

Dates & Updates

Rosedale Presbyterian Church, June 2016



JEOMA ROSS



RAYNE DAPRATO

Faces of Rosedale



MARJORIE ROSS



RAYNE DAPRATO



MARJORIE ROSS

Noteworthy

We remember ...

Colin Campbell

He was a member of our church family for almost twenty years, and for seventeen of those years he lived with chronic lymphocytic leukemia. He has been seriously ill for the past five years, passing away at last on May 29.



A service celebrating his life took place in the church on June 2, when friends from the congregation gathered to remember him.

Liz and Colin were married in Rosedale Church and celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary two years ago. Colin was determined that his worsening illness should not dampen the celebration.

He worked in accounting and, as several speakers told us, had a lifelong fascination with the stock market. In 1984 he founded his own personnel placement firm, Campbell Morden. A colleague who spoke at the service commented on Colin's gifts in this field, saying that he always "saw the whole person." Outside of work, Colin's life centred on his and Liz' son, David, and the cottage at Long Branch on Lake Erie, where his ashes will be scattered.

Our minister Wes Denyer, who knew Colin in his last years, commented on his quiet strength and dignity. Wes visited Colin in hospital and said that Colin never complained; he read the Globe from cover to cover and wanted to discuss the news of the day rather than talking about himself. Wes suggested that Colin was one of those whose disease summoned up qualities he may not have known he had. It could be said of him that "his suffering shaped him for the life to come".

Throughout Colin's illness he was supported by the love and encouragement of his family, Liz and David. Our prayer for them now is that they may find rest and comfort in the knowledge that for Colin the worst is over. May they know God's presence in their lives in the weeks to come.

Faces of Rosedale

The pictures on the cover were taken during RPC's annual picnic and BBQ on June 12. Clockwise from top left: Jean Sonnenfeld who celebrated her birthday at the picnic; Julian & Olivier; Paige; Ann Laidlaw in the bright sun and Oliver.

Our sympathy goes to...

Annemiek Miller, Michelle Miller-Guillot and their families on the sudden death of Annemiek's oldest sister, **Myra Tupker Hiemstra**, as the result of a fall. Myra Tupker became a member of Rosedale Presbyterian Church in 1954, and continued as a member until she returned to the Netherlands in 1959. During her years in Canada she attended Branksome Hall for two years, and Trinity College, University of Toronto, for three. After returning to the Netherlands she married, and emigrated a second time. Since the mid 1970's she has made her home in New Rochelle, New York. She leaves two children and their families, including four grandchildren. She was to turn 77 this coming July 13. Our sympathy and prayers are extended to Myra's family and to Annemiek and the family in Toronto.

Bill Klempa to receive honour

Dates and Updates has received notice that our former minister (the **Rev. Dr. Bill Klempa**) will receive a "Graduate of Distinction" award from the Knox College Former Residents Association (KNOXFRA) at their annual dinner in the fall. We will bring you all the details in our late fall issue.

Presbyterian Pride

The Toronto Pride Parade takes place this year on July 3. As in past years, there will be a group of Presbyterians registered to march. This year, they have their own banner "Presbyterian Pride." The group describes themselves as "Presbyterians seeking hospitality and justice in the same way that Jesus taught us to love everyone and judge not". They are encouraging everyone to join the group to show solidarity and commitment to LGBT people and proclaim that God's love includes everyone.

Marshalling begins at 1:00 P.M. at Bloor and Ted Rogers Way (top of Jarvis Street). Following the parade there will be a meal and celebration at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (King and Simcoe). Please send confirmation of your participation in the Parade and the celebration to Sue Senior (sue.c.senior@gmail.com).

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Minister's Message

Living together like decent people

BY WES DENYER

Fifty thousand years ago, two tribes of human beings came into contact with one another. They had different customs and gods, and different ways of worshipping. They didn't look the same and they didn't share a language. While most of their encounters were marked by suspicion and fear, some members of the tribes wanted to learn more about each other. They wanted to trade goods and share a feast, but louder and more paranoid voices prevailed. They argued, "We need to keep all the land for ourselves! There aren't enough berries and wildlife to share!"

They said about each other's tribe, "They do not properly respect the gods!"

Voices of friendship and alliance were drowned out by voices who spoke of "us" and "them," and fear and suspicion escalated into violence. The two tribes engaged in a vicious war with one another and many people were killed, including children. For thousands of years, the tribes continued to co-exist in the same region, but they hated one another and frequently fought devastating and tragic battles. They were never able to live in peace.

There are some who believe this was a common scenario for our early ancestors – that in the course of human evolution, we developed a strong sense of "tribalism", cooperating with and protecting those in our own tribe, and vilifying and threatening those in other tribes. Anthropologists tell us that in the beginning, cooperation within a tribe may have been beneficial, and added to the success and survival of human beings who learned to do so.

But this is the 21st century, and it is possible that our challenges may be aggravated by a tendency towards tribalism. We are no longer one tribe facing off against another in the forest. We face a multiplicity of tribes equipped with powerful weapons on a crowded planet. We are divided by nationality, religion, sexual orientation, politics, wealth, language and race. We see our tribe as speaking for God, for truth and righteousness, while the other side is made up of the ungodly who tell lies and are determined to snuff out all the hope and light in the world.

Throughout history, religious differences have given rise to war and violence – "Our God" versus "Your God." At its best, religion recognizes and promotes humanity as one people – loved and cared for by God. The ancient Israelites spoke of "welcoming the stranger." Jesus made friends with those who were considered outcasts and foreigners, unclean and ceremonially impure. Paul the

Apostle said, "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

We face many challenges in today's world – challenges that I do not believe we will overcome until we let go of our tribalism, and the ways in which it sets us up in opposing communities of mutual hostility, distrust and violence. Our planet and its people face many problems: climate change, economic inequality, population control, war and terrorism. Our hope for solving these problems is in humanity coming together – working together to build a better future for this planet and for all of us who populate this tiny globe.

Astronaut Frank Borman saw things in a new way from his unique perspective aboard the Apollo 8 spacecraft. He said, *When you're finally up at the moon looking back on Earth, all those differences and nationalistic traits are pretty well going to blend, and you're going to get a concept that maybe this really is one world and why the hell can't we learn to live together like decent people?*

Could this be the dream of God – all of us in the common bond of humanity, children of a loving God learning "to live together like decent people"?

Messy Church



WES DENYER

Everyone creates musical instruments during Messy Church. This event aims to create the opportunity for adults and children to enjoy expressing their creativity, to gather together for a meal, to experience worship and to have fun within a church context.

Activities

Movie Night



MARJORIE ROSS



MARJORIE ROSS

On the last Movie Night of the season, Rev. Wes Denyer cooked up some burgers on the BBQ and Liz Pyper, David McCracken, Peter Schall and Mary Jane Campbell enjoy the meal. After dinner, the group discussed *Pride*.

On the last Friday of the month (with the occasional variation) about twenty people gather at the church for a potluck dinner and an hour of discussing a current film. The film is shown in the lounge at 4:30 prior to the meal, but many people borrow it on a DVD and watch it at home.

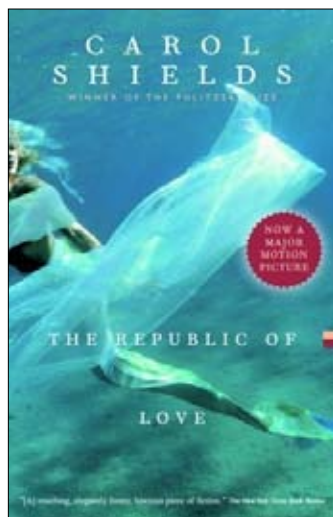
Since January we have watched and discussed *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *Suffragette*, *Spotlight*, *Remember* and *Pride*. As these titles indicate, many of the films focus on a social or political issue, but we sometimes see a film just for fun. We all usually learn something, about the issue, and often about each other as we share our impressions of the film.

We are always glad to see new people. Watch for the notices in the church bulletin, and if the film interests you, sign up at coffee hour and join us for an enjoyable evening.

Book Club

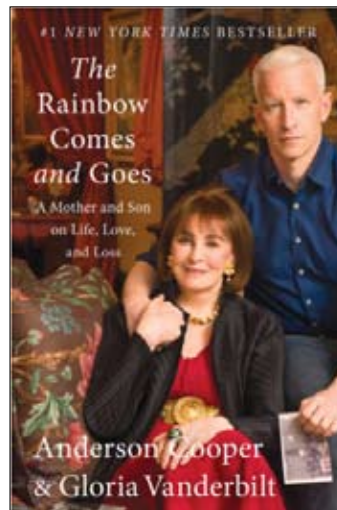
During the winter, the Book Club met several times at noon as many of our members preferred not to come out in the evening in bad weather. On May 18 we resumed meeting in the evening, at 7:00 P.M., to discuss *The Lacuna* by Barbara Kingsolver.

The two books for our summer reading are *The Republic of Love* by Carol Shields and *Rainbows Come*



MARJORIE ROSS

and *Go* by CNN's Anderson Cooper and his mother, Gloria Vanderbilt.



In addition, Irene King is collecting titles of books for summer reading from Book Club memers and their friends in the congregation. She hopes to create a summer reading list.

We meet again on Wednesday, September 21 at 7:00 P.M. to share our views on our summer reading. If you are interested in either of these books, please join us.

Noteworthy

Communion and worship with Mt. Zion Worship Centre

On May 29, we were joined for our regular communion service by the pastor and members of the Mount Zion Worship Centre. Pastor Yonatan Hiruy assisted our minister in celebrating Communion and also spoke to the congregation, interpreting the personal story of a refugee member of that congregation. Following the service, our new friends served us a bountiful lunch of traditional Ethiopian dishes. It was a special treat for RPC members and an opportunity to meet some of those who have been worshipping in our sanctuary throughout the winter.

The Mount Zion group came to us last September, with our initial contact being through a doctoral student, Girma Bekele, whose thesis advisor was our associate minister, Dr. Charles Fensham. Mr. Bekele worked for fifteen years in the relief and development program of the Kale Heywot Church, the largest reformed Protestant church in Ethiopia. Later he studied in Britain and then came to Wycliffe College where he taught missiology at Wycliffe College, and studied at the Toronto School of Theology where he came to know Dr. Fensham. He was encouraged by Dr. Fensham to write to our church asking about the possible use of space in our building for an outreach ministry to Ethiopian immigrants.

There are approximately 75,000 Ethiopian immigrants in the GTA, with a large concentration in the St. James Town neighbourhood, and in other parts of mid-Toronto. We are a Reformed congregation located quite close to where many of them are living, and it seemed like a good fit. Session gave its approval at its meeting early in September: the group first met here at the end of that month.



ALEXANDRA JOHNSTON

On May 29, the Mount Zion Worship Centre celebrated Communion with the RPC congregation and provided a traditional Ethiopian meal afterwards. Above Walter Van Roon, Bruce Roberts and others line up for lunch. Below members of the Mt. Zion group: Ethrem and his son Joseph and Matusala and daughter Eliana.

The Mount Zion group worships Sunday afternoons, the first people arriving just after those of us who worship in the morning have left. After their service, they enjoy a social period in the Great Hall. Although our original contact, Girma Bekele, is no longer in Toronto, Mount Zion's pastor, Rev. Hiruy has come to know our church staff well.

We were delighted to have had an opportunity to share communion with them, and very much appreciated the wonderful food they provided after the service. We hope we may come together again soon.



ALEXANDRA JOHNSTON

Achieve a milestone? Remember to tell Dates & Updates

Recognition Sunday



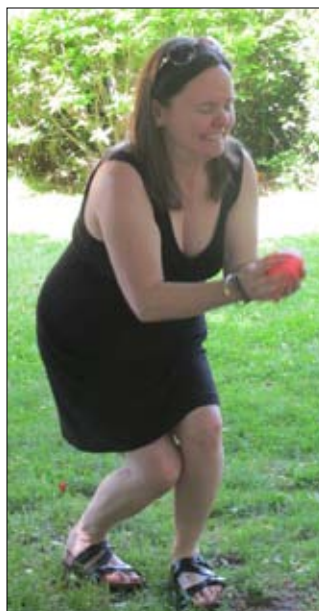
PHOTOS BY JEOMA ROSS

June 12 was designated Recognition Sunday to acknowledge those who have participated in the church school both as students and leaders. After the service was the church picnic with BBQ and games. Clockwise from top left: Paige, Melissa Weiler, Victoria Leigh and Catherine Lummack applaud the teachers and helpers of the church school; Christian Education Co-ordinator Jen Bell talking about the activities of the church school; Wes and Susan Leigh during the picnic and Feite Kraay, Alexander and Evan prepare the food.

Picnic



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RAYNE DAPRATOS



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This year's picnic included a bouncy castle, balloon animals, face painting and, of course, a water balloon toss. Clockwise from top left: Rayne helps Oliver in the bouncy castler; Jen Bell nervously catching a water balloon; Patricia and Emily with a balloon animals; Jake as spiderman and Marc Bernard with Edge on the bouncy castle step.

Activities

Refugee group update

Lemons & Lemonade

Our refugee committee (the “Tri-Church Refugee Group”) is still waiting for word that our family, now in Amman, Jordan, has cleared the immigration hurdles and is due to arrive. However, there was a development this month of interest of all those who have supported the project.

Early in the year, the refugee committee established a subcommittee to seek out possible housing for our family. Dr. Rosemary Hutchison, a hardworking member of that subcommittee, reported to us that she had heard that the board of the Bain Co-op, (a long-established co-op community in south Riverdale with a long waiting list) had placed a priority on offering housing to a Syrian refugee family.

Negotiations with the Bain Co-op Board followed and the refugee group took up a lease to begin April 15 on a two bedroom apartment (see article by Annemiek Miller in the last issue of Dates and Updates); we had no firm word as to when our family would arrive, but it seemed too good an offer to pass up. However, as the weeks went by, the committee grew increasingly concerned about paying rent on an apartment that seemed vacant with no known end date.

On April 27, the refugee group met to thrash out the pros and cons of giving notice to the Bain Co-op. The decision was to hold off for a month, with the provision that if there was no firm word of arrival by the end of May, we would let the unit go.

At a meeting on May 25th it was decided by a group of 14 volunteers from the three churches, that we would cancel our rental unit at the Bain Co-op with two months’ notice as of June 1st. It was also decided that we would do our best to find another Syrian refugee family to occupy the unit and that we would request the Bain Co-op to put our family, who is still in Amman, Jordan, on the waiting list.

The very next day, May 26 (by the agency of the Holy Spirit working through social networks!) we heard, through a friend of a friend of Ijeoma Ross, that a refugee family of five, who had arrived earlier in the year, was living in the basement of their sponsor’s house in the same neighbourhood as the Bain Co-op. They were eagerly seeking more adequate accommodation. Mark McElwain, backed up by Annemiek Miller, put in an intensive period of negotiations with the Bain Co-op management, and was able to facilitate this family (called the Mesha Olbeh/Louka family) taking possession of the unit starting July 1. Payment for the unit will pass to the family’s sponsor, a relative, called

Odette Khoury. The children in this family have become well established in the local primary school (Frankland); their mother, who speaks quite good English, is employed nearby. The whole family are delighted to be staying in the neighbourhood.

The Bain Co-op has also agreed to place our Kara Mohammed family on their wait list for a unit.

A little background: Ijeoma’s contact, Lindsay, is a member of a community refugee group who, like us, is waiting for their family to arrive. Her children are in Frankland School, and when she learned that some refugee children had recently enrolled there, she made a point of befriending them. That is how she knew the Mesha Olbeh family was looking for a place.

On June 21, she emailed Mark McElwain...

The family got the keys this past Thursday (and are beginning to paint the apartment). They are so excited and grateful to your group. I’m so pleased we could all work together in welcoming a newcomer family, even though we are waiting for our own separate sponsored families. You know what they say about lemons and lemonade!

Marjorie Ross

Seniors Lunch



The annual Seniors Communion and Lunch took place on June 15. The service was followed by a delicious lunch. Seen above, Brenda Reid and Nancy Moffat.

Around RPC



WES DENYER



SARAH HOAG



PAT KEITH



ALEXANDRA JOHNSTON

Clockwise from top left: Rayne creates food art at Messy Church; Kathleen Brinkman, Chris Spence, Helen Yurenka and Mark Roberts tend to the garden; Wes Denyer, assisted by Brooke Alyea, serves his birthday cake on June 26; Mary Legge, Sue and Peter Schaal and pianist Radka Hanakova after the recital at the church on May 8.

Calendar

July

Worship services at Rosedale United, 10:30, (Roxborough Drive and Glen Road). Services resume at Rosedale Presbyterian in August.

Summer BBQs

RPC on Wed. July 13 and Wed. Aug. 10 at 6 p.m. Please RSVP to Rev. Wes Denyer

Summer Pastoral Care

If you need to reach Rev. Wes Denyer during summer months, he will be available on his cellphone at 416-271-2233 or by email at wesdenyer@rogers.com