

news
@
westhill
March
April
2017



syn·er·gy
'sinərjē/sin-er-jee

(noun) ~ the extra energy that people create when they combine their efforts; a combined effect greater than the sum of any one person's separate efforts.

Synergy is exactly what we create at West Hill whenever two or more of us gather together. It's an energy that nourishes us, inspires us, and pulls us back together when we've been apart. It may be invisible, but I swear I can see it in the faces of those who join us in our Sunday gatherings, mid-week groups, working committees, and those spontaneous get-togethers that emerge out of nothing.

We think the word 'synergy' so beautifully reflects what's created at West Hill that we've chosen it as the name of our new magazine, soon to be launched. Synergy the magazine, will put the unique rhythm of West Hill right in your hands, taking you through a year's cycle of programs, seasonal gatherings, FUNdraisers, and special moments. You'll be able to see what it is we do, read why we do it, and have information about our banners, gatherings, Words of Commitment, and other bits of information you so often need, all in one place.

To create a magazine that will represent us well into the coming year and beyond, we'll be leaving specific dates out of the articles. Bi-monthly supplements (like this one you're reading; the evolved format of news@westhill) will alert you to the specific dates of special events and the start dates of programs, and feature a few articles from our regular newsletter contributors. The news@westhill supplement will be available at the church or by mail, and also online. Synergy magazine will help cut down on publication costs by splitting up the content from the specifics and providing you with a great reference that will be current for some time to come.

Our local advertisers are moving from new@westhill and will be featured in full colour in Synergy, helping subsidize the costs associated with printing and distributing our beautiful new magazine. We invite you to patronize them and let them know where you learned of their business. Perhaps you can make a little synergy with them, too! Look for your copy coming up this Spring.

Synergy. It's simple. Together we're better.

gretta vosper

Mission and Service ~ Bissel Centre

Several times a day in Edmonton someone dials 211 and reports a problem involving a homeless person. On the other end of the phone, a dispatcher takes the information and then relays it to the Mobile Assistance Program (MAP) run by the Bissell Centre, a United Church outreach ministry supported by Mission and Service.

The crisis team jumps into their vehicle and heads out to help. Sometimes a homeless person in the throes of a mental health crisis is behaving aggressively. Sometimes a store owner is tired of the same homeless person rooting through garbage near the store. Sometimes a homeless person has fallen asleep in the middle of a busy sidewalk.

The Mobile Assistance Program staff specializes in helping people make the transition from street to stable housing, and the staff finds that supporting people in trouble before they find themselves in confrontations with the police opens a door that often leads to a better life. Already, MAP has helped 80 people find permanent housing. It also helps to reduce costs for emergency services like police and paramedics who can turn nonurgent cases over to the team. The program also helps to reduce the number of homeless people who themselves become victims of crime.

The Mobile Assistance Program is just one of Bissell Centre's innovative programs working with other agencies and with governments to end poverty on the streets of Edmonton. Thanks to our donations for Mission and Service, people are finding shelter, support, and the road to a new life.

Dorothy Hirheley

Good News from First Nations

In Ontario:

Wataynikaneyap Power is a transmission company equally owned by 22 First Nations communities in partnership with FortisOntario and RES Canada. Wataynikaneyap means “line that brings light” in Anishiniimowin. The company will develop, own and operate new transmission facilities in Northwestern Ontario in order to connect 17 remote First Nation communities currently powered by diesel generation. Continued use of diesel generation to power First Nations communities is financially unsustainable, environmentally risky, and inadequate to meet community needs. The company’s vision is to provide reliable and affordable power to residents, businesses, and industry in the region, realizing opportunities for First Nations.

In Quebec:

The Quebec government announced plans in 1971 for a hydroelectric project in the James Bay region of northern Quebec. It followed typical practice of neither informing the Cree people living in the area, nor estimating the consequences of the development.

The governments of Canada and Quebec and representatives from each of the Cree villages and the most of the Inuit villages signed the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* on November 11, 1975. The agreement offered, for the first time, a written contract which explicitly presented the rights of indigenous people. The result of the hydroelectric treaty became a representative for future conflicts in other communities with issues of the same nature. It allowed hydroelectric development on Cree lands in exchange for financial compensation, greater autonomy, and improvements to health care, housing, and educational services. Today, The Grand Council of the Crees is the political body that represents the (2012) 18,000 Crees or “Eeyouch” of eastern James Bay and Southern Hudson Bay in Northern Quebec. The present Grand Chief is Dr. Mathew Coon Come. The Council’s head office is in the Cree community of Nemaska. It also has offices in Montreal, Ottawa and Quebec City.

In British Columbia: T

The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) is the first province-wide health authority of its kind in Canada. In 2013, the FNHA assumed the programs, services, and responsibilities formerly handled by Health Canada's First Nations Inuit Health Branch, Pacific Region. Our vision is to transform the health and wellbeing of BC's First Nations and Aboriginal people by dramatically changing healthcare for the better.

The FNHA is responsible for planning, management, service delivery and funding of health programs, in partnership with First Nations communities in BC. Guided by the vision of embedding cultural safety and humility into health service delivery, the FNHA works to reform the way health care is delivered to BC First Nations through direct services, provincial partnership collaboration, and health systems innovation.

Services are largely focused on health promotion and disease prevention and include:

- ◆ Primary Health Care
- ◆ Children, Youth and Maternal Health
- ◆ Mental Health and Wellness
- ◆ Communicable Disease Control
- ◆ Environmental Health and Research
- ◆ First Nations Health Benefits
- ◆ eHealth and Telehealth
- ◆ Health and Wellness Planning
- ◆ Health Infrastructure and Human Resources



Ruth Gill

AS I LIVE EVERY DAY,
I WANT TO BE
A CHANNEL FOR PEACE.
MAY I BRING LOVE
WHERE THERE IS HATRED
AND HEALING, WHERE THERE IS HURT,
JOY WHERE THERE IS SADNESS
AND HOPE WHERE THERE IS FEAR.
I PRAY THAT I MAY
ALWAYS TRY TO UNDERSTAND
AND COMFORT OTHER PEOPLE
AS WELL AS SEEKING COMFORT
AND UNDERSTANDING
FROM THEM.

Wherever
possible,
may I choose to be
a light
in the darkness,

A help
IN TIMES OF NEED,
AND A CARING, HONEST FRIEND,
AND MY JUSTICE, KINDNESS AND PEACE
FLOW FROM MY HEART FOREVER.

AMEN

Susan Wilson

March & April 2017 @ West Hill

Sunday

Sunday Service	Every Week	10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Visitors' and Travellers' Lunch	First Sunday of Every Month ~ March 5th ~ Second Harvest Soup & Bread Fundraiser ~ April 2nd	12:30 to 2:30 p.m.
West West Hill	Third Sunday of Every Month 84 Old Burnhamthorpe Road, Etobicoke ~ March 19th ~ April 16th	4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Monday

First Nations Study Group	Last Monday of Every Month	1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
Men's Spirituality Group	Every Other Week ~ March 6th & 20th ~ April 3rd & 17th	7:00 to 9:00 p. m.

Tuesday

Labyrinth Walk	Every Week, Followed by Refreshments	10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Crafting	Every Week	1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Board Meeting	First Tuesday of Every Month ~ WHU Members Welcome	7:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Wednesday

Vision Workshop

Every Other Week

7:30 to 8:00 p.m.

~ March 1st

~ March 15th

Women ROCK! Workshop

With Stephanie Baptist

7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

~ April 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th

Thursday

Choir Practice

Every Week with Scott and Babette

7:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Friday

Book Study

Every Other Friday

7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

~ **Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind**

by **Yuval Noah Harari**

~ **March 10th & 24th**

~ **April 7th & 21st**

Dinner With Friends

Last Friday of Every Month, Downstairs

5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

~ **Pot Luck; No Nuts Please**

Saturday

TRAINWRECK

Concert and Pub Night

7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Women ROCK!

~ **April 29th**

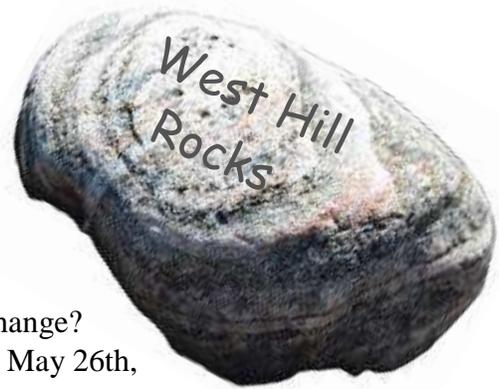
syn.the.sis *** essentials ***

Women of the congregation are invited to join one another for the next installment of **syn.the.sis**, a group engaged in

the exploration of self through the use of varied media, writings, and experience.

This installation will explore our "essential" nature. Who are we? What makes us who we are? Can we *really* change?

Join us on alternating Fridays and Thursdays beginning May 26th, for six weeks of, essentially, getting to know yourself.



We also have an ongoing Men's Spirituality Group that meets on alternate Monday mornings.

Report from West Hill's Board Chair

On February 13 we had our annual congregational meeting. We celebrated a 2016 year-end financial position of break even compared to our 2016 budget of a \$34,000 loss. The main reasons we were able to achieve this were: 1) We negotiated a one-year relief of mortgage principal payments which generated an \$8,000 savings, and 2) The use of PAR by more new members helped increase donations by \$15,000 over 2015 while not impacting our non-PAR envelope givings.

The membership at the meeting approved a 2017 budget of expenditures of \$229,000 with an expected deficit of \$8,100 based on current PAR support and known fundraising events. This expenditure level is once again one of being frugal with no planned investment in programs or capital improvements for our tired building; basically a maintenance and business-as-usual budget.

At the meeting we also began to talk more formally about the challenge in front of us as a congregation – no, not the review of Gretta, but the challenge of whether we can or should continue to keep our building and, if so, how. These have been difficult conversations. Our building has been the centre and the root of our community, while at the same time consuming a great deal of volunteer time and financial resources to maintain it.

We have begun some very important work by having conversations regarding what our vision is for our community, which will help define the role of our current building as it relates to achieving this vision. Is the building worth holding onto, with the need for continued financial support, or is it an asset that can be or should be realized by selling and relocating within our existing community. There is no easy answer.

As workshops are planned to facilitate this tough conversation and receive our collective perspectives of what is next for our West Hill Community, I strongly encourage all of you to engage whenever you can in having open and honest conversations about our future. This is not always easy to do, but if we respect each other in this process, then I believe the wisdom of our community will prevail as we write the next chapter in the future of our impressive, passionate, values-based community that we all love and need.

Randy Bowes

West Hill United

A warm place to find yourself

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