

ORLEANS UNITED CHURCH
Ottawa, Ontario

Making room for you ...
... in worship
... in community
... in learning
... in serving

newsletter

SUMMER, 2011

in this issue...

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A New Look for OUC's Newsletter

*It's not coincidence that the words **community** and **communicate** look so much alike. One of the most important things about being included in the church is keeping informed about the joys and challenges of faith we share together. So, we are experimenting with a few new ways of communicating. Our website is currently being revamped for Fall 2011 and Orleans United is now on Facebook! In addition, we are re-imagining OUC's newsletter.*

Beginning with this issue, the newsletter will be published quarterly and be filled with stories of faith and ministry that make a difference in our lives. We are also searching for a new look, and would appreciate your feedback on this experimental format.

Believing and Belonging

The understanding of Membership (having one's name in the historic roll of a congregation) within the United Church of Canada is changing, especially in the last few decades.

As OUC's ministers, we wanted to experiment with a conversation that would reimagine what church membership means at Orleans United. So we invited some folks who were not on OUC's historic roll to consider what being a part of our church family meant to them. In a two-night series, we were fortunate to gather with interested congregation people to embark on this journey together.

During our first session, we explored the concept of "believing." Using faith statements as a jumping off point, we shared together our own beliefs and came to further appreciate the diversity of theological understandings that exist within Orleans United.

Our second evening focussed on "belonging" as we considered what membership within any group means. That led us to examine the expectations that we may have of our congregation, as well as the expectations OUC has of each of us.

The end result of this process was that four individuals have joined our congregation as Members. But more importantly, a wonderful group of people enjoyed two evenings of meaningful and intentional sharing of our faith.

Sound curious? If you think this Fall you might like to explore a little more about what it means to believe in God and to belong at Orleans United, talk with Rev. Molly or Rev. Glen.

Making room for you ...

Our work with *Future Directions* consultant, Trish Elliot, helped inspire the tag-line in this newsletter banner and soon-to-be revitalized website. We want to remind everyone of OUC's commitment to build the kind of faith community that is spiritually open and receptive to anyone seeking a church home. Help us spread the word by inviting your family and friends to find their place in our worshipping, learning, and serving community!



Making room for you ... **in Worship**

SUMMER SERMON SERIES

Where's the Good in the News?

On the front page of the June 1 Ottawa Citizen was a story about an "Ottawa preacher (who) got up to address his congregation on Sunday with a bible and a stack of hundred dollar bills. By the time the service was over ... he'd given out \$10,000 to the gathered faithful."

Now you don't see that everyday – ministers giving out \$100 bills or front page newspaper articles that share Good News! Most of the daily news, most of the time, is more bad than good – at least at first glance. But God's goodness is there, if we dig deeper and anticipate the Spirit.

*In July and August Molly and Glen are preaching a **4-part Summer Sermon Series** called **Where's God's Good in the Daily News?** They'll find an article in the media (paper, radio, TV, internet) during each week that reflects God's gracious presence in everyday life and preach on it the following Sunday. And they would like your help.*

SUMMER WORSHIP

Summer is like Sabbath – taking a break from the often rigid schedule of life and letting the Spirit move you.

We encourage you to celebrate Sabbath this summer, and remind you that when you are in town, OUC is open every Sunday morning with meaningful worship and music weekly at 10am.

Come celebrate life in all its goodness with God and your church family on summer Sundays.

And feel the blessing!

Wherever you get your news, imagine the Spirit-possibilities, and when you notice something thought-provoking send Molly and Glen the link ... it could become next Sunday's sermon.

Theologian Karl Barth encouraged ministers to preach "with the bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other." You can help our preachers take that seriously this summer, beginning July 10.

Two Different Ways of Celebrating Holy Communion

At OUC, when we share Communion, it is celebrated in two different ways – offering the bread and individual cups while sitting in the pews and coming forward to stations and dipping a piece of bread in a common cup. Each way offers worshipers spiritual insight and encouragement.

When we celebrate **in pews** it symbolizes Christ's grace reaching out to you wherever you are in your life's journey (God's YES to you) ... there we humbly serve each other as Christ serves ... and when all have received, we partake together showing our unity in Christ.

When we celebrate **at stations** it symbolizes your heartfelt desire to come into Christ's presence (your YES to God) ... there each one receives a personal word of grace ... and while our friends are offered the bread and dip it into the cup, we pray for them to experience Christ's love.

Many of us have a preference, yet both ways have a positive message to offer. Hopefully we can affirm both and respect each other's preferences equally. And may Christ speak to every heart, regardless of which form our Communion takes.

Next Communion – August 7

A volunteer blessing ...

OUC is blessed with many folks who are willing to volunteer on Sunday mornings in worship - reading Scripture, writing and offering the Prayer of the People, ushering, singing in the Choir, playing an instrument ... and even sharing the children's story.

Recently a friend volunteered to do just that. As a retired teacher, she was used to interacting with an older age group, and knew this would be a challenge - the age range in the Discovery Garden can be quite wide. She prepared carefully, researching various stories, and timing herself to be sure she would not go on too long, even if the children had lots to say.

Sunday morning her time with the children went well, but she said the real reward came later, during coffee hour. A small girl approached her, and thanking her said how much she had liked the story!

Blessings happen all the time when we are willing to risk volunteering!

Making room for you ... *in Community*



Care and Support works within our congregation in a number of loving and encouraging ways ...

Members of the C&S team have the privilege occasionally of visiting church people who are in retirement complexes. Once a month two CST members visit a nearby residence to play Rumoli with a couple of OUC members there. They go to the library and make an awful lot of noise ... staff members stop by to see what all the commotion is about! Usually the laughter has to do with the CST members complaining too loudly over all the pennies they're losing!

One resident is 93 and just so sharp – she's flying to NB next month on her own for a family wedding. The other seems too young to live in a retirement residence but health issues limit her – though not enough to stop her from running the local tuck shop or participating with her family in the *Relay for Life*. What an inspiration they both are.

And what a blessing for all four women to be part of a church community that intentionally includes those who may not be able to make it to church every Sunday, but are still vibrant and important members of the OUC family.

The Care & Support Team is always open to making visits to seniors' wherever they live, and listening to the wise and wonderful life stories of our elders.

If you would like a visit, or know of someone who might, contact CST by calling the church office (613.837.4321) or emailing confidentially at ouc.CST@rogers.com.

*If God feels far away from you,
I wonder who moved?*

Wash & Worship!

On Sunday June 5 the youth of OUC washed and blessed over 50 cars, and had a great time doing it. As people arrived for worship they were greeted with signs and directions showing people to the car wash area of the parking lot. While our congregation worshipped inside, we cranked up the tunes and turned on the hoses outside. We're not sure what got more clean – the cars or the washers, but we do know that we had a ball and thanks to the generosity of the congregation we made over \$500 to put towards the activities and events of youth ministry. And we received great feedback from members of the congregation, like:

*"Had a lovely clean car when we left church ... bugs all gone!
Even better, the note under the wiper was inspiring!!!"*

Coming soon to a parking lot near you: Wash & Worship-the Sequel!

Rendez-vous, 2011

A first for the United Church! A national gathering for youth and young adults and their leaders...a chance to "go big and go home"...and we're going to be part of it!

From August 11 to 14, seven OUC youth and two of their leaders, Rev. Molly and Cara Pelletier, will be attending Rendez-vous 2011, being held at the University of Toronto. While there we will discover exhilarating worship, exciting opportunities for learning, growth, and service, and many examples of excellent youth and young adult ministries. We will be processing our learning during a "home group" time, as well as during an on-going learning process over the course of the coming year. We have received funding from the church at the national and conference level, as well as from Youth Ministries here at OUC. We are excited about being challenged, inspired, and we can't wait to share it all with you when we get home!

25th Anniversary WOMEN'S RETREAT **April 27, 28, 29, 2012**

The excitement seems to be building already toward a celebration of the 25th year of going on retreat at Camp Galilee.

On June 7th we held a fun evening here in the church lounge. Everyone was asked to bring a wrapped gift and it would be auctioned off for a maximum of \$10.00. Great fun was had as we found ourselves bidding on beautifully wrapped parcels, not knowing what was inside. A profit of just over \$100 was raised and will be used to help fund the retreat in 2012. We are hoping to have another get together in the fall, to keep the excitement building. Watch the bulletin for date and time. And it's not too early to get your name on the 2012 list ... call Jean at the office today!



Making room for you ... in Learning

Children's Ministry Summer Excitement!

This summer is going to be anything but quiet for kids at OUC! We kicked off the summer with Sundae Sunday and were thrilled to have so many ice cream enthusiasts join us in the hall.

We have continued with the One Room Sunday School program this summer and have many energetic and excited volunteers ready to lead the children each week. Be sure to check out the Sunday school bulletin board in the hall and watch as the murals grow with bible verses each week, as the children study them. Ever wonder what we get up to in Sunday school? Feel free to stop by, we always love visitors!

Camp Awesome is just around the corner and with a full camp the kids are going to have a blast with this year's theme GOD'S WILD WORLD! Kids will explore God's creation and learn how they can help take care of it. Why don't you drop by and see the kids exploring and learning through the various games and activities planned. And don't forget to check out what should prove to be their AWESOME presentation Sunday July 17, 2011 during our regular service at OUC!

WHAT'S MOLLY READING

The United Church of Canada, trying to remain an inclusive, socially relevant denomination seems to have created fuzzy distinctions around what we do and do not believe. Our lack of clear doctrine has caused people in and out of our denomination to doubt that the UCC is following a true path of God. One of the main forces behind these changes in our belief system is the "Progressive Christianity" movement.

This summer, I am going to read the book, "What Does a Progressive Christian Believe," by Delwin Brown, in an attempt to better understand the Progressive Christian movement. I fear that often I have been quick to judge the Progressive movement in the church, not fully understanding what it is all about. I am hoping this book will provide me with a better understanding of where the line is drawn between a faith community and a service club, between morality and faithfulness.

I'd love it if you would like to read this book with me! Contact me and let me know if you are interested.

Rev. Molly

Making room for you ... in Serving



Green Church Toolkit

A funny thing happened to me at Conference last month ... I walked into a workshop called "Green Church" –

To my surprise, I discovered a realistic, honest and spiritual approach to being more faithful in caring for this planet by how we use our church everyday. And the toolkit they sent me home with is fabulous. You ought to see it ... in fact you can. Just give me a call and I'd be glad to show it to you. But I'm warning you, I will probably ask you to consider helping raise the consciousness and conscience of our church family about environmental faithfulness.

So, did you appreciate OUC's "Earth Hour" celebration last spring? Then how about beginning summer with a little soul searching for the earth and our church?

"We only protect what we love."

Rev. Glen

Pennies for Peace Inspires Groundswell Response at OUC

Blessings & congratulations from Orleans Outreach!

With so many members of the congregation feeling enthused about Greg Mortensen's book Three Cups of Tea, it was only a matter of time before *Pennies for Peace* came to Orleans United Church.

The Sunday School adopted this Lenten project with heart-warming enthusiasm from the word go. Everyone happily took home a labelled jar, and the results were phenomenal.

While no monetary target was set, we collected 107,871 pennies in just 6 weeks ... more than a thousand dollars!

"Blessing" is not how much you've got ... it's what you do with what you've got!

That far exceeded what the Outreach Committee expected. In addition, no one could have expected how much fun we would have sitting together in the library after worship, rolling pennies and enjoying fellowship. Thanks to all who shared the blessing!

And keep your eyes peeled for future opportunities to "share the blessing" ... brought to you by OUC's Outreach Committee. Together we will continue to make a difference in the world.