



## Grace's Chatter – Summer 2022



Trinity United Methodist Church one of the venues of the festival.

### **Rev. Takouhi's Reflection...**

***Summer 2022 – June 8, 2022***

*"Do Not Let Your Circumstances Take Away  
the Joy of God's Blessings"*

Dear Grace United Church,

I do not know what is going on in your life right at this moment, or what is waiting for each of us this summer season. However, the Spirit is leading me to share what I have been learning still today about God's Blessings and life's circumstances.

Most of you know that I attended the Festival of Homiletics in Denver, Colo., which took place the week of May 16. This was the event's first in-person gathering since 2019, which also offered virtual participation. At first, I was going to participate virtually, until my eldest sister Silva passed away in Los Angeles on Feb. 25.

I do not know how to explain it, but maybe this question will help. Have you ever had something amazing take place in your life, but there were so many unwelcome circumstances around you that felt like you were living through a nightmare? There is no other way to describe the unwelcome events that took place, from missing my departure flight, not because I was late, but because Air Canada has new protocols in place to make things smoother, however I think they made matters worse. Therefore, I missed my flight out, even though I was at the airport five hours prior to my flight. After my return in Canada, I waited more than four hours for my luggage to arrive on the baggage carousel, and moreover, the next morning, I saw that my van door was damaged by another car, where I had parked for the week while I was away. Things seemed to be falling apart, and I am still sparing many other details of frustrations that I refuse to repeat.



Why am I telling you all these things in this reflection? Maybe just to show that even ministers have hardships of life; and by no means is this a whining session, but it is about that little voice of the Spirit in me keeps on reminding me to not let those

unwelcomed, unplanned, circumstances take away the joy, the nourishment and the delight of the conference that I enjoyed at the Festival of Homiletics in Denver.



This year, the Festival of Homiletics celebrated its 30th Anniversary. Rev. David Howell had a vision 30 years ago to offer a week of rejuvenation, nourishment and networking for ministers and lay leaders of the church. Before the pandemic, the festival would have about 1,800 in-person participants. This year, there were 3,910 participants: 797 in person and 3,113 online. So because of the pandemic, and the addition of virtual attendance, the festival expanded its participation, just like we have extended our Sunday morning worship celebrations as well – there is always some silver lining even in the darkest moments of life.

Beloved, I cannot help but think back upon the date that God clearly called me to serve Grace United Church - Saturday, June 27, 2020. In the midst of COVID. I never thought, I would ever leave the pastoral charge that I was serving. There are many other dates that I can share with you when God has blessed me with so much, amid difficult and dark times. And look at us now, we have been in ministry together since Nov. 1, 2020, even though we are just officially covenanted, June 12, 2022, on Trinity Sunday, because of COVID gathering restrictions. A Covenant is an act of promise between different participants – another description is a marriage of sort, where the parties promise one another to love, respect and work together to make this world a better place.

So today, as we enjoy these beautiful sunny and rainy days, I urge you **not to let your circumstances take away the Joy of God's Blessings that are present in and around you.** Airlines will make wrong decisions to help streamline the flow and make you miss your flight, luggage will arrive late, the hotel will run out of hot water, the car door might be marked with another car's bumper, **but all these things are circumstances out of our control, and the only control we have is our own reaction.**



These are the few wonderful staff I worked with at the festival.

As this summer dawns around us, would you make an extra effort to be grateful for the joys that God has provided you? **You are Loved more than you know by the Creator, and by your minister... Have a happy and a blessed summer of 2022!**

I remain humbly within God's Grace – Your Servant-Leader,

**Rev. Takouhi Demirdjian-Petro** B.A., B.Th., M.Div.

# Grace United officially welcomes Rev. Takouhi!

By Paul Scott

Covid 19 may have delayed our ability to hold an in person Covenanting Service, but no pandemic could dampen the joyful enthusiasm on Sunday, June 12, as Rev. Takouhi Demirdjian-Petro was officially and warmly welcomed to Grace United Church.

A Covenanting Service is a worship service which is held to celebrate the new ministry of called Minister, with their Community of Faith and with their United Church Regional Council. Rev. Rosemary Lambie from the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council was Presider and Preacher on Sunday and Wayne Harris attended as Regional Council Liaison. Tammy Fergusson, licensed lay Worship Leader, lead the worship portion of the Sunday service.



After Rev. Takouhi was presented to the community of faith by Ministry and Personnel chair David Charles, Rev. Rosemary Lambie presided over the Covenanting Ceremony with this introduction. "We are gathered here in the presence of God to celebrate the ministry and to covenant together for the service of God in this place."

The Covenanting relationship between Rev. Takouhi Dermirdjian-Petro and the members of the pastoral charge was outlined by Region Council Liaison Wayne Harris – that Rev. Takouhi was undertaking a new ministry at Grace United and that the members of the community of faith are called to join her in worship, study, prayer and action.

Rev. Rosemary Lambie and Rev. Takouhi.

For her part, Rev. Takouhi then promised to commit herself to this new trust and responsibility; to accept the discipline of the United Church of Canada; to be responsible, along with regional council, for the support and accountability of the church's life and accept the support and encouragement of this pastoral charge.

The members of Grace United Church promised and agreed to join her in a ministry of worship, study, prayer and action within in this pastoral charge and the world, and support Rev. Takouhi as she serves among us in this ministry.

Members of the pastoral charge then presented Rev. Takouhi with several symbols which represent the work of the church.

1. Tammy Fergusson presented The Bible – symbol of one who teaches and proclaims the Word.
2. Susan Barwell presented Water – as one who baptizes in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. The Towel and Basin were presented by Vicki Leakey, "as one who serves as Christ served."
4. Barbara Jenkins presented Bread and Wine – a symbol of one who breaks bread and blesses the cup.
5. Balloons were presented by Cheryl O'Leary representing the celebration of the ministry to all ages; through laughter, joy and celebration of the Holy Spirit.
6. Keys to the Church were presented by Murray Roantree as a symbol of daily duties and the work of administration and of this building; a witness of Christ's presence in this community.



The acts of Covenanting were concluded by Rev. Rosemary Lambie as she stated, "In the name of Jesus Christ, and by the authority of the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council, I declare this covenant to be established. Thanks be to God! Let us rejoice in the covenant we have made."

And one final piece of business was the disbanding of the Search Team. Liaison Wayne Harris thanked Brian Brooks, Pamela Shea, Shirley Clark, Colleen Harding, Tammy Fergusson, Elaine Davidson and Barbara Jenkins for their "commitment of time, faith and discernment" and declared the work of the Search Team to be complete.

During the service, which was also Trinity Sunday, Rev. Lambie's meditation was titled "The Spirit Connexion" and reflected on the Holy Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The morning's scripture readings were presented by Joan MacKinnon and the congregation joined together and sang "Called by Earth and Sky", "Breath on Me, Breath of God", "We are One", "Hallelujah" and "I the Lord of Sea and Sky." Grace Church Choir presented a favourite anthem "Lord, I Stretch My Hands to You", and



guest organist Douglas Gifford's postlude was a Roger's and Hammerstein classic, "You'll Never Walk Alone."

After the service, members gathered for a reception in the church hall where lemonade, cake, cookies and conversation were enjoyed.



Sign of the Cross. Sugar cookies Intricately iced and delicately decorated by Cheryl O'Leary.



After two years, folks enjoyed getting together and visiting



Reception after the Sunday service.



Barb Jenkins, Christine Gordon and Murray Roantree eyeing that corner piece!

# Mission and Service Spotlight: Ukrainian Refugees and Community Kitchen

By David Charles

The past few months have been very busy for our Grace United Church family through our service to the community. In late May / early June we have participated in the settlement of three Ukrainian families into the Gananoque and Kingston area by supporting the Gananoque Refugee Settlement Group (GRSG). Sam MacLeod of GRSG reports that the first family Diana and Elina and their son moved into an apartment in Canatara Court in Kingston (see photo below). Another Nadia and her son Danial have moved into Nadia's mother Olga's home in Gananoque and attended our worship service on May 29. On June 8, Irena and her daughter moved into a Gananoque apartment behind Laverne's restaurant. Thanks to all who supplied furniture, clothing, cooking supplies, apartment cleanup and repairs, and transportation for these families. To date, Grace United Church has donated \$1115.00 in financial support.





Also in March, April, and May Grace United Church provided kitchen space and financial support to the Gananoque and Area Food Access Network Community Kitchen. The primary focus of the three sessions was cooking good food on a budget, food handling safety, and shopping for nutritious food. In the photo below, Cooking Instructor Julie Cameron inspires two young chefs on the art of making vegetable filled crepes for dinner. The Community Kitchen plans to hold more sessions this Fall.



Thanks for being part of Mission and Service at Grace United Church.

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### Mark Your Calendars

## **Mary's Merry Minstrels are coming back.**

**At Grace United Church**

**Thursday, July 7<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 9 pm.**

### ***"Fiddle Days are Here Again"***

**A concert of fiddle music and more.**

**Admission is by Donation.**

**All proceeds to support**

**Gananoque Refugee Settlement Group/Ukraine**



# Costs have risen, but we still count our blessings

By Vicki Leakey

I truly hope most families have had some chance to enjoy time with loved ones that we have not seen for many months, perhaps a lunch or dinner at your favourite local dining spot. It has been a very difficult few months for many and as we begin to slowly open more doors the cost of food, price of gas continues to bring financial strain to many.

Unfortunately, high costs have an impact on our operations at Grace United as well. We see expenses the end of May total \$120,715 compared to \$66,427 in 2021. We see an increase in our gas heating bills, lights, and water - somewhat due to being in the church building this year as well as price increases. We also had some one-off repairs that are necessary to keep our building safe and equipment to allow quality on-line viewing. However, our revenue brought in for May 31, 2022 was \$105,913 compared to \$49,293 of the prior year.

We are fortunate to have available funds in our trustee accounts to cover increases and our breakdown saw an increase in offerings of \$7,000 and an increase in transfer from trustees of \$45,000. Once, we can organize more fundraising events in the fall, those revenues will help to reduce the future draw from the trustee funds. However, we are still in a favourable financial position compared to many churches and our congregation remains dedicated for each to give what they can. Our trustee funds are weathering the storm of the fluctuating markets and although we saw a decline in the portfolio the end of May, we would expect some rebound once markets and the economy show some positive activity soon.

We also remain a congregation dedicated to give to help those in need as we saw funds sent to Mission and Service of \$7,300 and financial assistance for local outreach of \$3,300.

We have several Offerings' options available for those that may wish to provide continued support during the summer months when we may be away spending time with family. **E-transfer** from your on-line bank account is popular, you can look for "send an e-transfer" on your on line banking website and send to [grace.gan@outlook.com](mailto:grace.gan@outlook.com). Just follow the instructions given. **Offerings by mail** is another option – send post dated cheques by mail to Grace Church at 120 Pine St. Gananoque, On K7G 1C7.

We should be very proud of the accomplishments this congregation provides to keep our church operating including the countless hours spent by the many members volunteering their time to continue with our pie making fundraiser, those working to keep Sunday service open in our sanctuary and filmed to share with those unable to



attend, wonderful music provided by our music director and choir and those finding solutions to necessary repairs to keep our church safe. Finally, cheers to our worship leaders Rev. Takouhi and lay worship leader Tammy Ferguson who provide the spiritual leadership that keep our members strong. Thank you for your gifts of time and finance. All of you are so appreciated and we are so blessed with the support we are able to share with each other.

### **Fruit Pies for Sale**

**A variety of fruit pies available  
for \$15 each**

at

Grace United Church  
120 Pine St., Gananoque.

To place your order call  
Carol at 613-382-4376

Pick up date is

Thursday, June 23rd from 3 to 6 pm

**(NOTE: We will not be at RibFest this year)**



#### **Types of Pies:**

**Raspberry, Blueberry, Peach, Rhubarb, Strawberry Rhubarb, Apple, Bumbleberry**

**Please call Carol to place your order and confirm the varieties available.**

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## **Maintenance Committee Update**

By Brian Brooks

The Maintenance Committee of Murray Roantree, Angus Fergusson and Brian Brooks continue their monthly safety inspection of the church building. From this inspection it has recently been discovered that some of the emergency exit lights and the emergency strobe lights have are not working properly.

After much testing, the cause is not apparent to the maintenance team. Jet Electric has been called hoping that their expertise will find and correct the problems.

GLAD plumbing will commence removal of the old boiler and water tank shortly. Parts for the new system are on hand at GLAD, so hopefully the change over will not take long. At the same time GLAD will have a look at the hot water rads in the church and see if they are good for another few years. These rads have been in place since the church was rebuilt.



The Pine Street door locking system has been upgraded with a two new palm opening units installed. New weather stripping was put in place as well. From all reports the new system is working well.

Two of the dehumidifiers required replacing in the basement. This has now been done.



Happy Birthday to all who are celebrating over the summer including Noreen, Gord, Brenda, Rhea, Dorothy, Choughik, Joan, Bruce, Cheryl, Shannon, Brad, Charlie, Dianna, Linda, Clarie, Marilyn, Elaine, Jack, Michelle, Martin, Dave, Jean, Carol, Darryl, Tom & Leanne. We send you our blessings and good wishes.

Happy Anniversary to all who are celebrating over the summer including, Neil & Gillian. Peter & Catherine, Tom & Carol, Richard & Nancy, Gord & Faye, Murray & Rhea, Jack & Gloria, Denis & Darryl, Liz & Doug, and Mel & Marg. Congratulations everyone.

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## **Condolences**

Our sincere condolences to all those who have lost loved ones in the past few months. In May, Grace Church lost a family member, Lucille Jeroy. We pray that Lucille's family will be comforted by their memories and know that she is at peace.

*Revelation 21:4*

'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'



**Contributors this month:** Rev. Takouhi, Vicki Leaky, Brian Brooks, Dave Charles, Ruth DD, Paul Scott and Laurie Cadue

**NEXT DEADLINE – September 9, 2022**

**Do you have an article for the newsletter? We would love to hear from you.  
Please contact Paul Scott or Laurie Cadue**

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**Contacts:**

**Minister:** Rev. Takouhi Demirdijian-Petro - **Direct line: 613-777-0880**

You can learn more about Rev. Takouhi on her website [www.RevTakouhi.ca](http://www.RevTakouhi.ca)

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