



# Horizons

Newsletter of Eastside United Church



FALL 2016

OPEN MINDS. OPEN HEARTS. OPEN DOORS.

## Crew from Eastside Basks in the Glow of Skylight

by Janet Bjorndahl, Sarah Tkachuk, and Rachel MacDonald

**T**his summer, a group from Eastside joined Russell in attending the 2nd Annual Skylight Festival of Arts, Faith and Justice in Paris, Ontario. Janet Bjorndahl, Sarah Tkachuk and Rachel MacDonald were among the over 500 participants. Here is how they each describe their experience at Skylight. We will also be hearing from each of them in three separate worship services over the coming months.

### Janet Bjorndahl: "Fun! Informative! Thought-provoking!"

Those are the first three words I think of when I think of Skylight 2016.

*Fun* because there were several singer/song-writers there, from the lively sounds of Jeffery Straker to the more laid-back vocals of Matt Epp, to the passionate protest songs of Grace Petrie. Great fun to sing along with, and to watch the children who were uninhibited enough to dance. And then there was Beer and Hymns (and saxophone) – need I say more?

### Informative and thought-provoking:

Bishop Mark MacDonald, National Indigenous Bishop of the Anglican Church, spoke of mourning and hope, and emphasized the role of the church in both the brokenness and the healing of our relationship with First Nations peoples.

Kairos conducted a Blanket Exercise – a great way to learn and reflect on First Nations history.

Jordan Cantwell, the moderator of the United Church, brought a vision of a church that might be freed to become more prophetic as it finds itself more on the margins of society.

Brian's sessions on the Enneagram challenged us to reflect on the divine within.

Peterson Toscano described a conversation that taught a former enemy how to be sincere in seeking forgiveness.

These were just some of the opportunities to listen, learn, reflect and grow during Skylight 2016.

**Continued next page...**



TOP TO BOTTOM: Janet Bjorndahl, Sarah Tkachuk and Rachel MacDonald attended Skylight Festival this summer!



## ***Eastside at Skylight, continued***

### **Sarah Tkachuk: "I approached Skylight with excitement and uncertainty"**

I approached Skylight with excitement, however not knowing what to expect. The weekend was filled with opportunities to connect, share stories, learn and grow. We heard messages from speakers who challenged us to think about our place in the world, and called us to social action:

Christa Hesselink, who talked about her book *Life's Great Dare*. Christa shared her faith story and her message of risking everything for an abundant life.

Raheel Raza, a Muslim Canadian, spoke of diversity and the need for religions to work together to share a message of peace and love, in a world that is divided by fear and hate.

Peterson Toscano talked about society's views on gender and taught us about non-traditional gender roles in the bible.

Max Kennel talked about violence, and how violence can be rooted in our need to impress our own perspective on others, even in our conversations and our personal interactions.

Jordan Cantwell spoke of the place of the United Church in our community, and rather than lamenting our shrinking numbers, we should celebrate that the church can be nimble because we have shed the burden of our size.

We had the opportunity to listen to amazing singer-songwriters from around the world, who inspired us with their messages of love, peace and social action.

Layered on to all of this were opportunities for great conversations, and meeting new and interesting people. Skylight was celebrated on Sunday morning, with a church service in the fair grounds, where we were joined by some members of local congregations.

In a summer filled with negative news stories such as the US presidential election, the Brexit vote, and stories of war and hate, the speakers and musicians at Skylight gave a message of peace, love and faith in the world. I know that I left with an overwhelming sense of hope.

*Are you ready, to walk this way?  
Are you ready, for a better day?  
Ready to rise in a higher place  
Ready to kiss the face of grace  
Are you ready, to walk this way?*

From the song "Are you ready" by  
Martyn Joseph

*BELOW LEFT: Martyn Joseph leads  
Songwriters Circle with Jeffery Straker,  
Grace Petrie (& Caitlin) and Matt Epp.  
BELOW RIGHT: Music, balloons and the  
great outdoors... must be Skylight  
Festival Worship!*

### **Rachel MacDonald: *Refreshing, interesting and nourishing!***

Skylight Music Festival was, for me, refreshing, interesting and nourishing! There are so few places where progressive Christianity is explored and celebrated through music, art, prayer, speakers and other activities.

The Festival was small enough that you could get to know people, including some of the musicians. It was great to share the experience with five from our church. Along with five other people who I knew from Regina, and lots of other friendly people, it felt like a small town.

The activities were diverse, from songwriters talking about their creative process, to a prayer seminar with a powerful forgiveness liturgy, to a talk on how our media society is taking away childhood, to inspiration to take God's Great Dare, to concerts of richly-envisioned songs that distill truths from the singers' lives. When I needed a break there was an outdoor living room where random strangers gathered under the sunny sky, to engage in lighthearted or sometimes deep conversation.

I felt safe there, and felt free enough to take time for myself, or have quiet talks when not taking in meaningful speakers and concerts. The accommodations with four women in one room, were homey and cozy, like a slumber party. I would definitely go another time and encourage others to check it out next year!



# Minister's Reflection for Fall

by Russell Mitchell-Walker

*The primary result of mature religion is to help us grow up early so we don't keep going down the same dead ends and making the same mistakes over and over again—*

*The wise ones recognize that without a certain degree of inner freedom, you cannot and will not love. Spirituality is about finding that freedom. Most of us didn't grow up thinking of religion as a path of freedom. We were taught a set of prescriptions, dos and don'ts, musts, oughts, and shoulds—against which we pushed back, like children always do. Yes, some amount of structure is important, as I tried to say in my book *Falling Upward*. [1] But that's just first-level growth, and far too much religion stays right there, "milk instead of meat," as Paul puts it (1 Corinthians 3:2).*

I have been receiving and reading [Richard Rohr's daily meditations](#) and have found them very insightful and helpful. This quote was from one of them in late August. His theme for the last two weeks has been "Letting Go". It can be a difficult thing for us to let go of that which we need to. Whether it is letting go of an issue that has been over-occupying our mind, a belief that no longer serves us, control over the choices of our children (young or adults!) or the movement from one season

to the next. Sometimes we find ourselves moving into change like the season changes. Richard Rohr talks about this in his recent book *Falling Upward* in which he talks about two halves of life, one of building a container or identity and the second half in which we dismantle the container and find a deeper meaning in life and of God or the Divine. This will be the book study that the Craft/Study group will embark upon this fall. It is also about redefining and understanding what religion is and can be for us, unpacking what it has been, and how institutional, western religion may not have served us the best it could have, as it buys into the dominant culture. So we explore how we can deepen our faith, and what that means for deepening our spirituality and relationship with the Divine.

This is just one opportunity to explore this fall. At several points during worship this fall, we will be hearing the experiences of those who went to [Skylight](#) Festival of Arts, Faith and Justice. The children and youth will be creating a video of a story to offer in worship on Children's Sunday November 20. There is an opportunity to explore your faith and what the church believes (youth and adults together) through Faith Exploration. We can explore how we engage with our neighbourhood as a church through the book study, The

New Parish. This is more than a book, it is a movement. There is a 3 week video series that redefines the story of Adam and Eve and the Fall: *Exposing the Myth of Sin and Separation* by Stan Mitchell of Gracepointe Church, a Progressive Evangelical church near Nashville. We also continue with our Family Dinners, and Film and Faith. This sounds like a lot, and it is. It won't all happen at once and what we do will depend on your responses and interest in some of these programs through our [program survey](#). I hope that you will be able to find something to engage in and find it lifegiving, challenging, and inspiring.

As we move through the seasons of the fall, may you be able to let go of summer, holding on to all the good it held for you and embrace the colours, changes, reflective time that this season can be. May you draw on the support around you to be able to let go of what you need to let go of, so that new life and energy can emerge and blossom.

Blessings for a wonderful Fall season!

Russell Mitchell-Walker

Diaconal Minister



## This year's theme: The Spirituality of "The Better Man"

We all know what it means to be a "Good Man", but how do we raise our male children to be those same "Good Men", and what role does spirituality play in their making? This year's conference features keynote speaker Gary Paterson as well as a long list of workshops, musicians and worship leaders. *Please speak to Russell if you are interested in attending the conference with a group of men from Eastside. Visit <http://banffmen.org/> for more info.*



## IMCF Breakfast

*Eastside continues its involvement with Indian Metis Christian Fellowship by preparing and serving breakfast the fourth Saturday of each month, from 9 am to 12 noon.*

Six volunteers are needed to help make this happen. If you are able to spare any time at all, as your schedule allows, you are more than welcome. Volunteers typically help with setting up tables and chairs; laying place settings at the tables; preparing and cooking breakfast; clean up including washing dishes and putting away tables and chairs. All volunteers are invited to join in for breakfast and conversation, the emphasis is on fellowship. IMCF is a very family oriented facility; please talk to me if your children would like to be involved.

**Our next breakfast is Saturday, September 24 and the following is October 22.** Please contact Peter Braun if you are interested in helping on one of these, or a future, date.



### CONTACT INFORMATION

If you would like to volunteer with the IMCF Breakfast please contact:

PETER BRAUN

[peterbraun@myaccess.ca](mailto:peterbraun@myaccess.ca)

306-789-3830

## Blanket Exercise Sunday, November 6

We will be serving lunch following 11:15 am worship and then participating in a Blanket Exercise following. Please join us!

## Welcome back to Sunday School!

by Amanda Tessier

It's that time again!! Hope everyone had a wonderful summer. Now we're back in groove and ready to move into another exciting year of adventures! **Kickoff Sunday** is on September 11 and registration for Sunday School will be available. Sunday School will begin on September 18 with some 'get started' games and treats! Please make sure to register for Sunday School after service on September 18.

This year Sunday School will be taught by Taylor Balfour and other volunteers. We will be journeying through our interfaith curriculum, continuing from last season. We will also be working on a little surprise to share with the congregation so don't miss out! All children ages 3-12 are welcome! If you have any questions please contact Amanda Tessier, the Sunday School Coordinator, [a.c.tessier@hotmail.com](mailto:a.c.tessier@hotmail.com) or 306-527-5570.



## Exposing the Myth of Sin and Separation

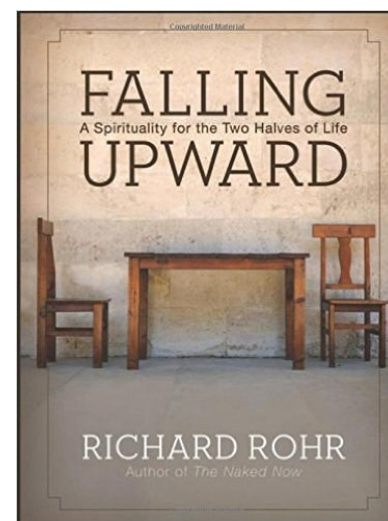
Are you interested in a different and refreshing perspective on the story of Adam and Eve and the banishment from the Garden? It is not about Sin, but Shame, according to Stan Mitchell. Stan is the pastor of Grace Point Church in Nashville, a progressive evangelical community, and is doing a lot of rethinking of theology. This three-part video series will explore the Myth of the Sin and Separation in the story of Adam and Eve. This will run if there is enough interest, so Let Russell know if you are interested.

## Craft/Study Group Resumes with New Book September 15

Eastside's Craft Study Group will resume Thursday, September 15 at 1:30 in the afternoon. This fall, the group will delve into a new book by Richard Rohr entitled *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*.

From amazon.ca: "In *Falling Upward*, Fr. Richard Rohr seeks to help readers understand the tasks of the two halves of life and to show them that those who have fallen, failed, or "gone down" are the only ones who understand "up." Most of us tend to think of the second half of life as largely about getting old, dealing with health issues, and letting go of life, but the whole thesis of this book is exactly the opposite. What looks like falling down can largely be experienced as "falling upward." In fact, it is not a loss but somehow actually a gain, as we have all seen with elders who have come to their fullness."

This important book explores the counterintuitive message that we grow spiritually much more by doing wrong than by doing right. It promises to be a good read with stimulating discussion! Let the office know by Thursday, September 8 if you plan to join us.



# Regina Youth Forum Prepares for Busy Fall Season

by Taylor Balfour

Fall is back which means so is our youth group!

For those of you who don't know, last fall Eastside started a youth group that we've since called "Regina Youth Forum". The goal of said group is to give youth in the community some familiar faces in the church and a group to come to for support, acceptance, love, and just some fun times. Last year we did events like a Christmas movie night, coffee/hot chocolate nights, cupcake decorating night, ice cream sundae night and so on. This fall, we're hoping to have just as many (if not more) cool events!

Since this began we've wanted to provide

a group of people in the church who will welcome youth into our building with open arms and provide them with a sense of friendship and comfort. This coming up Fall we're getting ready to brainstorm and plan plenty of nights and events for everyone to come and enjoy.

If you're interested in joining, attending, pitching some ideas or learning more, feel free to email me at [taylor.balfour1@gmail.com](mailto:taylor.balfour1@gmail.com). Or if you're interested in showing your support, like our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/reginayouthforum/>

This coming Youth Group season is sure to be a great one!



## Faith Exploration

*What do I believe? What does the United Church believe? What do others believe? I'm not sure I believe.* If these are questions you have, come explore your faith, learn about the United Church, and explore other faiths. This is an opportunity for youth, adult newcomers, and those interested in renewing their faith. It is an eight-week program and a schedule will be developed with those who indicate interest. Introduction/information session October 5, at 7 pm with dessert. Let Russell know if you wish to participate.



**Eastside Family Dinner  
Thursday, September 8  
at 5:30 pm**

Families have been loving the chance to get together and visit, to have a meal provided on a busy weeknight, and to let the kids run around and have a blast!

Parents with kids, and grandparents with grandchildren are all welcome (bring your kids too if you can!).

RSVP to [Russell](#) by Monday, September 5. This event can't happen without help to provide the delicious meal. Please let [Wanda](#) know if you can lend a hand.

**Can't make it to this one? Eastside's Family Dinners will take place the first Thursday of each month.**



**Fall Book Study  
Tuesday evenings  
at 7 pm  
Starting Sept. 27**

We will be reading *The New Parish: How Neighbourhood Churches are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*

From amazon.ca: "Tucked away in neighborhoods throughout North America there is a profound work of hope quietly unfolding. Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens and Dwight J. Friesen have seen--in cities, suburbs and small towns all over North America--how powerful the gospel can be when it takes root in the context of a place".

Please let Russell know if you'd like to attend. We'll be ordering books shortly.



**LSC Women's Breakfast,  
Saturday, September 10  
from 8 to 10 am**

Join us for breakfast and conversation!

Our guest will be Dr. Todd Sojonky, registered doctoral clinical psychologist who practices at the Living Spirit Centre. Dr. Todd works with people experiencing grief, anxiety and depression, addictions and other human difficulties and will be speaking about Mindfully-based Stress Relief. Please join us to hear about Dr. Todd, who he is, and how he offers healing to individuals, couples, groups and larger audiences.

All women are welcome. Please bring a toonie to cover breakfast costs.





## Worship at Wascana Rehabilitation Centre

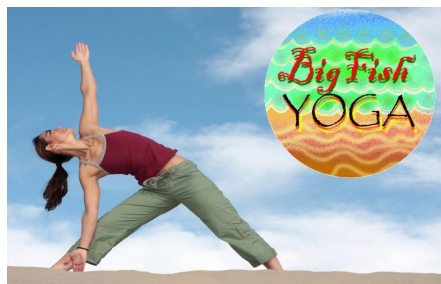
On the third Sunday of every other month, Eastside United Church volunteers hold a worship service for residents at the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre. The service takes place at 1:30 pm and volunteers arrive at the Centre a half-hour ahead of time to usher worshippers from their rooms to the chapel.

Our next service is scheduled for Sunday, October 16. If you are able to assist, please contact [Shelly Williams](#).

This important outreach ministry provides one of the only opportunities for patients at the Centre to attend a worship service. Thanks for your support!

## HOLY YOGA CLASSES at the LSC: FALL 2016

Connie Moker Wernikowski will be offering holy yoga classes again this fall at Living Spirit Centre. All levels are welcome. For more info go to Connie's website at [www.bigfishyoga.ca](http://www.bigfishyoga.ca) or call Connie at 306-551-6933 or email [mokerw@sasktel.net](mailto:mokerw@sasktel.net). Holy Yoga enhances strength, coordination, balance, relaxation, and flexibility integrated with breath exercises and Christian scripture. It offers time to be quiet, exercise and pray.



# Update on Mortgage Fundraiser

by Jim Fallows

The fundraiser to reduce Eastside's mortgage has resulted in a significant improvement to our financial circumstances. To August 31, a total of \$29,550 has been pledged, of which \$21,050 has been received, and the remaining \$8,500 is outstanding.

Eastside's mortgage obligation for 2016 is \$10,000, so this amount will be used to fund current year payments, with the remaining \$19,550 carried forward to future years.

The 2016 mortgage payments have been addressed, however the mortgage

continues until August 31, 2024, and Eastside faces an estimated \$63,619 of payments in future years. After deducting amounts raised to date, the amount of unfunded mortgage payments is only \$44,069, or approximately \$5,800 per year. This is a tremendous improvement from previous years, because prior to 2014, Eastside's mortgage payments were at least \$16,000 per year.

Members of the congregation are encouraged to continue making special payments to chip away at the remaining 4,400,000 cents of our debt!

### Eastside United Church - Mortgage Elimination Fund

Balance, January 1, 2016	0
Pledges received (cash) to August 31, 2016	21,050
Pledges receivable (to come)	8,500
Total amount pledged	29,550
Balance to be applied to mortgage in 2016	(10,000)
<b>Fund balance available to meet mortgage payments in future years</b>	<b>\$ 19,550</b>
Mortgage Balance, December 31, 2016	55,176
Forecasted remaining interest payments (Jan. 1, 2017 - Aug. 31, 2024)	8,443
Total Mortgage Obligation, December 31, 2016	63,619
Less: Mortgage Elimination Fund balance	(19,550)
<b>Equals: Unfunded Mortgage Obligation</b>	<b>\$ 44,069</b>

## LSC Meditation Group

Monday evenings at 7 pm

In the East Sanctuary

Starting September 12

All are welcome  
to join us!





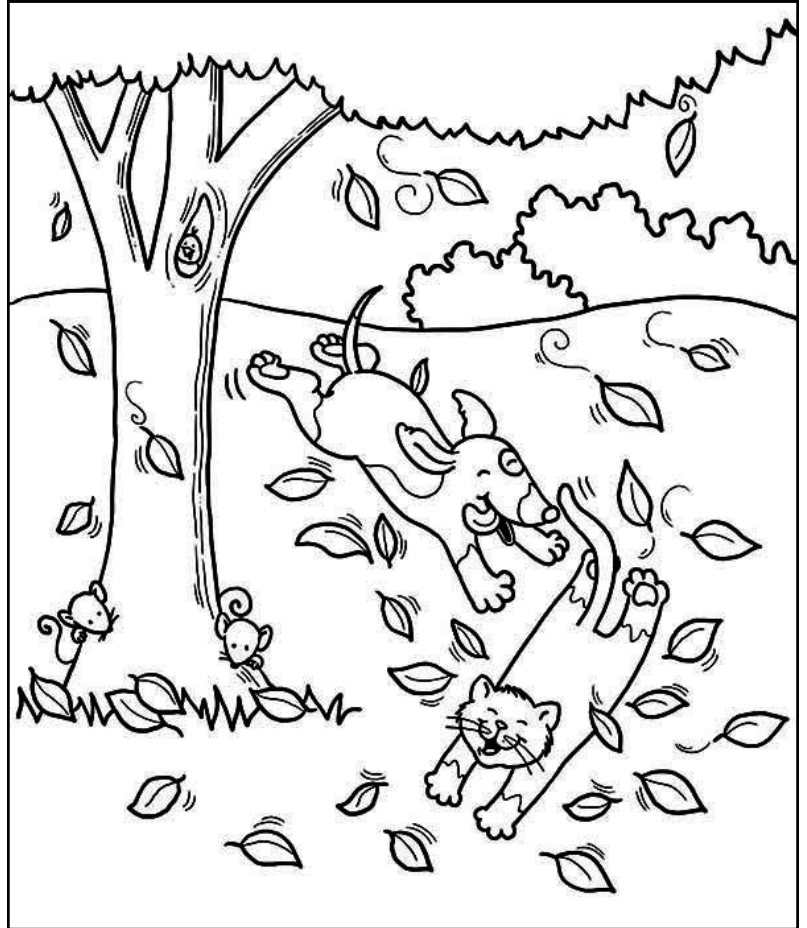
# BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Saturday, October 1 at 1 pm

BRING YOUR PETS  
TO THE LSC FOR  
A SPECIAL  
BLESSING!

The *Blessing of the Animals* is held each year in remembrance of St. Francis of Assisi's kindness to all creatures. Saint Francis was a Catholic friar who gave up a life of wealth to live a life of poverty, and was best known for his love of nature and animals. There are many stories about Saint Francis preaching to animals. It is said that one day he was talking to a flock of birds when they began to sing together, flew into the sky, and reputedly formed the sign of a cross! Through his writing of *The Canticle of the Creatures*, St. Francis shared with us his thoughts "about the Lord's creatures, of which we make daily use, without which we cannot live, and with which the human race greatly offends its Creator". October 4th is observed as Saint Francis Feast Day and *Blessing of the Animals* services are held on a date near to this.

This year, as in other years, we are having our own *Blessing of the Animals* at the Living Spirit Centre. Bring your pet(s) to this special service on Saturday, October 1 at 1 pm!



## WORD SCRAMBLE

First, unscramble these ten words about St. Francis:

SNIGSLBE \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

SCNARFI \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

MINAASL \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

DENSSKIN \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

BROETCO \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

SRTECRAUE \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

IOTCCLHA \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

GNWITRI \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

TEOPVRY \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

OLEV \_ \_ \_ \_ \_



Now arrange the circled letters to form this St. Francis of Assisi quote that answers the question:

"Why do we give?"

\_\_\_\_\_

# Financial Update: Jan 1 - June 30, 2016

By Jim Fallows

Eastside incurred a deficit of \$1,237 during the first six months of 2016 (see below), however this does not include the full amount that has been raised to date to reduce the mortgage. Only \$5,000 has been be used from the mortgage fundraiser for the quarterly mortgage payments; the remainder has been carried forward to make future mortgage payments.

As shown below, the deficit is a significant improvement from each of the past three years. It should also be noted that the deficit at March 31, 2016 was \$3,480, so Eastside posted a surplus of \$2,243 between April and June!

Looking ahead to the last half of the year, Eastside appears to have a good chance of avoiding a deficit for 2016, particularly now that the mortgage payments for the year have been covered. Operating expenses are anticipated to be slightly lower in the second half of the year, and Eastside will also receive the benefit of some pledges of increased monthly PAR giving that resulted from the mortgage fundraising drive.

Longtime members of the congregation know that Eastside has struggled financially in recent years, however the generous giving to date in 2016 has things moving in a positive direction. Let's keep the momentum for the remainder of the year!



## St. Philip Annual Steak Dinner

Friday, September 23

Tickets are \$20 and supper will include a 10-oz New York steak, Caesar salad, baked potato, St. Philip Heavenly Baked Beans, and dessert.

Doors open at 6 pm with serving beginning at 6:30 pm. Wine and beer will be available for purchase during supper. Tickets will go quickly so you are encouraged to call Don at 306-789-5241 or Ivan at 306-757-318 to reserve yours.

## Fall Craft Sale and Pie Social

Saturday, October 15, 2016  
From 9 am to 3 pm

This is a tri-parish event with proceeds going towards each congregation's outreach efforts. Please watch for sign-up sheets for pies in beginning of October. Contact Clare Banks if you need more information at 306-781-4121.



<b>Eastside United Church</b>				
Statement of Surplus (Deficit) for January 1 - June 30				
	<b>2016 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Actual</b>	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2013 Actual</b>
Revenue to Support Eastside United Church	\$ 69,447	\$ 69,742	\$ 79,256	\$ 70,929
Revenue to Support Mission & Service Fund	7,717	6,755	7,110	6,601
Total Revenue	77,164	76,497	86,366	77,530
Eastside's Operating Expenses	(70,684)	(70,209)	(75,232)	(72,509)
Contribution to Mission & Service Fund	(7,717)	(6,755)	(7,210)	(6,601)
Total Operating Expenses	(78,401)	(76,964)	(82,442)	(79,110)
<b>Operating Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ (1,237)</b>	<b>\$ (467)</b>	<b>\$ 3,924</b>	<b>\$ (1,580)</b>
Less: Mortgage Payments (principal & interest)	(5,000)	(6,100)	(6,100)	(8,000)
Add: Drawdown from Mortgage Fund	5,000	0	0	0
<b>Equals: Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ (1,237)</b>	<b>\$ (6,567)</b>	<b>\$ (2,176)</b>	<b>\$ (9,580)</b>

## Horizons: The Newsletter of Eastside United Church

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