



NOVEMBER MEMO

The Newsletter of
St. Mark's United Church
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NOVEMBER 2019

FALL EDITION



MITTEN TREE

*Some Little Kittens they have no mittens
And they've begun to cry*

*St. Mark's, so dear, we sadly fear,
our mittens we have none*

What, have no mittens you dear little kittens?

*Have no fear, St. Mark's will surely see that
you will soon have some.*

Mittens and gloves are most needed. Other accepted items for the tree include carves, toques, and even socks.

These items will be distributed to schools in the area and to the Out of the Cold programme.



FROM THE MINISTER

By: Janet Smith Zenwirt, Minister

Autumn is a season of transition and change. St. Mark's has also experienced a season of transition and change. I am grateful to be among the St. Mark's family as we do something new together. I am grateful for the many conversations and visits. Please call me so that we continue these chats.

I have been watching and admiring the lush burning bush at the back of the church. As September rolled into October, I waited eagerly to see what many folks had told me, "that bush turns bright red". Then, it unfolded before my eyes. Perhaps you have also been witnessing this display. Slowly, one leaf after another turned from green to bright crimson. Sadly, the branches are now bare. The leaves let go of the branches to allow new growth to appear in the spring. We wait. The wonder of it all!

Another time of waiting is drawing near. We wait for the cold, blustery weather to arrive. The bare branches of the tree in our entrance are sprouting mittens! From barren branches come something new - signs of compassion and love to be shared with our communities' children. We also wait with anticipation for Christmas.

We'll hear the familiar words from Isaiah: I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the

wilderness and rivers in the desert. (Isaiah 43:19) We wait for God to be with us, Emmanuel, even as God is always with us. We wait for Jesus to be born anew at Christmas. We wait for the One who will show us a way through the wilderness of life even when our lives seem barren and full of struggles. We wait.

Advent is a precious time of waiting, anticipating, and preparing. We will celebrate well-loved traditions such as the candles, the sounds of the choir, and the children's pageant. We will enjoy the sights and smells of the season as well. That said, it can be overwhelming and some of us may find it difficult to celebrate this year. Take time to step back away from the festivities to reflect on this liminal time. Perhaps take a stroll among the bare trees of Highland Creek and notice the quiet skies. Breathe in the wonder of it all. I also invite you to attend our Quiet Christmas service on Thursday, December 13 at 7:00 p.m.

What are we waiting for this year? Will we share Advent blessings of hope, peace, joy, and love with the world and in all our relationships? Will we focus on bringing tranquility, a feeling of calm, a gentle presence of the Holy into our lives and the lives of others? Will we help bring justice and love into this world? What are we waiting for? The wonder of it all!

SHINING WATER REGION REPORT

*By: Randy Stroud & Glen Greenwood,
Regional Representatives*

The most recent (and first) Regional meeting was held in Barrie in May of this year. Glen and Patrick Reed attended. The next regional meetings have been scheduled for May and October 2020.

Lately Glen attended the first meeting of the Licensed Lay Worship Leaders Committee in Innesfil. Next meeting will be held later this month online via "Zoom."

For news of our Shining Waters Region of UCC here is the link: shiningwatersregionalcouncil.ca

THE HELEN JONES' LIBRARY

By: Karen Wigle



I would like to say thank you to all those who help our libraries flourish, especially Rob Burridge, Glen Greenwood, Marna Niece, and everyone who donates Value Village coupons.

There will be a table of curated books for sale at the November 23 bazaar. They are all in tip top condition and will be selling for only \$3.00 each. Every gift tells a story and helps support our church.

Have you had a chance to look at these books new to our library?

Paris 1919 Six Months That Changed The World by Margaret MacMillan, a non-fiction multi award winner, also won the Governor General's Literary Award.

'Without question, Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919* is the most honest and engaging history ever written about those fateful months after World War I when the maps of Europe were redrawn. Brimming with lucid analysis, elegant character sketches, and geopolitical pathos, it is essential reading.'

The Eyewitness series book *World War I* is an easy to read, illustrated history of The Great War, suitable for most ages.

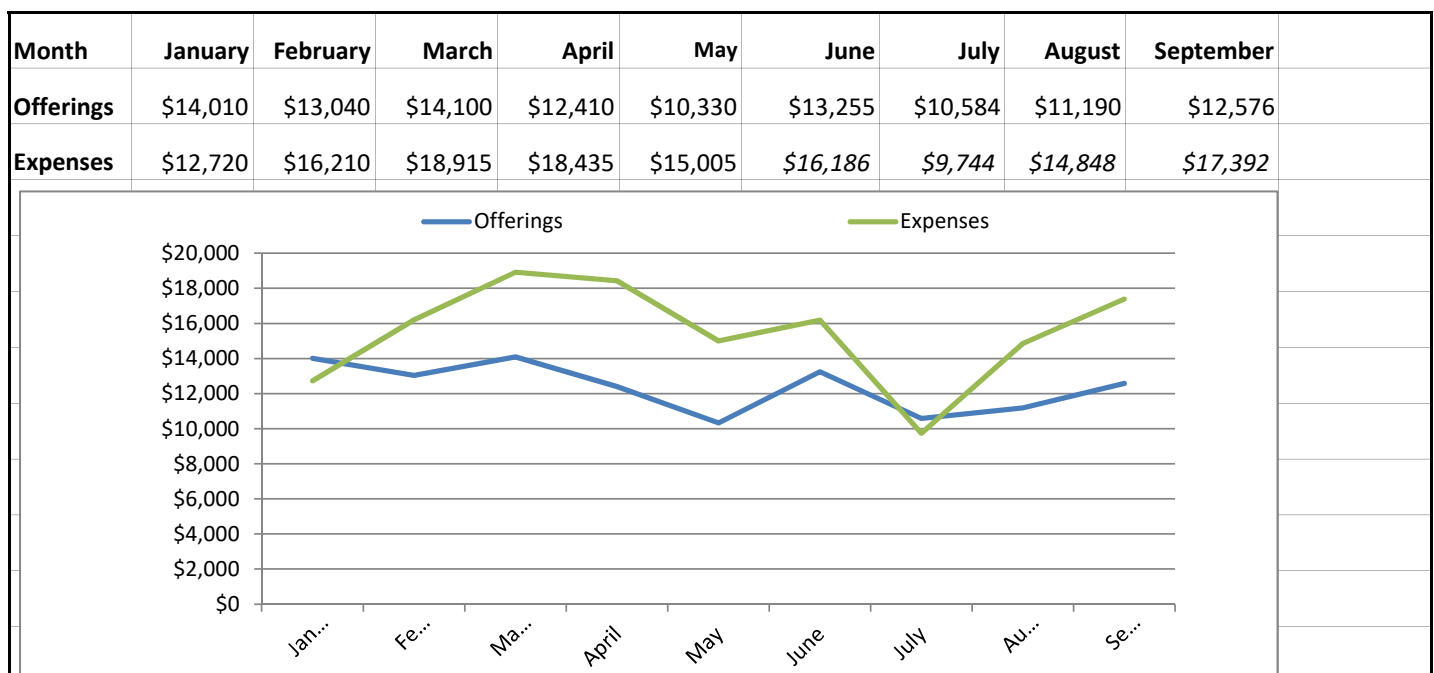
In *Born of A Woman A Bishop Rethinks The Birth Of Jesus*, John Shelby Spong integrates "his love and respect for scripture with his

keen understanding of current biblical scholarship and the needs of modern peoples.... (Spong) explores the virgin Mary tradition and its contemporary repercussions." "His daring and engaging reading of scripture shows that 'only the church that manages to free itself from its sexist definition of women, anchored significantly in the virgin Mary tradition, will survive."

It's Your Money Becoming A Woman Of Independent Means by Gail Vaz-Oxlade does not promise to miraculously solve your financial problems but rather help you to "understand why you deal with your money the way you do....establish a solid financial foundation....make your own financial decisions...navigate life's milestones" and cope when things go wrong in your life.

ST. MARK'S FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Offerings vs Expenses



FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

By: Charlie Wardell, Board Chair

Like the school year, our church really gets active in the fall. There is so much happening that there is certain to be something for each of us to join in with!

Of course, the wonderful newness at St. Mark's is welcoming Janet Smith-Zenwirt. Janet is very much a 'people person'. Easy to talk with, caring, and she has a great sense for church life. Although she has only been here a few weeks so far, it feels an interesting mix of comfortable and exciting. The response has been awesome!

Support and best wishes also to our Music Director search team. Headed up by Bart Boniface, they are off to a great start. If you're curious and especially if you know someone, the job posting is up on Facebook (and elsewhere!)

In the meantime, we're so grateful to have Sharon Russell leading us in music! A terrific musician and a friendly, accommodating soul. It's truly our pleasure.

Have you heard? We have a group formed specifically interested in supporting areas such as community engagement and the marginalized.

Social Advocacy Team - "radical innovation in action" (I love it!)

Working closely with our Ministry Teams and community partners, this initiative can help St. Mark's do more and be more.

Thanks to everyone who returned the Stewardship form. The information will enable us to better plan the good things that St. Mark's can do.

I continue to be awed and humbled by the St. Mark's spirit and passion. Together, we do great things!



Presented under ACF Site License Agreements

Friday
January 10th

**Free! Community
Movie Night**

7pm in the sanctuary
@St. Mark's United Church
115 Orton Park Road



Nut free treats provided

Upcoming Events

NEWS FROM CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: BIBLE STUDY

By: Glen Greenwood

Thanks to the kind support of the Christian Education committee we completed a six-week study of Romans 1-8. We had about seven folks out each Tuesday from noon to 1:30 during our six weeks together. We used as our study guide LISTEN UP! Bible Study, God is still speaking, a publication from our partner church in the US, United Church of Christ,] [Their website is www.uccresources.com/collections/listen-up if you are interested in more information on the material.]

In January will be continue our study of Romans and complete chapters 9-16.

Thanks again to our Christian Education Committee for their support and also the folks who attended. We had fun. Updates will follow in the next few weeks on our January session. If you are interested, please let me know so that I have enough new Study Guides for everyone. Many thanks to everyone, and yes, "God is still speaking."

All good things.

Which Bin???



Bring your questions to an

Information Session on Recycling
(led by a representative of the City of Toronto)

Wednesday November 27th
7:00 pm
In the sanctuary

Great Variety of Crafts

Christmas Decorations

Silent Auction

Bake Table

BAZAAR & CRAFTS MARKET

Many Vendors

Books

Saturday, November 23rd, 2019
10am-2pm

St. Mark's United Church
115 Orton Park Road, Scarborough