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HURON CHURCH NEWS

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



The joy of Resurrection: Eastertide and beyond

Rejoice, the Lord is King:
 Your Lord and King adore!
 Rejoice, give thanks and sing,
 And triumph evermore.
 Lift up your heart,
 Lift up your voice!
 Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

+++

Keeping up with the spirit of joy beyond Easter season in the face of everyday chal-

lenges: for the churches in Huron the test comes with the end of Eastertide.

On Pentecost Sunday the 183rd Synod of the Diocese of Huron convenes in London, Ontario.

The opening service will be held in St. Paul's Cathedral at 4:30 pm. Synod Banquet is scheduled for later that evening at RBC Place. Synod will convene for its

one-day session at RBC Place on Monday morning, at 9:00 am.

In the words of Bishop Todd, it is the time and the place where members from every parish have a say and a responsibility, "a voice and a vote", in the life and work of our church.

The opening service and the Monday session will be livestreamed.

LOVE ETERNAL
 The moment of grace that anticipates the joy of Resurrection: Rev. Allie McDougall kissing her daughter after Allie's ordination on March 21 at St. Paul's Cathedral.

- ▶ Page 2 Bishop Todd: A VOICE AND A VOTE - DISCUSSING THE PRESENT SHAPE AND FUTURE DIRECTION OF OUR CHURCH
- ▶ Page 3 DIVERSE CHURCH: CONVERSATION AND LEARNING WORKSHOP WITH BISHOP LUSA NSENGA-NGOY
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The wisdom of the desert: *Deja vu* that changed my life

We continue exploring Anglican monastic tradition and sharing experiences of various people in the diocese who have found inspiration in this little known and quiet corner of the Church.

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Field notes: Church decline, outreach and evangelism

Yes, decline is palpable and yes, we must do outreach and evangelism. But do we know what's out there, beyond the walls of our churches?

▶ Page 7



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-Ngoy
 (Bishop of Willesden,
 Diocese of London, UK)

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Discussing the present shape and future direction of our church

At the end of this month, delegates from across the Diocese of Huron will gather in London for our annual meeting of Synod—a meeting of the primary governance body for mission in our diocese.

It is where members from every parish have a say and a responsibility, “a voice and a vote”, in the life and work of our church.

The theme of Synod 2023 will be “Singing the Lord’s Song in a Strange Land.” We will welcome Bishop Lusa Nsenga-Ngoy from the “other London” (Bishop of Willesden, UK) as our speaker and preacher at the opening liturgy. It will begin on the Day of Pentecost and it will be wonderful to see and hear the movement of the Holy Spirit on those two days.

We will be discussing the present shape and future



**BISHOP
TODD
TOWNSHEND**

direction of our church. We will begin to design new methods of resource development for ministry in healthy communities.

There will be work done on revising and expanding our policies and practices for Safe and Healthy Churches, there will be some direction given for a diocesan property strategy, there will be financial updates, canonical (church law) changes, and there will be serious consideration of what we mean by “becoming a more diverse church”—linguistically and culturally.

Synod 2023: It is where members from every parish have a say and a responsibility, “a voice and a vote”, in the life and work of our church.

Above all, we will gather around tables for worship, nourishment, and encouragement.

Bishop Lusa’s visit will be a real gift to us. He was born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he studied theology at the Faculté Universitaire de Théologie Protestante, Brussels, and worked as a researcher for the African Development Information Service before training for ministry at Cranmer Hall, Durham.

Bishop Lusa is married to Mirjam, who served as Discipleship Officer of Leicester Cathedral, while +Lusa

served as Black and Minority Ethnic Mission and Ministry Enabler in the Diocese of Leicester, and they have three young children.

With his help, 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.

See you at Synod! Watch for news and opportunities to participate on the website diohuron.org and in Huron Church News.

+ Todd

'Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land' - the gift of diversity

Born in Congo, schooled in Brussels, serves in UK: Meet Bishop Lusa, our guest of honour at 183rd Huron Synod.



The Champion of Diversity: Lusa Nsenga-Ngoy, Bishop of Willesden. Bishop Lusa will address the Synod on May 28 and 29, and the general public will have a chance to engage in conversation with him on Tuesday, May 30.

Lusa Nsenga-Ngoy was consecrated as the Bishop of Willesden in January 2022, at a service led by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Lusa was ordained in 2008 and served as an Assistant Curate in the Diocese of Canterbury, before becoming Vicar of St Aidan, Gravesend in 2012. In 2017 he was appointed BAME Mission and Ministry Enabler in the Diocese of Leicester, wherein he oversaw an increase in representation and participation of those from UK Minority Ethnic (UKME) backgrounds in the life and structures of Leicester Diocese. Lusa is a trustee of St Mellitus College, Church Army, and deputy chair of the Board of Initiatives of Change UK.

His interests include ethical leadership, storytelling, and poetry. Lusa feels strongly about issues of social justice, and has worked with Making Herstory: an organization working to end gender-based violence.

Lusa’s wife, Mirjam Ngoy-Verhage, is Discipleship Officer for Leicester Cathedral. They have three children.

+++

Bishop Lusa will preach at the Synod opening service on Sunday, May 28, and he will engage in conversation with the Synod attendees in a group setting on Monday, May 29. Both events will be livestreamed.

The wider audience will have their chance to listen and to talk to Bishop Lusa. On Tuesday, May 30, the Diocese will organize a Conversation and Learning Workshop with Bishop Lusa. Everyone is welcome to attend.

▶ MORE DETAILS ON PAGE 3

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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
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Todd Townshend
Bishop of Huron
Diocese of Huron
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Huron Synod 2023: Rejoice always, pray without ceasing

By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

As we come together as a diocesan family for our Synod gatherings, we do so, with great expectation, anticipating as in our parishes, that as we gather, God’s Spirit will be faithful to move between and among us, guiding our reflections and considerations, opening our hearts and our minds to new understandings and perspectives of all that it is to be a follower of Jesus in this moment in the Church.

For it is in prayer that we not only lay before God our cares and concerns, but we also pause to listen and to make space in our lives into which God can speak. It is in prayer that we are reminded of who we are in Christ and to what we have been called. It is in our prayer that we both find and lose ourselves as our connection to the divine empowers and enlivens all that we do. As the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer within the Diocese of Huron, we exist to encourage and enable the ministry of prayer and to assist both indi-

ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

SYNOD PRAYERS ON DIOCESAN WEBSITE:

All Synod related materials prepared by AFP could be found on the diocesan website: <https://dihuron.org>

To find prayers and Vigil signup sheet go to Resources pages and select Synod Resources sub-page:
<https://diohuron.org/pages/183rd-synod-of-the-diocese-of-huron>

viduals and parishes to both grow and be changed by their life of prayer.

Our practice in the Diocese of Huron over the past number of years, has been to encourage parishes to organize a Synod Prayer Vigil during these days of Synod, so that we may surround all that will be considered and discussed during our time together in prayer. Prayer vigils can be done in a variety of ways. In consultation with your Rector, some parishes may decide to gather together to pray during



19, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork...”, Psalm 139, “Lord, you have searched me out and known me...” which acknowledge the wonder and beauty of God’s creation, and our stewardship of it.

2. This could then be followed by thanksgivings for the gift of our salvation through Jesus Christ, our faith and blessings received. As well we give thanks for the parishes and people of the diocese of Huron, including Huron’s leadership in its bishops, priests and deacons, lay leaders and especially the many who are serving and presenting at the Synod during these days could then be mentioned. Our prayers would include in particular that as a diocesan family, together we may strive to be faithful saints in the way of Jesus, discerning what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church in our time and in our particular context.

1. You may begin by either prayerfully reading a psalm or two (Psalm 8, “When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars you have set in their courses...”; Psalm

3. The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Huron) has sent out materials to all parishes in

Huron in late April. To see: a list of suggested prayers, and a template to use to organize your prayer vigil, please speak to either your Rector, or your Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Representative to see these materials.

If they have not received this material for any reason, copies may be found on the diocesan website or by e-mailing Rev Kimberly Myer at: kimmyer@diohuron.org. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:15-18)

I would encourage us all to find some moments both before and during these important Synod gatherings to commit ourselves to holding this important occasion before our loving God asking for eyes to see, ears to hear all that the Spirit is saying to the Church in Huron in these days as we choose to be faithful stewards of the bounty that surrounds us.

Rev. Canon Dr Val Kenyon is an Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Executive (Huron).



Everyone is welcome to attend a
Conversation and Learning Workshop
with
Bishop Lusa Nsenga-Ngoy

Tuesday, May 30, 2023
RBC Place, London, ON
9:30 am to 12 pm
To register go to:

<https://diohuron.org/events/>

HURON FARMWORKERS MINISTRY NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT



The Huron Farmworkers Ministry received amazing support from all our Huron communities in 2022.

We were able to collect over a hundred bags with clothes in an amazing condition, and a variety of other contributions such as bicycles, toiletries, kitchen utensils, bedding, food and many more. We were able to start preparing meals at Trinity Church in Simcoe and have been able to support the workers filling out forms/paperwork they need to send to CRA.

This year (2023) we continue to assist our farmworkers. We are planning in expanding our services to two different locations: Tillsonburg and Burford.

Once again, we are seeking donations of men’s clothing such as pants, sweaters, hoodies, t-shirts, warm jackets, shoes, gloves, baseball caps, team

shirts, toques, bicycles... Preferred sizes: small to large in clean, ready to wear condition.

Financial donations are warmly welcomed. Send your gift via e-transfer to: huronfarmworkersproject@gmail.com or send a cheque to:

The Huron Hispanic & Migrant Farmworkers Outreach Ministry
c/o St John’s Anglican Church
46 Front Road, PO Box 387
Port Rowan, Ontario N0E 1M0

For further information or donation pick up, please contact the Norfolk H. FM coordinator Fr. Enrique Martinez at enriquemartinez@huronfarmworkersministry.org or dianarueda@huronfarmworkersministry.org or call us at 548-881-5614. follow us <https://www.facebook.com/thehuronfarmworkersministry>

Here's the church and there's the steeple

All Saints' Waterloo monthly church build update: firmly grounded in the mission field



From the ground to the highest point translucent glass will be accentuated with a large cross that will be illuminated at night.

also symbolic that the prayers of church members would ascend to God in heaven. And traditionally being the highest point, before skyscrapers, they provided a visible way point on the horizon.

As construction continues at All Saints Waterloo's new church and community centre, we wanted to take a bit of a modern twist on the traditional steeple. Right on the corner for maximum visibility it will be a feature of the new building. From the ground to the highest point translucent glass will be accentuated with a large cross that will be illuminated at night.

Not only does it point to heaven, directing the prayers of the faithful heavenwards but it also firmly grounds us in the here and now, in the mission field we serve. It says who we are, an Easter people, ready to serve. A call to action in a sense, but also a declaration the All are Saints, All are Loved and All are Welcomed at this place.

By Rev. Marty Levesque

Here's the church and there's the steeple. Open the door and see all the people. Here's the parson going upstairs. And here he is now he's saying his prayers.

Warming up hearts on the coldest night of the year

By Lori Colbeck

There were two wood fires burning in Upper Queen's Park where folks could warm themselves and cups of hot chocolate were being distributed. CNOY toques were passed out to the sixteen members of the Stratford Anglican Churches Team gathered for the Coldest Night of the Year walk.

Archdeacon Tanya Phibbs and her husband Wade, Canon Rob Lemon the newly arrived rector of St. James' and St. Paul's, his wife Trish Taylor and their children Rebekah and Jacob were on the team.

Also on the team were The Reverend Lorraine Brooks, Deacon at St. Paul's and The Reverend Canon Tom Patterson, Deacon at St. James'.

Stratford has been participating in the walk which takes place across Canada and America each year — for over a decade, and for the last two years the Stratford Anglican Churches have formed a team.

We were aware as we chatted before the walk began that it was not an unpleasant late afternoon for a walk around the river. We were, however, acutely aware that there were at least 140 persons, adult and youth in Perth County living unsheltered day by day in far worse conditions.



"Shouts of great joy" despite the "coldest night of the year": Stratford Anglican team in Upper Queen's Park.

Ryan Erb, executive director of United Way Huron Perth, announced that \$140,000.00 had been raised locally by over 360 walkers. There were "shouts of great joy" from our team when it was announced that we had raised \$8,705.00 the most of all the 60 local teams.

Since the day of the walk our total has risen to \$8,875.00. It was said often in our group during the lead up to the walk that we were very appreciative of our donors' generosity; it meant even more that they understood the acute need for support for The Connections Centre and Shelterlink here in Stratford.

The United Way of Perth/Huron opened the Stratford Connections Centre, located

at St. Paul's Anglican Church, on December 20, 2021. The Centre offers folks who are homeless or threatened with becoming homeless a warm place to drop in for a hot meal and snacks. The Centre funded by the United Way opened during Covid, and supported by Public Health and following Covid protocols, they managed to remain open.

The parishioners at St. Paul's had been wanting to do an "Outreach Project" and when Choices for Change was looking for a space to run their programs St. Paul's, being centrally located in Stratford was a perfect fit.

Program staff includes Housing Stability Workers who help with housing searches, applications for housing,

Cancer turbans at St. George's of Forest Hill, Kitchener



Monthly meetings resume: Parish volunteers and members of the K-W May Count Club at St. George's of Forest Hill

For the past 16 years parish volunteers and members of the Kitchener-Waterloo May Count Club have been gathering at St. George's of Forest Hill Anglican Church to hand sew the turbans and enjoy fellowship and laughter.

Our monthly meetings were interrupted by COVID, but many members continued the sewing process at their homes. We were able to take an average of 50-70 turbans or caps to the Grand River Cancer Centre (GRCC) per month, September to June.

Since inception we have provided the patients at the GRCC with an average of 600 plus turbans/caps per year. Many prayers are said for those who receive a turban.

Mary Ann Millar

connections with landlords, and move-in readiness. Peer Outreach workers are staff with lived experience of homelessness who rebuilt their lives. They focus on supporting people in Stratford who are experiencing homelessness. There is also support for those dealing with addictions.

A shower has been added as well as laundry facilities. More than 323 people have accessed the centre visiting 1,300 times since the Centre opened.

Members of the three Anglican churches in Stratford - St. Paul's, St. Stephen's and St. James' supply sandwiches, home baking and other needed items to the Centre.

Stratford/Perth Shelterlink, serving youth ages 16 to 24, provides emergency or transitional shelter and support services to homeless or at-risk youth across Perth County. This past year 63 unsheltered youth were provided with shelter, basic needs, community referrals, and life skills counselling. Constant staff support helps move them forward and into a successful independent living situation providing life skills and career planning.

Support volunteers were positioned along the route cheering walkers on and providing help where needed.

The walk began down "snake hill" from Upper Queen's Park to the bridge that crosses the river. On the way back, the volunteer closest to the end of the walk had bright pink pom poms and cheered us on, reminding us "It's all uphill from here!"

Young and old, families with young children or babies in strollers, and dogs of all varieties hiked our way back up "snake hill" knowing we were making some difference for those less fortunate in our community, being supported through the good work of The Connections Centre and Shelterlink.

The chance to walk as Coldest Night of the Year team members knowing we were, in our small way doing God's work in this place, has given us more awareness and confidence to look towards future opportunities for the Stratford Anglican Churches to work together to make a difference.

Before leaving the Park, our team members handed their CNOY toques to our team leader to be taken to the Connections Centre. One of the folks visiting the Centre remarked that he needed a warm hat and so the love is passed on.

Lori Colbeck is a member of the Outreach Committee of St. James', Stratford.

The wisdom of the desert: Deja vu that changed my life

By Sue Lafreniere



Sue Lafreniere: "I wanted to honour my dear friend's memory, so I explored being an associate with the Sisterhood. On February 24, 2022, I started my year of discernment."

What first drew me to the monastic tradition was my dear friend and faith mentor for the past 25 years, Margaret Attwell.

She was the coordinator of the Pastoral Care Program at my previous church, St. John the Evangelist in Smiths Falls and passed the responsibilities onto me where I served for 10 years. She passed away January 2022, in her 93rd year.

When I attended her funeral, I wanted to make a donation in her name. The funeral home assistant asked me if I would like to donate to the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine or her home church.

Déjà vu: I was flooded with my memories of her asking me to consider being an associate of the Sisterhood many years before; I also recalled a nun at a Cursillo Weekend, where I volunteered in 2002, who had asked me if I would like to become a sister; and more recently our retired minister, The Ven. Neil Carver, at my present church of Church of the Holy Saviour, Waterloo, asked me if I knew about the Sisterhood of St. John Divine in Toronto.

I wanted to honour my dear friend's memory, so I explored being an associate with the Sisterhood. On February 24, 2022, I started my year of discernment.

My knowledge about being an associate was limited... just what I had read online and information that was sent to me. What I do know is that these three people saw something in me, through their faith in God, and encouraged me to learn more about SSJD.

For me, I am seeking, in associating my life with a religious community, to deepen my faith in God, continue to learn the teachings of Jesus, and share my gifts through the Holy Spirit with others.

During COVID I became much more aware of the great need to pray and love those around us more deeply. Many things helped me cope during COVID, but none more than those based in my faith in God.

The Ven. Neil Carver introduced a small group from our parish into a Virtual Vespers group that I believed helped us all immensely. During these Sunday afternoon services I was introduced to a short meditation time, which was extremely beneficial to me.

Later, Chuck Erion decided to start a parish meditation group at our church. That was over a year ago and it has been an amazing transformation for me.

More recently I've been participating in a Zoom group led by Matthew Kieswetter for people interested in monasticism. Through all these sessions I have read many great books that have inspired me to journal and personally meditate every morning and evening.

Last Fall I attended a 'Quiet Day of Prayer' for Advent at SSJD that was presented by Bishop Riscylla Shaw. This experience provided me with much peace. Through my contact with SSJD, I am continually reading and searching out new books to enlighten my faith in God and strengthen my knowledge in the Bible.

I am grateful for the guidance and love I have received attending Vespers and the ongoing Meditation course as well as the monastic support from The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine.

Sue Lafreniere is a member of Holy Saviour Anglican Church in Waterloo, and blessed to be an Associate with the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine.

Women talking... about prayer (A recorded conversation)

By Shirley Sewell and Linda DeBurger

CONGREGATIONAL



COACHES

Approximately twelve members of The Rondeau Bay Transfiguration Partnership get together online every Monday night to discuss, well, everything: The Way of Love, Listening to Indigenous Voices, Braiding Sweetgrass, Wade in the Water, even Death of a Christian.

In Epiphany, the group decided to learn how to pray, using the Revive small-group discipleship program. (All these study topics were under the direction of Dr. Rev. Lisa Wang.)

Facilitators were coaches Shirley Sewell of St. Matthew's, Florence, and Linda DeBurger of Christ Church, Dresden.

We recorded (with everyone's permission!) the wrap-up. We decided to share it with you.

(The prayer formats listed below in this reflection are all explained in detail in written form in section one "Communicating with God" in the Revive Program.)

"So, what did we like?"

"We liked the shorter prayers better than the longer, I think, and we decided we liked the STAF Prayer (Salutation, Thanksgiving, Ask, Finish) and the Body Prayer best."

"I think another thing, too, was that we need the prompts. You almost need an audio form of all the prayers as well as the written forms because then you don't have to stop and look to see what's the next part."

"Another thing, I think it was very helpful for people who do the prayers of the people at our services every Sunday."

"I feel so much more

confident in doing a prayer. I'm not anywhere near the stage where I can say a prayer without probably a week of preparation. But I'm on my way!"

"I know another thing I found is that if there is something coming up where you want to say a prayer, the STAF format comes to mind right away and you just automatically put the prayer into that format."

"I think with the different kinds of prayer we talked about, some of them are simple and some of them are long, it gives us the ability to choose, 'Oh, I think I could do that now. I think I could say that prayer.' I know when our regular intercessor was away a couple weeks and I did the prayers of the people, I did them differently than I did before because I used the STAF format and I integrated parts. I think it is 'more tools in our toolbox.'"

"That's a good way to put it."

"Also, when else have you ever talked about praying?"

"True!"

"For six weeks!"

[Laughter]

"It's very interesting.

Dresden is doing The Way of Love, and finding the way it integrates what we have learned about prayer. Lectio Divina is one of the prayer forms this week."

"I put a couple of those prayer apps on my phone that they suggested, and one is d365.org. The pause and go statements will stay the same throughout the week to center your mind. The middle three steps (listen, think, pray) are new text every day. I found that some of those apps are really useful."

"In Pray-As-You-Go, if you open the app, you can do the prayer for the day, but then there's a little icon that says 'journey' at the bottom and it's got every kind of prayer that we talked about in a format that you can listen to and do the prayer. I thought that was interesting. It was right there."

"Social media has a lot of things available if you just know where they are. You don't have to say, 'I don't know what to do.' All you have to do is push the button."

"The right one!"

[Laughter]

"Now the Pray-As-You-Go

app, do you have to pay for that?"

"No."

"It's free?"

"Yes."

"All good Christians want things free!"

[Laughter] "I think there is so much we learned in that first seven weeks, so many apps and links and now we have to sit and say, 'Okay, what can I do, because I can't do it all.' I have to choose to pray in a way that is meaningful to me. I like all the prayer formats we were introduced to. I want to pray but I don't have time to pray all day!"


"I find I do the music prayer at the end of yoga every session because we often stop with some type of a song, and I find that my mind goes right to the music prayer. Although my bones do crack, you can't hear them over the music!"

[Laughter]

Laughing and talking about prayer... what a novel idea!

Shirley Sewell and Linda DeBurger are members of the Diocesan Coaching Team.

ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN




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



In Memory

Deanery of London St. Anne's Church, Byron <i>Joy Philpott</i> <i>Margaret Gladwish</i> <i>Judith Brown</i>	Deanery of Kent Church of Advent, Ridgetown <i>Geraldine (Geri)</i> <i>Pollock</i> <i>Jean Althouse</i>	Deanery of Waterloo Trinity (Galt), Cambridge <i>Virginia Campbell</i> <i>Joanne Lockston</i> <i>Elisabeth Patterson</i> <i>Grace Spiers</i> <i>Shirley Vero</i> <i>Helen Nickason</i> <i>Joyce Spring</i> <i>Mary Dales</i>
St. Jude's Church, London <i>Shirley Shaw</i> <i>Letitia (Pat) Lynch</i>	Deanery of Lambton St. John-in-the- Wilderness, Bright's Grove <i>Janice McAlpine</i>	

A mission of caring at St. Columba in Waterloo



Yellow and blue: Easter chicks for Ukraine is just one of the ways ACW at St. Columba supports its wider community in need

The ACW at St. Columba Anglican Church in Waterloo may be small, but the group is the driving force behind much of the outreach that happens in the parish. The dedicated members of the ACW work throughout the year to raise funds that are then used to care for neighbours both near and far.

In 2022, the group organized a series of "Outreach Sundays", selling a variety of baked goods, jams and soups to raise funds to support the Waterloo Deanery Refugee Committee in its work of sponsoring refugee families and helping them settle in the region.

The ACW also held its popular Christmas bazaar in December 2022, and it was, as always, a huge success. From the proceeds of the bazaar the ACW was able to support Days for Girls, Food 4 Kids and the Women's Crisis

Centre with a donation of \$1,000 to each organization.

A new initiative that started in 2022 was the sale of hand-knitted Easter chicks to raise funds for PWRDF to support its work with various partners in bringing relief to the people of Ukraine. The ACW was able to send a total of \$580 to PWRDF last year from the sale of the knitted chicks.

In 2023, Easter bunnies were added, and the response was so great that orders had to be closed by early February, after only a month. Other churches in Waterloo Deanery were also invited to participate in the project.

The ACW expects to send an even larger donation to PWRDF for Ukraine this year from the sale.

Lisa Mandler, ACW St. Columba, Waterloo

Field notes: Do we know what's out there, beyond our walls?

By Rev. Allie McDougal

As one of the diocese's newest priests and an Anglican of a mere six years, I often find myself troubled by conversations around church decline, outreach, and evangelism.

These are weighty realities that demand our attention. Yes, decline is palpable and yes, we must do outreach and evangelism. But do we know what's out there, beyond the walls of our churches?

One of the hurdles to effective outreach and evangelism is that Anglican parishes have been, for the most part, closed ecosystems that possess their own quirks and cultural norms. There can be a steep learning curve for newcomers in our communities - from liturgical norms to coffee hour etiquette.

Most of our churches have been faithfully served for decades by static groups who, prior to the 2040 alarm bells being rung, had not had to examine the accessibility or relevance of their parish life. Because we are in decline, there



As a millennial culture watcher, I am troubled by what I see taking root in the land beyond the church doors and our inability to engage with sincerity and theological lenses.

is a prevailing assumption that the amorphous, ill-defined "secular" world has no need of us and we have nothing to offer them, except perhaps a venue to host grandma and grandpa's funerals someday. I don't believe this is true.

The English theological tradition known as Radical Orthodoxy (don't let the name scare you) theorizes that all of creation participates in the

being of God and that this includes the cultural containers through which we create meaning, consciously and unconsciously.

Put another way, it's God's universe and we're all living and making meaning in it.

When we think this way about the entirety of the human experience, the "secular" world is no longer an enemy, but a source of information and insight into the work of God beyond the walls of the church. It also helps Christians see and identify cultural trends that speak to the existential, theological, and spiritual anxieties that underpin the life outside our church walls. While our parish communities may be seen as distinct from their surroundings, we must not forget that the people who these com-

munities are comprised of are also navigating these cultural waters.

Knowing our context, our mission field requires us to pay attention and have curiosity about things that are not normally spoken about in the life of our churches. These subjects might not even be relevant to the people who make up our current membership profile. If we hope to persist in ministry and have a sustainable future as communities of the Christian faith, we must be able to look out and interpret what is being expressed by a normative culture that has rejected the Christendom of the 20th century and embraced new mythologies, messiahs, and rituals.

As a millennial culture watcher, I am troubled by what I see taking root in the land beyond the church doors and our inability to engage with sincerity and theological lenses. Reality TV, TikTok, the "manosphere", MAiD, inflation, contemporary work culture, pornography, the housing market, social media

influencers, mental illness, pop music, and just about everything else under the Sun informs and shapes the state of the human experience, where God is at work, and where the hope of the Gospel is needed.

We don't know what we don't know about the rapidly changing world in which we are situated, but once we do know we can be empowered to respond. In the great, diverse landscape of the Church Catholic, we can only be ourselves. There are spiritually rich and profound aspects of our Anglican tradition that can speak new life and bring comfort to the post-pandemic zeitgeist. On our part, the task of cultural engagement requires self-awareness creativity, and courage to step outside of our Huron Anglican comfort zones and gaze into the unknown. This is work cannot be done alone - allow me to share my field notes.

Rev. Allie McDougal is the Curate at St. Paul's and St. James', Stratford.

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

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PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

Appointments

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Sean Davidson as the rector of Trinity, Sarnia effective September 1, 2023.

The Reverend Davidson is moving to Huron from the Diocese of Fredericton where he is currently the rector of the Parishes of Waterford, Sussex and St. Mark.

Ordinations

On Tuesday, March 21, 2023, Bishop Townshend ordained four of our deacons to the priesthood at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, London.

Our new priests are:

- 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, Priest

Assistant under the direction of the Territorial Archdeacon.

- The Reverend Allison McDougall, Assistant Curate to the Rector, St. Paul's, Stratford and St. James, Stratford.

Rest in Peace

DOBSON, LILLIAN MAY (nee Rance). Passed away peacefully on March 9, 2023, at 89 years of age. Beloved wife of the late Rev. R. Maurice Dobson (2011). Proud mother of Miriam and husband Gordon Mark. Predeceased by parents Edward and Molly Rance. Predeceased by her sister Jean (Ernest Metcalf), Betty (Gannev), niece Beverley (Daniel St. Louis) and great nephew Mark Souchuk. Survived by niece Lorraine, husband Ron Souchuk, great niece Marianne, great great nieces Annalee and Allison. Will also be missed by numerous nieces and nephews, and her cherished friend Keith Moore and family.

Breakfast with the Bishop at Church of the Ascension, Windsor



On Sunday, March 5, Rev. Canon Lance Smith, associate clergy and congregation welcomed Bishop Townshend on his first official episcopal visit to Church of the Ascension in Windsor.

A 'Breakfast with the Bishop' was held between morning services which was followed by the Laying on of Hands to 19 eager Confirmants, dutifully instructed by associate clergy, Rev. Canon Dr. Donald H. Hull.

Postponed by the pandemic, and finally to all the faithful, it was a joyous step in the journey to Communion and the sharing of the sacraments.

A fitting and heart-felt welcome to Bishop Todd and the newest full members of the faith.

Randy Cyr



Bishop Todd (centre) with the newly ordained clergy in Huron (from left): Rev. Dr. Craig Love, Rev. John Paul Markides, Rev. Allison McDougall and Rev. Jamie Baxter

Inclusion and diversity in communities of faith

By Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle

It is a typical Sunday morning. Worship has started.

Loud utterances are heard outside signaling that our friend has arrived. Immediately one parishioner jumps up and goes out to help navigate the large wheelchair through the doors to the building and the sanctuary. The choir director pushes in the piano bench and sits in a pew to allow for easier navigation into the space.

Once our friend have found her spot, another parishioner offers her a tambourine and makes sure others have shakers to support inclusion during the music. The recently baptized three-year-old waves, they have become special friends in the short time they have known each other as they share the joy of playing along with the music. As tends to happen, our friend settles down once she finds herself surrounded by her Church family, people who gracefully accept her for who she is and continually make space for her to feel part of the community.

This congregation has had some 10 years experience with parishioners who have intellectual disabilities. It started with John, who had Down Syndrome. With him, the folks

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



Bishop Todd's vision includes the goal of having a diverse Church. This ideal challenges us to consider the extent to which we are inclusive as communities of faith.

learned the wonder and joy of a powerful smile that would light up the sanctuary during the passing of peace and when singing his favourite songs. They have a soft spot for Shine Jesus, Shine! because it was John's favourite. He would light up when it was sung in-spiring even some of the most traditional in the community to dance and clap along.

Loving John meant making space for him and his friends at pasta dinners. For a time,

all it took was ensuring there was a blender on hand. The Church family also represented his family at Christmas dinners as his siblings no longer lived in the area. These are treasured times for those who participated. Photos serve as reminders of these joyful moments.

John's workers also found a home among the community. One became a parishioner on her own and included the community when she was

married. Sadly, John died in 2020. Still his memory lives in the hearts of the community. His house continues to send baked goods for bake sales and the welcoming he received made it easier for Community Living to continue to bring friends to worship and events. John, our more recent friend, the Community Living workers, and their friends have become integral parts of the community and the ways the congregation embodies the Body of Christ.

Bishop Todd's vision includes the goal of having a diverse Church. This ideal challenges us to consider the extent to which we are inclusive as communities of faith.

How easy is it for those with mobility issues to access the spaces and places in our churches? Could a priest who uses a wheelchair preside at the altar? Could a blind person read scripture? How many would learn a bit of sign language to communicate with someone who is deaf and/or mute? What would happen if someone who is neurodivergent came to Church and was particularly expressive? Would they be perceived as an unwelcome disruption? What does our relationship with those who experience various challenges say about our understanding of what it means to be the Body of Christ today?

What can we learn from those who struggle with disabilities?

In the first letter to the Corinthians, we are told that we are the body of Christ and in individually members of it, each with our own gifts to bring. Living into this ideal challenges us to make space for the diversity of God's Beloved children whoever they are and however they come into our communities. The metaphor reminds us to value all parts of the body because "if one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it." (1 Cor 12:26) Thus we are challenged to "strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way." (1 Cor 12:31)

Who among us can name some of the greater gifts that the diversity of peoples with disabilities bring to our congregations? How many can say we have been blessed by the presence of siblings with physical and/or intellectual disabilities? What do we need to do to expand the spaces and places that embrace these individuals and the gifts they bring so that we come closer to that ideal of a diverse Church?

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

The light of Christ still shines through Ukraine Cursillo

By Rev. Brian Galligan

The roots of Cursillo grew during the darkness of war, out of a need to bring renewed faith and hope to those suffering from the loss and despair of the Spanish Civil War and later, World War II.

While it began in the Roman Catholic Church, its effective method for faith formation and renewal, together with equipping leaders for lay ministry caused it to be adopted by multiple Christian denominations throughout the world. Cursillo is now recognized as an ecumenical lay-led Christian ministry that operates under the authority and with the wide support and encouragement of international church leaders, including our Canadian Anglican Primate and Bishops.

With a common purpose of "Make a friend, Be a friend and Bring a friend to Christ", those attending



Cursillo Training Weekends are reminded that we are all part of one holy catholic and apostolic church, which transcends international and denominational boundaries. This is evidenced by the spirit of co-operation between Cursillo Movements of different countries and the welcome afforded to members visiting from overseas.

Consequently, following the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, the Secretariat (Leadership Team) of the Niagara Huron Anglican Cursillo Movement agreed that we were called to reach out to members of the Ukrainian Cursillo Movement. Writing to their Secretariat, Lay Director Renée Anderson and I let them know, that they were not alone, and that during their time of need we would continue to pray for the light of Christ to shine brightly upon them and through them, to dispel the darkness they were facing. We also invited them to join us in our regular on-line worship by Zoom.

This Canadian-Ukrainian dialogue continues on a regular basis through the sharing of prayer and updates about the ongoing situation in Ukraine.

We are pleased to report that despite the conflict, the Ukrainian Cursillo Movement has continued to grow, with

members actively sharing the Gospel and bringing God's love into the darkest of places through their faith, study and action. They are currently planning to host another Cursillo Training Weekend from May 18 - 21, 2023, and in a recent video, which was subsequently shared with Diocesan Cursillo Movements all across Canada, they requested Canadian prayer support for their Weekend team and participants.

Recognizing the value of opening a window into the day to day lives of Ukrainians, I requested additional videos from my contact showing food and clothing banks and telling stories about the enduring faith, hope and bravery of the Ukrainian people. These I was able to combine into a recent Sunday sermon which reflected the transforming power of faith in overcoming adversity.

As one Ukrainian Cursillo member puts it when he quotes St. Paul from Romans

12:21, "we refuse to allow ourselves to be overcome by evil but will instead, work to overcome evil with good."

Please join with us in praying for an end to this tragic conflict and for the Ukrainian Cursillo Movement whose members continue to serve Jesus by spreading the Gospel through their words and deeds.

Prayerful messages of support for their upcoming Cursillo Weekend can be emailed to cursillolviv@gmail.com

The next Niagara Huron Anglican Cursillo Weekend will be held July 21-23, 2023 at Five Oaks, Paris, ON. Details and Application Forms can be found at www.niagaracursillo.org

Clergy requiring more information are invited to contact me: Rev. Brian Galligan, Spiritual Director, Niagara Huron Anglican Cursillo Movement at: revbriangalligan@outlook.com

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

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Education for Ministry: Frequently asked questions



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

Expressed most simply, Education for Ministry is an opportunity participants make for themselves to dedicate a space of time in their week to explore their current understanding of their faith, while at the same time pressing into new understandings with others, also interested in study of this kind.

Education for Ministry asks us to stretch and open to God's Spirit as we connect what we know and are learning to the experiences and encounters of our everyday life. Below you will find some frequently asked questions. Perhaps you are asking them as well?

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the time commitment?

Groups vary in the time that they meet with some meeting weekly, biweekly or even monthly depending on the availability of the group members. Groups usually meet over a nine-month period. While the Efm is a four-year program, participants commit to just one year at a time.

Are there costs involved?

A full year of study costs \$350. In addition, participants are responsible for buying textbooks which range between \$125-\$150. Bursaries are available, so don't let money stop you from inquiring about a group near you. There are also sometimes parish funds available for study.

How much preparation is involved outside of the weekly session?

While each year has different amounts of reading, the first year will likely feel like the greatest adjustment. In all years, the material is engaging and very interesting. It is suggested that participants allow for a minimum of two hours per week outside of the meeting for preparation and personal reflection. Most will spend longer than this. It is not uncommon for participants to mull over questions all week that have been discussed in the group meeting.

Who participates in Efm?

Efm is designed for lay people of all ages. At baptism we are all called to ministry. Around the world, Efm has been a part of supporting many to understand their particular ministries and to

find their places of service within the church and the world. While everyone has their own reasons for joining Efm all come with a desire to learn and grow in their faith. Many come looking for a small-group setting in which they can explore the bigger questions of life in a safe and confidential environment, examining questions in light of popular culture.

Registration, Information and Open Houses

Registration takes place in late spring and the summer for classes that begin in September. A series of Open Houses are scheduled for May, June and August. As well, should a group at your parish wish an individual presentation in person or by Zoom, we are pleased to make that available to you.

Zoom Open Houses:

Wednesday, May 24th 7-8

Tuesday, June 6th 7-8

Monday, August 28, 7-8

For any additional information, please contact Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron Efm Coordinator or myself Val Kenyon at Efm@huron.anglican.ca

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

Making space for levity: Fostering times of joyful fellowship

Over the past two years, this column in the HCN has attempted to share different perspectives on how congregations are experiencing vibrancy, ministry growth and the fostering of new relationships. I am deeply thankful the many emails and responses that have come in, from readers who have connected with the themes in this column and often shared experiences from their own ministry contexts.

Today, I'd like to share one example, submitted by Helen Southgate Oldfield, Treasurer of The Parish of the Holy Spirit, Seaforth. Helen shares her congregation's deliberate efforts to express appreciation to the members of her church for having supported the parish faithfully over the difficult years of the pandemic.

Helen shares:

"In September of 2022 our Parish Council was finally back to meeting in person, and we hit the ground running, so to speak, keen to start planning to the end of the year.

We are small congregation in numbers, averaging about 25 per Sunday with about 35 regular participants in the life of the church community. As a Parish Council we have greatly appreciated the incredible support of our members through 2+ years of lock downs. We wanted to host an event beyond



Priscilla du Preez/Unsplash



GROWING BEYOND THE DOORS
REV. CANON GRAYHAME BOWCOTT

worship time to bring us back together, now that we could consider in-person events. So, our Rector and eight member leadership team unanimously decided to don our aprons ourselves and fully prepare a meal at no cost to the parishioners as a "welcome back to more normal times" and a thank you to all for supporting the parish ministry during the previous 2-1/2 years.

The wardens called to personally invite everyone on the parish list, taking care to

include those who had not been back since the onset of Covid. We did require preregistration and to our delight 55 people signed up to attend! We had a joyous celebration - a 4 p.m. Evensong on the First Sunday of Advent followed by a delicious turkey dinner with all the trimmings. What an amazing time we had sharing stories and renewing connections.

Additionally, nearly all of these folks came out to the Lessons and Carols service on December 18th and many had planned to come on Christmas Eve however, we live in the snow belt of Huron County and were affected by closures due to the blizzard. In spite of this letdown, we have the warm memories of our 2 Advent events to soften the loss. We

Is there regular laughter in your congregation? Are you having fun? While sometimes the Christian faith can be solemn and reverent, it is also true that one of the signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit is joy!

remain hopeful and have deep gratitude for God's grace as we move into 2023!"

On the key points that I'd like to highlight from Helen's account of her congregation's Lessons and Carols service and parish meal is the fact that they sound like fun! Most Anglican congregations have resurfaced on the other side of the pandemic a little worse for the wear, meaning that most congregations are in need of a little fun and levity to brighten the spirits and to promote a rekindling of the relationships for their members.

As we are entering into the warmer weather and the renewed life of the Spring/Easter season, now is a perfect time for congregational leaders to be sensitive to the spiritual health of their communities.

Is there regular laughter in your congregation? Are you having fun? While sometimes the Christian faith can be solemn and reverent, it is also true that one of the signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit is joy!

If laughter, fun and joy are not present in your congregation, perhaps this is an indicator that it is time for leadership to make space for levity. Often, when conflict or worries are overwhelming the members of a congregation, it is worthwhile to reflect on the moments when bonding and celebration have most recently been present.

Our experience of Church should be joyful! If joy is absent, we might be neglecting the most important element of congregational faith - our relationships.

Thanks again to Helen and Holy Spirit, Seaforth, for sharing their story of Making Space for Levity!

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

Edu-what? Edu-tainment! Here's what it is...

Edu-tainment is a growing trend in education, and churches are beginning to incorporate this approach into their outreach efforts.

One of the most popular platforms for edu-tainment is TikTok, a social media platform that allows users to create and share short-form videos. Instagram Reels is a very close second as the preferred platform.

But what is Edu-tainment? Edu-tainment is a term used to describe the practice of combining education and entertainment to create



MEDIA BYTES

REV. MARTY LEVESQUE



engaging learning experiences. This can take the form of liturgical explanations, short form bible studies or what is happening this week at your church.

TikTok or Reels can be a powerful tool for outreach and engagement for Christian communities. Churches can reach new audiences and

connect with their existing followers in a more meaningful way.

Here are a few tips for using TikTok or Reels for edu-tainment:

1. Keep it short and sweet: TikTok or Reels videos are short by nature, so it's important to keep your content concise and to the point.

Focus on sharing bite-sized pieces of information that are easy to understand and remember.

2. Be creative: TikTok is all about creativity, so don't be afraid to think outside the box. Use music, humour, and other creative elements to make your content more engaging and memorable.

3. Share your message: While TikTok is a platform for entertainment, it's important to remember that your goal is to share your message with your followers as well as seekers. Cross-share your videos on the rest of your platforms.

4. Stay on brand: Your TikTok content should be a reflection of your church's mission and values.

TikTok and Reels can be a powerful tools for edu-tainment and outreach in any church setting. By using the platforms to create creative and engaging content, churches can reach new audiences and connect with their existing congregants in a more meaningful way.

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

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The White Cross of St. John: Prudence, Justice, Temperance, Fortitude

Here is a question for our Diocesan Family: When you are in our Cathedral, look around, can you identify a symbol of an organization whose history of caring for humanity may be traced back to the 11th century?

Beginning as a hospice in the City of Jerusalem, a group of individuals developed a hospital caring for the poor, the sick and the suffering. They reached out to those in need without asking them to identify themselves by their faith tradition or any other litmus test.

A key element in the identity of the faith community who engaged in this ministry was that the feudal hierarchal system and order of the day was turned upside down. A radically new way of ministry was being offered, as a person's need and not their social status, or their faith identity, defined how the community responded.

Readers of this article may have understood by now that I am writing about the work of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem.

Those who are associated with this work are currently hiding, in plain sight, all around us, as Medical First Responders who wear the White Cross of St. John on their uniforms as members of St John Ambulance. We see them at many public events in



The newly created St. John Ambulance Chaplain's Pin: the Cross of St. John at the heart of an Ontario Trillium. The Lions and Unicorns are supporters of the Royal Arms granted by the British Crown and indicate that St John is a Royal Order of Chivalry. The Order of St. John is also part of the Canadian Honours System.



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

our communities and we have been aware of the presence of St. John volunteers at our Diocesan Synod over the years.

A significant feature of the St. John Ambulance organization is the manner in which it continues to draw on its heritage and tradition to shape its present work in the community. St. John volunteers are present to be the first ones to respond to immediate medical concerns at community events.

The St. John Therapy Dog program which was initiated in Canada has spread around the globe as the worldwide organization has seen the heal-

ing value of how the presence of St. John volunteers, along with their canine companions, offer a non-judgmental and healing presence in their visits to seniors' residences, universities and even in airports. School visits where patient dogs, who will neither correct a young student's grammar or pronunciation as a story is read out loud, generate a higher level of confidence which, in turn, enhances a student's learning experience. St. John volunteers may be trained in how to respond to drug overdosing. Different groups come together to learn how they can best respond to large scale disasters.

At the heart of St. John's connection with the community is the way in which the organization offers training for individuals to respond to immediate critical situations in their own lives.

First Aid and CPR training are available and accessible for all who want to have the basic tools necessary to respond immediately to the needs of members of family and friends. St. John Ambulance sets the Gold Standard for workplace Health and Safety Canadian guidelines.

From my perspective, a significant feature of the St. John organization is the attention which is given to the care and support of volunteers by a cadre of St. John Chaplains. Individuals with experience in ministry have the opportunity to offer a caring ministry to those who respond to the wider needs of the community and find themselves needing care.

At a recent Conference, as Ontario's Provincial Chaplain and Sub Dean of the Priory of Canada, it was my pleasure to welcome Bishop Nigel Shaw as one of the newest St. John Chaplains in the Province and present him with his Chaplain's pin. Bishop Shaw resides in the Diocese of Huron and currently serves as the Anglican Bishop to the Canadian Armed Forces. He personifies the way in which many St. John Chaplains volunteer their time in addition to the other work they do which is the primary focus of their ministry.

As a charitable organization, money raised from the work of St. John staff and volunteers makes difference in the lives of people they will never meet. The Order of St. John in Canada is a key supporter of

the work of the St. John Eye Hospital, which is the only charitable provider of eye care in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

The four arms of the White Cross of St. John have been used to remind its wearers of the four cardinal virtues of Prudence, Justice, Temperance and Fortitude. The eight points of the Cross represent the eight Beatitudes which spring from the practice of those virtues. (Matthew, 5).

I invite you to look for a St. John volunteer. Talk with them about the work they do. Thank them for the way in which, as they enhance their own skills as health care providers, they also serve the wider community by their caring presence.

The traditions of the past continue to teach us how to express our faith by caring for others. The Hospitallers of centuries ago felt that it was in serving the needs of others, they were serving Our Lord.

May each of us discover and follow our own path of service.

By the way, when you visit St. Paul's Cathedral, you will find the flag of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem has been placed in the South Transept.

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

Soulful reflection: More questions than answers

More than a few years back, together with an Elder, I officiated at a funeral service at Kettle Point. His words at the graveside were memorable, "We were born from our mother's womb, and when the journey's made, we return to our mother's womb."

Images of being folded back into the earth were vivid. I foresaw the body's decay.

The soil is fertilized, and the eventual growth of grass and flowers. Then the cattle and bees feed upon them, animals with life-generating purposes.

We live and die within a closed loop of systemic dependencies. Reminding me of how a wave, traveling far towards the shore, inevitably folds under and returns to total absorption in the lake out of which it was formed.

Do our souls stay in the same loop as our bodies? If you believe in having a soul, do our souls remain in that



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REV. JIM INNES

life-enhancing 'circle of life'? Or are our bodies and souls detached at death?

Tradition, at least the tradition I was raised with-in, suggests the body and soul have separate functions (sometimes at odds with one another) and, at death, detach and go their own way. The body is commonly seen as this leftover discarded into the ground while the soul turns into a vaporous form that rises above the earth. These ideas do make for spiritually rich poetic reflection.

However, for the sake of debate, is it too strange to envision our souls remaining as one regenerating utility that



grows back into life alongside the body? The body vs. soul reasoning has become entrenched, capturing our assumptions and engaging our imaginations.

Yet the notion that the two flow as one into the eternal cycle of regeneration adds colourful flavour to the scientific fact that all creation is interconnected. It adds power for 'greening' our lives because there is now much more at stake, a deeper connection to the future of this planet. And, is it not within reason to imagine our souls remaining present as our bodies return to

total absorption in life.

The importance of such reflections and questions fluctuates with age and circumstance. For example, what kind of burial do you want? What do you tell your children (and their children) about death and the hereafter? In this age of random violence, how do you cope with 'good and evil' and their connections with life's cyclical nature?

Aside from religious questions about the hereafter, many situations challenge our understanding of the body-soul relationship. To name a few; old-age dementia, medi-

cal decisions about resuscitation, moral issues regarding assisted dying, planning our parent's funeral, and how to understand and assimilate the grief over a loved one.

I have few answers regarding the truth of the matters stated in this article. However, I have come to appreciate the peaceful warmth and evolving compassion that flows with an open mind and heart toward another's view.

Judging another's perspective, especially when profoundly integrated and heartfelt, does not work. Nor does thinking that the answer for ourselves is but to be achieved except, perhaps, by learning to appreciate and trust our intuitive sensibilities.

Final question, is it fortunate that answers are never entirely achieved?

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

jiminnes@diohuron.org