

GRACEVIEWS

**November/December
2023**

Our mission is to worship God, to spread His word, and to serve communities near and far.



**Graceview Presbyterian Church
588 Renforth Drive, Etobicoke ON M9C 2N5**

Minister's Message...

Running the Race of Faith

Beloved Graceview church family,

It has been an incredible three months since I came to be your minister, and today, I am overwhelmed with gratitude. In this relatively short time we have spent together, your support has touched my heart greatly, especially during my recent marathon and Ironman journey.



Pastor Eric completes the marathon!

Completing these races has been an adventure both in physical and spiritual terms. Life, much like a marathon or an Ironman, is about the paths we choose and the experiences we gather along the way. The discipline and persistence required for these races mirror the consistency needed in our spiritual walk. It is in these challenges that we learn to be humble in our accomplishments and find strength in our shared mission.

In the midst of the trials faced during a marathon or Ironman, it is essential to draw upon the power and peace that God provides. The words of Isaiah 40:31 resonate deeply: *"but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength; they will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary,*

they will walk and not be faint." This verse encapsulates our faith journey and testifies to the power of trusting in God's providence.

Now, the idea of forming a church running club has been on my mind! I understand that our congregation is composed of wise and seasoned individuals, and a running club might not be suitable for everyone. Let's keep it lighthearted, like our walking club, where we can enjoy the outdoors together and cherish the camaraderie at the heart of our community.

Just as I have experienced the euphoria of crossing the marathon and Ironman finish lines, we can collectively thrive in our spiritual voyage as a church community, enriched by your unwavering love and encouragement. These earthly triumphs remind us of the ultimate finish line, where we step into the heavenly realm, carried by the grace and love of the Almighty. May the blessings of the Almighty be with each one of you.

Under His wings,
Rev. Eric Lee



Deck the Halls

Friday, December 1

6:30 PM

Come and help decorate our sanctuary for Advent and the Christmas season. When the work is done, there will be a carol-sing, followed by a time of fellowship and treats in the Adamson Lounge. Everyone is welcome!

The Nativity Story – Another way to look at it...

Kathy Twynam



In April and May of 2023, Susan Chopp, Lynne Bishop, Kathy Twynam and our then interim moderator Rev. Tim Bruneau facilitated the study of Season 1 of the remarkable TV series *The Chosen*. It was well attended and popular, so it was decided that this fall we

would do Season 2. **(10:30 Tuesday mornings from now until November 28.)** Everyone is welcome to come check it out – each episode more or less stands by itself and you don't have to have previously participated. The facilitators this time are Susan, Lynne, Kathy, and Pastor Eric.

I think everyone should see *The Chosen*. This show truly changed the way I view these biblical characters. They became real people to me, with their own personalities, lives, loves, sins, struggles and disappointments. There is much rich biblical history, gleaned from the imaginations of the show's brilliant creators, to be viewed and reflected upon. From what I have seen in both seasons, a good part of the script, especially the significant lines, are taken directly from the gospel accounts.

One of the characters, who appears periodically but not in every episode, is Mary the mother of Jesus. In both seasons, there is a scene in which Mary talks about Jesus' birth, expressing both wonder and terror at the enormous responsibility God has placed on her then teenage shoulders. Look at the picture above. Isn't that how we usually visualize it? At Deck the Halls at the end of November, we will set up a crèche, a nativity scene. Recall

what it looks like. What we picture in our minds, and what will be depicted in the crèche on our communion table, is a very cleaned-up and romanticized, idealized view of the scene in the - barn? cave? stable? after Jesus was born. Chances are, our mental images are shaped by Renaissance art – Mary in a beautiful blue gown, gazing adoringly at a smiling baby who looks to be several months old, Joseph hovering protectively behind her, farm animals reclining peacefully in the hay around them, shepherds and their sheep at a respectful distance. We cling to these images. We don't like to have our romantic notions interfered with. Let's imagine realistically what the scene in the stable would have looked like in real life.

Luke is the only gospel writer to tell the nativity story as a narrative, so let's assume that it happened exactly as Luke recounts. Ladies, most of us have given birth and we know that birth is a messy, painful, sometimes dangerously complicated business. Here we have a scared teenager facing childbirth for the first time, forced to deliver her baby in a cave, assisted only by her equally apprehensive and inexperienced husband, who is probably not yet twenty years old. As Mary says in a scene from *The Chosen*, her mother isn't there to help, they have no midwife, they must do this by themselves. She starts to talk about how when Joseph handed the baby to her, she had to clean him up - but then cuts that thought short, perhaps feeling that it wasn't an appropriate conversation in the company of males¹.

¹Because of the gospel accounts, we always assume that they had to manage this alone, but there are Christian scholars who dispute this based on Jewish customs of the time, where for a man to assist with childbirth would have been absolutely unheard of, which would, in fact, have rendered him unclean. There were midwives aplenty in that society - perhaps Mary did have some help...

The biblical account describes Mary and Joseph as having just walked the eighty or so miles from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judea. If they took the most direct route through Samaria, the journey would have taken them the best part of a week. But relations between the Samaritans and the Jews were not good, so possibly they would have skirted Samaria and taken a

longer route by the Jordan for safety reasons. Although they have been coached and reassured by an angel, and they trusted God to look after them and their very special baby, they must have been terrified. They arrive at Bethlehem exhausted and dirty, only to find that the only shelter available to them is a barn or cave where animals are housed. Animal quarters are not noted for their sweet-smelling cleanliness, but miraculously the child is born

healthy and squalling. By the time the shepherds, the dregs of their society, show up, he is cleaned up, wrapped snugly, and put to bed in an animal's feed box. Mary has recovered enough to feed him and care for him.

Enter the Wise Men. We always assume them to be present at the manger along with the shepherds, as they are displayed in our manger scene and often in works of art. But it is far more likely that they appeared on the scene some months, perhaps even a year or two later, having travelled quite a distance "from the east" and finding the child in a house, not a cave or a barn. (The several biblical translations I looked at, including the KJV, all use the word "house.") As I imagine the scene, Jesus, now a toddler, runs to the door when he hears a knock and ducks behind his mother's skirt when he is greeted by three imposing strangers. Not exactly biblical, but possible, and fun to



imagine. They are bearing gifts, not toys for the child or helpful items for the parents, but from our point of view rather strange gifts to celebrate a birth - a hunk of metal, perfume, and oil. But in those days, in that time, the symbolism of those gifts would have been well understood.

The Symbolism of Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh

These valuable items were standard gifts to honor a king or deity in the ancient world: gold as a precious metal, frankincense as perfume or incense, and myrrh as anointing oil. The Book of Isaiah, when describing Jerusalem's glorious restoration, tells of nations and kings who will come and "bring gold and frankincense and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord" (Isaiah 60:6). Although Matthew's gospel does not include the names or number of the magi, many believe that the number of the gifts is what led to the tradition of the Three Wise Men. In addition to the honour and status implied by the value of the gifts of the magi, scholars think that these three were chosen for their special spiritual symbolism about Jesus himself—gold representing his kingship, frankincense a symbol of his priestly role, and myrrh a prefiguring of his death and embalming—an interpretation made popular in the well-known Christmas carol "We Three Kings."

St. Giles – Patron saint of people with disabilities

In the beautiful and ancient city of Edinburgh, Scotland, there is a magnificent church. Founded in the 12th century, it is the High Kirk of Edinburgh and dedicated to St. Giles, the patron saint of Edinburgh. The St. Giles Church in Edinburgh is often referred to as a cathedral, but it is not a cathedral, because to be a cathedral it would need to be the seat of a bishop, which it emphatically is not. The term is perhaps a holdover from earlier times, when pre-Reformation it was indeed a Catholic cathedral. During the tumultuous times of

the Reformation, before the dust settled, there was a movement afoot to organize the Church of Scotland along the lines of the Church of England, which is episcopal. In those days St. Giles church was considered a cathedral on two separate occasions, when a bishop had been briefly installed. I found this interesting, and I include it as a little tidbit of information that might interest you, too. I also found it interesting that its first minister after the Reformation in the late 16th century was none other than John Knox, the foremost figure of the Scottish Reformation.

In our West Toronto Presbytery there is a much smaller church that we are all familiar with, also dedicated to St. Giles. So I began to wonder, who was St. Giles? My research revealed that he was a hermit or monk who lived in the Rhone valley in the late seventh century. Much of the information about him in Wikipedia and other internet sources is based on legend, not historical fact. Here is an amended version of what Wikipedia has to say:

Giles first lived in retreats near the mouth of the Rhône in the Visigothic Kingdom, which occupied southwestern France from the fifth to the eighth centuries. He withdrew deep into the forest near Nîmes, where he spent many years in solitude. His sole companion was his beloved deer, or red deer, who in some stories sustained him on her milk. His retreat was finally discovered by the king's hunters, who had pursued the hind to its place of refuge. An arrow shot at the deer wounded the saint instead, who afterwards became a patron of the physically disabled. The king, a Visigoth named Wamba, held the hermit in high esteem for his humility. Wamba built him a monastery in his valley, Saint-Gilles-du-Gard, which Giles placed under the Benedictine rule. He died there in the early part of the 8th century. St. Giles was a popular saint in Medieval Britain and was also considered to be the patron saint of lepers.

Now we are a little smarter than we were five minutes ago.

Our Thanksgiving Food Drive was extremely successful this year. Due to the generosity of our congregation, we were able to fill a wheelbarrow to overflowing with canned goods and toothpaste for the St James Food Basket. As well, we received \$810 in cash donations! This amount will be added to our usual fall donation of \$500 (\$1310 in total) and sent to the Food Basket. The Outreach committee is very appreciative of your support for this initiative which will help those in our community who are faced with food insecurity.

On Monday, October 30th, Outreach will be hosting a craft party for the residents and staff of the Community Living home on Wellesworth Drive from 1:30 pm to 3 pm. It will have a Halloween theme and we will be providing several crafts for the residents to do. We plan to serve cupcakes, which the residents can decorate, and drinks as our refreshments. The party will help to celebrate “75 Years of Belonging” which marks Community Living Toronto’s 75th anniversary. Outreach plans to invite the residents to join us for Deck the Halls and help us decorate the Christmas tree in the Adamson Lounge.

We are pleased to announce that Outreach will be hosting our second “Soup by Dave” luncheon on Thursday, November 23rd at 11:30 am in the downstairs hall. Chef Dave Taylor will be preparing another soup for the lunch and will demonstrate how to make it for us. Every guest will receive a copy of his recipe. We are looking forward to another lively presentation and an opportunity for those in attendance to ask “Chef Dave” questions about the soup and perhaps share some of their soup stories. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the front foyer. Please plan to attend and invite your friends to join you. Free Will Offerings will be gratefully accepted. The net proceeds will be donated to the St James Food Basket.

England's Green and Pleasant Land

Kathy Twynam

Many of you are very familiar with Britain, having been born there and/or regularly visit there, and you don't need a travelog. I will share with you some things I learned while travelling, and some impressions of this beautiful green country with its patchwork fields separated by hedgerows, where the weather was consistently warm and sunny when we were there, where palm trees actually grow in Cornwall, and where the people could not have been more friendly and helpful. I have always considered travel to be an educational experience above all else. Even in Britain where the language, political system, culture and mentality are very much like ours, there are many opportunities to learn something new.

Our September trip had three components – a twelve-day cruise around the British Isles, a five-day land tour of Devon and Cornwall, and four days in London.

Part 1 – The Cruise

The Blarney Stone - We chose the cruise for its itinerary, seeing it as an efficient way to visit many places in Britain without having to worry about where to eat or sleep. It fulfilled its purpose in that regard, among other things taking us to Ireland, where we had never been. There were three stops in Ireland – Cork, Dublin, and Belfast. So, what to do in Cork? That is the port (Irish - *Cobh*) from which you can take a shore excursion to Blarney Castle to kiss the Blarney Stone. It's a touristy thing to do, but it has been done by millions of people all over the world, including world leaders, literary giants and Hollywood celebrities, and I couldn't be in Ireland without joining that group.

Kissing the stone is not for the faint-hearted or claustrophobic. First you must climb to the top of the castle,

up a very long, confined, uneven spiral stone staircase to the peak, to access the stone that was set into the castle parapet in 1446 AD. In these days of rampant tourism, you wait in a long queue for the privilege. Then, you lean over backwards with the help of an assistant to plant your kiss. Today there are ropes and guide rails to help you up the steps and onto the parapet, and bars to hold while leaning backwards, but before these were installed, kissing the stone involved considerable risk.



Participants used to be grasped by the ankles and dangled bodily from a height, and it is easy to imagine how one false move and your attempt to perform this ritual would not end well.

Kissing the Blarney stone is said to confer the “gift of the gab”, eloquent speech that allows one to deceive without offending. One legend has it that Cormac McCarthy, the builder of Blarney Castle in about 1446, was involved in a lawsuit and appealed to the goddess Cliodhna for assistance. He was told to kiss the first stone he found in the morning on the way to the courthouse. He was able to plead his case with great eloquence, and he won. He attributed his success to the advice of the goddess, so he had the stone incorporated into the parapet of his castle. The stone’s reputation grew from there.

The Book of Kells –is an eighth century illuminated manuscript containing the four gospels of the New Testament and other texts, created in a monastery in Scotland or Ireland in about 800 AD. It is housed in the library of Trinity College in Dublin, and I thought it would be worthwhile to see such an ancient hand-written document. Sadly, it was not to be. The crowds were enormous in every

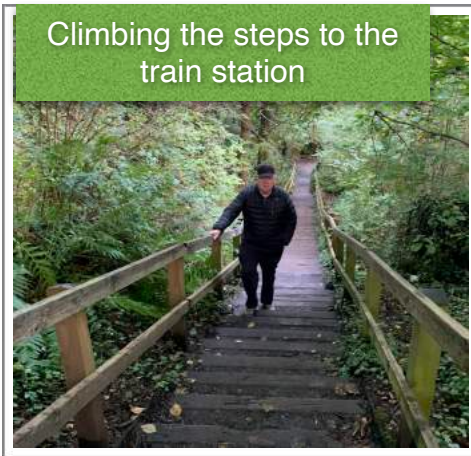
big city we visited, perhaps a result of pent-up demand from the pandemic when no one went anywhere. The city of Dublin was crawling with people, and at the campus of Trinity College there was a huge line-up to see the Book of Kells. I was surprised that there was a charge to view it - 30 euros each, or about \$43.00 - and I thought the price was outrageous, considering that there is no charge whatsoever to view the original 1215 AD Magna Carta in the British Library in London. I do not like to be gouged, and there is a principle to uphold. I believe these ancient documents are part of the British heritage and belong to the people, who should have access to them without cost. I decided that it wasn't worth it for the few minutes I would be in its noble presence, and I declined to join the queue.

Belfast and the Peace Lines – The Giant's Causeway, a World Heritage Site on the north coast of Northern Ireland, is the big tourist attraction to see from Belfast. We took a shore excursion there and marvelled at the formation of the 40,000 basalt columns leading from the cliff's foot to the sea. This result of an ancient volcanic fissure eruption has been deemed the fourth greatest natural wonder in the United Kingdom.

Our excursion included a bus tour of Belfast at the end – a quick drive-by with commentary from our guide. What interested me were the 'peace lines', which I hadn't known existed. The Peace Lines are a series of barriers in Northern Ireland, primarily in Belfast but also elsewhere, that are designed to separate the predominantly Catholic neighbourhoods from the predominantly Protestant neighbourhoods. The stated purpose of the peace lines is to minimize violence between Catholics and Protestants by keeping them apart. They are still there. Our guide compared them to the Berlin Wall, and I was shocked at their existence. I know there was far more to the euphemistically termed "Troubles" than just religious conflict, but I thought, "How deplorable. Two groups of Christians hating and killing

each other. How can they be called Christian when both sides have totally missed the message of Jesus?”

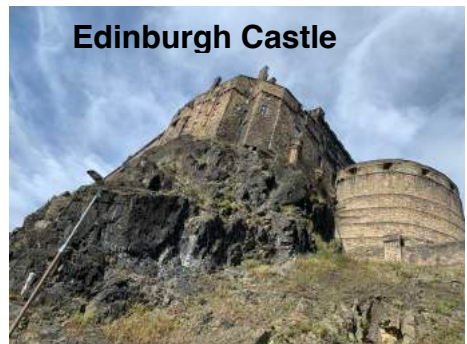
Scotland - home of my MacNeil ancestors and birthplace of some of you. There were three stops here, in Greenoch (Glasgow), Invergorden (Inverness) and Edinburgh. We had a boat cruise on the iconic Loch Ness and found it to be a very big lake, nothing special about it other than its reputation for harbouring a monster. We were told to keep our eyes open, but there were no Nessie sightings.



Climbing the steps to the train station

It's funny how the most lasting memories often come from things you don't expect, that have little to do with the actual sights you are seeing. What I remember most about Edinburgh is not the city itself, but the adventure getting into the city centre from the ship. Ship's tender to the pier at South Queensferry, then a climb of 111 rough,

uneven steps through a woodsy area to access Dalmeny train station, then a twenty-eight mile train ride to reach the city centre. Seeing this beautiful, ancient city in a few hours from a cruise ship doesn't do it justice. We needed far more time. We were last in Edinburgh in 1973, and I can assure you the famous castle is still there, high on the hill overlooking the city as it has done for a thousand years. In this fast-changing world, which is almost unrecognizable today



Edinburgh Castle

from fifty years ago, it is comforting to know that some things don't change.

Part 2 – Devon and Cornwall Land Tour

This five-day small-group tour took us to sites in southwest England that were featured in the legends of King Arthur, which have fascinated me since childhood. Two of them were bucket list items for me – Tintagel Castle and Glastonbury Abbey.

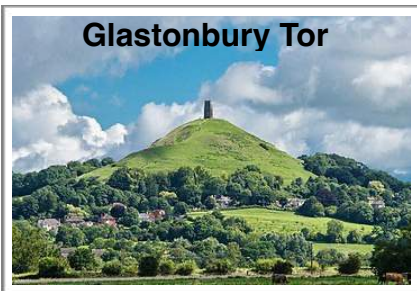
Tintagel Castle - There is no conclusive evidence that King Arthur, the “Once and Future King,” actually lived, or whether the mythology simply portrays an archetype, a collective memory, of kingly and knightly virtue embodied in Arthur. The legends appear to have sprung from a collection of oral stories passed down through the years from the sixth and seventh centuries to the Middle Ages. In the twelfth century, cleric Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote his fanciful *History of the Kings of Britain* and included a story of Arthur's conception and birth at Tintagel Castle. The story of Arthur and the knights of the Round Table gripped the imaginations of medieval nobility to the point where King Edward 1 (1272-1307) had a Round Table built for himself at Winchester, and rebuilt the supposed tomb of Arthur and Guinevere at Glastonbury Abbey.

Those stories gripped my imagination, too. I spent a glorious two hours exploring the ruins of Tintagel Castle on the rugged coast of Cornwall, trying to picture what it must have been like in the days when kings and lords lived there. It was purportedly the home of King Mark, uncle of Tristan of the Tristan and Isolde story, so that legend is part of its history too. Although the castle was built by Richard, 1st Earl of Cornwall, in the 13th century, there is evidence that buried underneath is an outline of a palace from a much earlier period. Perhaps King Arthur's Camelot? Nobody knows, but it's fun to speculate. Today the site is owned by William,

Prince of Wales, as part of the Duchy of Cornwall, and is managed by English Heritage.

Glastonbury Abbey - Since Medieval times Glastonbury Abbey has held legendary status as the earliest Christian foundation in Britain linked to Joseph of Arimathea and King Arthur. Christian legends have claimed that the abbey was founded by Joseph in the first century. From at least the 12th century, medieval monks have asserted that Glastonbury was Avalon, the legendary burial place of King Arthur. This notion is spurious at best. In 1191AD, pilgrim visits had fallen, and the alleged discovery of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere's tomb in the cemetery brought Glastonbury into prominence again. A search had been commissioned, and at the depth of sixteen feet a massive, hollowed oak trunk was discovered containing two skeletons. Above it, under the covering stone, was a lead cross with the unmistakably specific inscription *Hic jacet sepultus inclitus rex Arturius in insula Avalonia* ("Here lies interred the famous King Arthur on the Isle of Avalon"). Historians today largely consider the find a hoax, a publicity stunt designed to raise funds to repair the abbey.

To me, the ruins of the abbey were awesome, magical and very sacred. The day was sparkling, filled with brilliant sunshine and blue sky dotted with fluffy white clouds. I climbed Glastonbury Tor, which is particularly linked to King Arthur and has several other spiritual associations. It is topped by the tower of the Church of St. Michael.



Ascending it was not easy, as it is very steep and the path upwards was irregular and uneven. But the marvelous views of the surrounding English countryside were worth it!



The nearby abbey was founded in the 8th century, enlarged in the 10th, and rebuilt after a major fire in 1184. It became one of the richest and most powerful of monasteries in England, until Henry VIII got his hands on it in his zeal to

eradicate all monasteries from the land during the English Reformation. Too much valuable heritage, that should have been preserved, was destroyed at that time – but that is a conversation for another day. The abbey’s ruins are truly beautiful and well-tended, and it was a major highlight for me.

Part 3 – London

We returned to London on Friday, September 22, and had booked five nights in an Ibis Hotel in Kensington. Ibis is a budget chain, spartan but very clean, with tiny but well appointed rooms. Despite its “budget” status it wasn’t cheap, about \$200 a night, but it was in an area we were familiar with and less than a block from a tube station. We were comfortable there for the next few days while we reacquainted ourselves with our favourite world-class city and its amazing subway system. Our time there had several highlights:

The British Library – Its Treasures of England Room houses many manuscripts of famous writers and musicians, some quite ancient – Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte d’Arthur*, Captain Cook’s journal, several ancient bibles, hand-written musical scores by Handel and Beethoven, hand-written works by such renowned authors as Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, Lewis Carroll, Rudyard Kipling, Charles Dickens and Virginia Woolf. And the crowning gem, a room devoted solely to one of four extant 1216 AD original copies of the Magna Carta.

And it's all absolutely free. It's one of my favourite places in London.

Charles Dickens House – a five storey Victorian house where Dickens and his family lived while in London. We had tea and scones in the Pickwick Café on the property. While there we encountered a family with three young children who were being entertained by a private guide, who clearly knew how to keep the attention of children and who was making the whole experience fun and interesting for them. Those children should have been in school that day, but what an education they were getting, far beyond spending that time sitting in a classroom. Bravo to their enlightened parents!



Evensong at

Westminster Abbey –

We spent an afternoon in Westminster Abbey and were once again totally awestruck by its history and antiquity. There are no words to describe the feeling of reverent wonder as we roamed around, taking pictures of

gravestones and reflecting on the hundreds of people buried or commemorated there. Can you imagine? The abbey was there before the Normans came. William I, the Norman conqueror, was crowned there in 1066. Charles III was crowned there in 2023. What a heritage – one thousand years of glory to God!

At 3:30 PM the abbey closes to visitors as they prepare for the daily 5:00 Evensong service. There is no charge to attend a service at any of the churches, however prominent, in England. We decided to stay for Evensong and were shown to an area where all who wanted to attend the service were asked to wait. Everyone else had to leave. We were

among the first in line, and we were very fortunate to be seated in the third tier of the beautiful, richly carved choir stalls. The first and second rows on both sides were occupied by the men and boys of the Abbey Choir. All wore white surplices trimmed with red. I could look over the shoulder of the young chorister in front of me and read his music. It was awesome! The majority of the more than a hundred people who attended the service were in chairs on the floor, not always with a clear view of the proceedings. We were not allowed to take pictures during the service, which was a glorious experience, filled with music, prayers and uplifting scripture readings. There was no sermon. It was such a privilege to be there.

And the people of London were fabulous! Every single time we got on a crowded subway car, someone would immediately jump up and offer us a seat. If we stood on the sidewalk checking our phones for directions, invariably someone, unasked, would stop to offer help. The subway stations, despite the presence of elevators and escalators, are also full of stairs. Four times, we had to navigate some stairs toting luggage, and every time, someone offered assistance. The people could not have been more kind.

We did other things in London, visited several museums, took an Uber boat ride on the Thames to Greenwich, walked miles, and of course saw *Les Misérables* for at least the 25th time. That was a highlight for sure. It was a fabulous production.

And on September 27, luggage in tow, we took one last ride on the tube directly to Heathrow Airport from our subway station in Kensington. It's quite a system - each terminal has its own subway stop. Our trip to Terminal 5 took just over half an hour. We were ready to come home, but London was tugging at our hearts. At this stage in our lives, there is no certainty that we will ever be back. But you never know...

Remembrance Day 2023 - Some poems to think about...

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori. (How sweet and fitting it is to die for one's country.)



On Remembrance Day Sunday, November 5, at Graceview we will be conducting our traditional Remembrance service, at which will be featured the reciting of the poem **In Flanders Fields**. We all know and love this poem – I suspect that most of us

could recite it from memory. Its author was Lieutenant -Colonel John McRae, who wrote it after the funeral of a friend who was killed at the Battle of Ypres in 1915. But John McRae was not the only war-time poet who came to prominence during and after the Great War.

World War I poems were like nothing that had come before, fanciful visions of long-ago battles written by poets like Tennyson, who were not there and had no first-hand experience of the horrors of war.

These new war-time poems were stark in their simplicity, moving in their poignancy, sometimes shocking in their unvarnished truth, written by literate poets who were there.

Here are extracts from other well-known poems besides In Flanders Fields that are often quoted at this time, as we remember those who fought and died in both world wars.

Rupert Brooke (*killed in action, 1915*)

(I had to memorize the whole of this poem in school.)

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by the suns of home...

Laurence Binyon (*Too old to enlist as a combatant,
he went as a medic on the battlefield at Verdun.*)

...They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.
They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

Siegfried Sassoon

(This poem, which I had never heard, really got to me.)

Reconciliation

When you are standing at your hero's grave,
Or near some homeless village where he died,
Remember, through your heart's rekindling pride,
The German soldiers who were loyal and brave.

Men fought like brutes, and hideous things were done;
And you have nourished hatred, harsh and blind.
But in that Golgotha perhaps you'll find
The mothers of the men who killed your son.

Graceview and Centennial Park Place Al Bishop



You are probably all aware of the retirement home located behind Graceview Church, and many of you are familiar with the weekly services conducted there by

Graceview members on Thursday afternoons, but you may not all be aware of the long history of involvement between Graceview Church and the retirement home.

When the current site of Graceview Church (previously Grace Church) was purchased in 1960 it was about twice the size of what it is now. Construction of the church building began in 1961 on the eastern half of the site and the building opened in 1962. Most of the other land around the church was vacant at that time as was the western half of the church site itself. Gradually other sites around the church were developed and the area became more urbanised. As time passed Grace Church required a manse. New residential development had occurred north of the church and so a home was purchased by the church in that area to serve as a manse for the new minister. As a result of the money required to construct the church building and the mortgage taken on when the manse was acquired, Grace was carrying significant debt. At the same time it had an asset, the vacant western half of the site which it was not using, and a decision was made to sell that vacant land. In the late 1970's an agreement was finalized to sell that land

to Meadowcroft Place for construction of the retirement home. The proceeds from that sale were sufficient to pay off the loan associated with construction of the church building, to retire the mortgage taken on when the manse was purchased, and to provide a fund for construction of the new extension of the church at the front of the original building. In 1984 that new addition was completed and opened. So the first involvement between Graceview (then Grace) and the retirement home began in the 1970's when Meadowcroft Place acquired its site from the church.

When Meadowcroft Place was completed and opened a few years later Grace undertook various forms of outreach to the residents of Meadowcroft. This outreach took the form of youth groups singing there during the Christmas season, Harry Learoyd attending to provide music programmes to the residents, and other programmes by others, usually musical. In addition we had a television camera in the church with a cable connection to the television in Meadowcroft Place, and our church service was broadcast live to the residents of Meadowcroft in that way. We would also have some elders take the communion elements and serve communion to the Meadowcroft residents on Communion Sundays. It caused some consternation to the residents when they would see on their television the communion service going on in Graceview and some elders would be seen leaving that service only to appear moments later arriving in person at Meadowcroft Place.

Later on we began to conduct regular worship services in Meadowcroft Place on Thursday afternoons consisting of hymns, prayers, scripture and a message. These services were conducted by volunteers, with the message provided by the minister or by the volunteers themselves during the times when we had no minister. That arrangement continued with Graceview after the amalgamation and has been in place now for more than twenty years. Jan Hieminga, Stephen Dunkin, Rebekah Mitchell, and now Eric Lee have all delivered the message. The volunteers have been led by Harry and Pat Learoyd and currently assistance comes from Don Ryan, Peter Lee (a former member of Graceview), Barrie Porter (a friend of Don and Peter), Lenore Carty, and Lynne and Al Bishop. In the past assistance also came from others including Ethel Waite and the late Anne Wright and Len Swatridge.

The ownership of the retirement home has changed more than once and Meadowcroft Place has now become Centennial Park Place, but the mission to the retirement home still continues. All of the residents appreciate the singing, prayers, readings and message which are delivered each week as often the residents have a background in the church and the mission provided by Graceview is the only involvement they still have now with the church.

If you have questions about this ministry or wish to become involved with it feel free to speak to one of the volunteers or to Pastor Eric.

Hymn Stories: Silent Night, Holy Night

(adapted from 101 Hymn Stories - Kenneth W. Osbeck)

Lyricist: Joseph Mohr. Composer: Franz Gruber

Joseph Mohr was born in Salzburg, Austria, in 1792. As a boy he was an active chorister in the Cathedral of Salzburg. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1815. While serving as an assistant priest in 1818, at the Church of St. Nicholas in Oberdorf, high in the beautiful Alps, Mohr wrote the text for the most beautiful of all Christmas carols.

Father Mohr and Franz Gruber, the village schoolmaster and church organist, had often talked about the fact that the perfect Christmas carol had never been written. With this goal in mind, and after he had received word that his own church organ would not function, Mohr decided that he must write his own Christmas hymn immediately, in order to have it ready for Christmas Eve Mass and avoid disappointing his faithful congregation. Upon completing the text, he took his words to Franz Gruber, who explained when he saw them, "Friend Mohr, you have found it - the right song - God be praised!" Gruber then set to work to write the right tune for the new text. His simple but beautiful music blended perfectly with Mohr's words. The hymn was completed in time for the Christmas Eve service, and Mohr and Gruber sang their hymn to the accompaniment of Gruber's guitar, since the organ was out of order.

A few days after Christmas the organ repairman came to the church to fix the organ, and obtained a copy of the new hymn. Through his influence the carol spread throughout the entire Tyrol region, and from there throughout Austria and Germany. It was first heard in the United States in 1839, when a family of Tyrolean singers introduced it during a concert tour. Soon it was translated into English and other languages, and is a favourite carol in many nations today.

Mission Team - Update on Jerina Margaret Munene

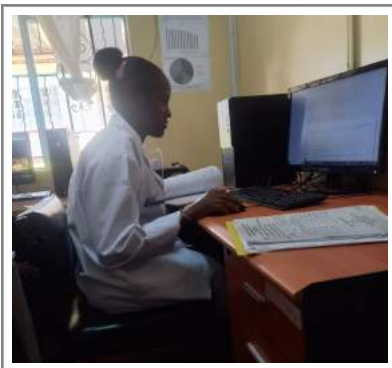


Jerina is doing well in her studies at Outspan Hospital Medical College. For the first time, due to the financial help from Graceview, she was able to sit for her exams in a timely manner because she had cleared her school fees. She passed the exams with good grades. She is currently on a three month attachment (September-November) at

Mt. Kenya

Sub-County Hospital in Nyeri. She

has expressed her gratitude to Graceview for the support. In her words from a recorded video message, she said "I would like to thank you for the great support that you have given to me. May God bless you. I am progressing well in my attachment at Mt. Kenya Hospital". This is a testament of the impact the mission work and acts of kindness has on those around the world that are in need of a helping hand.



What an awesome mission team we have! I think of the starfish story (see below.) The difference we are making to this one young woman in Kenya will affect many others, as she completes her studies and starts her work in the world. Bravo, Graceview!



The Starfish Story

One day a man was walking along the beach when he noticed a boy picking up and gently throwing things into the ocean.

Approaching the boy, he asked, "Young man, what are you doing?"

The boy replied, "Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die.

The man laughed and said, "Do you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish?

You can't make any difference."

After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the water.

"Made a difference to that one," he said.

Readers for November and December

| | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Nov 5 | Susan Chopp |
| 12 | Maureen Screen |
| 19 | Lynne Bishop |
| 26 | Errol Baldeo |
| Dec. 3 | Nancy McPherson |
| 10 | Olive Stanton |
| 17 | Margaret Munene |
| 24 | Al Bishop |
| 31 | Nancy Green |

Concerts at Graceview

On Friday, October 20, there was an excellent concert at Graceview, featuring the Queensmen and the Harmony Singers.



Each choir sang two separate sets, and the two choirs combined for a few numbers. The concert was well attended by close to 100 people, who all had a great time listening to and singing along to familiar and well-loved songs of our time.

The Queensmen, founded by Harry Learoyd, are now directed by our own Kento Stratford. Thank you, Kento, for filling our church with such delightful music and laughter.



Upcoming Concerts

Sunday, Oct. 29, 7:30pm - Music of all kinds for piano, clarinet, saxophone, and percussion

Dec. 8th at 7pm- Pascal Menke and Kento will be presenting a short program of piano music.

Dec. 15 at 7pm, TBA *Full length Chamber music concert*

Dear Graceview Family,

I hope you have enjoyed the November/December issue of Graceviews. The next issue will be available at the beginning of January. I am always looking for new material that might be of interest, and it is wonderful when someone submits an article they wish to share with their church family. Don't be shy - you never know what might strike a chord with people.

Susan's weekly newsletters are doing a marvellous job of keeping us up to date, but please don't hesitate to submit to Graceviews anything that you would like included in the next issue. God bless us, every one!

Church Directory

| | | |
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