



The United Church of Canada in Elgin and Portland

# Our Churches United

Advent News and Notes – November, 2018



## Elgin-Portland Pastoral Charge

Rev. Takouhi  
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### Pastoral Charge

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### Office Hours:

Wed.: 9 am-1 pm  
Thurs.: 9 am-3 pm

### Sunday Services:

Portland – 9:15am  
Elgin – 11:00 am

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## Thoughts on Advent, from Rev. Kathy Walton



*“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.” Luke 21:25-26.*

It is October 25, 2018, and last night Tom and I went to see Anthropocene, a documentary about the impact of humanity on the geology, and the shape and the biosphere of the earth. It was frankly, terrifying. Added to that, the rhetoric and discord in our global political life and indeed “distress among nations” is an accurate description. It was hard to sleep. In my own life, my only aunt has just died and my mother is living the end of her life in a nursing home and I am filled with guilt and remorse and all the feelings of a daughter torn by the needs of the future and the past.

So, when I looked at the readings for the beginning of Advent, I was hoping for the lovely story of Jesus’ birth as a distraction, and a calming antidote for the world around me. Alas! Instead I am faced with the very “fears and forebodings” I live with every day. It is a timely reminder to me and I think, to you too, that Jesus did not come into our world, vulnerable, needy, and poor, to be coddled and wrapped in satin and velvet. Nor did he come to a world already peaceful and stable, to simply tell us good stories and re-enforce our good will. He came into a struggling world, rife with persecution and oppression, an earth already being changed by the challenges of humans living in a rapidly expanding, hugely complicated world of conquest and negotiation. And his birth, even his birth, just another infant born, so small, so seemingly insignificant, so singular, changed everything.

It took time, it took his life, it is still taking time and it is still taking his life, but his very being still makes a difference. It is a reminder to me, and I think to you, that every age has its signs of the end of time, every age has its oppressors and its tribulations, every age faces loss and choice and fear, but in the face of those things every age has been set back on its heels by the awesome unleashed power displayed by God in the smallest of signs of hope, the tiniest source of light, mustard seeds of faith, whispers and cries of desire for justice.

**Thoughts on Advent (continued)**

We struggle, yes, we often despair, yes, but we pick ourselves up and go on, and we go on in hope for a future closer to the kingdom of heaven, because Jesus came into our distressed world to show us that the world could not overcome us – to show us that loving one another is a surer path to peace than hate will ever build. So, it is Advent, and we watch for the signs of the times that tell us not to despair, not to lose hope. Christ came into the world, comes into the world, will always come into our lives and our troubles, making all things new, making our struggles holy, opening our lives so that we become a new creation. It is not ever easy, no birth ever is, but still, inevitably, God comes. *“...Raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”* (Luke 21:28)

May God bless you with hope, joy, peace and love this Christmas and always.

Love, Rev. Kathy

**CASES OF CARING**

“Cases of Caring” are decorative pillowcases that are made for CHEO (Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario”) by a group of friendly, dedicated women from several local communities in Rideau Lakes Township.

The sewing bees are held from 9 a.m. to noon on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at Portland United Church throughout the year except for July and August.

Not a sewer? People who can cut fabric, pin the bands to the body, iron the fabric or the finished product, or sew the labels onto the pillowcases are also needed.

This initiative was started over a decade ago by Lynne Evans, who is still the convenor of this group. Each month, we send at least 35 pillowcases to C.H.E.O. Monetary donations are greatly appreciated so that we can continue to buy fabric.

Please feel free to join us for a fun and productive time!

For more information, call or e-mail:

Jane Pickard  
613-272-2524  
jpick@kingston.net

Joan Kelly  
613-272-3134

**PORTLAND PEALERS**



Oh, what fun we are having in our Handbell Choir! Thanks to the generosity of our Council, congregation and community, we purchased a three-octave set of choir chimes last May, and have thrown ourselves into music that features the chimes and the bells. Such pieces as *The Nutcracker Sweets* (all chimes), Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah*, and *You Raise Me Up* (which combine the bells and the chimes) have been added to our music library, and we love them!

Do you want to join the fun? We still have room for a regular ringer, plus would dearly love to have some "spares." Practices are Thursday evenings, 5:45 to 7:15 p.m. to accommodate ringers who are also choir members. This brings them out for one evening a week as opposed to two. Reading music is a plus, but if you are not a music reader, *don't let that stop you!* As long as you can count, you can ring! Check us out! We will be leading the joint Sunday service on **November 18.** We welcome your interest, whether you want to join the Pealers or not.



Of course, purchasing music such as *Hallelujah* can be costly. To that end we will be raising funds at our **Soup and Sandwich Luncheon** on **Saturday, December 8, from 11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** It's also **Build a Mountain of Food Day** - why not come to Portland for both events?

**PORTLAND  
U.C.W.  
TOURTIÈRES**

**ORDER NOW!** We are making tourtières again, to be ready for **December 8.** Only a limited number of these frozen, ready to bake meat pies will be available. So - sign up now - use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board or phone Sheila, 613-272-3531. Cost \$15 each.

**RIDEAU LAKES  
SEWERS**



The Rideau Lakes Sewers meet several times a year and thanks to the Portland United Church there is a great place to gather.

We are a team of dedicated sewers who get together to create attractive and comforting quilts that are donated to the Perth and Smiths Falls Hospitals.

These quilts are given to patients undergoing kidney dialysis, cancer treatments and palliative care.

There is always room for one more! If this initiative tugs at your heart strings, join us! Joan Horsfall will gladly provide more information. She can be reached at [joan@lenscove.com](mailto:joan@lenscove.com).

**BY THE NUMBERS****SUBMITTED BY DUNCAN PICKARD, TREASURER, PUC**

As Portland United Church approaches the last two months of the year a review of the numbers is in order.

Our congregation continues to face many opportunities, changes and challenges. As we go about trying to influence the community around us many of the opportunities, changes and challenges show up in the numbers. How are we doing? To the end of October 2018, the amount the church has raised for all its activities is up by \$3,500. However, if we look deeper, segments of our activities are being impacted differently.

**Dedicated Funds (a reflection of donations directed towards specific projects and missions)**

Much of the increase in income this past year was directed to international causes with an increase of \$7,000 to international missions; including Mission and Service, El Salvador, Honduras, and Peace through Education in Lebanon. To date contributions to our local community, missions such as DIG, and the Food bank, are down \$1,500. The designated funds which are directly associated with the church are down slightly. However this is a reflection of need and initiative as the congregation responded to the identified needs with great generosity including raising funds to support the Bell choir's initiative to purchase chimes and the building project to replace our eaves troughs.

**Church Operation (General Fund)**

Unfortunately the day to day operation of the church continues to run a deficit. To date weekly givings are down close to \$4,000 and funds raised by Fundraising activities are down by roughly \$3,000. Last year's deficit to the end of October was roughly \$10,000 and this year, with the \$7,000 shortfall in revenue, the YTD deficit has grown to \$16,000.

This shortfall has been covered in recent years by the generosity of those before us who had the forethought and resolve to set up our Long Term Fund, which over the last ten years, has earned enough annually to cover our shortfalls. In the world of reduced investment returns that we are experiencing, the Fund was unable to cover last year's deficit without reducing the capital. This year, as our deficit grows and fund earnings are reduced, the capital is being eroded more rapidly.

In addition to facing these immediate influences the greater United Church of Canada is going through major structural changes in the attempt to improve efficiencies and cut costs. With these changes not only will the support systems of presbytery be redistributed or eliminated but the administrative charges individual churches will bear will be increased. This increase is at least in part due to improved transparency as the portion of Mission and Service which was directed to Church administration is redirected to mission work and the church operational needs are born directly by congregational dues. The impact of this for Portland United Church annually is still unclear but estimated at between \$2,000-3,000 annually. Fortunately, this increase will be implemented gradually over a number of years.

*Council is currently starting the budgeting process for 2019 and beyond. May your prayers be with us as we search for the path which allows the Community of Portland United Church to continue to influence the world in which we live today, and long into the future.*



For the last three years Portland United Church, with the agreement of both Council and the Trustees, has used \$3,000 of our Long Term Fund to support the development of Youth in our community. This year council decided to split the monies between organizations 60% and individuals 40%.

The organizations which have been supported to the end of October this Year are: the Rideau District High School for the band; the Rideau Township Library, to purchase leveled readers; and the South Crosby Public School, to present a cultural event.

We are excited to say our guidelines for supporting individuals are now finalized and our first disbursement has been made.

*The guidelines for individual support have been posted on the bulletin board of both churches.* Please review them and advance opportunities in which they can be applied as we support the youth of our community in their development toward becoming productive members of society.



## ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SERVICES

**Rev. Walton will taking all the services in December up to December 24 and will be our "full time" minister throughout the Advent and Christmas Season.**

Sunday, December 2 (Advent 1)	PUC 9:15 a.m. EUC 11:00 a.m.	Portland will be holding a Soup and Sandwich luncheon: the Sunday School will provide soup; everyone else brings sandwiches and desserts.
Sunday, December 9 (Advent 2)	PUC 9:15 a.m. EUC 11:00 a.m.	<b>White Gift Sunday</b> for both churches
Sunday, December 16 (Advent 3)	PUC 9:15 a.m. EUC 11:00 a.m.	
Sunday, December 23 (Advent 4)	PUC 9:15 a.m. EUC 11:00 a.m.	
<b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b>	PUC 4:00 p.m. EUC 7:00 p.m.	
Sunday, December 30	EUC 10:00 a.m.	<b>JOINT SERVICE</b> led by our music teams (no service in Portland)



## **FOUR RIVERS PRESBYTERY/ CONFERENCE YOUTH EVENTS**

News Flash! Our youth are certainly very much alive and active representing Portland/Elgin Pastoral Charges well. Over the past six months the youth from the age of ten to sixteen have had the opportunity to participate and travel to some exciting events. In the spring Alex Price, Emily and David French with Pauline French accepted the opportunity for an amazing life changing experience for our youth to travel to El Salvador with other youth and leaders from the Bay of Quinte Conference. In June Leah Welch-Turner travelled to London, not to visit the Queen, but to be a part of the celebration of the ordination of Emma Pipe, which was the youth leader hired by presbytery to organize and carry out the planning and events for the Four Rivers Presbytery. Allison and her dad Brad had the opportunity to try out bubble soccer sponsored by Battersea/ Inverary United Church and Presbytery, and Alex Price attended the Closing celebration of the Bay of Quinte Conference in Peterborough representing the youth from our Presbytery.

Our most recent event was a trip to Niagara Falls to a province wide event with 250 youth from across Ontario. Portland and Elgin had representation from Leah Welch-Turner and Alex Price. Fellowship, music, workshops, Niagara Falls, an amazing water park, church floors and new friendships rounded out a great weekend. Even a greater blessing is the opportunity for our youth to meet and travel with our Newboro youth. They can't wait for the next event!

Thanks for your blessings and support. Our next event may be coming soon to Portland! Stay tuned.

Prayerfully submitted by Cathy Ryan – Youth Leader for Four Rivers Presbytery and Bay of Quinte Conference

## **ELGIN/PORTLAND SOUTH CROSBY SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM**

September brought about another request for Elgin/Portland Congregation to step up to the plate to be the church. Each Tuesday morning for 1 ½ hours the volunteers have the opportunity, on a rotating basis, to prepare the breakfast and, for the first time, visit the classroom to welcome the smiling faces of the Grade One class. At present, throughout the school, there are approximately 50 students, out of 240, starting their day with cereal, milk and juice. We are very blessed in this community to have Monique Hartley, Principal, who sees the value of nutrition and the positive outcomes.

We are blessed to be part of the team of volunteers from Bethel Pentecostal Church, Delta United, and Newboro Eastern Star.

If you would like to join the team please contact Cathy Ryan at 613-272-2026.

Submitted by Cathy Ryan



# Portland United Church



## BAKE SALE



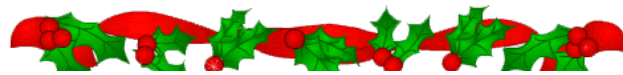
**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2018**

**10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Come and get your Christmas baking  
done in just a few minutes!

and

pick up your PRE-ORDERED Tourtières.



## Christmas Luncheon

**11:00 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**\$10**



for a selection of home-made soups,  
freshly made sandwiches,  
dessert and beverage.