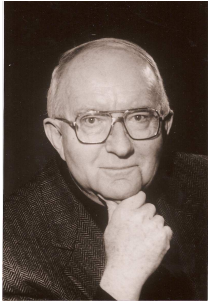


Anglican Fellowship OF **PRAYER** Canada



AFP-C NEWSLETTER - Vol. 22, No. 3

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS 2014



NOT JUST ANY CHILD **HERBERT O'DRISCOLL**

Why has this season such extraordinary and unrelenting power? As it approaches nearer, airports will be jammed, traffic will be gridlock. Radio stations, all usually seeking their own sound, will begin for a few days to sound alike. Every TV series, whatever its plot, will set that particular episode in the context of this season. Families will gather. Organizations will take steps to care for people in various ways. Gifts will be given; relationships nourished by cards or emails or phone calls.

Why? There are of course many reasons. Most of them we express according to mood. If we are feeling cynical we say it is nothing more than the creation of a greedy commercial system. If we are feeling intellectual we chat about ancient Roman holidays celebrating the winter solstice. Sometimes we throw Charles Dickens into the mix, calling him the creator of Christmas as we know it. But the fact is that, on their own, none of these elements could bring about what happens in these few hours.

I remember once being in a major international airport on the afternoon of Christmas Day. There were very few people around. The lights shone, the Arrivals and Departures screens dispensed their much depleted information, someone slowly mopped a spill in the snack area, all staff who were free to leave had left. Yet it was an hour when normally this place would be pulsating with activity. I realized that there was a sense in which the birth of a child two thousand years ago had reached across time and quieted this vast place.

The fact is that Christmas *is* the Child. Mind you, not just any child. Christmas is about a particular child born to a particular family in a particular place at a

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MESSAGE FROM OUR NATIONAL DIRECTOR

ARCHDEACON PAUL FEHELEY

A different way of life this Christmas

The dictionary defines Counterculture as, "a way of life and set of attitude opposed to or at variance with the prevailing social norm." As we celebrate the Advent Christmas season I think as Christians we need to be countercultural.

We live in a society that has moved far away from the beauty and simplicity of the child born in a manger. Too many people see Christmas as something that is to be endured as opposed to celebrate. For some the difficulty comes from trying to achieve the perfect Christmas, accomplished by over spending, over eating, over drinking and so much rushing, that exhaustion and weariness become the norm. For others, Christmas is the most depressed season of the year as loneliness, anxiety, and pain create feelings of isolation. It breaks my heart every time I hear someone say, "I can't wait until Christmas is over."

Neither you, nor I, can change the way that Christmas has become for so many. But we can begin to practice that "way of life and set of attitudes opposed to or at variance with the prevailing social norm." Against the norms of rushing; God offers us the opportunity to be at peace with him. Against the fears of the season; the words 'be not afraid' are offered to us. To the weary and exhausted; the invitation is extended to "Come unto me all that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest"

Prayer is the countercultural gift that we have to make this difference for it is our way of being in

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*Photo by
Simon Chambers*

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NOT JUST ANY CHILD

particular time.

What do I believe happened at that birth? The only one of the four Gospel writers who struggles to express that particularity is Luke. Mark doesn't mention it. Matthew does to some extent, but he emphasizes the coming of the Magi. John speaks to us in cosmic terms. For him time and eternity may intersect in that birth in Bethlehem but he never mentions the town. Only Luke grapples with the mystery. He is at pains to get away from a "*Once upon a time...*" kind of storytelling, so he is most precise. The political context is named. The place is made very specific. The relationship of Mary and Joseph is described in very human terms. Everything is grounded in the real and the particular.

But even Luke can't allow himself to be imprisoned in the particular. The universe becomes the extension of the small stage of actuality. Angels become the voices of the total creation of which humanity and earth are but an infinitesimally small part, and, when Luke does give us the song of the angels, it bridges in one magnificent sentence planet and universe, earth and heaven, time and eternity. That is precisely what our human voices are enabled to do to this day when we say or sing "*Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace...*"

What is being communicated by Christmas? To say that it isn't just about going home or about gift giving or being seasonally kind or wishing people well is not to dismiss these precious things. Even to say that it celebrates the truth and loveliness and hope hidden in childhood – while that is true – is not enough. One must never forget to ask the question that lifts our understanding of this season to the level of Christian faith. That necessary question is both deceptively simple and immeasurably. We must ask "*What Child is this?*" And faith answers "*This child is God incarnate, God in human flesh*".

Knowing well that language will defeat me here – for language defeats everyone who dares to try to open this season with groping explanations – let me try to say what Christmas means.

The single great contribution of Christian faith to the world is to offer the conviction that God is present in the human story. Why is this important? Because if we are to retain the capacity to live creatively and purposefully within history, in spite of its terrors, we need the resolution that comes from the conviction that that vast story of human history has meaning and possesses a destiny. That is why, right from the beginning, Christians sum up their faith in an ancient Jewish word.

*We say of Jesus that he is EMMANUEL.
It means "God with us".
Thanks be to God.*

- Continued from page 1-

**A different way of life
this Christmas**

conversation and communion with God. To make space for us to speak to God and for God to speak to us will make a profound difference in what, and how Christmas is celebrated. It won't happen by chance for most of us are people of good intentions but poor performance.

So I have only one question this Christmas – not what will you get, nor what will you give, but will you allow the time needed to have God in your life?

On behalf of the executive committee and my family, I wish you a prayerful Christmas that models a different way of being.


SAVE THE DATE

A Conference is planned for

June 1 to 5, 2015

at

The Lavrock Centre

Just west of **St. John's, Newfoundland**

Diocesan Representatives, Parish Representatives, and others interested in supporting the work of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer are invited to attend.

This is an opportunity to become more confident in providing prayer leadership in your own ministry. You will become more familiar with AFP resources, and share creative ideas to support one another and enrich the spirituality of the church.

More information to follow!



***If you wish to receive the
newsletter electronically,
and don't receive it in your
inbox already,
please email our editor,***

Win Mizon

newsletter@anglicanprayer.org

New AFP Chairperson

The Reverend Val Kenyon



Originally from Toronto, Val has called London home for the past 26 years. Looking for an affordable home for her then young family, she and husband Doug ventured the two hours west along the 401 and have been very happy they did. The time since then has flown by filled with the joys and challenges of raising three wonderful sons.

Prior to attending seminary, for many years Val was the Administrative Director of a local independent school, where in addition to her regular duties, she enjoyed representing those in administration and fund development in a network of independent schools across North America.

Since her youngest days Val's faith has been central to her life as has been her involvement at many levels in the Anglican Church of Canada. In 2006 Val began her studies at Huron University College. Ordained to the diaconate and priested in 2009, Val's first placement was as Assistant to the Rector at St. James Westminster, in the heart of Old South, in London. In the Fall of 2013, Val became the Rector of Trinity St Thomas.

Also an Associate of the Sisterhood of Saint John the Divine, Val is committed to ongoing development in her own spiritual life and that of those around her.

Val has served as the Diocesan Representative in Huron since January of 2011 and has been a member of the National Executive since October of 2012. Val resonates strongly with the goals and objectives of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer, and is so honoured to be asked to play this new role of Chairperson of the National Executive and to continue encouraging prayer in the life of the Church, and in the lives of those whom she has been asked to serve.

*May all I say and all I think
Be in harmony with Thee.
God within me, God beyond me,
Maker of the trees.*

CHINOOK PRAYER

Thank you Cathy.

You will be missed.



After eight years of faithful service as a member of the Executive Committee of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Canada), Cathy Reynolds has decided to concentrate on other ministries in her parish and elsewhere.

As with all of us who serve the Lord, the Holy Spirit was active in Cathy joining us.

Several years ago, the Executive needed a Secretary, and several attempts to find one had resulted in false starts, promises made, and promises broken. The members of the AFP Executive offered fervent prayer that God would raise up a reliable person to fill the secretary position. Lesley Dunkerley, then a member of the Executive, was visiting St. Paul's on the Hill Anglican Church in Pickering, Ontario and was chatting with AFP member Brenda Hallett. Brenda mentioned that her friend Cathy might be available and had the necessary secretarial skills. Cathy had also mentioned becoming more involved in AFP. Lesley approached Cathy and the rest, as they say, is AFP history.

We praise and thank God for Cathy's service to AFP. She has been a steady, reliable and faithful member of the Executive for many years and we will miss her, and the work she consistently did in rendering our sometimes meandering discussions and decisions into a readable and useful record of our meetings and discussions.

Thank you Cathy. You will be missed.

*Create in me a pure heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

*Do not cast me from Your presence
Or take Your Holy Spirit from me.*

*Restore to me the joy of salvation
And grant me a willing spirit,
to sustain me.*

KING DAVID
(PSALMS 51: 10-12)

The Bishop of Huron's Prayer Conference 2014**"Developing & Sustaining a Prayerful Community"***Submitted by The Rev'd Andreas Thiel*

Over 100 individuals from across the Diocese of Huron gathered at St. Aidan's Church (London) on May 3, to consider just what it takes to develop and sustain a prayerful community. In doing this, we were all invited to consider things such as quantum physics, string theory, energy, spirit and matter, and how these evolving and expanding scientific concepts might relate to the experience of prayer. The Rev'd Canon Dr. Todd Townshend, Dean of Theology at Huron University

**Rev'd Canon Dr. Todd Townshend**

College, was this year's keynote speaker, and his morning address considered some of the ways that we can be challenged to explore and trust in the power of prayer. Todd acknowledged that our images and understandings of what happens in prayer are apt to change during our lifetime. One might compare

this experience with that of a scientist, who, in testing various new theories, must always remain open to the possibility of surprise; the "strange" or as-yet undefined and unexperienced. So too with prayer: a prayerful community will continue to develop and be sustained by trusting in God's activity through Spirit, while maintaining an orientation which allows room for surprise. Part of the surprise on this day came as we reflected on the idea of "vibrating strings of energy." In afternoon sessions, participants had a chance to further experience and reflect on how both individuals and communities can be considered to vibrate with one another and with God, through prayer.

Bishop Bob Bennett opened the conference with his own reflections on prayer, some of them from his days in parish ministry. AFP Huron appreciates the support of our bishop, and we concur with his observation that "there is a hunger in our diocese for this sort of event." AFP diocesan representative, the Rev'd Val Kenyon, echoed this sentiment in her remarks, adding that it is "gratifying to see so many people from across our diocese at this conference, who value the time to learn and share with others their experiences of prayer." The day passed quickly, and we left as enriched people, inspired to continue the ministry of prayer in our respective communities.

The Mystery of Prayer as Experienced by One Person

Today I burned an incense cone. First a thin column of smoke arose, and then it slowly twisted and turned and curled around in delicate wisps. Gradually it dispersed, following the airflow, like miniature threads of clouds, until it could no longer be seen but merely sensed, its scent gradually enveloped the whole room, even beyond. So it is with prayer, wafting up to God.

Sometimes the column of smoke rises high unimpeded by draughts.

Our prayers sometimes rise up quickly and directly to Him who waits.

Sometimes currents buffet the column and it churns and billows and spreads before rising.

Likewise sometimes, our prayers are buffeted by the currents of daily life, before eventually rising and permeating our lives.

Long after the visible evidence of incense has gone the sweet smelling aroma of its presence is still with us.

Long after our prayers the sweet smelling aroma of His presence is still with us.

**St. Aidan's Church (London)**

The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Canada New Executive



Back Row: Mr. Paul Dumbrille (Resource), Mr. Tony Day, Rev. Gregory Mercer,
Mr. Mark Perrin (Web Coordinator), Archdeacon Paul Feheley (director),
Front Row: Mrs. Win Mizon (newsletter & membership), Rev. Anne Moore,
Ms. Janet Stevens (treasurer), Rev. Valorie Kenyon (chairperson)

NEW AFP-C EMAIL ADDRESSES

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treasurer@anglicanprayer.org
webcoord@anglicanprayer.org

PLEASE NOTE - IMPORTANT

Our AFP-C address is

**Anglican Fellowship of Prayer
P.O. Box 78084
Nepean, Ontario K2E 1B1**

**Donation cheques can be made out to
Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Canada
and sent to the above address.**

OR

**From our website – anglicanprayer.org
under “About” and “Finances”
Click on “Canada Helps” to donate.**

Are Church Synods a Place of Prayer?



Paul Dumbrille

Synods usually include prayer by way of Eucharist, Morning Prayer, and Evening Prayer, liturgies and prayer before meals. Often organisers feel that is sufficient. However this article proposes some other ways of making Synods a “Place of Prayer”, using an on-site Prayer Area and what I will call *situationally* focussed prayer.

One of the things that AFP encourages is that an on-site Prayer Area be set up during each Diocesan Synod that is accessible to both Synod delegates and observers, as well as to people from the outside to accommodate an on-site Prayer Vigil. The Prayer Vigil consists of prayer in three specific ways:

- before Synod either personally or at worship services;
- on-site in the Prayer Area; and
- off-site in a place of their choosing.

I offer the following suggestions to make prayer more of an integral part of Synod than just liturgical prayer and a Prayer Vigil. In liturgical language, these suggestions would be the “Prayers of the People” carried out intentionally and sequentially throughout the Synod.

1. Presenters and speakers could be encouraged to either pray themselves or have someone else say a prayer before each segment of Synod that is focussed on the subject they will be addressing. For example before a presentation or discussion on Community Ministries, a prayer that asks God to bless those in need, thanks those who respond to God’s call to help the poor, and asks God to help us make available the necessary resources to carry out our endeavours. Another example might be before a financial review, say a prayer thanking God for the many blessings we enjoy and asking that the necessary financial resources be provided to further God’s Kingdom. These prayers do not need to be very long, but should be relevant to the subject under consideration.
2. Presenters and speakers could be encouraged to either say a prayer themselves or have someone else offer a prayer at the end of the segment or presentation.
3. Before any voting on Resolutions takes place, a prayer could be offered seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
4. Each presenter or presenting team could be encouraged, by example and suggestion, to come to the Prayer Area for prayer before they speak or make a presentation.
5. Synod delegates could be encouraged to use the Prayer Area throughout the Synod, either for personal prayer or to have someone to pray with them.
6. Have a basket in, or adjacent to, the Prayer Area, wherein prayer requests can be placed and pray-ers who are attending from the outside would pray for these requests.

If you have any other ideas, send them into the editor of this Newsletter, and we’ll publish them.



Children’s Ministry

Elizabeth Short

Count-down to Christmas

Children love ritual, and they love anticipating Christmas, which is why things like the Advent Calendar can be a great thing. There is an incredible variety of calendars and ways to count the days until Christmas, but I have one more for you to consider. I have worked out a plan, but, of course it can be improvised to meet your specific needs. It involves decorating a small Christmas tree and putting a Nativity scene or Crèche together with “presents” from under the tree. This can be modified for any age.

This is what you need to get started:

- a small, table-top Christmas tree
- 12 stars to hang on the tree (these can be home-made, or not – use your imagination!)
- A nativity scene, with removable characters, each character wrapped and numbered; I numbered them as follows, but, again, you can change this, depending on what is in your scene.



- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1 – Ox (a stable is like a barn) | 6 – Sheep |
| 2 – Donkey (a stable is like a garage) | 7 – Star |
| 3 – Manger (a manger is where the animal's food is placed) | |
| 3 – Mary | 8 – Wiseman 1 (gold) |
| 4 – Joseph | 9 – Wiseman 2 (frankincense) |
| 5 – Angel | 10 – Wiseman 3 (Myrrh) |
| 5 – Shepherd(s) | 11 – Baby Jesus |

How it works:

I have organized this to begin December 1, although Advent begins 4 Sundays before Christmas.

If you have an Advent wreath, light the appropriate number of candles before you begin. There are 4 Sundays in Advent, and you light 1 candle for the first week, 2 on the second, and so on. Have a special place for the tree, with the wrapped “presents” underneath.

On December 1, take one of the stars and talk about things the child(ren) are grateful for. Let a child pick one thing he or she is grateful for and hang the star on the tree (if this star is homemade, you can write the gratitude on it, or it can be taped to a store-bought ornament. Express this gratitude in the form of a prayer. The next evening, do the same, only this time come up with something they would like to pray about, again a prayer is said and it is hung on the tree. Alternate between gratuities and petitions each evening. You will find that the kids get more creative as time goes on and they realize what is coming. On the 13th set out the stable and discuss what a stable is/was and then talk about how the stable plays a part in the Christmas story. You can pray a prayer of thanksgiving for shelter and pray for those who do not have shelter. The next evening open present #1 (ox), place it in the stable and see what kind of prayer evolves! This can come from you or the children. Continue along until the baby Jesus is placed in the manger on Christmas Eve.

I wish you and your family and meaningful Advent and a blessed Christmas.

Joy to the world!



Diocese of Huron***Responding to Life Through Prayer******Rev. Val Kenyon***

What a joy it was to gather on October 4th in the Diocese of Huron to consider together, what it is to respond to life and the world around us through prayer. We began our time together with a general introduction to intercessory prayer provided for us by

the Rev'd Kim Metelka, who reminded us that to engage in intercessory prayer is to pray with real hope and conviction that God will step in and act for the good of those in need around us. Recalling Christ's instruction to us to love our neighbour, what better way to do this than to give ourselves to prayer, knowing God wishes us to ask, "casting our weakness before God's strength...having a bit of God's passion burn in us".

Rev'd Metelka took us through some of the many references to Intercessory prayer that can be found in the Bible and also shared with us the timing of intercessory prayer in her own day: "...seeing people, situations, I pray for them ... youth in the mall... those I connect with in my daily living ... sitting quietly to hold particular ones up to the Lord using a prayer journal... Sunday mornings at church." It was clear from Rev'd Metelka's comments that in a very real sense we can always be in prayer as we stay awake to all that is going on around us.

Following this introduction we were then treated to presentations from six different groups in Huron, each with a special focus, so that we might hear more about the 'how' and 'why' of intercessory prayer in each of their areas. The Rev'd Matt Arquin, spoke to us from the Social Justice Committee citing the marks of mission and reminding us that in our public intercessions we are given the opportunity to live into the promises of Easter, with hope and trust in resurrection; Rev'd Arquin encouraged us not to overlook the power in naming things, and also that we are all called to consider social justice issues prayerfully. Canon Chris Pratt was up next and spoke passionately on behalf of the Enviro Action committee, encouraging us to embrace the fifth mark of mission, to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth." Canon Greg Smith spoke on behalf of the Huron Hunger Fund leading us through a "Blessing The World" and reminding us of the excellent work done globally by the Primate World Relief and

Development Fund, and of how we can learn more about it and how our prayers can be a support. The Rev'd Gwen Fraser presented on behalf of the Board of Deacons, and spoke of a deacon's primary function of service, with specifics of different ministries with which she is engaged. We rounded out our time together with a presentation from Canon Gaye Whippey, sharing with us some details of prayer practices among the aboriginal peoples of this Diocese, and finally we invited Nancy Lovelock from the diocesan Refugee Committee to share with us about the needs and wishes of so many, to escape very difficult situation in their home countries, to join us here in Canada.

At the end of the time together, I think I can speak for all present, we felt grateful for those who shared their wisdom and passion with us, and truly enriched and inspired by all that we had heard.

Bishop of Huron's Prayer Conference 2015
Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Huron) Presents

GOING BROADER...GOING DEEPER:
Experiencing A Variety of Prayer Practices

SATURDAY, May 2, 2015
Church of the Ascension, London; 2060 Dundas St. East
10:00a.m. to 3:00p.m.
\$20.00 - Lunch included

**WORKSHOP TITLES**

Prayerful Movement
Lectio Divina
Walking the Labyrinth
Prayer and Fasting
Prayerfully Imagining the Scriptures
Praying Through Song

To register please contact:
Rev'd Kim Metelka: kametelka@gmail.com
2896 Old Lakeshore Road
Bright's Grove, Ontario N0N 1C0;
519-869-2403 or text info to 519-464-8892
cheques payable to the Diocese of Huron



Advent

Laura Marie Piotrowicz

The season of Advent can be a time of busy-ness, of manic and frantic behaviour, a scheduling nightmare sometimes. Yet despite this, we are called to be patient and observant during this time. We are challenged not to be in the secular pre-Christmas mentality, but rather to fully and holistically embrace the holy waiting of Advent.

Advent is a season that invites us to use all of our senses as we wait. It's a full-body integration of the scriptures into our lives. Through our prayers, our lections, our practices, we are encouraged to engage all that we have into the patient process of preparation.

We're called to wait, to watch, to listen, to be ready. To have every aspect of ourselves ready to respond to the coming of our God. From the very first reading on Advent 1, the prophet Isaiah speaks of the desire for God to tear open the heavens and come down, making the very earth shock us into awe. The scriptures take us through a sensory journey like no other:

- * We feel Mary's fear, the quaking of the mountains, the cleansing power of the river Jordan in baptism.
- * We smell John's camel-hair as he stands in the river, the king's house made of cedar, the dust of the cities being rebuilt.
- * We hear the promise of salvation, we hear the resonance of the angel's message to Mary, and Mary's humble response to her call to ministry.
- * We taste the oil of gladness, our mouths filled with laughter, the produce of the gardens bringing forth their shoots.
- * We see the captives breaking free from their oppression, the signs of the grass withering and flower fading, the angels gathering together to proclaim the good news.

Likewise, our own practices invite and incite a full-body response. The flickering candles and pine scent of our Advent wreaths; the sweetness of chocolate in the store-bought countdown calendars; the blue or purple vestments and hangings in the church buildings (and rose on Gaudete Sunday) indicating the uniqueness of this season; the cantatas and hymns that are only sung at this time of year; the feasting and fasting that some undertake.

Our Advent journey is a sensual one, connecting every aspect of our lives on this earth with the process of watching, waiting, and being ready. May our prayers guide and direct us as we make this journey, moving away from the busyness and messiness of the secular season into the peaceful, all-embracing beauty that comes from watching and waiting in hope.

Come, Lord Jesus, Come Soon.

How Well Do You Wait?

Valerie Kenyon



Have you not known?

Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God...

**He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.**

**Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;
but those who wait for the Lord
shall renew their strength,**

**they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.**

Isaiah 40:21-31

Advent is a time of waiting...and we all know about waiting. On some levels everyone is waiting for something. It seems to be part of the human condition. Sometimes our waiting is easy, perhaps requiring a little patience but not much else, like when we grab a number at the bakery, counting down to our turn at the counter. Sometimes our waiting can be full of hope and expectation as we wait for the birth of a new child or grandchild, or an anticipated promotion or new opportunity; and yet there are also those other times when our waiting can be more difficult, full of anxiety, pain and sorrow, as we from time to time might find ourselves engaged in a serious life struggle or are the companions of those struggling through daily challenges. But one thing is certain. In a world that gets faster by the minute, waiting challenges us. And it is even more certain that the more difficult the waiting, the more we are pushed to our limits.

When I was a little girl, my father used to call me the "Instant Kid!" You can guess how I got that name, I was *terrible* at waiting. If I wanted something, I wanted it right away, I did *not* want to have to wait for it. I saw no value in the "waiting part"; I only saw value in the "getting" part; for to me waiting represented a lack of action. Waiting was all about inactivity, nothingness, empty space. As the years passed, I did get better at waiting and slowly came to realize that while waiting is part of the human condition, I can either wait well or *not* so well. Far from being a time of inactivity it became clear that waiting is quite the opposite. It can actually be a time packed full of action; but not action as I used to imagine it, but rather action as an opportunity given us to be shaped and formed by God, if we are open to that.

Waiting well, it would seem is actively engaging ourselves in lives of confident expectation. In waiting well we are promised both a renewed strength in our continuing, and

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How Well Do You Wait?

the gift of a new perspective, but not just any perspective. This new perspective will be that of an eagle who flies high above the situations of any particular moment and is in her circular motions able to grasp the bigger picture and the larger view in a single glance.

So as we begin this new church year and this season of Advent, a season of joyful expectation of Christ's coming, may we all be reminded of the renewed strength and fresh perspective given to us by our God; and at those sometimes challenging times of our waiting, may we confidently fix our eyes, our hope and our hearts fully upon Christ Jesus.

Toronto Diocesan Prayer Conference

Tony Day

Prayer: a passion for the presence of God.



This was the headline on the poster advertising the conference held at St. John's, York Mills on Oct 25th. Many who attended have that passion for the presence of God, a passion that was well satisfied at this

conference. The accommodation at St John's was outstanding as we were the first group to experience the benefits of their major building and re-furbishing project. The music team inspired us by playing the right tunes at the right time and thereby enhanced our passion for the Lord. Our tummies and taste buds were likewise satisfied with a healthy and tasty lunch. The books offered by CRUX were relevant and tempting making it easy to spend more than one intended.

The theme of the conference was "Abiding in the Word of God" and was presented in three inspiring talks by our gifted speaker, Emma Marsh, who used scripture and personal stories to illustrate her own faith journey and to encourage us in deepening our own intimacy with God. One of her stories included the suggestion that after receiving communion and having returned to our seats we pray and invite Jesus to immerse us in his love. This I have done and discovered that it does make a difference to how I experience communion.

Emma also included a rather amazing story that is included in the Newfoundland history book. It is the

story of how her husband's grandfather came to be a man of faith. Like so many from "The Rock", his grandfather was a fisherman. One stormy day as he was seal hunting, his skiff became detached from his fishing boat. For 70 days he was adrift on the Atlantic Ocean surviving by eating the meat of two seals that he had caught and drinking water that he managed to collect in his rain hat. After 70 days he was rescued 50 miles off the coast of Scotland. Before this event he had not been a man of faith but so amazing was his survival that he committed his life to God and Christ Jesus which changed his family forever. His grandson eventually was to become an Anglican bishop.

After each talk, small groups of about eight people met and discussed questions related to the talks which proved extremely enlightening and, in many cases, serendipitous.

The MC who kept us on track and on topic took time at the beginning of each talk to invite us to pray silently. Before talk one it was for the persecuted church, before talk two for a Bishop, and before talk three to use the mantra "Abba I belong to you".

At the end of the conference there were prayer stations for people who desired personal prayer. Many went forward.

At the beginning of the conference people were told that they could submit personal prayer requests into a prayer box that was available in the narthex. Fifty-five prayer requests were received which indicated that more than half of the attendees submitted a request. They will be prayed for at least twice and in some cases for the next year.

Prayer: God's highway to the heart. Yes!





ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

A Lenten Quiet Day

March 22, 2014

**Rev. Marline Wruck, Deacon
Diocese of Rupert's Land**

Our Lenten Quiet Day, hosted by the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer, was offered by Rev. Aubrey Hemminger and Nancy Aasland. The caption for the Lenten Retreat stated: "Give yourself the gift of a day to be still, to be present to one's self and to God, to be aware of the movement of God within us." As the tears rolled down my cheeks, I then realized my "absolute need" for this day.

We say things like, "I want to have a better prayer life, but I am too busy." "I want to volunteer for that cause or to join that committee, but I have more than I can handle." We all have been there. We must remember that the Master and Creator of the universe deserves a little of our time.

When our busyness becomes the thing we are totally engrossed in, then we fail to see Jesus clearly. I definitely was in that space in March. I was cheating God out of God's time. That is when I decided to slow down, and take a day and spend it at a Lenten Quiet Day Retreat.

Those on the Road to Emmaus did not recognize Jesus when he was in their very midst. When I, or we, are on a constant spin in our specific ministry, it can be difficult to recognize and remember that Jesus is walking beside us.

The heart of this passage, the place where the dynamic changes for the men is the meal in Emmaus where Jesus broke bread with them. It was in Jesus' characteristic behavior of giving, of feeding, of caring for his sheep. In feeding others at the right time and in receiving the bread broken for us with thanksgiving, we are given Jesus. May we pay attention the next time as we reach out to receive what is blessed.

Our Lenten Quiet Day started with a wonderful welcoming. Aubrey led us into readings for personal reflection starting with Luke 4:16-21, in the form of Lectio Divina. This is a traditional Benedictine practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer, intended to promote communion with God and the living word. We were invited to stay in silence for about 10 minutes between readings.....which was a true gift for me and hopefully others. We reflected on:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor."

This passage was read several times with a different intention for reflection, each time giving us that precious 10 minute time to reflect.

We then entered into what Aubrey called, "The Prayer of Imagination", referring to John 4: 5-30.

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

We were then invited to put ourselves in the place of the woman at the well, and also throughout this reading, imagining how we would be in the various roles.

Aubrey also spoke about what holds us captive. My personal words would be what "imprisons" us in our lives, and that which may keep us from this intimate relationship with God. We were invited in a prayerful way to write the things down that imprisons us on a small piece of paper (representing a brick), and placing it on the wall, in order to name what makes us captive and to then pray for healing.

In the afternoon there were six Stations set up in various places at the venue. There was a biblical verse, symbols to reflect on, and a creative reading at each, depicting the topic. We were invited to visit each station, spending as much silent time as we wished, and engaging in an activity in order to have the passage become "flesh". These stations were: A Stone's Throw, We Hurt, Carry a Cross, What Binds Us, What Gives You Hope, and Imprisonment.

To be gifted with that time for reflection was a Holy Time for me and hopefully others. We were nourished by the leadership and ministry of Aubrey who led us in prayer and Nancy whose music and words enhanced our day together. We were also nourished physically and socially by the people of St. Mary Magdalene, who prepared the delicious and tasteful meal. And we were truly nourished when at the conclusion of our time together we received Eucharist. The Bread of Life which sustains us.

And for all of this "WE TRULY ARE GRATEFUL".

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