

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



YPBC NEWS

March 2020



Published by:

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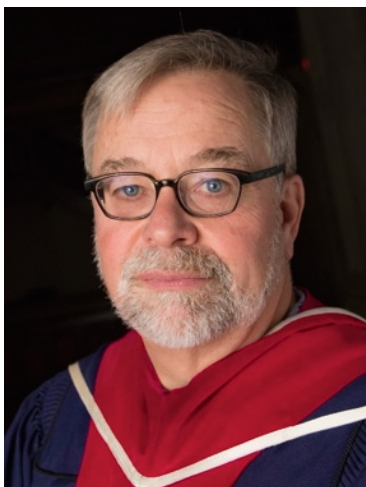
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FROM PETER'S PEN - 18 MARCH 2020

As I write, much of the world is slowing down significantly in response to the COVID-19 virus. We have had to close the doors

worship service, but at the same time we thank God for the wonderful gift we were given of webcasting and for the expertise of David King, Jim Weir honed over years of service. On March 15th we held a service with no one in the nave of the church but yet it was watched through the window of many a computer and we estimate we had a congregation upwards of 2,000. Thank you for your patience in this crisis and for being with us as we seek to be with you in the name of the God who is with us all in Jesus Christ uniting us by the power of the Holy Spirit.

These are trying times and worrying times and I don't even want to begin to think of what may lie ahead for us, but I continue on because I believe most of all in what lies ahead for all of us in Jesus Christ, "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you," (1 Peter 1:4). This virus is taking lives but Jesus Christ gives life and in him we put our trust.

In that spirit we journey on through this season of Lent ever closer to Easter not even sure if our church will be open by then, but our hearts

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

The next newsletter will be published in June, 2020.

Paul R Hill

In accordance with evolving protocols for the prevention of COVID-19 most Church activities, except for online Worship Services, for the next few weeks have been temporarily withdrawn.

Please check www.yorkminsterpark.com for updates.

are open now and one day - one great day our church doors will again be open and together we will lift our voices as one in praise of our God.

A week ago I had a call from my daughter in L.A. who was despairing of life in a city that had come under siege to COVID-19. Shelves in the grocery store were emptying, classes at the university where she teaches were cancelled and people were afraid. Within days the scene was being repeated in our own city.

One day earlier this week she called and the familiar spring was back in her step. I soon discovered that she had started taking an interest in some of her elderly neighbours by running errands for them and finding groceries for them where there had been none. That is of course, the power of love - the love we know in Jesus Christ.

I believe that as we live in that love no matter how hard the present crisis gets, we too will have not only a spring in our step, but the new life of eternity in our hearts. Let us reach out and care however we can. Everyone is saying, make a phone call. Phone calls are good, but I have been finding some phone lines getting tied up. What about writing an old fashioned letter? Just don't lick the envelope or the stamp. Let us pursue good works and do whatever we do to the glory of God.

During Lent our small groups have been following a book entitled *Lenten Journey - Beyond Question* by Eric Burtness, the Lead Pastor of the Zion Lutheran Church in Redmond, Oregon. Each day we consider a different question posed by Jesus. It has been very helpful. Each say through Lent our online devotional looks at the same scripture text and question. It has been very encouraging. If you haven't subscribed to our Walking Together online devotional, please do so on our website.

Sunday Services, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., we will be presenting online until further notice.

As we look ahead we are hoping to continue offering uplifting worship online.

Blessings,
Peter Holmes

LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

As previously reported, in the fall the Board of Deacons set up a committee to consider our history and help us work towards the celebration of some important upcoming dates.

In recent weeks Allan Williams has been exploring and cataloguing the Yorkminster Park archival material and some of his findings have been enlightening.

Our church has two primary streams that make up her history. Both streams originated in the same congregation fifty years apart, but for very different reasons. The Bond Street Baptist Church started a daughter church in the fall of 1871 when the Yorkville Baptist Church was officially opened on Scollard Street. In 1882 the congregation moved into new premises at the south-east corner of Bloor and Bay and took the name Bloor Street Baptist Church. Following the First World War they had so outgrown the Bloor Street building that the congregation began to hold its evening service in the large Uptown Theatre and the leaders began to search for a new property. In 1928 they moved into their new home at Yonge and Heath and took the name Yorkminster Baptist Church. We must give thanks for this group of believers who sacrificed life in a wonderful downtown congregation to plant the seed of a church not knowing what might grow from it. They started as a Sunday School and only had a handful of members to get it off the ground, but they trusted God and followed his calling.

The Bond Street Baptist congregation moved a few blocks east and north and in 1875 became the Jarvis Street Baptist Church. Jarvis Street Baptist Church was one of the leading Baptist churches in Canada. However, their role in the denomination began to change after calling T.T. Shields to serve as their pastor in 1910. Shields remained their pastor until his death in 1955, but by then the Jarvis St. Baptist Church had severed ties with almost all other Baptist Churches in Canada.

In 1920 Shields initiated two significant changes to the church budget that caused an understandable reaction from many. The first was to increase the minister's salary by 50%. The second was to all but remove the choir and Director of Music from the

budget. The second development was perpetrated because it was stated the choir and Director of Music took up too much time in the service. Our archival documents reveal that the Deacons deemed it was the sermons that were taking too long. Prior to the dismissal of the choir Shields' sermons had been approximately 60 minutes in length which the Deacons deemed long enough, but they did not approve of the 80 minute sermons that became the norm after the dismissal of the choir.

Shields dealt with the growing opposition to his leadership by accusing his Deacons of liberalism and worldliness, but they unanimously rejected these charges in a document they published in their defence. They claimed to be as theologically sound as their minister and presented themselves as devoted, godly and spiritual members of the church. Interestingly from the perspective of one hundred years later, one of the charges Shields had brought against his Deacons was that they danced. In the document the 18 maligned Deacons said that only one of their number even knew how to dance.

However these Deacons were also concerned about the character of their minister as he had continuously attacked them in both the press and the denomination. In the spring of 1921 the Deacons brought a motion of non-confidence against their minister, but after a summer of what seemed like political shenanigans they believed they were out maneuvered by their minister and once the vote was lost they were forced to leave the church they loved.

These Deacons along with their family members and many friends as well as the choir and Choir Director began to meet and worship in the Central YMCA of Toronto in the fall of 1921. Among these Deacons were the grandfathers of both Fraser Fell and Doug Brown. How wonderful that these leaders did not give up on God even when they had been let down by their minister and church. They were heartbroken in many ways, but they continued to seek the mind of Christ and to honour him in their life and worship and for this we must be so thankful.

Allan Williams rightly wondered why this group did not merge with the Bloor St. Baptist Church as they were theologically and socially so similar. It is a good question and one can only surmise they may have feared being swallowed up by such a large church. However, it may also have been that their

former minister, T.T. Shields had over the years instilled distrust in his people towards the ministry of W.A. Cameron as in 1922 the Bloor St. Board of Deacons took action against a pamphlet published by T.T. Shields which now maligned the character of Cameron saying among other things that he was unfit to sit on the McMaster Seminary board.

Whatever the reason, the exiles from Jarvis St. did not pursue conversations with Bloor St. until forty years later when their church tragically burned down. But in 1921 they did consider joining with Immanuel Baptist Church at Jarvis and Wellesley. Immanuel Baptist had grown out of Alexander St. Baptist which had also been a daughter church of the Bond St. Baptist Church. Immanuel, now located at Finch and Don Mills had a remarkable reputation for the support of mission work. However, Immanuel also held to a very particular and exclusive view about the Second Coming of Christ and the former members of Jarvis Street would have been forced to subscribe to beliefs they did not consider essential.

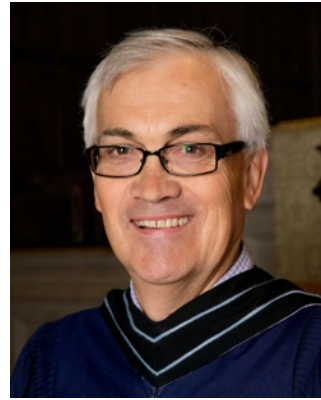


PARK ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, TORONTO
J. Francis Brown & Sons, Architects.



views of Park Road Baptist Church from The Journal, Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, December, 1927

MUSINGS FROM THE MINISTER OF PASTORAL CARE



“Now we see things imperfectly as in a cloudy mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity.” (1 Corinthians 13:12, New Living Translation)

“Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.”

Søren Kierkegaard

And so it was in the fall of 1921 when Bloor St. was celebrating its fiftieth anniversary the pilgrims from Jarvis St. who had persevered greatly began to meet at the Central YMCA and initially took the name Central Baptist. On the first Sunday it was said that many in the choir along with their conductor were deeply moved by the opportunity to lead in the offering of praise and thanksgiving to God and to worship in peace. Bloor St. Baptist encouraged this new church to build in the neighbourhood of Yonge and Bloor because Bloor St. Baptist was already planning to move to Yonge and Heath. The Central Baptist congregation then moved and formed Park Road Baptist Church.

Then in 1961 when the Park Road Church tragically burned the members were welcomed by the members of Yorkminster. The calendar cover for the commencement service of the new church on September 10, 1961 reads Yorkminster Park Road Baptist Church - Toronto.

It is interesting that while the font of Yorkminster Park Road is very large, the font on the words Baptist Church - Toronto is so small the words are barely legible. The word Road appears to have been dropped from the name shortly after. As congregational mergers go, the Yorkminster / Park Road merger into Yorkminster Park was a marriage made in heaven, but like a good marriage accommodations and hard work were required. Again we have so much to be thankful for as we look back on the faithfulness, kindness and sensitivity of so many and of the openness to the call of the Holy Spirit.

As you can see from looking back. 2021 is shaping up to be a wonderful year of celebration when together we will mark three great dates in the life of our congregation, 1871, 1921 and 1961. We have a great history to look back on and a wonderful future to look forward to. I hope that the celebrations we undertake in 2021 will help propel us into a new and exciting future to the glory of God.

I am very grateful to Allan Williams for bringing so much of this information to my attention.

Sincerely,
Peter Holmes

Reflections – I believe these are a beautiful part of God’s creation. Who has not marveled at the clear reflection of the landscape off a lake in the early morning? Think about some of the beautiful sights you have seen reflected: cottages reflected in quiet waters; the leaves of autumn reflected in little streams; boats reflected in shallow lakes; sunsets over the ocean; all of these scenes reflecting a kaleidoscope of colour. Someone has said it is as if God packaged the world with beauty, and then said: “How can I squeeze a little more in?”

Artists can do magic on the canvas with various reflections of light. The perfect reflection, of course, is found in a mirror. I have always found myself drawn to mirrors. There is something fascinating about them. A good mirror will reflect a perfect image, except that the image is reversed. Things appear backward. If you stand in front of a mirror, your right hand will appear as your left hand. Items of jewelry, brooches, watches and the like will be on the opposite side. Any letters will appear backward. It always seems odd when we see an ambulance with its letters printed backwards on the front of the vehicle. But when you see an ambulance behind you through the rear view mirror of your car, you can read the letters properly. As accurate as a mirror is in reflecting images, this one flaw seems very appropriate. It’s as if we are being reminded that the image we see is not exactly correct. It is not quite real. We are all flawed.

The ancient Greek philosopher Plato would use the analogy of a cave to explain the lessons of life and reality. He would offer the following illustration.

Suppose people lived in a cave and never saw real daylight. All they saw were shadows cast by the sun on the cave's walls. These people would naturally assume the shadows on the cave wall to be the real world. But if someone escaped into the world of sunlight beyond, and returned to tell them, would they believe the person? Or would they continue to cling to their shadows of false belief? It is an interesting question to ponder. We know that reflections are only reflections – they are not real. But Plato was getting at something important here. What if this world – the one we think of as real – is only a reflection of something deeper, truer, more beautiful that we could ever imagine? I believe the apostle Paul was speaking of a similar thing, only he attributed it to the God of the universe. He says this: “But as it is written, ‘What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him’ – these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit.” Paul firmly believed there was another world beyond this one – a world where death and decay and sorrow would be no more. In Romans he writes: “But with eager hope the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.” (Romans 8:21-22)

For me, this is what the Easter season is all about. We recognize that this world is but a poor shadow – a reflection – of a better world to come. We see signs of it in our own experience. We know that the long winter will pass, and spring will come. The dormant land will live again, the flowers will blossom and the days will get longer. There are unseen mysteries all around us. In his great chapter on love in 1 Corinthians 13, Paul reminds us that in this life we see only dim images – shadows really – in a mirror. They are but poor reflections of things to come. But faith in Christ gives us a wonderful glimpse into the life of God. All the beauty, goodness and love in this world is a taste of heaven. As the hymn writer Fanny Crosby put it: “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine, O what a foretaste of glory divine!”

Back in 2002, the Christian band MercyMe released a single which became the most played Christian song of that year. The words remind me of the

reflections of God’s glory here on earth, and how one day we will be amazed by his majesty:

*I can only imagine
What my eyes would see
When your face is before me
I can only imagine.*

*Surrounded by your glory
What will my heart feel
Will I dance for you Jesus
Or in awe of You be still
Will I stand in your presence
To my knees will I fall
Will I sing hallelujah
Will I be able to speak at all
I can only imagine.*

Reflections are wonderful symbols for us. They are not only visual images or even mental images, but also heart images. In this season of Lent leading up to Easter, let us reflect upon our lives in new and refreshing ways. Let us remember that our lives reflect a greater glory – the glory of God himself: “So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them....Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good.” (Genesis 1:27,31)

TRANSITIONS

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

Deaths

Marion Craig
Dougal Boone
Mary Sturgess
Nancy Covell,
Sylvia Gonzales,
David Smith
Betty Flower

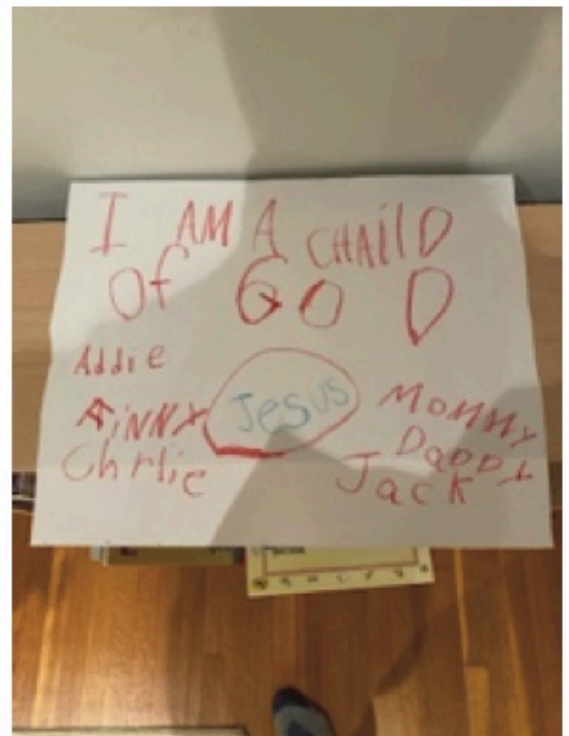
FAMILY MINISTRIES

from Heather



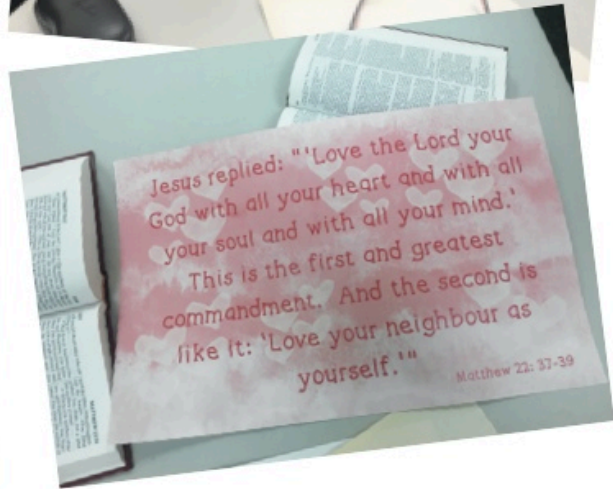
L O V E	 Youth
	 Children
<p><i>Luke 10:27 Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' "</i></p>	
Worship	Parents
 Faith	

Picture drawn by Addie (Gr. 1)





It is a JOY to witness children learning about God's love and how to shine His light everyday. Look at the picture drawn by one of our Gr. 1's and the picture showing our Large Group Time with children, youth and leaders together...growing in our faith:



DOXA GLORY

Engage, involve and challenge youth to live out their faith... sharing the Good News of Christ

YOUTH NIGHT Highlights:

Our Beatitude Youth Night included fun snack popcorn games, bible reading, discussion, coming up with creative skits to act out the Beatitudes, filming our efforts and then showing them in Large Group Time on the big screen the following Sunday for children and youth.



Sunday Morning DOXA continues to grow in faith development and prayer:

Jr. Youth



Sr. Youth



Avalanche Jr. Youth Retreat (Jan. 17-19)

Quotes from youth:

"Best weekend of my life."

"I loved playing basketball and all of the outdoor games."

"The worship time and speakers were so good."

"We had fun snowballing Jackie!!"



Blizzard Sr. Youth Retreat (Feb. 7-9)

- Adventurous
- Fun, Faith, Friends!!



Our February 25th Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

was a beautiful evening of fellowship and fun as a church family.

We were busy serving up stacks of pancakes as well as sharing life together. I want to thank all that were involved in coming and for those that served. We raised over a thousand dollars to support our Oneida Mission Team. A special thank you to the Ministry Staff for their creativity with pancake toppings and another super thank you to all of our YOUTH for working hard in the kitchen the whole evening clearing and washing hundreds of dishes.





NURSES NOTES FROM LILY COVID-19 UPDATE

There are 10 basic things that you should know about COVID-19 from the World Health Organization:

- **First**, as we keep saying, clean your hands regularly with an alcohol-based hand rub, or wash them with soap and water. Touching your face after touching contaminated surfaces or sick people is one of the ways the virus can be transmitted. By cleaning your hands, you can reduce your risk.
- **Second**, clean surfaces regularly with disinfectant – for example kitchen benches and work desks.
- **Third**, educate yourself about COVID-19. Make sure your information comes from reliable sources – your local or national public health agency, the WHO website, or your local health professional. Everyone should know the symptoms – for most people, it starts with a fever and a dry cough, not a runny nose. Most people will have mild disease and get better without needing any special care.
- **Fourth**, avoid traveling if you have a fever or cough, and if you become sick while on a flight, inform the crew immediately. Once you get home, make contact with a health professional and tell them about where you have been.
- **Fifth**, if you cough or sneeze, do it into your sleeve, or use a tissue. Dispose of the tissue immediately into a closed rubbish bin, and then clean your hands.

- **Sixth**, if you are over 60 years old, or if you have an underlying condition like cardiovascular disease, a respiratory condition or diabetes, you have a higher risk of developing severe disease. You may wish to take extra precautions to avoid crowded areas, or places where you might interact with people who are sick.
- **Seventh**, for everyone, if you feel unwell, stay at home and call your doctor or local health professional. He or she will ask some questions about your symptoms, where you have been and who you have had contact with. This will help to make sure you get the right advice, are directed to the right health facility, and will prevent you from infecting others.

Hand Sanitizing



1. Apply sanitizer (minimum 70% alcohol-based).



2. Rub hands together.



3. Work sanitizer between fingers, back of hands, fingertips, under nails.



4. Rub hands until dry.

Stop the Spread of Germs

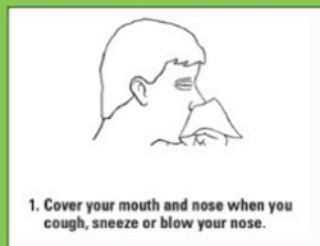
Always Sanitize Your Hands

<p>After you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sneeze, cough or blow your nose • Use the washroom or change diapers • Handle garbage • Play outdoors 	<p>Before and after you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare or eat food • Touch a cut or open sore
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If hands are visibly dirty use soap and water

416.338.7600 | toronto.ca/health | Toronto Public Health

Cover Your Cough



Stop the Spread of Germs

Always Cover Your Cough

- Covering your cough or sneeze can stop the spread of germs
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve
- Keep your distance (more than 2 metres/6 feet) from people who are coughing or sneezing

416.338.7600 toronto.ca/health | Toronto Public Health

- **Eighth**, if you are sick, stay at home, and eat and sleep separately from your family, use different utensils and cutlery to eat.
- **Ninth**, if you develop shortness of breath, call your doctor and seek care immediately.
- **Tenth**, it's normal and understandable to feel anxious, especially if you live in a country or community that has been affected. Find out what you can do in your community. Discuss how to stay safe with your workplace, school or place of worship.

Q&A: Similarities and differences – COVID-19 and influenza from the World Health Organization:

- As the COVID-19 outbreak continues to evolve, comparisons have been drawn to influenza. Both cause respiratory disease, yet there are important differences between the two viruses and how they spread. This has important implications for the public health measures that can be implemented to respond to each virus.

Q. How are COVID-19 and influenza viruses similar?

- Firstly, COVID-19 and influenza viruses have a similar disease presentation. That is, they both cause respiratory disease, which presents as a wide range of illness from asymptomatic or mild through to severe disease and death.
- Secondly, both viruses are transmitted by contact, droplets and fomites. As a result, the same public health measures, such as hand hygiene and good respiratory etiquette (coughing into your elbow or into a tissue and immediately disposing of the tissue), are important actions all can take to prevent infection.

Q. How are COVID-19 and influenza viruses different?

- The speed of transmission is an important point of difference between the two viruses. Influenza has a shorter median incubation period (the time from infection to appearance of symptoms) and a shorter serial interval (the time between successive cases) than COVID-19 virus. The serial interval for COVID-19 virus is estimated to be 5-6 days, while for influenza virus, the serial interval is 3 days. This means that influenza can spread faster than COVID-19.
- Further, transmission in the first 3-5 days of illness, or potentially pre-symptomatic transmission –transmission of the virus before the appearance of symptoms – is a major driver of transmission for influenza. In contrast, while we are learning that there are people who can shed COVID-19 virus 24-48 hours prior to symptom onset, at present, this does not appear to be a major driver of transmission.
- The reproductive number – the number of secondary infections generated from one infected individual – is understood to be between 2 and 2.5 for COVID-19 virus, higher than for influenza. However, estimates for both COVID-19 and influenza viruses are very context and time-specific, making direct comparisons more difficult.

- Children are important drivers of influenza virus transmission in the community. For COVID-19 virus, initial data indicates that children are less affected than adults and that clinical attack rates in the 0-19 age group are low. Further preliminary data from household transmission studies in China suggest that children are infected from adults, rather than vice versa.
- While the range of symptoms for the two viruses is similar, the fraction with severe disease appears to be different. For COVID-19, data to date suggest that 80% of infections are mild or asymptomatic, 15% are severe infection, requiring oxygen and 5% are critical infections, requiring ventilation. These fractions of severe and critical infection would be higher than what is observed for influenza infection.
- Those most at risk for severe influenza infection are children, pregnant women, elderly, those with underlying chronic medical conditions and those who are immunosuppressed. For COVID-19, our current understanding is that older age and underlying conditions increase the risk for severe infection.
- Mortality for COVID-19 appears higher than for influenza, especially seasonal influenza. While the true mortality of COVID-19 will take some time to fully understand, the data we have so far indicate that the crude mortality ratio (the number of reported deaths divided by the reported cases) is between 3-4%, the infection mortality rate (the number of reported deaths divided by the number of infections) will be lower. For seasonal influenza, mortality is usually well below 0.1%. However, mortality is to a large extent determined by access to and quality of health care.



Q. What medical interventions are available for COVID-19 and influenza viruses?

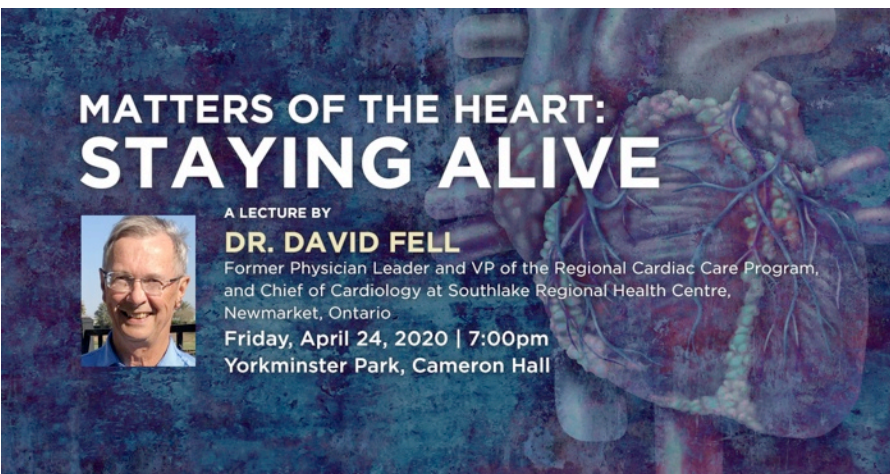
- While there are a number of therapeutics currently in clinical trials in China and more than 20 vaccines in development for COVID-19, there are currently no licensed vaccines or therapeutics for COVID-19. In contrast, antivirals and vaccines are available for influenza. While the influenza vaccine is not effective against COVID-19 virus, it is highly recommended to get vaccinated each year to prevent influenza infection.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS - UPDATE ON CPR TRAINING

We are pleased to update you that we have had another two classes/training sessions on Basic Child and Adult CPR, one on Thursday Feb 20th and the other one on Thursday Feb. 27th. We are grateful to Instructor Mr. Maroun Ackhtar, President of the Lifesaving Company whose class sessions proved to be very dynamic and informative. Our participants were a mix of YPBC Staff, Volunteers, Ushers and as well community members within our neighborhood, all ages.

I am pleased to share exciting news that we have purchased another AED, which is a Zoll Brand, and will soon be installed on the wall to the right of the main entrance to our Sanctuary, on the right side as one enters. During our class sessions, we practiced with this model. We are hoping to provide additional classes sometime in either May and/or June. I encourage each and every one of you to consider signing up for this opportunity to learn such a vital and worthwhile life skill. The skill of saving a life.

Please mark in your calendars and consider attending our guest speaker series topic in April, **MATTERS OF THE HEART/STAYING ALIVE**, WITH guest speaker Cardiologist, Dr. David Fell.



PRAYER FOR PEACE

As we all pray for peace in our World, I share the special words and messages found within the following lines of scripture and psalms and quotes.

PEACE EVERLASTING

In place of our exhaustion and spiritual fatigue, God will give us rest.

All He asks is that we come to Him...that we spend a while

Thinking about Him,

Meditating on Him,

Talking to Him,

Listening in silence, occupying ourselves with Him

Totally and thoroughly lost in the holding place of His presence

by CHARLES SWINDOLL

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

JOHN 14:27

WHEN TOUGH TIMES COME

Do not think of today's failures, but of the success that may come tomorrow. You have set yourselves a difficult task, but you will succeed if you persevere; and you will find a joy in overcoming obstacles.

Remember, no effort that we make to attain something beautiful is ever lost.

by HELEN KELLER

"And after you have suffered a little while, The God of all grace, who has called you to HIS eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

1 PETER 5:10

GOD'S GUIDANCE

God never guides us at some time in the future, but always here and now.

Realize that the Lord is here now, and the freedom you receive is immediate.

by OSWALD CHAMBERS

"I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you."

PSALM 32:8

YPBC WOMEN'S MINISTRIES...

SHE: 5 KEYS FOR LIVING AS A WOMAN OF FAITH

On Saturday, February 8, 2020, over 80 women gathered in Cameron Hall for an anticipated "time apart". Dr. Karoline Lewis led our annual women's retreat, outlining for us, five keys for living as women of faith: Bible - Body - Belief - Basics - Buddies.

KEY # 1 BIBLE

It's our responsibility to know it - all 66 books! We need to know what's in it and to be aware of what it is that we care about. What authority does it have for us? Lewis pointed out that 93 women speak in the Bible, 49 of whom are actually named. Women actually speak 14,056 words collectively, approximately 1.1.% of the Bible. A recommended reading for this is Rev. Lindsay Hardin Freeman's book, *Bible Women: All Their Words and Why They Matter*. We were reminded that the Bible gives witness to people who know God outside of the Bible as they give witness to their experience of God. Therefore we have knowledge of God from scripture as well as from experience. The 66 books of the Bible were selected by the Church and were first read in worship. They are authoritative because they make sense for our lives and our experience of God and they help us to think theologically.

Five Ways to Read the Bible:

1. Devotional - Where am I in the text?
2. Historical- "Just the facts, please"
3. Literary - The story narratives
4. Theological - What is God doing that we need Him to do?
5. Practical - What is our response to God's action? Discipleship - embodying God's word in the world

KEY # 2 BODY

"The Word became flesh," (John 1:18). Incarnation is critical - embodiment - crucifixion - sacraments - indwelling of the Spirit - resurrection - community. This includes intimacy and nurturing. e.g., Jesus was at the Father's *heart* (*bosom* in Greek) - Lazarus *reclined* on Jesus.

Some questions to consider:

- How do we think of our bodies in relationship to our faith?
- Where do we feel most comfortable in our bodies?
- What do we think our bodies communicate about us?
- How did Mary experience God in her body?

KEY # 3 BELIEF

What do we believe THEOLOGICALLY?:

- Christology
- Soteriology
- Pneumatology (breath into)
- Ecology
- Ecclesiology
- Eschatology

We were encouraged to think of faith as a verb and not a noun - it's always a verb in John. To believe in Jesus is to have a relationship with him. Our day to day decisions are embedded in our theological convictions so it's important to recognize our theological commitments - we all have sub-theologies.

KEY #4 BASICS

Interpreting Ourselves.

- What are the glasses we're wearing, through which we see?
- Gender, age, education, demographics, race, family of origin are lenses

2.Truth Telling

Living life authentically from the inside out not from the outside in. It's about believing that we can locate our trust in the person God has called us to be. The core commitment is to invest in *self* - to take care of *self*. This is a constant navigational process that requires intentionality and is not a hierarchy of values. All of our values need to be included but not always with the same weight. Do we have a personal mantra? e.g., "choose joy". We need to wait and listen for the sound of the genuine within ourselves.

KEY # 5 BUDDIES

God has called us to be in relationship as *paracletes*. We're called to walk alongside one another as *companions/helpers/advocates*. We need to remain integrated and resist pulling apart. We also need to have the courage to ask friends to tell us where they see pieces of ourselves drifting away.

A BIBLE STUDY

In our afternoon session, Karoline led us in a Bible study highlighting a woman of faith, the woman from Samaria at the well, a story unique to The Gospel of John, Ch. 4. We focused on the conversation through:

- *The Setting* 4:1- 6 Jacob's well - a place of relationship
- *The Encounter* 4:7-10 Jesus and the woman were alone - the disciples had gone for food.
- *The Possibility* - 4:11-15 Jesus sees the spiritual possibility - at the literal level, he has no bucket and the well is deep but spiritually, he has fresh, living water to give.
- *The Heart of the Matter* - 4:16-19 The woman sees Jesus as a prophet as he knows all about her husbands. "One of the deepest longings of the human soul is to be seen." (John O Donohue)
- *The Inquiry* - 4:20-24 Here is the most pressing theological question, "Where is God?" And Jesus is saying "right in front of you".
- *The Revelation* - 4: 25-26 Jesus is literally saying regarding his identity as Messiah - "I am, the one speaking to you."
- *The Invitation* - 4:27-38 What do we need to leave at the well? The woman left her water jar behind - a symbol of all the negative "stuff" in her life. She sees a new identity for herself and embodies it. "The most precious grace God gives to us is the grace to be ourselves." (Joel Workin)
- *The Witness* - 4:39-42 - This is the only time *Saviour* is used in the Gospel of John and it's on a Samaritan's lips!

We returned home that Saturday afternoon, each with a precious set of keys to be guarded by our hearts.

Coming in May:

6. Dr. Karoline Lewis's new book - *Embody* - 5 *Keys to Leading With Integrity*, Abingdon Press - May 5, 2020
7. Women in Community (A potluck supper for all women) - Monday May 25, 2020 at the home of Elaine Snider
8. Spring Thankoffering Lunch - Sunday May 31, 2020 Everyone welcome!

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

NEWS OF OUR SPONSORED FAMILIES

Charlene and Chancella became Canadian Citizens on February 27 when they took the Oath of Citizenship and received their Citizenship Certificate at a ceremony in Scarborough. A number of friends were able to attend the ceremony and the celebrations continued at a reception hosted by Strachan and Sally Bongard. Another big step in Charlene and Chancella's journey from the Central

African
Republic!

Our two
Syrian
families are
approaching
the end of
their 12-
month
sponsorship
period. As
soon as the
snow clears,
both Hayan



and Mohamed will be working with Rob Dixon's Green Keepers, a residential property maintenance company providing services in mid-Toronto. The two families would like to rent a house together if they can find something affordable.



Our sponsored family from Pakistan is pleased to see the end of winter. Sajjad and Farzana are making progress in their ESL studies and Sajjad is about to start a nine-month course which will qualify him to be a pharmacy assistant. Angel seems to be thriving at school and Amelia continues her exploration of everything around her.

submitted by Mike Wills

MISSIONS UPDATE

BOLIVIA

CBM Field Partners, Bill and Janice Dyck have returned to Cochabamba, Bolivia.

Empowering through music

For Janice, a top priority was getting back to teaching keyboard to her students. Some of her students struggle because their parents have AIDS or have died of AIDS. Students often have the responsibility of taking care of siblings and finding food for the family. The leaders in the local church help students grow in faith and their relationship with God.

Janice has also been playing on the worship team at church and is planning to do a missions fundraising concert.

Teaching, Leadership Training and Support

Bill will be speaking at seminary chapels this coming semester, was on the selection committee for the position of rector of the seminary, has been a guest lecturer at another evangelical seminary, teaches in the local church's institute, preached in their local church, and recently spent a lot of time with a SENT (short-term mission) team from Winnipeg. Other service opportunities include Casa de la Amistad (prison children's ministry) and the Chagas Disease Prevention Project. Bill also encourages a group of churches and OBADES (relief and development arm of the UBB), that have been providing over 1000 meals a day to victims of a massive mudslide.



- please pray for Bill as he pastors church leaders and plans meetings through 2020.

- please pray for good health and increased proficiency in Spanish for both Bill and Janice.

- please pray for peace and stability in Bolivia before and after the May elections.

THAILAND

Our Canadian Baptist Mission partners, Conrad and Fiona Kwok are doing well. They have been busy with some pastors from Canada, teaching at the school in Thailand since the beginning of February 2020. Teaching will continue until the end of the school term in April.

Please pray for safe travel for teachers and students. May people in many countries be blessed and experience the love and grace of our Saviour Jesus through them.

During particularly challenging times, please pray for the Chinese Ministries Team and the people of Myanmar.

Fiona and Conrad would like to thank the congregation of YPBC for your encouragement, prayers and support.

LEBANON

YPBC partners with a Baptist Theological Seminary in Lebanon. It equips servant-leaders for the ministry challenges arising in the Middle East and Africa – be it theology, apologetics, communication, pastoral care, ethics, society, or culture. The goal is to see God glorified, people reconciled, and communities restored through the Church in the Arab world. Thank-you for your prayers and support.

CZECH REPUBLIC

In February, Esther Barnes gave the congregation of YPBC an excellent presentation of her ongoing work teaching English as a foreign language every spring and autumn, in partnership with the Baptist church in Litomerice, a lovely town north of Prague. Her maps and photos gave us a glimpse of her community and the students she faithfully serves. Please pray for Esther and her Czech friends in the Czech Republic, March, April and May 2020, particularly as they grapple with the challenges of the coronavirus. Since her arrival, at least one local woman has been diagnosed with COVID-19. On March 10, the Czech government abruptly closed all schools and universities in the country and banned all gatherings of more than 100 people for an indefinite period of

time. This doesn't affect Esther's classes, but it does pose a problem for the Litomerice Baptist pastor and deacons. More than 100 people normally attend the church on Sunday mornings, and many more would want to come on Easter, when five people, including one of Esther's students, are scheduled to be baptized.

Esther Barnes had to cut short her visit to the Czech Republic due to the pandemic. She returned to

Canada March 18, 2020 . We are thankful to have her home.

The Yorkminster Board of Mission warmly thank all who pray and support YPBC missions in Canada and around the world. Lives are transformed every day as a result of your love and generosity.

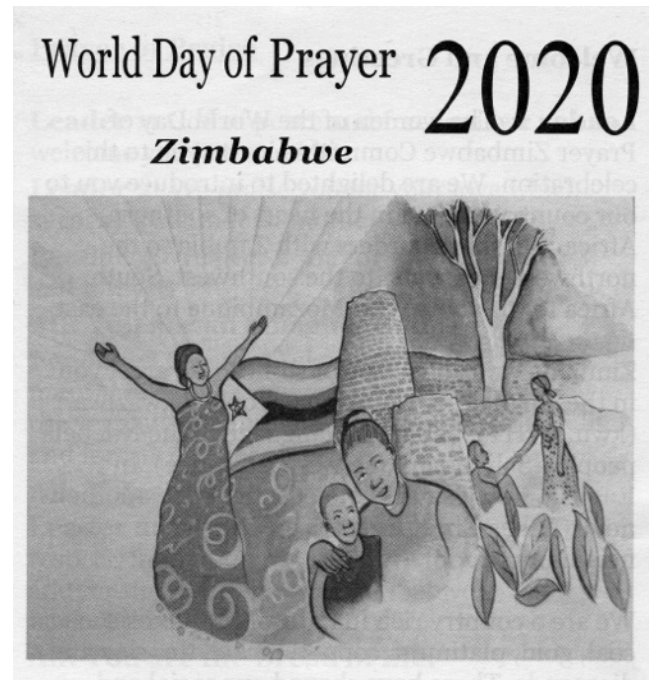
submitted by Esther Phillips

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Yorkminster Park hosted the Churches on the Hill World Day of Prayer service on Friday March 6th. The programme was written by the women of Zimbabwe who chose the text John 5: 2 - 9a" **Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk.**" The afternoon was planned by a committee with representatives from seven local churches. Approximately 60 people attended the service.

The Y.P. Women thank William Maddox, The Rev. Paula Willis and the Rev. Suzanne Wilkinson for participating in the service. Appreciation is also extended to the ushers and the sound system operator for volunteering their services as well as to members of the Y. P. Women's Executive for hosting the reception.

submitted by Ellen Branscombe



THE DORCAS GROUP

This year, Dorcas celebrates 93 years of continuous service. Did you know the Dorcas Group has been meeting for one year longer than Yorkminster Park Baptist Church has resided on Yonge Street? Our members are a dynamic and fun group of women - why not join us for a meeting any Tuesday morning at 10:00 a.m. and see for yourself. We invite all, only skill required is to be willing to learn to knit/crochet or trim stamps for the Bible Society who in turn sell the stamps to purchase bibles.



We joined the Needlework Guild of Canada (NGC) in 1927, one of the first groups to work under the collective of the NGC. Some of you may have seen the annual Distribution Day that takes place every November in the church - numerous groups from the Toronto Chapter deposit their work at the church the night before and it is then distributed to around 22 different Toronto charities. Last year, Dorcas donated 166 items. It is a gratifying experience seeing so many handmade and purchased goods being donated - it is literally heartwarming. Some of the charities that receive these items are Yonge Street Mission, Native Family Services, Sistering and New Circles.

Apart from the satisfaction of making a difference in the community, along with the NGC contribution, Dorcas also mailed 3 large boxes of knitted items to the Bethlehem Aboriginal Reserve in Winnipeg - a charity that is very close to Donna Willett's heart. As well, we purchased 44 hats and knitted literally hundreds of scarves for our Out of The Cold programme. The yearly visit by Reverend Dale Rose and other members of Yorkminster Park to the Oneida Reserve gives us an opportunity to send along some of our knitted/crocheted baby blankets, baby sweaters, hats, scarves, etc.

We are fortunate in having Lois Bishop as our coordinator. 2020 will be Lois' tenth year in this position. Lois, along with Mary Adams, our treasurer, ensure the ongoing viability of the Dorcas Group. We fund all of our activities ourselves, purchase our own yarn, gloves and socks for OOTC, make considerable charitable donations as well as rely on our hands to knit and knit until we have dropped a stitch or two and then ask one of our star knitters to help - although we have a few others nipping at their knitting needles. One of our members has been knitting for Dorcas for 27 years, we have two members from Iran, and one of our members volunteers to feed baby squirrels at the Toronto Wildlife Centre.

We appreciate the support and financial donations of our church family and look forward to carrying the Dorcas mission forward. We invite everyone to take a look at some of our handiwork that is displayed in our showcase in the north hall.

A special thank you to Peter Holmes and Dale Rose for their encouragement and support - to Ray and his team, and to Cody for his administrative assistance.

We are blessed by God's guidance and feel fortunate that we are able to meet weekly, and that from our hearts and hands we are able to assist those less fortunate.



submitted by Heather Crawford

LESSONS FROM THE FREEWAY AND BEYOND: MAKING SPACE FOR GRACE



Two roads diverged in a wood, and I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference. — Robert Frost

Slow down to make *space* for grace. This powerful insight occurred to me when I drove to a speaking engagement in the Ottawa Valley last spring. That’s a nice chunk of time to contemplate life! Now that it’s spring again... **here’s what *else* I realized from that journey, to apply to *your* life experience this spring, if the shoe fits:**

1. Make Space For Grace: People driving North America’s busiest highway—the 401—are more gracious, respectful and well mannered once they get out of the urban fray. Once they’re granted more literal and emotional space. Once the frenetically-paced congestion of the GTA was behind me it was amazing to see how well we all abided by the written and unwritten rules of the road. People kept the passing lane for *passing*; willingly moved aside for those who wanted to go faster; left a decent distance between vehicles; and moved to the left to give disabled vehicles an extra-wide berth. Isn’t this just like *life*? When we’re jam-packed in our physical and/or emotional environments we’re more likely to aggress and snipe, and generally play it thoughtlessly and unsafely. And that’s not in *anyone’s* best interest. Protecting your personal space helps cultivate deep peace and serenity, and goes a long way to making good on this prayer:

“Dear God, help me today, to be your faithful presence of grace to everyone I meet.”

2. Go Slower to Succeed: Outward bound I had “all the time in the world” (as my mother used to say). I travelled the speed limit, chose the “slow” lane and received this enlightenment: oftentimes the “slow” lane moves fastest! Yup, those cars that zipped by me at breakneck speed often ended up immediately in front of me further down the road. Isn’t *that* just

like life, too? I have a friend who *always* says, “I’ve been *running* around today!” She doesn’t realize how her chosen words inform her harried nature. Did you know there’s a *Slow Movement* gaining speed (pardon the pun) around the world? The Slow Movement is a cultural shift towards slowing down life’s pace. The Slow Movement proposes seizing control of time rather than being dictated by it—finding a balance between using time-saving technology and taking time to enjoy a peaceful walk or a *grace-full* meal with others, etc. Proponents believe that while technology can be useful in some ways to speed things along, the *most* important things in life should *not* be rushed. Ultimately, if you slow down—even a little—you will end up with *more* control over your own “vehicle”... your own day-to-day life experience. Slow and steady still wins the race, as Aesop’s *Tortoise and the Hare* taught us long ago.

We don’t see things as they are; we see them as we are. — Anais Nin

Matthew 6:33-34

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-22

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...

3. Periodically Be Last, *On Purpose*: I’ve been one of those drivers who, while on rural roads, wants to be the leader of the pack. On this trip, however, once I headed northbound into that breathtaking geographical feature known as our Canadian Shield (full of stunning rock-blasted sections, evergreen and hardwood forests, glistening lakes, wetlands and panoramic vistas), I decided I wanted to be last *on purpose*, without anyone riding my bumper. Once again those behind me passed, and swore I could hear them all say, as they zoomed by, “So long grandma!” Before I knew it, I got the same wish that I long for when I desire to be the *head* car... I was alone on the wide-open road without any visual interference. And *then* my patience was rewarded.

Without the worry of someone pressing me to go faster, I was able to glance around—to actually *see* the beauty of my surroundings... including God’s reward of showing me *two* deer, a beaver, a Blue Heron, an *eagle* (yes, truly!), and even a moose—all on the same journey! Can you believe my good fortune? I was sincerely God-smacked! ☹ I surely would *not* have noticed all of God’s glory presented just beyond my windshield had I been focusing on the “guy behind me,” or the one *I* was trying to pass!

If you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll always get what you’ve always got. Ray Kroc

Job 12:7-9

But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this?

4. Take the Rough with the Paved: Smooth, straight roads are great for gas mileage, time effectiveness, and minimizing stress, etc. but rough patches, potholes, washboard surfaces and dusty, stony detours (whether on actual rural roads, or metaphorically), can muck up your gleaming exterior, challenge your suspension, and rattle your constitution. No one really *wants* to experience rough patches and tough times; yet come they do. So what’s to be done? Along with prayer and faith, how about remembering that, “All sunshine makes a desert.” That’s the way it is with the weather and that’s the way it is with life, too. If life were always “great”—never any challenges or problems—how would you *know* or appreciate the good days? It also helps to remember that out of *order* comes *chaos*, and out of *chaos* order will return. And so it goes. Each stretch of the “road” passes eventually. *Your* job is to keep driving, hands firmly on the wheel.

Arrange whatever pieces come your way. — Virginia Wolfe

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on

what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

May all of your road travels this spring—local or afar—include God-moments and lessons that you can apply to life. Actively *look* for and wait upon these glimmers, and they will surely appear! And may your applied wisdom from these experiences, as Robert Frost suggests, *make all the difference...*

And, because it’s now *March...* the *Greening* of Toronto and all...

**May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sunshine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields and,
until we meet again, [next Sunday??], ☹
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.**

— An Irish Blessing

submitted by Nina Spencer

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

CNOY WALK FOR YONGE STREET MISSION

Well another walk took place on 22 February 2020 in ideal weather; certainly not the coldest night of the year. This year we assembled at St Paul’s Anglican Church on Bloor St, an enjoyable venue for the many eager walkers including a great team of 15 on Team YP on Yonge.

I personally was limited to TWO km and found it much tougher than expected but still able to finish. Most team members completed five km. I am extremely proud of our team, a real inspiration and encouragement to me personally.

The walkers of Team YP on Yonge:

Peter Holmes, Paula Willis, Dale & Donna Rose Garden & Shawn MacKay, Janet Kim & James Kerr, Bobby Giles, Jaqueline Murdoch, Jackie Chung, Julia Yacoub, Harold Hetherington, Jonanne & John Fenton

Most important we raised over \$54,000 which was astonishing over \$200,000 in six years to help Yonge

Street Mission in their compassionate work. My life has been enriched over 76 years of association, a truly unexpected gift at 87.

Whether I'll be able to participate next year is doubtful as health issues continue in the "golden" years. I sincerely hope this wonderful exercise will continue well into the future:

1. Benefit from walking is that it so healthy
2. Encouraging fellowship with the walkers from many areas
3. Raising funds for a respected and worthy charity.
4. Furthering the ministries of YPBC



submitted by John Fenton
2020 Team Captain

A HYMN OF SERVICE

At a time of global crisis, we all need to come together and care for one another and for ourselves, in a compassionate and collaborative manner.

The Hymn, "Brother, sister, let me serve you" says it all in a simple yet beautiful way.

BROTHER, SISTER, LET ME SERVE YOU,
LET ME BE AS CHRIST TO YOU;
PRAY THAT I MAY HAVE THE GRACE
TO LET YOU BE MY SERVANT TOO.

WE ARE PILGRIMS ON A JOURNEY,
AND COMPANIONS ON THE ROAD;
WE ARE HERE TO HELP EACH OTHER
WALK THE MILE AND BEAR THE LOAD.

I WILL HOLD THE CHRIST-LIGHT FOR YOU
IN THE NIGHT-TIME OF YOUR FEAR;
I WILL HOLD MY HAND OUT TO YOU,
SPEAK THE PEACE YOU LONG TO
HEAR.

I WILL WEEP WHEN YOU ARE
WEEPING;
WHEN YOU LAUGH, I'LL LAUGH WITH
YOU;
I WILL SHARE YOUR JOY AND
SORROW
TIL WE'VE SEEN THIS JOURNEY
THROUGH.

WHEN WE SING TO GOD IN HEAVEN,
WE SHALL FIND SUCH HARMONY,
BORN OF ALL WE'VE KNOWN
TOGETHER
OF CHRIST'S LOVE AND AGONY.

BROTHER, SISTER, LET ME SERVE
YOU,
LET ME BE AS CHRIST TO YOU;
PRAY THAT I MAY HAVE THE GRACE
TO LET YOU BE MY SERVANT TOO.

Dedicated to all lives lost to Covid-19 and to
all families and friends affected by their loss
around the World.

suggested by Lily

SERVICES AND EVENTS AT YORKMINSTER PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

Many of our usual seasonal events have been
cancelled due to COVID-19.

Our Sunday services are currently being
WEBCAST LIVE from the church. To worship with us,
visit our website at yorkminsterpark.com

Future services and events may be
modified and WEBCAST LIVE or cancelled.
Please visit our website regularly for
news and events updates.

Good Friday - April 10th

11:00 am - Morning Service - TBD

A devotional service of scripture with poetry and music.

4:00 pm - Good Friday Concert - TBD

Music and Readings for a Most Holy Day

With Eric Robertson and the Hedgerow Singers.

Special guest: David Hetherington, cello

APRIL 12th - EASTER SUNDAY

8:30 am - Communion TBD

A joyful celebration of the resurrection with readings/prayers and
Communion in the Meditation Circle.

11:00 am - Morning Service TBD

Worship featuring the great hymns of Easter, celebrating of the
good news of Christ's resurrection from the dead.

IN THE GALLERY



Robert Mee - *Waterscapes* - from Algonquin to Antarctica

Reception: Sun, Apr 26; runs through May 28.

An avid paddler and outdoors enthusiast, Mee's photographs explore various waterscapes, both natural and man-made such as ponds, lakes, rivers, waterfalls, icefalls, fountains and icebergs in all four seasons.

FLORAL INVITATIONAL

Summer Show and Sale to benefit the Benevolent Fund of YPBC

A group exhibition of diverse styles and mediums including paintings, photography and botanical drawing will be in Yorkminster Park Gallery during June and July, 2020. Participating artists include:

Ann Bald-Bloom, Sue Ericsson, Alison Galley, Paul Hill, Marian Holmes, Peter Holmes, Mary Karavos, Esther Lovrics (NFS), Jamie McGill, Mary McLorn Valle (shown), Henry Regehr, Maurice Snelgrove, Randall Speller, Les Tibbles and others.

