



March 2014

Mill Woods United Church 'Connections'

Mark Your Calendar

March 4

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

March 6

Choir Practice starts again
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

March 9

Communion Service (Lent starts)
Annual Financial Meeting

March 11

Make Tax Time Pay starts

March 12

Community Garden Potluck Supper
and Annual Meeting

March 13

Prayer Shawl Ministry meets in lounge

March 16

Infant Baptism
Covenanting Service for Ian 7:00 p.m.

March 29

Youth Understanding Youth

A post-colonial childhood

by Ian Kellogg

I grew up in what might be the quintessential Canadian city. Cornwall Ontario is an industrial city of 40,000 situated at the point where New York State, Ontario, and Quebec meet at the St. Lawrence River. The city is 70% English-speaking and 30% French-speaking, with most of the francophones living in the east end. There is a First Nations reserve on Cornwall Island, which is half in the US and half in Canada.

I lived in Cornwall from the age of three until I was 15, and I absorbed some of the colonial history of Canada simply by living there.

Canada was founded by French settlers who conquered and displaced First Nations people between 1608 until 1763, and who were in turn conquered by the British. Over time, the First Nations population of what became Canada dropped from one million or more at the time of first contact to around 150,000 by Confederation in 1867.

The English-speaking population soared after the defeat of Great Britain in the American Revolution of 1776-1783 and the arrival of United Empire Loyalists in what are now Ontario and the Maritimes. The ratio of English- to French-speaking people continues to tilt towards English -- currently about 80/20 -- although Toronto did not exceed Montreal as Canada's largest city until the 1970s.

Continued on page 2 . . .

A post-colonial childhood Continued . . .

First Nations communities are now the most rapidly growing ones in the country and number around two million people. Cornwall captures all this history in its very makeup.

My childhood in Cornwall comes to my mind as the United Church prepares for the seventh and final National Event of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in Edmonton at the Shaw Centre from March 27-30. The TRC is the largest effort yet in Canada to confront the painful legacy of the colonization of Canada's First Nations.

Our church focuses on the TRC not only because of the terrible social problems in Canada's First Nations population that are a direct result of colonialism, but also because of the church's role in running Indian Residential Schools for the federal government from the mid-1800s until the end of the 20th Century. These schools were designed to assimilate native people to "white culture" and were the site of terrible abuse and pain.

When I was growing up, I simply assumed English dominance over the French and European dominance over native people. That was just the way it was. French-English tension showed up in the schoolyard in fights between Catholics and

Protestants. But I was less aware of prejudice between those of us of European descent and native kids -- probably because it was more deeply buried.

I vaguely remember some native students when I was in Grade 7 and 8 Junior High. But before that, I thought native kids went to their own elementary school on Cornwall Island.

Recently, my older brother surprised me by saying that there were native kids in all grades of our elementary schools. I simply didn't notice! When I was in my 20s, I met a woman in Toronto who had attended the same elementary school in Cornwall as I did, but four years after me. I was astonished when she said it was fashionable for non-native girls to date native boys when she was in Grade 8. Four years earlier, this would have been unthinkable, I believe.

The aftermath of colonial wars and conquest -- among French-speaking Canadians, descendants of African slaves, and people of First Nations descent -- creates social problems for generations afterwards. The last Indian Residential School was closed less than 20 years ago, and so our work of learning the true history of the oppression of native people and of seeking ways for people of native and non-native backgrounds to reconcile has only just begun.

We are born into a world scarred by the wars of colonial times. As a boy in Cornwall, I absorbed prejudices towards both French Catholics and native people with hardly a word being spoken. The process of naming those prejudices and finding ways to overcome them can be a long and sometimes painful process. I hope that our preparations for the TRC Event will help me in this process.



After our Pancake Supper on Tuesday March 4, we begin the 40-day season of Lent. It is a season of reflection, repentance, and preparation as we "walk" with Jesus and the disciples from Galilee to Holy Week in Jerusalem.

In all of the Sundays in March, we will spend some of our worship time connecting the themes of Lent with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Event happening in Edmonton from March 27 to 30. This will include a celebration of communion on the first Sunday in Lent, March 9 and a blessing of the

March 2014 Worship

by Ian Kellogg

prayer shawls being knit for the TRC Event on March 23.

I treasure Lent each year. It is a time for us to reconnect with the pain and the grace shown to us in the life, ministry and death of Jesus of Nazareth. And just as winter always gives way to spring, Lent always leads to the mystery, beauty, and joy of Easter Sunday where we find Jesus' tomb empty and God's Love reborn in the resurrection. We are fellow pilgrims on the journey, and Lent reminds us of this fact like no other time.



The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has a mandate to learn the truth about what happened in the residential schools and to inform all Canadians about what happened in the schools. The Commission will document the truth of what happened by relying on records held by those who operated and funded the schools, testimony from officials of the institutions that operated the schools, and experiences reported by survivors, their families, communities and anyone personally affected by the residential school experience and its subsequent impacts.

The Commission hopes to guide and inspire First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and Canadians in a process of truth and healing leading toward reconciliation and renewed relationships based on mutual understanding and respect.

The Commission views reconciliation as an ongoing individual and collective process that will require participation from all those affected by the residential school experience. This includes First Nations, Inuit, and Métis former students, their families, communities, religious groups, former Indian Residential School employees, government, and the people of Canada.

www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=4



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry group, along with several very welcome newcomers, is doing its part to knit some of the 500 shawls requested for the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions hearings here in Edmonton from March 27-March 30. The response has been amazing!

Where else might our congregation be led to act?

If you'd like to learn a bit more, check out some of these sites.

Reconciliation

a poem by Rebeka Tabobondung

We are waking up to our history
from a forced slumber
We are breathing it into our lungs
so it will be part of us again
It will make us angry at first
because we will see how much you stole from us
and for how long you watched us suffer
we will see how you see us
and how when we copied your ways
we killed our own.

We will cry and cry and cry
because we can never be the same again
But we will go home to cry
and we will see ourselves in this huge mess
and we will gently whisper the circle back
and it will be old and it will be new

Then we will breathe our history back to you
you will feel how strong and alive it is
and you will feel yourself become a part of it
And it will shock you at first
because it is too big to see all at once
and you won't want to believe it
you will see how you see us
and all the disaster in your ways
how much we lost

And you will cry and cry and cry
because we can never be the same again
But we will cry with you
and we will see ourselves in this huge mess
and we will gently whisper the circle back
and it will be old and it will be new.

<http://www.turning-point.ca/?q=node/59>

by Ethel Ray

Frequently asked questions: <http://www.united-church.ca/aboriginal/schools/faq>

Some basic background: <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=4>

Lots more info: <http://www.trc.ca>

Article from the Edmonton Journal, January 20, 2014:
Edmonton to host national residential schools truth and reconciliation event <http://t.co/ApdxFfhFpR>

Welcome to March!

Well it seems we made it through that fickle month called February and are on the downhill ride to spring, well at least in theory. That warm spell in January was a ruse and I knew there was another shoe hiding in the air waiting to drop and I suspected it as a size -30.....

But it's March and the days are longer and the sun has strength to melt the skiff of snow on the sidewalk and you know when that happens that spring can't be far off.

It's been a couple of months of high spirits for me this year. Usually January and February are not very happy months for me, but this year the spirit is soaring, and the positive mindset continues to lift me through the grey skies and cold days. Ian is here and has begun to make our Sunday mornings his own. The Council is alive with new ideas coming forward and spirited conversation around new beginnings and new possibilities.

We welcomed the neighborhood to a Mardi Gras Saturday night with a good turnout despite the bitter cold night. We will celebrate a Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper and again open the doors to one and all. The announcement of a new music director has the choir's spirits soaring, and everyone else as well, as one more piece of the puzzle falls into place as we complete our staff

complement. Please thank Wendy Edey, Jennifer McPhee, Carla Janzen and Len Penner for their patience and dedication in keeping music alive in our congregation while we searched for Amy's replacement.

Now if we can solve the Child, Youth and Family worker position and have someone who can take over planning and executing programs for our children and youth and hopefully help draw new families to our community we could complete this part of our puzzle.

We move into the future with high hopes and high spirits, opportunities abound to become more involved in our congregation and with outreach to the community around us. I also would like to remind everyone that we are still in a permission model. This means that if you have an idea for outreach or fundraising or another activity that falls within our mission statement and our visioning statement then feel free to seek out others who share your same passion and run with it. The only time you need to come to Council is if you need funding. If you need building spaces please check with Janice for availability.

Welcome to Spring, it is coming, really it is.



*Paul Verdin
Council Chair*

Make Tax Time Pay

By Kathy Poechman

Mill Woods is again participating in the MTTP program run by E4C. We will be a free tax preparation site for low income families and individuals in the Mill Woods area. We will be operating on Tuesday evenings in March and Tuesday and Thursday evenings in April all from 6 – 9 pm. We have a new coordinator this year. Her name is Nancy Appleby and while she is not a congregational member she has worked with us for the last 2 years and we have gotten to know her very well. She has her own accounting firm and lots of experience with doing taxes. She is also a wonderful person who is very committed to the idea of MTTP and to our site. We also have a great group of volunteers who act as tax preparers, benefit specialists, or greeters who work directly with the clients. We also have a volunteer

scheduler and client appointment scheduler who work behind the scenes but are very important to the program. Some folks are returning and others are new this year. We welcome them all and know that we will have a great year helping lots of folks do their taxes – some of them for the first time and others for the first time in many years. Every evening we provide a snack of cookies and beverages to both our volunteers and clients. We would really appreciate it if 2 or 3 folks would make us some cookies – we do seem to go through a lot! Thanks to Jane Ward who has already made some for us. Look to next month's newsletter for an update on how things are going. If you would like to join us or want more information feel free to call Kathy Poechman at 780 463-7750.



Facing the Future - An Update

You will remember that last fall we kicked off a project to study what our congregation can become in the future. I want to use this issue and future issues of Connections to keep you informed on what we are doing.

Our group consists of

- Nancy Siever and Carla Janzen from the Stewardship Team
- Randy Round - a member of the financial team at Presbytery as well as a member of our Council
- Laine Pickle - Council Member at Large with a special interest in tracking our 5 year business plan
- Tim Janewski - Council Chair Elect
- and me, Linda Paddon - coordinator of the *Facing the Future* work.

Our first step was to have conversations with members of the congregation. To date we have met with more than 20 people. We are also collecting related articles to share with each other. By the time you read this, we will have met to consider what we have heard from the individuals

we spoke with looking for common ground. At that meeting we will also discuss an article found on page 41 of the January issue of the United Church Observer titled *It's not your fault*.

www.ucobserver.org/opinion/2014/01/reality_check

It is important to remember that the entire United Church is facing the same challenges and is asking the same questions. The 41st General Council meeting in 2012 established a "Comprehensive Review Task Group" to work in this area. Their web address is www.united-church.ca/general-council/gc41/comp-review You may want to look at their national discussion site at www.unitedfuture.ca. Another site worth checking out is the Moderator's blog at www.garypaterson.ca.

We welcome everyone into the discussion. If you hear stories or read articles that catch your interest, please share them with us. My e-mail address is lpaddon@shaw.ca or you can catch one of us on Sunday morning.

Linda Paddon

COVENANTING SERVICE

Mark your Calendars!

On Sunday, March 16 there will be a Covenanting Service at Mill Woods United Church. This service is the formal service between Ian Kellogg, Edmonton Presbytery and Mill Woods United Church. The service will start at 7:00 p.m. and will be followed by coffee and cake.

Participants in the service will include:

- Presider: Rev. Merv Gallant, Chairperson of Edmonton Presbytery, St. Albert's United Church
- Preaching: Rev. Catherine Faith McLean, St. Paul's United Church
- Joint Search Committee

It would be great to see many from our congregation attending and supporting Ian in his ministry with us.



CONFIRMATION CLASSES SPRING 2014

Are you in Grade 7 to Grade 12 (or know someone who is in one of those grades) and interested in the big questions of life, faith, and love? If so, we hope you will consider joining our confirmation class this spring. It will take place over four Sunday afternoons between April 27 and May 18 following the normal Mill Woods United service. We will begin with lunch and sharing, and then explore the following topics:

- 1) Life as a journey of faith; 2) Why God?;
- 3) Why Christ?; and 4) Why Church?

Those who want to do so would then be confirmed as a member of the church during the Sunday worship service on May 25, 2014.

We will be contacting people whom we think might be interested, but please feel free to also let us know at mwuc1@telus.net if you think you might like to attend.



Council members this year have agreed to humor me and participate in this little exercise. Each newsletter is highlighting a Council member and sharing with you their answers to my

20 Questions

This month we hear from Lesley Verdin, in her own words, my current position on Council is Presbytery Representative..

1. If you didn't do what you do for a living, what would you be?

The owner/bartender/cook/barrista of a Very Popular Neighbourhood Diner Coffee Pub.



2. Who would play you in the movie of your life story?

Sandra Bullock

3. What three famous people would you have dinner with?

Jean Nidetch, Donny Osmond, Carol Burnett

4. What's your favorite Edmonton landmark?

The Zoo

5. What do you enjoy most about Mill Woods United Church?

The family/community sense of acceptance and belonging

6. What is your favorite hymn?

"Go Make a Difference"

7. What's playing in your iPod or cd player right now?

Taylor Swift (not my choice), Amy Grant (my choice)

8. If you were marooned on an island, what would be the one item you'd want with you?

My best friend

9. Who's your hero?

My sister-in-law

10. What's the one gadget you can't live without?

My grater (cheese, garlic, lemon zest)

11. What's your favorite restaurant?

Vinny's Bar (best calamari) Sicillian Pasta Kitchen

12. What's your culinary specialty?

Soup/dessert

13. What's your favorite vacation spot?

The Okanagan with family.

14. What's your proudest moment?

Being a mom

15. What is at the top of your to-do list?

Finish the prayer shawl in time

16. What is your favorite animal?

Dog

17. What is your guilty pleasure?

Crab dipped in butter

18. What is your secret talent?

I can Tat

19. What are your words to live by?

"It's choice, not chance, that determines our destiny."

20. What is your favorite Mill Woods United Church memory?

The day Gaelyn was baptized - the boys sang to her - Wendy played - and she slept through it all!



From President of Alberta and Northwest Conference

Dear friends,

I am so grateful to have served our Conference in the role of President Elect and now to be President. Here are a few of the things I have been able to attend/participate in since May 2012:

- General Council 2012,
- Conference Executive and sub-executive meetings 2012-14,
- Two "Truth and Reconciliation Commission" hearing plus a "Remembering the Children" Feast, planning meetings for the next National event and an information session in Edmonton.
- Celebration of Ministry planning and leadership 2013 and 2014 (May 31 and June 1, 2014 in Lethbridge).
- National Presidents/Presidents Elect/Leading Elders connection meetings: one at General Council offices and three via conference call. Our next face to face meeting is in Toronto in April 2014.
- Conference newcomers event (November 2013),
- Glad and Generous Hearts (mid triennium event) planning and co-leadership 2012-3.

Presbytery visits in 2013

NORTHERN LIGHTS (September)
EDMONTON (November)

Presbytery visits in 2014 (booked so far)

ST PAULS (February)
RED DEER (March)
YELLOWHEAD (May)
FOOTHILLS (June)

This year we all have the opportunity to be a part of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. The Alberta national event will be March 27-30 in Edmonton (Shaw Conference Center) and many national General Council staff folks are joining our Conference to co-host the churches' area of this event. While the work of reconciliation (healing, storytelling, confessing, forgiving) will continue long afterwards, the opportunity to be a part of this moment in history - the uncovering and recording of the realities and policies of Residential Schools - is ours to experience. I pray these days will lead us to the "good new days" wherein we continue to listen and tell truths. For more information see the Conference website and www.trc.ca

This triennium (between General Council 2013 and 2015) our whole church – from its smallest community of faith to its largest inner city soup kitchens– are prayerfully reviewing our vision and structure as a church. The aptly named "Comprehensive Review" will listen, in this middle year, to Presbyteries (and equivalents across the country) and individuals (through interactive web conversations) to share the wisdom and experiences of current responsibilities and needs. After listening deeply to one another we hope to have a denomination that (structurally and spiritually) is even better able to participate in God's activity in the world. For more information see: www.unitedfuture.ca

Writing to you in peace and in hope,
Leigh Sinclair, President



CALLING CRAFTERS AND BAKERS OF ALL AGES: Cupcakes and Birthday Cards Needed for the TRC National Event

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) is holding its Alberta National Event in Edmonton from March 27 to 30. During this gathering many survivors of the Indian Residential Schools will be sharing their truth about their experience at the schools. We are invited to come and witness, learn and celebrate the resilience of Aboriginal cultures!

At previous TRC events, a Birthday celebration has become an important part of the closing ceremonies on Sunday afternoon. The singing of Happy Birthday and the gift of a cupcake and a birthday card have become symbolic gestures for all of the cultural and community rituals the children missed because they were at Indian Residential School. It has been a time for laughter, for healing and for celebration for all present. We will be continuing with this celebration in Edmonton. The "Birthday Celebration" will be held on Sunday, March 30 at about 5:00 PM. We would like to give a cupcake and card to everyone present at the closing ceremonies. We are anticipating we will need 2000 cupcakes and 2000 birthday cards. This is a great way to engage the children and youth in your communities, families and congregations.



The Cupcakes: As you make your cupcakes, imagine the happiness and good wishes for the ones who will receive them. Cupcakes should be made "nut free" and could be frozen. We can't guarantee that we can return your containers so please try to send them in containers that we can donate to a Thrift store or recycle. We don't have any storage space at the Shaw Conference Centre, so we are asking people to bring their cupcakes to the Churches Listening Area at the Shaw Conference Centre on Sunday, March 30, 2014 anytime after 2:00 p.m. To help us plan for the cupcakes, please contact Lois Evans at 780-434-4330 or llevans@shaw.ca as soon as possible and let her know how many dozen cupcakes

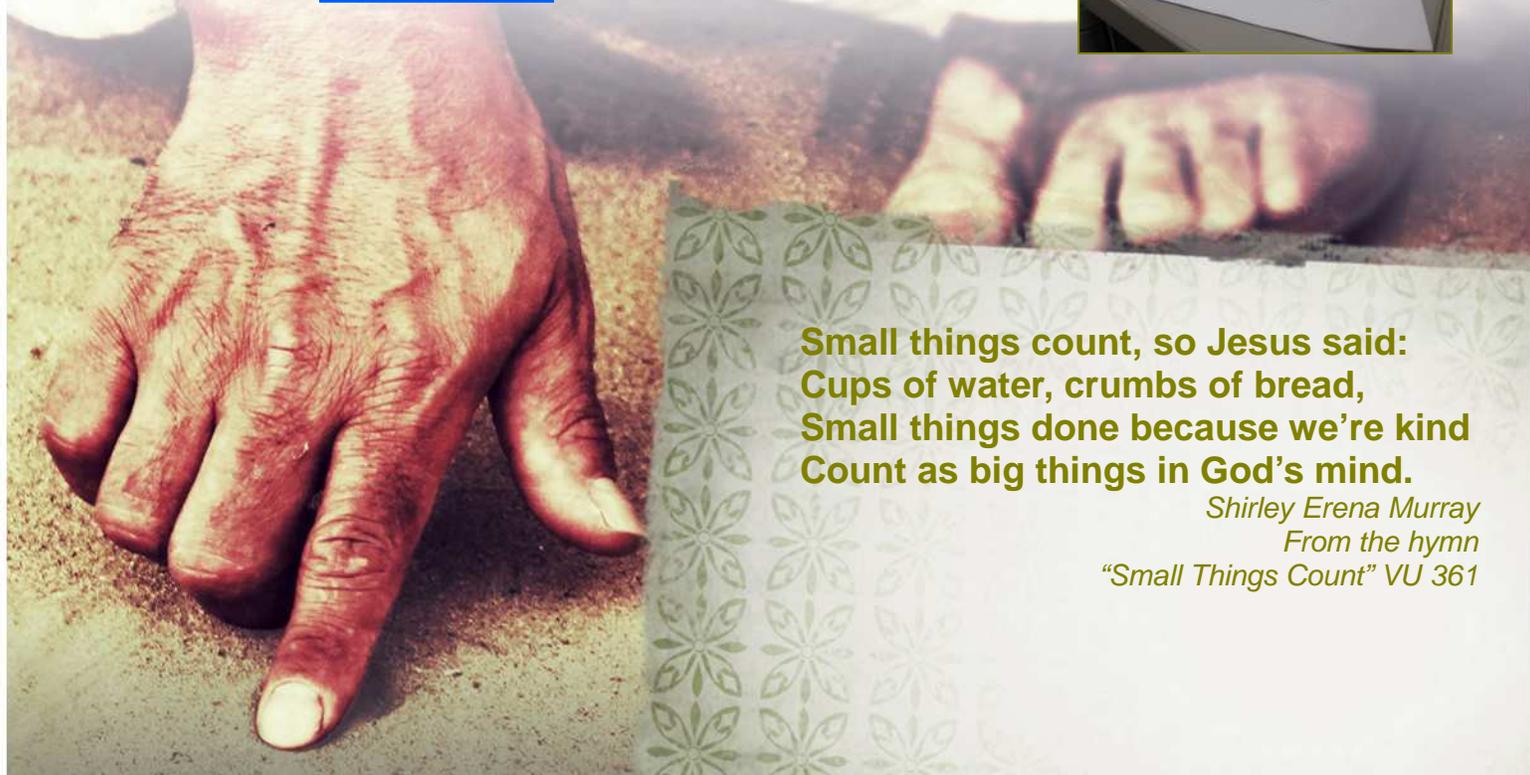
your family, your congregation or your group will bring. You can also contact Lois with any questions you might have about the cupcakes.

The Birthday Cards: The cards can be any size (e.g. 5 ½" by 8 ½" or 4 ¼" by 5 ½") and preferably hand-made with or without envelopes. You can deliver the cards to the Churches Listening Area anytime during the National Event or mail them prior to the National Event to Debbie Hubbard at 13 Andrew Crescent, St. Albert, T8N 2V2. Any questions? Please contact Debbie at trc@anwconf.com or 780-458-9286.



**Small things count, so Jesus said:
Cups of water, crumbs of bread,
Small things done because we're kind
Count as big things in God's mind.**

*Shirley Erena Murray
From the hymn
"Small Things Count" VU 361*





Mill Woods United Church

March 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<i>1</i> 9 am-3 pm SDA
<i>2</i> 10:30 am Worship- Transfiguration	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i> 5-7 pm Pancake Supper 5:30-6:30 pm Food & Clothing Bank 7-9 pm Tai Chi	<i>5</i> 4-5 pm Little Green Thumbs 5:30-7 pm Yoga	<i>6</i> 5:30-6:30 pm Food & Clothing Bank 7 pm Choir	<i>7</i> Office Closed	<i>8</i> 9 am-3 pm SDA
<i>9</i> 10:30 am Worship-Lent 1 Communion	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i> 5:30-6:30 pm Food & Clothing Bank 6-9 pm MTTP 7-9 pm Tai Chi 7 pm Council	<i>12</i> 4-5 pm Little Green Thumbs 5:30 Community Garden Potluck 5:30-7 pm Yoga	<i>13</i> 5:30-6:30 pm Food & Clothing Bank 7 pm Choir 7 pm PSM Mtg	<i>14</i> Office Closed	<i>15</i> 9 am-1 pm SDA
<i>16</i> 10:30 am Worship-Lent 2 Baptism 7 pm Covenant- ing Service	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i> 5:30-6:30 pm Food & Clothing Bank 6-9 pm MTTP 7-9 pm Tai Chi 7 pm Worship	<i>19</i> 4-5 pm Little Green Thumbs 5:30-7 pm Yoga	<i>20</i> 5:30-6:30 pm Food & Clothing Bank 7 pm Choir	<i>21</i> Office Closed	<i>22</i> 9 am-1 pm SDA
<i>23</i> 10:30 am Worship-Lent 3	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i> 5:30-6:30 pm Food & Clothing Bank 6-9 pm MTTP	<i>26</i> 4-5 pm Little Green Thumbs 5:30-7 pm Yoga	<i>27</i> 5:30-6:30 pm Food & Clothing Bank 7 pm Choir	<i>28</i> Office Closed	<i>29</i> 9 am-1 pm SDA
<i>30</i> 10:30 am Worship-Lent 4	<i>31</i>					