

BLOORBEAT

The Newsletter of



Volume XXXI, Issue 6

Minister's Message

"Human Rights, Human Wrongs"

This past September we observed four weeks of the Season of Creation for the first time at Bloordale, with orange becoming prominent in worship on Sundays. This Season set me thinking about how all we do and say and believe is within the context of God's original giftedness as the Creator, and how we've been given a special place in God's grand scheme of things. Our special status is not something we've earned, however; it's a gift, given by God without deserving and without condition. And because God has given us our valued status as human beings, that status translates into an inherent dignity that cannot and should not ever be questioned or put at risk.

Nonetheless, our world is full of people whose treatment is inhumane, literally less than human. If human dignity is to be a reality in this world, then human rights have to be asserted. It was a Canadian, in case you didn't know, by the name of John Humphrey, a New Brunswicker, who wrote the first draft of what later became the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, asserted by the United Nations in 1948. Human rights, individual and collective, have been a strong part of our Canadian heritage, as the courts have wrestled with the weight of competing rights in numerous historic cases. Maybe we don't like what Omar Khadr did, but we're in trouble if we assert that his rights as a Canadian-born citizen are different than the rest of us.

Yet the current government seemed so unwilling to protect his God-given rights, as Khadr languished in Guantanamo for nearly a decade. How do we as Christians reconcile the lack of respect for even the most basic human rights suffered by so many around the globe, rights such as adequate food, clothing and shelter, with the assurance that their dignity is a gift of God, which no human power can take away from them?

This is the question I struggle with alongside our Outreach Committee, and in my activist work as Chairperson of the Social Justice and World Affairs Committee of South West Presbytery. Our lay (non-clergy) Presbytery representative, Norm Dundas, also considers this question closely as Chairperson of the Mission Support & Finance Committee. Whether it be aboriginal healing and reconciliation, Palestinian solidarity, refugee protection, eliminating poverty, ending homelessness, or a host of other issues, the right to respect, dignity, and access to the basics of life for each and for all is consistent with the biblical values which Jesus taught which are contained in the concept of the reign of God. We may think this reign, this "kingdom", this domain sounds too distant, more remote than the farthest outposts of space. But Jesus says no: *"The kingdom of God has come near."* (Mark 1: 15) And when we translate the concept as the "governance" of God, which I like to do, we bring it a little closer to our earthly social, economic, and political realities.

Continued on page 4

Bloordale United Church

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Christian Development Co-ordinator	Lisa Mazzariol
Youth Leader	Hanna Lyle
Administrative Assistant	Juanita Eldridge
Organist & Choir Director	Mervin Fick
Custodian	Jim Spalding

Church Council

Chair	Julia Stavreff
Church Council Secretary	Dana Bach
Congregational Meeting Secretary	Pat Nelson
Board of Trustees	Jack Lovatt
Ministry and Personnel	Connie Drummond
Nominations	Pat Nelson
Treasurer	Norman Dundas
Presbytery Representative	Norman Dundas
Minister	Rev. Brian W. McIntosh

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Communications	John Pauksens
Congregational Life (co-chairs)	Helen Hitchcock Gladys Lewis
Christian Development	Verena von Stritsky
Finance & Stewardship	Jack Lovatt
Outreach (co-chairs)	Jill Donaghy Shirley Scott
Pastoral Care	Sylvia Williams
Planned Gift Fund	Bob Hitchcock
Property	Bruce Jackson
Social and Fund Raising	Vanessa Ramsahai
United Church Women	Joan Hollowell
Worship	Sharron Le Blanc
Member-at-Large	Jim Bell Frank Sword

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LOOKING AT THE WEEKS AHEAD

- Sunday, October 21 - Peace Sunday
- Sunday, October 28 - Reformation / All Saints Sunday - **Communion**
- Friday, November 2 - Movie Night - *Milk with Sean Penn* - 7:00 p.m. Room 15
- Saturday, November 3 - **Blazing Fiddles** -7:30 p.m.
- Sunday, November 4 - 23rd after Pentecost
Semi-annual Congregational Meeting
- Sunday, November 11 - Remembrance Sunday
- Sunday, November 25 - Reign of Christ
- Sunday, December 2 - Advent 1 - **Communion**

Worship Services at 10:30 a.m.

**Don't forget to turn back your clocks on
Saturday evening, November 3rd**

The Blazing Fiddles

*Toronto's Premiere Fiddle Group
Coming to Bloordale*



A group of lively and talented musicians playing an amazing variety of celtic fiddle tunes, popular show songs, and a medley of classical violin.

A cabaret style performance, with refreshments

Saturday, November 3, 2012

at 7:30 pm,

*Bloordale United Church
4258 Bloor St. W., Etobicoke
www.bloordale.ca*

*Tickets \$25
For tickets or information call Jackie 905-270-8748,
or Vanessa 416-358-4504*

UPDATE ON DOME REPLACEMENT

Our dome replacement should already be underway, as you are reading this. To date, we have received over \$ 18,600 , and I want to thank you for your generous contributions to our capital appeal (This is on top of contributions of \$ 10,500 previously given for eliminating our mould problem last spring – total given \$29,100.)

The go-ahead for the dome replacement project was given by Church Council in order to remedy a long-standing problem with water leakage in the old dome of our sanctuary.

The total cost is expected to be \$ 23,500, leaving a shortfall of \$ 5,000.

Additional donations are invited.

Thanks to John Pauksens for pulling this project together.

Julia Stavreff, Chair of Council

BLOORDALE AT CIRQUE DU SOLEIL'S AMALUNA

On Wednesday, September 19, 2012, 35 Bloordale family and friends went to see the new Cirque du Soleil show, AmaLuna, which is loosely based on Shakespeare's The Tempest. It was in a tent, the Blue and Yellow Big Top, at the Port Lands. As Toronto Star Theatre Critic, Richard Ouzounian said '(this show would) send your spirit soaring and bring your heart to places it's never been before'

Our cirque-goers had a number of favourite 'acts':

- the girl swimming in a large goblet (yes, on stage, with real water)
- the red dressed amazon women on the uneven bars
- the two sprites on unicycles, wearing large hoop skirts
- the serpentine creature named Cali with the marvelous moving tail
- the young men jumping on seesaws
- the blue dressed flying ladies, who landed in the audience once or twice

And we all were mesmerized by Lara Jacobs, who took 13 palm leaf ribs and slowly turned them into a living sculpture of incredible beauty. And then, with the pull of one rib, collapsed the whole thing.

It was a show worth seeing. We had 2 sets of seats; some in Section 103, and some in Section 203. Both sets were excellent.

Thanks to all who came, and special thanks to the drivers.

THE LUNCH BUNCH

We have a new initiative planned for Bloordale: The Lunch Bunch. Once every 4 to 6 weeks, those who wish, can go for lunch together after church. We will order from the menu, and pay individually at the restaurant. It is a time of fellowship.

Our first luncheon is tentatively scheduled for November 11th, 2012, at the Canadiana Restaurant in Six Points Plaza. If you are interested in going to this lunch, or to other ones to follow, or have questions, please talk with organizer Gord Moore(416-695-2639) or with Julia Stavreff (416-622-6309).

Car pooling available.

Continued from page 1

The basic issue is this: what would the world look like if God was the governing authority within it, if we lived up to God's intentions for us all and for the earth God made and still loves? The two great commandments which Jesus shared were, first, the Shema of Israel to love God with heart and soul and mind and strength, and second, and equal to it, to love our neighbor as ourselves. (Mark 12: 28-31) To love ourselves is to recognize and uphold the gift of our own human dignity, to reject any notion of our lack of self-worth, to offer ourselves the self-respect we deserve as creations, as children of God. Surely we can offer no less to our neighbors!

In the midst of an exciting and busy month at the church, with chancel renovations and dome replacement taking place in the sanctuary and a host of workshops and programming options, including the start of a new Sunday School music program, consider how you might contribute, not only to the food bank on the first Sunday of the month, though that charity is essential given the poverty that exists around us, but to the pursuit of justice and human rights for those who suffer at the hands of oppression, starvation, devastation, so that food banks become unnecessary, a happy historical relic prior to the implementation of God's governance. May it be so!

Brian

STEWARDSHIP SPOT

"Stewardship is everything I do after I say 'I believe'."

Stewardship Is Not Like Survivor!

One of my favorite authors through the 80's and 90's was Robert Fulghum. He made headlines with his widely popular book All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten. That single essay was both provocative and humorous, spiritual and irreverent at the same time, transforming it into a gift which embraced its readers and imparted learnings about service, commitment, caring, and other concerns dear to all of us who consider ourselves stewards of abundant life.

A 1993 Fulghum book is entitled Maybe, Maybe Not, and in it he writes about having a philosophy class, a group of high school seniors, and groups of adults in various contexts play a game that's a variation on musical chairs. In the game you first do the usual thing, removing chairs and eliminating people with each round. Then you play a second time, removing a chair with each round, only this time no one leaves, and people need to find a way to have everyone seated, including on someone else's lap, until you remove

the last chair and challenge everyone to get seated on each other's lap. Maybe in a group of eight or more you could try this sometime!

In playing this game, believe it or not, we'd learn something about faithful stewardship! Remember the gospel story (Mark 10: 35-45) in which two disciples make a pretty heady demand of Jesus, asking that he "*do for us whatever we ask of you.*" Perhaps a parallel could be made to folks in our day who look at life only through the lens of entitlement, who believe that the world owes them something or that the world is there for their taking, their pleasure, their privilege. Those two disciples wanted to be better than others – more important, with more status. They were like people who play survivor musical chairs with a will to win or succeed at everyone else's expense. If you play the musical chairs game in less polite circles, for instance, you might see some pushing and shoving going on!

In the Bible story Jesus didn't deal harshly with the two, since he asked them what it was they wanted. But he still left them with a reality check about what it was they would face, as he soon would face the challenge of the cross. It was as if he was saying that the only glory you're going to know, if you're truly faithful stewards of my way and will, is the glory of humility.

Repetitive, competitive endeavors such as our economy or musical chairs always leaves winners and losers, creating divisions among people who are called to be stewards of God's one creational circle of friends. Even those who lose, and lose often or always, long to be winners, emotionally as well as economically. Why do you think that playing the lottery is such a huge problem among the poor? When the ten other disciples overheard the conversation Jesus had with the two, they were angry, jealous or envious about the possibility of the two being given a more exalted status in Jesus' eyes. It's like those who are out early in the traditional musical chairs game, secretly miffed even if we pretend otherwise, since none of us likes to lose or be excluded.

Jesus, friends, had another idea. He wanted all of us to work together, to build a community of faith and a society where everyone is included and valued. He didn't want winners and losers, but a place of honor, respect and support for all of us in the circle. Truly faithful stewardship is about living our lives thinking about the needs of others, not just worrying about winning and being the best or accumulating the most. In Jesus' eyes, the best person isn't the one who has the most money and possessions or the most important job. In Jesus' eyes, the best person is the one who is in cooperation with, and service of, others. May we all learn a little more to see with Jesus' eyes!

Brian

TORONTO CONFERENCE "GROWING JUSTICE" EVENT OCTOBER 26-27

An excellent "*Growing Justice*" event is being held Friday evening **October 26th** and Saturday the **27th** here in Toronto, and everyone is invited! Intended to nurture social justice and outreach ministries in Congregations across the four Presbyteries of Toronto Conference, the keynote speaker is Ched Myers, an activist, theologian and author who is passionate about connecting the sanctuary and the street in an authentic gospel witness – he's a terrific speaker! Workshops will be offered on Saturday by various groups, including United Church and Kairos national staff, as well as Christian Peacemaker Teams staff, and volunteers like Brian. This great event is \$60 for the entire weekend or \$10 for the Friday evening only. To find out more information, including how to register, see the flyer posted on the bulletin boards upstairs and down in the Church, or call or speak to Brian.

AN EDUCATION EVENING WITH BRIAN ABOUT GRASSY NARROWS

On **Monday October 29th at 7 pm** Brian will have an evening in Room 15 to show pictures on powerpoint and talk about his experience in the Grassy Narrows aboriginal territory in August as part of a Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation there.

It will last a little over an hour, and will be relatively informal. Plan on joining him and learning about the Anishanabe people of that region, known as Treaty #3 territory, near Kenora in northern Ontario.

MOVIE NIGHTS AT BLOODDALE

One Friday/Month

Come and join Brian and others as we screen a meaningful movie once a month in Room 15 while enjoying popcorn and other goodies. We usually have a brief conversation following the film, as we relate what we've seen to our faith journeys. Here's the schedule for the fall:

Friday **November 9th** at 7 pm
Milk with Sean Penn

Friday **November 30th** at 7 pm
The Matrix with Keanu Reeves

Two weeks to go!

"DISCOVERING GOD'S VISION FOR YOUR LIFE: YOU AND YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS"

November 7, 14, 21, 28, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Bloordale United Church, Rm. 15.

Registration: No later than
Noon, Friday, October 26th

Nelsona Dundas: 416-620-4098;
nelsona.dundas@sympatico.ca.

Cost:

\$30 for materials due on registration.

How do you know, among the many demands made on your life, where God is calling you? In his book, "*Wishful Thinking*", theologian Frederick Buechner writes: "By and large a good rule for finding out is this. The kind of work God usually calls you to is the kind of work (a) that you need most to do and (b) that the world most needs to have done... The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

The Bible shows that even the greatest religious leaders serve not because they are better people than the rest of us, or because they have chosen God, but because God has chosen *them* and empowered them. Nor are they always the greatest moral examples! Consider: Abraham was a liar; Sarah laughed in disbelief when God promised to give her a son; Jacob was a cheat; Rachel stole her father's idols and lied about it; Moses murdered a man; David committed adultery and then had his lover's husband killed; Jonah ran away; and Solomon disobeyed! When summoned by God, they offer objections and make excuses for why they can't serve. Yet, when they allow God to work in their lives, great things happen! And so it is for us.

Helen Keller was once asked whether there was anything worse than being blind. She responded, "Yes. Having no vision." Come! Bring a friend! Discover God's vision for *you* and its power to direct *your* life in a wholly new and gracious direction!

See you there!

KAIROS TORONTO WEST WORKSHOP NOV. 3RD

The ecumenical (inter-church) Kairos Toronto West, a local group of the national organization Kairos, is holding a Workshop entitled "*Violence Against Aboriginal Women – Let's End It!*" on Saturday **November 3rd from 9 am to 12:30** here at Bloordale.

There is excellent leadership for this workshop, from both Native Women's Resource Center of Toronto and Council Fire Native Cultural Centre. Both Brian and Paul Rose from Bloordale are involved with Kairos, and invite you to attend this opportunity to learn about the challenges aboriginal women face.

See the flyer on the bulletin boards for more information.

CHURCH SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM LAUNCHED!

Our excellent adult choir includes a number of people who are either former educators or who **simply have a strong desire to pass on the gift of music to children.**

With the demise of the Sing 360 Children's Choir this fall, a number of people felt it's time to enhance the music program for our church's children. So we've launched a new program in which interested choir members will absent themselves from worship during the sermon on a regular basis (though the rest of you shouldn't get any bright ideas! Ha! Ha!) and go downstairs to teach our children songs for about 15 or twenty minutes.

The children will be prepared, then, to offer a song or two either in church on a Sunday morning or during the Christmas Pageant or the Passion Play. We're excited about this vision to share the gift of music with our young ones, and we hope you'll bring your children and youth on a consistent basis to enjoy singing, in addition to enjoying learning from Lisa and Hanna.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

This is your "Save the Date" notification for our annual Christmas Pageant! We will be presenting our pageant on Sunday, Dec. 16th. We will also be featuring a performance by our newly formed Children and Youth Choir. We are keeping details a secret for the moment but would like everyone to mark their calendars and we look forward to your wonderful support.

Lisa and Hanna

Everything I Need to Know About Life, I Learned From Noah's Ark ...

- One:** Don't miss the boat.
- Two:** Remember that we are all in the same boat.
- Three:** Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
- Four:** Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
- Five:** Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.
- Six:** Build your future on high ground.
- Seven:** For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
- Eight:** Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
- Nine:** When you're stressed, float a while.
- Ten:** Remember, the Ark was built by Amateurs, and the Titanic by professionals.
- Eleven:** No matter the storm, when you

OUTREACH NEWS

Mitten Tree

It may seem early but we would like to remind you knitters or shoppers that the Advent tree will be up on **November 25** waiting for you to decorate it with mitts, gloves, scarves, new socks for teenage boys and girls, new clothing items and toys. So get busy!!

The items we collect will be taken to the shelters about the 15th of December to be there before Christmas. We will also be looking for toiletry items, items for the Outreach basket for Ernestine's and Women's Habitat and YWS - all toiletry items (toothbrushes, toothpaste, razors, deodorants, shampoo, combs, brushes etc).

Don't forget all those things you bring back from trips and never use!. Just think of the items you use - they can use them also.

Food items are also welcome and are taken to St James' Food Basket on a regular basis on Wednesdays.

In Memoriam

Marian Scarf
June 30

Joe Vincent
July 26

David Saunders
August 13



Hats off to. . . .

*Gordon Moore for operating
the elevator every Sunday.*

Much appreciated Gordon.

CLEAN-UP DAY

Come and help the Property Committee with
the fall outdoor work.

Saturday, November 3rd

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon



MEMORIAL FUND

Many donations have been received in memory of
David Saunders. Thank you to the Saunders fam-
ily for designating Bloordale's Memorial Fund as
the recipient of these gifts.

WEDDINGS

Roxanne Titus and Alain Drying

Married at Bloordale

September 1st

Congratulations



DEMOLITION DAY - OCTOBER 15

Three & a half years ago the Sanctuary Dreams
committee held a brainstorming session to discuss
the function of the worship space.

Ideas about accessibility, safety & hospitality of
the space were formed into a plan to renovate the
chancel area.

Phase 1 (the sound system) has been
implemented.

Phase 2 (the renovation of the chancel) started on
Monday October 15th.

The Sanctuary Dreams committee would like to
thank Matthew Barrett, Norman Dundas, Mervin
Fick, Sharron Le Blanc, Lisa Mazzariol, Brian
McIntosh, John Pauksens and Victor for
completing the two day job in two hours.



**THE
CONSERVATORY
CHRYSANTHEMUM
SHOW**



The show features unusual and exclusive varieties

**Sunday, Nov. 4
1 to 4 pm**

A "FRIENDS" FALL EVENT

Refreshment table featuring "Alice's apple pie"

All proceeds to Centennial Park Conservatory

Centennial Park Conservatory
151 Elmcrest Road, Etobicoke

Holly Tea

Saturday December 1st

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Warm scones, whipped cream and jam - \$5.00.

No time to bake – stock up on Christmas cookies, choose what you love for \$5.00 a dozen.

Hosted by UCW



BLOORBEAT PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Following is the publication schedule and the deadlines for submissions for upcoming issues through May 2013.

Publication Date	Submission Deadline
2012	
November 25	November 17
2013	
January 13	January 5
March 24	March 16
May 19	May 11

Bloorbeat is published 6 times a year by the Communications Committee of

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