

CONNECTIONS

News and Views of Oxford County United Churches

Vol 5 Issue 8

September 6, 2023

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COLLABORATIVE MINISTRY/aka MINISTRY SHARING

Collaborative Ministry Possibilities

**FRIENDS of OXFORD gather
(laugh, chat, sing and learn)**

Wed., Sept. 27

Dundas United Church,

285 Dundas St, Woodstock

6:00 pm EAT, Meal cost: \$15

Deadline Fri, Sept 22.

email Margaret creativespirit@rogers.com

(Note special dietary restrictions)

7:00 pm ERIC SKILLINGS

Whatever the church of the future looks like, key aspects will include **how we learn, love and grow together.** Today, we may feel a bit like silos, standing alone, missing our Presbytery gatherings. We recognize that finances are a challenge for both congregations and the national church (see Christopher White, Question Box column in September 2023's Broadview Magazine.) Locally, Oxford has a strong history of both rural and urban supporting one another. **We know that even though we are unique, we can work together.** I'm curious and suspect you are as well about how we could learn to share ministry together to be a stronger United Church presence.

Eric Skillings (DLM) (Eric grew up at Innerkip UC) has a wide range of experience in former Chatham Kent Presbytery and his involvement with the United Church Rural Ministry Network (goes right across Canada!). CONNECTIONS has included some 'shared ministry' options! See [May 2023, page 7](#) and [August 2019, cover](#).

We hope you will join us on September 27 (details in above poster). Come early and chat. **Bring anyone who is curious.** Being together reminds us that we are not alone, and the food, fellowship and fun will be memorable. Hope is critical today. **When a sense of hope is present, it is guaranteed that love shows up in different ways.** Acting gives us hope. Let's gather with Eric Skillings and see where the Spirit is leading.

AFTER 5 YEARS AS A REFUGEE, SELAM ARRIVES!



Refugee sponsorship is not an easy endeavour, but the rewards are incalculable

for both refugee and sponsor. Selemawit (Selam) Solomon arrived from Addis Ababa on August 15th to live in London. St. David's UC welcomes and shares **the good news: their sponsored Eritrean refugees.** Shown in the picture above is Selam (3rd from left) with Glen Wright and Carol Ewing representing St. David's UC

and with Abrhazion Zekarias of London, Selam's co-sponsor and aunt.

A delighted and grateful Selam opens gifts.



Selam is shown here just before she left for Canada.

With her are her mother, Sara and brothers Naod and Fithawi who will arrive on September 21st. (continued pg 2)

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(continued from page 1)

Their difficult 5-year wait is due to multiple setbacks related to mishandling of the application at the government level. Their arrival is an example of perseverance yielding desired results and we are overjoyed that they will soon all be together in Canada. We pray that there will be more good news to share in the October CONNECTIONS.

Marj Martin (OURS Chair)

EDITORIAL

Working together is our theme:

New faces have joined our United Church presence in Oxford. We hope you can join us on September 27 to meet each other. We also welcome new faces to Canada whose journey here has been fraught with delays. We remind all pastoral charges to vote on the remit on the restructuring of the Indigenous Church and lift up Orange Shirt Day on September 30 to remember and repent of our role in the Residential Schools.

Thank you for your prayers, as we discern our way forward in the coming months.

Marg Murray co-editor

OXFORD WORSHIP SERVICES

Websites/contact information for Oxford congregations are listed [here](#). Also check their Facebook pages for current services.



OPERATION SHARING

The need for supplies and opportunities to volunteer continue. Please visit their [website](#), their [Facebook page](#), call 519-320-1372 ext. 4 or email info@operationsharing.ca

STITCH SUPPER CLUB [Facebook page here](#), [website here](#). Each Thursday at Trinity UC in Ingersoll. 4:30-6:00

Volunteers needed. Sign up here: www.stichsupperclub.ca/volunteer-sign-up

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THE SEPTEMBER EDITION OF CONNECTIONS WILL BE PUBLISHED WED. OCTOBER 11, 2023.

Submissions no greater than 250 words will be considered and are due by Noon Friday, October 6, 2023.

CO-EDITORS: Marg Murray + Glen Wright

To add or remove names, email

oxfconnections@execulink.com

CONNECTIONS website

oxfordunitedministries.ca

Oxford United Ministries Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/OxfordUCMinistries/>

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OXFORD UC COMINGS + GOINGS



Brooksedale, St Andrew's UC has called **Rev Janet Uren** for 20 hrs/week.

Ministry Appointments by ARW Human Resources Commission:

- **Kintore Chalmers UC, Rev Pirie Mitchell** appointed for 1 year, 20 hr /week. to serve as Retired Supply.
- **Dundas UC, Woodstock, Rev. Susan Camerson** appointed for 3 years, 30 hr/week to serve as Retired Supply.
- **Plattsville Peace UC, Rev Murray Rounding** till June 20, 2024 for 20 hrs/week, to cover maternity leave for Rev Jennifer Canning.

OBITUARY:



John A King Grateful for the life and service of this faithful servant of Christ. A member of Hebron UC, John served Oxford Presbytery and London Conference and numerous committees on rural life. The celebration of his life was Friday, September 1 at Hebron UC conducted by Kathleen Walsh (SDLM) and Rev. David Duncan (son-in-law). We keep his wife Agnes, Ruth (David) Duncan (all former Oxford Presbyters) and the King family in our hearts and prayers. You can read his obit [here](#) Grateful to have known and be known by John.



Jess Swance (3rd from left standing) with other candidates called to **ministry within the Indigenous Church.** Photo credit Julie Graham, [Facebook](#) July 30 2023)



OXFORD PRAYER CYCLE

Prayers for our ministry in the world.

Oxford United Churches, list is [here](#). Pastoral Charge Supervisors noted for congregations with a vacancy or student.

Sept 10 Foldens, Janine Lunn, Lynne Dunlop PCS

Sept 17 Sweaburg + West Oxford, Janine Lunn, Mary Anne Silverthorne PCS

Sept 24 Drumbo, Ken Jackson

Oct 1 Dundas St (Wdsk), Susan Cameron, Margaret Trapnell

Oct 8 Richwood + St. Paul's (Paris), Michael Shewburg + Sarah (Grady) Horvath

Oct 15 Peace (Plattsville), Murray Rounding

CHURCH EVENTS

ETONIA UNITED CHURCH

Anniversary Roast Beef Dinner

101 Hwy. #2, Etonia

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Cost: Adults \$20; children (12 and under) \$6; pre-schoolers free.

Tickets at the door.

(includes all the pie you can eat).

Takeout available.

Wheelchair accessible.

ETONIA UNITED CHURCH

Spaghetti Suppers

101 #2 Hwy., Etonia

First Wednesday of every month from October to May (except January).

5 to 6:30 p.m.

All-you-can eat Spaghetti, dessert, refreshments

Cost: Adults \$20; children 12 and under \$5; preschoolers free

Wheelchair accessible. Takeout available

KNOX CHURCH, WOODSTOCK FOODGRAINS BANK PORK BBQ

Friday, Sept 15 5 to 6 pm

Knox Church, 59 Riddell St. Woodstock

Tickets \$20.00 (only 160 tickets available)

Proceeds to support Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Donations accepted.

For tickets call: church office 519-537-2962

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Editor's note: Pleased to welcome Olga McKellar back.

MOONLIGHT: A GIFT FROM GOD



August this year ended in a week of glorious golden full moonlit nights. It was eyepoppingly beautiful; just soaking it in brought back good memories.

Early in my life, for example, were the War Years, nights when everything was 'blacked out'. All our windows were fitted with thick, black curtains. Artificial light could indicate the presence of life for a bomber. Many important errands needed to happen quietly by moonlight either by bicycle or by motorcycle or car using only the light of the moon to find the way. Often en route Dad would gather some road kill – a rabbit or a wild turkey – to add to our pantry.

Driving on a cloudy night close to a full moon was an answered prayer to my Mother. It meant Dad would be safe on the road.

Another good time on a clear full moon was the time I went out early before breakfast with my Dad's Dad: Grandad. He and I gathered fresh mushrooms to clean and cook for a family breakfast, a breakfast to die for – all available without using any of our precious food coupons. By moonlight the mushroom circles shone in the meadows like fairytale places – special, magical, yummy.

Years later, Canadian moonlight walks were the setting for some of my romantic adventures during my salad days. Moonlit hours beside the creek talking about life in all its wonder were so honest and clear. Who was I? What did God want me to be or do?

I wonder when I lost track of my love of moonlight. When did electric light blot out my moonlight?

When I decided to go to University and, to do that, worked a night shift at Canadian Kodak. The shift ended well before breakfast time and to save money for my fees I would walk home along the main streetcar line, a long walk for the most part by moonlight.

Once back on Campus where the cafeteria opened early, around dawn, I would arrive with a voracious appetite and a mouth watering for eggs and bacon.

This year I have regained my connection to moonlight, a connection linking me more firmly to God and to God's world!

Olga McKellar

CARING HEARTS SUPPORT NETWORK

at St. David's UC

190 Springbank Ave, Woodstock

For coming events see their website, call or email:

519.536.3370, email info@caringheartssupportnetwork.com www.caringheartssupportnetwork.com

CAMP TANNER

Follow them on [Facebook](#).

Thank you to the Campers that came to Camp Tanner this year! Without you camp wouldn't happen (and also wouldn't be as fun). We wish you all the best and hope you have a great year.

ReuseApalooZaha

When and Where?

Saturday Sept. 23, 2023

Where:

Zorra Embro Community Centre

8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

"Coffee and light refreshments will be offered for sale by the Ingersoll Pipe Band"

The [Jarful Refillery](#) will be showing people how to buy a raft of products with a zero-waste edge.

For more information check [here](#).

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OXFORD UNITED REFUGEE SUPPORT COMMITTEE (OURS)

The OURS Committee's function is to be available in **a supportive role** to United churches in Oxford who are considering refugee sponsorship. **How?**

- We are a resource for congregations that wish to sponsor refugees who wish to come to Canada and for families hoping to co-sponsor refugee family members in accordance with the policies of the Ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship of Canada (IRC-C). When a refugee contacts us seeking sponsorship we assist by helping to find a church who is willing to sponsor.
- We assist congregations on where to find sponsorship guides and appropriate application forms including an explanation of the various pathways available for applications.
- The OURS committee does NOT raise funds, have a bank account nor have status with CRA as a charity. Tax receipts are issued by the sponsoring churches. The committee can share however, fundraising ideas and information to set up bank accounts for refugee sponsorship as well as governmental expectations re the necessity of keeping detailed records of donated funds and expenditures. We can help with calculating the amount of money needed to support refugees based on family size and assist with preparing a budget proposal to submit with applications.
- After an application has been successfully submitted, we are available for advice on issues around settlement of the refugee(s).

*Submitted by Marjorie Martin,
Chairperson OURS Committee*

OURS Members: Marie Avey, Judy Campbell, Wendy Colcuc, Christen Currie, Carol Ewing, Sharon Fraser, Janice Landers, Cheryl Marshall, Marjorie Martin and Glen Wright.

Donations appreciated. Income tax receipts are issued by the sponsoring church. Please write **"Refugee Sponsorship"** in the memo line of cheques. **Knox UC**, PO Box 59, Embro ON, N0J 1J0; **Trinity United Church**, 118 Church St., Ingersoll, ON, N5C 2X6; **Westminster UC**, 115 George St. Thamesford, ON, N0M 2M0.

FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES FRANKLIN'S REVENGE

You may have heard of the wild turkey who hangs out in the Franklin and Weber Street area in Kitchener. Franklin, as he has been named, seems to enjoy the urban life. He has a habit of chasing cars, preferring the light coloured cars over the darker ones.



The Humane Society has been notified many times, but they say he appears healthy and happy. He is a wild bird so if he prefers city life, there is no reason to interfere. Is there an explanation for his urban habitat and his car chasing habit?

Maybe one day someone got out of a light coloured car, wandered through the turkeys' woods driving stakes with orange ribbons into the ground. Soon after the trees were cut down and the nearby corn field was turned into a parking lot. Now it's Franklin's turn to make people in light cars nervous. Or is it a protest against part of the green belt being turned into a place for luxury homes?

We do know that ever since we arrived on your beautiful planet, we have pushed wildlife off their land; and we are still doing it. Accept our apology.

So Franklin, be our guest but be careful; we are dangerous creatures. If this is what you prefer, it is our turn to share our world with you. It's the least we can do.

Blessings

GW

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Explore *current* **Programs** +
Possibilities. [webpage](#) + [facebook](#)



Friday, September 29 – October 1

Derek Suderman, Tanya Dyck Steinmann
and Stephanie Hill

More information, [here](#)

REMIT: RESTRUCTURING OF THE INDIGENOUS CHURCH:

This Category 3 Remit is for every Regional Council and Pastoral Charge Council to vote on between March 15, 2023, and March 31, 2024. This important vote changes the way we relate with the Indigenous Church. *You can access the material from our Summer edition of CONNECTIONS page 6 [here](#). The following new information has been provided by our Region:*

- **Upcoming Remit Education Workshops in person or online. See [here](#).**
- **Some answers to questions about the Remit. See [here](#).**

Education is an important element in our prayerful discernment concerning this remit. Blessings as we move forward. MM

NATIONS UNITING – SHARING CIRCLE: A safe place to Listen, to Learn, to Heal + to Grow,

[Nations Uniting](#)

Currently we are looking at films of the Residential Schools with Renée Hill, elder of Six Nations.

To join this zoom event and be part of their mailing list contact Rhonda Johns
nations.uniting@gmail.com.

Grandmothers' Tea

History: Lois Porter (of Six Nations) was concerned that the wisdom and experience of the elders in the church family were being lost. After working with Mardi Tindal of Five Oaks and Brenda Simpson of the Francis Sandy Theological Center, the idea of a gathering between native and non-native communities was hatched in 2007 +/- . You can read Shirley Manning's summary [here](#). For years, grandmothers from 35 communities have gathered (United Church, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Lutheran and interested folks have gathered the last Wednesday of each month. We bring our favourite potluck and our own dishes etc.

On September 27, we meet at St Thomas the Apostle, 110 Francis Street, Cambridge. To share a ride email Marg at murrayschell@gmail.com



ORANGE SHIRT DAY



On September 30, people all across Canada will wear orange shirts to remember and honour Indigenous children

who were taken from their communities and families to residential institutions.

For resources check out national website of UCC [here](#)

To purchase gifts check out this website:
<https://indigenousgifts.ca>

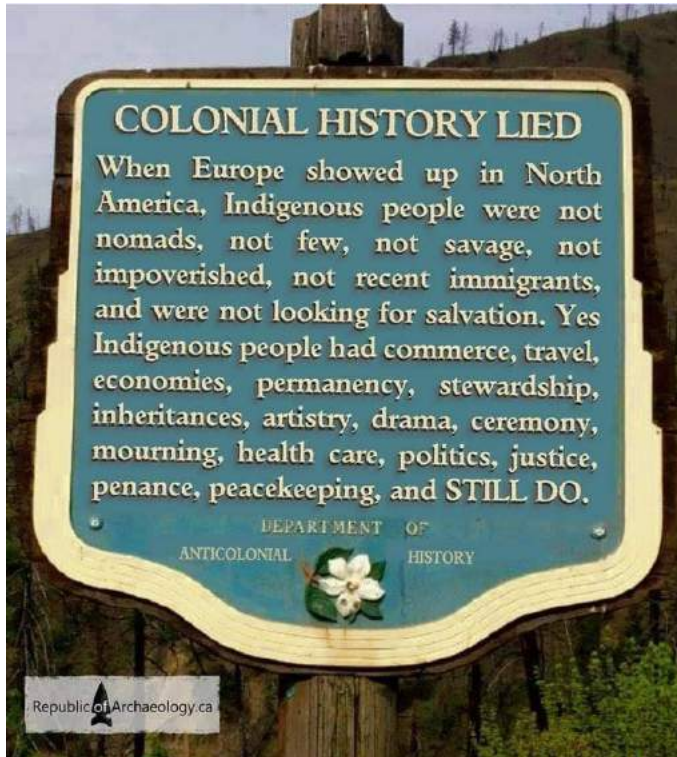
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[Facebook page](#)

Subscribe [here](#) to the newsletter of Antler River Watershed.

Save the Date:

Regional Council mtg Oct 27 and 28 online!

ARW Region: PRAYER CYCLE

As church, we are called to pray for each other and our mission in the world.

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

Sep 3 [St. Thomas; New Vision](#)

Sep 10 [Straffordville](#)

Sep 17 [Beachville](#)

Sep 24 [Dorchester](#)

Oct 1 [Foldens](#)

Oct 8 [Woodslee](#)

Oct 15 [Mount Brydges](#)

Climate Grief: Hard and Holy

Join Kathy Douglas, Faith Formation Minister and connect with others who are experiencing climate grief and/or struggling to discern a way forward with theological reflection and spiritual practice to ground and support.

Details at:

<https://arwrcucc.ca/climate-justice-hard-and-holy/>

Registration Required

Fairmont UC, London ,
Wed Oct 23 6:00-8:00 pm

ON ZOOM

Fishbowl –

CROSS-GENERATIONAL DISCUSSION

Tuesday, September 26, 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Calling people who are teens to twenty-somethings!

Calling people who are in the 40s to 90+!

Are you eager to engage in dialogue across generations with a shared concern for youth ministry today?

For More Information read [here!](#) Application Deadline is Sept 12 2023.



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FOOD FOR THE SOUL

The Archbishop's Sermon

Archbishop Justin Welby's sermon for the Coronation of the Prince of Wales was the best four-minute sermon I have ever heard.

It must have been rather daunting to choose texts for a Coronation. After all the only word of Jesus to a rich man, and ruler or leader was, "If you are seeking eternal life, then go, sell all you have, give the money to the poor, and come and follow me." Hardly appropriate for the occasion. What was appropriate was Luke 4:16-21, which includes, "I come to bring good news to the poor"; a bold text for the gathered congregation in the Abby and for those watching on TV, the most affluent people on the planet.

The first line of the sermon was equally as bold: "We come to crown a King for service". Then, just in case that intent was missed, the Archbishop adds, "for the King of Kings, Jesus Christ, came not to be served but to serve."

For the first three minutes the sermon proceeded as any sermon on service might. Then I heard these words, referring to Jesus, "His throne was a cross. His crown was made of thorns. His regalia were the wounds that pierced his body". (Those who were crucified were stripped naked; it was part of the humiliation.)

By contrast, here was the soon to be crowned King sitting in a 700-year-old oak chair originally covered in gold leaf, judged to be one of the most precious pieces of furniture in the world.

The crown, one of seven royal crowns, was made of approximately 5 pounds of pure gold adorned with 444 precious stones.

The King's regalia included gold and silver embroidered robes of velvet and silk, so heavy he needed assistance in getting to stand following the coronation.

What was Archbishop Welby saying about service, speaking to royalty, and to us, as members of the wealthy First World?

The scriptural foundation for the sermon was God's vision of the new world: a world where there would be no rich and no poor; where all would have what they needed. That was part of "the year of the Lord" (Luke 4:19), a time when there would be a redistribution of wealth. That was the "good news to the poor".

The hurting people would be healed and the oppressed would be freed. As we know, for Jesus, supporting the oppressed took place mostly in Galilee. Confronting the oppressors took place mostly in Jerusalem. Service, for Jesus, meant both. The cost of reshaping the world would be high. The consequence was the cross.

The sermon from beginning to end was about service: about what it means to be a follower of the "King of Kings".

Was this also a not-so-subtle judgment from the gospel, of a world of rich and poor, with one example being the monarchy? I believe it was.

At any rate, it would and should give King Charles III, and us, much to think about.



Blessings, *Glen Wright, co-editor*

(You can listen to Archbishop's sermon [here](#) or read it [here](#).)
