

SEPTEMBER 4th, 2011

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The **Upper Room** booklets for **SEPT/ OCT** are now available at no charge. (They are on the wall near the piano.) Copies of the **JULY/AUGUST Observer** are in the same magazine holder as the *Upper Room* and are also free.
- The Centering Prayer sessions are on Wednesday at 1:30pm.
- **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY** - Do you have a few hours a month to give to Ellesmere? We are looking for volunteers to be a presence in our church on **Tuesdays, 10 am to 2 pm**. We have a loyal team in place, but a few more volunteers would make the rotating schedule much lighter! Help us keep our doors open to the community! Please speak to Joanne if you can assist.

September 4 — A Circle of Love

Amber was 16 years old when she discovered she was pregnant. Her ex-boyfriend was training at a military base hundreds of miles away. They had ended things badly, and she was reluctant to tell him she was pregnant. Her family was worried about the shame her pregnancy would cause in their village and kicked her out of the house. They gave her a bit of money and told her to move on.

Amber went to St. John's where she tried to get a job, but not many places were interested in hiring a 16-year-old pregnant girl with a grade-10 education. Nearly out of money and needing to see a doctor, Amber turned to Naomi House, part of Stella Burry Community Services.

There she found temporary emergency housing. Through Stella Burry, she gained access both to health professionals who gave her tips on how to have a healthy baby, and to job- and life-skills courses. Through Stella Burry Community Services, Amber got the support she needed to become a happier and more productive member of society.

Stella Burry Community Services has offered support to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador for the past 60 years. Its work is made possible through gifts from the Mission and Service Fund. Please give to M&S so that young women like Amber can get a hand up out of poverty and uncertainty.

Together, we carry out the work of our United Church. Make a difference! Join the partnership! Support the work of the Mission and Service Fund today.

Conversations About Religion: In the 21st Century: Dr. Elliot Wolfson. Presented by the **Iona Pacific Inter-religious Centre: Dr. Elliot Wolfson**, Abraham Lieberman Professor of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at the New York University is this year's VST **Somerville Scholar**. Dr. Wolfson will be presenting the following events:

Wednesday, Sept. 21st at 7 pm: Lecture: *The Path Beyond the Path: Mysticism and the Spiritual Quest for Universal Singularity*, at the Chapel of the Epiphany. Free public lecture.

Friday, Sept. 23rd from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm: *Half Day Workshop - Undoing Time: Exploring Time in the Kabbalistic and Hasidic Interpretation of Dreams*, at the Chapel of the Epiphany. Registration required for this event, please visit www.vst.edu for details.

Native Ministries Consortium Summer School 2011. VST celebrates another successful summer school for Native Ministries Consortium with 70 attendees, including the children and youth programs. We are grateful for the donors who contributed to the bursary funds which enabled so many of our students to attend. Without that help, they could not have participated. For 26 years, this summer school has brought together First Nations Christians, lay and ordained, rural and urban, youth and elders, in order to learn together and develop healthy, culturally integrated ministries.

Friends of VST Dessert Party. You are Invited! The annual **Dessert Party**, on **September 29th at 7 pm** in the Felicitas Maier Room (Rm 527), invites friends of VST to delicious goodies and cakes, coffee and tea.

If you're interested in joining the Friends for this event, please contact **Shannon** at **604-822-9427** or email her at **shannonl@vst.edu**.

Cost is \$12 (or \$5 to renew annual membership at the door) and the Rev. Dr. Gary Patterson will be our speaker. We'd love to see you there!

Horn of Africa Relief. The federal government has committed to provide an additional \$50 million in financial support to humanitarian organizations delivering assistance to people in East Africa who are suffering as a result of the worst drought in 60 years, and has committed to matching the charitable donations of Canadians who take action to support charities of their choice.

The United Church of Canada is providing humanitarian relief in the region through its partners, including ACT Alliance, the National Council of Churches in Kenya, and the Organization of African Instituted Churches. Earlier this week the United Church announced it was launching an Emergency Appeal for the Horn of Africa to respond to this humanitarian crisis. This announcement means that funds raised through this appeal between July 6, 2011 and September 16, 2011 will be matched by the federal government.

Members of the United Church and the general public are encouraged to contribute to the work of ACT and the United Church's partners on the ground in East Africa by making a donation today at www.united-church.ca.

For more information, please contact: Mary-Frances Denis, Media and Public Relations, The United Church of Canada, 416-231-7680 ext. 2016 (office), 1-800-268-3781 ext. 2016 (toll free), email: mdenis@united-church.ca.

Donations for Emergency Food Bags. First United would greatly appreciate donations for the community: canned fish, tuna, salmon, sardines, canned meats, 9-grain pasta (except lasagne), rice, pasta sauce, stovetop stuffing, instant mashed potatoes, canned fruit, canned vegetables, pork and beans, canned ravioli, dry noodle soups, cake mixes, cooking oil, canned milk, table condiments, mayonnaise, and just-add-water pancake mix. Please call Linda Ostrom (604) 290- 8417, lostrom@firstunited.ca.

Deaconess History Search: I am conducting a McGeachy Research Project to record and honour the lives of United Church deaconesses. Were you a deaconess? Is there a deaconess in your family tree? I am collecting names and stories, and looking for diaries, letters, pictures,

writings and other materials that might help us to learn about women who were deaconesses prior to 1980. Their contribution as pioneers in ministry is important. The McGeachy Senior Scholarship is a research program funded through the General Council of the United Church, and I was awarded one of these scholarships in 2010 in order to work on this project. If you'd like to learn a little bit more about this project, you can visit [the United Church website](#). Please be in touch if you have anything that you can share. Caryn Douglas, 204-487-2076
caryndouglas@shaw.ca

Spirit Life Worship Center. You are invited to worship on Friday September 16, 7:30 p.m.- 10:30 p.m. at the Bonsor Recreation Complex, 6550 Bonsor Ave.