

“Living faithfully in the Spirit of Christ to make a loving difference in the world.”

Paul's Ponderings

The chancel renovation is underway. The carpet has been removed and we now see how the platform at the front of the church was constructed. We are looking forward to an accessible and adaptable platform soon. Worship will be re-oriented 90 degrees for the next few weeks as we use the side screen. I was telling a colleague about what was happening and mentioned that maybe Palm Sunday and Easter aren't the best Sundays to have the worship space under construction. However, there is a tradition of stripping the sanctuary bare for Good Friday and perhaps from a different angle of setting we will hear the stories of from a new perspective. One thing we have learned over the past two years is that the space of worship can vary; it is the people, the story, the Spirit that shapes and defines the worship experience. So as Easter approaches, we reflect on the promise of new life and wonder anew how that promise is known amidst uncertainty, fear and community.

Paul's Sabbatical - Within The United Church of Canada, minister personnel are eligible for a three month sabbatical every 5 years. Paul has taken sabbaticals in 2011 and 2016; he postponed it last year until this year. So from June 1st until the end of September, Paul will be away on sabbatical and then a month of vacation. Rev. Dr. Jessica Hetherington (a candidate for ministry from Riverside) will be working part time at Riverside for these four months.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



Ukraine: How Amnesty verifies military attacks
Amnesty International's Crisis

Evidence Lab has been working hard to identify and verify the details of possible unlawful attacks which have killed or injured civilians, and destroyed or damaged civilian infrastructure in Ukraine.

The Crisis Evidence Lab is a multidisciplinary team that uses cutting-edge digital investigation tools to document human rights violations remotely. This research provides essential evidence which can later be used to hold perpetrators of violations accountable. It helps to ensure that information

emerging from conflict areas is timely, accurate and meets the needs of human rights work in crisis situations.

RECENT GOOD NEWS STORIES: Iran: Two British Iranian citizens, Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and Anousheh Ashouri, were released from prison in Iran and reunited with their families in the UK. Also, Iranian human rights defender Atena Daemi was released after five years in prison

Guatemala: Bernardo Caal Xol, a Maya Q'eqchi' teacher was released from jail on March 24. He had been unjustly imprisoned for more than four years in retaliation for his leadership of a peaceful struggle by his people to stop destructive dams on the Cahabón River. Featured in the 2021 Write-for-Rights Campaign, over 26,000 messages from across Canada were sent in support of justice for Bernardo and his people

Burundi: Germain Rukuki, human rights worker, (Write-for Rights 2020) was reunited with his family in Belgium in February. He had been released from prison in June 2020 following the 2020 campaign.

China: The campaign to free journalist Zhang Zhan (Write-for Rights 2021) from prison continues. AI has heard that her mother has been able to speak with her.

Saudi Arabia: Raif Badawi, a prominent human rights defender and blogger who had been flogged in Saudi Arabia, was finally released on March 11th. AI continues to campaign to overturn the travel ban on Raif and several other former prisoners of conscience so that he can finally reunite with his family in Sherbrooke, Quebec.

Honduras: After 914 days behind bars, accused of crimes they did not commit, eight community leaders known as the Guapinol River defenders have been set free in Honduras. We participated in the AI Urgent Actions mobilizing supporters to write letters calling for the release of the defenders.

ONGOING ACTIONS: AI has been recently involved in human rights abuses in Israel, Colombia and Egypt. It is to be noted that AI will not adopt anyone or any group that has used or advocated the use of violence in their activities.



Throughout the past 2 years HEFC has continued to serve its clients despite the many challenges. Contrary to expectations, and for various reasons, the numbers of those requesting food had decreased until recently, when they are rising again. During this entire time monetary donations from all sources have been phenomenal, so the Centre has been able to purchase more food as well as other essentials and grocery gift cards for distribution.

Presently non perishable food items (soups, canned vegetables, dry pasta, pasta sauce etc) are very welcome in our yellow bin in the Narthex but please note that, thanks to your wonderful previous response, they now have sufficient egg cartons. (Earthub, who have a bin outside the front door of the church, will gladly accept them – along with many other recyclable items)

Cash donations are always needed, and a big thank you to those who have continued to support the Centre in this way. There are envelopes on the table in the Narthex; you may use the “donate” button on the website at www.hefc.ca or send a cheque by mail.

A reminder that Wilson's Independent grocery store receipts are still being accepted as they generate \$1 for each \$100. Last year receipts submitted by RUC translated into \$370 for HEFC.

Any questions – please contact Mary Shaw mbshaw@rogers.com or (613)733-4600

Frozen Apple Pies and a few apple crumbles are on sale and available after the Sunday service or phone Susan Wade at 613-731-0181

9 inch Apple Pies \$15.00
only 2 Small apple pies, 4 inch pies \$4.00 each
6 inch round Apple Crumbles \$8.00

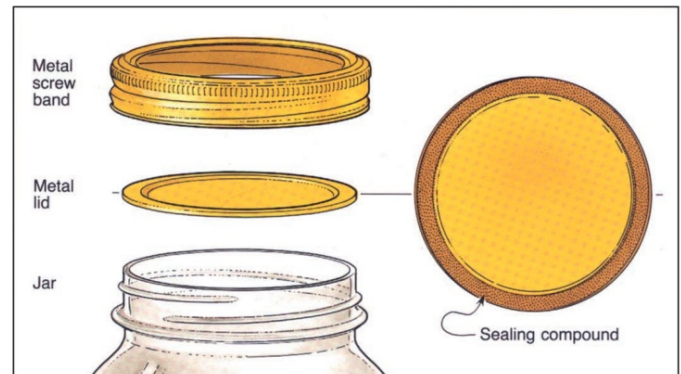


The ladies who make the baked goods are asking if people have jam & jelly jars to please bring them in and put them in the white box in the kitchen island. Thank You

Volunteers Wanted - No ‘Green Thumb’ Necessary

In less than two months, we will be preparing the Thexton Garden for the growing season.

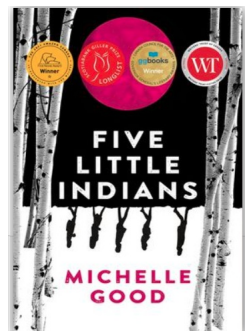
Once again, we will need 6 pairs of planters: each pair responsible for planting one raised bed in late May and then 12 pairs of waterers: each pair volunteering to take on one week of watering during the summer growing season. If you are interested in helping out with this community effort, please leave your name at the church office or with John Dixon at johnldixon957@gmail.com.



Home Canning and Preserving: Safety tips:

Current recommendations are to immerse in boiling water as your last step. and to use a new self-sealing lid each time. There is a supply of lids in the kitchen for items to go in the bazaar. The screw band can be reused as long as it is not bent or rusty. Government safety tips can be found at <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/general-food-safety-tips/home-canning-safety.html>. Some printed copies will be available at the church. For questions or concerns, you may contact Wendy Graham 623-523-2244

Next Discussion Group Novel - May 15th 7:00 PM - Five Little Indians by Michelle Good - With compassion and insight, Five Little Indians chronicles the desperate quest of these residential school survivors to come to terms with their past and, ultimately, find a way forward.



Calendar of Events - April 2022

Date	Details: Time	Event
Sun, April 10 th	10:30am - Palm Sunday	In person/Zoom/YouTube Worship Gathering
Thur, April 14 th	7:00pm - Maundy Thursday	On Zoom - including communion
Fri, April 15 th	10:30am - Good Friday service	In person/Zoom/YouTube Worship Gathering
Sun, April 17 th	10:30am - Easter Celebration	In person/Zoom/YouTube - incl. communion
Mon, Apr 18 th	Easter Monday Statutory Holiday	Office Closed
Sun, Apr 24 th	10:30am	In person/Zoom/YouTube Worship Gathering
Thu, Apr 28 th	3 rd Affirm Anniversary	April 28, 2019 – our Sunday evening worship service included our celebration of becoming an Affirming Ministry within The United Church of Canada.
Sun, May 1 st	10:30am	In person/Zoom/YouTube Worship Gathering
Sun, May 8 th	10:30am	In person/Zoom/YouTube Worship Gathering
Sun, May 15 th	10:30am	In person/Zoom/YouTube Worship Gathering
Sun, May 15 th	7:00pm - Book Discussion Group	On Zoom - Five Little Indians by Michelle Good

SOCIAL JUSTICE ROUND TABLE

WHEN - May 1st, 2022 7pm - 9pm

WHERE - Zoom link and registration info to come soon!

WHO - All UCC Ontarians are invited to a pre-election round table on guaranteed livable income, harm reduction, housing, and long term care reform

For more info: Shull@united-church.ca or Dmatheson@united-church.ca

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Very Rev. Lois Wilson, former United Church Moderator

LEADERSHIP FROM ISARC

Susan Eagle Jeffrey Dale ECORC Guaranteed Livable Income Network (GLI Network) Natalie Mehra Ted McMeekin

SPONSORED BY THE SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORK OF ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCILS

A fulsome program is emerging: an opening provided by UCC justice advocate and former Moderator Lois Wilson, breakout time hosted by Jeffrey Dale and Susan Eagle, joined by Natalie Mehra of the Canadian Health Coalition and the ECORC GLI Network, and a summary and 'next steps' with former MPP and active United Church member Ted McMeekin. The intention of the program is to provide networking space and concrete strategies for people of faith to employ as we seek to participate in a pivotal provincial election