

Newsletter – Winter 2019

From Rev. Sarina

Lift up your hearts! We lift them up to the Lord!

I am delighted to tell you what's up in worship! First, Christmas Eve is around the corner and we have two different worship services to celebrate the birth of Christ. Our 4:00 pm service will be just like last year. There will be a worship band playing Christmas hymns to contemporary arrangements (think Pentatonix!). We will also do a craft in worship to engage

children and adults in thinking about how God has been with us this year. Our 7:30 pm service will be different from last year. It will be a lessons and carols service with a short homily. We will welcome guest singers to our choir as well as a cellist! Worship bags will be



available for children who attend this service. All ages are welcome at both services. Whether you would like contemporary music with a craft (4:00 pm) or classical music with contemplation (7:30 pm), spread the word and come to celebrate the birth of Christ, Emmanuel, God with us, on December 24th!

Second, you may have noticed that we had approximately one blended service each month this fall. The session has decided to continue this plan (as best as we can!) in the New Year. There are many advantages to the blended services. At the blended services the sanctuary is more full and we have a stronger feeling of being a church family. We can connect with each other during fellowship time, developing friendships with those who normally attend the other service. This also facilitates recruiting people to help with our various ministries. It can be difficult for leaders who attend one service to meet those who attend the other, but fellowship time after a blended service makes this possible. In addition, there are more singers in the choir, enabling the choir to sing a more challenging anthem. As well, on a blended service Sunday, we only need to find volunteers for two Sunday school classes instead of three. And, the elder on duty has a shorter Sunday morning commitment. This fall we observed all of these advantages coming to fruition. We also greatly enjoyed worshipping together!

As we get into a rhythm, we might notice other advantages or possibilities that we haven't thought of. One possibility is that I could conceivably teach adult Sunday school classes after these services, giving those who work during the day and those who don't want to drive at night the opportunity to dig deeper into our Christian faith together.

Briarwood uniquely offers two distinct worship services on Sunday morning - one traditional and one contemporary - and we are committed to preserving them both. We are also committed to continuing to worship together (approximately) once a month, so that together we can lift up our hearts to the Lord.

Taking Time to Notice

I really like the season of Advent and Christmas. I even get excited going into Jean-Coutu in early November and seeing the Christmas decorations and gift ideas already out.



Gift-giving. It takes a lot of thought if you want to give the 'perfect' gift. You really have to know the person – their tastes, their interests, and to a certain extent, how they think. It takes time to do that and a certain amount of intentionality. You have to notice things.

Here at Briarwood, I am enjoying 'noticing' things and getting to know you as individuals and as a community. Often, I feel I'm on 'holy ground' as I chat with you and listen to your stories. I see that you're a community that cares about the people around you, including the ones you rent space to: Nova and Helping Hands. You 'notice' needs and try hard to 'do good', to give good gifts from the heart.

It feels good to be 'noticed', at least in a good way! Our God does that. The God who made us 'notices' us and sees our heart's desires; there is nothing about us that God doesn't know. We are invited to 'notice' this God who made us and loves us so deeply. As we get to know our Creator God, we come to understand ourselves in a deeper way. *Living Faith* says: "we know ourselves only when we know God". What a great Advent and Christmas gift!

Noticing things, really getting to know the other, including God, takes time and intentionality. But it's also worth it as we receive blessing for ourselves and can then pass that blessing on to others.

Edythe Arnott,
Briarwood In-Ministry Year student

New Members and a Baptism!

On Sunday, November 20th at a blended service, baby Violet was baptized and new members joined Briarwood.



Zak, Stevie & Violet with
godmother Elizabeth



New members
Rev. Oliver, Mfon, Ikwo and Joseph

Choosing Friends

We often say that we can tell the kind of person one is by looking at his or her friends. Like the proverb goes, “birds of a feather flock together”. While this may be true most of the time, it is not always true. People spend time with others for different reasons. Sometimes we do not choose the people we spend time with. For example, as students, we have different classmates and schoolmates over the years because of the schools we attend. We do not really choose them. As we grow older and begin to work, we would spend time with different groups of people because of what we choose to do. Sometimes people judge us wrongly because of those we spend time with.

Jesus was judged wrongly because he sometimes spent time with people that others did not like. In Mark 2:13-17, he was called a sinner because he visited tax collectors and sinners and ate with them. His enemies accused him that he visited sinners because he was like them. But Jesus told them that he did not visit the tax collectors and sinners because he was like them. He visited them because he wanted to change their lives. He was like a doctor, who spends time with the sick, not because he or she is sick, but because the doctor wants to help the sick to get well.

As children and youths growing up, we will spend our time with different people at different times. We will choose some, but we will spend time with others because of where we are and what we do. While it is great to choose friends who are like us, it is more useful to positively influence the lives of all that we spend time with.

*Rev. Oliver Kondeh Ndula
Children and Youth Director*

The Gomez Family

The Gomez family moved to Ottawa in the Fall. They have done this to ensure that their three children, already fluent in Spanish and French, can complete their education in the English system. We admire Carlos and Johanna for their courage and sacrifice to benefit their children’s future and we wish the whole family well.

Carlos and Johanna are grateful to us for our prayers, and are confident that God has heard them.



Photo by IPC Canada

Briarwood's Youth Group



This year, the youth group is meeting every second Sunday from 5-7 pm. Both the junior and the senior youth groups gather first for supper and games, and then for a time of music and teaching. We've had a lot of fun together! It's nice to start our evenings with supper together, and the youth really seem to gel around the table, eating and

chatting. I think one of the favourite suppers was when we switched it up and had Breakfast for supper!

We have had some pretty hilarious moments in our games too. One week we played Minute-to-Win it games (with video footage available of Oliver trying to balance a slinky on his head!). Another week we played Hide and Go Seek in a darkened church, and this past week we enjoyed a quieter night of board games (which really became a chess night!) Undoubtedly, the highlight of the Fall was our trip to SkyTag. The kids (and adults!) had a blast. It was also a great opportunity for the youth to invite their friends. In total, we had 16 youth that night, with three of our invitees attending subsequent youth nights.



We also have our more serious moments at Youth. We've been studying the Greatest Commandment, thinking about what it means to Love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and how to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. In the new year we will be tackling some of the more difficult questions the youth have, keeping this Greatest Commandment in mind. We look forward to welcoming some guest speakers to share their faith stories with the youth as well.

All in all, the new format seems to be working out well. We'd like to thank all the volunteers who have helped us - especially Tabea who shows up every week to help with music, small group time, and just generally being cooler than the adult leaders ever could be. Thank you to Roland, Becky, Jane, Charlene, Brett and Sarina who have helped in the kitchen and with games!

If you ever want to have a bit of fun while helping out on a Sunday evening, we are always looking for extra hands to help with meal serving and clean-up, or sharing a hidden talent with the youth! (We even have the youth washing their own dishes!) Feel free to contact Oliver or Liz for more information.

We will hold a Christmas party with the youth on Sunday, Dec. 15th and then resume in the new year on Sunday, Jan. 12th.

Liz Kirkland

A View through the Microscope of Sheila Runciman MacKeen

It was a Thursday dinner at the Runciman home in Ottawa, some 50 years ago, and Sheila was preoccupied with an ad in the newspaper.

“For goodness sake, Mum. You have read that thing six times,” said her 16-year old son. “What is it?”

“Well,” replied Sheila, “they are looking for people to train in cytology at the Ottawa Civic”.



Photo by IPC Canada

Responded son, “Well, you’d better go for an interview tomorrow because by Monday you will be too old!” Sheila turned 39 that Monday! This was 1965.

Sheila did the interview and was one of four students (out of 200) accepted to be sponsored for an 18-month course. They would be trained to read Pap smears, searching for cervical cancer. This was something totally new in the medical field.

There were 10 people in the initial course, four from Ottawa, one from Newfoundland, and five French-speakers from Quebec.

There were tests every month and if you made below 75, you were out. The first year was in the lab (paid for by the Ontario Cancer Foundation) and the last six months were in the hospital setting (paid for by the hospital). Sheila was paid \$100 a month which covered books, a cleaning lady and parking fees at the hospital.

Sheila came naturally to the task. Born in Scotland, she moved at two months of age to Montreal West where she grew up, went to Montreal West High, and then McGill, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Genetics and Zoology. Sheila married Jack Runciman who was a Navy pilot. They lived in Halifax where he flew out of Shearwater Naval Air Station. They crisscrossed the country with his job.

Dr. George Papanicolaou, father of the Pap Test, was a Greek pioneer in cytopathology and early cancer detection. After studying medicine in Greece and Germany, he emigrated in 1913 to the United States. He first reported that uterine cancer cells could be detected in vaginal smears in 1928, but his work was not widely recognized until the 1940’s.

In the early sixties, the Ontario Cancer Foundation decided to start a Cytology school, and in 1965 did the interviews from which Sheila was chosen. They took on the challenge of finding out what was in that microscope slide, and determining whether the findings would help. They very definitely did, and you could say “The rest is history”.

The Runciman family moved with her husband’s job (he was in civilian life now, flying helicopters) to Montreal West. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Montreal was seeking employees for its Department of Cytology to check out Pap smears, and to do other microscopic work. Of course, people who worked in cytology were few in numbers. Connections were quickly made and the Queen Elizabeth called Sheila!

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In both the interviews which Sheila had she was asked: “Are you married? Do you have kids? What if the kids get sick? Who does the child care?” Nowadays those questions cannot be asked. Sheila had all the answers, as her Mum was ready, willing and able to help. So, it was settled and Sheila went to work at the Queen Elizabeth, retiring 25 years later.



The samples came from the doctors. Sheila had to mark down that they had been received, make sure that the name on the sample and on the requisition matched, and she had to stain her own slides, today done by machine. The work was very satisfying, and thousands of lives were saved by early detection.

Sheila’s first husband died at a young age and she married Rolf MacKeen after her retirement. They travelled the world for 20 years. Now a widow, Sheila lives in a cozy corner of The Maxwell, where her neighbours are all from Briarwood!

Thanks for making history Sheila, and for helping so many by careful viewing through your microscope.

Virginia Bell

The Board Brunch Chefs Retire



Kathy Anderson and Cheryl Campbell Steer have produced their final Board Brunch. Having master-minded eleven Board Brunches, Kathy and Cheryl will toil no more. Kathy and Terry plan to move to the North Bay area next summer. Cheryl, Kathy’s intrepid partner for all these years, has decided that she will let someone else carry the torch.

Board members pay for the food, Kathy has scoured the newspapers for bargains and has done almost all the purchasing, storing and freezing, and all the Offerings go to our General Funds. Over these eleven years the two chefs have raised over \$25,000, aided by their loyal assistants, Terry Anderson and Brent Steer.

Will we ever see their like again? Our sincere thanks to these wonderful ladies.

I Love Teaching

by Katie Polley

I have wanted to be a teacher almost my whole life, except when I was in kindergarten and I wanted to work at the car wash! Sometimes I can't believe I actually made it to being a real live teacher, it's something I knew I wanted to do for so long.



Moving to the South Shore has been a bit of a change for me. I am fortunate to be living with one of my best friends from camp, which has made the move much easier. The main difference between living in the West Island and living on the South Shore for me has been dealing with the bridge and all of the construction going on around it on a regular basis. It can be hard to keep track of which roads are closed and when! Other than that, the two areas are not really so different. Both are outside of downtown Montreal, yet not far, and there is a fairly large English-speaking community here too.

Right now, I am teaching at a school in Saint-Hubert, about 8 minutes from my apartment! I teach English in a French school, which means I have about 340 students. I teach all of the students in the school from grades one to six. The students from grades 1-5 have one hour of English a week. In grade 6, they have two hours. As you can imagine, this makes the process of learning a language quite slow and difficult. Many students are exposed to English outside of the classroom by things like English TV, or their parents making an effort to speak and read to them in English from time to time. These are the students whose parents understand the importance of learning to speak English and how difficult that is in a one-hour class. Students who don't have any exposure to English outside of the classroom struggle to gain and maintain new vocabulary.

My school is considered a level 10 underprivileged school. Many of my students come from low income families. Some don't have winter boots, or snow pants yet for the winter, but we have some awesome staff members who are working with organizations to get them the things they need for winter. It is also a high immigration area, and many of my students speak at least 3 languages fluently, sometimes all in the same sentence! The staff is mainly francophone, so I have been helping translate during parent teacher interviews with parents who don't speak French.

As in any school, I have definitely encountered behavioural and discipline issues in some of my classes. It can be difficult since I am not my students' homeroom teacher, and only see most of them for an hour a week. I am extremely grateful that we have some very wonderful ed. techs. in our school that can help with the larger issues. They can come and help when there is a crisis and it makes everything get resolved much more quickly so we can all carry on learning!

My favorite part of teaching is my students. I love walking down the hall and being stopped so that they can show me their tooth that just fell out, or the special snack they brought from home. I love when they do something that they didn't think they could do and are proud of themselves. It's why I wanted to teach, and why I know I will continue to teach for a long time.

Our Malcolm Campbell – firmly rooted in Presbyterianism

More than a century! That's how far back Malcolm Campbell's roots in the Presbyterian Church go. The exact year is 1909.

His grandfather, the Rev. Malcolm A. Campbell was the minister of the First Presbyterian Church, corner Jeanne Mance and Prince Arthur Streets, Montreal, from 1909 until 1961.

First Presbyterian was formed by the amalgamation of St. Gabriel Street Presbyterian and Chalmers Presbyterian in 1909 and Rev. Malcolm was its first minister.

Malcolm himself is an elder. Elders are elected for life, but do not necessarily always serve on the Session. He is a trustee of Briarwood, and a former Chairman of Briarwood's Board. His willingness to serve his church comes naturally because he was surrounded by so many great Presbyterian examples:

- His parents, Helen and Colin, were staunch Presbyterians.
- His Dad was an elder and Clerk of Session.
- His Mum started a Meals-on-Wheels group, and was posthumously awarded a Caring Canadian Award by the Governor General.
- Malcolm's brother, married Janet Bell, whose Dad was the Rev. Ritchie Bell, well known in Montreal and across the PCC and at one time Principal of the Presbyterian College.

Malcolm grew up in Montreal West and went to school there. Then it was off to McGill for a Bachelor of Commerce, and a job with Burroughs Business Machines in Montreal.

During the great exodus from Montreal in the 70s, he landed in Vancouver, eventually joining Canadian Pacific Railways, with whom he followed his career until retirement in 2012.

At night Malcolm enrolled in the MBA program at UBC from 1981-85.

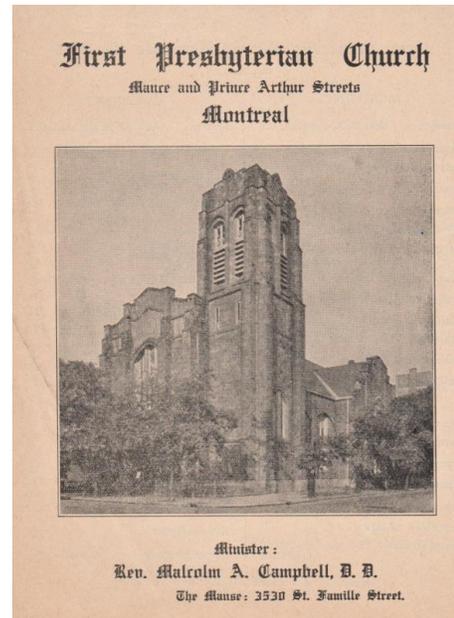


Photo by IPC Canada

In Vancouver he took up sailing, and lo and behold, a chance fill-in on a 5-day sailing cruise happened to be Heather. They were instantly attracted to one another and married a year later, 1986. All three of their children, Alison, Colin, and Eric were born in Vancouver.

In 1995, the family moved to Oakville where they attended Oakville-Trafalgar Presbyterian.

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Malcolm played the piano for the early service there. He learned to play from age 7, took 11 years of Royal Conservatory lessons and still plays regularly. I hope you had the good fortune of hearing him as he accompanied one of the summer services this year at Briarwood.

Malcolm and Heather enjoy travelling and regularly visit Palm Springs for golf, and winter jaunts to Heather's relatives in Edmonton.

Living on the lakefront as they do, water plays a big part in their lives. The view is spectacular at all seasons of the year. In addition, Malcolm and Heather enjoy being on the water on their Seadoo.

How fortunate we are to have this quiet accomplished gentleman in our midst.

Virginia Bell

Congratulations!

We share with you some exciting news. Sarah Jurchuk, Catherine Scheer's youngest daughter, has been awarded an internship at Tesla in California. She starts in January. She is also part of the McGill Formula Electric Team, which won the Formula SAE Electric competition in Nebraska on June 22nd, 2019. Congratulations, Sarah!



More Congratulations!

Lakeshore Minor Football claimed four titles in the Montreal Metro Football League this year: every age group from Atom to Bantam won their championships, and three teams, including Micah's Pee Wees, went undefeated for the season.

Micah (right) making an awesome tackle!

Photo by Chad Ribkin of Helping Hands

Beaconsfield's "Vulnerables"

Beaconsfield city runs a Register of Vulnerable residents who might need help in an emergency. "Vulnerables" might be living alone and over 75 with loss of mobility or autonomy, or such as hearing, visual, or cognitive problems.

If you know of anyone who qualifies and might want to register, direct them to the Beaconsfield Library, 514-428-4400 ex 4470 or bibliotheque@beaconsfield.ca.

Planned Giving

The Planned Giving Committee made a presentation at each of the recent Elder's District Meetings. The purpose was to remind members of the following needs:

- to build a strong financial reserve to ensure that Briarwood is able to maintain the programmes supporting the Christian education of our young people;
- to finance future renovation or major repairs to ensure that our building will be there for current and future generations;
- and to sustain any annual shortfalls.

Members were told about the various types of bequests that can be made. In addition to stressing the need to keep our wills up to date to reflect changing circumstances and relationships, the committee explained how easy and inexpensive it is to use a notary to add a codicil to our existing wills to record our wishes. "It costs less than a visit from your plumber."

The Committee members (Cheryl Campbell Steer, Doug Burns and Jim Murray) are available to answer any questions.

Stewardship Update

At the end of November we are \$4,000 behind budget on offerings. We are hoping to achieve the balanced budget for this year and accordingly, please review your offerings over the next few weeks. Thank you for your support.

2020 Budget

Preparation of the 2020 Budget has been postponed until early January, pending finalization of the 2019 statements.

Thanks!

How blessed we are. Our cup runneth over with thanks to:

- all who supported the "Joseph" choral story, performed so beautifully by Spectrum Voices, which raised \$2,565 for Briarwood's general fund. We salute Marilyn Scott, director; Nancy Wojciechowski, accompanist and Brett Meyer, in the chorale. Thanks to Virginia and Jim for making and serving punch at both shows.
- those who bought gifts for the Chez Doris Angel Tree, and those who contributed extra gifts to go to the Christmas basket recipients
- people who filled gift bags for the Seafarers
- those who shopped or donated for the Christmas food baskets
- the stalwarts who raked and polished on Fall Clean-up day
- the monthly muffin makers
- the contributors and workers for the December Bake Sale, which raised just over \$1,200 for Briarwood's general fund
- those who warmed people with hats, coats, scarves
- the Pastoral Support Team, who support the sick and shut-in
- all elders, ushers coffee preparers (especially Lola Cadet) and A/V teams, who help everything run smoothly every Sunday
- Virginia, Dwight, Tish and Debbie, who painted the north and west sides of the church. (The east and south sides were painted two years ago. This Fall it was time for the remaining sides.
- all who donated to our Thanksgiving table



(the produce was donated to Chez Doris)



Claude, Mary Ruth, Dwight & Fay helping on Fall Clean-up day



Painters Tish, Dwight & Virginia (missing is Debbie)