

# THE MESSENGER

Morningside-High Park Presbyterian Church

Easter 2014



## MINISTER'S REFLECTION

One of my colleagues had a sign posted outside his church a month or so ago that said Spring will come! I smiled as I drove past his church and in the midst of a long, seemingly endless winter, found comfort and assurance in that message. When I think about it in retrospect, I think a lot of that comfort had to do with the way the message was expressed: "spring will come", not "spring is coming"! When someone says spring is coming, I start looking around for signs of it, the evidence of thawing snow, bulbs peeking through the ground, robins arriving. And when they are not there, well then I don't take much comfort from the message, it is just empty words. Spring will come is so much different. It doesn't point to evidence as much as to faith. Spring will come is a faith statement. Even with no visible evidence to support it, we know that it speaks truth. When I read the sign saying Spring will come, it makes me think about how we talk about our faith at Easter. We say Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again! That is faith. In the midst of darkness and death, in the face of all evidence to the contrary, we speak words that themselves bring light and hope to the world. The faith they express is all the sign we need.

Just as we know that spring will come, so too will Easter and our opportunity to say these words again,

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ is risen again!

Grace and Peace

Karen

## LOOKING AHEAD TO: HOLY WEEK AT MHP

**Palm Sunday April**

**13 10:30 a.m.** This is a service of drama and song, Palms and Passion.

**Maundy Thursday April 17 5:30 p.m.** Join us for dinner and an interactive worship service that is designed for adults and children alike. As we gather to play some games and eat the echoes of Palm Sunday will still be with us. Then as the evening progresses, as we eat we will remember together the last meal that Jesus shared with his disciples and walk through the events of that evening together. Afterwards the sanctuary will be open for private prayer for any who wish to have that quiet time.

**Good Friday April 18 10:30 a.m.** Ecumenical Service with the Swansea Churches, held this year at St Olave's Anglican Church

**Easter Sunrise Service, April 20 at 7:30 a.m.** The service is held in High Park, by the cross across from the Grenadier Restaurant. This is a contemplative service of prayer and hymn singing. This is a very special service held each year in which we join with several local congregations in welcoming the dawn and rejoicing in our salvation.

**Easter Worship, Easter Sunday April 20**  
Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed! This will be our proclamation at **10:30** as we begin a most joyful celebration of the Resurrection

## **EASTER LILIES**

If you wish to place an **EASTER LILY** in the chancel Easter Sunday April 20, in memory of a friend or loved one, please complete an Easter Memorial Lily envelope available in the Narthex and submit **today or next Sunday**. A donation of \$12.00 is suggested.

## **MARC GOES TO THE PHILLIPINES**

At the end of January, our local Fire Association sent out a request for volunteers to go to the Philippines to be part of a Capacity Building Operation. I answered the call.

On February 26, 2014 I made my way to Tacloban, site of the super Typhoon Haiyan (locally called Yolanda) of November 7, 2013. I was able to be part of an incredible team and had a truly rewarding, uplifting and fulfilling experience.

GlobalFire put together a team of 14 personnel, 11 from Toronto Fire, one administrator from Ottawa and 2 from Alberta. We each fundraised over \$2500 and were able to equip 85 firefighters from all around the region with personal protective equipment and provide training in Fireground operations, Urban Rescue, Extrication, and Water Rescue. We were also able to provide 155 items (including ladders, axes, sledgehammers and medical equipment) and a total of 1300 pieces, all at no cost to our recipients.

As much as we were there to teach, I think we learned more from them. What struck me the most was the resilience of the Filipino people and how happy they were with what little they had. It certainly makes one think about what is needed for happiness, and perhaps that we should be more content with what we have.

Our team made a donation to the families of the five firefighters who lost their lives during the typhoon. Additionally, we made contact

with a nutritionist from the U.K. who was working for the Volunteers for the Visayans (<http://www.visayans.org>) and was feeding 40-60 children on 500 pesos per day (\$12) in a barangay (ward) not far from our training site. Globalfire donated a weeks worth of food to this worth cause as well as some crayons and paper for the kids.

It was an extraordinary experience for so many reasons which took me through a variety of feelings, often conflicting.

At times I was overwhelmed but I was also challenged.

I was sad but I was also inspired.

I felt helpless but also hopeful.

I was proud of our work but also felt inadequate.

I was able to build some new friendships but it didn't seem like enough.

I saw a great deal of destruction but also experienced the beauty of the people and the islands.

I felt good about the work we did there but know there is so much more to do.

I was depressed by the devastation but impressed by their spirit.

I was amazed by the conditions of Tacloban and the way the people just got on with their lives.

It certainly makes me thankful for what we have here, but it inspires me to do more. How will you answer the call?

## **BURNING BRIGHTLY ...**

**The Light of Christ: Shining into our past and our future,  
Calling Forth Light in us today!**

Our annual congregational meeting is history now, but the plans we have begun to make and presented there continue to move forward.

At MHP our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary is an opportunity not just to look back in our celebrations but to look forward! To explore where God is leading us and how we might be part of what God is doing in the world.

At MHP we believe we are given gifts so that we might be part of what God is doing in the world. We believe that we are called to be a community of Hope that makes a difference in communities we live in.

At MHP, we value the sharing of food, the value of God’s children of all ages, our growth in faith and discipleship, the care of God’s creation and our worship life, Together!

Guided by these we have identified the following six projects, some ongoing, some new, for the coming 1, 2 and 5 years! They are in various phases of planning and we look for your input, insight and support. Poster boards with more information and your feedback are located in the fellowship hall for the next few weeks, please share your thoughts and ideas on them or with the folks identified with them.

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**Community Garden at MHP**

Last year we started a wonderful project growing food. We grew it. We ate it. We shared it. Our garden made people excited, curious, talkative, receptive and hopeful. Adults and children helped. MHP members and neighbours, everyone benefited. Nature benefited. Even the bees were excited to see the garden!

This year we look forward with eagerness and God’s help to whole-heartedly continuing to grow together in our garden. Join us and bring your gifts: Gardening, marketing, public relations, research, cooking, baking, building, handy skills, artistic skills, gathering, donating, advice and knowledge, encouragement and companionship. All this helps.

New plans his year include rain barrels to save water for the gardens, a full compost program, natural remedies, companion planting, sharing more produce with Evangel Hall and local food bank on a regular basis and

of course, sharing with community volunteers and our congregation.

Let’s grow food. Let’s grow community. Together!

Date: Spring Summer and Fall of 2014

Contact: Gina MacKenzie-Lodge

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**Ministry with Youth at MHP**

We are blessed with an active Sunday school program for younger children and are currently developing our ministry with pre-teen and teen aged youth. This planning involves hiring a part-time youth minister.

We currently have a contingent of young people in late middle-school and early high school and many more just behind them. These are important years and as a congregation we want to foster connection with our youth at this time in their faith development.

This initiative will require financial support of approximately \$6500-10 000 per year. We have applied for grants to partially offset costs in the initial years and are hopeful about receiving them. We also require prayer for selection of the right person, wisdom in developing the program, and for the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the lives our young people. In the future, volunteers may be needed to teach, meet with, and mentor youth.

Date: Spring or Fall 2014

Contact: Lauren Matheson, Alison Williams or Tori Smit

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**Worship at MHP**

Worship is the center of who we are as God’s people. We are a congregation of many ages, from 1 to 93! Our worship is a time and place where we all come, experience God and are nurtured to go out into the world to serve.

The current sound system's ability to perform each week is tenuous and planning has begun to replace it with a new audio-visual system.

The new system will reach all ears better and will add a visual component to our worship with the addition of a retractable screen(s) in the sanctuary. The benefits of this will include the introduction of new music without the expensive purchase of new hymn books. Words on the screen for responsive readings and scripture will make it easier folks who have a hard time seeing. Visual pictures and images will complement the sermons and children's time. Not everyone is an auditory learner and the younger generation in particular is more attuned to visual messages.

The anticipated cost is fifteen to eighteen thousand dollars. To date six thousand dollars have been raised.

Anticipated Date for completion: Fall 2015  
Contact: Rev Karen Dimock or Blair Gerrie

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**MHP Kitchen Reno Project**

The Kitchen Re-Furbishing Committee and Women's Association

Vision: To strengthen the communal and mission life of MHP as we seek to be able to better serve our community.

Goal: An industrial dishwasher and a modernized kitchen along the entire west wall of the fellowship hall along Kennedy Avenue

Anticipated cost is \$75,000 - \$80,000. At April, 2014 approximately \$27,500 has been raised

**Planning Strategies:**

To include all women and men who wish to be involved on this committee. To locate and visit recently remodeled church kitchens in the city

To explore dreams and ideas as a congregation. To explore and discuss plans with reputable contractors

Anticipated Goal date: 2019

Contact Hildy Stollery

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**Building our way towards a brighter future....**

Our building is an integral part of the work we do as a congregation at MHP. It hosts our mission and our ministry; it is the hub of our work within the community. The F&M Team has some big dreams and visions for the projects we would like to take on in the coming years, and are looking for your feedback and comments.

- Putting glass windows into our interior doors
- Repair work on our organ
- Updating all the MHP washrooms
- Revitalizing the gym (new floors, dehumidifier)
- Repairing the masonry of the bell tower

Contact: Tristan Gerrie and Patricia Ramkhelawan

**Mission at MHP: Engaging our Community**

This is a conversation in its early stages, not yet at the stage of identifying or choosing projects but rather of asking and answering questions.

Many of our current and recent projects have engaged local community: Vacation Bible School, Habitat for Humanity, the community garden and the solar panels.

The community around us is continually changing as are we and so as we contemplate future engagement we are called to ask:

Who is our neighbour and what are their struggles?

Who are we and what gifts and or/facilities have we been given to share?

What do we need to learn about the community and ourselves that we don't know yet?

How will we do that?

We need your input and participation, your questions and answers as we get this conversation started, beginning of a journey that will continue to lead us to be part of what God is doing already in this community

Timeline: Now and into the future

Contact: Donna Sullivan

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### THANK YOU!

#### Evangel Hall Volunteers

On March 2<sup>nd</sup> a lively group of volunteers served dinner to our friends at Evangel Hall: Pots of chili, salad, buns & butter, and squares for dessert. Thanks for those who served and those who provided food. After dinner there was a short worship service lead by Megan Shin, our student minister.

As always we had such a great time that we are ready to go again. Stay tuned for the next opportunity to serve, likely sometime in early 2015.

### FROM THE SESSION

At its January meeting the Session approved the following Sunday dates for communion at MHP in the coming year

- First Sunday in Lent, March 9
- Palm Sunday, April 13
- Easter, April 20
- Pentecost, June 8
- Sunday School Commissioning Sunday, September 8
- World Wide Communion Sunday, October 5
- First Sunday in Advent, November 31
- First Sunday after Epiphany, January 11
- Any date we receive new members
- Possibly once during the summer, date to be determined

This is a change from our previous practice of serving communion the first Sunday of December, June and October as well as each week during Lent. In practice we will still serve communion as often as we have in previous years. We hope that in spreading the dates out over the seasons of the church year we will deepen our understanding of communion. In addition to these Sunday services we anticipate serving it as well at our service on Maunday Thursday as well as the longest night service in December.

Living Faith, one of the subordinate standards of our denomination has this to say about Communion:

#### 7.7 Holy Communion

7.7.1 In breaking bread and drinking wine Jesus told us to remember him.

In this action called Holy Communion, Lord's Supper, or Eucharist, Christ offers himself to us and we present ourselves to him, in worship and adoration.

7.7.2 In Holy Communion, Christ places his table in this world to feed and bless his people.

The Holy Spirit so unites us in Christ that in receiving the bread and wine in faith we share in his body and blood.

7.7.3 The Lord's Supper is a joyful mystery Where by Jesus takes the bread and wine to represent his atoning sacrifice, deepening our union with himself and with each other, giving us of his life and strength.

Here Christ is present in his world proclaiming salvation until he comes—a symbol of hope for a troubled age.

7.7.4 The Eucharist is thanksgiving to God. We pray for the world and with gratitude offer our lives to God.

We celebrate his victory over death and anticipate the joyous feast we shall have in his coming kingdom.

We pledge allegiance to Christ as Lord, are fed as one church, receive these signs of his love, and are marked as his.

7.7.5 Those who belong to Christ come gladly to his table to make a memorial of his life and death to celebrate his presence, and together as his church offer him thanks.

From: Living Faith, a Statement of Christian Belief

A Document produced by and adhered to by the Presbyterian Church in Canada and its membership.

There are copies to borrow on the lending library, and please ask Rev Karen if you would like one to keep for yourself.

## COMING SOON

### Joyce's Chile Dinner, April 12<sup>th</sup>

An annual favorite. Bring your friends and family and share an evening of fellowship, fun and food. Cost is \$15 for an individual, \$25 for a family & children under 8 free.

### Guess who is coming to Dinner: March 24<sup>th</sup>

Saturday May 24 is the date for this fun event for all ages. Here's how it works: Everyone at MHP is invited to sign up to be either a host or a guest. If you sign up to be a host, you indicate how many people you can host at your home, and you provide the main course. You won't know who is coming to dinner until they arrive. If you sign up to be a guest, you will be assigned to bring either an appetizer or a dessert, and will be given an address time on arrival. You won't know who you will be dining with until you arrive. This event is being organized by Alison Williams and Kevin Chan. Ask them if you have any questions. Sign up will begin in early May. Mark the date on your calendars now.

### Habitat for Humanity: June 14<sup>th</sup>

The date is almost here!! Yes, the Habitat Home on Runnymede has begun, mostly with the exterior shell being assembled at a factory and getting ready to be delivered to the site.

Soon there will be teams preparing to help build this house. The congregation of Morningside High Park will be one of them on Saturday June 14.

For the past year & a half the M&O team have been leading congregational activities to support Habitat for Humanity in their building endeavors. Through the serving of meals, this congregation has supported teams to help the completion of 2 homes within the Toronto community. Our Rev. Karen participated in a Faith Builders day, where she worked alongside leaders of many faiths to help in framing another home. Through our fund raising endeavors with the VBS, Community Lawn BBQ and Cuppa Change we have raised over \$1800.00 towards the cost of building the home on Runnymede Rd (almost double our original goal). On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Costa family joined us in worship and now we hope you'll be able to help this family, in a sweat equity endeavor, to build their new home in our community.

Please set this date aside and consider whether or not you might be able to assist in this endeavour. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old to be on the build site. We will be shown how to perform the tasks we're able to do that day and H4H supplies all the safety equipment we will need (hard hats, safety boots etc.) So don't let the fact that you don't how to swing a hammer hold you back. On the other hand, if you have knowledge, skills or abilities that might be useful in the building of a home, please let us know. Once we have the date set, we will post a sign in the Fellowship Hall for volunteers to sign up. Initially we were told that there would be a \$75 participation fee, but we have been told that this will be waived as our congregation has done so much fund-raising. Of course, if

**Deadline for submission for the September Newsletter: August 25<sup>th</sup>**

you would still like to contribute in this way, your donation is always greatly appreciated. So get ready to have some fun, learn a thing or two about raising a roof and know you're helping to build community.....See you there!

### **PRESBYTERIAN RECORD**

Check out the March issue for an article by Chandhar Ramkhelawan!

Hope you enjoyed it, is also time to renew your subscription.

One year subscription through the every home plan is \$27.75 including tax.

In order to stay on this plan we require 35 subscriptions, otherwise the cost rises to \$38.36

Deadline for renewals is April 30<sup>th</sup>, please speak to Hildy or Tristan.

### **STEWARDSHIP**

**Thank you! Your offering to the church allows us to do participate in the ministries and missions that God is calling us to.**

January - March 2014

Offering to the church \$36272.75

Budgeted amount- \$33850.00

Thank you for your generosity