

Editor: Tom Forbes

“News from the Pews” Newsletter

April 2024

Edition No. 91

Barton Stone-Mount Hope United Church

**21 Stone Church Road West
Hamilton, ON. L9B 1A1**

Church Mission Statement:

The Mission of Barton Stone-Mount Hope United Church is to be the people of God, called to respond with generosity of spirit, resources, and love; for the purpose of worshiping, nurturing, educating, equipping and caring within and beyond our church community.

Church Staff:

Minister: Rev. James Grunden
Music Director: Donna Dunn-Albert
Office Administrator: Alice Perniac

Office Hours:

Alice: Tues. to Thurs: 8:30 to 12:30
Rev. James: Wed. and Fri. 1 to 4, Tues. 10 to 2

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Note: Please use the Editor's email address listed in the Church Directory for any insertions into the newsletter.

NOTE: Submissions for the NEXT News from the Pews by the Friday following the Board Meeting that is on the Third Tuesday of each month.

IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE

McKinnell, Donna Kathleen

October 26, 1931 - March 20, 2024



Beloved wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt and friend to many. Donna is survived by her loving husband, Murray McKinnell of almost 67 years. Donna was born in St. Thomas but grew up in Fort Erie Ontario. She moved to Hamilton to attend Nursing School at the Hamilton General Hospital where she graduated in

1954. She met Murray on a blind date, New Year's Eve 1953 and they have been together ever since. Friends and family are invited to attend a celebration of life on Saturday, May 4, 2024 at CRESMOUNT FUNERAL HOME, 322 Fennel Ave., Hamilton Ontario from 1-4 PM. In lieu of flowers, donations in Donna's memory may be made to a charity of your choice if desired.

BS-MH'S Free Lunch Program:

(Submitted by Rosslyn Allan)

Mark and I have been part of BSMH's lunch program from the start.

We usually hand out lunches at the Terryberry Library and want to share with you some of our families.

The Terryberry provides us with space and a table.

Linda is staff at the library and not only helps hand out lunches but collects food donations too. She also hands out library information and employment information, resumes and places to go for food registration.

We had one man that came for a lunch weekly. He had unfortunately lost his job.

He stopped coming and we were wondering what had happened to him.

He came back several weeks later to thank us.

He had found a job (thanks to Linda and the library information) and wanted to thank us for helping him through a rough time in his life. He said the lunches had meant a lot to him.

We have a lady that makes you wonder why she needs a lunch.

After talking with her you find out why. She has cardio issues and needs a knee replacement. She has a husband at home with Alzheimer's. She has to pay \$120.00 for someone to stay with him if she goes out. The agency charges \$30.00/hr but will only send staff in minimum 4-hour blocks. That fee is going up too. She worries about him when she has her surgery.

We have a man that has not spoken to us or made eye contact. Finally, after almost 2 years he is looking at us and speaking. The trust is finally there.

Most of our people are regulars that we have become to know and recognize.

Scott takes four lunches for his neighbours. Two of them are married. They celebrated their 72-wedding anniversary this week.

Another regular is a dad with two young daughters. He is always so appreciative and thankful.

A young mom with a son who is autistic. He loves the tuna salad but not ritz crackers.

Shadow and Baron are two of our four legged regulars that come for food and a treat.

A gramma takes seven lunches each week for her grandchildren. She walks from Stone Church and Upper Paradise area. She removes the drink boxes we supply as it makes the lunches lighter for her to carry.

We could almost tell you something about many of our regulars. The man whose dad is sick up in Owen Sound. The lady and her son who come for four lunches. The lady that stops by for a lunch to hand out to others in need.

The program has increased in size from around eighteen sandwiches to seventy-two and we are turning people away.

We have formed a bond with many of the families and they have come to rely on the program for at least one good meal a week.

Hopefully with the community volunteers that make the lunches, the library, and the generosity of this congregation we can continue to provide this much appreciated program.



Filling Lunch Bags (Submitted by Rev. James)



Thank You Very Much- Our Lenten Food Drive was a great success thanks to all of your donations. Our church shopping cart was overflowing each week and we were able to fill

the Claus' trunk every Sunday for 5 weeks. We had over \$400 in cash donations and over 400 pounds of items taken to Neighbour to Neighbour. Thank you for your continued generosity. Mary McCracken

Something to Think About:

(Submitted by Joan Massey)

If a stranger walked into Barton Stone-Mount Hope, what would they see?

Members and Adherents:

At the Annual Meeting there was some discussion about membership.

A congregation consists of members, full members and adherents.

The simple explanation is that **members** are children of full members, or who have been baptized but are not yet full members.

Full members are those who have been baptized and have made a confession of faith, or are confirmed by the

governing body of the congregation (the Administrative Board at Barton Stone-Mount Hope) or by the congregation if they choose to take on that responsibility. To be confirmed, one must have reasonable knowledge of the Christian faith and of the United Church of Canada and be of sufficient age to understand the commitment they are making.

An adherent is someone who is not a member or full member, but contributes regularly to the life and work of the congregation.

Full members have **voting rights** at congregational meetings, and voting rights may be extended to adherents with approval of full members.

Source: *The United Church of Canada Manual 2024*, Sections B.3.3 and B.3.4

Note: The means by which one contributes to the life and work of the congregation are not specified, whether they might be financial, by attendance or by participation in other ways.

What is Stewardship?

The responsibility of the Stewardship Committee is to educate the congregation on the local and wider United Church mission (Mission and Service), and to make the congregation aware of the funds needed to carry out this mission, and how they will be used. The committee is responsible for encouraging the congregation's commitment to and participation in this mission.

A wider, and older understanding of stewardship is through the six T's:

| | |
|----------|---------|
| Time | Talent |
| Treasure | Tissue |
| Trash | Terrain |

Do we use our time and our talents/skills and all the financial and material goods that we have been given for the greater good of the church and God's mission? Tissue refers to our bodies. Think, for example, of organ donation. The last two are connected to our stewardship responsibility for Creation: litter, pollution, habitat, climate change.

Stewardship is everything we do after we say, 'I believe'.

Don't Forget: Rummage sale, Sat. Apr. 13, 9:00 to 12:00, with set up Fri. Apr. 12 at noon. Drop off items Apr. 9 to Apr. 11, 8:30 am to 12:30 pm or Apr. 12 noon to 3:30 pm. Contact Alice at 905-385-0800 if you can help.

The Children of Ukraine Need You. Mission and Service can help.

The war in Ukraine has displaced and disrupted the lives of so many. An English teacher is trying to bring some normalcy and psychological support for traumatized children by conducting classes with the primary aim of healing through human connection and opportunities to share experiences.

The United Church Mission and Service works with ACT Alliance, an organization that works around the world, identifying local needs and how best to meet them.

As an **Easter Thankoffering** gift, please consider a contribution to Mission and Service for educational programs like this and others across Canada and around the world.

You can donate through your offering envelope or another envelope marked 'Mission and Service' and your name

DATES IN APRIL:

National No Housework Day, April 7th

This falls on a Saturday this year and you can take a well deserved break.

National Farm Animals Day, April 10th

This year we are celebrating the goat, a great choice for farmers, hobby farmers . Goats can be raised for their milk, meat and even as pets or for weed control.

Earth Day, April 22nd

United Church program called Faithful Footprints has a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in its buildings 80% by 2030. A few suggestions: reducing the number of fridges that are always on, using on-demand water heaters, and installing motion sensor outdoor lights.

International Stop Food Waste Day, April 26th

Did you know that 33% of all food produced globally is lost or wasted every year.

Around Hamilton Streets: (The Editor)

Mohawk Road is a mountain road running through the Upper City districts, and has two distinct segments. The western segment begins as a continuation of Rousseaux Street in Ancaster just west of the interchange with Highway 403. The street is divided in East and West portions by Upper James Street and ends at Mountain Brow Boulevard at the site of the Mohawk Sports Park.

Fennell Avenue, is a mountain road that starts off just east of Garth Street on the West mountain. It is a two way street throughout that extends eastward. The street is divided in East and West portions, divided by Upper James Street and ends at Mountain Brow Boulevard which is a road that wraps around the edge of the Niagara Escarpment. Fennell Avenue, is most likely named after Joseph Fennell, (1835–1919), Anglican priest



Millionaire Drive Inn at Upper James and Mohawk Road West in 1974



Mountain Plaza Upper James and Fennell Ave. East, 1970

History of Barton Stone United Church:

(From the Editor)

Starting in this edition, we are going to re-visit the history of the Barton Stone congregation from 1789 to 2017.

A book was published in 2019 and is out of print.

1789 to 1832

The Barton Stone congregation is over two hundred years old. Most date us back to 1811. But there is an argument to be made that we go back a little farther than that. I am of that latter persuasion. At points over those two centuries, things have been golden. But at many other times, it has been a near run thing. Why have we prospered at times, and just barely survived at others? I pose this question, both for myself, and for you who read this. And over the next few months I invite you to journey

with me back in time as I...we seek to find an answer. We'll start in 1788 and make our way back to today. I propose to “chunk” our history: There will be small articles over the next few months. These instalments will consider the life and times of our congregation. But the above question will be ever present.

The First Years

At the start, there was no City of Hamilton, only a vast forest. The swampy lowland that stretched back from the Lake Ontario shoreline transitioned to big trees on the higher land behind. These maples, beeches, pines and oaks then climbed up the escarpment and marched out in all directions on the top as far as the eye could see. Here were all kinds of critters – bears, wolves, deer, beaver, racoons, skunks, and of course rattle snakes. This was the situation that greeted the first “white” settlers here, to the area called the “Head-of-the-Lake”. Among these early, non-indigenous arrivals were the families of William and Jacob Rymal, Aaron, Samuel and Philip Kribbs, Michael Hess, and Henry Smith. They were not United Empire Loyalists. William Rymal had come up in 1788 with some neighbours to scout conditions for settlement. Liking what they saw, the group returned to Pennsylvania, packed up all they owned in wagons pulled by horses and oxen, and returned in the spring of 1789.

The 1780's saw a time of climate variation: winter temperatures plummeted, blizzards were frequent. Snow lay deep everywhere, and spring came late. Summers were either very hot and dry, or cool and wet. The winter in 1788 was horribly cold, and the summer of 1789 was very hot and dry. Even in far off France, which usually experienced milder temperatures, most of the rivers froze. As a result grain could not be ground into flour (since water power was used in the milling process), making bread in major cities expensive. In 1789, this shortage of bread in Paris would be a key ingredient in the coming of the French Revolution. For settlers here at the Head-of-the-Lake, 1788 was even colder. Following on this, 1789 would be a year of misery, the “Starving Year”. Up on top of “the hill”, our newcomers huddled inside their log cabins hoping that their doors would keep the wild animals at bay, and put up with snakes that slithered in to share their beds. They ate bark soup and anything they could forage. Generally, they suffered. But survived.

Key to their survival was their faith in God. The Rymals, Hesses, Kribbs and Smiths were all staunch Presbyterians. For strength, they gathered in each other's homes to read from the Bible, and pray. They may also have met in the

little, log schoolhouse that stood at the corner of Upper Paradise and Rymal Road. What was the name of this little congregation situated between the mountain brow and the lime ridge? We do not know. Perhaps, because William Rymal and his brother Jacob were community leaders, the group was referred to as the “Rymal Congregation”. They were a small, Christian community, and not alone. There were Anglicans, Lutherans, Baptists and Methodists about. Indeed the escarpment back in those days was referred to as “Methodist Mountain” because there were so many “Methodies”. For example, present day Bowman and Bethesda United Churches had strong Methodist roots. Indeed it was here at Bowman, in 1829, that our present day United Church Observer got its start. So it was that our Barton Stone congregation had very humble beginnings indeed.

Through Boom, War, and Bust: 1810-1832

On Saturdays, Satan came to town. North of the “four corners” (the present day intersection of Fiddlers Green Road and Garner Road), was Fiddlers Green, a notorious racetrack where people flocked every Saturday. They also came to drink whisky and beer, to dance, to listen to fiddlers, and to fight. On occasion, someone got murdered. The devil’s work! The vast, sober majority of the community, however, stayed clear. On Sundays they met in each other’s houses for “reading meetings” and prayer. But it was the arrival of the saddlebag preacher with his three-hour “gospel sermon” that did the trick. For the “Rymal Congregation” it was first an unknown, Presbyterian missionary of German origin, and then after 1811, Daniel Ward Eastman. The reverend could appear on any day. And if it were a weekday, all work was stopped, his sermon being “more precious than gold that perisheth”. As well, all children born since his last appearance were baptized, marriages performed, and those who were considerate enough to have expired just prior to the missionary’s visit were given a full Christian burial.

Two things the upright most wanted after building their cabin – a school for their children, and a meeting place to worship their God. And since both a small log schoolhouse and a church were soon constructed, their wishes came true. In 1810, William Rymal gave land, and helped with the building of a two story wood frame church just to the west of his family’s burial plots near present day St Peter’s Cemetery on “The Great Road” (Presently Mohawk Road West). Things had gone really well for Rymal, leaving him in a giving mood. Nevertheless there wasn’t an overabundance of cash money in the

community, forcing Rymal and his Presbyterian neighbours to hold their noses and share the building with the Episcopalians (Anglicans). Appropriately, the structure, the only church between Ancaster and Grimsby at that time, came to be called the “Barton Union Church”. Or it was referred to as the “Rymal Church”. Mind you, only the building was ever shared, never services. The Episcopalian worship took place every other Sunday morning under the leadership of Rev. Ralph Leeming, while our Presbyterians gathered in the evening to hear their own Lewis Williams, and then Daniel Ward Eastman. For if you were Presbyterian you couldn’t possibly imagine why anyone would be an Episcopalian! And the Episcopalians felt the same way about Presbyterians. As for the Methodists, they were not welcome at all. They were just too enthusiastic. And there were too many of them! By 1815 their numbers in the larger region stood at 459 while Episcopalians were just 200 and Presbyterians 200 as well.

But in 1812, war came to all - sinners and saints, Presbyterians, Episcopalians and “Methody” – bringing huge changes, mostly for the worse.

1812 was not so bad. The Head-Of-The-Lake was strong in its support of Britain. A great number of men in the area joined the militia, the Fifth Lincoln, against the Americans. From our small Presbyterian community the following joined up:

John Daniel Young (Captain) actually he did not join the church until 1833

Peter Hess (Lieutenant)
Jacob Rymal (Lieutenant)
Henry Smith (Lieutenant)
Philip Rymal (Ensign)
David Kribbs (Ensign)
Jacob Rymal (Sgt.)
Paul Kribs (Corp.)
Jacob Hess (Private)
Samuel Hess (Private)
William Rymal (Private)
There may have been more.

The first year of the war saw a series of victories, and although Peter Hess saw action at Fort Detroit with General Brock, the role of the local militia was, for the most part, that of support behind the front lines. Then there was a decided turn for the worse. In April 1813, the Americans took York. In May, Fort George at Niagara-On-The-Lake was overrun, forcing the British army to

retreat to Burlington Heights (Present day Hamilton Cemetery and Dundurn Castle). Many of our local militiamen were employed building fortifications at the heights for a last stand. In early June, the enemy came as close to Stoney Creek before they were turned back. These were frightening times. Later, in June, the Battle of Beaver Dams was fought down near present day Thorold. But although the fighting took place at a distance, settlers here actually *heard* the battle! How terrifying that must have been - hearing the cannons, and not knowing the outcome of the battle.

Then, in October of 1813, the British army and Tecumseh were defeated at Moravian Town (Near present day London) and the Head-Of -The-Lake got to see the carnage up close and personal. First came the exhausted, defeated troops and warriors, then the mangled wounded, and the refugees, many of them Tecumseh's people. Suddenly the population swelled by about 7500 starving, desperate souls. And all had to be fed. This had immediate implications for our own Presbyterian farming congregation. British soldiers camped at what was then called "Barton Heights" (Corner of present day Mohawk Rd. and Upper James), drank at the Little Terryberry Inn (just west of the present day Terryberry Library), and along with our native allies victimized local farms, stealing pigs, grain, apples, anything they could find to eat. Peter Hess, who had a farm right near "Barton Heights", suffered great loss to his property. Moreover, army quartermasters legally commandeered cows, horses, sleighs for its use, promising to pay later. But they seldom did. As for the "Barton Union Church", it was used as a military barracks and a hospital. There were many damages. Our tiny, harried congregation was left with the cost of the repairs. And over all of this was the fear that the Americans would march from the west and south to defeat the British forces here. This was narrowly averted in the fall of 1814 when the Americans were turned away at the Grand River near Brantford in one of the last actions of the war. Still Christmas of 1814 was one of much hunger and little joy.

The year 1815 saw the end of the war and the return of Daniel Ward Eastman. But it was a sad time for the good reverend and our congregation. The church was heavily damaged and the whole countryside as far as Niagara-On-The-Lake was devastated. Indeed things would be tough for two decades after the end of hostilities: A worldwide depression smothered economics everywhere. This was certainly the case in the Niagara Peninsula. The British

army, a necessary evil when it encamped at the Head-Of-The-Lake, went home. When it no longer purchased locally grown produce, markets collapsed. Along with this, the weather was bad: Precipitation amounts and temperatures changed radically from year to year, causing havoc with crops. Indeed this "Mini Ice Age" would last until the 1850's.

To make things worse, the government in York was not at all helpful. Seeking to make Upper Canada into a little England with an established church and defined class structure, the ultra-conservative "Family Compact" refused to allow any new immigrants from the United States. Americans and republicanism were hated and feared. But these American newcomers had money to spend that would have eased the shortage of specie and helped restore the economy. Further, to fund that little England dream, two sevenths of every township was designated either Crown Reserve or Clergy Reserve. This meant large areas of "undeveloped" land that strangled transportation, and harboured wild animals that were a menace to farmers. Robert Gourlay did not share this dream, and in 1817 started a movement to turn things around. He asked the people of Upper Canada to list their local resources, problems as they saw them, and to suggest solutions. Both William and Jacob Rymal, along with most of their neighbours, supported the action of selling these vast tracts off to the highest bidder, and using the money to improve the economy. In so doing the Rymals showed themselves to be in opposition to the Family Compact's master plan. But the government did not relent and the troubles continued through the 1820's and on into the 1830's. Barton Union Church carried on.

In 1819, Daniel Ward Eastman left and there were no regular Presbyterian preachers until 1831. The arrival of many new immigrants added to the size of the Episcopalian congregation, dwarfing our Presbyterians. But the Rymal's dislike of the Family Compact, like that of some many others locally and across Upper Canada remained and festered. In 1837, their growing anger manifested itself in the Rymals' sympathy for the rebel William Lyon McKenzie.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. First there would be a great religious awakening brought by the American preacher, Edward Marsh. The 1830's were to be heady days that saw our small congregation grow and grow.

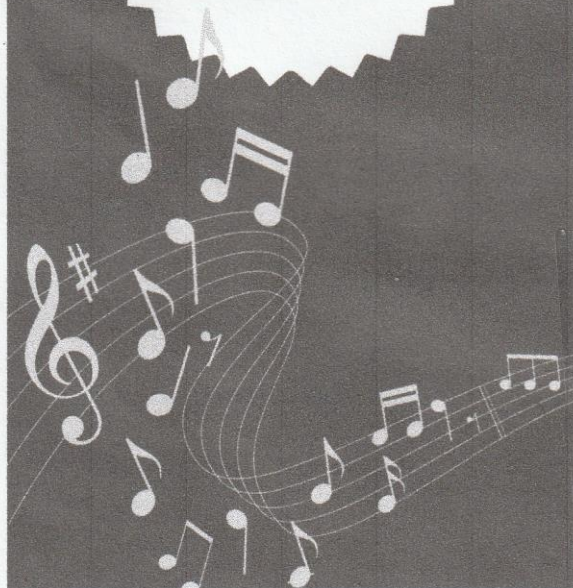
[Next: Millennialism and Post Millennialism 1832 to 1949](#)

MUSIC IN THE AIR

2023/24
CONCERT SEASON

TICKETS
\$10

**SUGGESTED DONATION
OR PAY WHAT YOU CAN!**



2023/24 CONCERT SEASON SCHEDULE

DEC. 2 7:00PM

BSMH United Church Choir

Donna Dunn-Albert, director

Kim Dunn, vocalist

Steven Barabash, vocalist/pianist

JAN. 27 7:00PM

Kokoro Choir

Brenda Uchimaru, director

www.kokorosingers.com

FEB. 24 7:00PM

Hamilton All Star

Jazz Band

www.hamiltonallstarjazz.org

MAR. 23 7:00PM

The Harlequin Singers

Michael Pin, director

Laura Pin, pianist

www.harlequinsingers.com

APR. 27 7:00PM

Renée Huynh, pianist

www.reneehuynh.com