

INSIGHT

MARCH, 2010

ROSEDALE UNITED CHURCH

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**Clare Barry
Clerk of Session**

AT A GLANCE

March 7 – 12:00 noon - Holly Berry Fair meeting
 7 - 12:00 noon – Refugee meeting
 8 – 7:00 pm – Prayer Circle
 8 – 7:30 pm – Book Club
 12 – Habitat for Humanity work day
 16 – 1:30 pm – UCW MacGregor Unit meeting
 28 – Palm Sunday
 28 – noon – Everyone’s Birthday Party

April 1 – Maundy Thursday
 2 – 10:30 am – Good Friday service at RUC
 4 – 7:30 am – Easter sunrise service
 4 – 10:30 am – Easter service
 5 – Easter Monday – church office closed.
 8,15,22,29 – 7:30 pm – Parenting with Spirit
 12 – 7:00 pm – Prayer Circle
 12 – 7:30 pm – Book Club
 14 – 7:30 pm – Men’s Group
 17/18 – Youth 30-Hour Famine
 19 – 7:30 pm – Pastoral Care meeting
 20 – 1:30 pm – UCW MacGregor Unit meeting
 27 – 7:00 pm – Board meeting

May 6-9 – Point Pelee Bird Watching Trip
 6,13,20,27 – 7:30 pm – Parenting with Spirit
 8 – Mayfair
 9 – Mother’s Day
 10 – 7:00 pm – Prayer Circle
 10 – 7:30 pm – Book Club
 15 – Refugee Committee fundraiser
 17 – 7:30 pm – Pastoral Care meeting
 18 – 11:00-1:00 - UCW Geranium Sale pick-up
 18 – 1:30 pm – UCW MacGregor Unit meeting

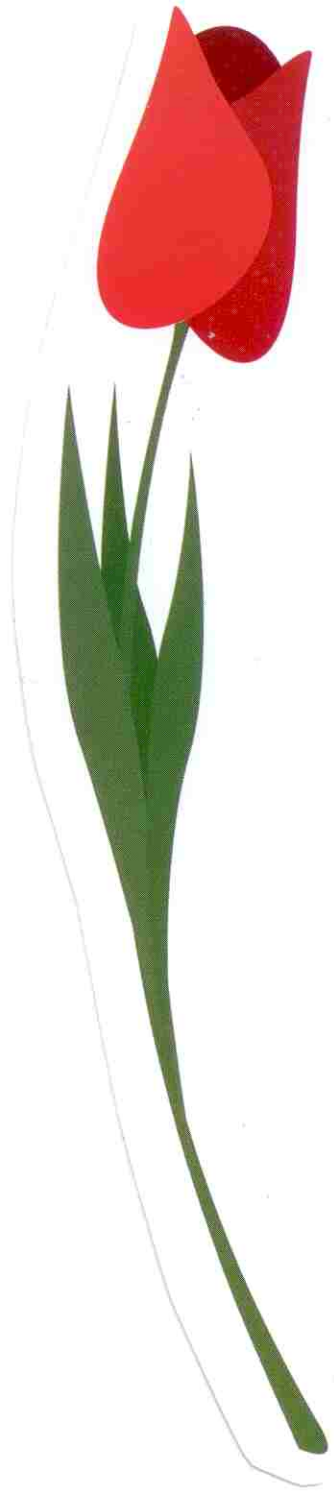
June 13 – Church Picnic

INSIGHT is published four times a year.
 Submitted items may be subject to
 editing. The next publication deadline
 is May 28, 2010.

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Editor’s Note:
 Breathe deeply and smile.
 Spring is almost here. All
 best wishes to you.

R-J Gilbert



ON BEHALF OF THE STAFF

As I sit looking out at the first real snowfall of the season, I am unaccountably pleased and thankful: Neither for the shovelling nor the more difficult driving but for the white fluffy stuff moving with the wind toward the ground. Grateful for the fact that it has forced me to stop my harried dash to ‘check off’ the things on my list. It has caused me to pause and look and breathe. It is enough in this moment looking out of the window to simply enjoy the falling snow. *Hopefully profound thought A* – The way in which we choose to live the moment is our only free will exercise. “Take no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take a thought of the things of itself.” Matthew 6:34

In the calendar of the Christian Church it is the 40 days of Lent and the Great Fifty days of Easter. In keeping with the grand tradition of utilizing existing culture and religion, the word Easter is a variation of the term Eastre (hence estrogen) a Teutonic goddess of springtime and hence fertility. This season begins with the harsh grip of winter (in our clime at least) and ends with the appearance seemingly against all odds of tiny green shoots pushing up out of just-thawing ground. What was seemingly dead is now alive – what was brown and brittle somehow held within it, new life! What to the ancients was a miracle is a miracle still, made even more so with our knowledge of the complexities and interdependence of this yearly ‘miracle’.

It is also the time of Lent – a time that has unfortunately been reduced to giving something up for 40 days. Although perhaps laudable, this practice has obscured the intent and intention of Lent. Why forty days? History and sufficiency – In biblical terms 40 is a round number symbolizing fullness – a span of time sufficient to accomplish what needs to take place. Rain fell in Noah’s time for 40 days and 40 nights; Moses and Elijah dwelt at Horeb for 40 days; Jesus endured the temptation of the wilderness and was revealed to his disciples both for 40 days; Nineveh was given 40 days to repent; Saul David and Solomon are reported to have reigned each for 40 years. In the early days of the church 40 days were the time sufficient for preparation for baptism and its rigorous fasting and prayer. Giving something up for these 40 days, falls far short of the opportunity offered by the Lenten season. Lenten disciplines are not temporary deletions or additions but spiritual exercises that permanently alter us. Lent is an in-between time – a time of self examination.

Try answering these questions instead of giving up chocolate.

the Philosophical/Theological

- Can I set my intention in these 40 days through moments spent in devotion, meditation or prayer to allow the space for insight to enter, the Spirit to settle and God to guide?
- Can I follow through on that intention by honestly examining the fears that stop me from ‘seeing’ the hope and the joy that Easter offers?

Lent is also a time to seek ways to minister on behalf of the world. Try answering these questions instead of giving up chocolate.

applied

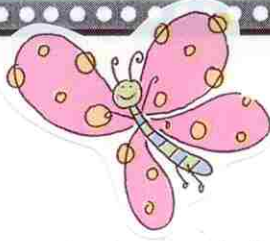
- What attitudes do I convey to those who irritate me? How can awareness of my own need of God’s grace enable me to be more gracious to them?
- In devotional acts of prayer and reading am I increasing my attention span and discovering new ways of listening rather than of talking of giving thanks rather than of complaining?
- Am I as charitable and thoughtful to family members as to others? Or do I ‘take it out’ on my family when school or work become too hectic?
- Can I redistribute my long range personal budget in order to have more money to give away?
- When I hear someone being unjustly maligned do I speak up to correct the record or am I a silent accomplice?
- What progress am I making in sharing gladly what I have with others? Laurence Stookey

As evidenced in this Insight, this community continues to provide opportunities to explore all of these questions both corporately and individually.

Hopefully profound thought B “Time is what keeps the light from reaching us. There is no greater obstacle to God than time.” Master Eckhart. In this season, as we journey together toward Jerusalem, let our practices and our worship seek to identify those obstacles beginning with pausing to watch the snow fall..

Karen Bowles





CLERK'S REPORT

I have gained so much from attending Rosedale United Church over the years. I am delighted to have the opportunity to “give back” in return for the many blessings I have received within these walls and from this caring, vibrant community.

Our church-community provides us with many different alternatives of how to connect with our inner spiritual self. I, like many of us, go through different stages and phases in my spiritual development and have different needs at different times. In a busy demanding world, we will either avoid or struggle with the following questions:

- What is important?
- What is this God?
- What is the mystery we call God?
- Where is God?
- How do I connect?
- Do I want to find this connection or is it relevant in this era?
- Is it value added to my life?
- Is it value added to my family?
- OR are there other things more beneficial to our lives?

The last United Church Observer has an article discussing the vision of God as being larger. *Our faith is not stagnant. It is an ongoing journey. Complacency does not provide for growth of mind or spirit. Spirituality is not just a Sunday event.*

Over time, one matures in faith and moves on from childhood ideas. We develop more comprehensive understanding and answers to these questions. We are free and encouraged to explore and reach new heights here in finding the personal answer for these questions through guidance from our ministerial staff. It is exciting to see so many “exploring together” and also “individually” in an open thoughtful way.

Recently, a group attended the St. John's Taize Service to learn how others approach Taize Services.

Just Be

There are “times when we can give” and times when we just need “to be”. We need to keep working at connecting with people of all ages and stages to provide a safe place for them to explore the mystery of God in their life. One can just sit quietly and reflect and connect to God through the glorious music or something that stimulated a thought from the sermon or prayer to help them move forward in their journey.

Community

There is a great sense of community that is always there caring when one is ready to share joys, sorrows, hurts, and fears. There are many opportunities to explore and discover the meaning of God in our church community.

As we continue our journey, may our vision include the following:

May Rosedale United Church become a leader in engaging and providing programs that will support the next generations in discovering and honouring the spiritual side of their lives.

Let us

1. Continue exploring the various ways RUC will meet our vision.
2. Maintain and increase our membership. We need to discover how to connect with those who are not here. As we know, complacency does not provide for stability and richness of an organization.
3. Support families, youth and children. Focusing on our children and youth and providing them with a place to learn and connect with God is imperative as they will be our future leaders if we nourish, love, respect, and include them as an integral part of our community. What is it that parents, youth and children will find beneficial?
4. Continue to support the “small group” activities as these provide a place where we can explore ethical issues, values and faith issues.
5. Provide programs that develop lay pastoral care leadership skills to assist in meeting the many pastoral care needs.
6. Support our staff in their roles.
7. Respect our heritage. We have been and are continually blessed with many talented and caring mentors. May we use the gifts God has given each of us wisely to add to the church’s heritage so that we influence the present and future in a spirituality positive way.
8. One must not ignore money issues. Balanced Finances matter to enable the church to continue to meet the needs of this church community and our many Outreach projects. We are fortunate to have many astute financial advisors to protect our heritage and assist in making good financial decisions.

We are on a good path. Let us use our leadership skills. Let us continue to explore the personal and community answers to the key questions about life. Let us continue to build community. Let us create a fulfilling journey exploring together and becoming a leader in meeting the needs of the new generations while:

- * honouring the past
- * living in the present in a caring community
- * contributing to a better future

We are blessed but must not become complacent. I am looking forward to sharing the journey with you. Thank you for your commitment to create a community where our church family can discover the Divine.

In closing, a Celtic prayer:

You are above us, God, You are within.

You are all things yet contained by no thing.

Teach us to seek you in all that has life that we may see you as the Light of life.

Teach us to search for you in our own depths that we may find you in every living soul.

Clare Barry



2009 IN MEMORIAM

At our Annual Meeting on February 21st, congregation members and community friends who died in 2009 were remembered in silence.

Gladys Alexander
Wendy Cheddie
Arthur Crockett
Douglas Frith
Doris Glover
Gladys Greenwood
Kent Jarvis
Thomas Jarvis
Susan Leslie
Jane Lowe
Herbert Metcalfe
Madeleine Monkman
Sylvia Morawetz
David Kent Pecaut
Marc Ricketts
Albert Ruby
Joyce Scane
Eugene Schmidt
Alan Thomas

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Sandra Watson-Greaves
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- Church Administrator:
Karen Bryant
karen@rosedaleunited.org
- Church Sextons:
Joe Houle & Brent Donnelly



Thank you! Thank you!
Wonderful HBF bakers!
Again our Baking Booth was a success and it's because of the delicious baking our membership donated.
The MacGregor Unit could not have done this without your very generous support.

Thank you all again,
Guusje Parks



ROSEDALE UNITED – OUTREACH UPDATE

Vision: To reach out in a compassionate and diverse manner in response to local and global needs.

This includes not just the work of the Outreach Committee, but many others – including our Out of the Cold volunteers, the UCW, our growing Habitat for Humanity team, our Refugee Committee, Youth outreach and our ongoing Mission & Service Fund support. And we've probably missed someone. If so, we apologize!

Our Regular Work

We are delighted to report that Mandy Macrae has agreed to chair the Outreach Committee this year. Please contact her if you are interested in getting more involved.

Out of the Cold, coordinated by Sandra Watson Greaves, is our most regular, 'hands-on' component of our outreach, with a very devoted group of church volunteers running a lunch program through the winter.

We also look forward to working with our youth in building a relationship and potential mission trip with SchoolBox, a wonderful organization operating in Central America. You'll be hearing much more about this in 2010.

For more information, please check out <http://rosedaleunited.org/outreach/city/>.

Christian Resource Centre ~ 40 Oaks ~CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

- Congregation members have given/pledged over \$350,000 and this was supplemented by a congregational gift of \$300,000 last June.
- Rosedale's commitment was the tipping point – moving the project from “probable” to virtually “certain”. Our gifts enabled the CRC to move forward with a phased construction plan to commence while further fundraising is done. 87 units of housing and a 'roughed in" community hub and worship space should be ready in late 2011.
- CRC has relocated to free, temporary space nearby to continue programming.
- The Toronto municipal strike significantly delayed certain permits and final funding paperwork. This, and some other technicalities, complicated obtaining the necessary funding from CMHC delaying the project approximately 8 months.
- **CMHC and Infrastructure Ontario financing was approved in mid-February and the builder has been given a green light to begin construction; demolition of the old building will commence in March and the excavation for the new building will be underway in April.**

We are helping something truly transformational happen – just as Rosedale leaders dreamed about almost 50 years ago in launching the original Christian Resource Centre; and now, as we renew and update that original dream.

Thank you to everyone who supports our outward looking efforts – whether it be with time, talent or money. Even though it doesn't always feel like it we, as a congregation, truly are blessed with abundance, abundance to share, and to make things happen.

The Outreach Committee

8.

save the date

explore

create

sup

Spring Spirituality Workshop

Sunday May 2

Mosaics

Personal and Communal

Opening Worship

personal exploration

- short history and description of *Tabgda mosaic
- creation of personal mosaic 'collage' with the Tabgda as a centre, side or backdrop.

communal exploration

- Explanation of Kirtan and a short history and description of chanting and call and response in Christianity
- **Kirtan led by ***Jim Gelcer, local resident and musician
- Vegetarian early Dinner

Closing

*



**Kirtan is an ancient form of call and response chanting. The idea behind kirtan is that by repetitively chanting the name of God, we reveal our true nature, bringing us closer to God. Chanting has an incredible effect on the consciousness when done with 100% enthusiasm. It's like charging your batteries while having fun at the same time! Also, the chants are constantly evolving and anyone can join in. All you need is a YES mind and the heart will follow!

***I've been a musician all my life – drummer, keyboard player, composer and producer. I have had the good fortune to perform all over the world with many great musicians in a wide variety of styles – jazz, rock, pop, classical, and several forms of world music. However it was only after getting serious about yoga that I was first exposed to kirtan. One morning, while on a visit to an Ashram in Canada's Laurentian Mountains I was invited to chant in the temple. Sometime later the Swami took me aside and told me there was something special in my voice and that I should follow this path. Now I lead kirtans regularly in the Toronto area, am hosting my first kirtan and yoga retreat in Costa Rica in April and around the same time will be releasing my first kirtan album.

For more information and/or to register call Karen Bowles at 924-0725 Ext 29, Rosedale United Church, 159 Roxborough Dr.

Welcome To Toronto!



Shireen, Hazha, Hakar, Shakar and Karo, our latest refugee family, arrived Monday February 22nd on a connecting flight from Syria through Rome on Alitalia. They were greeted by their Toronto family members: Shireen's mother *Mina*, Shireen's sister *Lava* and her husband *Soran*, Shireen's brother *Salah*, Shirren's brother *Sabah* and his wife *Halsho*. Linda and Claude had the honour of representing the Rosedale Refugee Committee and the Rosedale Congregation.

The flight was about twenty minutes early and despite our apprehension that they would be delayed through Immigration, they cleared Customs and Immigration within 45 minutes. They were escorted to the waiting area by an Immigration agent, who was obviously taken up with the emotion of the reunion. He likened it to the current *Tim Horton's* commercial. His only concern was whether their household goods would follow, because if that were the case, these goods should be registered now to avoid paying taxes

later. When we told him that what they had on the luggage carts was the total of their worldly possessions, he nodded that he understood and wished the newcomers welcome to Canada.

We presented the family with the welcome card that the Congregation members had signed on Sunday, gifts reflecting Canada and a box of *Timbits* (staying true to the commercial). Although Shireen and her children don't speak English, the tearful expression in their eyes and their hugs said it all (Nettie, you would have enjoyed all of the hugging). "*We had saved them*".

The winter storm added to the overall change of environment for Shireen and her children. It was 21 degrees Celsius in Damascus when they left; while in Toronto, we were experiencing the start of our first major snowfall in months. As a convoy of family vehicles headed to Lava and Soran's residence near Fairview Mall, we caught the front end of that storm but left before the "rush hour"; so we weren't "stuck in traffic" too long. Sabah's mother-in-law and Mina had prepared a lavish meal - a "feast" that reflected the deep emotional importance of the long-awaited family reunion.

Shireen and her children have been moving from place to place, hiding out in Syria along with their two other sisters and their families for about five years. The situation all began in Kurdistan when her brother Sabah's fiancé got pregnant and the men in her family beat her until she miscarried, then killed her. Sabah went into hiding and later moved to Toronto with his mother Mina to live with his sister Lava. Seeking revenge, the girl's family then issued a threat signed by their family and stamped with Al Qaeda's approval to kill any male in their family or take a woman to replace their daughter.

Come Celebrate "A Kurdish Night" - Saturday, May 15th

Mark your calendar not to miss this amazing evening being organized to celebrate their arrival and to raise funds to continue our support of future refugee families including the possible reunion of this family with their remaining members still hiding out in Syria.



In appreciation, this Kurdish family and their friends in Toronto will be cooking and serving an authentic Kurdish meal and entertaining us with customary music and dance. We will also be entertained with great music from some very special members of our choir. The evening will begin with a Welcome Reception and Silent Auction.

Please help us find sponsors for this event. Tax receipts are available for minimum contributions of \$100 value. Here are some of the ways that you could help:

- Wine – red and white (8 cases) for reception and dinner
- Silent Auction prizes - gifts or gift certificates
- Cash Donations (**Gold Angels \$1000, Silver Angels \$500 and Bronze Angels \$100**)

Contact Linda Hutson at 416 447-5246 or hutsonhould@sympatico.ca for more information on how you can help.



Memo

RUC is on the build again!

A Habitat for Humanity team will go out on another build on Friday March 12th. We would welcome about 12-15 able bodies to help us with this work. If you are interested please call Blair McRobie, Mandi Macrae or sign up during coffee hour. Please join us for a wonderful day of work and camaraderie.



BOOK CLUB

March 8 – 7:30 pm – *The Book of Negroes* by Lawrence Hill
An award-winning novel that follows the life of a young African girl who is abducted into slavery, sent to America, liberated, then finds her way to Nova Scotia, and back to Africa.

April 12 – *Winter Vault* by Anne Michaels

May 10 – *A Year of Wonders* by Geraldine Brooks

June 14 – *Best Laid Plans* by Terry Fallis

Seeking Bird Lovers & “Wanna Be” Bird Watchers

A weekend in May, a trip to Point Pelee to see the Spring returning birds in their full magnificent mating plumage.

May 6th – 9th

Contact David Wood at dwood@securenet.net or 416-769-7897

CHILDREN'S BOOK DRIVE



Visit our
Library

Our Sunday School has a Lenten project to collect gently used children's books (infant-age 12) for the Children's Book Bank. This agency provides books for children in the Regent Park area. Please bring your books on Sundays to Copp Hall or drop them off inside the Glen Rd. entrance beside the small bench during the week.

