

# **GRACEVIEWS**

**September/October 2025**

**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...



This past August, I was given the privilege of being one of the selected scholars to participate in the annual Guder Scholars gathering at St. Andrew's Hall, University of British Columbia. This year's event, which centred around missional leadership and discernment, brought together pastors from across Canada, along with some from the United States and other traditions beyond the Presbyterian Church. It was a four-day immersion of prayer, learning, and conversation that became one of the highlights of my summer.

What made it even more meaningful for me was realizing that when Iris and I first landed in Canada a decade ago, we had stayed on that very same UBC campus. At the time, I never could have imagined how God would lead me from those first uncertain steps to serving as a minister today—and now, into my third year with the Graceview congregation. Looking back, I can only marvel at how God orchestrates our journeys in ways far greater than we could plan for ourselves. God is good and faithful. He sets out the steps for us—we only need to trust Him more.

Among the ten pastor cohorts in this gathering, I happened to be the only non-white—or Asian—pastor present. It echoed something of my experience at Graceview. When I was first called here, the congregation was about 90% white. Over time, that demographic has gradually become more diverse. I sometimes joke that maybe I was the one who helped bring the ratio down! But more seriously, this experience reminded me again that in Christ we are not defined or divided by race, culture, or background. As Paul reminds us: *“there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave*

*nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).*



While in Vancouver, I also had the chance to visit Regent College, the Chinese Presbyterian Church, and Reality Church, an evangelical congregation in the heart of downtown with a contemporary style of worship. Regent College was particularly striking with

its vast library, open to the public, holding an enormous collection of books and resources for study and spiritual growth. The Chinese Presbyterian Church bore witness to the faithful work of generations while still discerning new ways to reach younger people. Reality Church showed both the vibrancy and the challenge of proclaiming the Gospel in a city where secular culture is so strong and the needs of the community are so great.

Another blessing was being able to reunite with a couple of pastors I have known from earlier years. Sharing stories of our congregations reminded me of something I have often heard—that pastoring can be a lonely profession. There is truth in that. But gatherings like this, and times of study leave, widen our perspective and remind us that we are not walking this road alone. We are part of a much larger body of Christ, and it is Christ Himself who strengthens us to walk faithfully on this path.

Strengthened by His Spirit,  
The Rev. Eric Lee

*"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." – Isaiah 41:10 (NIV)*

I am the product of a thoroughly Christian education – Catholic elementary schools through Grade 8, and Saint Joseph’s High School, a private, all-girls convent school, through Grade 12. Public funding was not fully extended to Catholic high schools until 1984, under Premier Bill Davis. Whether this should be the case in our modern diverse society is an argument for another day, but the first British North America Act of 1867 guaranteed public education support (up to Grade 8) to “Her Majesty’s Roman Catholic subjects and Her Majesty’s Protestant subjects”. This is important – the idea was that Catholics and Protestants were to be treated equally and given equal opportunities to educate their children as they saw fit. At that time the vast majority of the population of Canada belonged to one of these two Christian groups, and the few followers of other religions were actively discriminated against.

The Separate elementary schools taught Christianity from a Catholic perspective, where the doctrine in most areas is not a whole lot different from other Christian denominations but which has some different traditions. Until the Reformation of the sixteenth century, in western Europe to be Christian was to be Catholic, a word which simply means “universal”. Reformed Churches continue to acknowledge this in the reference to “the holy catholic church” in the Apostles Creed.

In 1951 the Catholic schools did not offer kindergarten, so I was sent to a public school for kindergarten. That’s where I learned to sing three children’s hymns that have stayed with me all my life - *Jesus Loves me*, *Jesus Bids Us Shine*, and

*When He Cometh.* When my boys were in public elementary school in the eighties, they had a weekly Bible Study class prescribed by the Ontario Curriculum. How times have changed. These days, many public schools are reluctant to mention Christmas even in its secular sense, lest somebody be offended. How then did the faith-based education of Catholic children differ from the public school education of everyone else?

In elementary school we opened and closed each day with a prayer. We had a formal “Catechism” lesson daily where we memorized questions and answers which grew increasingly more complex as we advanced in grades. Example: Q: Who made us? A: *God made us.* Q: Who is God? A: *God is the Supreme Being who made all things.* These were the first two questions in the primary catechism, which I still remember today. The Presbyterian Church also uses catechisms as teaching tools to instruct members on core Christian beliefs and Presbyterian doctrines. These catechisms, often in question-and-answer format, cover topics like God, sin, salvation, and the Christian life. The Westminster Catechisms are prominent examples, widely used by various Presbyterian and some other denominations.

We were prepared by our teachers to first participate in the sacrament of Holy Communion in Grade 2 at the age of seven. “First Communion” was then, and is today, an important ceremony marking the so-called “age of reason”, when a child is expected to know right from wrong, is morally responsible for her own behaviour, and is old enough to become a full-fledged communicant. I vividly remember my

First Communion Day, more than seventy years ago, as I nervously paraded up the aisle of St. Charles Church with the other second grade children, girls in white dresses and boys in little suits and ties. My siblings tell me it done differently now - children receive their first communion in the company of their parents, to prevent undue anxiety. I still have the little white prayer book given to me on the occasion by an aunt. We were taught to pray regularly, to turn to God in times of trouble and of thanksgiving. We learned to read from a series of Readers called “Faith and Freedom”, which was similar to the public school “Dick and Jane” series, except that the children were David and Ann and Baby Mary, the dog was named Zip instead of Spot, and the Readers included child-based ethical situations and simplified Bible stories. At an early age, God, and especially Jesus, became very real to us, and entered into many of the decisions we made in our day-to-day lives.

There were some perks, too. We got some extra holidays, called “Holy Days of Obligation”, when it was our duty to go to church – which we did, of course, but the rest of the day was our own. One which comes to mind is November 1, All Saints’ Day, which, being the day after Halloween, caused some jealousy among our Protestant friends who had to go to school. (Those extra days off have long since been eliminated.)

And so, on to High School where my Christian education continued where the elementary school had left off. When you walked in the front doors of my high school, you first passed the chapel, the set of double doors on your left. Outside the chapel, on a little table, was a basket of lace

handkerchiefs for girls who had forgotten their hats, as women and girls must cover their heads when entering a church. (Remember, this was 1959.) Our school uniform included a hat, a felt tam-like structure universally hated by the girls, which we were expected to wear to school every day but which was often conveniently “forgotten” at home. We bonded over hating those hats. You could almost tell the time of year by the traffic at the chapel. It was busiest at exam time, when many bargains with God were being made inside. If you had studied, you reminded God of this and asked Him to make sure your efforts were rewarded. If you had not studied, you pleaded with God to somehow enlighten you with enough information to pass – often offering Him something in return, such as saying so many extra prayers or performing some act of penance. I was a good student, and rarely had to make such a deal with God.

You headed off to your classroom, where you remained for most of the day. Our teachers, (about half were Sisters of Saint Joseph, who lived in the attached convent; half were lay teachers; all were women) rotated to us for the different subjects instead of the other way around. We were taught the Ontario High School Curriculum, and we were taught it well. When I transferred to a public high school for Grade 13, I found I was ahead of my class in several subjects, notably English and Latin, and more than holding my own in others. Grade 13 algebra would have given me grief under any circumstances!)

We had a formal Religion lesson every day, using a series of textbooks called “Our Quest for Happiness”. Every class period started with a prayer. We had a yearly three-day

retreat, during which special speakers were brought in, and we were encouraged to pray, read the Bible, and reflect on how to be better Christians.

When I was at St. Joseph's (1959-1963), the school was a private, all-girls high school receiving no public funding. My parents paid tuition for me every year. They were not rich, but I had won a partial scholarship out of Grade 8, which encouraged them to send me there. My five siblings were not so privileged – they all attended public high schools. The school was situated in the Six Points area of Etobicoke, where the Tapestry retirement community is now. Right beside St. Joseph's and sharing a mutual driveway was Michael Power High School for boys. In my day, woe betide the girl who was caught hob-knobbing with a boy in that shared driveway – she was sure to receive a stern lecture from our formidable principal. Today those two schools are joined into a single co-ed school, Michael Power/St. Joseph's, now situated at the corner of Renforth and Eringate, just up the street from Graceview. I assume the girls are allowed to talk to the boys these days.

I remember my days at St. Joe's very fondly. I loved it there. I loved the structure and the discipline and the comfort of believing beyond a doubt that no matter what happened, I had a friend in Jesus. I loved wearing a distinctive uniform to school, in the days before school uniforms became the norm in Ontario. Our spring/fall uniform was a regulation blue tunic and white blouse; our winter uniform was a navy blue, very itchy, wool serge dress with a white collar and cuffs which were removable and washable. Today it is unthinkable that anyone, let alone a teenage girl, would



actually wear such a garment. By the end of a term, the air was pretty ripe, as most of us owned only one uniform dress and it had to be dry-cleaned. Many present-day co-ed Catholic high schools have eliminated the more modern kilt as part of the girls' uniform and gone to pants, feeling that pants are more modest than the traditional kilt which was often hiked up thigh-high by many of the girls. At St. Joe's we hiked our dresses up, too, but they were hastily yanked down again if we saw a teacher approaching. The proper length of the dress was such that it grazed the ground when you knelt on the floor, and no one wanted to be told to kneel so the length of her skirt could be observed!

I have such warm memories of those days. I remember assembling in the gym, by class, every day after lunch, to hear announcements from our principal (there was no P.A. system) and then marching to class row by row, often to the tune of Colonel Bogey's March. I remember my Grade 11 English teacher, Miss Cameron, who so inspired me with her passion for English Literature and who was kind and compassionate enough to make some accommodation for a student (me) with a stutter who was terrified to recite or read aloud. I remember my classmate Nancy Ellis, who one day was caught smoking in the bathroom and got suspended for such a terrible offence. Her classmates were shocked that a St. Joe's girl would do such a thing.

If I loved St. Joe's so much, why did I transfer to a public high school for Grade 13? At the end of the summer after Grade 12, I had been in Nova Scotia with my grandparents, arriving home during the last week of August. The difficult Grade 13 year was looming, the year in which so much of

the educational efforts of both students and teachers would be directed toward the dreaded Departmental Examinations in June, where every graduating student in Ontario wrote exactly the same set of exams. We were facing as many as nine three-hour exams, written over the course of as many days, and 100% of our final marks was based on those exams. When I got home from Nova Scotia, my father suggested that it might be a good idea to take my final year in a public high school, to make sure I was well prepared and smooth over any gaps I might have in my education to date. If I had had more time to consider the matter I might have refused to make the switch, but at the time it seemed like a new and exciting adventure, and I agreed. I lived to regret that decision many times over the next year, which I spent feeling like a fish out of water and plotting ways to get out of going to school. Quite a turn-around for a studious kid who had previously not wanted to stay home from school even when sick. However, I did adjust and it worked out okay in the end.

But I digress... The bottom line is that at St. Joseph's our days were marked by a close relationship with a God who was very real and personal to us. We were taught that we had a moral duty to worship Him in church every Sunday, and we fulfilled that duty faithfully. It would not have occurred to me, as a high school and university student living at home, to announce to my family one Sunday morning that I wouldn't be going to church that day. Attending church was accepted, and never questioned, as an important part of living a Christian life. I suspect it was that way in most of your homes, too, when you were growing up. My five siblings, all of whom attended Separate schools

as far as Grade 8 but then transferred to public high schools, also continued to attend church without question, at least until they left home. As children and teenagers, we had learned to love God, to be kind to our friends and neighbours, and to demonstrate that kindness every day. In short, we did indeed learn how to be Christians in what was then a solidly Christian society.

### **Bell Ringers Choir - New and exciting fun for Graceview!**

On Sunday, August 17, we had our first practice of the bell ringers' choir. It was an introductory session, without the bells, to let us know how it was done. There were eight of us present, and there is a rumour that there are two or three other interested people who were not at church that day. It's fun for everyone. Nobody needs to read music, nobody needs to be able to sing, and everyone can participate. It's based on a numbering system, from 1 to (I think) 24. If there are eight in the group, everyone will have three bells to manage; if there are twelve, we will each have two bells. We are assigned numbers which will match the bells, and it's simply a matter of following the number charts in front of us. Easy. At our next practice in September, we will work with the bells, and hopefully our first performance will be on



Thanksgiving Sunday.  
Thank you, Glen, for introducing us to something new and different!

Have you ever thought about how dependent we have become on computer technology that we once shunned as totally unnecessary? About how the Presbyterian church managed to get along just fine for five hundred years, without screens or microphones or live streamed services? Or, for that matter, about how most of us now walk around with a computer in our pockets that is a million times more powerful than the room-sized computer proudly owned by York University in the sixties when I was there?

When Rev. Stephen Dunkin was with us, as you recall, he wanted to put in a screen, so he could enhance his bible-based sermons with pictures. At that point (2013 or 2014) we had none of that stuff in the church, and there was much resistance to getting it. “It’s expensive...we don’t need it...” and other objections were voiced, but in the end a camera and screen were installed. That led to the construction of a booth at the back of the church from which the Power Point could be operated, and for a number of years that sufficed. People got used to it, as people usually do, and it came to be relied upon as a real enhancement to our worship services.

And then came 2020, and Wham! We were hit with the pandemic, where for nearly two years we were subject to lockdown after government-mandated lockdown, when we were unable to gather in person at the church and other means of “doing church” and keeping connected had to be found. An emergency meeting was held at the church in March 2020, where it was decided that we would close our doors “for two weeks” to see where things would go from there. Two weeks turned into months of fear and uncertainty as churches, schools and businesses around the world were closed and hospitals laboured to keep people alive. People quickly learned to use meeting platforms such as Zoom to keep connected when we were not able to gather in person.

For some weeks, Rev. Rebekah delivered a sermon from her living room.

In the fall of 2020, Bob Twynam, using only his iPhone and a tripod, started recording church services from the church on Fridays, with Rev. Rebekah, organist Eric Medhurst and himself all masked and well-separated from each other, and no one else in the church. The recorded church services were then edited and uploaded to YouTube, where they could be viewed by anyone at any time. That went on for almost a year, until the summer of 2021, when the lockdowns were lifted and we were finally able to gather in person, with certain restrictions. The question then became, did we want to continue providing an online presence that had proven so convenient and valuable for those unable to attend church in person? It was decided that we did, and the possibility of live streaming began to be a reality.



Bob took on the job of researching how to do it, sourcing and purchasing the needed equipment, learning how to use it, and training others. The best method of live streaming at that time was thought to be a device called a Yolo Box.

This was purchased and installed, along with two cameras to allow for switching back and forth for different views. A fairly simple live stream system was set up with three components - the live stream to broadcast the services through YouTube, the computer which operates the Power Point for presentation of pictures that you see every Sunday, and the sound system. An AV team of volunteers was formed, and we were in business. The Yolo Box system worked fine, but it did have its limitations.

One Sunday, we were surprised by the return to Graceview of Eldrin Charan and his son Eric, who had been regular attendees a few years earlier. Eldrin, an expert in technology, saw what we were doing and offered his services to assist the AV team. He introduced a better, more professional way of live streaming using a system called OBS (Open Broadcasting Software). This was done by computer, and the Yolo Box became redundant. Over the next few months new equipment was added, and as time went on, with Eldrin's help our broadcast services became very sleek, professional – and far more complicated to produce.

The booth at the back of the sanctuary was too small to accommodate the new and improved set-up, so Dave Taylor and Earl Nixon planned to enlarge it. The AV equipment was temporarily removed to the balcony and set up on two folding tables so the work downstairs could be done. Before too long, the AV team came to prefer running the show from the balcony, and when the decision was made to make the temporary balcony arrangement permanent, Dave Taylor volunteered to build a wooden table to replace the plastic folding tables. The beautiful table was finished in July 2025, and all the equipment was dismantled in order to install it. Dave, Bob and Earl installed the table on July 16<sup>th</sup>. On Sunday July 20 there was no live stream or Power Point, and hymn books and Bibles were resurrected for what was supposed to be that one service only.

On Monday July 21, Bob was at the church from 10:00 AM to about 9:00 PM with Candace Raymond, our website manager, and a hired expert named Rich, to reconnect everything and get it ready for re-opening on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Bob, Dave and Jackie went over the next day to clean up the mess left behind by redundant equipment, and when they left, they were confident that everything was working correctly.

Well, they say “Man plans, God laughs.” On the following Sunday morning, we were surprised to find that absolutely nothing worked! No live stream, no Power Point, no microphones. It remains a mystery how this could be, since the system had been tested repeatedly a few days earlier and found to be in perfect order. So, it was back to the drawing board. Out came the hymnbooks and Bibles again, and Rev. Eric and others were forced to shout in order to be heard, not always successfully. A week of attempts to remedy the situation ensued, with Bob spending much time at the church with and without Candace to try to get it resolved. By the next Sunday, everything was up and running again - except for the choir screen and the pulpit screen. Bob then sought the help of our son John, who is an IT specialist working for Canadian Tire, but John’s attempts to figure out the problem were unsuccessful.

On Tuesday, August 19, the choir screen and the pulpit screen were finally successfully made operational with help from YongKoo, a tech expert recommended by Candace. On Sunday August 24 we were delighted to see that everything was up and running again as it should be. Let us hope that it stays that way!

## Coming Soon - The Chosen, Season Five

An eight-week Bible Study at Graceview  
Tuesday, September 30 until Tuesday November 18,  
12:15 pm  
Adamson Lounge

This is a remarkable TV series that has been the subject of our Bible Studies for the previous four seasons.

Everyone is welcome. Please join us as we watch each episode together and share our thoughts and impressions with each other.

*This is one of my favourite prayers. As I read it, I picture a family, father, mother, several children, and perhaps grandparents, sitting around a table in reverent attitude as one of their members thanks and beseeches God in this perfect prayer of thanksgiving and intercession. It would be equally suitable for our church family as we assemble each Sunday for worship.*

## **Prayer for Home and Family**

Robert Louis Stevenson

Lord, behold our family here assembled. We thank thee for this place in which we dwell; for the love that unites us; for the peace accorded to us this day; for the hope with which we expect tomorrow; for the health, the work, the food, and the bright skies, that make our lives delightful; for our friends in all parts of the earth.

Let peace abound in our small company. Purge out of every heart the lurking grudge. Give us grace and strength to forbear and to persevere. Give us the grace to accept and to forgive offenders. Forgetful ourselves, help us to bear cheerfully the forgetfulness of others.

Give us courage and gaiety and the quiet mind. Spare to us our friends, soften to us our enemies. Bless us, if it may be, in all our innocent endeavours. If it may not, give us strength to encounter that which is to come, that we may be brave in peril, constant in tribulation, temperate in wrath, and in all changes of fortune and down to the gates of death, loyal and loving one to another.

As the clay to the potter, as the windmill to the wind, as children of their sire, we beseech of thee this help and mercy for Christ's sake. Amen.



## Charles Wesley – more prodigious than Wordsworth!

Kathy Twynam



One of my favourite hymns in our Book of Praise, which unfortunately we very rarely sing, is *And Can it Be That I Should Gain*, by Charles Wesley. We sing many of Wesley's hymns, and I have often wondered just who he was, that he seemed to be able to provide a hymn for every occasion. Our Book of Praise contains 19 of them. The Methodist hymn book *Hymns and Psalms* contains 150. I had a vague

idea that he was a churchman, perhaps from the eighteenth century, but I knew nothing else except that he wrote a lot of hymns. (I didn't know that the total was close to 9000!)

Charles Wesley was born on December 18, 1707, in Epworth, Lincolnshire, England, the son of Susanna and Samuel Wesley and brother of John Wesley and eighteen other siblings. Ordained in the Anglican Church, he became a leader of the Methodist movement, which encouraged personal holiness and a disciplined (hence "methodical") Christian life. He spent many years as an itinerant pastor, essentially preaching from the back of a horse, until at age forty-nine he no longer had the stamina to continue being "rain-soaked, frozen, poorly-fed, and assaulted by angry mobs." He established residence in Bristol with his wife Sarah and the three of their eight children who survived infancy.

While searching around on the internet to find out more about Charles Wesley, I ran across a sermon preached on Feb 22, 1998, by Victor Shepherd, a Canadian Presbyterian minister, theology professor, and author living in Toronto. The sermon, entitled simply "Charles Wesley, 1707-1788", is magnificent, and paints a picture of a brilliant, eccentric man who, in the throes of poetic inspiration would become almost

deranged, totally unaware of his surroundings, unable to focus on anything at all until he had his poem safely written down. He wore his winter clothing all year, even on the hottest summer days, and if he happened to be on horseback when a poem popped into his head, would ride to the nearest house, leap off his horse, and hammer on the door, crying, "Pen and ink! Pen and ink!", in order to preserve his poem before it left him.

Following Charles' ordination to the Anglican priesthood, he travelled with his brother John to the colony of Georgia in America, in the entourage of James Oglethorpe, the governor of Georgia, returning to England a year later. There, he rejoined his sister Kezia and became heavily influenced by her new-found maturity and conviction that God could and did "work a work of Grace in the human heart". On May 21, 1738, he wrote in his journal "*By degrees the spirit of God chased away the darkness of my unbelief. I found myself convinced...I saw that by faith I stood.*" Thereupon he wrote the lines that prompted my curiosity about him:

*And can it be that I should gain  
An interest in the Saviour's blood?  
Died he for me, who caused his pain?  
For me, who him to death pursued?  
Amazing love! How can it be  
That thou, my God, should'st die for me?*

Charles Wesley tried, in his poetry, to empathize with his fellow human beings and with all the trials, stresses, and griefs of the human condition. He wrote about "wives and widows, coal miners and criminals, high school students and highwaymen, saints and soldiers, particularly soldiers who were loyal to the crown of England during the American War of Independence." (Victor Shepherd)

At church we are treated to only a small sampling of Charles Wesley's genius. Every liturgical high point is represented. Some favourite Wesley hymns are: "Christ the Lord has Risen Today", "Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies", "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus", "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing", "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling", "Rejoice, the Lord is King", and "Soldiers of Christ, Arise".

On 24<sup>th</sup> May 2007, many celebrations were held throughout England to commemorate 300 years since Charles was born. Although this occurred in December, the May date was chosen to coincide with the spiritual awakening of first Charles and then his brother John, in 1738. In November 2007, the Irish Post Office issued a 78¢ stamp to commemorate the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Charles Wesley's birth.

\* \* \* \* \*



*Here is a post I found on Facebook, which I thought was interesting and worthy of sharing with those of you who don't do Facebook. I know many of you shop at Walmart and/or Costco, which carry Bonne Maman jams, and I have bought it a few times. This was posted by Michael Perino, although he didn't write it. An attached note said "Credit unknown."*

"At the supermarket today, I found a small, elderly woman standing in front of a high shelf holding Bonne Maman preserves. She was having trouble finding the flavour she wanted because the jars were set back on the shelf.

She couldn't read the labels. She could barely reach them. I offered to help. After I handed her the raspberry preserves, she thanked me, paused, and then asked, "Do you know why I buy this brand?"

I laughed and replied, "Because it tastes good?"  
"Yes, it tastes good." She paused again. "I am a Holocaust survivor." This was not the conversation I expected on a Sunday grocery run.

"During the war, the family that owns the company hid my family in Paris. So now I always buy it. And whenever I go to the store, my grandkids remind me, 'Bubbe, don't forget to buy the jelly.'"

I told her that that was the best reason I ever heard to buy any company's product. And then we both smiled...and went our separate ways."

*Research revealed that indeed, the town that was home to Andros Company, the makers of Bonne Maman products, hid and saved Jewish families in WW2. The town was called Biars sur Cere, which then had about 800 villagers.*

*Another article declared that: "You have to understand what it was like then. There were posters on the walls, from the Nazis and from the collaborators, and they said that if you are found to help a Jew, ... you will be shot on sight." Despite the great danger which helping them put the villagers in, still they kept (people) safe."*

*A good reason to buy Bonne Maman products, and a poignant reminder that when we look out for each other it can change lives, and that there are good and selfless people in the world.*

## Halloween, Then and Now

Facebook, that ultimate time-waster, is known for all kinds of crazy stories, memes, political rants, recipes (which often feature a perfectly good chicken breast or pork chop smothered in brown sugar, cheese, or other calorie-laden ingredients), etc. etc. etc. The other day on Facebook I ran across the following statement: “Thanksgiving, Halloween, or Christmas – one of these holidays must go. Which one?” Clickbait that I couldn’t resist.

For me, it was a no-brainer – I could definitely do without Halloween. That said, I do remember enjoying it as a child, when one year I went as a coal miner, blackening my face with burnt cork to represent coal dust with no thought that one day such a thing would be considered offensive. I enjoyed Halloween when our kids were young, enthusiastically making their costumes myself and feeling smug when our son Jamie, seven at the time, won a prize at school for his Robin Hood costume. I participate in Halloween today, somewhat reluctantly, plugging in my fake Jack-O-Lantern and sitting on my porch with bowls of peanut-free candy, ready to receive the little ghosts and goblins and wave to their parents waiting patiently on the road. When I was young, and even when my boys were young forty years ago, only the very youngest children were accompanied by parents on this night dedicated to children. School aged children were let loose on their own, to roam the streets, knock on doors, shout to each other about which house had the best treats, and fill their pillowcases with junk food. Today, everyone seems to have a parent in tow.

Halloween evolved from the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, a celebration to mark the end of harvest and the beginning of winter, when the veil between the living and the dead was believed to be thinnest. Celts believed the spirits of the dead would walk the earth on this day, so they lit bonfires and wore costumes to ward off evil spirits. In the 8<sup>th</sup>

century, Pope Gregory III established November 1 as All Saints Day, to honour saints. This Christian holy day soon incorporated elements of the Samhain festivities, just as Christmas has incorporated some elements of the Roman winter solstice holiday of Saturnalia. October 31 became known as All Hallows Eve, which was later contracted to "Halloween."

Irish and Scottish immigrants brought the holiday and its customs to North America, where it transformed into the modern celebration of costumes, trick-or-treating, spooky storytelling, haunted houses, and jack-o'-lanterns. Historians estimate that by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Halloween was celebrated widely in Canada and the United States, in more or less its present form. In recent years, we have had to be conscious of things like peanut allergies, much increased traffic, and even, sadly, deranged people with intent to harm children by handing out treats laced with noxious substances. Hence the increased parental surveillance, which has become ever more necessary. When my boys were trick-or-treating on Halloween night, I never tried to ration their candy. I figured their teeth and their psyches could better withstand a sugar binge over a few days, than bit by bit over a few weeks, and I wanted the candy gone.

During the pandemic, Halloween trick-or-treating was put on hold, but judging by the scores of kids visiting my house in the last two years, it's back in full force. Happy Halloween, everyone!

### **Something New - Welcome Back Pot Luck Lunch**

Sunday, October 5

Downstairs after church

All welcome - please join us

A sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board

**Grand Slam Ham**  
Looneyspoons  
Janet and Gretel Podleski

*If I am serving ham at Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, or any other occasion, this is the way I do it. If a holiday meal features both turkey and ham, the ham is always most popular and disappears before the turkey does.*

1 fully cooked lean ham

1 cup apricot or peach jam

1 ½ tbsps. each of white vinegar and Dijon mustard

1 tbsp. orange zest (If I don't have an orange, I will leave this out.)

¼ tsp. ground allspice (If you don't have a jar of allspice, this is the recipe: ½ tsp cinnamon, ¼ tsp ground cloves, ¼ tsp nutmeg.)

Preheat oven to 350°.

Slice ham into 1/2 inch thick slices. Arrange in a 9 x 13" baking dish.

Combine jam, vinegar, mustard, orange zest, and allspice in a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat until bubbly.

Spoon over ham, making sure each slice is coated.

Cover and bake for 30-35 minutes until ham is heated through.

6 - 8 servings.

I hope you have enjoyed the September/October issue of Graceviews. The next issue will be available early in early November. **The deadline will be Sunday, October 26.**

If you have anything you wish to share with your church family, please make your editor very happy by writing it up and sending it to me by email. If it interests you it is bound to interest someone else. And don't forget my plea for recipes! I need your help, as my supply of recipes is dwindling.

### Church Directory

Church Office		416-621-0888
Minister	Rev. Eric Lee. pastor@graceview.ca.	778-791-1741
Clerk of Session	Bob Twynam	416-207-9170
Music Director	Dr. Glen DeLine <a href="mailto:delineglen@gmail.com">delineglen@gmail.com</a>	
Church Secretary	Halyna Parypa office@graceview.ca	647-881-0439
Property Manager	Earl Nixon	416-620-4190
Chairperson, Outreach	Sheila Thomas	416-239-8520
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