

BLOORBEAT

The Newsletter of



Volume XXXI, Issue 2

Minister's Message

Grace is probably the most central and crucial word in the vocabulary of the Christian faith. Yet to even begin to speak of grace – for instance, to say that grace, quite simply, refers to the way, or ways, God loves us into a generous, sacred and saving relationship – opens the gates to deep and often inexplicable mysteries.

From the biblical witness onward, our faith history is the story of trying to understand not only the “why” and “what” of grace, but especially the “how” of it. As grace is a gift, the expression of God’s initiative toward us, the why and what of it have to do with God’s freedom to be God with and for us as the divine Lover chooses. That domain is one we glimpse, at best, only “in a mirror dimly,” as Saint Paul wrote centuries ago.

But the how of grace is the intersection of the ache and awe in the human-divine struggle. The how has to do with the ways grace might come to us, shape us, restore us. The how, then, involves our discernment and experience of life’s meaning, our response to this proclaimed gift. That discernment and response is the essence of the religious life, the life of the Spirit, the life of faith personally, in relationships, and in the community we call church.

Though no less mysterious than the why and what of grace, the how of it becomes more immediate and urgent for us. Theologians have written countless volumes about the how of grace, making distinctions between various kinds of grace in order to help us trace the fingerprints of grace on our lives.

But any analytical process that goes overboard and reduces grace to definitions and distinctions has the effect of diminishing the dynamic quality of life, limiting the mystery of grace to explanation and making religion or faith just another compartment of contemporary controlled life. The “how” of grace slips into being the “how to” of grace, and becomes the particular domain of institutional religion, something the church dispenses rather than receives or recognizes.

Consequently, we tend to miss the more inclusive, subtle, sneaky, counter-intuitive and even non-religious ways grace could be, and we trust is, operating in our lives. And we usually don’t consider our responses to those non-traditional experiences of grace – here understood as serendipity, coincidence or acute meaning – as having any spiritual significance, if in fact we actually take time to reflect on our responses much at all. As a result we continue in our anxiety, our uneasy or vague confusion, on which we do reflect if only in the middle of sleepless nights or on occasions when we can’t escape into either busyness or explanation.

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Bloordale United Church

4258 Bloor Street West
Etobicoke, ON M9C 1Z7
(416) 621-1710

Minister	Rev. Brian W. McIntosh
Honorary Pastoral Associate	Rev. Robert G. Trimble
Pastoral Care Minister	Rev. Nelsona Dundas
Christian Development Co-ordinator	Lisa Mazzariol
Youth Leader	Hanna Lyle
Administrative Assistant	Juanita Eldridge
Organist & Choir Director	Mervin Fick
Custodian	Jim Spalding

Church Council

Chair	Julia Stavreff
Church Council Secretary	Pat Nelson
Congregational Meeting Secretary	Pat Nelson
Board of Trustees	Jack Lovatt
Ministry and Personnel	Connie Drummond
Nominations	Pat Nelson
Treasurer	Norman Dundas
Presbytery Representative	Norman Dundas
Minister	Rev. Brian W. McIntosh

Committee Chairs

Communications	John Pauksens
Congregational Life (co-chairs)	Shirley Scott Ameena Ramsahai
Finance & Stewardship	Jack Lovatt
Outreach (co-chairs)	Jill Donaghy Shirley Scott
Pastoral Care	Sylvia Williams
Planned Gift Fund	Bob Hitchcock
Property	Bruce Jackson
Social and Fund Raising	Vanessa Ramsahai
United Church Women	Jo-Em Bettridge
Worship	Sharron Le Blanc
Member-at-Large	Joan Hollowell

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LOOKING AT THE WEEKS AHEAD

- Sunday, February 19 - Transfiguration Sunday, COMMUNION
Annual Congregational Meeting
- Tuesday, February 21 - **Annual Pancake Supper** - Between 5:15 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, February 22 - Ash Wednesday - **Tri church worship at Richview UC**—7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, February 25 - **Soweto Gospel Choir** - Sony Centre - 8:00 p.m.
- Sunday, February 26 - Lent 1
Yak with Mervin - Room 15 after Worship
- Sunday, March 4 - Lent 2
- Sunday, March 11 - Lent 3
54th Anniversary Dinner - 5:00 p.m.
Astoria Greek Restaurant - 1970 Dundas St. E., Mississauga
- Sunday, March 18 - Lent 4
- Sunday, March 25 - Lent 5

Worship Services are at 10:30 a. m.

Continued from page 1

So it often doesn't occur to us that God's grace is always operating to restore, rescue or release us in love, quite apart from trying to fit our experiences into commonly defined religious categories. Therefore we remain mired in prayerless, worshipless, joyless, one-dimensional living in which there is little trust and much anxiety.

So how do we get in touch with the "how" of grace? Pay attention to the stories of our lives – the stories of our particular life, the stories of scripture as they intersect with us, the stories of our church or community or country. Stories help us touch on at least some of the many levels of our ordinary lives in which grace weaves and works. All the shades and shadows of the stories we are and know sustain us in life and give us choices day by day, choices that convey possibilities for us to do and be something at least somewhat new and different, to move, swiftly or bit by incremental bit, toward that freedom, peace, wholeness that salvation implies.

Stories are the means and vehicles of grace, enabling us to explore the ways of God's love in our lives. Stories reflect glimmers of the light of God's grace, and as we engage in our stories we engage all the sweaty, twisting, sensuous, painful, humorous and poignant ways we know of God's active grace in our moments, days, and years. May God's grace be given to you afresh in moments, days and years to come – and may we not fail to give God the glory for it!

Brian

WORSHIP MATTERS

Yak with Mervin

Every so often following worship Mervin hosts an open fireside chat about an aspect of our worship life, creating a safe space for questions and conversation.

There's always lively discussion, and those who come both learn about one another and about the topic at hand.

The next Yak with Mervin is Sunday, February 26th.

EASTER EGG SALE

4 oz. cream filled, chocolate covered, candy decorated eggs being made by Richview United Church Women. They are \$3.75 each or \$4.25 each gift boxed.

They are delicious and totally sinful.

If you are interested please place your order with Connie Drummond. We only had one week to advertise them last year but ordered a good number which Richview U.C.W. appreciated.

MAYBE WE CAN DO EVEN BETTER THIS YEAR to support our neighbouring church.

Come with us to see and hear
Soweto Gospel Choir
 "African Grace"
 at the
Sony Centre
 for the Performing Arts,
 1 Front Street East, (at Yonge)



Saturday February 25, 2012, 8:00 pm

Performing traditional and contemporary songs infused with the Spirit of Africa

**Tickets: centre orchestra \$64
 Front row of mezzanine \$56**

***A Bloordale and Friends Event
 Carpooling Available***

For further information and tickets contact
 Julia 416-622-6309 (h) / 416-621-8050 (w)

Elmer Iseler Singers in Concert

Lydia Adams, conductor

Sing for Spring, a Choral Celebration



Sunday, April 29, 2012

*4:00 pm, doors open 3:15
Bloordale United Church*

*4258 Bloor St. W., Etobicoke
www.bloordale.ca*

*General admission, refreshments available
handicapped accessible, ample free parking*

*Tickets \$30
For tickets or information call Nancy 416-620-5377,
or Vanessa 416-358-4504*

Children's Craft Night 2012



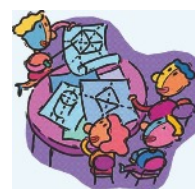
Classes at:
Bloordale United
Church
4258 Bloor Street West
Toronto, ON M9C 1Z7
(416) 621-1710
Please call to register



Who: Children Ages 4-10 welcome
When: Every Friday from February 3rd
to Friday March 2nd, 2012

Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Cost: \$3.00 per Friday or
\$12.00 for all 5 classes



PROGRAM ADVERTIZING

We will be having paid advertising in our program for the Elmer Iseler Singers, performing Sunday April 29, 2012, 4 p.m. at Bloordale United Church.

If you are interested in advertising, please call Nancy at 416-620-5377 or Vanessa at 416-358-4504.

Program page size will be 8 ½ x 7 inches (which is ½ of a legal size page).

Business Card (1/8 page)	\$25
Double Business card (1/4 page)	\$50
½ page	\$100
Full Page	\$200

Ads will be in black and white

Don't miss out on this opportunity to advertise your business to 300 to 500 people for minimal cost.

Toronto Beach Chorale Concert: Love is ...

*Sunday, February 12, 2012, 3:00 pm
Kingston Road United Church,
975 Kingston Road, Toronto (near Victoria
Park).*

Great songs of love including selections by Cole Porter, and Gershwin, as well as a suite of madrigals and the delightful Love Songs of Springtime by Canadian Paul Halley.

Tickets: \$20 adults, \$10 under 18 years old.
Concert tickets are available from Mervin, Brian or Verena, or at the door (first come, first served).

POP TABS FOR WHEELCHAIRS - Nelsona Dundas

The project of collecting pop tabs for wheelchairs began in 1989 with Jack Baumber and Raymond Pearse, members of the Royal Canadian Legion in Elora.

The two approached the Aluminum Company of Canada (Alcan) and an agreement was reached for Alcan to purchase the collected pop tabs at the going rate of metal, which fluctuates with the economy. By the end of 1989, the project had raised enough money to purchase one wheelchair! As of January 19, 2012, 1,449 wheelchairs have been donated to those in need of one! Priority is given to Veterans followed by the general public and the Third World.

FAQs

- Can tabs from pet food cans also be used? Yes.
- How many tabs are there to a pound? Approximately 1,000.
- How much money is raised per pound? 62 cents.
- How many tabs are needed for a wheelchair? Approximately two tons (about 2,500,000 tabs), depending on the cost of the chair which varies according to the individual's needs.
- How does one go about getting a wheelchair? The Pop Tab Committee requires a written request along with a letter of recommendation from your doctor, or therapist, as to your requirements and measurements. Your name will go on our waiting list and as funds become available, you will be contacted.

Bloordale is already saving stamps, eyeglasses and plastic bread tabs. Now we can add pop can tabs. You will find designated collection boxes on the tables near the front door. **Thank you!**

FLASH! As of January 30th, the number of wheelchairs donated has risen by three for a grand total of 1,452!

CONSIDER A PLANNED GIFT TO BLOORDALE UNITED CHURCH

A planned gift to Bloordale through your estate plan is a way of saying I care about my church and its future.

It is a way of saying how much you appreciate the personal, family programs and religious and psychological benefits you derive from your church and the congregation

A message from your Planned Gift Fund Committee

Bloordale United Church 54th Anniversary Dinner

Sunday March 11, 2012
Astoria Greek Restaurant

1970 Dundas Street East, Mississauga
(near "Staples" a bit West of Highway 427)

Reception at 5:00 pm

Sit-down 4-course Dinner starting at 5:30 pm



Appetizers, Salad, Lamb or Chicken
Souvlaki Dinner or Salmon Dinner,
Soft Drink and Tea or Coffee, Baklava Dessert
Cash Bar

Friends and Family welcome

Tickets: \$30.00 (at cost, includes tax and tip)

Special rates available for children
Carpooling available.

Free Parking, Wheelchair Accessible

For tickets or information contact
Evelyn 416-622-6091 or
Julia 416-621-8050 (w) or 416-622-6309(h)

PASSION PLAY

The children and youth will be presenting their annual Passion Play on Sunday, April 1st, following worship service.

We will once again be offering delicious hot cross buns, along with coffee, tea and juice.

This is a very moving production, told with a wisdom beyond their years and I encourage all to join us for the experience.

Lisa

When men have come to the edge of a precipice, it is the lover of life who has the spirit to leap backward, and only the pessimist who continues to believe in progress.

G. K. Chesterton (1874 – 1936)
English writer

Pancake Supper

The Pancake Supper returns to
Bloordale United Church on

Shrove Tuesday
Feb 21, 2012



Come any time between
5:15 pm and 7:15 pm

\$7.00 / \$4.00 for Children under 12

A Bloordale Community Event

**All are welcome,
bring your friends and
neighbours**

*For further information / tickets
call John or Julia 416-622-6309.
Tickets will also be available at the door.*

UPDATE FROM THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Here is a listing of our upcoming Social outings.
All are at cost.

- Saturday, Feb 25, 2012, 8:00 pm, Soweto Gospel Choir at the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts.
- Monday, April 9, 2012, 7:00 pm Toronto Blue Jays home opener vs Boston Red Sox.
- Saturday, May 12, 2012, 1:30 pm, TSO for Kids, The Hockey Sweater at Roy Thompson Hall; especially for kids 5 to 12 years old.

Please check your calendars and talk to Julia Stavreff for information and/or tickets: 416-622-6309 (H) or 416-621-8050 (W)

Stewardship Spot

"Stewardship is everything I do after I say 'I believe'."

Everything is Stewardship!

Within the church, stewardship often has been treated as one of those necessary but tiresome activities of Christian life, as we're asked to support a budget rather than a mission. But stewardship is much more than giving money simply to keep the building open. It involves working for what God wants to bring about in the world: the peace, justice, and glory of the creation and its creatures, including us. Christian stewardship engages individuals in all aspects of their lives and in the whole life of the world. It is a total attitude and stance toward this world which God made and still loves.

As stewards of God's creation, we're called to challenge those powers that threaten the world today. This means taking action on various social fronts: individual, communal, corporate. It means asking ourselves tough questions about our role and place in God's divine mission.

It also means asking questions about our lifestyle: Shall we use energy and resources only as consumers or as conservers? How shall we manage our disposable incomes? How shall we care for our bodies, as temples of the spirit? How do we respond with our whole selves, and in every aspect of our lives, to God's undying love?

Stewardship means asking questions about financial habits: How shall we respond to the biblical call to tithe, which means to give God 10% of our income? Do we invest our resources wisely or ethically, or only profitably?

There isn't a field of thought or action that isn't touched by God's call to transformation of our stewardship. For example, do we give money out of guilt or simply to meet the budget, attend services because of duty rather than delight, or donate our time simply to keep a Committee going? Or do we give, attend, and volunteer because we want to participate in God's purposes, in the gospel mission and ministry of Jesus?

These are the kinds of probing, self-reflective questions out of which Christian stewards must make practical, time-bound life choices. As Moses said, *"Today I set before you life and prosperity, death and disaster."* Which shall we choose?

Brian

Wisdom is divided into two parts: a) having a great deal to say and b) not saying it.

Anonymous

WHEN AND WHERE

THE EXTINGUISHING OF PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE

October 18, 1685

Why is France today considered a mission field?

The Wars of Religion began in France in 1562, between the Roman Catholics and the French Protestants called Huguenots. The Huguenots were led by the family of Henry of Navarre, a minor kingdom including a small portion of southern France and the present Spanish province of Navarre. Henry inherited the throne of Navarre from his staunchly Calvinistic mother. When his cousin King Henry III of France died in 1589, he became heir to France's throne. His Calvinism made him an unacceptable candidate in Catholic France until he embraced Catholicism in 1593. He was then crowned King Henry IV.

Once king, however, he did not forget his Huguenot roots, and in 1598, he issued the Edict of Nantes. This agreement gave the Huguenots freedom of religion in certain areas of the country. It provided the Huguenots with a state subsidy for their troops and pastors and allowed them to retain control of approximately two hundred towns. The Edict of Nantes was historically unique in that it was the first time freedom was granted to two religions to exist in a nation side by side.

By the late 1600s, Henry IV's grandson Louis XIV was king of France. But Louis XIV shared none of his grandfather's empathy for the Huguenots, and on October 18, 1685, he revoked the Edict of Nantes. All Huguenot worship and education were forbidden, and all Huguenot churches were either destroyed or turned into Catholic churches. Huguenot clergy were given fourteen days to leave France, but the remaining Huguenots were forbidden to emigrate. All children within France were to be baptized by a Catholic priest and raised as Catholics, and Huguenots were allowed to remain in only a few specified towns.

Mounted soldiers were housed in the homes of Huguenots. The troops were given license to do anything they pleased short of murder. Obstinate Huguenot men were imprisoned. The women sometimes fared better as they were sent to convents where they often received unexpectedly sympathetic treatment from the nuns.

Of the 1.5 million Huguenots living in France in 1660, over the next decades four hundred thousand risked their lives by escaping across the guarded borders. Geneva, a city of sixteen thousand, welcomed four thousand Huguenots. An entire quarter of London was soon populated with French workers. The elector of Brandenburg gave such a friendly reception to Huguenots that over a fifth of Berlin was French by 1697. Holland welcomed thousands and gave them citizenship.

Many Huguenots fled to South Carolina and to the other colonies as well.

At the height of the Reformation nearly half of France's population was Huguenot.

But as a result of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the intense persecution that followed, today less than one percent of the French share the faith of the Huguenots, making France a mission field for the gospel.

TWEET SAYS THE BIRD

Have you heard?

Pastoral Care Committee is making plans for coffee hour April 22

Plan to stay.

Plan to attend our

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, February 19, 2012

after worship service

Light Lunch provided

BLOORBEAT PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Following is the publication schedule and the deadlines for submissions for upcoming issues through May 2012.

Publication Date	Submission Deadline
March 18 nd	March 9 th
May 20 rd	May 11 th

Bloorbeat is published 7 times a year by the Communications Committee of

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