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# HURON CHURCH NEWS

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF HURON • Huron Church News is a section of the Anglican Journal • JANUARY 2021



## Called, gifted, sent...

M. J. Idzerda/  
Huron Church News

Bishop of Huron, The Right Reverend Dr. Todd Townshend with the newly ordained (from left to right): Rev. Enrique Martinez, Rev. Susan Bagshaw and Rev. Jordan Murray. St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Ontario, November 30, 2020.

## The journey begins for the "COVID ordinands of 2020"

Two services of ordination took place in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Ontario in the month of November.

On November 19, Rev. Andra Townshend O'Neill and Rev. Justin Comber were ordained to the order of priest. Rev. Andra Townshend O'Neill serves as the rector of St. Mark's, London and Rev. Justin Comber is the rector of the Parish of Transfiguration. Their ordination service to diaconate, back in March, was the last large gathering in the diocesan cathedral church before COVID-19 measures were introduced.

On November 30, Bishop Todd Townshend ordained Susan Bagshaw, Enrique Martinez and Jordan Murray to the order of deacons.

Upon her ordination, Rev. Susan Bagshaw was appointed deacon with special responsibility for pastoral care at St. John's Church, Cambridge.

Rev. Enrique Martinez started his service as deacon-in-charge of the Parish of Long Point Bay (Port Ryerse Memorial Church, Port Ryerse; St. John's, Woodhouse; St. John's, Port Rowan; St. Andrew's-by-the-Lake, Turkey Point and Christ Church Chapel of Ease, Vittoria).

Rev. Murray will serve as the Assistant Curate to the Rector, St. George's, Owen Sound effective January 1, 2021.

Both services were live streamed as the attendance at the cathedral was limited due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Reflections on ordination by Susan Bagshaw, Jordan Murray and Enrique Martinez: pages 3 and 5

## COVID-19 colour code explained: what does it mean for your church

As the Government of Ontario introduces increased preventive and restrictive measures in some parts of the province, the Diocese of Huron sets forth modification measures to its Amber Stage protocols.

The Bishop of Huron recommends that parishes in red zones cease in-person worship. Parishes that have strong reasons for wishing to resume in-person worship may request permission to do so.

On page 7 of this edition we bring you the breakdown of colour-coded Amber Stage COVID-19 modification measures in the Diocese of Huron detailing the actions that have to be taken in each colour coded zone as defined by the Government of Ontario.

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## Silent Night (and a candle in the dark)

**The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined.**

Old St. Thomas Church at Night  
Courtesy of Railway City Tourism

Like many other Huron churches, Old St. Thomas Church (St. Thomas, ON) will not echo with the sounds of carols this Christmas season.

Without having the Salvation Army Band in the church, and without the collection that parishioners traditionally give to the Salvation Army Red Kettle campaign, the folks at Old St. Thomas moved their Christmas carol selection and presentation online. Instead within the walls of the church, the voices of Old St. Thomas' own

Samantha Ballard and Janette Byrne will resonate in people's homes. And all for the good cause, says Rev. Canon Nick Wells: "The beauty of the gifts is in the giving. So I ask you to give generously, not only to the Salvation Army but to all the worthy causes that we have at this time of year."

As for the Twelvetide, all Huron deaneries will prepare their video recordings for the each of twelve days. All videos will be posted on the diocesan website: [www.diohuron.org](http://www.diohuron.org).



# God's creative work: Newness will come to us

Sometimes we go about our work in the church and everything seems to be withering on the vine. Other times, with the same level of effort and commitment, nothing really different on our part, there seems to be an outpouring of newness. Sometimes we are visited by an abundance of new life.



**BISHOP  
TODD  
TOWNSHEND**

It simply comes to us. We don't conjure it up, it is a gift. It is a result of what God is doing much more than about what we are doing.

In the seasons of Christmas and Epiphany, newness is revealed whether people seek it or not. A little baby comes into the world and the world is a different place—for the parents, especially—and the future of this person is unknown. Yet, it is real, it is new, and it is full of possibility. When that child is Jesus, the one in whom God becomes flesh, there is no limit to the kind of "new" that is possible.



## The act of faith involved in responding to God's new activity is to remember that Jesus chose to bear our suffering as a sign of God's deepest love for us and for all.

It is clear, however, that not everyone saw the birth of Jesus as a good, new thing. Starting with Herod. He knew something about newness; it can be very threatening.

I spoke about this as part of our annual Synod in September, saying that God's promise to "make all things new" is one of the most unsettling

and downright controversial themes in the life of faith. God's creative work alters our plans and our preferences. Thanks be to God!

So, the act of faith involved in responding to God's new activity is to remember that Jesus chose to bear our suffering as a sign of God's deepest love for us and for

all. Anything new has to be, ultimately, for our benefit and for the benefit of those who suffer. God's newness is good news for the poor, the weak, the sick, and those who are alone. The gift and the task for us is to watch for signs of this newness, to recognize it for what it is, and to cultivate and nourish it to maturity.

Newness will come to us in this new year. May it be God's blessing to you now and throughout the year of our LORD, 2021.

+Todd

# Finding a sacred space for prayer

By Sharon Frank

Pre-COVID, the assumption of a sacred space was relatively easy. There was always that same pew one sat in every Sunday. One could settle into quiet prayer before the "normal" service. You just knew, almost without exception, where everyone else would also land! Yes, people have special occasional "thin places" to commune with the sacred but that was much less routine and less often.

During COVID lockdown when in-person worship was not an option, computers, tablets, TVs, and books offered service options. These were not routine, and perhaps that was part of the fascination, frustration, and adventure. New and different ways to build on developing a relationship with the Divine and a community. And we must always be mindful that in-person worship may come and go as the pandemic ebbs and flows.

In-person worship with limitations and restrictions offers yet more options. Finding a sacred space continues to transform and evolve. Regis-

## ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER



tering for church...who would have thought?

The seating within buildings has been shaken up. Amazing what one sees and experiences in a familiar place from a pew on the other side of the sanctuary, when the people around have shifted. It is not about the building, the routine, the taking things for granted. It is about intentionally finding your place each time you journey with God.

Many people are not com-

fortable participating with in-person worship, and that's okay. Things are constantly being significantly rearranged and are different and that's okay, too. There are lots of options and possibilities to commune, but it cannot be taken for granted.

The tradition of a sacred space is important yet can take on exciting and varied identities. Each Sunday it is good to know you have a place, a new view, a new opportunity to

## It is not about the building, the routine, the taking things for granted. It is about intentionally finding your place each time you journey with God.

connect with the Creator. Be it in a new pew, in the corner of a living room, in the middle of nature on a snowy walking path, or sitting in the basement (a former storage area) in a small private chapel complete with icons and candles. Here a tablet can broadcast the good news of the Gospel or one can pray, meditate, be silent. Everyone can be creative about their chosen sacred space, but it is important to intentionally identify a specific place... Your sacred space. A sacred place to meet with the Holy, as we enter a New year, a new opportunity, a new way forward. Let the journey begin. Amen

Sharon Frank is an AFP Huron lay executive member.

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# Called, gifted, sent: reflections on my ordination



**"I will never forget the feeling of the bishop's hands on my head at the moment of consecration": Susan Bagshaw on the day of her ordination**

## Joined in prayer, rooted in Christ, humbled by grace

**By Rev. Jordan Murray**

Imagine my experience leading up to ordination to be like that of everyone else who has stepped into this moment. Each day brings its own set of conflicting emotions. Joy and trepidation. Excitement and fear. Worry about being prepared for the work, and whether you have the skills required to step into your call.

As an introvert, I spent a lot of time in my own head, and so I'd like to share a couple of observations of my own experience.

First of all, prayer is an incredible thing, evocative and efficacious, though often not in the ways we expect. I am, of course, aware that I'm preaching to the choir, but I think this realization bears endless repeating, for we easily allow the distractions of the world to pull us away from God. The apostle Paul's words to the church at Thessalonica is wisdom we need just as much today as it was so many centuries ago: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

I remarked to Bishop Todd early on the day of my ordination how I felt a deep sense of being held in prayer as the time drew nearer. Perhaps only the second or third time in my life I have tangibly felt such a prayerful embrace. It is a profound thing to experience. I knew people were praying for me; they told me they prayed when I was present, and far away, and as others prayed for

me, I prayed for them and for the other ordinands.

We can't undervalue the importance of prayer. Pray often, and let those around you know that you are praying for them. The ability for prayer to connect us to God and to each other cannot be overstated, especially during the challenges that this year has brought. This is who we are, a people joined in prayer, rooted in Christ, humbled by grace. Let this be our grounding and our practice.

My second observation was the realization that my ministry of service began long ago. What a remarkable process this has been: the training, the education, the hands-on experience, the successes and the failures, and the patience I never knew I possessed. All of this heading toward a few moments, standing before God, hearing the body of Christ affirm my call and the Bishop laying hands on me, as I moved through a ritual that has been repeated for centuries.

As I write this, I still feel the overwhelming weight of that moment. Enrique, Susan and I may have been set aside for a particular role, like other clergy, but we did not begin serving Christ's Church on November 30. Indeed, my ministry began the day I surrendered my life and circumstances, and invited God to be in control, allowing Him to determine where this world needed my gifts. I continue to surrender to this, over and over again.

All of us are called to ministry – right in the midst of

our mundane, everyday lives, God has work for us, building bridges, caring for his world, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, loving all people. This holy work is our response to the Gospel call. Answering our individual calls to ministry requires saying yes, every day, as we commit again and again to a new life in Christ. Preparing for my own ordination reaffirmed that ministry isn't something only clergy do: While some of us are called to specific roles, ministry is what we are all called to do, and who we are called to be; broken people, loved into community, called to the table of our Lord and then sent into the world to heal and to love.

I offer these observations as one who has just begun and who began long ago, journeying as we all do, moving through the world, striving to love God and neighbour.

As we move through this time of preparation for the coming of the Christ child, born in our midst, I pray that we may all be given eyes to see, to discern our call, to offer loving service to each other in the name of the one who loves us beyond measure. I ask your continued prayers for myself and all clergy. Know that I will be praying for all the people of Huron, that when Christ comes, we will all be found in faithful love and service. I wish you a blessed Advent.

*Rev. Jordan Murray is appointed as the Assistant Curate to the Rector, St. George's, Owen Sound effective January 1, 2021*

**By Rev. Susan Bagshaw**

I know, for myself, where I was, what I was doing, what day of the week it was, and what the weather was like on that day.

I suspect those who have been ordained in holy orders remember your moment as well when God spoke to you, and called you to be His servant in ministry in His church, be it by words, a physical rush that went through your entire being, or a gentle 'poke' telling you to go 'that way'. The call had been received, the message heard and the journey about to begin.

I had the very good fortune to be directed to Renison University College and Ministry Centre Director Marilyn Malton to further discern this call. She welcomed me to classes, as she welcomes everyone seeking answers about the faith journey they find themselves on, with a gentle spirit, an encouraging word and a prayer and I am forever grateful.

Fast-forward eight years, with the unwavering support of my family and friends along the way, the day started off with a good set of nerves until things got rolling. It was a strange feeling to wear a collar for the first time and it will take some getting used to! I am sure I did not remember every instruction given prior to the service, but it did not matter – the Holy Spirit was fully present! It was an absolutely joyful day for me and despite the restrictions that COVID-19 placed on the service itself, everything was absolutely as it should be. I

tried very hard to take in every moment and tuck it in my memory. I will never forget the feeling of the bishop's hands on my head at the moment of consecration. Never. Now, by God's grace, here I stand as newly ordained in God's church as 'Deacon with special responsibility for Pastoral Care' – one I do not take lightly, and I know that I do not minister alone.

The Reverend Stephen Berryman reminded myself and my fellow ordinands – Reverend L. Enrique Martinez and Reverend Jordan Murray – during the homily that the Feast of St. Andrew will always have special meaning to us as a reminder that Andrew was first called to follow Jesus, and so are we called to do the same. These fellow deacons will always have a place in my heart wherever they may go with their ministries, and as Bishop Todd further reminded us, we are tied together by this moment in our individual histories and we will share this bond forever. We may be forever known as 'the COVID ordinands of 2020' but I think that perhaps the simplicity of the service added to a purer beauty for each one of us as each element will be remembered as we go forward to serve Christ in others having answered the call, being gifted by the Spirit and sent out into the world as we declare, "I believe I am so called."

*Rev. Susan Bagshaw was ordained on November 30, 2020 and appointed deacon with special responsibility for pastoral care at St. John's, Cambridge.*



**Ordination service at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, Ontario on November 17, 2020: Rev. Justin Comber and Rev. Andra Townshend O'Neill were ordained to the order of priest.**

Ordination photos: M. J. Idzerda/Huron Church News

# A new year, a new me

COVID pandemic and the rediscovery of prayer as relationship

By Br. John-Paul Markides

Have you ever drifted from a loved one, and did not even know it had happened till you sat down with them and realized they have become a stranger? I recently had that realization about my relationship with God. It was there, and I had been doing all the things I had to do, but the soul had gone from it.

Earlier this year, I would sit out on the porch to have my morning coffee, where my husband joined me with his soon after. I enjoyed the feeling of the cool air blowing on my face, watching families drop off kids at daycare. The families passed by, kids in their surgical masks, followed by a deep, pungent odor of disinfectant.

"The world is so different than when we were kids," I said to my husband, while looking at the parents who looked as though they were run so ragged by the burdens of juggling overwhelming and complex responsibilities.

"Change is the only thing that stays the same," Kasimir replied. I feel like I should be doing something! I find myself asking "What can I do? I can't help; I can't share their burden. I feel like the world is falling apart, and all I can do is watch from the window?"



Vince Fleming/Unsplash

He looked me dead in the eye and said, "You can pray."

How dare he, the atheist?! My eyes rolled so far back in my head they could have fallen out. "The world doesn't need more words; the world needs help!" Some days are harder than others. Of course, I knew he was right, but in my heart, I was thinking: "We are fraying at the seams and God asks me to pray!"

I have always thought of prayer as the expression of a relationship with God. A pouring out of one's emotions, petitions and love in gratitude to the creator. Isn't this what we see from the many stories of the Bible, sometimes in action? For Jael it was a tent peg of justice; Moses was raising

his hands high for days in prayer; Mother Mary consented to a miracle in Jesus... And even for Jesus, his anxious prayer would have him perspiring blood.

For many of us the act of public worship in the church is the high point, mainstay and perhaps for some only regular acts of prayer. When COVID hit, this was no longer an option: the pews of people, the lights, bells, songs and suits, all disappeared. Gone was the coffee gossip, and dare I say, judging eyes. It soon was just me, my book and God. I used to think of myself as a prayerful person, but COVID showed me that even there I had lost touch with my first love. Sure, we have been able

**The centeredness and value I have found in this time of prayer has shown me that I do have faith, not just in Jesus but in myself and most of all, in us.**

to go back to worship in a church, thank God, at least for a while but it's not the same.

I have felt an air of anxiety, a sense of weightiness with these drastic changes and dire warnings. It is hard to sit and be still when there is so much to worry about. But I decided I would make a habit and routine of prayer. After this realization, I told myself "tomorrow morning, you are going to renew your morning devotions."

I started small and short, but over the next few days and weeks it took off, and I found my anxiety was different, not gone, but manageable. I felt I was adding a kind of meaning to my days. It became my coffee time with Jesus. I devel-

oped a habit, but the prayer was not always the same; some days I read the Bible, some the prayer book or some just prayer beads and the name Jesus. Nothing crazy happened; I didn't see visions and I didn't dream dreams; heck some days I would get my coffee and say good morning to Jesus, and we would just sit in each other's company.

I still miss the time I used to spend with my church community; this time of isolation, brought on by COVID, has caused me to return to a simpler form of devotion. My days have grown lighter, and dare I say, longer, I find myself on occasion praying multiple times a day, and not just a word or two but actual conversations with God, not so much one sided as shared with deep silence.

By letting my relationship with God grow stale I realized that I had been cheating myself out of the tools I needed to be able to do more than simply survive this pandemic. The centeredness and value I have found in this time of prayer has shown me that I do have faith, not just in Jesus but in myself and most of all, in us.

We have the strength to do this; we will see a way through and we will prosper again.

*John-Paul Markides (he/him), CFC, is a member of Proud Anglicans of Huron.*

## Gazing out the COVID window: becoming a person of hope and calmness

By Colin Shutt

Before I go much further with my thoughts about contemplation and introspection etc., I freely admit that all you ladies out there – and I am generalising already – have a command of these. And generalising again, most men have to be gently pushed into a corner to exhibit any of these. That is, unless you are DaVinci or Hemingway.

We, as men, are not window gazers but since this pandemic hit, I seem to have a lot of time to gaze. With the extra time on my hands most chores and hobbies cannot consume all my time.

So here I am writing this short piece because I have had time.

We are blessed with a small sunporch which looks out on my garden, grapes and hummingbird feeder. And yes, I have sat there before but usually spending just enough time to drink a coffee. Taking



Sasha Freemind/Unsplash

much more time to appreciate God's beauty so freely given, (other than a little rototilling), and finding myself asking a lot of why and how come questions.

Some of you gents may relate to some of the things that have happened in my life which I call prompters (or corners). The first major decision I made, that truly affected my Christian journey, was my Cursillo weekend in 2012 – the questions and introspection it opened were

the proverbial can of worms. And, instead of making me all comfy and rosy, it turned me into a seeker.

The second major suggestion given to me by one of my favourite clergy persons was to go on a silent weekend. For those of you who don't know me, that was a LOL moment for most all of the people who do know me: Colin silent? No way! But I went! And, yes I was silent, kind of 'cornered' into introspection.

There, in a moment of deep

prayer on a sunny afternoon, in a rustic chapel, I finally allowed myself to be forgiven. Jesus became my BFF. If anyone knows the poem "Footsteps", he no longer had to carry me. From there to EFM to which I gave what I had and accomplished my four years.

Now back to gazing out the COVID window. New questions started arising: Is my "Rule of Life" really challenging me or is it just a comfy corner? How good am I at applying the Beatitudes? Am I truly an asset to my fellow man?

It has been a while since I dredged up any of this stuff!

Some may say you're just a marvelous lad but it's you who has to look in the mirror (another spot where men, I suspect, don't spend much time); it seems you don't need a window only to gaze into. I feel for me the mirror is a way to intimately (another thing as a man I am not accomplished at) look into your soul.

So if one day you bump into me, feel free to ask how I'm doing with my soul gazing, remember most men need to be nudged into that corner! And as a Christian, I expect to be held to a higher standard.

Thanks: I feel better writing this and I hope you can relate.

*Colin Shutt is a parishioner of St. Stephen's Memorial, London.*

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# Being a servant of Christ

By Rev. Enrique Martinez

*“For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.” Luke 22:27*

The word deacon, according to its etymology, comes from the Greek "diakonos", which in turn is derived from the Latin "diaconus" whose meaning is "servant." The highest honor a Christian can receive is to be elected and ordained as deacon in the church. To be a deacon is to be a "servant of Christ," and your job should be selfless Christian service; dedicated to the Lord.

In salvation history we consider the spiritual and human dimensions of the diaconate. For this reason, we point to Jesus Christ as the deacon par excellence, whose service is summarized in the donation of himself. We also highlight the figure of Mary as a servant who gives herself to the fulfillment of the divine plan. This is why the deacon, in terms of ordained ministry, has the distinctive note of representing

and making Christ the servant present.

Taking these words, God opens the doors of heaven to those who, out of love for him and his church, give their lives to be servants. Today God gave me a new opportunity to reach everyone as the server. Jesus calls us all to be: "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5: 13-16)

But for me Jesus not only calls me to be the salt and Light of the world; He invites me to go further. Being the one who carries the light and distributes the salt to others so that we can all make our beloved Anglican church a true

home where we all can meet our beloved Lord.

Today I have been called to serve without limits for the love of God and all the brothers and today more than ever I carry in my Heart and in my soul that fire that gives light and warmth to the house of the Father, which is the church of Christ our Savior.

Having received the strength of the Holy Spirit in ordination through the imposition of the hands of our Bishop Todd, I am responding to the call of our Lord Jesus Christ to give my life, to make possible the fulfillment of the greatest law that God has given us. through history: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22: 36-40

To be a deacon is to give every minute of our lives to the love of God in our neighbor; it is to go to meet the brother and bandage his wounds and take care of him like the good Samaritan: "and when he saw him, he was moved with pity.



Rev. Jordan Murray, Rev. Enrique Martinez and Rev. Susan Bagshaw at the ordination service, November 30, 2020

He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him." (Luke 10:33-34)

Being a deacon gives me the responsibility of caring for the Faith, the hope of each one of God's saints, so that each of our beloved brothers see the light of Christ and feel the warmth of the Father's love, and through the Holy Spirit so we all may say with one voice:

"God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" (Galatians 4: 6); "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10)

There is no greater desire in my heart than to be able to serve Christ our Lord in all the saints of God.

Rev. Enrique Martinez is the deacon-in-charge of the Parish of Long Point Bay (Port Ryerse, Woodhouse, Port Rowan, Turkey Point and Vittoria.

## Opening ourselves to alternative perspectives

By Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle

As I write this article, parts of the province, including areas in our diocese are back into lockdown. I suspect my region isn't far off.

I know this will significantly impact our experiences of Christmas this year. This is particularly disconcerting. Many will lament. By the time you read this, much will have unfolded. This creates a valuable opportunity to look back and reflect. What have we learned from our experience?

What did the threat or experience of a second lockdown mean for you? Were you among those who were panic shopping for toilet paper and cleaning products not sure when these would be available again? Did you get anxious about Christmas shopping believing that it wouldn't be Christmas without wonderful gifts to share? Did you choose to spend one more day at the gym, grab a final haircut or manicure, or indulge in one last meal at a restaurant because these were things you deeply missed last time? What experiences from the first lockdown impacted your expectations for a second one? How were these concerns and experiences different for others?

What is it like to experience lockdown for those who are

### SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE



small business owners? What about those who work as hairdressers, personal trainers, bar tenders and in all those businesses that would have to close leaving them temporarily unemployed and uncertain if there would be a job at the end of all of this? How many experienced this time with anxiety about how they would continue to pay their bills? How many wondered how long government support would last? How many had sleepless nights concerned over whether they could put food on the table? How many worried they might lose their homes?

Health care workers probably experienced this time in

different ways still. These know, from personal experience, that the lockdown signifies lives hanging in the balance. Every confirmed case is a person to them. A person that they might see admitted to hospital. A person who may end up on a ventilator in ICU. A person who might have long term implications as vital organs are affected by COVID. A person who might die.

Health care workers are intimately acquainted with the implications of this disease. They have seen its progression. They know its victims by name. They also know that for every case, the finite resources of our system are being diverted

**Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me. (Matthew 25:45)**

to care for these individuals leaving others in limbo waiting on procedures that could be lifesaving.

Those affected by COVID may offer a different perspective too. When you or someone you love has had their life turned upside down by illness, it can change your priorities. How many of these individuals and families will approach Christmas with an altered sense of meaning and hope? How many will grieve? How many will be content to simply get through it?

Looking back on this year, what have we learned? How has our perspective impacted our understanding and experience of this time? What might happen if we take the time to truly listen to experiences different from our own? How might other voices challenge our expectations and priorities? What can we learn from others?

Jesus said: "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." (Matthew 25:45). Our awareness of the vulnerability and marginalisation of others is not the sole determining factor in our responsibility

to act with love. Rather, God calls us to continually look beyond our experiences and the priorities that distract us and see the realities of prejudice, injustice, vulnerability, and marginalisation that are all around us. One way to do this is to open ourselves to alternative perspectives, creating spaces where we can recognise our privileges and be more sensitive to the realities and needs of our neighbours.

Building on this recognition of multiple experiences and voices, Social and Ecological Justice Huron is offering a series of virtual workshops – "Conversations with..." Using video conferencing technology, we will 'gather' on the second Saturday of the month, with each session offering insights from a different perspective.

These workshops begin with an exploration of "Conversations with People with Disabilities" on January 9. To participate, please email [sejh@diohuron.org](mailto:sejh@diohuron.org).

Rev. Chris Brouillard-Coyle is the Social and Ecological Justice Huron chair. [chrisbrouillardcoyle@diohuron.org](mailto:chrisbrouillardcoyle@diohuron.org)

Social and Ecological Justice Huron presents

#### CONVERSATIONS WITH...

Conversations with People with Disabilities - Jan. 9

Conversations with LGBTQ2+ - Feb. 13

Conversations with Creation - Mar. 13

All workshops are held via Zoom from 10-11:30am

Contact [SEJH@diohuron.org](mailto:SEJH@diohuron.org) to register

## ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN

# The story of Henry Budd

Rev. Henry Budd was the first Aboriginal person to be ordained in the Church of England in North America

Henry Budd was born in Sakacewescam, near Norway House, Manitoba. He received his training at the Native Indian School Establishment at Red River and in 1850 was the first Aboriginal person to be ordained in the Church of England in North America.



It is reported that Henry was a “superior” student, with a quickness of apprehension and the ability to read well and to answer complex questions of Christian doctrine”. He also acquired the middle-class Victorian attitudes and values to which he was exposed to the extent that “he warranted a raise in salary to accommodate the expenses of a Victorian lifestyle.” In spite of this, Henry was very effective in

his ministry among the Cree people of Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

As teacher and lay catechist, Henry established a mission, including a school, at The Pas in 1840, a ministry he continued through to 1857. He had only modest success at first, as several leaders in the area refused his missionary efforts, and a shortage of meat complicated his work. In addition to teaching and preaching, he was responsible for the welfare of the settlement, helping to establish farms and raise cattle.

Henry spent the years between 1857 and 1867 at the mission at Nepowewin developing a mission school, and serving in itinerant ministry to the Plains Cree of the region, a group he found much less receptive to his work than in The Pas.

In 1867 in poor health, Henry returned to The Pas, which was now suffering hardship. He spent his remaining years devoted to reviving the village, which became the first permanent parish north of Red River. The settlement prospered and expanded upriver to Big Eddy.

In the spring of 1875, Henry contracted influenza and passed away on Friday April 2. “To his death, Rev’d Henry Budd remained concerned for the future of the native communities he had nurtured.” The greatest tribute came from a member of the community – “sorry does not express what we felt. My own father died some years ago, but when Mr. Budd died, I felt for the first time what it meant to be an orphan.”

Submitted by Liisa Ellen (Ellie) Eldridge, A.C.W. Office Secretary

*The information in this article is gleaned from a monograph titled “Reverend Henry Budd” published in 1981 by the Manitoba Department of Cultural Affairs, Historic Resources Branch and copied from a pamphlet from Henry Budd College for Ministry – Lent 2005.*



### Symbolism of the Henry Budd Logo

The Canterbury Cross, with four red hearts, symbolizes the love of Christ in the four Gospels, and our love of God in heart, mind, soul, and strength.

The four directions and colours are a widespread Aboriginal symbol; here they speak of the Gospel reaching out to all races in all directions.

Ten footprints symbolize the Commandments, walking on the green circle of Mother Earth, under the sky-blue arc of Heaven, the home of the Creator, “Kisa Munitoo”, (kind/gentle) Mystery.

## The birth of Jesus: how would you react if you were there?

In the Old Testament Book of Isaiah, written between 740 and 680 B.C., the prophet predicted:

“The Lord Himself will give you a sign. The virgin will conceive a Child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means God is with us).”

It is mindboggling that this was foretold so many years before the birth of Jesus. Can you imagine what people would have thought? “Impossible”, comes to my mind.

The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to a village Nazareth of Galilee to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to Mary and said, “Greetings favored woman. The Lord is with you!” The angel told her not to be afraid, that she had found favour with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of God. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor King David. He will reign in Israel forever, and his kingdom will never end.” This must have seemed unbelievable to Mary at first.

When she asked, “How can this happen? I am a virgin!”, the angel said,



“The Holy Spirit will come upon and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. The baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1: 26-35).

How would you react as a virgin in an angel told you, you would become pregnant by the Holy Spirit? Would you be afraid? Would you think this is absurd, it can’t possibly happen? Yet, we have seen many miraculous things.

In Matthew 1:20-25, Joseph in a dream saw a vision of an angel. He was told to not be afraid to take Mary as his wife, that the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. When Joseph woke, he took Mary as his wife as he was commanded.

Joseph and Mary traveled from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judea to register according to Roman law. Mary being heavy with child rode on a donkey. Can you imagine how uncomfortable that must have been for Mary? Nowhere does it say she complained. I imagine she didn’t utter a word, knowing the blessing she carried.

Jesus was born in a stable, wrapped in cloth and placed in a manger as no rooms were available. The angels told the shepherds of this glorious event and they went to see. The three wise men followed the star until it stopped moving. They came with gifts to worship the newborn King. Joseph and Mary escaped to Egypt to protect Jesus from

King Herod’s desire to kill him. Can you comprehend the fear they must have felt trying to protect their son? Of course, God would protect His Son. In a similar circumstance we would probably panic unless we had a very strong faith.

May you all have a Merry Christmas! One of health and safety. Praise the Lord for the many blessings He showers on us.

Barbara Jackson, A.C.W. President-elect

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**PROPOSED ANNUAL  
“ZOOM” MEETING**

**A.C.W. Annual  
Meeting &  
Conference**

**APRIL 24, 2020**

**(more info to follow)**

# Colour coded AMBER STAGE modification measures

Government of Ontario <b>GREEN ZONE</b>	Government of Ontario <b>YELLOW ZONE</b>	Government of Ontario <b>ORANGE ZONE</b>	Government of Ontario <b>RED ZONE</b>	Government of Ontario <b>GRAY ZONE</b>
<b>PREVENT</b> Standard Measures	<b>PROTECT</b> Strengthened Measures	<b>RESTRICT</b> Intermediate Measures	<b>CONTROL</b> Stringent Measures	<b>LOCKDOWN</b> Maximum Measures
<p>DIOCESE OF HURON: Check Diocesan AMBER STAGE Guidelines. Available on the diocesan website:  <a href="https://diohuron.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Loving-Our-Neighbours-AMBER-Stage-Diocese-of-Huron.pdf">https://diohuron.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Loving-Our-Neighbours-AMBER-Stage-Diocese-of-Huron.pdf</a>  www.diohuron.org&gt; Covid-19 Resource Hub&gt; Reopening of Church Buildings - Amber Stage</p>	<p>DIOCESE OF HURON: Check Diocesan AMBER STAGE Guidelines. Available on the diocesan website:  <a href="https://diohuron.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Loving-Our-Neighbours-AMBER-Stage-Diocese-of-Huron.pdf">https://diohuron.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Loving-Our-Neighbours-AMBER-Stage-Diocese-of-Huron.pdf</a>  www.diohuron.org&gt; Covid-19 Resource Hub&gt; Reopening of Church Buildings - Amber Stage</p>	<p>DIOCESE OF HURON: Diocesan AMBER STAGE with the following modifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All meetings/groups should be virtual except 12-step groups.</li> <li>• If a meeting must be held in person, a max of 10 people for less than 1 hour.</li> <li>• Facemasks must be worn by singers unless they are separated from others by an impenetrable barrier.</li> <li>• Pastoral visits should be done by phone or zoom unless there is a strong pastoral need for an in-person visit. Facemasks must be worn.</li> <li>• No permission will be given for exceptions to the AMBER STAGE protocol.</li> </ul>	<p>DIOCESE OF HURON: Diocesan AMBER STAGE with the following modifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bishop recommends that in-person worship be suspended and replaced by video worship (recorded or live-streamed) or written worship materials delivered weekly (including sermon)</li> <li>• If a parish wishes to continue in-person worship, permission must be received from the bishop's office in writing.</li> <li>• Only urgent in-person pastoral care visits are permitted. Facemasks must be worn.</li> <li>• No on-site meetings, rentals or gatherings except for food sustainability and 12-step programs.</li> <li>• Parish staff should work from home where possible.</li> </ul>	<p>DIOCESE OF HURON: Check Diocesan RED STAGE Guidelines. Available on the diocesan website:  <a href="https://diohuron.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Loving-Our-Neighbours-RED-Stage.pdf">https://diohuron.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Loving-Our-Neighbours-RED-Stage.pdf</a>  www.diohuron.org&gt; Covid-19 Resource Hub&gt; Messages From the Bishop - Loving Our Neighbour - Red Stage</p>

## Parish in a "Red Zone" (Civil Province of ON) requesting Permission to Hold In-Person Worship

While the diocesan AMBER Stage protocols minimize the risk of COVID-19 being spread during worship in one of our churches, it does not reduce the risk to zero.

Combined with the higher risk of general transmission of the disease within the

Province of Ontario's red zones, the Bishop recommends that parishes in red zones cease in-person worship. Parishes that have strong reasons for wishing to continue (or resume) in-person worship may request permission to do so. The following information is to be included in the request:

- Reason for continuing or resuming in-person worship

- What provision is being made for parishioners who cannot or choose not to worship in person?

- What is the maximum number of persons that you will have present for worship? (This will be the fewer of 50, the number that can be seated physically distanced or 30% of the capacity of your worship area)

- Include a diagram showing the seating plan.

- What training will be or has been provided to greeters and ushers?

- How will you ensure cleanliness and sanitization in regard to the following items and spaces? Worship leaflets/bulletins, prayer books, physical items such as pews, the altar, pulpit, lectern, kneelers, and communion rail, bathrooms, other common spaces or high-touch areas

- How will you sanitize worship and other spaces between any worship services? Who will perform this task?

Please submit the information to Archdeacon Tanya Phibbs in the Bishop's office.

E-mail: [tphibbs@huron.anglican.ca](mailto:tphibbs@huron.anglican.ca)

Parishes may not hold services until they have received written permission to do so.

## PASTORAL PROGRESSIONS

### Ordinations

The following ordinands were ordained to the Order of Priests on November 17 at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, London:

The Reverend Dr. Justin Comber, upon priesting the Rector of the Parish of the Transfiguration (Church of the Advent, Ridgetown; St. John's-in-the-Woods, Aughrim; Christ Church, Dresden; St. Matthew's, Florence; Church of the Redeemer, Highgate and Trinity Chapel of Ease, Highgate.)

- The Reverend Andra Town-

shend O'Neill, upon priesting the Rector of St. Mark's, London.

The following ordinands were ordained to the Order of Deacons on November 30 at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, London.

- Mr. Jordan Murray
- Ms. Susan Bagshaw, upon ordination, Deacon with special responsibility for Pastoral Care, St. John's, Cambridge
- Mr. Enrique Martinez, upon ordination, Deacon-in-Charge of the Parish of Long Point Bay (Port Ryerse Memorial Church, Port Ryerse; St. John's, Wood-

house; St. John's, Port Rowan; St. Andrew's-by-the-Lake, Turkey Point and Christ Church Chapel of Ease, Vittoria)

### Appointments

Bishop Townshend appointed The Venerable Janet Griffith Clarke as the Archdeacon of Brant-Norfolk effective December 1, 2020.

Bishop Townshend appointed The Right Reverend Barry Clarke as the Archdeacon of Oxford and Delaware effective December 1, 2020.

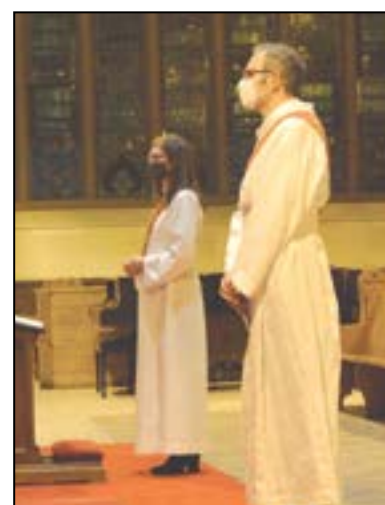
Bishop Townshend appointed Rev. Jordan Murray as As-

sistant Curate to the Rector, St. George's, Owen Sound effective January 1, 2021. Jordan was ordained on November 30, 2020.

### Rest in Peace

Mrs. Anya Laurence-Thiel, wife of the Reverend Andreas Thiel. Anya, a gifted concert pianist, writer and teacher, died on November 18. May flights of angels sing her to her rest.

Mrs. Grace Verna Bradley, mother of the Reverend William (Bill) Bradley. Mrs. Bradley died on Oct. 29. May Grace rest in peace and rise in glory.



Rev. Andra Townshend O'Neill and Rev. Justin Comber

# A New Year's resolution: Unconditional love, advocacy, and allyship

By Sydney Brouillard-Coyle

This year has brought many unique challenges that very few of us could have predicted.

We are continuing to face the COVID-19 pandemic; we have been unable to access our traditional spaces of worship and prayer; we have been called to show unconditional love towards all of God's children, and we are being pushed towards new ways of reconciliation and justice.

In the past year alone, we have seen the highest reported year of violence against transgender and gender-diverse people; the impacts of climate change becoming more and more prevalent; an increase in hate crimes for people of diverse identities; and the Black Lives Matter movement advocating for accountability and justice in systems of oppression.



What a year 2020 has been. While there are those who may be relieved that this year is drawing to a close, and those who would prefer to ignore this year's events altogether, simply writing them off as "too difficult", each of these events challenges us to look at the way that we participate within our societies' systems. In what ways has 2020 brought to light the many injustices that are existing within our world? How has 2020 encouraged or perpetrated discrimination and

marginalization towards people and communities? What are we called to do, as Christians, in response to each of these events?

For this answer, we must turn to the Five Marks of Mission, which guide us as an Anglican community. We have committed to:

- Proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom
- Teaching, baptizing, and nurturing new believers
- Responding to human need with loving service
- Seeking to transform unjust structures of society, challenging violence of every kind, and pursuing peace and reconciliation
- Striving to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustaining and renewing the life of the Earth

Each of these Marks provides a unique way for the Holy Spirit to guide our faith, our teaching, and our advocacy. As a result

of the pandemic, our ways of "doing" ministry have changed – in some ways, for the better – through the creation of online communities of faith and activism. We have been forced to step outside our comfort zones, and look inward to find our true sense of spirituality and faith that is beyond the confines of the church building. Issues of injustice have presented us with the opportunity to become true disciples of Jesus.

"If anyone has material possessions and sees a sibling in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us love not with words or speech but with actions and in truth." Our actions – the ways that we live out God's message of unconditional love and hope for all – speak much louder than anything that might be said from the pulpit. God is igniting a fire within each and every one of us,

challenging us to explore that which is new, just, diverse, and learning, just as our Bishop Todd said in his charge and vision for Synod.

In many ways, 2020 was a "new" and "learning" year. As we move into 2021, let us pray that we can show justice through our radical diversity and inclusion, following in the footsteps that Jesus left behind. We pray that God's presence remains known among each and every one of us as we seek to transform our world to reflect the image of God, rather than the image of what we want. We pray that each of us, and our church, is led away from the temptation to be complicit in the face of injustice – and instead, that we are given the courage to learn how to be true allies to all of God's beloved children. Amen.

Sydney Brouillard-Coyle (ney/nem), co-chair of Proud Anglicans of Huron.

# Learning to share what we think is "mine"

By Ven. Kim Van Allen

I don't know about you, but much of what is on my mind these days is simplicity. Must be my response to the pandemic.

Preparing to write this article, I glanced over at the lovely built-in shelves in the Rectory Office to the line-up of books about stewardship. The Church has offered many common-sense ways and novel approaches to communicate the art of giving. I greatly value each of these which I have used numerous times over the years.

Along the way, though, others modelled for me the



holistic understanding that giving is simply part of who we are, who we are to be. It's one of the 'Everything I Know I Learned in Kindergarten' bits of wisdom.

Just before the pandemic, our son and his family moved from Halifax back to Ontario. It has been a joy to 'catch up'

with our two grand-daughters, and learn what is important to them. The two-year old was born in Nova Scotia and since February, we have witnessed her growing use of language. 'Mine' is a very important concept to express, Maggie thinks, as she discovers who she is distinct from Mommie and

Daddy and especially her older sibling, Gillie.

*Mine.* Early in life, we learn 'mine'. Then we are taught that not everything is 'mine'. Learning to share what we think is 'mine' is the next challenge! We are taught at a very young age, that giving to others is expected, is a norm. And here we are today, trying to understand the concept of 'Generous Living'. I guess we do know what this means – we are simply still learning to do what we were taught in kindergarten!

Generous living seems to be such a healthy way to live in the world, doesn't it? Sharing

what I have with someone else is a genuine response to who we are as people of faith. Contributing towards things we value, all that makes the world a better place to live, is another way to share, to live generously. We become part of something larger than ourselves. We invest our selves in creating with God!

This is how I want to live. It seems so simple. There is a purity to this kind of living that has meaning beyond words. Generous Living ~ my goal for 2021.

Ven. Kim Van Allen is a member of the diocesan Stewardship Committee.

# Tips on building your first church app

The thought of building an app for your church probably scares most people, myself included.



## Tithe.ly

So, when I submitted my request form to Tithe.ly to begin the process of building All Saints' first app for smartphones and tablets, both for Android and OS, I was nervous. Had I bitten off more than I could chew?

Thankfully, the process was easy. Some simple design questions and layout choices and the Tite.ly team took care

of the rest. My role in the app rollout was entirely about what would serve the church the best, a functional design and what information I wanted the app to contain.

So here are a few tips to think about when preparing to build an app for your church.

1. Don't replicate your website. The website already has a mobile version. Think

about how you want people to interact and what additional information you want to share. For All Saints' we decided on an interactive prayer wall, an "events" button, a connection to our live stream, pictures of life at All Saints, a Bible tab and a tab to the revised common lectionary.

2. Your app will also allow push notifications. Set a policy on how and when to use this feature. For example, snow event and worship is now cancelled is a good use. Birthday announcements are probably a bad use and will have people uninstalling your app.

3. Link your app to your other social media accounts,

whether YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. Create an eco-system where individuals can easily access all your online information

For the first 20 years of this century, a website was one of your most important evangelistic tools. The next 20 years though will continue with people moving from computer screens to their smartphones and tablets.

Now is the time to get on Tithe.ly to launch your branded app.

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

[martylevesque@diohuron.org](mailto:martylevesque@diohuron.org)

MEDIA  
BYTES

REV. MARTY  
LEVESQUE



I have never built an app before. And if I am honest, I am not that techie of person. In reality, I am an end-user. People build programs, and then I use the best program. It is very much the same as being a mechanic, finding the right tool for the job.



# Leading out of crisis

A hopeful resource for congregations asking what's next in this "new normal"

**But now, just as we are settling into some kind of, "new normal" this other question is starting to be asked. What comes next?**

By Ven. Perry Chuipka

Let me begin with a story. One Sunday morning a priest was giving a homily, and as she went on, she became more animated. The priest made a sweeping gesture - and knocked all the papers of her sermon off the pulpit. She immediately went down to the floor and scrambled to pick them up. Once back in the pulpit, she looked out and asked, "Now, where was I?" A voice from the back of the congregation responded, "Right near the end!"

When we look into the face of this pandemic, we are not "right near the end of it", even with a vaccine.

During this pandemic some people have said that we are at the end of what we used to call normal...we are entering a "new normal". If that is true and it looks like it is, then we all need to begin discovering our "new normal".

Before we were all confronted with COVID-19, my congregation and I were on a journey together using the Joining God: Remaking church initiative created by The Missional Network. This new initiative had challenged us to work on discerning, "where God was calling us to be in our communities?"

Well, when this pandemic started, The Missional Network went to work in creating another initiative called, "Leading Out of Crisis". The purpose of this initiative was to get priests and congregations talking about where God was leading them into the present and the future. The Missional Network says it better than I can:

"What if this is not a time for fixing or getting new programs into place, but of attending

## CONGREGATIONAL COACHES



to, listening, of discerning what the spirit is saying to us?" When the lockdown came we realized that so many of our normal practices and activities as clergy and congregations were stopped. Many of us dove into planning and organizing ways of responding. We had to work out, quickly, how to put services on-line, how to be with those who cared for us in social distancing, how to manage the sudden drop in finances - a whole list of "how-to's" that needed to be done. It was all quite hard work that, strangely, made us even more stretched than before. But now, just as we are settling into some kind of, "new normal" this other question is starting to be asked: What comes next?

If there isn't going to be a return to things as they were before, if our roles are going to change, if something is happening to our people through this period-how do we as clergy prepare for the next chapter and how do we lead our people into it and through it in ways that discern and integrate our life what the spirit is saying to us?"

So how do we listen to what the spirit is saying to us in this special time? I believe it requires us to have a plan. But how do you make this plan? In order to have a plan, you need to understand the lay of the land, how people are living.

It reminds me of the priest who was called to a church in the slums of India. The first thing she did was go out and talk with the people in her parish. Then she went out into the community that surround the church listening to people's stories. It was only after hearing



**We are now living in a time where we are being called to discern where God's Spirit is leading us. It is not about doing a program that will get us through this.**

the people's versions of the way they were living that she could then hear the way the spirit was leading her to begin looking at a new plan for their church.

With the help of other leaders in her church, they developed a plan. The church didn't grow in leaps and bounds, but it maintained its status in the community in a whole new way. It became a healing church that helped people to grow and prosper all because a new priest listened to the people and together they discerned a new way forward.

We are now at living in a time where we are being called to discern where God's spirit is leading us. It is not about everyone doing a program that will get us through this. Instead it is about taking the initiative to listen to God's spirit which works through the people both in the church and in the community.

This is what the "Leading Out of Crisis Initiative" is about. It is an organized way to help people talk and share their stories about how their lives have been shaped by this pandemic.

Let me talk a bit about this resource.

It begins with the idea that people are beginning to ponder about what the church will look

like moving forward. But it also encourages people to have conversations about what they are experiencing right now in their lives.

This resource begins with three postures.

1. Don't get caught up in to-do lists.

We need to watch that we don't focus on keeping ourselves busy with the day to day maintaining the church status quo.

2. Focus on the work of your people.

The work of the church is not just on maintaining the church as it was—church services, following through the church seasons and so on. The work right now is how you lead the people to discern what has been happening and what it means for us to be God's people in our community.

3. Reflect together on your experiences.

No one person, whether clergy or laity has the answer forward. This is a time for you to invite your leadership to reflect on their experiences over the past months and discern what these experiences might mean for being the church in a world we can't expect.

In this resource they give you ideas to help you in creating a group or groups of people to begin this journey of reflecting, storytelling and discerning the spirit.

There are four sessions which all have four elements to them.

1. Our stories  
2. Our stories beyond our own

3. Our stories and church life

4. Discovering a new normal  
The four elements for each section are:

A) Each session begins with the, "Dwelling Of The Word". A time to listen to God through scripture and one another.

B) Sharing stories around a question: What are you noticing that is different in your neighbourhood due to COVID-19

C) What are you hearing about what is happening in your neighbourhoods? Three questions are given to the group for discussion.

D) For next time: You are asked to do some personal reflection around three questions that are given. The answers to these questions by the participants will be discussed in the next session which will lead into the topic of the following session.

Sara Jane Roxburgh Walker at The Missional Network in Vancouver told me that there are other congregations in the Anglican Communion using this resource, which is helping them move forward in new ways. I am looking forward to using this material with my six churches and one parish chapel. Should you be interested in this resource the link is: [www.themissionalnetwork.com/lead](http://www.themissionalnetwork.com/lead).

Let me go back to the congregational member that yelled out "Right near the end!", when the priest asked, "Now, where was I in my sermon?" When we look into the face of this pandemic we are not right near the end of it. We still have a ways to go and even when we do get a vaccine, we will be living in a "new normal". It might be helpful for us to stop and ask the question with our congregations, "What does that new normal look like?"

Should you think of other ways that our congregational coaches can help you in moving forward with your congregation during this new normal, please contact my Co-chair Paul Townshend 519-433-5406 or myself 519-534-2607. May God bless your congregation with more resources to enable you to move forward in this special time.

Ven. Perry Chuipka is the Archdeacon of Congregational Development in the Diocese of Huron.

ANGELICAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Hope Bears are reading AFC books. You can order books through the AFC Store.

[anglicanfoundation.org/store](http://anglicanfoundation.org/store)

**Donate online to your parish or to the diocese:**

[www.diohuron.org/covid-19-resource-hub/](http://www.diohuron.org/covid-19-resource-hub/)

# Reclaiming the parish by serving the neighbourhood

Local theologies are the ways that the everyday members of a congregation express their faith beliefs and understanding about Church.



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

In my interviews with numerically growing Anglican congregations I found that many lay members of my study were surprised that I was interested in asking their feedback about their faith experiences. “Why don’t you just ask our priest?” was a commonly encountered response. I didn’t fully appreciate the impact of local theologies until I had completed a survey of almost 1000 Anglicans from numerically growing congregations. I found it fascinating that the collection of answers on the themes of Gospel, Church and Culture from lay members (parishioners) often differed significantly from the answers given by their priests.

“Why do you think people initially show up to your church?” This is was one of the first questions I asked clergy in my study. There was a spectrum of answers given. Some priests would suggest that first time visitors were drawn to Anglican liturgy or to a particular



expression of Anglican theology. Some said it was the music programs of their church. Others mentioned advertising or the offering of small group programs such as Alpha. Still others would suggest that their children’s ministry was a great draw for newcomers.

When I posed a similar question to almost 1000 worshipping members of growing Anglican churches I was a little surprised by their responses, mainly because most of the time they did not match up to the responses of their respective priests at all.

In the Diocese of Huron 346 participants were asked: “What brought you to this church for the first time?” The number one response to this question (from 38.72% of participants) was this: “I live close to the church.” This particular survey had allowed for respondents to write in their own answers. Of all the reasons that could have been written in, proximity to the church was the number one

stated reason for showing up in the first place.

The second most common response (at 27.42% of participants) was: “A family member was already attending the congregation,” or “a family member brought me to church.” The third ranked response (at 17.05%) was: “Someone invited me.”

Only 5% of respondents mentioned the Anglican tradition. Even fewer mentioned that they were exploring their spirituality. Barely 2% mentioned congregational outreach ministries. Only 1.4% mentioned that they had shown up as a result of church advertising.

In the largely urban Diocese of Toronto the responses were very similar to Huron’s: 40.35% of participants mentioned proximity as the reason they showed up to their church for the first time; 26.43% mentioned that they had been invited by someone; and 23.47% shared that they came because they already had a family member attending.

**Anglicans need to reclaim the concept of a “Parish Church” – a model of church where congregations self-identify with the resident families in a geographic area.**

When the results of my study were shared with the clergy of their respective congregations, some (but not all) were completely amazed by how far apart their answers were from their congregation members. The survey results suggested that some things continue to remain important to visitors to growing Anglican congregations: proximity, invitation and family ties.

In my role as a researcher what this has revealed or me is that Anglicans need to better appreciate how much of an impact we can still make in the neighbourhoods that we are called to serve.

If one of our best tools of evangelism is proximity, we need to be asking ourselves: how well do we know our immediate neighbourhood community? Do we focus our ministry activities in ways that call us to engage with the people who live close to us? Or does the majority of our ministry happen behind closed doors (where others might not see us and come to know us)?

Do we realize and appreciate how effective family members can be as evangelists? Or how powerful the act of invitation continues to be? 1 in 4 participants surveyed reported

that they were attending their current congregation because someone invited them!

What these statistics reveal to me is that Anglicans need to reclaim the concept of a “Parish Church” – a model of church where congregations self-identify with the resident families in a geographic area. This isn’t precisely a new model of being Church – Anglican parishes have existed for hundreds of years, but the intentionality of seeking out relationships and serving our neighbourhoods is something that some congregations have forgotten or misplaced. How might we reclaim our caring role in the neighbourhood?

Lastly, it’s one thing to ask why a guest shows up for the first time, but another thing entirely to explore what keeps them coming back to church, perhaps even eventually becoming a member. More on this subject next month!

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## A prayer that never ends...

By Rev. Canon Val Kenyon

Baptisms, by any account, are without doubt wonderful events in the life of the community.

At a recent baptism, I was reminded of one of my favourite prayers found in our Book of Alternative Services’ liturgy. The community has gathered, the readings have been read, the preacher has preached, the candidates have been presented, the prayers of the people have begun, the water has been blessed, the baptismal covenant affirmed (and reaffirmed by all present), and the water and oil have been applied. Then, just before the giving of the light and the welcoming of the newly baptized into the household of God, the priest concludes with the following prayer:

*Heavenly Father,  
we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit  
you have bestowed upon these  
your servants the forgiveness of  
sin,*



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*and have raised them to the  
new life of grace.  
Sustain them, O Lord, in your  
Holy Spirit.  
Give them an inquiring and  
discerning heart  
The courage to will and to  
persevere,  
A spirit to know and to love  
you,  
And the gift of joy and wonder  
In all your works. Amen.*

In particular, it is the second half of this prayer that contains an unmistakable request of the community that what has begun in the life of the newly baptized on this special day will only be the beginning of a



life of faith. Going on to more specifically define what characterizes a life of faith we see: inquiring, discerning, courage, perseverance, and an expansion of both the candidate(s)’s understanding and love of God; all of this wondrously tied together in joy and wonder within evolving epiphanies, as the candidate(s) encounters all that God has done.

One way to view this prayer for the newly baptized, and in effect for all the baptized, is to see it both as an invitation and a reminder to first wake up and then to stay awake so that we might live lives of continuous

learning, to quote Clemens Sedmak, Jesus wanted people to wake up...[even if] waking up might take some time. Waking up is a journey. Jesus invited people to this journey. He wanted people to be opened (Mk 7:45).

Expressed within both the baptismal prayer and the quote above, is an emphasis on the organic and developing nature of our faith. The simple truth is that it’s not over till it’s over... and for Christians, it’s never over, as Bishop Todd reminded us in his September charge to Synod, “we aspire to be a learning Church...a Learning Church seeks spiritual formation that leads to changes in life that bear fruit in action.”

Every Sunday that we gather at our local parishes either in person or online, as we worship, and pray, in effect, we are actively living into this prayer as we ask God to continue the work initiated at our baptism. In part this work continues in us as we mindfully engage in the art of theological reflection,

making time and space to reflect upon our life and experiences in light of Scripture and our understanding of it.

If you are interested in learning more about the art of theological reflection as presented within Education for Ministry, or to explore the role it plays in our ongoing growth and development, please contact Libi Clifford, the Diocese of Huron EfM Coordinator or myself Val Kenyon at [EFM@huron.anglican.ca](mailto:EFM@huron.anglican.ca)

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# The magic will come upon us: Our COVID Christmas

There is a magical mystery that surrounds the Christmas season. This Advent (time before Christmas), we will sense this mystery as wrapped in shifting behaviours.



**As I See It**

**REV. JIM  
INNES**

But, despite any emotional bumps this shifting may create, nothing about the magic of Christmas will change.

Perhaps, even more, we will witness just how God works miracles by breathing life into the unexpected and opening hearts to experience Love, and charity, and warmth, and grace.

The COVID Christmas will be different than we have ever known. Christmas magic will



**As God came into a manager as a child, we can have no expectations of how God will come into our lives. We may wish for things, but we cannot control or manipulate Her. God will do what God wants.**

enter our lives less as social interaction, and more as 'being present to the moment.' By this, I mean taking in the small blessings. And by this, I mean leaving expectations behind, not falling into disappointment, and looking more favourably on what is, as it is.

As we stay open to the flow of grace in all these matters, God's presence will arise from within us. Trust God, and the power

of Her hand, to transform this COVID world into a place of more astounding beauty and compassion.

This transformation flows in a relentless stream of unstoppable majesty. It comes from where we don't expect and leads us to more than we can ask or imagine. It breaks down to rebuild. It rebuilds to set new heights that will be but the continuation of systemic

change throughout the creation.

As God came into a manager as a child, we can have no expectations of how God will come into our lives. We may wish for things, but we cannot control or manipulate Her. God will do what God wants. The best we can do is wait and see. Many of us will struggle with this. And not because we don't trust, but because we are, to varying degrees, wanting to run our own race.

We will never confine God within our expectations, but we can expect this, God comes into our brokenness. It is the nature of God's Love for us. We are who we are because we are loved, and we stay within that Love, even grow deeper into that Love, when we learn how to be people who Love.

I dare say that any transformation's direction is to bring us to know God's Love. All laughing and all moaning, all pleasure and all pain, all

success and all failure...all of it, is an occasion for the world to experience the deep abiding Love in God's huge heart.

As I see it, and as I stated at the beginning of this article, despite the disturbing changes brought about by COVID, the magic of Christmas will come upon us. The glorious light of God will break into our midst and transform us in unexpected ways. So, we may need to make a choice. We either wilt (and go negative) in the frustrations created by these historically significant behavioural shifts, or Hope and Trust in the power of divine grace.

When we choose to have confidence in God's Love around us, we can become part of the gift of this season. We can, in effect, become the Love we all need so much to feel.

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## Our identity and mission in the absence of table fellowship

The fortieth anniversary of my Ordination to the Priesthood on December 14, 2020 gives me the opportunity to reflect on the fact that over the years, no matter what diocese or parish I have served, the phrase, "diocesan family" and, "parish family" have been part of my vocabulary.



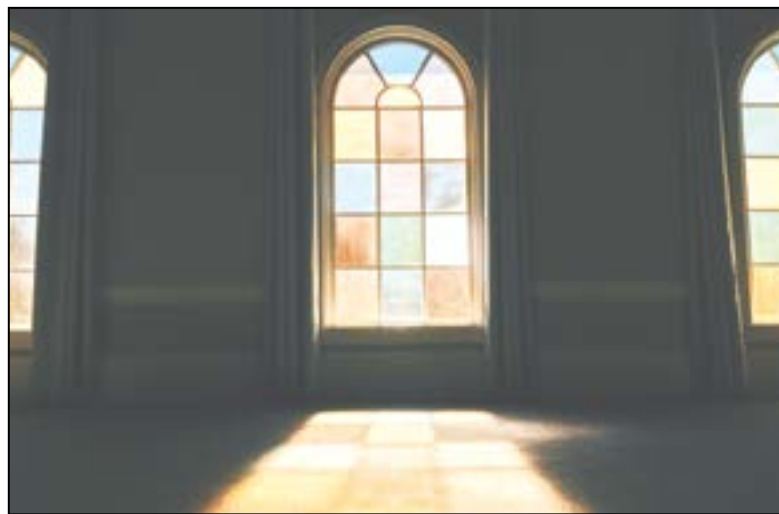
**A VIEW FROM  
THE BACK PEW**

**REV. CANON  
CHRISTOPHER  
B. J. PRATT**

Even before I knew of its historical roots in the halls of Huron University College, the concept of being an Anglican was wrapped up for me in the words of the Anglican Congress held in Toronto in 1963. Anglicans are called to be "mutually responsible and interdependent members of the Body of Christ."

Now we listen to the call of our diocesan bishop for our diocesan family to be transformed from an identity shaped, and sometimes limited, by past experience, into a new framework where our growth as a community of faith is shaped by prayer where learning, justice and diversity define us for ourselves and for society at large.

At the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a couple of immigrants in Brooklyn, New York, began to observe the historic traditions



Daniel McCullough/Unsplash

of their new homeland. My grandparents watched, over the years as their observance of Thanksgiving and the number of family members grew. I remember sitting at "The Kids Table".

As time passed, and as my parents, my aunts and uncles and some cousins died, seating arrangements changed, family members in charge of cooking dinner shifted to a new generation and new traditions began to shape our time together.

After more than one hundred years of gathering for a feast, November 2020, created a new experience of a ZOOM Thanksgiving! New England, New York, New Jersey, Florida, California were all represented. Ottawa, Combermere and Waterloo comprised the Ontario, Canada contingent. The international component of our clan was rounded off by a cousin who woke up at 5:30am to join in the conversation from New Zealand. The computer

screen in front of me reflected the diversity of our family, (I now have a Maori first cousin! [twice removed]).

I reflected on the special, dynamic stories which each component of our clan had to share. We are a family, yet each, unique element of our clan had its own story to tell. The Reverend Dr. Graham Bowcott has noted that within the life of the family of the church, that this is experienced in congregational life which generates a "local theology". (HCN Dec. 2020) The diversity of congregational life adds vitality to our Diocesan Family.

Although the tradition of US Thanksgiving carries its own historical burdens, one of the interesting features of our conversation was hearing how in New Zealand, the English tradition of celebrating Guy Fawkes Day has given way to identifying and celebrating a more appropriate Maori festival. English history, rooted in

the Commonwealth tradition is giving way to a just recognition of New Zealand's own national story.

As our family engaged in conversation, something else that was new was happening. Unlike in years past, where the volume of conversation increased steadily over time, Zoom etiquette demanded that, if you were not speaking, you were muted! Each person was placed into a position where they had to listen. A cousin, who had not been able to attend family gatherings for some time, requested that as we spoke, we also took the time to identify who we were on the family tree. Through the act of listening, we were learning more about each other.

Cousins from my generation shared our memories of Thanksgiving celebrations of years gone by. It was a moment when the passing along of family stories and history took place. We all listened and learned.

Some cousins spoke of their work and business. Others talked about their poetry and creative writing. Potters and artists contributed to the conversation. Church choir members talked about their contribution to an online choral project. One family talked about life with chickens, goats, and other farm animals as a part of their daily life. So many stories, so far removed, yet so closely linked over five generations spread out over more than a century.

Yet one thing was missing. Over the years, conversation

and personal contact took place while the family was seated around the Thanksgiving table. Not a morsel was consumed until we all joined hands and sang the Doxology. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow", was familiar to many and simply an annual experience for some, but it was a tradition that helped to define our family and renew an attitude of gratitude.

For our family, like our diocesan family and our parish family, the absence of table fellowship, gathering around the Table of our Lord is something for which we yearn. As we wait for that time, our energy may be given over to prayer, engaging in learning, seeking how to shape a more just society in which our contribution will make a difference.

Forty years ago, at the very outset of my ministry as a priest of the church, it was impossible to imagine the challenges faced by the community of faith in the twenty-first century, especially dealing with the reality and the limitations of a pandemic. Yet here we are.

Trusting in the reality of our faith that led by the Holy Spirit, the ministry we share will motivate us to offer our song of thanksgiving, "praise God, from whom all blessings flow...."

*Rev. Canon Christopher B. J. Pratt has retired from full time parish ministry, but continues to offer priestly ministry in the Diocese of Huron.*

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# Facts and opinions: "I am right because I say that I am right"

I shared a post on Facebook recently that I thought was brilliant. A week or two later, I responded to another post on Facebook and together, the two items seemed to me like something I wanted to share by way of this column.



**MOSTLY ABOUT RELIGION**  
**REV. CANON KEITH NETHERY**

It's a much broader issue in our world today, with no easy path forward, but sometimes when you make it smaller it can be easier to unpack. That's my intention here.

The post I shared was originally posted by *Mindful Christianity Today* and authored by Marc and Angel. It said this: "Be careful not to dehumanize people you disagree with. In our self-righteousness, we can easily become the very thing we dislike in others." It drew 18 likes, two comments and two shares. I actually thought there might be more reaction.

The other post was of a newspaper opinion column from a Canadian paper. (I could share a summary of the content, but I think it would be a distraction to what I am trying to get at.) The poster's comment was that it was a "good read." So, I read it. It was a good read. It was well written, with creative phrasing, some good jabs and even a quirky turn of phrase or two. I was

entertained. But I also knew that I disagreed with the piece. Why? Because there wasn't a single fact to be seen anywhere in the article. It was 100 per cent conjecture and personal opinion.

The takeaway was clear and simple. "I am right because I say that I am right."

**Once you step away from facts and argue strictly from preference and position, it is a short step to dehumanizing those you oppose.**

I shared with the person who shared it that, from a creative standpoint, I did think it was a good read. But I also shared I was concerned about the naked opinion without facts to back that opinion. I thought we might have a conversation, but it didn't happen. Doesn't mean it won't happen down the road, but he liked my response and that was that.

These two anecdotes, in a nutshell, give me pause when I think about how we communicate in today's world.

You might have seen on Facebook as well, a picture of the late Walter Cronkite with a tag line about how he came into your living room via television, read the news, provided the information without personal comment, and left you to make up your own mind. I think that

for the most part, that would be considered true, but it's been a long time since Walter delivered the evening news. I think that in general terms, it would be fair to say that newscasters have much more freedom to offer comment today than, say, 20 or 30 years ago. Comment is a good thing, but there needs to be research and presentation of various sides of the argument before the conclusion is made. It seems to me that far too often in our world today, we jump straight to the opinion. What is even more concerning is that the opinion is more than that, it borders on being an agenda.

Watch MSNBC and Fox News report the same story and you might well wonder how they can be talking about the same thing. Fair comment is not supporting a broad position because it suits your needs, or persona of your party when it comes to politics. Fair comment is one that is willing to look through the available evidence, understand all points of view and then, provide a personal opinion. More and more often it seems the former is increasing and the latter decreasing.

But it goes even one step further when a source excludes all but one opinion. The newspaper column shared by my friend, gave only one side of the story – the author's. As I responded to the poster, it seemed to be nothing more than I'm right because I say I am right. For me that falls short of the mark for journalism and for general communication. That's the rub. We don't want to communicate,

which involves sharing of ideas. We seem on a track for a world of strident opposition between biased opinions with the winner being the one who shouts the loudest and draws the most followers.

This happens in church circles as well. It is not hard to find stories on a variety of blogs, websites and even traditional media outlets that are obviously meant to do one thing – to discredit anyone who believes something different than the author of the piece. What happens is that likeminded gather and over and over again, repeating this opinion until it seems they have convinced themselves that it is true. Note, I said "seems" because that is a personal conclusion. This type of religious journalism occurs across several different schools of opinion. It ends up being a heap of I'm right because I say I am right.

I would love to jump in and have a reasonable, intelligent and informed discussion with people across several areas of this type of reporting, to engage in a fact based conversation that begins without a definitive conclusion already having been made. I will suggest to you that more and more those kinds of conversations are not possible because people have become steeped in an idea that if you say something often enough, loud enough and with enough gusto; you can claim it is right because you want it to be right, and get away with it.

My days in journalism are some three decades behind

me. I can't even recognize the stuff that is spewed out today as being real media. Articulate conversation with the joy of the debate is disappearing. It's now about stating how "right I am", pushing a party platform and establishing one as the most authoritative voice, even though you have no facts except the ones you have handpicked. It's not journalism at all. In my opinion it is just opinion.

So back to my starting point. Once you step away from facts and argue strictly from preference and position, it is a short step to dehumanizing those you oppose. Once we all dehumanize each other, the only avenue left is to go off in our exclusive camps and have no relationship what so ever with those terrible people on the other side.

To me, there is no good result from this. I enjoy a good debate as much as anyone. If I come up short, so be it. You can be sure the next time I will have done my homework and have an enhanced, fact-based argument to put forward.

That is, for me, life giving. It is the way I think discourse should take place every day. It doesn't matter who started us down this path to "I'm right." I just wish we could all agree to get back to a world where we can all have a little banter, learn a little bit from each other, and always part with good relationships!

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# Prompted by snow: my five journal entries

When the pandemic started for us in Canada around March, I started a group for hobby artists to do sketchbook art on a regular basis, using word prompts.



**LAUREL PATTENDEN**

So, each day I or someone would send out a word like "shoes" or "wind". From this word we would let our intuition lead us to a drawing expressing the word. Then we would share on Facebook.

Word prompts are also readily used in writing classes. Same idea where the word provides the basis for the sentence or story.

What follows are some quick, journal entries that I wrote on the prompt word "snow". They



**Laurel Pattenden: Joy, Love, Hope**

were written last January, long before our lives changed with the arrival of the Covid virus. The writings are written in a very free flowing way so grammar and sentence structure are not at all correct. Although, I don't think my writing ever is! There are five journal entries:

1) Snow is so very versatile. It touches us in so many ways

that we no longer open up to. Slushy, dirty water from pure snow becomes life giving as it melts into our lawns at spring. Does slushy, dirty water of life get purified in our hearts as it melts? Is all that is of life melt into our hearts? But what hardens our hearts? Maybe some things just do not melt. Unmeltable.

2) Interesting that I find Christmas so burdensome and January refreshing. I love clean slates. Maybe January is the baptism month -snow as baptism. Canadian, eh! The green evergreens stark against a black and white world. Green - life giving in the dead of winter. Paradox? Do we feel more life near death?

3) Plaid blankets go so well with snow. The wool ones that are picky. Safety in a warm, plaid blanket. Maybe God dresses in plaid for the snow. God's tartan. What colours would God's tartan be - definitely blue, white and a hint of pink and gold.

4) Snow can be safe and unsafe. Beautiful or not. Soft, floaty or ice needles in the face. Snow falling down, when we want to always gaze up, at its descending.

5) Snow can hurt, snow can destroy, snow can overwhelm the earth. But when seen drifting, lightly down it appears divinely sent. Snow a force of nature that only God would create. Especially for children and those light of heart. Snow angels! A heavenly host of innocence and purity.

So there you have some very quickly written exercises based on a word prompt. I certainly cannot explain them nor defend them. Certainly not perfect nor are they good or bad. Simply intuitive writing and rather fun to do.

The January of 2021 will be somewhat different from January 2020. Time will be felt differently. We may feel that we need more prompting to get at our activities and pursuits. Maybe we will feel the need to

be prompted into new activities.

Start looking for prompts in your daily life. Tape words to your refrigerator or your mirror. Learn about the birds in your yard. Study something you always wanted to learn about. See and listen to the prompts that are right in front of you.

This January, forget about the New Year's resolutions and instead, create some prompts! Pay attention to the prompts that will renew your heart and spirit. There are so many. We truly do have abundant life. Sometimes we just need a little prompting to see it.

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

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND BEST WISHES IN 2021**