

CHIMING IN ON EXCELLENCE
Peter Ryde, the chimer at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford, received a prestigious community award.
Page 6

A SEASON FOR GIVING AND A LIFETIME OF GENEROSITY
God's generosity is not an abstract idea celebrated once each year.
Page 7



A PARTNERSHIP OF PRAYER, LEARNING AND FRIENDSHIP
Companionship with the Diocese of Amazonia: the latest chapter.
Page 8

Huron Church News

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

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

187th Synod of the Diocese of Huron: Popular Report

By Chris Levett

At 7 p.m. on October 23, we were welcomed to the table at the 187th Synod. It was a full church filled with wonderful music and liturgy. The congregation gathered at St. Paul's Cathedral as well as on-line.

Right Reverend Dr. Todd Townshend, the Bishop of Huron, officiated and shared his reflections. Tom Adam was presented with the Order of Huron for his work in leading the Archives Task Force. An offering was also collected for Alongside Hope.

At 9 a.m. on October 24, 230 delegates (80 clerical and 150 lay) were welcomed in prayer, and the meeting was called to order. A formal land acknowledgement was read, and thanks were offered to past Synod delegates. A special welcome was offered to Sergio Augusto from our companion diocese of Amazonia.

A presentation was made by Education for Ministry (EfM) with reference to Huron being a learning church. The new one-year curriculum will start in January with the ultimate goal of having at least one EfM graduate in every congregation.

Bishop Townshend led the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed by reading the names accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation. A list of Huron's retirees was also presented near the end of the meeting.



Photo: Charlotte Poolton

The session continued with the necessary housekeeping motions needed to efficiently manage the meeting, which included the nomination and election of a new Secretary Treasurer, Ms. Jacqueline Davison. Her hard work over the last two years was acknowledged and was appreciated by Synod.

A presentation was made regarding the parishes that were supported by the Huron Development Fund. Jacqueline Davison presented the audited financial statements for 2022, 2023, 2024 & 2025. The Diocese is now current to 2025 with the dedicated talents of the accounting department and the new auditors. The statements can be reviewed on the Diocesan website. They were received and accepted by Synod.

Bishop Townsend took time to lead the Synod in a renewal of baptismal vows from the Book of Alternative Services. Bishop Townsend presented his Charge to Synod. He outlined where we have been with the themes of the last five years.

- Remembering who we are (2020)
- Yielding to the life of the Spirit (2021)
- Expect to meet the Risen Jesus along the way (2022)
- Sing the Lord's song in a strange new land (2023)
- Continually turn to the God of Grace (2024)
- Cultivate a life of faithful stewardship and generosity (2025)

This year's theme is to Plunge More Fully into your Life in Christ with a continuation of last year's theme of being called lives of faithful stewardship and generosity. Bishop Townshend remarked that "Stewardship isn't a program to sustain the church. It's the other way around. We sustain the church so that lives of faith and generosity can be made possible."

Bishop Townshend further described the inter-relationship between stewardship, discipleship and the catechumenate. Jesus Christ is the gift that we are given and is the one who put gifts into our heart. "Every gift is needed for us to be continually raised up in the world as His body, for His purposes."

Bishop Townshend stated that "the Christian faith has always been shared and transmitted not only through what we teach, but through what we have seen and heard, experienced and lived. When we tell one another where we have encountered God, how grace has changed us, or why we have chosen to give ourselves to the work of the Church, faith becomes visible, tangible, and resonant."

We were encouraged to explore our faith in small groups of six to twelve people in the ways that are outlined by Rev. Canon Dr. Lisa Wang. Our faith testimonies don't have to be fancy or complicated. They just need to be truthful. When we are expressing how we are formed and transformed by Jesus Christ, we are passing on our faith.

PAGE 4-5: BISHOP'S CHARGE TO SYNOD

PAGES 3 & 5: FAITH WITNESSES AT SYNOD

PAGE 3: POPULAR REPORT (cont' d)

Anglicans across Canada help bring light to St. Luke's Hospital in West Bank



Solar panels on St. Luke's Hospital in Nablus.
Photo: Diocese of Jerusalem

By Rev. Canon Greg Jenkins

PILGRIMS have been lowering buckets into Jacob's Well for at least 1,700 years. Cut deep into the rock, the shaft was once measured at over 40 metres. Today it lies beneath a Greek Orthodox church in Nablus, in the West Bank, and visitors can still draw water from it.

It's at this well that a tired Jesus asked a Samaritan woman, "Will you give me a drink?" (John 4:7), crossing a line no one expected him to cross. The church over the well is dedicated to her. Orthodox tradition calls her Photini, from the Greek word for light.

This year, Anglicans across Canada helped bring light to a hospital nearby.

St. Luke's has cared for the people of Nablus since the 1890s. Today the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem runs the hospital, which serves about 455,000 people, including 57 villages and four refugee camps. It is Nablus's only charitable hospital, caring for people who can't pay. It also hires people with disabilities, who are too often shut out of work elsewhere. At St. Luke's, they are colleagues, caring for the city.

But its power is expensive and unreliable. When the grid fails, diesel generators rumble to life to keep surgery lit and incubators warm.

The diocese knew what its hospital needed: solar panels. Alongside Hope listened, and Anglicans responded. Through the Wild Ride and gifts from across Canada, we surpassed our goal of $176,000. A generous donor matched every gift, doubling the total to cover the full $352,000 cost.

Today 407 dark panels sit tilted toward the sky on the hospital roof. For centuries, people came to this city to draw water from deep in the ground. Now St. Luke's draws power from the sky.

By cutting the hospital's reliance on the grid and on diesel, the panels are expected to save more than $135,000 a year, money that goes back into patient care.

When her conversation with Jesus was over, the woman at the well left her water jar behind and ran to tell her town, "Come and see" (John 4:29). John tells us that many in her town believed because of what she told them.

Every parish in our diocese can do what she did: carry the news home. Tell your congregation what their gifts have done in Nablus, and invite them to come and see what else they are doing through Alongside Hope.

And please keep the staff and patients of St. Luke's in your prayers.

Rev. Canon Dr. Greg Jenkins is the Chair of Alongside Hope Huron.

Living Water

"Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water"
John 7. 38

187th SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF HURON
OCTOBER 23-24, 2026









Above: Synod opening worship
Left: St. Paul's Cathedral choir; Tom Adam, the recipient of the Order of Huron
Below: Synod Saturday session

Photos:
Charlotte Poolton (Opening worship)
Rebekah Lemon (Synod session)





SYNOD SPONSORS



HURON CHURCH NEWS

Volume 76, Number 10

Submissions
Huron Church News welcomes news articles, commentaries, photographs and story ideas. Publication is at the discretion of the editor.

Editor
Davor Milicevic
huronchurchnews@gmail.com
c/o Huron Church House
190 Queens Ave.
London, ON
N6A 6H7

Deadline
Tuesday, December 1
for the January edition

Subscriptions
To subscribe, unsubscribe, change address or name, report a delivery problem, contact:
Circulation Department
1-866-924-9192, ext. 245
Fax: 416-925-8811
Email: circulation@national.anglican.ca
Via Web: www.anglicanjournal.com/subscribe

Individual suggested donation:
$15 per year in Canada.
$23 in U.S. and overseas.

Advertising
Angela Rush
huronchurch.ads@gmail.com
905-630-0390

Huron Church News shall not be liable for damage arising out of errors in advertisements.
Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement by the Huron Church News or the Anglican Church.

Publisher
The Right Reverend
Todd Townshend
Bishop of Huron
Diocese of Huron
Huron Church House
190 Queens Avenue
London, Ontario N6A 6H7
Phone: 519-434-6893

Huron Church News is published by the Diocese of Huron as a section of the Anglican Journal.
Approximate circulation 3,500

Printer
KT Web Printing
287 Bridgeland Ave
Toronto, Ontario M6A 1Z6

Mailed by Elite Bindery and Mailing Services
1860 Midland Ave,
Scarborough, Ontario M1P 5A1

This newspaper is printed on partially recycled paper using vegetable-based inks.

Focus on stewardship: Synod Popular Report

From Page 1

Rodger Moran and Cynthia Connell were faith witness that described the role of active stewardship in their lives. Roger shared that we are taught to give of ourselves generously without recognition. He stated that we should be thinking about what gifts on the offering plate could make possible. He learned stewardship by receiving it. He learned discipleship from watching others following Christ. To treat others with compassion. To put faith into action. Not just recipients of God's love, but to carry it through the world.

Cynthia Connell felt that past ideas of stewardship were perceived only to be about money and resources. In her work with students, she discovered that all the gifts that we receive and meant to be used to care for people. This is especially true for students at Canterbury where they gather for a weekly food share program and bible study. She shared a story of a visit to a care home where one of the students had a deep conversation with one the residents.



Photo: Rebekah Lemon

The conversation was had in their own language. Both people were brought together. This is stewardship and faith transforming by breaking barriers. The sharing is just as important.

Rev. Kevin Dixon offered insight into active stewardship. Stewardship is usually seen as money, but it is discipleship. He explained the relationship within the Virtuous Circle of Joy (Discipleship, Grateful Generosity and Assets for Ministry and Mission). Our experiences are meant to be shared with others in our parish. We were led in a two-person exercise where we answered the following questions about ourselves.

- Faith – Who or what has helped shape the person I am as a Christian?
- Generosity – How has that shaped the way I share what I have?
- Fruit – What difference have I seen that generosity make?

Presentations were made that celebrated our diversity. (The Anglican Communion is truly global.)

Niagara Huron Anglican Cursillo (a short course in Christianity) works to deepen faith and build friendships. People are encouraged to meet in small groups to discuss faith, study and take action with a life centered in Christ. The dioceses of Huron and Niagara are working together. People are returned to their parishes with deepened faith and renewed enthusiasm. The next Cursillo weekend will be held in July 2027.

The Indigenous Ministries of Huron offered a prayer of thanks for us to live in harmony. Their ministry began through letter box drops. Different traditions are being brought together. Spiritual life is active with baptisms, confirmations workshops and classes. Inequalities are still being felt. The are being treated with an attitude of love and hope. A place to grow. A safe place to welcome others. An invitation is offered to walk with them hand in hand.

Rev. Augusto Santos and Sergio Silva from the Diocese of Amazonia made a presentation. He shared that God's mission does not have borders; we have a companionship. We walk together, we learn together, we serve together. God can bring people together in unexpected ways. They shared stories of working with indigenous people. Amazonia has been a companion diocese with Huron since 2014.

Greetings were extended from the sponsors of Synod; Canterbury, Huron, Renison Colleges and Ecclesiastical. They were thankful for ongoing gifts, prayers and their growth. They support students with interfaith learning, fellowship and pastoral care.

The Deacons' Outreach Program share that we raised over $10,000 through their gift card collection for Huron Farmworkers Ministry.

The enrollment at Huron Church Camp was up compared to COVID. 51 kids (14 – 16 yr olds) participated in the leadership development program (LIT). The camp is celebrating 80 years. Gerry Adam is retiring after serving for 29 years.

The meeting was adjourned just after 4 p.m.

Chris Levett is a postulant in the Diocese of Huron.

'She was teaching me what it means to give of yourself'

By Rodger Moran



WHEN I think about stewardship, the first image that comes to mind isn't an offering plate. It's my godmother, Pat.

I see her sitting beside me, with a book open between us. She's not reading to me, and I'm not reading to her. We're reading together.

And though I didn't realize it at the time, she was teaching me something far greater than how to read. She was teaching me what it means to give of yourself.

Pat had been a close friend of my parents long before I was born.

When my father died in 1983, I was not quite three years old. My brother was seven, and my sister was eight. My mother was suddenly faced with raising three young children with very little financial security.

Pat could have remained a dear family friend. Instead, she moved into our home, helped support us financially, and raised us alongside our mother.

She never explained that decision to us, and she certainly never sought recognition for it. But knowing Pat and the way she lived her life, I can only say: of course she did.

Before I was old enough to understand generosity, I was already growing up surrounded by it.

Godmother was the word we used to describe Pat, because family friend never came close. But as we grew older, my brother, sister and I came to understand that she was so much more. She helped form us as Christians, certainly, but she was also the mother God had sent us when we needed one the most.

Faith was central to Pat's life, and she believed it was something you lived.

She served our church for years as Treasurer, bringing the offering plates home each Sunday. I would sit with her, helping to count and record the donations.

But she taught me far more than how to count money. She taught me what those gifts could make possible: children's programming, sponsoring refugee families, caring for people in need, and supporting the ministry of the Church.

And she showed me that stewardship extended far beyond the offering plate.

She welcomed newcomers to Canada, looked after children so their parents could attend job interviews, and drove people to appointments when they needed help.

Pat was quiet and reserved. She was a woman of action, not words, and she never sought recognition for her generosity.

For much of my childhood, I didn't have the words to describe what she was teaching me, either.

It was only as I grew older, deepened my own faith, and became a father myself that I began to understand: Pat had taught me what discipleship looked like long before I understood what discipleship meant.

As a child, I learned generosity by receiving it. I learned stewardship by watching Pat share what God had given her. And as my own faith grew, I came to recognize what she had really been showing me: how to follow Jesus.

She never sat me down to explain Christian discipleship. She lived it. And through her example, I learned that following Christ isn't simply something we profess on Sunday mornings. It's something we practise in how we treat people, share our gifts, and respond when someone needs us.

After Pat died, my brother, sister and I began gathering every February around the anniversary of her death. We live in three different provinces, but it's the one time each year we know we'll be together.

We miss her terribly. But we also come together to honour her by making time to be present for one another, just as she was always present for us.

That's one way her lessons continue to shape my life.

As a father, I try to lead with kindness and curiosity. When my children were little and became upset over something that seemed trivial to me, I learned to look into their eyes and recognize that what they were feeling was real, even if I didn't understand it.

Pat never taught me that particular lesson directly. But she taught me to approach others with compassion, to encourage them, and to stand beside them as they discover what they're capable of.

Her example also shapes how I serve the Church.

I prayed for the opportunity to use my professional gifts in service to God, and today I have that privilege through my work with Camp Huron. At my parish, I sing in the choir and serve as Cantor, sharing the musical gifts God has given me in worship.

These are some of the ways I try to put my faith into action as a disciple of Christ. And it was Pat who shaped my understanding of what good stewardship means: recognizing that everything God has entrusted to us, whether our time, our talents, our resources, or our capacity to love, is meant to be shared, extending God's grace to others through the way we live.

As disciples of Christ, we're not simply recipients of God's love. We're called to carry that love into the world through our own lives.

Sometimes through words, but never through words alone. And what I find so remarkable is that Pat is still teaching me those lessons today.

Her generosity didn't end with her death. It continues in the way my siblings and I care for one another, in the lessons I try to pass on to my children, and in how I seek to use what God has given me in service to others.

I often return to that image of Pat sitting beside me, reading together. And I remember watching her do the same with my own children.

I hope that when my own children look back on their lives, they'll remember not simply what I gave them, but how I loved them, encouraged them, and stood beside them.

Because that is what Pat gave me. And that is what I hope, by God's grace, to continue giving to others.

Rodger Moran is the Manager of Advancement at Camp Huron.

Plunge more fully into your life with Christ

Bishop's Charge to 187th Synod of the Diocese of Huron. St. Pul's Cathedral, London, Ontario, October 24, 2026.

By Bishop Todd Townshend

WE ONLY MEET like this once a year, usually, and some of you are here for the first time so I will begin with a recap. Here are the "short form" summaries of the Bishop's Charge over the past six years.

1. Remember who we are and what we do. (2020)
2. Live in community by yielding to the life of the Spirit (2021)
3. Expect to meet the Risen Jesus along the way (2022)
4. Be ready to sing the Lord's song in a strange new land (2023)
5. Continually turn to the God of Grace (2024)
6. Cultivate a life of faithful stewardship and generosity (2025)

This year:

7. Plunge more fully into your life in Christ.

We've spent the past year with renewed focus on God's purpose in calling us to lives of faithful stewardship and generosity. We are going to keep the strong focus on this for the next few years, and I pray, for every year to come. It's central to everything. Stewardship isn't a program to sustain the church. It's the other way around. We sustain the church so that lives of faith and generosity can be made possible.

I am very grateful to Kevin Dixon, Andra O'Neill, Jennepher Cahill, Rodger Moran, and Julie Ryan—our Diocesan Stewardship Advisory Team—who have guided us in deeper learning and commitment in offering our gifts within the church and for the world. I cannot even say that, without breaking into doxology!! "Praise God from whom all blessing flow!"

A nice surprise for me over the past year has been the re-discovery of how many powerful and beautiful stores of stewardship can be told in our life together. One of the most powerful gifts we can offer one another is the simple testimony of a life being shaped by Jesus Christ—who is THE gift and who puts within us every gift. Every gift is needed for us to be continually raised up in the world as His body, for His purposes.

The Christian faith has always been shared and transmitted not only through what we teach, but through what we have seen and heard, experienced and lived. When we tell one another where we have encountered God, how grace has changed us, or why we have chosen to give ourselves to the work of the Church, faith becomes visible, tangible, resonant.

This is especially important when we speak about stewardship. Stewardship is not primarily a church program or a conversation about money; it is discipleship expressed in the whole of life. It is our grateful response to God for everything God has given us: our time, abilities, relationships, resources, bodies, communities, and the created order itself. When we share our own stewardship stories, we help others imagine what such discipleship might look like in their lives.



There is a treasure to be found in the work of catechumenate and it requires the regular, persistent work of turning, converting our lives to the gospel. Life in baptism, and after baptism, is not a "thing", it is a way, it is a "plunge" into the fullness of the language and culture of Christian faith so that we may live out of it. I am asking for a simple thing. Find ways to prioritize this as a year-round activity.

A personal testimony does not need to be dramatic or polished. It needs to be truthful. And when ordinary Christians speak truthfully about the difference Christ is making in their lives, faith is passed on. We pray that God will give us courage to speak—but also that God will give us a listening heart. So often, God reaches us through our ears. Other physical and spiritual senses too, but is a Christian practice to develop a listening heart. An openness to hearing something new.

I think of Mary at the tomb of Jesus—the empty tomb. She did not find what she was looking for. But she turned from that emptiness and encountered the risen Jesus through the sound of him speaking her name. And sending her to "go tell".

So, the work we've done around stewardship has helped us to move from the narrow confines of fundraising to the place it where it belongs: at the heart of Christian discipleship.

And that is this year's "twin" theme comes in, discipleship. My charge for you in the coming year is to continue to do the work of stewarding God's gifts, and now to ask, what are the gifts? It sounds like a question that shouldn't need to be asked. What are the gifts? As a person enters into Christian faith, as we renew the commitment to Christ that was made in our baptism, what gifts are given? Discipleship sounds like something we have to do. It is. But it's impossible to do without the overflowing giving of the triune God. These are given first. They make it possible. You died with Christ in his death, you are raised with him in his resurrection. Now what?

Practice. Practice living a Christian life. Practice following, not leading, following Jesus. Put him at the centre of everything. He is already there! But bring this to mind and to heart. And gather others around this holy presence.

The treasures of Christian living are a true treasure. Maybe the only true treasure. And we recommit to exploring this, spending time on this, investing resources into this. What is it to follow Jesus? How does a person come to faith in him? I invite you and your congregations to dive more deeply into that water. To make this a year of baptismal living. Take the plunge, once again. Dive more deeply into your life in Christ and invite everyone you know to do the same.

For another way to think about this, here is a fable. "The Farmer and His Children."

A rich farmer, about to die, advises his children not to sell the land they are inheriting because "a treasure is hidden there." After the father's death, the sons so thoroughly plow the fields that there is no part of them "where they do not work the soil again and again." But they find no treasure. However, one concludes, there was indeed a treasure: the work that causes the earth to be fruitful. (LaFontaine's Fables)

The faithfulness and fruitfulness of living a Christian life can be compared to this treasure—the field. There is no value-object to be found in the field—there is no clump of gold in the field. The treasure is the fully cultivated, fertile field. The whole field is the treasure. The "treasure" of Christian life is found in the work of plowing, of turning, of "converting" to the gospel – the symbolic "field" that your Christian life is. . . that our common Christian life is.

This work has many names and many ways. One of the oldest names for it is Catechumenate. Like Stewardship, this is something so central that we cannot let it slip from the centre of our lives together.

A catechumenate is the formal period of instruction, spiritual formation, and preparation that a person undergoes before being baptized and admitted into the Christian Church. But for those already baptised, it can also be re-experienced through the part of the process called "mystagogy". Which basically is a word for "being led through the mysteries". The mysteries of Christ and a life lived in Christ. It's something that takes a lifetime and never really ends. Because the mysteries are inexhaustible. They are deeper and richer and more good than we will ever know. So, we want to be drawn more and more deeply into them.

This will be good for us. But it's more urgent than that. It is something the whole world needs—badly. There is a deep hunger and thirst for this; it is an acute need. We need to be ready for the people who will come to us with this hunger and thirst. Things are getting more difficult for most people in most ways. Even as some of us seem to have everything we could ever want. This work will help us to want the things that God wants. And that is liberating.

There is a treasure to be found in the work of catechumenate and it requires the regular, persistent work of turning, converting our lives to the gospel. Life in baptism, and after baptism, is not a "thing", it is a way, it is a "plunge" into the fullness of the language and culture of Christian faith so that we may live out of it.

I am asking for a simple thing. Find ways to prioritize this as a year-round activity. Establish, or increase, small group ministry in your parish. Groups of 6-12 people. Facilitated, focused on four things: gathering around the presence of Christ and learning about him, prayer, mutual support and care, and a group mission or task that will bring joy.

Canon Lisa Wang will be speaking later about some ways to enter into this in your parishes and there will be groups of people made available, as we've done with Stewardship, to help you focus on this aspect of discipleship—coming to know more deeply what it is to plunge into the joy of it all. There are lots of resources available for this work. The goal is to continually turn to grace. To find resonance in the people and world around you and to give thanks for God in everything. This will automatically give life, release joy, and propel us into the work with good news and good. Help.

Discipleship and Resonance.

I like to take a few more minutes to go just a little further into what is meant by this. What are we looking for here? One of the most interesting concepts I've come across lately (Hartmut Rosa, sociology) is captured in the two words: Acceleration and Resonance.

In our time and place, as this theory goes, social acceleration is the problem. The speeding up of "modern" capitalist society forces a continuous increase in the pace of life, the pace of technological innovation, and social change JUST to keep it all from collapsing. It requires more energy and effort just to achieve the same things. To achieve dynamic stabilization, "just to stay in the game", you must grow, speed up, innovate continually and ever faster. That's the demand on us. Life starts to feel like going up the down escalator. A lot of work just to stay still, to keep afloat.

The result: alienation.

When everything moves too fast and is treated as a resource to control or consume, the world begins to tun cold, distant, and "silent". I worry about things that go cold, distant, and silent. It's not always bad. Sometimes we need to



cool off, get away, sit in silence. But this is different. It's alienation. Often the feeling of being alienated from God. Acceleration destroys our ability to truly connect. With one another, with our work, with the world around us – including the natural world—and with the divine. There is no more resonance.

Recently, I was walking along the bays at Owen Sound, within Georgian Bay (in the deanery of Saugeen!). It was late in the afternoon and the sun was shining on the water and on the opposite shore. We were on a two-day vacation and playing golf. At one point we sort of "looked up" and we all stopped to take it in. Just walking down the fairway and we stopped for a moment and took it in. It was more beautiful than "normal". It all seemed to radiate. One of us said out loud, "beautiful". Everyone agreed. Minutes later another one wondered why do we stop and look and think that "that" was beautiful?

Later that night, one of the group was outside and poked his head through the door, "Guys, you've got to come see this." It was a clear but dark night, stars visible everywhere, but just above the horizon over the water was the moonrise. That night it was a half-moon with that orange harvest moon glow. Looking larger than normal, as the moon does when close to the horizon. It was spectacular. We stood there for a while. Enjoyed it. Tried unsuccessfully to capture it in photos.

What were we looking at? What was speaking to us? When the one friend guided us out there to see the moon, the responses in us were very similar. We could have responded differently, I guess. What's so great about that? The moon is always there. It's just a rocky orb, 385,000 kms away, littered with craters and devoid of life. It's been like that for millions of years, it never changes. A big rock in the sky, what's the big deal? That is all true, but that response might have missed something—the opportunity for encounter, for enjoying the resonance of the moon, that night, in that place, with those people.

This is the same moon that every creature that's ever lived on land, or maybe even in sea, has a relationship with. And somehow it was momentarily available to us in a new way.

"Resonance" is a sociologist's word for the solution to the problem (acceleration, the desire to control, increase, produce) and it's resulting alienation. What are our words for it? We have many. Resonance is a good one too.

Notice that the response to the problem of acceleration is resonance, not deceleration. Resonance is a two-way relationship. It is an active, responsive connection where you touch the world and the world touches, moves, changes you. It "speaks". And you hear, if you're listening.

I think of "sympathetic resonance" of vibrations caused by sounds waves or other movement. It is powerful. A harmonic phenomenon where a passive object or body begins to vibrate at a certain frequency because it encounters external waves of energy on that same frequency. It's a match of natural resonant frequency. It can happen on stringed instruments, in tuning forks, and in and between human beings and the mediations of the world.

I think of string theory in physics. That the smallest building block of all like, smaller even than electron or quarks, are tiny vibrating strings of energy. That we are made up of a gazillion little vibrating string of energy. String of energy resonating deep within, relating to other strings of energy.

I heard in a sermon recently about the Canadian artist Emily Carr who travelled from the West Coast to visit Lawren Harris, one of the Group of Seven at his studio. They met for a while and then he wisely just left her with many of his paintings, some finished some unfinished. After experiencing them, she wrote in her notebook:

"Oh, God, what have I seen? Where have I been? Something has spoken to the very soul of me, wonderful, mighty, not of this world. Chords way down in my being have been touched. Dumb notes have struck chords of wonderful tone. Something has called out of somewhere. Something in me is trying to answer."

(Emily Carr, "Hundreds and Thousands", *The Journals of Emily Carr, 6.* Sermon by Rev. Dr. Hyuk Cho)

Divine resonance is in the world and it's a way to think about the connection between the divine and the human. It is not always a harmonious thing, like a beautiful chord. It can be dissonant. It may speak warning, guidance, protection. So, we are all ears. We find way to put up our antennae and expect God to "speak". You know resonance. You may not have sensed it recently but you've all known it, at times.

With these kinds of things in mind, I think that this would be a good way to spend the next year: asking, locally, how can we cultivate Christian resonance? Within our own traditions and open to the "ever ancient, ever new" gifts provided by the Holy Spirit of God—in your daily rhythms, in your daily practice, in your parish life together, in our meetings, in our meals, in our worship, and in our outreach. Say "Amen" to what you are! Plunge more fully into your life in Christ.

Stewardship on university campus

By Cynthia Connell





AS A CHILD, growing up in the Anglican church I remember stewardship campaigns, and I recall conversations at home about tithing.

These conversations lead me to believe as a young adult that stewardship was about caring for money or resources. But when I was asked to speak today about stewardship and campus ministry, the first thing that came to mind was the holistic way in which students staying at Canterbury display that they are good stewards of their time, talent and treasure.

At Canterbury College and on the university campus, stewardship takes on a beautiful and unique form. Through my ministry I have learned, at its heart stewardship is about recognizing that everything we have, our time, our talents, our energy, and our opportunities, is a gift entrusted to us for the good of others. We are a community made up of people from different countries, cultures, languages, and life experiences. International and domestic students come together not only to learn in classrooms but also to discover how their gifts can make a difference in the wider community.

When I was reflecting on some of the outreach ministry I have done with the students that attend *Food for Thought* Bible study over lunch, I recalled one of our coffee chats at a local nursing home. We had been there for a couple of hours and as we were leaving, we passed a gentleman that was sitting on a bench in the hallway. One of the students, Yxnag, was from China and completing her master's in business. The man called out and spoke to her, and Yxnag immediately stopped and sat on the bench. The rest of us had walked a bit further and when I looked back, they were sitting together on the bench holding hands and talking. I stayed back while the others went outside. I had no idea what they were saying, but I could see in both of their expressions it was a deep and meaningful conversation happening.

They spoke for about 15 minutes and then she got up and walked towards me. The first thing she said to me was thank you for bringing me today. Then proceeded to tell me the man had been there a few months and not really talked to anyone as no one spoke his first language and his English was very broken.

This was a true moment of stewardship. It was 15 minutes of Yxnag's time. No financial cost, no giving of any possessions. Just sharing a spiritual moment, a moment of care compassion and listening.

Yxnag had questioned at Food for Thought a few weeks before why she came to Canada as she was struggling with English and finding studies very challenging. But in that moment a piece of God's plan was very clear. Those few minutes and watching how Yxnag showed care and compassion are reminders for me of the importance of being present, listening and caring for those around us.

There are many other examples of stewardship on campus. We see stewardship when students spend an evening serving soup to those who are unhoused. They offer more than a meal. They offer dignity, kindness, and the reminder that every person matters.

We see stewardship when students purchase toys for inner-city families at Christmas. They help bring joy and hope to children and parents who may be facing difficult circumstances. And we see stewardship when students make cards for seniors, taking time to create simple messages that remind those receiving them that they are remembered and valued.

What makes these acts especially meaningful is that they often arise from busy students whose schedules are already full. Students who sometimes have left war torn countries and have come to Canada with very little to try to complete their education to better their future. Yet they choose to give of themselves. In doing so, they demonstrate that stewardship is not about how much we have; it is about how willing we are to share what we have.

These experiences also transform those who serve. As students reach out to others, barriers of age, culture, and circumstance begin to disappear. They learn that community is built through relationships, and that some of life's most important lessons are learned not in lecture halls but in acts of service.

Campus ministry reminds me that stewardship is so much more than caring for money or resources. It has challenged me to ensure that every gift I am given from God is used for the good of others.

May we all continue to be good stewards of all that has been entrusted to us, using our time, talents, treasures and opportunities to build a more compassionate, connected, hopeful and faithful community for all.

Cynthia Connell is Chaplain and Lay Pastor at Canterbury College.

Chiming in on excellence



Peter Ryde (third from the left) received the City of Stratford TED BLOWES Community award on October 20.

Photo: Lindsay Gerber, City of Stratford

PETER RYDE, the chimer at Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Stratford for some 35 years, received the City of Stratford TED BLOWES Community Service Award for 2026 at an awards banquet on October 20 at the Rotary Complex Community Centre.

The award, named after former Stratford mayor and educator Ted Blowes, honours a resident who has helped make a difference in the city or County of Perth, through volunteerism, beautification and education.

Peter began his service as a chime ringer at St. James' Anglican Church in 1970 at the age of fifteen. Following the amalgamation of Stratford's Anglican churches in 2026, the church became Holy Trinity Anglican Church, where Peter's volunteer service continues today.

Except for a brief hiatus during early adulthood, Peter has been chiming regularly since 1996. Taken together, he has devoted more than three decades to this role—an extraordinary example of sustained, reliable volunteer commitment.

The bells of Holy Trinity—fifteen in total following their major restoration in 2015—have sounded out across Stratford for more than 150 years, marking weddings, funerals, civic occasions, and moments of shared joy and reflection. He chimes multiple times each week, including Sundays and free public concerts every Wednesday throughout the year, contributing meaningfully to Stratford's identity as a city of culture, heritage, and community pride.

Peter maintains the interior of the bell tower – a demanding and unseen work that includes clearing snow and ice, removing debris and wildlife, repairing louvres, and protecting delicate mechanical components during major restoration projects. He also maintains the tower clock, which chimes the Westminster quarters across the city each day.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, when much of civic life fell silent, Peter continued ringing the bells—providing reassurance and continuity at a time of great uncertainty. In 2018, he organized parishioners to toll the largest bell one hundred times to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War. In 2023, he collaborated with another Stratford carillon player to perform Ukrainian folk music in recognition of the war in Ukraine.

The family of Holy Trinity Stratford honoured Peter separately after the 11:00 a.m. service on Sunday, October 25.

Prepared by James Colbeck

Parish of Holy Spirit, Seaforth completes its accessibility project



Parish of the Holy Spirit, Seaforth recently achieved their goal of building accessibility and celebrated with cake and ice cream after Sunday Worship on October 4.

After more than a decade of planning, research, challenges, campaigning and fundraising, the dream of an accessible washroom and ramp access to the parish hall from the church, has been realized. Wardens Steve Miners and Mary Anne Snowdon, who navigated the project to the finish line, pose at the new ramp, with the celebratory cake and several congregation members. We look forward to welcoming all in our community into this inclusive and inviting space.'

Helen Southgate Oldfield, Stewardship Committee Member

Thirteen years of Children's Community Closet at St. George's of Forest Hill



Thank you so much to our volunteers and donors who helped to make our Children's Community Closet event happen on Saturday, October 24! The event was very well attended providing gently used clothes, toys and miscellaneous items to 90 families.

St. George's of Forest Hill Outreach Committee

Pastoral Progressions

Announcement

Bishop Townshend congratulates the Venerable Tanya Phibbs on her appointment as the Executive Officer of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario. The appointment was announced by Archbishop Anne Germond, Metropolitan of Ontario, at the Provincial Council meeting this week.

This is a part-time appointment and Archdeacon Tanya continues as the Associate Rector of Holy Trinity, Stratford, and St. James, St. Marys.

Ordination

Bishop Townshend announces that the following are called to the Priesthood at a service of Ordination on the Commemoration of Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, Wednesday, 18 November 2026, at the parish church of St. George's, Goderich:

- The Rev'd Kathleen Aitken, upon ordination Priest Assistant to the Territorial Archdeacon of Northern Huron;
- The Rev'd Brent Krysa, Curate of St. Mark's, Brantford;
- The Rev'd Annette Procunier, upon ordination Priest Assistant to Rector of St. George's, Goderich and Christ Church, Port Albert.

Induction

On behalf of Bishop Townshend, the Venerable Rob Lemon inducted the Reverend Brendon Bedford as the Rector of St. George's of Forest Hill, Kitchener, at a service of Evensong on the Feast of All Saints, 1 November. The preacher was the Reverend Ann Webber.

Appointments

Bishop Townshend appoints the Reverend Ann Veyvara-Divinski as the interim priest of Trinity, Durham, St. James, Fairmount, and Christ Church, Markdale, effective 1 November 2026.

Bishop Townshend appoints the Reverend Amirthaseeli Jeyaseelan as the interim priest of Christ Church, Port Stanley, effective 1 November 2026.

Retirement

Bishop Townshend has accepted the request of the Reverend Margaret Walker to retire from parish ministry, effective 31 December 2026.

Margaret was ordained deacon and priest by Bishop Bob Bennett in January and June 2012 and began her ministry as assistant curate at St. George's of Forest Hill, Kitchener. She was appointed priest-in-charge of St. George's, New Hamburg and St. James' Chapel of Ease, Wilmot in June 2012 and served there until 31 August 2025 when she became the interim priest-in-charge of St. Andrew's Memorial, Kitchener. In September 2020, St. Columba, Waterloo, was added to her charge and she served that community faithfully until her resignation in January 2024. She has been the chaplain of St. Monica House/Monica Place in Kitchener and since June 2023 has been the diocesan Cemeteries Coordinator.

Margaret has served the Diocese of Huron in many capacities. She is a member the Administration & Finance Committee, the Land & Property Sub-Committee, the Cemetery Sub-Committee, the Insurance Sub-Committee, the Social Justice Committee, Diocesan Court, and the Synod Organizational Committee.

We give thanks to God for Margaret and her service and we wish her well in retirement.

Anglican Church Women

In Memory

London Deanery

St. Anne's, Byron
Jean Wilson

A season for giving and a lifetime of generosity

By Rev. Kevin Dixon

AT CHRISTMAS, we become wonderfully preoccupied with gifts.

We make lists, wrap presents, prepare meals and look for ways to spread joy. In the familiar story of the first Christmas, we encounter gifts of a different kind: Mary's willingness to say yes to God, the shepherds' wonder at the good news, and the Magi's costly offerings to the Christ child.

At the heart of Christmas is the astonishing gift of God himself, given to us in Jesus. It is a gift that invites a response – not simply at Christmas, but throughout our lives.

Similarly, our stewardship activities are meant to infuse our lives thoroughly. Toward the end of each year, many parishes across this diocese launch annual financial appeals. There are letters to write, sermons to prepare, print materials and response devices to distribute, and conversations to be had. These are important practices. These appeals help us to plan responsibly for the year ahead and invite people to support the ministries they value.

But there is a danger. We may inadvertently communicate that stewardship is something we do for a few weeks, when the church needs money. What if stewardship were less about an annual fundraising campaign and more about a lifelong journey of faith?



Kira auf der Heide/Unsplash

The Christmas story reminds us that God's generosity is not an abstract idea celebrated once each year. It takes flesh. It becomes a child held in loving arms and a light shining in the darkness.

Stewardship is sometimes described as everything we say and do after we say, "I believe." It begins with the recognition that our lives are gifts from God, and that our time, abilities, relationships and material resources can become instruments of God's love in the world. Giving to the church is an important expression of this faith, but it is part of a much larger picture.

The question is not simply, "How much will I give to the church this year?" It is also, "How is my faith shaping how I live, the choices I make, and the way I use everything entrusted to me?" In other words, stewardship is not just about raising money. It is about forming disciples.

The theme of forming disciples is one we have been exploring in stewardship workshops and conversations across the Diocese of Huron. It is also shaping our work with parishes and deaneries as they plan their stewardship activities for the coming year.

I'm delighted that most parishes in the diocese have now submitted their stewardship plans as requested by Bishop Todd. These plans represent an encouraging commitment to making stewardship a more intentional part of congregational life. Our next step will be to continue working with parishes and deaneries to develop these plans further, share ideas and identify practical ways to put them into action.

One promising practice is what we have been calling Stewardship Moments: brief opportunities during worship or other parish gatherings to tell stories about generosity and its impact.

A parishioner might share why they volunteer at a community breakfast programme, how their faith has shaped their approach to charitable giving, or what they have learned about generosity from receiving someone else's kindness. A ministry leader might describe how a particular gift of time, money or skill has made a difference in someone's life.

These stories need not be dramatic. Their purpose is not to make people feel guilty or to turn every Sunday into a fundraising appeal. Rather, they help us recognize the many ways generosity is already at work among us. They remind us that stewardship is something we practise together, and that even modest acts of faithfulness can make a significant difference.

Imagine what might happen if, throughout the year, congregations made space for these stories alongside opportunities for prayer, gratitude, learning and service. The annual financial appeal would still matter, but it would become one moment in a much larger journey rather than the principal occasion when stewardship receives our attention.

The Christmas story reminds us that God's generosity is not an abstract idea celebrated once each year. It takes flesh. It becomes a child held in loving arms and a light shining in the darkness. Our own generosity, in all its forms, can make that love tangible in the world around us.

We don't become generous Christians simply by expressing our financial intentions for the coming year. The deeper work of stewardship is helping us become people whose lives are themselves an offering. This is a gift worth unwrapping in every season of the year.

Rev. Kevin Dixon is Diocesan Stewardship Coordinator.

Stewardship and the weight of our stuff

By Rev. Mark Wilton

SEVERAL years ago, Tracy and I attended our nephew's wedding—a beautiful celebration with more than 300 people gathered.

As I looked around at the joy, the gifts, and the bustle of family life, I caught myself thinking: They are probably going to need a bigger house just to hold all their stuff. That stray thought reminded me of a favourite comedian's monologue about our obsession with possessions. In his words, "Actually this is just a place for my stuff, ya know? That's all, a little place for my stuff."

He goes on to describe how our homes, our suitcases, even our vacations revolve around managing smaller and smaller versions of our stuff. We accumulate, protect, store, and transport our belongings as though they define us. And while George Carlin was "very likely the least religious person on earth," he understood something about human attachment that echoes a deeper truth in today's Gospel.

In that Gospel, Jesus is preparing to leave town when a young man runs up with a last minute question—one



of those "One other thing…" moments that often come at the end of a conversation. He asks, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" It's a question many of us quietly carry. Jesus answers simply: follow the commandments. But the young man already does that. Something inside him still feels incomplete.

The Gospel tells us, "Jesus, looking at him, loved him." Jesus loves his searching—his willingness to ask the harder question. But Jesus also gives him a harder answer: sell what you have, give to the poor, and follow me. The young man walks away grieving, not because he is bad, but because he is attached. He has a lot of stuff, and his stuff has a hold on him.

We often assume this story is about wealthy elites—"the Donald Trumps and Bill Gates of the world"—but Jesus is speaking to all of us. As Carlin joked, "Have you noticed that their stuff is junk and your stuff is stuff?" We don't need to be millionaires to cling tightly to our possessions. Most of us have basements, garages, closets, and storage units full of things we once thought essential.

The issue isn't wealth itself. "Stuff isn't inherently bad—money or wealth isn't inherently bad—it's how you relate to it." Stewardship begins with that relationship. It asks us to examine whether our possessions serve God's purposes or whether we serve them.

If I spend more on dinners out than I do supporting those who have no food, something is out of balance. If I drop a five dollar bill in the collection plate but spend thousands on entertainment, my priorities are skewed. If I worry more about the brand of jeans I wear than about neighbours who rely on Goodwill, I've lost sight of what matters.

Stewardship is not about guilt—it's about clarity. It's about recognizing that our lives are shaped by the priorities we choose. Advertisers tell us constantly what we should want, what we should buy, what we should value. But the Gospel invites us to a different ordering of life: love God, care for others, and loosen our grip on the things that distract us from both.

The disciples, listening in on Jesus' conversation, probably felt relieved. They had already left their possessions behind. But Jesus reminds them—and us—that following him is not a halfhearted endeavour. It is "all in," not one foot in the world of stuff and one in the kingdom of God.

Stewardship is the practice of being all in. It is not merely about giving money; it is about giving attention, compassion, time, and trust. It is about seeing our resources—large or small—as tools for the kingdom rather than trophies of personal success. It is about asking the deeper question the young man asked: What must I do to live a life that reflects God's love?

In a world overflowing with possessions, stewardship calls us to travel lighter. To let go of what weighs us down. To use what we have for the good of others. To remember that our homes, our bank accounts, our calendars, and our talents are not monuments to ourselves but gifts entrusted to us for God's work.

Carlin's monologue, humorous as it is, ends with a truth worth repeating: our stuff expands, multiplies, and demands more space, more attention, more energy. But Jesus offers a different path—one of freedom, generosity, and purpose.

As we enter this stewardship season, perhaps the question is not How much stuff do I have? but How much of myself am I willing to give? When we loosen our grip on possessions, we discover that our hands are free to lift others. When we reorder our priorities, we find that generosity becomes not a burden but a joy. And when we invest in the well-being of our neighbours, our churches, and our communities, we participate in the kind of life Jesus invites us to live—one marked by love, purpose, and hope.

Stewardship, at its heart, is not about what we give up. It is about what we make possible.

Rev. Mark Wilton is Priest Assistant to the Territorial Archdeacon of the South.

Amazonia: A partnership of prayer, learning and friendship

SINCE THE BEGINNING of Huron's Diocesan Companion relationship with Amazonia, the Deanery of the Saugeens has fostered a special relationship with friends and colleagues in Brazil.

Beginning first with the personal connections and shared ministry experiences of Archdeacon Graham Bland, who guided our first introductions with Bishop Saulo, and then Bishop Marinez and other clergy from their diocese, over the years we have come to grow in friendship with many in Brazil, and have journeyed with them through correspondence and prayer.

In particular, it has been a deeply meaningful experience for us, in the Deanery of the Saugeens, to have partnered with the mission congregation of Divino Salvador in Ulianópolis, Pará. Since its founding, this community has sought to reach beyond its doors to care for the neighbourhood around them, welcoming young families and children, and in particular, offering after-school educational programming for local children hosted out of their church building.

In a previous mission trip made by members of the Amazonia to Huron, Bishop



Rev. Sergio da Silva (middle), visiting with members of the Saugeens and Rev. Gilles (St. Matthew's, Windsor).



GROWING BEYOND THE DOORS
REV. CANON GRAYHAME BOWCOTT

Marinez and Rev. Claudio shared with us the hopes of the Divino Salvador community in dreaming of an enlarged parish hall that might better accommodate the growing relationships that were forming between the church and many young families. Their existing space at that time was very modest, but the piece of property that they owned allowed for the capacity to grow their footprint.

In 2020, after much prayer and discussion, the congregations from the Deanery of the Saugeens decided that they would launch a "Little Anglicans" Ulianópolis Mission Project in support of the costs of expanding the Divino Salvador church. Together, and with the generosity of each of the twenty congregations in our deanery, we exceeded our fundraising goal of $15,000, which was then gifted to our friends in Amazonia to move forward with their dream of having a larger parish hall to host their youth and educational ministry programs. There was much joy among our Huron communities in having the opportunity to partner in this way.

In the recent missionary visit of Rev. Sergio da Silva, we were able to rekindle our conversations about the Divino Salvador community. Sergio has a very unique relationship with that church, as he was a founding supporter, in partnership with his diocese in establishing it in the first place. Fr. Sergio works full-time as a law clerk. His ministry as a priest is non-stipendiary (completely voluntary). In his early years of ministry, Sergio helped to form a grouping of house-based churches in Ulianópolis, fostered in the Anglican tradition and focused on both spirituality and service in their community. As these house churches continued to flourish, he recognized that the establishment of a church building would allow for a visible sign of Anglican presence within their neighbourhood.

Rev. Sergio then approached the Diocese of Amazonia about donating personal funds to be able to help build what has now been named as the Divino Salvador Mission. Prior to his visit with us, we were not familiar with the history of our partner community, or the inspirational faithfulness that has allowed their community to grow and flourish over the years.

Our hope in our relationship going forward is to be able to collect and share more stories between our northern Huron congregations and our partners in Ulianópolis.

We give thanks for Sergio's presence among us over his recent stay, and for the chance to learn from him about our companions in Brazil. Members of the Saugeens hope to have a future opportunity to visit Amazonia and see, firsthand, the communities that we are upholding in prayer and friendship.

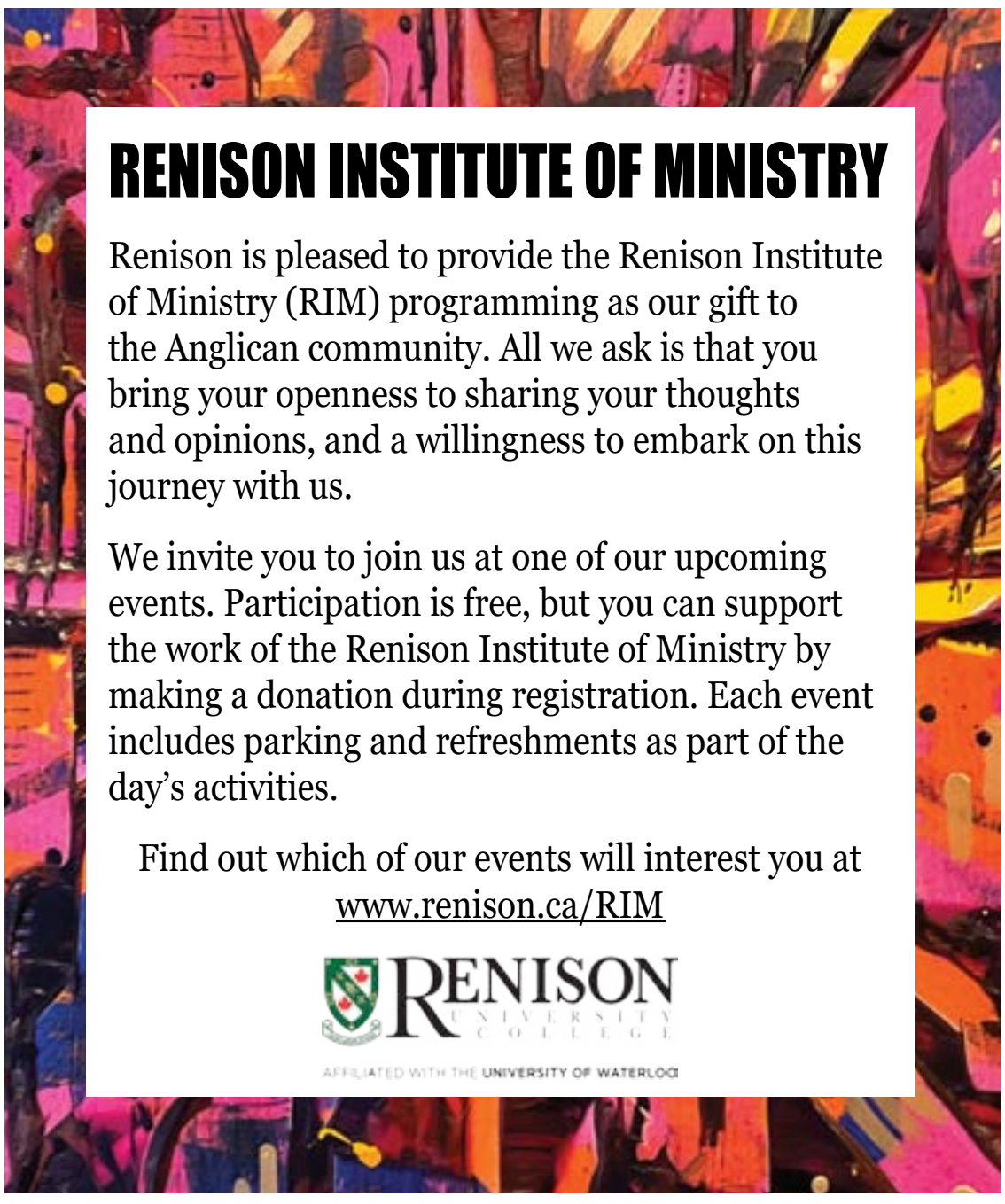
Rev. Canon Dr. Grayhame Bowcott is passionate about fostering congregational relationships and sharing our Anglican vocation with others. He serves as Rector of St. George's, The Parish of The Blue Mountains, and as Program Director for the Licentiate in Theology program at Huron University.

grayhamebowcott@diohuron.org



NOTE TO READERS

In 2027, the January and February issues of Huron Church News (and Anglican Journal) will be combined into one issue. Readers can expect to receive the issue in late December. Regular mailings will resume with the March issue.



When our own needs sneak in...


Atelierbyvineeth/Unsplash



As I See It

Rev. Jim Innes

We can become so certain we're doing what's right that we lose sight of the people we're trying to help.

FROM where I sat, the solution was obvious: put my son on the ice. He was the team's best scorer. Why were the coaches leaving him on the bench?

This was house league hockey, many years ago. I can acknowledge now that winning wasn't necessarily the most important thing. But I wanted him to score, to make the difference, perhaps even to save the game.

As my frustration grew, I began suspecting the coaches were deliberately holding him back, though I had no way of knowing.

My emotion finally spilled over. As the coaches headed toward the dressing room, I challenged them. I was angry and wanted an explanation. They became angry too.

I suddenly became ashamed of my behaviour. I suspect the children felt the tension, and my son may have been embarrassed. But was he as upset about sitting on the bench as I was? I'm not sure. I remember my own frustration far more clearly than I understand his experience.

We can become so certain we're doing what's right that we lose sight of the people we're trying to help.

That memory returned when I heard a CTV News report about Nevada, a three-year-old soccer player in Florida. In the videos, he ran circles around the other children, scoring goals and dominating play. But a dispute between his parents and league officials brought police to the field, and his place in the league was reportedly in question.

His family said they were singling him out because of his soccer skills. The league director raised concerns about Nevada pushing during play and his parents' conduct. After reading the reports, I was still unsure how the dispute escalated or how to reconcile the differing accounts.

What stayed with me, however, was a small child caught in an adult struggle. It reminds me how easily our own feelings and wants can overshadow the experiences of those who depend on us.

Perhaps our good intentions and care for others become entangled with our own needs, assumptions, and personal struggles: the baggage we carry. By baggage, I mean the unresolved things in our own lives that can shape how we respond to others, sometimes without our realizing it.

If that is true, it becomes especially important to recognize when we start making decisions based on personal need. As parents, coaches, clergy, politicians, or government officials, we are entrusted to serve the needs of those in our care. Unfortunately, when our own needs sneak in and begin directing our care, we can end up serving ourselves while believing we're helping someone else.

How might we notice when our own concerns begin to crowd out the people we're trying to serve? If our minds are set on where we think things ought to go, are we still listening to what they're telling us? The people we claim to speak for may not experience the situation as we do.

At the rink, I wanted the coaches to listen to me. Looking back, I wonder whether I had listened enough to my son.

Rev. Jim Innes is Rector of St. John's, Grand Bend with St. Anne's, Port Franks.

jiminnes@diohuron.org

The wonders of the Incarnation: At once wondrous and messy

By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon



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.

Through Scripture, tradition, theological reflection, and the wisdom of our learning community, we begin to recognize that our everyday experiences are not distractions from our spiritual lives. They are often the very places where our faith takes shape and where we discover God at work.

WHILE still in the season of Advent, shortly we will be immersed in the wonder of the incarnation, celebrating that time of Christ's coming to us, to live among us, in order to show us God's great love in the experiences of our everyday lives.

Luke's Gospel will lay out for us the story of Christ's birth, a story enmeshed in the realities of everyday life. For God will come among us in the middle of it all: there will be labour and birth, exhaustion and sacrifice, government decrees, journeys, crowded accommodations, and even taxes. The holy and the ordinary become woven together so completely that it becomes difficult to separate them.

The wonder of the Incarnation is that God does not wait for life to become tidy, peaceful, or particularly holy before showing up. God enters the messiness of human experience and makes it a place where, somehow, we can miraculously connect to the divine. Mary and Joseph do not experience the birth of Jesus in ideal circumstances. Far from it! Instead, they navigate the demands of their world, responding to circumstances quite beyond their control, as they make their way through the ordinary challenge of being human. And there, right in the middle of it all, God is born among us; at once wondrous and yet still incredibly messy.

At Education for Ministry (Huron), we are invited each week to pay attention to the world in which we actually live. We study Scripture and the Christian tradition, but as we do so we do not leave our own lives at the door each week. Instead, our questions, our relationships, our work, our frustrations, our joys, and even those things that seem terribly ordinary, unspectacular, somehow become places of theological reflection. We ask: Where is God in all of this? What might God be revealing to us? How does our faith shape the way we understand and respond to the world around us?

EfM helps us learn to see our own lives in much the same way. Through Scripture, tradition, theological reflection, and the wisdom of our learning community, we begin to recognize that our everyday experiences are not distractions from our spiritual lives. They are often the very places where our faith takes shape and where we discover God at work.

Perhaps, in the end, the invitation of both Luke 2 and EfM, is simply this: Pay attention. God may be doing something extraordinary right in the middle of the ordinariness of your today! How will we respond?

If you have been wondering what EfM is about and how you can begin to participate, here are several ways to learn more:

- Listen to a short video of the highlights at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzpnNvEDCuk
- Reach out to us at EFM@huron.anglican.ca

Why not start 2027 investing in our walk as disciples of Jesus? Always pleased to answer your questions and explore the possibilities with you or your community.

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

Join Tithe.ly now! Become a part of our evergrowing family:

• All Saints', Waterloo • St. James, Stratford • St. Paul's Cathedral, London • St. Mark's, London • St. George's, The Blue Mountains • St. Thomas, St. Thomas • St. George's, London • St. Thomas the Apostle, Cambridge • Regional Ministry of Hope • St. John's, Tillsonburg • St. Paul's, Stratford • St. James', St. Marys • St. Paul's, Essex • Holy Trinity/St. Paul's, Chatham • St. Michael & All Angels, London • St. John the Evangelist, Strathroy • Trivitt Memorial, Exeter • St. Stephen's, Stratford • St. Luke's, Cambridge • Trinity, Sarnia • St. James Westminster, London • Christ Church, Meaford • Church of the Holy Saviour, Waterloo • St. John the Evangelist, London • Holy Trinity, Lucan • Parish of the Holy Spirit, Seaforth • St. Andrew Memorial, London • St. Andrew's Memorial, Kitchener • St. George's, New Hamburg • St. James the Apostle, Wallaceburg • St. John-in-the-Wilderness, Brights Grove • St. Mark's, Brantford • St. Pual's, Point Edward • Trinity, Cottam • St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London...

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

Baking and the Kingdom of God

By Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE





Skyler Ewing/Unsplash

RECENTLY, I have been binge watching the Great Canadian Baking Show and its sibling show, the Great British Bake Off on CBC Gem.

The format is simple, weekly themes with signature bakes, technicals, and showstoppers. Each week a star baker is named, and one is eliminated until three remain and then the winner is proclaimed and awarded a special cake plate at a party that includes all of the bakers, and family and friends of the three finalists.

There is something truly beautiful that happens in the baking tent. It welcomes a wonderful diversity of people from across the country, people who are encouraged to share who they are. She can talk about her wife. He can talk about his husband. They can talk about their partner and their daughter. There are nods to homelands from around the country and around the world. One baker added a chili she thanks another for introducing to her and the judges acknowledge that it works well in her bake. They are teaching each other about who they are, and everyone seems to welcome that knowledge like it is a new recipe to try in the kitchen. Of course, there is some actual trying of food in the tent too, and not just by the judges.

They support one another. The encouragement is audible throughout the bakes and the judging especially when things go awry. They celebrate one another's achievements and remind each other of their talents. They are also quick to help each other. In the final moments of one signature bake, a baker was carefully placing a large caramel circle on top of his cake. It broke. One baker handed him a torch, and another gave him a hand enabling him to mend the circle and present his Ode to Snow White cake. It is clear they really care for one another, so much so that there are often tears when bakers are eliminated particularly in the later weeks of the season.

This makes a big difference at the end when a winner is announced. Yes, there can only be one winner, but it feels like all are winners. There doesn't seem to be any animosity. The final celebration is a celebration.

While I love baking, I am also drawn to this show because of the beauty of the community that is created. When I think of the Kingdom of God, this is the kind of Kingdom I envision, a world where diversity is welcomed and celebrated. Where people can be who they are, share their gifts, and support one another meaningfully. A world where everyone is encouraged to do their best everyday and can trust that that is enough. A world where we are continually open to learn from one another, embrace one another, and celebrate one another.

November 22, we celebrate the Reign of Christ. It is the last Sunday of our liturgical year. This is the moment when we pause and gather all we have learned from throughout the year about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and what this means for our faith. It is the time for us to consider how we will embody what we have seen Jesus embody, how we will live out the challenge to consider what we do to the least of these who are siblings (see Matthew 25:31-46, read on Nov. 22).

In what ways might that embodying look like the community created by the Great Canadian Baking Show and the Great British Bake Off? What does it take to create other communities with the same feel? What is needed to expand the possibilities and create more spaces in which people are welcomed, celebrated, and able to generously share their gifts?

May we who are inspired by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus be also open to be inspired by those who create spaces that are loving and supportive so that the reality of the present and not yet of the Kingdom of God can expand, evolve, and grow in our time.

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

Parish is a profound theological declaration about geography



MEDIA BYTES

REV. MARTY LEVESQUE

Lace up your shoes! When you walk the pavement, the world ceases to be a theoretical problem to solve. It becomes human.

WE LIVE in a culture engineered for speed.

Most of us move through our days insulated inside climate-controlled vehicles, hurtling past front porches at sixty kilometres an hour. We leave our attached garages, drive to enclosed workplaces or big-box parking lots, and return home without ever exchanging a glance with the human beings who share our postal code. We have mastered the art of living everywhere in the abstract while residing nowhere in particular.

The church has not been immune to this societal drift. In our quest for relevance, we routinely retreat into windowless committee rooms, obsessing over strategic plans, regional alignments, and demographic projections. We draft grand visions for transforming the world, all while remaining completely oblivious to the person standing on the sidewalk right outside our front door.

Long before the parish became an administrative line drawn on a diocesan map, it was a profound theological declaration about geography. It insisted on an uncomfortable truth: God does not just call us to love humanity in general. God calls us to love specific neighbours in particular.

The ancient parish system understood that a community of faith was entrusted with a tangible, walkable plot of soil. The streetlights, the crossing guards, the independent diner at the corner, the public schoolyard, and the creek cutting behind the back alleys were never background scenery. They were the parish. They formed the exact parish boundary of holy obligation, entrusted to our care whether the people living there ever darkened the church door or not.

Recovering that insight requires what I call the spiritual discipline of radical proximity.

Radical proximity means intentionally slowing your pace to the speed of a human walk. It means recognizing that an afternoon spent walking your neighbourhood streets, greeting the dog-walkers, and buying your lunch at an independent local counter will do far more for the kingdom of God than another five-year strategic plan.

When you walk the pavement, the world ceases to be a theoretical problem to solve. It becomes human:

- You notice the elderly neighbour struggling to push a grocery cart over an uneven curb.
- You see the exhausted young parents lingering at the park, desperate for an adult conversation that does not revolve around bedtime routines.
- You learn the names of the cooks, the baristas, and the shopkeepers whose daily labour gives the street its pulse.

These quiet, daily encounters are not distractions from the work of ministry; they are ministry.

The incarnation reminds us that when God chose to save the world, the divine did not issue a memo, launch an advertising campaign, or commission a strategic plan. God took on flesh and moved into the neighbourhood. Jesus walked the dusty roads of Galilee at four kilometres an hour, eating at local tables, stopping for interruptions on the roadside, and touching the reality of everyday lives.

If our churches are to have any authentic witness, we must rediscover that same incarnational nerve. We need to surrender our obsession with managing distant institutions and return our attention to our physical three-, four-, or five -block radius.

Grace has never lived in an abstract corporate vision. Grace lives on the corner, waiting to be noticed.

Leave the car keys by the door. Lace up your shoes. Take a walk around the block, look your neighbours in the eye, and meet Christ on the sidewalk.

Rev. Marty Levesque is Rector of All Saints' in Waterloo. He served as diocesan social media officer.

martylevesque@diohuron.org

Silent Night, Holy Night... CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS *from* CAMP HURON

Christmas is a time for children


Aditya Romansa/Unsplash



Field Notes

Rev. Allie McDougall

Both Christian and secular dealings with children during the holiday season, no matter how well intentioned, share in the same core issue: we struggle to grasp and give dignity to children as people.

THIS SEASON of preparation and anticipation of Christ's birth turns our attention, in varying degrees, to the contemplation of babies and children.

Christmas is a time for children, within and without the Church. This is not always embodied in a way that actually respects the inherent spiritual wisdom of childhood and actual kids. For many churches, Christmas is the only time children and their spirituality enter our imaginations and the extent of this contemplation is "Jesus was a baby once, isn't that nice?".

We take porcelain Baby Jesus out of his tissue paper swaddling clothes for the parish creche, we may invite the children in our midst to reenact the Nativity story, and in communities where numbers merit, we bring children to attend a "kid friendly" Christmas Eve service separate from the rest of the adult members of the parish. Baby Jesus and the children in the orbit of local church communities are brought out, displayed, and put back on the shelf for safe keeping.

In the secular celebration of Christmas, children are both the drivers of festive cheer and the targets of marketing. As a mother to two young children, I am warmed by their delight at the wonders of Christmas and horrified at the external pressure to spend money on them in order to ensure positive childhood memories in equal measure. Christmas divorced from the core biblical narrative slides quickly into a training ground for consumerism and expectations of gifts, and this has been true since the commercialization of Christmas in the 1840s. It is fun to be generous to the children we love as an extension of the virtues of Christmas; it is not fun nor is it fair to kids to allow gift-giving to spiral out of control for the sake of capitalistic pressure. And if the kids in your life are anything like mine, they're much happier rolling around in tissue paper on Christmas morning anyway.

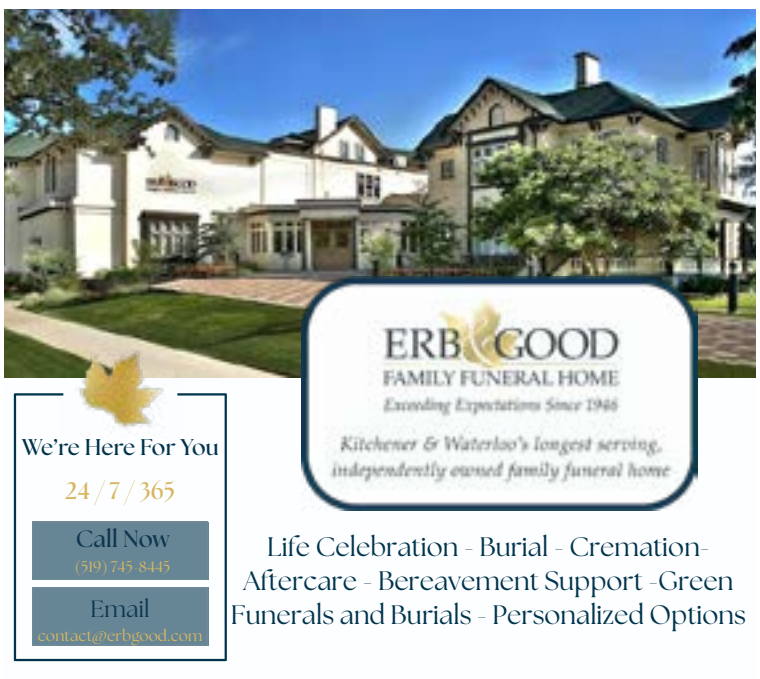
Both Christian and secular dealings with children during the holiday season, no matter how well intentioned, share in the same core issue: we struggle to grasp and give dignity to children as people. Within capitalistic secularity, this is quite straightforward. Marketers don't centre children because they care, they do so in an attempt to convince parents and grandparents to spend money. For the Church, particularly for Anglican parishes with dwindling numbers of young people, children are easily objectified as the hallmarks of success in Church, not necessarily as full members of the Body of Christ. The temptation during Christmas is to find and bring out children to serve a narrative or creative purpose that bolsters the image of the Christ Child in the manger.

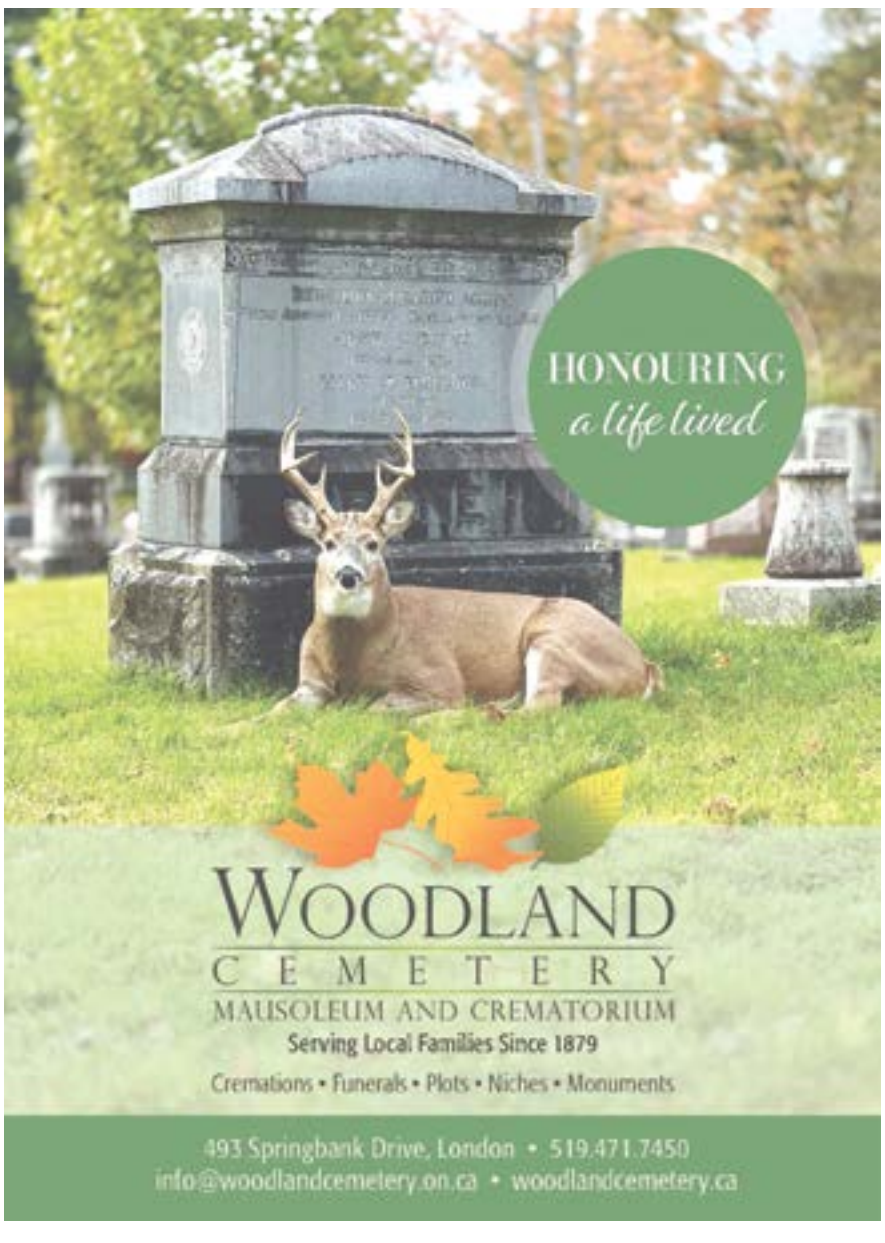
The nature of Christ is grounded in His material experience inside of time as Jesus the Man and as the co-eternal Word of God. Jesus is simultaneously immanent and transcendent. He is at all times the man on the cross, the baby in the manger, and the promised, returning King. Jesus does not assume different forms at different times of the Church year, He simply is. It is a beautiful thought, as I gaze at my own children, that the fullness of God was contained in a drooling, giggling, fuzzy-headed body who depended on His parents for survival. Worshipping this God who became flesh and lived through all stages of human development is an invitation to see the spiritual beauty of human life at all stages. Christ blesses the human experience through the Incarnation, and that includes the vulnerability of newborn babies, the busyness of toddlers, the curiosity of children, and the sullen moodiness of teenagers. Jesus is present to people of all ages and stages of life; the Holy Spirit reveals wisdom and truth in the minds of the youngest souls.

The children in our natural and parish families, with the right support, can be collaborators and even leaders in faith when we invite them to be. They have insight and gifts to share that extend beyond saying the darndest things during the Christmas pageant. As we dedicate the season of Christmas to adoring the simplicity of the newborn Christ, may we give the children in front of us the same opportunity to lead us into deeper wonder and appreciation of the work of God through their eyes.

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

alliemcdougall@diohuron.org







HURON CHURCH NEWS ONLINE:

https://www.diohuron.org/news

Read your favourite columnists

News & articles posted daily

Download our latest issue (pdf)

A Christmas gift for you, dear reader


Mel Poole/Unsplash



A View from the Back Pew

Rev. Canon Christopher B. J. Pratt

AS THE CALENDAR YEAR draws to a close, few words have a higher place in our minds and lives than the word "gift".

For the hours, days, weeks, (or in some cases where a person is highly organized and motivated) months…, time prior to the Christmas Season, has been taken over with the joy-filled, yet often stressful experience, of acquiring gifts. Part of the whole experience of gift giving is matching up a person with a gift which will brighten up their day or enhance their lives.

There will be many people for whom the focus of Christmas gift - giving centers exclusively around December 24 and 25. Although Christmas Eve and Christmas Day may be dates which fit neatly onto personal calendars, there is a real possibility that they will miss out on the rest of the celebrations which last for twelve full days until January 6th, the Feast of the Epiphany.

Some see the amount of money spent on a gift as being in direct relationship with the expression of affection which may be identified in a relationship. Opening up a box from a jewellers to reveal something bright and sparkling inside, might generate a different reaction than untying a package containing… socks….

(Although, on a very personal side note, beautifully hand knitted socks are clearly a very tangible expression of affection which generates a profound awareness of love whenever they are worn by the recipient!).

It is nigh on impossible for me to provide you, Dear Reader, with a personal gift this Christmas Season. However, I would like to share with you a gift, as a recommendation, that I received from my wife and one of our sons.

The best-selling book "Theo of Golden" by Allen Levi, is well worth your time. There are many themes and strands of story-telling which, each in their own way, will give you the opportunity to reflect on some of the basic elements of relationships, faith, love and the reality of the phrase, "it is more blessed to give, than to receive".

Whether or not you add this book to your personal library (as I have), or add your name to the many names ahead of you on the wait list at your local library, I hope that at some point in the future that you will send me a note (my email address is at the end of this article), and let me know your response to this gift.

During his ministry, my Father was invited to offer a preaching ministry which took him out of town. He stayed with the family of a colleague who was hosting him during his ministry. His host got the household moving in the morning with the loud declaration, "Wake Up, everyone! The Lord has given us a new day. Let us see what we can do with it!"

From that perspective, the concept of gift giving may be seen in a different light. Each day, each moment, each breath we take is a Divine gift which enables us to experience life in all its fullness. Suddenly our view shifts from gifts being measured by dollar signs or as "stuff" that quietly accumulates until it has the potential of being overwhelming. The gift of life itself is worthy of reflection and appreciation.

What makes the gift of life special for you? There are those people for whom days which are highly treasured are those moments when the pace of life is radically altered from the frenetic daily challenge, where keeping up with our own expectations or the expectations that others have of us cause us to feel overwhelmed and drained. The experience of quiet and silence generates a time of personal renewal and rejuvenation. Those days, or those moments, may easily be described as treasured gifts.

The gift of time, especially the gift of time given by those people we love, generates its own high level of gratitude. From my own experience, being able to sit down at a table and share a meal, surrounded by the members of our family has become a precious gift. The meshing of calendars which leads to the moment of us all being at the same table, at the same time, renews my faith in the miraculous!

With all of the activity and celebration which surrounds the Christmas Season being a reoccupation and focus in our lives, the ever-dwindling Christian community of those who still live in the land known to Jesus, currently lives life on the edge. Being a person who seeks to be a faithful follower of Jesus in a politically precarious part of this global village, is a potentially, very dangerous experience. Being prayerfully and practically supportive of the Christian community in that setting needs to be a priority for us all, not only during the Christmas Season, but also throughout the year.

In contrast to what sometimes feels like an overwhelming seasonal cacophony, I find comfort in familiar words which celebrate both a transformative gift and an expression of Divine Love.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given.

So, love imparts to human hearts the blessing of God's heaven!

No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin,

where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

(Common Praise - Hymn 120)

May this be a truly Blessed Christmas Season for us all.

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

Pause, listen, pray... Make room for wonder, gratitude and peace

A Christmas Prayer

Lord Jesus,
You came into the world in humility and love.
Quiet our hurried hearts and help us welcome You.
Comfort those who grieve, provide for those in need, reconcile those who are divided, and bring peace wherever there is fear.
Fill our homes with Your presence and make our lives a reflection of Your light.
Amen

By Rev. Kimberly Myer

THE BEAUTY of Christmas arrives with familiar sounds: carols in the air, greetings exchanged, children laughing, and families gathering for the Christmas meal.

We see Christmas in the lighted trees and homes, and the decorations that bring a sense of warmth in the cool weather. Yet beneath the celebration is a quieter invitation. The story of Christmas calls us to pause, listen, and pray—to make room in our hearts for the Christ child who came among us to bring light into the world.

Prayer helps us move beyond the busyness of the season and enter a time of reflection and gratitude. It turns our attention from everything we are trying to accomplish toward what God has already done. In prayer, we can find ourselves



Anglican Fellowship of Prayer

reliving what took place many years ago when a little baby was placed in a manger; where we receive again the good news that God is with us.

The first Christmas was filled with wonder. Mary treasured what had happened and pondered it in her heart. The Shepherds hurried to Bethlehem and returned glorifying God. Wise travelers followed a star, searching for the newborn King. Each responded by listening to God and the angels to find the Christ child.

We can pray with the same attentiveness. Taking the time to find a few quiet minutes each day during Advent and Christmas. We may give thanks for people gathered around us, for memories of those we miss, for the food on our tables and the roof over our heads, or for the strength we received from God that carried us through a difficult year. We do not need to find eloquent words, only words from our heart to say, "Lord Jesus, help me welcome You anew."

In our preparation for Christmas to set aside time to pray for peace on earth and for those who are hungry, lonely, homeless or feeling grief. As we pray for those who are suffering, God may also show us how to become part of the answer—through a meal shared, a generous gift, a phone call, a visit, or an act of forgiveness. Such prayer keeps Christmas from becoming private or sentimental. The Child in the manger came for the whole world. To pray in His name is to let His compassion widen our own hearts.

At Christmas, prayer is not one more task to fit into an already busy schedule. It is a way of making room—room for wonder, gratitude, compassion, and peace. Even a simple prayer can quiet the noise within us and remind us that the heart of Christmas is not what we create for ourselves, but the grace we receive from Christ.

May our homes be filled with joy this Christmas, but may our hearts also become still enough to hear the ancient promise made new: God is with us. And may that assurance send us into the world with renewed faith, generous love, and enduring hope.

Rev. Kimberly Myer is an AFP executive member.