

news  
@  
westhill



Holiday 2022

## Message From Mike, WHU Board Chair

Much has happened in the last few months. We continue with the Action Plan and have several groups working on their areas of focus. The Identity group is working away at their initiative, and we have many other groups meeting throughout the week. Thanks to Ellen Dinerman for her leadership with the monthly Colloquy sessions.

Scott Kearns was off on medical leave while recovering from injuries, the most serious of which was a concussion, sustained when he was assaulted on October 6 by a resident at the long-term care facility where he works. I checked in with him several times a week during his time off to express the love, support and encouragement for him from the West Hill community. We were very glad to welcome Scott back on Sunday, November 6 to resume his duties as Music Director of West Hill. Many thanks to Dale Lockhart who stepped up to the piano and work with our 2 excellent vocalists, Babette and Donna, in Scott's absence.

Rev Gretta continues on her medical leave of absence. Her health is improving and she is imagining a return to West Hill at some time in the future. The Ministry and Personnel Committee will continue to meet with her to explore this possibility.

Rev Cindy has continued to serve as our supply minister in Gretta's absence. Her leadership in directing the Action Plan continues and the committees are working hard at their tasks. Her weekly perspectives follow themes that inspire and challenge us.

Annie has returned to her position as Director of Engagement (Administration) after a medical leave of absence. We welcome her back, benefitting greatly from her knowledge of West Hill and her extensive skills. Brianna provided administrative assistance in Annie's absence, and Elise stepped in with continuing support for Annie when Brianna took a full-time job outside of West Hill. Our thanks to both Brianna and Elise for helping to keep things running smoothly.

We were saddened by the resignation of John McKechnie from his role as Treasurer. The Board accepted his resignation with regret at the October board meeting. A letter of thanks, appreciation and regret was sent to John from the board. Under the leadership of Anita DesRosiers, our Chair of Ministry and Personnel, and with the input of Walter Shouldice, Louise Lawrie and myself, a prospect was interviewed and endorsed to assume the role of Treasurer. His nomination was reviewed by the M&P and the Finance Committees, and they both agreed a motion would be presented at the November Board Meeting. This meeting took place on November 8 and Joe Hatlett was approved to serve as Treasurer. Joe is experienced and well versed in financial matters. He has completed 80% of the required credits to obtain his CPA. Walt Shouldice has agreed to be the Chair of the Finance Committee and his appointment was confirmed at the recent board meeting. The Finance Committee is now preparing a budget for 2023. Walt and his committee are asking committee chairs and other WHU groups desiring financial support to submit their budgets soon, with a deadline of December 15. This budget must be reviewed by the Finance Committee, then the board, and then be presented for approval to the congregational AGM in early February.

On another board matter, George Oliver has tendered his resignation from the board due to health concerns. We thank George for his past efforts in assisting with governance and leadership development as Chair of Education and Growth. We hope he continues to engage us with his insights and sense of humour.

Peace,  
Mike

*Wishing Everyone a Happy Holiday Season and All The Best in 2023!*

# First Nations Study Group

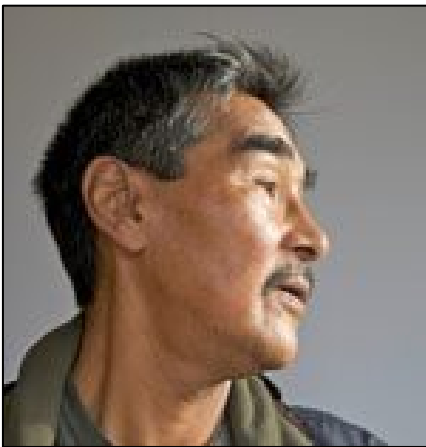
## SPOTLIGHT ON INDIGENOUS ARTISTS IN 2023 THE ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO

In mid-January, the gallery will display a showcase of works by Inuk artist, **Ningiukulu Teevee**, who is known for her bold designs that often feature birds and animals.

**Ningiukulu** has a comprehensive knowledge of Inuit legends and a fine sense of design and composition, and these elements have made many of her prints highly sought after by collectors.



Later in the month, AGO will begin an exhibition of more than 60 works by Inuvialuk sculptor **David Ruben Piqtoukun** (Inuit) from Paulatuk, in the Northwest Territories.



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January will also see the opening of “**We Are Story: The Canada Now Photography Acquisition.**”

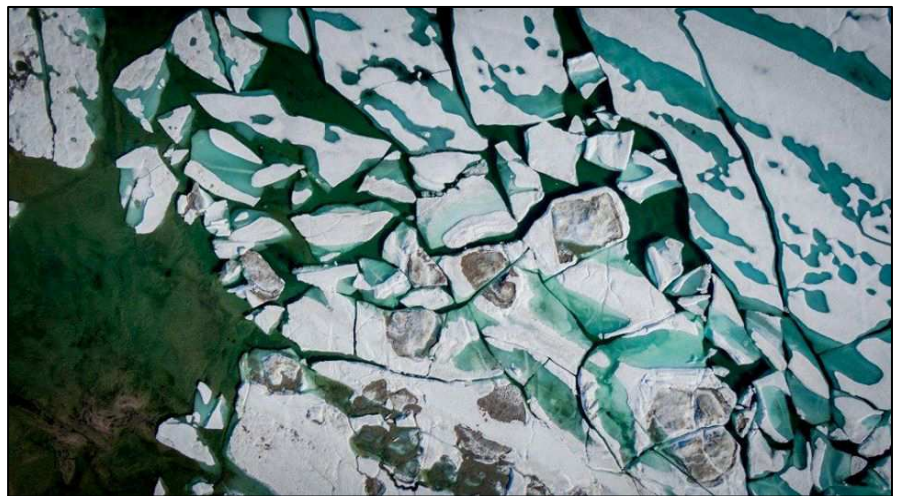
The exhibition will feature newly acquired photos by 10 Canadians, including the Inuk multidisciplinary artist Asinnajaq, the Nunavut-based photographer Robert Kautuk.

**Asinnajaq, also known as Isabella Weetaluktuk**, is a filmmaker and artist whose work is fuelled by respect for human rights, a desire to explore her Inuit heritage, and a sense of wonder in what she calls “the abundant beauty of the world.” The daughter of filmmaker Jobie Weetaluktuk and university professor Carol Rowan, she was a teenager when she assisted her father on *Timuti* (2012), a film he made in Inukjuak, home of their extended family. She later studied cinema at NSCAD University in Halifax, and her short film *Upinnaqusittik (Lucky)* (2016) premiered at iNuit Blanche, the first ever circumpolar arts festival in St. John’s. Her first film with the National Film Board of Canada, the 12-minute-long *Three Thousand* (2017), combines historic footage of Inuit, selected from the NFB’s archive, and original animation.



**Robert Kautuk** is a photographer based in Kangiqtuqaapik (Clyde River), NU who uses a digital SLR camera and drones to document stunning views of the Canadian Arctic, in addition to his community and traditional practices.

He has also captured incredible videos of walrus in the Arctic Ocean. Kautuk’s use of technology provides a special look at rarely seen



moments, activities or landscapes that are not accessible or possible to capture using conventional cameras.

### **TICKETS**

The AGO believes that everyone should feel safe, welcome, and have access to experience great art and programming that reflects them, their history and the people who live in their community. Passes to the Ontario Art Gallery are available at your local library, or you may buy tickets online (or on arrival) \$35.00 for one visit or \$45.00 for a one-year pass with which you may bring a guest for free.

*submitted by Ruth Gill*

# Christmas at West Hill United

Throughout the year, there are many ways people seek and create meaning and purpose in their lives. Whether we focus on family, relationships, work, volunteering, or contributing to and celebrating beauty in the world, a meaningful life is resilient and helps us cope better with the stresses and challenges of our complex world.

Because what we do at West Hill is a bit different from what you might expect to find at other churches at Christmas (or any other time of the year), we thought we might introduce ourselves to you with this brief explanation of what this season means to us.

Through biblical and doctrinal study, scholars have learned that much we previously thought to be factually true about the Bible and Christianity really isn't. The Bible is recognized by these scholars as a collection of stories told by people who were trying, just like you, to make sense of their world.

We know much more than biblical authors did about how the world works, about nature, about science, and about conception and birth. We now know the stories about the birth of the man called Jesus were written down decades after he died. None of them are eye witness reports and none of them are true in the sense of being factual. All are tales spun by people trying to share a particular message.

What does that mean? It means that rather than focussing on who Jesus was, we need to focus on the positive aspects of the message those authors, and so many others both before and after them, have shared over the centuries. It's the same message shared by many iconic leaders. It's the same message we believe needs to be heard right now. It's very simple. Love one another – no matter what.

While "love one another" is a simple message, it is not a simple thing to do. The world is a complex place. The more we know about how others live, their needs, and the effect our choices have on their lives, the harder it is to ignore them and live whatever way we please. We realize we are all connected and we are all responsible for one another. At Christmas, as at no other time in the year, that message is more easily heard. So even though we know that some of the details of the nativity stories aren't exactly the way things really happened, the most significant message of the season remains: love one another – deeply, extravagantly, and no matter what.



submitted by Andrea (Annie) DiPede

*Singing the Season ~ West Hill's festive gathering of sing-alongs and solos fuses the wonder of Scott with the beauty of Christmas. It weaves celebration, wistful memory, inspiration, and joy.  
Invite your friends and family for a lovely taste of West Hill's unique celebration.*

*The Longest Night ~ On the eve of the Winter Solstice, we retell the story of darkness pressing over light and light's ongoing triumph, reflect on what has been and our complicity in its dark and brutal tale, and then, encouraged in community, move into light and, in so doing, let darkness slip from our hearts.*



***Singing the Season ~ Sunday Celebration ~ December 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m.  
The Longest Night ~ The eve of the Winter Solstice ~ December 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 p.m.***

*We hope you enjoy our signature seasonal services  
and wish you a beautiful holiday season and a wonderful New Year.*

# Outreach News



## Affirming/Christmas Luncheon

The Crafty Crew and the Outreach Committee are co-hosting a Christmas Luncheon on December 4. This is also a special Sunday as West Hill United celebrates the anniversary of becoming an Affirming congregation. On the menu is vegetarian and beef chili, rolls and dessert squares. Please plan on joining us! A non-perishable food donation to the food bank would be appreciated. There will also be an opportunity to make a donation to support Tina, our refugee who is waiting for her approval to journey to Canada. At our Harvest Luncheon held on October 16, \$300 was donated to help Tina...thank you! (\$200 was sent to Tina to cover her rent and food for November/December; \$100 was held back for Christmas and her birthday in January). Please Note: Donations for Tina are free will donations, so no tax receipt will be issued.

## Holiday Gift Drive

The Christmas season is upon us and the Outreach Committee is asking our West Hill United community to help raise funds towards our Holiday Gift Drive. The Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities (SCHC) supports families requiring assistance year round and especially at this time of year. West Hill United Church, in past years (pre-Covid), would help by filling Christmas hampers with food and gifts for ten families, all donated by our congregation. For the last two years, however, the assistance changed to one of providing grocery gift cards to the SCHC for distribution wherever support is needed. Last year, West Hill United provided \$1300 worth of gift cards!! Your cheque supporting this campaign should be made out to West Hill United Church with Holiday Gift Drive on the memo line. Thank you for your support!



## Crafty Crew News

The Crafty Crew is busy knitting hats and sewing neck gators to help keep kids and adults warm during the winter months. Want to come out Tuesdays from 1 to 3? All are welcome! Want to help? Need a pattern? Just email [barussell2003@yahoo.ca](mailto:barussell2003@yahoo.ca). We will also be selling our crafts, including crocheted critters by Heather and hanging kitchen towels by Joan during the next few weeks. Everything is priced to sell and proceeds support Outreach and Crafty Crew community initiatives.

## Gingerbread House Party

This year, the Gingerbread House Party will take place on Saturday December 17, from 2 to 4 PM in the Gathering Hall. All school-age kids are welcome to decorate a gingerbread house, make a craft and join in a sing-along! There is no charge to participate...come and enjoy the festive gathering with kids! A nonperishable food donation to the food bank would be appreciated. To register a participant, please email [barussell2003@yahoo.ca](mailto:barussell2003@yahoo.ca).



Outreach Team Members:

Gill Cockwell, June Dickson, Ruth Gill, Donna Lockhart,  
Wilma Ramcharan, Barb Russell, Ingrid Shouldice

*submitted by Barb Russell on behalf of the Outreach Committee*



*Greetings of the season  
& special thanks to our advertisers.  
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Wishing you and yours  
a happy & prosperous 2023!*



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We have many more options for all ages. Please check out our website for our class schedule, rates and more information (647-352-4879): [www.inthespirtityoga.com](http://www.inthespirtityoga.com), email [letsconnect@inthespirtityoga.com](mailto:letsconnect@inthespirtityoga.com)



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# Please Join Us For Our Weekly Service And Other Special Gatherings

Sunday Morning Gathering/Perspective(s) ~ 10:30 AM (in-person & Zoom)



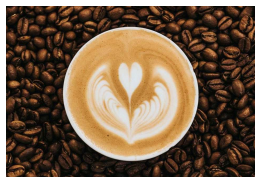
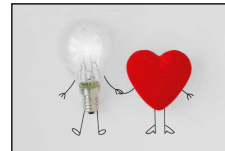
Tuesday Morning Labyrinth Walk ~ 10:30 AM (in-person in the WHU parking lot )

Tuesday Afternoon Crafty Crew ~ 1 PM (in-person at WHU)



Tuesday Afternoon Wellness Group ~ 2 to 3 PM (on Zoom)

Wednesday & Thursday Colloquy (on Zoom)  
December 7 at 2 PM & December 8 at 7 PM  
January 11 at 2 PM & January 12 at 7 PM  
March 9 at 2 pm & 7 PM



Thursday Morning Coffee ~ 10 to 11 AM (on Zoom)

## West Hill United Board of 2022

Board Chair: Mike Lawrie

Property Chair: Gary Megson

Ministry and Personnel Chair: Anita DesRosiers

Communication and Marketing Chair: Vacant

Education and Growth: Vacant

Friendship and Hospitality: Barb Russell

Community Care: Babette Oliviera

Celebrating the Spirit: Vacant

Finance Chair: Walter Shouldice

Treasurer: Joe Hatlett

Secretary: Vacant

Members at Large: Jean Skillman (governance review),

Donna Hall, Peter Thomas, Florence Soknacki

Regional Representatives: Annemarie Leepel and Louise Lawrie

Trustees: Glenn Cockwell (Chair), Jim Hyland, Frank Kilroy, Gretta Vosper

Minister: Cindy Bourgeois

## West Hill United

*A warm place to find yourself*

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