

Watch this week's service on YouTube by clicking: [Sunday Worship Service Video](#)

- ❖ *Sunday, December 6 at 10:00 is **our next live Hebrews e-Café**. Laura Rousseau is hosting and you can join on Zoom by using the following information:
Join using computer audio and video by clicking this
link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9542153646?pwd=T0tRODRLMGZxeWlvNzJsUVdPODIUdz09>
Password: *jesus*
OR Join by telephone by dialling: 1 204 272 7920 and entering the meeting ID 954 215 3646 and the passcode 370976*
- ❖ *We have launched a **Lights for Lives Book of Remembrance**. You may visit it here:
<https://charleswoodunited.org/lights-for-lives/> To add a name please contact the church office by phone (204-832-3667) or email (office@charleswoodunited.org)*
- ❖ *Our Youth Coordinator, Jody Poborsa, is going to be hosting a **Youth Games and Trivia Night on Zoom** Wednesday, December 9 at 7:00. Any young person interested in joining in please email the church (office@charelswoodunited.org) and we will provide the Zoom link information.*
- ❖ ***Hope, Peace, Joy, Love – Images of Advent** - As we prepare for Advent, Laura is collecting words and images to go with our candle lighting that reflect the theme for each week of Advent. If you have a picture that represents Joy for next week please email it to lrousseau@charleswoodunited.org*
- ❖ ***For Children: Our most recent Cool School video** is available by clicking here: [CUC Cool School Video 4](#)
You are welcome to share this with others but please note that you must use the link provided. It is not available by search.*
- ❖ *Please enjoy our online worship and feel free to share with others. The **link for sharing** is:
<https://youtu.be/vNazBioORWl>*

Dear Friends

Welcome to worship for Sunday, December 6, 2020.

Len Van Roon celebrated his 99th birthday this past week! When I spoke to him on the phone he said that I must have it upside down, he's really 66. But I was right and he was joking. Len is justifiably proud of his age and his health. And as a church we are delighted to share in this good news by wishing him well.

A very modest and humble man, Len is in many ways the embodiment of our church. He was born in Charleswood and still lives in the farmhouse on Charleswood Road where he grew up. He is a veteran of World War 2 and was part of the D-Day landing and the liberation of Holland. With his late beloved wife Verna, Len has served the church in almost every capacity imaginable for nearly all of his, and our, life (we are only 98). To the community of Charleswood, Len is a priceless treasure. He and Verna were community educators who meticulously researched the history of this area and then shared those stories freely wherever and whenever asked. They respectfully told the Indigenous history, the settler and farming history, the war history, and all that was involved in the creation of the prosperous suburb that began to

form after World War 2. The Charleswood Museum is largely composed of the personal collection of Len and Verna. The hall of our church has been named "The Van Roon Community Hall" for a very good reason.

Len Van Roon's 99th birthday seems like a wonderful opportunity to be reminded of the gift of grace it is to be part of a community. We are called to live as neighbours, to be aware of the people around us and appreciate, if not love, them. To work cooperatively in the creation of the institutions which enable and guard community life like schools and community centres, curling clubs and churches. To worship together and call ourselves the body of Christ precisely because that is not something one can be on one's own.

All of this seems unusually challenging at the moment because for the most part we are being asked to live in isolation and isolation is not what we have been created for. But isn't the essence of loving one's neighbour and creating community, the realization that we are not in it for ourselves alone? The present moment is asking us be isolated for the sake of our neighbour as much as for the sake of our own well-being. And in that sense, even isolation is something we are doing together.

The other thing that remains undiminished in the present moment is that there is a Spirit to being in community. You've heard the term 'community spirit' before. Does it not mean that there is a transcendent quality to a community as well as an imminent one? Something hard to pinpoint and difficult to describe. But it is a presence and it is real and you know that if only for the times when it does not exist.

I wish we were in church this week. We would sing Happy Birthday to Len Van Roon and many of you would go out of your way to greet him and wish him well. He would attempt to deflect all the attention. Hopefully there would be cake.

But we are no less grateful for the life of Len and those of his generation. We are no less aware of the abundance of gifts that surround us. We are no less a community when we cannot be in the same room. We are a people of the Spirit. A community spirit. A Holy Spirit.

Grace and peace,

Michael

P.S. Would you like to follow along with today's bible readings on the video? Click here: [Isaiah 40:1-5](#) ; [Mark 1:1-5](#)

*P.P.S. For news and events please have a look at the **Life & Work** insert: <https://charleswoodunited.org/media/life-work/>*

*P.P.P.S. You can **support the ministry** of Charleswood United Church by visiting: www.charleswoodunited.org/donate. Thank you to all those who have continued to contribute regularly.*