

NORTHMINSTER NEWS

February 2012

Upcoming Events

Annual General Meeting and Pot Luck Lunch after Church

February 26th 10:30

Palm Sunday

April 1st 10:30 am

Palm Sunday and the Story of Holy Week, 10:30 AM. Children and Youth will be invited to take part in the Palm Sunday Parade.

Seder Meal

April 5th 6:00 pm

Come for supper, and hear the story of Jesus' last meal that he shared with his disciples. We'll weave the story in and through our meal. Watch for sign up sheets to assist with set up or clean up, and to bring food such as nuts, dried fruit, cheese, pita, hummus, olives, roasted lamb, grape juice, etc.

Good Friday

April 6th

Hosted by Symons Valley United Church

Time to be announced

Easter Sunday

April 8th 10:30 am

Easter Celebration with Communion

Silent Auction

April 21st 6:00 pm



REFLECTION

Bright orange paint marks out the exact place where work is needed. In the Fall, as the city was preparing to redo the sidewalks outside the church, orange paint markings appeared where surveyors determined necessary points. Anytime we see markings like this, there is no mistaking the intention or the purpose of the colourful lines and lettering. Soon the surface here will be dug up and whatever lies beneath will be replaced, repaired or removed.

I wonder whether Lent has the same sense of urgency and purpose as that implied by the bright orange surveyors paint? And if in contemporary culture it doesn't any more, why is that? With so much that needs to be put right both above and beneath the surface of our life you would think that Lent would be grabbed by society.

Lent is the time when Jesus marks us out for renewal. As disciples we expect our attention to be drawn prayerfully to freshly marked out areas of orange paint which frame those aspects of our being which are most in need of renovation or refreshing. Sometimes fresh paint will be applied on top of many layers of faded orange; some areas of weakness persist and require constant attention. Elsewhere the vivid orange paint will take us by surprise. God yearns to mark out the hope and expectation that love longs to get below the surface and put things right. The God of renewal does not ignore our anguish or complacency. We might be tempted to leave things as they are within us, but God knows that we deserve so much better than that.

Blessings to you on the Lenten journey, as you prayerfully seek the places in your life that need a touch up, a re-creation, or a complete resurrection. And remember, your church family is here to journey with you!

Rev. Nancy

BAPTISM AND MEMBERSHIP

Are you interested in celebrating baptism for yourself or your little one? Want affirm your belonging to this congregation and the United Church of Canada by becoming a member? To explore this further, please contact Rev. Nancy as soon as possible! Dates currently available include March 18 and April 22 or 29.

COMMUN-I-CARE MINISTRIES

In 2001 the Commun-I-Care Ministries program was accepted by the Board of Northminster United Church and became one of the Pastoral Care vehicles to reach out to our members and adherents.

It is simple and effective. There are three call outs, by telephone each year (February, May and October). C-I-C is the friendly communication to bring church news to you and share your joys and concerns. If you have needs which you would like to have referred (request for prayers, contact by the Minister, or other guidance) your caller will confidentially refer your concern with your permission. At the time of each call-out, if no one answers, the caller will leave a message. If there is no return call, there will be one more call with message. That may answer your needs, but feel free to return the second call.

There are a few things this ministry does not do:

1. Make calls outside Calgary limits, except in rare circumstances.
2. Call members who have requested to have their names removed from our call list.
3. Request funds or volunteer services.
4. Distribute information from the Board or single individuals. There are other means for that type of distribution.

We are not counsellors or social workers. Such needs would be referred to more qualified people.

All of the individuals in this Pastoral Care program are volunteers. Some have been involved from the beginning!

This is a brief description of C-I-C. If you would like to discuss specific points you may find confusing, feel free to contact one of the three co-ordinators: Darlene (403-282-3240), Donna Munro (403-274-0312), or Carol (403-275-2027).

BOOK LIST FOR LENT AND EASTER – for personal study during Lent and beyond. Go to www.UCRDstore.ca or call 1 800 288 7365 for more information or to order.

“I Am Listening: Daily Reflections for Lent” By Betty Lynn Schwab, ed. Contains biblically based reflections that span life experience, ages, and backgrounds, and calls readers to listen with their hearts and hear the voice of God. \$12.95 print, \$7.95 e-book.

“Rising with the Morning Star: Daily Reflections for Lent” By Betty Lynn Schwab, ed. Readers travel with and toward Christ, the Morning Star, and so participate in God’s abundant healing of soul, community, and creation. \$10.95 print, \$5.95 e-book.

“Mosaic: When God Uses All The Pieces” By Shane Stanford. Examine how God uses the broken pieces of our lives to reframe our purpose, turning our discarded hopes and dreams into something beautiful and useful – a mosaic in with God uses all the pieces. Seven part study, for group or individual use. \$9.99 print.

“Lent for Everyone: Mark, Year B: A Daily Devotional” By N.T. Wright. This book is a gentle guide through the Lenten season, from Ash Wednesday through the week after Easter. Includes scripture translation, brief reflection, and daily prayer. \$16.95 print.

And for children...

“The Easter Story” By Brian Wildsmith. The story of Easter as told through the eyes of the donkey that carried Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Suitable for children ages 2 to 5. \$10.95

“The Lion Storyteller Easter Book” By Bob Hartman. This collection of 23 stories includes all the Bible accounts of the events of the first Easter from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday and the encounters of Jesus’ friends and followers after his resurrection. Great for children ages 5 to 7. \$11.50

GUEST SPEAKERS FROM “Home Instead”

Home Instead is a for-profit organization throughout North America that assists families with supporting elderly loved-ones with assistance or companionship. They also work to assist seniors by connecting them with needed resources and support networks in the city.

Perhaps you are a senior wanting to maintain independence in your own home, or you need occasional support or companionship in the facility where you live. Or maybe you are younger and are looking for ways to support an aging parent, or want to begin the conversation with them about transitions. Join Rev. Nancy and staff from “Home Instead” for coffee **Saturday, March 31st at 10:00 AM** at the church. We will cover topics such as how to start conversation in your family regarding sensitive life topics – how to approach difficult topics, maximize independence, seek help and support, avoid conflict amidst family members, plan ahead, share responsibilities with siblings, and keep communication open. Bring friends, family, neighbours, and others who may be interested. All are welcome.

LENT SERMON SERIES- Big Christian Words

Born again! Repentance! Salvation! Mercy! Righteousness! These are just some of the words that can confront us when we talk with a friend or colleague of an evangelical tradition. Words like these can leave us feeling uncomfortable or confused because they are not part of our normal vocabulary in the United Church. During the month of March, Rev. Nancy will help us explore the meaning of these words, their use, and perhaps how we can redefine them and reclaim them in such a way that they have more appropriate meanings and truths in our own tradition.

BAG LUNCH STUDY DURING LENT - U.N.I.T.E.D.

Michael W. Foss in his book “Power Surge” (Fortress Press, 2000) describes a movement in congregations from a membership model to a discipleship model. As part of this there are six marks of discipleship which you are invited to explore with us: **Uplifted** through daily prayer, **Nourished** in weekly worship, **Informed** through scripture, **Taking** God’s love to others, **Engaged** in spiritual relationships, and **Donating** back God’s gifts of time, talent, and treasure. Join us for three Sundays in March for about an hour – beginning at noon. Whether you have participated in the church for years, or are contemplating membership here at Northminster – this is a conversation not to miss. March 11, 18 and 25.



SCRAPBOOKING

Our Scrapbooking Group meets once a month to preserve memories and to make new ones. Details are available from Tracey Abbott and everyone is always welcome. The group meets one Friday night a month at 7 downstairs. The next dates are: February 24th, March 30th, April 27th, May 25th, June 22nd

CHOIR

Our choir provides leadership in music ministry for church services and special occasions. Practice is Thursday evenings – 7:30 – 9:00. We encourage those with an interest in music and singing to join us. We are currently looking for a new choir director – Inquiries can be made to Rev. Nancy or any Board Member.

UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

The UCW is for women seeking companionship, fellowship and spiritual guidance in our busy lives. We warmly welcome new members. Meetings are generally held on the fourth Wednesday of every month. Contact Martha Webster for more information. Plans are being made for a special celebration of 50 years of UCW in 2012. We are compiling a list of Charter Members at Northminster.

BOOK CLUB

Love to read? Enjoy engaging discussions? Want to meet new people? Then book club is for you. We meet the first Saturday of the month at 9 AM. Upcoming titles:

March 3 – Sarah's Key by Tatiana de Rosnay

Mar 31 – The hundred-foot Journey by Richard C. Morais

May 5 – A Dublin Student Doctor by Patrick Taylor

June 2 – Left Neglected by Lisa Genova

Oct 6 – Study in Sherlock by Laurie R. King



SENIORS AND FRIENDS

Get together for cards, games, laughter and refreshments on the first Wednesday afternoon of every month at 1PM. Information from Helen Thresher.

HEALING MINISTRIES

Our Prayer Chain, Prayer Shawl Ministry, and Commun-I-Care volunteers ensure that spiritual needs are met. Come and volunteer to knit, pray, or phone. Call the office.

BABIES, CHILDREN, AND YOUTH



Babies, children and youth are an important part of the life of Northminster. Programs to inspire and nurture spirituality are available most Sundays, and on special occasions throughout the year we hold fun-filled gatherings. Our youth group is very active with exciting events. For more details on all these programs, please go to our website.

HOLY GROUNDS



Every Friday morning at 10 AM you are invited to stop by the nursery upstairs for coffee, tea and conversation. This is a free-wheeling discussion. Sometimes funny, always interesting. Stop by for a cuppa with Rev. Nancy.

BROWN BAGGING IT FOR KIDS

Northminster is starting a new out reach program. This program will have us make and provide nutritious lunches for 15 children at Buchanan School a few times a month. If you are interested in helping with this program please put your name on the sign up sheet in the large gym or contact Ernie Abbott at 403-274-9742

SILENT AUCTION

Northminster United Church is holding a silent auction on April 21, 2012 as its major fundraising event to support the Benevolent Fund at Northminster. This fund is used though the year to support several community outreach projects which provide assistance to low income families in North Central Calgary.

In 2011 Northminster spent over **\$6,900** in support of these programs and over **\$25,000** in the last 4 years. In 2012, we will be adding a school lunch program to the outreach offered by the church and funded through our Benevolent Fund.

In addition, Northminster continues to offer subsidized space to several community groups, including a daycare, AA groups and others. These programs provide services and enrichment to the residents in our neighbourhood.

Proceeds from the Silent Auction on April 21st will assist Northminster United Church to continue to offer and support these programs providing valuable assistance to individuals and families in the community. Any donation you or your organization can make for this worthwhile cause is paramount to these programs continuing and is gratefully received.

With your help we can make a difference for the disadvantaged in our community!

LET'S GO TO CUBA!

We are proposing an amazing opportunity to travel to Cuba February 14 to 24, 2013 as an awareness raising trip, led by an experienced travel guide and United Church lay minister Doris Kizinna. The purpose will be to learn about the lives of people in that area of the world, build solidarity and friendship with the people we would meet from the churches there, and have opportunity for some hands on experiences at schools, hospitals, and orphanages. Cost will be approximately \$2600 including flight, accommodation, meals, and transportation and activities in Cuba. Youth at least 14 years of age and adults are encouraged to declare their interest as soon as possible to either Ernie Abbott or Rev Nancy, and we will arrange a meeting to discuss more details. There is space for 14 to 19 people.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH – don't forget to register now if you want to go to Camp Kasota this summer! Financial funding may be available from the church as well. Talk to Rev. Nancy or a member of the Board for more details, and go to www.campkasotawest.com to register for camp.

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Thanks to everyone that bought a Poinsettia to beautify our sanctuary over the Christmas season. It's wonderful to have that to look at over the holiday's. This year we had 46 Poinsettia's, almost a record, and they were beautiful. Red Rose Florist sells us the plants at cost so the church sees a small amount. This year \$200 was put in the general funds for the church. Thanks to Joanne Hiebert for helping with the watering and looking after them.

Lorie Haydu

Emergency Food Hampers

During 2011 emergency food hampers were delivered to 10 families. These requests come from North Central Resources. When they have exhausted all other means of getting food for families they call Northminster to see what we have in the cupboard. Our cupboard always has supplies, but sometimes more than others. We encourage you, if possible, to buy a little extra at the grocery store and put it into our Food Collection box that is always at the 32nd avenue entrance. Every little bit helps. We always like to include some hygiene items in with the hamper so toilet paper, toothpaste and toothbrushes, 2 in1 shampoo, and dish soap are always welcome. Thanks so much for your continued support of this most important Outreach to our community.

Food Hamper Story – during the summer of 2011 we had a call from Aspen Family Services about a Grandma and 3 kids that needed support over the summer months. The kids were in a Breakfast and Lunch program at school so Grandma was able to stretch the budget for dinner. During the summer break they didn't have that program and Grandma didn't know how she was going to feed these 3 kids 3 meals a day. Northminster didn't hesitate to say YES of course we could lend them a hand. The first of July and the first of August we took them a food hamper from our cupboards, as well as supplied them with a \$100 food voucher from Superstore. In August when the hamper was delivered the 3 kids quickly came out of the townhouse to help carry in the groceries from the car. The littlest one, about 6 yrs old, looked up at me and said "Did you bring us some butter?" I had to say "NO, sorry there isn't any butter in there, but why do you ask". She looked at me with this sad look and said "Have you ever had popcorn without butter." Grandma had made them popcorn and they were watching a movie, but there wasn't anything to put on the popcorn. Needless to say I went to Superstore and bought them 2 pounds of butter and a few "other treats" to have while they watched the movie. When I went back to the house to deliver it you would have thought I had given them the world. They were all so excited (obviously it wasn't the first time they had eaten popcorn with nothing on it) and you would have thought they had been given the world. It's the little things that we do for these people in need that makes such a difference. Grandma was quick to thank Northminster United Church and the generous congregation for their donation of food and the food vouchers. It took a load off of her....made the kids happy and ensured that they were getting 3 decent meals a day.

Lorie Haydu

Community BBQ

In September we had a Community BBQ at the church. It was a wonderful success. Through different ways of getting the message out we invited the neighbourhood to a BBQ. We estimated we had about 100 people from the community. We BBQ'd hotdogs, hamburgers, had salads and dessert. There were some activities that were held to help people get to know one another, there was a bouncy castle for the kids (they thought that was a blast) , and a whole lot of food was eaten. Nancy had just started with Northminster and it gave her the opportunity to see some of the things that Northminster has been doing to get out into the neighbourhood and get to know those that live around us. As a Mission and Outreach committee we hope that we can continue to do these sorts of activities and help the community get to know us and what we have to offer. We would like to thank the many people that came out to help make this a success.

Christmas Hampers

In conjunction with North Central Resources we were able to supply enough food for 10 Christmas hampers to families in our neighbourhood that were in need. Your very generous donations had the boxes overflowing and the people from North Central were amazed at how much they had to load out of the church and into their offices. We also supplied them with a \$50 coop food voucher for each of the hampers to enable the families to get a turkey and some fresh food for their Christmas dinner. Please know Northminster, that you make a difference in our neighbourhood.

Aspen Christmas

This year with Aspen Family Services we partnered up with them to help with their Christmas celebrations. We supplied \$50 gift cards per child so that the counsellors at the group home could go and buy gifts for the kids that live there (currently 6). They know the kids so well that it was decided that was the best way to get the kids what they need and would want. In addition to that the counsellors thought they would like to help the kids understand that Christmas is not only about receiving but giving as well. We supplied the group home with two \$25 gift cards for each child so they could do some shopping for others. At the home they had a gift exchange between the kids so one \$25 gift card was to buy whoever's name they got a gift for under the tree. Luckily all of the kids had a place to go this year at Christmas so the other \$25 gift card had to be used to go and buy their sponsor home (where they were going for Christmas) a gift. Whether that was treats, or something else specific was left up to them but that was their responsibility. We also supplied the house with 2 coop food vouchers for them to have a "Christmas dinner" before they all went their separate ways for the holiday. The staff at the group home were thrilled that we assisted them with doing all this and the kids were so excited to be able to do a bit of shopping themselves. The other thing that Northminster did was supply them with some baked treats for several weeks before Christmas. **A HUGE THANKYOU** to all you wonderful people from the congregation that did some baking for us to deliver to the house. The kids waited patiently for the treats and of course thoroughly enjoyed every mouthful we are told.

Chili Dinner and Zoo Lights

Again this year (this was the 3rd time) we partnered up with North Central Resources to hold a "Chili Dinner and Zoo Lights" trip. NCR was able to get a bus and the Zoo supplied them free entrance tickets into see the Zoo Lights. We made Chili, had buns and vegetables, and again our wonderful congregation supplied dessert with baking. We had about 40 people from the community come and enjoy the dinner and then hop on the bus to go to the zoo. It wasn't a bitterly cold night this year like it has been in the past which was nice. We had a mom with 2 kids tell us that they wait for this every year as it is part of their Christmas celebration, it allows them to get out and enjoy some of the spirit.

Your Mission and Outreach committee would like to extend a really big Thank You to everyone for your continued support. When we look back Northminster has embarked on a lot of activities in 2011 that make a difference in our community. Whether you donated food for the hampers, come and help at some of our activities, baked for the many requests that we have made, or put an extra dollar in the Benevolent fund we want you know that you have made a difference in someone's life. We look forward to doing more of the same in 2012. If you would like to get involved in Mission and Outreach please don't hesitate to make yourself known to one of the committee members. We would love to have you!

Northminster Family 5 Pin Bowling Event

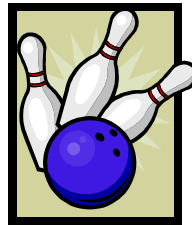
April 15th from 4 to 6 pm

2 games with shoe rental \$11.00

or

2 hours with shoe rental \$17.00

Please contact Lynn Gillies Westbrook for sign-up at 403-474-4994



Volunteers Needed!

Ushers

People to serve Communion

Sound System help

Update the Centre Street sign

Take a turn at serving coffee

Spares for tellers

Please let the church office know if you can spare an hour each month to help.

This newsletter is published by Northminster United Church

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Northminster News is published three times a year by the Unified Board and issues a one page newsletter outlining the Christmas services in November. It is available at no charge from the church, by mail or by email.

If you have a submission that you would like to see in the newsletter, please send it to Leanne Demerais at communications@northminster.ca.