

CALVARY Catalyst

ADVENT • CHRISTMAS 2023



“GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN”

Dear friends in Christ,

As I rake the leaves in my yard and move them into the paper bags and to the curb for pickup, I am reminded that the seasons are definitely changing as we now prepare for the wintry days and nights in the not-too-distant future.

It is also a time of less sunlight in the Northern Hemisphere, with the darkest time of year occurring at the Winter Solstice, approximately December 21 — something that, for many, can contribute to natural feelings of sadness. It can be a sad time, for various reasons, for many as we prepare for the holidays. However, as Christmas music is starting to play in various places where we shop or go to find refreshment, our spirits can be lifted by the excitement starting to build as we look forward, even with sadness, to another Christmas.

One of my favourite Christmas hymns, especially in times where hope is needed, is the African American spiritual written by John Wesley Work II in 1907, “Go, Tell it on the Mountain.” The music is alive with the spirit of hope and peace for all humankind. There is great joy in going to tell our family, friends, and neighbours,

from the mountaintops, that Jesus Christ is born. The good news we share from the mountaintops is the feeling we have when we have journeyed to the manger and the subsequent elation that is upon us as we have marveled at the mystery of the baby Jesus, and what that good news brings to each of us.



The hymn has everything in it for the telling of the great story. There are shepherds, angels, the baby Jesus, the hills, and we are present right there in the midst of the singing of those wonderful words.

Our lives and our spirits are transformed once again by hearing the wonderful words of this spiritual. The last verse of the hymn tells the story of the shepherds as told in Luke 2: 8-20 and Matthew 28: 19, “Down

in a lowly manger, the humble Christ was born, and God sent us salvation, that blessed Christmas morn.” The beloved hymn is the Annunciation (proclaiming the birth of Jesus) to the Shepherds as described in the Gospel of Luke, which is our story of telling the good news to all that we meet during this season and into the new year and at all times.

With everything that is happening in the world right now, my Christmas wish is for you and your respective family to remain safe, stay healthy and be mindful of God’s most precious gift given for us at Christmas. There can be peace, there can be joy, there can be hope and love all due to the Prince of Peace who

has come for us. May it be so this Christmas time and for the new year. Let us always go and tell it on the mountain, for truly Jesus Christ is born, for me, for you and for all those that hear and live by the good news, now and forever. Amen.

In faith and in peace,
Rev. Kerry (he, him).

*Calvary ... just the beginning ...
in relationship with nature, with our
neighbour, and continually
discovering ourselves in God.*

From the office files

The Calvary Community was saddened by the recent passing of:

Douglas Hoskin

"Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted." Matthew 5:4



Calvary Worship Schedule

December 3 – Advent 1, Communion

December 6 – Jazz Vespers at 7pm

December 10 – Advent 2, Memorial Sunday

December 13 – Blue Christmas Worship at 7pm
(A quieter, reflective service of prayers and readings.)

December 17 – Advent 3, Music Sunday

December 24 – Advent 4

December 24 – Christmas Eve Worship at 7pm

December 31 – Lessons & Carols



Birthday Milestone!

Reta Astles, mother of Karen Butt, turned 103 on September 29. She lives still at Grand Wood Park and remains active in the various programs, including Book Club and Bingo.

In the photo she is celebrating with Karen, her 2 grand-daughters, and 2 great granddaughters.

The End Is Nigh!

Not a head-line you'd expect to read in a Calvary United Church newsletter, but this is about Calvary's Gift Card Program through Fundscrip.

After many months' deliberation, a decision has been made that it's time to end Calvary's participation in the program. We've had a long, successful run, raising an average of over \$3,000 each year from 2007 to 2019. Then the pandemic hit. With closures and broken ordering habits, our profits averaged out to \$800/year over the 3-year span from 2020 through 2022. We've never really recovered to our old levels of participation, but can't



blame it all on Covid. Much of it has to do with store loyalty programs, credit card bonus points, and general distrust of gift cards.

Our last two ordering dates for the gift cards are Sunday, November 26 and Sunday, December 10. A list of available cards can be found at fundscrip.com. Write your order on a slip of paper or print off an order form, accompanied by cash or cheque to "Calvary United Church" and either hand it to me or put it on the offering plate. I'll have your cards for you the following Sunday. Gift cards are great for teenagers, millennials (Amazon? or Best Buy?), or a small thank you (Tim Hortons? Indigo/Chapters?). Don't forget your own day-to-day purchases for groceries or gas too, and maybe even a little treat for yourself?

Thank you to everyone for all of your support in ordering gift cards for 17 years! We've had a great run! - *Nancy Hind* (nancyhind@rogers.com or 519-434-4048)

CALVARY Catalyst

The Calvary Catalyst is published four times a year. Its purpose is to inform and report on news and events at Calvary United Church.

Submission deadline for the next issue is: **Tuesday, March 5, 2024**

Send submissions to Bruce Jones: scouterbruce@rogers.com

Calvary United Church

290 Ridout Street South, London, Ontario N6C 3Z1

email: calvaryuc@execulink.com ~ 519-434-5526

www.calvaryuc.ca

More Happenings Around the Green.....



The Interfaith Tree Planting by Greening Sacred Spaces, London and facilitated by Reforest London last month was at full capacity. A very successful event with an enthusiastic, peaceful crowd. The three faith leaders from Or Shalom Synagogue, First St . Andrews, Al- Mahdi Centre (Mosque) and Chris George from the N'Amerind Friendship Centre gave blessings and inspiring messages for our world during these difficult times. It was a very moving, opening ceremony. Thank you to all who joined us!

Our Pollinator Garden Journey was once again shared with Or Shalom Synagogue whose Rabbi was a participant at the event. They are hoping to start a garden next year.

Notice our new SECRET garden sign.

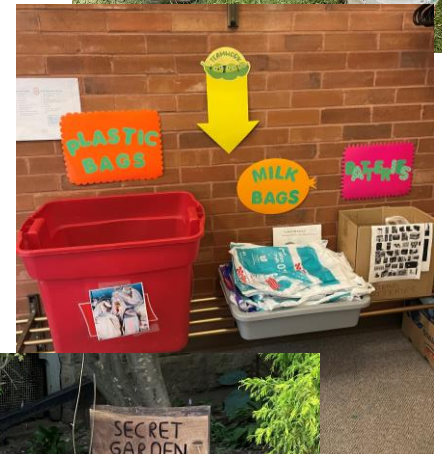
Plans for the memorial bench are moving along. It will be a much-welcomed addition to the Green.

Recycling continues in the hallway.

Many thanks to those who helped empty and move the three rain barrels and two herb boxes to their winter storage.

Any ideas or suggestions for future events or projects are always appreciated ...

- Lyse Geldard



Last month at his residence at Parkwood, Rev. Dr. Graham Tipple formally received and accepted the unanimous invitation of Calvary Council that he become Calvary's **Minister Emeritus**. Dr. Tipple served as Calvary's minister from 1968 to 1983. He attends Calvary worship each Sunday morning on-line and is spiritually active as a Calvary member.

- Bill Butt



Bruce, Bob and Bill in books.

Calvary's Fall Bazaar

This year's Calvary Fall Bazaar was a huge success with lots of people in attendance and lots of items sold. There was not a single baked good left over! Thank you to our many volunteers. This year's profit was \$6,250!



Jill, Karen and Nadine



Linda and Pam in crafts.



Our resident artist, Ruthanne.



Brenda, Liz and Marlene in Baked Goods.



Bonnie, Kay, Marg and Vaughan

Mary in Jams and Preserves.



Brian, Lindsay, Heather and Brian in Gently Used Items



Rev. Kerry welcomes attendees.



Kris and Nancy



Tim in Games.

Lots of tasty treats waiting to be sold at the Bazaar!






VS
Highest Bid Wins!

London Knights vs Owen Sound Attack
Friday, December 15, 2023 at 7pm

Club Seats: Section 114, Row F, Seats 15,16,17,18
Parking Pass Provided
(Total Value \$170.00) **Reserve of \$50**

Donated by:
Dave and Christie Mullen
A. Millard George Funeral Home &
Cremation London & Middlesex
60 Ridout Street South
London, ON




Draw for Hockey Tickets

The winning bid was \$200.

Thank you to AMG Funeral Home and Cremation London & Middlesex for their generous donation to our bazaar.

End of an Era

Calvary United Church Women – celebration of their work over the past 60 years.

Over the past 61 years, UCW has been an important group in the life of Calvary. You may have wondered what went on at their meetings and other activities. Prior to UCW the women served in either Women's Missionary Society who supported the missionary work of the United Church or the Women's Auxiliary who focused on the work of the local church and community.

The UCW's mission is to love God, foster Christian commitment, faithfulness, and spiritually, and promote respect and love for all God's creation. This mission has been embodied in the Calvary UCW in many ways. As the photo of the 40th Anniversary banner illustrates, it was the work of many hands that made this possible.

We celebrate the UCW of Calvary, and especially recognize our remaining charter member, Isabel Hill, who like 91 other women were UCW members from the beginning in 1962. At that time, Calvary's UCW had six units who met during the day and one unit which met at night as these were the younger women who were working. There were about 25 women in each unit. The evening unit kept growing by mentoring younger women. As one of those members stated, "we had fun learning from each other as we took turns leading meetings".

We remember and give thanks for the women who accepted



leadership roles as Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurers and who filled other committee responsibilities. Over the years, UCW organized rummage sales, bazaars and other events with the help of members of the congregation. Since the late 60's a stewardship letter has been sent out to all the women of Calvary. In the beginning, a motion directed that the money contributed be used to support local agencies related to the United Church. In recent years, this was motion rescinded in order to support community agencies also.

The UCW remembers Calvary members with cards for special birthdays and anniversaries as well as bereavements. We appreciate the years that Jean Knowles fulfilled this responsibility, and we thank Miriam Admans and Kathi Barton who have continued in this role. UCW has made a donation to the Memorial and Special Projects Fund in memory of all Calvary members.

The National World Day of Prayer Service was first hosted by Calvary UCW members in 1964 and has continued on a rotating schedule with the other South London Churches. These services were prepared by women from a different country each year as a means of education and unity expressed in the worship customs and themes of the various nations.

As fellowship was important, unit meetings ended with a social time. A combined meeting of all units would happen in the Spring and at Christmas to enjoy either a social tea or luncheon. UCW also catered often for funeral luncheons as a way of supporting families in their grief.

As Calvary's UCW closes in December 2023, we wish to thank the many women for their dedication and long-term commitment to Calvary UCW. Since there are so many names that could be listed, only a few are included. Heart-felt gratitude goes to Pam Harrison Secretary/Treasurer, Christine Kussner Vice President, and Mary Margaret Farrow, Past President. We also thank Ruthanne McLagan, President, for her leadership in the past four years.

Thank you to these women and the many women, not named, for fulfilling the UCW purpose of uniting women of the congregation for the total mission of the church and providing a means through which we expressed our loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ in Christian witness, study, fellowship and service.

- *Mary Margaret Farrow*



CHARTER MEMBERS

Jean Chambers-Mellor
 Barbara Muma
 Mary Kernohan
 Gertrude Muir
 Eileen McNichol
 Doris Hopper
 Eleanor Tuckey
 Marion Bender
 Isabel Hill
 Marion Campbell
 Grace Mitchell
 Pauline Hooper
 Evelyn Marsden
 Gwyneth King
 Helen Budd
 Norma McArthur



Kristen Goodman, Mary Margaret Farrow, Ruthanne McLagan, Pam Harrison

UCW PRESIDENTS

1962	Mary Warwick-Brown*
1963-1964	Jean Chambers-Mellor*
1965-1966	Helen McCrady*
1967-1968	Gertrude Jackson*
1969-1970	Ethel Collins*
1971-1972	Audrey Lahn*
1973-1974	Mary Kernohan*
1975-1976	Isabel Hill
1977-1978	Marilyn Durham*
1979-1980	Shirley Smith*
1981-1982	Elva Whitmore*
1983-	
1984-1985	Grace Mitchell*
1986-1987	Vera Robbins*
1988-1989	Tena Thompson*
1990-1992	Alicia Hoskin
1993-1994	Mary Horne*
1995	Christine Kussner, Alicia Hoskin
1996	Christine Kussner
1997-1999	Helen Budd*
2000-2018	Mary Margaret Farrow
2020-2023	Ruthanne McLagan



The Kussner family



Seated – Alicia Hoskin



Brian Wallace and Diane (Tipple) Sadler

Bread not Stones

In 2014, the United Church of Canada launched "Bread Not Stones", a national project to eradicate child poverty in Canada. "*If a child asks for bread, who among us would give that child a stone?*" Matthew 7: 9. National UCW adopted it as a project and Calvary participated. Rag Dolls of Hope were created and distributed to politicians.



Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau with "Jack" and Linda

UCW 2012



Canadian Foodgrains Bank 40th Anniversary Celebration



On November 2nd, over 100 supporters of Canadian Foodgrains Bank joined together to share a meal and celebrate the 40th anniversary of CFGB.

Henry Reinders, Ontario region representative welcomed everyone and spoke of the continued support of the federal government for CFGB, matching donations to a maximum of \$25 million. Christina Phillips, director of communications and public engagement, shared her experiences traveling to countries where CFGB, working with overseas partners, are having a profound impact. She shared stories of people facing starvation, but who found real joy when food and support was provided. Many stated that their faith in God helped them survive until emergency food supplies arrived.

Don Langford, a local Ontario farmer, who was instrumental in starting the CFG B program 40 years ago, spoke of the earliest days, when farmers came together to send grain from Canada to Ethiopia, Somalia and India, Prior to the pandemic, the number of people facing starvation was on a downward trend. However, that trend has been reversed due to supply chain problems, conflict and climate change. The need to support is growing exponentially.

At the end of the evening we joined in song, with the following refrain
*"Until all are fed
Until all on earth have bread
Like the One who loves us
Each and everyone
We serve until all are fed"*

- Kathie Leigh

London Community Chaplaincy

Rev. Pam advised that, "Fall at the Chaplaincy is busy with after-school programming, basic need support and adult community building/social inclusion. The communities have enjoyed seasonal art, apple picking, haunted houses, outdoor sports and more. New this Fall is an exciting boys' group run in partnership with Camp Kee-mo-Kee. As well, we are piloting a new program titled 'Future Dreams' aimed at helping youth understand how to achieve their post-secondary education dreams.

A Fall highlight is of course our Walk-A-Thon, and we are so grateful to all who supported Linda from your congregation.

Sending our huge thank you to Calvary United Church members for all you share with the Chaplaincy families".





Courthouse Rocks

A half-dozen Calvaryites (Calvaryans?) took part in the annual fundraiser concert called Courthouse Rocks. It's held downtown at the London Music Hall, and organised by Lawyers Feed the Hungry, London Chapter. They provide funds for the Community Breakfast program at Calvary as well as other London churches. Calvary has sent a singing contingent

for several years now. The event is open to everyone, not just lawyers, and it's for a good cause. Plan to attend next year.

Here wowing the crowd are (left to right) Jane Mills, Randy Mills, Denis Jung, Katy Farrow, Kerry Stover, and Brian Wallace.

- *Bill Butt*



Emily swims for the London Aquatic Club, a competitive team for children. Swim times in 5 events, freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and individual medley are recorded at the start of the season, with the goal of shaving off seconds over the year. Emily shaved more than 300 seconds and was awarded with a gold medal. She also was presented with a trophy for most improved. Hooray for a little fishie!

Advent Project 2023– Life*Spin

- We are collecting gently-used, clean, winter clothing - long sleeved shirts, sweaters, sweatshirts, pants, warm pyjamas, slippers, shoes, winter coats, hats scarves, gloves, mitts and boots - **Both children and adults clothing.**
- Kitchen items, toasters, cutlery, cooking pots and serving utensils
- glasses, cups, plates, bowls
- Children's games and stuffed animals
- Baby clothing and blankets

Drop-off at the parking lot entrance and leave on the table in the vestibule.

LIFE  SPIN



CALVARY LIBRARY

Your Library is brimming with Advent and Christmas resources, suitable for the youngest to the oldest of our congregation. Displayed on the book cart and on special Advent/Christmas shelves are books with stories of the Nativity, heartwarming and humorous stories, poetry, meditations, program ideas, crafts, dramas and Christmas carols. Also, there are CDs and DVDs. And, don't forget the Christmas Survival Guide!

We wish you a Blessed Christmas!

Your Calvary Library Committee

Welcoming gifts to Indwell residents

In early October, a basket full of household items was delivered to the newest Indwell apartment complex, at 403 Thompson Rd. These items were donated by members of Calvary United Church to help those moving from homelessness to secure and safe housing in the 44-unit building. Each one of the units is either totally or partially accessible and the building is located in a pleasant green space, close to transportation and amenities.

Below is the thank you received from Indwell for your Kindness to our neighbors in need.

“Thank you for your gift of a Welcome Basket for new tenants moving into 403 Thompson Road. Your generosity is appreciated. As you may know, many of our tenants will be moving from homelessness or other precarious housing. Often people arrive to their new homes with very few

belongings. Your gifts will give people the tools and supplies they need to care for their new apartments and themselves. The items are a very practical way to say "Welcome!" Thank you again for your gifts of hope to Indwell. Your donation will directly impact someone as they transition into their new home.”

Sincerely,
Melissa Papia (she/her)
“HOUSING SUPPORT
WORKER” INDWELL



Jazz Vespers



November 8, 2023 – We Remember
Jazz Vespers Quartet (JVQ) - Nevin Campbell,
Ted Peacock, Kim Ladd, Ken McLagan and
Rev. Kerry (vocalist)



JAZZ VESPERS
“Christmas... and all that Jazz”
with vocalist **Sonja Gustafson**
Wed. Dec. 6th at 7:00 pm
Calvary United Church
290 Ridout St. South at Garfield

Musicians Nevin Campbell, Ken McLagan, Larry Ernewein & Sandy MacKay, vocalist Sonja Gustafson & minister Kerry Stover

FREWILL OFFERING IS APPRECIATED • ENTER PARKING LOT FROM RIDOUT ST.
More info call 519-434-5526 or www.calvaryuc.ca