

THE MESSENGER

Morningside-High Park Presbyterian Church

May and June, 2014



I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the LORD- PSALM 118:17

Reflections in the Easter Season

As spring finally arrives in Toronto and the days warm up, I don't know about you but for me it is really hard to stay inside. Even on rainy days there is a joy in being able to get out. The smells have changed, the light seems new, the grass is greening and the world beckons anew. All over the city people are out, sidewalks are filling up and there is a life and liveliness coming back into our communities. As more and more people find themselves pulled and compelled outside, I wonder if this is a bit of what that first Easter felt like.

"Why are you looking for the living among the dead?" This was the question that the angel at the empty tomb asked the women on the first Easter morning. He isn't here, he has risen and has gone ahead of you to Galilee.

as the truth of that broke into their lives, like a glorious spring morning, the women who had come to sit by the grave and weep, turned and ran back into the world. Compelled not just with the good news they now had to share but with the joy of knowing that Jesus was out there.

"He is not here, he is risen and has gone ahead of you!" Easter is a time of being sent out into the world with joy. Just as the beautiful weather summons and awaits us outside our doors this spring, so too does the risen Christ summon and wait for us out in the world.

Easter is always a moment of sending, out into the world to find the risen Lord and be part of what he is doing. Part of what he has always done: healing, forgiving, loving... I wonder where you will catch up with him in this glorious Easter season.

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Karen

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The "Session" sessions...

Our annual general church meeting in late March was a pretty exciting time of looking forward. Six focus areas were proposed to advance our ministry and life together, including facility improvements at our church home that would support these goals. This is our 125th year as a congregation in Swansea, so we anticipated joining the funding and implementation of these focus areas into a collective effort initiated in this anniversary year and extending over the next five years. The

church "session" leadership group along with many congregation members have been active since the annual meeting initiating and refining plans.

Already in motion are plans around our church garden and youth ministry development. We have received a grant from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation for \$3800 to develop our dreams to enhance the ways that our church garden builds relationships and is shared with our wider community.

In April the Session gave final approval to the creation of a youth minister position and appointed a search committee to begin immediately looking for the right person to work with us in developing our work with middle school and high school aged youth and their families. We anticipate a successful search to be complete in the next couple of months with the candidate working 10 hours per week with us by the start of September.

Funding plans for capital improvements are less certain at the moment. Both the Session and the Finance and Maintenance teams are gathering information to be able to make wise recommendations to the congregation. On Wednesday the Session met with capital campaign manager [Paul Mack](#) to for advice on raising funds. In May the Finance and Maintenance team meets with [Herb Gayle](#) to discuss planned giving options that could make it easier for congregants to name our church in their wills or make less common gifts like securities or insurance products. While we

had anticipated approaching the congregation with a significant funding appeal to coincide with the 125th anniversary in the fall, we are not attached to this schedule if we do not have the information we need in time to make that happen. We will keep you informed along the way.

In the mean time, there will be no other spring or fall financial appeal as has been the tradition at our church. However, if you have been accustomed to giving to a spring appeal in the past, please do consider making a special gift at this time of year because our budget does anticipate that.

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Thank you! You make a difference

Received Jan 1 to April 30, 2014

For the operating budget

44823.00

Budgeted Offering

45004.00

Received Jan 1 to April 30, 2013

39878.00

Giving frees us from the familiar territory of our own needs by opening our mind to the unexplained worlds occupied by the needs of others.

Barbara Bush (b. 1925), former American first lady

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Book Club for May and June

The Cellist of Sarajevo by Stephen Galloway, Wednesday May 21st at the home of Myrette Paul-Chowdhury

The Language of Flowers by Vanessa Dieffenbaugh, Wednesday June 18 , at the home of Annette Lloyd-Thomas

Summer Reading: Why did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha and Mohammed cross the Road by Brian McLaren

This book is an interesting reflection on how Christians engage people of other faiths. Author, Brian McLaren questions our traditional conservative and liberal perspectives and the divide they create as he looks for a new way of understanding and interfaith dialogue.

If you are interested in reading this book this summer and being part of a conversation around it let Rev Karen know. We can order copies together (there is already one in the lending library) and decide how and when we want to discuss our reading.

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News from the Garden

Thanks to a grant from TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and working with our F&M team the MHP gardening group is excited to be able to expand our vegetable garden project this year. We will reach out to the community by making this into a true community garden involving not only MHP members but our friends and neighbours as well. We would love it if you would like to join our efforts. There are so many ways to be involved.

Even if you are not a gardener join us with your talents and gifts! Gardening, marketing, public relations, research, cooking, baking, canning, building, handy

skills, artistic skills, gathering, donating, advice and knowledge or even encouragement or companionship you can help in and benefit from the garden. We could use help with signage, media, construction of raised beds, moving soil, planting, cleaning produce, delivering produce or even just hanging out in the garden with us for company. There is a place for all who wish to be involved. There are different needs at different times in the garden so if you are not able to help in the spring there will be others tasks throughout the summer and fall.

Our plans broaden this year to include more raised beds for planting, 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 as well as sharing again with community volunteers and our congregation. Growing is good. Let's grow food. Let's grow community. There is so much we can do together. We would love to hear your thoughts and ideas!

We will be planting seeds in worship and fellowship on Sunday May 18 and hoping to have a full on Garden Party on May 24th to build new garden beds, move soil and get planting! We will have a signup sheet on the 18th if you'd like to join us in the garden for the season or a few hours.

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Guess who is coming to dinner – May 24

Sign up for this exciting evening began on Sunday May 4th during fellowship. This is a fun evening for all ages to get to know

others at church over dinner in someone's home. Sign up to be a host or a guest. For more information please speak with Alison Williams or Kevin Chan.

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Habitat for Humanity Runnymede Build – June 14

MHP members that wish to participate in the Habitat for Humanity build at 828 Runnymede Road, Toronto scheduled for **Saturday June 14, 2014** may register directly by clicking on the following link vhub.at/Morningside_HFHGTA There are 10 slots available so registration will be on first come first served basis. Habitat encourages members to register at least 7 days before the build date. This build day is offered in thanks for MHP's generous fundraising support of the 828 Runnymede Road build. If you do not have internet access and would like to sign up please talk to Rev. Karen or contact the church office at 416-766-4765.

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Sunday School Picnic: June 22nd

We cannot believe it but summer is upon and so is our planning as we celebrate and give thanks for another fabulous year of Sunday School at MHP. Did you know we have 23 members of our congregation who volunteer in the Sunday School and Nursery? On June 22nd we will be recognizing them and our children in the worship service and then having a picnic lunch together afterwards.

The Stewardship Committee has for the last three years co-ordinated the luncheon portion of the picnic as their way of thanking the Christian Education Committee

and Sunday School teachers for sharing their time and talent through the year. If you are able to help them in any way please speak to Maria Matheson.

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Vacation Bible School: August 18 – 22nd

Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks

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Mark your calendar!

"Mark your Calendar" dates

- May 24 -- Guess who is coming to dinner
- May 28 -- Session meets
- May 30 -- June 2 General Assembly in Waterloo
- June 14 -- Habitat for Humanity Runnymede Build
- June 22 – Sunday School Picnic
- July 7-12 -- Canada Youth Brock University, St. Catharines
- August 18-22 – Vacation Bible School
- September 7 - Church School Commissioning
- November 1-2 – Anniversary Weekend

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Getting in touch

Rev Karen can be contacted either through her email, karendimock@bellnet.ca or by phone at 416-766-4765.

Laurel Gerrie our office manager is in Wednesday through Friday from 8 am to 1 pm. Her email

morningsidehighpark@bellnet.ca