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HURON CHURCH NEWS

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF HURON • Huron Church News is a section of the Anglican Journal • APRIL 2022



Laurel Pattenden, PRETTY BIRD SERIES, Mixed media, 2022

Along the way: This is where our encounters with Jesus happen

From the Resurrection onward, writes Bishop Todd in his column, Jesus has come alongside us as the Risen One who teaches us, guides us, gathers us, and sends us. In the Scripture, says the Bishop, we see that this often happens “along the way”, “on the road” to somewhere or another.

Encounters with Jesus – accepting the unexpected. As our Education for Ministry article notes, “so much, both around and within us, can keep us from experiencing God’s presence.” Thus Lent and Easter as a season for drawing closer to God and opening our minds for those unforeseen and surprising moments.

Encounters with Jesus – accepting the unexpected. Here is a scene: An Anglican priest in the Ukrainian Orthodox church, asked to offer a reading during a prayer for peace. The warm welcome, readings in three languages – Ukrainian, Russian, and English. A lesson in sacrifice, service, and salvation.

He is risen, indeed!

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Stratford Anglican churches walk for the homeless

Eleven members from three Anglican churches participated in the Coldest Night of the Year Walk. They were among 65 fundraising teams that collected over \$162,000 to help the homeless in Stratford.

By Ven. Tanya Phibbs

Saturday, February 26 was a beautiful winter day – cold and bright. Late afternoon, as the sun began its downward journey through the western sky, was indeed the perfect time for a walk around Lake Victoria in Stratford, also known as the Avon River. The brisk breeze was a bit chilly but not as much as the knowledge there are those in our communities who would be sleeping outside on a night when the temperature dipped to -9C.

Eleven members from the three Anglican Churches in Stratford – St. Stephen's, St. Paul's and St. James' – came together to form a fundraising team for the local Coldest Night of the Year Walk in Stratford. This was a wonderful opportunity to spend time chatting with each other while



The Stratford Anglican Churches team raised over \$5300 in the City Walk.

supporting the wider community.

An extra incentive to do so this year was that one of the host organizations was the new Stratford Connection Centre, housed at St. Paul's church.

This new center provides a place-based intervention combining the efforts of pro-

fessional service providers and well-trained volunteers to begin or continue a wellness journey for individuals experiencing significant challenges, including but not limited to poverty, homelessness, addictions and mental health, all in one location in downtown Stratford. This includes access to laundry

facilities, showers, washrooms, food, social connection, emotional support, information and referrals as well as assistance with document readiness. In addition to the important role St. Paul's has as the host of Connection Centre, the volunteers will include members from all three Anglican churches in the city.

The other organization that the Coldest Night Walk supported was Shelterlink, a local organization that assists homeless youth and youth at risk of becoming homeless. Shelterlink does more than just assist in finding youth a warm safe bed – they actively work with youth to assist them in their pursuits, through education and skills development supports.

In a small city such as Stratford, where homelessness tends to be hidden more deeply than in larger cities, it is easy

to overlook the difficult reality that there are many without safe housing. In Stratford, thanks to the work of 65 teams made up of 395 walkers, over \$162,000 was raised for these two important organizations, smashing the Walk goal of \$126,000. The Stratford Anglican Churches team was the fifth highest fundraising team in the city Walk, raising over \$5,300.

The Stratford Anglican Churches walkers are grateful to the members of the churches who sponsored us in the walk and to our captain, Wade Phibbs, for his regular updates and constant cheerleading. A chance to live out our baptismal vow to “seek and serve Christ in all persons”, together with Anglican siblings in Christ, was a blessing for each of the participants.

We look forward to next year!

ALLELUIA - CHRIST IS RISEN!

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Editor

Davor Milicevic
huronchurchnews@gmail.com
519-434-6893, ext. 251
c/o Huron Church House
190 Queens Ave.
London, ON
N6A 6H7

Proofreading

Terri Ellison

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The Right Reverend
Todd Townshend
Bishop of Huron
Diocese of Huron
Huron Church House
190 Queens Avenue
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Together on the road with Christ

This year, the beginning of April sees the end of the season of Lent and the beginning of our holiest time of the year—the celebrations of Easter.

We have been praying for peace in the world even while we do all that we can to give aid and protection to the vulnerable in Ukraine, Eastern Europe, around the world, and in our own communities where other kinds of war claim casualties every day.

Times of war and pandemic have a way of focusing the church on the basics of our life together. The spiritual practices and acts of mercy and justice combine to powerfully draw us together. The power of the church is the activation of speech and action taken



**BISHOP
TODD
TOWNSHEND**

together in the name of Christ, and in the presence of God's Holy Spirit.

One of the ways that our churches come together is in the annual gathering of our diocesan Synod. The 2022 Synod begins on May 15, the fifth Sunday of Easter, when we will hear the one seated on the throne of heaven saying, "See, I am making all things new." (Revelation 21)

I continue to believe that our common strategic diocesan goal is to shift the centre of gravity in our practices from

an emphasis on operations to an emphasis on new creation, better revealing the marks of mission by becoming: a learning church, a just church, a diverse church, a new church.

Attuned to the needs of the world around us, the key is to be willing to go more deeply into the practices of the church, fully open to God's desire for us and for the world, focusing on Jesus and yielding to the life and movement of the Holy Spirit.

We began this theme in 2020 when Synod met by Zoom for a one-day event in September 2020. With a focus on our "Identity and Mission in Christ", we explored how we were doing as a church in the midst of the pandemic. In May of 2021, we continued the same theme with a focus on "Yield-

ing to the Life of the Spirit". For a third meeting in a row, we will continue using the basic theme to focus on life "Together on the Road with Christ".

I pray that there will be many ways in which this theme will resonate within our life together. From the Resurrection onward, Jesus has come alongside us as the Risen One who teaches us, guides us, gathers us, and sends us. In the Scripture we see that this often happens "along the way", "on the road" to somewhere or another. These encounters always bring the disciples back to faith and life in him. Through these encounters, they (and we) are saved.

I look forward to Synod this year where we will hear many healing stories of such encounters in our life together.

+ Todd

Lent to Easter celebration

We are almost to the end of our 40 days of Lent. A time where we were invited "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." (BAS pg. 282)

This is a special time that was set aside for us to do these things, but it does not have to end. Continuing into the Easter season and the rest of the year to focus on prayer, reading and meditating on the Word of God only strengthens our spiritual lives and our relationship with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Rev. Steve Greene says it well in his article:

"Soon we can belt out, 'Jesus Christ is risen today!' And begin the fifty days of the Eastertide. God's self-revelation in the Easter event comes to us as a call to spread the Good News of redemption, liberation and of our commissioning to mission and service. We recall



ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

the women who first found the Empty Tomb and their zeal to inform the Disciples that Christ is risen indeed!

Ancient tradition teaches that the Resurrection of Jesus marks a new beginning, a chance to rejoice in God's renewal of creation. The late Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann handed on this teaching, 'God did not create the world for this separation, dying, ruin

and corruption... The Resurrection is the re-creation of the world in its original beauty and totality.'

The resurrection is for all time!! In His death and rising to life again, Jesus gave Himself as a sign of the new and eternal covenant that God is always with us. In giving of Himself, He opened to us a way of freedom and peace. We profess these things in our Eucharistic



prayers each week and in our hearts at every moment.

As children of the resurrection, as children of the resurrected God, Jesus not only conquered death, but He also ushered in Life! Not only spiritual life, but full and abundant life, physical and spiritual. He now reigns as the Lord of Life. The Lord who gives new life to His creation—beginning with us!

Let us continue with our daily prayers, reading and meditating on God's word and open ourselves to the freedom, peace and love offered to us, through God by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit."

Lent and Easter blessings to you and your families!

From the Executive of Anglican Fellowship of Prayer:

Rev. Steve Greene – St. Luke's, Cambridge; St. Thomas The Apostle, Cambridge, and Rev. Kimberly Myer – The Parish of St. Stephen's and Church of the Redeemer, Oldcastle.



"Surely the Lord is in this place... This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."



"Come and journey with a Saviour": Willing to go into the undiscovered country, with the Holy Spirit as our guide



All Saints', Waterloo: Groundbreaking service for the new church

Members of All Saints' Anglican Church community in Waterloo gathered on a frigid Sunday afternoon, February 13, to participate in a groundbreaking service for the new church.

The service began in the sanctuary of the existing church with Bishop Todd Townshend addressing the parishioners. The procession was then led to the ceremonial groundbreaking location at the south-east corner of the same property, where Bishop Todd broke the ground at the site of the altar for the new church.

More than a hundred people participated in the ceremony, including All Saints' head pastor Rev. Marty Levesque, associate pastor Rev. Dan Bowyer, and children, youth and Filipino community pastor Rambie Bernardino, as well as the clergy from other churches in the Deanery of Waterloo.

"It's a joy for the whole diocese when a parish community can develop their home in new ways to serve their 'neighbourhood'", said Bishop Townshend after the service, adding that All Saints, Waterloo is giving wonderful witness to the goodness of God: "We celebrate their faithfulness and their continuing hard work in the name of Jesus our Lord."

The groundbreaking ceremony marks an important step in a

decade long reorganizing effort of the community.

In 2012, their joint partners, Waterloo North Presbyterian, came to an end of their life cycle, and All Saints' members, led by Rev. Canon Robin Lyon, decided to purchase their share of the building and the property. A major capital campaign was launched, and the entire property with the church building came into All Saints' possession in 2014.

The next two years saw the congregation explore unlocking the value of the property, and dreaming a new future and new possibilities. In 2016, when Rev. Marty Levesque became the rector of All Saints, a decision was made to sell a portion of the property and relocate the church to the retained portion. Breaking of the ground for the new church on February 13 is seen as the end of the long and complicated administrative process involving numerous severance and zoning changes applications.

"Through all of the ups and downs, we can honestly attest that God has been a part of this from its inception", commented Rev. Marty Levesque, praising the courage and persistence of All Saints' community.

The construction of the new church will begin with the excavation works this spring.



182nd SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF HURON

TOGETHER ON THE ROAD WITH CHRIST

LONDON, ONTARIO, MAY 15-16



Stewards of freedom

By Ven. Graham Bland

Oscar Peterson, Canadian jazz pianist, and Harriet Hamilton, Wisconsin lawyer, knew well the racist and gender-based prejudices that deny freedom.

Oscar set Harriet's words to music as a Hymn to Freedom:

When every heart joins every heart and together yearns for liberty, ...

When every hand joins every hand and together moulds our destiny, ...

Any hour any day, the time soon will come when men will live in dignity, ...

When every man joins in our song and together singing harmony,

That's when we'll be free.

We are not yet free. Just in the last short while, a 'Freedom Convoy' triggered Canada's Emergencies Act; Russia invaded Ukraine.

Followers of Jesus are called to be stewards of freedom in a troubled world.

Freedom is a word that stirs deep feelings. In every age, people have shed blood



and spent their life's energies in brave and selfless struggles against dehumanizing forces. When human dignity is betrayed by selfishness or violence, everyone's freedom is diminished.

Linguistically, freedom has Proto-Indo-European roots: *prī-*, "to love", and *priy-a*, "dear, beloved". It came into Old English as *freo*, "not in bondage," or "noble; joyful." One's "beloved" or "friend" was a free member of one's own clan. Freedom is about the clan. Freedom is ours; it is not only mine.

Freedom is uprooted when used in a narrow, individualistic sense, when employed to insist on the rights of one group over the rights of the rest. One cannot be truly free while others are not.

Freedom suffers when its would-be champions ignore the freedom of others. John C. Calhoun, one-time vice president, spoke in the U.S. House of Representatives: "It has been said by some physicians, that life is a forced state. The same may be said of freedom. It requires efforts, it presupposes mental

and moral qualities of a high order to be generally diffused in the society where it exists." Sounds right, but when you discover that Calhoun also called slavery a 'positive good,' you realize that true freedom is sometimes betrayed by high-sounding rhetoric.

The cry "Freedom!" in recent protests is unsettling when it ignores the deep roots of freedom in love, friendship, and community; when it misappropriates freedom as a rallying cry for selfishness; when it portrays freedom as a personal right, unlimited by responsibility to others. Then, ironically, the cry "Freedom!" serves not freedom but slavery, slavery to a narrow view of one's place in the world.

St. Paul writes: "You were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that

you are not consumed by one another." (Galatians 5)

Stewardship seeks to ensure the quality of people's lives and relationships in community. Good stewards want to embody the mysteries of God's grace in the world.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu's recent death reminded us how South African Christians accepted God's call to be stewards of freedom in a racist society. They understood and embodied the Gospel value that to be free in Christ is to serve the freedom of others; they bore public witness to that value, often at great cost.

Christians in Canada are called to the same freedom quest. Our mission is to discern together how to be stewards of freedom here. Then we must act in common cause, until democracy and justice prevail, until racism and prejudice are history, until people simply love and listen to one another. Until all humankind enjoys true freedom.

Ven. Graham Bland is a retired priest, and a member of the diocesan Stewardship Committee.

Bishop of Huron's Prayer's *Online* Conference

Praying through Times of Transition

Saturday, May 7, 2022

9:30am to 12:30am

Ven. Megan Collings-Moore



When everything changes, prayer can help ground us. But that is also the time when prayer can be the most difficult. What do our experiences tell us about how to pray when life changes? What ancient wisdom does the church have about

prayer in uncertain times? What might Jesus or Scripture suggest about responding to loss?

Join the Ven. Megan Collings-Moore for a morning exploring what prayer might look like in times of transition. The morning will contain keynote addresses and breakout discussion groups. There will also be resources shared, as well as a chance to reflect on your own experiences and wisdom. **Session #1 - Prayer & truth telling:** How does prayer help us discern what is true? In a world where truth seems to mean many different things, how can we trust G-d? **Session #2 - Prayer & perspective:** When life is hard, what is the role of prayer in helping us lament our losses, but also pulling us beyond ourselves? Can prayer help us see as G-d sees?

To Register contact the Rev'd Kim Myer at:

kimmyer@diohuron.org;

text or call (519) 980-4545

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Drum roll, please...

The Anglican Foundation of Canada grant goes to St. George's, London: Youth and music are a combination that can't be beat!

By Michelle Hauser

This week the youth at St. George's Anglican Church in London are celebrating the arrival of instruments from around the world thanks to their 2021 *Say Yes! to Kids* grant.

"We asked the youth what kind of a program they wanted funding for," says Rev. Aidan Armstrong, Incumbent, "and the Music from Around the World project is what they came back with."

The church worked with a local music store to put together a versatile instrument package that would best meet the needs of young people. The percussion kit includes cajons, bongos, claves, tambourines, maracas, a cowbell, and Latin percussion eggs.

"Our youth music programming is open to young people in the church and the wider community free of charge," says Father Aidan. "As pandemic restrictions lift, we will once again have young people gathering in a safe environment where they



can now learn a variety of new instruments and even have a jam session."

Music from Around the World will be a joint initiative of the youth ministry team and music team at St. George's. The church foresees these instruments in use for years to come across a variety of different ministries.

Father Aidan explains, "It is also hoped that people from the community will be able to offer education and instruction about how

to play the different instruments, and that the program will give our youth an opportunity to learn about different cultures and traditions from around the world."

While traditional worship music is the mainstay at St. George's, Father Aidan says the new instruments have the blessing of the Music Director and he is confident the percussion kit will find its place within the overall music program.

"The people of St. George's are highly supportive of

their youngest parishioners. No matter what your age or interests, our church offers a rich program of ways to belong, to learn and to help others. Our young people had a vision for this and now it is ready to come to life."

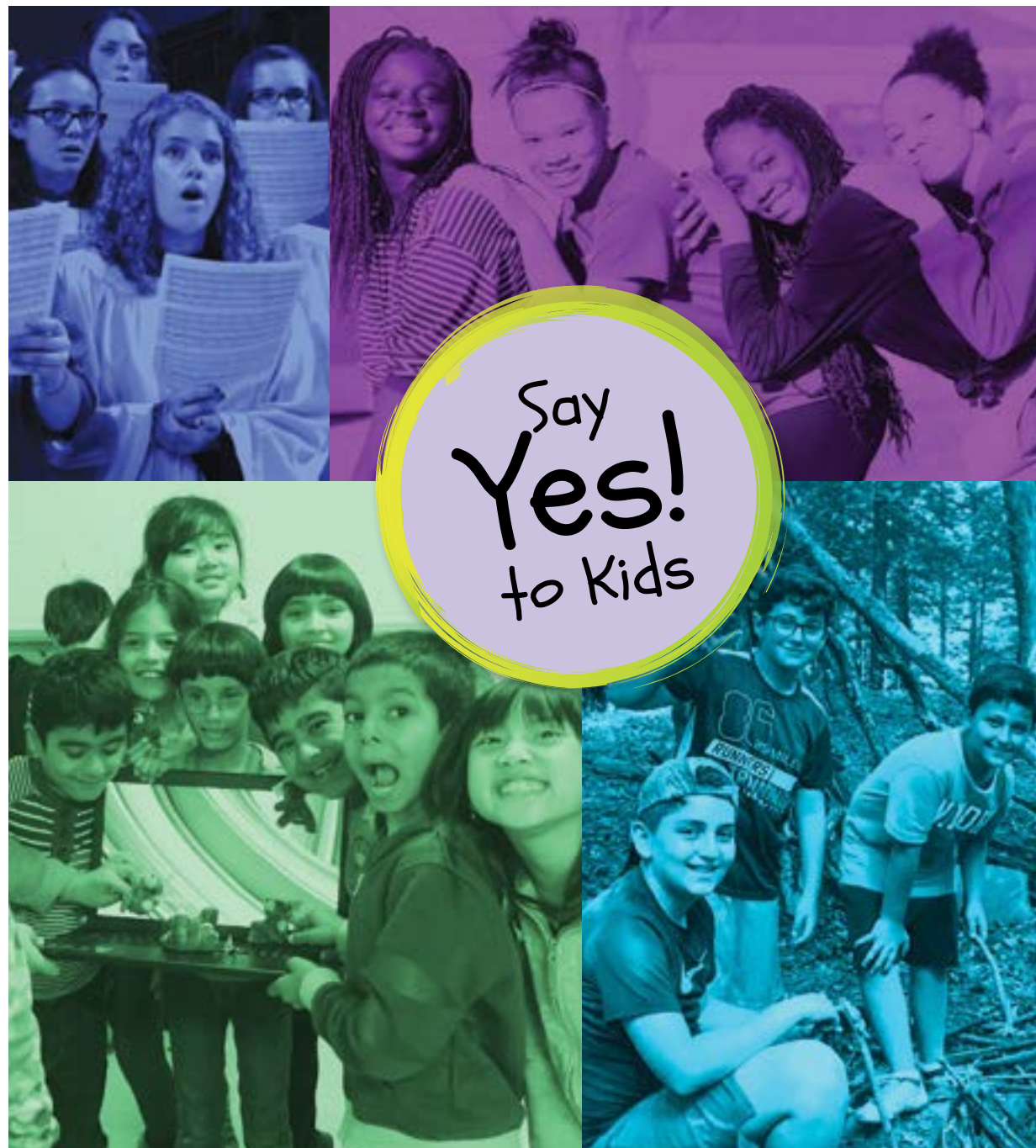
St. George's London was one of 10 *Say Yes! to Kids* grants for arts and music programs, totaling \$49,500.

Michelle Hauser is the AFC Development & Communications Consultant.

Sounds of music inside St. George's, London:
\$1,800 AFC 2021 Say Yes! to Kids grant goes for a versatile music package that includes cajons, bongos, claves, tambourines...
St. George's is one of ten Say Yes! to Kids grants for arts and music programs given to Anglican churches across Canada.

Other grant recipients in this category included:

- Diocese of Algoma
 - St. Luke's Cathedral, Junior, Boys & Girls Auxiliaries, Christmas walk & 2022 Play, \$2,300
- Diocese of Edmonton
 - Anglican Parish of Christ Church, Diocese of Edmonton Children's Choir \$10,000
- Diocese of Huron
 - St. Paul's Cathedral, Series of musical concerts for children \$5,000
- Diocese of New Westminster
 - Holy Spirit Anglican Church, Enrichment Program in Music & Training \$3,000
- Diocese of Nova Scotia&PEI
 - Parish of St Margaret of Scotland, North end Youth Ukulele Band \$4,500
 - Ward 5 Neighbourhood Centre, After School Music Group \$5,000
- Diocese of Ottawa
 - Epiphany Anglican Church Confirmation Choir \$3,800
 - Church of the Ascension Rising Up: Children, Arts, and Community \$5,000
 - Kid-Safe Productions, Help for Children & Families Through Drama, Spirituality & Music \$5,000



ANGLICAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Say Yes! to Kids is back, and better than ever!

Who is eligible

- Any Anglican parish in Canada with a vision for ministry and outreach to young people.

When

- Apply now and campaign alongside your peers nationwide from April 1 to June 30.

Why

- Raise the funds you need to bring your church's vision for youth ministry to life.
- Reconnect with families in your community by raising awareness about your youth programs.

How much

- Each team establishes its own fundraising goal.
- Salaries, equipment costs, and capital improvements can be included in your case for support.

Help our church grow a brighter future for young people, today! Visit anglicanfoundation.org/say-yes-to-kids



HOME-LONGING, HOMECOMING



Around me the trees stir in their leaves
and call out, "Stay awhile."
The light flows from their branches.
And they call again, "It's simple," they say,
"and you too have come
into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled
with light, and to shine."

(From *When I am Among the Trees* by Mary Oliver)

Come, let us gather in this holy place, this happy place, this green and growing place, where we live and play in and around a circle of sun-faded wooden cabins nestled between farmland and Lake Huron, under an overarching sky that each night fills to the brim with stars, stars, and more stars, where we find home in God, creation, and one another.

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August 14-20 – It Takes a Village
August 21-27 – Linger Longer

Senior Camp for those graduating from Grade 8 in 2022 \$1400 + \$182 hst

July 10-23
(This is a 2-week overnight program with limited enrolment – if it fills, we may open another session in August)

Leader in Training \$2000. + \$260 hst

August 7-27 LIT1 for those currently in Grade 9
August 7-27 LIT2 for those currently in Grade 10
(This is a 3-week overnight program with limited enrolment – if it fills, we may open another session in July)

Register today at www.camphuron.ca

For more information, please call 529-434-6893 ext 217 or email contact@camphuron.ca



ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN

Ellie (Ellen) Eldridge



The staff of our diocesan office were saddened by the death of Ellie Eldridge on February 8, 2022.

Ellie was the Secretary for the Anglican Church Women and worked from Church House, making herself a beloved member of the team. Always lively and spirited, she was quick to offer support with any project, from stuffing synod registration packages to stewarding outreach opportunities. She had a quick wit and kept us laughing, while insisting we kept up with her in completing the task at hand. We delighted in the sound of the only typewriter in the office, as Ellie worked away.

Ellie was a woman of deep faith and unwavering love and loyalty. She spoke often of her friends, children and grandchildren, with her infectious smile and the ever-present twinkle in her eye.

We will remember Ellie and the things she loved: fancy brooches, fine teacups, earrings for every outfit, her love of the church, and her life of servanthood.

+++

Ellie was born in 1936 in Hornepayne, Ontario. Her father William Kampela was a foreman with the CNR while her mother Aune Kampela (nee Varho) kept the house warm for the family which included her brother Victor and sisters Elsie, Esther and Connie.

In her late teens she found office work in Toronto and eventually met the love of her life - Harold (who passed away in June 1986). They married in 1958 and had their first son - Shayne. They shortly moved to London living in Old South then eventually moving to the east side of the city. Shayne soon had two new brothers - Scott and Steve.

Ellie had worked as a dental hygienist, which led her to the position of the head of the Dental Division at the London Board of Education. This eventually folded into the London Middlesex Health Unit where her organizational skills helped the division succeed and grow. She worked as the Executive Secretary to the Director of Dental Health for decades, till her retirement at age 65.

Ellie was the type of person who liked to be busy and active. She soon found work with the Anglican Church Women headquartered at the Diocese of Huron. She was very active and well respected and loved by many friends and groups: The Daughters of The Nile, Eastern Star (PW Matron) and especially 'The Cooters'.



The Annual Meeting of the ACW Saturday, April 30, 2022 via Zoom

Please watch for further information
on the meeting, and on registration

Recognizing that not everyone is comfortable with video-conferencing, or equipped to sign in, we encourage those who are able to do so to host appropriate gatherings (i.e., meeting whatever protocols are in place at the time) in their parishes or homes, so that as many women as possible can join in.

All about Rathbone

Diocesan Secretary/Treasurer Paul Rathbone retires after 21 years of dedicated service. It has been much more than "crunching numbers for Jesus".



Paul Rathbone started his employment with the diocese in April 2001. After two decades of service, he is certainly in a position to offer a unique perspective on the recent Huron's history.

When he started, there were 214 churches active in the Diocese of Huron and right now that number is down to 165.

"I must admit at times I have felt more like a realtor than a financial manager", says Paul and points out that achieving financial stability was paramount. It made all later diocesan investments in ministry initiatives possible, and he is certain that this approach has secured Huron's future.

In 2001 there was an accumulated deficit of approximately \$80,000, recalls Rathbone. The diocese had started to feel the effects of litigation costs from the residential school lawsuits in the late 1990s. In the last decade, however, the diocese has received approximately nine million through the sale of its property. The important thing, says Rathbone, is that fifty percent of these proceeds is earmarked for the Huron Development Fund trust for investments of ministry initiatives in the diocese.

"This is certainly a healthy situation, not only financially", concludes Paul.

Paul Rathbone leaves his post with mixed emotions. The diocese has been a huge part of his adult life and he has enjoyed his time in Huron Church House.

"Through all of this time of financial reporting and managing the finances of the diocese, I have worked with a lot of unique and caring people", says Paul.

He served under many bishops: Bruce Howe, Bob Townshend, Bob Bennett, Terry Dance, Linda Nicholls and Todd Townshend. They allowed him great autonomy in managing the diocesan finances.

"They had faith and trust in me which was appreciated and valued; they largely left me to my management care of this place."

All the staff are too many to mention at this point, says Paul. Still, a few names pop up often while he reminisces about his twenty-one years in the diocese: his trusted associates Sarah Chase and Charlie Mungar, as well as Tanya Phibbs and Sue Tite.

"Working alongside them has given me great service, counsel, humour and joy over these many years", says Paul.

He has certainly made many good friends across Huron, and he hopes that these friendships will continue in the years to come,

"I am leaving for retirement early in my working life. I must say I am tired given all that has happened around me over the last few years. As many of you know, I lost my wife to cancer when we were both 54. It was three and a half years ago, but time is insignificant", reflects Paul appreciating the outpouring of support from his friends and colleagues.

"Many of your care for me when this happened in my life was very gracious and emotional to me. I retire now, as I never would have thought, without her by my side, which is truly hard and honestly gut-wrenching."

Paul's wife Kris loved the water and Lake Huron, and she spent much of her early childhood there.

"I have bought a cottage right on the water north of Port Albert in part of God's true country. I did this as a testament and love for her. Time will tell whether I am there fully 12 months of the year, but certainly it will be for a very significant portion of that."

Paul plans to golf a lot more with his two sons and friends, and enjoy some fine spirits and sunsets on his water's-edge deck.

"My grandkids in London will visit Poppa as much as they wish, and I can hope for lots of that."

His final words are those of thanks and gratitude:

"Thank you all again for your support of our beloved Church and for your service and support of me as I worked hard to steer our financial resources to do the work we are all so called to do."

Paul Rathbone will be honoured at our 2022 Synod as Canon Emeritus of the Diocese of Huron.

PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

Appointments

Bishop Townshend reappointed the Reverend Dr. Stephen Hendry as Regional Dean of Waterloo effective February 12, 2022, for a three year term.

Retirement

Bishop Townshend accepted the request of the Reverend Canon Keith Nethery to retire effective December 31, 2022.

Canon Keith was ordained a deacon in June 1995 in Calgary and priested in May 1996. He came on the strength of Huron in August 2002. He has served the parishes of St. Luke's, Crumlin, St. George's-on-the-Wye, Thorndale, Christ Church, Lakeside and St. John's, Thamesford; St. Stephen's, London; Holy Trinity-St. Stephen's, London; Christ Church, Glanworth; and St. James' Westminster, London.



He has served on the Diocesan Council, the Huron Church News Committee, the Sesquicentennial Planning Committee, the Local Arrangements Committee for the House of Bishops, the Communications Committees, Life and Faith, the Huron Church Camp Advisory Board, the Strategic Plan Implementation Group and as the Diocesan Media

Officer and the Diocesan Communications Officer.

He was named a Canon of the Cathedral in May 2015.

Canon Keith will be honoured with the other retirees in the spring.

Rest In Peace

Mrs. Ellie (Ellen) Eldridge, Diocesan Anglican Church Women's (ACW) secretary died on February 8, 2022.

As well as her duties as the ACW secretary, Ellie was an integral part of the Huron Church House team who was always willing to lend a hand and help get things done.

We will deeply miss her. May Ellie rest in peace and rise in glory.

Mrs. Yvonne Haché (mother of the Reverend Gilles Haché) died on February 16 at 90 years of age at the family residence, surrounded by her children.

The Funeral mass took place on Monday February 21 2022, at the Église Catholique de l'Immaculée Conception in Riviere Du Portage New Brunswick.

May Yvonne rest in peace and rise in glory.



Huron's Licentiate in Theology Program

Cost to register is \$325 for Full Credit, \$150 to audit. To register, please contact Dr. Grayhame Bowcott at: grayhame.bowcott@huron.uwo.ca or by calling (519) 438-7224 ext. 832



**"SAYING GRACE":
PREACHING AND PROCLAMATION
IN WORSHIP**

WITH THE RIGHT REV. DR. TODD TOWNSHEND

Tuesdays from 8 - 10 P.M. (ET)

Starting April 19th | Hosted via Zoom

The course will explore the practice of preaching in the context of Christian worship as a primary medium for "the Gospel" – the saving activity of God in the world. We'll dig into questions such as: What kind of God speaks and acts through ritual speech and action? What kind of opportunity is still present in the communal hearing of a word? How can our preparation for preaching be attuned to this "liturgy of the Word" so that it will propel us into the joyful mission of Christ in the world? Together we'll consider how the skills and habits we bring through biblical interpretation, theological intervention, and liturgical innovation help shape the message we proclaim.



**OUR ANGLICAN FAMILY TREE:
THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION
AND ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS**

WITH THE MOST REV. DR. LINDA NICHOLLS

Thursdays from 8 - 10 P.M. (ET)

Starting May 26th | Hosted via Zoom

Ever wondered how the Anglican Church of Canada relates to other Christian traditions and to other Anglicans around the world?

Over six sessions we will explore the development and structure of the Anglican Communion and its commitment to ecumenism noting the particular history of ecumenical relationships in Canada. Students will examine key documents in the development of the Communion and ecumenical relationships, current relationships, and future development, including tensions and challenges!

A season for drawing closer to God

*"Make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."
Isaiah 43:19*

By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

It seems to me that sometimes the season of Lent can be misunderstood. Without question it is a penitential season, that is a season where we are encouraged to examine our lives, our choices, our actions and reactions, against what we see modelled for us in Scripture and in the life of Christ. As we do this, making space in our lives to do this examination, informed by the principles of God's kingdom, when we find discrepancies, we look for grace to turn and move in another direction, God's direction.

At its core, the real purpose of Lent is to serve as an annual invitation to draw closer to God. In anticipation, and perhaps even some trepidation, we venture out into the wilderness, that is, a place, or a way of being, that allows for fewer distractions. So much both around and within us can keep us from experiencing God's presence. It is not really about criticizing ourselves more harshly during these 40 days, but rather about giving ourselves the moments needed



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.



Ben White/Unsplash

to prayerfully examine those places in our lives that keep us from following more closely this God whose voice we have heard, and whom above all else we wish to serve.

Lent invites us to remember that great love with which we are loved, that love that gives us life, that love that will go to Golgotha, and most importantly, that love we will

So much both around and within us, can keep us from experiencing God's presence.

celebrate on Easter morning. Lent invites us in through the shadows, into the promise of light, into the ongoing and ever-evolving promise of life in Christ. Don't be fooled. Lent, while many things, is also a season of great hope and expectation, and isn't that exactly what we need right now?

We live in a time and a season following these two years of COVID restrictions and revelations, that, to say the least, have been challenging. This pandemic and all that has been birthed throughout it, has challenged us in ways we could never have imagined. It has exposed those parts of us and of our society that are difficult to see, and quite frankly difficult to deal with.

In light of all of this, I find myself keenly aware of my ongoing need for reminders and infusions of God's light, God's life, and God's love. Obstacles abound and chaos seems a regular occurrence. Yet, this very chaos drives us to long for and seek out those islands of stability in Christ, where we remember we are known and loved by God, and in this remembering, strengthen for service as disciples of Jesus

and ongoing exploration.

Throughout the course of Education for Ministry sessions, it is quite usual to find oneself in a time of venturing out into new environments and wildernesses as so much of the study, discussion and reflection is designed to offer a perpetual invitation to participants to explore the realities around them in light of this great love offered to us in Christ.

Should this be something that you would like to explore in more detail, in the Spring (Wednesday, May 25th and Tuesday, June 7th at 7pm) we will be holding several virtual Open Houses where you can learn more about Education for Ministry and what might await you there. If these dates, times, or format do not work for you, please reach out at any time to hear more about EfM within the Diocese of Huron. Either Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron EfM Coordinator or myself Val Kenyon, Huron's EfM Animator at valeriekenyon@diohuron.org would welcome a call or email.

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

Catechumenal ministry: Where learning happens

By Rev. Lisa Wang

In the ancient world, learning was a privilege. The wealthy could afford to send their children to prestigious academies, or they could hire tutors to educate them at home.

But in the ancient church, learning was offered to all who would come. Each week, the faithful gathered in the great basilicas to hear the Bishop explain the Scriptures. Year after year, through the liturgical seasons of feast and fast, they heard the Bishop expound the mysteries of the faith. And those who wished to be baptized were given special catechetical instruction as part of their course of preparation.

The church was a place of learning, because being a Christian is something we all need to learn — and never stop learning — how to do.

Where does learning happen now?

If we think about examples of learning in the church, the



Formation happens in so many different ways and places, because it embraces so many aspects of our lives as Christians.

first thing we might imagine is a Bible study meeting, or a Sunday school lesson, or a confirmation class.

But just as education is not confined to the schoolroom, neither is learning in the church limited to the settings we have come to associate with it. That's because learning is not just about imparting information. Learning is also about how we are shaped into people who live our faith. This kind of learning is sometimes called formation.

Formation happens in so many different ways and places, because it embraces so many aspects of our lives as Christians.

Formation can happen in the liturgy, when through prayer, proclamation, worship and communion, we allow the mystery we celebrate to enter into our hearts and change us.

Formation can happen when we gather to reflect on the Scriptures. We ask questions together, and share our

insights, so that the word of God can bear fruit in our lives.

Formation can happen when we stop to ask ourselves: do we know how to pray? We listen to the wisdom of others, and share our experiences, practices, and disciplines.

Formation can happen when we work together to help those in need. We see and experience how the Spirit leads us, and we learn to follow with readiness.

Formation can happen when we inform ourselves about justice issues. We share our concerns with one another, and together discern how God is calling us to act.

Formation can happen when we simply spend time with one another. In getting to know one another, we build the mutual trust we need to uphold one another in difficult times.

One thing that becomes clear from all these examples, is that learning happens in community. We need one another, in order to be formed. We need one another, in order to become Christians.

We need one another, in order to be the Church.

How can we support one another in this process of formation which is the Christian life? What do we need to do, so that our church communities can be places where learning happens?

Rev. Dr. Lisa Wang is the Developer for Catechumenal Ministries for the Diocese of Huron.

Mental health on World Health Day

By Sydney Brouillard-Coyle

April 7 of each year marks the celebration of World Health Day.

From its inception at the First Health Assembly in 1948, and since taking effect in 1950, the celebration has aimed to create awareness of a specific health theme to highlight a priority area of concern for the World Health Organization. The celebration is marked by activities which extend beyond the day itself and serves as an opportunity to focus worldwide attention on these important aspects of global health.

It is important to consider not just physical health, but also mental health. The reality is that the COVID-19 pandemic has severely exacerbated the mental health crisis in Canada. In any given year, one in five Canadians experiences a mental illness. About 4,000 Canadians per year die by suicide—an average of almost 11 suicides a day. In particular, Indigenous youth die by suicide at 5 to 11 times the rate of non-Indige-



Caring for mental health and other, less-discussed aspects of physical health are just as important as caring for a broken bone.

nous youth, while one in three trans youth have attempted suicide in the past year.

Since the pandemic, 74% of Ontarians are experiencing mental health and addiction challenges. There has also been a 35-40% increase in overdose rates and opioid-related deaths. In a single week

in 2021, there were 4,500 mental health and substance misuse-related ED visits in Ontario. On average, wait lists for mental health care are 6 months to 1 year, but in some areas of the province, this can be as long as 2.5 years.

Mental health matters. As a society, we need to call for an

interdisciplinary approach to World Health Day and health-care. Things that are vital to a person's health – therapy, dentist appointments, psychiatrists, optometrist appointments, ALL medication that improves one's quality of living, gender-affirming care – these should all be covered underneath a universal health-care system in Canada.

Caring for mental health and other, less-discussed aspects of physical health are just as important as caring for a broken bone. We deserve better. It is our responsibility as Christians to stand up and to call on our governments and insurance companies to ensure that their policies and plans are equitable, reaching those who are living below the poverty line, who are unemployed, on disability, and in need of support.

Particularly as we approach a provincial election, we must all make a stand to ensure that our healthcare system recognizes the rapidly changing atmosphere in regards to physical and mental health, and provides equitable oppor-

tunities for all Canadians to live full, well lives.

On this World Health Day, let us pray:

We pray for all those who are struggling with their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health - that they might feel Your comforting presence during this difficult time. We pray for the healthcare workers (including doctors, nurses, peer mentors, sponsors, social workers, psychiatrists, therapists, and all those who minister to health needs) that they might find strength and energy in You. We pray that all people will have equitable access to healthcare and the services that they need so that they can live in wellness. All this we ask in Your Name, Lord. Amen.

Sydney Brouillard-Coyle (Ney/Nem/Nir) is co-chair of Proud Anglicans of Huron and music director at St. Paul's Anglican Church, Essex. Ney also serve as the Education Coordinator and Non-Binary Transition Guide at Trans Wellness Ontario.

Nature vs Nature: reshaping our learned behaviours

By Caroline N. Sharp

If you happen to attend church and look around at those in attendance, it's not hard to see that the average age of parishioners is much higher than the average age of the general population.

For the most part, this is why it is so hard to initiate positive changes towards fighting the climate crisis we find ourselves in. We are pleading with generations that were encouraged to become the ultimate consumer for a more convenient way of life.

Public relations were developed throughout the 1900s primarily by Sigmund Freud's nephew, Edward Bernays (1891-1995), who used his uncle's complex ideas on people's unconscious, psychological motivations and applied them to the new field of public relations.

Bernays described the masses as irrational and subject to herd instinct—and outlined how skilled practitioners could use crowd psychology and psychoanalysis to control them in desirable ways. Bernays later synthesized many of these ideas in his postwar book, *Public Relations* (1945), which outlines the science of managing information released to the public by an organization, in a manner

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



most advantageous to that organization.

It was Bernays (and his uncle's student Abraham Brill) whose advertisements encouraged women to pick up smoking in the 1920s and 30s by appealing to sex drives and the role of women in the modern world. The cigarette represented a "torch of freedom" for women whose feminine desires were increasingly suppressed by their role in the modern world.

These new public relations techniques were used after the wars to encourage people to spend their money and stabilize the economy through make-work projects. Women had to spend money to keep their husbands, fathers and sons employed. Consumerism was adopted, and influenced how we lived our lives. Then new technologies were invented, and the working

woman was encouraged to simplify her life with fast food and convenient options for feeding her family faster and easier.

All of this has snowballed into where we find ourselves today. As we prepare to put COVID behind us, you may have heard or seen advertisements that encourage us to spend our money at Canadian owned businesses so we can get our economy back on track. Even if you didn't grow up in the earlier half of the 1900s, you were likely influenced by someone who had. Trying to change this learned behaviour is difficult, especially when you don't realize what or why you do some of the things you do.

It is much like the allegory of the ham (<https://www.executiveforum.com/cutting-off-the-ends-of-the-ham/>) and doing something the way we

It takes mental maturity, open-mindedness, and humility to honestly analyze whether the decisions we've made in the past were correct then and whether they still make sense now.

are taught without knowing why it is done.

When we keep doing things in this manner, we fail to innovate, and this is apparent throughout much of the church. We want to keep doing things the way we've always done them, even though it may no longer make sense to do it that way.

There is 100% no doubt that climate change is real. It affects weather patterns and we are experiencing more fires, droughts, floods, stronger storms, etc. Just about any farmer could tell you that things are changing, and the fact that we are able to notice these changes within our own lifetimes is why the condition of our climate is being deemed a crisis! Because of this, we need to look at how we've reached this point (why we keep cutting the ends of the leg of ham off) and start being innovative. It takes mental maturity, open-mindedness, and humility to honestly analyze whether the decisions we've made in the past were correct then and whether they still make sense now.

It is also our mandate as Christians to protect God's Creation! When we connect the dots, we can easily see how our actions affect others (ie. fast fashion - cheap clothing made by underpaid employees who inadvertently pollute their environment contributing to the climate crisis) and it is up to us to have the discipline (disciple) to take steps that avoid hurting others or the environment (stewardship). We need to take off the rose-coloured glasses we are wearing and look at the world through a new lens. It is only then that we can focus on Creation Care, making our churches AND homes something we can stand behind as a people who want to make the world a better place for ourselves and for generations to come.

Fighting the climate crisis is the number one social justice movement we can all take part in that affects, directly or indirectly, all of the other social justice efforts we make!

Caroline Sharp is a tri-chair of SEJH.

Raising up spiritual leaders for the future church

When I think back on all of the most impactful ministries that I have been a part of in my years ministry, whether this has been the leadership of pastoral care groups, the launching of new outreach ministries, or even fundraising projects such as making meat pies or hosting a fish fry, the most integral component of each of these initiatives has been the leadership roles of faithful Anglican parishioners.

The backbone of healthy churches is lay leadership. Without these leaders, our congregations would cease to exist. This is not to slight clergy in any way, but the truth is: any congregation is only as strong as the Christian leaders who offer themselves up for service.

As an Anglican priest I am always deeply conscious of the fact that clergy-centric models of congregational leadership are doomed for failure. This is a model of ministry in which congregations depend solely on their priest to make decisions on their behalf, to implement all the ministries of the church, to support the spiritual, administrative and financial needs of the community and, often, to be the first person in the church at the beginning of the day and the last person to turn the lights off.



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

Some churches do operate with this model. These run the risk of not only burning their clergy out, but they are also, whether they know it or not, practicing a type of Church that runs counter to the teachings of the Gospel. Ministry, as Jesus taught his followers, should always be focused on enabling new leaders in their faith journeys, in their discipleship and in their excising of their own vocational ministries.

The future of our Church depends on spiritual leadership. Spiritual leaders are not simply people who show up and do the work required to keep church doors open. They are individuals who, in their own encountering of Jesus and the Gospel, feel called to serve God and others through their own expression of faith or vocation.

One of the characteristics that I have found in just about every growing congregation that I have experienced, is the fostering of an environment in which spiritual leadership is not only encouraged, but is well resourced and enabled within the faith community. New leaders need to have a chance to be lifted up in prayer, to be able

The future of our Church depends on spiritual leadership. Spiritual leaders are not simply people who show up and do the work required to keep church doors open. They are individuals who, in their own encountering of Jesus and the Gospel, feel called to serve God and others through their own expression of faith or vocation.

to discern their own unique way of serving in the church, and to be mentored, equipped, commissioned and celebrated in their vocational ministry.

But where to start? That is often the big question! Allow me to share a relatively new resource to the Anglican Church that was specifically designed to raise up spiritual leaders.

The program is called REVIVE and it was created by an educator in our Diocese, The Rev'd Canon Dr. Dawn Davis. REVIVE is a video-based small group discipleship program that helps new leaders to explore their faith, their prayer life and their vocation calling. Information about it can be found here: <https://www.forwardmovement.org/Products/2497/revive--small-group-discipleship-program.aspx>

I use the REVIVE program as a tool in my own parish to

help both new and long-time parishioners explore their personal gifts as leaders. Like most things in life, the more that congregations invest in and cherish their leaders, the greater the blessings that may come out of such an investment. Participants in our own REVIVE group have continued on to become wardens, outreach leaders, committee chairs and even a postulant for ministry! If you ever wish to have a conversation about how your congregation might be looking to raise up spiritual leaders, I am happy to connect with you anytime!

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

Disinformation alert: How to spot fake news

Many parents will blame their children's rowdy behaviour on too much sugar, but there's no actual evidence to support this claim.

A definitive 1995 meta-analysis published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that sugar in children's diets does not affect their behaviour. But it is a piece of fake news that is commonly accepted as fact.

Fake news and disinformation are common online. Each year various celebrities must tweet out replies to their fans that they have, in fact, not died. It is important, not just for children, but for all of us in the church to be aware of fake news and disinformation.

Here are a few tips on how to spot fake news and disinformation to help protect yourself and those we love and serve.

Who?
Check for the author's name. Is the name available or is it missing? What are their qualifications?

A simple Google search will help you confirm the author's credentials.



**MEDIA
BYTES
REV. MARTY
LEVESQUE**

What?

Does the article inform you of all sides of the topic? News articles should provide you with facts from various viewpoints. Does the content match the headline of the article? A headline should provide you with an idea of what the entire article is about.

When?

Older articles may not contain up-to-date facts and might have broken links. Individuals sharing an older article may discover that some information has been disproven or debunked. Run a search to see if there are similar articles written by other news organizations.

Where?

With few exceptions URLs including their domains (.ca, .com, etc.), can be purchased by anyone. Many domains do



not have any requirements to register. Some individuals trick users by using domain names to imitate an organization's official site.

Why?

What is the purpose of the information? To inform or to persuade? Is the article or online content informative in some way? What information is it giving you? Try to think critically about the information you receive. Be skeptical! Can you verify the facts? Are sources offered? Can you evaluate the sources? If there are links

on the page, where do they take you?

Taking a step back to ask yourself some basic questions and look a little further into a piece of information will help everyone share the best and most accurate information. And in an age of disinformation and fake news, it is also a great way to protect and love your neighbour.

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



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JOIN US,
BECOME A PART OF
HURON FAMILY

Sacrifice, service, and salvation

The calendar on my desk identifies the fact that four short days from now we will begin to observe the Season of Lent.

What words may I offer to you as the month of February draws to a close which will begin to touch whatever reality we may be experiencing when the Huron Church News is published and distributed in the month of April?

A few days ago, as Russian troops began the invasion of the Ukraine, I became aware of an opportunity to attend a prayer service at St. Sophia Orthodox Parish and St. Nicholas Mission, which is a part of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada. The advertised focus of the liturgy was set as a time for "Prayer for the Deliverance of Ukraine from Invasion".

The warm welcome which I received, reflected the deep appreciation by that community, that an expression of support was being given, simply by me showing up for the service. Readings were offered by different members of the congregation in Ukrainian, Russian and English.

I had the great honour of being asked to offer readings of the Psalms. I was fully aware that there were members of the congregation whose thoughts and prayers were focused on friends and members of their families who were still living in Ukraine.



Elliott Reyna/Unsplash



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

Throughout the centuries, in times of joy, in times of turmoil and in times of painful despair, people of faith have turned to the Psalms for guidance. The Psalms are there when words fail us and yet when words are needed to experience the Divine support and love upon which humanity depends.

In the midst of this time of crisis people I have not seen in fifty years will mark our 1972 high school graduation with a connection using Zoom. In the late 1960's and early 1970's our voices were raised in Phil-

adelphia as protests against the Vietnam War were an almost daily reality. Members of our class participated in the first Earth Day gathering as we called for a greater awareness of the need to be better stewards of the natural world.

The violence of warfare and the destruction of the environment were as much a reality fifty years ago as they are today. Over time the world has changed. The technology we use to make connections with other people today are the sci fi dreams of fifty years ago, yet the calls for peace and caring for God's Creation have a familiar echo in today's world.

It would seem that with the reality of constant change being something that we all have to live with, that we would be challenged to find a model of consistency to identify that might even be familiar to us.

However, it really is not difficult at all.

In early February of this year, as the Queen marked the day, when seventy years ago her Father died and she acceded to the throne, she wrote that she hoped that it would be possible for many people to "reflect on the positive developments in our day to day lives that have so happily coincided with my reign." One of the key elements of her seven decades of royal leadership has been her annual tradition of broadcasting a Christmas message. Taking time to review her shared thoughts over the years, it is not difficult to discern how her Christian faith has been a strong foundation upon which she has built her life.

In her Christmas Message of 2012, the Queen said:

This is the time of year when we remember that God sent His only Son, "to serve, not to be served". He restored love and service to the centre of our lives in the person of Jesus Christ. It is my prayer... that his example and teaching will continue to bring people together to give the best of themselves in the service of others.

An overview of Her Majesty's record of faithful service has been offered in a pamphlet entitled "The Servant Queen and the King She Serves". Over the years, she has modelled her life on the image of servanthood exemplified by Our Lord.

Her Platinum Jubilee message simply concludes:

"Your Servant, Elizabeth R."

It is to the events of Holy Week and Easter that we turn to in these days, as the threads of this reflection find their place and form a tapestry image of sacrifice, service and salvation in a changing world.

The pain and suffering experienced by Our Lord on the Cross reflects the pain and suffering of humanity. Not only in a large, grand scale way, but also in the pain and suffering which each of us experiences in a way which is unique to our own life story.

However, we navigate through the dark and difficult days we face, as people of faith, we look through the darkness, we grasp those moments and opportunities to serve Our Lord, by serving others in His Name, moving ever closer to that moment when in the light of Easter morning darkness is vanquished and we are able to raise our voices in a shout of victory and proclaim:

*Alleluia, Christ is Risen!!
The Lord is risen Indeed,
Alleluia !!*

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

When hearts grow cold and no one is listening

Issues are hardly ever black and white. Yet, as in the case of the Ottawa protest, family and friends (riddled with confusing feelings) are being broken down. Hearts grow cold, and no one is listening anymore.

I have friends who are pro-vaxers and anti-vaxers; friends left-wing liberal and right-wing conservatives. Knowing what to say is sometimes tricky, especially when my perspective has leanings opposite them (or I see both sides).

Such discord is an emotional nightmare. Not to mention a political and spiritual crisis, which escalates friction and increases confusion when managed poorly. And this intensified turmoil is more challenging to resolve than the original issue, and long-term damage is inevitable.

Unfortunately, people in crisis tend not to think clearly. As a counsellor, I witnessed many failed reconciliation



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

attempts because the couple is too 'triggered' to set aside their baggage. The beloved becomes the enemy, and affection turns to self-protectiveness. And the divide between them deepens.

A recent CBC article put this conflict into a broader perspective by stating, "The convoy has moved on. The challenge of extreme populism remains." Populism results from a broken trust created when some feel their perspectives and needs are irrelevant to those in power. This mistrust is challenging to overcome and becomes even more challenging to respond to, especially when the distrust grows on both sides.

Populism results from a broken trust created when some feel their perspectives and needs are irrelevant to those in power.

It is far easier to name the issue than it is to resolve. Yet we must try. And I believe that within us is the desire to end conflict and live peacefully with each other. One of my favourite theologians recently stated, "Even though we will constantly fail, failure is not the final word. We also have hope that everything can be mended, healed, and restored" (Richard Rohr).

A psychologist commenting on the divisiveness of the Ottawa protest suggested that what is at stake are core values. I'll add that these core values are rooted deep (integrated extensively) in decisions made since we were about five years old. They make up our reality (even at an unconscious level).

An example of a core value is civic-mindedness. It is

played out in various ways and interpreted differently in a variety of circumstances. Challenging these values leads to a potential standoff. People on both sides of the fence can become callous and brazen, devaluing and defaming. Violence erupts too often.

I know many have become hard-edged in regards to political and moral differences. And because of too many failures, some counsellors no longer accept couples as clients. It can feel like there is nothing left but agreeing to disagree, and staying locked behind our safe walls and the people who support us there. It is better than fighting but can feel isolating and scary. Unresolved conflict is a stressor of the first order.

Let me offer this very challenging Christian teaching:

"Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you... bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you... Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned".

I offer this not as some religious nicety but as a challenge that aligns with what I found to be a helpful approach to couple conflict. Create energy that generates an environment of trust and goodwill.

Determining who is right and wrong does not particularly create this energy. Nor does finding agreement or resolution. Instead, it builds a platform upon which differences are voiced, tolerance finds the light of day, and compassion takes root.

Undoubtedly, this is demanding work, and many will choose not to go there.

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

In the beginning – it was hot! (The Farewell Tour)

By now, I'm sure the news has trickled out that I will be retiring on the last day of 2022 after more than 27 years of ordained ministry.

As I step away from writing this column, I wanted to first look back. From now until the January 2023 issue of this paper, reflection will be the focus of this space. From ordination in Alberta, to life at the "grain and feed", four parishes and ten congregations, much ministry has been done and there are lessons in faith that have been front and center.

The worship space at All Saints in Medicine Hat is literally a box. Ninety people can squeeze in before it gets uncomfortable. There are only two little windows that open and one tired ceiling fan that tries to stir the air. Close to 100 people were in attendance on June 18, 1995, as a new deacon was minted. It really was hot! More than 30 C. I hardly noticed until it was over, and then I wondered whose sauna I had visited!

I spent seven years in Medicine Hat/Redcliff and enjoyed every minute. There are three stories that I want to share from that time period, and each has formed my faith in special and continuing ways.

Early on, the Medicine Hat Ministerial selected a new



Marek Studzinski/Unsplash



**MOSTLY ABOUT
RELIGION**

**REV. CANON
KEITH
NETHERY**

president, who didn't know enough to avoid volunteering. The term lasted more than five years. Along the way, a parish member who was an instructor at Medicine Hat College asked if I would deliver the invocation at commencement, as a representative of the Ministerial. Still hadn't learned that volunteering thing. So, what kind of a prayer does one use at a ceremony that is not only multi-denominational, but multi-faith? All this in an area were the term "Bible belt" was a frequent subject of conversation.

How does one combine those elements? I decided to simply use the term God. It would cover all aspects. When I stood before more than a thousand students and their family and friends, my knees were knocking. This was all new. Out of my mouth came something I hadn't planned. "God as we understand you, we pray to you!" I didn't expect it to be a conversation starter, but it was.

People asked if it was mine or had I heard it somewhere else. I honestly said, it just happened. I was invited back to deliver the invocation three or four more times. I've used the line every time I've been asked to pray at a multi-faith event!

I was also asked to be Padre to the Legion Branch in

For all the times I thought that I knew how to do ministry, God has provided me that many times plus one, the understanding that ministry is of God, and when I step aside, God will communicate through me and maybe even in spite of me.

Redcliff. Seemed like an easy task. But I wasn't ready for what men and women who served our country might say to their "padre!" As they approached the end of their lives, they needed to give voice to stories untold, and there were times I was chosen to be the listener.

I was humbled in that, and humbled in a different way the first time they asked me to march in the Remembrance Parade to the Cenotaph. I'd never marched in my life, but I figured what I lacked in experience, I would make up for in relative youth. Soldiers nearly 30 years my senior left me half jogging and out of breath as I weakly tried to match their quick march. I have a soft spot in my heart for veterans, and the things they have lived with. I have shed many tears in listening.

The third story may well be the best description of my ministry. A congregation member, in the time I was in the parish, lost both of her

adult children and then her husband. I spent much time with her, and much time in prayer. After her husband's passing, she told me one day, "If it wasn't for what you said to me that day, I'm not sure I could have gone on!"

I was at a loss for words at that moment, and it was a good thing because I have no idea what I said. We revisited the same conversation several times and I could never bring myself to tell her I had no idea what it was that I said.

For all the times I thought that I knew how to do ministry, God has provided me that many times plus one, the understanding that ministry is of God, and when I step aside, God will communicate through me and maybe even in spite of me. I have tried to remember that every day now for nearly three decades.

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

keithnethery@diohuron.org

Stick in the mud: Getting rid of hesitancy and fear

Spring and Easter go hand in hand each and every year. This spring and Easter we can also add in the easing and lifting of the Covid-19 restrictions.

It has been a long time since we could attend an Easter brunch, to casually shop around allowing the Easter bunny to find goodies to fill our Easter baskets anew. However, it feels like an even longer time since our church doors have been opened wide with the smell of Easter lilies welcoming us.

At the time of writing this article, I feel more like a late, reluctant, February groundhog burrowed away in a sort of physical inertia. Hey, do you remember the old expression "stick in the mud"? That mild insult we would sling at our friends when they were unwilling to participate in a game that we personally want-



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ed to play. When we felt they were being grumpy or boring. Personally, I don't know why that saying came to mind now. Does anybody even use that saying anymore?

Well, COVID-19 has left me feeling like a "stick in the mud". I am feeling stuck and probably very boring to those around me. Perhaps a bit more grumpy and tad more irritable which I know is very hard to believe! Do any of you feel like this?

We have lived over two long years with a hyper-sense of hesitancy and fear that has definitely lowered my se-



sentir joyeux (feeling joyous). Joy is not hesitant nor is it fearful.

So along comes spring and Easter coinciding with the easing of the COVID restrictions. The season of spring is not hesitant nor is it fearful. Spring can be slow, but it never gets stuck like a stick in the mud. Pussy willows are willingly vulnerable to show their fuzzy under bellies in the cold winds.

Crocuses push their golden-green stems through the frozen ground, blooming unafraid. Spring comes, is here, and it is joyful.

Easter also, is not hesitant nor is it fearful. The stone had been rolled away from the tomb when Mary Magdalene peered inside. The angels inside asked her "Why are you weeping"? Then Jesus, himself, said "Why are you weeping"?

The question had to be repeated to her. To be emphasized to break through to her. She needed to get unstuck. Mary did not remain hesitant or fearful. She did not remain "a stick in the mud" in her sorrow but joyfully ran to the house where the disciples were hiding.

Hiding behind a locked door, the disciples were feeling hesitant and fearful until Jesus appeared. He said to them "Peace be with you". Then he said it again "Peace be with you". He had to repeat himself because they didn't get it the first time around. They needed it repeated to get unstuck. The disciples left the room and re-entered the world with purpose and joy. They were no longer stuck in their hesitancy and fear.

We have been stuck in our locked rooms for quite a while. We have become hesitant and fearful but as we peer into the world the angels are saying "Why are you crying?" Then Jesus enters our homes and says "Peace be with you". He then tells us to go out into the world and spread the joy. Happy Easter.

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

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For more information contact Kyle at kgascho@huron.anglican.ca