

# Grace's Chatter

## Fall 2021



### **Good News is God's News**

By, Rev. Takouhi Demirdjian-Petro

*"My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in Glory..."*  
(Philippians 4:19 NKJV)

Dear Grace United Church Family & Friends,

We all know the meaning of need; may it be personal or communal. Today, in the middle of this pandemic, I want to share with you a story of God's provision through a total stranger.

In June, a woman called from Wasaga Beach (Ontario) asking if I can do the inurnment at Gananoque Cemetery on August 21 for her life

partner who passed away in December 2019. Soon after the celebration of life, COVID put a stop to all gatherings, hence the inurnment has been delayed. She had called Grace United Church Office, and our wonderful administrator, Laurie Cadue, had given her my direct office number.

As usual, whoever contacts me, I always ask for their e-mail address so that we can keep in touch without worrying about time. I got her e-mail address and sent her a test message to confirm it, and also invited her to watch our worship celebrations on our YouTube Channel, so that she can see me and get to "know" me. I admit that this could have led to her changing her mind! 😊.

Since connecting via e-mail, we communicated many times, and had many telephone conversations. A week before the inurnment, I called to ensure that last-minute details were in place and she expressed that she had been watching the worship celebrations regularly on YouTube, at the time which is convenient for her (that is the beauty of YouTube). She said she would like to donate to Grace United for any specific ministry that Grace is working on, and wanted my guidance.



Because she is watching the online worship celebrations regularly on YouTube, the answer was clear. I suggested that she might consider directing her donation to GUC's AV Department, so that we can set up and continue to do church beyond walls.

On Saturday, August 21, 2021, which also marked the 35th Anniversary of my entry to Canada as a refugee, after the inurnment service, to my surprise, she gave me a bouquet of beautiful sunflowers, (I have never received a bouquet of flowers after a funeral service, specifically bought for me), along with an envelope, saying, "The church's cheque is in this envelope with your honorarium"; holding another folded cheque she continued to say, "However, I made up a second cheque for the church today, but postdated for the end of September, as I realized I have a few dollars coming at the end of September and I want my husband's legacy to help spread the love of God, instead of just getting a memorial bench, the AV Work at Grace United will help far more people than a bench."

I was truly moved by all this generosity, even before I opened the envelope or the folded cheque. When I returned home, I opened the envelopes and tears of joy started to flow for the generous honorarium to me, which was beyond my imagination, but the donations to Grace United, two cheques, each of \$1,000.00. I was reminded of the words of Apostle Paul, written so long ago to the church of Philippi, but which still speak to us today. I know, our church councils worry about making ends meet, then God sends provision through strangers.



Beloved, why do I share this with you? Because August 21, 2021, will once again be a historical day once again. God's Provision has come front and centre. Thirty-five years ago on August 21, (1986) I entered Canada as a refugee, I never imagined that I would become the very first Armenian woman minister ordained by the United Church of Canada and serve this beautiful Community of Faith, Grace United in Gananoque, where God called me in the middle of a pandemic, and do ministry beyond the walls of the church building. Who would have thought that YouTube, which made Justin Bieber a superstar, would be an avenue of ministry for the Realm of God?



So, I share all this Good News with you because Every Perfect Gives Comes from God, therefore every **Good News is God News**, which surpasses ALL understanding.

Today, with this short reflection, I urge you to pay attention to all that God provides to us with; every breath we take and every move we make.

Let us all do our part to share from our own finances and gifts for the work of God and carry on the work for the Kingdom of God which has no walls. Remembering the words of Apostle Paul, **"My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory..."** (Philippians 4:19 NKJV)

Thanks be to God – For all that we have been provided, and for all that is promised to us through Grace. **Amen!**

Your Servant-Leader,

**Rev. Takouhi Demirdjian-Petro**

*B.A., B.Th., M.Div.*



# We are back for in person worship!



By Colleen Harding for The Re-opening committee

At Grace United, we are excited to announce that at our recent Official Board meeting, we voted to proceed with plans to reopen our sanctuary for in-person services starting on September 12, 2021.

We are aware that this pandemic is far from over, but we believe it is possible for us to reopen safely by following the protocols recommended by the Ministry of Health. Masks that cover your nose, mouth and chin will be mandatory, and we will adhere to 2 metre social distancing.

The Leeds Grenville and Lanark Health Unit feels that if we are all masked and seated 2 metres apart, it is safe for us to sing quietly, so that is a real step towards normal church services! However, social gatherings are still not recommended so we will have to wait a little longer to have our coffee time.

We also urge everyone who can, to become fully vaccinated. We believe that vaccination is the best path to finally defeating this pandemic and the best way for you to put your faith into action and demonstrate caring for your neighbours and others in our community of faith.

We know that many of you cannot or are not ready to attend in person, so we will follow a hybrid model, combining our in-person service with real-time live-streaming of the service on the internet, the link will be available on Facebook, as well as on-demand recordings of our services on Youtube, and our weekly service on Cogeco TV. We welcome you to join us whichever way is best for you.

Our numbers for the in-church services will be limited by the need to maintain social distancing. We cannot use or fill all the pews. Therefore, if you would like to attend the service, please contact Laurie in the church office by Friday to reserve a seat. (Phone 613-382-2161 – email [grace.gan@outlook.com](mailto:grace.gan@outlook.com)). It is helpful to know how many will be attending in order to meet Covid protocols for indoor gatherings. It is also necessary to record the names and phone numbers of everyone present for contact tracing. We hope you are able to join us!



# National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

By Paul Scott

Rev. Takouhi will participate in a special ecumenical service at the Town Park band shell to mark National Truth and Reconciliation Day. The service is at 2 p.m. on Thursday, September 30 and our community of faith is invited to attend.

The service is being organized by volunteers Jennifer Palmer and Debra Donaldson, two lay people who are committed to honouring Indigenous Residential School victims and survivors and who desire to learn from and walk the path of reconciliation with the First Peoples.

The discovery of the 215 unmarked graves near a residential School in British Columbia prompted the First People's Circle of the 1000 Islands to lead two memorial services at the Town Hall in Gananoque. The organizers have consulted with the First People's Circle and have their support. Through this ecumenical service, settler Christians, can reflect on the role of colonialism and the residential school system and commit to the ongoing process of reconciliation.

Covid protocols such as masking and social distancing will be in place and you are encouraged to wear an orange shirt.

For further information you may contact Jennifer Palmer at 343-364-4388 or Debra Donaldson at 613-453-4190.



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## A gentle reminder from the Stewards

By Vicki Leakey

Treasurer Vicki Leakey continues her successful juggling and is keeping all the balls in the air. The Stewards Committee and treasurer are most grateful for the continued financial support from Grace United community of faith.

The good news is this. The Offerings from our community of faith are very close to what they were last year; the Mission and Service givings are almost double last year's year-to-date total; our investments continue to provide positive returns, so there are funds available from the Trustees as may be required.

On the other hand, we find our operating expenses continue to grow as well. So your support for our ministry and expanded outreach continue.

And again, just a reminder that there are several offerings' options available which you may consider. **E-Transfer** from your on-line bank account is popular. Look for "send an e-transfer" and send to [grace.gan@outlook.com](mailto:grace.gan@outlook.com). Just follow the instructions given.

If more convenient, you may drop an **Envelope in the mail box** at the Pine St. choir door on Fridays before 1:00 p.m. that day as Laurie will be at the church office and will make sure contributions are safely received.

**Offerings by Mail** is another option – send by mail to Grace Church at 120 Pine St. Gananoque, ON. K7G 1C7.

And new this September, **In Person Worship** allows for contributions directly into the offering plates in the sanctuary. It so nice to see familiar "masked" faces joining in worship on Sunday mornings. Remember, if you are attending please call Laurie at 613-382 2161 or send an email to [grace.gan@outlook.com](mailto:grace.gan@outlook.com). Physical distancing protocols limit the number of worshippers who may attend.

We are so blessed to have all of you as part of the Grace United family. Thank you for your time and financial support. Stay safe, get vaccinated and together we will stay strong!

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## Notice Re: Vaccination Exemptions

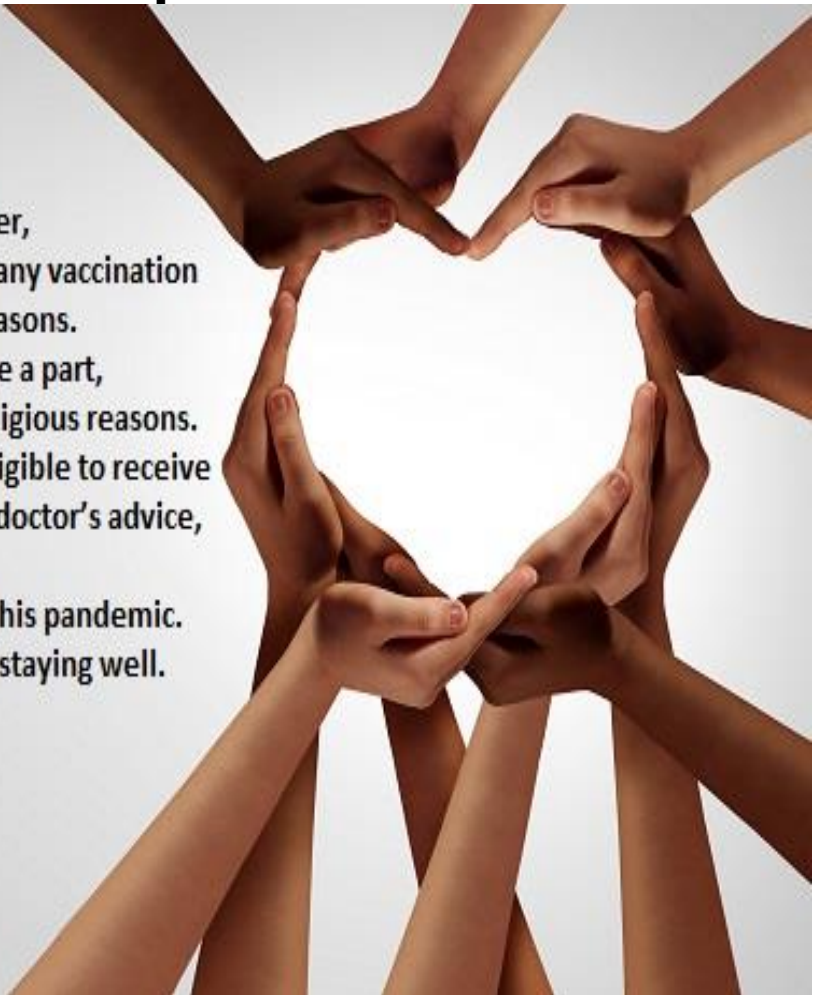
Dear Grace United Family & Friends,

Please be advised that our incumbent minister, Rev. Takouhi Demirdjian-Petro, will not sign any vaccination exemption forms for anyone, for religious reasons.

The United Church of Canada, of which we are a part, does not have any medical restrictions for religious reasons. Moreover, we encourage everyone who is eligible to receive this vaccine to obtain it, as per their medical doctor's advice, and help us fight this pandemic head on.

We hope you are all doing your part to fight this pandemic. Moreover, we hope you are staying safe and staying well.

Grace United Church Official Board



# Grace Church is Ready for Streaming

By Paul Harding

The week of September 6<sup>th</sup> was a busy one for the Audio/Visual Team and Installer Rob Bailey of Kingston SoundWorks.

Rob installed the first of two pan/tilt/zoom cameras along with the hardware to stream the video signal to Facebook and beyond. Meanwhile, our Music Director was working on the sound system, to ensure that everything that happens during our services can be heard in our streamed service. Dave Charles provided a laptop computer, with which we can display the words of hymns and prayers. And an enthusiastic group of volunteers gathered 'round to see how it all goes together to send our worship service to the internet. Brian Brooks, Cliff Edwards, Dave Charles, Christina Kaya and Paul Harding received instruction on how to operate the system.

Christina drew the straw to be the first on deck and approached the task with organization and conscientiousness. With only a few hours of instruction and practice, Christina sent out to Facebook our first streamed live service since December 20, 2020. Kudos to her for the fine job she did, for her first try. With suggestions and equipment adjustments Christina will be at the helm on September 19<sup>th</sup> as well.

The AV Centre is all housed on a small table at the back of the church with the exception of a camera, which is mounted higher on a centre pillar. The camera is capable of wide shots, zooming in, panning from side to side and tilting up and down, controlled by a single 'joystick'.



**Our A/V Centre**

The A/V Team appreciates the enthusiasm with which Grace United Church has embraced the concept of having our services "out there" for all the world to see. Some of our member, who may no be comfortable yet joining with the group, look forward to seeing our services Sunday morning, on Facebook, YouTube and Cogeco TV. Operating AV Console is indeed easier that you think. Please give consideration to serving Grace United Church is this way. Training will be given and there's help every step of the way.

Contact Office Administrator Laurie at 613-382-2161 or [grace.gan@outlook.com](mailto:grace.gan@outlook.com) to get your name on the roster of helpers. The more people we have, the less often you have to take your turn.



**Pan?Tilt/Zoom Camera**

# Support for the People of Haiti – we can make a difference!

By David Charles, From Your Generosity Matters



On the morning of Saturday, August 14, Haiti was struck by a severe earthquake. Precious lives have been lost. Many homes and community buildings have been destroyed. Hospitals have also been damaged, and acutely injured and traumatized people are struggling to find help.

The earthquake follows sharply on the heels of other disasters, including a massive earthquake in 2010 and Hurricane Matthew in 2016. To make the situation even worse, Tropical Storm Grace hit Haiti on August 16.

The impact of the most recent earthquake is all the more devastating because of political instability, a severe economic downturn, and the COVID-19 pandemic. In the face of the current political crisis, Haitian citizens are working to create an agreement to facilitate a successful interim government to build a different future for their country.

The United Church of Canada is in contact with Mission & Service partners in Haiti to find out how we can support their communities. Already, we know that the people of Haiti need emergency shelter, clean water, and food. Please pray for Haiti and consider designating a gift through Grace United Church:

- 1) by e-transfer to [grace.gan@outlook.com](mailto:grace.gan@outlook.com)
- 2) by cheque –120 Pine ST. Gananoque, On K7G 1C7
- 3) by Credit Card through CanadaHelps.

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/118944701RR0001-grace-united-church/>

If you have any questions, please call the church office: 613-382-2161

A Prayer for Haiti

**Loving God, We Pray for Haiti** by: Pierre-Paul Lafond

Our Haitian neighbours have seen so many tragedies in recent times, and now another—the earthquake that shook the country on August 14.

We pray that you will give

the medical teams and those who search for the missing  
the courage and strength they need.



Strengthen our solidarity  
with this country that has been battered for so long.  
You, manifest in Jesus,  
came to listen and heal the broken and the brokenhearted,  
and those who are experiencing so many challenges;  
and to comfort those who are suffering right now.

We pray especially for the people  
who are waiting for news of their loved ones,  
and for those in hospitals that are unable to meet their needs.  
Generous God, you know all that they need.  
Make your loving presence visible to them today.  
And open our hearts to this country which has once again been devastated.  
Help us to support those who are coming to the aid of the Haitian people,  
because you are the one who sees the pain this disaster has caused.

**Amen.** <sup>1</sup> <https://united-church.ca/stories/support-people-haiti – September 12, 2021>

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## Order pies for Thanksgiving

By Carolyn Scott

The Pies for God's Sake team has been busy this summer and fall and will have 200 delicious pies ready for your Thanksgiving entertaining.

You can choose your favourites – apple, apple crumble, blueberry, bumbleberry, cherry, peach, raspberry, rhubarb, strawberry, strawberry-rhubarb, strawberry-rhubarb crumble and raisin. The price is still \$12.00 each and you can pay by cash, cheque or e-Transfer.

Orders can be placed starting Wednesday, September 29 by calling Carol Currie at 613-382-4376. And pie pick up will be on Thursday, October 7 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. downstairs at the Grace Church Hall, Stone St./Tower door entrance.





## Condolences

We regret to announce the passing of the following members and adherents of Grace United Church, Angie Tingren Watkins, June 18<sup>th</sup>, David Atkinson, June 25<sup>th</sup>, and Francis Hough on July 27<sup>th</sup>. We pray that their families and friends can find comfort knowing that their loved ones are at peace.

*"I assure you that whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and won't come under judgment but has passed from death into life." — John 5:24*



**Angie Tingren Watkins**



**David Atkinson**



**Francis Hough**

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## Celebrations

*"Those who stand firm during testing are blessed. They are tried and true. They will receive the life God has promised to those who love him as their reward." — James 1:12*

### September

Birthdays: Jean N., Carol C., Darryl W., Thomas M., Leanne C.

Anniversaries: Denise & Darryl W., 50 years, Liz & Doug D., \_\_\_ years, Mel & Marg W., 66 years.

### October

Birthdays: Susan T. Brian T., Susan T., Helen J., Neil M., and Faye T.

Anniversaries: Brad & Anne C., 42 years

### November

Birthdays: Betty W., Bill L., Joan M., Rev. Takouhi, Brian B., Carolyn S., Murray R., and Bud W.

Anniversaries: John & Helen C., 48 years.

### December

Birthdays: Denise W., Steve T., Paul S., Bonnie S., Edna M., Rev. Seeley, Carol G., and Catherine M.

Anniversaries: Brian & Linda B., 55 Years and David & Joan C., 44 Years.



**Reminder** – *Please notify the church office or Rev. Takouhi if you know of anyone who may need a visit, is in hospital or needs prayers. We appreciate when people let us know as it is so difficult to reach everyone, especially right now.*

*Grace United Church is here to offer whatever help, comfort we can. If you would like to sit and reflect in the peace of the Sanctuary for a few moments (during regular office hours) contact Laurie and she will arrange a time for you.*

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**Contacts:**

**Minister:** Rev. Takouhi Demirdijian-Petro Direct line: 613-777-0880

You can also follow and learn more about Rev. Takouhi on Facebook, YouTube and her Blog [www.RevTakouhi.ca](http://www.RevTakouhi.ca)

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**Church Contact:** Laurie Cadue 613-382-2161 [grace.gan@outlook.com](mailto:grace.gan@outlook.com)

**Office Hours:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 8:00 am to 1:00pm  
Closed on Wednesday

**Church Boards:**

Official Board – Chair: Brian Brooks 613-382-2385 – Vice Chair: Bruce Wilson

Session – Chair: Paul Scott 613-382-4386 – Vice Chair: Rhea Roantree

Board of Stewards – Carolyn Scott 613-382-4386 – Vice Chair: Denise Wood

Treasurer: Vicki Leakey 613-382-4015

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**Contributors this month**

Rev. Takouhi, Colleen Harding, Paul Harding, Dave Charles, Vicki Leakey, Carolyn Scott Paul Scott and Laurie Cadue.

**Next deadline for Newsletter: Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>**

