



# THE MONTRÉAL LAY READER

## LE PRÉDICATEUR MONTRÉALAIS

The newsletter for lay readers of the Anglican Diocese of Montreal

Le bulletin des prédicateurs laïcs du diocèse anglican de Montréal

SEPTEMBER 2021

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## STUDY DAY AND COMMISSIONING SERVICE 2021

### Good Grief: Loss and Hope in a Time of Uncertainty



**The Venerable Tim Smart is the Archdeacon of Bedford and the Richelieu Regional Ministry of Brome/Sutton.** We first knew Tim as our Pastor of Lay Readers! He is an old friend who has known us and supported our ministry for many years.

Tim has worked in prison ministry, and in ecumenical endeavors. He will be our speaker on Study Day on November 13th, 2021. Tim was pleased to be invited to spend time with us again. It was our hope that we might be able to meet face to face for this Study Day, however, we continue to experience the threat of Covid 19, so we must meet again on ZOOM. With caution we continue to travel through our second year of this pandemic.

Tim will address the topic of grief and loss. He will encourage us to move towards healing and wholeness, with thanksgiving for lessons learned, and gratitude for our God who holds us firmly in His hands.

#### Tentative Schedule

- 9:00 Welcome
- 9:30 Morning Prayer
- 9:45 First Talk
- 11:00 Break
- 11:15 Second Talk with Discussions
- 12:15 Closing Remarks, Questions, Prayer
- 2:00 Commissioning Service with Bishop Mary



## PASTOR'S MESSAGE

### Exit Cards

I was reading an article from the "First Person" section of the Globe and Mail recently and I came across a term I've never heard before. It is the term Exit Card.

An Exit Card, as used in this article, "...is a written student response to a question posed at the end of a class. Students give their Exit Cards to the teacher before they leave the classroom and the teacher uses them as a quick check to see what they really remembered from the lesson."

The author of the article goes on to say that he is retiring from teaching and is now writing his Exit Card to record some of the things that he as a teacher has learned from his students throughout his career.

He goes on to highlight some of those lessons, noting such insights as "kindness as a simple act with profound effect," "being a positive influence on others," and "bravery as the capacity to perform properly even when scared half to death."

After reading the article I thought about our Lay Readers. I wondered what they may have learned in their ministry as Lay Readers over the years, both before and during the pandemic. What could each teach and learn from one another in listening to or reading about each other's experiences, both positive and negative. And what could I, as Pastor to the Lay Readers, learn from the sharing of these experiences.

I am convinced that God teaches us in many different and unexpected ways, and I am persuaded, that some of that teaching comes in part through one another's experiences. As Paul writes in Colossians 3:16, "...Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives..." (NLT). And as Proverbs 19:20 urges, "Get all the advice and instruction you can, so you will be wise the rest of your life" (NLT).

Not all wisdom comes from scholars, priests, teachers or books. Some comes from the daily experiences in life, from trying to live out our faith and ministry with authenticity and integrity set in so many different contexts.

It is my hope that in the new year we will spend some time together, hopefully in-person, to share with one another the responses on our "Exit Cards," what it is that has been learned as lay readers in God's ministry. And in so doing "... motivate one another to acts of love and good works" (Hebrews 10:24, NLT)

Yours in Christ,  
Lorne+  
Pastor to the Lay Readers



<p>How do you feel about today's lesson?</p>		
<p>Why?</p>		

**WILD GEESE****BY MARY OLIVER**

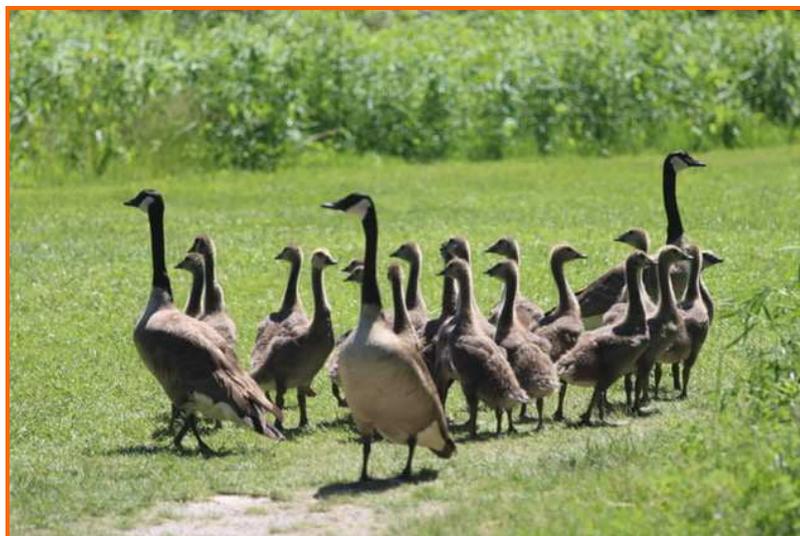
You do not have to be good.  
You do not have to walk on your knees  
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.  
You only have to let the soft animal of your body  
love what it loves.  
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.  
Meanwhile the world goes on.

Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain  
are moving across the landscapes,  
over the prairies and the deep trees,  
the mountains and the rivers.  
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,  
are heading home again.

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,  
the world offers itself to your imagination,  
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting  
over and over announcing your place  
in the family of things.

From: Dream Work

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Life in Transition

I hope you had an enjoyable summer and that this newsletter finds you in good physical, emotional and spiritual health. I hope you were able to finally visit family, recharge your batteries and have a more "normal" life, albeit with a few caveats since we cannot yet drop our vigilance in the face of Covid.

By the time this Fall Newsletter is out we will be close to Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving of course means Fall and Fall for me means the return of the geese on their fly-by to their Winter grounds.

A few days ago I woke up to the honking of a flock, one of hundreds that will pass over my house in the next few months. I don't really know why their call affects me so much, but hearing and seeing these remarkable birds makes me feel very much part of God's creation. I feel I am witnessing an event that has been happening for thousands and thousands of years and it touches a chord deep down inside me. I feel one with God's universe, one with God's creation.



Once they had flown over, I lay awake unable to get back to sleep. As I was drawn into the still quiet moments of the night, I heard lyrics playing in my head. "Your constant grace remains my cornerstone" I have no idea where that came from but I looked it up and it is part of a hymn called "Jesus we Love you", one I am not familiar with. I must have heard it somewhere and somehow the words came back to me, nudged no doubt by the Holy Spirit. A feeling of joy and peace filled my heart as I thought of what a perfect Thanksgiving reflection those words express.

The years come and go. Life's transitions continue but my constant cornerstone truly remains the mercy and grace of God.

Psalm 136, beautifully expresses what my heart feels. "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, ... Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven! For His mercy endures forever."

Even amidst the pandemic and all its related problems, even amidst my present constant worries for my friends safety in Afghanistan, God's good heart remains constant amidst the ever changing days of my life. He has been and continues to be faithful to me.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I reflect on this last year, my heart is full. Life continues to be about change and growth. I thank God for His constant grace that enables me to live well, brings joy into all areas of my life, and gives me hope for all of my tomorrows. May our awesome God's constant grace give you hope for all your tomorrows.

I wish you and your family a Happy and Blessed Thanksgiving.

Yours in Christ,  
**Anne Claude Geoffrion**



### THE LAY READERS' ASSOCIATION OFFERS BURSARIES

Every active Lay Reader who participates in courses of ongoing religious studies, including EFM, is entitled to \$200 per year to assist with the cost of their study.

Please send a request to our treasurer,  
Ann Cumyn, [acumyn@sympatico.ca](mailto:acumyn@sympatico.ca)



## A VERY LEGITIMATE CONCERN

It seems that our society has been closed for a very long time, and it is normal for people to want to associate with each other as they wish.

But I am concerned that we overlook the caution expressed by the medical and scientific community about the variants of the Covid-19 exploding into the Fourth wave. Reading the medical expertise, one cannot conclude that having two doses of the Covid-19 vaccine will grant anyone total immunity from getting the Delta variant of Covid-19, the variant that seems to be catching up steam.

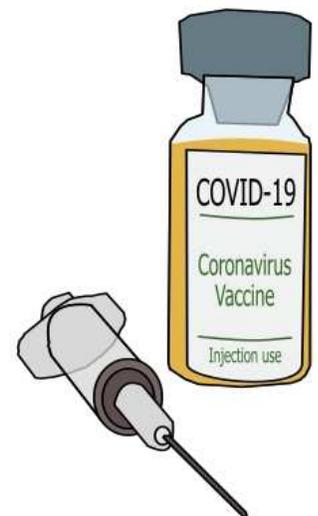
We still have anti-vaxers and people who cannot have the vaccine for medical reasons, people who have had only one shot, and, I wonder, does every type of vaccine: Moderna, Pfizer, etc... guarantee the same efficacy? The more we break the rules of common sense, the more we expose ourselves, and our vulnerable loved ones to the danger of contracting the Covid-19 virus and becoming gravely ill.

The Diocese of Montreal has relied on the advice of the Provincial Health Authorities. However, some of the Provincial decisions seem to be based on economic pressure. Stores, bars, restaurants, small business owners are clamoring for their businesses to reopen. Careful and responsible steps must be taken by every organization within the Province and the Diocese to ensure the safety of everyone involved. A registration of every person who will attend 'live events' should be primary, and Zoom or YouTube or Facebook should be offered for any who cannot physically attend an event for whatever reason.

If we keep up with the news associated with Covid-19 the numbers have recently increased sharply. The Delta variant has exploded into the equation and affected our population. Even the infectious disease experts do not all agree with each other about the restrictions that are necessary to keep our vulnerable population safe. That is the greater problem. What is safe?

My only concern is the health of every person in our community and especially those who might be seriously endangered if they would contract Covid-19.

**George Ryder, R.N.** (Retired)



## WILL COVID TURN INTO THE COMMON COLD?

***Will COVID turn into the common cold?*** This was a headline I found in an August issue of The Spectator. The suggestion is: as different places see a fourth wave, that from now on COVID will always be with us, like the common cold and the seasonal flu. Each of these latter two infections has carried with them a number of annual fatalities and increased risks for those with weakened immune systems.

Now, as governments around the world, and in all levels of jurisdiction, are rolling back the measures taken to control the COVID infection, we can expect the church's leaders to do the same. But should we return to normal, meaning the way we were, as so many have dreamt of over the last two years?

If the government says I no longer need to wear a mask in a store or mall or office; should I stop, or continue; and what should I expect of others.

I have been told to keep at least six feet from the person next to me, to reduce the chance of infection; should I keep doing this, or return to the norm for this society before COVID. We know that different cultures have kept different zones around individuals as a matter of cultural norms, anywhere from 18 inches to 3 feet, but should I now expect a new cultural norm of six feet for all conversations. Should I expect that for the long term all establishments like churches, theatres and conference halls will offer me the possibility of sitting close to my relatives, but at least 6 feet from someone not in that group. Will you be offended, if you feel you are a good friend, if I won't let you closer than 6 feet, unless you are wearing a face covering?

Will government offices continue to have Plexiglas between me and the public servant? Can I now ask to be met by a public servant wearing a niqab, because it makes me feel more comfortable and less at risk of infection?

When we look at the bible we see a clear pattern in the messages of Jesus and the disciples that we are responsible for the care of everyone, for their health, welfare and nourishment. (We can also see this message in the Old Testament).

So to meet this standard, even though the government says I don't have to worry, do I expect the stores where I shop to insist still on customers washing hands, on customers wearing masks, on the supermarket cleaning baskets between users, on the library asking for people to keep space between themselves and other customers.

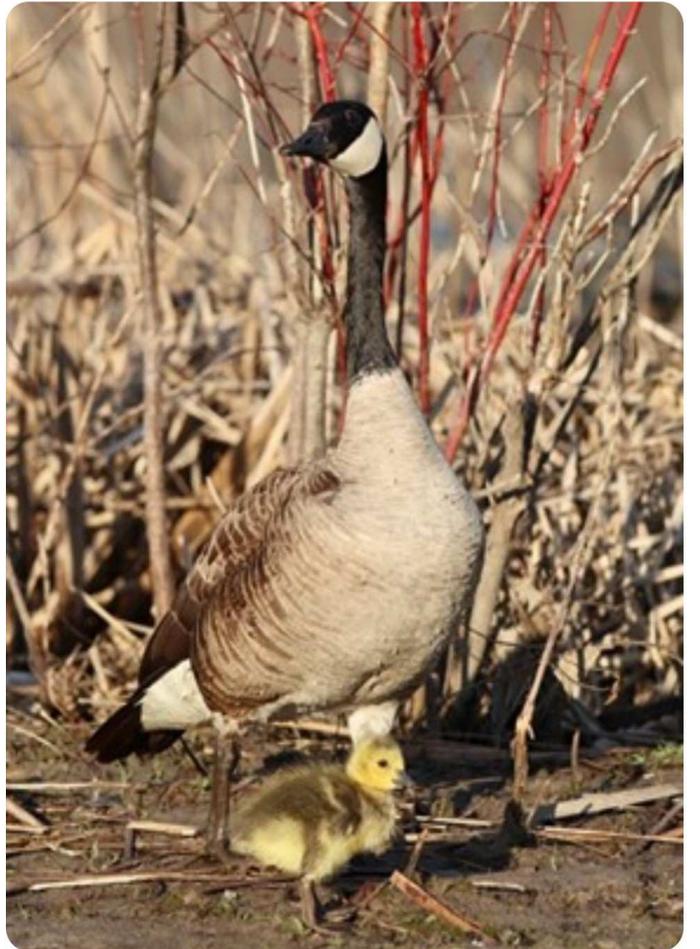
In church will I sing with my mask on? Can I even return to in-person participation.

I have been immuno-suppressed for over 20 years. Never before have I had to be so concerned about my choices and my behaviours and those of the people I meet and interact with.

***Mark Weatherley***



RETURNING TO THE WORLD WE LOVE



## RETURNING TO THE WORLD WE LOVE



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

**SPRING RETREAT**  
**APRIL 30 AND MAY 1, 2022**



**Speaker:** Maylanne Maybee  
Anglican Deacon

**Theme:** Praying for Peace and Justice

The Rev. Dr. Maylanne Maybee is an Anglican deacon, just retired as Principal of The United Theological College in Montreal. For 25 years she served as a deacon in the parish of St. Mary Magdalene, Toronto, while working in inner city ministry and social housing, and later as Coordinator of Mission and Justice Education for the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada.

From 2011 to 2017 she served as Principal of the Centre for Christian Studies in Winnipeg. Maylanne studied theology and education at Trinity College, Toronto and Oxford University. She received an honorary degree from Trinity College for her work in the renewal of the diaconate.

Maylanne is the mother of two adult sons and the grandmother of James (10) and Isla (7).

