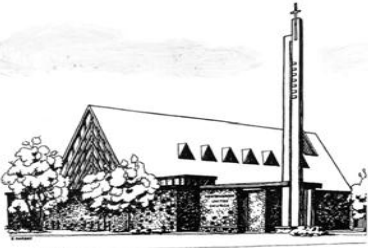


# REFLECTIONS

Reflections from Rev. Allan Baker



REFLECTING THE PAST  
PRESENT & FUTURE AT  
NEWTONBROOK  
UNITED CHURCH

## FIND US:

53 Cummer Avenue  
Rev. Allan Baker  
Toronto, Ontario M2M 2E5  
Phone: 416-222-5417  
www.newtonbrookunitedchurch.ca

## CLERGY:

Rev. Allan Baker

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## IN THIS ISSUE

- P.1 Reflections
- P.2 Peace Pieces  
Limerick Corner  
Closing the Cottage  
Taize Services
- P.3 Browsing  
Membership Lists
- P.4 Mosaic Interfaith  
Vision 2020 Report
- P.5 Green Team  
Bible Quiz
- P.6 Bulletin Bite  
Welcome Back  
Milestones
- P.7 Picnic Photos
- P.8 Benefit Concert

**Mission construction:** Is it true that summer is coming to an end already? To me, it seems that someone has tampered with the mechanism in the time machine and they have managed to speed things up. Can the beauty of springtime have happened so long ago? Can I remember what happened in the month of May?

It was in May this year that I heard the Very Rev. Peter Short saying that, "God has matched you with this hour in the church." At the end of August, that speech in Orillia to the Annual Meeting of Toronto Conference seems to have happened so long ago. Maybe that's the way it is with wisdom? Is there a possibility that wise words about our mission quickly remind us of an eternal truth? Yes, God has called us to be God's people in this time and this place, using the gifts that God has shared with us to do ministry.

We tell the world that:

*Newtonbrook Church, as a vibrant Christian community, will help people nurture their faith and deepen their relationship with God in order to become faithful disciples of Christ and carry out Christ's mission in the world.*

Peter Short told us in Orillia that God made us for this time and place; that we construct our mission out of the resources that we have right now. Newtonbrook's future will be built on the ministry that we undertake in the present time.

"**Faith Under Construction**" was the title of a challenging article in the July / August edition of The United Church Observer. Murray Malcolm traced the development of the theological thought during the time that he has participated in the United Church. He wondered why UCC clergy have been so timid in expressing new theological ideas. The author, a long-time member of the United Church, quoted Bishop John Spong when he wrote that either the Christian church must change, or it will die. He is sure that construction of new theologies must take place for we, "can't carry on like this." As a lay person, Malcolm suggests that a radical reinterpretation of Scripture is long overdue, and "we have been waiting a long time for the authoritative pronouncement from our leaders." If you haven't already, I recommend that you read Mr. Malcolm's construction of an argument for preaching new theological concepts, rather than the status quo.

**More construction:** Part of the mission of the Newtonbrook United Church congregation has been to provide safe, affordable housing. Most of us are aware that having a place to call home is the key that opens the doorway to a more abundant life. Here at Newtonbrook United Church you have seen this happen at Lester B. Pearson Place. Your continued financial support for NUC-TUCT is beneficial to all who live there. Supporting the NUC-TUCT fundraising party in the fall is a part of our mission as a congregation. We are still constructing new life at Lester B. Pearson Place.

Habitat for Humanity is another Christian based organization that aims to provide affordable housing. This September I have been invited to lead a devotional time for their "911 Build". The participants in that "build" are EMS workers, firefighters and police officers. I will also be participating in the Toronto Habitat "Faith Leaders Build" on October 27<sup>th</sup>. I am collecting financial pledges and I have a sign-up sheet available in the office that Taylor and I share. Your contributions to Lester B. Pearson Place, or to Habitat, will assist in making affordable housing viable for our neighbours.

As we construct our journey in the coming months, may God continue to bless all of us.

## PEACE PIECES

The US has approximately 700 military bases around the world with plenty of food whether surrounding people do or do not. They are sources of extensive contamination, prostitution flourishes and unwanted pregnancies are serious problems. Overall, the presence of these ubiquitous bases are creating abroad more enemies than friends.

*Eldon Comfort*

### LIMERICK CORNER

Thirty years is sure a good long time  
Since their wedding bells did chime.  
And we know 'twas Shari  
And not the good fairy  
That made Allan's life sublime.

We know there is nothing fictitious  
'Bout seniors being judicious  
We don't expect reverence,  
Just occasional deference  
And tolerance when we're capricious.

*Eldon Comfort*

### CLOSING UP THE COTTAGE?

When clearing the shelves why not consider donating tinned goods and unopened packages to Newtonbrook's food cupboard? Those items will be put to good use, and you won't have to rearrange cupboards at home ... a win-win situation. It sure saved me time and energy. In addition, Carol Crump can use grocery bags to pack food for those who come to the door.

*Andrea Journeaux*

## Taize Worship Services



The Taizé Worship Service at Newtonbrook United Church is a different style of worship developed by an international, ecumenical community in Taizé, France. The gentle, repetitive and lyrical prayers which form the basis of the service encourage peaceful meditation which many find very refreshing and inspiring. This form of prayer treasures our differences and shows us how our faith can bring us together.

It was found that people arriving in Taizé community spoke so many different languages that prayers were made simple, short and put to music. They were repeated many times over allowing all those present to be in harmony with each other.

The atmosphere at Newtonbrook's Taizé Service is best described as tranquil. Lights are turned down low and candles glow softly at the base of the cross, having been lit from the light of the Christ candle that stands nearby.

You are invited to join us for this meaningful and time of quiet reflection within our community. The services are held approximately every other month at various seasons in the church year.

### Upcoming Taizé Service dates:

- Thursday, October 6 - Thanksgiving
- Thursday, December 8 - Advent
- Thursday, January 19 - Epiphany/Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- Thursday, April 5 - Maundy Thursday (with communion)
- Thursday, May 17 - Ascension Day

**BROWSING.....**
**Water for Elephants**  
 by Sara Gruen

When you enter the world of “Water for Elephants” you become immersed in a whole new environment.

You enter “The Big Top”, a weird and wonderful culture in the Depression Era with its own rules, regulations, vocabulary, patterns and principles.

You experience a broad spectrum of emotions including tension, fear, disgust, empathy, joy and happiness.

You are in Jacob’s world. Suddenly you are alone in the world, a young student orphaned by a fatal car crash. You hitch a ride on a train and begin your adventure in an entirely different environment.

Author, Sara Gruen researched for four and a half months, and three research trips to discover some of the vast knowledge of the circus. She studied many different sources because the circus has a long history.

Sara Gruen has intertwined some of the information with a group of characters we get to know and try to understand. We meet the roustabouts (workers), the performers, the attractions, the crew (food, property, the owners and manager and the vast world of circus animals.)

Jacob Jankowski is an “almost vet” and he quickly fills the important position of veterinarian for the circus. He meets Walter, the dwarf and befriends Camel, an elderly man who needs support and care. He discovers that this is a dangerous, unpredictable “vagabond” life. We hear his story through the memories

and recollections of the elderly Jacob who resides in an assisted living environment.

The plot is scary, driven and very intricate. The dialogue is very riveting. This novel has something for everyone: intrigue, new data and information, a glimpse into the rough tough world of the circus and a chance “to see” the motives of the main characters and of course a complex, enthralling love story! We follow Jacob as he “grows up” very quickly after discovering that he is penniless and on his own.

Jacob is a devoted, caring veterinarian. Rosie, the elephant is only one of his many charges. The menagerie includes the screeching chimps, the roaring cats and the yelping zebras.

Sara Gruen’s months of research have produced a unique story that will appeal to a wide group of readers.

*Barbara Evans*

<b>MEMBERSHIP LISTS</b>
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On October 30, 2011 there will be an opportunity to vote on the issue concerning the amalgamation of Newtonbrook United Church and Northminster United Church. The only people that will be eligible to vote will be those people who are members at either Newtonbrook or Northminster. There will be a list of those who have membership at Newtonbrook available in the church office.

If you are an adherent or not a member and wish to become a member please inform Carol Crump or Allan Baker before October 21 in order to have your membership request approved by the Co-Ordinating Committee before the vote on October 30.

*The NUC-NUC Amalgamation Committee*

## Mosaic Interfaith will present ~

### HOW TO BE A PERFECT STRANGER – FUNERAL CUSTOMS

Sunday, September 18 from 2:30-5:00 pm  
at Gursikh Sabha Canada  
Scarborough Gurdwara  
905 Middlefield Road  
(between McCowan Road and Markham Road)

RSVP by Thursday, September 15 to your congregational MOSAIC representative or to

Fran Isaacs at: [thisisfran@yahoo.com](mailto:thisisfran@yahoo.com)  
Refreshments served. A tour of the Gurdwara available following the program.

#### Panel:

- Reverend Bill Bruce - Christianity
- PT Eshwar Maharaj-Doobay - Hinduism
- Professor Hussein Khimjee - Islam
- Rabbi Cory Weiss - Judaism
- Mr. Ranjit Singh - Sikhism
- Parvin Contractor – Zoroastrianism

“Many of us have attended a funeral for someone from another faith and have felt uncomfortable not knowing what was appropriate to say or do, or what the significance of some of the customs were. Our panel of experts from MOSAIC INTERFAITH will try to answer these and any other questions that you might have when we present the last in our series on “How to Be a Perfect Stranger,” inspired by the award winning book of the same name, edited by Stuart M. Matlins and Arthur J. Magida.”

“MOSAIC INTERFAITH is a gathering of communities for interfaith dialogue. It was founded in 1980 and is made up of congregations representing Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism.”

*“How to Be a Perfect Stranger” Volumes 1 & 2 are available in our library.*

## VISION 2020 UPDATE

Your Vision 2020 team continued to work on your behalf negotiating the sale of our density rights and exploring community needs which will help us to determine our mission and renovations. We have also been communicating with our neighbouring United Churches.

In this update we want to inform you of our discussions with Northminster United Church. As most of you will be aware, Newtonbrook received and accepted a request from Northminster to explore a partnership with them for a new congregation (a united Newtonbrook and Northminster) to worship at Newtonbrook’s existing site.

A task force (made up of Newtonbrook and Northminster members) has been meeting regularly each month to prepare an amalgamation motion which will be presented to both congregations on October 30, 2011. The motion will contain a time-line and process for making the necessary decisions for our life as a new amalgamated congregation. If this motion is passed by both congregations, it will then proceed to South West Presbytery for approval.

You will all have the opportunity to take an active part in this process and of course all decisions will have to be accepted by a vote of the congregations.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact us.

*Newtonbrook members of the task force are Allan Baker, Phil Coulter, Nancy Ort, Gordon Robertson and Irene Carriere.*

## YOUR GREEN TEAM

### Our mandate is one of respect for and protection of Creation

As chair of your Green Team I wanted to keep everyone informed as to what your team members and many volunteers have been doing.

The most obvious being the Newtonbrook Neighbourhood Garden on the south lawn of the church. As most of you know we received two grants for this project. One came from TD Friends of the Environment Foundation for the building of raised beds. The second grant was awarded to us by Live Green Toronto. Both grants were approved because we showed that our plans will and have reduced our **Carbon Footprint** in the Newtonbrook neighbourhood.

There are a number of initiatives that we are involved in as well. As members of the Green Awakening Network (GAN), a project of the Toronto United Church Council, NUC supports and participates in many workshops and events around the City. We have held a Solar workshop and a Container Gardening workshop here at the church. In April members volunteered at the Green Living Show at Exhibition Place.

We have had a number of milestones. Some of which were the installation of the Bike Rack, the Compost Bin and the Rain Barrel. Our Co-Ordinating Team transferring to *\*Bullfrogpower* for the church further reduced our footprint.

I and other team members are in constant contact with Local, National and International agencies keeping us informed as to how we can reduce our impact on the Earth and hopefully reverse some of the Climate Changes that have already been done to Creation.

Coming soon will be a **Green Policy** that we hope both congregations' members as well as anyone using this building will agree to sign.

The Green Team meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at 9:00am If you would like to be a member of this very exciting team please let me know.

*\* the website for Bullpower is  
[www.bullfrogpower.com](http://www.bullfrogpower.com)*

*Janet Love*

## BIBLE QUIZ



- (1) King Ahasuerus is the kind of guy I like to think of as a "Bring and Brag" man. All ego but with power to boot. And yet it is his wife's name that most will remember. Who was she?
- (2) The Three Amigos refused to worship Nebuchadnezzar's 90' statue. A bit over the top, don't you think? Let's just say their abstinence took them from the frying pan into the fire. Who were they?
- (3) The long and the straight of it was his undoing. If only he had known, you just don't go into battle without a regulation haircut! You would think his famous father would have told him! Who was he?

- (4) Of the two sisters, she was considered the workhorse. She was always aware of the comfort of others and tried to be prepared. It wasn't until Jesus reminded her of what was more important that she finally took a break. Can you name her?
- (5) You might say he became a professional traveler in those early days. And then he performed a miracle in Lystra when he healed a man who had been a cripple all his life. Who was he?
- (6) Her Mom was an amazing woman. She created a small ark out of rushes, and daubed it with slime and pitch. She watched as Mom sent her baby brother on his first cruise. Who was she?

*Answers on page 7*

### BULLETIN BITE

#### Why Do They Call It a "Congregation"?

The word "congregation" comes from the Latin meaning "gather together". It refers to more than a random, spontaneous collection of people. It is a group of people gathered by God for the purpose of worship. The Greek word for church, *ecclesia*, means "called out". In this sense the congregation gathered for worship is called together by God – apart from the rest of the world – to be a unique people.

were missed. Barbara maintained her Newtonbrook membership, along with that in the University Women's Club of North York. She also continued Scottish Country Dancing.

While searching for a new home here Barbara has lived in and looked after the houseplants and gardens at the Journeaux residence. We long-term Newtonbrookers know Barbara well. Newer members will soon become acquainted.

Barbara, we're happy you're back. Many blessings.

### MILESTONES

#### Weddings

Debra Pavetri Gurrucharran & Aravindran Nair  
on July 1, 2011

#### Deaths

Douglas Edgar Robinson  
on June 7, 2011

Gordon Wayne Norwood  
on July 27, 2011

**Next Newsletter Deadline:**

**Advent/Christmas Sunday, October 30, 2011**

**Contact:**

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**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

### WELCOME BACK!

Barbara McNutt; long time member, former Trustee and Librarian, and all-round worker-bee, is back 'home' in Willowdale. When Barbara moved to Qualicum Beach, Vancouver Island, five years ago, her presence and skills



OUR PICNIC  
NEWTONBROOK ~ NORTHMINSTER



Answers to Bible Quiz: (1) Queen Esther  
(2) Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego (3) Absalom, (4)  
Martha (5) Paul (6) Miriam


# "Finding Home" BENEFIT CONCERT

**VOICES UNITED FOR A CARING WORLD**

*Sing Songs in the Key of Home*


**FEATURING**

*The Minister*  
*The Executive*  
*The Musician*  
*THE PROFESSOR*



**THE 4 MEN**  
**VOICES UNITED  
FOR A CARING WORLD**

**Fundraising Concerts**  
for  
The Mission and Service Fund



Mervin Fick, Tenor  
**THE MUSICIAN**



Brian McIntosh, Tenor  
**THE MINISTER**



Lambert Zuidervaart, Baritone  
**THE PROFESSOR**



Rudy DePaoli, Bass  
**THE EXECUTIVE**

and David Murrell, Piano

with special guests Archilles Kisitu

**FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 30, 2011**  
**7:30 PM**

**Northminster United Church**  
**255 Finch Ave. West, Toronto**

**Tickets: \$20 / Students \$15**

For information, contact: 416.225.7941 or  
[northminster.uc@rogers.com](mailto:northminster.uc@rogers.com)

**Proceeds go to support the programs of  
Don Valley Refugee Resettlers and the  
Mission and Service Fund of The United Church of Canada**