

## Jubilee News!

Rev. Anne is currently on maternity leave. In a very different world, it has been a challenge to figure out how to manage without her and also who to get to help us. For now, there are several programs, for which Anne is responsible, that will simply be on hold until she returns. They include: Parents and Children Wednesdays, Dinner/Picnic Church, as well as pastoral care and Faith Explorations. In other programs, Haley Brown will be focused on the children's Sunday program, and Haley and Rev. Norm will be managing youth group and associated activities.

We have also hired Bri-anne Swan to work with the team for one day (8 hours) a week. Bri-anne will help with Sunday worship and pastoral care as well as continuing to produce and lead Resistance Church. Many of us first met Bri-anne as Jason Meyer's partner and mother to the remarkable Isaiah and Simon and we also were blessed with her beautiful voice and dynamic musical gifts. However, there are a few things about Bri-anne that you may not know.



Bri-anne Swan (she/her) is currently the Minister for Social & Ecological Justice and Network Support at Shining Waters Region. . Before joining Shining Waters Region, Bri-anne served as the Community Minister with the Living Presence Ministry, a new and experimental ministry in East Gwillimbury. She has been involved with advocacy and accompaniment since her teens and holds a particular interest in issues and intersections connected to income inequality, scapegoating of vulnerable populations, and the criminal justice system. She is a friend and accompanier to men on Texas' death row and continues to be humbled by the lessons on power, redemption and love she has witnessed through these relationships.

Bri-anne is a candidate for ordered ministry and is part of the diaconal program at the Centre for Christian Studies. In addition, Bri-anne is working towards her Masters of Theological Studies at St. Andrew's College at the University of Saskatchewan.

It is quite possible that Bri-anne will be able to convince the "Lockdown Brothers" to contribute to the occasional Virtual Sunday Service, but she got the job entirely on her own merits. We are very fortunate that Bri-anne is available to be with us in Anne's time away.

## MISSION AND SERVICE FUND

In the past five months, our lives have been changed almost beyond recognition. Thankfully, for many of us, inconvenience has been bothersome, but we have not suffered real hardship. However, for some people in our local community and for many in national and international locations, physical and financial struggles have become greater.

The United Church of Canada through the Mission and Service Fund supports local, national, and international programmes. Jubilee's congregation generously supports M&S through envelope offerings and PAR.

An additional method of showing love for our neighbours is to use the Gifts with Vision programme designed by the UCC to help individuals give gifts to relatives and friends to support our M&S partners. If you check the Gifts with Vision website, you will see various categories like Healing and Reconciliation, Leadership, Wellness, Safe Spaces, Education, Poverty and Hunger, and The Future. You'll be amazed at the range of gifts and prices. **For more details, call 1-844-715-7969. The website address is: [GiftswithVision.ca](http://GiftswithVision.ca).**



## First Annual Jubilee 5K Run/Walk Event

**Our very own event!** For the past few years, many of us have participated in the Scotiabank Waterfront 5K Walk / Run, ½ Marathon, and Full Marathon. Scotiabank has officially cancelled this year's 5K Walk / Run. Therefore, we shall be hosting our own event: Jubilee United Church 5K Walk / Run for our community, right here through

the streets of Don Mills, on the afternoon of Saturday, October 3 (rain date Sunday, October 4). You've already received a letter about the event, but now all of the information as well as registration is available on the Jubilee website. It's listed under "Special Events".



In the coming months, Rev. Seli is prepared to visit and share in the sacrament of Holy Communion. The visits would be one-on-one and last about 20 minutes. Rev. Seli will bring all of the necessary elements for you to share in Communion. He will not be visiting multiple people in a day and all of the Communion elements will be safe and separate and in their own air-tight containers. Rev. Seli will wear a mask. If you would be interested in Rev. Seli coming to see you and share communion, you can call him at **(416)447-6846 x103** or email **nseli@jbuileeunited.ca** to arrange a convenient time. We thank you for your patience in advance, as the scheduling might be tricky, but Norm hopes to be able see everybody who requests Communion in the next couple of months.

**For the love of our Neighbours,  
this is how we will gather together as Church:**

**C** **Come** in the Main Door

**O** **Observe** Physical Distancing

**M** **Masks** are Mandatory

**M** **Move, Hum and Clap** for hymns  
(Only soloists will do the singing)

**U** **Ushers** will direct you to and from  
your seat

**N** **No Touching** (hugs or handshakes)

**I** **Infants/Children** to stay with families

**T** **Toilets** (Wash hands, wipe taps)

**Y** **Your Stuff** stays with you (no coat  
racks, etc.)

## Notes from Norm

It happens that Jesus was healing and teaching around the shores of Galilee, arguing with the authorities in Genneseret, when this happened: (Matthew 15:21-28)

<sup>21</sup> **Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon.** <sup>22</sup> **Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.”** <sup>23</sup> **But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.”** <sup>24</sup> **He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”** <sup>25</sup> **But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.”** <sup>26</sup> **He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.”** <sup>27</sup> **She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.”** <sup>28</sup> **Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed instantly.**

Now, I have to wonder why Matthew tells this story. I mean, there are lots of stories about Jesus helping and healing people, there are stories of him interacting with women, but there aren’t very many stories about his being dismissive or rude. For me, this is not a flattering story about Jesus. He called this woman a dog. A woman who is suffering and trying to save her daughter. A woman who is an outsider, feeling completely vulnerable and alone. And Jesus suggests that she is not worthy of his teaching or his time... **“It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.”** Can you imagine how she must have felt in that moment? Isolated. Alone. All of the her hope taken away. Nobody is listening; nobody cares!



I used to have a bouncy chipper Jack Russel dog that we called “Gladys”. Here she is beside our miniature dachshund “Hercules”. Gladys was the happiest creature that I have ever known, thrilled to see me when I got home, excited when she woke up from a nap, enthusiastic when people visited – always ready to jump in your lap and lick face or just run around in circles celebrating life. Jack Russels are like that. But, if I was watching the Leafs play hockey and raised my voice at the screen (something that happened far too often) - happy, cheery Gladys would run away and hide in the hall closet. She would sit in the dark and shake... I think that the woman in the story might have felt like that.



Today, I know that a number of us are feeling like Gladys and the woman who confronts Jesus. Sitting alone and shaking. Feeling like nobody is listening; nobody cares. We are getting tired and more than a little bit scared as this pandemic continues and it almost feels like God isn't interested in us... perhaps there are other things more important, other folks that God loves more than you or me. I understand this story - the pandemic - and I'm not sure that it shows God in a very good light.

But, maybe this story isn't really about God or even about Jesus. I suspect that his story is actually about the woman. In this moment she is thinking and feeling, God isn't on my side. God doesn't have time for me. I'm not worthy... where's the nearest closet. I recognize those feelings and I am among the first to retreat when I feel them.

But not the woman.

She didn't leave.

She stood her ground.

She didn't run away... even though she felt alone, even though she was unsure, even though she was pretty sure that she wasn't worthy of God's attention. She stood her ground!

Not only did she stand her ground, she spoke out, she spoke back to Jesus, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

And her daughter was made well. She realized that she was worthy of God's attention.

That's important to me these days. These days, when the pandemic keeps getting longer and longer and I'm leaving more forgotten, left out and ignored. It's important to me because that woman's faith is what this story is about, this woman's faith is what got her through the toughest of tough times and her faith is something that I can share.



Faith is when we stand our ground:  
We don't run away from the world.  
We don't run away from God.  
We don't throw in the towel.

The woman in the Gospel knew - deep inside - that she was worth Jesus' time. She was valuable. She was significant. She was lovable. That's faith. That's the faith that you and I can share.

Faith is EASY when it's all going your way.

Faith is EASY when everything is good.

But real faith is knowing that you are important to God, even when nothing is going your way. Real faith is realizing that you are lovable, even when it seems that nobody is loving you. Faith is holding your ground – even when it feels like God has turned away.

I want a vaccine today.

I want this pandemic and all of the cautions around it to be over yesterday!

Because until we get through this stuff, life is really hard.

And that's when real faith begins, when it gets tough.

Real faith – that kind that brings healing and hope.

Real healing and transforming faith is not about believing in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and one Lord Jesus Christ the only begotten son of God..

No, faith is knowing that you are important to that one God and that only begotten son of God.

Faith is knowing that you are of value to the maker of heaven and earth.

That's the faith that the woman of the Gospel showed

That's the faith that Jesus recognized.

That's the faith that we are invited to share, nurture and grow – especially in difficult times.

Faith is not about rituals and hymns, it's not about opening the church sooner or later, it's not about Sunday worship or even Community Table. The truest faith is that one that believes that we are loved by God, even when the world gives us reason to doubt.

As things begin to slowly change and new opportunities and challenges emerge, I remind you that have the faith of that woman in the story, you are valuable and important to God.

**You are not alone.**

*Norm*

