

The Church Mouse

The Newsletter of Oxford Presbytery in the United Church of Canada

June 11, 2008

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Operation Sharing The Meeting Place.

Michael Black and Frank Smith from Operation Sharing visited the Official Board of College Avenue Church a number of months ago with a request that we consider accommodating the 'Meeting Place' in our building, in the area of the old Sunday School room below the Sanctuary. The details of their request were written down and included the days and times that the Meeting Place would be open, the type of activities that would be included, the possible numbers attending and the space that would be required for counseling and office space.

The possible costs of the changes to the area were presented and how these costs might be met. Things like security, accessibility and how the operation of the Meeting Place would affect the weekly activities of College Avenue were discussed. The Board of Elders of College Avenue discussed the request after Mr. Black and Smith had left the meeting. They were in general agreement that we should, as a congregation, seriously consider the request, particularly from a Christian responsibility and our involvement in the other aspects of Operation Sharing. Since Operation Sharing was an organization begun by the United Churches of Woodstock, the Meeting Place would provide a significant involvement by College Avenue in the operation.

Some wondered if it wouldn't be a better plan for the 'Meeting Place' to have a building of their own within the city. However, the people from Operation Sharing felt, as did many of the regular fellows that attend the Meeting Place, that having a Christian Church location would be a much better place, for a number of reasons, a main one being that the Christian location effect on the people would be very beneficial.

Both College Avenue Church and Operation Sharing drew up what their requirements would be with regard to the renovations and daily operations of the Meeting Place. College Avenue presented a list of the concerns of the congregation with such an operation and how it would affect the regular organizations within the church. The aim of all these discussions, back and forth, was to come up with a workable, written, signed agreement, covering all aspects of the operation.

The official Board of College Avenue circulated among its members, several times over the past months, documents describing the draft proposal, and its many details. A number of congregational meetings were held to further discuss the details and to allow the members to ask questions and voice their concerns about such an undertaking. At the last such meeting, on April 6, 2008, at the end of the discussion, a vote was taken. The Official Board felt that a 2/3 majority in favour of our involvement should be required and this was moved, seconded and carried by the congregation. When the vote (by secret ballot) was taken, this required majority was obtained and this was reported at the following Presbytery meeting held at Newark United Church, on April 9th.

Russell Tausaw - Presbytery Representative of College Avenue United Church.

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There has been no word from Bill and Karen Butt this month. At first their new e-mail address didn't work, but then it did. Let us keep them in our thoughts and prayers. It must be a very trying time with the higher cost for food and fuel, that means they cannot continue much needed programmes. The flooding will mean many crops will be ruined and they will not be able to feed themselves again. How discouraging for everyone involved. How can we help?

**OXFORD PRESBYTERIAL UCW HOLD RETREAT DAY**

The Ingersoll Seniors' Centre was the scene of the Oxford Presbyterian UCW Day of Retreat on Monday June 9<sup>th</sup> when 79 women enjoyed the beautiful day and the cool surroundings. With coffee and goodies always on hand it made for a near-perfect day.

Marg Martin and Norene Holbrough from Trinity United Church in Ingersoll started the day off with singing. "Come and Find the Quiet Center" was the theme song for the day.

President Jean Manning, welcomed everyone and gave the needed announcements. Community Building was conducted by Thamesford United Church with each star or heart colour finding their matching shape and colour. Partners then found out about each other and their UCW activities.

Kintore United Church conducted the morning worship service with the theme of, "Come and Find the Quiet Center". Scripture verses from Mark 6: 45-46 and Isaiah 41:1 were read. A Christmas story to cool down the hot weather taught us that we cannot run from life. Prayer and our theme hymn ended the worship.

Carol Tabor introduced the guest speaker for the day, Rev. Maya Landell, who spoke on the theme, "Come and Find the Quiet Center". Rev. Maya very skilfully brought us to our quiet center with her prayer song, "Open Our Hearts". She spoke about how the Jewish prepare their hearts and minds for the Sabbath, which

begins on Friday night at sunset. On the Sabbath no work is done but visiting, eating and blessing of the children is important

"Honour the Sabbath to keep it Holy". Everyone had 1/2 hour of quiet time to visit the many centers around the room that Rev. Maya had prepared for the group. She used a singing bowl to bring us back to prayer.

A delicious lunch was served by the Center members.

Everyone was brought back to the afternoon session with singing. Anne Cooper and Evelyn Chute portrayed God and St. Francis in a dramatic reading about the grass, weeds and trees that God had placed on this earth.

Rev. Maya used the quiet center in conversation as her afternoon theme. She taught us how to Open Our Hearts and really use Holy Listening with silent prayer followed by conversation and listening in partners. When the letters of SILENT are rearranged they can spell LISTEN.

Doreen Smith thanked Rev. Maya Landell and gave the courtesies for the day.

As the candles were lit, the quiet music of Linnea Good singing, "Come to the Table", was played. The day closed quietly with worship and Communion given by Rev. Maya Landell our guest speaker.

Upcoming events:

The Fall Event Monday, October 27, 11:00 - 3:00 at Sweaburg United Church.

Pot Luck Lunch By Sandra Stock  
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On Sunday June 29<sup>th</sup> a UCW church service will be held at Hebron United Church at 10:00 a.m. with guest speaker **Marion Harrington.**

Marion is on the Mission and Outreach Committee with London Conference United Church Women. She the Chairperson for the Church in Society portion of this committee where women of the church learn about community and national issues and take Christian action related to these issues.

Marion's topic will be, "Faith in Action".

Come to Hebron to learn more about the work that Marion and this committee are doing.

Encourage others to come with you.

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**REV ELOI GUNN – TOGO**

Eloi Gunn is a man with a vision. Minister for Drumbo/Richwood charge he is taking steps to turn his vision into a reality. His project will enable single unemployed parents in Togo to feed and educate their children. Based on a very successful rural reconstruction program established in 1983 in the Honduras he hopes to promote economically viable and environmentally sustainable agricultural techniques in the mountainous areas of his homeland.

Rev. Gunn says the project has many benefits. "It will provide education, livelihood, agricultural extension, health care and community growth among economically marginalized, rural families of Togo."



The good people of **Princeton United Church** invite you to come and enjoy their delicious and much anticipated annual **Beef Barbeque** on **Monday August 4th** beginning at 5 P.M. at Princeton Centennial Hall. Please call the church office at 519-458-4091 (or Rev. Dave at 519-774-3477) to place your ticket order in advance (a good deal) or buy your tickets at the door (still quite affordable).

**Allan Slater & CPT at Queen's Park**

Allan Slater has been in Toronto at the Native Rally at Queen's Park for 2 days in late May. A very highly organized event with the opening rally on Monday evening and then two days of workshops, etc. CPT had to provide three meals over the three days. Not sure who else was doing meals maybe steelworkers and perhaps some churches. Trintiy-St. Pauls United and Bloor Street United were providing sleeping space. Steve Peters, the speaker had ruled that Queen's Park was sacred ground and that they could not put tent pegs in sacred ground. Rather ironic as people were there to draw attention to the fact that the government had allowed mining companies to put stakes in their sacred land!! *Rev. Slater*

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**WOODSTOCK PROJECT-CANADIAN FOODGRAINS BANK
 Pork Barbeque and Bean Supper**

Knox Presbyterian Church, Woodstock
 Friday, Sept. 12 - 5 to 7pm Adults \$12 & child \$6.

CAMP TANNER

There are still spaces available in all the different camps. More emphasis on sports, drama. Call Sandra 519-475-4833 to register.

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 Megan Ross (daughter of Mary Lou Ross) is working at Camp Tanner this summer & sends this needs list. Let's do what we can to help!!

- Needs: pop tabs \* bread tabs
- Pringle's tubes \* baby food jars \* wood scraps
- paper towel rolls \* wrapping paper rolls \* cereal boxes
- old greeting cards \* telephone wire
- old magazines (appropriate please)
- cutlery and keys -----for wind chimes
- Zehrs cash register tapes \* Canadian Tire money
- Contact Megan at 519-454-8558 to arrange delivery.

**EASTWOOD UNITED CHURCH GARAGE SALE**  
 Saturday July 19 starts at 8 am-- lots a good articles plus a BAKE SALE

**HEBRON COUNTRY MARKET**

Saturday, September 13, 2008 8 a.m - 1 p.m

At the busy intersection of County Road 8 and the 16<sup>th</sup> Line

Come for **breakfast** and buy yummy baked goods to take home, As well as:  
 Fruit / vegetables, Canned goods - pickles, relish, jam etc. Cut / dried flowers  
 Perennial roots / flowers for fall planting  
 Fall / Thanksgiving / Halloween decorations  
 And Craft items

For more information contact  
 Joyce Hill 519 462-2812  
 Mary Lou Ross 519 454-8558  
 Sandra Stock 519 462-2643

**Canadian Foodgrains Bank** is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary **Sunday, June 22** at the Heritage Park at Milton (formerly Agriculture Museum) Gathering in Gambrel Barn after 3 pm Power point presentation at 3:30pm. Special guests and BBQ. \$30.00 each. Call David & Cathy Mayberry 519-485-3642 or e-mail [mayberry@xplornet.com](mailto:mayberry@xplornet.com)

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EASTWOOD UNITED ANNUAL CHICKEN BBQ

Saturday, June 21, 4:30 to 7:00pm take outs available
 Adults \$12 00 Children 6-12 \$6.00

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OBSERVER

Did you notice there is a letter from Woodstock, actually he is from Eastwood. Was good to see a local person was published. The letters are always interesting, sure lots of sides on any one issue. Lots of other good stories and articles. Lots of different takes on many subjects of faith and justice.