

The Harcourt Herald September 2022

The Life and Work of Harcourt United Church





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 John Lawson,

Pamela Girardi:
Manna Lead Coordinator,

Director of Music Ministry:
Alison MacNeill

Office Hours: Monday to Friday
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From the Desk of the Editor

Yes, indeed. Here we are again. The Herald restarts after a wonderful summer rest.



I did nothing!! I sat most of the time in our garden, admired the floral display, watched the birds, squirrels and chipmunks (unfortunately digging among the flowers), and listen to the sounds of kids playing, machines working, and feeling the heat and soft wind.

People sometimes asked us about our summer plans – but we have no desire any more to fly (in a petri dish) to other countries. We now live by the motto: Bloom where you are planted.

Again this year, the Harcourt Herald team will suggest topics for the issues (these are merely suggestions, but they help focus on some aspect of our community of faith.) For this month, we suggested people talk about their summers. You will read very differing accounts – several with quite unpleasant twists... I am not sure the pandemic is totally under control, thus many of us will be still very careful meeting people the usual way. Thus, we are glad to help our congregation to better get know about each other.

Wonderful things are happening at Harcourt: we welcome John Lawson again to be our interim minister for two month, and then we look forward to meet and greet our new minister Kate Ballagh-Steeper. (Read Kate's profile description in this issue.)

By the way, did you wonder a bit about the cover picture? I just wanted to call attention to Brian's financial report. I know, numbers are not everybody's cup of tea, but I think this article is important with a warning we need to take seriously. Have a look!

Notice: you will find the index from now on at the end of the Heraald.

The United Church of Canada

<https://united-church.ca/news/rev-dr-carmen-lansdowne-elected-44th-moderator>



has elected the Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, Kwisa'lakw(opens in a new tab), 47, as its 44th Moderator. She will be the church's spiritual leader for the next three years.

Ordained in 2007, the Rev. Dr. Lansdowne is only the second Indigenous person to be elected Moderator, following the Very Rev. Stan McKay, who served as Moderator 1992-1994. A member of the Heiltsuk First Nation, she was born in Alert Bay, British Columbia, and has been a lifelong member of the United Church. She is committed to an Indigenous way of being in the world.

In articulating her vision for The United Church of Canada, the Rev. Dr. Lansdowne speaks of a church committed: "To build new connections and rebuild old ones. To work towards social change that sees a world cared for, and human dignity honoured. To walk together every day in repentance and reconciliation. To march and fight and change unjust systems together. To pray together. To sing together. To discern together."

The Rev. Dr. Lansdowne holds a PhD from Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. In addition to her theological contributions as a writer and speaker, she has served the church in a variety of roles locally, nationally, and with the World Council of Churches. As Moderator, she will be on leave from her position as Executive Director of First United Church Community Ministry Society, which serves the people of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

General Secretary the Rev. Michael Blair spoke of "great excitement across the church" at the election of the Rev. Dr. Lansdowne, saying, "She embodies the deep spirituality, bold discipleship, and daring justice to which the church aspires." The Rev. Dr. Lansdowne was uncontested in the Moderator election.

At this moment of transition, the United Church also expresses its sincere gratitude to outgoing Moderator the Right Rev. Dr. Richard Bott, who served the church with grace during an extraordinary and extended period. Of the transition, the Rev. Dr. Bott said: "I look forward to supporting our new Moderator as she leads the church in this critical time. A powerful voice, Moderator-elect Lansdowne will bring lived experience, wisdom, and an abundance of gifts to lead needed transformation in the church and the world."

Meeting online for the first time in its 97-year history, the church's General Council 44(opens in a new tab) will install the new Moderator at its closing worship service on August 7, 2022. This

worship service will be livestreamed(opens in a new tab) across the country, with an in-person event held at Canadian Memorial United Church in Vancouver at 1 p.m. PT.

Council News

Lorraine Holding, Council Chair

Sharing a summer experience in the life of Harcourt provides opportunity to highlight some significant decisions and “next near steps” towards our visioning priorities. It also illustrates that our work does not stop during the summer.

Following our Special Congregational Meeting on July 10, we eagerly look forward to welcoming Rev. Kate Ballagh-Steeper, who has accepted our call as Minister for Worship & Pastoral Care. She will begin her ministry with us on November 1. We appreciate the thorough work completed by the Search Committee since April. The team included Kathy Magee (Chair), Tammy teWinkel, Bill Chapman, Dan Ganesh, Laura Hofer and John Phelps, with support from Sandra Welch and Bill Lord as consultants.

With the search completed, we could confirm that Rev. John Lawson will return as Supply Minister for September and October. We welcome him to provide some continuity from his time with us earlier this year.

In July, we placed the order for Sanctuary chairs after having raised over \$37,000 to pay the initial deposit. We are very grateful to those who have contributed to date. We welcome contributions towards the balance of \$24,000 to be paid prior to delivery, expected in late fall. We thank Carolyn Davidson for her leadership on this project.

Council’s summer meeting on August 17 focused on Harcourt’s future, with discussion related to the work of two task groups.



As outlined in previous Council updates, one of Harcourt's four visioning priorities is Building Partnerships. A small task group has started to explore the possibilities of developing and growing a "community hub" that could be beneficial to our mission in the community. Steve Pierce (Chair), Mary Harding, Peter Gill, Gerald Neufeld and Mark Sears have met with representatives of Trinity Centres Foundation (TCF), and have visited some churches with whom they have worked in partnership. Please read Steve's update elsewhere in this newsletter to see the motion that Council approved as a "next near step". We emphasize that this work is an investment outside of the operating budget, important to our work in focusing on our mission and vision for the future. We are thankful to have our Pillar funds to support new initiatives.

Also, we discussed the summary report from the Financial Recovery Task Group, chaired by Kent Hoeg. We appreciate the commitment from the task group members: Judy Cimino, Patricia Eton-Neufeld, Joyce Johnson, Carol Jones, Lawrie Jones, Tony Wagner and Murray Woods. We are grateful for the \$20,000 in one-time donations received in response to the recent stewardship letter. We welcome the group's list of ideas for increased awareness and recommended actions to strengthen both financial support **and** volunteer experiences. **To make progress we need a few people to accept a coordination role.** This work is another investment in focusing on our mission and vision for the future. If you are willing to help, please contact me (councilchair@harcourtuc.ca) or other Council members to explore this opportunity.

Watch for more information about all these initiatives during the fall. Please consider your commitment to Harcourt's ministries and what our community of faith means to you. There are many ways to re-build our connections. Will you join us as we walk and work together towards Harcourt's next chapter?

Financial Update

Brian Magee

My last update was at the end of the first financial quarter, March 31st. At that time Harcourt's deficit stood at all most \$37,000 and was on track to exceed the approved 2022 budget deficit of \$95,000. I have delayed the 2nd quarter update until now in order to report the initial results of the stewardship letter that was sent out at the end of June to all Harcourt members and adherents.

As of the end of the 2nd quarter, June 30th, Harcourt's deficit rose to \$86,000. Why the large deficit? Donations for the first six months of 2022 are \$20,000 less than last year. For the same period expenses are \$50,000 higher due mainly to increased property and personnel expenditures for that period. There will be some personnel expense relief for July and August that will help that budget line.

Not only are we currently in a deficit position, we are also spending more operational funds than we have. Thus, we have received \$50,000 of investment funds from the Trustees to help meet our monthly expenses for the remainder of the year. In addition to that, we are holding in trust \$48,000 of Trustee funds that Finance is unable to transfer to them at this time.

As of July 31st, seven months into the fiscal year, Harcourt's deficit stands at \$73,000. The reduced deficit is primarily the result of the congregation's response to the stewardship letter and to not having a full-time minister in July.

Harcourt is grateful to those who have responded to the stewardship letter by showing their financial support with an extra one-time donation. Thank you to a few members who have increased their PAR or weekly donations. Unfortunately, only about 20% of the desired financial goal has been achieved from the stewardship campaign. We are still in an unsustainable financial situation.

We need everyone's financial support to ensure Harcourt's future and for support of our new minister who will join us in November.

Financial Summary 2nd Quarter

<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Donations	29,227	23,591	28,110	80,928
Other Income	9,379	8,606	8,579	26,564
Total Revenue	38,606	32,197	36,689	107,492
Total Expenses	53,159	42,831	60,944	156,934

	-			
Surplus/Deficit	14,553	-10,634	-24,255	-49,442

2022 Accumulated

	-			
Surplus/Deficit	51,230	-61,834	-86,089	

Note: Double ministerial wages were paid in June to cover paid vacation salary for July.

Chairs Fundraising Initiative

Carolyn Davidson

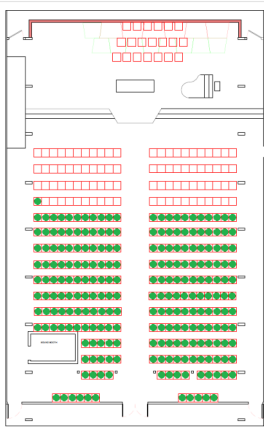
In their Summary Report, the Financial Recovery Task Group identified moving forward with flexible seating as a key component of a short- and long-term financial recovery plan for Harcourt. Flexible seating will enhance spaces for community partnerships and expanded rentals and is key to supporting the growth of Manna.

On July 20, we placed our order for 340 chairs for the Sanctuary with U.S.-based Comfortek. The final cost will be approximately \$61,000 (including \$4,800 in HST that will eventually be refunded to Harcourt). We paid 50% of the cost with our order, and the remaining 50% will be due two weeks before delivery.

The implementation team is currently planning for the arrival and installation of the chairs, which is expected to take place in late fall.

As of August 20, fundraising for the flexible seating project has reached \$38,394. The implementation team is deeply grateful to those who have contributed so far. We continue to welcome your contributions.

Take a Seat!



Here's how to donate:

- **By e-transfer** to office@harcourtuc.ca – write “Chairs Fundraising Initiative” in the message.
- **By cheque**, payable to Harcourt Memorial United Church – write “Chairs Fundraising Initiative” on the memo line.

Want to “Buy a Chair”? The suggested donation for a single chair is \$175, but all donations in any amount are gratefully received.

Memorial donations will be recorded in the Memorials Book on display in the Greeting Area.

Please... take a seat! (As you are able.)

Harcourt Financial Recovery – is it possible?

Kent Hoeg, on behalf of Council and the Harcourt Financial Recovery Task Group.

In April 2022, acknowledging that Harcourt was facing a \$100,000 deficit this year, Council struck a “Harcourt Financial Recovery” group to be led by Kent Hoeg. Starting in May 2022, a team comprised of Kent Hoeg, Judy Cimino, Patricia Eton-Neufeld, Joyce Johnson, Carol Jones, Lawrie Jones, Tony Wagner and Murray Woods met weekly. The intent was to meet for 6 weeks straight to design a financial recovery plan, both short term and long term. The group ended up meeting throughout May, June, and July.

The group began with fact finding. Understanding our current financial challenges, the church’s “Pillars”, and our Visioning Priorities (Building Partnerships, Worship, Spiritual Life and Supporting the growth of Manna) – all with an intentional focus on identifying points of integration.

We also spoke to Peter Jackson to better understand the Holy Listening Circle, Dave Jagger (Stewardship & Gifts Officer for Hamilton & London Conferences) and Anne MacKay, a professional fundraiser.

Our first priority was the development of a Stewardship Letter, which was mailed at the beginning of August. The letter garnered some success. There were many generous “one-time” donations totalling over \$20,000. This will certainly assist in reducing our \$100,000 deficit – but will not get us there. As well, not many have signalled an intent to increase their yearly givings for 2022 and beyond.

The Financial Recovery group also produced a report outlining their accomplishments including recommendations to move forward. We are working to put this report onto the Harcourt website for all to see. Recommendations include:

- Increased communication and education on the stories of Harcourt. Harcourt is a supportive and caring community. We need to explain the need and use of the funds we receive.
- Support for flexible seating, community partnerships, our growing rental base.
- Increased awareness of our financial situation through our website.
- More interaction with GUM – is it time to ask the “hard” questions?
- Leverage the opportunity given by many organizations to qualify for grants.
- Develop short-term volunteer experiences – many are no longer interested in being part of on-going committees.

Above all else, the Financial Recovery Group signalled the urgent need for Stewardship volunteers. The report generated many recommendations, and we need people who can move these ideas forward. This is an investment in our future.

Please contact Council through councilchair@harcourtuc.ca to volunteer your expertise. We need you!



Our New Minister

Kathy Magee



As Chair of the Search Team – Dan Ganesh, Tammy teWinkel, Laura Hofer, Bill Chapman and John Phelps - it is my privilege to share with you the news of our successful ministerial candidate. Kate Ballagh-Steeper has answered our call to serve as our Minister of Worship and Pastoral Care. Kate is currently the minister at Lakeshore United Church in Goderich. She will start here at Harcourt on November the 1st, 2022.

Kate has roots in the Golden Horseshoe area and she and her husband will be moving to Guelph. She has a strong background of involvement in social justice issues and was Executive Director of a Community Chaplaincy organization prior to becoming an ordained minister.

She also an accredited Family Mediator, with a compelling reputation for building partnerships and community.

Without exception her references mentioned clear vision, excellent organizational skills, a friendly, welcoming approach, strong leadership skills, creative approaches to worship, remarkable collaborative skills, and the ability to work through difficult situations. All of which confirmed our impression of Kate from a very demanding interview process.

One of her references offered: “You would be very lucky to have Kate and the Goderich community will have a big hole to fill”.

What came through in the time we spent with Kate is her compassion, humour, energy and vision of a future for the church that aligns with Harcourt’s. She is excited about the future and is looking forward to the opportunity to work with us in new and creative ways to live out our mission as God’s people.

We look forward to welcoming Kate into the Harcourt community of faith.



Kate and her family

Building Partnerships Task Group

Stephen Pierce

Council recently approved the following motion: **“That Harcourt Council sets its visioning priorities for the community of faith to be: building partnerships, worship, spiritual life, and supporting the growth of Manna, with an intentional focus on identifying points of integration.”** With the passing of this motion, the development of concrete steps/actions for each theme is now to take place.

The purpose of the theme of partnerships and the development of a community hub is to sustain Harcourt’s mission into the future. Harcourt, by itself, is not in a position to sustain itself either financially or from a human resource perspective. Harcourt will continue to exist, and its role in offering different forms of worship, retreats, education, pastoral care etc. to meet the spiritual needs of individuals will be sustained by a redefinition of our relationship with the community.

I wish to briefly outline the steps that are currently taking place to address the theme of partnerships and the potential development of Harcourt as a community hub. In July, a task group was created to identify the steps necessary to move this theme from conversation/discussion to action and implementation. The Building Partnerships Task Group has met on two occasions in July. I have agreed to chair the group. Current members of the Task Group are: Mary Harding, Gerry Neufeld, Mark Sears and Peter Gill.

Beginning in June, the Transition Steering Committee met with Kendra Fry over zoom. She is currently working with a number of churches in the development of partnerships and community hubs. For a good understanding of Kendra’s thinking about the future of churches, the following is a link to her interview on the CBC’s program Tapestry:

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/tapestry/how-religious-practice-continues-to-transform-through-the-pandemic-1.6281077/why-canada-s-27-000-faith-buildings-are-crucial-for-communities-1.6281233>

Kendra and Dave Harder work together with a charitable organization called Trinity Centres Foundation (TCF). TCF has been established to assist churches in developing sustainable futures. Since that initial meeting in June, I have met with Kendra and Dave to provide them with information about Harcourt and where we are in our visioning process. Later in July, Dave met with our Task Group to discuss further his role in working with churches and the resources available through TCF. In early August, members of the Task Group met with Kendra in Stratford to talk about potentially involving her and Dave (TCF) in our process and next steps.

Following these visits and meetings, Council was approached to approve requesting a proposal from TCF to work with Harcourt in developing partnerships/a community hub. The Task Group believes we are not in position to carry out the necessary process on our own. If we are going to engage in this process, we want to do it right. TCF has the experience and resources we do not have. We have talked to churches which have worked/are working with Kendra and the comments about her involvement are positive. A proposal was received from them and at a Council meeting on August 17th, the following motion was approved:

That Harcourt Council approves the recommendation brought forth by the Building Partnerships Task Force to proceed with Phase 1 to explore the establishment of a community hub, proposed by Trinity Centres Foundation, at an investment of \$15,000 from the Pillars with percentages to be determined by Finance Committee according to the policy governing the Pillars.

Now that the proposal has been approved, TCF will prepare a contract and when signed by Harcourt, a timeline can be established to implement a community engagement process. The idea is to establish mutually beneficial relationships with the community.

The Task Group is feeling hopeful and excited about TCF's involvement with us in taking our next steps to sustaining our mission, enhancing the lives of those in our community and making Guelph a better place in which to live.

Future updates will be provided as the process unfolds.

An Interview with Rev. John Lawson

Judi Morris

We were led through Lent by Rev. John Lawson, during Miriam's study leave. He is returning to Harcourt during September and October, to fill in until Rev. Kate Ballagh-Steeper joins us in November. I was able to catch up with him over the telephone for a few stolen moments during a short return from his trailer. While we were not able to spend much time chatting, he agreed for me to forward the questions to him and sent his responses.

I know precious little about the book of Revelation which pushed me to one of the questions posed to him. To me he clarified Revelation's basis. He also seized the opportunity to leave us with clear direction regarding our Christian future in his last two lines.

I find his responses to be rich, enlightening and urging to the future.

Judi: I often have heard of United Church ministers belonging to other denominations and am curious if you have always been connected with the United Church, or had you belonged to other denominations, and if so, what brought you to the United Church?

John: I was raised in the Presbyterian Church. My father was a Presbyterian minister. I was always active in the church, even being one of those strange students throughout university who would get up early on Sunday morning and make my way to church.

After graduating from university, I volunteered at Frontier College where I was sent to a fly-in mining camp called Tasu on Haida Gwaii (or what was then called the Queen Charlotte Islands). During the day I would work in the mine as an underground surveyor and in the evening, I taught English as a Second Language. Once a month the mine flew in the United Church minister who served two churches, one in Queen Charlotte City and the other in the indigenous village of Skidegate. That Minister, the Reverend Bob Henderson, became a wise mentor and encouraged me towards ministry in the United Church. It was there that I formally joined the United Church of Canada.

Judi: Over my lifetime I have seen much growth and changes within the United Church, most certainly for the better, and was curious of John's encounter with it and asked, "Of all the changes you have experienced, which one or ones have you embraced the most or felt were long overdue?"

John: I, like you, feel very grateful and humbly proud of some of the ways the United Church has been opened up over my years in ministry. There are many – our journey with the LGBTQ+ communities, people with disabilities, issues around racial justice. But the one I would have to say is most important for me would be our walk with indigenous peoples in Canada. We good United Church folks were finally brought face-to-face with our participation in cultural genocide in the residential school system. This broke forever our "comfortable pew" that we were all fine and nice United Church people. In reality, we privileged settler people were blind to the terrible wrongs committed in our country.

Before studying theology, I did two degrees in history – all European or international history. I bought into the colonial/imperial dream that real action in history was somewhere else – some European centre of civilization. Today I look back in shame and astonishment that I knew nothing of the land literally beneath my feet here in Canada. That I didn't know the history of this land – and not simply colonial history. For number of years, I attended school right beside a native reserve and with indigenous kids in my classroom. And yet I knew nothing of their history, their reality, and our historical relationship as settlers with them.

In my retirement I am trying to read and learn more of that history and wonderful indigenous wisdom that our world so needs right now as we continue to exploit and despoil our beautiful world. If I were to offer one marvellous book trying to bring together the indigenous and scientific perspective, it would be *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

Judi: It's generally the same scriptures we use according to the time of the year. Rarely do we ever have much to do with Revelation. Are you able to enlighten us on why this is?

John: It is interesting that you should ask about the book of Revelation. You're right, it tends to be ignored or regarded with embarrassment by more liberally-minded Christians, such as those generally found in the United Church of Canada. I did a preaching series on it some years ago and I must confess it was a very heavy slog – to try to find anything redemptive or helpful in it.

That being said, for many more evangelically-inclined Christians, it sits at the very front of their imagination. A final battle of good and evil. The earth being destroyed as the faithful are transported to a better heavenly place. These views, and this overwhelming narrative, seem very much alive – especially right now in our polarized neighbour to the south.

I read a blog a short while ago by the church historian Diana Butler Bass that some Christians in the United States are looking for a battle where the spilling of blood will purify a corrupt nation. Blood theology. Scary stuff.

As we need to confront the violence of our colonial past, we also need to confront the violence of our Christian theology married to our imperial past. It is one thing to be comforted by images in Revelation if you were a slave oppressed by the Roman Empire. It's quite another if that theology is married to the power and privilege of Empire – or to use the term of the Book of Revelation itself, married to the power of the beast. We need to name and confront these distortions that many people associate with all Christians.

Judi: What can you offer our congregation on the loss of the past and prepare for the future?

John: I think you rightfully locate the moment of time we are in as churches in Canada – needing to let go of many aspects of the past, and choosing carefully what we need to carry into an unknown future. I would hunch that this is the way it must be for Harcourt, but it is also part of how it is for the United Church, and indeed most churches in Canada.

As I said, it is freeing and sifting the good from the toxic history. It is unravelling the unholy marriage of Christianity with power and privilege. But it is also unearthing the treasure of Jesus' words and ministry and Spirit in a world today that so needs Good News.

As I look to the future I see a much more simple Christianity where it is less about what we profess and preach and more about how we live in Jesus' Way. Christianity was first called "The Way". How our lives are shaped and informed by Jesus' call. Daring to be people who say that there is more to this world than meets the eye, more than is promised in our materialistic, consumer society. It will be counter cultural. It will be following a mystical/experiential faith. And second, loving our neighbour – all of them. As we are learning from our indigenous siblings this will include four-legged and multi-legged and creatures with fins and wings as well. The work of the reign of God has never been more urgent. There can be no "retirement" from this urgent work.

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

Thin Time/Space/Place

Sharon Chapman

Every summer in August, Bill and I pack up our car and our kayaks and head to Lake Mississippi.

We have rented a simple cottage there for about 6 years, enjoying each other, children and grandchildren. We have kayaked, knee boarded, swam, done jig saw puzzles, played endless card games and sat for hours around an open camp fire.

Nothing fancy or elaborate, no internet, basic cooking and lots of story telling. It is the endless hours in nature, just 'being', that call my inner most sense to a place of rest and renewal.....

Deep within my soul there is a need, a crying out for feeding, for gentling for life....

These two weeks have become an essential part of each year. It is that time and space where all routines are laid aside, the tyranny of the urgent becomes what is before me whether the latest book that I am reading, or the invite to collect clam shells, or make mud pies to dry in the sun. There are little or no expectations other than to 'be in the moment' and enjoy and ponder what is before me...

In Celtic tradition there is a term referred to as a 'thin place', 'space' or 'time'. This is a happening that we might imagine as the unveiling of the Holy or the Other in our midst. This is a time or space where we are in some ways 'transported' to a place or space of 'presence' where although unseen, we sense or are aware of that which is beyond or greater than ourselves. A connectedness.....



There are times in all of our lives when we can recall that 'aha' moment when suddenly it was like heaven itself opened before us and invited us in. This happening may have been only in the twinkling of an eye or it may have lasted for minutes, or hours or even days.

Even though we may have no physical proof of any such happening, our being, our soul has experienced something very profound and deep. Often without even language to explain or describe... Yet deep in each of our souls we KNOW that something profound happened and we did encounter someone or something beyond ourselves.

In my life, as in all of our lives, there is a need for a regular feeding of our souls. That in fact, we will have these unexpected happenings, but there is a need to build in times, spaces, places where we regularly address 'the other', the 'Holy' and seek to hear and learn more

We can find these times and spaces in our regular day, but for most of us we need to create spaces, times events when we put aside the routines of our day and focus on 'the Other'.

Coming to the cottage each year is a wonderful gift for renewal and retreat, but on a daily or monthly basis this is not going to happen. Like my three meals a day routine, I have learned over the years that I need regular times of quiet, reading, study, prayer.

I am not sure what might speak to your heart. Over the years I have learned different ways to connect, to be fed. I guess two of the most significant things that I do daily is finding a quiet space each morning for prayer and reading and then sometime during the day I go for a walk, whether it be around the block, into the Arboretum, or along the Speed River in Royal City Park.

To find a rhythm or a balance to life is a life long endeavour. To hear and connect to the hunger of our soul, ebbs and flows.

This is essential for a sense of affirmation and direction in my life that allows me to move forward in relationships, commitments and service.

Thin places, thin spaces, those happenings that engage 'the other' in me are to be sought after and received with gratitude. The brilliance of the gift, the connectedness with 'Spirit' is life changing. I cannot live a life that is 'not being nurtured by my sense of the Eternal'.

And as I sit here writing these thoughts I am suddenly aware of the mournful cry of the loon rising beyond the sound of the 'slapping' of the waves on the shore. And I am reminded that I am connected to something far greater than myself.

I am in AWE.....

A Thin Place... A Thin Space... A Thin Time!!!!

Grieving Loss, Embracing Change

Andre Auger and Bill Lord

It seems like we can't escape it... We keep hearing about the speed of change and how we need to embrace it. But so few point out that to do so, we are forced to let go of cherished habits, beliefs, spaces, and relationships. Remember what a poor job we at Harcourt did to grieve the loss of a long-standing and well-loved fixture of the community – John Buttars. In the not too distant past, Harcourt community has experienced the retirement of ministers: Jim Ball, Wendy Brown, and the resignation of Miriam Flynn. No less shocking was the sudden illness and death of a beloved long serving custodian Darko Cikovic. How many of us have simply not been ready to move on from these losses without proper grieving, and balked at the change that felt imposed on us by those who had already caught a vision of the future? “Change” happens to us; “transition” is what we need to accomplish inwardly as a response to change.

And still more change is heaped upon us. We want to do a better job this time. And this time, change is far more all-encompassing. Covid-19 made sure of that! Zoom and streaming worship services are no longer considered temporary stop-gap measures to get us through the pandemic: they have become some of the new tools knitting our social fabric in radically new ways. You don't believe this? Take a look around you on a Sunday morning – not just at Harcourt but in almost every sanctuary: attendance is down anywhere from 30 to 60% from pre-Covid days. And that can't be explained simply by some still reluctant to be in close proximity to others. How often have you heard that watching a worship service in your pjs with a cup of coffee at your convenience beats the trouble of getting dressed and going out... That's not going to change.

And we sure can't blame all of our current financial woes on people not giving us their envelopes when they don't physically come to church... The church does not appear to be a worthwhile investment any more. Money and time commitments speak loudly; are we listening? Things are changing. And fast.

We can probably assume that each of us, in our own way, is going through the various stages of grief – denial, bargaining, depression, anger. A few of us may be ready to move on and are already excited about new visions of the Church. A few, but not most. Many of us still hold on to the dream that things will go back to the way they were. They won't. Ever.

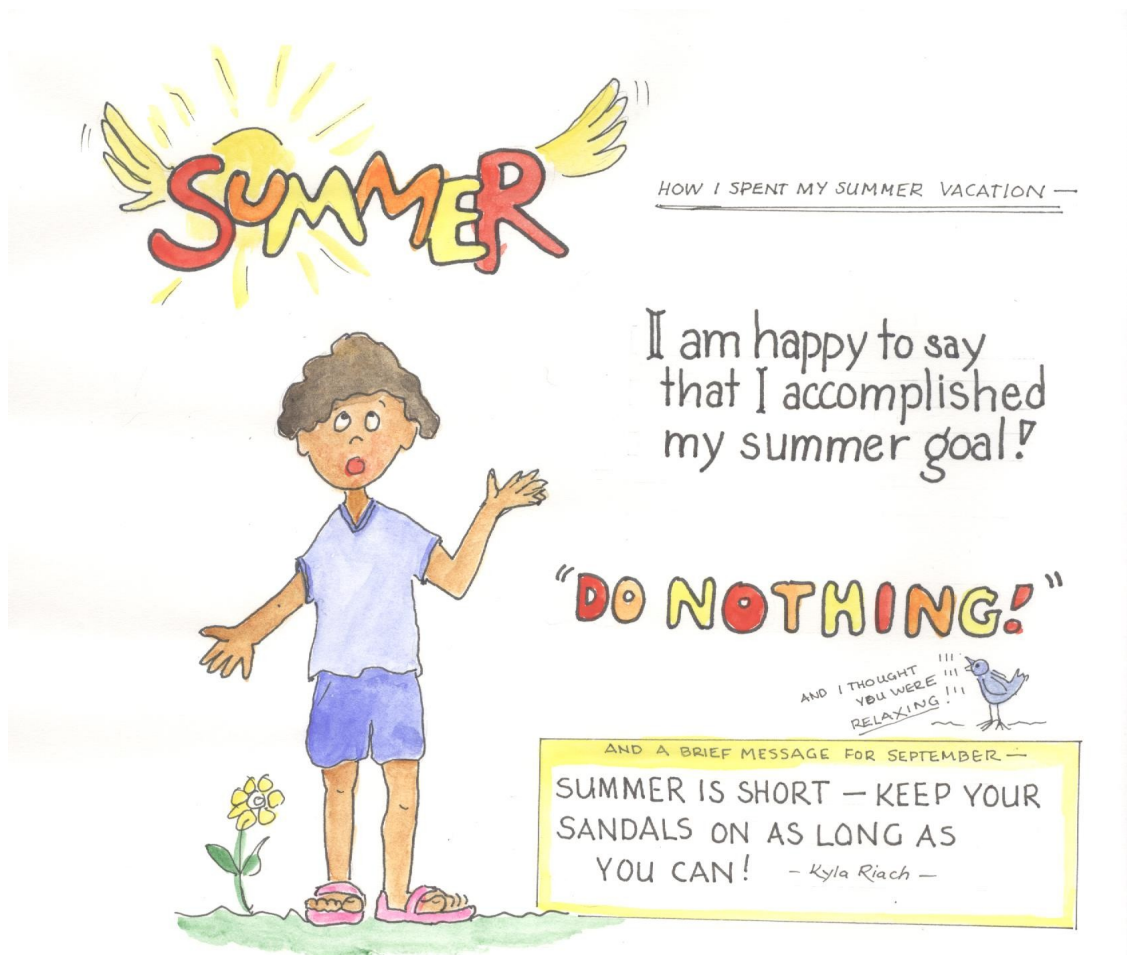
Let's be clear: we need to acknowledge the wide spectrum of response represented by the term “transition,” from denial to new activities. No matter where you might locate yourself on that spectrum you are OK. However, this demands the recognition that not everybody else sees or experiences the situation as anyone else does. If we are to survive and grow as a

community of faith, this calls for a time of deep listening to each other and the Spirit. The Church must discover what motivates people to give to a missional cause and find new ways to focus people's passion on being the Body of Christ in the world.

So, here's what the Steering Committee would like to do: take the first four Sundays upon our return after Labour Day and publicly acknowledge our losses and our grief and pain, engage in proper Lament, then open ourselves in trust and hope to the new possibilities for being church, and finally prepare ourselves to welcome a new era in ministry with the best hospitality we know how. Grieving and preparing for new possibilities is not something you read about or watch: it's something you engage in and do.

Join us, therefore, starting Sept 11th, on site or online, and be ready to participate actively in this intentional worship time. A Handout, for personal mid-week study and reflection, will be available for this series – both online and on paper in the box at the door of the church. Come: let's grieve, lament, discover, and greet the future together.

Roz Illustrates summer



The Summer of 2022

Susanne and Tom Wilson

Our summer started on April 24th as we boarded a plane to Athens Greece. On arrival we did a brief tour of Athens and some other sites. Susanne was proud of being able to climb the trail up the acropolis and tour the Parthenon. On the 29th we boarded the ship *Oceania Sirena* to commence a Mediterranean cruise ending at London, England.

Disaster interfered on May 3rd when, in respiratory distress, she was urgently disembarked to the hospital in Rhodes. The *Sirena* staff very efficiently helped me pack up, board a taxi, and arrive at a prebooked hotel. On the 4th she was intubated and on the 6th she was transferred by air to the PAGNI hospital ICU at Heraklion, Crete. The efforts of our travel advisor in Guelph found me a flight on the 7th to follow her. Daughter Catherine decided she would use her vacation week to visit Crete, do touristy things, and join me on the daily visit to the hospital.

Greece was very prescriptive about Covid, requiring masks when indoors and a negative rapid test within 48 hours of entering a hospital. Tests were readily available at pharmacies for between 7 and 10 Euros. My hotel was near the centre of the old city. Pedestrian malls and outdoor dining nearby allowed people to move around without having to be masked although many were.

Susanne was extubated on May 11th and moved to the respiratory department on the 12th. At this point she was too weak to stand and could barely sit upright. By the 25th it was decided that she was well enough to be discharged. The global assistance company arranged for a nurse to fly from Canada on the 26th arriving late on the 27th. She met with the medical people at the hospital, made her own assessment and agreed that we would travel on the 29th.

May 29th was a hard day for Susanne. Up at 5:00 am, dressed, into a wheelchair, transferred to a cab, arrived at the airport, into a wheelchair and into an airplane to Athens. At Athens, into a wheelchair for a four-hour layover. The Air Canada staff at check-in offered a medical room for our wait. Susanne was able to lay down and the nurse was able to fully recharge her oxygen concentrator. Another wheelchair onto the plane and a business class seat that laid out as a bed so she could rest through the flight. Another wheelchair, then into a limo dropping the bags at the house. Out of the limo into one more wheelchair at the ER of the Guelph General Hospital. It was a busy night at the ER, but she was provided a bed within an hour (8:00 pm). She was seen by a doctor at midnight and admitted at 3:00 am.

After 5 days it was decided - SURPRISE - she could go home. There was a scramble to get a commode and a walker and set up the pull-out couch in the family room. With assistance, she navigated the 3 steps into the house and collapsed into bed. Daughter Catherine had come to visit and was very helpful in pulling everything together on zero notice.

Over the next 10 weeks she has progressed to not needing the commode, being able to climb the stairs to her own bed, able to do short walks unassisted and walks 200 metres of the sidewalk with her walker. There has been lots of assistance from daily PSW visits that have progressed from sponge baths downstairs to getting a shower upstairs. A nurse has visited several times as has a physiotherapist and an occupational therapist. Mary Harding set up a meal train which has been very helpful.

Tom created a blog, “Cruise Blues,” to keep people at home informed about our 39-day celebration of his 80th birthday, two years late, that had morphed into an, at times, scary adventure. Cruise Blues generated a massive outpouring of support from various energy practitioners and to prayer lists as far away as a Baptist church in Brantford. There is no doubt that these efforts shortened her time in critical care and have supported the steady advances she is making. This is like a 10,000 km journey. We feel like we are at the 10 km mark. We are very thankful that our summer plans, upended as they were, have turned out to be a time of experiencing how life may be short, the need to be quick to love and hasten to be kind.

Orkney – inspiration in stone

Sarah Lowe, 21 August 2022

In June we braved the airports and headed over to the UK, prompted by the 80th birthday of one of my sisters. It was wonderful to catch up with 30 relatives spanning four generations.

As a side trip John and I visited Orkney, a group of islands off the north of Scotland with a long history of human settlement going back almost 9000 years, and some of the best archaeology in Northern Europe, thanks in part to a plentiful supply of sandstone.

My favourite Neolithic (Stone Age) site was the Ring of Brodgar. The site is a large circle of standing stones 104 metres across, set in the heath between a freshwater loch and sea loch, in the vicinity of other stone age settlements and burial sites.



We went back a second time in the fading light of a long midsummer evening. This time we had the place to ourselves, and with the redshanks and curlews calling all around us, the atmosphere was magical. One can only imagine what rituals were performed here more than 4000 years ago.

On Pentecost Sunday, I went for more conventional experience at a service in the inspiring medieval St Magnus Cathedral in the capital city of Kirkwall, built by the Norse from local red and yellow sandstone. The Cathedral survived the Reformation relatively unscathed, and is now the Presbyterian Church of Scotland (and therefore technically not a cathedral at all!).

Interestingly, the Cathedral building itself is owned by the people of Orkney, and is managed by the Orkney Island Council, including tours and rentals to outside groups.

This gave me something to ponder: would it be a help or a hindrance if the municipal council were to manage our building with personnel and funds?



The Summer Highlight That Didn't Happen

by Marilyn Whiteley

It was to have been the highlight of the summer. Our younger son, David, was acting in a two-person play, *The Red Priest (Eight Ways To Say Goodbye)*. He stayed with us and commuted much of the time that the show was in rehearsal and then being performed outdoors in the Guild Park in Scarboro, but we didn't try to go with him to see it there. The family worked out other plans.

So on my birthday, Wednesday, August 17th, our older son, Paul, arrived by bus and train. He spent the night, and on Thursday, he drove us to Rockport, where Hugh and I settled into a small but comfortable motel by the St. Lawrence. Paul's wife, Rose, and son, Rousseau, came to have dinner with us at the adjacent restaurant. On Friday, David would join the five of us in Prescott for an early dinner; then we would go to the grounds of the St. Lawrence Shakespeare Festival, to attend the play. All seemed well. But after Paul and his family left to return to their home, I received an unwelcome e-mail: the other member of the play cast had developed COVID and all performances were cancelled!



This was a huge disappointment. We have seen David perform a great many times since watching him in the front of the Harcourt sanctuary in a musical directed by Gerry Roffey. There I looked on with amazement at the care with which he (as David) pantomimed choosing just the right stone with which to slay Goliath. We have seen him act in student productions, then in performances with trained amateurs and, more recently, now that David is an ACTRA member, in professional performances. We even saw him at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, playing Moody in *Anne and Gilbert: The Musical*.

But *The Red Priest* seemed special. I love classical music and Baroque music in particular, and David was playing the part of the composer Vivaldi. The Canadian playwright specified what recorded music is to be played at various times during the play, but since David also plays the violin (he had a double major in drama and music at the University of Guelph), the director adjusted things so that David plays from time to time during the performance. And the violin he plays belonged to my grandfather! We had it refurbished for David's use long ago. So for many reasons, I was especially looking forward to seeing this play in a pleasant outdoor setting.

But the family rallied 'round. On Friday we had perfect weather for a two-hour St. Lawrence cruise out of Rockport. Then David joined us for a patio lunch in Brockville. After that we walked (I was wheeled) through the nearby historic railway tunnel, complete with interpretive signs and *son et lumière* show. Getting to and from places, we enjoyed the lovely scenery along the Thousand Islands Parkway. Then on Saturday, after breakfast with Paul, Rose, and Rou, Paul drove us back to Guelph. After a night here, he returned home, again by bus and train.

So things did not go as I had hoped: the highlight of the summer was not seeing the play. But the summer did have its highlight, for a visit with family—especially with a family that goes out of its way to be caring and helpful—is a precious thing. (And on a phone call, David holds out a glimmer of hope: *maybe* the play will be remounted next summer at Prescott or sometime during the theatre season in Ottawa. I do hope so!)

What We Did This Summer

Andre Auger



I stopped counting the number of people who would open a conversation with something like “So, where are you going this summer?” or “Any plans for summer travel?” or “Where have you been this summer?” I get it. I understand it. I too loved travel: discovering new places, seeing new things...

When did it all change? Is it simply a question of getting older and having less energy? Did the pandemic take away our appetite for adventure? Or did the pause in travel pin me down to ask me the question: why do you travel? Is the world truly there as an answer to our desire for new experiences?

It was certainly a number of factors that got me to the point of wondering about the ethics of travel: the worry that it was human travel which spread the virus in the first place, the damage to the environment of flying or driving, the brevity of the new experience, and then it's over... I don't know. All I know is that Marion and I found ourselves adjusting our lives so that living right where we were had become good enough for us. Quiet, mindfulness, and attention to the details of our daily living all managed to convince us that this was, after all, not a bad place to spend the summer – no, our lives.

Okay, we start from a position of privilege. We don't live in a claustrophobic highrise; or in a row-house with a postage-stamp size backyard. While we don't live on a sprawling estate, we are surrounded by trees, very private, with a pleasant garden with many corners to sit in. And add to this, our age. I do not have the same wanderlust at 80 that I had at 60...

Given all this, though, it is interesting to note how easy it has become to be quite happy with our daily routines. To note that our days are filled with moments of intense gratitude; that we have become accustomed to appreciate subtle changes in light and shade; that each flower blooming brings joy and appreciation; that people visiting us fill hours with delightful conversation.

I suppose all that has made it possible for us to turn to “Sabbath economics” – a lifestyle based on “enoughness” - and realize that our contentment and reduced need falls in line with the Biblical injunction of being satisfied with what we have; to have what we need, not what we want; to reduce our carbon footprint; to redirect our time and our resources to the needs of others.

I’m not going to worry too much about the “chicken-and-egg” issue: which came first – concerns for Sabbath economics or the decreased desire to travel. So I won’t boast about our “enlightened” lifestyle. I’ll simply be grateful that we have managed to come to this point where we have diminished our collusion with the dominant culture always wanting us to desire more, and that we are able to desire so much contentment from just being here.

Rediscovering a Lifetime Love

Cassey Connor

This has been a largely uneventful summer in my personal life. Never would I have considered what possibilities an uneventful summer would unlock, as my closest memory of such a summer is probably from my childhood, sitting at home and playing video games with my brother. I can’t say that was very productive (albeit a happy memory), but this time around, I have used my free time and headspace to start an indie rock show for CFRU 93.3 FM/CFRU.ca, the University of Guelph’s campus radio station. Maybe my childhood summertime memories influenced this recent decision more than I was originally aware, because my show is called Big Sis Radio and is inspired by the kind of music my brother and I would jam out to growing up. We always enjoyed upbeat indie rock and I like to think I earned big-sis-cool-points for introducing my brother to his first mosh pit. Memories aside, it has been endless fun to discover new indie music and rediscover old favourites.



As I have explored new music, I've also found myself wondering what really defines a musical genre. If you aren't familiar, indie rock gets its name from "independent rock", meaning rock music created by musicians who aren't signed to a label and who typically have a more creative sound than the rock musicians in the mainstream at the same time. This genre has evolved throughout the years and eventually came to describe an artist's sound versus the status of whether they were signed or not. Nowadays this definition remains true but is also understood to have replaced the alternative rock genre. I've added another layer to my show's indie rock roster by seeking artists who represent diverse identities (for example, artists who are female, genderqueer, Black Indigenous People of Colour (BIPOC), LGBTQ+, and who create music in different languages). The minimum requirement for Big Sis Radio's content is 35% Canadian music and 20% new music, as defined by Canadian federal law and station requirements, but I feel that including artists of many identities represents another important quality to direct the show's content.

Seeking diverse representation in my show has further challenged my ideas of what makes a genre, as genres are inherently defined by a certain, often colonial, perspective. We see this issue in award shows, where racially diverse artists are often placed in race-defined categories and nowhere else. An example of this was when the Nunavut rock band Northern Haze were nominated for Indigenous Music Album of the Year at the 2020 Junos. Their album is packed with diverse rock sounds that melt together, juxtapose, and ultimately inspire listeners to imagine the future of rock while also happening to be entirely sung in Inuktitut. It's an album that could easily stand with other Canadian rock greats in the "Rock Album of the Year" category. So why not put it in that category? Well, I don't have influence on how the Junos are run (yet), but I can challenge this barrier in my own way by playing interesting variations of indie rock all together in one show. Oh, and if you'd like to check out Northern Haze, they open episode 3 of Big Sis Radio airing August 29th which you can listen to either live or recorded.

As I look forward to assembling future episodes of my show, I'll continue learning how best to promote innovative artists while also unlearning my colonial perspective. It's a fun research challenge and connecting it to past and future fun times with my brother makes it that much more meaningful. So I am thankful for my uneventful summer and I hope you have had one too!

The Summer of 2022

Deb Murray



This past Summer has been a mix of experiences and opportunities for my soul.

The season started by giving me a chance to take a break from all my commitments in the community and give my mind a rest.

After catching my breath I started to prepare with my friends to go on a long two week vacation to Nova Scotia with them. It was a unique vacation opportunity as my friends had included me in their special family plans and the trip gave us a chance to enrich our friendships and for me to meet their relatives in Nova Scotia. It was also a chance for me to tour one of my favourite Canadian provinces that I had always dreamed about.

Once I returned home after the vacation I experienced good re-organization of my belongings that gave my mind a good refreshing feeling to start again with everything once September rolled around. I felt a lot more optimism this year with things starting to return to normal and not being as strict in Covid restrictions as they were the year before.

As August carried on, I spent my time management working on preparing for the Girl Guide program and the successful registration numbers of my Brownies and Sparks gave hope of an active year ahead. Overall it's been a peaceful optimistic Summer that has given me the strength to get a fresh start to my Fall routine ahead of returning to community commitments and activities.

Expect the Unexpected

Jane McNamee

Yes my summer of 2022 was nothing like expected. The previous summer Of 2021 we were still an independent couple and able to drive ourselves to our cottage in Oliphant on the Bruce. This summer was overshadowed by my husband's time in Hospice over the winter, followed by his palliative care treatment there and at home..

One of the main results of his time at Hospice was that Bernard reasoned he would not need our car, which was as one of our main means of transport. So he gave the car to our granddaughter. On his return home at the beginning of the summer, some of the many friends who visited him in Hospice came to check up on him at home. Some of them took him out for rides in the country. Our daughters were taking care of the catering.

This ended after one of our supply nurses told us about a young man whose job had expired with his patient passing. We were invited to meet him. He came to meet us and arranged to sleep in our basement during the week but would go back to his family on weekends. My summer has been part of watching Bernard loosing any desire to go on living and wondering why I still want to continue and don't want to give up.

Recently I was pleased to be asked to submit a painting for a Fundraiser for the Birds on the Bruce. From this I have learned to appreciate the energy and pleasure that my paintings give me. In return I am happy to donate one. From this I have learned that I am not ready to call it quits yet!

How Dry I Am

Judi Morris

The droughts of 2020 and 2021 had 2022 start out in a moisture deficit. At least those two years ended up with rain at a critical enough time to save most crops, albeit with smaller than anticipated yields. Areas in Wellington south may not be so fortunate this year.

Forecasted rain reached Guelph and north of Guelph but not a drop landed in Puslinch. From my friend's farm we watched it fall several times in Freelon and in Hamilton. From my farm I watched rain fall in Guelph, a mile north of me yet we remained dry. Our pastures turned brown and crisp, corn growth stunted and roped, beans and alfalfa are yellowed. We scoff at a forecast of 40% chance of rain because 60% and 70% does not materialize.

The good news of north Wellington and the Niagara Region getting sufficient rain at least, means there should be produce for the stores.

Veterinarians have been dealing with lameness brought on by concussions from the hard ground. It affects horses in their hooves, legs, and shoulders. Shoes and pads sometimes help to keep them working but sometimes they are put on stall rest. Not what their owners expected during summer months.

Farmers with crop insurance must allow their crop to sit in the field for the allotted growing period, then they are required to harvest as if they had a successful crop to prove they qualify for their insurance payment. A lot of money and time to put in to prove you have nothing. Not to forget early summer produced diesel costs over double the previous years when the crops were planted, with hope.

A welcome rain came last week however for most it will be too little too late. If hay farmers manage a 2nd cut it will be 25% or less of normal yield. Dairy farmers need 2nd cut for its high protein content. They will be shy of their required yield and will go farther afield to purchase it. People with horses that require 2nd cut will be up against dairy farmers for their needs.

Often when there is low yield, prices are higher. This will not apply to Puslinch farmers this year because all around have received sufficient rain and their yield will dictate price.

I will do 2nd cut hay because I have two old horses that must have it. My two fields will not produce enough for my needs where one should be enough. I won't have hay to sell. The cost of producing such small yield is daunting. I will have to rake four, five, maybe six rows into one to have enough for the baler to pick up. Usually it's two rows into one.

So far, our well has always held out. That has not been the case for a neighbour up the road one year. Livestock needs trump personal ones. No horses or vehicles get washed and you use the water from your dehumidifier for your garden.

I dug four-foot hole for a fence post. Never have I seen the dirt at that depth be like powder. One would expect it to be damp at that level, not crumbly.

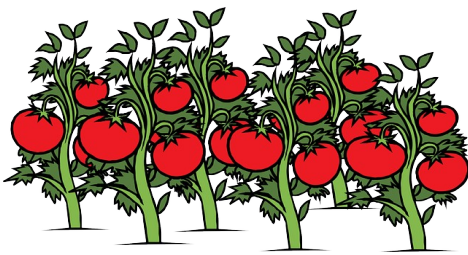
To get out of this we needed several three-day rains three weeks ago. It will be too late for some now, no matter how much rain we get.

Folks in the city feel inconvenienced because they are not allowed to water their lawns....it makes our teeth hurt.

Rain is forecasted for August 7th and 8th. May it be so.

From the Garden

Jill Gill



As of August 14th the Harcourt Communal Garden has produced 91 Kg (200 lbs) of local, organically-grown produce that has all been donated to Chalmers Downtown food pantry. The 'heavy weight' crops are beginning to ripen – cucumbers, zucchinis and soon – tomatoes. We have a bumper crop of tomatoes this year and with sufficient rain and sun in good proportion, the yield from this crop will be plentiful. I'll keep you posted in future newsletters.

Our dedicated crew of volunteers work diligently each week to weed, water and harvest vegetables and herbs. We'd welcome anyone who would like to assist. If this is an activity you'd like to take part in, please contact me, Jill Gill, at peter.gill@sympatico.ca for further details.

The Language and Gifts of Stones

By Judi Morris

Stones have called to me for as long as I remember. At the age of nine, my friend took me to spend a few days with her Grandparents who lived in an immaculate home on lake St. Clair. Following an afternoon of swimming in the lake and play on the beach we traipsed through the house with sand covered feet. Her Grandfather sat speechless. He found his voice when a rock broke through the flimsy bag I carried, and crashed onto the well-polished hardwood floor. "What in God's name was that!" he shouted. I became the speechless one. I couldn't find the words to explain why a common rock had to go home with me. I believe it chipped the floor.

People shop when they go away...I search for meaningful stones to stuff into Bill's golf bag. Friends often bring me stones from their trips. I have a small piece of Hadrian's wall, and a rock I picked up on a beach in California was of interest to the University of Guelph. In Ireland I picked stones from a beach I was told witches frequented. The stones had holes and the witches wore them on strings around their necks. I gave my favourite one to a Wiccan friend as I could see how much it meant to him. Lila Engberg brought me a stone from Auschwitz.

I have three sets of stone steps, a stone patio, and with thanks to my backhoe, I dug up huge rocks and used them as a retaining wall.

Coloured ones delight me, especially if they are blue or green, or black. Sparkles for some reason don't speak to me so much. For years I collected stones and made a dry riverbed across an area where tractors cross. I lined the bottom with what I referred to as non-distinct stones and saved the coloured ones for the top, only to discover one day the role the non-distinct ones would fill in my life.

A stone carving class I took once a year for near ten years opened a new world for me with the non-distinct stones on this farm. They are usually limestone and the most perfect rocks and stones to hand carve.

My first carvings were Celtic Symbols, then I created wedding stones. My wedding stones usually had two rings entwined over a cross or within a heart or on a heart shaped stone. The instructions with a wedding stone is that it be placed beside where the couple make their vows. The energy of their vows is absorbed into the stone therefore making the vows written in stone and cannot be broken. I have made about ten of them and then I started on church symbols.

I was part of the committee that hired Jim Ball and at the time we were reading Parker Palmer's book in Mindstretch, *The Promise of Paradox*. It had a Celtic Symbol on the front,

and I carved that to connect and welcome him to Harcourt. He usually left it on the table in the chapel.

Miriam's time at Harcourt touched me and I needed to carve a stone to commemorate her time with us and as an exercise to help me let go. I asked her about symbols that she liked, and she told me the Triquetra with a circle and sent me a photo of it. Interesting to me, it forms a triangle and makes me think of the window in the sanctuary. I used a stone from my farm instead of the smooth ones I collected from the beach in Goderich. It was difficult and constantly threatened to chip – yet it stayed firm. Parts of the stone were soft and easy to work with and parts were most difficult. I always feel the stone is speaking to me as I create the piece of art, filling me with pertinent information and emotions. I wanted to spend more time on it but wealth of time was not on my side...it had to be what it was and I somehow felt that Miriam as I came to know her would be OK with it as it is.

Stones can cause you physical grief when digging a post hole in Puslinch...from which you develop muscles on your muscles. They provide invaluable building materials. With the right size you can firm up your laneway for wet seasons, make new lanes and trails and of course decorate. There isn't a stone on this farm that I can't find a use for once it's in my hands.

I can honestly say, "All stones have worth."



Suggested Reading from your Librarian

Mary Lou Funston

To the Harcourt Library patrons:

We have been given a rich selection of 'new' books for our Library shelves. I hope that you will find them as challenging, readable, and enjoyable as I have. I have not read them all but have wandered through each of them, finding many thought provoking golden nuggets.

* Sabbath Economics: Household Practices, Matthew Colwell 248COL

In each of 7 chapters, the author discusses one household practice in line with Sabbath Economics, relates a personal story on the topic – either his own or someone else's, provides resources for further reflection and ends with a list of questions for group discussion. It is a very practical look at one's own household economic practices.

* When “Spiritual But Not Religious” Is Not Enough. Seeing God in Surprising Places, Even the Church. Lillian Daniel 235 DAN

“With poignant reflections and sly wit, Daniel invites all of us to step out of ourselves, dare to become a community, and encounter a God greater than we could ever invent.”

* A New Earth. Awakening to Your Life’s Purpose Eckhart Tolle 235 ECK

This follow-up volume to *The Power of Now*, is described as ‘a profoundly spiritual manifesto for a better way of life – and for building a better world.’

* Life of the Beloved. Spiritual Living in a Secular World Henri J.M. Nouwen 282 NOU

This small book is the result of a deep friendship between the author and a young secular Jew who challenged Nouwen to “write something about the spiritual life for me and my friends.” And so, Nouwen writes, in a deeply personal way about what it means to Be the Beloved, then Being the Beloved and, finally, Living as the Beloved.

* A New Harmony. The Spirit, The Earth, and The Human Soul John Philip Newell 270 NEW

“Newell explores the ancient harmony that is deep in the matter of the universe, the essential interconnectedness of all things.”

* The Other Face of God. When the Stranger Calls Us Home Mary Jo Leddy 261 LED

In this book, Ms Leddy uses the stories of those inhabiting Romero House, a temporary shelter in Toronto,to summon us to a new sense of ourselves, a fresh sense of Christ and a compelling vision of the church.”

* Mortality Christopher Hitchens 304.64 HIT

“Hitchens embraces the full panoply of human emotions as cancer invades his body and compels him to grapple with the enigma of death.”

* Embers. One Ojibway’s Meditations Richard Wagamese 242 WAG

In this book, Richard Wagamese shares his meditation experiences and what they have meant for his life as an indigenous man in our society.

* The Soul of Christianity. Restoring the Great Tradition Huston Smith 230 SMI

The author says, “I have tried to describe a Christianity which is fully compatible with everything we now know, and to indicate why Christians feel privileged to give their lives to it.”

* World Religions Michael Keene 299 KEE

An “easy-to-digest, attractively presented information on the main religions of the world..”

* Longing for Home. Daily Reflections for Lent Edited by Alydia Smith 242 SMI

A new addition to our Lenten series.

And from our Harcourt members:

* Food for the Journey. Thoughts and Reflections from the “Awakening” Series Compiled by the Spiritual Life Committee

These “....testify to the richness of spiritual practices in the Harcourt community,....”

* The Lord’s Prayer. Versions and Paraphrases Harcourt Memorial United Church 230 HAR
And if you just want to relax with a fun novel:

* Comfort Food Kate Jacobs JAC Fic

And for the Manna crowd:

* A Child’s Book of BLESSINGS Sabrina Dearborn PIC

News from the Ecumenical Campus Ministry

Andrew Hyde



This September sees the University of Guelph welcoming its largest class of first year students ever. Nearly 6,000 new students will be on campus this Fall, bringing U of G’s enrollment to approximately 30,000.

The Ecumenical Campus Ministry is planning to receive these new students with a variety of Orientation Week activities (Sept. 4-10), as well as a slate of regular programming, which includes:

- Community Dinner (each Wednesday 5:30pm)
- Vespers Worship (each Thursday 5:30pm)
- Labyrinth Drop-in (each Friday 11am-1pm)

- Fall Day Retreat (Sat. Sept. 24 at St. Brigid Villa)

Natasha Luth, a fifth year Creative Writing student, has taken on the role of Coordinator for ECM's Queer Christian Community. QCC draws together students looking for an affirming space at the intersection of their Christian faith and LGBTQ2IA+ identities.

Two of ECM's recent graduates - Rowena Hetherington-Wilson and Jamie Gibson - begin studies in the Masters of Divinity program at Emmanuel College this Fall. Your prayers for them, all recent grads, and current ECM students are most welcome and warmly encouraged.

With so many challenges facing young adults and institutions of higher education in recent years, chaplaincies like ECM have become vital sources of support and encouragement. ECM is only able to have a presence on the U of G campus because of support from Anglican, Presbyterian, and United Church communities of faith in our region.

2023 marks the 55th anniversary of ecumenical campus ministry at the University of Guelph. It was 1968 when Anglican and United Church visionaries collaborated to hire Rev. Ritchie McMurray as UofG's first ecumenical chaplain.

Local churches are being asked to sponsor ECM's 55th year, in ways that will make the campus ministry sustainable into the future. These requests are coming to church sessions, councils, and boards for your prayerful consideration this Fall. Currently, ECM faces a financial shortfall of approximately \$25,000 each year.

To learn more about ECM's programs, our role on campus, how you might donate to ECM, or get involved, visit www.ECMguelph.org or email the Ecumenical Chaplain - Andrew Hyde - at hydea@uoguelph.ca.

Daily Rehearsal Before Sunrise

Sandy Phair

A bird glee club practices in my maple tree at five every morning.

Today some songbirds are seeking partners for duets.

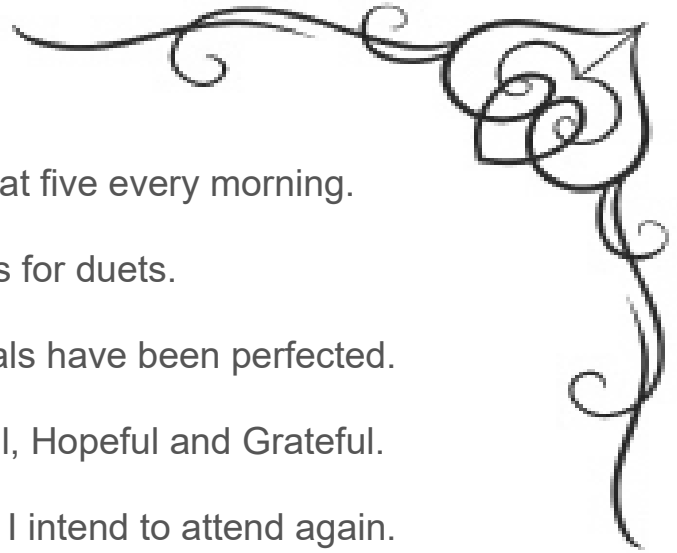
The tweets of robins and the trills of cardinals have been perfected.

I believe today's pieces are entitled, Faithful, Hopeful and Grateful.

I am glad to be present for this concert and I intend to attend again.

I know to arrive early and to bring my deck cushion.

The practice always ends when the sun rises.

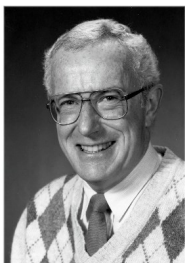


Passages



Murray Miller

1931 - May 29, 2022



W. Trevor Dickinson

August 30, 1939-July 9, 2022

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