

# Jubilation!

**Jubilation!** is the newsletter of Jubilee United Church  
 40 Underhill Drive \* 416-447-6846 \* [www.jubileeunited.ca](http://www.jubileeunited.ca)

## *Notes from Norm*

On the last Saturday of May, I stood behind my friend and colleague, Brigid Maya Douglas Brathwaite, and laid a hand upon her head as we celebrated her Ordination by the Holy Spirit and the discernment of the United Church of Canada. It was an honour and a privilege... also a profound responsibility. Not because I could get it wrong and ruin everything, but because I could miss it and let a holy moment pass by without comment; I could be distracted and not recognize love that filled every space; I could fail to let it touch me.

As I stood over her, in an instant I flashed back to my own ordination 25 years ago and marvelled at how much has changed and how much has not. I recognized in an instant the nature of ministry as I have experienced and shared it...



### **What's changed in 25 years?**

My thinner waist and fuller hair have changed places. My naïve optimism has become wise hope. My faith has become more fulsome and less precise. I no longer fear, but revel in questions that I cannot answer. For my church, there are not as many buildings and fewer full-time jobs; there is less respect for the institution of church, but more opportunity for us to be brave, prophetic, and effective. We talk more freely, broadly, and fearlessly than ever before and nobody seems to be “going through the motions”.

But even as things have changed, I stand amazed at how much has stayed the same. As I stood in that chancel celebrating the ordination of my friend, everything that I've practiced or learned in ministry was right there.

Maya often refers to me as her “Mentor”. She flatters me with the title, but she means it sincerely: I have mentored her. What I realize is that as much as I may have mentored her and helped her to learn and grow, she has taught me and inspired me to grow as well. The learning and the growth has been mutual. I have been blessed all through my ministry with such relationships and opportunities: from the compassionate person who confronted me and mentored me on organizational skills; the preacher who told me to stop apologizing for my theology and recognize that not only have I been called, but I'm also being paid to think out loud; through the seemingly old farmer's wife who taught me about feminism; the fellow who refused to go to church, but still taught me about real faith in action; to the people at Jubilee who amaze me with insights and inspirations on a daily basis – including this bit of wisdom from our most recent pair of Confirmants: ***“The Church is more than just a place you go to for a one hour service on Sunday; it is more than a building: it is a family, a place where we can be ourselves without fear of judgement; it is a place for learning real life lessons from real people and God.”***

*continued on pg 2*

**Today, as in every day of the past 25 years, I realize that I am called to teach and lead... and also to learn and follow.**

As Maya stood up after the blessing and I put the stole around her neck, we were both suddenly in tears. We had been planning this day for 5 years. We had rehearsed it only hours before... but this time, it was for real. It was holy. And we both wept. **Sometimes in ministry, you cry.** You cry in joy, you cry in sadness, you cry in pain, you cry because all that stuff that's going on just can't be kept inside. Sometimes you don't even know why you're crying. Over the years, I've cried when I've sat with people in the midst of darkness and hurt; I've cried as people have told me what it is that they love about the person they are about to marry. I've cried as we've sat and talked about a loved one, gone for many years; I've cried in a group as we've read or watched the news. I cried when our first refugee family arrived in Canada and cried again when our second family made it here. I've cried at Confirmation and Baptism and every now and again, tears well up when I preside over Communion. Reading over this, it seems like I'm a blubbering mess... but crying, for me, is important. It humbles me as I cry in the midst of beauty and love; it humbles me when I cry in the midst of sorrow and pain, because I recognize that there are parts of life that are simply beyond me, and in my tears I share the burden with God. **Every day for the past 25 years, I have experienced ministry as a wonderfully humbling experience.**

As we were crying and I was thinking about the past and present, I was standing beside Maya's mother. I can't begin to imagine the journey that brought her to this moment; I have no idea the variety or depth of the emotions that she was experiencing... But I knew that I wanted her to know that I respected her love for her daughter; I wanted her to know that I felt blessed by her presence; I wanted her to know things for which I simply didn't have words. So, I reached out and took her hand. We held hands as her daughter was announced to the gathered assembly; as the Rev. Maya was handed her Bible and congratulated on her journey.

**I realized that for 25 years, I have doing ministry by holding hands:** baby hands when I first get to hold them before baptism; children's hands as we play. I have held the hands of couples coming to be married; hands of newcomers looking for welcome. I have held the hands of those who are leaving this life and those are bringing new life into this world. I have sat with people who were struggling and offered my hand silently; I have grabbed the hands of those who needed to squeeze and wrestle trying to express their pain or frustration. In seminary, I learned lots of words and techniques for active listening and pastoral counselling, but sometimes – when the time is right – holding hands communicates more than I could ever express in words. Holding hands conveys presence... in joy or in sorrow it assures us that we are not alone, and that is the essence of ministry.

During the Ordination Service, I was swept away by the music and the preaching; I was embraced and held by the words and shape of the liturgy. I will confess that this isn't always the case. More often than not, when I am not involved in the service, my critical brain takes over and my head is filled with, "Why did she do that?" "I'd never make that mistake!" "I wonder where he got those robes?" "I've got to remember that, so that I can use it..." All of that chatter often makes it hard for me to listen. Ministry can be like that, too. Going to see someone in the hospital or starting something with a new group, even leading a worship service... the chatter can be quite distracting and I find myself worrying that I'm not going to get it right; I'm going to make a mistake; I'll ruin everything. Sometimes the chatter makes me want to go back to my office and plan again what I'll do when I get there; what I'll say when I open my mouth.

At this Service of Ordination, I had no words to say, no difficult task to perform – all that I had to do was to show up in love. So, too with ministry. Most of ministry is simply showing up in love. In 25 years, most of my profound well-rehearsed words have been forgotten, my eloquent and expansive theologies laid aside as new ones have come along and replaced them... but the times that I have shown up and not let the clutter take over my words and actions have had the greatest impact. As companion, silent witness, mourner, welcoming face, helping hand, dish washer, and chair stacker – **showing up is what has mattered the most.**

So, I suppose that nothing has really changed for me over the past 25 years. Oh, my body has changed, the communities that I have served have changed (although I've been with Jubilee for almost half of my Ordained Ministry) – but my practice, not so much. Except that I think I'm beginning to see what it is to practice ministry: **Lead and follow, teach and learn; cry, hold hands, and show up...**all of which has very little to do with my time in seminary. Which might mean that it was a waste of time and money... but more importantly means that you can practice the same kind of ministry, too. Thanks for being part of the past 25 years and I look forward to seeing what we can do together in the next.

# COUNCIL COMMENTS

Currently, the focus of Council is on the future merger of St. John's United Church with our church, Jubilee United Church, which is to take place on July 1st of this year. To date, we have prepared a Merger Agreement, referred to as the Covenant Agreement, which was presented initially to Council and thereafter to the congregation where, in both venues, unanimous approval was granted to proceed towards the merger. With that approval, Jubilee will assume the assets and liabilities of St. John's United Church and will take responsibility for the sale of the St. John's property, as well as the maintenance of custodial services at St. John's until the property is sold and occupied by the new owner. We hope that every member of Jubilee will extend a warm welcome to our new members from St. John's. Such hospitality on our part will help with integrating their members into their new church home here at Jubilee. Our last hurdle involved seeking approval to proceed from the United Church of Canada, represented by Presbytery, which was granted with the remaining task of establishing a joint real estate sales team to select a realtor and proceed to sell the St. John's church property. As we anticipate people and financial resources becoming available to Jubilee, the support of Council members and the members of our congregation have made this merger commitment to the people of St. John's a reality and a worthy undertaking.

Other issues that were addressed by your Council included voting favourably on four Re-mits which could impact the structure and policies of the United Church of Canada going forward. Approval of the Re-mits would essentially eliminate Presbytery by providing broader regional oversight. The downsizing that will occur on the approval of these Re-mits will allow for church governance at a lower overall cost.

Council also supported a proposal presented by Scouts Canada to offer sponsorship to the local Scout Troop in our neighbourhood. This Scout sponsorship includes providing support for their programs and activities and possibly a little financial support, but they do not have a need for the use of our premises at this time.

Please know that we at Council welcome your comments and suggestions as it is our mandate to represent and support you, our congregation. An informed Council can best meet this obligation that we have to all of you.

C. Scott

## ADVANCE NOTICE JUBILEE BRIDGE 2017

At  
JUBILEE UNITED CHURCH  
40 Underhill Dr.  
416-447-6846

### BRIDGE INSTRUCTION BY AUDREY GRANT

Acclaimed bridge teacher and author  
Member of the Canadian Bridge Hall of Fame  
Member of the ACBL Hall of Fame, Chicago USA

ONE DAY ONLY: November 17, 2017

**COST:** \$60.00 Cash or current cheques payable to Jubilee United Church

#### Information on Registration

We suggest you pre-register by contacting  
Marie at 416-222-9329 or [mmcrorie@rogers.com](mailto:mmcrorie@rogers.com)

If this is not convenient there will be a Registration Day at  
Jubilee on Friday, September 8, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

SINGLES, PAIRS OR GROUPS OF FOUR CAN BE ACCOMMODATED  
REGISTER EARLY AS THIS EVENT NORMALLY FILLS QUICKLY



## Like to play bridge?

Join our Marathon bridge group. We meet in each others' homes throughout the winter and end the season with a dinner out. It's a no stress group and lots of fun.

Contact

Bob Simpson at  
416-203-0398  
or Ruth Nicholls at  
416-445-2642.



## Theology on Tap

**Wednesdays, June 21 and July 17**

Rev. Seli will be sitting down at 7:30pm at The Mill for a pint and a chat about things theologic.

We'll talk about the real world and what God and Faith has to do with it all... We might be clever, we might get deep... we might just enjoy some chicken wings. The Jubilee FaceBook page and The Church Bulletin will offer upcoming topics as the day approaches.

Buy your own food and drink; bring your own opinions... but sit with Norm and he'll keep the conversation going.

## The Benevolent Fund

Allow me to preface this note with, "This is not a plea". There is no Benevolent Fund campaign – and never will be. Some people in the church and around our community like to contribute to this fund and I think it only fair that I share with you from time to time.

As most of you know, the Benevolent Fund is a modest and discreet fund that I use to help folks in the greatest need. There are no reports made or records kept; it is entirely at my discretion. It is my policy to shy away from repeat requests, and try to keep to modest amounts so that we can reach as many as possible, and not turn people away when the funds are depleted.

Since I last reported, there has been a great need for support for groceries and basic clothing. We have helped with a few utility bills and helped cover tuition for someone making a better life for themselves and their family. These little things are not the kind of things that most agencies or established funds are designed to cover; these are the things that fall below the radar and often allow people to fall between the cracks. We make a difference; there are some folks who have made their way over the poverty line with a little bit of help from us... and that's something that I don't want to keep to myself.

I hear a great many stories as people come looking for help – some make me feel honoured to be so trusted; some are fabrications and attempts at drama. Even if the story isn't true, the need often is and I try, on your behalf, to offer the kind of assistance that helps people stand on their own and make a better life for themselves and their children.

In the summer months, we find a number of people looking for food support and transportation to seasonal jobs. We have, from time to time, helped children go to summer camp or helped to subsidize Day Care (it can get expensive when the kids aren't in school).

Donations can be made directly to me, but also to the Church office or in the Offering Box in an envelope marked "Benevolent Fund". In the box or through the office assures that you will get a Tax Receipt... to me directly is not as reliable (I do forget sometimes).

You will not hear about these efforts during the year as privacy is essential – but please know that your contributions are valued and make a difference in people's lives... people you might never know, or people who might be sitting beside you on Sunday.

Thank You      **Norm**

**Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup>**

**RIGHT HERE after**

**Church @Jubilee**

Food, Games, our friends  
a general lack of order  
and **LOTS of FUN** for all ages.





# Blanket Exercise @ Jubilee

The History of Canada from the perspective of  
Indigenous Peoples

**Saturday, July 8, 2pm  
in the Sanctuary.**

An interactive educational experience that will share the historical and cultural relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous people in Canada. Led by Rev. Evan Smith and Jess Swance (from Toronto Urban Native Ministries), this will be 2 hours well spent and a personal experience of Truth and Reconciliation.



**ScotiaBank Waterfront Marathon**  
**(1/2 Marathon and 5k)**  
**Sunday, October 22, 2017**

Make our world a better place – Ready – Set – **GO!**



Cost for the week: \$100      Grades 2-7      9am - 4pm



This environment-based day camp is an action-packed week for children and young teens. Trained staff and volunteers will lead programming inspired by The GO Project along with traditional camp experiences like games, crafts, delicious food, and lots of fun!



Ecological clean-ups team-building activities, growing and sharing food, and other environmental projects will spark their imaginations and give campers the confidence to change the world one small step at a time.



Junior Adventure Campers and Children's Adventure Campers will do their part to make our world a better place.



**July 24-28  
JUBILEE  
United Church**

40 Underhill Drive  
(416)447-6846  
[www.jubileeunited.ca](http://www.jubileeunited.ca)

For financial assistance  
contact  
Rev. Norm Seli at Jubilee

For more information.... visit [www.thegoproject.ca](http://www.thegoproject.ca) under Children's Adventure Camps

## We are looking for Volunteers!

We need three or four adults to help us in the Kitchen preparing snacks and lunch; four or five youth to work with the Children under the leadership of two GO Directors; and a few people to help drive the kids to activity sites through the week. We are also looking for Billets for the two directors from Sunday, July 23 through Thursday, July 27.

**If you are able to help us, call Pat in the Office, speak with Rev. Seli, or sign up at the church. Thank You.**



# **So, we've merged with St. John's United Church. What does that mean?**

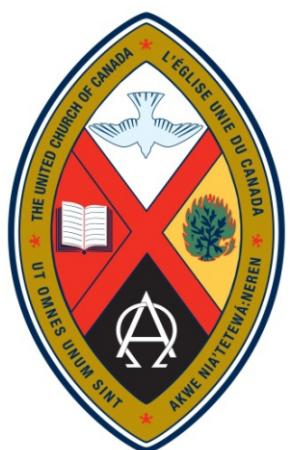
It means that on July 1, 2017, all of the assets of St. John's United Church are under the care and management of Jubilee United Church. We have been entrusted with the legacy and continuation of St. John's ministry to the community and they have given us all that they have to help us live up to that commitment. Many of you will have read the Covenant Agreement that lays out our plans going forward – this agreement was worked on faithfully by people from both St. John's United Church and Jubilee United Church, under the supervision of officials from the United Church of Canada (through Presbytery). It lays out the "Official" plans. The official plans indicate that every member of St. John's becomes a member of Jubilee United Church, unless they have indicated a desire to go elsewhere. The reality is that nobody changes churches in an instant; nobody joins a new family right away. The folks at St. John's don't yet know us – they didn't choose me or Anne to be their ministers; they haven't been church shopping; they weren't part of an interview committee that hired Jubilee's team. In time, they may come to join us; to welcome Anne and me as their ministers; but it takes time. There will be a time of grieving as many of them will be saying good-bye to the only church that they have ever known, or the church that they helped to build and sustain for many years. I suspect that over the summer we will see a few folks join us; in the fall a few more... by Christmas some others will have settled in and over the next couple of years even a few more. But it takes times. Along the way, some will choose other churches because they are closer to home or closer to familiar ways; some will wait to see if their friends settle in or if they really like the team of ministers or the music in church.

And so, we will endeavour to be good neighbours and give the folks of St. John's United Church a chance to discern and experience. We will be patient, and in time we will discover that some of them have moved into the church family and brought new ideas, new expectations, and new gifts to Jubilee. It will be our challenge and privilege to welcome these gifts – just as it is when any single person joins Jubilee. On paper, they will all belong on July 1<sup>st</sup> – that's official – in reality, we will get to know each other over time; they will discern and choose to share themselves, join with us in community and ministry, when they are ready. Until and after that day, we hold them in all in our prayers.

Norm



**Welcome Jubilee's Newest Members,  
Helen Clark, Barbara and Gary Grisdale,  
Heather Grisdale, Tove Henriksen, Sandra Park,  
Robert Pomeroy, Donald and Linda Smeaton,  
as well as Chanelle Christmas-LaFleur,  
and Hailey Clinton who were Confirmed on Sunday,  
June 4<sup>th</sup>!!**



# **Message from the Music Director**

It has been a fantastic musical year here at Jubilee. Holy Week and Easter were very moving this year, and I want to highlight the Good Friday Service. The service featured organist Kelly Galbraith, who serves as St. John's United Church's Music Director. Our collaboration included the leading of *Kyrie* and *Drop Drop Slow Tears*, both original works of mine, scored for saxophone, organ, and choir. It was very meaningful to have Kelly there and symbolized the coming together of our congregations.

Our recent Canada 150 concert was a huge success. Our Jubilee Choir musically hosted a fitting celebration to our country. Hats off to the choir for its dedication, versatility, and willingness to grow. The concert was also the result of much work by the Order of Good Cheer, and the many meetings with Ed Rutherford, Barbara Greenwood, and Cheron Christmas-LeFleur bore much fruit.

More recently, Rev. Norm Seli and I had the honour to lead the worship service at St. John's United on Sunday, May 28. The St. John's Choir is a very talented and receptive group of singers who sang beautifully. Norm and I performed one of our spoken scripture/saxophone duets and enjoyed a wonderful time of fellowship with the St. John's congregation after the service. A special thank you to all involved in this time of sharing.

The choir will take a much-deserved hiatus over the summer. We will perform anthems each Sunday in June, but our regular Thursday evening choir meetings will finish at the beginning of June. We are, however, looking for new members, starting in September. Practices are Thursday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. and there is no experience necessary!

Cheron Christmas-LaFleur (Choir President) and I are anticipating organizing the St. John's United Church choir library and look forward to bringing some of their great musical repertoire to our services next year.

Happy summer to all and hope to see you soon!

Daniel Rubinoff, Director of Music

## **Open Doors**

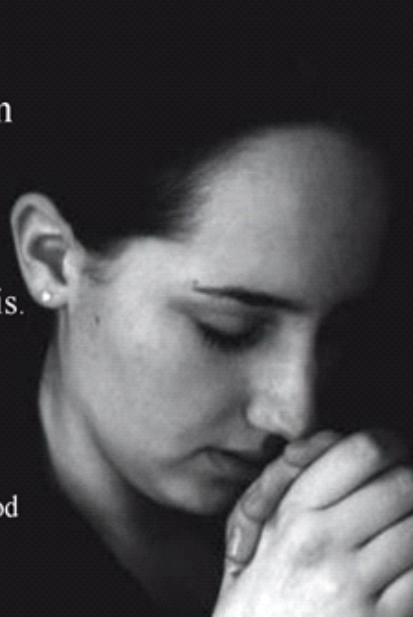
Wednesdays 430 – 630 pm

The sanctuary is open,  
and you are invited to sit...  
to pray...  
to be still and know that God is.

One of our ministers will be there  
if you want to talk

There are candles that can be lit  
and time that is just for you and God

**Jubilee United Church**



## **Life Events**

**Celebration of Life:**

Helen Vitale -- April 8



Jubilee United Church  
and the Howling Heretics  
invite you out to  
Definitely NOT Church

# Bad Baby Names

From the Bihlel  
From the Bible!

**THURSDAY, June 22 @ 7:30pm**

Tongue in Cheek, Heart in Hand, Drew and Norm  
present Music from the Past 7 decades

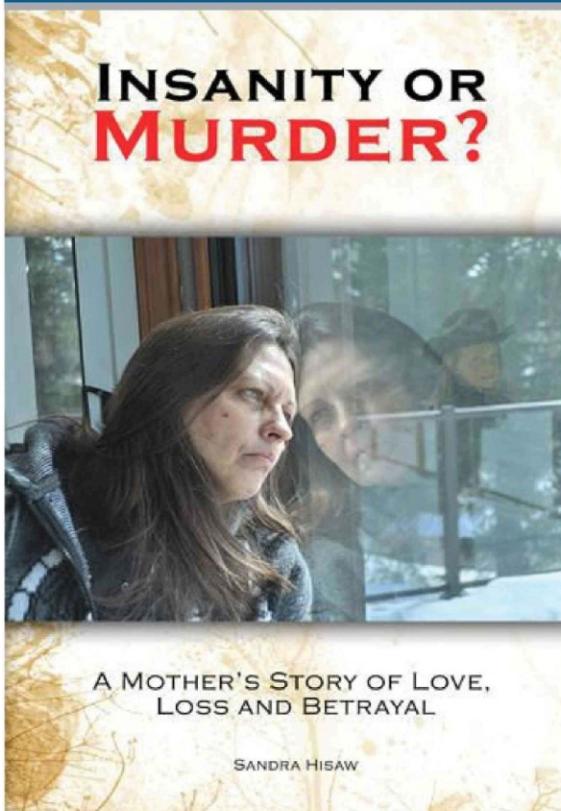
and do their best to assure that  
future generations will still have Pontius and Dorcas to pick on!

**BBQ at 6:30pm!!**

*Warning from the Theologian General: This evening is NOT advised for woman who  
are pregnant or considering naming a baby in the near future”*

# AN EVENING WITH

## SANDRA HISAW & SARAH SMITH BAND



**JUBILEE UNITED CHURCH**

40 Underhill Drive, Toronto, ON

**June 28th, 2017**

Doors open at 6:00 pm

Event starts at 7:00 pm

**TICKETS - \$10**

[www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com)

or

Jubilee United Church after 10:30 service

Books will be available for purchase  
at door for \$15.00 CDN

Reserve your copy of my book  
by emailing: [shisaw62@hotmail.com](mailto:shisaw62@hotmail.com)

## Glass Menagerie - at the Scarborough Village Theatre -- June 2-17

This is the story of Amanda Wingfield, who once was pretty and popular, but who now seeks happiness in her dreams and memories. And this is the story of her son, Tom, who looks to movies and alcohol for his hope for happiness. And this is the story of her daughter, Laura, desperately shy, seeking happiness in her collection of glass figurines. And finally, this is the story of Jim O'Connor, who accepts a dinner invitation but cannot solve any of the family's problems. This is ultimately the story of dreams that cannot come true, told through Tom's memories.

**Recommended for ages 14 and up.**

June 2\*, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15 and 16 at 8:00pm

June 4, 11 and 17 at 2:00pm.

\*A wine and cheese reception will follow the opening night performance on June 2nd

Regular tickets: \$22