

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



YPBC NEWS

June 2012



Park Road Baptist Church Toronto.

Orwin Staples

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PRIMARY GOALS II

This is the second in a series on the primary goals identified in the long range plan of Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. In the last

issue I reflected on our goal to be a people of prayer. In this issue I turn to simplicity and our goal: TO BE A PEOPLE OF SIMPLICITY, RELEASING OUR TIME, TALENT AND RESOURCES FOR CONNECTION WITH COMMUNITY AND OUR FAMILIES.

Not long ago a member of the church met me at the door and explained to me that he had missed a church function because his daughter, visiting from out of town, had unexpectedly asked him to go for a walk and he had decided that his duty to the church could be set aside in order to be present for his daughter.

I have thought a lot about that brief conversation in recent days while sitting at the bedside of my own father, wishing that perhaps there could be time for just one more walk. It is not that this passage came upon us unexpectedly or suddenly, quite to the contrary. In fact perhaps it was the slow creeping advance over several years that lured me into behaving as if there would always be tomorrow to go for a visit, or to pick his brain about old family stories and legends. But just as there would always be tomorrow for a walk there has always been so much running around to do today. Little things that seemed oh so important at the time, but sitting at my father's bedside, I could no longer remember what any of them actually were.

I also found myself thinking of the words of the late Senator Paul Tsongas of Massachusetts who resigned from the U.S. Senate quite suddenly upon the return of his cancer, coining the phrase, "Nobody on his deathbed ever said, I wish I had spent more time at the office."

I am one who is all for planning in advance and working hard in preparation, believing that by doing so we can eliminate the need for worry, but maybe all that toil and sweat can at times be a form of anxiety. Perhaps all the meetings we hold to get everything just right can distract us from all that is right and good here and now.

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A suggested theme for the newsletter was **Park Road Baptist Church**; one of the Constituent Congregations of YPBC. The article on Page 12 is a starting point and includes a summary of the beginnings of the church, and provides documentary photographs and drawings. To come will be more about the Ministers of the church, the circumstances of amalgamation, etc.

The cover is by Owen Staples, well known Toronto artist and grandfather of our deceased member Guy Staples.

Comments and suggestions for future editions of the YPBC News are welcome. Please send them to:

pilgrim.h@sympatico.ca

Paul R. Hill

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PROCLAMATION OF GOOD NEWS FOR WOMEN

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is good news to all the women of the world...

To those who are weighed down with guilt, it is forgiveness.

To those who sin, it is redemption and renewal.

To those who are oppressed, it is freedom.

To those who live with fear, it is peace.

To those who are despised and rejected, it is kinship with the God who endured the shame of the cross.

To those who are bound by culture and tradition, it is emancipation by One who treated women as equals.

To those who cannot trust, it is dependence upon One who has proven Himself trustworthy.

To those who are lonely, it is friendship with the Best Friend women ever had.

To those who are devalued, it is a new identity as joint heirs of the grace of God.

As women who follow the Lord Jesus Christ, we are compelled by His love, commanded by His word, and gifted by His Spirit to share this Gospel with those who have not seen or heard the salvation of our God.

Therefore,

We will radiate His light into the dark corners of women's experience;

We will bear His life to those who are dying;

We will share our bread with those who are hungry;

We will declare his promise of resurrection to those who have no hope;

We will proclaim his empowerment to those who are powerless;

We will bring affirmation to those who do not know they are made in the image of God;

We will see with the eyes of Jesus, weep with His tears, hear with His ears, speak with His words, touch with His hands, embrace with His arms, and feel with His heart.

Until that great day comes

When every woman, man and child

Will know the glorious grace and goodness of our God.

(Adopted by the Women's Global Consultation on Evangelism, sponsored by the Women's Department of the Baptist World Alliance. 1992)

submitted by Jonanne Fenton, YPBC Women's Ministries



*O gracious and holy Father,
give us wisdom to perceive Thee,
intelligence to understand Thee
diligence to seek Thee,
patience to wait for Thee,
eyes to behold Thee,*

*a heart to meditate upon Thee,
and a life to proclaim Thee;
through the power of the Spirit
of Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Benedict of Nursia

from the book PRAYER, Does it
make any Difference? by Philip Yancey

submitted by Ruth Adams

PENTECOST – BEYOND DIFFERENCES OF LANGUAGE

Every year as Pentecost rolls around again, I find myself looking both ways along the road called History. The feast was important long before the time of Jesus; Pentecost was one of the first festivals of the nation of Israel. Jesus' return to heaven occurred only ten days before that amazing day when the city of Jerusalem rang with amazing news. "Have you heard? Peter, an ignorant fishermen, is speaking perfectly the language of visitors from Pontus! Another, named Andrew, has a group of Phrygians around him! They latch onto every single word. Matthew, must have learned the language of the Lydians when he collected taxes: how else would he be captivating these visitors to our city! I never knew he had friends there. Quick, get up to the temple; it's just amazing!" That was the work of the Holy Spirit, and on that day the divisions caused by human languages disappeared. Thousands believed then and in next days.



We all know the story of the birth of the church on that famous day of Pentecost. Miracles done in the name of Jesus, clarity in preaching, generosity towards widows: the early church experienced it all, until opposition came in the form of Stephen being stoned. Believers of the Way began to be imprisoned.

Commentators often compare the miracle of Pentecost in Acts 2 with the Tower of Babel. There, languages began to divide people, sending tribes far and wide. Under the leading of the Holy Spirit unity came to people who spoke dozens of different languages. Confusion, and even fear, brought about by different languages is not always addressed by Christians - Pentecostals, Baptists, or others.

We may expect that people who speak different languages should willingly, quickly and easily

overcome differences. After all, aren't we all one in Christ Jesus, following in the steps of those who came together: Jew and Greek, Romans and Scythians? (Scythians in those days would have included people from the present country of Romania around to Ukraine and even Southern Russia.)

Our experiences overseas as Canadian Baptist missionaries have humbled me many times, often over the issue of languages and misunderstandings arising from differences that seem built into the inner constitution of our human race. Cathie and I have witnessed much as the power of the Holy Spirit breaks down barriers.

In Brazil, where Portuguese is spoken, there are still another 180 (approximately) tribal languages spoken by indigenous peoples. (Since Brazil was discovered an estimated 120 languages have totally disappeared.) One Brazilian Indian tribal group near Campo Grande, where we lived, accepted the Lord - en masse! About 80% of that tribe became followers of Jesus. These brothers and sisters in the faith couldn't understand why the 20 Baptist churches in Campo Grande, a city of 350,000 people at that time, didn't follow their pattern of faith! After all, the Christian faith was so real it demanded meetings every night of the week in the villages! We, in the city, were seen as possessing a less demanding faith. Yes, we still had meetings Sunday mornings and evenings, with the evening meetings packed out and with conversions every night, but we didn't plan to bring every believer together every night!

The Brazilian government doesn't want mixing between the tribal villages and the general population, so opportunities for fellowship were limited. Most importantly, we, and our brothers in the Indian villages, learned to not speak poorly about each other. Some of the deepest lessons I learned in Brazil came from a dear evangelist who left his tribal village, going to another tribe to share the gospel. When this man prayed at our pastor's retreats, his heart conversation with God was so intimate that we yearned to have faith like his.

Languages and differences in culture could have kept us apart. Instead, language differences helped us learn from one another even more, a timely, unexpected gift of the Holy Spirit.

After 14 years in Brazil we moved to Cochabamba, Bolivia. While Spanish is the language of commerce, government and education, about 75% of the population speak either Quechua or Aymara, two languages that have a long history, perhaps 2,000 years old. Church conventions brought believers together from every part of the country; each event lasted three times as long as what we considered “normal”! Each sermon, announcement, and perhaps admonition, had to be translated into three languages. It took me a while to adjust to this type of church “fellowship”! Afterwards I marveled at the wisdom of these folk, many of them humble peasants. They didn’t exclude anyone from fellowship just because someone came from the highlands around Lake Titicaca, or the lowlands of Santa Cruz.

During the three years we worked in Bolivia I thought of the spiritual appreciation these folk gave to each other, making sure all, young and old, richer and poorer, were included. I often thought back to Canada where English-speaking Baptists in our country gave little room for French-speaking colleagues in our conventions and meetings. In the end they formed their own Baptist Union of French Churches. Some of my best moments in Canada as General Secretary of CBM were spent with our Francophone brothers and sisters at their annual conventions. Their young people and children are included, not excluded. We are the poorer for not being able to appreciate and hear the vibrant faith of our Francophone brothers and sisters.

We spent eleven years on assignment in Turkey, representing Canadian Baptists. Language difficulties lie at the root of one of Turkey’s most serious social and political situations. The Kurdish people, found in the eastern part of the country, come from different backgrounds than those who govern the country. A long period of conflict has created endless headaches for families; migration patterns took many of the Kurdish people to Istanbul, other cities in Turkey and even to other countries.

Part of the maturing process of the Protestant Churches in Turkey has been to include speakers of the many dialects in Turkey in fellowship. The sensitivity of this topic prevents me from giving specific examples, but I watch with joy as prayer fellowships, reconciliation meetings, expressions in music and Kingdom commitments begin to break down barriers caused by a long, painful history. Not long ago the Kurdish New Testament was read on a government sponsored TV channel. The Holy Spirit is at work.

Recently Cathie and I spent three months in Northern Thailand. We attended worship in a church that by our standards is a small congregation. Yet, within the circle of those very impoverished people, financially speaking, their fellowship welcomes people from eight

different languages. They find their common faith in Jesus Christ. The Thai language doesn’t have to dominate. Space prevents me from giving specific examples of the evidence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of people who find the bridges of faith in these four countries. Pentecost is not only the moment of the birth of the Church. It brings us an unsettling question. We know what to do with Christmas and Easter, but what do we do to celebrate the birth of the Church? I’m sure every reader has their own answer. I have mine: I believe Pentecost marks the ongoing treasure of the Church in which every language is precious. Every person from a different culture, if they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, is valued in a special way. It means taking extra time to understand those who are in the minority in number, may often be ahead of me in terms of spiritual growth. It usually means getting a glimpse of the Holy Spirit's work in another culture, spreading the news of the Kingdom of God.



submitted by David Phillips

IS SUFFERING PUNISHMENT FOR SIN - JOHN 9:1-41

The story of the healing of the man born blind demonstrates the fact that, according to Jesus, sin and suffering are not necessarily related. Jesus makes this plain in John 9:3 **“His blindness has nothing to do with his sins or his parents sins”** (Good News Bible).

However, it is obvious, on the basis of simple observation, that some suffering is recognizably related to a specific sin. The damaged liver of an alcoholic is the result of his drinking, and the suffering caused by broken human relations is often the consequence of sinful behavior. Many other examples can be provided to show that some suffering is related to sin but it does not follow that all suffering can be explained in this way. Herein lies the significance of Jesus answer to the question.

In the end, however, we must remember with humility that “in a fallen world, exhaustive explanations (of suffering) are in principle not available” (Bruce Milne, *The Message of John*, page 138).

The sign begins when Jesus and his disciples notice a man who has been blind since birth. Because of their preconceived notions concerning the relationship of illness to sin, they ask Jesus a question **“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”**.



Job and his Wife, Albrecht Durer, 1504

The garden was perfect in that it contained every good thing needed for human life to be lived in perfect relationship to God. Adam and Eve were given only one constraint; they were told by God that they could take the fruit from any tree except the one in the middle of the garden (Genesis 3:2-3). This command of God asked them to recognize the fact that they were ‘created’ but not ‘creator’. They were to obey this command out of their recognition that all of their lives were to be lived according to a vertical relationship with God that was to inform and provide a norm in their lives. However, they declared their independence from Him by their disobedience.

Jews believed that personal suffering was due to sin. Their assumption was that either this man had sinned in the womb (this must be the case since he was blind from the very beginning of life) or that his parents’ sin had led to his blindness. They were obviously unable to explain blindness without assigning personal responsibility to someone. The question raised here is an important one.

Sin and Suffering: Any Connection?

While there is some truth to their belief, it is incorrect to make the generalization that personal suffering is the result of personal sin in every case. Such a point of view is unnecessarily harsh, cruel, and inconsistent with the teaching of scripture.

The story of Job is traditionally understood as a lesson on patience but in fact the story actually presents a rejoinder to the notion that Job’s suffering was due to some sin he had committed. Job, in spite of demands for repentance from his friends, insists that he is innocent. The story unfolds in a manner that is supportive of Job’s claim; he is innocent. The story of Job rejects the idea that suffering is punishment for personal sin.

However, the Bible does teach a general relationship between suffering and sin but the general principal must not be applied specifically to every situation. Jesus’ response to the question supports this position. Two particular Biblical texts deserve a close examination: Genesis 3 and Romans 5:12.

Genesis 3 contains the story of Man’s fall from grace in the garden.

The apostle Paul is responsible for our understanding of this story and he gives us its meaning in Romans 5: 12-19. He argues the case that sin entered the world through Adam and that his sin is inevitably repeated by everyone since Adam. The entire human race is guilty before God of doing just what Adam did because everyone, like Adam, defines their own existence by living without the vertical reference that God intended when he created human life. If this was not the case there would be no need for a suffering Messiah. The result of sin is devastating; all men and women die.

All human mortality is a result of the sin begun by Adam and repeated in the lives of his descendants. In this general sense suffering (death) is directly related to sin and disobedience before God. In other words, suffering can only exist in a fallen world. Thankfully, the apostle goes on to say the Good News that the ravages of the Fall are reversed by the death of one man. “..... just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous” (Romans 5:18-19). In this passage Paul has established a general principal governing sin and its relationship to human suffering.

Jesus’ answer concerning the relationship of blindness to sin is made plain. He said that neither the man nor his parents were responsible for the blindness due to a specific sinful act. He must mean that there is no sin for which the blind man is being punished because, in reality, both the blind man and his parents were sinners (a universal condition) but this fact does not explain the blindness.

What Jesus said in John 9:3b means that the blindness of this man is an occasion for God to show his love and mercy through healing while at the same time revealing the true nature of His Son. Likewise, the apostle Paul found his own suffering to be the opportunity for God to demonstrate how He uses suffering for His own divine purposes. He writes: “To keep me from being conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations there was given to me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” ” (2 Corinthians 12:7-8).

Suffering exists. Sometimes God removes the cause and sometimes He does not, but in every case He uses it to display His love and faithfulness to those who suffer by offering His presence in their suffering. This biblical truth is the reason that Paul can say, “**And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who have been called according to his purpose**” (Romans 8:28).

Followers of Christ are not to remain passive and unresponsive to the suffering in the world. In John 9:4 Jesus plainly says that all his followers are to join him in the work that relieves suffering because it is God’s work, and since life is short, there is an urgency to act as He acts. There are some things that will not keep for the time when life is over (see the parable in Matthew 24:45-51).

At the end of human history God does not intend to replace his creation with another. Instead, He will perfect the present reality and rid of it of everything except perfection.

submitted by Peter Ferguson

TRANSITIONS

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

Birth

Katherine Rose Yip *dau of Christopher and Jen Yip*

Baptisms

Jessica Horek
Deepa Jolly

New Members

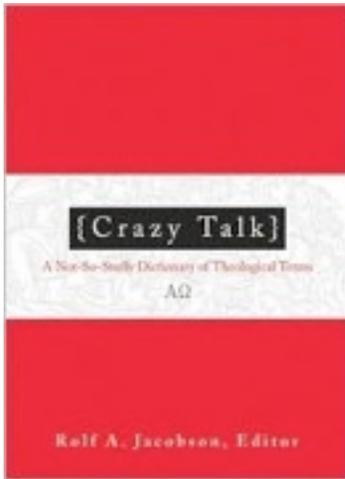
Maria Meehan
Carol Radford-Grant
David Radford-Grant
Pedro Alfonso
Murray Lindores
Suzanne Khan

Deaths

Helen Flanagan
Mabel Margaret Van Camp
Robert Davis Holmes

BOOK REVIEW *Crazy Talk: A Not So-Stuffey Dictionary of Theological Terms*, Rolf A. Jacobson, Editor

A recent article in *Christian Century* magazine questioned the importance of theological conversation asking: “is there any value in a theological conversation in our post-modern society?” The question is a good one, but whatever the experts decide I will choose to think and talk theologically. I prefer it. I have found great diversity during conversations on the meaning of particular scripture and the relevance of certain historical events in the



life of the church, but when we speak about God we must agree. How many will argue that God is good? Who can deny that God is long-suffering or merciful? Theology or God-talk is just plain good! And the book *Crazy Talk: A Not So-Stuffey Dictionary of Theological Terms* edited by Rolf A. Jacobson makes something good great fun.

The book is a dictionary of pretty common terms that we church people toss around and hope people know what we mean. I laugh (out loud) and scream at the answers and boldness to speak the truth with love. For example: “Offering – That which doesn’t really belong to us in the first place and which often only after much anguished deliberation and wringing of hands, we reluctantly part with as a ‘gift’ to God – presumably in thanks for God’s having given it to us in the first place.” (Rolf, 120) This is certainly the first dictionary of theological terms that I would suggest be a part of every Christian book collection, clergy, lay, church leader, Bible study teacher or student and bench warmer. Get this book and you

will no longer be dependent on ‘appropriately trained’ persons to define terms for you, you will have the answers for yourself. This is a dictionary that you will not be able to put down.

I enjoy theological discussions and invite you to join me in one soon. Maybe we could read a good book together and share our thoughts and opinions. If this interests you email me at channa@yorkminsterpark.com. After all “‘Crazy talkin’ has a long and distinguished tradition, and as long as there are people crazy enough to join the conversation, it will continue. Armed with vocabulary we’re helping you amass, you’re well on your way to becoming a crazy-talk-o-logian. Slap that on your resume and let the offers roll in (if you tip the paparazzi, they’ll shoot you from your good side)” (Rolf, 171).

The Reverend Cheryle R.C. Hanna

Crazy-talk-o-logian in residence at YP

GOOD WORKS

It was at an Alpha Dinner at YPBC in 2003 that the idea for Good Works first came into being. A young man seated beside me explained with much difficulty that he had just lost his job of 15 years at one of the major banks. I too was unemployed for the very first time after the insurance company I worked for closed its doors after one hundred years in business so I knew his pain oh too well. It later became apparent to me that something was noticeably different with this young man. I later found out that he was bipolar and schizophrenic. He seemed to have no hope for finding future employment due to his apparent disabilities. Later in the evening at home my mind kept going back to that young man and I felt a heavy burden thinking “surely there must be a program that could give him spiritual and emotional encouragement while providing practical information as he goes about seeking employment?”. I made a few inquiries and found out that no such program existed. Then in a quiet moment God spoke to me and gently said “why don’t you do something about it?”. The program is inspired by the scripture of **Matthew 5:16** that says “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your **Good Works** and give glory to your Father who is in heaven”. In the fall of 2003 I designed and facilitated the first Good Works Program workshop at YP and ran it for four years.

Fast forward nine years later to 2012. Good Works has started up again and at the heart of the program is the earnest desire to encourage others through the word of God while providing a supportive community of care and gently reminding our guests that “He who began a **Good Work** in you shall complete it until the day of Christ Jesus”: (Philippians 1:6).

Good Works' main objective is to meet our work life challenges with faith-based solutions by examining the scriptures, facilitating group discussion, having industry experts share their knowledge, and providing a place where information and resources can be exchanged. This program is designed with four distinct tracks in mind:

- to provide a community of support for the **Employed** with their Christian 'walk' at work,
- to offer spiritual and emotional group support for the **Unemployed** while providing a forum to share and exchange useful information
- to offer support to those in **Career Transition** or those entering into retirement or retired
- to serve as an **Outreach Ministry** to our neighbouring community

So far this year there are some noticeable differences in the demographic of our guests: 75% of the participants come from outside of our church, more men are in attendance than previous years, more employed participants are attending, more participants who are transitioning are attending and there is an increase in cultural diversity. The workshop attendance has varied from 3 to 17 with an average of about 8 -10 each week. We have various guest speakers and industry experts including a Registered Psychologist, Executive Recruiter, and Social Media Expert. Participant feedback so far has been very positive and I have received comments like the following:



"I have not experienced such a strong sense of peace in an environment in years. I don't feel judged and I feel accepted for who I am" - Male (Unemployed)

"I'm stressed at work and face the daily moral challenges that often do not align with the values of my faith because of working in an environment with non-Christians. Thank goodness I have a place I can come on a weekly basis that provides me with some objectivity, scriptural guidance, and a community of support" – Female (Employed)

"The speakers so far have been outstanding and of the highest caliber. Thank goodness there a place I can come that provides me with quality information and spiritual encouragement" - Female (Employed)

"I am not quite ready to retire and I am currently exploring other options for a second career" - Male (In transition).

Good Works is a support group and an outreach ministry. It is not a job-finding club but a place where individuals can bring their employment concerns and be encouraged in the Lord by His word within an affirming and encouraging environment that provides useful information. Good Works at best can be summarized by **Colossians 1:10**: "And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every **good work**, growing in the knowledge of God".

submitted by Carol Roberts

SEEKING ONGOING PRAYERS FOR OUR NEW CANADIAN (REFUGE) FAMILY

As we head into summer, please continue to keep our sponsored family in your mind and prayers. Pray for success as Ebrahim and Nazli focus on the job search. They have had some interviews, but it is a challenge to break into the workforce. Pray for Batoul, who has some medical concerns and is awaiting consultation for treatment options.

If you have a lead on potential entry-level jobs, or with potential employers, please contact Janet Kim at 416-978-1950 or frozeninyellowknife@hotmail.com.

We again thank all the generous donors who have assured that, as a congregation, we can fully provide income support to the family until August, when our financial commitment concludes.

submitted by Refugee Sponsorship and Settlement Committee, YPBC Board of Mission

PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE EVENTS

Caregiver Lunch and Seminar

The Scriptures encourage us to care well for relatives and friends, especially when they are experiencing difficult times. There are many in our congregation who take that very seriously and give of themselves exhaustively on a daily basis. The Pastoral Care Committee recognizes that such people need a break from time to time, along with an opportunity to talk about their situation with other caregivers. On April 19, a lunch was provided for thirteen of these caregivers, followed by a presentation by Jennifer Scott and Cathy Condie of the Community Care Access Centre. The feedback from those in attendance was very positive, so the Committee will continue to hold this event twice a year.

Homecoming Service

Yorkminster Park is fortunate to have a large number of people who have served Christ faithfully in the church and community - contributing their time and talent and resources generously - over the years. We are rich in experience! Unfortunately, a number of our members are no longer able to attend Sunday services on a regular basis because of age or mobility issues. For a number of years now, the Pastoral Care Committee has invited these valuable individuals to a twice-yearly Homecoming Service and Tea. On May 17, the largest group of people in several years attended the 2:00 p.m. Thursday event, along with volunteers who provided transportation. Following the service, which included The Lord's Supper, members of the Pastoral Care Committee served refreshments in the Friendship Room, giving people an opportunity to catch up on each others' lives and reminisce about their experiences at Yorkminster Park.

Journey Through Grief Toward Healing and Hope

The loss of a relative or close friend is a difficult journey to navigate through. We at Yorkminster Park are fortunate to have Rev. Elaine MacInnis, a certified grief counsellor and chaplain, to facilitate a six week Tuesday evening gathering during May and June, at which people from the church and community have an opportunity share their grief and reflect on the eternal hope we have through our faith in Christ.

Prayers of Healing and Blessing

Each Sunday following the morning worship service, two members of the Board of Deacons or Pastoral Care Committee or ministerial staff are available in the Centennial Chapel to meet for a few minutes with individuals who want someone to pray with them. This a time not for counselling, but prayer for wholeness of spirit, soul and body. A printed sheet of Scriptural blessings is also provided.

Bus Trips

From time to time, trips are planned to various cultural events. Judy MacDonald is the Trip Coordinator on behalf of the Pastoral Care Committee, and this spring (Apr 30-May 3) helped organize the Pilgrimage of Sacred Spaces tour to the churches of Pittsburgh, PA, led by Dr. Peter Holmes, William Maddox and Corey Keeble of the Royal Ontario Museum. Descriptive reports on the trip are available on Peter's Blog. On June 13, several people went to the Old Mill Inn, Toronto, to enjoy a lunch and matinee at the Mysteriously Yours Dinner Theatre.

The fall event is a bus trip to the Stratford Festival to see the musical 42nd Street. The date is Wednesday, October 3, and the cost \$150, including lunch at a restaurant in Stratford. Call 416-922-1589 for tickets.



submitted by John Torrance

PRIMARY GOALS II cont'd from Page 2

Meetings and consultations are important – especially in a Baptist church with its democratic governance – but they are not the most important thing in the life of the church.

When Jesus told us not to worry in the Sermon on the Mount, it wasn't a call to plan more efficiently, but to trust God completely. God has our best interests at heart because he made us and loves us. As he spoke those words Jesus made reference to the birds of the air and the flowers of the field, the very things we miss when we hurry through life trying to get everything done. It seemed to be a call to take a deep breath and appreciate the beauty and wonder all around us and when we do, perhaps some of the things we race around trying to fix and get in motion will take care of themselves. Clearly that is at the heart of the call to simplicity.

Jesus concluded his words about worrying with the call to seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness promising that when we do, all else that matters in life will take care of itself. One of the enemies of simplicity is the way in which our lives and our world get so complicated with financial debt. Instead of seeking first the Kingdom we set our hearts on obtaining a particular material thing which will surely make us happy. We go in debt to purchase it and then discover we need one more thing. Jesus called us to uncomplicate our lives and hearts by setting them on the Kingdom. It frees us to give rather than get and as we do we discover, as Jesus promised, that it is truly more blessed to give than to receive.

At times I have used the call to seek the Kingdom first as a bit of an excuse to be unapologetically busy with church work. I convince myself that it doesn't matter if I don't make it home to have dinner with my children because I am busy doing God's work. Yet, God's call on my life also involves being a husband and father and neighbour and friend.

When he spoke of putting God's Kingdom first, Jesus also said to seek the righteousness of God. We tend to think of righteousness as living uprightly, and certainly that is part of it, but it also means to live a right relation with God, oneself and others. It concerns relationships among neighbours, friends and family. When it comes down right down to it the call to righteousness is a call to uncomplicate our busy schedules, so that we can be free to do simple things like take a walk with a child, or a spouse, or a friend, and to remember always that God walks with us.

Perhaps the call to simplicity is the most challenging when it comes to working it out in the life of the church. Its purpose would be defeated were it to be implemented with a program or budget. At its most recent retreat the Ministerial Team came back with a suggestion to hold more of our meetings on a common night in order to work more closely together – taking time to share and pray since we are all there together – and freeing the time and talent of our people and the church up to invest in the life of community and family.

There is a beautiful old Shaker Hymn written in the 19th century which puts it so well:

*'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free
'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,
'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.*

It sounds simple enough to me. I think I will call my daughter now and see if she is free to go for a walk.

Grace and Peace, Peter

A WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT



Janet and I are delighted to announce that our daughter, Jessica Allison Holmes will be united in marriage to Alex Andreas Loschberger at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church on Saturday, September 22 at 1 p.m. We very much want everyone to feel most welcome at the ceremony and at the Afternoon Tea which will follow in Cameron Hall. There is no need to feel obliged to attend, nor to bring anything but a joyous spirit as we share in this delightful day in our daughter's life.

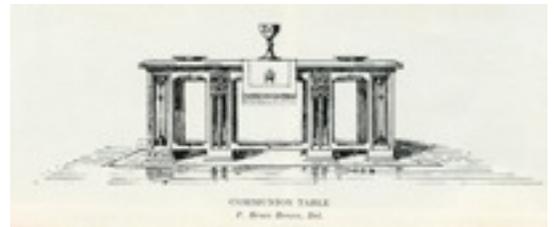
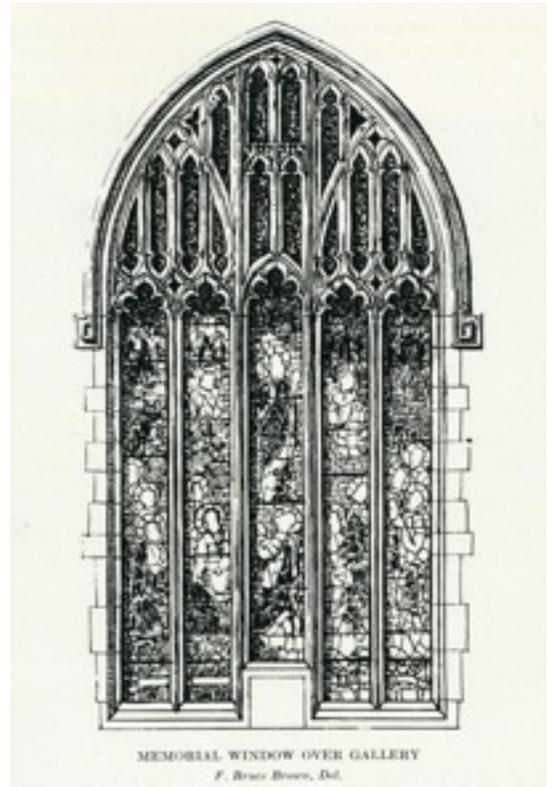
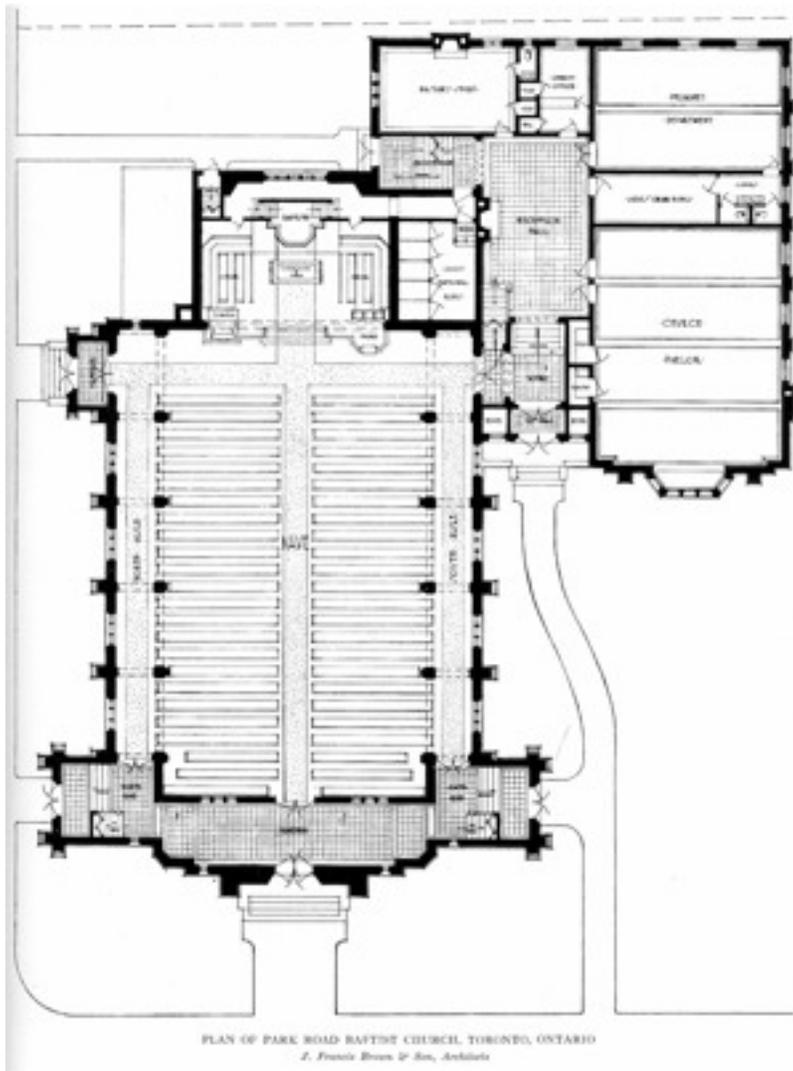
Peter Holmes

PARK ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

Park Road Baptist Church was formed in 1922, with the initial 350 members coming out of Jarvis Street Baptist Church (located in downtown Toronto). In 1927 a new church edifice was completed at the corner of Park Road and Asquith Avenue, in the Yonge/Bloor area. The architectural firm for the church was J. Francis Brown and Son of Toronto: the principal being the grandfather of our member Doug Brown. In March 1961 a devastating fire destroyed the Christian Education portion of the complex affecting minor structural damage to the sanctuary. It was decided that rather than rebuild on that site, an amalgamation with another congregation would be explored. The result was an amalgamation with Yorkminster Baptist Church, in October of that year, to become **Yorkminster Park Baptist Church**.

The principal features of Park Road Baptist Church were a sanctuary with a seating capacity of 800 and Sunday School accommodation of 450, along with a parlor and a recreation and dining hall. The Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, December, 1927 describes the sanctuary: *“The main floor of the church consists of a Clerestory Nave 42 feet wide with low arcaded side aisles, and Baptistry and Choir Chancel, the seating capacity including the Gallery over the main entrance vestibule is about 800. The Chancel floor is elevated 2 feet 6 inches above the main floor and is planned with the Baptistry and Communion Table forming the main central feature, these two represent the two ordinances of the Baptist Church. The choir is planned to seat 40 choristers arranged without obstructing the view of the Baptistry. The Organ Chamber opens into the side of the Chancel above the choir panelling with three arched and oak screened openings”*. The Journal also offers photographs, drawings and renderings some of which are hereafter reproduced.





SUMMER PREACHING at YPBC

July

- 1 The Rev. Dr. Peter J. Holmes
- 8 The Rev. Cheryle Hanna
- 15 & 22 The Rev. Dr. Stephen Ferris
- 29 The Rev. Dr. Kevin Livingstone

August

- 5 & 12 Dr. David Bartlett
- 19 The Rev. Dr. Paul Scott Wilson
- 26 The Rev. Dr. Peter J. Holmes

September

- 2, 11 am The Rev. Dr. Peter J. Holmes
- 2, 7 pm The Rev. John R. Torrance

AWARD - EARLAINE COLLINS

2012 Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in the Performing Arts



Earlaine Collins has been a supporter of the performing arts in Canada for more than 45 years. She has donated time, talent and capital to leading cultural organizations, notably the Canadian Opera Company (COC), the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and the Calgary Philharmonic, and has provided personal and financial support to numerous emerging Canadian artists. She is a passionate ambassador for the performing arts, and her vision, determination and generosity have served as an inspiration to volunteers and artists alike.

Mrs. Collins is president of the Gerard and Earlaine Collins Foundation, which she and her late husband established in 1989. Cultural institutions that have benefited from the foundation's support include the National Ballet of Canada, Canada's National Ballet School, Art Gallery of Ontario, Gardiner Museum of

Ceramic Art, Royal Ontario Museum, Canadian Children's Opera Company, Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto Summer Music Foundation, Aldeburgh Connection, University of Toronto School of Music, Regent Park School of Music, and many more.

"I particularly enjoy sponsoring young artists and watching them grow and mature," she says. "It's an incredible personal opportunity: you get back tenfold what you give."

Her voluntarism extends beyond the arts: she is active with the Havergal College Foundation, and supports the SickKids Music Therapy Program for Palliative Care (Toronto Hospital for Sick Children), St. Michael's Hospital Foundation, Mount Sinai Hospital, and World Wildlife Fund (Canada). In 1988, she and her late husband helped establish the House of Compassion of Toronto, a permanent residence for people living with mental illness.

text from the site "Governor General's Performing Arts Award" and photo by Donna Willett

SO MANY FREE GIFTS

The people of Israel didn't acquire the Promised Land in a huge takeover bid. It was given to them for free. We are so quick to point out that nothing is free. We forget, though, that as the old song says "the best things in life are free". The English writer, G.K.Chesterton once said that no one ever earned a sunset.

What things are happening in your life today that you didn't pay for? The privilege of sight... of geese in flight or a new puppy chasing its tail? The sound of the breeze as it whistles past your open window or the windshield wipers flip-flopping in the rain with the thunder in the distance?

What about the smell of a freshly made apple pie baking in the oven or the aroma of a lilac bush in bloom?

How about the feeling of a job well done or words of approval from someone who appreciates you? What about an unexpected, spontaneously made, delicious lunch offered to you by a friend?

The present is a gift from God, free for the noticing. Awareness is the beginning of appreciation. Gratitude is the outflow of a heart sensitive to the countless gifts of God. Expression of that gratitude is a benediction all its own.

So many things can bring a smile to the face and a warm feeling in the heart. The more we are aware of all that we've been given, the more thankful we'll be.

The Giver of every good and perfect gift is so worthy of our gratitude and worship for all that comes freely from His hand.

submitted by Suzanne Wilkinson

SUMMER BIBLE STUDIES

Wednesdays at 7 pm, Friendship Room

July 4 - Cheryle Hanna

John 11: 41b-42 Prayer for Lazarus

July 11 - Rob Inman

Matthew 6: 9b-13 The Lords Prayer

July 18 - Harold Hetherington

Luke 9: 28-29 Mount of Transfiguration

July 25 - Carol Belford

Luke 23:24 First Word From the Cross

August 1 - Cheryle Hanna

Mark 14:36 Fourth Word from the Cross

CARNIVAL CONNECTION

We had a wonderful day last Sunday! The weather was perfect and the setting was fabulous for inviting everyone to our parkette for an enjoyable afternoon. Many of our visitors expressed their thanks as they enjoyed the food, rides, tours, music, face painting, clown and so much more. Some reflections on our afternoon.....

- The bouncy castle where the kids burned off some of the sweet treats of the day
- Smiling faces as they handed out lunch, drinks, and all kinds of tasty carnival “goodies”
- Ponies delighting children as they rode and giggled, even calling the ponies by name
- Tours that integrated visitors with members to learn about the organ and the stained glass windows
- Singing together, “all tucked in” under the shade
- And finally the fellowship – as we walked around the park you could hear the conversations of old friends together and new friends welcomed, among them many visitors, some of whom had just wandered by. Our guests were greeted with warmth by our many volunteer greeters and others in the congregation.

Thank you to the MANY willing volunteers who made the event run so well. We couldn't have had a successful Carnival Connection without you!

Special thanks to Mary Stevens and her team who prepared and served the wonderful lunch. Thank you to Janice Ivory Smith for the beautiful publicity pieces and to Bill Maddox and Corey Keeble for the tours. We were also blessed by the Salvation Army Band and the hymn sing.

A HUGE thank you to:

- Steve Holmes at SpringFree Trampoline for the set up and use of the trampoline
- Len Jillard at McDonalds for arranging for our drinks
- Sabina Viet at Bakerhaus for the pretzels

May the Lord use the fruit of this day for the building of His kingdom!

submitted by Christine Knight, Retiring Chair, The Board of Christian Education



Photos by Donna Willett

PRAYER SHAWL KNITTING MINISTRY

A new group started in this church on Tuesday, September 27, 2011 when eighteen women met in the Friendship Room at 7 pm. The purpose of this group is to knit and crochet prayer shawls to be given mainly, by the Minister of Pastoral Care and by the Parish Nurse, to people who are in need of comfort. The group continued to meet the fourth Tuesday of each month throughout the church year with from 15 to 28 people attending.

It is an evening of fellowship when we enjoy knitting together for a purpose. We also have a short time of reading prayers written by women specifically for blessing of this ministry. Prayer is a very important part of this ministry - praying for the hands that create the shawls and for the unknown recipients of the completed shawls.



On Sunday April 15, 2012 at the morning service there was a dedication of this new ministry with **The Litany in Dedication of a New Ministry** as follows:

Leader: By the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Prayer Shawl Ministry has been called to join us in our discipleship journey. Today these yarn, needles and shawls are displayed in the midst of this congregation to bear witness to that call. Those who knit the shawls join their hearts with all who witness this covenant of discipleship before God, pledging to foster this new ministry through the work of our hands. We acknowledge God's calling and claim on our lives, and commit ourselves in Jesus' name to support this ministry among the people of Yorkminster Park Baptist Church.

People: We affirm the persons who knit and crochet these shawls, and promise to encourage their ministry among us, remembering they are to be reckoned among us as fellow believers in need of nurture and loving support, in Jesus name.

Leader: Lord Jesus, you who used your hands to bless and heal, call us to be your disciples. We give you thanks for the gift of dexterity in our hands. Give those who knit the shawls the grace to see their hands as you see them, as instruments of grace and comfort to carry out your works of mercy and love. May the shawls their

hands create bring blessing to those they wrap in love, and healing to those upon whom they rest.

People: May the word go forth in our community that a new era of service has begun at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church - that a new ministry has been consecrated on this day, grounded in the old, old story of Jesus and his love.

All: Holy one, fill us with your tender mercy, breathe in us the gift of your grace so that our hearts may be your heart, our hands may be your hands and our work may be your work, now and forever more. Amen.

The group will again start to meet the fourth Tuesday of each month with the first meeting September 25, 2012 when we will be pleased to welcome any women who are interested to join us at 7pm in the Friendship Room. If you are unsure of your knitting or crocheting skills there will be people to assist you. Yarn and needles will be provided. Please consider joining this group.

submitted by Rhoda Hill, Co-Chair YPBCW Executive

