

CHURCHPOST

RIDEAU PARK UNITED CHURCH



Minister's Message

Familiar words, new meanings

The pandemic has taken over our lives and, in the process, impacted our vocabulary as well. The word **bubble**, for example, refers (according to Webster's) to a *thin, usually spherical film of liquid filled with air and gas*. Bubbles were once associated with children, baths, weddings and gum. Now when we hear the word bubble, we think of small units of people trying to stay Covid-free by associating only with each other. *Stay inside your bubble*, we're told. I heeded that advice. Not easy for an extrovert when their social circle is limited to two. Fortunately, the other person in my bubble is good company.

The word **lockdown** I previously associated with outbreaks of flu in retirement homes. An outbreak would lead to a lockdown and the cancellation of my monthly church service. Usually, there were a few lockdowns each winter among the five residences where Rideau Park holds services. Now most of Ontario is in lockdown. This one is also linked to a virus and, like influenza, the coronavirus comes from a large, prolific family. Its newest variants are more contagious – some experts say up to 50% more. The wisdom of bubbles and lockdowns becomes clearer every day.

To me, the word **curve** used to mean a bend in the road – *watch out for the curve ahead!* Since March, the curve that compels my attention is a line on a graph that keeps trending upwards. The battle cry of scientists, politicians and medical personnel for almost a year now has been *flatten the curve!* And they told us how to do it. Making a guess about who reads *ChurchPost*, I'd say that most of us have made an effort to comply with what was asked of us. That choice may explain why the Covid curve remains relatively flat for members of Rideau Park. Here's hoping the curve will soon flatten for everyone.

The word **zoom** I once associated with sound and speed. Then it became a means of Internet communication and I started participating in occasional Zoom meetings as part of my work on a regional committee. Then the pandemic comes along, and I find myself Zooming with groups of Rideau Park women three times a week. Zoom has become a way of life for many of us. Rideau Park uses Zoom for committee and UCW meetings, weekly meditation group, bible study and the now once-weekly cyber chats. Thank heavens for Zoom! As the old Bell Canada commercial put it: *It's the next best thing to being there.*

While the meaning of some words has evolved during the pandemic, the meaning of other words has stayed the same. Words such as consideration, respect, caring and kindness – all translate easily into a pandemic context.

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Stewardship	Gavin Currie, Chair
Administration & Comm.	Vacant

RIDEAU PARK UNITED CHURCH	
Worship (online):	10 a.m.
Coffee Hour:	Suspended
Sunday School:	Online

OUR HEARTS REMEMBER

We hold in our thoughts and prayers the families and loved ones of these Rideau Park friends who have passed away:

Evalyn Collins	December 10, 2020
Alex Caldwell	December 18, 2020
Art Redekopp	December 29, 2020
Doug Barber	January 12, 2021
Fergy Short	January 15, 2021

I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.

John 11:25-26



Minister's Message (continued from page 1)

When we stay in our bubbles, wear our masks and keep an appropriate distance from each other we are living out the true meaning of these words.

It's been almost a year since Rideau Park's worship service and some of its programs have gone virtual. When things will get back to normal, we don't know. Appreciation is due to the staff and church leaders who have kept us feeling connected in the interim.

Boy, do we need a big party when this is over. Be warned though – when that time comes I've got lots of pent-up hugs and handshakes and more than a little conversation to share with anyone who wanders within a few feet of me.

Until we meet again...

Stay safe.

Georgina Fitzgerald



Finance Committee Update

If 2020 showed us anything, it is the resilience of the congregation, staff and volunteers, and that there can be silver linings even in the most difficult of times. Through a lot of hard work, the church was able to maintain services online through ever-changing circumstances, from limited openings to lockdowns. We were also able to keep staff on the payroll for the entire year, and to maintain a safe and healthy work environment for those who had to support the services. We were able to keep the Christmas Cheer and the Shoe Box programs going and to fulfill our Mission and Service commitments to the national church. This success is the result of strong support from the congregation through your donations, and from the government through their various assistance programs. Consequently, we ended the year with a reasonable surplus.

The Committee would like to thank members of the congregation, the UCW, staff and volunteers for helping make 2020 a successful year under difficult circumstances and we look forward to your continued support in 2021.

Rideau Park Finance Committee



Come and find the quiet centre in the crowded life we lead, find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed: clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes, that we can see all the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.
(VU #374)



Children’s and Youth Ministry News

Sunday School continues online: Our Sunday School has been meeting online on Sundays since September. There are four age groups: JK/SK at 10am, Grades 1-3 at 10am, Grades 4-6 at 10:30am and our youth class at 11:30am. All these groups are meeting on Zoom. A huge thank you to our teachers for making this possible! If you would like to join in, message Steve Clifton at sclifton@rideaupark.ca for the Zoom coordinates.



Online teaching opportunity: We are looking for someone to join our JK-SK teaching team, to teach a short lesson on Zoom every other week. If this interests you, speak to Steve Clifton for more information.

Camp Awesome: An expanded Camp Awesome is planning a summer online experience in 2021. We will share more on what Camp Awesome 2021 will look like as the program develops.

Confirmation Class: A class of 12 young people have been meeting online monthly since October. The class has four members from Kitchissippi and eight from Rideau Park. Normally, we would celebrate confirmation in June but we may well wait until fall 2021 so that we can celebrate in person together.

Rideau Park Prayer Chain



Pastoral Visiting. Prayer Shawls. Prayer requests on Sunday morning. These are a few of the ways that Rideau Park people offer prayerful care. A prayer chain is a group of people who are committed to pray each day for concerns that are brought to them. Concerns for people can be sent to the chain. The prayer request will be forwarded through the chain by email or phone. Prayers will be offered; names and circumstances need not be included with prayer requests and all information that is provided will be kept confidential within the chain. If you would like to access our prayer chain, please send requests to Doreen Hamilton, hamilton.doreen@gmail.com or phone the church 613-733-3156 and press 5 to leave a voicemail request. If you would like to join the prayer chain, please contact Doreen.

Twenty Minutes of Sacred Stillness

Our meditation group meets every Thursday morning at 10am on Zoom. Message Steve Clifton at sclifton@rideaupark.ca to get the Zoom meeting information or visit our website to find a recorded session and “how to meditate” videos.



Black History Month

February is African Heritage or Black History Month. Our February focus is antiracism, and you will find videos posted daily on that theme in our Facebook group. You don’t need to “join” Facebook to see our posts, just search for the [Rideau Park United Church Facebook Group](#).



Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI)

Multifaith Housing, which our church supports, is working on a Veterans' House initiative. Using the former CFB Rockcliffe Airbase Lands in Ottawa, the proposed building will comprise three floors of living space, one floor of communal space and a basement for administrative purposes. All this housing is for Veterans: "40 homeless or at-risk veterans will have immediate access to support services from a variety of partner agencies. This supportive “Housing First” model will give our veterans on-site recovery from health, mental health and addiction-related issues. Not only does the supported housing model improve the overall quality of life, but it does so in recognition of crucial and unbreakable experience of military bonds that exist for all in the military community from veterans to their families."

The [#WeSaluteYourService Challenge for Veterans' House](#) invites people to make a donation in honour of a veteran that they would like to remember.

<https://www.multifaithhousing.ca/>



Zoom Cyber Chats

Join other women from Rideau Park for a half hour Zoom cyber chat. Email Georgina Fitzgerald at gfitzgerald@rideaupark.ca for the link. Topics differ each week. The last three were: What belief, biblical story or event of the Christian religion did you once hold as true but can adhere to no longer? Once Queen Elizabeth passes on, do you think Canada should continue to have a member of the British Royal Family as its Head of State? Tell us something about yourself that sounds as if you're making it up but is actually true. These chats are informal, usually fun, and we try to end before Zoom cuts us off at 40 minutes. Hope you'll be able to participate in some of them.

Greetings from the UCW

As I take over as president of the UCW, I'd like to say a sincere and heartfelt "thank you" to Nancy Begg-Durkee for the last three years of leadership she has provided. Things are quiet presently, and it feels a bit sad not to be looking forward to the annual Valentine's Day Coffee Party at Rideau Park. I have fond memories of folks, many dressed in red, enjoying tea, coffee, baked goodies and, above all, warm conversation and a few laughs with folks we hadn't seen for a while.



The Parlour always looked so festive for this event, with the valentine décor and lovely silver tea services. Perhaps a Thanksgiving Coffee Party is a plausible goal for 2021? I will certainly advise the congregation whenever the UCW has small fundraisers in the meantime, as soon as public health guidelines allow. Until then, do stay well and patiently look forward to the time when we can get together again at church for worship and fellowship.

Nancy McPherson, UCW President



Calendar of Events – Special Dates of Note

Wednesday, February 17 at 10:00 am – **Recalculating: a Bible Study** exploring sudden changes and new directions in the story of God's people. Contact Elizabeth or Steve if you would like to receive the Zoom link for this discussion group.

Sunday, February 14 at 10:00 am – Sunday worship with **guest speaker Adele Halliday**, the United Church of Canada's first antiracism and equity officer.

Monday, February 15 is Family Day. The "office" will be closed, so staff (who are working from home) may not answer your emails or phone calls.



Wednesday, February 17, at 7:00 pm – **Ash Wednesday:** A Zoom worship gathering to mark the beginning of Lent. We invite you to be creative in preparing your own symbols for the service: a candle to light, bread and cup for communion, and something to draw a cross on your hand or forehead. (Some are planning on using cocoa powder mixed with some oil, but you can use whatever you have on hand, like a washable marker or black hockey tape – be creative!)

Sunday, February 21 at 10:00 am – **Lent 1 communion service.** The service will be livestreamed, so we invite you to bring your own bread and cup to the computer.

Monday, February 22, at 1:30 pm – Our **Knitting Group** is meeting by Zoom for stitchery and conversation. If you are interested in joining us, contact administrator@rideaupark.ca for the invite.

Wednesdays, February 24 and March 3,10,17,24 at 7:00 pm – **Evening Reflections in Lent.** The theme is *Conversations with Jesus* – a prayer and reflection service to deepen our journey.

Sunday, February 28, at 11:30 am – Following our regular Sunday morning worship, the Rideau Park United Church **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be held over Zoom at 11:30 am (Zoom link opens at 11:15 am). There will be a separate email containing details, agenda and a link to the annual report.



Sunday, March 7, 10:00 am service – will include the annual **lighting of a memorial candle** in memory of the members of our church family who died in 2020.

Sunday, March 14 is P.I.E. Day, a day when we commemorate our choice to be Public – Intentional – Explicit about our decision to be an LGBTQ+ inclusive faith community. Stay tuned for more details.



Sunday, March 28, 10:00 am service – **Palm Sunday service.**

Thursday, April 1, 7:00 pm (exact time to be confirmed) – **Holy Thursday**, a shared service with Emmanuel and Kitchissippi United Churches, **livestreamed from Emmanuel United's website:** www.emmanuelunited.ca.

Friday, April 2, 10:00 am – **Good Friday service**, shared with Emmanuel and Kitchissippi United, live-streamed from Rideau Park United.



Sunday, April 4, 10:00 am – **Easter Sunday worship.**



Rideau Park Reads and Watches...



Here are some recommendations from fellow Rideau Parkers to help pass the time enjoyably.

TV/Netflix/Film

- ◆ “The Dig”, on Netflix, based on a true story of archaeological findings in Suffolk, England just before the start of World War II. Excellent drama starring Carey Mulligan and Ralph Fiennes.
- ◆ “The Children Act”, on Netflix. An excellent legal drama, starring Emma Thompson and Stanley Tucci.
- ◆ “The Queen’s Gambit”, on Netflix. Limited-run dramatic series about the world of competitive chess and a young woman prodigy, starring Anya Taylor-Joy, who also starred in the recent film “Emma”.
- ◆ “Offspring”, on Netflix, a popular series from Australia about an obstetrician and her rather dreadful family. The characters grow on you.
- ◆ “The Personal History of David Copperfield”, a film loosely based on the Dickens classic, starring an international cast, such as Dev Patel, Tilda Swinton, and Hugh Laurie.

Books

- ◆ “Truth Be Told”, autobiography of former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada Beverley McLachlin.
- ◆ “This Is How It Always Is”, a novel by Laurie Frankel.
- ◆ “Lilac Girls” by Martha Hall Kelly, based on a true story.
- ◆ “The Huntress”, by Kate Quinn.
- ◆ “The Forgotten Home Child”, a novel by Genevieve Graham.
- ◆ “The Other Side of the River”, by Alf Dumont.
- ◆ “The Lying Life of Adults”, a novel by Elena Ferrante.
- ◆ “We Have Always Been Here: A Queer Muslim Memoir”, an autobiography by Samra Habib.



A Limerick Challenge for All



Lorna McCrea submitted the extremely apt limerick below, with the suggestion we invite others in the congregation to submit theirs. For the May issue, due Friday, May 7, please send to nmcpherson@rogers.com your Covid-inspired limerick(s) and they will be printed for all to enjoy.

*We’ve been fighting the pandemic all year
It’s been hard to maintain our good cheer
But we’ll hope for the day
When we’ll be OKAY
And can meet again over a beer!*

A limerick must be 5 lines long. The final syllable or word of the first two sentences rhyme with each other, as does the final syllable or word in the final line. (As in Lorna’s example, year, cheer and beer.) The last word in each of the third and fourth lines should rhyme with each other. I think you can figure out the metre or rhythm from her example, or Google the format. I think we’re all pretty familiar with this popular (and often cheeky) form of verse.

In high school, our grade 13 English teacher taught us about many forms of poetry – the sonnet, haiku, blank verse, the limerick, etc. I didn’t keep my old sonnets or haiku, but I did keep a couple of my limericks, which I’ll share, even though they have nothing to do with the pandemic.

*There once was a princess named Alice
Who drove the king wild with her malice.
He ordered her dead
As she lay on her bed
So they put cyanide in her chalice.*

*There once was an oyster named Sam,
Who spent hours on end eating jam.
He once became glued
With this sticky-sweet food,
And he lived till his death like a clam.*

Guess I had a bit of a morbid streak in those days! Anyway, those are just a couple of extra examples to give you a sense of the cadence and length. Have fun!

Nancy McPherson



Next ChurchPost Submission

Due: 12 Noon, Friday, May 7, 2021

Pick-up: Sunday, May 16, 2021

Submissions to ChurchPost can be emailed to:

nmcperson@rogers.com

and should include the name and phone number of the author(s).

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