

Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Luke 22:19

Please reflect on these words of scripture in the context of organ donation.

The United Church of Canada and the Ontario East Transplant Support Group (OETSG) are pleased to work together to bring awareness and information to the public, especially those we can reach through Conferences, presbyteries, pastoral charges, and other ministries. The OETSG, like similar organizations across Canada, consists of volunteers—some of whom are waiting to receive a major organ transplant, others who have already received the Gift of Life, or donor family members. We are all committed to promoting organ donor/transplant awareness to enable passing on to another the greatest gift of all: the gift of life itself.

Please TALK about It!

Please think about what you might do if a loved one required an organ or tissue transplant to save her or his life. Could this be the greatest gift you ever gave?

If you decide to become an organ donor, please sign both cards and ask a loved one to witness your signature. Keep one card for yourself and give the other to your witness, who will retain it as a statement of your wishes.

For more information, please contact:
steward@united-church.ca or www.oetsg.com



Gift of Life Donor Notification Card
 Please retain this card with your personal ID.

Dear _____, in the event of my death, I consent to donate the following in the hope that I may help others:

any needed organs or tissue
 only the following organs and/or tissue (specify): _____

Donor's name _____ Donor's signature _____
 Date _____ Witness's signature _____
 Contact number: _____

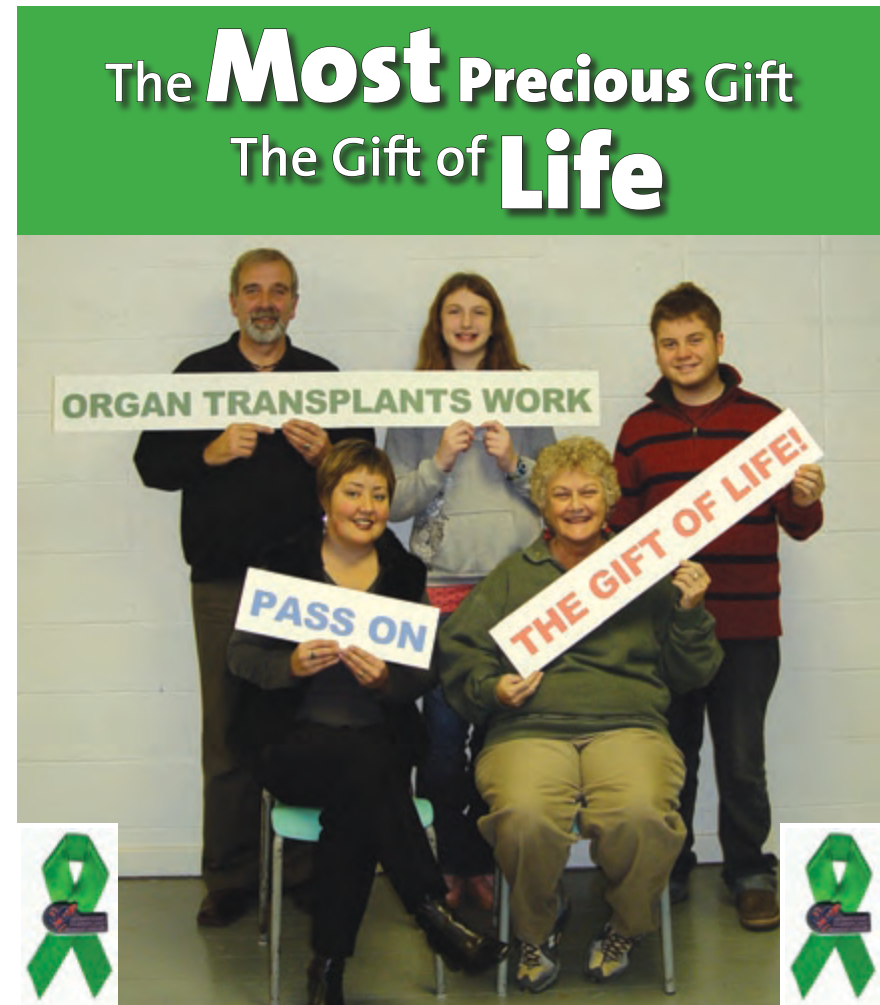


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Alistair, Katrina, and Benjamin (left to right, back row) and Shillane and Jean (left to right, front row) all owe their lives to an amazing gift given by someone else. Alistair received his liver transplant from his son and Benjamin his kidney transplant from his dad. Katrina and Jean received heart transplants and Shillane a double lung transplant, each from anonymous donors. They all have a desire to say "THANK YOU" to those who have thought of others in this way. There is nothing more precious than a human life, and perhaps the ultimate expression of love is to become an organ donor and give:

THE GIFT OF LIFE

April 20–27, 2008
 National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week



April 20–27, 2008 National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week

While we were in Nazareth last year we met with retired Judge Aboud, Chairperson of the International Christian Committee of the Department of Services to Palestinian Refugees. He told our group about a conference they've hosted for transplant recipients, donor families, and surgeons. The families and surgeons spent a weekend together getting to know one another.

Initially, I wondered what transplant surgery had to do with supporting peace in Israel and Palestine. Then, the penny dropped. The donations were made across ethnic divisions. Israelis received organs donated by Palestinians, and vice versa. The surgeons were there to remind everyone that they can't tell the difference between Palestinians and Israelis in the operating room. By the end of the weekend, those who had previously been sworn enemies were bonded by shared heartache and gratitude. The lines of ethnic hatred had disappeared.

I carry a signed donor card in my wallet. I hope it will never be used. However, if there is a moment that, as I leave this wonderful world, some aspect of my physical self can be a gift to another person, I would be glad for it. Perhaps knowing that some good came from my death would redeem the suffering of those who love me. My donation might not be a step toward world peace like the Nazareth project, but if it gives someone the gift of savouring this beautiful world, it is one drop in God's ocean of love in which we live.

National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week is an opportunity to talk with family and friends about your own wishes. I hope you will consider obtaining and completing a donor card.

The Rev. David Giuliano
Moderator of The United Church of Canada

Please consider photocopying the bulletin insert on the reverse and including it in your order of worship on Sunday, April 20 or Sunday, April 27.

The Moderator's letter can be used in your church newsletter or bulletin, or consider reading it as a stewardship minute in worship.

You can download a copy of the Moderator's letter and the insert from www.united-church.ca/exploring/stewardship.

Let's Talk about It, a DVD produced by the Canadian Transplant Association, will be available soon through AVEL, accompanied by a study guide and PowerPoint presentation. This resource helps individuals and groups to think about the life-giving choice to be an organ/tissue donor, one of the most important stewardship decisions an individual can make.

