



Words from Wilmot

Events and Worship Schedule for the 2015 Advent and Christmas Season



Advent I: Sunday, November 29, 11:00 am - White Gift Sunday and Communion;
(Delivery of Grandmothers Helping Grandmothers Wreaths)

Advent II: Sunday, December 6, 11:00 am - Hanging of the Greens (Last day for
receiving Christmas Hamper gifts from Mitten Tree); Special Guest Gail Costello will
present an Affirming Diversity information and listening session following worship

Contemplative Space for Advent: Wednesday, December 2, noon

Advent Carol Festival: December 2, 7:30 pm at St. Paul's United Church

Contemplative Space for Advent: Wednesday, December 9, noon

Advent III: Sunday, December 13, 11:00 am - Children and Youth Pageant "The Not-
So-Silent Night" (special music by the children and youth and the Frank T. Pridham
Memorial Handbell Choir); Christmas Congregational Lunch following worship

Contemplative Space for Advent: Wednesday, December 16, noon

Advent IV: Sunday, December 20, 11:00 am - Special Christmas music by Senior
Choir and Baptism

Contemplative Space for Advent: Wednesday, December 23, noon



Friday, November 27
9:00 am to 1:00 pm
UCW Bake Sale and
New-To-You Table



December 10 and 11
Volunteers needed for
wrapping and delivery of
Christmas Hampers for our
Refugee Families



Monday, December 7,
6:00 pm - UCW Annual
Pot Luck Christmas
Dinner and Social

November, 2015

Inside this issue:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Children and Youth | 3 |
| Gordie Young | 4 |
| Cancellation | 5 |
| Evergreen Wreaths | 5 |
| Outreach Committee | 6 |
| Christmas Hampers | 6 |
| Wilmot Writer in The Observer | 7 |
| Advent Carol Festival | 7 |
| Tiny House | 8 |
| Fair Trade | 10 |
| Affirming Diversity | 11 |
| Hanging of the Greens | 12 |
| Wilmot UCW | 12 |
| Seniors Buffet | 13 |
| Faith Seekers | 14 |
| Gift Ideas | 15 |
| Quiet Place | 16 |
| Landscapes of the Soul | 16 |
| Hymn "Endless Skies" | 16 |

Words from Wilmot

Volume 26, Issue 4
November 2015

Ministry Team
Rev. Rose-Hannah Gaskin
506-292-1680
rosehannahwilmot@gmail.com

Rev. Ellen Bearsto
506-206-1943
ellen.bearsto2@gmail.com

Organist
Virginia Leiter

Music Director
Steven Peacock

Church Office
Marlene Phillips
506-458-1066
wilmotuc@nb.sympatico.ca

Church Sexton
Randy Randall
Dylan Sweeney
Kitchen and Hall
506-452-0219

Words from Wilmot
is published by the Information Team of Wilmot United Church

Web Site:
wilmotuc.nb.ca



Tuesday, December 15 - Annual Seniors Christmas Buffet Lunch at Aggie's Restaurant (Details on page 13)



Friday, December 18 (details to be announced)



Longest Night Service

At Wilmot, Monday December 21, 7:00 pm



Christmas Eve Services Thursday, December 24

Children's Christmas Service, 4:00 pm
Family Christmas Service, 7:00 pm
Communion Service, 11:00 pm



Sunday, December 27, 10:30 am at St. Paul's United Church



Each Sunday there will be healing prayers and anointing with oil following worship in the Sanctuary for those who wish.

Home Communion is available for those who wish. Please call Rose-Hannah or Ellen



A Small Group retreat "Landscapes of the Soul" is planned for Advent - weekly sessions, time to be announced

Words from Wilmot

is published several times a year by Wilmot United Church, Fredericton, New Brunswick. Opinions expressed in any issue of *Words from Wilmot* are the views of individual writers, and do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the congregation.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH CORNER

Sunday School continues to bring great joy to one's soul as we work together with the children. With the program *Seasons of the Spirit*, as our guide, we have just completed a Unit on Creation and are preparing to begin our Advent/Christmas/Epiphany Unit. Lots of ideas. Coming together in the Sunshine Room at the beginning of our Sunday School time has worked very well.



Currently we are learning our songs for the upcoming "The Not-So-Silent Night" Christmas Pageant. On December 13. The children

and youth will perform the play for you. It should bring some "Awe's" along with a few smiles but as you can imagine, we have lots of work to do in the next few weeks. Our LEADERSHIP TEAM of High School/University students as well as Young Adults continues to be a great help. THANK YOU!

Our YOUTH GROUPS have had a little slower start this year as we have tried to figure out their schedules as well as the schedules of our leaders. We have set up 'doodle polls' online allowing the youth to share what times work for them. Modern technology is certainly a great help. Ask us about this simple and effective way of gathering information. We are now underway with gatherings planned for both age groups. We have had a relaxing Pot Luck for the Senior Group at Oliver and Katie Glencross' new home. Bowling, musical jam sessions, sports, rock wall climbing, snowshoeing and simply gathering together as friends are all in the planning stages. We are also active in giving support

when needed to our Saturday Night Drop-In and the Community Kitchen, and hope to be involved in supporting the Refugee program in the coming year.

Next term will see two of our youth on an educational adventure. LAURA COON will be an exchange student attending High School in Vetheuil, France. Laura and her family welcomed JADE MAGDELAINE into their home



for the past few months and now Jade's family await Laura's arrival.

JACQUELINE YOUNG, who is currently studying Engineering at UNB, has been accepted as a participant in UNB's Study Abroad program. She will be studying at the Louvain School of Engineering in Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium.

CONGRATULATIONS to both Laura and Jacqueline. Interestingly, these two communities are less than 4 hours apart. We will keep in touch and look forward to hearing about your experience.

☺ Blessings to all our readers from Ellen, the children, youth and their leaders.
See you on December 13th

Gordie Young's Passion for Christmas Trees



Gordie and Carol Young

Members of the Young family have been attending Wilmot United Church for six generations. Gordie and his brother Bill are faithful members of the choir and have served on many committees.

My first encounter with the people of Wilmot was with their mother Clara.

I was pregnant when I first attended; she visited me after the birth to enroll my baby into the cradle roll, came to have tea with me and invited me to her house. Fifty years later, I was interviewing her son and his wife Carol in their beautiful home.

Gordie grew up on the corner of Westmorland and Aberdeen Streets. His passion for Christmas trees began when he was in grade school. He would take his handsaw into the woods, cut a tree, and sell it on the way back home. In high school he worked on various tree farms. In 1961, while he was at UNB in the forestry program, he bought 100 acres of land and with a partner started his first Christmas tree plantation of Scots Pines. In 1970 the trees developed a fungus and had to be cut and burned. He decided that he was through with Scots Pines and with partners.

He and Carol then bought land in Cardigan, a former Welsh settlement out on the Royal Road. At first they sold “natural” trees but soon started their first plantation of Balsam Firs planted in rows, “where God and Gordie” could grow perfect trees. In 1969 they acquired a trailer so that they and their four children, Chris, Karen, Graeme, and Neil, could sleep there during the busy season. “All the children worked at the

farm.” Carol adds that they all loved climbing trees.

Gordie says, “I’m a professional forester with two degrees in forestry. But forestry is also my hobby—like some people play golf.” I’m reminded of Robert Frost’s lines, “My object in living is to unite/My avocation and my vocation/As my two eyes make one in sight.”



They now have five farms with 300,000 trees as part of their company, Keywood Enterprises. Sometimes they even have to buy other farms’ trees to fulfill their orders. In their biggest year they sold 50,000 trees, mostly to Mexico, Central and South America, but also to St. Pierre/Miquelon. Keywood also offers a “Choose and Cut” experience. Those people who want to cut their own tree come out to the farm and tag one sometime after Halloween. Closer to Christmas, they come to cut it. In the camp, there is a festive atmosphere, with cookies and hot chocolate served around two wood stoves. The saws are provided.

Before their semi-retirement (“We practically had to move up there after Halloween.”) Carol cooked for the truckers. “Texas truckers thought that Boston was nearly the end of the world. And then they had to drive to Houlton. And then on to Cardigan!” Their philosophy is to treat these truckers well. They are particular about the papers needed to get the truckers from one country to another. Gordie would start at 6 A.M. and go to midnight.

(Continued on page 5)

Now they lease the land to a friend—875 acres, 65 acres for seeds. They grow the trees from seeds from their own cones, and after two or three years transplant them, 40,000 trees a year. “We put a tree everywhere a tree should be.” That means filling in the space where a tree has been cut. The firs must be protected by fertilizing, weeding, and removing any “witch’s broom” growths. Carol says she can go down the rows and smell the growth. “It smells like Javex.” The biggest job is shearing the trees to make them perfect.

The Balsam Fir is the New Brunswick provincial tree. It’s also the most fragrant, Gordie says.

I ask him for advice. “Cut the tree a week before Christmas. When you are about to put it up, cut off a further half inch. Put it in a clean stand with room temperature water and never let it go dry.”

☺Nancy Bauer

SOUNDS OF THE SEASON
A Celtic Christmas
Featuring "Tangled Traditions"
Carolyn Holyoke - piano and accordion * Katherine Müller - fiddle and cello
Tom Richards - guitar, vocals, tin whistle

Cancelled

Special guests...
Chris Rice - narrator * Susan Kenefick - vocals * Andy Rogers - small pipes
Marilyn Inch - tin whistle and vocals * Adam McIntyre - Irish dance and bodhran

Friday Nov 27, 7:30 pm
Gagetown, NB
Grace United Church,
46 Tilly Road
Tickets for Gagetown event available at
Long Pointy or at the door

Saturday, Nov 28, 7:30 pm
Fredericton, NB
Wilmet United Church,
472 King Street
Tickets for Fredericton event available at
examplar books, Wilmet church office or
at the door

Admission: Adult \$20.00 Student \$15.00
Organized in celebrating the 20th Anniversary of Christmas in The Village
Come for the fun, November 27th and 28th, 6 to 9 pm.

Due to a hand injury, Carolyn Holyoke will be unable to perform in the “Sounds of the Seasons” show, so it must be cancelled. Her hand will fully recover but not in time for the show. Anyone who purchased tickets may take them to the seller of the tickets and receive a refund. Please spread the word.



Hurry and Place Your Order!

Fresh Double Sided Evergreen Wreaths for Sale

Did you know that there are over 13 million grandmothers in Africa raising children orphaned by HIV/AIDS? Grandmothers Helping Grandmothers is a Fredericton based organization working in solidarity with these African grandmothers both to *raise awareness* to this desperate plight and to *raise funds* to be distributed between two national groups engaged in direct support. The Stephen Lewis Foundation and Ottawa based Help Lesotho actively support



groups of grandmothers in Africa with a variety of resources including food, school fees, medicines, counseling, and even coffins to allow for a dignified burial of loved ones.

Again this fall we are raising funds through the sale of beautiful, fresh, double sided Christmas wreaths. December 22 is the last day to order our undecorated 12 inch balsam fir wreaths @ \$12 each and for decorated ones @ \$14 each. Please look for our table at coffee time to place your orders. The wreaths will be ready for pick up on November 29th. On that day we will also have bundles of fir, white pine and cedar for sale \$5... no reservations needed. Questions? Contact Sue MacLeod @ 459-7066 or Ann Price @ 455-7660. For further information about GHG visit: grandmothershelpinggrandmothers.ca

Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee has had a busy fall with Wednesdays @ Wilmot, Drop In and other up and going programs. As always, thanks to you, the congregation, for supporting our efforts in so many ways, including the Benevolent Fund, food and other donations, as well as your time. Look for separate updates on the Christmas Hamper Program and Fair Trade booth in this issue.

By the time you read this, you may have seen media coverage on the very successful Access to Justice Public Forum held on Nov. 12 at Wilmot. Organized mainly by Gail Wylie and Norm Laverty, approximately 90 professionals, partners and clients in the justice system attended a comprehensive day, discussing challenges and opportunities in areas including: family law and intimate partner violence, treatment of youth in the present system, and Social Assistance application and appeal processes.

The forum generated many positive suggestions on how we, as part of a larger community, can try to engage and provide more equitable services to those accessing the complex justice system. Thank you to the UCW for taking care of our nutrition needs, Marlene, Randy, Doug Beirsto, Craig Frame, all the presenters, volunteers and sponsors – specifically to the Child and Youth Advocate’s office of the Province of New Brunswick, Fredericton YMCA Global and Community Unit and the Maritime Conference of The United Church of Canada.

Please save December 13 for a special congregational Christmas lunch, immediately following the service. We hope to see you at the many activities celebrating the Advent season!

©Lynn MacKinnon
Outreach Committee

Christmas Hamper Program

Each year Wilmot provides Christmas Hampers for refugee families who have moved to



Fredericton. This year the families are from Bhutan, Iraq, Iran, Congo DR, Liberia, South Korea and Sudan.

The families who receive the hampers, with gifts and food gift cards, have left their extended families behind, along with the support network that extended families represent. So aside from the fact that they need the warm items that we provide for them, the warmth that they receive along with our gifts is very much needed and appreciated.

We work in partnership with the Multicultural Association of Fredericton to make this a reality. MCAF provides us with the family list and some donations. We always have help from others in the community but Wilmot people have always been very generous in supporting this project.



Mitten Tree

The mitten tree is set up in the gym on each Sunday, Nov 15 to Nov. 29. There are paper mittens on the tree, each mitten provides information about a gift. The gifts range from toys—games—clothing, such as indoor winter

tops. We ask that the gifts be new and returned no later than December 6. Monetary donations also may be given through envelopes marked for the hamper program.

(Continued on page 7)

Volunteers are needed to help with the preparation and delivery of the hampers on Dec. 10 and 11. Sign-up sheets are available at the mitten tree.

☺ Thank you for your support.
Elaine Kenyon and Rita Roach
Outreach Committee

The United Church **Observer**

Wilmot Writer Featured in The United Church Observer

Be sure to check your December copy of *The United Church Observer* for an article by Rose Burke, one of our Wilmot Writers. This is the second time that an article by Rose has been published in our church magazine. You will find her essay in the "First Look" section on page 10, and her photo and background on the masthead page introducing December's contributors.

In May of this year Rose travelled to The Netherlands and searched out the family home of her mother, who lived through the invasion of Holland and the liberation by Canadian Forces in 1945. Her mother became a Dutch War Bride and came to Canada to start a family with her soldier husband, Rose's father, in Millville, New Brunswick.

While in Amsterdam, Rose visited the Rijksmuseum and was mesmerized by the depiction of The Holy Family in a small sculpture of wood by Jan Van Doorne (1616 - 1663). Rose said, "This sculpture took me from the typical imagery of Mary and the Christ Child to a consideration of them as a family, including Joseph. It was only as I gazed at Jan Van Doorne's statue that I became aware that, other than his presence in the Nativity story, there is minimal visual

depiction of Joseph." Rose's article is a meditation that leads readers beyond Jesus' birth to think of him as a toddler and a young child and to see Mary and Joseph as parents like



themselves. It is a sacred story but it is also universal, a depiction of every family. In her search for family roots she found affirmation that "every family is a holy family".

☺ L. Caseley



Advent Carol Festival

Be sure to mark your calendars for Wednesday December 2, 2015, 7:30 pm when St. Paul's United Church will host the 26th annual Advent Carol Festival. If you are unfamiliar with this event, it is an occasion when a number of church and community choirs join together to present music of the season along with carols for everyone to sing. There is no admission fee, but an offering will be taken with all proceeds going to support the Fredericton Community Food Bank. Since its inception in 1990, the Carol Festival has raised over \$100,000 for the food bank! Come along and bring a friend!

☺ Garth Caseley

Erica Young's New Adventure

Erica Young is on a new adventure. A Social Worker who likes to travel and try new things, she is currently following her dream to live mortgage-free and off the grid by building what is known as a Tiny House. Erica



explains, "I had been living and working in Ottawa when family circumstances made me even more aware of the importance of family and how I needed to be back home in New Brunswick." Erica has deep roots in Fredericton and within the Wilmot Church family. She is the great-niece of Rev. Ellen Beirsto and the granddaughter of Gordon and Carol Young and Fred and Dixie Beirsto.

Following her decision, things happened very quickly. She accepted a position at Work Safe in Grand Bay-Westfield and faced the immediate challenge of packing up and moving. Having just moved very recently within Ottawa to a larger house, she understood the high cost of hiring a moving van and movers, and she had experienced the hassle and expense of keeping things in a storage unit when extended travel made it necessary. Erica began looking at possessions in a different way and asked herself, "How much stuff do I really need?" She decided to drastically downscale and keep only her bed, dresser, skis, winter tires and some clothing; all things she could fit into a 5x8 U-Haul.

Everything else was sold on Kijiji, given to friends or donated. Once she got into it, she describes the act of reducing her possessions to the bare essentials as "freeing, fun and even thrilling!"

Erica says she has always tried to be debt free, environmentally conscious and, from a young age, wondered if it might be possible to own a home mortgage-free. She began exploring the Tiny Home concept and it seemed a natural fit. She did considerable research on the Internet, ordered building plans from Humble Homes, a UK-based company, and modified the blueprints to suit her taste and needs. Before any building could start, she had a 24 ft. trailer built in Rexton NB and her uncle, dad, and cousin took a road trip to pick it up with her uncle's truck. She chose this length because it is the largest size with a double axle that can carry up to 10,000 lbs., and be towed (hopefully, she says) by a regular pickup truck. The Tiny Home is built right onto the trailer with steel ties anchoring the structure. Once a Tiny Home is placed in situ, the trailer can be put on blocks and skirted in. Erica has plans for a deck to be added on at a later date.

When I met with Erica we stood inside her half-completed home that is being constructed on McLeod Avenue behind a building owned by her grandfather and Ellen's older brother, Fred Beirsto. "I could not do this without the support of my family," she says. "Once I explained what I wanted to do and answered a few questions, they simply asked, 'How can we help?' I am really blessed by a wonderful family." Erica makes the design choices and purchases the materials for construction. "There are so many decisions to make and suppliers to visit. I carry a tape-measure with me wherever I go." While Erica has hired a carpenter for the actual building of the structure she is not afraid to roll up her sleeves and get her hands dirty. "I help whenever I can." She apologizes that there is

nowhere to sit yet, but it doesn't take long to do the tour. The walls are up, windows and doors are in place. "A friend of the family contacted me and offered to do the wiring at cost as he was so excited about the Tiny House concept. In exchange he can put his participation in the project on his website." Erica is surprised at the amount of interest her home is generating. "People want to see it and ask me questions and I don't mind talking about it." A common question is "Why?" "I wanted something that will last, that is built with quality materials and as much as possible has a small environmental impact. It will be solar powered and will have a composting toilet vented to the outside."

When building a Tiny Home, towing weight is critical, so 2x4's rather than 2x6's are used, with ½ inch high density foam insulation. She has ordered durable, light-weight cork flooring for the main area, and carpeting for the upstairs sleeping loft. "You can sometimes really save on building supplies as the quantities needed are so small, so sometimes you can get ends and discards." She also purchases recycled materials whenever possible. "With what you save, you can splurge once in a while. For example, I really wanted a skylight over my bed which cost more but will be a nice feature." With space and storage at a premium there will be custom-made multi-purpose furniture. She is planning to have padded window seats on casters, which can be easily moved around, used for storage or locked together to form a guest bed. Her table will likely be foldable and will also serve as a desk/office area. It is easy to see this will be an attractive, functional living space, with lots of bright windows, a high ceiling in the main sitting area, an efficient kitchen and bathroom on the main floor, and a glassed front door which will lead to a deck for additional space when it is added. A staircase with built-in storage will lead to the upstairs half-loft for sleeping

and reading. There will be plenty of shelving and storage place for clothing.



Erica estimates the cost of her new home including labour will be between \$50,000 to \$60,000 dollars, and she hopes to be moved in by this summer. Still to be determined is the exact location of where she will place her home. For Tiny Home dwellers, building codes and zoning restrictions are sometimes the biggest obstacle they face. However, Erica is excited by this new adventure and feels the greatest challenge to "living small" will be resisting the urge to accumulate possessions, and efficient storage for essentials.

Eventually, she may need a larger home at which time her Tiny Home, built to last, can become a studio, office or cottage, or who knows, it is so lovely I might just move in! Thanks Erica for showing me your place and for an interesting afternoon. Stay posted for updates.

©Kathie Goggin

The Fair Trade Cupboard: Justice in Your Kitchen

Laura Coon, Claire Vezina and Lucie Vezina are excited to be staffing the Fair Trade Cupboard again this Fall and Winter.

In conventional commodity trading dominated by large corporations, small-scale farmers are paid very low prices for what they produce, locking them in to ecologically-damaging farming practices or driving them out of the market entirely.

The idea of "fair trade" was developed in the 1980s to make sure small-scale producers receive a fair share of the final retail price paid by you and me. This is often accomplished by helping farmers organize into co-operatives through which they sell their products to wholesalers. Fair trade standards guarantee farmers a higher price than what they would get on the open market, with a portion of that price being invested into the local community through the cooperatives. Often fair trade standards also require ecological production methods, such as growing without the use of synthetic pesticides or fertilizers. This benefits the land, water and wildlife, as well as the health of farmers and their families. Thus many fair trade products are also labelled *organic*.

Through Wilmot's Fair Trade Cupboard, we are supporting farmer cooperatives who sell to two fair trade-organic wholesalers.



Just Us Coffee, based in Grand Pré, Nova Scotia, buys and roasts coffee beans from farmers cooperatives in South and Central America and Africa. They also buy tea, cane sugar and various chocolate

products—all organically grown—from those regions.



Zatoun is a fair trade cooperative based in Palestine. They produce and sell olive oil and herbs, supporting farmers struggling to build a local agricultural economy in the occupied territory.

While you can buy cheaper coffee, tea, sugar, chocolate, olive oil and herbs, the money you spend on corporate brands benefits those corporations first and foremost. Their products are cheap because the farmers and workers are underpaid, their health is damaged from agricultural chemicals, and the land and water are abused.

Wilmot's Fair Trade Cupboard offers you the opportunity to participate in a justice-building project. When you purchase everyday products from the cupboard, you can be certain the farmer is receiving a fair share of your purchasing dollar, rural communities are also benefitting, and the soil and water as well as the health of the workers, are being protected.

Now that Advent is upon us, think of the Fair Trade Cupboard as a source of ethically-produced, high quality gifts for loved ones, teachers, workmates, neighbours, Secret Santas—even the Minister! A gift can be as simple as a special box of tea and a bar of handmade chocolate, or as exotic as a bottle of pure Palestinian olive oil and a Middle Eastern herb mix.

So come visit us at the Fair Trade Cupboard every Sunday during Coffee and Conversation. Put some of your food dollars to work for justice—for people and for the Earth.

©Janice Harvey

Note from the Affirming Diversity Committee



On October 25 approximately 40 people attended a listening session hosted by the Affirming Diversity Committee.

Sue Short led us as we discussed the times in our lives when we felt isolated and different and how we respond to those feelings. Thanks Sue for your thoughtful leadership.

The committee met following the session to debrief and plan further action. We heard from those attending the listening session that you have questions and that you need more opportunities for discussion and reflection. In response, the committee will be organizing more listening and information sessions to further explore your questions and concerns. Reserve Sunday, Dec. 6th, after church to come and hear Gail Costello from the Gay/Straight Alliance at Oromocto High School. Gail will talk about her experiences with LGBTQ youth – their hopes and their struggles.



One of the things that affirming congregations in the United Church are required to do is to have a vision statement. These are inclusive statements with sexual

orientation and gender identify clearly named. Here are a few such vision statements.

Bedford United Church, NS
(they called it an Inclusivity Statement)
We the people of Bedford United Church declare publicly our commitment to creating a community where all people are welcome

regardless of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, differing abilities, ethnic background or economic circumstances.

All persons are welcome to take part in every aspect of church life including membership, leadership, celebrating life passages and marriage.

We celebrate the richness that diversity brings to our church, even as it challenges us. We pray for God's spirit to guide us as we work for reconciliation and justice for all persons in both church and society.

New Westminster United Church, BC
Based in the hospitality of Jesus Christ, we practice an open door/table policy, where all are welcome to worship and explore Christian faith with us regardless of age, race or colour, family status, physical or mental dis/ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, class, income level, nationality, ancestry or place of origin, marital status, or religious point of view.

Nelson United Church, BC
God calls us to be a loving, inclusive and compassionate people, who following Christ's teachings, gather to worship, celebrate the gift of love, live with respect in creation and seek justice and welcome for all regardless of, but not limited to, the following: age, race, colour, ancestry or place of origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, physical and mental ability and economic status.

The Affirming Diversity Committee welcomes your questions and comments at any time. Please feel free to contact us. We'd love to talk with you. The committee members are: Maureen Toner, Elizabeth Savoie, Norm Laverty, Deb Bradbury. Maureen Toner

©Affirming Diversity Committee

The Hanging of the Greens

In about 1990 some Wilmoteers suggested we have a Christmas tree in the sanctuary. Another Wilmoteer protested loudly because a tree was a pagan symbol, not appropriate for a Christian church. To resolve this controversy our beloved minister, The Rev. Dr. Rod Sykes, researched the subject and found an



Rev. Dr. Rod Sykes and Marilynn Sykes on the celebration of Rod's retirement on September 28, 2014

authentic reference to the Christian practice of bringing evergreen boughs into the church. Rod discovered that the greenery was a symbol of eternal life. Of course, he says, you have to live in a place where greenery is available. Thus began our tradition of The Hanging of the Greens.

I had thought that Rod was responsible for this tradition, and when I was talking to Gordie and Carol Young, they remembered that too. Gordie told me a wonderful story about Rod, Marilynn and their two children. Every year the Sykes would drive out to the Youngs' tree farm in their VW bug to cut a tree. The first year Rod cut one "about nine feet tall" according to Gordie. He struggled to get it on the car, and when they got home they had to move the sofa out of the living room in order to fit in the tree. Rod loved the farm so much that one year he asked Gordie and Carol if they could stay overnight, which they did.

I was happy to have The Hanging of the Greens assignment because it gave me a good excuse to contact Rod. He retired from his church in Calgary a year ago when he discovered he had Parkinson's disease. He is doing well, he says. He has an excellent neurologist and is in a country-wide clinical trial.

Both their children still live in Edmonton. He and Marilynn love Calgary. For one thing, they are only a 45-minute drive to the Rockies. Marilynn still works at Chapters but took a month off so they could go on a trip to Newfoundland and Ireland.

On a personal note, I've always been grateful to Rod for leading the seminar on the Reign of Christ that has played a large part in my theology.

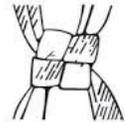
©Nancy Bauer

Wilmot UCW

The UCW has been having a very busy and exciting fall. Our regular meetings have been



CGIT
"100 Years with a Purpose"
1915-2015



spent with wonderful guest speakers including Sandra MacBean, celebrating 100 years of CGIT; Theresa Lattrulo, instructing us on Food Safety; and most recently Beverly Harper discussing Personal/Home Support Services. We have also spent much of our time planning our fall fundraisers, which have

proven to be very successful.



Our Fall Rummage Sale broke all records in October bringing in over \$3200.00!



Our Final Fundraiser is our Bake Sale and New-To-You Table, scheduled for November 27th and we will be calling each family in the congregation to remind them and ask for support. At this time we would like to thank the congregation for all the hours contributed to these events. We always plan our fundraisers knowing we have the strength and support of the congregation behind us. You do not disappoint! Thanks-a-Million!!

On Apple Pie day we prepared 280 Large and 77 Small pies, raising over \$2500 (before expenses).



At this time we would also like to celebrate a growing UCW group. We have recently added 6 new members and regularly have visitors dropping by as they are able. Welcome to Susan, Mary-Lynn, Judy, Colleen, Kathie and Val. We invite all ladies of the congregation to drop by one of our meetings; you are always guaranteed a warm welcome and a hot cup of tea! Our next meeting will be our Christmas Potluck on December 7th. It is always a wonderful evening of food, friendship and maybe even a Christmas Carol or two! Please Join Us!

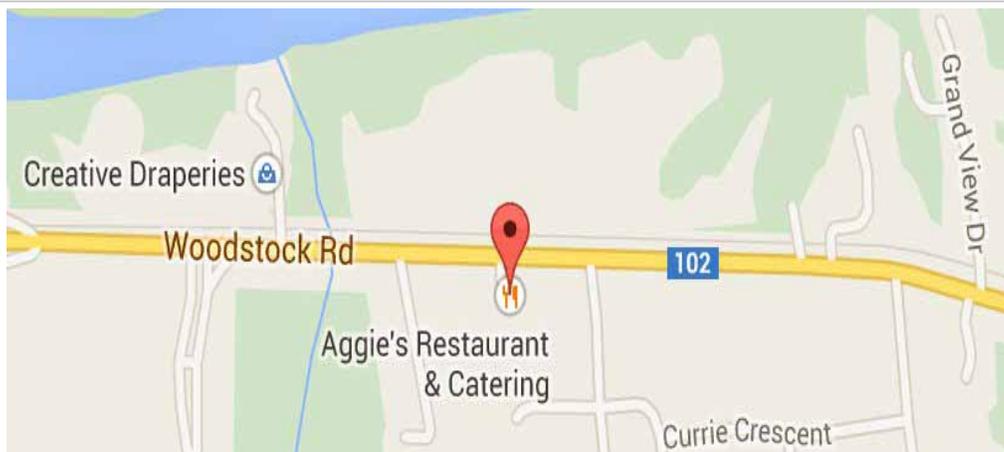
☺Brenda Cameron

Seniors Christmas Buffet

The Annual Seniors Christmas Buffet Lunch will take place on Tuesday, December 15 at Aggie’s Restaurant. (See Below.) Be sure to let Susan Breen (450.4072) or Brenda Cameron (363.3388) know if you wish to attend, and what your transportation requirements are.

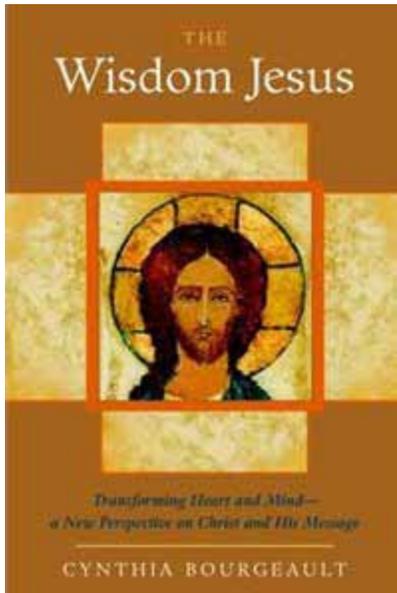
Price is \$16.50 including tax and gratuity.

As in the past, it will be a very special event to remember.



Faith Seekers in the New Year

If you have a New Year's resolution to read a current book on faith development for your daily pilgrimage in the year ahead, you can't go wrong in putting Rev. Don MacDougall's recommendation of The Wisdom of Jesus: Transforming Heart and Mind, a new



perspective on Christ and his message, by Cynthia Borgeault, on your Christmas wish list. A reviewer of the book says, "*If you put aside what you think you know about Jesus and approach the*

Gospels as though for the first time, something remarkable happens: Jesus emerges as a teacher of the transformation of consciousness." The Seekers Group, which meets monthly on the third Thursday from 4:00 to 5:30 pm will use this book as a discussion guide in February/March after members and guests (all are welcome to each meeting) finish Spong's latest book The Fourth Gospel.

Don and Lois MacDougall have offered a wonderful ministry to Wilmot United Church with both the weekly Adult Bible Conversation for the past 15 years and the Seekers Group since 2009. When Don retired from active ministry at St. Paul's United Church, and he and Lois settled into their cozy home in Forest Hill with their abundant gardens, they decided on Wilmot as their church home. Don has been actively involved



Don and Lois MacDougall

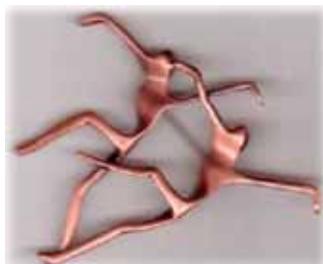
on the Board of Tatamagouche Centre, a learning retreat and conference centre, recognized internationally for its experiential learning model, social justice initiatives, and programming related to transformational learning and spiritual deepening. Lois is very involved with Folks on Spokes, a recreational biking group for folks over 50. She received the George Wakeling Award in 2013 for her dedication to improving the lives of New Brunswick seniors.

Don and Lois' commitment to Adult Faith development have been an inspiration and enrichment for our Wilmot church family, and the Seekers Group in particular has reached many who are not part of our faith community but are seeking meaning in their lives. Their Adult Bible Conversation group gives enhancement to the lectionary worship experience every Sunday for those who attend.

Lucille Caseley

Ideas for Christmas Gifts

(Gifts that Give Twice)



UCW Friendship Pins

The UCW has the popular Friendship Pins for sale as a fund raising project, \$12.00 each. They are a perfect Christmas gift for a cherished friend, along with an original poem expressing gratitude for friendship. Contact Nancy Chase at 450-2978 or dpc@nb.sympatico.ca.



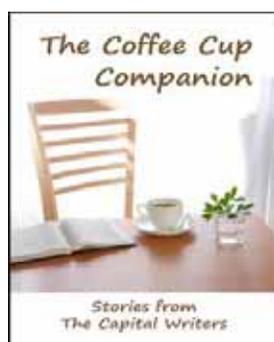
Youth Group Garden Lights

Solar Garden Tea Lights crafted by Greg Black for a fund raising project for the Youth Group are available from Ellen or any member of the Children and Youth program, and from the Church Office, \$20.00 each. An accompanying card with poem and garden photo is attached to the elegant cup handles. You can also contribute your own tea cups to have them made into tea lights so that you will have a sentimental gift to give to a relative or friend, or just to have as a keepsake. These make a unique gift for any occasion.



Buy a Night Campaign

Buy-A-Nights are gift cards, sold for \$10 each, that indicate a donation has been made on behalf of the recipient towards the cost of a night at the shelters. All proceeds go directly to support the Men's Shelter and Grace House for Women. You can purchase them on line from our church office or the Lighthouse Book store, 60 Bishop Dr. 453-1010, or on line at <http://www.theshelters.ca/ban.html>.



Support Fredericton Shelters

For some folks books come to mind when purchasing a gift for a friend or relative. Rose Burke, a member of Wilmot Writers Group, and her friends have published *The Coffee Cup Companion*. As the title suggests, these 42 stories are the perfect companion for quiet moments of relaxation. You will find a mixture of fiction, humour, rhyme, essays and creative non-fiction ensuring interest for every reader. All profits from the sale of this book will go to Fredericton Shelters. Copies available at the Co-op and Westminster Books.



2016 United Church Calendar

A beautiful 2016 calendar showcasing inspired photographs of Anglican and United Churches from across Canada has significant dates of the church year and spiritually uplifting verses to make it the perfect calendar to give or keep. Sales of this calendar will support our United Church programs. They are available from Wilmot's church office for \$6.00.



WE'RE ON THE WEB AT WILMOTUC.NB.CA

HAVE YOU CHECKED LATELY?

This newsletter can also be read online in colour on our web site.

Words from Wilmot

is available in

LARGE PRINT

for those with impaired vision.

These will be available on a limited basis for each issue.

If you would like to receive the LARGE PRINT edition, please ask your Sunday Morning Welcomer.



Advertisement for the Quiet Centre at Wilmot United Church, offering sacred moments of contemplation and renewal during the Advent Season. Includes church interior and exterior views.



Landscapes of the Soul

Rose-Hannah is offering a small group retreat to prepare your soul for the birth of the Christ Child. Four sessions will be offered. Time for the sessions will depend on the interest of the participants. Please contact Rose-Hannah to register or leave a message at the church office. There is no cost for this event, and you are not required to attend each week if you are not able. Come and drink at the well. Bring a friend.

Poem 'Endless Skies' by L. Caseley, December 2012. The poem is framed by a border of yellow stars. The text describes people of the planet earth, the birth of a Jewish baby, and the message of hope and renewal.