

# July/August 2024

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



A walk in the park on a 35°C June day 2024

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



# Minister's Message

Dear Graceview congregants,

Some of you know that Iris and I were away for a road trip to the States in June. We visited many gorgeous museums, more than we anticipated. In D.C., most of them are huge and free, but we wished we had a e-scooter or automated wheelchair to help us navigate the vast spaces within those dozen museums! (^^)

The Holocaust Memorial Museum was deeply moving. The Air and Space Museum was awe-inspiring. The U.S. Capitol and Library of Congress were phenomenal. However, there is a hidden gem I discovered during this journey that I would like to share with you all. It is the Museum of the Bible (MOTB), which opened to the public just a few years ago.

When Christians around the world serve their ministries and exert their influence, we often face the dilemma of resource allocation: should we use our resources to care for the poor and the sick, or invest them to produce high-quality work that glorifies God? Is it worth or pleasing to God to gather millions or even billions of dollars to build a top-notch museum like MOTB? I do not have a definitive answer to that question, yet the immersive experience and the fine details I encountered at this museum left me in awe and wonder. I spent three consecutive days exploring its various floors and even became a member, gaining unlimited entry and access to free virtual tours.

MOTB is divided into three main exhibits: History of the Bible, Story of the Bible, and Impact of the Bible. There is an abundance of information and interactive media for visitors to engage with. For instance, the Story of the Bible section

offers two theatrical attractions—one for the Old Testament and the other for the New Testament. Additionally, there is a special theatre displaying highlights from 'The Chosen' drama series.

I am both touched and blessed by the immaculate work that the dedicated team of Christians contributes to this museum. While we cannot visit Israel or the Holy Temple in Jerusalem right now due to the war, visiting MOTB might be the closest experience to visiting the Holy Temple of God. I cannot recommend this museum highly enough and will most likely visit again. Perhaps, as a congregation, we could even organize a group tour so that more of us may be enlightened by what this museum has to offer, in the name of our Holy Saviour Jesus Christ.

And for those wondering about the journey, a fast driver can probably make their way there in just 8 hours! (^^)

With gratitude always, Rev. Eric Lee

"Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path."
Psalm 119:105 NIV



# Chaos in the Parking Lot

For most of us, our Christian spirit and kindness towards



others is alive and thriving – until, that is, someone sits in our pew or parks in our spot. On Sunday June 16, I'm sorry to say that our Christian spirit was sorely tested. When I arrived at church at 9:40 AM, our parking lot was crammed full of cars – every parking

spot was taken, in our lot and in the lot next door (formerly belonging to the Masons). The passageway between the two lots was blocked with cars, as was the passage between our building and the retirement home behind. What was going on? Had these scores of people suddenly seen the light and decided to join us at church that morning? I didn't think so. Before long, other Graceview folks started showing up choir members arriving early, our Music Director Kento, and our quest minister Rev. Jan Hieminga and his wife Lynne. With nowhere to put any of our cars, we double parked behind the rows of parked cars and gathered on the lawn to discuss what to do next. Where did all these people come from, and what made them think they had the right to commandeer our parking lot on a Sunday morning, leaving no space for our own church people? We were surprised and angry, and uncertain about how to proceed with our church service when our people couldn't get near the church for the traffic.

We asked one of the many people heading to Centennial Park what was happening, and learned that there was a special prayer service being held in the park that morning for the Muslim community who were celebrating Eid-al-Adha. One of two main Islamic holidays, it began this year on Sunday June 16 and lasted until Wednesday, June 19. Called the Feast of Sacrifice, it commemorates the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son Ishmael as an act of obedience to God. We are all familiar with this story - the Judeo-Christian version describes this as Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his other son, Isaac. An important prayer related to the event was being held outdoors in Centennial Park due to the capacity crowd expected. The parking lots in the park were full and cars were parked all along the park roads.

There was a police car, with lights flashing, stationed near the park, possibly to keep control and to offer any necessary assistance. It had been rumoured that it was the police who told the hordes of people that they could use Graceview's parking lot. If this is true, he may have been assured by the Muslim group that their prayer service would be very short and they would be gone by the time we needed the lot. They had to put their cars somewhere, and the officer, possibly overwhelmed by the sheer numbers, may have felt there was no other option.

Time was marching on and more and more of our congregants were arriving, some parking on the grass and others on Renforth, illegally blocking the bike lane. By 10:30 we were on the verge of simply leaving our cars wherever they were parked, even if blocking others, and going inside to proceed with our church service as usual. But suddenly people from the park were returning to their cars and we realized that the Muslim prayer service had ended. It was a chaotic zoo for the next half hour while we moved our cars to let others out, wiggling them around other cars that were blocking the way and gradually pulling into parking spots as they became empty. Some of our people found themselves turned into traffic wardens, standing in the road directing traffic and trying to ensure everyone's safety. Our service that morning was delayed by 35 minutes as the mess

outside got sorted out and our equanimity was restored.

On that morning God gave us an unexpected opportunity to show understanding, patience, and Christian kindness. Yes, it would have been better had we known the situation in advance and been able to accommodate our Muslim friends by perhaps moving our service to a half hour later, but that was not the case. Despite our initial upset and frustration, did we rise to the opportunity presented in the best way possible? I think we tried to. It was a reminder to look for ways to do good, to show compassion, and to remember the greatest commandment, to "love your neighbour as yourself".

I learned later that one of our congregants, who is no longer young, upon arriving at the church and finding nowhere to put her car, decided that this was her church, and she wasn't going to let a little chaos prevent her from attending it. She drove home, parked her car, and walked the 1.2 km. from her home back to the church. That's determination for you! I do hope someone was kind enough to drive her home after the service...



# **Hymn Stories: In the Garden**

Adapted from 101 Hymn Stories - Kenneth W. Osbeck

Author: C. Austin Miles 1868-1946

Composer: C. Austin Miles

And he walks with me and he talks with me, And he tells me I am his own And the joy we share as we tarry there None other has ever known.

Next to "The Old Rugged Cross", this is one of the most popular hymns ever written. It is one of our favourites, and a favourite of our friends at Centennial Park Place. In 1912, songwriter C. Austin Miles was asked by music publisher Dr. Adam Geibel to write a hymn that would be "sympathetic in tone, breathing tenderness in every line..." Here is an adapted version of Miles' account of how this hymn came to be written:

One day in March, 1912, I was seated in the dark room where I kept my photographic equipment and organ. I drew my Bible toward me, it opened at my favourite chapter, John 20 – that meeting between Jesus and Mary (in the garden.) As I read it that day, I seemed to be part of the scene. I became a silent witness to that dramatic moment in Mary's life, when she knelt before her Lord and cried "Rabboni!" ... I seemed to be standing at the entrance of a garden, looking down a gently winding path shaded by olive branches. A woman in white...walked slowly into the shadows. It was Mary. As she came to the tomb...she bent over to look in and hurried away.

John...appeared...then came Peter, who entered the tomb...followed by John. As they departed, Mary reappeared...Turning ...she saw Jesus standing, so did I. I knew it was He. She knelt before Him... looking into His face, she cried "Rabboni!"

I awakened in the full light, gripping the Bible... Under the inspiration of this vision I wrote as quickly as the words could be formed, the poem exactly as it has since appeared. That same evening I wrote the music.

# Over The Edge - A Story by Jean Ross

I watched the SUV lose control. I couldn't figure out why the driver had not tried to correct the skid. Looking down, I saw the vehicle leave the road and head for the edge. I tried to shout to watch out, but not only was that fruitless, it was too late. The red SUV leapt over the cliff but it didn't explode. I cried.

"Don't cry, Annie. The woman felt nothing. She was dead before she left the road. You know, they rarely blow up. That is just Hollywood. A strange phenomenon, Hollywood", said a man next to me.

"Oh! That explains why she didn't correct her trajectory. Did she feel anything?"

"No, she didn't. My name is Peter, by the way."

"Hello, Peter. What happened?"

"Think back," he said cryptically. I thought back and I noticed that the woman was wearing the same thing I was. She also drove a red Toyota Rav4, just like me. I remembered feeling a bit nauseated and I had thought that the sushi for supper had been maybe a bit off. There had been a short, sharp pain in my chest but I had thought it was just more ingestion.

Oh, I thought again. How was I seeing this from above? To Peter, with his kind eyes and kind face, I asked, "Are the gates really made of pearl?"

He laughed. "No. There are made of brushed nickel but when the sun hits them, and that is often, they seem pearly. Simpler minds and times I guess. Come, there are many waiting for you."

He took my hand and I realized that I was on my way.

# The curtain falls on our Bible Study of The Chosen



Our successful Bible Study of Season 3 of The Chosen ended on June 4. Stay tuned for Season 4. This remarkable series, which has pervaded the world, enriched our Christian lives and gave us something to think about and talk about for eight weeks, as each week we

watched an episode together and shared our thoughts about it. Although parts of it were fictional, gleaned from the imaginations of the show's creators as they gave each character a distinct personality and life situation, great pains were taken to ensure historical and biblical accuracy as they painted a picture of the life and times of Jesus. Much of the script is taken right from the Bible. It is a show that appeals to a wide range of people, not just to Christians.

We recommended this series to our son James, who is a philosopher and a solid thinker, not a believer, does not adhere to any religion, but reads extensively and is fascinated by the philosophies of many different religious systems. Here is a text he sent to us after he was hooked by the first episode of Season One and quickly binge-watched the rest:

So I finished season 1 of The Chosen last night. I watched the last 2 eps via screen mirroring. Turns out my TV does not support this feature but the Roku does.



I really liked the show. Surprising high production value considering that it is free. Good writing, decent acting and a great story to work with. Also it is nice to see something positive compared to how dark some of the most acclaimed shows are these days.

#### Concerts at Graceview

(With thanks to Susan Chopp for her commentary in the Weekly News)

This spring at Graceview, we were treated to two fabulous concerts arranged by our Music Director Kento Stratford.



On Friday, May 24, a 13-member ensemble of saxophones regaled us with some contemporary arrangements. With saxophone sizes ranging from the tiny sopranino sax to the huge and thundering bass saxophone we were mesmerized with the sounds

and tones of these magnificent instruments performing together. The hit of the evening was a transcription of An American in Paris by George Gershwin. It was truly amazing to hear.

On Saturday, June 8, a second concert featuring Pascale Menke and Kento Stratford graced our sanctuary. If you were not there, you missed a truly wonderful performance by two amazingly talented pianists. The music, if



not familiar to most of us, was sprightly and melodic – in fact, so sprightly that if you were close enough to watch Pascale as his acrobatic fingers moved over the keys, you would have seen nothing but a blur. It was totally mesmerizing - in my view, the best one yet. Thank you, Kento, for bringing this wonderful musical talent into our church.

"Do you know what a foreign accent is? It's a sign of bravery." -Amy Chua

# **Language – the Doorway to Wisdom**

Kathy Twynam

Many years ago, when I was very young, I remember hearing a story about a schoolteacher who had to explain to his young students that starting that afternoon, he would no longer be teaching them in their mother language, French. A new teacher would be arriving, and henceforth all their lessons would be in German. I could not remember the reason for the change in the language of instruction. But I never forgot the sorrow and anguish of the teacher and his students at the thought of their language suddenly being taken away from them. Does this story ring a bell with anyone else?

A few weeks ago, I discovered this story in a book I own called The Book of Virtues. It's called The Last Lesson and was written by French author Alphonse Daudet during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, when the French territories of Alsace and Lorraine came under Prussian rule. Orders had come from Berlin that, starting immediately, nothing but German was to be taught in the schools of Alsace-Lorraine and all French teachers would be compelled to leave. It is a first-person narrative told by a French schoolboy who was worried about going to school because he had not studied for an upcoming test and was afraid he would be scolded by M. Hamel, his teacher. But instead of scolding, M. Hamel, his voice shaking with such emotion that he could barely speak. explained to the children that it was the last time he would be teaching them, they would now be taught in German by someone else, and why.

Several different themes have been ascribed to this story – national pride; patriotism; the value of education; never to take for granted the rights, privileges, and freedom you have today lest you lose them tomorrow. But it brought home to

me the crucial importance of language to our national pride and our sense of identity of ourselves, and of others. We see this every day in our own country, as the province of Quebec, alarmed by what it sees as the erosion and diminishing of the French language, is doing its best to discourage – indeed, legally forbid in places - the use of anything but French.

There was a quote going around on Facebook a while back which, paraphrased, admonished, "Never make fun of a person whose English is hard to understand. It usually means they speak another language." I ran across this quote during our pulpit vacancy when we were blessed with a series of guest ministers, some of whom were indeed quite hard to understand. Some of us were frustrated and unhappy about this and said so. That is understandable. It's not easy to listen to a sermon whose message you must strain to understand. But from the point of view of the speaker, it can't be easy to preach a sermon in a language not your first language, even if you consider yourself fluent in both languages. I would try to remind myself of this while struggling to grasp the point of a sermon I was having trouble following, and try to feel thankful and grateful to our guests for being kind enough to minister to us in our time of need. I wasn't always successful.

In the 1970's, when I worked as an Immigration Officer for the federal government, my job involved interviewing prospective immigrants to Canada to determine their eligibility for landed immigrant status. To help with this, we had a staff of interpreters we could call upon when needed. They hung out in the interpreters' room, and for whatever language I needed, I picked up the phone and one of them showed up in my office. I had great respect for them. Most of them spoke not just two, but four or five different languages, and it never failed to amaze me how comfortably they could do this, alternating between English and another language with skill and confidence as the interview progressed. How

did they acquire their skill with languages? Almost all were European born, raised in smallish countries nestled among other smallish countries, all of which spoke different languages. Knowledge of languages other than their own, easy to acquire and maintain when opportunities to make use of other languages were plentiful, opened all of Europe to them and was, for many, a necessity at school and in their jobs. In a recent conversation with Rev. Jan, he told me that as a student in the Netherlands, he would be tested in four different languages in which he had to show proficiency, to pass his courses.

We in Canada are not so lucky when it comes to multi-lingual opportunities. We are a vast country that is supposed to be bilingual, with two official languages, but in reality it doesn't work that way. Most folks in urban areas of Quebec, where French is the only official language, seem to manage not badly in English if necessary. Most folks in The Rest of Canada have very limited knowledge of French, gleaned, perhaps, from cereal boxes and road signs and long-ago high school French. Franco-Ontarians constitute the largest French-speaking community in Canada outside Quebec but make up less than 5% of the province's population. I was appalled when years ago the Ontario Ministry of Education in its so-called wisdom stopped requiring a French credit in all five years of high school, grades 9-13. Now only one French credit is necessary to graduate. In my opinion, in this country that is disgraceful.

We have travelled throughout Europe extensively, speaking only English, and rarely have we encountered a language difficulty. On one notable occasion in Paris, we wanted to visit the Musée de l'Air et de l'Espace, at Le Bourget airfield north of the city, that housed two defunct Concordes and was accessible by subway. We were given to understand that the museum was visible from the subway station and we could walk from there with no problem. However, when we emerged from the Metro station, we found ourselves in a

semi-rural area, with the museum nowhere in sight. There was, however, an elderly gentleman sitting on a bench nearby, and I determined to go and ask directions. Assuming he would not speak English, with my limited high school French I mentally composed a French sentence to ask where the museum was. Giving no thought to what I would do if he replied with detailed directions in rapid French that I couldn't understand, I tentatively approached the man. Before I got halfway through my fumbling inquiry, he interrupted me in English with the curt response, "Bus 52." (I don't think he thought much of my accent.) When Bus 52 lumbered along shortly thereafter, we boarded, and it deposited us a mile later in front of the museum.

Learning a second language for most people is not easy, and it seems the older you are, the harder it is. My brother Pat is a pretty smart guy who held quite a lofty position as Director with the Atomic Energy Control Board of Canada, stationed in Ottawa. A few years before he retired, the government decided that he needed to be bilingual, which had never been necessary in his position. To accomplish this, Pat was relieved of his regular duties and sent to a year-long French Immersion program at full salary, where for eight hours a day, five days a week, he had one job, to learn French. At the end of the year he was tested in three areas, passed two of them but was not up to par in the third. He was sent back for an additional six weeks of training, after which he managed to pass all three. The government then deemed him officially bilingual.

Pat laughs when he tells the story. In his words, "There are a lot of us in Ottawa. They call us BOPs – Bilingual on Paper."

Even after all that intense immersive training at the considerable expense of Canadian taxpayers, although he could manage not badly in casual situations he certainly didn't consider himself fluently bilingual. So again I say, learning a second language is not easy! I have read that to

learn to speak it unaccented, the age of eight is about the cut-off point. This is borne out by my two brothers-in-law, both born in Italy and both arriving in Canada speaking not a word of English. Tony was three when he came, and his English bears no trace of an accent. Joe was nine, and his accent is still faintly detectable at age seventy-three. Both of them can still communicate in Italian, which stood them in good stead when they travelled back to Italy as adults.

American professor and linguist Noam Chomsky once said, "A language is not just words. It's a culture, a tradition, a unification of a community, a whole history that creates what a community is. It's all embodied in a language." Let us cherish our first language, whatever it may be. For us English speakers, our language is the language of Chaucer, Shakespeare ... and the great British poets. And let us embrace others who were brave enough and determined enough to learn it as a second language. They are one step ahead of most of us.

# **Quotes to ponder**

It appalls me to contemplate what must be the future of the Church when all the people who are now fifty and up are in their graves! This oncoming generation...is not in the least way concerned about organized religion.

Lloyd C. Douglas, Magnificent Obsession, 1932

The Ten Commandments are vital in Christian thought and in the other monotheistic faiths, but the central teaching of Christ is that we love God with all our heart, mind and strength, and love others as ourselves... Christianity is best represented by people living as followers of Jesus, helping those in need and in pain, evincing goodness and kindness, and sacrificing for the sake of others. In political terms, that could be by improving public education, giving women reproductive choice and heavily subsidized daycare, fighting poverty and spending money on housing and health rather than tanks and torpedoes.

Michael Coren, Toronto Star, June 27, 2024

# Joseph of Arimathea

Joseph of Arimathea is named in the gospels as the man who took responsibility for the burial of Jesus. Three of the four gospel writers describe him as a member of the Sanhedrin, the supreme council of the Jews, having jurisdiction over religious, civil and criminal matters. Matthew's gospel simply describes him as a rich disciple of Jesus, and John adds that he followed Jesus secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. When Jesus died. Joseph sought permission from Pilate to take care of the body, as the Passover Sabbath was approaching and according to Jewish law the body must be buried before sundown. Assisted by Nicodemus, whom John names as a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin, he removed Jesus from the cross, wrapped his body in a linen cloth with spices provided by Nicodemus, and buried him in a new tomb in which no one else had been buried.

During the Middle Ages, many legends grew up relating to Joseph of Arimathea and his association with England. It was said that Joseph was the original custodian of the Holy Grail, bringing it to England with him. In some accounts, such as that of John of Glastonbury, he is said to have arrived in England bringing with him "vessels containing the blood and sweat of Christ." John of Glastonbury further claims that King Arthur of England was descended from Joseph, and so Joseph is also tied to the Arthurian legends. Wikipedia's account of Joseph of Arimathea gives his place of death as Glastonbury, although I'm not sure how much credence we can give to that.

#### **Jerusalem**

The legend that Joseph of Arimathea and the glorified Christ walked together on England's hills captured the imagination of British poet William Blake. He was so moved by it that he was inspired to write his poem, *Jerusalem*. It is often assumed that the poem was inspired by the fanciful story

that a young Jesus, accompanied by Joseph of Arimathea, travelled to what is now England and visited Glastonbury during his unknown years. But the poem draws on an older story that Joseph of Arimathea, alone, travelled to preach to the ancient Britons after the death of Jesus. The poem's theme is linked to the Book of Revelation (3:12 and 21:2) describing a Second Coming, wherein Jesus establishes a New Jerusalem. In the most common interpretation of the poem, Blake asks whether a visit by Jesus briefly created heaven (Jerusalem) in England, in contrast to the "dark Satanic Mills" of the Industrial Revolution. The second verse is interpreted as an exhortation to create an ideal society in England, whether or not there was a divine visit. <sup>1</sup>

And did those feet in ancient time, Walk upon England's mountains green:
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine, Shine forth upon our clouded hills? And was Jerusalem builded here, Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my Bow of burning gold:
Bring me my Arrows of desire:
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold:
Bring me my Chariot of fire!

I will not cease from Mental Fight, Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand: Till we have built Jerusalem, In England's green & pleasant Land.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wikipedia

### **Cam's Brighteners**



I have in my possession a remarkable little black notebook lent to me by Sandy Taylor. It is volume 4 of Rev. Cam Taylor's "Brighteners" and is comprised of a treasury of inspirational stuff that obviously Cam loved – filled with handwritten quotes, pasted clippings from magazines, newspapers and church bulletins, poems.

even a couple of letters. For those of you who don't know Cam, he was minister here at Grace Church in the early 70's. When he retired from the ministry in 2001, he and his wife Sandy decided to make their church home at the newly amalgamated Graceview, where he served as Minister in Association until his death in June 2022. We were blessed that he was periodically able to lead our worship service, during a pulpit vacancy and minister's vacations. Here are some samples from Cam's treasury:

- A hospice is not about dying, it's where you learn to live your life to the fullest, even if you have only days left. (Dorothy Ley patient.)
- Here is a test of your character: how do you treat the people you don't need?
- The remark of Jesus that it is more blessed to give than to receive is based on the human truth that the more you give away in love, the more you are.
- Do you know what it means to cherish? It is the loveliest word in the marriage ceremony and one of the loveliest in our language. It means "to hold in one's heart."
- The next best thing to being wise oneself, is to live in the circle of those who are. (C.S. Lewis.)
- If the Presbyterian Church had saints, Cam would be one of them. (Rob Howard to Sandy Taylor. Cam's comment: What a delightful thought! Our rewards are in the hearts of our people.)
- Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity. And I'm not sure abut the former. (Albert Einstein.)

# **Prune and Orange Scones**

Janet Ottewell

(Pronounced "delicious" by Janet's friends with whom she shared them.)

3 cups flour

½ c sugar

4 tsp baking powder

½ tsp salt

½ c margarine or butter

1 egg

1 c buttermilk (I used some leftover sour cream and milk)

1 c chopped pitted prunes

2 tsp grated orange peel

Egg wash: 1 egg, beaten with 1 tbsp cream or milk

In a large bowl, mix flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Cut in margarine or butter until mixture resembles coarse meal

In a small bowl, beat egg with buttermilk; add to flour mixture with prunes and orange peel. Mix well but do not overhandle.

Turn dough onto floured surface and lightly knead 5 or 6 times, adding more flour as needed to keep dough from sticking.

Divide dough into approximately 16-18 equal portions. Shape each portion into a ball and flatten into discs ½ " thick. Place on an ungreased baking sheet and brush lightly with egg wash.



Bake at 375 degrees for 20 minutes or until golden brown.

Scones can be tightly wrapped and frozen up to one month

### Dear Graceview Family,

I hope you have enjoyed the July/August issue of Graceviews. The next issue will be available early in September. **The deadline will be Sunday, Sept. 1.** 

I am always looking for submissions from our church family on any matter that might be of interest. If you have a hobby, a favourite book, TV show or movie to report on, a trip you enjoyed, a family celebration you would like to tell us about - if it interests you, it is bound to interest someone else. Please write it up and send it in, and make your editor very happy! And don't forget my plea for recipes!

May you all have a very happy and blessed summer!

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