



The Sunday Plus

Parkminster United Church
Newsletter –
October 2021

YOU ARE NOT ALONE. COME SHARE THE JOURNEY

IN THIS ISSUE

Notes from the Chair



Change is in the air as we enter the season of Thanksgiving. And we have a lot to be thankful for.

We are approaching 19-months of

worship services delivered from and into our living rooms and kitchens. How quickly Reverends Heather and Joe transitioned from leading our worship services in our beloved sanctuary to bringing us together as a community of faith over Zoom and Facebook. How beautifully our Music Director, Neil, has continued to bring music into our homes on Sunday mornings through his own piano and voice and those of our many talented singers and musicians. How seamlessly it appeared that worship images and presentations were produced that kept us interested and engaged. How bravely our worship participants made announcements, did readings, delivered messages and learned to socialize over chats. **Thank you.**

Coming this Sunday, Joe, Heather and Neil will broadcast our worship service from the Parkminster sanctuary. Such a great deal of learning has happened with our new cameras and sound equipment. Setting up, mastering

and rehearsing has been going on for weeks and has meant hours of effort by staff and volunteers. **Thank you.**

The next transition will be to hybrid services, combining in-sanctuary and Zoom worship to support personal choice. Public health permitting, we anticipate this could happen later this fall. Preparations have involved many hours of discussion and decision-making by staff, COVID-19 Working Group and Council. **Thank you.**

And with this, so too, continues the work of our Committees and groups. **Thank you.** A few examples include:

- Choir and Bell Choir are back to their in-sanctuary practice;
- Resettlement continues to support Siham, Fadi and family;
- Property has renovated the Family room (photo above) and completed property and building maintenance; and
- Inclusive has continued living in right relations, racial justice and a number of other initiatives.

Members of our congregation continue to do important work behind the scenes, and they support each other in innumerable ways.

On this Thanksgiving weekend, we are blessed and I give many, many thanks.

Jennifer Allan, Chair of Council

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Message from our Ministers

Dear Friends,

As we write, it was on this exact date, October 1st, five years ago (as shown in the photo on the left), that we began our ministry with you all. What a blessing it has been and how time flies.



In this short time, we have been through a lot together. It started not long after we arrived, with some homophobic graffiti at the entrance of the church. What was supposed to be a hateful act, turned into one of grace and community. The response from you, other churches, and the community at large reminded us all that the church indeed remains holy, and

our vibrant mural served as a visual reminder of that. As your then new ministers, it revealed to us the significance of Parkminster's affirming Christian presence in KW. We are proud to serve such an open, inclusive, and affirming community.

Through the years we have gotten to know each other through worship and pastoral care, through committee meetings, church gatherings, and special events. In our conversations, we have learned about the history of Parkminster and the special people who made the vision of this community a reality. Unfortunately, we have also mourned the deaths of some charter and long-time members. We have been very fortunate to work with many capable and committed leaders and volunteers as well

as with a staff team that is kind, competent, and dedicated. Thank you all.

More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic changed so many aspects of our life as a community of faith. But once again, the resilience of our community was felt as we have come together, adapted, and transitioned to online worship, to taking care of each other in different ways, and still support the ministry and mission of Parkminster.

Now (as shown in the photo on the right), we move into a new time of transition as we look ahead to hybrid worship and what it means to be a community of faith in a post-pandemic era. Although there will be challenges, we remain hopeful and even excited about what is to come.

In that very first service we talked about the ministers/congregation relationship being like an arranged marriage, where we're brought together but don't know much about each other - the hope being that the love grows and builds over time as we face challenges, grieve, laugh, and work together. We can assure you that this is true for us.



May God continue to bless us and our ministry together,

Heather and Joe

Resettlement update

The seasons, as the song says, go round and round! It feels like time is flying by with Siham and her family. We are already closing in on one year together.

This past summer we were able to enjoy visits in backyards and a couple of special events with Siham, Khairiyia and Yehya, and their families. Check out the photos for details.

September has seen all of the children go back to school. After months of challenges because of Covid, it was exciting to see them all have a successful start-up in person. We are already seeing increased confidence in the English skills of the children.



A post-vaccine sports party at Victoria Park. The first time that we have been able to gather in a larger group!

At the same time Siham, through the generosity of Parkminster members and friends, received a sewing machine which she immediately put to good use.

Since school began Siham also has a little more free time and is able to pursue some of her own learning in English and computer skills.

We have had frequent contact with Siham's nephew Fadi over the past couple of months. We know that he has been cleared to travel. We have not been given a travel date as of the date of writing this article.

Thank you for your ongoing interest in the family and for your support - materially, financially and socially. We are excited to see what this next season holds for Siham and her family.



Cobie hosted a girls' afternoon in her backyard. The cousins clearly enjoy being together!

A glorious day at the beach at Lori and Gerard's cottage on Lake Huron. Siham, Khairiya and Yehya surprised us with a fabulous Syrian barbecue meal.



Getting to know... Charter Member John Heinbuch

Each person at Parkminster has their own story. Every person's story is unique and interesting. Trouble is we usually don't know those stories. We often don't know much about those sitting beside us in church or serving together on the same committee. Here is another in our periodic storytelling about those among us at Parkminster.

In the 1950's, John and Marjorie Heinbuch joined with other couples in the neighbourhood to establish Parkminster United. Worshipping first at Harold Wagner Public School on Bridgeport Road, the group then arranged for the purchase of property and the building of the church on Erb Street. Worship was held in the first phase of the building, i.e., the gym, kitchen, family room and office. There was a thriving Sunday school. Similar congregations were springing up all over Canada.

John is now 93, one of our few surviving charter members. Marjorie passed away in 2017. Their story is an interesting one.

John was born in 1928, and grew up on a farm three miles from Linwood. They moved to Linwood in 1936 when his father became the Township

Clerk. His Mother was a school teacher, but died tragically at age 35 from pneumonia when he was three years old.

After high school in Elmira, on the suggestion of a friend, John applied to Bell Telephone and got a job on a line crew, working mainly in the Owen Sound area. In the winter the crew used a team of horses and a sleigh to get where they needed to go. His pay was \$20 a week, plus expenses. He later got promoted to an underground cable splicing job, and it was when doing work in Windsor that, he met Marjorie. She grew up on a farm near Strathroy, attended the University of Western Ontario, attended Teachers College and, in 1950, took a teaching position in Windsor.

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Getting to know... continued



John and Marjorie quickly discovered they had a lot in common...a farm background, United Church members, both interested in sports. When it came time for John to head home to Linwood, they had decided to keep on seeing each other. The distance problem was solved by meeting halfway, at her parents' farm. They were married in 1953, around the time of the polio epidemic, with public swimming pools closed. John took a position with Bell in Kitchener; they joined Highland Road United, and Marjorie taught at KCI. In 1954 they bought a home in Waterloo. Interestingly, even though John worked for Bell, they weren't able to get a home phone. Post-war, phone lines hadn't yet been put in place.

Their son David was born in 1955; son John Edward in 1957, and Jim in 1959. A great neighbourhood for the kids...15 kids living in six houses on their end of the street. It was a big deal when they got a black and white television set.

The 1960's was a memorable time...John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King were assassinated, there were race riots in the U.S., the drug culture began, the Vietnam War was on, birth control pills came on the market, Bill Haley and the Comets launched the rock and roll era, and Neil Armstrong walked on the moon.

The boys learned to swim at the YMCA in downtown Kitchener and began to swim competitively. John volunteered as a coach. Much of their time in the 70's was devoted to their competitive swimming.

John Edward and Jim were going into provincial competitions. Dad John became an official and soon was being invited to officiate at out-of-town competitions. Dave was identified as having potential for the national team.

It was an exciting time. Dave competed in the Canada Winter Games in 1973 in Vancouver, and won a silver medal in the 1975 Pan Am Games in Mexico City. John swam on the U of Waterloo swim team which won the CIAU championship in 1979.

Dave went to Simon Fraser University and then University of Waterloo, and qualified for 1976 Olympic team. He later turned to coaching with the Nepean Swim club in Ottawa, and is now a full-time swim coach at the University of Ottawa.

Sons John Edward and Jim spent their working careers with Bell Canada. Both are now retired and living in Waterloo and Penetanguishene respectively.

John served as President of the Ontario section of the Canadian Amateur Swimming Association and travelled with the Canadian swim team to the 1978 World Swimming Championships in Berlin. Marjorie joined John there and they did a bus tour of walled off East Berlin, then accessible only via Check Point Charlie with its armed guards and dogs. A very poor and desolate place compared with West Berlin.

The end of the 70's saw the end of John and Marjorie's heavy involvement with the sport.

John has been a lifelong Cleveland baseball fan. When growing up on the farm, his father took the Globe and Mail. John remembers reading about Cleveland pitcher Bob Feller breaking into baseball. Feller threw so hard he could break a barn board with his fastball. He was John's hero. Sportscaster Bob Costas once interviewed Feller and asked about the pressure of pitching. Feller replied that it was always fun. Pressure he said was serving on a destroyer in the Pacific in World War II and seeing three buddies killed. John and Marjorie's 50th wedding anniversary in 2003 was celebrated with a trip to a Cleveland game.

In 1983, at age 55, John retired from Bell to join Marjorie's brother working on the family farm near Strathroy, and they bought another 50 acres across the road. It meant a lot of travel back and forth to Waterloo, but the boys loved going to the farm. They grew wheat, soy beans and corn and had a great vegetable garden. John bought a tractor from Thelma Van Camp's brother's firm near Listowel. John kept farming until 2002, when they sold the property.

In retirement, John and Marjorie were very active at Parkminster, loved playing bridge and being with friends, regularly attended the Pops at the Centre in the Square (not surprising since John used to listen to the CBC classical music station when driving the tractor on the farm), and John loved the burgers at the Harmony Lunch. John's kids and grandkids Austin and Emma are now John's greatest joy in life.