



# The GrapeVine

**Advent & Christmas 2014**

## Message from Our NEW Chair of Council

While visiting the beautiful country of Scotland, home of my ancestors, I had the opportunity to visit Iona. Iona is a small island in the Inner Hebrides on the western coast of Scotland. It was a centre of Gaelic monasticism for four centuries and is today renowned for its tranquility and natural beauty. I enjoy reading material published by the Iona Community as they work for peace and social justice, the rebuilding of community and the renewal of worship. I would like to share some ideas from one of their articles called "Making the Most of Advent" in the hope that you might find some of it useful in your own Christmas celebrations.

- Celebrate St. Nicholas' Day (December 6<sup>th</sup>). St. Nicholas was a bishop in Turkey in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. He is the patron saint of children. He anonymously gave bags of gold to the poor. In many homes there is a tradition to have St. Nicholas mysteriously deliver a bag of golden chocolate coins to each child on the night of December 5<sup>th</sup>. If you don't have children in your home, treat yourself to a bag of golden chocolate coins anyway. Remember the story of St. Nicholas and consider who in your community you could reach out to in unexpected, but much needed ways.
- If you have friends or family who are far away this Christmas consider sending them a tea bag or a packet of hot

chocolate in their Christmas card. Ask them to take time out on Christmas day to make a cup of tea with the promise that at the same time you will do the same. You may not be able to be together but you can share a cup of tea together while connecting by phone or email.

- Almost all of us miss someone at Christmas. Accept the losses or the distances between you. Light a candle for those you miss, or drink a toast. Sit with your memories and welcome them as a part of the Christmas experience.
- Christmas comes with a lot of expectations about happy families and coziness. Sometimes, real Christmases just don't meet the expectations of popular culture. Be as gentle with yourself as it is possible to be, and be realistic about what you can and can't expect to get out of Christmas.
- Join us for the Quiet Christmas Service on Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. as Rev. Neil, Rob, and the Sanctuary Choir share with us, a very quiet, devotional and prayerful service of reflection and Worship during this Very Holy, but for some, difficult season of the year. Light refreshments follow in Gardiner Hall, and are being provided by our Congregational Care Committee.

On behalf of Erindale Church Council and myself, have a Blessed Advent Season as we await the birth of the Christ Child.

*Margaret McCrae*

## Five Oaks Women's Retreat

Seven women from Erindale attended the Fall Retreat, sponsored by Hamilton Conference UCW, at Five Oaks Centre on October 24/25. The 24 hours of the retreat were divided into four sessions, interspersed with worship, singing, meals, book review, and a short movie.

The theme was 'Love in Action' and Rev. Dr. Diane Walker was the facilitator for the sessions. She used **'12 keys for Effective Living'** by Dr. Kennon Callahan as her inspiration.

Each session covered several of the twelve topics: - Have a Mission, Show Compassion, Nourish Hope, Build Community, Exercise Leadership, Live Simply, Embrace Joy, Access Wisdom, Give and Receive Encouragement, Develop Creativity, Seek Wellness, Be Generous - and ended with Rev. Walker posing some questions for us to ponder and discuss. These sessions were not only thought provoking but also entertaining as Rev. Walker drew on many instances in her ministry and family life to illustrate points.

Mealtimes provided time for us to enjoy each other's company, meet up with old friends, and make new acquaintances from across the Hamilton Conference area which stretches from the Bruce Peninsula to Niagara and the Lake Erie shore.

Our spiritual needs were satisfied with Vespers and Morning Watch worship times led by members of Conference UCW Executive, and closing Communion conducted by Rev. Dr. Walker.

All seven of us enjoyed our time at Five Oaks and look forward to next year's Retreat. Perhaps some other women from the congregation will join us.

*Ann Edge*

## 2014 Christmas Basket Program

"The Christmas Basket program is back, but with a few tweaks this year..... most importantly, we'll be supporting families in our community not only through The Open Door, but also through the Deacon's Cupboard. This is a very exciting way to broaden our reach in the community.

The Open Door program will operate slightly differently this year. Due to an increasing focus on privacy concerns, baskets will be delivered to the Open Door for distribution instead of directly to the families. We have a number of anonymous family profiles with family composition, number and ages of children, etc. available for sponsorship. While this won't provide the intimate family connection that you have received in the past from delivery the basket directly, the program is no less impactful for the families who receive the baskets, so do not let this change in process impact your consideration of the program this year. The other avenue we're pursuing with the Open Door this year is to sponsor individuals to attend their Christmas dinner - the cost is \$10/person and the event is a wonderful, festive dinner complete with gifts for all attendees, followed by an impromptu Nativity play - a great way to spread the gift of Christmas with the less fortunate in our community. Tax receipts will be available for all donations of \$10 or more.

We will have family profiles from the Deacon's Cupboard and this part of the program will operate as in years past with the Erindale sponsoring a family and delivering the gift basket directly to the receiving family. As we do every year, we would ask that you seriously consider supporting a less fortunate family in our community this year through our Christmas Basket

*Nicole Hansen*

# FROSTY FESTIVE FARE



## BAKE SALE



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>

*In Gardner Hall after worship*

*\*\*\*Bring your Friends\*\*\**

*Sale of baked items, pickles, jams, and jellies,  
including make up a box of your own choice of squares &  
cookies.*

*Christmas White Elephant Table*

*Do you bake any special Christmas items?  
The UCW would be grateful to have donations of the above  
items, incl. Christmas items only for the White Elephant  
Table from the Congregation.*

*Please wrap, label and price your goodies and bring them  
to the kitchen on Saturday, Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>, between 1 and 5 pm  
A price list guide is available to take home - look for the  
Christmas box on the kitchen counter.*

*Please specify if your item contains nuts.  
Priced items may also be brought early on the Sunday.*

*For further information, you may contact one of the following:*

*Joyce Murdoch - 905 849 0057*

*Clarine Dillon - 905 819 8127*

*Eleanor McIntosh - 905 820 6179*

## 2014 Skating Party

This year the Skating Party is planned for Sunday December 14 with skating at Mississauga Celebration Square ice rink from 2:00 – 3:00 pm, Hot Chocolate, treats and Gingerbread decorating for children (mostly) back at Gardner Hall from 3:30 – 5:00pm. Bring your children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and your Holiday spirit.

Last year we started this new event at Erindale. It included about an hour of skating at Mississauga Celebration Square, across from Square One, followed by an hour of warming up with a cup of hot chocolate and Christmas treats back at Gardner Hall.

The event was originally planned for Saturday evening, but we were snowed out and rescheduled to Sunday afternoon. A few families met at the Celebration Square ice rink and donned their skates, others watched on the side lines. We had about 9 skaters and 6 spectators. A small group of us returned to the church for some festive hot chocolate, coffee and treats, complete with background music. Everyone who attended had a great time. Many members of the congregation helped to decorate a Gingerbread model of the church after the service.

Don't have Skates? Skate rentals services are available at the ice rink at a cost of \$10/adult and \$5/child (includes helmet).

Don't Skate? Come out to the rink and watch the skaters, or just come later for the hot chocolate.

Don't have a child to bring? Come out and enjoy fellowship with your friends and maybe

make some new ones.

Please contact Nicole Hansen at [nicolelduncan@hotmail.com](mailto:nicolelduncan@hotmail.com) for more information.

## Want to learn more about Judaism?

Solel Synagogue offers a "Doing Jewish" course. This is an introductory course offered by Solel's Education Director, Arlene Botnick. It is a great way to learn about Judaism and make new friends. The course runs for 5 weeks starting January 8, 2015. You can choose to go any or all of the sessions.. The topics are below, but the focus this year will be a Daily living a Jewish life.

Topics:

1. Biblical History - January 8
2. Role of Women - January 15
3. Jewish Home - January 22
4. Service Literacy - January 29
5. Jewish Values - February 6

Please pre-register with the Solel Office at 905-820-5915. Cost is \$10/session donation to Solel.

I will be trying to maintain good contact with Solel congregation throughout the year, with an effort to show our support in their current time of transition since the retirement of Rabbi Lawrence Englander.

*Nicole Hansen*



## **The Christmas Season at Erindale United Church**

### ***ChristmasFest--our version of a Pageant***

Some years ago, Church families found that getting-out to Pageant practices generated a feeling of overload in a busy season, and *ChristmasFest* was created.

On the **last Sunday before Christmas (Dec. 21, this year)** we gather in the Church Hall after worship. There is lunch, our Band provides seasonal music, and the children present Christmas skits and readings.

**If your child would like to be part of a Christmas event this year**, we welcome you to bring him or her out to join in at our Sunday School for the Sundays beginning **Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>** during our regular Worship service at **10:30 am**. There is a place for all ages.

Please contact **Terry @ 416-505-2603** for more info.

*We would be glad to have you as part of the event or attend ChristmasFest on the 21st.*

### ***Helping Others in the Season--'Gifts with Vision'***

'Gifts with Vision' offers **22 gift options** ranging from \$10 to provide fruit and vegetables for one family for one week at the House of Lazarus social outreach ministry in rural areas south of Ottawa, to \$100 to support a physically or intellectually challenged youth at Chipembi Farm College in Zambia.

Great teacher-gifts, gift exchange options, or just something for someone who doesn't need a ceramic pelican from the mall.

Catalogues are on a table in the Lobby of the church.

### ***Skating Party***

Dec 14, 2014 - Skating at Mississauga Celebration Square (across from Square One) from 2-3pm; Hot Chocolate, Christmas Treats and Gingerbread decorating for children (mostly) at Erindale UC from 3:30 – 5pm.

### ***Christmas Eve Services, Dec. 24th***

#### **7:30 p.m. Family Service**

A one-hour service with drama, carols and candles, aimed at families with children, and getting you home in time for taking care of business before bedtime--as if anyone is going to sleep!

#### **10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Communion**

Carols, candles and Holy Communion, in the quietness of late Christmas Eve. In our church's tradition, all who attend are welcome to share in the Lord's Supper.

## Worship Committee

### *Celebrating Advent at Home*

*by Jackie Harper*

“Advent” literally means “coming.” Beginning four Sundays before Christmas, the season of Advent moves us toward Bethlehem as we anticipate the coming of Jesus. We remember the prophets who pointed the way. We journey along with Mary and Joseph, shepherds and sheep, angels and wise ones hoping to find the baby who is the sign of God with us.

- Mary learns about the birth of her son. (Luke 1:26–38)
- Mary visits with her cousin Elizabeth. (Luke 1:5–25, 39–80)
- Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem. (Luke 2:1–7)

Where are you in the story, or what part is about you? What is your favourite part of this season’s celebrations? What you would bring to the baby Jesus?

The Advent season, with its traditions and rituals, gives us the opportunity to enrich our family life and our family’s spiritual life. Here are some ideas your family or congregation may want to incorporate into your Advent celebration.

### **Make an Advent Wreath**

The Advent wreath is a circle, which symbolizes the eternal because a circle has no ending and no beginning. It is made of evergreens, a symbol of eternal life. The candles around the wreath represent Jesus, the Light of the World.

Your family can use the litanies in [Advent Candle Litanies](http://www.united-church.ca/files/planning/seasons/advent_candle.rtf) ([www.united-church.ca/files/planning/seasons/advent\\_candle.rtf](http://www.united-church.ca/files/planning/seasons/advent_candle.rtf)) as you light the candles on your wreath each week of Advent.

### **Sing Carols**

St. Augustine said, “When we sing, we pray twice.” Advent is a season of song. Use family mealtimes to listen to or sing Christmas carols.

### **Pick-a-Card Prayer Time**

One of my favourite Christmas traditions is to put all the Christmas cards we receive into a basket on the dining-room table after we’ve read them.

After Christmas, when life is less rushed, we pull one card each day and take the time to truly cherish it and the message from its sender. Then we say a prayer of thanks for the person or family who sent the card. It is a way to truly cherish the gift of being remembered.

### **Christmas Stories**

Each year, give your family a Christmas storybook to be read together on Christmas Day. If you are able, you might also consider giving a copy of the book to your church’s library so others might enjoy the book. Here are some books to consider:

- *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* by Barbara Robinson (HarperCollins, 1988)
- *The Gift of the Magi* by O. Henry (various editions and publishers)
- *Jacob’s Gift* by Max Locado (Thomas Nelson, 1998)
- *The Last Straw* by Frederick H. Thury (Zero to Ten Children’s Books, 2004)
- *A Northern Nativity* by William Kurelek (Tundra, 1976)



- *Room for a Little One: A Christmas Tale* by Martin Waddell (Orchard, 2005)
- *Silent Night: The Song from Heaven* by Linda Granfield (Tundra, 2000)
- *They Followed a Bright Star* by Joan Alavreda (Putnam, 2002)
- *Three Wise Women* by Mary Hoffman (Frances Lincoln, 2002)

## Gift Giving

In some families each person receives three gifts, a reminder of the three gifts the wise ones brought to Jesus. Consider giving three gifts to an agency in your community that helps people in need.

## Rethinking Gifting

As a family, rethink gifting. Instead of asking, “What do you want for Christmas?” ask, “What do you want to give for Christmas?”

Or, consider “When I get something, I give something.” Every time you receive a gift or buy something, you give something you already own away.

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## Our Annual “ChristmasFest” ChristmasFest Celebration

Please join the Sunday School and Psalm 98 after Sunday Worship on **December 21<sup>st</sup>** Service in Gardner Hall. A light lunch will be served and following will be our annual ChristmasFest performance. This year a Christmas pageant is planned along with some good old fashioned carol singing. Everyone is welcome to the festivities.

## Fellowship of the Least Coin

On behalf of the Women’s Inter-Church Council of Canada (WICC) which oversees the collection of FLC monies in Canada, Erindale United Church Women thank everyone who donated to the Ingathering of the Fellowship of the Least Coin in October. The total realized was \$750.25.

Collection cans are available in the Narthex along with prayer cards for daily home use. Please take a can home and return it, or just the amount collected, next October on Ingathering Sunday.

The money donated in Canada by many different denominations is forwarded to the International FLC Committee which meets annually to consider requests for funds from women’s projects around the world. WICC sends a representative to this meeting.



Date	Season	Lectionary Reading	Sunday Service Reading	Special Events
Nov 23	24 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost	Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 Psalm 100 Ephesians 1:15-23 Matthew 25:31-46	Psalm 100 Matthew 25: 31-46	Stewardship
Nov 30	- 10: 30 a.m. Advent I - Evening Service With Carols	Isaiah 64:1-9 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 Mark 13:24-37	Isaiah 64:1-9 Mark 13: 24-37	Communion
Dec 7	Advent II	Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2,8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8	Isaiah 40:1-11 Mark 1:1-8	Baptism
Dec 14	Advent III	Isaiah 61:1-4 Psalm 126 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 John 1:6-8, 19-28	Isaiah 61:1-11 John 1:6-28	
Dec 21	Advent IV	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Psalm 89 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38	Luke 1:26-38	Christmas Fest
Dec 24	Christmas Eve			7:30pm – Chancel Players 10:00pm – Communion
Dec 28	First Sunday after Christmas	Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Psalm 148 Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:22-40	Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Luke 2:22-40	
Jan 4	Epiphany	Jeremiah 31:7-14 Psalm 147:12-20 Ephesians 1:3-14 John 1:10-18	Matthew 2:1-12	Lessons and Carols Service including guest musicians to celebrate the Epiphany and the 12 Days of Christmas.
Jan 11	First Sunday after Epiphany	Genesis 1:1-5 Psalm 29 Acts 19:1-7 Mark 1:4-11	Psalm 29 Mark 1:4-11	
Jan 18	Second Sunday after Epiphany	1 Samuel 3:1-10 Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 John 1:43-51	Psalm 139 John 1:43-51	

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