

The Olinda Outpost

Monthly Newsletter of the [Unitarian Universalist Church of Olinda](#)
2953 Olinda Side Road, Ruthven, Ontario, N0P 2G0
Toni Janik & Bobbye Baylis, Editors

Sunday Services 10:30 am
December 2022



Date	Speaker	Title	Musician(s)
Dec. 4	Rev. Rod Solano-Quesnel	<i>The Curiosity Gap</i> - Some answers lead to more questions. This can offer a path to wider wisdom... or to shoddy information. Want to know more?	Toni Janik
Dec. 11	Rev. Rod Solano-Quesnel	<i>Stellar Apple Pie</i> - Have you ever made apple pie from scratch? Like, really from scratch? It may take longer than you think!	Baylis-Stone Trio + Fred Butzen
Dec. 18	Rev. Rod Solano-Quesnel	<i>Hibernation</i> - Winterizing things is part of this season. Sometimes, that means winterizing ourselves. And this can offer welcome outcomes.	Lorie Lyons
Dec. 24 5 pm	Rev. Rod Solano-Quesnel	<i>Housewarming (Christmas Eve Service)</i> - Join us for an evening of carols before cozying up at home for the end of the year.	Baylis-Stone Trio
Jan. 1	Congregants	<i>New Year's Gifts (online only)</i> - An opportunity to start the year by sharing your messages of hope, blessings and inspiration, with musical interludes, from the comfort of home.	Lorie Lyons

The building is open for in-person services following a COVID-19 protocol requiring masks and maintaining a 2 meter distance. The services will also continue to be broadcast via Zoom. The website, uuOlinda.org, will be kept up-to-date regarding services and meetings.

Rev. Rod is publishing his reflections on the website. You can access them by going to UUOlinda.org and clicking on the appropriate Recent Post (upper right-hand corner.) His reflections are also being mailed to those who prefer to read printed materials.

Report from the Board

We are all looking forward to the end of Covid-19 and the return to maskless conversations, hymn singing, and lively discussions during live coffee hour. But Covid is still dangerous, with new variants that threaten surges spreading as we gather together in close quarters indoors. Even hard lockdowns as in China's strict zero-covid policy are insufficient to protect from outbreaks. In Canada, we are shocked to see covid problems, compounded by crowded and understaffed emergency rooms, that together with a deficit in long-term care facilities, can immobilize ambulance services and imperil lives.

As serious as our local problems are, they pale in comparison to the tragedies now facing so many others of the current world population of 8 billion. From flooding in Bangladesh, hunger in East Africa, and heat waves in Australia, caused largely by climate change driven by carbon emissions, to deadly barrages of hundreds of powerful missile strikes daily, targeting homes, schools, hospitals, and electrical infrastructure in an invasion of Ukraine by Russia, driven by delusional greed that seems to reflect a magnified horror-show version of the gang violence that now makes Haiti wild and dangerous after its recent earthquakes. Our small blue marble outpost of life in this vast Universe is in need of serious healing during celebrations this Christmas season.

We at UUOlinda have taken a cautious approach to in-person celebrations, relaxing enforced mask mandates while still encouraging some masking with appropriate distancing. This worked well for two memorial services in November, one for Marion Thompson and another for Wilf Innerd, both with refreshments. Rev. Rod has been including some pre-recorded hymns, so that listeners from home can sing along as long as they are muted. But now, at the end of November, we are also experimenting with live (but limited and masked) singing of the hymns in the sanctuary. We hope this will prove safe and successful so that we can enjoy live singing of Christmas cheer as we share its healing powers with the world!

In a step to returning to pre-covid traditions, we plan an in-person **Christmas Eve service, starting at 5 pm, Dec. 24**. While it will be broadcast online as well, we encourage those who want to celebrate the season in person to join us in the church sanctuary for a candle-lighting service. But first, thanks to the work and generosity of John Upcott, we now have a live Christmas tree in the sanctuary to adorn. Please plan to help us decorate it on **Friday, December 9 at 5 pm**. Carols, cookies, and hot cider will also be on hand. On Sunday, December 11, Bobbye, Bill, and Ray look forward to being joined by expert flautist/recorder player Fred Butzen from Chicago to provide music.

Bill Baylis, President

Clergy Connection

The past month has been difficult for our church, as we have been impacted by the closely-timed deaths of **Marion Thompson** and **Wilf Innerd**, both of whom we honoured in November. I am grateful to have met them both and shared some of their lifetimes with them. I am also grateful for the volunteers who have taken many supportive roles in the preparation and conducting of their memorial services.

Although Charlotte Innerd wasn't able to directly present her words for the Nov. 6 service, we were still able to hear her perspectives and the collective work of the Archives Team, as channeled by Sue Markham. This was nicely complemented by Carol Hylton's presentation of the heirloom watch for the church's musicians.

The latest set of tests by the **Tech Team** have been very fruitful in running much smoother services, which can be appreciated both in-person and at-home. Upgrades include a new internet connection and computer, which together offer better sound reception and clearer broadcasting capabilities.

The Board has also moved to reinstate **limited live singing** – with masks on – in the Sanctuary. This will likely be a combination of communal singing, some singing performed by lead singers only, as well as hymn recordings. This will allow us some opportunities for experimentation with our worship format.

I attended the online **Carters Law Seminar** for Charities & Not-for-Profit Sector on Nov. 10. I've often found these useful in better understanding some of the nuances that affect organizations such as our incorporated church. It featured guest speaker Sharmila Khare, a fellow UU from Ottawa First, who is the newest Director General for charities at the CRA, and it was gratifying to hear her speak in her new capacity. I also met with the **UU Ministers of Southern Ontario** (UUMOSO) for a one-day retreat in Mississauga on Nov. 21.

We will be having our **Christmas Eve service on Saturday, Dec. 24 at 5pm**. The Sunday Services Committee decided that there will be **no Sunday service on Dec. 25**, and the **Jan. 1 Sunday service will be online only**. We hope these options will offer you and our volunteers an opportunity to stay at home and "hibernate", while still having a time for shared worship on both those week-ends. Now that meeting in-person has become more of an option, we also celebrate that we can *choose* to stay at home from time to time!

This has been a heavy month for our church. It has also been a time of honouring our past and the people who have been part of it. We will begin looking at the future in anticipation as this Advent season begins.

Warm regards,
--Rev. Rod

Important Dates

Committee meetings may either be in-person or via Zoom. Committee chairs need to notify their members how the meeting will be held when they send out meeting reminders.

Dec. 4 Noon
Sunday Services Meeting

Dec. 9 5 pm
Christmas Tree Decoration

Dec. 11 Noon
Congregational Budget Meeting

Dec. 15 7 pm
Board Meeting

Jan. 3
January Newsletter Reports Due

Jan. 22 Noon
Social Responsibility Committee Meeting

Jan. 26 10 am
Membership Committee Meeting

The Meaning of Christmas?

Everyone has their own view of what Christmas is all about. Some come from a purely “religious” point of view. Others come from the point of view that it is a time for “family gathering” and gift giving and receiving. Your view no doubt has to do with many factors, including your family traditions, your age and the financial status of your household. It can be a magical time, a time full of traditions, or “a chore”, a very stressful and overwhelming time, depending on the responsibilities you have, or have taken on, at the Holiday time. If you are five, you likely can’t wait for Santa to arrive, assuming your household has the resources to buy gifts for under the tree. If you’re five, and your family is disadvantaged in any way, you are likely sad to see what others, with money, experience at Holiday time, but hopeful that a gift or two might arrive for you and your family. If you are fifty, you might be the family Matriarch who has taken on having all of the family at your home for a wonderful Holiday dinner, with all the trimmings. You are charged with shepherding the family off to Christmas Eve or Day services. Although you relish the thought of having the family home, and the sound of kids running through the house, it is a whole lot of work preparing the “perfect meal” and getting it on the table as if it was nothing. If you’re lucky, (and smart), you do a “pot-luck” style dinner, where those attending contribute something to the dinner, and therefore cut down your work, and increase your enjoyment of the event. And, if you’re really lucky, you haven’t forgotten to take the turkey out of the freezer, and the hydro doesn’t go off, just as you are cooking The Bird. And you’re super lucky if folks who are coming don’t arrive with unannounced guests who have tagged along, not thinking anything of it, as you have to figure out how to stretch the food to accommodate the extras. If you’re like my Grandmother was, she always put on a few extra potatoes, and made a bit more stuffing anyway, just in case. No matter what age you are, this might be the year that someone special passed away during the year, and you all are dealing with how strange it feels to have that empty chair.

I can still remember the Christmas Eve at our home, in 1954, when I was five years old. Our Holiday tradition was that we each could request two modest gifts that “Santa” could deliver, and my brother and I each had a Stocking that would be filled with smaller, usually practical, sometimes interesting, articles. We were fortunate that my Father was a Manager of a Department at Simpson Sears, so we were entitled to a discount of 25% on many things we purchased there. The house rule was, that if it couldn’t be purchased at Sears, we didn’t get it, unless we bought it for ourselves. This allowed my parents to be able to purchase more expensive gifts such as bicycles, which we might not otherwise be getting. We always received clothing, on mail order from the Sears Catalogue. We were allowed to browse the catalogue for our chosen gifts, which I recall had to be under a certain amount, including the discount. My father’s Father was visiting that Christmas, and was given my bedroom, so I was sleeping in the dining room on a roll-away bed. One room over from the Dining Room was the Living Room, where the fireplace was, our stockings were hung and the Christmas tree was. During the night, I heard a noise in the Living Room, and tiptoed to the Living Room to see what was going on. I think I expected to be a wide eyed kid seeing Santa there, but instead I saw my father, in his pajamas, with a Santa hat on, putting gifts in each of our stockings, and some under the tree. I never told my parents that that was the night that I stopped believing in Santa.

Our Holiday was usually filled with having family and friends over for dinner, as well as attending family gatherings at my Aunts’ or Cousins’ in Toronto. Gifts were exchanged; many delicious meals with home made pies and other wonderful desserts were consumed. My two “Maiden Aunts” as they were called, on my mother’s side, always hosted a big splash, with

The Meaning of Christmas? continued

probably around 25 of us there for dinner. If you were under 13 years old, you had to sit at the Kids Tables, which were in the end of the kitchen. If you were 13 or older, you were considered an adult, who knew how to behave at the table, and remembered all of your manners, especially “please and thank you”, and you were invited to say Grace. We all wore our “Sunday Best”. After dinner, and before dessert, we always played “Parlour Games” like Charades, in family teams. To be included in such “adult games”, as a youngster, was indeed an honour. And it was so delightful to see all of my elders “let down their hair”, so to speak, and have such fun playing Charades and the other “Parlour Games” we played.

One of my “Maiden Aunts” (an “Unclaimed Treasure” as my Father called Her), my Aunt Agnes, was a Senior Public Health Nurse, for many years in the City of Toronto, who made home visits all over her large area. Until I was a teen, every Holiday time, on a weekend before Christmas, she would have me come and stay for the weekend, and we would go Downtown on the trolley buses, and subway, as a treat. We would go and see the decorated Christmas windows of both Sears and Eaton’s, the two big catalogue competitors of the day, who also each had flagship stores side by side on Yonge Street. There would be crowds and crowds of folks there to enjoy the windows, and declare which ones were “better”. Of course, as a loyal youngster, I always favoured the ones by Sears, as that’s where my Father worked.

The weeks before Christmas always seemed to be not only a bit of a frenzy, but also a bit of a blur. Before you knew it, it was Christmas Eve. My Mother or Father made sure my brother and I got out to buy gifts for the other members of the family...modest ones purchased with what was left over from our allowances or paid chores. My Mother, being the consummate shopper, always started her Christmas shopping for us, and the rest of the extended family, right after Christmas, when all the “really big” sales were on. There was no such thing as “Black Friday” then, a “shopping holiday” after the U.S. Thanksgiving in November, that we seem to have borrowed from the Americans. My Father was a terrible shopper, it was something he had little skill or interest in, and had it not been for the intervention of my Mother, there would have been no presents under the tree from my parents. I vividly recall the last Christmas we all had together as a family, before my Father died unexpectedly. The tradition was to always have Christmas up at my parents’ winterized cottage in Tiverton, Ontario, east of Kincardine. My Father had to work right until noon on Christmas Eve Day, while my Mother, brother and I were able to go up a few days early, as soon as school was out for the Holidays. Just before that, my Mother had declared, once again, that she was not going to “bail” my Father out, and that he needed to put some effort into thinking about and purchasing the gifts he needed to get, in advance. As was my Father’s custom, gift buying was always left to the eleventh hour, quite literally, unless my Mother did “bail him out”, despite her threats to the contrary. So this Holiday, although my Mother HAD in fact purchased some gifts for herself (from him) and us, knowing my Father’s custom, she did not share with him that she had done so. So, on the way up to Tiverton from Oakville, where we lived at the time, my Father was left with a very limited number of places where gifts could be purchased, as in those days most stores closed in the early afternoon of Christmas Eve. That year, as we discovered while opening his gifts, he had found only a few gas stations and convenience type stores open, so our gifts were all things that could be purchased in a hurry at the cashier’s counter, like chocolate bars, pepperoni sticks, hand warmers, tins of pop, Kleenex, comics, and snow/ice scrapers and a box of chocolates (for my Mother). It was a time full of laughter at his “surprises”, some even wrapped, and then my Mother would bring out the “real gifts”, and he got the last laugh!

These days, we are a much smaller family, with two Corgis who *love* Christmas and, who, along with us, each have their own stocking, on our Stocking Tree. We have a few decorations in and out, and an LED Charlie Brown Tree. When we open gifts and stockings, we are truly grateful for the all the love in our household, and all our blessings... and then we watch football! Happy Holidays to all of you and yours, from Anne, Chanel, Oscar, and me!

Notices

Christmas Tree Decoration

Help Make Our Olinda Tree Beautiful!
December 9, 2022
5 pm

Congregational Budget Meeting

Vote on the 2023 Budget
December 11, 2022
At noon following the Zoom Service

New Year's Gift Service

Your opportunity to donate a short performance
from your home to the Zoom Service
on January 1, 2023

Suggestions:

Poem

Reading

Skit

Instrumental Piece

Please contact Bill or Bobbye Baylis
Before December 24, 2022
With your selection

January Soup Meal Order Form 2023



Toni Janik and Elaine Stevenson are thrilled to offer a contactless fund-raiser for congregants and friends. Pickup will be on Wednesday, January 25, 2023. Suggested donation is \$20 per meal, paid by e-transfer or cheque mailed to Helen Moore.

Each Meal will include a generous portion of soup, a bun and dessert.

Please place your orders before January 17th.

Please choose one or more of the following :

Soup: (1) Dill Pickle Vegetarian Soup

(2) Quinoa Veggie (Vegan)

(3) Four Cheese Tortellini (Vegetarian)

(4) Wonton

(5) Beef Barley

Dessert: Please choose (A) Regular OR (B) Sugar-free.

Please Choose Pickup Location:

(A) Elaine's front porch Olinda OR (B) Toni's front porch Windsor.

Pickup time—Wednesday January 25 from 11 AM to 6 PM.

Please specify what time you would like to pickup.

If you require pickup outside of these hours please call Toni.

To Place Your Order(s) - Call Toni at 519-966-6434 or

email djanik1@cogeco.ca

Finance Report

The Budget, distributed by mail on Nov. 20, is ready for your approval at the Congregational Budget Meeting after the service on Sunday, Dec. 11.

Various committees and trustees had input into this budget, but it mostly is based on past expenses and donations, recorded by our Treasurer, Helen Moore. Thank you, Helen, for your dedication to this work.

This Budget has been approved by the Finance Committee and by the Board of Directors and represents all of our best estimates. Please stay after "Coffee Hour" for this meeting or call in at 12 noon (So we can have a Quorum!) and join in the discussion of this important aspect of church life.

Note that this budget projects a 2023 deficit that is higher than that projected for 2022 (about \$7000), but about the same as had been projected for 2021. The actual result in 2021 was a surplus, due to not spending some budgeted amounts and extra-generous donations. In fact, our typical total budgeted expenditures average about \$7000 more than we actually spend. This is because of our practice of making sure each line item has a budget to try to cover all possible expenses. Our committees are very careful not to spend any of the church's money unless absolutely necessary.

This is why we are comfortable presenting a budget showing a deficit of \$9,280. To achieve this, we had to request a larger transfer from the Lloyd Fund. While higher than normal, it is well within the limit of 10% of the value of the fund. As has long been our practice, we will not transfer any more from the fund than is actually needed. Some years in the past we have transferred only up to 50% of what was budgeted, and once we took nothing!

From the Annual Report of 2017: "In operating the Lloyd Fund, the objectives are

1. to provide a satisfactory annual yield for the support of church operations;
2. to maintain some investment in equities which hopefully may increase in value to at least keep pace with inflation; and
3. to compensate for reduced income in interest and distributions by using some of the gains in market value to support transfer payments to the Church Operating Fund."

See you at the meeting on December 11!
Bobby Baylis, Finance Chair

Social Responsibility Activities

There is Great Need.....



As the cost of living escalates more and more people are finding it trying to make ends meet. I know this is a common refrain in the media but it is borne out in reports on the numbers of people now relying on food banks. Stretched family finances means even those employed are facing

tough decisions around feeding and clothing their families. As if yearlong is not difficult enough it is especially important during the Christmas Season.

Having this in mind, I would like to remind us that we do have a hamper to collect food goods for Food Banks at our church and alternatively I would like to remind you if you are out in the community to drop off goods or money at Food Banks. When I checkout at grocery stores I ask where the Food Bank Donation bags are and often purchase one or two. This is an immediate action that helps.

It would be wonderful if these items can be collected by the end of each month for distribution.

It is also a reality that with the winter there is a need for warm thermal clothing, hats, mitts, scarves for those in need in the community as well as for the migrant workers. Justicia4Migrant Workers often has regular events to promote and support migrant workers in our communities and donating through that organization is very effective. If you have items that you could give please call me or even more to the festive season perhaps choose to add adult sized mittens, gloves and scarves to our Olinda Christmas tree.



If you would like to generally donate warm apparel and hygienic products within Leamington, you could do so through St. John's Anglican Church, 60 Erie St North.

There are also a couple of groups that are in need of plastic milk bags that are either knitted or crocheted into sleeping mats for homeless or to other countries in need. If these bags could be collected at the church, then I can deliver them to those groups. Christmas is a gracious time of giving and sharing. Making it happen throughout the year seems more urgent than ever.

With gratitude,
Sue Markham

Caring Committee Report

We warmly welcome you all to the month of December. May the joy of this month bring you and your family long life and prosperity.

Many thanks to all for reaching out, to shut-ins and fellow congregants, living alone, either by e-mail or phone conversations. Always comforting to hear a friendly voice.

It is with great sadness to announce the passing of Marion Thompson on Nov. 3, 2022, at the age of 102. She played many roles over the years, including being the treasurer along with being involved with yard sales and bake sales to name a few. Also, a dear friend to all, Wilfred Innerd who passed Nov. 11, 2022, at the age of 87. He was an active church member where he sat on many committees including being the church president. He was the go-to person if a speaker was needed. He thought life was about service to others and being prepared to take leadership roles. Good advice to follow. Both these church members will be greatly missed.

On Dec. 1, 2022, our very own Buster Ringrose will be celebrating his 95th birthday, wishing him all the best.

The caring committee elves are busy preparing their unique Xmas treat boxes for the shut-ins, which will be delivered in time for the holidays.

Christmas is a time to celebrate with friends and family. Sending lots of joy, smiles, and laughter this holiday season.

Submitted by: Linda Upcott

Note from the Treasurer

November was a busy and sad month with the loss of two long time members.

By now you have received the Letter of Appeal, record of your donations through October 31st, a pledge card and a copy of the budget. Please return the pledge card, if you are willing, or call me at (519) 776-4068 or send an email so that I can record your pledge of what you plan to give to the church in 2023.

Thanks for your continuing donations for the operation of the church, the Christmas families and donations in memory of Marion Thompson and Wilf Innerd. Thanks also for all your extra hours as we celebrated the lives of Marion and Wilf.

In order to receive an income tax receipt for 2022, your donation must arrive by December 30.

Helen Moore

Caring Committee Members

Carol Hylton
Carmen Smith
Anne Purtell
Linda Upcott