



# *Grapevine* *Fall 2019*

## FONTHILL UNITED CHURCH

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*From the Minister*

### *A Time for change:*

In January I announced my intention to retire from the ministry in a year's time. Eight months have since passed so it feels to me that we are now counting down the remaining five months. I set January 31, 2020 as the target date and that made finding the next minister, the congregation's project for 2019.

The Search Committee is required to maintain confidentiality about its work so you haven't heard much from them but it has been at work, and you will find the chairperson's progress report in this issue of the *Grapevine*. The hope is that sometime during the fall, the Search Committee will be ready to call a congregational meeting in order to recommend one candidate for the congregation to approve. By approving the recommendation, the congregation extends the call. The call must also be approved by the Human Resources Commission of Horseshoe Falls Regional Council. The congregation can then get ready to welcome the new minister.

Several people have asked me about my retirement plans. Sigita and I plan to continue living in our home in Fonthill. I do not plan to take on any commitments for the first year. I currently serve on the Regional Council Executive and as a Regional Council Liaison and I plan to continue in these roles. After the year is up, I will consider helping local churches as an interim or supply minister. There may be other ways to serve the church, but I am not retiring because I am looking for work. I am retiring so that I can have the time to do some of the things I have been unable to do while working full-time.

During my retirement, I look forward to pursuing some hobbies and interests. Sigita and I would like to go back to Latvia, maybe visit Holland, and perhaps some other places in Europe. We would like to spend more time hiking in the wilderness. I would like to age in good health and I know the key to that is to follow a regular fitness plan. I would like to meditate more regularly and read many good books. Because Sigita and I both worked on the weekends, we were unable to take advantage of the cultural opportunities that will now be available to us. And friends! Most of my social energies went to the congregations I served and I have neglected to make friends. I know it's a bit late in life to start, but I hope I can still do that.

People have also asked me about whether I will continue to be involved at Fonthill United Church. The United Church of Canada has a disengagement policy for the continuing involvement of retired ministers in the churches they have served. It is that they "*do not attend the community of faith in which they have just served for a specific length of time, at least one year, to allow the new minister to be settled into the life of the church.*" This is a wise policy and I intend to observe it, so I will not be involved during the first year and we'll see after that. I do, however, want to keep in touch as we see each other around town. You may see me at a dinner or the Flea Market or some other event, and maybe at worship eventually, but not during the first year.

When the people I have known pass away I will want to attend their funerals, but I will not want to conduct the services or speak at them. The same disengagement policy requires that if I am asked to do that, I must refer the request to your new minister and it says that I would only be permitted to conduct a service with the approval of Council. I hope I will not be asked to do that but circumstances may arise that make it necessary, for example, if the new minister is away on vacation and no one else is available.

As my ministry among you comes to a conclusion, there will be some people who will be tempted to withdraw their involvement. Please don't do it! Especially if you are serving on Council, on a committee or in other ways, it is important that you continue doing what you've done for a year or two. You cannot expect the new minister to find others to do your job when he/she doesn't know people well enough. If you quit before the new minister starts, he/she will feel like he/she has no support and that makes for a rough start. Also, do not withdraw your financial support either, because if you do, then the minister will question whether he/she can stay for the long term or has to make plans for when the money runs out.

Having left congregations before, I know that there will be some people who will want to have a final visit, to express appreciation (or disappointment) and to say good-bye. If you are one of them please do not wait until the last month to do it because that could be overwhelming. I will leave it to you either to come to the church office for a visit or to invite me to your home.

There will be more to talk about in the months ahead but we have another Grapevine coming in December and we still have five months together. In other matters...

#### *A New Governance Handbook*

In the Spring *Grapevine*, I reported that I was working on a new Governance Handbook to replace the old *Constitution*.

The *Constitution* was in need of revisions for two reasons. As of January 2019 the United Church adopted a new governance structure. Since the old *Constitution* was based on the old structure, a new document is needed. Secondly, Council has made changes to some of its committees which were not described in the old *Constitution*. In order to make for a good transition to the next minister, it is important that the way we do things be clear, and that's what a *Governance Handbook* is for.

With the help of Harland Young, I have prepared a document I've called *Fonthill United Church Governance Handbook 2019*. I've dropped the word 'constitution' because the 2019 *United Church Manual* does not use it. In this new era the word 'governance' is common so I have used it here. I tried to bring the Governance Handbook in accord with the 2019 *Manual*, and to describe the workings of Council, its committees and the other groups in our congregation.

I asked Patrice to post it on the church's website where you will find it under the "Resources and Links" tab. There you will also find the existing *Constitution* with which you can compare the new one. Patrice can email a copy or print one (9 pages) for any who are interested in reading and commenting on it. I've asked Council members and a few others to make suggestions to improve it and I welcome suggestions (in writing, please.) I will gather up these suggestions in September and make appropriate revisions.

At the September Council meeting I will ask Council to approve it in order to recommend that the congregation adopt it. We will have to call a congregational meeting to do that, perhaps in October or November. Then we can publish it in booklet form and make copies available to anyone who asks for one.

I realize this is not the most exciting task but it is a necessary thing we should do so that the next minister gets a good start to his/her ministry.

#### *Pastoral Care*

The Pastoral Care Committee assists me in the ministry of pastoral care. They visit members and adherents and meet with me once a month to share concerns and decide on best ways to help. Two of the original members of the committee no longer serve. Sharon Middleton withdrew last year and Joyce Teather died this past summer. We have two new additions to the committee to announce: Aileen Grantham and Trudy Pickersgill. The full committee is:

Marleene Kretchman (chairperson)	Aileen Grantham
Sheila Laundry (cards)	Trudy Pickersgill
Joan Rigg	

The committee normally meets on the first Wednesday morning of each month. If you know of anyone in need of a pastoral care visit, either by a member of the committee or the minister, please speak to me or to one of the committee members.

In the past few months we have had six deaths in the congregation and in all cases, family members expressed appreciation for the ministry of Pastoral Care. The people who died are:

June Timms on April 20	Sandra Duncan on July 8
Pam Bronn on June 17	Joyce Teather on July 20
Jack Gray on June 23	Ralph Haun on August 11

It has been a hard summer for the congregation, but being part of a congregation that supports one another in these difficult times is one of God's blessings. We express our sympathy to all family members and friends.

#### *Cyclone Idai Appeal*

Last spring, the United Church asked congregations to respond to a special appeal to respond to the humanitarian crisis in southern Africa in the wake of Cyclone Idai which hit Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi, and was followed by a second Cyclone Kenneth. Our congregation responded to the appeal, raising \$2,150 which was sent to our United Church partners in these countries to buy food and medical supplies. Thank you to all who made a contribution. This is one of the ways the congregation continues to be faithful to its calling.

### *New Member Reception*

In case you missed it, on June 2 we received the following new members into the fellowship of our congregation:

Dick O'Brien	Gaye Meloche
Catherine Geary	Heather Jesik
Fay MacPhail	Russell Jesik
Margaret Frazer	Mike Russell
Phil Main	Debbie Stock

We also welcome as adherents, Shalo Johnson and Frances AnZinger. Fran is Jim Molkoski's sister.

Fonthill United Church continues to attract new people to its membership. If you haven't yet gotten acquainted with our new members and adherents, please make a special effort to meet them. Making friends is one of the ways we strengthen our fellowship.

### *Discussion Group - Now for something completely different...*

The last discussion group I will be offering will meet following worship beginning September 15. I purchased a new video series called *ProFuture Faith*, led by Rev. Michael Dowd. It is the most progressive theological expression that I have yet seen, and it addresses issues of:

1. Un-Trivializing GOD – Reality as Thou
2. The Purpose of Religion and the Necessity of Science
3. The Epic of Evolution: A Cosmic Timeline
4. What is Inevitable; What is Needed
5. What is Futile; What is Urgent
6. Why We Struggle: Un-Trivializing Mythic Wisdom
7. Impermanence and Death as Sacred: Embracing Limits
8. Staying Sane, Sober, and Inspired in Contracting Times

The theology in this series will be a bit of a stretch for most people (even me!) but it should result in lively discussion. Each video is about 20-30 minutes followed by the discussion. There will be eight sessions that meet at the usual time, from 11:00 to 12:00.

I'm looking forward to the next five months I will have with you. I hope that in this time we can store up the memories of the good times we have had and all that we have been able to accomplish together.

I want to help you prepare for our transition: you to the new minister and me to a new phase of life. In this time let us be as mindful of God in our midst as we believe God to be mindful of us.

*Garry van Bruchem,*  
*Minister*

### Upcoming Dates

Oct. 6	World Communion Sunday
Oct. 13	Harvest Thanksgiving Service
Oct. 26	5:30 pm – UCW Ham & Scalloped Potato Dinner
Nov. 10	Remembrance Observance
Nov. 16	“Homes for the Holidays” Christmas House Tour
Dec. 1	Advent 1 – Communion
Dec. 4	2:00 pm – Lessons, Carols and Cookies
Dec. 8	7:00 pm – Christmas Carol Service with Fonthill, Wesley, Central and Fenwick United Churches
Dec. 15	Choir Cantata
Dec. 24	9:00 pm Candlelight Communion

## **HAM & SCALLOPED POTATO DINNER**



at Fonthill United Church

Saturday, October 26, 2019 ~ 5:30 pm

### **Tickets:**

Adults \$15 / Children 12 & under \$10

Call the church office to reserve: 905 892-6433

### ***From the UCW***

The UCW usually meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 1:30 pm, starting up again on September 11. Our guest speaker for the September meeting will be Nancy Rushford; topic – elderly care and connections, crossing generations and cultures.

Once again, the next four months will be filled with projects and we will need many helpers. All women of the congregation are invited to come and enjoy the fellowship while helping our church and community.

*Maxine McPhail, UCW President*

### ***Pastoral Care Committee***

We welcome Trudy Pickersgill and Aileen Grantham to our Pastoral Care Committee. Trudy is always aware of and caring for many church friends at the senior's residence. Sadly we miss Joyce Teather who served on our committee from the beginning, always with a spring to her step and a practicality and insight that we treasured. It seems a natural gift to have Trudy occupying her place with her medical background and caring heart.

Aileen brings much life experience, practicality and a desire to contribute. We are grateful for her willingness to serve on this committee. Both Aileen and Trudy will be attending the Pastoral Care training sessions in the fall.

We continue to meet with Garry each month.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Marleene Kretchman, Chair*

### ***Finance & Property Committee Report***

The deficit in the operating fund at the end of July amounted to \$15,843 which is slightly below projections. Excluding adjustments for the solar panel revenue, the deficit is virtually the same as last year. Obviously the goal is to achieve a position where we operate on a break even basis but until this occurs, the fact that we are not exceeding the previous years' deficit is a step in the right direction.

After accounting adjustments, total revenue increased \$2,200 or 1.9%. Expenses increased 1.7%. We should mention that the increase in expenses is due to higher heating costs as we kept the furnace on until late May. In addition we incurred a one time expense of \$700 to examine all drains in the parking lot to try and locate the source of the "sink hole" which developed in the spring.

As in the past, our attention continues to be focused on how we can increase revenue and reduce expenses. A recent examination of pledges confirms 51% of givings are from members over 80 years old; 92% of all givings are from members over 70.

Over the next few months the attention of the Finance and Property Committee will be directed to the following:

- How can we increase rental income? We recently had an enquiry for a longer term rental which offered some benefits. However it would have been disruptive to several current tenants so at this point we declined to review the issue further. Having taken this position now we will review the overall rental policy.
- Monitor the repairs completed on the parking lot "sink hole" early in the spring. All drainage pipes were inspected and appear to be in good condition so hopefully it was a one-time occurrence.
- Monitor the installation of the new stained glass windows.
- Work with the Search Committee to ensure our full support in their task of hiring a new minister.

There is no question the air conditioning has made Sunday services more comfortable for everyone and the services have been well attended. As in the past, we welcome any ideas you may have which would assist our committee in our areas of responsibility.

*Thank you, the Finance and Property Committee*

### ***From the Worship Committee***

Many thanks to the Lay Readers in 2019. If anyone would like to be included in the readers list for 2020, please contact Beryl West.

### ***“Homes for the Holidays” Christmas House Tour***

Our committee is currently organizing Fonthill United Church’s 16<sup>th</sup> annual ***“Homes for the Holidays”*** Christmas House Tour which is scheduled for **November 16**. Please mark this date on your calendars.

Vermeer’s Garden Centre and Flower Shop, Le Village, Cox Home Furniture, Log Cabin Gift Shoppe, Oliver and Rust Vintage Interiors, and Chic Design & Staging will all be participating and we ask for your continued support of these businesses.

When tickets and flyers are printed, any help you can offer in selling and posting them respectively would be appreciated.

In mid to late October, sign-up sheets for a variety of jobs (hosting, bake sale table, kitchen volunteers) will be on display in the Narthex. We rely on your support. As we have always said, the organizing of the house tour is the “easy” part. . . . rounding up sufficient volunteers to “work” on the day is the “hard” part. There are two shifts on the day for 2.5 hours each. We try to supplement congregational member volunteers with students who receive credit for community service hours, but each year it seems more and more difficult to find sufficient volunteers. If you are aware of any friends in the community, relatives including children and/or grandchildren, who might wish to volunteer, please reach out to them on our behalf.

And finally, the Bake Sale has been such a huge success and important part of the previous tours, that we want to do the same again this year. We would hope that we could count on your wonderful baking skills and assistance in mid-November!

Thank you for any support that you can provide!

*Submitted by Carolyn van der Sluis and Virginia Haun*



### ***Report of the Search Committee***

Following the announcement of the retirement of Rev. Dr. Garry van Bruchem, the work began to search for a new minister for our church. The process follows a number of steps, mandated by the United Church of Canada. The process began with the writing, and posting, of a Community of Faith (COF) profile that was approved at the Regional level and posted on the United Church of Canada website known as ChurchHub. This work was completed by the Profile Committee, approved by Council and then approved by the Region in the early spring.

Following the approvals, the work of the Search Committee began. A regional liaison, Rev. Elizabeth Agnew, was appointed by the Region to provide training to the members of the committee and to provide guidance and direction ensuring the process outlined is followed. Committee members are Nancy Curran, Alvin Penner, Lyn Taylor, Pat Tooley, Joan Wells and Helen Wismer. The training session outlined the search process, provided information on preparing for interviews and negotiating terms of the call. Areas such as confidentiality and human rights were also reviewed.

The Search Committee has been meeting almost weekly over the summer. We developed questions linking them to the areas that were highlighted in the Community Profile as being important characteristics in our next Minister. We developed a process to ensure that all applicants would be interviewed with consistency making sure the skills, gifts, passions and competencies of each can be identified and compared fairly.

The committee received five applications and one expression of interest. We are making good progress. Please pray for the interviewees that they will come prepared and confident—and for us, that we are able to provide a safe and welcoming environment in which each interviewee feels able to shine.

*Pat Tooley, Chair  
Fonthill Search Committee*