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Other Mothers to Remember and Pray for on Mother's Day

Not often is there an occasion the week before Mother's Day to feature **two of the most anxious mothers on the planet along with one of the happiest**, but here they are. They all have a connection through sponsorship with the Oxford United Refugee Sponsorship Committee (OURS).



Manal, husband Mohamad Mira and family left Syria and are now **settled happily in Ingersoll.**



Freweini, along with her two daughters and a son, fled Eritrea and have been in **Khartoum, Sudan as refugees since 2016.** Funding is in place.



Sara, along with her daughter and two sons **escaped Eritrea and are in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as of February of this year.** Funding is partially in place. Over \$12,000 has been raised, with **\$8,800 to be raised.**
GW

Soon, OURS Committee Members are going to be asking if they may come to your church, to tell, briefly, more of their stories.

You may share financially in this important outreach ministry by using your offering envelope, making a cheque out to "St. David's United Church" with "Refugee Sponsorship Fund" in the memo space.

We are asking your treasurer to send the cheques to St. David's United, 190 Springbank Ave N, Woodstock, ON N4S 7R1.

Receipts will be issued from St. David's at the end of the year.

OURS ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, June 2nd at 1:30 pm

St. David's United, Woodstock.

NEXT WEDNESDAY

Mark and Lydia present Nakba Day (in recognition of the 'catastrophe' against the Palestinian people)



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ANNUAL MEETING of new Antler River Watershed Regional Council, May 24-26

This is an opportunity to attend the **celebration of Rev. Karlene Brown-Palmer as she becomes a Minister of the United Church of Canada** at the AGM on **Saturday, May 25**. Karlene has worked hard to complete the studies, assignments and exams to achieve this designation. Many want to celebrate the occasion with her, so **St Paul's UC Tillsonburg has organized a bus to Port Elgin**. The bus is large, air conditioned and has a washroom. Cost for the day is \$80.00 (includes 2 meals) with cheques made out to St. Paul's AOTS .

Leave Tillsonburg at 10:30 am and return about 10:00pm.

URGENT REQUEST: Call Maurice at 519 688 7724 by May 12, if you are interested.

WE NEED TO FILL THE BUS

ReUseaPaloozaha!

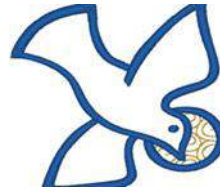
THIS SATURDAY, May 11

Woodstock Agricultural Fairgrounds

Open 8:30 am to 2:00 pm.

great free swap event

Help STOP WASTE and keep material out of our LANDFILL.



FOOD FOR THE SOUL

*Praying through the words
of an old Psalm...*

Lord, you are our shepherd; there is nothing more we need.

Through the calm of quiet waters, green pastures you lead us, though we may see you not, providing unexpected resource and regular renewal of our spirits.

There is nowhere we can go that takes us away from your caring presence.

Even in darkest places, Lord, where our best strength is fragile, whatever else we fear there, we need fear no evil; for you are with us, we are not alone. You hold up our heads whatever comes. You set your strength before us as a table spread in the midst of worst enemies.

You give us all we need. Your goodness and your mercy follow after us down all our winding days. Wherever we go, we are in your house.

Lord, you who are our shepherd, shepherd us now. Help us to lean our little spirits back into the sureness of your surrounding love.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen

Contributed from Joyce Kelly

**Rev. Mark Marshall & Lydia Marshall
Available for Sharing**

**"Through the Keyhole:
The Holy Land Today"**

contact

**revmarkconnexions@gmail.com or
(519) 533-8989.**

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Programs for Families

St Paul's UC, Tillsonburg



May 18 – Messy Church from 10-12 noon. Theme May Flowers

Hot lunch provided no charge. Crafts, games, music and fun! All are welcome.

Come out and see what the program is about! Children accompanied by adults welcome.

Norwich UC

Messy Church Tuesday, June 4th

Doors open by 4:30 pm, supper @ 6:00 pm,

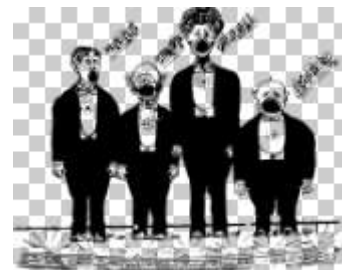
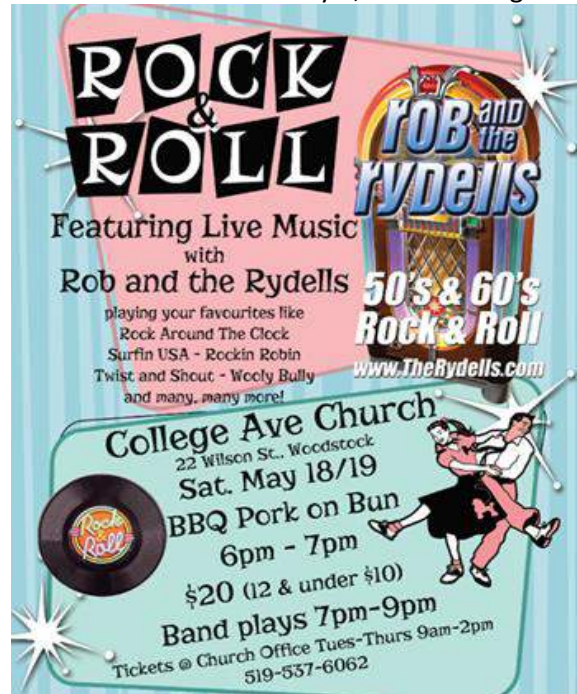
Messy Church is first Tuesday of every month.

Summer Camp brochures and registration forms available

www.norwichunitedchurch.ca



Norwich UC Mission Outreach and Ministry Team is hosting a "Mission and Service Pizza Luncheon" on Sunday, May 26th after service. Pizza is supplied by local Godfather's Pizza. \$2 per slice and a donation to the dessert table is appreciated.



St Paul's UC, Tillsonburg

The Gentlemen of Harmony

will perform on

Sunday, May 26th

at 2:30 p.m.

Tickets \$25

available at the church office

519-688-0011

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A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO CHURCH

True stories from our readers...

In the mid 1960's when **female clergy were very new and very rare**, my newly ordained Husband was placed **500 miles North of Edmonton**. North even from our new charge was an Anglican charge and as we were arriving in our new home, **an Anglican deaconess was being considered** for hers. She was the **first female Church Leader** to be placed there. She was an outdoors kind of woman who had a large dog and a bluff, hearty, no nonsense manner. After she had visited each of the points on the circuit, talked to all the lay leaders and checked out the Church house, **the people agreed to accept her if she agreed to come.**



She thought about it and then told them: **"I'd love to come but not until you install a door on the outhouse."** A door on the outhouse? No other clergy had ever asked for such a luxury. Suddenly the people of the congregations were divided into **two opposing camps: men vs. women.** The men decided she was far too opinionated to suit them. The women were 100% in favor of an outhouse door. Families split over the issue.

Tempers flared. **She remained adamant: no door, no minister.** Eventually, the women prevailed. A door was installed, and the first woman leader was appointed. But, ever since, although **she served there faithfully and well for years**, she has been remembered as **'The minister who wanted a door on the outhouse.'**

Olga McKellar

UCC Retired Ministers & Spouses & Pensioner's Lunch Elmhurst Inn, Ingersoll May 7 2019



<https://1drv.ms/w/s!AiDNGgSFiqOAIAgk9MFn3BIKo64Z>



GRANDMOTHERS TEA Wednesday May 29, 2019

Noon – 2:00 pm

**St. James UC,
Cambridge**

Potluck luncheon

*Bring your favourite dish or dessert
and share in the fun and laughter.*

<http://www.nationsuniting.com/>

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CAMP TANNER

Camp Registration now open

Register online

<http://www.camptanner.ca/>

BOSTON PIZZA FUNDRAISER

For CAMP TANNER

SUNDAY, June 9th

Woodstock Boston Pizza from 5-7pm

All you can eat PIZZA, PASTA & SALAD. (drinks not included).

Cost \$20.00 per person.

Tickets available from Board members or call Sheri at 519 539 6877 or Sandra 519 475 4833.

NOTE: All year long, Camp Tanner collects receipts from Woodstock Boston Pizza. Camp Tanner gets back a percentage from each receipt in cash.

Greetings to Oxford County United Church Friends

Due to the great response to our 2018 "Food Appeal", Camp Tanner is seeking your support for donations of food for camp.

Thank you for your support

Sheila Greason.

FOOD DONATIONS for CAMP

Salsa (mild)7 jars
Pop (variety incl. iced tea 25 cases of 24 cans)
All Flavours Chips including Nachos ...30 bags
Freezies6-8 boxes
Chocolate Chips.....4-6 large bags
Popcorn Seasoning 12 shakers
Graham Crackers 12 boxes
Marshmallows12 large bags
.....6 bags of minis
Canned Apple Juice 60 cans
Large Muffin Liners 400
Ranch Dressing (475 ml)..... 6 bottles
Cheese Bars (450 grams - Old)..... 40
Cheese Slices (pkg of 48)8 pkg.

FOOD DONATIONS to be dropped off at CAMP TANNER:

July 2 (5-7 p.m.)
July 3 (6-8 p.m.)
July 4 (all day)
July 5 (all day)
July 6 (all day)

Participating congregations are requested to advise Sandra Schurman (519-475-4833)

sandraschurman@execulink.com by May 31st. Leftover food will be donated to the Woodstock Food Bank.

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Five Oaks

ANNUAL MEETING, May 5, 2019

It was a marvelous celebration as members gathered in this sacred place for the 2018 AGM. An encouraging contrast to the 2016 AGM when the Board had recommended closure. **The theme "Coming Together" reminded members of the importance of gathering and participating even though it is risky amidst the increasing violence and divisiveness in our world today.**



We take responsibility for our land and for each other as we live out the new vision for Five Oaks.

These were the opening words of retiring Board Chair, Yvonne Stewart. Under her wise and visionary guidance, the Board and the Staff, headed by Michael Shewburg, with a lot of help from the volunteers have secured a confident future for Five Oaks. Rentals and programs have grown from \$250k in 2017 to a projection of \$450k this year. \$135k was spent on upgrades in 2018, without the need to borrow funds. The Board of 10 directors includes representatives from our Vision Partners - Six Nations, Muslims.

This is exciting good news! MM

Volunteers are always valued on the Working Teams of Human Resources, Communications and Marketing. Check the new website for more information:

<http://fiveoaks.on.ca/>

Gaza Calls - Canada Answers



For a year now, people in Gaza have held weekly demonstrations at the border with Israel, protesting the blockade and siege of Gaza.

According to the United Nations, at least 189 Gazans and 1 Israeli soldier have been killed, and thousands of Gazans injured.

Saturday June 8 at noon EDT, people in Gaza will speak to Canadians via nation-wide video hook-up.

An opportunity for you to hear from Gaza and join in a conversation with people in Gaza. Join us in a nation-wide video call with Gaza.

Where: Lambeth United Church, 4268 Colonel Talbot Road.

When: Noon EDT, Saturday June 8.

Free admission.

Organized by the United Church of Canada and their partner the United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel.



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MOVING FORWARD

Reflections on St David's UC 60th Anniversary

I started high school when St David's Church gathered at Hillcrest school. Three years later, they built the physical church. **Bill Butt was a kid in public school.**

60 years later, Bill, along with his wife, Karen (pictured here) recounted their experience of Church across the many places (Africa, Japan, Europe) they have been **called to serve as Overseas Ministry Personnel.** Without question, they experienced **church as accepting community which cares for each other.** Bill reminded us of the encouraging words of Rev Ken Oates, of Chalmers United, at the sod turning ceremony: **'the four marks of a church are Worship, Word, Witness and Work'**. 60 years later, these are still the marks of church.

Standing out for me was the wee church in Romania on the side of a cliff which was **only accessible by rope** - but then, I thought, being physically accessible doesn't guarantee spiritually accessible or sensing the sacred. St David's is accessible and seeks to welcome diversity in pursuit of unity. It was touching as Judy Crane, former Secretary of Oxford Presbytery, read

the Word from her motorized wheel chair. It was inspiring to sing the new words of Rev Jane Van Patter 'Sing of Faith and Family'. It was challenging to view the new Creation Banners by Kathy McDermott on the west wall. It is important to celebrate Church Anniversaries.

For the future I wondered about how to celebrate the faithful members and stories of those churches which close. Their witness continues to surround us.

MM



Karen and Bill Butt are willing to speak at your church or events. Contact them
[**kbbutt@gmail.com**](mailto:kbbutt@gmail.com)

**OXFORD PRESBYTERY
FACEBOOK PAGE**

[**https://www.facebook.com/Oxford-Presbytery-690395957746547/**](https://www.facebook.com/Oxford-Presbytery-690395957746547/)

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Links for Prayer cycles:

Communities of faith are encouraged to pray for each other and for our mission in the world.

United Church of Canada – Antler River Watershed.

<https://www.prayercycles.ca/antler-river-watershed26c697c9>

Former Oxford Presbytery – updated April 8, 2019

<https://1drv.ms/w/s!AiDNGgSFiqOAK!TfUQnhF5NuK5qE>

Congregations within Oxford County Searching for new Ministerial Leadership.

We hold in prayer the following congregations:

Avondale UC (Tillsonburg), Mt Elgin UC, Newark UC, Otterville UC, Hickson UC, Knox UC Embro, Trinity UC Ingersoll and Hebron UC (as of July 1)

Prior Issues of CONNECTIONS:

January, February, March, April 2019:

<https://1drv.ms/f/s!AiDNGgSFiqOAKHtXnTBBOM-xnJPO>



A weekend of faith, justice and celebration of the arts.

Enjoy superb speakers, incredible artists and fantastically talented musicians!

WHEN? JULY 26-28, 2019

**WHERE? FIVE OAKS – Paris, ON
REGISTER, DONATE and SEE OUR
LINE-UP**

skylightfestival.ca

This year a headline performance by Juno Award-winning rapper and host of Hip-Hop Evolution, Shad.

NOTE: Congregations are welcome to join worship at 9:30am at no cost.

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PUBLICATION DATE: 2nd Wednesday

**SUBMISSION DATE:
noon of the prior Monday**

email: oxfconnections@gmail.com

Help us stay connected with each other. You may share widely. Email the editors to share stories of your congregation or important links.

To remove your name from this mailing list, please email oxfconnections@gmail.com

Feedback welcome!