

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



YPBC NEWS

June 2020



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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

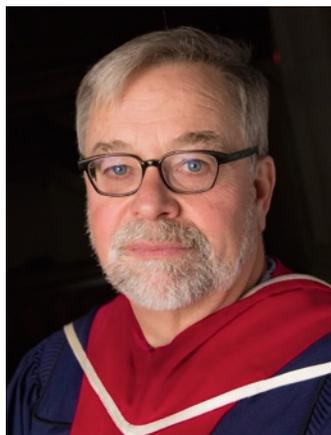
The Rev. Dr. William A. Sturgess
Minister Emeritus, Pastoral Care

We have all come through a dark period. However, in the darkness there is still the remembrance of light. Even windows not often seen as beautiful provide a respite from the surrounding darkness. The window on the cover is in the



cloak room off the narthex. When next we are there it is worth noticing. Comments and suggestions for future editions are welcome. Please send to: pilgrim.h@sympatico.ca
The next newsletter will be published in September, 2020.

Paul R Hill



Our Minister, Peter Holmes is on medical leave. Our thoughts and prayers are with Peter and Janet, and the family at this time.

BOARD OF DEACONS

How we miss you all!

Although the church is closed, many important decisions continue to be made by the Boards, Church Council and Board of Trustees. Who would have thought that we have all become Zoom experts! The Board of Deacons, in discussion with the Worship Committee and the Ministry Team, have made the decision to continue the present webcast format until September. As Peter indicated in his email to the congregation we have formed a Reopening Task Group, chaired by Carol Radford-Grant, to develop a plan for our phased opening. We have researched the literature and found some good references in documents from BC and Alberta where church opening has begun. It is clear that singing will not happen in worship for some time as it has been found to be a large factor in spreading the virus. The Reopening Task Group has been challenged to bring a plan to the Board of Deacons in August. We do know that we have to plan carefully, and that when we do open life will be very different at YPBC as we will have to heed public health guidelines to protect our staff and congregation. Our thanks go to Janice Ivory-Smith, David King and our webcast team for their creativity and commitment. What an amazing job there are doing! We have 700 computers linking in to the service each Sunday which could represent double the number of people who actually attend worship.

Many of you will have read the notice in the calendar announcing the hiring of Rev. Paula Willis on a contract to support Dale during Peter's medical leave. A great leader develops a great team and we are seeing the fruits of Peter's leadership as our wonderful team pull

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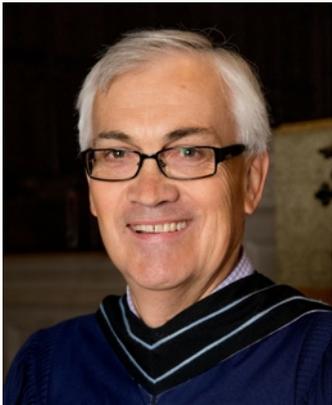
together in these extraordinary times. Thanks to our ministry and administrative staff who have continued to support the essential functions of the church. A special thanks to Cody whose computer skills have been really tested and found to be excellent!!

At this time of year we celebrate our High School Graduates as they move into the next exciting phase of their lives. Our Grade 12 Graduates are Casey Charette and Anthony Radford-Grant. This year things have been very different for them and the format of any further education uncertain. We want to wish them every success in the future and assure them of our prayers and support as they enter this new chapter in their lives.

We continue to pray for Peter and the many in our congregation experiencing loss or hardship during these challenging times.

Joan Ferguson, Chair of the Board of Deacons

MUSINGS FROM THE MINISTER OF PASTORAL CARE



“This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.” (1 John 1:5)

“Speak your heart. If they don’t understand, the message was never meant for them anyway.” (Arab proverb)

The story is told of a middle-aged man who was walking on a deserted California beach one summer afternoon in 1949. He was broken and discouraged, having failed in business. He was now killing time on the beach between job interviews. As he walked along the shoreline, he saw a bottle in the distance, partially buried in the sand. It appeared to have something in it. There was a note inside. So he broke the bottle open and read these words: “To avoid confusion, I leave my entire estate to the lucky person who finds this bottle, and to my attorney Barry Cohen. Share and share alike. Signed, Daisy Alexander, June 20, 1937.” The name Daisy

Alexander didn’t mean anything to this gentleman, so he passed it off as a joke. But after taking the note home as a keepsake, he investigated the matter further. He learned that Daisy Alexander was the heiress to the vast Singer Sewing Machine fortune. If he could prove the validity of the note, he might be entitled to half of her multi-million dollar fortune.

Apparently Daisy Alexander was an eccentric who lived in England. She often tossed bottles into the ocean, wondering where they would end up. She died at age 81 in 1939, leaving no final will and testament. According to ocean experts, a bottle dropped in the Thames River in London could wash through the English Channel out to the North Sea. From there it could ride the currents across the Atlantic Ocean and through the Panama Canal, and then into the North Pacific, ending up in California. An unlikely scenario, but not beyond the realm of possibility. One expert said it would take about twelve years. In fact, it took eleven and three quarter years. Some people question the veracity of this story. Some say it was a hoax. But if it was true, that man had literally found a fortune in a bottle.

All of us receive messages every day. Granted, they are not as exotic or as spectacular as a fortune in a bottle, but we welcome them nevertheless. Whether we are hearing the sound of a text message, checking the mailbox, downloading our e-mail, or answering the phone, we anticipate who it is that is trying to reach us. As kids in school, we would pass notes between the desks hoping that some vigilant teacher would not intercept them and read them aloud before the whole class. Every day in the city we are bombarded with messages – some welcome and some unwelcome. We see and hear messages in modes as varied as giant billboards, short tweets, text messages, musical jingles and indecipherable graffiti. Most of the time we like to receive messages. The “ping” of a text message; the ring of a cell phone; the transmission of an e-mail – they make us feel wanted, useful, valued and important. On occasion, if you are like me, you prefer to go for a long walk where the only messages you hear are those of your mind’s own making! Sometimes we find ourselves on “message overload,” where we need a break from the busyness of life. At other times, we are just plain “tuned out” or “switched off,” and others cannot reach us.

There is wonderful short scene in George Bernard Shaw's play *Saint Joan*. Shaw re-tells the story of the famous Maid of Orleans, Joan of Arc, from a dramatic perspective. Joan is trying to advise the French king to stay the course and drive out the English invaders. He asks Joan how she knows what to do. She replies that it is her voices from God. At this point, the king is frustrated and cries out: "Oh, your voices, your voices! Why don't the voices come to me? I am king, not you." And Joan replies: "They do come to you, but you do not hear them. You have not sat in the field in the evening listening for them. When the angelus rings you cross yourself and have done with it; but if you prayed from your heart, and listened to the thrilling of the bells in the air after they stop ringing, you would hear the voices as well as I do."

I suspect there are a lot of messages floating around with our name on them, but we never receive them because we are not really looking for them. In 1 Samuel 3, we find the story of the young boy Samuel who was ministering in the temple under the tutelage of Eli the priest. Eli and his family were not serving the Lord very faithfully, but the old priest did have a few words of good advice for Samuel. When the boy kept hearing a voice calling out to him in the night, Eli perceived it might be God calling the boy. He told Samuel to go lie down, and if he heard the voice again, he was to say: "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." The voice did indeed come again, and it was the beginning of God's call in the life of this young prophet.

Today, like most days, you will hear many messages. As you listen, I hope you will be able to discern with wisdom the ones that really matter. In Psalm 85:8, we read: "Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts." And as you hear God speak, may you find the words of Jeremiah to be true: "Obey my voice, and I will be your God and you shall be my people." (Jeremiah 7:23)

Dale Rose
Minister of Pastoral Care

ONEIDA RE-VISITED

"I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, thankful for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:3-6)

In his letter to the Philippians, the apostle Paul begins with thanksgiving – thanksgiving for the partnership in the gospel he has shared with the church in Philippi. He is confident that the work begun there will be brought to completion one day by God. These are the same sentiments shared by all of the volunteers who have been part of our Oneida Mission for the past five summers. It has been our privilege to travel to the Oneida Nation of the Thames reserve near London, Ontario and lead a day camp for indigenous children, using the classrooms and gymnasium of Standing Stone Elementary School (and for last summer the facilities of Oneida United Church). We have built many bridges and forged many friendships with the children and



families of Oneida. It has become one of our most cherished mission partnerships in our Yorkminster



Park Baptist Church family. Brian and Shirley Gleadall have been our contacts and partners through First Oneida Baptist Church, where they are the pastors.

Unfortunately we will not be able to conduct our day camp this year. It was scheduled for the last week of July 2020. But with the COVID-19 pandemic still causing health concerns, the leadership of Oneida have cancelled all summer camps. Although this is disappointing, it was not unexpected. The safety of the children and families of Oneida, as well our volunteers, is of paramount importance. Oneida Chief Jessica Hill cited community factors that put First Nations at higher risk during the pandemic, including limited access to health care and high rates of cancer, diabetes and heart disease. Oneida has in



fact closed its borders to people who are not residents since mid-March. Their extra care and vigilance is working, because there has not yet been

any COVID-19 positive cases in their community as of the end of May.

The cancellation of summer camps not only affects our church, but also two others. My previous congregation, Lorne Park Baptist in Mississauga, sends a team to conduct a day camp the week after us each year. And then following Lorne Park, the Bridle Trail Baptist Church in Markham do a camp. This provides the children with three weeks in a row of summer camp.

Over the past five summers Yorkminster Park has had over 60 people that have volunteered at least once for the week-long camp. This has resulted in many friendships formed and relationships established. The children look forward to seeing us each summer, and they stay connected with us through social media. Occasionally we visit the reserve in the fall or Christmas season to maintain contact with our partner church First Oneida Baptist, and with the children and teachers of Standing Stone School. Some of our volunteers even attended a funeral last fall for one of the young people on the reserve.

Our volunteers want to take this opportunity to thank



Yorkminster Park for all their support over the past five years. Prayer support; financial donations; beautiful knitted clothes for the reserve children created by our Dorcas Group; and other acts of kindness and tangible help have been much appreciated. We are already planning for next summer, God willing. Next year's Oneida Mission will be July 25-30, 2021. We can't wait to re-visit Oneida!

Dale Rose

Minister of Pastoral Care

Team Leader – Oneida Mission

FAMILY MINISTRIES

from Heather



In this unusual time, our heartfelt prayers are lifted to God for healing, protection, wisdom and courage.

Our **Family Ministry Team** is ministering to children, youth and their families in new and creative ways. We are blessed by God to have so many servant hearts sharing their spiritual gifts with us as we carefully navigate virtual ways to reach out.

Our Teaching focus and theme over May and part of June is on **PRAYER!**

Every week our **Family Ministry Team** send out a **Faith at Home Email** to ALL YPBC families that include the following Faith Resources:

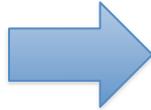
- Recorded from home Teaching videos for Families, Lighthouse (Children) & DOXA (Youth)
- Worship Song videos (Members from DOXA Band)
- Age-appropriate lesson plans for parents to engage their families at home with
- Weekly Prayer and faith resource links
- Faith at Home Challenge – Collage of pictures and experiences by families (see some pictures below)



We also mailed out two big mailings to children and youth that included faith activity sheets, prayers, spiritual name meanings, notes and blessings.

Every Sunday we connect with our **DOXA YOUTH** for a **BIBLE STUDY** via **ZOOM**. Our discussions have been special and an encouraging experience. We also had a new youth join our study time each week.

One of our youth drew a picture relating to our **PRAYER** theme that focused on forgiveness. See Sarah McGeer's artwork



GEAR UP FOR
**VIRTUAL
VBC**

SHOW ME THE FRUIT

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
Galatians 5: 22-23

5 days

Can be used anytime over the summer.

**At home Bible Camp -
something for all ages!**

Coming July 2020

STAY TUNED for further details on our Virtual "At Home" Bible Camp!!

This fun camp can be accessed on our website: yorkminsterpark.com and via email by July 1, 2020

Gift Bags will be filled with materials needed for the "At Home" camp and we will keep you posted on when they can be picked-up at our church parking lot 😊

NURSES NOTES BY LILY

Parish Nursing Ministry - Faith Community Nursing Practice



As I sat to complete my report, I realized it was June 4th. For me, it was a special landmark day, as it marked my 2nd-Year anniversary of being of service at Yorkminster Park.

I continue to gain a deep understanding and appreciation of our diverse community at Yorkminster Park. This is accomplished by creating connections and developing relationships with members, as they seek knowledge, guidance and support related to their health and well-being.

“Parish Nursing is a ministry of the congregation, not of the individual performing the ministry.” - Deborah L. Patterson in The Essential Parish Nurse

I am grateful to have such rich opportunities to be of service and to be a part of such a caring and devoted community. To name a few, the Dorcas Women’s Group, the Tuesday Prayer and Bible Study Group, the Tuesday Chapel Morning Prayer Group, the Women’s Executive, the Health and Wellness Committee, the Pastoral Care Team and of course all of you, members of the Church. In particular I would like to thank Heather Heatherington, your pioneer Parish Nurse, and now my role model/mentor.

I could not achieve my role and responsibilities without the support of congregation and the leadership of boards and committees.

“The role of parish nurses is basically a reaching out for more whole person ways of ministering to people who are hurting.” - Granger Westberg, 1999

We are truly blessed to work with such collaborative and compassionate people. I thank each and every one of you.

Recently I received a meaningful article, written by a parish nurse colleague, Carol Rose Kudelka entitled

“Coping through the COVID-19 Pandemic” (<http://www.yorkminsterpark.co.uk/page/150/covid-19-info-and-resources-from-our>). I believe that the content in this article applies not only to seniors but to everyone across the lifespan. The current pandemic affects everyone, regardless of age. Having read the article, I now have a better understanding of what so many of you, who have reached out to me, either by phone, email or zoom, are experiencing.

We are perhaps, on various levels, grieving the loss of what was for us “normal”. Let us be hopeful, despite the day to day uncertainties, and not miss the moments throughout this turmoil, which can still bring joy. It reminds me of one of Henri Nouwen’s quotes:

“Waiting for tomorrow...asks for a deep faith in the value and meaning of life, and a strong hope which breaks through the boundaries of death.”

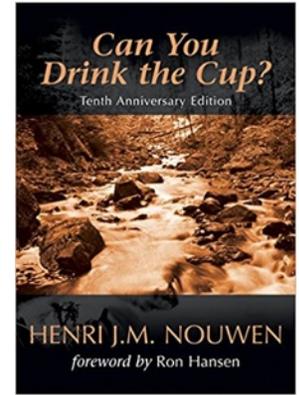
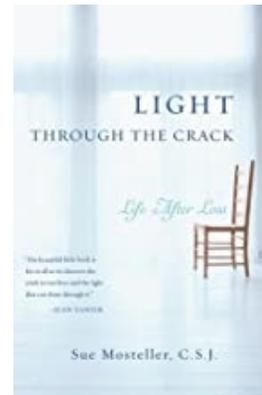
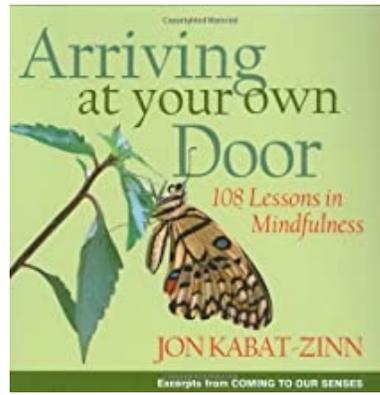
The power of prayer continues here at Yorkminster, despite the fact that our doors are closed. Dale continues to update our Prayer List for the Church Family and beyond. We may be physically apart, but we continue to pray from wherever we may be on a Tuesday. Dale now introduces our list by saying “... please be assured that your pastoral staff are still praying for the needs of our congregation”. We are also attempting to stay in touch with those members of our Church family who may be more vulnerable

and/or socially isolated. Please continue to pray for our people; stay in touch with friends and neighbors by phone or social media; and stay safe.

Thanks to Maxine Sterling-Dawe for organizing Tuesday weekly zoom meetings for the Tuesday prayer and Bible Study group. Thanks to Carol Belford who has joined us and continues to teach and lead us in scripture. These zoom gatherings have been a great source of comfort and joy, during such unprecedented times of social isolation. Special thanks to Lois Bishop for being our liaison with the Dorcas Group. I am also grateful to our chair of Health and Wellness, Laura Heatherington for her ongoing support and constant availability to be of assistance whenever an occasion arises.



I have found the following books inspirational, and comforting, providing me with hopefulness, especially at a time when humanity is struggling to find peace and respect for one another.



Yorkminster Park Sanctuary celebrating National Nurses' Week - 10 May 2020



Jenny Piper, RN
circa 1943



Judy Macdonald, RN
circa 7 years of age

“And remember every nurse should be one who is to be depended upon...she must have a respect for her own calling, because God's precious gift of life is often literally placed in her hands.”

Thankful garden signs



photo Esther Phillips

"When care is our first concern, cure can be received as a gift. Often we are not able to cure, but we are always able to care."

Blessings for World Peace and Good Health, Lily



OUR DAILY BREAD

If you go on line this moment you will see hundreds of lists written by people from every denomination explaining why people should read their bibles every day, why they should engage in spiritual reading, why they should pray each day and the pinnacle of many of those lists is that you go to God and you spend time with God not because you have any need at all, but simply because you love God. There is nothing wrong with having lists like this. They give insight into what happens inside us and to us, to what changes happen in our souls if we seek daily bread and in that sense they are not really unlike the lists one can find on nutrition sites listing all the great benefits of this or that fruit, vegetable or grain.

But not everyone reads lists and not everyone needs lists, at least not forever. So lists have their place and they can heighten the pleasure of reading scripture, because we have a better idea of what happens to us, but they no more increase the benefits of being with God than knowing the benefits of every morsel we eat will increase its nutrients. The point is, even if you do not know all the details of why God is very good for you, don't miss a day with God, just as you would not willingly miss a day with three square meals. Nutritionists are not healthier than others because they know all about why food is good for them, but they are healthy if they eat well. Scripture and healthy food do us such good and they are both gifts of God. Healthy food and scripture are similar in that if we go too long without them, we lose our appetite.

There are situations though that can awaken that hunger and so can be the beginning of a turning around to good. In times of great crisis, at critical junctures an appetite for God can return. It is not only when people go to hospital to give an example, but also when people marry, which is a happy sort of crisis, that there will suddenly be a



desire to learn more about God, to be with God and to model one's life and love on the Trinity. That awakened hunger can mean that a person who is going through a time of trial or a time of heightened joy has wisdom and insight to share from the bounty they suddenly have. Because even one single verse of God's word, one moment with him, is greater than a lifetime with all the learned people who walk the earth today.

So why do we not always eat well? I do not know. I know that I do not always do as I say. I know to sit still but I do not always do it and sometimes it is for good sounding reasons. It can be because I am doing so much for others, and sometimes it is because I am plain old tired, and sometimes it is because I have to increase my appetite again by sitting still because it has become weak. Jesus was right of course when he said Mary chose the better way. We can grab a verse on the go just as we would a sandwich as we run out the door but sitting still and letting a good thing do its good work is so much more beneficial.

In the hospital I see people who have not had a great deal to do with God for a while in a formal sense, people who often will say, "I have not been to church for years," but a crisis opens them up to returning to the Word. In the hospital I have given out more bibles and devotionals than I could ever recall. This is wonderful. Mostly our lives are lived outside heightened circumstances but what those heightened times show us, is that before we sought God in them, we certainly didn't need to seek out a list, no matter how interesting it might be. Deep in our hearts we know what is best for us and at critical junctures, when life changes, we often finally remember what we knew, that which was knitted into us when we were in our mother's wombs.

My prayer is that when life circumstances are good that we still remember our devotions, our need for Holy food. We so often turn to God when we need healing or when we remember we need his blessing but once we have had those gifts we forget. God's word is not medicine although it can heal us. God's word is a blessing but he is the giver of the gift, the living word, so ultimately the blessing of the word of God is God. Each time we engage in reading the bible, pondering his word, sitting at his feet, we are

in the presence of the God. Nature is our gift too, beauty is gifted us, our open book for those who do not like to read or like both. And the Holy Spirit is our helper and guide, in the reading of the world, in reading of the word, helping us to remember to take our daily refreshment. We need to nurture an appetite for good. Holy food is so rich that the slightest encounter can keep us going for a very long time but there is more to life than merely keeping on. We are not to be spiritual camels who stop at an oasis and then go on long voyages with what we can carry. We are to have the Word carry us through each day. Wouldn't it be lovely to find out what the more is that Paul is speaking of when he speaks of God's goodness and power in us bringing about more than we can ask or imagine?

Thank you Lord for coming to us in your word and person in times of trial and in times of great change. But let us also seek the riches of God on good days, when the sun is shining and the birds are singing and our very best friend is near. Let us dare to have more than we could ever ask or imagine. To sit at the table with God and take and eat each and every day of what he has so tenderly prepared for us all. There is no list long enough to cover all the goodness of God and what he has to offer us so give thanks and eat and you will grow in Christ.

submitted by Paula Willis

UPDATE ON REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

New refugee sponsorships are on hold due mainly to the travel restrictions arising from the COVID-19 virus. We have no news of our application to sponsor a family from the Central African Republic and can only pray for a positive outcome amidst what must be a very difficult time for them in the refugee camp in Ghana.

Our two Syrian families have come to the end of their 12-month support and they seem to be able to make a living from various part-time jobs. Our two co-sponsored Eritrean refugees are both well: Lydia moved to Ottawa to stay with her aunt while Samsom is renting a room in a house in Toronto. Both were working before the pandemic and are now enrolled in on-line ESL classes.

Sajjad and Farzana, our family from Pakistan, are still in their 1-bedroom apartment near Yonge & Lawrence and coping in difficult circumstances, trying to keep Angel and Amelia working at their on-line classes. Sajjad is working hard – in all kinds of weather – at garden maintenance with Green Keeper, a residential property maintenance company.

It has been difficult for all these newcomer families as the pandemic arrived just as they were trying to become independent and their children were making friends and enjoying school. Please keep them in your prayers.

submitted by Michael Willis

TRANSITIONS

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

Births

Júlia Sene de Sousa e Silva, *dau of Renata and Eduardo Sousa e Silva*

Arthur Willson Morgan, *son of Robyn and Blake Morgan*

Mya Kaur Fell, *dau of Bryn Anthony Fell and Navneet Kaur Binpal*

Deaths

Donna Britten

Fraser Fell

Donald MacDonald

YPBC WOMEN- PRAYER SHAWLS



The work of one women, twenty four, during the pandemic.

YPBC WOMEN'S MINISTRIES....

Prompts and Prayers in *THE GREAT PAUSE*

We've missed you! We've missed gathering in a home as *Women in Community* for a shared meal and soul nurturing conversations with women whose stories have the power to birth new worlds in us - we've missed gathering as the YP faith community for a *Thankoffering* lunch in support of the ministries of Canadian Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec - we've missed the spiritual force of friendship, the ground of our growth in the communal experience of our Women's Executive meetings (we haven't Zoomed in yet!) - and we've missed being able to gather for worship - to greet and be with you in person - to shake a hand, give a hug, reach out and touch an arm - to share our connection with God and one another other face to face as the community of His people.

And yet in this *Great Pause*, we've continued to knit prayer shawls - to send notes of friendship and comfort - we've been able to support Suzanne Wilkinson's challenging WALK to raise funds for *The Daily Bread Food Bank* - we've cared for each other through phone calls, emails and texts - we've witnessed the inspiration and stirrings of the Spirit in the most simple acts of kindness and generosity and in the most ordinary acts of tending and caring. We've also paused to regain perspective and to pray.

Our mission and ministries haven't changed:

As women with a passion for serving God, we are a caring community who strive to be faithful and accepting.

For such a time as this we endeavour to:

- Invite and welcome all women into our community
- Encourage women to discover their full potential in Christ
- Motivate, minister, mentor and befriend
- Live and serve under the influence and empowerment of God's Spirit

Our challenge now is how to live out our mission and remain connected as a *caring community of women* AND *for such a time as this!* We're prompted to pause and affirm anew what it means to be a true community of believers. At our *Women's Retreat* this past February, Karoline Lewis reminded us that one of the keys to being a woman of faith is what we believe theologically. "It's important to

recognize our theological commitments." And so where better to look for a foundation of community than to our God who exists in his wondrous Tri-unity and offers us a grounded connection with himself, ourselves and others because he is a community! God endures as a completely loving, mutually self giving, endlessly generative relationship between equal partners. And so as *women in community*, God remains as our source and foundation as we remain grounded in him as a *caring community of women* where the quality of what we think and say makes us valuable members not just what we can do or accomplish. And as a member of our Executive commented, "caring for others is still our priority"! Praying must be as well. In a recent *Walking Together* devotional, John Torrance wrote of prayer as 'an offering of love' that 'springs from everyday life' - from the community we're embedded in - from the midst of a pandemic! We are being prompted to pray for new possibilities for ministry and for being connected *for such a time as this*, and not for our own ends but in ways that bring glory to God.

In her book, *The Gift of Years*, Joan Chittister optimistically views dislocation and discontinuity as emancipating possibility. She echoes the wisdom of Sr Sue Mosteller who led our Women's Retreat four years ago. The theme was CHANGE ...And the Journey of the Heart - how timely ! In a film she showed, photographer Dewitt Jones claimed that when we celebrate what's right, we develop a vision of possibilities. How open to possibilities do *our* visions allow us to be? He believes that celebrating what's right actually gives us the energy to fix what's wrong and helps us be more accepting of change. What he described as the awesome change curve also becomes a possibility curve. Times of change always hold the most possibilities and so we can live in an exciting possibility curve where we can live in uncertainty and act with confidence. With God, we believe that something extraordinary is possible. And so for this we are prompted to pray - as a *caring community of women* at YPBC and *for such a time as this*.

And who knows, the *Women's Executive* may even learn how to ZOOM! Now that's an extraordinary possibility!

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

2020 SPRING REPORT - INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

Lebanon - Arab Baptist Theological Seminary



This is the time for the Church to be ready to bring a message of God's love, hope and joy when many people are suffering due to the pandemic and crumbling economies.

METAMORPHOSIS

In terms of economics, the Seminary is concerned about survivability. It is exploring ways to re- envision how they can come alongside the Church post-coronavirus. The needs in communities are changing, the realities of church life are changing, and so are the realities of theological education and leadership formation. Leaders are wondering how to survive the current crises and re-grow in the right direction. Leaders are reflecting on *Simplicity, Purpose, and Transformation in this time of Pandemic*.

Let's pray that the Holy Spirit will guide ABTS and use it as a laboratory of new ideas and methods for the glory of God.

Before Covid-19 lockdown, the number of home groups and programs for children in Lebanon was growing. Most of the children in refugee camps have no access to education so the Bible stories and reading lessons were very much appreciated.

God continues to work during the pandemic.

Where possible, home group studies have moved online with platforms such as Zoom and WhatsApp.

Groups are helping struggling Lebanese families through distributing food and hygiene packages.

We thank God for reports of provision, protection from danger and miraculous healing. Let's pray for the leaders, students and graduates as they serve our Mighty God in these critical times.

ESL and the Czech Republic

Esther Barnes arrived back in Toronto in March, barely a week after she began what would have been her 12th 90-day term in the Czech Republic, teaching English in partnership with the Baptist church in Litomerice. Esther is hoping and praying that she will be able to return to her students overseas in September.

Since her return to Toronto, Esther has resumed tutoring three ESL students with

adjustments for "social distancing". She now meets each of them once or twice a week on Skype for a 90 - minute session.



One of the students is a pastor hoping to return to Brazil.

Other tutors also keep in touch by phone and computer with their students and use a mixture of structured and unstructured sessions. Working online, motivated and conscientious students are improving their written English. Phone conversations can be immensely helpful and encouraging for tutors and students.

For example, one ESL coach phones her former student, a mother of young children, at least once a week and hopes to be able to resume their face-to-face sessions as soon as possible.

Students need guidance and practice with English--but they also need someone to talk to about the challenges they face daily. Some are isolated and miss their families and friends. Many are adjusting to Canadian culture. Some have financial challenges because they have no paid employment.

Let us continue to pray for Esther Barnes, the ESL team and their students. They all appreciate our

Bolivia - Heros, Hardship and Hope

Bill and Janice Dyck, our Canadian Baptist Ministries partners in Bolivia, remind us that disasters have phases.

The first phase is the “**Hero Phase.**” After a disaster, volunteers might instinctively and heroically step into danger. Victims sometimes endure heroically as well. This phase lasts about three months. Then heroes run out of energy, and small problems grow to a breaking point. Bill and Janice think they have been in the **hero phase** up until now. The Covid-19 crisis in Bolivia did not hit like an earthquake or hurricane. At first it was just a break, a chance to catch up. But it did not take long to realize that in a country where people depend on daily wages, most can’t afford a break. Delivery of relief hampers



started right away, but that made the helpers vulnerable. Most of the pastors depend on weekly offerings and

supplement that with work.

Bill and Janice heroically stepped in to provide hampers for 21 pastors around the country. Before long, they organized hampers for another 50.

It occurred to Bill that pastors would be needing more than food, so he started calling the pastors listed in the UBB directory. He might have tried to call all 321 pastors himself, but one of the pastors in the Pastoring of Pastors support group suggested, “Why don’t we divide up the pastors in the directory, call them, and find out how we can pray for them?” Each pastor in the National Leadership Team accepted the challenge of calling about 40 pastors and



praying

for them. They have met weekly via Zoom to pray for each other and the pastors they have been contacting.

The second, “**Wall Stage**”, may be where the church in Bolivia is now. The heroes are tired. Victims are complaining. Problems are complex. One pastor confided, “It’s hard to have been without income for five weeks.” Another shared “Children don’t understand when there’s no bread.” Sadly, many churches can no longer support their pastors and staff and are letting them go. Seminaries are making difficult staffing decisions. Tough realities hit like a wall and leave people in desperation.

The third, “**Renewed Hope Stage**”, is summed up by Isaiah 40:31: “...but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles...” One of the ways that national leaders in Bolivia have been able to stay in contact, even with those who can no longer access the internet, is through radio. Bill Dyck was invited to preach on the radio. It was a chance to share some hope. People are hopeful that strict quarantine measures will be lifted soon. People are hopeful that courses, like the online course on church planting being taken by 32 potential church planters, will result in new churches. People are hopeful that the world will not

forget them in a time of desperation. Even a little bit of outside help can be a great encouragement as it lets people know they are not alone.

The fourth, **“Hope for the Future Stage”**, concerns hope for the children. Before the pandemic, Janice was teaching music to vulnerable children from the “red light” district. The good news is that their mothers are being provided with food, weekly, on the morning that they are allowed out. They are still being helped with their schooling as far as possible. The concern is for their safety and psychological well-being, as their homes which they are confined to, are generally small, sometimes one room and possibly have no window.

Prayer Requests for our Canadian Baptist Ministries partners in Bolivia

1. Health issues in Bolivia. There has been one Covid-19 death among people in their community. One pastor asks for prayer for his son, a new doctor, so he can serve Covid-19 patients. Unfortunately, he is expected to provide his own PPE, but can't afford it. Bolivia's strategy is to prevent the spread of Covid-19 through strict quarantines because availability to treatment is limited.

2. Prayer for Janice and Bill Dyck to stay healthy in Bolivia, and for the health of their children and Janice's Mom back in Canada.



3. Prayer for Denominational and Seminary leadership as they face difficult staffing decisions and have limited resources with which

to support those under their leadership.

4. Prayer for Pastors: their finances, families, physical and mental health, and perseverance & creativity in ministry
5. Prayer for children and families: food for those who have been relying on daily wages,

protection for those quarantined in abusive situations, and schooling when classes have been suspended & online options only favor those who have that option.

Bill and Janice Dyck thank the congregation of YPBC so much for your continued financial and prayer support!

Thailand

We are thankful that Fiona and Conrad Kwok are well. They report that the new school term of Bethel Bible Institute in



Thailand started in May 2020. However, because of the Covid19 lockdown, the border is still closed. The Thai government announced that all schools will begin July 1. But at BBI, they have started classes using long distance/on-line teaching.

Many students live in villages where internet is not stable. Some places have no electricity, so it makes on-line teaching more challenging.

Conrad and Fiona have asked us to pray that the border will be opened soon, so that students from



Myanmar and overseas are able to return by July 1.

submitted by Esther Phillips

SEVEN SIMPLE SUGGESTIONS FOR EAST-TO-APPLY RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS:



Be kinder than necessary, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of a (personal) battle.

— Attributed to T.H.

Thompson and John Watson

Everyone is fighting *some* kind of battle??? Probably. Every one of us, every day is faced with challenges, and is searching or reaching for the solace, fortitude and spiritual faith to see us through to calmer, saner, quieter, safer, and happier times. Especially through this Covid-19 period. So it's with thanks to our Lord, our faith, inspirational ministerial team, and online Sunday services—still blessedly transmitted from our glorious sanctuary—that we're all hanging on in our *individual* boats and finding our way through to the eventual other side, fortified with right attitude and faith-based resilience. *Individual* boats??? You may retort, "I thought we were all in the *same* boat, *together!*" To clarify and paraphrase our dear Neil Hetherington (interviewed yet again on Zoomer Radio on June 2, regarding The Daily Bread Food Bank's continued appeal to help fortify food security for all)—we are *all* in this same *storm* together, but we may be inhabiting *different* boats. How is *your* boat floating these days? Those of loved ones? Your community? It's important to be mindful and thoughtful of this reality—the difference between you/us and others when it comes to living and experiencing life during this time of Covid-19—whether assessing your physical, emotional, mental or spiritual buoyancy.

Considering this current reality, once again (and as is eternally supported by scripture), I'm reminded of the sentiment, "Practice random acts of kindness."

Now is an exceptionally perfect time to exercise these practices—whether within your local neighbourhood, our church community, the city/GTA, or our country at large. In that vein, I pose these questions for reflection and action:

1. What memorable acts of kindness have I experienced and/or witnessed since March 2020? Who has extended such acts to *me* since this lockdown began, and since our subsequent worldwide challenges have arisen?
2. What memorable acts of kindness have I extended to another?
3. How can I improve on my willingness to *receive* others' random acts of kindness?
4. What can I do to improve my track record for practicing random acts kindness in the balance of this time and beyond?

Here Are Seven Simple Suggestions for Easy-to-Apply Random Acts of Kindness:

1. "Clap" harder and longer for those who put out sincere effort: When I attend live theater productions I'm often amazed at the conservative response of audiences. We watch the actors' or dancers' over-the-top performances, and then audiences politely clap for one curtain call, if that, and it's over—with some darting for exits beforehand (no pun intended!) to "beat the traffic." Sometimes it's not like that, but oftentimes it is. Too often it's the same with the tepid support received by frontline staff, whether in healthcare or other industries. So it's heartening, now, to see so many figuratively and literally clapping for our essential workers. **Action Point:** Sing the formal praises of some worker that's served you well (over the phone or in person)—someone you *know* is working hard and doesn't hear that "song" sung about *them* often. And insist that your positive feedback is documented in that praiseworthy employee's HR file.

2. Forego the big stores in favour of supporting smaller neighbourhood merchants (if your local geography allows): If you live in a neighbourhood with small shops, go exploring! Walk farther along to discover shops that you never realized were there! **Action Point:** Forego the "super"markets for groceries in favour of "ma and pa"/local stores. Less people with whom to connect, no line-ups, and, overall, a more satisfying community-contributing experience—all the while knowing you're helping struggling small businesses stay afloat (continuing with the boat analogy). 😊

3. Cultivate a new socially-distant friendship with someone on your block, building, etc.: Remember how isolated you may have felt during those first weeks of lockdown... when it was still miserable outside? We now have *June*! Alleluia! Let's celebrate small mercies! So go ahead and work on expanding your circle of real-life friends and acquaintances *now*. **Action Point:** Be first to say "hello" or strike up a conversation with a neighbour sitting on their porch as you pass. Or, if *you* are the one on the porch, be the one who greets the passers-by first! Everyone is more receptive to strangers' greetings these days. As corny as the expression seems, "strangers are merely friends that you've not yet met." You've got the time. And you've now got the perfect weather, too!

4. Exercise conscious patience: For those who are now living even closer and longer with others (or interacting with others by phone, Zoom, or in person, at shops, etc.), current stresses may make it easier to lose patience and serenity—to succumb to a shorter fuse. It's a physiological fact that ten measly seconds grants your higher-brain thinking time to engage, and resist blurting an unkind or regretful response. **Action Point:** If/when you feel an irritation with another arising, literally (and, lol silently) count to *ten* before you bark at a family member, friend, frontline worker, etc.

5. Celebrate the emotional and spiritual healing of "flower power": ☺ I'm not suggesting a simplistic flashback to the late 60's, but to merely *deeply* behold and contemplate a flower's wondrous, mathematically perfect, complex structure can literally quieten your breathing and heart rate. Perhaps an open-eyed prayer while gazing upon a flower??? And know this about the meaning of flowers' colours, too, while you meditate.:

- Red = love, beauty, courage and respect
- White = reverence, humility
- Pink = appreciation, gratitude, grace, perfect happiness and admiration
- Yellow = joy, gladness, friendship, delight, the promise of a new beginning

Perhaps you could choose your flower colour based on themes upon which you want to focus! **Action Point:** Consider dedicating the Sanctuary flowers, to

the Glory of God and in memory of a loved one, for one of our upcoming Sunday services. As always, and especially now, these beautiful Sunday bouquets do joyous double-duty—firstly bringing comfort and joy to *us* in our sanctuary, and *then* going on to, e.g., Jake Aikenhead's Salvation Army Gateway Shelter, or elsewhere, as desired.

6. When an old friend or person you admired pops to mind these days, consider it a God Whisper and reconnect: Remember, every day, unbeknownst to you, *someone* that you haven't seen in ages is probably thinking of *you*, too! **Action Point:** Even if it's just an email of, "Hello, I was thinking of you today!," a handwritten note, or better still, a spontaneous call, recognize these God Whispers as your own "phone call" from our Lord; and *answer*. ☺

7. Practice random acts of kindness on yourself, too: Take at least *some* time "selfishly" just for you, no matter to how many others you feel obliged or have a heart's desire to serve. Your personal "boat," too, needs a solid sturdy structure to stay afloat! **Action Point:** How about starting with at least this... Toronto's ice cream (and food trucks) are now allowed to open! Go chase an ice cream truck with the joy of a child before June is done! Do a little dance, regardless of your age (why is it that only kids are "allowed" to dance about when they're happy? Go on! I dare *you* to have a jolly dance, too!) ☺ ... as you delight in the simple pleasure of ice cream dribbling down your chin, or licking up the parts that run down the cone because the sun's melting it too quickly; or noisily slurp up that milkshake until you make that "rude" sound with your straw! You know the noise. The one about which your mum probably berated you? Just this once, be a kid and go for it! You surely deserve it these days. ☺

So there you have it: Seven simple suggestions for easy-to-apply random acts of kindness during these continuing Covid-19 Days." Amidst all that there is to be concerned about now, you can greatly benefit from the periodic reprieve of some islands in the stream to momentarily moor your boat.

And lastly, consider this: Chambers Dictionary of Etymology reports that the word, *kind* dates back to 725 AD/CE (from Old English's Beowulf), meaning

“friendly, benevolent, natural.” So, at its core, and at the start, being *kind* is natural. Being “normal” sometimes gets in the way of our true *nature*, but it is *natural* for humankind to *be* kind. Let’s hold on to that truth moving forward. Blessings.

Be extra kind today. To everyone you encounter.

submitted by Nina Spencer

Nina is a (Virtual and In-Person) 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)

INTRICITI



Within disruption there often comes opportunities – opportunities for us to bring **HOPE**. In the disruption of COVID-19, Intriciti continues to offer **HOPE**, although we’ve had to continually adapt to the changing circumstances and pivot in a number of ways.

Directly following the work from home declaration in mid-March,

we moved all of our programs online during the course of a weekend and were ready to go beginning that first Monday. I had only wished I had taken a Minor in Information Technology - I am sure I am not the only one!

But this transition to online with existing services and programs did not seem to be enough.

Upon listening to the needs within our sphere of influence, we decided status quo was not enough and rolled out a more robust response to COVID-19. As a faith based organization, we did not just want to flatten the curve of hopelessness but we want to attempt to plank it. With a gradual and measured approach, we want to pursue every possible option to bring hope.

HOPE is our strategy.

A sneak peak to what we have been up to ...

Virtual Open House Hours:

Every Friday between 7:30 A.M. – 9:00 A.M. I make myself available through Phone | Text | Email | Zoom | Social Media. This is a transition from our weekly open house hours at Starbucks at Yonge & King. Whether or not someone is available to connect during this time slot it is a poignant reminder of our availability and desire to authentically and empathetically connect.

Ongoing Connections:

Throughout the week we engage with personal connections to provide ongoing encouragement, counsel, connections, and prayer. It is our goal to connect with 500 key stakeholders throughout the pandemic. It has been fascinating to me how a simple connection can lead to beautiful threads of raw and honest conversations of fear and uncertainty regardless of whether someone has a little, a lot or no faith at all.

Roundtables for the Disruptors:

This small group is for those leaders making strategic organizational decisions resulting in a change of product line or service delivery and/or have been responsible for executing mass layoffs that would like to garner from the experiences and support of other leaders.

Roundtables for the Disrupted:

This small group is for leaders who have lost their job and are looking for a space to gather to find meaning in their loss, to work through their disruption, and also to help with tangible skills and connections to re-enter the market.

Alpha Online:

As an organization, we have encouraged those seeking answers to life’s questions to simply pause Netflix and join us for online Alpha. There are a lot of questions in regards to the "why" of this unprecedented season. There were also lots of questions prior to COVID-19. As we host a virtual online Alpha session each week, individuals have a little more time to ponder and explore life, faith and Jesus together in a friendly, open and informal environment via ZOOM. Each person who is attending has little to no faith background and are not attending a local church.

Caring from the Couch:

Recognizing that our charitable friends are struggling to respond to the high demand we launched a campaign “Caring from the Couch” to encourage our corporate friends to leverage their personal and corporate connections and resources to assist. To date, we have featured nine charities on social media asking for engagement from our community from laptops for marginalized children for online learning to gift cards for homeless youth struggling for food with numerous meal programs closed due to physical distancing to donations towards Personal Protective Equipment for charities to safely serve clients.

Social Media:

According to statistics, daily time spent in various online platforms is increasing 20 per cent year over year. All social platforms have reported a significant increase in usage during the pandemic as a means of staying connected. As an organization, we are looking to engage with various audiences. As a result we have increased our engagement on various social media platforms each day with thoughtful messages, relevant articles, and meaningful scripture. This is where individuals are and this is where researchers suggest they are going to stay post pandemic. These numbers present an opportunity to create brand awareness and connect with people who are searching for something more. Our influence is expanding because of our exposure and engagement with others.

Website:

As individuals seek out information during the pandemic, starting with a website rather than traditional brochures or an initial meeting will be the first point of contact. We have committed to do an overhaul of our website from the look of our website to better portray our brand, to bring it up to speed from a technology front, and to add thoughtful and timely content. Through these new ideas, planning, content and design we believe we will reach an even wider audience.

Summer Series:

Traditionally, we have hosted a Speaker Series in downtown Toronto on Wednesday mornings prior to work. This summer we are hosting an online series with three panelists bi-weekly (July 8/July 22/August 12/August 26). The four topics we will be addressing are directly related to the pandemic – On Leadership, On Fear, On Innovation, and On Service. The series is complimentary and you are invited to join us online to learn from some exceptional leaders.

Bells on Bay St./Bells on Bank St.

Looking ahead it is hard to imagine Christmas. Our planning cycle is twelve months so we are already watching Christmas movies looking to land on a theme that connects to this past year. This marks our 20th Anniversary of our signature event. With the possibility of a second wave, we are being prudent and will be digitalizing the entire event and excited about reaching a larger audience across Canada

and beyond. We are delighted to announce that Paul Burns, Head of Twitter Canada will be our Guest Speaker.

Meetings have been cancelled. School has been cancelled. Even church has been cancelled. But HOPE has not been cancelled.

We believe this season will continue to provide unprecedented opportunities for us all to embody our shared passion of the Gospel. Within the uncertainty, we can offer a sense of **HOPE** to a world that seems quite frankly upside down. It will look different for each one of us pending our contexts and spheres of influence. Let’s not miss this opportunity!

Join me in bringing **HOPE**. Our world is looking for something more and we have the answer through Christ Jesus – our strength and our redeemer.

submitted by Alana Walker Carpenter | CEO | Intricity



“ Meetings are cancelled.
Schools are cancelled.
Even churches are cancelled.

*But HOPE
is not cancelled.”*

- Alana Walker Carpenter
CEO
Intricity

THE CHALLENGE

SUZANNE WILKINSON - WALK FROM TORONTO TO NIAGARA FALLS AND BACK

Now more than ever, the Daily Bread Food Bank needs your help.

The Challenge – a walk from Toronto to Niagara Falls and back during this pandemic. (This 200-mile trip is now completed!)

Many are feeling a bit helpless and to a great extent, social isolation is precluding our volunteerism. Giving money to charity is a way to fight this. I am trying to inspire people to give (as they are able) during this pandemic. As I hope to demonstrate a way to stay fit, I have chosen the Daily Bread Food Bank of Toronto as the charity for this fundraiser.

Since the pandemic started, I have been walking 4 - 5 miles per day (x 6 days a week since March 18th, 2020). Of course, I have not *REALLY* walked to Niagara Falls and back, but have walked inside in the parking garage or outside in my neighborhood (4 – 5 PM, Mon – Sat). So, as I have now completed this virtual journey, I invite you to donate to the Daily Bread Food Bank to help me reach a goal of \$6,000.00. I sincerely thank you for your support for the needy of our city.

“Did you know that nearly 12 times more people in Toronto are asking for help with food security right now? As food insecurity continues to increase rapidly, your gift will enable the Daily Bread Food Bank of Toronto to continue to provide uninterrupted service to our community, and will help ensure that everyone’s right to food is realized in the weeks and months ahead. At Daily Bread’s on-site food bank in Etobicoke, we have seen a 122% increase in average daily visits since COVID-19 hit our city.” Neil Hetherington, CEO

After they’ve paid for housing, the average food bank client has \$7.83 per left per day to cover all other expenses – including food – making it impossible for them to stock the recommended supply of provisions for their family.

We are trying to figure out ways to live our lives and help those in need while socially distancing. Firstly, we want to support the efforts of healthcare workers

on the front lines. By caring for the poor, we will help those who are marginalized become healthier, thus hopefully stay out of our busy Toronto hospitals. Secondly, we are concerned about the effect COVID-19 will have on the marginalized populations and on all of us. I hope supporting this charity will make a small difference in achieving those two goals.

This is my personalized link that will take you directly to the Daily Bread Food Bank – (You may need to ‘cut and paste’ the link into your browser).

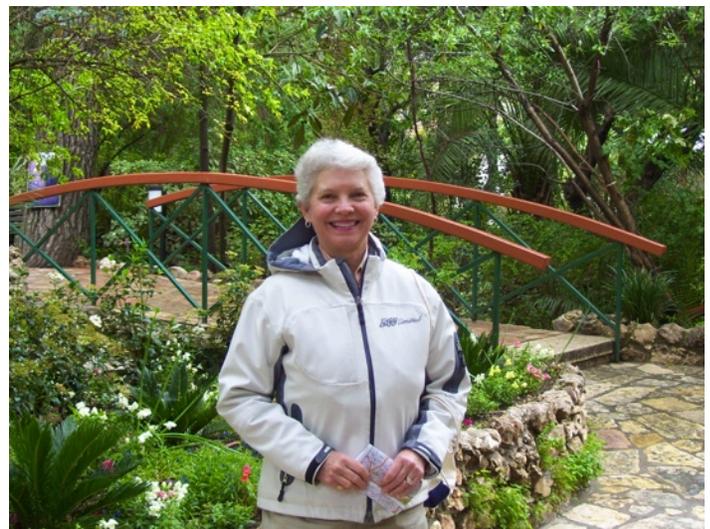
<http://support.dailybread.ca/goto/NiagaraFalls>,

Alternatively, a cheque sent to the Daily Bread Food Bank, noting that it goes towards my fundraising tally would be gratefully appreciated. (The Daily Bread Food Bank, 191 New Toronto Street, Toronto, ON M8V 2E7). You can also give your donation (cheque/cash) to me; I would be pleased to mail it for you.

In these COVID-19 days, since I can’t distribute this Challenge information personally, would you be most kind to send this out to friends by e-mail, or print it and hand it to others who you think might support this effort. I am grateful for this help.

Thank you for your support and generosity on behalf of the marginalized in our city. In partnership with you, accept my sincere thanks and blessings, stay healthy, strong, and be hopeful.

submitted by Suzanne Wilkinson



YORKMINSTER PARK GALLERY

The Gallery remains closed along with the rest of the church, but we hope in the autumn to present the following exhibitions . . .

Nelson Cheng - Sept 12 - Oct 15 - *Then, and Now, and Then*

Cheng is the inaugural winner of Landscape Artist of the Year, Canada. This competition has expanded Cheng's subject matter of man-made urban scenes to localities in the natural world.



Richard Mongiat - Oct 17 - *Past Interpretations*

As the internet allows for a sampling of the world of fine art, so Mongiat explores juxtapositions of various eras and genres in a series of re-imaginings of historical paintings.



Nancy Oakes - Nov 21 - Dec 21 - *Portraits of Imaginary Humans*

Oakes photographs and draws her own clay sculptures of imaginary people, producing large clothed photographic portraits and small more interpretive pencil drawings of human faces.