

PENTECOST NEWSLETTER

Spring 2023



The day of Pentecost – communication at its best...



We invite you to read [Acts 2:1-15](#)

On the day of Pentecost, the most amazing thing happened – persons of diverse ethnicities, languages, and backgrounds could communicate. They could hear each other and listen without misunderstanding or misinterpretation.

It is reality and vision– a reality for those who witnessed the first day of Pentecost and a vision for us today as we continue to work for inclusion in our community and world.

Pentecost is the prototypical – quintessential ideal – that sets the standard for human relating it is a standard that transcends cultural biases, the cultural, personal, and ethnic trappings that define who we are as unique individuals, – me uniquely me and you uniquely you.

Pentecost respects difference and embraces each person as person. It is about all the things we talk about and strive for every day – openness and respect for diversity in all its manifestations.

As a church, the challenge of Pentecost is to enable technology to improve our communication; to enter with willingness and openness to conversations and spaces, knowing that **listening** is just as vital as speaking. The power of Pentecost is not that everyone could speak to each other, yet they could understand and hear each other.

As we strive for an inclusive community, may we remember to welcome and embrace each other, to listen to diverse voices, to hear their story, and to value the contributions they bring to our community.

For all the theatrics of the story, what the Spirit inspired that Pentecost day was communication and connection. It was the language of home, in a foreign land.

The questions for us as a people of God this Pentecost are....

How does our community of faith connect with the world around it?

How do we offer a spiritual home, not just in language, but in action, for the shared stories and in living those stories into the world?

Pentecost Blessings Abound!

The Ministerial Team

Rev. Pamela, Rev. Rebecca, Rev. Ettie

COINS FOR CUPS/BUCKS FOR BOXERS

Gower's Outreach Committee is always looking for new initiatives to fulfil unmet needs within underprivileged and marginalized populations in our community. A rarely talked about, but the vitally important commodity is the provision of new undergarments to those in need. The mission of this initiative is to provide new underwear to individuals to improve the quality of their lives. We also aim to educate communities about this true, unmet need. Underwear is the most under-donated and most needed item of clothing. No one should be deprived of the simple, daily necessity of clean, well-fitting underwear that so many of us take for granted.

Hygiene and physical comfort are only a part of this basic human need. New, clean underwear also provides dignity and self-esteem. For many, underwear is a necessity, not a luxury. Proper fitting, supportive undergarments can assist with multiple health issues.

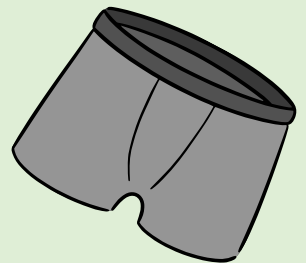
This year our target benefactors are Stella's Circle and the John Howard Society. We are asking for your "support" via cash donations so that these organizations can custom-buy to meet the needs of the people they serve.

You can make monetary donations via our website (www.gowerunited.com) below, E-transfer to gsuc@nl.rogers.com, drop donations at the office, or offering plates during worship. Donations are being accepted until July 1, 2023.



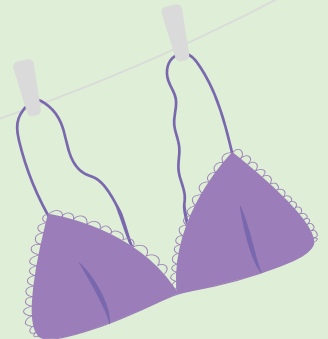
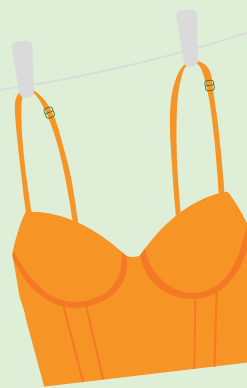
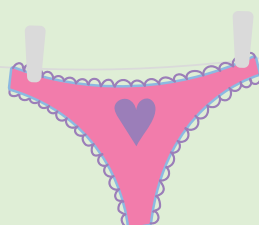
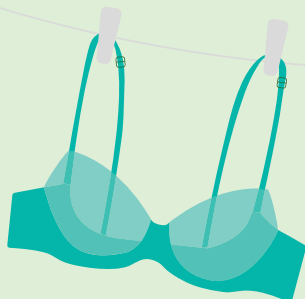
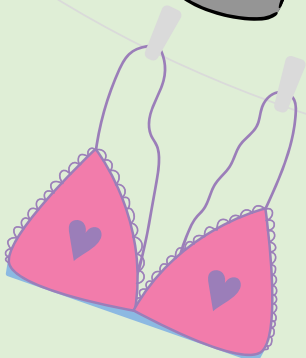
Stella's Circle

Hope Lives Here



John Howard

THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR



CELEBRATING DOUG!

We thank Dr. Douglas Dunsmore for over 40 years of work with Gower. To mark his retirement, we reached out to community members to share messages with Doug, which we share here as a trip down memory lane for us all.

For the past 40 years, Doug has continued and enhanced the Gower tradition of excellence in the ministry of music. As he steps aside from the position of Music Director, we wish him well and express our deepest thanks for his service.

- Tony Chadwick, Gower Senior Choir

Thank you, Doug, for so many fond Gower Street memories!

- Grace Rose, Former Wendy and Carl Stevenson Choral Bursey Student



Dr. Dunsmore is a dedicated musician who demanded excellence from each of his choir members.

His time and commitment to the musical program at Gower are to be commended. I would be remiss if I didn't mention the fact he and his wife, Grace provided excellent musical leadership for hundreds of people during the pandemic.

I have learned so much from him. He will surely be missed.

I wish only the best for him and Grace in their retirement.

- Rosanne Lake, Gower Senior Choir





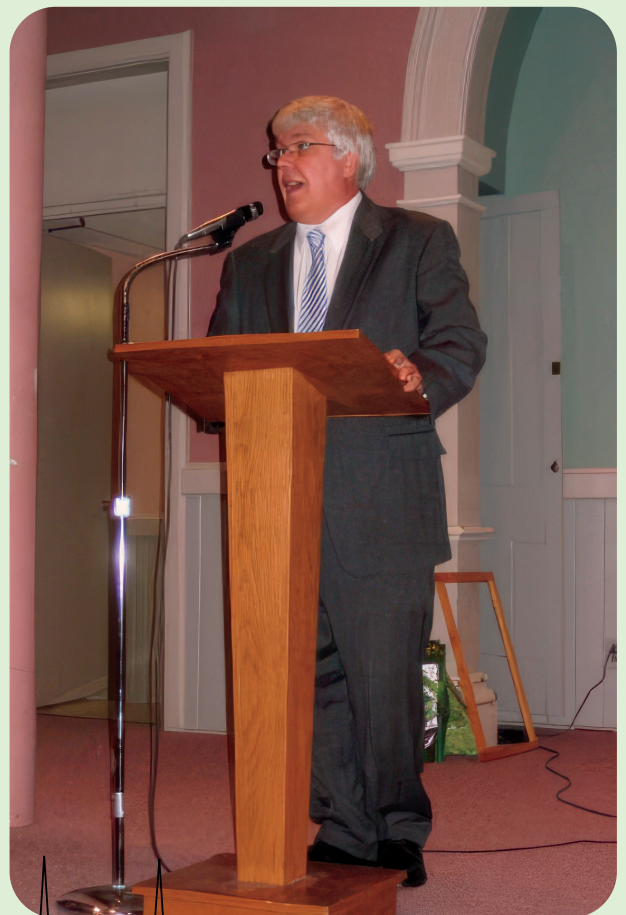
CELEBRATING DOUG!

I first met Douglas Dunsmore more than 40 years ago when he became music director of the choirs at Gower Street United Church. Over the years, he has greatly influenced my musical development as a church choir member, as a voice student at the MUN School of Music and as a founding member of the PCNSO, in which I sang under his direction for more than 30 years.

With a keen musical ear, a persistence for musical accuracy and a contagious passion for sharing the beauty of timeless choral music, Douglas has impressed, inspired and impacted the choral music scene provincially, nationally and internationally. He truly deserves his appointment to the Order of Canada for his leadership as a choral conductor and music educator.

Douglas, may you continue to contract cases of “the musical shivers” and continue to infect others with this delightful disease.

- Roberta Gill, Gower Senior Choir





CELEBRATING DOUG!



Dr. D,

You have played such a large role throughout my life, from singing in the Junior Choir to the Youth Chorale & playing in the Bell Choir.

The experiences and traditions of Christmas & Easter were part of my childhood and helped shape me as an adult. To have my own kids sing in the Junior Choir and play handbells is a direct result from yours and Mrs. Dunsmore's dedication to the music at Gower over the years.

Favorite Memories are definitely singing for brunch at the Hotel during Christmas, singing "O Come" at the beginning of the Christmas Eve Services, singing in the loft for the midnight Christmas Eve Services with my parents, playing handbells on CBC with Karl Wells and travelling to Ontario with the bells and choirs. Most memorable songs are "Carol of the Bells" - Bell Choir & Youth Chorale, "Angels" - Bell Choir, "Here I Am Lord," "Leaning," "Clouds," & "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" - Youth Chorale.

Thank you for all that your family has done for the Music at Gower and my family.

- Jennifer Higdon, former Junior Choir, Youth Chorale & Bell Choir Member



CELEBRATING DOUG!

I am so grateful for the gift of you to the Williams family. Amy, Andrew, Kathryn, and John were so blessed to have you teach them music and performance throughout their childhood and beyond. Now our grandchildren, Charlotte, Alex, and Megan, are equally blessed to have you teach them the joy of music and performance. In an age with so many choices and distractions, they love to ring bells and sing in church.

What started with music and fellowship at Gower St. Church turned into a lifelong friendship with the whole Dunsmore family that Ed and I cherished. How can I not mention our decades-long New Year's Eve tradition?! Chinese food, boys vs girls Trivial Pursuit game (go Girls!) and trekking through all kinds of weather to shoot off fireworks by the river at midnight. Epic!! I'm sure Ed would have some words of wit and wisdom to add, but just know that we cherished our time together, and the whole family is so grateful for you.

Congratulations on your retirement Doug. Thank you for everything. We love you.

- Betty Ann and all the Williams family, parent of former Junior Choir, Youth Chorale & Bell Choir Members



"One more step along the road I go"

Doug,

Congratulations and all best wishes as you take (and Grace) the next step of your journey! Thank you for enriching our lives with your music and musical direction for so many years. I wish you the gift of time - time to smell the roses, time to take a walk in the rain, time to read that book you haven't been able to, time to travel with Grace, to enjoy music as a listener instead of a leader, time to relax, and so much more. And, special thanks from me for "All in the April Evening" and for reviving the Handbell Choir. David joins me in sending congratulations and best wishes.



- Gwen Alcock, Member of Worship & Sacraments and Bell Choir.

CELEBRATING GRACE!

We cannot acknowledge the contributions of Doug without also extending our gratitude to Grace for all she offered Gower during Doug's time of employment with Gower.

Grace, we offer you our appreciation, love and thanks for sharing your gifts of music, time and talent with us over these past 40-plus years.



GOWER STREET UC FIRST DAWN EASTEN EDGE DELEGATE REPORT

The following is my report of the FDEE Annual Meeting for 2023. The meeting this year was a virtual format using Zoom, apparently similar to how the previous two years' meetings were held due to COVID-19. The plan is to return to normal face-to-face style meetings next year in 2024.

The large format of the Zoom meeting did seem to have a bit of a silencing effect on the meeting. However, this was offset by several smaller break-out groups throughout the weekend. The discussions in the small groups I participated in were very open, frank, and a welcome counter-balance.

The Zoom format was a boon to me in my inaugural role as one of Gower Street's Elected Representatives this year - as work forced me to travel to Ottawa in the middle of May. Despite being stuck in Ontario, I was able to represent Gower fully through my laptop throughout the main meeting sessions on Friday and Saturday, though the Saturday session did start very early for me in the EDT!

The first session on Friday evening (May 12) was mostly an introduction session, where the virtual voting methods were explained (and practiced). We were introduced to the theme of this year's meeting which was "Created in God's Image". A summary of reports was presented, though most of the major content had already been covered by a series of three webinars held during the weeks leading up to the annual meeting. The idea was for the delegates to be familiar with the content of these reports already so we could expedite the business/decision making.

We were greeted by our Moderator, The Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, in a recorded video message, and then were introduced to this year's featured speaker, Rev. Japhet Ndhlovu originally from Zambia, who serves as the diversity focal at the General Council. The evening concluded with the introduction of new ministers to the Region, and there was also a celebratory video of the milestones/anniversaries of many of the clergy within FDEE. I was pleased to see our own the Very Rev. Marion Pardy and the Rev. Veronica Brett-William featured prominently!

At the meeting sessions on Saturday (May 13th) we got down to the more serious business before the Regional Council. The major topics and issues discussed were:

- 1.Rev. Pardy gave a two-part presentation on the Guaranteed Livable Income, and how the UCC, along with several other allied faiths, continue to press our elected officials to do something to implement this in Canada.

- 2.The nominee for President-Elect for the FDEE (Rev. Jocelyn Cook) was elected. This means the current President, Rev. Nancy Mojica-Fisher transitions to past-President.

- 3.The new "call statement" for the FDEE was presented for us (the delegates) to approve. It seems to have occupied a great deal of work since at least 2019. The rewording of the call statement made it inclusive. It was approved (with some minor wordsmithing) with a very large majority vote.

4. The more serious topic of business was a Category 3 Remit which all UCC congregations and Regions must consider and vote on between now and March 24, 2024. [This remit \(opens in a new tab\)](#) asks if the church will agree to remove structural barriers so that the Indigenous Church can determine its place and structure within the United Church. This Category 3 remit is triggered as it impacts the structure of the UCC, and will alter the Basis of Union described in The Manual. Obviously, some discussions will have to happen within our Gower faith community before any voting takes place. We hope to coordinate with several other St. John's churches to hold some joint educational workshops, likely in Fall 2023, so this Remit can be considered fairly and wisely. The FDEE Region voted in favour of this Remit, though the vote was not unanimous and there were several abstentions.

5. The finances (and especially the Budget) for 2024 was presented and voted on. The financial situation at the Regional Council was surprisingly very healthy. For me, this was a disconnect considering the financial challenges that many faith communities in NL are facing.

6. After the conclusion of business there was an entertaining Youth Worship segment which featured youth from around our region (including some of our own young folks at Gower). I particularly liked the Ukulele Ministry segment. Very fun, light-hearted and even moving!

I was asked to give my "impressions" of the Regional Council (the meeting, I assume). As the "new kid on the block" I was at first very cautious in such a large Zoom meeting. My previous career experiences with similar huge virtual meetings have taught me that politically, it is much safer to "stay quiet" than to speak up in such environments. However, there were several opportunities where we split off into small break-out rooms (4-5 people in each). The discussions in these sessions were much more meaningful, and I sensed everyone wanted more opportunities like these to share experiences and discuss some of the REAL issues facing the UCC. Unfortunately, these sessions were usually time-limited and cut short, usually just when things were getting interesting!

I found some of the official agenda items to be of less importance.

The agenda was dominated by issues of diversity and divisiveness (e.g. the Remit) rather than some of the existential pressures to our denomination.

It is expected these things will be present when the Regional Meetings return to face-to-face format in 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Stevenson



UKRAIAN EGG PAINTING WORKSHOP

On April 7, a group of 40 people gathered as we welcomed Valerie Seredynska, who led the group in traditional Pysanky Egg painting.



SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, June 11: Summer Kick-Off Social with Gower Community Band
Join us at 10:45 a.m. for worship with the Gower Community Band, and following worship, we will have hot dog lunch and games as we welcome summer.

Sunday, September 10: Welcome Back Sunday – Kick off to fall, start of Gower Learners.

Sunday, October 1: Worldwide Communion Sunday

Saturday, October 14: Movie Time – The Lorax

Sunday, October 15: The Lorax-based worship

Sunday, November 26: Advent Preparation Event – Advent Wreath Making

Sundays in December: Advent Journey

Mark
YOUR
Calendar

Stay Tuned to What's Up and our website for more upcoming events like the Gower Block Party, Family gatherings, UCW and Gower Service and Social Club events.

ST. JOHN'S MEMORIAL SERVICES

The dates for the St. John's Memorial Services are as follows:

Mount Pleasant Cemetery, Hamilton Avenue Extension
Monday, July 3, 2023, at 7 P.M.

General Protestant Cemetery, Topsail Road
Monday, July 17, 2023, at 7 P.M.

Memorial Gardens Cemetery, 25 Beaumont Hamel Way
Monday, July 31, 2023, at 7 P.M.

Please note: In the event of inclement weather, the services will move ahead to 7 P.M. the next evening.