

# CHURCH CHAT

## Synod Highlights: Stewards of the Gift

In his recent Charge to Synod, Bishop Todd Townshend invited the Diocese of Huron to lean into a year-round cultivation of stewardship and generosity. As our own parish focuses on stewardship in the coming year, the Bishop's message provides a timely and inspiring blueprint for our journey.

Rather than viewing stewardship as a chore to keep the lights on, Bishop Todd reminds us that it is the natural, joyful response of a disciple to the extravagant gifts God pours out.



### Three Pillars of Diocesan Resource

The Bishop broke down our shared resources into three distinct areas:

- **People:** Every baptized person has a unique vocation and a gift to offer. Bishop Todd highlighted the necessity of renewing our leadership by blending the wisdom of our elders with the new gifts of rising leaders. He also introduced the Anishinaabe concept of *Aanikaw*—the act of binding and joining. It reminds us that we are inextricably linked to the three generations before us and the three generations after us, forming a resilient web of kinship in Christ.
- **Property:** Our land and buildings are an inheritance to be stewarded in truthful, generous, and healing ways. Across Huron, parishes are courageously reimagining their spaces. From urban redevelopments—like our neighbouring **All Saints, Waterloo** and its **Sidewalk Centre**—to rural ministries moving out of expensive buildings to become "a church that is the people," we are learning to treat property as a flexible tool for neighbourhood outreach and affordable housing rather than an idol to cling to.
- **Planning:** The diocesan strategic plan, *Turning to Grace*, continues to come alive in unique local ways across our 140 parishes, guiding communities to adapt swiftly to a fast-changing modern landscape.

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## The Charge: For the Sake of the World

The ultimate focus for the next twelve months is a deliberate cultivation of year-round stewardship. Bishop Todd challenged a common misconception by flipping our standard perspective on its head:

"We don't encourage generosity and stewardship to sustain the church; we sustain the church so that we can preach generosity and stewardship for the sake of the world that God so loves."

In an era defined by consumerism, greed, and a scarcity mindset, the Church possesses a beautiful, urgent antidote. We are not merely managing budgets and buildings; we are the stewards of Jesus' resurrection life.

As we embark on our parish stewardship focus this year, let us remember that our generosity is meant to counter the world's scarcity and overflow into our broader community. We sustain this place so that lives of transformative faith can be made possible right here in our neighbourhood.

## Evangelism Moment ~Pastor Marty

### The Grit of Hope: Everyday Evangelism for the Rest of Us

We Anglicans have a bit of a reputation when it comes to the word "evangelism." It makes us nervous. We tend to picture street-corner preachers, high-pressure sales pitches, or glossy television productions. We think it requires a specialized theological vocabulary, a flawless personal life, and a distinct lack of doubt. We've turned evangelism into a specialized program run by professionals, leaving the rest of us feeling unqualified.

But if we look at the world, that "highly polished" version of faith is hitting a wall.

Between the rising cost of living, global anxiety, and a general exhaustion with manufactured perfection, people have developed a sharp nose for anything that feels fake. They aren't looking for a flawless, airbrushed presentation of religion anymore. They are looking for **Realistic Optimism**. They don't want a faith that ignores the struggle; they want to see a faith that knows how to survive it. And that means evangelism doesn't belong to a program; it belongs to the everyday parishioner.



Before I entered the priesthood, I spent fifteen years working as an automotive mechanic. In the shop, you don't evaluate a tool by how clean it is or how shiny the chrome looks. You evaluate it by whether it can handle the job when the bolts are rusted, the space is tight, and your knuckles are bleeding. You look for a tool with some grit.

Everyday evangelism is much the same. When we

try to act as if we have it all together, pretending our lives, our families, and our faiths are pristine, we inadvertently send a message to our neighbours: *You only belong here if you're already winning.*

Realistic Optimism is a grit-filled hope. It's the willingness to be honest about the fact that life is heavy, while quietly insisting that darkness doesn't get the final word. You don't need a theology degree to share that. You just need to be real.

- **Share the Process, Not Just the Pageant:** Evangelism is letting a coworker know that you're struggling with anxiety too, but mentioning that you find a strange, grounding peace in the quiet liturgy on Sunday morning.
- **The Ministry of Availability:** It's showing up for your neighbour with a plate of food or a listening ear when their world is falling apart, not because you have a hidden agenda to convert them, but because your faith gives you the capacity to sit in the mess with them.
- **Honest Hope:** It's being the person in your workplace or community group who refuses to participate in cynical doom and gloom, choosing instead to look for where life, community, and restoration are breaking through.

This isn't a new strategy; it's the original blueprint. In Acts 11:19-26, the early Church didn't expand because the Apostles launched a massive, centralized evangelism campaign. It happened because ordinary believers were scattered by a crisis, the persecution following Stephen's death. They were displaced, uncertain, and likely exhausted.



Yet, as they travelled, these everyday parishioners simply lived out their faith in the grit of their new realities. They talked to the people they met in the marketplaces, the neighbourhoods, and the local docks of Antioch. They didn't ignore the tragedy they had just survived, but they refused to let fear dictate their lives. Their grit was so distinct, and their realistic optimism so compelling, that the secular culture couldn't help but notice. It was right there, in the middle of ordinary life, that the disciples were first called Christians.

As we go about our weeks, our greatest evangelistic asset isn't a perfect life. It is our willingness to show that even when life is heavy, the "hand of the Lord" is still moving among us.

We need to stop waiting for a committee to design an outreach program. The most radical thing an everyday Christian can do is prove to a weary world that grace still works, that community is still real, and that hope has dirt under its fingernails.

## Book Club ~ Joyce Harry

Greetings again from the Book Club.

If you are an avid reader and have a bit of spare time on the last Wednesday of the month, why not consider coming to join a discussion at our book club?

We meet at the church at 1:00 p.m. Our next meeting is June 24, and we will be discussing 'The Island of Sea Women' by Lisa See.

The group has grown over time, and everyone has the opportunity to recommend books to read. You can also lead a meeting if you like.

The books for the next couple of months:

July 29 – The Caretakers by Amanda Bestor-Siegal

August 26 – Theo of Golden by Allen Levi

This is a great way to get to know new people and have some good conversation. Would like to see you there.

“Champions keep playing until they get it right”  
Billie Jean King.

## Stewardship Moment ~ Mike Banham

### Stewardship at All Saints': Building a Church for Our Neighbourhood

At All Saints' Waterloo, stewardship is about far more than budgets and buildings. Stewardship is the faithful response to God's generosity in our lives. It is the way we offer our time, talents, compassion, energy, and financial gifts so that our church can continue to be a place of welcome, hope, and transformation in the community.

Over the past several years, our parish has stepped boldly into a new chapter. The construction of our new church home and the development of the SideWalk Community Centre represent much more than a physical building project. Together, they reflect a vision of a church deeply rooted in the neighbour-



hood — a church that exists not only for Sunday worship, but for service throughout the week.

Every week, lives are touched through ministries operating from our church and community centre. Through food distribution programs connected with the local food bank, families receive practical support during difficult times. Through community cooking initiatives, neighbours gather to learn, share, and build friendships.

Through youth basketball programs, young people find encouragement, mentorship, activity, and belonging in a safe and welcoming environment.



These ministries are not side projects. They are central to who we are as followers of Jesus Christ. Yet as our ministry opportunities grow, so too does the need for stewardship within our congregation.

### **Stewardship Is Everyone's Calling**

Sometimes, stewardship is viewed as simply financial gifts – how much you put in the offering plate each week. That is far too narrow a definition. Christian stewardship is more about discipleship. It asks a simple but important question:

How are you using the gifts God has given you?

Each person in our parish has something meaningful to offer. Some offer hospitality and help newcomers feel at home. Others bring administrative or organizational skills that support our ministries behind the scenes. Still others mentor youth, prepare meals, visit those who are isolated, care for the building, pray faithfully, or give financially to sustain ministry. Every gift matters because every person matters.

### **A Church in the Heart of the Community**

Our new church building and SideWalk Community Centre have already become important gathering places in the neighbourhood. People who may never have entered a traditional church are now walking through our doors for programs, meals, sports, conversations, and support. This creates an extraordinary opportunity for ministry.

In many communities today, loneliness, isolation, financial pressure, and uncertainty are growing realities. Churches that are visible, compassionate, and engaged can become places of healing and connection. We are seeing this happen at All Saints'.

## **Buildings alone do not create Ministry - People do.**

The strength of our parish depends on the willingness of parishioners to share their lives in service to others. As we continue to expand programming and outreach, we need more volunteers who can help lead, organize, welcome, mentor, prepare, clean, coordinate, and support the many ministries taking place each week.

We are seeking renewed energy and greater participation on our Stewardship team. Stewardship leaders are vital in helping our parish grow in generosity, gratitude, and engagement. They share the story of what God is doing through our church, invite others to find meaningful ways to serve and help build a culture in which giving time, talent, and treasure is a joyful expression of faith.

## **Stewardship for the Future**

Alongside volunteer involvement, financial stewardship remains an important priority for our parish. The reality is operating a modern church and community centre requires significant ongoing support. Mortgage payments, utilities, maintenance, insurance, staffing, ministry supplies, and community programming all carry real costs. As ministry grows, those responsibilities grow as well.

At the same time, financial giving is not simply about “keeping the lights on.” It is about investing in ministry that changes lives. Every gift helps sustain worship, outreach, pastoral care, youth programs, food distribution, and community partnerships. Every contribution helps ensure that our church remains open and active as a place of hope in Waterloo.



For some parishioners, stewardship may mean increasing regular financial giving. For others, it may involve making a first-time commitment to monthly donations. Some may be able to contribute special gifts toward ministry expansion or building support. Others may not be able to give financially right now, but can offer valuable time and service instead.

What matters most is participation in the shared mission of the church. As more people encounter the ministries of All Saints' and the SideWalk Community Centre, we hope many will discover authentic, practical support from our Christian community. We want people to feel God's love through action.

## **An Invitation to Stewardship**

Today, we invite every member of our parish to prayerfully consider how they might participate more deeply in the life and mission of All Saints'.

Perhaps God is calling you to volunteer in one of our growing community ministries. Perhaps you have leadership gifts that could strengthen the Stewardship team. Perhaps you can increase your financial support to help sustain the church's future ministry. Perhaps your role is simply to encourage others and pray faithfully for our parish.

Whatever your gift may be, it matters. The future of All Saints' will be shaped by an entire parish community responding together to God's call. We have been blessed with a beautiful new church and community centre. More importantly, we have been entrusted with a mission: to inspire and uplift all with inclusivity, compassion and the transformative love of Jesus Christ.

Through faithful stewardship of our time, talents, and resources, we can continue our mission for generations to come.

## Sunday School Spotlight ~ Mike Banham

We have experienced significant growth in our youngest parishioners over the past couple of years. Each week, we are seeing as many as 15 – 20 children participate in Sunday School. To continue to provide the experience our children need and deserve, we need more volunteers to help with our Sunday School program.

Whether you are a parent, grandparent, retired educator, student, or parish member looking for a meaningful way to serve, there is a place for you in Sunday School.



Please prayerfully consider joining this important ministry and volunteering as a Sunday School teacher.

Sunday School has always been one of the most meaningful ministries at All Saints! Each week, children gather to learn about God's love, compassion, forgiveness, and the teachings of Jesus Christ in a warm and welcoming environment. Through Bible stories, music, crafts, prayer, and fellowship, our Sunday School helps young people build a strong spiritual foundation while creating friendships that often last a lifetime.

Behind this important ministry is a dedicated team of volunteers who generously share their time, energy, and care. Our volunteers help create a safe and encouraging atmosphere where children feel valued, heard, and supported. They assist with lessons, organize activities, guide discussions, and most importantly, model Christian kindness and compassion through their actions.

Through the years, All Saints has been blessed with gifted leaders and volunteers who have nurtured the young members of our church. While it is natural for parents to volunteer to support their children's faith journey, more of today's volunteers are supporting Sunday School because of their passion and interest in helping our youngest parishioners get to know God.

Many people believe they need formal teaching experience to volunteer in Sunday School – but that is not the case. What matters most is a willingness to serve and a heart for helping children grow in faith. Whether someone helps once a month or every week, every contribution is deeply appreciated and has a meaningful impact on the lives of our young parishioners.

Volunteering is a rewarding experience for adults. It provides opportunities to deepen personal faith, strengthen connections within the church community, and witness the joy and curiosity of children discovering God's presence in their lives. For many volunteers, Sunday School becomes not only a ministry of service but also a source of personal encouragement and spiritual renewal. Here is what some former and current Sunday School teachers say about their experience.

"I taught Sunday School through our children's faith journey. Using the Sunday School curriculum as a guideline, I wanted to create an exciting and unique experience for the kids and sometimes gave them a preview of next week's activity to encourage them to return. It makes me smile to this day when those kids, now adults, come up to me and talk about a specific class they remember."

*Ron Bender*

"Teaching and assisting with the Sunday School program has given me an opportunity to support the growth of our youngest parishioners. It brings me joy when I see them smile, dance, complete a craft and listen to Bible Stories."

*Shari McLaren*

“If we want our young people to be the church of tomorrow, we all have a role in ensuring they are first the church of today. Experiencing the boundless energy, thoughtful questions and spontaneous responses of our children has given me a fresh perspective on learning about God’s love, the life and teachings of Jesus and living a Christian life.”

*Nancy Carlisle-Weaver*

As a Sunday School volunteer, you nurture faith, inspire young hearts, and strengthen the future of our church family for generations to come. If you feel moved to volunteer, please contact Pastor Marty or Catherine Sprowl. We need you to help build a strong spiritual foundation for the children of All Saints.

## Summer Sabbath ~ Pastor Marty

As the calendar turns toward July, a natural shift happens around us. The pace of the school year grinds to a halt, the days stretch out long and warm, and the local landscapes across Waterloo burst into full bloom. Yet, for many of us, our internal pace remains stuck on high. We treat our lives like a machine that must constantly produce, and we treat our faith like a task list that never ends.

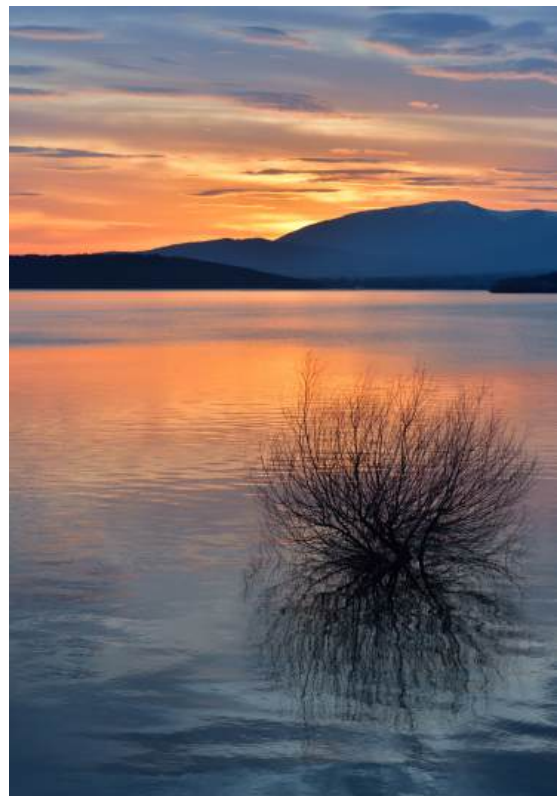
This season, I want to invite you into a counter-cultural spiritual practice: **The Summer Sabbath.**

Too often, we treat resting, taking a vacation, or spending a quiet afternoon sitting by the lake as a luxury, or worse, a form of laziness. We tell ourselves we will rest *after* the work is finished. But the biblical concept of Sabbath flips that narrative on its head. In the creation story, God didn't rest because He was exhausted; He rested to show us that completion, enjoyment, and stillness are holy.

Rest is not a reward for a job well done; it is a prerequisite for a faithful life.

When we step away from our daily routines to immerse ourselves in God’s creation, we aren't taking a break from our discipleship; we are deepening it. Jesus regularly practiced this "theology of the pause." He frequently withdrew from the demanding crowds, the theological arguments, and the busy villages to go into the wilderness, up a mountain, or out onto the water. He didn't do this to escape his ministry, but to sustain it.

Creation is a unique classroom. When we walk through



the woods, sit by the water, or simply watch a summer sunset, we are reminded of a fundamental theological truth: the world runs beautifully without our help.

Stepping into nature forces us to step down from the throne of our own lives. It reminds us that we are creatures, not the Creator. It shifts our perspective from a mindset of scarcity and endless striving to one of abundance and grace.

This connects deeply to the vision Bishop Todd shared with us at Synod regarding stewardship. Remember his challenge: we sustain the church so that lives of faith and generosity can be made possible for the sake of the world.

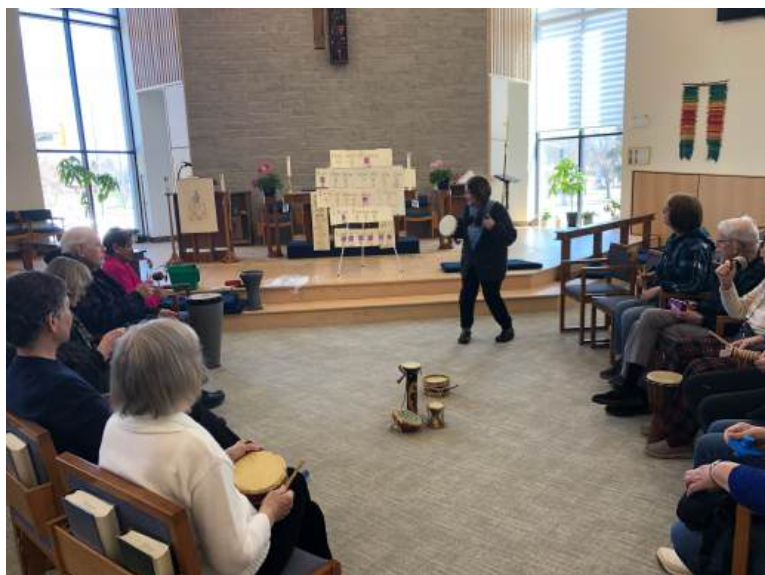
You cannot pour from an empty cup. You cannot preach a gospel of abundance to a weary world if you are running on the fumes of exhaustion and anxiety. Taking a Summer Sabbath, whether that means an extended trip, a weekend camping, or a deliberate digital fast on a Sunday afternoon, is an act of stewardship over the life and energy God has entrusted to you. It is a declaration that your worth is found in who you *are* as a child of God, not in what you *do*.

So this summer, turn down the internal noise. Step out onto the porch, find a trail, or sit under a tree. Breathe in the warm air and remember that the God who holds the universe together is inviting you, simply, to rest.

## Savvy Saints ~ Carol Barnes

There was a different kind of joyful noise filling our sanctuary recently as the Savvy Saints gathered for a vibrant drum circle experience. Moving in a circle of chairs right in the heart of our worship space, our seniors' connection group traded a traditional afternoon for hand drums, tambourines, shakers, and rhythm boards. Guided by a facilitator who mapped out playful patterns on a chart at the front, the room quickly came alive with a shared beat. From keeping a steady pulse to experimenting with different accents, it was a beautiful reminder of the energy, laughter, and creativity that happens when we try something new together.

This lively afternoon was a fantastic example of what the Savvy Saints do best—creating spaces for genuine connection and active fellowship. The circle of chairs and shared instruments proved that music making doesn't require a lifetime of training, just a willingness to join the rhythm. If you or someone you know is looking for a community group filled with mutual support, light-hearted fun, and a great beat, we invite you to come out to the next Savvy Saints gathering!



## Meet Natalia

Natalia Sawyer, originally from Vancouver, studied music at Wilfred Laurier University. Currently based in Kitchener-Waterloo, she's known for her versatility as a collaborative pianist, conductor, and improviser. Her recent performances include productions with the KW Singers, Opera Laurier, and at the Paprika Festival in Toronto. In concert, she has conducted the Kitchener-Waterloo Youth Orchestra in performances at Centre in the Square, the Conrad Centre, and First United Church in Waterloo.

Natalia can be contacted at [musicdirector@all-saintswaterloo.ca](mailto:musicdirector@all-saintswaterloo.ca)

Welcome to All Saints!



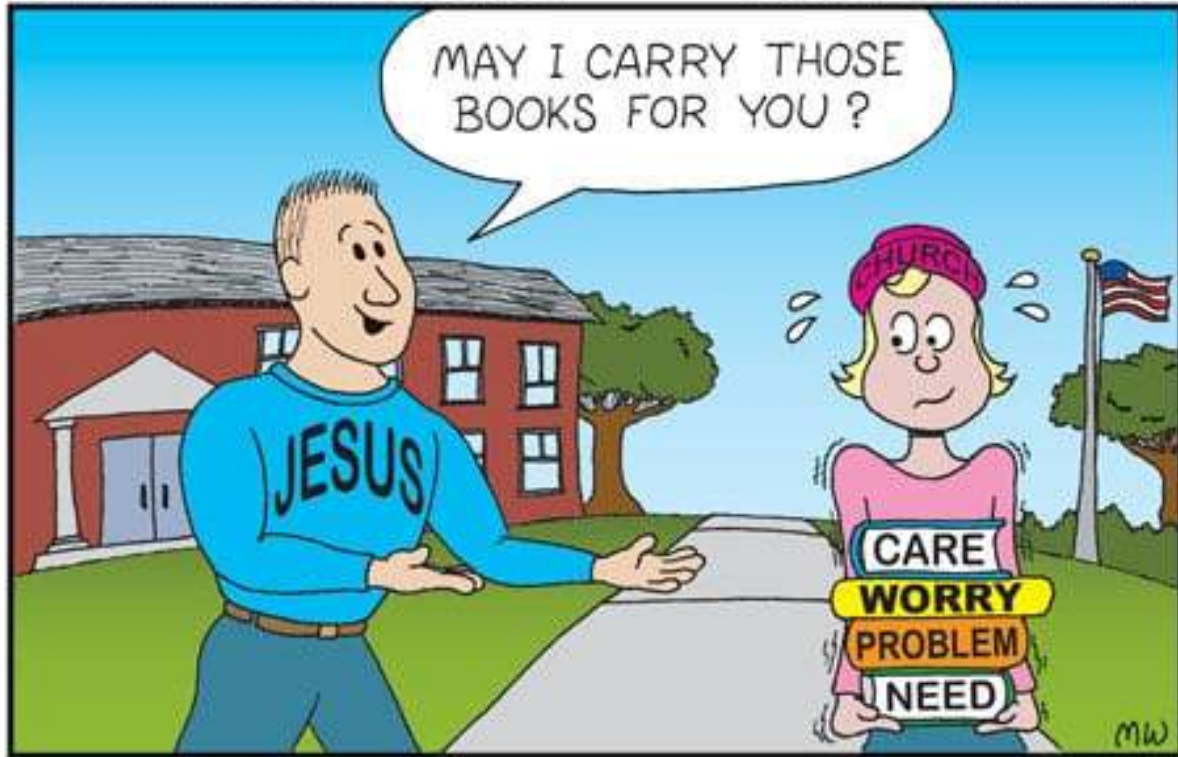
## Thank you

A huge thank you to Chris Frengos and the fantastic team at **Daily Grill** (located at 615 Davenport Rd, at the corner of Northfield and Davenport) for their incredible generosity! They stepped up to supply the hot dogs for our parish BBQ during our annual garage sale, keeping our volunteers and bargain-hunters well-fed and energized throughout the day. We are so grateful for Chris's wonderful support of our community. Please be sure to drop by the Daily Grill to show them some local love and grab a great meal!

## Funnies

### CARRY YOUR BOOKS?

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



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Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.  
-1 PETER 5:7 KJV

# Word Search

Bible Pathway  
Adventures

# PENTECOST



Read Acts 2:1-47. Find and circle the words below.

N	L	T	G	Z	U	L	A	N	G	U	A	G	E	U
H	A	O	E	S	S	M	T	R	B	F	I	R	E	P
G	Y	T	I	M	H	E	B	S	X	Y	C	U	U	G
V	I	E	I	D	P	A	Z	X	J	D	P	Z	H	U
V	H	H	B	O	M	L	V	G	Z	E	E	L	J	D
G	X	M	L	R	N	E	E	U	I	M	N	Y	E	B
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