



FLATLANDERS INN

FROM BEGINNING TO END

BEGINNINGS

The early story of Flatlanders Inn goes something like this... There was once a guy living in the big warehouse at 782 Main Street. He had a small room on the 3rd floor. He lived and worked in the Vineyard church as the building manager and welcomed neighbourhood people to the twice weekly drop-in centre. Over time, one or two other guys began to crash on various rugs and couches. The friendships made at drop-in extended from the scheduled meals to additional breakfasts and spending time getting to know each other. Occasionally, someone else would need somewhere to crash. Another couch would get filled up.

This organic and motley crew began to put legs to the housing and community vision that began a few years earlier. A group was formed to flesh out the possibility of pursuing housing in the church funded primarily with government homelessness grants.



BEGINNINGS

"Over ten years ago, there was a seed of a dream. It was to have a place - a home, really - for people to share life together in the way of Jesus. A place where real community could grow. A place where those who had been overlooked, lost in valleys of abuse, oppression, loneliness and shame could be brought onto a level and healing playing field. A place where many of the barriers to real relationship with others, God and creation could begin to be levelled. This is still the way of Flatlanders and it is the way of the Kingdom.

The seed of this dream sprouted in March of 2007 when our doors officially opened. It was planted in the fertile soil of the Vineyard.

However, the dream began to take shape before the physical space did. From a bunch of guys sleeping on couches and taking in people off the street in the Comfy Couch Room

to families welcoming others into their homes, the heart of Flatlanders Inn was germinated in many ways. Welcoming the other, the stranger, the one who just needs to get back on their feet again this was and is the way of Flatlanders this is the way of the Kingdom."

- Andy Wood, 2017, 10 year Anniversary Newsletter



GRAND ENTRANCE

In 2007, Flatlanders officially opened its great big doors with a ribbon cutting ceremony and a big party. The 12 beds quickly filled and the adventure began.

2009 saw phase 2 open and phase 3 was completed the following year.



OVER THE YEARS

Over the last 12 years, Flatlanders adapted a list of values for leadership and community. The following pages are reflections on the ways that we were able to put those values into practice.



FOLLOWING JESUS CHRIST WITH OUR WHOLE LIVES

We believe that everything is spiritual and so everything we do can be an expression of worship. Our bodies, thoughts, emotions, spirits, possessions, how we live, and even our society matter to our faith and to God.



"Flatlanders is contending for something very precious at 782 Main. Like pioneering, living and working towards seeing the rough places made smooth is not always an easy road; but it is close to Gods heart. And, therefore, it is worth it."

- Jocelyn Armbruster, 2011 Fall Newsletter

For many of us, choosing to live at Flatlanders was a direct response to the call to follow Jesus. It was an obvious whole life response. For some, it actually can feel easier to follow the call of Jesus in a setting such as Flatlanders than to live a normal North American life while keeping Jesus at the centre.



"Those of us who move our lives into Flatlanders inevitably get hit with both transition and community, no matter our intention. Both community and transition all mingled under one roof. Its tricky like that. To steal from the great articulator of emotions, Anne Lamott, "Yikes and wow."

Out of an attempt to convey the truth and to use less words, I would smoosh those explanations together to call Flatlanders a Transitional Home. Home: a place where we become who we are, and transition: a season of growth, of change, of moving from one to another.

- Laura Dahl, 2019 Spring Newsletter



BEING REAL, OPEN, AND VULNERABLE WITH EACH OTHER

Honesty is so much better than trying to hide our insecurities, weaknesses, and struggles. When we are real about where we are at, we can help each other out.

This is so true, yet always the most difficult thing. Living together adds a complexity to this value that I'm not sure we will ever fully understand. The value of honesty always comes at a cost and I think one of the lessons of Flatlanders is that honesty comes in waves or intervals and every interval, no matter where on the scale, is still honest.

The witness of Flatlanders over the years is to learn to trust people as they are not who you think they should be. A confusion, perhaps exacerbated by living in community is the idea that we are to call each other to something better - into new life. We can often interpret this new life or something better as external behavior.

The confusion is that this approach has often made it so that living up to or into new life turns out to be only each other's expectations and the typical reactions are to create a front and encourage dishonesty OR simply that the task is impossible and we run away from each other.

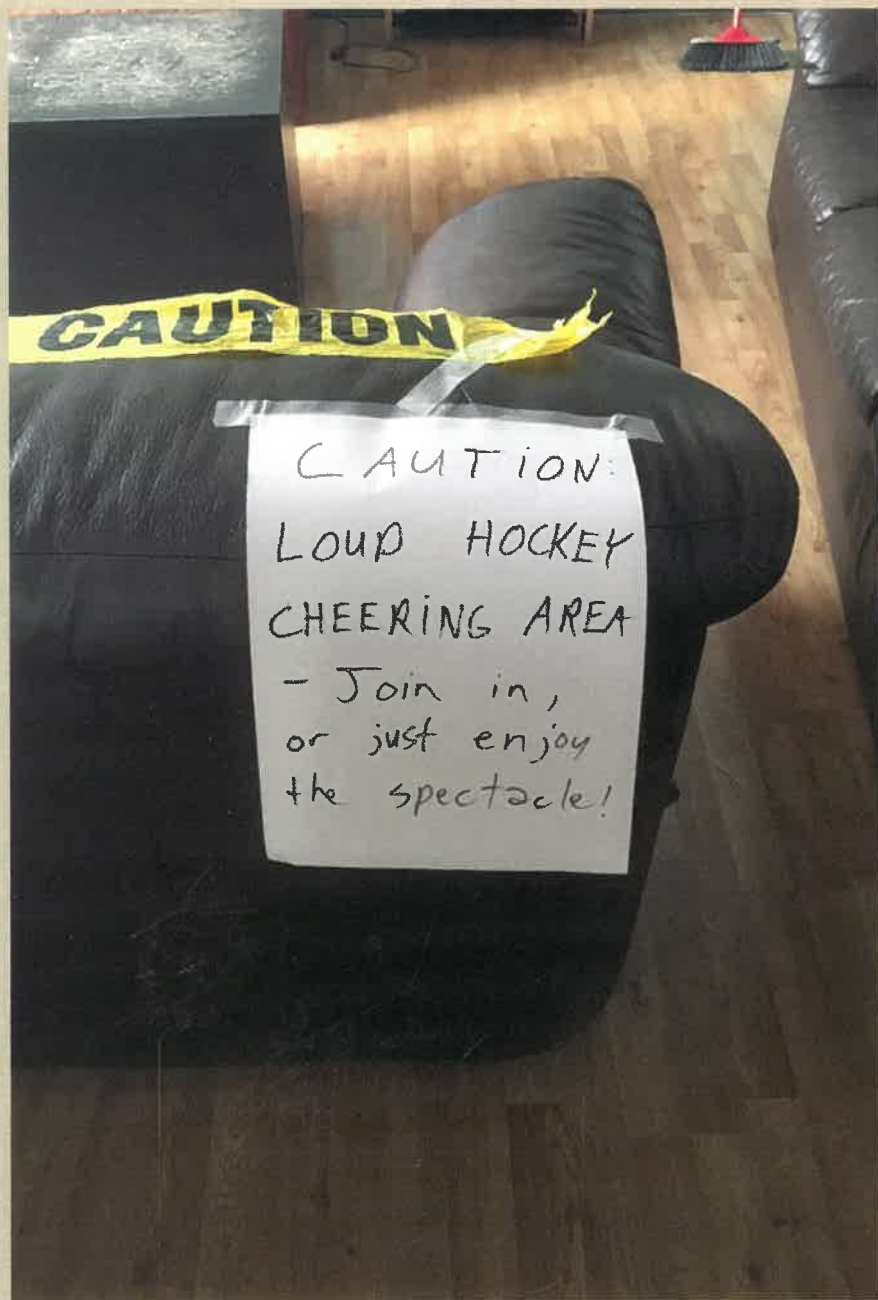
Trust us this is true and achieves the opposite of the hope.

Grace has been the answer. Honesty and being real only comes with trust and trust is built through offering grace over and over and over again.



"Perhaps the essential quality for anyone who lives in community is patience: a recognition that we, others, and the whole community take time to grow. Nothing is achieved in a day. If we are to live in community, we have to be friends of time. Friends of time! That has a poetic sound to it. But as I reflect on the actual meaning and the implications behind it, I am less enthused. As someone who focuses a lot on what can be changed and improved, being patient and comfortable with slow growth is a challenge. And from the challenge is birthed an invitation to not only tolerate slow growth but to embrace it, knowing that the slowness is the very thing that makes it real and lasting.

- Erin O'Neil, 2017, 10 year anniversary Newsletter



RHYTHM AND BALANCE IN:

Prayer, work, service, learning, rest, play. It is important to have a regular rhythm in all these areas of life. We're creating a place where we can all work on these areas and help maintain a good balance between them all.

Community rhythms change as the community does. Flatlanders has had seasons that include regular rhythms of morning and evening prayers following the Northumbria community prayer book. We have engaged in a regular deep clean day where all hands are on deck sharing the work of keeping our space clean. Over the years, we have put together neighbourhood parties and Bean Gallery fundraisers, honing the talents of those among us. And, of course, our forced family fun nights, which were either a trip to the movie theatre or Billy Mosienko's on Main for pizza and bowling.

Rhythm and balance matter at the community level as well as the individual. We have encouraged this value in both areas sometimes with a stronger community aspect and sometimes with a greater focus on the individual lives.



"As strange as it might seem, the most life changing, dramatic thing I learned while living at Flatlanders is that washing dishes is important and you have to do it every day. Sharing a space with many other people taught me to clean up after myself and (at times) others without complaining - to embrace cleaning and tidying as a part of my life. Since my time at Flatlanders I've learned to ALMOST enjoy doing the dishes."

- Kris Longmuir - 2017 reflection



"Spread the Love began in 2012 as a result of an unexpected donation from a community similar to ours (The Simple Way in Philadelphia, PA). They encouraged us to do something innovative and fun with their gift...we decided to have a party, collect donations, and pay the whole idea forward - every year! This year, support was raised to host this event again next year, and to benefit Sunshine House, home to the 2014 Spread the Love performers, JD & the sunshine band."

- Julie Kettle, 2014 Fall Newsletter



OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

We live where we do on purpose. We love this neighbourhood and want to see its good parts flourish and its troubles transformed.

The location of Flatlanders was an interesting one and, honestly, not one that most people would choose to live in. For the majority of the city, the neighbourhood surrounding 782 Main St. is a neglected and forgotten one. Within a few block radius, housing consists of hotels and shelters for those without homes. In the summer, the parks and treed areas become residences or shady spots for people to gather and get out of the sun. For many who are unfamiliar with this neighbourhood, it can feel scary, but this is really only because it is unknown. Our hope of being there was both to be good neighbours and to know our neighbours. And so we had our regular visitors who would come by daily, weekly or just occasionally. These friends of Flatlanders, who might only be friends with one or two of us, would slowly become familiar and friendly with more people who lived there and it was

through these visits that relationships broadened.

One of the results of Flatlanders was that we all ended up living with others who we would not have likely chosen. This was also true of the neighbourhood. Whether intentional or circumstantial, being forced outside our comfort zones caused us to broaden our lens of what it means to be human in the world. Our perspectives changed or widened (when we let them) to include that of others, broadening our empathy and compassion for those around us.

It is important to remember that within the community, some chose to be there, and others came because it was their only option. We are not all called to the same work and that is okay.

Lord Have Mercy, Christ Have
Mercy

When the evening comes
we set a table
and eat.

My children laugh
then fight
then laugh again.

I look at my husband
with love
then anger
then love again.

We clean up together.
The kids watch Youtube.

But there are three girls on
Sutherland tonight.

We put out bowls for breakfast.
Make their lunches.
Yell.
About brushing teeth
and p.j.s.
we're tired.

We say our prayers.
We dont mention them.

But there are three girls on
Sutherland tonight.

And as we stay warm
the girls are there
alone
they stand in cold air.

Cars come

and go
a steady flow
of evil
right beneath our sleeping heads.

When I wake
I pour the coffee he made
and look North.

Treaty One Territory.
Lord have mercy, Christ have
mercy.

Later
once the kids are safe at school
I choke out words for this
in living rooms
with friends.

But no one knows what to say
when morning comes.

And Sutherland is still.

- Jessica Williams, 2017 10 year
anniversary Newsletter



"I really love gardening (check out the cedars!) Having the greenspace and memorial garden available to putter around in is really therapeutic. The garden aspect is huge, really. Flatlanders has really affected me, the way they relate to the community. Its not just "here's a sandwich, goodbye," its part of your life. The acceptance of my family, my daughter and granddaughter, is amazing too.

- Maurice Senecal, 2011 Summer Newsletter

BEAUTY IN UNLIKELY PLACES

We believe that God has put beauty everywhere and that each person in some way reflects their Creator. We want to discover this in each other, and uncover the beauty often hidden around us. Also, we think there are many beautiful parts of this neighbourhood that are overlooked because it has a bad reputation; we want to stand up to this.

It can take a while to see it. At first, community living can get your guard up and blind you to the beauty in others. Many spend a lot of energy in self-protection or shame. This is an inability to see our own selves as lovable or beautiful makes it really hard to treat others as lovable or beautiful. But when a bunch of different people get together, all in various stages of life and coming from different walks, the result is that we learn from each other. Those further along in the journey of self discovery and love can coax the rest of us forward. This happens beautifully within a community context because it can be the every day tasks of life that lend opportunity to deepen relationship.

And yes, the neighbourhood that Flatlanders was located in isn't very



attractive so, literally, beauty is hard to see. But where there is creation, there is beauty and as we see it in our Creator, in ourselves and amongst each other, we should be able to recognize it in those around us.

SHARING RESOURCES

We think that sharing stuff is simply a smart way to live. It makes sense to us. Some of us have many resources, others have little. Some have gifts, wisdom or knowledge that others do not. What we have, we have been given to use wisely in community and we want to share.

Sharing food, hydro, water, laundry and living space is such a practical and affordable way to live. Flatlanders was set up so that a person living on social assistance could afford to be there. It was also set up so that if you came with literally the clothes on your back, you would still live pretty comfortably. But like the value says, this isn't all about physical things, but also sharing ourselves. I think this overlaps quite a bit with a few of the other values, but there were unique ways that people shared their knowledge or skills with each other that we could mention here. We once had a window cleaner who lived at Flats who cleaned our windows while one of the other guys held the ladder for him.

We once had a tattoo artist who may or may not have given a tattoo here or there. There have been cooks who share their meals with others and cooks who show others how to cook. There have been bakers who leave plates of muffins or pies and other baked goods out for the community, catering to the various preferences. People who liked finances helped others who liked spending their finances. And so on.





"I think my biggest contribution to Flatlanders was getting the talking stick to help us to listen to each other."

- Eric Friesen - 2017 reflection

What has been good about life at Flatlanders?

Lanzon: There's a big space to play, enough room to do our art--and crafts! (Wayrandina chimes in). Always running water. And, oh! community supper! I love community supper!

Teena (Lanzon & Wayrandina's mom): It's nice connecting with people, being involved in the community. Everybody brings something to it - resources and skills.

Wayrandina: Love.

Ivan: Lots of space. I'm used to living in community. Its a very good help for us.

- The Timms, 2014 Winter Newsletter

SUSTAINABILITY

We want to be here for years to come. We also want every Flatlander to develop a way of life that is not destructive, and that they can maintain over a long period of time.

"Flatlanders was our home for three years, and like most big life changes it was terrible and wonderful.

It was terrible. We had passive aggressive (and aggressive aggressive) conversations with neighbours about sharing space. There was frustration when getting home from a bad day to know I might have to see people before I could retreat into my own space. There were thin walls and 20+ people knowing every time our kids were upset (or every time I was upset with a kid). There was some unsolicited advice. Once, we had mice, cockroaches, AND bedbugs at the same time.

It was also wonderful. A beautiful space to live in. Kind-hearted adults invested in the well-being of my children. There was always someone to talk to on a bad day, and share joy with on a good day. Sometimes chocolates would show up at my door. I made some new best friends.

Cooking and eating together. Sharing space and making space. Working through conflicts. Being unable to run away, so needing to work it out. The vulnerability and growth that comes with these things.

Of course, all close families and communities are wonderful and terrible, and that's how it should be. And of course, communities like this don't just exist on the second and third floors at the corner of Main and Sutherland...I'm optimistic that we can all find terrible and wonderful communities wherever we find ourselves."

- Jess Ehlers - Post Closure Reflection



NON-VIOLENCE

Jesus modeled a way of life that did not use violence to accomplish any task. In fact, His death showed just how corrupt and wrong violence is. In a neighbourhood where violence might be an expected method of dealing with conflict, we actively explore



The physical address of our home and the people we welcomed commonly knew and or witnessed some form of violence it was expected. People hitting other people just doesn't work in a community/family setting. Most of us know this and shared the belief that that's not okay. But not all of us understand

non-violence in day-to-day conversations or in organizational/community structures. Violence is a forceful means of control. I.e. through manipulation, brow beating with higher education, appealing to systems to better oneself at the expense of others (hierarchy, social ladder). Non-violence challenges all of this because it is not power over but rather power with. It honours the sacredness of all humans as image bearers of God. It gives life rather than death because it refuses to give up human agency (even when you yourself might lose in the end) you march on, but at no one else's expense. It also provides dependency on God because you need help to do it. It is the archetype of the Christian understanding of risk, or as we like to call it faith. To live out of control and trust God will make all things new.

HOSPITALITY

Were striving to live open and welcoming lives. Of course there are boundaries, but we'll welcome just about anyone once!

The rhythms of community life and the location of Flatlanders gave us ample opportunity to practice hospitality regularly. Every time someone new came to live at Flatlanders, the whole community needed to shift a little and make space. This wasn't always easy and wasn't quite the same each time. It can take time to settle into a new normal.

Other aspects of community living is realizing how much we do for others out of guilt or shoulds or perhaps to feel like we've done enough. There's a noticeable difference when we are motivated to show hospitality out of compassion or to give it as a gift one to another.

And when it happens, whether were recipients or givers, we cherish those moments and are changed ever so slightly because of them.



You move toward me,
watery eyes and cheeks pinched by cold.
You smile like you think you know me.
I assure you that you don't.

Nevertheless, in a moment I am scooped into a hug.
A heartbeat of bewilderment before I extricate myself.

You are speaking.
I would attend, but I have to focus on your hands,
how they are trying to find mine.

It is not long before I realize how very slow your hands are, sort of
scooping at the air. I discover I can easily shift and angle myself away from
your flailing arms; then I pay more attention to what you're saying.

You have lost your house, you tell me.

My mouth is a hard line of anticipation, ready for the subsequent request
to help you out. Not that I have a problem with helping in the ways I can, I
just begrudge the attempts to manipulate my compassion.
I wish I didn't take it so personally.

You sob and I am impressed.
You have no house and you sob again.
Your son lost your house three days ago to a drug addiction.

I am aware of the wind testing my layers, of your florid ears and knuckles--
eyes.

Your wife has died of cancer.
You suspect that is why your son developed the drug addiction.

As you tell me these things you are gazing behind me at something I know
I will not see if I look.

The request for help never comes.

You ask me if I know what you are going to do next. I tell you that I don't.

"I'm going to buy more beer," comes the slurred reply.
You move to hug me again.

I plant my hand firmly upon your chest and push you back, saying "No.
Boundaries" continually until you stop.
The fact that you do--stop, that is--breaks my heart a little and I want to
thank you, but I don't.

You say: "Okay,"
"My name is Cal," you add.

When I'd asked you before, you had said your name was "Crazy,"
wheezing at your own joke.

I had smiled and told you that my name was not that. (I don't know why I
said that).

You were once a marathon cyclist. My face lights up with interest and
you respond to that by leaning against the wall to roll up your pant leg.

You expose a surprisingly well-defined block of calf muscle to the
elements.

"Wow! ...but you should cover your skin again. It's too cold for that."

I must have missed something you said as you were rolling because you
ask, "What, you don't want to?" and I am confused until you tell me
(ostensibly again) to touch it, gesturing to your exposed lower-leg.

"No, I'm okay"
"What, why not? Just touch it"
"No"
"Why not?"
"I don't want to, that's all"

You roll down your pant leg and I am silently pleased with my effective
No-ing.

You try several more times to embrace me.

It only seems strange to me now, in reflection, how silent it was and how long these slow attempts and easy deflections might have gone on for as cars passed and, all the while, the length of my arm and gaze stretched between your need and mine.

You suddenly stop and rummage around your layers for a moment before producing a lollipop, which you extend toward me gently, stopping midway between us. I remove my mittens in an oddly reflexive way and reach out both my hands toward you. It is one of those Halloween lollies with a giant eyeball on the wrapping. I draw it back toward me and feel inexplicably overwhelmed.

You reach out and take my bare hand in yours, as if to shake it, but you just hold it like that. I let you. I search your face to find you searching too.

I tell you that I should go and you agree with me. You try once again to hug me and I am confused to experience both anger and compassion striving in the womb of my heart. I'm not sure which wins, but I do not let you hug me again. Instead, I give you my sight, hoping it displays for you how very moved I am by you--that you have mattered to me.

You try instead to bring my hand shakily to your face for a sloppy, wavering kiss. I resist, and you pause in that drunken, slow-processing way before trying again. Angry and bruised and longing for a world where I don't have to choose between your need and mine, where it doesn't feel like caring for you necessitates violating my own bounds, I crack under the ambiguity and find myself compromising: You raise my hand to your lips again and I don't resist even as, in writing this, I experience an aggressive anger toward myself for the "weakness" and caving. At the time, though, I confess I mostly felt like the bottom of my heart had given out under the immense sorrow I felt for you and the overwhelming reality of my own limitations.

I take my hand back and place it on your shoulder.

"Take care, Cal."

Your eyes hold mine for a beat of silence before you stagger along the building and I cross the intersection.

Blessed am I,
by the poor in spirit.
Lonesome, drunk,
asking, weeping.
The lowly and cast off;
the addict, the naked.
Poor.

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GROWTH AND LEARNING

We all have areas in our lives that we need to grow in. We want to learn about these areas and help each other grow stronger together.



Posture. The Vineyard loves posture. But not the orthopedic kind. What is meant by posture is actually a willingness to be open to new things. This openness needs to be present for growth and learning to take place. One set of our interns helped us re-pot all of our house plants. We gathered all the plants onto the kitchen tables and began the task. One of the plants they pulled out was so extremely root bound it was a shock it was still alive! We need to make space to grow...sometimes this is intentionally found, sometimes the space finds us. Even the space we need to grow is different from person to person. Sometimes we need a space that will give us room for solitude and introspection and sometimes we need to push up against each other, work out our dishes' conflict.



"My experience at Flatlanders and at SoJ is allowing me to better understand how God calls us to be relational beings. In the context of social justice, this means, among other things, looking past the issue and at the individual. Now, when I think of things such as homelessness and addiction, I think of friends I've made here who have, or are, facing these situations. I would also say that my perception of God, and my relationship with Him, is changing in a positive way. There are certain aspects of Gods character and his relation with humankind that He is revealing to me over and over again. I feel that the more I understand and - most importantly-believe these things about Gods character, the more I can develop a deeper and more meaningful relationship with Him."

- Erin O'Neill, 2016 Winter Newsletter

CREATION CARE AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Creation is a gift from God and humans are caretakers of the earth. We want to be conscious of how we live, realizing that this not only affects those around us, but the earth itself.

Yes, this has certainly been a Flatlander value along the way. We have composted, recycled, encouraged meat reduced diets, purchased fairly traded coffee beans and gardened. We have also experienced the tension that comes when we all don't agree with the importance of the value. When belief systems and values differ, the practices we keep tend to be different as well. What one might think is common place, another may experience as an imposition. We found that some of these things we could do as a community while other efforts to care for the environment needed to be invitational rather than a requirement.



THE END

Flatlanders Inn officially closed its doors June 30th, 2020. While we will no longer live out this expression of faith in the physical space of Flatlanders Inn, our hope is that a portion of these values will carry on beyond the walls and halls of 782 Main Street into the hearts and lives of those who have lived here.



LEADERSHIP

"Flatlanders' leadership are certainly the pillars of this community. They are committed to the community and care about making it work, even with its immense challenges. They have seen through the changes in this community, and people come and go. They have shared these stories with me and I have seen the love in the relationships they have made.

By living here, I too have opened my eyes to and engaged in the surrounding Main Street and North End neighbourhood. I am no longer afraid and I have got to know many of my neighbours. At Flats and WCV, there is a special place for people from the community like the beloved Raymond, Teddy, Marty and many of the friends at Drop-in. They are welcome and treated as good neighbours should.

I want to be the goodness that I have experienced and embrace others with unconditional love
I will say that Winnipeg needs more places like Flatlanders Inn."

- Teena Timm, 2015 Spring Newsletter

MATT BEYNON

ADAM WARD

SARAH HENDERSON (COLOUMBE)

AMANDA & JEFF LEIGHTON

LUKE MAYHEW

SARAH HILDEBRAND

PAUL & DIANNE SAMPSON

KELLY & BRENDAN DVORAK

**JOCELYN & SHERWOOD
ARMBRUSTER**

MATT & JAC WIEBE

NICOLE & ADAM CLOSS

LAURA DAHL

JESSICA & IAN WILLIAMS

JESS EHLERS

ANDY & BECKIE WOOD



FLATS RECIPES

JACS SUMMA BORSCHT RECIPE

Summa Borscht is German for: Soup that doesnt Have Cabbage or Beets)

T ground peppercorns
8L water
10 bay leaves
3 handfals of chopped chives
6c spinach
2 handfals of parsley, chopped
5 handfals of fresh dill chopped (frozen works)

Bring these to boil. Then add 10-15 potatoes, cubed.
Salt to taste (Dont add too much until the end because the sausage is salty) 2 double packs of farmer sausage, quartered. 2c buttermilk (or 2c milk with 2T vinegar)

Cook till potatoes are soft. All measurements are approximate.

Dont skimp on the meat!!

This soup is especially good with Jocelyn Armbrusters homemade bread ;)

WILLIAMS MONKEY BRAINS

4-5 zucchini cut in slices
3 carrots shredded
1 medium onion, sliced
1/4 cup butter
1 cream of celery soup
1 cup sour cream
3/4 cup croutons

Sauté the onions in butter, then mix with the rest of the ingredients

Bake at 350 F for 40 minutes.

NATALIE'S QUICHE

1 whole russet potato, peeled & sliced into very thin rounds
8 whole eggs
1/4 cup milk
1 tsp italian seasoning
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp pepper
3 roma tomatoes, sliced in thin rounds
3 cups tightly packed fresh baby spinach
cup cubed cheese
1/2 cup shredded parm cheese

Preheat oven to 375 F. Grease 9" pie plate. Layer potato rounds on the bottom and sides of pan. Bake potatoes in oven for about 10 mins until they start to look a little translucent; set aside while you finish rest of the prep. In a large bowl whisk together eggs and milk until smooth. Add in seasonings and whisk until well combined. When potatoes are done par-baking, layer spinach, cheese. Gently pour egg mixture over top being sure to redistribute cheese to make it all even. Layer tomatoes on top. Bake for 30-40 mins until middle is no longer jiggly. Sprinkle with parm and broil until cheese on top is brown and bubbly. Remove from oven, let sit for 5 mins and serve.

BRENDANS BEANS & RICE

3 Celery Stalks
1 Large Onion
1 Sweet Pepper
10 Cloves of Garlic
2 Tbsp Bumin
4 Tbsp cooking oil
3 cups rice
6 cups beef stock
1 can black or kidney beans
Large stock pot

Dice celery, onion, pepper and garlic. Heat oil in stockpot and saute vegetables with spics for approx 8 mins. Add rice, beans, and beef stock. Stir in mixture and brint to a boil. Turn down to simmer for 20 mins. Stir and serve.

* if heat is your thing, adding a few diced jalapenos with the vegetables is excellent!

We like to keep this in the fridge regularly for anyone to hep themselves to!

GORD'S CAESAR DRESSING WITH CROUTONS

1 cup real mayo - 3 cloves garlic, minced - 3 T FRESH lemon juice - 1 tsp dijon mustard - 1 tsp worcestershire sauce + a bit more - 1/2 cup REAL parm - S & P to taste - Whisk together all ingredients and let sit for as long as you can. The longer it sits, the tastier it gets!

For croutons:

Put 3/4 cup olive oil into a bowl and add some onion & garlic powder, salt & pepper, italian seasoning and chili flakes to taste. Then cut up 10 slices of bread into cubes and toss until coated. Put coutons onto two baking sheets and bake at 350 F until desired crispiness - approx 20 minutes.

LEIGHTONS GERMAN APPLE PANCAKES

4 eggs
3/4 cup milk
1/4 cup butter
3/4 cup flour
1/2 tsp salt
2 medium apples, thinly sliced
Cinnamon & Sugar to taste

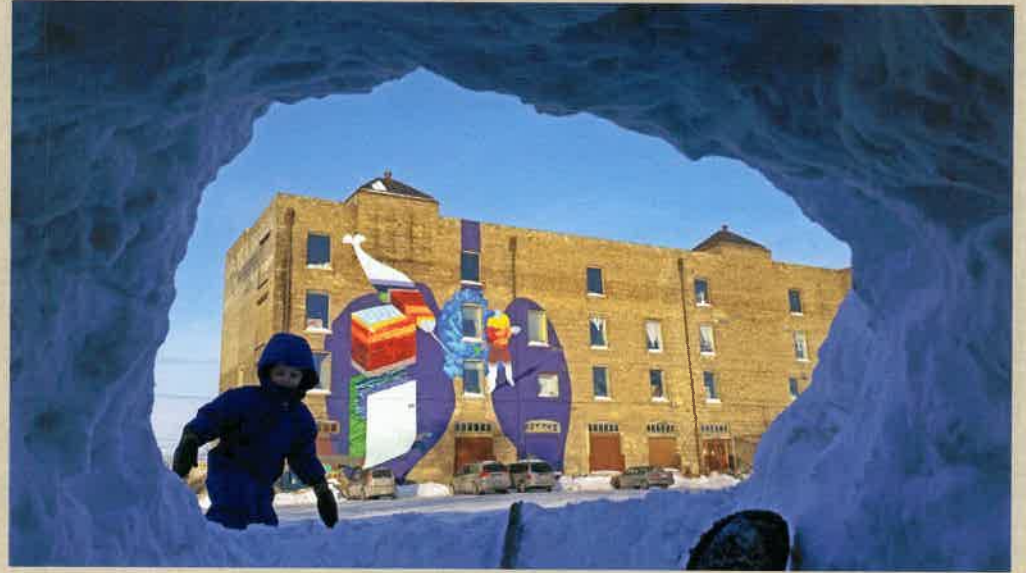
Heat oven to 400 F. Place 9x9 pan into the preheating oven. Beat eggs, flour, milk and salt in bowl. Remove pan from oven place the butter into the hot pan, rotating until the better is melted and coats the sides.

Layer the bottom with apple slices then pour batter over top. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon.

Bake uncovered until puffed and golden brown. Approx 25-30 minutes.

For 3 9x13 pans use the following measurements:

18 eggs, 3 1/2 cups milk, 1 1/4 cup butter, 3 1/3 c flour, 2 1/2 tsp salt, 10 medium apples. Voila!





Flatlanders Lenten Practice 2019

Over the last nine years we have formed a tradition of taking all the food out of our cupboards that we would ordinarily avoid and use it up as best we can.

Our goal is to grow in recognition of our abundance. We hope to use what we have and buy less during the 40 days of lent. We will also refrain from buying "extras" or luxury foods for the next 40 days. The money that we save will be used to bless and care for others in our extended community. We will watch our "stock" of food decrease with each passing week, seeking to be creative while "making do" to a greater extent than we do at other times of the year.

FLATLANDERS, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A FLATLANDER

What is a Flatlander, I wondered as I read the title posted above the entrance of this converted old warehouse situated in the deteriorated urban core of the city. Ribbons of the CPR rail system funnel through a bridge to the south, less than a hundred feet from the building. To the north, blocks and blocks of dereliction and taverns, and smack dab in the middle: this thing. Big brooding old warehouse thing. Flatlanders thing.

It's connected to a church. Does that help? Winnipeg Centre Vineyard Church. The main floor of the building is a church. But above that is this Flatlanders thing. Maybe being a part of the church is the reason for the Bible verse that appears on the walls inside: Every mountain brought low, every valley raised up (Isaiah 40:4). Even ground. Nothing to trip over. Nothing that needs grappling hooks to scale. Nothing to rappel down. Vistas so broad you can see your destination before you knew you even had one. That would make anyone traversing this stretch of open wilderness a Flatlander.

So who, exactly, are the Flatlanders?

We're the ones that popped open our tents on this expanse in our wanderings, claiming a small stake here, for awhile anyway. We're individuals and, in some instances, entire families calling this plain our home.

Its a hospitable place; we have many visitors and invite many guests. They are well fed here before they continue on their own journey. Some even return. Its a noisy place. There are children here squealing and stampeding at play down the hallways. Its an unkempt place at times, our biggest concern being the plague of dirty dishes that revisits us often, growing tower-like beside the sink, which no amount of suds seems to render permanently clean and shelved.

It can also be a peaceful place, a place of solitude. Even though there are a lot of us here, there's always a spot to squirrel yourself away to contemplate, think things over, read, and pray, especially in the middle of the day when the crowd is the thinnest, and especially if you're the one that works nights, like me. There's an activity room on the second floor. You can use the treadmill when the weathers in-climate or work out those biceps and triceps and get totally ripped for summer. Or you can crank up the tunes, belting out a song in a voice that's cracking and out-of- tune plodding away at a keyboard as you try to write a piece for the newsletter that's taken waaaay too long to finish, like this one.

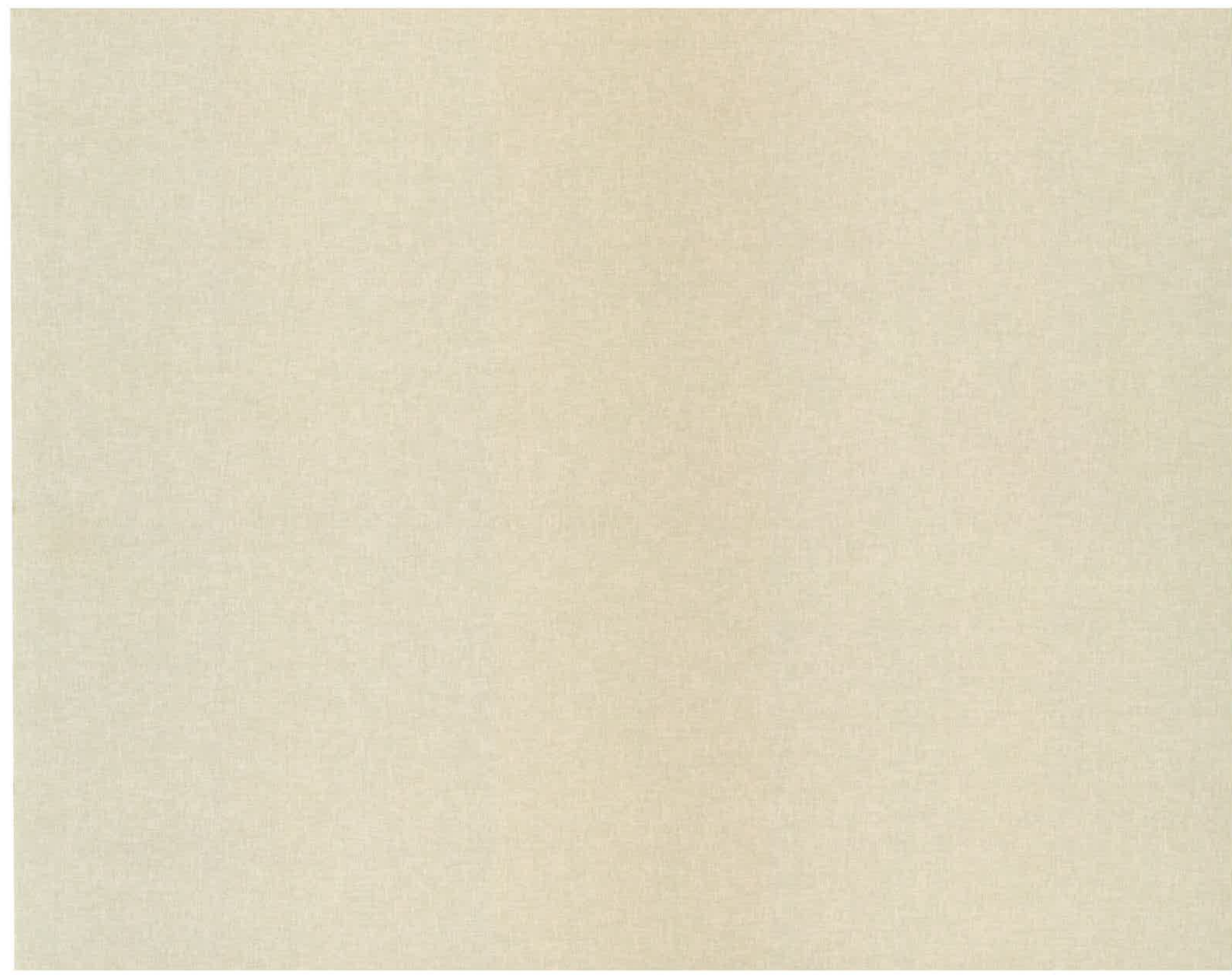
Or you can go downstairs and help out at the drop-in which happens every Tuesday and Thursday, that some of us volunteer for. Then theres the School of Justice that some of us attend. There used to be a yoga class, too.

So, in the most miniscule of nutshells, that's Flatlanders, and its residents. A group of wanderers, not necessarily lost, occupying two floors of your church, right above your head when you're here to worship on Sunday mornings. Which, again, some of us attend, but I'm not one them. I work nights, remember? I'm still sleeping. Keep that in mind when you raise your voices in praise. The Lords not deaf, you know. I mean, geesh, people.

- Chris C. - 2016 Summer Newsletter



AUTOGRAPHS



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