

news
@
westhill

Mar
Apr
2020



Report From Your Board Chair

As we move through the winter months, there is a lot of activity at West Hill. We had an open Board Meeting following church on February 2 and held our Annual General Meeting after church on February 9. The turnout for the AGM was substantial with 64 people participating.

While we are moving ahead with the response to the Boys and Girls Club of East Scarborough (BGCES) to purchase the church, we still attend to the routine matters to keep WHUC running smoothly. These include approving a budget and affirming the membership of the Board. We expressed our heart felt gratitude to Randy Bowes as he retired from the Board with Emeritus distinction. He served as Board Chair for 9 years and also participated in many other leadership roles. As per my request, he served a year as Past Chair — thank you, Randy! Also resigning from the Board was Dennis Hollingshead and we thank him for his many years of service. Joining our Board are Donna Hall and Peter Thomas. We have a lot of work before us this year and the role of the Board is vital to our success.

The current challenge is to put in place all of the necessary requirements of our congregation as we shift from being owners of the building to being tenants. We have 2 groups working on our response to the purchase offer: 1. The Finance Team consisting of our Treasurer, Frank Kilroy, Randy Bowes, Frank Dixon, Joanne Worobess and up to 4 other others.

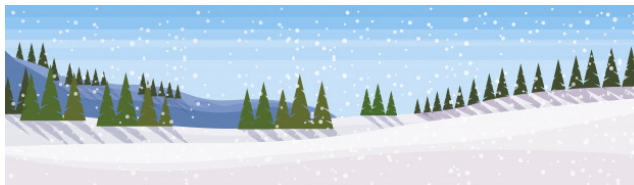
2. The Logistics/Property Group led by Florence Soknacki with Gary Megson, Ruth Gill and up to 4 others. Mike, Gretta and Annie are ex officio members of both groups.

With approval of the congregation, we have retained the Trinity Centres Foundation (TCF) as consultants and advisors to us. This group has a large staff of professionals and volunteers whose mission is to assist in transforming historic churches into community hubs. As we proceed, we need to present our needs for space, time and program development to allow us to thrive and explore new partnerships and outreach opportunities. The offer essentially gives us a cash payment and allows us to carry the balance in a mortgage. The financial analysis looks quite beneficial to West Hill and gives us rent-free space and mortgage interest payments of around \$100,000 per year. The details must be approved by the Board, the congregation, the Trustees of WHUC, and the Shining Waters Region (representing the United Church of Canada).

My goal in this message is to give an overview of the offer and rely on the church leaders and our frequent updates to present the details. If we do not sell the church, our choices would be very difficult as we would have to make substantial cuts in our expenses or increase our revenue. In the past several years, we struggled to find methods to balance our budget but had to declare that there was not a clear way to the future. Thanks to Gretta and Annie and our leaders as we pursue opportunities before us. Stay tuned for updates.

Continuing our journey together ...

Michael Lawrie, Board Chair



Precious Planet Recipe Corner

with Deb Ellis

Hi everyone! This is a hearty yet simple soup you can throw together in a flash, and it is delicious! A friend of Gretta's introduced me to it, and even my 17-year-old stepson (who doesn't like soup) said recently, "Wow. This is actually good. You could make this all the time!" :) Enjoy!

Spicy Black Bean Soup

<https://cookieandkate.com/spicy-vegan-black-bean-soup/>

Author: Cookie and Kate

Prep Time: 10 mins, Cook time 45 mins

★★★★★ 4.8 from 296 reviews!!

This healthy black bean soup recipe is easy to make with canned beans. Thanks to some basic aromatics and Cuban spices, it's incredibly flavourful and delicious. This soup is naturally vegan, vegetarian and gluten free. The recipe yields quite a bit of soup (6 to 8 servings). It is easily halved, or you can freeze the leftovers.

Ingredients

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 medium yellow onions, chopped
3 celery ribs, finely chopped
1 large carrot, peeled and sliced into thin rounds
6 garlic cloves, pressed or minced
4 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes (use 1/4 tsp if you're sensitive to spice, or if you don't like spice, just leave them out).
4 cans (15 ounces each) black beans, rinsed and drained
4 cups (32 ounces) low-sodium vegetable broth
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro (optional)
1 to 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar, to taste, or 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Optional garnishes: diced avocado, extra cilantro, thinly sliced radishes, tortilla chips.

Instructions

- ♥ Heat the olive oil in a soup pot over medium heat. Add the onions, celery and carrot and a light sprinkle of salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are soft, about 10 minutes.
- ♥ Stir in the garlic, cumin and red pepper flakes and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Pour in the beans and broth and bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Cook, reducing heat to maintain a gentle simmer, until the broth is flavourful and the beans are tender, about 30 minutes.
- ♥ Transfer about 4 cups of the soup to a stand blender, securely fasten the lid, and blend until smooth (never fill your blender past the maximum fill line, and beware the steam that escapes from the top of the blender, it's very hot). Or, use an immersion blender to blend a portion of the soup.
- ♥ Return the pureed soup to the pot, stir in the cilantro, vinegar/lime juice and salt and pepper, to taste.

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First Nations Study Group Wataynikaneyap The Line That Brings Light

Following up on Wataypower's activities, a company owned by 24 Ontario First Nations, whose plan since 2016 was to connect 17 remote First Nations Communities in Northern Ontario to the Ontario Hydro grid, our study group has learned that the first connection was made in December of 2018 with Pikangikum First Nation, a remote fly in community.

Pikangikum is one of the largest First Nations communities in the region with a population of 2,300 people. This will surely bring hope to a nation that has been painfully struggling with suicides. *"Canada: Home to Pikangikum, suicide capital of the world"*. Maclean's Magazine, 2012.

The second phase of the project has been approved by the Ontario Energy Board which is the installation of 1,630 km of transmission line connecting 17 First Nations north of Red Lake and Pickle Lake. Some may be connected by 2021 but all will be connected to the grid by 2023. See map of Phase one and two on next page.

"Hope is a verb with its sleeves rolled up." David Orr, Oberlin College

This project will open up all kinds of opportunities for the First Nations Peoples, more homes to be built where many live in trailers or grossly overcrowded homes, homes to meet a family's size and needs, construction jobs, refrigeration, and safe reliable heating.

Our group was deeply moved by the six-minute video showing the lighting of the Christmas tree in Pikangikum First Nation on its initially being connected to the grid. We invite you to share in their joy. Go to www.wataypower.ca. Scroll down the left-hand side of the page to the The Wataynikaneyap Power Transmission Project video.

submitted by Ruth Gill, First Nations Study Group



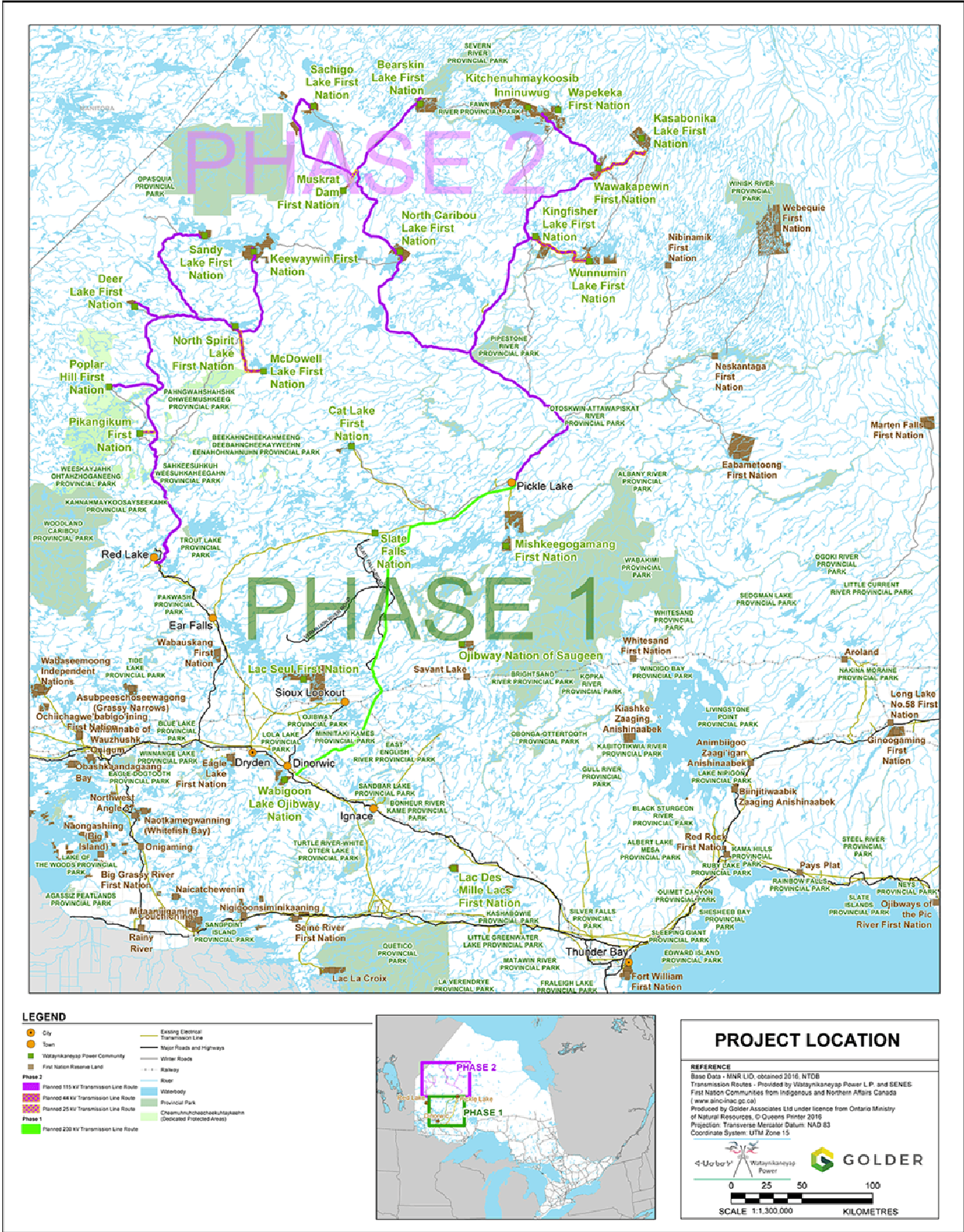
IN THE SPIRIT

Yoga Studio & Wine Lounge



REMINDER — YOGA CLASSES (SENIORS DISCOUNT). We still offer special seniors classes (yoga in chairs and for those with mobility issues) Mondays at 10:15-11:15 a.m. and Thursdays 9:00-10:00 a.m. (\$15/class includes tea/coffee & cookies). (Highland Creek Plaza, 376 Old Kingston Road)

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, email letsconnect@inthespirtityoga.com



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Dream Away Service Series: Easter Re-Imagined

Each year, West Hill's community gathers to explore the great themes of death and resurrection. We don't, however, focus on a death and resurrection that took place two millennia ago. Rather, we explore these themes as they are relevant right now in our world, our relationships, and our lives.

In a theologically barrier-free community, there will be those for whom the traditional Easter story has deep meaning and there will be those for whom the story seems anachronistic when viewed from a 21st century perspective, so it is important to honour the tradition while doing so in language, metaphor, and symbolism that can be interpreted by anyone to be meaningful regardless of the world view through which they are experiencing it. That's one of the things that West Hill succeeds in doing with more integrity each year.

Join us on Sundays April 5th and 12th as we reach deep into the complexities and challenges that resonate with an ancient story but face us at this moment in time... and seek within them the beauty of possibility and hope.



Soup & Bread Lunch for Second Harvest Sunday, March 1st



12:30 PM
After Sunday Service
V&T Lunch
Hosted by the
Outreach Committee

