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HURON CHURCH NEWS

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



Turning daily troubles into small graces

THANKSGIVING — offering our gratitude for "the bountiful harvest with which Canada has been blessed."
As one of our columnists notes, there is much more in our lives for which we need to be thankful. Including all the challenges we face.

In the words of the Psalmist,
*Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.
Serve the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.
Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him; bless his name.
For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness to all generations.*
(Psalm 100, 1-5)

Turning daily troubles into small graces.

GRATEFUL for a walk on the beach. GRATEFUL for the sand and water beneath my feet. GRATEFUL for the changes of the seasons. GRATEFUL for the memories of summer and for this month of October. GRATEFUL for the beauty of this day. GRATEFUL for my family and friends.

- ▶ Page 6 **CAMP HURON: SUMMER 2024**
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- ▶ Page 12 **CHANGE, TRANSITION, AND THANKSGIVING**



ANGLICAN CHURCH
in the Diocese of Jerusalem

” This diocese is home to about 7,000 Anglicans worshipping in just twenty-eight congregations. Yet these relatively few Christians are responsible for more than thirty institutions, including hospitals, schools, clinics, and rehabilitation centres, scattered across Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Israel.

- ▶ Page 7 **PWRDF IN THE RUINS OF GAZA**

TURNING TO GRACE
Diocesan Plan made easily accessible on the website



” A very wide and enjoyable consultation process has led us to this point—thanks to all who were involved.

- ▶ Page 2 **DIOCESAN PLAN ON OUR WEBSITE – GO AND CHECK IT OUT**

ST. MARK'S NETWORK

East London church outreach helped 10,000 people in August

” Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.



- ▶ Page 4 **TUESDAYS, THURSDAYS... AND ANY OTHER DAY: ST. MARK'S OUTREACH CONTINUES**



Turning to Grace

Diocesan Plan is on our website – go and check it out!

TOWARD THE END of September, your Diocesan Council will have had a look at the final version of our Diocesan Plan “Turning to Grace” and will have voted to adopt it (or not) as our official diocesan plan. A very wide and enjoyable consultation process has led us to this point—thanks to all who were involved.

Once approved, it will become the focus of the annual Synod meeting October 18-19 where the members of Synod will have the opportunity to “launch” it!

In preparation for this, tremendous work has been done to make the plan—and its various parts—easily accessible on the diocesan website (diohuron.org).



**BISHOP
TODD
TOWNSHEND**

There you can find a dedicated “page” to support use of the plan in your parish or regional ministry. This section may be “live” when you read this so, please go have a look.

The plan can be downloaded and read in its entirety but because most of us will return to one part or another, it has been divided into digital parts.

If you’d like to read a shorter executive summary, it will be the first thing you see scrolling down the page.

Further down, there will be the “preamble” section which may be used to gain better understanding of the purpose and hopes for the plan. Another clickable “box” will contain the “principles” of the plan—the thinking behind some of the language and priorities.

Alongside that will be three areas where the Three Pillars of the plan can be considered one by one: What does it mean to be a Learning church for discipleship, what does it mean to be a more Just church for all, and what does it mean to become a more Diverse church?

Further down, an area will be provided with just the “Acts and Actions” of the plan (the strategies and specific tasks), a section devoted

to “Stewardship and Resources”, and an area describing who is accountable for various kinds of reporting and support.

Finally, there will be what I hope will be the most user-friendly sections detailing specifically the ways that the plan will help you in parishes, deaneries, and in council.

All of this will make it easy to update, as we go. Please check it out. (diohuron.org)

Overall, the objective is for each of us to embrace the moment that we have been given and to serve as well as we can, trusting in God. This is a time for us to know the joy that comes with responding to the Holy Spirit’s movement in our lives.

I wish you every blessing.

+Todd



185th SYNOD of the DIOCESE OF HURON

October 18-19, 2024

London, Ontario

**Friday, October 18, 2024 at St. Paul's Cathedral
7:30 pm: Synod Service and reception following the service**

**Saturday, October 19, 2024 at the Lamplighter Inn
8:00am: In person registration begins
9:00 - 5:00pm: 185th Synod of the Diocese of Huron**

**HURON
CHURCH
NEWS**

Volume 74, Number 8

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A fond farewell to Luke's Place

MAY GOD grant you the grace to dream God's purpose for you and the courage to live that purpose from the depth of your being.

That's what happened at Luke's Place: God placed a dream in our hearts and gave us the grace to build a Special Ministry in the Diocese of Huron. Over a five-year period, ending in December 2023, Luke's Place served the student community that surrounded it with enthusiasm, imagination and passion.

We began by saying yes! when our neighbours knocked on our door looking to use our space for their peace and justice initiatives. We partnered with them, held them in prayer while they traveled the world and, on their return, invited them to share their learnings with us.

Through them we learned about rebuilding after genocide in Rwanda, vigils to remember 'the disappeared' in Central America, projects in Kenya, and Bangladesh, to name but a few.

Then we took it farther. We learned about evangelism and developed an evangelism plan growing out of our music programme. We offered our time,



our listening, our enthusiasm, and our hospitality. That was the seed we sowed. And we reaped so much in return: the thrill of pioneering in this day and age. We did something we had never done before, or even thought was possible... who knew church could look like this?

We got to meet wonderful new people. And we had fun! Joy filled our hearts and laughter filled the space. We loved learning from the students who came to Luke's Place. Some of them even joined the Worshipping Community, singing in the choir, weeding the Garden-

4Bees, helping at various events.

Luke's Place was our gift to the community: serving our neighbours, making a difference in God's world.

We held coffee houses, jam sessions (the musical kind), study groups... we even read the Rule of St. Benedict together. During exams we opened our space for studying. Student interns helped run our programmes.

We took food insecurity amongst our neighbours very seriously, partnering in Love Western... operating a Food Pantry on Thursday evenings, providing 30 to 40 food

Gathered around the font for Sunny Side Up – reflection on our faith journey

Left to right:
Back row: Anqui (Kay) Zhan, Cameron Saunders (Theological student intern), Matthew Pope (Director of Music at Luke's Place) Victor Berryman, Jonah Murphy
Front row: Britney Kinyanjui, Charlotte Toyne

hampers a week to struggling students.

And of course, we were not alone... we had the support of the Anglican Foundation, the Huron Development Fund, the Deaneries of London and Delaware, the Community of Deacons, our neighbouring parishes, to name a few.

Luke's Place will forever be in our hearts! That's why we end this story with some of the feedback we received about the difference Luke's Place made...

Thanks be to God!

The Luke's Place Team

Jennifer, a Music Education in Action intern: I can't even begin to express how thankful I am to have had my placement at Luke's Place. I felt so at home... you have really shown God's light to me. Thank you for being there to talk to, and helping me regain my confidence and faith. Keep shining your brilliant light.

Julia: I love how they're reaching out to the community and really getting the community involved.

Hannah: My experience at Luke's Place was one that opened my eyes to what a church really should be like. You made me feel welcomed, loved and appreciated. I hope that I can find a church like yours when I begin studies in my new school in a few days.

Cameron, a theological student intern: they were so helpful, encouraging, and just warm; I really learned so much from them – I don't think I will ever forget them or all they've done for me. Please know that you all will forever be in my heart.

5K RUN/WALK in support of St. John the Evangelist outreach activities

By Liesel White

EVERY SATURDAY night, for 27 years, St. John the Evangelist has been welcoming hungry Londoners to dinner.

Our guests come not only for food. They come for the fellowship and support provided by our volunteers and by fellow guests. Each comes with their own individual story. Some are homeless, some are casually employed, some depend on Ontario Works and disability cheques, many are seniors, some are recent arrivals to Canada, some are students, most are singles, but some are families with young children.

Many volunteers work together to ensure the delivery and success of the Saturday Meal. We have a rotating roster of serving teams – from St. John's and from other churches, including St George's Middlesex, St Anne's Byron and St Aidan's. We have teams from community groups, including Western's medical and dental faculties, the Bishop Hellmuth Neighbourhood Association,



ANNUAL 5K RUN/WALK WILL BE HELD ON OCTOBER 20 to help raise the money for St. John the Evangelist's outreach activities. (Photo from the last year's 5K run/walk: Eager participants ready to start the race)

and the Camino Pilgrims of London. We have other teams made up of groups of friends, unaffiliated with any organization. Different individuals and teams do the weekly shopping and prepare the rotating menu of the Saturday meals.

Because Tuesday was a day without a lunch offering in the community, this year we added one. It has a more eclectic menu, depending on purchases to supplement what is available through Second Harvest and Harvest Hands (organizations which 'save' unsold grocery chain goods approaching their 'best before'

date). The lunch has its own roster of volunteers to prepare the food we serve our guests.

Every year the number of guests grows. Currently we serve the Saturday meal to 24% more people than a year ago and 50% more than in 2022! The Saturday and Tuesday meals combined feed over 250 people each week – with the weekly numbers being higher towards the end of the month when the cheques run out.

Preparing and serving these meals would not happen without the ongoing commitment of so many! We have been truly blessed!

We recently saw another need in the community – food insecurity in individuals who do not come to our meals. We have a vague idea of who they are – students living in nearby rental housing, the working poor, people who are living on the margins. So, earlier this year, we added the Outdoor Food Pantry. It sits just outside the church tower entrance, with the invitation to "Take What You Need and Leave What You Wish." (Recently a man on a motorcycle left a large and very full grocery bag).

A dedicated team of volunteers coordinates securing

food and keeping the Pantry stocked. Parishioners donate non-perishable food along with money. A team organizes a biannual neighbourhood food drive, and this fall we plan to organize a food drive involving high school students.

On October 20, we will be holding our 17th annual 5K Run/Walk. It raises the money to ensure that these programs, and our many other Outreach activities, continue.

This is a fun event with (a few) runners and (lots of) walkers. We have prizes for winners in a variety of categories – children and adults, humans with dogs, walkers and runners, and most money raised. We have music before, during, and after from St John's Marching Band and the Barclay Road Brass Works. And we have post-race pizza!

Everyone is welcome to participate – more details are available at <https://www.stjohnslondon.ca/pages/5k-run-walk>.

Liesel White is a St. John the Evangelist parishioner.

Tuesdays, Thursdays... and any other day: St. Mark's outreach continues

The volunteers at St Mark's, London, with a lot of hard work and networking with other groups and agencies, have reached out and in the month of August they helped 10,000 people in London's east end.



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

By Nancy McSloy

THIS QUOTE is so true and has become very evident at St Mark's church, a small Anglican parish, nestled in a wooded area in London's east end.

Here we are in 2024, we have the highest technology ever. People seem to think they have an answer for everything. Large corporations are showing huge profits. Does this all sound "rosy"?

Perhaps it does, however we are seeing a very dark side as well. The poverty rate is staggering and the homeless rate has probably far exceeded the numbers from the Great Depression.

A small team of volunteers at St Mark's has recognized that help is needed by so many so with a lot of hard work and networking with other groups and agencies, they have reached out and in the month of August they helped 10,000 people.

It is heartwarming to see that some of the people who are in need of food have come to the church to volunteer their time. This is their way of giving back to the community.

Every Tuesday night you will find a group of about 10 volunteers, some from St. Mark's, some from other churches and some from *Just A Bunch of Friends* (a group who prepares food for the homeless) come together to package bread and pastry donations.

Thursday morning food is picked up from Glen Cairn Community Resource Center. The food consisting mostly of fresh fruits and vegetables, pastries, some meat and protein products are then distributed to needy families and to homeless encampments as well as to churches who prepare hot meals for the less fortunate.

The volunteering does not stop after the Tuesday and Thursday jobs. Throughout the month volunteers are needed to ensure that the food pantry is in order.

The third Thursday of the month is food pickup day.

People in need are invited to visit St. Mark's and again a team of volunteers is there ensuring that the pickups go smoothly and that all of those attending are treated kindly and with respect.

During the week leading up to food pickup day, volunteers are busy packing food and preparing for the day.

It is heartwarming to see that some of the people who are in need of food have come to the church to volunteer their time. This is their way of giving back to the community.

In a perfect world, it would be wonderful if poverty could be eliminated. But until then it is groups like those at St. Mark's who are helping to make life more bearable for those in need.

Nancy McSloy is a member Trinity United Church and St. Mark's network.

In a perfect world, it would be wonderful if poverty could be eliminated. But until then it is groups like those at St. Mark's who are helping to make life more bearable for those in need.

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Renison is pleased to provide the Renison Institute of Ministry (RIM) programming as our gift to the Anglican community. All we ask is that you bring your openness to sharing your thoughts and opinions, and a willingness to embark on this journey with us.

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

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

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<https://diohuron.org/news>

Peace Pole dedication at St. Paul's, Port Dover



Port Dover, September 8, 2024:

Font row, left to right: Janet Ternes, Bishop Barry Clarke, Bobbi Ann Brady, Adam Veri, Rev. Lynn Thackwray, Hleb Koleiko, Mark Liota.

Back row, left to right: James Hopkins, Alan Hayes, Gail Nutley, Toby Barrett, John Bird, M.J. Perry

(Photo: James Cation)

On Sunday, September 8, a Peace Pole was dedicated at St. Paul's Anglican Church in Port Dover.

The Pole was dedicated by Rt. Rev. Barry Clarke, Bishop-in-Charge at St. Paul's, and Reverend Canon Lynne Thackwray, guest minister, after the Sunday service with many parishioners in attendance.

The Peace Pole is posted on the right side of the church entrance, in its own garden space, and it has quite a history that makes our parishioners honoured and proud.

This Peace Pole was pre-

sent to All Saints' Anglican Church, Hagersville, on Peace Sunday in November 1998. A member of All Saints', Anna Berwick (Mitchell), a teacher at Northview School (Hagersville) and Six Nations, designed and guided four students to paint the pole in four languages – English, French, Ojibwa and Cayuga. (Anna later became an Anglican minister, serving at St. Peter's Tyrconnell (Wallacetown), until her sudden death in 2007.)

Traditionally, students from Northview rang the bells at All Saints' on International Peace

Day. A Peace Garden was designed as a place for the Peace Pole to reside. It was placed there in the spring of 2000, blessed by Reverend Canon Lynne Thackwray, dedicating it to past, present and future members of All Saints' Church.

With the closure of All Saints' Church, Hagersville, in September of 2020, the Peace Pole needed a new home. Various former members of All Saints' agreed that St. Paul's Anglican Church in Port Dover is the appropriate church to receive the gift of this Peace Pole.

Gail Nutley

A PEACE POLE is a monument that displays the message "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in the language of the country where it is placed, usually with additional translations.

It was created by philosopher Masahisa Goi in Japan in 1955 as a peace prayer, after World War 11. He then formed the World Peace Prayer Society. Since that time over 200,000 poles have been placed in 180+ countries. Peace Poles are made in varying sizes and materials, from tall granite poles to small wooden ones. The text may be carved, etched or painted.

Many religious leaders have planted Peace Poles including Pope John Paul II, Mother Teresa and the Dalai Lama. Peace Poles have been placed in such locations as the North Magnetic Pole, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, the Egyptian Pyramids site in Giza, as well as numerous community parks. Frequently they are placed near the entrances of churches or schools.

Perhaps the world's largest Peace Pole, at 52 feet, is located in Janesville, Wisconsin at the site of a KKK rally. Another of the largest Peace Poles, measured in tons, is the granite Peace Pole in Beech Acres Park near Cincinnati, Ohio, posted there to warn against hate literature left in the driveways of Jewish residents.

Outreach through Spanish language lessons at Christ Church, Chatham



The lessons are taught the old-fashioned way: The chalkboard has been at Christ Church since the 1930's.

On Thursday, September 5, Christ Church Chatham offered its first free Spanish lesson to the congregation and community at large.

It was an excellent turn out. The lessons, led by the Reverend John Maroney, a native Spanish speaker, are intended to equip the students with the basic skills to carry on a simple conversation.

There are hundreds of Mexican migrant workers in the Chatham-Kent area. They are away from their loved ones for extended periods of time, and the language barrier they encounter only adds to their sense of isolation. By learning basic conversational Spanish, the students will be able to engage our Mexican brothers on a deeper and more meaningful level.

On any given Friday night, large groups of Mexican migrant workers patiently wait outside Walmart, groceries in hand, for buses to transport them back to where they work. People walk right past them, as though they were invisible. It would make a world of difference to them to have someone take the time to stop and say " Buenas noches, amigos. ¿Cómo están?

A simple act of kindness goes a long way.

The lessons will run for four weeks every Thursday from 5-6pm. Additional lessons are already in the works.

Bendiciones infinitas!

Rev. John Maroney

Choral Evensong: A great Anglican tradition is alive at St. George's, London

By Rory Leishman

CHORAL EVENSONG is one of the great treasures of the worldwide Anglican communion. Countless numbers of Christians in other denominations have also come to cherish this very special service as one of the most sublime liturgical and musical resources in the entire Holy Catholic Church.

In England, the Anglican communion is in a state of impending collapse, yet over the past six or seven years, there has been an uptick in attendance at Choral Evensong. Nowhere is this trend more evident than at St. Bartholomew the Great, a sprawling, 900-year-old edifice in the heart of the financial district in



London, England.

Like St. George's in London, Ontario, Great St. Barts is growing and thriving as a result mainly of outstanding, inspirational, theologically orthodox preaching supplemented by an excellent music program featuring a superb organist and choir. At a packed Choral Evensong on June 9, 22 members of Great St. Barts

(almost all young adults) were baptized, confirmed and welcomed into the Church of England.

What accounts for this revival in Choral Evensong, especially among the young?

In a recent interview with Damian Thompson of The Spectator magazine, the Rev. Marcus Walker, rector of Great St. Barts, explained: "It an-

chors a very, very, very fragile generation in something that feels eternal, something that stood the test of time. Actually, offering worship that's beautiful, that uses the poetry that undergirds the entire literary tradition of England, is attractive. It takes you out of the tedium of spreadsheets and Zoom and bureaucratic forms, and puts you into a wholly different register, where suddenly you're encountering God."

Of course, there has also been a revival in Choral Evensong here at St. George's. Andrew Keegan Mackriell manages with his magnetic personality to recruit some of the top choristers in the city to supplement our excellent choir for Choral Evensong on the fourth Sunday of each month from September to June. One

of the regular guest artists is Angus Sinclair, who motors down to St. George's from his perch as Music Director of St. John the Evangelist (Anglican) in Kitchener. Like Andrew, Angus is one of the top organists in the country. With Angus at the organ console, Andrew can concentrate on conducting the choir in some of the most sublime music ever composed.

The next Choral Evensong at St. George's is on Sunday, October 27 at 4 pm. Nowhere else in Canada can you be inspired and uplifted by a more exalted combination of preaching and liturgical music than at our own Choral Evensongs her at St. George's (London).

Rory Leishman is a freelance journalist and St. George's (London) parishioner.

The next Choral Evensong at St. George's is on Sunday, October 27 at 4 pm.



We give you thanks and praise, almighty God, for the gift of a world full of wonder, and for our life which comes from you.

(Eucharistic Prayer 5, Book of Alternative Services, p. 204)



Another summer has come and gone! Please enjoy these beautiful images, tiny windows into great and grand vistas of our young ones enjoying their camp adventures immersed in God's creation. Keep watching for more good news and updates here and at www.camphuron.ca

"Thank You": A prayer practice for life

By Sharon Frank



ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

OCTOBER is associated with Thanksgiving. A time to be grateful. A time to gather with family and friends often in the sharing of a Thanksgiving feast ... think Turkey and all the trimmings. It is also a time to gather your thoughts together and offer a big "Thank You" to Creator. For without the gifts from Creator, we would not be, and there would be no life.

Each time that you say, "Thank You" and truly mean it, that is a prayer. Research from Harvard Medical School -2021 "Giving thanks can make you happier", has shown that when a person takes a moment (daily - the best scenario) on a regular basis to count their blessings they are generally, happier, healthier, and more likeable. The Ministry of Gratitude is nothing new, in fact "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

St. Ignatius of Loyola developed a Spiritual Exercises, "the Daily Examen" in 1522 a prayer practice designed to help people grow in their personal relationship with God. An opportunity to reflect on our sins, in light of God's infinite love and mercy and see God's generous self-gift. Gratitude. As we contemplate all the ways that God is at work in our lives, we are moved to gratitude.

Even in time of difficulty there is always something, no matter how small or insignificant, for which to be grateful. This is a spiritual practice, looking at the glass as half full instead of half empty. Or perhaps even acknowledging that there is a glass. Talking to God about your challenges and still finding gratitude, just might arm you to cope with those challenges. Prayer is how you communicate with The Divine. Make sure you talk to God, but that you also take time to listen, to be, to have the Holy Spirit offer guidance. Prayer does not change God, but it just might change you and offer a wholeness that is needed.

As you lie down at night think of one or two things for which you are grateful, and it may simply change your life! It can help you refocus on what you have instead of what you lack. Initially, it may feel contrived but with use and practice the mental and spiritual wholeness and happiness follows.

There are many ways to cultivate gratitude. Try writing a thank you note or email to tell someone how important they are to you, don't forget to send one to yourself. No time to write, well thank them privately and mentally in your head. Keep a gratitude journal and jot down your blessings, you can keep this secret or share with others showing how you appreciate them. Count your blessings on a regular and frequent basis and take note of the sensations this elicits. Meditate, by being mindful and focusing on the present without any judgement on the word "gratitude" or that for which you are grateful (friends, weather, sounds, etc). Pray from your heart or search the internet for Gratitude prayers, there are many to choose from, and remember "Thank You God, for my blessings" is a prayer!

Reminder of AFP's upcoming Fall conference on October 5th
Sharon Frank is an AFP Lay Executive Member.



ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER
Saturday October 5, 2024
 9:30 am—12:00 pm
 By Zoom
 Registration: Ms Susan Johnson—brlmail2@aol.com

HOW DO WE PRAY?
 WHERE DO WE PRAY?
 WHY DO WE PRAY?



Healing / Anointing—Ms. Sharon Frank



Praying in Creation—Rev. Stephanie Donaldson



Silent Retreat / Daily Office—Rev. Craig Love

Prayer Walking—Rev. Kimberly Myer

Tools Used in Prayer—Ms Libi Clifford



PWRDF in the ruins of Gaza: Giving HOPE to the Middle East

By Rev. Canon Greg Jenkins

THE OTHER DAY, I was asked if I would be attending an event. I quickly answered, "I hope so." Later, I realized how casually I had used a word that has held such deep meaning for our faith for thousands of years.

The word "hope" has lifted entire generations from despair, giving people courage even in the most desperate situations. Hope is not just a fleeting feeling but a steadfast belief in God's promises, even in the midst of great trials.

The work done by our Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) is rooted in this very hope. When we meet with our membership partners across the world, their examples give us hope. One such example is the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Jerusalem. This diocese is home to about 7,000 Anglicans worshipping in just twenty-eight congregations. Yet these relatively few Christians are responsible for more than thirty institutions, including hospitals, schools, clinics, and rehabilitation centres, scattered across Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Israel. It is hard to imagine working across these borders, checkpoints, and national governments, each with their own divergent laws and politics.

Despite the challenges, these Anglicans respond to the need for healthcare and education in areas where many cannot afford it, making no distinction between religion, ethnicity, or gender. They work faithfully to bring stability to a troubled

region, bearing witness to Anglican Christian values and offering a voice of moderation, reconciliation, and peace.

They are known globally for running our hospital in Gaza, which has been repeatedly devastated by ongoing war and violence, yet continues to function against all odds.

Through their work, we see that hope is not passive. Hope is not sitting idly by, waiting for God's promises to come true. Hope is active. It takes on flesh in the hearts and hands of those who work to bring God's kingdom into reality, even when the world seems determined to tear it down.

The prophet Jeremiah, standing in the ruins of Jerusalem, bought a field even as the city was about to fall to the Babylonians (Jeremiah 32:15). This was an act of hope. It was a belief that God's restoration would come, even when the situation seemed hopeless. Similarly, Anglicans across the world offer a witness to the power of hope. In the ruins of Gaza, hospital walls are upheld; amidst hatred and killing, our friends offer healing without distinction between religion, ethnicity, or gender. They remind us of Paul's words in Romans 5: "Suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope."

This is the kind of hope that transcends borders, bridges checkpoints, and resists the forces that seek to divide us. It is a hope rooted in the unwavering belief that God's kingdom will come, that peace will reign, and that love will conquer hate. As Martin Luther King Jr. once proclaimed, "The arc of the

moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." These Anglicans are bending that arc with every act of love, every child they educate, and every patient they treat.

Their work reminds us that hope is not some distant dream, but a present reality we are called to build, brick by brick. Yes, the situation may seem all but impossible, and yes, the obstacles may often appear insurmountable, but the God of hope calls us forward. He calls us to be his hands and feet in this world, to work for a future where peace and reconciliation are not just ideals but realities.

So, let us take courage from their example. Let us remember that hope is not found in the absence of difficulty but in the midst of it. Let us look to our PWRDF partners as a living testimony of the power of Christian hope. It is a hope that rebuilds, reconciles, and refuses to give up. Let us join in their work, believing, as they do, that the work of the Gospel is where we find life's true meaning.

Please continue to pray for those affected by this conflict and donate to PWRDF's Gaza and West Bank Emergency Appeal. You can also donate online at PWRDF.org, or by phone at 416-822-9083 (or leave a message toll-free at 1-866-308-7973, and we will return your call) or by mail. Please send cheques to PWRDF, 80 Hayden Street, 3rd Floor, Toronto, ON, Canada, M4Y 3G2, and indicate "Gaza and West Bank" in the memo field.

Rev. Canon Dr. Greg Jenkins is PWRDF representative for Huron.

PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

Appointments

Bishop Todd Townshend appointed the **Reverend Lisa Poultney** as the Rector of Christ Church, Colchester, effective 1 September 2024. Lisa remains the Rector of Christ Church, Amherstburg.

Bishop Townshend appoints the **Reverend Ann Webber** as Associate Priest with Responsibility for Children and Families (half-time) at St. James Westminster, London, effective 1 September 2024.

Bishop Townshend appoints the **Reverend JoAnn Todd** as the Rector of the Parish of the Holy Spirit, Seaforth, effective 1 September 2024. JoAnn remains the Rector of the Regional Ministry of Hope (Trinity, Blyth and St. Paul's-Trinity, Wingham.) In conjunction with this appointment. JoAnn has resigned as Regional Dean of Huron-Perth. We are grateful to her for her faithful ministry in this role.

Bishop Townshend appoints the **Reverend Canon Robert Lemon** as Regional Dean of

Huron-Perth, effective 1 September 2024. Rob is the Rector of St. James, Stratford, St. Paul's, Stratford, St. Stephen's, Stratford, and St James', St. Marys.

Rest in Peace

Carole Jones, died on Saturday, 31 August 2024. Carole was the wife of the Right Reverend Derwyn Jones, the ninth Bishop of Huron. A funeral will be held at a later date.

Please remember Evan, Paula, and the rest of Carole's family and friends in your prayers.

The Reverend Herbert Horsey, died on Saturday, August 31, 2024. Herb was ordained and served in the Diocese of Ottawa before moving to Stratford to teach at Conestoga College. In Huron, he held a number of interim appointments and, at his death, was a parishioner at St. Columba, Kitchener. The funeral service was held at St. Columba, Waterloo, on 5 September.

Please remember Joan, John, Susan, and the rest of Herb's family and friends in your prayers.



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ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN

Plan to Attend

"Let Your Light Shine"

ACW Presidents' Conference's Special Events @ St. James Anglican Church, 41 Mornington St., Stratford, ON
September 26th ~ 29th, 2024

Thurs., Sept. 26th @ 7pm
Opening Church Service.

Fri., Sept. 27th @ 7pm
Fun Fashion Show,
Meet & Greet.

Sun., Sept. 29th @ 10:30am
Morning Worship,

guest officiant: Archbishop Linda Nicholls.

All are Welcome & encouraged to attend.
We look forward to seeing everyone!



In Memory

Deanery of Delaware
St. Thomas Church,
St. Thomas
Geraldine Smith

Deanery of London
St. John the Divine,
Arva

Lillian Rosemary Hammond
(Diocese of Huron ACW
President 2002-2004 and
Vice-President 2000-2002)

When church feels like homecoming!

I REMEMBER a conversation that dates back almost fifteen years now. I was a newly minted deacon at the time, serving the congregation of St. John's-by-the-Lake in Grand Bend. Gathered around a table in their beautiful parish hall, were members of their parish council and supportive members of the congregation who were having an open, personal conversation about what they loved most about their church and why they chose to be so engaged in the ministries of that community.

"I consider St. John's to be the family of faith that I call home," I remember one parishioner sharing at that gathering. This response resonated with everyone around that table. One member quickly responded by saying: "That should be our motto!", and, shortly afterwards, that's exactly what happened.

I remember that moment, both vividly and fondly, because that was when the congregation began to wonder: How might we reach out to newcomers and potential members in a way that would allow them to experience church as being a homecoming of sorts? A place where newcomers and seekers would feel included, valued, and familiar?

Since that conversation, 15 years ago, I have looked and listened intently at the places where relational bonding takes place within congregations. In University research over the last decade, when I have been able to formally survey over a thousand participants from numerically growing Anglican congregations,



"The family of faith that I call home": St. George's ACW



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

asking the question: "What keeps bringing you back to church?", the number one answer that participants shared, not surprisingly, is that it is the warm welcome, the supportive community and the familiar feeling of homecoming that keeps members engaged with congregational activities and worship services.

In these studies, a sense of being valued and included within a Christian congregation ranked even higher than one's preference for church traditions, worship expressions, and denominational identity. The words: "I feel like I belong here," are perhaps the most profound expression of Christian identity that one can experience

In a shift that seems to prioritize relationship over responsibility, our ACW is spending more time focusing on the fellowship aspect of their meetings. They are encouraging long-serving members to get to know the newest faces and to invite them into the various facets of church life that they have found meaningful for years.

in the Church today. If only this were true for all those seeking a family of faith to call home.

The truth is, there is no one, magic solution for making people feel at home in a church community. While different groups of people do things differently, it seems to me that the secret of successful bonding within Christian communities is the result of intentionality.

Are our congregational leaders regularly talking about how they are prioritizing getting to know the visitors and newest members in the community? Are we

developing habits of invitation to help them to feel that they belong? Or do we default to spending most of our time with the people we already know? Sitting in our familiar pews, so to speak, of routines and habits with our friends?

The most current example that I've experienced of an intentional growth of relationships in my home congregation of The Blue Mountains has been found in the recent explosion of new members in our Anglican Church Women's group. Participation in the group has almost doubled in size over

the last six months as a result of the ladies' leadership team deliberately reaching out and introducing themselves to new women in our congregation.

In a shift that seems to prioritize relationship over responsibility, our ACW is spending more time focusing on the fellowship aspect of their meetings. They are encouraging long-serving members to get to know the newest faces and to invite them into the various facets of church life that they have found meaningful for years. It's one thing to invite a new person into a sense of belonging, but it is another thing entirely to make that invitation feel like a homecoming. The difference is found in the care and attention that is invested in each authentic invitation.

So, if I am able to leave one thought in your mind this month, my hope is that it is to explore the places in your own congregation where relational bonding may be taking place. Does your congregation make space to welcome newcomers? Are you getting to know them personally? Let us strive to make each first impression of Church an experience of homecoming for all those God brings to our doors.

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.

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The end of social media: A misconception

THE IDEA that social media is on its deathbed is a recurring theme in many circles; the chaos of Twitter, the emergence of TikTok and the general malaise of Facebook. Platforms will rise and fall, but social networking remains a fundamental aspect of human interaction.

The misconception that social media is dying stems from a few factors.

1) Platform Fatigue: As new platforms emerge, users may become overwhelmed and tired of existing ones. However, this doesn't necessarily mean the end of social networking.

2) Privacy Concerns: Data breaches and privacy scandals have raised concerns about the



**MEDIA
BYTES
REV. MARTY
LEVESQUE**

safety of personal information on various platforms. While these issues are valid, the data shows they haven't deterred users entirely.

3) Changing Trends: The popularity of platforms can fluctuate over time. For example, MySpace once dominated social media, but its decline didn't lead to the death of social networking. Rather, the decline of Twitter leads to the

rise of others, like TikTok.

While the landscape of social media may evolve, the underlying need for connection and community remains constant. People continue to use social media for various purposes such as building relationships and connecting with friends and family.

Social media allows for information sharing, and the dissemination of news, ideas, and experiences. Pinterest blogs have replaced the classic Church Cookbook. Substacks have replaced the newsletter, and blogs.

And of course, social media still provides much opportunity for entertainment. The general consumption of con-

tent, such as videos, memes, and games. And there are clear business and marketing opportunities for reaching and engaging with seekers and parishioners.

As technology advances, social media platforms will likely adapt to new trends and challenges. While specific platforms may come and go, the concept of social networking is here to stay. After all, the story of Jesus Christ has been Liked and Shared for 2000 years.

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Paralympics 2024: What can churches learn from this event?

By Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle

THIS YEAR, the Paralympics ran from Aug. 28 to Sept. 8. The event was the 17th Paralympic Games and the 12th to be held in the same host city as the Olympics.

In preparation for the games, Paris's public transport system underwent accessibility improvements and all 5,288 volunteers from the city received disability awareness training. There were 260 volunteers specifically allocated to deal with accessibility issues.

The Paralympics had a total of 549 medal events, 220 more than the Olympics to accommodate diverse needs including wheelchair users, those with visual impairments, various upper and lower body impairments including prosthetic use, intellectual impairments, and others to ensure as level a playing field as possible. There were some 4,400 athletes from 180 countries who competed, in addition to a Refugee Paralympic Team and Neutral Paralympic Team. (Facts and figures about the Paralympics games taken from <https://olympics.com/en/news/paris-2024-paralympics-facts-and-figures-about-the-2024-paralympic-games>)

A lot of thought, consultation with people with dis-

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



Arisa Chattasa/Unsplash

abilities, and creativity went into the Paralympics ensuring this year's event was the most accessible ever. The design of the athletes' village, food distribution, workout spaces, and transportation were based on the ideal of athlete autonomy. The goal was to ensure the athletes could do what they wanted, when they wanted, without necessarily having to rely on others for assistance. A simple example, carts were made available in the cafeteria so that athletes with mobility issues could take their time deciding what they wanted to eat without being dependent on someone else to carry their food.

A lot of thought, consultation with people with disabilities, and creativity went into the Paralympics this year. The question remains: what can churches learn from this event to improve our accessibility and support the autonomy of people with disabilities in our congregations?

So often churches focus on accessibility from the perspective of mobility. Some have added ramps and accessible bathrooms. These are important. To what extent do these adaptations ensure that a priest who has mobility issues can access the chancel to lead worship and have an office to work? To what extent can a lay person who is a wheelchair

user participate in worship as a lector, Eucharistic minister, or server? Can people with mobility issues access all spaces in the building? What does it say about inclusivity if this is not possible?

What about other adaptations? Has consideration been given for those who have hearing impairments? How might the auditory systems ensure that those who need hearing assistance can properly hear the service? Is ASL interpretation available for those who need it?

Could someone with a visual impairment participate in worship? Are there braille Bibles, prayer books, and other resources available to support inclusion? To what extent is description available to help those who are visually impaired experience the visual elements of the spaces? What adaptations have been included on Internet resources to better support those with visual impairments?

How about accommodations for those who are neurodivergent, those whose brains work differently? What considerations have been made to ensure that there are safe spaces for those who might be easily overwhelmed by stimuli? Are there food options that take into consideration those who might have sensitivities – like making your own sandwiches instead of

selecting from those premade? Could someone get pasta and butter if they have an aversion to complex sauces? Are there spaces where those with diverse mental health needs could feel seen, understood, and included?

To what extent are stories of people with disabilities included in our programming, reflections, and sermons? In what ways are people with disabilities seen and valued as full persons in Christ? What more is needed to ensure that church communities respect the dignity of every human being, disabled and abled? What can we learn from the efforts of the community to ensure that we are as accessible as we could be? People with disabilities are also created in the image and likeness of God. How are we honouring Christ in those with diverse disabilities?

The questions posed in this article arise from experiences with people who have diverse disabilities and through reading stories of those with disabilities. For one interesting look into the struggles and hopes of those with disabilities, check out "The Future is Disabled: Prophecies, Love Notes, and Mourning Songs", by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha.

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

The empathic journey (Implementing Charitable Love)

HERE IS a plausible scenario:

Pro-Palestinian protesters meet up with pro-Israeli protesters, all in arms due to the war in the Middle East. They agree to meet in a neutral zone.

A nervous pro-Israeli protester vehemently takes the podium first: "We are advocates for the recognition of Israel's right to exist in peace. We want support against terrorist attacks. We need help to support people and communities affected by the crisis. We need anti-Semitism to stop."

The room was silent. The appeal makes sense.

The next speaker, a pro-Palestinian protester, in an equally vehement plea, emphasized the importance of addressing her people's basic needs, including access to clean water, healthcare, education, infrastructure development, and economic stability. She concluded by addressing what she called the "ongoing genocide."



AS I SEE IT

REV. JIM INNES

The room was again silenced. The appeal makes sense.

All of a sudden, a small grumble turned into a heated argument and then escalated into a full-blown conflict. Former neighbours, now on different sides of the room, couldn't contain their grief.

Police intervened. The room broke up. All went home empty and sore.

In this picture, despite their differing political views, Israelis and Palestinians want to feel safe and acknowledged as human beings. Yet, despite that common ground, nothing but violence has wracked their homes for years. And no amount of outside interference has done much to settle



the deep-rooted malice that festers.

I'm not sure if any intervention will ever stop the outpouring of generational conflict. I turn to Hope but recognize that things just simply exist, whether we like them or not. So, with an apology for adding to the complexity, I want to offer the concept of 'charitable love' or 'selfless love'. It's an energy that focuses on serving others and, when engaged, draws upon empathy.

I use the word "energy" because it implies that chari-

table love is a force that can be harnessed and directed. Charitable love is not just a feeling or emotion but a decision we make to actively care for the needs of another for the sake of a higher cause, sometimes at the expense of our own needs.

The concept of Charitable Loving is recognized and taught at the core of every major religious tradition in the world. It may be familiar to us as the Great Commandment, "Love your neighbour as yourself," which is second

only to "Love God with all your heart." Universally, this is known as the 'Golden Rule'.

We are all familiar with the power of Charitable Love: when you're feeling down and seeking clarity, help someone else. When you're confused or upset and looking for stability, do something kind for someone. However, it's important to acknowledge that practicing this type of charity can be challenging. And, I believe is where the rubber hits the road when it comes to deeply rooted conflicts.

As I see it, Charitable Love, as a concept, challenges us to battle the dark corners of our own souls. And we can do it, maybe not quickly or even all at once (it may take years). But the journey is about defining ourselves as empathic on a mutual journey with our neighbour.

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

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In celebration of being whole and undivided



Angela Hobbs/Unsplash

Few could argue with the idea that we live in a day and an age where opinions run hot, and polarization is common, quite the opposite of integrity. In the midst of all of this, what does it mean for those who follow Jesus, to strive for integrity, for wholeness and for unity?

By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE during this Fall season when we celebrate Thanksgiving and remember the gift of St. Francis to us, to not be impressed with both the beauty and bounty of God's creation and reminded of our stewardship of it.

As the final vow in our baptismal covenant asks us,

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

While we understand this statement well enough, I found myself pausing at the word "integrity", for it is the integrity of God's creation that we are striving to safeguard. What is this really asking of us?

Did you know that integrity has two meanings? The first definition of Integrity is that it is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles, moral uprightness. Now on the one hand it's hard to argue with moral uprightness, but as our history tells us, the definition of what is and what isn't moral can be a bit changeable depending on who's in charge at any given point. However, it was the second definition of integrity



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

that caught my attention, for integrity is also defined as the state of being whole and undivided.

Few could argue with the idea that we live in a day and an age where opinions run hot, and polarization is common, quite the opposite of integrity. Perhaps it has always been so among humans, but it feels more pronounced these days. So, in the midst of all of this, what does it mean for those who follow Jesus, to strive for integrity, for wholeness and for unity?

While no simple answers exist, it seems clear that polarization, is fueled by anxiety and uncertainty, again, both in abundant supply these days. As we consider our response to this state of affairs, perhaps there is a clue for us in the prayer attributed to St. Francis:

Lord, make me an instrument, a vehicle, a catalyst of your peace:

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand,

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are

pardoned,

and it is in dying that we are

born to eternal life.

What does all of this have to do with Education for Ministry in the Diocese of Huron?

Each week as the participants of EfM gather, they do so, seeking integrity and

wholeness in their lives. Their intention is to live lives that are guided and directed by their faith. As they gather, they reflect together and support one another in their readings of Scripture, of history, of theology, of global and local news and views. They lean, as best as they are able, into the questions and the wonderings anticipating that there will be grace to help them to be open and sensitive to see how God's Spirit is moving in and through them, with the hope that in offering themselves, injury, doubt, despair, darkness and sadness might be transformed, so that wholeness might with time blossom in the places in which they live and serve. They journey together as they look for the intersection of their every-day lived experiences and their faith, and while not an answer to every dilemma, it is a beginning. Interested in learning more

about Education for Ministry? Either Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron EfM Co-ordinator or me Val Kenyon at EFM@huron.anglican.ca would be pleased to consider with you the possibilities.

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

LET IT GROW...! Celebrating the world's rebirth

CATHERINANNE and I recently traveled to the 'holy land of Newfoundland' to visit family and to enjoy some vacation.

Needless to say we made numerous visits to the many homes of our very large family, trips out on the bay, plenty of food and beverage, a great deal of laughter, a few tears, and the sweet melodies of Newfoundland music. The singing, the storytelling and the accompanying sense of communion that goes with drinking in such rich culture was a great elixir. This Newfoundland boy was in need of reconnecting with his roots.

Thanks be to God for the gifts of family. Thanks be to God for the sacredness of place. I moved away from Newfoundland thirty years ago. After living most of those three decades quite contentedly in Ontario, I have to confess that each return trip to my homeland is a reminder of just how truly beautiful and enchanting Newfoundland is. I can't quite describe the feel-



It's JUST KEVIN

V. REV. KEVIN GEORGE

ings that well up inside me on these trips. There is an intangible connection that I think many Newfoundlanders have with the rocks, the sea, the forests, the sights, the sounds and the smells. There is a deep and sacred relationship with place.

All of that is true, but indeed the deeper and more intense bond is that between kin.

That too is a gift from God's own hand. There is not a day that I am not overwhelmed with gratitude for my six siblings, their children, their grandchildren and their great grandchildren. I fear that in the rush of this world that we live in drives us to distraction from the importance of place, of relationship, and of opportunity to be present to any one moment in time to see God's hand at work.



Bryce and Calle: Let it Grow!

We have a beautiful great-great niece named Callie and a rambunctious and delightful great-great nephew Bryce. These siblings are a real joy to spend time with. Their mom Lauren is my Goddaughter. Lauren has always loved music and is a beautiful singer. Her love for music has been passed to these beautiful children. The night before our return to

Ontario, Lauren took out her guitar and the two children sat and sang a song for us from The Lorax. It was such a sweet gift for us. I had not heard the music from that film. When they sang these words, I was overcome with emotion.

Let it grow, let it grow

You can't reap what you don't sow

Plant a seed inside the earth

Just one way to know it's worth

Let's celebrate the world's rebirth

We say let it grow

Relationships are a gift of God. God is revealed to us when we have the courage to sow love, and sow it abundantly. These trips to Newfoundland always remind me how important it is to make time, take time, and share time. In so doing, we grow. We come to know our worth - our belovedness. The world's rebirth is something we might celebrate daily, if we were to have the wisdom to see each person anew, each and every day. Our baptismal covenant calls us to seek and

serve Christ in every human being. Every day we have the opportunity to sow seeds of love, compassion, mercy, and forgiveness. We don't reap those beautiful gifts in our own lives if we do not sow them abundantly.

Three year old Bryce and six year old Calle looked up at us and sang:

Let it grow, let it grow

Like it did so long ago

It is just one tiny seed

But it's all we really need

It's time to change the life we lead

Time to let it grow

It is time to change the life we lead: Who do you miss? What phone call have you put off? Who is overdue for a visit from you? Who needs to hear how much you care about them? Who do you need to forgive? From whom do you need forgiveness? Make the first step. It is just tiny step, a tiny seed, but it will grow.

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

Halloween: Christian origins and secular culture

THE DISCONNECT between Christian holy days and their secular analogs grows sharper with each passing year.

The commercialization of Christmas and progressive erasure of Easter are the classic examples of this dynamic, but as we draw nearer to the spooky 31 days of October, I am struck by the chasm between the actual culture of death and grief, the wisdom of the Church and its traditions of death, and the entertainment derived from the cultural celebration of Halloween.

The disruption of the processes of death, dying, and grief was one of the greatest losses of the pandemic. People died alone, without closure or comfort from loved ones. Funerals were cancelled or dramatically postponed, reduced to five and ten person gatherings, socially distanced, masked, and voided of the many comforting rituals that typically accompany funerals. Here in the aftermath, I have noticed through parish ministry that the practices of death and grieving have not been restored. Private graveside committals with direct cremation and limited involvement of faith communities are becoming steadily popular, even among the most committed and active parishioners.

Death is inconvenient, messy, and emotionally wrought and what the pandemic revealed is that we can opt out the aspects of dying that make us, as loved ones and supporters, feel uncomfortable. Death has been sanitized, minimized, and



Colton Sturgeon/Unsplash



FIELD NOTES

REV. ALLIE
McDOUGALL

Halloween in the hands of secular culture has been almost completely severed from its Christian origins as the eve of All Saints. Some Christians have even taken it upon themselves to totally repudiate and reject Halloween as being evil, the work of Satan, and contrary to the Christian life.

streamlined for the sake of efficiency, but to the detriment of a healthy grieving process and the Christian conception of what it means to die well and receive the crown of everlasting life, in hope of the Resurrection.

The Triduum of the Dead, Allhallowtide, the time surrounding our feast of All Saints enshrines the remembrance of death and resurrection into the pattern of the Christian year. In the three days of All Hallows' Eve, All Saints Day, and All Souls Day, we make space for all the emotion and complexity that accompany death. Fear, anxiety, sadness, loss, remembrance, hope, and celebration are all encompassed in those three days.

It is rightly known as the Triduum of the Dead because,

very much like the Paschal Triduum, we travel through the process of death, its defeat, and the promise of resurrection as it applies to human life. As Christ passed into death and triumphed over it by being raised to new life, so will the Christian soul.

Taking this time to remember one's own death, to give thanks for the saints who have gone before, and to remember all whom we love who have died in the Lord is a spiritually powerful action. It reorients us toward the reality of life and death and gives us a context for offering our sorrow back to God. We can peer into and contemplate the darkness of our existence, then allow the light of Christ to shine upon it. A fulsome celebration of this festival season is truly remarkable

and should be explored more by parishes!

Halloween in the hands of secular culture has been almost completely severed from its Christian origins as the eve of All Saints. Some Christians have even taken it upon themselves to totally repudiate and reject Halloween as being evil, the work of Satan, and contrary to the Christian life.

As a Halloween fan, horror movie connoisseur, and priest this saddens me. Halloween is one of the most direct points of connection that the Church can make with the broader culture about death. While we are broadly uncomfortable and avoidant about death as we experience it, countless others are perfectly fine to enjoy the symbolism, aesthetics, and media about death popularized through

Halloween. Gothic, spooky subculture is an accessible, even playful way for people to engage with challenging, frightening themes. The most beloved horror stories and imagery of this season are often metaphors and fables for the horrific or painful realities of the real world. People are drawn to them, as they are to other forms of meaning-making, to process and find catharsis for what they bear in real world.

In the Triduum of the Dead, the Church has an entire set of ritual actions and traditions that can take cultural engagement with death from the realm of entertainment to spiritual enrichment, openness to death conversations, and maybe even healing for the pain of grief and loss.

Taking ownership of our theologies and traditions of death as the Christian Church is not morbid or pessimistic but honest and refreshing, particularly as the culture of grief and death is condensed and sanitized. Christianity has always been a little bit spooky – the Lord whom we serve personally and totally defeated the forces of death and evil and burst open the gates of eternal life to all people. As our world walks a tightrope between denying and hiding death in the real world and playing with its symbolism during the Halloween season, it's worth making our perspective known.

Rev. Allie McDougall is the Assistant Curate of St. Paul's and St. Stephen's, Stratford.

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The Anglican garden: A note on diversity



By Rev. Partick Martin

A red rose is not selfish because it wants to be a red rose. It would be horribly selfish if it wanted all the other flowers in the garden to be both red and roses.

- Oscar Wilde, *The Soul of Man and Prison Writings*

IMAGINE one's disappointment upon visiting a garden and realizing all the flowers were a matching shade of beige.

This garden could be remarkable for its uniformity, but that's about it. A much more enjoyable garden would be one with a variety of colours, but one where the plants grew well and complemented each other. Now any gardener would tell you that it is not only the look of a plant that

matters, but that plants grow well with each other rather than choking each other out.

One of the beautiful aspects of Anglicanism is our long history of variety, captured by the phrase, 'via media' or the middle road; that the length and breadth of the Anglican tent is very broad. One of the struggles that the church has faced throughout its history is how to live with broadness and still be a church. One prevalent myth is that unity means uniformity, that to be together we must all think, and act, and worship the same. And so that everyone is (relatively) happy we pick some neutral common denominator. The often corresponding thought is that anyone straying from this neutral is thinking of themselves,

rather than the happiness of everyone.

Enter our quote from Oscar Wilde, "A red rose is not selfish because it wants to be a red rose." The rose is not selfish for being a rose. There is no fear of the rose forcing its redness on anyone, but instead an acknowledgement that it is blooming as roses do. There is a boldness about being unabashedly authentic, but there is also truth in it. Part of being a creature created by God, is being the creature that God created. Really, allowing people to be authentically themselves is respecting the dignity of their person as a God created creature. It should also be noted that this mindset cannot not align, as some might fear, with bigotry,

because at its core is about respecting the dignity of others. It could perhaps be summed up as, Loving God and loving one's neighbour.

So how might this play out in the church? I think it is by acknowledging that difference exists and that nothing can be accomplished by chasing that artificial ideal of uniformity. That one Anglican is going to be different from another Anglican. We each have (and are allowed) our preferred flavour: High or Low, Praise Band or Choir, Mtr/Fr. or The Rev'd., but that should not dictate our validity. What matters is that we all have a place in the garden.

Rev. Patrick Martin is Assistant Curate at St. John's, Tillsonburg.

Change, transition, and Thanksgiving

THE TWISTED wrought iron door handle felt familiar. I pushed on the thumb latch and entered the old church building for the first time in forty five years.

In 1979, I had been called into a meeting with Archbishop Garnsworthy of the Diocese of Toronto and given the opportunity to serve the Parish of Beeton, Tottenham and Palgrave during a time of clergy transition. As a newly ordained deacon, being given the responsibility of liturgical leadership on Sundays, even as I completed my studies at Trinity College in Toronto, was exciting.

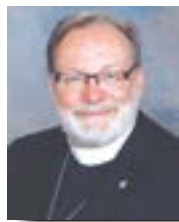
The morning drive to the three-point parish North of Toronto meant an early start to my Sundays, but early mornings were to become a reality over the years. The first two services, in Palgrave and Tottenham, were always a bit of a blur. Dashing from one point to another meant that I treated the speed limit signs merely as suggestions! The reward after the last service in Beeton sometimes included an opportunity for tea and butter tarts!

As my ministry in that setting drew to its conclusion, the young organist at St Alban's, Palgrave, thought that, no matter what time of the year it was, he had to play, what he thought was my favourite hymn for my last service. So, as we sweltered in the heat, "O Little Town of Bethlehem", was sung by the congregation. It was a Christmas Carol that had been written by Phillips Brooks when he was the Rector of Holy Trinity, Philadelphia. It was the parish where I grew up, the congregation my Father had served as rector and the church where I had recently been ordained a deacon.

Now, in the summer of 2024, the number of people I saw was far more than I used to see on a Sunday. The nar-



Priscilla DuPreez/Unsplash



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

row pews had been replaced by far more comfortable picnic table benches and the Sanctuary provided space for a variety of beers and the cash register. St Alban's Church has transitioned into the home of Caledon Hills Brewing Company, Brew Pub!

Enjoying a delicious meal in that setting was an interesting experience. I could not sit with my back towards what had been the Sanctuary. The stained-glass windows now provided an artist with the opportunity to showcase half full glasses of beer. Instead of a quotation from Scripture, the phrase, "Brewed with a Little Attitude" was given a high profile in the window over where the Altar used to be. Filled with memories of forty-five years ago, the traditional tune of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" came to mind.

While the primary focus of any Canadian Thanksgiving is rooted in offering gratitude for the Harvest, there is much more that may be identified in our lives for which we need to be thankful.

I hasten to add that this article has NOT been sponsored by the Caledon Hills Brewing Company! (I will present a copy of this article, however, when I next visit, hoping for a discount!).

As we consumed the delicious peach cobbler dessert at the end of our meal, my wife and I reflected on the past forty five years. Ministry opportunities that took our family to different communities, choices made, paths taken...or not, all found their way into our conversation and thoughts. The people,...

In the midst of all of the change, all the transition, all of the different elements that shape each day, each week, each month and each year, for people of faith, there is a constant upon which we can depend. Jesus has promised that through our life, He will share the journey with us. He will celebrate moments of joy with us and hold us up when the burdens of life feel overwhelming.

individuals whose lives have enriched our experience, came to mind. Decades of life experience all seemed to percolate to the surface in that brief dinner stop.

Pausing to reflect on the many blessings in life is a valuable element in any Thanksgiving celebration. While the primary focus of any Canadian Thanksgiving is rooted in offering gratitude for the Harvest, there is much more that may be identified in our lives for which we need to be thankful.

Change and transition have always been a part of our family life. Moving from place to place, new places to call home, new people who have become friends, all of those elements are part of an ongoing story which is still being written. The institutional church into which I was ordained has undergone a transformation. A number of church buildings that I knew well as the rector of a parish or as an archdeacon, have either undergone significant change or have been closed and sold.

Now, as I have shared with you, I have become aware of one that has been turned into a Brew Pub!! The diversity of life experience is a reality for all of us. The joys and challenges that come along each day are lived through and shape our view of the world in which we live.

In the midst of all of the change, all the transition, all

of the different elements that shape each day, each week, each month and each year, for people of faith, there is a constant upon which we can depend. Jesus has promised that through our life, He will share the journey with us. He will celebrate moments of joy with us and hold us up when the burdens of life feel overwhelming.

Words of worship reflect our faith. They give us the opportunity to clearly claim what it is we believe. They provide a framework around which our lives may express our gratitude for the consistency of Divine Love upon which we depend. Words taken from the Book of Common Prayer Order of Compline allow us to identify how, at the end of the day, a time of rest also offers a time of renewal.

We pray that "...we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this fleeting world, may repose upon thy eternal changelessness..." (BCP pg. 727)

As you pause to reflect on the many changes, transitions, and yes, the many blessings you have experienced in life, it is my hope that you will enjoy a truly wonderful happy Thanksgiving celebration.

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