Conversations Under the Trees ~ August 12 & 13 2020

Reflections:
- Gratitude for young people showing respect as a member takes his daily walk.
- Member’s granddaughter’s questions for the education minister.
- Lessons of life from farming and gratitude for time with grandkids.
- The evolving church and how informal gatherings are like the early start of Christianity and might be our new longing.
- Learned more today about others than a year in worship.

Future Dates: Wed Sept 16 & Tues Sept 22, 10-11:30 am
Email info@trinityunitedguelph.ca or call (519) 824-4800 Ext 1 to reserve a place.

'A welcoming, caring family of faith, celebrating God’s love in Jesus.'
Core Value Statement 2008
Dear Trinity Friends,

I miss you dearly, but I appreciate the calls and letters. We join the world experiencing a grief that life has changed so dramatically since March. We join the whole world in experiencing what Elizabeth Kubler Ross called the stages of grief over these past six months. Stages of grief like shock, denial, anger, depression, bargaining and acceptance. We can find ourselves experiencing these feelings day by day.

As we peer into the September season, we realize that we have never done this before. How will it go as we re-enter Trinity? At the same time, we understand that many and perhaps most of our community will continue to watch worship from the safety of home. These decisions are especially important for your personal well being. Please do what is right for you! With caution and protocols, I am willing to return to Trinity while also supporting our online worship. I am so grateful for our Re-Opening Team, Trinity Council, Ministry & Personnel Committee and Staff for all their care and support. The details are quite overwhelming, and the spirit of trust and co-operation has made all the difference in the world.

Finally, as much as I have felt the grief deeply in missing each of you and how our lives have changed, I also have an overwhelming sense of GRATITUDE. I tap my debit card or use my Trinity gift card at the grocery store and I feel an incredible sense of gratitude for the cashier and my ability to pay for food. I attend another Zoom Council meeting, or staff meeting ends and I am thankful for such caring people. Every day I have this sense of gratitude. I left my dentist office last week incredibly grateful. I made an on-call pastoral visit to the Guelph General and after sharing time and prayer with a person in crisis with tears flowing from the patient and myself, I felt profound gratitude. I gathered for one more funeral at the cemetery and I am in awe of the words expressed and how people safely gather in bubbles and give thanks for their loved one as we release another dear soul back to God. Gratitude overflows in my heart and my tears flow more freely than ever before.

Friends, I know we might think it is easier to be thankful when things are going well, but I am learning that it’s even more important to find gratitude when things are not going well. In these difficult times of a pandemic, political tensions and economic worries, we need gratitude more now than ever.

This September we will be learning so much together online in worship and at Trinity and I know we will be caring and as patient as possible as we make our way in faith, hope and love. I am so grateful for the people of Trinity – I love You!

Peace and Hope, Rev. John

As Paul the apostle says in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 –

“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
Trinity has started to reopen its building, and is about to take steps to resume in-person worship services. The church office will reopen on September 8, although by appointment only. The exterior entrance doors remain locked. Gingerbread House Co-op preschool will resume operation on September 14th. We are all looking forward to worshipping together, but things have changed, and the worship experience will be very different. The reopening committee, led by Hal Osborne and John Bye, have worked diligently to create guidelines and protocols to ensure our safety when we return.

But there are no guarantees. The congregational survey shows that up to 75% of congregants are not ready to return for in-person worship. We are aware of the risk and respect the decision to stay home until there is a vaccine or the pandemic is declared over. Harcourt and Three Willows are not opening yet for in-person worship.

The online services have been popular and will continue to be available every Sunday. We just need to figure out how to provide both in-person and online services. Council has approved funding for cameras and video equipment to record the in-person services and maybe even stream them live over the internet.

In other business, council approved the project to replace the floor in Trinity Hall. With the building closed, it was an opportune time to undertake this renovation. The old floor was potentially hazardous due to loose tiles that could cause a fall. We will certainly appreciate the new floor for many years to come. A significant portion of the cost was covered through donations from various groups that use Trinity Hall -- volleyball, badminton, pickleball, Sunshine Club, and Monday yoga group as well as various memorial donations by church members. We have applied for grants to cover the balance.

Council accepted the recommendation from Beth Harris and her team of volunteers to close ContacT PlacE permanently. ContacT PlacE closed temporarily when the building was closed on March 16. The cupboards were emptied and the food and personal care items were donated to Chalmers Community Services Centre and to Salvation Army Family Services. The number of families and singles relying on ContacT PlacE has been declining each year. Elsewhere in this issue of Trinity Voices is an article chronicling the history of ContacT PlacE.

At a recent event hosted by the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council, Rev. Cameron Trimble suggested that COVID-19 is fundamentally reshaping our institutions, economies, personal lives, and faith communities. She identified “Ten Ways the Church Will be Changed by COVID-19”. Interesting times ahead.

Ken Chupa, Chair, Trinity United Church Council
The Covid-19 Beatiudes
(by Rev. Gaylyn McLean)

♦ Blessed are those who stay home if they are feeling sick, have a cough, temperature or symptoms associated with Covid-19.
♦ Blessed are those who wear a mask and practice safe social distancing.
♦ Blessed are those who give their names and contact information for contact tracing in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak.
♦ Blessed are those who follow the direction arrows to move safely within the building.
♦ Blessed are those who wash and/or sanitize their hands regularly and avoid touching their faces.
♦ Blessed are those who appreciate and respect all of these guidelines to keep everyone safe and healthy within our building.
♦ Blessed are those who faithfully practice care and concern for all throughout our community in these challenging times with kindness and patience.

Trinity welcomes you if:
you do NOT have any of the following:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Sore throat, trouble swallowing
- Runny nose
- Loss of taste or smell
- Not feeling well
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea

In the past 14 days, have you been in close contact with someone who is sick or confirmed with COVID-19, without wearing appropriate PPE?

Have you returned from travel outside of Canada in the past 14 days?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, please go home & self-isolate right away. Call your health care provider or go to an assessment center to find out if you need a COVID-19 test.
Our Gratitude List...

- For Ken Chupa and his guidance as Chair of Council, and for his quiet ongoing contribution to ensure our weekly online services.
- For John Bye and Hal Osborne’s leadership of the Re-opening Committee and care to ensure a safe return for all.
- For Wendelin and her creative online Children’s Program and great care for our children.
- For Cora Bent & Anton delaCruz who have helped with our Children’s Program. You are inspiring young people and we are grateful for the gifts you have shared with Trinity!
- For Ron McMillan and his constant care and maintenance of our church building.
- For Drew Goff and his care of the Trinity facilities and family. We wish you well Drew as you enter the next stage in your journey.
- For Kathy & Robert Stephens’ and Drew Goff’s assistance with the Under the Trees Gatherings.
- To Kathy Cross, Joyce Flewelling & Myrtle Martindale who have made cloth masks to be available for those coming for worship without a mask.
- To our phone team who have stayed connected with our Trinity family members by phone since the outbreak of Covid-19... JoAnne Angle, John Bye, Sue Chadder, Linda Cowbrough, Wendy Cuthbert, Wendelin Galatianos, Eleanor Harrison, John Holt, Ron & Janet McMillan, Hal Osborne, Gwen Phillips, Catherine Reed, Sandra Sharpe, Kathy Stephens, Noreen Ueberer, Bob & Marion Wells.... A sincere thank you. Your calls are very much appreciated.
- For our ContacT PlacE volunteers & supporters over the years who have reached out to the needy in our community on behalf of Trinity.

MINISTRY & PERSONNEL UPDATES

After many applications and several interviews, we are pleased to hire Ian Pasmore as our new Primary Custodian replacing Drew Goff. Ian lives in Rockwood and some of you may have met him working as a Funeral Director at Wall-Custance Funeral Home. Ian drives a school bus and was a Pastor at one time working in the Yukon. Ian started working September 1. We welcome Ian to our Community of Faith.

Since the closure of the church in March, many of us have faced many challenges. Our Staff have had to learn new ways of doing ministry and fulfilling their responsibilities at Trinity. We thank all of them for all their hard work.

We all long for the day when we can gather together again but for now, we need to be cautious for the safety of everyone.

Next newsletter submission deadline...
November 22nd, 2020

Please email submissions to info@trinityunitedguelph.ca
Since the COVID-19 lockdown at March Break, Trinity has adjusted to doing Children’s Programs online. Sadly, when Trinity re-opens for Sunday worship services, it is envisioned that there will be no Children’s Time at the front of the sanctuary, no gathering of children in the nave, and no in-person Sunday School classes. Children will need to remain with their families for the entire service. Sunday School will remain online for the foreseeable future.

For safety, in order that the Gingerbread Co-op Preschool space can remain as separated from Trinity’s activities as possible, Children’s Program supplies have been moved up to the Nursery and into a cupboard on the stage in Trinity Hall. A big thank you to Ron McMillan, Robert Stephens and Drew Goff for their help rearranging storage.

At this time, we are not certain where & when we will be holding in-person Sunday classes – there are many moving pieces to transition to a hybrid of virtual and in-person, as the Re-Opening Committee considers the needs and wishes of the congregation and various guidelines from the United Church of Canada, Public Health, as well as legal concerns. Trinity remains committed to our children and youth, as we find new ways to offer programs.
Cora and Anton have been very much appreciated as assistants in the Sunday morning Children’s Program. They have a good rapport with the children and youth, and are a pleasure to work with. This past year, Cora has led the younger group, while Anton has helped with the older age group. Their help has been invaluable! They continued to faithfully assist with the online groups during the pandemic.

Anton’s favourite class at Ross was Fitness – not just the practical physical education component, but lectures on human biology. His teachers have expressed admiration that he is always polite, respectful and persistent; they could always see his effort, and he has been a pleasure to teach. Anton has always shown high determination to succeed in school. He has also been working at the Guelph Public Library. His parents admire Anton’s good work ethic, which will hold him in good stead in the future.

One of his blessings is that he has maintained the same set of best friends from grade school throughout high school. Anton thought he might like to study how to make games, and that is how he became interested in computers. Anton is going to study Computer Science at Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo. His parents are very proud of him! Congratulations, Anton!

Cora has been in the French Immersion Program at Ross. She especially enjoyed the Improv Club, her Drama and English classes. She was able to adjust well to online learning for her last semester at Ross. Cora is going into the Educational Support program at Sir Sanford Fleming College in Peterborough. It is a 2-year program with the opportunity for co-op experiences. Online courses begin the first week of September, so Cora will continue living at home for September and October. If there is no second wave of COVID-19, Cora will be in residence in Peterborough at the end of October. It is a 2-year program with the opportunity for co-op experiences.

Her parents are very proud that Cora has been able to take so much responsibility for managing her own work. She is a very hard worker and shows a lot of dedication. Cora is able to look at a situation, and the pros and cons. She is very accepting of others’ opinions and is non-judgmental, and open to new experiences and learnings. Congratulations, Cora!

Sylvia and Wendelin are grateful for your dedication and all your help. We will miss you both greatly as you turn your attention to post-secondary studies.

Your church community celebrates your achievements and cheers you on in your future endeavours!
Happy Wedding Anniversary to Norine & Ken Chupa!
Norine & Ken celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on August 29th. Wishing you many more healthy, happy years!

Dr. Gerald (Gerry) Friars, husband of Dorothy (June 19, 2020)
Gerry, the self-styled Farm Boy, was an academic, a family man, and an avid fisherman, whose contributions to the fields of Poultry Science and Fish Genetics continue to be influential.

Susan (Sue) Beemer, mother to Scott (June 3, 2020)
Sue loved nature, birding, singing in church choirs and musicals. She also enjoyed spending precious times at the cottage on Oxtongue Lake and in North Bay. Sue was a loving, caring, and compassionate person who especially loved sharing time and laughter with family and friends.

James Douglas (Doug) Gillan, husband to Pat (July 13, 2020)
Doug had a keen sense of humour and always a funny story to share. He was a long time postal carrier. Dancing, card playing, hunting, travelling and time with family were special to Doug.

Carolyn Barckert, wife of Glen (July 22, 2020)
Carolyn touched the lives of many elementary and junior high students. She was a fan of sci-fi television, historical fiction about the royal family and cheesy Hallmark Christmas movies. She loved coffee, chardonnay, and travelling to far-flung islands and always made room in her home and heart for friends, extended family, dogs and cats.

Scott Walter Beemer, son of Sue (July 22, 2020)
Scott was an avid birder and was a member of many nature organizations. He enjoyed playing volleyball and taking part in his employer’s annual golf tournaments each year. Cottage life with his mother at their property on Oxtongue Lake was a favourite summer past time. Scott was a quiet, and gentle soul.

Celebrations & Sorrows is a new addition to Trinity Voices. Please forward any Celebrations you would like included in future issues along with a photo.
To order: Call/email Kathy Stephens to order as many meals as you wish.
Payment: $20.00 per meal (includes tax) by e-transfer to kathyrobertstephens@gmail.com OR OR Drop cheque into mail slot at Trinity payable to Kathy Stephens
Please pay before September 25, 2020
(Please place cheque in an envelope with your name, phone number and the # of dinners.)

Pickup: at Guelph Country Club
You will be given a time to pickup between 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. on Thursday October 1.
Should you wish to order and you are unable to pickup, please discuss with Kathy and arrangements will be made for your meal to be delivered to you.
Jennifer Cameron & the Guelph Covid-19 Surgical Cap Sewists

(by Jennifer Cameron)

What started as a simple request by a Doctor from Guelph General hospital to find a few people to sew about 22 scrub caps for the emergency room doctors quickly expanded. Before I knew it, we had over 50 volunteers making caps and masks for the hospital. In order to communicate with everyone, I started a Facebook page which grew rapidly with members from across Canada and the United States.

We made about 1,400 scrub caps for the hospital and more than 1,500 masks. The needs in our community were still great so we turned our efforts to helping retirement and long-term care homes making masks, scrub caps and gowns for Morriston, Stone Lodge, College Ave., Arbour Trails, Riverside Glen, LaPointe Fischer, Norfolk Manor, Wellington Terrace and many more places requesting help. We provided scrub caps for every paramedic in Guelph and Wellington County. We also supplied gowns, scrub caps, and masks to all of the emergency childcare centres. As places started to open up, we provided supplies to community daycares as well. Several physiotherapy clinics were also provided with scrub caps and gowns. We also helped to provide gowns, scrub caps and masks to the Guelph Midwives. Whenever possible we gave an ear saver with each mask.

Our team of volunteers included new sewers who had just bought machines, people just learning to sew, experienced sewists, sewing teachers, teens, and seniors. One of our volunteers was 95 years young and managed to make many masks for us despite the fact that she was legally blind. Another mother and daughter team stitched up gowns with beautiful French seams. Another special volunteer logged many kilometres picking up and dropping off sup-

(Continued on page 11)
It has been quiet inside Trinity since the middle of March until the week of August 17th. A new tile floor was installed over the original tile floor in Trinity Hall and the stage. The old tiles have been lifting over many years and have been re-glued down and repairs to chipped tiles have been made using vinyl cement. Many groups and clubs have fundraised for at least five years to raise over $15,000 towards the total cost of just over $25,000 for the new floor.

Council approved the project with the information of the existing funds raised and a grant application hopefully to be approved in the fall to cover the costs. For now, the balance has been paid out of Trinity reserves. It was felt this was an excellent time to install the new floor when there were no other activities happening at Trinity.

Submitted by Ron McMillan

NEW Trinity Hall Floor

It has been quiet inside Trinity since the middle of March until the week of August 17th.

A new tile floor was installed over the original tile floor in Trinity Hall and the stage. The old tiles have been lifting over many years and have been re-glued down and repairs to chipped tiles have been made using vinyl cement.

Many groups and clubs have fundraised for at least five years to raise over $15,000 towards the total cost of just over $25,000 for the new floor.

Submitted by Ron McMillan

(Continued from page 10)

plies and delivering finished goods. We were very lucky to have one volunteer who dedicated his time to keeping our sewing machines running in good repair. As we wrapped up mid July, we had over 350 volunteers helping us.

I have kept the group running so that people could continue to access the patterns we shared. Our membership now spans 8 countries including Canada, the United States, Mexico, Great Britain, France, Sweden, Norway and Italy.

None of this work would have been possible without the generous gifts of fabric, elastic and thread from our community. Thank you to everyone who helped and supported our efforts.

Jennifer, we commend you for this incredible outreach initiative and congratulate you and your team as recipients of the Mayor ’s Award. Well done Jennifer! You are an inspiration.
TRINITY’S FINANCIAL SIGNPOSTS

Signposts point the way or direction

DIFFERENT TIMES—DIFFERENT WAYS

--Are still affecting our ability to identify and predict our financial Signposts which can point our way but much more stability has come with your amazing continued support with your Offerings and the staff cost support though the Government Subsidies.

Importantly, there is more good news amidst all of this!

• Your traditional support, generosity and willingness to use new methods of payment strongly suggests that Offerings will largely be maintained. Thank you, thank you!! The only shortfalls arising are mainly from members who have passed away and the Loose Plate used by visitors. Memorial Gifts also have been most helpful. The continuity of your Offerings is key as they are our largest and most reliable source of revenue at $265,000 and will be even more so, into the future, long after the Government support has ceased.
• Government Subsidies will provide around $60,000 to support our Ministers and Staff in tirelessly innovating and preserving our Worship, Pastoral Care and Trinity Way of Life using online services and communication.
• The Discretionary spending freeze, which was implemented immediately, has resulted in many savings.
• As forms of re-opening are developed some modest Rentals are beginning to resume. This is very good for our community life but unlikely to provide significant revenue.
• Fundraising Events are also re-awakening with the Pulled Pork Pick-up Dinner being run in an innovative form by utilizing an outside caterer.
• Investment in our future, post COVID, is still being made by renewing the Trinity Hall Flooring, COVID protection facility changes and Video Recording technology in the Sanctuary
• Cash Resources and Reserves are adequate at this time.

Signpost Action:
Offering:

If you have not yet done so, please consider the new ways of getting your continued financial support to Trinity:

1. Mail or Drop Off a cheque in Trinity United Church mailbox. (Sorry, no cash, please)
2. Pay in Advance for several months, for all 2020 or beyond
3. Join PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance)
4. Use email money transfer (e-Transfer), call Heather for details or email office@trinityunitedguelph.ca
5. Catch up on any interruptions you have had to make

(Continued on page 13)
Gift Cards:

TUC earns about 5% on these very convenient ways to pay for your essential food and other purchases without having to use cash. After an initial pause, the Avgen Gift Card Sales are still in business! George Cuthbert is running this ongoing fundraiser.

Order you Gift Cards at georgewcuthbert@hotmail.com or call 519-836-6518.

- Metro/Food Basics in denominations of $50 and $100
- Sobeys/Fresh Co in denominations of $50 and $100
- PC/Zehrs/No Frills in denominations of $50, $100, and $250
- Email or call George for availability of other gift cards.

Pickup at 46 Waverley Drive, Guelph or a Delivery option is also available.

Payment by cheque payable to Trinity United Church or by e-transfer for those who have online banking by adding Trinity United Church as a recipient for email money transfers (e-Transfer). Please be sure to specify Trinity United Church as the name of the recipient and the email address office@trinityunitedguelph.ca & please note that the funds are for “Gift Card” sales for easier tracking.

We hope that these Signposts will reinforce your belief that Trinity is well positioned to get through this time apart together! To do this with the lowest negative financial impact as possible is the best protection we can provide to our Trinity Ministry Way of Life, support our dedicated Revs. John & Gaylyn along with our lay staff both now and well into the future.

We wish you and your loved ones a continued healthy, safe and happy Summer as we approach Fall and Back to School activities for many families.

Your Finance Committee

We need your help to safely return to in-person worship...

When we return to in-person worship, volunteer ambassadors will be needed to assist with parking, greeting and collecting contact tracing information, ushering, AV and video recording. Training on new COVID-19 health and safety protocols will be provided. Please contact one of the members of the Worship Committee or the office at info@trinityunitedguelph.ca if you are able to assist. Volunteers are necessary to be able to move forward with a return to in-person worship. We need you!
History of ContacT PlacE

FROM BEGINNING...

ContacT PlacE originated in February 1993 as part of the “Becoming Aware of Poverty (BAP)” Outreach group at Trinity United Church. Our emergency food cupboard/pantry was created in response to a query from the Church secretary to take action to the numerous visitors requesting monetary assistance to purchase food and as an action plan following several discussion meetings and asking community contacts for suggestions.

It was a conscious decision on the part of the initial group to always refer to our “visitors” as such and keep our “requirements” as un-intrusive as possible. Throughout the years there have been many changes but we consistently kept these core values the same with a welcome to our Visitors, a very simple information form and (as the cupboards allowed), a choice of items for them to access.

Many times in the first ten years or so it was “Mother Hubbard’s Cupboard” more often than not with very sparse offerings. One Sunday a month was set aside for ’Food Sunday’ with an ‘extra’ Communion Offering to boost the coffers and allow for funds to purchase staple items such as peanut butter, powdered milk, pasta sauce and pasta. For many years we augmented small amounts of food with Zehrs (and later Price Choppers) gift certificates, which we referred to as food vouchers. In 2004 we discontinued the food vouchers due to budget restraints.

Initially we were available Monday & Friday mornings from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon and Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. We were located up in the Nursery, then on the Choir Loft stairs (during the big renovation in 1993) and finally settled in the Library (now the Chalmers Room) with access to cupboards on the Stage). Wednesday evenings were discontinued in 1996 for numerous reasons. ContacT PlacE closed for the month of July beginning in 1998 as a break for our volunteers. Since we are an “emergency” resource, we asked our visitors to try and come in only once per month.

In 1999, the Seventh Day Adventist Church began a partnership with ContacT PlacE after observing our ‘operations’ and a presentation to their congregation. For several years ContacT PlacE received generous donations of bread from their VegHut bakery. Around the same time, Chalmers United Church also asked for assistance in setting up an emergency food pantry that has now evolved into Chalmers Community Services Centre.

For many years we prepared Christmas Hampers for some of our visitors & their families. Since 2003 we work in conjunction with the Salvation Army with donations of Gift Cards, toys & White Gift money donations. A $100 donation per ContacT PlacE visitor receiving a Salvation Army Hamper was made each year that ContacT PlacE was a Hamper Sign-up location.

In 2000 the volunteers were concerned that “sometimes we have visitors who have no transportation”. So they decided to have a small supply of bus tickets on hand for those visitors who needed a way to get home especially in bad weather and winter months.

(Continued on page 15)
Over the years donations of food and money came from some of the following:

- Trinity United Church Members
- Trinity United Church Women (UCW)
- Trinity United Church Benevolent Fund
- Trinity United Church Volleyball Players
- Trinity Sunshine Club & Womenkin
- 12th Guelph Guides & 17th Guelph Scout Groups
- Area Churches
- University of Guelph – Meal Exchange Program & Security Department
- Navacrek Community Services Inc.
- Numerous Resident Groups, Office Staff & others from across Guelph

On December 21, 2012 Contact Place invested a donation of $15,290 from Paisley Memorial UC to ensure that the funds would be available in the future. Over three years as a GIC investment then Savings account, the amount grew to $16,547.49 in September 2016 when $1,200 was transferred to Trinity’s General Fund to cover the Contact Place Salvation Army Hamper donation from December 2015. A decision was made this past spring to support emergency food distribution during the pandemic with $2,000 donations to each of the Salvation Army, Chalmers Community Services Centre & North End Harvest Market. In July an additional $1,000 to each were processed for a total distributed of $9,000.

TO PRESENT...

Before Covid-19 we had seen a steady decline in the need for our service. In 2015 we had a total of 251 visitors which represented 468 family members. In the first months of 2020 we were only serving 6 people per month or 15 family members. When the Church closed due to Covid-19 we were closed as well, so we sent most of our supplies to Chalmers and Three Willows to distribute. We were able to send around 600 pounds. An additional amount was taken to The Salvation Army.

At this time Contact Place will be discontinued until the community needs change so that a new revised Trinity program can be created to meet our community needs. We will continue to support United Church food pantries in Guelph.

To the amazing volunteers who have dedicated two or more hours a month to ensure that our doors were open though the years, a huge Thank You!!

Without your support Contact Place would not have been able to help!

(“From Beginning” by Heather Husnik-Osborne (Admin support)

“To Present” by Beth Harris (Contact Place Co-ordinator)
What it Takes...to make a successful Prayer Shawl Ministry

Much time and effort goes into many projects and events in the name of Trinity. In this issue, Valerie Morrell shares What it Takes to have a successful Prayer Shawl Ministry.

Oh I know … you throw out some patterns, and some yarn and the prayer shawls will automatically come back fully made.

Many, many years ago in the time before the pandemic, like September 1, 2007, the first prayer shawl was given out. Prior to that the Therapeutic Touch Team was in the making and the prayer shawl ministry was a dream, so that seed money set the shoppers off for the best quality and lowest priced yarn, deciding that if we purchased the yarn, we could suggest the universal pattern of 3 knit and 3 purl, including prayers and thoughts in triplets, like love, peace and hope, or strength, love and courage.

Knowing that knitting is very therapeutic, we wanted to invite knitters and crafters of all walks to take some yarn and make the shawls. We certainly did that, with up to 30 knitters at one point. Remember one lady who knit 2 or 3 a week! Remember another who did one a year! We loved them all.

Then where did the shawls go? Remember the lady who said, “My church never gave me anything!” Remember the dying person who had the shawl spread over his body at all times, and don’t you dare move it! Some were buried with their owners… some went to family who cherished the comfort it gave to their loved ones. The Police Victims Services carried some in the car to lovingly enfold yet another victim. The abused child who slept through the night for the first time with her blanket protecting her even though the abuser was gone. So many stories. We have long lists of names that we keep, though that is incidental, as maybe you need another one, so we give you another one. It is the stories that we hear and will never hear that keep us moving forward. At Trinity, the shawls have Therapeutic Touch energy infused in them, and some have felt the difference from just a knit shawl. Some don’t understand this at all, but seem to feel comfort when wearing the shawl around their shoulders.

In this time of pandemic, please ask Sharon or the ministers if you would love to have a shawl for yourself or someone you know that needs the extra feeling of connectedness in these disconnected times. You are not alone, we are all connected, this is just another way of making sure you too can feel it!

Valerie Morrell
PONDERINGS BASED ON THE BOOK:  
CHAIN REACTION:  A CALL TO COMPASSIONATE REVOLUTION  
(Submitted by Wendelin Galatianos)

Is there anything worse than the loss of a child?  The death of a child through a school shooting?  The grief of parents and family of the shooter, who then kills himself?  How do we fight internally for forgiveness?  How do we trust the goodness of God after a terrible tragedy?

Darrell Scott is the father of Rachel, a victim of the Columbine shooting at a Denver area high school in 1999.  His first book talks about Rachel’s “deep spiritual values, which were based on her unshakable faith in God.” (p.15). This book looks at “compassion, kindness, love, and forgiveness, and how to apply them to our lives” (p.16), and focuses on Rachel’s essay, “My Ethics, My Codes of Life”.

Rachel believed that only kindness can confront violence and anger.  She consciously challenged herself to be kind to everyone.  To truly “see” a person – not through a first (or second, or third) impression, but through taking the time to ask deeper questions.  Some feel Rachel was targeted because she spoke up to bullies.  In videos, the shooters ridiculed Rachel and her faith, and showed intense hatred for anything Christian, for “jocks” and for Blacks.

Eric and Dylan, the shooters that day, before they killed themselves… did they feel emptiness, disconnection, hatred?  Were they lost and lonely?  Did they feel they had nothing left to lose?  This doesn’t excuse their choices.  How could they have been reached, and filled with love rather than so much overwhelming hatred that they did not even feel their own lives had worth?  Can we forgive? “Forgiveness is wiping the slate clean.  It is letting go of the pain and anger that poisons us.  It is choosing to not allow bitterness and anger to grow and multiply in our own hearts.”  But mercy goes beyond this:  “You can pity someone else from a distance, but you have to get close to someone else to show him mercy.” (p.134)

Two stories in the book stood out.  One was of the sister of someone who had been paralyzed after being hit by a drunk driver.  The person that was hurt moved on first, let go of the hurt.  The parents took 3 years to let go.  But the sister held on to her anger for 12 years, it changed her negatively in deep ways (p.15).  Another story was of a father whose son, a high school football player, had been injured in another school shooting.  Hearing the author, he said, “You just talked tonight about unforgiveness disabling people, and I’ve been disabled for a year… My whole life and everything in it have been affected.  I know I’ve got to choose to let go.” (p.79)

Sometimes we see someone in emotional pain, perhaps acting out.  Can we make a habit to give a kind and encouraging look that says, “I see you”?  A smile?  To give a “hello” to someone who has become so used to being judged, they don’t even look people in the eye?  Instead of first meeting someone and asking, “Where do you live, what do you do for a living” – what if we asked something like, “What is the most important thing you’ve ever done in your life?”  “What are the values most precious to you that you try to live out every day?”  This book challenges us to make real connections, and to put our agape love into action.

It’s been an honour to work with Guelph United Ministries on building a collaborative future for the United Church in Guelph. In four “Conversations for Change” sessions led by Rebecca Sutherns in 2019, we began to discern a vision for the future. Last November I was approached to come back and help put that vision into practice.

Well, those plans – along with just about everything else – have been upended by COVID 19. The programs, gatherings and events that I thought would be the framework for action couldn’t happen.

We thought shutting down our churches for six months was hard. We’re discovering that opening up again with COVID restrictions will be even harder. And there’s no clear end in sight. We have never been through anything like this.

In the midst of so much uncertainty and loss, I’ve found it really important to focus on the positive and to look for encouragement and hope wherever it can be found. One thing I have realized is that all the groundwork G.U.M. has laid over the last few years has not been in vain. You have been learning cooperative skills and habits that have made all the churches stronger in the face of great adversity.

And we’ve been working hard during the pandemic. Your ministry staff and Council chairs have been communicating, supporting and learning from one another. You put together joint online worship services for the summer. At three virtual “Town Halls,” people from all four congregations came together for free-ranging conversation about the impact of COVID on areas of church life such as worship, pastoral care, community outreach and building use. We convened a meeting of church reopening teams to share ideas, experiences and best practices.

Please remember to support and encourage and pray for your ministers, support staff and lay leaders who have been working so hard during these challenging times.

It is so easy to focus only on what is no longer possible. But I’ve observed people talking with excitement about what is possible. Sure, we can’t do many of the things we’re used to. But what can we do? Out of those conversations have come some truly creative ideas.

(Continued on page 19)
As we move towards reopening our churches, we need to think about the lessons we have learned that we can carry forward into a changed future. We need to take heart that necessity has made us more adaptable, resourceful and resilient than we might have been if COVID hadn’t happened. And we can be encouraged at how we’ve proven we can actually can survive the massive changes that have been forced upon us – and that experience will equip us to whatever lies ahead with confidence and faith.

I am a historian. History teaches us is that the norm for most of church’s existence has been disruption, not stability. Change is the one constant. In these times of change, our question is not “How can we hold onto what is familiar?” but “What must we do to remain faithful to the mission and purpose God has for us in these times?” If we can do that, COVID may turn out to be a blessing in disguise.

I’m looking forward to continuing this journey with you – and to make some wonderful lemon-ade out of the lemons these times are handing us.
8th Annual Trinity Golf Social

When: Monday, September 14, 2020
Where: Guelph Country Club
Price: $25/ 9 holes * Carts: $12/rider pre-booked
Time: 8:30 am for Breakfast
Breakfast options: $10/Scrambled egg or bacon, egg & cheese sandwich (pay for golf & breakfast in the pro-shop)

Beginner to experienced. Breakfast starting at 8:30 am. First tee-off at 9:15 am. Sign up by Sept 8 by emailing info@trinityunitedguelph.ca

Calendar of Events

Sept 9   Reopening Committee
Sept 10  Worship Committee
Sept 14  Trinity Golf Social
Sept 16  Conversations under the Trees
Sept 18  Fundraising/Stewardship Meeting
Sept 21  Church Council
Sept 22  Conversations under the Trees
Oct 1    Pulled Pork Pick up Dinner
Oct 4    Communion
Oct 19   Church Council
Nov 16   Church Council
Community Yoga continues Sundays, 7-8 pm

All the Trinity email addresses are @trinityunitedguelph.ca, e.g. info@trinityunitedguelph.ca
Staff
rev.john
rev.gaylyn
andrea

Office
info (to Sharon)
office (to Heather)
childrensprograms

Committees
council (to the Co-Chairpersons)
finance, treasurer
property
avbooth
webmaster

THIS LAND - We acknowledge that we are on the land of the Attawandaron or Neutral People. These people and at various times Haudenosaunee & Anishnabe peoples, found this area at the junction of two rivers to be a place of trade and ceremony. We are grateful for their stewardship of the land and we accept our responsibility to be good stewards in this time.

MINISTERS: Rev. John Benham, Rev. Gaylyn McLean
MINISTER OF MUSIC: Andrea LeBlanc
CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAM CO-ORDINATOR: Wendelin Galatianos
BOOKKEEPER: Heather Husnik-Osborne, OFFICE CO-ORDINATOR: Sharon Huska
PRIMARY CUSTODIAN: Ian Pasmore, SECONDARY CUSTODIAN: Cindy Stevenson
400 Stevenson St. N., Guelph, ON N1E 5C3  I  Phone: 519-824-4800  I  Fax 1-888-233-1862
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