

LIFE TOGETHER



St. Jacobs Mennonite Church

www.sjmc.on.ca

Fall 2023

Pastor's Pen Worship at SJMC

Mark Diller Harder

On Sunday, September 24, our large group of volunteer worship leaders from SJMC was treated to a yummy lunch of Moroccan Stew, rice and pumpkin dessert (Thanks Social Committee!), followed by a time of conversation. This lunch was organized by Brent Horst, his last contribution as a worship planner on Sunday Morning Ministry as he finishes his term. The lunch was a way of thanking our worship leaders for their wonderful and creative contributions to our Sunday morning worship. We have an amazing and dedicated group of worship leaders. They each take seriously their role of leading worship, and they each embody this in their own unique and personal way.

Following the lunch we had a vigorous conversation on the nature and purpose of worship, and how people have experienced their role as worship leader. We called out 'popcorn' style what words and phrases come to mind when we think about worship, and worship at SJMC:

- *Praising God*
- *Connecting and Communing with God – an entry point into God's presence*
- *Listening in many ways and directions – to God, to each other*
- *A place to set aside busyness*
- *A place where we are seen and heard*
- *A place to centre my life, to claim my identity*
- *SJMC has a non-stuffy warmth in worship – it is very participatory*
- *Music and singing and visual arts lead us into God's presence*
- *We have an openness to the new, while valuing our heritage and traditions*
- *We have an implicit liturgical structure that holds our worship*
- *Worship invites us into contemplation*
- *Worship enlivens our imagination for what the world can be*



Our SJMC Worship Leader's Guide begins this way:

'Worship is a time where we commune with God as a congregation. It is the place where we are reminded of who we are as followers of Jesus. It is the place where we proclaim what we have seen and heard; where we are called again to live in the world as it has been revealed to us through God in Christ. Meaningful worship can be as individual as people are, and it is the calling of the worship leader to offer a variety of entry points that make us aware of God's presence in our midst.'

We spent time walking through the worship guide, which outlines the details of the various parts of worship and the roles and responsibilities of a worship leader. We talked about the evolution of things like children's time, music, the language we use and our congregational sharing time. As we did so, we reflected as a group on our experience of leading worship – both the joys and the challenges. Consistently worship leaders get more out of a service when they are involved themselves, and after all the prayer and reflection that goes into the preparation. They also appreciate other services more because they know how much work goes into the planning. A highlight is meeting together with the pastor to read the Scripture together and reflect on the theme for the morning. So much of the direction and the creativity in worship comes from those in-person meetings. People consistently feel affirmed for their leadership, and find that they learn so much themselves in the process.

As a congregation, we too add our thanks to all of our worship leaders for enlivening and enriching our worship. Well done O good and faithful servants! If you feel a nudging to test out some worship leading gifts, or to be involved in other aspects of worship, take the risk to talk to one of the pastors or Sandy Shantz, chair of Sunday Morning Ministry.

Writers & Contributors



Brent Horst • Editor



Mark Diller Harder



Ella Brubacher



Karen Sauder & Brenda Poole

Editorial

Fall has arrived with a new church year, back to school and changing weather. This issue looks back at a fun-filled summer, including receiving new members on May 28th, the Derksen family's move to Winnipeg, food trucks, church camping weekend, campfires, cinnamon buns made by our junior youth, a youth event at Silver Lake, an Indigenous Food Collective cooking day, cycling fundraisers, welcoming Don Penner as interim pastor and more!

In this issue, Ella Brubacher helps us get to know a couple of our new members, Frank and Janet Hill. Lori Martin tells us a bit about the ball hockey in our parking lot this summer while Brenda Poole and Karen Sauder write about the gigantic church garage sale. Marie Fretz reports on the Senior's Gospel Sing-along held on June 1st.

Mark's pastor's pen focuses on worship leading and I wade into the discussion of how we define our church family.

I think Doris Kramer is our first Life and Times participant who is a centenarian and I still learned something new about her! Rachel Diller Harder and Alvin Hershberger (also an answer to a Wideman Crossword clue) complete our Life and Times this issue.

What new beginnings have you had this fall, or perhaps you have returned to a pre-Covid activity? Write about it and send me your submission for a future issue.

We are blessed in our life together and I trust we will have a great rest of 2023. See you in the new year!

Brent

Thank You!

- Article and Picture Contributors
 - St. Jacobs Printery
- Pauline Martin - Distribution

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Life & Times



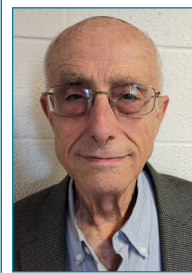
Doris Kramer, 100
Retired Social Worker
Maiden Name: Miller

Childhood Home: Iowa, United States
Present Home: St. Jacobs



Rachel Diller Harder, 58
Staff Scheduler at Aldaview Services (a division of Tri-County Mennonite Homes)
Maiden Name: Diller

Childhood Home: Bluffton, Ohio
Present Home: Kitchener



Alvin Hershberger, 84
Retired from Adult Education Instructor
Enjoyed a few years of self employment

Childhood Home: Kansas City, Kansas USA
Present Home: Elmira, ON

Some of my favourite smells, sounds, tastes:

- Lilacs • Bread baking • My children singing hymns together • Voices of family and friends on the phone • Ice cream • Fresh produce • Roast beef • Chocolate • Lemon

- Fresh mowed lawn • Cicadas in the middle of summer • The call of loons • The sound of communion cups being dropped into the cup holders • The taste of vine-picked tomatoes.

- No smell sense - don't mind skunks
- Sounds of music
- The taste of juicy fruit

Some things you may not know about me:

- I have traveled to almost all continents in the world • I got a penny for every 100 potato bugs I picked • Went to school in a one-room school house for 8 years and graduated from high school at age 16 • The first woman to serve on the Mennonite Mission Board and also served as secretary of WMSC for US and Canada for 6 years

- When I was 15 I was in a body cast for 8 months following scoliosis surgery • I did 5 years of Voluntary Service in an International location - Canada • In college I had a meeting at the Libyan Consulate in New York City • I was House of Friendship's last Voluntary Service Worker

- Voluntary Service in Northern Alberta in lieu of Military Service
- Started water hauling in the community
- Volunteer Fire Chief while living at Calling Lake
- Harvesting from Texas to Montana in college years

Personality traits others would say I have:

- Outgoing/friendly • Task oriented • Open minded • Caring • Generous • Good sense of humour

- Realist • Introvert who can hide it by being outgoing • Thorough • Resilient • Welcoming

- Enjoy concentrating on sermons with eyes closed • Enjoys choir • Appreciates quietness and patience

My interests include:

- What my children and grandchildren are doing • Stamp collecting • My church • I appreciate and collect art glass, including paperweights, vases, etc. • I have a sock darter collection • I like to read

- Reading
- Biking and long walks (if you call it a hike I might not go)
- Dreaming/Planning the next camping trip
- Camping

- Singing in the Jubilation Men's Choir
- Doodling on the piano
- Exercising
- Feeding, watering and watching birds

Some favourite lifetime memories:

- I loved Valentine's Day at school, and I saved all of my Valentines for 95 years • Good family times with both nuclear and extended family. We sang and laughed together. • I always felt loved by my parents • The birth of my grandchildren and great grandchildren • When WWII was over. It was a sense of elation. We went to Philadelphia to celebrate. • My range of friendships from atheists to Old Order Mennonite and everything in between.

- Visits to my Grandparents in Williamsport Pennsylvania • My 4 years at Welcome Inn in Hamilton with Mennonite Voluntary Service • A road trip with three friends to Winnipeg for Mennonite World Conference • Drives home from Silver Lake with the kids listening to their stories about their times at camp • Camping trips with our kids, including the good and the not so good times that now make for great stories

- Marriage in the St. Jacobs Mennonite Church
- Living in small Cree-speaking communities
- Enjoying activities of our children and grandchildren

Where I like to play or ponder:

- I play at my kitchen table
- I ponder in bed when I lay awake at night

- Early morning walks at dawn • Any place our trailer ends up on camping trips

- In church during a challenging sermon
- Living room in my Lazy Boy • Out walking

Some items on my "Bucket List":

- Not to stagnate but to keep growing. I have lots to learn yet. • I wish I would have spent a term with MCC. • I want to be the best person I can be. I want to be the love of Jesus to people. • I want to sew as many MCC school kit bags as I can until I die.

- To actually finish one of my unfinished projects
- Visit Newfoundland – a trip that has been planned and put aside many times
- Continue to go exploring on camping trips with Mark

- Fly in plane with Zach, our grandson, as pilot
- Travel to places on all continents

Summer Ball Hockey

Lori Martin

We are thankful for a very successful summer sharing our church parking lot with the youth of St. Jacobs!

Throughout the summer, we hosted ball hockey for the youth in our community. Every Thursday night, from 430-530 pm, we would set up the hockey nets, haul out a pile of sticks and enjoy a good ol' hockey game.

Back in the spring, we were at a Leadership Council meeting discussing how we would engage the youth over the summer, since the pastors would be short-handed after Kevin's departure. I had the idea that I could contribute by facilitating ball hockey. I had help from Mark Diller Harder, Ryan Clemmer and Devin Martin just to name a few. Doug Shantz and Pauline Martin took care of the behind-the-scenes insurance requirements, which is definitely not as much fun as the hockey...thank you.

The last Thursday in August I got ice cream for the group. The kids were excitedly asking me if we would be doing it again next year. Success and yes, I hope we can make it happen again next summer!



Seniors Gospel Sing-Along

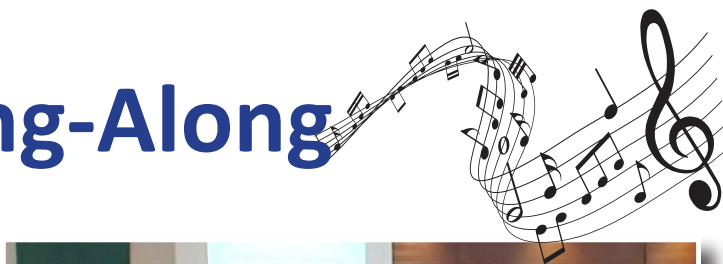
Marie Fretz

Remember the "All Night Gospel Sings" we attended as young people? That was when gospel quartets would come up from the U.S.A., we would listen to some wonderful singing, and yes we wanted to sing along. At least I sure did but alas we could only listen. Well on June 1st, 2023, we had our own gospel sing-along right here at SJMC. You bet we had our own country band. There was Darrel Martin on piano, Chuck Kruger on guitar, Wayne Bridge on banjo (I think he had something to do with getting this started) and the violin played by Bruce Kleinknecht put the finishing touch to the band.

Now this was the time to sing along! About 35 seniors came out to the event and we had a wonderful time going back down memory lane as we sang the old faithful hymns of the church. Laverne Brubacher did a good job leading us and had to stretch a bit to get through one or two that were really not familiar to him, or anyone else for that matter.

Of course, we can't have fellowship without food so a big thanks to Karen Sauder and Donna Johnson for providing a tasty lunch and creating a space for us to mingle in the basement.

It was a great event, and I really enjoyed the sing-along. Should it happen again? A big "thumbs up"!



Welcome TO THE TEAM Don Penner

This fall we welcomed Don Penner to our staff and pastoral team as our interim pastor (0.5 FTE).

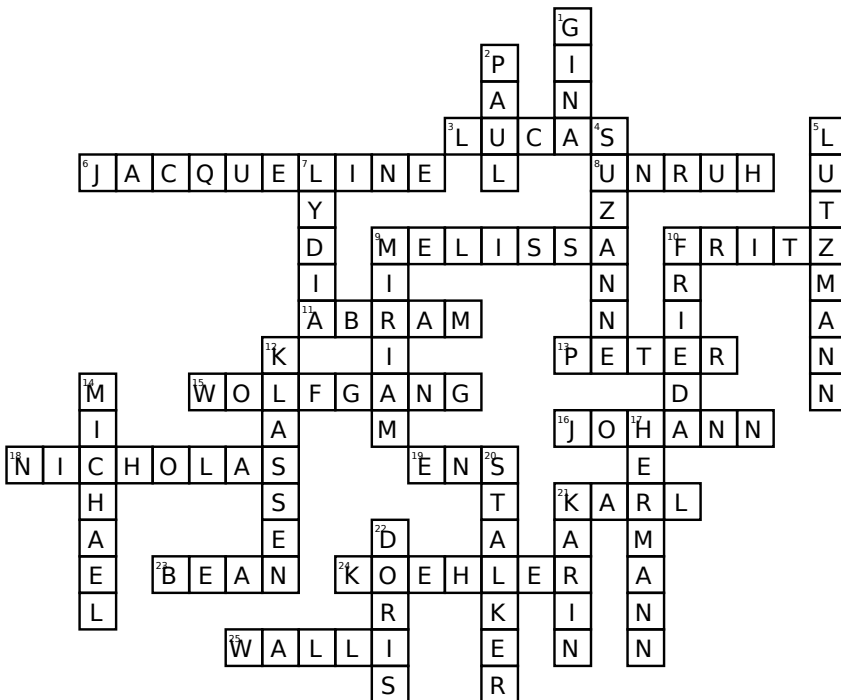
Don shares the following:

'Hi Everyone! As many of you know, my wife Kristen and I have been attending SJMC for the past year since my formal retirement celebrated at the Shantz Mennonite Church near Baden. After a year of rest, I'm happy to now help out at St. Jacobs, filling this interim role. Let us trust the track record of God's faithfulness to continue to give us courage and grateful hearts to walk into whatever the future holds. I look forward to getting to know you better, and give thanks for the chance to work with Janet, Mark, and church leadership.'



Klassen Clan

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS



Getting to Know...



Ella Brubacher

Frank and Janet Hill are a senior couple, retired, and living in The Meadows, St. Jacobs.

Frank was born in Kitchener and lived in upper Waterloo County, attending schools in Alma, Ariss, Floradale and Elmira. While doing different jobs he took at night school courses at Conestoga College, ending in meat cutting butchery for 35 years. He grew up Lutheran. His hobbies are gardening and working on his car. Frank loves travelling.

Janet was born in Kitchener as well, and grew up on a farm outside Kitchener, close to the current Steckle Heritage Farm. She went to Williamsburg School and Plains and went to Doon for grades 7 & 8. As a family they went to Stirling Mennonite until she was 12, then went to Bethany Missionary in New Dundee. She worked after high school at Dutch Boy and finished her working days at University of Waterloo in Food Services. She likes to be a silent helper.

They have two girls. Daphne (husband Jack) lives in Calgary with two granddaughters, Hannah and Zoe. The other daughter, Stephanie, lives locally. She has a dog, which Frank and Janet babysit on occasion.

They have a camper van, which you can guess Frank keeps in good working order. They have travelled many places, including Calgary of course (visiting family) and all the places between here and there. They've gone to Arizona, Florida, Texas, Newfoundland and Alaska.

Frank and Janet love to walk and bike, and you'll see them on the trails or in the village of St Jacobs, and between here and the market as well. One day I met them walking toward their home and they showed me their hands. What kind of bloody mess did they clean up? They had just finished dead heading the geraniums at our church.



Yes, these two are gardeners! Let me tell you about Frank and Janet gardening.

They have a garden plot at Home Hardware. I went up there one gorgeous fall day and found Frank rototilling his plot. I had never been there, and what a healthy and prolific site! Frank showed me around and explained the whole concept of this hidden treasure.

Home Hardware generously has on hand on the site all the hoes, shovels, wheelbarrows, rototiller, and water supply that you need to take care of your garden. Frank said that when you have a site you are obligated to also put in time on the one site that is strictly mandated by

Home Hardware to be a Food Bank garden. This is much larger, and has all the vegetables ... carrots, peas, beans, cabbage, lettuce, spinach, egg plant, broccoli, beets, tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, peppers, onions, potatoes (& others probably), and a large everbearing raspberry patch. Apparently when a volunteer picks the raspberries, for every two boxes you pick for the Food Bank you get one free. By the way, they need more volunteers from

spring to fall. Frank freely told me names of those who put in countless hours to help plant, weed, and harvest. You know who you are!

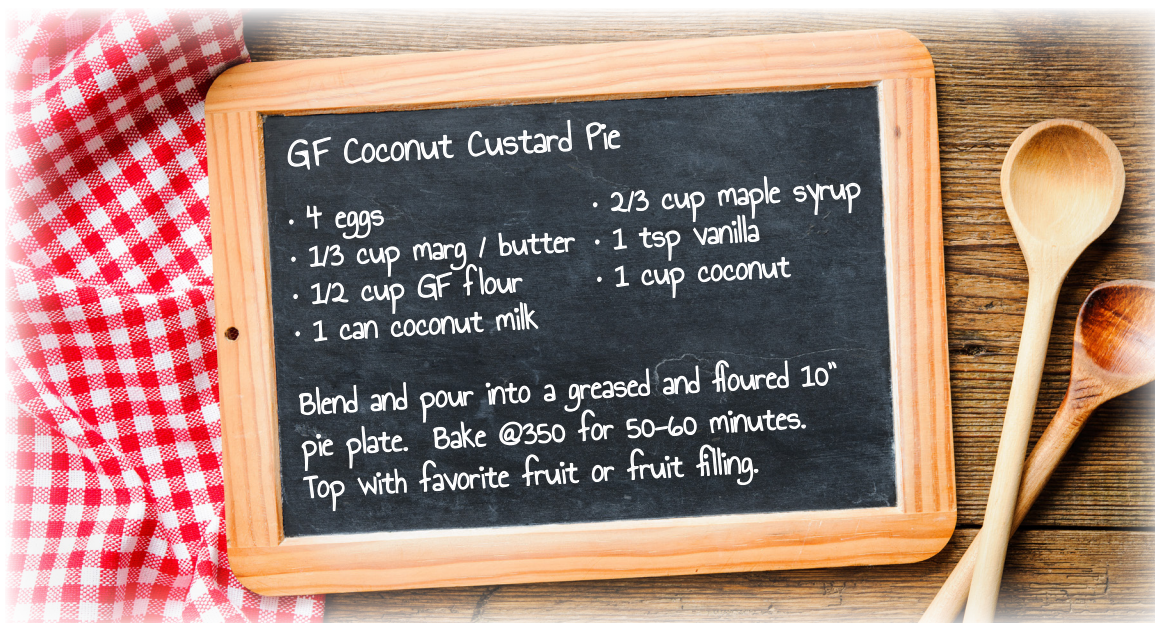
Monday morning, if you went there, you would see a truck back up to a trailer that the volunteers have loaded, gathering ripe produce for the weekly trip to the Food Bank. Also benefiting is Meals on Wheels, and Nutrition for Learning for kids. The other garden plot owners also donate what they can't use for themselves.

Of course Frank and Janet also are generous with what they can't use. Frank was pleased with his potatoes. It was the first time he planted them and said they turned out great. The tomatoes were another story. Such a wet year, and there was lots of rot and mold. They had to go to the market to augment their need for canning tomatoes. Otherwise, he was pleased with all the produce they are getting. He planted yellow and green beans, because personally he prefers the yellow ones. Keeping the weeds down is always a challenge. He likes to pull these from the root, and add to the big compost pile.

He's telling me how much they freeze and can, so of course that takes me to their house where Janet shows me their cold room storage area. You can see I tried to get a picture of her and as many of the jars of delectable vegetables that they produced and fruit that they buy, but even as she sat I couldn't capture a picture of them all. It is a cooperative effort. Frank helps her with all of it, and of course she puts in time in the garden herself too.



For a bushel of peaches she said she uses 42 cups of water and 6 cups of raw sugar, and 10 tsp of ascorbic acid (added when sugar water cools). She has a pressure canner. One thing she has discovered over the years is to use the canning jar lid only once because she feels the rubber lining is being manufactured thinner. She has oodles of recipes. Here's one recipe that's a treat, when the work's all done.



As we see Frank and Janet living out their lives, we can be thankful with them for God's bountiful blessings.

Editor note: Frank and Janet Hill became members of SJMC on May 28, 2023.

The Church We Love

Brent Horst

We had a robust discussion at our annual meeting this past February about the size of our pastoral team. How would we cover the fact that Kevin will no longer be a ¾ time pastor for our congregation after June 2023? How would we pay for it since our total giving to the spending plan has been much the same level for ten years and our staff and facilities costs continue to rise? What's the impact of reducing our giving to "Beyond Ourselves" within our spending plan?

I'll admit it was hard to fully absorb all that was shared in that meeting at the time, so I watched the recording. As I listened to all the speakers a second time what struck me was how much we love our church. I heard so much passion and hope for our congregation and many spoke to a strong pastoral team as critical to fulfill that love for our church. Hope is not a strategy some say. I think hope is a fine strategy for a church. We are built on faith and hope! I think this is wonderful and I too love and share your passion for the church. That love for our church and each other was also clear in our engaging discernment Sunday March 26. Thank you to Leadership Council for creating such excellent settings for discussion of these issues.

What I didn't explain well in my own comments at the annual meeting is what "church" drives my passion. For me it includes our congregation but also includes the regional and national churches. You might think I'm abusing my role as editor of Life Together in publishing this article, but I am simply trying to show how the Mennonite Church in Canada is currently defined. This definition is not just my opinion, but I am worried that our congregation has lost this knowledge over the past years. This article is to provide a broader view of the church and admittedly also my personal view of the impact of this broader definition. I welcome reaction and further discussions.

Our local congregation is only part of the Mennonite Church in Canada. Our local congregation is made up of members with a variety of gifts and abilities. Some can give more money, some can give more time and some need more from the congregation right now than they can give back. That's all fine and that's what makes up a strong **local**

faith community. I love this and don't want to see anything that will harm this part of the Mennonite Church.

SJMC is also a member of a regional church, Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada (MCEC). We are one of 104 member congregations in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick. Our regional church pays staff who provide services to congregations, support new church plants, support emerging and smaller congregations, and look at regional issues for the Mennonite Church. Most of the \$83,000

we have committed to the broader church in our 2023 spending plan goes to support this work. That

is generous and awesome! We are blessed

to be able to give more than many other congregations as we all share

in the work of MCEC. Admittedly we don't need most of the services that MCEC provides. Some

congregations can give more money to the regional church, some can give more time and

others need to receive more from the regional church than they can currently give back.

That's all fine and that's what makes up a strong **regional** faith community. I love this and don't

want to see anything that will harm this part of the Mennonite Church.

MCEC is one of five regional Mennonite churches that form the national church, Mennonite Church of Canada. The others are Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. At the national level there are paid staff who provide services to the regional churches, look at national issues and support international witness workers around the world. A smaller part of our \$83,000 goes to support this work. Each of the regional churches are somewhat unique and have different needs from the national church. They don't always see eye to eye with each other and some can give more than others. That's all fine and that's what makes up a strong **national** faith community. I love this and don't want to see anything that will harm this part of the Mennonite Church.

Together we are the Mennonite Church in Canada. No individual congregation is an island, just like no individual member of our congregation should feel alone. We are all one large Mennonite faith community across Canada. I love that we love our church. I love that we are concerned with each other as brothers and sisters in this congregation.



Our church includes other MCEC congregations and other regional Mennonite churches across Canada. As a fun experiment, I challenge you to make a list of the MCEC congregations that you know. I was shocked to only come up with about a third of the 104 total, and even when I looked at the full list on the MCEC website (www.mcec.on.ca) I only really recognized just over half of the congregations' names. I guess I don't know my church as well as I thought I did! How did you do? A better question is how can we best love and care for all of the church? How can we show our love for all those in the total Mennonite Church?

Discussing the "Beyond Ourselves" spending lines when reviewing our spending plan is not a complete view of our church. We also give beyond ourselves when we partner with Benin Bible Institute, when we sponsor refugees and when we send our members to the broader church, here and across the world. Many of us volunteer in organizations that are beyond the walls of our own congregation. We do a lot "beyond ourselves" and should feel good about that.

We are blessed to be able to love our whole Mennonite Church and continue to give beyond ourselves. Thanks be to God.

Fun Times @ SJMC



A sign with a black background and white border. The words "GARAGE SALE" are written in large, bold, red capital letters. Below that, "@ SJMC" is written in black capital letters on a white rectangular background.

**GARAGE
SALE**

@ SJMC



Brenda Poole & Karen Sauder

Early in 2023, Community & Hospitality Ministry suggested an idea to hold a spring Garage Sale as a fundraiser. With the date set for Saturday, May 20, sign-up sheets for volunteers and baking donations were soon in place. To have the garage sale in the parking lot, a BBQ by the ramp, a bake sale at the front entrance and kids' games and activities in the grassy area behind the church house would certainly turn this endeavor into a fun, community event as well.

About two weeks before the sale, items poured in from not only our members but many people in the community filling all the Sunday school rooms and the hallway in the basement. Sorting, categorizing and pricing needed to be done. The committee of Pauline Martin, Karen Sauder and Brenda Poole along with many other volunteers sorted clothing, books, toys, puzzles, camping equipment, housewares, dishes, home decor and many other donations. The volume of the donations was so large and the weather forecast was not favourable so the decision was made to hold the sale indoors in the church basement. The committee and volunteers worked every day and several long evenings to organize the massive number of items received.

Saturday, May 20th the sale was to start at 8:00 am. Before 7:30 am people started to gather outside the front doors of the church, waiting to get their hands on a bargain. At 8:00 am sharp the doors were opened and at least 30-40 people flooded in, the beginning of a steady flow of shoppers. We were so thankful to have the sale indoors because it would have been impossible to set up all of the tables outside in the morning. One lady laid claim to a corner in the back hallway where she collected her intended purchases. Calvin Martin and Robert Poole assisted in calculating the total of her purchases and about an hour later she left with a van full of bargains totalling over \$300. Our cashiers were stationed in the main entrance and were kept very busy tallying all the treasures that were being sold. There was a definite buzz in the base-

ment that day and many community people were very pleased with the variety of items we had to offer.

At 10:00 am the BBQ started, selling hotdogs (with fried onions) and pop which proved to be very popular.

Inside, the bake sale table loaded with pies, butter tarts, squares, muffins, cupcakes, whoopie pies and many other delectable treats was a popular spot for garage sale attendees.

Pauline Martin coordinated a Kids Zone which was relocated to the Gathering Room due to the weather forecast. The activities needed to be modified but children appeared with painted faces, popcorn and crafts. Thanks to Vita and Sasha, two of the Ukrainian youth living at the Jakobstettel Guest House, who were amazing face painters for the event.

By noon the hotdogs and baked goods were sold out. The basement was much emptier but there were still some items along with clothing remaining. Arrangements were made to deliver these items to the New Hamburg MCC Thrift Store, the Elmira MCC Thrift Store and Value Village. This was a garage sale that kept on giving!

After an exhausting week and a long sale day, the committee was very pleased with the results. One of the day's highlights was a message received from a person who attended the sale with her daughter who relied on a wheel chair for mobility. She commented that this was a great facility, and her daughter was so pleased with the respect and kindness of the workers that she chose to donate the change from her purchases to our Elevator Upgrade Fund. Well done everyone who made that kind of connection and impression!

Proceeds from the day's events (Garage Sale, Bake Table, BBQ) totalled \$4,544.70 and were distributed to Woolwich Community Services Programs, SJMC Sponsored Refugee Family and our Capital Fund for the elevator upgrade, demonstrating God's love in our neighbourhoods and in the world.

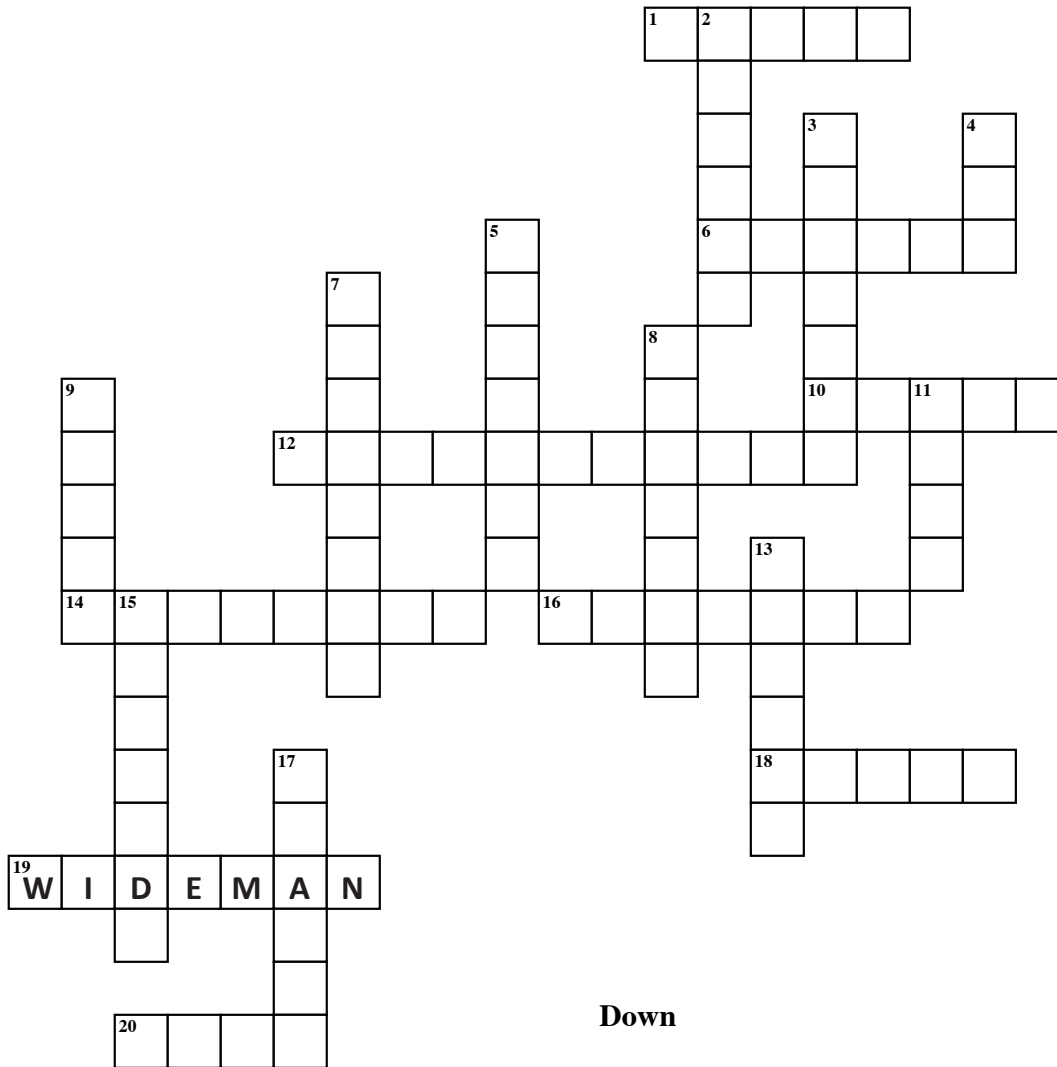


Even MORE Fun Times @ SJMC



Wideman Family

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

- [1] Patriarch of the family
- [6] Full sister of Elroy
- [10] Eldest son of Aaron and Lucinda
- [12] Surname of Elaine and Alvin
- [14] Mother of Cliff, Maynard, Stewart and Marilyn
- [16] Late son of Aaron and Florence
- [18] Spouse of Elaine
- [19] Last name of Crossword family
- [20] Spouse of Heather

Down

- [2] Youngest daughter of Mark and Cynthia
- [3] Niece of Elaine
- [4] Spouse of the late Maynard
- [5] Eldest daughter of Elaine and Alvin
- [7] Eldest daughter of Dave and Heather
- [8] Youngest daughter of Aaron and Florence
- [9] Full brother of Maynard and Marilyn
- [11] Spouse of Elroy with a jewel of a name
- [13] Youngest daughter of Dave and Heather
- [15] Mother of Elroy, Elaine and 3 other children
- [17] The late spouse of Cliff