

## **Greetings from the centre of North Park**

Our beautiful church sits in an historic neighbourhood with many congregations coming together for over a century to worship according to their own customs and beliefs. This rich mixture has developed in us an embrace of diversity and mutual respect.

The manse at the Ukrainian Catholic church, St Nicholas the Wonderworker, was set ablaze in the middle of Tuesday night (i.e. early Wednesday morning.) Miraculously, the Pastor, his wife and their children escaped with their lives. In an email I received from their congregation this morning I was told: "Father Yuriy and family made it out ok. Very scary though."

We are grateful to know this. BUT they escaped with only their lives, their faith and their place of being loved members of their faith community.

Several people have contacted me about our response as a congregation. I thank you for asking and am glad to share what we have done. Our first response was to contact them by email Wednesday at noon to express our support, and our outrage at this act. May I suggest that prayer be our first response as individuals and as a congregation? I will be delivering two beautiful prayer shawls this afternoon to remind them of this important link we all share to the Holy One.

Earlier today, the Board took action by means of a financial donation to the Congregation of St Nicholas the Wonderworker for their Pastor, Yuriy and his family.

If you would like to financially contribute to this situation, may I make a couple of suggestions? You can make a donation, here at First Metropolitan, and mark it to be sent to St Nicholas the Wonderworker. Then a single cheque will be drafted from the congregation of the amount collected.

On the website for their congregation they have a link which will take you to the Canada Helps page. This is a reliable and secure method of making a donation to a registered charity, and it is posted on our website already.

On Sunday, we will have cards available for everyone to sign, regardless of whether or not you made a donation in any way.

May the Holy One bless us with hope and faith in this troubled time.

Shelagh