



The Spirit of St. Mark's

Parish Newsletter

May 29, 2016

From the Rector's Desk

He has told you, O mortal, what is good: and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6.8).



This was the verse from Scripture around which the theme for our 175th Diocesan synod coalesced. The theme issued out of our third and fourth Marks of Mission ('to respond to human need by loving service' and 'to seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue truth and reconciliation'). Synod, which gathered in London from May 15-17, focused around three specific issues touching this theme: our response to the world-wide refugee crisis, our response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Calls to Action and the strengthening of our partnership with our sisters and brothers in the Diocese of Amazonia. I think it would be also fair to describe Synod as a transitional one. Bishop Bob gave his last charge as he concludes his episcopal ministry on November 1, and Bishop Coadjutor Linda gave her first as she prepares to pick up the reins. I commend their charges and the popular report to your attention, all of which are accessible through the Diocesan website at www.diohuron.org and through our weekly updates. There are also hard copies available at the back of the church.

I'd like to pick up on points each of our Bishops made. Bishop Linda was explicit about the challenges we are facing as the church – 'changes in demographics, social expectations, communications and worldviews... and the rapidity of those changes.' Of course, as you and I know there are no silver bullets. By way of responding, Bishop Linda has charged the Diocese with knowing God as revealed in Jesus Christ for ourselves. She has requested each of us to go deeper in our discipleship with Christ, that through the intimacy of our relationship, we can share our knowledge of him more freely and more joyfully.

I ask each person in this room – lay, deacon, priest and bishop - to commit to one new way of deepening your knowledge of Christ in this year! -Join a bible study; find a spiritual director; participate in an Education for Ministry group; go on retreat; covenant with a friend to pray and read scripture together, become a biblical story-teller, engage in a theological course... read the whole Bible!

What Bishop Linda was reminding us (as did Bishop Bob) is that we can only engage in the third and fourth Marks of Mission (see above) as we remain faithful to the first two (to proclaim the good news of the kingdom and to teach, baptize and nurture new and already believers). What does this mean for us at St. Mark's? It simply reaffirms who we are as a people of God at 155 Memorial Drive and what we are about. Together we are learning to follow Jesus, to become his disciples, to grow as his apprentices, even as God's hands are extended through us to the community and beyond. It is vital that we not only give our best attention to how we live out the third, fourth and fifth (to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth) Marks of Mission, but also to how we invest in the first and second.

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To this end, by God's grace we will continue to seek out and provide opportunities that will help us go deeper in our relationship with God and assist us with how we can share generously God's life and love with others. I am deeply grateful for the groups in our life that are already nurturing our life in faith. Please pray that God would multiply these groups and please see me if you are interested in leading or being part of a faith-sharing group.

Often it fell to Bishop Terry (now retired) to send us out from Synod at the end of proceedings. This year it was Bishop Bob. In his concluding remarks, he mentioned his time here at St. Mark's along with the other parishes in the Diocese he served. He described some of the challenging times he faced (not at St. Mark's of course!) He told us that when well-meaning parishioners asked him how he was doing in the midst of a crisis, he could say to them honestly, 'I'm fine.' He could say it because he knew in his heart that wherever he was, was precisely where God had called him and his family to be. God had called him to this particular parish, to journey together with these particular people. And so, Bishop Bob would add, 'We are in this together and together we will figure out God's purpose for us even in the midst of the maelstrom, because God has given us the Holy Spirit, holy peace and each other.'

Felicity, Sophie, Lynn and I know in our hearts that God has called us to share the journey together with you for as long as the Holy Spirit wills. We are so very thankful. We may not be in the midst of a maelstrom (yet!); we do know that we are in this together by God's grace and that God is already laying on our collective hearts as his people the priorities God is calling us to embrace. May the Holy Spirit, whose birthing of the church we celebrated last Sunday at Pentecost continue to knit us together, deepen our relationship with God and send us out to witness to God's life and love.

A blessed and restful Summer to you all.

Tim+

St. Mark's Environment Committee

St. Mark's now has an Environment Committee. We are engaged with helping St. Mark's be a place that follows the fifth Mark of Mission of the Anglican Church of Canada - "To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth."



Our main project for the next months is to consolidate the results of the green audit done for St. Mark's by the Faith Common Good organization. In that audit we achieved Deep Green status and were the first church in Canada to do so. In October the Environment Committee will host a workshop for faith groups in Brantford/Brant/Norfolk including Christian and other religious groups. The workshop will present our journey to Deep Green status and will give participants a chance to explore ways to improve the green footprint of their worship site.

The committee is also planning a pollinator friendly garden space that will be both beautiful and useful for butterflies and other pollinators.

We are always looking for people with knowledge in an environmental area and passion for stewardship of creation. If you are interested, please speak to Neil Dunning or Nancy Harvey.

Notes and News



Our wardens attended a workshop at the end of February in Waterloo for wardens and treasurers. The facilitators impressed upon all the participants the importance of compliance with Safe Church policies and procedures. I am grateful for the commitment and dedication of Jody, Vicki, Christine and Steve to this parish. They are presently conducting a review of various areas of our life to ensure that St. Mark's is not only a healthy and vibrant community, but is a safe and secure one too. I would ask for your patience and understanding as they work through what is a rigorous and demanding process. If you have any questions and concerns, please direct them to one of the wardens or to me personally.

Our seniors will be gathering shortly for their quarterly Communion service and luncheon. Sylvia Learn is tireless in her coordination of these important occasions in our life. I am deeply grateful to Sylvia and her team of helpers for their passion, organization and sheer hard work. It goes without saying that our ministry with seniors is integral to our mission here at St. Mark's. It is for this reason, I wish to lift up the ministry of our Parish Nurse, Deb Belowitz. God is blessing us richly through Deb's leadership and pastoral sensitivity as she seeks quietly to deepen and broaden the care this community offers. Deb's ministry is undergirded and supported by the Health Council and together they are overseeing the Parish Visitor Team and Casserole Ministry which includes our ministry with newcomers and promoting informative education events - Advance Care Planning in April and Creating Caring Communities with a focus on mental health in May. Please keep both Deb and the Health Council in your prayers and please remember, we have a Parish Nurse, who is looking for your input on how she and her team can promote better health in our parish.

The Generosity Team has been hard at work through the Spring, searching for ways in which by God's grace we can cultivate and share the vast array of gifts God has spread amongst us at St. Mark's. Our hope over the Summer is to provide an accurate description of all the ministry groups in our life and to develop a simple questionnaire which will help each of us to identify the particular gifts and skills that God has given us. Our desire is to provide a way for folk to match their gifts with the various ministry opportunities at St. Mark's which would welcome those gifts. I am grateful to Dan Walker, Carrie Roth, Keith Potts and Rick Newson for their time and energy.

Our Primate and our Bishops have charged us as faith communities to be engaging with the TRC's Calls to Action as we seek to build relationships with our aboriginal sisters and brothers. For us in Brantford, it means specifically looking for ways to get to know the people of the Six Nations. I am grateful for Pat McMillan's leadership amongst our children and for Sharon Symington's support. Our Kid's Club will be meeting at the Woodland Cultural Centre in June and I know that Pat is exploring ideas for sharing our resources with vulnerable communities. I am delighted that our Sacred Circle continues to meet following the workshop which the Diocesan Bridge Builders offered last October. We hope to host a memorial service for missing and murdered Aboriginal women in the Fall and a Blanket Exercise.

As we experience more extreme weather patterns throughout the world, I am grateful for Neil Dunning's leadership of the Environment Committee. Historically, care for the environment is part of St. Mark's DNA and the leadership role we offer not only in the Diocese but across the national Church is becoming even

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more important. Please consider responding to any initiatives that the Environment Committee is promoting, including a workshop for other faith communities in the Fall, as by God's grace we all strive to live more responsibility with the resources God has entrusted to our care.

It was an extraordinary gift to have Clayton Rowe, World Vision's National Director of Canadian Program, facilitate a workshop here on community engagement – how we at St. Mark's can get to know our neighbourhood better in order to respond to identified needs, particularly amongst seniors and young families at risk. We are in the process of hiring a summer student to assist with a survey and compiling a report. Thanks to all those who attended the workshop and who have volunteered to assist with the process. Our thanks to Dan Walker, Christine Pizzey and Adrian Burkhardt for their oversight of the project. We will keep you posted!

It seems hard to believe that Alison Clark, our Organist and Choir Director, has already been with us now for four months. I am especially grateful for the way in which she has transitioned so smoothly back into our life and for her dedication to our worship. Many of you have told me how much you appreciate listening to the children's choir on Sunday morning and also the chimes choir on occasion. It is wonderful to have you back, Alison!

What a blessing Messy Church continues to be in our life as we gather monthly on the third Friday evening. I never imagined that there would be such a positive response so soon after launching. What is especially heartening is that God keeps bringing new families to us. Messy Church involves a great deal of planning and preparation. Our thanks to Pat McMillan and to all those who are contributing in various ways to the gathering, including all the cooking teams who ensure that we are so well fed and watered. It is a great gift. I wish to thank Pat Perkins for providing strong leadership in coordinating the craft activities for our first year.

Thanks for your patience with the changes in how we make announcements at the Sunday 10.30am service. The Worship Committee have elected to experiment with one person highlighting items in the bulletin, who is available before the service to receive items and afterwards to respond to questions. We will review the process at the end of June. Please feel free to give feedback to the wardens or to me personally.

One of the risks of highlighting some areas of our life is that others get overlooked. I take the risk and apologise to any whom I may have hurt. What I would ask is that if there is an area of ministry in our life that is under-recognised, please let me know! We are in this together by God's grace, each one of us playing the small but important part God has assigned us to spread his reign of love and justice for all of God's creation.

Annual Parish Yard Sale - Saturday, June 18th



Our Annual Sale is quickly approaching and we need your help to make this a great church fundraiser. Donations of items that you no longer require would be appreciated. Suitable items include household items, books and craft items. Electronics, televisions and clothes will not be accepted. Donations will be accepted on the following dates: Monday, June 13th to Wednesday, June 15th from 9:00 a.m. to noon; Thursday, June 16th from 9:00 a.m. to noon and 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.; Friday, June 17th from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

News from the Ladies' Guild

A Summertime Lunch

Members of the Ladies' Guild invite members of our parish to join them at Symposium Café, 58 King George Road on Thursday, June 23rd at noon for lunch. All women of the parish are welcome. Rides are available. Those planning to attend are asked to sign the sheet on the Information Table.



Baked Goods

The Ladies' Guild members invite you to assist them at the Bake Table at the Yard Sale by bringing in your baking to sell to our customers, either to enjoy with a cup of coffee or to take home. Baked goods can be delivered to the church on Friday, June 17th.

Fruits for Pies

Soon we will be enjoying crops of Ontario's fresh fruits. The members of the Ladies' Guild ask that you set aside some of these luscious fruits to donate for us to make pies in the Fall as our contribution to the Holly Jolly Faire. (No rhubarb, please).

Health Council, Parish Visitors and Parish Nurse

Advanced Care Planning, Future Planning , End of Life Care

Camilia Galezowski led a discussion on planning for the future, both personal and financial. She presented ways on how to begin conversations with the person you have asked to make decisions on your behalf, in the event you are unable to. If you were unable to attend and wish information, Camilia has left information with Debbie Belowitz.

Creating Caring Communities

Rev. Kevin George and Patrick Ferguson, Parish Nurse, from St. Aiden's in London, presented a workshop on how their parish worked together to reduce the stigma of mental illness. Small group discussions helped those attending identify what we are currently doing within the parish and what other things we might be able to do, as a parish and individually.

Parish Visitors

The Parish Visitors have been meeting monthly to identify members of the parish, who for various reasons, may benefit from a visit, card or phone call, to let them know they are in the thoughts and prayers of St. Mark's. Please let Christine, Tim or Debbie know if you are aware of anyone who would appreciate a contact from one of the Parish Visitors Team.

Casserole Ministry

We are in the midst of developing a team to prepare casseroles, soups and baked goods available for members of the parish who may be experiencing a challenging time or to enjoy tea and a muffin with a parish visitor. A freezer has been donated to store the products and will be kept in the Parish Nurse's office. Watch the bulletin for a planning meeting date and time in the near future.

Woman's Fellowship Potluck Dinner - Tuesday, June 7th at 6:30 p.m.

Bring your favourite dish to share.

Junior and Senior Youth

Let me just begin by saying, it is great to be back and getting into full swing. A big thank you to everyone who has helped out over the last several weeks while Erin and I have been away. A special thank you to Debbie Dejong, Carrie Roth, and Jody Ogilvie for all the help they have provided in running events while we have been getting used to being a new family. I would like to congratulate the Confirmation Candidates for this year and look forward to watching them grow in their personal walks with God. We have also had a number of fun events with both Junior and Senior groups, including Laser Tag, a Lock-In Sleep Over, and Bigger and Better. We have seen so much spiritual growth in all the youth over the past few months, and we are so proud of all of them. This past weekend, we took a group of youth to Pitch and Praise for a weekend of worship, learning, and fun! It has been a joy to get to know the youth in both groups in a more personal way and have the chance to share in their spiritual walks. I'm so thankful to God for guiding this ministry and for the work He is doing in each of their lives.



In the coming months, we will be moving toward an approach that focuses more on outreach fellowship. This will provide exciting opportunities for the youth to bring in their friends, and reach out to other teens in the community. Activities such as Fear Factor, movie nights, and other organized events will have a greater fellowship focus. We are looking forward to the opportunity these events will provide for the youth to grow in their faith by reaching out to others in the community. We are really excited for everything God has planned for this ministry in the months to come.

Adrian Burkhardt

Activities for Children and Caregivers

As we approach summer at St. Mark's, we have many exciting activities for children and caregivers. Listed below are some important dates to mark on your calendar.

- On June 5th during regular Sunday School time, the children in will receive recognition by their teachers for consistent attendance and contribution to our programme. Also registration forms will be handed out for Vacation Bible School
- On June 19th, we will celebrate Dads and Dad figures by making a special take-home gift.
- On June 26th, Summer Sunday School begins for children JK - Gr.6 and continues to August 28th. The children will be dismissed from worship following the readings and will return for family Eucharist.
- On Thursday, July 7th, there will be a Meet and Greet in St. Mark's Hall at 7:00 p.m. for those who wish to help with Vacation Bible School.

Thanks to our church family for their ongoing support towards Christian education programming.

Pat McMillan, Child and Young Family Coordinator

Messy Church - 'The Fruit of the Spirit'

Friday, June 10th from 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Join us for crafts, a theme-based story and a family barbeque hosted by the Health Council.

Woodland Cultural Centre Excursion

A Kid's Club excursion for school-aged children and parents/caregivers has been planned for Saturday, June 4th. This outing ties with the Sunday School meaningful giving goal to connect with our Six Nations neighbours. Registration forms and token admission of \$2.50 per child and \$5.00 per caregiver should be handed in to the office or to Mrs. McMillan prior to the event. We will meet at the Centre at 2:00 p.m. for a one hour tour of the museum, then gather in a reserved room until approximately 4:00 p.m. to make a beaded craft and enjoy a snack.

Student and adult members of our congregation are welcome to join us for the museum tour for the regular admission fee of \$7.00

Gently-Used Toys Needed

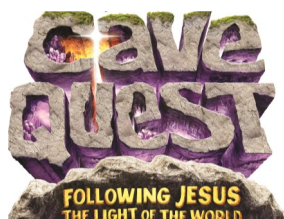
Members of the parish are invited to bring in gently-used, clean toys for the Sunday School children's *Toy Corner* at the Annual Parish Yard Sale. Toys will be received during the following times:

Mon., June 13th - Wed., June 15th from 9:00 a.m. to noon
 Thurs., June 16th from 9:00 a.m. to noon and 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
 Fri., June 17th from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The Sunday School children are encouraged to come and help out at the *Toy Corner* at the annual Yard Sale on June 18th at anytime throughout the morning beginning at 8:00 a.m.

All money earned will be used to support Jamin, our foster child from Bangladesh.

Vacation Bible School Information



At *Cave Quest VBS*, kids experience God's Word in surprising and unforgettable ways! Each day, leaders reinforce one simple Bible truth through stories, songs, games, drama and crafts - which makes it easy for kids to remember and apply to real life!

This year's Vacation Bible School takes place from Monday, August 22nd to Friday, August 26th from 9:00 a.m. to noon and provides suitable activities for school-age children. Watch the website for more details and registration information.

Join us for Cave Quest 2016: Following Jesus - the Light of the World

Teddy Bear Picnic

Saturday, June 4th

10:00 - 11:15 a.m.

Toddlers, preschoolers and their caregivers are invited to bring a favourite stuffy and join Mrs. McMillan for games, songs, stories, a take-home craft and a picnic.

Please call the church office at 519-752-6251 to register for this fun event for toddlers and preschoolers.

Sunday School Picnic

Sunday, June 12th

Bring your lawn chair to an outdoor worship service (*weather permitting*) beginning at 10:30.

Following the service, there will be hamburgers and hot dogs plus salads, beverages and dessert.

After lunch, there will be games for the young and the not-so-young organized by our junior and senior youth.



Report from 175th Synod

175th Synod took place in London, Ontario starting at 5 p.m. on Sunday, May 15th through Tuesday, May 17, 2016. Jody Olgivie, Charles Ruff, Janet Vickerman, Nick Robertson (Youth Rep.) and Rev. Dr. Tim Dobbin were in attendance representing St. Mark's Anglican Church.

Synod was called to order by the Rt. Rev'd Robert Bennett at 5p.m. in the Cathedral Church of Saint Paul. A quorum was declared followed by the welcoming of new members and the apologies from those absent. Motions for adoption of the proceedings from the 173th and 174th Synod of the Diocese of Huron were carried. Elections of the honorary secretaries of Synod were made followed by the motion to appoint Auditors for 2016. Motions for Reception of Reports and Notices of Motions, Huron Hunger Fund, nominating committee and questions arising from the reports were brought forward. \$391,000 was raised in 2015 for the Huron Hunger Fund.

Even though the weather was chilly, a wonderful BBQ was served on the lawn of the Cathedral Church hosted by the Diocese of Huron and Huron University College with musical entertainment by Shelly Rastin.

The Synod Service was held at 7 pm in Saint Paul's Cathedral. As part of the service, Rt. Rev'd Robert Bennett made some appointments. To the surprise of those in attendance from St. Mark's, our own Rev. Dr. Timothy Dobbin was named a Canon.

During the Bishop's Charge, Bob reminisced about his 42 years of ordained ministry and talked about his passing of the mantle of episcopal responsibility to our thirteenth diocesan bishop, Linda Nicholls. Bob said, "an appropriate image in this year of the Rio Olympics might be the relay race. Here, we have Bob passing the baton on to Linda. As I slowdown from full speed, she runs alongside, carefully takes the baton and accelerates to full speed. Mantle passed – all is good." The Bishop's Charge was presented in two parts: part one was Sunday night given by Bishop Bob and part two was presented on Monday morning by Bishop Linda as she was unable to attend Sunday's portion of Synod due to prior commitments.

Bishop Linda Nicholls' charge spoke of the extent of our Diocese of Huron and the need to build relationships between parishes and Six Nations but especially in our relationship with God.

Motions were presented throughout Synod with discussions and debates when the need arose.

- There were Constitutional changes, changes to Canons and revisions to Canons
- Request for extensions to the ministry of Bridge Builders
- Request that parishes and/or Deaneries in the Diocese of Huron be encouraged to review the Sustainable Development Goals
- An update was presented on the number of Refugee families the Diocese has sponsored (18 families = 80 refugees)
- We were introduced to representatives from our companion Diocese in Amazonia - Rev. Marcos Fernando Barros de Souza and his wife Maria de Lourdes Bernardino de Souza.

It was a privilege to hear reports from several committees around the Diocese who focus on Justice and the 3rd and 4th Marks of Mission and Truth and Reconciliation. Throughout our sessions, song was a great way to stretch and move. Each piece kept our focus on the overall theme. We are called to act with justice, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with our God!
