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EAT, PRAY, SERVE
Serving others is fun, especially
when our faith calls us to emulate
the generosity of Christ to others.
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HURON CHURCH NEWS

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF HURON • Huron Church News is a section of the Anglican Journal • OCTOBER 2026



CAMP HURON SUMMER 2026
We weren't leading anything. We weren't
managing. We weren't hurrying. We were just
two grown-ups on a bench, being allowed
to witness the kind of belonging you can't
manufacture.

► PAGE 4: THANK YOU, GERRY!

From the chapel bench (Miracles of the summer past)

An ordinary afternoon at Camp Huron: Chaplain Chris Travers and the Camp Director Gerry Adam are sitting on an old bench, watching children doing their stuff.

By Rev. Chris Travers

SOME OF THE BEST
Camp moments don't
happen in the middle of all
the action, they happen on
the edge when you're simply
watching.

Gerry and I found our-
selves on the old bench in
front of the chapel early yes-
terday afternoon after an E
on the B (emergency on the
beach) practice run. A bench
that is rather old, leaning a
little to one side and worn
down by years of kids, adults
and grandparents sitting and
sharing stories. From there,
you can see the whole main
compound, the patchy grass,
outdoor chapel, the gaga ball
pit, the beach volleyball area
and the space used for games
of all kinds. We didn't plan
to sit long but as usual we
did. Then partway through
second session kids from all
different cabins began play-
ing different games.

Clusters of kids came from
nowhere and everywhere into

spontaneous play in the field
where soccer nets had been
dragged out, in the volleyball
area and of course at the gaga
ball pit. No one seemed to be
keeping score and among all
of it kids were rotating in and
out, making up rules as they
went along and it very much
looked like various games of
Calvinball from the Calvin
and Hobbes cartoon.

What struck me, sitting
beside Gerry, wasn't just the
play, it was the mix. Juniors,
intermediates, seniors and
LIT's playing and helping one
another. Helping each other
up, explaining whatever rules
they were coming up with,
not because they had to, but
because someone once did
that for them right there on
the same grass. Connection
doesn't ask for a birth year; it
asks for presence.

Time felt elastic on the
bench and soon five minutes
became forty-five minutes.
There were movements and
indicators that time was
passing but it also felt like

someone hit a pause button
so we could be held still by
a bunch of kids who had
nowhere else to be but ex-
actly where they were. Gerry
leaned over at one point and
said something like, "This is
the real program."

She was right. The sched-
uled activities are wonderful;
the program staff work hard
to make them enjoyable but
the space after and between
them? That's where the in-
visible threads are spun that
keep us all coming back.

We weren't leading any-
thing. We weren't managing.
We weren't hurrying. We
were just two grown-ups on
a bench, being allowed to
witness the kind of belonging
you can't manufacture. No
screens, no rush, only time
and connection. It was just
camp doing what camp does
best, in the open air, with a
chapel keeping quiet watch
over it all.

*Rev. Chris Travers is Camp
Huron's Chaplain.*



Something precious has been lost...

The closeness did not erase
the difference.

It was not a hard line of
distinctness, not a sharp
boundary of suspicion, but a
quiet awareness that our na-
tions' stories were not quite
the same.

► PAGE 10: AN ELEGY FOR A
ONCE-FRIENDLY BORDER



A voice from a vacant pew

**Returning to Church, twenty
years later...**

My lack of attendance was
not an issue of faith. I did
not have any reverse Road to
Damascus situation.

So, why twenty years away?

► PAGE 5

Living Water

"Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water"

John 7. 38

**THE GIFTS OF THANKSGIVING
AND SYNOD**

► PAGE 2

**NEW HURON ARCHIVES
READY FOR SYNOD**

► PAGE 6



The gifts of Thanksgiving and Synod

ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

We give thanks for the opportunity to build our relationship with God and each other through prayer practice as we gather for both Thanksgiving and as a Synod.

By Sharon Frank

OCTOBER is the month of Thanksgiving and Synod. Is there a connection? It would seem so!

We in the Anglican tradition are blessed to be a denomination that sees all members as having a voice, all members able to be part of the decision making, all members as equal. All the positions – Bishop, priests, deacons, laity are unique and specific (with some overlap) and yet they come together at Synod, as equal members, to determine how best to follow the teachings of Jesus the Christ and support parishes and members of the diocese and beyond.

We give thanks for the opportunity to gather, to pray together, to share liturgy and hymns, to build relationships, to share fellowship and hospitality, to make the decisions about the ministry, the business, direction, and mission of our beloved “church.” To explore and to share our faith, to witness

the presence of Christ in our world. We do not always agree but do demonstrate love, respect, and acknowledge the dignity of all and for this we are thankful. We take the time for dialogue and an opportunity to listen to and learn from one another and the Holy Spirit. We always offer prayers for guidance for our Synod work, knowing that “we will/ can with God’s Help”

Thanksgiving is a time to stop, to reflect, to be grateful for the many blessings and the abundance of God in our lives, in our world in all of creation. We offer prayers for the harvest, for God’s abundance in this world, and take time for family, friends and those in need. The acts of grace before meals are heartfelt as we contemplate the ways God has been evident in our lives and in the lives of those whom we love and admire. Counting one’s blessings and being grateful for them is a true act of thanksgiving. The Thanksgiving feast - one serves or consumes - in a home,

restaurant, or community setting is a visual reflection of Gods abundance and love.

We give thanks for the opportunity to build our relationship with God and each other through prayer practice as we gather for both “Thanksgiving” and as a “Synod.” In many parts of the world this is unknown and unheard of. So yes, there are connections between Thanksgiving and Synod coming in the same month. Synod supports the themes of faith enrichment, gratitude, abundance in stewardship, and ministry; while “Thanksgiving” is about giving thanks and appreciating abundance, the many blessings in our lives, and our ability to serve.

That attitude of abundance and not one of scarcity is part of our Christian hope and a reflection of both “Thanksgiving” and Synod... And for this we pray, “thanks be to God”! Amen and Amen.

Sharon Frank is an AFP executive member.

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OPEN HEARTS, OPEN HANDS

Growing a Life of Prayer Together

The **Anglican Fellowship of Prayer** invites you to a monthly gathering to deepen our life of prayer, through teaching, reflection, discussion, and guided prayer.

Join us as we cultivate rhythms of prayer that shape everyday life, strengthen faith, and renew the Church.

One-hour Zoom gatherings are held on the first Monday of each month at 1.00pm Eastern. Visit www.anglicanprayer.org or follow us on Facebook for details and link



Anglican Fellowship of Prayer

Fall Conference Presents:

The Eternal Canticle: Praying the Psalms

Presenter: The Rev'd Canon Dr. Lisa Wang

Saturday, October 3, 2026
9:30 am—12:30 pm
By Zoom

What are the Psalms, where do they come from, and how did they become such an important part of the Christian tradition in our liturgy as Anglicans?

What can we learn from them, and how can we pray with them?

Come find out why Thomas Merton called the psalms our "bread in the wilderness".

Registrar: Mrs. Susan Johnson brlmail2@aol.com

Eco-green friendly stewardship at St. Matthew’s, Windsor

By Rev. Gilles Haché

ST. MATTHEW’S Anglican Church in Windsor has entered a new chapter in its life and mission—one shaped by intentional ecological stewardship, renewed baptismal identity, and a deep commitment to the diocesan vision *Turning to Grace*.

This transformation, rooted in prayer, discernment, and parish-wide collaboration, reflects our desire to honour God’s creation with integrity, purpose, and hope. Our journey began with a simple but profound recognition: “The earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it” (Psalm 24:1). If creation belongs to God, then our responsibility as disciples is to care for it faithfully. This conviction guided our parish as we began to re-examine our habits, our practices, and our impact on the environment.

A Vestry-Mandated Commitment to Creation Care

In February 2026, following a clear and affirmative vote at our Vestry Meeting, St. Matthew’s adopted a comprehensive eco-friendly stewardship policy. This decision marked a significant turning point for our parish. It was not merely an operational adjustment; it was



a theological and spiritual commitment to live more deeply into our baptismal promises.

The Renewals of Baptism, calls us to “strive to safeguard the integrity of God’s creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth.” This promise, often understated, became the foundation of our renewed ministry. It reminded us that caring for creation is not an optional activity—it is part of our baptismal identity and a sign of our faithfulness to Christ. Our policy established new standards for all parish activities, ministries, and rental groups. It also initiated a cultural shift within our community—inviting parishioners to embrace new habits, reconsider long standing practices, and participate in a shared ministry of environmental responsibility.

Concrete Actions and Measurable Impact

Since adopting this policy, St. Matthew’s has implemented several substantial changes: We eliminated 99 percent of paper products, removed all Styrofoam and single use plastics, and reduced our biweekly garbage output by 60 percent.

We established a parish run composting program, maintained by trained volunteers, and required all rental groups to follow the same eco-friendly standards without exception.

These initiatives reflect the biblical call found in Genesis 2:15, where God places humanity in the garden “to till it and keep it.” Our efforts are a direct response to this ancient mandate—a recognition that stewardship is both a privilege and a responsibility.

St. Matthew’s ecological stewardship aligns directly with Bishop Todd’s diocesan vision *Turning to Grace*. Our parish’s initiatives embody this vision by integrating ecological responsibility with spiritual renewal, community engagement, and long term mission planning.

Greening Sacred Spaces: Stewardship in Action

On July 19, 2026, a special Vestry Meeting approved the installation of eco efficient windows in our church hall. This project represents both ecological stewardship and long term financial responsibility. It is a tangible sign of our commitment to sustainability and our desire to care for the physical space where our community gathers for worship, fellowship, and service. St. Matthew’s anticipates achieving Greening Sacred Spaces certification by the end of the year, joining other Anglican communities across the Diocese of Huron who are actively pursuing environmental justice and creation care.

Our work is also shaped by the hope expressed in Romans 8:21, which proclaims that creation itself longs to be “set free from its bondage to decay.” Our efforts are part of

this longing—an offering of hope to future generations.

Our ecological ministry is a direct expression of our baptismal covenant and a sign of our commitment to live faithfully as disciples of Jesus Christ. It is a reminder that our faith is lived not only in prayer, but in practice; not only in worship, but in the choices we make each day.

St. Matthew’s ecological stewardship aligns directly with Bishop Todd’s diocesan vision *Turning to Grace*. Our parish’s initiatives embody this vision by integrating ecological responsibility with spiritual renewal, community engagement, and long term mission planning. By turning to grace, we turn toward God’s dream for creation. We turn toward a Church that leads with courage, compassion, and conviction.

Rev. Gilles Haché is the Rector of St. Matthew’s, Windsor.

Treasures abound at St. Paul’s, Southampton



Have you ever heard the phrase “one person’s discard is another person’s treasure”? Well, it’s true.

For 12 years, St. Paul’s in Southampton has run an annual “Festival of Treasures” Sale on Civic Holiday, Friday night and Saturday morning. It has become a true community event!

The church invites the community through social media to bring in their no-longer-needed “treasures”. Everyone knows that every cent made will be given to local charities. The charities for the year are announced well in advance of the sale.

All donated items, including books, glassware, furniture, antiques, collectibles, gardening supplies, Christmas

Presentation of cheques to four local Saugeen Shores charities: Total of \$7,300 was raised during this year’s Festival of Treasures hosted by St. Paul’s Anglican Church in Southampton.

decorations, etc. are laid out on tables in the community hall over a period of ten days, and on opening night Friday, treasure seekers from far and near are lined up out the sidewalk and down the street, eagerly awaiting their chance to come in and find their new treasures, which they lovingly take away. Some treasure items have been known to reappear at several successive sales! Everything is given away by donation.

In recent years, St. Paul’s Treasure Sale has expanded to include a Jacket & Jewelry Boutique, Silent Auction (for those highly sought-after special treasures) and a Bake Sale.

This year, we celebrated the best year ever, realizing in excess of \$7300 for community outreach, and cheques for \$1800 were presented to each of Saugeen Shores Hospital Foundation, Saugeen Hospice, Salvation Army Food Bank and Living Hope Food Basket.

This is an annual community event where everyone wins. People can offer their no-longer-needed treasures, others can cherish their new finds, and community charities benefit from the fun experience! Everyone is invited to be generous, and generosity is contagious! Approximately \$20,000 has been donated to community outreach in the last three years alone! And now, it’s time to start saving your treasures for next year!

Doug Goar

Practicing Extravagant Generosity

A Stewardship Workshop

Led by Robert Schnase, retired Methodist pastor and bishop author of Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations (revised)

In person and online streaming options available

Saturday, October 31, 2026 9:30 am - 3:30 pm

St. Paul's Anglican Church 248 High Street, Southampton, NOH 2L0

Cost \$20 - includes lunch

More details on the website: BestEverAnglicans.com

Register by email: stpaulssouthampton@diuhuron.org

Or call 519-797-2984

Generosity – a fruit of the spirit – a sign of spiritual growth

Robert Schnase

Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations

Revised and Updated

SCAN HERE for more details and to register

THANK YOU!

As the seasons change and we move into a time of Thanksgiving, it somehow feels right to share some of the heartfelt messages that our Camp Director Gerry Adam has received as she nears retirement at the end of this church year.



DEAR GERRY...

You taught us to look up to the sky in wonder, sing our hearts out in praise, find miracles in everyday nature and care for each other like family. Through your guidance, leadership, and storytelling, we went out into the world prepared to make it a better place in whatever small but meaningful ways we could... Congrats on your well-deserved retirement from Camp Huron!

There was one homily last summer about mercy that has really stuck with me, and I bring it outside of camp...

As the camp chef, one of the greatest rewards was seeing the smiles on the children's faces as they gathered to enjoy a meal...I will always treasure our commitment to faith-based programming made camp more than a summer destination- it became a place where lives were nurtured, friendships made, and faith could grow. Surrounded by the beauty of the lake and God's incredible creation, every summer was a reminder of how special HCC truly is...

Gerry has an extremely graceful way of saying it like it is, which I will always appreciate because it challenged me and helped me to grow...

I am thankful to you for fostering such a caring accepting and safe space for people in the LGBTQIA2S+ community to work alongside faith. You have never shied away from seeing people for who they are...

One of my fondest memories at HCC was during my second-year placement when I was working in a cabin. I was outside engaging the children in a hacky sack circle, and you were quietly watching, after my placement finished you connected with all the second years to see how their placement went. I remember you sharing with me how much joy it brought you to watch all the children and me having such a fun experience. The feedback you gave me really helped my self-confidence and paved my way to a career working with children and being a mentor as well.

My favorite memories of being at camp together with Gerry are not of any particular story, but of a place. The nurse's porch is a special place where stories are told, support is given,

laughs are shared and where life and nature are observed all around us... I will cherish those memories of my porch sitting days with a dear friend.

As a parent, I always knew my children were safe in the embrace of Camp Huron. I trusted that they would come home more deeply connected to who they truly were, with a greater understanding of their place in the larger camp story...Your story will continue through the works and actions of everyone who comes after you- whether or not they ever stood on this scared ground at the same time you did. You have woven you right, creativity and compassion into the very fabric – and soil-of Camp Huron....From a deeply grateful heart.

May you always know what a difference you have made in the world by reflecting the Lord and sharing God's love.... Thank-you for guiding our young hearts....

You showed so much kindness and understanding – I never doubted the care you held and the love you have for life. I carry it with me; I want to carry on the kindness and spread it like glitter! THANK-YOU FOREVER!

I learned to remember, "It's not a funny prank if they aren't laughing"! ☺

Gerry had a rare gift where she could walk into a cabin, a dining hall, a campfire circle, or a hard conversation and somehow leave it lighter and more whole than when she found it. She led not with authority but with love, the kind that notices, that remembers, that makes room for everyone.

Remembering Gerry, who did some of her best coaching and mentoring on the walk up the road between the Dining Hall, past the Laundry Shed, and back to the camper compound. Always thoughtful and a chance to think while the wonderful madness of HCC swirled around us!

I will always remember that feeling of turning onto the gravel road with the greatest anticipation to pick a bunk in the cabins...

You were always a helping guide but also allowed me to have input as well. The volleyball court has come a long way from the day

that I had the idea to start a beach volleyball court...I kept going up and down the beach stairs with buckets of sand. You eventually had mercy on me and bless your heart; you ordered trucks of sand to help finish the job... All the best on wherever the road takes you next...

The lessons you taught me have stayed long after camp. "Is it my hill?" a reminder to choose my battles wisely and perhaps the greatest of all, "own the work you do." These simple words have guided me throughout my career and life.

I am looking forward to updating you about how camp continues to be a welcoming, inclusive, and leader-oriented place, long after your time as Director has ended...

You impact on me has rippled and its waves will touch the lives of many, many young people to come... P.S. See ya at church!

As the longest-serving director Camp Huron has ever known, you didn't just run a camp. You built a home. A place where kids could stumble, be silly, be homesick, be brave, be exactly who they are – and know that they would be met with warmth, no matter what. I think about how many children have sat across from you after a hard day, or a scraped knee or a broken heart over a friendship gone sideways and found in you someone who made them feel safe...With so much love and gratitude...

God's grace flows so easily on the holy ground of Camp Huron (Huron Church Camp in my heart)! Lives have been changed tears dried, comfort given, the gospel preached, children found their voices, young people learned acceptance and grace and love...all because Gerry said "yes." Thank-you Gerry on never compromising on being you. Thank-you for saying "yes." And thank-you for teaching us to shift down the bench a little further to make room for some more folks who would very much like to enter the kingdom, too.

So many of my younger camp memories include not just you, but your children. As a parent now I see what a sacrifice it was for your whole family to be so tied to the camp... Thank-you to Tom and Emily and Maggie and Charles and thank-you Gerry – these words are not enough.

A voice from a vacant pew

By Carl Micks

I HAD THE PLEASURE last summer on a rare quiet Sunday in cottage country of being able to attend a service at the local seasonal church. Aside from funerals it was the first time I have attended an Anglican service in nigh on twenty years.

Part of my attraction was the building itself, being older and of wooden construction. I was not disappointed. The day was warm and bright, with the usual weekend noises of traffic and beachgoers, but upon entering I was transported to a cooler place with the dark wood and that musty smell of a wooden building that has been closed off. In my shorts and golf shirt I was transported back to my time at church camp with the little wooden chapel on hot bright Sunday mornings.

I am pleased to say that while the service was from the Book of Alternative Services, the incumbent selected the version that most closely resembled that in the Book of Common Prayer, so I was not at sea following the proceedings.



I am also pleased to report that the congregation was warm and inviting to a stranger in their midst and I enjoyed a cup of tea with them after the service on the side lawn.

Last summer was my first summer retired. As the fall approached I looked to what post-retirement needs I was required to fill. Physically, that is not a problem as I play and ref hockey. I was fortunate that an acquaintance of mine asked me to be a test reader for his books, so I had a bit of intellectual challenge to replace that from work. As the year went on I continued to look for options and discovered a noon hour service. Based upon my summer experience I decided to dip a toe

into the waters of Anglicanism again.

The service followed the same format as the summer, and that added to my comfort. Again, the congregation and clergy both were warm friendly and inviting to me.

At some level, I knew this would be the case.

So why twenty years away?

Good question I say to myself. My lack of attendance was not an issue of faith. I did not have any reverse Road to Damascus situation. Indeed, given my experiences, it was family, faith and for those who know me, hockey, which carried me through the darkness I experienced. If anything, faith is stronger as a result.

Many people come and go from parishes. Often in our transient society they simply move to another location. Still others, such as myself, slowly slip away.

So, I have to ask, why now? A summer opportunity which triggered nostalgia for a time that has long passed, combined with my familiarity with a service generally not in use and a building with dark wood and actual pews and kneelers?

I don't know. And doubt is a hallmark of a true Christian journey. In a recent action movie, the protagonist was continually asked, "Are you back?". For much of the run time he did not know. And neither do I.

Many people come and go from parishes. Often in our transient society they simply move to another location. Still others, such as myself, slowly slip away. The Church has many community outreach and support activities that serve the parish and local communities well and spread the Word through action. Perhaps thought can be

given to a form of outreach when long term members start to disappear. A simple phone call may disclose why and offer encouragement to return. It could be a new physical restriction, simply needing a ride to church. Or it could be a more complex challenge. One does not know unless one asks.

While I cannot say with absolute certainty that a call or contact would have changed my trajectory, I do know that my address and phone number never changed over the last 40 years and I never received that call.

Carl Micks is a "cradle" Anglican, former server, Sunday school teacher, youth leader, chair of the Opening of the Courts Committee and warden, who also served on a board of management for several years. Carl is also a lawyer who recently retired from a career in finance.

All this and more: So you want to be a parish priest?

By Rev. Greg Little



The call to priesthood is sometimes summarized under the categories of priest, pastor and prophet. However, it involves a lot more than fits into those three categories.

I WAS GOING through some old files a while ago and came across a document; Ministry Description, Priest/Rector. This was a job description of what is expected for a parish priest in the Anglican Church which was provided for me when I became a full-time parish priest some years ago.

There is a very old joke about clergy only having to work an hour once a week i.e. Sundays. This job description buried that canard. Here is a summary which, I hope, will give you a general idea of all the things expected of someone who assumes the role of parish priest. There are ten areas of responsibilities giving a summary of each one.

1. Pastoral Ministry – pastoral care/visitation of the sick; marriage, baptism and confirmation preparation, pastoral counselling.

2. Worship – preparation for worship services including sermons, hymn selection, children's focus, maintain prayer lists, bulletin preparation; lead worship in long term care facilities.

3. Parish Education – provide for families preparing for baptism, confirmation, funerals;

The challenge, as I see it, is that the parish priest is called to be all things for his/her parish. This is particularly true in small and medium sized parishes where there is only one priest.

provide seasonal education programs e.g. Lenten and Advent; lead bible study.

4. Parish Administration – participate in preparation of parish budgets; manage parish office, lead council meetings; chair vestry meetings.

5. Encourage Lay Leadership – identify, train, equip and commission lay leaders within the parish.

6. Spiritual Guidance – provide spiritual counselling to individuals and groups,

7. Ministry Beyond the Parish – involvement in Diocesan meeting and groups; attend Synod (annual Diocesan meeting).

8. Community Involvement – attend community clergy meetings; lead/participate in ecumenical community services; serve as Legion Chaplain.

9. Continuing Education – attend clergy conferences; participate in Diocesan clergy days; undertake continuing education.

10. Spiritual Development – annual retreats; meet with Spiritual Director; maintain regular prayer life;

regular study of scripture.

The call to priesthood is sometimes summarized under the categories of priest, pastor and prophet. However, as you can see for this it involves a lot more than fits into those three categories.

The challenge, as I see it, is that the parish priest is called to be all things for his/her parish. This is particularly true in small and medium sized parishes where there is only one priest. It would be an executional person who could do all these things well, or perhaps, even adequately.

If there are larger parishes which have a clergy team there can be clergy that have strengths in certain areas and other areas can be undertaken by other members of the team. Most Anglican parishes are small to medium sized in Canada. This puts the responsibility of all these areas on one person.

Even Jesus had a group of twelve and more to undertake his ministry. Perhaps there needs to be a recognition and acknowledgement that one person cannot do

all these things well. As a result, some areas are going to suffer.

The next time you are tempted to criticize your priest/minister, bear in mind he or she is only human and can't perform miracles. Praying for them is always a good idea as is seeing where you can assist in the life of a parish/congregation.

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



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Making the new Leighton Archives – A photo tour

Over the last year, we have been busy transforming spaces at St Paul’s to create the new Leighton Archives. The process is still ongoing with final touches and re-opening scheduled to coincide with Synod later this month. We thought you might enjoy a quick sneak peek at our major remodel at the Cathedral.

Transformation in the Vault

Our collection occupies a large space below the Sanctuary that formerly served as the Choir score library and rehearsal room. We re-routed miles of piping and ductwork and levelled and re-tiled the floor. We updated electrical and HVAC systems to ensure consistent humidity and a stable environment for our fragile records and rare artifacts. We transferred and reinstalled our compact shelves from our old location and supplemented it with new shelving. We relocated our flat storage cabinets down here as well. With a new security system, we have a safe new home for all of our archival records and historical materials.



Moving the Collection

We loaded the complete Archival collections in our old location at Huron University College into rigid red plastic totes, stacked box on box on box. We spent a day or two just loading all 850+ onto trucks and driving back and forth to St Paul’s Cathedral, first staging everything in Cronyn Hall in a sea of red. Then, over the next week or so, tote by tote we moved and re-shelved the collection down into its permanent new home in the Vault.



Transformation in Our Storage Room

We require considerable space to quarantine new acquisitions, securely house material awaiting cataloguing and store a myriad of archival supplies. In what was the children’s worship space on the Cathedral second floor we safely preserved its mid-century mural behind a new wall, installed ranges of shelving and now have ample room for all of our storage needs safely adjacent to our new public spaces.



Transformation in Our Public Spaces

In what was three adjacent offices, one with a small annex, on the second floor of the Cathedral, we created the public spaces of the new Leighton Archives. Dividing the middle room made an office for the Archivist and a small welcome/reception area which serves as the main entrance from St Paul’s into our new space. Opening the latter on one side to a new staff/volunteer Workroom with its annex housing equipment for our growing digitization program, and on the opposite side into a new Reading Room for in-house Archives users and other researchers we connected the rooms which now flow comfortably one into another. With a paint refresh, upgraded electrical panel and air-conditioning throughout the entire second floor, new internet and phone connectivity, and accent walls on which we can display some archival treasures such as our collection of historical church commemorative plates, we look forward to welcoming you to the new Leighton Archives very soon..

Prepared by Tom Adam, Chair of the Archives Relocation Working Group

PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

Appointments

Bishop Townshend appoints the Reverend Canon Tony Bouwmeester as the interim priest in charge of Holy Trinity, St. George, effective 19 July 2026.

Bishop Townshend appoints Mr. Darryl Watson as the Lay Pastor in charge of Christ Church, Huntingford, effective 1 August 2026.

Bishop Townshend appoints the Reverend Leah Arvidsson as the Rector of St. Michael and All Angels, Sarnia, effective 15 October 2026.

On behalf of Bishop Townshend, his Commissary, Archdeacon Stephen McClatchie, appoints the Venerable Judy Walton as the interim priest-in-charge of Christ Church Meaford, effective, 1 September 2026.

On behalf of Bishop Townshend, his Commissary, Archdeacon Stephen McClatchie, appoints the Reverend Jeffrey Kischak as the Rector of St. Paul’s, Southampton; St. John’s, Port Elgin; and Christ Church, Tara, effective 1 November 2026.

On behalf of Bishop Townshend, his Commissary, Archdeacon Stephen McClatchie, appoints the Venerable Nancy Adams as the interim priest-in-charge of St. James’, St. Marys, effective 1 September 2026.

On behalf of Bishop Townshend, his Commissary, Archdeacon Stephen McClatchie, appoints the Venerable Matthew Kieswetteras the Rector (part-time) of St. Mark’s, Brantford, effective 1 January 2027. Matt continues in his role as the Archdeacon of Eastern Huron.

Resignation

Bishop Townshend has accepted the request of the Reverend Daniel Bowyer to resign as the Associate Priest of All Saints, Waterloo, effective 31 October 2026. His last Sunday in the parish will be 20 September 2026. With the Bishop’s permission, Dan has accepted a full-time management position in the field of social work as a Registered Social Worker in Ontario. He remains a priest in good standing and will hold a general permit of the Bishop of Huron.

Rest in Peace

Please keep in your prayers the family and friends of **Yvon Levesque**, who died on 5 August 2026.

Yvon was the father of the Reverend Marty Leveque, Rector of All Saints, Waterloo. The funeral service was on 17 August.

Please remember Mary Louise, Vincent, Marty, and the rest of Yvon’s family in your prayers. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.

Please keep in your prayers the family and friends of **Jeffrey Beck**, who died on 22 June 2026.

Jeff was the husband of Heather Moller, a former staff member at Huron Church House. The funeral was held on Saturday, 12 September at St. Michael and All Angels Church, London.

Please remember Heather, Cian, Chad, and Hali and the rest of Jeff’s family and friends in your prayers.

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

Education for Ministry and our baptismal vows



What happens at a baptism isn't over when the candle is blown out ... the vows are a lifetime commitment!

Our Baptismal Vows tells us what we promise as baptized Christians... Education for Ministry helps us learn how to live those promises in everyday life.

By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

EDUCATION for Ministry (EfM) is all about reminding us that ministry is for all the baptized. When we hear the word “ministry” we can sometimes think of it as something only for the ordained. But Scripture is very clear, ministry is the calling of every baptized person inviting us to share in Christ's work by loving God, serving others, and helping to build God's kingdom through their daily lives, gifts, and relationships in whatever ways are opened to us throughout our everyday lives. At EfM we focus on



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.

reflecting on Scripture, tradition, and how through our life experiences we can more confidently do this by living out our faith in the world each and every day. At the centre of our EfM sessions is the practice of examining everyday experiences through the lens of our faith. We discuss and develop the skill of reflecting theologically as a group on the weekly readings and questions. Together we learn that faith is not something confined to Sunday worship but something that



shapes our decisions, relationships, work, community involvement, and service to others at every turn. Through the different practices of EfM it becomes clear that baptism is not only something that happened in our past, but rather something that guides and directs our everyday decisions as followers of Jesus. Our Baptismal Vows describe what Christian life is meant to look like. EfM helps its participants develop the knowledge, skills, and spiritual awareness

needed to live into and out of those vows faithfully, or as our own EfM Co-ordinator Libi Clifford likes to say, What happens at a baptism isn't over when the candle is blown out... the vows are a lifetime commitment! While EfM traditionally starts in September and runs through to May, we are hoping to run a session that starts in January 2027 and will go through to June 2027 and then start up again from September through to November. Our hope would be to have a largely online class with some in-person sessions drawing upon participants from across the Diocese, featuring the newer one-year EFM Wide Angle program. To learn more about this or any other aspects of our programmes, we'd love to hear from you at EfM@huron.anglican.ca Rev. Canon Dr. Val Kenyon is EfM Animator in Huron.

'The Go-between God': Divine presence that bridges gaps

I'VE BEEN READING Cathy Ross and Jonny Baker's book *Imagining Mission with John V. Taylor*. The book is an exercise in “riffing on John Taylor” because, as they put it, “there is so much wisdom to draw on.” But who was John V. Taylor? John V. Taylor (1914–2001) was an Anglican bishop, missionary, and theologian whose work helped shape modern Christian thinking about mission and the Holy Spirit. Drawing on his experience in East Africa, he emphasized that God's Spirit is already at work in the world and that the Church's task is to discern and join in that work. He is best known for his influential book *The Go-Between God*. Ross and Baker are mis-siologists. Their work in church mission and contextual theology is impressive, and they bring a refreshing approach to what Christian formation might look like. All that to say that they reference the book *The Creative Stance*, which summarizes seven behaviours that might help an artist flourish.



It's JUST KEVIN
V. REV. KEVIN GEORGE

ish. They then apply those behaviours to formation in a Christian context. Those seven behaviours are imagination, provocation, risk, rigour, ambiguity, agency, and resilience. This is decidedly different from the kinds of qualities often expected in church formation, which tend to be much more concerned with conformity, orthodoxy, churchmanship, and proper liturgy. Ross and Baker, by contrast, see the Church as a rich ecosystem full of possibilities. While curiosity and exploration are not words often associated with church communities, Baker and Ross make a compelling case for fostering communities where uncertainty, inquisitiveness, dialogue, and imagination are in the air we breathe. They ask: “Do [church] members breathe air that encourages creativity,

imaginative practice, hope and possibility, that connects with who they are and what they are called to? Or is the air concerned with right theology and right ways of doing church? Conformity and status quo?” I wonder what our communities might look like if we were not so inhibited. To be truthful, I don't have to think very hard. In nearly thirty years of ordained ministry, I have witnessed the greatest growth when the communities I have been privileged to serve risked ambiguity and vulnerability. I use the word growth here not simply in a numerical sense, but in the same way yeast causes flour and water to rise. Each parish context I have served has been unique. What has been common in all of them, however, is what happens when a community becomes attuned to what John V. Taylor calls the “Go-Between God.” The Go-Between God is the Holy Spirit who connects God and humanity, people with one another, and the Church with the wider world. Taylor's vision encourages Christians to approach

others with humility, vulnerability, and attentiveness, looking first for where God is already at work rather than assuming that they bring God with them. Labrador City, Windsor, London West, and Downtown London are very different contexts. What works well in one place will not necessarily work in another. That said, when the air in each of those places was cleared of certainty, status, and conformity, and when seekers, sinners, and saints alike were breathing in vulnerability, humility, curiosity, and questions, each community became better able to discern how the Go-Between God was already at work in the neighbourhood. In turn, they became eager to discern how they might join the divine in that work. I am fortunate now to be walking alongside followers of Jesus from the heart of the city. I pray in thanksgiving for the ways in which we have become less certain of ourselves at St. Paul's Cathedral. I pray that we risk more as we seek to live faithfully in a deeply challenged downtown core. I encourage us to en-

gage in Scripture, tradition, worship, and our role in the public square with greater rigour. I pray that we not be frightened by ambiguity or difficult questions; that we be suspicious of easy answers and shortcuts. In baptism, we promise to respect the dignity of every human being. It is my prayer that we recognize that every person who crosses our threshold possesses agency and gifts to offer. And I pray that we be resilient. The forces of division, and those who profit from them, are doing their level best to keep us apart. But we do not make this journey alone. The Go-Between God is the divine presence that bridges gaps, fosters understanding, and creates encounters where God's grace can be recognized. How far we might go in joining that presence is limited only by our imagination. So let your imagination run wild. Very Rev. Dr. Kevin George is Rector of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, and Dean of Huron. kevingeorge@diohuron.org



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Cultivating faith leadership teams: Eat, pray, serve

THIS PAST AUGUST, the Parish Council members of my congregation sat around a table on the back deck of our Rectory.

We shared a simple pasta dinner, some wine, and an evening of informal conversations about ministry planning for September. There was much laughter, familiarity and an aura of positive energy around our table. Instead of a leadership council, we felt like a family of friends, caring for one another, dreaming together, and deeply invested in each other's well-being and the future of our Anglican congregation. Certainly, this was a moment to sit back and say: "thank you, God, for these leaders."

This type of synergy doesn't happen overnight, and I have been part of parish councils in the past where tensions were high, disagreements were frequent, and a shared congregational vision was lacking. And so, in today's article, I ask: what makes a healthy parish/congregational council?

The leadership of a healthy, positive and unified parish/congregational council can make all the difference in the world to the broader feel of a local church. Positive energy is contagious, and the modelling of a group of church leaders who care for each other, and work closely together, can inspire the members of a congregation to be more committed to the ministry and vision of a faith community.

In my years of ministry leadership, I have come to recognize that there are certain ingredients that are needed to shape a group of faith leaders so that they may come to self-identity as family together. These ingredients are not rocket-science by any means, however, a deficit of any of these three



Members of St. George's Parish Council celebrate the reopening of their 1870s Carriage House for the use of the wider public.



GROWING BEYOND THE DOORS
REV. CANON GRAYHAME BOWCOTT

characteristics often results in leadership teams that may not form together, or come to share, a unified direction for their church. Three simple ingredients to form the foundation of community: eating together; praying for each other and the Church; and serving both the congregation and the wider neighbourhood.

Eating together. It seems that Jesus did his best ministry wherever food and common meals were to be found. It's no surprise then that sharing a meal together allows for individuals to bond, to relax, and to relate to one another. Some leadership teams take their ministry so seriously that they never find time to lower their guard and find common ground together. What greater way to do this than to enjoy meals with one another? Eating meals is a foundational social act within the Church, and a leadership team that neglects to make time to do so passes up the opportunity to grow in their relationships together.

The leadership of a healthy, positive and unified parish/congregational council can make all the difference in the world to the broader feel of a local church

Praying for each other and the members of the congregation. Some leadership teams may take for granted that prayer is a gift that God has shared with all people, and not just the clergy of a congregation. Prayer reveals the intentions of our hearts, and has the power to bring us into closer relationship with one another. Congregational teams that ask for each other's prayers, and remember one another in prayer, are communities that will grow to better trust both God and each other.

I hold firmly to the belief that no meeting in the Church should ever begin without being upheld in prayer, as both an invitation to God to come alongside us, and as the motivation and spark of the ministry that we are called to do together.

Prayer is also an opportunity for leaders to listen to, and be led by God, who calls each congregation to grow in its relationships and in the living out of our Christian lives together.

Serving others. In some ways, this is what Christians are called to do. We are called to serve others, to care for others, and to be an expression of the love that God has shared with us through Jesus. Sometimes serving others can be challenging, and some congregations have even reached a stage in their lives where they may be doubting if they have the energy and the resources to continue to serve others. Yet, the power of the Gospel message is that God is always directing us to look outwards from ourselves in asking: where are we being called to help and care for our neighbours? Who are we being called to serve? In a similar fashion to sharing meals together and praying for one another, the experience of serving, side-by-side, with other Christian leaders can act as a bonding agent for leadership group formation.

Within my congregation's leadership team, one of the questions that we regularly fall back on to guide our activities is the question:

who is God drawing us into relationship with to serve? In answering this question, we have found that our network of neighbourhood groups has continued to grow every year. Within the wider Blue Mountains community, our leadership team has come to be known as a community of collaborators, and other groups are excited to partner with us.

Serving others is fun, especially when our faith calls us to emulate the generosity of Christ to others. In opening ourselves to others in service, we often discover new relationships, new needs in the community, and an invitation for the church to partner with the wider neighbourhood. Often the result of these partnerships is the cultivation of a shared identity that your church leaders know that they are making a difference in their local communities. This affirmation, from God and others, spills over into their patterns of worship, discipleship, and personal commitment.

As a final note of appreciation in this month's topic of cultivating faith leadership teams – for clergy and congregations to take note – never pass up an opportunity to say: "Thank you! And, thank God!" The leaders of our congregations throughout Huron do amazing things in the putting of their faith into action. For any who may feel underappreciated: "Thank you for your care; thank you for your faithfulness; and thank you for your 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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HURON CHURCH NEWS

Municipal elections – this is where we shape our future

By Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle

EARLIER this year, I reflected on the perceptions and realities of those who are unhoused in a way that resonated with many people. The article proved particularly popular on social media and there were some very thoughtful comments and reactions.

This article was inspired by a proposal made by Windsor City Council to post signs discouraging donations to individual panhandlers and suggesting donations instead to appropriate organisations. It is notable that since that article was published, it came to light that the same Council denied extra funding for the only local homeless shelter specifically for women and children.

When challenged, the Mayor claimed to know for a fact there are no homeless women on Windsor streets. Those who work with the unhoused and have experienced homelessness explained how women and children are more likely to avoid spaces, places, and even shelters frequented by men because they do not feel safe. This can make them seem invisible. These stories and the advocacy of others in the community helped reverse the council's decision during a summer meeting. Following

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



What happens at the municipal level matters. City and town councils decide how local revenues are spent.

a near unanimous vote, some funding for extra beds will be provided to the women's shelter, at least through to the end of this year.

What happens at the municipal level matters. City and town councils decide how local revenues are spent. Local parks, streets, beautification projects, outreach programs, policing, libraries, housing, fire services, garbage, composting, and recycling, tourism projects, and public transportation, these are all responsibilities of municipal governments.

There are a plethora of social justice issues deeply intertwined with these responsibilities. As we prepare

for another municipal election, to what extent do we honestly reflect on the ways each candidate's platform and behaviours illustrate respecting the dignity of every human being, responding to human need with loving service, transforming unjust structures, and caring for creation? To what extent are we considering the connections between our faith and our choices as we engage with candidates and vote in this municipal election?

Perhaps it might be helpful to remind ourselves of what was so impactful about the previous article which talked about respecting the dignity of unhoused people and then

draw from that challenge when engaging with candidates and platforms. Looking at our own cities and towns, what has been done and what is being promised to support those living in poverty, and those who are housing insecure? Are local municipalities working with other levels of government to secure low-income housing? Why or why not? What more do you think could be done? What do you think Jesus calls us to do?

What would it look like to educate ourselves about the use and abuse of strong mayor powers and the consequences for policy in the municipalities? To what extent are candidates prepared to use or deny this option? Are you prepared to have a conversation with mayoral candidates about this practice? What would you say?

To what extent have you considered the environmental consequences of municipal policies? Issues like tree coverage (Windsor is below average for Southwestern Ontario), waste removal, invasive species management, recycling, etc. are part of the municipal responsibilities. We are called to safeguard the integrity of God's Creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth, to what extent are we paying attention to the policies and practices of our municipalities

and those seeking election that impact God's Beloved Creation?

Also on the ballot are school board trustees creating opportunities to hold school boards accountable to the public for spending, programming, policies, and practices. Here too consideration can be given to candidate's positions about the most vulnerable – special needs students, those who are racialized, immigrants, those needing English as a second language, those who are 2SLGBTQIA+, First Nations, Metis, and Inuit, etc.

Ultimately, municipal elections matter because the people elected have roles that matter and can make decisions that impact individuals and creation. The question falls to each of us: are we willing to do the work to learn about each candidate, reflect on their platforms and their behaviours, and make choices at the ballot box that are consistent with the challenges of our faith? As we vote in the upcoming municipal elections, may we elect individuals who will respect the dignity of every human being, respond to human need with loving service, transform unjust structures, and care for Creation.

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



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An elegy for a once-friendly border



The trust and affection that once felt so ordinary now feel distant, strained, and broken. Something precious has been lost...

WHEN I was a boy living in Prescott, Ontario, along the Saint Lawrence River, the United States felt less like a foreign country than a close neighbour — close in feeling, and close enough in distance that, with a good slingshot, I could almost pitch a rock onto its shore. I once remember riding my bike across the Johnstown bridge from Johnstown, Ontario, into Ogdensburg, New York. It was not planned. It was simply one of those spontaneous summer decisions, made because the day was long and the bridge was there. What I remember most about that crossing is how little it felt like entering another country. I felt none of the conflict that seems so present today. For me, there was none. Not even at the border's checkpoint itself, where only friendly faces greeted me. Mostly, they seemed puzzled by how I had managed to pedal up and down the bridge's high arch and navigate the widely grated steel road that I could see straight through. (Even bike tires whine as they drive over it.) The United States did not feel threatening or distant to me; it felt familiar, peaceful, and woven into ordinary life, like a neighbour I could visit anytime. Granted, I

Looking back, it had something of the spirit of the psalm: "How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity." That was how the border felt to me then, not as a line of suspicion, but as a place where neighbours met.



As I See It
Rev. Jim Innes

was young and ignorant of many things, but children can still sense when tension is in the air. And I sensed none. My brother would marry someone from the United States, as would my best friend. Many times, we would drive down through the Catskills and on to New York City without worry, and without any thought that one day there might be a rift between us as countries. Looking back, it had something of the spirit of the psalm: "How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity." That was how the border felt to me then, not as a line of suspicion, but as a place where neighbours met. Part of what made that closeness feel so natural was the river-border itself. The St. Lawrence was not a wall

between two worlds but a shared highway, a bi-national shipping system, carrying huge Lakers to both Canadian and American shores. Though they flew different national flags, and sometimes the other country's flag as a courtesy, those magnificent vessels depended on the same river, the same channels, the same locks, and the same weather. That same natural, easy closeness also came through the airwaves. Growing up in Prescott, we did not have an abundance of radio or television stations. What we heard and watched was a mixture of Canadian voices, especially from Ottawa, and American broadcasting from across the river. We followed American news, absorbed American ways of thinking and became familiar with American stories almost as much as our own. In some ways, we may even have known more American history than Canadian history. And yet the closeness did not erase the difference.

It was not a hard line of distinctness, not a sharp boundary of suspicion, but a quiet awareness that our nations' stories were not quite the same. One local place where that distinctness became visible to me was Fort Wellington. I visited it many times as a boy, drawn by its castle-like walls, battlements, and heavy timber palisade. It made history feel close and physical. It reminded me that this peaceful border had not always been so peaceful. Yet what stayed with me was not a sense of threat, but the quieter realization that the friendship we now shared had been built slowly, over time. Perhaps that is what moves me to write now: not in anger, and certainly not without gratitude, but with sadness for what is unfolding around us. I suspect many who grew up with some version of that closeness are grieving too. The trust and affection that once felt so ordinary now feel distant, strained, and broken. Something precious has been lost... not beyond hope... but certainly changed. Rev. Jim Innes is Rector of St. John's, Grand Bend with St. Anne's, Port Franks. jiminnes@diohuron.org





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Body problems and soul solutions

THE TRENDS of fashion and culture, as they relate to bodies and beauty, are an ever-swinging pendulum between aesthetic decadence and iconoclastic restriction.

A cursory examination of the red carpets and runways of 2026 have indicated that the Western media circus is once again prioritizing restriction. About 10 years ago, curves and softness were all the rage, but now it's clavicles and hollowed out cheekbones as far as the eye can see.

Harsh plastic surgery that eliminates creases, folds, and fat from faces and raises eyebrows further and further up the face are popular among women and men alike. Easy access to weight loss drugs and GLP-1s means that ordinarily thin women are becoming skeletal and emaciated. The ultra-famous popstar Ariana Grande, reminiscent of Karen Carpenter in her final days before succumbing to anorexia-related cardiac illness, has cancelled her tour to take time out of the spotlight. Natural aging has fallen out of style (if it ever was in) and been replaced with uncanny youthfulness and frozen, same-y, expressionless faces.

While celebrity beauty culture has always trended on the side of the unnatural, these people ultimately dictate what becomes trendy and popular with the masses. There is a sort of trickle-down economy of beauty that has emerged in the social media era: beginning with taste-making celebrities, democratized and made accessible through TikTok



Navid Sohrabi/Unsplash



FIELD NOTES

**REV. ALLIE
McDOUGALL**

and Instagram influencers, and incorporated into the beauty and lifestyle habits of young consumers.

The term economy is apt to describe this exchange as cosmetic and pharmaceutical companies that pay top dollar for celebrities and low-level influencers to shill their products. "Get ready with me" tutorial videos populate social media feeds, highlighting the correct beauty treatments and products that hold the key to beauty. Private cosmetic day surgery clinics have begun popping up in cities of varying sizes. Ozempic can be legally purchased online with little to no medical consultation.

Although beauty trends overwhelmingly impact young women, the current turn towards punishing control of the flesh is also affecting young men. If you are familiar with the term "looksmaxxing", you would

know that there is now an entire corner of the internet committed to achieving the perfect physical form through sublimation and extreme restriction. This trend has emerged from the darker recesses of the internet, the product of incels (involuntary celibate young men) who feel that perfection is what it takes to find a desirable woman. I discourage the reader from conducting any further research on this movement, lest you can stomach wading into a subculture rife with misogyny and sexual delusion.

Obsession with physical perfection, aesthetic uniformity, extreme weight loss, and evading aging is far from new, but the ubiquity of these messages paired with the accessibility of the products and services required to achieve the desired results are making themselves available to the next generation.

This is not a new problem for the Church and to prepare a compassionate Christian rebuttal, we needn't look further than our own history. The punishment and control of physical bodies in the secular 21st century is really not all that

All bodies have inherent value, regardless of their appearance or ability, and that will be true no matter what cultural trends dictate. Affirmation of the goodness of the body and its inherent value is a necessary component of Christian public witness, as the consequences of current trends begin to affect broader swathes of the populace and our youth feel the pressure to participate in punishing aesthetic rituals.

different from the ascetic Gnosticism that battled with the core of the true Church in its first few centuries. Instead of sublimating the body to attain perfect divine understanding, people are employing the same methods to achieve high value in the eyes of others, particularly as viable sexual partners or objects of admiration. Secular asceticism is not about holiness, it is about consumption of the self to earn the love and attention of others.

The answer for orthodox Christianity has been to affirm the goodness of the body as a creation that bears God's image, not a thing to be overcome. The created world matters to God, who lovingly crafted it and called it good. The Incarnation of Jesus Christ depends on His enfleshment in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is of utmost importance in the plan of salvation that Jesus, as fully man and fully God, walked, talked, ate, drank, and slept in the body He inhabited. The same body which was tortured, died, was resurrected, and is currently alive and dwells at the right hand of God in heaven.

Our bodies deserve care and celebration, rather than restriction and reinvention. All bodies have inherent value, regardless of their appearance or ability, and that will be true no matter what cultural trends dictate. Affirmation of the goodness of the body and its inherent value is a necessary component of Christian public witness, as the consequences of current trends begin to affect broader swathes of the populace and our youth feel the pressure to participate in punishing aesthetic rituals.

We must be particularly mindful of this as the discussion begins to shift from the physical realm to the transhuman, physically transcendent allure of virtual reality and AI are touted by Big Tech as humanity's true destination. We know our actual destination, which is with God in His kingdom, our bodies and souls forever united with the same Jesus Christ who shares in our humanity so that we may one day share in His divinity.

Rev. Allie McDougall is Rector of St. Mary's Walkerville.

alliemcdougall@diohuron.org

Hospitality is almost always perceived by sight

SCIENTISTS tell us that the human nervous system processes roughly 11 million bits of sensory information every single second, and around 10 million of those are dedicated entirely to sight. Long before we hear a welcoming word, taste the coffee at fellowship hour, or shake a warm hand, our eyes have already told our brains a complete story.

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- Are the service times immediately obvious, or

In an era where trust is fragile and skepticism is high, visual hospitality isn't superficial vanity; it is a critical front line of evangelism.

buried under three sub-menus?

- Are the photos recent images of real people, or blurry graphics from a decade ago?

A clean, responsive, and uncluttered website tells a seeker, "We anticipated your arrival, and we care enough to make finding your way here easy." A neglected, chaotic website subtly communicates that the lights might be on, but nobody is really home.

The visual assessment doesn't stop online. When someone finally builds the courage to visit in person,

their senses continue the scan:

- Are the outdoor signs legible from the street, or faded and overgrown with weeds?
- Is the entryway clean, well-lit, and uncluttered by outdated flyers and broken easels?
- Does the sanctuary feel cared for, fresh, and intentional?

Care for physical spaces is deeply theological. Maintaining clean grounds, organized foyers, and fresh, welcoming spaces isn't about striving for corporate perfection or hiding our hu-

manity. It is an expression of stewardship. A well-tended building says that what happens inside is sacred, worthy of dignity, and prepared with love for an honoured guest.

We often say that faith comes by hearing, but hospitality is almost always perceived by sight.

Before a visitor ever hears the sermon or joins in the prayers, their eyes will decide whether they feel safe enough to stay. When our digital windows and physical thresholds are clean, fresh, and well-tended, we clear away the visual static, making room for the heart and spirit to listen.

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To everything there is a season

ACCORDING to some musicologists, in 1954, (the year I was born), the song *Turn! Turn! Turn! To Everything there is a Season* was composed by Pete Seeger. Later performed by Judy Collins and the Byrds the song made it to the top of Billboard's Hot 100 in 1965.

During a taping of a duet with the composer, Judy Collins nonchalantly introduced the song indicating that the words came from Ecclesiastes, with a confidence that those who were listening to the song would have at least a familiarity with her reference. When I saw the Youtube video of the duet, it evoked significant memories of a number of moments, places and people in my life. For many individuals who lived through the challenging times of the Vietnam War this song was a claim as part of the Peace Movement and as an expression of anti-war sentiment.

October heralds a moment when we pause to offer our personal thanksgivings for the many blessings which we experience in our own lives. It is a season when we pause, look around the table, not only to value and appreciate the people who are gathered at our Thanksgiving celebrations, but also to think about those who are no longer with us. Thanksgiving allows us the opportunity to mark the passage of time, not in a maudlin way, but in a way in which we may reflect on all the "changes and chances of this fleeting world" (BCP pg. 7726) which have brought us to this moment.



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

In the midst of the turbulent world in which we live, taking a moment to be grateful seems like a luxury when so many human beings in this global village are simply seeking to survive. There are moments when being aware of events which move at an exceedingly fast pace and which are completely out of our control may feel overwhelming. The calming rhythm of the song reminds us that "for everything there is a season".

Recently, I have been made increasingly aware of the passage of time. Once a month, I have connected with my high school community based in Philadelphia and joined in a Zoom Quaker Meeting for Worship. Being rooted in the Quaker tradition of silence has been a cornerstone of my spiritual life which was formed over the years I spent at a school where Meeting for Worship was a part of the weekly schedule. I am indeed very grateful for that experience and that season of my life.

During the summer, a trip to Fredericton gave me the opportunity to visit the Alumni Office of the University of New Brunswick and receive a lapel pin acknowledging the fact that I graduated from that school 50 years ago. That sounds like a moment worth celebrating, but when that date is identified as being

As you observe Thanksgiving this month, I ask you to reflect, not only on the blessings of the Harvest and our place in God's Creation, but also to think about the people who have touched your life and whose presence has made your life story the beautiful mosaic that it is.

an event that happened half a century ago...well, that has a different emotional weight. Yet those days, and that season of my life marked a time when I was aware of a Divine nudge and moved towards responding to a vocational call to ordained ministry. It is another season in my life which gives me cause to be very thankful.

This year, during that same visit, my wife, Carolyn and I, were able to visit the first parish we moved to in 1980. I walked through the parish cemetery outside the historic wooden church building which has been closed for a number of years. The gravestones not only marked the final resting places of human remains, but they also generated memories as stories associated with those individuals flooded through my heart and mind.

These were folks who had welcomed and supported a newly married couple who were starting a life together. They had joined in the celebration of the arrival of our first son. Some had witnessed his baptism at an Easter Vigil and had been part of the Cathedral congregation when I was ordained as a priest. Some of the names I read were very familiar, because I see them every time I open the Book of Common Prayer which they had presented to me at

the time of my ordination. It is another season in my life which gives me cause to be thankful.

As the summer drew to a close, during a visit with our grandchildren, I tucked my grandson into his car seat and covered him with a crocheted blanket which was the creation of his great-great-grandmother. The connection with the generational story over the years gave me the opportunity to be thankful for the blessing of family.

It has been my experience in ministry that when families and friends gather for a funeral or a celebration of life that a key element of those moments is when folks gravitate towards the collection of pictures which are either displayed as a photo montage or are tacked up onto bulletin boards. Invariably the conversations those pictures generate pick up on moments of family life which generate their own stories. The memories lead to family members and friends, to indicate, in one way or another, how grateful they are that the individual they are remembering was a part of their lives.

One colleague in ministry had planned his funeral in great detail and had ensured that as his coffin was brought into the church, a recording of Aaron Copeland's "Fanfare for the Common Man" was to be played.

I cannot hear that piece of music without remembering that moment, being grateful for that person and their ministry... and smiling.

Another colleague, in planning for his service included the reading from the third chapter of Ecclesiastes. He moved past the familiar first eight verses which had inspired Pete Seeger and included the twelfth and thirteenth verses.

I know that there is nothing good for a person except to be happy and live the best life they can while they are alive.

Moreover, that a person should eat and drink and enjoy themselves in return for all their labours, is a gift of God.

(Ecclesiastes 3:12,13 New English Bible)

As you observe Thanksgiving this month, I ask you to reflect, not only on the blessings of the Harvest and our place in God's Creation, but also to think about the people who have touched your life and whose presence has made your life story the beautiful mosaic that it is. It is a moment when you have the opportunity to thank God for all the blessings of this life and to be grateful.

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