



BEYOND SAINTS & SUPERHEROES

Accessibility is much more than adding ramps and accessible bathrooms.

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SOAKED TO THE SKIN AND LIVING IN HOPE

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

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CELEBRATION OF LOVE, ACCEPTANCE & COMMUNITY

Proud Anglicans at London Pride Festival, July 18-20.

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HURON CHURCH NEWS

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF HURON • Huron Church News is a section of the Anglican Journal • SEPTEMBER 2025

Canadian Anglicans adopt Pathways for Change

Diocese of Huron hosted General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada in London, Ontario from June 23 to June 29, 2025



The installation of the 15th Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Ontario, June 29, 2025. The Primatial election drama on June 26 was resolved with a jubilant celebration at the Service of Installation of the new Primate, Shane Parker, on the last day of Synod.
Photo: Brian Bukowski/General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada

FROM UNEXPECTED elements of drama to the celebration of unity and inclusion – more than 200 representatives of the Anglican churches in Canada witnessed it all gathered under the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, Ontario from June 23 to 29, for the 44th session of General Synod.

The drama: Primatial election on June 26. It ended with the majority of both lay and clergy votes for Right Rev. Dr. Shane Parker, Bishop of Ottawa, whose name was not even on the ballot when the process started! Parker won on the fifth ballot after being added to the list on the third ballot by the Order of Bishops in response to a motion from the Order of Laity asking for more candidates – the move allowed by the General Synod rules.

The celebration: Opening worship on June 23, and Installation Service on the final day of Synod. The jubilant atmosphere of the opening service set the tone for the rest of the Synod. It helped the delegates to engage in some diffi-

cult deliberations that took place from June 24 to June 28 at London's RBC Centre.

General Synod voted to pursue THE SIX PATHWAYS FOR CHANGE – a document recommended by the Primatial Commission – and to allocate up to \$2 million of unrestricted funds to do that work.

The PATHWAYS implementation will be in the hands of the Council of the General Synod – the executive body of the Synod. On June 27, the delegates elected new members of the Council for the 2025-2028 triennium, among them Huron's own Ven. Tanya Phibbs as the Prolocutor.

The delegates heard farewell messages from Archbishop Linda Nicholls, the 14th Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, and from Archbishop Anne Germond who became Acting Primate after Nicholls' retirement.

General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada will gather in St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador in 2028.

► GENERAL SYNOD – HURON PERSPECTIVES: PAGES 3-5

Grace Church, Brantford marks 195 years of ministry

Brantford's "Mother Church", established in 1827, exhibits extraordinary signs of vitality: the arrival of new parishioners from Nigeria, re-establishment of a small Sunday school, and consistent outreach activities that serve hundreds of local residents each week.

By Rev. Bob Schroeder

HEAR YE, HEAR YE! So began the 195th parish anniversary service June 1, 2025, marking 195 years of ministry of Grace Church, Brantford.

With a booming voice and in period costume, David McKee, Brantford Town Crier, recounted a brief history of Brantford's Mother Church from its humble beginnings in 1827 as a wood frame building to the magnificent gothic revival structure we know today constructed in 1856. The architect was the renowned John Turner.

As parishioners and guests made their way into the church, they were treated to the carillon bells emanating

from the memorial bell tower dedicated in 1918 as a gift from the Leonard family. William Fletcher, who has been a bell ringer since his teens, still climbs the 110 steps for special occasions at Grace.

Ven. Rosalyn Kantlaht'ant Elm, Archdeacon for Reconciliation and Indigenous Ministry, read the first lesson.

Right Rev. Todd Townsend, Bishop of Huron, was the preacher and celebrant. In his homily, Bishop Todd unpacked the word "grace" and how God's grace continues to be extended through the sharing of the Good News of Jesus Christ at this time and in this place.

Bishop Todd was ably assisted by the present rector, Rev. Dr. Canon Stephen Hendry.

The choir, under the direction of Alison Clark, led the hymns and liturgy as well as an anthem for the occasion. Following the liturgy, a reception was held in the parish hall. Church wardens Hilary Bowring, Dorothy DeVille, Nick Greer, and Chris Levett invited Bishop Todd to do the honours by cutting the first slice of an anniversary cake. As the saying goes, "a good time was had by all".

All told, it was a real celebration! Signs of new growth at Grace abound. The arrival of parishioners from Nigeria has been a particular blessing. A small Sunday School has been re-established. Outreach ministries such as the weekly Food Cupboard and the Wednesday Daily Bread

program continue to serve hundreds of Brantford residents each week. Happily, several Lay Readers offer regular leadership and are involved in EFM studies.

A special THANK YOU to the Anniversary Committee who planned the festivities: Renée Anderson (chair), Nancy Beard, Cynthia Chamberlin, Chris Levett, Joy Logan, Fr. Stephen Hendry, Fr. Bob Schroeder, and the late Pam Murray. Sadly, Pam died unexpectedly the week after the anniversary. The spacious and renovated parish hall was constructed under the auspices of her grandparents, the Bartles.

Rev. Bob Schroeder is Honorary Assistant at Grace Church, Brantford.



HEAR YE, HEAR YE! David McKee, Brantford Town Crier, recounts a brief history of Grace Church.



Renouncing the desire to make everything controllable

I PRAY that these summer months have brought you some time of relaxation, rest, and restoration. For some people, this is what the summer brings. Yet for others, these months bring the hardest work—or the hardest time.

Looking around the globe we see some places where there is no relaxation, nor rest, nor restoration. The suffering in Gaza is a particularly painful humanitarian crisis. The inhumane killing of civilians, including so many children, even while they seek basic necessities of life, is a barbaric extension of war far beyond any need for self-defence. We pray with the Anglicans in that area, and around the world, for an end to this lawless cruelty.

Other ongoing atrocities also occupy our minds and engage us in prayer and active



**BISHOP
TODD
TOWNSHEND**

responses. Russian attacks on Ukraine continue in regular neighbourhoods and even recently targeted maternity hospitals. Warlords in places like Sudan and Haiti terrorize and murder the general populations, and the ICE squads in the USA round up people and hold them in what appear to be inhumane conditions without a commitment to the rule of law.

Add in natural disasters, like the forest fires and other obvious effects of global warming, and the world feels “out of control” in some very bad ways.

It is essential that Canada and its partners work tire-

lessly to restore peace and a just order. Anglicans can support many organizations, including our direct partners, to support these efforts. And at home, we can attend to those who are most negatively affected by all this trauma and fear.

Human life is lived somewhere between those things we can control and those things we cannot control. The desire to conquer, master, and “get ahead” of someone or something is very strong. For those who seek to make the world controllable (to their own benefit), the “end” justifies even the most horrible “means”. Extreme desire for controllability only leads to acts of impotent aggression and violence, bringing death and destruction while solving nothing.

So, we resist this—in ourselves and in others—with all of our might.

To encounter the world rightly, and to encounter one another rightly, requires us to open ourselves to the uncontrollable encounter with God. This is not passive—it is quite an active way of living and being. The outcomes are not known ahead of time. Faith tells us that God will lead the way and guide us in this. And the first step in this direction is to renounce the desire to make everything and everyone controllable. Then we can recognize that the basic human desire is for healthy, mutual human relationship and a healthy, mutual relationship with all of Creation.

Taking this step has been part of my own prayer work this summer. We continue pray for and stand in solidarity with those for whom these months bring the hardest work—or the hardest time. May we all know the peace of Christ.

+ Todd

Prayer and more prayer: Practice is the key

By Libi Clifford

GOLF AND PRAYER have a lot in common. In both, everyone is only too happy to tell you how you can become more skilled and better set yourself up for success.

We all know that the best way of getting better at anything is to practice it and that once a week practice isn’t enough. Once a week won’t do anything for your golf or your prayer life. You won’t get noticeably better at either without frequent practice.

Playing golf and praying both offer many options for practice. You could play golf more often, take lessons or go to a driving range and use the clubs that give you the poorest results. Prayer practice might be very similar. You could pray more often, read and try out different prayer practices or practice the parts of prayer which you don’t feel you do well. Maybe you haven’t tried to concentrate often enough to feel comfortable with meditation or you need practice organizing your thoughts.

Golf offers you many club options. Pro golfers can have up to 14 clubs in their golf

bag. Each one is for a specific distance and circumstance. The rest of use fewer – just the clubs that give us the best results. How many prayer practices can you name? Not surprisingly, I stopped counting at 14. The bigger question is how many are you comfortable using? Maybe you like following the rules of a prayer style. Maybe rules get in the way of your prayer. In the end, the best prayer style for you is the one that gives you the best conversation with God.

Conversation is how I look at prayer. I want to know God better and to me the best way of getting to know someone is to talk with them. Talking is often how I organize my thoughts about my faith, beliefs and the world around me. I do that through prayer. God seems to listen patiently and then sometimes days later offers the question, “Are you sure, maybe this is truer?”. If I listen, I learn more about God and what he thinks is important for me and that inspires me to pray more often. Like golf, practice in prayer is the key.

Libi Clifford is an AFP Executive.

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2. WHY pray the divine office: its theology and spirituality

3. HOW to pray the divine office: best practices

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Above:
Service of Installation, June 29, 2025: Archbishop Shane Parker, the 15th Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada; National Indigenous Archbishop Christopher Harper gifts the new Primate with the eagle's feather; The Installation Service at St. Paul's included music and liturgy from Indigenous, European and African tradition.



Left:
Bishop Michael B. Curry (former Primate of the Episcopal Church) preaching at the opening worship; The Primatial election begins; Delegates attend the Celebration of Holy Communion; The Most Rev. Marinez Bassotto, Bishop of Amazonia and Primate of Brazil presents to the youth members of General Synod.

(Primatial election photo: Brian Bukowski/General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada
All other photos: Charlotte Poolton/General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada)



GENERAL SYNOD 2025

“Ladybird Hospitality”: Hosting General Synod 2025

By Rev. Canon Grayhame Bowcott

WHAT DOES IT TAKE to host over 350 delegates, dignitaries, vendors, observers, and guests for a week-long triennial gathering of Canadian Anglicans (and ecumenical partners) – with participants arriving from coast to coast to coast?

The answer: an army of volunteers, three years' worth of planning, and a hearty helping of God's Spirit of hospitality!

From June 22 to 30, the Diocese of Huron hosted the 44th Session of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada at four venues: St. Paul's Cathedral, the Convention Centre (RBC Place), the DoubleTree and Delta Armouries hotels in our see city of London.

Hosting a General Synod is not for the faint of heart, as it entails shepherding guests from airports and train stations (some who had

never been to Ontario before), hosting an opening reception and a closing banquet, compiling hundreds of delegate bags with goodies from groups and sponsors, overseeing the security and orderliness of times of delegate voting, chauffeuring VIPs and those with accessibility needs, and, most importantly, being a constant presence of information and support to answer all the questions and the requests of our guests as they arise.

The Diocese of Huron is proud to say that we did all this, (and more!), with the help of over 80 volunteers and more than two years' worth of logistical preparation with the General Synod 2025 Planning Group.

At the helm of this volunteer army were two amazing co-chairs, Libbi Clifford and The Rev. Margaret Walker, who, along with myself, divided up the various duties of responsibility and hospitality to ensure

that every plan had a back-up, and that every scenario of our daily gatherings had support and care. Routines included delegate registration (including working with our tech team to provide electronic voting devices), shepherding guests between the four venues (sometimes providing transportation), helping to set up and host the first-ever reception in our newly renovated St. Paul's Cathedral nave (with our amazing Crave Catering team and cathedral volunteers), staffing the Primatial election, planning and hosting the closing banquet, and making sure that everyone found their way back home (via train, plane and automobile). Suffice to say, there were few boring moments to be had more than a couple particularly exciting ones!

Early on in our gathering, our colourful volunteers were nicknamed “the ladybirds” by Archbishop Anne Germond,

a reference to the bright red vests that we wore to be easily distinguishable to our guests. The reputation of our diocese as being “warm-hearted and generous” was embodied through the attention to detail and the care offered up by each and every volunteer.

General Synod's Acting General Secretary commented that no one could remember a “more organized or considerate” Local Arrangements team, and that the pride of our Diocese was apparent in our diverse and committed services to our guests who joined us from every part of our country.

I'm sure that, in other articles in this newsletter and in the Anglican Journal, that the historic decisions made during our gathering, including electing Archbishop Shane Parker (formerly the Bishop of Ottawa) as our new Primate, establishing a National Youth Council, and resolutions that

will review and revise our National Church governance structures, will be shared with you in the reporting of the hard work and the fruits of the spirit that resulted from our General Synod.

For our part, the Diocese of Huron is proud to say that we were able to create a space for this important ministry to be possible. It was truly a privilege for us to host our “beloved Church” at its best. To all the faithful volunteers who helped to make it happen, may we heartily say: THANK YOU!

The Rev'd 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.



Smiles and laughter at the General Synod opening worship.
Photo: Charlotte Poolton/General Synod of Canada

“ On behalf of the many members of General Synod who asked me to pass on their thanks to Huron, I give thanks to God for all of those who did us proud in their joyous service of hospitality. To the volunteers who served at RBC Place, the people who assisted folks at the airports and hotels, all who gave people rides, the folks at St. Paul's Cathedral, and to every person who prayed for us while we met – thank you! It was a very good meeting and the outcomes are filled with the sense the Holy Spirit of God led us and we followed. Thank you especially to Libby, Margaret, and Gray who led the way as co-chairs of the Local Arrangements Committee.

“I thank my God always in remembrance of you.”
Philippians 1:3

+Todd

GENERAL SYNOD 2025



Newly elected members of the Council of the General Synod (CoGS). CoGS carries out strategic planning, coordinates the work of all committees and advises the Primate on matters that concern the welfare of the church.

The CoGS membership includes the Primate, the Prolocutor, the Deputy Prolocutor, the Chancellor, bishops, clergy and lay members of General Synod elected by GS, one youth member of GS from each ecclesiastical province, one member each nominated by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Episcopal Church, and two members nominated by the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples. The General Secretary of the General Synod is an ex officio member of CoGS.

The Prolocutor is the most senior member of General Synod save for the Primate, responsible for helping in the administration of General Synod meetings and business and chairing meetings in case the Primate is unavailable.

(Photo: Charlotte Poolton/General Synod of Canada)

Pathways and crossroads: In conversation with Archdeacon Tanya Phibbs

It is general consensus that by approving PATHWAYS document, General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada overwhelmingly voted for change. The implementation of the Pathways is now up to the Council of General Synod (CoGS) as its executive body.

Ven. Tanya Phibbs, a long-serving Archdeacon of Huron and, in the last few years, diocesan Secretary-Treasurer, is now CoGS' Prolocutor. In the previous triennium she served as the Deputy Prolocutor. This puts her in a unique position to comment on potential challenges in the implementation of the document. We start our conversation on a personal note.

Congratulations on your election! What does it mean to you personally?

I'm very grateful for the trust that the Synod placed in me by electing me to this role. It's an opportunity to be involved in the Anglican Church across Canada and to do so at a transformational time in the life of the church – to get to know Anglicans from across the country and to learn from them. It's exciting and a bit daunting.

Your election to this position comes with the adoption of the Pathways – a document that calls for deep changes in the structure and operations of the Church, if not its entire culture. No pressure there?

There is definitely some pressure on the officers of General Synod to move the work of the Pathways forward. General Synod adopted the Pathways with a vote of over 90%. That is a very clear mandate to get moving, to do something, to move into what Archbishop Anne called 'a time of holy and sacred risk taking.' No one wants this to

be another report that sits on a shelf and gathers dust. As Sister Elizabeth Anne said, "If you say YES to this [report] and then do nothing, [the church] will die. You must say YES and do the work." Thankfully there is a great deal of commitment from very gifted people who are willing to step up and say, 'Yes, we will do this work.'



What do you see as major challenges in the implementation of the Pathways and how to overcome them?

One challenge in many large organizations, and the Church is no exception, is that we spend a lot of time and energy planning, or even planning to plan. So much so that we are tired by the time we get to the actual implementation. Good planning is important but it needs to lead to things being done. Thankfully, the leadership of the Transformation Task Force understands these dynamics and will not get bogged down in the early stages at the cost of moving to implementation.

Changing a beloved institution is always challenging. Discerning what God is calling the Anglican Church of Canada to become over the next years will continue to

bring a variety of voices to the table.

The Primate's Commission did an outstanding job of consulting with Anglicans across the country. There are clearly areas where there is much common ground and others that may bring more conflict as General Synod begins to make decisions about programs, policies, and people.

We look to structures like the Church for stability and resist change within them. Paradoxically, the only way to bring stability to our Church in this time will be to transform it.

By the end of this process, our national Church House will probably not look like it does now, the programs of General Synod will probably not look like what they do now, the structures of General Synod will probably not look like what they do now. That can be hard for people. It's especially true in time where there is change and unease in the rest of society. We look to structures like the Church for stability and resist change within them. Paradoxically, the only way to bring stability to our church in this time will be to transform it.

The Church throughout Canada is full of passionate, faithful, committed, and gifted people. We are going to need those gifts in order to bring about true and lasting change. The challenge can be that often people don't think about

volunteering at the national level. Often this is because volunteering in their local church and diocese keep them more than busy enough. But we are going to continue to need to discern who we can tap on the shoulder and ask to help lead this change. The strong commitment from General Synod to this work will help in this recruitment. People want to make a difference and will hopefully see being part of this transformation as one way to do that.

The election of the new Primate was quite dramatic and unusual – we have a Primate who was not initially on the ballot! One could wonder if what happened during this process questions "unity in diversity" as the underlying premise for the changes that the Anglican family in Canada wants to implement?

It was unusual and dramatic! But there was also a profound sense throughout the day of this being a communal discernment – of the delegates together seeking God's choice for our Primate. The election was bathed in prayer and in music – we sang a lot of hymns!

In many ways, we need a Primate for this triennium who is a holy disruptor, who can help the church make changes we need to make. I think it's interesting that even Archbishop Shane's election could be seen as a holy disruption – his nomination to the ballot disrupting what might have been originally expected to happen. My sense of Archbishop Shane is that he is committed to diversity in the church as a source of unity and of strength and will work toward that goal.

How do you see the Diocese of Huron and its future in this big picture?

Huron is one of the larger dioceses in Canada. It is sometimes hard to remember this as we watch our numbers declining and parishes closing, but it is true. We have gifted people who can make a difference at all levels of the church, including the national level.

Questions raised by the Pathways may have direct implications for Huron such as the question of communication and the future of the Anglican Journal. If there is no print Anglican Journal, the cost of distributing a print Huron Church News may be prohibitive for the diocese. What other ways can we communicate with Anglicans in Huron? We already have some options – a website and some social media – what else should we be doing?

There may be parts of the administration of General Synod that could be shared with some dioceses – sharing staff members in certain areas for example. Archdeacon Rosalyn Elm is half-time in the Diocese of Huron as the Archdeacon for Reconciliation and Indigenous Ministry and rector of the Parish of Six Nations while also serving half-time as the Director of Indigenous Ministries for our national Church. One of the benefits of this sharing is that it allows each of her roles to inform the other roles, as well as working to prevent the siloing that can happen between the various levels of the church.

Strong dioceses are vital for the future of our national church just as strong parishes are vital for the future of our dioceses. Continuing in our own transformation as we continue *Turning to Grace* will help Huron to be a strong partner in the transformation of our national church.

D. M.

Celebration of love, acceptance and community

Proud Anglicans at London Pride Festival , July 18-20



The interior of St. Paul's Cathedral on July 20: Ready for the Rainbow Eucharist.
"ON OUR WAY!": Proud Anglicans in downtown London.
Golden, Robin, Kevin & Jordan after the Rainbow Eucharist.
Archbishop Linda proclaiming the Gospel.

A wonderful celebration of love, acceptance, and community was experienced at the London Pride Festival July 18-20. Proud Anglicans participation once again this year, was truly a testament to our commitment to welcoming all of God's children.

We had a presence both marching in the parade and for the first time in many years, with a booth in the community tent in Victoria Park. It was heartwarming to see so many familiar faces, sharing smiles and spreading our message of an inclusive and welcoming faith with the broader community. Through the many interactions in the community tent, we were reminded of the importance of being visible al-

lies and advocates. Too many people still feel ostracized and othered by the broader church because of their gender identity or sexuality.

A highlight of the weekend was a beautiful Rainbow Eucharist service at St. Paul's Cathedral. We were deeply moved by the powerful testimonies shared by Robin and Golden, who courageously opened their hearts to share their lived experience as queer people of faith. Their stories reminded us all of the importance of authentic community, the power of grace and the need to continue listening to marginalized communities and individuals.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Dean Kevin and the entire team at St. Paul's Cathe-

dral, for their partnership. We also offer our thanks to every volunteer who contributed their time, energy, and enthusiasm to make these events so meaningful. From parade marchers to booth volunteers to participants in the Eucharist, none of this could happen without you!

As we look ahead, we're already excited about the possibilities for the coming year! Follow Proud Anglicans on Facebook to stay up to date on future events and continued opportunities to celebrate diversity, build bridges, and live out our call to radical hospitality in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rev. Jordan Murrey

Jane's Walk, Colchester: A surprise visit from the past



A photo with the church founder: Rev. Lisa Poultney with "Rev. Richard Pollard"

Rev. Lisa Poultney as well as the congregation of Christ Church Colchester were pleasantly surprised at the appearance of Rev. Richard Pollard in their church on Sunday, April 27.

Founder of St. John's Sandwich as well as Christ Churches in Amherstburg, Colchester and Chatham in the early 1800's, Pollard would minister to all four congregations, a 240-mile trek on horseback or on foot.

Colchester was part of the annual Jane's Walk, celebrating a community of faith for over 220 years.

Randy Cyr

Busy summer at St. George's of Forest Hill



St. George's of Forest Hill, Kitchener hosted its second Annual Neighbourhood Block Party on June 21. Face painting, bouncy castle, dunk tank and lawn games were a hit. Free ice cream & hotdogs, Fire Department guests, Bandology and the Greg Wilson band rounded out the entertainment.

St. George's of Forest Hill Anglican Church, Kitchener hosted a Spring Children's Community Closet on Saturday, May 3. The Outreach Committee and parish volunteers organized the huge donation of free clothing, toys, books, playpens and strollers to support those in need.

Once a month the men in the parish meet for breakfast and fellowship. Many thanks to Mike Stredwick for organizing throughout the year.

Mary Ann Millar

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Services at the Mohawk Chapel for 2025

Sunday, October 5 (Thanksgiving Service) at 2 pm

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H. M. Royal Chapel of the Mohawks
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PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

Appointments

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Canon Tom Patterson as Regional Dean of Huron-Perth, effective 29 June 2025.

Tom is the deacon with responsibility for outreach ministry at St James', Stratford.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Clare Stewart as the Rector of Holy Trinity, St George, effective 15 August 2025.

Clare has recently returned to the Diocese of Huron from the Diocese of Edmonton.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Paul Poolton as Regional Dean of Waterloo, effective 1 September 2025. Paul is the Rector of Trinity, Cambridge.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Venerable Janet Griffith-Clarke as the Administrator of St. Thomas, St. Thomas, effective 16 June 2025.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Matthew Kiewetter as the Archdeacon of Eastern Huron (Deaneries of Brant-Norfolk, Delaware, and Oxford) and the Rector (part-time) of St. James', Paris, effective 1 September 2025.

Bishop Townshend appointed Ms Janet Ternes as Curate to the Rector of St. James', Paris, effective 1 September 2025. Janet will be ordained to the Diaconate on 11 June 2025.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Patty Dobbs Luxton as the Rector of St John the Evangelist, Strathroy, effective 16 June 2025.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Canon Carrie Irwin as the Archdeacon of Southern Huron (Deaneries of Essex and Kent) and the Rector (part-time) of St. John's, Windsor (Sandwich), effective 1 September 2025.

Bishop Townshend appointed Mrs. Allison Agius as Lay Pastor, St. John's, Windsor (Sandwich), effective 1 June 2025. Upon ordination, she will be Deacon Assistant to the Archdeacon, Episcopal Office, until 1 September, at which time she will be relicensed as Curate to the Rector of St. John's, Windsor (Sandwich).

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Bill Strang as the Interim Priest-in-charge of Holy Trinity-St. Paul's, Chatham, effective 1 June 2025.

Congratulations

Archdeacon Tanya Phibbs was elected Prolocutor of General Synod for the 2025-2028 triennium. Congratulations and every blessing from Bishop Todd on behalf of the entire Diocese.

Ordinations

Bishop Townshend called the following to the Diaconate at a service of Ordination held on the Feast of Saint Barnabas the Apostle, 11 June 2025, at St. James Westminster, London

- Mrs. Allison Agius
- Ms. Tianna Gocan
- Ms. Maya-Mel  Okazaki
- Mr. Gerard Phillips
- Ms. Janet Ternes

Announcement

Bishop Townshend announced that the Venerable Kristen Aikman will step down from the position of Archdeacon of Life-Long Learning and Vocational Development Learning, effective 31 August 2025. The position will be discontinued and the work transferred to the territorial archdeacons. We are grateful to Kristen for her leadership in the role since its inception in May 2022. As of 1 September 2025, she will be styled the Reverend Canon Kristen Aikman.

Conclusion of Ministry

The Rev'd Steven Maki has concluded his ministry at Holy Trinity-St. Paul's, Chatham. Steven remains a priest in good standing.

Inductions

On behalf of Bishop Townshend, the Venerable Amanda Longmoore inducted the Reverend Jordan Murray as the Rector of Holy Trinity-St. Stephen's Memorial, London, on Sunday, 25 May at 4:00 p.m.

The preacher was the Reverend Canon June Hough.

On behalf of Bishop Townshend, the Venerable Dr. Stephen McClatchie inducted the Venerable Amanda Longmoore as the Incumbent and the Reverend Rob Henderson as the Rector of St. Aidan's, London, on Sunday, 1 June at 7:00 p.m.

The preacher was the Reverend Michael DeKay.

On behalf of Bishop Townshend, the Venerable Rob Lemon inducted the Reverend Rambie Bernardino as the Rector of St. James, Cambridge, on

Sunday, 15 June at 4:00 p.m.

The preacher was the Reverend Marty Levesque.

On behalf of Bishop Townshend, the Venerable Amanda Longmoore inducted the Reverend Andra O'Neill as the Rector of St. George's, Middlesex Centre, on Sunday, 8 June at 4:00 p.m.

The preacher was the Reverend Patricia Allison.

Appointments to New Parish

Bishop Townshend announced that the Diocesan Council approved the requests of the Vestries of St. Bartholomew's, Sarnia, and All Saints' Church, Sarnia, to reorganise to form a single parish at the All Saints' site, effective 8 May 2025, with a new name to be chosen for the reorganised parish by the first Sunday of Advent 2025. He appointed the Reverend Karen Nelles as the Administrator and the Priest-in-Charge of the new parish; she will serve as Administrator until a new Vestry is established according to the terms of Canon 18. Karen continues as Administrator with priestly responsibilities for Canon Davis Memorial Church, Sarnia.

Bishop Townshend announced the appointment of the Reverend Canon Stephen Harnadek as the Associate Priest of the new parish, effective 8 May 2025.

Retirement

Bishop Bishop Townshend accepted the request of the Reverend JoAnn Todd to retire as the Rector of the Regional Ministry of Hope (Trinity, Blyth; St. Paul's-Trinity, Wingham; Holy Spirit, Seaforth), effective 31 October 2025.

JoAnn was ordained a deacon in May of 2010 and priested on 30 November of that year. She also served the parishes of St. James', Hanover; Trinity, Durham; and St. John's, Brussels. JoAnn has been a member of Diocesan Council, the Human Resources Committee, and served as a Pension Trustee, a Congregational Coach, and as the Regional Dean of both the Saugeens and Huron-Perth. In 2012, JoAnn was the Primate's delegate representing the national church at the Council for the Status of Women, which that year focussed on the empowerment of rural women.

We give thanks for JoAnn's ministry and wish her well in her retirement.

Rest in Peace

Ms. The Reverend Canon Marilyn ("Lynne") Calhoun, died on 5 July 2025.

Lynne was ordained a deacon on 14 May 1992 and priested on 30 November 1992. She spent her entire active ministry at St. George's, New Hamburg, with Christ Church, Ayr, and St. James', Wilmot, from which position she retired in June 2001. Lynne was made a canon of the Cathedral in 1999 and also served for a time as the interim priest of Holy Trinity, St. George. The funeral service took place at Holy Trinity, St. George, on 10 July. Please remember Neil, Dale, and the rest of Lynne's family and friends in your prayers.

The Reverend Canon James ("Jim") Stevenson, died on Thursday, 19 June 2025.

Canon Jim was ordained a deacon by Bishop George Luxton on 19 May 1966 and priested on 25 May 1967. He served the parishes of All Saints, Windsor, St. George's, New Hamburg, St. James, Cambridge (Hespeler), Epiphany, Kingsville, and Holy Trinity, Chatham. On 31 July 2003, he retired from the position of Rector, St. George's, Goderich, with Christ Church, Port Albert. Jim was made a canon of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul on 30 May 1999. Please remember Kathleen, Louise, Bill, and the rest of Jim's family and friends in your prayers.

The Reverend James (Jim) Miller, died on 17 May 2025.

Jim was ordained a deacon on 11 January 1987 and priested on 17 December 1987. He served at Trinity Church, Sarnia, and at St. John's, Walpole Island, from which position he retired in 1996. After retirement, Jim provided interim and supply ministry in Dover Township, Chatham, and Sarnia. A memorial service was held at St. John's, Walpole Island, on 31 May 2025. Please remember Diane, David, James, and the rest of Jim's family and friends in your prayers.

Robert ("Bob") Calhoun, died on 16 May 2025.

Bob was the spouse of the Reverend Canon Lynne Calhoun. The funeral service was held at Holy Trinity, St. George,

on Wednesday, 21 May 2025, with visitation at the Wm. Kipp Funeral Home (184 Grand River St. N. Paris). Please remember Lynne, Sean, Dale, Kent, Neil, and the rest of Bob's family and friends in your prayers. The full obituary may be found below.

Maureen Eley, died on 14 May 2025.

Maureen was the mother-in-law of the Reverend Chris Brouillard-Coyle, Rector of St. Paul's, Essex. A graveside service was held at Saint Joseph Catholic Cemetery on 21 May. Please remember Chris, Chris, Michael, and the rest of Maureen's family and friends in your prayers.

Please keep in your prayers the family and friends of the Reverend Sylvia Brightwell, who died on Friday, 11 July 2025.

Sylvia began her ministry as Assistant Curate and then Associate Rector of St. John the Evangelist, London. She served as Honorary Assistant at Christ Church, London, until its closure in 2014, after which she co-led a House Church and, later, became Honorary Assistant at St. Anne's, Byron. The funeral service was held at St. Paul's Cathedral on 17 July. Please remember Pam and the rest of Sylvia's family and friends in your prayers.

Please keep in your prayers the family and friends of the Venerable Dr. Ronald Matthewman, who died on 9 July 2025.

Archdeacon Ron was ordained a deacon for Huron by the Bishop of London (England) on 21 December 1953 and priested on the same date the following year by Bishop George Luxton. He served at St. John's, Kitchener, St. Mark's, Brantford & Holy Trinity, St. George, and Trinity, Aylmer, before being appointed Rector of the Church of the Ascension, Windsor, from which position he retired on 31 December 1993. Named a Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral in 1970, in 1988 he was appointed Archdeacon of Essex. The funeral service was held at the Church of the Ascension, Windsor, on 15 July 2025. Please remember Gillian, Timothy, Anne, and the rest of Archdeacon Ron's family and friends in your prayers.

ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN

In Memory

London Deanery	Catherine Coker	Barbara Kendall
St. Anne's, Byron	Norma Mae Cross	Marilyn Rawson
	Shirley Geigen-Miller	Kathleen Welch
	Mary Louise Hawley	

Beyond saints and superheroes: Rethinking accessibility

By Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle

A MOM of two children with disabilities describes their family's experience of Church as like being in a dinghy that is towed behind a cruise ship. They may have the same goal but can't get there in first class. They feel like outsiders since their children have been born despite a lifetime of engagement with church communities.

Another mother was excited to introduce her child to the congregation after months in the neonatal intensive care unit. Unfortunately, the child may have been a bit too excited over the music that day and made a bit too much noise for some. They were told that the next time they came they were to sit at the back so as not to be a distraction to others. Some parents were told that their child's disability was a consequence of their own poor choices. Is it any wonder that they chose not to return out of fear of judgment?

Some families choose not to bring their children to church or simply do not attend at all because hidden disabilities might lead to individuals blaming poor parenting or otherwise see their children as poorly behaved if they become overstimulated. When people don't understand hidden disabilities, ones that are not visibly obvious, it can be particularly challenging to feel welcomed and accepted.



So often when we think about accessibility we focus on physical issues, adding ramps and accessible bathrooms. Accessibility can be so much more dependent on the needs of those in the community.

Other families do not participate in church because individuals are not prepared to make accommodations. Insisting that foods that contain allergens are part of the tradition, refusing to include foods that better accommodate those with sensory needs, or ignoring requests to change lighting or reduce noise for the wellbeing of those who are neurodivergent sends a message that those with special needs are not truly welcome.

These experiences are all part of the stories shared through research done by

Laura MacGregor and Allen G. Jorgenson entitled "Beyond Saints and Superheroes: Supporting Parents Raising Children with Disabilities." What does it look like for congregations to honestly confront the realities of these stories and what it says about Church? This was goal of a recent sermon series at St. Paul's, Essex.

Each Sunday followed a similar pattern. It began with a short conversation about artwork inspired by the stories of the research and created by disability activist and artist Wendy Newbery.

The sermon then shared the related stories from the research creating space for further reaction and conversation. Lastly, connections were made with the scripture highlighting what we can learn from the resources of faith about how to walk with those who are different.

The result created space for meaningful conversations and opportunities to reflect on how we are accommodating and can better accommodate diverse needs. One of the consequences of this particular series was the introduction of fidget toys which are designed to help engage hands and free minds to focus on what is happening. Interestingly, adults and children alike have made use of these toys at different times reminding us that accessibility can benefit everyone.

In the diocesan plan, Turning to Grace, congregations are encouraged to "reexamine learning about diversity that does not resonate with what we know about God. (And) extend these insights into conversations to encourage honesty about issues of diversity."

So often when we think about accessibility we focus on physical issues, adding ramps and accessible bathrooms. Accessibility can be so much more dependent on the needs of those in the community. For too many families in this research, there was a lack of attention to these needs. There were, however, bright lights – congregations who saw the children with disabili-

ties as valued members of the Body of Christ and found ways to ensure that they could share their gifts as they chose. For one mother, this led to her describing the church as being like bread – warm, welcoming, and nourishing for her and her family.

What does it look like for all of us to be honest about the ways we interact with diverse individuals? What story might parents with disabled children tell about our congregations? What are we willing to do to ensure that more of our congregations are like warm bread? May we continually turn to grace and open ourselves to do what is needed to ensure diverse individuals feel like they are valued members of the Body of Christ.

Those curious about the content of the sermon series can find the images and text on the St. Paul's website at: <https://stpaulsessex.ca/podcasts/media/series/encountering-the-resurrected-christ>

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

Resource quoted: Laura MacGregor et al., *Beyond Saints and Superheroes : Supporting Parents Raising Children with Disabilities: A Practical Guide for Faith Communities*, in *Beyond Saints and Superheroes : Supporting Parents Raising Children with Disabilities: A Practical Guide for Faith Communities* (Mad and Crip Theology Press, 2023).

Illustration: Wendy Newbery. Printed with the artist's permission.

Authentic digital community in an AI-driven world

AS CHRISTIANS, we're navigating a fast-changing digital landscape. AI is everywhere, shaping what we see online and how we communicate. The big question for the church: How do we utilize AI to foster genuine community, not just broadcast into the noise?

AI can be a powerful ally. Think of it as your co-pilot, not the preacher or teacher. AI can help you brainstorm sermon ideas, draft social media captions, or even out-line blog posts. It's a starting point to get your own unique voice flowing.

But beware, over-reliance on AI carries risks. AI-generated content can feel generic.



MEDIA BYTES
REV. MARTY LEVESQUE

We risk losing the unique, human connection that defines true ministry. Algorithms favour quick engagement, not deep relationships. So we need to remember that likes aren't discipleship. And please be mindful of AI biases. Much of AI has been trained and favours white voices.

So, how do we stay smart and authentic in an AI-driven world? Prioritize real stories, real faces, and real interactions over purely

AI-generated content. Your people are your best content. Respond to comments and foster genuine conversations. And make your digital spaces feel like a true gathering. Always use online interactions to point to offline connections: a coffee, a service, or a small group. Digital is a bridge, not the destination.

AI is a tool. Its power is in our hands. As Christians, let's use it to amplify our human touch, to build genuine relationships, and to share the timeless message of the Gospel.

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

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Soaked to the skin and living in hope

Leonard Cohen wrote, "I don't consider myself a pessimist. I think of a pessimist as someone who is waiting for it to rain. And I feel soaked to the skin."

There is no shortage of negativity, bad news, fear, and foreboding in our day-to-day lives. If we were to give in to the forces about us, we would surely be always expecting it to rain. Given the current state of the world, that pessimism might be understandable.

The truth be told, many of us are pessimists. Days of rain and wind serve to remind us of how much rain has fallen, not of the sunshine that has warmed us in the midst of our summer days. We forget that sometimes we need to be soaked to the skin to fully appreciate the nature of being warm and dry.

Another great line of Leonard Cohen is found in the song *The Anthem* – "Ring the bell that still can ring. Forget your perfect offering. There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in."

Somewhere across the windswept, rain-soaked sky that I look into is a ray of light. It may be dim, but it serves as a reminder to me that the sun will shine, that the sun has not vanished, that the live-giving power of the Son is still there despite the fact that it obscured at the moment with a grey darkness.

Is it Optimism that we need to embrace then?

In *Bread for the Journey* Henri Nouwen writes about living with hope:



It's JUST KEVIN

V. REV. KEVIN GEORGE

"Optimism and hope are radically different attitudes. Optimism is the expectation that things—the weather, human relationship, the economy, the political situation, and so on—will get better. Hope is trust that God will fulfil God's promises to us in a way that leads us to true freedom. The optimist speaks about concrete changes in the future. The person of hope lives in the moment with the knowledge and trust that all of life is in good hands. All the great spiritual leaders in history were people of hope. Abraham, Moses, Ruth, Mary, Jesus, Rumi, Gandhi, and Dorothy Day all lived with a promise in their hearts that guided them toward the future without the need to know exactly what it would look like. Let's live with hope."

As followers in the Way of Jesus, we are invited to love as hopefuls. We are invited into a relationship that is held up

with trust. We are reminded in word and sacrament that we are a people who have received Hope in the form of Jesus of Nazareth and yet we live in expectation, and waiting, and hope for the time when God will fulfill the promises of the covenant.

Consider these verses from Psalm 80 (8-19):

You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it.

You cleared the ground for it; it took deep root and filled the land.

The mountains were covered with its shade, the mighty cedars with its branches; it sent out its branches to the sea, and its shoots to the River.

Why then have you broken down its walls, so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?

The boar from the forest ravages it, and all that move in the field feed on it.

Turn again, O God of hosts; look down from heaven, and see; have regard for this vine, the stock that your right hand planted.

They have burned it with fire, they have cut it down; may they perish at the rebuke of your countenance.

But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself.

Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

This psalm is a Communal lament. The psalmist recalls the time of God's goodness. The psalmist is calling out to God who is shepherd, king, and above all Gardener; a Loving Gardener who has planted the people and allowed them to grow as a people into a strong and proud people. Having recalled those images of God, the psalmist has the courage to call out to the Great Gardener and remind God that in this very moment the people feel abandoned and under attack.

The psalmist is one of those folks that Nouwen speaks of. The psalmist is a spiritual leader of hope. The psalmist never fails to call to God for deliverance and rescue feeling assured that the rescue is just around the corner.

As followers in the Way, we speak with hope the Christian promise that Salvation came to us in the form of Jesus and now we wait for Salvation to achieve its fullness. We could look at the world about us and be pessimists. We could see only rain. We could refuse to acknowledge the Light that shines through that dark and greying sky today. But as a people who follow Jesus, we know that the love that he proclaimed compels us to live

in hope! We are hopeful and we believe the blessing of the psalmist in Psalm 85 (10-14):

Yes, His rescue is near for those who fear Him, that His glory dwell in our land.

Kindness and truth have met, justice and peace have kissed.

Truth from the earth will spring up, As justice from the heavens look down.

The Lord indeed will grant bounty, And our land will grant its yield.

Justice before Him goes, that He set His footsteps on the way.

You see we are soaked to the skin. We have been saturated in the waters of baptism. That soaking has caused us to wade into waters that are often tumultuous. Following Jesus of Nazareth sometimes will cause us to ask difficult questions about why life can sometimes be so demanding, sometimes dark, and in many cases evil and cruel. But the covenant that we share with Jesus calls us to live in hope that our work, compelled by the love of Jesus, all directs us to that time when justice and peace will kiss. We declare that God will see truth springing up from the people and justice pouring down a new rain from heaven. There will be a harvest of plentiful love, redeeming and renewing justice, and unbelievable sense of shalom.

Let us be a people of hope! We are soaked to the skin – thanks be to God!

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

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'Be yourself...': A further reflection on authenticity

Oscar Wilde aptly stated, "Be yourself; everyone else is already taken."

This quote is from my February article. It expresses individualism. I'd like to use it as a starting point to explore the work of expressing one's individuality while remaining selflessly committed to serving the community.

Expressions of individuality are closely linked to ego needs, which arise from self-worth and drive our quest for recognition. Embracing these needs allows us to channel our energy into our ambitions and dreams. However, while embracing our individuality, we must also recognize that selfless service is vital to our identity and the common good.

Selfless service involves helping others and attending



AS I SEE IT

REV. JIM INNES

to their needs and well-being. It embodies kindness and generosity, which are essential to our identity. It fulfills our altruistic side and positively impacts the world, returning benefits to us. That said, disharmony can arise when selfless service and self-expression are misaligned.

This misalignment, disharmony, or inner conflict occurs when selfless acts are motivated by the desire for self-esteem or social approval rather than a genuine intention. For instance, a person might

volunteer at a charity, but their underlying motivation may be to enhance their own image, possibly to feel better about themselves.

Moreover, the interaction between ego needs and selfless service can lead to feelings of anxious ambiguity. Too often, we set aside our own needs for the sake of others, not in a truly altruistic manner, but rather because we are deriving some benefit from it, beyond the joy of helping. This internal conflict, or ambiguity, often manifests within us as questions regarding our genuine motivation.

Personally, I often grapple with distinguishing whether my choices arise from altruism or unresolved ego needs from childhood. My clarity blurs during moments of immediate reaction, thinking

thoughts like, "I can't do that" or "I don't have the energy." And doing so alongside equally powerful feelings to support and be present for others.

For instance, a parent may feel overwhelmed by the pressure to meet all their child's needs, while a spouse might struggle with the decision to attend an event to please their partner rather than taking time to relax when needed.

Recognizing these internal conflicts is crucial. We benefit from acknowledging that feeling 'torn' is a natural response to balancing our individuality with our need to serve others. In addition to this acknowledgment, the more complex task of managing our boundaries arises. Here, 'boundaries' refer to the personal limits we establish to safeguard ourselves, protecting us from

being overly influenced or drained by the demands of others. By learning to set limits, we can protect our well-being and still fulfill our obligations in the community.

I heard a quote from a civil rights activist that resonates here: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." This highlights that what matters most is how my reactions, our reactions, leave people feeling.

So, as I see it, whether we say "No" or choose to say "Yes," it is the manner in which we do so that will have the greatest impact.

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

Summer 2025: Scrolling on by

IF THE SUMMER of 2024 was culturally defined by an irrepressibly catchy wave of pop music muddled with anxiety about the American presidential election, what can we say about Summer 2025?

What was sown in 2024 – the intensification of conflict between the Israeli government and Hamas, the political rhetoric that greased the last election cycle, and the escalating tension between nations – is being reaped in 2025. This summer offered no cultural escapism or outlet for the endless news cycles of fear and suffering, and I am becoming increasingly concerned about what this level of exposure is doing to our hearts and minds.

Since the earliest innovations in mass media, we have been consuming real stories of war, genocide, and wide-scale human suffering. Coverage of the Second World War preceded Hollywood blockbusters. Vietnam was broadcast on family television sets at primetime. And now, we can watch livestreamed footage of immigrants being kidnapped off the streets or of Gazan civilians starving to death, all on our phones. This summer has been filled with voyeuris-



FIELD NOTES
REV. ALLIE
McDOUGALL

We must stay informed about the events that torment God’s creation, but we cannot stay stuck in the feedback loop of horror.

tic images of state-sanctioned violence against innocent people, sandwiched between advertisements and AI-generated nonsense. Inundation with these images produces a range of troubling emotional outcomes: anger, despair, radicalization, disempowerment, and desensitization.

The hyperconnectivity brings the horrors of war and humanitarian crises closer than ever before, quite literally at the tips of fingers and ends of noses. The horror feels inescapable not only because of algorithmically driven patterns that force it to the forefront



of our social media feeds, but because of the increasing pressure to not look away. Consuming these images and videos feels like the morally correct choice, when lawmakers and politicians refuse to act justly, to intervene, to put an end to the unfair punishment of civilian bystanders.

There is a passivity that comes with this method of consuming information, which is perhaps a feature and not a flaw of our current methods of mass communication. A never-ending barrage of the worst of humanity just doesn’t seem to translate to the political will to demand change and accountability for the brokers of power. Instead, we internalize the horrors, finding new ways to cope with the unease and cognitive dissonance we feel so that we may, at least, keep on living. Lest the horrors turn their attention to our population demographic.

As Christians, we turn our feelings of frustration and grief for the state of the world to prayer, asking God’s will to be done and for the Prince of Peace to reign. We pray weekly, in public and private, for all affected by war, genocide, corruption, and political violence. We raise funds and give to worthy causes and reliable aid organizations. In the case of Gaza, we are unsure if this support reaches its intended targets or if it is caught behind a blockade.

One feature of our Christian witness, perhaps the one we feel the most awkward about, is the call to be prophetic voices in the world. The summer lectionary highlighted for us the voices of the prophets, men like Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, who stood in the face of terrible corruption and suffering to proclaim the truth of God.

Passively consuming the realities of genocide and po-

litical corruption erodes our hearts and souls and warps our perception and capacity for empathy. We must stay informed about the events that torment God’s creation, but we cannot stay stuck in the feedback loop of horror. We have been catechized in the faith to know that God abhors violence, persecution, torture, starvation, captivity, and greed. That is the truth of God that rings out over the din of Facebook and TikTok feeds, that is the truth we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim.

May God give us the prophetic boldness we need to collectivize as the Church and proclaim this truth loudly. May He also grant us the trust needed to accept that His justice will be meted out in time.

Rev. Allie McDougall is the Vicar of St. Paul’s and St. Stephen’s, Stratford.
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But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well - Matthew 6:33



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Turning a new page of the Church calendar

ONE OF THE THINGS I look forward to every year is the notice that the Canadian Church Calendar is available for purchase. Quickly looking through the year, it is a great joy to think, "Oh, I have been there!", or "I have worshipped there!", or "I know the person who took that picture!"

It has often been said that the Church is a very small family. In a different millennium, when backpacking across Europe was a rite of passage for some, putting a Canadian flag on display would initiate a conversation with a stranger who would begin by saying, "You are from Canada? Do you know...?" What started as an innocent question would often lead to some interesting discoveries of links that defied logic as some kind of connection came to light.

Half a century has passed since I graduated from university, but I still recall the simple truth of our Convocation speaker at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton who mused on the concept that Canada is a community of communities. The unique identification which is nurtured by geography, culture and history shapes the interaction of people who choose to live together in a particular setting.

That insight also has much to offer when thinking about our "Beloved Church", as former Primate, Archbishop Fred Hiltz often referred to the Anglican community of faith of this country. Each element of the Anglican Church of Canada has a unique story and gift to offer. Each congregation, each parish, each deanery, each diocese stands on



Photo: Charlotte Poolton/GS of the ACC



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

The Canadian reality offers a distinct contrast to the social construct south of our national border which defines itself as a melting pot, where individuals are expected to blend in to a bigger picture.

its own, yet at the same time, is connected with a sense of being part of a larger picture.

The Canadian reality offers a distinct contrast to the social construct south of our national border which defines itself as a melting pot, where individuals are expected to blend in to a bigger picture. The image of a Canadian society being depicted as a mosaic reflects an appreciation for the unique value and beauty of each individual tile as it adds to the beauty of the larger picture.

It was not until I began the experience of retirement that I was able to fully grasp the reality that a number of members of congregations which I had served over the years had shared with me. There were those who had driven past several other parishes to worship. Their motivations were unique. Some loved the

church building. Others had strong family connections. There were those who were drawn by different elements of the style of worship of that particular community of faith. Others came because of unspoken reasons which reflected the fact that in that place, surrounded by the people of that congregation, motivated by the call to ministry in that setting, they felt that their spirit, their souls and their experience of faith was being nurtured and fed.

In the place which I now call my parish home, Trinity Church, Cambridge, there is a stained-glass window which was given as a memorial and notes a moment in the life of the Anglican Church which I have often referenced. The Anglican Congress of 1963 met in Toronto. As bishops, clergy and laity from around the world gathered in that setting,

a key statement of the meeting identified Anglican Christians as those who are called to be "mutually responsible and interdependent members of the Body of Christ..."

As Canadians, we are reminded of that identity and that reality whenever there is a gathering of our General Synod. As I attended the opening and closing services of our recent General Synod (you would have found me sitting in the back pew!), it was a distinct joy to greet colleagues in ministry whose paths of ministry have crossed with mine over the years and now they may be found in different locations from coast to coast to coast.

Although I was not a part of the conversations and deliberations of the meetings, it was a joy to be able to share in the worship offered in the renewed physical setting

of our Diocesan Cathedral. The experience was a gentle reminder that we do not exist and worship in isolation, but we are all part of a community of faith where we have much to celebrate.

The final blessing offered by our new Primate, Archbishop Shane Parker captures the sentiments of the moment:

"God has abundantly blessed us with grandeur and beauty; from the waters of the Atlantic to the Pacific; across the Rockies and the Prairies; from the Arctic to the Great Lakes; across the Great Canadian Shield and the Laurentians. May what we share together across our country always unite us; may our faith empower us to faithfulness in all we say and do as the Body of Christ. The blessing of God almighty, Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier be with you this day and always. Amen"

As he followed the Primatial Cross out of the Cathedral our new Primate carried an eagle's feather which had been gifted to him during the service by the National Indigenous Archbishop on behalf of the Anglican Council of Indigenous People and the Sacred Circles. It was an offering and a sign of mutual honour and respect for the ministry and witness which we share across this great land.

If you listened very closely, it was possible to hear the rustle of the turning of a new page of the Church Calendar.

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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An invitation to explore faith in community



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.



By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

ARE YOU LOOKING for a new way to explore your faith? Do you want to go deeper into what you believe and why?

This September is the perfect time for a fresh start with Education for Ministry (EfM). There's still time to join as classes are still forming.

EfM is a program designed for anyone who wants to learn more about faith, the Bible, and the Christian tradition—no experience needed. You'll be part of a supportive group where everyone learns together.

The group reads Scripture, books, articles, and even listens to podcasts. There are open discussions where you can ask questions and share

your thoughts. Whether you're new to exploring your faith or have been part of other groups for years, EfM welcomes you.

Two programmes to choose from:

- **Education for Ministry – Classic:** This is a four-year program that has been running in Canada for 40 years. It's designed for those who want to go in-depth, step by step, with a group of fellow learners. Each year covers a different area: Bible, history, theology, and more.

- **Education for Ministry – Wide Angle:** New this year! This is a one-year program. It's perfect if you want a shorter commitment or a broad overview. You'll still cover a lot and join the same supportive community.

So, are you ready for a fresh start this September? There is still time to sign up. EfM is a great opportunity to learn, ask questions, and meet others who are also searching and growing.

If you are interested, don't wait—reach out now and begin your journey with EfM this September. You'll find new knowledge, new friends, and a deeper sense of your own faith.

For more information on the class locations and timing, and how to register, please reach out to Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron EfM Coordinator or myself Val Kenyon at EFM@huron.anglican.ca

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

A revised version of Education for Ministry's Classic program will begin together with a new one-year option that has been called "Wide Angle".