

M.A.I.D. – MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

The June issue of Broadview (our church magazine) had two thoughtful articles on this topic, upon which I shall comment later. As always, the magazine does not dodge difficult moral and ethical questions; my interest was captured.

This option for voluntarily ending life was made legal in Canada on February 6, 2016. To be eligible to apply one must be at least 18 years of age, have Canadian medical health insurance, and have an incurable medical illness, disease or disability. Application is made through a medical doctor willing to assist in the process and a team of three medical personnel must be gathered for the process to proceed. Many doctors are unwilling to assist in a M.A.I.D. death, based on conscientious objection, and/or their moral and religious principles. Some religious denominations have made strong statements of condemnation about it to their congregants. The Catholic Church in particular is opposed to the use of medically assisted dying. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops is pressing the government to improve palliative care rather than expand access to M.A.I.D. and reviews are ongoing.



Caption: The three recent Broadview magazine covers—referenced issue is in centre—June 2020 issue.

The three medical persons involved each meet with the applicant and each must be confident that he or she is in grievous and irremediable physical or psychological suffering. The medical state of decline must be such that natural death is foreseeable in the relatively near future. Each must be assured that the request is a voluntary one and that no coercion has been exerted by other individuals. They must also judge that the patient has the

mental capacity to understand what it is he or she is asking for and that he or she understands the steps which will occur during the process. This is called informed consent and the law currently forbids any action if it is not present. The same clarity must be present on the actual day of the death.

On average, it takes a minimum of 2 weeks after signing the request form before death can occur. There is a ten-day "reflection period" after the request form is signed to allow for a change-of-mind. It is also necessary for eligible witnesses (usually close family) to sign the form. On the day of death, the witnesses will be sent away from the patient while he or she is again asked to give informed consent. Usually, the medical team will explain once again, to all, what is going to happen before proceeding. Two IV's are put in place, one in each arm. Three needles are given. The first essentially puts the patient to sleep, beyond any pain. The second and third stop the heart, shut down the organs and bring on death.

The first lengthy article in Broadview follows the story of Ron Posno, an 80 year-old, who has been diagnosed with early-onset dementia, essentially Alzheimer's disease. He is adamant that, when he reaches a point where he no longer recognizes his loved ones, he wants his life ended. The law presents the problem in that; when he reaches that point he is unlikely to be able to re-confirm his wishes. If, in fact, he could give informed consent at that point, the law would regard him as not yet at a point where his life is without any "pleasures". Posno is now 4 years into a battle with the government to allow M.A.I.D. as an option for those trapped like himself in a disease of relentless progression. We are also introduced to a provider, Dr. Stefanie Green, and we are told of some examples of tough decisions she has faced.

The second article in the magazine traces the last day of the life of Clarence Pettersen, and from the perspective of his wife, recounts the full procedure of medically assisted dying. She expresses gratitude for his gentle passing and the end of his suffering with the pain of cancer. It is in this article that we read a full review of the steps involved in a medically assisted death, including the administering of the needles. She terms this a "gift of conscious parting" for her husband, who was able to speak lovingly to each of the gathered family members.

I commend Broadview to you, for the fair and open way it tackles difficult issues like this. Where do you stand on this topic? What is a "good" dying? Does God want the dying to suffer in pain, sometimes for years? Are we trying to BE God if we choose an option like M.A.I.D.? Is improved palliative care a remedy alone or should it be added to options like

M.A.I.D. ? Why isn't M.A.I.D . offered worldwide? Should it be? What is the impact of M.A.I.D. on suicide rates among the chronically ill and elderly? Would you choose it? How would you feel if a family member chose M.A.I.D.?

Submitted by Joan Smith

Ed. Note: Interested in reading the Broadview article mentioned in this article? Their website has a great archive of full-text articles. A discounted subscription rate of \$25 is available if we have 5 or more subscribers in our pastoral charge. Email the office if you are interested in subscribing:

graceunitedportdover@gmail.com

Full text of Broadview Article:

<https://broadview.org/medically-assisted-death-canada/>

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From the minister's desk...

Well the summer is already half over! What a different summer this has proven to be. Certainly it is one that we won't forget for a long time.

As I write this it is mid-July and I am preparing for two weeks of vacation. We are just waiting for the government to graduate our region to phase 3 of the re-opening guidelines. However, even at phase 2 we are allowed to re-open our buildings. Hallelujah!

As you have probably already heard, we will be opening both buildings on September 6. I thank those from both churches who have given of themselves to ensure that the safety of all will be protected when we gather once again.

I also want to thank each and every one of you who reached out to

others to offer connection and support through these times of isolation. Further, I would like to thank Arlene Navarro, Robyn York, Brenda McRae, Marjorie Dawson and Jim Dawson for all of the extra time and talent they expended to ensure that everyone received copies of the worship services these past months.

We have received such positive feedback from the mailing and broadcasting of the services that we realize that this is an important part of our ministry. Distribution of the service is a way to stay connected with those who are unable to join us in our buildings each Sunday. So, even beyond September 6, we will continue to do both. **If you receive your service by mail and would like that to continue, please let Robyn know. (Email: graceunitedportdover@gmail.com or voicemail: 519-583-0342)**

For those of you who watch on YouTube, we will be changing slightly. We want to switch to “live streaming”, which means that you can watch the service in real time, while it is happening on Sunday morning. This is important not only for those who cannot come to the church regularly, but also for those who occasionally must stay home, perhaps because of health or weather. To do this we must purchase some expensive equipment

However, once we have the equipment, its use will be able to extend beyond our Sunday morning services. Concerts, guest speakers, special services, and celebrations will all be able to reach those with internet access.

Are you able to help with the expense of these two ways of reaching our sisters and brothers who can't come to us?

To sponsor the mailing of the services, the average is about \$1.10 every two weeks.. That includes paper, envelope, and postage.. So for less than \$30 you can ensure that services and newsletters go out for a whole year to someone who relies on this way of staying connected. Please make your cheque payable to Port Dover-Woodhouse Pastoral Charge.

The equipment for live-streaming may cost up to \$10,000. I will be asking for your help. Thanks to a government Covid-19 response program, we can take up to 2 years to raise these funds. To donate to this ministry please make your cheque payable to Port Dover-Woodhouse Pastoral Charge or donate through Canada Helps (be sure

to check “Live Stream”).

To initiate a fundraiser, use your imagination. Just remember that the United Church of Canada does not allow any form of gambling (bingo, 50/50, chase the ace, etc.).

I believe that this ministry is one of the ways that God has used the Covid-19 pandemic to create something new and good. How wonderful it has been to share the love and word of God with so many. We will not abandon you when the crisis is over.

As we work to ensure the continuance of our contact with those who can't come out, I am reminded of Jesus' words in Matthew 25:40, “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’” This is not to say that I think that those who can't get to church are somehow “less than” those who can. It is to say that they have the least opportunity and/or ability to get to the actual service. They are among our most vulnerable, deserving of our unwavering love, respect, and support.

Together in Faith,

Rev. Kathryn

.....
*Woodhouse United Church
Decoration Day Outdoor Service
Sunday August 30, 2020, 9:30 a.m.*

Weather permitting. We do not have an alternate rain date.

All Government issued COVID19 regulations will be in effect. Please bring your own lawn chair.

Rev Kathryn Vance will lead our service and Heather Smith from the United Empire Loyalists will be our guest speaker.

Donations may be sent to,

Woodhouse United Church Cemetery Board

Jim Tiller, 54 Ross Ave N., Simcoe, ON N3Y 4W8

*Receipts will be issued at the end of the year.

Kathryn Bannister,

Woodhouse United Church Cemetery Chair. 519-429-8150



COMING UP IN AUGUST & SEPTEMBER

Sunday August 30—Woodhouse Decoration Day Service, 9:30 a.m.

Sunday September 6—Services resume at both churches

Details to come—watch your email/mail.

Grace: Memorial Candlelighting

August 16 - We remember:

Peter Fowler Barrett, Dee Brown, Grant Dougherty,
Spencer Keith Robert Gamble, Olive Mae Gillam,
Clayton Randell Keyes, Elsie Irene Lawrence, Ora Albert Mason,
Mary Rubena Opersko, Marguerite Isabel Underhill,
Marie Hazel Wear

September 20 - We remember:

William Ernest Adams, Mary Awde, Karen Barrett,
Jefferson Bruley, Keith Bennett Everett, Evelyn Hobbs,
Peter Frank Kalina, Fred Wray Long, John Rowell MacDonald,
Barbara Rose MacDonald, Stanley Robert McMillan,
Myrtle Marie Pos, Joan Elizabeth Stetson, Patricia Ann Trinder

Woodhouse: Memorial Candlelighting

August 16- We remember:

Catherine Mary Judd, Arthur Grenville Robertson

September 20 - We remember:

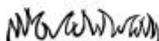
Herbert Roger Cruikshank, Frances Louise Woolley

SUMMER FUN

Here is an activity to do at a safe distance, with the grandkids, a friend or family member, or on your own! Enjoy exploring our great outdoors!

Nature Walk

Put a check in each box when you spot the object! How many can you find?

<input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> 
<input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> 
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Scripture Readings August 9—September 27

August 9 - 10th Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 Joseph is sold into slavery by his brothers

Psalms 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b Remembering Joseph

Romans 10:5-15 The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart.

Matthew 14:22-33 Jesus walks across stormy waters.

August 16 - 11th after Pentecost

Genesis 45:1-15 Joseph is reunited with his brothers.

Psalms 133 How pleasant it is when God's people are together.

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32 God has not rejected the Hebrews.

Matthew 15:10-28 A Canaanite mother challenges Jesus.

August 23 - 12th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 1:8-2:10 The baby Moses is adopted by Pharaoh's daughter.

Psalms 124 If God had not been at our side!

Romans 12:1-8 Present yourselves as a living, holy sacrifice to God.

Matthew 16:13-20 Who do you say that I am? asks Jesus.

August 30 - 13th Sunday after Pentecost, Woodhouse Decoration Day Service

Exodus 3:1-15 Moses encounters the burning bush.

Psalms 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c Remembering Jacob and Moses

Romans 12:9-21 Let love be genuine; overcome evil with good.

Matthew 16:21-28 Take up the cross and follow me.

September 6 - 14th Sunday after Pentecost, Labour Day

Exodus 12:1-14 Instructions for the first Passover

Psalms 149 Sing to God a new song.

Romans 13:8-14 Owe no one anything but love.

Matthew 18:15-20 Where two or three are gathered in my name

September 13 - Creation Time 1 in the season of Pentecost

Exodus 14:19-31 God parts the sea for the Hebrews

Psalms 114 Tremble, O Earth.

Romans 14:1-12 Whether we live or whether we die, we are God's.

Matt. 18:21-35 How many times must I forgive?

September 20 - Creation Time 2 in the season of Pentecost

Exodus 16:2-15 Bread and quails to feed the people

Psalms 105:1-6, 37-45 Make known what God has done.

Philippians 1:21-30 For me, to live is Christ.

Matt. 20:1-16 Daily wages for the labourers; what's fair?.

September 27 - Creation Time 3 in the season of Pentecost

Exodus 17:1-17 Water flows from the rock for thirsty people.

Psalms 78:1-4, 12-16 God did marvelous things for our ancestors.

Philippians 2:1-13 Let the same mind be in you that was in Jesus

Matthew 21:23-32 By what authority does Jesus act and teach?

