



REIGN OF CHRIST: WHO ARE THE MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY?

Building relationships that are respectful and reciprocal.

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FIELD NOTES: WHAT HAS CHURCH BEEN REPLACED WITH?

There are many for whom the emptiness of being a consumer no longer satisfies.

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NEW YEAR STARLIGHT: NO OTHER LIGHT SHINES SO BRIGHT

The Star is the guiding light for traveling into and through the new year.

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HURON CHURCH NEWS

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF HURON • Huron Church News is a section of the Anglican Journal • JANUARY 2024



Transformed by the light in the darkness

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined.
(Isaiah 9:2)

The joy of Christmas – becoming a new creation in Christ! For St. Paul’s Cathedral – the oldest church in downtown London – this means living up to the challenges of our time and revitalizing the Cathedral to make it a focal point of the city. The appointment of Rev. Canon Dr. Kevin George as new Cathedral Dean is seen as a step in this direction. The incoming Dean has a proven record of having a deep passion for the city and its downtown community. A great addition to the parish whose members would like to see the Cathedral as part of the restoration of the downtown area. The two-century-old building is looking to be transformed in a new and exciting way...

THE GOOD SHEPERD (detail)
One of the four Tiffany windows in the nave of St. Paul's. The stained-glass windows made by the world-renowned Tiffany & Co. were donated by the Meredith family from London. They were installed between 1897 and 1923.

- ▶ Page 3 EVERYONE IN DOWNTOWN LONDON IS ST. PAUL'S PARISHIONER
- ▶ Page 7 A SHORT HISTORY OF ST. PAUL'S TIFFANY WINDOWS



All Saints', Waterloo in a new home

On December 6, 2023 – the Commemoration of St. Nicholas – Bishop Todd Townshend presided at a Service of Consecration of All Saints' Anglican Church in Waterloo.

▶ Page 5: FOR OUR CHILDREN...



The new church is built on a part of the same property where the members of All Saints' broke ground for their old church, in 1981. The new building is designed to meet the needs of the wider Waterloo community and younger generations in particular.



Amazonia – Our siblings in Christ

One of the interesting things about writing for our diocesan newspaper is that one must imagine-forward a month.

As I wrote this, we were on the “eve” of the season of Advent. The beginning of another new year on the church calendar. As we read this, it’s closer to January 1, the beginning of another new year on another calendar. For every kind of “newness” of God, we give our thanks and praise.

In January I begin a ten-week leave that will allow for rest and recovery, and for some concentrated time to think and pray about the future of our life together in the Diocese of Huron. There are so many instances of God



**BISHOP
TODD
TOWNSHEND**

doing a new thing in our lives—this is a very hopeful time. Yet, there are also many worries and serious challenges. Please keep me in your prayers, as you will be in mine.

As I mentioned in the last edition, I travelled with Archbishop Linda Nicholls and Dr. Andrea Mann to Brazil to spend time with the people of our companion diocese, Amazonia. I plan to write a reflection on the journey and the relationship of compan-

ionship complete with photos and longer descriptions. Watch our website for this later in January (diohuron.org).

For now, I’d like to affirm the importance and beauty of this companionship relationship.

The word itself comes from the Latin “com” (together with) and “panis” (bread)—meaning, ‘one who breaks bread with another’. The word is also used in other ways today, but this is the meaning we mean! There is endless depth to the eucharistic resonances in human life and we experience and anticipate the fullness of God’s Reign around such a “table”. It seems that every community we visited in Amazonia, and every table around which

we gathered, manifested and symbolized genuine eucharistic companionship. That is something to really celebrate and cherish.

What does this actually mean? I am still growing into an understanding of that, but I know that the people of Amazonia, with all the challenges of Christian life both here and there, are our siblings in Christ and companions on The Way. This is a true gift that becomes every-new with each encounter.

May God richly bless you with the gifts and surprises of the New Year(s) and may the Holy Spirit, who has begun a good work in you, direct and uphold you in the service of Christ.

+Todd

Entering 2024: Replace your resolutions with goals

By Rev. Kimberly Myer

Our prayers at Christmas invited us to focus on the Christ Child. It provided us with the time to reflect upon the birth of Jesus and draw closer to him through our prayers, and our conversations.

Even though life has been very hectic for most through the Christmas season, we are given a wonderful opportunity in January to slow down, to look back and to count our many blessings. To take some time to think about what our next year will look like.

At one time I would set resolutions that were not attainable - or at least not the way they were set up... This year, along with the past few years, the word “resolution” has been changed to “goals” I would like to reach if able, with the help of God!

I would like to share my process with you, and maybe you can discover something in the goal setting that can be a benefit to you.

ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER



The first goal that is set is to make time for God each and every day, and not allow life to get in the way.

As many of you know, that can become difficult at times. Yet, we strive for it and do not punish ourselves if we don’t do it as perfectly as we had hoped. I truly believe God understands.

Setting aside the time to pray or talk to God can be done anywhere. That has been a game changer for me. It doesn’t mean rising earlier in the morning or forcing myself to stay awake at night. I wish I was like many of you who can do this, but for some reason it goes well and then...

When it comes to finding the time, for me it means finding a different way to have the conversation / prayer whenever the opportunity

presents itself. Whether in the car, in the grocery store, or preparing a meal. Maybe before anyone else arrives at the church. These are golden opportunities to have a talk with the Lord.

The second goal is to decide what it is we want to do this year and present it to God for help.

Asking God what God’s plan is for us, for our work, our ministry, our church, is where we begin. It is through this prayer that we take the time to listen for the answer. To notice things around us that may give us the answer to this question. This prayer helps us to remain in the present moment and not to go running off looking into the far future without God’s direction.

This year my goal is to find peace by being more open to

the promptings of the Holy Spirit in all areas of my life. Let me know what your goals are, I would be happy to hear from you!

Let us pray:

O God, we give you thanks for sending your only son, Jesus Christ, may we never forget that you are our ultimate warm and comfortable home where we can spend our time in conversation with you, being surrounded by love and peace wherever we may be. Amen

The AFP Executive wish you and yours a healthy and joyous New Year!

Rev. Kimberly Myer is the rector of St. John the Evangelist Church, Leamington and AFP Diocesan Representative of Huron.

Please remember to elect an AFP representative for your church. The AFP executive are here to help your representative or to answer any questions about becoming the AFP Rep. Please contact kimmyer@diohuron.org with any questions or comments.

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Everyone in downtown London is a St. Paul's parishioner

St. Paul's is set to welcome a new Dean!

On October 8, Bishop Todd Townshend announced the appointment of the Rev. Canon Dr. Kevin George as the sixteenth Dean and Rector of St. Paul's parish. His appointment date is January 1, 2024, with his first day in the parish being January 15.

Kevin was ordained deacon in 1997, and priest in 1998 in the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador. He served as Curate in the Parish of Labrador West before moving to the Diocese of Huron in late 1998.

Kevin was Rector of St. Mark's by-the-Lake in Tecumseh from 1998 to 2012. Most recently, Kevin served alongside the people of St. Aidan's Church in Northwest London since 2012.

New Dean's appointment comes as at St. Paul's they make ready to explore new relationships in the downtown core. In the eleven years Kevin has been in London, he has built strong connections within the Interfaith community, the business sector, the non-profit and social services sector as well as with the City of London, our local MPs and MPPs.

"I look forward to further developing relationships and networks in our city to advance the work of church. We are followers in the Way of Jesus," he says, "St. Paul's is well situated to explore how we can best disciple in that Way in the very heart of the City of London. The needs in the neighbour are extraordinary. So are the opportunities."

At St. Paul's they are excited for Kevin to get started because of the work he has been doing in the London Community now for over a decade.



Rev. Canon Kevin George and his wife Catherinanne are about to join the St. Paul's community. Kevin's first day in the parish will be January 15, 2024.

Churchwarden Gord Rolleston has been busy getting the Dean's office ready with fresh paint. Between brush strokes, he says, "Kevin has a great energy level and his enthusiasm will rub off on others. His knowledge and local connections will be a benefit to the Cathedral's operations and goals."

Canon George is eager to learn more about the services that the Cathedral currently provides to those on the margins.

"Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the

least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me", reflects Canon George and adds: "The future of St. Paul's hinges on our willingness to take the words of Jesus seriously."

"Now is the time for us to ask what services we offer, what we ought to be offering, and how we, with God's help, we can bridge the difference", says the incoming Dean.

The Rev. Steve Johnson, President of the Board of St. Paul's Social Services (SPSS) welcomes the news of this appointment.

current membership of the Cathedral is top of mind for Kevin as he prepares for his move in the new year.

"After meeting with the Selection Committee and studying the parish profile, it has become very clear to me that the membership of our Cathedral cares deeply – they want better for their church, their community, and the neighbourhood. I am excited to get to know these servants and explore how we might serve together."

Kevin is also keen to get to know the whole of the downtown community.

"It will be important for me early on to meet with all who call downtown home. Everyone in the downtown is a parishioner. That includes those who live in the high-rises as well as those who live in tents," says the incoming Dean.

Also high on his agenda is gathering the Cathedral Chapter of Canons. There are twenty active canons in the Diocese of Huron. Having been appointed Canon himself over a decade ago, Kevin wants to discern a more active role for these diocesan leaders.

"We have some incredibly good leaders in this diocese. Those priests that the bishops have appointed canons over the years, all have gifts that the Cathedral (of which they are canons) should elevate and support. We can do more collectively to tend to the work of following in the Way of Jesus," he says.

"I will be bringing them together early in the new year to discern and explore opportunities for mutual ministry."

Kevin and his wife Catherinanne look forward to joining the St. Paul's community in the middle of January.



Waterloo Deanery

MESSY CHURCH

Trinity, Cambridge and St. George's of Forest Hill, Kitchener hosted 'Messy Church' events.

The theme of St. Francis of Assisi and his connection with nature, reminding us to be stewards of God's creation, was a hit with the children.

The organizing committees arranged for fun and interesting crafts, story time and a fan favourite the Lizard Guy. The day ended with a meal together - Pizza!

Mary Ann Millar

St. George's of Forest Hill, Kitchener

Plans made for profit – space suited for witness

Three years ago, at St. George's, Goderich, they hoped that the newly minted community hall would be a source of revenue. Today they see it as a place of transformation and learning, and embracing others in Christ.

By Rev. Justin Comber

On November 7, 2023, shared workspace giant WeWork filed for chapter 11 bankruptcy in a New York courtroom.

The company, prior to the Covid epidemic had made billions by leasing office space in major cities around the world and subletting them to corporations and individuals. Some of those leases were for terms as short as one day, though longer-term leases were also a part of the mix. The bankruptcy of WeWork is just one more harbinger of the ongoing divorce between centralized space and the world of work. For business, space has become much less of a premium. In major cities, existing office spaces still sit largely empty. In small towns, the demand is nonexistent.

About three years ago, St. George's Goderich embarked on a large-scale building project.

Initially, it was hoped that the newly minted community hall would be a source of revenue. It was hoped that the money invested in the space would invite financial returns on a business scale. But the pandemic changed the world around us. Whatever space that was available for isolation has already been transformed into functional workspace, and centrality is no longer



St. George's Goderich

offered at a premium.

The bankruptcy of WeWork should tell us that renovating spaces for profit and transforming existing spaces for rental in a saturated and dwindling market will cost far more than it will ever generate.

However, the same isolation that created an excess of workspace and broke the business of centrality also helped people recover something forgotten. We are a people who cannot be summed by the total of our working parts. We are people with emotional, social, and spiritual needs. Isolation, the stilling of so many lucrative pursuits, helped us recover whispered longings muted by the din of pursuit.

I am not suggesting that our church can be lucrative again by meeting rediscovered

and broadly defined spiritual needs. I am suggesting that God our Father loves the whole creation and calls out quietly-but-persistently for all to come. God offers invitation. We are witnesses to God's invitation. It's a good one. And it's been reheard.

We now find ourselves meeting in a space transformed for a purpose it can never meet. I am grateful for two reasons.

First, St. George's was not founded to be lucrative. It was founded as a worshipping community; a place of transformation, of learning, for gathering with and embracing others in Christ, and for new life. The untenability of our planned business model will prevent us from following the lucrative. We are not its disciples.

Second, the transformation of this space has given us exactly the resources we need to witness the goodness of God in Christ through the Holy Spirit to the people of Goderich.

In the new year, St. George's Goderich will begin offering a monthly midweek program for children and families. We will invite whole families into this space for food, for time together, for creativity and play, and for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Because of plans made for profit, we have a space perfectly suited for witness. Our newly renovated kitchen will feed the mouths of the spiritually hungry. Our infrastructure, with its newly laid miles of audio and network cables, will allow us to share joy, music, and very good news. Our open spaces will be places for families to gather, uninhibited by the usual weight of the holy, and our laminate floors will make clean up a breeze.

This is one example of the kinds of things that we can, and should do as a community of believers. This is one example of the ways that our foundation of faithfulness and stewardship can be the basis of a robust and intentional focus on Christian mission and ministry. I hope there will be more.

This one (like most of the other great ideas I've encour-

tered) was not my idea. But it's one that I support wholeheartedly. And it is of a kind that I will continue to support, wherever it comes from.

Mission and ministry are central to our Christian identity. That identity, mission, and ministry is shared. It is yours and mine. We share it like we share one hope, one faith, one baptism, one bread, one cup, one church, one Spirit, one Christ, and one God and Father of all.

The bankruptcy of WeWork is more bad news for an established way of being relentlessly assailed by pandemic and enforced change. I don't mean to suggest that it is good news for the church. We already have good news, news that stands unchanged and unaffected by the winds of time and the fates of banks and institutions. The new ways of being that will emerge in a post-pandemic economy will not be any more Gospel than the old ways (thank the prophet Jagger for that one). But I am grateful for stewardship, for providence, for the still small voice that still calls out its invitation, and for the opportunity to listen and obey. I'm excited to see where this church will go next.

Rev. Dr. Justin Comber is the rector of St. George's Goderich and Christ Church Port Albert, and lecturer in Biblical Studies at Thorneloe University.

THE WISDOM OF THE DESERT

Domini Canis: The Anglican Order of Preachers in Huron

By Br. Noah McLellan

The Diocese of Huron seems to be experiencing something of a Renaissance of religious communities. Though if one was to ask around, they would be likely to hear that "the Anglican Church does not have religious communities" or perhaps that "that's more of a Roman Catholic thing".

While we are certainly less prolific than our Roman Catholic counterparts, religious communities have actually been an Anglican "thing" since around 1841 when communities of vowed religious sprang from the Oxford Movement. First with the foundation of religious orders of women such as the Community of St. Mary the Virgin and the Society of St. Margaret, which was shortly followed by the monastic SSJE or Cowley Fathers who still operate today with a monastery in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

By the time the Cowley Fathers were beginning to spread from their beginnings, a Roman Catholic group was celebrating their 650th anniversary; a group of religious who were not monastic but mendicant in nature, their male members dubbed friars as opposed to monks.



2023 Profession Mass Full Chapter (about half of the English-speaking segment Order present as well as four members of the Latin American segment) Front row, left to right: El Hermano Edwin Valez Castro AOP, Sr. Annette Fricke OP, Br. Noah McLellan OP, Sr Amy Linder OP, Br. Todd Thomas OP, El Hermano Rafael Zorilla AOP

This group, founded by Dominic de Guzman around the same time as St. Francis founded his Order of Friars Minor, were dedicated to preaching and teaching the Gospel truth lovingly dubbed the "Hounds of God", stemming from twofold reasoning: one being the story of Dominic's mother having a vision while pregnant with the future saint; that she would give birth to a great hound born with a torch in its mouth who would set the world ablaze with the Holy Spirit. This of

course being coupled by the much more practical creation of the term when the Order's colloquial name was translated to Latin (Dominican = Dominicanis) two words were noticed within Domini (God) and Canis (Hound).

Fast forward a few hundred years to the late 1990s in the United States. These two traditions of Anglican religious communities and the Order of Preachers would finally intersect 85 years after our Franciscan siblings emerged in the Anglican Church.

Episcopal Priest Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Mackey developed a rule of life for a Dispersed order of Brothers and Sisters with a spiritual heritage tracing back to the original Order of Preachers, while maintaining an Anglican identity. The Order consists of Brothers and Sisters of the order who, after one year of postulancy, and two years of novitiate, live as life-professed (or "vowed") religious, following vows of obedience, simplicity and purity; oblates of the order, as well as associates of the Order.

This order has, over the ensuing decades, grown and spread across the world with its largest concentrations in North and South America, but with Brothers and Sisters in the UK, and Australia among other places. All formed into groups called Priors or "Houses".

The Canadian Priory, or "Jordan House", encompasses all of Canada, led by our Prior, Brother Jason Carroll, a priest in the Diocese of Calgary; our Sub-Prior, Brother Peter Cory, a licensed lay reader from the Diocese of Kingston. Presently in the Diocese of Huron we have two members: Br. John Maine whose novicing (initial promises and receiving of the Black Dominican cowl or hood) has been covered in a previous issue, and myself.

Br. Noah is a life professed brother of the Anglican Dominicans, where he serves as Co-Director of Inquiry. He is a licensed lay reader for St. Johns Parish in Cambridge where he has served for nearly 10 years and is a licentiate of theology student through Huron's LTh program.

More information about the Anglican Dominicans can be found at anglicandominicans.org

AI and the Preacher: A stranger in a strange land

By Rev. Greg Little

I am not what you would call an early adopter in terms of technology.

I do have a Facebook Page and a blog – neither of which could be called new technology anymore – and I have never Tweeted (I do know Twitter it is not called that now), and I can send a text if I absolutely have to. In effect, I can get by in the electronic age when push comes to shove, but that is about all.

All this said, I have recently become a stranger in the strange land of Artificial Intelligence (AI). With the encouragement of a friend, last summer, I signed up for ChatGPT. In case you are not aware of this popular manifestation of AI, it is a system which can answer many complex and detailed questions and requests almost immediately.

Interestingly, I asked ChatGPT for the number



of users and it wouldn't or couldn't tell me, "I don't have access to real-time data or specific user statistics, including the number of people who have signed up for the service." This is likely because I haven't signed up for the paid service that is up to date. The one I signed up for, which is free, is limited to data from a few years ago. I used the now old-fashioned way of finding out, and googled the question. I was told that there are 180.5 million users of ChatGPT, "according to the latest available data." It is a real time

example of why you shouldn't blindly accept the information on social media. It should be treated with care.

However, with that caveat, my exploration of this strange new land has given me results which are quite impressive. There has been much speculation about the future impact of AI will be. It may bring about a new revolution as earth shattering as the invention of the printing press or the development of the assembly line. The industrial revolution of the 20th Century eliminated many manual labour jobs. The impact of AI is going to be revolutionary according to most experts. AI is predicted to eliminate many professional and white-collar jobs with mind numbing speed.

What inspired me to write about this topic today specifically was the potential for ChatGPT to be used for

composing sermons. It is a temptation which I believe will be hard to resist by at least some many of my fellow clergy. It likely has been used for this purpose already.

I tested out the potential for ChatGPT to produce a sermon – no, I didn't use it. I asked my new friend Chat (for short) to give me a one-thousand-word sermon on John 11:32-44 – the account of the resurrection of Lazarus. The results were what I would call competent but not inspired or inspiring. I won't reproduce it here given the limitations I have placed on the length of these missives. I can supply the results to anyone that requests it.

To give you a taste of what it can do, here is a short introduction to one of the readings from last Sunday, 1 John 3:1-3. I asked Chat for 20-25-word summary of the passage. In our parish there is an intro-

duction to each of the readings. Here is what Chat gave me almost instantaneously:

In 1 John 3:1-3, the apostle emphasizes God's incredible love, portraying believers as His children. Despite worldly confusion, the promise of transformation into Christ's likeness offers hope and purifies hearts.

This use is just a small example of the ways AI can be used. Perhaps if Jesus was to be tempted by Satan today, this would be one of the temptations. There is no doubt what we are facing is a wilderness of potential uncertainty and possibly chaos, about a future which includes AI. It is something we need to be concerned about and pray for guidance and wisdom on our journey into that strange land.

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

All Saints', Waterloo: For our children, and our children's children

DECEMBER 6, 2023



ALL ARE SAINTS.
ALL ARE LOVED.
ALL ARE WELCOME.

SNAPSHOTS FOR HISTORY: ON THE FIRST DAY...

All generations gathered under the same roof.

A scene known and familiar: Noise and laughter in the kitchen - that's how the job is done!

Excitement among fellow clergy: When was the last time we had a Service of Consecration?

Expecting the very first service in their new church.

And one very tired (and happy) rector, taking care of his flock.



PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

Appointments

Bishop Townshend announced the Reverend Sharla Malliff, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. James, Cambridge, from December 4, 2023.

Bishop Townshend announced that, as of November 1, Ms. Jacqueline Davison, who joined the Diocese of Huron for a one-year term as Interim Director of Finance on August 14, has agreed to continue without term as the Director of Finance.

Bishop Townshend announces the appointment of the Reverend Gilles Haché as Curate, St. Matthew's, Windsor, for a two-year term, December 1, 2023 - November 30, 2025.

Bishop Townshend announced the Reverend Canon June Hough as Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Jude's, London, from January 1, 2024.

Retirement

Bishop Townshend has accepted the request of the Reverend Patricia Nunn to retire as the Priest-in-Charge of Christ Church, Port Stanley, effective January 1, 2024.

Patt was ordained to the diaconate on May 1, 1984 and to the presbyterate on December 8, 1984. Upon ordination, she served as the Assistant Curate at St. George's, Owen Sound with responsibility for the parish of

Chatsworth (Desboro, Holland Centre, Walter's Falls). In 1986 she became Rector of St. John's, Brussels, St. Mark's, Auburn, and Trinity Church, Blyth, also serving as the Regional Dean of the Saugeens. After a period on leave, Patt spent a number of years filling in at various parishes before beginning a long-time and meaningful part-time ministry at Christ Church, Port Stanley in 1995. In addition, Patt taught elementary school for over twenty years, retiring in 2020.

We are grateful for her faithful service and we wish her well in retirement.

Consecration

Bishop Townshend presided at a Service of Consecration for All Saint's, Waterloo, 400 Northfield Dr. W. on the Commemoration of St. Nicholas, December 6, 2023.

Rest in Peace

William Darcy McKeough, O.C., BA., LL.D., D. Div., died November 29, 2023. Mr. McKeough was involved in the diocese and the Chair of the Bishop's Men for many years. Family and friends gathered at Christ Church, on Friday December 8, 2023 for visitation and Funeral Service with Rev. John Maroney officiating.

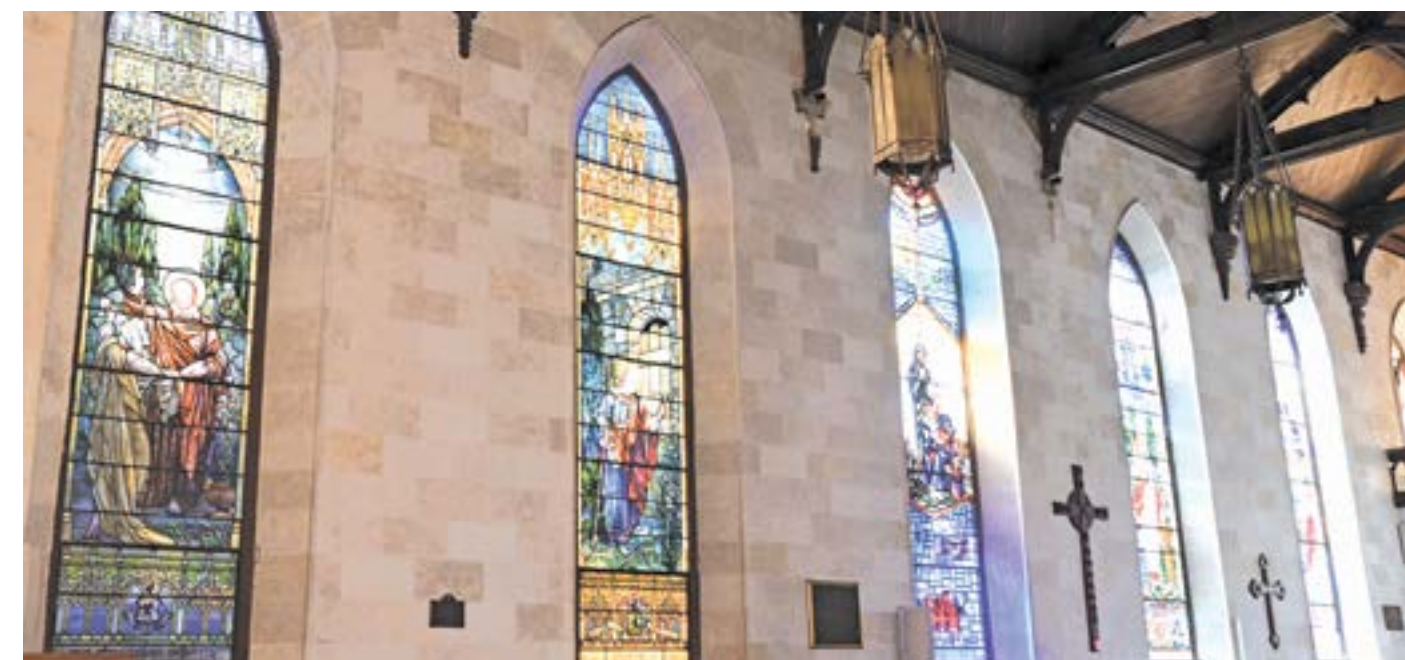


Ordinations

Bishop Townshend announced that the following were called to the Presbyterate at the service of Ordination held on the Commemoration of St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland, Thursday, November 16, 2023, at the Parish Church of St. James', Stratford:

- The Rev'd Diana Boland, Assistant Curate to the Rector of St. James', Stratford, St. Paul's, Stratford, St. Stephen's, Stratford, and St. James', St. Marys, with primary responsibility for St. James', St. Marys.
- The Rev'd Patrick Martin, Assistant Curate to the Rector of St. John's, Tillsonburg.

A short history of St. Paul's Tiffany windows



South nave wall of St. Paul's Cathedral displays two out of four Tiffany windows: "The Raising of Jairus' Daughter" (1918) and "Christ Standing at the Door" (1923). The four monumental lancet-windows are donated as memorial windows by the Meredith family of London, Ontario. The windows are 19 feet tall and 4 feet and 7 inches wide. Each window weighs around 1,800 pounds.

By C. Cody Barteet

From artists like Yvonne Williams, Peter Howarth, Christopher Wallis, Stuart Reid, James and William Meikle to the firms of Michael Farrar-Bell, G. Maile & Son Studios, Hobbs Manufacturing Co., Ltd., Robert McCausland Limited, Luxfer Studios, N.T. Lyon, and Sunrise Stained Glass, the churches of the Diocese of Huron house some of the most spectacular stained glass produced over the past 150-years in North America.

The scope and diversity of artists is remarkable and a testament to the faith and stewardship of our parishes and parishioners.

Among this diverse collection of glassworks are four windows produced by the famed Tiffany Glass & Co. that populate the north and south nave walls of the St. Paul's Cathedral.

The four monumental lancet-windows, roughly 19 feet (5.7 meters) tall and 4 feet 7 inches (1.3 meters) wide, while weighing in around 1,800 pounds each of favrile glass, are memorial windows to the Meredith family of London.

The windows honour the memories of five individuals: John Walsingham Cooke Meredith (1809-1881) and Sarah Pegler (1819-1900), and three of their children, Ada Walsingham Meredith (1851-1916), Anne Cooke Meredith (1838-1920), and John Stanley Meredith (1888-1920).

Like the world-renowned Tiffany & Co., the Merediths were widely known throughout Ontario and Quebec at the turn of the twentieth century. The children of John and Sarah held important positions within the Canada's judiciary and financial institutions, shaping the Canadian legal systems and economy for generations.

The Merediths' influence is also felt within the Canadian artworld. John and Sarah's seventh child, Sir Henry Vincent Meredith (1850-1929), along with his wife, Isobel "Brenda" Allan (1867-1959), were avid art patrons in Montreal, and facilitated the establishment of the Art Gallery of the Art of Association of Montreal. More locally, The Honourable Justice Richard Martin Meredith (1847-1934) was an active patron too and a member of the Cathedral's worshipping community. Among Justice Meredith's more notable contributions to the Cathedral, was the set chimes he donated in 1901.

In more recent times, the various contributions of the Meredith family to St. Paul's have become muddled. The opaqueness is in part connected to the unfortunate ending of Sarah and John's family tree with the death of Justice William Ralph Meredith on 20 May 1934.

Over the past ninety years collective memory has given way to speculation and assumptions concerning the Merediths most significant contributions to the Cathedral, the four Tiffany windows. For decades the memories of when the windows were installed, and which family members commissioned the memorials has slowly dissipated about the windows that depict

four distinct scenes: The Good Shepherd (1897) and Blessed are the Pure of Heart (1923) along the nave's north wall, and to the south, The Raising of Jairus' Daughter (1918) and Christ Standing at the Door (1923).

Despite their importance to Canadian artistic culture, as one of only five locations housing Tiffany windows in Canada, the windows have received little attention in today's popular culture or academic scholarship. Some long-time members of the parish and diocesan staff may recall the interest of the former curator of glass at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

The curator's inquiry was connected to a traveling exhibit in 2009-2010 that focused on the art of Tiffany & Co. The Meredith windows factored into the discussion of Tiffany glass in Canada that also promoted the seventeen windows which made of the Museum's collection. No mentioned was made to other locations that possibly house single Tiffany windows including Murray Bay Protestant Church (Quebec) and St. George's Anglican Cathedral (Kingston).



"Christ Standing at the Door" was installed in 1923. The scene depicted here is derived from William Holman Hunt's painting. The window is dedicated to John Stanley Meredith and donated by his brother the Honorable William Ralph Meredith.

To return to the St. Paul's windows. During the lifetime of the firm, Tiffany windows were far from economical means of honoring deceased relatives, with windows costing between \$1,000 to \$5,000 USD. To put that into today's rates, the pricing scale is equivalent to \$17,000 to \$184,000! And it seems that at least one of the Meredith family's windows was priced in at the higher end of the scale.

On Saturday 11 September 1897 The London Advertiser ran an editorial tilted, "A Costly Memorial." The editorial notes the windows dedication to John W.C. Meredith while noting its cost as "one of the richest works of the kind ever turned out by . . . Tiffany & Co." Likely commissioned by his wife and children, the window would go on to serve as a double memorial after Sarah's death in 1900.

It would be almost another twenty years before another Tiffany window was installed. On Wednesday 24 July 1918, The London Advertiser published a lengthy discussion and large picture of what we know call the Ada Meredith Memorial window. Commissioned by the Honorable Richard Meredith, the window was dedicated to his sister.

Of the four windows, the Ada Memorial depicts one of the more unusual subjects produced by the Tiffany firm: The Raising of Jairus' Daughter. The story recounted in the Gospels of Matthew (9:18-26), Mark (5:21-43), and Luke (8:40-56) was depicted by Tiffany & Co. only a handful of times. The subject, connected to the bat mitzah coming-of-age ceremony, at first thought is seemingly out of place in the larger Anglican cathedral. However, in Christian practices the story corresponds to the acts of conversion of the gentiles through the acceptance of Christ as the Messiah that facilitated a new spiritual life and the assurance of salvation. Such a narrative of spiritual salvation is more than appropriate considering the historical moment the window was created at the end of the Great War and the catastrophic loss of life it precipitated.

The final two windows, both designed by Louis C. Tiffany during his retirement, were commissioned by the Honorable William Ralph Meredith. Dedicated to his sibling Anne Cooke Meredith and John Stanley Meredith, the windows illustrate scenes of "Blessed Are the Pure of Heart" and "Christ Standing at the Door." Derived from the Beatitudes and William Holman Hunt's painting, respectively, the works were announced to the public in the Thursday 26 April 1923 issue of The Free Press.

Although none of the windows at St. Paul's are dedicated to the cathedral's patron saint, the four windows do adhere to Paul's ministry. Through their didactic messaging each window, necessitates parishioners and visitors to consider their actions and their commitment to opening the door to God and embarking on a path to salvation.

C. Cody Barteet is an Associate Professor, Art History Department of Visual Arts, Western University, and Senior Rector's Warden at St. John the Evangelist, London.

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Transformed by the Light: A new confidence to leave the old behind



By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

Have you ever had an unexpected guest drop over?

Most of us have, perhaps someone was just passing by, or found themselves unexpectedly in your area and thought they'd drop in. Sometimes these visits can be quite delightful, and other times quite challenging given whatever was on our schedule for the day.

For many of us, we were taught as children, that if you are visiting someone, announced or especially unannounced, don't go empty handed. A good house guest begins their visit by presenting the host with an appropriate gift of thanks.

The season of Epiphany begins with three rather spectacular guests who even though it is true they just 'dropped in' unannounced, they certainly did bring some lovely gifts



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with them. Out of the blue, these three exotic, gift-bearing, star studying seekers, arrived at the doorstep of Mary and Joseph, no doubt only adding to the wonder of this child entrusted to them, likely fueling far more questions than answers.

And what about this star? What did they see when they looked up into the sky?

In Medieval times writers tried to believe that it was not a star at all in the usual sense, but rather a bright angel placed there by God to guide



and direct them to the child and his family. However, whether an actual star, some other celestial formation, or an actual angel, the intent was clear. The spotlight was to be upon this child. For it is at Epiphany that we are reminded that God, who so loved the world, gave us His Son for all of the world as represented by these three from other lands, and from other traditions.

It was as true for the kings then as it is for us now, allowing the light of the wonder of this miracle of God's gift to

If we are wise, we will make a habit of returning to the light, to inspire and heal us, to comfort, assure and direct us.

us to penetrate to the deeper places of our lives and of our hearts, our life will never be the same.

Encounters with Jesus, if we are bold enough to allow this light to touch our hearts, if we allow the wonder of the star, and of the events we have been reminded of over the Christmas season to really penetrate our consciousness, we will never be the same.

Like the kings we will leave the encounter by a different route, changed, allowing to unfold before us, new maps to whatever is next, with a new confidence to leave the old behind and opening in a new way to God's leading and directing.

At the core of our faith is transformation, and if we allow it, the light of new under-

standing will change us, and not just once, but repeatedly. If we are wise, we will make a habit of returning to the light, to inspire and heal us, to comfort, assure and direct us. In a very real sense this is what we strive to do each week as we gather for our EFM sessions, following the light of God's Spirit, into adventures great and small. Interested in learning more about Education for Ministry or in arranging an information session that works for you or your parish? We are just a phone call or an email away. Please contact Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron EFM Coordinator or me Val Kenyon at EFM@huron.anglican.ca.

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

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Reign of Christ: Who are the members of your family?

God knows the number of hairs on each person's head. It is this familiarity and compassion that comes from the responsibility to build relationships that are respectful and reciprocal.

By Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle

This year's Reign of Christ Sunday included the Gospel story about the sheep and the goats (see Matthew 25:31-46).

It is a story that is well known: the king puts the sheep on the right and the goats on the left based on their behaviour when they have encountered those who are hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick, and in prison. This is the story where we hear Jesus say: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

Reflecting on this story, I couldn't help but wonder what it might look like to treat this parable as a kind of benchmark about what it means to love our neighbours. Can we see ourselves in this parable? Based on our choices, would we find ourselves with the sheep or the goats? What can we say about the ways we have encountered those who are hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick, and in prison?

As I prepared my sermon for that Sunday, I felt compelled to directly ask the question. Reign of Christ Sunday is essentially the church's New Year's Eve, why not look back and see how we did so that we

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



What benchmarks will we use to reflect on the ways in which our congregations embody the love of God reflected in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus? To what extent will these benchmarks include an exploration of how we have encountered those who are hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick, and in prison?

can reflect on what we might do better.

Thankfully, I have a congregation where conversations in sermons work. The folks in the parish I serve are not particularly shy about sharing their thoughts, especially when given the opportunity. So, after

an appropriate introduction to the topic, I directly asked what we have done to serve the least of these the siblings of Jesus, and a meaningful exchange ensued.

The end of the calendar year is quickly approaching. Soon we will be engaging in

vestry season, that time when we intentionally look back at what we have done and look forward to what we hope to do in the new year. What benchmarks will we use to reflect on the ways in which our congregations embody the love of God reflected in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus? To what extent will these benchmarks include an exploration of how we have encountered those who are hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick, and in prison? What have we done well? What could we do better? How many of these neighbours do we know by name?

Jesus said: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

That part about 'members of my family' speaks volumes. For Jesus, encounters with people on the margins are not happenstance and fleeting. These are members of his family. He knows each by name.

God knows the number of hairs on each person's head. It is this familiarity and the compassion that comes from the responsibility to build relationships that are respectful and reciprocal, that the expected dynamic evolves. Jesus doesn't want us to simply provide food, drink, clothing,

welcome, care, and visits. Jesus wants us to get to know the members of his family, the members of our family.

As we reflect on the year that has passed and consider our goals for the year to come in preparation for the annual meetings of our church family known as vestry, to what extent will these reports acknowledge the ways we have sought to build relationships with those on the margins? Based on what our vestry reports say, will we be counted among the sheep or the goats?

Truthfully, we won't always get it right. We don't always get it wrong. The stories of our faith, the challenges that come with continually reflecting on the example of Jesus Christ, the prophets, and the saints, invite us to know better and do better.

As we come together for vestry, may we set benchmarks reflective of what we believe about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, so that we might one day hear Jesus say to us: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

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

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Finding the right 'fit' for service: When ministry stops being ministry

We all know how the story goes:

A faithful member of the Church serves in a ministry role for many years. In that role there is lots of work to be done, and sometimes the work is emotional or frustrating. And, when finally someone relieves the person of the position, that ministry volunteer takes a step back. In stepping back, the person withdraws from various ministry routines, might suddenly be absent from regular patterns of worship, and, one day, stops showing up at all.

Do you know someone like this? Does this story describe you?

One of the most important truths about our Anglican congregations today, one that isn't celebrated enough (in my opinion), is the reality that our worshipping communities are only as strong as the lay leadership that maintains them.

It is through the faithful efforts of lay readers, wardens, parish administrators and secretaries, treasurers, sextons, choristers and music directors, pastoral visitors and prayer groups, committee chairs, parish council members and our small armies of volunteers that drive the life blood of a healthy congregation or parish. Even the smallest of churches is a complex network of personalities and relational connections.



GROWING BEYOND THE DOORS
REV. CANON GRAYHAME BOWCOTT

If ever ministry starts looking like a long list of chores or obligations and there isn't any spiritual benefit to doing them, perhaps that is the time when ministry stops being ministry.

There are many different reasons why people choose to carve out space in their busy lives and schedules to serve in a ministry of the Church. For some, it is the sense of belonging to a larger community, of being part of a family of faith that gives them purpose and identity; for others it is the social relationships, the opportunities to work alongside their friends while caring for others too.

Among our many volunteers, there are also those who don't take much joy from

what they are doing anymore. Perhaps there was a time when they were excited about their role, but something changes for them. If ever ministry starts looking like a long list of chores or obligations and there isn't any spiritual benefit to doing them, perhaps that is the time when ministry stops being ministry.

As Anglican congregations in the Diocese of Huron transition into our post-Christmas season of Vestries, Wardens' meetings, and the challenges around budget-

ing and staffing our various expressions of ministry, one of the things that we must always keep in mind is that ministry is always supposed to be an expression of our vocational calling – not a list of chores or obligations.

In my congregation there is an open policy that goes like this: if, at any time, anyone is no longer enjoying their ministry role (appointed, elected or otherwise), they always have my support and permission to stop doing it. Permission to lay it down.

Why? Because God calls us to serve in ways that are life-giving and meaningful. If ever our ministries stop being this for us, then we may be doing them wrong. We may be missing the point.

As we enter into this new calendar year, I invite you to consider the things that your offer to God and others in service – your own expression of ministry. Are you passionate about what you are doing? Is your ministry role spiritual and life-giving? If not, perhaps it may be time for you to have a conversation with your priest about finding the right 'fit' for your service.

Frederick Buechner, an American theologian, summed it up in this way: "The place where God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's (or neighbourhood's) deep hunger meet."

As we enter this new year, I pray that we all find ourselves in the place of our vocation, in the place where we are passionate to serve God, Church and others.

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

When not trusting anyone is a matter of survival

In one of the recent Sunday services, we read a bible story called *The Parable of the Talents*.

It is a story about a Master giving three slaves money to invest. Two slaves did as asked, increased their holdings, and, after settlement with the Master, were rewarded. The third slave decided bravely, or foolishly, to bury the money. And at settlement, offered nothing but dirty coin.

Looking past all displeasure loaded within the Master-Slave relationship, traditionally, this story describes God's hopes for our actions. God wants us to invest our giftedness, including our money, in building up the kingdom of God. The more that we give, the more we get. When we fail to participate, we fail ourselves.

It's not my intent to preach a sermon. I mention this story and its usual interpretation



AS I SEE IT
REV. JIM INNES



because it points to an issue I want to explore. And it will be an easy read. Why would someone believe that God is harsh or unfair and consequently hesitate to participate, at least entirely, in investing their God-given talents?

As I see it, this issue, which many struggle with, arises from injury. Simply put, people have been hurt by the Love that God represents. They don't easily trust. In a world where betrayal, violence, and abuse rears its ugly head, many struggle to accept Love as a power worthy of investment. And if they have suffered any manner of abuse or profound loss, it is often too

much of an ask to let down defenses that have kept them safe.

To some, not trusting anyone is a matter of survival. Many have come from unbelievably challenging backgrounds where they have had to learn to keep their heads low, their expectations in check, and their hearts shut down. A loving God is another authority that can do them harm.

It has been my journey, and the journey of many like myself, that childhood trauma broke Love. Life was welded together by self-protective habits, engrained so deeply

that even in old age, the wary eye scans a room before entry.

Broken Love can result in PTSD or depression. The number of folks who suffer can be counted highly amongst the addicted, the ill, the imprisoned, and the 'lost'. It can be seen eating away at creativity, leaving behind heavy shame.

Broken Love is at the root of most, if not all, marital separations. It triggers choices, leading to hostility and, eventually, estrangement.

And if the broken Love is not addressed, it will lead to increased antagonism and overly controlling behaviour.

Love can be a frightening vulnerability, giving it but mainly receiving it. It can be easier to bury it, push it away, rather than struggle with its threatening demands. And in terms of investing in a God of Love, withdrawal is safer than deposit.

Naming the dynamics at work (after an experience of broken Love) does not make the issues mentioned above any easier to manage. Once your world has been coloured blue or red, it is challenging to begin seeing it as green or yellow. So, I hesitate to end this article with pastoral niceties. Instead, I will offer a prayer...

"Gracious God, forgive our debt. Lead us courageously into the darkness of our lives. Let us see the light of Love waiting to warm our broken souls. Amen"

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

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What has Church been replaced with?

Those with an interest in church growth and development often refer to the current North American cultural moment as the "era of post-Christendom".

This means that Christianity is no longer the dominant religion, the relationship between the Church and civil society has been severed, and that we can no longer take for granted a shared Christian outlook with others outside our households.

For many still worshipping in our parish churches, the shift from Christendom to post-Christendom has taken place in their lifetime, the change having been accelerated by the in the latter half of the 20th century. The "good old days" of overflowing Sunday schools, enormous choirs, parish prosperity, and respect for the Lord's Day were symptoms of a Canadian society that was attuned to the lifestyles of Christians and vice versa. Senior members of my parishes have described church membership as a positive sign of social conformity – everyone went to church because that's all there was to do on a Sunday and that's what good, upstanding people did.

This was advantageous for the church as an institution with power in society, but not for its health as the Body of Christ. As Bishop Townshend instructed us in his 2023 charge to synod, we must leave behind the church of 1950 and prepare ourselves for the church of 2050.

What has church been replaced with in our context? We are all aware of the various other, non-churchy

Upcoming generations have no institutional or cultural memory of church and therefore do not possess the same baggage and revulsion as those who led the charge out of the church.



FIELD NOTES
REV. ALLIE MCDUGALL

activities that can quickly supplant church attendance and engagement. Hockey practice, brunch, shopping, or sleeping in have more appeal to the unchurched than attending a religious ceremony for which they have no frame of reference or connection to.

However, church membership is not merely an activity to occupy our time. It is, or ought to be, reflective of a personal commitment to following Jesus Christ, a channel through which we find our shared identity with other believers, and the means by which we are formed for God's service. With increasing numbers of Canadians identifying as non-religious, we must consider what is satisfying the spiritual yearnings,



Heidi Fin/Unsplash

social needs, and moral/ethical formation of those beyond our pews.

I will admit that I find this question difficult to answer as someone who has professed faith in Christ since the age of four, but I've made a few observations over the last couple of years.

Last month's edition on the manosphere highlighted the growing influence of hyper-masculine strong men over the formation of boys and young men. A future edition will explore that which has captured the attention of girls and young women, but it is worth mentioning now that the dominant influences of this group may largely be found in the content of social media influencers and online activists.

As a mother, I can't help but notice that children's films, particularly those produced by Pixar Animation Studios in the last decade or so, have taken on an existential and

spiritual bent. Family films have commonly held deeper morals and symbolism, but films like *Coco*, *Onward*, and *Soul* are tackling subjects like life after death, resurrection, and ensoulment, prompting families to consider these themes with their children.

The ever-bloating Marvel Cinematic Universe and DC Extended Universe have produced matrices of interconnected superhero films that require a roadmap to help decipher plot points and character development. These texts have become a mythology in and of themselves, wherein viewers can align with the powers of good or evil and create connections between fantastical, superhuman conflict and current events.

While this is by no means a comprehensive appraisal of all that captures the popular spiritual imagination in replacement of Christian

identification and worship, it has become clear to me that the consumption of media is one of the linchpins of the post-Christian paradigm shift. This is both concerning and hopeful for our cause as a missional people. Multi-billion-dollar corporations are shaping the spiritual discourse of the day with little to no connection to a religious context of any sort, with the explicit aim of making money off their target demographics. As Anglicans, we are not prepared, nor should we be enticed to offer a consumption-driven model of church to appeal to this sort of crude, profit-motivated secularism.

There are many for whom the emptiness of being a consumer no longer satisfies and they are seeking a spiritual outlet that is substantial and life-giving. Upcoming generations have no institutional or cultural memory of church and therefore do not possess the same baggage and revulsion as those who led the charge out of the church. There is a genuine interest and curiosity among the unchurched that we can respond to with joy and open hearts. We cannot take for granted that non-religious people know the basic tenets of the Christian faith, Bible stories, or even who Jesus Christ is. But we can be open to the possibility that they want to find out and that we have the tools to help them find it as the empowered, Spirit-filled Body of Christ.

Rev. Allie McDougall is the Assistant Curate at St. Paul's and St. James', Stratford. alliemcdougall@diohuron.org

A few simple strategies to build your online presence

Building your church's social media channels is vitally important for maintaining connections with current parishioners and helps to attract new ones.

This year-long activity can pay dividends at various times of the year. Especially when sharing special services at Christmas and Easter and other big parish events.

Here are a few simple strategies to help build your online presence.

1) Send direct invitations from your social media channels to parishioners. Don't wait for them to join your church's Facebook page or group, be proactive and invite them.



MEDIA BYTES
REV. MARTY LEVESQUE

2) Advertise which channels your church uses in the bulletin, on welcome screens and announcements before and after the service.

3) Make sure your website has social media links to all your channels, so it is easy to find you.

By tending to social media channels throughout the year you will be able to increase your reach to possible new



parishioners. Also, it's not uncommon for church members to become inactive over time due to life circumstances such as work, school, or family commitments.

But, with social media, you can easily reach out to these individuals and invite them back to church for events or special services. By staying in touch with inactive mem-

By tending to social media channels throughout the year you will be able to increase your reach to possible new parishioners.

bers, you can help them feel like they're still a part of the church community and make it easier for them to return when they have more time.

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

A note on words, actions, and prayer

Words have power. This simple statement may not come as a revelation to many.

The words we use may generate feelings in others which cover the spectrum of emotions. Words which are intentionally offered to stir the heart and soul and mind in a very positive way, for some, may be heard as painful words by others. Words offered in a humorous way, may cause offence. Words which are spoken from the pulpit or on a one-to-one basis intended to comfort may cause unforeseen wounds and generate great distress.

In 2023 the Office of the Chaplain General of Canada circulated a document, outlining a policy which "supersedes the 'Public prayer at military ceremonies' directive which was issued in 2013 by the Office of the Chaplain General."

The end result of the document identifies the fact that the Chaplaincy Services "affirms the value and importance of a variety of beliefs within Canadian society and in the Canadian Armed Forces."

It calls upon all Chaplains within a public ceremony to be mindful of "the principal of state religious neutrality as a Canadian public institution by not favouring one religious faith group or belief system over another, while still acknowledging and



**A VIEW FROM
THE BACK PEW**

**REV. CANON
CHRISTOPHER
B. J. PRATT**

making certain to respect, in a holistic manner the spiritual dimension and needs of all persons."

We all witnessed how that kind of policy directive gets translated into action when the Chaplain General of the Canadian Armed Forces spoke at the National War Memorial ceremony on November 11, 2023.

Brigadier General Guy Belisle prefaced his remarks by saying;

As we gather in this place of sacred memory may these words I share now be for some prayers of our heart, others a reflection of your heartfelt thanksgiving and for all, may these words speak to our duty to remember.

This level of sensitivity is generated by a Supreme Court of Canada ruling which states, in part:

The state's duty to protect every person's freedom of conscience and religion means that it may not use its powers in such a way as to promote the participation of certain believers in public life to the detriment of others.

(Supreme Court of Canada ruling in the *Mouvement*

If we have acknowledged that words have power, then we also need to affirm that how we use the words we claim are important, also needs our examination.

laïque Québécois v. Saguenay (City) case)

The changing environment of society creates new challenges in which we express the faith we hold dear. If we have acknowledged that words have power, then we also need to affirm that how we use the words we claim are important, also needs our examination. At the very early stages of my ministry, I listened to colleagues share how quickly they could offer a mid-week Eucharist. Speeding through the liturgy seemed to generate a sense of accomplishment!

My Mother would sometimes listen to what I had to say and simply offer her critique by saying, in a very firm maternal way, "Tone".

I have been present when words of the liturgy and the words of Scripture have been drained of their vitality as they are offered at a pace and with a tone that sounds like a dirge. A funeral becomes truly funereal, when offered in that tone, but are we not now using different words, which indicate that families and friends are gathering for a "Celebration of Life"?

As people of faith, we acknowledge that words have power. We value and appreciate that we have access to the words of the Gospel and words of worship which are transformative. How we use those words and where we seek to freely express our faith is unique to each of us and the setting in which we find ourselves.

There is another truth we need to acknowledge.

Actions speak louder than words. The actions of our daily lives are a true indicator of how much we are invested in achieving a particular goal or purpose. We may talk a good talk, yet not feel motivated to actually contribute to the process of turning a vision into reality.

A community of faith may seize upon some local social imbalance or cause and speak about the need for this challenge to be addressed, yet if they do not utilize their resources to resolve the matter, then, rest assured, the critique and criticism from society at large, will not be far behind.

As we engage with the gift of the year ahead of us, I invite

you to use your words well and with sensitivity. I invite you to reflect on the time, talents, resources and energy you have and how you may use them as an expression of the faith you claim.

In years past, this experience used the Rule of Life form in the Book of Common Prayer (page 555). I invite you to use the newer words of our Baptismal Covenant for your reflection as you build the framework for your life in the year ahead.

- Will you continue in the Apostle's teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in the prayers?

- Will you persevere in resisting evil and, whenever you fall into sin repent and return to the Lord?

- Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

- Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself?

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

- Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's Creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth?

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

New Year Starlight: There is no other light that shines so bright

When we get ready for our new calendar year, familiar New Years' Eve celebrations usually include watching large, lighted digital clocks or large balls dropping in N.Y. Counting the seconds down so at the stroke of midnight we can turn to that first, fresh month of January in our calendars.

Opening our new, crisp, unmarked calendars, we will travel through each new day, week and month, as if their numerical sequence gives us direction, so we can plot out our way through the new year. With every calendar page we turn over, our hopes and dreams also travel along with each page. Encountering distractions and unforeseen events will cause us to draw a line through our penned in plans, changing our hopes and dreams.

Meanwhile, in our liturgical church year, the magi are



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still on their way to meet the Christ child. Riding camels on their journey following "the Star" they sighted in the sky.

We also get to have "the Star" with us as we open up our new year. Not knowing whether this is a coincidence or not, I find the timing of these two different calendars comforting. Actually, to me, this is a bonus of the season. Our travels with the magi to Epiphany are somewhat plotted out for us. We have the comfort of their companionship.

We all arrive together, allowing us to watch while the magi adore the Christ child. The magi have reached the



destination of their seeking but their journey is not over until they return home. It was good to have traveled with them. We all got to our destination safely. However, it is at this time we say our goodbyes to the Magi, for we will not be traveling further with them.

Now, the best part of not journeying further, with the magi, is that we can get off the camel! Have you ever ridden a camel? Nor have I. I am afraid my eyes would have been perpetually on the ground not

on 'the Star' of the night sky. I would be lost if not for the magi!

The beckoning of "the Star" changed the plans of the magi, calling to them to travel afar, seeking. Then set them home on a unpredicted, perhaps unknown, route. Their lives had been changed. Altered.

This same star beckons to us and will also set us on a different, unpredicted but better route. Our life has been changed. Altered. For once you see "the Star" and follow

it to the Christ child, there is no other light that shines so bright. It far outshines dropping balls in N.Y. and flashing digital clocks. The Star is the guiding light for traveling into and through the new year. This light, that shines to our very hearts, will accompany us as we travel through the crisp, new pages of the calendar year.

Is it a coincidence that the liturgical year and the calendar year overlap? I like to think it isn't. What better way than to enter the new year following "the Star"? It will light the whole journey.

I am thinking of inviting the magi to our celebrations this year. They can probably give us advice on how to keep on track, following 'the Star', this New Years' Eve.

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