

Linnea Good is coming!

Linnea Good is singer-songwriter and leader in the fields of music in worship, and adults and children worshipping together.

Many across Canada have enjoyed her performances for years. From her interpretation of old favorites to her expression of contemporary, thoughtful spirituality, she feeds our souls! We are so blessed to have her.



Did you know that Good has recorded 9 CDs and is currently working on her 10th! Five of her hymns are included in our "Voices United" hymn book and 10 are in the supplement "More Voices". Her album, "Swimmin' Like a Bird" was thrice nominated for major Canadian awards as Outstanding Children's Album of the year.

Have you ever wondered where she gets her inspiration? One of the places is touring to places from Victoria to Woodstock! Touring is hard work but enriching says Good. "... I don't know how I can write music without venturing out and learning what life is like outside my front door. The evening concert will include David Jonnson on the drums! A reception will follow with homemade goodies plus an opportunity to buy her CDs.

In the afternoon, Good is offering a workshop on the "the Hospitality of Worship - the energy flow of worship. Good suggests that worship mirrors the flow of any good visit with a friend. There is a beginning full of energy, a middle in which we are able to be deep and vulnerable and receptive and

an ending in which we re-emerge from the intimacy and prepare to go back into the world. She will help us to use this approach to assess the energy flow in worship and then to see how music (and also word, prayer, silence and other elements) can be a helpful tool.

Thumbs up to the shared ministry of Central/Chalmers United Church for hosting a day at Central Church with Linnea Good on Wednesday, May 28. Concert is at 7:30 pm and the afternoon workshop on "Hospitality of Worship" is at 1:30... see ad for details (or call 519-539-1161 or 519-537-2373).

Sponsored by the Shared Ministry of Central and Chalmers United Church

Linnea Good & Good Company Central United Church

Corner of Riddell and Adelaide, Woodstock

All-ages Concert Wednesday, May 28, 2008 at 7:30 pm

Tickets: \$12/adults, \$8 children 6 & up,
family \$25

Afternoon Workshop: 'The Hospitality of Worship'

1:30 to 4:00 pm, cost \$10

Combined tickets for workshop and concert:
\$20

All tickets available by phone 519-537-2373
or 519-539-1161

Tickets also available at the door
Email: centralunited@execulink.com

Pray for KAIROS, a United Church Partner.
The **M & S Fund** supports the work of
Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives.

Pray for the young mothers of the Massey
Centre for Women in Toronto, an outreach
ministry supported by the **M & S Fund**.

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WHAT IS A PRESBYTER?

“So you have been selected by your congregation to be their representative at the Presbytery have you? Well don't worry its not a big deal. You only need to attend one meeting a month. It means only ten meetings per year, because the summer months are free. The Presbytery doesn't meet in the summer. Everyone is on holidays except God. The meetings begin at 6 pm with supper to boot, not bad eh? You receive lots of information and a ream of paper which you don't need to worry about anyway. Your Minister also has all that data and the congregation will hear about it on Sunday morning during the Worship Service. So its no big job and will not take much of your time. The reason that we need a representative is so a name will appear on their books. Maybe they will stop bothering us if we give them a name. Oh by the way, you don't need to fret about going to the annual Meeting of Conference in May each year, they always have people who can go in your place. This job is a push over, you can do it.”

Is this the line you heard when you were asked to be “The Presbytery Rep.” for your congregation? There is certainly more to being a Presbytery Rep. than this statement. A Presbyter has the opportunity to be a part of the court of the Church which is nearest to the Pastoral Charge and Congregation. You are part of the court that gives you access to the next court, Conference and further to General Council, which is the higher court of the United Church of Canada. You are par

implements decisions of the higher courts. You are the intrinsic part of the Presbytery in which every Pastoral Charge has representation. You have certain responsibilities. You are required to attend all meetings of Presbytery and the Conference. You are required to attend all covenanting services of new Ministers coming into the Presbytery. These services are considered Presbytery meetings. You have the responsibility to read all the minutes and be aware of the next meeting's agenda, and be familiar with the issues to be discussed. It is also your job to report back to your congregation the concerns and decisions of Presbytery. This also works in the reverse. You must let Presbytery know the concerns of your congregation.

By taking advantage of these opportunities and accepting these responsibilities you will create a sense of belonging between your congregation, Presbytery, Conference and General Council.

Don't be fooled into thinking that this job is no big deal. It is a very important part of this United Church of ours. Thanks be to God.

Oi Sackrider

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The Greening of our Faith, May 9-11, Fri. 7pm — Sun. after lunch. Join keynote speaker **Rosemary Radford Ruether** & leaders **Elizabeth May, Tony Maas, Stephen Dixon & First Nations elders** for a discussion of the

locally & globally. Explore what faithful & practical responses we can embrace and implement in our lives & communities.

Delighting in God: Discerning what Matters Most in our Faith, June 13-15, Fri. 7pm — Sun. after lunch. A retreat with **Nancy Cocks** to reflect on God's invitation to take delight in times of rest & renewal.

Labyrinth Programs, June 20-24, various times. Choose from an overnight retreat, evening walk and facilitator's training with the Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress, Episcopal priest, spiritual director, therapist, and author.

Family Camp, July 27-Aug. 1, Sun. 5:30 pm — Fri. after lunch. Join Day Camp staff for worships, swimming, canoe trip, hikes, games, crafts, singing, campfires, and more! Kristin Philipson will help families develop strategies for practicing faith at home.

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Last month Presbytery voted to donate \$30,000.00 to Five Oaks, to be used to refurbish 'The Chalet'. It will be made into a stand alone area for 20 people. There will be sleeping accommodation, a kitchen and meeting rooms.

In return Oxford Presbytery can use that facility at half the going rate until we have used up the \$30,000.00.

It can be used for Youth events, such as retreats, confirmation classes or any other events they would want. Pastoral charges could use it for time away to discern where they are going and what God is calling them to do. With kitchen facilities a group can

The Norwich United Church Summer Program is hosting a Scott Woods concert on April 20th at 2:30 p.m. Scott is the Canadian Fiddle Champion and Entertainer of the Year. It is a 2 hour show of fancy fiddling, gospel and country music. Tickets are \$15.00 for adults, \$5.00 for under 12, and under 5 is free. For tickets call Nancy 519-879-6764 or the church office 519-863-3637.

*Deb Durham, Secretary*

*Norwich United Church 519-863-3637*

### **The Oxford Presbyterial Spring Event**

was held at the Hickson United Church, Monday evening. We were welcomed by Pastor Betty Jean Page, minister at Hickson and Ruth Ross, president of their UCW. The Hickson Ladies had lots of very interesting and delicious desserts for everyone to enjoy, along with coffee or tea.

Following lunch we made our way upstairs to the sanctuary where Ruth Ross lead the singing, accompanied by Ruth Anne McKay on the piano. UCW members are great and enthusiastic singers and very much enjoyed singing time.

President Jean Manning called the meeting to order with the bell from Korea and the lighting of the Christ candle. Jean read a number of short poems about spring. The UCW Purpose was repeated.

Secretary Ellen Town read the minutes of the Fall Board which were approved. Louise Baird gave the treasurer's report. Program material is available at St David's in Woodstock, five days a week between 9 am and 4 pm. A complete list of the topics that are available was handed out. There are 91 topics in the Red Binder and 44 topics in the Wine binder.

Margot Leachman, Doreen Smith and Ilene Chesterman put together material for a UCW church service, that could be used for Conference Sunday or any other Sunday for a UCW service. They used some of the material prepared for Peace Sunday in November 2007. Has lots of good ideas.

Westminster Weekend, representing the Oxford Presbyterial, it is being held in April this year. The June Retreat will be held Monday 9 at the Ingersoll Seniors Centre, with Rev. Maya Landell. Conference Summer Event at Siloam July 19, with Rv. Kristianne Charlton. The Annual meeting of London Presbyterial is April 27 and 28; speakers from North Buxton Museum who will talk of the Underground Railway. Meeting takes place in St Andrew's Chatham.

Louise Ross introduced the speaker for the evening, Sue Orr who volunteers with the Sleeping Children Around the World (SCAW). Last year she was visiting the country of Kenya where they gave out at least 4,000 kits. The kits cost \$30, until next September when they go up to \$35. It is probably the extra quality mosquito netting they are required to provide. 100% of money raised goes for bed kits. The administration is mostly done by volunteers. The Drydens have both passed away, left their house for the head quarters, sold their Christmas Tree Farm, setting up a trust to cover the cost administration. They work with partners in the countries they go to, the money needed for the bed kits is sent over to people in the country where they plan to go and everything is sourced from there. This saves shipping costs and at the same time stimulates the local economy. There is no government funding at either end. One woman she met looks after 18 orphan children. There is 1 bed kit per family. Sue was thanked and given a gift.

Dundas St UCW, Brenda Harris, Annice King, Shirley Waugh, led a very impressive worship service, on children being accepted by Jesus. We sang "This Child of Ours". A reading on difficult children, when we have patience with difficult children, we find out what they have had to put up with and all they really want is to be loved and accepted. Ruth Stephenson gave the courtesy remarks. The meeting closed with the new UCW Benediction. *Ruth for Sandra Stock*

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# The Church Mouse

The Newsletter of Oxford Presbytery in the United Church of Canada

April 09, 2008

Volume 27, Issue 4

Dear Friends in Oxford,

Most young people in Oxford receive an allowance from their parents, which they spend according to their own tastes and priorities, and from a young age learn to budget, save, and manage their personal finances. Many from a young age also have part-time paying jobs—mowing grass, shovelling sidewalks, babysitting and so on.

Very few families in Mozambique can afford this for their children, and there aren't jobs for adults, let alone youth. So any opportunity to earn is rare and welcome. The girls of PEDRA have jobs making knotted thread bracelets, each in two colours—any colours. It's a craft they learned in a couple of weeks of lessons and practice in their PEDRA program. A visitor saw the the bracelets, loved them, took some back to the USA—and the result was the donor of PEDRA, Church World Service in the USA, has asked for as many as the girls can produce, which they give to donors, to help raise PEDRA's profile there, and awareness of American donors.

Each girl for each bracelet earns ten meticais, about forty Canadian cents. In the month since the project began, they've made a thousand bracelets (the order is for 6000), and some individual girls have made more than fifty each. To date more than a hundred girls are taking part, and each week more girls achieve the level of quality work necessary, and enter the PEDRA paid workforce. It's not a sweat-shop racket; it's a craft they love; they make the bracelets voluntarily in their spare time, when they're not at PEDRA, at school, or helping out at home.

Besides a little personal income, the girls learn a fine-motor skill, develop high work standards (you can't market a shoddy product), beautify the world for themselves and for someone far away, and by gaining confidence in their ability

to create and contribute they build their self-esteem. Good return on a 40-cent investment.

*Bill and Karen Butt*

## NATURE FEEDS THE SOUL

A story from out of the tragedy of the Porcupine Hills fire in Dec. 1997 is a reminder that our spiritual roots are planted in the natural world.

150 km/h winds propelled a spark into an inferno that raced across 85 sections of brittle grassland. The flames separated as they bore down on one tiny ranch in the lee of the hills, leaving the house-trailer intact amid an ocean of char. For almost six months the smell of burnt sod and the scene of desolation were constant reminders of that day-of-terror.

"We've always loved our Big Sky Country," the mother recalled, "especially the tiny clump of bush we could see from our kitchen window." It was there they looked for evidence of changing seasons.

"Nothing was left but a few blackened twigs, so we had to make sure the family went somewhere each week in search of something beautiful. That was the only way we could nurture our spirits and keep from falling into despair."

In these times, as weather events become more radical, as extremes of drought, wind and fire become the order-of-the-day, we need to give close attention to what we can do to feed and nurture our spirits and the spirits of those around us.

Through telling our stories, developing and celebrating rituals, searching out what is beautiful and life-giving, through cultivating our cultural and spiritual gardens, we can prepare ourselves to face the changes that lie ahead. The ancient ones told of how we humans are made from the dust of the earth, attached to Mother Earth by a life-giving umbilical chord. CRCN Glimmers of

Hope in the Rural Landscape. May 2007.

A well attended Variety Night, with people performing from Eastwood, Innerkip, Bright and Etonia United Churches. Raised \$450.00 for medical supplies for the Dominican Republic. Amanda Bertrand and her nursing classmates will be taking them and with bags of supplies later, this

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