



Go into all the world
and preach
the Good News
to everyone.



FROM PETER'S PEN
IN PRAISE OF THE CHOIR

One Sunday afternoon several years ago a young man arrived at the church and introduced himself to me. He was a Christian musician from Nigeria who was visiting Canada and wanted to see

Yorkminster Park Baptist Church as he had heard our choir on a radio broadcast in Africa and loved the hymns they sang. In fact, listening to our choir, he heard for the first time the hymn that became his favourite; Ye Servants of God. It was an amazing encounter as he took pictures in the Sanctuary and sent them to his family far away to show that he was finally in the church he had longed to see. It was an amazing moment that would never have happened without the tireless devotion of our choir over many years.

I often meet people who upon learning the identity of the church I serve tell me they love coming to Carols by Candlelight and often recount a tale of just how important that has been. These are people who rarely if ever enter a church, but again thanks to our choir they enthusiastically come to Yorkminster Park at Christmas.

Yorkminster Park has long been blessed by its tradition of choral excellence, but behind that tradition there has always been a significant group of gifted singers eager to work hard together to strengthen the church's worship. Their offering of music consistently lifts all of our spirits to another level evoking beauty, wonder, mystery and faith. And these are people who not only sing together, but who also laugh together and have a lot of fun along the way. Their singing has often led to travel tours abroad in which the friendships grow deeper still.

In their ministry they become for us not only an instrument supporting our worship but also a glimpse of what the church is at its best. Each singer's individual voice disappears into the

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*Blessed be the God and
Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ! According to his
great mercy, he has caused
us to be born again to a
living hope through the
resurrection of Jesus Christ
from the dead.*

- 1 Peter 1:3





whole. One of the reasons they wear robes is to appear as a unit rather than a collection of individuals. While each voice is different, each singer sings at the same volume and comes in on the same beat resulting in the harmonious sound. It is like the body of Christ in which we all have our own gifts but we work together in a unified spirit. And like the body of Christ, each chorister looks up and follows the conductor, just as the church looks up to follow Christ.

The choir is amazing. It is no wonder Paul McCartney recently said, “I love to hear a choir. I love the humanity. To see the faces of real people devoting themselves to a piece of music. I like the teamwork. It makes me feel optimistic about the human race when I see them cooperating like that.” Our choir always leaves me feeling optimistic and hopeful.

One of the things I have long appreciated about our choir is that they truly do look up and follow Christ. Through the years they have always welcomed newcomers openly and supported their members through rough times. Members of our choir have often also been active in other areas of ministry in the church. Their members sit on boards and committees and are active in services like Out of the Cold and Meals on Wheels. What’s more, time and again, they have gone the extra mile in singing at special services and extra events.

There was a time when Thursday night, the night most church choirs rehearsed, was

known as Choir Night in Canada, but there are fewer and fewer church choirs in Canada. Some churches have opted for other styles of music where the choir is phased out.

In many other churches the choirs have become increasingly smaller and only capable of doing simpler forms of choral music. Many church choirs even disappeared after the pandemic. But our choir came back and what a blessing they continue to be.

However, this past year has been especially hard for our choir. Five members of the choir have died in the last year; Rhena Petch, Phil Penney, Phil Irwin, Marilyn Brady and Doug Bull. Phil Irwin, Marilyn and Doug have all died since the New Year and while the choir sings and laughs together so well, recently there have been many tears.

So, the next time you see a choir member, please thank them. Better yet, if you or someone you know may be interested in learning more about what is involved in singing in the choir, please speak with William Maddox. New singers will not only find the choir welcoming and supportive, but your life will be filled with music and meaning, laughter and love.

The Retirement of John Kershaw

John Kershaw, who has served as our Director of Operations over the last five years, recently announced that he will be retiring as of the end of June, 2024. When John joined our team, he

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brought his skills as a chartered accountant and many years of experience in leading the national operations of the Salvation Army Thrift shops. As a member of our team, he has offered wise counsel and a strong and steady presence in the life of the church. He helped guide us through the challenges of the pandemic and during his time we established strong relationships with several new tenants.

We are very grateful to John, but the good news is that he and Marilyn continue as members of the church family and so we will continue to be blessed by their fellowship, friendship and service.

A Special Thanks

Yorkminster Park has hosted a funeral or memorial service for a dearly loved member of the church. It is always a meaningful and

helpful time for the family who are appreciative of the comfort and support of the church.

A large part of that support is provided by a group of women and men organized by Judy MacDonald, Rhoda Hill and Debbie Ivison. These volunteers welcome and guide visitors around the church, offer hospitality at the reception and answer countless questions. Al Livy and Ruth Farrow also faithfully attend to the Narthex and duties of ushering.

Above and beyond all else, these volunteers help create an atmosphere where both the bereaved family members and the many visitors to the church sense the love of the people of the church for those who are in need. Thank you to each and every one of these special volunteers!

Blessings,
Peter Holmes

SUMMER PREACHING SERIES

We are pleased to announce our line-up of guest ministers for 2024.



July 7
The Rev. Laura de Jong
Pastor, Christian Reformed Church of North America



July 14
The Rev. Dr. Andrew Stirling
Ambassador, Canadian Bible Society



July 21
The Rev. Dr. Stuart Blythe
John Gladstone Professor of Preaching and Worship, Acadia Divinity College



July 28
The Rev. Dr. Casey Barton
Assistant Faculty and Director of the Pastoral Ministry Program, Lancaster Bible College



August 4
The Rev. Dr. Das Sydney
President, Canadian Council of Churches



August 11
The Rev. Dr. Joni Sancken
Butler Chair of Homiletics and Hermeneutics, Vancouver School of Theology



August 18
The Rev. Dale Rose
Former Minister of Pastoral Care, Yorkminster Park, 2012 to 2021.

For more information about our guest ministers visit yorkminsterpark.com





FROM THE MINISTER OF PASTORAL CARE AND DISCIPLESHIP

Over the last six weeks, many of us in the congregation have been studying the Lord's Prayer, using Adam Hamilton's book by that same name as a launch for many discussions. One of the most common responses I have heard to this year's study over the last few weeks is how wonderful it has been to go slowly, to really savor the prayer, line by line, word by word.

With all the wonderful inventions that we have to make our lives easier over the last century, including the explosion of mass communications throughout the world, it has been a blessing to ponder on what Jesus has to teach us through the prayer he first taught his disciples, and through them and down through the centuries, us.

We often note that Jesus begins by reminding us of our common family background, through praying as one to, "Our Father." It is beautiful each and every time we pray together on Sundays. I love to hear everyone's voices as we pray, as beautiful as any hymn we will ever sing.

During the season of Lent, we notice in a special way how our Bible studies work to bring us together like a network, to keep us together, so to speak, well beyond our Sunday worship. In the thick of the pandemic, we found that to keep studying together, really to continue nurturing this blessing of community that it might be a very good idea to explore new ways to meet.

Like many since the pandemic ended, we have found that the Zoom technology we used was

both a blessing and a curse because of course the technology makes it so easy to give in to the temptation to stay home. The same could be said for the webcast.

Prior to the pandemic, it was so helpful to be able to take part in the service when we found ourselves shut-in but when we all became shut-in through the long Covid season it was hard for many of us to build back our social muscles again. I wonder if people long ago mused as I am now, on the great social changes that happened when telephones were invented and instead of traveling to someone's home to visit with them or writing a letter if one could not travel, people began to just pick up the phone.

One of the questions that we have looked at over this Lenten season is whether God tempts us, or in other words does God really lead us in temptation. The Apostle James would say most adamantly, "NO!". But with that said, we do know that God allows us to be tempted and tested and in an article in which I wish to conclude by giving great thanks that our community survived a great test, my hope and prayer is that we will continue - after this wonderful season, when about 90 or so of us have joined Lenten Study groups, and families have joined in the study through Family Ministries - to stay active.

Outside of Lent we still have many opportunities to join together, not only through attending one of our eight ongoing Bible studies, but through Dorcas, the YPBC Book Club, the Prayer Shawl Committee, Tuesday morning prayers and so much more.

If you are new to the church, do not hesitate to contact me by phone at 416-922-1240 or by email at pwillis@yorkminsterpark.com.

I would be more than happy to help you find a place or places where you can join in the life at YPBC well beyond Sundays.

It is so easy to give in to the temptation to not go out and be with others, especially when it is not that long ago, that we could not go anywhere at all, but let us give thanks that time is starting to fade from memory, that long season when we

were forced to be apart. In its place, we have a new day; a new life in Christ that we can freely share together to the Glory of God.

God bless all of you through Easter and beyond with good health, community and the love of God.

The Rev. Paula Willis

CHECK OUT THE **GLADSTONE LIBRARY!**

We have a number of authors in the congregation, some current members, some past members.

Come and find them in the library. There will also be a display of titles on the Narthexbook cart, which you can borrow in April.

Here is a selection:



John Gladstone

Various Sermons



John Torrance

A Year in Prayer



Barbara Fuller

Various Bible Studies on New Testament Books



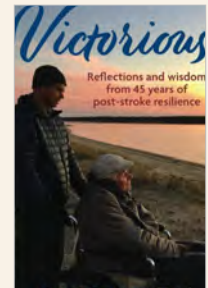
Jackie W. Chung

In the Light I Rise



Siobhan Carlin

Uncover Your Light: Volume Two Chapter 4



Bruno Fuemin

Victorious: Reflections and wisdom from 45 years of post-stroke resilience

We also have extra copies of some of the more current books for sale.

The Library is open before and after Sunday service. You can contact the library by calling **416-922-1167**, extension **241**, or by email at library@yorkminsterpark.com.

You can search the catalogue at: <https://www.librarycat.org/lib/YPBlib>.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Myriam Touré

Myriam Touré has been worshipping here with us at YPBC since October 2023, along with her wonderful children, Kenan, Isaac and Charlotte. Born in the Paris suburb of Argenteuil, France, Myriam lived and worked in several countries (Belgium, England, USA), before relocating with her husband and kids to Edmonton, Alberta and later settling in Toronto. She is a consultant in the pharmaceutical industry.

Now a divorcee, Myriam is grateful for finding a church like Yorkminster Park. It is a place that she and her children can call home, one she says that provides both “family balance” and a welcoming place to worship. “It takes a village to raise a child”, she says, recalling a famous African proverb.

She first came to faith through reading her mother’s Bible. She was baptized in the city of Paris. Myriam considers YPBC a vital resource in the spiritual formation and upbringing of her family. Her children are all actively involved in the YPBC Family Ministry. She reports they are loving their experiences there. She attends services regularly. In our worship, she enjoys a time for prayer, spiritual refreshment and sustenance away from work.

Myriam joined with other women at the recent retreat hosted by Yorkminster Park Women. She now looks forward to getting to know more YPBC congregants, people with whom to worship, socialize and pray.

She would join Yorkminster Park by transfer of church membership from West Meadows Baptist Church in Edmonton.



Chong & Audrey Ling

Chong grew up in a Methodist home and was baptized as an infant. He tells us that he came to a very deep faith through an evangelist in Malaysia. Audrey was raised in a Baptist home and was baptized by immersion at 14.

Chong worked in Canada as a mechanical and structural engineer, with expertise also in electrical engineering. Audrey worked as a church secretary in a United Church in Sudbury. They have been married for 52 years, and have two daughters and three grandchildren, all of whom live in Toronto.

In his retirement, Chong heard a call of God to do street evangelism and did so for nine years. He has now retired from that calling. During his years as a street preacher, he distributed some 60,000 booklets and prayed with 9,000 people.

Chong and Audrey are accepted into church membership at YPBC by Christian experience.



In 2014 I was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes. Since then, I have gone through many struggles, but God has been present to me in many ways during these times. This is part of my story of faith.

I first remember feeling the presence of Christ when I was 7, in Roman Catholic Primary School. I attended partly because of the French Immersion programming that the school offered but can trace part of my earliest Christian formation to this time as well. I especially remember the importance of prayer during those earliest years of school, and all students were expected to participate in the religious life of the school community.

A real change in my life happened over Easter of 2014. I had gone into diabetic shock after having been sick for a long time and ended up in the ER and then the ICU. I almost died several times during the first day in the hospital, which also happened to be Maundy Thursday. In one of the moments of unconsciousness, I was aware of being in front of God, looking at the gates of heaven and it was as if I was being given a choice to come back. However, in the years that followed, I was diagnosed with PTSD and carried a lot of anger towards God. How could He have let all these things happen to me?

I started a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance at the University of Toronto in the Fall of 2012.

During those first few months, I struggled a bit and my mother kept suggesting I join a church here. In January of 2013, I was invited to join the choir at Kingsway Lambton United Church in Etobicoke.

I then spent some time singing at Trinity-St. Paul's (TSP) and occasionally sang at other churches during that time, including dropping in on service at Yorkminster Park after service at TSP, where I would often be able to catch the sermon. I joined the choir at Yorkminster Park in 2017. In 2018 I met Jackie, and we were married in August 2019. I felt like I had come home in many ways. I also finished my BMus and took a leap of faith and started an MDiv at Wycliffe College.

Throughout this time, though, I was struggling. I was learning how to adjust to living with Type 1 Diabetes, and I was also trying to learn how to live with the emotional and spiritual impact. I had to reach out for help. A lot. Through this support, including from YPBC and Wycliffe College, not to mention Jackie, I began to develop a vocabulary of lament. I learned how to confront my anger with God. I learned how to face intense feelings, including the guilt of having hurt a lot of the people closest to me.

This Easter will be the 10th anniversary. The amount of growth that I have experienced, and the very real experiences of God throughout this time has shown me the very real presence of sin and pain which exist in this world. Yet, it has also shown me the Grace that God extends to all of us in Christ Jesus.

Being a follower of Christ is a life-long endeavour, that we can embark on because God first loved us. And it is this that is our hope, as the story and journey don't end with sin, and ultimately death, but with the promise of God's love sealed in the Blood of Jesus, the Christ.

YPBC WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

THE GIFT OF HOPE

and why it matters



On Saturday, February 10th, over a hundred women gathered in Cameron Hall for an eagerly anticipated day apart in God's wrap-around presence". It was the first in-person women's retreat held at YPBC since the pandemic and was facilitated by the Rev. Dr. Emily Bisset, our neighbour and Minister of Calvin Presbyterian Church. Our theme for the day was "**Hope and Why it Matters**".

Dr. Bisset began her talk by considering the pros and cons of optimism and pessimism. She explained that Optimists tend to focus on the positive aspects of a situation while pessimists on the other hand are more inclined to see the negative side of things and anticipate the worst outcome. We learned that having a pessimistic mindset is not necessarily a bad thing.

She further explained that confusion arises when we equate hope with optimism and lament with pessimism. When we do this, we ignore the Psalms of Lament. Lament is when we recognize we are sad, angry, or despairing.

Unfortunately, we've got the notion that there's no room in the church for sadness and disappointment. It's brave to lament—it is not pessimism—it's authentic and makes room for hope and makes space to hear the whispers of God and for possibilities to come.

To face the world as followers of Christ we need hope. The problem comes when we divorce hope from grace. As God's people, we need to make space for lament in the church. Dr Bisset pointed out that some churches have embraced the ideologies of positive thinking such as The Prosperity Gospel, Solar Christianity, and Progress Driven Christianity. These ideologies distort the Gospel and leave no room for lament or pessimism. There needs to be room for suffering and nonjudgmental care in the Church.

Here are some powerful takeaways from her teaching:

Grace is the powerhouse which grounds us in love and gives us hope.

The world views optimism and positive thinking as the answer to success but this philosophy about life does not sustain us through deep disappointment or grief. We need grace, the unmerited favour of God, which is the access to faith, a gift from God that grounds us in love, and gives us hope. Grace is what accompanies us when we are saddest and runs deeper than optimism ever could. Grace is the powerhouse. Faith is the access to grace that allows us to take risks and allows us to hear the Holy Spirit whisper "I am holding on to you".

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Faith sustains us in the heights of joy and the depths of despair.

Christian Hope is Hope in God's Future!

Hope is an answer to lament without negating it. Ephesians 1:17-19 is not talking about optimism but about being able to see with new eyes, *“so that with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you're able to know the hope to which God has called you”* Jeremiah 29:11

assures us that *“God knows the plans he has for us, plans for our welfare, not for harm but to give us a future with hope.”* In his beautiful prayer for his readers in Ephesians 3:16-21, Paul describes the full experience of God's grace, the source of power we have for hope, not what we can do on our own with optimism, but what we can do with a power that doesn't come from us but from God as a gift. It is love that surpasses knowledge. Christian hope is hope in God's future, not ours and it's based on God's ability.

HOPE BRINGS US:

1 Strength in our inner being.

Romans 5:1-5 dispels misguided ideas about inner strength. We get strength in our inner being through hope. It involves suffering, lament and endurance. Hope doesn't disappoint us. Douglas John Hall, an emeritus professor of theology at McGill University, reminds us that hope is grace - it's Gospel. We're not asked to manifest strength. Hope gives us strength in our inner being as it trusts in the love of God in which we're rooted and grounded.

2 The ability to rest.

Hope looks at our lives with stark honesty and acknowledges that the world is grim. Jesus, the embodied promises of God, however, is the evidence for what the world will look like—where the future is shone back into our presence as Jurgen Moltmann, the German Reformed Theologian, believes. And when we understand and trust that hope comes from God, we can rest. Hope frees us from the burden of thinking it's all up to us. It's not—it's up to God and God is faithful. Augustine understood long ago that God has made us for himself and that our hearts are restless until they rest in Him.

3 Inspiration for Action.

Daniel Migliore, an American theologian and author, states that hope provokes us to acts of love and service and Moltmann insists that those who hope in Christ can no longer put up with reality as it is. Hope compels us to struggle and take risks for justice, freedom and peace for all people. We're called to be witnesses to God's coming reality. It is creative and allows us to persist when others have given up. God's imagination ignites our imagination. It encourages us to search for, act out and advocate for God's new world of justice and peace now!

Our hope is in the triumph of our crucified and risen Lord, trusting that God's triumph will prevail. Hope also surprises us and sustains us when things don't work out.

Before we went home that day, Emily encouraged us to believe that we have baptized imaginations and that our imaginations are paired with God's.

In small groups, we were challenged to consider and discuss how hope affects us personally or how it changes our optimistic or pessimistic outlooks. What are the things that bring us hope?

- What strengthens us in our inner being?
- What gives us the ability to rest, particularly from anxiety or worry?
- What inspires us to action?

Empowered and reassured by the honesty, richness and depth of her teaching and our conversations throughout our day apart, we returned home claiming a hope that does not disappoint us, and this is because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us - God's gracious gift that matters for our lives and for the world he so loves.

*Submitted by Jonanne Fenton
On behalf of YPBC Women's Ministries*



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 In the High Arctic**



A LECTURE BY

MARLIS BUTCHER

Author and Adventurer

Friday, April 12, 2024 | 7:00pm

Cameron Hall, 1585 Yonge Street, Toronto

(also available as a live webcast)

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 Ambassador and MP Chris Alexander**



THE RT. HON. JOE CLARK

Former Prime Minister of Canada

Friday, May 10, 2024 | 7:00pm

Cameron Hall, 1585 Yonge Street, Toronto

(also available as a live webcast)

MISSIONS UPDATE



Matthew
House
Toronto

NEWS FROM MATTHEW HOUSE

For 25 years, the Matthew House (MH) home at 981 Dundas Street West has been the first Canadian home for hundreds of refugee claimants. Yorkminster Park is honored to support Matthew House over many years.



RENOVATIONS

Over the last 8 months staff and volunteers have put in new floors and a new staircase, updated the bathrooms, and even put in a new kitchen (pictured). And with the basement renovation underway to create fresh, new living spaces, the end of this renovation is in sight.

David is the first post-renovation resident. Executive Director of MH Jacky Tuinstra notes, “With spring David can look forward to cherry blossoms in Trinity Bellwoods Park. It shows that new beginnings are always just around the corner, waiting for the right moment and support to bloom”.



MUSTAFA'S STORY

A few years ago, Mustafa arrived in Toronto from Afghanistan. Welcomed by Matthew House, his first impression was that it felt like home, “Matthew House is a place full of good people,” said Mustafa, “it’s a shoulder to rest your head, support when you have no one, and a school for guidance.”

At Matthew House, he found a community that transformed his life. “I met some friends from

Matthew House who changed my heart and blessed me with good habits of helping others, volunteering, and bringing smiles to others.”

Today, Mustafa has a great job in his field through the support of the Matthew House community, and he regularly volunteered for over two years at the Dundas home. His wife and young child have been able to join him in Canada and are doing well.



Who is my neighbour?



Love in Action

The Yorkminster Park Baptist Church (YPBC) Out of the Cold (OOTC) 2023/24 season was eventful and busy: **over 2500 hot dinners** and **2500 take-away lunches** were prepared for our unhoused and precariously-housed guests. This season, YPBC also offered overnight warm shelter to about **700 guests** and a dedicated team of foot washers provided much-needed relief to about **30 guests** each evening.

We could not have succeeded without the generous financial and volunteer support of the YPBC community and the community at large. Six shifts of volunteers, totalling about 75 people were committed to serving their neighbours for 23 weeks - a wonderful example of our ministry of hospitality's mission of showing love in action.

Thank you all for your prayers and generous donations of much-needed items; your on-going financial support ensures that we can continue to provide our less fortunate neighbours with food, TTC fares, and basic necessities. To donate, visit yorkminsterpark.com > **Donate online** or use your phone to scan the QR Code. Select **"Out of the Cold"** from the pull-down menu.



A special thanks to Family Ministries for the preparation of notes and treats for our guests for both Christmas and Easter - how blessed are we to have such expressions of ❤️ from our children!

SAVE-THE-DATE

**YORKMINSTER
PARK DAY**

AT THE



**Daily Bread
Food Bank**

Join The Fight To End Hunger.

May 4, 2024, 9:00am to 2:00pm

TEAM-YPBC will be sorting donated food and learning more about food insecurity in Toronto

For more information, call the church office at **416-922-1167** or email office@yorkminsterpark.com.



Lighthouse Kids DOXA Youth



Being a part of Family Ministries and witnessing changed lives because of Christ, is an honour and a joy for us all. We see God's hand on everything. We see God's love and grace poured out over and over. Our **Christmas season** was a gift because we have all received the most incredible gift, Jesus Christ. It was a blessing to watch families participate in the various Christmas Services offering up praises to God and humbled hearts to serve. We are thankful for the number of families that were a part of the **Lighting of the Advent Candle Wreath** and the children and youth who **read scripture, painted murals, sang in the Chorister's Choir** and made **Christmas Cards** along with food donations to raise funds for the **COTH**

Food Bank. We had an awesome **FM Christmas Party** that filled Cameron Hall with families, food, gifts and good cheer. Not only did we have a fun time celebrating together, we also **donated 35 Gifts Cards to give to OOTC guests.** We are grateful for all of our families and their faithfulness in coming to church to worship God, learn more about His love and truths and how to walk in the ways of Jesus. We thank all of our FM volunteers who give of their time and gifts to serve and plant faith seeds in eager hearts.

We so enjoy our fellowship times together and have become richer for it. Our **New Year's Luncheon** filled the upstairs Youth Zone Area with families and loads of joy, food, love, laughter and prayer. We value these special times together as they support how we build one another up in faith and encourage each other with God's love and prayer.

Family Ministries played a big role in the **Annual Shrove Tuesday, Pastor's Pancake Supper** by coordinating it and involving various people to serve and share in this grand event. We raised over \$1,300.00 for the **COTH Food Bank** along with food donations and also had rich fellowship time together ... and let us not forget how delicious our Pastor's Pancakes were!

Lighthouse Kids continues to **bear much fruit** as children are engaged in weekly Bible lessons that include praise songs, activities, prayer and discussion. It is an absolute delight to witness their eagerness to learn and soak in God's love. Leticia and I continue to meet weekly on Tuesdays with children, parents and other leaders for our FM Zoom Time. This is a great way for us to strengthen our faith and connect further with God through prayer and discussion mid-week.



DOXA Youth ROCKS!!! We are so blessed by our youth here at YPBC. They are faithful in coming to our weekly Bible Study Time and engage in faith discussion and prayer. They also enjoy giving and serving at various events and services and do so with a servant heart. Our youth partake in music, scripture reading, helping in Lighthouse Kids, painting murals, setting and cleaning up for food events and so much more. We were also blessed to have a group of Jr. youth attend the **CBOQ**



Avalanche Retreat in January and a group of High School youth attend the **CBOQ Blizzard Retreat** in February. Both Youth Retreats were held at Muskoka Woods. We eagerly give a special thank you to Hazel Reyes and Isaac Me11sam for being their groups leaders. They enjoyed times of worship, group discussions, bus rides, food and loads of winter games and activities together.



I also want to give an extra thank you to **Lutzen Riedstra** who has served here as our Youth Ministry Assistant for close to 3 years. Lutzen is stepping down from this role to focus more on his studies and other responsibilities. We will continue to see Lutzen and his wife Jackie as they are very much involved in the life of the church. Lutzen has blessed us with His time and gifts and we are grateful to have served alongside him. On March 3rd, we had a FM luncheon and during that time, we gave our gifts and prayers of thanks to Lutzen.

We have an exciting event coming up on Saturday, April 20th !! **Faith Sticks** is a family friendly faith night with the **Toronto Marlies** hosted by CBOQ! This is an amazing opportunity to watch a great afternoon of hockey with friends and family that have not yet come to faith. Following the hockey game, we will hear from a Toronto Marlies player share about Jesus' impact on his life! The after game event also includes skating on the ice! We have limited tickets at \$20 per person, but if you know someone who does not know Jesus and would like to come, let me know. Faith Sticks could be the break out moment for someone to know Christ!



Please mark your calendars for our **Family Ministry Worship Service** happening on **Sunday, April 28th at 4pm** and a **Potluck Supper** to follow! We are blessed to have our children and youth take part in this special service.

In Faith,
Heather Mackey
Director of Family Ministries

Rejoice! Rebirth! The Blessed Resurrection! Spring! Come Out & Play!

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." – Matthew 19:14



Sometimes I think we adults are too “grown up” for our good. In her song, *Woodstock*, Joni Mitchell penned: “We are stardust. We are golden. And we’ve got to get ourselves back to the garden.” What if we *adults*, in greater numbers,

got ourselves back to the garden, too?
The *playground* variety!

In my time, thus far, volunteering for Family Ministries (in the nursery), I’ve realized, more than ever, the blessed physical, emotional, mental, *and spiritual* value of *playtime*; the importance of coming to the morn like a child.

Last Sunday, for example, what fun we had plopping multi-coloured lumps of Play-doh on the table! We squished and squashed those mounds flat until they looked like Shrove Tuesday pancakes; and then we created “neat stuff!” The little ones spontaneously took those “flapjacks” and rolled them into miniature “worlds.” While doing so, we talked about Jesus, and God,

and creation. Just like *they* were doing right there—*creating!* Mixing colours. Crafting something awe-some. Their very own Creation Stories!

Built right into the Creation Story is a sense of play ... of God making something wondrous out of “nothing.” And His rejoicing and delight in doing so. “Rejoicing” and “delight” are words that go well with *playfulness*. Think about it. Play is *natural*.

God-given. It’s in our DNA. (Amazingly, most *animals* know how to express their versions of play and laughter, too!) So then, if we are *coded* with “play genes,” why do we older adults, in too large a number, seemingly lose our fondness for fun and frolic?

Years ago humourist Loretta LaRoche observed that when she asked her audiences to be playful—by standing up and bellowing “ta-da!,” while throwing arms in the air—most reluctantly stood; and if they *did* stand and feign participation (out of embarrassment that they’d otherwise be thought “kill joys”), they performed their “Ta-da’s” half heartedly. Then abruptly sit. LaRoche would point out that if this opportunity were granted to *children*, *they’d* belt out their “ta-das!” with *glee*, stay standing, demanding, “Let’s do that again!” But we *adults*? No. *We* sit (hoping no one was watching). What a pity to lose our sense of play out of self-consciousness or feeling worn down by life to the point where exuberance seems redundant—“for kids only”—to *not* play because we worry *more* about what we look like to others (while playing), rather than fully participating in potentially joyful,

Continued on page 17

spontaneous, and serendipitous moments of life that *God offers us daily*:

This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

– Psalm 118:24

Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. – Matthew 24:42

That's why on the last Sunday of February, during the middle of Lent (leading up to our most joyful time of Easter Sunday), it was so encouraging to see the unleashing of playful participation of so many in our congregation! Our play-full Heather (Director of Family Ministries) and dedicated FM volunteers all leading our spirited children and *whole congregation* in the hand-action hymn, *Lord I Lift Your Name on High*. Tricky hand movements at first, to be sure, but everyone caught on. And even if some free-styled their actions, instead, the *real* spiritual magic was in everyone's willingness to participate and *play along*! *The encore?* Winston leading us all in a rockin' good, stand-up-and-sing-and-sway-along version of *Amen!* All I can say to that is: *Amen! Amen for such uplifting songs that inspire our whole congregation to let their playfulness out to ... play!*

Easter is the time of new life—the return of things that have been dormant—including, perhaps, your sense of play. It's the *perfect* time for letting your eternal inner child out to play again! *How to do that? One idea is*

to begin in the safe and loving arms of our church community! This spring, at church, consider daring to let go even a little more when invited to sing along. *Actions and all!* Letting yourself *play along*—giving yourself *permission*—is a demonstration of love, trust, sharing, and *active participation* in your God-given life! We are stardust. We are golden. Despite worrisome world politics, ongoing global health scares, uncertain economic times, topsy-turvy workplace and community dynamics, fragile personal relationships, etc., get yourself back to the *joy-filled* garden as best as you can—and see what abundance of *playmates* you can inspire to join the games!

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

– John 10:10



In the best of times, our days are numbered anyway. So it would be a crime against nature for any generation to take the world crisis so solemnly that it put off enjoying those things for which we were designed in the first place: the opportunity to do good work, to enjoy friends, to fall in love, to hit a ball, [to play], and to bounce a baby.”

– Alistair Cooke

Respectfully submitted by Nina Spencer. (Nina is a Virtual & In-Person Motivational and Business Keynote Speaker, Speaker Coach, Speaker Book Coach and Book Project Manager, Voiceover Artist, and Bestselling Author of Getting Passion Out of Your Profession, and A Time to Creep, A Time to Soar.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH YP | 2024

Ettie Dawkins and the Black History Month Committee organized another February filled with an array of excellent activities.

We were honoured to welcome Harriet Thornhill, Chancellor of Tyndale University, Julian Taylor, singer/songwriter/son of Hudson Taylor and guest preacher Rev. Dr. Jerome Washington, to our Sunday worship services.

Community activist Dr. Winston LaRose, author Paula de Ronde and fine artist Tony K. Miller all gave insightful presentations during our three Wednesday evening Zoom sessions.

We also had saxophonist Jelani Watson performing at our Pastor's Pancake Supper and Tony Miller's stunning artwork in our gallery.

"The BHM focus has become very meaningful to the whole congregation. For some it has led to greater appreciation of the contribution to the life of the church of those with African origins and for others it has led to a greater sense of belonging."

- Rev. Dr. Peter J. Holmes

Black History Month Committee:

- Ettie Dawkins, Chair
- Janice Ivory-Smith, Vice Chair
- Winston Davis
- Milton Fletcher
- Amos Jones
- Hudson Taylor
- Shannon Wareham-Browne
- YPBC Ministerial Team

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP



Harriet Thornhill, Chancellor, Tyndale University



Singer/songwriter, Julian Taylor



Rev. Dr. Jerome Washington with Rev. Dr. J. Peter Holmes



Harriet Thornhill, Chancellor, Tyndale University with Ettie Dawkins, BHM Chair



Rev. Dr. Jerome Washington preaching from the YPBC pulpit.

TONY MILLER'S YPBC GALLERY RECEPTION



YPBC youth, Cruz Wareham-Browne and artist Tony Miller



Tony Miller chatting with YPBC Art Gallery Committee member Sue Ericsson and Lorraine Beech



Carol Roberts compares hats with the artist



John Schram and BHM committee member, Hudson Taylor



Peter Holmes in conversation with Lorraine Thomson, Tony's wife and creative partner

GALLERY cont.



YPBC Gallery committee members Sue Ericsson and Randall Speller with the artist



One of several pieces sold at the show

PASTOR'S PANCAKE SUPPER



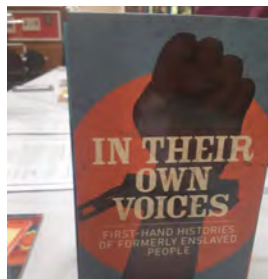
Jelani Watson, Saxophonist plays familiar Gospel tunes



Committee member, Winston Davis with Dr. Winston LaRose



Shannon Wareham-Browne, Committee member, and Claudette Knight



Displays, book tables and treats at our Pastor's Pancake Supper

THE LAST SUNDAY OF BHM MONTH ...



Winston Davis, the Family Ministries Band and our youth lead the congregation in a rousing version of *Amen* ... **AMEN!**



YORKMINSTER PARK GALLERY

PRESENTS

OCEANS AND ICE:
Arctic Light

JANET READ

APRIL 6 - MAY 30 2024

Opening Reception:

Sunday April 7, 12:30 - 2:00pm

Sustainable cultivation, sovereignty, and climate remediation issues prompt my ongoing desire to “keep faith” artistically in various media with my experience of the arctic.

Arctic fragility and beauty, and the urgent need for climate response compel my works: a mode of response to move the heart to knowledge and action.

Gallery Hours:

Sunday:

10:00- 11:00am and 12:15 - 1:00pm

Saturday: Noon -3:00pm

Also available by appointment with the artist:

www.janet-read.com or by calling the church office at 416-922-1167.

Event Time	Event Name	Location	Event Time	Event Name	Location
Monday, 1 April 2024			Wednesday, 10 April 2024		
All Day	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED EASTER MONDAY		7:00 AM	Men's Brew Bible Study - Stuart Campbell	Friendship Room
8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen	8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen
1:00 PM	Women of the Word ZOOM	Offsite event	11:00 AM	Open Door	Main Sanctuary
Tuesday, 02 April 2024			11:00 AM	Watercolour Art Classes - Ann Stirling	Youth Zone
8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen	12:15 PM	Noon Day Organ Recital	Main Sanctuary
9:15 AM	Intercessory Prayers	Chapel	6:00 PM	Out of the Cold	Heritage Room
10:00 AM	Dorcas	Youth Zone	Thursday, 11 April 2024		
11:00 AM	Open Door	Main Sanctuary	8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen
11:30 AM	Lunchtime Chamber Music	Main Sanctuary	7:00 PM	Thursday Night Bible Study - John Speller	Offsite event
6:00 PM	Orpheus Choir Rehearsal	Cameron Hall	7:00 PM	YPBC Choir Practice	Cameron Hall
6:30 PM	Family Ministries ZOOM	Offsite event	Friday, 12 April 2024		
Wednesday, 03 April 2024			8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen
7:00 AM	Men's Brew Bible Study - Stuart Campbell	Friendship Room	6:00 PM	Friday Night Life Group	Youth Zone
8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen	7:00 PM	YP Speaker's Series - Marlis Butcher	Cameron Hall
11:00 AM	Open Door	Main Sanctuary	Sunday, 14 April 2024		
11:00 AM	Watercolour Art Classes - Ann Stirling	Youth Zone (508)	10:00 AM	Berean Bible Study	Red Board Room
12:15 PM	Noon Day Organ Recital	Main Sanctuary	10:00 AM	Bible in a Year Bible Study - Janet Kim	Fifth Floor Board Room
6:00 PM	Out of the Cold	Heritage Room	11:00 AM	WORSHIP SERVICE - Rev. Paula Willis	Main Sanctuary
Thursday, 04 April 2024			11:00 AM	Family Ministries	Cameron Hall
8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen	7:00 PM	Evening Service - Rev. Paula Willis	Main Sanctuary
10:00 AM	Women's Executive Meeting	Fifth Floor Board Room	Monday, 15 April 2024		
11:00 AM	Open Door	Main Sanctuary	8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen
7:00 PM	Thursday Night Bible Study - John Speller	Offsite event	1:00 PM	Women of the Word ZOOM	Offsite event
7:00 PM	YPBC Choir Practice	Cameron Hall	6:00 PM	Toronto Mendelssohn Choir Rehearsal	Cameron Hall
Friday, 05 April 2024			Tuesday, 16 April 2024		
8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen	8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen
10:00 AM	Take down - Tony Miller / Install - Janet Read	Centre Hall/Art Gallery	9:15 AM	Intercessory Prayers	Chapel
6:00 PM	Friday Night Life Group	Youth Zone	10:00 AM	Dorcas	Youth Zone
Saturday, 06 April 2024			10:00 AM	Tuesday Morning Bible Study	Friendship Room
7:00 PM	Salvation Army Choral Convocation	Main Sanctuary	11:00 AM	Open Door	Main Sanctuary
Sunday, 07 April 2024			11:30 AM	Lunchtime Chamber Music	Main Sanctuary
10:00 AM	Baptism Class	Rev. Holmes office	6:00 PM	Orpheus Choir Rehearsal	Cameron Hall
10:00 AM	Berean Bible Study	Red Board Room	6:30 PM	Family Ministries ZOOM	Offsite event
10:00 AM	Bible in a Year Bible Study - Janet Kim	Fifth Floor Board Room	7:30 PM	YPBC Book Club ZOOM	Offsite event
11:00 AM	WORSHIP SERVICE - Rev. Dr. J. Peter Holmes	Main Sanctuary	Wednesday, 17 April 2024		
11:00 AM	Family Ministries	Cameron Hall	7:00 AM	Men's Brew Bible Study - Stuart Campbell	Friendship Room
1:00 PM	Annual General Meeting	Heritage Room	8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen
7:00 PM	IONA - Rev. Dr. J. Peter Holmes	Main Sanctuary	11:00 AM	Open Door	Main Sanctuary
Monday, 08 April 2024			11:00 AM	Watercolour Art Classes - Ann Stirling	Youth Zone (508)
8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen	12:15 PM	Noon Day Organ Recital	Main Sanctuary
1:00 PM	Women of the Word ZOOM	Offsite event	6:00 PM	Out of the Cold	Heritage Room
6:00 PM	Toronto Mendelssohn Choir Rehearsal	Cameron Hall	Thursday, 18 April 2024		
Tuesday, 09 April 2024			8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen
8:00 AM	Meals on Wheels	Heritage Room Kitchen	11:00 AM	Hughene Boggs Memorial	Main Sanctuary
9:15 AM	Intercessory Prayers	Chapel	11:00 AM	Open Door	Main Sanctuary
10:00 AM	Current Events Club	Cameron Hall	7:00 PM	BHM Committee - Janice Ivory Smith	Friendship Room
10:00 AM	Dorcas	Youth Zone	7:00 PM	Thursday Night Bible Study - John Speller	Offsite event
11:00 AM	Open Door	Main Sanctuary	7:00 PM	YPBC Choir Practice	Cameron Hall
11:30 AM	Lunchtime Chamber Music	Main Sanctuary	To see our full schedule of services and events visit www.yorkminsterpark.com		
6:00 PM	Orpheus Choir Rehearsal	Cameron Hall			
6:30 PM	Family Ministries ZOOM	Offsite event			
7:30 PM	Meals On Wheels Board Meeting	Red Board Room			

This newsletter is published by:

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