

# Grace's Chatter

July 2020 Edition

## Ministry Often Brings Unexpected, Yet Joyous Surprises By – Rev. Ken Norman

Rabbi Harold S. Kushner, in his book *"Nine Essential Things I've Learned About Life"*, has a chapter entitled *"Religion Is What You Do, Not What You Believe"*. In it He makes this challenging statement to all people of Religion, and certainly to all *"would be followers of Jesus"*. He states: *"My Theology is less about who God is or what God does, and more about who we are and what we do because of what God means to us"*.



Back in the late sixties, when we lived in Gananoque, one morning I received a call from a garage owner, whose garage also served as a bus stop. He told me that a young lady had gotten off the Bus and was sitting in his garage, and to use his words: *"Mr. Norman, she is in a terrible condition, and I don't know what to do, can you help me?"* I immediately responded to his request, and found a young woman in her early twenties, on the verge of committing suicide. I took her to our home and Shirley made breakfast for her and then put her to bed, because *'she hadn't slept'*, she said *'for several nights'*.

After we had time to talk and I listened to the story of her life, it was a story, like so many that I heard from people I had known that led them to think that *'life was no longer worth living'*. In spite of our attempt to get her to stay with us longer, she insisted on leaving the next day by Bus. Where are you going? I asked. In tears, she replied: *"I don't know sir, I just have to keep going"*. Two years later, we received a letter from this young woman, telling us how her life had changed, that she was now happily married, and had just given birth to a little girl. She wanted to thank us for helping her, as she said *'to turn her life around'*.

I have no recollection of what we said during the time we spent with that young woman, but the fact that she had a change of life for the better, leaves me to believe that it is not so much what we said, but the impact that we made on her by simply *'holding her hand, drying her tears, and shedding tears WITH her'*, and the assurance somehow communicated to her by our actions that she was not to blame for the terrible experiences that she had endured. To quote Rabbi Kushner again, *"when someone feels rejected by God, by fate, by significant people in your life, the best possible medicine is to be in the company of people who give you the message that you are a good, competent person and that they care about you"*. My hope is that that girl's short experience with us at a time of such distress in her life, might have done just that.

One of the joys and satisfactions of Ministry with the Church, when one reminisces about it all, is to recall the many opportunities that come one's way to be with people not only during their occasions of happiness and joy, but especially when they feel that *'the*

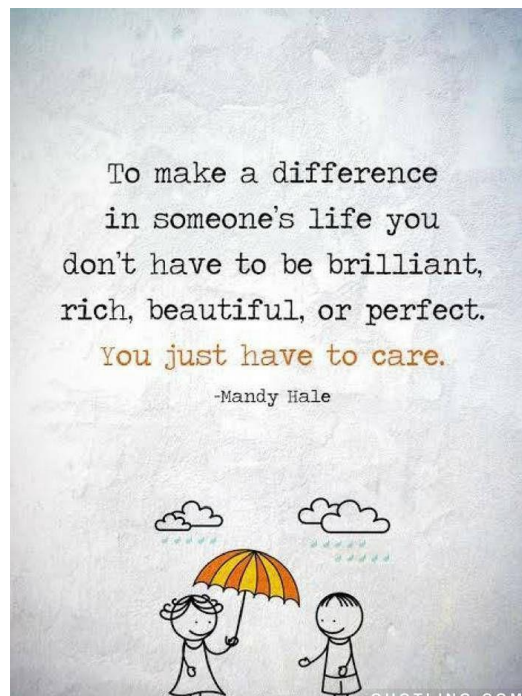
*bottom has dropped out of their lives', and during those times when for various reasons, they feel that life for them is no longer worth living. To learn later that you have made a small contribution to a restoration of their lives, makes one's years in Ministry all worthwhile.*

### George Stuart's Hymn: **"God Pictured As Human"**

*Our life is full of joy and sorrow,  
Of tension, peace, of love and grief.  
And 'God within' feels our emotions;  
Feels happy, sad – beyond belief.*

*If any person does what's loving,  
A smile appears upon God's face.  
God says, "It was for just this moment  
I made and love the human race."*

*For when we act with love and mercy  
We let 'God in between' have reign.  
God nudges, prompts and even pushes  
To help us ease some awful pain.*



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### **Confessions of a newly minted Video Editor -** By Paul Harding

Although I miss my choir, the wonderful organ, and the beautiful building, the opportunity to produce online worship services has given me new insight into what worship means and what is truly meaningful for worshippers.

Choosing graphics to reflect the words of the hymns has been a particular challenge, as it forces me to analyze what the words are really saying and to find pictures which, either in a traditional or contemporary context, reflect those lyrics.

In addition to this, the learning of post-production skills with editing and mixing has been a particularly creative outlet. The feedback received is most gratifying, considering I'm just a piano player who learned how to edit together an online worship service in a matter of two weeks with a \$30 piece of software.

Mind you, this work entails 45 – 50 hours a week and so it was welcomed relief when Robin Ableson and I got together to explore the possibility of sharing online worship services with our friends at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church. As you know this has worked out well. Each church agreed to produce an online service every other week during the summer months.

Grace United created the first joint service on June 28 and this arrangement will continue with St. Andrew's sharing their final service with us on August 30<sup>th</sup>. Many will recall that for nearly 40 years, Grace and St. Andrew's actually physically had joint services in July and August, to this is a return to a long-standing tradition.

We continue to look forward to worshipping with our brothers and sisters down the street.

## Thank you – Brian Bass

Hello Grace United Congregation. I would like to Thank the congregation and I am grateful for the fruit basket. This fresh fruit will help me get my energy back for the physio ahead with the work to be done on healing my knees and Cecile has also done up a plan for an apple cake if I do well at physio. I injured my knees at home to the point that I needed to have surgery to repair both of them.

Thanks Again! And God Bless  
Brian Bass

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### Grace United Church Memorial Fund

The following donations have been gratefully received by the Memorial Fund -From January 2020 to June 2020.

In loving memory of **Vern Fielding** from Diane Kirkby and Paul and Carolyn Scott.

In loving memory of **Marilyn Humphrey** from Arthur Page, Neil Smith, Bill and Brenda Lussier, Louise Baldree, Merna Price, Carol Green, Linda Robb, Peter and Catherine Mills, Diane Kirkby, Marilyn Belbin, Diane Nuttall, Mary Dickson, Gary and Susan Curtis, Christina Gordon Charney, and Susan and Rodger Gollogly.

In loving memory of **Wayne Laviolette** from Carol Laviolette, Diane Kirkby, Paul and Carolyn Scott, Ms Debbie Scherle, and Mr. and Mrs. Mike Neave.

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**Save the date!** – Small (rural) churches, big ideas! Online workshop on how your Community of Faith can focus your ideas for a project to offer your unique gifts in new and creative ways (phone-in option also available). Two dates to choose from: Wednesday, September 23, 7:30 to 9:00 pm OR Saturday, September 26, 2:30-4:00 pm. Sep 23, 2020 07:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) Register in advance for this meeting. Sep 26, 2020 02:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) Register in advance for this meeting. More information: Jane Dawson: Jdawson@united-church.ca, 613-290-1882. There is a link below.

<https://eoorc.ca/event/small-rural-churches-big-ideas/>

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## Thank You to Grace for continued Mission & Service support – Moderator Bott.

Dear Friends in Christ,

Thank you for all you do to live out Jesus' call to love one another through your gifts to Mission & Service. God's compassionate presence is made real by the beautiful things that are happening because of your generosity.

We are grateful to the people of Gananoque: Grace Pastoral Charge who have provided \$8,309 in 2019 to enable life-saving and life-changing work through our shared Mission & Service.



Mission & Service takes on a new importance as the church responds to the worldwide COVID-19 crisis. Our ministries in Canada and across the world are acting quickly to help people whose lives have suddenly changed. In-person outreach programs closed by

social distancing have been replaced by food distribution and finding safe homes for people who are homeless. Hospital chaplains are caring for COVID-19 victims and their families. People are being helped to adapt to pandemic conditions and taught how to keep the virus from spreading. Virtual camps and education programs are being offered to support families in isolation at home.

Your gifts to Mission & Service make all this possible. You are truly an example of what it means to love one another! Please continue to be a part of our amazing ministry.

Blessings,

The Right Rev. Dr. Richard Bott, Moderator, The United Church of Canada  
Sarah Charters, Acting Director of Philanthropy

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### **Continued financial support makes the difference - By Vicki Leakey**

At the end of June, I am very happy to report our operating financials are still in the black. Our expenses to date are down 28% and our receipts to date, are down 32% from 2019, however we have had to transfer only \$20,000 from the trustee investments compared to the \$60,000 we required in the prior year to balance our accounts.

Thanks to all of you, friends and family of Grace United Church, who continue to send financial support to help us maintain reduced operations as well as continuing the weekly virtual service.

Members of the Official Board continue to monitor regular communications from United Church of Canada as well as the Province to try to determine an estimate for the timing of when we can begin to consider actual services in the sanctuary. Your support and patience until we can safely gather is greatly appreciated.

We have options for you so that offerings can be made via use of the e-transfer from you on-line bank account and look for "send an e-transfer" and send to [grace.gan@outlook.com](mailto:grace.gan@outlook.com) and follow the instructions given. Also, if convenient you may drop an envelope in the mail box at the Pine St. choir door on Thursdays before 1:00 pm that day as Laurie will be at the church office and will make sure contributions are safely received. Payment can also be mailed to the church at 120 Pine St. Gananoque, On K7G 1C7. You can also give through Preauthorized Remittance (PAR), an automatic monthly withdrawal from your bank account, PAR allows you to give to what matters to you most. If you are interested, a link to the pdf form is below. Fill out and return to the church office.

[https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/resources/form\\_par-authorization.pdf](https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/resources/form_par-authorization.pdf)

I truly wish all of you to be safe and healthy, please forward on communications to the church office as members of our church family share celebrations, or perhaps experiencing a time of need for encouragement. During the pandemic, we sometimes need to be reminded that we have each other for support.

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### **Highlights from the Official Board Meeting of June 25, 2020**

**Session:** On-line worship will continue for the summer, alternating services with St Andrews. The monthly newsletter will continue until we resume in person services. Kid's Club an on-line Sunday school lesson/video will be provided to help stay in contact with our young families. Joan Shaw and Marg Worth have joined the "Fill-the Pulpit" committee. A Phone Tree was established to help keep in contact with members during

the pandemic.

- **Marriage Policy** – at the session meeting of February 18, 2020 the following was approved” that the Official Board of Grace review the current marriage policy, so that it reflects the results of the December 15,2019 Community of Faith survey and that the new policy be presented to the congregation for approval”.

Moved by Paul Scott and seconded by Colleen Harding “that a motion be presented to the congregation, at the next congregational meeting to change the wording in the Church Marriage policy to remove the phrase “a Man and a Woman” and insert the words “two persons”. Motion was carried.

**Stewards:** Special Grace Mission Funds of \$250.00 each was distributed to Lorraine Payette and Tammy and Russ Jonassen. In February a motion was passed to transfer the remaining funds from Special Grace Mission fund to the Memorial and Outreach Fund. Special grace Mission fund will be removed from church envelopes in 2021. Pie sales conducted by email and then delivered has raised almost \$2000 to date.

**Treasurer's report:** Vicki reported that we have used \$40,000 less in Trustee Funds in 2020 compared to same time in 2019. Church investments are down \$52,000 as a result of current market conditions. Despite this fact, our financial position remains strong.

**M&P** - Dave Charles moved and Marg Worth seconded the motion - “that Rev. Jolyn Campbell be asked to continue her association with Grace until September. Motion Carried.

Dave Charles moved and Colleen Harding seconded the motion to permit Donna Norman to continue in her current capacity until end September 2020. motion Carried.

**Memorial Fund** – Carolyn Scott reported that the current balance is \$630. with a further \$425 to be deposited for a total O \$1055.

**Search Committee** – Brian Brooks reported that the process was continuing although it was more complicated than original thought. Interviews are continuing with promising prospects being considered.

**Church Reopening** – Board Chair requested volunteers to establish a reopening committee. Colleen Harding has come forward to sit on the committee. If you would like to be part of the reopening committee please contact the Official Board Chair.

**Maintenance** – installation of the new lighting in the Sanctuary has been postponed due to Covid-19. The contractor cannot start work until given the OK by the government body who authorized the grant for partial funding of the project.

**Pine Street Construction** – Board Chair has met with Town representatives. Although there will be no sidewalks on the north side of Pine Street. A new side walk will be built on a portion of the church lawn to allow members to walk from Stone Street to the Pine Street door and accessible ramp.

**UCW** - Linda Brooks reported that they continue to suffer from lack of funds. Some of the members recently meet at Marg Worth's for tea with social distancing observed.

**Next Official Board Meeting** – scheduled for August 20<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm – hopefully in person.

## Birthday & Anniversary Celebrations for June & July

### June

Birthdays celebrated June are, Tammy Fergusson, Mel Worth, Tom Currie, Doreen Wilson, Nancy Abrams, Eileen Thomson, Laurie Cadue, Ann Curtis, Richard Abrams, and Marg Chitty.

June Anniversaries were, Doug & Betty Wooding, 60 years, Tammy & Angus Fergusson, 35 years, Brian & Susan Tunnicliffe, 40 years, Neil & Gillian McCarney, 41 years.



### July

Birthdays for July are; Brenda Lussier, Rhea Roantree, Dorothy Jocko, Bruce Wilson, Cheryl O'Leary, Julie Demacio, Brad Curtis, Charlie Donevan, and Dianna Grier.

Anniversaries for July are, Peter & Catherine Mills, 51 years, Tom & Carol Currie, 58 years.



Happy 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Joan Simpson.  
We hope that you had a wonderful birthday and it was filled with blessings.



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Education and Pastoral Care Co-Ordinator: Donna Norman 613-970-0128  
Church Boards: Official Board: Brian Brooks 613-382-2385  
Session: Paul Scott 613-382-4386  
Stewards: Carolyn Scott 613-382-4386 / Vicky Leakey 613-382-4015

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"We'll sing the first verse, hum the second,  
and lip-sync the third."

### Thanks to our Contributors

We acknowledge those who contributed articles, time, talent and information for this July issue of Grace's Chatter – Rt. Rev. Dr. Richard Bott, Rev. Ken Norman, Brian Brooks, Vicki Leakey, Paul Harding, Donna Norman, Carolyn Scott, Brian Bass, Laurie Cadue, Paul Scott

### Next Grace's Chatter

Deadline – Monday, Aug.17, 2020, 12 noon.

**Office Hours:** Laurie is in the office Tuesdays & Thursdays, & working from home Mondays & Fridays. Regular hours are: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday - 8:00 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Holiday – July 31 to August 17th**