

“Living faithfully in the Spirit of Christ to make a loving difference in the world.”

Paul's Ponderings

As COVID restrictions are lifted and our ability to do more things opens up, I am recognizing within myself varying reactions and responses. The curling club opened up on Jan 31st, but it wasn't until Feb 11th that I got back to curling - an activity I love. I'm not sure I can explain all the factors for my hesitancy or for why it felt okay to go back. I don't feel ready (safe) to go back to a 67's game, and I am not sure about a restaurant. That process of discerning is happening a lot and each of us are weighing various factors in the process.

As we move back into in person worship I understand that not everyone will feel comfortable returning. Maybe some who came in the fall won't feel ready to be back now. Maybe some who didn't in the fall will be okay now.

As a community, I trust that we will recognize the various paths of thought and comfort that we will be living as we move out of this challenging and traumatic pandemic experience. It is going to take time and reflection to process all our responses. So, as we plan for worship, we will continue to offer a variety of ways to engage with worship and community.

So, let us continue to care for one another as we live these days and have respect and understanding for the differing paths of response.

REFUGEE COMMITTEE:

In 2020 we started working on an application to sponsor a Syrian family of five - 2 adults and three young children. This January we were delighted to receive an email stating that our sponsorship application has been approved by ROCO (Resettlement Operations Centre in Ottawa). The file is now being transferred to the appropriate IRCC (Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada) office abroad where a decision will be made on the refugees' application for permanent residence. It will be some time before we know whether this family will be allowed to come to Canada but a least progress is being made.

Pat & Norm McLeod

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



Update on the 2021

Write for Rights

Campaign: Our letter writers wrote 180 letters to add to Canada's total of

75,00 letters for the 2021 campaign. Many thanks to all who participated.

Since the campaign we have been involved in 5 new actions: defending Indigenous peoples in **HONDURAS** protecting the Guapinol river on their traditional lands, speaking out for 5 human rights workers in **CHINA**, including one we had campaigned for in the 2021 write-a-thon, defending the right of a parliamentarian in **TUNISIA** to express his own opinion, speaking out for a human rights worker imprisoned and missing in **PAKISTAN**, and raising the issue of people in **NIGERIA** being evicted from their homes.

AI is pressing the UN General Assembly to meet in an emergency session and adopt a resolution denouncing **Russia's** unlawful attack and calling for an end to all violations of humanitarian law and human rights. The lives, safety and well-being of millions of civilians are at stake. Amnesty is mobilizing as a global movement to protect human rights and lives in **Ukraine**, and hold leaders accountable.

We did receive one piece of good news: a human rights defender in **CHAD** has been released from prison although he is restricted on his movements and his right to speak freely.

We can always use more people interested in participating in these campaigns for human rights.

Contact Norm McLeod pn.mcleod@sympatico.ca.

Norm McLeod

Progress Pride flag

The pride flag is a symbol of the LGBTQ+ community and its colours represent the different communities within it. Over the last few years, the Pride Flag has been updated and changed to better include and represent more communities. What do the colours in the flag mean?

Pride colours The original pride flag was first displayed by Gilbert Baker in 1978. Gilbert said 'We needed something beautiful...something from us'. Each colour represents meaning to the community:



Red – Life – Blood is red and often thought of as a vital life force of the body. Red represents passion among many cultures and passion is also where life originates.

Orange – Healing – Orange is believed to be fun and celebratory which are healing activities.

Yellow – Sunlight – Yellow functions as the flags radiant and bright centre, said to simulate new thoughts and ideas.

Green – Nature – Green represents prosperity, growth and nature which is a place of healing.

Blue – Peace/Harmony/Art – The original intention of including blue was to represent serenity. Blue is known as a relaxing colour of calmness and unity.

Violet – Spirit – Violet (purple) denotes pride and is considered calming and connects us to the spiritual realm.

Black and Brown

In 2017 Philadelphia's office of LGBT Affairs added black and brown stripes to the pride flag to represent people of colour, who historically were not always included in aspects of the mainstream LGBTQ+ movement.



In recent years, society has acknowledged that the pride movement originated thanks to Black trans activists, such as Marsha P. Johnson, who fought against police at the Stonewall Inn in 1969. With the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement, culture has started to acknowledge the vital roles that people of colour have had in our society. Many people of colour did not receive the recognition they deserved historically. Adding colours to the flag is one way to change this.

The placement of the colours in an arrow shape conveys that progress still needed.

Black and Brown arrows also represent people living with HIV/AIDS, those who have died and the stigma around the virus that still exists in society now.

We'll take a look at other colours, their meaning and background in following newsletters.



In January our group **From House to Home Furnishings** requested you post a notice, that we were seeking donations of furniture and household items for newly arrived Afghan refugees. You did that and also sent it through the United Churches across Ottawa

network, which have given a wonderfully positive response from all the congregants. Thank you so much. It means a great deal to us and to the refugee families.

Thanks to the generosity of donors we have been able to furnish the housing for many of the refugee families. As they get their paperwork in order. Additionally we are expecting as many as 400 more families to arrive throughout 2022.

This effort to help newly arrived refugees and will be ongoing in the foreseeable future and we will be open to accept donations. As our warehouse (in the former Country Grocer store 729 Ridgewood Ave) is manned by volunteers the drop-off hours fluctuate but donors can find the latest hours by clicking on the From House to Home: Furnishings for Refugees facebook link <https://m.facebook.com/pg/FromhousetohomeOttawa>

Additionally, should anyone be interested, we are also looking for volunteers willing to pick-up items, or help sort in the warehouse. You can register by clicking on this link

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScf7ONP1mO91lrh55oyyMJVFwBIKC64_mBbVgjDarahaPLODA/viewform?usp=sf_link

Once again, thank you for posting our appeal. Kind Regards Suzi Shore-Sauvi, Director &

Mary Logan Tel: 613 853 1576



TAX BENEFITS FOR DONATING SECURITIES TO THE CHURCH

A gift of publicly listed stocks, mutual funds, or bonds can be a good way to make donations to your church and the ministries you care about because there are no taxes on capital gains for donated publicly listed securities.*

Because you don't pay capital gains tax and you get a charitable tax receipt, the cost of making a gift using stocks, mutual funds, or other securities can be less than if you made a gift of the same amount using cash. If this is of interest to you, talk to your financial advisor and/or contact the office for further information.

*Stocks, mutual funds, or bonds listed on the TSX, NYSE, etc.

Caring for One Another

In 2019 the "Caring for One Another" ministry was created along with its sister ministries "Nourishing Our Faith" and "Building Partnerships." One of the tasks that the Caring for One Another ministry assumed was the organization of funeral/memorial services along with the receptions afterwards. In the year or so between the implementation of the Ministry teams and the beginning of COVID there was consideration among team members about how to organize things so that this task was sustainable. These discussions were paused but not forgotten during the Covid shutdowns. Now that things look to be opening up again, it is time to share our analysis and conclusions with the congregation.

The activities that the "Caring for One Another" ministry volunteers must perform for a service and reception include:

1. Liaison with the family to ascertain their wishes and outline the possibilities and constraints;
2. Setting up the chancel for the service, setting up a room for the family to wait in before the service, greeting attendees and handing out orders of service and hymn books;
3. Setting up for the reception, including setting up tables and chairs as required, making and serving coffee, tea and juice, organizing and setting out food, and then cleaning up afterward; and

4. If necessary, depending on the time of year and the weather, directing traffic into the parking lot and assisting people if from their cars or from the drop-off point into the church.

In recent years the primary responsibility for the indoor tasks has devolved to Wanda Maurais and Mary Shaw and for the outdoor tasks to Bob Garrow. In addition to the tasks, they have made the necessary calls to find volunteers to assist them. Although they made this arrangement work, it is no longer sustainable. We are looking for a group of eight volunteers who can take on these responsibilities in the future: six for the inside responsibilities and two for the outside responsibilities.

The provision of food for the receptions by members of the congregations is another area that we considered. Over the years the amount of food that the congregation provided has been reduced and the reliance on external services has increased. By the time of COVID closures, congregational contributions were limited to desserts. We are now at the point where even this is no longer sustainable, so we are seeking out reliable caterers to whom we can refer families (or whom we can call on their behalf) to prepare, and deliver all of the food, including desserts. Our ultimate goal would be to find a caterer who would also set up for the reception, provide service during the reception, and clean up afterward. However for the moment this is still the responsibility of the church volunteers from the church.

The groundwork is in place to continue to hold funerals/memorial services and receptions in the church, once the church COVID response committee gives a green light. Clear instructions have been written for the tasks that must be done for funerals/memorial services and receptions, and we will set up training for all who come forward to support this important ministry at Riverside. But we do need those eight volunteers. If you are willing, or if you would like some more information, please contact either Peg Brandon or Wanda Maurais.

Property Committee Update - March 2022

While the snow continues to fall, your Property Committee has been hard at work preparing for the major renovation projects on the Chancel. As you recall, we have two major projects underway:

a. Construction - addition of a new accessibility ramp on the right (west) side of the chancel, removal of the top layer of the chancel pedestal, removal of the curtain, carpet and communion rails and relocation of the choir to the left (east) side.

b. Audio-visual - addition of a new central speaker, addition of new large screen monitors on either side of the church hall, addition of a camera on the left (east) side wall and installation of new control and switching boxes.

Work is well underway and we thought you'd like to know some of the things going on -

Construction - We have signed with a contractor, Mr Roland Graham of Home Dalliace renovations and have held our kickoff meeting. Mr Graham has worked with Southminster United on several projects and brings in-depth knowledge of church operations. In fact, he has made several key suggestions. As a result, we have consulted with Wayne Irshick and plan to leave the organ in its current location and orientation. We felt placing the organist with his/her back to the congregation would not be ideal. As well, we are looking at a wooden floor option instead of carpet as we plan to harmonize the look of the chancel area in harmony with the wood of the Cross, central panel and altar area. Mr Graham is conducting the final design and cost options phase and hopes to begin demolition and reconstruction in Mid-March with completion in April. With kind assistance from David Gray, we plan to remove, clean and store the wall hangings during the construction phases so they won't be damaged and will go back up in fine shape once we are all done.

Audio-visual - We have been under contract with CBCI Canada as the prime contractor since November of last year. The supply chain shortages largely exacerbated by COVID-19 have affected our delivery of parts but we are hopeful that the final components will be delivered by end-March with work to begin mid-April. This should coordinate well with the construction contract. Current work involves finishing the wiring design so that we can run cabling under the chancel floor once we have removed the carpet.

So what will this mean for the church activities? Well, from Mid-March to Mid-April, things may get a bit messy at the front of the church so we may have to move in-church services further back from the altar area or shift to an east-west alignment (similar to the Meeting House arrangement). We will take our direction from Paul and the Church Council.

How can you get involved? Well if you are interested in being "consultant's" on colours or fine details we can make that happen. Please pass your name to Louise in the office.

Here are some of the ideas also being considered by Property Committee:

a. Preparing for continued technology support for services and rentals. Currently, it takes a few folks to manage our Zoom or in-person service arrangements with cameras, sound, YouTube connections and so on. With our new system we will have more options to consider so we are considering a Youth Tech Mentoring initiative to bring interested junior adults on board to learn Audio-Visual Presentation skills and assist with services and rentals.

We would conduct training in the related technology areas of expertise and consider paying honorariums for direct support of services or special functions. Start thinking now if you would know of anyone interested in such an arrangement.

Snow and ice-clearing has been quite active this year. Our contractor, Vincent Ward, has done an outstanding job (yes he was "out standing" in the cold) and in conjunction with the parking lot snow plowing contractor we have had very good and safe access this year.

We are looking forward to some new members on the Property Committee this coming year so stand by!

As spring approaches, we are planning for some tree pruning and removal projects, repairing the roof on the garage to prevent animal intrusions like we had last year, and preliminary plans for a fellowship "Spring back into action" morning or afternoon to get things spiffy. We may also schedule Workday Wednesday's again once things get nice and warm. The Property Committee is a busy group.

For your information. If you have questions or seek more details - happy to provide.

Richard Williams, Chair Property Committee

Calendar of Events - March 2022

Date	Details: Time	Event
Fri, Mar 4 th	World Day of Prayer – Zoom 2:00 PM Rogers Cable 22 7:00 PM	The World Day of Prayer service for this year will be streamed by Zoom call that will bring together folks from Riverside United and Rideau Park United Church. The service has been prepared by the England, Wales and Northern Ireland committee for 2022.
Sun, Mar 6 th	10:30am	In Person / Zoom Worship Gathering
Tue, Mar 7 th	at 7:00 pm	Indigenous Canada is a twelve-session online course through the University of Alberta
Sun, Mar 13th	10:30am	In Person / Zoom Worship Gathering
Mon, March 14th	(3.14) is PIE day.	This is an Affirming Ministry Day of recognizing the importance of being Public, Intentional and Explicit in our identity as Affirming
Sun, Mar 20th	10:30am	In Person / Zoom Worship Gathering
Mon, Mar 21st		International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
Tue, Mar 22 nd	at 7:00 pm	Indigenous Canada is a twelve-session online course through the University of Alberta
Sun, Mar 27th	10:30am	In Person / Zoom Worship Gathering
Sun, Mar 27th	After service (our aim is for 11:30)	Annual Congregational meeting
Sun, Apr 3rd	10:30am	In Person / Zoom Worship Gathering
Tue, Mar 5 th	at 7:00 pm	Indigenous Canada is a twelve-session online course through the University of Alberta



I am a grandfather of four and I like to fish. It is my hope that I can combine the fishing equipment I have with other equipment to provide my grandkids with some quality time with their grandfather.

I would like to pass along my skills as a catcher to one of them. Please let me know if you have equipment to donate. My number is 613 739-3485 thank you for your time.
David Biggs