



# The Signal

St. Stephen United Church Newsletter  
Fall 2010



## Why Do We Give Thanks??

I was recently spending time with a two year old and her favorite question was, “Why?” Why do we do what we are doing - whatever that thing might be. As adults we continue to ask that question, “Why?” Often we only ask it in times of trouble or when something happens that we don’t feel is fair. We ask, “why?” when our car needs repairs and we don’t have enough money in the bank. We ask why? when we are asked to do more than we were prepared to do. We ask, “Why?” when our hearts are broken, when a loved one falls ill or dies. We ask, “Why?”

The first question, or some variation, of theological inquiry is “Why are we here?” The answer that we as God’s people give is: We are here to glorify and enjoy God’s grace throughout creation. We are here as expressions of God’s Love on earth. Our very existence is a result of God’s outpouring of love. We are called as a people of faith to give Thanks to God and give Praise to God throughout all stages of our life, during all circumstances of life. I know this is not easy. When all of life seems to be falling apart, how do we give thanks? When waiting 12 hours to find out if a loved one will live, knowing that even if they do it will be a long, horrific time of healing ahead, how do we give thanks?

We all respond to the trials and struggles in our lives in different ways. We can follow the example of the Psalmists and give all our anger, grief, frustration to God with both barrel, and then even so, remember God’s faithfulness throughout the ages and also give Thanksgiving. Our moderator Mardi Tindale has expressed this action of giving thanks and extending God’s grace to each other as one beggar sharing with another where they found food to fill their hunger.

*“So let us give thanks to God and let us Rejoice in the Lord always. Revel in God’s Goodness each day. Don’t fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God’s wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It’s wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worries at the centre of your life”.*

*Philippians 4: 6-7 - The Message*

*Rev. Allison Playfair*





## Notes from Council....

I am very pleased and honoured to be taking on the role of Chair of the Coordinating Council and would like to thank Nancy Adams for the great job that she did last year. This is a terrific time to be taking on this role. New and exciting ideas are coming forward and I feel a renewed energy emerging. The Council has already met with the congregational members who attended the More Franchises conference in June and who brought back innovative and dynamic ideas. We want to develop a Vision with input from all members of the congregation. The planned after-church luncheon on Oct 24<sup>th</sup> is one opportunity for everyone to share ideas, but any suggestions for the future that are written down and submitted to any Council member will be welcomed. Share in our Vision! Help shape our future!

- Heather McGavin

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## Angels....according to children

(thanks to Pat Murray for this contribution)

Angels live in cloud houses made by God and his Son, who's a very good carpenter.

-Jared, age 8

Some of the angels are in charge of helping heal Sick animals and pets. And if they don't make the animals get better, they help the child get over it.

-Vicki, age 8

Angels don't eat, but they drink milk from Holy Cows!!!

-Jack, age 6

Everybody's got it all wrong. Angels don't wear halos anymore. I forget why, but scientists are working on it.

- Olive, age 9

## UPCOMING EVENTS. . .

### Thanksgiving Sunday

A parade of thankful blessings will be a part of the worship service on Thanksgiving Sunday. Please bring an item for which you are thankful. They will be laid on the church chancel during worship to signify the many blessings in our lives.



### Thanksgiving Food Drive

Wesley Centre's ongoing needs include canned/packaged/fresh vegetables and fruit, powdered milk, canned juice, soup, breakfast cereal, peanut butter, etc. gently used towels, spray-on deodorant, shaving cream, toothbrushes, combs, hair brushes, socks, underwear, feminine hygiene products. Cash donations would also be appreciated. Please bring contribution to our worship service on Sunday, October 10<sup>th</sup> for distribution.

### Rummage Sale



Start cleaning out those closets!

**Date: Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Time: 9 am - 12:00 Noon**

Any "recyclable items" may be dropped off on Friday between 6 - 8 p.m. Any help would be greatly appreciated. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board in the hall.

### Music Workshop

Members of the choir are participating in a music reading workshop on October 16<sup>th</sup> at Erin Mills United Church. The facilitators of the workshop are Don Besig and Nancy Price; composers and lyricists whose music the choir often sings during worship.



### Congregational Luncheon

Please join us for lunch after worship on Sunday, October 24<sup>th</sup> as we begin an exciting journey to determine a vision for our future.

## Wesley Centre Dinner

Our annual opportunity to serve dinner at the Wesley Centre, will take place on **Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>**. A poster is located in the hall indicating what is needed regarding volunteers to work as well as to prepare food. **Please be sure to sign up!**

## Church Library

The current library space is being used as a meeting room, nursery and Sunday school room. As a result some of the books are going to be relocated. Others, however, will be looking for a new home. Please watch for an announcement inviting the congregation to select books to take home for personal use. The remaining books will be distributed to a charitable organization.



## Remembrance Day Service

Our service of remembrance will take place on November 7<sup>th</sup>.

During the service veterans from our own congregation as well as family members will be recognized. Further information will follow.

## KEEP THIS DATE OPEN. . .

**Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 pm**

**You're invited to a Family Christmas Party!**

Turkey dinner, family party games and Santa Claus will make an appearance. Adults, children and grandchildren all welcome!



## **A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

At the Congregational Meeting on September 19<sup>th</sup>, Treasurer Dave Shilton gave an update on our worrisome financial position. Envelope givings are \$5,000 lower than last year. Despite increased participation in the PAR program, this past summer's offerings are lower than ever.

Our deficit (expenses exceeding revenue) is now \$19,000., considerably worse than at the same point last year!

Why is this happening?

- As our congregation ages, we are losing members who were major contributors.
- Fewer people are attending services on a regular basis.
- Some have left the congregation permanently.

We need your help!

- If you have been away for the summer, please try to "catch-up" on your offerings.
- Please consider enrolling in the PAR program (speak to Dave Shilton or Walter Adams)
- Try to increase your offerings, as you are able.

A major Capital Campaign is being considered by Council. If you are interested in helping with a Stewardship program, please speak to any member of Council.

## **FYI**

Some of you may be aware of the flooding that has occurred in the church basement on more than one occasion. After investigation, it has been determined that there are significant issues with the foundation. As we learn more about the damage and subsequent repairs, the congregation will be updated.

- Church council