

SHUC NEWSLETTER

Living into Easter

Recently, those of us living in Ontario had to deal with an extended period of dark, gloomy weather. In some places in southern Ontario, we went over one month without experiencing any direct sunshine. It was dark and gloomy. And that pretty much matched the mood of most of the people I talked with.

We were dark and gloomy ourselves!

This reaction to a lack of sunshine in winter months is called “SAD” (Seasonal Affective Disorder). And “sad” pretty much describes the condition too. I myself suffer from SAD, which I treat using light therapy. Most years, only people who suffer from SAD experience this period of gloom. But this year and lack of sunshine lasted for so long that almost everyone was affected. The most common treatment for SAD is light therapy. Meaning, sitting near or looking at high intensity lights. And on those rare occasions when the sunshine breaks through, we need to seize the moment. We need to turn and face the sun. We need to take a moment to bask in the sun’s glow. We need to stop what we are doing and focus on the light.

And that is a bit like Easter.

Easter is approaching. It’s easy enough to get carried away in some of our favourite Easter activities. By the time you read this the Shrove Tuesday pancakes will have been eaten. But we can still look forward to a potluck meal on Maundy Thursday, a Good Friday service, Easter Sunday, and perhaps family Easter gatherings. And that is all great.

But the point of Easter is surely to experience the presence of God in our own lives. For most of us, we feel that presence only occasionally. But when those moments happens, we need to seize those moments. We need to turn and face the light. We need to take a moment to bask in the spirit’s glow. We need to stop what we are doing and focus on the divine in our midst. Easter is coming.



I hope and pray we will take time out to embrace the spirit of God in our midst
... whenever and wherever you experience it.
The blessings of the Lenten journey to you all.

Rev. Paul

A Message from your Board



In June of 2022, the Board of Sydenham-Heritage United Church met at Five Oaks for a full day to discuss our church's challenges and strengths. We began to work towards a strategic plan that includes fostering a culture that centres on being inclusive and sustainable. In this context, sustainability while including economic realities defined in much broader terms.

The painting depicted here and the posters you've likely seen around the church building is a visual representation of this culture; the open door welcoming all to enter; the arrows pointing inward and outward representing energy and communication with our congregation and beyond the building to the wider community; the tree changing through the season as a symbol of our past, our roots, our branches reaching out into the future and a symbol of change and resiliency; the cupped hands holding up the warmth and energy of a circular sun; and at the centre, the heart and cross to show that Christ and love is at the core of what we are and what we do. The rainbow of colours in the background aligns with diversity and the central blue line represents the importance of water as a source of life and our place on the Grand River. The circular canvas symbolizes our commitment to equity where all points on the circumference are equally important and in balance and in relation to one another. This shape mirrors a drum, drumming for peace, for harmony, for unity, and for healing and justice.

The Core value of love, inclusion, affirmation, engagements, development, growth are what will make us sustainable. This is the message and vision that we encourage all of us to embrace and to live.

Submitted by co-chair, Sharon Davidson

Music Ministry

This spring, Sydenham-Heritage is excited to debut various special performances from our congregation members and guests, in addition to continued choral collaboration with the other united churches in Brantford through our joint United Churches services.

The next joint service is April 23rd and St. Andrew's UC will host this service.

The four united churches are looking for more voices to join our mass choir on the occasional joint service, so please let Trevor, our music director know if you would like to join in the fun. No previous experience required!



Sydenham-Heritage's music ministry will be fund-raising to contribute to the expensive repairs to our lovely Samick grand piano. Donations are appreciated and tax-refundable.

We will continue to run our hymn-sing on the first Sunday of each month led by Trevor and the choir at 10:15am. Again, let Trevor or Terry Matheson know if you have any requests..

Submitted by Trevor Dalton

What's New?

Music Celebration Series: Covid has taken a toll of much of our community and church family and has kept us from doing things we love with people we love.

This spring 2023 we want to help you make memories doing the one thing we love more than anything, MAKING MUSIC!!!! Sydenham-Heritage United Church is organizing a **Music Celebration Series** this spring We are proposing four dates, four musical themes/genres, one venue (Calder Hall).



April 15 – Country Music
April 22 – Love Songs
April 29th – 50's/60's sock hop
May 6 – 70's/80's Chart Toppers

Watch the church website, church bulletin, SNIPPETS and FaceBook for information on ticket availability. And for those performers who saw our request for singers and musicians, there's still time to get on the programme. Contact the church and leave your contact information! Let's make music together!

Submitted by Terry Matheson

Crafty Friends: Our group now spans three churches, and has over 20 members. We have taken up residence in the yellow room (off the Fellowship Room) and crafters, knitters, crocheters, sewers, quilters... are welcome to visit Tuesdays (afternoon session drop in from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm for anyone interested in meeting with friends, dropping off projects and picking up supplies or patterns, or the evening session 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm).

Some of our members prefer to craft at home and send their projects in, some members pop in long enough to say hello and drop off their projects, or donate yarn and some of us meet in the yellow room for a little fun and fellowship. However you choose to participate, all are welcome. If you'd like more information on current and ongoing projects please contact Terry Matheson (or search out a **Crafty Friend** and ask them).

Submitted by Terry Matheson

Prime Roast Beef Dinner: Sydenham-Heritage UC is hosting a Prime Roast Beef Dinner with all the trimmings! Roast potatoes, honey glazed carrots, French style green beans, buttered rolls, salad and dessert.



Mark your calendar for **March 18th** and get your tickets by contacting a member of Outreach/Stewardship Committee or call the church. Dinner starts at 5:30 pm and tickets are \$35.00/person.

Submitted by Verna Timpener

Still I Rise
written by
Maya Angelou

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise I rise I rise



Maya Angelou, born Marguerite Ann Johnson April 4, 1928 in St. Louis, Missouri, was an American poet, memoirist, actress and an important figure in the American Civil Rights Movement. In 2001 she was named one of the 30 most powerful women in America by Ladies Home Journal. Maya Angelou is known for her series of six autobiographies, starting with *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, (1969) which was nominated for a National Book Award and called her magnum opus. Her volume of poetry, **Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'Fore I Die** (1971) was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

***"I'm convinced of this: Good done anywhere is good done everywhere. For a change, start by speaking to people rather than walking by them like they're stones that don't matter. As long as you're breathing, it's never too late to do some good."* – MAYA ANGELOU**

"Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened." – Matthew 7:7-8

Fun Facts About Easter.... Did you know?

The Easter Bunny legend began in Germany

The origin of the Easter Bunny dates back hundreds of years, beginning in pre-Christian Germany. Here, the hare was said to be the symbol of the Pagan Goddess of Spring and Fertility. As Christianity spread across Europe, Pagan traditions were blended with Christian holidays, which saw the Easter Bunny lay a nest of colourful (today, chocolate) eggs for children who were well-behaved on Easter Sunday.



The act of painting eggs originates from a Ukrainian tradition

For countless generations, Ukrainians have been decorating eggs as a calling out to the Gods and Goddesses of health and fertility. This traditional act of pysanka (“pih-sahn-kah”) is made by using wax and dyes, but this colourful custom didn’t take off until Ukrainian immigrants came to the U.S.

The world’s largest Easter egg weighs in at 5000lbs

Standing 31ft tall and 18ft wide is the world’s largest Easter egg. Found in Vegreville, Alberta, Canada, the egg weighs a hefty 5000 lbs and took 12,000 hours to complete. Named the Vegreville Pysanka, the world’s largest Easter egg is actually more of a jigsaw than a sculpture, as it is made from 3500 pieces of aluminium.



Pretzels used to be associated with Easter

When we think of Easter, chocolate, hot-cross buns, and eggs usually spring to mind. But did you know that pretzels are also an Easter snack? Pretzels are associated with Easter because the twists resemble arms crossing in prayer. From the 1950s, it was tradition for Germans to eat a pretzel and a hard-boiled egg for dinner on Good Friday.

The UK’s first chocolate egg was produced in Bristol in 1873

It was during the 19th century that the Fry family of Bristol ran the largest chocolate factory in the world and produced the first chocolate egg, in 1873. It was two years later in 1875 that saw Cadbury’s make their first Easter egg.

In Germany, it is illegal to dance on Good Friday

On Good Friday, which sees the start of the Easter weekend, it is illegal to dance in public in the majority of states in Germany. Even Europe’s clubbing capital, Berlin, becomes a dance-free zone out of respect for the religious day. In Baden-Württemberg, music is allowed to be played but dancing is not allowed, whilst in Bavaria, if you are caught playing music of any kind in a bar, you could be fined up to 10,000 euros.



Easter is celebrated on the Sunday after the full moon following March 21st

Ever wondered why Easter Sunday changes date every year? It’s down to the lunar calendar and the position of the moon. Easter in fact falls on the first Sunday after the full moon that takes place on or after March 21st, which is said to signal the start of spring.

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" — John 14:6

Dorothy Wagner “The Cookie Lady”



What a beautiful, happy, gracious woman Dorothy was!

She brightened everybody’s day with her up beat manner, with a smile for everyone. Dorothy was easy to like and easy to be around. She was always first to arrive and very punctual. She was a strong lady who loved flowers, birds, horses, and nature. Her beloved dog Candy was with her to the very end.

She loved to bake. Accord to Norm his children called Dorothy ‘The Cookie Lady’. Anytime Norm went to visit Jack, her husband, Jen and Justin wanted to tag along. They always knew that Dorothy would give them sugar and/or molasses cookies.

Norm also remembers her holding him at a very young age at the Barracks at the Brantford Airport. Norm is busy looking for the picture as we write this.

Norm loved coming to church to get a hug and ‘morning Normie’ from Dorothy. She always called him ‘Normie’. She never yelled or carried on – just gave a look that told everything!

Her favourite TV show was The Waltons, as is mine. It’s a reminder of simpler times demonstrating love and caring to the family and community.

Dorothy was a very generous lady and so reliable to such church groups as the UCW and Pastoral Care. Dorothy also counted the offering ever Sunday and on one of those Sundays there was some change missing. They found it attached to Dorothy’s magnetic bracelet!

She drove people to church with Barb Kernaghan for many years. They always sat together on right hand side near the back. It was comforting knowing that they were always in attendance.

Her favourite song was ‘I love you a bushel and a peck and a hug around the neck’ Every night for the past 4 years at Seasons she was tucked in and said ‘Night Mommy’. Dorothy certainly helped to make this world a better place and will be sorely missed.



Lovingly submitted by Gail Merritt & Norm Greenfield

Calling all Recyclers

DID YOU KNOW that the outer bag on a 3 litre bag of milk can be recycled into a sleeping mat?

DID YOU KNOW that your empty pill bottles with the labels removed can be reused?

DID YOU KNOW that the pull tabs on your aluminum cans can be recycled?

DID YOU KNOW that the aluminum beverage cans can be recycled as a fundraiser for SHUC

So, bring your milk bags, pill bottles, aluminum cans & pull tabs to the church and put them in the bins by the office, and we will get them to people who will make very good use of them.

The Privilege of Stewardship by Xochitl Dixon (Daily Bread Ministries)

While on vacation, my husband and I walked along the beach and noticed a large, square patch of sand blocked off by a makeshift fence. A young man explained that he worked around the clock with a team of volunteers committed to guarding the eggs in each sea turtle's nest.



Once the hatchling emerged from their nest, the presence of both animals and humans threaten and decrease their chance of survival. "Even with our efforts," he said "scientists estimate that only one out of every five thousand hatchlings reach adulthood." These bleak numbers didn't discourage this young man, however. This passion for selflessly serving the hatchlings deepened my desire for respecting and protecting the sea turtles. Now I wear a sea turtle pendant that reminds me of God-

given responsibility to care for the creatures He's made.

When God created the world, He provided a habitat in which each creature could live and thrive (Genesis 1:20-25). When He created His image-bearers, God intended for us to "rule over the fish in the sea and birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground" (v. 26). He helps us serve Him as responsible stewards who use our God-given authority to care for His vast creation.

In what ways have you cared for God's creation? How can you become a better steward of it this week?

Staying Connected

Worship services are always available to view online Sunday mornings. Just click on the link in the church calendar. But did you know that you can watch them at your convenience too? There are 3 options for finding our services online after Sunday service.

1. The online calendar at sydenham-heritage.ca includes links to past services (as well as future ones).
2. If you go to youtube.com and search for "**Sydenham-Heritage United Church**" you will find everything there. Click on our channel to see only our content.
3. If you go to paulshepherd.ca and click on "**reflections**", you get links to our services. You also get links to the sermons. They are now available in 3 formats: pdf (great for printing), eBooks (great for reading at a comfortable font size), and video.

Are you a **Facebook** user? Do you follow **Instagram**? Do you check out **YouTube**?

Did you know that you can find Sydenham-Heritage United Church on all these social media platforms?

Jean Maich populates our Facebook page with uplifting messages and funny memes.

Terry Matheson updates Facebook with events and special dates

Rev. Paul uploads videos to YouTube and updates Instagram.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." — John 3:16

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**Sydenham-Heritage United Church
ALL are welcome in this place**



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