

LIFE TOGETHER



St. Jacobs Mennonite Church

www.sjmc.on.ca

Spring 2021

Pastor's Pen

Liz Weber

Throughout this pandemic we have heard the phrase “we are all in this together.” Maybe you are someone who relates to this phrase or maybe you are someone who is tired of hearing it. There is definitely some truth in the saying, but I believe that what we have experienced is more than just being in this together, and more like the Swahili word Harambee, which means “all pull together.” It is more than just experiencing the same things; it’s a coming together to get things done.

This sense of Harambee has been very present at SJMC as members of the congregation (and sometimes beyond) have come together to get things done during this time. This has been most present in the many different virtual choirs and musical arrangements that continue to be put together. It has also

Continued on page 3



SJMC's Collaborative Visual Project for Lent and Easter Worship Series, Envisioned and Co-ordinated by Liz Weber

Writers & Contributors:



Liz Weber, Pages 1, 3



Amanda Chathi, Page 4



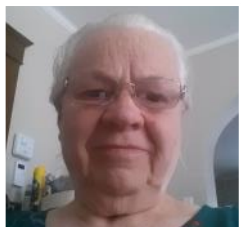
Chip Bender, Page 6



Zach Cressman, Page 7



Doris Kramer, Pages 9,10



Leah Boehm, Page 11

Editorial

Spring arrived early and confidently! We have enjoyed great weather and we just celebrated a beautiful Easter weekend. We are also dealing with the news of more lockdowns and higher pandemic case numbers. Our community life continues to be more apart than together. Some people were able to safely attend an Easter sunrise service, but larger gatherings still seem far away.

In this issue we share some of the activities of our members over the past few months. I asked for stories, poems or artwork and am happy to see what arrived. Leah submitted a poem, Amanda talks about her artwork that was used in worship last fall and Liz tells the story of the mural shown in our Lent, Easter, and post Easter services.

We celebrate with Zach on his first solo flight and read of the persistence needed for the Bender’s backyard rink. Doris shares some of the life of Bruce, a new SJMC member last fall, and I included my own story about some very special hands. Marcia Shantz was inspired to create another Children’s Challenge and the regular Life and Times feature completes this issue.

Our “Life Together” continues to have ups and downs but it has been great to celebrate these stories, knowing there are many other inspiring stories out there. May this wonderful spring sustain us through the summer and may God’s Holy Spirit continue to give us hope, peace and joy.

Brent

Q: Do you have any ideas for future articles or content?

If so please email me at lifetogether@sjmc.on.ca or call me at 519-664-3374.

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Life Together, since 1979. Formerly The Beacon est.1967; previously Keystone Literary Society newspaper.

been evident in the few in-person events we've been able to have such as the Pork Fundraiser dinner or the Curbside Christmas events and the many people who came together to put those on. Most recently I have seen the congregation pull together to help create the Lent worship mural.

For years I have wanted to create some sort of big collaborative art piece. I always thought this would happen in some way at Arts Abound, the art studio where I used to work, but the opportunity never came during my time there. As Mark and I were planning the Lent worship series and looking through the worship material in the Leader magazine, I was drawn to the various images that the writers had included and an idea started to form. At first, I wasn't exactly sure what it would be, but as Mark and I continued to plan for Lent, and as I started brainstorming some ideas with some friends/former colleagues, a picture began to come together.

From the start I knew I wanted this to be a collaborative project including others from the congregation. Being in a pandemic though meant I had to really think through how this could be done using resources that were fairly accessible. I wrote out instructions of the different pieces I thought could fit and how to make them, having only a bit of an idea of what I wanted the mural to look like. Each week when the various pieces would arrive, I would find myself looking at them thinking, "now what?" or "how am I going to make this work?" Some weeks I would be changing my mind of how pieces would be displayed right up to the last minute before filming.

Being filmed while assembling the mural was also a new thing for me, and definitely had me feeling a little nervous as I knew I only had one take to make the mural and any mistake I made would be seen by all. Throughout it all I was continuously reminded of a quote from Ms. Frizzle, on the kids TV show, The Magic School Bus. About once an episode she would tell her students to "take chances, make mistakes and get messy." Working on this mural I definitely took a

chance in not knowing how it would turn out and not knowing if anyone would actually contribute to it. I definitely made mistakes along the way, but part of making art is figuring out how to turn your mistakes into something new, something better. And I for sure got messy, mainly my hands which would be covered in glue by the time I was done assembling the pieces. The kids, however, certainly got messy while making the pieces!



I am grateful to have had this opportunity to try something new and appreciate that so many people contributed to it as well. Let's continue to find ways to collaborate and pull together – now while we are still apart, but also one day when we can finally meet in person again. Let's continue to take chances, make mistakes and get messy! ■



The Wave

Amanda Chathi



When I first painted this picture in 2009, I did it to be an alter display at Erb Street Mennonite Church as a part of our Lenten services. At the time it was meant to represent loss and renewal. Renewal was implied by the faint rainbow on the top of the wave.

However, during Lent that season, I experienced a miscarriage - a great loss. Thus, for many years when I looked at this painting on my wall, I was reminded of the loss of my baby, who I named Robin. But the rainbow at the top of the wave still represented hope to me; hope for seeing Robin in heaven someday, and hope for the arrival of future children. Eventually the pain faded and my wave became something simply of beauty that I enjoyed hanging in my home.

Back in the fall of 2020 when Kevin Derksen and I were planning the first worship service in the series on racism, we were wracking our brains for what to do for a display for such an emotionally loaded series. We didn't want an image that would misrepresent anyone, or that would cause hurt by mistake. So, we thought that something abstract to the issue would be best. That's when I thought of this picture.

In the Call to Worship I spoke the following. It sums up our thoughts about the wave well.

“The background image we chose for this series is a wave. The reason for this choice is that it represents turmoil. The waters are churned up. It is crashing down. It is pounding the shore, smashing apart the rocks bit by bit. It is clearing the footprints from the sand. It is bringing change. It is powerful. It is beautiful. It is bringing new hope.

But it also feels dangerous. And it can feel mighty uncomfortable to be caught in a wave if you are unprepared. There is a wave that is sweeping our society right now.

It is a wave called “Black Lives Matter!” It is a wave calling us to open our eyes and see the inequalities right in front of us. It is a wave that is demanding that we examine our preconceptions and our privileges. And it is demanding that we change. That we open our hearts, unlearn our patterns of racism, and work toward equity for all people.”

I now have the wave picture here at home again. It isn't actually hanging on my wall right now as I am running out of walls to hang stuff on. But it is a painting that I think I will always keep close as it touches something deep in my heart each time I look at it. ■

Hands of Love

Brent Horst

What do you see?
Worn, old, weathered and
wrinkled hands?
Let me tell you what I see.

I see hands that hung onto sisters' and parents' hands. They also took the hand of my father in marriage. Much later these hands held my father's hand, as he took his last breath. They rubbed my back gently as I grieved the loss of our first grandchild, who never took his first breath.

These hands prepared meals; so many meals for so many people in so many settings.

These hands seeded and weeded, they plucked, shucked and podded. They cleaned up dribbles and schnibbled up beans. They rubbed, washed, scrubbed and prodded.

These hands washed and hung out tons of clothes and ironed them flat. They gathered eggs and then delivered them to the customers, right to their door.

They knitted, crocheted, darned and quilted. They mended, patched and produced many creations. They held music books for singing; and even played guitar – Hawaiian that is. These hands have held me, my children and my grandchildren too. These hands hugged many people and squeezed many other hands.



These hands write cards and letters and dial phone calls; a way to deliver love and care to others. They fold in prayer, wipe away tears and gently touch. They now type emails on a laptop, scroll through Facebook photos and postings, click for news and join calls on Zoom. They can still thread a needle, write neatly and are rarely idle as they continue to create.

Today these hands eat meals made by others and can rest while others clean. So well deserved and wonderful to see.

Yes, these hands are worn; well worn. These hands are old with wisdom, weathered by sun and storms and they are wrinkled with memories.

I thank God for these hands. These hands are blessed and are a blessing to me and to others.

These are hands of love; these are the hands of my mother.

Written by Brent Horst, December 2020

Photo by Gary Horst

Pandemic Ponderings: Life Lessons from our Backyard Rink

Chip Bender

One of the joys of winter for me is the creation and the use of our backyard rink. At least it can be a joy if you can get passed the misery of some of the setbacks. As a relative novice ice maker, I was naïve to think I could parlay my one year of ice-making experience into a smooth trouble-free second season. There is a reason they say experience is the best teacher.

The ice-making endeavour started off well enough on a mild autumn afternoon as we erected the boards around the perimeter of the rink-to-be. Visions of a flawless ice surface danced through my mind as I am sure it did for my teenaged assistant, who was the driving force behind the rink. Several weeks later the liner was effortlessly set into place, and several weeks after that, when the temperature began to edge towards freezing, water flowed through a hose from the outdoor spigot to the rink. Everything was going exactly as planned, until it wasn't.

The declining water level was our first indication something was awry. Holes in a rink liner can be rectified if noticed before one begins to fill it with water. When one tries to do repairs retroactively, even with the use of Flex Tape, the odds of success are limited. A substantial snowfall, in my rookie thinking, added some welcomed depth to the places where the ice was too thin. However, pouring water over packed snow for several nights in a row did not yield the results I had imagined. So, I decided to throw in the towel and hope for better results next year. Even though I knew a

backyard rink would help us cope with the pandemic, I was not interested in exerting more effort without yielding any results.

Fortunately, my son was more determined to continue with the insanity of continued effort in the face of apparent futility. Thank goodness for youthful optimism and an ignorance of the cost of water. Eventually, the surface was smooth enough to skate on and has finally offered the joy both of us had anticipated several months earlier.



This experience has taught me many valuable life lessons. Firstly, life rarely goes as planned. Secondly, if plan A does not work remember there are 25 other letters in the alphabet. Thirdly, it is easy to get discouraged when plans repeatedly fail, particularly as you get towards the end of the alphabet. Fourthly, keep going no matter what. Lastly, even when it seems like all is lost, remember there is often someone with enough determination and enough hope that everything will turn out. Sometimes that someone is a long-time friend, or a professional, or even as unexpected as a teenager. ■

Pandemic Ponderings: Working Toward a Dream During a Pandemic

Zach Cressman

Hi SJMC, I hope everyone is doing well! I miss seeing and talking to you all on Sundays.

As many of you know I am currently following my dream of becoming a pilot. I am at Conestoga College in their Aviation- general arts and science program. It is a two-year program, and I will graduate with my commercial pilot's license.

I am in the second semester of the first year, so I am nearing the halfway point. I completed my first solo flight on January 8th; ironically, this was only a week after my first time driving a car on my own. I now have enough solo hours to go and write my private pilot's license written test. Once this is done, I can go take the flying portion of the test and I will then receive my private pilot's license. This will allow me to take passengers, which half of my family is very excited for (Sorry Grandma C).

It is very exciting, and it still has not quite sunk in that I am going to be a pilot yet. It has been a real roller-coaster ride. There were times I was worried I would not be accepted in the program, and there were times when we thought my medical (which is required for flying) was going to be revoked. I believe God gives us interests so that we can do good in the world with them. Jeremiah 29:11 is a verse that has stuck with me a lot through this, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope". I am very fortunate that God has given me the passion for aviation and the ability and resources to get my license. At



some point I would like to fly with Mission Aviation Fellowship, or other relief style work. I hope that God can put me where He can use me to spread his love and help others who are less fortunate. ■

Your friend, Zach



Life & Times



Tina Cressman

Currently in grade 11 at Elmira District Secondary School (EDSS)

Childhood Home: Elmira, Ontario
Present Home: Elmira, Ontario
Age: 16



Joy Scheifele

Retired, homemaker. Past: MCC Co-director for NL, program director for VSS (Seniors program sponsored by Erb Street Mennonite Church), Manager of MCC Benefit Shop in Kitchener, Secretary and matron at residential

school in Moose Factory, Church Secretary
Childhood Home: Montreal, Quebec
Present Home: , Waterloo, Ontario



Sharon Bauman

Retired from Waterloo North MC as office administrator; prior to that Home Hardware Stores Limited administrative assistant

Childhood Home: Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario
Present Home: St. Jacobs, Ontario
Age: 61

Some of my favourite smells, sounds, tastes:

- mom's cooking/baking
- birds
- smells and sounds by the lake
- farmers market pizza
- fruits
- rain and thunderstorms

- freshly scrubbed floors
- fresh baking
- hearing hymns and other music presentations
- sounds of nature

- chocolate
- bonfire crackling
- popcorn: sound, taste and smell!
- coffee...sound of brewing, smell and taste!
- waves crashing on beach at cottage

Some things you may not know about me:

- was on the Rockway wrestling team for 2 years
- I enjoy learning languages
- took piano lessons for 9 years
- our family fosters animals

- I have lived in three provinces
- some of my ancestors were sea captains

- collected sap for maple syrup on farm
- sold corn from back of a pickup truck at Wagner's Corners for 75 cents a dozen!
- helped make pork sausage on family farm

Personality traits others would say I have:

- creative
- quirky
- shy
- helpful
- kind
- easy going

- quiet
- a good listener

- funny
- shy

My interests include:

- drawing
- playing piano
- volunteering at St. Jacobs Country Playhouse (when it was open)
- camping
- playing trivia games
- animals

- jig saw puzzles
- crossword puzzles

- time at our cottage
- traveling in RV
- walking our dog

Some favourite lifetime memories:

- family trips to Alberta, Caribbean, Disney
- learning how to waterski and wakeboard
- going to see shows with grandparents for Christmas
- going to Chesley Lake and Elim Lodge
- camping
- dog sledding (2019)

- walking on Great Wall of China
- climbing 807 metres to top of Grosse Morne Mountain in NL
- visiting every province and territory in Canada
- holding each of our children moments after birthing them

- getting a purple bike with banana seat and high handlebars for my birthday
- boating with my Dad and fishing
- birth of grandkids

Other vocations I might have chosen or would choose:

- I have no idea, still exploring my options!

- currently retired

- for me, nothing beats retirement!

Where I like to play or ponder:

- my room
- going for walks outside
- car rides

- cooking
- reading
- travelling

- by the water or in it on a kayak!
- anywhere in nature

Some items on my "bucket list":

- travel to Europe, Hawaii (and learn to surf) and so many more countries!
- watch the Olympics in person
- write and publish a book
- own a hobby farm

- recognize each day as a gift and seek God's guidance daily how to live it

- hug my grandkids again!
- travel
- drive my "new to me" motor boat

Getting to Know You ~ A Visit With Bruce Kleinknecht

Doris Kramer

When Bruce Kleinknecht was asked “What brought you to SJMC”, his reply was “SJMC was well represented at St. Jacobs Meadows and I felt I needed a community of like-minded Christian people.” Throughout his life he has been drawn to spiritual matters and reads books on spirituality. He felt warmly welcomed and especially enjoyed the children’s responses during their lesson times. He also appreciates the singing. It was a cold day on October 11, 2020 when in an outdoor ceremony, he was received as a member of SJMC. We are grateful for his commitment to Christ and the church.

Bruce was an only child born on September 4, 1937 at K-W Hospital to Florence Sass and George Kleinknecht. He is a fifth generation Canadian. They lived at 172 Benton Street, Kitchener. When he was born his mother was 30 years old and his father 39. They had married the previous year. Bruce was baptised as an infant at St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church on Benton Street. His family attended that church regularly and it was there that he received his early spiritual training in Sunday School. He was also active in Luther League in his teen years and sang in the choir.

He attended Courtland Public School and, the only public high school in Kitchener at the time, KCI. He especially liked math and science and was active in sports. When small, he played Squirt ball (earlier than Pee Wee) and he also played hockey at Victoria Park on Saturdays in winter months. Another interest of Bruce’s was the violin. He began lessons at age 9 and continued until he was 18. He was Concert Master in the high school orchestra and, at ages 17 and 18, played with the K-W Symphony when Glen Kruspe was conductor of the amateur orchestra. At age 82 he began taking lessons again.

As a young lad he enjoyed following his retired neighbour in his garden. Bruce pulled the wagon filled with tomatoes for him to sell in the neighbourhood. There were almost no children where they lived except a family of 5 or 6 children across the street and they were not allowed to play with him as they were a different Christian denomination. Today that would not be an issue.

Bruce’s father was from a family of 14 so there were lots of cousins. He loved to go to his grandfather’s farm west of New Hamburg. They went by bus as his parents didn’t own a car.



His father never learned to drive but later, when they got a car, his mother at age 50, was the driver.

His father worked as a butcher at Schneiders Meats for 45 years. This gave Bruce summer work opportunities in a variety of jobs at Schneiders as a teenager. His mother was a homemaker and the manager while his father was the provider.

Bruce was close to an aunt and uncle (his mother’s brother) in Conestogo and sought them out for advice on how to plan for further schooling. They were younger than his parents and had an influence on him regarding a vocation. His aunt had had good experiences with a chiropractor and appreciated their philosophy of healing. Bruce wanted to do something that would help others, had some chiropractic adjustments and, after careful consideration, decided to go to Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College in Toronto. A high school friend made the same decision, so the two young lads were off to the big city. They found a room together which cost \$15.00 weekly for Room and Board. That included breakfast and dinner. The following year the price went up to \$17.00. Tuition was \$300.00 annually. He worked hard at his

studies. On weekends, he and his friend would hitchhike home on Hwy. 5 (before the 401 existed). Bruce graduated in 1960 with a Doctor of Chiropractic. He had been a stutterer all his life and when he began his chiropractic practice, he gradually overcame it.

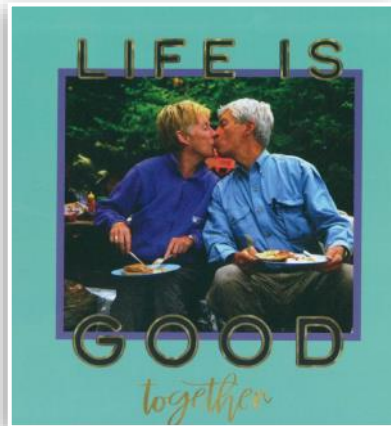
After graduation, the office of another chiropractor became available above a butcher shop on Frederick Street, Kitchener. He lived in one room and used the other for a treatment room. How does one build up a practice? Some people knew him, and he did a bit of advertising in the newspaper, but it was primarily through word of mouth that he gained patients. He was in the Frederick Street space from 1960 to 1964.

Romance came to him in an unexpected way. He got a phone call from Carole Schlei inviting him to a Christmas party. He accepted but had some concern as Carole had an identical twin and he wondered if he'd know her when he called on her. Then he thought "she'll be the one dressed up." He did not really know her as she was five years younger than him, but he knew her mother who sang in the church choir and he had seen the twins in church. Carole's grandfather was also the organist. Bruce had taken driver training in high school so used his mother's car for dates. The relationship proved to be successful, and they married in 1962.

Bruce and Carole moved to a basement apartment on 5th Avenue in Kitchener. They bought a used car. In 1963 their first child, Cheryl, was born. They then moved to Bridgeport to a house owned by Carole's aunt. They felt they would like to raise their family in a small town so, in 1964, made the decision to move to Elmira. It felt like home and they liked that it was a farm town as Bruce always liked going to his grandparent's farm. He found office space at 2 Park Avenue

East. When he closed his Kitchener office, many of his former patients came to Elmira for adjustments. He maintained a successful practice. Carole took on the task of bookkeeping.

In 1964, they built a house on Bluebird Place. Their daughter, Lisa, was born in 1965. Bruce became very involved in the community: St. James Lutheran Church, The Lions Club, and charter member of the golf course. In 1972 they made



another move in Elmira to a larger home on Bobolink where they remained for 47 years. By this time, their family had grown with the addition of two sons, Andrew and Paul. This was exciting for Bruce as he thought he could only produce daughters. His children all attended schools in Elmira and all went on to higher education. One son has followed in his father's footsteps and became a chiropractor. Bruce is blessed with seven grandchildren (4 girls and 3 boys).

During his time practicing chiropractic in Elmira, Carole was very supportive and took an active interest in the Ladies Auxiliary of Chiropractic, serving as its president during the 100th anniversary of chiropractic in 1995. They helped in raising funds for the Chiropractic College. They commissioned a book to be written of the History of Women in Chiropractic in the 1900's. They also commissioned artwork to raise funds. Carole was a real asset to Bruce's work.

Another anecdote Bruce shared was that he bought Carole an unriden horse. She learned to ride and enjoyed riding for 32 years. Bruce said he got a good deal on the horse but hadn't calculated the cost of keeping a horse. Camping and canoe trips were also an important activity which they enjoyed.

At one point, because of his attraction to spirituality, he was drawn to a church that adhered to a very fundamental interpretation of the Bible. Carole was very opposed to this and their marriage went through a shaky time. He said he became disillusioned with that church and left in 1975. In the mid-80s he began studying A Course in Miracles. This was a psycho-spiritual explanation of Christianity. Its purpose was to provide a way for people to find their own internal Teacher, the Holy Spirit. He studied it until he retired in 2014.

In 2013, Carole began showing signs of dementia. Bruce decided to retire after 54 years of practice and spend time with her. They sold their house and cottage on Lake Huron and they moved to St. Jacobs Meadows in 2015. By 2017, Carole needed extra care and was moved to Luther Village where she could receive that. She died in 2019.

In Bruce's own words: "Around the time of transitioning through the implications of Carole's diagnosis, my spiritual life took a change again. Through my studies with a friend, I realized a Course in Miracles would not save me. It seemed very easy to accept this message and I moved back to the Bible. I remember after I started reading the gospels, Jesus became more real to me and I lost the feelings of guilt which had increased when Carole moved to Luther Village. I felt more free and closer to Jesus. Reading other spiritual accounts of the New Testament gave me great peace while Carole was at Luther Village and later after she passed." It was at this point that Bruce sought out the community at SJMC.

Bruce has had a full and interesting life, and everything has certainly not been covered here. He has been a positive addition to St. Jacobs Meadows and SJMC. ■

*Y*earning for Change

*Longing for a spring of openness
Of meeting and greeting friends
Hearing more joy and less stress
Hope renewed as winter ends*

*Listening for the early bird songs
Not only the cry of jays and crows
But robins and orioles in the trees
While doves coo gently to their young*

*Discovering flowers peep thru the earth
Showing they haven't lost faith
That their warming, terrestrial berth
Allots them strength to show their face*

Poem by Leah Boehm

Illustration by Marilyn Wideman



Children's Challenge! Can You Guess Who We Are?

Clue: 'Initially-speaking', we're a classic 'PB&J' sandwich, and it would take 21 sandwiches to feed We3 and all of our siblings combined!

One Rambling Riddle: "Of my siblings, I am the top of the bottom half."

Three Thinking Thoughts: 1. I find the best way to lift my spirit is to do something nice for someone else. 2. "Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right." (Henry Ford). 3. "Love conquers all." (My mom told me so!)

Five 'Foul' Frowns: 1. People driving in the passing lane when they're NOT passing. 2. Being late. 3. Going to the dentist. (I can cry just because the dentist has walked into the room!) 4. Getting a needle. 5. Racist jokes.

Ten Telling Tales: A mother. Love the beach. Taking photos of sunrises/sunsets. Summer rain. Making music. Being a good friend, and continuing to make new friends. Cooking and feeding people. I have my mother's hands. Caregiver. A good hearty belly laugh!

Gospel Guidance: Ephesians 4:32 "Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another just as God through Christ has forgiven you."

#1



One Rambling Riddle: "I am the eighth of nine times out of ten."

Three Thinking Thoughts: 1. People are people are people; focus on ability; kindness rules! 2. Smile until it reaches your eyes (very important these days — masks and all.) 3. Walk like you're going somewhere! (My mom's advice.)

Five 'Foul' Frowns: 1. Mice! 2. High winds. 3. Masks below the nose! 4. Buildings that are not wheelchair accessible. 5. The 'dis' seen before 'ability'.

Ten Telling Tales: Advocate. Sunday School Teacher/Assembly Leader (many years ago). Guitar/singing. Caregiver. Front porch visits. Flowers. Cat lady. Mom. Folk music (J.T.!). Summer.

Gospel Guidance: Luke 6:31-34 "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

#2



One Rambling Riddle: "I married a twin, whose 'non-twin' brother also married a twin, whose twin has the same first name as me!"

Three Thinking Thoughts: 1. If I am created in the image of God, so are you and so is everyone else. So let's treat each other that way. 2. I try to look for the 'ordinary miracles' in each ordinary day. 3. "There is always something more to learn. There is always another way. There is always a story you have not heard yet."

Five 'Foul' Frowns: 1. Dog poop on playing fields. 2. Finding bugs with lots of legs in my house. 3. Fishy smell. 4. Excessive plastic packaging. 5. Putting on rental bowling shoes.

Ten Telling Tales: Grew up along the Conestogo River. #5 out of 6 farm kids. A 4-H'er. Learned to skate on "The Gully," learned to ski on "The Big Hill," and learned to play baseball in "The Top Orchard". "Put me in coach, I wanna play...centre field". Sang in a group called "Timeless" as a teenager. Lived in Manitoba. 'Ms. B.' to many. Bench boss. Soccer fields were my 'second home' on summer evenings for many years. My kids are both 'L's'.

Gospel Guidance: 1 Corinthians 12:4 "There are many gifts, but the same Spirit."

#3



Answers to Winter 2021 Challenge: Andrea (Feick) Horst, Beth (Fisher) Metzger, Raylene (Bowman) Cooper