



Tidings

Vol 29, No 2
Pentecost/Summer 2019

**Human Rights:
 Food for Thought**
 (See Pages 4 and 10)

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Tidings

Editor David Wardlaw
Graphic Designer..... Jim Silcox
Photographers Willis Buckingham, David Wake, Jim Silcox
Ad Sales Bob Peel
Team Members Willis Buckingham, Barb Dalrymple, David McKane, Bob Peel, Pat McGregor, Nancy Quinn, Jim Silcox,
Proof Readers Pat McGregor, Pat Sole

Published by:
 The Communications & Marketing Team
 First-St. Andrew's United Church
 350 Queens Avenue
 London, Ontario N6B 1X6
 Tel: 519-679-8182
mail@fsaunited.com
www.fsaunited.com

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David Wardlaw

Two of the articles in this issue cover topics that fall under the broad umbrella of human rights. One of these articles, by Anne Cummings of the Affirm Committee at FSA, considers progress on equality for LGBTQ2 people in the church and community. The other is a feature article, by Dr. Alydia Smith, that encourages us to imagine and to create an anti-racist church, with specific reference to long-standing racism against black people. Dr. Smith was guest speaker at FSA this past February and her contribution to our worship service helped FSA to honour Black History Month. Her article builds on the spoken message she delivered on Feb. 3rd at FSA. To acknowledge the focus on human rights in this issue, the cover displays the logo of the World Human Rights Organization.

You will be reading this June issue at a time of transition from the 'regular' year to summertime, a time where we tend to do different things and some of the things we do regularly are done differently, or perhaps not at all. At FSA worship moves to Proudfoot Hall or outdoors and there is no choir, Coffee & Conversation is replaced by Lemonade on the Lawn, committees meet less frequently, and the Sunday school and the junior music programs take a break. Whatever your summer activities, projects, and travel may be, the *Tidings* Team wishes everyone a relaxing, restorative, rewarding and safe summer.

†



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GROWING IN GOD'S GARDEN OF GRACE



Rev. Michelle Down

Dr. William Barber II opened the recent *Festival of Homiletics* with these words:

*“My heart is full.
My love for you O God is deep.
The gift you offer to us O God is unending Grace.”*

We are invited in this Pentecost Season, the Season of the Spirit, to receive this gift that God is offering, and to Grow in God's Garden of Grace. To open ourselves to the Holy Spirit in ways that root us in the tradition of the gospels, and enable us to grow into the future of Grace. Grace, being the deep blessing of God's love upon us and within us.

The Garden of Grace; where we feel the Spirit in the winds of the trees, and allow our hearts to be transformed into beating cauldrons of Justice.

The Garden of Grace; where the sacred native plants of the Indigenous Peoples—Sage, Cedar, Tobacco and Sweet Grass—are rooted to offer wisdom teachings, and sacred ceremony.

The Garden of Grace, where we are invited to rest and find peace on a memorial bench; or dance around the Peace Pole that states our truth in many languages: that we, the people of God, are committed to seeking Peace for all.

The Garden of Grace, where we can find safety and security deep within the earth, allowing us to transform our hearts and minds in the womb of rich darkness to bring new life to the world.

God's Garden of Grace is not just at FSA's new Eco-Meditation Garden, but in all of God's creation, and in all of God's created. That includes each of us! 2 Corinthians chapter 8 encourages us with these words: “Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel in this act of Grace also.” To receive God's Grace is to be open to the invitation of Pentecost—the moving of the Holy Spirit in our lives. As the great theologian Dianna Butler Bass says: Don't ask God to guide your footsteps if you are unwilling to move your feet and be planted in a new place in the Garden of Grace.

The people of First-St. Andrew's excel in many things; and so let us hear anew this call that Paul writes to the people of Corinth, and the people of 350 Queens Avenue—to Grow anew in God's Garden of Grace. Hear these words today:

*You are beloved, and worthy of God's Grace.
You are beloved and worthy of being Blessed by God's Holy Spirit of Pentecost.
You are beloved and worthy of being planted anew in God's Garden of Grace ...
for God's Grace is Amazing.*

†



HAVE A DREAM: IMAGINE AN ANTI-RACIST CHURCH

Alydia Smith

I visited you during Black History Month this past February, and spoke a bit about anti-Black racism in the Canadian, and particularly the church context. I could hardly scratch the surface about the church's complicated relationship with race. Racism is so enmeshed into the church that it is impossible to imagine how racism could be extracted without dismantling the entire institution. It would be like trying to extract flour from a cake once baked and ingested. The dilemma with this realization is that one cannot successfully work for change within an institution if it does not believe that change is somehow possible. Ministry without hope is destined towards failure.

As the Easter Season offers the hope and mystery of the resurrection, I offer you, First-St. Andrew's, some of the things that bring me the hope of new life in this work of dismantling racism. The hard truth about choosing to be about resurrection is that something must die in order for something new to be reborn. When Paul tries to describe the mystery of resurrection to the people of Corinth he states: "Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies." (1 Corinthians 15:36) As a church, if we are to become anti-racist, and therefore affirming of racialized members, we very practically need to allow the old church to die in order for new life to break forth. The grandeur and impossibility of the task is overwhelming, but we must decide to start somewhere. The women who went to the tomb, early, while it was still dark, on that first Sunday morning, must have had many questions, uncertainties and impracticalities (how could they possibly roll the stone away), but nevertheless they persisted. Even though we may not know it, I am sure that they had a plan.

My plan for my ministry is to start by intentionally dismantling the White colonialist narratives that are a part of the Western Church in North America. Professionally, this will look like challenging ideological myths that, although well intentioned and at a superficial level appearing to be approaches to becoming an anti-racist church, can actually support this oppressive narrative in liturgies, literature and church culture. The accompanying table lists a few of the myths on which I am working, provides several examples of each myth, and explains why it is a problematic approach to reducing and eliminating racism. As I learn more, this table grows. For all our sakes, may we continue to grow and learn together. Amen. †

SOME CONCEPTS (IDEOLOGICAL MYTHS) THAT NEED TO BE CHALLENGED TO CREATE AN ANTI-RACIST CHURCH

MYTH	EXAMPLES IN CHURCH LIFE	WHY IT IS PROBLEMATIC
The Canadian Promised Land	Focus on the Underground railroad in Worship Services and Liturgies; Use of Spirituals as songs of arrival; Triumphalist and congratulatory language in worship when discussing equity and equality.	Allows us to start Canadian Black History from after the emancipation of slavery in Canada (therefore avoiding talking about slavery in Canada); Allows us to neglect the underground railroad that traveled south (because it does not fit into the colonialist narrative of Mexico).
Better than is good enough	Focusing on statistics and human rights violations in other parts of the world while avoiding statistics from Canada; Praying for other countries in a patronising manner (sending love); Implying that some forms of racism are better.	Allows us to settle and to domesticate the dreams, hopes and aspirations of freedom fighters and civil rights activists (we are not living the dream of our ancestors i.e. my family and kin); Allows us to not gather statistical information on the status and well-being of racialized people in Canada.
Conflict avoidance as a sign of civility or success	Avoid conversations, words, phrases and language that may make people uncomfortable, including naming racism; Only ask for feedback from racialized people in controlled spaces.	Allows White power and privilege to go unchecked; Allows us to use diversity to describe how a community looks while avoiding the difficult work of integration; Allows for cultural appropriation.
Seeing transforming hearts as the key (as opposed to one step of many) to dismantling racism	Assuming that intent is related to impact; Assuming that racism only manifests itself in hateful and discriminatory action; Assuming that we can fight racism most effectively with kind words and loving expressions of unity (racism is a complex system that all of the church and society operates within),	Allows us to excuse and discredit the everyday racist acts of others (they didn't mean anything by it; they are good people); Allows us to separate ourselves from racism by associating racism with grandeur acts by hateful people instead of the everyday systemic privileging of Whiteness.



Dr. Alydia Smith is Program Co-ordinator, Worship, Music and Spirituality in the General Council Office of the United Church of Canada. This article is an expansion and extension of her spoken message which was delivered at FSA on Sunday Feb. 3rd, 2019, the first in a series of four worship services in February (Black History Month) that focused on raising awareness of the history of, and racism towards, black peoples in Canada and the church.

CELEBRATING METROPOLITAN UNITED CHURCH



Nancy Quinn

Re-built after a fire in majestic Romanesque style and seating 1,400, the *Free Press* (1895) called the new church building “Methodism’s Magnificent Temple.” With Church Union, in 1925, it became Metropolitan United Church, affectionately known as Met to many. Its location on the southeast corner of Wellington and Dufferin makes it FSA’s closest church neighbour. The senior minister is Rev. Dr. Jeff Crittenden, who is in his tenth year in that role. Other members of the Met staff are listed on the church website <http://metropolitanchurch.com/>

Rev. Crittenden provided the following synopsis: “Our vision of Christianity is diverse, robust, inclusive, engaging, thoughtful, open to conversation, grounded in tradition, and pays attention to a variety of interpretations. We listen to the text via an environmental lens, a justice lens, an economic and class lens, a feminist lens, a transgender lens, privilege, and so forth. Metropolitan strives to learn from a variety of theological voices and expressions. Metropolitan is committed to hospitality, outreach and discipleship.” An exciting example of inclusive community work is mCamp, open to the public and offering secular arts and music programming for children and adults. Other examples include: the Friday community meal, the poverty campaign in London, the initiating of the multi-faith coalition (in partnership with FSA), and UCC relief programs. The church has partnerships with organizations such as missions and food banks, helping with mental health, poverty, and homelessness. It also has relationships with the Inter-faith community (including local synagogues and mosques) and the Interdenominational community.

Metropolitan’s annual budget (approximately \$800,000 this year) fluctuates, as they base the budget on income. Over \$100,000 is invested every year in the local neighbourhood and world-wide. With a robust roll of 1200 members, the 11:00 a.m. church attendance varies from roughly 300 to about 500-600, depending on the time of year. Nine independent elders oversee “the whole” of congregational life. The various ministries submit annual budgets to the Finance Committee, who report to the Elders, who report to the Congregation.

Metropolitan’s website lists ministry groups as including: United Church Women (three units), Knit Wits, Funeral Reception Committee, Growing in Faith Study Group, Prayer Group, Property Team, Hospitality Meals Program, Outreach Team (formerly M&S), Sanctuary Guild, Archives, Café Metro, Christmas Hampers, Welcoming Team, Book Club, Couples Club Plus, and Men’s Club. Many learning events are open to the community, including the eight week, mid-winter, Wednesday morning *Time Out* lecture series for which information on registering is available with

(Cont'd on page 19)

Margie Wake (1921–2018)



David Wake

A life-long resident of London, Margie (Cook) Wake spent her early years at her grandparents' small farm on Commissioners Road, attending the nearby three-room school. The family moved into town at the time Marge started high school at Sir Adam Beck Collegiate.

Marge was a proud graduate (1943) of the Victoria Hospital School of Nursing; she later became active with the school's Alumnae Association, a major focus of her volunteer work for many years.

At home, she took great pride in her roles of wife, mother and homemaker. Influenced by her childhood on the farm, she loved gardening. Although her East London garden was small, she packed many flowers and vegetables into it.

During her childhood, Marge's love of nature was encouraged by her father, who enjoyed fishing on his days off. Much later, recognizing my growing interest

in nature, my mother joined the local nature club, now known as Nature London. She soon became the club's treasurer, a position she held for 30 years. Thereafter, she remained an active volunteer with Nature London for a further 20 years.

After my father's death in 1989, Marge became an extremely dedicated volunteer at Parkwood Hospital, where my father had spent the last few months of his life. Many in the FSA community have told me about their memories of Marge in her role at the information desk.

Music was always an important part of Marge's life. After I joined the FSA senior choir in 1979, she became a strong supporter of our music program, always eager to attend concerts. As a member of the congregation, she enjoyed the opportunity to sing hymns and to interact with the FSA community.

Margie resided at Mount Hope for the final six years of her life. She received good care there, and we

are thankful that her mind was bright until the very end.

As I write this, spring wildflowers are blooming, as are the early flowers in the garden. We remember how Marge, with her love of nature and gardening, treasured these signs of new life each spring. †



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Jean Wright
Jim Silcox



Barry Moore
1935–2018



The Scene: Two old friends meet in a local coffee shop to reminisce about the passing of their mutual friend, Barry Moore.

Jim: What was there about Barry that prompted you to make him your friend?

Jean: Well it was music. We met as undergrads at Victoria College, University of Toronto. I had written, and was directing the music for the college show, and Barry showed up with his trumpet to play in the orchestra. As a group we spent a lot of time together rehearsing and talking and laughing. What about YOUR friendship with Barry?

Jim: His humble nature attracted me right up front. Of course, I knew that he was an economist, minister, past administrator of various prestigious educational institutions and an effective liaison between the Christian and Muslim communities in London, but he came across as just another “bloke.” Now I’m curious. Tell me a little bit about your friendship with Barry over the years.

Jean: After graduation we went our separate ways. I had heard that he had gone to Emmanuel College to study for the ministry, a bit unusual for a graduate in Commerce and Finance. Then one Sunday he appeared before church at First-St. Andrews, and Frank Meadows introduced him as Dr. Barry Moore, President of Fanshawe College, and 30 years dropped away. We had lots of catching up to do, so we started meeting for coffee every couple of months, talking about the “old days” and our families. Ken and I had the honour of celebrating with Barry and Anne at their wedding at FSA. Barry was a real “family man,” and in addition to talking lovingly about Anne, I heard all about his three sons and grandchildren and how proud he was of them. I had the joy of meeting them all on different occasions. Of course, he talked to me about Susie, who, when she talked about Barry, said, “He goes to my school.” (Fanshawe)! Despite all the years that had passed, and all his accomplishments, he was still the same modest, smart, warm friend. And Jim, how did your friendship with Barry develop?

Jim: It was not long after we met that we started going out for lunch together about every other month. I would e-mail him and arrange a date and location, usually some little out of the way place, like the Bag Lady. We never talked about ourselves but rather about the things we were currently interested in or experiencing, politics, theatre ... pop culture of all sorts. He always gave his complete attention to whatever I babbled on about. He was a great listener, reacting in all the right places with approval, sympathy and even the odd, “Wow!” Lunch with Barry always left me with something to think about and a new take on my stale old thoughts. In retrospect, I suspect that was the essence of his success as a minister, educator and administrator. He drew the best from us and turned it around for us to look at from a different perspective. That’s a gift!

Barry Moore’s life touched so many in various fields and interests. Each person has his/her own special memory. This is his legacy: that when two people are reminiscing about Barry, affectionate, admiring stories are shared.

†



Annabelle Logan

*Helen
Cameron
McLeod
1922-2018*



With a dignified presence and an elegant hat framing her beautiful face, Helen McLeod would walk down the aisle of First-St. Andrew's church to sit in her usual pew on the west side of the sanctuary.

Helen was a member of FSA most of her life and lived in south London, attending Wortley Road Public School, South Secondary, and Beal.

In 1942 Helen married the love of her life, Gordon McLeod. Soon she was the mother of two daughters, Mary (Liberatore) and Kathryn (Patton). Once her little girls started school, Helen began her lifelong volunteer work.

Replying to a jingle contest for Blue Bonnet Margarine, Helen won a fabulous new Chevrolet Belair; let's say she was off and running! As a leader in Explorers she drove a couple of girls to the activities and they were very impressed to have been driven in a brand-new car.

Helen was a member of the Women's Auxiliary and later became a charter member of the UCW. We always enjoyed watching Helen model in the UCW fashion shows. She looked amazing in the beautiful clothes from Artistic Ladies Wear. Helen held several UCW executive positions and was designated as a lifetime member.

Helen also delighted in her 45 years of volunteer experience at St. Joseph's Hospital Auxiliary. She was a participant in the founding of WOTCH—Western Ontario Therapeutic Community Hostel. She also became an early supporter of My Sisters' Place. These organizations are now under the umbrella of The Canadian Mental Health Association.

Helen was an incredibly loving mother to Mary and Kathryn, a devoted grandma to Mary's son Mark, and a dear great-grandma to Oliver, Charlotte and Elliott. She enjoyed a loving relationship with Kathryn's husband Gordon and his family. †

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Equality for LGBTQ2 People?



Anne Cummings

On April 23, the Royal Canadian Mint announced a new loonie called the “Equality Loonie” to commemorate 50 years of progress since the 1969 act that decriminalized homosexual acts between consenting adults 21 years and older. The Canadian government has also recently announced 30 million dollars over five years to fund global LGBTQ2 rights projects in developing countries. While we can celebrate both of these announcements, equality has certainly not yet been reached for many LGBTQ2 people who still have to deal with prejudice, assaults, lack of specialized services, discrimination in the workplace, and in some cases, alienation from their families.

At particular risk are our LGBTQ2 youth who are often bullied at schools beginning as early as elementary school for some of them. Besides feeling unsafe at school, these young people often internalize the slurs used against them and this can result in feeling shame for who they are. It is not surprising then, that studies show these youths as experiencing more depression, anxiety, school dropout, suicide attempts, being kicked out of home, and living on the streets

than do their peers. What can we do within our church to help?

One of our best resources is the Affirming Ministries Program of Affirm United. It has been working over the past few decades to help United Church congregations understand the barriers of prejudice and subtle discrimination within our churches that can make LGBTQ2 youth and adults feel unsafe. The program provides support through both written and media resources about equity and justice, as well as showing how to be publicly welcoming and inclusive. It also encourages the study of how to promote inclusion of other marginalized groups in our society.

You can learn more about this very helpful organization from its excellent bi-monthly justice magazine, *Mandate*, which arrives by email and is dedicated to stories about LGBTQ2 issues, as well as about related activities occurring at United Churches

around the country. We have occasionally submitted articles to it about our activities at FSA. Anyone can subscribe to *Mandate* at communications@ause.ca. Affirm United also has an active Facebook page with interesting content and over 980 members; anyone can join it. We are on a journey toward equality, but we are not there yet. †



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Don Jones

The FSA Organ—Retrospective on its inauguration 50 years ago

In 2018-19 FSA celebrated 50 years of the Casavant Frères organ. It was installed in 1968-69 following which it began a storied career in enhancing worship in First-St. Andrew's United Church and supporting music and arts in the community. The organ was formally inaugurated not just by a single special event, such as a service or concert, but by a festival that ran from April 11th to 27th, 1969, and consisted of an event every day save one in this time period. This festival remains a landmark in the history of FSA. There were concerts, recitals, an opera, special guest soloists, and three special church services. These events were developed and led by the church organist and choir director at the time, Barrie Cabena, and a very active group of volunteers who carefully planned and promoted every event. A number of articles in the *London Free Press* attested to the scope and magnitude of this festival.

Following the festival, the *London Free Press* columnist for the arts at the time, Lenore Crawford, said, "The Church and the Arts Festival, consisting of 12 concerts, one opera, and three church services with music as focal part is over. First-St. Andrew's United Church attempted a colossal 'first' in London's and Ontario's church history.... It is merely a cold fact that no previous extended presentation of 'the arts' in London ever roused such a storm of excitement."

The installation of the organ meant reorganization and a great deal of reconditioning of the church Sanctuary. In an article carried by the *Free Press* on Saturday, April 12th, 1969, Jeanne Graham wrote a photo story about the "Mighty Pipe Organ" where she said "... now assembled and finely tuned, the three manual tracker organ is reputed to be one of the finest in Canada and is the only one of its kind in Ontario."

In his sermon at the Service of Thanksgiving at the conclusion of the festival, Rev. A. J. Farquhar called the organ "the Greatest of all vehicles of man-made sound." He also said "Music has long been the servant of the church ... It should be about God and it should strengthen."

As a member of the FSA choir and as a composition and harmony student of Barrie Cabena at the time of this festival, I can say with personal satisfaction that it was a wonderful time to be a member of First-St. Andrew's United Church. I will cherish the memory and the experiences of meeting weekly with Barrie to hear of the latest developments in the festival planning and to discuss the historic events that were to take place. Those who were in Barrie's FSA choir with my wife Dorothy and me, were well aware at the time of this momentous undertaking and the importance of helping at every chance to make it the fantastic project that it turned out to be.

To quote Lenore Crawford of the *London Free Press* again: "The Festival was a financial success; the budget was met. This spelled artistic success too, for the church congregation, however generous it might wish to be, had its limits. Financial success depended on appeal to music lovers outside the church. They came by the hundreds from the first concert on April 11th to the final one."†

SOME BASIC FACTS ABOUT FSA'S ORGAN

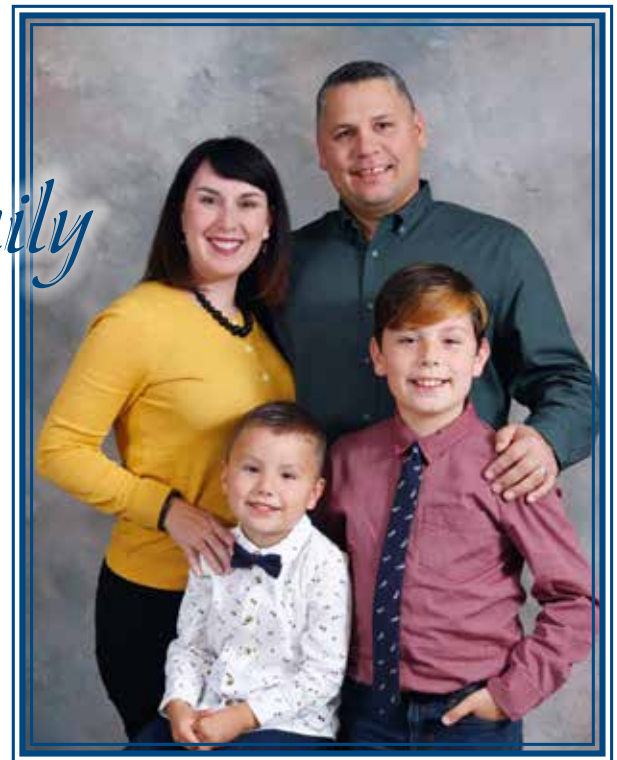
The Casavant Opus 3045 organ was built and installed by the pipe organ-building company of Casavant Frères of St. Hyacinthe, Quebec. There are 2593 pipes, 54 ranks (rows of pipes) and 36 stops. The stops switch the different types of sounds on and off. Selection of a single or set of stops is what provides the varying nature of the sound from piece to piece of music and often within a piece while it is being played. Organ stops are sorted into four major types: principal, string, reed, and flute, and there are numerous sub-types of each. There are four divisions in the organ—a division is a subset of stops controlling the sounds from a particular keyboard. There are three separate keyboards or manuals and one pedal keyboard (played using the feet). The linkage between the keys and the pipes is mechanical, thus making it a "tracker" organ. Airflow to the pipes is provided by a bellows that is pressurized by an electric air pump/fan housed in the tower room. The organ is tuned several times a year, and ongoing maintenance is currently provided by Dodington & Dodington Pipe Organ Services Inc.

The editor thanks Director of Music Terry Head for his essential assistance in preparing this description.

The Ahenakew Family



Heather Locking-Cusolito



Heather recently had the distinct pleasure of talking with Anna Ahenakew to learn more about her and her young family. Anna and Larry Ahenakew and their two sons, August, nine years old and in Grade 4, and Vincent, four years old and in JK, have been attending FSA for the last couple of years. Anna, however, who is the granddaughter of Gerry and Augie Meacham, attended FSA as a child and feels a long-standing connection to members of the congregation. For example, she speaks fondly of time in the youth group and ringing hand bells under the leadership of Barb Plante in the early '90s.

As a young teenager Anna moved to Saskatoon, which is where, after high school, she met Larry through her older brother Ian. Larry, who is of Métis heritage, was born in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, grew up in Lac La Ronge in north central Saskatchewan, and moved to Saskatoon as a young adult. He played bass in a band and it was their shared love of “happy music,” like James Brown and Stevie Wonder, that first drew Anna and Larry to one another. After Saskatoon they relocated to Calgary for work opportunities. They were married in Canmore, Alberta, in 2006. Both their boys were born in Calgary.

Three years ago Anna, who works for Apple, was recruited to London. The move resulted in an expansion of her responsibilities. She describes herself as a “people manager”, with responsibility for ensuring that her large team helps customers get the most out of Apple products. Larry, who had a busy career as an electrician in Calgary, has been tenacious in finding work in his chosen field, and sometimes has had to travel significant distances out of London for job opportunities. Recently work finds him spending more time in London, and he is grateful to be able to get home at a more reasonable hour to spend evenings with his family.

Both Larry and Anna are very proud of their boys, both of whom are in French Immersion. Anna tells us that August is an excellent artist and creates comics emphasizing a strong moral code with “good guys and bad guys.” Vincent likes to colour and is very creative and imaginative. Both August and Vincent are taking karate and swimming lessons, and have also participated in the children’s Christmas plays at FSA. Anna and Larry hope that they will also soon be able to join “Sing for your Supper” on Wednesdays. As for their parents, their love of all forms of live music continues. They also feel especially blessed to be able to spend time with Anna’s grandmother, Gerry.

The Ahenakew family feels warmly welcomed at FSA and are so appreciative of all that the church and congregation have to offer—great music, thoughtful sermons by Michelle, and wonderful programmes for young families. We also feel blessed to have them in our midst. †



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Gavin McGregor

MUTUAL TRUST: A SIMPLE LESSON



The 2019 congregational meeting was over, but I needed clarification on some of the changes taking place. While leaving Proudfoot Hall I managed to walk and talk with George Jolink. My concerns centred on how committees interact with each other and the impact this could have on the future of FSA.

At the bottom of the stairs, opposite the elevator, our conversation was interrupted by a small boy standing on the stairs asking politely for us to tie his shoelaces. George spoke to him. "Thomas! You know how to tie your laces." "Yes, I know, but they won't stay tied. I don't want to trip and fall." Without hesitation, I started to tie his left shoe and George the right. When finished I noticed we had tied identical knot styles. Our handiwork was examined carefully and met with a nod of approval and a loud "Thank you!" Thomas then turned and confidently dashed up the stairs.

We faced each other and smiled. There was no need to continue our previous conversation. We had just received a powerful lesson on the meaning of trust. †

COMMITTEE BULLETIN BOARD – Items in this section are provided by the committees of FSA for the purpose of promoting or reporting on a particular event, activity or project. The committee that submitted the item is stated immediately below each item.

Summer Parable

Now it came to pass that, as the time of vacation drew near, a certain member of the church bethought him of cool streams where fish were found, and his children thought of sandy beaches by the sea, and his wife thought of the mountains.

And this church member spoke and said, "Lo, the hot days come and my work lieth heavy upon me. Come, let us depart and go where fishes do bite, and where the cool winds bring refreshment and the land is beautiful about us."

"Thou speakest words of wisdom," said his wife. Yet three, nay, even four things we must do 'ere we go."

"Three things I can think of, but not a fourth:" said her husband "that we ask our neighbour to minister unto our flowers, that we arrange for our grass to be mowed and watered, that we have our mail forwarded, but no other thing cometh to my mind."

"The fourth is like unto the other three, but greater than all," said his spouse, "even this, that thou dig into thy purse and pay the church pledge, in

order that the good name of the church may be preserved, that the heart of the treasurer be made glad, and that it may be well with thee. For verily I say unto thee, thou has more money now than thou wilt have when thou dost return."

And the husband replied, "Verily, thou art noble and wise among women."

And he did pay his pledge for the summer, and the treasurer rejoiced greatly, saying, "Of a truth, there are those who care for the good of the church."

And it was so.

(from the
Finance Committee
and courtesy of Archives)



COUNCIL

George Jolink

Once again we find ourselves at the end of a busy season at First-St. Andrew's. As we look to the summer and a time of respite and relaxation, we take stock of the past year and make plans for the next.

Over this past year Council and its committees, in collaboration with our staff, have worked on your behalf to oversee the day-to-day operations and the many events which build community and raise our profile as a vibrant congregation within London and beyond. Historically we have always been one of the great congregations within the United Church of Canada, and we continue to be a leader in so many ways.

We have also changed over the years. Council, Staff and Trustees look to manage those changes in a way that is

responsible and forward thinking. Our current focus is in the area of fiscal management, balanced outreach fundraising, and efficient governance. Over this past year we have been experimenting with a "Mission Model" of governance, which would see an expanded focus in the areas of Faith, Service, and the Arts. Our Faith Development Team (formerly Christian Development and Worship committees) are piloting this model.

Council also looks to the work of the Long-Range/Short-Term Planning Committee as we discern our way forward. This has led to exciting initiatives such as the Arts Round table, Arts after 5, the Faith Partnership discussions, Service Roundtable, and the Community Garden project. We are so fortunate to have a willing volunteer base with a dedicated commitment to this work.

Council and its executive meet regularly. My hope is that we can provide a type of "servant leadership" to facilitate the work of FSA now and into the future. Many thanks to all who serve FSA in a multitude of ways. God's blessings be upon you. †



MISSION & OUTREACH

Barb Dalrymple

Cyclone Idai swept through Southern Africa in March. With more than 120,000 people displaced in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi, Idai is one of the worst weather-related crises to ever affect the African continent.

United Church Mission & Service partner ACT Alliance, together with local partners, worked to provide immediate assistance and ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable were met. United Church people donated over \$130,000 and have also generously given to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, which provided emergency food relief, especially in Malawi.

Our Grow-a-Row or Foodgrains project kicked off Sunday, May 5th with Cynthia Simpson and Linda Badke doing a skit emphasizing the 4:1 matching by the Canadian government. The campaign will continue until November. We are again twinned with St. Mary's United Church with a soybean crop. On September 8th our project will be celebrated with a corn roast and a speaker from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Donations are gratefully accepted through the offering plate or the church office.

Mission Services London is grateful to the Rummage Sale volunteers who packed and drove "leftovers" to the Mission

Store. As well as selling items to support Mission Services four branches, the Emergency Voucher program gives thousands of clothing, footwear and household items at no cost to individuals and families who are struggling.

St. Paul's Social Services continue to provide fellowship and lunch for approximately 100 guests three times a week. Daily Bread foodbank serves about 40 clients every day. Please continue your support.

ELUCO - Some notes from the AGM: Nutrition programs help address the diminished food security of our families. Every Wednesday during the second nutrition break children from J. P. Robarts Public School enjoy a nutritious hot meal and social time at the unit. ELUCO offers breakfast three days a week, and school snacks for our children. After school there is reading, crafts or co-operative games. A program partnering with Growing Chefs Ontario is exciting children about healthy cooking and eating under the direction of qualified chefs.

Stress can wear down our adults and isolation only makes things worse, so we build community with group activities of arts and crafts or cooking together. Several times a year ELUCO hosts family events, including the March Break Sugar Bush trip, Summer Fun at the Farm, Pumpkin Carving, and the ELUCO Annual Christmas party.

Often Nancy Howard will accompany individuals in a support and/or advocacy roll at appointments with Ontario Works, Ontario Disabilities Support Program, School Meetings, Children's Aid Society, London Middlesex Housing Corporation, doctors, lawyers, and at Court sessions. †



FINANCE

Kerry Hill

At the end of April 2019, our financial picture was a relatively healthy one. Variances to date from the budget are likely seasonal in nature; that is, budgeted revenues and expenses will even out over the full year.

The Shopping/Gift Card program has shown a 60% increase in net revenue compared to last year for the same period, thanks to the efforts of David Manness and Margo Christodoulou. We have installed our new donation kiosk called "Give-Point," which is located at the bottom of the Atrium stairs going up to the Sanctuary. Thanks to the Trustees for their support of this venture. Look for articles on the Shopping Card program and the Give-Point kiosk in the September issue of *Tidings*.

The very successful Wearable Art Show in April organized by Ardath Finnbogason-Hill and Paddy Richardson, contributed about \$1,500 to the FSA operating fund. It's "drop

and draw" activity also contributed about \$800 to My Sister's Place. Many thanks to Kathryn Patton and all the volunteers she recruited to help with the Friday evening reception and the rest of the weekend. Many of the audience at the London Symphonia performance on the Friday evening dropped by at their intermission to have a complimentary glass of wine at the reception and made an entirely voluntary contribution to FSA. (LCBO take note—voluntary!)

The Art event—like the UCW bazaars, concerts, the Mothers' Day Children's Musical and other FSA events—show the wonderful synergy achieved by people working together for a great cause. In many cases, people from outside FSA also volunteer to help. And, of course, many participants in these events come from the wider community.

Finally, a request: the summer months are coming up and that means people leaving for the cottage or other vacations. Don't forget that church expenses don't take a holiday. If you contribute by envelopes, perhaps consider pre-paying your summer months or providing the office with post-dated cheques. Before you prepare that summer vacation checklist, I encourage you to read the Summer Parable, which is found on [page 13](#) in this issue. And don't forget to stock up on shopping cards before you leave. Thanks, and have a safe summer. †



COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Jim Silcox

"Collaboration" is the new buzz word for the Communications & Marketing team. In the Fall, thanks to the liaison work between Merran Neville and Janice Wallace, we met with a team of students (Trevor Dehaan, Waverly Shin, Emily Morph, Savannah Hamelin and Lushwana Anderson-Stewart) from Western's Media Relations program, who made it their academic project to help us market the second of the Woodfield Jazz shows last November. Pleased with the results of this relationship, we elected to try it again. This past February we met with a different student team who called themselves

"The Three Wise Men" (Grant McGuire, Kylar Chopyk, and Chris Downs) to consult on marketing for The Peacemakers concert held on May 4th. For those of you who admired The Peacemakers poster, you can give credit for it to our student partners. Of note, it was this team that suggested that we arrange for ticket sales at places outside of the church office, and so we are now offering ticket sales at Long & McQuade and Locomotive Espresso as well as the church office and online for all our musical events going forward. Our student team also developed three different "Music at First-St. Andrew's" logos for us to consider. Watch for our choice to start appearing on our marketing materials and platforms with the advent of the 2019-2020 season come the Fall.

As a result of Bob Swartman's recruiting efforts, new members have been added to the C & M team: Natasha Roberts, David Manness, with Kathryn Skelly and David Wardlaw coming on board, ex officio. We look forward to tapping into their expertise in order to get our messages out. †



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MUSIC

Merran Neville

He's done it again! On May 4th, 2019 FSA rang out with the voices and instruments of 100 performers. Music Director Terry Head brought together the FSA Senior Choir, Beal Secondary School Treble Choir (director David Weaver), FSA Strings, the Laudamus Bells and other guest musicians to present a very beautiful and inspirational concert, which included *Peace in Our Time* for handbells and violin, and *The Peacemakers* by Welsh composer, Karl Jenkins, with Claire Jones-Fright, and Sonja Gustafson, soprano. Feedback obtained from an audience survey was extremely positive, as illustrated by the following comments provided by two different respondents: "The energy of both choirs, the beautiful beginning with bell choir plus Claire's violin piece ..."; "Wonderful bringing together of people, message, song and execution. Superb!"

The Ontario Guild of English Handbell Ringers is holding its biennial festival June 6-8 at Fanshawe College. The festival concludes with a concert on Saturday, June 8th at 8:00pm. Three hundred handbell ringers, including our Laudamus Bells, will be performing, and one of the pieces will be *Peace in Our Time*, which they rang at the May 4th "Peacemakers"

concert. Claire Jones-Fright, violin, will be playing as well. Tickets: Adult/Youth (under 18) \$20/\$10.

The FSA Strings have given us beautiful music in service during Lent. After more than 30 years' leadership, Bruce Richardson is stepping down as music director following the May 29th concert. Congratulations to Bruce on a well-earned "retirement." Associate Director Igor Saika-Voivod will be Bruce's successor and we are very pleased to welcome him.

The children led our worship service on Palm Sunday with a delightful presentation of "Untie the Donkey." They performed once more on May 12th presenting the musical *Imagine God*. It is a blessing to have the children perform and we are delighted to have them take an important part of the service. Thank you to Jane Dockrill, Allyson Watson, Marija Ristic and Terry, and the volunteers who assist with the "Sing for your supper" program.

The Woodfield Jazz series of four concerts, which was launched in September 2018, had its last concert on May 24th featuring the Charlie Rallo Quartet. The series has attracted an enthusiastic following, including some residents of the local Woodfield district. The series will continue in 2019-2020.

While not a musical event, the Wearable Art Show and Sale in March was co-ordinated by Ardath Finnbogason-Hill and Paddy Richardson with support from the Arts sub-committee. The show was a great success, and about \$800 was donated to My Sister's Place and about \$1,500 to FSA.

It has been a very good year!

†



PROPERTY

George Jolink

As we approach the halfway point in this budget year, the Property Committee has been busy trying to balance ongoing maintenance needs, improvements, and a consultant's (Avis, 2008) recommendations while we continue to operate within budget constraints. We are thankful as always to the Board of Trustees for their ongoing support to the Property Committee as capital projects are undertaken from time to time.

Summer is typically a less busy time at FSA, which allows our building manager to schedule repairs and improvements. This year our main project will be minor repairs to the stained glass windows, being an Avis recommendation in 2008. In addition we hope this year to begin enjoying our newly-developed Eco Meditation Garden.

The Property Committee continues to build relationships

with our long-term and short-term rental clients who provide us with a much-needed revenue stream. A close look at our operating budget for last year shows that property maintenance costs were about \$86,000 and rental income brought in about \$87,000. As you can see, we are using this building to generate the income we need to cover most of our costs. We depend on these clients. Please extend your welcome and thanks to our guests for choosing First-St. Andrew's as their home too. With this in mind we are happy to welcome Meals on Wheels into our main building. They are expanding their operations at 350 Queens Ave., and as result are increasing their rental commitment to us. This will increase some traffic in and around the building in the mornings and during the noon hour. We are very pleased to further develop our partnership with them.

As we head into the summer the Property Committee will take a brief hiatus. Thanks to all those who serve on this committee, and those who volunteer to both maintain and improve our church home. If you wish to get involved in one of our projects, or join our committee, please contact the church office. As you may expect, there are always jobs to do in an aging building.

†



MEMBERSHIP AND NURTURE

Heather Locking-Cusolito

Welcoming: At our most recent meeting we welcomed Steve Elson who, as Council Chair-elect, is visiting each committee to get to know us better. We wish Steve an abundance of support as he takes on this new role. We are extremely pleased to welcome a new member to our committee, Donna Thompson, who has also joined our lay visitation team.

Newcomers' Friendship Group: Recently, under the leadership of Glenna Hall, we held our first Newcomers' Friendship Group gathering in the Parlour. The event is purely social and designed to connect new people in the pews with long-standing members eager to get to know them better. We plan to hold these events three to four times per year. The next gathering will likely be in late September. If you know anyone who is new to FSA please plan on inviting them to our next gathering and coming with them for an hour of fellowship.

Open Sanctuary: At a recent meeting we welcomed Barb and Jon Baskerville who, for many years, championed the Open Sanctuary at Colborne St. United. They shared their rich experience and made several very relevant suggestions. We will continue to explore the concept in the Fall.

Lay Visitation Team: Over the Easter season our lay visitation team visited many of our congregants residing in retirement or long-term care homes. With the generous

support of the UCW, visitors took gifts to each of their flock and also, where appropriate, copies of Tidings. Thanks to everyone for their commitment to this important ministry.

Coffee and Conversation: I can think of few greater opportunities to connect as a church community than our weekly Coffee and Conversation following worship. Our sincere thanks go to the many volunteers who help each Sunday. Most importantly our thanks go to Deanne Pederson, who faithfully purchases all supplies and recruits people to prepare and clean up each Sunday. Thank you Deanne. On Sunday June 16th we will switch from Coffee and Conversation in Proudfoot Hall to Lemonade on the Lawn. We are deeply committed to alliteration.

Pew Cards: Since we will soon run out of our existing pew cards, Mason Robichaud and Heather Locking-Cusolito have been busy redesigning them. We are also doing some preliminary work on a brief pamphlet that highlights various programs and activities taking place at FSA. Both documents should be ready some time this summer.

Archives: As Willis Buckingham has so clearly identified in his Archives report, the Archive Committee, which comes under the umbrella of Membership and Nurture, is in desperate need of some new members. If you can help in any way please contact Willis at wjb13@rogers.com or Heather Locking-Cusolito at johncusolito009@sympatico.ca.

If you need to be in touch with our committee for any reason feel free to contact Heather Locking-Cusolito by email or 519-433-6344. †



ARCHIVES

Willis Buckingham

Did you know that it is now possible to access in digital format from the office computer the Baptismal records from 1890-2018, Burials from about 1924-2018 by date range, and Marriages from about 1924-2018 by names or dates?

Did you know that a small group of volunteers was able to contribute about \$900 to the FSA general funds from the sales of the 175th anniversary History Book?

A conversion of FSA's paper records to electronic format is in progress. This is a long-term endeavour that involves many person hours of volunteer time. Natasha Roberts recently joined the Archives group and is taking a leading role on the digitization project. There are various benefits to making our records available in an e-format: it provides a backup to our

paper records; the records will be much more accessible and can easily be distributed, and the documents become computer searchable. There are decisions to be made on future accessibility requirements and policies regarding the emerging digital archive, as well as pre-planning for the 200th anniversary in 2032.

The Archives Room has a mass of photographs in binders that really should be gradually digitized for ease of access and preservation. These cover the records of artifacts, events, new members, choirs and productions, many clubs, and various church committees. That is a task that needs many hands to accomplish, but there is no urgency to complete.

It will soon be possible to access *Tidings* from 2006, Annual Reports from 2011, sermons from Rev. Dr. David McKane, Rev. Dr. Susan Shelstad, Rev. Dr. Kate Crawford, as well as photo collages of many of the church events from 2004.

If you would be interested in taking part in these interesting projects, please contact Heather Locking-Cusolito at johncusolito009@sympatico.ca, or Willis Buckingham at wjb13@rogers.com. †



UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

Nancy Quinn

Retrospective:

Thank you to all who contributed to the UCW's February Phantom Tea and to Millie Bates whose poem brought a smile.

On Tuesday, March 19th, we enjoyed a St. Patrick's Celebration Tea. Dave Chandler, the owner of Wisdom Café Teashop and Japanese Crêperie educated us on Asian teas including: (1) White Tea, (i.e. Peach/Apricot); (2) Green Tea (i.e. Bohemian Raspberry); (3) Oolong Teas (between green and black tea); (4) Black Tea (i.e. Keemun Panda) and (5) Pu-erh Tea (fermented black tea).

The Rummage Sale on Saturday, April 27th, was a great success. Co-ordinators Jan and Jim Hendry report that we will net over \$3,000 for the UCW's charity work. Thanks go to the Marketing Committee, the many contributors with generous donations, the hard-working volunteers, the enthusiastic buyers, and the amazing clean-up crew.

On Tuesday, May 7th, Jillian Johnston, president and founder of the *Days for Girls*' branch Team London, spoke on this exciting global movement, which provides health solutions for girls in developing countries. One Ziplock kit with

two panties, two shields, 7 liners, a washcloth, and a spare Ziplock bag (for washing), prevents the loss of as much as 180 days of school over three years. Girls otherwise stay home from school during their cycle. The London Team has created 2,879 hygiene kits. See: <https://www.daysforgirls.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/Days-for-Girls-London-ON-Team-333718003667035/>

On Sunday, May 26th, the UCW church service focused on the question: "Why UCW Tomorrow?" They provided some interesting answers.

Upcoming:

- Registration: Monday, June 17th, UCW Camp Kee-Mo-Kee Day, with Middlesex Presbyterial.
- Registration: Saturday, July 20th, London Conference UCW event at Siloam United. The theme is "We Are One," with speaker, Carolyn Murray, who works with refugees.
- Our new UCW Mission Project for 2019 to 2022: "Women for Change" in Zambia—keeping girls in school. Our FSA UCW has contributed \$500.00.
- Wednesday, September 18th, at 2:00pm, in the Parlour, please join us to hear Sarah Collins, program director for the Salvation Army. The Centre of Hope is beginning the work of transitioning from an emergency shelter to a Recovery Community Centre model. In Phase One they will assist those seeking recovery by bridging the gap between withdrawal management and the, sometimes, twelve-week waiting period before treatment. †



TRUSTEES

Doug Jones (L)
Bill Peel (R)

The Board of Trustees of First-St. Andrew's United Church and its activities are guided by FSA's *Statement of Policies and Procedures* (posted on the website), the *Manual of the United Church of Canada* (available online: <https://www.united-church.ca/news/manual-2019-now-online>), and legal requirements of the Province of Ontario. The administration of FSA trusts conform to the provisions of the *Trustees Handbook* of the United Church of Canada. The historic church property, for which the Trustees hold the Deed, as well as funds to maintain the property and assist with FSA's congregational activities, continue to be stewardship and fiduciary responsibilities of all Trustees.

Current Board members are: Michelle Down (Minister of Worship and Congregational Life); John Eberhard; Jane Hill; Doug Jones (co-Chair); Bob Kennedy; David Manness; June McKay; Bill Peel (co-Chair); Alan Salmoni; Bob Schram and

Catherine Wonfor (secretary). To accomplish its responsibilities, there are four committees with at least one member of the Board on each: a) Investment; b) Insurance; c) Long-term giving, and d) Memorials. If you might be interested in being on the Board, talk to Doug or Bill.

For several years, your Trustees have actively worked with Council recognizing the future financial challenges that face FSA. Since 2011, Trust Fund investment income has become an ever-increasing source of essential revenue to support church operations and programming, as personal annual givings now cover only 57% of these costs. The total support from the Trust Funds in 2018 was **\$167,663**. This has been accomplished only with grateful reliance on past legacy contributions to the Trust Funds. However, increasing reliance is simply not sustainable. Thus, together with Council and its committees, we are devising a revised financial plan to stabilize short- and longer-term operations.

It is vital to recognize Trust Fund stewardship is not only for the current congregation, but also for those who have left legacy contributions, and for future congregants. We encourage considering leaving a Legacy from the heart to FSA through your will, which can ensure that your values and commitment to FSA continue. †

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The companion anecdotal story I submitted to *Tidings* called *Mutual Trust* (page 13) has caused me to think a lot more about the nature of trust.

We use the word quite often to describe a quality that exists in a personal relationship or within a group, and recently in connection with the negative behaviour of government officials ... calling it a serious breach of trust. I have even heard people say they can't trust themselves to carry out a particular task.

A group has to work together to overcome difficulties, to

solve problems, to share confidences, to recognize the collective strengths of the members, and to rely on each other before trust just seems to emerge. For example, much has been said about the work being done to accomplish Truth and Reconciliation within Canada, but much more is needed for trust to emerge.

In any human relationship trust is like a binding energy, a uniting force. Or is it as mysterious as Dark Matter?

Sincerely,
Gavin McGregor

Our Neighbours (Cont'd from Page 6)

Met's office. Art Frankel, *Time Out* Co-Convenor, reports that over 350 people attend each week. Recent past presenters from FSA include Rev. David McKane and Paul Merritt.

Metropolitan's music program under Director of Music and Arts, Dr. Gregg Redner, honours the beauty of traditional sacred music. The Senior Choir consists of 45 choristers, including fourteen paid choral scholars, and they sing music from the Anglican Cathedral Repertoire. The Met and FSA senior choirs enjoy co-creating the Good Friday music; this year the joint choir presented Stainer's moving *Crucifixion*. The Metropolitan United Church Choir School has thirty auditioned choristers, between the ages of eight and eighteen. In August 2018, the Choristers travelled to the U.K., where they sang a week in residence at Chester Cathedral, and gave other performances. Met's music program also includes: the

Parish Quire, Summer Music and Drama Camps, mCAMP programs, Jubilate Bell Choir (Senior), and Impello Bells (younger ringers). For the past two years, the Met and FSA senior bell choirs have participated in a reciprocal arrangement wherein the bell choir from one church participates in a worship service at the other church and vice versa.

Rev. Crittenden's closing comment in my interview was "we value FSA's partnership, encouragement and support in ministry. We are thankful for your neighbourliness."

Further information on Metropolitan's rich church life and programming can be found on the website. †

Editor's note: Much of the content of this article is based on an interview with the senior minister at Metropolitan, The Rev. Dr. Jeff Crittenden, whose co-operation is greatly appreciated.



REPORT ON WOODFIELD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION PLANT EXCHANGE

Pat Tripp

On Saturday, May 18th, the Woodfield Community Association (WCA) held its annual Plant Exchange at Lord Roberts School. This well-attended event is eagerly looked forward to as a place to trade plants, pick-up some mulch and humus, and share some friendly gossip over a breakfast sandwich and a cup of coffee.

As First-St. Andrew's is a member of this community organization, it was decided that this would be a great occasion to present the final rendering of our new garden and extend invitations to its dedication. Many WCA members remembered the introduction to the garden, given by Barrie Evans and George Jolink, at the 2018 Woodfield AGM. They were very pleased to see the garden plans coming to fruition.

Pat Tripp and Sandra Black-Evans staffed the display and made the point that this is a neighbourhood garden, for the community, not just for the church. Despite the damp weather,

the turnout at the exchange was good. Approximately 30 invitations to the garden's inauguration were given out. As a side benefit, one person and his family have already attended a Sunday service. †

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