



ST. JOHN'S NEWS

JUNE 2021 EDITION

From the Minister's Desk: A Long Summer

The Abraham story, in the Book of Genesis, contains two episodes (chapters 21 & 23) in which Abraham makes a covenant between himself and the peoples who possess the lands through which he is travelling. Abraham is an alien in the land, but he earns a reputation as a righteous man because he deals honourably with his neighbours – the inhabitants of the land. Abraham, however, was not always so honourable. As he moves through the lands promised to him and his descendants by God, he learns that this covenant with God affects not just him but also all those with whom he will come into contact.

A little over a month ago, the latest paroxysm of violence erupted in the middle east. Each time Israel and the Palestinians engage in conflict with one another, I recall Abraham's covenants with Abimelech and the Hittites. From a biblical perspective, I often wonder if there is any hope for peace if Israel cannot deal faithfully with those with whom they share the land. Can there be peace where there is no respect?

Just three weeks ago, an unmarked graveyard containing the bodies of 215 First Nations children was discovered on the grounds of a former residential school in Kamloops, B.C. This week, another 750 unmarked graves were found on the property of another residential school in Saskatchewan. And we know there will be more. During this summer of awakened awareness of the tragedy suffered by First Nations communities, as a result of the residential school system, we who have colonized this land are being forced to recognize the physical and emotional suffering meted out on First Nations people by our ancestors. And that will be a difficult thing; but it is essential. As Christians we know that without acknowledging the sins of the past, we cannot begin the journey toward reconciliation.

Many have asked how our congregation can respond; and to be honest I do not have a lot of great answers – yet. The first step is simply to become aware that these things have happened and to recognize that, like all families who have lost a loved one, the deaths of these children have had a lasting effect on their communities. And we can listen. There are stories to be told about our First Nations people: stories of their culture and who they are as peoples, and stories of how they have suffered. We need to hear them. Like Abraham, we need to allow our faith to inform all our relationships, and to deal honestly and with integrity with everyone we meet. Like Abraham, when confronted with his lack of faithfulness, we too can learn. We too can be better.

Hopefully in the fall COVID restrictions will be eased and we can begin gathering together. If you would be interested in being part of a group to become aware of the issues and plan events to engage our congregation in the work of reconciliation, please contact me. Now is the time for us to begin the listening that will lead to reconciliation.

Blessings.





June, July and August Birthday Wishes

There will be no newsletter in July and August, as we have decided to take a little break. Therefore, we have included the July and August birthday wishes in this newsletter.

Happy birthday to everyone celebrating in June: Paul Quan, Dwayne MacKinnon, Jennifer Vipond, Paul Hickey, Yvonne Willard, Erika King and Judy Seguin.

We wish to apologize to Judy Seguin, as we listed her birthday in May when she actually celebrates her birthday in June.

Happy birthday to our July folks: Doug Carpenter, Ellie Adams, Heather McCleary, James Jones, Frank Wilson, Dale Shaver, Tyler Jones, Joan Moak, William J. MacMillan, Angele McCartney, Wilma Bowles, Jeannette Scrimshaw and Alia Hum.

Happy birthday to those celebrating in August: Susanne Matthews, Chantal Vivarais, Ava Emilee Quenneville, Patsy Portieous, Wes Libbey, Bill Quan, Addison Grant, John McMartin, Kayla Markell, Joan Painter, Grant MacNeil, Donna Leroux, Alma Godard, Daniel Seguin, Archie MacDougall, Anna Newton, Lise Evans, Cassandra MacLennan, and Nelda Dewar.

We also want to apologize to Darlene McMartin, who celebrates her birthday in August, but we had her celebrating in April.

We also send very happy birthday greetings to all those wishing to remain anonymous.

If we have made an error in your birthdate, or missed it entirely, please advise us so that we can update our records.

Prayer Chain



I am happy to announce that the prayer chain is back in action once again. We invite you to join us as we pray for others in our congregation and our community, both near and far. If you know of someone who needs pastoral care, and would possibly like us to pray, please contact Reverend Adams at 613-932-8693 or by email at minister@stjohnscornwall.ca.

It is very important that we demonstrate empathy and compassion for all those who may be experiencing difficulty.

Submitted by Brenda Aikman, Pastoral Care Chair



Hey Betty and Wayne!

Hi Folks,

We are hoping everyone is surviving our new lifestyle. We feel very blessed that our family and ourselves have remained covid free. We await our second vaccine which will happen this month.

Since coming home early from Florida in 2020 we never assumed we would still be in lockdown. What to do with our time? Buy groceries...eat! Buy groceries... eat! And so it goes. During this time Betty was able to play pickleball when things opened up. She also walked with friends (always the same people). When permissible we met outside for a coffee. We both like to read. Betty downloads free books on her e-reader and I must have a book. Betty continues to crochet and I don't know how many more shawls can be made! One good thing about Covid is we had so much time to finish a jigsaw puzzle. We were shamed in to getting it done when our friends finished theirs in a month and we were almost taking a year.



I tried to walk several times a day in our condo, lifted some weights and of course went for my morning coffee from Timmies.

Initially we took some bridge lessons and continued playing online with our friends. Canasta was another game we have perfected unfortunately can't say that about bridge. We have never spent so much time in front of the television. Always a movie and of course hockey playoffs. We did miss watching the grandkids play hockey. One granddaughter and six grandsons and they all play hockey! We continued to help out babysitting occasionally the three youngest. Keeping a little contact with the grandkids was a real boost to an otherwise quiet existence.



Keeping in touch with our friends was very important. We had a few cocktail hours via facetime. Some dinners together when permitted.

Our family continued to work. Our son and daughter-in-law teaching from home virtually find it difficult as they are supervising their own kids. Our daughter who works from home also was challenged with three kids trying to learn virtually. The youngest went so far as to give his older brother \$5.00 to do his work. Our eldest son and daughter-in-law working in the community (Cornwall transit and R.N.) worried about covid exposure and then bringing it home. All in all they are coping pretty well.

We would like to thank Rev. Adams and Dan for providing our online church service. This is such an important community outreach. Betty is hoping the Wednesday morning kitchen group can soon reunite. We miss our church friends and pray that our church life will soon be back to normal.

Thank you Susan and Cynthia for the monthly newsletter. Your efforts in putting this together are greatly appreciated.


Betty and Wayne McConnell

Thanks so much Betty and Wayne, we truly appreciate your submission!

Kids' (and the young at heart) Corner Challenge

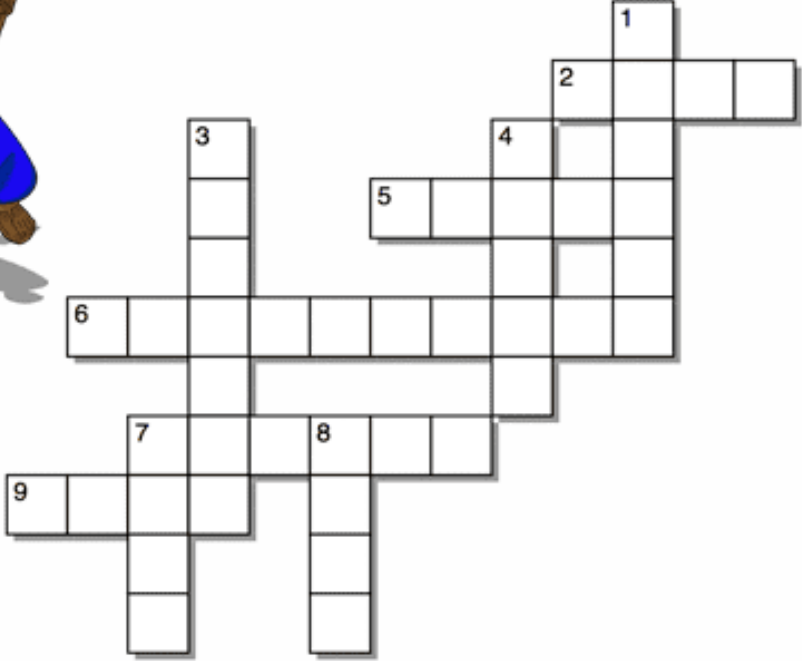
Calling all people of any age! We challenge you to complete the crossword puzzle. The first person to correctly finish it and return it to Susan at: susan.macdonald5@sympatico.ca or drop it off at the church office will receive a prize. We will publish the name of the winner in the next newsletter.

We are so excited to announce that we finally have a winner of our Kids' (and the young at heart) Corner Challenge. A special thank you to Johneen Rennie for submitting Reverend Rennie's work. She tells us that Fred has been completing various types of word puzzles for many years and we are so glad that he now includes us in his routine. We hope to see a Facebook posting of Reverend Rennie and his beautiful daughter Johneen enjoying dinner together at Burger King, one of Fred's favourite eating spots.



CROSSWORD

DAVID AND GOLIATH




ACROSS

2) David took the _____ and played it with his hand. (1 Sam 16)
5) Yah looks at a man's _____. (1 Sam 16)
6) David struck the _____ on his forehead. (1 Sam 17:49)
7) David chose five smooth _____ from the brook. (1 Sam 17)
9) The Israelites and Philistines camped in this valley.

DOWN

1) Yah does not save with sword and spear. For the _____ is His. (1 Sam 17)
3) Name the giant from Gath.
4) Name the shepherd who fought the giant.
7) Name of the king of Israel.
8) "I come to you in the _____ of the LORD of hosts. (1 Sam 17)





It is a pleasure to congratulate Alex on his recent graduation from McGill University. Alex has received his Bachelor of Theology degree. We know you join us in telling him how proud of him we are, and wishing him success as he continues his studies.

This year is a special year for me for a number of reasons, some of which are not exactly the most positive. However, today I wish to highlight a positive reason to celebrate 2021. Over the past four years, with one of those years taken off due to medical leave, I have been spending time in Montreal completing my education as a candidate for ministry within the Presbyterian Church in Canada. While I have been working towards my Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree, I also have been working on another academic endeavor. The Presbyterian College in Montreal has a special arrangement under the Montreal School of Theology with McGill University. As far as I am aware, it is an extremely unique relationship being the only one of its kind in all of North America.

While the other two Presbyterian Seminaries offer M.Div. programs, Presbyterian College Montreal offers a slightly enhanced program. With its arrangement with McGill University, I had the honour to not only attend classes at McGill University, I also had become a full student with all the rights and responsibilities like any other student in any other program. The curriculum for the M.Div. program has specific requirements. Due to the small size of the Montreal School of Theology, they maintain a special relationship with McGill.

McGill University has a School of Religious Studies under the Faculty of Arts. It is a unique program at the university as it produces multiple degree programs. In addition to the Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies, they also have a Bachelor of Theology (B.Th.) program. McGill claims that it is the “most intensely theological education available as a first undergraduate degree in a publicly-funded University in North America”. Thanks to the arrangement between McGill and the Montreal School of Theology, they designed their curriculums so that those in the B.Th. program are completing the same courses as M.Div. students in their first two years.

This means that I had the opportunity to earn two degrees during my time in Montreal. While M.Div. students do not have to earn the B.Th. degree, the degree requirements naturally allow students to earn both. Most M.Div. programs are standalone and do not have this bonus happenstance. I write to you today to announce that I have officially earned my B.Th. degree from McGill University.

McGill University is an extremely prestigious school in Canada. Recognized for having the highest average entering grades of any Canadian University and consistently ranking as one of Canada’s top universities, having a degree from McGill is very special to me. Apart from counting myself as an alumni to many prominent students including Governor Generals, Prime Ministers, Nobel laureates, Rhodes Scholars, and even the inventor of Basketball (who is also an alumni of Presbyterian College), my time at McGill has been unforgettable. On top of meeting an amazing group of students, I had the honour of serving as President of the Theological Undergraduate Students’ Association of McGill University. Despite the challenges and set backs we have had due to

the pandemic, I was honoured to be chosen amongst my fellow students to help foster the sense of community at McGill.

I wrote about my course work at McGill in the various Annual Reports of the Church. While I will mention this accomplishment in a future Annual Report, I wish to take this time to both acknowledge and thank the congregation of St. John's.

During these past four years, I have undergone a period of intense growth in my life. While I have been in school, you have been supporting me in more ways than I can mention. I have heard from many of you giving me support, both financial and spiritual, and it has been an immense blessing to me. While I was prepared for the course loads, there were times that I had not anticipated. There were certainly challenging moments at my time at McGill, most especially the past year. I never imagined I would be completing my degree entirely online. I have missed the interaction with my cohorts and the time spent in the classroom. However, I remain forever grateful for the time I was able to spend in the classroom.

While my time at McGill has officially come to an end, I look forward to the time I have remaining to spend in Montreal as I work towards completing my M.Div. program. Having earned a second bachelor's degree, I look back at the past 8 years with fond memories. However, I close this chapter of my life and look forward to the future in which I hope to achieve. My time in undergraduate education is over and I embrace the future that God has laid out for me. I wish to thank you once again for your support and prayers over these past years, and I look forward to continuing the journey that God has drawn me to.

Alexander Plant



With anticipation and hope that in-person worship will resume in September, the Christian-Ed Committee is planning the resumption of Sunday School and is looking for Sunday School Teachers.

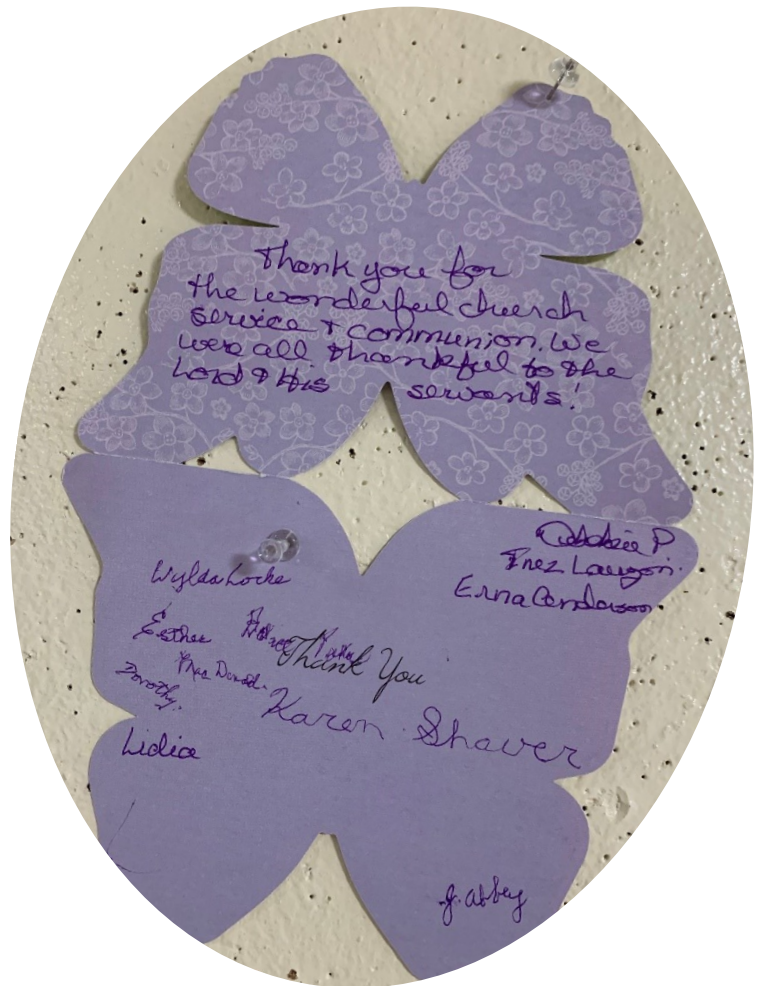
Please contact Trish Brown
Email: brownietrish4@gmail.com
or the church office if interested.



*Sunday School
Teachers
Make a Difference*

Thank you from Sandfield Place

We received this lovely thank you card from the residents at Sandfield Place who have been worshipping with us online. We are so pleased that they recently participated in Communion with us.



Your chuckle for today...

The minister was preoccupied with thoughts of how he was going to ask the congregation to come up with more money than they were expecting for repairs to the church building. Therefore, he was annoyed to find that the regular organist was sick and a substitute had been brought in at the last minute. The substitute wanted to know what to play.

"Here's a copy of the service," he said impatiently. "But, you'll have to think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances."

During the service, the minister paused and said, "Brothers and Sisters, we are in great difficulty, the roof repairs cost twice as much as we expected and we need \$4,000 more. Any of you who can pledge \$100 or more, please stand up."

At that moment, the substitute organist played "Oh Canada."

And that is how the substitute became the regular organist!

Got a good joke, poem, or a funny Covid-19 or isolation story? Please share it with us. We will not reveal any names unless you give us permission to do so. Send your submission to: susan.macdonald5@sympatico.ca.

A Walk Down Memory Lane...

In last month's newsletter, we learned that a new manse was built in 1960. Here is the newspaper article highlighting the open house.



OPEN HOUSE AT MANSE

Beautiful new St. John's Presbyterian Church manse at 407 Second street East was scene of "Open House" ceremonies Wednesday with Rev. W. L. MacLellan and Mrs. MacLellan receiving more than 200 guests. (For story see Page 9).

(Staff Photo)

Open House Held At New St. John's Church Manse

More than 200 members of the congregation of St. John's Presbyterian Church gathered at the new manse at 407 Second street East Wednesday when Rev. W. L. Maclellan and Mrs. Maclellan acted as hosts at an "Open House."

Open House was held from three to five o'clock in the afternoon and from eight to 10 in the evening.

Dr. Robertson Millar, of Martintown, senior member of the Presbytery, brought greetings from all congregations at the evening program and Dr. Iver D. MacIver of Maxville, moderator of Olengarry Presbytery, led in prayer. Everett Rush sang a solo, "Bless This House."

Assisting Mrs. Maclellan as hostesses during the afternoon were Mrs. J. R. Cameron, Mrs. John Hunter, Mrs. George Johnston and Mrs. George Brown.

TOUR HOME

Guests were taken on a tour of the manse by Mrs. George VanBeek, Mrs. Trafford Carvell and Mrs. Earl Fourney, wives of the Building Committee members.

Pouring and serving tea during the afternoon were Mrs. Orval McCarthy, Mrs. F. N. Tait, Mrs. Norman Buchan and Mrs. F. B. MacMillan.

Helping receive the guests during the evening were Mrs.

Harry Liddell, Mrs. Edward Kelly and Mrs. Charles Bacon. Evening tours were conducted by members of the Building Committee. Mrs. Arthur MacHaffie and Mrs. G. S. Lloyd poured coffee along with Mrs. George Adams and Miss Isobel McGaughey.

Wives of other members of the congregation also assisted during both the afternoon and evening.

The new manse was erected on the site of the old one and Dr. and Mrs. Maclellan moved into it Dec. 15.

The dining room was suitably decorated with flowers for the occasion and visitors to the manse all commented on the warmth of the reception and the attractiveness of the new home which will serve ministers of St. John's congregation.