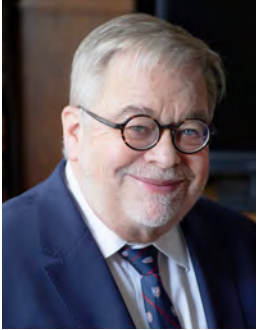




Go into all the world
and preach
the Good News
to everyone.



FROM PETER'S PEN WHAT SHALL WE DO NOW?

Thank you to Paula Willis and the thirty plus people who have been part of the Wednesday evening online study preparing for Advent and Christmas by studying Adam Hamilton's

book, *Prepare the Way for the Lord*. The study has focused on the birth, teaching and ministry of John the Baptist, who was the voice in the wilderness preparing the way for Christ's first coming.

In one of the chapters, Hamilton refers to those who travelled to hear John the Baptist at the Jordan River, repented of their sins and were baptized by him. Hamilton notes they often asked, "What shall we do now?" No matter who they were, his answer was of an economic nature, calling his converts to be honest in all their dealings and to share generously.

Hamilton points out the extraordinary material wealth of our own society and can't help but wonder what John's economic challenge would be for us. He believes that Advent is a time to help people in need. Yorkminster Park makes this a priority throughout the year through the various ministries that we support including:

- **The House of Compassion** hoctoronto.com
- **The Churches on-the-Hill Food Bank** cothfoodbank.ca
- **Yorkminster Park Meals on Wheels** ypmealsonwheels.com
- **The Daily Bread Food Bank** dailybread.ca
- **Intricity** intricity.ca
- **Matthew House** matthewhouse.ca

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*For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given; and
the government shall be
upon his shoulder, and his
name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting
Father, Prince of Peace.*

- Isaiah 9:6



● **The Canadian Baptist Ministries** cbmin.org

The Canadian Baptist Ministries, to which Yorkminster Park belongs, also offers an online Christmas catalogue with various projects around the world where our gifts can make an incredible difference.

You can place your orders here: cbmin.org/hopeful-gifts-for-change/

● **Camp Kwasind**

Camp Kwasind located on Skelton Lake in Muskoka is the camp of the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec. Kwasind offers a wide variety of amenities and services at an affordable price, in a beautiful setting. As Kwasind enters the month of December its various weekly camping opportunities for children and youth in July and August of 2025 are apparently 90% sold out, so this is the time to register your children for a wonderful camping experience next summer.

To register go to kwasind.com

NOTES ON CHRISTMAS AT YORKMINSTER PARK

John McDermott will be back on **Thursday, December 19th at 7:00 p.m.** for his annual fundraising Family Christmas Concert. Along with his band and Dala, John will be joined by legendary Canadian guitar player, Pavlo. The concert is free, but donations will be received to support both the YP Out of the Cold and the House of Compassion.

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, Sunday, December 22nd at 4:30 p.m. is being promoted by the Toronto Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese as part of the year-long celebration of the 60th anniversary of the decision at the Second Vatican council in November of 1964 that gave birth to the modern ecumenical movement. Each month in 2024 they have highlighted a service by a different denomination. We are honoured that they have chosen Yorkminster Park for December. As always, please go out of your way to welcome visitors.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with the Choir on **December 24th at 11 p.m.** will feature **RH Thomson** as our guest reader.

EVENING SERVICES

All through Covid and beyond the Iona service continued on the first Sunday evening of the month. Weekly evening services were reintroduced from the first Sunday of Lent 2024 through until the first Sunday in May and started again on the first Sunday of October.

There will be no evening service on December 8 and December 29, but an Iona service will be held on Sunday, January 5, 2025. The evening services will then take a recess until the first Sunday in February 2025.

Merry Christmas,

Peter



CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 4:30 P.M.
IN-PERSON & LIVE ONLINE
FREE Admission

A Yorkminster Park tradition, Carols by Candlelight, established in 1933, was the first candlelight carol service in Canada.



JOHN McDERMOTT
Family
CHRISTMAS
with special guests DALA

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19
7:00 P.M.

Free Admission

Donations can be made at the door upon entry. Proceeds will be split between YPBC's Out of the Cold and the House of Compassion.



FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 4:30 P.M.
IN-PERSON & LIVE ONLINE
FREE Admission

In the tradition of King's College, Cambridge, the service consists of nine short Bible readings interspersed with the singing of carols, hymns and anthems.



WATCH NIGHT SERVICE

NEW YEAR'S EVE
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 11:15 P.M.

The Watchnight Service provides the opportunity to review the year that has passed, make confession and prepare for the year ahead by making new commitments.



FROM THE MINISTER OF PASTORAL CARE AND DISCIPLESHIP

ADVENT REFLECTION

Advent is that time of year when so many of us are preparing our homes for visitors, doing extra baking, and feeling, if truth be known, a little tired. There are some of us also who are wishing we could experience some of that hustle and bustle again, even for just a moment or two, because over the years, friends have moved away, family have spread out and the noise level of the dining room is so much quieter than it once was. I have had to learn over the years a new sort of Christmas celebrating myself, smaller and quieter to be sure, but isn't this the time of year when we celebrate what might at first seem little or insignificant?

With that said, I am a great lover of joyous music, and the many conversations that take place all at once before and after worship. I love our corporate prayers, those times when our hearts join together in silence, and I am thankful for the many blessed opportunities we have to welcome strangers into our midst. With deep gratitude, I give thanks at this time of year and in all other seasons too for the community of our church, and the community of the Church throughout the world. For anyone who has experienced great change in their life and for those who are looking to enact great change, the Church is the place to be. Emmanuel, God is truly with us as we gather and that is a great blessing. What a gift that Christ came down at Christmas; what a gift that he will come again; what a gift that he is with us always.

There are so many things that we have been waiting on and hoping for as we enter into Advent, some things that might have come to fruition and fullness, such as the celebration

of a child born, a degree completed, a new marriage that feels like it was made in heaven, or a new job we love. But for some of us this time of year, no matter how beautiful it is always a challenging one. Preparing our hearts for the Lord can feel impossible if we are in a season of grief, or suffering the loss of a job, or seeing that a reconciliation we hoped for is likely not going to happen, or that the diagnosis is worse than we feared. At those times when it feels like our hearts are too heavy to lift it is such a gift to know that our Lord's heart can take any and all of our burdens and give us rest.

The Service of Comfort and Hope, which will take place on December 21st, offers a respite from the busyness of the season. It is a service for those who feel the need for a quieter moment in the church. Whatever losses or other changes might have happened over this year, or in the years before, please come lay your burdens down and rest in the Lord. And for those who simply feel run down with the pace of the season, come, and be fed and nurtured.

Long ago, Mary and Joseph found when they arrived in Bethlehem that there was no room for them in the Inn. Thanks be to God, the heart of our Saviour has room for us all, and in whatever condition we find ourselves this year. He is ever loving, ever compassionate, and ever ready to extend his loving heart to us.

If you are finding this season a challenge, or if you are wanting to share a story of something that has brought you joy, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at **416-922-1240** or at pwillis@yorkminsterpark.com.

I wish all of you peace and joy, healing and growth in this season and beyond. May you all thrive in the love of the Lord.

The Rev. Paula Willis

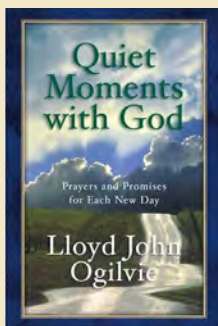
SERVICE OF COMFORT AND HOPE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 11:00 A.M. | IN PERSON ONLY

A hopeful and compassionate service designed for those who approach Christmas with the emotions of grief and loss in their hearts and minds.



CHECK OUT THE GLADSTONE LIBRARY!



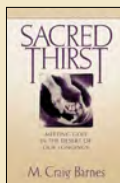
BOOK REVIEW BY BRENDA LAM

Quiet Moments with God: Prayers and Promises for Each New Day
Lloyd John Ogilvie

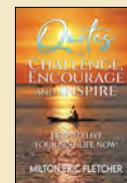
I found this book both edifying and comforting. It has added depth and range to my daily prayer regimen so that it is not dry or empty. Having intimate moments first thing in the morning with God is so important; it opens my heart to experience His mercy, new every day.



Phoebe:
A story
Paula Gooder



Sacred Thirst
Meeting God in
The Desert of our
Longings
M. Craig Barnes



**Quotes to
Challenge
Encourage and
inspire you**
Milton Fletcher

The Gladstone Library is open before and after Sunday service.

Contact the library by calling 416-922-1167, ext. 241, or email, library@yorkminsterpark.com.

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

MISSION UPDATE



CBM

*embracing a broken world
through word & deed*

**CANADIAN
BAPTISTS**
Together in Mission

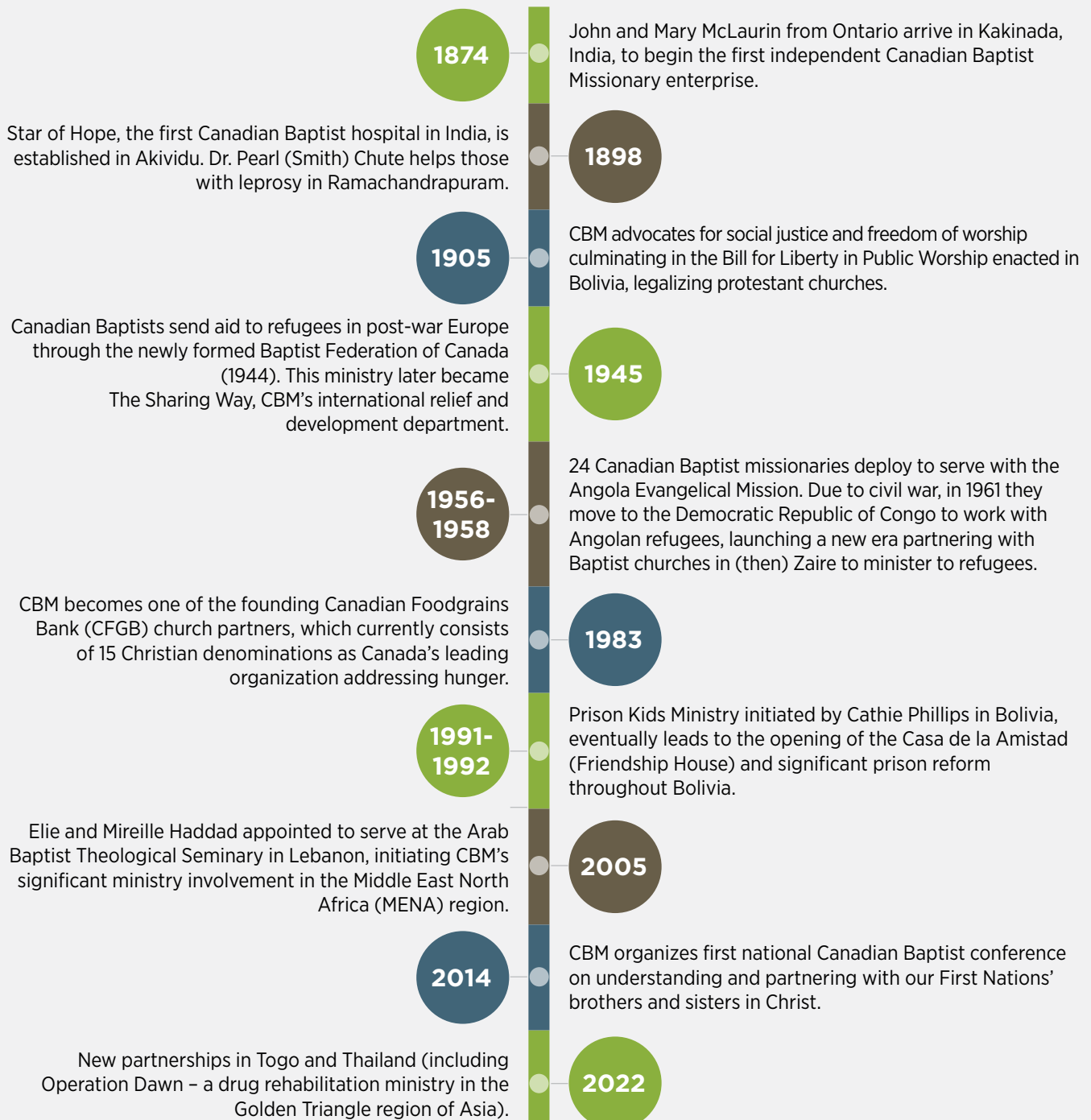


cbm.org

HAPPY 150th CBM!

Some birthdays are truly special. For Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM) reaching 150 this year is a major Milestone. Through your mission dollars YPBC supports CBM's missionary activities and has for many years. What's been the outcome?

Here are just a few milestones of CBM's multi-faceted work!



Sharing My Cloak Today, and Tomorrow Too

On November 11, Cuba celebrated Chaplaincy Day, a date chosen to honor the memory of St. Martin of Tours, a figure from the Hungarian Catholic tradition. The story of this man carries deep symbolism for chaplaincy. As a young man traveling during a harsh winter, Martin encountered a half-naked man shivering from the cold. Without hesitation, he cut his cloak in half and shared it to provide warmth and dignity. Later, in a dream, Martin saw Jesus saying to him: “Martin, you covered me today with your cloak.”

The term “chaplaincy” originates from the Latin word *Capella*, which directly references this legend. This selfless act of sharing embodies the very essence of hospital and prison chaplaincy. It reminds me of the passage in Matthew 25:40: *“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”* That is why on Cuban Chaplaincy Day, I chose to honor the spirit of sharing by focusing on three essential elements: sharing time, sharing kindness, sharing knowledge and experience.

Sharing Time

One of the most meaningful gifts a chaplain can offer is their time. When visiting people in hospitals or prisons, chaplains recognize that those they meet are far from the comfort of their family environment. Hospitals and prison cells can be overwhelming places: constant noise, unpredictable flashing lights, and a sense of intrusion when staff come in to provide care or check on the inmate. The bed often becomes the only space that feels remotely personal, but it is far from the comfort and warmth of home.

The main purpose of daily time with God is not to study about Jesus, but to spend time with Him. As your relationship grows, so does your love for the Lord (Psalm 63:1). The attentive presence of a chaplain allows those being visited to process these experiences, turning moments of vulnerability into opportunities for meaningful connection and renewed hope. In these settings, the presence of a chaplain is a sacred offering that respects the space

Continued on page 8



of the other. By giving their time, chaplains create an opportunity for patients or inmates to freely express their fears and concerns.

Many people in hospitals or prisons face life-altering questions, grappling with the fragility of health, freedom, economic uncertainties, or the broader implications of their situation, whether personal or familial. To share time with others is to bring them closer to God.

Sharing Kindness

For most people, hospitals and prisons are not places of comfort or peace. Instead, they are spaces filled with anxiety and the emotional weight of the unknown. The love and kindness that chaplains provide become a healing balm in these circumstances. It can be a simple but genuine smile, an anxiety-free presence, compassionate listening, or a gentle reminder that the person is not alone in their struggle.

Sharing Knowledge and Experience

Beyond emotional support, chaplains also share their experience. Years of training and practice equip them with the necessary tools to help individuals and families facing trauma and profound life changes. This is not a casual commitment; chaplains draw upon a wealth of knowledge, both practical and spiritual, to offer guidance that addresses complex emotional and spiritual challenges. As Paul wrote to the Philippians:

“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ- to the glory and praise of God”

- (Philippians 1:9-11).

While a friendly conversation can be comforting, chaplains go further by providing informed support tailored to the unique needs of each individual. They use their understanding of human suffering, resilience, and the spiritual wisdom they have gained to help people navigate their crises, transforming fear into a journey toward meaning and inner strength.

That is why when I look at the Cuban Chaplaincy Ministry, I have infinite respect and admiration. Amidst all the challenges in Cuba they are very brave serving with so much love and selflessness. They are my inspiration. I can only feel, amidst the darkness of the present time, the presence of God and the light of Christ shining through them as they share their “cloak” with fear and trembling, but also with great love.

Adianes Ponce

Asesor de Hospital Chaplaincy of Cuba

YORKMINSTER PARK

SPEAKERS SERIES

Continuing education lectures by outstanding speakers on topics of general interest

www.ypspeakersseries.com

UPCOMING YPSS PRESENTATIONS



Friday, January 10, 202 , 7:00 pm

Francine McCarthy

Brock University
Earth Sciences Professor

*Crawford Lake in Burlington,
Ontario and the Anthropocene*



Friday, February 7, 202, 7:00 pm

Tom Allen

Master Story teller and Broadcaster
The Music of Talk

A JOURNEY OF FAITH

Handled with Hope

On March 24th, 1993, a beautiful baby girl was born to my sister Donna. The only problem was that she went into labour in her 24th week, 6 months early to be exact and gave birth to my niece who weighed exactly 660 grams, the equivalent of 1.45 lbs. The Doctor in attendance gave my sister little hope that her baby would survive and inferred that she would have neurological impairment and that her organs would be malformed. He told her that the other premature babies that were born on the same day as my niece did not make it.

Donna called me in distress. In fact, she told me that my niece had stopped breathing and was on a table, waiting to take her last breath. I told my sister to not lose hope and to leave room for God to work. I prayed fervently and pleaded with God to spare my niece's life and like Hannah, in the Bible, I prayed that my niece would serve the Lord's Kingdom in some capacity and that she would flourish and thrive in life always.

At the time of my niece's birth I was working in the Financial Services industry downtown Toronto, on Bay Street in our Financial District, a stone's throw away from where my niece was at Women's College Hospital. I asked my boss at the time if I could come an hour earlier so that I could have a 2-hour lunch. Having that period to travel back and forth to the hospital and work would be ideal because I would be able to visit and pray for my niece. I visited the hospital for 5 weeks. I remember my first visit it was like yesterday, going into the Intensive Care Unit and seeing my little niece hooked up to what seemed like a million tubes and wires. She looked surreal and almost not even human. She fit so neatly into the palm of my hand. I was struck by the awe and wonder of human life. This obscure little moment

deepened my faith and solidified to my soul just how great God is and continues to be. I am happy and grateful to say that my Heavenly Father answered my prayers. My niece was aptly named 'Rushelle' because she rushed to come out. She is alive and well and presently 31 years old.

On October 27th, this year, I was at the Meridian Hall on Front Street and watched my niece walk across the stage to accept her Diploma from Seneca College in Community and Social Work, and I am even more elated to share that she is a committed Christian young woman who has made Jesus Christ her Lord and Saviour.

When she was born the Doctor tried to convince my sister that she would have cognitive impairment, brain damage, and a whole host of medical issues. I remember speaking to the Doctor letting him know adamantly, that in our family we always leave room for God to work.



"Glory to God in the highest for all the marvelous things that He has done."

After my niece crossed her graduation threshold she leaned in and whispered to me *"Aunty Carol, next I want to get my Master's and then a PhD and I want to have the closest walk possible with my Lord and savior, Jesus Christ. I want to serve His Kingdom."* I could barely keep the tears from falling down my face to think that this young lady standing and towering above me now, once fit into the palm of my hand and that all my prayers were answered 31 years later. God is so amazingly good. ***Thanks be to God that we are so fearfully and wonderfully made.***

Carol Roberts

Jesus answered, “Love the Lord you God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and “Love your neighbour as yourself.”



Over the fall, Family Ministries has been privileged to teach God’s Word and how our faith should be active. We seek not only to grow further in our faith, but to clearly show God’s love in our daily lives. Another passage we dove into was from Hebrews 10:24-25; “And let us consider how to stir one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching. We surely need one another, and we need to be encouraged. Even when we cannot meet in person, we have creative and technical ways that we can gather, stir one another to love and good deeds and to pray for one another. Sunday mornings in Family

Ministries are full of joy as we gather to Praise God with our worship, scripture teaching and enjoy sweet fellowship. Every Tuesday evening, we engage children/families in God’s word, prayer and discussion with our online ministry. At our last Youth Night, we enjoyed all kinds of activities that put into action; “to stir one another to love and to good deeds”. Our Youth made Christmas cards for the OOTC Mission, painted a scripture mural to enhance our Family Ministry Team and put together a video skit to show at our Family Ministry Worship Service. What a joy it is to belong to a church family where we keep Christ at the centre and where we get to give of our time, talent and treasure. **We meet. We love. We act.**



Please read on to learn more about all the wonderful blessings God provides in Family Ministries.

- ➔ Before our Worship Time on Sundays together, Heather leads a **Leader Prayer Group** that is a gift to each of us. We study God’s word, share how it is relevant to our lives and then spend time praying for one another. **We will continue meeting** every Sunday at 9:45am. All praise and glory to God!
- ➔ Family Ministries hosted a **Potluck Luncheon** on Sunday, Oct 6th after the service. These potluck meals are something that we intentionally plan throughout the year. Gathering to share food and fellowship and encourage one another and pray for one another is a joy and a gift.
- ➔ We also hosted a **potluck supper** after our **Family Ministry Worship Service** titled ‘Father, we adore you’ that was held in the late afternoon on Sunday, November 17th from 4:30-7:30pm.
- ➔ In November, we did a **large mailing** for families that included a Family Christmas Advent Calendar and ad about the FM Worship Service/Potluck dinner. [See Advent Calendar for details.](#)

Carter Brinton Walker Carpenter (Doxa Youth) was baptized on Oct. 20th and Family Ministries hosted a gathering in Cameron Hall after the service with cake and coffee. What a joy it was to witness his faith in Christ shared with all.



Our **Family Ministry Band** works well as a team. In our worship time, they teach us new praise songs to honor and worship God.

Praise God that our FM team continues to grow and strengthen. We have added **7 more volunteers** to our team this fall:

- **Diana Kayando**
(Gr. 3 & 4 class, co-leader)
- **Evelyn Boateng**
(helps Nina in the gr. 5 class)
- **Azalyia Munawar**
(helps Kate with Kindergartens and helps Isaac with youth nights.)
- **Mike Reyes**
(helps Isaac with youth nights)
- **Addison Rocca**
(helps Ange and Madge in the nursery)
- **Louise Bark**
(helps with prepping materials for Sundays)
- **Andrew Klima**
(joined our video leader team to create Lighthouse Kid's videos)

Our **Birthday Card Ministry** is a blessing, and we thank Nina, Ange and Leticia for their gifts shared in this.

Our **Family Christmas Mission (White Gift Sunday)** will be on Sunday, December 15 (see ad in [Advent Calendar](#)) in support of the COTH Food Bank.

Our **Family Ministry Christmas Party** will be on Wednesday, December 18, 6-8pm in Cameron Hall.

The Nativity Play will be on Sunday, December 22 during the 11:00am service and we hope that all children and youth will be eager to be involved.



Bethlehem on Yonge, December 24th at 4:00pm!

Our Family Ministry YouTube channel continues to be a blessing to our church family and outside of our church family. We have viewers in Indonesia and Australia. If you would like to subscribe, go to: youtube.com/@familyministriesatypbc.


We continue to give thanks to God for the blessings of our devoted crew of volunteers that serve in Family Ministries. They love the Lord and love His children and commit to teaching Bible Stories and Bible truths weekly.



FAMILY MINISTRY CHRISTMAS PARTY

WEDNESDAY, DEC 18, 2024 6-8PM | CAMERON HALL

POTLUCK SUPPER: Bring your favourite dish or snack to share. If able, bring \$5 Tim Horton's Gift card to give to OOTC Mission. **Games, Prizes, Music & Gifts!** Hot Drinks will be provided!


 "On this day of joy, we are all called to contemplate the Child Jesus, who gives hope once again to every person on the face of the earth. By his grace, let us with our voices and our actions give witness to solidarity and peace.
 Merry Christmas to all!" (Pope Francis)

DECEMBER 2024

1 1st Sunday of Advent Candle of HOPE. <i>Read Jeremiah 33:14-16</i>	2 Make your own Advent candle wreath with tea lights and decorations or draw and colour your own.	3 Share the 'Good News' of Jesus to a neighbour or friend by inviting them to an Advent and/or Christmas Service	4 Look for a way to serve those in need.	5 Pray for our 'Out of the Cold' Mission	6 Wrap gifts as a family and talk about how Jesus who came at Christmas wrapped in strips of cloth, was our best gift	7 Make a paper snowflake and talk about God's wonderful designs (Psalm 139:13-14)
8 2nd Sunday of Advent Candle of PEACE. <i>Read Malachi 3:1-4</i>	9 Donate to COTH Food Bank	10 Look up Isaiah 9:6 and print out on an index card, draw a picture next to the verse keep by your bedside	11 Watch a Christmas movie that's about Jesus	12 Make Christmas cookies for someone who needs encouragement	13 Sing your favourite Christmas Carols together	14 Make hot chocolate and popcorn & look-up Psalm 19:10 & Matthew 5:13-16 (discuss)
15 3rd Sunday of Advent Candle of LOVE. <i>Read Philippians 4:4-7</i>	16 Pray for the first person you see outside today	17 Discuss as a family why Christmas is about hope	18 Make a new Christmas decoration for your tree or string popcorn	19 Give a prayer of thanks that Jesus is the reason for the Christmas season	20 Write Christmas Card notes of kindness and leave for delivery/mail people	21 Wish someone a Merry Christmas
22 4th Sunday of Advent Candle of JOY - <i>Micah 5:2-5a</i>	23 Read Matthew 1:18-24 together	24 Read Luke 2 together and give thanks to God for Jesus	25 Share what you're most thankful to God for	26 Have a pajama party all day!	27 Write down as many words as you can from the word 'Christmas'	28 Try and use only words of blessing throughout your day
29 Read Matthew 2:1-13 together	30 Build a snowman with cotton balls	31 Write down a prayer to God what your hopes are for the New Year				

BUNDLE UP FOR Bethlehem on Tuesday December 24 4:00 p.m. Yonge

The Christmas Story re-enacted in the park!
 Carol Singing, Cookies and Hot Chocolate in Cameron Hall.
Dress warmly!



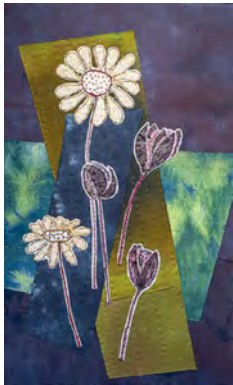
YORKMINSTER PARK GALLERY

Linda Coulter

A Promise of Spring

Runs until January 9, 2025

Linda Coulter is a mixed media artist who 'paints' with textiles. By dyeing, adding paint and other surface treatments to recycled fabrics, she creates material which she stitches into unique compositions of wall art.



Randall Speller

Recent Works

Jan 11 to Feb 20, 2025

Randall Speller's oil paintings focus largely on the Kawartha Lakes, where his family has had connections since 1850s, as well as on the settled landscapes of Southern Ontario. Capturing the essential qualities of these landscapes has engaged him for more years than he cares to count.

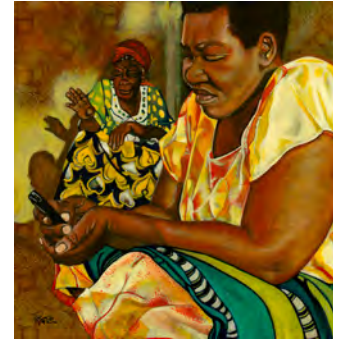


Hans Poppe

Memelemeta (Shining)

Feb 22 to April 24, 2025

Hans Poppe, Tanzanian-Canadian artist is known for his vivid, cultural portrayals that draw deeply on his heritage. His work blends traditional painting techniques with contemporary perspectives, often featuring Tanzanian fabric patterns.



Gallery Hours:

Sunday: 10 am - 11 am and 12:15 pm - 1:00 pm | Saturday: Noon - 3 pm
Also available by appointment by calling the church office at **416-922-1167**

Follow us on Instagram: [@yorkminsterparkgallery](https://www.instagram.com/yorkminsterparkgallery) 



FINDING JACK IN FLANDERS FIELDS:

Remembrance Day Memories Turn Into A Best-Ever, God-Sent Christmas Gift

My grandmother was raised in England, she was the youngest of 13 children. Her eldest brother John a.k.a. Jack was her favorite. Throughout my growing up years she recounted the heroic stories of “my big brother Jack,” each time ending in tears. Which made me cry, too, I did not understand why her fun stories about Jack always ended in grief. And she never expounded. When I was older, I mustered the nerve to ask. My grandmother explained that Jack was killed in December 1915 in Flanders Fields. But that was all she knew. That was all any of us who were still alive to protect and cherish Jack’s memory and ultimate sacrifice knew.

My grandmother has long since passed. Before her passing, I interviewed her to gather basic information about his rank and serial number for the Rogers wing of my family history, including my great grandparents’ given names. That information would prove to be valuable in my quest to learn about my uncle Jack. Every year, from the time of my Brownie and Girl Guides days, to the present, when

attending Remembrance Day Services, I always said a special prayer for my Great Uncle Jack – for his sake, and then later, for my grandmother’s. That was all I could do. That was all I knew. Then, one day in November 2014, everything changed.

I happened across a CBC radio interview of a cherished friend of YPBC, RH Thomson, who was championing his poignant, website: theworldremembers.org. The minute the interview was over, I visited this site, full of anticipation that this was the portal through which I would discover more about my Uncle Jack!

The anticipation was palpable. I had a powerful premonition that this was the day I was going to find him. And then... some momentary disillusionment and sadness to see that so many soldiers named “John Rogers” died during WWI each listed by year. Forty-seven pages of them. But I soldiered on, looking at the specific details of each fallen man who shared the same name as my great uncle, pausing long enough to remember and consider that each of those Johns were somebody’s special, dear, lost loved one, even if not mine.

I found nothing in the 1914 list on to the year 1915, And THEN... THERE IT WAS! OH, MY GOODNESS!!! There was my uncle’s

name and all his details (thanks to knowing my great grandparents' given names, and thanks to this wonderful website!): "John Cresswell Rogers, a private with the Norfolk Regiment, died of his wounds in Flanders Fields, Belgium, Dec. 19, 1915." My dear, great-uncle. Once seemingly lost forever. Now found.

I discovered that Jack's regiment was one that was present at the well-told Christmas Eve Truce of 1914 and the subsequent soccer game played between the enemies on Christmas Day. Had my uncle played in that match? I'll never know. But this amazing website helped me find the name of the Belgium town where Jack was laid to rest, the name of the cemetery, and even his plot number!

I was home alone when all this came to me, I cried aloud "Oh my Goodness! Oh, my Goodness! I have found you, Uncle Jack! I have found you!!!" All the while crying with the glee of a person who had just won the lottery! Jack had been missing from our family for 100 years. Now I know... Now we know where Jack was, thanks to this website, 21st century technology, and RH Thompson's earnest focus on the 100th anniversary observance of WWI.

I felt a profuse gratitude to theworldremembers.org, and to RH Thomson, for honouring and remembering each of the "them" that are also referenced in the lines from the *Ode of Remembrance* (a passage embedded in the Laurence Binyon poem, *For the Fallen*): *They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old; Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning. We will remember them. We will remember them.*

Jack was 33 years old when he was killed. He never married. Never had children to love and raise (beyond the surrogate of his kid sister/my grandmother). Who knows him now? Only four people (me, my sister, and two cousins) know the stories of our Jack Rogers. Only four people know his name – that he "lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow," as our immortalized, beloved Canadian, Dr. John McCrea, captured in his poignant Remembrance Day poem, *In Flanders Fields*.

The serendipitous alignment of these events brought my Uncle Jack "home" to his remaining family, a century later. At Christmastime. He lives in our hearts. Even more so because of these added details. Now, a man who never got the chance to create a family legacy of his own, has flowers placed on his grave by remaining loving family members. Plot IV, Row G, Grave 42. Now that is poetic and beautiful. And, as it should be. Lest we forget. Thanks be to God.

And the "P. S." Christmas tie-in part? My husband, knowing how much all this meant to me, secretly reached out to the British organization that was granted permission (by Queen Elizabeth) to re-commission fallen WWI soldiers' medals. He thought it would be the perfect birthday gift) for me on Dec. 6th.

He could barely contain his excitement. He anxiously awaited the courier every day... for a month! They had promised it would arrive on time. But it didn't. Although I did not know what "it" was, I felt sorry for him that it was so long in coming. I watched his disappointment turn to worry, as we wondered if this special package would even arrive by Christmas. Or worse, was it lost??? And then... on December 19th – the very

Continued on page 16

day that Jack was killed in action in Flanders Fields, 99 years earlier – his medals/my medals arrived! I cried with a blend of wondrous, gob-smacking astonishment and beaming, “should have known” serenity that God had other plans for the best December day and time for me to become the new custodian of Jack’s cast-in-silver-and-bronze re-commissioned honours – deep in December, when we most earnestly lift our voices on high to rejoice at the now-fast-approaching date marking the coming of our Lord, singing praises of joyous *hallelujah for all that He gave us... the ultimate best gift.*

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.

- John 15:13

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

- James 1:17

Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

- Peter 1:8-9

Wishing you a blessed, joyous, peace-filled Advent Season.



Submitted by Nina Spencer. Motivational and Business Keynote Speaker Coach, Speaker Book Coach and Book Project Manager, Radio Voiceover Artist, and Bestselling Author of Getting Passion Out of Your Profession, and A Time to Creep, A Time to Soar.



Who is my neighbour?



Out of the Cold is looking for donations of new or gently used **adult backpacks**, **Toothpaste** (travel size preferred) and **Toothbrushes**. These can be left in the Centre Hall beside the Daily Bread Food Bank donation bin. For more information, contact OOTC@yorkminsterpark.com

Please help our neighbours in need

To donate: www.yorkminsterpark.com > DONATE ONLINE. Select **“Out of the Cold”** from the pull-down menu.





CITY CAROL SING 2024

A FREE concert was held on December 7 in support of the Churches on-the-Hill Food Bank.

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS:

Marek Norman, Barbara Barksy.

Heather Bambrick and host, Devo Brown

Also featured, the Toronto Brass Quintet, the Hedgerow Singers, John Wanless Gr.6 Choir, the Yorkminster Park Baptist Church Choir,

William Maddox, Organ
and Eric Robertson, Conductor.



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YPBC WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

As women with a passion for serving God, we are a caring community who strive to be faithful, creative and accepting.

BELONGING TO CHRIST

YPBC WOMEN'S RETREAT
SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2025 | 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
YORKMINSTER PARK BAPTIST CHURCH



We are delighted to be welcoming once again, **the Rev. Dr. Karoline Lewis**, as the Retreat Facilitator at the 2025 YPBC Women's Retreat.

Karoline is the Marbury E. Anderson Chair in Biblical Preaching at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, where she has taught since 2007. She is the author of several books including *Belonging - 5 keys to Unlock Your Potential as a Disciple*, which is the resource for our topic this year. Ordained in the Evangelical

Lutheran Church of America, Karoline holds degrees from Northwestern University (B.A.), Luther Seminary (M.Div.) and Emory University (Ph.D), New Testament Studies and Homiletics, a contributing writer for Working Preacher and co-host of the site's weekly podcast, *Sermon Brainwave*, since its inception. She leads conferences, workshops and retreats internationally on the Gospel of John, the New Testament, interpreting the Bible, preaching, leadership and women in ministry.

Karoline writes that one of the deepest human needs is a sense of belonging. In the story of the

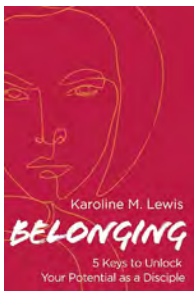
Samaritan Woman at the well, we discover what true belonging to Christ means.

Our women's retreat this year will explore this remarkable encounter between Jesus and this unnamed woman who ends up modeling what true discipleship looks like. Through her story, we will gain a renewed sense of our own call to follow Jesus and be reaffirmed in our belonging to Jesus, our Good Shepherd.

Our retreat will be held at Yorkminster Baptist Church, Cameron Hall, on Saturday, January 25, 2025 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Registration will take place from 9:00 to 9:30 am. A continental breakfast will be available and a full hot lunch, catered by Blazing Kitchens, to be served at noon with vegan and gluten free options.

The cost for the day is \$55.

Registration forms with complete information are available on tables in the YPBC Centre Hall and Narthex.



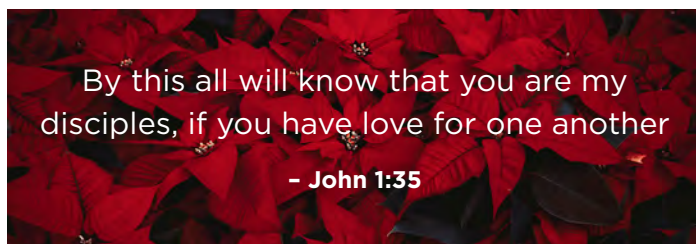
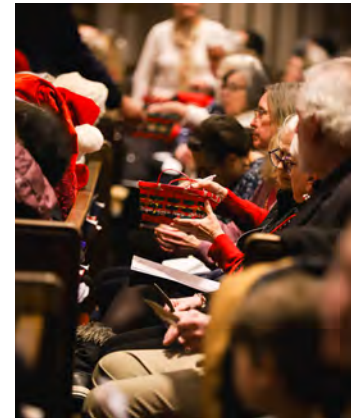
For those who'd like to prepare ahead of time, we also have a limited number of Karoline's book, *Belonging...*, for sale at a cost of \$25 per copy. These are available from members of the YPBC Women's Executive in

the church Narthex on Sunday mornings from December 1st through to January 19th.

All women are warmly invited to this day apart, for a time of fellowship, inspiration and spiritual renewal.

We look forward to welcoming you!

Submitted by Jonanne Fenton on behalf of YPBC Women's Ministries





HELP US CONTINUE TO SHARE THE JOY IN WORD AND DEED WITH YOUNG AND OLD FROM NEAR AND FAR.

December is a key month for giving at Yorkminster Park, but the Postal Strike has made it more challenging to reach our entire congregation and difficult for some to have their offering delivered to the church. The Christmas letter we normally mail to the congregation with an envelope for a special offering was inserted in the calendar Sunday, December 8th. If you did not receive one, there are additional copies available at the church on tables in the Narthex and centre hall. You can also read the letter by visiting [Peter's Blog](#).

Receiving mail is just as challenging. To aid you in offering a gift to the church you can choose one of the following:

- A Place it on the offering plate** on Sunday or deliver it to the church office **before December 31st**. Please see our Holiday office hours below.
- B Make your donation online** visit yorkminsterpark.com or scan the QR code to the right which will take you directly to Yorkminster Park's online donation page.
- C Make your donation using a credit card** by contacting our [Director of Operations](#).



Scan QR Code

Please note your donation is particularly important to us this year with the ongoing national postal strike. This has a significant risk to Yorkminster Park and to all charities.

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS:

Monday, December 23

Regular Hours:
9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Tuesday, December 24

Regular Hours:
9:00 am – 4:00 pm

**Wednesday, December 25,
Christmas Day**

Office closed (excepting morning worship service)

Thursday, December 26

Office closed

Monday, December 30

Regular Hours:
9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Tuesday, December 31

Regular Hours:
9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Wednesday, January 1

Office closed

Thursday, January 2

Regular Hours:
9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Friday, January 3

Regular Hours:
9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Editor: Gwendolyn Ramsay
This newsletter is published by:

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