The Newsletter of St. Mark's United Church, 115 Orton Park Rd, Toronto M1G 3G9 • (416) 439-8623 www.st-marks.ca

MARCH 2017

EARLY SPRING EDITION

FROM THE MINISTER'S DESK

By: Paul Hutchison, Minister

There are signs of new life making their way out of the ground – tiny little slips of green popping up in the front garden at home. All these double degree days have brought so many of these dormant bulbs back to life – in the dark, cold, depth of the soil, they feel the change in the temperature, the moisture in the soil, the lengthening of the days and they stretch into something new. But... of course... it is risky... there is still a lot of winter that could come, but they find their way forward. Ready to bloom when the time comes.

I've been doing a lot of yoga this year. It's not pretty, but I LOVE it – it stretches me beyond what I ever thought this body would ever be able to do. I've been working on plough. I have been fighting to get my toes on the

ground, pushing stretching, bending my neck that I can barely breath thinking that it isn't "Right" until my toes touch the ground. Yesterday I finally figured it out. It's not about the toes touching the ground, its about the arch in my back, the stretch in my legs, and my breathing... being still in that moment and space and my thinking was changed. I think I just got better at yoga yesterday!

These are both Lenten thoughts – be brave – push your way up into new life – but – don't rush it – don't push it so hard that you can't breathe. On this Lenten journey, find a place to walk, a space to breathe, and a rhythm to connect with. On this journey, always remember, we are not alone. Thanks be to God.

Paul

FROM THE BOARD CHAIR - CEDARBRAE LOCATION CONVERSATION:

By: Art Nicholson

At the past congregational meeting I brought up our relationship with Church of the Master and the motion that was approved in 2016.

"Motion from 2016 (Wendy Whittam, Gord Maunder) that St. Mark's United Church's congregation approves the leadership team entering a conversation with Church of the Master United Church to explore a closer relationship to secure and revitalize the United Church ministry in Scarborough. CARRIED"

Unfortunately Church of the Master voted to close

When Church of the Master closes the funds from the sale of the Church building will revert to Toronto Conference. I reminded everyone that in 2025 St. Mark's will be required to install an elevator plus funds that will be required to repair our Church building.

There was a brief discussion regarding the potential of St. Mark's moving its ministry to the Cedarbrae location.

Motion: (Charlie Wardell, Rob Burridge) that the

congregation of St. Mark's United Church direct the Board and Nominating Team to establish an Ad Hoc Ministry Team with a mandate to consider the ministry potential of St. Mark's at Cedarbrae. CARRIED

A team from St. Marks and Presbytery has been set to look into the financial, structural implications and potential new areas of ministry of this possibility.

The members of the St. Mark's Team are Brian MacFarlane, Hugh Graham, Steve Salt, Debbie Maunder, Don French, Harry Brown, Catherine Denault, Art Nicholson and Paul Hutchison.

The members of The Presbytery Team are Nick Walker-Finance and Property, Michael Cottrell,- Congregational Health, Meriel Simpson- Mission Strategy and Anne Shirley Sutherland.

I, as well as most of the congregation, would rather stay put, but we need to keep an open mind.

Once we have the details, we must seriously consider this opportunity.

Continued on page 2

... CONTINUED FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Otherwise, in the long term, we may suffer the same fate as the United Churches in the area that have been forced to close.

The congregation will be provided

a list of known pros and cons, and will be asked for further input once we have solid facts to consider.

I know it will have to be a very compelling long term ministry

opportunity, to make this feasible. Regardless of the outcome, this exercise will surely make us stronger.

Peace

THE HELEN JONES' LIBRARY

By: Karen Wigle

Here are some of the new and interesting books in our collection. Look for these on the main display shelves along a selection of Lenten books.

The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper by Phaedra Patrick – "In this poignant and curiously charming debut, a lovable widower embarks on a life-changing adventure....A touching tale of rediscovering someone you love... Utterly charming and endearing."

Searching for Sunday by Rachel Evans

- "If you need a book to pastor you, befriend you, pick you up and dust

you off, and maybe even give you a spiritual kiss on the cheek and a devotional kick in the pants, you've found it here."

Multi-Site Church Road Trip/The Multi-Site Church Revolution/Multi-Site Churches – "From multiple locations to internet campuses, the multi-site church movement is changing the shape of church.... Common practices and mistakes to avoid are clearly explained, and first-person advice and anecdotes from nine leading mlti-site church experts offer an invaluable advantage for



when your church considers whether or not to follow this path of ministry."

Reality Grief Hope Three Urgent Prophetic Tasks - Walter Brueggemann. "...is one of the most highly regarded Old Testament scholars of our time...presents a passionate and timely exploration of the theological crises that have infected the U.S., particularly since the 9/11 attacks..."

FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP:

By: Steve Salt

I would like to remind everyone to please return your 2017 financial pledge card to the office. Our goal is to have all cards returned in order to help us with our full year financial plans. Thank you to all who have already returned your cards. It is much appreciated.

As per my 'financial update' letter that came with your 2016 tax receipt, your Finance and Stewardship team is always looking for new ideas on how to gain more revenue into St. Mark's to help us achieve a balanced budget. If you have any questions, ideas, comments or recommendations, please reach out to anyone on the F&S team (Steve

Salt, Debbie Filey, Hugh Graham, Gord Maunder, Bart Boniface, Jane Greenwood and Jane Ogaki).

Thank you all for your financial and stewardship (volunteer) contributions. St. Mark's can not do what it does without you.

Month	Jan.	Feb.
Income	\$9,720	\$21,082
Expenses	\$12,832	\$36,165
Deficit	-\$3,112	-\$15,083



STUDY OF VIKTOR FRANKL'S "MAN'S SEARCH FOR MEANING" PASSES THE HALF-WAY POINT!

By: Rob Peck

Each year in St. Mark's a group of us meet roughly every other Friday from January to April to study a book that explores our faith. During each session we study a few pages, eat and chat. No exams. No marks! Everybody passes! This year we have been studying Viktor Frankl's remarkable book, Man's Search for Meaning. The following description was excerpted from Amazon.ca's web site.

Frankl argues that we cannot avoid suffering but we can choose how to cope with it, find meaning in it, and move forward with renewed purpose. Frankl's theory holds that our primary drive in life is not pleasure, as Freud maintained, but the discovery and pursuit of what we personally find meaningful. Specifically,

Frankl quotes Nietzsche as saying if we can find a "why" to live, we can bear with almost any "how". A 1991 reader survey for the Library of Congress found Man's Search for Meaning among the ten most influential books in America.

March 10th was the occasion of the group's 5th session of this study; we are now more than halfway through the book. Katharina Manassis led our discussions and a host of stalwarts provided the treats that, for many people, are the prime reason for attending! At the opening and at the closing of our discussions, Katharina shared some words of wisdom that many of us felt were so profound we should share them with the rest of the church. So ... here you go!

KATHARINA'S OPENING

"Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it." ---Helen Keller

"If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we should find in each man's life sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility." --- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

KATHARINA'S CLOSING

21st Century Commandments

- 1. Believe in something greater than yourself.
- 2. Look past your own fears and desires, so you can see what's important.
- 3. When unsure what to say, speak lovingly.
- 4. Take time to rest and reflect, for without this you cannot help others.
- 5. Honor the natural world, for it is both mother and father to us all.
- 6. Be curious about other people, look for the best in them, and don't crush their spirit.
- 7. Value every contribution to your life, whether monetary or not, and cherish the contributors.
- Feed all who lack in food or selfrespect, for most conflict is fueled by these wants.
- 9. Honor the truth, for spoken lovingly it can reconcile.
- 10. Aim for a more level playing field, so people have less reason to be jealous.

FROM THE WORSHIP TEAM...

THANKS

A big "thank you" goes out to all the amazing volunteers who contribute every week to our Sunday worship: those in the choir who bring us such beautiful music and lead us so well; those who provide coffee and refreshments, those who teach the children, greet, read scripture, light candles, receive the offering, prepare and serve communion, etc., etc.. So many people step forward. We truly are a community of faith and we want you to know your contributions are very much appreciated.

GOOD FRIDAY – APRIL 14TH 10:30 A.M. AT THE CHURCH OF THE MASTER

Last year St. Mark's hosted a joint Good Friday service where people attended from a number of neighbouring United Churches. This year the Church of the Master is reciprocating. Once again there will be a joint choir. If you have space in your vehicle, we encourage you to offer a ride to someone who may not have transportation. The Church of the Master is on the corner of Lawrence Ave. East and Greencedar Circuit (immediately west of the Cedarbrae Mall).

VISITING SUNDAY - CHURCH OF THE MASTER - APRIL 23RD

On April 23rd. people who normally worship at the Church of the Master are being invited to join us in our service of worship. St. Marks is a friendly church and I'm sure most of us will reach out to anyone we don't recognize. We hope there will be several visitors so please make an extra special effort to wear your nametags, greet them, introduce yourself, invite them to have refreshments and

perhaps offer a tour of the church.

SUMMER SERVICES

It's -6° C this morning and it's a little difficult to think of summer, but it's coming and that means we will have opportunities for people to lead summer services. If that's something you are willing to try, let's talk! Please let Tom Stephens or Catherine Deneault know.

BAPTISM POLICY

Our Baptism Policy has not been updated for several years and we would like to review it to ensure it accurately reflects St. Mark's mission. On April 30th. we encourage you to stay for short time following the service while we explore this policy and hear your views. Please bring a sandwich if you wish and we will supply coffee, tea, juice and cookies.





BLUE JAYS VS. KANSAS CITY ROYALS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST

ROSES ARE RED; VIOLETS ARE BLUE!

By coincidence, the Blue Jays open Spring Training today, and this leads us to our annual Blue Jays outing; This year, plans have been made for tickets to the BLUE JAYS vs. Kansas City Royals on THURS., SEPT. 21st. (7:05 p.m.)

As you may have noticed in the media, the Jays have increased their prices this year, as has the Transit Company. However, we have been

successful in negotiating a reasonable price that will cover: game ticket, transportation, driver's gratuity

We must have **35 folks minimum** to make this price work for our advantage.

Cost, if using the bus, - \$60.00 p/p Cost if NOT using bus - \$52.00 p/p

Please reply to either Don Thurston or Gord Maunder BY MARCH 30th with your interest. No money will be required until June. Thank you for your past interest in this fun day event.



COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT

EASTER SUNDAY 10:30 - 11:00AM

Worship service to follow at 11





FRIDAY, APRIL 21,ST 2017
AT Q-SSIS BANQUET HALL





APPETIZERS & COCKTAILS: 6:30PM

DINNER:7:30PM





FOR TICKETS, SEE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZING TEAM MEMBERS:

Karen Boniface, Carol Caise, Melinda Calway, Bill Wolba, Bettie and Dave Mackenzie, Rob Peck, Tom Stephens, Pat Wardell, Sharon and Trevor White (416) 574-6429 or call the office (416) 439-8623.





PROGRESSIVE DINNER

Saturday, April 29th, 2017

5:45 - 6:45 Appetizers and punch at the church

6:45 - 7:00 Travel to host home for main course

7:00 - 8:45 Dine at host home

9:00 Dessert at the church

Cost: \$20 per person (collected at church prior to appetizers)

Procedures:

- 4 to 6 guests will be served main course at host home; guests will learn at appetizer course the host home where they will go for main course
- Host will provide main course
- Guests will contribute their choice of appetizer, salad or dessert
- If you wish, bring your own wine to main course only

If you have any questions, please call Luella Stephens at 416-283-1267 or Heather Urbansky at 416-282-8699 or email tom.stephens@sympatico.ca or hurbansky@sympatico.ca Please complete a registration form and place it in the box on the table in the narthex or call Luella Stephens at 416-283-1267 with the information.

RSVP required by April 17th

All proceeds will go to St. Mark's United Church.