

Published for the Metropolitan United Church Community

56 Queen Street East, Toronto, ON | www.metunited.org

COMMUNITY SERVICES WELCOMES A FOOD SERVICES MANAGER

Metropolitan's funding application for a food services manager, "Investing in Neighbourhoods", was granted by the City of Toronto last month. The papers have been signed and Ferda Celik started the job.

Ferda managed a restaurant in her native Turkey and was in need of that elusive Canadian experience to get her into the workforce. The City-supported program is designed to provide experience, funding pay and benefits for twenty-one hours per week for one year.

Ferda gives Community Services the benefit of her considerable energy and her food services management skills. Ferda has taken over the supervision of meal provision for the drop-in, the ordering and organization of supplies, and well as management of the Met Centre kitchen.

Photo: (left to right) Bill Chapman (Director, Community Services), Ferda Celik (Food Services Manager), Patrick Chartrand (City of Toronto), and Steve Hanson (Met's Administrator) celebrate the first "Investing in Neighbourhoods" placement at Met.



MINISTERS' MESSAGES

THE REV. DR. JOHN JOSEPH MASTANDREA

Eye Spy with the Eastersphere

*Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more,
Till he became
Most poore*
(George Herbert 1593-1633)

We look to the time of rising in our liturgy of church and our liturgy of life. In the Church, we speak of resurrection and proclaim the encounters on the road and in locked rooms, as well as places familiar and strange. The recurring theme is one of recognition, in the breaking of the bread and the raw encounter on the everyday road. In the church, our two thousand-year tradition began with the foundation event of Easter. That is where it all started. This event precipitated the establishment of the Eucharist, the meal of thanksgiving and proclamation. This sacrament and ritual has been born in the rite of Passover, which we inherited from our Jewish brothers and sisters.

Recently, I was invited to the home of my friend's mother for second Seder. In the words of the Haggadah, the Jewish text that sets forth the order of Passover, "Blessed are You, Adonai, Supreme of the Universe, who sanctifies us by your commandments and commands us to kindle the lights of the Sabbath and Festival." Because of these sacred words, I was overwhelmed with "verklemmt," a German word meaning, "choked with emotion." Coincidentally, on Barbara Streisand's 1994 US tour, she employed the same word when she declared, "Now I am starting to get verklemmt."

The Jews have celebrated Passover for over three thousand years, and being a guest at the Passover table moved me to the core. I am told that they consider inviting non-Jewish people to the Passover table a mitzvah, a selfless act of kindness toward others. When we broke bread and poured the cups of wine, a kindred fusion of revelation arose between the Children of Abraham and the followers of Christ. In the liturgy of the Church, it started in an upper room, and ended on the Emmaus road on a beach. Through the passing years, we have layered the liturgy, complementing the foundation event and including other contexts that complicate the sacrament with an injection of doctrine and juridical rubric.

In many contexts, the accessorizing of the liturgy confounded the understanding of the event. The tradition has become prodigal, taking in each instance the share of the inheritance and running off to a foreign place, but somehow forgetting to return home. Now we come to the time of a new millennium, and we reexamine the liturgy of the church as it seeks for new relevance and a meaningful connection with the liturgy of life.

The liturgy of life looks at the Christ on the road—Japan, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya—around the corner and at the crossroads. I noticed that toward Easter, many new faces were crossing the threshold of our sanctuary. There were many new faces at the office door of the church seeking, yearning and groping for God in their lives. We stand at a magnificent moment where we can offer the excellence of rising in the healing word and listening spirit.

Metropolitan is poised at a time of great alignment. Decades ago, we heralded the dawning of the Age of Aquarius, but it is now the dawning of the age of communication. The call will be to "rise and risk" in the dark days of uncertainty, amid broken courage and soiled sorrow. to redeem the liturgy of life in the waking moment of this day. I am told that there is a new group of teens who are accessing the Typosphere. That is, they use manual typewriters. This reconnection with something low tech is a signpost on the road of life that suggests people are seeking concrete encounters. That is the Eastersphere.

In the closing words of the Haggadah "*Tonight we acknowledge our parents and ancestors. We vow that we will not allow their stories, their experiences, their wisdom, to be stolen from us. It is our legacy and we will study it and teach it to our friends and children.*"

It is our legacy to notice our neighbours. I re-discovered this on the CBC program Ideas, which features Tarek Fateh, a progressive Moslem Cabbagetown neighbour that speaks about rising to the front and opening the doors. We win the victories when we spy the holy in our midst...in the Eastersphere.

*Till he became,
Most poore:
With Thee, O let me rise,
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day Thy victories*
(George Herbert, 1593-1633)

THE REV. DR. MALCOLM SINCLAIR

Back in nineteen eighty-two, I preached five Sundays in a row at St. John's Church, Oxgangs, in suburban Edinburgh. In their farewell to us, the congregation sang, danced, brought potluck things to eat, and then proceeded to "roast" me for all my idiosyncrasies. I spoke with a strange accent, said "trespasses" instead of "debts" in the Lord's Prayer, as well as mentioned food in every sermon. At the risk of being "roasted" again, I am going to follow that pattern in this commentary.

Easter has given us a feast of faith and meaning. There is much to chew on. Easter is also the midway point in the story, so what we chew and how it affects our lives is important. The bodily story of Jesus among us is over, and now we relate to him as most people always have, as an experience of faith. If we are serving him to others, in a modern-day ministry, what is the nature of the food?

A full meal may be too heavy. Many are strangers to us and we are just "dating". We don't feast on the first date! A homespun recipe is always good. Serving what we know and love touches the heart. Perhaps hors d'oeuvres or tapas may be wise, giving little tastes of many things. Our faith is rich and varied in expression. Maybe a picnic will do as we relax and eat together in a larger field of play.

Too many of our favourite spices, though they reflect our constitution or tribal pattern, may overwhelm the eater. Heartburn is not our friend. The point is that eating something together has always been the way that faith-communities have grown strong.

Perhaps it is the style of the Gospel itself that gives a clue. It has been called a "tear-off sheet" or "door-to-door flyer". It quickly advertises something good, and tells us where and how to get it.

Following up, we can party and partake of various foods, including exotic dishes and good old-fashioned favourites, or anything we feel is tasty and true, as long as we tell them where to get it and make sure it's ready when they call.

Talk of food comes naturally to me. I can't live without it. How like the Easter feast, the gift of eternal life from the kitchens of a great God.



Let us break bread together...

The Met Board gathers on retreat reflecting upon the words of John Dominic Crossan at the Home Linn Holness. From left to right:

Bruce Peckover, Ruth Peckover, Malcolm Sinclair, Steven Hansen, Frank Parkin, John Lloyd, Jean Lee

And John Joseph Mastandrea as the Paparazzi.

MUSIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHOIR NEWS

All the musical groups have had a very busy Lenten and Easter season. The Metropolitan Choir presented J. S. Bach's motet "Jesu, meine Freude" (Jesus, priceless treasure) in the service on Sunday, April 10, accompanied by Sarah Svendsen on the continuo organ and Laura Jones on 'cello. The motet was interspersed with the lectionary readings of the day and by two Dylan Thomas poems. Naturally, extra services in Holy Week kept us all busy! The Metropolitan Festival Choir spent six Sunday afternoons preparing for our Good Friday evening concert, 'Lamb of God,' in which we presented a variety of music from the Renaissance to 21st century Canada and Britain. We were privileged to present the Canadian premiere of Bob Chilcott's Requiem. The Metropolitan Handbells played on Palm Sunday and the Sunday after Easter. The Choristers sang on April 3 and have been busy preparing for our 'Joseph' production. The Great Heart ensemble joined with the Metropolitan Choir on Easter Sunday in 'The Power' by Elton John. The Metropolitan Silver Band, besides giving concerts, joined us all on Easter Sunday. All our musicians continue rehearsing and performing through June, with the Metropolitan Choir travelling to Brighton, Ontario, for a concert and service on the second weekend in June.

SUMMER SCHEDULE

The final choir Sunday of this year is Sunday, June 26. Sarah Svendsen, our Organ Scholar, will be playing during four Sundays in July, and Dr. Patricia Wright will return in August. On Sunday, July 16, Benjamin Stein will lead the service music, as both Sarah and Patricia will be attending the national convention of the Royal Canadian College of Organists in Hamilton, Ontario.

CONGRATULATIONS, SARAH!



On Sunday, July 16 at 1 pm, Sarah Svendsen, our Organ Scholar, will compete as one of six semi-finalists in the National Young Organists Playing Competition of the Royal Canadian College of Organists. Sarah has just completed her third year of studies as an organ major in the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, and has completed

her first full year as our Organ Scholar. This round of the competition will take place at McNab Presbyterian Church in Hamilton, Ontario. The final round of three selected from the semi-finals will take place on Wednesday, July 20 at Central Presbyterian Church in Hamilton. Good luck Sarah!



Photo: Patricia Wright leads the Met Choir during the Good Friday worship service.

MUSIC AT METROPOLITAN CONCERTS

Our brochure is available in the Narthex or can be mailed if you contact Patricia Wright.

NOON AT MET - Free recitals - Thursdays, 12:15-12:45pm

- May 12 - Friends University Singing Quakers (Wichita, Kansas)
- May 19 - Aaron Tan, organ (part of ORGANIX festival)
- May 26 - David Palmer, organ (part of ORGANIX festival)
- June 2 - no concert – preparations for 'Joseph' production
- June 9 - John Paul Farahat, organ
- June 16 - Elisa Mangina, organ

SARAH SVENDSEN

Will play a noontime recital on Monday, May 23 from 12:15 - 1 pm at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Eaton Centre, as part of the ORGANIX 11 festival. Suggested donation is \$10.

JOSEPH AND HIS AMAZING TECHNICOLOUR DREAMCOAT

Will be presented on Friday and Saturday evenings, June 3 and 4, at 7:30 pm and on Sunday afternoon, June 5, at 2 pm. This full production of the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical stars Charles Davidson as Joseph, Kirsten Fielding as the Narrator, Malcolm Sinclair as Pharaoh, John Joseph Mastandrea as Potiphar, and a host of singers and dancers from Metropolitan and the community. The production is directed by Graham Maxwell, with musical direction from Benjamin Stein. Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$20 for students and seniors, \$10 for children 12 and under. We are offering a family pass in advance only for \$60 – two adults and up to three children 18 and under. Tickets can be ordered online at www.metunited.org or by calling 416-363-0331 Ext. 51.

METROPOLITAN UNITED CHURCH PRESENTS

**A musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber (Music)
& Tim Rice (Lyrics)**

General admission \$ 25
Students and seniors \$ 20
Children 12 and under \$ 10
Advance family pass \$ 60

for two adults and up to three children,
18 and under (in advance only)
416-363-0331 Ext. 51 www.metunited.org

FRI JUNE 3 7:30 PM

SAT JUNE 4 7:30 PM

SUN JUNE 5 2:00 PM



JOSEPH Charles Davidson
NARRATOR Kirsten Fielding
PHARAOH Malcolm Sinclair
DIRECTOR Graham Maxwell
MUSICAL DIRECTOR Benjamin Stein

Metropolitan United Church
56 Queen St. East
Toronto, ON

COMMUNITY NEWS



JONATHAN JOSEPH MAL

The Celebration of Baptism for Jonathon Joseph Mal, child of Joseph and Laura. This was a milestone for our own Rev. John Joseph Mastandrea, as this was the first child he has baptized who bears his name.



MET MARCH MEMBERSHIP INQUIRY DAY

Here are the participants from the Met Membership Inquiry Day on Saturday March 26th. They will be received into membership at the Met on Sunday May 15th.

From right to left: Roy Tomlinson, Nico Godson, Bob Turner, Pam Turner, Mary Jo Smith, Paul Brown, Philip Burchinshaw and Beth Crozsmán



EASTER SUNRISE AT DUNDAS SQUARE

Over 100 people gathered at 6:30 am on April 24th for the Easter Sunrise Service at Dundas square.

From left to right: Alan Sinclair, the minister of Toronto Urban Native Ministry, the Hon. Bob Rae, and our own Rev. John Joseph Mastandrea

ADMINISTRATION & LIBRARY NEWS

INTRODUCING OUR MET OFFICE STAFF



Rachel Van Geest our Office Administrator and Bridgene Barber our Office Administrative Assistant

Rachel arrived at the Met on September 27, 2010. Bridgene has come to us from the Toronto Youth Job Core arriving on March 1, 2011. This is our exciting Met Office team that offers their presence of welcome and invitation to the work, life and ministry at Metropolitan United Church.

TOO BUSY TO READ A BOOK? TRY PERIODICALS!

See what churches are up to by glancing at *The Observer*. Whether the issue is old or new, there will be something of interest. Here is a sample of article titles:

The Other Battlefield- About Afghan Women

What is the Real Power of Prayer?

To the Ends of the Earth - a climate change article by Alanna Mitchell that includes wonderful photos

Unearthing Ancient Secrets - new archeological discoveries

Question Box - How to fire a volunteer

Bible illiteracy - discussed by one of the columnists

Prisons and Politics

The *Observer* also has a website: ucobserver.org, with web documentaries. Another feature is film reviews, among them *Barney's Version*. There is also an update on KAIROS, whose funding the government cut, as well as an article on *Seeing Green* - practical tips for sustainable living.

In other periodicals, such as *Geez Magazine*, there is an article subtitled *Holy Mischief in an Age of Fast Faith*. Another excellent periodical is *Axial* - published by Snow Star Institute. It promotes religious literacy, education, and tolerance in the Canadian context. This Institute translates scholarship into the common idiom.

Try one, in fact you can take it home for 2 weeks.

OUTREACH NEWS

OUT OF THE COLD VOLUNTEERS MARK THE END OF A VERY BUSY SEASON

Religious thinker and provocative author Karen Armstrong once commented, "A lot of religious people prefer to be right rather than compassionate." She was not talking about the fifty-some Out of the Cold volunteers who brought the seventeenth Out of the Cold season to a conclusion in the Met Centre on April 14.

At their potluck luncheon, they showed each other the compassion they have extended to 5,075 guests on Thursdays from November 4 to March 31. The number of meals served (6,517) indicates their concern to provide the hungry with second helpings, while the number of take-outs (1,184) ensured that an ill member or children at home not go hungry or that the guests have something to eat that night.

The volunteers expressed their appreciation for the weekly donations of bread and fresh produce from the local Loblaws and their gratitude for the many financial contributions and time contributions made by so many. They talked of the welcome rest that summer days would offer and the joy of being together again next fall. Rising food prices have caused concern this year. (The season's food costs reached \$20,000.00.) Higher costs are predicted for the fall. It is hoped that they will not be a big concern.

—George Gregg

MET'S COMMUNITY SERVICES IS THE SITE OF CHOICE FOR SOCIAL SERVICES TRAINEES

Community Services' Director Bill Chapman has built strong ties with the Social Services training programs at both Humber and George Brown Colleges. Community Services now welcomes up to six students a term in work placements and students during the summer in block placements. The students benefit from real world experience under the watchful eye of the experienced Met team.

Community Services benefited from the students' presence in ways large and small. The clearest indication of their contribution (and the impact of Ferda's work) was in the monthly statistics. Brief interactions stats climbed steadily as students interacted with clients who were waiting for counselling and information. Ferda freed up counselling staff from kitchen duties.

Total number of brief interactions: 896 (January); 1053 (February); 1204 (March).

As Bill Chapman said, "Before, clients waiting to see counsellors would give up, and we'd lose them. Now the students can engage them, help them, or help them wait. It's great to see how many more people we can assist."

—Susan Girvan

Photo captions

1. Out of the Cold Steering Committee members (back row, left to right): Kathy Priestman, Shirley Oakley, Walter Ridley, David Walker, George Gregg, Marg McIntosh; (front row, left to right): Jean Stinson, Vicki Butterfield
2. Marg McIntosh with Don Finlayson, who helps Shirley keep the kitchen team calm
3. Kathy Priestman and Jean Stinson head out of the kitchen
4. Alec Economides (aka The Soup Guy) and Vicki Butterfield
5. Grant Curtis and Wilbert Ward take a bow
6. Joyce Ward (one of the cookie bakers), Sheila Hambleton, and Ruth Peckover wrap up their OOTC duties

PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE NEWS

Our Peace and Social Justice Committee meets regularly after Church on the second Sunday of the month, and we invite new members to join us.

On March 20th, the Peace and Social Justice had a Lunch and Learn focused on an Aid-to-Africa program. Our presenter was Owen Sheppard, who had a video presentation of his work empowering young people in the slums of Nairobi, Kenya through video making. A donation was made to support "Liberation", a Nairobi-based, youth-produced newsletter.

Our present emphasis is centred on the issue of food, with direction from Tracy Phillips who works with Local Food Plus. We plan to have several food-related educational and "eating" events in the coming months and a possible food seminar "Roof Garden at Met?", on September 18th. Join us on May 9th, as we continue our planning.

—Walter Ridley



UPCOMING EVENTS

A NEW EASTER STUDY GROUP

with Dr. Mastandrea

Wednesdays April 27, May 11, 18, 25, 10 am to noon.

Exploring the work of Rex Wyler, *The Jesus Sayings*. The voice of Jesus survived decades of oral transmission before written records appeared. How accurately did the message of Jesus survive decades of spoken discourse and centuries of revision? *Saul of Tarsus, The Magdalene, On Whose Authority, Voice of the Galilean*.

Join Dr. Mastandrea in the Narthex. Light refreshments will be provided.

TAYZE LABYRINTH WALK

Wednesday May 4th and June 1st, at 6 pm. Take the time to find the Quiet Centre, with soul song and the Taize Labyrinth walk. Gather under the candle light in the Chancel.

LUNCH AND LEARN

"Journey of the Heart" film

Sunday May 22nd at 12:30 pm

The Life of Henri Nouwen with Dr. Mastandrea in the Met Centre.

DOORS OPEN TORONTO

Saturday May 28th and 29th

Met Silver Band concert at 1 pm

Carillon demonstrations and tours of the Met Centre will be available.

A NEW JUNE STUDY GROUP

with Dr. Sinclair In the Narthex

June 1, 8, 15, 22 - 10 am to noon

Light refreshments will be provided.

MEMBERSHIP RECEPTION

Sunday May 15th

A time to honour and welcome our new members at the church service.

WEEK OF GUIDED PRAYER

May 15th to 21st

A week of guided prayer in everyday life. A unique and meaningful way to deepen your relationship with God. For more information please contact Dr. Mastandrea

JOSEPH AND HIS AMAZING TECHNICOLOUR DREAMCOAT

Friday and Saturday June 3rd and June 4th at 7:30 pm

Sunday June 5th at 2 pm

CHURCH PICNIC AND BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Sunday , June 12th

Service 11:00 am | Church Picnic 12:30 pm

Bring all that creepeth and crawlth, your four footed and two winged friends for a time of blessing.

WEEKLY PRAYER BREAKFASTS

Thursday mornings will begin next week from 8:00 to 9:00 am.

Join us for a time of hearing the Word, sharing the Word, and praying the Word at Fran's Restaurant, located at the corner of Victoria and Shuter St.

Please RSVP to Dr. Mastandrea at johnjosephm@metunited.org if you plan to attend.

PRIDE SUNDAY

Sunday July 3rd

Save the date and join the Parade.



Web Design + Print Design + Copy Writing



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JOIN US SUNDAY

9:30 am: Chapel Communion
10:00 am: Metropolitan Choristers and Sparklers
10:30 am: Carillon Prelude
10:45 am Organ Prelude
11:00 am: Worship Service + Church School
12:15 pm: Great Heart (teen) ensemble rehearsal
Coffee Hour Following the Service

Taize Labyrinth Meditation:

First Wednesday of each month at 6:00 pm



Professional and personal image consultation.
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Make your first impression, last.

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MetNews is an information forum for our entire community.

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Many thanks to all those who contributed to this issue of MetNews.

Deadline for Submissions

To Joanne Nicolson (joannenicolson7@gmail.com)
Submission by Sept 16 for Publication Sept 30

Check out www.metunited.org for more pictures, extended articles and ongoing discussions in MET's community.

Metropolitan United Church
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