



TALKING IN CHURCH
St. Matthew's, Florence hosted
Huron Farmworkers Ministry
Awareness Service.
Page 3

**SARAH MULLALLY IS THE ARCHBISHOP
OF CANTERBURY-DESIGNATE**
Sarah Mullally to be installed as the 106th
Archbishop of Canterbury in March 2026.
Page 6



**WHEN DOUBT, UNCERTAINTY,
AND CONFUSION MELTED AWAY**
Reflections on Ordination to
Diaconate.
Page 5

HURON CHURCH NEWS

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

Residential school in Brantford reopens as cultural centre



Heather Wilks Jenkins of the Alongside Hope Youth Council stands in front of the former Mohawk Institute, the longest-running residential school in Canada and now a part of the Woodland Cultural Centre.

” I accept and I confess before God and you, our failures in the residential schools. We failed you. We failed ourselves. We failed God.

— Archbishop Michael Peers, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, 1993

On September 30, the doors of the former Mohawk Institute Residential School in Brantford, Ontario opened once more; this time as a museum for truth-telling. Now part of the Woodland Cultural Centre, the reopening took place on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

The event drew hundreds to honour survivors and confront the legacy of Canada's longest-operating residential school.

Inside the Centre, exhibits of Indigenous language, art, history, and testimony offer a powerful invitation to listen and learn. These expressions of identity which were once suppressed through policies of forced assimilation now speak with clarity and strength.

The Anglican Church of Canada held spiritual and administrative control in partnership with the Federal Government over the Mohawk Institute from its founding by an Anglican society in 1828, until 1970. The Church continues its journey of repentance and accountability, guided by the truths shared by survivors and the leadership of Indigenous communities. From Archbishop Michael Peers' 1993 apology to the National Native Convocation (now the Sacred Circle), to Archbishop Fred Hiltz's 2019 apology for spiritual harm, and

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby's 2022 visit and apology to Indigenous communities, the Church has committed to walking alongside survivors in humility and ongoing response.

Alongside Hope has sought to walk humbly and respectfully alongside Indigenous-led programming across Canada. These initiatives focus on language and artifact reclamation, community health, youth engagement, safe water, and climate action. They are rooted in Indigenous leadership and shaped through collaboration that begins with listening, humility, and respect.

The Alongside Hope Youth Council was invited to participate in Sacred Beginnings, a gathering of Indigenous youth, elders, and Knowledge Keepers. Through intergenerational learning, it is a space where memory is honoured, futures are imagined, and the work of repair continues - not as a project, but as a shared path. As Heather Wilks Jenkins reflected: "Sacred Beginnings has been an experience of listening in a deeper way and being present with respect, so the stories and relationships can shape how we move forward together."

Text and photo:
Rev. Canon Greg Jenkins

This is the heart of Alongside Hope: Annual Appeal



By Rev. Canon Greg Jenkins
DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST,

After the service one Sunday, I was standing at the back of the sanctuary, exchanging handshakes and warm smiles as people made their way out. The usual hum of conversation filled the space: children tugging at coats; someone asking about choir practice; a few lingering to chat.

One of our longtime parishioners stayed behind. She remained in her pew, hands folded and eyes lowered. She was not in distress, but

deep in quiet thought. She is someone who is usually quick to offer a cheerful word or a gentle laugh; her stillness caught my attention.

After the last goodbye, I walked down the aisle and sat beside her.

She looked up and said softly, "It's hard sometimes, isn't it? The news is just... so much. Fires. Wars. Hunger. Cruelty. People fleeing their homes. It's like everything's coming apart."

We sat together for a moment, letting the silence settle around us.

Then she added, "But I keep thinking. There are still peo-

ple doing good. There's still kindness. Still courage. Still the Holy Spirit. That's what I pray for: that we don't forget."

Her words stayed with me. They were not dramatic or rehearsed; just honest. A quiet kind of testimony. And in that pew, with the light slanting through stained glass and the sanctuary nearly empty, I was reminded that hope does not always shout. Sometimes it kneels. Sometimes it stays behind after the service. Sometimes it speaks in the voice of someone who refuses to give up on love.

That is the heart of Alongside Hope.

Stewards of The Gift



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A way of life!

Stewardship and discipleship: Turning gifts into joy

GOD PROVIDES. “God provides” is a core concept for us. God is the source of all necessary resources, sustenance, and gifts for us and for all creatures. We are encouraged to have faith in this divine provision.

The primary gift and resource given, of course, is God’s very self. God, in Christ especially, makes available to us the gifts of the Holy Spirit—each of us in a unique way.

Therefore, we have everything that we need. Our eyes may be attuned to the lack of those things we’d want. We may see times in our lives or



**BISHOP
TODD
TOWNSHEND**

in the lives of those around us when clearly people do not have everything that they need. But those things are distortions of the truth of God’s providence—brought about by human disobedience and greed.

When Jesus says, “the kingdom of God has come near” he points to the incredible reality that God reaches out to us, comes near to us, draws us into God’s reign

of peace and glory. We may turn away, preferring other kingdoms, but that “kingdom” of God always comes near again, in the person and presence of the Risen One, Jesus. Thanks be to God.

At Synod this year we will be remembering and recognizing the closeness of the Holy One in all that we do. We will focus on how and what God has provided to us in this time and place. And we will be considering how our discipleship and stewardship of these gifts can be our joy and our return-gift to those in need and to those who will come after us.

Please pray for all the delegates/members of Synod,

especially on October 24 and 25. I look forward to this gathering in our Cathedral.

If you are able, please join in the worship celebration on Friday evening at 7:30 pm (Oct. 24) when we will gather around the Word and Spirit of God as we celebrate Eucharist, commission our four new Territorial Archdeacons, and honour Pam Fulton of Walpole Island and Dorothy Patterson of Six Nations with the Order of Huron. It will be a wonderful celebration in the providence of God! (livestream at diohuron.org)

Peace to all,
+ Todd

186TH SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF HURON
October 24 & 25, 2025
St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Ontario
Synod Worship Service:
Friday, October 24 at 7:30 PM

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Talking in church: A learning service

By Lawrene Denkers

“Here is where everything started.”

Late on Sunday, September 28, at a Huron Farmworkers Ministry Awareness Service at St. Matthew’s, Florence, Fr. Enrique Martinez was asked a question.

First of all, you should know that we all were asked questions.

Although many clergy attended – Fr. Enrique, the Rev’d John Maroney, Harold Harvey, Marlene Harvey, and Silverio Ferreira as well as our Archdeacon, the Ven. Carrie Irwin – the service was conducted in the style in which our congregation has been worshipping when no clergy is present. We follow the morning (or evening) prayer service, but ask and answer questions during a short discussion about each reading. We talk about what we are being called to do, for instance. We talk about what has come before, and next steps. (Ask us about how we follow the Turning to Grace plan in this!)

On this Sunday, after a multi-voice reading of Matthew 25:31-46, everyone was invited to answer questions about what we had heard. And

then Fr. Enrique was asked to tell us about his personal journey.

He began, “Here is where everything started.”

He talked about coming to Canada from Colombia, and his work with the diocese that began in our parish, and finding kindness. We talked about how the questions he asked us during his homilies made us more thoughtful, more empathetic, braver and more willing to take part in our present discussions and studies.

We talked about the importance of the Huron Farmworkers Ministry and what we can do.

“What can we do?” Fr. Enrique said. “Do what you did with me.”

That is, treat everyone with respect, as humans. Help put people back together. Give time. Listen.

The tens of thousands of temporary migrant farm workers in the Diocese of Huron have some distressing stories to tell. Fr. Enrique reminded us that there are also beautiful stories of welcome and human connection.

Lawrene Denkers is a St. Mathew’s, Florence parishioner.



Rev. Enrique Martinez at St. Matthew’s Florence talking about his personal journey and his engagement in assisting migrant farmers in southwestern Ontario. About two dozen people came from Kent Deanery to hear about Huron Farmworkers Ministry. (Photo: Janice LeBoeuf)

In June of this year, St. Matthew’s put out the call to our parish, the Rondeau Bay Transfiguration Partnership, for donations to the Huron Farmworkers Ministry. \$2,000 was collected, and it didn’t sit unused waiting for the fall service, it went immediately to work. At September 28 service, over \$200 was collected on the plate and added to that.



Reflecting on “Mapping the Ground We Stand On”



In anticipation of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the Church of the Holy Saviour in Waterloo hosted Mapping the Ground We Stand On – a powerful, interactive workshop designed to deepen our understanding of the shared history between Indigenous Nations and settlers.

Organized through Alongside Hope, the event invited participants to step onto a giant floor map of Canada and engage physically, emotionally, and spiritually with their own ancestral stories and the land’s layered histories.

Led by facilitators Cheryl Marek and Nancy Hurn, with firekeeper Bruce Weaver, the

gathering took place on Saturday, September 20, 2025. Through guided reflection, storytelling, and movement, participants explored the complex relationships that continue to shape our communities and our commitments to reconciliation.

Many were struck by the sheer diversity of Indigenous Nations across this land.

“I had no idea there were so many distinct Indigenous peoples in Canada,” one participant shared. “It’s humbling to realise how many lives and Nations were already here. This land was never empty when settlers arrived – and that Indigenous peoples are still here, still present, still inviting us

Humbling experience: Participants of the Blanket Exercise in Waterloo on September 20

into conversation.”

Another participant reflected on the embodied nature of the experience: “Walking across the map made it real in a way that went beyond reading; I felt the weight of the land and the connections.” Together, we explored different ways of knowing – through conversation and presence.

We are grateful to all who participated and contributed to this meaningful journey. As part of a diocesan community, we are seeking to build a foundation of mutual respect, listening, and learning – grounded in truth and the hope of reconciliation.

Rev. Canon Greg Jenkins

THE BRIGHTEST GIFTS SHINE FOREVER

A photograph of the cover of the "World of Gifts" magazine. The cover features a vibrant image of a group of people, including children and adults, gathered around a table. The text on the cover includes "World of Gifts", "Alongside Hope", and "The Brightest Gifts Shine Forever". There are also some smaller text elements and a QR code on the cover.

Find **Alongside Hope’s** World of Gifts in your Anglican Journal, scan the QR code to browse our guide online or visit alongsidehope.org/worldofgifts

Christ Church, Markdale 175th anniversary service

Bishop Todd helps St. John's, Tillsonburg celebrates 125th anniversary



Christ Church, Markdale on September 7, 2025: Bishop Todd Townsend with Rev. Jeffery Kischak at 175th anniversary service. Bishop Todd's father led Christ Church's 150th anniversary service, and his grandfather led the 125th anniversary service. (Photo: Jim Griffin)

Christ Church in Markdale is celebrating 175 years of being a voice for God's word. We welcomed the Rt. Rev. Todd Townsend, Bishop of Huron, on Sept. 7, 2025 to lead the celebratory service. Interesting to note is that Todd's father led Christ Church's 150th anniversary service while he served as Bishop of Huron and Todd's grandfather led our 125th anniversary service while also serving as Bishop of Huron. Quite a family connection to Christ Church.

We have much to be grateful for to those who came before us with their vision and support of the church as there were many roadblocks - or more like no roads but only trails in the early 1840's. The only Anglican missionary, Alfonso Henry Rose, who resided in Sydenham (now Owen Sound) serviced the sparsely populated Grey and Bruce counties. It took all day on horseback to reach Markdale. The 35' deep bog on the trail between Markdale and Berkley was particularly treacherous.

Church services were initially held in the old log school just south of Markdale on the Sydenham Road. George Walker donated an acre of land and a log church with gothic style windows was erected on the lot in 1860. In

1880 the existing brick church was built on the same lot followed by the manse in 1890. A cemetery surrounded the church.

When the Sydenham Road (Hwy 10) was being widened the Church was told that it would be better for the church to exhume the buried than leave it to the road construction workers. It was a heart-wrenching task. Between 1908 and 1914 most of the remains in the graveyard were moved to the Markdale Cemetery. Unfortunately, headstones that were being stored in the church's driving shed over a winter were taken and were never seen again.

In the mid-1900's memorial stained-glass windows started to replace the original windows. Christ Church is now lighted with incredible stained-glass windows depicting Jesus' life and ministry. The Good Shepherd stained-glass window above the altar was gifted in memory of the St. Matthias church in Berkley.

Christ Church has a rich musical ministry. A Breckles and Matthews pipe organ that first appeared in 1908 originally needed a child to pump the bellows. In 2007 a beautiful baby grand piano became part of the church's musical liturgy. Gerard Wilmes is our

current incredibly gifted music director.

The church has always had a strong ACW (Anglicana Church Women) presence. Their fundraising efforts have supported needed improvements within the church as well as local and international causes.

Good leadership is a key component in a flourishing church. We have been blessed over the decades with very dedicated, inspiring ministers. James Ward was the minister at Christ Church when the brick church opened for services in 1880. He gifted the eagle lectern which is still in use today. Rev. Jeffery Kischak is our presiding minister and has an active presence in the community. Throughout the years our ministers have also been charged to preside over other local Anglican churches such as Maxwell, Eugenia Falls, Dundalk, Inistoge, Berkley, Durham, and Fairmount.

We are currently seeing growth in our congregation as newcomers to the community feel a welcoming home to praise God's unconditional love, opportunities to be an integral part of the service, and a time to share in Christian fellowship.

Tess Winget



There were lots of smiling faces at St. John's Anglican Church in Tillsonburg on Sept. 14 as the congregation and guests enjoyed a Ukrainian-themed fundraiser lunch as part of its 125th anniversary festivities. Front and centre enjoying the lunch was The Right Reverend R. Todd Townsend, Bishop of Huron, who led the service. The lunch was a fundraiser for Alongside Hope with \$843 was raised to support young Ukrainians with disabilities as they develop critical social skills.

Dignitaries, an authentic Ukrainian lunch and special music were highlights as St. John's Anglican Church, Tillsonburg, celebrated its 125th anniversary on Sunday, Sept. 14.

Presiding over the anniversary service, the Bishop of Huron, The Right Reverend R. Todd Townsend, noted it was also Holy Cross Day. He said that to many people, the idea of Christ dying on the cross may seem like a sign of weakness or helplessness.

"And yet the cross is the central thing that reveals to us, and gives to us, the power of God," said Bishop Townsend. "There is no kind of deadness that God can't speak into, heal and raise up to life. That has been celebrated here at St. John's for a lot longer than 125 years, and it will be for a lot longer than 125 more."

Another special guest, former St. John's rector The Reverend Canon Robyn Lyons, was warmly greeted as congregation members shared fond memories.

Celebrants at the service also included St. John's interim priest, The Reverend Patrick Martin, and deacon The Reverend Vermell Stevens.

"We would like to thank everyone who came out to help us celebrate our anniversary," said Rev. Martin. "We are very grateful to Bishop Todd and also happy to welcome Deputy Mayor Dave Beres."

Beres presented the church with a framed certificate recognizing 125 years of service to the community and expressing the Town of Tillsonburg's appreciation.

Music was led by organist Joanne Smith and the choir. Special vocal, guitar and piano music was performed by guests Stephanie Tulloch and James Turner from Paris, ON.

The service was followed by a Ukrainian-themed lunch in the parish hall, prepared by chef and congregation member Rudy Bangaru.

The lunch was a fundraiser for Alongside Hope. A freewill offering raised \$843 to support a project in Ukraine that helps young adults with disabilities learn to live independently, a task made much more difficult in times of war.

To accentuate the theme, there were Ukrainian flags and displays, as well as a menu including perogies and cabbage rolls.

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Visit: <https://diohuron.org/resources/tithe-ly-partnership>

When all the doubt, uncertainty, and confusion melted away

Back in June, Allison Agius, Tianna Gocan, Maya-Mele Okazaki, Gerard Phillips and Janet Ternes were ordained deacons. We bring you their reflections on ordination, starting with Allison and Tiana, and ask you to hold them all in your prayers as they prepare to be ordained to the priesthood on November 18.



Tianna Gocan at the Service of Ordination on June 11 (Feast of Saint Barnabas the Apostle) at St. James Westminster, London. (Photo: Charlotte Poolton)

By Rev. Tianna Gocan

SOMEHOW, June 11, 2025 feels like it was both yesterday and a thousand days ago all at once.

The day that I had been waiting, praying, and hoping for since I first started discernment half a decade earlier had finally come.

During those five or so years I graduated from not one but two universities with two different degrees (my BSc and MDiv, from the University of Waterloo and Huron University College, respectively), went from being afraid to altar serve and preach to being excited to help set the table of our Lord and to write for and preach from the pulpit, and grew into the confident woman that I am now, with all the gifts and talents that I know God has given me for this life and vocation that He has called me to.

That confidence in my vocation was not something that I always had. When I first started, I was new to Anglicanism and to the discernment process and that made me nervous. During that time, there are so many moving pieces, so many requirements to fulfil, so many boxes to check, so many prayers that need to be answered, that you wonder if you'll ever see the other side.

I remember, in the middle of my second year of my MDiv, reaching out to my friend, Rev. Allie McDougall, and saying "I feel like I've been swimming so long across this huge ocean, but I can't see any land around me anymore. I'm getting tired of swimming, but I'm out too far to swim back, and there is no land in sight." Then I asked, "Does that feeling get better as a postulant as time goes on?"

She replied "It does, but until ordination, the uncertainty lingers."

While it did bring me comfort at the time, it still felt like I had a lot more distance to cover before I could even see the shore, let alone set foot on land again.

It's funny, now that I reflect on this journey, I realize that, while that feeling was very much authentically how I felt at the time, it didn't last long.

Sixteen months after that conversation, I received a letter from Bishop Todd informing me that I was now an ordinand, and that, God-willing, on June 11th, I would be ordained to the transitional diaconate.

When that letter came, all the doubt, uncertainty, and confusion melted away, and instead, I was filled with joy. Once I got that news it felt like this journey that has been so life-giving and fulfilling to me and has made me who I am today, was worth it. That call, which I had felt, believed in and that others had seen and affirmed, was about to be realized. And I was more than ready.

I remember that evening, before the service started, the Rev. Steve Greene, my past youth minister and now mentor and one of my presenters, asked me "Are you nervous?", to which I replied confidently, "No, I'm ready, let's do this". I remember when he heard my reply to his question he almost couldn't believe that I wasn't nervous, but I wasn't, not anymore.

God had prepared me for a time such as this, and I know that I am surrounded by my family, friends, colleagues, and all the saints, who were praying for me, encouraging me, and supporting me as I knelt and gave my "fiat", my "yes" to the Bishop, to the church, and to God.

After receiving the laying of hands on my head, I was able to look out to all of them, beaming with ontological change, knowing that I was doing exactly what I was created to do, and how, my beloveds, can we be afraid when we are saying yes to God and following His will for us?

That night, my soul echoed the words of Saint Joan of Arc: "I am not afraid... I have God, my Lord... I was born to do this!"

Rev. Tianna Gocan is Deacon Assistant to the Archdeacon of Northern Huron.

Here I am Lord: Being humbled, honoured and fearful

By Rev. Allison Agius

I HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN I am called to ministry, but for too long I was focused on my own plans instead of listening to God's work in my life. Once I finally had the courage to answer my call, everything seemed to fall into place.

My journey through seminary looked much different than that of my peers. Second career, a mom of two young children, a wife, a home, and a job... what could I do but trust the process? I won't say it was easy, and I won't say there weren't tears yet I will say that I learned more about myself in those three years than I have ever known. Before I knew it, I was walking across the stage at Convocation and our family had done it!

I was not prepared for the whirlwind of emotions that came with Bishop Todd's email inviting me to be ordained to the diaconate. I was humbled, honoured and fearful all at once. Fast forward a few weeks and I found myself at the pre-ordination retreat on the beautiful shores of Lake Erie. Water has always been a "thin place" for me, so it seemed fitting that I would spend a few days near the water with four wonderful colleagues in ministry as we prayed, shared, laughed, and learned.

The morning of the ordination felt surreal as

we shared one last breakfast and went on our way. My family, close friends and I checked in early to the hotel and were able to enjoy some cherished time together before the rehearsal.

As I walked into the church, I felt like I was walking on air; it felt like my wedding all over again. I clearly remember the feeling of humble gratitude as I was presented to Bishop Todd. Just as I had promised my stepmother before she passed away, I slipped her ring on my finger and vowed to serve God. Her and I had talked at length about how important it is to have an outward symbol of my sacred vow, just as I had with my wedding.

One of the most poignant moments of the service for me, was when Bishop Todd indicated that I would be administering communion; I actually looked at him and said that I didn't think I was allowed... He assured me that I was and so I did.

That is the moment it was really real. I can't put into words what it felt like to be gathered around the altar with my Bishop, and my cohort as we sang "Here I am Lord," a hymn that sums up my call to ministry beautifully. I left the church that evening filled with grace and humility to confidently go where the Holy Spirit leads.

Rev. Allison Agius is Deacon Assistant to the Archdeacon, Episcopal Office.



Allison Agius at the Service of Ordination on June 11 at St. James Westminster, London. (Photo: Charlotte Poolton)

Bishop's Friends are back in action!



After almost six years of interruption caused by the pandemic, Bishop's Friends gatherings have started again! On Saturday, September 27, Renison College hosted Bishop's Friends' Waterloo banquet. Silence auction, pleasant atmosphere and delicious dinner marked the evening. The guests were welcomed by Rev. Barry Ferguson, and Renison's President and Vice-Chancellor Rev. Dr. Marc Jerry. Bishop Todd talked about the ministry of the Bishop's Discretionary Fund and the support it provides for diocesan clergy and their families in need.

Next Saturday, October 4, guests from across the Deanery of Saugeens met at St. George's, Clarksburg, for a wonderful evening of socializing and a prime rib feast (courtesy of Maxwell Meats, prepared by the ACW of St. Goerge's). The evening highlighted a delightful performance by Ann-Marie MacDairmid on piano and Karen James on flute. Beverages were served by members of Beaver Valley 281 Legion. The evening was MC'd by Regional Dean Jeffery Kischak, and Tastes of the Saugeens silent auction was a huge success!



Above: Highlights from Bishop's Friends North, Clacksburg, October 4.

Left: Bishop's Friends at Renison, Waterloo, September 27.

Sarah Mullally named as the next Archbishop of Canterbury



The Anglican Communion Office announced on October 3, 2025, that King Charles III had approved the nomination of Sarah Mullally as the next Archbishop of Canterbury.

Mullally has served as Bishop of London since 2018, and previously served as Bishop of Crediton in the diocese of Exeter. She will be formally installed as the Church of England's senior bishop in March 2026 in a service at Canterbury Cathedral.

She is the first woman to be appointed to the Church's most senior office.

Before her ordination in 2001, Mullally worked as a nurse, specializing in caring for cancer patients. From 1999 to 2004 she served as chief nursing officer for England, as well as the National Health Service's (NHS) director of patient experience for England.

Since 2024, Mullally has served as chair of the board of trustees for Christian Aid, an ecumenical relief and development charity that includes 41 Christian denominations in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

The Archbishop-Designate will legally assume the role at the end of January and will be installed as the Bishop of the Diocese of Canterbury in March 2026.

Bishop Townshend joins with Archbishop Shane Parker, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, in rejoicing at the appointment. Archbishop Parker has called Bishop of London Sarah Mullally's appointment as the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury a "timely and inspired" choice for the Primate of the Church of England and symbolic head of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

Appointments

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Canon Dr Stephen Hendry as Regional Dean of Brant-Norfolk, effective 1 September 2025.

Bishop Townshend appointed the Reverend Jeff Kischak as Regional Dean of the Saugeens, effective 1 September 2025.

Ordinations

Bishop Townshend announced that the following will be called to the Presbyterate at a service of Ordination to be held on the Commemoration of Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, Tuesday, 18 November 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, London:

- The Reverend Allison Agius, Curate to the Rector of St. John's, Windsor (Sandwich)
- The Reverend Tianna Gocan, Curate to the Rector of St. James', Stratford, St. Paul's, Stratford, St. Stephen's, Stratford, and St. James', St. Marys, with primary responsibility for St. James', Stratford
- The Reverend Maya-Melé Okazaki, upon ordination, Priest Assistant to the Priest-in-Charge of the Rondeau Bay-Transfiguration Partnership Ministry
- The Reverend Gerard Phillips, upon ordination, Priest Assistant to the Rector of All Saints, Windsor
- The Reverend Janet Ternes, Curate to the Rector of St James', Paris.

Rest in Peace

Please keep in your prayers the family and friends of the Venerable John Spencer, who died on 3 September 2025.

Archdeacon John was ordained deacon and priest in the Diocese of Newfoundland in May 1968 and May 1969. After a curacy and first incumbency in Newfoundland, in 1975 he came on the strength of Huron to be the Rector of St. Michael and All Angels, London. Archdeacon John was subsequently the Rector of St. Mark's, Brantford, and St. James', Stratford, from which position he retired in September 2003. He was made a canon of St. Paul's Cathedral in 1988 and in 1992 he was collated as the first archdeacon of the newly formed archdeaconry of Huron-Perth.

Throughout his ministry, John was deeply involved in the life of the diocese, serving on many of its committees, including over two decades on the Diocesan Executive.

Archdeacon John's funeral was held at St. James', Stratford, on 12 September.

Please remember Ruth, Lesley, Pamela, and the rest of Archdeacon John's family and friends in your prayers.



Stepping into the story: The practice of theological reflection

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."
Colossians 3:16

By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

THE FIRST core practice of Education for Ministry is theological reflection.

At its essence, this practice invites EfM participants to pause and to ask, "Where is God in this moment? What might God be saying here?"

In this simple discipline, everyday life is slowly transformed, and what once seemed ordinary begins to take on a new brilliance.

In this way, EfM strives to draw us more deeply into the stories of Scripture, not only as something to be studied, but as something to be lived.



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

Because of this, Scripture becomes for us a living conversation with the divine, a conversation into which we are all invited.

When we read the stories of God's people, we are not only learning about their world. We are also being asked to notice aspects of our own. What is going on in the hearts and minds of those about whom we are reading? What fears kept them awake at night? What hopes inspired and encouraged them

forward? What doubts, what failures and what new beginnings shaped their journeys of faith? How are they different from our own struggles and questions today and how are they not?

In EfM, we bring our lives to the text. Sometimes we will find ourselves standing alongside Moses, uncertain of our own voice. At another time we may recognize ourselves in Ruth, stepping out in loyalty and love into an unknown future. Without question we

will recognize our own cries in the psalmist's prayers. And in all of this we are reminded that God, who was faithful then, remains faithful now.

As we gather each week in our EfM sessions we find companions on this road: fellow learners who reflect, wrestle, pray and play alongside one another. In the end, we discover that Scripture is not just about long-ago people in far-away places. It is about us. It is about God's continuing invitation to us to see ourselves within the story of grace, and to live it out as our own.

If you want to learn more about Education for Ministry please contact Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron EfM Coordinator or myself Val Kenyon at EfM@huron.anglican.ca

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



Jeremy Vessey/Unsplash

When we read the stories of God's people, we are not only learning about their world. We are also being asked to notice aspects of our own.

'That's a lot of love!' (Visible on my hot-pink cast)

IF YOU ARE a regular reader of this column, you will know that I sustained a nasty leg fracture near the end of August that necessitated me being laid up for an extended period.

At the time of writing, I have been non-weight-bearing on my right side for five weeks. I have another two weeks of that ahead, before graduating to partial weight-bearing on a walking cast, or an air-boot for another six to eight weeks after that. It's been a journey. My fractures required extensive surgery, including the addition of plates, screws, and pins to hold together the shredded mess of bone fragments.

The first cast was a temporary plaster cast that was removed and replaced after two weeks with a more stable, firm, circumferential cast. Made with fiberglass, the second cast provided rigid, complete immobilization of my leg, promoting proper healing of fractures. So after those first two weeks of healing, off to Victoria Hospital I went to have the plaster cast off, and nearly one-hundred staples removed from the two incisions on either side of my ankle.

"All looks good," Dr. Sanders exclaimed! "Thank God," I said, "I've seen what you have done to chicken legs, and I was worried!"



I AM A VERY FORTUNATE MAN: I have learned from all of you that we might come to know the love of God if we are mindful of the love we have for one another.



It's JUST KEVIN

V. REV. KEVIN GEORGE

He reassured me he is not related to the Colonel, and said, "Kristie is going to cast your leg. I'll see you in four weeks."

You can imagine my surprise when Kristie fanned out a colour palette with every colour you can imagine, and asked, "What colour would you prefer for your cast?"

Anyone who has been in my presence for more than an hour knows how much I avoid attention and prefer to fade into the background. Not waiting to draw attention, I quickly said, "Hot Pink!"

Both Catherinanne and the orthopedic technologist did a double take and asked, "You sure?" While I'm not usually impulsive, I stepped out of my comfort zone. "Definitely pink," I said.

When I returned to Kensington Village, everyone took notice (Mission accomplished!). Next, I pulled out the sharpie. Catherinanne did some original artwork and wrote her words of encouragement. Then, one after another, over the two weeks I've been wearing this thing, people wrote messages, added art, quoted scripture, wrote prayers, and cheered on their favourite sports teams. It's hardly got a square inch that is not marked. There are hundreds of messages on there. Everyone notices it — I love it!

One night, two weeks into the four weeks that I will

wear this cast, I was experiencing some serious pain in my foot. Since I have arrived at Kensington Village, I have had exceptional care from the Doctor, PSWs, Physiotherapists, and Nurses. I have come to trust these nurses with so much. Remi, Maureen, Samantha, Jasper, Jeslie, Julie, & Charles are exceptional at what they do. So, when I rang the buzzer, asking for help I knew I would get good counsel.

Charles always does the night shift. He came in at 12:15 am. After hearing me out, he felt I should be off to the hospital, to rule out any infection or circulation problems. (Turns out I had a gout flareup. Gout...in a foot wrapped in a hard cast!) That meant a night waiting in ER on Homecoming weekend - very exciting.

I was over two hours into that excitement when a doctor headed outside for a comfort break walked by. She looked down at my hot pink leg, produced a wide smile and said, "That's a lot of love!" One eyebrow raised, I looked up at her quizzically through my pain and self-pity. "Written on your leg there! That is an incredible show of love! You are a fortunate man!"

That somehow took some of my pain away. More importantly, it refocused my spirit and lifted me out of my pity fit. I was reminded of words written by Trappist monk Thomas Merton. "Love is our

true destiny. We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone - we find it with another".

The number of folks who have shown such incredible love for me over these weeks is terribly humbling. The names on that hot-pink cast are a visual reminder of an intangible truth. God pours out immeasurable love in giving us one another. None of us make this journey on our own. From the day of my injury to this very minute, I have been showered in love, prayer, care, concern and kindness. So many have been so kind and caring — too many to name. But know this, I am thankful for each and every one of you — for your concern for me. I know our true destiny is love, and I have learned from all of you during these long weeks that we might come to know the love of God if we are mindful of the love we have for and show one another.

As I woke from a long nap after returning from hospital, and looked to the foot of my bed, I saw the most faithful of caregivers, Catherinanne. Her head back, her eyes closed. I have no doubt she is praying. In that moment, I heard that doctor's voice again, reminding me that I am indeed... "a very fortunate man."

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

kevingeorge@diohuron.org

Abandoning our comfort zone: A note on diversity in church

By Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle

MY GRANDFATHER had a swivel, recliner chair that was positioned such that he could sit and watch out the window or rotate and engage in conversation with those in the room. In his later years he spent hours in that chair. Each time he sat down, it was as though he melted into its frame and the two become one. The chair was truly his in a way that no one else who ever sat in that chair could ever experience and yet, my grandfather never fully understood why it was others didn't find his chair as comfortable as he did.

For many of us, our churches are like my grandfather's chair. We have spent so many hours in our spaces there is a sense of familiarity and comfort that allows us the privilege of feeling like we belong. Worship, fellowship, and so much more, 'fits' us in ways we don't even realise. We don't have to. It is just so natural to us. In fact, it is just so natural for us, that we may not understand how others may not have the same experience of comfort and familiarity.

Just as letting someone sit in his chair wouldn't necessarily

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



enable someone to be comfortable alongside my grandfather, there is more to having a diverse church than simply inviting diverse people into the pews. It is important to consider what is needed to ensure that diverse individuals have what they need to participate in the community. This may mean compromise and perhaps even change.

Compromise and change are part of our history. Consider the conflicts raised in the very early Christian Church about the inclusion of Gentiles. Did they need to be circumcised? What about food sacrificed to idols? What rules from the Jewish tradition needed to be obeyed to be part of the fledgling community? St. Paul was a significant advocate for spaciousness, for meeting people where they were

at, and accepting the gifts they offered. His letters, the epistles we frequently read in worship, serve as reminder that spaciousness is part of our history and a challenge to consider what that might look like today.

What are we willing to let go of to enable us to have a diverse church today? Would we consider adapting Myrtle's butter tart recipe, a longstanding staple at fellowship time, so that it no longer contained nuts in order to protect those who might have allergies? Are we prepared to let go of the need for sacred silence in worship to accommodate young children and those who are neurodivergent who might make a bit of noise? How much chaos are we willing to tolerate in worship to enable young families to participate?



Cindy Tang/Unsplash

Many churches have added ramps and accessible bathrooms, but what about other types of accessibility? To what extent have we looked at possible sensory issues for those with autism? Do lights hum? Are there food options that are appropriate, like plain pasta or make your own sandwiches? Is there space where someone could go if they were overstimulated?

What considerations have been given for those from diverse backgrounds? If individuals are new to Canada and are still learning English, are there parishioners willing to learn a bit of their language to help bridge the gap? To what extent is there a willingness to invite these individuals to share their culture and/or their story if they are open to do so?

How about those who are gender and/or sexually diverse? If a couple displays affection, will they get negative looks? To what extent have folks recognised that saying only brothers and sisters excludes those who are non-binary? How will a transgender person be treated if they come to the church?

Therein lies the biggest question every congregation should be asking if we are truly

aiming to be a diverse church: How will diverse individuals be treated if they come? How will Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour be treated? How will those with diverse abilities be treated? How will those with diverse genders and sexualities be treated? How will those living in poverty be treated? How will those with addictions be treated? How will the plethora of God's Beloved children truly be treated by every member of the congregation? Are we ready for the spaciousness needed to ensure diverse individuals are respected and comfortable among us?

In Galatians 3:28 we are told "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." The words challenge us to see all people as God's beloved, members with us of the Body of Christ. May we continually seek to challenge ourselves to look past the comfort of our chairs and find ways to extend comfort to diverse peoples as we work to truly be a diverse church.

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



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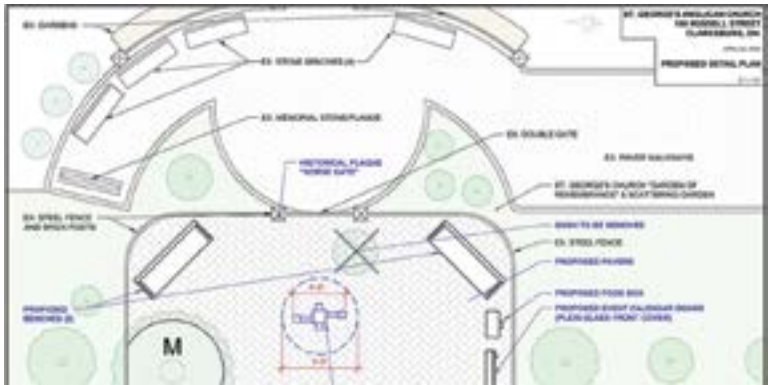
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Outreach in Blue Mountains community: St. George's Waygate project

DIACONAL MINISTRY is often described as being the place where bridges are built between a Christian congregation and the wider neighbourhood. The places where the grace of God, as experienced in worship and faithful community, spills out beyond the doors of the church.

In my congregation, we have been reflecting on our Bishop's Charge: Turning to Grace; and to the various ways that our congregation might respond to the three pillars of 1) a Learning Church, 2) a Just Church, and 3) a more Diverse Church. Much of this reflection has been taking place among our leadership team at a time when we are training two new deacons for service in our community. At this moment in the life of our parish, outreach seems to be front of mind within our community. Our postulants, our parish council and our members are asking the question: how can we extend the love that we feel within the relationships of our church congregation to others in our wider neighbourhood? And, how might we do this is a way that furthers our engagement in making our church a more just church?

With thanksgiving for the leadership of our Diaconal Postulant, Michelle Hughes,



GROWING BEYOND THE DOORS
REV. CANON GRAYHAME BOWCOTT

St. George's is in the planning stages of a new project that seeks to even further extend our care to the residents of our neighbourhood and Blue Mountains Community. And so, let us introduce St. George's Waygate Project!

In English Christian tradition, Waygates, or often better known as Lychgates, were places at the edge of a church property where charitable services were made available: including food, clothing, sometimes a place of respite, and with some churches, even a covered porch where funeral services could be offered.

At St. George's, The Blue Mountains, we are blessed to

still retain our original church yard, including a historic gated property that retains a traditional horse and buggy gate. In the spirit of English Lychgates of the past, our proposed Waygate Project hopes to include a number of outreach elements that will offer support to residents and visitors in our neighbourhood:

- new park benches for guests and visitors to rest (just outside of the location of our historic horse and carriage gate).
- a public water fountain with a bottle refill station and a dog fountain.
- a community services announcement board (to share advertising posters for local organizations that are helping the neighbourhood).
- a neighbourhood prayer mailbox (which would allow anyone to submit a prayer request. These can be confidential or could ask for a visit from our clergy).

• a community food box that would augment the current food scarcity programs in the Town. This box would carry free items for local individuals or families to take whenever needed.

• a historical marker showing pictures of how St. George's has been serving the neighbourhood since 1862.

• Town of the Blue Mountains garbage and recycling bins.

• and, an indigenous Treaty Marker (St. George's is located on the boundary of Treaty 18, dating to the year 1818).

Each of these outreach components are unique in that they are offered for the benefit of non-members of our congregation. They hope to extend a sense of hospitality and support for the most vulnerable in our community, even beyond the front curb of our church.

St. George's is thankful for the leadership of our postulant, Michelle Hughes, in her meeting with numerous community groups and leaders, to listen to the needs that they have expressed in our neighbourhood, and to partner with them in these upcoming projects.

Our Waygate Project is also serving as a teaching ministry, to share with Michelle, and our congregation, the various steps of implementing a community outreach project,

including: community consultation; prayerful discernment; fundraising elements; upcoming presentations with diocesan Land and Property, Grants and Loans, and Diocesan Council approvals; and coordinating the completion of the project itself.

Once this project is in place, it will also require a trained team of outreach volunteers to maintain it. We are proud to share that we already have interest from both congregation members and non-members who wish to be part of St. George's vision of being a more just Church, as expressed in our local community.

All of this is just one way, one example, that one congregation in our Diocese has been inspired and motivated to respond to Huron's Turning to Grace Campaign. I hope and pray that others will seek out their own ways of responding to the three pillars of loving service.

Rev. Canon Dr. Grayhame Bowcott is passionate about fostering congregational relationships and sharing our Anglican vocation with others. He serves as Rector of St. George's, The Parish of The Blue Mountains, and as Program Director for the Licentiate in Theology program at Huron University. grayhamebowcott@diohuron.org



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Serving somebody? (Life-long pursuit of meaning and truth)

You may be an ambassador
to England or France
You may like to gamble, you
might like to dance
You may be the heavyweight
champion of the world
You may be a socialite with a
long string of pearls
But you're gonna have to
serve somebody, yes
Indeed you're gonna have to
serve somebody
Well, it may be the devil or it
may be the Lord
But you're gonna have to
serve somebody...
Bob Dylan, *Gotta Serve
Somebody* (1979)



Nikoloz Gachechiladze/Unsplash

BETWEEN 1979 and 1981, Bob Dylan, the voice of a generation in the early 60s, underwent a profound transformation after experiencing a powerful spiritual awakening. In his hotel room in Tucson, Arizona, Dylan described feeling the presence of Jesus—an encounter he believed was physical and direct.

This revelation inspired him to embrace Christianity, leading to dramatic changes in both his personal life and music. Some fans and critics were unsettled by this shift, but others were moved by his conviction and sincerity.

During this period, Dylan's concerts took on a new atmosphere, featuring gospel-in-



As I SEE IT

REV. JIM
INNES

spired performances and sermon-like moments. His new journey was reflected in three albums: "Slow Train Coming" (1979), "Saved" (1980), and "Shot of Love" (1981).

Among the songs written during this period was "Gotta Serve Somebody," which was representative of Dylan's new direction. He was moving from serving the ideals of fame, success, and ambition, toward a higher purpose. He became deeply involved in the evangelical Christian

It's all too easy to find ourselves following habits, fears, or priorities that drain us instead of fulfilling us. Often, we're not even fully aware of what—or whom—we're actually serving in our daily lives.

community: attending Bible studies, being baptized, and allowing his faith to reshape his artistry.

Dylan's journey involved a profound transformation, a complete redirection of his energy. This 180-degree shift raises the question: why? One clear answer is that the values and pursuits he previously served no longer satisfied the restless spirit for which he was known.

Many biographers and critics highlight his lifelong

pursuit of meaning, truth, and authenticity. One aspect I notice is how his story naturally raises important questions about whom or what we serve each day. Are those allegiances or priorities fulfilling, or simply ingrained or obligatory? Do they stem from an expression of wholeness (who we truly are) and do they give our lives purpose and contentment?

It's all too easy to find ourselves following habits, fears, or priorities that drain us

instead of fulfilling us. Often, we're not even fully aware of what—or whom—we're actually serving in our daily lives. Someone wittingly said, "If you want to understand your priorities, the things or people you serve, review your bank statement." While this insight offers some clarity, the things or people we serve are influenced by many pressures; not only financial, but also those within our families, among friends and neighbours, at work, and from broader politics and economics.

Dylan's journey provides a powerful example of how changing habits and priorities can transform a life. His willingness to leave behind what no longer resonated with him and to explore new directions seemed to bring renewed energy and purpose. Even after his evangelical phase, Dylan continued to search. His willingness to step into his own identity and discover what was truly important to serve solidified him not only as a musical icon but as an example of living forward.

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

Your shadow is invited to the banquet

By Rev. Greg Little

A WHILE AGO, the Gospel for our BCP Eucharists was Jesus' parable of the rich man who invites his neighbours to a great feast.

None of the invited accept the invitation so he invites all those who wouldn't usually be invited to a rich man's celebration – the poor, the halt, the lame, the blind. This is well summarized by the Medical Mission Sister's in their song, *I Cannot Come to the Banquet*, which we sang at the worship service. Here is the chorus:

*I cannot come.
I cannot come to the banquet,
Don't trouble me now.
I have married a wife.
I have bought me a cow.
I have fields and commitments
That cost a pretty sum.
Pray, hold me excused,
I cannot come.*

The meaning of this parable seems clear to us. It is easier to understand than some of

Jesus' parables. God offers a banquet to us. As Christians we are people who will be invited to God's banquet that is prepared for us in God's kingdom. However, many of us who are invited to God's feast with all the wonderful food and drink that will feed our souls, will decide we have better things to do than attend the Great Feast.

That is the usual understanding of the parable. I believe that it is perfectly valid and true. However, I want to look at another way of understanding the lesson that Jesus is giving us. What if we look at this from an inner perspective? What is God offering to us about ourselves—about who we are created by God to be? We have those parts of ourselves which are good and upright and live a life that is acceptable to us and to society.

What then of the guests that the master invites when we don't partake—the poor

street people, the halt, the lame, the outcasts and people we wouldn't dream of inviting to our banquets? What about the parts of ourselves that are the aspects of ourselves that we don't find acceptable—the street people within us?

We can look at those people invited instead of us as aspect of ourselves that we don't find acceptable—those parts of ourselves that we don't like and don't even want to acknowledge. These unacceptable parts can raise their ugly heads when we aren't looking.

Those parts of ourselves that we don't want to acknowledge are part of who we are. Carl Jung named those parts of ourselves, that are unacknowledged and denied, the Shadow. They are also invited to the Great Feast as the parable tells us. If we are going to attend the Great Feast those parts are going to attend as well. We have to acknowledge them to God if we are to attend. Otherwise,

we will not be included in the Great Feast that God offers us.

Take a few moments to think an aspect of yourself that you would not want to invite to a party. What would it be like to welcome that part of yourself to a party that Jesus is throwing? What if Jesus welcomed that part and made them the guest of honour. How would you feel about that?

That is the part of you that Jesus truly wants at the party. If we will acknowledge them and offer them to God, we will be invited to partake in the Great Feast that Jesus offers us—acceptable parts and unacceptable parts.

Your Shadow is accompanying you on your journey. Why not get to know you Shadow and see what it offers you. That will be a true blessing.

Rev. Greg Little is Honorary Assistant at St. John the Evangelist, Strathroy.



Rene Bohmer/Unsplash

What is the true cost of freedom?

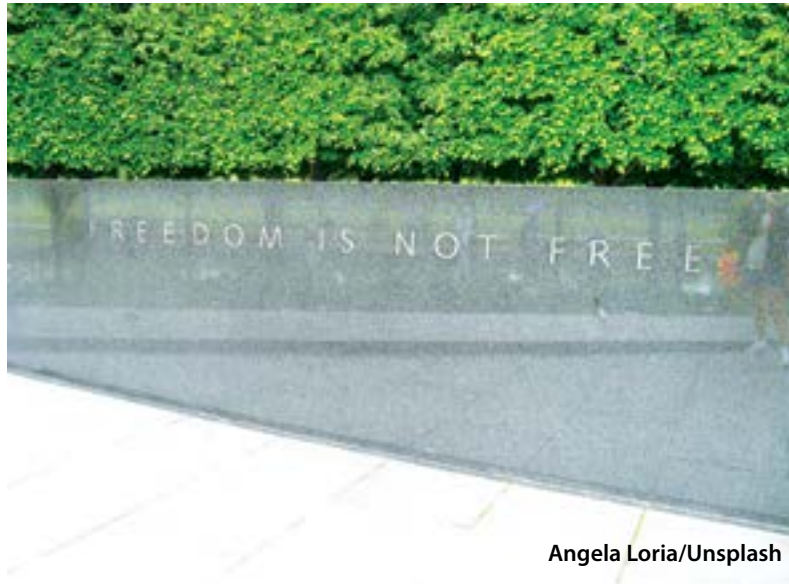
I HAVE RECENTLY been swamped by a wave of nostalgia.

It is not a simple reflection of the past being the “good old days”. The moment that triggered memories of more than half a century ago was when I was reading a sports column in our newspaper (the paper version, NOT the one online), that reported the death of Bernie Parent.

When I was attending high school in Philadelphia the city was enthralled by the exploits of the Broad Street Bullies. Led by goalie, Bernie Parent, the Philadelphia Flyers won the Stanley Cup in 1974 and 1975. I was one of the crowd that watched the Stanley Cup Parade in those years. An unforgettable moment occurred when the car that Parent was riding in, as it led the parade, turned a corner and as it did so, the crowd, which was easily measured in the thousands, fell silent. Then, as Bernie raised his arms as a sign of victory, the crowd went wild!

As I witnessed this remarkable moment, I looked at a banner which was hanging nearby. It simply read: “Only the Lord Saves More than Bernie Parent”

As the mental newsreels of the past generate other memories of those days, many of the highlights involve me being part of large crowds. In 1970, I joined with thousands of people who filled the Ben Franklin Parkway (a street known to the viewers of the first “Rocky” movie as the hero finishes his run and looks back across the city). We raised our voices and demonstrated for action to be taken to curb climate change



Angela Loria/Unsplash



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

and to call for everyone to do a better job of caring for our planet Earth. It was a moment with a positive message, a clarion call to action filled with hope and joy.

Less joyful were those moments where the crowds around me were filled with people who were both angry and anxious. The Vietnam War touched the lives of many people. Nightly newscasts brought the war into our homes with a newfound immediacy in journalism which meant that there was an inescapable emotional effect as we watched bombs being dropped and bamboo huts being set on fire with the flick of a soldier's cigarette lighter. The loss of life in a far off country became a reality in our lives on a daily basis.

I vividly remember being part of a choir who offered

Faure's Requiem while an open casket sat in the middle of a church where people placed the names of lost ones and prayer requests as together we prayed for peace.

Then, as now, we were reminded of the words of Jesus who said, “The time is coming when you will hear the noise of battle near at hand and the news of battles far away...” (St. Matthew 24:6 - NEB). When it felt like the world was crashing in all around us, Jesus went on to say, “see that you are not alarmed”.

It is difficult to NOT be alarmed in today's world. As our global village lurches from crisis to crisis there are those who seek to lower their blood pressure readings and find ways to cope with the day-to-day challenges of life. Through highs and lows the gift of music has been a constant blessing. Songs I remember outside of worship experience always seemed to find a way to convey concerns which resonated with my own state of mind. Artists expressed through their

When it felt like the world was crashing in all around us, Jesus went on to say, “see that you are not alarmed”.

words and melodies, emotions which seemed to reflect my own reality.

There were individuals who re-worded a Pete Seeger folk song and asked the question:

*How many deaths will it take 'til we know,
that too many people have died?*

The answer my friends, is blowing in the wind.

The answer is blowing in the wind.

In his song, “What's Going On?”, Marvin Gaye's voiced the thoughts of many people. I take the liberty of editing his words for brevity:

Mother, There's too many of you crying.

Brother, There's too many of you dying.

You know we've got to find a way.

To bring some loving here today.

Father, We don't need to escalate.

You see, war is not the answer

For only Love can conquer hate.

You know, we've got to find a way

To bring some loving here today

In an iconic cultural moment known as Woodstock, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young challenged everyone to reflect on the true cost of freedom with the words:

*Find the Cost of Freedom,
buried in the ground.*

Mother earth will swallow you. Lay your burden down.

The large public protests clamouring for change and crying out for peace seem to me to be moments I remember as events of the past. Meaningful messages conveyed through songs which have stood the test of time are deeply imbedded in my memory.

Fortunately, when crowds gather it is not always at moments of crisis. Our own Diocesan Family welcomed the Canadian House of Bishops to share in our Sesquicentennial celebration. We travelled from every parish in the Diocese of Huron to meet to worship at the Labatt Centre in London. We saw in that moment that we do not live out our Christian Faith in the Anglican tradition isolated in our own congregations. We celebrated the fact that the carved wooden Cross which was at the service had been in every parish during the previous year. It is a link for all of us even as it now has its place on the wall in our Cathedral. It is a moment which also has its message shaped in the music and words of the hymn:

*Lift High the Cross, the Love of Christ Proclaim
'til all the World adores His sacred Name.*

In this troubled world we are reminded of our mission and the joy - filled message that is ours to share. May that continue to be true in your life and mine.

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

Hope as prayer in waiting — Toward justice and healing

By Rev. Gilles Haché

ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

IN SEASONS of uncertainty, when answers are delayed and paths seem unclear, hope becomes a form of silent prayer. It does not shout; it does not rush — it waits. And in that waiting, it bears witness to a deep trust: that God is at work, even when everything feels frozen.

Hope is not naïve. It knows tears, doubts, and silence. But it chooses to believe that morning will come, that healing is possible, that peace can rise in the heart of turmoil. To hope is to pray without words, with the very breath of our faith.

In our communities, our families, and our solitude, may hope to keep us faithful. May it lead us to pray not only for what we see, but for what we believe — even without proof, even without immediate answers.

For to hope is already to pray. And to pray is already to believe that God meets us in the waiting.

Advent is a season of waiting, but also of promise. We await the coming of Christ not as a memory of the past, but as a light breaking into our darkness today. In

this waiting, hope becomes prayer — not just spoken words, but a living desire for justice, a longing for healing, and a commitment to transform what is broken.

To hope is to believe that God is at work even in silence. It is to pray for a world where wounds are healed, the excluded are welcomed, and truth and peace embrace our communities. It is to resist cynicism and choose to walk in faith, even when the path is uncertain.

In the spirit of the Turning to Grace plan, this waiting becomes true conversion. We turn our gaze toward grace — not as an abstract idea, but as a living force

that transforms our lives, our communities, our Church. It is an invitation to leave behind rigid habits, to embrace the Spirit's newness, and to walk together toward a Church that is more open, more courageous, and more rooted in the love of Christ.

So, in this Advent season, may our hope be active. May it become prayer in motion — a prayer that heals, liberates, and builds. For in waiting for Christ, we discover that justice is not a distant dream, but a work God begins in us, here and now.

Rev. Gilles Haché is Huron AFP executive member.

Lord of light
and promise,
in this Advent season,
teach us to hope boldly.

May your Spirit
guide us
toward justice,
may your grace heal
and transform us.

Make our waiting
a living prayer,
and our journey a
path to your love.

Amen.



Help for children in Tanzania and Burundi



Midwives in Ecuador



Uganda: Skills training program

From Page 1

We believe in a hope that moves with us. Not wishful thinking. Not turning away from what is difficult. But the kind of hope that leans in, listens, and stays. Responding to Jesus’ call to love our neighbour, we picture this work as a shared journey: side by side, holding strong to hope even when the path is narrow or steep.

When you support Alongside Hope, you are joining hands with local partners around the world; people who know their communities deeply and guide our shared efforts with wisdom and care. Together, we focus on key areas where hope is urgently needed. Here are just a few examples:

Health and Healing and Resilient Livelihoods:
In Mexico, Peru, and Ecuador, 342 Indigenous midwives are improving maternal health. In Uganda, more than 6,700 young women have received entrepreneurship training. And through our partnership with Oikocredit, low-income families are reporting stronger savings; better incomes; and a renewed sense of wellbeing.

Indigenous Partnerships:
In Nova Scotia, Mi’kmaw artifacts are being returned and restored after decades away; creating space for stories to live again. In Manitoba, grandmothers from four northern Cree Nations gathered for heal-

ing, grounding, and spiritual resurgence.

Creation Care and Climate Change:
In Zimbabwe, thousands of farmers are learning conservation agriculture and holistic land management. In Kenya, rocket stoves are saving firewood and improving family health. And in Colombia, women are leading water protection efforts in the Pisba páramo moorland, which supplies much of the country’s fresh water.

Humanitarian Response and Supporting Refugees:
In Gaza, the Al Ahli Hospital (operated by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem) has treated more than 18,000 patients since the current

conflict began. In Ukraine, a new daycare centre in Lviv supports young adults with disabilities. In Tanzania’s Nyarugusu Refugee Camp, refugees are learning organic farming and launching small businesses. And in South Sudan, nearly 10,000 people are receiving monthly food relief.

Emergency Response in Canada:
After the Jasper wildfire, the Diocese of Edmonton partnered with local agencies to support more than 1,500 evacuees. In British Columbia and Yukon, a fifty thousand dollar grant stands ready to help communities respond to future wildfire emergencies.

This and more is what your support makes possible.

As we launch our annual Fall Appeal, with the support of the Synod, Diocesan Office, and Huron Church News, we are inviting you to continue the journey with us.

Whether you give once or monthly, your generosity helps us meet urgent needs and nurture lasting change.

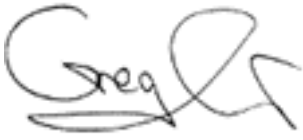
To make a donation, visit www.alongsidehope.org/give-today; or send your gift through your parish. Every contribution, whether large or small, makes a difference.

Through prayer and partnership, your witness matters. You are part of this unfolding story of hope.

Thank you for your enduring commitment to God’s work through Alongside Hope. With your support, we look forward to another year of transformation and grace.

May your generosity be a light in someone’s darkness. May your hope be a seed that grows in unexpected places.

In Christ,



Rev. Canon Greg Jenkins,
on behalf of Alongside
Hope Huron

Photos: Alongside Hope



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☐ Cheque - **Please make cheque payable to Diocese of Huron**

Credit Card: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

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Expiry Date: _____

Signature: _____

I WISH TO SUPPORT *ALONGSIDE HOPE Huron* BY MAKING A MONTHLY GIFT!

☐ Please deduct my monthly gift of

☐ \$10 ☐ \$20 ☐ \$30 ☐ Other \$_____

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☐ Please bill my Credit Card: (charged on the 15th of every month)

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Credit Card#: _____

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Automatic Bank Withdrawal - Please enclose a cheque marked VOID or a pre-authorized payment form
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