***Our Statement of Purpose***

As a community of faith led by the Spirit, we welcome all to worship God and live in loving, just and respectful relationship with each other, our neighbours and the earth. Inspired by the life and ministry of Jesus Christ we strive to recognize the light of God in each person regardless of age, race, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, economic status or any other category by which the world may seek to divide. We challenge ourselves to deepen our relationship to God, to see the light of the divine in each person and in all creation, and to live the faith we proclaim in every aspect of our lives.

***Our Week at a Glance – September 9, 2018***

The flowers today have been placed by Renee Snell and Yvonne Powell, in loving memory of our congregation’s loved ones.

***THIS WEEK AT TSA:***

**Mon. Sept. 10** UCW General – bag lunch, Chapel, 12:00

**Wed. Sept. 12** Men’s Breakfast – Rocky Mountain House, 8:30
 Property – Library, 10:00
 Bible Study – Marian Roffey, 12:00
 Mat Group – Stewart Hall, 1:00
 Crafty Ladies – Library, 1:00
 Finance – Library, 6:00

**Thurs. Sept. 13** MPCF – Marian Roffey, 10:00
 Worship & Music – Library, 6:00
 Choir – Sanctuary, 7:00

**AUDIO SYSTEM** Sept. 9 – Geoff Roberts
 Sept. 16 – Marilyn Eady

**COUNTING OFFERING** September – Pat Blandford & Marg Crozier
 October – Bev Davis & Sadie Smith

**MEALS ON WHEELS** Sept. 9 – Darwin Phillips & Tyson Jessup
 Sept. 16 – Kevin & Pat Box

**Renfrew Fair**: Many thanks to everyone who contributed to our fair booth.

**Men’s Breakfast**: the next Men’s Breakfast is scheduled for Wednesday, September 12, at 8:30 a.m. at the Rocky Mountain House.
 **Crafty Ladies**: The Crafty Ladies will resume for the fall season on Wednesday, September 12, at 1:00 in the Library.

**Mat Group**: The Mat Group will be meeting on Wednesday, September 12 at 1pm in Stewart Hall. If you are interested in joining our group, please stop in and join us for tea at three!

**Stewardship Month in Bay of Quinte Conference**: October is Stewardship Month in Bay of Quinte Conference, and Sunday, October 14 is Toonie Sunday. Please collect toonies in a pill bottle and bring to the church on October 14.

**Upper Room Daily Devotional**: If you are looking to obtain the Upper Room daily devotional, they are now located in the Office, and can be picked up Mon-Thurs, 9-2. The booklets are $2.00.



**By Melanie Macdonald**

September 1, 2018

Although Trinity St. Andrew’s United Church has been my home church for several years, extensive travel has taken me to different locales across North America, The Bahamas and Europe.

During my journeys, I try to attend church each Sunday, finding a United Church of Christ whenever I am in the U.S. That other “UCC” is our partner church and is the closest to The United Church of Canada among the various Protestant denominations in terms of theological perspective. I always feel very comfortable in those congregations.

Because I often spend weeks at a time in Lexington, Kentucky, I sought out the only local United Church of Christ there: the Bluegrass United Church of Christ (bluegrassucc.com). I visited their website and learned that it is a very new church - only six years old, housed in a non-descript, boxy, red brick building in a northern suburb. It is also a LGBTQ congregation, but open to everyone. The church is led by a female, lesbian minister, who lives with her partner and manages her own accounting and public image firm, alongside the very full-time role of leading and growing this fledgling congregation.

I arrived there with some nervousness, not knowing what to expect. But I stepped into a lively, joyful group of sixty or so members standing in the narthex, chatting over coffee before the service. I was hugged three times before I even took my seat on a folding chair in the very plain sanctuary hall. I realized that my feelings were what gay people feel so much of their lives, I’m sure: with my being one of a few “straight” people surrounded by those with other sexual identities.

There was so much love in that place! It was humbling and beautiful to feel that. And the service was terrific with heartfelt singing and extended “prayers of the people”. Most were what one would expect: “my sister is going through chemotherapy; my friend is facing an uncertain future with his health”, etc.

But then a young man spoke about how he was so happy to be back at Bluegrass as he had made a very difficult decision recently. His grandmother, whom he loves dearly, is a lifelong Baptist and is now too frail to attend her church alone. After anguishing about what he would face weekly, he decided that his love for his grandmother was so important that he would commit to taking her to church most every Sunday, giving up his time at Bluegrass. He knows when he is in that Baptist congregation that he is not welcome because of his homosexuality, with sermons often directed negatively towards what he is, by birth. He is surrounded by many people who shun and despise him but he tolerates this courageously, to support a person whom he loves.

He cried as he told us this, partly because of sadness at his decision but also because of the joy of being back at Bluegrass in a community that accepts him fully and embraces him for exactly who he is.

So even though, yes, I will be in a small minority at Bluegrass, I consider it my privilege to now consider Bluegrass UCC my Kentucky church home.

And I will hold that young man close in my heart as we here in Renfrew make our own decision about TSA being affirming, welcoming and open to all people. I pray that we can celebrate this turning point in our congregational life together as we take another step to live out our lives through love and acceptance, as Jesus taught us.



Training Effective Leaders

Our gifts for Mission & Service support theological training at seven schools across Canada and three education centres.

In the beautiful south end of Halifax, Nova Scotia, there is a small university whose commitment is to “serve Christ’s mission by shaping effective and faithful ordained and lay leaders and understanding among communities of faith.” The Atlantic School of Theology (AST) was formed in 1971 through the joint vision and forward thinking of its three founding parties—the United, Anglican, and Roman Catholic Churches of Canada. The school is located on the site of Pine Hill Divinity Hall, which had provided theological education since 1878. Thanks to its board of governors, faculty, and staff, and the support of the three founding parties, Atlantic School of Theology continues to train, support, and prepare leaders to face the unique challenges of ministry in the 21st century.

Kim Curlett is a candidate for ordination in the United Church and a Master of Divinity student. “AST was my first choice for theological education because of its commitment to ecumenism and interfaith dialogue,” she says. “To me, effective leadership in the church today means that we are not only able to educate and care for our local congregation, but that we are also able to engage with our neighbours outside the church walls with respect and a deep sense that we are all children of God. It is with this understanding that we are truly able to be Christ’s hands and hearts in the world.” Mission & Service makes theological education for students, clergy, and lay worship leaders possible. Thank you for your generous support.

If Mission & Service giving is already a regular part of your life, thank you so much! If you have not given, please join me in making Mission & Service giving a regular part of your life of faith. Loving our neighbour is at the heart of our Mission & Service.