

## Christmas 2025 Acorn



### From the Minister's desk...



Over the summer I was privileged to witness an amazing sight. While in the country side visiting friends on the north shore of Georgian Bay, we went outside at midnight and, for the first time in my life, I saw the northern lights! They came as a stunning moment of wonder! I was struck by how transient the lights were. They were gone when we went outside ten minutes later. How beautiful,

both despite this and because of it. In a year of much shift and change that light will travel with me as a wonderful gift.

The northern lights come as a particular grace as we approach the season of Advent. It is a season that calls us to be present to all that is shifting and changing and allow ourselves to be present to marvel, to welcome and to experience wonder. This wonder does not ask us to ignore the world, but to engage more deeply with it. To see the grave and the love that moves through the pain and shows up in the way that only we can.

It is not possible to keep it from coming, because it will come. That's just how Advent works. It is not possible to not see it, to miss it, to turn just as it brushes past you. And you begin to grasp the wonder of it all.

As Advent draws near, I want to share some words inspired by the night sky.

With the northern lights lingering in my vision, I am seeing these words anew and tucking them into your hands as you travel into whatever these days bring.

Oh, my friends, in these days. In this year, in the heartbreak and the hope. In the love that holds us and goes with us, In all of it, may you be met with wonder. I am sending you so many blessings. The season of Advent means there is something on the horizon, the likes of which we have never seen before.

So, stay. Linger. Tarry. Ponder. Wait.  
Behold. Wonder.

There will be time enough for running.  
For rushing. For worrying. For now, stay,  
Wait.

Something is on the horizon.

(Photo1 stock image. Photo 2 Wendy Noble)

May the blessings of hope, peace, joy and  
love be yours

Rev. Wendy Noble

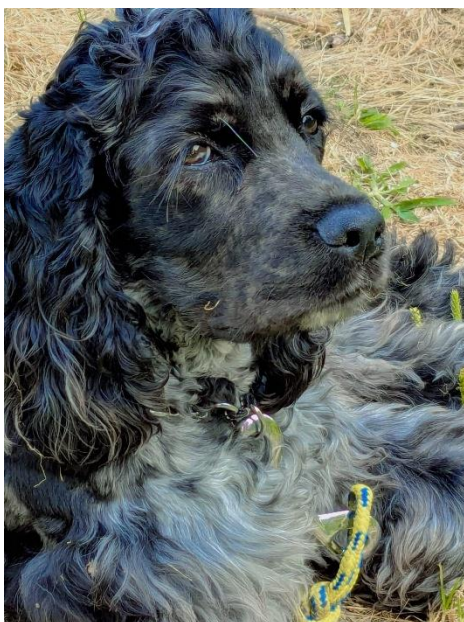


## **Doggie Tales from Ilka**

I have been learning some tricks. (And I don't mean the kind that involves escaping from the yard) It seems that now I have to work for my treats. So, I will sit, shake a paw and do a down on command. Sometimes Mommy mixes up the order to trick me. I am not doing so well on the command to stay, or return to heel but we are still working on that!

My outdoor duties still require me to guard against the squirrel invasion. I take this job very seriously as I maintain an eye out for neighbourhood squirrels looking to relocate to my domain. Unfoundedly, I am limited in my ability to give chase as I have an anchor on the other end of my leash. Mommy isn't as fast as I am and she keeps telling me that, "we don't chase squirrels while on a leash".





I had 2 farm visits over the summer and fall. There is a new dog at the farm who needs to learn some manners. His name is Gillie and he is some kind of spaniel. I try to be patient, but he is always in my face.

When we are out running in the yard, he is a little better, as we take turns chasing one another. One of my farm visits was a birthday party / retirement party. There was cake, pie and ice cream and special dog treats for Gillie and me. Parties are great!

Looking forward to more adventures over the winter season. Hope you enjoy the snow as much as I do!

Doggie kisses, Ilka

## Knit Happens

Our group continues to meet over Zoom and have been very productive in making socks, owls, snowmen, hats and all other kinds of items. Some of them have been donated to the Craft Sale at Dundas Street Centre and some of them will be donated to the Rowntree Christmas Bazaar and some of them continue to go to Victoria Hospital for the Family Birthing Centre, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, or the Paediatric Critical Care Unit.

We meet on Tuesday nights from 7:00 pm to about 8:30 pm. Knitting or any kind of crafting is not required. Come for the



conversation and the show

and tell. Contact Rev. Wendy for the Zoom link. (picture of some of the hats going to Victoria Hospital)

The heart project continues.





These were made for the Rowntree Christmas Bazaar and will be handed out by some of the 59<sup>th</sup> Beavers and Cubs. Spreading some Christmas cheer!

Submitted by Rev. Wendy on behalf of the Knit Happens crew. Stay tuned for more pictures.

## Past Services

National Day of Truth & Reconciliation Sunday – Sept 28



Thanksgiving Service

## Remembrance Day service at Dundas St. UC.

Dundas Centre and Rowntree shared Remembrance Day service November 9/25

For those who could not make it out to our shared Remembrance Day service here are a few pictures...

The day started out cold, wet and snowy...

Guest musicians Fraser Gibson and Steve Davidson...

Rev Wendy Noble ...Reflection: Memories and Remembrance

Soloist: Jim Traquair

Dundas Centre and Rowntree choirs

Music Directors: Norman Abbott and Ryan Baxter





## ELUCO ( East London United Church Outreach) Update



Nancy Howard, community worker ,is busy preparing for Christmas Share in the Marconi area. Contributions from several United Churches make this possible.

### ELUCO Food Cupboard

We are located at 1461 Huron St. In the Gesthemane Apartment building.

We are open Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9:30 am until noon for people living in the area.

We are getting more refugee clients and also larger families.

People are allowed to come every thirty days.

All donations are greatly appreciated. ( leave in tub inside glass doors )

### Fund Raiser

The Annual ELUCO Walk and Roll for families was a huge success.

Over \$10,400.00. has been raised.

ELUCO is funded from donations ( from people like you) and grants that are applied for annually. The clients are so grateful for the help they receive.

Judy White

## Stained Glass Nativity



Approximated 25 years ago, Fred “Bud” Sweeney crafted a beautiful set of stained glass nativity figures which he has recently donated to Rowntree. Please take time during this Advent/Christmas season to admire this set in the narthex, along with the nativity figures under the Christmas tree.

Rowntree has other stained-glass art that Mr. Sweeney has created. The 2 stained glass art pieces that hang in the choir loft were donated by Gail and Bernard Selig in loving memory of their daughter, Kathryn, in 2004. Kathryn loved nature so small pieces of glass depict water , trees, rainbows and the sun. They were hung carefully to catch the light as it enters the sanctuary.

Another work of art that he created is a stained-glass picture of Rowntree that hangs in the east entranceway.

We wish to thank Mr. Sweeney for his beautiful contributions to our place of worship.

## **FUNDRAISING NEWS**

***A big thank you to all in the Rowntree family whose interest and enthusiasm make our fundraising events so successful and enjoyable.***

### **Yard & Bake Sale**

On Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, we once again joined in with our Carling Heights neighbours for a yard (and bake) sale. Fortunately for our neighbours, we enjoyed much better weather this year.

A mini-event compared to our Christmas bazaar; we nevertheless had a very successful day with sales exceeding last year by 33%. And coincidentally, the amount raised was almost identical to the ham and strawberry dinner; \$1,535 vs. \$1,537. What are the chances?!

Of special mention was a generous donation of “like new” books, DVD’s and CD’s received from a friend of the Barbers. Every available table was moved into the Mills Room to display the extraordinary number of books etc.

### **Annual Christmas Bazaar**

At 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, we opened the doors to a throng of very eager shoppers and closed the doors behind the last customer at 1:00 p.m.

The book room once again found a home in The Mills Room. The bake and deli table in the Friendship Hall was a huge success. The baking was virtually a sell-out. The last jar of Merry Christmas jam was snapped up halfway through the morning; we are already planning an emergency jam session to replenish before Christmas.

Joanne advised that 54 hot dogs were served along with her homemade soup. Customers shopped and dined downstairs while enjoying our very own Piano Man, Glen Thompson.

Upstairs, the Christmas treasures received a boost from items donated by friends of the Thompsons who are downsizing. Rowntree's own craft tables were full, and we received many calls from crafters/vendors this year wishing to rent tables. Currently, we limit vendors to people who have a connection to Rowntree. This year Beth Brown and Mark Jolliffe were added to the list of crafting vendors. And the Toonie Table was not to be outshone, with over 40 items donated.

On the day, the bazaar grossed over \$4,500. After additional contributions and jam expenses, it is anticipated that we will be very close to, if not slightly over, last year's total of \$4,000.

**Forest City Singers present "The Sounds of Christmas"** was at Rowntree on Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. At the time of this report, the event had not yet taken place. Watch the Fundraising bulletin board for updated results.

### **Pictures from our Bazaar & Preparations of**

Highlights from Rowntree's 2025 Christmas bazaar. If you missed Rowntree's 2025 Christmas Bazaar, here are a few of the pictures of persons who made it happen. We started out the morning with a beautiful sun shining day and a line up at the door. Some of the fabulous crew were ready; Phyllis, Jo, Brad, Deb, Maryjane and Catharine.

Meeting and greeting was Rev Wendy Noble along



with George Hill and his trusty helpers who gave out wooden Christmas ornaments (made by George) and our knitted hearts. Given to the first 75 visitors...gone in a blink of an eye...soooooo busy☐





Most people were interested in the bake table and jams. The bake table ran the full length of the Friendship Hall. Starting with our fabulous jams made by the Rowntree jam making group- see pic of Phyllis ( red top ) & Martha. There were many helpers on the bake table.



The book room was kept in order with Val running the show solo.



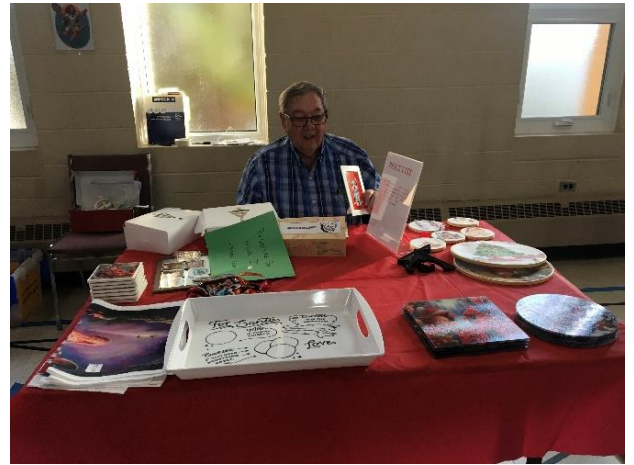
In the kitchen serving up soup, hotdogs and drinks. Joanne, Murray, Barb (in all her sparkles), there were others behind the scenes ...Martha and Bob. When the crowd got hungry, Murray & Joanne 'dished it out' and Les was there to take the cash!







Upstairs more action. This year we had 4 vendors. Gloria, Mark, Lauryn and Beth and the Lindsay's. Great additions to the bazaar.





We had our Toonie Table, which is always a hit, running smoothly by Heather and Judy who had 2 helper elves...thank you elves☐

Not to be left out...we had Christmas Treasures and lovely ladies on the Craft Table...Jessie and Judy along with Judy and Ruth...well done ladies😊

Now with all the excitement of purchasing books, baking, treasures, crafts, Toonie prizes, and a



scrumptious meal we were immensely entertained by the one and only Glen Thompson....let those fingers fly....



Another one in the books ....speaking of which...Freda will inform us just how successful .....thanks to everyone...Merry Christmas one and all🎄🎄Lynn Patterson

## United Church General Council News



**Deep • Bold • Daring  
Toward 2035**

The United Church of Canada has unveiled an inspiring new initiative, **Toward 2035**, as part of its Centennial celebrations. This forward-looking vision and whole church strategy aims to honour the legacy of past generations while charting a bold path for the future.

In an open letter, which continues to roll out across the church, Rev. Michael Blair, General Secretary, emphasized the importance of this moment for reflection and imagination.

Approved by the General Council Executive, the initiative began with data-informed discussions among church leaders in late 2024.

**Toward 2035** envisions a future where the United Church thrives through a strong denominational identity characterized by cooperation and collaboration, better reflecting the diversity of Canadian communities. It aims to foster resilient and inspired communities of



disciples, accompanied by adaptive and effective ministry leaders, less burdened by property and governance requirements.

The initiative is a data-informed and connected approach to discernment and action to ensure the church's witness remains strong, transformative, and effective going forward.

As part of this effort, resources and discussion guides will be made available to facilitate conversations within communities of faith and church networks, as well as discussions at GC45 and in regional meetings in both spring and fall.

Rev. Blair invites all members to join in this transformative journey, praying for hope, joy, justice, and peace in a world that desperately needs them. Together, The United Church of Canada will continue to embody its call to Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, and Daring Justice.

For more info click [here](#)

Did you notice our **new outside cross** facing Elliott St? The original cross, likely mounted with the original building in the mid-50's was marble but years of weathering had cracked it and parts of it came down this past summer. We had different ideas of what to replace it with but the costs were high: up to \$5000. Maryjane Jolliffe suggested composite decking- great idea. Even better – Patrick Taylor, Ross's son, donated the installation and materials. THANK YOU PATRICK !



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The Acorn is published by the Communications Committee of Rowntree Memorial United Church and edited by Brad McMurray. Articles for the next edition are due March 23, 2026. Comments or articles can be emailed to [wbmcmurray55@hotmail.com](mailto:wbmcmurray55@hotmail.com) or left in the Communications mail slot at Rowntree. Stories are much more effective with pictures, as 'a picture is worth a thousand words. Visit our web site at [rowntreechurch.ca](http://rowntreechurch.ca) to find the main parts of the past 4 Sunday services, more info on who we are, what we do, what we believe in and how you can support us. And look for us on Facebook.

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