



THE MONTRÉAL LAY READER

LE PRÉDICATEUR MONTRÉALAIS

The newsletter for lay readers of the Anglican Diocese of Montreal

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

With Gratitude from Your Editor!



Where did our summer go? Do you find, as I do, that the weeks just disappear?

Suddenly it was time for a newsletter, but a very different one as events are held online. So I sent you a plea for some idea of how you are all coping during this pandemic. And I have received an avalanche of replies!

I am so grateful to you all. It is fascinating to hear of so many creative opportunities for worship and for service. I am sure you will enjoy reading what your colleagues have shared. We will continue to participate in a variety of activities, using Zoom. At least we can enjoy seeing one another without masks!!

Both our Study Day and our Spring Retreat will take place online this year. Some details are included in this newsletter. Our goal is to continue our journey together in safety.

With God's blessings,

Sue Winn



THOMAS MERTON'S PRAYER FOR DISCERNMENT

At a very difficult and dark period in Thomas Merton's life he penned this prayer that has been such a help to so many people:

O Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going,
I do not see the road ahead of me,
I cannot know for certain where it will end.

Nor do I really know myself,
And that fact that I think
I am following Your will
Does not mean that I am actually doing
so.

But I believe
That the desire to please You
Does in fact please You.
And I hope I have that desire
In all that I am doing.

I hope that I will never do anything
Apart from that desire to please You.
And I know that if I do this
You will lead me by the right road,
Though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore I will trust You always
Though I may seem to be lost
And in the shadow of death.
I will not fear,
For You are ever with me,
And You will never leave me
To make my journey alone.

Source - <https://discernmentresources.blogspot.com>

Contributed by Lorne Eason



STUDY DAY AND COMMISSIONING SERVICE 2020 SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2020

with **Dr. Jesse Zink**
Principal of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College

Topic: What We Are Learning About Church From Covid19

To be held using ZOOM

Details will be sent later



Tentative Schedule:

9:30 am	Welcome
9:45 am	Morning Prayer
10:00 am	First Talk
11:00 am	Break
11:15 am	Second Talk with Discussions
12:15 pm	Closing Remarks; Questions; Prayers
2:00 pm	Commissioning Service with Bishop Mary

2021 SPRING RETREAT FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 23 AND SATURDAY, APRIL 24



with **Bishop Michael Oulton**

Topic: Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy

To be held using ZOOM



Details will be outlined in the Spring Newsletter



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Did You Wash Your Hands & Face, Brush Your Teeth & Comb Your Hair?



I hope all is well with everyone. I know the pandemic has put us all in an environment no one expected and has forced us to adopt new behaviours we would never have thought necessary.

Who would have known that physical distancing, frequent hand sanitizing and the wearing of masks would become the new social checklist?

It reminds me in a way of the checklist I had to satisfy in my childhood days, except the checklist was different. Almost every morning I could expect to hear; did you wash your face and hands, did you brush your teeth, did you comb your hair and did you make your bed? Answering no to any of these questions, and simply leaving it at that wasn't an option. These simple habits, which needed to be done, were in the long run for my benefit.

As much as I may have found these constant questions annoying, and as often as I didn't feel like doing what I was asked, fulfilling them helped form healthy habits in my young life that set a pattern for me as I grew older. Eventually the questions stopped, but the habits remained.

Today, as governments and health organizations constantly remind us to sanitize our hands, wear our masks and maintain physical distancing, we trust that such simple behaviours will provide us with a fair degree of protection from a virus that respects no one. Hopefully, our agreeing to abide by this new social checklist and repeatedly fulfilling its to do list, will gain for us a certain measure of safety and allow us to move about and interact with one another with a degree of freedom we would otherwise not enjoy. And hopefully, the diligent practise of these habits will help bring about an end to this insidious virus.

This new social checklist reminds me, not just of the one I had to address as a young boy, but of the one the apostle Paul constantly reminded the Christian community of, so that its leaders and members might know the peace of God, which would guard their hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, especially in times of uncertainty, stress and trial.

Paul writes, ***"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"***

(1 Thess. 5:16-18). It is a refrain he repeated in different ways over and over again to the Christian communities he came in contact with and/or wrote to.

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PASTOR'S MESSAGE

He reminds the church that such a practised pattern of behaviour works to instill in the practitioner **"the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, (which) will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus"** (Phil 4:4).

Perhaps the limitations, restrictions and stresses that we have been experiencing these last 6 months have put a damper on our prayer practise, muffled our joy and tempered our thankfulness. I know it has been a roller coaster ride for me.

Nevertheless, we can be encouraged in the knowledge that the Lord is near, that His Spirit is active even in our weakness, and that our saying YES to Paul's checklist; **Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances** will enable us to experience the peace of God which passes all understanding and know the joy of believing.

Yours in Christ,
Lorne +
 Pastor to the Lay Readers



A LAY READER EMERITUS MEDALLION



John Cromwell, a retired Lay Reader from All Saints by the Lake (formerly St. Andrew and St. Mark's, Dorval), is thrilled to wear his medallion presented to him by Yvonne Wakeland, on behalf of the Lay Reader Association. John served for many years as a faithful lay reader. He had to relinquish his lay reader duties because of medical issues but He has always been interested to follow the Lay Readers activities.

We all value the legacy of our Emeritus Lay Readers.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

His Eye Is On The Sparrow

For more than 8 months now we have been battling a pandemic and we all know this worrisome situation will be with us at least until we not only have a safe vaccine but also until we can produce it in high enough quantities to safeguard everyone.

If there is a message I would like to pass on to you it is to keep faith and not to give in to fear. Yes, this year has been a year of upheaval for our whole planet. COVID-19 has changed the world as we knew it. The number of cases is staggering, so is the number of deaths. Millions of others have been impacted both directly and indirectly and we don't know what lies ahead of us. It is normal to be afraid and stressed.

We are the lucky ones because God has repeatedly reassured us that we are never alone and that we will always be loved and cherished.

In Matthew chapter 10, Jesus was teaching his disciples that even though they were going to be facing some difficult times as his followers, they should not be afraid. He told them, "Two sparrows are sold for one copper coin, but not one single sparrow can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it. So don't be afraid, you are more valuable to God than many sparrows.

God says "All the days." Not just some of the days. He is with us in days of darkness and days of light, in days of sorrow and days of joy.

God tells us: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you." Isaiah 43:1b-2a (NIV)



Through every day the Spirit is with us and will remain with us for as long as we live. It is a promise, a pledge of unbroken love that binds us to the heart of the holy. Do not be afraid. Not today. Not any day. For the Maker of Days is with us and will stay with us forever. God is by our side. He will give us courage and fortitude to face the future however uncertain.

Father, we know that your eye is on the sparrow, and we know that you are watching over us. Amen.

God bless you all and keep you safe,
Anne Claude Geoffrion



CAN THIS PANDEMIC BE A GODSEND?

Whenever one wants to compare events in history or scripture, context must be considered. We are presently amid a pandemic, Covid-19, which has devastated the senior population particularly. Every year, however, countless seniors and others, with weakened immunity, die of flu-like diseases.

Some may inquire if this pandemic might be God's wrath poured out on human-kind for some wrong. It was custom, at one time, to regard any illness or infirmity as a punishment from God. The Old Testament story of Job and the ills that were inflicted on him, even though he was considered 'a righteous man'; or Abraham, commanded by God, to offer his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice... and being spared at the last second.

It is all about context: we can look at the social isolation that this pandemic has caused with a degree of relief or a degree of pestilence. We are blessed each day to wake up to a new day... in winter or in summer, spring and fall; the Lord God, in His wisdom, makes the sun shine on the poor and the rich... and we will prevail if we only take a step back and examine the context.

During the pestilences that befell Job, recorded in the Old Testament, Job's friends, and then his own family, behoved him to finally curse God, even if he would die. The story of Job serves to remind us that He who is in us, is greater than He that is in the world.



The stories of the heroes who have stood to help the people struck with Covid-19 speak to the very heart of the gospel message that Jesus taught in his earthly ministry. The Two Greatest Commandments took over and summarized the Ten Commandments that God gave to Moses. This pandemic has perhaps been a Godsend to the Church to reach out to the greater community; at a time when the community might be asking why this pandemic is happening. Why does God allow 'bad things' happen to good people?

The only answer is to take this period in context. While we may not be able to meet and greet each other in our local churches, we do, still, can communicate with our Creator, God. We have all the amazing technology of Zoom and Skype, and all the other methods of communication, that at one time were not available. We can survive this pandemic just as others before us survived their crises in life.

George Ryder
St. George's Chateauguay



MY LIFE DURING THE PANDEMIC

A Quote from Aldo Boitano of Chile -

"There is no greater fragility than living in Isolation and Omnipotence without knowing it."

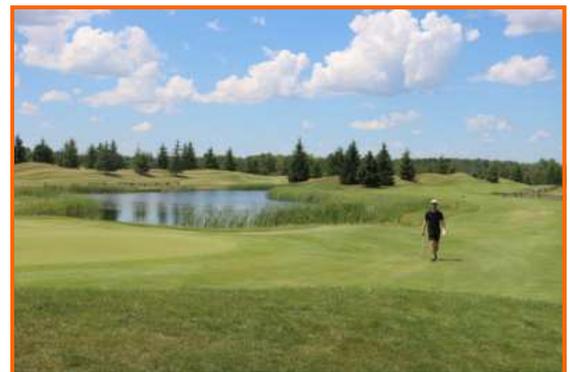
These last 6 months have made me feel very empathetic with the Israelites wandering aimlessly for 40 years in the wilderness. Having grown up in the Islands, social distancing, isolating myself, and communicating virtually is "not my bag".

When the restrictions started, it took me about a month before I accepted that life as I had known it had changed and wearing masks was going to be the norm for the foreseeable future. As I went for walks around the neighbourhood, the streets were bare. Seeing someone approaching, I would walk on the other side of the street.

I then started participating in daily evening prayer with members of the congregation. Zoom was a learning curve for me as I am not a whiz at computer technology. But this lifted the feeling of being isolated, especially when Sunday morning services started.

I miss the personal contact and face-to-face conversations, especially with family members. I have been able to devote more time to reading books and participating in courses and meetings virtually. My duties of pastoral care have been through telephone conversations and writing cards as visiting has been curtailed.

With the opening of golf courses, I have been able to have some exercise and commune with nature and the birds as I walk the course. It is a sport where I can distance myself from other players while having some interaction with them.



I am thankful that my health has been good and I am able to move around without difficulty. I am hoping that with scientific advances we will be able to overcome this pandemic within a reasonably short time.

I am also hoping that Church services will continue to be virtual so that those unable to attend in person can participate in the worship services.

Now that we have opened some churches for worship, I continue to pray that we will remain healthy and safe.

Blessings to you all!

Yvonne Wakeland



TO MY DEAR FRIENDS IN SAINT-SAUVEUR, MORIN HEIGHTS AND GRACE ARUNDEL IN PARTICULAR -

A very much loved and too young member of our parishes died after a short illness. We knew that many folks would want to come to her funeral so we had to be a bit imaginative.

I'd marked out the outside space for the churchyard gathering with canes at 2 metre centres the day before.

Thursday, 10th September

The funeral.

I went up early to pop dahlias in the top of all the 2 metre distanced marking canes in the gathering area for the "outside 30".

Regulation limited us to only have 30 folks inside the church building, but seemed to permit a separate gathering of 30 – with a really good sound system – in the churchyard.



And, since it's an open churchyard, other folks just placed themselves casually around the place. Social distancing wasn't complete, but it was adequate. It was a lovely service, the weather was glorious and I don't think that we as a church community could have done better under the circumstances.

But who would have thought, when I was scrabbling around trying to find dahlia tubers to plant, earlier in the year, that their flowers would find this use?

My love in Christ to you all.

Peter Crawford

Reader licenced both in the Benefice of Long Ashton with Flax Bourton and Barrow Gurney, Diocese of Bath and Wells, UK, and also Serving in the Parish of the Lower Laurentians – when Covid permits.



UNE RÉFLEXION APRÈS SIX MOIS DE SERVICES EN LIGNE : OÙ S'EN VA-T-ON ?

Pendant plus de six mois, nous avons célébré uniquement en ligne. Les services de la cathédrale Christ Church sont des liturgies interactives sur Zoom. Au moment où j'écris ces lignes, la cathédrale ouvre graduellement pour les prières et les services en personne, mais la majorité des membres continuent de célébrer en ligne.

Avons-nous appris quelque chose de ces six mois ? Qui ne se rappelle pas des sombres prédictions de la fin de l'Église anglicane d'ici 2040 ? Dans ces nouvelles de janvier, il n'était souvent pas clair de quelle sorte d'Église on parlait. Et combien de fois, lors d'une prière du matin, n'aurions-nous pas voulu d'un « vrai service », c'est-à-dire d'une eucharistie ?

- **L'Église, c'est avant tout la communauté.** Au cours de cette période, les différentes communautés se sont toutes maintenues. J'ai remarqué une forte cohésion de toute la communauté. Malgré la distance physique, on continue de célébrer ensemble, mais aussi d'échanger et de prier les uns pour les autres.
- **Dans l'ensemble, presque tout le monde continue de participer aux services.** Notre défi consiste à conserver une connexion valable avec les quelques personnes frileuses à la participation en ligne. On assiste également à certains mouvements : quelques anciens nous reviennent et d'autres nous quittent momentanément pour visiter d'anciennes communautés.
- **On dessert un tant soit peu de nouvelles régions.** Nous avons observé ce phénomène dans nos deux principales communautés et de façon plus évidente dans la communauté francophone où 10 % de nos membres viennent de régions non desservies par des communautés anglicanes ni même par toute autre communauté protestante.
- **Nous avons même pu développer de nouveaux services sur semaine.** Pour une communauté aussi dispersée que celle de la cathédrale, voilà un bénéfice insoupçonné de la pandémie. Compte tenu des horaires de travail extrêmement variés de nos membres, il était presque impossible de réunir la communauté francophone sur semaine. Or, depuis mars, nous avons une prière du soir sur semaine qui réunit régulièrement de 12 à 20 personnes.
- **On voit les gens les yeux dans les yeux.** À l'église, tout le monde regarde dans la même direction : le célébrant fait face à tous. Et même lorsqu'on forme un cercle, seulement la moitié des gens sont en face de nous. La beauté d'une plateforme interactive comme Zoom est que l'on se voit tous et toutes directement dans les yeux. Nous sommes tous égaux devant Dieu, mais aussi devant notre communauté !

suite à la page suivante



UNE RÉFLEXION APRÈS SIX MOIS DE SERVICES EN LIGNE : OÙ S'EN VA-T-ON ?

- **Les visiteurs se font très rares.** La cathédrale étant en zone touristique, nous accueillons toujours quelques visiteurs le dimanche. Septembre est aussi et davantage lors de la rentrée en septembre. Évidemment la plupart ne viennent qu'une ou deux fois, mais certaines de ces personnes sont des gens en quête d'une nouvelle paroisse. Je doute fort que le renouvellement ait été aussi important cette année.
- **En tant que lecteur laïc,** prêcher ou enseigner devant une caméra est étrange, car cela limite la gestuelle. Par contre, il est beaucoup plus facile de moduler rapidement le message en suivant le regard des gens.

Un regard vers l'avenir

En conclusion, ces six mois en ligne ont été un défi, mais certainement pas une pénitence ni un exil. Cela dit, est-ce que j'ai hâte au retour à la normale ? Certainement ! J'ai hâte de célébrer en chantant pour vrai en groupe et surtout sans entendre « Allume ton micro ! » ou d'autres remarques du genre. Et surtout, j'ai bien hâte de célébrer de nouveau l'eucharistie et de nous réunir autour d'un succulent dîner communautaire sans artifice électronique. Par ailleurs, je suis aussi conscient que ce n'est pas tout le monde qui apprécie également la liturgie en ligne et que plusieurs ont hâte de revenir célébrer en personne.

Bref, l'expérience des six derniers mois me démontre clairement que l'Église de Dieu a un avenir, peu importe le nombre de bâtiments dédiés au culte. Elle m'a surtout appris – concrètement – que l'Église est réellement une communauté de fidèles et que l'Église de Dieu a un avenir, peu importe le nombre de bâtiments dédiés au culte. Elle nous a également permis de découvrir qu'il y a d'autres façons de se réunir et de prier qui nous donnent davantage de flexibilité.

En terminant, certaines régions du Québec sont un véritable désert d'églises anglicanes : les communautés anglophones sont vieillissantes et fort dispersées et les paroisses francophones sont presque inexistantes. Il serait peut-être plus que temps de planifier à long terme le développement de communautés en ligne ou hybride pour desservir les gens de toutes les régions.

Michel Gagnon



PANDEMIC PRESENCE: SUNDAY MORNING FROM THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS

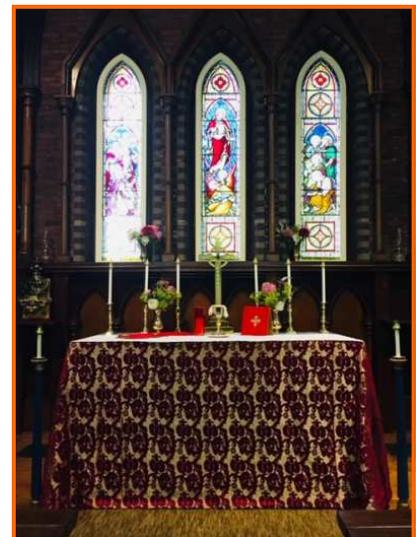
It has now been over 150 days since a global pandemic has forced the temporary closure of our church buildings for our own health and safety. While our buildings might be closed, Covid19 has not closed the Gospel, nor has our ministry to God's people been shut down. I have been amazed by the quick ways that our Anglican churches have grappled with digital technologies and methods of outreach in this new, strange world that we find ourselves in.



Out in the Eastern Townships, where I have been starting my ministry as a newly pandemic-ordained priest, we have been hosting our Sunday morning worship services on Zoom since March. The transition was not overnight. We began with doing online Gospel Based Discipleship, a form of group Bible study and prayer which asks us to consider the words of Jesus at the very centre of our lives. The Sunday Gospel passage is read three times, during each of which three questions are considered: What words or images stand out from the passage? What is Jesus saying to you in this passage? And, what is Jesus calling you to do? (I often add a fourth question as take-away homework: What are you going to do about it?).

Our meditation and sharing was nestled between an opening hymn and prayers. Because we had a time of heartfelt sharing at the centre of our worship, we decided to not couple our Zoom services with YouTube or Facebook Live; this was intended to create a safer, and more open space for sharing.

By Easter, our Zoom services were more recognisable in the structure of Morning Prayer (following the order of the Book of Alternative Services). A PowerPoint presentation with an order of service is screen-shared on Zoom for all to follow along. We have a rota for online preaching, including some truly amazing sermons from lay members of our congregation. Our organist provides music from the grand piano in her home; we sing hymns and the psalm, as well as metrical settings of the Venite and the Nicene Creed. Except for the musician, each of us remains muted to preserve the sound quality on Zoom, but we still raise a joyful noise to God each in our own homes. Prayers are offered on behalf of the community. Images and artwork (often photos of the region taken by myself or Archdeacon Tim Smart) accompany our worship, giving new life and beauty to the stories of the Bible.



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PANDEMIC PRESENCE: SUNDAY MORNING FROM THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS

We opted for Zoom as a worship platform as it provides for more active lay participation: each of the Biblical readings and prayers are offered by different people. Those who do not have internet still join us on the phone. It truly feels like worship — the community is gathered around Word and prayer and song — in a way that couldn't happen if I was doing a live broadcast alone in an empty church. We end our Sundays with a digital coffee hour, dividing the online congregation into smaller groups using the Zoom "breakout room" feature for a time of more intimate conversation and catching up. We have also had a mid-week Townships Bible Study and a book club on Zoom.

Bonds and connections, friendships in Christ, are being formed and strengthened across the region. Indeed, Zoom has been a real gift in doing ministry across an area as big as the Townships: what is normally 16 small, rural churches spread out across over 80km, has become a single regional service, drawing on average over 70 people each week. Our worship is titled "Sunday Morning from the Eastern Townships," but in reality we regularly draw in people from beyond the region, including Ottawa, Vermont, even Europe. We have even gotten a few new faces, as it seems easier for people to invite someone to church for the first time by sharing a URL link or a phone number than it is to say, "Meet me in front of Grace Church at 10:30 on Sunday". I hope and pray that this new sense of regional community and unity can be maintained post-pandemic (whenever that is!).

The technology isn't perfect. Internet sometimes fails, Zoom can go down, sound quality is never absolutely fabulous, and nothing can replace the feeling of presence when we are all physically gathered together, but the technology has been a real blessing in maintaining our Christian community during the pandemic. And, as strange as it is for me to preach or bless through my laptop, I am constantly reminded of the many faces and names on Zoom — windows reaching beyond a computer screen into peoples' homes and lives.

May God's Holy Spirit continue to blow with a breath of hope and renewal in our uncertain world. Amen.

Rev. Tyson L. Røsborg
curate



LET THERE BE LIGHT!

Sitting in the kitchen this morning drinking a cup of tea, these words came to me:

LET THERE BE LIGHT, AND THERE WAS LIGHT.

In the beginning (**Genesis 1**) the Bible says that there was:

- *Darkness,*
- *Emptiness....void*
- *Confusion.....chaos*

God waited on the Holy Spirit to move, to hover over the earth, and then He spoke these words: "**Let there be light.**"

God created the world that He wanted. He created the atmosphere that He wanted. He said it was all GOOD.

In today's world, we are seeing all these images again....*darkness, emptiness and confusion.* And so what are we to do?

- Stay focused on Jesus.....The Light of the world.
- Imitate our Father.
- And in whatever situation that we are facing today declare: **LET THERE BE LIGHT!** Let us say it as often as we need to, and then wait prayerfully and watch *Transformations take place.*

God bless you as you light up the world around you.

Good Morning!God bless you. I love you.



Marge K.



ST. JAMES ANGLICAN CHURCH, ORMSTOWN



Barbara Whyte wrote to say that some members of this 189 year old church, unable to get together for summer services, decided to give their time to repairing the outside of this historic place of worship. The church needed this loving care, and it was possible to do the work, maintaining physical distancing!

A very moving reopening service was held on September 20th. An elderly parishioner, Marjorie Coffin, whose husband had been a well-loved lay reader many years ago, came to inspect the work that had been done.

Barbara added a thought for all of us: *"Painting our church is another way to have a service, worshipping God by taking care of God's house."*



VISITING PLACES OF WORSHIP, FAR AND WIDE, THROUGH THE MAGIC OF TECHNOLOGY

Schools were hurriedly shut down on March 13, 2020 by our Quebec Government as the Pandemic swept through our cities. On March 15, some churches closed their doors. However, on that same day, we at St. Paul's, held our last service and were delighted to celebrate Lay Reader, Ivan Harding on his 90th Birthday. A few days later a general lockdown was announced. This included no church services in our church buildings. We also could not be visited by our grandchildren because both my husband and I were well past 70 years of age.

So, not wanting to be rushed to the ICU of the hospital at 120 km/hr., we adhered to all the protocols. We were hopeful that in weeks life would return to normal. Here we are, six months later, still expecting a return to normal. Instead, we have been given the idea that there will be a "new normal".

In an effort to see as many good things as possible in a bad situation, I accepted an invitation from my friend, Stacey Neale to join Rev. Grace and the people of All Saints by the Lake for Evening Prayer, Monday to Saturday at 5:00 pm via Zoom. I had taken two courses with the MDTC in 2018 and 2019 via Zoom. So, I eagerly joined. I was delighted with their welcome and to this day, I join them every evening. As a matter of fact, I have missed very few sessions. I just love being with them and we all look forward to praying together.

During the week, I joined such events as Lectio Bible Study, Compline, Neil's Let's Talk and Passing the Plate. I also had the opportunity to continue my Wednesday Bible Study with St. George's, Place du Canada, via Zoom. Prior to COVID, we used to start with Holy Eucharist but now we start with Morning Prayer.

I was very happy to join the people of the Laurentian Ministry in a six week on line book study on Materiality and Resistance, by Walter Brueggemann led by Professor Kirkpatrick.

And, what an enjoyable course on Hymns and Hymnody, taught by Canon Giuseppe Gagliano! I learned so much!

Personally, because of the lockdown, Zoom brought me Sunday services from my brother in Barbados, who is the Pastor of a Wesleyan Holiness church there. Also, right after my own church Sunday services, we joined the service of my brother-in-law who is the Bishop of a Pentecostal church in Boston. Also, I had the pleasure of browsing and listening to the various Anglican Church services in Barbados, U.K., Canada and U.S.

My regulars are the recorded services presided by Archdeacon Bill Gray and Devotions by Rev. Eleanor, and Morning Prayer from Canterbury Cathedral with Dean Robert. Sometimes I listen to AMATO, Forward Day by Day, or Our Daily Bread. One of the things I appreciate is the many points of view on the same passages of Scripture. It is a fascinating way of learning.

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VISITING PLACES OF WORSHIP, FAR AND WIDE, THROUGH THE MAGIC OF TECHNOLOGY

Our own church building will be open for services with restrictions, effective October 11th. Even though I am not sure whether I will be returning, I am happy that we are making some progress.

While, like the children of Israel, we may be asking, 'Is the Lord among us or not?' we can take the advice of the words of 2 Chronicles 7:14, and pray earnestly that the Lord will heal our land. Now, like never before, we can apply the advice of Proverbs 3:5, " Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding."

I am sure that we will be better people at the end of this pandemic.

Valerie Bennett

DISCOVERING OUR CONNECTION TO GOD AND CREATION

This past summer has been a blessing since I was able to discover a real gem in Lachine; that of the area south of the Lakeshore Road (Blvd. St. Joseph) that includes the Lachine Canal, The Jette and Rene Levesque Park.

My work schedule in the past had not permitted me to take such long walks but since the passing of my beloved dog "Buddy" in February, these walks provided me an opportunity to explore and experience nature in areas that I had not explored in the past.



The month of May in the Park provided the promise of renewal with the return of the geese and the ducks and the joy of seeing their very young. Turtles provided another element of joy when I discovered five (5) large ones sun bathing on top of a wharf in the Lachine Canal.

My walks to the Canal and beyond also provided me with the opportunity to bring a brown bag lunch and sit either enjoying the peace of the Jette and the boats docked there or looking out on Lac St. Louis and enjoying the rhythm of the water as it made its way to the St. Lawrence.



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DISCOVERING OUR CONNECTION TO GOD AND CREATION

Nature also provided so many blessings with the canopy of old trees, some whose trunks have weathered many a cold winter. Sometimes I would hear the familiar knocking of a wood pecker, and if I was in the right place at the right time, I would enjoy, if only briefly, the presence of a ground hog.

Rene Levesque Park in Lachine embraces life whether it be human, animal, bird, fish or vegetation. If one spends time there one becomes aware of how connected we are to God's creation and how blessed we are to experience with all our senses how perfect that creation is.

And God has given us emotion to experience His creation with such feelings of joy and gratitude but also with a spirit to recognize that we are so much more than we realize. We are connected to the universe as a whole – every rhythm, every beat, ties in to our being part of God's great energy of love and imagination in creation.



This past Spring and Summer has had many limitations but I have found a tremendous freedom walking with God and being one with Him and His World. It is my hope and prayer that in sharing my story these past months that you will discover the love and joy of a closer walk with God.

Karen Birkett

VESTMENTS FOR LAY READERS

If any of our members know of an individual or a church that might have a cassock, a surplice or a retired blue scarf, please contact The Rev. Lorne Eason, Pastor of Lay Readers to donate or sell these items for a small price.

Please contact Lorne at
leason@montreal.anglican.ca

AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCOVER THE GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW!



Last February, on the coldest day of the year, I travelled with six others to the Presbyterian College to meet with the Rev. Hilary Bogert-Winkler, who teaches in the Montreal Diocesan College. She instructed us on how to present the Gospel of St. Matthew to our local communities. I had written to my own community in Manoir Westmount to discern their interest in learning about this gospel. I received twenty-one replies!

Once the Pandemic came along, we were not able to meet until September. We broke into two groups and have been allowed to meet in our Activity Room, masked and well-spaced. We have concluded the first five sessions. Another group of nine sessions will begin on October 7th.

This study has been amazingly well-received. I believe part of the success is because most of us have known the Bible in little snippets each Sunday, but not as a continuous story. Another benefit is getting to know one another in a completely new context. As we always eat in two sittings in the dining room, we do not have an opportunity to know residents in the next sitting. I was delighted to meet a

woman who had lived on the next street to mine in Toronto, and we had attended the same public school, three years apart. Her granddaughter lived three years in China, a country I know well.

Of course, the best part is that we are getting to be on familiar terms with St. Matthew!

Shirley Newell

THE LAY READERS' ASSOCIATION OFFERS BURSARIES

Every active Lay Reader who participates in courses of ongoing religious studies is entitled to \$100 per year to assist with the cost of their study. Students who register for EFM (Education for Ministry) programs may receive \$150 per year.

Please send a request to our treasurer,
Ann Cumyn, acumyn@sympatico.ca

ZOOM USE: EXPERIENCES & LESSONS LEARNED BY LITURGICAL ZOOMERS!



[Image source: All Saints, Dorval QC]

EXPERIENCES: Well we are certainly now aware that the Covid19 Pandemic has permanently changed the way that most of our churches have been conducting their Sunday Morning and Weekday Evening Services over the last 6 months! Just think about it! Even 9 months ago, who would have dreamed of having such a radical change in how we would be conducting our weekly Church Services. In retrospect, little did we Lay Readers realize that when we had Lee-Ann Matthews spend a day with us at our last “face-to-face” Workshop, on January 25th, 2020, discussing and demonstrating examples of **“On-Line Worshipping”**, that only within a few months, many of us, our Incumbents and congregations, would become heavily involved in producing and running such services within our own parishes!

Thus **God certainly did move in a highly “mysterious way”**; the consequence of which, showed many of us this new and exciting Zoom methodology, allowing us to “collectively” renew our praying together. Using this online approach also allowed us to retain most of our members. In fact, using Zoom, or similar types of software, we expanded our outreach to others within our communities and beyond. We have thus used this technology to facilitate online Parish Meetings, Bible Studies, Courses, Workshops, Planning Sessions and Messy Church.

However, Zoom does NOT replace person-to-person contact, and unfortunately the Incumbent cannot conduct a service of Holy Communion, physically giving the host to their members. Thus many of us still have a “spiritual void” and we wholeheartedly miss our main spiritual reason for attending physical liturgical services, to have Holy Supper with our Lord Jesus!

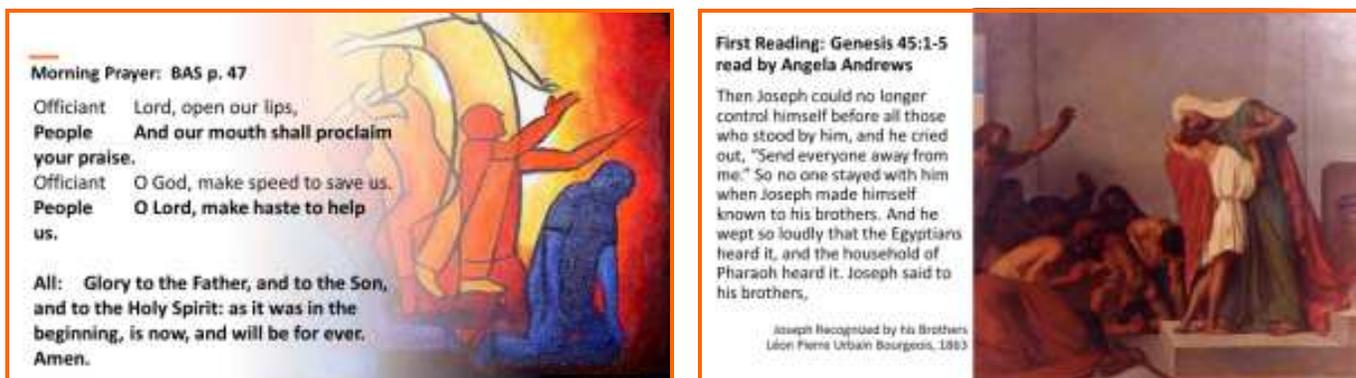
Zoom does take time, proper planning and a few key volunteer parishioners, “Techies”, Hosts, Readers, and Intercessors to learn, practice and really make this technology work properly!

Overall, while an Incumbent, Preacher, Lay Reader, or other person can comfortably manage a Zoom session and conduct their service, for a small number of participants it can become rather chaotic! It’s best to assign “someone else” as the Zoom Co-Host. This person can manage the Zoom session while the Incumbent is free to concentrate on smoothly conducting the service. While the Leader is busy conducting the service, a Co-Host can mute/unmute participants as needed, rename a participant, and efficiently look after other Zoom administrative functions.

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ZOOM USE: EXPERIENCES & LESSONS LEARNED BY LITURGICAL ZOOMERS!

At All Saints by the Lake, Dorval QC, we utilized a “team” approach: Incumbent, Co-Hosts/Software Techies, Organist/Choir Master and a Tenor or Soprano Soloist. As well we had the paid Church Administrator, who previously, had made up just Weekly Church Bulletins; introduced to, practicing and using PowerPoint Software. Slides would be used to show the Morning Prayer Text extracts from the Book of Alternative Services (BAS). In addition, we used appropriate Biblical images from the Internet, or from the Diocese’s Digital Image Library (Lee-Ann Matthews). Once obtained, the digital BAS text was copy/pasted to one half of each slide, and on the other half of each was an appropriate image. These PowerPoint slides were used within the Zoom Service presentation to our congregation, using the “Share Screen” function of Zoom. **See examples of our PowerPoint digital “creativity” below:**



[Image source: All Saints, Dorval QC]

We quickly discovered that having a person(s) singing the Hymns and playing the Organ Music “live”, in conjunction with PowerPoint text slides; resulted in a poor and almost inaudible sound quality. So our “Techie Team” looked at various possible alternatives to alleviate this problem. They soon discovered that within the PowerPoint software setup, there was a feature whereby you could “embed pre-recorded digital files”, containing both music and voice. This was truly a Godsend for us, as our chosen Sunday Hymns could then be “pre-recorded” electronically at home, by the Organist and Soloist on their laptop’s .mp3 file; then sent to the Techies, a couple of days before the Sunday Prayer Service. This task was usually completed, by the Techie Team, Friday evening or Saturday morning, so that ALL Audio slides could be reviewed and tested. Once the Audio file was correctly imbedded onto the slide, you had a “grey imaged loudspeaker” on it; and all the Co-Host had to do, was “double-click” on that loudspeaker and the now very clear Organ Music and Solo Voice would play, in conjunction with each slide shown. See PowerPoint slides on next page, using the “Audio” (grey loudspeaker) function:

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ZOOM USE: EXPERIENCES & LESSONS LEARNED BY LITURGICAL ZOOMERS!

<p>Sequence Hymn: "She Came to Jesus", tune at #505</p> <p>1. She came to Jesus from outside the fold- Canaanite woman! Persistent and bold! Looking to Jesus, she wanted to see one who would help her and set her child free.</p> <p><small>The Canaanite Woman, from the Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry. The Condé Museum, Chantilly.</small></p>			<p>Closing Hymn: CP#330, "O Praise ye the Lord"</p> <p>1. O praise ye the Lord! Give praise in the height; rejoice in God's Word, ye angles of light; ye heavens, adore him by whom ye were made, and worship before him in brightness arrayed.</p>
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[Image source: All Saints, Dorval QC]

LESSONS LEARNED: Overall, through "trial and error", we discovered and concluded the following **pros and cons** about the use of **Zoom** for online Services:

Advantages of Zoom:

- i. *Able to bring many parishioners together "virtually" on-line. They are visible and audible (as desired) to each other, directly from their homes, cottages, or wherever they have their laptop; I-Pad or I-Phone. In addition, those who are not quite up-to-date with computer technology, can at least "phone-in and listen" to the service; and even "speak" to others, when "unmuted". Usually by the end of 1-2 Zoom services, most individuals were fairly comfortable with the basic functions.*
- ii. *Well-suited for Churches who may not have the time, extensive technical skill sets, or numerous resources to do a typical "live-streaming" setup. It's a "cloud-based" online software solution that can be set up and run without much tweaking, or special equipment, for up to 100 users. Also you can mute people upon their entry into the virtual Service, without hearing any ambient household noises.*
- iii. *A 1-month subscription is an excellent cost-effective method to start with. If your Service has fewer than 100 people and (if) shorter than 40 minutes, using Zoom is free! For more participants or extended events, the church would need a paid-plan from Zoom. For such info, plus "How to Use" Hints etc., do check out their website at: <https://zoom.us>.*
- iv. *Has a "break out rooms" feature, allowing parishioners to have an after Service "virtual coffee" together, or discuss important church or local affairs. Once time is up, the Incumbent can bring everyone back into the main dismissal.*

Disadvantages of Zoom:

- i. *The main one is: Current inability to have more than 2-3 persons and/or live Music playing simultaneously, and to hear such with any real clarity. Thus the Co Host needs to use the "Mute All" button having individuals speak "one-at-a-time", as well as when listening to any Hymns/Music.*

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ZOOM USE: EXPERIENCES & LESSONS LEARNED BY LITURGICAL ZOOMERS!

- ii. *Variable sound quality, ranging from "Fair to poor and static", especially with any "real-time" music and singing. In fact for using singing and hymns, the **ONLY** way to make them fairly audible, is to "pre-record Hymns" on a **separate musical/voice computer-file** (like MP3); a couple of days **prior** to the Sunday service. Then this digital "Audio file" can be merged into the PowerPoint slides, which show the actual "hymn text and image".*
- iii. *Unpredictable Service "outages/interruptions", especially during our early weeks of using it. This was usually due to either initial Zoom Software problems or Wi-Fi/Router Line problems. However we did experience improved Zoom performance on these points, over time. Unfortunately there can be occasional "Zoom Bombing", whereby "Outside Hackers", will penetrate through its Security features and/or User passwords, and disrupt the Church Service. Avoiding this type of incident was generally done by, NOT publicizing outside of the congregation the meeting's "password". Fortunately at All Saints we never had this "Hacking" intrusion occur.*

CONCLUSION: Well, certainly for now, as of September 26th, 2020, it looks like we are going to *continue on suffering the afflictions and upheavals of our global Covid19 pandemic*, for months to come. Although some Diocesan Churches have opened their doors to limited attendance (25 pre-registered, masked, socially distanced in alternate pews; with online Zoom as an option, for all others). However I suspect that if this 2nd Covid19 Wave worsens, that we shall all be reverting to full-time virtual online Church Services again! (Sigh ...) Unfortunately, this will likely last over the oncoming winter and early Spring 2021 months. It's VERY sad indeed, as we ALL are truly longing to return to meeting and hugging our family and friends and physically sharing the Holy Supper with our Lord Jesus Christ! Sadly it is unlikely to be, for the foreseeable future. However, I am quite confident that, even after this pandemic has cleared-up and passed us, that a new and exciting *21st Century hybrid form of combined "in-person" and "virtual" on-line Church Services and offerings, will emerge and stay with us!* Using this "hybrid" elixir will likely allow such on-line Churches to reach even more individuals throughout the various social layers of our society, and potentially increase our Churches current declining membership! Who knows, perhaps the Anglican Church membership by 2040 (re: January 2020 Anglican Journal Article "Gone by 2040?" - https://www.anglicanjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/aj-jan2020_web.pdf) - may NOT decline, but have INCREASED! **Yes indeed, God certainly does move in "mysterious ways!"**

Or, as our Holy Scripture states in **Romans 11:33-36** (NRSV): *"O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?". "Or who has given a gift to him, to receive a gift in return?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen."*

Rob McLachlan

Lay Reader - All Saints by the Lake, Dorval QC



We thank Colin Winn for his photos reflecting the beauty of our natural world.