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Learning to listen and respond to a God Positioning System (GPS).

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# HURON CHURCH NEWS

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



## Images of Our Lord Reflecting on who we are

*Then God said, "Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness..."*  
(Genesis 1:26)

It's more than ten fingers and toes, obviously! The divine spark in us transcends our physical traits and even deeply rooted notion of ourselves as cultural beings. Yet, when we depict our Lord – when we do it "in our image" – we tend to be limited by our cultural perspectives.

Does this prevent us to see clearly the face of our Lord? Have we seen God lately?

February is Black History Month. A great opportunity "to be intentional in our choices of whose voices and stories we centre", as Rev. Chris

Brouillard-Coyle puts it in her article.

For this purpose, it may be helpful to take a "Christmas Spirit Walk" and travel back in time to see how a Huron parish – the one in Dresden – persisted in creating a diverse community that included Black pioneers. A segment of Huron history rediscovered and reclaimed!

February is also a month for financial planning and Vestry meetings. This may represent additional challenge in our relationship with God. Redeeming tax receipts and discussing congregational budgets – is it God's work? Is it possible to transform a chore into a celebration? Let's dive in and figure it out...

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**CHRIST IN GLORY - Ethiopian Gospel Manuscript, British Library**  
The manuscript was commissioned in the last years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century by Emperor Iyasu I Yohannes of Ethiopia for use in his royal city of Gondar. Illuminated with distinctive miniature paintings and highly decorative coloured borders, this is one of the most beautiful of the Library's Ethiopian manuscripts.

## Many faces of Huron: From monastic introspection to migrant workers outreach

As documented in your newspaper in 2023... and in all previous years, going back almost three quarters of a century



**Still here, some 850 years later: illumination in Miroslav Gospel, Serbian manuscript from 1180.**

Our words are here to stay. Whether we like it or not, written, printed words have unique power to hold out against constant changes around us. Once imprinted on a sheet of paper, they stay there as a reliable witness to our intentions and deeds. Especially the words embodied in stories: they shape our opinions and goals into accomplished verbal gestures. We can't revoke them, they defy our ever-growing

inclination to shorten the reach of our individual (and collective) memories, to limit our attention span to mere minutes or even seconds. Yes, we can re-interpret them according to new, emerging contexts, but in their core, they remain unchanged – a dependable testimony of our actions and our efforts to shape the world around us.

In 2023 we documented rich and diverse nature of Huron ministries. *The Wisdom of the Desert* series introduced us to

a little-known spiritual world of Anglican monasticism that is obviously growing in the diocese. On the other side of the ministry spectrum, we covered extensively different outreach efforts across Huron: from various attempts of churches in London Deanery to tackle the problem of homelessness, to small-town scale endeavours in Meaford and Lambton, to the global initiative of PWRDF Huron to raise funds for the Anglican run Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza.

**Huron Church News Annual Appeal**  
**PAGE 12**



**THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI, copy woven in 1894 for the Corporation of Manchester. Designed by Edward Burne Jones with details by William Morris and John Henry Dearle. Tapestry, wool and silk on cotton warp, 101 1/8 x 151 1/4 inches (258 x 384 cm.), Manchester Metropolitan University**

# Have you seen God lately?

By Rev. Kimberly Myer

## ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER



In February we are continuing in the season of Epiphany and then we will move into the season of Lent. In the early church, Epiphany was one of the great feast days—second only to Easter in its importance. Easter used to be celebrated with an all-night vigil the night before and then the celebration continued on for what was called the “Great 50 Days” ending with a great celebration on Pentecost to mark the birth of the Christian church. Epiphany, Easter, and Pentecost were the focus of the church as great celebrations. After Epiphany and before Easter, the time of Lent was for repentance but also a time of preparation for new believers of the church to learn what it meant to become a follower of Jesus Christ. So why are Epiphany, Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost

not celebrated as it was case in the past anymore? There may be several answers, but I think one of them is that, for the most part, we no longer live in the mystery. We want proof, answers. The early church was a church full of excitement and expectation. They anticipated the return of Jesus at any time, and the persecutions which they endured forced them to be aware of their faith. Many of us today have lost that sense of excitement and expectation. In the early church, the point of Epiphany was not to remember history, but to be reminded that God appears miraculously to us in places and in ways that we don't expect. If we keep

remembering that God seems to thrive on the unexpected appearances and if we keep expecting to see God everywhere we turn, we are not too likely to miss it when it happens. How many times do we prepare for our day by asking God to be revealed in our co-workers, while we are standing in line at the grocery store, in our housework, in our children or friends, in the customers we deal with? How many times do we prepare for church by asking God to speak to us in the music, in the sermon, through others in the congregation? How many of us honestly, truly expect a real, life-changing encounter with God when we enter the

doors of our church? I believe that those few who do expect such things, like me, find them. As we enter into Lent this year, instead of giving something up I would like to ask you to take something on, to help you to find the excitement and live in expectation of meeting God in your day. Gracious and loving God, please reveal yourself in ways that open us to what you are calling us to do as your children. Help us to open our eyes and hearts and to feel the excitement of your presence. Show us what you are doing so we can follow and further the kingdom of heaven here on earth. We pray this in the name of your son, Jesus Christ. Amen. Rev. Kimberly Myer is the rector of St. John the Evangelist Church, Leamington and AFP Diocesan Representative of Huron.



From left: Epiphany (Baptism of the Lord), Ethiopian biblical manuscript; Resurrection, Coptic icon; Pentecost, illustration in Armenian manuscript

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# The spirits of Christmas past at Christ Church, Dresden

True meaning of Christmas spirit revealed in historical reenactment that displays vision of a church community without racial distinctions.

What do a 1940s Scoutmaster and an 1850s Underground Railroad conductor have in common? If you live in Dresden, the answer lies in a modest brick church, built in 1867, that sits in the heart of downtown. It is the second oldest surviving church in the community, built in 1867 by Rev. Thomas Hughes out of handmade bricks and timbers from raw materials on Hughes farm. Here, Hughes made a permanent home for his British Church and School Society's mission to the formerly enslaved that he introduced to what was known as the Dawn Settlement in 1857.

The church, which has changed very little since the time it was built, served as a perfect backdrop for Christmas Spirit Walk held on December 7, 2023. It is also the connecting link between George Brooker, a Christ Church congregant in the 1940s and 1950s and Black Abolitionists who a century before shared Hughes' vision of creating a church community in which there were no racial distinctions.

That classic Christmas theme of “good will towards all men” provided the unifying theme running through the six historical stories represented by reenactors. “It seemed fitting, in that we were trying, like Dickens, to stir people's awareness of the true spirit of Christmas, that we should choose Christ Church as a setting,” says organizer Marie Carter, co-chair of the Dresden History Group.

Supported by the congregation of Christ Church and a community group, Dresden Shines, the Dresden History Group presented three 35-minute “Spirit walks” through the church to 75 75 people.

Two time periods were featured: 1867, the year the congregation first celebrated Christmas in its then new building; and 1947, the year the Anglican Scout Group left Christ Church to take up residence in its new hall as a non-denominational community Scouting and Guiding unit.

“These two time periods,” says Carter, “echo the theme of unity and inclusion that seems to have run through the entire history of Christ Church and which was based on the first minister, Rev. Thomas Hughes' original vision that there should be ‘no separate pew among us’.”



**NO SEPARATE PEW AMONG US: Keith Burnett (left) as Rev. Thomas Hughes who founded Christ Church, Dresden in 1867, and Lee Highgate as his ancestor Aaron Highgate, a Christ Church congregant in the 1940s and 1950s.**

The English-born Hughes sought to create an integrated church and society at Dresden at a time of rising prejudice due to a large influx of formerly enslaved persons into the area. His vision seems to have remained a guiding principle for later parishioners like 1940s Scoutmaster George Brooker and his wife Elizabeth, who similarly embraced an integrated vision for their Scouting and Guiding movement.

The Spirit Walk, which strung together vignettes of six historical figures from Christ Church's past played by amateur and professional actors who volunteered for the roles, told of the important links of Christ Church to figures of the William Still Underground Railroad, who called Christ Church their spiritual home in the 1850s and 1860s.

Many of those playing famous figures like J. B. and Mary Hollensworth, relatives of the famous Underground Railroad conductor William Whipper, had not previously known of Christ Church's heritage. Rev. Josiah Henson (long known as the inspiration behind Harriet Beecher Stowe's lead character in her landmark abolitionist novel “Uncle Tom's Cabin”) is often the only person of African descent people associate with Dresden, a community that grew out of the famed Dawn Settlement that Henson is often credited with found-

ing. Finding that the slavery to freedom narrative is not representative of every family's background was a surprise many found instilled a new curiosity about Black Heritage.

Community member Paul Robinson, who portrayed the Pennsylvania intellectual Parker T. Smith on the walk, felt pride in portraying the little known Black intellectual and president of the famed Benneker Institute in Philadelphia, who worked briefly with Hughes to bring intellectual and spiritual uplift to formerly enslaved persons during a 10-month stay in Dresden.

Marie Carter, a local historian who has researched and written about Black History at Dresden for the past 20 years was pleased to write the script. “It's always gratifying,” she said, “to watch people rediscover this lost history that shows a diverse community existed here that included Black pioneers who had the resources and agency to transform society.”

A handful of elite Black leaders were involved not only in Hughes' church but in the community as a whole, where they created infrastructure needed by formerly enslaved. Some like J.B. Hollensworth (played by Keith McCorkle) and his third wife Mary were linked through marriage to one of the most prominent Underground

Railroad conductors on the William Still Underground Railroad Network, William Whipper. Whipper himself was a major investor in creating Dresden businesses and institutions, including Christ Church, and his wife Harriett was a parishioner during the Civil War. As supporters of Hughes' mission, Whipper,

ers began their Scouting movement at Dresden. That law, which made it, for the first time, illegal to refuse service on the basis of race or creed, was itself brought about through descendants of 1850s activists like Dennis Hill, a member of Hughes' church who first challenged segregation of common schools.

## You can see in these histories that people transformed the world through their living out of the Gospels, sometimes despite great personal peril.

his family members and business associates supported a number of efforts that provided education for the formerly enslaved population at “Dawn” and championed civil rights efforts like desegregation of common schools.

Lee Highgate, a local artist and professional actor, whose family has a long association with Christ Church, portrayed his ancestor, Aaron Highgate. That prominent educator from Pennsylvania taught at Rev. Thomas Hughes' mission schools in Dresden and the surrounding townships.

Jackie Bernard, a program developer at Josiah Henson Museum, played Mary Smith-Hollensworth, an independent Black businesswoman, who was a major supporter of Hughes' mission from the time of his arrival at Dresden in 1857. The second floor of Mary's grocery store was the original site of the mission's school, which Hughes affectionately referred to as his “Upper Room School.”

Keith Burnett, a seasoned little theatre actor, played Rev. Thomas Hughes, the stalwart minister who tried in vain to attract white families to his congregation. It was an idea that was not popular in Hughes' time and ultimately only one white family besides his own attended Christ Church in Hughes' lifetime. Yet, Hughes' vision seems to have survived him.

By 1947, George Brooker (played by Jeffrey Carter) and his wife Elizabeth, both Christ Church congregants, established their Scouting movement on much the same principles as Hughes at a time when Canadian society still openly practiced segregation in public and private spaces.

Indeed Ontario's Fair Trades and Accommodations Practices Act came about five years after the Brook-

For Carter, the scriptwriter, the spirit walks were an important opportunity to share stories she has researched and written about for the past 20 years. Popular entertaining activities with a Christmas theme attract audiences who might never seek out historical information in other ways, she says. But beyond this, she says, is the sheer joy of seeing individuals whose heritage is connected to the families who were part of Hughes' congregation discover newfound pride in their ancestors and their achievements.

Having an opportunity to highlight the history of churches in the community as places where faith was put into action in transforming society also excites Carter, who believes it's a relevant insight for today's congregations who are searching for ways to make religion “relevant” to society today.

“You can see in these histories,” says Carter, “that people transformed the world through their living out of the Gospels, sometimes despite great personal peril.”

The stories of Hughes' parishioners, she believes, provide inspirational examples and instill pride in the history of the church.

“Churches get a lot of bad press these days, but these stories remind us that the church, though not perfect, has made some incredible contributions to the transformation of society. It's shaped people in ways that have made our world more egalitarian and humane. And that's something to celebrate, especially during this season when people are more receptive to the central messages of goodwill inherent in the Christmas story.”

Submitted by Christ Church Dresden and Marie Carter, local historian.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# We will not be turning off our livestream

Church of the Ascension (London) parishioner reacts to our columnist's article (Rev. Marty Levesque: Turning off your livestream – is it time yet?)

Rev. Marty Levesque authored an article in the December issue of Huron Church News, in which he gives the reason that many churches began live-streaming services during the Covid-19 epidemic, and have continued in a hybrid model since re-opening.

He then gives his reasons why he questions continuing this model. Some of his reasons are technical: the presider needs to be concerned with not moving out of the camera shot or turning the mic on and off at the proper times. With a properly functioning AV console and team, these things need not concern the presider, and are inadequate reasons to discontinue the livestream.

The second half of the article suggests that people are choosing to stay at home and watch church while drinking their coffee. If true, this would have the effect, as stated in the article, of disrupting community and preventing the gathering of the church family.



To this I take strong exception.

In our parish, there are two classes of people who watch the livestream. First are those unable to attend in person due

to illness or age. Several of our parishioners come when they can, but at other times are happy to be able to feel part of the service from their residence. We make a point of welcom-

REV. MARTY LEVESQUE'S REPLY

### The beginning of a conversation?

I was hoping to spark a conversation and this seems like the beginning of a conversation. It opens up the conversation between are we a local church or an episcopal church? And how best can we serve those who are unable to attend for whatever reason?

Let's hope and pray the conversation continues on a deanery or diocesan level always looking for the best way to serve our Lord.

ing them each Sunday at the beginning of the service. One parishioner who is undergoing medical treatment in Europe faithfully attends via YouTube each week.

The other category consists of those who do not live nearby, and are not officially members of the parish. Several friends and family members of parishioners watch from various parts of Canada and abroad.

The article suggests that the needs of these folks could be met by a single diocesan livestream from the cathedral. In other words, remove those who are unable to attend in person from the parish. If they wanted to watch the services from St. Paul's they would be. Instead, they choose to remain part of their home parish.

So, my answer to Rev. Levesque is, "No. We will not be turning off our livestream."

Russell Braley  
Church of the Ascension  
London, ON



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### CHARACTERS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

Rev. Canon Dr. Douglas Leighton was the canon historian of the Diocese of Huron. He regularly contributed to the Huron Church News and wrote about dozen articles in his column "Characters and Circumstances". You can read some of his articles in the *About* section of our website:  
<https://diohuron.org/about-us/our-history>

## 'The remarkable life of Dr. Oronhyatekha': Our 2016 article revisited



Dr. Oronhyatekha (Peter Martin)

We received a letter from Virginia Hanney, a member of St. John the Evangelist Church, who found our old article on Dr. Oronhyatekha (Peter Martin), a Mohawk physician and a prominent Canadian public figure of Indigenous ancestry. The article is a part of our series *Characters and Circumstances*, written by late Rev. Canon Douglas Leighton. It was originally posted on March 21, 2016 and printed in 2016 April edition of the Huron Church News.

"My grandfather Archdeacon George Ross Beamish was the minister at St. Thomas Church Belleville, Ontario", writes Virginia.

"He married Mary Jessie Ackerill whose family were UEL's from the Bay of Quinte. I am told that Oronhyatekha used to visit my great grandmother (on my grandmother's side) for tea. Some of our relatives lived in Tyendinaga and Deseronto."

"I am impressed with the comments in your article as he was a truly amazing man that it is hard to believe how much he accomplished. There is a professor at Kings College who has recently put out a book about him."

# Joy came rushing up the aisle: Elvis in the Royal Chapel

Annual Advent/Christmas service was held at His Majesty's Royal Chapel of the Mohawks on December 3, 2023

By Sandra Tobicoe

"This is a time to bring joy into our lives", announced The Venerable Rosalyn Kantlahtant Elm, Archdeacon of Indigenous Ministries.

With this in mind, His Majesty's Royal Chapel of the Mohawks in Brantford, festively dressed for the Advent / Christmas Season, welcomed many folks on Sunday, December 3 for the annual seasonal service. There were many return folks as well as many who had come for the first time.

The Ven. Rosalyn Kantlahtant Elm, Chaplain of The Chapel, and Dr. Barry Hill, Chair of the Chapel Committee, welcomed everyone to the service, and introduced each of the participants. Mr. Michael Montour gave the Thanksgiving Address in both English and Mohawk.

After prayers and a hymn there was Pandemonium in the Chapel as joy came rushing up the aisle!

Elvis was in the House!

Yes, Elvis (aka Rev. Matt Martin) did shake, rattle, and roll his way up the aisle.

For the best part of the next hour, lips moved, heads bobbed, fingers and feet kept time and eyes twinkled as Elvis sang many of his greatest hits including Welcome to My World, Don't Be Cruel, Blue Suede Shoes, Teddy Bear, and Blue Christmas. He also included inspirational songs such as How Great Thou Art, In the Ghetto, You Gave Me a Mountain, and Peace in the Valley. He also sang Amazing Grace in Mohawk.

Elaine Burnside, Pastoral Associate, read the Nativity from Mary's perspective of saying yes to God's call to birth hope and joy, peace and love into the world in a small baby boy. The Chaplain's message was the YES she said to God for the Love, Hope Peace and Joy she would bring into the world. She said yes despite the danger, despite the fear. With hope she had for herself, her family, her community and faith in God she overcame her fear to deliver the most joyous Mag-nificat.

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for He has looked with favor on His humble servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed, the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is His Name. He has mercy on those who fear Him in every generation.*

*He has shown the strength of his arm, He has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the humble.*

*He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.*

*He has come to the help of His servant Israel for He has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise He made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children for ever. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen, Alleluia*

Mary serves the first communion that Christmas morning as he gives the bread of life to world and this small baby boy would live out his destiny as the Messiah to show the world the power of Love, Hope, Joy and Peace.

Our service concluded with a hymn. In his closing remarks Dr. Barry Hill expressed his gratitude to Whitney Henry, curator of The Chapel for her beautiful decorations, the ladies who provided the refreshments that were served following the service, Mr. Michael Montour, to Rev. Matt Martin for his gift of music, to the sides people Don Lynch and John Anderson, and to everyone for coming out on that foggy afternoon. The Ven. Rosalyn Elm gave the blessing. Mr. Michael Montour closed the afternoon by teaching us a little about the Mid-Winter Ceremony held in the Longhouse in early January, and by reciting the Great Thanksgiving in Mohawk once again.

Now at 239 years old, His Majesty's Royal Chapel of the Mohawks is one of, if not the oldest church in Canada. Services are held here three times a year – Palm Sunday, Thanksgiving and the first Sunday in December. Services are always at 2 PM. It is open for tours by appointment all year, and for walk-in tours daily from May 24 to Thanksgiving.

Updates and special events are posted on [www.mohawkchapel.ca](http://www.mohawkchapel.ca).

Sandra Tobicoe is a H.M. Royal Chapel of the Mohawks parishioner.

Photos: Elaine Burnside, Pastoral Associate



"Elvis" performs in the Chapel of the Mohawks on December 3, 2023

Rev. Matt Martin with a keen group of "fans"

## St. George's of Forest Hill, Kitchener: All who have served, past and present



St. George's of Forest Hill clergy, past and present, with Mary Ann Millar who served as Rector's Warden for all of them.

On December 18, St. George's of Forest Hill parish family gathered to celebrate the life of William (Bill) Cromarty.

Rev. Canon Christopher Pratt, Rev. Canon Don Ford, Right Reverend Robert Bennett, Br. Mark, Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen Hendry and Rev. Canon Don Davidson participated in the service – all who have served St. George's past and present.

In other news, we had our traditional ANGEL TREE & BELLS OF CHRISTMAS event. This outreach project is in support of families and youth in need, plus two units at Winston Park Long Term Care Facility. Christmas is for all ages and we have for a number of years helped the staff and the residents at Winston Park by providing simple gifts to bring a smile to the faces of those who live in long-term care. Love thy neighbour as thyself.

Mary Ann Millar

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### PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

#### Appointments

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Harold Harvey as Priest-in-Charge (part-time) of the Rondeau Bay-Transfiguration Partnership Ministry (the Parish of the Transfiguration and the Parish of Rondeau Bay), effective 1 January 2024 through 31 December 2026.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Patricia ("Patt") Nunn as Priest-in-Charge (part-time), Christ Church, Port Stanley, from 1 January to 31 December 2024.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Rob Luxton as the Rector of St. John the Divine, Arva, effective February 1, 2024.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Jordan Murray as Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Aidan's, London, effective January 1, 2024.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Robert Clifford as the Regional Dean of Essex, effective December 5, 2023. Robert is the Rector of All Saints, Windsor.

#### Induction

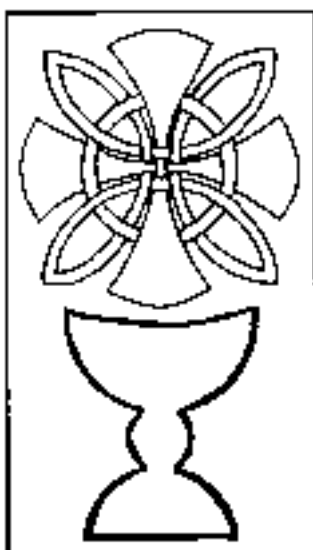
On behalf of Bishop Townshend, the Venerable Megan Collings-Moore inducted the Rev'd Canon Dr Greg Jenkins as the Rector of the Church of the Holy Saviour in Waterloo on Sunday, December 10. The preacher was the Rev'd Canon David Bowyer.

#### Announcements

Bishop Bishop Townshend visited our companion Diocese of Amazonia, Brazil, from November 3 through November 14. He travelled with the Primate and staff from General Synod and connected with local parishes and Diocesan officials on matters of common interest, including outreach and theological education.

Bishop Townshend announced that the Reverend Canon Dr Preston Parsons, currently a Canon Catechist, is being retitled as Canon Theologian, with immediate effect.

In this role, Canon Preston will provide theological guidance and support for the Bishop in a variety of initiatives across the Diocese of Huron.



## Making the most of those twists and turns



By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

Have you ever used your phone to find directions to some new restaurant or avoid traffic? What about logging your miles on a walk or your steps towards the often-elusive goal of 10,000 steps a day?

From things as simple as telling time on your phone or computer to things as complex as self-driving cars, these modern necessities and luxuries are all powered by something most people these days take for granted: the Global Positioning System (GPS).

Do you remember the first time that you used a GPS? The first time I used one was a number of years ago when in Los Angeles for a work conference. Don't ask me how this happened, but somehow, I missed our exit; even with the voice on the GPS singing out when and where to turn.

There I was, on a 16-lane



**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.**

highway headed to LAX airport with my exit ramp getting smaller by the minute in my rear-view mirror, and all my GPS could say after a series of "recalculating ... recalculating ... was "when safe to do so, make a legal U-turn". In that moment I will be honest, I felt let down by my GPS, but the truth is, I had not been listening. For as most of us know, distractions abound, and so listening can be quite challenging at different times of our lives particularly when navigating previously uncharted territories.

I once heard it expressed that we are all hard wired with a different kind of GPS, a God positioning system... And once we realize this, our central task as Christians is to spend our lives learning to listen and respond to it.

We stay connected to God by spending time with God in worship, in God's word and in prayer. As we give ourselves to these practices, we learn to listen and "follow directions". If we get off course, if we are wise, we will listen again, perhaps a little more intentionally this

**I once heard it expressed that we are all hard wired with a different kind of GPS, a God positioning system... And once we realize this, our central task as Christians is to spend our lives learning to listen and respond to it.**

time, for the "re-calculating ... recalculating". If at any point we "miss our exit", and we will miss our exit from time to time, we return to the listening, even when all the future twists and turns may still be a mystery.

Shortly we will begin our Lenten Journey with an aim to observing a holy Lent. Ash Wednesday will remind us of the importance of both listening and of how valuable, even if not always pleasant, all those twists and turns are in our lives. One thing is certain. While it may not feel it in the moment, God is there in all of them, giving us opportunities time and again to practice our listening and to respond.

Over the course of the last number of years that EfM has been in Huron, many have been connected with an EfM group to spend time each week learning, listening, and responding together.

Perhaps this is something you or your parish would like to explore? Companions on the road are a real blessing to be sure.

To learn more, you are always welcome to reach out to either Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron EfM Coordinator, or me, Val Kenyon, at [EFM@huron.anglican.ca](mailto:EFM@huron.anglican.ca)

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

### Good News from Camp Huron

# DREAM ON!

A big blue sky stretches over us.  
It just goes on and on!

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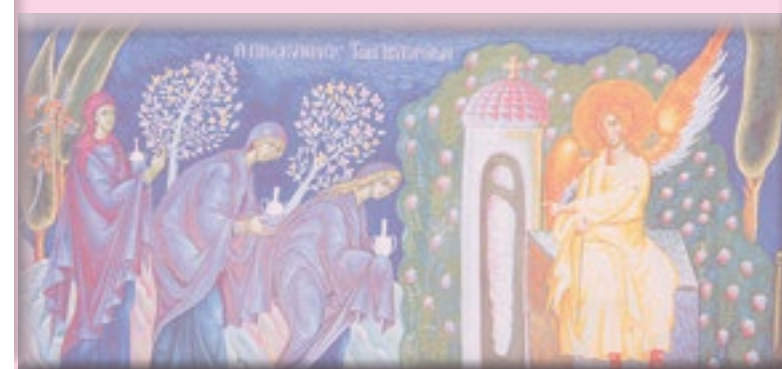
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### ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN

#### In Memory



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# Black History Month: Diversity of human existence

Might a focus on Black History Month inspire us to engage with the stories and histories beyond our pews? Black History Month is an occasion ripe for meaningful learning and inspired conversations.

By Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle

## SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



**To what extent do we envision the characters of the Bible as being like us, meaning white? How does this impact our understanding, our behaviour, and our assumptions towards those who are different? What would it look like to centre the voices and stories of individuals who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) with humility, care, and an openness to learn?**

Could we centre the life and words of people like Sojourner Truth and her intersectional work for freedom for Black people and women? Might we find meaning in the poetry and reflections of authors like Audre Lorde and Maya Angelou? To what extent have we read and studied books written by modern day Black theologians like "The Church Cracked Open" by Stephanie Spellers?

Ever notice how many songs in our hymn book are African spirituals or written by Black musicians? Common Praise includes: "Guide My Feet", "I want Jesus to walk with me", and "Were you there". How

many others do we know? How often do we use these in worship? What would be needed to include more music with origins in Africa, the Caribbean, or Latin America?

Might a focus on Black History Month inspire us to engage with the stories and histories beyond our pews? The Josiah Henson Museum of African Canadian History is within driving distance of many churches in this diocese and does tours for groups of 15 or more even during the off-season. What would it look like to have a field trip to the museum or access another local resource for Black History? Are there local Black History

**Black History Month is an important time that challenges us to be intentional in centering the voices and stories of Black people. How this time shapes and forms the other 11 months of the year speaks volumes about the willingness of the dominant voices to learn, perhaps sit with discomfort, and grow.**

Month events that congregations could attend? Don't forget to financially support these programs as much as possible. This could be through admission, or donations.

Is it possible to bring in a speaker knowledgeable about Black History? Perhaps there are racialized individuals in the congregation or the community willing to share their stories or is there an organization that provides speakers for events? Note: there is not a universal Black experience. The stories and histories of those descended from those who travelled the Underground Railroad are different from 21<sup>st</sup> century immigrants from Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America. There is value in centering diverse stories and histories as appropriate to the context.

When incorporating a speaker, remember, storytelling, particularly when it is personal stories, is emotional labour that should receive compensation. It is also vital to ensure these individuals feel safe. Chiefly, this means, when they tell you what they've experienced, believe them, and then with love, candour, and commitment, discuss what it looks like, in practice, for each of us to transform unjust structures of society, challenge violence of every kind, and pursue peace and reconciliation.

Black History Month is an important time that challenges us to be intentional in center-

ing the voices and stories of Black people. How this time shapes and forms the other 11 months of the year speaks volumes about the willingness of the dominant voices to learn, perhaps sit with discomfort, and grow. If our efforts are merely token, placebo-like engagement to say we did something, we are no better than performative in our allyship. For those who take seriously the Baptismal Covenant to respect the dignity of every human being, we should be continually reflecting on the ways in which space is shared across the diversity of human existence. This means, the goal is to ensure that Black people's voices and stories are heard throughout the year. May we find inspiration in the choices we make for Black History Month that leads us to embody our Baptismal Covenant and Marks of Mission more authentically.

This article would not have been possible without the wisdom and stories of Black Anglicans in our diocese. I am particularly grateful to Irene Moore Davis whose words can be found woven throughout this text and to the Ven. Osita Oluigbo whose thoughts informed important points. Thank you for generously sharing your time to enable me to write this article.

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

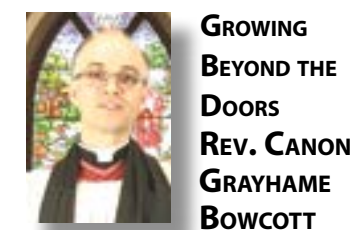
# God's work: Redeeming tax receipts and congregational budgets

With the conclusion of Christmas services and the ringing in of the new year, many priests and wardens throughout the diocese will now direct their focus to a more a somewhat more somber commission: Vestry Season.

Each year, two of the most foreboding tasks of congregational leaders are the compilation of year-end vestry reports and the challenging work of financial planning and receipting. For many, these tasks are not generally thought of as 'life giving' ministry, but rather, as a necessary chore in order to transition from one financial year to the next.

What if we could conduct the business of Church in a way that celebrates the missional accomplishments and the relational scope of our congregations over the last year? Is it possible to transform a chore into a celebration?

Consider this: each tax receipt that a congregation mails out at the end of the year costs \$1.07 per stamp. Annual practice for some churches is to simply mail out a single tax receipt document. However, doing so is a missed opportunity to tell the story of what your congregation has accomplished with the support of each donor's gift to the Church. This is where a little intentionality can go a long way! Each donor receipt should be accompanied by a



**GROWING BEYOND THE DOORS**  
**REV. CANON GRAYHAME BOWCOTT**

thank you note that tells the story of how God has been working through your congregational ministries.

This is the time of year that I dig out my vestry book and I pour over the statistics. How many services were hosted by our congregation in this last year? How many times was someone at home or in hospital visited and delivered communion? What are the various expressions of ministry that your church shared with others in the past year? How many meals were deliv-

ered to those in need? How many dollars were contributed to outreach causes beyond the walls of the church? What is the impact of the ministry that happens between the Sunday worship services each week and how are the lives of others being nourished through our congregation's care, prayer and proclamation?

You'd be surprised that all of this information can usually be summed up in a celebratory one or two page narrative that can be neatly tucked behind each tax receipt. In receiving a thank-you, in this narrative sense, donors will often feel like their offering has been compounded by the numerous ways that God is acting in our ministry. Never sell your church short, for God's story is always greater than the dollars and cents of

an annual budget!

Another great way of celebrating a congregation's achievements over the past year is to share financial reports through the use of narrative budgets. A narrative budget is a presentation method that breaks down all of the expenses of the church year into ministry categories such as worship, evangelism, outreach, administration and maintenance.

The point of a narrative budget is to communicate how ministry expenses are not just bills and salaries that need to be paid for each year, but instead, to share how each budget item enables different types of ministry. Does your congregation see their advertising as being a form of evangelism? Do they know how many cents from every

dollar on the plate are directed towards Christian outreach? A traditional budget doesn't always communicate the values of mission and outreach in the same way that a narrative budget can.

For any congregation looking for an example of a narrative budget or some direction on how to put one together, please don't hesitate to reach out to me - always happy to share!

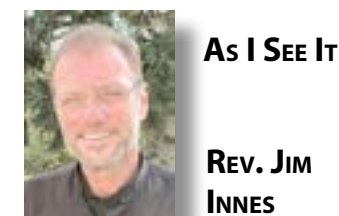
Church finances don't have to be dry and depressing. Instead, they should reveal God at work in your community. Vestry Season is one of the greatest times of the year to talk about the ministry and the relationships that are central to our faith communities. Don't hesitate to use tax receipts and financial budgets as an excuse to proclaim the good news of what God has accomplished through and in your congregation over this past year. May God's Spirit continue to work in our preparation for Vestry season in these upcoming weeks.

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

# It's not all doom: A word on progressive transformation

The Canadian Charter of Rights states, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication." The purpose is "to promote the search for and attainment of truth, participation in social and political decision-making, and the opportunity for individual self-fulfillment through expression" (Charterpedia).

One of the fundamental facets within this chartered right is the anticipation of a healthy systemic connection. More concretely, the chartered right promotes our seeking to uplift one another. By doing so, we will attain truth, political health, and the satisfaction of our deepest hopes. And conversely, ideas or expressions that violate or defame will lead to a breakdown... in various ways.



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

As I look back on the last year, I've seen pervasive expressions of defamation and violence. Here it is, 2024, generations of progress. And still, people choose all manner of self-invested behavior to manage their space, which may have its boundaries fearfully drawn all too tightly.

Best described, the inescapable hostility in our world is scary. It's one thing to react to threats aggressively, ignorantly, or from "bad" habits. It's natural, forgivable, and somewhat correctible (though never reversible). But, when we justify our aggressions and narrow-mindedness without seeing the harm caused, we



pass along a bomb set to explode repeatedly!

Nonetheless, despite the damage, confusion, and pain, we are not destined to continue destroying. I do not accept any notion that we are doomed. It's not all a never-ending cycle of tragedy. I believe that we are evolving.

As I see it, we are in a progressive transformation, a process in which we have increasingly accepted the wrongs committed. Though we are slow on the uptake and guarded on the amendment, people are increasingly trying. It is not easy to stop passing along the 'sins' of our parents

and grandparents and cultural norms.

At the very core of our being is a desire to be connected to one another peacefully, regardless of race, religion, color, creed, or sexual orientation. Hence, part of our evolutionary process has been learning, however, gradually, to let go of the things that separate us. And becoming aware of the behaviours that rope us into lonely corners.

I'd like to believe that my children have stepped beyond my limited and faulty worldview (and habitual reactions). And, in so doing, pass on a more beneficial way of being

to my grandchildren (and, in turn, their children). Each generation is moving forward in benefit of the next, albeit having to wade through the murky water as they let go and adjust.

My New Year's wish is that we accept that part of us that still needs to come to light. I hope that we grow in wisdom in those matters of reconciliation and ongoing peaceable living. It is my belief that whether we do this with skinned knees and bruised egos or we do it through heart-driven reflection, it will happen. The world will evolve into the people God has meant us to be. The question is, how much are we currently part of the solution?

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

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# Selling ourselves short: Social media and self-objectification

The internet, since its inception, has been a tool of connection – connecting people with information, ideas, and with each other.

Social media platforms have evolved rapidly over the last twenty-five years, in a manner that few could have predicted. Millennials and Gen Zs were the first generations to widely adopt the usage of social media platforms, making them the hubs of youth culture. Gen Xers and Baby Boomers were mostly later to adopt, but it didn't take very long for the phenomenon to spread across generations and connect people of all ages. Social media is a normal part of life, with 59.9% of the global population possessing some form of social media identity.

Just because something is normal does not mean that it is good or healthy. Social media used to be a fun thing that kept me in contact with friends and family using digital media. It still has the potential to be this, but the market interests of the corporate entities that own and manage these platforms have transformed the way we engage with them.

What were once simple tools for exchanging information and keeping in touch with people we care about have become farms for "content". Content is the stuff, the information that gets exchanged online and consumed by others, like memes, photos, and videos.

The most popular and fastest-growing subset of social media content are shortform videos like TikToks and Instagram Reels. These are popular

**Making our churches places where people can connect in real time and real space must be an utmost priority for our future community health.**



Alex Kotliarskiy/Unsplash

send a personal brand that is widely appealing or interesting to viewers. Anything can be content, if it is presented in an accessible, usually entertaining way. Supermodels, skilled tradespeople, chefs, performing artists, and mothers of young children are among the multitudes of profitable creators. Content that is successful and enjoyable to consume activates the feel-good hormones in our brains as the viewers. The creators also experience a positive neurochemical rush from the thrill of engaging with hundreds, thousands, sometimes millions of viewers.

I am concerned with what social media and the push to turn us all into content creators means for our collective spiritual health. God has of course created us, in His image, as social beings who thrive off relationships with others. The greatest tool we have to forge these connections has been manipulated

into yet another revenue stream and does so by asking us to post and present the most attractive, relevant, or bankable aspects of who we are for the world's scrutiny and consumption.

The proliferation of social media usage and the push toward content creation is hastening disconnection from ourselves and the fullness of human experience by prioritizing that which is marketable, rather than what is true and honest. Even attempts at authenticity get hijacked by the impulse to commodify, cheapening otherwise important conversation topics, like mental health, trauma, and emotional vulnerability. I feel trepidation and anxiety using these platforms and have begun seriously reassessing the role they play in my life. If the experience of using social media is to either passively consume or be the thing that is consumed, then what's the point anymore? It feels like it's

time to start disengaging and logging off.

The Church is one of the few arenas of social and spiritual connection that is not mediated by an online experience or an app. The Church is also where identity in Christ may be found and connected with, where the fullness of the human experience may be celebrated, honoured, and sanctified.

I find that my peers and parishioners alike are craving connection that is material and embodied. Our humanity is not a commodity to be sold through clicks and views, and neither is the gift of grace given to us in Jesus Christ.

Making our churches places where people can connect in real time and real space must be an utmost priority for our future community health and as a ministry to those who feel overstimulated and burned out from the last two decades of social media glut. Developing a ministry of presence and access is one way forward to help counter the internet's demands of self-objectification. Having our buildings open to the public, directly inviting people to church, clergy being visible and accessible in the community, hosting simple events that foster conversation and relationship-building, and embracing the sensory and symbolic in our liturgy can aid in bringing people back from the alienation of the digital and into the beauty of the real.

Rev. Allie McDougall is the Assistant Curate of St. Paul's and St. Stephen's, Stratford. [alliemcdougall@diohuron.org](mailto:alliemcdougall@diohuron.org)



FIELD NOTES

REV. ALLIE MCDUGALL

because they are easily produced and shared, addictive to watch, and require little investment from the viewer. For the same reasons, this type of content is a huge money-maker for the platforms and their shareholders. Subsequently, the user experience of these apps is designed to draw people in to becoming creators of content themselves, the content being their very lives.

Being a content creator or an influencer are new and booming professions that involve the commodification of a personal brand or online identity. It typically also involves advertising for various companies through "sponsored content".

Content creators are usually skilled in some way or repre-

# How to spot AI-generated deep fake?

With the rise of AI, Artificial Intelligence, individuals need to be weary and media savvy now more than ever. AI allows for deep fakes to be rapidly produced and disseminated widely.

A deep fake refers to a type of artificial intelligence (AI)-generated content, typically in the form of audio, video, or images. In the context of deep fakes, images, audio, and video are used to manipulate or generate new media content that appears realistic but is synthetic.

So here are a few tips that will help spot a deep fake.

1) Look for odd details. It's important to always analyze



MEDIA BYTES

REV. MARTY LEVESQUE

the details in images and look out for discrepancies when something feels off. Manipulated images typically lack realistic lighting, and the hands are often digitally mangled.

2) Unnatural or blurred-out images. Faces of the people often have unnatural skin tones and waxy or blurred-out features. These are strong indications that the images are fake.



3) Is anything strange in the background? Are the words blurred out on street signs? AI struggles with creating natural street scenes with complete signs for streets or restaurants.

4) Botched hands and writing. AI struggles to write words correctly on uniforms. And often hands are at weird angles or have 6 fingers.

5) Deep fake videos tend to have a couple of main features:

unnatural eye movements and the audio seems just out of sync.

These tips should help in the near term, however, as AI technology improves, it will become harder to detect discrepancies between real and fake content online. For this reason, the most important way to spot deepfakes and avoid misinformation is to fact-check and question the

reliability of the sources sharing the content. It is important to get information from official and trusted sources such as official government agencies, and credible news platforms. In most cases, a quick search online, using reliable news sources or fact-checking organizations such as Snopes.com can help identify whether something is true or not.

"The wise are cautious and turn away from evil, but the fool throws off restraint and is careless." Proverbs 14:16

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

# Transformed by love: Listening to the voice of Holy Spirit

Standing at the Lectern at the new All Saints Church in the Deanery of Waterloo, Bishop Townshend offered these words of prayer as a part of the Consecration Service.

"We give thanks for the words of human speech that give voice to thought and feeling. We give thanks for the words which here proclaim the story of your eternal Word."

In 2024, February 14<sup>th</sup> marks St Valentine's Day, and Ash Wednesday. Both days herald an expression of love which is experienced in unique ways.

For many, telling someone else how important they are for us is as simple, and as difficult, as saying, 'I love you', for the first time.

That place, everything special about that moment in our lives remains indelibly etched in our hearts and minds. We use "words of human speech that give voice to thought and feeling."

An entire industry has been generated to relieve us of having to find the "right" words to convey our emotions. Around St Valentine's Day, cards decorated with hearts, usually accompanied by flowers and chocolates were seen as a measure of affection. These days, a brief email, filled with emoji heart symbols may be deemed to be sufficient.

In the Diocese of Huron, Stratford is a focal point of pilgrimage for faithful devotees of Shakespeare's work. It seems to me that his words, whose impact have lasted through the years, "give voice to thought and feeling."

*When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,  
I all alone beweep my outcast state,  
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
And look upon myself and curse my fate,  
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,  
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,  
With what I most enjoy contented least;  
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,  
Like to the lark at break of day arising  
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;  
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings  
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.* (Sonnet 29)



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

**As we struggle to find the right words to give "voice to thought and feeling", another option may be to use the gift of silence to listen.**

The mark of cool ashes on our foreheads in the form of a Cross also is an expression of love.

Divine love is a transformative love, a love offered with an immensity, an intensity and a consistency which sometimes may prove to be beyond our comprehension. Divine love stands in sharp contrast to a human expression of love with all of the human weaknesses which are attached to it.

The Season of Lent offers a time when we, as people of faith may take time, for, "self-examination and repentance, by prayer, fasting and self-denial, and by reading and meditation upon God's holy Word". (BCP pg. 612)

How is it possible for us to have a positive impact on the world around us, if we are not at peace with ourselves?

A more contemporary wordsmith offers this insight:

*I'm starting with the man in the mirror  
I'm asking him to change his ways  
And no message could have been any clearer  
if you wanna make the world a better place  
Take a look at yourself and then make a change.* (Michael Jackson - The Man in the Mirror)

Sometimes, there are moments when words fail us, or are insufficient, as we seek to give expression to our thoughts and feelings. Sometimes words hurt instead of heal.

How often have we misunderstood or have been misunderstood ourselves! How often have we begun a response with the phrase, "What I thought I heard you say..."; only to be told that what we thought we heard did not come close to what was being expressed?

As we struggle to find the right words to give "voice to thought and feeling", another option may be to use the gift of silence to listen. Listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit moving within us may generate the kind of transformative experience that the Season of Lent can offer. Perhaps with that change, we may discover meaningful ways in which we may express our love for each other.

May the Season of Lent be a time of meaningful reflection for us all.

Rev. Canon Christopher B. J. Pratt has retired from full-time parish ministry but continues to offer priestly ministry in the Diocese. [chrishpratt@diohuron.org](mailto:chrishpratt@diohuron.org)

# Audire tener eloqui amare: There is more to the language of humanity

The experts suggest many things to keep our brains agile and healthy as we age. The dark, southwestern Ontario winter is a perfect time to put some of these suggestions into action.

Being somewhat nerdy, I do love the challenge of brain games and puzzles, however this winter I have decided to try learning Latin. (*to learn - discere - Latin*)

For some reason this is an idea that I have wanted to try for several years. Now with some books on hand I hope to be able to stick to it. (*to stick to - haerere - Latin*). Adding some video lessons to hear the vocabulary should enhance my pronunciation for speaking.

It seemed like a good choice of language for me. The alphabet is mostly the same as English and many of the words we use today are derived from Latin. Consonants are basically the same until they are not. Vowels are basically the same until they are not. What can go wrong?

Also, how many people out there will be able to know if I make a mistake of pronunciation or spelling? Probably more than I am hoping for. I would think that there would be many more critics if I had chosen French, Italian, German or Spanish to learn. Of course, if I really wanted to stretch my brain, I would have bought books on Mandarin but reality stopped me from pursuing it.

What I am saying here is that I want to work my



LAUREL PATTENDEN



brain, learn a new language, but by the easiest route. Now that I have opened my Latin books, I realize that this is not going to be an easy route to brain fitness. (*to weep, cry - flere - Latin*)

It is amazing how many languages exist in the world today. Each country, culture and region (*regio*) speaks a language that is unique. Many people are multi-lingual and I am envious of that. To experience different words for the same thing can only expand our understanding of it. When I think about language (*lingua*), it is not just being able to speak the words but about listening to them also.

For you, who are like me, that speak with only one language vocabulary, listening well is still necessary. Listening to how one spoken word is said can change the meaning of the word. How words are said can create a whole new language. Whether you speak English, Ojibway, French, Latin or all of them, we also must listen for the language of despair, divisiveness, loneliness, complaint, bitterness, anger, disillusionment. This language is not of country,

culture or region but is the language of our humanity. It is imperative for us to listen. This language exists worldwide.

There is more to the language of humanity. The language of loving kindness, tender mercy, acceptance, non-judgement, equality exists worldwide. It is imperative for us to speak them loudly. So that these languages spread worldwide.

Latin may be fun to learn. Is it good for my brain? Maybe. But is it important? No. I need to listen, and disillu-sionment. I need to use the words of loving kindness, tender mercy, non-judgement, acceptance. If we are going to spend time learning a language let that be the language of humanity.

I don't know what it will do for our brain, but I do know it will do a lot for our heart. (*heart - cor - Latin*).

Laurel is retired and likes to spend her time in her art studio. [acorn1217@gmail.com](mailto:acorn1217@gmail.com)

# HURON CHURCH NEWS

Anglican Diocese of Huron • 190 Queens Avenue • London, ON N6A 6H7



### From Page 1

Most notably, we followed the accomplishments of the Farm-workers Ministry which has been very active in Huron in the last couple of years. This ministry was presented a \$50,000 dollar cheque from the Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) for the first Category C grant given by the Foundation.

Huron Church News was there to cover our annual Synod – to *Sing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land* and explore the gift of diversity in church with our guest Bishop Lusa. We documented the work of our Indigenous Ministry and took a deep dive into all aspects of ministry plans that should define the future of the Diocese of Huron. And, of course, we were on the shores of Lake Huron to witness with joy the return of our youth to Camp Huron.

The stories are in front of you, showing many faces of Huron. Combined with the content you read in the Anglican Journal, as a part of the same bundle that comes monthly to your door, they represent a true picture of our diocese and its place in the wider Anglican community. A snapshot of our time recorded for the generations to come.

We have continued to post our stories daily on the diocesan website. And, as noted before, we are exploring possibilities to translate them into video format. But you can be certain that we will persist in delivering the news in the form that is familiar and dear to you. After all, this is your choice visible both in stable, even slightly increased number of readers, and in your generous financial support for the Huron Church News.

This is your newspaper and we will continue to print it as long as you find it beneficial and suitable. As we have stated again and again – your relationship with your newspaper has been most honest even when it comes to its financial backing: Huron Church News is financed by its readers; we depend solely on your donations.

So, thanks to your support, we will be here in 2024, covering events around the diocese and preparing for 2025, when we will mark 75 years of the Huron Church News. In 2025 the diocese will also host General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. Exciting times are ahead of us.

Thank you for your generosity.

With gratitude,

Davor Milicevic,  
Huron Church News editor

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual tax receipts will be issued for monthly donors.

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