



JOURNEYS SESSIONS: CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT CAMP HURON

A piece of paper, a Ziplock bag, and a bit of courage - that's all you need.

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IT'S VESTRY TIME AGAIN

How much resources go into sharing your good news with the wider community? Is it a cost or an investment?

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ENABLING YOUR LEADERS IN THEIR FUTURE MINISTRY

Explore Huron University's Licentiate in Theology programs.

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HURON CHURCH NEWS

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF HURON • Huron Church News is a section of the Anglican Journal • JANUARY 2026

Solar Suitcase success: Light for mothers, hope for communities

Alongside Hope completed its Solar Suitcase Project that has brought sustainable solar power to rural medical clinics in Mozambique and Madagascar. Maternal clinics in Madagascar were equipped with 14 solar suitcases, and the Diocese of Huron provided 11 of those units.

By Rev. Canon Greg Jenkins

I REMEMBER the first time I experienced a power outage as a child.

It was a hot summer night, and the ceiling fan turned lazily above me, its rhythmic creak and steady breeze the only relief from the heavy air. Then, in an instant, everything changed. The fan slowed, its blades circling more sluggishly until they came to a halt. The hum of the refrigerator vanished and the house fell into a silence so complete it felt as though the world had slipped away.

The darkness was startling, and I had to feel my way out of the room, hands stretched in front of me, searching for the doorframe. I was scared I might trip or step on the cat's tail. Each step was tentative, guided only by touch, until I finally found the flashlight that broke the spell of the void with its narrow beam of light.



Program support staff member Heather Jenkins of Alongside Hope making presentation of the Solar Suitcase at General Synod 2025. (Photo: Carolyn Cummins, Director of Fundraising and Donor Relations of Alongside Hope)

Now imagine that same darkness in a rural clinic where a mother is giving birth. A nurse clenches a flashlight between her teeth to guide the delivery, a fragile solution that works only if everything goes smoothly.

But complications happen. In those moments, light is not a luxury; it is the difference between danger and safety, between fear and hope.

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5)

With gratitude and joy, we celebrate the completion of the Solar Suitcase Project: a life changing initiative that has brought sustainable solar power to every rural medical clinic in Mozambique and Madagascar.

In Madagascar, 14 solar suitcases were required to equip maternal health clinics. The Diocese of Huron stepped forward in faith and generosity, providing 11 of these units.

Through this gift, Huron has ensured that mothers giving birth at night in rural communities will no longer face the dangers of delivering in darkness.

This project came to life through the shared partnership of a generous donor and the collective support of deaneries across the diocese. With the donor's matched funding, the following donations were made:

• Delaware Deanery: Contributed \$43,593, funding 6½ suitcases;

• Essex Deanery: Contributed \$14,169, funding two suitcases;

• Across the Diocese: Together we raised \$72,730, funding 11 suitcases in total.

Solar Suitcases are more than equipment; they ease anxiety and offer care. Each unit provides reliable electricity for lighting, a fetal doppler, charging ports, and other essential medical tools.

They have a life span of 25 years and the funds raised include transporting them and offering training in their use.

This project is a testament to what can be accomplished when communities unite in generosity. The Diocese of Huron has not only met a practical need but has embodied the Gospel call to care for the vulnerable, literally letting our light shine.

Go Huron!

Rev. Canon Dr. Greg Jenkins is the Chair of Alongside Hope, Huron.

All Saints' Waterloo – the best Shared Space in Canada



A prestigious award for All Saints' Waterloo SideWalk Community project

All Saints' Anglican Church in Waterloo won the best Shared Spaces project award at the annual competition hosted by the School of Cities at University of Toronto and the Canadian Urban Institute.

The results were presented at the Canadian Urban Institute's State of Canadian Cities Summit in Ottawa on December 3 and 4, 2025.

Around 150 projects were submitted for the competition in this category and 89 were selected to be presented as the examples of successful local solutions from across Canada.

Each December, the Summit brings together hundreds

of urban professionals, policy makers, business leaders, community advocates, and academics to assess the health of Canadian cities and shape their future.

Detailing All Saints' success as the "spotlighted solution", the organizers presented SideWalk Community as part of an extensive redevelopment of the church's property to provide one of the only in-neighbourhood community centres in the city.

"The creation of the community centre stemmed from the realization that there was a lack of spaces for recreation and connection in this rapid-

ly changing neighbourhood with a large percentage of new Canadians, visible minorities, and families with limited disposable income."

By thoughtfully repurposing church property and listening to local voices, community champions and church volunteers created an essential community amenity in the SideWalk Community Centre.

As stated in the "spotlighted solution", All Saints' example "demonstrates how churches can fill gaps in 'third places' and strengthen community life at the neighbourhood level."

To walk these halls and read these stories...



► PAGE 9: MOHAWK INSTITUTE - A PART OF OUR HISTORY



GROW YOUR LEGACY
For ideas about starting meaningful conversations on legacy giving in your church visit
anglicanfoundation.org/legacytalk

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► PAGE 7: ANGLICAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA - LEGACY GIVING



A tender moment – finding ourselves between the old and the new

THE SEASON of Christmas and Epiphany are, in our society, a “Happy New Year!” time. Kind greetings and well-wishes are offered in a heartfelt way and there seems to be a bit of hope in the air.

This is a tender moment. Whenever we find ourselves between the old and the new, we want to lean into the hope, the warmth, the kindness of the moment. Gather with others, friends old and new, to “raise a cup”—take-



**BISHOP
TODD
TOWNSHEND**

ing a sip of this sacred communion.

No one knows exactly what will come in this new time, yet we have hope. Our hope is clearly grounded in the Incarnation, the event that we celebrate at Christmas, the birth of Jesus, Son of God. This gift of God’s saving

presence remains as our one true hope.

I read recently that as we cross the threshold into a new year, fully in the presence of God’s Holy One, two profound truths about us intertwine like ancient melodies in the ears of the faithful. First, we are not merely people who pray—we are often an answer to prayer. Second, each one of us stands as a steward of divine mysteries. A lot could be written about these two truths but perhaps is best to simply receive them and

watch for how God reveals the truth of them.

In this coming new year: may we be people of prayer and answers to prayer, may we be faithful stewards of the divine mysteries, may we find the courage to be kind when our hearts begin to feel hardened, may we be given wisdom to forgive even when wounds remain unhealed, and may we find the grace to extend our care to both friend and stranger.

Blessings for 2026 and beyond!

+ Todd

Bring Hope, Faith and Love into the New Year with prayer

By Donna Whiteside

AS WE RING in the New Year singing the familiar words to the traditional song of Auld Lang Syne, kindling feelings of nostalgia and reflection of the past year, we now look forward to 2026 with Hope, Faith and Love.

These three key ingredients in Christian life and are also the prime inspiration for prayer. Communication is necessary in any family setting and prayer is a necessity in our life with Jesus. Initiat-

ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

ing prayer into our daily lives with Hope, Faith and Love is a good start to the New Year.

Every wish and dream for the future is based on a hope for better things to come. When we pray, we share our hope by asking God to bless our world with new possibilities for peace and reconciliation in the coming year.

Our faith in Jesus and His ability to bring our prayers to fruition is a major factor.

Full trust and confidence that our requests are not only heard, but will be fulfilled according to the will of God, is the faith needed for our prayers to be answered.

The last ingredient of prayer is love. Love of God, love of family, love of neighbour, love of creation. A heart filled with love when we pray, will get God’s attention every time. There is no better way to feel the presence of Jesus than to offer prayer with a heart overflowing with love.

Let us pray:

Precious Lord, another year has come and gone, but a New Year has just begun.

We pray for peace where conflict rages, for abundance where food is scarce, for healing where there is sickness and for compassion where there is brokenness.

Bring hope for a better world, faith in Your justice and truth, and love for all of humanity through the power of Your Holy Spirit and in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Donna Whiteside is an AFP Executive Member.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Wishing you a year filled with happiness, joy and prosperity

2026

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Editor

Davor Milicevic
huronchurchnews@gmail.com
519-434-6893, ext. 251
c/o Huron Church House
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Angela Rush
huronchurch.ads@gmail.com
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Todd Townshend
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Journeys sessions (Christian Education at Camp Huron)

A Ziplock bag full of short notes left for a cabin group that would come the following week: A small, safe risk that turns into a message of love and courage.

By Rev. Chris Travers

OF ALL THE SOUNDS that fill a summer camp—the shouts of games in the main compound, the crunch of gravel underfoot, the crackle of the evening campfire, the sound of waves from the lake, and, of course, the sound of coming down the laneway into the thin place that is Camp Huron—it's the quiet conversations that often hold the most power.

This summer, I tried something new in our Journeys sessions (Christian Education): a lesson that began with scripture and ancient history and ended with a Ziplock bag full of paper pieces, ready to be picked up by another cabin the following week.

Each session began with one of the children reading a story of the early disciples. We huddled together not in a stuffy classroom but in the space where we worship twice daily—the indoor chapel—and we leaned over a map, talking about what it must have been like to share the Good News. It wasn't just sharing, though; we got specific.

"Imagine," I asked the campers, "what risks were involved in travelling around with the most amazing, life-changing story?"

They listed all sorts of dangers, from dehydration and sore feet to capsized boats and bandits.

"Now, imagine you have to share it with a soldier from an army that's occupying your town, a government that has the power to throw you in jail, or even hurt you for what you're about to say."

They thought deeply and listed other kinds of risks: rejection, ridicule, persecution. We talked about the courage it took to speak about Jesus in hostile, "occupied territory,"



The lesson was no longer just a history lesson but a lived experience. They learned that evangelism isn't about having all the answers or being a perfect speaker; it's about having an experience of God's love so real that you can't help but want to share it with the next person, even if it feels a little risky.

and what kind of message you must have to be willing to take all those risks.

Then, they received their own mission. They had to put together a package of notes for a cabin group that would come the following week. They would become disciples sharing Good News about God—and also sharing what not to miss during their time at camp.

"They might be nervous, or unsure, or just not know what this place is all about," I explained, "so your task is to write them a message. Tell them what you want them to know about God, or about this camp. Be their 'good news.'"

The results were astounding. The messages weren't theological essays; they were pure, heartfelt testimony, with many recurring themes:

"God loves you. Don't be afraid to be yourself here at

Camp Huron. I hope you have lots of fun. Give everyone grace and forgiveness. Camp is a safe space."

They were taking a small, safe risk—the risk of being vulnerable, of putting their faith into words for a stranger. They were, in their own way, understanding the disciples' dilemma and courage.

Then, the following week, after the cabin finished their notes for the next group and went to collect the package left for them from one of many locations around the camp, came the most powerful part.

We opened the package together and read through the messages. The chapel was quiet as they listened to the words of those who had come before them.

The reactions were noticeable: a shy smile, a nod of agreement, a whispered or shouted "wow," or "I hope

we get to eat that, try that activity." One camper said quietly, "I thought I was the only one who felt that way." Another, listening intently, said, "It feels like they're our friends, and we haven't even met them."

They weren't just receiving a piece of advice; they were receiving a testament. They were experiencing the result of someone else's courage to share. The notes bridged the gap between weeks and age groups, creating an instant, invisible community of faith—a part of something bigger. The new campers felt seen, welcomed, and loved.

In our debrief before the end of the session, we connected the dots. "How did you feel getting those notes?" I asked.

"Like someone cared about me," one said.

"Like I belong here," added another.

"It made me excited for the week."

"And that," I said, "is a tiny glimpse of what it feels like to receive the Good News. It's a message of love and belonging passed down through generations, from people who took risks to make sure it reached you. Your note is your version of that. You are the disciples for the next cabin."

The lesson was no longer just a history lesson but a lived experience. They learned that evangelism isn't about having all the answers or being a perfect speaker; it's about having an experience of God's love so real that you can't help but want to share it with the next person, even if it feels a little risky. It's about leaving a message of hope for the ones who will come after us.

The final group of campers had the same experience, although their notes were directed toward the staff, to encourage us as we once again departed the sacred space. The artwork they left decorated the altar at our final Eucharist together, and the remaining notes formed the sermon—for what else could be said about our time together than what was written by those whom we had come together to serve this summer?

The sun has set on another summer at Camp Huron, and I like to think that the walls of the many gathering spaces are whispering with the accumulated prayers and encouragement of the young ones and the staff—each one learning that the most important things we can leave behind are love, courage, and a message of good news for the next traveller to come down that sacred laneway.

Rev. Chris Travers is Camp Huron's Chaplain.

**We are counting the sleeps until summer, our 80th anniversary!
Online registration opens on February 26, 2026!**



Hope was placed back in its rightful place (Faith Witness at Synod)



MICHELLE HUGHES



I HAVE BEEN with St. George's Parish of the Blue Mountains since 2020 and was baptized in 2021.

Bishop Todd and Archdeacon Tanya kindly asked me to speak at Synod about how being a steward of the gift has shaped my journey of faith. A little bit of history may be helpful.

Life began in the Anglican church, attending Sunday school and youth group. I wasn't baptized as a child, because my parents said they wanted me to make up my own mind about religion when I was an adult.

Over time – although I attended church off and on – I drifted away. I loosely believed in God. I believed in a Creator, but I saw God more as a distant father who left us for very good reason. I didn't understand why God would want anything to do with us, or this world. I didn't understand Jesus. My faith was placed in myself; I trusted in my own strength, in my abilities to get through life.

I also believed in family, and I believed in love. And that was where I placed my hope. I felt as if I could create some little oasis in the world. And God is patient, to let me go on my own. In the end, I set out to do things differently, to be better, and somehow ended up in the same place. Now, I was the problem, and I cried out to God with an unplanned prayer for help.

There was this process of journeying back to God, who was so kind to allow me, and finally asking the question "Who is Jesus?" Then, being drawn to read the four gospels

(through that particular lens) and knowing it was the truth... Knowing as experiencing it, just as we learned in our class during preparation for confirmation. *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God* (Ephesians 2:8).

I didn't deserve it, nor earn it, all has been done by Jesus on the cross. The same gift from God, as for everyone. Now hope was placed back in its rightful place, in who Jesus is, what he has done and what he will do.

Then I had to learn to live from there, with all that had been given, as life's framework had changed. There was this small beginning of accountability. I wanted to do something for God, something outward. I saw Baptism as a beginning. I wanted to bear witness before God and family, to get started, and to make up for lost time.

Community was what I needed, to go to church... But it was during COVID, so I began watching St. George's online, "Mid-day with our Canon Gray". And I saw somebody who believed and was teaching God's Word. I saw a community sharing in worship.

It's funny, because I always felt that I would come back to church someday, meaning Sundays, but I never thought I could find the time. I find that hilarious now, because once I started, I couldn't stop. Finding time for church is so not an issue.

In St. George's kitchen outreach is where I first discovered a love of serving together. The beginning of devoting time to service: I would look

around and learn from everyone. We served over 10,000 meals to families and seniors during Covid. Our meal bags have a sticker, "Caring for others because God cares for us all." That's the mission, and Jesus, who came to serve, is the model.

And I love our church because it's not like the world. I see people in our church living differently, not perfectly, but with a difference. It's evident in their interactions, in their diverse modelling of Jesus. I love when we are inclusive and welcoming of everybody. I love when we share God's gift of love with generosity.

St George's has a generous amount of property, right in the middle of town. At present, we're sharing this blessing in new ways. We recently planted a pollinator garden, much admired by the community groups in our parish hall, looking out through the window at the bees and butterflies. New projects are also underway with a community parkette and a makerspace renovation of our old carriage house. All of these benefit our neighbouring community, involve relationships, and bringing God into.

This is how I see stewardship: Management of another's resources, and accountability, which will come.

I see time now as an opportunity to serve. Like so many, I look forward to spending quiet time with God, first in the morning and last at night. That's part of our Anglican Faith. Life has become a rhythm of days that has shaped out naturally.

The church is where I spend days in service. That doesn't

mean that when I'm with my family, that I love so much, or serving alongside others in our neighbouring community, that I'm outside the church. I'm always thinking about church and wanting to share its true life with others. I'm always looking for ways the church can help to meet the needs in our neighbourhood. It's about relationships. I pray for God to continue to grow me there. Life is all under God's umbrella.

I try to use what God has given, where is best fitted. What I care most about, or what bothers too much, is a good indicator of where God has equipped for service. Many of the ways I used to make money are used in our church or neighbouring community. I love hospitality still and serving alongside others. I find serving outside in our neighbouring community, working together, creates authentic relationship. Barriers come down; and friendships form.

We have so much beauty around us in the Blue Mountains. Life is like a postcard. I love going swimming with friends, mostly at sunrise, in the fresh blue waters of Georgian Bay. Our community loves the Bay. My favourite is seeing all the kids, on the last day of school, towels around necks, riding bicycles to the Bay for a swim. I need to spend more time remembering: it is perfect beauty God created for our enjoyment, but it also belongs to God, as does all the gift of creation around us. And I share in responsibility for its care.

Michelle Hughes is a St. George's of the Blue Mountains parishioner.

The Companions Program

September 2026 – June 2027

The residential Companions program is an immersive opportunity to experience a contemporary monastic community rooted in the Benedictine tradition. It is open to women aged 21 and up regardless of Christian denomination.

Companions live, work, and pray alongside the sisters, learning from them but also sharing each companion's own gifts with the sisters and their ministries. They will:

- ↳ Learn to cultivate peaceful and creative ways of living in a diverse intentional community
- ↳ Appreciate silence and solitude as well as community and service for a healthy life
- ↳ Put down deep roots of spiritual intimacy with God and each other
- ↳ Develop a personal path to ongoing spiritual growth



Cost:
Residential Companions: sugg. \$150/month.
Companions Online: sugg. \$100/month.
If cost is a hindrance, assistance is available.

Open to women of all Christian expressions, **Companions Online** is an opportunity to become "monastics in the world," living a Benedictine rhythm of prayer, work, study, and recreation. Online Companions learn to develop practices that support and nurture their spiritual life from the comfort of their homes.

They meet regularly for classes and discussion groups, and commit to times of personal prayer at home. They share in book studies, participate in online worship and sometimes screen a film relevant to spiritual growth and self-understanding. Online Companions also develop spiritual disciplines that follow the liturgical year.

To learn more about either program, or to apply, email:
Canon St. Elizabeth Rolfe-Thomas, SSJD, at
companions@ssjd.ca, or phone St. John's Convent:
416-226-2201, ext. 304

The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine



Application start & end (both programs):
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Early Bird Deadline: February 28, 2026
Registration Deadline: April 12, 2026

'I will, with God's help' (Not one step of this journey was taken by me alone)

We conclude our reflections on ordination with Rev. Maya-Melé Okazaki's and Rev. Janet Ternes' stories. They were ordained deacons in June this year, along with Allison Agius, Tianna Gocan and Gerard Phillips. On November 18 all of them were ordained priests in the Diocese of Huron.

By Rev. Maya-Melé Okazaki

Beyond those gently lit doors of a poised, ever-present Cathedral, a stately invitation is offered to the community, to the clergy, visitors and tonight, the ordinands!

The door was open and I stepped in, at the end of one journey and the beginning of another, into a redesigned Cathedral, and a beautifully written liturgy capable of being a warm embrace of truth, purpose and destiny.

All the worries, the internal questions, and the nervousness lifted in the realization that I am not alone, ever, even when I felt the most alone. At my reserved and appointed seat, amid a constant hustle and bustle of organization, my eyes witnessed the truth: not one step of this journey was taken by me alone, not one. There they were – those who had walked with me, with all of us. The bishop, colleagues, friends, co-workers, clergy, family, ministers, and yes, all of heaven and I knew... *I will, with God's help.*

The prayer, with words forming our foundation, at the Baptismal Font, became the perfect launching pad for the night yet to unfold. My heart was also warmed by the Covenant words of servanthood that made clear the call and its promise of a Christ-centered life.

While the entire ceremonial service was deeply meaningful and unforgettable, there were two transcending moments.

The first moment when all things went silent, Bishop Todd gently rested his hands on my head and the beautiful tingling warmth resembling liquid oil, covered my

head. A hand touched my right shoulder and another burst of warmth flowed over me. Many hands and much warmth continued until what I can only describe the feeling as being 'Under the Wings of the Almighty' and I knew... *I will, with God's help.*

The individual vestments in all their glorious red fabric and ornate embroidery, hung in anticipation of their first appearance. There was an air of reverence and achievement lingering as we changed our garments and walked one by one to where the Bread and the Oil revealed their intent. When Bishop Todd took these well-used hands into his own and covered them in blessed oil, they felt heated, renewed and anointed for service; as the bread helped absorb the oil, the depth of ritual meaning consumed me in thought and prayerful reverence. My trembling hands were strengthened in their bond with my heart to serve. Peace and oneness filled my being and I knew... *I will, with God's help.*

Our Ordination Night was beyond what I could have thought or imagined. Immersed in our Baptismal Vows; moved through the Ordination Rite; blessed and anointed into service unto Christ our King; presented to the Communities that surround us; and welcomed as brothers and sisters standing in accountability to each other and to the bishop.

We are one, together in Christ, and may we stand in assurance every moment of every day to say...

I will, with God's help.

Rev. Maya-Melé Okazaki is Priest Assistant to the Priest-in-Charge of the Rondeau Bay Transfiguration Partnership Ministry.



Rev. Maya-Melé Okazaki at the Service of Ordination, November 18, 2025.
Photo: Charlotte Poolton

'The Holy Spirit moved us as our best selves'



Rev. Janet Ternes in St. Paul's Cathedral at the Service of Ordination. November 18, 2025.
Photo: Charlotte Poolton

By Rev. Janet Ternes

BEAUTIFUL is not a broad enough word to describe the night of my ordination, and yet the worship lacked no beauty, and it was full of grace, and so beautiful suits.

I felt loved, which is a curious thing to say, about being received by so many supportive people, all singing, speaking, and praying in unison. And this to a singular wish: that these ordained to the presbyterate might help form them in holiness.

Curious the ask, prayer worthy. And curious the peace, after all the trials of discerning a calling, the fear that this might just be of me. Curious the enthusiasm, the collective words spoken with such confidence when the calling comes in a quiet voice. Curious the binding, to have my own narrative bound to the sacred text, the Word creative faithful.

And so, the night was beautiful, they were resolved, of one voice. I felt drawn forward by them, their hands held me fast, the wish of their hearts pushed me down as though I might escape by elevating from the spot. I could have, if happiness were the helium behind this Amen. Curious enthusiasm.

Sometimes in the church we get disheartened. We linger over discord and differences until deflated, as though this is all we are, the broken. But here, this night of the ordination, the Holy Spirit moved us as our best selves, the ones that belong to him through baptism. The ones who trust that by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ there would be a resounding AMEN to holy endeavor.

And so it was... Wrapped for sacramental duty in a sea of red cloth, anointed to hold bread and wine, trusted to proclaim, not because I can, but because He can, He is faithful, and He is for us. I felt received, loved and upheld, an Amen moment, a perfect moment of accord.

The night of my ordination is almost too personal to speak of, except that it is not fully personal but the movement of the Christian community, and that gathered voice and intention is what made it beautiful in holiness. Not because we are worthy to sing praise, but because we are His, and to Him we are beautiful, and so we sing of His glory.

Rev. Janet Ternes is the Curate to the Rector of St James', Paris.

Relocating the reservoir of our corporate memory: What is an archive?

Diocesan Archives is in the process of relocating from the Huron University College to the new, permanent location, at St. Paul's Cathedral. It will temporarily close in Spring 2026 to facilitate the move and will reopen as The Reverend Canon Dr. J. Douglas Leighton Archives, in Fall 2026.

By Dez Nacario

Canon 16, Section 5 mandates that parishes deposit "all Parish registers, books, documents, records and papers relating to the Parish which are no longer in use and are suitable as archival material."

But what exactly is an archive and why is it necessary for us as a Diocese to maintain one?

The materials outlined in the Canon contain the stories and memories of each parish, and it is the task of the Archives to preserve them and keep them safe for the use of future generations.

An archive is a collection or repository of information that documents history.

Typically, archives have a focus such as geographical location, organization, family, or group of people. The purpose of an archive is to collect, preserve, and make available historical information to interested users.

What makes archives unique from libraries, museums, and galleries are the collection mandates. Libraries are concerned with collecting published materials such as books and periodicals and museums and galleries focus on artefacts and visual media. While all of these types of materials could find their way into an archive, the majority of an archival collection deals with records.

Records are typically textual such as diaries and journals, meeting minutes, correspondence, by-laws, property documents, and financial ledgers; however, archival records can also include maps, photographs, sound and video recordings, and architectural plans and

Receipt of parish material will be suspended beginning Friday, December 19, 2025.

Parishes will be notified of a date in Fall 2026 when they will be able to transfer materials to the new space.

Tips on how to safely store your records until we are able to receive them again:

- Store records in a clean, dry place – preferably in drawers or on shelving, not on the floor;
- Try to limit your records' exposure to light, pests, harsh chemicals, and fluctuating temperatures;
- Write legibly in pen (future researchers will thank you!);
- Keep your records in chronological order or otherwise organized in a way that makes logical sense;
- Apply appropriate labels and names to files including dates when possible.

drawings. Records can be both physical (on paper) or digital.

Regardless of format, archival records are materials that were created or received during the regular activities of the person or group to whom the collection pertains. Each type of record in an archive must be assessed for its historical value or significance, collected, organized to a set of standards, preserved, and made available for research.

Archives can offer security, environmental control such as temperature and humidity regulation, and most importantly, knowledge on how to best keep the records in a way that ensures longevity and easy accessibility.

Depositing records in the Archives clears up space in the parishes and creates standardization in how they're organized and stored.

The upcoming move to St. Paul's Cathedral will help centralize Diocesan services and provide more storage space and researcher space.

The Archives Move Task Force looks forward to unveiling the new facility in 2026!

Questions about the move and new space can be directed to: leightonarchives@huron.anglican.ca.

Dez Nacario is the diocesan Archivist.



A PHOTO OF THE ARCHIVES - FOR THE ARCHIVES:
The Verschoyle Phillip Cronyn Memorial Archives located at the Huron University closes its doors for good. The diocesan archives will reopen as Rev. Canon Dr. J. Douglas Leighton Archives in Fall 2026, and will be located in St. Paul's Cathedral.



BUSY BEHIND THE CLOSED DOORS:
Moving all records from current location will be a huge undertaking for the Archives Move Task Force.



Merry Christmas Market and outreach activities at St. George's of Forest Hill, Kitchener

St. George's of Forest Hill held a successful and 'Merry' Christmas Market on November 15.

Our Christmas Elves welcomed our visitors to the Craft & Baking tables, Book room, Christmas Treasures and Tea room. We wish all our fellow Anglican friends a Merry Christmas and Best Wishes in 2026.

Earlier in the month, on November 1, we hosted Fall Children's Community Closet. We assisted 90 families who enjoyed some hospitality with our Outreach members.

Mary Ann Millar

Photo: HUGS AND SMILES—St. George's of Forest Hill is always a very busy place, but the period around Christmas is parishioners' favourite time of the year.

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Visit: <https://diohuron.org/resources/tithe-ly-partnership>

Legacy Giving: Vestry season may be the right time to start planning

Anglican Foundation of Canada encourages the conversation about legacy giving and provides the Legacy Talk Parish Toolkit.

As vestry season unfolds, many parish councils and stewardship committees are taking stock of the year behind them and planning faithfully for what lies ahead.

For some, this is the moment when a familiar refrain is heard: "We should really do more about legacy giving."

It's an area of stewardship that many churches aspire to strengthen but rarely find the right moment—or the right tools—to begin. Resources from secular charities don't always translate to a faith-based context, and conversations about wills and bequests can feel awkward or out of place in the life of a congregation.

"We often hear from parishes that they want to start the conversation about legacy giving, but they're not sure how," says Michelle Hauser, Development & Communications Officer for the Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC). "That's exactly why we created the Legacy Talk Parish Toolkit—to make it easier, more natural, and more spiritually grounded."

Rather than focusing on financial targets, Legacy Talk connects legacy giving to gratitude, discipleship, and hope for the future of the Church. Each seasonal toolkit aligns with the rhythms of the liturgical year, offering clergy and lay leaders reflections, bulletin inserts, sample messages, and practical templates that can be adapted to any parish setting.

Begin with Vestry Season: Planning with Purpose

Annual Vestry Reports and planning meetings provide a perfect opportunity to integrate legacy giving into the parish's financial and spiritual vision.

For example, the Vestry Season Toolkit offers a Parish Council Checklist—simple, concrete steps that can help normalize legacy giving as part of a parish's ongoing stewardship practice: Add legacy giving as a standing item in stewardship conversations; Include a legacy paragraph in the vestry report;

Ensure your website or bulletin mentions bequest options; Publicly thank legacy donors when appropriate.

"For many churches, the checklist is a great place to start—it helps parishes move from 'we should do something' to actually feeling confident about making legacy giving part of their spiritual DNA."

From Lent to Christmas: A Year of Gratitude, Growth, and Faith

Across the seasons of the Church year, Legacy Talk offers practical ways to weave legacy giving into parish life—always grounded in faith rather than fundraising.

During Lent, parishes are invited to reflect on what they treasure and why, exploring legacy giving as a spiritual practice rooted in love and intention.

The Easter to Pentecost toolkit celebrates growth and gratitude, encouraging churches to see legacy gifts as seeds of faith—planted today to bless

the Church of tomorrow.

In Ordinary Time, the focus shifts to steady, everyday stewardship through simple reflections and conversation tools that keep faith communities engaged year-round.

As All Saints' approaches, parishes are encouraged to remember, honour, and plan—giving thanks for those whose generosity built the Church we inherit and asking, "What legacy will we leave?"

Finally, Advent and Christmas offer a natural moment to express gratitude and hope, reminding us that every generation helps "prepare a place" for those who will follow.

"It is our hope that using Legacy Talk as a guide will help parishes build a rhythm of gratitude and generosity," says Hauser, "and that 2026 will be the year more church communities feel inspired to take that next faithful step—turning good intentions into lasting impact."

To explore or download the full series, visit anglicanfoundation.org/legacytalk.



GROW YOUR LEGACY

For ideas about starting meaningful conversations on legacy giving in your church visit

anglicanfoundation.org/legacytalk

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PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

Rector of St. Mary's (Walkerville), Windsor, effective 1 May 2026.

Inductions

On behalf of Bishop Townshend, the Venerable Dr Stephen McClatchie inducted the Venerable Carrie Irwin as the Rector of St. John's (Sandwich), Windsor, on Advent Sunday, 30 November. The preacher was the Venerable Amanda Longmoore.

New Parish

Bishop Townshend approved a name for the new parish in Sarnia, following the vote at their vestry meeting last Sunday. Please welcome St. Michael and All Angels, Sarnia, to the diocesan family!

New Huron Church House Staff



Olivia Murray, our new receptionist, is honoured to join the Diocese of Huron and serve as

the first point of contact helping to create a welcoming and respectful atmosphere. She looks forward to contributing to the mission of the diocese and to connecting with the people who make it so special.



Liliia Petryk is an Accounting Clerk. She is excited to support the financial operations of the

Diocese and looks forward to contributing to the efficiency and accuracy of the department's work and collaborating with the team.



Valerie Chelangat is our new Communications Officer. She is eager to share stories that highlight

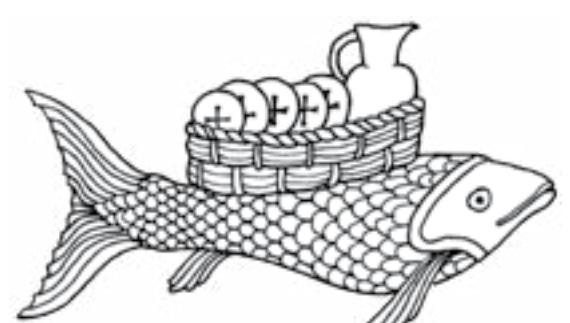
the vibrant ministries and people of the Diocese of Huron. Valerie looks forward

ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN

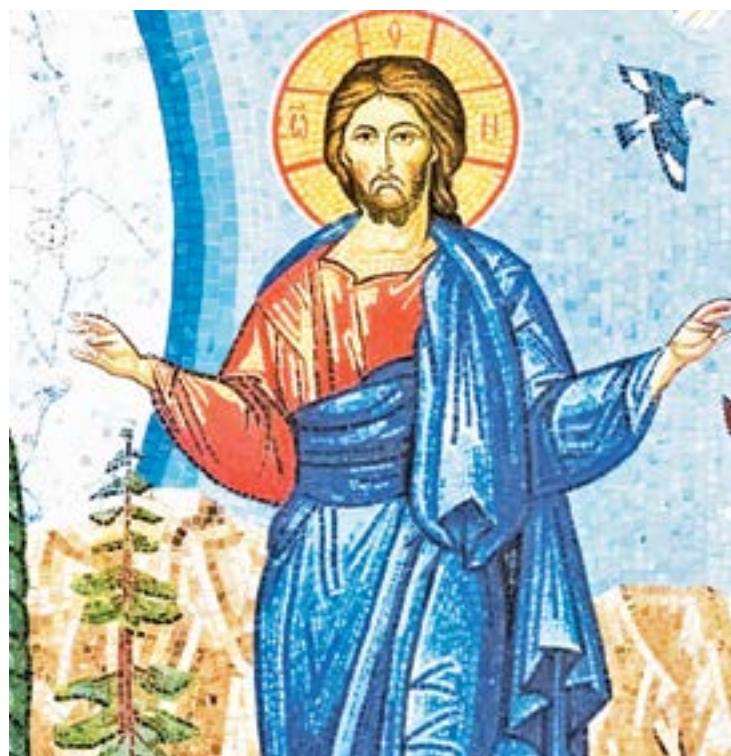
In Memory

Delaware Deanery

St. Thomas Church
St. Thomas
Irene Hume



Looking backward, pressing forward



God is always renewing, reshaping, and calling us into a deeper, more courageous life of faith.

See, I am making all things new.

Revelation 21:5

By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

IT'S JANUARY. That means a new year, complete with a mixture of hope, curiosity, and a sense of possibility.

The beginning of a new year is, however, more than a moment to set goals. A new year is also an invitation to reflect more deeply on how God has been shaping us over the past 12 months as we look ahead to how we are being called to grow in the twelve months yet to come. EfM reminds us that growing as a Christian happens through the steady weaving together of scripture, tradition, reason, and experience, and the New Year offers a natural time to reflect.

Scripture shows us again and again that God is a God of renewal, calling people into new paths, new understandings, and new communities of purpose. Tradition gives us practices of prayer, discernment, and reflection that help us take stock of our lives without fear or self-condemnation. Reason helps us see patterns recognizing where growth is needed and where new habits



Education for Ministry is spiritual, theological, liturgical, and practical formation for lay people.

EfM is about integrating faith and life, and communicating our faith to others.

or boundaries might be helpful. Experience grounds us, encouraging us to notice how God has already been present and at work in the joys and challenges of our lives.

EfM teaches us to ask questions like: Where is God in this? What is God calling forth? How might I respond? The New Year is a powerful moment to ask these and other questions. We might reflect on how we use our time, how we listen for God's voice, how we serve others, or how we nurture relationships that strengthen us for the ministry we are called to in our everyday lives.

As we begin this new year, we do so trusting that God meets us with grace and possibility. The Scripture above, *See, I am making all things new*, from Revelation, affirms what



lays at the heart of all Christian growth, and indeed what lies at the heart of the EfM journey. God is always renewing, reshaping, and calling us into a deeper, more courageous life of faith.

So Happy New Year from us all at EfM Huron, and may 2026 be for each of us a time of renewing as we answer this invitation to reflect more deeply and to grow more intentionally.

If we at EfM can be of any assistance to you, or you would like to learn more about what EfM has to offer please reach out to Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron EfM Coordinator or myself Val Kenyon at EFM@huron.anglican.ca.

Rev. Canon Dr. Val Kenyon is EFM Animator in Huron. EFM@huron.anglican.ca

Facing another New Year: Each step forward is taken in faith

A NEW YEAR BEGINS. Indeed, it is that time of making and resolutions. January 1 is a day for great promises. We look at the year ahead and hopefully see all kinds of potential. We want things to be better for ourselves and for the world.

Naturally enough as the page of the calendar turns over to the fresh new year, it seems the right time to put things right, to start fresh, to begin again. For those so inclined, the first day of a new year is a time of hope and of great potential.

And yet, for others it is a time of uncertainty. That page changes from December 2025 and turns to January 2026 and that shift raises all kinds of questions and a new series of questions. What will lie ahead? Who will we say goodbye to in these next twelve months? What will become of me? Is this the last turn of the calendar for me?

Whether we tend to take the New Year in with a sense of hope and expectation or whether we see the shift in time as a time of dread and uncertainty, I pray that we can enter this New Year in



**It's Just
KEVIN
V. REV. KEVIN
GEORGE**

faith. We do not know what lies ahead. We cannot know. The older I get, the more thankful I am for that unknowing.

In her book *Tramp for the Lord* Corrie Ten Boom writes that "Faith is like radar that sees through the fog."

Having grown up in Newfoundland, I have seen my share of fog. For me, the turn of the New is a lot like a dense fog.

As a youngster, as ominous

Whether what lies ahead is joy or tragedy, we know that when the fog lifts, we will face what is revealed with God as our strength.

and uneasy as a foggy morning could feel, there was also something almost mystic about stepping off the back porch into the unknown, moving toward the sounds of water on beach rock, fog horns, and outboard motors pushing punts across the harbour. Each step forward, a step toward the potential of what the day ahead might bring. Each step was taken in faith. The fog will lift. When? Don't know! What will be

revealed when the fog rises? A mystery.

We cannot know what the year ahead will bring for us. As followers on the Way of Jesus, we step off the back porch of 2025 and step into the crisp, cool, and foggy air of 2026 with faith as our radar. Each step ahead is one made in trust. We do not walk alone. Whether what lies ahead is joy or tragedy, we know that when the fog lifts, we will face what is

revealed with God as our strength. As the prophet Isaiah foretold,

"When you go through deep waters,

I will be with you.

When you go through rivers of difficulty,

you will not drown.

When you walk through the fire of oppression,

you will not be burned up;

the flames will not consume you."

(Isaiah 43:2)

With that said, I look forward to journeying into the unknown of the year ahead, with you fellow sojourners by my side.

I am not one for resolutions. Writer and critic Susan Sontag said, "Kindness, kindness, kindness. I want to make a New year's prayer, not a resolution. I'm praying for courage."

As we head into 2026 together, I am making a New Year's prayer - for you and for all of us, I pray for more kindness and for courage.

Very Rev. Dr. Kevin George is Rector of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, and Dean of Huron. kevingeorge@diohuron.org

Mohawk Institute – a part of our history

By Rev. Chris
Brouillard-Coyle

“I accept and I confess before God and you, our failures in the residential schools. We failed you. We failed ourselves. We failed God.”

The words of Archbishop and Primate Michael Peers, delivered as an apology to the Sacred Circle for the Anglican Church of Canada's role in residential schools on Aug. 6, 1993, are now inscribed on the walls of the Mohawk Institute at the Woodland Cultural Centre. The former Mohawk Institute Residential School reopened as an Interpretive Historical Site on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Sept. 30, 2025. This sacred space now provides self-guided and audio tours that offer participants profound insights into the stories and experiences of the children of the school.

This school is located within the Diocese of Huron, in Brantford. It is a part of our history. As such, we are reminded through the stories that it was bishops, elected by clergy and lay people in our diocese that made decisions that impacted the lives of the

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



children at the school. To walk through this space is to be reminded that this history is part of our collective history. What have we learned? What can we still learn?

It can be said that many throughout the Diocese didn't know what was happening. Many bought into the idea that the schools were somehow benevolent. As we enter into a new year, what would it

look like if every settler in this Diocese challenged ourselves to make a trip to Brantford and visit this site? To what extent are we, as settlers, willing to challenge any lingering attitudes and prejudices we might have? To what extent are we willing to bear witness to the stories of the survivors? To what extent have we considered the irony that we can celebrate our children

To walk these halls and read these stories is to bear witness to our failures and challenge ourselves to consider how we can do better now.

graduating from school while First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples have either themselves or know someone who survived residential schools? To what extent are we willing to recognise, as Archbishop and Primate Michael Peers said, the failures of our past?

Maya Angelou once said: Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.

Walking in the sacred halls of this Interpretive Historical Site is a powerful experience even for those who are knowledgeable about residential schools. There is something about being present in the space where these stories happened, where children as young as 4-years old encountered adults who failed to seek and serve Christ in them, and truly love them as neighbours.

To walk these halls and read these stories is to bear witness to our failures and challenge ourselves to consider how we can do better now. To walk

these halls and read these stories is attainable for people across the diocese. How many of us are willing to open our hearts to the truths, sit with the discomfort of our failures, and pray for transformation?

As we look toward a new year, with new possibilities, may we embrace the Baptismal challenges to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbour as ourselves, and to strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being, by taking a good, long, hard look at our relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

May every settler be open to knowing better and continually working to do better and may we embrace the responsibility to build relationships that are respectful and reciprocal trusting in the possibilities for our diocese and our world.

Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle is a co-chair of SEJH.

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We invite you to join us at one of our upcoming events. Participation is free, but you can support the work of the Renison Institute of Ministry by making a donation during registration. Each event includes parking and refreshments as part of the day's activities.

Find out which of our events will interest you at www.renison.ca/RIM

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Enabling your leaders in their future ministry

VESTRY SEASON is upon us! And one of the challenges that many congregations dread each year is the process of finding leaders to serve in the capacity of Church Wardens, Treasurers, Administrators and Counsellors.

Some congregations are very small, and so the opportunities to find new leaders, often seeking to relieve those who have served for many years, can be a burdensome responsibility for both clergy and congregations.

Throughout our Vestry season transitions, it is important that we hold fast to the practices of prayer and of ministry discernment. Holding fast to the belief that God has a plan for each of our congregations, and that He is always raising up leaders for Christian ministry and service all around us. Vestry season, therefore, becomes an annual time of discernment within the Church.

Congregations would be well served to include prayers of discernment in their normal worship services. Not only do these prayers express our needs and concerns to God, but they also cause us to reflect on where God is calling us, personally, to put our faith into action within the wider life of the Church.



GROWING BEYOND THE DOORS
REV. CANON GRAYHAME BOWCOTT

A simple prayer, included within the Prayers of the People, might serve to both inspire and encourage individuals who have the right gifts for service, but who might be hesitant to step forward. An example might be: *God of calling and vocation, we give thanks for the leaders who have faithfully stewarded this congregation for generations past. In our upcoming Vestry season, help us to raise up leaders to shepherd us into the future. Enable those who have the seeds of leadership planted in their hearts to have the resources and encouragement they need to step into new ministries, and may each of us find our own way to serve You,*

Explore Huron University's Licentiate in Theology Program church leaders courses: <https://huronu.ca/programs/theology/life-long-learning/>

and this congregation, as we follow in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus Christ. This we ask, in His name. Amen.

All baptized Christians are called to offer their gifts to the Church in some way. Within each congregation is the capacity to raise up the necessary leadership gifts to meet the ministry needs of the year. However, not all leaders choose to step into this calling. Some are hesitant because they feel they lack certain skills or training necessary to do the ministries that God is calling them to.

Equipping future leaders for their service in ministry is one of the missional priorities of our Diocese – to be a

Learning Church. In support of this priority, the Diocese of Huron has sponsored a subscription service with Huron University's Licentiate in Theology Program. This subscription allows for any church leader in the diocese to access theological training and ministry courses, hosted online outside of the 9-5 work hours, free of charge!

Among the many courses being offered are a series of Parish Administration and Leadership training courses especially designed for Wardens, Treasurers and Administrators. These courses, hosted over three Saturdays (once a month in April, May and June), provide new min-

istry leaders with all the tools they need to be both confident and successful in their ministry. Students enrolled in these courses also receive a video recording of their lectures to allow for them to review and consult the materials at any time throughout the year. Graduates of these courses are currently serving in various ministries throughout the Diocese of Huron, made possible through the coaching and mentorship that they have received from their instructors and classmates. Any current or future church leaders seeking to explore these courses can find them at: <https://huronu.ca/programs/theology/life-long-learning/>

Best wishes to each and every congregation in our Diocese as we enter into Vestry Season. Remember to hold fast to prayer and to ask God to unlock the vocational potential that is inherent in each of us.

Rev. Canon Dr. Grayhame Bowcott is passionate about fostering congregational relationships and sharing our Anglican vocation with others. He serves as Rector of St. George's, The Parish of The Blue Mountains, and as Program Director for the Licentiate in Theology program at Huron University. grayhamebowcott@diohuron.org

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'Let us not grow weary in standing firm for what is right'

Eric's nerves were vibrating rapidly as he looked around the formal marble ceremonial room used during the Olympic Games in Paris, 1924.

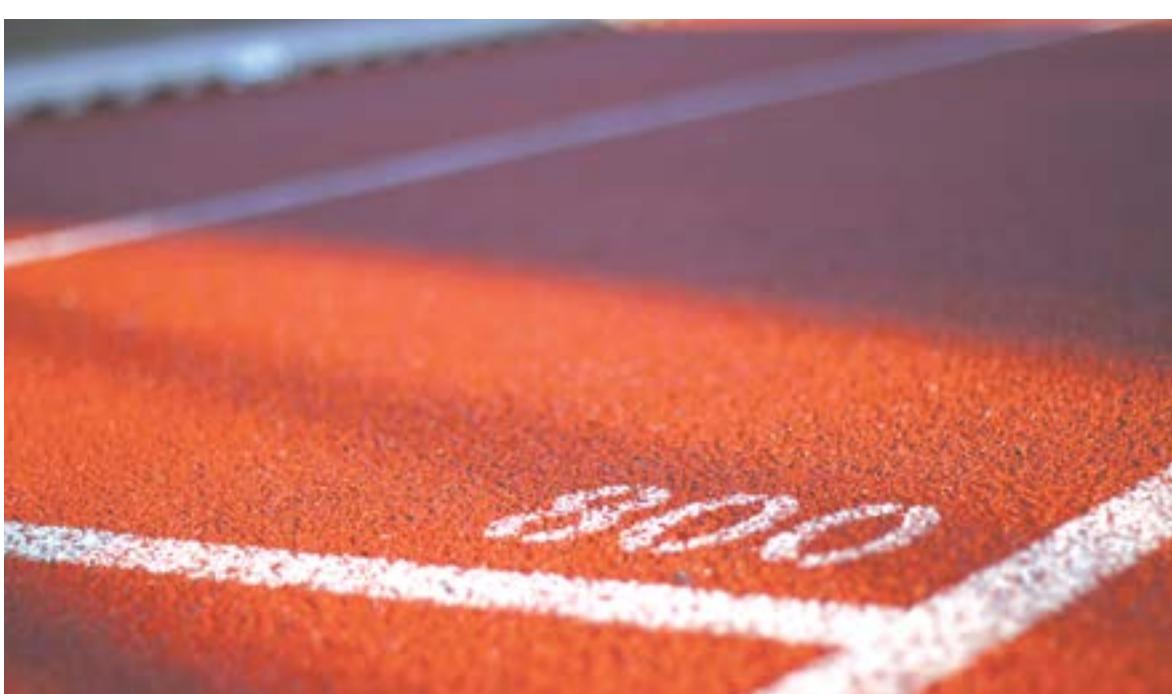
History seemed to bounce off the walls. He felt the weight of his country's expectations that he would win a gold medal, something he had trained hard to achieve.

Before him stood the stern figure of the Prince of Wales (future King Edward VIII) and the imposing chair of the Olympic committee. Their eyes were fixed on him with a mixture of expectation and disbelief.

Eric, a Scottish athlete known for his unwavering values, refused to compete in the 100-metre event he had trained for because it was scheduled on the Sabbath, a day he strictly dedicated to worship and rest. Rooted in his Christian faith, he stood firm in his commitment, even as the world watched and pressured him to reconsider.

"Eric," the Prince of Wales began, his tone smooth but urgent, "your country needs you. It is your duty to compete tomorrow."

At that time, Britain was eager to prove itself on the world stage through sporting achievements. The Olympic Games were highly publi-



Tirza Van Dijk/Unsplash



As I SEE IT

REV. JIM
INNES

cized, and athletes like Eric were seen as representatives not just of their teams but of their entire country.

Eric was still. He understood the hopes of the crowd waiting, and he knew they had high expectations of him to bring them some honour on the world stage. On top

Eric Liddell's story shows how true convictions ignite a determination within us all, pushing us to achieve more than we ever thought possible.

of that, the Olympic Games had always been his dream calling, closer now than ever. However, today another voice was insisting that he stick to his decision, a voice of conscience and belief.

In that quiet, pensive moment, a flicker of frustration and contempt swept the

room. "You would put your beliefs above your king and country?" demanded the committee chair.

Emboldened by a deep conviction, he stood resolute, "Sir, I cannot run on the Sabbath. My faith, my God, forbids it."

Eric Liddell's courage to

stand up for his beliefs, even in the face of such immense pressure, is the very reason I chose to recount this moment from his life as an Olympian. His unwavering conviction truly demonstrated the gold standard of success.

Eric was ablaze with conviction. It not only fueled his resolve and moral courage, but also his achievements later in the games when he set a new Olympic record in the 400 m race, a distance not considered his strong suit.

As I see it, his example shows how true convictions ignite a determination within us all, pushing us to achieve more than we ever thought possible.

An interesting aspect of this story is shown in the movie 'Chariots of Fire': a track coach, observing Eric's running style and speaking out of earshot, remarks that Eric is better suited to long-distance running than to shorter races. It reminds us of the sentiment... "Let us not grow weary in standing firm for what is right, for in due time we will see the good that comes from holding true to our convictions." (Galatians 6:9).

Rev. Jim Innes is the rector of St. John's, Grand Bend with St. Anne's, Port Franks. jiminnes@diohuron.org

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HURON CHURCH NEWS

Canterbury: Tales of the past, for the present and the future

AS A NEW YEAR begins, I open the pages of my new paper calendar and look at the blank and empty pages. I wonder what will fill those days in the year ahead. Then, as I look at those pages, I reflect on the fact that many of those days are already marked in a special way.

Through the years, the Church, has noted that there are days which have been marked to remember, commemorate and honour individuals whose life, ministry and sometimes, their death, bears witness to their faith - filled commitment to Jesus. Many of the individuals have been identified as Saints. There are also those whose lives have not been put in that category. At the same time, their discipleship has been deemed to be of special significance so that we need to be reminded of their story.

An individual whose story is a part of our Anglican heritage is Archbishop Thomas Becket. He was martyred in Canterbury Cathedral on December 29, 1170. Canterbury Cathedral is a focal point for those whose identity as members of the worldwide Anglican Communion reflects how they experience and express their faith and love for our Lord.

For those who seek a quick historic update regarding St Thomas I invite you to view the film "Becket", which was produced in 1964. If you are interested in a more theatrical presentation of the story, you may want to read the play by T.S. Eliot, entitled "Murder in

Canterbury Cathedral is a focal point for those whose identity as members of the worldwide Anglican Communion reflects how they experience and express their faith and love for our Lord.



A VIEW FROM THE BACK PEW
REV. CANON CHRISTOPHER B. J. PRATT

the Cathedral", which was first presented in 1935. Hopefully, the stories, both theatrical and on film, will pique your interest and you will seek out more historically accurate information.

Discovering powerful reality of the story may be experienced by going to Canterbury Cathedral. Travelling with my parents when my Father was taking a summer course gave us the opportunity of being given a tour of the Cathedral which was led by one of the Canons. His love of the place came through as each niche and corner had its own story. We arrived at the place where Archbishop Becket was murdered, and he dramatized the moment by choosing three members of the group to take on the roles of the three knights who did the deed. I was chosen to fill the role of the youngest knight! At the age of ten moments like that



Image of Chaucer as a pilgrim. Ellesmere Manuscript (Huntington Library, San Marino, California). The manuscript is an early publishing of the Canterbury Tales.

get indelibly etched into your life and memory.

Over the centuries, pilgrims have journeyed to Canterbury. In "The Canterbury Tales", written by Geoffrey Chaucer around 1400, individuals tell their stories as they journey towards the Shrine of St Thomas. Many who left their normal pattern of life and engaged in a pilgrimage to Canterbury did so with the belief that if they went to see the place where the Archbishop had been murdered and knelt in the Corona Chapel, at the shrine where the crown of his skull had been preserved, their prayers would be answered. Stories of miraculous healings permeated the society of the day, fostering those beliefs and expectations.

As a priest, I planned to take my own summer course at Canterbury. Correspondence with the Dean led to, not only having the opportu-

nity to administer a Chalice at the main service on a Sunday, but also to preside and preach at the Eucharist on the Feast of St James. The service took place in the Corona Chapel. As a student of history and as a person of faith, it was yet another experience which is etched into my life and memory.

Canterbury Cathedral has special meaning for the worldwide Anglican Communion, when those who are called to Episcopal ministry gather at the Lambeth Conference. The Corona Chapel became a focal point during one of the more recent services held in that setting. There was a recognition that even with its unique place in the life story of our denomination, the story of those who have been martyred for their faith is not a story which may be confined to the pages of history.

Throughout the years, in different parts of our global village, there have been those who have professed their faith in Jesus Christ and have done so, knowing that they were putting their lives at risk. That danger is a reality today. Because of that reality, and the stories which are told of the ultimate sacrifices which have been made, the Corona Chapel is now known as the Chapel of Modern Day Martyrs.

In the year ahead, you may have the opportunity to renew your own Baptismal Vows. Listen well to the questions you will be asked:

"Will you proclaim by word and example the Good news of God in Christ?"

and,

"Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?"

(BAS pg. 159)

Throughout the year 2026 you will have opportunities to make decisions about how you will make those commitments a reality in your own life. In Canada, your commitment may not lead to martyrdom, but it may lead to sacrifice. At a moment in time when we may be called to answer the questions, "Will you strive..." and "Will you proclaim...?", may we all offer a sincere response:

"I will...with God's help."

Rev. Canon Christopher B. J. Pratt has retired from full-time parish ministry but continues to offer priestly ministry in the Diocese. chrispratt@diohuron.org

It's Vestry time, again: How much resources go into sharing your good news?

AS THE CALENDAR turns to January and February, parishes across our diocese are preparing for the annual tradition of Vestry. It's a time for reflection, electing new wardens and councils, and, critically, approving the parish budget for the year ahead.

While most of our discussion rightly focuses on core pillars, such as salaries, facilities, and outreach ministries, there is one line item that demands a new level of scrutiny in our digital age: Media and Communications.

How much resources go into sharing your good news with the wider community? And are you treating this expenditure as a cost, or as an essential investment in the future growth of your church and ministry?



MEDIA BYTES
REV. MARTY LEVESQUE

When financial advisors look at a healthy church budget, they typically focus on major categories:

- Salaries Costs: Often 40-50% of the budget.
- Facilities (Maintenance, Utilities, Mortgage): Often 20-30% of the budget.
- Ministries, Outreach, and Missions: Generally, 10-20% of the budget.

Yet, a dedicated line for "Media and Advertisement" is often non-existent, or is scattered under administration, a one-off for a Christmas

Vestry is a moment to not just reflect on what we did, but to make a courageous, intentional plan for what God is calling us to do next.

banner, or buried in a generic "supplies" category.

In the secular business world, a rule of thumb for marketing is to spend 5% of revenue just to maintain your current position, and 10% to achieve significant growth. While the Church is not a business, we are called to actively grow God's Kingdom.

How does our investment in communication stack up against this idea of intentional growth?

As you review the draft budget for 2026, consider raising these questions with your Vestry:

- Audit the Hidden Costs: Where are we already spending money on communication (website hosting, bulletins, copier lease, online giving fees)? Gather these into one visible "Communications & Technology" line item.

• Align Budget to Mission: If our mission is to welcome new people and engage our neighbours, is 1% or less truly enough for the primary tool that facilitates that initial connection?

- Invest for the Future: Could a dedicated, small but significant budget (even

2-3%) for proactive media and communications be the most effective outreach money we spend this year? This could cover a website overhaul, a new microphone for the livestream, or even a small, targeted social media ad to promote a Lenten program.

Vestry is a moment to not just reflect on what we did, but to make a courageous, intentional plan for what God is calling us to do next.

Let's ensure our budget reflects the value we place on sharing the good news of our parish with a world that is searching for it.

Rev. Marty Levesque is the rector of All Saints' in Waterloo. He served as diocesan social media officer.

martylevesque@diohuron.org