



## David's Dialogue

Dear members and friends of St. Matthew's,

**Genesis 32:22.** In the course of the night, Jacob arose, [...] and crossed the ford of the Yabbok River.

The story about Jacob at the Yabbok river can be read and explored from a myriad of angles. One way to read it is as a story about Jacob wrestling with his unconscious. There are many things about this story that lend themselves to a psycho-analytical interpretation. For one thing, it is a story that takes place at nighttime. The story of Jacob crossing the Yabbok and wrestling with a stranger has a dreamlike quality to it. The name of the river is also a clue. In Hebrew "Yabbok" is simply the reversal of two consonants in the name "Yakob," the Hebrew pronunciation of Jacob. The word Yabbok is therefore a reflection of Yakob.

What or who is Jacob (Yakob) wrestling with? The Bible story hints that he might be wrestling with his own self, a self that he is having a hard time understanding or acknowledging. This story is a metaphor for our own lives and the ways we wrestle with who we are. But I wonder if we might not also hear a word about the church in this story. Since 1966, the membership of the United, Presbyterian and Anglican churches has been on the decline. Congregations are not renewing themselves. As a minister, I find myself wrestling with the unseen forces that are the cause of that decline, forces that may have as much to do with the parts of the church that are unconscious, unseen, unacknowledged as they have to do with the world around us. Let's call it the church across the Yabok river. Or rather the St. Wettham river.

In October we celebrated the conclusion of nearly two decades of an effective Health Ministry at St. Matthew's. That health ministry was a blessing to many thousands of people. While we are grateful for the blessing that it was and rightly proud of our congregation's role in it, we cannot help but grieve its ending. As with the diminishing church at large, we at St. Matthew's are wrestling with change, wrestling with the future.

I have no doubt that as we wrestle with the church across the St. Wettham river we, like Jacob, will eventually find ourselves wrestling with God.

When Jacob demanded a blessing from the person he was wrestling with, the person gave him a new name. This new name seems to unlock a new future for Jacob. He realizes that his troubled relationships with his uncle and brother are part of a bigger

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picture, a picture that includes God, maker of heaven and earth. By locking horns with this God, this God who has been faithful to his ancestors and promises to be faithful to the generations to come, he would be able to rise above the other conflicts and fears that had dominated his life to date.

If we are as persistent in our relationship with God as Jacob was, we will also be given a new name. The new name will be a blessing. It will define our new identity and our new mission. I wonder if that new mission will connect with "Truth and Reconciliation" or with "Affirming Ministry". But one thing is certain. The blessing that Jacob received across the Yabbok was a blessing meant not only for him but for us, too, and for the world beyond. So will it be for us. Our new ministry will be a surprise. It will arrive as in a dream. And it will be Good News, once again, for us and for our community.

Amen and thanks be to God.  
Peace like a river...



Rev. David Kim-Cragg ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ *wahkohtowin*;  
Minister at St. Matthew's United Church (he/him)

Fall trees and a beaver dam in the river -  
sure signs of northern Ontario.  
Photo by Marj Andre.

## **CASH CARD ORDERS: Get your orders in on Sunday Nov. 20th!**

After checking with our vendor, Doreen will take your Holiday and end of year gift card orders on NOV. 20th to ensure we have the cards to you before December! This is the last cash card order for this year. So please start considering what you want to order so the order will be ready by Nov. 20th. Doreen should have your fulfilled order back to you on Nov. 27th. Thank you for supporting our church.

## **ANNUAL BAZAAR: Saturday NOV. 26th**

This year the bazaar runs from 10am to 1pm. A brunch is featured during this time as well. The bazaar will be selling Meat pies (Roast beef, ground beef, and turkey) as well as fruit pies (Blueberry and Cherry). Baked goods also include Cookie-walk boxes, loaves, muffins, and more. Some knit goods and crafts will also be offered. And if you miss it, perhaps you'll find something to enjoy at the Mini-bazaar after service on Nov. 27th.

## **CHRISTMAS DINNER: December 10th**

Christmas Dinner. Tickets will be available later in November from Bill Hurdman. This is an eat-in dinner with take-out available as needed. Join your friends and family in this wonderful dinner of turkey, ham, mashed potatoes with gravy, veggies, stuffing, buns, and dessert.

## NEWS FROM THE PEWS

On Saturday, Oct. 8th, Noah, Hannah, and Rev. David went with a student from Emmanuel College to the Crump's apple farm. They had a great time watching as the fruit was harvested as well as doing some picking themselves. Rev. David shared these photos with us of his family's fun outing.



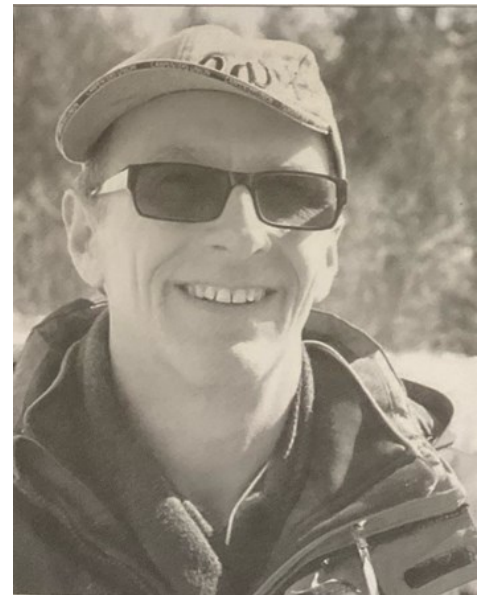
## TIM WRIGHT'S 60th!

*From Daybreak Newsbreak, the quarterly newsletter of L'Arche Daybreak Community. Photo by L'Arche Daybreak staff.*

Tim Wright celebrated his 60th birthday on AUGUST 30th! His home (Green House) was decorated with blue and white balloons for this celebration to show support for his favourite sports' teams—the Toronto Blue Jays and the Toronto Maple Leafs! Happy Birthday Tim!

Tim has been a long term member of our congregation regularly attending until Covid. You'll remember his mom Iris proudly telling us about his swimming and bowling wins as he was an avid participant in those sports for many years.

I'll share that Ken & I enjoyed having Iris and Tim over on many occasions including Chris' 1st birthday. As the years went by, Chris and Aaron were able to help Tim learn to play various video games which they'd take to his home to play with him and then leave them so he could continue enjoying them. Tim loved those games!



*- Submitted by Doreen Coyne*

## Miss a recent services? Watch them on YouTube.

Services by the Rev. Dr. David Kim-Cragg.

- [Oct. 9. Video recording.](#) Sermon - What Waters Known You Best?
- [Oct. 16. Video recording.](#) Sermon - Jacob at the Yabbok
- [Oct. 23. Video recording:](#) Sermon - Health Ministry
- [Oct. 30. Video recording:](#) Anniversary Sunday with Rev. Wayne Reed





## Upcoming Seasonal Services & Activities

- The **Fill a Purse for a Sister** Campaign brings comfort, hope and dignity to women and youth in crisis with the gift of purses filled with personal necessities such as Bath soap, Body wash, Deodorant, Feminine hygiene products, Flashlight, Gift cards, Gloves, Hairbrush, Hand sanitizer, Hat, Lip balm, Notepad, Pen, Scarf, Shampoo and conditioner, Socks, Tissues, Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Whistle. New items only. There is a box in the Narthex for your donations. Last donations will be Nov. 27th.
- Nov. 20: Cash Card Orders will be received. Cards to be delivered Nov. 27.
- Nov. 26 from 10 to 1: Annual Bazaar! Highlights: a brunch, sales of Meat pies (Roast beef, ground beef, and turkey), fruit pies (Blueberry and Cherry), baked goods (Cookie-walk boxes, loaves, muffins, and more), Knit goods, and crafts.
- Nov. 27: Advent 1—Communion
- Dec. 02: The Mitten Tree Goes up. Please bring in your donations of hats, scarves, mittens, winter socks, etc. for children and adults.
- Dec. 04: Advent 2—White Gift Sunday
- Dec. 10: Christmas Dinner. Get your tickets from Bill Hurdman.
- Dec. 11: Advent 3
- Dec. 17 – Chorus York Concert with our handbell choir participating (in our Sanctuary)
- Dec. 18: Advent 4 - Carol Service
- Dec. 24: 7 pm. Family Christmas Eve Service with Communion.
- Dec. 25: Christmas Day Service.
- Jan. 01: New Years Day Service

## Seasonal Photos from my BC friend, Megan Beddows.



I've added photos taken by Megan in prior issues. She and her husband take daily 1 to 3 hour walks in the areas around their home in White Rock, British Columbia. The trees seem to speak of "Fall Perfection". The central photo captures the irony of fall's colours in the rusting over the base yellow of the truck. I'll mention that I've never met Megan but she & Ken were friends from age 4 onwards. - Doreen