

# Between Friends

Winter 2016/2017

## CO-ORDINATING COUNCIL

*Shirley Irvine*, Chair  
*Carl Pinnock*, Vice Chair  
*Rev. Dr. Paul Shepherd*, Minister  
*Carol Burke*, Secretary

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*Carl Pinnock*  
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*Judy Binns (Interim Chair)*  
Outreach and Mission

*Stella George*  
Property

*Joan Carr*  
TSW Presbytery Representative

*Joan Carr and Shirley Irvine*  
United Church Women

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## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

For me the worst part of the coming of winter is moving my bicycle into the basement. It's not physically hard to move my bicycle of course - the bike itself is light. My problem is mental. I don't really want to acknowledge that my outdoor riding season is over. Today I'm not ready to exchange sunshine for fluorescent lights. I'm not ready to exchange the dynamics and forces of riding on actual uneven road for the uniformity and smoothness of riding on rollers.

Then why do I do it? Why do I ride in my basement? If I compare riding in my basement to riding outside in the summer - down the Welland Canal with friends for example – I would never ride in my basement. But if I compare riding in my basement with not riding at all - then the choice is clear. I ride. Even though I ride differently. I ride.

Christmas can feel like that too. Many of us carry memories of Christmases past that were very special. Perhaps when we had young children at home. Perhaps when the church was packed on Christmas Eve. Perhaps when we looked forward to large family gatherings and meals. Perhaps when Christmas felt magical. Many people have told me that they just don't "feel Christmas" like they used to. It is very natural to grieve for Christmases past.

**CHRISTMAS  
IS STILL  
COMING !**

And yet, Advent is still a season of waiting, and of hope. That has not changed. Our hope is grounded in the expectation that this year – like every year – will bring joy and wonder as we wait for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. As we wait in anticipation, we need to be open to new visions. This Christmas may unfold differently than Christmases past. But it will still be Christmas.

We wait to see Jesus in our midst. But what will that look like? How will you recognize Jesus in your midst? Each of us will look with different eyes, but if we look, we will find the presence of Christ in our midst. Even in the Nativity stories there are different "visions" of Christ in our midst. I encourage each of us to read the Nativity stories (they are all short!) and to appreciate the vision of Christ in our midst in each of the gospels. Pay attention to the differences between what each of the gospel writers say. When we see Christmas pageants, they are usually a mashing together of elements from the different stories. But the gospel authors each have their own unique voice, and it is interesting to reflect on the differences between those voices. The voices are all different, and yet they all point to Jesus.

And as we each meet Christ in our midst ourselves, let us add our own voices to the continuing story, and share our voices with each other.

Blessings of Advent to you,  
Rev. Paul

# CO-ORDINATING COUNCIL UPDATES

## Note from Chair of Council

Greetings to all! As Chair of Council I am looking forward to all the exciting and meaningful activities of the Advent/Christmas season at Martin Grove United Church. The Christmas season and celebrations are something we can all enjoy.

Everything from decorating our sanctuary and singing carols prior to our Sunday Worship Services as well as our UCW Christmas potluck supper, and we can't forget our mitten tree which brings joy to those in need.

Rev. Paul will be bringing wonderful services, sermons and spiritual leadership for all of us as well. On Sunday, November 6 we celebrated Rev. Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary at MGUC and we hope he will continue to provide us with his excellent leadership on our journey of faith for many more years to come.

I want to thank the Choir for their important role in our Worship services as they continue to give us great Christmas music programs.

However, there are many ways that we can support the church and I am asking you to lend your support and

talent not only at Christmas but throughout the year as you are able. Please volunteer to commit your support to the life and work of the church, if you haven't done so yet.

To all those who serve on Committees and participate in church activities, thank you for your support.

Council continues to be very busy taking care of church business. Here are some of the items on our agenda that we will continue to work on:

- Replacing parking lot lighting
- Updating church signage
- Budget planning and approval
- Planning the 23rd AGM meeting
- Projection system project
- GC 42<sup>nd</sup> voting on Remits

Merry Christmas! May the spirit of Christmas be with you and may the New Year bring blessings to all and to Martin Grove United Church. ■

*Submitted by Shirley Irvine, Chair of Council*

## Financial Update

Due to our large deficit at the end of September, a "Reduce the Deficit" letter was mailed to everyone asking for their assistance. We thank everyone who has given extra to help to reduce our deficit.

The Christmas Stocking Program continues to be a popular fund raiser and will conclude on December 11.

Marilyn Coombs is helping once again with her beautiful custom-made cards and felt craft ornaments.

Please remember that December 25 is the last day to submit donations that you wish to be recorded as part of your 2016 income tax totals. ■

*Submitted by George Avery, Chair Stewardship and Finance*

	<u>Year to Date</u>
Revenue .....	\$137,231
Expenses.....	\$154,812
Surplus/Deficit .....	\$-17,581
M&S (incl. UCW) .....	\$8,916
	(objective \$13,700)

## Outreach

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Our annual drive for helping local organizations such as Ernestine's Women's Shelter, Youth Without Shelter and the Rexdale Women's Health Centre has started. The Mitten Tree will be up on Saturday, November 26 and we would like gloves, scarves, hats, socks, gently used winter clothing, coats and boots. These items may also be donated to other communities where there is a need. Christmas-Wish-Lists for Ernestine's and Youth without Shelter are on the notice board. Let's fill the Mitten Tree with our good wishes.

We are also sponsoring "a family in need". Ernestine's has selected a family for Martin Grove United Church to reach out to with Christmas gifts and your committee will be co-ordinating it.

Thank you to the Outreach Committee and our generous congregation for reaching out to our community once again, in the true spirit of the Christmas Season. It is a kindness that reflects who Martin Grove United Church is.

*Submitted by Judy Binns, Chair Outreach*

<b>The 2016 Martin Grove United Church SOUTH INDIA Outreach Program</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>India Location</b>
	Mon, Dec 5	Mukuperi
Tue, Dec 6	Nazareth Gnanaraj Nagar	St Luke's Community College Immanuel Children's Home
Wed, Dec 7	Peikulam	St Luke's Leprosarium
Thu, Dec 8	Nazareth Nazareth Sathiyaganaram	Elders Home Mentally Challenged Children's Home Speech and Hearing Impaired Children's Home Leprosy Colony
Fri, Dec 9	Anaiyarkulam	Polio Home
Sat, Dec 10	Kulathukudeiruppu	ERS Home
Sun, Dec 11		Distribution of cash and clothes to widows

This is the very busy schedule for Martin Grove's South India Program, planned by Robert Koil and Robert's brother in law in India who is acting as a program intermediary.

*Submitted by Robert Koil*

## Memorial and Special Occasions

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Many donations were made to the fund this year and we thank everyone for those donations made on behalf of friends and loved ones.

On Friday, October 21, West Humber Collegiate's Commencement Ceremonies were held. The Pam Prinold Community Scholarship was awarded to Kashyap Patel, chosen by the school as the student who best represented the spirit of Community service that Pam embodied. Unfortunately, Kashyap was unable to attend due to illness, but a cheque and certificate of congratulations will be presented to him by the school when possible. ■

*Submitted by George Avery, Chair of Memorial and Special Occasions*

## Worship

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### Prayers and Privacy

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**T**his congregation is a warm and welcoming community of faith. In many ways, we are a lot like a family, and we care about each other. Part of caring for each other is knowing about each other's lives, which includes knowing about our celebrations and our concerns. We care. So naturally, we care when someone we know is in hospital, or has health or family concerns.

But it is also very important that people's stories are shared in the way that the person concerned would want their story to be shared. How do we do that? It's very simple – we ask them. If you are considering sharing a personal story of concern about another person, ask them if they want the congregation to know that story. And if you are given permission to share the story, ask what details the person would like to have shared.

Because we care about each other, please put prayer requests in our "Prayer Book" and/or in the cards in the pews. Rev. Paul will speak to requests in the Prayer Book during worship, but will often speak only the name if he doesn't know that the details are to be freely shared. If details are to be shared, speak with Rev. Paul prior to the service. The pew card prayer requests go to our Prayer Group. And of course, you may speak your own words of concern during the invited times during the Prayers of the People.

### F.A.Q. (Frequently Asked Questions)

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#### WHY DO WE HAVE 2 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES?

Our two Christmas Eve services are designed to be very different. The 7:00pm service is our "big" service with lots of joyful singing and our largest crowd of the year. We will read and sing our way through the Nativity. The 10:00pm service is quiet and reflective, and communion will be served. In both services, we end with singing Silent Night by candlelight.

The services are so different from each other that you are encouraged to come to both. And if you stay at the church between services we will have refreshments and games.

#### WHAT IS THE LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE?

At Christmas, there is a lot to celebrate. But for most of us, there are things we need to grieve as well. We can grieve many things. A loss in the family, unemployment, broken dreams, broken hearts. In our society, there are many places where we do not feel free to grieve, but church should be a place we can come as we are and grieve if we need to. The Longest Night service is designed to help us grieve. Communion will be served.

#### WHY IS THE MIMICO DRUM CIRCLE VISITING ON JANUARY 18?

When Rev. Paul was in Mimico, he started a drum circle. Since he left there, the group has come under new leadership and they are excited to come to Martin Grove and share their enthusiasm of drumming with us. We are all invited to come - not just to watch, but to participate! If you have a hand drum, bring it, but they will have spare drums we can use too. Remember - if you have a heart beat, you can play a hand drum! ■

*Submitted by the Worship Committee*

## Pastoral Care

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The Pastoral Care Committee wishes everyone a Happy and Blessed Christmas. We are here to help you and if you or anyone you know needs a call or a visit, please let Rev. Paul or any member of the Pastoral Care Committee know. ■

*Submitted by Sheila Avery, Chair Pastoral Care*

## Martin Grove United Church Women

Although our bazaar was in October, I have never said **thank you** to all those who helped, so here is my chance.

- **Thank you** to those who spent most of Friday and Saturday at the church.
- **Thank you** to all those who sold their crafts.
- **Thank you** to those who staffed the tables – the bake table, the book table, the “white elephant” table, etc.
- **Thank you** to all those who supplied baking for the bake table. We sold it all!
- **Thank you** to all those who helped with the coffee, tea and goodies.
- **Thank you** to those who set up tables and also helped put them away after the bazaar.
- **Thank you** to those who took what was not sold to Value Village.
- **Thank you** to all those who pitched in and helped wherever necessary.
- **Thank you** to all those who advertised the bazaar.
- **Thank you** to all those who came and spent their \$\$\$\$. There were many bargains.
- **Thank you** to all those who came and supported the UCW in any way.

**We made \$1,156 ... Well done!! Did I say “Thank you!”**



*Submitted by Joan Carr*

## NEWS & EVENTS

### Advent Groups

	Dates	Times	Topics
1	Tues Nov 29	1:00 & 7:00pm	Matthew's Story
2	Tues Dec 6	1:00 & 7:00pm	Luke's Story
3	Tues Dec 13	1:00 & 7:00pm	Our Story

Join with us for our “Advent Groups”. During our time together we will engage with the nativity stories in the gospels, and also share our own stories of Advent and Christmas. This will not just be a “head” event. Bring your hearts and hands too. It's Advent . . . anything can happen!

For more information, please contact Rev. Paul. ■

*Submitted by Rev. Paul.*

### Choir News

The choir will be singing some of your favourite anthems this Christmas season, so please plan on attending the Advent and Christmas services. We will be presenting our Cantata, “**Morning Star**” on December 11, and we look forward to having everyone join us as we share the story of Christmas in song.

Led by Tom Fisher, we will also sing Christmas Carols 15 minutes before the Sunday Services in Advent and Christmas. Come and choose your favourite and celebrate the Christmas season in song. ■

*Submitted by Liz Gosse-Davidson.*

### Men's Luncheons

On the first Monday of each month, except for July and August, the Men's Group meets at Wally's Restaurant for lunch. No set meal is served, just order what you wish. Wally's provides us with free coffee and we have a great time together. All men are welcome. Come on out and enjoy this fellowship together. ■

*Submitted by George Avery*



*In Loving Memory*

*John Niewisiewicz . . . . . October 15, 2016*



## LOOKING AHEAD

*All Worship Services start at 10:30am unless noted otherwise*

### Schedule of Worship

#### Advent and Christmas

Sun Nov 27	Advent I ~ Worship Service
Sun Dec 4	Advent II ~ White Gift & Food Bank Sunday
Sun Dec 11	Advent III ~ Choir Cantata
Sun Dec 18	Advent IV ~ Christmas Pageant
Wed Dec 21	7:00pm ~ Longest Night Service
Sat Dec 24	7:00pm ~ Candlelight Service
Sat Dec 24	10:00pm ~ Reflective Service Communion
Sun Dec 25	Christmas Morning Service

#### January

Sun Jan 1	Worship Service ~ Food Bank Sunday
Sun Jan 8	Worship Service ~ Baptism of Christ Epiphany Sunday ~ Communion
Sun Jan 15	Worship Service ~ South India Project Rpt.
Sun Jan 22	Worship Service
Sun Jan 28	Worship Service

#### February

Sun Feb 5	Worship Service ~ Food Bank Sunday
Sun Feb 12	Worship Service
Sun Feb 19	Worship Service
Sun Feb 26	Worship Service



*Please note that these schedules may be subject to change, and for that reason we encourage you to regularly check your weekly "Life and Work", monthly "Calendar", or our "Online Calendar" for the most current info possible.*

### Dates to Remember

Thursdays	7:00pm – Choir Rehearsals
Saturdays	11:00am – Prayer Group
Sundays	10:00am – Sunday School

#### Advent and Christmas

Tue Nov 29	1:00pm Advent Group ~ Matthew's Story
Tue Nov 29	7:00pm Advent Group ~ Matthew's Story
Wed Nov 30	6:00pm UCW Christmas Potluck Supper
Mon Dec 5	12:00n Men's Luncheon at Wally's
Tue Dec 6	1:00pm Advent Group ~ Luke's Story
Tue Dec 6	7:00pm Advent Group ~ Luke's Story
Tue Dec 13	1:00pm Advent Group ~ Our Story
Tue Dec 13	7:00pm Advent Group ~ Our Story
Wed Dec 14	1:00pm UCW Christmas Tea
Sat Dec 24	<b>Christmas Eve</b>
Sun Dec 25	<b>Christmas Day</b>
Mon Dec 26	<b>Boxing Day</b>
Sat Dec 31	<b>New Years Eve</b>

#### January

Sun Jan 1	<b>New Years Day</b>
Mon Jan 2	<b>New Years Day Observance</b>
Sat Jan 7	Removal of Sanctuary Decorations
Sun Jan 8	YWS Dinner
Mon Jan 9	12:00n Men's Luncheon at Wally's
Thu Jan 12	10:00am Outreach Mtg
Sun Jan 15	Worship Mtg following Service
Wed Jan 18	10:00am Mimico Drum Circle Visits 1:00pm MGUCW Mtg
Wed Jan 25	7:00pm Co-ordinating Council Mtg

#### February

Thu Feb 2	10:00am Outreach Mtg
Mon Feb 6	12:00n Men's Luncheon at Wally's
Wed Feb 15	1:00pm MGUCW Mtg
Sun Feb 19	Worship Mtg following Service
Mon Feb 20	<b>Family Day</b>
Wed Feb 22	7:00pm Co-ordinating Council Mtg.
Tue Feb 28	Shrove Tuesday – Pancake Dinner

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