

THE MESSENGER

Morningside-High Park Presbyterian Church

January 2014



REFLECTION

Arise! Shine! Your light has come
– Isaiah 60:1

As the New Year begins with this reading for Epiphany, I laugh as I read it, remembering again, just how happy I was to be awoken in the early hours of December 24th with the power going back on.

What a Christmas we have just had! Little did we know as we began our Advent journey, innocently lighting the candles on our wreath, just how much some of us were going to have learned about light in the darkness by the time Christmas arrived.

At home and at the church power was lost during the ice storm on Sunday morning, December 22nd. We were almost forty eight hours before it came back on. For some of you, I know it went on even longer. Out came the candles and warm sweaters, board games and cards took the place of our laptops and televisions, gas fireplaces were turned on, barbeques fired up and for the first day or so it was an adventure. Up on Bloor Street, the coffee shops did a brisk business as people charged their phones and strangers became friends. Then the temperature in the house dropped past comfortable and our neighbours began to seek refuge with

friends who had power. We worried about those we knew who were older or who had young kids. The news said it could be days, maybe even a week, and for some in this city it was.

What a Christmas!

As I think about all we have been through I am reminded that when Jesus and the prophets spoke about light in the darkness, they were not talking about turning on electric light bulbs with the power to illuminate a whole room. Lamps in those days were often just a single wick floating in some oil, the flames no bigger than the candles we are now so much more familiar with.

This was the light that Jesus talked about. Held high it is just enough to illuminate your next footstep or see into your child's face and know if they are happy or sad. This is the light in the darkness. It doesn't reveal or lay everything open to examination but it gives us what we need.

I am thinking about that as we begin the New Year. What is the Light that you you have been looking for? The simple grace you need to take your next step? To reach out to your neighbour? It is here!

So Arise! Shine! Your light has come!
Happy New Year, *Rev. Karen*

SOLAR UPDATE

Estimated income for October and November -- \$618.00 (October \$421.00 & November \$197.00)

Actual income for October and November --- \$696.50

During 2013 our loans have been reduced by \$10,000.00 -- \$5,000.00 was paid to West Toronto Presbytery and \$5,000.00 to the W.A.

ANNUAL REPORTS

'Tis the Season!

Calling all teams, committees and church groups! 2013 was an exciting year for us as a congregation. Please submit your group's 2013 report through the church office by January 31st.

Our annual meeting and congregational pot luck lunch will be March 23rd. As we wrap and celebrate 2013, this meeting will be an opportunity to share dreams, vision and plans for the coming year.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

On **Sunday January 12th** we look forward to welcoming new members in our morning worship: Paul Matheson, Elaine and John Durette, Marilynn Hall and Miriam Smit.

If joining the church is something you are considering please speak to Rev Karen , Blair Gerrie our clerk of Session or your elder. We will be receiving new members again in the spring.

LENDING LIBRARY

A Month with Max. Our library has a large collection of **Max Lucado** books for adults and children that we will be featuring on the lending library table throughout the month of January. Check them out! Really, check them out!

JOB BIBLE STUDY

10:00 a.m. beginning Thursday, January 9th

We hope you will consider joining us for this new study. Job is part of the wisdom tradition found in Scripture. It asks questions about innocent suffering and fear of God, and is both challenging and timeless in its relevancy.

Thursday January 9th we start with Job 1 and 2. Why don't you give it a read and then come join us. The only thing you need to bring is your interest, curiosity and conversation. You can bring your own Bible, or ask and we can help you find one that works well for you.

If you find that you cannot come every Thursday morning we understand and hope you will still join us when you can. We do hope that for the purposes of the study you will commit to keeping up with the readings in weeks you miss.

Our plan is that this study will take us until the spring to complete.

If you are not able to make days and would like an evening study please talk to Rev Karen or Megan. If there is enough interest and commitment we will be glad to plan for that.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

Reading Your Bible in a Year

The year has just begun. Anyone still wanting to pick up this project for the year and to find a group of folks to support you in your endeavors please chat with Pat Ramkhelawan or Annette Lloyd-Thomas.

There is a reading plan in our MHP 125 calendars and if you need a copy of it please ask. If you are looking for a Bible and have questions about different translations and versions please chat with Rev Karen. She will be happy to help you find a Bible that works for you.

MAKING AND BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER

**Winter Weekend Away
February 7th-9th 2014**

Register Now! ...or please by January 12

Take a weekend away from it all. Relax with God and with church neighbors away from the pace and pressures of our city lives. We will share conversation as we bake bread, and share communion as we break bread. We will play and pray on the fields and trails of the Crieff Hill Community property. We will cook together, eat well, and sit by the fire. Our singles and families, elders and children will be welcome and together we will all see how God feeds and sustains us in community.



Where?... will I sleep

We will sleep, eat, and meet together in the "House of Ruth" building with space for about 24 people in five bedrooms. When we know who would like to come we can talk together about the best way to divide into rooms to meet everyone's sleeping needs.

What?... will I eat

Food will be provided, and will be planned around any dietary needs of those coming. We will all share in communal tasks during the weekend like preparing and cleaning up after meals.

What?... will we do together

Last year we went for walks in the snow then ate yummy cookies by the fire. We told stories, read scripture, and prayed. We spent time together, and allowed time to be apart. We got to know each other a little more and a little differently. The Christian Education Team has some ideas in the works for this year's retreat, but will incorporate ideas from folks coming too.

How?... can I sign up!

Please email the church office, morningsidehighpark@bellnet.ca, right away to indicate your interest. Cost for the weekend is a modest \$50 for adults and \$25 for children and teens, but if the cost is deterring you from coming please speak with Reverend Karen and we can make arrangements. To capture a bit more information about dietary and accommodation needs, registration forms are available after church. Car pooling can be arranged to get to and from Crieff Hills. Talk to Lauren Matheson or Kim Oliver any time for more information.

BOOK CLUB

All are welcome. The group next meets on Thursday January 23rd at 7 pm at the home of Annette Lloyd-Thomas. Speak to Annette, Myrette or contact the church office if you would like to attend and need directions.

Copies of the January book club book, *The Orenda*, by Joseph Boyden are available from the lending library.

BURNS DINNER January 18th, 2014

Burns Dinner tickets are now on sale during the Fellowship Hour! Be sure to pick one up before they are gone! It promises to be a fantastic night of lively entertainment and a delicious, traditional menu. We hope to see you there! Speak to Patricia or Blair Gerrie for more information or to purchase a ticket.

STAINED GLASS SUNDAYS

The stained glass Sunday project is going to take a break and will be back after Easter when we will look at the last four of the windows in our sanctuary. Photo cards of all ten windows (photos taken by Marc Koecher) will be back on sale later in the spring.

HYMN FEST
A Light on the Hill,
A Light to the Nations

February 22nd, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

I came that you might have life and life abundant! (John 10: 10)

As we at MHP celebrate our 125th anniversary in Swansea, the good news that we proclaim is that the promises that God has made our ancestors, God is keeping in Christ Jesus and that the best reason for what we do is what he is doing.

At this hymn fest, we invite our friends and neighbours to join us singing the story of God at work in the world, and to remember our part in that story, as a people who are committed to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.

BURST FORTH
A National Presbyterian Women's
Gathering
May 16th-19th, 2014

Three days of worship, workshops and fun with women from around the world. Keynote speaker is Dr. Samantha Nutt, author of *Damened Nations: Greed, Guns and Aid*, copies of which are available in the lending library. Dr Nutt is an inspiring speaker who has attended the front lines of many of the world's crisis points- Iraq, Aghanistan, Somalia, the Congo, Sierra Leone and Darfur. She sees global conflict as a problem that can and must be solved.

Brochures and information for this event are available on the hallway table below the Solar information screen. This event is being held in Richmond Hill and accommodation is available or you can commute. Please speak to Rev Karen if you are interested in attending.

COMING IN WORSHIP...
Seek Ye First the Kingdom of
Heaven

Beginning January 12 we will be focussing on Matthew 3 – 7, spending much of our time reflecting on Jesus words in the Sermon on the Mount.

THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who helped out over Christmas, with readings and candle lightings, with song and music, with mitten tree donations and with the offers of shelter and food to those without power.

And, check out the nursery! Thank you to **John-Peter Smit** and **Hugh Dimock** for painting.

If you have any "Thank Yous" that you would like to submit for the next newsletter, just submit a name and a sentence about the work that individual did.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS
2014 at MHP

January 1 – New Year's Day
January 9 – Job Bible Study Begins
January 12 – Reception of New Members
January 18 – Burns Dinner
January 19 – Stewardship Drive Begins

February 7-9 – MHP Winter Weekend, an all ages congregational event at Crieff Hills
February 22 – Hymn Fest:
A Light on the Hill, A Light to the Nations

March 2 – End of Stewardship Drive,
Congregational Pot Luck Luncheon
March 2 – Congregation's turn to serve at
Evangel Hall

March 4 – Pancake Supper
March 5 – Ash Wednesday, Lent Begins
March 23 – Annual Meeting and Pot Luck
Lunch

April 12 – Joyce’s Chili Dinner
April 13 – Palm Sunday
April 17 – Maundy Thursday Serve at 7 p.m.
April 18 – Ecumenical Good Friday Serve at
St. Olaves, 10:30 a.m.
April 20 – Easter Sunday, Sunrise Service in
High Park at 7:30 a.m., Easter Worship
at MHP at 10:30 a.m.

May 11 – Mother’s Day
May 16-19 – Presbyterian National Women’s
Gathering
May 19 – Victoria Day
May 29 – Ascension

June 1 – Healing and Reconciliation Sunday
June 8 – Pentecost
June 15 – Trinity Sunday
June 15 – Father’s Day
June 22 – Tentative Sunday School Picnic
Date

July 7-12 – Canada Youth, a week long
gathering at Brock University

August 18-22 – Vacation Bible School

September 1 – Labour Day
September 7 or 14 – Community Lawn Bbq

October 5 – World Wide Communion Sunday
October 5 – Three Week Food Drive for
Evangel Hall Begins
October 12 – Thanksgiving Sunday
October 30 – Reformation Sunday

November 1 – All Saints Sunday
November 1-2 – MHP Homecoming Weekend
November 2 – MHP 125th Anniversary
November 9 – Remembrance Sunday
November 23 – Christ the King Sunday
November 30 – First Sunday of Advent
November 30 – Mitten Tree begins

December 21 – Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 21 – Blue Christmas Service
December 24 – Christmas Eve Service 7p.m.

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

The total for the Christmas Appeal was \$5265!
Thank you to everyone who donated! Your
generous support of the life and work of our
congregation is appreciated.

**Deadline for Submission for
February Newsletter:
January 26th**

**Wishing you a happy and healthy
2014!**