

The Voice



December 2010

A Message from The Chair of Council

Like everyone else who knew him I was shocked and saddened at the sudden death of Rev. Gary Redcliffe. While his stay at The Donway Covenant was short he had a significant impact. Gary believed that the most important pillars of the church were Pastoral Care, Christian Education and Human Rights. Three of the recommendations he had for council, which I think he felt would not only pave the way for Rev. Palin's ministry, but also were important to the success of our church were:

- We needed to increase our outreach activities.
- We should be open to the marriage of people of all sexual orientations.
- Our Pastoral Care Committee needed to be represented on Council.

I am sure he would be pleased to know that all of these suggestions have now been acted upon.

I am grateful to the members of council and in particular the committee chairs, for the many hours of dedication and hard work they have devoted to some very difficult decisions we have had to make this past year. The hard work and long hours that many people devoted to this year's highly successful Fall Sale led by Mr. Organization, Ted Reeve, were very much appreciated. The new members of our staff have blended well with the talented and dedicated staff that we are so fortunate to have.

As we near the end of another year we give thanks for being able to live in Canada where most of us enjoy a relatively prosperous life. We are able to enjoy the pleasant surroundings, peace and safety of the Don Mills community. We pray for a resolution to the many conflicts in the world, the injustices that still exist within Canada, the homeless and hungry in Toronto, and for those who are grieving and struggling within our own congregation. The Christmas Season is a good time to reach out to the lonely and less fortunate and why not invite them to join us at one of the special worship services.

On behalf of Marian and myself we wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Chair of Council

Norm Childerhose

The Angel of January.

The angel of January teaches us to look within, to take stock of ourselves and our lives.

The January angel keeps us company as we ponder over those long, cold winter nights, helping us to be honest with ourselves and to be patient at the same time. Conveying the wisdom of an elder, the January angel takes our hand as we seek to glean understanding from our lessons from the past year. With support such as this, we can give ourselves both recognition and admonition in their turn. With this help, we are able to chart a new course or alter our present one.

We seek and receive the companionship of the angel of January to warm us through the winter of our introspection.

Editor's Note

I recently returned from a visit to Calgary to visit a friend, then to Vancouver to see our son, his wife, and 10 month old daughter. I could not imagine a better trip; the scenery in both places ---the Rockies and the west coast---is incredibly beautiful. I am constantly reminded of how very lucky we are to live such a peaceful and prosperous country. And warm relationships with family members and friends both near and far are what make our lives meaningful. I don't need anything else for Christmas ! Even if you are not gathering around a big table for a big turkey dinner, you can be surrounded by the Christmas spirit by going to the various holiday events at the church, where the warmth of the season is shared with your many church friends. Don't you feel sorry for those people who only experience Christmas by shopping and eating and drinking too much ? How can they go through the whole season without hearing the story of the baby in the stable and the shepherds and angels and singing Joy to the World and Silent Night and all those other wonderful old traditions, all based on that First Christmas ?

Have a happy Christmas season and a healthy New Year !

Jill Reeve - Editor

Advent Christmas at The Donway Covenant

Waiting, Welcoming, Watching. Hospitality and the Art of Offering Refuge

Every year, Christians around the world prepare to welcome Jesus. Here at DCUC, we're exploring what "welcoming Jesus" means for us in today's world – and what God has taught us about hospitality by welcoming us at our birth in to God's world.

Sunday, December 12, we'll read the dramatic story of how Jesus and Mary and Joseph had to flee for their lives from King Herod – what would we do if Jesus' family asked us for help as they tried to escape?

Sunday, December 19, we'll enjoy special music the Choir has prepared and we'll celebrate that ALL of us are welcomed by Jesus – if we ever wondered what true hospitality looks like, we need only look to Jesus, and then find ways to celebrate his birth into our lives by welcoming "the least" among us into our church, our homes, our community, our country.

Sunday, December 24 at 7pm we will sing traditional Christmas carols and watch a not-so-traditional Christmas pageant presented by the children and youth, followed by Communion. Then later, at 10pm, we will have a quiet and contemplative Communion service in the last few hours before the Hope, Peace, Joy and Love of Christmas Day dawns on us.

Sunday, December 26, we will have a service of poetry, scripture, and lots of carol singing; then **Sunday, January 2, 2011,** we'll welcome the New Year and celebrate God's gift of another year of life here on God's Earth.

We truly hope you will feel welcome to join us.

Message from The Minister - Giving Thanks for Christmas Present

This church, this community of faith, is very actively living out God's vision of shalom in preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ. So far, to celebrate Christmas, this church:

- had a fabulous Ladies' Lunch with a guest speaker from Grandmothers to Grand mothers, in support of the Stephen Lewis Foundation fighting AIDS
- had a Christmas party for children and youth, and bought beautiful crafts the children and youth made for Christmas gifts
- wrote hundreds more letters for Amnesty than usual at a write-a-thon, and sold gifts supporting Amnesty International
- bought handicrafts made by Haitian artisans supporting Haitian re-development
- hosted a discussion of Oiko-Credit – a micro-lending bank supporting economic development for the poorest around the world – and bought shares in this bank so that more people will have access to the capital they need to create small businesses
- bought Fairly Traded handicrafts promoting economic justice for workers in developing countries.

Before Christmas is over two weeks from now, we will have:

- had a special Sunday worship service featuring Christmas choir music
- focussed on the deep spiritual meaning of hospitality and making room for Jesus
- delivered dozens of plates of homemade Christmas cookies to encourage people
- staged a Christmas pageant written by DCUC children, youth, and Alcina
- remembered Jesus' life as we celebrated Communion at the pageant and again at a service of contemplative worship later on Christmas Eve
- celebrated Jewish history at Hanukkah, as Jesus would have.

AND kept all of our regular church activities going

AND shared pastoral care and joyous fellowship with each other and with newcomers to the church in innumerable shared acts of kindness and love.

DCUC is a vibrant community living a life of discipleship and reaching out in faith.

Happy Christmas one and all – hope to see you celebrating faith at DCUC soon.

Rev. Jennifer Palin

A Message from the Sunday School Co-ordinator

It's been a great start to the year with the children's ministry. I felt immediately welcomed as a part of the DCUC community and have been met with a lot of support from parents and the congregation in general. It has been wonderful meeting all the families here at the church and all the energetic spirits, young and old. The children and youth have been such a pleasure to work with as we went from week to week and planned special events together.

Our Sundays have been filled with a balance of learning the story and applying it by making a craft or playing games. You may have seen some samples of our handiwork hanging on the CE office door. We've been exploring the stories and themes brought up by the Song of Faith series that have been the source of the Sunday sermons these past few months.

After a successful Hallowe'en party full of fright and delight, in which the youth created a haunted house for our adult guests, we're now looking forward to the Christmas party, the pageant, and the upcoming, festive season. In harmony with the Advent theme of Hospitality and Refugees, we'll be taking a look at some of the social issues that the traditional Christmas Story brings up, sharing what we've learned, and seeing how we can all give back to the community, in spite of our age. For example, we're raising money to buy a part of an OikoCredit share in order to help businesses in developing countries by selling crafts that we've carefully hand-made.

Merry Christmas!

Alcina Chiu, Sunday School Coordinator

The Church in Winter...

Worship Service:	Sundays at 10:30a.m.
Sunday School:	During the 10:30a.m. service
Office Hours:	Monday to Friday, 9a.m. - 4p.m. Office will be closed: Thursday. Dec. 23 to Jan. 5th (inclusive)..

The Staff

Minister:	Rev. Jennifer Palin
Minister Emeritus:	Rev. Dr. Donald Ray
Music Director:	Daniel Rubinoff
Sunday School Coordinator:	Alcina Chiu
Church Administrator:	Jaren McLeod
Website:	www.donwaycovenant.com

The Christmas Truce by David G. Stratman

It was December 25, 1914, only 5 months into World War I. German, British, and French soldiers, already sick and tired of the senseless killing, disobeyed their superiors and fraternized with "the enemy" along two-thirds of the Western Front (a crime punishable by death in times of war). German troops held Christmas trees up out of the trenches with signs, "Merry Christmas."

"You no shoot, we no shoot." Thousands of troops streamed across a no-man's land strewn with rotting corpses. They sang Christmas carols, exchanged photographs of loved ones back home, shared rations, played football, even roasted some pigs. **Soldiers embraced men they had been trying to kill a few short hours before. They agreed to warn each other if the top brass forced them to fire their weapons, and to aim high.**

A shudder ran through the high command on either side. Here was disaster in the making: soldiers declaring their brotherhood with each other and refusing to fight. Generals on both sides declared this spontaneous peacemaking to be treasonous and subject to court martial. By March 1915 the fraternization movement had been eradicated and the killing machine put back in full operation. By the time of the armistice in 1918, fifteen million would be slaughtered.

The following is a song written by a soldier in 1916.

My name is Francis Toliver, I come from Liverpool.
Two years ago the war was waiting for me after school.
To Belgium and to Flanders, to Germany to here,
I fought for King and country I love dear.

'Twas Christmas in the trenches, where the frost so bitter hung.
The frozen fields of France were still, no Christmas song was sung.
Our families back in England were toasting us that day,
Their brave and glorious lads so far away.

I was lying with my messmate on the cold and rocky ground,
When across the lines of battle came a most peculiar sound.
Says I, "Now listen up, me boys!" each soldier strained to hear,
As one young German voice sang out so clear.

"He's singing bloody well, you know!" my partner says to me.
Soon, one by one, each German voice joined in harmony.
The cannons rested silent, the gas clouds rolled no more,
As Christmas brought us respite from the war.

As soon as they were finished and a reverent pause was spent,
"God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen" struck up some lads from Kent.
The next they sang was "Stille Nacht," "'Tis 'Silent Night,'" says I,
And in two tongues one song filled up that sky.

"There's someone coming towards us!" the front line sentry cried.
All sights were fixed on one lone figure trudging from their side.
His truce flag, like a Christmas star, shone on that plain so bright,
As he bravely strode unarmed into the night.

Then one by one on either side walked into No Man's Land,
With neither gun nor bayonet we met there hand to hand.
We shared some secret brandy and wished each other well,
And in a flare lit soccer game we gave 'em hell.

We traded chocolates, cigarettes, and photographs from home.
These sons and fathers far away from families of their own.
Young Sanders played his squeezebox and they had a violin,
This curious and unlikely band of men.

Soon daylight stole upon us and France was France once more.
With sad farewells we each began to settle back to war.
But the question haunted every heart that lived that wondrous night:
"Whose family have I fixed within my sights?"

'Twas Christmas in the trenches where the frost so bitter hung.
The frozen fields of France were warmed as songs of peace were sung.
For the walls they'd kept between us to exact the work of war,
Had been crumbled and were gone forevermore.

My name is Francis Toliver, in Liverpool I dwell,
Each Christmas come since World War I, I've learned its lessons well,
That the ones who call the shots won't be among the dead and lame,
And on each end of the rifle we're the same.

Spirit of Math

Perhaps you have wondered what this program is all about, especially when you see all those children pouring into the CE building on weeknights. These tenants have been with us for several years now. The program was developed by Charles Ledger, a teacher in North York, about 20 years ago, to offer enriched math to students who found the normal school curriculum not challenging enough. It is not a tutoring program. High performance math students are accepted on the basis of a personal interview and past achievements (B+ marks or above). According to their website, there are over a dozen locations in the GTA, plus others in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Ottawa, and one in New Jersey. At our church location there are 140 children, from Grade 1 to Grade 9. They rent three classrooms, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 6:15, and on Wednesday, also at 4:30. There are children on a waiting list. When I have been at the church on those evenings, I am impressed with the enthusiasm of these kids, of all ethnic backgrounds, as they run into class. There go the scholarship winners of tomorrow!

Fractured Christmas Carols as Understood by Children

In addition to: “While Shepherds Washed Their Socks By Night” there are....

1. Deck the Halls with Buddy Holly.
2. We three kings of porridge and tar.
3. On the first day of Christmas my tulip gave to me.
4. Later on we'll perspire, as we dream by the fire.
5. Noel. Noel, Barney's the king of Israel.
6. With the jelly toast proclaim.
7. Sleep in heavenly peas.
8. In the meadow we can build a snowman, Then pretend that he is sparse and brown.
9. Oh, what fun it is to ride with one horse, soap and hay.
10. Good tidings we bring to you and your kid.

Message From the Music Director

The busy Christmas season is upon us and the music program is humming along nicely these days! Recently the choir welcomed baritone Mark Gough, who is lending his musical talents during the Christmas season. A highlight of our Advent services was a duet rendition of Franck's Panis Angelicus, which featured Mark and our splendid soprano soloist Meghan Fleet.

The choir is busy preparing the December 19th cantata service. This year our offering features folk music from several different cultures. Our goal is to offer a universal Christmas message that reflects our multicultural mosaic. Special thanks to all choir members who have participated in extra rehearsals in order to prepare for all of our special Advent and Christmas music.

We are thrilled to have welcomed Bill Graham (tenor) and Dereck Lumb (tenor) into the choir. The choir is actually the largest it has been in my nine years as Music Director and this makes us all very happy. We are still looking for some new voices – remember, no experience necessary and we have lots of fun!

I am looking forward to helping Alcina musically with the Christmas Pageant. I think it will be a very interesting one, and I hope we can find a few more young people to participate on Christmas eve! The special communion service will feature the beautiful soprano voice of Meghan Fleet.

A special thank you to Sigrid Angell, for making our first Music on the Donway concert such a success. We raised over \$1,000.00 for the church and the vocal music of Leonard Whiting and Edward Franko was delightful. Their showmanship really won over the crowd. Stay tuned for our next concert entitled, "For the Love of Jazz," a special Valentine's Day concert featuring the beautiful jazz vocal artistry of Terra Hazelton. She is backed by Mark Eisenman on piano and Steve Wallace on bass. These musicians have performed here in the past and they are returning by special request. I hope to play a few tunes on the sax with these great musicians. Please mark Saturday, 12, 2011 on your calendar for this great concert. Merry Christmas, Donway!

Daniel Rubinoff
Music Director

Music on The Donway
Presents

For the Love of

Jazz

Featuring

Terra Hazelton,

Vocalist

Steve Wallace, Bassist

Mark Eisenman, Pianist

Daniel Rubinoff, guest Saxophone

Saturday Feb 12, 2011,

7:30pm

Tickets: \$20/adults, \$12/students/kids. Call 416-444-8444 for tickets

The Donway Covenant United Church 230 The Donway West, (Don Mills & Lawrence) 0

Jesus Was a Woman

There were 3 good arguments that Jesus was Black:

1. He called everyone Brother.
2. He liked Gospel.
3. He couldn't get a fair trial.

But then there were 3 equally good arguments that Jesus was Jewish:

1. He went into His Fathers business.
2. He lived at home until he was 33.
3. He was sure his Mother was a virgin and his mother was sure he was God.

But then there were 3 equally good arguments that Jesus was Italian:

1. He talked with his hands.
2. He had wine with every meal.
3. He used olive oil.

But then there were 3 equally good arguments that Jesus was a Californian:

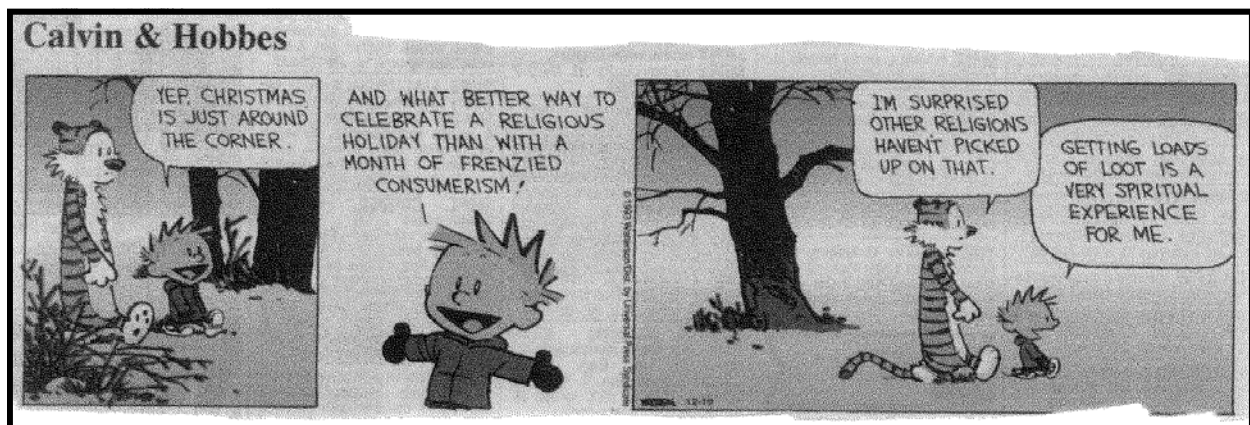
1. He never cut his hair.
2. He walked around barefoot all the time.
3. He started a new religion.

But then there were 3 equally good arguments that Jesus was Irish:

1. He never got married.
2. He was always telling stories.
3. He loved green pastures.

But the most compelling evidence of all - 3 proofs that Jesus was a woman:

1. He had to feed a crowd at a moment's notice when there was no food.
 2. He kept trying to get a message across to a bunch of men who just didn't get it.
 3. Even when He was dead, He had to get up because there was more work for Him to do.
- Amen!!!



From the Outreach Committee

Our Purpose: Following our call as disciples of Jesus Christ to serve the marginalized and vulnerable.

This term has been a very productive one for our committee. We have met regularly, attended Church Council meetings, supported the Film Fest-Soup Suppers and instituted “The Living Room”, Drop-In for coffee, conversation and board games. The former took place on November 3, 10, 17, 24 and December 1, 2010. Titles of movies were: Double Happiness, Toronto Stories, Little Mosque on the Prairies, Passage to Ottawa, and The Sweet Hereafter. A total of up to 40 people attended the 4 p.m. and the 7 p.m. showings.

Films will be shown, during Lent, on March 30, April 6, 13, 20, 2011. Watch for flyers, the church bulletin and the Hi-Rise magazine for titles of films, in February and March.

“The Living Room” attracted members of the congregation, the community and ESL students. These drop-ins occurred from 2-4 p.m. on September 24, October 8, November 5, 19, December 3. All who attended enjoyed the camaraderie. Dates for the next “The Living Room”, Drop-In for coffee, conversation, board games will be available in January 2011.

The Advent project, Oikocredit was off to a good start with announcements in the bulletin and in church, the Fair Trade items from Haiti for sale and the members from Oikocredit who came to answer our questions and distribute materials for us to read.

It was delightful to see the children and young people selling handmade Christmas decorations and to learn that they plan to sell hot chocolate and cookies on December 12 to bring their earnings to \$250 to invest in Oikocredit. Fair Trade vendors will be available on December 12 to sell fair trade items for Christmas

Look for more information, in the coming months, about the Fair Trade Fair to be held on May 14, 2011.

The Amnesty International letter signing sessions have shown positive results. These sessions continue on the third Sunday of each month.

None of these activities could take place without dedicated volunteers. We are grateful for the kindness of all of those who have made these events possible.

Committee members

Don Cowan
Helen Guillet
Lorna Lampkin
Marie Harvey, Chairperson

The Donway Covenant United Church Advent Project - Oikocredit

For the second year, our Advent Project is to raise funds to invest in Oikocredit. For over 30 years Oikocredit has been investing in the future of people, by giving access to capital mainly in developing countries. Oikocredit is a financial cooperative, with investors who are willing to invest with acceptable risk, while at the same time fighting poverty. Alongside institutional investors such as churches, banks and organizations from around the globe, 30,000 individuals support Oikocredit through their investments and encouragement to develop sustainable ways to fight poverty.

Oikocredit has been recognized for its contribution to socially responsible investing, receiving the CGAP award for integrating environmental, social and governance factors into investment decisions. This award honours the “best in class” microfinance investors, with its project partners and other industry groups. *For more information* about Oikocredit go to their website or pick up brochures from the display in the hall near the office and the library.

Each share is \$250. If you feel that you can buy a share, please do! If you would like to contribute toward a share please contribute in \$20 increments. Place your contribution in the special envelope, which you will find in the bulletin, during Advent or deliver to the office during the week. Thank you for caring.

- The Outreach Committee

Here's a Woman fighting Terrorism With Microloans

By Nicholas D. Kristof

An old friend of mine here fights terrorists, but not the way you're thinking. She could barely defeat a truculent child in hand-to-hand combat, and if she ever picked up an AK-47 — well, you'd pray it was unloaded.

Roshaneh Zafar is an American-educated banker who fights extremism with microfinance. She has dedicated her life to empowering some of Pakistan's most impoverished women and giving them the tools to run businesses of their own. The United States should learn from warriors like her.

Bullets and drones may kill terrorists, but Roshaneh creates jobs and educational opportu-

nities for hundreds of thousands of people — draining the swamps that breed terrorists.

“Charity is limited, but capitalism isn't,” Roshaneh said. “If you want to change the world, you need market-based solutions.” That's the point of microfinance — typically, lending very poor people small amounts of money so that they can buy a rickshaw or raw materials and start a tiny business.

Roshaneh grew up in elite circles here in Lahore and studied business at the Wharton School and economics at Yale. After a stint at the World Bank, she returned to Pakistan in 1996 to start

her microfinance organization. She called it the [Kashf](#) Foundation.

Everybody thought Roshaneh was nuts. And at first nothing went right. The poor refused to borrow. Or if they borrowed, they didn't repay their loans.

But Roshaneh persisted, and today Kashf has 152 branches around the country. It has dispersed more than \$200 million to more than 300,000 families. Now Roshaneh is moving into micro-savings, to help the poor build assets, as well as programs to train the poor to run businesses more efficiently. She is even thinking of expanding into schools for the poor.

Microfinance is sometimes oversold as a silver bullet — which it's not. Careful follow-up studies suggest that gains from microloans are often quite modest.

Some borrowers squander money or start businesses that fail. Some micro-lenders tarnish the field because they're incompetent, and others because they rake in profits with [sky-high loan rates](#). Microfinance has also generally been less successful in Africa than in South Asia.

Yet done right, microfinance can make a significant difference. An outside evaluation found that after four years, Kashf borrowers are more likely than many others to enjoy improved economic conditions — and that's what I've seen over the years as I've visited Kashf borrowers.

On this trip, I met a woman named Parveen Baji, who says she never attended a day of school and until recently was completely illiterate. She had 14 children, but five died.

Ms. Parveen's husband, who also never attended school, regularly beat her and spent the family savings on narcotics, she says. The family's only possessions were four cots on which they slept, crammed three or four to a cot, in a rented apartment.

"One night all my children were hungry," she remembered. "I sent my daughter to ask for food from a neighbor. And the neighbor said, 'you've

become a beggar,' and refused."

Then Ms. Parveen got a \$70 loan from Kashf and started a jewelry and cosmetics business, buying in bulk and selling to local shops. Ms. Parveen couldn't read the labels, but she memorized which bottle was which. As her business thrived, she began to struggle to learn reading and arithmetic — and proved herself an ace student. I fired math problems at her, and she dazzled me with her quick responses.

Ms. Parveen began to start new businesses, even building a laundry that she put her husband in charge of to keep him busy. He no longer beats her, she says, and when I interviewed him separately he seemed a little awed by her.

Eventually, Ms. Parveen started a restaurant and catering business that now has eight employees, including some of her daughters. She bought a home and has put some of her children through high school — and a son, the brightest student, through college. She has just paid \$5,800 for a permit for him to move to London to take a health sector job.

Ms. Parveen tried to look modest as she told me this, but she failed. She was beaming and shaking her head in wonder as she watched her son speak English with me, dazzled at the thought that she was dispatching her university-educated son to Europe. "Microfinance has changed my life," she said simply.

That's an unusual success story. But the larger message is universal: helping people start businesses, create jobs and support education is a potent way to undermine extremism.

We Americans overinvest in firepower to defeat extremism and underinvest in development, and so we could learn something useful from Roshaneh. The toolkit to fight terrorism includes not only missiles but also microfinance and economic opportunity.

The antonym of "militant" is often "job."

Tuesday Morning Study Group:- What is Spirit?

As I took my spot in church a few Sundays ago I suddenly realized I felt "happy" and "peaceful". How can this be? I thought. My best friend died two days ago, yesterday it was my neighbor and my 99 year-old mother was surely on her way. It had been a sad week and, I mused, the prelude music wasn't even playing. Being an analytic, rational and intellectual kind of person, it didn't make sense to me!

Later during the service as I helped serve communion, the feeling returned - more intensely. I saw the depth of meaning in people's faces as they passed before me one by one. Their lives lived. I marveled at the hands that took each thin wafer -- some shaky and slow, knuckles gnarled with arthritis, others quick and adept with slim elegant fingers adorned with rings and polish. What a privilege to share in this community, I thought.

That particular Sunday was All Souls Sunday. The theme of the sermon was "Spirit." The following Tuesday in our morning study group it was my turn to lead the chapter of the book we are studying "Simply Christian" by T.S. Wright. Coincidentally, the chapter was about the holy spirit. The same coincidence between Jennifer's Sunday sermon and the following chapter topic has happened three times now. Curious.

Is this "Spirit?" you might ask. What is Spirit, beyond something we all experience yet cannot easily explain.

If you are curious about such things and enjoy exploring concepts and ideas with a view to gaining a better understanding, come join us at our Tuesday morning study group. It's a forum of friendly people who like sharing & debating ideas as we study today's religious writers in our contemporary world.

Audrey King

Did I hear that correctly....?

If you think the Tuesday Morning discussions are always serious and theological, you are wrong. Here is an anecdote from Marg Taylor, when we were remembering how, as children, we misinterpreted the words to hymns or Bible passages.

When Marg was still a very young child, she went with her parents to hear a black choir sing spirituals in her home town of Kitchener. One of the songs was "Ain't gonna study war no more". Little Marg thought they were singing "Don't stutter any more", and since she was at that time a stutterer, she felt offended to be singled out, and left the hall in a tiff. After that, she stopped stuttering!

Preparing this Edition of The Voice:

Thanks to the staff: Patty Snowdon, Ann McLeod

Editor: Jill Reeve, Assistant Editor: Patty Snowdon, Layout Design: Jaren McLeod.

Mother's Little Red Notebook by Yvonne Ng

One spring day in the mid - 1970's, Hong Kong

So, everything was ready for Mom's journey across half of the world. She got her air-tickets, and her Hong Kong passport stamped with the required visas to Australia, and the States. She did not need one for Canada because at the time Hong Kong was still a British colony, a part of the British Commonwealth.

Her traveling bags were lying neatly on the floor. In a week she would be on her way. And on this day, I went to Mom's home to see if everything was ready for her once in a lifetime trip. It was to be really a 'once in a lifetime' experience for her. Though Mom had been to Canada and the States several times already, yet on every trip somebody was with her. There was even one time, my early-teenage sons, Yuri and Willie, 'had brought' their Grandma Young back home to Hong Kong, at the end of their North American summer vacation. One time Mother had even stayed in Toronto for about two years to help baby-sit my sister May's firstborn daughter, Zee.

"Mom, can you think of anything else you need on your way? You are all by yourself this time," I asked. She was still figuring out if she had enough cash of various currencies for the three destination countries. And suddenly a thought struck me – Mom did not speak English except for: thank you; please; good-bye; and a smile, a nod for 'yes' or a turn of her head for a 'sorry no'! I had a bright idea. I offered, "Mom, I will make you a bi-lingual notebook to bring with you."

With that we had had a great time putting together questions or requests she might need on the way, in a little red notebook. What Mom said in Cantonese I immediately translated into English. Most of the things said were on her needs on the plane: I'm thirsty; tea, please; I'm cold. Could I have a blanket, please? And so on. Mother appeared to be very confident of what she might ask for help.

Then, after pondering a little while Mom told me to list out all the names of the cities she would be stopping at: Melbourne, Honolulu, Los Angeles, Regina, and finally Toronto. That was quite an impressive line-up of places to visit – for an elderly lady at 70 plus years of age, travelling alone to English-speaking worlds with only speaking comfortably and fluently the Cantonese dialect!

My Mother was not deterred by this reality. She was determined, composed and sure of herself. She said, "Don't worry. It's only on the plane and at the airport on arrival that not speaking English poses a problem." That was true. Once safely arrived at her destinations she would not need the little red notebook.

Mom was actually excited by the prospect of taking such a long journey and visiting five of her adult children, their families, relatives and church friends. Towards the end of our collaboration in the compilation of the traveling little red notebook, she suggested to try out how it worked. Yes, I remember she said she was thirsty and would love a cup of tea. Then she pointed to the English equivalent and looked at me with a smile. And I pretended to give her a cup of tea. And she said 'thank you' in English. At the end of the 'practice' she brewed a teapot of *pu-er* tea.

While we both were enjoying our *pu-er* she began talking about who she would look forward to meeting in her up coming trip. Then she remembered something, She asked me to remove two pictures from the family photo album. I did what I was told and put the pictures in an envelope and attached it with a clip to the back inside cover of the little red notebook.

Both pictures were taken in the fifties. Mom told me the picture without my elder brother Julian, because he had to attend private calligraphy lessons; and our youngest brother Kue was seated on her lap. The other picture with all eight of us was taken in our old Haven Street flat. And young six-year old Kue was standing in front of the row of six elder sisters and one elder brother. That year, Julian had returned to Hong Kong from his studies at Beijing University, specifically for the big event, Grandma's 80th birthday dinner. Mom gave a fond look at the pictures and then put the little red notebook in her large handbag. Then as if an after thought, she looked at me and added, saying, 'Probably I'll stay a few years in Toronto to help baby-sit your sister May's second-baby daughter, Lin.'

One summer day in the mid-1980's, Hong Kong

Mom had returned to Hong Kong after staying with May for about seven years or more. It was my sister Mabel that had accompanied her on her

way home. Meeting Mom at the airport I could not at once recognize her. She looked so frail, so bent and her hair so silvery grey. What remained the same was Mom's smile. It was so loving and so gentle. On coming back to Hong Kong she decided to give up her Canadian citizenship. I wondered if she had only wished to be with her bachelor son, Julian.

And one day in response to Mom's telephone call I went to her home immediately after work. She said she could not find her Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank bankbook. The tone of her voice sounded very desperate. She would wish I could help her to locate it. In an apologetic tone she added, "I have become very forgetful! I am getting to be 'useless'." Well, her bankbook was not in her usual 'money matters' drawer. It was in the adjacent one. To my surprise her bankbook was right on top of the little red bi-lingual notebook. And the two pictures were still clipped to the back inside cover.

I imagined Mother must have been reading and matching the Chinese and English questions and sentences. She must have been looking at the two pictures quite often, for the envelope was quite frayed at the edges. She might have been trying to capture what might have remained in her now somewhat fragile memories.

Mother put away her bankbook in its original drawer. Then turning over the little red notebook, she pointed to the line in Chinese that had the English translation: "I am thirsty. May I have a cup of tea please?" I pretended to give her a cup of tea. She looked up, thought for a while and pleasantly said in English, "Thank you." I was so pleased that she took the cue. Then we went on and played the 'matching game' for a while. And she remembered how on the plane to Melbourne she had even helped a Chinese young man who was seated next to her to ask the air-attendant for a cup of coffee. Then going down the list of destinations, she came to the word 'Toronto'. She stopped and tried to think. I offered, "Toronto was your last stop. May and Martin were expecting you at the airport." After a while, she looked up and smiled. Yes, she remembered.

Mom knew the plane had come to an airport. She saw people begin getting out of the plane and yet there were quite a few remained in their seats. She waited for a while and was wondering what had happened. Upon looking outside the plane she found the airport look familiar. Ah! It had to be Toronto. She took out her little red

notebook and pointed to the sentence that read, "I am going to Toronto." The air-attendant was truly surprised, mumbled something Mother did not understand but then immediately signaled Mother to follow her. When May and Martin saw Mom appear accompanied by the air-attendant, they were really relieved and glad. I was told, Mom could very well have gone to Montreal if she had not pointed out to that 'life-saving-sentence' in the little red notebook. And I was told, Mom had gratefully said 'thank you' and 'good-bye' in English to the air-attendant at the end of the ordeal.

During my visit to Mom that summer afternoon, I noticed that her memory appeared to be failing, though slowly. I thought then this was a sign of aging. Mother had by that time joined the rank of the 80+.

I suggested that she should make a list of 'things to do' in the little red notebook. This would help. She agreed but then jokingly she said, "What if I forgot to read the notes?" I replied, "If you forget that's OK. But first don't forget to enter your 'things to do' in the book."

One autumn afternoon in the late 1980's, Hong Kong

Before I left I looked into Mom's 'money-matters' drawer. The little red notebook was right on top of the HKSB bankbook. With fondness I ran through the bi-lingual questions and statements. Then I glanced into the pages where Mom was to write her to-do list. Obviously she did not have much to remind herself to do: to attend church worship services, to give offerings, church ladies' to visit her, appointments with her doctors, birthday dinners to attend. Mom used to join the Women's Visitation Team. And now she was on the Team's to visit list.

At first her writing on the list was neat. Then her handwriting looked crooked. Further on I found in one character she made one extra stroke and in another, one less. In the end she must have been frustrated and have given up writing her to-do list altogether. She simply left the rest of the little notebook blank. The two pictures clipped to the inside cover of the notebook were still there. But the envelope was nearly torn. I would never know how often she had been looking at the pictures. But I believed these two pictures must have given her some comfort and brought her back to some far off memory lane.

Endnote: On October 26, 1989 Mom passed away. That fateful morning, she went to the

washroom by herself. Probably she did not remember to wake the live-in caregiver to give her a hand. She fell down and knocked her head against the washroom door. Mom was pronounced dead when the ambulance arrived at the hospital casualty. She was 84 years old.

All of us, her eight children, 5 from overseas and 3 in Hong Kong, were at the memorial service, the funeral and the burial. On the following Sunday after worship we took a group photo in front of the church main entrance. We stood in a line, in the order of seniority by age. And Nancy called out our names one after the other to get us in place for a pose. We remembered fondly how Mom used to call us by our Chinese names, in that same order: Yin, Kit, Wing, Fok, Yau, Che, Yinn, Kue (Nancy, Kitty, Winifred, Julian, Yvonne, Mabel, May, Kue). And that picture remained the only, second one with the eight of

us standing in a row. When Julian died in 2003 in Toronto, we were left seven.

For Mom, she had looked upon us, her children as God's gifts to her. She knew she could not keep us forever with her. She knew each of us would have our own life's journeys. So when her children left her to build their homes in Canada or Australia, she had gone visit them and their families. She brought with her the little red notebook.

Mom is now with God, enjoying the ever lasting, eternal Peace and Joy and speaking a language of Love. The language of Love needs no translation.

Yvonne is a long time congregation member and currently on the Strategic Planning Committee.—Ed.

Thank You from the Good Neighbours' Club

Your donation to the Good Neighbours' Club has already made a difference! As you know, the Good Neighbours' Club feeds, clothes, and serves elderly homeless men 7 days a week, every day of the year. Your generous donation of clothing and hamburgers is already keeping impoverished seniors warm and nourished this season. Together we are meeting the basic needs of these forgotten men: for food, for warmth, for dignity. We could not do it without your help, Donway Covenant United Church!

Please note, we also accept prayers.

Our Annual Sale has been providing some of the unsold men's warm clothing to the Good Neighbours' Club for over 20 years. This year the Church also donated uncooked frozen hamburgers from the snack bar. This Club would welcome men's good used clothing any time of year.

Norm & Marian Childerhose

The Angel of February.

The angel of February is the angel of patience.

During the dark blustery nights of February, when nature is in a deep chill and we long for a sign of warmth and life, this angel can help us learn to await with grace the first signs of spring. February's angel teaches us that winter has its own special peace, that being snowbound or staying indoors can be a welcome respite from the busyness of life.

In February, we can complete unfinished projects and prepare for new initiatives in the spring. February's angel brings us the gift of patience, helping us to enjoy the solitude and quietness of the winter, guiding us to replenish our energy for the warm, busy days ahead.

Hugs..... The Wonder Drug

The following was sent to The Voice by a congregation member, who said it reminded her of Marg Taylor, who turned 95 in October, and still goes around making many folks' days brighter with her wonderful healing hugs.

Have you ever wondered how effective hugs are ? You rarely give a hug that is not appreciated or receive one that does not make your day a little brighter. Can you think of any medication that has such pleasant side effects ?

Hugs are good for you. They're not fattening and they don't cause cancer or give you cavities. They are all-natural, contain no preservatives, artificial sweeteners or other chemical additives. Hugs are cholesterol free and contain the recommended allowance of hope and happiness. They are a completely renewable source of energy and they're available without prescription.

Hugs don't require any special instructions. They don't need batteries, tune-ups or x-rays. They're non-taxable, but are fully returnable and energy efficient. As a matter of fact, they work especially well on cold or rainy days. They are particularly effective in treating everyday problems like stress, worry, anger, frustration, sadness or sorrow, and even the occasional nightmare.

The best thing about hugs is that you can use them without any special training or prior experience. But a word of caution to those trying it for the first time; you should never wait until tomorrow to hug someone who needs it today. Once you realize how good it feels, you'll want to do it all over again tomorrow !

Yes. Hugs are extremely addictive

Tabs Make a Difference!

Recently, I was talking with June Hayes who is the coordinator of the "**Tabs for Wheelchairs**" program in our area. She was pleased to be picking up **10 liquor sized cartons full of tabs** collected from Donway Covenant and Jubilee United Churches and others in the Community. According to June, the amount of tabs required to get a wheelchair is 65 oil barrels full. Our contribution was three quarters of a barrel.

June's granddaughter, Alicia has seen the program in action. A boy in her class needed and got a wheelchair purchased for him through this program.

June wanted me to thank all those who have supported this worthy cause.

YES WE CAN make a difference!

Keep on tabbing.

Jim Greer

A Bit of Trivia by Alvin Nelson

The following is another article from our resident free-lance writer, whose curiosity knows no bounds; we are always happy to share his ruminations with him. In case you have not yet heard, he will be celebrating his 100th birthday on December 20th, and there will be a party in the Auditorium after church on the 19th. Come and be part of this wonderful and unique event !

Foot wear styles – an interesting topic for study by a curious person with nothing better to do than sit on a bench in a downtown shopping mall and look at the feet of people walking by. This will tell the observer an interesting story about changes in footwear styles, particularly by young business ladies.

High shoe heels for ladies were very much in style during the 1930's. However, the heel was not as high as it is today, and the shoe was made to fit the foot. No more material than necessary was used in making the shoe. With the onset of World War II the shoe industry became part of the war effort so no more stylish shoes were made until after the war ended. Necessity demanded that the limited number of shoes made during the war be functional.

This wartime shoe continued to be made and worn until the 1960's; after that changes in shoe styles began to appear. By this time many of the "Baby Boomers" were old enough to want, and had money enough, to purchase more stylish footwear.

Ladies shoe styles began with pointed toe shoes, followed by higher heels. Over time, heels continued to rise until the lady wearing the shoe had almost the stance of a ballet dancer on tip toes. The heel tapered downwardly from the sole to the point one-quarter inch by one-quarter inch, or in other words, one-

sixteenth square inch in area. For a lady weighing one hundred and thirty pounds this amounted to a ton per square inch of force applied to the surface contacted by the heel whenever the lady put her full weight on the heel. Some of the heavier ladies caused damage to floors in subway cars and airplanes, and made deep dents in asphalt paving during hot days. An odd heel could sometimes be found stuck in a hole in a manhole cover.

After a few years this style ended and did not appear again until about ten years ago. Since stylists can't be modern and simply repeats an old style, shoe styles were in for an interesting twist. Heels on ladies dress shoes became higher than ever, and toes longer and pointed. In some cases, the length of the shoe appeared to be about twice the length of the foot of the person wearing the shoe. High styles of ladies shoes did not stop here; the tops of some shoes rose to near the knee of the person wearing the shoe. Except for the very high heel and long pointed toe, this shoe was much like the shoe that Great Grandmother wore.

Until recently, men resisted high shoe styles. However, stylists how appear to have succeeded in influencing men's dress-wear. For the past several years, well-dressed men can be seen wearing shoes that have extra toe lengths. However, pointed toes and high heels are still missing. Will they come in time?

If feet could talk, some feet could probably have some gruesome tales to tell.

In order to keep brain and body functioning after retiring from active employment, one needs to develop an interest in less demanding activities because she or he can no longer do, more afford to do, what they did in their younger days. This story demonstrated one of these new interest.

Church Landscaping

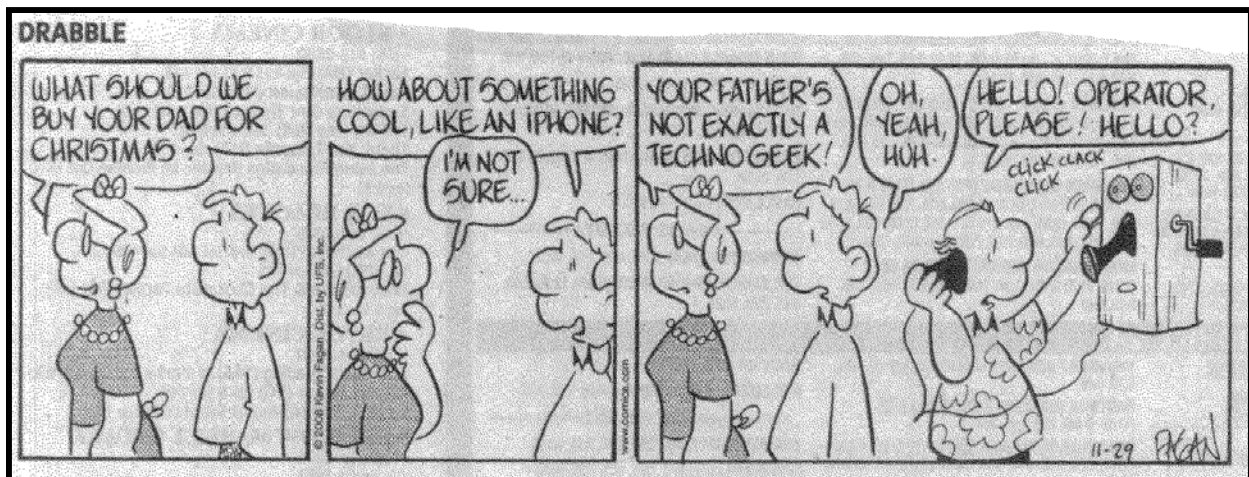
Over the past growing season I received numerous compliments on how beautiful our flowerbeds looked. Thank you to the following people:

- **Elda and Ted McDowell** took on the east of the sanctuary and they did a wonderful job.
- **Barb and Don Messaros**, who are so creative and talented, you can see their work in many areas of our property, including the front of the sanctuary.
- **Nina and Frank Saunders** took care of the gardens at the west entrance of the narthex.
- **Nancy and George Webb** were responsible for the flowers around the Cross.
- **Jacqueline Heaton** planted the raspberry bushes outside the church office.

A special thanks to **Anesti Dhefto**, a new church member, who did a great job of cleaning and weeding.

Many thanks to all of you who did the watering to keep all the flowers looking neat and fresh.

Again thanks to all of you. - Marten de Groot



Announcements

Births

Dawson Kevin O'Connor

was born August 25th, 2010.

He's the son of Dr. David & Kate Mills O'Connor, grandson of Jane & Alex Mills.

Deaths

Doug Robertson

Passed away September 14, 2010.

Audrey Birrell

Passed away September 19, 2010.

Jean Balderson

Passed away September 19, 2010.

Joyce Hacker

Passed away October 19, 2010.

Berna Hull

Passed away November 26, 2010.

Gord Heintzman

Passed away December 3, 2010.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the departed.

Gord Heintzman

Lee Heintzman and her family would like to thank all those in our congregation who have sent prayers, good wishes, cards and food during Gord's illness. It was good to have this kind of support at this very difficult time. Gord passed away Friday December 3rd. May God bless all of you !

A few week ago this piece from a former Scouter. Ian Cowan, was sent to Lee

Scouter Gord,

I've been meaning to drop you a note Gord, to tell you that, along with my father, you are the most positive influence in my life. I speak for many other boys that you pointed in the direction towards becoming men. You did this not by teaching us that a sharp axe is safer than a dull axe, or by teaching us to roast a chicken on a campfire at -20 degrees (although you did these things.). You did this by your example of how a man conducts himself: rock solid integrity; quiet fortitude; compassion; decency; and most importantly, respect for all. These gifts you gave us helped shape our lives, and on behalf of all of your former Scouts, I want to thank you.

Gord, I want you to know you are the finest person I have ever met. There is a line from a movie that I always liked, "God places angels among us masquerading as humans to take care of us!" I've often thought of you as one of these angels. If there are MVP seats in heaven, you will be in them. My son once asked me "what colour is heaven?" I told him it is all of your favourite colours. I imagine for you that will be the blue of your cottage lake and the green of the forest that surrounds it. And beside you there will be a perpetual campfire with a pot of coffee on it, and of course eventually Lee will be there as well.... Angels attract other angels.

Thank you again Scouter Gord

Up-coming Events

Check out our website for up to date events listings at
www.donwaycovenant.com

- Dec 12 - - **Worship Service, Advent III “JOY”, “Herod Hospitality - Jesus escapes as a child refugee”** . 10:30a.m. in the Sanctuary. Service led by Rev. Jennifer Palin
- Dec 12 - **Pageant Practice**, after the worship service.
- Dec 14- **Parents & Tots**, every Tuesday and Thursday morning from 9:30 to 11a.m
- Dec 14 - **Tuesday Study Group**, contact Jill Reeve (416-447-7524) or Joan McCalmont (416-447-0942) for details
- Dec. 14 - **Committee and Council meetings**, 7p.m. & 8:15p.m.
- Dec 15 - **Qi Cong**, every Wednesday morning from 9:30am to 11am.
- Dec 15 - **E.S.L. Conversation Group**, weekly at 1:30p.m. in C.E. Wing.
- Dec 16 - **Parents & Tots**, every Tuesday and Thursday morning from 9:30 to 11a.m
- Dec 17 - **Badminton**, every Friday night in the gym starting at 8p.m.
- Dec 17 - **Pageant Practice**, 8pm in Room 5.
- Dec 19 - - **Christmas Cantata, Advent IV “LOVE”, “Jesus Hospitality - a place where we and they are “well-come” home again.** . 10:30a.m. in the Sanctuary. Service led by Rev. Jennifer Palin
- Dec 19 - **Pageant Practice**, after the worship service.
- Dec. 23 - Jan 5 inclusive: **Church office will be closed**
- Dec. 24 - **Christmas Eve Pageant and Communion - 7pm**
Christmas Eve Worship Service and Communion - 10pm
- Dec. 26 - **Sunday Worship Service and Hymn Sing**, 10:30a.m.
- Jan 2 - **Sunday Worship Service**, 10:30am in the Sanctuary.
Service led by Rev. Jennifer Palin
- Jan 4- **Start of Parents & Tots**, every Tuesday and Thursday morning from 9:30 to 11a.m
- Jan 5 - **Start of Qi Cong**, every Wednesday morning from 9:30am to 11am.
- Jan 5 - **Start of E.S.L. Conversation Group**, weekly at 1:30p.m. in C.E. Wing
- Jan 7 - **Start of Badminton**, every Friday night in the gym starting at 8p.m.
- Jan 11 - **Start of Tuesday Study Group**, contact Jill Reeve (416-447-7524) or Joan McCalmont (416-447-0942) for details
- Jan 11 - **Committee and Council meetings**, 7p.m. & 8:15p.m.
- Feb 12 - **Music on the Donway, For The Love of Jazz**, 7:30pm. For tickets call 416-444-8444
- Feb 27 **Annual General Meeting**