

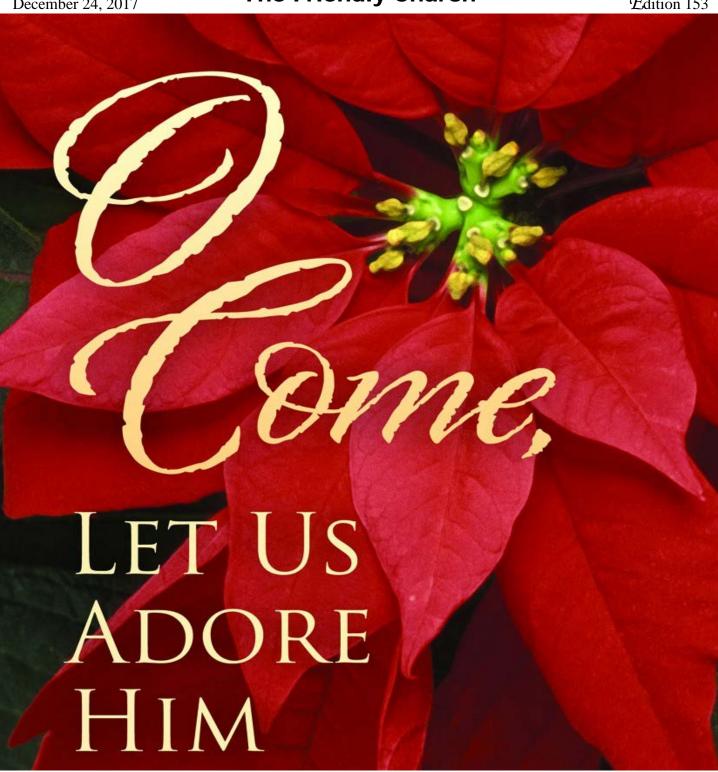
Asbury and West United Church

3180 Bathurst Street, Toronto, ON M6A 2A9 Office: 416-783-6503

December 24, 2017

"The Friendly Church"

Edition 153



Our Mission Statement: We are a diverse community of Christians, called by God, who seek to make a positive difference in the lives of those who live in the Bathurst and Lawrence Community and beyond.



Merry Christmas!

Long before there was any question about the political correctness of saying "Merry Christmas," the pastor of the church I attended as a youth told us why he preferred to wish everyone a "Happy Christmas." He'd point out that we don't say "Merry Easter" and would question whether this adjective for Christmas, dating back to the 17th century, was the best one for us to use. The first printed Christmas card (1843) wished recipients a "Merry Christmas" but at the end of A Visit From St. Nicholas in 'Twas the night before..., Clement Moore wishes his readers a "Happy Christmas." The history, then, is mixed. "Merry" seems rather light and even "Happy" might fail to bear the weight of this day's wishes. What kind of Christmas do we hope for our family and friends?

My prayer is that you will have a Joyful Christmas: a Christmas rooted in the inner serenity faith provides, strong enough to survive the sorrows life delivers to our doorstep and exuberant enough to celebrate life's happiest times. May the birthday of Christ touch you with deep joy...

I pray, too, that you will have a Peaceful Christmas: the peace the world so clearly is unable to give itself; the peace that broken hearts long for; the peace that is ours to share with one another in forgiveness and kindness. May the birthday of Christ sow seeds of peace in your heart...

Finally, I pray that you have a Hopeful Christmas. So much in the world around us encroaches on our capacity to hope: a spirit abroad that seems intent on draining the beauty and poetry from our lives and robs us of awe and reverence before the mystery of life, of love and of God. May the birthday of Christ renew hope in your heart...

I wish you a Joyful, Peaceful, Hopeful Christmas and should your Christmas be Merry and Happy – all the better!







Merry Christmas to all the wonderful families and people at Asbury and West Untied Church.

We wish you all good health, happiness, blessings, safe travels and a very Happy New 2018 Year!!

Felice Navidad from your Music Director..

Paolo Busato and family





Asbury's Adult and Youth Choirs





FROM THE EDITORS' DESK

May your Home be warm, your Holidays grand, and may your Heart be held gently in the Lord's hands.

Jocelyn & Sylvia

Members and Friends of Asbury And West Who Passed This Year

forever remembered, forever missed.



Betty Enta (March 19, 2017)
Longina Tutins (May 18, 2017)
Robert Scythes (June 12, 2017)
Myra Badley (August 7, 2017)
Mildred Louise Franklin (November 8, 2017)

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16



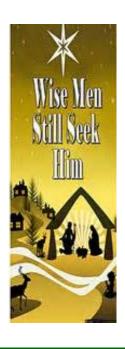
TAKING CARE OF YOUR POINSETTIA

With proper care, your poinsettia will last through the holiday season and right into late winter. Play close attention to the following tips:

- Place in a room where there is bright natural light but not where the sun will shine directly on the plant.
- Keep the plant away from locations where it will receive hot or cold draughts.
- Place the plant high enough to be out of reach of unmonitored children and pets.
- Set the plant in a water-proof container to protect your furniture.
- * Water the plant thoroughly when the soil surface is dry to the touch. Discard any excess water which remains in the saucer after 10 minutes.
- The bright colour will remain longer if temperatures do not exceed 22°C.



"Sharing the Gifts We Have Been Given"



Stewardship \mathcal{M} inistry

The members of our team have been working hard to manage the financial affairs of our congregation to the best of our ability. However, the results of our annual giving campaign were disappointing, as pledges for 2018, combining envelopes and PAR (pre-authorized remittance) were down by about \$9,000 below 2017. We need more of our new members to commit to regular giving. We have been bless to receive two generous bequests from deceased members, which will be used for investments and special projects such as an effective lawn sign. Our regular budget must be supported by the stewardship of congregation members, plus rental income and fundraising.

Many donors give a portion of their gifts to the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church of Canada. Our "Minute for Missions" tells of the wonderful work of this organization in Canada and throughout the world, wherever people are in need.

During the year, special envelopes are provide for specific donations such as white gift, memorial gifts, Christmas and Easter flowers. Along with your donations of non-perishable food items, your gifts to the benevolent fund allow us to purchase food vouchers for our neighbours in need.

We are most grateful for all of your gifts, which enable us to fulfil our mission, our call to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

Phoebe Cleverley, Chair



ARE YOU ON P.A.R.?

Have you thought about making your church donation by P.A.R. (Pre-Authorized Remittance)? Through PAR, automatic monthly withdrawals are made from your bank account. PAR is easy to set up and can be adjusted at any time should your circumstances change. If you are already on PAR, don't forget that you can increase your donation anytime. Simply speak to Cheryl Holliday, in confidence, about the process.

Thank you for your support!

LOONIE BIN = COPPER KETTLE



Please drop your change in the big Copper Kettle. Folding money gratefully accepted. Available every Sunday.

We have collected \$44.06 YTD.

Walk-up Sunday brought in \$251.65 YTD.

Thank you for your generous support!



We are also collecting Canadian Tire money to assist with future purchases. Please consider this form of donation to your church.



$P_{\text{ROPERTY}} M_{\text{INISTRY}}$

The committee has received estimate for installation of sprinkler/irrigation system to be done on the southern side of the church to the Condo. We have budgeted for it in our 2018 budget as the condo whom we have a shared agreement with requested this as it also enhances their building as well. This work will take place in the spring by one of their contractors who has given us a discount. We are not able to have the western side of the church done, (even though we have received an estimate for it) as there is no availability of funds. This project came about after the leak in the garage and excavation of the southern side of the church had to be done, resulting in putting new shrubs down. The work was paid for by the Condo which was \$40,000.00 so we were asked to maintain the sprinkler system.

Regular maintenance of the various equipment in the building have taken place.

There is good news in respect to installation of a frontal sign for the church. We have decided on a contractor and the preliminary work has begun. We hope, prayfully, by spring we should have our sign provided there isn't any problem from Heritage Department.

We continue to have a cordial relationship with our tenants, Forest Hill Montessori Day Care School and Immanuel Korean Church. The Upper Room continues to be used for short term rental which helps in our revenue.

> Yvonne Wright and Clayton Johnson, Co-chairs





MINISTRY AND PERSONNEL (M&P)

Everyone's done it. I'm sure we've all imagined ourselves to be places we could never go to or thought about meeting people we would never meet. The imagination can be a wonderful thing. Yes, I've gone all around the world and met the most interesting, wonderful people through my imagination.

Then again I am brought back to see how real it can be for me, at AWUC, our mission statement states it well. Our fellowship congregation reflects much of the world's people, I am truly blessed. I praise and thank God for the opportunity to recognise and being able to utilize the precious gifts God has given to me for His glory. Special thanks to my choir director Paolo along with the support of my choir sisters and brothers.

Through the course of the year and, oh, what a year it has been at AWUC, through worship, inspiring messages from our Rev. Carol and the various activities and events which allowed for love to grow among us and trust and faith in God, our Source to grow.

I thank each and everyone one of you for a smile, a kind word, a helping hand, a friendly phone call, a compliment, a flower, a friendly hug, a hand shake, a list of my favourite "simple" blessings. I have gained more than I could ever imagined by embracing our Lord, by acknowledging the precious promises found in the Word and hope that you have as well.

At this most Blessed Season I wish each and everyone of you and your loved ones too a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and a BLESSED NEW YEAR'S!

"JOY TO THE WORLD"!

Lola Pinnock, Chair



United Church Women

Our Annual Christmas Pot-Luck Lunch, hosted by Shirley Beckles and Ianthe Spencer, was held on Nov. 21st, and enjoyed by all.

We mourn the passing of Mildred Franklin, a faithful member of our UCW for many years. We said goodbye to another long-time member, Margaret Stark, who moved out of the city this Fall to be near her daughter.

Our numbers are small but we continue to financially support the Mission and Service Fund, The Massey Centre for Girls, The Fellowship of the Least Coin, and our Church. A special request was received from Flemington School for financial help with their Breakfast Program. We were pleased to assist with a one-time donation.

Dorothy Ostrom









I would love to share my enjoyment of the OBSERVER with you and your family. Do subscribe to and read our historic but also current, relevant, affordable United Church OBSERVER. Articles are well written and cover a great range of topics, some controversial, concerning faith, justice and ethical living.

If you would like to receive the OBSERVER, speak to me or call the church office. Also, if you have a change of address or wish to discontinue your subscription, let me know.

Phoebe Cleverly, OBSERVER representative



During our meeting of September 28th we watched the Alfred Hitchcock thriller "Rear Window".

Our Thanksgiving Pot Luck Lunch meeting consisted of the games Trivial Pursuit, Bluster and Bible search.

The Remembrance Day movie Wartime Farm showed the effort the farmers took to feed the Britons during WWII as they were cut off from imports by the German blockade.

We had a speaker from Amica of Thornhill who outlined the services provided at that particular seniors residence.

By the time you read this we would have had our Christmas lunch with music provided by George Heldt.

The entire year went very well. We are small in numbers but we have decide to carry on into the new year.

Shirley and I would like to wish the Members of the congregation a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, with the hope that you and your friends will join us in 2018.

Melvyn and Shirley Beckles, Group Contacts



Membership And Pastoral Care Ministry

Our continued goal is to invite adherents to become members of Asbury and West United Church. We continue to phone absentee members, with encouragement.

We send out cards to all members wishing them Christmas Blessings.

Two of our members left us this year for a better place. Mira Badley in August and Mildred Franklin in November. May they rest in Peace.

One person who removed their membership is Viola Warford. We will miss her and we wish her God's continued Blessings.

Care Link

Our at Home Members are: Cecil Anderson, Fredrica Cameron, Hollie Hepburn, Marina Mackin, Fred Sunahara, and Louise Cobon.

Members of the Membership and Pastoral Care Ministry are Rev. Carol McKinley, Melvyne Beckles, Shirley Beckles, Lucille Hunte, Yvonne Lampkin, Nancy Sisson, Janiss Johnson (Secretary), Phoebe Cleverley and Ianthe Spencer (Chair)

From all of us we wish you all a Blessed Christmas.



COUNCIL

One of my earliest memories of singing in Sunday School was the hymn Jesus Loves Me. How do I know? Because "the bible tells me so".

As a member of Asbury and West I have seen many great accomplishments in 2017 and I am thankful for the support and participation of Rev. Carol, the members of Council, members of each Ministry and the members of the congregation. Perhaps the biggest accomplishment has been our collective belief in the power of prayer.

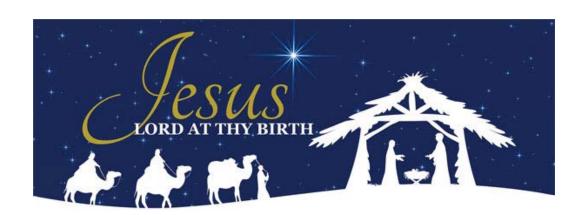
I ask that you continue to pray for our church, our members and the work we have yet to do. Like the 12 Day of Christmas, below you will find 12 simple short prayers. Prayer does work. How do I know? The bible tells me so.

- **1. FAITH** Father God, it is by Your grace we have been saved, and through our faith this is not from ourselves, but a gift from you not by our works. Ephesians 2:8-9
- 2. **HOPE** May the God of Hope fill you with joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in Hope. Romans 15:4
- **3. LOVE** Help us to love because You first loved us. 1 John 4:19
- **4. FORGIVENESS** Thank you for being faithful and just in forgiving us our sins and thus purifying us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9
- **5. MERCY** Let us be merciful, just as our Father is merciful. Luke 6:36

- **6. KINDNESS** Let us be kind and compassionate to one another, forgive each other, just as through Jesus, You forgave us. Ephesians 4:32
- 7. **GENEROSITY** Let us be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, and to give the glory and thanks to you Lord. 2 Corinthians 9:11
- **8. COMPASSION** Let us live in harmony with one another, be sympathetic and compassionate, love as brothers, and be humble. 1 Peter3:8
- **9. JOY** Let us be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Romans 12:12
- **10. SALVATION** Thank you for providing Jesus who us the way, the truth, the life and the only way to You. John 12:6
- **11. OBEDIENCE** Help us to mot merely listen to You Word, and so deceive ourselves. Help us to do what it says. James 1:22-25
- **12. LIFE** Thank you for coming that we may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:10

I wish you and all those you love and care about a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Jocelyn Shewalter-Patterson, Chair





On December 2 we hosted the annual Congregational Christmas Pot Luck Dinner. As a group we have hosted this dinner for more than a quarter century!

We started by picking up where the Session, and the Adult Social group left off. A huge turkey dinner was cooked by volunteers and served. Dinners to home members were assembled and delivered the same evening, again by volunteers.

Joybreak made gingerbread houses that made for delicious door prizes. The Craft Group were invited to sell their knitting and other items. A *Mitten and More* tree was decorated with many of their items, along with donations from the congregation, and in January donated to missions and inner city schools. Joybreak prepared and presented a program at each dinner. Toys and gifts for mothers were brought and donated to the North York Women's Shelter. Lots of great memories.

Times have changed and so have the dinners. We now enjoy a Pot Luck Dinner. The table is filled with a variety of foods from all cultures. We still donate toys - this year we donated to the Toy Mountain/Salvation Army Campaign. We still present programs. This year we made swaddling bands for baby Jesus which will be used for the Christmas Eve Nativity. We still have fun. We still have great fellowship.

The tradition goes on...see you next year!

From us to you, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and many blessings in the New Year.



Cheryl Holliday, Women's Ministry, Chair





















BOODLE **F**IGHT

At the Sunday School Christmas Party this year we experienced something different for lunch. Thanks to our Filpino friends we enjoyed a "Boodle Fight".

A Boodle Fight is a Philippine Military Academy tradition where cadets would gather around a long table full of food and rice which is spread over banana leaves and eaten with bare hands.

Our lunch table was spread out with meat, vegetables, spring rolls, rice and sauces placed on banana leaves, and we sat as a congregation to enjoy all the delicious food. Donations of desserts and other food completed the meal

What a wonderful experience and a delicious meal. Let's do it again!

Cheryl Holliday

















Fun Facts About Christmas

- * The Christmas wreath is symbolic of Jesus. The red berries symbolize his blood and the holly represents the crown of thorns.
- The word Christmas originates from the words Christ's Mass. In old English (first recorded in 1038) it was referred to as Cristesmæsse, which literally means 'Christian Mass'.
- * The poinsettia, a traditional Christmas flower, originally grew in Mexico, where it is also known as the 'Flower of the Holy Night'. Joel Poinsett first brought it to America in 1829.
- * The popular Christmas song "Jingle Bells" was actually written for Thanksgiving. The song was composed in 1857 by James Pierpont, and was originally called "One Horse Open Sleigh".
- * There are 364 gifts mentioned in "The Twelve Days of Christmas".
- * Artificial Christmas trees have outsold real ones since 1991.
- * Christmas lights were invented in 1882 by Edward Johnson.
- ☼ J.S. Bach inscribed most of his musical scores with the note 'In dem Namen Jesus', or in English 'In the name of Jesus'.
- Roast turkey did not appear consistently on royal Christmas Day menus until 1851 when it replaced roast swan. The medieval dish of boar's head remained popular with Royals for much longer.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY

Sunday School

The Sunday School has been sponsoring a foster child through World Vision for over 30 years. Money for sponsorship is raised every year through the Rev. Douglas McKenzie Memorial Walk. Our role is to keep in touch with our sister or brother through card and letter writing. In return we receive progress reports, a photograph, hand drawn pictures, translated letters and information on the programs that are benefiting our foster child and the community.

Noemy Gissel Mendez C has been our foster sister for about 5 years. She is now 9 years old and is in the 4th grade. She and her family live in Perla del Ulua, Honduras. Because of our support, Noemy is able to attend school and church, receive medical attention, benefit from community projects, and learn life skills.

Perla del Ulua is a densely populated and marginalized community of migrant families gathered on a piece of bare land. It consists of neighborhoods along dry rivers that are flooded during the rainy season. The majority of the community works in "maquilas", or clothing workshops. Because there are no formal day care services and very few places where mothers can leave their children, many single mothers have no choice but to leave their children home alone while they work. Children are extremely vulnerable to drugs and gangs that occupy most of the community's territory.



World Vision is helping the community with the issue of drugs and gangs. School children are being taught ways to prevent violence and how to respond appropriately. Recently the village organized a soccer tournament to promote a culture of peace. This tournament motivated the youth to build healthy and respectful relationships with one another.

And if you're wondering what Noemy does for Christmas - she gathers with her family, enjoys a nice dinner which includes tamales, she plays with her family and friends, and prays for all the people she loves.

Thank you helping to make Noemy's childhood happy, healthy and safe.

We wish you all a blessed Christmas.

Cheryl Holliday, Chair



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GAMES PLUS MORE

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The Birth of Jesus

Find the words underlined below.

In the City of Bethlehem with the star over the manger with great joy they saw the child with Mary and Joseph. They saw the child Jesus and three Kings worshiped him, then they offered gifts of Gold, Francense and Myrrh.

> Words from Matthew 1: 18-24 Submitted by a member of the congregation

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Jokes What do you call a Christmas duck?

A Christmas quacker!

What do snowmen do on Christmas? Play with snow angels.

How do you know when Santa's in the room?

You can sense his presents.

Why did the elf push his bed into the fireplace?

Because he wants to sleep like a log.

What does Santa clean his sleigh with? Comet.

Why is it always cold at Christmas?

Because it's in Decembrrrrr. What do sheep say to each other at

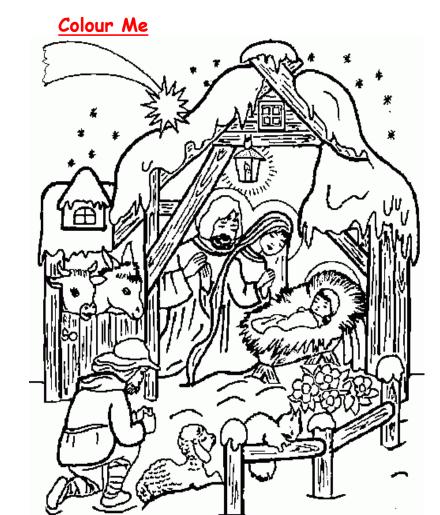
Christmas?

Merry Christ to ewe.

What happened to the thief who stole a Christmas calendar?

He got 2 months.

Who delivers Christmas presents to cats? Santa Claws.



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Christmas is a special time To reflect on Jesus Christ, The wonder of His lowly birth Brings meaning to our lives

There really is no other reason, We celebrate this day, The birth of God's precious son And the life He willingly gave

But so much seems to distract us
In the busyness of our lives,
We lose our focus in all the happenings,
Not knowing we leave out Christ

We lose sight of the true meaning As we endlessly rush about, Trying to find that perfect gift, Seems to cloud our Saviour out

We need to stop and reflect awhile, Remembering our precious Lord, His birth, His life and sacrifice And all that He stands for

For though the world may celebrate, It seems, though, for other reasons, Let's keep in mind that Jesus Christ Is the true meaning of the season.

by M.S.Lowndes

JOHN MCDERMOTT CONCERT

It all began with a phone call last January. Because John McDermott was on tour for three months, it was a long time before we heard back. A meeting with Council was held to see if there was interest, and from that meeting came a small committee to help this project move forward. John got back to us, gave us a date, and as they say, the rest is history.

John toured Australia and New Zealand in 1994 and topped the charts with Danny Boy. In 1995, Bill Ballard arranged a show with 'The Seekers'. He played his first U.S. concert at Boston's Ritz Carleton Hotel in 1995 where a member of the audience went back stage to pay his respects. It was Senator Ted Kennedy and the American icon invited John to perform at the Democratic National Convention. They became friends and John, at Ted's request, frequently visited the Kennedy Compound at Cape Cod. When the Massachusetts senator died in August 2009, John was invited to sing at the memorial service.

And now, Asbury and West United Church has asked this icon to sing for us on November 18. He did! And what an afternoon it was! He mixed with the people, had his picture taken with many of our guests and members. He was fun, he was personable, and it was a very exciting time. People had a wonderful time mingling with him, asking for his autograph and getting to know him. There were about 140 in the audience that day. Every one left with a smile on their face and an extra step in their walk. People have been talking about that day ever since! And is that not how we measure success!

Rick McKinley Chair, John McDermott Committee















Calendar of Events



January

Thurs Jan 1 Happy New Year!!! Sat Jan 6 **Epiphany Sunday** Baptism of Jesus Sun Jan 7

February

Shrove Tuesday Tues Feb 12 Wed Feb 14 Ash Wednesday Wed Feb 14 - Lent Starts Wed Feb 14 Valentines Day Mon Feb 19 Family Day

March

Sun March 11 Daylight Savings Time, put clocks ahead 1hour

Sat March 17 St. Patrick's Day

Sun March 18 - Deadline for Easter Edition of Flock Talk

Sun March 25 Palm Sunday

Maundry Thursday Thurs March 29 -

Good Friday Fri March 30

April

Easter Sunday....HALLELUJAH! Sun April 1

Sun April 1 Flock Talk available

Mon April 2 Easter Monday

May

Sun May 10 **Ascension Sunday** Sun May 13 Mother's Day Sun May 20 - Pentecost Sunday Mon May 21 Victoria Day

Regularly Scheduled Events - ALL ARE WELCOME

- Caring for the Temple (Beginner Yoga) Tuesdays at 7:00pm.
- Caring for the Temple (Chair Yoga for Seniors) Wednesdays at 12:30pm, bring your lunch for noon.
- Choir Practice Thursdays at 7:30pm. & Sunday morning at 9:30am.
- Conversations (Bible Study) Wednesdays at 11:00am.
- Joybreak (Women) every 4th Monday at 7:30pm except Feb, July & Aug.
- UCW 3rd Tuesday at noon, except Dec., July & Aug. Bring your lunch.
- Worship Service & Children's Church School on Sundays at 10:30am, followed by refreshments after the service.
- Young at Heart (Seniors) 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month at 11:00am. Bring your lunch.

\mathcal{M} INISTRY \mathcal{G} ROUPS and COMMITTEES

COMMUNICATIONS

Chair: Vacancy

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Chair: Cheryl Hollidav Council Rep: Kim Davidson

HOSPITALITY

Chair: Lou Rhoden

MEMBERSHIP AND PASTORAL CARE

Chair: Ianthe Spencer

MINISTRY & PERSONNEL (M&P)

Chair: Lola Pinnock

PROPERTY

Co-Chairs: Yvonne Wright & Clayton Johnson

STEWARDSHIP

Chair: Phoebe Cleverley

WORSHIP, SACRAMENT AND MUSIC

Chair: Sylvia Shewalter-Nielsen

WOMEN'S MINISTRY **Chair:** Cheryl Holliday

MEMORIAL Committee Cheryl Holliday, David Tuck

PRESBYTERY REPRESENTATIVE

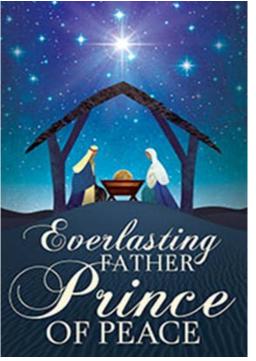
Vacancy

CONGREGATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Vacancy

Council Chair:

Jocelyn Shewalter-Patterson



Asbury and West United Church

Contact us at ...

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Paolo Busato busatopaolo@gmail.com Music Director

Cate Billinger secretary@asburyandwest.org Office Administrator

Alvaro Perez custodian@asburyandwest.org Church Custodian

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Sylvia Shewalter-Nielsen (905-770-7457) Flock Talk Editors

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NEXT DEADLINE – March 18, 2018 Next Edition – Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018

Material accepted ANYTIME (the earlier the better). Please place all materials in the "Flock Talk" folder on the counter in the workroom or email the editors. Articles are subject to editing for length and clarity.

Have you taken a few minutes in the past week to pray for members of our congregation who are in poor health, or who are unable to get out? Take a minute to phone one or two, or call to make some personal visits, or send out a couple of cards just to let them know we care about them. Please let the church office know if we have forgotten any one.



HOME MEMBERS

Cecil Anderson Fredrica Cameron Louise Cobon

Hollie Hepburn Evelyn Lyons Marina Mackin

Helen Smith Fred Sunahara



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