

# CONNECTIONS

## News and Views of Oxford County United Churches

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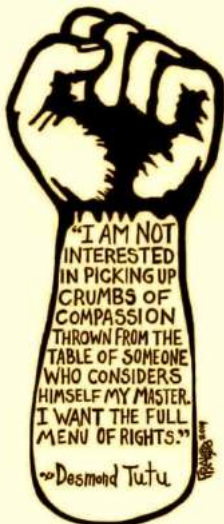
### EASTER - COURAGE TO ACT

Eastering is discerning and joining in the action of God's grace already taking place in the world. It may be inside the walls of the church. It may be in the woods beside the church. It may be – you tell us. We've gathered some stories, but there are many more. Yes. We need prayerful discernment; and to work together not alone. Here is part of what we know.

OUR CONTEXT (p 2) notes congregations seeking new ministerial leadership; Trinity UC, Ingersoll seeks a child and youth coordinator and their Church Mice make hummingbirds; Spring 2022 Regional Council Meeting and newsletters; Camp Tanner still needs some summer staff and volunteer kitchen help; good news for one of our refugees; the UCW celebrates 60 years.

In Christ (pg 6) offers preparation for Ontario Provincial Election; report from the Oxford Social Justice Committee on the recent Reuse-A-PalooZaha in Brownsville; meaningful Land/Territorial Acknowledgements; Sharing Circle at Nations Uniting at Ohsweken.

A NEW CREATION (pg 9) our prayer cycles; the Humpback Whales; butterflies and cockroaches; news about the newly formed Oxford County of Ontario Helps Ukraine; need for Canada to stand up for Palestinian Children's Rights.



Marg  
Murray  
co-editor



### FOOD FOR THE SOUL

Glen Wright, co-editor



### Now That's the Spirit or Wasn't That a Party?

We think of harvest festivals as fall events. For first century Jews in Palestine the thanksgiving for **the wheat harvest was celebrated in the spring**. They called it Pentecost which was 50 days after Passover. Pentecost, like Passover had political implications. The 50 days represented the Jubilee when there was to be a redistribution of land and resources so that there would be no poor people. **It was to be an exercise in economic justice.**

These were anxious times for those early followers of Jesus. For some people everything had changed; for most people, nothing had.

There were reports that Jesus, who had been crucified, had risen. That this Kingdom of God, long hoped for was just around the corner. There were other reports that Jesus had ascended into Heaven. Now what were they to do? What was their next step?

Rome was still very much in charge. **The followers of Jesus were being imprisoned.** This longed for and hoped for kingdom of God was just not there as envisioned.

John the Baptizer had warned people that the coming Kingdom meant a day of wrath, a day of judgment.

Jesus had a different vision for the coming of God's reign. Although he also looked to the future for the fulfilment of God's Kingdom, **Jesus said God's Kingdom is already here. It is among you. It is within you.** (Luke 17: 21) **Kingdom building was and is a collaborative**

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**effort with God.** As the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu once said, "God without us will not, as we without God cannot."

When the people gathered early on that Pentecost morning to celebrate the wheat harvest, **did the aroma of fresh baked bread recall for some the stories of the feeding of the 5000?** You could not have a festive celebration without wine. **Did the bread and wine remind those from Judea of the presence of Jesus?** As wine was to be poured, **did they think of the prophet Joel's words, "In the last days I will pour out my Spirit?"** (Joel 2:28)

We know what happened at that Pentecost house party. The disciples and other followers of Jesus, both men and women were gathered. Also, there were people there from 14 different countries, included people from both Judea and Rome.



**There was a rush of wind. Flames lit up people's faces; they heard one another in their own languages.** (Acts 2:9ff) They

saw the whole community as children of God. All racial, cultural, economic, and religious barriers no longer mattered. All were members of God's family. All were loved; all were included. There was no longer an "us" and a "them". **It was a protest against all that attempted to disrupt and destroy the human family.**

When people gathered that day, they brought, like most congregations, fear, uncertainty, grief, hope, disappointment, love, gratitude, anger along with their question to God, "what is our next step?" They were at a cross road (pun intended).

**In their vulnerability the Spirit found room. They came away with a new vision and new courage.** For the

church, then and now it gave and gives immense hope.

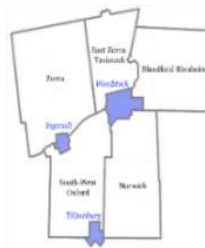
It really was some Party!

Blessings *Glen Wright, co-editor*

*The sections of **Our Context, In Christ and A New Creation** invite us to think about what is going on now in this time and place; how with Christ, we dare to face challenges and be changed in our faith and life journey to become a new creation.*

## OUR CONTEXT

### COMINGS AND GOINGS AROUND OXFORD



### CONGREGATIONS SEEKING MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP:

*We hold in our hearts and prayers **all** our communities of faith (see prayer cycles [here](#) on page 9) as we live out God's mission.*

### Congregations In Search Mode – Accepting Applications:

- **Avondale UC** (Tillsonburg) and Otterville UC
- **Beachville Pastoral Charge** (Sweaburg UC + West Oxford UC)

### Congregations Working Through Steps of Search Mode:

- **College Ave. UC**
- **Kintore and Brooksdale UC**
- **Foldens UC** has a Shared Ministry Agreement with Beachville PC.
- **Burgessville UC** has LLWLs.

## THE OXFORD LEGACY FUND

still taking requests in 2022!

Submit your requests  
to Lynne Dunlop

[lynndunl@execulink.com](mailto:lynndunl@execulink.com)

For details of Fund see [here](#)

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### Trinity UC, Ingersoll

Parttime Paid

Position: **Child and Youth**

**Program Coordinator** to work with people aged 3-18 years.

*We need a team member who is energetic, self-motivated, spiritual and creative to help inspire our children and youth to learn and live their faith. Sunday morning attendance is required.*

13 hrs./week. The hourly salary is \$18-20 depending on experience. Only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted. Please forward resumes to TRINITY UNITED CHURCH, c/o Search Committee, Anita Gielis, 118 Church St., Ingersoll, ON, N5C 0A3 or email [thefab3@rogers.com](mailto:thefab3@rogers.com).

Resumes will be accepted until May 20. Please contact Trinity United Church for a complete job description [Trinityingersoll@rogers.com](mailto:Trinityingersoll@rogers.com)

Phone: 519-485-0820

### **Hummingbirds for Ukraine**



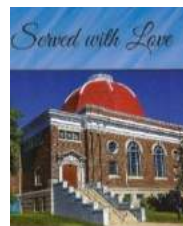
The Church Mice are four women, stained glass artists, at Trinity UC, Ingersoll who have been working tirelessly the last few weeks to send support to Ukraine. Using the Ukrainian blue and yellow colours, they chose to create a hummingbird, because it is small but mighty, smart, full of energy and diligent when guarding and defending its territory. The Church Mice will soon have made and sold 65 hummingbirds by advertising on the Church Mice Facebook. **\$15.00 from each sale will be donated to the UNICEF Ukrainian Relief.** No further orders will be accepted.

*Submitted by Catherine Elliott*



*A sacred place for peoples of all faiths as well as spiritual seekers to gather in community to live, work, learn, pray, play, heal and act for justice.*

### **St Paul's UC, Tillsonburg**



88 Bidwell Street

**Community Kitchen**

**Hot Take-out Lunch**

**Every Saturday** from

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Serving from ramp entrance.



[ARWRC webpage](#)

[Facebook page](#)

**Regional Council SPRING Meeting –**  
**To register for this Spring Meeting, go**  
**[here](#) to the ARWRC website where**  
**expressions of interest forms to serve**  
**will also be posted.**



**Stay informed on our Region's news!**  
**Subscribe to the ARWRC newsletter**  
**[here](#)**

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[Facebook](#)  
[page](#) and  
[website](#)

**Thank you!**

TO ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEERS,  
AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS  
WHO DONATED TO OUR  
BOTTLE DRIVE!

### Registration for campers is OPEN!

July 10-15 is intermediate camp  
July 17-22 is junior camp  
July 24-29 is intermediate camp  
July 31-August 5 is junior camp  
August 7-12 is senior camp  
August 14-19 is junior camp

#### **Reminder:**

Junior Camp - ages 7-10  
Intermediate Camp - ages 10-13  
Senior Camp - ages 12-15

**Registrar: Kate Wintermute (Tondue)**

Phone: 226-927-3353

Email: [camptannerinc@gmail.com](mailto:camptannerinc@gmail.com)

### **STILL NEEDED:**

Assistant Director  
Male Counsellors  
Life guards

job descriptions are here:

<http://www.camptanner.ca/staff.html>

### **CAMP TANNER SEEKING KITCHEN HELP**

**Volunteers needed:**

- **2 (fully vaccinated) to assist the head cook on each shift.**  
**Would anyone in your congregation or community be interested?** Students can use their camp time for volunteer hours.

Interested people, please contact Marg Dykeman (519-532-4875) or [marg.dykeman@gmail.com](mailto:marg.dykeman@gmail.com).



**The Meeting Place** is accepting spring clothing, raingear and

light jackets at College Ave UC, 22 Wilson St., Monday to Friday 9:00 am – noon. Contact Madeline 519-320-1372 to arrange another time.

**Food For Friends** As food costs increase, we are blessed to be able to give a Dollar at the till for others to make nutritious choices as they shop with dignity.



The new [website](#), has stories of **The Inn** (Oxford's Emergency Shelter). **The Meeting Place, Bullwinkle's Eatery and Hospitality.**

### **\$ DONATIONS\$\$**

Donations can be made on their website or mail Treasurer of Operation Sharing, P.O. Box 20081, Woodstock, Ontario, N4S 8X8.

### **"NATURE'S FIRST GREEN IS GOLD." (ROBERT FROST)**



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### OXFORD UNITED REFUGEE SUPPORT COMMITTEE (OURS)

#### **One Step Closer**

On March 9 we received a request from the Resettlement Operations Centre of Ottawa (ROC-O) to submit **a plan for quarantine for Bisrat Berhe Yemane**, one of our sponsored refugees. Thanks to Marj Martin, the plan was submitted the same day. The quarantine plan is the last hurdle in the process.

#### **For those who may have forgotten**

in August of 2016, Freweini Mebrahtu and her family, daughters Sasyt, 3, Salem, 5 and her son Bisrat, 16, left Eritrea for Khartoum, Sudan.

In 2018 Freweini and her family were sponsored by St. David's UC. When the time came for the final interview by a Canadian examiner, it was alleged that Freweini's proof of refugee status document was a copy and not an original. Her application was turned down. She had the option of re-applying through The United Church of Canada. However, by this time Freweini was so discouraged she did not want to spend another 2 to 3 years in Khartoum. She and her two daughters left for Uganda. We believe that Freweini and her daughters are now living in the Netherlands. Bisrat decided to stay in Khartoum and re-apply.

The next correspondence from Ottawa should be Bisrat's flight schedule. **We look forward so much to welcoming Bisrat to Canada.**

Knox United in Embro and Westminster United in Thamesford are still fundraising.



**The OURS Annual General Meeting will take place at Trinity United Church, Ingersoll on Sunday, June 5**

**at 1:30 PM. ALL ARE WELCOME.**

*submitted by Marj Martin and Glen Wright*

Your donations for Refugee Sponsorships will be welcome and appreciated. **Tax receipts for donations come from the sponsoring church. Please make cheques out to the sponsoring church with "Refugee Sponsorship" in the memo line.**

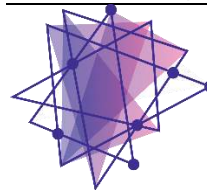
The sponsoring churches accepting donations are:

#### **Knox United Church**

116 Kincardine St.,  
PO Box 59,  
Embro ON N0J 1J0

#### **Westminster United Church**

115 George St,  
Thamesford, ON N0M 2M0



## SKYLIGHT FESTIVAL

July 15-17<sup>th</sup> at Five Oaks

Nurturing a narrative of hope, joy and transformation, the [Skylight Festival](#) is a celebratory and creative space where diverse communities connect to explore arts, faith, peace and justice.



Register [here](#)



### **60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

**Congratulations  
and thank you to  
the UCW for 60**



**years of honourable service  
to the United Church.**

Services of hope, celebration and thanksgiving that have been prepared by the UCW can be used for worship. These are available in the May 2022 newsletter on the ARWRC website [here](#).

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*Easter strengthens us to reflect critically on how our choices are re-shaping our world and the need for systemic changes.*

### In Christ

#### **ONTARIO PROVINCIAL ELECTION**

**JUNE 2, 2022** will be among the most important in our history. Our April edition highlighted the long-term costs of the increasing privatization of health care services including seniors' care. Contact Bryan Smith ([bryasmit@oxford.net](mailto:bryasmit@oxford.net)) for lawn signs. Essential facts help us make an informed choice. I offer these:

[The Ontario Health Care Coalition](#) has issued an excellent briefing on the for-profit long-term care industry which is largely a real estate and equity investment industry. You can read more [here](#) on the [Ontario Election Health Care Primer: Health Coalition Brings Warnings and Outlines Key Issues as the Writ Drop](#) and their disturbing video [Broken LTC promises](#). We need accountability, improvements and a 'real never again'.

[Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives \(CCPA\)](#) a non-partisan non-corporate funded policy think tank which values social justice and environmental sustainability. The Ontario Office deals with provincial and municipal policies. Their research shows that Ontario school board funding fell by [\\$800 per student](#) over the last four years and Ontarians with disabilities need [higher incomes](#). In the days ahead, find their material online at <https://monitormag.ca/topics/ontario>; read their latest research reports at <https://policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/ontario>. Remember Ontario is a wealthy province. We can afford to rebuild our health care system as well as our education system.

[The Election Backgrounder Package of ISARC \(Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition\)](#) provides facts and raises questions for candidates re Affordable Housing, Income Security, Worker Justice and Long Term Care: 843,000 Ontarians are living in **deep poverty**; **core housing need** (spend more than 30% of income on housing) grew almost 20% from 2011 to 2018 (from Financial Accountability Office of Ontario – FAO); **minimum wage** of \$15 per hour is still below a living wage (\$16.20 in Sault Ste. Marie, \$22.08 in Toronto). Read ISARC's material. Ask questions of candidates in our riding. MM

**If one bottle of water made into the sea, how long would it take to fully decompose?**



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### Oxford Coalition of Social Justice



### **Waste Not, Want Not!**

It's hardly new thinking, but trading goods with our neighbours and friends is a way to reduce your costs and the costs to the environment of our wasteful ways.

You see: We live in an affluent society.

Everything we extract from the earth and manufacture for our use and pleasure costs us plenty. And when we discard things, they continue to cost us; the costs in dollars of hauling garbage and holding it for centuries in landfill sites are astronomical, as are the human and environmental health costs when trucks spew carbon, or dumps exhale methane or spill pollution into ground water and streams.

**Isn't it better then to reuse and reuse and reuse... and to rethink our relationship with goods.** That's where a **ReuseapaloozAHA** comes in.

**AHA! That eureka moment when you realize that the clothing you are finished with is needed by someone else,** those garden tools could go to a new homeowner while you downsize to a condo, that large furniture could grace another house, the books you've read could be enjoyed again, and again, and again.

**Brownsville saw the crew organizing a giant free swap meet South-West Oxford's folk promoting composting and rainwater collection at the pavilion.** For the next four hours, in the glorious sunshine, people brought reusable goods and/or collected useful things. Children found toys. When a 4 year-old knows her last name means Lion, she knows which stuffie to collect. When a handyman sees a power drill set, he hangs onto its handle. A furniture refinisher filled a truck and trailer; Beautiful wooden tables, chairs, and dressers will serve again at prices below those of short-lived 'cheap' chipboard and laminate. Generous families hosting people fleeing wars (in Ukraine and Syria and... ) found kitchen wares guests will need soon and for a while. A local service club stocked up for the next fundraiser for local and international projects – books, books and more books. Retail charities now have more goods for sale; at the end of the morning donations were headed by the carload.

Fast fashion and disposable goods aren't cheap when you pay multiple times to replace them, and to discard them. 40% of some landfills are fabrics, much to the dismay of quilters, and rag rug makers.

**ReuseapaloozAHAs,** community garage sales, porch pick-up sales, crafters and artisans' shows all help the economy, the environment and the community. Keep your eyes peeled for the next one. Already, those attending, those organizing, those supporting Brownsville's **ReusapaloozAHA** are saying "Let's do it again" in other communities.

For more information about Reuseapalooza visit [www.reuseapaloozaha.ca](http://www.reuseapaloozaha.ca) or contact [bryasmit@oxford.net](mailto:bryasmit@oxford.net)

*Roving Reporter Bryan Smith,  
Oxford Social Justice Committee*

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### Making Land/Territorial Acknowledgements Meaningful

Many are the ways to understand the place where we live. Land Acknowledgements are much more than statements about the history of the land on which we live or work. **Expanding our understanding of place can help us to feel a deeper connection to the land which is in peril and with those first peoples who have a long history with this land.** This work of Truth and Reconciliation is laying the ground work for the future. It is part of our shared environmental stewardship to honour the land, which is God's creation.

Well over 100 participants joined with Tri-regional staff, Thérèse Samuel, Diane Matheson-Jimenez, and Kathy Douglas to view a PowerPoint Presentation developed by Rev Matthew Stevens. It will be available later as a teaching tool.

If you are keen to start, there is an interactive tool available at <https://native-land.ca/> in which you can type in your town or address, and it will locate it. Settler labels and colour can be added or removed, etc.



There is much to discover and uncover about these stolen lands we occupy. The formal treaties which were signed. The historical use of the lands for hunting and fishing. How did settlement affect them? How do we reconcile our prosperity at the

expense of those who occupied the land before us? **How do we lean into the words of Amos 5:24 "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream"? How do we live out our part in the Recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?**

Learning more is an investment in building relationships for our future together. The GS08 Proposal which is before General Council 44 notes that the work of Climate Justice is the work of reconciliation! It could be valuable to learn together about our collective history. I look forward to working with interested folk. Stay tuned! MM

### GRAND RIVER BOOKSTORE

To order call 1-888-6680871; email

[sales@grandriverbooks.com](mailto:sales@grandriverbooks.com); online

<https://www.grandriverbooks.ca/>

Mail delivery \$5.00.

**Nations Uniting**  
Sharing Centre

*A safe place to  
Listen, to Learn, to  
Heal and to Grow*

From [the Nations Uniting blog](#) "We have had such topics, as Residential School Stories, Traditional cultures, Watched documentaries about Residential School. Just plain conversations with other, what's happening in communities or congregations? What we can do within our communities to provide what they..."

**Next Sharing Circle: We are waiting on confirmation that Phil Monture will speak on Land Acknowledgements.**

This Sharing Circle may be online by Zoom or possibly in-person (1562 Chiefswood Road in Ohsweken). Contact Rhonda Johns <nations.uniting@gmail.com> to get zoom information.

**May 30 @ 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm**

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### **A NEW CREATION**

*Being called beyond our comfort levels, we commit to use **our power to love** others and creation to effect change: to be **a new creation in God as Love**. Our work is **power with**. Fully human and alive with the Spirit, we treat others and nature as subjects (not objects).*

### **PRAYER CYCLES**



*We are invited to pray for each other and our mission in the world – our communities of faith in Oxford, in the Antler River Watershed Region and our General Council. Sharing with each other, we support each other. We are not alone.*

**For Oxford United Churches:** Full list is [here](#). Note: For congregations with a vacancy, Pastoral Charge Supervisors are noted.

May 15 Jeff Smith PCS, College Ave  
May 22 Karen Willis, Innerkip  
May 29 Susan Cole, Embro  
June 5 Burgessville  
June 9-11 **ARW Regional Meeting**  
June 12 Lori Minler Mt Elgin  
June 19 Karlene Brown-Palmer,  
Karen Hodges, Pat Cook,  
Maurice Francis St Paul's (T'burg)

#### **For ARW Region:**

<https://www.prayercycles.ca/antlerriverwatershed>

May .....15 [Innerkip](#)  
May 22 [Essex](#)  
May 29 [Camlachie](#)

#### **For GENERAL COUNCIL 44**



Who Do You Say I Am?  
General Council 44

We join the commissioners in prayer during this unique General Council meeting:

**We name ... with  
prayers of love and  
blessing today.**

**Holy God, reveal yourself and your  
words as we pray for ...**

**Come, Holy Spirit. (listen for God) Jesus is here... A  
thanksgiving...**

**Pray for someone else...**

**Pray for yourself...**

### **FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES Marvelous Mothers**

Since Mother's Day was last Sunday, you may still be thinking about marvelous mothers.

I thought that we might extend those thoughts to all the marvelous mothers that have inhabited our planet millions of years before we humans evolved. After all, they are our ancestors. Without those awesome mothers we would not be here.

Can you think of a marvelous mother from the wide world of nature?



How about Humpback Whale mothers? Did you know that a Humpback Whale baby calf is 15 feet long and weighs 2000 pounds at birth? Wow! Also, they need about 500 litres of their mother's milk each day to survive. Because they are born in the water but breath air, they don't always know how to manage that, so the mother swims under her baby, carries her on her back to the surface so she can learn to breath.

Whale babies are always born during our winter, when whales are in the tropics. Humpback whales feed on shrimp-like krill and herring which are found in the northern waters, so the mothers do not eat in the winter while looking after their babies. They wait until they go north to put the weight back on that they have lost.

The whale baby stays on the milk diet for about 5 months. By that time the baby is

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strong enough to make the 1500 km journey north with her mother, a whale of a swim.

Some whales are endangered. They have one main predator, us. Fishing nets, ships and pollution take their toll.

Scientists tell us that about 50 million years ago whales walked on the earth on 4 legs, but gradually evolved into these beautiful sea creatures we see today.

Whales are such awesome creatures; mother whales are quite marvelous.

Next month the story will be about "fantastic fathers" in the wonderful world of nature. GW

### AN EMBARRASSING QUESTION

- Olga McKellar

Recently I was wandering in a second-hand book shop reading bits and pieces from books I happened upon. I picked up a small book called 'The Book of Questions'. It offered the following situation: If someone offered you a complete four-week vacation for two, anywhere in the world, all expenses paid, with one condition: First you must systematically tear off the wings of a butterfly, causing it to die, would you accept the free vacation? Take a few minutes to think about it before you decide.

Apparently, 90% of those asked answered 'No'.

Then they were asked the same question, but the condition was changed to having to step on a cockroach. After an embarrassing pause, 80% had answered 'Yes'. Many had even added that they would



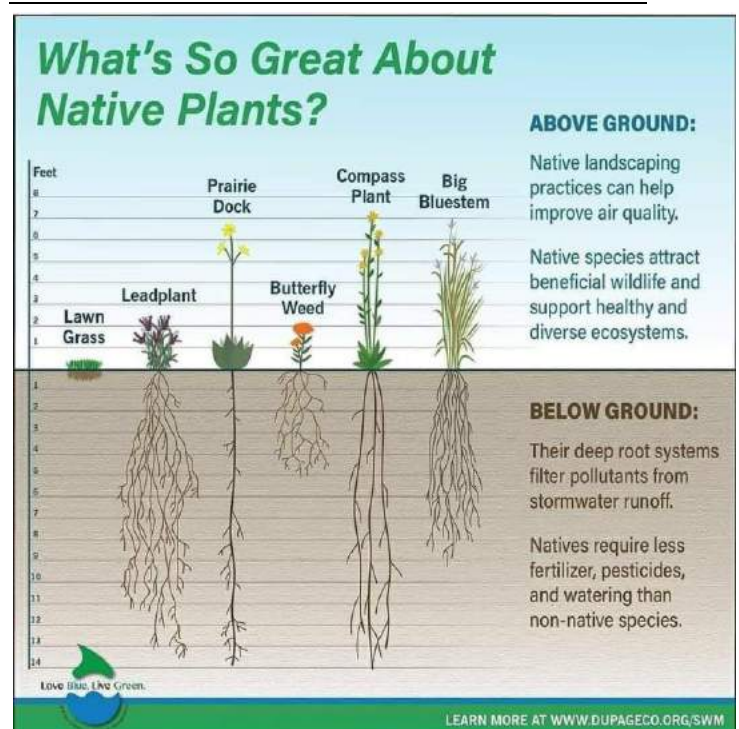
have stepped on the cockroach even if they had not been offered a trip with expenses paid.



How quickly our biases lead us astray! Jesus, aware of our weakness, told us, "Whatever you do to the least of my disciples, you do to me." (Mt.25:45) Since a cockroach is a dirty, germ-carrying insect, we easily feel free to kill it without a thought; but we do not feel the same about a beautiful butterfly. Think about that. Whatever we do to the dirty, diseased, law-breaking cockroaches of society we do to Jesus. Come to think of it, whatever we do to the disowned parts of ourselves we also do to Jesus.

Think about our world today: about anti vaxers who seem to threaten our health and the health of those we love; about Russian soldiers who, perhaps against their wills or acting on misinformation, bomb and kill and dehumanize their Ukrainian neighbors. Every human being is made in God's image.

Who is the cockroach and who is the butterfly? God created both. OM



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### Oxford County of Ontario Helps Ukraine

**Sunday afternoon  
May 1,** 150 people filled the hall at St. David's United seeking information on how to help Ukrainians fleeing the war and seeking a safe place here in Oxford.



Karen and David Murray shared current information re **hosting and the many other ways to help besides hosting.** Their [Facebook page](#) has a lot of valuable information on it about Hosting Safety Measures, Matching Guidelines, Offer to Host or Hosting Needs (still to come), Coming to Ontario, COVID guidelines, Federal, Provincial and Municipal Supports. **For information you can also email** [oxfordhelpsukraine@gmail.com](mailto:oxfordhelpsukraine@gmail.com). Councillor Mark Shadenberg, of the City of Woodstock brought greetings from the City and Deputy Mayor, Connie Lauder. Other elected reps present were David Mayberry (SWOX), Marcus Ryan (Zorra). Current rules re **Driver's Licenses for Ukrainians** are posted [here](#).

**Irene Tiegs**, a retired medical social worker, who initiated the City of Woodstock's Ukraine Relief, spoke of the tremendous support already received in terms of clothing. Previous donations of clothing are being warehoused, at 225 Main St courtesy of Ross and Jeff Bon, to be distributed to people when they arrive here in Oxford. (Shipping costs are high.) **Irene needs help sorting and folding clothes. Her phone is 519-536-5554. Also needed are silverware and dishes. Irene is very knowledgeable about who to trust in terms of sending money or goods.** She arranged delivery of life saving tourniquets to the front line in Ukraine within 10 days!

Flights have increased from \$300 to \$1600. Charitable donations intended for flights can be sent to:

[St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Church](#)  
154 King Street North  
Waterloo, ON N2J 2Y2 with "Flights for Oxford County" in the memo line.  
Help is available: OHIP, ESL for adults through Thames Valley District School Board's Sara McCreery at [s.mccreery@tbdsb.ca](mailto:s.mccreery@tbdsb.ca) or 519-532-4748; ESL through the schools; job seekers see Karen Oldroyd, Newcomer services at Community Employment Services [koldroyd@cesoxford.ca](mailto:koldroyd@cesoxford.ca) or 519-539-8161 x233.



### **Who are Karen and David Murray?**

Karen is a retired nurse from the Woodstock Hospital; David is a retired renovator and farmer formerly of Bennington. They now live outside of Thamesford.

**When I asked, 'what inspired you?'**, their reply was "Our 3-year-old granddaughter, watching the footage on TV of the initial missiles exploding in Ukraine, asked her parents **'Why are the children running away? Where are they running to?'**

**Their response to my query 'what keeps you going'** is people's generosity, willingness to help, energy and the gratitude of those receiving. 'We were really encouraged when we attended the meeting of [Ukraine Help Middlesex \(London, ON, Canada\)](#) in March at Nairn UC in Ilderton. We realized that a separate group in Oxford would properly support those fleeing for safety."

"When we delivered a gift basket prepared by Cheryl and Rev Mark Marshall, to the first couple arriving here from Ukraine, their appreciation moved us deeply."

*full disclosure: both David Murray and MM descend from John Piper Murray and Jane McLeod who emigrated in 1829 from Scotland*

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### RESPONDING TO A CRY FOR HOPE



We have just celebrated Family Sunday or Mother's Day here in Canada. I attended the UNJPPI event in London this past weekend, Responding to a Cry for Hope. Think for a moment about Palestine, a country illegally and violently occupied by Israel for 47 years. Hard as this reality is for adults, the reality is worsening for children. **What do the children dream about? They want to live!** Why, I wondered? What is happening to the children? After I read reports of children being detained and imprisoned, no fair trial, no adults present, I realized it is not such a strange dream. Reading accounts like the **Military Court Watch** which is one of a broad based cross-Canada coalition working on behalf of Palestinian children's right is disturbing but necessary. Their most [recent newsletter](#) reports that at the end of March 2022, there were 134 Palestinian children held as 'security prisoners' in Israeli prisons. 67% of children were detained inside Israel in violation of the Geneva Convention IV and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

**Our country, Canada, needs to stand up for Palestinian Children's Rights.**

Join me in writing to our Prime Minister [Justin Trudeau](#), [The Honourable Mélanie Joly](#), Minister of Foreign Affairs, [The Honourable Mary Ng](#), Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development and local MP, [Dave MacKenzie](#). The letter should simply state that Canada needs to support Palestinian children's rights. Children are being tried in military courts. MM

### WORSHIP SERVICES IN OXFORD

Check with individual churches re specifics of in-person worship, streaming or conference call services. Churches in blue have websites. Check Facebook for for Facebook Pages.

**Avondale UC, T'burg**

[avondaleuc@gmail.com](mailto:avondaleuc@gmail.com)

**Burgessville UC, 10:30 am**

[College Ave UC](#)

[Dundas St. UC](#)

**Hebron UC** - [rsstock@execulink.com](mailto:rsstock@execulink.com)

[Innerkip UC](#)

[Kintore/Brooksdale UC](#)

[Knox UC, Embro](#)

[Mt Elgin UC](#)

[Norwich UC](#)

[Peace UC, Plattsville](#)

[peaceplattsecretary@outlook.com](mailto:peaceplattsecretary@outlook.com)

[St. David's UC](#), Woodstock

[St. Paul's UC](#), Tillsonburg

[Trinity UC](#), Ingersoll

[Westminster UC](#), Thamesford

**Willis UC, Drumbo** open for in person service and conference call.

[drumbocharge@hotmail.com](mailto:drumbocharge@hotmail.com)

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### CONNECTIONS – News and Views of Oxford County United Churches

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**CO-EDITORS:** Marg Murray + Glen Wright

**To add or remove names, email**

[oxfconnections@execulink.com](mailto:oxfconnections@execulink.com)

**CONNECTIONS website**

[oxfordunitedministries.ca](http://oxfordunitedministries.ca)

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CONFLICT MAY DIVIDE US  
BUT COMPASSION  
ALWAYS UNITES US