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Facing the challenges of our time: Fear is acceptable, refusal is not
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YIELDING TO THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT: 181st SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF HURON

MAY 16-17, 2021
(Virtual gathering)



COUNTERING ANGLICAN TRIBALISM

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HURON CHURCH NEWS

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF HURON • Huron Church News is a section of the Anglican Journal • MAY 2021



THE MIRACLE OF LENTEN JOURNEY: UNDERSTANDING WHAT GOD HAS DONE, IS DOING, AND WILL DO

Six-week long journey of self-reflection through the process of painting.

Rev. Susan Bagshaw explains her work on the painting of the Crucifixion during this year's Lenten season. It started with a 2' by 3' canvas and was completed on Good Friday. (Three of the six phases depicted above.)

Each week during Lent, the piece was placed in the church for people to reflect upon. The finished work is called "Three o'clock in the afternoon" and it now adorns the interior of Huron Church House.

A Lenten Journey in Paint, Page 3

Learning in lockdown: Lessons from St. Matthew's, Florence.

A learning church looks like a battle sometimes, says Lawrene Denkers in her account of the Florence Anglican community's efforts to overcome the challenges of the pandemic.

Disparate technology and rural wi-fi have been some of the obstacles. The battle is nearly won. Lawrene comes with a long list of the lessons learned during the lockdown.

We Were Looking Forward to the End, Page 5

The miracle of seeds: Dancing and singing with God.

Social and Ecological Justice Huron article reminds us that the language that Christ uses is often land based and, more specifically, agricultural. We need to listen to his words simply and as they are.

In the words of Caroline Sharp, a SEJH chair, the mustard seed of our Church is currently in that anxious stage of being watered and waiting for its shell to crack

The Miracle of Seeds: Page 9

Lenten pickups at Church of the Ascension, London



Rev. Canon June Hough accepts outreach donations for the Anova women's shelter from parishioner Enid Runnalls in the parking lot of Church of the Ascension. The church held a collection for a different area charity each week during Lent.

By Sandra Coulson

Lenten discipline had a drive-thru angle at Church of the Ascension in London this year.

Each Thursday morning, Rev. Canon June Hough pulled into the parking lot in her bright red Jeep and opened the back to take in a collection of goods for outreach charities in the city's east side, where Ascension is located.

Among those helped were the Anova abused women's shelter; Humane Society London & Middlesex; the Youth Opportunities Unlimited youth shelter; Project Hope, which serves to fill the gaps in social services; and Winter Interim Solution to Homelessness (WISH), an 18-agency coalition that through the winter helped those who struggle with traditional shelters.

"Lent is a really good time not only to give up stuff but also to reflect on what God is asking of us," June said. "What

God is asking of us is the Great Commandment. It's not giving up; it's giving back. That's what stewardship is. If we take up charity, if we give back what God has given us, then we live out the Great Commandment. We can give up coffee, but unless that improves our relationship with God, what does that mean? Hopefully when we do this, people start to think about their relationships with each other and ultimately with God."

The response from the Ascension congregation was strong, and on at least one occasion, a carload also arrived St. John the Evangelist Church in London.

"I thought people would get tired of me asking every week, but it hasn't been like that," June said. "People are like: 'Okay, what's next?'"

As for the organizations that have a packed Jeep show up at their door, June said, "People have really been surprised by

how much they're getting."

June also noticed some spinoff benefits of the parking lot pickup.

She said she chose Thursday mornings because that's the only day of the week the church office is open during the pandemic, giving people an opportunity to do any business they might have with the office at the same time.

"It reminds us we're a community that gathers here as well," June added.

So it wasn't surprising that often people didn't just drop off items and leave. "People get to see each other and get kind of excited about that," June said. "They want to hang around and talk. They keep social distance, but there's an excitement to connect with each other and talk and joke around and laugh and see people they haven't seen in a long time face to face."

Sandra Coulson is a parishioner of Church of the Ascension, London.

Newness, possibility, hope – despite all of the evidence

On Good Friday, a public intellectual and scientist in the UK tweeted a short comment making fun of those who believe that someone could be raised from the dead.



**BISHOP
TODD
TOWNSHEND**

I wasn't offended but it made me shake my head a little. I like science. I like theology, too. They are different methods — and we need them both.

"The scientific method" has been the norm in this age of reason. You make a hypothesis, you test it out, you gather evidence, and you draw a conclusion. Then you say to others, "Ok, now you try it, you verify it, or prove it wrong." If enough of us can verify it, we will call it fact. Truth. Until a better hypothesis comes along.

I still love science, because it is a form of revelation for us. Obviously, the scientists have given us incredible insight into how to live through this pandemic, not to mention the scientific miracle of several excellent vaccines! But, for a



while in my life, I came very close to a serious problem. "Science" seemed to tell me that I should want to verify everything and that, if it cannot be verified, it cannot be true. I started to think that Christian faith had to be proven, certified, and that I could use science to become smarter than the Gospel.

Thank God that I don't try to do that anymore. Evidence does not often lead to certainty, and it rarely leads to God. Faith is of a different "order". Christian faith is less about evidence and more about leaning into the promises made in a good relationship—the prom-

ises of God—despite all of the evidence, sometimes.

The Easter season is about newness, possibility, hope. I have hope for newness in our church life. The deepest, truest, form of "new" possible. It is the kind of "new" that we hear described in the book of Genesis, when God said... "let... there... be light..."

And there was light. Before that, light didn't even exist. Before that, no one had even thought of light. It was new.

This kind of "new" was also seen, in a new way, on the third day. Jesus was dead. Sealed up in a cave. Three days dead, when all hope is gone.

And God said, "let there be life. . . in the face of this death." Get up Jesus! You are the Risen One and there is a new creation. It was the same Jesus—he still had the wounds—but newness was now possible.

That is what our church is built upon. Faith in the possibility of a new creation growing out of the history of our lives and our traditions. We need to know what to bring forward with us and what to leave behind. When Jesus was raised up, they wanted to embrace him, to cling to him. But he says to them, go to my brothers and sisters and tell them there is a new creation stretching out before you.

That's the kind of "new" we are going to see. God will do this.

Last September at our "virtual" Synod I began to ask the following question—it's a method, of sorts. In every decision, every loss, every opportunity, we ask, "could this newness be the work of God? It looks like a death, but maybe it's something new. Is this a possible place where God's new creation may take root?" I invite you to ask that question with me, praying that God will guide our eyes and ears to places of divine newness.

+Todd

Prayerfully supporting the 181st Synod of the Diocese of Huron

By Rev. Val Canyon

Life is full of significant moments isn't it? Moments that help us to recall happy, joyous events, and others that remind us of more difficult times in our lives.

What all of these moments have in common is that they invite us, if we are willing, to spend some time in reflection, offering us occasions to pause in the usual course of our day, our month, our year to consider the effect of a moment, or a series of moments on our today, our tomorrow and in many ways on who we are becoming.

In God and the Pandemic: A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and Its Aftermath, a book by well-known author and Bishop within the Church of England, N.T. Wright, the author reminds us of a core Kingdom of God principle: God's kingdom is all about restoring creation the way it was meant to be. God always wanted to work through loyal human beings (made in God's image). It is not so much about asking why something is happening in times like these but rather about what our response should be. Wright goes on to say that times like these drive

ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER



A Prayer for Our Synod Gathering 2021

God our help and our strength,
we gather in these unusual times as a synod family
and are reminded of your great love
of your people and for your Church.
Help us to be diligent in our seeking,
and faithful and courageous in our following
of the paths you are opening before us.
Help us to not only discern the leading of your Spirit,
but to give space in our lives for your grace
to do its work in and through us in all things.
We ask this in the name of your Son,
our hope and our vision.

us to groaning, praying at the very point of the world's greatest pain.

As we prepare to gather for one of the significant moments in this diocese, our annual Synod, we come to this place undergirded by the prayers of this past year and in anticipation of where God's Spirit is leading us in the days to come. While the way in which we are gathering again this year for Synod is, with the exception of

September 2020, quite different from past synod gatherings, at its essence our intent remains the same. We gather as a family across our diocese to consider together what God is doing in our midst and how we as individual parishes and as a collective can most faithfully respond out of the contexts in which we minister. Foundational to all of this, as we know, is prayer.

The usual practice of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer

(Huron) to provide resources to direct our prayers for all that will be considered and discussed during our time together, remains an important component of this diocesan gathering. A simple format has been created to encourage prayers to be said before and during Synod.

These prayer materials will be sent in April to parish incumbents throughout Huron as well as to AFP Parish Reps. If you do not have a Parish Rep, or would simply like a copy of these materials, please visit: <http://www.diohuron.org> or let me know by e-mailing valeriekenyon@diohuron.org and I would be pleased to send a copy of the prayers to you directly.

While, of course, you cannot drop by our table at Synod this year, please be reminded that our resources are for the most part available online at: <http://anglicanprayer.org/index.php/resources/> and that the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Huron) Executive remains available to you at any time.

Rev. Canon Dr. Val Kenyon is the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Huron) diocesan representative.

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Editor

Davor Milicevic
huronchurchnews@gmail.com
519-434-6893, ext. 251
c/o Huron Church House
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The Right Reverend
Todd Townshend
Bishop of Huron
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Three o'clock in the afternoon: A Lenten journey in paint



By Rev. Susan Bagshaw

I didn't quite know how it would end up but my Lenten journey 2019 started out with a 2' by 3' canvas before me on the floor of my kitchen. I diluted black paint with water and with a rag wiped it over the canvas. An image emerged as the paint dried. Most did not see it. Perhaps it was meant just for me.

Week one

The image of Christ's face emerges. 'Very truly I tell you, the hour is coming and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.' Jn 5:25

Week two

An ominous sky emerges and brewing evil in Jerusalem spreads across the ground. 'And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. Mk 11:18

Week three

God's power is preparing to be released! A cosmic eruption is brewing in the heavens. 'But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.' Mk. 13: 24-26

Week four

The image of the cross. He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.' Mt. 8:34

Week five

Christ in the shadow of the cross. When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, 'You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.' Mt 26:1-2

Good Friday

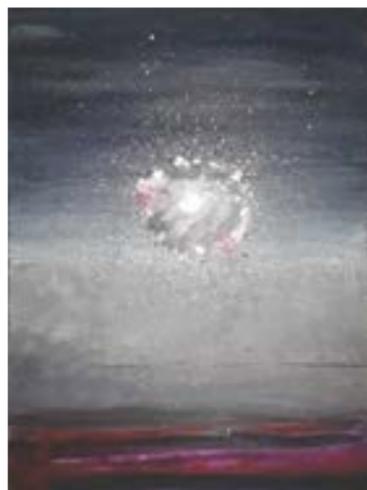
It is finished. 'At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?' which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.' Mk 15:34, 37.

Each week during Lent, the piece was placed in the church for people to reflect upon until its completion on Good Friday. The finished piece is called 'Three o'clock in the afternoon'.

The journey of Christ into Jerusalem and into the hands of those who could not understand him, culminates in his death on the cross on Good Friday. The moment Jesus' spirit left his earthly body results in the cross exploding with the immeasurable might of God in a 'cosmic' display of pure power as he overcame death. The red earth that was the evil of sinful man is now washed away by the spilt blood of Christ.

Rev. Susan Bagshaw is Deacon at St. John's, Cambridge.

Left: Susan Bagshaw, *Three o'clock in the afternoon*. Bellow: Phases, weeks one through five



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GUEST PRESENTER: THE REV'D DR. GRAYFAME BOWCOTT, RECTOR, THE BLUE MOUNTAINS & COORDINATOR OF THE LICENTIATE IN THEOLOGY PROGRAM AT HURON UNIVERSITY

Yielding to the Life of the Spirit

181st SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF HURON MAY 16-17, 2021

The altar in our house

Hearing the call to prayer, finding sanctuary and sacred space, where you are

By John-Paul Markides

I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God." Rev 21:3



When I finished high school, I spent some time in northern Manitoba helping the church with some projects.

While I was there, I spent the summer living with a nun. She spent most of her life working to better the lives of people in the surrounding communities. She also ran a kind of guest house. Not a typical bed and breakfast; rather a place where she was Martha and Mary to those of us who stayed with her. I recall her moose stew was to die for.

This sister had a rustic and simple altar, a place of devotion, within the common area by the bedrooms. It was located close to the guest rooms. I watched her every day for over a month. She would clean and do a simple prayer whenever she passed by the altar. I never saw her praying there, but it was well kept, with pressed linens, books and other things that were changed often.

Halfway through the summer, my schedule changed, and I found myself waking up before 5 am. I prepared myself quietly, tiptoeing through the hallway when the house was still dark. I noticed the altar had been attended to, hav-

ing the Bible out to the daily readings, and all the proper colours for the season or feast were out. The sister was up, and sure enough, I found her in the sitting room, eyes closed, quietly praying in her armchair. She didn't expect me to be up, as I noticed her hearing aids were out. I think I nearly scared her half to death that first day. But she was there every morning in her armchair, praying with a rosary in hand and her chair facing the window.

This was her schedule; she would wake up at some earlier hour, go to the altar and prepare it for the day, then go to a space in the living room, knowing she would not be disturbed. She would take out her hearing aid, pick up her rosary, sit down in her armchair, and begin to pray. She would be in that place till 7 am when she would make breakfast for herself and anyone else in the house.

The presence of the altar in the house nagged at me. Why have the altar if it's not a place for prayer? Why work so hard keeping it if it wasn't adding to her prayer life or relationship with God?

One evening over dinner I finally asked her. She informed me warmly that the altar was a call to prayer, a devotion, and

an act of service to God. For her, it evoked a rhythm to her prayer life. The call to prayer was heard by all who lived and stayed in the home, but most of all it was the place devoted to her spouse, Jesus. It was a place she passed by often, and a place that called to her often; it spoke into the busyness of her life "come and rest with me awhile" (Mark 6:31).

She told me that building an altar or sacred space is an act of intention and prayer. The act that, if done in and through prayer, can help us to grow closer to God. I came to see the altar as a distillation or manifestation of my desire to have God's presence in my life and in my homes. It is a distinct place for God; think of it as God's throne in your home, a place where God is welcomed.

All over the Bible people are building altars as a sign of devotion to God. Jacob built an altar after he experienced God in a dream, he called the place El-bethel, because God had chosen to reveal Himself there. All of our patriarchs and matriarchs in the Old Testament had this practice of building an altar as a sign of devotion and thanksgiving, and animal sacrifice. The tradition of sanctifying a place in the home

(or tent) to God is part of our spiritual heritage. This continued with Christianity. Just walk a back road in Europe, you can't throw a stone without hitting a shrine, chapel or place for spiritual devotion.

In the time of Covid, of war, insurrection and protest, perhaps we could use these symbols that say, "come and rest with me awhile" in our lives and in our homes. Not for animal sacrifices! We can't offer anything as gift to God that isn't already His! No, your altar won't be for goats or physical "gifts" but maybe, perhaps our contrite hearts, and dare I say we could offer our broken world. This would be a place for God in our homes, and let's face it folks he is literally dying to be invited in. I don't know if Jesus ever built altars, but in truth, he was the altar, the priest and the sacrifice. His altar was the cross, and we can call that THE altar of sacrifice. Christ used to go into the hills privately to pray, in a lot of ways his altar was the world. If that works for you, good. If you are like that sister I knew years ago, perhaps this is something calling to you, what I liked about this nun's altar was that she didn't feel she had to use it for prayer, in her life it was a physical reminder, she saw it as a call to prayer.

How do I make an altar, you may ask. It comes from inside you. The only mistake in making an altar is to do it for anyone or to impress anyone. For some people, the altar is in a space that you can't necessari-

ly sit at. For other people, it is a side table next to a comfortable chair where you sit every day for prayer. One has to understand themselves and their habits in order to fully know where and how to place their altar. In my father's house, his fireplace is his altar, where he puts the most interesting things: pieces of wood and rocks next to a crucifix and a small statue of the Virgin Mary. That is nothing like mine. Mine has icons, a candle, my book of psalms, and some other devotional things. Yours may be a combination for your family's devotional objects, or it may be as simple as a lit candle.

I have come to find my place of daily prayer to be on my porch, under a heated blanket in the winter. This works well for me. I do have an altar in my house, it is a space set apart for God that calls me to prayer every day. I do pray there as well, but we cannot limit ourselves in prayer, we must let God be God and let us be, well, us. I learned long ago not to hide it away (if I can't see it, it can't remind me). It is for me like the bells of medieval Europe, the cry of "Allahu Akbar" from the towers of the mosques, or the apostles in the time of Christ living by the hours of the temple. Sometimes you take out your carpet and you pray where you are. It is up to you to discern what that means and how that looks.

Brother John-Paul Markides, CFC is the CASC Psycho-Spiritual Therapist and Spiritual Care Practitioner (INT).

Meet Rev. Jim Garey, the marathon man of evening prayer

Rev. Jim Garey has been the marathon man of Evening Prayer during the COVID-19 pandemic, posting the service on YouTube every day except two since March 2020.

Jim, a retired Lutheran pastor who is an honorary associate at Church of the Ascension in London, said he started the daily project a couple of weeks after the pandemic began, when he realized Anglican churches in Ontario would not be reopened for Holy Week.

"Because we normally have daily services during Holy Week (at Ascension), I thought I would do that," Jim recalled. "Immediately I started getting reactions from people and quickly those reactions were: 'We hope you don't stop after Easter.'"

Jim initially saw the project as "a little glue to help hold the parish together." But viewers began sharing the links he posts on Ascension's Facebook



Rev. Jim Garey of Church of the Ascension in London has conducted a YouTube Evening Prayer service for every day but two since shortly after the pandemic began.

group and his own Facebook page with their friends, and Jim has noted followers from other parts of Canada, Europe, Latin America, and the Philippines.

He often gets 10 to 20 visitors

– and as many as 40 at any given time – during the services, which now run anywhere from 15 to 30 minutes.

Jim has made some changes along the way.

Besides the Canadian version of Evening Prayer, he has also used the services from Anglican churches in New Zealand, the U.S., England, South Africa, and South India, as well as similar services (slightly revised) from the Lutheran, United, and Roman Catholic churches.

He has added a segment noting significant dates on the calendar, ranging from saints' days to promotions like Sleep Well Day. In the summer, he began including a meditation.

In late December, his goatee disappeared.

Jim expects he will continue until the limits on numbers attending churches are lifted "and we feel safe being there."

"I've been having a lot of fun with it," Jim said. "It feels occasionally like it's a chore until I sit down and do it and then it feels like fun again."

Sandra Coulson, Church of the Ascension, London

ANGLICAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, May 19, 2021
5:00 p.m. Eastern on Zoom

Please RSVP to
foundation@anglicanfoundation.org
by May 17 in order to attend.

www.anglicanfoundation.org

ANGLICAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA

We were looking forward to the end, because it's just beginning

Learning in lockdown: Lessons from St. Matthew's, Florence

“...better revealing the marks of mission by becoming a learning church...” – *The Right Reverend Todd Townshend, Bishop's Charge, 180th Synod of the Diocese of Huron*

By Lawrene Denkers

What does a learning church look like? Deep in a pandemic, at tiny St. Matthew's, Florence, a learning church looks like faces in Zoom boxes, a group of parishioners meeting to study online.

One such group was the parish catechumenate. It started in the fall of 2020 and continued through Lent to Holy Week, covering the Gospels, Church history, the Apostles' creed, the Lord's prayer, the sacraments, and the rule of life. Participants renewed their baptismal vows at the Easter Vigil. It is a loving and kind group with a deep interest in education.



Dozens quilts were sewn and distributed to hospitals and treatment centers: A closeup of one of St. Matthew's group's quilts

words in the Book of Alternative Services (BAS):

“I invite you therefore, in the name of the Lord, to observe a holy Lent by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and by reading and meditating on the word of God.”

We were looking forward to the end, because that was when we would examine how what we learned and did would shape our future actions so that we stay on this path.

This is where another resource, our clergy, came in. The Reverend Dr. Lisa Wang invited us to think about how, this year, we would approach the traditional Lenten disciplines mentioned in the BAS.

Self-examination

We would reflect each week upon what it means for us to act with concern for others and for God's creation.

This reflection took place communally by Zoom after the Monday Bible study. The entire parish (The Parish of the Transfiguration) was invited, making it bigger and better than it started!

Penitence

We would work to change both our actions and attitudes so that we can better follow God's will.

We decided those actions and attitudes would focus on two commodities: chocolate and cotton. Each week we read and discussed a short article to inform ourselves about the ethical concerns regarding chocolate and cotton so that we could make those changes.

Prayer, reading and meditating on the Word of God

We would pray, read, and meditate on scripture daily using the prayer sessions at pray-as-you-go.org.

In order to abide in the vine and bear fruit (John 15:5) through our Lenten disciplines, we committed to spending time with God daily and nourishing our souls with God's word.

Fasting

We would purchase only chocolate that is fairtrade and/or sustainably grown. We would purchase only cotton, if new, that is fairtrade and/or sustainably grown.

We not only made these purchases, but we shared with each other where and how to do so. Lists were made of local retailers, of ideas for upcycling, of links and how-tos.

Almsgiving

During Lent we would continue in the making and distributing of quilts to our shelters and treatment centres and hearts to our hospitals' ICUs.

A learning church looks like a battle sometimes. A battle, that is, with disparate technology and rural wi-fi. However, the strife is over; that battle (nearly) won.

Dozens more quilts were sewn, and dozens more pairs of hearts were knitted just during Lent.

What did we learn?

For this we turn to the participants themselves. We asked at both the final Zoom community fast discussion, and at the final Zoom catechism class for direct input.

What we learned from the community fast, in the words of the fasters:

- We learned about production issues like child labour, pollution, and water use.
 - We learned how many harmful chemicals are used in mass produced clothing.
 - We learned how much clothing is thrown away.
 - We learned how important it is to reduce, reuse and recycle.
 - We learned where we can buy secondhand, fairtrade, and sustainable goods.
 - We learned to read labels!
 - We became more aware of the harmful chemicals and microplastics used in other everyday items.
 - We became more conscious of what we're putting into the environment.
 - We became more conscious of our use of disposable items.
 - We became more conscious of how much we're throwing away.
 - We began to think about how we can do things differently.
 - This fast was not just about trying not to eat something in Lent, but learning something that will help someone else.
 - Instead of just thinking for a brief moment about what we will give up for Lent, we were thinking about these things all the way through Lent!
- What we learned in Catechesis, in the words of the catechumens:
- We gained a much better understanding of our Anglican Christian tradition.

• We found out what was inside the BAS!

• We learned a lot from the explanations/rubrics in the BAS.

• We learned why we do what we do: the history and theology behind our worship and practice as Christians and Anglicans.

• Catechesis makes the liturgy a lot more meaningful, because now we understand it!

• It helps to have someone guide you through it.

• We think a lot more now about what the liturgy really means, instead of just doing it by rote.

• Catechesis opened the door to understanding things we often wondered about, but never discussed before.

• We found Catechesis tied in with our other learning initiatives, with the marks of mission, and with our Mission and Ministry Plan.

• We would do it again next year!

The future

Participants said they would be more aware when shopping for any kind of consumer product. One told the group she started washing all her freezer Ziploc bags, and couldn't believe how many she uses in a meal. Two indicated they already do this, and at least one is seriously thinking about taking up the practice.

The quilting group has plans now to re-use even more fabrics and repurpose even more clothing than they already do. (They already upcycle jeans, sweaters, and police uniforms.)

In the end, as a group, we found we were looking forward to the end of Lent, and not because we were doing without something that we would get back. We are not going to go back to unethically produced chocolate and cotton. (Or microplastics or harmful chemicals...)

We were looking forward to the end, because that was when we would examine how what we learned and did would shape our future actions so that we stay on this path.

We were looking forward to the end, because it is just the beginning.

And that's a little of what a learning church looks like here. What does it look like in your parish?

Lawrene Denkers is a parishioner of St. Matthew's, Florence.

Build your website with Tithe.ly

The Diocese is offering local parishes a chance to upgrade their websites by reimbursing the initial setup fee and providing guidance for the website building process.

For more information, please contact Kyle Gascho:
kgascho@huron.anglican.ca

ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN

Basics of the altar symbolism explained

Unless you are a member of a chancel/altar guild, you may not be aware of the altar's symbolism.

During a Bible study we were asked how many crosses are on the fair linen? What do they signify? There are five crosses on the fair linen, one on each corner of the altar and one in the middle. The five crosses represent the five wounds of Jesus. A fabric square known as the corporal is placed over the center cross. The corporal represents the covering of Jesus' face in the tomb. The two candles on the altar are symbols, one meaning humanity, and the second one meaning divinity the Spirituality of Christ. This is known as the Hypostatic Union.

On the altar are the chalice holding the wine, and the ciborium holding the wafers to be consecrated. On top of the ciborium is the paten holding the priest's wafer, and a purificator over the chalice.

On top of the chalice and the ciborium is the pall, the veil and the burse to prevent dust from getting on the elements. The credence table holds the wafer box the lavabow, a bottle



of sanitizer and a towel. On a tray is one cruet with water and one cruet with wine. To me, this symbolizes when Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding, His first miracle.

The aumbry is a space receptacle in the wall and is used to store consecrated bread and wine. There is a white light of presence above the aumbry to signify the Holy contents and as a visual of the real presence of Christ. The sanctus chime/bells draws the attention of the worshippers to the invoking of Christ's presence.

The white frontal and hangings signify the sacredness of holy days, the watershed mo-

ments of baptism, weddings and funerals. Red is symbolic of the feast and fire of the Holy Spirit, and the blood of martyrdom. Green is the color of growing things, symbolizing life.

Purple is a symbol of prayers, penitence, repentance, sorrow and Lent preparation. Blue symbolizes truth and eternity, preparation, and penitence during Advent. Black is a sign of mourning the sins of the world.

Vestments: the alb is the white eucharistic vestment that represents the purity of Christ, and the robe in which our Lord Jesus was arrayed by Herod. The stole is a sign of ordination.

The chasuble is the seamless tunic worn by Christ that the Romans cast lots for John 19:23-24. The cincture's varied colors represent the office the cleric holds and is worn like a belt symbolizing the belt of truth. The white cord/rope is worn by Deacons and servers, purple is for Archdeacons, and red is for Canons.

My prayer is that this article gives a better understanding of the Holy symbols and to better appreciate and follow the service every Sunday. May our gracious Lord watch over, protect, and bless you in Jesus' name.

Barbara Jackson

Diocese of Huron ACW Council President

In Memory



Waterloo Deanery

St. Thomas the Apostle, Cambridge

Shirley Patricia McCann

Brant/Norfolk Deanery

Grace Church, Brantford

Bettie Austin

Jean Carson

Donelda Gooding

Sherri McElveny

London Deanery

Holy Trinity, Lucan

Alice Gilmour

Carol Hardy

Dorothy Lankin

Lillian Longman

Say YES! to kids: a new AFC campaign

The Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) launched "Say Yes! to Kids" campaign on April 6, hoping to raise \$100,000 to fund post-pandemic programs for children, youth, and young adults in Canada.

mobilize Canadian Anglicans to respond courageously, creatively, and compassionately to emerging needs."

Rois says she is deeply concerned about young people who are facing setbacks due

with investments totaling over \$1,087,000.

"From hospice care to homework clubs to breakfast programs and summer camps, the past decade has given AFC a hopeful view of our church's capacity to support outreach to young people," says Rois.

"We have seen how resources can be used through people and partnerships to make a lasting difference in the lives of children and youth."

Rois says AFC will rely on the strength of its granting program to quickly turnaround campaign proceeds by funding a Request for Proposals (RFP) for youth-focused initiatives in fall 2021. "After five cycles of RFP funding AFC has seen the power of catalytic philanthropy in action and how it stimulates creativity and innovation," says Rois. "Reaching our \$100,000 goal means Say Yes! to Kids will enable AFC's most impactful RFP to date."

For more information email foundation@anglicanfoundation.org. To join a Say Yes! to Kids fundraising team, or to make an individual donation to the campaign, visit www.anglicanfoundation.org/kids.

to school disruptions, absence of recreational activities, and loss of the depth and variety of in-person relationships with peers, extended family, and caring adults in the community.

The launch of the campaign also marks the 10th anniversary of the Kids Helping Kids Fund (KHK) through which AFC has championed the cause of children, youth, and young adults in Canada

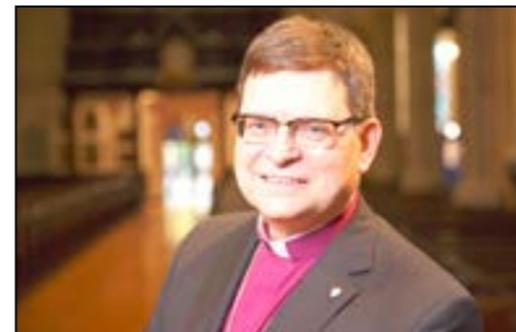


Scheduled to run from April 5 to June 30, the campaign will be supported by a variety of fundraising initiatives including an online peer-to-peer program designed to engage youth advocates nationwide.

"At AFC we have heard the growing concern about COVID-19's potential long-term impact on children and youth," says Judy Rois, Executive Director in the statement issued on April 6. "We want to

Archbishop Colin Johnson receives 2021 Lambeth Award

Archbishop Colin Johnson, retired Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario (2009-2018) and Archbishop of Toronto and Moosonee, is on the list of recipients of 2021 Lambeth Awards. The recipients were announced by Archbishop of Canterbury on April 7.



Archbishop Colin Johnson

Lambeth Awards recognize outstanding contributions to the Church and wider society. This year they were given to over 30 individuals who include scientists, musicians, academics, activists, peacemakers, doctors and clergy. The recipients span the globe and the breadth of Church life and beyond.

Archbishop Colin Johnson received The Cross of St. Augustine for Services to the Anglican Communion. He was awarded for his "extraordinary efforts and leadership in sustaining communion through initiating ongoing dialogue amongst Bishops across the Anglican Communion – especially Canada, Africa, the UK and the USA – following Lambeth 2008 through to 2020.

Archbishop Colin served as the Diocesan Administrator of Huron from October 2019 to the end of January 2020.

Goodbye and best wishes to Rev. Derek Perry

The congregations of St. Paul's Princeton, St. John's Eastwood and Christ Church Oxford Centre regrettably said goodbye and best wishes to Rev. Derek Perry and his wife Rev. Yun-Hee Noh-Perry on Sunday, February 21, as they officially retired.

Rev. Perry came to this three-point parish in the spring of 2008 and has been our spiritual leader and our friend for the past 13 years. Rev. Perry came to us as a "half time" minister with the responsibility of looking after three churches and their congregations, which he did extremely well, although he may have run over the half time, some, if not all weeks.

In addition to the weekly church services, there was no one from these congregations who needed a visit and didn't receive one from Fr. Derek. Those visits were not confined to members of the three churches but were also extended to others in the community if needed.

Fr. Derek and Yun-Hee were also strong supporters of the community and surrounding area. From the "Coffee Guys" with their Tuesday morning coffee hour (before Covid) to any other need in the community including Remembrance Day services, and the Blenheim and area food bank along with the delivery to those in need.



Strong supporters of their community: Rev. Derek Perry and his wife Rev. Yun-Hee Noh-Perry

heim and area food bank along with the delivery to those in need.

It was the same with the Coffee Guys community garden which Derek and Yun-Hee could be found faithfully tending, weeding, harvesting and delivering to many in the community and area.

There are undoubtedly many other gestures that we are not aware of. Unfortunately for

Derek and fortunately for the rest of us, "No" was not in his vocabulary

Although this retirement is very well deserved and perhaps a little overdue we hate to see Fr. Derek and Yun-Hee leave but wish them all the best, and a long and healthy retirement.

The Congregation of St. Paul Anglican Church in Princeton.

PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

Retirement

Bishop Townshend accepted the request of The Reverend Jane Piercy Ballard to retire effective May 1, 2021. Jane was ordained a deacon on November 16, 2003 serving the parish of Epiphany, Kingsville. Jane has also served as a member of the Deacons' Board.

New staff at Huron Church House

Doreen Kyomugisha joined the Church House team in March and will be assisting the Administration and Finance department on a part-time contract as we catch up on the backlog created in the challenges of a pandemic reality.

Doreen has a degree in Business Administration – Finance and Accounting, as well as years of experience working in the field. Her skills and experience will be an asset to our daily operations and she will assist with the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) for the parishes.

Doreen continues her work with All Saints' London during her contract with the Diocese. Doreen, our Financial Assistant can be reached at extension 241 or by email at financial@huron.anglican.ca.

Kyle Gascho continues to serve the diocese in different facets, including his administrative support of the Refugee Committee. In addition, his part-time role within the diocese will be extended to include assisting with building the new diocesan website, supporting parishes to develop their own new websites with Tithe.ly and spearheading technology upgrades within synod office. Kyle continues to serve on the Communications and Companion Diocese Committees.

Kyle, our Support Assistant, can be reached at extension 228 or by email at kgascho@huron.anglican.ca.

Rest In Peace

Mrs. Norma Dixon, the widow of the late Reverend Canon Lewis Dixon and the mother of Mary Lou Anderson (wife of the Venerable Ken Anderson) and the Reverend Kevin Dixon died on Monday, March 1.

Norma was a part of the parishes of New St. Paul's, Woodstock; Advent, Ridgetown and Redeemer, Highgate; St. James', Windsor; Christ Church, Chatham and St. James', Westminster, London.

A memorial service will be held in the spring at St. Philip's Anglican Church, Walter's Falls.

May Norma rest in peace and rise in glory.



Welcome to wonder!

Swim and walk along the beautiful Lake Huron shore. Run across grassy fields. Hide and play amongst the trees. Marvel at the starry night sky. Bask in the golden light of a sunset. Fall in love with creation and be inspired to take care of Earth, our island home. Stand shoulder to shoulder with friends both old and new, feet planted on the ground of this most beautiful place, arms outstretched around the world!

Camp is waiting for you to join the fun!

Online registration is open www.camphuron.ca

Plans for our 75th season are underway. As long-time members of the Ontario Camps Association we are blessed to have camp professionals from the province working tirelessly with government and health officials in order to create a road map for the safe re-opening of overnight summer camps in 2021. We are very hopeful that we will once again gather at the camp this summer. We will continue to build our programs around worship, formation and the raising up of caring and compassionate leaders as we immerse campers in the wonder and beauty of God's creation.

For more information, please call Director, Rev'd Canon Gerry Adam 519-434-6893 ext 217 or email contact@camphuron.ca



Stewards of God's Kingdom: Fear is acceptable, refusal is not

By Rev. Andra Townshend O'Neill

giving



For many years we had a magnificent old dutch elm tree on our front lawn, a majestic reminder of decades past that this tree had stood, long before we had come along.

From the time we had bought the house, the tree was showing signs of aging and so we did everything we could to extend its life. We injected it with fertilizer, secured and fortified weak branches and when storms came, prayed it wouldn't fall on anyone or anything.

During one particularly long and violent summer storm, I sat awake most of the night watching at the front window as branches fell wondering if this was the night that the whole thing was coming down? And as I sat there fretting about it, one of the kids scurried out of their room, scared by the storm and discovering me at the window, asked what I was doing?

It was a good question. I told him that I was "watching the storm go by" because I definitely did not want to tell him that I was sitting there watching our tree falling down in front of me, praying that it didn't fall down on the house, that it didn't fall down on him!

That innocent little question clarified things - it was time to let this tree go.

When we had the tree removed, the arborist showed us that from the inside the tree was nearly hollow - it had been using up all of its resources to stay upright and alive and was actually very close to falling down.

In many ways our church is like that tree, a magnificent reminder of decades past that our churches have stood, long before we arrived. Our churches provide shelter, a place to gather with one another and of course, like a tree, provide us with what I would call spiritual oxygen. And many faithful people are watering, fertilizing and fortifying our churches to extend their lives.

Here we are in a particularly long storm - a pandemic. And this storm has our attention.

We are taking the time to look and really notice that some of our branches have been falling, weakened by the natural process of time. Declining congregations, changing demographics, shifts in society, our thriving, multi-generational church is no longer. We are drawing on all of our resources to remain standing.

"Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit"

Are we trying to keep the grain from falling to the ground?

Have we lost our faith in God to show us who we are meant

to be in this world that we live in today?

Perhaps we are a little afraid, afraid of what God might ask of us. What might we have to give up in order to follow where God is leading?

I know that I have been resistant to hearing God, afraid that I won't want to do what God is asking. When I turn to the scriptures, I realize that at times, Jesus was afraid too.

In Holy Week we remembered the obedience of Jesus to God's purpose in the midst of his fear. The final supper with the disciples, the betrayal and arrest in the garden of Gethsemane, the trials, beatings, humiliation and torturous death. Jesus suffers so much loss in that journey, He had to let go of everything that was important for him as a person, except God.

How difficult must it have been for him to see through all of that to the resurrection?

Jesus says: "Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say - 'Father save me from this hour?' No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour."

Fear and concern are acceptable for followers of Jesus. Even reluctance, but refusal is not:

"Whoever serves me must follow me".

And that is the heart of it. If we are followers of Jesus, we must let God lead us into new life, the life that is promised in the gospel. Like the disciples, we must be willing to move, act, to be transformed.

I pray that we will have the faith to let God transform our church into who we need to be to continue the work of the Kingdom. It will be different because our world is different. We can't keep things as they are, trying to hold together something that is showing us that it is ready to be reborn.

We can't be sitting at the window in this storm, watching the branches fall, hoping that the whole house won't come down.

That is not what the Kingdom of God is like. That is not Resurrection.

What a difference it made to have that Elm tree removed from our yard. Without the huge canopy of foliage the gardens and smaller trees were bathed in sunlight, new plants sprouted out of the ground and buds and blossoms appeared where they hadn't been before. The earth was bursting with unexpected, glorious, new life.

Rev. Andra Townshend O'Neill is the rector of St. Mark's London.

Spiritual trauma is an act of violence

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these siblings of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25: 40.

On May 17, 1990, the World Health Organization made the decision to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder.

This was an important landmark that paved the way towards further progress for the rights of queer and trans individuals from across the world. Today, May 17 is internationally recognized as a day against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia, and seeks to bring awareness to the types of violence that are still perpetrated against individuals with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. It is a day for us to look inward at the ways that we continue to erase and alienate God's children from the table. We are often so quick to point the finger at other church institutions, or at society as a whole, and say - "but look! What they are doing is so much worse! At least we..."

It is far easier for us to deny our own complacency in situations of injustice than to examine the ways that we have



failed to follow Jesus' example. We turn a blind eye to the ways that we have perpetuated spiritual trauma onto members of the queer and trans community - and continue to do so. When we are aware of our sins - the sin of homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia - it serves as an onus that we must confront these sins and work towards reconciliation.

Spiritual trauma, which comes in three forms, is psychological abuse that convinces queer and trans individuals that we are somehow unworthy, sinful, or hated by God. The first form of spiritual trauma is Internalized, which is when individuals take the teachings of the church and internalize them, leading to them questioning their right to exist or to be loved. This can lead to

self-harm, depression, anxiety, and suicide, as people consider themselves to be unworthy and unloved. Another form of spiritual trauma is Community, which is when parents, family members, and friends use biblical passages as sacred weapons to justify their own bigotry and exclusion of queer and trans individuals. This can lead to queer and trans people being rejected, being uninvited from family gatherings, and being kicked out of their family and/or households. The final form of spiritual trauma is Systemic, which is perpetuated by church institutions and leaders who use their platform to spread hatred. This can include bishops who refuse to affirm equal marriage within their diocese, priests who preach from the pulpit that queer and trans people are not deserving of full acceptance, or the failure of institutions to work towards inclusion and celebration of people of diverse identities, and can result in people leaving the church as they feel unsafe, or as though they have no place at God's table.

Spiritual trauma is an act of violence. Until we confront the ways that we continue to perpetuate violence onto members

of the queer and trans community, we are complicit in violence and discrimination. The Anglican Church of Canada's Marks of Mission remind us that we must respond to human need with loving service; to seek to transform unjust structures of society; to challenge violence of every kind; and to pursue peace and reconciliation. These Marks hold us accountable to the fact that there is still much work to be done before we can build a church that is truly diverse and welcoming to all of God's children. These Marks stand as a reminder that if we are neutral in situations of injustice, we take the side of the oppressor. These Marks stand as a reminder that Jesus' life was spent feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, freeing those enslaved, and welcoming those who were outcast to the table. We are called to follow Jesus' example by condemning all forms of spiritual trauma, affirming radical and inclusive love for all God's beloved children, and working to rebuild the church community into one that celebrates each person as they were created to be.

On this International Day Against Homophobia, Trans-

phobia, and Biphobia, let us pray:

"Creator, we come to you with both the joys and the sorrows of our hearts. We are grateful for the gift of life and the joy that it can bring; for the families and friends who love us, for the allies who stick up for us even when we cannot risk sticking up for ourselves, for the great diversity you have created in our world. We pray for those who suffer from discrimination because of their gender identity or sexual orientation: who worry about their employment or who cannot find a job, for those who must hide who they are to find housing, for those who are not safe on our streets, for those who do not feel safe in their place of worship. Help us to end homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia, and all forms of discrimination and hate. Show us the way to make this world a better place for all."

(A prayer by Ruth Wood).

Sydney Brouillard-Coyle (ney/nem/nir) is co-chair of Proud Anglicans of Huron and music director at St. Paul's Anglican Church. Ney serves as a consultant to Faith, Worship & Ministry on developing Trans* Liturgies.

The miracle of seeds: Dancing and singing with God

By Caroline Sharp

"For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you."
Mt. 17:20-21

One of the things I look forward to by the end of winter is spring. The days grow longer, we shed our heavy winter clothes, and new life abounds.

For me, as a farmer, it means that I can start putting the hundreds of seedlings I've started outside! It means that it is time to return to the outdoors and get my hands back in the dirt; preparing raised beds, setting up irrigation, laying down mulch, planting seeds, transplanting, etc. But what I look forward to the most is the germination and growth of a new plant from a seed.

God can be found in nature, in her Creation, all around us! I empathize with C.S. Lewis' statement: "Nature never taught me that there exists a God of glory and infinite majesty. I had to learn that in other ways. But nature gave the word glory a meaning for me. I still do not know where else I could have found one."

When I see the miracle of a tiny seed unfurl itself into

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



Jonathan Kemper/Unsplash

roots and a vine, then journey upwards sprouting foliage, then flowers and fruit, I cannot help but think of God's glory and the love God must have for this tiny little bit of life to grow and do what it was created to do. What boggles the mind is that God loves us all so incredibly much that she doesn't even expect us to have faith the size of a mustard seed. But if we did

have that much faith, nothing would be impossible for us! To have this faith means that I can do all things through him who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13).

For us to do what God intends, we need to make our faith the size of a mustard seed so that we can plant it, because that's what you do with seeds. When our faith is planted, it grows roots and a vine. It

branches out, and reaches places we never thought possible and this miracle – this gift – comes from God. The trouble is, it is so very hard for us to plant our mustard seeds or, at least, to get them to germinate.

Author, mentor, and entrepreneur, Cynthia Occelli wrote: "For a seed to achieve its greatest expression, it must come completely undone. The shell cracks, its insides come out and everything changes. To someone who doesn't understand growth, it would look like complete destruction."

As humans, we must work at developing and maintaining relationships with others. Our relationship with Christ is no different. Building this relationship grows our faith and our mustard seeds. Try for even just one dinner to put a plate out for Jesus and serve up some food to this seemingly empty spot at the table. Remind yourself that Jesus is always with you and feel his love for you. He loves you no matter what! Even when you think you are alone, Jesus is there (even when you're dancing and singing like no one is watching!). Is this relationship relatively one sided? If so, there are multiple ways to give your relationship a boost, just ask your rector!

The language that Christ uses is often land based and, more

specifically, agricultural. We need to listen to his words simply and as they are. We need to listen with open hearts and be impressionable like young children. It is from this that we can see growth rather than destruction. For our Church to grow we must plant our seeds as well as water them and nurture them in the ideal environment. Seeds, left unplanted, become unviable. Unplanted or unwatered seeds are also an expense, rather than a profit.

I really believe the mustard seed of our Church is currently in that anxious stage of being watered and waiting for its shell to crack. To be fair, the Church has likely been in this stage for quite some time. However, we are not accustomed to kairós time - things happening when they are meant to happen. But the seeds are soaking and, in time, will grow to fruition.

I know precisely how many seeds of everything I have planted and I watch the moistened soil regularly for new growth. I suspect that God also does this with us. For each and every new seed to pop up out of the soil, God sings and dances like no one is watching.

Are you with her when she does?

Caroline Sharp is a chair of SEJH.

The place of story in our lives

By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

Earlier in the year author and historian Diana Butler Bass, spoke at a Deanery of London event entitled Unbinding Heavy Burdens.

Speaking from a historian's perspective Butler Bass spoke of the place of story in our lives. In particular she spoke of the very human tendency to want to find just where we fit into this larger picture of our communities, as we try to place ourselves somewhere in the larger story. Humans are inveterate story tellers and have been since they first gathered around a fire under the night stars. In many different parishes, due to pressures of all kinds many of us have begun to more intentionally wonder together just what is our place in the story of the Church and how can we structure ourselves to be ready to meet what is next in a faithful way, a way that responds to wherever we see God moving in our midst.

Butler Bass spent some time speaking about what happens when either the events of our lives or larger events in society



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

(think Pandemic) disrupt our story. She went on to say that when we have a certain understanding about who we are, what we do, how we do it, and in what feels like the blinking of an eye, due to some disturbance, it all changes.

She shared the example of how the events of September 11, 2001, beyond unmistakably being very tragic, were so difficult for our American neighbours as the destruction of the twin towers disrupted the commonly held story that Americans were safe within their own borders. Obviously, this was no longer true. Of paramount importance when such disruptions occur is the need to address these disruptions and process how our story has now

changed. Failing to do this can be very unhealthy both for individuals and for communities of all kinds.

Disruptions to our story mean that some things no longer make sense, and so our tendency is to try to fix the story, often returning to previously effective solutions, instead of doing the hard work of acknowledging the disruption and reflecting on a way forward in light of new realities.

We all have disruptions that take place in our stories don't we. Perhaps we have a financial setback, perhaps we or a loved one gets a serious diagnosis, perhaps it is becoming far too obvious that our bodies are not quite as strong or as resilient as they once were, perhaps we feel

like technology is racing past us, at far too fast a pace to keep up and we are in real danger of being left behind.

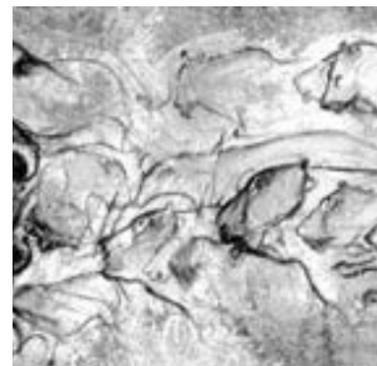
All of these are disruptions in our own stories. How we deal with them, if we deal with them, will determine a lot about how the new realities will eventually be incorporated into who we are. One thing is certain however, when disruptions to our stories happen, they never feel very good but there is always something for us to learn as we embrace each new component of our story.

As an Anglican community of faith, the local parish, as well as the Church in general is undergoing a great many disruptions in the stories, we tell ourselves about who we are, and what constitutes ministry. We all know them. And yet, what disruptions offer us personally and as a community, are very valuable opportunities, to pause, reflect, and begin the discernment process of hearing God speaking in this moment. While this takes energy that sometimes we do not feel we have, it is opening for us fresh countries to explore, new

boundaries to cross and so much more.

Central to the purpose of an EfM group is the practice and process of reflection. If you are interested in learning more about joining others on this journey, seeking by God's grace to incorporate new elements into their stories, as we move to whatever new chapters may lie ahead, we will be hosting our first Open House on Wednesday, May 12 at 7pm by Zoom. If you, or anyone you know, would like to attend, please be in touch with Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron EfM Coordinator or myself Val Kenyon at EFM@huron.anglican.ca

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



Countering Anglican tribalism: A more diverse Church

Last month I hosted a class on congregational growth and evangelism that included thirty one students from three different dioceses and four different time zones.



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

If lemonade is to be made from the fruits of our pandemic, then one of our newfound blessings is the ability for Anglicans to come together over great distances via Zoom to learn from each other.

Represented among the students in the class were both large and small Anglican congregations, both urban and rural. While the contexts of ministry in Canada are sometimes very different: a cathedral church in Kingston, Ontario vs. a family-style church in Dawson City, Yukon – many of the challenges facing Anglicans today were expressed as being remarkably similar.

Throughout the class a number of concerns were raised by the participants: our congregation isn't open to trying new things; we haven't been seeing any new members in the last



Sharon McCutcheon/Unsplash

few years; our volunteers are too old to carry on like in the past; we don't feel like there is enough of us to make an impact in ministry.

If some of these responses sound familiar to you, it is likely because you've probably heard the same refrains in your own congregation. I certainly have, and for this reason I sought to prepare counter-arguments to each one of them before starting the course.

Have you noticed that there is one element in common with each of the concerns expressed above? That each statement begins with an emphasis on "our" or "we"? The reason for this, I believe, is that Anglicans, whether we recognize it or not, are deeply entrenched in a form of Church tribalism.

What I mean by this, is that we often find it difficult to visualize possibilities that

are beyond what is already familiar to our membership. While Anglicans may often lament the trends of decline experienced in the majority of congregations in Huron, we aren't overly enthusiastic about reaching beyond what is known and comfortable to us in efforts to evangelize, to grow or to innovate.

"Our congregation isn't open to trying new things." Okay. It's one thing to be able to name a challenge, but another thing entirely to let yourself be conquered by it. Growing congregations have a tendency of seeking diversity in their ministry activities. In trying new things sometimes they fail, but in their commitment to trying out unfamiliar practices sometimes they also succeed. The fruits of these labours is often the formation of new relationships.

"We haven't seen new members in years." Well, maybe you've run out Anglicans in your particular neighbourhood and they aren't walking through the door anymore. It's time to start making new ones! When the only options for growth lay beyond our tribe (beyond self-identifying Anglicans) it's time to get to know the people in your neighbourhood who aren't interested in darkening your door on Sunday. Where is God already at work with them? How might you care for them, serve them, pray for them and learn from them?

"Our volunteers are too old." Here's a new idea! With age comes experience. Where might you share your experience with others beyond your tribe? The example of an aging Anglican Church Women's group inviting local school children to learn how to make jams comes to mind. In partnering with the school students, there were many hands to make light work for their annual fundraiser. The ACW members enjoyed sharing their experience for the benefit of a younger generation and both groups shared the proceeds of the event.

"We don't feel like there is enough of us to make an impact." It only takes one person to make another person feel welcomed. If smaller congregations are truly open to the idea of growth, they need to also

be willing to embrace change. Each new person that enters a small church changes the DNA of that community. Sometimes this change can be perceived as a threat to our tribe – to the old way of doing things. The truth is, it is far easier to grow a small congregation than it is to grow a larger one, but unless we make room for the change that each new member inevitably brings, unless we embrace diversity within our tribe, then newcomers won't truly feel welcomed and they will leave.

At the end of our class together, each of the students had two or three new ideas that they were excited to bring back to their respective congregations. Their enthusiasm to explore the diversity of new practices and relationships was incredibly hopeful to me and, I would argue, to our entire Anglican tribe.

May God bless their leadership, their ministries and their willingness to learn new ways of relating to those beyond their doors.

Rev. 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.

grayhamebowcott@diohuron.org

Do not create a language barrier!

I love words. I love learning the etymology of words, their development over time and even those new words that get added to the lexicon each year.



**MEDIA
BYTES**
**REV. MARTY
LEVESQUE**

Some notable words and phrase from 2020 are: cancel culture, deep fake, contact tracing, onboarding and social distancing. A few that are not quite so easy to discern

are zoodle, weak sauce, WFH, and sadfishing.

The English language continues to evolve each year and as new words become part of our everyday verbiage, older words lose their common or assumed understanding. This is true about the church and our vocabulary, which often seems like we have our own special language.

And while words like Triduum, Eucharist, Unction, Vicar and Rector all have distinct meanings that those who are church-ed intuitively know, they are no longer part of the general population's lexicon.

That is not to say we no longer use these words that have deep meaning to our

faith and tradition. Rather, it is to say we need to know when to use those words and always be ready with a quick definition. One place where our inside language can be problematic is our outward-facing media: websites and social media.

For instance, creating a Facebook event and advertising on a church website Maundy Thursday services might seem logical to those who are church-ed, but to a seeker, it might as well be Latin (which of course it is). A better advertisement would be "Maundy Thursday: A Communion Service of the Institution of the Lord's Supper."

Yes, that is a mouthful, but it explains what the service is, offers some theological education and prepares seekers as to what to expect. In essence, it is welcoming by not creating a language barrier.

So whether it is Easter or "Christmas and the Celebration of the Nativity of Lord: Commemorating the Birth of Jesus", including the definition in the title goes a long way in welcoming seekers into our communities and to the font and the table.

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

martylevesque@diohuron.org



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We are perfect in our imperfection

I am 62 years old, going on 63. And I find myself emotionally and spiritually challenged in at least one similar way that I was in my early 30s. I share this with the intent of provoking you to wander out and beyond my process reflectively.



As I See It

REV. JIM
INNES

This challenge is an issue familiar to many. When I am receiving affirmation, I feel creatively joyful, connected, optimistic, and powerful. It's the same experience when I am feeling confidently productive. But, when I am not receiving affirmation, and with very little or no provocation (like the slightest criticism), I begin to wonder what more I ought to be doing.



Anne Nygard/Unsplash

I believe this self-questioning arises from more than just a bruised ego. I think it has to do with connecting to our inherent gifts and feeling, or not feeling, as one within the order of things.

What makes this issue unique for me, for all of us actually, is how it bubbles inside. Some easily let it go and move on.

I, on the other hand, become quickly anxious. This anxiousness turns to doubt. This doubt provokes a barrage of obsessive negative thoughts, primarily about myself and my choices. My reactions can create a problem that never existed or make a minor issue a humongous one.

Through all the counselling I've undergone, and all the counselling I have offered, I'd like to think such debilitating reactivity goes away. And though I may have outgrown some of the intensity, it persists like a wound that never heals.

What is this compulsive behaviour say about the redemptive process? And, why are some issues so very lifelong?

We could perhaps find some answers in depth psychology, a process that explores our motivations. However, knowing about the problem, even where it might have begun and why we chose specific behaviour, does not make it disappear.

Perhaps there is a need to follow suit with AA members who start sharing by declaring they are an alcoholic or drug addict. Because, no matter how long they've stayed away from their substance of choice, they realize the potential of falling prey to its grip.

This courageous realization disables hiding problems behind denial (where they grow more extensive). It enables a self-possession that can be friend (or at least fend off) the monster at the door. Because of this, I believe AA is an effectively pragmatic process of redemption that can offer us all a means to manage those persistent issues.

I use the word "redemption" purposefully there. I would use the word healing, but healing to me feels like it's disappeared. Unfortunately, some issues don't disappear, never (or rarely). They can almost be called an obsession. That is because when a specific stimulus is nearby, our complicatedly

wired brains go in a particular direction.

Conceivably, all we can do regarding persistent behaviors is heighten our self-awareness to lessen the damage. Now, this may sound a little pessimistic or hopeless. So, let me say this, "we are perfect in our imperfection." If we deny our imperfections, we reject the parts of ourselves that, when redeemed, contain great value.

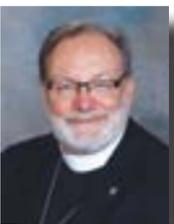
In another article, I will need to explore this concept of 'being redeemed.' Yet, for my intent in this article, let me only suggest that our redeemed woundedness is the cornerstone of compassion. And, it is our scars that define our unique calling.

As I see it, and as I experience it, one of the most challenging concepts to appreciate and then live into is how our wounds have the potential for good.

Rev. Jim Innes is the rector of the Regional Ministry of South Huron.
jimminnes@diohuron.org

We are the storytellers of this generation

Extensive periods of limited outside activity over the last year have led me to renew my acquaintance with, and to enjoy, the books of Edward Rutherfurd.



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

Pure escapism, to be transported once again to New York, London, Paris, Sarum and some of the other locations featured in his writings, allows me to walk the streets of places where I have either lived or visited. Rutherfurd draws back the curtain of history and sheds a light on the past. His perspective on the geological formation of the valley of the Thames River, for instance, has an ongoing impact on the narrative he writes as it sweeps through the centuries.

He presents the stories of families whose lives are interwoven through the years and how decisions made at moments which are lost in the mists of time influence and shape the framework of contemporary life.

From personal experience, I am very aware of the fact that decisions made by others and decisions which I have made of my own accord, have had an impact on where I am in my



Dmitry Ratushny/Unsplash

However and wherever we become aware of the Gospel story, there comes a time when we have the opportunity to claim the story as our own.

life today. All of us, I suspect need only to look at the brief time frame of our own lives to see how unique moments, special events, meeting others for the first time, are not only indelibly etched into our memories, but have influenced the pattern and direction our lives have taken.

Clergy may point to the example of how the combination of circumstance, episcopal guidance, search committee

dynamics, gut feeling and the guidance of the Holy Spirit have either opened doors into new and exciting experiences or revealed that the opportunity for a shared ministry in a new setting was not a viable option. So many factors influence the direction our lives take. All of those elements are a part of our own history, our own story. Some we understand; others we do not.

The recent experience of Holy Week reminds us that we have a story of faith which we have received as a gift from the generations who have gone before us. The way in which the story is told, how it has been shared with us, is as unique as our family context. For some, the family setting may not be the place where our lives are rooted in the Gospel. However and wherever we become aware of the Gospel story, there

comes a time when we have the opportunity to claim the story as our own.

One of the most profound moments when the Church creates an opportunity for us to be reminded of what offers us a strong foundation of faith upon which we may choose to build our lives is the Easter Vigil. The almost two dozen readings of Scripture which are included in the shape of the liturgy allow God's People the opportunity to be reminded of the experience of previous generations whose stories span the centuries and whose witness bring us to this moment in our lives.

As you look into the rear-view mirror of your life, you have the opportunity of exploring what influences have shaped your life and what influences have impacted your own faith journey. This perspective not only helps you to value and appreciate your past, but also help you to discern how you may be able to build a bright future.

Recently, I became aware of a poem written by former President Jimmy Carter, entitled, "I wanted to share my Father's World". In a few, brief lines he writes of the reality of the relationship that he had with his father. He reflects on all that has been experienced in life and in their relationship and knows that he is looking at "the Father who will never cease to be alive in me".

On a personal level, my guess is, that at the very centre of the

circle of those who have had a deep influence on our lives, we may find the members of our families. It is through them that we develop an initial understanding of values and perhaps even of faith.

In a world which relies increasingly on technology as a means of establishing and nurturing relationships, those who are physically there for us when we lift our eyes up from our computer enhance our lives in ways unmatched by any touchscreen contact. These are the people who will never cease to be alive in us. If that is true of our immediate family, it also holds true for those who form the different branches of our family trees which reach back through the years.

At the core of our faith story we are drawn back to the Life, Ministry, Death and Resurrection of Jesus. We know the story because it has been told and shared by others through the centuries. It is a story which has never ceased to live in the lives of those who have claimed the story as their own. In a world which needs to be aware of the reality of God's Love for God's World, we are the storytellers of this generation.

May we all be faithful storytellers as we share the Gospel story through our words and deeds in our daily lives.

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

My secret diaries – I'll keep doing it for a while

For over a year now, Hana Scorrar and I have been writing daily reflections for the people of St. James Westminster.



**MOSTLY ABOUT
RELIGION**

**REV. CANON
KEITH
NETHERY**

We've been surprised along the way as we have received notes from people who are not members of our congregation, to tell us how much these reflections have meant. Obviously that inter-web thing is working well, and people are sharing that which they feel has been helpful to them.

So, while on a walk the other day, I found myself deep in thought about this. I've never written a blog, or been part of a podcast. I guess I can't rule such things out, but having written so much in the past year, I'm not sure if I'd want to take on such an ongoing task. But wait a minute – haven't I been doing this all my life and so have others? There are so many ways that we find to correspond; sometimes to small groups, sometimes with



Gerry Cherry/Unsplash (detail)

a wide-ranging circulation and sometimes just our own thoughts, which someday we might let someone else read.

I chuckled as I remember the "secret diaries" that so many, mostly girls, used to write. We all wanted to see what deep secrets others would write, but certainly were not enamoured by the idea someone else might get eyeballs on our own written thoughts.

For years, probably decades, my mom's siblings kept up a "family letter." It was a significant moment when that letter landed in the mailbox, and the envelope was opened and the letters inside quickly read. No doubt us kids would hover about to see if we might get tidbits of news that might interest us. Each person would write a page or two or three. All of this was done in beautiful cursive writing and I seem to remember, we always knew

whose page mom was reading by the penmanship (is that a word – it is inclusive which is important!) Given that my handwriting was atrocious at best, the prospects of me ever writing such a letter was always seen as unlikely.

But it wasn't that many years, with both my sister and I in Alberta (and I soon made a foray into Saskatchewan) that we started such a family letter amongst us. We were all thankful that dad had insisted that we take typing in high school and we all had access to typewriters, although some letters arrived in longhand! I soon remembered that spark when mom would receive her letter, when the latest family news arrived in my mailbox.

There were several times in my broadcasting career, that I was allowed to write a "comment column" which was usually about sports and part

of a daily broadcast. What freedom to be able to comment on whatever I wanted, and to say pretty much what I wanted to, as well! I learned a lesson rather quickly. What was said on radio could bring quick and stinging rebuttals. But I have to admit it was a joy to participate in this banter.

I think the first online idea of this that I remember was something called ICQ. That's really about all I remember. I don't think I ever participated, but I seem to remember this was a "thing" on these new-fangled computers that a lot of people joined in.

It's more than a decade ago that Facebook came along. It was a breath of fresh air. A way to communicate to and with your friends.

If my memory serves, just about everything posted on Facebook in the early days was friend to friend. No annoying adverts or posts shared "for you." What was a unique way of combining multiple layers of communication has slowly and sadly deteriorated to the point where I would suggest 80 per cent of what I read today is of little interest; however, there is this rabbit hole yearning that we all seem to have and I dive in far too often.

Well, you know the rest of the

story. Social media has morphed into a multi-billion-dollar industry, and has made more than a few people many millions of dollars.

But it's all still about communication. It's still like family letters, newspaper or radio columns and many other ways to sharing thoughts and ideas within a group of people.

Writing three spiritual reflections a week for more than 52 weeks has been a challenge. There are days I sit and stare at the computer screen hoping that some form of intelligent message will magically appear. But in the end, it has been about making connections in community to help each other along.

That's the heart of the Gospel and no matter how many different methods, modes and modules we have used along the way, we have success when we connect, when we communicate, when we share our love for God, family and community. It's a rather good use of our time and energy and brings a lot of fulfillment.

I guess I'll keep doing it for a while!

Rev. Canon Keith Nethery is the rector at St. James' Westminster, London.

keithnethery@diohuron.org

A note on 'normal things'

"Only when normal things are not normal anymore do we realize how special normal things are." Unknown Source



**LAUREL
PATTENDEN**



Laurel Pattenden.
May Flowers

This Covid-19 quote appeared in my Facebook stream and at first glance it certainly made me long for the old normal days of freedom in our movements.

I think my husband and I miss going out for breakfast the most. Him reading a newspaper, me doing the puzzles and having jam with our toast. Just so you know, jam has no calories or sugar when eaten in a small cosy breakfast cafe.

The second reading of this quote raised a few red flags for me. Does it for you? What are "normal things"?

My normal things are not necessarily normal things for you. Perhaps you prefer lunch out or definitely marmalade in-

stead of jam at breakfast. Your normal. My normal.

Thinking about normal things, I opened the dictionary to find that normal means conforming to the usual standard, type or custom. Usual. It makes me wonder who sets the usual standard or custom. Would it be your bank account, your neighbourhood, your race, your gender etc? Also, when I think of normal things as being special and good it just shows you

that I live in privileged circumstances. As do many of you.

For many people "normal things" are not necessarily good or special. Living in poverty is not a good normal. Living daily with racism is not a good normal. So normal can mean so many different things. Turning on your tap and finding the water undrinkable day after day is normal for many.

Living during the pandemic, has affected all of us in many,

many ways. The pandemic has, on its own terms, created many new normals on how we get through the day. My normal is living without visits to my grandson in B.C. This is heartbreaking for me. Your normal may be having to home school your grandson. This may be enriching or maybe not so (from what I have heard). My normal. Your normal.

Some of the pandemic normals (yes, we have developed over the past year pandemic normals!) I have established, which are actually positive choices, I hope will carry on. You actually do not need deodorant unless leaving the yard. But then again if we maintain six feet distancing, depending on the wind, your scent will not offend. This does not work however around bears and other wildlife.

My addiction to paper towels has ended. They are much too bulky to carry out of grocery stores. Taking up way too much space in your shopping cart for goodies. I have saved many trees. Dryer sheets are now woolly dryer balls. Fragrance free and much more eco-friendly. These are just a few of my new normals.

By this time you are probably wishing you hadn't read that quote on "normal things"! It certainly has made me ponder over this term. Our normals can be good, bad, safe, unsafe, habitual, life giving and circumstantial. Most times our normal is not in our control.

I think I have come to dislike the word "normal". We see normal only through our own eyes and circumstances. Whether in the pandemic or not, perhaps I will learn to see my "normal things" as not status quo for everyone else. I need to see "normal" through the eyes of frontline workers, the eyes of indigenous people, the eyes of those living below the poverty line and all disadvantaged. I need to acknowledge my normal and I need to acknowledge everyone else's normal.

We will get through this pandemic bringing in the "new normal". Let us hope that the new normal includes goodness and life opportunities to all. Not my normal. Not your normal. The world's new normal. God's normal. So the "normal things" nourish everyone.

Laurel is retired and likes to spend her time in her art studio.