



# Tidings

Vol. 31, No. 4, 2021  
ADVENT/CHRISTMAS/EPIPHANY

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# Tidings

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David Wardlaw

The centrepiece of the issue is two articles on the FSA retreat, New Beginnings, held in late October: a summary of its content and outcomes by Steve Elson; and a primer on the UCC's United Fresh Start program by Tanya Cameron, who made a presentation on this topic at the retreat. The "Tribute" column highlights the contributions of two long-serving, stalwart volunteers, Marilyn and David Beach. This marks the beginning of a collaboration between the Membership and Nurture and the *Tidings* committees to intentionally pay tribute to members of the FSA community who have a demonstrated record of outstanding volunteer service. In the "Spiritual Dimensions" column, Barrie Evans provides a thought-provoking essay, a follow-on to his three-part series, "God in the Time of COVID," published in previous issues beginning in June 2020. I also direct readers to the Mission and Service article provided by Helen Keenliside (guest preacher on October 17<sup>th</sup>) on world hunger and the efforts of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Robyn Marie Butt has provided a poem for the Advent season plus a report on her activities in her first two+ years as our writer-in-residence.

This being the last issue of *Tidings* published in the calendar year, it is again time to thank and acknowledge the many people who contributed their time and talent in 2021 to make this magazine vibrant and sustainable. There are far too many individuals to list by name, so I'll recognize the myriad of volunteers in groupings. First, there is the *Tidings* team as listed on the inside of the front cover. Next, the authors of the articles and reports. In 2021 there were: regular reports from the chairs or designate reporters of 15 committees and groups, and a regular message from our minister; 25 articles by members and adherents of FSA; and five articles by guest authors from outside FSA. Finally, there are the fiscal contributions that make possible the high-quality hard-copy printing of each issue, namely our paid advertisers and the congregation as a whole by virtue of approving an annual budget for Communications and Marketing that includes a supplement to the advertising revenue. To all of you, I express my sincere thanks and deep appreciation for the high quality of your varied and valued contributions to *Tidings*.

The *Tidings* team wishes you a peaceful, joyful, and restorative holiday season. May Advent provide opportunities for reflection, worshipful moments, faith development, and sharing the joy of this season. †



Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence

*A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.*

In this familiar Advent passage, the prophet Isaiah announces not only what will come but what must come. To borrow from the *futur antérieur* (French), it will have been the case that faithful endurance of exile yields hope for a new world. One free of militarily occupied landscapes and devoured homes. The remnant of Israel shall be rewarded with peace and wisdom. But not until the return. And only after the longest night.

This textual interplay is not just the fascination of a curious minister but, arguably, the origin of all cultural practice. To carry out daily tasks with any conviction, the community must act with a minimal level of faith, namely that group efforts will result in a greater quality of life. This is even more apparent in the case of a distressed community, wherein external and internal pressures call into question the most basic features of daily action. The grueling hours of an occupied life – one lived in bondage to a foreign agent – are made more tyrannical by the interruptions of existential doubt. Why is this happening to me, since I have done all that I was asked to do by the elders? Why is “God” allowing this to happen to us/me? Is everything I was told a lie?

These and other questions would surely have arisen for the children of Israel, just as they do for us today. While circumstances vary, the recurrence of suffering ensures the persistence of these queries. And the Biblical prophets typi-

cally jump right into this breach of undecidability with a mixture of faithful insight and obnoxious insistence. As if they alone have received that “longed for” Word of God. Their audacity is nothing if not improper and, while I realize I am supposed to identify with them, the truth is I am likely to have disregarded their behaviour like many an Israelite. It is a challenging thing to maintain faith in the eye of apocalypse. And the decidedly reasonable part of me questions the doggedness of such a gesture. Why could not Isaiah and Jeremiah simply find a channel for their frustration that would have been more accommodating. Less intense. Less severe. Less...

As we await the prophetic entrance of the Christ this year, and even prepare the way along with our Crazy Uncle John, I do wonder how seriously we heed the promise of another world, a different way. How do we hear the words of Isaiah in 2021? Isaiah, who dares to say, “it will have been the case that...,” or Autumn Peltier, who invites us to “pray for the waters, as there is no life without water.” What will have been the case 10, 20, or 50 years from now? Are we willing to listen, stand with, and work for the restoration of the Earth and the peoples of the Earth? Will generations to come look back upon our actions with disgust or gratitude? Just as there is no life without water, neither will there be branches growing out of roots. Unless we jump headfirst into the breach, as did our brother Isaiah and sister Miriam, and say, “A shoot shall come” because we have prayed for the waters, listened to the Earth, loved our neighbours as ourselves, and thus, prepared the way for the coming of a new world. †





Barrie Evans

# COGNITIVE SCIENCE, COMPLEXITY AND COMMUNION

*This do in remembrance of me, Luke 22:19  
God be in my head and in my understanding, Sa-  
rum Prayer, 1514*

The title may be off-putting, but bear with me as I attempt to weave together some ideas that I hope will become a coherent and accessible tapestry. This essay follows on from my previous essays of "God in the Time of COVID." I had envisioned writing only three essays and, at the time of writing the third, I was hoping that we would now be in post-COVID times. Well, here we are with a fourth wave and probably still more waves to come, so a word about COVID is required.

If you are feeling the same way I am, these waves seem to be a relentless onslaught. We are like King Canute who attempted to stop the tidal waves of the sea from coming ashore, and we might learn a lesson from him. His actions have been greatly misrepresented. In the original version of the story, his attempt to stem the tide was done in order to illustrate the frailty of mortal kings and the infallibility of God.

"Let all the world know that the power of kings is empty and worthless, and there is no king worthy of the name save Him by whose will heaven, earth and sea obey eternal laws." Thereafter King Canute never wore the golden crown on his neck, but placed it on the image of the crucified Lord, in eternal praise of God the great king." [Historia Anglorum, by Henry, Archdeacon of Huntingdon, a twelfth-century chronicle covering the history of England from ancient times.]

Today, as we discover ways to overcome COVID, we indeed need to place our trust in God and give thanks for the hope provided by the numbers who have been vaccinated, and the health care providers and scientists who are working tirelessly on behalf of the whole of humanity.

With this thought we can leave COVID behind. As a clinical psychologist, I have been especially interested in relational phenomena: our relationship to others and the world around us. Some years past I presented a paper on psychotherapy with ideas, perhaps a little out of the mainstream, to an audience at a university psychiatric rounds. I borrowed from the science of chaos and complexity and the cognitive science of Chilean biologists Umberto Maturana and Francisco Varela,

which have influenced my theory of change and my understanding of causality.

There is a difference between physical causality and psychological causality. People react differently to the same physical stimuli and environments. No matter how hard we try, we cannot physically change a person's behaviour. For example, no matter how much force and pain are inflicted, torture does not inevitably force the disclosure of secrets. Paraphrasing what Maturana and Varela wrote, there is a difference in predictability between the outcome of kicking a ball and kicking a dog. The result of kicking a ball is predictable using Newtonian physics and the outcome is replicable under the same conditions, whereas with animate objects the same is not true.

There is truth in an old joke. Q: How many therapists does it take to change a lightbulb? A: Only one but the lightbulb has to want to change. A therapist cannot change the behaviour of patients or clients, only create a space where change can happen. The nature of this space defines the essence of psychotherapy. It is a safe space where, through the therapist/other relationship, set patterns of feeling, thinking, and acting are disrupted and at the same time there is an openness to new patterns. This space, as I referred to it in my paper on psychotherapy, is the "edge of chaos," an almost magical point where psychological (cognitive, emotional, and behavioural) reorganization can take place. Old patterns are no longer holding together the sense of self; new patterns develop as emergent structures. The process of "becoming" or self-making is called "autopoiesis" by Maturana and Varela and is more simply expressed as "self-organization." This happens, not just in psychotherapy, but all the time. Psychotherapy can provide some direction and acceleration to natural processes. We are always in the process of becoming; each feeling and impulse, each action, each expressed or unexpressed thought, creates a pathway for the next one to happen.

So how does this connect with the sacrament of communion? The ritual, established when Jesus took the last meal with his disciples, was not so much an act of remembrance as an injunction for future action. Its significance is not just in passively remembering Jesus but in actively going forth into the world acting as He did. Through the disciple Peter, it later

("Cognitive..." continued on page 17)



# Marilyn and David Beach

*Heather Locking-Cusolito*



**M**arilyn and David Beach and their two sons, Ryan and Jeremy, first came to FSA around 2002, attracted by the Sunday School program faithfully and capably led by Monique and Chris Silcox. They immediately felt welcomed and still remember the warm reception they got from Bob Slater and others.

Marilyn was raised in London, David in Vancouver but they met in Toronto, introduced by David's sister. Marilyn remembers attending St. Andrew's United Church in Toronto where Alan Barthel, the former organist at FSA, was the music director. David describes his childhood association with church as both "hit and miss" and also ecumenical. For example, he was nominally raised in the Anglican church as a child but also attended both a Catholic boys' school and a Lutheran school growing up.

Their commitment to volunteering at FSA is both tangible and apparent. At the yearly Christmas Boutique Bazaar, they always bring baking, often prepared by David but artfully cut and wrapped by Marilyn. David usually also operates the elevator for the day, a job he points out that has its ups and downs. Both Marilyn and David also help at the annual rummage sale, especially when it comes time to deliver carloads of unsold items to the Mission Store.

Both Marilyn and David each make other important and major contributions to the life and work of FSA. For over 15 years David has been responsible for yard maintenance at the church. Beginning in mid-March, when the snow melts, he starts by raking and picking up twigs and branches. He moves on to grass cutting later in the spring, which often takes

12 hours per week. In the past he also worked on keeping the parking lot looking presentable. David would often finish up his yard work for the season in late November, or early December just before the snow flies! Last April, due to health reasons, he had to retire from his work of "playing in the grass," an important contribution to the upkeep of the church.

For 10 years Marilyn has been a member of the Mission and Outreach (MO) Committee. David often joins her in working on the many extensive projects that MO undertakes. Examples include the annual fall corn roast and the White Squirrel Golf Tournament, both of which raise much-needed funds for the outreach undertakings that MO supports. Both Marilyn and David are willing volunteers when it comes time to prepare and serve coffee for Coffee and Conversation or greet people on Sunday morning. Recently David has also been working on the team that videotapes the weekly service.

One final contribution that they hope to resume is the leadership of the FSA film night. In the past, together with Anne Cummings and Deanne and David Pederson, Marilyn and David have provided leadership to the FSA film night by preparing snacks and setting up the DVD player. They are hoping to resume these nights in the not-too-distant future.

When asked why they have made such an important contribution of time and talent to FSA, Marilyn and David both say they love volunteering. As David says "It is a perfectly satisfying way to give back to the church and community at large." We are all so thankful for their ongoing commitment to making FSA a better place. †



# HUNGER IS ON THE RISE again!



Helen Keenliside



Amanda Thorsteinsson



**C**onflict, climate change and now COVID – those are the three main factors keeping more and more families around the world from accessing enough food.

**For the fifth year in a row, the number of people going to bed hungry has increased.** That's according to the latest State of Food Security

now – it's alarming."

The report notes that the pandemic made it difficult to accurately measure the number of hungry people, and instead provides a range. A mid-range figure of 768 million people currently experiencing hunger points to an increase of 118 million over last year. One of the main drivers of hunger in the report is the COVID pandemic – which also

previously were able to earn a living and provide for their families now struggle to do so," says Harrington. "This past year, 43% of Canadian Foodgrains Bank's total budget was spent responding to people in need of emergency food due to violent conflict."

The drivers of hunger are shaping how the Foodgrains Bank, its members, and their partners respond to hunger needs. A recent \$10 million program funded by the Government of Canada addressed the economic impact the global pandemic is having on small-scale food producers. The Humanitarian Early Recovery and Development program allows Foodgrains Bank members and their partners to provide specialized support to farmers in six African countries, including supporting them in jointly marketing their produce to get the best prices.

This program helps people experiencing long-term hunger who have been disproportionately impacted by the economic effects of



and Nutrition in the World report, just released by the United Nations.

"It's deeply troubling to see how difficult it has become to make progress in the fight against hunger," says Canadian Foodgrains Bank executive director Andy Harrington. "Five years ago, we were seeing global hunger decreasing. It was wonderful news and, even if the decrease was modest, it was something to celebrate. The upward trend toward greater hunger in the world we're seeing

made it difficult for the number of hungry people to be measured as precisely as in previous years.

While the global COVID pandemic is causing its own misery on the lives of people experiencing hunger, conflict and climate change are the other two main drivers of hunger, as they have been for several years now. "For example, conflict and the displacement it causes in places like Syria, Yemen, and South Sudan mean many people who

COVID. Each project involves an emergency food response phase and an early recovery and development phase to provide a strong foundation for building resilience and a move out of poverty in the longer term.

During the emergency response phase, households are provided with emergency food or food vouchers they can redeem at local markets. To support early recovery, some participants are also offered inputs to re-start agricultural

("Hunger..." continued on page 12)



Robyn Marie Butt



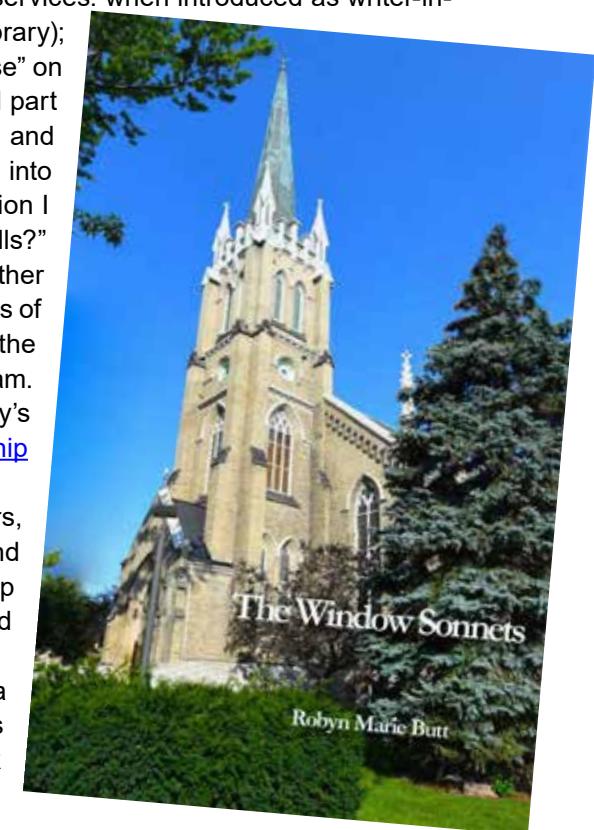
# Writer-in-Residence

A grateful, fruitful two+ years I've spent as First-St. Andrew's writer-in-residence! COVID hit and saw us apart for half of it, but luckily writers can work in solitude.

In my first year I spoke to the confirmands about identifying God Within and became the poetry go-to for Rev. Michelle and *Tidings*. Most poems were my own work or my adaptation; others chosen for the occasion. Some might recall me reading in worship services: when introduced as writer-in-residence (poems from *A Hundred Poems About Flowers* – in FSA's library); for Remembrance Day (selections I researched); Advent (see "Winterhorse" on page 8 of the current *Tidings*); or Lent ("Toad Song"). Rev. Michelle used part of my narrative poem "Magi In 3 Voices" for her Christmas Eve reflection, and I gave the meditation on Mary for the UCW Christmas luncheon. I dove into some powerful poets during Black History Month. On one notable occasion I received a sort of commission. "Have you ever written about the handbells?" asked Paul Merritt. I hadn't, but he'd struck gold. Soon I dropped "Another Carol of the Bells" into Paul's mailbox. We were then also mourning the loss of our late music director Terry Head; it hit me the poem could be offered to the Ontario Guild of English Handbell Ringers for use as they wished in memoriam. OGEHR speedily accepted. "Another Carol of the Bells" now lives on Terry's Memorial Scholarship webpage at <https://ogeehr.ca/Terry-Head-Scholarship> [scroll down].

In the winter of 2019–20 both FSA members, and some non-members, joined my Writing Your Memoirs group. We built community, shaping and hearing each other's life stories – until lockdown. I also taught a workshop on how to decorate and bind your own handmade blank journal and read for an Alvego Root Theatre audio project.

You may have heard that I've been ill. Persistent Lyme, PTSD, and a formerly sedate epileptic condition did begin kicking at my traces. Bless skillful physicians! Treatment and tweaking continue. But writers often work through illness – my COVID months produced a book on FSA's beautiful windows. To be printed soon. All proceeds from *The Window Sonnets* will go to FSA outreach, so – it's gift-time!



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## Winterhorse

Robyn Marie Butt

A great white horse broods  
 paused as snow slants from her dapples  
 nostrils flared scarlet, muzzle etched against cedars.  
 Her birds flit in the edge of the woods  
 and all are preparing: the fields  
 have pulled on her gift of a white blanket, day's light  
 is going bluer, stars brighten  
 as her trees stand alert. She breathes the time awake  
 and watches  
 over the wild things without a name  
 over flakes and gusting wind  
 over the ponds' freezing  
 pale-crystal shards at creek's edge. And air billows now  
 from her bunching shoulders, snow plumes from her knees  
 as she trots, circling our days  
 each deep hoofprint marking a place  
 where fieldmice hearts may shelter and find rest.

O great white horse  
 of winter, float your sweeping tail along our busyness  
 let swish from it some freshening current  
 toss snowdancers whirling from your mane  
 and whinny, whinny the month's joy  
 to greet the Babe our brother. He comes  
 this Child for whom we stir  
 leaning into your welcome. Help us grow still like hanging branches  
 to shelter the Holy Family. See, they approach.  
 Nicker greetings. Snort as we wade your drifts  
 towards our kneeling, call out our year-end praises  
 into your moonlit nights.

O great white horse of winter  
 weave green boughs, red berries  
 over our questing dreams:  
 huff out blue morning sky, low clouds, and wheel  
 sweeping your snow-wake like angel's wings –  
 great white horse, pacing  
 in frostfall a pattern to guide our weeks  
 great white horse, galloping-in  
 our Christ's ascendant season.



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*Robyn Marie Butt was appointed as First-St. Andrew's writer-in-residence in 2019. Selections from Robyn's works of poetry, as chosen by her, are published periodically in Tidings.*

PHOTO-TO-THE-EDITOR

Debbie and Bob Schram submitted this photograph of their one-year-old granddaughter, Nora Schram, with a copy of the Pentecost/Fall 2021 issue of *Tidings* on the beach while at their cottage at Grand Bend. Given Nora's age, it seems most likely that the appeal is visual, and thus a tribute to the creative and elegant magazine layouts provided by Jim Silcox.

Nora and her parents, John and Ashley Schram, were visiting from Australia.

LETTER-TO-THE-EDITOR

October 2, 2021

Dear David,

Like most of the congregation at First-St. Andrew's, I read articles in *Tidings* with interest. I am vaguely aware of the various advertisements scattered throughout the pages, but recently I had to get a watch repaired, and the *Tidings* ad for Dan's Jewellers Inc. popped into my head. I couldn't find my latest *Tidings*, so I called you (as the editor) and asked for details – phone number, address.

I then phoned Dan's Jewellers Inc., identified myself as a member of First-St. Andrew's, and stated how I knew about the store. I explained the problem with my watch, an old wind-up diamond watch of sentimental family value. The person on the phone said to bring it in.

When I arrived, Peter greeted me, spent some time examining the watch, and said he would call me. As I was getting ready to leave, we chatted about how I had come to his store, and he told me what a pleasure it was dealing with Bob Peel who was in charge of getting advertisements for *Tidings*. Peter was very complimentary about how Bob was such a fine representative of the church, and how, as a businessman, he, Peter, was pleased to advertise in the FSA publication.

Then, he said, "Would you just wait a minute?" He went to the back of the store, and came out and handed me an envelope. "Would you give this to Bob Peel at your church on Sunday? It is a cheque. Would you tell him it is not to pay for an ad, but it is a donation to First-St. Andrew's." I was completely taken by surprise. I thanked him and told him I knew how pleased Bob Peel would be by this generous gesture.

This is a tribute to all the people who volunteer their time and talents to bring the excellent editions of *Tidings* to us at First-St. Andrew's.

Jean Wright

RECIPE CORNER**Cranberry Chutney**

Makes five-to-six 250-ml jars

1. Combine the following Ingredients:

4 cups cranberries  
1 cup raisins  
1 ½ cups sugar  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
½ teaspoon ginger  
¼ teaspoon cloves  
1 cup water

Simmer until the berries pop (approximately 15 minutes).

2. Add:

1 medium onion – finely chopped  
1 medium peeled apple – chopped  
½ cup celery – thinly cut

Stir about 15 minutes longer on simmer.

3. If not preserving in sealed jars, stop here. You are ready to enjoy your chutney, or you can freeze some or all of it. If canning, proceed with step 4.

4. For canning, bring the mixture to a boil and then quickly transfer to 125-ml or 250-ml sterilized and pre-heated canning jars, and seal.

*Provenance*

*This recipe comes from Barb Williamson and Liz Mignotte and was used annually in the fall by Barb for at least 15 years. Barb and Liz kept some jars for themselves and distributed the rest as gifts to family and as a donation to the FSA fall bazaar where it has been a popular item. A big bag of cranberries was obtained every year by their friend Marilyn Chamberlain at the Bala Cranberry Festival. The recipe comes*



Steve Elson

**O**n Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, FSA held an all-day retreat at the Best Western Plus Lamplighter Inn in London. There were slightly over 40 participants, who included members of Council and the Board of Trustees, staff, volunteer members of FSA committees, and a few participants at large.

The purpose of the retreat was to build a strong collaborative approach within Council, staff, and key stakeholders by

- Creating fellowship and building relationships
- Celebrating accomplishments
- Identifying principles of collaborative leadership and how they would apply to FSA
- Sharing hopes, dreams, and aspirations for the future
- Understanding United Fresh Start and agreeing on key modules

Throughout the day there were opportunities for participants to get to know each other and talk in small groups. Large group sessions were also held.

The first session of the retreat added to work already done “virtually” by the FSA Thursday morning Coffee and Conversation group to document and celebrate our accomplishments.

The retreat participants then had the opportunity to talk about and understand collaborative leadership, namely “The ability to work with others to develop/achieve a common goal in a way that values and invites input from all stakeholders.” There was genuine interest in adopting this as a way of doing business at FSA.

In the session called Hopes, Dreams,

and Aspirations, a number of creative suggestions were made in the areas of faith development, music and the arts, and service and social action. The following reflects the summary objectives of the suggestions put forward:

- The overarching objective of the identified opportunities for faith development, spiritual care and support – and the challenge for FSA – is to provide a variety of ways in which the diverse needs of different people in different stages of life and in different situations can be recognized and met.
- The overarching objective of music and the arts is to give expression to the talent within our own community of faith and to celebrate the talent and diversity outside of ourselves – all of which enrich our lives personally and collectively.
- The overriding objective of service, social action, and social justice is to use a variety of means and opportunities to live out our faith and commitment to love one another and respond with empathy, caring, and action.

In an afternoon session on United Fresh Start, a program of the United Church of Canada, led by Tanya Cameron from the United Church, participants learned that this program is specifically designed for communities of faith going through transitions, especially those involving having a new minister come on board. To quote: “The program will help create a fresh start for the pastoral relationship and prepare you for effective mission and ministry together. Although the program is ideally suited for new pastoral relationships, several



# NEW BEGINNING

## A Report on the Fall Retreat

of the modules can be used to equip congregations to be effective in the face of any adaptive challenge.”

The following four modules were selected as the ones participants saw as being most useful to FSA: Leading Planned Change, Conflict Awareness, Diversity, and Transition.

Evaluation forms completed by participants indicated that the retreat was well received and was time well spent. There was real interest in learning about next steps as a follow-up to the retreat. My assessment of the next steps is as follows:

1. Complete the documentation of our accomplishments and celebrate by making it widely available.
2. Confirm and reinforce the commitment to implement and apply the principles of collaborative leadership across FSA – learn by doing!
3. Use the suggestions for future action and summary objectives, as outlined from the session on Hopes, Dreams, and Aspirations, to guide decision making and priority setting.
4. Take the necessary steps to begin the United Fresh Start program. †

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The [full report](#) on the retreat is posted on the FSA website. The Retreat Planning Team consisted of Steve Elson, George Jolink, Kerry Hill, Heather Locking-Cusolito, Merran Neville, Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence, Kathryn Skelly, and David Wardlaw.



## UNITED FRESH START PROGRAM

Tanya Cameron



**U**nited Fresh Start is an educational program specifically designed for communities of faith going through transitions, especially those involving having a new minister come on board. The program is intended for ministry personnel and lay leaders serving such communities. The United Fresh Start curriculum is comprised of 24 modules that teach ministers and congregational leaders critical strategies for working effectively together to create a fresh start for the pastoral relationship and prepare for effective mission and ministry together.

The United Fresh Start program originated with the Episcopal Church in the US in the early 1990s. In the early 2000s, it was brought north of the border in the Toronto Diocese of the Anglican Church and, in 2013, the program was piloted in the United Church in southern Alberta. The conclusion of this testing in fall 2015 showed that 87% of participants felt that the program was valuable for the congregation and the pastoral relationship. In early 2016, it was rolled out across our denomination to support healthy pastoral relationships.

So... why this program and why now? At the 39<sup>th</sup> General Council in 2006, the results of the Isolation in Ministry study 2000 from our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider Warren Shepell were shared. The report indicated that high levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout for ministry personnel were directly correlated to the health of the relationship between minister and congregation. As we seek to support ministry personnel from the General Council Office, this program is expected to be a way to improve the

resiliency and overall wellbeing of ministry personnel and to help foster health in the pastoral relationship at its beginning.

The stronger the pastoral relationship between ministers and the congregation as a whole, the healthier and more effective ministry personnel will be, and the vitality of our congregations will be strengthened.

The program involves a trained facilitator meeting with a congregational group, including the newly called or appointed minister, to work through at least four of the 24 unique modules from the United Fresh Start curriculum. Additional modules may be selected from the list. Typically, a module is covered in a half-day session and typically the selected modules are spread out over the first two years of the new pastoral relationship. The modules focus on the themes of transition, leadership, organizational development, and conflict management.

United Fresh Start is a curriculum that teaches ministers and congregational leaders critical strategies for working effectively together. It contains proven methods based on the work of organizational leadership experts. Together, ministers and congregational leaders gain a mutual understanding of leadership expectations, role clarity, and the use of power and authority. The program will help create a fresh start for the pastoral relationship and prepare you for effective mission and ministry together. †

---

*Tanya Cameron works for the United Church of Canada in the Office of Vocation and is a facilitator for the Fresh Start program. The United Fresh Start Coordinator is Rev. Adam Hanley.*

## "Hunger..." (Cont'd from Page 6)

activities, training to improve agricultural production or start new livelihood activities, and support for establishing savings and loans groups.

Many Foodgrains Bank projects work with small-scale farmers who are disproportionately affected by climate change, and struggle with lack of rainfall and extreme weather conditions. Outside of regular program work, the Foodgrains Bank also engages governments and decision makers in encouraging support for small-scale food producers who are greatly impacted by severe climate and in ensuring conflict sensitivity in the delivery of humanitarian food assistance. To add your voice to encourage decision makers to increase their

efforts, particularly to address extreme weather conditions, you are invited to go to the online letter builder at <https://foodgrainsbank.ca/online-letter/>. Your letter will electronically go to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. A groundswell of voices does make a difference.

It's knowing that there are concrete steps that can be taken to push back against the current increase in people facing hunger that encourages Harrington. "Such news is certainly disheartening – but it should also strengthen our resolve," says Harrington. "We know that reducing hunger is a goal within reach, because we've seen those numbers increasing before, and I'm

confident that, with effective action, we will be seeing them going down again."

†

Helen Keenliside is an ambassador for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGBC) and was the guest speaker at FSA for Canadian Foodgrains Sunday on October 17<sup>th</sup>. Amanda Thorsteinsson is Senior Communications Officer with CFGBC. For more information on the subject of this article, you may choose to watch a short YouTube video at <https://foodgrainsbank.ca/news/increase-in-numbers/>

## NOTEWORTHY



All at FSA send blessings and best wishes to the **Rev. Kerry Stover** whose Covenanting Service at Calvary United Church took place on Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. Following a recommendation from a discernment committee here at FSA, Kerry took up his studies in Theology and was ordained three years ago. We are proud that we have had a part to play in his calling to the ministry.

Congratulations to chamber choir member, mezzo-soprano **Hillary Tufford**, who has been selected to join the Vancouver Opera's Young Artists Program in 2021–2022. We wish Hillary all the very best as she moves to Vancouver in January to join the program. Hillary has made a great contribution to music at FSA this year.



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## ANTLER RIVER WATERSHED REGIONAL COUNCIL

*Linda Badke*

The Antler River Watershed Regional Council met via Zoom the last weekend in October. Indigenous justice was a focus of the meeting. Early in the meeting we named the nearest First Nation to us, the name of an Indigenous leader who influenced us, and our next step in our journey toward reconciliation. The names were turned into a word image. Some of the Indigenous leaders named were Grafton and Eileen Antone, Geraldine Robertson, and Janice Rising.

Eileen Jacobs introduced us to Walpole Island and Tarance Whiteeye introduced us to the ministry of the congregation at Moraviantown. Chief Denise Stonefish of the Delaware Nation at Moraviantown joined us to share her community's deep connection to the land where the village of Fairfield once stood and their hopes of creating an interpretive centre there.

Karlene Brown-Palmer opened our sessions with the lighting of the flame and provided worship for us. The two main

foci of the regional council were business and accountability, and proposals to go to General Council 44 in February. One proposal received by the regional council concerned former ministry personnel continuing to offer ministerial leadership in a community of faith that they no longer serve. This was passed and directs the regional council to develop an educational plan and to raise concerns with the Office of Vocation involving ministry personnel who continue to do this.

General Secretary, Michael Blair, delivered the message at the Celebration of Ministry service on the Saturday night. Karlene Kimber was commissioned as a diaconal minister at the service. She is known from her days as the director of the Middlesex Presbytery Resource Centre. Karlene is continuing to serve the Belmont–Harrietsville–Mossley Pastoral Charge near Dorchester. The next meeting of our regional council is in the spring when we hope to be able to gather in person. The president of the Region is Rev. Jane Van Patter who took on the position last fall the day after she retired from active ministry. The theme for Jane's term is keep calm and rock on. †



## COUNCIL

*Steve Elson*

I think I am correct in stating that the theme of this report is transitions. Transitions come in many forms, shapes, and sizes and at FSA we are seeing these in spades!

Your Council continues to give strong leadership to FSA and to make decisions that continue to move us forward – together.

The biggest transition since the last issue of *Tidings* has been the arrival of our new minister, Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence, and his family. Pastor Joshua, as he likes to be called, has hit the ground running. He has already not only met and is working with many people within FSA, but he has reached out and is getting to know the larger London community – within the United Church and beyond. His presence at Council meetings has been a most positive addition.

Another significant transition has been the return to in-person Sunday services though, for a period of time, we were limited in the number who could attend and where they could sit. With people being fully vaccinated, this restriction has now been lifted. The FSA response to COVID-19 is something to which the Council has been paying a lot of careful attention. The balance has consistently been on keeping people as safe as possible while, at the same time, allowing in-person interactions.

On October 27<sup>th</sup> Council and other active FSA committee members and volunteers participated in a day-long retreat (described in more detail elsewhere in this issue of *Tidings*). It provided Council members and others with the opportunity to not only reflect on our successes but to also think about future priorities in terms of faith development, service, and music and the arts. Translating these aspirations into action will be a future focus for Council.

Beginning in December and lasting until the end of March 2022, FSA will be partnering with the Ark Aid Street Mission. Through this partnership FSA will be renting space to enable Ark Aid to run an Out of the Cold overnight resting space for people who are homeless and have no shelter. Council has discussed the venture and made decisions concerning this partnership at three separate Council meetings. While it presents some challenges and adjustment on our part, it will enable FSA to play a vital role in supporting the most vulnerable in our community.

As this will be my last *Tidings* report as chair of Council, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my fellow Council members for their support, dedication, and leadership. Council will be blessed to have sound leadership when David Wardlaw assumes the role of Council chair at the end of January 2022. Yet another transition! †



## MUSIC

*Merran Neville*

It was exciting to return to in-person services in September. Since then, outstanding leadership has been given by Paul Merritt, organist emeritus; Dr. Victoria (Viki) Meredith, interim chamber choir director; Richard Frank, director of the Laudamus Bells; and Igor Saika-Voivod, director of the FSA Strings. Such willing collaboration leads to the achievement of great things even in the time of a pandemic.

We began Advent with the traditional service of Lessons and Carols on Sunday, November 28<sup>th</sup>. The chamber choir led with anthems and was joined by senior choir members for the hymns. The Laudamus Bells rang for us once more. Richard Frank responded to the request from the Ontario Guild of English Handbell Ringers (OGEHR) for handbell choirs to submit a recording of an Advent/Christmas piece for a Virtual Handbell Christmas Concert. The Laudamus Bells are grateful to Jim Silcox for videoing our performance of "Carol of the Huron" for the concert, which will premiere on Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm. The Laudamus Bells also rang in the Covenanting Service for Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence,

October 24<sup>th</sup> and on Anniversary Sunday, November 14<sup>th</sup>.

Congratulations to chamber choir member, mezzo-soprano Hillary Tufford, who has been selected to join the Vancouver Opera's Young Artists Program in 2021–2022. We wish Hillary all the very best as she moves to Vancouver in January to join the program. Hillary has made a great contribution to music at FSA this year.

The FSA Strings have brought us the first concert since the pandemic began. They performed a delightful concert on Wednesday, November 24<sup>th</sup>. They will also be playing for the Christmas Eve service.

We all look forward to singing again, and members of the senior choir are especially keen to return to pre-pandemic rehearsals and singing as a full choir on Sunday mornings. Let's hope it is very soon.

Did you know that London has been designated as Canada's first UNESCO City of Music? Surely FSA and other musical organizations in the city have helped to contribute to that designation. †



## MEMBERSHIP & NURTURE

*Heather Locking-Cusolito*

The Membership and Nurture Committee is pleased to be meeting again in person and to welcome Pastor Joshua Lawrence and Dr. Mary Mattar to our committee. Our committee has been undertaking the following activities:

- After summarizing the results of a congregational survey in the late spring to consider implementing an individual award for volunteers, we decided in response to the feedback that we would not introduce an individual award. Instead, we intend to profile people in both the WOW section of the eblast and in *Tidings*. Additionally, we will continue our annual Volunteer Appreciation Sunday. And, of course, every one of us can play a role in expressing appreciation to people who give generously of their time and talent.
- Caring Callers and the Prayer Chain under the leadership of Annabelle Logan continue their faithful ministry. The lay visitation team is being revitalized under the leadership of Mary Mattar. If you are interested in participating in either of these outreach teams, please get in touch with their leaders.
- Due to COVID restrictions we are foregoing the healing prayer station at communion services.
- Pastor Joshua alerted us to a website [www.prayercycles.ca](http://www.prayercycles.ca) that schedules a cycle of prayers for churches within

each region. Joshua has agreed to profile the church being prayed for in the eblast each week.

- Plans are underway to carry out a Time and Talent survey to identify people interested in the many opportunities to gather in community or support one another at First-St. Andrew's.
- Glenna Hall and Heather Locking-Cusolito have been meeting to discuss ways to streamline the coordination, preparation, and serving of Coffee and Conversation once we are able to meet again in Proudfoot Hall.
- Archives under the leadership of Don Jones continues to work enthusiastically to organize and catalogue the archival materials of FSA and to profile some fascinating history in the eblast.
- The Affirm Committee continues to look for a new leader. Anyone interested in taking on this role should feel free to call or email Heather Locking-Cusolito.

Finally, thank you to the many members of our congregational family who contribute to the nurturing and support of our membership every day. †



Archives  
Don Jones

The Archives Committee has continued to meet by Zoom once each month and has been able, under the recent relaxing of COVID rules, to meet in small groups to work in the archives room, restoring and boxing items required by the

United Church of Canada. The archives room has, over the years, been the repository for many interesting and important documents that have been received for storage in the archives room. Not everything that is stored there is archival material. The committee has been studying what needs to be kept as required by the United Church, what is nice to keep, and what is not needed. This is a time-consuming undertaking and members have been volunteering to spend time in the archives room doing this work in one-hour sessions.

To date we have placed minutes from Session, Council, Trustees, Official Board and Stewards in dust-protected boxes with labels indicating the years, for easy identification. The books and articles that are specific to our history are very valuable and are stored in the archives. There are, however,

other items that are difficult to identify as to who provided them and why; these items will need broader scrutiny before deciding whether to retain.

The biggest job requires more human power than we have on the committee. This job involves sorting and identifying older photos that have no captions or names identifying the individuals or groups. The Archives Committee would welcome the participation of longstanding FSA members who might be able to identify individuals in the old photos. If there are members of the congregation who would like to donate about 1 or 2 hours of their time to this project, please email Don Jones at [nodenoj@gmail.com](mailto:nodenoj@gmail.com). †



## UNITED CHURCH WOMEN

Nancy Quinn

Over the fall, an exciting momentum has developed, as we fundraise to help those hard hit by the pandemic. With pandemic health concerns, we did not hold the regular November Boutique Bazaar. We are grateful to Glenda Robinson for giving experienced leadership to the UCW Charity Sales held on October 17<sup>th</sup>, November 14<sup>th</sup>, and December 5<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to the many people who generously cooked preserves, created hand-made greeting cards, provided baked goods, sewed batik bookmarks, and knitted/crocheted items, along with many other creative treasures.

Susan McGregor energetically collected preserves, many of which she made. Our cooks created an amazing array of over 200 jars, including blueberry jam, crabapple jelly, orange marmalade, peach jam, strawberry jam, red currant jelly, green tomato mincemeat, chili sauce, antipasto, beets, strawberry/rhubarb jam, and tomato sauce. Pat Carter, Millie Bates, and Anne Cummings helped create and organize the extensive knit and crochet table, which included afghans, scarves, and baby clothes. Jane Glaves shared her hand-made gift cards and Glenda Robinson contributed her batik bookmarks. A delicious array of baked goods was contributed by our talented patissiers. We are grateful for the many, varied gifts of abundance that so many people shared, for the efforts of the sales staff, and for the enthusiasm of the buyers at the UCW Charity Sales! Our many charities, including Anova and

My Sisters' Place are grateful.

Another positive adaptation to the pandemic is our new national UCW outreach newsletter, *Keeping in Touch*, which we invite you to explore: <http://nakonhakaucc.ca/programs/ucw/>.

To subscribe electronically please click on "Newsletter" under the "News" tab in the top bar. This link will take you to both the Subscription Form and the Newsletter Archives. Interesting reading includes the *Environment Network Report* and the *Pride News Report*.

Do you enjoy travelling and meeting new people who have a common love of the UCW mission? Consider registering from our Antler River Watershed Region for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the UCW: Continuing in Hope Conference, to be held in Sydney, Nova Scotia, July 11–15, 2022. You can register online by googling "UCW National" and get the link embedded in the "Register for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gathering" section, near the top of the information page.

We are grateful for the faithfulness of our UCW members in remembering to send in their Green Envelope donations to the FSA office. Cheques can be made out to the First-St. Andrew's United Church Women, and the envelope labelled Attention: FSA UCW.

As the UCW, we are often called "the hands and feet of Christ." May we have an enduring sense of Christ's presence, in his/her many forms, during our continuing faith journeys in this Advent season and into 2022. †



## CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT

Allyson Watson

Christian Development has been providing Church School on Sundays at 10:30 am. The children explored Food Gratitude in October. In November they are focusing on Saints. Pastor Joshua has the Thursday Bible Study up and running. Keep an eye out for our

adult Advent series coming soon! The new confirmation group is up and going under the leadership of Elizabeth Stewart and Susan McKane. The Christmas Eve family service will be at 6:30 pm. Finally, we are in the process of interviewing for the youth minister, who will be shared with Metropolitan and Siloam. We will continue to update you on the status of this collaborative position. †



## MISSION & OUTREACH

### Grow-a-Row 2021: Thanks for Your Support Cynthia Simpson

We have just concluded our second pandemic Grow-a-Row campaign (in partnership with St. Marys United Church) and wanted to thank our dedicated FSA supporters for another successful year. Our donation period is now over so any additional funds received will be applied to the 2022 campaign.

Our thanks go out to Canadian Foodgrains Bank ambassador Helen Keenliside who delivered the message at our service on October 17<sup>th</sup> (see page 6). It was lovely to welcome her back to First-St. Andrew's. We were disappointed once again that we could not hold our annual fall corn roast in support of the United Church Foodgrains Project, as it always results in a significant final bump in donations. However, we almost ran out of special donation envelopes, so we know many FSA members who were at the service that day made a point of helping this worthy cause. We are sure others downloaded the form from home. We hope you all celebrated with a meal at home in honour of the Grow-a-Row campaign even if we couldn't break bread together. Our fingers are crossed that we will be able to host a corn roast next fall.

It is challenging to run a virtual fundraiser. No one was handed a donation envelope this spring, and we have relied on our members to notice the information piece in the weekly email blasts and/or go to the FSA website to download the form. We are thrilled to announce that our generous and supportive FSA family has risen to the challenge and, as of November 8<sup>th</sup>, donated \$5585 to the campaign, which surpasses our 2020 total. We are also pleased to announce that Bayer Crop Science committed to supporting projects across the country and our local Grow-a-Row campaign received \$100 from them, which is greatly appreciated. In addition, the Canadian government matches most donation funds at a 4:1 ratio to provide food to developing countries. Well done, everyone! †



### East London United Church Outreach Ann MacPhail

The pandemic continues to affect us all but, for some in the Marconi Affordable Housing Community, East London, the isolation and restrictions have been crippling. The result has been a steep rise in depression, anxiety, addictions, and violence. Nancy Howard, ELUCO's Community Outreach Worker, continues to provide support and counselling outside at a distance. She says, "As the months passed it reinforced my understanding that the most important aspect of my outreach is being present in the community. Living our faith, listening without judgment, encouraging, comforting, advocating, and teaching – these are the gifts ELUCO

bestows to those most in need." And there are successes! A youth from the Marconi community was hired as a counsellor at the Kee-Mo-Kee day camp this summer; a collaboration with the London Public Library outreach program provided outdoor workshops, including stories, activities, and crafts; and children received new backpacks with school supplies, through generous donations from Rowntree United Church and The Royal Imperial Sovereign Court of London Ontario.

An enormous **THANK YOU** for those who donated to the ELUCO Walk & Roll for Families fundraiser in September. With your very generous donations we raised more than \$7,000. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

It is time again for the ELUCO Christmas Share, when



ELUCO Board of Directors and supporters participating in the Walk & Roll for Families fundraiser in September, 2021

we at First-St. Andrew's have an opportunity to spread some of our good fortune to those who are struggling in so many ways. Nancy Howard organizes the giving of food and Christmas gifts for families in the Marconi Affordable Housing Community who would otherwise go without, helping to make Christmas a more joyous, hopeful celebration for them.†

### How to donate to ELUCO Christmas Share

Please take this opportunity to give generously and help make this Christmas a celebration of love, peace, joy, and hope by donating in one of the following ways (by December 12<sup>th</sup>):

- Cash or cheque at the FSA church office (please write "ELUCO Christmas Share" on memo line).
- Online on the ELUCO website ([eluco.ca](http://eluco.ca)) or the FSA website ([fsauited.com](http://fsauited.com), click on the ELUCO logo at the bottom of the homepage).
- Shopping card donation at the FSA shopping card table in the Atrium (on Sundays).





## WORSHIP

Jo Ann Silcox

The Worship Committee continues to express profound gratitude to Rev. Dr. David McKane, Rev. Karen Low, Rev. Tom Hiscock, and Rev. Ann Corbet for their selfless gifts in carrying the congregation through the many months without a lead minister.

As of September, we have been blessed with the gift of the Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence. As he finds his way in the Canadian context in general and in FSA in particular, Joshua brings a plethora of preaching, teaching, visioning, and pastoral care skills – leading us into a new and exciting settled ministry.

Paul Merritt and Viki Meredith continue to show remarkable ingenuity and good humour in arranging instrumental

and choral music carefully orchestrated to abide by COVID limitations.

Under the careful watch of Catherine Charlton as narthex coordinator, returning worshipers have experienced gentle COVID screening and a warm FSA welcome.

Throughout these many months, for those not able to attend, virtual worship has been possible through the expert videotaping skills of Dr. Jim Silcox, Merran Neville, Kathryn Skelly, and their elves.

As we step out in faith believing that full congregational worship may be possible in a post-COVID future, we are acutely aware that the form of worship and the changing needs of worshipers will require a willingness to ask and imagine how we might meaningfully gather in brand new ways.

Together as a whole people of GOD we give thanks for new visions of congregational life at FSA. †



## TRUSTEES

Jackie Williams &  
Paul Cooper



The Trustees said goodbye to two members of the Board recently: Kay Hillier and Doug Jones. However, Doug has agreed to remain as a long-distance ex-officio member of the Investment Committee as an advisor.

We are delighted to report that two new members have agreed to serve on the Board, Katherine Wonfor and David Wake. We are blessed to have such individuals who are so willing to volunteer their time and experience.

Since being able to return to in-person services, the Trustees have been catching up with the special recognitions, both for the Proudfoot Tree and the Proudfoot Society. The Memorials Committee honoured five individuals with leaves on the Proudfoot Tree on Sunday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021. These were members of FSA who passed away in the last year, but who left bequests in their wills, or had donations given in their memory. These individuals are greatly missed,

but their thoughtfulness and generosity towards our church lives on, and the leaves on the Proudfoot Tree are a symbol of gratitude from all present and future members of this church.

Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 saw the recognition of the inaugural members of the Proudfoot Society, a benefactor program initiated by John Eberhard with the Long-term Giving Committee. This is an important program through which living donors contribute to our Legacy Trust Funds to ensure the long-term sustainability of FSA. Both services were presided over with great thoughtfulness by our new minister, Rev. Dr. Joshua Lawrence. What a joy to welcome Joshua and his family to our congregation!

In February 2021, the Board of Trustees approved a recommendation from the Investment Committee to increase equity holdings from a maximum of 50% to 65%. Due to the strength of the markets and our equity holdings now at 62%, FSA has seen greater returns in 2021. The Trustees are focused on the long term and the Investment Committee meets regularly with our professional investment advisors to make the best investment decisions. We are confident the Trust Funds will continue to generate sufficient revenue to support FSA programs now and in the future. †

## "Cognitive..." (Cont'd from Page 4)

became the act of carrying on the life of Christ in the body of the Roman Church. Today, as we engage in communion, we take the sacrament in order to become more Christ-like. This act of communion does not cause us to become more Christ-like in a Newtonian physical sense. We receive the host by actively engaging with the ritual, thereby creating a pathway by means of which, through repetition, we gradually incorporate Christ into our being. Communion is a sacred space in which, as in psychotherapy, we consensually and willingly allow this to happen and in doing so, change our lives. †

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## FINANCE

Kerry Hill

The financial status of First-St. Andrew's remains relatively healthy as we come to the end of the year. Although revenues were below budget at the end of October, the seasonal up-tick in November and December should leave us in good shape by year end. Rental revenue has suffered because of the pandemic; however, strong gift card sales and government COVID support programs have helped considerably in keeping us on an even keel.

Thanks to David Manness' great work, gift cards are ahead of budget. In October, we applied for a further federal salary support payment of \$4,600. Some have asked recently about the federal loan program that we participated in: we have received a total loan of \$60,000 (in installments of \$40,000 and \$20,000), of which \$20,000 is a forgivable grant. The remaining \$40,000 must be repaid by December 2022. The salary support program is being phased out, so we will need to restore former and new sources of revenue going forward.

Which brings me to two campaigns: the fall stewardship drive and the Christmas appeal. The stewardship materials have been distributed. Please think carefully, again, about what FSA means to you, in considering your 2022 pledge. As you know, costs of groceries, fuel and other goods have been rising at a somewhat alarming rate in recent months. FSA's costs are rising, also. In supporting our church, we all

face the pressure of our own costs going up, coupled with increasing needs of the charities we support. Remember that you know exactly how your money is spent at FSA. You can see that expenditures on salaries have a direct impact on Faith, Service, and the Arts. The great work of our church has continued throughout the pandemic, despite all the restrictions and challenges we have faced. Also coming up is our annual Christmas appeal, in which we ask you to help end our year with a strong financial push by making an "extra" donation.

Our October retreat highlighted a long list of accomplishments FSA has achieved over the years; please take a look at the full retreat report posted on the FSA website. Our future is equally inspiring. Pastor Joshua is invigorating our spiritual life and renewing cooperation and collaboration with other churches, other faiths, and key service agencies in the city.

Allyson Watson has been the FSA point person in forming a partnership with Metropolitan and Siloam to create a youth and young adult ministry. The Mission and Outreach Committee is taking a fresh look at how we approach our mandate; are there opportunities to be more hands-on locally, in addition to raising money for Canadian and global social concerns? These and other initiatives, together with your time, talent, and financial support, mean a bright future for First-St. Andrew's.

Thank you for all that you do for First-St. Andrew's. †

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## PROPERTY

George Jolink

Over the last 20 months the Property Committee has been meeting largely to ensure security issues, as well as ongoing maintenance, are dealt with. While there has been less use of the building, from time to time issues arise that require immediate attention. In the past year there has been some vandalism/theft and overnight activity on the property. Namely, copper cabling for lightning protection has been stolen from two exterior locations and, on a couple of occasions, small fires have been set. The cabling is currently being quoted for repair, and security grates have been installed in some of the window wells. Others to follow. The Property Committee is looking at all areas where security breaches may be possible and identifying solutions.

As for interior maintenance, we continue to service our aging boiler to prolong the life of our current heating system as we explore possible upgrades, replacement, or alternative heating sources. With that in mind, the Property chair has been invited to attend a road trip with members of Climate Action London to a church in Oakville, which has converted to geo-thermal heating. We know at some point our heating system will need replacing. Advance research will help to inform our decisions on how to move forward.

Most recently the Property Committee has responded to an assessment of our historic stained-glass windows. The Avis report of 2008 identified several deficiencies, some of which have already been corrected. The remaining work will be contracted (about \$45,000 worth) as soon as funds become available. While we don't anticipate needing a capital campaign, donations are always gratefully accepted.

Finally, as COVID protocols become part of our everyday habits, the Property Committee has investigated strategies for improving air quality in some of our meeting spaces. With the assistance of a generous donation, three Hepa air filtration units have been ordered for use specifically in the chapel and Fireside Room.

As always, thank you to Tim, our facilities manager, who is committed to maintaining our building in top form. †

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## CLIMATE ACTION LONDON

Mary Ann Hodge

Climate Action London is now the contact organization in London for Greening Sacred Spaces (London). About 60 people joined us as we officially launched the London chapter on September 21<sup>st</sup> with a Fall Equinox event at Victoria Park. We were guided in ceremony by Tracey Whiteye who led us in a deeply moving experience with drumming and song as we honoured the four directions. Please join us for a Winter Solstice celebration on Tuesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>.

On Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, Greening Sacred Spaces London will be hosting a talk at Siloam United Church to learn about their collaboration with Urban Roots, which has produced 3,000 pounds (1,360 kg) of fresh, healthy food. This was donated to agencies serving local families, such as the ELUCO Food Cupboard. Plans for next year call for expansion to include an orchard. Climate Action London was just awarded a grant from TD Friends of the Environment to purchase native plants to establish pollinator gardens at both the Siloam garden and the original Urban Roots garden on Norlan Ave.

Climate Action London will be at Reimagine Co's holiday markets at 206 Piccadilly on Saturdays from November 27<sup>th</sup> – December 18<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm. We will be promoting the use of public transit by selling pre-loaded London Transit smart cards, gift wrapped for stocking stuffers. We will also be giving away native plant seeds to encourage gardeners to add native plants to their gardens. Come and say hello.

We continue to pursue grants to help us reach more Londoners to inspire and advocate for greater climate action.

You can email us at [climateactionLondon@gmail.com](mailto:climateactionLondon@gmail.com), subscribe to receive our weekly "Environment Message" at <http://eepurl.com/hhK8Ff>, or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

Learn about more climate actions at [ClimateActionLondon.ca](http://ClimateActionLondon.ca). †

## MILESTONES

### DEATHS

Bob Lindsay, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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