

Jubilation!

Jubilation! is the newsletter of Jubilee United Church
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Some familiar words from the fifth chapter of Matthew:

¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷ “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸ “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God...”

“Blessed” has a double meaning for me: It means not only that God sees us, but also that God is revealed in us. In our mourning, in our struggle, in our acts of mercy and peacemaking, God sees us, and God's love moves through us. With that in mind, I want to say to all of us who claim Jubilee as a home, **“Blessed” are you, especially in this time of Covid.**

For the past eight months, most (if not all) of us have been doing things that we've never done before: we are trying to teach our children, manage home life and work life without a buffer, or work in spaces too small for our wide imaginations. We are hugging our grandchildren over smart phones and viewing funerals remotely. We have to find skills and competencies for which we were not trained and never seemed important before the pandemic revealed itself. We are being pulled into various political reality shows and suddenly given time and cause to really consider racism and the weaknesses of our society. Yet we feel denied a chance to do anything other than think about it. Governments and churches try to stay on top of the latest developments, but that leads to a variety of mixed messages that confuse more than guide us. We are, at times, poor in spirit and mourning the death of the way things once were. If you're finding these times difficult and demoralizing, you are not alone, but as you move faithfully through these difficult times, you are a blessing to many more than you realize. People see the struggle and also the faithful resolve; they see the brokenness and experience the love, and they are inspired. In this time, one of our blessings is being vulnerable with one another.

It's not all gloom. Some of us are finding great moments of creativity and opportunities unimagined before. Some are creating new family rituals and relationships, sharing at a very deep level in ways that just didn't seem possible or necessary before the pandemic. Folks who were barely on our priority lists are now getting regular phone calls; letter writing as art is seeing a resurgence; we are cooking, baking and discovering the joy of simple things like reading a book or doing a jigsaw puzzle. The air is cleaner, and the pace has slowed for many. Many of us are confident that our communities, families, and Jubilee will emerge from this time, stronger and deeper in faith. But even so, there is a great deal of time and emotional labour involved in this kind of flourishing.

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A little further in that same passage in Matthew's Gospel, each of us is reminded that: **“You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world.”**

Mourning or flourishing, pure in heart or poor in spirit, you are the salt of the earth, and you are a light of the world. God is working through you in ways that you cannot even imagine, and you have been called to this time and place, not because of your expertise, but because of your love and willingness to share God's love.

Jubilee folks, I pray for you.
I give thanks for you.

You, who have been called into this community by God, a church and a ministry that we all share with the one who assures us that in our mercy, in our hunger, in our pain, in our imperfections, in our struggles, and in our triumphs, will share the light of the world.

Thank you, Jubilee, for your remarkable support, resilience and love in this time and may you always know that you are not only blessed, but a blessing to us all.

In Faith and Hope,

Norm



2005

January	February	March
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April	May	June
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July	August	September
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24 25 26 27 28 29 30	28 29 30 31	25 26 27 28 29 30
31		

October	November	December
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A Blast from the Past

**15 years ago, I wrote my first Christmas
“Notes from Norm.” I thought it might bear repeating.**

I really shouldn't tell stories about my kids... so this isn't about them. It isn't about one of my sons when he was 18... it all happened in a dream.

Yeah, that's what it was, a dream.

This imaginary young man wandered into my imaginary house, a dream of my den and flopped down on the couch as his mother and I were deep in conversation.

He huffed and harrumphed.

We hardly seemed to notice.

He bounced around on the couch.

He sprawled.

He sighed.

He turned on the TV.

We kept talking (we are very cruel people).

Finally, he threw himself across my wife's lap.

“Yes?” We inquired.

“Oh, nothing,” He replied.

So, Anne and I continued to talk about Burgundy wines and the proper storage of such... (I told you that it was a deep conversation.)

Then we got the “look.” The “how could you two old fools be so stupid that you can't see that I have something important to say to you...” look.

“Son, what is it?” I asked earnestly.

“I need some advice.”

I checked again, carefully, to see who this strange child was who had just walked into my house and insinuated himself between my wife and me. My sons don't ask for advice. They get it, mind you - but they don't listen to it, and they never ask for it.

“I need advice about women.”

My son was 18. I knew that he needed advice; it just never occurred to me that he knew that he needed advice.

“Well, having considerable experience myself...”

I looked at my wife, “I mean, having almost no experience other than the one time I met the perfect woman, I would still be glad to help.”

I got the “look” from both of them.

“Okay - so I was at the mall, and I saw this really cute girl that I sort of know from school. She was with a friend, and Ralph and I were on the other side of the Food Court. And I told Ralph that I really liked her... So Ralph went and told her. Right then!”

“That's what friends do. So what did she do?”

“I don't know; I ran away.”

“You what?”

“Well, I didn't run away - I just sort of got up and walked really fast and then hid behind a door.”

“Oh...well, as long as you didn't run away.”

“So Ralph goes like, 'My friend thinks that you're nice and good looking' and she goes 'I think that your friend's nice too' and Ralph goes 'So do you want to see him or anything?' and she goes 'Well, my friend and I have to do some more shopping, but we'll meet you back here in half an hour,' and then they laughed.”

“So, how do you know this?” I asked.

“Ralph told me.”

“Let me guess what happened next...They didn't show.”

“Yeah, how did you know?”

“Women!!” I got the look again (mostly from my wife).

My wife, then, decided to contribute, “Well, it is obviously that young lady's loss. She should be sorry that she didn't come back to see you. Serves her right...(and then there was some muttering that I won't repeat... it was NOT complimentary in regards to the young woman.)

“Dad, what are you supposed to do?” My son was seeking wisdom...

I answered as wisely as I could: “Well, son, I'm a minister. I've taken courses. I've worked with people. I may have even dated women (I'm not saying one way or another), and this is the best advice that I have: Next time, don't run away!”

God reaches out to us in Jesus. God says, “I want to be with you,” and we don't know what to do. We stammer and blush. It's like those high school dances – people relegated to different sides and corners. One brave person manages to cross that great desert and actually dry-mouthed, asks another, “Would you like to dance?”

Jesus is God walking across the wide desert of the gym floor and asking us if we would like to dance. We can giggle and blush. We can turn the offer down flat, and our suitor faces the humiliation of walking all the way back across the floor alone... Or we can say yes, we'd love to dance.

And we can dance. We can use our bodies and our minds, our imaginations and our gifts; we can let go of a few of our inhibitions and worries; we can rejoice in being human. In being alive. In being with God. And the amazing thing is that once one person starts to dance, soon another will start to dance... and another... and soon the gym floor is full.

This Christmas, the baby Jesus is God coming all the way across the desert of your loneliness, your hurt, your worry, your life, and your struggles and asking you to dance. Please say “Yes!”.

And if you can't quite manage to say “yes,”... at least don't run away. Who knows what will develop?

2020 Postscript

The first thing that I want to tell you is that I celebrated my son's wedding in September, so he did figure out how to “not run away.”

The more important thing to share is that it seems to me that 2020 has made a number of us want to run away. We don't know what to do because everything feels different. But God is still asking us to dance. It's just that in 2020,

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the floor seems wider, and we don't know any of the dance steps. This time of compassionate isolation makes it difficult for God to reach us in the usual ways, and we don't know how to respond. Last year, we could collect diapers and throw socks for others; we could take family shopping, gather for dinners and concerts and sing Christmas Carols at the top of our lungs. This year, not so much. But God still crosses the floor – we hear God in prayer, in phone calls from friends, in masked visits. The other day, I met a baby... 6 months old. I was so worried because I was meeting her while wearing a mask. I was pretty sure that I wouldn't be able to bond with her and make her smile and laugh. I worried that what I think of as my personal magic with babies would be thwarted because she couldn't see my smile. It took a second... it took a minute... maybe two... for me to forget about the mask and focus on the baby. Pretty soon, she was smiling, and we were both giggling, and the magic wasn't gone. She read my eyes; she understood my body language, and in ways that I don't understand, she knew that she was safe with me and that we would be friends.

This year as we stop focusing on the things that we can't do and delight instead in the invitation of Christmas, the presence of God, we will find new and glorious ways to dance.

A few dance steps that I'm trying this year

1. If we can't have family together for Christmas dinner, my wife and I might do the turkey and invite my sister to do a roast of beef. My son and his wife can do potatoes and soup, enough for everyone. My son in Kitchener can bake pies (he makes great pies). On the night that we want to share dinner, we will prepare dinner packages for each house, turkey and gravy already in. I will drive to Bowmanville and add soup and potatoes to dinner packages; in Markham, I will add roast beef and a vegetable; in Kitchener, I will pick up the pies and leave a complete Christmas dinner package. Back to Markham, leave a complete dinner with pie; onto Bowmanville to drop off a complete dinner with pie and then back home to Pickering. A little time to reheat and a shared Zoom call (or phone call) allows us all to eat together.
2. I think that I'll check in with the church and see if there are a couple of people that I might be able to send Christmas cards to. Just a nice note to someone whose face I might recognize, but who I don't know all that well.
3. The church is producing virtual services for Christmas, including a Christmas pageant, Christmas Eve worship, midnight communion, and Christmas Day. There may even be an Advent service with all Sydney Carter music. I'm going to watch them all, and I might even call a friend so that we can watch them together over the phone.
4. I'm going to accept that this year is different and let go of the stress of trying to get everything to be perfect.
5. I have time to really think about personal gifts that I can get for those close to me. I am going to search for small independent retailers and do what I can to modestly support the local economy.
6. Recognizing that there are many folks for whom this pandemic has been devastating, I will give less to my family friends and make donations to those who can use the support: Food Bank, Benevolent Fund, The United Church Gifts with Vision.
7. I'm not going to wait for Christmas Day. This year, I'm going to really celebrate Advent and wonder about the many ways that God comes to be in the world.
8. I am going to open my eyes, my ears, my imagination and my heart to God's presence in this time of Christmas. Because I can't rely on the old ways, I will find new ways, because if God can appear in a manger in Bethlehem, I know that God can appear in my life.



In December, the Jubilee Creche will be set up on the Labyrinth and will be changing every week, inviting people into a journey of Christmas.

If you're in the neighbourhood, have a look.

On Tuesdays in December, Rev. Seli will be out on the Labyrinth singing Christmas carols for 15 minutes at 7 pm. You are welcome to come and hum along (while standing at an appropriate distance).

Heads up!

A couple of things coming up that you might want to know about!

The first is a virtual concert on Sunday, November 22nd at 730pm.

There is more involved... and you'll be hearing about it (no doubt), but you should know that you can hear some great Jubilee Musical Talent on Sunday, November 22nd



Watch the Jubilee Website for details



The second is that we will be selling home baked Christmas Cookies this year.

Jubilee Bakers have been recruited to

bake and for a very reasonable price you can pick up cookies by the dozen (*for a still reasonable but not as inexpensive price, you can have them delivered*). We will be taking orders in the first two weeks of December... keep an eye on the Jubilee website for details.

Did we mention that you can also offer a generous price for our fantastic cookies and get a very reasonable tax receipt? Well, you can!

Mission and Service

In this prolonged global pandemic, we are aware of challenges facing the local, national, and international partners of the United Church of Canada as they strive to maintain programmes to support those in need. One small way in which we at Jubilee UC can help is to order gifts from the new GIFTS WITH VISION catalogue that subscribers to the *Broadview* magazine received in the November issue. The catalogue and order form can be viewed on-line at giftswithvision.ca. Because gifts are available until September 2021, we can celebrate different holidays and people throughout the year.

Among the front-line workers keeping us fed physically and spiritually, we must recognize ministers, volunteers, and churches' staff. Their workload has increased with the closing of the buildings for public gatherings. At Jubilee, the Rev. Norm Seli and ministerial candidate Bri-anne Swan have gone beyond their job descriptions to prepare creative and inspiring virtual worship services, to offer pastoral care, and to lead small study groups.

Theological colleges and education centres offer training and continuing education to candidates and ministers. Our gifts to Mission and Service help to finance these across Canada. Let us support the people who have answered God's call to serve in the United Church of Canada.

[submitted by Pam Lock, designated M&S enthusiast at Jubilee]



The Jubilee Communion of Saints and Faces...



Jubilee Christmas Plant Sale 2020

Great news, the Christmas Plant fundraiser is a go! In previous years, our local Scout troop played a key role; however, due to Covid, they cannot participate. Liz Liness and Brian Kalanda will take on this great fundraiser with all proceeds going to Jubilee United Church. If you have ordered before, you know the plants are gorgeous!

What plants can you order:

The same garden nursery will be providing us with the following beautiful plants:

Poinsettias: Red, white, pink, bi-colour and tri-colour, in various sizes.

Price: \$6 to \$30.

Mixed planters with a poinsettia and mixed foliage:

11" round decorative bowl. Price: \$26.

12" oval glitter red tin bowl. Price: \$33.

Cyclamen plant: 6" pot in assorted colours. Price: \$13.

Kalanchoe plant: 4" pot in assorted colours. Price: \$6.



Where can you get an order form:

1. Order forms will be available on the Jubilee website or
2. Contact Liz Liness or Brian Kalanda (contact information is below).

Orders are due by Monday, November 23.

How to place your order:

1. Email Liz Liness @ bliness@yahoo.com or Brian Kalanda @ bkalanda@gmail.com
2. Text or call Liz @ 905-621-9205 (leave a message if necessary).
3. Text or call Brian @ 416-884-5956 (leave a message if necessary).

How to pay for your Christmas plant order:

1. E-transfer to bliness@yahoo.com in advance of pickup.
2. Cash or cheque (payable to Liz Liness) on pickup.

How to pick up your Christmas plants:

1. Plants will be ready for curbside pickup Saturday, December 5, at Church of Our Saviour, 1 Laurentide Drive, from 10 am to 4 pm.
2. For those who are not able to pick up their Christmas plant order, arrangements can be made for local home delivery.



What's Happening with Kids and Godly Play?

When restrictions started to be placed across the city and doors started closing, our Godly Play group knew that we didn't want to wait until we were allowed to meet in person again. Rev. Anne and Haley have been hosting a virtual, modified Godly Play/Sunday check-in for kids and parents since late March in order to keep connected and continue learning and growing together. Every Sunday at 2:00 pm, young ones in the Godly Play age group (3ish-12ish) are welcome to join us for our virtual Sunday meeting. Parents are welcome to join if they wish or if their young one needs help with the computer. We tend to meet for around 30 minutes and start off with the circle of the church year, and then we do a show and share or question of the day, a story, wondering questions, and a discussion about what we are all going to work on after our time together and during the week. We end with a virtual candle time, and kids are invited to take that time to reflect, pray, and talk about what we are thankful for - and most times, we end up giggling together because we are just having so much fun! While we can't wait until we are able to meet in person again, we are absolutely loving connecting each week online. The link is available on the Jubilee website, and we hope to see you there!



BAKERS, we need YOUR Help!

We are looking for volunteers to bake cookies. Cookies that will be sold and delivered as a fundraiser for Jubilee, but mostly as a way to share some warmth, sweetness and joy in the month of December



Volunteers can contact the church office and offer to make

**Chocolate Chip Cookies
Shortbread Cookies
Sugar Cookies
Ginger Cookies**

You may offer to make 4 dozen Shortbread or perhaps 3 dozen Chocolate Chip or maybe 1 Dozen Chocolate Chip, 2 dozen Sugar Cookies and 4 dozen Ginger Cookies (because you make great Ginger cookies). You make your offer by the end of November and Jubilee will take orders in the first 2 weeks of December. The Youth Group will package cookies for pick up and volunteers will help to make deliveries. **It all starts with the Bakers.**

If you are interested in sharing the love and the cookies while helping to support Jubilee, please be in touch with Dianne in the church office (admin@jubileeunited.ca or 416-254-0583) or Rev. Seli (nseli@jubileeunited.ca)

Author of “So You Want to Talk about Race?” Ijeoma Oluo points out that **“The beauty of anti-racism is that you don't have to pretend to be free of racism to be an anti-racist. Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And it's the only way forward.”**

At Jubilee, we take these words to heart. Early in June, 20 folks began to meet weekly to talk about racism, how we can work toward personal transformation and how we can help the community become anti-racist. We are hoping to provide opportunities and safe places for people to experience new points of view and new ways of being in relationship. In December, we will suggest videos or articles that people can read during the week and then connect via Zoom to talk about them. Look for announcements of times and resources at the end of Sunday worship services, in weekly updates, and on the Jubilee website in late November and December.

In January, we will be offering a viewing party and discussion about “First Contact.”

We are planning three Monday evenings in January. **January 11, 18, and 25 at 7:30 pm.**

Our plan is to watch a 45-minute episode of “First Contact” and then spend another 45 minutes talking about what we have seen together, how it makes us feel and think. Rev. Norm Seli will host and facilitate the discussion.

First Contact is a television show produced by APTN that takes six Canadians, all with stereotypical opinions about Indigenous People, on a unique 28-day exploration of Indigenous Canada. It is a journey that will turn their lives upside down, challenging their perceptions and confronting their prejudices about a world they never imagined.



We will use ZOOM to watch together and to talk about our experience. There are three episodes in Season 1. If there is enthusiasm to continue, we will schedule the three-episode Second Season in February.



The Benevolent Fund

This is the time of year when we get the biggest surge in donations for the Benevolent Fund. **Thank you.** As most of know, our lives are fragile, and sometimes it just takes a little nudge to bring things crashing down... This time of pandemic has been more than just a little nudge; needs and requests are higher than ever. In the past, I have usually contributed the honouraria that I receive for weddings and funerals to the Benevolent Fund, but 2020 will be a year in which I celebrated only one wedding (and my son didn't

pay me) and very few formal funerals. However, I have been moved by the many others who have helped close the gap to keep the Benevolent Fund vital and active.

The Benevolent Fund is a modest amount of money that is shared at my discretion with those in need. I try to share this resource with those who might otherwise fall through the cracks, and in 2020 some of those cracks have widened, and new ones have emerged. We try to help those who have medical or financial needs that cannot be met through other agencies; those who have a one-time challenge that threatens their future. Sometimes we pay a bill; sometimes, we share grocery cards... sometimes, we make a plan and address a more systemic problem. Sometimes, we just give because we can, and we hope...

Thank you for all that you have done in the past. Should you wish to contribute in the future, donations can be made in all the ways you currently contribute to Jubilee by simply adding a note “For Benevolent Fund” – you can also e-transfer to me directly (nseli@jubileeunited.ca). I will be sure that the donation is recorded and added to your other church donations, and you will receive a tax receipt.

In the words of our friends, “Thank you.”

Norm

Direct from the
Island of Mis-Fit Musicians

**Definitely NOT
VIRTUAL
Christmas**



Sunday, December 6th @ 7:30pm

We can't be together in person, but you can join us virtually for an hour (or so) of music, and irreverent Christmas Cheer. Some of us will watch it together, others will be able to watch anytime after the December 6th premier. The link will be on the Jubilee Website!
www.jubileeunited.ca

EARLY REMINDER NOTICE ABOUT SUBSCRIPTIONS TO BROADVIEW

In January, subscribers will be contacted by Pam Lock about renewing their annual subscriptions @ \$25 for ten issues of stimulating, provocative articles on spirituality, justice, and ethical living. There is always a section devoted to news about the United Church of Canada, Canada's largest Protestant denomination.

The November issue contains a special offer to give gift subscriptions (\$25 for the first gift and \$20 for the second gift). If you are not a subscriber, you can call 1-866-807-5515 and use the code GIFTS25G. OR, you can contact Pam for more details.



Update from the Finance Committee (and some words from Rev. Seli)

On March 8, 2020, the congregation approved the 2020 operating budget for Jubilee United Church, which showed a projected deficit of approximately \$100,000.

A lot has happened since then. The Coronavirus has changed our lives, including our involvement with Jubilee. We have been meeting virtually. We have been unable to do any events, including our fundraising. For over six months, our tenants have been unable to operate their businesses or conduct meetings. As a result, our facilities' revenue has taken a hit. Thankfully, you, the congregation

continued to support us financially. To date, our PAR giving's are only down 3%, and Envelopes are down 12%. We have also received \$60,000 in bequests, bringing total revenue at September 30 to \$299,500, vs a prorated budget projection of \$282,800.

During these unusual times, we have maintained a full staff compliment. We have been aided by significant Federal government subsidies. There were small savings in other expenses due to the building being closed and no programs operating. Before the wage subsidy received on September 30, our expenses to September 30 were \$367,000 vs. a prorated budget of \$383,000.

At September 30 was revenue of \$299,500 less expenses of \$367,000 for a deficit of \$67,500. The wage subsidy received of \$81,000 gives us a September 30 surplus of \$13,500.

The Finance Committee is unsure as to whether we will continue to qualify for the federal wage subsidy. In projecting forward to December 31, with no further subsidy, we are projecting an operating deficit of approximately \$40,000.

So those are the facts. We had prepared for a \$100,000 deficit, trusting that the return from our investments would cover that deficit, and we would not need to spend any of our capital to keep Jubilee thriving at the level that we have come to cherish and expect. The great news is that our investments have stayed stable. The government subsidies have helped us keep everyone working and connecting to the community. Your support has put us in a position in which our Finance Committee doesn't feel the need to ask for a "13th Month" contribution. Imagine – in the toughest of years; we are not asking for more money to fulfill our plans and obligations. Thank you.



2021 is just ahead, and I honestly have no idea what to expect. I can't imagine that we're going back to the way things used to be. I am confident that many of the things that we cherish and love about Jubilee will return; there will come a time when we gather in person, and coffee will be shared without fear. But, I also believe that we will never stop virtual Sunday services; I suspect that we are now forging relationships that we will want to continue in 2021 and beyond. Resistance Church and Daily Meditations are of such value to some folk that it is hard to imagine stopping them. In 2021 we will be finding ways to connect with children and have children connect with each other; we will figure out how to invite and welcome new members, celebrate baptism, connect our seniors in meaningful and fruitful ways. Your support assures me that we will be able to keep up some of the newer innovations as our cherished programs return. Further, as opportunities arise, we will be able to take advantage of them; your financial support means that we can try things without the fear of failure and share our successes with other churches who do not have quite the financial foundation and support enjoyed by Jubilee. As we conclude 2020, I give thanks for the dedication and careful planning that has allowed us to have a financial base from which to operate and a history of careful investment strategies and wise budgeting. I give thanks to the congregation of St. John's United Church, who invested their ministry and companionship in Jubilee, making us even stronger and more dynamic. I give thanks to those who have come to join the community of Jubilee, supporting what we do and bringing new ideas and experiences.

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Although we will not be asking for a 13th month (our obligation and plans are covered), there will be opportunities in November and December to increase your support for Jubilee. The “You Don't Have to Come” Fundraiser and a Jubilee Cookie Sale are just two examples. Why are we doing this? Because cookies are good! But more than that, some folks expect a 13th month, so they plan for it; some folks want to help support Jubilee so that if the volatile investment market turns on us, we can afford to wait it out. Others support the efforts that Jubilee is making and recognize the ministry that we can share with other churches as we take a few risks that others may not be able to afford. I can assure you that anything that you choose to invest in Jubilee United Church will not be hidden away; it will be used to help Jubilee continue to be a vital, creative, and loving community sharing the love of God and the ministry of Jesus Christ.



gifts with vision



The United Church of Canada developed *Gifts with Vision* in response to member requests to be able to give gifts to relatives, friends, and loved ones that are in direct support of the church's Mission & Service partners across Canada and around the world.

If you are seeking inspiring new gift ideas or perhaps would rather not give family and friends the same old clothes, toys or chocolates, *Gifts with Vision* presents a new way to celebrate special occasions. Give a gift that can help change people's lives!

Gift funding raised for partners through the catalogue will be over and above the regular member-supported, stable core funding that these partners receive.

Everyone will find something in *Gifts with Vision* worth sharing with the special people in their lives. Gifts are available in a range of dollar amounts, as well as for many areas of need — hunger, shelter, education, health, safety, mobility, and more.

We encourage you to visit the website – it is very easy to use - www.giftswithvision.ca
If you would like us to email you a PDF Gifts with Vision Catalogue or even print one and mail to you, please contact Dianne and the Church Office (admin@jubileeunited.ca / 416-447-6846), and we will get one to you.

You can help support local folk in need, communities in transition, people across Canada, and all around the world.

In 2016, Gifts with Vision helped buy goats for Zimbabwe.

Thank you for your gift of money to buy a goat. We are excited that people in Canada are interested in Chipinge Horticultural College in Zimbabwe and have helped buy goats. People who live around Chipinge Horticultural College think they are lucky to have good land and are celebrating being able to buy more goats!

Goats are really important for the people living in Chipinge District. They provide milk, cheese, and meat for children and families. That helps everyone, and especially children, be healthy and strong. If there is more milk or meat than a family needs, it can be sold, and having that money means more children can go to school or families can buy medicine they need.

Isn't this the kind of gift that you'd like to give this year? Please take some time to look at the website and recognize the many ways that Gift Giving can be special in 2020.

How can you keep engaging your faith Jubilee?



Sunday virtual worship services are presented Sundays at 10:30 a.m. on our YouTube Channel. You can find the link on the Jubilee website: www.jubileeunited.ca. The service can be watched anytime after it's been premiered, using the same link.

Our Sunday service is available as a podcast.

We do a little editing to maximize the audio experience, and it is available on Sunday mornings at the same time as the virtual service is available. The link is also on our website using the "Podcast" button, or you can find us at jubileeunited.podbean.com



Our Sunday service is also available by phone. You can dial directly to (416)219-8749, and the podcast version of our service will play from beginning to end. Call any time to hear the latest service; we promise no busy signals.

On our YouTube channel (and on our website), you can also access **Norm's 20 minute daily meditations** (Monday-Friday). <https://youtube.com/c/normseli>. Since the pandemic began, Norm has read and wondered his way through Mark's Gospel, The Book of Acts and is currently in John's Gospel.

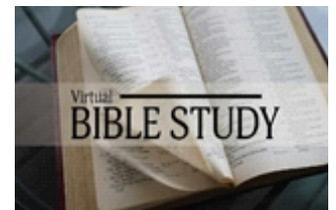


These meditations can also be experienced as a podcast.

Again, a little editing, some music and the promise of NOT having to look at Norm talking make these podcasts a popular option. The podcasts run about three weeks behind the video meditations.

We also have a weekly virtual Bible Study on Mondays from 4 – 5 p.m.

You can join us by using the Zoom link on our website. The passcode to join us is "Jubilee." Every week we look at two readings that will probably be included in the upcoming Sunday service. Pop in every now and then, you don't have to come to them all, and there is no exam.



Church Reopen Committee Report

In June, two committees were started by council to look at the reopening of the church. One was to look at worship and what that would look like; the other was to deal with tenants and church groups.

The tenant reopen committee has been very busy. We started with the Little Acorns Montessori School, as they were allowed to return in the early summer by the government, with limited numbers. We developed very stringent, specific protocols. We then worked with Keun Sarang, our Korean congregation, who have been back with a shortened Sunday afternoon service for about a month. Leslie Group has just recently returned. Reach Yoga is continuing with virtual classes at the moment, working towards a limited return in early December. We are very blessed to have such wonderful, caring, conscientious tenants who have a similar mindset as us with keeping all safe.

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We are presently looking at some of the smaller church groups and their safe return if there is a desire.

Celia Ball, Dianne Clare, Fran Crabe, Jeanne Elgie-Watson, Gary Norris, Bill Watson and Iona Williams comprise the committee. I am very grateful for their advice and support. We have had to sort through a great deal in a very short and timely manner, all uncharted territory.

A special thank you to Jeanne Elgie-Watson, who is also the church's Health and Safety Covid-19 coordinator and Bill Watson for their additional time and expertise to get us to where we are. Many hours crafting documents, much thanks!

As well as Mike Flynn and John Sharp, for their assistance with the government tenant rental subsidy program, thanks for all of your efforts!

Barb Secord
Chair, Reopen committee - tenants and church groups.



Despite Covid 19, Music lives on at Jubilee!

In September, we were able to resume choir rehearsals after a six-month hiatus. A big thank you to all members who embraced this remote learning mode and faithfully “zoom” in each week to perform a voice/body warm-up and engage in the singing of hymns, responses, and anthems. The choir members are muted, which means that they can only hear my verbal directions and the piano. The four Jubilee choir leads physically distance themselves in the sanctuary behind me and vocally model for the choir members at home. Choir members can see the leads, and with improved technology, they experience the four-part harmony that is essential to the choral experience. We are indeed lucky to have Marie Criscione (soprano), Cheron Christmas-Lafleur (alto), Dylan Hillyer (tenor), and Mike Thomas (baritone) as our choir leads this year. Our group is, however, in need of male choir members! Men, don't be bashful. In study after study, singing emerges as one of the most healthy activities for anyone, because it offers a myriad of physical, psychological, social, cognitive, and spiritual benefits!

The virtual services that Rev. Norm creates have been a tremendous blessing to the whole community. It has been a great joy to work with Rev. Norm and produce music each week that he weaves into these services. The choir leads are now recording with me once per month in order that there is always a large collection of music that can support the various themes that emerge. We expect that this ministry will continue – even after the pandemic abates.

Our monthly live services have begun this fall. It is a blessing to worship together in our sanctuary, although the atmosphere is entirely different. In September, we welcomed approximately a dozen worshippers and two singers. Physical distancing, masks, plexiglass barriers and reduced seating capacity alter our experience, but the joy and communal spirit remain. A special thank you to the choir leads who sing hymns, responses, solos, and duets during these services. It is a more vocally demanding service than before, because worshippers are not able to sing along during the hymns.

My Rimbala programs continue to evolve during this time. The online format has served the population well because I am able to give directions, musical examples, and movement work in a safe and easy-to-follow format. The technology allows me to hear and see participants clearly, and thus I can offer feedback and continue to evolve the curriculum. A big thank you to newcomers and faithful veteran students alike! We have a beginners' class on Thursday at 10:00 a.m., and an intermediate level class on Thursday at 4 p.m. If you are looking for a way to exercise your body and brain, “zoom” into a class. The Zoom invitations are on the Jubilee website.

Here is to everyone's safety and well-being during these challenging times. It is an honour to be part of the Jubilee community and play a role in supporting this most important work.
Blessings,

Dr. Daniel Rubinoff
Director of Music

Outreach

Even as the Church has been closed since March, the work of Outreach goes on. Our congregation has been calling, texting, and emailing others to keep in touch. I sent out over two hundred homemade Easter cards and spring cards to congregants in order to send a smile and let them know they were being thought of. Prayer shawls are still being made and sent out to those who will benefit from receiving one. Muriel Gilmour has called me to inform me that she has knitted hats, headbands, and has some lap covers to donate. I will arrange to get them all and have them sent to the people who need them most.

Barb Measures helped me get all the clothing and goods that had accumulated in our Outreach bins off to places where those in need will be able to make use of them.

Cheryl Colford has provided us with a partnership with Eva's Place, a homeless shelter for youth, through the menstrual product collection project. As the pandemic worsened, the shelter system realized that they needed to separate the youth as they were living in close quarters. The youth were taken to a nearby hotel and given individual rooms so that they were able to socially distance as advised. The youth were in need of basic supplies - toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, and body wash. I was able to provide enough for the 14 youth that were housed at the hotel. We will continue to support them and see what their needs are closer to Christmas.

The food banks are open, and in more demand than usual, so we encourage you to donate as you are able. Write "food bank" on your cheque to the Church, and we will be sure to get it to the Community Share Food Bank.

We have been distributing a St. John's Community Scholarship each year since St. John's joined Jubilee. This was an initiative that began over 20 years ago, and we are proud to be able to continue doing it. It is given to a deserving youth who is pursuing post-secondary education. The youth must also be an active volunteer in the Church or the community. I am pleased to announce that Jacqueline Edwards was chosen to receive the \$1000.00 scholarship. You can read about Jacqueline, in her own words, below. Congratulations, and good luck with your studies, Jacqueline. We are proud of you!

Iona Williams



My name is Jacqueline Edwards, and I am the recipient of the 2020 St. John's Community Scholarship.

I am a first-year student at Queens University, and I am planning to major in Life Sciences as a path towards medical school. This term, I am taking a heavy course load of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Calculus, and Social Determinants of Health, in order to obtain the prerequisites required for my second year.

I have participated in many Jubilee events, and you may recognize me from the Scotiabank run, various radio plays, church readings, community suppers, and youth group activities. I am extremely appreciative of Jubilee's support of my academic endeavours.



First week of Advent, November 29th

Luke 1: 5-25

⁵ In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.⁶ Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord.⁷ But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

⁸ Once, when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty,⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense.¹⁰ Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside.¹¹ Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him.¹³ But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John.¹⁴ You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth,¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit.¹⁶ He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.¹⁷ With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel, “How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.”¹⁹ The angel replied, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.²⁰ But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.”

²¹ Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary.²² When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak.²³ When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

²⁴ After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said,²⁵ “This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.”

Hidden by the shadow of “THE” Christmas Story is this powerful story of faith, frustration, and fulfillment. In this first week of Advent, read the story and then tell it from memory to another person. Wonder together about this story... what does it mean to you in 2020? Wonder about the times that you have not wanted to believe or trust; what was that like, knowing all that you know today, would you do anything differently? Sometime this week, share a story about yourself that might have had more attention if something else hadn't happened... if you hadn't been the middle child or the second one to learn how to do something amazing. Tell someone about the time you worked hard and came in second. Ask to hear this kind of story from someone else, too.

Send a Christmas card to someone who would never expect to get one from you.



Second week of Advent, December 6th

Luke 1: 26-56

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth,²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.²⁸ And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.”²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.³⁰ The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God.³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?”³⁵ The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth

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month for her who was said to be barren.³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.”³⁸ Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country,⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?”⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy.⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

⁴⁶ And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

⁵⁶ And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

What do you think? Does Mary have a choice? If not, what does that say about God? If so, what does that say about Mary? Wonder about Mary this week. How does your Spirit magnify the Lord? And if you're not sure – in fact, even if you are – ask somebody how they see your soul magnifying the Lord and let them know what you see in them.

This is a great week to think about justice, and you can do to make our community a better place for everyone.



Third week of Advent, December 13th

Luke 2: 1-20

¹ In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.³ All went to their own towns to be registered.⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.⁷ And she gave birth

to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!”

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.”¹⁶ So they went with haste

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and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child;¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

We all know this story so well that we almost forget to pay attention to it. There are two reasons for the Emperor to register everyone: 1. Update the Tax Rolls 2. Prepare to draft more soldiers. In the midst of a story about money and war, Mary and Joseph help to reveal God's presence. It's not an easy job, but in their love and struggle is an act of resistance. They will not make this a journey about war or money; they make a journey that reveals God. This is a great week to wonder about your own acts of resistance. How do you resist the flow of commercialism, the flow of violence and quick answers to complex problems? How do you reveal God's presence and love in the world? If you're not sure, this would be a good time to talk to somebody close to you; tell them how you see them resisting and revealing love and ask them how they see it in you. It's a very vulnerable conversation to have, and it may take time and even more than one attempt... but it wasn't an easy journey for Mary and Joseph either, but in the end, it was worth it.

This might be a good week to consider supporting the Massey Centre with a gift of diapers or getting some Jubilee Christmas cookies for yourself or a friend.



Fourth Week of Advent, December 20th

Luke 2: 22-38

²² When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”),²⁴ and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him.²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.²⁷ Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law,²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹ “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³ And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day.³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

And now, we get ready to hold, to embrace the baby Jesus. What does the baby Jesus look like to you? Does the baby Jesus resemble you or your child? Does the baby Jesus look different than you? Does it matter? Is the baby a boy or a girl? Does it matter? These are things to talk about with adults and children and together explore what it means to have God revealed in our lives. Simeon's heart was filled, and his life complete when he held the child. Anna couldn't stop telling people about the wonder of this child. How and why does Christmas fill your heart? What stories do you tell to help others understand how special Christmas is to you? **Tell your stories and ask others to tell theirs.**

This is a good week to immerse yourself in the story of Christmas. Jubilee will have a Virtual Christmas Pageant, A Virtual Sunday Service, A Virtual Christmas Eve Service, A Virtual Christmas Eve Midnight Communion, and a Virtual Christmas Day Service. Watch one or watch them all. Call a friend and watch them together over the phone. Don't hesitate to call family and friends and tell them how it feels this Christmas.

Property Report

While we all miss the normality of church, your property team has taken advantage of the time to get several important and invasive projects done. A 'tip of the hat' to Barb Secord for leading each of these projects on top of many other duties. Barb has been one very busy lady!

The key projects, all approved by Council and Trustees (thank you!) that are complete are:

- 1) Replace the north hall tiles and find out why they are cracking. The root cause - cuts in the floor made during renovations decades ago. These have been addressed, and new tiles have been laid. The work included the two washroom floors in the north hallway as well as the two storage cupboards in the auditorium that had similar issues.
- 2) Refinish the auditorium stage floor. The floor was in very rough condition. The stage floor and side entrance stairs are once again safe for use and look great.
- 3) Remove the wooden roof sunscreens outside the garden room and the west side. The wood was decayed. Once removed, new aluminum facing that match in terms of both colour and design to existing church exterior trim was installed.
- 4) Remove the temporary platform on the left side of the chancel, providing space to move the organ console into the area. Minor modifications to the stairs and floor tiles were done. Power and sound cables were also run to that new location. The cabling was done to allow the organ to be moved when necessary. This will also enable Daniel to move from the piano to the organ more seamlessly without having to travel across the sanctuary.
- 5) Painting of the exterior cross on the SE side was completed. It was quite weathered, and rust was prominent. It now looks great again!
- 6) Replace cultured stone. In several locations, the cultured stone had fallen off. These were replaced and look great.

Many other maintenance projects, including HVAC repairs, broken window repairs, repainting the picnic table with an inclusive rainbow flag, to replacing cracked ceramic tiles in the foyer and sanctuary, have also been completed.

We continue with a couple of other projects still to complete as well as regular maintenance items.

Keep well!

Brian Kalanda, Chair of Property

Life Events

Births:

Christopher James Petrie – child of Christine and Will – June 27, 2020
Catherine Elizabeth Amparo Dionisio – child of Anne and Max – September 4, 2020

Deaths:

Donald "Digger" Gorman – April 20, 2020
John Gorsline – May 23, 2020
Anna May Snook – July 5, 2020
Kenneth Linn – July 24, 2020
(Rev.) Lindsay King – August 14, 2020
Marjorie Hollands – September 24, 2020
David Neylan – October 1, 2020

Marriages:

Joseph Battams and Victoria Clemmer – February 22, 2020
Kenneth Miller and John Salib – March 15, 2020
Michael Seli and Kaitlyn Chappelle – September 19, 2020

Thank you, Norm!!

Only three words, but they carry our heartfelt gratitude, love, and care for who you are and all you are doing in these times.

Times unforeseen and like no other. Not what we were anticipating for Jubilee's 20th Anniversary.

From the content of this Jubilation, all can see a great many groups are continuing, and new ones added, all because of you. All so vital for connections and supports for people. And then there is what we can't see, from calls and emails, to care for others, and so much more, we are so blessed and grateful. The Jubilee Ark is still afloat!

Please look after yourself Norm, reach out when you need, pause, and breathe.

God Bless you!
Keep safe and well!