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HURON CHURCH NEWS

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Stewards of the gift: Finding our way to serve one another



Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.
(1 Peter 4:10)

THE LABYRINTH AS A PATHWAY TO THE ALTAR
The interior of St. Paul's Cathedral has been remodeled to reflect a change in ministry defined by desire to be open to the wider community and serve its needs.
The nave of St. Paul's will host Huron Synod in October this year. The theme of this year's gathering will be STEWARDS OF THE GIFT. Devoting time, sharing talent, giving treasure: A way of life!
Finding our own ways, within ourselves, while approaching God. Figuring out our gifts and weaknesses, and realizing and appreciating the gifts and weaknesses of those around us. Being a community that serves the community.
Being the Body of Christ.

► **PAGE 12: ANNOUNCING 186TH SESSION OF HURON SYNOD**

Meaford honours a legacy of faith and connection across the Atlantic



Rev. Brendon Bedford (Christ Church, Meaford) and Rev. Lucy Newman Cleeve, Assistant Curate at St. Giles', Cripplegate.

THE MEMORIAL WINDOWS at Christ Church, Meaford consist of six panels made from hundreds of shards of stained-glass pieces blown out of over 100 churches in the UK and Europe during Nazi bombings.
Rev. Brendon Bedford, rector of Christ Church, visited three of those churches in England this past July: St. Paul's Cathedral (London), St. Giles' Church, Cripplegate (London), and Bath Abbey.
He shared the story of the Meaford memorial windows and gifted his hosts with pieces of plain glass sourced from the windows of Christ Church.
The idea for memorial windows was conceived by Rev. Harold Appleyard, the former rector of Christ Church, Meaford (1938-1949) and later a suffragan bishop of Huron.
Appleyard served in England during WWII as a Canadian Army chaplain. He collected pieces of stained glass from scores of churches that had been damaged or destroyed in the conflict.

► **PAGE 3: A JOURNEY OF GRACE AND BROKEN GLASS**



National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

September 30 is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, but our awareness and efforts should not be contained to this day alone. Check out the resources offered by Social and Ecological Justice Huron.

► **PAGE 8: WEAR ORANGE AND REMEMBER THE INJUSTICE**



COMMUNION FOREST GROWS AT CAMP HURON

The Communion Forest is a global Anglican Communion initiative launched at the 2022 Lambeth Conference. At Camp Huron, every Friday campers and staff would plant a tree, eventually creating a circular grove.

► **PAGE 4: 2025 SAY YES! CAMPAIGN AT CAMP HURON**



Gratitude as prayer in action

By Sharon Frank

DO YOU SEE the glass as half full, or is it half empty, or do you even notice that there is a glass at all? This just may shed some light on how you see God's creation.

When I think of October, of course Thanksgiving comes to mind with turkey, dressing, gravy, cranberries, mashed potatoes, veggies, and pumpkin pie with whip cream! As I consider these things I am struck by a sense of gratitude. I am so grateful that these are part of my memories and family traditions.

This idea of gratitude is not new dating back to the fifth century, as evidenced in Saint Benedictine's "Rule of Life", deeply rooted in Benedict's spirituality which emphasizes humility, service, and recognizing God's presence in all things. This is not a fleeting emotion; it becomes a way of life and involves a conscious effort.

Today, we hear of the "Ministry of Gratitude", the

function of being thankful comes to mind and can refer to a deliberate effort within a church to foster a culture of thankfulness and appreciation. What is old is new again! It can also be used broadly to describe the practice of expressing gratitude in any ministry or service-oriented context. Essentially, it emphasizes the importance of gratitude as a core aspect of faith and ministry, encouraging individuals to recognize and appreciate God's blessings and the contributions of others.

Some of the key aspects of a "Ministry of Gratitude" includes forging and strengthening our relationship with God through prayer. By actively looking for and acknowledging the good thing in life we recognize our Blessings. We can express thankfulness by verbalizing and/or acknowledging those good things to The Divine. This helps to cultivate a grateful heart and contributes to an attitude of thankfulness as a way of life. Finally, we can bear witness;

by sharing the goodness, love, and blessings we have received from God with others.

When gratitude becomes a routine part of a personal way of life, it helps build a relationship with the Holy One. Every and any time our lives are strengthened in a relationship with the Divine is a prayer. Prayer is all about connecting, communicating, and building a relationship. There is no wrong way to pray. There is no one way to pray. There are many and varied ways to do so.

When we are grateful and give thanks for God's good gifts of creation, we are strengthening a "Holy Bond". This then prepares us to remain stronger in times of sadness, fear, and even doubt. Human being are complex creatures and so when we find ways to strengthen our Bonds with Creator that does indeed give us the fortitude to face the difficult times in life, which we all experience from time to time ... some more than others. In life people are often

quick to criticize or complain but slower to see the positive and acknowledge it. Fun fact: the more one focuses on the positive, that is gratitude, and as we offer up thanks it comes full circle, and we become known as positive people. Others want to be around grateful people.

In summary, when one lives out the "Ministry of Gratitude" there are definite benefits. We find an increased joy, happiness and wellbeing. Overall relationships improve because expressing gratitude can strengthen relationships with God and with one another. There is a shift away from negativity and complaints to positivity. Finally, there is spiritual growth as relationships deepen and there is a fostering of purpose and meaning for life.

Gratitude, being thankful strengthens faithfulness. Give thanks... and give it often! Happy Thanksgiving!

Sharon Frank is Huron AFP lay executive member.

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A journey of grace and broken glass



At Bath Abbey (left to right): Rev. Canon Nigel Rawlinson (Associate Minister of Bath Abbey), Rev. Canon Guy Bridgewater (Rector of Bath Abbey), Rev. Brendon Bedford, Ashley Bedford

THIS PAST JULY, the Rev. Brendon Bedford, rector of Christ Church, Meaford, travelled to England bearing unusual gifts for three churches there: an incredible story and pieces of plain glass sourced from the original 'placeholder' windows of Christ Church, Meaford – simple panes installed when the church was built, before stained glass was added.

During his visit to St. Paul's Cathedral (London, UK), St. Giles' Church, Cripplegate (London), and Bath Abbey, Bedford shared the story of Meaford's WWII Memorial Windows with these churches and presented the glass as a symbol of Christ Church's connection to these ancient Christian churches.

The Meaford congregation hoped the gift would serve as a tangible sign of shared faith and history given that Christ Church, Meaford holds a piece of each of these churches in their unique WWII Memorial Windows, installed in Meaford almost 80 years ago.

The Memorial Windows – six panels made from hundreds of shards of stained glass – contain pieces blown out of over 100 churches in the UK and Europe during Nazi bombings. Some fragments are upwards of 700 years old, making them among the oldest examples of stained glass in Canada.

"The Memorial Windows in Christ Church honour the ultimate sacrifice made by so many during the Second World War, which we must especially remember in these present days. But they also speak powerfully to the hope we find in God's ability to bring about new life and beauty, even out of the worst situations," said Bedford.

The idea for memorial windows made of broken glass was conceived of by the late Rev. Harold Appleyard,

The Memorial Windows in Christ Church honour the ultimate sacrifice made by so many during the Second World War, which we must especially remember in these present days. But they also speak powerfully to the hope we find in God's ability to bring about new life and beauty, even out of the worst situations.

the former rector of Christ Church, Meaford (1938-1949) and later a suffragan bishop of Huron. While serving in England during the Second World War as a Canadian Army chaplain, he collected and was gifted with pieces of stained glass for this memorial project from scores of churches that had been damaged or destroyed in the conflict. They were crafted into windows in England for free, in gratitude for the service offered by Canadians during the war, and sent to Canada to be installed in the Meaford church in 1946.

"It was humbling to visit these places of prayer where Christ has been continuously worshiped for centuries, to walk where my predecessor, Rev. Harold Appleyard, had been 80 years ago during the war, and to offer to these communities a tangible point of connection with our parish in Meaford, Ontario," said Bedford.

"In our World War II Memorial Windows, we had a piece of them, and we thought it only right that they should have a piece of us. So, we offered a piece of what was

original to our own Christ Church building."

Bath Abbey had become aware of the connection in glass between the two churches a few years ago and had since included the story of the Canadian Army Chaplain from Meaford and his memorial windows in Canada in their daily tours offered to visitors to the Abbey. They were thrilled to receive a representative of Christ Church, Meaford, excited to learn which piece of the windows had been sourced from the abbey and gain a deeper understanding of Appleyard's story.

Bedford was also invited to preach and participate in a baptism at St. Giles', Cripplegate, where, along with the glass, he gifted a chalice to the church, on behalf of Christ Church, Meaford.

"We wanted to affirm the connection between our parishes, not only in glass, but also in the one Body of Christ and the worldwide Communion, even when we're an ocean apart."

Visitors are warmly invited to view the WWII Memorial Windows in person. For more information or to book a free tour, please contact Christ Church, Meaford or visit: christchurchanglican.ca.

Texts: Rev. Brendon Bedford, Ted Appleyard, David Appleyard, and Nancy (Appleyard) Frase
Photo: Pat Rawlinson
Front page photo: Ashley Bedford

The Story of Christ Church, Meaford's WWII Memorial Windows

Signing up as a military chaplain in 1941, the Rev. Harold Appleyard, then rector of Christ Church, Meaford, found himself posted to an embattled southern England. The destruction appalled him – homes, factories, schools – and so many churches.

According to his diaries, within months of arriving in England, he had the idea for memorial windows back in Canada to honour the sacrifices being made by so many and began to collect shards of stained glass from the shattered windows of damaged and destroyed churches.

One night Appleyard was on volunteer fire duty in the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. There he met Mr. G. S. Sherrin, an architect appointed by the Crown with responsibility for the ancient churches of London. Telling him about the idea for memorial windows made of broken glass, Sherrin became very enthusiastic about the young chaplain's idea and gifted him with small pieces of glass from churches under his authority, including one piece from St. Paul's Cathedral, as well as pieces from other churches built by Sir Christopher Wren.

Sherrin also referred Captain Appleyard to Cox and Barnard Ltd. a stained-glass company in Hove, England, to have the windows made. To Appleyard's great joy, Mr. Cox offered to design and re-lead the glass to fit Christ Church, Meaford, and he would do it free of charge in gratitude to the Canadians for their many war efforts.

As long as he was in England, Appleyard, with permission, collected and was gifted with bits of seemingly unusable glass from scores of cathedrals and churches, large and small, carefully labelling each one with its origin. Then, when his regiment moved to the continent in 1944, in the wake of the D-Day invasion, he collected a few more pieces from churches in France, Belgium, and the Netherlands as the Canadians advanced to liberate the Netherlands from Nazi occupation.

After the war, Appleyard returned to Meaford to take up his ministry in the parish once again. On August 11, 1946, the memorial windows were unveiled at Christ Church, Meaford by Mabel Randle and Winnie Hackett, two mothers in the parish who had lost sons in the war. The church was packed, and the service was broadcast live on CBC Radio and later in the United Kingdom and Europe.



Meaford Memorial Windows: Red Shield - The piece of glass that was originally part of Bath Abbey; Held hands - The piece of glass that was originally part of St. Giles' Church, Cripplegate; Green Circle - The piece of glass that was originally part of St. Paul's Cathedral

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Saturday, October 4, 2025
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By Zoom

Presenter: The Rev'd Canon Dr. Lisa Wang
Developer for Catechumenal Ministries

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2025 Say Yes! To Kids campaign: Communion Forest now grows at Camp Huron



Top left: A Friday tree planting with campers and staff of all ages.
Top right: Nature Programmer, Lily, with Leaders in Training, planting a new pollinator garden.
Left: Our grove of trees

Camp Huron once again participated in the 2025 Say Yes! to Kids campaign through the Anglican Foundation of Canada! This year's campaign funded our bursary program, helping us say yes to campers in financial need—and support the planting of a native tree grove on our site as part of the worldwide Communion Forest.

The Communion Forest is a global Anglican Communion

initiative launched at the 2022 Lambeth Conference, aimed at deepening creation care through local tree-growing and ecosystem protection and restoration projects. It is a virtual forest formed by the collective efforts of parishes, dioceses, and provinces worldwide, embodying their commitment to the Anglican Fifth Mark of Mission to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain the life of the Earth.

Every Friday, our Nature Programmer, Lily Ryan, provided an opportunity for a small group of campers and staff to plant a tree into a circle. One day those who come after us can enter this grove, this place set apart to sit, wonder, ponder, and pray. We thank Lily for her leadership and thank our donors, especially our ACW for saying YES to kids—and for helping us grow a future rooted in love.



camp huron



BACK TO SCHOOL! (With a little help from Holy Trinity Church, St. George)



Throughout the month of July and the beginning of August, our church has been doing its annual outreach with the community to gather backpacks and school supplies to help kids starting back to school. All items were delivered to the Brantford Foodbank where they were much appreciated.

Thursday, August 7, was a fun night as we met members of St. George who stopped by to drop off their bags, boxes, totes of supplies and even some new running shoes. As a thank you, each person received a pen with our name and phone number on it.

In total we are proud to say that we were able to collect 41 backpacks and numerous supplies along with donations of \$105.00.

The financial cost for fulfilling this need can be considerable for so many families that would find this a huge challenge to their already overstretched budgets.

This backpack endeavour has grown exponentially over the three years that we have partnered with the community, rather than just with our church alone.

We firmly believe that we are put into this world to help others. Sharon Travers

ICE CREAM SCOOPERS at St. John's Kitchen



Weekly donations keep this ministry alive for the visitors at St. John's Kitchen in downtown Kitchener.

On Fridays during the summer months teams of volunteers scoop a variety of ice cream and toppings to very happy patrons!

Photo: Co-Ordinator John Ryrie with Gerry McGregor, Catherine Carlson and Kathy Glaser.

Mary Ann Millar

Our Lord has a sense of humour (It really happened!)

By Bill Elders

I WROTE A STORY in this paper that was printed in the April 2025 edition on page three (my first attempt!) and casually mentioned that I thought our Lord has a sense of humour. A few people said that they liked the story. I have since remembered another humorous event that took place in my life that involved myself and our Lord. It really happened.

We have five children and after high school they all attended their education at various schools, and of course that involved five different cities. So, what else would you expect?

They involved Windsor, London, Waterloo, Hamilton and one wanted to go to the UofM.

Now, in our area of Southern Ontario, this usually refers to the University of Michigan. But NO, she meant the University of Manitoba which is in Winnipeg. Good grief! But it was her decision. We agreed, and in 1988, we took her out there, 1200 miles and a two-and-a-half-day drive with camper trailer. All

went well and after leaving her all alone, we went south to visit daughter number one who is older and was already teaching elementary school in the Omaha Nebraska area.

Kids get around, again all went well, but she did learn that in winter, in Winnipeg, minus 40 is COLD! We settled into a Sunday evening phone call routine to gab and keep her connected with family.

Now this story happened on Easter weekend.

We had our long phone chat as usual, when I casually asked, "Did you get to church today?" So hang on now for the details.

You see, shortly after she got to the UofM, she got involved with a school-based religious group. All went well and she became friends with another girl whose last name was ALBERS, which was close to hers (ELDERS), and so the other young people in the group referred to them as sisters. That's nice. This girl and her family were from Guiana (or Guyana) in South America, which would suggest she was of colour as in black, very black, and our daughter is white. Sisters? OK, that's humorous.

This girl lived with her family about 50 miles north of Winnipeg, and it was a long weekend, so she invited our daughter to come home for the Easter weekend with her. She agreed and again all went well.

Now she found out that her "sister's" father was a teacher. Well, I am a teacher! And he teaches in the local high school. So do I. He is a shop teacher, and so am I. He teaches auto-shop, and so do I. And he is working on an old car, and so am I!

Now this is very interesting. They are Anglicans and so are we, of course. Saturday night he was reading his Bible and so was I, because he was doing a reading on Sunday, so was I. The first reading... So was I... So, we were reading the same verses. WOW! How about that?

So next morning, they were all at church. (Were our churches names the same?) And it comes time for the father to do his reading. But a lady in front of him got up and proceeded to go to the front and read. Oh no! One of them had obviously made a mistake. What should he do? So he just kept quiet and did

the second reading, without reading it first, and of course he had to find it. But all went well.

So, you wonder what happened to me in Chatham? How could my adventure top that one?

Well, our Lord was certainly laughing, because when I prepared to get up to do the first reading, a lady also stood up in front of me and proceeded to do the reading. Oh NO! I had to do the second reading with no preparation. But no, hold on. It got even worse.

One of our members (George Down) looked after the Bible Readers group and he would tell us ahead when we read and he would find the correct pages and mark them with a ribbon and even pencil-mark the exact verses for us. Simple, eh? Well George was away that day and the pages were not marked ahead of time, and the first reader did not flip the pages to the second reader's place as was usually done. Good grief. I forgot exactly what the second reading was, but it was around six short ones and hard to find in a hurry (Corinthians, Galatians etc.) Oh no again! I got flustered. I gave up and asked

Rev. Larry Brown to please find the place for me. Very embarrassing, for sure!

I did not check to find out when their church service started but it was in Manitoba which is an hour behind us in time zones, so if our service started at 11 am and theirs at 10 am, they would be taking place at the same time regardless of time zones. Did our Lord arrange this so that our Bible readings were taking place at exactly the same time? Could our Lord do this? Of course he could. But would he? Would that be in his realm of humour? The Bible says we are made in his image. So if we know humour, so does he! Did our Lord set this up? You decide.

When our church in Chatham closed, I was in charge of cleaning it out. On that occasion I took out the Bible that we read from. Little did we know the building would be demolished, so cleaning meant nothing (even our expensive church lights were demolished). But I have that big Bible in my possession. The building is gone. The memories remain.

Bill Elders is a Holy Trinity/St. Paul's, Chatham parishioner.



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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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So, what's on your mind these days?



...whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Philippians 4:8

By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

NO DOUBT you have noticed that our lives are filled with constant interruption—there is the news, work and family obligations, anxieties, and the ceaseless noise of digital devices all competing to occupy our minds and hearts. It is easy, perhaps easier now than ever before, to become distracted, to allow our attention to drift to whatever is loudest or most urgent in the moment. In his letter to the Philippians, the Apostle Paul offers some advice as he calls them to be discerning, to choose carefully what they allow to settle in their thoughts as whatever they choose consequently will shape their spirits.



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.

He writes, “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable... think about these things.” What was true for the Philippians remains true for us. This is not to suggest in any way that by following Paul’s advice we turn away from the realities or complexities of the world, or retreat into narrow-mindedness. Rather, Paul invites us to look with intention for what is beautiful and life-giving in the midst of everything else. This can be a challenging task, especially when it is so easy to slide into negativity and fear, but as disciples of Jesus, we are called to cultivate a mind attentive to God’s goodness, to recognize grace at work around and within us, and to let that recognition shape not just our living, but also who we are becoming. In doing so, we do not deny pain or difficulty, but we choose in the midst of everything we are experiencing, to orient our hearts toward hope, compassion, and the transforming presence of Christ. While there is a great deal that is happening in an Education for Ministry session each week, this cultivating of attention to the presence of God in and all around us, is top of mind. This is especially true in our weekly theological reflections, those moments given to explicitly connecting

our lives with the truths we are exploring and how they can be expressed in the choices of everyday life, providing a safe space to explore and wonder together. Within the setting of our Education for Ministry meetings in both our one-year Wide Angle programme and our classic four-year programme, each week provides an opportunity to hone our focus. We undertake this together intentionally looking for the true, the honorable, the just, the pleasing, the commendable, the excellent and those things worthy of praise. In all of this searching, we strive to be open to all that God’s Spirit is wishing to birth in our hearts and minds. If you are curious about Education for Ministry and want to learn more, please contact Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron EFM Coordinator or myself Val Kenyon at EFM@huron.anglican.ca We are always glad to help with any questions and considerations. Rev. Canon Dr. Val Kenyon is EFM Animator in Huron. EFM@huron.anglican.ca

Diocesan Plan: Made new by the God who we cannot own

By Rev. Justin Comber

YOU ARE SUPPOSED to be afraid of wild animals. It’s part of what makes them beautiful. They are untouchable. You shouldn’t be able to pet a lion like a cat. It’d probably take your hand off. You shouldn’t be able to snuggle a grizzly. These are far off things. They are mysterious things. If you are near, but not afraid, you aren’t really getting it. The danger is a part of their appeal. Their untouchability, their uncertainty, their indomitable forms, and their wildness is what draws us and makes us curious. But I was at a place a few years ago, where wild animals were held in cages for public display. There were lions, and the remnants of the frozen meat they had been fed. There was a wild bird of prey in a cage about 60 feet tall; nearby, visible, grounded. There were primates, too (no, not that kind), in little rooms behind fences. All of these wild things were brought to me. I could see them close up without fear or danger, in my element, safely, tamely. It was among the ugliest things I have ever seen. The cages, too small and cramped,



Sutirta Budiman/Unsplash

too domestic, had robbed the wild of all its beauty. Fear and inaccessibility is what made these animals worth seeing, what drew the crowds to gawk through the chain link fences, to point and jeer. But they looked miserable in their captivity, and I felt miserable looking at them... Because the best things in life cannot be captured or owned. Because there is nothing so destructive to its subjects and objects as possession. Because there is no less Christian word in the whole of the English language than “mine.” Possession simply is not a Christian virtue. You and I belong to the community of Christ. And we recognize that there is virtue in surrender, in handing over, in recognizing that God is our source. We abandon control

of others. We surrender our rights. But the Love of God is never ending. Those who are abandoned to the love of God cannot help but love with God’s own love—unbound, unpossessed, undemanded, wild, and beautiful. I have been following the Bishop’s plan for our diocese since 2020, when the first hints of its direction appeared in his inaugural address to synod. It has been refined and given structure since then. It has been the object of subsequent addresses to synod, sermons, and consultations. At its centre, you will find a choice. We will either focus our attentions on the administration of the church, or we will become one. In the fall edition of this paper, the bishop reinforced the need to relinquish our need to “[c]on-

quer, master, and ‘get ahead’...” Instead, we ought to “open ourselves to the uncontrollable encounter with God.” That’s the plan, in a nutshell. We find where God is, and we meet God there. It will fail to satisfy our desperate need for the controllable and the measurable (things well within our capacity to possess). It requires us to stand a few steps removed from our administrations and metrics. It requires us to act (fiscally, even) as though our proclamation of a God who makes himself known, who loves, who redeems, and who is merciful, kind, and just (i.e. a Christian reality) is worth acting on. We love our church. I love this church. But control isn’t affection, and ownership isn’t love. (Aside: I have fallen for an idea I found in Rowan Wil-

liams’ Looking East in Winter; that the trinity is bound together in unity by a love that loves the other fully and completely without erasing or consuming the other into oneself). So, allow me to offer you a beautiful alternative. Allow me to offer you the life of a disciple of Christ. Forfeit your possession of this church. Abandon every hour and tear and dollar that you have given—that your families have given—to establish these beautiful places. Release all of it, every last bit, into the hands of God. And then watch as these precious gifts, this terrifying abandonment of self and family and history become good in God’s hands. That is what this church is for. There is no beautiful, mysterious, and wild future for your church, this diocese, or the Anglican Church of Canada if they are trapped in our feeble hands, or bound and caged as our unhappy possessions. In short, our plan (our only hope) is to be made new by the God who we cannot own. Rev. Dr. Justin Comber is the rector of St. George’s Goderich and Christ Church Port Albert, and Adjunct Professor in Biblical Studies at Thorneloe University.

Bursting at the seams: Summer partnership opens new possibilities



Diaconal Postulant, Laura Woolner (Diocese of Qu’Appelle) proclaims the Gospel in an ecumenical service.



GROWING BEYOND THE DOORS
REV. CANON GRAYHAME BOWCOTT

IN A PREVIOUS column of *Growing Beyond the Doors*, I shared how my congregation of St. George’s, The Blue Mountains, had entered into a preliminary dialogue with a neighbouring congregation, Grace United Church, about the possibility of exploring a time of shared ministry together. When Grace approached our leadership team about this possibility, we were honoured that they would consider reaching out to us in this way. In an age of increasingly congregationalist fear, which often isolates congregations when they find that their patterns of sustainability are becoming harder to maintain, this invitation, by Grace, to explore a short time of shared ministry was innovative, invitational, and, quite frankly, refreshing! The motivation behind a summer partnership between our two congregations was likely a result of a significant change for Grace, as their minister of two years, The Rev. Dr. John Smith, was concluding his time as pastor of their church, as of the end of July. The suggestion that was forwarded by Grace was to explore sharing two months of ministry together, beginning in July (when Rev. Smith would be serving in his last month) and then continuing to the end of August (where I

would be leading worship for both congregations). After a series of back-and-forth conversations with our leadership teams, (and with approval by our Bishop!) St. George’s and Grace churches commenced with what we lovingly referred to as a “summer of speed dating”: the goal, a desire to get to better know each other in all our denominational differences and similarities. St. George’s, The Blue Mountains, has two services on a Sunday: an 8:00 a.m. Said BAS Eucharist and a 10:00 a.m. Choral BAS Eucharist.

Grace United Church hosts a single 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday, which is, more often than not, a non-Eucharistic service of the Word. So, in the month of July, St. George’s cancelled their 10:00 a.m. Choral Eucharist and joined together with Grace’s 10:30 a.m. service. The 8:00 a.m. congregation remained with their usual time and place. In August, after Rev. Smith had concluded his ministry, Grace United Church joined St. George’s for our 10:00 a.m. services. We chose to alternate between Choral Holy Eucharist and services of Morning Prayer (so as not to overdo Holy Communion for our United Church friends). What was the result? Well, I am delighted to share that there were much enthusiasm and curiosity among the members of both churches.

Members from each denomination were curious to experience the differences in worship and liturgical practices. We asked both congregations to be themselves and to demonstrate to the other what makes them unique. Both congregations are blessed with many lay leaders who are proud to share in readings, prayers, and even officiating. Both churches have choirs that love to collaborate with each other, and so music was a highlight of our summer experiment. This resulted in a 20-person choir that was assembled on three of the Sundays in our time together. The sound was glorious! Over these summer months, Grace and St. George’s enjoyed attendance that had us bursting at the seams. Volunteers were frequently asked to be on hand to add extra chairs, as 20-30 more people were showing up to check out what it was that we were doing together. In August, three of our services were hosted outside, on the front doorstep of St. George’s in Clarksburg, where dogwalkers and those passing by were serenaded with Christian hymns sung by more than 80 voices. A wonderful way to witness to the neighbourhood that the vitality and joyfulness of our ecumenical collaboration was real and happening! Now that summer has concluded, our two churches

enter into a time of prayerful reflection. Grace United Church is currently without a minister and will be discerning what their ministry going forward looks like. St. George’s has committed to sharing our pastoral coverage with them and to upholding them as a partner in prayer. We don’t know what the future looks like, but we do know that we experienced a time of hopeful partnership. Together, our two churches’ shared values and desire to serve those in our community have brought us closer than we have ever felt in the past. This, by itself, has been a great blessing shared through our summer experiment. My hope in sharing this update with you is that other Anglican congregations might be inspired to explore an ecumenical experiment of their own! If you do, please pass along your experiences to me, so that we can learn along the way! Rev. Canon Dr. Grayhame Bowcott is passionate about fostering congregational relationships and sharing our Anglican vocation with others. He serves as Rector of St. George’s, The Parish of The Blue Mountains, and as Program Director for the Licentiate in Theology program at Huron University. grayhamebowcott@diohuron.org

PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

Appointments

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Mary Farmer as Interim Priest-in-charge of the Parish of Saugeen Shores and Christ Church, Tara, effective 1 September 2025.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Margaret Walker as the Interim Priest-in-charge (part-time) of St. Andrew’s Memorial, Kitchener, effective 1 September 2025.

Margaret continues in her role as the Diocesan Cemeteries Coordinator.

Resignation

Bishop Townshend has accepted the resignation of the Reverend Paul Sherwood as the Rector of Trinity, Simcoe, effective 30 September 2025. Paul has accepted a position in the Diocese of Blackburn, in the Church of England.

Interim Ministry

Bishop Townshend appoints the Reverend Canon Nick Wells as the Interim Priest-in-charge of St. John’s, Glencoe, effective 1 August 2025. Canon Nick remains as the Priest-in-

charge of the Parish of Tyrconnell.

Bishop Townshend appoints the Reverend Canon Dr. Lorne Mitchell as the Interim Priest-in-charge of St. George’s, New Hamburg, effective 1 September 2025.

Rest in Peace

The Reverend Sylvia Brightwell, 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 Thursday, 17 July.

Please remember Pam and the rest of Sylvia’s family and friends in your prayers. The full obituary may be found below.

May her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.

The Venerable Dr. Ronald Matthewman, 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 Tuesday, 15 July 2025.

Please remember Gillian, Timothy, Anne, and the rest of Archdeacon Ron’s family and friends in your prayers. The full obituary may be found below.

May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.



Tony Alberts (left) and Christopher Pratt met with Lieutenant Governor of Ontario Edith Dumont after she had invested them as Knights of the Order at St. James Cathedral in Toronto.

Knighthood for our columnist

Rev. Canon Christopher Pratt and Mr. Tony Alberts (of the Parish of Saugeens Shores) were invested as Knights of the Order of St. John on June 7, 2025 by the Honourable Edith Dumont, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

Tony Alberts was recognized for his exceptional leadership in a variety of roles within the St. John Ambulance organization for twenty-five years within his region and the Province of Ontario. Canon Pratt’s thirty years of service building up the role of Chaplains within St. John Ambulance has had a positive impact, provincially, across Canada and has been recognized internationally.

Wear ORANGE and remember the injustice!

By Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle

SEPTEMBER 30 is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The day serves as a reminder of the intergenerational and communal trauma and struggles caused by Residential Schools.

The numbers of those who didn't return home are staggering. The challenges faced by those who did remain. There is no one among the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) peoples who hasn't been touched by this tragedy. It remains important for settlers to continually confront these truths and seek paths to reconciliation.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is also Orange Shirt Day, a day in which all people are encouraged to wear orange, especially orange shirts purchased from Indigenous artists and organizations that remind us "Every Child Matters".

This symbol connects to the story of Phyllis Webstad whose grandmother gave her an orange shirt in celebration of her first day of school.

Sadly, as a student at a residential school, Phyllis lost that shirt on arrival. Her story, widely available in bookstores, and the symbol of the orange shirt provides an important reminder of the violence of residential schools and an invitation to

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



Aedrian Salazar/Unsplash

know better and do better.

What does it look like for settlers to know better and do better?

For starters, we can honour the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, wear orange, and use the time to remember the injustices that undermine the dignity of the FNMI peoples historically

and in ongoing ways today.

We can learn by reading the 94 calls to action. Calls 58 to 61 are directed to Churches who had a hand in the violence of residential schools. This includes call 59:

"We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement to develop ongoing education strategies to ensure

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation offers one day in the year to challenge settler Canadians to know better and do better. Our awareness and efforts should not be contained to this day alone.

that their respective congregations learn about their church's role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential school students, their families, and communities were necessary."

It is important to recognize that this work is for congregations. We cannot continually ask FNMI peoples to engage in emotional labour for our benefit.

We can draw from existing resources to challenge our perspectives and biases. Hosting the Kairos Blanket Exercise or Alongside Hope Mapping Exercise are two powerful tools. There are also a multitude of books that can support independent reading and book study opportunities.

Easily available and informative books include:

- "21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act: Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a Reality" by Bob Joseph

- "Truth Telling: Seven Conversations about Indigenous Life in Canada" by Michelle Good

- "Highway of Tears: A True Story of Racism, Indifference and the Pursuit of Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls" by Jessica McDiarmid

- "From the Ashes: My Story of Being Métis, Homeless, and Finding My Way" by Jesse Thistle

- "The Reason You Walk: A Memoir" by Wab Kinew

We know that inequity continues in relation to FNMI peoples in Canada. We know discrimination continues. We know challenges continue.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation offers one day in the year to challenge settler Canadians to know better and do better. Our awareness and efforts should not be contained to this day alone.

How will we continue to humbly learn, challenge problematic biases and norms, and ensure that we, and society as a whole, respect the dignity of FNMI peoples throughout the year?

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

Adapting your voice: A key to effective communication

YOU NEED a different voice for different communications because effective communication is about connecting with your audience.

The way you speak, write, and present information must be tailored to the specific group you're addressing. Using a one-size-fits-all approach often fails because different generations have unique communication styles, values, and expectations.

Consider stewardship, stewardship appeals and capital campaigns. The way you appeal to a Boomer is fundamentally different from how you approach a Millennial or a member of Generation X.

Boomers (born 1946-1964) often value tradition, respect for institutions, and a clear sense of purpose. A fundraising appeal to a Boomer should be formal and direct.



MEDIA BYTES

REV. MARTY LEVESQUE

It should emphasize the credibility of your particular church, its long-term impact, and the tangible results of their donation to the parish. The letter might be a traditional, physically mailed letter, and the language should be respectful and professional, focusing on the legacy they can leave.

Generation X (born 1965-1980) is often described as independent and pragmatic.

Gen X is known for its skepticism and a desire for authenticity. A stewardship appeal to Gen X should be concise and to the point. They don't want fluff; they want to know the "why"



Jason Rosewell/Unsplash

Mastering the art of adapting your voice is about empathy and coming alongside parishioners. It requires you to understand your audience's perspective, their values, and their preferred mode of communication.

and the "how." The message should highlight the efficiency and transparency of the church, focusing on how their contribution will solve a specific, identifiable problem. Emails and targeted social media campaigns can be effective here in addition to a written letter.

Millennials (born 1981-1996), as digital natives, are highly connected and often motivated by social causes and personal impact. An appeal to a Millennial should be authentic, relatable, and visually engaging.

It should tell a compelling story, often through video

or social media posts, and emphasize the community aspect of the ask. They want to see how their contribution can make a big difference and be part of a larger movement. Peer-to-peer fundraising and mobile giving options are often successful with this group.

Ultimately, mastering the art of adapting your voice is about empathy and coming alongside parishioners. It requires you to understand your audience's perspective, their values, and their preferred mode of communication.

By tailoring your message, you ensure it resonates, leading to a more effective and meaningful connection and ultimately a successful stewardship campaign.

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

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Have a great break! ('I receive, therefore I am')

HOW MANY people, I wonder, expressed to me their genuine wish that this summer would be a wonderful break for me? It had to be hundreds.

It was a busy 2025 for us at St. Paul's Cathedral. Getting the major remodeling of the Nave completed by the third week of June was, I'll admit, tiring. The reward for that? Hosting the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, which came with its own stresses and demands. So, a time of sabbath rest was certainly in order and I was excited to take five full consecutive weeks off for the first time since I was ordained. I believed those around me that I needed a break.

The English language is really interesting. Take, for instance, the word 'break'. It can mean more than one thing. It can be a verb or a noun. As a noun it can mean "a pause in work or during an activity or event." As in, "Because Kevin has been working hard for a number of months, we feel that he should take a five-week vacation as he could sure use a big break." How thoughtful people can be!

But events of the past few days have me questioning whether or not I have been using the word 'break' in the wrong sense of the word. You see, as a verb it can mean "to (cause something to) separate suddenly or violently into two or more pieces, or to (cause something to) stop working by being damaged." As in "With just two days left on his summer vacation Kevin was forced to come to a quick stop while enjoying a ride on his new bike. To do so he firmly placed his foot on the asphalt causing his leg to break!"



IT'S JUST ME: HUMBLING AND GRATEFUL! V. Rev. Kevin George in the ambulance vehicle following his accident.



It's Just KEVIN

V. REV. KEVIN GEORGE

As I rest with leg elevated in a local rehab facility, trying to find some relief from the pain in my surgically repaired ankle, I choose to believe that the wishes for a "great break" were hopes for the restorative time Catherinanne and I enjoyed until just over a week ago and not the violent destruction of my ankle.

In the meantime, I have come to gain insight into just how fragile our day-to-day carefree lives are. I have multiple fractures of my tibia, and fibula, and have torn up the ligaments in my ankle. This has been repaired with plates, screws and pins. I will not be able to bear any weight on my right leg for 10-12 weeks. It is the first time in my life that I have stayed in a hospital, broken a bone, or needed surgery. At this early stage of my healing, I need help with everything. I am helpless.

When I stopped the bicycle, looked down and saw that my toes were pointing to 3 pm instead of 12 o'clock, I was in shock. My excitement to get back to work was dashed in one quick moment, one poor decision. Instead of going to hospitals to visit parishioners, I would now lie in bed and welcome visitors. Instead of giving care, I would now learn to receive care. I now am forced to admit that I cannot do anything to heal that ankle. I need to allow others to give me the optimal conditions for healing. I have to accept that there is so much that I have no control over. I have to admit that no amount of hard work or 'doing' will give me a quick fix. That is much easier said than done. As a follower in the Way of Jesus, this should not come as a surprise to me. Again and again, Jesus reminds his followers that grace, love, healing, forgiveness and hope are all gifts freely given to us by the Creator. None of it is earned.

Part of my restful time has been spent reading. In his book The Sound of Life's Unspeakable Beauty, luthier

Martin Schleske writes, "The only power that can transform us into something good is love. It is the power of God, humbly sanctifying everything that it touches. Nothing in us can be holy if we are not able to be recipients. I receive, therefore I am. This is what the washing of the feet stands for. Can you bear to be this kind of recipient before God? The holiness that God requires cannot be earned; it must be granted to us. This is the purity that knows about our own behaviour and questionable thoughts, yet still allows Jesus to come and be near in this fragility and intimacy." I read these words upon being returned to my room today after my bath. Perhaps it's no surprise that these words brought tears. I sat alone in my room in a moment of tenderness.

I don't know Tina. Today was the first day she was working with me as a Personal Support Worker. She took me to the washroom. She spoke to me with care and gentleness. She explained how I would be loaded onto a lift and lowered into the tub and what she would do for me. She asked me if I was ok. In her every action, gesture and mannerism she reassured me that she was there to help me and to show her care for others in her work. This is one of God's own who brought me some healing today as she washed, not just my feet but my hands and my head and all of me as well. It was a sacred laying on of hands.

Schleske writes that Jesus comes to us in fragility and in intimacy. This intimacy, this fragility, "brings existential healing: the healing of one's entire existence. I need quiet moments in which to close my eyes and take it in: "Jesus,

I will let it happen!" There is a reason that he says: "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Grace is poured out like water in the basin Jesus uses to wash the disciples' feet. It is not fortified by our magnificence. My [body] has been washed, and I allowed it to happen. That is the whole of my riches. Sometimes it is actually harder to believe grace than to do good, because in good works, I am still looking at myself. Simply being loved creates a holy self-consciousness that is absent in works. Love that must be earned is not love but payment. Love can never be earned. It is the epitome of grace. It purely a gift."

Perhaps I needed both 'breaks' this summer. [To be clear, this is not in any way to suggest that this misery was brought on by God.] John's gospel places considerable emphasis on the foot washing. As Tina gently washed away the filth from my body today, I prayed that God would wash away any notions I may have of my own magnificence. John told the story of foot washing because we all need to be humbled, we all need to be recipients. 'We must spiritually sit in a row with the other disciples and know that our turn will come. Can we bear it?'

I digress. I must as Jasper just came in to administer my pain meds. He'll help me to the bathroom and lower my bed for a night of rest. So, I will lay down, my prayer being, "Nothing in us can be holy if we are not able to be recipients. I receive, therefore I am."

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



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**Services at the
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**Sunday, October 5
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**Sunday, December 7
(Christmas Service)
at 2 pm**

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HEY SUPERSTAR! An old controversy with a new twist

IN AUGUST, a three-night run of Jesus Christ Superstar was mounted at the Hollywood Bowl with an all-star cast that notably featured Cynthia Erivo in the role of Jesus.

This is the first time a woman has sung the role in the legendary rock opera in its 55-year history. Erivo has recently broken into superstardom after her turn as Elphaba (aka the Wicked Witch of the West) in the film adaption of the celebrated musical Wicked, itself an adaptation of L. Frank Baum's The Wizard of Oz. The casting choice was divisive – some felt that this was an intentionally provocative decision to get a rise out of the Christian right, others that it was long overdue to have a Black woman play the role, and others still felt that it was downright blasphemous.

Controversy has followed Jesus Christ Superstar since its inception in 1970, to the point where co-writers Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice were unable to secure funding and opted to release the music as a concept album before translating it to the stage. The purpose of the piece is to psychologize Jesus and the disciples, to remove His divine nature from the text, and ask the age-old question: what if Jesus was just a normal guy? This is the same question that has been asked by doubters,



Gift Habeshaw/Unsplash



FIELD NOTES

REV. ALLIE McDUGALL

skeptics, and liberal theologians for decades. JCSS has never pretended to be anything other than an examination of the human mind and intentions of Jesus and Judas, set to some of the most memorable and iconic riffs and lyrics in musical theatre history. It is not a piece of devotional art, like Bach's St. Matthew Passion or Handel's Messiah, and for this reason it has been enjoyed and debated by fans with and without religious identification, introducing the Jesus Story to new audiences using the parlance of the times since 1970.

The hullabaloo surrounding Erivo's casting in 2025 is retreading old territory, but with a new set of cultural concerns. A Black woman playing Jesus in a rock opera is neither blasphemous or offensive to Christ, nor does it score the culture war points that edgy provocateurs might be hoping to rack up in their crusade against the Christian right. And regardless of how one feels about the casting decision, you cannot argue with Erivo's immense talent and vocal compatibility with the technically, musically challenging role of Jesus in JCSS. Clips surfaced online of her rendition of "Gethsemane", the searing take on Christ's agony in the garden prior to His arrest. Erivo performed the role with all the requisite passion and sincerity demanded of the part. As far as the specifications of the

role and the production go, her sex and race are irrelevant.

The secular, culturally constrained arguments for and against casting a Black woman in the role of Jesus Christ ultimately fall apart under the weight of the theological implications that can be gleaned from this choice. The image of Jesus has always been interpreted and reinterpreted through cultural lenses, around the world and through time. We understand the historical Jesus to be a brown-skinned Palestinian man, yet He has appeared in religious art and media with innumerable faces, each reflecting the artist and audience. Are not all people bearers of God's image, deserving to identify their own humanity with the nature of Christ? It is a comfort that Christ's incarnation graces humanity in all its forms, transcending the artificial barriers and labels we ascribe to our physical bodies. In the mystery of the Word made flesh, the totality of the human experience is included and represented. There is nothing blasphemous about casting Cynthia Erivo in the role of Jesus Christ because there is nothing wrong or offensive or profane about being a Black woman. Indeed, there are more striking comparisons and identifications to be made with the suffering and struggle of Black women on the axes of race, sex, and violence and that which Our Lord experienced on Earth. Much of this work has been done and continues to be developed by Womanist theologians and scholars. What is wrong, offensive, and profane is insisting that there is only one acceptable way to image Christ in visual media, that the monopoly of this holy image belongs to any single group (least of all white, blonde-haired, blue-eyed Europeans).

Whether or not it was Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's intention to make us think theologically about a depiction of Christ that is overtly and intentionally human and critical of orthodox Christianity is immaterial. For 55 years, the story of Jesus' Passion and the incredible music that accompanies it have grabbed audiences, stirred up controversy, and invited us to think more creatively about how we understand Jesus from where we stand in time. Jesus may not have walked this Earth as a Black woman, but he also didn't sing rock and disco. Love it or hate it, Jesus Christ Superstar has the cultural cachet to keep heaven on our minds.

Rev. Allie McDougall is the Vicar of St. Paul's and St. Stephen's, Stratford. alliemcdougall@diohuron.org

Life grinds through heavy asphalt

RECENTLY, I was walking along a country path I had taken several times. This time, it had been freshly paved, perhaps for cyclists or for skiers in the winter.

The smooth, even surface made for a pleasant walk, and interestingly, something struck me as unusual. Despite its fresh appearance, cracks were forming, with weeds and grass sprouting through the crevices, irrepressibly!

Despite a 2-inch artificial barrier, life had punched its way into the light of day. An inspiring reminder that Life, as a force of nature, a force of God, continuously seeks a path to flourish, irrepressibly breaking through any obstacle in its way. Through every season and every challenge, life steadily endures and adapts, just as it has since the beginning of time. It will even grind its way through heavy asphalt, busting forth and lifting us higher than we can imagine.



AS I SEE IT

REV. JIM INNES

Growth and restoration will always occur. The life force continually exposes us to sunlight, and through that light, we thrive.

This scene reminded me of a story of resilience, the story of Joseph, son of Jacob. One son out of twelve, yet favoured because he was the firstborn of Rachael, his father's beloved wife. The other sons were jealous. One day, they took Joseph away to be sold into slavery.



A turn of fate that would have buried most of us beneath the heavy asphalt of despair. Yet, Joseph was full of life's unyielding spirit. His integrity caught the attention of important political figures, and he gradually gained recognition for his wisdom and exceptional skill at interpreting dreams. Eventually, and once again, he was favoured among others. He rose to power, and the life within him reached the stars as his influence shaped a nation. As it was with Joseph, the power of life flows as an unstoppable force. This same force is always at work within us. It is like the way life re-

claims a forest after a wildfire, restoring trees, grasses, and wildflowers, sometimes more abundantly than before. This force is alive within us. It shapes and supports us; it is us! Through it, we are woven into the very fabric of the natural world, inseparable from it.

Put in another way, no matter the challenges we face, because life flows within us and through us, we are recipients of life's regeneration, healing, and renewal. Growth and restoration will always occur. The life force continually exposes us to sunlight, and through that light, we thrive. When we notice these quiet miracles,

we draw courage, trusting that growth finds a way even when we do not understand how.

Google search shows that a seed breaks through the tough crust of asphalt by tenaciously finding tiny cracks. There, it germinates and sends out flourishing roots to seek moisture and nutrients. As these roots grow, they apply steady pressure, widening the crack until a blade of grass finally appears. With unwavering patience and quiet resilience, life quietly and patiently takes shape.

I pray that as our lives unfold, the same invincible resilience of the grass seed will be our hope and our unyielding strength because in every challenge we face, there also exists the power of life, waiting, never still or subdued, slowly emerging at a pace we may not fully understand.

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

Turning our grief into a clarion call to action

THE ARTICLE had already been written, read and re-read for the October edition of the Huron Church News. It was a reflection on the emotional connection we have with the music that we hear as we move through the liturgical year and the seasonal messages which are so central to our shared worship. Then reality impacted on that wistful message.

I write these words after the news that yet more tragedy has invaded our world.

We are reminded too often of the way in which communities of faith become the targets of violence. This is not a new phenomenon. Individuals whose deaths we recall throughout the church calendar as martyrs were singled out in their day because of their zeal and commitment to our Lord. Some of them were people whose proclamation of their faith identified them as high-profile targets as they stood up against injustice. Speaking God's Truth to worldly power can prove to be a very dangerous thing.

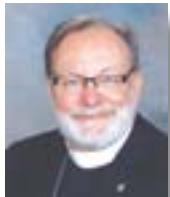
It is not difficult to find mixed into media reports of military activity in different parts of the world, those moments where places of worship or faith sponsored health care facilities have become targets. The Archbishop of Jerusalem and other religious leaders keep raising their voices in the cause of peace. Yet day after day, individuals of diverse faith communities share news of sorrow and loss. Their heartfelt mourning echoes Scriptural lamentation.

I suspect that between the time that I write these words at the end of August and the time that you read this article in October we will be hearing of more tragic moments and loss of life. I am writing at a time, when just hours ago, I learned of the event which took place in Minnesota, when a school community, gathered in prayer at the beginning of the academic year was the target of a shooter who was bent on death and destruction.

There is no viable way to grade the impact of different levels of loss. Families, communities or even nations experience a sense of grief whether a death of a single individual takes place on the battlefield or in a house of prayer. The tragic nature of violence is that too often there is senselessness to the deaths that are reported which, in turn, generates a feeling of helplessness and bewilderment. The emotional turmoil which builds up within us as we become aware of the losses suffered through senseless violence in our world has an impact on each one of us as individuals. There is often a sense of bewilderment which becomes difficult to manage. Not being able to control the news we hear may lead us to simply avoid listening to media reports, not watching news on television or turning the page of a daily newspaper to avoid the painful reality which surrounds us.



Palestinian News & Information Agency (Wafa) in contract with APA images



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

Come face to face with the power of stillness and silence. Recognize that it is moments of quiet, when we listen well, that we are enabled to be aware of God's guidance.

Yet the world keeps turning. As people of faith, we are called to put our time, our talents and our energy into making a difference in the world in which we live. We are called to do what we can, so that through our words and deeds God's Peace may become a reality in God's World. Not letting the grief we feel "overwhelm us and isolate us from others," as we view our world in turmoil, but rather turning our grief into an emotion which motivates us to action.

We are at the focus of groups who set their financial needs before us asking for our generous support. As members of a community of faith, we are all prepared to offer our thoughts and prayers in support of those who are suffering. At moments when we feel stretched to the

limits of our resources, both physical and spiritual, the act of grasping for some focus for personal action in offering some kind of relief seems so very natural. We feel compelled to DO something.

At those very moments which sound like a clarion call to action, as we face the temptation to rush off into all different kinds of directions, trying to solve every problem and challenge which is set before us, I suggest that, as people of faith, we have another option. Jump off the treadmill track which seems to be moving faster and faster under our feet. Come face to face with the power of stillness and silence. Recognize that it is moments of quiet, when we listen well, that we are enabled to be aware of God's guidance.

I am not advocating a withdrawal from the turmoil of the world. Rather, I am suggesting that each of us takes time for a period of discernment, when we ask for Divine direction as to where our God given gifts may best be used.

Jesus commissioned his disciples to go out into all the world, proclaiming the Gospel and shining the Light of God's Love in a darkened world. Each apostle headed out in their own unique ministry emboldened and empowered by the Holy Spirit. They faced serious challenges, and their witness was not without cost. In our own day and age and in our own circumstance and context we are the inheritors of that mission and ministry.

Together, and as individuals, we can bring God's Peace into God's World.

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

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186TH SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF HURON

October 24 & 25, 2025

St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Ontario

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