



GRACEFIELD



WOMAN OF FAITH



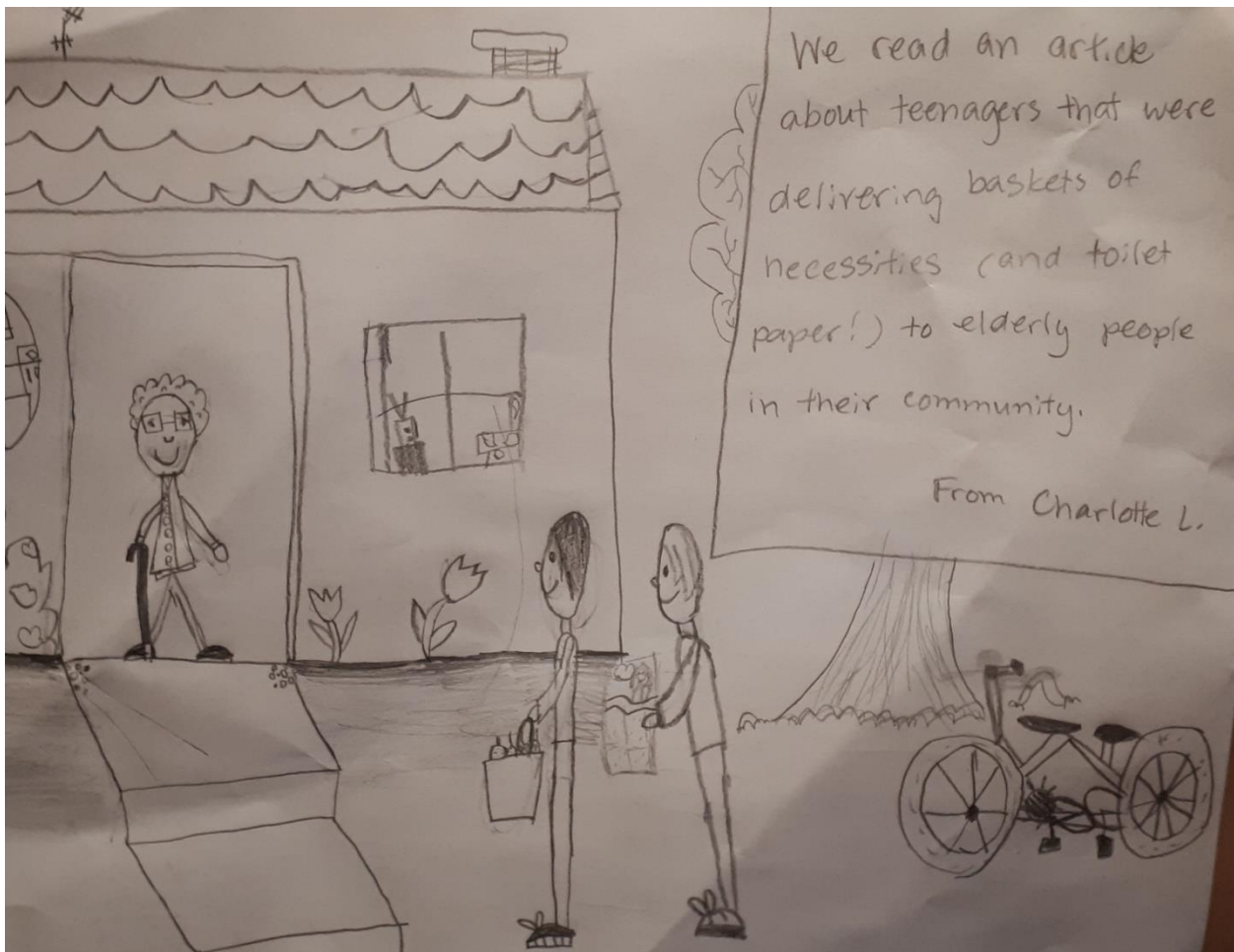
REFUGEE
SPONSORSHIP



LAUNDRY CO-OP
AND COVID

ST. ANDREW'S IN ACTION

Summer Edition, 2020



Jesus in the Neighbourhood, by Charlotte L.

This quarterly newsletter is published the first Sunday in March, June, October and December. The deadline for submissions for the next issue is September 15. Please respect the deadlines for submissions. You may email your articles and high-resolution photos at any time to StAndrewsInAction@gmail.com.

A Letter from Karen

And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds

Hebrews 10:24

Dear Friends at St. Andrew's,

It has been three months since I last wrote a newsletter article and I can hardly believe the change we have seen in that time, the experiences we have been through together...and yet apart. In one of my earliest messages to you, sometime in mid-March, I said we were going to be doing some things differently as well as some different things. Still who might have imagined...at that point I think we thought we were going to be out for a few weeks. After all, in 1918 the church was closed for just four weeks during the Spanish Influenza. We have been doing worship at home now for some 15 services!

Someone said to me a couple of weeks ago how much they enjoyed seeing me worship at home. That in a time when they are not getting out or able to visit friends, they feel they get to come to my house each week. I hadn't thought of it like that before but I am glad for the insight and glad to be able to welcome you each week in a way that makes such a difference. The decision to leave the sanctuary in the early days had a lot to do with social distancing, it was safer we felt for us to record our contributions individually and see if we could then stitch them together into a service. It has worked surprisingly well!

It continues to feel odd to be speaking into a camera for worship, but I do take a good look at the congregational directory during the week, and the new photo directory as well, and so you are all there with me as we record. There is something about speaking from my home to yours that captures the solidarity of this time, reminding us that our true worship is not an hour once a week in the sanctuary. Our true worship takes place out and about in the world, in our homes. The building might be closed but the church is not!

Many of our endeavors have found ways to continue. Zoom! Just like prayer keeps us connected with God, the internet and phone lines have become are main means of connecting with each other. Did you know what Zoom was three months ago? I had experienced a few meetings on it but had no idea how quickly so much of our work would begin to be carried out using this internet-based teleconferencing tool. For many of us it meant getting on the internet in new ways and trying new things but what a difference it has made. We have led church meetings, begun new Bible studies, started new groups for conversation and care and hosted guest speakers—and all on Zoom.

It is amazing how the Spirit continues to work among us in this way even when we are apart. In early June we were even able to share communion over Zoom and the internet and at the same time share a worship service with Reverend Susan Cord and the Reverend James Bisset and their congregations in Scotland. While none of this has been the same as physical presence with each other, the presence of Christ continues to be made known and we continue to keep in communion with each other. This newsletter will give you an even greater insight into how much we continue do differently as well as some of the different things we are doing.

One of the harder things we have experienced in this time is the funerals, as six of the saints of this congregation have passed into God's keeping in the last six weeks. Lois Wyatt, Bill Brown, John Urquhart, Mary Ellen Boomgaardt, Diane Hoskins and Barbara Sawh. They were part of the bedrock of our community. They are sorely missed and we sorely miss being able to gather and hug and care

the way we usually do. We will look forward to services together to celebrate their lives some time in the future but for now notes and phone calls matter as we continue to care for each other and their families. The words you might have spoken at a visitation or reception after a funeral, the special memories of what someone has meant to you, taking time to write and share that with their families is a gift you can offer.

Along with many of you I do give thanks for the ongoing work of the Mission and Outreach committee that continues to remind us of the hungers beyond our own community and invites us to serve with them. Nathalie Bradbury-Jost has just recently agreed to become our Refugee Sponsorship Co-ordinator, taking over from Terry Collins-Williams who has led in this role so well for the last five years. In this newsletter you will hear from Terry about our latest sponsorship and you will also find updates regarding other mission endeavors.

And Friends, one of my great joys in these months has been in the personal updates and anecdotes that so many of you have taken time to share with me and each other. Photos of your gardens, new grandbabies, shared recipes, book suggestions, children's drawings, prayer requests—in some ways we are coming to know each other a little bit better. These are simple things but this sharing along with all the rest of the ways our community is holding each other up, these are what the church sometimes calls the ordinary means of grace. They convey love of neighbour, love of God and love of self.

When I was speaking with the Reverends Susan Cord and James Bissett for the service on June 7 we were marvelling over the words of Psalm 8. A psalm of Divine Majesty and Human dignity, it evokes those moments when we are caught up in the wonder of the world, aware of the presence of God who created it, so immense and beyond our understanding and yet so close as well. The sense that we get in those moments that God's purpose in this world is good—very good—and that somehow, God is mindful of us and is drawing us into what God is doing. We realized as well that this is what Jesus is doing when he sends us the Holy Spirit. He has risen from the dead and been raised to rule over Heaven and Earth. In this way there is nowhere we can go that he does not go with us and in the power of his Spirit we are drawn into his purposes for the world—trusted with much, partners in Christ's service.

There have never been days like this before in my living. Pandemic sweeping its devastation across the world, uniting us in our understanding of our mortality and at the same time, around the world people coming together to protest Anti-Black Racism and the terrible devastation that visits on too many lives as well. Three months ago, who would have guessed all this? We will not be the same after this. Things have come undone and we are all in some way or another going to find ourselves re-oriented after this. The things that matter will have shifted. And our relationships with others, they will matter in different ways now too. And in all this, I have found God...

In the morning when I rise, in the evening when I lie down to rest, in all the moments in between... the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, we find our life in him, Amen and Amen.

The peace of Christ be with you,
Karen

Psalm 8

1 O LORD, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.

2 Out of the mouths of babes and infants
you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;

4 what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals[a] that you care for them?

5 Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honor.

6 You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet,

7 all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,

8 the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

9 O LORD, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!



by Lougheed

Power to Issue Committee

Andrew M., Recording Clerk of Session

In early May, the Kirk Session created a Power to Issue Committee that consists of the Minister, Clerks, Temporal, and the other committees that make up the life and work of St. Andrew's Ottawa. This committee was created to assist the church in examining how and when St. Andrew's Ottawa may adapt to the Pandemic and ultimately reopen its physical building. The committee meets every two weeks and continues to monitor government updates and guidance as well as information being supplied by the PCC in determining an appropriate course of action. Recently, certain principles were established by the committee as a basis for any future recommendations to Kirk Session or the Temporal Committee. These principles are:

- Keeping aware of guidelines being set by government and other entities, however, not to be restrictive—doing what makes sense for St. Andrew's;
- Starting slow and building in flexibility for course correction throughout;
- Strive for the safety and well-being of Minister, staff and St. Andreans alike;
- Acknowledge that the way of operating, even if a new vaccine is found, will likely be forever changed—an opportunity to reorientate;
- Focus on mitigating the risks we do know and can address rather than the uncertainties we do not, such as the course of the current and any subsequent outbreaks.

A list of considerations and issues to be addressed once St. Andrew's is able to reopen the church building has been created and will continue to be updated on an ongoing basis as we work through the identification of any constraints and challenges. The goal is to reopen the church safely, likely in phases. However, at this point the timing remains uncertain and more information will be shared with the congregation as we progress through these unusual times together.

We are very thankful that in this day and age, technology is readily available and able to provide tools such as YouTube and Zoom that can facilitate our continued gathering in spirit, if not in person.

Greetings from the Kirk Session

Heather P., Administrative Clerk

As I write this, I can't help reflecting on how the nature of connection has changed in the last three months. For many, our main way of connecting used to be from personal contact – getting together socially, attending events, going to the mall, church, work, school and so many other places, alone or together. These days, “virtual” meetups have replaced that. Online school, coffee hours, meetings and church have become the norm. Checking with friends and family often happens via email or phone.

So, it is very good to connect with you all in this way, and let you know what the Kirk Session has been working on recently. There is still much to do, and we have been meeting each month. June 1 marked our last meeting until September, but work in various areas will continue through the summer.

At the April meeting of Kirk Session, we agreed to suspend the election of new elders and resume it once we were all back at the church, which at the time we thought would be sometime this summer. Due to the severity of Covid-19 coupled with government restrictions, we do not know when we will

be back, but the election is important and the Kirk Session would like to see it come to its conclusion. Therefore, the election will resume June 2 and conclude July 31. There will be more information coming to you and please feel free to contact your elder, (or any elder) if you have questions. The results from the election will be made known to the congregation after our September meeting.

When are we going to be able to worship in our sanctuary again? This is the question many of us are asking particularly this week as on Monday (June 8) the Province of Ontario announced procedures and protocols for the phase 2 of reopening. As part of this places of worship in Ottawa will be able to reopen at 30% capacity as of June 12 while continuing to restrict the number of people in other social gatherings to ten or less including at funerals and weddings. I am sure you are wondering what that means for our congregation here at St. Andrew's Ottawa?

The PTI committee met on June 9 to discuss the province's move into Stage 2 of reopening and the implications of that for our life and worship at St. Andrew's. In the coming weeks we will be working with the Worship & Music Committee and members of our staff to put in place the policies and procedures necessary to begin worshipping in the sanctuary again. This will include the production of a high-quality recording that we will continue to post to YouTube. It will also include consideration of the yet to be released guidelines regarding worship from the province, any input from public health, the ongoing COVID-19 situation in Ottawa and your input as members of the congregation. Any dates that we are considering are all very preliminary and subject to change should the situation warrant. At the moment, it is hard to have a definite idea of when we will be back in the church, but we will be in touch throughout the summer with updates. When we do begin to open up, congregational gatherings will be small at first and slowly increase as the province opens up further and as we are confident of the safety of doing so for ourselves.

Until then we continue to offer our online worship at home service on our YouTube channel and are grateful for all who participate in that and make it happen. For now, the church remains closed, but we can remain connected through activities such as our June Communion.

On behalf of the Kirk Session, I wish you all a very good summer, with opportunity for relaxation and renewal. I look forward to seeing many of you on Zoom in the next few months.

Living with Uncertainty: A morning gathering for women

Jenefer C., Christian Education Committee

On Saturday, May 9th about 30 St. Andrew's women spent the morning alone but together (on Zoom) listening to and engaging with Dr. Angela Schmidt, Director of Experiential & Innovative Learning and Assistant Professor of Leadership at Knox College.

Dr. Schmidt, who is also a registered psychotherapist, provided us with insights and practical exercises for living in times, such as this pandemic, when a lot about the future is unknown and our day-to-day lives have had to change.

She spoke candidly about situations in her own life that have required her to manage "unknowns" and the accompanying anxiety. She reminded us about how much prayer, and the knowledge that God's love is with us always, can get us through these times.

We explored aspects of Christianity, managing emotions and the importance of staying grounded as the pandemic follows its course.

Hosted by Reverend Karen and the Christian Education team, the event took the place of this year's Women's Retreat and possibly set the stage for next year's event—where we hold out hope that we can be together in person.

Personally, while I was very inspired by Dr. Schmidt, the best part of the event was having the faces and voices of these fabulous 30 women in my presence.

Ways to Support Gracefield Camp

There are many ways that you can make a difference in the lives of guests who come to Gracefield year-round. Every gift, large or small will help us to facilitate our many programs, as well as steward our amazing camp!



Gracefield Retreat. Photo by Tim Patterson

Financial Support

[Make a Donation](#)

Your gift will help us to build skills and transform lives!

- Donate via PayPal Givings Fund Canada Now at <https://www.paypal.com/ca/fundraiser/charity/3436693>. 100% of your donation will go to the Camp. PayPal Givings Fund Canada will issue your tax receipt
- Send an Interac e-transfer to info@gracefieldcamp.ca
- Mail a cheque to the Camp at 37 ch. des Loisirs, Gracefield, QC, JoX 1Wo.
- Call the Camp at 1-819-463-2465 or 1-888-493-2267 to donate using your credit card
- Gracefield Guardians

We encourage you to consider joining our Gracefield Guardians program, making regular monthly donations to the Camp via pre-authorized remittances (PAR). If you would like to do so, please email or call the Camp to register PAR.

Cabin Sponsorship

Another way you can support us as a church is by sponsoring a cabin. We are currently looking for a church sponsor for Cabin 4. For more information on cabin sponsoring, please email secretary@gracefieldcamp.ca



Gracefield Retreat. Photo by Tim Patterson

Wish List

In addition to financial donations, we gratefully accept in-kind donations to help keep our program costs low. Please note: we do not accept drop-off in-kind donations currently due to COVID-19 restrictions. Please contact secretary@gracefieldcamp.ca to discuss your in-kind donation and we will arrange a safe pick-up.

- A gently used camper trailer to house staff
- A gently used chest freezer 18 cubic feet
- Microwave ovens 1 to 1.3 cubic feet (new or less than 10 years old)
- Water cooler/dispenser (new or less than 10 years old)
- A commercial ice machine
- Good quality coffee urns (50 cups or bigger) and thermal jugs (10 cups or bigger)
- Good quality, matching lamps for various lodge rooms
- Musical instruments in good condition—especially guitars
- A new deck built on the manse
- Gently used canoes and paddles
- 46 White sheet sets for Twin Sized Beds
- Bug spray
- Flashlights and batteries
- Compasses
- Craft supplies (paint, bracelet making materials, paint brushes, larger sheets of paper, etc.)

Volunteering

Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre has always thrived on a spirit of volunteers. Volunteering is good for your mind and your body, it's fun, and it allows you to connect to your Gracefield community and make it a better place.

Here are just some of the volunteer opportunities at Gracefield right now:

- Board members
- Board committee members:
 - ◊ Property
 - ◊ Program
 - ◊ Fundraising
 - ◊ Personnel
 - ◊ Communications
 - ◊ Finance
- First aid attendants, nurses
- Retreat group hosts
- Maintenance and building projects
- Gardening
- Trail maintenance, including in the winter
- Annual volunteer audit of the Camp's finances
- Beavertales (camp newsletter) editor
- Social media updates

- Organizing fundraising events
- Organizing special events such as Canada Day
- Spring opening and fall shutdown weekend work parties

Meet Mark Hamilton: Gracefield's New Managing Director

Mark was born and raised in Shawville Quebec. His earliest memories of Sunday school and church are of being a young child at Bristol Memorial Presbyterian church. He comes to Gracefield after thirteen years in the GTA—ten years of which was spent as Warehouse Manager for Canadian Stone Industries where he oversaw his shipping team, facility maintenance, purchasing and helped with customer service. Before this he had been employed in golf course maintenance and very involved in pastoral ministry. He has experience as a volunteer coach and worked with students at multiple high schools and at sports camps, and while living in the Vancouver area he served as the chaplain for the Vancouver Canadians baseball team. He has also served in congregational ministry in the roles of youth and young adult ministries, musical worship, and as a small group leader at churches in Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario.

He has recently been serving in many areas including as an elder and on the communications team for the church he has been attending in Brampton, Ontario. Mark completed his BA in Strategic ministry at Millar College of the Bible in Pambrun Saskatchewan. He has a long background in camp ministry and has served at numerous camps as a cabin counselor, director, and as a camp speaker/bible teacher. In Mark's words "GCCRC is an answer to my prayers, and I am excited to get started with the chapter that God is bringing me into. Looking forward to getting to know everyone and coming alongside the board to steward this wonderful camp and retreat centre." GCCRC Board and Search Committee are so pleased to welcome Mark to this position, and look forward to working with him towards our vision and mission at Gracefield!



Quaver in the South March Highlands Forest (Greg & Pauline S.)

Woman of Faith in My Life

Anthea O., Mother's Day 2020

The woman that most profoundly inspired my faith is my mother, Mary Odai. I recall in my early childhood, around age 6 or 7, my parents had early Saturday morning “prayer service” with my siblings and I, in addition to our regular Sunday church service. We learned songs, bible verses, stories and prayers in our native language. This was the beginning of the solidification of my faith.

My mother’s faith was displayed in everything, and it was not until I was much older that I realized just how much this example influenced my life. She taught me gratitude before I could fully appreciate the concept. She would say “Thank you Jesus” for everything so naturally—for something as simple as when we arrived home safe from an outing, or when I passed an exam, to major life events for our family. It is a practice I continue to this day, and instill in my own children.

Mom taught me to trust God and seek His guidance in all that I do. She always said that she was beyond blessed and could express that belief so fervently that even non-believers would feel it and be drawn to her. This deep-seated faith held her through her most joyous times and her most difficult life challenges, because according to her “Jesus loves me and no circumstances can change my opinion.”



Through my own trying challenges in recent years, I have found myself drawing strength from the foundation of faith established by my mother.



My father passed away in October 2018, and unfortunately, my mother was diagnosed with a terminal illness around the same time. Even through her struggle with the grief of losing her friend and partner of nearly 70 years and through her own illness, Mom was the epitome of love and unshakable faith—a true beacon for her children. This was especially clear in her final days. When most people would be focused on themselves, my mother was selflessly praying for her children to be blessed and strengthened when she was finally called home.



In some of her final words to us, my mother reaffirmed her faith by repeating her constant message “I love my Jesus and my Jesus loves me.

No circumstances can change my opinion.” This knowledge strengthened when she left this life to rejoin our father and Heavenly Father in December 2019.

Mom’s life, faith and example taught me the real meaning of one of my favourite bible verses—God’s peace that surpasses all understanding, does indeed guard our hearts and mind.

My mother was a faith warrior and will forever be my faith hero.

A Call for Change

Rev. Dr. Karen Dimock

As people around the world have come together in the past weeks to protest the violent and tragic death of George Floyd and too many others, the interfaith community in Ottawa hosted an online discussion on June 11. Rev. Dr. Anthony Bailey of Parkdale United Church was the keynote speaker, addressing *Racism and White Privilege*. He reminded us that while the concept of race is a false one, there is only one human race, racism is real. It creates an artificial construct that situates human beings in a hierarchy of social values. It is life threatening and destructive and underlies actions, behaviors and systems that perpetuate hatred and negative prejudice. In his talk Reverend Bailey encouraged us to pay attention to the way we tell the history of our own country, to recognize the legacy of racist policies and practices that continue to shape the experience of Black Lives in Canada today. Racism deprives people of opportunity, costs people their lives and makes parents afraid for their children. It not Godly. It is sinful.

Reverend Bailey urged the gathering that night to find a better story. To live into a fiercer and more compelling love that challenges us to do better, to support each other. To look at our own communities with humility, not pride. To acknowledge and learn about the cracks in our ways and our own faults because that, quoting Leonard Cohen, is how the light will get in.

Later in this same meeting, Reverend Jim Pot of Knox Church was interrupted in his speaking by a tirade of obscene and racist remarks. The hosts of the meeting muted everyone and removed the speaker from the gathering. When Reverend Pot continued, he said something to the effect of that is why this is important.

It is important.

If you like me are interested in learning more about how we might make positive change in ourselves, our interactions with others and the places we live and work as well as our church life there are resources listed below that can get us started. A good many of these were suggested to me by Koko Agborsangaya who is our church school superintendent. She has also pointed us towards Parents for Diversity (www.parentsfordiversity.com), an Ottawa-based group of parents who advocate for equity in the education system. They help parents navigate Anti-Black racism within the education system, and work with educators and administrators to address discrimination in schools. On their website they have a Diversity Library, listing books written by individuals with lived experience of racism and negative prejudice for reasons that include ethnicity and gender.

Some book recommendations:

So you want to talk about race, by Ijeoma Oluo

How to be an Anti-Racist, by Ibram X. Kendi
The Skin We're In, by Canadian journalist Desmond Cole.

For kids, *Intersection Allies: We Make Room for All*, by Chelsea Johnson, LaToya Council and Carolyn Choi is a lovely book with beautiful illustrations.

For parents & youth:

TED Talk, *The Danger of a Single Story*, by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

Listen to experiences of Black, Indigenous and other racialized people and act by amplifying their voices or supporting organizations which do this work. Some local organizations include:

Jaku Konbit (www.jakukonbit.com)
Black History Ottawa
(blackhistoryottawa.weebly.com)
Odawa Native Friendship Center
(www.odawa.on.ca/home.html)



The Coldest Night of the Year Walk for The Ottawa Mission

Rob S., Convenor of the Mission and Outreach Committee

The walk each year is sponsored by the Mission and Outreach ministry of St. Andrew's Church Ottawa. It was held on Feb. 22 this year. It was the largest attendance by the church in the 5 years we have participated in the walk. The pledge for the St. Andrew's All Saints team was \$1500.00. With the 20 walkers we raised almost \$8,000.00 for the Ottawa Mission. This was the 5th largest team in the city.

A Tribute to Our Music Program

Peter Lamont, Convenor of the Worship and Music Committee

The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche said: "Life, without music, would be a mistake." If Nietzsche is right, it is not a mistake we have ever made at St. Andrew's, where music ministry is such an important part of our worship.

Once a month or so at regular services we enjoy the handbell choir under the direction of Lynn Boothroyd, and as they continuously expand their repertoire and hone their skills we experience new ways of worship with them. And some of our children gather weekly as a choir, and we pray that both the love of music

and the love of God may grow together in them under Gabrielle's capable direction.

Our music ministry is led though by our choir and soloists under the direction of Tom Annand who, week upon week lead our praise in hymn and anthem, from the opening prelude through to Tom's solo organ postlude, stretching our musical boundaries, affording us a glimpse of the ineffable. As a congregation of God's people we have much to be grateful for.

It is not often that Nietzsche is quoted during a service of Christian worship, so let me atone for that by also quoting John Knox, whose plan for the reformed church set out in the First Book of Discipline included that "...men, women, children, would be exhorted to exercise themselves in psalms, that when the kirk doth convene and sing, they may be the more able together, with common hearts and voices to praise God..."

In this once-in-a-century world-wide pandemic emergency let us pray that we may soon all be reunited in song and praise.



Photo by Joan Rivard

Refugee Sponsorship Update: Meet the Masanka Family

Terry C., Refugee Sponsorship Coordinator

We are pleased to introduce Masanka family, whose members are mother, Mubikayi, son Joly age sixteen and daughter Misenga age thirteen. The Masankas are refugees from Democratic Republic of Congo which has been torn violent civil war for the past twenty years. Two years ago they fled the DRC and were settled in a UNHCR refugee camp in Uganda. St. Andrew's applied to sponsor the family as refugees last year. It is cheering to be able to provide news of progress on the sponsorship of our newest refugee family's visa application in the midst of this global pandemic.



Misenga, Mubikayi and Joly Masanka

This past December, we were informed by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada that our sponsorship application for the Masankas was approved and that it would be forwarded to the Canadian High Commission in Dar es Salaam to process the family's visa application. At that time, the estimated processing time for refugee applications by that office was eighteen months; however, with the advent of COVID-19, we were advised by both the Refugee Sponsorship Team at PCC headquarters and the Government that the refugee resettlement process had been slowed and to expect delays. Imagine the delight then when we received news directly from Mubikayi, via our contact point the Reverend Albert Tambwe Musangelu, that she had an interview with a Canadian Immigration Officer on March 8 and was told that her application met the eligibility criteria. She subsequently submitted the family's medical results to Dar es Salaam.

These are important milestones in the visa application process. They lend hope that when resettlement operations can return to normal and the Government is able to lift travel restrictions on foreign nationals entering Canada, we can look forward to the Masankas arrival in Canada. In the meantime, we will ramp up our plans to settle the family in Ottawa. Stay tuned for the launch of a campaign this fall to raise the necessary funds to support this initiative. Please pray for the health and safety of the Masanka family.

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Update from Amkhut, India

Aisling B.

About a week after Canadians were asked to self-isolate, the government of India ordered a public curfew for one day, on Sunday, March 22nd. It seemed curious to make this a one-day event, but it was a way of easing India's citizens into a lengthier lockdown: if they could stay inside for one day and feel fine, then they could continue to do so.



A Bible verse that was passed around amongst our brothers and sisters in India was from Isaiah 26:20, "Go, my people, enter your rooms and shut the doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until his wrath has passed by." It was surreal to see photos of normally bustling streets, full of people, cars, and animals, almost completely empty. After a successful first day the government extended the lockdown until April 14th, and continued to add days. As in Ottawa, there are restrictions for food shopping: only one family member allowed, shop hours are limited, and shoppers should remain at least two metres apart. In most cases the head of the household is designated as the shopper, though he may not be familiar with the markets. One man got around this by ordering his family's groceries online!

Throughout lockdown friends in India were concerned about farmers and villagers who must work every day in order to feed themselves and their children. The youth group in Amkhut raised money to provide food to families in need; as well, the congregation has given monetary support of Rs 1500 (\$30CAD) to mission school teachers. There was shock and sorrow among the congregation when they saw the photos and video clips of migrant workers forced to travel to their home states on foot when the railways were shut down.

Rev. Navneet, and all of the ministers in the region, quickly adapted worship so that it could be recorded live on Facebook, though Rev. Navneet did express concern about how to reach older members of the congregation who were not online. By mid-May they rolled out an online VBS on Facebook, which was held May 21–24. The Vacation Bible School was well attended; speakers and musicians made videos for the children, which were posted each day.

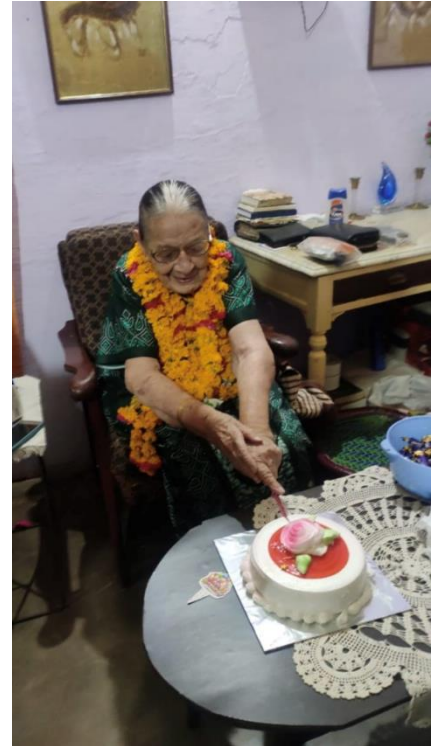


On a personal level, I was deeply touched by the outpouring of messages and phone calls I received from friends in Jobat and Amkhut when my mother passed away. The ministers had been praying every morning and evening for our family and everyone was sad for us. Most funerals happen within

24 hours in India, so the prolonged grief was something new for them to understand. Occasionally Rev. Navneet sends me Bible verses; after telling him recently that I have had trouble speaking with God, he sent me a particularly poignant one, “I have cried to the Lord with my voice and he has heard me from his holy hill.” Psalm 3:4.

Former missionary Pauline Brown celebrated her 95th birthday in Jobat on May 26. We had spoken earlier that month, when she told me she was incredibly proud of the way that townspeople were self-isolating and following the rules. Some of these rules may have been broken in order to give Pauline a great birthday...which involved six cakes!

At the time of writing the Indian government is easing restrictions for lockdown, even as the infection rates continue to rise. Just like in Canada, people are eager to get the economy rolling again.



The Community Laundry Co-op

Jeanie H.

We're still here! There is always lots of laundry to do, even during a pandemic. The good news is that despite COVID-19 the Community Laundry Co-op is still open and supporting its members and commercial clients.

As well, the Ontario Government has declared laundry an essential service. This not only confirms that we are meeting a critical need in the community but also gives us permission to keep operating during COVID-19.

It has not been easy. We are following the guidelines from local and provincial levels. We have to limit the number of people doing self-serve laundry at one time and most of our business clients have stopped operating due to the outbreak. At one point, we had to close for 2 weeks when our counsellor/co-ordinator was ill. Even then we were able to keep in touch with vulnerable members and our Business Manager found an alternate laundry service for our commercial clients.

It is quiet in the Co-op now—no families chatting while the clothes get washed. The smell of disinfectant is stronger than the sweet smell of clean clothes. Our counsellor is helping our members deal with huge issues related to social isolation and COVID-19 that we can't even imagine.

Now, more than ever, money is an issue for us. COVID-19 is already affecting some of the grants we've applied for. We had to cancel our annual Bridge Luncheon fundraiser and our contract income has dropped by over \$2,200 per month. To date, we have lost \$4,500 in revenue. We are hoping that we will qualify for some of the Government supports but it is not certain at this point that we will "fit the boxes." We have received a number of donations through Canada Helps and hope you will be able to support us during this difficult time.

Community Laundry Co-operative
 Charity # 843949298RR0001
 Heartwood House, 404 McArthur
 Ave., Ottawa ON K1K 1G8



Photo by Jeanie Hicks

Christian Education Update

Sydney McIntosh, Christian Education Coordinator

(289) 795-6003

Hello & happy beginning of summer everyone!

Peace of Christ be with you.

I have been spending lots of time outdoors with our puppy Callie, going to dog parks (thank goodness they are open now) and soaking up the sun outside with a book in hand. It has been lovely to see so many people spending time outdoors and working in their gardens. This year we are trying to grow baby tomatoes, kale and lettuce indoors!

I hope that you and your loved ones are doing well during this challenging time. I miss you all. Life has changed so dramatically in the past few months, but it is a relief to know God is a constant amid it all.

The past few weeks we have been discussing Christ's Ascension and Pentecost Sunday! The birth of the Christian church coming into the world. Happy Birthday Church! We also celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and that is our focus in our words to remember this June.





How do you see God, by Carolyn K.

“If you love me, show it by doing what I’ve told you.

I will talk to the Father,
and he’ll provide you another Friend
so that you will always have someone with you.
This Friend is the Spirit of Truth.”

John 14:15–16 (MSG*)

I love this translation* of the verse because it refers to us as a “Friend” of Christ and that Christ will never leave us because He has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Come spirit come! We are so blessed to have the Holy Spirit by our side, especially during these times.

I hope you are encouraged by John 14:15–16 to lean into Christ and His Holy Spirit for we are a Friend of Christ’s.

I am here if you ever want to chat. Please reach out, I would love to hear how you are doing.

Missing you all!

In Christ’s love,

Sydney

* For more information about this translation, see www.biblegateway.com/versions/Message-MSG-Bible

Youth in Strange Times

Sydney McIntosh, Christian Education Coordinator

Hello everyone! I hope you are well.

Very strange times, but take heart in knowing the Lord is with us. How are you and your families handling isolation? Tim and I are lucky to have a puppy to keep us out for lots of walks. Missing you all and know that I am praying for you.

I wanted to provide everyone with an update for what is happening with the Confirmation Class 2020.

After discussing the issue with Rev. Karen and the Christian Education Committee, we decided to wait until we can be together in person in the sanctuary for the communicants to join the church formally. There is something special in everyone being together for the profession of faith and the welcoming of the new members by the congregation. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to reach out to myself or Rev. Karen.

At this point I cannot provide a new date for when the confirmation class will be welcomed as members and have a celebration together. I am hopeful that it will be sometime in the fall depending on health regulations. I will keep you all up to date as we transition back from isolation.

In the meantime, we are encouraging the youth and their mentors to connect when possible.

Part of the confirmation class was to encourage an outreach component, meaning an engagement with our community.

The Christian Education team has come up with the idea that the youth be given postcards to send to those who are homebound or people in need in our church community. In the last week of May, I dropped off postcard packages and stamps with the help of some friends to each of the youth in this year's confirmation class to send to their pen pals.

Can't wait to see what goodness the Lord brings out of these connections.

Stay well!

Sydney

Children & Youth Ministry

Sydney McIntosh, Christian Education Coordinator

(289) 795-6003

Upcoming Events

Looking forward into summer, be sure to check out these great events!

Bible Story Time with Sydney

- Every Thursday 9:30–10:30 a.m.

Youth Chat (12 & up)

- Every Friday 3:30 p.m.

Weekly church school resource email

- Email from Sydney jam-packed with a children's time video, bible activities and helpful links for all ages.

To join the mailing list or to get Zoom invites to these events contact Sydney by email at sj@standrewsottawa.ca or text 289-795-6003.

VBS Update

We are considering having an online program for Vacation Bible School, August 17–21. The Committee is meeting regularly to discuss the best next steps.



Kid's Church

Kid's Church has been very different via Zoom but has been an interesting new way for children and families to connect during this time.

In April we held an Easter Kid's Church which was so much fun! Kids sang songs, listened to a bible story, created a stained-glass cross craft and their own Resurrection eggs to tell the story of Easter through Eggs! We saw so many kids attend, which was wonderful! There were over 20 children at the virtual event, praise God!

In May we discussed the promises of God, it is amazing to think there are over 7,000 promises in God's word. The promise we discussed was the story of Noah and the Ark and how God promised never to flood the earth again and sealed that promise with the beautiful creation of the rainbow. Every time we look up into the sky and see a rainbow we can remember God's promise. The kids drew some beautiful pictures of rainbows. The craft we did was to remember the rain in the flood. We created our own rain clouds using food colouring and shaving cream in a glass of water to make the appearance of rain dripping down through the clouds. So fun to watch, and an easy one to try at home.

Thank you to everyone who has participated virtually in Kid's Church ministry. It is such a blessing for us to be able to be together virtually during this challenging season.

God bless.

Artwork from Families

I love my job for many reasons but one of my favourite's is getting to hear and see the things the children at St. Andrew's can imagine. After singing a song or reading a bible story together it is amazing to see the artwork and discussions that come out of their talented minds. These children know and love the Lord and it is so clear when you see the way they draw and interpret bible stories. They love to explore and learn more about our wonderful God! I am so blessed that I get to share God's love for them but also that I get to watch them grow up and create beauty in our world.

Here are some of the submissions I have received from children and their families over the past months. I hope you enjoy them as much as I do.

Take care.



I think I made a mistake, by Jacob



Raining Easter Eggs, by Lougheed



Filled with the Holy Spirit, by Mathieu C.



Mummy, by Miriam

Was He or Wasn't He the Messiah? Spring Wednesday Evening Studies

Jenefer C., Christian Education Committee

The onset of the COVID-19 situation converged with the plan for our Wednesday evening studies group of viewing and discussing Netflix's series *Messiah*.

With the help of Zoom we kept the plan and enjoyed ten weeks of faith-inspired discussions led by Reverend Karen.

The show chronicles the rise of a contemporary messianic figure known as Al-Masih who appears out of nowhere in modern-day Syria and begins performing miracles across the world, including walking on water. As a result, Al-Masih starts to attract crowds of starry-eyed believers, many with their own complicated and often desperate lives.

Suffice to say, the show manages to be very entertaining while attaining respectable Christian depth, including many rather hidden Biblical references. The thought-provoking episodes—with a captivating ending—prompted many good discussions on what it is to be a Christian in our wired, tumultuous world.

Our programming for Wednesday evenings is now faith-based "Ted Talks" which, at time of writing, have already inspired our usual honest, somewhat intelligent and always enjoyable Zoom meetings. Just email the office if you can join us!

Book Report: A Faith Like Mine

Written by Laura Buller, published by DK: Dorling Kindersley Limited, 2005

Diane Munier

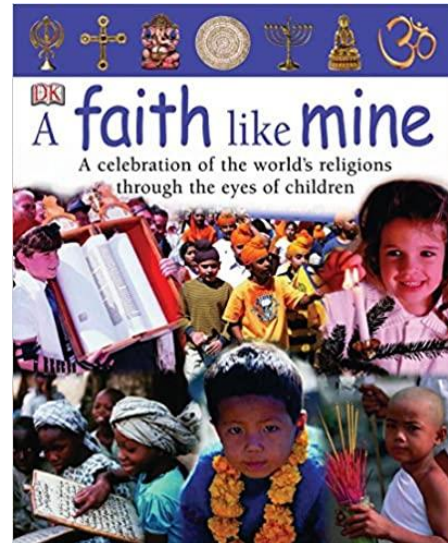
A Faith Like Mine is a gorgeous, lavishly illustrated children's book. It is, as its sub-title says, "A celebration of the world's religions through the eyes of children."

In the Introduction, the author asks, "What is faith?" Here is the definition: "When you believe in something, you have faith in it. If you believe something to be true, you show your faith by being loyal to it. For millions of people across the globe, their faith is the thing they trust, hold true and are loyal to. They pray and worship, and read the words that help them to remain faithful. The children in this book will tell you why their faith is important to them."

This book examines in detail the six largest faiths in the world as practiced and understood by the children of those faiths: Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Through pictures, photos and their own words, boys and girls explain why their faith is important to them and how they try and follow the laws and beliefs of their faith. Five other faiths: Zoroastrianism, Shinto, Taoism, Jainism, and Bahá'í are examined as well, but without children's comments. Each of the larger faith's descriptions runs to six or eight pages.

In these pages, author Laura Buller outlines the origin of the religion, the main beliefs, the spiritual leaders, the symbols, the holy books, how and where people worship, their special clothes or special diets and rites of passage and festivals. There are maps and graphs showing where the faith is practiced and how many people practice that faith.

But it is the photos and comments of the children that make this book a treasure. Vipul, a Hindu boy from the United States, says that "Hinduism teaches you to do good things without expecting something in return", while Sonam, a Hindu girl from India, says that "My favourite god is Rama, because he fought for my religion and won against evil Ravana." Jang-chub from Tibet is training to be a Buddhist monk: "My father helped me to decide to become a novice when I was 10 but some children join when they are eight or nine. The thing I like best is learning the dhamma, Buddha's teachings."



Food and the faith are important: At the Gurdwara, their place of worship, Vijayant, a Sikh boy from Australia, writes: "We first share a sacred pudding—called prashad—that is blessed at the end of the service." Benjamin from France, a Jewish boy, tells about the food at Hanukkah: "We eat food cooked in oil. This is to remember the miracle of lamp oil. My favourite food is doughnuts. Antonino, a Christian boy from Italy, tells about his First Communion while Corrine, a Christian girl from Sweden, explains about the traditions of St. Lucia's Day. Rachid, a Muslim boy from Morocco, both shows us in five photographs how he prays and tells us about the Five Pillars of Islam. Omar from Afghanistan explains

about Ramadan. “Ramadan is a special time for Muslims. Muslims fast for one month to remember that everyone is equal. Poor people don’t have food, so everyone fasts to know how it feels if you don’t have food.”

The piety and faith of the children is heart-warming. They are proud of their faith and proud of the traditions that make up their faith. They try very hard to live up to what their faith expects.

While this is a child’s book, adults can also learn so much about different religions and faiths as well. I was unsure about the tenets of Jainism and Bahá’í, but now I am more familiar with those beliefs. I learned that Zoroastrianism is probably the oldest faith still practiced, with about 150,000 followers worldwide. I learned as well that Taoism is represented by the yin-yang, the black-white symbolic circle.

I would recommend adding this book to your personal library, your Church library or your school library. You and your children will learn a great deal.

Book Club in the Time of COVID-19

(with apologies to the author of *Love in the Time of Cholera*)

Laura M.

Well, the best-laid plans of book clubs and planning committees often go astray and so it has been for your St. Andrew’s Book Club. We spent some time last November planning our reading for the upcoming year with members carefully choosing their proposed titles and

wondering how best to “sell” their chosen few to the rest of the group. We had a presentation night and spent more time thinking of what to vote for; it came down to the nail-biting wire for four books, two of which were ultimately chosen. We plotted dates and times and assigned our reading to each month. We made sure there was a copy of each chosen title available at St. Andrew’s. We worked through the first few books and had fun during our discussions and then...came COVID-19! So no more access to the Ottawa Public Library, no more access to the St. Andrew’s library and unless you had already obtained a copy of our upcoming reads, you were plum out of luck if you wanted to read a physical book. So what to do, what to do? We spent some time trying to locate electronic copies of our chosen titles with somewhat spotty results. We had hoped that most of the books were available in free audiobooks but this also didn’t pan out.

However, being the resourceful group we are, we simply rolled with the punches and listened to a radio play (*The Investigator*) on YouTube for our May discussion which went off very well via Zoom and have chosen *Prayer* by Philip Kerr for our June read. Unfortunately it is still only available to us in electronic form so we will need to read it via our computers or eBooks but I’ve been highly impressed with the ability of our members to keep as true as they can to our commitment to read interesting books and to get together to discuss them in a spirited but respectful way. We would certainly invite anyone who has a little extra time on their hands and an interest in joining us to do so this June 18th. If you contact the office, we will include you in our mailings for future reads. In the meantime, kudos to the book club members for being so dedicated.

The Centretown Emergency Food Centre: In the Storm

Rob R.

For our Centretown Emergency Food Centre the pandemic created the perfect storm. The swollen ranks of the unemployed, the closure of school food programs, and the shutdown of other food banks due to positive tests created an unprecedented need for its services. On top of that the process of providing service to the public in its ancient Centretown United Church premises was a new challenge.

St. Andrew's was quick to respond to the need for more resources. Generous gifts were given by the Mission and Outreach Committee, the Men's Fellowship, and by our minister through the Lulu Phillips Fund. Eventually the Ottawa Food Bank made a special donation of \$25,000. And the CEFC's brave staff and volunteers reorganized its operations by providing pre-packaged food parcels to ensure a safer environment for all.

The CEFC, a project of 22 Centretown churches, has effectively and compassionately fulfilled its mission. St. Andrew's is grateful to all those who made that possible.

The Garden Kingdom

Ken Y.

He said therefore, 'What is the kingdom of God like? And to what should I compare it? It is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in the garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches.' Luke 13:18-19

Spring is a time when the earth emerges from a blanket of snow, our surroundings turn green, and we hear the calls of birds and animals. For many of us, this sense of returning life is concentrated in our gardens. Our gardens come in all sizes. A garden might be a suburban yard, a planter on a downtown balcony or a pot on a windowsill. But they all respond to days getting longer and warmer.

The parable of the mustard seed brings to mind that a garden is more than plants. It is soil and water, and all manner of living things. It provides shelter for birds and food for insects. In a garden, we can see the connections and relationships that make up the web of creation. I have never tried growing mustard, but other plants attract the birds of the air, and the animals on the ground, too. My late wife Judy planted butterfly weed to attract (of course) butterflies, and crocosmia for hummingbirds.

In our gardens, we see life unfolding. As the parable suggests, we feel wonder at the transformation of a tiny seed into a mature plant. Each spring, we wait in anticipation for returning plants and birds, leavened with concern about what might not have made it through the long Ottawa winter. The maple out front has a big red X drawn on it; it will not see another spring. But a new tree, perhaps another maple, perhaps something else, will take its place. The cycle of life will continue, a lesson from our gardens.

Being human, and not yet in the kingdom of God, we play favourites. In our gardens, as elsewhere, we draw distinctions between good and bad plants and animals. Chipmunks are cute, squirrels—not so much. Some plants are weeds, and it is not even clear why. Why is a brilliant yellow dandelion, one of the first signs of life in spring, a bad thing?

The parable compares a garden to the kingdom of God. Especially in these times, being in a garden does seem, if not heaven, at least a waystation.



Tales of The Great Journey of 2020

Elizabeth J P.

A note of explanation: When St. Andrew's Church Ottawa went into lockdown on March 14, 2020, several of us 'Craft Ladies' of the Women's Guild went into limbo as well. We usually meet every Monday morning for 10 months of the year to create the crafts that we sell at the annual St. Andrew's Scottish Tea & Christmas Bazaar. Included in these are the very popular felt nativity sets. This year, I began making the camels, cows, and, later on, some of the shepherds. Suddenly, our work ground to a halt, with most of our supplies, and completed figures, locked in the Guild craft cupboard in the church basement (this is the oft-mentioned House of Andreas that you will find in the Tales!).

However, I did have three of the camels at home. After a couple of weeks of isolation, and, let's face it, dreadful boredom, I set the camels on a desk near the window, and began this adventure in my head. I had no notion after the first two days of where it would all go, but as ideas came to me, at all times of day and night, I jotted them down in a wee notebook, then began to share them with the craft ladies. Below you find the first few 'episodes'. I have written many more, and if you find them amusing, please let me know, and I can include them in future editions of St. Andrew's in Action. I may be reached at ejphillipson@gmail.com. Enjoy!



Part I: Who is this interloper in our midst?

Najima and Shams were enjoying the late afternoon sun when someone approached on the horizon.

'Who are you?' said Shams.

‘My name is Sadiq’, said the stranger (his name means Friend). ‘Might I join you on your voyage?’

‘You are very welcome, Sadiq, but we will not get to our destination for many, many days’, said Najima.

‘That is fine, I am in no hurry, what with this plague that has come upon us. Best to stay and rest awhile in this safer place’, answered Sadiq.

‘Blessings to you, then, we will rest together’, said Shams. ‘I hope the food is good in this place...’, muttered Najima.

And so the new companions stayed and rested, for who knows how long; we will hope for the best. Stay tuned for more adventures with Najima, Shams, and Sadiq!

Part II

It is time to begin the tale of our three intrepid travellers. You have already met Najima, his brother Shams, and the stranger Sadiq. Would you like to hear more of their backgrounds? Yes, of course you would...

Najima (his name in Arabic means Star) is light of pelt, while his brother Shams (Sun) is of darker hue. This is because their mother Hubun (Love) had two husbands. Her first, Aliliman (Faith), was dark of pelt, and gave Shams his hue. Aliliman died when Shams was young. Hubun then became the wife of Amal (Hope), and with him bore Najima. Amal was light of pelt, and so passed on his hue to Najima.

And what of the interloper Sadiq? Have you noticed that he has the same hue of pelt as Najima? His saddle is from a different tribe: is this significant? And why is he travelling along the same road as Najima and Shams? There is a tale to come that will keep you enthralled, we hope, as we await the end of the plague that has come upon our land.

Join our intrepid travellers on their journey north to find Alqamar (Moon) and Sama (Sky), who are locked away in the lower depths of the stone edifice of Andreas, near the raging river across the path from the High Court of the land. It will be a journey fraught with danger, but also with friendship and faith. And so let us begin....

Part III

Greetings, gentle readers: your humble scribe had a restful night and is ready to continue. Are you ready to hear more about our travelling trio? Yes, of course you are! And so ...

Shams and Najima stepped apart from the stranger Sadiq to converse.

‘Shall we travel together? Shall we trust this stranger, Shams?’ said Najima.

Shams replied, ‘Najima, you decide; I will trust your judgment’.

‘Oh, but Shams, you are the eldest of my brothers, and much wiser than I, and I trust you to take the lead for this journey. Please, Shams, I have much fear, and you are so brave!’

‘All right, Najima, then I say that we should trust this stranger, and move ahead as a trio. Our journey may be fraught with danger and great trials of character, and he seems strong. Let us trust Sadiq, and find out why he, too, seems to be travelling northward into the land of King Justinian.’

Najima and Shams turned back to Sadiq, who was awaiting them (although he had slyly listened in on their conversation).

‘Sadiq, will you join us on your journey? We would be honoured to consider you as our brother: your saddle shows that you are from a noble tribe’, said Shams. ‘The sun has set; shall we gather around a fire and tell one another our stories?’

Sadiq was pleased; he did not wish to undertake his journey alone, and was eager to tell his new friends about his dear brother Sama, who, he feared, was locked in the depths of the mighty stone edifice of Andreas, across the path from the High Court of King Justinian.

So the trio found a suitable place, lit a fire, and gathered around the flame.

And so they began to tell one another of why they were journeying into the land of King Justinian. Are you ready to hear, as well? Of course you are! Your scribe will continue later, it is time to break the fast. Join me later...

Your servant.

Part IV

Greetings, gentle readers, it is I, your loyal scribe, coming to you once again as this afternoon comes softly to its close.

Like to our travellers, the plague that has come upon us continues to envelope us in its wrathful grip! I have received a scroll from envoys from our great leader King Justinian, and news is sorrowful. Many more have succumbed across our land, beyond our borders, and across the sea.

It is with this heavy heart within my chest that I continue with our travellers, to bring us all a distraction from our woes. Do you wish to hear more? Of course you do....

When we last left Shams, Najima, and Sadiq, they were preparing for a restful sleep next to the fire.

‘Tell us, Sadiq, just what is the purpose of your journey into the land of King Justinian, for it will not be an easy one,’ said Shams. ‘Now that we are brothers in travel, you may be frank with us, we are indeed trustworthy.’

‘I do trust you, my brother, I see from your saddles that you are from a fine tribe, and of even finer stock,’ replied Sadiq. ‘We are in this together, as many say these days.’

I must get to the great stone edifice of Andreas: my brother Sama may be in grave danger! I hear from other travellers that some of our number are being held captive in a dark place within Andreas’ abode, and I fear for them all. As the year comes to an end, Andreas always holds a Great Bazaar for the community: people come from near and far to purchase the wares, and, I fear, our brethren! Each year several of our kind are sent to Andreas, and never return. I fear that they may be sold—into slavery! What if this happens to my dear brother Sama? I must find him before it is too late.’



Najima cried out: ‘Sadiq! This is what we fear will happen to Alqamar, our own dear brother! He disappeared a while ago, and we have heard rumour told that he has suffered this same fate. Yes, yes, we must join forces to save them and any others that may be with them. I am told that these may include sheep and cattle, all in the dark depths of the House of Andreas.’

Sadiq, though strong of heart and of limb, began to weep. ‘Sama, oh, Sama, I miss you, dear brother, and now that I have found new friends, I have hope to free you.’

Sadiq pulled a parchment from his saddle, and showed this to Shams and Najima. ‘This is my brother Sama, you will recognise him by his saddle, which is of our tribe.’

And so, dear readers, you must await another dawn to hear more of the travails of our travellers. Until we meet again, I remain,

Your servant.

Part V

Greetings, dear readers, I hope that you have rested well, and have now broken your fast, for your humble scribe has more to tell! Are you ready? It is thus....

Shams, Najima, and Sadiq slept well, and now were ready for the Great Journey to begin at last! But they were in need of food, and so went looking.

‘Ah, this will do,’ said Shams, ‘eat up, we need to carry on!’

Yes, quite tasty, if somewhat dry: sticks in the throat a bit!’ said Sadiq. ‘We will probably have worse as we go along....’

Soon they set out. They came to a large glass (Roman, of course: they make superior quality), and looked out.

‘Sadiq! You have travelled much more than Shams and me: what in the name of the gods is that? Is it manna?’

Sadiq replied smugly, ‘Have you never seen this white substance that falls from the sky? It is cold, and makes water on your pelt as it melts away. This land has much of this substance, but as the season turns, it will disappear, you’ll see.’ Shams was anxious to get closer to this substance. ‘Come on, let’s get out there!’

‘No, no, Shams, I am not brave like you! I am afraid of this whiteness!’ cried Najima. ‘What if we fall victim to it?’

‘Najima, you can be quite cowardly, you know, remember your ancestry! We must explore the world around us, widen our horizons. Let us go!’

And so the trio ventured into the whiteness, Shams leading the way.

‘Great thunder! My hooves are sticking into this whiteness, and are freezing up!’

Sadiq chuckled at the sight of Shams up on the mound, of shivering Najima beside him.



‘Are you satisfied now, Shams? Let us go back towards the warmth and explore there first, and wait for the melting. With luck, it will come in the next days. You have much to learn of the world, you brothers.’

And so our trio went back to the warmth to start the next phase of their adventure.

Have a good day, gentle readers. Your scribe must catch up on household tasks now. Join me tomorrow to discover what Shams, Najima, and Sadiq get into next!

Your servant.