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A Note From Micheline

As I sit down to write this note, it is a bright sunny day out and there is no snow yet! Some people are already busy hanging Christmas lights, taking advantage of this beautiful weather we are being gifted with. As for me, I am still cleaning out my flower garden! Yes, it is hard to believe that in a couple of weeks we will be entering another season of Advent. We will once again prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of the One we call the Christ Child, Emmanuel, Prince of Peace. With many politically unstable areas in our world, with tensions within and among many nations, and with many changes all around us, we have been living through a rather uncertain year. The message of Good News and hope that comes to us each year at Christmas time is one of which we are in need maybe more than ever. May the true Spirit of Christmas indeed guide our thoughts, our footsteps and our actions in the way of peace, for ourselves, for our church and for our world.

As the Christmas season approaches, we will find ourselves inevitably busy with many things and the church is no exception. We will begin our Advent preparations with a Congregational Christmas dinner on November 29th. The teachers and our S.S. children are already busy planning for our 3rd annual "Old Fashioned Christmas Concert." It will be held on December 6th, beginning with a Pot Luck supper at 4:30PM, followed by an all-star cast concert. On December 13th we will join together in the afternoon for our service of "Hope and Remembrance." On Sunday December 20th, rumour has it that the choir is planning a special event filled with music of course as they share what Christmas is all about. And last but not least, on Christmas Eve, we will have our 2 services, one at 6:30PM and one at 10PM. There will be lots of opportunities for us to join together as a church family to celebrate this wonderful season of our church calendar.

I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to all members and adherents of our church family who join in and share in the ministry that makes Edith Rankin Memorial United Church the church it is called to be. The role of the church assumes caring for the community all around. Sharing the good news of God's love and care for each other is an important and vital part of being in ministry together, not just at Christmas but all through the year. Ministry requires the co-operative presence of all of us, in the everyday life, work and worship of our church family. Each one of us has a responsibility to take part in our ministry in some way, shape or form. All contributions of time and talent are gratefully received and very much appreciated.

As I conclude this message, I wish you and those you love a joy-filled Christmas season and a blessed New Year. This is my prayer for all of us this year at Christmas and throughout the year:

May we go often to the Bethlehem of our hearts and visit the One who offers us hope, peace, joy and love. May these gifts be ours to share with the world around us. God Bless.

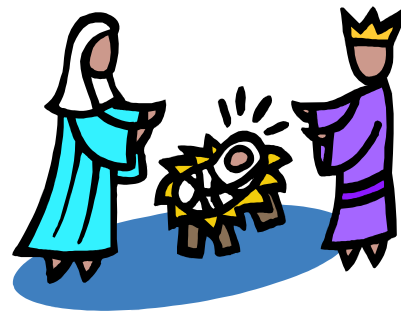
~ MM

WAYNE'S WORLD

"Catching the Christmas Spirit"

I should have bought stock in Purell since I'm sure I am now sanitized down to the bone. Not because I am fearful of catching H1N1 since, apparently, one of the few perks enjoyed by those of us creeping up on Methuselah may be our ancient immune systems. Go figure. But I could be a carrier if I don't scrub myself raw every five minutes. Given my preference to press the flesh rather than live in not-so-splendid isolation from human courtesies, I'll probably bare my arm to the needle, too, just to be kind to my neighbours. Besides, I rarely get lucky under the mistletoe, but, hey, you never know.

The flu isn't all that funny and it's just common sense to take precautions against it. Too bad though, there isn't a vaccination for a host of other ills that beset us and seem to spread like wildfire – fear, crankiness, greed, miserliness, stress, spiritual amnesia and the like. Goodness knows, we could do without them. Of course, some things we would do well to catch. You know, things like hope, love, joy, peace and all that other Christmassy stuff that seems to be going round. Wouldn't it be something if we caught the Christmas Spirit, not just as a seasonal virus that works itself out of our system by Boxing Day, but something that gets into us and that we just can't get rid of?



Folks who may be finding it hard to "get into the Christmas Spirit" might try letting the Christmas Spirit get into them. Expose themselves, say, to the old, old Story, or dance cheek to cheek with herald angels harking to the Good News of great joy, or cozy up to Shepherds in the fields abiding, or, best of all, hold Bethlehem's Babe long enough to get whatever He has.

So, if there's any chance you might catch the Spirit of Christmas this year, I hope you do. And since it's pretty contagious, feel free to spread it around!

~ WWS

Advent Calendar

November 29/09 – Advent 1

- Worship (10:00 a.m.) Sermon – *“A Sign for the Times”*
- ERMUC Family Dinner beginning at 5:00 p.m. with a Carol Sing and Crafts for kids first starting at 4:00 p.m.

December 6 – Advent 2

- Worship (10:00 a.m.) Sermon – *“Refined By Grace”*
- Potluck supper at 4:30 p.m. followed by an “Old-Fashioned Christmas Concert” at 5:30 p.m.

December 13 – Advent 3

- Worship (10:00 a.m.) Sermon – *“Let the Saints Be Joyful!”*
- Service of Remembrance and Hope (4:00 p.m.) Sermon – *“What’s Your Joyful News Today?”*

December 20 – Advent 4

- Worship (10:00 a.m.) Sermon – *“And This Shall Be Peace”*
- Christmas Music Presentation (7:00 p.m.)

December 24 – Christmas Eve

- Early Service (6:30 p.m.) Story – *“Unwrapping the Christmas Crèche”*
- Late Service (10:00 p.m.) Sermon – *“The Bethlehem Connection”* Communion

December 27 – Christmas 1

- Worship (10:00 a.m.) Sermon – *“Carrying On with Christmas”*

January 3 – Christmas 2

- Worship (10:00 a.m.) Sermon – *“Claiming our Destiny”*

Men's Fellowship Breakfasts

On the last Sunday morning of each month, January to April inclusive, the men of the congregation are encouraged to come to the church for breakfast, starting at 8 a.m. Following breakfast, a speaker presents a topic of interest and, if there is time, a lively discussion follows. We are finished at 9:20 so those who haven't made other arrangements can drive home to pick up the family for church. Cost is \$3.00

Programs:

Jan 24 Dugald Carmichael on "The Geology of our Area"

Feb 21 Keith Notley on "The other half of Australia – from Darwin to Perth (west coast)"

Mar 28 Peter Dawson, Superintendent of Frontenac Park

Apr 25 John and Ruth Abbott on "Sailing Lake Superior". The ladies of the congregation are invited to attend this, our final meeting, before the summer.

No reservations are required; just wake up early and come!

UCW Information

UCW Executive meeting: Tuesday January 5th, 2010 at 9:30 a.m. in Upper Clark Hall

UCW Annual Worship Service: Sunday April 11th, 2010

UCW Spring General Meeting: Tuesday April 20th, 2010 at 7 p.m. in Lower Hall

Newcomers are always welcome!

Caring Connections

This is a small group who meet regularly on the second Tuesday, September to June. The members visit those who are unable to attend church due to long term or short term health issues. The monthly meeting is to inform our ministers of concerns or of pleasant events of the people we visit and to receive support for ourselves.



Our December meeting has a small social included in keeping with Christmas so if you are interested in visiting, come join us and learn more about Caring Connections.



February Family Fun Fest

~ In the afternoon of February 7, 2010; plan to join us for horse and wagon rides, crafts, games, and hotdogs.

Watch Tidings for upcoming information!

Youth

Looking ahead.....

As we head into this season of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, we will be preparing packages for the Ryandale Homeless Shelter, so that each resident will have his or her own bag of goodies to unwrap Christmas morning.

Through the 'Christmas Break' the Youth will be working on a video presentation, which will be a part of the kickoff Anniversary Service that is being coordinated by the Worship Committee, for January 17th. Small groups will begin work on taping *Godly Play* presentations, and we have been talking about a 'blanket project' that would see us making colourful, warm and cozy (no sew) fleece blankets to give to shelters.

Please join us (as a participant or volunteer) – you'll be glad you did!

EDITH RANKIN ROCKS!

~Lori Servage; youth@ermuc.ca DLM - Youth

It's Directory time!

Experience the fun of your own professional photography session. When you sign up and attend a session in April 2010 your family will receive:



- FREE 8x10 portrait
- FREE Pictorial directory
- Opportunity to purchase additional portraits at attractive prices

You'll be photographed and view your images in one trip to the church! Please allow one hour for your session.

Watch Tidings for more information and don't forget to sign up to be part of ERMUC's directory! It won't be the same without you!

Faith Formation and Development Committee Report

According to Sarah Breathnach in her book *Simple Abundance*, "December gifts-custom, ceremony, celebration, consecration, come to us wrapped up not in tissue and ribbon but in cherished memories. This is the month of miracles. Where there is love, there are miracles. And where there are miracles there is great joy".

In December there are many services and events which give us an opportunity to express and experience that joy.

January according to the same author "is the month of new beginnings and a time to look forward to the year ahead and the journey within."

The following programs continue into the New Year.

Decisive Issues - a discussion group providing an opportunity to broaden one's understanding of key issues impacting our Christian Faith. Every 2nd Monday at 10:00 a.m.

Adult Bible Study follows the lectionary and the group meets Tuesday afternoon 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Spirit Sisters (women's spirituality group) meets the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Just Men and Just Men Two, meet regularly; Tidings can be consulted for specific dates and times

The Rankineers provide a social community for those who are 50 plus. Tidings provides details of this group's activities.

Sunday School and Nursery every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. The programmes are vibrant and the teachers devoted to accompanying the learners on their faith journey. Should you wish to share in assisting our children in any capacity, please call. You may even find it a rewarding experience and you are definitely needed.

~ Reverend Micheline Montreuil and Millie Hill

Happy Anniversary!

You are no doubt aware that 2010 is a very special year for the Congregation of Edith Rankin Memorial United Church. We will be celebrating our 50th Anniversary.

For those of us who have arrived since 1960, it is sometimes hard to believe that 50 years ago, the congregation of Collins Bay United Church made a leap of faith that resulted in a new building with a new name. In some respects, we are on a similar threshold, but that discussion is for a future time.

A number of special events have been planned to celebrate ERMUC's Golden Anniversary. However Council is cognizant of the fact that too much is, well, too much. Therefore, the philosophy that has been adopted is to encourage our 'regular' events to adopt a 50th Anniversary theme to mark the occasion. There will be special events, for example, an Arts & Crafts Weekend in the spring, but these will fill calendar gaps and not displace activities we normally celebrate.

To help you fill in your 2010 calendars and provide an overview of the year, an outline schedule of specific 50th Anniversary events is provided below. The calendar will also be available on the ERMUC website.

As well as these events, there are a number of commemorative projects, such as a 50th Anniversary photo directory, which will be organized by groups and individuals. The details of these initiatives will be provided in our weekly *Tidings*, during announcements at weekly services and in the Anchor.

It is hoped that all members of the congregation will truly celebrate this significant milestone.

~ ERMUC Council & Committees & Groups

2010 – 50th ANNIVERSARY YEAR

- January 17th:** A “kick off” Anniversary Sunday
- January 31st:** Rehearsals begin for the intergenerational theatre experience reflecting on life, past & present at ERMUC
- March:** 50th Anniversary Photo Directory sign-up; watch *Tidings* for more details
- April 13-17 & 20-24** Photo Directory photo sessions
- April 16th - 17th** Performances; an intergenerational theatre experience reflecting on life, past & present at ERMUC
- May 7th:** Old Hymn Night
- May 8th:** Musical Celebration
- May 7th-9th:** Festival 50 Arts Festival
- August 18th:** “Breaking 50” 4th Annual 9 & Dine Golf Tournament
- Sept. 24th -26th** Hand Bells Remembered – 25th Anniversary and reunion of hand bells at ERMUC

