

• GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PREACH THE GOOD NEWS TO ALL CREATION •



YPBC NEWS

December 2020

*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding
in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.
And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and
the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and
they were sore afraid.
And the angel said to them, Fear not: for, behold,
I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be
to all people.
Luke 2 : 8 - 10 KJV*

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Yorkminster Park
Baptist Church
1585 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON
M4T 1Z9

www.yorkminsterpark.com

The Rev. Dr. J. Peter Holmes

Minister of the Congregation

The Rev. Dale Rose

Minister of Pastoral Care

Mr. William Maddox, B.Mus.,

FTCL, FCAM - *Organist and*

Director of Music

Ms. Heather Mackey

Director of Family Ministries

Ms. Lily Cugliari-Kobayaashi

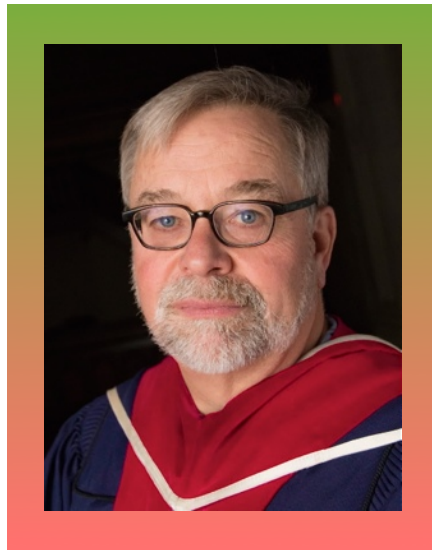
Parish Nurse

The Rev. John Torrance

Minister Emeritus, Pastoral Care

The Rev. Dr. William A. Sturgess

Minister Emeritus, Pastoral Care



FROM PETER'S PEN

MERRY CHRISTMAS !

For so many 2020 is shaping up to be an unusual Christmas

towards the end of a very strange year. We willingly wear our masks and follow the pandemic protocols, but we long to be together to sing the familiar carols and to see loved ones and friends with whom we have not been able to gather. Some have despaired and wondered aloud why we are even bothering to celebrate Christmas this year.

Yet the reality of Covid-19 can serve to heighten our appreciation of the Christmas message. The incarnation of Jesus Christ means that he took upon himself our flesh and entered into this world where not only was there no room for him in the inn, but where he would be at risk of contracting a virus or disease. He came at a time when foreign armies marched the streets and there was tension in the air. He came from heaven above and descended to a stable many believe was underground. He lowered himself completely and identified fully with our humanity and with the brokenness of this world. He was entrusted to the care of a teenager named Mary who at nine months was forced by a government decree to travel for ten days to get to a city far from the family who would have helped her care for the baby. By taking upon himself our flesh and mortality, he bore the curse of death though he was himself without sin. Whatever we are going through Jesus is right there beside us to help us and guide us and show us the way home to God. This is the wonder of Christmas. For God so loved the world that he sent his Son far from home that we might find our home in God. Merry Christmas!

CLOSING THE DOORS AGAIN

We were overjoyed to open our church doors in early September and to conduct worship in the midst of a gathered congregation. In the weeks that followed the committee chaired by Al Livy fine tuned our protocols to render the church a remarkably safe place to gather during the pandemic. Those who attended were screened and required to

cover - Carols by Candlelight

From the number and depth of articles for this newsletter it is seen the activities of the Church continue; despite the absence of normal worship services.



Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Comments and suggestions for future editions are welcome. Please send to: pilgrim.h@sympatico.ca

The next newsletter will be published in March, 2021.

Paul R Hill

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register. Masks were required and only the soloists were allowed to sing the hymns. Social distancing was maintained and any catching up with friends took place afterwards and outside. But it was very safe and so I am confident when we return that it will continue to be.

Knowing how safe it was made the decision to close the doors at the end of November in response to a plea from the mayor difficult, but the decision was made in the interests of public health and safety. A week later the Premier enforced further restrictions and we are now limited again to no more than ten people at a worship service until at least December 20. We will wait to see what directions are given after that date.

Closing the doors has been easier to accept because of the remarkable work from our webcasting ministry team led by Dave King. Each Sunday since the outset of the pandemic Dave King and Jim Weir have been on hand to ensure our service is webcast. Thank you Dave and Jim!

We have been hearing from many people both locally and globally who tune in to our service each week and feel a part of our worshipping community. On a normal Sunday we have upwards of a thousand people joining our online platform and for special services such as Easter our numbers have doubled.

While we miss the choir terribly and miss each other even more, Dave has been able to access hymns from the archives which allow us to see the church at worship from years past and remind us of how great it is to be together in word and song. In preparation for Advent and Christmas, Dave has been working extraordinarily hard to bring some remarkable special services together. Please note the list of services below and pass them on to others who will be encouraged and inspired.

CHRISTMAS TREES and DECORATIONS

Towards the end of November each year a small army of 30-40 volunteers from within the church gather early one morning to help Dave King put up our Christmas trees. It takes hours and they work side by side with enthusiasm. Sadly, pandemic protocols rendered erecting and decorating the two large sanctuary trees impossible this year. However the talented Kim Aikenhead stepped forward and offered to decorate the chancel on a smaller scale

and Randall Speller offered to put up some candles. The result is beautiful. Thanks to Kim, Tim and Randall and all who assisted them.

Meanwhile some asked, If we can't light the trees inside, can we light some of the trees in our park? The answer was an enthusiastic, yes and so it was done. When the lights first went up in the park I was inspired to write the following poem:

Christmas Lights - 2020

The lights are up and out of doors.
Three blue spruce shine as never before.
Packed in crates and sprouting doubt
the trees inside are down and out,
as are so many. But up are the lights,
leading us out of the shadows of night.
Why keep the light inside under a bushel,
when outside an inn unassuming
burns still a bush unconsuming?
In this cold, covid winter stark,
God speaks into the chaos dark.
Light, oh let there be heavenly love.
The Word made flesh, down from above.
Holy human, full of acumen, divine.
So eat the bread, and drink the wine,
take off your shoes, fall on your knees.
God touched the earth and lit up the trees.
JPH 22-11-2020

ADVENT and CHRISTMAS SERVICES to be webcast from YORKMINSTER PARK

www.yorkminsterpark.com

City Carol Sing, Friday, December 11, 8 p.m. for the Churches on-the-Hill Food Bank

Special guests for 2020, host of CITY TV's BT, Dina Pugliese; the sensational soprano of the Canadian Opera scene, Measha Brueggergosman; and the legendary Juno award winning Canadian singer songwriter Jim Cuddy and members of his band. Neil Hetherington, Ken Burns and others will inform us about food insecurity in our community and inspire us to respond. The webcast will also include opportunities to sing along wherever you are with the congregation and choirs from previous years.

<http://www.yorkminsterpark.com/gather/webcast/index.php?id=729>

Advent III, Sunday, December 13, 11 a.m. Rev. Paula Willis preaching

We will be lighting the Advent Candle of Joy and singing some of the great songs and carols of Advent

and Christmas. The Rev. Dr. William Sturgess will also be with us to offer a window on the church and offer one of our scripture readings.

Carols by Candlelight, Sunday, December 13, 4:30 p.m.

A treasured Toronto Christmas tradition since 1933. The service will include musical highlights from previous years and some fresh voices in prayer, readings and poetry.

<https://www.yorkminsterpark.com/gather/webcast/index.php?id=727>

Service of Comfort and Hope, Saturday, December 19, 11 a.m.

An online gathering and service designed for those who have experienced loss and grief this year. Contact Dale Rose for the link.

Advent IV, Sunday, December 20, 11 a.m. Rev. Dr. J. Peter Holmes preaching

The service will include a special Christmas presentation from our Family Ministries.

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, December 20, 4:30 p.m.

Lessons will be read by beloved friends of YP new and old from around the world. Be prepared to be delightfully surprised and be sure to stay tuned for conversations with these friends immediately following the service.

<https://www.yorkminsterpark.com/gather/webcast/index.php?id=728>

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Thursday, Dec. 24, 11 p.m.

With special music by the celtic band, Iona Passage and readings offered by one of Canada's finest actors, RH Thomson. Rev. Dr. J Peter Holmes preaching

Christmas Day Communion, Friday, Dec. 25, 11 a.m. Rev. Dale Rose preaching

Christmas I - Sunday, December 27, 11 a.m. Rev. Dr. J. Peter Holmes preaching

New Year's Eve Watch Night Service, Dec. 31, 11:15 p.m. Rev. Paula Willis preaching

WALKING TOGETHER online devotional in Advent

During the pandemic many have found that Yorkminster Park's Walking Together online

devotional has provided them with inspiration and encouragement. Indeed the devotional has grown since the fall of 2019 from a readership of 120 to over 335.

The devotional features entries each week from Peter Holmes, John Torrance, Paula Willis and Dale Rose, while Rob Inman, Sue Wilkinson, David Dorapalli, and Heather Mackey take turns offering the Friday reflection. The entries include a scripture reading and brief reflection and prayer.

During the Advent season we are thrilled to have five distinguished guest writers offering a Saturday entry each. These began on Nov. 28th with the Honourable David C. Onley and Dec. 5th with the Rev. Carolyn King. We are also looking forward to entries on Dec. 12th by Milton Fletcher; Dec. 19th by the Rev. Dr. Anna Robbins and on Dec. 26th by the Rev. Dr. Paul Scott Wilson.

I feel a personal indebtedness to each of our writers as their entries truly encouraged me during my recent illness and recovery. We are also very grateful to Paula Willis for her hard work as the editor of the devotional.

The devotional is available to all who subscribe whether they belong to the church community or not. Perhaps you have a friend or family member who might be encouraged in their own faith by receiving the devotional. If so please send them the link and invite them to subscribe.

To learn more about and to subscribe to Walking Together go to:

<https://www.yorkminsterpark.com/grow/weekday-devotional.php>

BLACK HISTORY MONTH at YP

In February 2021, Yorkminster Park will be marking and celebrating Black History month. The Board of Deacons made this decision at their March meeting and a committee was formed which is Chaired by Deacon Ettie Dawkins and includes Janice Ivory Smith, Carol Roberts, Monette Buck, Heather Mackey and myself with Milton Fletcher of Detroit serving as our Honorary Chair. Plans are underway for Zoom sessions each Wednesday night in February in which we will engage with leaders about important elements of black history and its impact on the faith and the church. We are delighted to announce that on Sunday February 7th we will have

official greetings from the Honourable Jean Augustine, the first Black woman elected to the Canadian parliament who successfully introduced the bill to parliament establishing February as Black History Month in Canada. We are so pleased to announce that our guest preacher on February 7th will be the Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III, pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago. Before the month is over we will also have the privilege of welcoming soprano, Measha Brueggergosman back to YP to sing. More information will follow.

BUSINESS AT YORKMINSTER PARK

During the pandemic you will be pleased to know that the various boards have been meeting online and have been able to offer significant leadership for our congregation. Those whose terms were to have expired in June were asked by Church council to extend their terms initially to the end of the year and more recently until the end of May 2021. Similarly all of the board chairs agreed to extend their terms of office until the end of May. This has been an incredible gift to the church offering us great stability and wisdom in a challenging time. I commend our board chairs, Joan Ferguson, Deacons; Stephen Hart, Finance and Admin; John Torrance, Mission; Carol Radford Grant, Music; Christopher Milthorpe, Christian Education and Robert Peck, Trustees. We are also grateful to the Yorkminster Park Women for their leadership.

Due to the pandemic protocols limiting the size of indoor gatherings we have not been able to hold a congregational business meeting at Yorkminster Park since early March. Meeting online is the only solution at present, but our church constitution does not include an article allowing for church business to be conducted using an online platform. There is however important business to consider in the coming months. The Board of Deacons have therefore passed a motion recommending Church Council call a meeting of the congregation to be held using an online platform such as Zoom to consider a motion to amend the constitution to allow for congregational meetings to be held online. If the motion passes, a second meeting will be held a few weeks later to consider some of the motions that need to be passed. Please keep our boards and the chairs in your prayers as they continue to help our congregation navigate their way ahead.

As I look back at 2020 I am so grateful of the love and support of my church family during my time of illness. Thank you for your prayers and messages of encouragement and kindness.

Have a safe, healthy and wonderful Christmas!
Peter Holmes

MUSINGS FROM THE MINISTER OF PASTORAL CARE



“It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness.” (Chinese proverb)

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” (Martin

Luther King Jr.)

“For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light --for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.” (Ephesians 5:8-9)

When I was a young boy in Sunday School, one of the first songs I learned was this old children’s hymn: “Jesus bids us shine with a clear, pure light; Like a little candle burning in the night; In this world of darkness, we must shine; You in your small corner, and I in mine.” Some of you will remember singing this same hymn. The words were penned by Susan Warner, an American writer and devout Presbyterian in the latter part of the 19th century. She wrote religious songs for children, as did her sister Anna. Anna Warner was in fact the author of one of our best-loved children’s hymns, *Jesus Loves Me*. But I have always loved Susan’s hymn about Jesus inviting us to shine. It talks about one of the great Christian symbols – the candle. Candles have played an important role in our household over the years, especially during the Christmas season. From advent wreaths to table settings to fireplace mantels, our holiday season is full of the soft glow and ambience of candles. My wife Donna loves to visit candle

shops and factories. I must confess that even though I am not a great fan of “window shopping” (actually like some men, I’m not a fan of shopping at all!), I do like the different colours, scents and creative shapes of candles in the store.

For many centuries, the candle was the main source of light in most homes – long before the days of electricity. Candles are still used in many different settings – in the home, on tables, on window sills, in churches and temples. There is something warm and inviting about candles – real candles that flicker in the breeze, that give out light in the darkness. Candles have always symbolized hope and presence. It is amazing how much light one candle can give off in a room of total darkness. It is no wonder that the symbol of light is so often mentioned in the Bible, especially in connection with the nativity of Jesus. Isaiah the prophet spoke of the coming Messiah: “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.” (Isaiah 9:2) As the shepherds watched their flocks near Bethlehem, “the glory of the Lord shone around them,” giving them news of great joy. (Luke 2:9) Old Simeon took the baby Jesus in his arms, and blessed God for granting “a light to the Gentiles, and a glory to your people Israel.” (Luke 2:32) And of course, the wise men were guided by the light of a star which led them to the infant Jesus.

I have always loved the expression: “We’ll leave a light on for you.” It reminds me of my high school days, when I gained my first taste of freedom; when I could stay out later; when I could drive the family car by myself. My parents would always leave the porch light on for me, so I would not have to come home in the dark. I also suspect they stayed up late many a night waiting for me to return home safely – something which I also did when my children became teenagers. Coming home late, no light looked as good as that single, shining porch light. That small light reminded me that I was loved and cared for, and that people were expecting me home. In this season of Advent, light becomes a more precious commodity as the days get shorter. Many people rise in darkness and return home from work in

darkness. But Advent reminds us that the light will return. As the days soon begin to get longer again, we anticipate the coming of spring and with it, the hope of the earth renewing itself in nature.

So too we look forward to the coming of “the light” this Christmas. But for Christians, it is a different kind of light. As the apostle John put it: “The true light that enlightens everyone was coming into the world... The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:5,9) May the words of this Advent prayer remind us of the light that is coming for each of us. This prayer was written by Henri Nouwen, a priest and chaplain for many years at the *Daybreak* L’Arche community in Richmond Hill:

Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.

We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.

We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us.

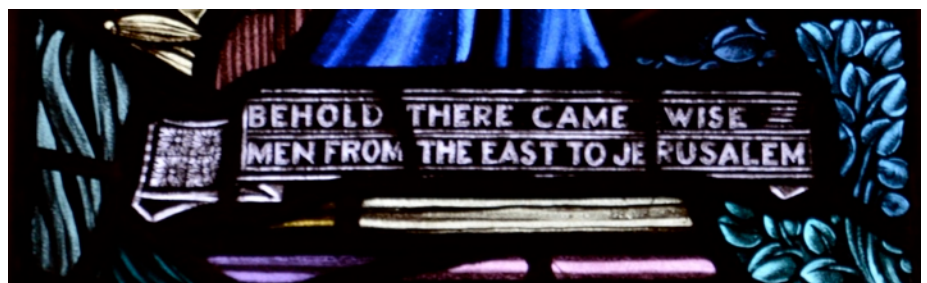
We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom.

We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.

We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light. To you we say, “Come Lord Jesus!” Amen

As you light candles in the darkness this Advent, may you be reminded of the One who is the Light of the World – the One who shines brightly in our night time – Emmanuel, “God with us.”

Dale Rose
Minister of Pastoral Care



Christmas Mission Project

Families are supporting the Churches-on-the-hill (COTH) Food Bank by giving non-perishable food items and/or financial donation. We will highlight this on Sunday, December 15th - 11am for our White Gift Sunday Online Worship Service.

On December 6th, we were able to safely give families a **CHRISTMAS FAMILY ACTIVITY BAG** filled with Advent materials and craft supplies for children/youth to engage in over the season. Let's keep Christ in Christmas!

Out of the Cold Missions Letter

A BIG thank you to all the children and youth who participated in supporting this mission by writing and drawing over 50 Christmas letters that were copied and given to 300 **Out of the Cold** guests along with a box of essential needs. Spreading joy with our words of love and encouragement is a blessing! Take a look at a couple of our the letters below:



Family Christmas Service

Our Family Ministry Team are excited to include as many children and youth for our **Family Christmas Online Service** happening on **Sunday, December 20, 2020 at 11am**. We are being creative with how we share Luke 2:1-20 and will do so in safe/virtual ways. Stay tuned for this intergenerational worship service.

ZOOMING IN!

Our weekly **Online Ministry** (Zoom) experiences are also a wonderful way to stay connected and be supported. If you would like to be a part of them, please contact Heather Mackey at hmackey@yorkminsterpark.com

- DOXA Youth Bible Study * Sundays from 11:30am–12:30pm
- Youth Group Night * Tuesdays from 7:30–8:30pm
- Family Ministry experience * Tuesdays from 6:30–7:15pm

A big thank you to God for our devoted Family Ministry Team for their time, gifts and servant hearts shared.

In faith, Heather Mackey
Director of Family Ministries

NURSES NOTES BY LILY

Health and Wellness Update - Congregational Check In



The Humber College/University of New Brunswick/ Bachelor of Arts, 3rd Year Nursing Program students (School of Health Sciences) have now completed the practicum placement here at YPBC.

The nursing students along with their teacher, Theresa Santos, have collated and examined all the responses/results within each survey which have been submitted to me for initial review.

As you may recall the survey focused on how the Impact of COVID-19 has been affecting the Wholistic Health of our congregational community.

ISAIAH 9:2

The people in darkness have seen a great light; On those living in the Land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

ISAIAH 9:6

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given. And the government will be on his shoulder.

On behalf of the students, their teacher and myself, we are immensely grateful for your participation, time and efforts in sharing your lived experience during such unprecedented times. We look forward to sharing this report/article with all of you soon, sometime mid to end of December 2020. It will become available on the Parish Nurse page of the YMPB Church website, and available in hard copy, as requested.

LUKE 6:38

Give and it will be given to you.

A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over,

Will be poured on your lap.

For with the measure you use, it will be measured for you.



Wishing each and every one a safe and peaceful Christmas and a New Year filled with Hope and Sunshine.

Lily Cugliari-Kobayashi, RN Faith Community Nursing Practice

THERESA SANTOS has requested to please have the following message shared amongst the YPBC Church Community

Dear Yorkminster Park Baptist Church Community Members and Staff:

On Sunday Nov. 22, 2020, my 3rd year nursing students presented the final draft for the "Congregational Check in report". I would like to acknowledge the dedication, hard work and resilience that they and all of you have demonstrated over the past several months. Regardless of your role at the church, whether you are a member of the congregation or a congregation staff member, I want to extend my gratitude and appreciation for your contributions to the report. I also want to acknowledge the hard work of my students as they worked virtually through this Community and Population Health placement which carried its own challenges and learning.

I have observed and taken action with my team of students to help collaborate efforts and talents to support the members of Yorkminster Park Baptist church to re-connect and find hope in faith. These are such unprecedented times for all of us with this worldwide pandemic.

I want to conclude the semester with a heartfelt thank you to the members and staff of Yorkminster Park Baptist Church - who are taking on more than their share of the burden related to COVID-19 and they are going above and beyond what could ever be expected of them. Just to name a few:

- Rev. Peter Holmes and Rev. Dale Rose
- Rev. John Torrence.- photos of nature

- Mr. John Fenton - writer/poet/YMPBC member
- Henry Regehr, Pat Hemmings, and Ruth Farrow, Dale and Heather who participated in our zoom meet and greet session. Henry also contributed photos.
- Paula Willis – Daily devotionals contributor and organizer/administrator
- Cody, office administrative coordinator who assisted with communication within the bulletin and cannot forget the support of the health and wellness chair, Laura Heatherington and all the committee members.

Sincere apologies if we have mistakenly missed mentioning anyone else’s name.

Of course, there would be no opportunity for a team of student nurses to work with Yorkminster Park Baptist if it wasn't for the most knowledgeable and dedicated compassionate colleague, I've ever worked with in my entire career Lily Cugliari-Kobayashi.

It has been a privileged to work with her and learn from her experience and wisdom. I admire her work ethic and commitment and believe it would be hard to find a more dedicated Parish Nurse for Yorkminster Park.

Warmest regards,
Theresa Santos, BScN, RN, CCHNC



“Lessons of the Geese”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hazitrzhPk>

TRANSITIONS

Since the last newsletter there have been several milestones in the life of the church.

Birth

Ruth Eleanor Llewellyn-Thomas
dau of Roland Llewellyn-Thomas and Frankie Davenport-Llewellyn-Thomas

Deaths

Phyllis Epp
Don Epp
Neil Swan
Ruth Davies

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

The three sponsored families (one from Pakistan and two from Syria) and two individuals (from Eritrea) are all coping in these difficult circumstances. All have been in Canada for over a year and are no longer being supported by the church. The men are all working and the children are all attending school. There are 3 babies on the way!

We are committed to sponsoring a family from the Central African Republic (currently in a refugee camp in Ghana) but have no news on the status of their application. The father has lost his job and is no longer



able to support his family. The Church is providing modest funding (from the Refugee Fund) to support them while they await news of their application.

We continue to be approached by families from Syria and Iran who are seeking sponsorship but until we have clarity over the outstanding application, we are not committing to new sponsorships.

Please keep all these families in your prayers.

submitted by Mike Wills

NEWS FROM THE BOARD OF MISSION

The Board of Mission brochure defines Christian Mission as “*the advancing of the good news of Jesus Christ. It is God’s cross-cultural mission, both local and global in scope, in which all Christians are invited to participate in the spiritual and practical ministries of love and compassion.*”

There are several organizations and mission partners that the Board supports through its budget in order to live up to this mandate. Here is a brief summary of a few:

Fiona & Conrad Kwok, our Canadian Baptist Ministries partners in Thailand, teach at the Bethel Bible Institute in that country, but because of the Covid19 lockdown, all schools have been closed. At the Bible School they have been holding classes using long distance on-line teaching; but many students live in villages where internet is not stable. Conrad and Fiona have asked us to pray that the staff and students will be safe from the coronavirus and that classes will resume soon.

Bill & Janice Dyck are our Canadian Baptist Ministry partners for Bolivia. After about five months of strict quarantine, working from home in Bolivia, Bill and Janice decided to come back to Canada in August where they continue to be in touch with the people of Bolivia from their home in Calgary. Bill has weekly meetings with key pastors via Zoom, promotes training events, and continues to take further training himself. Janice continues to be in contact with and in prayer for the children of the Emmanuel Foundation, where she was teaching music to children from the red-light district, and supporting local volunteers who continue going to the individual homes of the children with food and educational materials. They ask for prayer for Bolivian pastors. About 35 of our Baptist pastors, including the President, contracted COVID, 10 of whom have died. Most pastors have had little or no income from their churches, so they need our prayerful support.

Nabil Costa, the CEO of the Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development, and his team have been very busy helping the victims of the explosion in Beirut on August 6, as well as ministering to many refugees from Syria. Thanks to

your generosity, we were able to send \$15,000 through the fundraising appeal last August, on top of the yearly \$10,000 we contribute to the ministry in Beirut. On the education side of the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary, **Elie Haddad** and team have been restricted to online teaching and are having to conduct faculty visits to the different locations of the students.

On the home front, we are grateful that **Meals on Wheels** has continued to deliver healthy meals to seniors in the area throughout the COVID-19 restrictions. Unfortunately, **Out of the Cold** had to cease providing meals and shelter beginning in March and will not be functioning as normal this winter.

That said, the **Out of the Cold (OOTC) Steering Committee** has had a representative participate in bi-weekly city-wide OOTC Coordinators teleconferences. During the teleconferences, the sixteen faith-based OOTC programs share their initiatives, opportunities and challenges in finding ways to minister to the needs of those experiencing homelessness during the pandemic. The following initiatives were brought to our OOTC Steering Committee, adapted based on further fact-gathering, approved, and are now being implemented:

1. **300 PPE/Comfort Kits.** These kits include a 6’x8’ tarp, winter hat & gloves, wool socks, toiletry kit (2 masks, toothpaste and brush, hand sanitizer, lip balm & lotion), energy bar, and a note from the children of our Lighthouse Ministry to give them a message of encouragement. While these kits were going to be assembled by our OOTC volunteers in the gym, lockdown prevented volunteers from gathering. We are grateful to Kim Aikenhead and her family members and Margaret Barclay for stepping up to not only procure the items but also assemble all 300 kits. These kits were distributed through the All Saints Community Centre on Dundas Street East to people who have no home to call their own and are very vulnerable on the street and on transit during this pandemic.
2. **Funding a Part-Time Frontline Community Staff person at All Saints Community Centre.** The frontline staff at

the All Saints Community Centre have been overwhelmed and exhausted due to the increased number of guests arriving at their door to be fed and to use the washroom facilities. Our OOTC Steering Committee has made use of accumulated funds to support one additional staff person at the Centre from Dec. 1 through to March 31, 2021.

3. **4800 Hot Lunches.** Through various not-for-profit caterers, 1 hot meal per week will be provided for up to 100 guests for the period Dec. 1 through to March 31, 2021, at three partner organizations, including All Saints Community Centre, Metropolitan United Church and St. Andrews Presbyterian Church. They are all within the downtown core, providing direct access through existing ministries for people experiencing homelessness.

4. As the pandemic continues and the number of people experiencing homelessness increases, our OOTC Steering Committee is continuing to network and gather information to develop additional initiatives for those in need at street level and to engage our volunteers in safe outreach. To that end, watch for the next initiatives from the Steering Committee. And in the meantime, if you have access or a lead to high quality sleeping bags at cost or to be donated please contact ehuggins@rogers.com.

The Board is very grateful to the Steering Committee for these new ways of meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness during a time in which we are unable to host them in our own facility.

The **House of Compassion** was founded by members of Yorkminster Park in 1988 to provide a permanent supportive home to people in Toronto who are living with severe and persistent mental illness. It is funded by many government and corporate organizations, as well as individual donations from Yorkminster Park members and the Board of Mission.

Executive Director Ryan Tucker reports: "House of Compassion continues to face extraordinary challenges in responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Covid-19 virus poses an incredible risk to our 21 residents, many of whom are seniors



living in shared quarters with underlying health conditions. Unlike larger facilities and institutions, our home presents challenges that are unique to community-based settings; our residents' bedrooms are compact and we depend upon our communal kitchen, dining room, living rooms and shared washrooms in the delivery of our services. The risks of exposure to COVID-19 for vulnerable populations such as ours who live in congregate settings is very high and will be for some time to come. This means that our best line of defense against COVID-19 at House of Compassion is: Prevention. In an effort to ensure the continued safety of our residents and staff we have had to restrict all non-essential visitors to the house, equip our residents and staff with necessary personal protective equipment, augment our cleaning and sanitation services and introduce many other measures to ensure the continued safety of everyone that we house and employ at House of

Compassion. We would sincerely like to thank everyone who has supported us during this extremely challenging time; we are so very grateful for this support and your contributions are continuing to make a tremendous impact here at the House.”

We thank the members of the church for your generosity in donating to the Missions section of the offering envelop. Unfortunately, this year those designated offerings are down from last year, which means that all of the organizations we support are having to do with less in their own ministries. The Board of Mission budget is separate from the overall church budget, so this is simply a reminder to contribute to our mission endeavors as you are able.

With appreciation,

John Torrance,
Chair, Board of Mission

GIFT FOR THE FRIENDSHIP ROOM

A painting has been given to the Friendship Room, *"Back Country on the Jericho Road"*, painted by Douglas Edwards, son of Jean Edwards. It has been donated by Jean Edwards and the Artist in loving memory of Stanley Edard Edward.

submitted by Ralph Neal



“FELLOW” AWARD - JOHN FENTON



One of our members, John Fenton, has been awarded the honour of “Fellow” by CPA Ontario (formerly known as the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario) and he can use the designation “FCPA, FCA” following his name. CPA Ontario invites nominations once annually

from among its members for candidates who have shown leadership or exceptional service in the accounting profession, the community or in charitable organizations and after a committee review, some of the nominees are chosen for the honour.

Over many years John has given outstanding service to **his Church, Humber College, The Elmer Iseler Singers and to Yonge Street Mission**. Now he has been recognized by his peers in the accounting profession for such dedication and many hours away from home and office over the years. Good work John! We all are pleased that this honour has come to you.

tribute by Warren Paddon, photo by Peter Emmerson Photography

YPBC WOMEN'S MINISTRIES...



new BWA logo

CONNECTING THROUGH PRAYER

*Baptist World
Alliance Women*

*Our aim is to
connect Baptist
women globally
because we
believe when*

Baptist women come together in Christ, God creates shalom for all.

A priority that YPBC Women's Ministries shares with *Baptist World Alliance Women*, with which we are affiliated, is that of embracing creative ways to remain connected with one another. One cherished and vital way of fostering the connectedness of Baptist women on a local, national and global scale is God's gracious gift of prayer, ever available to us. Historically, *YPBC Women* have set aside a day in November to participate in the *BWA Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer*. This has been a welcome opportunity to join with Baptist women, globally - to pray for our Baptist sisters throughout 7 continental unions and to support them financially as we have been able.

The *Baptist Women's Day of Prayer*, held on the first Monday of every November, is central in the life of *Baptist World Alliance Women*. It is a time when Baptist women gather in towns, villages and cities to pray for each other and for issues facing women around the world. On this day, funds are donated to support projects around the world that benefit vulnerable women, youth and children. This annual observance is the means by which Baptist women from every continent stand together, grow in effectiveness and impact our world for Christ. The *BWA Day Of Prayer* began as a miracle of God's peace-making grace in the aftermath of WW II. In 1948, 19 Baptist women from Denmark, France, Italy, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Great Britain, Finland and Czechoslovakia met in London England with the chair of what was then the *Women's Committee* of the BWA. The war had shattered their

lives and their sisterhood in Christ. They came bearing wounds of loss and anxiety, suspicion and shame - wounds that began to heal as they prayed the Lord's Prayer together. Within three days, they had formed the *European Baptist Women's Union* and chosen their President, Marie Norgaard of Denmark who led them to dedicate the first week of November as "a week when we unitedly pray for each other and the world." Since that eventful period, the *BWA Day of Prayer* movement among Baptist women has grown. Observances now reach women in nearly every country where there are Baptist groups, currently 156 countries within the 7 continental unions with translations of the programme into over 80 languages!

The *BWA Baptist Women's Day of Prayer* links women of the world, providing spiritual lifelines that strengthen and give hope. In some parts of the globe, women are known to walk several miles, some over and down mountains, to reach appointed places of prayer. Dorothy Neal, a former member of YPBC and one time President of the *North American Baptist Women's Union*, would often remind us that in parts of Asia and Africa women swim small rivers and streams in order to participate in the *Day of Prayer!* With such courage and devotion, Baptist women continue to be the strength of their churches!

In the words of Bea Mesquias, *Baptist Women's Union of Latin America*:

God fearing women are not the type of people who sit around and accept whatever comes. We must fight in prayer for our families, leaders and for our country!

The overall purpose of *BWA Women* is to connect Baptist women globally in order to help us to flourish and to experience God's *shalom*...

- We want every woman to find her true worth and strength in Christ
- We want every woman to live out all God made her to be and do
- This will help her to thrive and as every woman thrives, everyone benefits

It is a privilege for us as *YPBC Women* to know that we are part of this beautiful, diverse family of

Baptist Women across the globe and that we can extend our love to one another through prayers of support and our responses of generosity.



Women's Executive meet

For further reading:

- The programme and prayer requests for the November 2, 2020 *Day of Prayer* may be accessed at bwad.org
- If you're interested in reading more about the *BWA Women's* purpose and how and why they began, please read Esther Barnes excellent book, *Coming Together*, available in the YPBC Gladstone Library and the CBOQ READ ON Bookstore. (Esther is currently a member of YPBC and the former editor of the award winning *Link and Visitor*.)

submitted by Jonanne Fenton on behalf of YPBC Women's Ministries

DEAR LADIES.....

Dear Ladies of the YP Women's Group, Christmas 2020

2020 will go down as a year filled with many challenges and unique and isolating times. What does it mean to have hope amid trying times? Hope is more than a feeling; it isn't simply being perpetually optimistic or having a "hopeful" attitude. Scripture offers us an understanding of hope that is much more robust. Christian hope has heft, endurance, and purpose—and God is its source.

God, "in his great mercy ... has given us new birth into a living hope" (1 Pet. 1:3). And it is our "God of

hope" who enables us to "overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 15:13). This reality isn't true only in good times; in fact, it is in dark and difficult times when hope truly shows its mettle.

This is what Christian hope looks like. It doesn't ignore fear, anxiety, and doubt; it confronts them. It holds steady, clinging to peace in the midst of chaos. Through life's many treacherous storms ... Christian hope is buoyed by something greater that has happened and something greater that is going to happen again.

Hope Is an Expectant Leap – We are now in the midst of the Advent season. Advent is a season of the liturgical year observed in most Christian denominations as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Christ at Christmas and the return of Christ at the Second Coming. Advent reminds us that Christian hope is shaped by what has happened and what's going to happen again.

Let us focus on our hope in Christ's future coming—in the Second Advent we wait, during which time that waiting gives us endurance, confidence, and joy in our daily lives, no matter what difficulties we might face. We reflect on the hope of God's people in the Old Testament as they relied upon God in hardship and we look at prophecies of hope that pointed toward the First Advent: the coming of the Messiah. We contemplate the miracle of hope breaking through in the Incarnation, when "the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14)—as a human baby, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

This is our "living hope" or, as the New Living Translation puts it, our "great expectation." Our hope is animated by our confident expectation that the child who was born will one day come again in glory to put all wrong things right, and his kingdom will have no end.

Merry Christmas and a healthy, safe and fulfilling New Year. May you experience the gifts of God's blessing offered in the name of His son, Jesus, the babe we celebrate and remember with our gratitude and love,

Suzanne (*Wilkinson*)

FOR THE LOVE OF A *GOOD OLD DAYS* CHRISTMAS



Good old days, dear old days when my heart beat high and bold.

(Eugene Field's poem,
New Year's Eve)

Ah, coasting in those days—those good old days—was fun indeed!

(Eugene Field's poem,
Ashes on the Slide)

... *Good old days beyond the big divide*
(Eugene Field's poem *John Smith*)

Mr. Field sure liked those “good old days.” Didn't we all? Haven't we all (or at least most of us) pined and sighed at least once or twice this year for our easier, simpler, predictable and normal pre-pandemic times? Oh how we like to go on about the better days of long ago. *I* can sometimes get caught up in “good old days” thinking. You too? Even Charles Dickens referenced such days (in *The Chimes*): “The good old times, the grand old times, the great old times!” And our very own Peter (Holmes) comforted us, in his earliest pandemic-update emails this past March, by referencing Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* passage: “It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.” Perhaps Peter's contrasting Dickensian reference is the most profound of them all when it comes to how we've thought and felt about this past year' and now this Advent season that is before us, too.

But *all* times are *good* times, even the tough ones, if we remember to reframe our perspective about the experiences at hand—like those of this pandemic; like those of our current Covid-Christmas. Isn't it true that there have been times since March that, despite the stresses and frets, the worries and perhaps even sicknesses, you have participated in or witnessed wonderful, meaningful, powerful moments *this year because* of social distancing? *because* of lockdown? *because* of staying home? Moments that took your breath away or yanked your heart with their simple beauty and authenticity?

Moments that were seemingly so “insignificant” or “unimportant” that you would not have otherwise even noticed in a “regular” year? Is it not true that when you look back at your “good old days” some of your fondest memories include recollections of events that weren't *all* “sunshine and lollipops?” Sometimes stressful and worrisome times, too, end up counting amongst our fondest recollections. As Carly Simon's song *Anticipation* reminds (from the good old days, lol—the irony here is not lost on me!) ;)

*We can never know about the days to come
But we think about them anyway
And I wonder if I'm really with you now
Or just chasin' after some finer day...*

*And tomorrow we might not be together
I'm no prophet and I don't know nature's ways
So I'll try and see into your eyes right now
And stay right here 'cause these are the good old days*

Despite it all, these *are* the good old days. Five years from now we will look back at *this* time and, in addition to what Peter shared in his September 20, 2020 sermon (about one day reflecting on 2020 and saying, “What *is* it?/what *was* that?”), we will *also* remember those “good old days” of 2020. Whether you were amongst those that voluntarily or mandatorily took a year-long breath and pause, or those who worked harder than ever just to keep up during the pandemic, we will all look back with great appreciation for the fortifying value and importance of our faith in helping us successfully pass through such unprecedented times with a fairly serene core. And when we also think of those good old pandemic-times days, we will recall how grateful we were (and are) to be members of a church with such strong and creative teams (ministerial, AV, music, and all the others) who have all so dedicatedly played their parts to help see us through without missing a beat—up to *and* including our beloved and joyous multitude of 2020 virtual Advent services and Christmas-focused musical events over the next couple of weeks!

“Ah,” we will say, “... remember those good old Covid-19 days when we: slowed down, mustered the courage to learn new technology, engaged in longer,

more meaningful phone conversations with friends and family members, walked more, drove less, talked with and looked out for our community neighbours and local merchants, cleaned house, rode bikes, rediscovered cooking and baking, sat in our local park and enjoyed urban picnics, said hello and smiled more often to “strangers,” became masters of the seven-day 1000-piece puzzle, rediscovered (or introduced our children and grandchildren to) board games, dusted off Chess and Scrabble boards, “let” our hair grow out (and our roots show, women!) ;), rediscovered old hobbies and started new ones, pondered a blue sky and a pink flower, walked a (dog four times a day), cuddled a cat more often, “zoomed” grandchildren regularly, lingered longer at the cottage or country house, found time to read that huge stack of bedside books, redefined the difference between “needs” and “wants” and then *practiced* the needs and let go of the wants, and sleuthed out the *quality* programming on Netflix (like the true-story documentary *The Biggest Little Farm*, heralded as “Joyful in all the best ways. It’s utterly and completely beautiful.” “The hardships we face make the dream itself feel so much more alive.” I know you love it! ☺) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfDTM4JxH18>

And when it comes to remembering Christmas 2020 somewhere down the line, consider this: Have you ever noticed that when you think of your fondest memories of Christmases past, it’s the *simplest and purist* things that make your heart fill with joy? Not the “wowie-cowie” big present, but rather the broken little bird ornament that you hang on the tree every year, just so, to hide the broken bit, while still honouring that bauble with a premium pride-of-place tree branch; the grease-stained, vintage cookie recipe that makes the best-ever gingerbread that you bring to church or share with family, friends and neighbours; playing that old vinyl recording of Eugene Ormandy and The Philadelphia Philharmonic’s *Messiah*, the day after you’ve just heard it performed live at church; making paper chains and looping them around the ceilings and walls; Christmas Crackers at the feast table (and hating to throw away those cheesy “prizes” within, while some “hate” wearing their paper crowns for fear of looking silly? We look silly with those tissue

tiaras lopsidedly adorning our heads. That’s the whole point! Silly and sweet and sentimental. ☺

Right now, thanks to the pandemic, you may possibly see only loss and pain and financial stress, alongside chaos, woeful turmoil and a fretful sense of the future. And that’s because we can’t see far enough around the corner to know *for sure* what’s coming next. But *this* much we *do* know is coming next—the birthday of our Lord. Bad times or good, *this* is the time we celebrate the birth of Jesus, our Emmanuel. A time worth celebrating. A *good* time. Any year.

So I wish you, with all my heart, a merry little Christmas. Even if *little* is the operative word this year in terms of numbers with whom you may gather, it will *still* be grand. It can’t help but be otherwise—it’s *Christmas!* Just like The Grinch learned when “his heart grew three sizes that day. And then the true meaning of Christmas came though, and the Grinch found the strength of ten Grinches, plus two.” ☺

So keep moving hopefully and faithfully forward in the right direction. And remember the following reflection and selection from scripture:

*I find the great thing in this world is not so much
where we stand,
but in which direction we are moving.
To reach the port of heaven we must sail,
sometimes with the wind, sometimes against it
—but we must sail and not drift or lie at anchor.
-- Oliver Wendell Holmes*

Romans 5:3

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Let’s go forth through the rest of our Advent season (virtually, this year only), *together*, knowing that we are all out there for each other, as we gather for our services and celebrations online. Every time I “attend” church with you on virtual Sundays I *know* that *you* are out there too! I *feel* your presence, and

see your faces in my mind's eye, as we all sing our hymns *together* from separate homes, pray the Lord's Prayer in unison, lift our hearts when listening to our beloved soloists, and listen intently, *together*, to learn from the inspirational sermons and spiritual guidance offered up each week by Peter, Dale, John or Paula.

Look for the value, lessons and *good* experiences you can glean from all the "bad."

Advent is a wondrous time to see the value in everything you do, through everything that happens this month, and *has* happened this year. You can spin *gold* (*alongside frankincense and myrrh*) from looking at these truths and insights—and *that*, that is what makes for the good times—times worth remembering.

Nina is a (Virtual and In-Person) Conference Keynote Speaker, Speaker Coach, Voiceover Artist, Bestselling Author of *Getting Passion Out of Your Profession*, and *A Time to Creep, A Time to Soar* (Leadership lessons from climbing Kilimanjaro), and Member of YPBC

REMEMBERING KINDNESS

November 13th - Yesterday at the church bells ceremony I wore this bracelet. It is not just any bracelet, but is associated with a kindness story from the First World War.

In 1916, this lovely nine carat seed pearl bracelet was given to my Great Aunt by an 18-year-old serviceman in training - as a gift for



her kindness. His identity is unknown. My aunt resided in Kent County in the town of Gillingham, England. On Sunday evenings she and other townsfolk took in

young soldiers who were training for combat in WWI. They were served home-cooked meals and given warm clothing. This bracelet was passed down through my family; I am fortunate to wear it every Remembrance Day.

submitted by Elaine Snider

NIAGARA AND BACK - DBFB



Fundraiser for the Daily Bread Food Bank – Walk to Niagara Falls and Back - Initial goal achieved.

I sincerely thank those who have contributed to the Daily Bread Food Bank in support of my virtual walk to Niagara

Falls. I have finished the 300 km. trek from North York to Niagara Falls and back almost twice. The original goal was reached, but the need to continue is great. Therefore, the new goal is now \$12,000.00. Presently, through the generosity of friends and neighbours, this fundraiser has raised just over \$11,000. Please join me in this worthwhile fundraising challenge for the needy of our city as together we raise \$12,000.00 together. My personalized direct link to the Daily Bread Food Bank is: <http://support.dailybread.ca/goto/NiagaraFalls>

I count it a privilege to have been able to do this walk. Unquestionably, there is an immense need to provide food for the marginalized of our city, especially in these days of COVID-19. Many have been plunged into poverty and unemployment and cannot provide for themselves or their families.

I sincerely appreciate your past or future donation, as it will be a high bar to meet this new target. Yet, I am optimistic that the \$12,000.00 goal is reachable. Thank you so very much.

With sincere gratitude and blessings to you and yours.

submitted by Suzanne Wilkinson



WHAT HAPPENED TO YP GALLERY'S SEPTEMBER 2020 ARTIST

Nelson Cheng* was exhibiting his paintings last year at Toronto Outdoor Art Fair when he was approached by a CBC television producer. The producer asked him to apply for a place in a reality show --- a sort of 'Paint-Off.' The winner would be declared: *Landscape Artist of the Year, Canada*. Nelson's first thought was, *Can this be legit?*



Nelson, Midland Town docks - photo David Leyes

The show was four episodes: three preliminary rounds (each round with six artists competing and only two winners) and one final episode. Nelson thought about the unknowns of painting on location, within a time constraint, in front of judges, with everyone watching, and all of it televised. It would be too much pressure. And yet, he applied.

A month later news came. Nelson had not been picked to be a main participant, but he could join a group of 'wildcard' contestants. Wildcards had to choose which preliminary round to participate in: **Episode 1.** *Pastoral Landscape* in Ontario farmland; **Episode 2.** *Lakeside Landscape* at Cobourg marina; **Episode 3.** *Industrial Landscape* at Midland town docks. Nelson chose number three.

Nelson went a day ahead to Midland and stayed overnight. While the six principal painters were provided with side-by-side portable studios, the wildcards had to bring in all their own equipment. Nelson recalls, *It was just like TV. They said, 'GO!' and we were off. We had to find and claim our spot*

in a designated area, set up our gear, and paint --- all within four hours. It was pretty exhilarating, although we had a long list of distractions: the time limit, constantly changing weather, glaring sun, strong winds, bees, flying drones, camera crews with swinging sound booms, and cameramen watching our every move.

Judges **Joanne Tod**, artist and educator, and **Marc Mayer**, former director of the National Gallery of Canada kept returning to Nelson Cheng's painting. Nelson had to laugh at one of Marc Mayer's comments, *It shouldn't work, but I can't stop looking at it.* By the end of the day, Nelson had won the wildcard spot. He was going to the final.

Episode 4. *Group of Seven Territory*, Lake Rousseau. Two artists from each of three qualifying episodes, plus Nelson, the only wildcard, made a new Group of Seven.

You can see the exciting competition and the results at:

<https://gem.cbc.ca/season/landscape-artist-of-the-year-canada/season-1/2597c8a7-77bc-406c-b134-9e766229930c>

You did it! Congratulations, Nelson! ***Landscape Artist of the Year, Canada.***

***Nelson Cheng** was contracted to be Yorkminster Park Gallery's Sept, 2020 artist. His and all cancelled exhibitions will be rescheduled when the North Hall re-opens.



winning painting on display, McMichael Canadian Art Collection