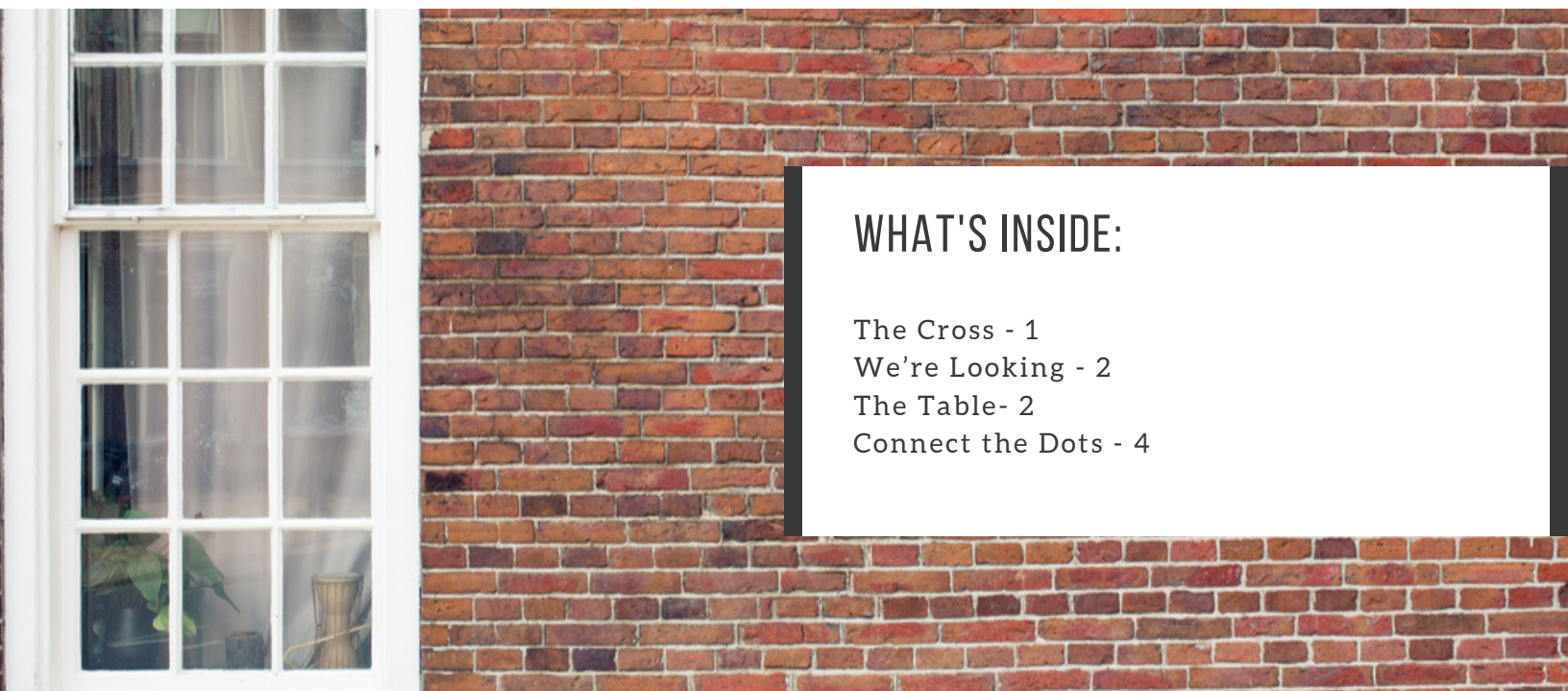


PARISH HOUSE

Newmarket Church of Christ



WHAT'S INSIDE:

The Cross - 1
We're Looking - 2
The Table- 2
Connect the Dots - 4

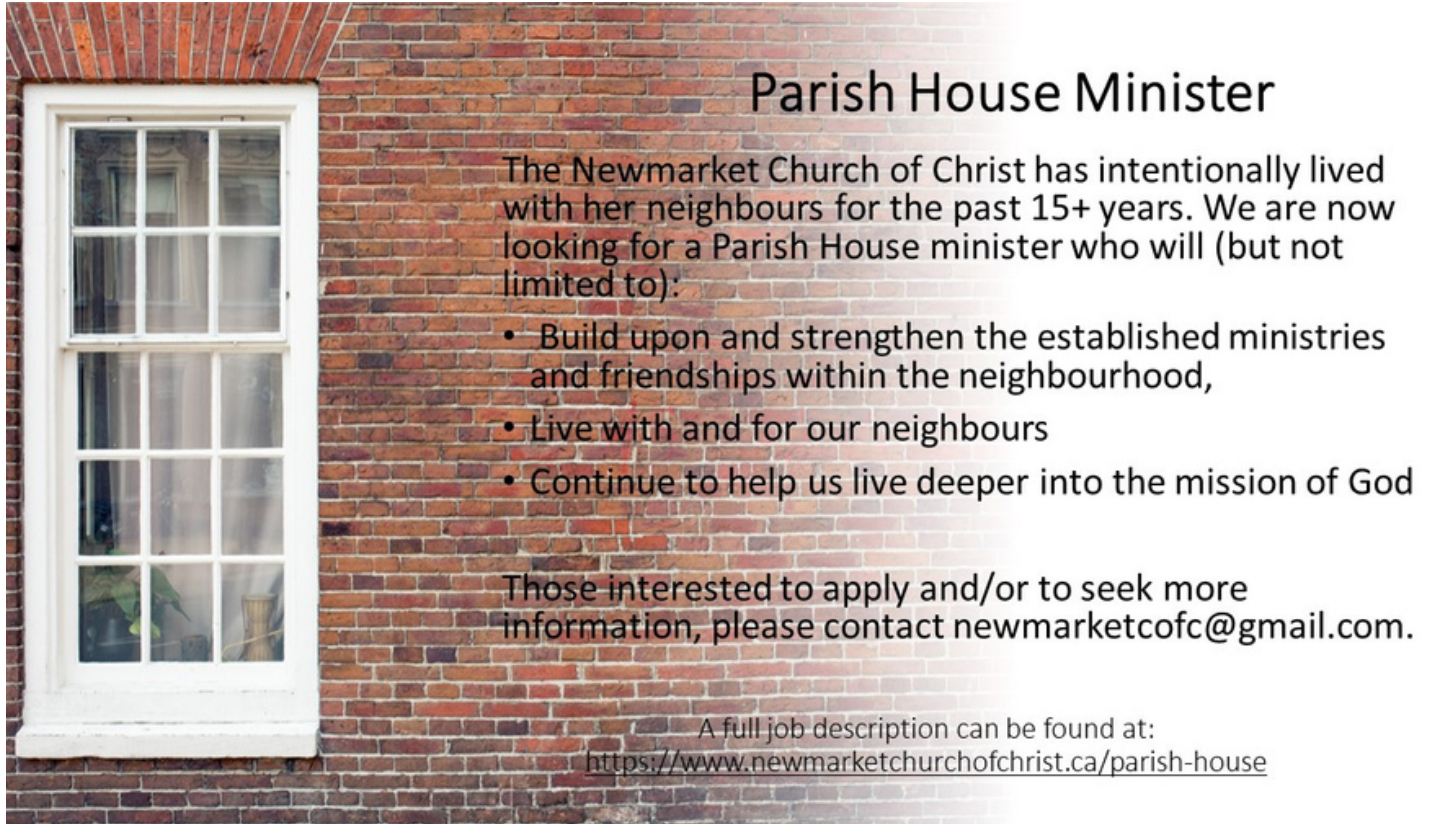
THE CROSS

Nathan Pickard

I had a professor who once said something like, “*Pay attention to the text of Scripture and you’ll notice the differences between what Matthew writes and what Luke writes; what Mark writes and what John writes.*” I admit, it’s hard to pay attention sometimes because there are so many strings pulling at our lives. But if we are able to pay attention, we’ll notice the differences and noticing the differences, we can ask different questions of the text--questions that will help us see what the gospel writers are trying to tell us. For example, why do Luke and Matthew have different beatitudes (see Matt. 5 and Luke 6)? Someone who is paying attention might raise a few questions as to why.

continue reading, pg. 3

We're Looking . . .



Parish House Minister

The Newmarket Church of Christ has intentionally lived with her neighbours for the past 15+ years. We are now looking for a Parish House minister who will (but not limited to):

- Build upon and strengthen the established ministries and friendships within the neighbourhood,
- Live with and for our neighbours
- Continue to help us live deeper into the mission of God

Those interested to apply and/or to seek more information, please contact newmarketcofc@gmail.com.

A full job description can be found at:
<https://www.newmarketchurchofchrist.ca/parish-house>

The Table

The table is where friendships are born, enemies are reconciled, walls are torn down, gospel is experienced and tasted. I am becoming more and more convinced that the church that is centered on Word and Table has the opportunity to continually be grounded into the image of God.

I am super excited about the opportunity for us as a church to share table fellowship with 280 Davis Drive. Roughly every 4-6 weeks, we arrive at the “party room” with trays full of sandwiches, drinks, chips and whatever else we are able to muster together. A mishmash group of people gather. We laugh at and with each other. We tell stories. We share our struggles. And afterwards, people say, “God bless you” to each other.

Where might this table fellowship go? I hope the table of sandwiches leads people to experience the table of bread and wine. I hope it leads us to deeper friendships. I hope it leads us to experience the in-breaking kingdom of God.



The Cross, Cont'd

What about Mark & John's gospels? There are numerous differences, especially around the narrative of the cross. If we read Mark's gospel, notice the differences between what Jesus says when he is nearing his death. Mark has Jesus say, "My God, my God, why are you forsaking me." John has Jesus saying, "It is finished." Why the differences? By paying attention to the text of Scripture, we're able to raise different questions that can help us understand the direction each writer is wanting to draw our attention towards.

I heard a friend once ask, "If we don't mark time by the redemptive activity of God, how are we marking time?" This simple comment opened my eyes. Have you ever noticed the numerous yearly feasts in the Old Testament? These yearly feasts helped the people of God mark time through God's past actions, while creating an imagination for God's future actions. This past week, we marked time around the events of Easter. Easter is more than a bunny hopping around leaving chocolate for the kids to find. Easter marks time where Jesus dies and rises again.

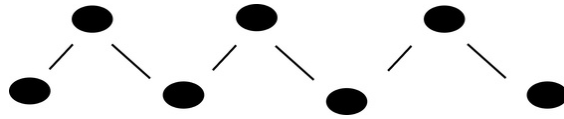
To prepare for Easter, I spent time reading John's account of the death of Jesus. By paying attention, I noticed that it's only John who has Jesus say, "It is finished." What is finished? Why does John have these words spoken by Jesus on the cross and no other gospel writer does? What is John drawing our attention too?

Throughout the first half of John's gospel, a reoccurring phrase takes place, "His hour had not come." Then in chapter 12, the phrase is changed to, "His hour had come" (12:23, 27). In both instances when John writes, "His hour had come", John also writes about the Son of Man and God being glorified. A close reading unearths that the cross (the death of Jesus) becomes the means through which God is glorified. As one commentator has written, Jesus has accepted his mission as planned and fulfilled his mission. There is no "He could have called ten thousand angels" in John's gospel because the cross has always been the destination! Jesus speaks, "It is finished" on the cross because Jesus fulfilled the task God has sent Jesus to do.

Now what about us? If we read the ending of John's gospel, the crucified and resurrected Jesus breathes the Spirit into the church's life and sends us to practice the ministry of forgiveness. Furthermore, if we read the story of Peter as a way for us to live our lives, we are called to be shepherds, following in the footsteps of Jesus who is the great shepherd (John 10; see also Ezekiel 34). And what does Jesus do as a shepherd? He dies for his sheep.

Easter celebrates and retells the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus. In our retelling of this story, we tell the story of Jesus whose destination was always the cross. And it's our destination as well. It's our vocation. The church is called to embody the cross-shaped life of Jesus. The church gives her life away for the sake of others . . . for a neighbourhood. May our churches not just look to the cross for our salvation; may the church embody the cross-shaped life of Jesus.

Connect The Dots



I remember as a little kid opening up a coloring book and having numerical dots. It was my job to connect the dots. Slowly, as each dot is connected, a picture emerges. Let me connect the dots as to what has happened so readers can understand how being a neighbourhood church allows us to embody, proclaim, and announce God's in-breaking kingdom.

Food boxes during COVID were delivered to the neighbourhood . . . partnerships formed with civic organizations and churches . . . food boxes leads to trust and friendship in the neighbourhood . . . which leads us to find people of peace (Lk. 10:1-12) . . . which leads us to having an invitation for table fellowship . . . which leads us to eating, healing, and announcing God's kingdom.

One of the most important concepts for churches being able to live into the mission of God is to be able to listen and discern with those whom God is calling the church into mission with and for. As churches listen and discern, we shape our congregational practices to support our listening and discerning. This must include listening and discerning with those whom God is calling us into mission with and for, even those who are not yet a part of our Christian faith communities.

The dots are being connected for us because we are listening and discerning with our neighbours. In the act of listening and discerning, we've been invited to eat with our neighbours and to being present in the neighbourhood in new ways. Slowly, the dots of an in-breaking kingdom are being connected and a picture of a neighbourhood church in the shape of a cross is being formed.



Unfortunately this pic doesn't capture what's happening (it's the only pic I have though). Every other week the "Pay What You Can" farmers market takes place during the winter months at the church. We are deeply grateful for the partners who are funding and organizing this market.

"To be most effective in bringing about change in a community or a neighborhood, it helps if you live there."

Larry James, *The Wealth of the poor*

**NEWMARKET
CHURCH OF
CHRIST**

Sharing the kingdom of
God through friendship
with the neighbourhood

230 DAVIS DR.
NEWMARKET, ON L3Y 2N4

905-895-6502
NEWMARKETCOFC@GMAIL.COM
WWW.NEWMARKETCHURCHOFCHRIST.CA