

RAPPORT

Mountainside United Church

4000 The Boulevard, Westmount, Quebec



September 18, 2011

Dr Balfour Mount Awarded CMA Medal of Service



n August 24, 2011, a highly respected member of the Mountainside United Church congregation, Dr Balfour M. Mount, Emeritus Professor

of Palliative Medicine at McGill University, was awarded the Canadian Medical Association's (CMA) prestigious Medal of Service, at the association's annual meeting held this year in St. John's, Newfoundland. The Medal of Service is awarded to a person "who has made an exceptional and outstanding contribution to the advancement of health care in Canada," and the citation states that Dr Mount's award was "in recognition of his contributions to the development of the field of palliative care at the local, national and international levels." He was a pioneer of Palliative Medicine in North America and Canada.

The nominations and awards procedure at the CMA requires several months of research and consultation and

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Caring and Sharing

Hi everyone. The ramp up to serving God for another season is well under way. You will find lots of info in this regard in this issue of *Rapport*.

However, reviewing the submissions for this *Rapport*, covering the last few months, gives quite a wonderful picture of faithful people caring and sharing and seeking the sacred in creation and renewed relationships. The articles are heart warming and well worth the read. Teen confirmation certainly was a highlight in June. The reprint of one of the July sermons offered in my absence is a wonderful invitation to seeking the sacred. In August, the awarding of the CMA Medal of Service to Bal Mount and engineered by Ed Coffey touched me deeply. Judy and Philip's travels and connecting with family, friends and God's good creation this summer inspires me for my sabbatical planning and preparations. There are other articles, notices and pictures that again depict faithful folk sharing and caring as they seek the sacred in our midst.

A new activity beginning in September on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 8:30 is a Meditation group following the John Main approach. Linda Guignion-Mount will be leading it with my participation. Look in the Sunday bulletins or on the web site for the start-up date.

It is good to be part of the Mountainside family of faith. This *Rapport* sure shows it. Enjoy.

Rev John

Baptism of Hailey Dizon-Salgado

n Sunday, August 28, 2011, Hailey Dizon-Salgado was welcomed by the congregation of Mountainside into membership by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Susan Salvati was the representative of Liturgy and Learning and introduced Hailey's parents Laura Ashley Dizon and Harold Salgado and her six Godmothers and six Godfathers.



Welcome Back!

The Summer is now behind us and our activities have resumed for what is really the



second half of our Church year. We are again worshiping in the Sanctuary after spending July and August, well most of August, worshiping in the Chapel. This was a somewhat unusual summer as we had *two* baptisms during August which required us to move the service to the upstairs Sanctuary as attendance would have resulted in an overflow of the Chapel. My thanks to the members of the Congregation who volunteered to lead the worship services during the month of July. Having attended these services, it was clear that there was thoughtful preparation by each of the leaders.

We welcomed the Montreal Korean Methodist Church to the Mountainside facilities, and, after a few "growing pains", they have so far proved to be respectful of our Congregation and church building. Although this relationship is in its early stages and thus evolving, we are hopeful that it will evolve into a more permanent partnering arrangement.

This fall, the Session will be presented with the report of the Futures Committee. I will tell you in advance that this Committee has not found the "Silver Bullet" to deal with our deteriorating financial situation and declining membership. We did, however, come up with a series of different initiatives designed to build more of a sense of community, and some with which we will attempt to transition Mountainside into a 21st century place of worship. The decisions on these matters are of course in the hands of the Session and the Congregation. We will also continue the practice begun last year of a two phase Annual Meeting. We will schedule a short meeting in late fall to present the 2012 budget for consideration and approval and a second meeting in the April timeframe for the remaining agenda items.

Lastly, it was with sadness that we said goodbye to the Okrah family (except for Leslie) and wished them well in their move to Ottawa. In the relatively short time in which they were members, Lambert served both on Session and on the Executive Committee. He also volunteered his time to the Futures Committee. We will sorely miss Lambert's energy and ideas as we move forward.

Vincent Salvati, Chair of Session

Sharing Locally and Internationally

We who have much to be thankful for feel the need to share with others.

You have heard about the emergency situation now affecting several countries in the Horn of Africa—Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia and the Karamoja region of Uganda. Our hearts go out to the millions of people affected by what our regional partners there say is the worst drought to hit the region in 60 years.

The United Church immediately responded in July with a commitment of \$50,000 to the humanitarian relief work of ACT Alliance and partners who work through their member churches to respond to the immediate needs of people affected. The Canadian federal government will match funds raised through this appeal between July 6, 2011 and September 16, 2011.

To donate through Mountainside United Church write a cheque designated for "Horn of Africa Drought Relief". It will be credited to your givings and forwarded to the national church to support United Church partners on site. Donations may also be made directly online www.united-church.ca/africa.

The church's initial rapid commitment of \$50,000 to this crisis has been possible thanks to the United Church's Emergency Response Fund, which retains 15 percent of emergency donations to provide the capacity to rapidly respond to emergencies as they occur.

This fall, Oct 23rd, our congregation will again be needing servers, money and blankets to participate in serving a meal at the Old Brewery Mission. Please contact Grace Garcia, Nancy Walkling or the church office if you would like to participate.

A big thank you to Lambert Okrah for his leadership and ideas as Chair of Outreach. We miss him and his family now that they have moved to Ottawa.

Nancy Walkling, Treasurer of Outreach

Outreach Sunday is October 23rd

Our guest speaker will be Paula Kline, Director of the Montreal City Mission. Mountainside congregation makes annual donations to the mission and its summer day camp. A few years ago we ran English classes for newly arrived refugees who were being helped with accomodation and orientation by the mission.

Here are some words from Paula:

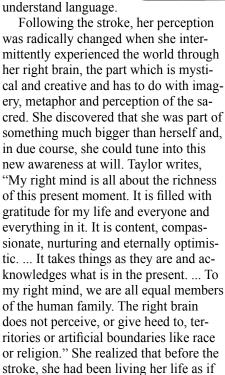
"One hundred years old and still kicking! Montreal City Mission continues its vibrant ministry in downtown Montreal with the support of the United Church and UCC congregations. In your name, the MCM team reaches out to those struggling on the margins, looking for help, for a way to belong and a way

Experiencing The Sacred

an you and I find evidence of the sacred in our daily lives? Perhaps the experience of others can inform our search.

When she was in her mid-thirties. Harvard neuroscientist Jill Bolte Taylor had a stroke. It involved the left side of her brain. Until then, she had expe-

rienced life largely through her left brain, thus using her organizing, rational mind and linear processing that enables logical thought, memory, and the ability to speak and



Here are some other examples of people describing their experience of the sacred.

that inner dimension didn't exist.

A musician friend finds a profound connection with the sacred through music. He first noticed this at the age of four. He refers to his considerable musical talent as a gift and says that when he is making music he often feels that he is in a place that might be described as being close to the heart of God.

The poet, Mary Oliver, has such experiences as well, especially when she is walking on the beach with her dog, at the pond, looking out over the

marsh, or in the woods. She hesitates to label it, but her tone of reverence makes it clear that her perceptions are of the sacred. In her poem, The Summer Day she writes,"I don't know exactly what a prayer is; I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down in the grass, how to be idle and blessed." This special

> awareness occurs when she is radically present to the moment at hand.

Leonard Cohen was moved to recognize the presence of God powerfully reflected in the morning sunlight streaming into his bedroom. He wrote, "In streams of

light I clearly saw the dust you seldom see, out of which the Nameless makes a name for you and me."

Must life be going well for us to experience the sacred? The psychiatrist Viktor Frankl had his life-changing revelation even though he was a prisoner in Auschwitz at the time.

What about my own life? When I was a child, my Father read me the poem "Vestigia" by Bliss Carman. "Vestigia" means footprints or signs. Bliss Carman wrote:

I took a day to search for God And found Him not. But as I trod By rocky ledge, through woods untamed, 1 Just where one scarlet lily flamed, I saw His footprint in the sod.

Then suddenly, all unaware, Far off in the deep shadows, where A solitary hermit thrush Sang through the holy twilight hush — *I heard His voice upon the air.*

And even as I marveled how God gives us Heaven here and now, In a stir of wind that hardly shook *The poplar leaves beside the brook* — His hand was light upon my brow.

At last with evening as I turned Homeward, and thought what I had learned

And all that there was still to probe — I caught the glory of His robe Where the last fires of sunset burned.

Back to the world with quickening start I looked and longed for any part In making saving Beauty be ... And from that kindling ecstasy I knew God dwelt within my heart.

This is the experience of a man who encountered God on a walk in the woods.

The poem has resonated with me since the day I first heard it, so many years ago. My younger self knew I liked what the poet was saying but I wasn't sure I could relate it to my life. Over the years I have come to realize that Bliss Carman's words have informed my awareness that the spiritual dimension of reality exists both around me and within me.

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Christmas Bazaar

The Annual Christmas Bazaar is being held on Saturday, November 12th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. It is always great fun and a good way to get into the Christmas spirit!

Donna Fraser and Julie Dawson are devoting their time and talent to make it a success. Let's help out with our TREASURES.

We need lots of the following:

- ♦ ART WORK
- ♦ BAKED AND FROZEN GOODS - to supplement apple pies
- **♦ PRESERVES**
- **♦ NEARLY NEW**
 - gifts, toys, linens, art work
- ♦ CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS - seasonal items
- ♦ BOOKS recent novels, non-fiction, records, CDs, tapes
- ♦ JEWELLERY real or costume
- **♦ TREASURES & COLLECTIBLES**

All items can be brought to the church and left on the bench at the Roslyn door marked for "Bazaar."

Mountainside Church Choir

ountainside Church Choir will resume a regular rehearsal schedule on Thursday evening, September 15, at 7:30 pm. This will be a full rehearsal and anyone interested in joining the choir is most welcome to attend. The fall objective is to prepare music for our annual Christmas Celebration of Music concert on Sunday, December 4, at 4 pm, as well as to review choral music for the regular Sunday morning services.

This fall we welcome our new soprano soloist, Katrina Weston, a graduate of Dalhousie University, Halifax, who begins a Master of Music degree at McGill this year. We will bid Mariana Ramos adieu at choir coffee time prior to the service on September 18.

Margaret de Castro Director of Music

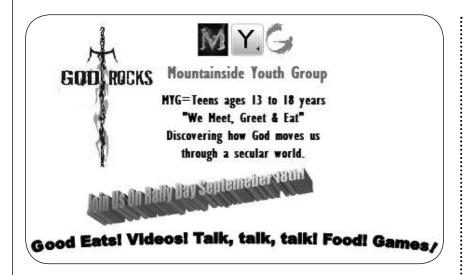
Youth Music

Welcome back to all members and prospects of our Youth Band–TM2. Our core members are stronger than ever, and we are hoping to make some of the best music this season. TM2 will be participating in services at Mountainside and elsewhere as well as performing at our fundraisers and events, so keep an ear open for us and enjoy the music. If you are in high school and you play an instrument, from accordion to zither, we would love to have you on board. TM2 rehearses every Sunday at 1:00 pm and is always open to incorporating new instruments and voices.

Have a wonderful startup to your school year everyone, and we will see you on Sunday, September 11, 2011 for our first planning and music-making session.

"One good thing about music, when it hits you, you feel no pain." — *Bob Marley*

Vanessa Rodrigues Youth Music Director



Outreach ... continued from page 2

to give back. At the Just Solutions Legal and Accompaniment Info Clinic, men, women and children, often in desperate situations, get the help they need to navigate daunting government bureaucracies and find stability and peace. Project Refuge houses and supports refugee claimants, many of whom have fallen through the cracks and wound up homeless. Our Youth/Inter-generational program operates a summer day camp with a focus on the environment and athletics (also welcoming children with special needs), and organizes two choirs: The Every Kid Choir and the Every Senior Choir. The EKC and ESC practice every week and often perform together at community, peace and justice events around the city. Approximately twelve law and social work student interns annually help run these programs, while gaining an invaluable hands-on learning experience."

Liturgy & Learning

The L&L Committee is a small L but vibrant group who meet monthly (usually Wednesday at 5 pm) from September to June to plan and coordinate all aspects of worship and education at Mountainside. The current roster is Lynne Dawson (Chair), Linda Guignon, Judy Johnston, Susan Salvati, Debbies Zemnickis, Maria and Santos Dizon (communion elders). Rev. John Forster and Margaret De Castro are ex-officio but dedicated members of this committee. Dr. Ed Coffey and Anne Hamilton were thanked for their several years of service this Spring. Anne has agreed to continue on as a communion elder and to organize the readers throughout the year (aside from summer). Many thanks to Judy for overseeing the summer services again this year. Anyone wishing to know more about L&L should speak to one of the members.

Lynne Dawson

Experiencing the Sacred ... continued from page 3

This heightened awareness seems to occur most frequently in my garden.

I don't have a particularly beautiful garden, although there are times when it is quite pretty. What I'm really talking about is what can happen to me when I work in the garden. I feel as though time stands still and that I am attentive to what I am doing in a way that I seldom experience when involved in other activities. No matter whether it is weeding, planting or deadheading spent blooms, when I am there, time stands still. The sounds of my neighbour's door closing, her shoes on the stairs, the car in the driveway, the blare of a fire engine rushing past become faint and do not distract me. The work is sometimes relaxing, but on other occasions it is physical and dirty. I might get a blister or scratch my arms on something prickly, sometimes my back goes out. Whatever the nature of the work, the garden is a place where I find that I think only about the task at hand, where, like Mary Oliver, I really pay attention and come into the present moment. Concentrating only on the task at hand, listening only to the songs of the birds at the feeders or in the trees, I find myself in the "Eternal Now."

When I am in my garden, I understand the cycle of creation, birth, growth, decline and death so much more clearly. Before I had a garden, I found that autumn with its shortening days and falling leaves was a depressing time of the year with what I perceived as a certain death spiral into winter. Now I see autumn and winter as necessary components of the way creation works — an interlude when, under the snow, new and abundant life grows, mixed in with the remnants of last year's garden.

In the garden I also have learned that nothing is ever wasted. The dried stems of my columbines rattle. There are tiny black seeds in the pods. I can't put them on the waste pile, so I shake the pods, scattering the black seeds and, for good

measure, I tuck in the stems among the other plants. I look forward to seeing where new columbines will spring up next year. I no sooner place the weeds, stems, leaves and branches on the compost than they begin decomposing and the rich scent of transformation wafts up to my nose.

Coming back to Bliss Carman's poem, I realize that when I am in the garden I experience what he meant when he wrote, "God gives us Heaven here and now." He also noted, "I knew God dwelt within my heart." I'm not sure if in my garden I know that God dwells in my heart, but what I do know for sure is that when I am in my garden, I am close to the heart of God. This awareness comes because I have stepped outside of time and into the present moment.

I love being in that moment of eternal presence, the eternal "I Am." God said, "Tell them I Am has sent you." In that stillness out of time in my garden, I find a message, and it is that the universe is a benevolent place, that as Julian of Norwich said, "All will be well and all manner of things will be well."

I have concluded that my experience of "Heaven here and now" is only one of many ways that we can recognize the sacred in daily life and as Jill Bolte Taylor found, we can choose to tune into it, like you can tune into a radio station.

Jesus said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you," and again, "I am with you always." The Apostle Paul stated, "In Him we live and move and have our being." Their words speak of an intimate relationship with the Divine that is there for the noticing, an existing reality for us to tap into.

Einstein said, "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle. Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away."

What takes your breath away? Where do you experience the sacred in your everyday life?

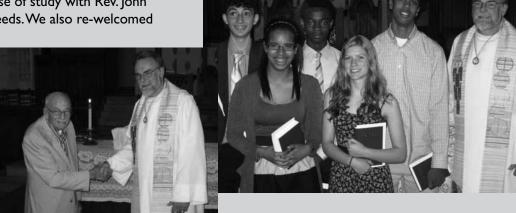
Linda Guignion Mount — July 31, 2011

Pentecost ~ Teen Confirmation ~ Youth Program Wind Up

Our youth program and children's church wound up the season with thanks given to all of the leaders

who participated in their various activities. We celebrated the confirmation of five young people who had completed the course of study with Rev. John and wrote their own creeds. We also re-welcomed

John Lehnert to membership in Mountainside United Church. Congratulations to the confirmation class: Fritz Okrah, Jalen Boyce, Emily Brady, Paul Farquhar, and Sandy Haentjens.



Travels with Judy and Phil

Why would I want to do that?" This question was my response to Phil's suggestion that we spend the month of July driving west across Canada and home through the States. "Such a long way; such a lot of driving," I thought.

An adventure like this one had been on Phil's "bucket list" for some time, and now that we've actually made the

trip, I'm prepared to admit that it was yet another one of his really good ideas.

We set out with two goals. One was to tap into the glory of the landscape; the other was to connect with family and friends whom we seldom see because of the distance between us.

The Trans-Canada Highway hugs the northern shores of Lake Huron and Lake Superior. It's no wonder the Group of Seven found inspiration in the endless expanse of conifers, the rocky shore, the islands dotting the lakes, the vastness of the wilderness to the north. We were blessed on this stretch with cloudless blue skies which highlighted lavish displays of

wild flowers: buttercups, daisies, Indian paint brushes and masses of lupines.

West of Winnipeg, where we enjoyed our first visit with friends, the prairies begin and we found ourselves in Big Sky Country. The landscape stretched out endlessly in a

patchwork of green and gold; it was just like driving through a postcard. Some evidence of the spring flooding remained in the fields.

As we approached Calgary, the countryside became less flat and provided



Pearl & Bob Shank

grazing land for cattle and sheep. We settled in for three nights with a friend who had been Matron-of-honour at our wedding. Marion, like most Calgarians, is a huge fan of the Stampede, so she was our guide at many events including the Parade where we caught a fleeting glimpse of William and Katherine. We had a much clearer view of Grand Marshall Rick Hansen, 750 horses, (at least half of which were Clydesdales and Percherons), numerous marching bands, and a large group of members of the armed forces who were greeted with cheers and a standing ovation. The

Rotary Club members, all resplendent in cowboy gear, all wearing huge smiles and all shouting "Yee-Haw" provided a most delicious pre-parade pancake breakfast.

Our luck with weather ran out when we hit the coast—nothing but clouds, cool temperatures and rain. However, our visits with family and friends provided the bright spots. Our first engagement was lunch with Bob and Pearl Shank at their lovely condo in Burnaby. They are very well, and asked to be remembered to their friends at

Devils Tower National Monument

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The State of the State o

Judy & Phil Johnston

Mountainside. Their son, Jim, was married on August 19th in Canterbury, England.

Over the next week, we reconnected with a nephew in West Vancouver, a dear old friend in Kerrisdale, three friends on Vancouver Island, and yet two more in Surrey before crossing the border into Washington state at the Peace Arch. We chose to follow

secondary roads through North Cascades National Park. From Marblemount to Twisp, we managed to navigate the narrow, twisty, mountainous roads as we marveled at the waterfalls and snow—capped peaks. Beyond Twisp, the highway ambled through green patches which we

discovered were orchards and vineyards.

Once across the border into Montana, we encountered a series of "WOW" moments: more rocky peaks, tree-covered slopes, swift-flowing rivers in which fishermen were angling for trout, trail riders and white water rafters.

We entered Yellowstone National Park by the west gate (1 of 5). A long, lovely drive past many lakes and mini-geysers led us to the Real Thing. We arrived in the parking lot just in time to see Old Faithful do its thing. Impressive! At this site we were 8200 ft of elevation: our breathing patterns confirmed this to be so.

From Cody, Wyoming (Buffalo Bill Territory), we set out through Bighorn National Park. We must have passed 100 cyclists; all of them making the conquest of the switchbacks look easy. On the east side of the Park, the landscape flattened out, and we could see hundreds of square miles of ranchland stretching to the horizon.

The national monument at Mt. Rushmore, SD took our breath away. It is beautifully and practically designed; the sculptures themselves are close at hand and the

Summer Services

Once again we owe our warm thanks to our willing members who prepared and led the Sunday worship services during the month of July when our pastor, Rev. John was away on holiday. They are: Sheila McDonough, Esther Vicente, Miriam Tees, Alan Greig, Susan Salvati, and Linda Mount. Thanks also to Elva Crawford and Betsy Zukow who tended to the secular details each Sunday morning.

Judy Johnston

Dr Balfour Mount ... continued from page 1

begins at the provincial level, in this case at the Quebec Medical Association (QMA) which is the provincial division of the CMA. In Quebec, the nominations are initiated by the QMA Board of Governors consisting of Past Presidents of the QMA, and are approved by the QMA Board of Administration before submission to the national CMA committee on awards, where final selections are made and approved by the CMA Board. In 2010, as a QMA Governor, I was asked to begin working on the documentation and submission of the QMA's nominee, Dr Balfour Mount, for the CMA Medal of Service award.

Several months later, when the first indication of Balfour's award was confirmed, I was overjoyed, as was Balfour, his wife Linda and family. I apologized for the fact that he would have to travel to Newfoundland in August, to receive his award. To the contrary, he said, he was looking forward to visiting Newfoundland where his father, shortly after graduating from medical school and before training as a neurosurgeon, had practised medicine for a time with Dr Wilfred Grenfell, later "Sir Wilfred," at the Grenfell Mission in St Anthony, Newfoundland & Labrador.

Now, all Mountainsiders and other readers of *Rapport* can share Dr Balfour Mount's joy in receiving this well-deserved award and recognition by his profession, as a very special physician in our midst.

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Edwin Coffey August 31, 2011

Travels ... continued from page 6

representations of the four presidents uncanny. Gutsom Borgland was some kind of genius.

After a one-night stay with a goddaughter and her family in Delano, Minnesota, we drove through the corn belt in Iowa and Illinois to Peoria for a visit with Phil's sister and brother-in-law. As we said good-bye, we wished we could don our ruby slippers, click our heels and "be back in Kansas."

Our new car "Topher", carried us safely over 11,738 kms. Through six provinces and ten states in 28 days. We did it, and we are so glad!

Judy Johnston

Meals on Wheels ~ Requiescat ~

During the Service on May 29, 2011 everyone present was asked to come forward if they had ever done some volunteer work for Meals on Wheels. A surprising number of us found ourselves in the front of the church. We were informed that the Mountainside MOW group was going to close at the end of June since there were not enough volunteers doing meal planning, shopping, cooking, driving and delivering meals. We were thanked personally by Betsy Zukow, our coordinator. In order to reach everyone concerned, she followed up with a friendly letter on the same subject. Isn't that enough? Almost.

What may be missing is a philosophical footnote on the transitory nature of many good deeds and the false implication that the end of these efforts indicates failure. During the 45 years of service, members and friends of the Church and the girls from the Sacred Heart School visited persons deemed to need two good meals per week in addition to what the clients could prepare for themselves. I did a rough calculation, assuming 15 clients at each outing, and came to about 59,000 meals. Have we failed because we had to stop in 2011? Our effort was greatly appreciated by many of our clients. Our chore resulted in all kinds of companionship, even friendship. It was a definite success. We are all sojourners on this planet and are privileged if we are able to do something for others...

John Lehnert

RAPPORT

Rapport is published by Mountainside United Church Communications Committee.



Please send articles and announcements to the church office:

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SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER 2011

| | | SEPTEMBER |
|----------|----------------------|---|
| Sept. 11 | 13th after Pentecost | Service at 11:00am, in the Sanctuary |
| | | Children's Church Registration |
| Sept. 14 | | Liturgy & Learning Comm, 5:15 pm |
| Sept. 15 | | Choir practice, 7:30 pm |
| Sept. 18 | 14th after Pentecost | Rapport distribution |
| | | Rally Day / September Birthday Celebration / TM2 |
| Sept. 19 | | Monday Women's Group, 12 noon |
| Sept. 22 | | Session, 7:30pm |
| Sept. 25 | 15th after Pentecost | Monday Women's Group, 12 noon |
| Sept. 26 | | Monday Women's Group, 12 noon |
| | | OCTOBER |
| Oct. 2 | 16th after Pentecost | World Wide Communion / Stewardship Sunday |
| Oct. 3 | | Monday Women's Group, 12 noon |
| Oct. 6 | | Church Picnic & June Birthday Celebration |
| Oct. 9 | 17th after Pentecost | Thanksgiving Sunday |
| Oct. 10 | Thanksgiving Monday | church building closed |
| Oct. 13 | | Session Executive Meeting, 5:30 pm |
| Oct. 16 | 18th after Pentecost | October Birthday Celebration |
| Oct. 17 | | Monday Women's Group, 12 noon |
| Oct. 20 | | Choir practice, 7:30pm |
| Oct. 23 | 19th after Pentecost | Outreach Sunday |
| | | guest speaker: Paula Kline, Montreal City Mission |
| | | Mountainside serves supper at the Old Brewery Mission |
| Oct. 24 | | Monday Women's Group, 12 noon |
| Oct. 30 | 20th after Pentecost | All Saints Sunday / Memorial Sunday |
| Oct. 31 | | Monday Women's Group, 12 noon |
| | | NOVEMBER |
| Nov. 3 | | Choir practice, 7:30 pm |
| Nov. 6 | 21st after Pentecost | Remembrance Sunday |
| Nov. 7 | | Monday Women's Group, 12 noon |
| Nov. 10 | | Session Executive Meeting, 5:30 pm |
| Nov. 12 | | Christmas Shopping Arcade, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm |