



Covid and Greenwood Church

September 2023

February 2020 -New illness, New restrictions, New orders

First, by using the new rules to establish strategies for church service with everyone signing in, seats marked 6 feet apart, no hymn singing and only one person singing the hymns as solos, and no pot lucks, we were able to attend church. Then we had summer services on the lawn and Emil, with a pole, measured where we were to put our lawn chairs. Friends were missing because they were concerned about being in crowds - often for medical reasons. And everyone was wearing a mask. We can't forget our Covid experiences. We know that we never want to go through that time again. But Covid also brought us Zoom. Thanks to so many people who developed new skills, learned through the challenges and today send our services out to those who are unable to attend church.

Covid and What Changed for Me.

Aileen Castle

Covid was devastating for so many people. Loneliness was my biggest hurdle. I found solace in such simple things as watching the cardinals, chickadees and goldfinches at my feeder. Walking in the neighbourhood and chatting with neighbours at a social distance and in the fresh air (without masks) was stimulating. E-mails definitely kept me in contact with my friends. It was difficult, but so many people were watching out for me. I was so blessed.

Shirley Mckenzie

When Covid started, people said it was just a real bad flu. How wrong they were!!

Hard for me: Hard to wear a mask

My glasses fogged up

Hard to get groceries and appointments all in one trip

Good: Masks protected our face in the cold

Glad: That Covid shots were available

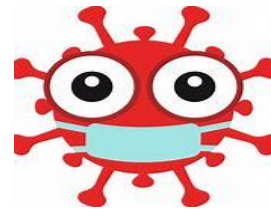
Sandy Mills

My mother always said that I was born talking so I don't thrive in isolation. The things that changed for me were greeting people on my daily walk. A friendly hello and a brief chat became a wide berth and an almost imperceptible nod. As a firm believer in indoor masking, I missed people's smiles, and I missed being able to share mine. I missed spontaneity.

On the upside, Covid gave me a lot of time for personal reflection and reinforced my understanding of the things I can and cannot change. I have continued in my quest to leave a smaller ecological footprint because I can always find ways to do better, and to entrust the things I cannot change to a higher power. Thus far I have escaped Covid, and I give thanks for my life, and everyone in it, every day.

Barb Johns

We arrived back in Peterborough, from a Florida vacation just as COVID was starting. I had planned to downsize my home, with help from my daughter on her days off. However, since visits were limited, and we couldn't be with friends whom I hadn't been near for several weeks, I decided to start my own Phone / mail / Text list, etc. We would take turns to get in touch by whatever manner worked. Mailing a note was also welcome. This arrangement worked for months, and eventually our contact was able to proceed somewhat as before. Because we are also older, some people still aren't getting out, so we keep doing what works for each of us. I also was in the mass production of mask-making for PRHC. That was fun, finding interesting fabrics for all our different persons.



Committee Reports

Session

Session had a meeting on June 8th and agreed to reconvene at the end of the summer. We had a nice, well-deserved rest and enjoyed the services held downstairs where it is cooler. On July 30th, a celebration took place downstairs to honour Emil Varga's 85th birthday. It was well attended and all had a good time.

Session reconvened September 7th ready to tackle a busy fall. Here is an update on the items discussed:

The Living Faith Story- has been updated and has been posted on the HUB.

Bedford House- Reverend Allan and his wife Lynn have been creating an online course on poverty, to be delivered on the United in Learning platform across Canada.

Pastoral Care- As a result of meetings held in May, June and July, a team of six members from the congregation came forward to be trained and perform pastoral care. The list of Congregation members was divided and it was agreed to meet again on September 27th. In the meantime, each member, nicknamed a “weaver” was to call the names on their list and introduce themselves.

Communion- There will be communion on the following days this fall: October 1st, Worldwide Communion Day; November 12th and December 10th.

Pot Luck- Session will host a Pot Luck on October 1st. More information to follow.

Joanne O’Donoughue, Chair

Stewards

Our yard sale was a great success in June as we had lots of great items to sell. It was a real church community effort.

From 8 am to 1 pm tables were set up in the parking lot with a few chairs supplied. There was lots of help from our Church members getting everything outside the night before and early morning along with the garage sale.

There was a BBQ stand selling hot dogs and burgers and pop which was a great success, with help from my granddaughters. A lemonade stand was set up and proceeds went to our Syrian refugee family.

We raised almost a \$ 1000 for the church as well as \$26\$ from the lemonade stand.

The yard sale was a great fund raiser and it was a good way to meet the community people for a chat. It was a real team effort with everyone taking part.

We thank everyone for their help in cleaning up afterwards.

Ken Minion, Chair



News from M&P

Sandy Mills resigned from being the Administrative Assistant at the start of the summer. Personal and job-related demands meant that it was time to focus on family needs at this time.

We will miss her creativity and friendliness. It was always a pleasure to read her introductions to the announcements she sent out about Sunday services. We were fortunate that Barbara Ramsay was interested in joining the Greenwood staff. Barb started as secretary for the Bailieboro/Springville congregation 15 years ago. Mergers happened between churches and she has worked with a community church made up of congregations of United and Presbyterian churches. She knows how to work with people from different faith backgrounds! For the past 3 years Barb has been a regular member of the group who attend our service on Sundays by Zoom. She joined the Greenwood staff at the start of September.

This job has changed names and job descriptions over the years but it still requires a friendly, competent person to keep things running smoothly. We are so fortunate that we have had people like that to do this important work.

Ann Barrett, Chair

Outreach

Outreach policy states *We will seek to partner with groups that we support through financial support plus mutual engagement such as volunteering.*

This year our Outreach partners are participating in our Church services. Last winter we heard from One City and about our Syrian refugee family. One Roof, Camp Kawartha and Niijkiwendidaa Services Circle are presenting this Fall.

Three of our members are volunteering at One City and others have made loaves of sandwiches. Two hundred sleeping mats, woven by the Retired Women Teachers Branch, were donated to One City. Our crocheters have made baby blankets for Niijkwendidaa. We are donating food for breakfasts for One Roof. Our Sunday School children have raised money for the young son of our Syrian family by making and selling bracelets and selling lemonade at our Yard Sale.

Joyce Fee, Chair

News from your "Weavers"

Last spring, in response to a felt-need for better connections among our members our minister invited interested folk to form a Pastoral Care Team. They would like to be known as the "Weavers". They are Joyce Fee, Lynn Jondreville, Esther Warren, Mary Gordon, Joanne O'Donoghue, and Joy Gaskin (team convenor).

At our last meeting, we divided up the membership list so that everyone on our team of 5 had a list of members to call and establish a friendly connection.

Our mission is to have everyone feel connected to the church through a regular phone call or visit and to find out who could use assistance/prayers. We also want to keep our connection details updated.

Joy Gaskin, Convenor

Our Sanctuary Garden

Unfortunately, due to my health problems, I haven't been able to be involved in the garden this year so I can only thank those who have looked after the "necessities" of life for the flowers. We did have plenty of rain and I got to view the garden a couple of times which made me sad and happy at the same time.

A row of cherry trees was planted at the far end of the driveway by Lynn and Robert. We thank them and the other garden crew for their ongoing faithful support. A service berry tree was planted in memory of Dan Fee. I'm sure the bees found the blooms and pollen to create some honey!

Any questions or concerns can be directed to the main committee: Ruth Benson, Brian Nichols, Mary Kaye, Joanne O'Donoughue, Pat Lounsbury

Assistants: Don Benson, Roger Clapperton, Emil Varga. Gary Lounsbury

Pat Lounsbury, Convenor



Beekeeping Update

Our Girls have had a busy year so far.

Both Hives have been strong throughout the Summer, after being treated in the Spring for Mites. They have been working on making honey for us. The West Hive produced about 8 frames of capped honey, while our East Hive had honey that isn't capped yet. We pulled the Honey Frames in the West Hive last week but unfortunately, we will not be able to harvest any honey from the East Hive. Ahmad, our Bee Mentor believes that we need a new Queen this coming Spring, since she doesn't have strong honey producing genes.

The Bees are currently being treated for Mites for 42 days and after that our girls will be put to bed the middle of next month for the Winter.

With gratitude!

Anne Wilson, The Beekeepers

Welcome Back, or is it Welcome Home -- Rev. Bill Peacock

It was the fall of second year of university when I started attending Church for the first time since Sunday School. I had wanted more in life and had been questioning things like faith, community, purpose and found myself in the back row of West Ellesmere United Church in Scarborough. Earlier that summer I had found my way to a Christian Bookstore, looking for a Bible that was easier to read than the King James New Testament that we had been gifted in elementary school. It was almost embarrassing acknowledging I didn't know how to find a Bible or even where to begin.

I don't remember the clerk who helped, other than the kindness of her presence and the encouragement of her words. She handed me a contemporary version that made it easier to read and then offered a few helpful suggestions. I'm sure I didn't recall all of them but a few stood out, such as:

- 1) Don't start at the beginning of the Old Testament and read all the way through
- 2) Try reading the gospels she suggested, dropping a bookmark at the beginning of Matthew.
- 3) If you like poetry, try the beauty of the Psalms, another bookmark.
- 4) Find a church where you feel comfortable, it's okay if it takes time to find where you belong, be easy with yourself.

The church has been important to me for most of my life. It's here where I truly feel "at home". This is the place where I have met most of my friends, guidance in challenging times, hope when the world felt full of despair and love when anger overflowed in the world around me.

I'm grateful for the churches of my youth, the places where I have worked and in retirement, the welcome and kindness shown from Greenwood.

Blessings Rev. Bill

From your Minister's desk:

September 2023

As we come into this new season, with flu shots and new covid vaccines ahead, we might reflect on what the Spirit has been saying in these most challenging, changing times.

In Richard Attenborough's 2021 documentary "The year the Earth changed" we see stories of how animals all over the world began to re-inhabit territory, and recover from human interference. With the pandemic shut-down of 2020, wondrous stories of how creatures all over the world began to thrive once their human neighbours' invasive lifestyles are stilled.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XswV_yqPq28

We too are God's creatures. If 'God's creation is our inspiration' as our Greenwood motto states, then how might we be inspired by the lesson these stories tell?

A friend just loaned us a novel called "The Last Beekeeper" by Siya Turabi:

In this passage a father is speaking to his son Hassan:

"You know by now that poetry doesn't belong in a world of tasks and timetables.

Haven't I taught you enough to know that poetry and nature are partners? Just like honey and the bees are partners. Honey is a product of love. It can't be limited by clocks. Clocks only feed our addiction to become... to constantly become something.

We need to forget about time sometimes and just listen."

"To what?" Hassan asked.

"To the truth that nature speaks. When the mind is quiet and we're no longer rushing around to be somewhere, to do something, or think something, that's when you can hear nature speak."

When I make time to sit and listen to the bees in our backyard, they offer a vibrational tone that soothes and settles and grounds my soul. My worried mind is freed to enter into a creature-like trust in my Maker's gifts. All that I have, use, and enjoy comes from the Maker.

I lament with my Maker at how our human excesses and addictions are so hurtful to God's Creation.

I give thanks for my Greenwood community of faith where we can lament together, share stories, and sing – raising our own vibrational healing tones – thankful for opportunities to serve God as we follow Jesus' path of simplicity and compassion.

Yours on the journey, Alan

