



The Sunday Plus

Parkminster United Church
Newsletter –
June 2017

YOU ARE NOT ALONE. COME SHARE THE JOURNEY

IN THIS ISSUE

Notes from the Chair

Well here we are in June and it seems like the warmer weather is here to stay. Here's to days at the cottage and other summer pleasures.

This is my first message to the congregation and I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who have taken the time to support and guide me as I learn the responsibilities of my role as chair.

Much has happened in the past few months. In terms of governance, Parkminster voted to accept the streamlined board model. We are hugely indebted to Barb Leask Wynne and her committee for their excellent work. We also gave our support to four remits which, should they pass, will alter the governance of the United Church of Canada. The remits offer the Church the opportunity to downsize while creating a new vision of ministry. There is one other for us to consider – One Order of Ministry – which must be voted on by February 2018. There will be an opportunity for discussion on this in the fall.

The Transition Team submitted its report. Under Meg's guidance the committee met the goals set out by Council when it was set up in October 2014. There is one unfinished goal, that of implementing a conflict resolution process, which will be completed in the coming weeks.

We will once again have two summer students working on Outreach and Communications. These students are in the process of being hired and will be with us June 26 – August 19. Thank you, Bruce for your initiative in this area. Thank you too, to those working on the signage for the Labyrinth.

May was a month of goodbyes and welcomes.

We said goodbye to Elaine Beattie who had to resign because of ill health and family responsibilities. Parkminster continues to hold Elaine and Ross in its prayers. We welcomed Fred Monteith who took over her duties. Thank you, Fred, for your ministry. Fred will be with us until June 23 and then again for the month of September. Pastoral care will be covered by Meg in the months of July and August. We also said goodbye to Kelly Moores, who has enthusiastically and effectively led our Sunday school and community outreach to families. We will miss Kelly and her many contributions to the life of the church but wish her all the best in her new job at the Grand River Conservation Authority.

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Photos courtesy of Lee Osborne unless otherwise indicated.

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Notes from the Chair, continued

Our most significant welcome will happen at the end of September when our new ministerial team takes the reins at Parkminster. We are excited to welcome the Rev. Joe Gaspar from Parry Sound and the Rev. Heather Power from Alliston. With the joy of that welcome comes the pain of saying goodbye to Meg who has nurtured us, mentored us and kept us afloat in the last three years. Her wisdom, grace and love have made our new future possible. Thank you, Meg! You have shown us what it means when we say:

God is calling us to be an evolving community of faith inspired to embrace our future as we:

- **Deepen our commitment to each other**
- **Nurture our spiritual vitality and growth**
- **Live a life of loving influence in the world.**

Meg and Fred's last day in office will be September 25.

During the fall we will be having various events to give the congregation the opportunity to meet our new ministers. In addition, committee chairs and Council will be invited to meet separately to share with them the great work being done here at Parkminster. There will be more details on these to share with you in September.

I wish you all a safe and blessed summer.

Maedith Radlein



Message from Meg

Her name is Francine Christophe. She was 8 years old when Germany invaded France during World War II. The French police in her hometown of Marseilles, were assigned the terrible task of rounding up the locals who were wearing the yellow Star of David on their clothes. Maybe because they were rounding up neighbours, the police allowed each family to bring along one small thing.

Francine and her mother were two of the Jews who were part of this particular scoop. Like the rest, they brought a small token from home. Francine's mother chose two pieces of chocolate, maybe a treat to be enjoyed amidst the horror, maybe a small bit of food that, at some later date, might save her daughter. Then the two, mother and daughter, were herded to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

Time passed with the usual indignities, until the day came for a fellow inmate to give birth to her baby. Francine recalls that the woman was so thin that she did not look to be pregnant. The woman asked Francine's mother to stay with her through her labour and Francine's mother agreed. As the two women were heading for the infirmary, her mother asked Francine if they could share their chocolate with the woman who was

about to birth new life in a death camp. Francine said yes.

After several hours, a new baby returned to the barracks of Bergen-Belsen. Francine noted that the baby girl was tiny and weak. Neither she, nor her mother, thought it would live long.

The fate of that baby remained unknown as the concentration camp was liberated shortly after that wee one's birth day.

Francine and her mother returned to Marseille and tried to pick up the pieces of normal life. Francine grew up, married, and had a daughter of her own. About 25 years after she was freed, Francine was reflecting on her post Bergen-Belsen experience. She wished that there was mental health support for those who had endured atrocity. She wished that there was spiritual support for those who had lived in a wasteland without kindness or compassion. Francine's daughter challenged her to do something about it. The challenge was to redeem the death camp and to heal broken souls with hope.

Francine took up her daughter's challenge. She planned a lecture by a

therapist that was geared to survivors, their families, other therapists, and to anyone interested in turning death into love. In planning the lecture, she shared her own story with the speaker.

The night of the lecture arrived and many came out of interest or out of need. Before the talk began, the speaker approached Francine and asked if she could speak to her before she began the talk. She looked right at Francine and said, "I am that baby."

We do not know what we do when we share kindness. We do not know what we liberate when compassion moves us to generosity. We don't always remember that we are a people of hope and even the greatest offenses can be forgiven, but not forgotten, and we can be free and strong.

Francine's mother shared a piece of chocolate hope and support with someone who needed both. Here's to sharing our chocolate and changing the world into the realm of the holy. We can if we will.

We will miss you, Kelly



On a beautiful Sunday in May we sadly said goodbye to Kelly Moores, our Christian Education Coordinator. We honoured her work with the children and youth of Parkminster.

We will miss Kelly's enthusiasm and dedication to the families of PUC and her skills in leading our children on their faith journey.

To remember us we gave her a lovely solar bird bath for her garden at her new home with Dan in Elmira.



Over the summer Rob Vanderlinden and Franceen Wagner will lead Sunday morning activities each Sunday based on a picture book. If you have a free Sunday morning, join them for a rewarding time. This fall we will be continuing with the curriculum Feasting on the Word and many people have volunteered to lead Sunday morning activities for the children.



A note from Kelly

Thank you for all the small ways that the church has been involved and supportive life of Dan and me. Leaving the kids and families of Parkminster is certainly the hardest part, as I love them all.

Thank You Dan

Many thanks to Dan Ackland (Kelly's partner) for his leadership in running the audio-visual system during the services. Dan you will be missed.

Fare thee well, Elaine

Thank You Elaine!

Words aren't sufficient to express our thanks to Reverend Elaine Beattie.

The congregation at Parkminster is greatly indebted to her for having twice stepped in at a time of special need to provide pastoral care, from March 2011 to June 2013 and then again from March 2016 to April 2017.

Elaine has been an inspiration to all of us, providing compassionate care, wise counsel and insightful leadership. She has been a friend to all.

Over the past 14 months she and Reverend Meg have worked closely, a wonderful example of team ministry during a time of transition at Parkminster. We wish Elaine and husband Ross well in their recovery from health problems. (We'll miss Ross in the band as well!)



Skylight Festival July 28-30

You are the ones for Skylight!

The Skylight Festival of faith, justice and arts runs July 28 to 30 at the Paris Fairgrounds in Paris, Ontario. The festival is a celebratory and creative space where diverse communities of all ages connect.

Engage with the passion of cutting-edge thinkers, musicians and artists, or just chill in the 'living room' (in a field). Volunteers welcome! Registration and more information at www.skylightfestival.ca.

The most economical way to register is with a group of six or more. Camping is included with registration. Sponsored by EDGE Network for Ministry Development and the United Church Observer.

Men of Parkminster

What began as a small get together for wings at Bruce Mutton's house in the winter of 2015 turned into a number of great get togethers for fellowship and growing friendships at Parkminster.

UGOIGO started out strong and developed their name early in the process. As usual, the men took a little longer but we got there. After numerous discussions (?) and a couple of false starts, market genius won out and we are officially: "MOP" (Men of Parkminster) which is not to be confused with the Parkminster Men's Group (for all of you Life of Brian fans).

We are not a formal group; the goal is simply to get the MOPs and friends of MOPs together on a somewhat regular basis to enjoy each other's company, maybe learn something and to occasionally enjoy some food together.

We have toured a craft brewery, played darts, toured a new school, gathered for billiards, enjoyed a great bowling evening organized by UGOIGO, watched a great movie on the troubles of Omar Khadar and have been hosted at the homes of a number of MOPs (thanks to Johnathan Klingenberg, Lee McWebb and Bruce Mutton). We finished our "formal" gatherings this spring with a great barbeque prepared by Chef Keith Hagedorn (Kathy Hagedorn-Hehl's brother and Parkminster alumni).

We have a couple of informal gatherings suggested for the summer focusing on the Jazz and Blues festival (details to follow this summer).

The big event for the fall is the evening with the Neil Murray Band. We hope to see many Parkminster folks, including MOPs along with their friends on September 30 at the Navy Club.

We will be putting together a list of events for the fall, winter and spring over the next couple of months. We welcome any suggestions that you have and most importantly extend a warm welcome to all MOPs to join us.

UGOIGO

A few years ago Norma Hutton had a plan but she needed some help. So she invited the women of Parkminster to a social event at Shelly Mutton's. We came baring wine and appetizers not knowing the intent of the evening until our supreme leader stood at the fridge, poster paper and marker in hand.

You see, Norma wanted to bring the women together to form a group that would meet monthly for a fun social night. We would get to know each other so we would feel more comfortable at church and develop new friendships with women of all ages. We have enjoyed a wide range of activities from line dancing, hiking, speakers, book sharing, theatre and pot luck dinners to name just a few.

Our numbers have blossomed and more women only make us better. It runs on individuals offering to host or organize events. If you would like your name added to the UGOIGO event email list speak to Norma or send a brief email to sarah_quanz@hotmail.com

Want some company while walking?

On Wednesdays, 6 to 10 Parkminster people head out on a walk led by Sue Usaty. Each week is a different location.

Join for a fun and easy way to get some exercise. Watch each weeks What's Up for information on the walk for the next week.

Photos on the right are show some of the interesting items along our walks.

Summer students

For the past few summers, Parkminster has enjoyed the experience of hiring summer students to help with community Outreach projects and to help fill gaps when our staff are away.

The student salaries are paid by a grant from the Federal Government specifically allocated for the hiring of young people.

During the months of July and August this year, we are once again enjoying the presence of two summer students who will assist with activities during Food Truck events and promote our Labyrinth to the community. Both students will be assisting in many ways throughout the summer so if you see them around, please welcome them.

