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HURON CHURCH NEWS

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF HURON • Huron Church News is a section of the Anglican Journal • APRIL 2023

The joy of giving: What wondrous love is this!

Eastertide at the Food Bank of St. Paul's Social Services comes with a heightened sense of awareness of the vital role it plays in London's community care circle.



IT IS A BLESSING TO BE A DESTINATION FOR THOSE WHO NEED HELP.

Graffiti in front of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Ontario: As the oldest church in London, St. Paul's has always been an intrinsic part of the city. The diocesan cathedral church represents a complex organism that fulfills different functions. Hosting St. Paul's Social Services is just one aspect of its multifaceted nature.

How would you decide what you, or your children or your grandchildren, or even your pets could live without to stay housed?

Today, more and more families, seniors, single parents, students, people with disabilities — anyone on a limited income — are asking for help from our St. Paul's Social Services. It is a blessing to be a destination in their despair.

Many people do not know that the Food Bank of St. Paul's Social Services stayed open five mornings a week throughout the pandemic, and that the Fellowship Centre lunch pro-

gram worked around the lockdowns and restrictions (Thank you, St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church for hosting our FC lunch for over 13 months!). All in service of our mission of relieving hunger in our community.

Throughout the pandemic our core volunteers have been remarkable and extremely brave. They came in regularly to help long before vaccines, and carried on helping throughout. We would have been lost without them. We are humbled by these people and by their love for their fellow humans!

Go to Page 3: St. Paul's Social Services need your creativity

SINGING THE LORD'S SONG IN A STRANGE LAND:

Bishop Todd's Easter Message

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The wisdom of the desert: much more 'this-worldly' than I had expected

Our new series explores Anglican monastic tradition and shares experiences of various people in the diocese who have found inspiration in this little known and quiet corner of the Church.

The brothers outside Holy Cross Priory, north of High Park in Toronto

▶ Page 3: The wisdom of the desert: My first impressions

IT WASN'T AT ALL like the Sean Connery movie 'The Name of the Rose'. The sounds of the big city are omnipresent. The 'chapel' is a corner of the living room; thus, their prayer life is not worlds away from mine or yours. They aren't avoiding the world, much less despising it. Instead, they are continually fed and formed to serve the world in the particular way to which God has called them.

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Editor

Davor Milicevic
huronchurchnews@gmail.com
519-434-6893, ext. 251
c/o Huron Church House
190 Queens Ave.
London, ON
N6A 6H7

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Angela Rush
huronchurch.ads@gmail.com
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The Right Reverend
Todd Townshend
Bishop of Huron
Diocese of Huron
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The wisdom of the desert: My first impressions



The brothers at prayer: Holy Cross Priory, the Canadian home of The Order of the Holy Cross since the early 1970s, originally built in the late 1800s by James T. Jackson, newspaper and real estate firm owner.

By Rev. Matthew Kieswetter

This month I'm pleased to introduce what I hope will be an ongoing series I'm calling "The Wisdom of the Desert."

In this series we'll meet various people from our diocese who have found inspiration from the monastic tradition, oftentimes leading to a relationship with a religious community.

It will surprise some people to learn that there are indeed communities of monks and nuns within our Anglican tradition, alongside other dispersed religious orders, with people united by shared vows, values, and ways of life. It is appropriate to start this series in the season of Lent, as we reflect on Jesus's time in the desert.

The most pivotal moment in my faith journey was attending a Lenten lecture in the late '90s at which I was introduced to the life and work of Thomas Merton.

He was a gifted and charismatic young man living in the mid-20th century who had a

" I HAD EXPECTED a group of... hmmm... eccentrics? Extremists? Saints? What I found instead was a community as diverse and as human as any other. I have sensed and observed different pieties; different personalities; different theological and political leanings.

dramatic conversion experience that eventually led him to a monastery in Kentucky. There is no small irony that in wanting to disappear behind the walls of the monastery, he would write his autobiography and become a best-selling author...

Merton had something of a second conversion years later when he was out in the city for an appointment. At a busy intersection he had the realization that he loved the people around him; the people whom he had tried to escape years earlier. This experience led him to engage more fully with the life of the world. It was said by one prominent peace activist that Merton was the conscience of the peace movement.

I'll leave you to do some further reading on Merton — both his devotion and his contradictions. But for me, I'll simply write that the experience of discovering Merton was like finding aspects of my own self and my own story in his. It cracked open and enlivened aspects of our Church life: a deeper appreciation of the liturgy; the contemplative tradition; inter-religious dialogue; faith-inspired activism. A few years after that Lenten lecture, I made contact with a small Anglican monastery in Toronto: Holy Cross Priory. What a joy and relief to learn that the monastic tradition overlapped with my own denomination! And now for about half my life I have been an Associate of

the Order of the Holy Cross, connecting my life to theirs, and living in some small way the values that inspired their founding and their ongoing ministry.

Much more could be said, but for me, two surprising things stand out. The first is that through my visits and retreats at the priory I realized that the monastic tradition was much more relatable and 'this-worldly' than I had expected.

It wasn't at all like the Sean Connery movie 'The Name of the Rose'. The sounds of the big city are omnipresent. The 'chapel' is a corner of the living room; thus, their prayer life is not worlds away from mine or yours. They aren't avoiding the world, much less despising it. Instead, they are continually fed and formed to serve the world in the particular way to which God has called them.

My second surprise flowed out of the first: I had expected a group of... hmmm... eccentrics? Extremists? Saints? What I found instead was a community as diverse and as human as any other. I have

sensed and observed different pieties; different personalities; different theological and political leanings. Not to mention a more nuanced, healthy, and mature understanding of human sexuality (and human sexuality as expressed in the context of Christian life) than I had assumed I would find.

Ultimately, I found a collection of people striving to follow God's calling. For some of us, God's call includes some sort of engagement with one or more living expressions of the ancient Christian monastic tradition. I pray that we, as a diocese, will be blessed by our religious orders: through their prayers, their example, and their wisdom.

I invite you, dear reader, to join me at Renison University College on Saturday, April 15 for a half-day introduction to Anglican monasticism, which will include several special guests. Look for more info online and in diocesan announcements, or email me for more information.

Rev. Matthew Kieswetter is the rector of St. Andrew's Memorial, Kitchener. matthewkieswetter@diohuron.org

'Singing the Lord's song in a strange land'

In the celebrations of Holy Week and Easter, God reveals the deep love that is continually poured out for us and for all of Creation.

"What wondrous love is this?!" we sing, knowing that we see this astonishing love as we gaze again upon the reality of Christ's death and resurrection.

It is strange that we sing, hearts full, in the face of the devastating death of Jesus. We may sing through tears but, even on Good Friday, we know that Sunday is coming, and that God commands life coming out of death. It is the way of God.

Centuries before Jesus' time, perhaps the most devastating experience for God's people Israel was "The Exile."

It is the time when they were displaced from their home in Jerusalem and either destroyed or exiled to Babylon—a "strange" land. Rather than devastating them completely, this experience



BISHOP TODD TOWNSHEND

Every Christian community, every local church, is already equipped and empowered to sing this song through their life together. It is our joyful witness and mission.

rience resulted, eventually, in a fresh understanding of God and they committed to new ways of relating to God. They learned to "sing the Lord's song in a strange land."

This will be the theme of Synod 2023. This is a year when we are "Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land."

For many churches and individual Christians today, the COVID pandemic has been a form of exile. We are praying that we can emerge from this time with fresh understandings of God and of our faith, new ways of being and doing church, and a reinvigorated commitment to the wonder of mission.

Mission, particularly the clear proclamation of the Gospel along with our response to Jesus' Great Commission to "go and make disciples of all nations", is the core task of the church.

Every individual Christian has their part to play in this, learning how to sing the Lord's song (the Gospel) beautifully and effectively in our current context, which is not always entirely friendly to it—or to us. Every Christian community, every local church, is already equipped and empowered to sing this song through their life together. It is our joyful witness and mission.

The earliest Christians, starting in the days after the

resurrection of Jesus, were stepping foot into a strange new land—the world of Resurrection Life. Things were not the same after the resurrection of Jesus. Whole new worlds had been created and now, especially with the sending of God's Holy Spirit, whole new worlds were possible, indeed promised, for them!

Through the celebrations of Holy Week and the season of Easter, may God continue to draw us together into these promises and may we act as one great company of people leading the world into a strange but wonderful land.

+ Todd

desired by including prayers & thanksgivings from pages 39-61.

For Anglicans (many of whom already say one or more of these daily services), the idea of talking to God "off the cuff" can sound irreverent. But opening up to God the way we would to our most intimate friend is a way of formally recognizing, in ordinary language, that God is "acquainted with all [our] ways."

Psalms 139 provides many other images that make our intimacy with God very clear. It can be useful as a jumping off point, helping to overcome mental stumbling-blocks that keep us from enjoying life in Christ.

Rev. Dr. Craig Love is Assistant Curate of St. Thomas the Apostle and St. Luke's, Cambridge.

Talking to God 'off the cuff': He is acquainted with all our ways

By Rev. Craig Love

Lent is the season for fasting from creaturely pleasures for a time, but it also offers the right amount of time to establish new habits of prayer.

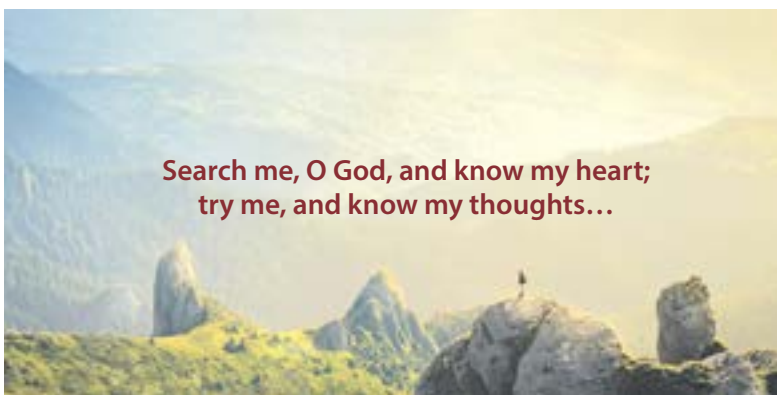
Among the many prayers spoken under the sun, some are unscripted, pleas & praise said spontaneously, while others are scripted, words read off the page or from memory. Both kinds of prayer are meaningful ways of drawing closer to God, but most people show a strong preference for one or the other.

This Lent, I encourage you to practice the type that is beyond your current comfort zone. For English speakers, the Book of Common Prayer provides prayer scripts unequalled by any other Christian tradition.

ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER



Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts...



The language of the Prayer Book is notably different from the speech we use every day, but it is memorable & powerful, gaining depth the more it is repeated. Depending on the time of day you

have available, you might say Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer — or both. If your time is limited, there are shortened services for each near the back of the BCP. These can be lengthened as

St. Paul's Social Services need your creativity

From Page 1: The Joy of Giving

St. Paul's is a truly grassroots organization. Our food bank and meal program are powered by parishes in London deanery, together with our other supporting churches (an ecumenical group of faith communities) and local initiatives.

In order to continue our vital role in London's community care circle, we need to ask our community for more help this spring.

Our creative team has come up with some new ways to contribute to this urgent need.

We understand that many of us are doing more with less, so we respectfully suggest a menu of ways to help us fulfill our mission.

Please, consider coming together to sponsor the annual cost of our core offerings beyond what is donated by our generous sponsors:

- Fresh Eggs or Powdered Milk
- Peanut butter
- Cereal & pasta, mac & cheese
- Canned goods- particularly pasta sauce, meat or fish



Kevin and the Food Basket. The Food Bank of St. Paul's Social Services stayed open five mornings a week throughout the pandemic. Volunteers are ready for the Eastertide busy schedule

- Re-usable bags
- Cat food or Dog food
- Christmas Share Sponsorships

We invite you to get creative with your own category! Thank you to our generous weekly/monthly/yearly supporters; Cobb's Bakery, Shopper's Drug Mart on Clarke Rd, the many businesses who support the London Food Coalition, The London Food Bank, Gary's No Frills, Knitting for Peace, The St. Paul's ACW, St. Martin in the Fields, Riverside United, Mt. Zion United, St. Jude Anglican, New St. James Presbyterian, First St. Andrew, Holy-Trinity St. Stephen Anglican, St. John (Arva), St. Mark's Anglican, St. Michael and All Angels Anglican, Church of Ascension Anglican, St. Peter's Basilica and all our churches and faithful donors...

Sharing your precious time, generous monetary gifts and bequests, prayer and good wishes keep our doors open to the most vulnerable amongst us. Bless you.

Barb, Shiella, Heather, all of our Volunteers, and the Clergy & Leadership of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Ecumenism on a small-town scale

Christ Church, Meaford teams with other churches in town to support the local food bank.

By Rev. Brendon Bedford

Sometimes the work of ecumenism and Christian unity takes the form of great conferences and official gatherings. Sometimes it looks like flipping pancakes.

Pancake suppers are almost ubiquitous with Shrove Tuesday. In fact, Christ Church, Meaford, with the exception of the recent pandemic, has been hosting a pancake supper for 70+ years. But, the present realities of church life, as we emerge into a new COVID reality, mean there are fewer volunteers to draw upon to serve the parish and those in the local community. This is not limited to the Anglican reality; within a small town that supports nine churches, such as Meaford, Ontario, all denominations are facing this challenge.

Yet, there is another shared reality between all these churches: they are all called to



Volunteers from different Meaford churches serve their many neighbours

love God and love their neighbours.

So, this year on Shrove Tuesday, Christ Church, Meaford joined with five other churches in town to put on a Pancake Supper for the town. The dinner was open to all, without exception, and free-will donations were accepted in support of the Meaford Food Bank.

It was a combined effort to feed neighbours, both directly and indirectly. Through the amazing generosity of all who attended, the churches raised

over \$2300 for the Meaford Food Bank, with nearly 200 people from town attending.

“It goes to show what we can accomplish through common action and prayer. I think this is a wonderful model of shared ministry for churches in a small town,” said Rev. Anne-Marie Jones, Minister at Knox Presbyterian Church in Meaford.

Local businesses and parishioners also provided support, through both goods and time. Over 20 volunteers from the

five different churches came together to make this happen, as well as some who had no church attachment. The supper was hosted at the Presbyterian church in Meaford, as the group felt it was the best location overall, given they had the most accessible building and the most parking space. For the volunteers involved, it was a wonderful opportunity to work together with fellow Christians that they did not yet know.

“The pancake supper has been a long-standing tradition in our parish, led largely by the members of the Brotherhood of Anglican Churchmen (BAC),” said Jean Richardson, Deputy Warden at Christ Church.

“In this time, as we try to re-engage after the isolating years of COVID, we would never have been able to serve and benefit so many people without joining together with our neighbours in town and siblings in faith in a common goal of service.”

The event was preceded by a short service where all participated in being shriven in anticipation of the Lenten season, hearing scripture, and burning the palms in preparation for Ash Wednesday the following day. Christians of various denominations attended and participated in this shared gathering for prayer.

Attendees of the supper were especially glad to have a renewed opportunity for social fellowship after several difficult years. Those arriving at the event expressed some surprise but also significant gratitude that the many churches of Meaford would work together to host an event that supports the entire community. An air of hope pervaded that this kind of practical ecumenical work will continue into the future.

Rev. Brendon Bedford is the Assistant Curate at Christ Church, Meaford.

I can't hear the preacher: Hearing the spoken word

By Rev. Paul Woolley

There are various reasons that some members of a congregation may have difficulty hearing the spoken word. However, the ‘pachyderm in the room’ is that the age distribution of most congregations is heavily weighted toward senior citizens.

Years of noise exposure and the aging process both lead to deficits in hearing for a large proportion of the senior population. Since many sound systems fail in being able to provide sufficiently accurate sound reproduction to service the needs of those affected. This article is an attempt to help to explain the nature of the problem.

I have included what might look like a fairly complicated diagram, but which may help to explain the basic problem of reproducing the spoken word.

Along the top is a small piano keyboard simply for reference. At the bottom of the diagram, the scale is given in Hertz which is the measure of the frequency or pitch of sounds across the range of frequencies detectable by the human ear.

For reference, the sound spectrum is divided into low frequencies, mid-frequencies, and high frequencies. (In a hi-fi loudspeaker system, this would be a woofer, mid-range, and tweeter!)

The diagram also gives the pitch ranges where most of

the sound power is contained in average male and female voices.

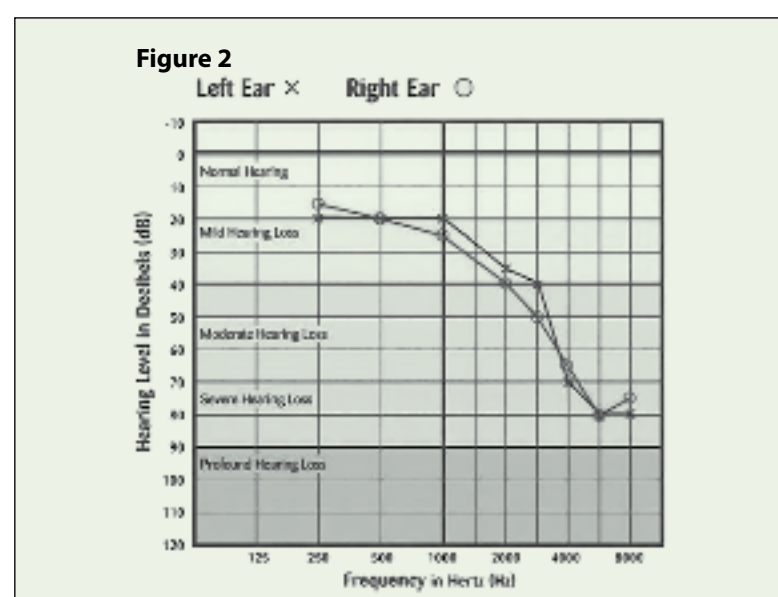
Speech occurs when air is forced past the vocal cords, causing them to vibrate. The vibrations become a fundamental tone, and the oral and nasal cavities resonate much like an organ pipe and give tonal structure to the sound. The more air forced past the vocal cords, the stronger the sound.

As we place the tongue and the lips in different positions we form different letters – vowels, voiced and unvoiced consonants. The vowels (a, e, o etc.) are formed from the fundamental tone with most of their power from 250 – 2,000 Hz power and are generally stronger than voiced consonants (b, d, m etc.) in the range 250 – 4,000 Hz. Unvoiced consonants (f, s, t etc.) vary in strength and lie in the frequency range of 2,000 – 8,000 Hz. (See Fig 1)

The second diagram included is an audiogram, the type you receive from a hearing test. This audiogram is indicative of someone with pronounced hearing loss. However, it is an example of what happens with most people's hearing loss, in that it is the higher frequencies that suffer the most. In such a case, when listening to speech the low-frequency vowels are heard, but the consonants and unvoiced consonants are generally lost to some degree. This makes all speech sound like the speaker is mumbling!

Although those with hearing loss will suffer the most, it should be noted that even people without hearing loss will have problems if the higher frequencies are not reproduced fully.

Proper loudspeaker systems for churches, need to have a high-frequency speaker, (called a tweeter) which broadcasts over the seated area.



These speakers use a horn section to perform this task and are often selected for a specific installation.

Preachers and readers should not get too close to microphones, since many microphones have what is called a ‘bass proximity effect’. In that case, vowels are accentuated and voiced and unvoiced consonants almost disappear.

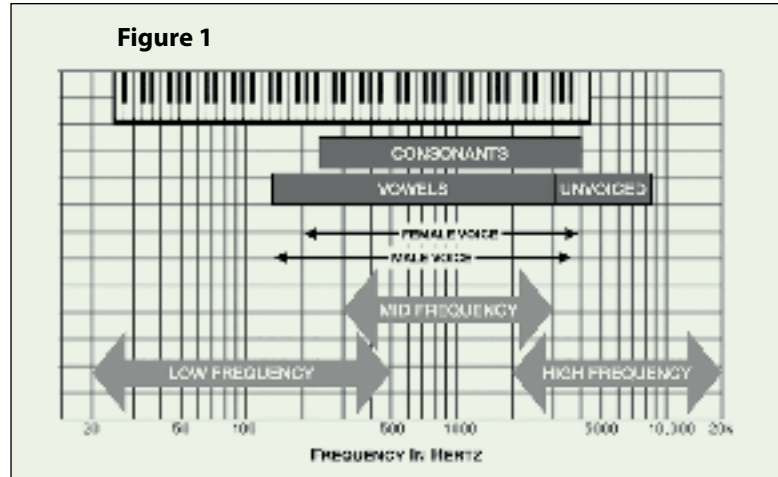
Hearing aids are of great assistance to those with hearing loss. The newer digital models can be programmed to specific needs. But all of that technology is not the same as normal hearing.

Additionally, there are those who prefer not to wear hearing aids and those who have not fully realized their hearing loss, and some who simply can't afford them.

Over the years there have been a number of technologies developed to assist congregants with hearing loss. Some of these have been, headphones wired directly to the sound system, wireless and infrared headphones, and inductive loops to broadcast the sound to the ‘telephone’ or ‘T’ coils in hearing aids.

The latest movement is the equipping of churches with a system that makes use of the ‘Bluetooth’ capabilities of the newer digital hearing aids. I will attempt to cover the various available assistance systems in a future article.

Rev. Paul Woolley is a retired priest in Huron. He has 55 years of experience working with audio equipment of every description for varied venues.



Ask the Bishop: An evening of questions and conversation with Bishop Todd



By Rev. Sarah Armstrong

“Does God have a plan?” “What is your position on open table and the theology behind it?” “How can we use the diversity within our church to build an inclusive outreach program?”

These are a few of the great questions that Bishop Todd was asked at Ask the Bishop, an intergenerational dialogue held via Zoom on Wednesday, February 15.

Over sixty people from across the Diocese joined to offer questions and to hear Bishop Todd speak.

The event was organized into four blocks of time. The first was shaped by questions about the faith. Bishop Todd spoke about God's plans, and our participation in God's will, before commenting on a question about Israel's role in the history of salvation.

The second part of the discussion was guided by questions submitted by youth and young adults. These included, “Why is the Bishop wearing purple?”, and queries on Eucharistic adoration, Anglican feast days and rituals, and evangelism in a world that seems resistant to religion. The Bishop spoke

to each of these topics before highlighting other terrific youth-submitted questions as opportunities for future dialogues.

Question about the church shaped the third part of the conversation. Here the Bishop spoke about open table, and the blessings and challenges of church buildings.

Rounding out the dialogue were Bishop Todd's comments on questions concerning the world.

A youth-submitted enquiry about how the Diocese of Huron can be involved in affordable housing solutions was addressed first before Bishop Todd spoke about diversity in our communities and within the Anglican church. Here he expounded on his vision for the Diocese of Huron being a diverse church; we find unity and blessing in our God-given diversity.

The event was the start of many important conversations about the faith, the church, and the world; dialogues that will continue in future.

Thank you to everyone who participated and to those who shared their questions.

Rev. Sarah Armstrong is Assistant to the Bishop of Huron.

Anglican Fellowship of Prayer is pleased to present the Bishop of Huron's Prayer Conference

Saturday May 6, 2023
10:00am - 3:00pm
Church of St. Jude
1537 Adelaide St. N., London
Cost: \$20.00 (includes lunch)

The Intersection of Prayer and Music: Encountering these practices as Individuals and as Faith Communities.
with
The Reverend Andreas Thiel

Please join the Rev'd Andreas Thiel, rector of St. Matthew's and former professional musician from the Diocese of Huron to explore aspects of how we encounter prayer and music in our own lives and in our faith communities. In a variety of ways, we will explore together how music in our liturgies and in our lives both serves as and enhances our prayers. Afternoon workshops will be designed to put some of what we will hear in the morning and afternoon sessions into practice. Please join us in person at 9:30 am for refreshments.

To register please contact: the Rev'd Ann Webber at annwebber@dioghuron.org or by calling or texting info to 226-373-1391

“ It is strange that we sing, hearts full, in the face of the devastating death of Jesus. We may sing through tears but, even on Good Friday, we know that Sunday is coming, and that God commands life coming out of death. It is the way of God.

- Bishop Todd

SINGING THE LORD'S SONG IN A STRANGE LAND

The 183rd Synod of the Diocese of Huron
MAY 28-29, 2023

Opening Service:
Sunday, May 28,
St. Paul's Cathedral at 4:30 pm

Synod Banquet:
Sunday, May 28, RBC Place,
at 7:00 pm

Synod Convenes:
Monday, May 29, RBC Place,
at 9:00 am

Guest of Honour:
Bishop Lusa Nsenga-Ngyo
(Bishop of Willesden,
Diocese of London, UK)

PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

Appointments

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Katherine Loynd as Priest-in-Charge of Christ Church Huntingford, effective March 1, 2023.

Bishop Townshend appointed Mr. Patrick Martin as the Lay Pastoral Assistant to the Rector, St. John's, Tillsonburg, effective April 15, 2023.

Bishop Townshend appointed the following as Canons of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, effective February 19, 2023:

- The Reverend CJ Adams
- The Reverend Wendy Mencil
- The Reverend Rob Park

Bishop Townshend appointed the following as Canon Catechists, effective February 19, 2023:

- The Reverend Dr. Grayhame Bowcott
- The Reverend Dr. Stephen Hendry
- The Reverend Carrie Irwin
- The Reverend Mark Loyal
- The Reverend Dr. Gordon Maitland
- The Reverend Dr. Preston Parsons
- The Reverend Dr. Lisa Wang

Interim Appointments

Bishop Townshend appointed the Venerable Janet Griffith Clarke as the Interim Priest-in-Charge of Grace Church, Brantford effective March 1, 2023.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Venerable Rich Jones as the Interim Priest-in-Charge of Church of the Epiphany, Woodstock, effective March 1, 2023.

Inductions

On behalf of Bishop Townshend, the Venerable Megan Collings-Moore inducted the Reverend Wendy Mencil as

the Rector of Trivitt Memorial, Exeter, on Sunday, March 19 at 4pm.

The preacher was the Rev. Kate Hathaway.

Ordinations

Called to the Priesthood at the service of Ordination on Tuesday, March 21, 2023, The Commemoration of Thomas Cranmer at 7pm at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, London:

- The Reverend Jamie Baxter, Assistant Curate, St. James the Apostle, Port Lambton and St. James the Apostle, Wallaceburg.
- The Reverend Craig Love, Assistant Curate, St. Thomas, Cambridge and St. Luke's, Cambridge.
- The Reverend John Paul Markides, upon ordination, Priest Assistant under the direction of the Territorial Archdeacon.
- The Reverend Allison McDougall, upon ordination, Assistant Curate to the Rector, St. Paul's, Stratford and St. James, Stratford.

Rest in Peace

Reverend Sylvia Doran died on February 8, 2023.

Sylvia was ordained a deacon in May 1989 and priested in April 1990. She served the parishes of St. Stephen's, Thamesville and Christ Church, Dresden before retiring and returning to Massachusetts in 1994.

Her funeral service was held on Saturday, February 25, 2023 at St Stephen's Episcopal Church, Westborough, Massachusetts.

May Sylvia rest in peace and rise in glory.

ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN

Deanery of London

St. George's, London
Leone Stark
(President of ACW)

In Memory

Deanery of Waterloo

St. Thomas the Apostle, Cambridge
Georgina Vokey
Jean Lamky
Shirley McCann
Francis Moran

Holy Trinity, Kitchener
Mary Jane Hundt

St. Columba, Waterloo
Grace Corcoran



ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN - DIOCESE OF HURON

ANNUAL MEETING & CONFERENCE

"Walk Humbly with God"

St. Paul's Cathedral
London, Ontario
Saturday 29 April 2023

Registration @ 9:00 a.m.
Meet & Greet - Coffee/Tea
Morning Prayer - Followed by Meeting - 10:00 a.m.

Guest Speaker
Diane Dance
on the Anglican Foundation topic "Say Yes to Kids"

Holy Eucharist - 2:00 P.M.
Bishop Bob Bennett
Celebrant



New licenced lay readers at St. George's of Forest Hills, Kitchener



St. George's of Forest Hill, Kitchener was pleased to induct four new licenced lay readers in 2022: J. Hendry, J. Shaw, A. Lee and C. Carlson.

<https://diohuron.org/news>

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Trans visibility in the face of danger

By Sydney Brouillard-Coyle

Over 370 anti-trans bills are currently circulating in the United States, including gender-affirming bans that largely target transgender youth, bans on drag performance, bans on trans individuals participating in sports, "don't say gay" and "don't say trans" bills that endanger queer and trans youth in schools, and bills that prevent trans people from using a bathroom that corresponds with who they are.

Hate crimes and threats are also on the rise, with over 140 incidents of anti-LGBTQ protests and threats in 2022, including firebombing, shootings and vandalism.

This is not limited to the United States either; cities across the country have borne witness to protests against LGBTQ gatherings and safe spaces, while prominent LGBTQ activists are directly targeted and threatened. Trans individuals, particularly Black trans women, face disproportionate high rates of violence,



leading to the need for the Transgender Day of Remembrance, which memorializes those lost to transphobic hate within the preceding year.

In order to address the frustration that the only well-known transgender-centered day was the Transgender Day of Remembrance (mourning the murders of transgender people), transgender activist Rachel Crandall founded the Transgender Day of Visibility.

This is an opportunity to celebrate transgender people around the globe and the courage it takes to live openly and authentically. This day also helps to raise awareness about the discrimination transgen-

der people still face. However, visibility comes with significant risk.

Visibility cannot exist without safety. We need better protection for trans youth in schools, both from student bullies and administrators and teachers who fail to intervene. We need better funding for mental health, affordable housing, and a universal basic income.

We need a bill protecting our right to access gender-affirming healthcare, and to reduce barriers for medical transition. We need a clear condemnation of hate speech and violence against trans individuals, and to stop giving bigots a platform through politics and media.

We need mandatory diversity training for all schools, universities, colleges, doctors, nurses, social workers, and anyone else working within the service sector. We need people in our governmental systems to truly represent us and to work for us.

We need Christians to stand up against religious bigots who try to use the word of God to condemn and traumatize us. We need everyday citizens to stand up as advocates, activists, and allies to create a world where we can be truly visible – and safe.

In honour of this Transgender Day of Visibility, I invite you to reflect on this Prayer of Cisgender Confession and Commitment, written by Tammie Day:

We rise each day into a world that fits our natures, our understandings, our assumptions. The clay of our bodies and faces conform to our spirits: male, female. We are learning it is not so for all of us. Some of us are born of a wilder imagination. We are learning new language and new images for those Spirit is coloring outside our lines: transgender,

intersex, gender-variant.

We confess that we have slumbered while members of our family are slaughtered. The headwind of hatred batters bodies and minds and spirits: the diverse beauties that continue to arise. We commit to standing against this headwind of hate, a bulwark to end the battering. We commit to seeing the diverse beauty, all around us, every gendered and gender-free expression, every form of love. We commit to loving difference, and becoming. We commit to learning the new language(s) that enable our beloveds to exist, and thrive.

Love, make us bold, to live our own lives fully and abundantly. Love, give us passion, to work for everyone's full abundance. Love, gather us together, that no one you have created is not seen is not allowed to live is ever lost to the hurricane of hate again. Amen.

Sydney Brouillard-Coyle (Ney/Nem/Nir) is co-chair of Proud Anglicans of Huron and the music director at St. Paul's Anglican Church, Essex.



Earthrise

This amazing photo was taken over 50 years ago, as Apollo 8 circled the Moon.

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Community ministry development happening in parallel with build

All Saints', Waterloo monthly build update: Outreach ministry defines the vision of our future church and centre building.

By Rev. Daniel Bowyer

Not only walls, but also excitement continues to build as the construction of the new church and community centre at All Saints' Waterloo resumes.

The build is of both of a new church and a community centre. The congregation at All Saints' has not undertaken a build solely of a church for ourselves. The community centre is simultaneously being constructed so that All Saints' will be well positioned to offer ministries to the immediate community around us and to serve the neighbourhood in the name of Jesus.

As many may know, Pastor Marty Levesque, the Rector of All Saints', is working with our Development Team in the parish to oversee the construction of the physical structure. In my role as the Associate Priest at All Saints', I am working with our Faith-in-Action Team and other community partners to discern and implement ministries that meet the primary needs in the neighbourhood around us.

In addition to serving as a priest in the Diocese of Huron, I have also recently completed a degree in social work and am now a registered social worker in Ontario. Unbeknownst to me, while I was studying, All Saints' (without knowing I was studying) indicated a need for a social worker to come alongside them to assist in discerning



Getting there: Opening is planned for October 2023

Our plan is centred around thoroughly developing two to three ministries that respond to greatest community needs well, from which further ministries will inevitably arise.

and implementing community ministries. It cannot be anything but the guidance of the Holy Spirit that has brought me to All Saints' at this important time. Besides serving as a priest in the parish, I am able to draw on the social work skills I have been developing as we work together to serve the community around us as Jesus has directed.

What Christians would broadly call Outreach Ministry is known broadly in social work as Community Development. The first rule of undertaking a Community Development initiative is to ask the community what their greatest needs are. As such, the first step in developing Outreach Ministries for the new All Saints' community centre has been consultation with social service agencies and families in the neighbourhood.

Over the last year, myself and members of the Faith-in-Action team at All Saints' have consulted with Carizon Family and Community Services, House of Friendship, Lutherwood Children's Mental Health Centre, Adventure 4 Change and the Region of Waterloo Food Bank. As a result of these consultations, our

Faith-in-Action Team has discovered that 40-60 households just outside our doors have to travel challenging distances to access a food bank distribution point.

We have also learned that many new Canadians live in the neighbourhood around All Saints' and a primary need is for a space to undertake collective cooking. Thirdly, we have learned that there is a need for activity for young people in the neighbourhood.

As we prepare to move back to the completed church and community centre in the fall of 2023, All Saints' has begun the process of structuring and implementing ministries that will take place in the community centre.

We are very excited that the first ministry has actually begun even before construction is complete. The Region of Waterloo Food Bank has recently acquired a mobile food pantry. Despite the fact that construction is ongoing, All Saints' has partnered with the food bank to begin a food distribution ministry which commenced in February. This ministry will move into the new community centre when it is completed.

Our Faith-in-Action Team has also partnered with the community development arm of Carizon to plan and actualize ministries that respond to the prevalent community needs we have discovered through our consultations over the past year. Our plan

is centred around thoroughly developing two to three ministries that respond to greatest community needs well, from which further ministries will inevitably arise.

We are beginning our partnership by structuring a collective cooking ministry that will happen in the new industrial kitchen that is part of the All Saints' community centre. It will integrate other resources that we have learned are needed for new Canadians in the neighbourhood over time. English as a second language classes are an early possibility being considered.

We will then focus on structuring a ministry for young people in the neighbourhood, likely starting with open gym nights and progressing to integrate a homework club and mental health supports over time. All of the ministries that are being developed will be open to everyone regardless of who they are or what they believe.

Please pray for us at All Saints', Waterloo as the build and development of new ministries continue. The build of the new church and community centre have been undertaken not for our own glory, but to serve in the name of Christ in the neighbourhood and world around us that God so loves.

Rev. Daniel Bowyer serves as associate priest at All Saints', Waterloo and is a registered social worker in Ontario.

My personal journey of going 'zero waste'

By Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle

Near the beginning of Lent this year, I was reminded that the Lenten discipline I had chosen back in 2020 was to try to go zero waste for my breakfast.

At the time, I felt the best way to accomplish this was for me to learn to make granola and yogurt with ingredients that were sourced in reusable or, at least recyclable containers. Thus started a journey into lower waste.

The journey wasn't perfect. I failed in my efforts to make yogurt and quickly went back to buying containers that could be recycled and reused. Fruit, which I include with the yogurt and granola, often comes in plastic bags or, at a minimum with stickers that aren't compostable. Sourcing these from farmer's markets can help, at least when the fruit is in season. I have been able to make granola buying many of the ingredients in jars from a local grocer and that effort continues today.

Lenten disciplines can and should be about more than one season. They should provide us with an opportunity to learn and grow. There should be something that we carry forward from this time into how we choose to live for the rest of the year and beyond. Through my journey into a

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



This is all you need: Granola ingredients

zero-waste breakfast, I learned more about reducing waste in general and started buying soap, cleaner, hand cream, and other products in refillable containers. I recently encouraged a friend to do the same.

With total humility, I admit that I do not do zero waste perfectly. That doesn't stop me from trying, and from being open to learn. Thus, a Lenten journey has become a life-long journey.

As Lent 2023 began, we found ourselves facing a variety of problematic and challenging issues: A winter storm caused chaos throughout

Ontario leaving some without power for days. People were pausing to recognize the war in Ukraine had passed the one-year anniversary. The trauma in Syria and Turkey surfaced as earthquakes hit the region putting vulnerable people further at risk.

Inflation continues to increase such that living wage (the actual wage needed to have the barest basics of necessities) in Ontario is now an average of \$19.72 while minimum wage, disability payments, and Ontario Works payments remain well below that threshold. The realities of

With total humility, I admit that I do not do zero waste perfectly. That doesn't stop me from trying, and from being open to learn.

bodies buried in unmarked graves on former residential school sites serves as a reminder that we are far from Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Stories from Black History Month offered further reminders of painful realities which cry out for change.

There is a lot happening that is hard, painful, and in need of redemption. It can be overwhelming. We may get stuck in a pattern of 'thoughts and prayers'. Still, even thoughts and prayers are meant to be transformative.

The more we pray, the more we should find ourselves connected to those for whom we pray. Prayers invite us to include people in our families. What would we do for family? What steps might we take to support family members who are struggling, who need a sense of hope? How can that thought become the catalyst for action in Lent and beyond?

We are quickly approaching the end of this year's Lenten journey. What have you done this season that has been transformative for you? How have your efforts addressed some part of the plethora of

issues of which you are aware? What will you take from this journey into your life's journey?

What you choose doesn't have to be perfect. We can always commit to try and to learn. God has ways to take what we do and who we are and transform these offering new life and new possibilities. This is the promise of the cross and resurrection.

Looking ahead to Holy Week and that journey into Jerusalem, that journey into recognizing how anger, distraction, greed, and sin get in the way of the relationship with humanity and God, may we remain humbly open for what God is doing in and through us.

May this journey be an opportunity to take our Lenten disciplines into the rest of the year in ways that are meaningful. May we be a sign that new life happens when we are open to God working in us in ways that are infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.

Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle is a tri-chair of SEJH and a tri-chair of Justice League of Huron.

My time is not God's time (Slowing the circles down)

By Rev. Greg Little

I am at a point in life when I take six pills each day – some are by prescription, and some are vitamin supplements. Some time ago I decided to swallow – not one of the pills in this case – but my pride and admit that it would be easier to have one of those seven day containers for my pills as I didn't always remember if I had taken my pills or not – perhaps there is a pill for that but it is not on my list of pills.

In any case I recharge the daily pill container on Fridays – nothing significant about the day but it is just when I do it. It used to be Thursdays but I forgot to take them one day a while ago so it became Friday proving even a good system is not foolproof.

Well, I am telling you this because I am always amazed when Friday rolls around and it is time to recharge the pill container. How could a week have gone by so quick-



ly? A long, long, time ago in a land fairly far away when I was a child, a week seemed interminable. I remember saying to myself at one point, I hope the weekend would last forever so I wouldn't have to go back to school – being the kind of child who seemed to be out of sync with school and never in the right place in my learning experience – but that is a story for another day. In any case the week at school did seem to last forever.

Time does seem to be very flexible and stretches out or shrink in my experience. I was at the Long-term care yesterday to do an Anglican worship service for the residents. Visitors have to have a COVID test which requires waiting for fifteen minutes to get the results. Another visitor remarked that this period was always the longest fifteen minutes of her life. I was going to mention that it didn't seem as long as the two minutes of silence on Remembrance day which I used to have to count out when I presided at Remembrance Day Services. This, of course, has nothing to do with it not being significant – just the opposite. Every second of that silence holds deep significance. But I didn't get the chance as the staff person gave us the all clear and I headed off to the gathering congregation. Time does seem to be flying by these days but it couldn't be that I

am getting old - can it?

Time flows on and there seems to be no stopping it. As the Joni Mitchell song says, "it won't be long now, till you drag your feet to slow the circles down."

When we move into timelessness and eternity we are moving from our time to God's time. Some time ago, I listened to recordings of Northrop Frye's lectures on the Bible and Literature https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4Swyk_ZRy8. He notes that the creation story in Genesis did not happen in linear time, it happens in God's time. In effect, it is a timeless event which is happening all the time.

As Frye notes, the Bible speaks of time in two different ways; time is either Kairos or Chronos. Simply put, Chronos is measurable time which has a beginning and an end. Kairos, on the other hand, means an opportune time, a moment or a season

such as harvest time. St. Paul uses Kairos in the passage from Ephesians 5:15-16, "Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil."

If you have ever been caught in a moment when time seemed to stop or disappear, you have moved from Chronos to Kairos. We need to be aware of when we want things to happen on our schedule, in Chronos and become aware that they sometimes happen in Kairos. It is a reminder that as much as we like to believe it, we don't often set the agenda. That can be frustrating, but it can also be liberating.

May you be blessed on your journey to experience it in Kairos and well as Chronos.

Rev. Greg Little is the Honorary Assistant at St. James, Parkhill and St. John the Evangelist, Strathroy.

Quarterly Grant Application Deadlines

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- January 1
- April 1
- July 1
- October 1

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Effective January 1, 2023, AFC moved from a semi-annual grant cycle to a quarterly one, with application windows open on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 each year.

Diocese of Huron Grants and Loans

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Willing to get things wrong without losing heart

Growing into a new understanding of "ministry" as something in which all the baptized participate, group members grow in their confidence to reflect and consider both on their own and in a group.



Education for Ministry is spiritual, theological, liturgical, and practical formation for laypeople. EFM is about integrating faith and life, and communicating our faith to others.

By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

Whenever I am able to attend an EFM meeting, it is always a blessing!

These groups are filled with curious people, interested in broadening their understanding of their faith and the context and stories behind the words and the people of the Bible, in time coming to a new appreciation of them both. They are motivated by a wish to learn how to live into and out of the words in Scripture in a modern world, and how to face modern challenges with ancient wisdom.

In these groups I see people willing to risk learning something new and being uncomfortable for the sake of their faith, committed to persevering long enough with kingdom principles to live into new expressions of what a Christian's life looks like in 2023.

Growing into a new understanding of "ministry" as something in which all the baptized participate, group

members grow in their confidence to reflect and consider both on their own and in a group. Because of this they are able to support the ministries offered within their parishes, which is especially important in these days where so many of us are wondering as communities, what is God asking of us and how we might fit into all that God is already doing in our world.

Those who attend EFM, like all of us, have their limits, but with each passing week they develop their capacity to stretch into and grapple with the material presented to them. In any given week this same material may leave them still wondering, yet at the same time inspired to press on.

They wrestle with concepts, language and interpretations, ask many, many questions, and learn to listen to the voice of their neighbour. For many, they find their voice. Most importantly, they are willing to get things wrong without losing heart. They know that to grow one must wonder, and

In these groups I see people willing to risk learning something new and being uncomfortable for the sake of their faith.

to grow well, one must wonder with others.

They are delighted to find that their questions are shared by others, and that their journey does not have to be done on their own. Their experience has taught them that they are never, ever too old to learn something new, or to be used by God in some way. They have seen and are confident that God's love, mercy, justice and truth are new every morning, if you're listening.

Sound like a group you'd like to join?

If you would like to learn more about all that is available to you at Education for Ministry, please reach out at any time to either Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron EFM Coordinator or myself Val Kenyon, Huron's EFM Animator at valerikenyon@diohuron.org as we would be pleased to hear from you.

Dates for upcoming Open House sessions will be announced next month.

Rev. Dr. Canon Val Kenyon is EFM Animator in Huron.

Keep your website content up to date... and revise it, again and again!

Your website is one of the most important, if not the most important, tools to keep your church visible in today's world.

You want to establish a sense of trust with your audience, and there's no faster way to lose someone than to have outdated or irrelevant information on your website. Here are a few tips for a spring clean-up of the content of your page.

Back it Up

You're here to do some spring cleaning, not start over. Depending on what platform you use to host your website, some plugins can back your site up with the click of a button.

Of course, this is a step I recommend churches do quarterly because threats such as hackers, server failures, or unintentionally de-



MEDIA BYTES

REV. MARTY LEVESQUE

A few simple steps, especially in advance of Easter, can go a long way in welcoming the newcomer.

leted files can happen more often than anyone would like to admit.

Do a content audit

Pretend you're visiting your website for the first time.

simple, but first impressions are important to not only satisfy visitors, but also the search engine algorithms.

Take a good look at your pages and subpages. Are they still relevant to your day-to-day activities? Are all the pages necessary or could some be merged with another page? Do a few of your pages barely get any views at all?

If so, perhaps it's time to merge or consider deleting them.

Details, Details, Details

Your site may be full of outdated blog posts, dead links, or past events. I cannot stress enough how bad it looks when the last blog post is about Easter services in 2019.

If you cannot fill out the site, then less is more.

Does your website have an events page? These pages can

easily get lost in the shuffle of cleaning up your website.

If your church rarely has events or it is inconsistently updated, consider taking this off your website.

Revise, Revise, Revise!

Of course, pages are only as good as the content they contain. While you're cleaning up, be sure to check that your contact information, about us page, and even leadership bios are up to date with the most current information so that users can easily get in touch with you.

A few simple steps, especially in advance of Easter, can go a long way in welcoming the newcomer in this holy season in discovering the gem that is your church.

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

martylevesque@diohuron.org

Attracting new members: A ministry of first impressions

As a priest, visiting new members can often be like a job interview: new members are always looking to explore the meaning behind what our congregations do, and answers to why Anglicans do things in certain ways. For newcomers who have been seeking a faith community, they are always interested in what makes our congregations unique and how they might be different from the other churches in the neighbourhood. As these visits generally happen in the homes of new members, the conversations often happen around tea and cookies, but amusingly, I usually find myself answering so many questions that the tea gets cold and the cookies go uneaten!

It is incredibly important for congregations who are desiring to grow to be quick in responding to newcomers in their first weeks and months in visiting your church.

Long time members might not always remember how vulnerable and anxious the experience of showing up to a new church can be. The truth is, it doesn't take much for someone to feel turned away from a new congregation. This is where an intentional ministry of first impressions is so important.

It has always been part of my pastoral practice to visit newcomers as quickly as possible. My intention in doing so is to begin forming a personal relationship between them and myself, and, perhaps more importantly, between them and potential new friends and community members in their new church.

While I always look forward to answering the barrage of questions that a newcomer may have regarding my church: What are your services like? What does your church do in the community? What do Anglicans believe about...?; at the same time I am always excited to be able to ask some questions of my own!



Drew Dizzy Graham/Unsplash



GROWING BEYOND THE DOORS
REV. CANON GRAYHAME BOWCOTT

The number one question that I always ask is this: what was the first thing that made you want to explore coming to St. George's?

In this most recent visit, when I asked this very question, the answer to the question really surprised me! The new member, hosting me for tea, replied: "Back in 2016, when I was moving away from this community (to move back to Toronto), I decided to host a yard sale. I needed to

borrow tables for my yard sale and decided to call up some of the local churches, figuring that they would likely have tables to share. I called three churches at that time. The first two said they weren't interested in helping out. The third church was your church, and you were the only ones willing to help me out! Members from your congregation were even willing to drop them off and pick them up. I remembered your generosity. It was my first impression of your church."

This response moved me greatly, because I remember when the phone call came in, way back in 2016.

Before lending out the tables, members from our leadership team had a robust

It is incredibly important for congregations who are desiring to grow to be quick in responding to newcomers in their first weeks and months in visiting your church. Long time members might not always remember how vulnerable and anxious the experience of showing up to a new church can be. The truth is, it doesn't take much for someone to feel turned away from a new congregation. This is where an intentional ministry of first impressions is so important.

conversation about whether we'd be willing to share them or not. I remember some voices who argued: "We want to keep our tables looking nice. Why should we lend out our good stuff to others? They could get damaged."

At same time, I also remember one voice that spoke out with this comment: "Doesn't all that we have at St. George's belong to God anyway? Wouldn't God want us to be generous in sharing what we have with others?"

It was this final perspective that won that day: God is calling us to be generous in our first impressions!

When this new member moved back to the Blue Mountains, she remembered our generosity and was cu-

rious as to what we were up to (seven years after she had borrowed our tables)!

She explained that she noticed that St. George's was still "caring in the community" through our outreach to an Afghan Refugee family, through hosting funerals for people she knew in the community, and in our recent Shrove Tuesday pancake community dinner.

"The more I thought about it, the more I decided that it was time for me to really find out what you Anglicans are all about!" explains St. George's newest member. And so, in her new member visit with me, this person decided to take the next step of commitment and officially join our faith community.

Notice that it was a number of positive impressions all pointing towards a community of generosity and inclusion that ultimately led this particular newcomer to making a commitment. Back in 2016, had we decided to not be generous in sharing our tables with a stranger, I might not have had the opportunity to welcome this newest member into our community.

I share this story with you today to invite you and your congregation to reflect on the ways that you are making first impressions in your own neighbourhood and community. If you stopped a random person on the street in your town and asked them what their impression of your church might be, how do you think they would respond? Would you be known as the generous and caring church on the block? Lastly, how do you think God wants us to be known to others in our ministry of first impressions?

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.

grayhamebowcott@diohuron.org

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The totality of God can never be caught up within a net of words

Is the Father with us?
He is!
Is Christ among us?
He is!
Is the Spirit here?
He is!
This is our God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
With episcopal permission
in both the Diocese of Huron
and the Diocese of Niagara,
I have been able to use the
Kenyan Canon when I have
had the opportunity to pre-
side at the celebration of the
Holy Eucharist.

My awareness of the words
of the Kenyan Canon came
from the work done by the
present Bishop of Bran-
don, when he was offering
ministry in the Diocese of
Huron, as he collected and
published a variety of eucha-
ristic prayers from around the
worldwide Anglican Commu-
nion.

Whenever I have pre-
sented the Kenyan Canon
in worship, I have taken a
moment or two at the very
outset of my homily to review
the eucharistic prayer with
the congregation. As I have
initially gone over the call and
response which began this ar-
ticle, the community of faith
usually participates in a very
muted, very polite manner.
After some encouragement,
as I ask them to let the joy of
our shared faith find expres-
sion in their participation in
this moment of worship, the
volume of their response gets
cranked up, and the unbri-



Michelangelo, Resurrection of Christ (Study, 1533)/Louvre, Paris



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

dled joy of their love for Jesus
breaks forth from the shack-
les of Anglican reverential
politeness.

It is a wonderful experi-
ence! It is a joy to see the
smiles and to feel the excite-
ment as the congregation
claims the presence of the
Holy Trinity as a reality in our
shared worship.

I was taken aback, on one
occasion, when I was ap-

proached after a joy-filled
worship experience by an in-
dividual who had not felt the
joy of the moment, and who
had, in fact, felt some pain
and frustration. The use of the
word "He" as a description of
the Holy Trinity was the focus
of their discomfort.

The Gospels and Epistles
and the other texts record-
ing the life, ministry, death,
resurrection and ascension
of Jesus, use many words to
share the Good News. Yet, in
all their numbers, the words
themselves fall short of a very
specific goal. My own Father
offered a brief reflection in
one of his sermons which is
indelibly etched in my life. He
said:

**The words that we use this Easter Season
will never be enough to capture the full
impact and experience of what it means to
be the focus of Divine, Sacrificial Love.**

"The totality of God can
never be caught up within a
net of words".

After having recently
moved from a home of eigh-
teen years into a new home
and after packing and un-
packing a significant number
of boxes, each with their own
collection of books, I must
affirm the truth offered at the
conclusion of the Gospel of St
John:

"There is much else that
Jesus did. If it were all to be
recorded in detail, I suppose
the whole world could not
hold the books that would be
written". (St John 21:25)

How do you use words to
express your thoughts, your
feelings, or your emotions?
Do your words always have
the impact that you have
hoped for? Are you always
understood, valued and ap-
preciated in the way in which
you communicate? Do your
words build up or wound the
person you are speaking with?
What unknown sensitivities
does the person who hears
your words have? Do the
words that you use have the
same meaning for you as the
one who hears or reads them?

A young poet, seeking to
express the sense of loss at the
end of a relationship wrote:

*Love is a word oft times
abused,
And one that should not be
overused,*

*But that word is heaven -
sent,*

*To explain the joy,
And what it meant,
Being together.*

The words that we use this
Easter Season will never be
enough to capture the full
impact and experience of
what it means to be the focus
of Divine, Sacrificial Love. We
proclaim the joy at the heart
of our faith:

*Alleluia, Christ is Risen!
The Lord is Risen indeed,
Alleluia!*

The words of the Kenyan
Canon (slightly revised) also
seek to joyfully express the
reality of the moment, as it
has an impact throughout our
lives:

*We are (God's) People!
We are Redeemed!*

May the words you use,
serve you well, as you seek to
express your faith each day of
your life.

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

Easter in a snow suit: Dealing with the burden of awareness

On a fine winter day,
I noticed a young
toddler strolling hands-free
beside her mother down a
sidewalk. She (or maybe he)
was wrapped cozily in a heavy,
warm snowsuit. Each step
was separated by a whoosh
of her bulky pants. A little
face beamed from out under
the snuggly hood, seemingly
impervious to the drag of the
cumbersome outfit.

I was riveted by the sparkle
of her playful energy, fasci-
nated by her ecstatic pleasure.
Many of us have long lost en-
gaging life with such profound
joy. Our hearts and minds are
increasingly distracted by so
many things; busyness, stress,
hardship, pain, loss, and on
and on.

Many of us have developed
a remarkable resiliency to life's
distractions. Yet still, we aren't
breathing as deeply as we once
did. Muscles have tightened,
and though this may help us
get by, it limits our being fully



AS I SEE IT
**REV. JIM
INNES**

engaged, and we inevitably
bury some of the pleasure.

The toddler's lighthearted
spirit bubbled up from a natu-
ral spring inside her. No creed
had to be recited, and no act
of contrition was demand-
ed. Its nature is reminiscent,
perhaps even parallel to, the
uninhibited innocence de-
picted by Adam and Eve, who
lived large and carefree in the
garden of Eden, and, maybe,
additionally likened to the
eastern concepts of Moksha
and Nirvana.

We all seek a lighthearted
and joyful experience in our
daily walk. However, unlike
toddlers, we also carry the
burden of awareness. And like



Adam and Eve, we must say
goodbye to innocence.

However, despite that loss,
I do believe, against all odds,
there is a natural spring of
light and life within us. A
source of joy that will never
dry up...no matter our adult
condition. Perhaps seeking
this inner connection is what
some have called the search
for the Holy Grail, a drink
from the cup of life.

In the Christian church, this
inner journey is commemo-
rated by Lent and Easter. Lent

is an annual 40-day prayer,
fasting, and almsgiving that
begins on Ash Wednesday
and ends at sundown on Holy
Thursday (for 2023, the dates
are February 22 to April 6).

A well-used prayer goes like
this, "Everlasting God, create
and make in us new and con-
trite hearts, that we worthily
lamenting our sins and ac-
knowledging our brokenness,
may obtain of you, the God of
all mercy, perfect remission,
and forgiveness, through Jesus
Christ, our Lord...."

Lent leads into Easter (April
9), and Easter commemorates,
in all manner of symbolism,
reconnection to the joyful
source, that ecstatic toddler
within. In prayer, it is asked,
"O God, we share in the light
of your glory... inflame us
with new hope. Purify our
minds by this Easter celebra-
tion, and bring us one day to
the feast of eternal light..."

As I see it, we can return (in
some measure) to the child-
hood pleasure of walking in a
snowsuit on a bright winter's
day. We can drink from the
cup of joy and experience ec-
static moments. However, we
cannot, by any practice, sim-
ply be zapped back in time.
The source of such pleasure is
now a hero's journey away.

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