

The Messenger

Morningside-High Park Presbyterian Church

Reflection

February 2015

Just as Advent marks the beginning of a new year in the church calendar, so too did it mark the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Morningside-High Park as Rev. Dimock's was called to St. Andrew's in Ottawa. We wish Karen and her family goodbye and good luck, but know that God's plan for her and her ministry are bright.

However, with that goodbye, there are questions about what's next for us as a congregation, and what this "interim" period might look like. Some might be feeling dread at undergoing this process, others uncertainty, frustration, or confusion. As we move forward into this transition, here are some things to consider.

Be a Person of Prayer. While prayer is always an important piece of our faith, during a vacancy the need to include the congregation in your prayers is even more acute. Ask God to bless the church, to heal hurts, and to help us move forward as a congregation towards the path He has planned for us.

Process your Feelings. Regardless of the circumstances in which a minister leaves a congregation, there are a wide variety of feelings, both positive and difficult, associated with this loss. Holding on to these feelings, lamenting the loss or struggling with distrust is not healthy for an individual or the congregation. Pray out these feelings; ask for God's help in healing hurts and changing negative attitudes. What has happened has happened, and while feelings shouldn't be shut off or ignored, it is still important to move forward and discover God's new plan.

Build Unity in our Congregation. Being without a minister can be a powerful opportunity for congregations to get on the same page, prioritize and learn to be self-sufficient. A vacancy presents an opportunity for members to learn to resolve conflicts and build consensus within their membership. It can also be an opportunity to build new relationships in the congregation and strengthen old ones, as we are pulled closer together due to our increased need to minister to one another.

Continue to Faithfully Worship as a Community. A lack of consistency may make some feel less excited about attending church regularly. However, this can be an opportunity to experience different types of sermons, worship and leadership styles, and help determine what suits you as a congregation.

Don't Waste the Opportunity. A vacancy can be an opportunity to try new events, strengthen relationships and try pilot projects in the church. I remember during our last vacancy, the church tried a number of new events, including a Burns Dinner and the 30 Hour Famine. I wonder what new initiatives our church might try during this period to rejuvenate the work and life of our congregation?

Lend a Helping Hand. Changes in church leadership can be an opportunity to try new roles as the church undergoes a time of transition. Remember that the church is not just an agency to provide service to you, but a relationship-based community where people serve and bless one another mutually. It takes everyone's participation to make things flow smoothly.

Be at Peace. Things will go smoothly if the congregation remains calm and steadfast in their faith. Ultimately, God cares about our congregation as much as we do, and we can trust in the fact that He will continue to build and support our church.

Know That There is a Plan and a Process. The search for our new minister has already begun and Rev. Kim is in place to help us navigate the process. It is not a decision that can be rushed, nor should it be, as we want to ensure that we are finding a minister who is the right fit for the congregation.

If you have any questions or concerns, or just need someone to talk to, know that any of the Elders would be happy to offer support. We continue to hold each and every member of the congregation in our prayers, and know that you are important members of our church family.

Tristan

FAREWELL IRIS

It is with both joy and sadness that we say goodbye to Iris at the end of January. We have enjoyed the many facets of Iris's music over the years, be it on the horn, the cello or her lovely voice. Latterly she has been our 'official' music leader, but that time has come to an end as she continues to develop her music career.

She now has a position with the Windsor Symphony which makes it impossible for her to be with us also. Everyone has certainly appreciated and benefited from her ministry of music through the years and we are sad to see such a cherished member of our community leave. However, we want to wish her our very best wishes as she continues along life's musical path. Iris, thank you and God Bless!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held **March 1st, 2015** following the worship service. As in previous years, we will host a **Pot Luck Lunch** prior to the meeting. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall in the weeks leading up to the AGM.

EVANGEL HALL

Mark your calendars now! MHP will be serving dinner at Evangel Hall on **March 8, 2015**. There are a number of ways to get involved, whether by preparing food ahead of time, or assisting by serving the meals at EH. There will be more information and a sign-up sheet posted **Mid-February**.

This event is a great way to give back to our community and our city, and is always a meaningful experience for everyone involved.

SANCTUARY SAFETY

The F&M Team asks that children are not left unsupervised in the sanctuary. This request is made for their own safety, as there a number of potential hazards. Thank you!

MHP SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER February 17th 5:30-7:00 p.m.

You've treated your loved ones on Valentine's Day. Family Day will have taken away the Monday blues. MHP's Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will lighten your "What will I make for dinner?" woes. The F&C Team invites you to partake in this annual event on Tuesday, February 17th. Shrove Tuesday marks the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday.

Bring your family and friends to partake in a meal of light, fluffy pancakes, scrumptious sausages, fresh fruit, all smothered with tasty syrup. Coffee, tea, and juice are also provided. Cost is \$8 per person or \$25 per family. Doors are open at 5:30 p.m. and pancakes are served until 7:00 p.m. Hope to see you there!

PULPIT SUPPLY

Feb 8: Rev. Cam Taylor
Feb 15: Rev. Dr. John-Peter Smit
Feb 22: Glenn McCullough

March 1: Phil Yoo
March 8: Rev. Cam Taylor
March 15: Glenn McCullough
March 22: TBC
March 29: Rev. Dr. John-Peter Smit

2014 GREENING SACRED SPACES AWARD

MHP has been honoured with the 2014 Greening Sacred Spaces Award! This award recognizes the contributions of faith communities who demonstrate a commitment to the care of the environment through action.

The award takes the following areas of "greening" into consideration: Spirituality and Worship, Sacred space, grounds and activities and Supporting stewardship in the wider community. A date to receive the award has not yet been arranged. Thank you to everyone who has worked hard to make our congregation "green!"

SEARCH COMMITTEE

As Morningside-High Park prepares to begin the process of calling a minister, the Session is looking for nominations to the Search Committee.

Responsibilities of the Search Committee include creating a church profile, reviewing profiles submitted by applicants, traveling to attend worship services led by applicants, and conducting interviews.

Nominations should be submitted by February 21, 2015. Session will review and consider all nominations before making a final decision.

Decisions around membership of the committee will be made at the February Session meeting. Session will take into consideration the demographics of the congregation and the participation in church life of the nominee. Session will carefully consider each nominee, but acknowledges that we will likely receive more candidates than can be accommodated on the search committee. For this reason we ask that any nominations are kept **confidential**, and once a committee has been decided upon a member of Session will approach the nominee.

Nominations can be placed in the box in the Narthex or given to your Elder.

To aid you in your selection, the Session has made a list of some qualities which are "desirable" and "not desirable" for members of a Search Committee.

Desirable

- Prayerful and joyfully shares their faith
- Good collaborator Listens, co-operative, builds on others)
- Good communicator (share thoughts clearly both at meetings and between them)
- Provides constructive feedback (have differences of opinions respectfully and harmoniously)

Desirable (cont.)

- Reliable (follows through on assigned tasks)
- Committed to the Congregation (involved, attendance)
- Critical thinker and analyzer
- Flexible and open-minded
- Good "intuitive" feelings (able to "read" people)
- Familiar with MHP and the Presbyterian Church
- Willing to shoulder some of the work associated with being on the Search Committee
- Grateful of their MHP Family

Not Desirable

- Competitive and divisive
- Self-Important/Self-Righteous
- Does not know many MHP congregants
- Indecisive
- Not familiar with worship at MHP
- Argumentative
- Easily persuaded and influenced by others

BENEVOLENT ASSISTANCE

We ask that if any individuals approach you during the service or fellowship hour asking for financial assistance that you direct them to a member of Session. MHP has a policy around providing benevolent assistance and an Elder would be happy to offer support in this situation. Thank you.

FELLOWSHIP HOUR SCHEDULE

Feb 8: Lauren Matheson's District

Feb 15: Allen Stuart's District

Feb 22: Donna Sullivan's District

March 1: AGM Pot Luck

March 8: Kirk Dunn's District

March 15: Marc Dunn's District

March 22: Alison William's District

March 29: Blair Gerrie's District