



The Sunday Plus

Parkminster United Church
Newsletter –
October 2019

YOU ARE NOT ALONE. COME SHARE THE JOURNEY

Notes from the Chair

For Everything There is a Season



For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven.

A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest.

Ecclesiastes 3 NLT

The season of fall brings with it a time of change. The leaves turn from green to vibrant reds, oranges and harvest golds. The temperature drops and becomes a little chillier. Summer's growth becomes the bountiful harvest and, in my house, we start having a lot more soup—a warm comfort food. Many have started new terms at school, and all of us have returned to routines and left the lazy hazy days of summer behind us. May we remember to be grateful to the Divine for showing us through nature how life must change.

The journey of life is marked with change and adjusting to change can be difficult. It can be scary to leave the comfortable. Change can make us feel disturbed and anxious. But change can also be a vehicle of growth; a time to leave old habits behind and embrace the beginning of something new.

Today's society is constantly changing and churches need to evolve to meet the needs of this changing society. The Parkminster Capital Projects Committee wants to keep

Parkminster moving forward into the changing future. Council has embraced their recommendation to proceed with Phase One of the United Church of Canada's Development Strategy (for more information see the article on page 3). Other United Church development projects have led to greater involvement in the community as well as greater financial security for the church.

Another exciting initiative is the Stewardship Committee's "Inspired to Give" program. I am looking forward to the Parkminster Community Luncheon where we will enjoy a meal together as we explore why and how we support our church.

The Membership and Pastoral Care Committee ran a dementia workshop to move Parkminster towards its goal of being a dementia-friendly community. Parkminster is indeed striving to meet the needs of a changing community.

When making decisions, Council members endeavor to remember our mission statement:

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

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Photo above courtesy of Sandi McMullen from the Two Row Paddle. See article on page 3.

In a world of change, perhaps the best we can do is to ensure we are living our lives in line with our values and not be afraid to embrace change as we deepen our commitment to each other, nurture our spiritual vitality and growth and live a life of loving influence in the world.

Kathy Shortt, Chair of Council

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Message from our Ministers

Spring is often thought of as the season of new beginnings. The rain falls; flowers bloom and blossoms perfume the air. We stand in awe, amazed the beautiful earth survived another frozen winter and we rejoice.

But for some, autumn is the season of renewal. We pack away tents and beach towels; we enjoy the bounty of our vegetable gardens and start preparing them for the colder seasons ahead. And as the temperature begins to fall, we are resolved to begin again the rituals of family life. Autumn is the season of beginnings and fresh starts with new classes, new teachers and even new schools. We look forward with hope and excitement for another great year. We are in the midst of another fall season together here at Parkminster.

There will be many opportunities to experience ongoing and new life in our community of faith. We are excited to embark on programs and opportunities that will help us expand our vision of what we can accomplish as followers of Jesus locally and in the world. As we begin the fall, we invite you to consider these things:

- Pray for the life and work of our church.
- Seek ways to get more involved in the life of Parkminster.
- Get the word out about our church and all we do here: Invite someone to church, to help in one of our projects, to a study group or to an event.

May God bless us and others as we live out our mission and ministry together.

Rev. Heather and Rev. Joe

Pastoral Care at PUC

Pastoral care consists of helping acts, done by representative persons, directed towards the healing, sustaining, guiding, reconciling and nurturing of persons whose troubles and concerns arise in the context of daily interactions and ultimate means and concerns. This is the definition that was found on the internet.

Our ministers Rev. Joe and Rev. Heather do complex pastoral care around funerals and marriages. They help families transition through these major life events. They do some counselling with families and singles who are struggling with life events such as depression, major illness and family issues. They connect as they can with seniors, people who are shut-in and anyone who requests a visit. Many of these cases are also referred to other agencies for more therapy and support.

The Pastoral Care and Membership committee coordinates the 2 by 2 visitations, Christmas poinsettias for Shut-ins, Easter plants for those who have suffered loss of a loved one, Longest Night service, personal cards, Strawberry Social for our elderly, learning seminars about Dementia, meals and so on.

Much of the work done by the Ministers and Pastoral Care committee is done privately and without announcement. We are strictly bound by privacy legislation to treat our congregants and their private lives with dignity and respect. We are very careful. The ministers do not share names of congregants without their consent even with the committee. The Pastoral Care committee is equally careful. Your privacy is of utmost importance to us.

However, we need you the congregation to be part of the Pastoral Care team. There are many people in the congregation who need support. It can be as simple as a phone call, a visit for coffee, a visit to play cards or a game, or more complicated as taking a meal to someone who needs that support. The congregation is and should be the primary provider of pastoral care because you are aware of situations that are not well known. If you have a concern on how to approach a particular individual or family, please feel free to contact the Pastoral Care committee or our Ministers for advice and remember that privacy applies to you as well.

Thank you for being part of the Pastoral Care Team

Letter to Parkminster

This letter came to the church during the summer. Inclusive Ministries wishes to share it with all of you.

Hi,

I wanted to reach out to express gratitude for your community's commitment to being publicly supportive and welcoming to LGBTQ people.

I moved into my first home with my fiancée this year, and though our neighbours have been mostly welcoming, I was afraid of how they might react before we moved. I know friends who have not been as lucky as we have.

The message that myself and others like me are unwelcome is often heard from people who hide their personal discomfort behind their faith, and when I was younger, I understood religious faith and hatred to be the same.

When I drive by your church and see the flag my heart is lifted. I feel safer knowing your community is open.

I understand that this is a commitment you have made. That there has been vandalism in the past to shame the people of your church into less public support, and that your response has been more love and more beauty.

I am writing this to tell you how much seeing your flag means to me.

Thank you.

Sonya

Two Row Paddle

It's 6 a.m.—the sun is shining and the parking lot is full of knapsacks, sleeping bags, canoes and kayaks. There are sounds of laughter and catching up, hugs and welcomes. Everybody is helping out others: *"I can help you carry your kayak to the shore, let me wash your dish, fill your water bottle"* and so on.

Welcome to the Two Row - Deyohahage Gihę'gowahneh, a 9-day paddle on the Grand River organized by and paddled as an indigenous/settler partnership. On the surface, it's a paddling/camping adventure for the inexperienced to expert, and a chance for us to meet people from the indigenous community at Six Nations. But it is so much more.

It's a journey into self-discovery, a commitment to community and a sublime experiential learning opportunity. Indigenous reality and our shared history comes to life on the river in a way that just won't happen in a classroom or at a seminar.

In welcoming us on the paddle, Ellie Joseph, one of the organizers, talks about helping if you can, asking for help if you need it and accepting help if it's offered. It's more than caring, and it shifts our mindset. Being strong and independent is a mindset we recognize; assuming everyone carries their own weight, that's something we value. But this is about putting the needs of the group first and recognizing the interdependence of all. It's valuing reciprocity.

"Nobody's tent is up until everyone's tent is up. Nobody has finished the portage until everyone has finished the portage."

The spirit and the intention of the Two Row is clear: Good Mind, Good Words, Good Actions. These words permeate the atmosphere, the actions and the spiritual practice of the event. Each day begins with a Thanksgiving address offered, if possible, in one of the languages of the Six Nations of the Grand: Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca, Cayuga or Tuscarora. These *"words before all else"* invite us to experience Haudenosaunee culture and thought, and offer time for personal reflection. You have to be very quiet to hear it; their tone is low, their voice soft, the indigenous participants around us joining in with IO (yo) at the end of each verse as an acknowledgement of the speaker's words. There's quiet time on the river too, to think, wonder and watch the rippling water.

A lot and nothing much happens on the Two Row. The days are mostly the same—wake up and camp tear-down, Thanksgiving address, paddle, lunch break, paddle, set up camp. This is followed by an Indigenous speaker about some aspect of history or culture, then dinner, campfire and bed. There's lots of laughter and shared tears as people connect over conversations and life experiences. It all creates the potential to challenge how we think and what we know about ourselves. And it seems almost incidental to share that being on the Two Row offers physical, mental, emotional and spiritual healing: the more you are outside, the better you feel.

Inspired by the original Two Row paddle on the Hudson River in 2013, the Two Row on the Grand will celebrate its fifth-year next year. To paraphrase its purpose as stated on their website, it is a symbolic enactment of our original Two Row Treaty of 1613.

From time to time we paddle in two rows—one indigenous row and one settler/immigrant row—to demonstrate the concept of the treaty: travelling on the river of life in parallel paths, close enough to help each other as needed, but not disrupting each others' way of life.

The Two Row event and community is becoming an integrated and a powerful influence at Six Nations: there is strong involvement and investment from both the economic development council, and health services. What community leader can you find that encourages 50+ of her employees to spend their work week helping out on a camping trip?

We wanted to learn about Indigenous culture and how to create right relationships, we came to paddle and maybe make a few friends. We found so much more! Whatever brings you to the Two Row, you can be sure you will leave with many unexpected gifts.

The Two Row on the Grand next year will run from July 22 to July 30.

Sandi McMullen and Nancy Dykstra

Working with EDGE

EDGE is a part of the Church in Mission Unit of the General Council Offices in The United Church of Canada (UCC). EDGE works with congregations and ministries across Canada in the areas of new ministry, renewing ministry, property and innovation.

On September 17, 2019 the Capital Projects Committee hosted an evening with Kris Tavella, from EDGE. He presented information about the UCC's Real Estate Planning Process which works with selected communities of faith to provide unbiased property information. As we look forward into the future, EDGE would help us make informed property decisions, so Parkminster could focus on its mission and ministry. Council approved a motion to proceed with Phase One of the UCC's Development Strategy.

During Phase One EDGE will work with the congregation to develop a vision and outreach objectives to drive the project:

- EDGE will collect community demographic and enviro-nics data;
- EDGE will consult with city planning and other professionals to see the developmental options available to us; and
- EDGE will prepare and deliver a report outlining our church property options (e.g., affordable or senior housing, a community hub, expanding our existing facility, etc.)

At the end of Phase One, Parkminster will decide whether to proceed to Phase Two of the Development Strategy. The cost for Phase One is \$3,500, but we only pay if we don't proceed to Phase Two. Past EDGE projects have led to greater involvement in the community, as well as greater financial security for the Church.

Capital Projects Committee

Bert Blackburn	Bruce Mutton	Jeff Stacey
Andrea Gaspar	Rev Heather Power	Ron Usaty
Rob Hehl	Terry Ridgeway	John Watson
Clare Klingenberg	Kathy Shortt	