



John Black Memorial United Church

Easter Newsletter 2019

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DATES TO REMEMBER

April 14: Palm Sunday at John Black, 10:30 a.m.

Together we will mark Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, before his arrest on Holy Thursday and his crucifixion on Good Friday.

April 18: Maundy Thursday Seder Meal at John Black, 6 p.m.

Our TBJIGGN partners will join us to remember Jesus's last supper with his disciples. This intergenerational service will include a handwashing ritual and the Seder meal.

April 19: Good Friday Service at John Black, 11 a.m.

We mark Jesus' death with a special service at John Black.

April 21: Easter Sunrise Service at Immanuel United, 7:30 a.m.

An Easter sunrise service, followed by a breakfast, celebrates Jesus' resurrection.

April 21, Easter Sunday Service, at John Black, 10:30 a.m.

We come together for an Easter service. Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia! Come and celebrate the gift of New Life.



THE THIRST FOR EASTER

Thirst is a very uncomfortable feeling, especially when there is nothing to drink close by. When your mouth goes dry, it's hard to swallow, and you are absolutely parched like the wilderness desert at high noon.

Thirst is usually our body telling us it needs more fluid: "hydrate me!" Unbearable thirst can come from other sources such as medications, too much salt, but also a hollowness in the pit of our "being."

One of the things Jesus said from the cross just before he died was "I am thirsty" (*John 19:28*). This is an insight into his humanity as it is one of the last things humans are conscious of at the end of our days.

One of the most beautiful things to do for someone who is close to death is to moisten their lips to ease their discomfort and quench their thirst, if even just a little. It is a caring and compassionate gesture that is pure love. In this moment, Jesus calls to us to quench his



thirst as he has tried to quench ours. Come close and witness that place where humanity and divinity intertwine.

...whatever our thirst may be, Jesus beckons us to come and drink.

There is a greater thirst in this world that Jesus regularly invites us to quench. It is a thirst, an aching dryness of our hearts and souls that longs for love, peace, acceptance, understanding, justice, equality, courage, hope, joy...whatever our thirst may be, Jesus beck-

ons us to come and drink.

He says to the woman he meets at a well that if she drinks of the water he gives she will never be thirsty (*John 4:14*). She misunderstands and thinks Jesus is referring to the water from the well.

Jesus is the "well" that can quench our deeper inner desire for meaning, for significance, for love, and forgiveness if we accept his invitation to come and be refreshed.

Our Lord and Savior, the risen Christ, willingly surrendered his life

PLANS FOR OUR LENTEN JOURNEY, AND OTHER INFO

An update from your Worship Interest Group:

The United churches in Northeast Winnipeg, now joined by Bird's Hill and Transcona United, have come together for some Lenten activities.

A Shrove Tuesday pancake supper and Ash Wednesday service were held at Gordon-King, Bird's Hill, and North Kildonan with the other congregations invited to take part.

A musical celebration happened on March 15 at Immanuel United with six congregations sharing talent and fellowship.

Holy Week services will be both shared and independent—each congregation will hold its own Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and

Easter service; a combined Maundy Thursday (Seder meal) will be held at John Black. The Seder meal will be a potluck with food organized by Grey Street, and the liturgy led by Ha Na Park from Immanuel. Please watch for a sign-up poster for food donations and offers of help in setting up and cleanup.

More details regarding Easter services can be found on page 1 of this newsletter.

We welcomed six children into our church family through baptism on March 17: Brielle Ada, daughter of Kyla Johnston and Ian Walker and granddaughter of Pat Johnston; Dexter

Laurence, son of Amanda and Dave Dowbenko and little brother to Tessa and grandson to Peggy Aitchison; and the children

of Victoria and Colin Moorhouse: Ajay Victor, Ashton Ryder, Avery Edward Dale, and Aiden Colin.

COMING UP AT JOHN BLACK...



The Pastoral Care Team at John Black is preparing Easter Baskets for shut-ins. Baking will be needed and, if possible, it should be individually wrapped. There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex on Sunday, March 31, and Sunday, April 7.

Baking can be dropped off at the church Sunday, April 14 and Monday, April 15 between 9 a.m. and noon.

Say hello to Julia Daniels, our new nursery attendant at John Black. Julia is a Grade 10 student at Miles Macdonell Collegiate, in the International Baccalaureate Program. Her goal is to become a neuroscientist. Julia lives with her family on Oakview Avenue.



JESUS IS THE WELL THAT CAN QUENCH US

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for our sake. He is fully human and fully divine and teaches us reconciliation with ourselves, with others, and with the living God.

As you celebrate this Easter, invite someone who is thirsty to come and be quenched at your table. Offer someone a blessing of sharing a meal together on this most Holy day and let the one who gifts us the cup of joy be your water of life this day and always.

Wishing you a most refreshing and blessed Easter!

Rev. Laurie



The trusty trustees and assorted friends are at it again! On April 27 from 8:30 to 10 a.m., another pancake breakfast fundraiser will happen in Robertson Hall.

Tickets—\$10 for adults; children 9 and under free—will be available after church, and at the door. The menu includes pancakes, sausages, orange slices, and tea, coffee and juice.

Luella Stephens will be organizing a silent auction, so if you have something you'd like to donate please contact her. If you'd like to assist in any way, let our convenor Vince Hykawy know at vhykawy@shaw.ca

This is not just a fundraiser or a meal— it's an opportunity to get together with our church family and enjoy the fellowship that breaking bread together can bring.

CELEBRATING EASTER IS EASY TO DO



**Ross Wedlake, Chair
Leadership Team**

I have always found Easter to be a season when it is easy to celebrate.

Resurrection, re-birth, new life, flowers, gardens, and people emerging after a long winter, able to talk with others outside without having to bundle up from the cold...

In addition, children smiling, laughing, splashing in puddles without their bulky winter coats and snow pants, trying out their bicycles, some learning to ride without training wheels for the first time — a milestone in everyone's life.

Also, seniors now able to walk safely and enjoy the fresh air...

It is truly a joyful time of year for us all!

It is much the same at John Black Church. Everyone seems to be happier and more alive. The snowbirds have returned and are welcomed back. It is wonderful to see so many children in church and participating regularly in the services.

Last year, I read a book, *The Unstuck Church*, by Tony Morgan. In it, he describes the lifecycle of churches and the last chapter is called 'It's Time to Embrace a New Beginning.'

I truly feel that is where we are in our faith journey.

Our renewed energy is moving us forward with lots to celebrate and a great deal of what could be called "good noise."

We have had to overcome some obstacles and problems, and there will be more to come, but if we remain positive about the future and accept that things are changing for the better, we will experience a new vibrancy.

Rather than fixating on being the best church in our community, we are moving towards being the best church **for** our community.

On behalf of our entire Leadership Team, I wish one and all a joyous Easter.

BUILDING & PROPERTY GROUP FORMED

As of February 2019, there is an "official" Building and Property Interest Group.

The current volunteers are Art Bridges, Larry Lobay, Rick Sokolowski, Steven Studeny, Jim Treller and Ron Williams. We would be happy to have more volunteers join us, so please consider getting involved as a member.

If you would like to help occasionally but not commit to joining an actual interest group, let it be known that you would like to help on projects where and when you can.

Please feel free to contact any one of us. We plan to meet only as needed to discuss and plan the projects that are to be undertaken.

There will be some painting projects coming up in the months ahead and some needed repairs to the heating system.

We did have some heating issues in February when the boiler shut down on a couple of occasions. This left the daycare in Little Hall with some pretty cool room temperatures, forcing them to cancel child care on one of the days. Unfortunately there is no real control over events like this and we were fortunate that Bright Future Daycare was very understanding.

However the problem has been fixed and things are back to normal.

Rick Sokolowski on behalf of the Building and Property Interest Group



Succulent Gardening with Master Gardener Marilyn Dudek

Join us for tips on easy care succulents in containers: sun, soil and water requirements; propagation; and design for patios, balconies, stairs and gardens.

Wednesday, May 8, 6:30-8 p.m.
John Black Memorial United Church
Tickets \$10

To reserve tickets email:
johnblackunitedevents@gmail.com
Tickets also available at the door

YOUNG NEWCOMERS INSPIRE AS WE AWAIT REFUGEE FAMILY

“Very cold, but good.” These were the recent words, accompanied by a broad smile, of an 18-year-old newcomer to Canada. He was responding to my question, “How is Canada for you?”

Bara, his brothers and parents have been in Canada for less than six months. They’re very thankful to have been accepted as refugees after leaving their homeland of Syria and journeying through two neighbouring countries before being accepted by Canada with refugee status.

It was my pleasure to meet Bara and a group of his schoolmates from Miles Macdonnell Collegiate on March 14 at a “Meet & Greet” reception for The Hon. Ahmed D. Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship who had come on behalf of the federal government to thank the North Kildonan/River East area of Winnipeg for its history of friendship and hospitality to people from around the world.

Air travel has its advantages and disadvantages. On Thursday, the late arrival of the Honourable Minister’s flight, allowed me an hour of time to spend chatting with my new friends as we tried, at first, to make ourselves understood by any and all means. Then we were joined by other youth who, having been in Canada longer, gladly used their recently acquired English language skills to interpret any thoughts we had not managed to make clear to each other.

When I asked, somewhat tentatively, if there were other family members with him in Canada, Bara explained very well that a sister had remained in Jordan and married there, but that his parents were in Winnipeg and at the reception, too. I was honoured that he took me to where they were seated, and introduced me to them.

I had tried to explain to the group of young people with whom I was seated why I was at the afternoon reception, and why I was so happy to hear the mostly happy endings to their many personal stories of refugee journeys. They were interested in the fact John Black is in the process of applying for refugee status for a group of people, and asked many questions about our experience.



Clearly, their education has been, for these young people, a highlight of the early days of a new life in Canada. The full school bus of students who had come with their two English teachers to the special event with our local MP for Kildonan-St. Paul, the Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk hosting the Hon. Minister Hussen, were engaging in an element of their new country’s democratic process.

We were fortunate that a translator was available, allowing even those with limited English to appreciate that as newcomers to Canada, they can become valued

volunteers very early on. What better way to build self-confidence in a young newcomer? Who knows where such positive self-worth can lead a newcomer?

Certificates were presented to three students, all recent immigrants who have distinguished themselves in their short time in Canada by volunteering in a variety of positions. I asked Bara, with the help of his translator friend, if he knew these young people who were being recognized. Again, with a broad smile he said, “yes, they my friends!”

With a lump in my throat, I expressed as best I could to my new friends that when our hoped-for refugee group arrives from overseas, it was my fervent hope there will be for all of them, but especially for the teen, a group of new friends for him “just as warm and friendly as those young people I had met on this special afternoon.”

- Mary Bradshaw

GARDEN TOUR

Saturday, July 6, 2019
10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Includes 8-10 gardens
 in our local community

Cost: \$15

Proceeds to support
John Black’s

Refugee Interest Group

We are fortunate to have Luella Stephens and Lori McKay co-ordinate this exciting event. Please save the date, and stay tuned for more details.

