



## Mt. Forest United Church Messenger March 2022

### Rev. Sheryl's Reflection: "If We Believe in Peace..."

Many thanks to Nancy Harper for leading worship Feb. 27 while I was on vacation. After almost two years of the pandemic, it was wonderful to get on a plane and head to Alberta to hang out with family – my brother, sister-in-law, niece, my son Graham and his fiancée Trina. Life almost felt normal, and there was much to celebrate!

This week, however, world events cannot be avoided. An unjust tragedy is unfolding in Ukraine. It must be acknowledged. A theme emerged for our first service in Lent, maybe for all of it: "If We Believe in Peace..." If we believe in peace, what must we do? Those of us who are engaging in the Lenten study of a book called *Lesser Evils* have been learning about "good intentions." Are good intentions enough? Can good intentions actually be harmful? If our existence is governed by a series of choices of 'lesser evils' can they collectively form a greater evil?

This week, we encounter the Luke version of Jesus fasting in the wilderness for 40 days. The tempter mocks Jesus and offers him power and glory, yet even in his weakened state, Jesus resists. Such courage boggles the mind. How would any of us fare when tested in this way?

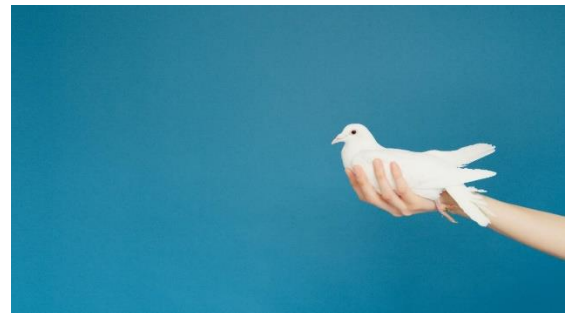
As food for the journey as we accompany Jesus to the cross over the next six weeks, we will share in Communion together.

To prepare, read Luke 4:1-13 and ponder the following:

1. What do you think it would be like to fast for 40 days and nights?

2. "The wilderness" in Biblical accounts is often portrayed negatively. What is your concept of wilderness?

Image: Artem Podrez, [www.pexels.com](http://www.pexels.com).



## A Note from Verna Batenchuk

Verna Batenchuk sometimes calls me, just to check in. Verna is well into her nineties and lives alone, but her sense of humour is infectious and so welcome. “I can’t get into trouble much,” she said in our last conversation, “I can’t get out!” What Verna wanted to make sure that everyone in our community of faith knows about, however, is how much the efforts of the pastoral-care team at Mount Forest United mean to her. “Pastoral care deserves a little pat on the back,” she said. “I’m so thankful. I’m terribly spoiled. To be so faithful at a time like this, I think it’s just wonderful.”

Wise words from a wise woman.

~ Rev. Sheryl

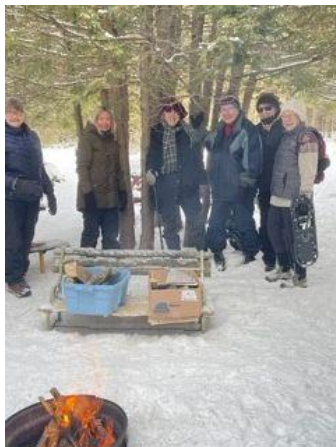
## Membership Class

Are you interested in becoming an official member of Mount Forest or Woodland churches? If you are new to the congregation or new to the United Church, the membership class is an excellent way to get an overview of the history and theology of the United Church of Canada, as well as a sense of Mount Forest and Woodland churches – their values, dreams and goals. Membership classes in the past have also served to create authentic bonds between the members of the class. Even if you’re already a member or adherent or have been part of the United Church of Canada your entire life, this could be an opportunity to fuel the fire of your faith.

The class will be offered in one day, Saturday, April 2 from 9 to 3. For more information or to register, contact Rev. Sheryl at [rev\[at\]wightman.ca](mailto:rev[at]wightman.ca) or 519-323-1910, ext. 2

## Forest Church in Winter!

Forest Church was held on February 26th on a beautiful, cold winter day. Our theme was “Winter is Awesome”. Seventeen people attended. We all enjoyed snowshoeing on the trails and visiting around a campfire.



# The Green Team

## Green Thoughts by Rhoda Seibert

After saying I wasn't going to chair anything anymore, lo and behold, I volunteered to start a Green Team at our church. I felt strongly that it was something our church should do. I don't really feel qualified to be the leader because I have a lot to learn. But in the last few years, I have read a lot of articles and books and viewed insightful videos. I am trying to learn how I can play a role in saving our planet.

The first thing I studied was my carbon footprint. My carbon footprint is the amount of greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, etc.) that I produce in my daily life. Too many greenhouse gases are causing the earth to warm at an unnatural rate. The top causes of global warming come from power plants, transportation, farming, deforestation, fertilizers, oil drilling, gas drilling, and melting permafrost (releases methane).

Interestingly, I am currently reading a book where an environmental attorney, ecologist, and climate advocate, Gus Speth, says, "I used to think that the top global environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse, and climate change. But I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed, and apathy. To deal with that, we need a spiritual and cultural transformation."

I also read lately, that there are 5 R's, not 3. Reduce, reuse, recycle, rot, and refuse. Refuse means don't buy overly packaged products, plastic water bottles, other single plastics, and things that come from far away. I was grocery shopping and noticed some broad beans, which you normally can't buy. Then I looked at the country of origin. Morocco! So I refused. I noticed the relish I was buying was from India! Refused! Now I buy locally made relish. And there's a checkout woman who just loves to put everything I buy in a bag. Even bananas. I refuse. I guess I should have a little talk with her. And I even asked Klaus not to give me red roses for Valentine's Day as they most likely come from South America.

There are lots of ways you too can make a difference, that's what I've been trying to do.

Here are some reminders:

Stop buying your water in plastic. *I try to bring a water bottle everywhere I go.*

Fly less. *Not so hard during covid!*

Walk or bike to your short destinations. *I have trouble with this one.*

Turn off lights and unplug. *I'm good with the lights but not so good with unplugging.*

Eat seasonally, locally grown food, and less meat. *I'm trying.*

Use cold water for laundry and line dry. *I hang my clothes indoors. I'm afraid that birds will poop on them outdoors.*

Buy the most efficient car or share. *Donna will tell you the joys of her Tesla. I love my orange Kia. My goal is to only have one car but I haven't convinced my better half yet!*

Keep the thermostat down and use fans or open windows in summer instead of air conditioning. *Less air conditioning is a hard one for us with Klaus' COPD.*

Don't make hard copies. If you need to, make double-sided copies. *I read our church annual report online the last couple of years.*

Shop at the Thrift Store. *Great prices.*

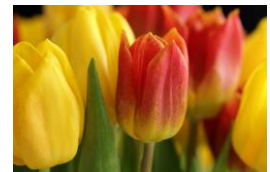
Plant trees. *Daphne is doing a great job of planting trees in Mount Forest. Talk to her about how you can help. 519-323-2505.*

### **Join the Green Team!**

*From Facebook: Imagine if trees gave off Wifi signals. We'd be planting so many trees we would probably save the planet.*

## **Easter Flowers!**

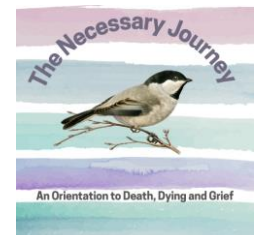
For the past two Easters, we have not been able to worship in our sanctuaries. Presuming that all will be well to do so this year, let's make it beautiful! If you would like to contribute towards the purchase of live flowers for Easter decoration, please place an envelope in the offering at worship labelled "Easter flowers" or contact Annette in the office.



## **The Necessary Journey**

The Necessary Journey: An Orientation to Death, Dying and Grief events continue!

Many thanks to Julie Martin-Jansen and Peggy Pritchard of Hospice Wellington for leading a workshop on advance-care planning, palliative care and hospice via Zoom on Feb. 15. If you are interested in accessing the slides used in that event, click on the red link below.



[Click here for Advance-care Slides](#)

Many thanks also to Cynthia Croker of Motus O dance theatre, who led a wildly successful workshop on Navigating Grief through Movement on Feb. 27. There was so much interest that a longer series may take place sometime in the future. Stay tuned!



### **A Conversation about Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID)**

**March 8<sup>th</sup>, 7-9pm**

**Mount Forest United Church, Fellowship Hall**

This panel discussion will provide attendees with a look inside the various aspects of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) from those with firsthand experience. Attendees will hear from several rural Wellington panelists on aspects including: living with a terminal illness, who is able to access this regulated option, what the process is like requesting this option, and the legislation regarding MAID.

The panel discussion will be moderated by Elsa Mann.

**Register for this free event:**

1. Eventbrite. (Search MAID Mount Forest)
2. Scan the QR code
3. Call 519-313-7000
4. Space is limited



The Necessary Journey draws on the expertise of a wide variety of community organizations and individuals, including the Mount Forest United Church, England Funeral Home; Hospice Wellington; Motus O dance theatre; consultant Elsa Mann, grief educator RoseAnne Desmarais and artist Andrea Bird. Events are free. Organizers wish to thank and acknowledge the United Church's Embracing the Spirit Fund which allowed these events to be accessible to everyone.



[To register or for more information - click here.](#)

## **New Leadership Team!**

Following the new governance model adopted at the 2021 annual meetings of both congregations, the leadership team for the Mount Forest-Woodland pastoral charge has been established. The team will meet for the first time on March 15, so please hold the work of this body in your prayers. An introduction of members and blessing for the leadership team will occur in worship in coming weeks.

**2022 Leadership Team:**

**Chair**

**Ron Harper**

**Past Chair**

**Rick Sinnamon**

**Mount Forest Trustee**

**Laurie Aitken**

**Woodland Trustee**

**Marg Mitchell**

**Member at Large – Mount Forest (1 year)** **Stacey Harper/Michelle Matheson**

Member at Large – Mount Forest  
Member at Large – Woodland  
One Member from Finance Committee  
Regional Representative  
Secretary  
Minister

Joyce Sims  
Gerry Wilkinson  
Al Leach  
Norm Eygenraam  
Patty Sinnamon  
Sheryl Spencer

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## Statement for Peace in Ukraine

The Moderator of the United Church of Canada, the Right Rev. Richard Bott, has offered a statement for peace in Ukraine. The statement includes a prayer, a sample letter to be written to Ukrainian neighbours and how to donate to the Conflict in Ukraine appeal. The statement may be accessed here: <https://united-church.ca/news/statement-peace-ukraine>

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## Zoom Prayer

Zoom prayer, for Lent we're meeting from 10:00 to 11:30 in order to study the book Lesser Evils: Daily Reflections on Seeking Wisdom. This is a lively time of worship, prayer, and connection led by Rev. Sheryl and other leaders within the group. This is a come-when-you-can gathering! If you would like to be put on the e-mail list to receive the weekly Zoom link, please contact Janice Benson at [ebenson\[at\]wightman.ca](mailto:ebenson[at]wightman.ca)



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## Power in Prayer

If you'd like the Pastoral Care Team to pray for you or someone you know, or if you know of any hospitalizations, sickness, or special occasions, please contact one of the following members of the team:

Betty Seminowicz at 519-923-5416

Email: [betvansemi\[at\]hotmail.com](mailto:betvansemi[at]hotmail.com)

or

Daphne Rappard at 519-323-2505

Email: [drappard\[at\]wightman.ca](mailto:drappard[at]wightman.ca)



All requests are shared only with the Pastoral Care Team and are kept confidential.

Pexels photo - Tara Winstead

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## Coming Up in Worship

March 6 – Lent 1 – “If We Believe in Peace...” Celebration of Holy Communion  
March 13 – Lent 2 – PIE Day! How do we create brave space where diversity is truly welcomed? From Affirm United: “PIE = Public. Intentional. Explicit. These

are the standards we hold ourselves and our welcome to when we become affirming, welcoming, or inclusive communities. March 14 is a chance to serve some pie and roll out the PIE by celebrating the full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ and Two Spirit people in faith communities and beyond across Canada.”

March 20 – Lent 3

March 27 – Lent 4

April 3 – Lent 5

April 10 – Palm Sunday

April 14 – Maundy Thursday – An intimate service celebrating Jesus’ last supper, with hand-washing and quiet, contemplative Communion, 7 p.m. (MFUC)

April 15 – Good Friday

April 17 – Easter!

## Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council

Check out what is happening at Western Ontario Waterways, click on the link below.

[Click here to visit WOW website](#)

## Messenger Deadline

The Messenger is now back to a monthly schedule, coming out on or around the first Monday of the month. In order to make sure your submission gets included please email Juliann, at [united@wightman.ca](mailto:united@wightman.ca) **before noon on March 28, 2022.**

[Contact Us](#)

[Visit our website](#)

[Give now through CanadaHelps.org](#)

