

# Anglican Fellowship of Prayer

*Serving, Supporting, and Encouraging Prayer*

Vol 31, No. 4

Autumn 2023

## The Gift of Animals

*Paul Feheley, National Director*

Dear friends,

This fall somewhere around October 4th a wide diversity of creatures- all things great and small will arrive at the door of our churches to be blessed. This tradition on St. Francis Day honours the beloved saint who was born in the 12th century and had a deep connection and reverence for all living creatures, considering them as part of God's creation and deserving of respect and care. St. Francis is said to have communicated with animals and to have preached to them, viewing them as fellow creatures of God.

I think that there is a great deal we can learn from animals that will enable us to have a better and deeper relationship with God. Many people form strong emotional bonds with animals, particularly pets like dogs and cats. Animals offer companionship, unconditional love, and a sense of connection that can improve mental and emotional well-being. They can alleviate feelings of loneliness, reduce stress, and even help with conditions like depression and anxiety.

In recent times it is not unusual in my parish for three or four people to arrive with dogs for our morning worship. At first it seemed like something quirky or the latest trend. I have come to realize the therapeutic benefits and positive effects these animals have on individuals with various physical, emotional, and cognitive challenges.

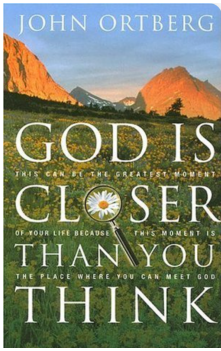
In 2009, Wendy Francisco, an American musician and writer produced an animated video, GoD and DoG, which was posted on YouTube and received a million views in the first 40 days. ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4\\_oG2vGls-U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_oG2vGls-U)) Here is the text:



"I look up and I see God, I look down and see my dog.  
Simple spelling G-O-D, same word backwards, D-O-G.  
They would stay with me all day. I'm the one who walks away.  
But both of them just wait for me, and dance at my return with glee.  
Both love me no matter what - divine God and canine mutt.  
I take it hard each time I fail, but God forgives, dog wags his tail.  
God thought up and made the dog, dog reflects a part of God.  
I've seen love from both sides now, it's everywhere, amen, bow wow.  
I look up and I see God, I look down and see my dog.  
And in my human frailty... I can't match their love for me."

In your prayers this fall season perhaps you could allow the beauty and love of pets and indeed all of creation to speak to you about love forgiveness and faithfulness in a new or different way stirring your heart soul and mind. Amen- bow wow.





## “God Is Closer Than You Think” by John Ortberg

*Reviewed by Paul Dumbrille*

In the book, “*God is Closer Than You Think*”, John Ortberg sets out seven general ways of experiencing God, or “pathways”, as he calls them, to God. These include:

**Worship pathway:** where something deep inside finds release when praise and adoration are given voice. Music is helpful in this.

**Contemplative pathway:** where reflection comes naturally, and God feels most present when distractions and noises are removed, such as through meditation and centering prayer.

**Serving pathway:** where God’s presence is felt most tangibly when helping others, in praying while they are serving. This pathway attracts those engaging in mission related activities.

**Relational pathway:** where people find God’s presence through significant interpersonal relationships. They experience God in community and through others.

**Intellectual pathway:** where people draw closer to God through learning; studying helps these people experience God best in silence and in study.

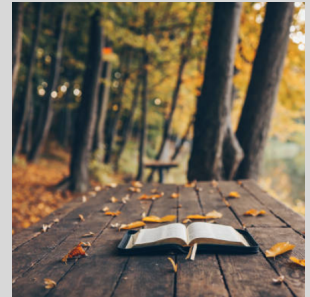
**Creation pathway:** where people celebrate the deeply life-giving and God-breathed presence in nature or in the creativity of the arts.

**Activist pathway:** where people experience God in looking at and doing new things. They experience God in action.

How do you experience God? Are there pathways you wish to explore more fully? This book has something for everyone.

*You crown the year with your goodness, and your paths overflow with plenty.  
May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing, and the hills be clothed with joy.  
May the meadows cover themselves with flocks,  
and the valleys cloak themselves with grain; let them shout for joy and sing.*

*Ps 65.11-13*



## Let Us Pray!

We are so pleased this fall to be returning with our popular monthly virtual *Let Us Pray* series on the third Monday of each month. Please mark these dates down in your calendar and plan to attend:

- **September 18, 2023** - Prayer in Campus Ministry with the Rev’d Matt Martin, Chaplain at Huron University College. Please join us as the Rev’d Matt Martin, speaks about his experiences of Campus Ministries and the role prayer plays in these ministries.
- **October 16, 2023** – We are so pleased that our Director, Paul Feheley, will be joining us to speak about Evangelism & Prayer in the Churches of the Middle East;
- **November 20, 2023**– We are still working on organizing our November speakers. Watch for more details on this to come.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87388880778?pwd=YWNXaIB4ZUJaMG5HRIM0ZnVWMIgVZz09>

Meeting ID: 873 8888 0778; Passcode: 997550

OR join by phone; find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/kcEOUrk2Ah>

Looking forward to seeing you there.

## Current Work of your AFP Executive

*Valerie Kenyon, AFP Canada Chair*

### Let Us Pray Video Resources

The perfect resource for a prayer gathering any time it suits your schedule. Please visit our website at [anglicanprayer.org](http://anglicanprayer.org) approximately one week following the event (or any time after that) to view these resources.



### Supporting the Work of our Diocesan Contacts

#### *~A Reminder~*

With a desire to support the work of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer in Canada, the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Canada) has approved, for the use of any approved/appointed Diocesan Contacts, an annual reimbursement of up to \$250 for expenses consistent with the AFP commitment to encourage and enable the ministry of prayer in Canada.

Receipts must be sent to the treasurer, Libi Clifford, at [treasurer@anglicanprayer.org](mailto:treasurer@anglicanprayer.org) and will be presented to the Executive for approval. Receipts for 2023 should be submitted by Dec 30, 2023.

Any questions about this may be addressed to the AFP Chair, Val Kenyon at [chairperson@anglicanprayer.org](mailto:chairperson@anglicanprayer.org)



*Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord.  
The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth,  
being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains.*

*You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts,  
for the coming of the Lord is near.*

*~ James 5:7-8*

*La Boyariza 2*  
by Javier Díaz Barrera  
CC BY-NC-ND 2.0  
Source: Flickr

## “Prayer Among Friends”

*A New Resource on the AFP Website*

Several years ago, the Rev. Herb O'Driscoll created an audio CD of talks he created as a response to an invitation by Pat Curtis, wife of former AFP National Director, Barry Curtis, to create some articles for the AFP Newsletter.

The audio material was recently generously provided by Herb to AFP for our use. It consists of 16 reflections about prayer, with background harp music, each of which is about 6 minutes in length.

When you access this Prayer Among Friends link, either by the web address below or the QR code to the side, you can find the prayer reflections and further information about Herb and the CD.

<https://anglicanprayer.org/index.php/hov/>





## Sensible Prayer – Sight

*Paul Dumbrille*

*This is the second of a series of articles exploring the use of our senses in connecting with God.*

If we restrict our understanding and the practice of prayer as being an activity only of the head, it can be likened to a bird trying to fly with one wing. We would be missing the richness of the use of the senses that God has given us. To “sense” something is to understand and experience life, gaining knowledge and achieving our potential. As we do with the physical world around in touching, tasting, smelling, seeing, and hearing, so, too, we can use our senses to learn about and experience God.



In this article we explore the use of our **Sense of Sight** and prayer. Severing a major link with the physical world by closing our eyes is not a precondition of prayer. Reading words is the most obvious and often use of the sense of sight in prayer. Reading scripture, spiritual classics, and articles by Christian authors often leads us into prayer. Many people begin their meditation sessions by reading a written selection before meditating in silence.

Another way of using our sense of sight is the use of visible images to serve as invitations to prayer. Many of us feel the presence of God powerfully when we are in nature with our eyes seeing the wonder of creation. We decorate our churches with objects that should be invitations to prayer. Another form of using our sense of sight in prayer is the use of icons. Sacred icons serve as bridges to Christ. The Eastern Christian churches are noted for their extensive use of icons. When praying with icons it is not the image itself that is important, it is letting the image be the bridge between us and God. It is the vehicle for God to speak to us. Praying with icons is a receiving form of prayer. Most often praying with icons is done in a quiet place, letting God’s spirit connect directly with our spirit.



Julian of Norwich Icon at  
Julian of Norwich Parish

As we go about our daily lives, we see evidence of God’s work everywhere. We revel in the created works of nature. We see evidence of God working through people to create great works of art and constructed homes and buildings, to name a few.

We are encouraged to see God in everything we see.

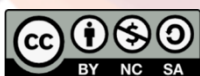
*Paul explores the senses of smell and taste in our next issue.*

## Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Canada)

PO Box 43021, London, ON N6J 0A7

[www.anglicanprayer.org](http://www.anglicanprayer.org)

This work is licensed under  
Creative Commons (CC-NC-SA 4.0)



[newsletter@anglicanprayer.org](mailto:newsletter@anglicanprayer.org)  
Next Newsletter: December 2023  
Submission deadline: November 30, 2023