

WHITE OAKS UNITED CHURCH

NEWS AND NOTES

August 22, 2018

The 40th Anniversary of White Oaks United Church

Sunday October 21

Guest Preacher: The Rev. Dr. Anne Beattie-Stokes.

Special guests in attendance: past ministers of White Oaks United
the Rev. Glen Wright and the Rev. Dr. Nancy Hardy.

A Potluck Lunch follows.

Invite friends of White Oaks United and let's celebrate together.



THIS FALL WATCH FOR ALL THE SPECIAL HAPPENINGS BOTH IN THE LEAD-UP TO ANNIVERSARY SUNDAY AND ON THE DAY

- In song and story, a sharing of memory and meaning. "Those Were the Days"
 - A special edition 40 day calendar of reflection and action
 - A sharing of food and friendship
 - An awesome photo-booth for taking home some of the fun
 - An opportunity to add your name to a Celebratory Wall Hanging
- A Sunday School peek into "White Oaks United Church 40 Years from Now"
 - Grace-filled reflections with the Rev. Dr. Anne Beattie-Stokes

ANNIVERSARY MEMORIES

As we move closer to celebrating the 40th Anniversary of White Oaks United Church, notable events are rising to the surface in people's memories.

One such event occurred in 1999.

While in that year people elsewhere were celebrating such events as:

- democracy being restored to Indonesia
- Piccard and Jones non-stop circumnavigation of the world in a hot air balloon
- the official introduction to the Internet of My Space
- and the creation of Canada's newest territory, Nunavut,

White Oaks United was on Sunday May 2 during the morning worship service, celebrating a wedding. Here is the story of that wedding and how it came to be.

The role White Oaks played in bringing Yvonne and Jim Wilkie together as written by Jim Wilkie and reviewed by Yvonne Wilkie

White Oaks became part of my life when they were soliciting funds to build the Church.

At that time my wife Vinda and I were members of Wellington Street United but after our children had grown up, Vinda decided to follow her father's footsteps and become a minister. During that period we transferred our membership to White Oaks as the Rev. Glen Wright was supervising one of Vinda's Emmanuel College courses. Vinda and I became very active in the White Oaks congregation.

But this isn't telling you the story about Yvonne and Jim.

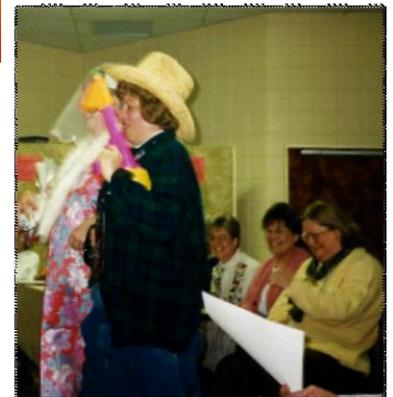
Well, Vinda graduated, was ordained, and accepted a pastoral charge at Ripley, Ontario. Six years after her appointment while preaching one Sunday morning she fell to the floor and an aneurysm ended her life. Shortly thereafter I returned to London and went back to White Oaks United. "I was home again". At that time White Oaks had a less formal early morning service which I found easier to attend as I was still tearful and missing Vinda. On one of my tearful days Yvonne, who had recently lost her spouse, the Rev. James Vanslyke after a battle with cancer, took pity on me, knowing how I must be feeling, and tried to comfort me. This led to a wonderful relationship which led to marriage and gave me a wonderful life long partner.

The Rev. Nancy Hardy, the minister at that time, noticed that we were becoming very friendly and informed Yvonne that it was too soon after our spouses' deaths for us to have a serious relationship. However, we didn't listen and when we asked Nancy if we could be married during a Sunday morning service she became very excited and the planning began.



We had the whole-hearted support of the congregation both in our grieving and in our marriage plans. At the White Oaks grief counselling sessions, we even suggested that we had formed a relationship for minister's spouses and thus we had no competition for our courtship. Although I had never attended many showers, White Oaks had a shower for Yvonne which was probably was the largest White Oaks ever had with seniors and youth participating.

They even had a mock wedding and note the toilet paper wedding cake.



When the big day came it was a beautiful and delightful service (no more clowning). Family, friends, and congregation attended. Nancy had even invited the members of Presbytery, (who had come to know me as an active member of Middlesex Presbytery). The guests filled the church. Our student minister took over during the announcements and collection while the Rev. Nancy Hardy continued to have us sign the registers.

Coffee and Wedding cake was served after the Church Service ended while the UCW prepared the meal for our guests. White Oak congregation made our wedding a great success.

Jim

RALLY SUNDAY

Reflections



Sunday September 9

Sunday School registration
and Blessing of the Back
Packs.

Don't forget your special
offering of
"lunch bag school snacks"
for the White Oaks Food Pantry

Look for the Grocery Cart
to place your gift of snacks.

A free-will offering BBQ lunch
in support of the Sunday
School follows worship.

I am a mother, a wife, an educator. I am also a Sunday School teacher. I began this work at White Oaks about 10 years ago when my daughter was three. I grew up going to Sunday School and I have fond memories of that time. I wanted the same for my daughter Adelle, for her to have yet another community of people surrounding her, helping her to navigate through her childhood and adolescence. As a registered Early Childhood Educator, it was an easy leap for me to help with the Sunday School. The more time I spend in this role, however, I recognize that while my formal education has been helpful, what is most important is finding joy in being with children and having the ability and desire to connect with other people, being part of a team.

The Sunday School team at White Oaks is strong and passionate. We strive to create a culture where children can be joyful, engaged, and supportive of one another. Each year, we thoughtfully consider what our approach for the upcoming year will be: will we purchase a curriculum or develop the lessons ourselves? What will the big idea be that weaves through all of the sessions? In the past we have chosen important topics such as Love and Gratitude; this year we will focus on Social Justice. We hope the conversations we have with the children will sit with them, linger around in their minds as they move through their week, cause them to reflect and encourage them to be thoughtful and kind.

We are always hopeful there will be others who step forward to join us on this spiritual journey, who are eager to see the Bible through the eyes of children. People who are willing to be alongside Sunday School mentors who will help them find their place in this important work. I want to see myself reflected in my church community. Where do you see yourself in White Oaks United Church?

Kathy Harris, Sunday School Leader

Life is amazing.
And it's awful.
And then it's amazing again.
And in between the amazing and the awful,
it's ordinary and mundane and routine.
Breathe in the amazing, hold on through the awful,
and relax and exhale during the ordinary.
That's just the living, heartbreaking, soul healing, amazing, awful,
ordinary life.
And it's breathtakingly beautiful.

L. R. Knost

A NEW BOOK

A New Book...
**It's Good To Be Here
Stories We Tell About
Cancer** by David Giuliano

It's Good to be Here: Stories We Tell About Cancer is a courageous and deeply personal book about the author's 25 year journey with cancer. It is part memoir, part spiritual meditation in which Giuliano challenges the ubiquitous and one dimensional "battle with cancer" narrative, with alternative narratives about temples, treasure, light, pilgrimage, wolves and love. It is a fiercely honest, at times funny, book about the metaphysics of medicine and the power of story to heal.

Reviewed by and available at the Middlesex Presbytery Resource Center.
482 Dundas St. London
519-434-6427

AN INTER-CHURCH GROUP STUDY

An Inter-church Group Study: **Redesigning Your Life, A Practical Spirituality for the Second Half of Life.**

This fall, join us for a wonderful opportunity to engage in conversation and reflection on living the second half of our lives with spiritual integrity, richness and what Jesus described as "the abundant life."

Join us 8 Tuesday evenings beginning September 25 at White Oaks United Church from 7:00-8:30pm. The final session includes a light meal and an opportunity to ask questions and share your reflections with the Rev. Dr. Sheila MacGregor, author of the resource text, Redesigning Your Life. Cost \$25.00.

Registration is ongoing.

A FOLLOW-UP OPPORTUNITY

A follow-up opportunity: **Faith and Humour with Susan Sparks**

In the fall of 2017, a group of us at White Oaks met to reflect on humour in the context of our faith utilizing a video series with Susan Sparks. Ms. Sparks will be one of the key note speakers at the Lester Randall Preaching Fellowship, Nov. 11 – 13, in Toronto. Susan had been a NYC trial lawyer by day and a stand-up comic by night in Manhattan clubs before a spiritual awakening led her to Union Seminary. Now ordained and serving in the historic Madison Avenue Baptist Church, Susan has found a way to blend humour, wisdom and grace in the pulpit for the sake of healing and peace.

For more information see www.lesterrandall.com

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER ENGAGEMENT

An opportunity for further engagement: **Indigenous Calls to the Church from the 43rd General Council**

Continuing the education and action on Reconciliation, join with the Rev. Dr. Anne Beattie-Stokes and others to share in this essential work of our church and country. The first gathering is Thursday September 13, 6:00pm. In the Church Hall. You are welcome to bring a bag dinner and join in the conversation.

Christ Church Prayer Spirit Holy
Maturity Adult Creed
Spirituality Formation Journey Morality
Faith Relationship

AUTUMN SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER

*Saturday Sept. 1, Craft Group
9:30am-12pm*

*Saturday Sept. 1, Pizza & Movie Night
5:30pm*

*Thursday Sept. 6,
Folk Choir & Senior Choir Practice
7pm, 8pm respectively*

Sunday Sept. 9, Rally Sunday with Sunday School Registration

Young people are invited to bring their school backpack/lunch bag for Back to School prayers. Lunch bag non-perishable snacks will be collected for the food pantry. A BBQ lunch (free-will offering) in support of the Sunday School will be held following worship.

*Tuesday Sept. 11, Council Meeting
7:30pm*

Sunday Sept. 16

A brief Anniversary Remembrance in Song.

*Tuesday Sept. 18, Observer Group
11am-12:30pm*

Issues of Faith, life and world events are discussed. Bring a toonie for lunch.

Sunday Sept. 23

Glenn Waterman, Taking Faith on the Road.

*Monday Sept. 24, UCW Meeting
10am*

*Tuesday Sept. 25, 50 Plus Drop In 1:30-
3:30 pm*

Bring a board game to share or just come for the conversation and a cookie.

Sunday Sept. 30

Anniversary Remembrance in Poetry

OCTOBER

**Sunday Oct. 7, World
Communion and Thanksgiving
Celebration**
Intergenerational Worship

*Saturday Oct. 13,
Fall Dinner & Dance*

Sunday Oct. 14

Anniversary Remembrance,
Linda Watier, One Family's
Story

Sunday Oct. 21, WOUC 40th Anniversary

Guest Speaker, the Rev. Dr.
Anne Beattie-Stokes

Sunday Oct. 28, All Saints Sunday

NOVEMBER

Sunday Nov. 4

**Sunday Nov. 11, Remembrance
Sunday**
Intergenerational Worship

Sunday Nov. 18

Sunday School pageant practice
begins.

Sunday Nov. 25

