

The Harcourt Herald November 2021

The Life and Work of Harcourt United Church



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Harcourt Memorial United Church

An Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Canada

We are a people of God called together and sent forth by Christ to... **Seek. Connect. Act.**

Our Mission: Inspired by the Spirit, we participate in Christian practices that strengthen us in the building of just, compassionate and non-violent relationships.

Our Vision Statement: To be an authentic community of spiritual growth and service.

Our Core Values: Risk... Respect... Responsibility... Vulnerability... Trust

Our Purpose: To welcome and strengthen in community all who wish to serve God and follow the way of Jesus

Church Administrator:
Wendy Guilmette

Worship, Communication
and Technical Support:
Casey Connor

Custodian: David Kucherepa

The Ministers: The People
with
Reverend Miriam Flynn,
part-time pastoral care
minister Rev. Marcie
Gibson, Pamela Girardi
Manna lead coordinator,
Director of Music Ministry:
Alison MacNeill

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From the Editor's desk

November is the month of remembering and walking towards winter. It's not particularly appealing, especially after such a glorious summer and early fall ... and yet, when I look outside and see the wonderful colours in the trees and bushes, yellow leaves covering the streets, piles of leaves for children to jump into on the way to and from school, all of that gives me great joy.

It remains that we are in the Season of Remembrance and the horrors of war and the fragility of peace do preoccupy us at this time of year. And so in this issue members of Harcourt reflect on war, peace, and especially, shalom, which is much more than the absence of war. It is a rich concept reminding us that we are called to fulfilment, to blossoming, to wellbeing, to wellness.



And yet, I keep wondering about the future of our beloved Harcourt Herald. How can we best use it? It is, after all, our monthly vehicle to communicate with each other, to learn who we are and to find out what is important to us as a church community. Thanks to the new face of the weekly e-bulletin, we now have regular updates about what is new, important and happening at Harcourt and our sister congregations. That is allowing the Herald to become a true reflection of the broader issues of the life and work of the Harcourt people.



The Herald team cannot and should not decide the Herald's future look and content alone. We need all of you to give us feedback. Thus, the questionnaire that appears here and in this issue of E-Harcourt, the weekly update, gives you a chance to have a say. Please take a moment and let us know what YOU want. You can either fill it out online, in print form, or just send your thoughts to the Herald directly (remember to use the email address: marion.auger@sympatico.ca)

Seeking your Feedback!

We would like to know your thoughts about recent issues of the Harcourt Herald. Please consider taking this short online survey to share your feedback with the Herald team. Your responses are anonymous - we will not have any identifying information about who completes the survey, unless you decide to identify yourself by name in any of your answers. The Herald team will review the responses in hopes of improving your reading experience. If you do not have access to complete the survey online, but would like to provide your feedback, paper copies of the survey will be made available with the print copies of the Herald. Those who are able to complete the survey online are encouraged to do so.

Click here to complete the survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TRRSQW2>

Season of Remembrance at Harcourt

Rev. Miriam Flynn

As the days shorten and our church approaches the end of another liturgical year, we at Harcourt begin the Season of Remembrance. In a series of themed Sunday worship services we acknowledge, commemorate, celebrate and renew our pledge of peace and our commitment to community.

We remember those who came before us – the ones who blessed our lives through their living. We acknowledge and tend their legacies of love, wisdom, sacrifice, vision and faith. We make space to lament the loss of members of our community who have died over the past year. We take time to give thanks for gifts of time, talent and treasure on Stewardship Sunday. We share in the celebration of our congregational history on Anniversary Sunday.

Why do we choose to remember? Why is it important to mark the passage of time, to reflect upon our losses, celebrate significant milestones and lift up our community commitments in this way? Occasions of reflection and celebration allow us to acknowledge the significant events and contributions that make us who we are. Each milestone reached, each new beginning, each gift that grows us, each loss that grieves us becomes a part of our shared story.

Looking to our collective past and looking forward, again, together, can refresh the screen for envisioning a shared future. And perhaps this is especially important for us in pandemic times, when the ongoing need to stay calm and carry on in resilient fortitude can keep us pre-occupied with an all-consuming present. Seeing our place in a story that spans generations provides spiritual depth perception as we journey into a future that seems uncertain.

Remembrance reminds us that difficult paths have been walked in this place before. It reminds us that wars do end, that a difficult present may be followed by a better tomorrow and that time, compassion and grace have the power to heal. We are witness to the community that emerges among people who pitch in and build up. And we can see the times when community has been strengthened by those who have had the courage to move on or let go. And so our sacred remembrance gives us hope for the future – assuring us that the footprints of grace that are discernible throughout the past will lead us on the journey to come.

Surely, goodness and mercy will follow us into the future, come what may. May it be so.

Blessings, Rev. Miriam Flynn

A Reader of the Harcourt Herald send us this card.



A note of thanks to somebody at
Harcourt that delivers our bulletin every
week plus the Herald.

We look forward to this message & all
the interesting information that is
enclosed.

It has been a long time to be away from
Harcourt & the Caroline Group & all our
Church friends.

Please thank the member who takes
time to bring us the Message & all the
information to Chartwell Wellington.

Lorraine Macpherson

Council News

Lorraine Holding

This month, I continue from my October updates about our discernment work and highlight decisions made at council's October 20 meeting.

We approved recommendations from the Transition Steering Team (TST) and Ministry & Personnel Committee (M & P) to extend our short-term staffing plan into early 2022. Several factors have led to this decision:

- Work led by the TST continues. We have found that we need to maintain flexibility and experimentation while we work towards a shift to being a more missional church. More time is needed to determine a more permanent staffing model.
- Our short-term appointments during 2021 have worked well. Unfortunately, after December 31 Marcie Gibson is unable to extend her call as supply minister for pastoral care (20 hours a week).
- In accordance with the United Church of Canada Manual, following her five years with Harcourt, Miriam has requested that she take her earned sabbatical from February 1 to May 1, 2022. She previously discussed this with M & P and the TST. Therefore, we require a supply minister for worship and pastoral care during the sabbatical.
- To accommodate these changes, **council has approved the extended ministerial short-term staffing plan** as presented for implementation in January 2022, coordinated by M&P and a search committee. The plan includes these positions:

1) **Full-time supply minister for worship & pastoral care** to cover sabbatical time for 15 weeks (40 hours a week). Responsibilities will primarily be worship leadership, coverage for urgent pastoral care, leadership with Manna one Sunday a month, and other essential duties (e.g. council meetings). This needs to be approved by WOW Regional Council's Human Resource Commission.

2) **Full-time Manna lead coordinator** (congregational designated minister) extended for January to December 2022 (40 hours a week) and includes community engagement facilitation with the broader congregation. This will relieve Miriam's time/leadership except for once a month occasions such as communion and adult group discussions. Because of Manna's existing interest in social justice issues, there is a good fit to include time allocated to community engagement work. A one-year contract will provide continuity while experimentation continues.

3) **Pulpit supply and crisis pastoral care** will provide occasional assistance to ensure coverage from January to June. A six-month plan will be needed, and collaboration within Guelph United Ministries could be included.

- Council also approved an extension of Casey Connor's contract as worship, communication and technical support until June 30, 2022.



Model created by Elizabeth Bone (video: see Harcourt Herald March 2019)

Carolyn Davidson has taken the lead to research and create an implementation plan for **flexible seating in the sanctuary**. Very grateful for her commitment and detailed preparation, we agreed that a final version will be presented to the congregation for approval this fall. Supported by others, Carolyn is setting up a “chair lab” for drop-in visitors to test some chair samples and see upholstery options. Please share any colour recommendations and your rationale with her by email to cdavidso@rogers.com by Friday, November 5. She will share her proposed implementation plan at a Zoom information session in mid-November. Please watch for more announcements!

Lastly, council is calling a **special congregational meeting for Sunday, November 28** for two purposes:

- ➔ The TST will present a visioning story, built from the ideas gathered during our spring Harcourt conversations. Three themes have emerged as potential priorities for Harcourt: support growth of Manna; spiritual life, worship shift and integration; and building partnerships through physical and technical resources.
- ➔ The flexible seating implementation plan will be presented for approval to move forward.

Details about the meeting time, format and agenda will be shared when confirmed. Please watch for email and Sunday updates.

Remember, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

With faith and hope,
Lorraine Holding, council chair



HEY! LONG TIME NO-SEE!

oh,hi.

DID YOU HEAR THAT LIVE CHURCH
WAS BACK?!

WHAT'S THE MATTER? WORRIED
ABOUT VARIANT VIRUSES?

er,yes.

just a bit...

IS IT ABOUT HAVING TO SIGN UP AHEAD?

IS IT THE LACK OF COFFEE?

not really.

no, not that.

IS "NO SINGING" A PROBLEM?

no, I just hum anyhow.

THE EARLY TIME ON SUNDAY
AN ISSUE?

no, I'm up.

SO-WHY AREN'T YOU THERE ?!!!?



because
I just
want to stay
in my
pajamas!



Is that
Long
Covid?

Building Committee activities

Dave Hume

Wendy will appreciate that the boilers got fired up this week, so there should be heat in the office and the sanctuary now. A crew of Peter Robinson (thanks for the use of the trailer, Peter!), Alison MacNeill's son Blair, Frank Webster, Walter Johnson, Mark Sears and Dave Hume loaded roof steel from its long-time resting place in the Daynard barn and took it to BenMet Metal Recyclers in Guelph, where it was sold. These were sheets of corrugated steel left over from roofing projects.

There is a persistent water leak somewhere between the furnace room and the single-toilet washrooms on the lower floor. The plumbers have been in to resolve the problem, but the tiles in the custodian's closet still seem to have a squishy sound and feel to them.

Back orders seem to be the order of the times. The Property Committee was going to repaint the lines on the parking lot but the paint is on back order. So are the tiles for the gym floor.

Fall cleanup of church grounds is scheduled for Oct. 30 with a rain date of Nov. 6.

Saving money, one delivery at a time

Ann Middleton



An initiative by Lynn Hancock, sparked by Miriam Flynn and church administrator Wendy Guilmette, has saved Harcourt close to \$5000 in the last 18 months. At the beginning of the pandemic, Miriam was concerned with keeping those without computer access connected to the church. That winter of 2020, Lynn had been busy working on developing a list of church members who would connect people in their neighbourhoods with the church through occasional phone calls. A list of people who would benefit from receiving a copy of the e-bulletin, some prayers and the Herald was developed. Instead of mailing these, Lynn and Wendy offered to hand deliver them every week. Lynn recruited other volunteers and in the months since the initiative began in May of 2020, \$4879 in mailing costs have been saved.

Quite a bonus for some fancy footwork and a little gas in our cars.



A Manna event



Trees, rocks, slugs, soft forest floor, fallen leaves and calm winds welcomed us to worship. Word, song, a labyrinth and other paths invited us into community, connection and calm. Linnea Good's song, Part of Everything, affirms:

*You are a part of everything
The seas, the ground and the sky
This is the love that planted the earth
The Spirit's reason why*

Gratitude bubbled over.

Went home after Manna met at the Ignatius Centre, having left some heaviness behind, filled with forest blessing, and gifted with a bag of homemade cookies.

Mary Harding

Here is an article that we missed last month:

The gift that has gone on giving

Sharon and Bill Chapman

It was the summer of 1973, the end of the Vietnam War, with much dismay in the US ...

She was American, which at that time in our lives made her unique and exotic. A nurse with a kind heart and an ever present smile, she had quickly moved into a place of friendship in our hearts. Bill and I were volunteering at a Christian summer camp while we waited to move to the States for Bill to start his seminary training. It was a season of excitement and nervousness as we anticipated the challenges of years away from family and friends and education in a different system.

Then the letter arrived from the Immigration Department of the US government in a foreboding grey envelope. “*Dear Mr. Chapman,*” it began, and then it became ominous:

“Because you are entering the USA on a student visa you run the risk of illness etc and being unable to support yourself ... and therefore before you can enter you must have an American sponsor family ... who will pledge to carry you financially ... in case of problems ... failure to procure this guarantee results in forfeiture of your admission to your Masters program.”

We didn’t even know anyone in the USA, let alone someone who would risk sponsoring us. So in an act of desperation, we went to the camp nurse and asked if she had any ideas of what we could do? “Let me think and pray about it,” she said. “I’ll get back to you later in the week.” A few days later she called us into her cabin and shared with us a story that would change our lives.

Her husband, who appeared to be absent for long periods of time, was the captain of an American nuclear submarine. He, along with his wife, agreed to be our sponsors. He would write immigration on his military letterhead, and in light of his position there would be no issue of our admission. And there wasn’t!

A gift of kindness and love. An act of faith and caring, an act of thanks-giving and thanks-doing that eventually resulted in Bill and me both entering Christian ministry. An act of thanksgiving that produced lives of thanksgiving.

You never know what fruit a gift of thanks-giving will bear.

The Christian call to shalom

Andre Auger

The theme for November's issue of the Harcourt Herald is War, Peace and Shalom. Of course I decry war and long for peace. Yet our governments continue to pour trillions of dollars into weapons of defence and offence, far more than into any of those social problems that could indeed reduce the risk of war.



I long for peace; we all long for peace. But what we seem to want is an absence of war and violence, which is why the third term in the Herald's theme is so important. Wikipedia describes shalom (Hebrew: שלום shalom) as a Hebrew word meaning peace, harmony, wholeness, completeness, prosperity, welfare and tranquility. In the book *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*, author Cornelius Plantinga described the Old Testament concept of shalom: *The webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight is what the Hebrew prophets call shalom. We call it peace but it means far more than mere peace of mind or a cease-fire between enemies. In the Bible, shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness and delight – a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creatures in whom he delights. Shalom, in other words, is the way things ought to be.*

I note the resemblance – it should perhaps come as no surprise – with the Christian notion of the Kingdom of God. Particularly in the synoptic gospels we find various depictions of Jesus describing what the world would look like if humanity lived out the values of God.

Many of us Christians seem to forget that two of the gospels offer us an interpretation of Jesus' vision of how humans ought to behave toward one another to bring about this kingdom. Both Matthew and Luke offer versions of the Sermon on the Mount (or on the plain). And their Jesus is simply reiterating what the Jewish prophets and the sacred books of Moses before them have been saying for millennia: the way to shalom is through countercultural attitudes and behaviours and through God's economics, not the economics of the wealthy. Some have called it Sabbath economics.

I find realizing shalom is hard work. It requires me to overcome the natural tendency to look after myself – my needs, my wants, my dreams – first. But perhaps there is no more important message that I need to bring to this hurting world than this alternative vision of what it means to be human. Yes, it's called love. And love is about helping everyone be the best they can be.

Perhaps one of the best ways I can work toward this shalom is to determine that I will do everything with loving intent.

I remember

Sandy Middleton

I was born in 1938 in the tranquil village of Banchory on the banks of the River Dee, 20 km inland from Aberdeen, Scotland. My early childhood was spent in a country at war. As my father was in a reserved profession (bank manager), he was not called up for military service. Accordingly, our family did not have the disruption of an absentee father on wartime duty.

As Banchory had no strategic importance, we were spared the impact of active warfare. Nevertheless, my earliest memories include the activities of military bands leading soldiers on parade, vehicular convoys of military equipment, the odd incursions of both friendly and enemy aircraft, and the ubiquitous presence of people in uniform.

This was all exciting stuff to a young, impressionable boy, but this benign impression of war changed in 1943, the year my youngest brother was born, and the year my father was moved by the bank to its branch in the North Sea fishing town of Peterhead.

In contrast to Banchory, Peterhead was in the thick of war. With its geographical position and proximity to occupied Norway, it was the subject of many hit and run raids by enemy bombers, so much so that the town was the second most bombed location in Scotland during WW II, a fact unknown to many.

When my brother was born at home on April 14, 1943, an older brother and I went to Aberdeen to spend time with my aunt and grandfather. As luck would have it, on the night of April 21, Aberdeen experienced its heaviest air raid of the war: bombers from occupied Norway attacked the city, causing much structural damage and the deaths of 125 people.

Unfortunately for us, one of those aircraft released its bomb load over our heads. As we huddled under the dining room table, we could hear the roar of the aircraft's engines as it flew low overhead, followed by the scream of the descending bombs and the resultant explosions which, one by one, seemed to creep closer and closer to us.

Finally, one bomb landed in the intersection about 50 meters away. The blast was terrific. The concussion blew shattered glass from the windows, removed many of the slates from the roof and, saddest of all, loosened the budgie's cage door through which the panicked bird flew into the living room fire. When the All Clear siren sounded, we were badly shaken, but relieved that the raid was over. I had tasted the savage and terrifying reality of war.

Later in 1943, I learned a second lesson when my tearful mother shared news that her beloved cousin, Lt. John Aitken, RNR, had been lost at sea while in command of the corvette, HMS Polyanthus, along with his crew of 77. They were torpedoed while on convoy duty in the North Atlantic. For the first time in my young life, it dawned on me that war had a terrible human cost. I now began to understand why so many young service people, who had visited our family at the invitation of my parents, had vanished from our lives.

As I have grown older, I have become more and more intolerant of war and our complicity in it. As Michael Berg said when interviewed about his son's death in Iraq: "The only fruit of war is death and grief and sorrow. There is no other fruit."

And so, in this Season of Remembrance, I pray that the words of hymn 679 (*Voices United*) may come to fruition.

*"perish the sword, perish the angry judgement,
Perish the bombs and hunger, perish the fight for gain"*



Sandy's family spend a day at the beach in the late 1940s. The large cement structures are anti-tank obstacles left from the war. Sandy, standing, is with his parents, three brothers and a friend. They are having a "chittery bite," something to stop their teeth from chattering after swimming in the frigid North Sea.

Memories of WWII in Norway

Marta Coutts

I was born in the middle of the Second World War in the village of Ulvik which is at the end of the Hardangerfjord, some 100 km inland from the city of Bergen.

When the German army invaded our village in April, 1940, they came surreptitiously, in a ship that looked like a tourist boat. Suddenly soldiers sprang onto the dock and sprayed bullets around the valley in an attempt to intimidate the villagers. My sister was just a week old and a bullet narrowly missed her crib.

That was the beginning of the occupation of Ulvik, Hardanger, where I lived until 1950 when my family moved to Canada.



Those who watched the dramatic television series, *Atlantic Crossing*, will know that King Haakon spent the war years in England. He transmitted messages of encouragement to the Norwegian people via radio.

During the occupation, radios were forbidden and confiscated if found. My uncle, living on a farm high up above the fjord, had a radio and he related news to others. The German soldiers got wind of this and came to visit the farm. My 70-year-old grandmother didn't give anything away. She said repeatedly in Norwegian "I don't understand you," denying any knowledge of the radio. The Germans were furious and stomped through the house looking everywhere. What they didn't know was that the radio was right under their feet, hidden beneath the floorboards at the entrance. They left empty handed.

Flour, sugar and coffee were rationed during and after the war. I remember my mother saving and trading her coupons. We lived on a small hill farm so those losses did not affect me greatly. I remember my parents using burnt grains to make ersatz coffee. I do not think it was very good.

The local school was burnt down during the invasion so that when I started to go to school in 1949 the remaining German barracks served as classrooms. There was not enough space for everybody. We children went to school every second day. Imagine my shock when we came to Ontario. Even though I liked school, I thought that going every day was a bit much!

As an adult, I have learned more about the Norwegian resistance. A daring raid on the Norsk Hydro plant at Rjukan, Telemark, sabotaged the production of heavy water, delaying German plans for a nuclear bomb. In an operation that came to be known as the Shetland Bus, people and supplies were transferred between Norway and Shetland by a steady flow of fishing boats during the long winter nights.

Memories and stories about Remembrance Day

Bill Lord

In response to Marion Auger's request to share some personal stories, I am offering the following in the hope that you will also reflect on your unfolding of fresh insights.

As a small child, I remember the importance of Remembrance Day for our family. My mother's first cousin Bruce left two small children and a spouse to serve in the Canadian Army. He was killed in battle and buried in Belgium. Remembrance Day in my childhood was the day when our family talked about Bruce, his family and his Silver Cross mother. Remembering was a family matter.

Years later, after my ordination, I moved to a small town in Manitoba where I was informed by the locals in the United Church that I would be expected to cooperate with the Lutheran minister to provide an outdoor service at the cenotaph at 11 a.m. on November the 11th. We persuaded the Roman Catholic priest to participate with us.

I was nominated to deliver a short homily. When the service was finished, we all went to the legion for a sandwich lunch. I quickly realized the power of local rituals. It was an important event in the life of that little town and the community was quiet that day.

My next recalling of November 11 was of flying into Halifax to attend a conference that was to begin the next day. At suppertime I went out to look for a restaurant in the neighborhood near the hotel, but everything was closed, and the streets were deserted. I realized the power of Remembrance Day in a city like Halifax that had seen so many young men sent out on ships to serve overseas, many of them never to return. It was a somber day indeed and I was reminded again of the importance for a community to remember and honour those who never returned.

While writing this I was reminded of a funny story. A minister was taking a group of children around the church and one of them asked about the framed plaque on the wall with all the names. The minister explained that this was how the church remembered those who died in the service. The youngster asked was it at the 9 or the 10:30 service? No memory of the two world wars.

More recently I have become aware of the need to remember more than those who are buried overseas. After the two great wars there were those who came back psychologically damaged and were identified as having shellshock. We now know that it was PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder). They were the walking wounded. Their bodies were not sent home in caskets or buried overseas. They had not necessarily lost limbs, but they carried scars all the same. Some continue to suffer from flashbacks and triggered events and are emotionally damaged. Others suffer from survivor's guilt because they lived and their friends and fellow soldiers died. All carry the experiences of war.

9/11 in the US was an event that made us realize that war doesn't have to happen “over there,” but is here in North America. As we remember the twin towers crashing to the ground, we need to expand our remembrances to think of not only those who paid the price with their lives, but those who paid the price with physical disabilities or mental scars.

And now in 2021, we need to remember those who are providing essential services in the presence of the pandemic.

Remember the past, yes, but become more aware of the suffering in many places in our world where the power of war continues to destroy human life and communities.

My understanding of Remembrance Day has changed radically since my childhood. I experience it now in a much broader perspective. It links me to a saying in John's gospel where Jesus said to his disciples: “My peace I give unto you.” Canada has been known in the past as a peacekeeper – may it continue.

My challenge and invitation to you as a participant in the Christian community is to remember the results of wars and the human costs and to do the work of being a peacemaker in our world, in action and in prayer.



War: the leader's game

Anonymous

NO, there are no “people's wars”!
It's only leaders reaching for stars,
deceiving their people,
preaching down from their steeple;
Just looking for glory,
but creating such a gory
mess for their people and others
- the fathers and mothers,
and all their young.
Into death they are flung.

While the leaders are protected,
only giving the orders,
personally unaffected,
maintaining the borders,
between them and us.

Memories of a war baby

Rosalind Slater



I remember being told of my birth by my uncle who trudged through deep snow to visit the nursing home the day after I was born. He told of the sun that didn't show through on that dismal grey day in the northern town where we lived. I remember my mother's reaction to the story told by Uncle Jack. "The night before your birth was cloudy," she said, "but the moon shone through and stars twinkled down on us as if looking forward, little one, to your birth. I remember your father coming to visit us. The night was clear and he prayed there wouldn't be a raid whilst we, you and I, were away from the safety of our own little cottage that was home to all of us. His prayer was answered and we got you home safely a week later."

Rosalind with her elder sister Doreen 1942 or 1943

I was always known as the "little one" after that, gentle and caring while I was a baby, but not a handle I wanted as a teenager. The war raged for the first five years of my life and maybe it was responsible for my very young remembrances of strange happenings in the night. My earliest memory (I could have been barely two years old) was of being lifted from my warm bed and carried outside and down stone steps to the air-raid shelter.

Dad built a new house with a shelter underneath after I was born. He'd also made another cellar room to act as a way station for the home guard organization of which he was a member. These shadowy men appeared in our cellar whenever there was the screaming of sirens and at other times when they were meeting stealthily. Neighbours also joined us in our shelter as they felt it was much safer than the Anderson shelters that had sprung up all over the place.



I remember one night being plucked from my bed and rushed down under the house so precipitately that there wasn't time to use the washroom. I cried in fear and embarrassment, for the need was great, and I was scared to wet myself. My father appeared at the door to see if all was well and my mother told him of my need. I was so scared of him being hit by a bomb that my tears multiplied and I screamed all the louder and said it didn't matter, I didn't need the chamber pot. Even so he went out to get it and mother tried to soothe me. My sister whispered that it would be my fault if he died and told me she'd send me into the deeper part of the shelter where the rats lived.

When the raids got particularly bad, we had a deeper shelter. Dad had an iron cauldron-shaped tank sunk into the ground before the house was built and this was to be our stronghold in emergency. I'm thankful we never needed to use it, for this was the place that gave me nightmares and my sister didn't help with her tales of rats and mice.

Birthdays came and went, five of them in all during the war years, and then there was rationing for another nine years after the war ended. My parents still tried to make our birthdays special. Oh the joy and rapture I felt as a small child to see the packages wrapped in brown paper or newsprint and tied up with string.

On my fifth birthday there were still many shortages, so my father, who was a pattern maker and superb craftsman, made me a toy out of offcuts from the factory where he was conscripted to work during the war. The toy was a kind of wheel with little men carved around it. Two of these were fastened together with a mechanism that made the men appear to be running when they were pushed across the room. A long stick was attached so that I could do the manipulating. He'd painted it in beautiful colours for my delight – red like a robin's breast, blue like corn flowers and bright yellow like Bird's custard powder. My Dad had done me proud.

When I was older, I learned the end of the story of Dad's factory filching. He had to smuggle the piece out of the works and the only way he could do this was to hide it down his trouser leg. During the war years nothing was allowed to be taken out of the armament factories in case of spying activities. Although he'd only taken a few sticks, he could have been in trouble if he'd been reported. So he'd walked stiff legged out of the factory gate and breathed a sigh of relief when the bus had standing room only.

But as bad luck would have it, his foreman was riding home on the same bus and as it made its stops along the way, the inevitable happened and a seat became vacant. The two men looked at each other and little rivulets of sweat began to trickle down my father's neck into his collar and down his back, as he, a strict Methodist, thought about the illicit gift inside his trouser leg. Luckily the foreman took the seat as –being senior – he thought it was his due. Dad's perfidy wasn't discovered so that I could enjoy the gift which has lived so long in my memory.

My first memory of World War 2

Jane McNamee

That first memory dates back to when I was a baby in a pram in the kitchen of my parents' first house in Chipstead, England. One morning there was an enormous crash on the hillside outside the house. Everybody left the kitchen except me in my pram.

It turned out that two planes had collided while practising their landings. It was not the start of war, but very close to the beginning.

My next memory was when I was standing in a train with many khaki-legged soldiers on each side of me. There was a very strong smell of cigarettes. My mother and I were leaving London and going to visit my great aunt Ursula in Sidmouth, Devon. The photo of Aunt Ursula and me looking at the sky was taken when we were there. While we were in Devon, my sister Mary was born.

Later we moved to Henfield, Sussex where my father was an Anglican curate secretly thinking of joining the Catholic church. When his parishioners got wind of this, they ostracized his wife, refusing to speak to her in the village shops, to my mother's frequent distress.

Eventually my father did join the Catholic church and I was re-baptized in a Carthusian monastery along with my sister Mary and brother Thomas.



Now jobless, my father went back to the law and we moved closer to London where we lived through some of the devastating air raids on the city. Because of the bombing, we slept downstairs or in a very small cellar under the stairs. At this stage, the war became much more frightening for us children.

We used to hear the German planes flying overhead on their bombing raids. We knew that if we heard them coming back, it meant they had already dropped their bombs.

I first saw German soldiers when they were digging the 100-acre field behind our house. They were prisoners of war and had chains on their feet. There were guards and dogs with them. My mother sometimes gave me packets of food to give to them.

Across the field from us there was an ammunition factory which the Germans were trying to destroy. They aimed their V2 rockets and doodle bugs (unmanned rockets) at it. Sometimes these weapons of war came alarmingly close to our house.

Among the most frightening sounds of the war were the air raid sirens warning of impending attack. But one night we heard a different sound. It was the cry of a new baby. My sister, Margaret Theresa, was born just weeks before the end of the war on March 27, 1945.

And then one day in May it was announced at lunchtime in my school that the war had ended, and we all cheered! I remember feeling glad that I could walk home from the bus after school without worrying about possible air raids.

Lest we forget

Henk Dykman

During these days of up and down isolation because of Covid-19, we have become aware of how much we need the company and friendship of family and friends on a regular basis. Our young people have suffered from the lack of companionship at school and will have a difficult time catching up on their social life.

The soldiers involved in the battles of World War II were often not much older than our high school youth. They had a desperate need for comradeship, for very deep friendship. Yes, comradeship made it possible to keep one's senses even when facing death. But the loss of such a friend was unbearable.

I would like to share with you a letter written by a sergeant of the Canadian army to the brother of his dearest comrade, who had fallen. This letter is all the more moving for me because that corporal was killed no more than 400 meters from the house where we, the Dykman family, were sheltering during the battle for our liberation.

But while we were already celebrating the arrival of the first Canadians who came with universal carriers, Corporal Aimé Periard and his infantry platoon were still under fire from enemy machine guns and snipers on a field behind us. The lieutenant who started this platoon had already been shot in the stomach (he survived). His sergeant, Woito – the writer of the letter – took over, but when he aimed his Bren gun at some sniping positions he was wounded twice and could not continue. So Corporal Periard assumed the leadership. But when he received the orders to advance and stood up to go, he was shot dead, leaving the platoon leaderless.

Aimé Periard was the oldest of three brothers. The second was Arthur. He served with a medical unit and was not far away. After crossing the Rhine river in Germany at the end of March, 1945, the whole Canadian land army moved north in the early part of April through the region where we lived.

The youngest was Frank, too young to be a member of Aimé's Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry regiment, although he joined it when the war was over. Frank adored Aimé and told me stories about him, for example, how his oldest brother won a skating race and gave him the prize, a little white elephant!

Tragically, the second brother, Arthur, died not very long after the war in a car accident in Montreal. The parents of the boys, shopkeepers in Alexandria, did not grow very old after that. "They died of grief," Frank told me.

When I met Frank and was able to tell him where Aimé was killed, he said, "Can we go to see the place tomorrow?" A year later, in May of 1994, Frank, his wife Fleurette and I, with a group of about 40 local people, retraced Aimé's last footsteps. When we came to that sad spot where Aimé's life had ended, we saw a five-foot-high white cross with his name on it. A caring local volunteer had made it and placed it there.

At the end of the day Frank and I were told that no official permit was given to put it there beside the road, so we should not expect it to be around very long.

Guess what? It is still there today.

Lest we forget!



Letter from Sgt Gordon Woita to Cpl. Arthur Periard about the death of brother Cpl. Aime Periard.

C-79012 Sgt Woita G.D
S D & G Highlanders
P. E. 4 Cdn. Rfn. Bn
2. C. B. R. G.
C. A. O.

D-109830 Cpl. Periard A. E.
8th Can. Fd. Amb.
R. C. A. M. C.
C. A. O.

Dear Pal,

Just a short note as I picked up today's Maple Leaf and see where you wanted to know about your brother Aime.

Well I thought I would write you as I can give you some information.

I met Aime first in Oct. 42. And we have been the best of pals ever since. Always went on leave together and everything else. He was in my platoon the whole time, 14 pltn. C. Coy. We came in together on D-day. I was wounded at Hoofdplaat on Oct. 9, then came back to the regiment in Ghent while they were in rest. So at once Aime and I teamed up again. Then we both went on leave together last Jan. 4 to England. By the way I have some pictures of him and of him and I together that we took on that leave. I know he has sent some home. If you want any I might be able to get you some reprints.

Well, anyway, we came back and toughed her right through till April 4th when Aime was killed. I was wounded the same time. We were nearing Zutphen when we ran into a nest of snipers. Aime called me aside as I was his pltn Sgt. to point out a couple of snipers to me. While I was directing some brengun fire I got wounded again. So leaving me behind the pltn started to advance across a field to take the buggers out. Both Aime and the officer (Lt) got it but the officer only wounded. However I can assure you Aime suffered no pain. He got a rifle bullet square in the heart. A stretcher bearer reached him right away but he was dead. Just after that I guess I kind of went to pieces as he was my best pal. I was then evacuated and spent 41 days in hospital.

In regards to where he is buried I don't know but have also been trying to find out as I want a picture of his grave if possible. But he was killed just outside Zutphen.

I can't think about anything else about it just now and it is a subject that is hard to write about to such a close relation of his. I intended writing your mother but didn't know how to word the letter.

However if I can be of any more assistance just let me know.

A very good pal of Aime's

(Signed) Gordon Woita

A bystander to war

Tom Wilson

My experience of war and its losses is fragmentary. A blessing in so many ways. A five year old watching and not understanding a victory parade in downtown Vancouver. Two uncles and a father-in-law who signed up and never finished basic training. Older workmates who had little to say about their time at “the front.”

Lest we forget. We hear the phrase every November, “lest” meaning to avoid, to not forget, to once more bring to mind the memory of those who fought and died in the battles to defend liberal democracy.

Anyone who has experienced the grief of bereavement does not need “lest” when remembering their loss. A missing loved one is always in our hearts. I am a volunteer in an organization that provides peer support to those who have been affected by a workplace tragedy. Each of us has a relationship with someone who was killed or maimed or contracted an industrial disease while at work. Hearing the stories of loss, it is clear we will never forget the phone call, the knock at the door, the diagnosis that devastated our lives. So, too, for those who grieve the deaths and maiming and mental after effects of the battle field.

The challenge for those lacking the direct experience of tragedy is how to respond. One way for those of us who do not directly know the terrors of wartime is to stand quietly with the grieving during ceremonies of remembrance. November provides a time to remember those who answered a call to serve. It is an opportunity to hear the stories and honour the lives of the men and women who died or were in other ways harmed by war.

A time for reflection on war and Covid

Tony Wagner

For many, November is the penultimate month of the year. For others, it may be considered the month of remembrance. Sure, the global governments – with good reason – have selected the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month to celebrate the end of the Great War with silence, parades and speeches. Calling the First World War “the war to end all wars” is a true misnomer because there have been wars somewhere on the globe continually.

But the absence of peace is only part of the story. Remembrance connotes the past, and the past connotes history which, if we don’t learn from it, is bound to be repeated. As we remember there are certain events we would not like repeated such as the Wall Street collapse, the turning away of a ship in 1939, World War II and the holocaust, to name just a few.

All the kids in our family were too young for the war and my father’s occupation was considered necessary for the war effort in Canada and therefore he was not conscripted. I don’t remember much of the war except seeing the occasional news footage and war bond posters

hanging in the town hall. A few from our small community were called up and did see action in Europe, but they were much older than I was.

Shortly after the war, we helped several refugee families settle in Canada. Some of their stories about relocation were horrific and made me thank God we lived in Canada. Obviously, the perpetrators of that war had not learned from history.

On a global scale, Canada is little more than a bump on a log compared to countries like China and India, although even a bump on a log can turn into a bud that can grow into an effective branch. Canada is not considered a warring nation but rather a peaceful democratic country. We are **so** fortunate and have so many reasons to be thankful. We can be much more effective as a model than as a muscle flexer. I did have an 18-year connection to the Canadian Air Force. Thank God it was during a period of peace for Canada. But I digress.

Returning to November, 2021, we may have the impression that once Covid is over, we will return to normal, just as it was almost two years ago. But many things in the world have changed and it would be an opportune time to reflect on the past. Our study of history does not have to go back centuries; it can go back a few years. What things would we like to keep, and what things would we like to change?

We are a democracy, but we can't take it for granted. We have to work to keep it. There is a strong initiative to right past wrongs associated with residential schools and to include First Nations as full members of society. We have to level the gender playing field. What will our Christian community look like when the dust settles? This is a once-in-a-century opportunity to right some questionable ways, to do things differently. Or does the new normal simply become the old normal with a lost two years?

This will require a global approach, but even as a bump on a log, we will have to do our share to ensure not only an absence of war, but a society that truly cares about and for each other.

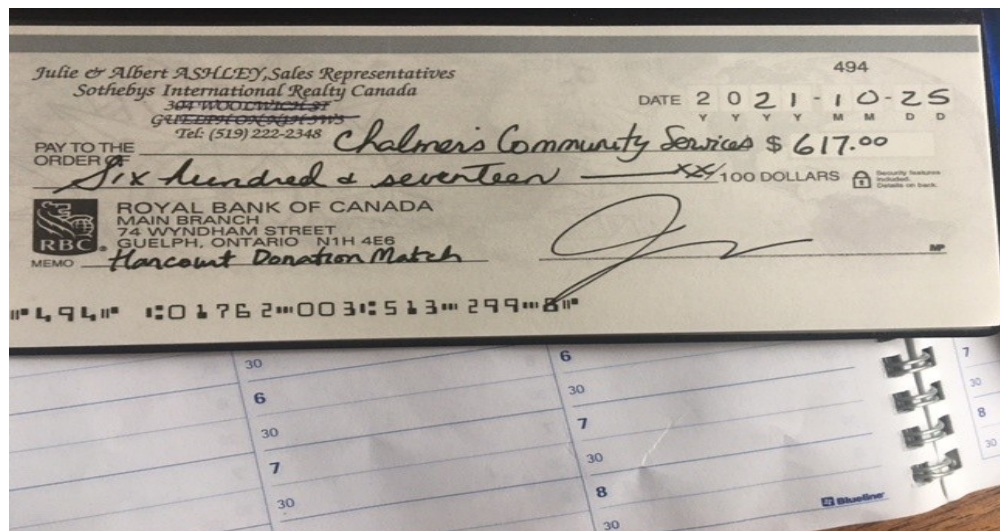
The Challenge taken

Heather Sullivan



Choir member Heather Sullivan and her grandson Adrian had the fun of building a food sculpture. The Harcourt choir's donations to Chalmers Community Services weighed in at 293 pounds. In addition to the choir's contribution, Deb Murray's Harcourt Brownies collected 197 pounds of food and hygiene products. With last month's donations, this means Julie and Albert Ashley's Food Challenge for Chalmers brought in 617 pounds of goods. The Ashleys are matching this amount dollar for dollar with a whopping big cheque for Chalmers. Thanks Julie and Albert and all the Harcourt folks who made it happen.

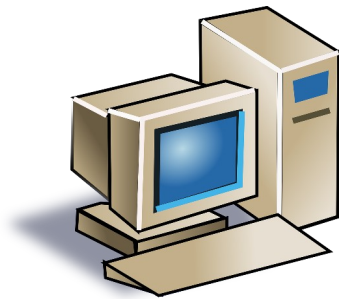
"Thank you for inspiring us with your dollar matching challenge. What an awesome, generous idea! Take care, Heather"



Cheque is in the mail!

Do you need a new home for you older computer?

Janet Webster



As so many businesses and families upgrade their systems, older computers can find new life. The computer in Harcourt's library is a bit of a dinosaur and this seems like a good time to replace it. With re-opening and greater numbers of people returning to the building, it would be such a blessing to have a faster, more user friendly computer in place.

The present system holds our catalogue. In the past, many people have tried to search for specific titles and authors. The catalogue is available by a link on the Harcourt website, but there needs to be an easy method to access the collection in the library itself.

Library Committee members usually do searches, listings and deletions from home and have been continuing to do so during lockdown, but we would love to be able to offer a more up-to-date system to the rest of the community.

If you have a computer you think could do the job, would you be willing to have a practice session with us?

For more information, please contact Barbara Shaw
barbaraeshaw45@outlook.com



ALL THINGS CHRISTMAS

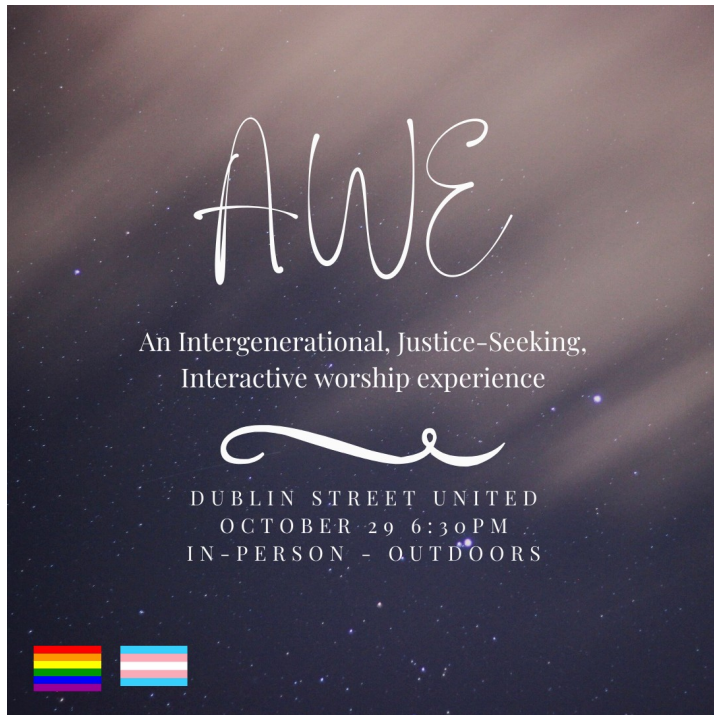
2021

CANCELLED



All Things Christmas

Dublin Street United Church



is excited to announce that we will be starting a new form of worship service for all ages called **Awe** on October 29th at 6:30pm. If you are looking for a worship service that is interactive, justice-seeking, queer and trans* affirming, prayerful, with lively music from a praise band anchored by the Dublin Youth this is a worship time for you. Bring yourself, your family, your friends and anyone who is seeking a different way to do a spiritual community. We will be outdoors and distanced, we will have a contact tracing sign-in sheet and masks will be required for time when we are not able to be distanced.

Email Colleen youthcoordinator@dublin.on.ca for more information or if you want to join our praise band.



The Lord's Prayer in Verse

Everson T. Sieunarine

Father, whose image we all bear.
Whose love creates us one,
May heav'n and earth your name reverse,
Your holy will be done.

Spread o'er the world your reign of peace,
in this place you made our home.
Let kindness thrive and warring cease
and unity be shown.

Give to your children food each day.
Your Spirit in us renew.
That loving service be the way
of proving love for You.

Forgive our sins in thought and deed.
And when our life's with hurt beset,
Let our mercy reach our foes in need.
As life pays its true debt.

When darkness falls or fears abound,
Or wrong displays its might,
Deliver us from evil's bond.
Shine on our souls your light.

The Lord' Prayers (Harcourt's Versions)

