

E A S T E R 2 0 1 7

CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

Light in the City



Dear Friends, As the Easter Contact goes to print, there are real signs of spring in the air. Temperatures have risen and the days are growing longer.



Easter is the season of new birth, of life emerging from the tomb, of hope after the darkness and challenges of Lent. And yet one of the keys to the spiritual life is to live the days of darkness and challenge well. These days can take different forms, from illness to bereavement to the perplexity of why things turn out as they do. Sometimes the answers to life's biggest questions are not forthcoming, and it is at these times we rest in God's faithfulness of the past and look to the promise of His presence and His grace to face the future.

While Spring may have sprung and the cold of Winter a distant memory, the Ascension is facing the crisis of needing to replace Boiler #2 before the Winter returns and before it completely breaks down. The prospect of no heat is a troubling worry for the Corporation and me, who have the responsibility of keeping the Ascension open & functioning. We rest in the knowledge that God will supply all our needs and see us through, and so it is appropriate that in this Easter season in which we celebrate new life and hope that there will be an opportunity for you to respond to this impending crisis.

As we place our hope afresh in the Lord who defeated the power of death over us by bursting forth from the grave, may I take this opportunity, along with Fr. Vernon, to wish everyone a blessed Easter.

Love and Blessings, Nick +

Save the Date!

Screening In Faith May 7th following the 10:30 am service. Help keep our Church a safe place for our most vulnerable.

Mother's Day Tea May 14th following the 10:30 am service. More information to follow.

Father's Day Outdoor Service & BBQ June 18th Honour Dad & welcome Summer.

Muskoka Luncheon Cruise & Theatre Date & time in July to be confirmed, cost \$129.

Community Festival June 11th

Festival Service 10:30am
Opening Ceremony 12 noon
What are the ingredients to a perfect Community Festival?

It's one part bringing together as many smiling, happy families to share stories while meeting new people in our neighborhood. AND it's one part – all the incredible activities, like:

- ✓ TALENT DISPLAY
- ✓ KIDS FUN ZONE
- ✓ FACE PAINTING
- ✓ BAKE & BOOK SALE
- ✓ GIFT BASKET RAFFLES
- ✓ BISTRO CAFÉ
- ✓ AND MORE





Café 65

Smiles and laughter characterize the atmosphere at each Café 65. It is clear that those who attend and those who volunteer experience an enjoyable time together. In December 2016 Café 65 received an additional \$10,000 through a Stretch Grant from the Diocese, which is a strong indication of their support. Food donations from Revera and Delmanor are also much appreciated. By God's grace and hard work, Cafe 65 continues to be a hot spot where friendships are made and strengthened, and where visitors are invited to be Disciples of Christ and members of his Body here at the Ascension. When last did you attend Cafe 65? Did you bring a friend? Your prayers and support are much appreciated.



Food Bank Outreach

The Community Share Food Bank, had its beginning with a Reach Grant from the Diocese and has been a friend to all the new Syrian refugees that have relocated to the Don Mills area. Some 791 Syrian and Armenian refugees have settled in our neighbourhood. Most are overjoyed with the welcome and the opportunities that Canada has given them. It is now over a year since they arrived and their financial support has run out. They have come with very few possessions and they all have stories of the war back home and how it affected their lives. We can't imagine some of the difficulties that these new Canadians have gone through just to get to Canada but we can be instruments of God's peace, and be *Lights* helping these refugees find their way in our city by coming out on Food Bank Outreach Saturdays, (usually held the 2nd Saturday of the month), and be the caring presence of Christ's love.



Carol Hamilton – Administrative

Assistant and More. Carol is the Clergy's "right-hand man," and she helps to keep renters & parishioners singing from the same page. If you want to know what's happening, call Carol! Carol also shares her gifts and talents as Head of the Altar Guild, as a Sides Person, member of the ACW, and sits on the Board of Footprints and Better Living. Recently the hours of the Administrative Assistant have been reduced, but Carol continues to support the Ascension by volunteering time & ensuring the Ascension Office remains to function. Thank you, Carol. You are a trooper!!



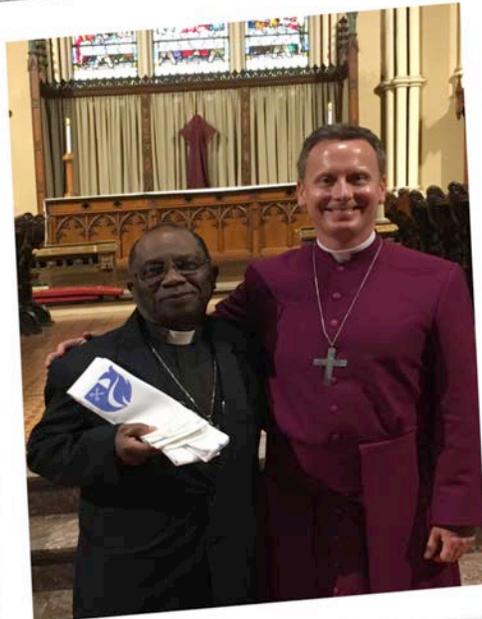
Una Cambridge

She is known as "Queen of the Ascension". For nearly 45 years Una has generously shared her gifts of time, talent and resources with her Ascension Family. She taught Sunday School, has been ACW President, is a Christian Companion, co-ordinates the Caring Cards Ministry, serves as a Sides Person, volunteers at Café 65, is a member of Parish Council and still finds the time to attend a Bible Study. Thank you for blessing us Una!



Thursday Morning Bible Study

Fellowship, Bible Study, and a strong cup of java keep this faithful group coming out each Thursday morning from 10 am to 12 pm. The scripture for each Sunday is read and discussed using Herbert O'Driscoll's "The Word Today" as their main commentary. Hymns are sung, prayers and petitions are made and shared. Why not come out to join in the study of God's Word? All will receive a warm welcome!



Fr. Vernon stands with Bishop Kevin Robertson after receiving his 25th Silver Jubilee Stole from the Archbishop Colin Johnson at St. James Cathedral.



Joyful Giving: An Opportunity

Joyful giving. These are two words that we don't normally put together. Joy we tend to associate with receiving. Beautiful weather, time with friends and family, and receiving good news. On the other hand, giving can sometimes evoke fear and anxiety.

The Apostle Paul encourages the churches in Corinth to think differently about giving: "The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

We recognize that everything we have comes to us from God, and we know that God gives not out of obligation but out of love. Our blessings are his joy. Giving through stewardship can be full of joy when we understand it is an opportunity to work with God and allow him to work through us. God has great plans for our church and us, and he wants us to partner with him as Christ's living body. In fact, it's not so much that God wants us to be part of his plan, but that we ARE the plan. God in Jesus Christ gives everything and intends for those who follow his way to give generously to others as he showed us to do.

This Easter Season, pray and ask God, "How can I help?" We come together as a group of committed Christians gathered at the Ascension ready to minister to the needs of our diverse community and make disciples of Christ, focusing on three areas of giving as ways to fulfill our congregation's mission as a Light in the City through time, talent and treasure

Sharing our time, talent and treasure create the foundation for how vital and how impactful our church will be in Don Mills.

Many of you will and have already made a generous donation to our Boiler #2 Campaign, and I thank you for it, but Joyful Giving is different. I am asking each member of the congregation to consider increasing their yearly giving by 3% to help with general maintenance and ministry obligations we have.

Soon you will receive a Joyful Giving Package that will include a Narrative Budget and an Intention Card of how you plan to share your gifts of time, talent and treasure. Please complete the Intention Card and return it to the church as soon as possible.

This Easter season please consider what gifts you can offer joyfully to the Ascension, and embrace the opportunity to partner with God! Thank you for your presence, as a gifted and beloved child of God, and for all you do for the work of the Gospel at the Ascension.

How to Invite Others to Church

Extend an invitation to a family or a friend

to experience the warmth that is Ascension try to choose a particular event such as the Community Festival that they would especially enjoy.

Look for opportunities to become "a light in the city" to those in need searching for something more in life. This could be a neighbour struggling with the loss of employment or feeling all alone in the face of a difficult challenge.

Make a point of introducing yourself to anyone at church you don't recognize. We were all new here once. Welcome someone new and make sure they leave knowing you look forward to seeing them next week

Participate in Ascension Fellowship Activities. Look for opportunities to invite a friend and encourage other members of your family to do so. There's nothing more welcoming than a pancake breakfast or spaghetti dinner

Pray that the Holy Spirit guides your thoughts and actions and works through you to reach out to others with the love of God.

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