

The Spirit of St. Mark's

From the Rector's Desk

Bishop Linda used a term in her charge to Synod that caught my attention. She spoke of 'missional apprenticeship' – learning mission by doing mission and then reflecting on what we are doing. It's what happened for Jesus' first disciples – a 'continuous cycle... of sending out – coming back – reflecting/ learning – sending again. They were in a missional apprenticeship - learning as you go!' Indeed, as she notes, this is what life is like – 'an extended engagement in this same praxis – learning what is needed to respond to this moment so that God's kingdom may be seen and known.' As John Dewey reportedly wrote, 'We don't learn from experience, we learn by reflecting on experience.' Usually when I set out into unfamiliar territory, I want to make sure I have figured out how I might respond to different scenarios before I leave home. Only Jesus' first disciples show us a different way. Again in the Bishop's words,

... we see disciples who are not united in themselves; with different agendas (political, spiritual, personal....); often barely grasping the significance of what they were hearing or seeing; sent out into the world to proclaim what they did know. And God used their willingness, their faith, their courage, in all their frailty, to be those who transmit the Good News of the Kingdom and love it into birth both before and after the death and resurrection of Jesus.

So it is to be with us. We may not have all the 'i's dotted and 't's crossed; we may not know where exactly it is all leading; we may not know precisely how we are going to get there. As apprentices,

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Special points of interest

- A variety of areas for our parish to volunteer their time
- An extraordinary experience building relationships and deepening friendships
- Election of a new Primate
- Many words of thanks to our parish members



Baptism

The next Baptism will be held on Sunday, November 24th. Please contact the church office for more information.

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we are simply called to learn as we go, and to put into practice what we are learning.

We are called to a way to live in this crazy, upside down world that loves, heals, forgives, renews and creates. It is an apprenticeship as an apostle - an apprenticeship we enter at baptism and continue every day of our lives until we are called home to God. We are SENT INTO THE WORLD TO LIVE AND PROCLAIM THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Our journey with Jesus is an adventure – life's greatest adventure. The best part about the adventure for me is that it is a shared adventure, an adventure together. At St. Mark's we are discovering together what being a healthy, vibrant and generous people of God looks like in a world that looks less and less like the world many of us grew up in. We discover by doing and reflecting. As importantly we discover by enjoying the journey, by trusting that God is with us, that God has our back and that God wants us to adapt and flourish way more than even we ourselves may want it. It is with this trust, that in the words of the good folk at the Lombard Mennonite Peace Centre, God gives us the grace to 'stay calm, stay connected and stay the course.'

What undergirds this process of discovery through doing and reflecting is prayer. Prayer is the lifeblood of the process. Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, reminds us that prayer is where we are most simply and most obviously in the company of Jesus. We attend and we absorb as we ask for God's grace to quiet our minds and bodies. We focus on simply being God's beloved child in the presence of our loving Parent. The heart of prayer resembles lying on a sunbed, bathing in the warm rays of God's love. We are simply being where God's light and love is. As St. Augustine says somewhere in his Confessions the issue is not so much that God is not there, but that we are not much of the time. Often we are all over the map, distracted and preoccupied by our concerns and our obsessions. Praying is simply about arriving, arriving where we are at – as beloved children in the presence of a loving Parent, deeply connected to one another and to the world around us. We learn again the basic truth that God is a generous God, out of whose generosity we have become who we are. We may touch our own vulnerability, but also our own beauty in that moment. God reminds us that we are because God is, that God is a God who loves being God and that God loves what God creates. In prayer, we allow this

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truth to permeate our deepest being and it is this truth that is the bedrock of all that we do and reflect on and learn as apprentices, missional apprentices of Jesus.

May the summer be an opportunity for us all to discover more what it means to be a missional apprentice of Jesus, those who are learning first and foremost what it is to rest in God's fathomless love through prayer.

A blessed summer to you all.

Tim +

St. Mark's Photo Directory

It has been 6 years since we last created a photo directory of our St. Mark's family. We are thrilled to say that just over half of our parish family came out to get their photos taken to be included in the new directory.

For those families that had photos taken, they will receive a free copy of the directory in the Fall when it is completed. Anyone interested in purchasing a copy should contact Heather MacDonald at schoolmumof2@gmail.com so enough extra copies are ordered.

Companion Diocese

In April, Father Tim and Rev. Jenny Shar flew to Belem, Amazonia for the first signing of the new 5-year Diocese of Amazonia/Diocese of Huron covenant.

A few weeks later at the Huron Synod, Bishop Marinez flew up and signed the covenant for a second time. During the synod the companion committee reported on everything that has happened between our Dioceses over the past year.

Bishop Marinez and Bishop Linda planted a tree. Bishop Marinez delivered the homily at the cathedral service and spoke about mission. The companion committee also shared indigenous crafts that were offered for donations. We managed to raise \$1700.00 of which 100% of the funds are going to the ladies who created the crafts.

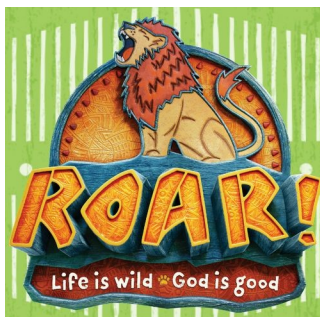
There was fun, humour, as well as fellowship and friendship. We are two but one in Christ.

Nigel Challen



Rest in God's fathomless
love through prayer.





Meet and Greet

A *Meet and Greet* for adult volunteers for the Vacation Bible School programme will be held on Thursday, July 4th from 7-8:00 p.m. in St. Mark's Hall.



ROAR - Vacation Bible School 2019

Plans are in progress for an exciting week-long adventure on the African Savanna! From August 19th-23rd between 8:45-noon, participants will discover that when life gets wild/overwhelming, God is there to guide us!

Our VBS display in St. Mark's Hall invites students in grade 7 and up and adult volunteers to join us in making our week a ROAR-ING SUCCESS! High school students will be given community hours for their help. Forms are available for adult volunteers to fill out in compliance with our Safe Church Policy. Two pieces of identification are the only requirements.

We do appreciate donations from our Wish List. Thank you to our congregations for helping out with needed supplies. Registration forms for children in K-Gr.6 and for student volunteers are available on our website (stmarks.on.ca). Forms are also available at the church. Please register on line if possible and make sure that forms are sent or delivered to the church office as soon as possible.

A Scenery Set-up and Training session in Munro Hall for student volunteers will be held on Sunday, August 18th from noon-2:00 p.m. with Pat McMillan. A pizza lunch will be provided. Please contact Pat McMillan (519-759-5973) in advance if you are unable to attend. This time together is an important requirement towards knowing expectations when working with younger children.

Thanks again to St. Mark's for your support toward our VBS programme. We couldn't go on this Savanna Adventure without you! "ROAR!"

Sunday School at St. Mark's

As we finish up our Spring unit on *Family Friends in the Bible*, the children have come to realize that being a faithful, trusted friend to others has never grown old. To be a true Christian community is to work for the betterment of all and where 'better' to begin than with our close friends.

Moving into Pentecost is an exciting time as we celebrate the birthday of the church with a Pentecost cake. The story of the Holy Spirit coming into the lives of Jesus' followers reminds us

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that patience and faith truly can be rewarding.

On Sunday, June 16th, we honoured Dad/Grandpa by crafting a special gift. The children also received a certificate and small token from their teachers for Sunday School participation throughout the year.

Meaningful Giving is the hallmark of our Sunday School at St. Mark's. We are asking our congregational community to collect gently used toys to sell at our Community Marketplace on July 20th. Proceeds will be used to sponsor a new foster child from World Vision. Toys may be brought to the church on July 18th and 19th.

Our St. Mark's Parish Barbeque will take place following the 10:30 service on Sunday, June 23rd. Please plan to join your church family in fellowship as we celebrate the beginning of summer with a barbeque and picnic games.

Messy Church

At this time of writing, we finished our fourth year of Messy Church on June 14th, 2019. It is constantly amazing to Tim and myself about the consistent support we receive from our Core Team, our Messy Church volunteers, our youth, our church groups and our 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. congregations. No matter how much planning is done, we could not run this alternative services programme without your continuous help. To say "Thank you" is not enough, to say "God's Grace shines within you" is better, to see the smiles and laughter from our Messy Church meet-ups is best! Our Messy Church congregation knows what it feels like to 'give back' from our '*S'more Gifts*' to our Policing Community and to our monetary gift and cards to Ronald McDonald House, Hamilton. We feel blessed that we are integrated with both of our St. Mark's congregations and are pleased to report an average attendance of 60 congregants at each of our monthly services.

Our Annual Messy Church Meeting with volunteers will be held on Thursday, August 29th from 7-8:00 p.m. in St. Mark's Hall to review the past year's successes and brainstorm new ideas. There will be a sign-up sheet near the beginning of July for names of volunteers who would like to continue or become part of our team! A Messy Church list of volunteers will be e-mailed to members prior to the meeting on August 29th. Please call Pat McMillan at 519-759-5973 if you are unable to continue serving as a volunteer. Your voice mail messages will be acknowledged.

Watch What You Say

A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?" "I wouldn't know what to say," the girl replied. "Just say what you hear Mommy say," the wife answered. The daughter bowed her head and said, "Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"



We will begin our fifth year of Messy Church on September 13th.



Summer Sunday School

Summer Sunday School begins on Sunday, June 30th with a group of helpful volunteers from our congregations. The pre-planned lessons focus on *Families of the Old Testament* and will help children to understand that all Christian families, old and new, can rely on the loving care of our Heavenly Father.

Lessons and a sign-up schedule can be found in St. Mark's Hall. Please team up with a partner for your 20 minute session. Pat will give you a standard form to fill out, if you haven't already done so, regarding our Safe Church policy.

We are delighted to have Lori Barber sign up for our last Summer Sunday School session on August 25th. Lori is well-qualified to introduce a Labyrinth Walk to the children in Munro Hall. Parents are welcome to join us for a look at this exciting form of Prayer.

News and Notes

It is a joy for me personally to have Rev. Ryan Sim help us reflect more intentionally on what it means as a community to be missional apprentices of Jesus in our neighbourhood. Ryan initiated the conversation at a workshop at the end of March through an in-depth look at who is actually living in the surrounding area. The process continued at Parish Council in May as we began to think of initiatives that might make a difference in the lives of particular folk we had identified. My hope and prayer is that we will settle on a specific project that we would commit to experimenting with in the Fall. Ryan has also met with the wardens and some staff to get a better handle on what we are thinking and feeling as we discern carefully where God is leading us. Please pray for Ryan and for this vital conversation we are engaged in. If you have any questions or concerns about the process, please be in touch with me personally. It is important to me that we are fully informed about what we are doing and as importantly why we are doing it.

Thank you for your willingness to explore the feasibility of partnering with other churches and individuals in the community to sponsor another refugee family. One of the highlights in ministry for me personally in our time together has been watching the way in which Khaled and his family have created a new life for



How can we make a difference in the lives of others in our community?

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themselves here in Brantford over the past three years. They have done amazingly well. By the time you are reading this, we will have met with folk who are interested in supporting this next initiative and will have a better idea of our financial resources and of individuals who are able to take on specific tasks. I emphasise that, as with Khaled's family, St. Mark's would be working in partnership with others. I am very grateful for the initiative, passion and vision of Mieke Schroeder as she helps us to assess this God-given opportunity.

I feel so blessed to have had time after Easter in our Companion Diocese of Amazonia, as Huron renews our covenant with Amazonia for another five years. The trip was an extraordinary experience as I shared with some of you after coffee hour on Sunday, May 26th. Aside from the overwhelming hospitality and the stunning array of foods many of which I had never seen before, I was deeply impressed with the Diocese's sense of mission. They model for me what it means to be a missional apprentice in our neighbourhood, particularly in their case through developing afterschool programmes to connect with children at risk. I was privileged to hear first-hand what a difference in the lives of kids the programmes are making – remedial education and music. My hope and prayer is that St. Mark's might consider partnering with another parish (or parishes) in the Diocese to help expand one of these parish-based programmes, as a way to build relationship with our friends in Amazonia. I am deeply thankful to Nigel Challen for how faithful he is in deepening our friendship with folk in the Diocese through regular email contact.

Another way in which are we already engaging as missional apprentices is through initiatives aimed at adding value to the lives of seniors. Laurie Murray and the Cooking Angels have been busy preparing nutritious meals for folk who for a variety of reasons may be needing support; Debbie Belowitz and the Health Council hosted an informative evening on Elder Abuse, which helped us identify what to look out for and the resources available to us. The Parish Visitor Team continues to meet regularly to review the needs of those who may be in a vulnerable space. I remain deeply grateful for all the ways in which the community of St. Mark's embraces Jesus' ministry of care.

I am also thankful for other initiatives during the Spring. Quar-

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Building a relationship and deepening friendships.

Siblings

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, 5 and Ryan 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'"

Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus!"



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terbacking a parish photo directory is a Herculean task (just ask the Walkers who have looked after previous issues). Heather Macdonald-Moore has gone above and beyond in scheduling appointments, following up by phone and recording our information. Sheri McIntyre secured a Vimy Oak for us, a descendant of one of the acorns Leslie Miller gathered on Vimy Ridge and subsequently planted in Scarborough. It is a privilege to have the first Vimy Oak in Brantford on our grounds. The Green Team continues to look for ways in which we can reduce our carbon footprint and live more responsibly. Neil Dunning and Ralph Storey have installed LED flourescents in the lounge, my study and the adjoining hallway. I am grateful for the leadership that St. Mark's continues to exercise, and particularly as the realities of climate change impact the lives of more people, especially those in the developing world. I'd like to give a shout out to the Fund-raising Team, and particularly to Dave and Christine Hazell and their team for the prime rib dinner in early May. Not only do these events support our ministry costs; they provide a marvelous opportunity for us to have fun together and to invite others to share our fun.

I would invite your prayers for General Synod, which takes place in Vancouver from July 10-16. It is an honour and privilege to represent the Diocese. We will be electing a new Primate on July 13. Bishop Linda is one of five candidates on the ballot. Please pray for her. There will be other contentious issues, including the second reading of the proposed amendment to the marriage canon and continued conversation on self-determination for our Anglican indigenous sisters and brothers. My hope and prayer too is that our national church takes leadership on how we can respond as Anglicans to climate change.

Five Things to Quit

1. Trying to please everyone.
2. Fearing change.
3. Living in the past.
4. Putting yourself down.
5. Overthinking.

We remain so thankful as a family for the joy and privilege of sharing the exciting journey of faith with you. We pray that the summer is a time of rest, recreation and refreshment for all of you.

Yours in Christ.

Tim+

A Report from Our Wardens

The Wardens of St. Mark's wish to thank the parishioners of our church for giving us a great start to the 2019 year. We have so many people who are building community in our congregation and beyond. These people are helping us get to know each other better, helping us serve each other, and creating ways for us to serve the larger community outside of St. Mark's - as our mission states, *"We are the Christian Family of St. Mark's...God's hands are extended through us to serve the community and beyond."* We have also had a great start to the year with our finances and have been able to complete the first half of the year without a deficit. Thank you to each one of you for your generosity.

To deepen and focus our work on our mission, we are working on a process to help us identify new ways of serving our community under the direction of Ryan Sim. We look forward to working with Ryan, as a church family, to continuing this process and the ideas it will generate.

An important act of Parish Council this spring was to adopt a photo policy for St. Mark's. With concerns about privacy issues, it is important for each of us to know how the church will approach photography during events. While we are concerned about privacy we also want to be able to celebrate our life together through sharing images on our website, in print, and on social media. In brief, the policy states that the church assumes that we can share photo images of large group shots without asking permission, but will ask before taking small group or individual photos. In either case, parishioners can ask that images be removed from circulation after the fact by contacting the office. Children may be photographed as part of large general group shots, but permission will always be asked of a parent before taking photographs of children in small groups, at children's events, or individually. Interested parishioners can obtain a copy of our photo policy by contacting the office.

Thank you to Parish Council for their work to review the activities of the parish each month and to work on and review details of policies, budgets, and so much more.

Neil, Christine, Brenda and Sheri



Celebrating our life together through sharing images while adhering to a new photo policy.

Editor's Note

Suggestions for subjects for our church newsletter and material both humorous and informative are always welcome. See me personally or send me an email if you have an idea or something to share.

Anne Walker

RESIST



PLASTIC

Brantford Recycles

Aerosol cans (empty)
Aluminum foil and pie plates (cleaned)
Cartons and drink boxes (milk cartons, juice boxes)
Glass bottles and jars
Metal paint cans (empty or containing no more than ¼" of dried paint)
Plastic bottles, tubs and jugs
Plastic clamshell containers (no Styrofoam)
Steel and aluminum cans
Newspapers and flyers
Magazines and catalogues
Books (softcover and phone books), hardcover books (hard covers removed)
Household paper products (envelopes, writing paper, printer paper)
Boxboard
Egg cartons
Tubes and rolls (flatten)
Cardboard boxes (flatten,

Being Mindful Stewards of Creation

Do you know what 'single use plastic is'? It is the plastic that we all use once and then we dispose of it. At the recent Synod in the Diocese of Huron a motion was passed unanimously to reduce the use of single use plastics including rigid foam. Watch for a similar motion to the Anglican Church of Canada's General Synod in Vancouver this July. Our Full Communion Partner, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, will likely be considering a similar resolution during the 2019 National Convention.

To share your ideas about alternatives to plastics feel free to speak to Nancy Harvey.

Motion to the Synod of the Diocese of Huron 2019

Subject: Seeking to reduce the use of single use plastics including rigid foam
Moved by: The Rev'd. Chris Brouillard-Coyle
Seconded by: Pamela Fulton

Recognizing that as Christians we are called to be mindful stewards of Creation and noting that there has been a growing concern about the effect of plastic on the environment, we recognize the harmful effects of single use plastics and the continued industrial production of the same, and recognizing that there are members of our communities who may require access to single-use plastic items in order to insure their full inclusion, and recognizing that we are called as Anglicans to live out our Baptismal Covenant and the 5th *Mark of Mission*, be it resolved that this diocesan synod:

- a) Encourage parishes of the Diocese of Huron and Huron Church House to reduce the purchase of products with single use plastics, including rigid foam (styrofoam and other brands), and to end such purchases by the beginning of 2023. Parishes are asked to include these actions in their 2020 Mission and Ministry Plan updates and review progress by the 2021 annual Vestry.
- b) Request the Justice League of Huron to provide educational resources to assist parishes and Huron Church House in the choosing of alternatives to single use plastics and to raise awareness throughout the Diocese.

submitted by Nancy Harvey

Thanks to Our Coffee Hosts

We have enjoyed much fellowship thanks to the parishioners who have hosted a coffee time following our Sunday services. A big thank you to all of you. If you would like to add your name to the list of coffee hosts, contact Betty Kelso for the 9:00 service and Christine Fournier (church office) for the 10:30 service.

Also, remember that simple is good. A few sweets or snacks is more than adequate and most appreciated.

Refugee Sponsorship

Three years ago, the Anglican Churches in Brant Deanery sponsored a refugee family from Syria. They are doing well. We have the opportunity to sponsor again and with your support we can offer a safe refuge and a hope for a new beginning to another refugee family. Right now there is an opportunity to sponsor a family through a special programme where the government pays six months of living expenses, and a special fund (available for a short period) will pay the other six months. This means that the churches, as the sponsoring group, would be responsible for start-up costs (such as clothing and furniture) and for incidental costs.

To proceed, we are looking for support in two key areas:

Settlement Support - When the family arrives, they will need help settling in Brantford. We need people who can support them especially in the area of education (enrolling them in ESL, enrolling the children in school and being the liaison with school). It would also be helpful to have someone who would be willing to look for training and work opportunities for the family.

Financial Support - Our fundraising goal is \$15,000. The money will be used for start up costs and incidental costs such as dental bills, household items, supporting education needs.

Your help would be greatly appreciated! Please pick up an information package including a pledge and donation form and let us know how you can help. The package is available from the church office and is also on the Information Table. Please return the pledge form to the church office by June 30th if possible. For more information contact Mieke Schroeder 519-759-8372 or schroederhbj@gmail.com.



A four-year-old child had an elderly neighbor who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the man's yard, climbed onto his lap and just sat there. When his mother asked him what he said to the neighbor, the little boy just said, 'Nothing, I just helped him cry.'

Just A Thought

*Whenever you have the opportunity to laugh, laugh;
whenever you have the opportunity to dance, dance;
whenever you have the opportunity to sing, sing and
one day you will find you have created your paradise.*



Parish BBQ and Games Galore

Sunday, June 23rd

immediately following the 10:30 service

Join for an indoor worship service beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Immediately following this service, we will gather in Munro Hall for hamburgers, hot dogs, salads, beverages and a dessert. If the weather permits, you are welcome to bring a lawn chair and enjoy lunch outdoors.

After we finish eating, the fun will continue outdoors as the youth group and servers provide a variety of games and activities for the young and not-so-young. Spectators are most welcome!

This is an event for all parish members, so mark your calendar and plan to enjoy some good food and great fellowship.



**St. Mark's Annual
Golf Tournament
and Dinner
Northridge Golf Course
September 29th**

More details coming soon!

Community Marketplace

Saturday, July 20th

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

There will be a bake table, crafts, a gently-used toy sale, a barbeque, door prizes, a draw and more.

The day will also include vendors inside the building and yard and trunk sales on the grass and in the parking lot.

Yard/Trunk Sale Spots	\$10.00
Business Vendors	\$30.00

(plus a product donation)

To reserve your spot (yard/trunk sale or business vendor) contact the church office at 519-752-6451 or by email at office@stmarks.on.ca.