

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



YPBC NEWS

March 2014



Published by:

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PETER WRITES

When I woke up this morning I looked outside to see a blanket of freshly fallen snow - again! Now I don't deny that it is beautiful, but winter is officially over, it just refuses to leave. Hopefully by the time this newsletter goes to print we will have seen the last of the snow until next winter. It has been such a long season and already it is clear that when the snow and ice have finally melted I am going to be faced with a lawn ankle-deep in twigs that came down in the December ice storm.

As most in the church are aware, many of the worst storms, like the ice storm in December, seemed to come on Saturday nights or Sunday mornings, making it difficult for many to make it to church. At one point I was told we'd had Sunday morning storms for ten successive weekends. Speaking with colleagues in other churches the story has been much the same, but many have also spoken of a malaise that seems to have come over their congregation, if not over the entire city with each new storm.

There are years when it is the exodus of so many of the faithful to Florida that dents the attendance, but this year I am actually glad so many have been able to be away through these winter months. I have not yet heard of anyone who went south for the winter only to slip and fall on the ice, but here the number of broken bones has apparently snowballed.

It has been a long winter and yet in the midst of all those storms and frigid temperatures people persevered, never giving up. We did a lot of laughing and singing and if we were given to feeling sorry for ourselves, we had only to stop and give thanks for a roof over our head, and the warmth of a home and family, and food in the cupboard.

So thanks to all who helped us through this season, from the Out of the Cold volunteers who have made an incredible difference to those who might otherwise not have made it through the winter, to those who have staffed the entrances offering a warm welcome to visitors. Thanks also to our Building Superintendent Ray, and his team of Louis, Lawrence, and Carlos. Not only did our staff keep the building clean on days when

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Song of Solomon 2:
11-12 KJV

*For, lo, the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone;
the flowers appear on the
earth; the time of the
singing of the birds is
come, ...*

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

pilgrim.h@sympatico.ca

The next newsletter will be published in the week of 23 June 2014. The deadline for submissions is 9 June.

Paul R Hill

hundreds would traipse through with slush on their boots, but day after day they ventured out into the coldest wind to help break up the ice and remove the snow. And through it all there was rarely a day when Ray wasn't smiling - even when it looked like we were running out of salt.

We did have snow last night, but when I walked down the street to take care of a mid-morning errand, the sun was high above and her rays were warming their way through the freezing temperatures to melt away a little more snow and ice. Winter doesn't get the last word. The rising sun has long been a symbol of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and it is he who gets the last word.

There are of course other storms in life, but the Risen Christ has a way with these storms too. Through the coldest nights and the shortest days he has been with us, and in season and out, whatever storm arises Christ still has the last word and it is always a word of peace and grace. Let us be still as we prepare for Easter and allow his word to speak to our hearts and our world in a new way.

Peace,

Peter



PILGRIMAGE OF SACRED SPACES

Join William Maddox, Corey Keeble (Curator Emeritus, Royal Ontario Museum) and Peter Holmes on a pilgrimage to churches and other religious structures in the Niagara region. This two day tour will take us along both sides of the Niagara River on May 7 and 8. The tour will focus on spaces in the twin towns of Niagara Falls and north towards Lake Ontario. The tour will include one of the oldest churches in the province of Ontario, some quaint village churches, a college chapel, a building from half way round the world, as well as some strikingly modern structures on the American side. The price will be announced shortly, but to register in advance, please contact Euan Ferguson eujoferguson@sympatico.ca or 416-363-9900. A passport is required. The trip cost will include coach travel and one night's accommodation in a Niagara Falls hotel. The pilgrimage is a wonderful opportunity to get to know each other better and to learn about and grow in one's faith.

MUSINGS FROM THE MINISTER OF PASTORAL CARE

“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; his greatness is unsearchable.” (Psalm 145:3)

In this long Ontario winter of 2014, many people were spending time in southern climes, trying to find sunshine and warmer weather. For one glorious week in February, Donna and I found our “place in the sun” by spending a week in Phoenix, Arizona. I read somewhere that on average, Phoenix receives 305 days of sunshine per year – my kind of place! When I travel, I always like to visit some of the sites which celebrate the natural beauty of God’s creation. During our week in Arizona, we made the two hour drive north to the town of Sedona, nestled into the mountains of Red Rock country. I had never been there before, and I was more than impressed – I stood in awe and amazement at these majestic rock formations. Hollywood discovered Sedona many years ago, when the western was king of the big screen. Some of the great westerns were filmed there, starring the likes of John Wayne, Burt Lancaster, Jimmy Stewart, Barbara Stanwyck, and Glen Ford. The town has a rich and varied history.



But what really sets Sedona apart is its natural beauty and tranquility. The name Sedona simply means “created name.” Apparently it was named after an early settler, whose mother simply thought up the name – literally “created” it. As you drive through the town, you pass one magnificent vista after another. The feeling you get is that of being very small. I think this is a good reminder for us as human beings. Compared to the vastness of our world, we are pretty small and insignificant. And because God is so great and unfathomable at times, we try to shrink him down to our size – to make him “manageable.” The great Bible scholar J.B. Phillips once wrote a little book called *Your God Is Too Small*. The premise of his book is that we do God a disservice by trying to reduce him to something he is not – like a Santa Claus figure, a policeman, a God-in-a-box, and so forth. Phillips explores the ways we can find a meaningful God who is big enough to handle our experience of life and big enough to command our worship and adoration. We need to be reminded of the greatness of our God – the God who in the Psalms is described this way: “O Lord my God, you are very great. You are clothed with honour and majesty, wrapped in light as with a garment. You stretch out the heavens like a tent, you set the beams of your chambers on the waters, you make the clouds your chariot, you ride on the wings of the wind, you make the winds your messengers, fire and flame your ministers.” (Psalm 104:1-4)

There is a world out there that is much bigger than any of us can imagine. It stretches our minds and touches our hearts. As the people of God, we are now in the midst of the season of Lent. Lent is a wonderful time to reconsider our thoughts and feelings about God. I see it as a time to enlarge our borders – to embrace the greatness of our God and to seek his presence in our daily lives. There is a wonderful verse in Isaiah 54:2. God is addressing the Jewish exiles who find themselves captive in a foreign land. (And who among us has not felt like an exile in today’s culture, where Christians feel marginalized?) The prophet writes: “Enlarge the site of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes.” Lent encourages us to explore the wonder and majesty of our God – a God who created the heavens and the earth; the God who created human beings in his own image; the God who loved us so much that he sent his only Son to die on the cross to bring us back into relationship with him.

As we continue our journey through this Lenten season, I pray that it will be a time for you to enlarge your spiritual borders. Throughout the centuries, many Christians have used this season to practice the spiritual disciplines – prayer, scripture reading and meditation, fasting, practicing silence, and so forth. All of these can be helpful in drawing us closer to God. But ultimately God is much bigger than us. Yet the wonder remains that he desires a relationship with us – the people he has formed in his own image.

As winter turns to spring; as darkness gives way to light; as we approach the joy of Easter – may your experience of God be enlarged, lengthened and strengthened. May we proclaim with the Psalmist: “The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed, and I will declare your greatness.” (Psalm 145:6)

Dale Rose

SPIRITUAL CARE IN CHRONIC DISEASE SELF MANAGEMENT

My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Psalm 73:26

This past winter the Yorkminster Park Health and Wellness Committee sponsored a program for people experiencing the health problem of chronic pain. Chronic pain is one example of a spectrum of illnesses that develop over time and although manageable, are as yet, not curable and known as *Chronic Diseases*. More examples include: heart disease and stroke, diabetes, renal failure, COPD, Parkinson’s, some cancers, osteoporosis, back pain, and the many joint problems related to arthritis.

Chronic diseases have outpaced infectious diseases as the main cause of death and disability throughout the world. They account for almost half of the global “burden of disease”, which means the impact of a health problem in terms of economic costs, and risk of death or disability. “Burden of disease” is often measured

by disability-adjusted life years (DALYs), meaning the extent to which years are lost due to a disease. For example, one DALY can be thought of *as one year of healthy life lost.* (WHO, 2011).

Over the past few decades, careful research has resulted in a model of care developed by Stanford University called *Chronic Disease Self Management (CDSMP)*. This program has proven unequivocally that teaching and supporting strategies, such as good nutrition and appropriate exercise to manage chronic health problems, can vastly improve quality of life and prevent losing years of healthy living. CDSMP is meant as an *adjunct* to medical treatment - not to replace it, and one good example is following the recommended eating plan for diabetes, along with taking medications, to achieve optimum blood glucose control thereby preventing kidney failure, vision loss, and foot problems. Another example is walking and swimming for arthritis and osteoporosis in order to lessen the stiffness and pain that impedes mobility.

As a Parish Nurse, easing suffering is my reason for being. I hold to the view that we are all primarily spiritual beings having physical experiences, and that good spiritual care is crucial to easing suffering and achieving wellness despite experiencing chronic illnesses. And as it turns out I’m not alone in these views. In *Spirituality In Nursing – Standing on Holy Ground*, O’Brien M.E. (2011) found that individuals with chronic illnesses recognized “*spiritual care*” as a major factor in maintaining quality of life, and that having “hope, trust, courage, faith and peace” became exceedingly meaningful.

In general terms, *Hope* means anticipation that something desired will occur. *Trust* is having confidence in something or someone. *Courage* - another crucial element needed by individuals in times of illness-is “an ability to transcend one’s fears, to choose to actively face what needs to be ” - not an absence of fear (Stoll, 1989 as cited in O’Brien, 2011).

Faith is relationship with God on whose strength and absolute sureness we can literally stake our lives (Fatula, 1993 as cited in O’Brien 2011). *Peace* is a sense of being undisturbed, a feeling of freedom from anxiety and fear (Dwyer, 1990 as cited in O’Brien 2011).



We health professionals are getting the message that medicine is not the only effective treatment for illness, and that promoting healthy food and exercise are key to maintaining quality of life, and easing suffering in chronic disease. However, according to research, such as reported by O' Brien et al (2011), it appears that promoting hope, trust, courage, faith and peace are equally, if not more, important.

As Christians we know that Scripture can be the most effective "prescription" of all, and some beautiful examples to promote hope, trust, courage, faith and peace, include: Psalm 62; "Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my *hope* comes from him". And in Proverbs 3:5; " *Trust* in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding". Or Ezra 7:28; "I took *courage* for the hand of the Lord, my God, was upon me. Luke 8:48; has "Daughter, your *Faith* has made you well".

And finally for *Peace* - in my opinion the most important healing goal of all, there is John 14:27 " Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid".

References:

O'Brien M.E. (2011) Spirituality in Nursing: *Standing On Holy Ground*. Sudbury, MA, Jones and Bartlett

Stanford University: Chronic Disease Self Management Program; downloaded March 14, 2014 from <http://patienteducation.stanford.edu/organ/cdsites.html>.

World Health Organization: downloaded March 14, 2014 from <http://www.who.int/en>.

Cathy

APPOINTMENT - MINISTER OF DISCIPLESHIP

We warmly welcome the Rev. Deborah A. Ban as she joins the Yorkminster Park Baptist Church ministerial team on a part-time basis from March 20 to December 31, 2014. She comes with a depth of experience. Deborah holds a Master of Divinity degree from McMaster Divinity College and has served on pastoral teams in Windsor, Mississauga and Denver, Colorado as well as serving as a Chaplain at Kingston General Hospital. She has strong pastoral experience in the area of faith development, working with persons in all age groups. While in Sarnia, Deborah worked as an individual, couple and family counsellor. She has used her creative and organizational skills in facilitating and leading small groups, presenting workshops, and developing faith-based programs.

Deborah's husband, the Rev. Craig Rumble, is the pastor of Markham Baptist Church. Their daughter, Braelyn is sixteen and in grade eleven. Family is very important and one way they have time together is through adventures in travel. Outdoors Deborah likes to walk, hike and garden. She also enjoys hospitality, reading and creative projects.

Let us keep Deborah, Craig and Braelyn in our prayers during this next chapter in their family's life journey.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES - KIDS CARE MISSION PROJECT

News from Children's Ministries about the 'Kids Care' Mission Project.



We are excited to announce that this year the Children's Mission Project, '*Kids Care*' will support our STEP partner in Lebanon as they minister to Syrian refugee families. The Lebanese government estimates that there are 1 million Syrian refugees in their country. Many are suffering as they are unable to find work or adequate housing and those with children have trouble providing schooling for them. In addition, the majority of the refugees are woman and children.

The Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development – LSESD *Baptist Children and Youth Ministry* is helping by providing child-friendly safe spaces in the form of three day camps. Read what a report to CBM from LSESD (dated March 29, 2013) said about the successes of the camps:

“Working with the Syrian refugees is a challenge in itself but provides the best results for both the leaders and the children. These 100 children, and counting, walk in with

their ripped pants, smeared faces, and sagging shoulders from the burdens that they carry, and leave with hopeful eyes and a renewed sense of faith...This camp that was held by Baptist Children and Youth Ministry proved to our youth leaders what a change a little love and attention could do, especially to those who have rarely been touched with the warmth of love.”

How can we help?

You may donate a gift of money by designating it on your giving envelope or by putting it in a specially marked envelope for '**Kids Care**'. The Sunday School children will be given a calendar that has a daily reminder about giving and you may pick one up from the Center Hall if you like.

The launch of the mission project is March 30th and it runs until May 4th, 2014. Please bring your gifts to the church on or before May 4th.

Please join the children of YPBC in showing care to Syrian refugee children. Kids Care!



submitted by Miriam Little

FROM THE YPBC WOMEN'S EXECUTIVE...

LIVING LIFE WITH JOYFUL ABUNDANCE



photo by Donna Willett

On Saturday February 8, 2014 approximately a hundred women gathered at the North York Novotel eagerly anticipating a day-long retreat. Cindy Mosey was the facilitator and our focus was how to live life with joyful abundance, a hopeful topic in a long and sometimes dreary, winter! Cindy was about to guide us through five areas of interest over the course of the day.

We began with “brainworks”- our negativity bias and our need to develop an “attitude of gratitude”. We were reminded that our brain’s threat system is geared to survival

with a ‘fight or flight’ response that once a threat is detected involves an automatic physical reaction. These changes happen for good reasons but may lead to anxiety when experienced in safe situations. Perhaps to keep us out of harm’s way, our brains have a negativity bias as they are built with a greater sensitivity to unpleasant news. In fact, we are hardwired to pay more attention to the negative aspects of life and as a result, our attitudes are more influenced by downbeat news than by good news. We actually require three to five positive exchanges to balance out one negative one. Accordingly, we need to be intentional in developing the self-soothing part of our brain and the happy news is that it is possible to develop a new neural pathway. Weaving this into our brain takes a constant repetition of positive messages so that the response of this part of our brain becomes automatic and faster.

In 1 Thess. 5: 16-18, the apostle Paul exhorts us to pray without ceasing and in everything to give thanks. An attitude of gratefulness is key to the experience of joyful abundance. Practicing an “attitude of gratitude” involves being highly aware of all the good things that happen, i.e. the blessings in our lives *amidst* our circumstances. Then, we need to take the time to express thanks and appreciation for these and for the goodness in others. It also includes the realization that each moment is a gift from God. Doing this results in positive benefits for us psychologically, physically and socially and leads to joy in our lives.

To help us do this, one suggestion is to keep a gratitude list or a “journal of abundance”. To motivate us to do this, we were provided with a journal in which we could record our healing, joyful, peaceful, loving, lively, hopeful, encouraging thoughts! This journal is not for listing our worries or dislikes but is to keep track of simple joyful things that happen daily...a bright blue sky, scrambled eggs the way we like them, a life-giving interaction, etc. Our journals are to be works in progress, a process of reflecting on and hoping about things that are meaningful for us.

Following a break we engaged in a gratitude exercise where we wrote a note of gratefulness to someone of our choosing with the option of giving it to the person or not. Next, we focused on “savouring” our lives as opposed to just coping. In our technology-filled lives and rapid pace, we’re tempted to multi-task our experiences much to our detriment. With savouring, our thoughts and behaviours are intentionally used to generate, intensify or prolong positive feelings and enjoyment. It’s a process of deeply enjoying a positive experience and of the deliberate and conscious attention to the experience of pleasure. It’s about being fully in

the moment. We considered four kinds of savouring:

- *basking* – enjoying well-deserved praise and congratulations
- *thanksgiving* – expressing gratitude for our blessings
- *marvelling* – losing ourselves in the wonder of the moment
- *luxuriating* – indulging our senses

By this time we were hungry! As always, we enjoyed a delicious lunch but with a more intentional savouring of it this year! We were invited to become part of the “slow food movement”. We were encouraged to determine how hungry we were, eat slowly, pay attention to our senses, note colour, content, arrangement, express gratitude, take small bites, put down our utensils between bites, use words to describe what we were eating, pay attention to our body’s feedback and consider telling someone later about the meal we “savoured”! WHEW!

After our lunch break we turned to “optimism and hope” and joyfully participated in a positive exercise. Referencing Helen Keller we were reminded that it’s faith that leads to achievement and that nothing can be done without hope and confidence. At each of our tables there were sheets of paper with a variety of positive sayings from a wide selection of authors, including Robert Frost’s poem, *The Road Not Taken*. These we cut and pasted into our journals for ongoing reflection and inspiration in the days to come.

Another intriguing exercise was looking at and learning from an optical illusion. We were reminded that each of us can look at the same thing quite differently and that it’s possible to hold two views of the same situation. It’s also possible to initially see one view and then another or to see a view and have it slip away. It’s also possible to ignore concrete evidence! Sometimes if we force ourselves to focus differently we can see a whole different picture and at other times with assistance, we are able to see something that has eluded us.

Our final session drew us deeper into “spirituality, purpose and faith”. We referred to Psalm 1 and considered the importance of being rooted and anchored in God and his word amidst the daily challenges of our lives. Acknowledging that joyful people are more resilient, bounce back faster and have a longer life, we also affirmed that happiness/fulfillment can’t be obtained directly but is a byproduct of meditation on God’s word. It is by drawing deeply from His streams of living water that allows us to grow. And this needs to be an intentional choice.

We left that afternoon, grateful for Cindy’s input, the depth of her spirituality and her research as a therapist, into the emerging field of “positive psychology”. We also left with a sense of joyful hope, eager to develop new neural pathways and even to do some further reading and research on our own. To facilitate this, Cindy compiled a bibliography for us:

- *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment* by Martin E.P. Seligman (January 5, 2004)
- *Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-being* by Martin E.P. Seligman (February 7, 2013)
- *Gratitude Works! A 21-Day Program for Creating Emotional Prosperity* by Robert Emmons (April 1, 2013)



photo by Donna Willett

- *The How of Happiness: A New Approach to Getting the Life You Want* by Sonja Lyubomirsky (December 30, 2008)
- *Mindful Compassion: How the Science of Compassion Can Help You Understand Your Emotions, Live in the Present, ...* by Paul Gilbert and Choden (May 15/14)
- *Savoring: A New Model of Positive Experience* by Fred. B. Bryant and Joseph Veroff (June 30, 2006)

And a recommendation from YPBC Women’s Executive...

Space for God – Study and Practice of Spirituality and Prayer by Don Postema (second edition, 1997)

Don Postema is ordained in the Christian Reformed Church and carries on a ministry of spiritual formation through retreats, conferences, teaching, writing and spiritual direction. He has also served as a member of the adjunct faculty at Fuller Theological Seminary in California in the area of Christian Spirituality. While studying at Yale Divinity School with Fr. Henri Nouwen in the 80’s, Postema developed a spirituality of gratitude within his own tradition. In this beautifully formatted book he offers us a space to live gratefully in the presence of God. As one reviewer (Lewis Smedes) has commented; *Space for God* “sparkles with spiritual joy on every page. More, it is a book of uncommon visual beauty”. Two copies of this book will be available in the YPBC Gladstone Library. It can also be purchased through Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec’s READ ON Bookstore. books@readon.ca or 416-620-2934.

submitted by Jonanne Fenton

ALL-CHURCH RETREAT

Preparing to Walk with Us – our Church Retreat from May 30th to June 1st.

We have over 120 people coming to Jackson’s Point for Saturday only or the full weekend to join in an all-Church retreat. The emphasis of the retreat is to come together as a community and create links and connections that will last for years to come. We selected Jackson’s Point as it’s a beautiful facility on Lake Simcoe that will allow everyone to feel comfortable regardless whether you love being outdoors or prefer a more comfortable recreational space inside. They have an excellent kitchen that will be serving us 5 scrumptious meals. And we’ve even booked evening campfires and a Sunday morning hay ride along with other fun aspects of a weekend outside the city.

Our program emphasizes walking with Christ, walking with each other, and how our personal walks impact who we are. We’ll have an opportunity to hear about different walks, to learn from the Bible, and to be in an awe-inspiring location for prayer – individually or in groups.



At this time we have confirmed our hotel rooms and cabins for everyone who has registered. If you have now decided to register for the weekend, contact Miriam Little or Amy Charette as soon as possible, as we will be happy to try and accommodate the request by seeing if we can add a room for you.

If you are planning to come just for Saturday – we can take registrations until April 27th. Forms can be found at the Church or on the website. Please turn the form and cheque in to Amy Charette, Miriam Little, or the Church Office. The day starts at 8am with breakfast and registration followed by a great day of activities. You can depart when the evening activities are complete or stay and visit around the campfire.

Saturday-Only Fee per person including your 3 meals on Saturday:

Adult \$45 ; Teen (10-17) \$45 ; Child (3-9) \$25

We look forward to seeing many YPBC friends at the end of May.

submitted by Amy Charette

GRATEFUL FOR TEN YEARS OF MINISTRY

and trusting God for future ministry



I still rejoice at the incredible blessing conferred on me 10 years ago at my ordination here at YPBC on March 4th, 2004. My prayer then and now is that the ministry God has given to me would honour Him, build His kingdom and through me extend His love wherever He leads me. It has been my great privilege to serve God in a variety of places, often in a nursing and retirement home environment, at a funeral or wedding, or just talking to others in a group.

After 10 committed years of ministry, I still feel there is no greater honour than to be a servant of God Almighty, whether in His Church or out in the community where so many do not yet know Him. During this time I have tried to learn – and had to re-learn – what it really means to serve Him.

Some of the critical lessons I am learning include:

1. Depending fully on the sufficiency of Christ for my adequacy – that brings spiritual blessing, release and authority.
2. Seeking the approval of God rather than that of others – that

brings humility, boldness and freedom.

3. Learning, living and expounding the truths of God's Word – that brings wisdom, fruitfulness and authenticity.
4. Dying to self, and yielding to the fullness of the Holy Spirit – that brings power, anointing, discipline, joy and fullness of glory.
5. Allowing the love of God and His purity to order and to permeate relationships – that brings godliness, transparency and acceptance.
6. Casting my burdens upon the Lord who cares for me in prayer– that brings rest, peace and endurance.
7. Asking for counsel from godly people and listening carefully for ways to improve.
8. Nurturing family and faithful friends and confidants - these people will help to keep you humble and on the right track, hopefully in God's will.
9. Being prepared, staying calm and smiling a lot, and being earlier than punctual.
10. Lovingly weaving the Good News of the love of God in Christ into everything said publicly and on a one-to-one basis. All ministries can be overwhelming except for this: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." "Greater is He who is in me than He who is in the world."

May His face shine on all of us, for He who has called us will equip us for ministry, whether formal or informal. We all have a part to play, for we are His handiwork, His light and salt for an often dark and dying world. And may His Spirit so indwell us that we bring Him a blessing and glorify His name.

submitted by Suzanne Wilkinson

NEW MEMBERS

Metzi Guarana

Metzi Gaurana was raised in a Christian home and attended Christian schools in the Philippines. She received Christ as her Saviour when a teenager. The major influences in her life are her mother and the writings of Corrie Ten Boom, especially their emphases on serving others.

She came to Canada three years ago and hopes to make this country her permanent home. Metzi is presently looking after four boys - a job that requires much patience and prayer! I am sure they find her as friendly and effervescent as others in our congregation have found her.

Metzi was told about Yorkminster Park by a friend. She started attending in March of last year and especially appreciates the solemnity of the worship service and the warmth and spirit of the congregation. She is also impressed by the focus on community service.

Metzi wants to be involved in serving the community - she wants to do as well as learn. She has attended the Discipleship classes and likes the emphasis placed on "love and respect". She joins by Christian experience.

Jim Youngson

Jim Youngson came to us from Waverley Road Baptist Church where he was organist for over 50 years. He also served at various times as the Treasurer, a Deacon, the Bible School General Secretary and a Trustee. Jim worked for both the Toronto Board of Education and the North York Board of Education. He ended his professional career as the chief Co-ordinator of Special Education.

His wife Joan died one month short of their sixtieth wedding anniversary. Jim has two grown daughters and a grown son. He was drawn to Yorkminster Park because of the music and the dignity and beauty of the worship service. He had also worked with several people within our congregation and felt glad in being able to renew those friendships again.

TRANSITIONS

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

Birth

Evan William Harris *s of Noriko and Matthew Harris*

Infant Dedication

Simon Jacob Finn *s of Leanne and Stuart Finn (grandson of John and Valerie Gerber)*

New Members

Metzi Guarna

Jim Youngson

Death

Florence Morton

Yorkminster Park Gallery Photography Show 2014 June 7 - August 14



YPBC members, adherents, and friends are invited to submit two images to a juried group show, **PHOTOGRAPHY 2014**. Details are available on entry forms in the gallery, the narthex or through the church office.

WHAT ARE WE TO THINK ABOUT HELL ?

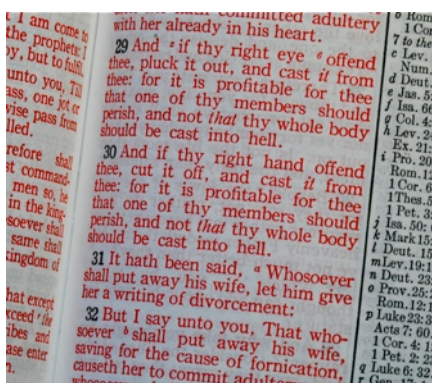
We find the concept of hell and eternal punishment difficult. It makes us uncomfortable and sometimes it embarrasses us, especially when people ask why a loving God would condemn people so harshly. Usually, they have a medieval picture in mind of souls in agony as the flames burn their flesh without consuming them.

We do not want to align ourselves with those who speak of hell with glee and use it to manipulate people by eliciting overwhelming fear designed to evoke a positive response to Jesus. Such an approach involves a plea for self-preservation and the universal desire to avoid eternal agony rather than an invitation based on grace and God's extravagant generosity. As well, we have difficulty reconciling the love of God with punishment that goes on eternally, and seems disproportional to what has been done for a finite period. Yet we realize that the Bible and Jesus speak of hell directly and indirectly. This issue troubles us. Many have tried to recognize hell but reduce the terror it brings. Several scholars find the doctrine unethical and the equivalent of child abuse.

Hebrew Concept

Ancient people, including Israel believed that the dead retained their consciousness and were aware that they were separated from the presence of YHWH. Hell, they believed, was a place located under the earth and various other places and once there, no means of escape existed. Over time, the word for hell became 'Sheol' or 'Hades'.

New Testament Concept



There is no getting away from the fact that in the New Testament there many references to (i) everlasting judgement, (ii) everlasting fire, (iii) everlasting chains, (iv) outer darkness and several other symbolic images that suggest retribution, absence from righteousness, and unalterable separation from God.

Further, these images underline the immensity of the evil associated with rebellion against God.

The holiness of God requires judgement; otherwise, his absolute holiness is compromised. Nevertheless, some theologians have turned themselves into a pretzel trying to reconcile the fact of hell with a loving God. Some, like John Stott, argue for annihilation (perishing) while others, like William Barclay, believe that ultimately, no person is eternally lost (universalism).

Wayne Gruden insists that the reality of hell should never be a reality we celebrate nor should it provide an emotional release during times of hostility. When people persecute the church we must not be thinking, "You are going to get yours!"

"We must believe that eternal punishment is true and just, yet we should also long that even people who most soberly persecute the church should come to faith in Christ and thus escape eternal damnation." (Wayne Gruden, Systematic Theology, page 1153).

C.S. Lewis: The Great Divorce

Lewis saw hell as a road self-chosen that begins on earth.

"Not all who choose the wrong road perish, but their rescue consists in being put back on the right road, never just 'going on'. If we insist on keeping Hell (or even earth), we shall not see Heaven: if we accept Heaven, we shall not be able to retain even the smallest and most intimate souvenirs of Hell. Earth, if chosen instead of Heaven, will turn out to be a region of Hell: if put second to heaven, it will be found out to be the beginning of Heaven itself" (Walter Hooper, C.S. Lewis, page 282).

Some Additional Thoughts From Timothy Keller For Consideration

1. In modern culture, divine judgment is an offensive doctrine.
2. We live in a culture of moral relativism; therefore a concept of a God who loves us and supports us no matter what we do is acceptable.

3. Ancients believed that there was a moral order built into the world; therefore, they expected eternal consequences. Modernity believes only in the natural world, which can be shaped to fit our desires.
4. Modernity gives us the right to determine the categories of right and wrong.
5. Loving a person causes you to be angry when you see them ruining their life. A loving person judges out of their love.
6. Ultimate justice rendered by God enables us not to take justice into our own hands.
7. A society that believes in a judging God is less, not more, brutal.
8. "Hell, then, is the trajectory of a soul, living a self-absorbed, self-centred life, going on and on forever" (Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God*, page 68-83).


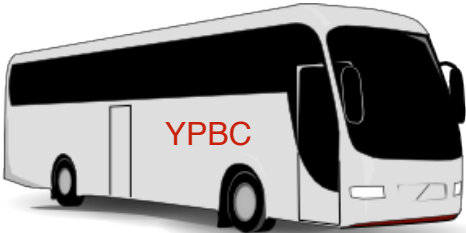

Some More Nuggets From N.T. Wright

1. The word hell conjures up an image gained more from medieval imagery than from the earliest Christian writings.
2. The most common New Testament word sometimes translated by hell is Gehenna. Gehenna was a place, not just an idea: it was the rubbish heap outside the north-west corner of the old city of Jerusalem.
3. When Jesus used this word he was telling Israel that "unless they turned back from their hopeless and rebellious dreams of establishing God's kingdom in their own terms, not the least through armed revolt against Rome, then the Roman juggernaut would do what large, greedy, and ruthless empires have always done to smaller countries whose resources they covet or whose strategic location they are anxious to guard".
5. There must be such a thing as judgement. Judgement - the sovereign declaration that this is good and to be upheld and vindicated, and that is evil and to be condemned - is the only alternative to chaos.
6. Hell is the reality in which "all that distorts God's good and lovely creation and in particular of all that defaces his image-bearing human creatures."
7. Sin stems "from the primal fault, which is idolatry, worshipping that which is not God as if it were."
8. The reality of hell is avoided by "a specific turning away from such a way of life, those who persist are conniving at their own ultimate dehumanization" with the result that they "cease to bear the divine image at all." (N.T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, page 175-182).

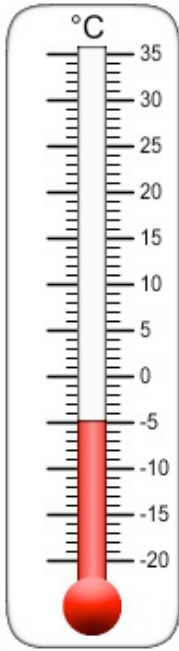
Recognized Christian thinkers like Wayne Gruden, C.S. Lewis, Timothy Keller and N.T. Wright find the reality of hell in the Biblical text and each draws the conclusion that the redemptive story told in Scripture makes little sense if the concept of hell is deleted. They agree that hell is a destiny in which its residents are there by choice. They all conclude that hell is the reality in which every aspect of God's image is lost. Lastly, hell's residents are not there because they have piled up too many sins to be forgiven. Rather, like the Pharisee in Jesus' parable, they are committed to the notion of 'self-salvation' based on 'good works' rather than the underserved mercy of God.

We should find no joy in accepting humankind's radical freedom to reject the benefits of Jesus' sin bearing death but, on the other hand, we celebrate the truth that in Jesus Christ, God himself suffers as a means of recovering every person's intended humanity.

submitted by Peter Ferguson (for study and discussion in the Berean Bible Class. For dialogue contact Peter at p.c.ferguson@outlook.com)

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| <p>12 June 2014 Stratford Festival "Crazy For You" Lunch at Keystone Alley Cost \$ 160</p>  |  | <p>16 October 2014 Shaw Festival "Philadelphia Story" Lunch at Prince of Wales Cost \$ 150</p>  |
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OUT OF THE COLD AT YPBC



Out Of The Cold at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church was a great place for our guests to call home every Wednesday of the week for the winter season.

I was privileged to work for TD bank for 50 years. In 2013, when I decided to retire, I thought maybe it was time to try something new now that I had a lot of time on my hands. On several occasions in the past, I have had conversations with people in our church who had given of their time to help with the “Out Of The Cold program”. Since I am a morning person, I offered my help for the breakfast shift. Not knowing how the system worked, I was surprised when the coordinator sent me a schedule that had me working once every four weeks, to which I responded that I wanted to volunteer every week. She happily assigned me to each of the four teams.

On my first morning shift, as per my habit for the past 50 years, I arrived earlier than normal and not knowing the routine, waited until the rest of the team showed up. When they did it was full speed ahead with every-one knowing what was required of them. The kitchen became alive with activity. The goal was to prepare the food in a timely manner for our guests, who would be awakening in a very short time and looking to be fed. I was given an assignment to do, then assisted with the set up in the dining room and then served the food.

As I work with each team, I have been able to observe the subtle differences of each group. All are led by great captains who provide guidance and collaborate with their crew to decide what is going to be the menu for the day. Many of the team members have been involved with OOTC for several years so they are pros at knowing what needs to be done and the camaraderie between them is incredible.

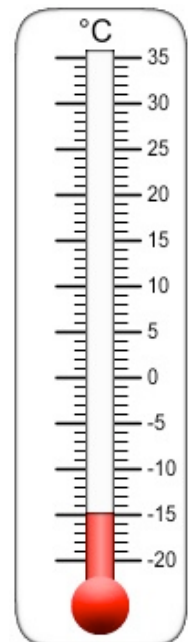
We have three staple items; muffins with melted cheese, bacon and hard-boiled eggs. Each team has their own specialty; porridge, french toast, fried or scrambled eggs. In addition to the hot food, they are given a choice of two cereals, toast, coffee, tea and apple juice as well as fresh fruit.

When our guests arrive in the dining room they are greeted in a warm and compassionate manner. Many, who are regulars, are addressed by their names. I have come to know many of them over the past few weeks and have learned each of their little eccentricities. We have a young man who will not touch anything with his hands and carries his own dishes with him. We have a gentleman who has an imaginary girl-friend who always happens to be out of the room when the food is being served so he brings two plates for food. You learn very quickly to listen and not respond to everything that takes place in the dining room.

While most of our guests have been with us overnight, we do get some who come in just for the breakfast and in talking to some of them, the reason is that they do not feel safe sleeping with a large group for fear of having their stuff taken.

For the most part, our guests are well behaved; they sit and eat their meals, chat amongst themselves or to themselves. Security is on the scene but rarely called upon other than to remind the group of when it is time to leave. We get many a “ thank you “ for the breakfast as they leave the church and head out to face another challenging day.

I have had my eyes opened by being involved with the Out Of the Cold Program, it has been a reality check for me and has made me realize how thankful I am to God for the life that I have and the realization that but for a twist of fate it could have gone the other way. The bottom line is that we are all God’s children and therefore we should look after each other to the best of our ability. OOTC allows me to give something back to my fellow man.



submitted by Albert (Al) Livy

YORKMINSTER PARK GALLERY

LAURA CULIC – *Sojourn*

Opening reception: Sunday, April 6, 12:30-2pm

Art Speaks: Sunday, April 13, 9:30-10:30am



April - Yorkminster Park Gallery is excited and pleased to introduce our first exhibition of encaustic paintings. LAURA CULIC uses pigments mixed with hot wax (encaustic) to create her luminous landscapes. Layers of wax are alternately built up and scraped away in an intuitive process of concealing and revealing. Within the many layers of scored and scratched wax Culic suggests elements of nature, strata of rock, hints of mosses and lichens, sunlight, and reflections on water. Over time, the surface of a painting accumulates character, acquires a unique history and develops a presence. In this way, each of Laura Culic's paintings becomes an environment unto itself.

Culic paints full-time in her Toronto studio. She

describes her work as “a response to my deep and abiding love of the natural world in Ontario.” To nurture her restless spirit and to refresh her inspiration, the artist takes long motorcycle trips, camps with her children, paddles and hikes.

YPBC's Art Committee has chosen Laura Culic to talk about her work on Sunday April 13, 9:30-10:30am in the Gladstone library. 'ART SPEAKS' is a series of public conversations held between a featured artist and John Franklin, arts philosopher. After a brief interview the floor is opened for discussion. This is a great chance to ask your questions about art.

May is the month of 'CONTACT,' Toronto's city-wide display of photography. Our participating artist is Dr. Peter Alberti, father of YPBC member Andrew Alberti. After retirement, Dr. Alberti took his medical skills and his camera into the Eastern world.

His exhibition with our gallery is titled *Aspects of Asia* and is an exquisite sample of the wealth of stories he encountered.

June through mid-August photography continues in the gallery. YPBC members, adherents, and friends are invited to submit two images to a juried group show, PHOTOGRAPHY 2014. Details are available on entry forms in the gallery, the narthex or through the church office.