



# Bell Ringer

Bells Corners United Church

Volume 17, Issue 2

Christmas

December 2018



**Dec 16** – Third Sunday of Advent / Joy / Pink or White

Sermon Focus: "Who is Zephaniah?" (Zephaniah 3:14-20)

**Dec 23** – Fourth Sunday of Advent / Love / Red  
Sermon Focus: "Who is Micah?" (Micah 5:2-5a)

**Dec 24** – Christmas Eve Services

6:30 pm – Family Service. 9:00 – Celebration of Communion

**Dec 30** – Joint Service with Glen Cairn and Kanata – 10 am.

Host: Glen Cairn United Church (Abbey Hill, Kanata)



Fostering intergenerational interaction, seeking and expanding partnerships with community and faith-based groups, and engaging young families at BCUC!

Contact Erin or Jordan Berard  
([jordan.berard@sympatico.ca](mailto:jordan.berard@sympatico.ca))

## United Church of Canada 2019 Calendars:

Copies of the 2019 Canadian Church calendar, United Church edition, are available from the church office for \$6 each. Enjoy images of United Churches from across Canada as you go through the next year. ❖



**UP** *Our very active Youth Group ~ UP (United People)*

By: Kim & Alex Culley, Coordinators of Youth Group

Well it has certainly been a busy fall for the UP Group! We are very happy to say we've grown in numbers and have a lot of fun at the events this fall.

In October we attended a very chilly evening at Saunders Farm and were frightened by several of the rides and enjoyed a well received hot chocolate at the end of the evening.

November was very busy. Many of the youth shared an insightful and meaningful breakfast at the Veteran's Breakfast. We baked dozens and dozens of cookies, under the tutelage of Ruth Howes, for the Christmas Bazaar raising several hundred dollars for the youth and mission exposure funds. Many of the youth helped out with several of the tables at the Bazaar as well.

We capped off November trying to escape the Diefenbunker. There were 11 of us there including Abe Te Grotenhuis and Linda Miller (thanks for the help). We had a blast rushing through the challenges to try to stop the missile launch... and fell just short! It was great time.

At the start of December we helped FAMSAC as they received an OC Transpo bus load of food donation as part of their Food Drive. Now we have our final event of the year coming up soon. It's our annual Christmas Party. We will be celebrating with a lasagna dinner and cookie exchange. Also, we will be supporting a charity group called Smiles for Seniors this year by purchasing Christmas gifts for seniors that do not have family members. We are looking forward to a set of fantastic events planned for 2019. Merry Christmas and have a great holiday season.

Alex and I are always open to new suggestions so please feel free to come and speak with us before/after church or through email at [akculley@rogers.com](mailto:akculley@rogers.com)  
Kim and Alex Culley ❖



### IT'S NEVER TOO SOON TO START THINKING ABOUT CHRISTMAS!

Looking ahead to 2019's Christmas Bazaar and The Children's Store, if you receive a gift at Christmas, although thoughtful, really doesn't suit your needs and not sure what to do with it, how about donating it to next year's Children's Store at the Bazaar! The store is a delight to our young shoppers looking for a gift for Mom, Dad, Grandparents or siblings. Items such as

Christmas ornaments, mugs, cards, toiletries, fancy soap, candy dishes, etc. are usually a hit. We especially need items suitable for men. Also needed are gift wrapping items including bags, boxes and tissue. Don't pack that unwanted stuff away. Drop it off to the Church marked for the Children's store, or contact me, Jean Watson, at 613 829-3463. Let's make next year's store the best one yet!

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**BABY FOOD JARS NEEDED** We've had a successful Christmas Bazaar and already are thinking about next year. We really need some help in rounding up Baby Food Jars (not Junior ones) to continue with the Jam Crates that sell so well. Three jars of jam go into each crate and this year we had 57 crates sold, plus 20 jars donated to the Gift Baskets. Please try to find some jars for us: keep looking all year, maybe your families, neighbours or friends can help finding some. This is something to think about year-round. You can leave them in the Church Office, or in the UCW drawer in Communication Alley, or I will pick them up. Please let me know if you have any jars for me. Thanks so much. Pat Stoute @ (613)820-0174 or [stoute@gmail.com](mailto:stoute@gmail.com)

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**COFFEE AND FRIENDS:** Looking to meet friendly people, learn things and experience good conversation. Starting in 2019 drop in and join us in the church's Main Hall, Thursday mornings, for a morning of lively and fun conversation on different topics and tea or coffee; sometimes we even have cookies! We meet in the Main Hall at BCUC at 9:15 am. We have different topics each week such as show and tell, Christmas party, movies and book reviews, and everyone is welcome! If you have questions please contact Bev Wilcox at 829-1180.



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**SPRING EVENT /MUSICAL** Plan to be a part of our event in late April! Preparations will begin in earnest in January 2019. We will need singers, musicians, actors, artists, set designers and technical folk who are willing to dedicate the time to attend planning, construction and rehearsals. More details will be forthcoming but speak to Abe if this is something you want to be a part of. It's bound to be a lot of fun with lasting memories for all!



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Check out the ever changing **ART WALL** at BCUC! Artwork of our church family is shared here for all to enjoy and appreciate. The Communications Committee will change the display several times a year, and welcomes art from all ages, as we celebrate the many gifts and talents God has given us.

The criteria is simply that it is flat and will fit into the frames for protection and hanging. Fabric and photography, as well as drawings, paintings, etc. are appropriate. For more information, or to contribute your work, please contact [cc@bcuc.org](mailto:cc@bcuc.org)



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### Bells Corners United Church now has a Facebook page!

Watch for weekly updates of news and events at our church.

Our appreciation goes to Hazel Smith for this initiative. Contact Hazel if you would like your event posted, or information shared on Facebook.

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**MITTEN TREE:** Donations of hats, scarves and mittens to our mitten tree will go to the Carling Family Shelter for the Homeless and the Nepean Rideau Osgoode Community Resource Centre.

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Hunting for a Christmas present or stocking stuffer? Or perhaps a welcome holiday hostess gift? Then look no further than Multifaith Housing Initiative's *Gather Around the Table*, a compilation of tasty recipes submitted by local cooks – including some from BCUC! Books are available from the BCUC office for \$20 and all proceeds will support MHI's ongoing efforts to end homelessness in Ottawa.



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**Sunday Nite Lite is back in 2019! Programming information available soon!**

## Seasonal Thoughts and Prayers!



### *Make Room in Your Heart*

Dear friends,

Christmas is in our midst! We have waited and it has arrived, as it does every year. The anniversary of Jesus' birth brings us face to face with our Christmas traditions. Whether it is anticipated with light or heavy heart, we help give birth to Christmas. We bring Christmas in the lighting of candles, the writing of letters and cards, the singing of carols, the baking of cookies, the welcoming of friends and relatives into our homes, the remembering of treasured Christmases, the joys in wrapping and opening of presents. In the wonderful variety of these traditional rituals, we affirm once more our relationships - that we are connected.

A woman named Katherine wrote a letter to Bishop John Shelby Spong who asked him about the true meaning of Christmas. These were her questions: *What is it about this Jesus that you find so compelling? When I hear the Christmas story from the Bible I believe that I am listening to fairy tales. Stars do not announce the birth of a human being. Angels do not sing to hillside shepherds. Virgins do not conceive and give birth. Is there something behind the old mythology that I am missing?*

And here's an excerpt of Bishop Spong's response which I find so meaningful and relevant: *"The story of Christmas, as told by the gospel writers, has a meaning beyond the rational and a truth beyond the scientific. It points to a reality that no life touched by this Jesus could ever deny. The beauty of our Christmas story is bigger than our rational minds can embrace. For when this Jesus is known, when love, acceptance, and forgiveness are experienced, when we become whole, free and affirmed people, the heavens do sing "Glory to God in the Highest," and on earth there is "Peace and Good Will among Us All." Hence, we Christians rejoice in the transcendent beauty and wonder of this Christmas story. To those who have never stepped inside this experience we issue an invitation to come stand where we stand and look through our eyes at this babe of Bethlehem. Then perhaps they too will join those of us who read these Christmas stories year after year for one purpose only: to worship the Lord of life who still sets us free and who calls us to live, to love and to be all that we can be. That is why the Christmas invitation is so simple: Come, come, let us adore him."*

What is the meaning of Christmas for you? Why do you celebrate this yearly event? Why give so much time preparing for its coming? Because Christmas tells a story of hope, peace, joy and love. These are the very attributes of Emmanuel - God-with-us. We tell of God's love who came wrapped in swaddling clothes, a baby in a manger, and in that child we beheld something of the sacred - of the divine. The birth of Jesus answers a thousand years of asking, "God, how can we experience you?" When we tell the story, "for to you is born this day in the city of David . . ." we tell the story of God: *"This is where I am - in the lowly stable. I am present in Make room in your hearts - in humble hearts, in life lived in love, justice and compassion. Be present to one another. Be for each other a light in the darkness."* The Christmas story is the story of God, and it is the story of all humanity. For it is with and in all people that God dwells. We are the bearers of God's hope, peace, joy and love, of God's presence in the world. When we make room in our hearts, when we watch over each other in love, we bring God in the flesh. In our midst.

As we light the candles of Christmas, may they be for us a reminder that God's light has come! Let us find meaningful ways and opportunities to share the gifts of hope, peace, joy and love. May they be for us an invitation to let God's light shine forth from our lives and into the world.

On behalf of Ken, Justin and Jacob, I wish you all a blessed Christmas! - Rev. Kim

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Look for **'Keep Christ in Christmas' fridge magnets** for sale at \$5 each from the church office. Sales of these magnets, which can also be used on your car, your front door or as stocking stuffers, will go to fundraising for renewal of our Shalom Room.





## FAREWELL TO THE VALLEYMEN!

*Fond Memories*

**By: The Valleymen**

The Valley Men choir has been closely associated with BCUC for 25 years. The formation of this male-voice choir in 1994 was the brainchild of George Wallace. He realized that the BCUC choir director (Shirley Hughes) had recently retired, as had he (as assistant to Shirley and as a school teacher). The same applied to several men of the BCUC choir and of other choirs with which George was involved.

At that time the Newfoundland cod fishery had just collapsed and George's inspiration was to add 2 and 2. "Let's put a choir together and visit the small villages of Newfoundland, to bring a message of hope". He had contacts there and so we practiced through the summer of 1994 and eventually set off in September for Deer Lake. We were a small but enthusiastic



group of twelve singers with Shirley as accompanist, and we sang in various small out ports, all the way "down" (as the locals say) to the Great Northern Peninsula and over into Labrador. Those of us who toured Newfoundland still have vivid and happy memories of the experience.

This was intended to be a "one off" until someone said "let's do this again". So we arranged to sing in Northern Ontario in 1995, all the way to Hearst and Moosonee. After that, for the first 15 - 20 years, we usually had a tour outside the Eastern Ontario area every second year, interspersed with tours closer to home. During that time, we sang in P.E.I., Nova Scotia (three times), the Niagara peninsula, and the Eastern townships of Quebec (twice). More recently, as our willingness to drive long distances has lessened, our concerts have been at shorter distances from Ottawa.

From the beginning we paid all our own costs (transportation and accommodation), and suggested to our hosts that they put any funds raised to worthy local causes. We estimate that, during the lifetime of this choir, we raised somewhere in the region of \$80 -100k, for local food banks, roof funds etc. Many memorable concerts were in small rural churches (apart of course from concerts at BCUC), sometimes with audiences larger than recommended by the fire officials.

In 2004, George and Viola moved to Doon, ON. Keith Bailey was asked to take over as Director and a year or two later Shirley retired. Her replacement, Sarah Surjadinata, moved in quickly and smoothly so that the choir moved ahead without a hitch. More recently Sarah retired from the group, but we were very fortunate to have Cynthia

Watson stepping-in and Sandra Dean who took over as accompanist for the last two years. Keith recently announced that he intended to retire at the end of this 25th season. This caused a certain amount of "wailing and gnashing of teeth", until many of us realised that we too were ready to call it quits. There remains a small number of us who have been around for the whole 25 years and we can attest to what a great experience it has been.

About 60 men sang with the choir over the years. Several developed talents as soloists, instrumentalists, arrangers, and even composers. We sang at various times with violin, trumpet, guitars, and, most memorably, bagpipes; both large and small. (We still retain a library of several hundred bagpipe jokes, which we are willing to share with anyone interested).

It has been a wonderful 25 years, summed up succinctly by Denis Watson, who said "Let's celebrate 25 years of great singing and go out on a high note!" (some of us are more comfortable with low notes).

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## **SERVICE, OUTREACH AND SOCIAL ACTION** By: Alison Bridgewater

### **Interfaith Bridge Building**

On Saturday 29th September about 120 people from Bells Corners United Church and Jami Omar dined together in the gym at the mosque. Neighbours sat with neighbours and chatted amongst each other and made new friends. The catered dinner was a delicious spread of Somalian delicacies with fresh fruit and cakes for dessert. At the beginning of the evening a group of youngsters from the mosque sang 'O Canada' and BCUC presented the imams with a flower arrangement in thanks for the dinner. During the meal two representatives from the mosque and two from BCUC described their Canadian story. David Stafford and Vernon Sulway represented us and an Indian doctor and a

Somalian refugee represented the mosque. Nicole Beaudry made place mats and book marks and Jami Omar gave each guest a stone with thoughtful words imprinted on them. It was a great evening.

Please mark your calendars for Saturday January 19th from 5:30 to 7:30pm (you will need an early dinner) for an educational evening. Rev. Kim and Lorrie Lowes will talk about the Christian liturgical year and the Imams will talk about the Islamic year. We at SOSA encourage you to attend. It will take place at BCUC.

### SOSA Advent Project

This year we are focusing on financial donations to the victims of the tornado in Dunrobin. Cheques may be made payable to the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre with a note on the memo line 'counselling services team'. Grocery cards are very much appreciated too. To date we have collected cheques to the value of \$760 and \$200 in grocery cards. The project will last until Christmas. Thank you.

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## FINANCE UPDATE!

**By:** Bill Johnson, Chair Financial Management

This is an overview of the status of BCUC's Operating and Other funds to the end of November and a forecast to the end of December for the Operating Fund under the assumption of *business as usual* leading to *no deficit for 2018* (all figures unaudited).

Operating Fund	Jan. - Nov.	Dec.	Year-end	Budget/2018
	YTD	(est.)	(est.)	(planned)
Revenue \$	\$ 366,600	\$ 30,000	\$ 396,600	\$ 415,400
Expenses (*)	\$ 363,600	\$ 33,000	\$ 396,600	\$ 429,978
Surplus/(Deficit	\$ 3,000	(-\$ 3,000)	\$ 0	(-\$14,578)

Note (\*) – Expenses each month include notional monthly allocations for M&S that are accumulated each month and paid out in December (\$41,000).

Other Funds	Jan.1 Balance	Credit	Debit	Nov. 7 Balance
Directed Funds	\$ 26,038	\$ 37,844	(-\$40,624)	\$ 23,256
Bldg. Mtc. & Repair	\$ 16,109	\$ 5,875	(-\$ 4,617)	\$ 17,367
Capital Funds	\$ 116,400	\$ 181,173	(-\$274,576)	\$ 22,997
Memorial Fund	\$ 96,557 *	n/a		
Stinson Bequest	\$185,488 *	n/a	(-\$28,000)	\$157,488

(\*) Source: Audit Report Dec 31, 2017)

Please keep the needs of the Operating Fund in mind as you plan your donations for 2019!



### ROOF FUNDRAISER WITH EBATES.CA!

Sign up for a new account at [EBATES.ca](https://www.ebates.ca) and make a minimum purchase of \$25. You will get a \$5 bonus rebate on your purchase and BCUC will get \$10 for each new referral.

EBATES.ca is a great website that actually **pays you Cash Back every time you shop** online and works with over 750 stores that ship to Canada including Indigo.ca, Amazon.ca, eBay, Old Navy, Forever21 and Groupon! Check this link on the [BCUC.org](https://www.bcuc.org) web site for direct access and happy shopping!

## **FAMSAC - We Need Your Help! By: Glenna Jackson**

FAMSAC Christmas Hampers: Your donations of food, cash and assistance are really appreciated. We are now receiving requests for Christmas hampers. Please call 820-5428 if you require help or if you know someone who would benefit. We are hoping that your family/office/organization will contribute \$100 which will provide a family with food for a Christmas dinner (turkey, stuffing, potatoes, carrots etc.) as well as a week of meals. A receipt for income tax purposes will be issued for each donation. Your assistance is needed for the preparation of these hampers. Our Schedule is as follows:

- Tuesday, Dec.18th, 1:00-3:00 p.m. Packing the hampers
- Wednesday, Dec.19th, 11:00-3:00 p.m. Delivering hampers

These activities take place at St. Martin de Porres Church. Please sign the form at the Information desk if you are able to assist. With your help, many less fortunate families will have a Merry Christmas. A sincere thank you for your continued support of this local mission. Thankyou! Glenna Jackson 828-8525.

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**ECUMENICAL BREAKFAST 2019** - Yes it is that time again and this year it is being held at Christ Church Bells Corners (Anglican) on **Saturday, January 26th**. Please mark it on your calendar for starting your day with a super breakfast and/or volunteering with this event.

As per other years, there will be sign-up sheets for volunteering or making muffins, in the Main Hall

following Sunday services in January. There will also be a donation bottle for those unable to attend the event but wish to donate to our recipient group (more about this in the coming weeks).

Thank you,  
Nancy Wiles & Bev Wilcox



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