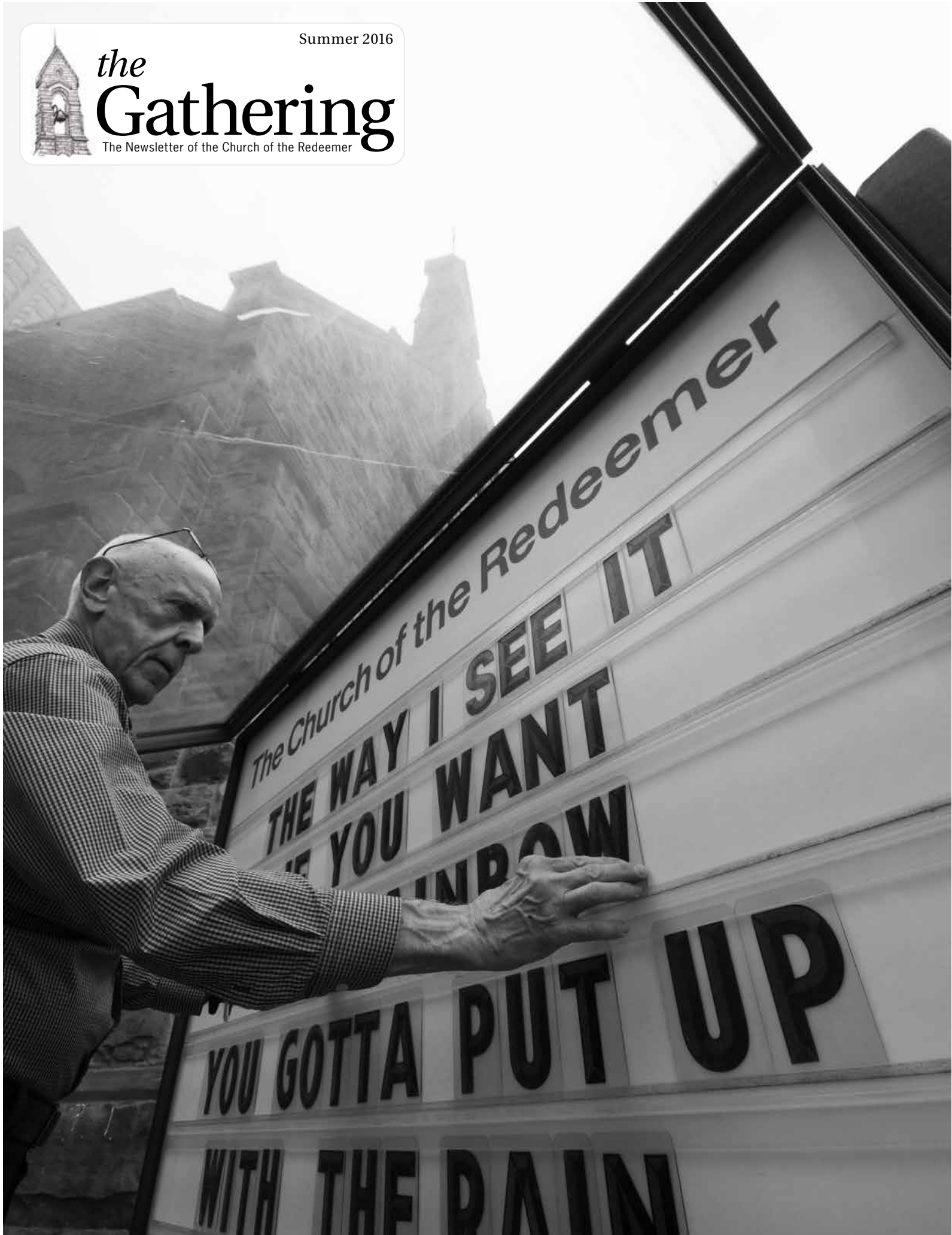


Summer 2016



the
Gathering
The Newsletter of the Church of the Redeemer



Dear Friends,

As August unfolds, the contract I have with you is being extended into the late fall. I feel happy about this as I am enjoying my time with you at Redeemer. But I do feel a little anxious because I am aware that the duration of this “interim time” is extending.

Interim periods in the life of a church are periods of significant work.

There is grief work in letting go of the incumbent who you have come to know and settle down with. Andrew is a person of great skill, leadership, vision and faithfulness. He had deep relationships with many of you. He is a gem of a priest and a man I like very much. And you lost Mary and their collective children, all Redeemer people, too!

The interim is an important time for gathering up all the good things he gave you in your walk of faith, and taking hold of them for yourself, so you can use them and share them with others. We learn by example and faith is sewn by hand.

In the space created by the departing priest a church gets a new person, me in your case, to try to fill the space just enough for everyone to be able to see the space more clearly. It's only when a space appears in your life that you actually get to notice what was there for you.

The Parish Selection Committee and the bishop have specific tasks to do and decisions to make. Personally, I cannot imagine a better group of people and a more thoughtful and creative process being found to do this work. But you each get to look at the space and see how you have changed by passing through it. You get to take up what you learned in the past years with Andrew and decide how you will make those insights and visions your



own and move forward in your own ministry. Ministry is not just for those ordained, it is for anyone, who, trying to be faithful, and just a smidgen Christ-like, acts on their faith. Many, even most of you are already on your way in this respect.

I am endlessly impressed by the way Redeemer has evolved to be a place where members lead, teach, heal, care, and do all the things of ministry with the role of the clergy being as facilitators, supporters and enablers.

There is also the work of expecting. Mostly we like to know what we are getting and we don't like uncertainty. However, there is something good about just sitting in a place of not knowing. It requires us to be open and to hold open our minds and hearts. (What is that line about parachutes and minds?)

You do not know who will be leading the church or when. To be able to be at peace with that is work. Allowing the Holy Spirit, mediated by ordinary people, to do their work requires a conscious effort of being non-controlling.

And there is the work of practicing acceptance. Andrew and I are different people and I worried that I could not match up to his skills and style. But quickly it became apparent that I was not being asked to. I felt accepted and welcomed. Each new person brings God in a way. When, in the Eucharist, we say “Blessed is he who (actually, I mumble “is the one who...” gender-inclusivist that I am!) comes in the name of the Lord,” it is both a commitment to be one who comes carrying Christ within, and to

looking at the other as one who brings Christ to you in a new way. The interim is a time to become more open to that possibility.

The other place of waiting for us is around the way we will be doing marriages in Redeemer. Archbishop Colin has told us that this diocese will open full sacramental marriage to Christians regardless of gender orientation. Marriage, a commitment to covenanted love, reveals the nature of God to us because all of the Bible talks about that as the way God is with us. God enters into contracts with Israel through a covenant of laws and practices of worship. Then through Christ the covenant of love is re-articulated without laws and rules but through a commitment to a love that will not let us go. Love in a covenant is unconditional. It is for better or for worse, smooth and bumpy, etc., etc. You promise to keep on loving even when you don't feel like loving. And that, precisely, is where you stumble into the sort of love that will go into death and return in resurrected spirit as the relationship enters the next and deeper phase. You learn of God. In a sacramental way the Anglican LGBTQ2 community has loved the church through times when love seemed hard to believe in. It is a resurrection miracle that the synod has made a door open for that love to be

returned and celebrated. Archbishop Colin's job presently is to find a way of opening that door so it stays wide open, but without crushing anyone or inadvertently closing on someone's toes. He has said it will take him some weeks or months to get the process in place. I do not know quite what this will look like, but I am confident that Archbishop Colin will have a careful and respectful route for all of us to go along together. Personally I am eager as can be, and there is already a wedding request in our system. I will be writing to Archbishop Colin about where we are in the next few days.

I am, as I said, enjoying being here in this interim, liminal, ethereal, uncertain, tidal, vaporous, contingent time with you.... As summer gives way to fall and the pace picks up I want to invite you back into the unknown in the midst of the known. Play here, worship and work here and learn to be full of wondering as, together, we hold open the space we may call the Interim.

In peace



David.

The Annual Mid-Year Review

Peter Bennett

The Stewardship Committee more often than not wears two hats. It might be argued that wearing any hat is unbecoming, but to wear two is, well, it's ridiculous! The one hat is our responsibility to educate ourselves and the parish that stewardship of God's gifts to us of time, talent and treasure is nothing more than, or maybe I should say nothing less than, the fulfillment of our baptismal covenant. It has been suggested that the committee should rename itself the Stewardship and Fundraising Committee, in honour of our responsibility to the undesignated and FaithWorks elements of our ministry plan. As I contemplate the work we do, I am not sure that is the correct title. I think it should be the Stewardship and Faithraising Committee. More on that later.

The numbers tell a story. To the end of May, our undesignated gifts from envelopes, PAR, and Canada

Helps are about \$30,000 behind 2015 actual or almost \$60,000 behind what Vestry agreed to as our 2016 ministry plan in February. Our contributions to FaithWorks are slightly ahead of last year's actual, and our open offerings are about even with last year. If we look at designated gifts, support for our drop-in meal program, refugee sponsorship, youth ministry, and Step into the Future campaign remain strong. The Septimus Jones Memorial Society already has seven identified members and the bequests and gifts total well over \$250,000.

So, what's in the story? The committee has operated from the belief that God's love for us is an unconditional love, and our response to God in our gifts of time talent and treasure is an unconditional one. However, the way we meet God is a personal encounter. It's individual in nature. Whether it's the leper, a woman at a well, a relative grieving at the loss of a sibling, a boy with five loaves and two fish, the travellers on the road to Emmaeus, how we come to a relationship with Jesus is deeply personal. To dismiss or devalue an individual's desire to respond with a conditional gift of time, talent or treasure would be a disservice to the genesis of that relationship. However, the stories we read of these personal encounters with Jesus are not the whole story. How we entered into the relationship is the start, but it's what happens after that is truly transformative. We are invited to go deeper, to build community, to care for the sick, to stand in solidarity with the oppressed, to support, to educate, to advocate, and yes, to sacrifice or align the personal with the common good. It is for this reason that the committee believes that each of us in community are called to respond unconditionally through our undesignated gifts, in addition to (not instead of) specified ministry areas.

The ministry plan which we adopted at Vestry is our common response to God's call to ministry at the corner and beyond. In the letter we wrote in April, the committee asked you to consider the promises we make in baptism.

Will you continue in the Apostles' teaching, fellowship and breaking of bread?

Will you resist evil, repent and return to the Lord?

Whether it's the leper, a woman at a well, a relative grieving at the loss of a sibling, a boy with five loaves and two fish, the travellers on the road to Emmaeus. How we come to a relationship with Jesus is deeply personal...

Will you proclaim the Good News?

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself?

Will you strive for justice?

Will you strive to respect the integrity of God's creation?

Does our ministry plan measure up to those promises? Does it invite us to enter into a deeper relationship with each other, with the community, and with God? I know what my response is. What's yours?

This is a time of transition for this parish. We have lost a well loved incumbent. We are searching for a new one. We are being ably shepherded by David, and superbly led by Heather, Joanna, Ryan and Paul. In a way, we are in a post-Easter phase in our history. We have lost our leader, we have been given gifts, but we are uncertain, and operating from a place of uncertainty—of our gifts, of the unknown, of the future. However, through faith, we discover that we are endowed with certain gifts, we gradually discover the courage

to proclaim, we gain strength from community, and we have a vision of what is new and possible in His name.

I mentioned a possible name change for the committee. Yes, we talk about money. Yes, we put forward the case for support. Yes, we invite you to respond with joy. Yes, we do our best to express our gratitude. These are the attributes of a good fundraising committee. But have you ever looked at how often Jesus talks about money? The conversation may be about money. It may be about power. However, more often than not, it is in the context of relationship. Relationship to money itself, but also how money affects the relationship we have with God, our community and each other. When we ask a parishioner, "Why do you give?," the conversation quickly moves from money to pastoral care. We uncover examples of transformative moments, encounters with joy, sadness, and loss. It's way beyond fundraising. When you respond with your gift of treasure, it's the manifestation of something way deeper, way more intimate, and way more personal, than a transaction to satisfy a budget.

We will, with God's help!



The Children Are Waiting: *Hope in Words and Action*

Pamela Thomson

Redeemer was privileged to host representatives of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth on June 17—Irwin Elman, Laura Arndt and Aliesha Arndt—as we learned more about the work of the provincial advocate and the Feathers of Hope. Irwin Elman is the advocate. From the biography on the Provincial Advocate’s website we learn that *he brings to this position an extensive background as an educator, counsellor, youth worker, program manager, policy developer and child and youth advocate. In working with young people in our ‘systems,’ he has carried out these roles with respect—borrowing from the courage and hope of the young people he served to create innovative approaches for youth in Ontario, Jamaica, Hungary, and Japan. For over 20 years, Irwin was the Manager of the Pape Adolescent Resource Centre in Toronto: a program of the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto and the Catholic Children’s Aid Society of Toronto. More recently, he was the Director of Client Service at Central Toronto Youth Services: an innovative children’s mental health centre.*

The duty of the Office of the Advocate is to:

- ☞ provide an independent voice for children and youth including First Nations children and youth and children with special needs by partnering with them to bring issues forward; and
- ☞ encourage communication and understanding between children and families and those who provide them with services; and
- ☞ educate children, youth and their caregivers regarding the rights of children and youth.¹

Laura Arndt is a Mohawk woman and Bear Clan member, who is the mother of two and is currently completing a PhD in Cultural Studies at Queen’s University. She has served children, youth and the disability community for many years. As director of

¹ Detailed information about the role of the Advocate can be found online: provincialadvocate.on.ca/main/en/about/meet_provincial_advocate.cfm

advocacy, she helped author the *Feathers of Hope* report that resulted from a gathering of First Nations youth from 65 communities in remote parts of Ontario. The issues identified within that event led to an invitation from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Laura and the youth to make a presentation at their last national event. You can find the report online (digital.provincialadvocate.on.ca/i/259048-foh-report). This powerful document offers insights into the experiences of First Nations youth—the legacy of the residential schools, the issues that affect them the most and the places of hope in their recommendations of a way forward. You will learn much by reading this report. The most recent gathering of Feathers of Hope was in July and report on *Culture, Identity and Belonging* will be published in 2017.

Laura was accompanied by her daughter, Aliesha, who had just graduated with a MA. Aliesha has been part of the *Feathers of Hope* team since the beginning. The most moving part of the evening was when the two of them shared their story. Laura’s mother was taken to the “mush hole” (Mohawk Institute) at the age of four. The mush hole was run by the Anglican Church. They both entered the Redeemer in trepidation, with sadness and gentle anger. Sharing the evening with us, it took strength and determination to come into our church, and to share so openly with us.

For Laura’s mother, the experience of growing up without the love, support and wisdom offered by family resulted in difficulties in parenting Laura and her siblings in an urban setting. Laura became, in many ways, the caregiver. Bullied for being First Nations, Laura learned the strength of being quiet—to hide from bullies, and to hide from the Scoop of the ‘60’s.

Laura confirmed that “invisibility kills, and drowns voices.” The most important thing one can ‘do’ is listen: all else will follow. Being heard means having influence. Dreaming gives strength to take risks. Young people must be given leave to do so. From being listened to, comes story and power. We should not think about “decolonizing” our minds, our culture, but rather to “revitalize” through healing, listening and sharing. We all need to heal from the trauma of discovering what we thought was wrong. Everyone will have pain.

To keep the hope alive, young people need to be treated as equals. They need everyday heroes and champions. They truly are the experts, with clear vision for the future. They need to see healthy adults who listen.



Keeping on with the Work of Reconciliation

Mark Plummer

Aboriginal history month has come and gone with many events across the greater Toronto area. It is time to pause and reflect. This year the Aboriginal Issues Working Group has a closer collaboration with our neighbours who are part of the Indigenous Justice Coalition which meets regularly at Redeemer. There is also continued support and collaboration with Toronto Council Fire Cultural Centre.

In June we welcomed the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, Irwin Elman, and Laura Arndt, the founder of the Feathers of Hope conference. The reports and open-heartedness of our speakers were received with thanks. Please see a full report on the evening elsewhere in the newsletter.

Our first *Travel for Learning* event was the excellent trip to Curve Lake and the Canoe Museum with Trinity St Paul's United Church. Darlene, from Trinity St Paul's, organized a meeting with two elders at the community church and this was a gift. We also enjoyed our other adventure in July—camping at Stony Point and Kettle Lake Reserve.

The working group continues to publish the *Weekly Indigenous News Digest* that includes upcoming events across the city and beyond that may be of interest. Highlights are also published on the Redeemer website. The group is working on an updated reading list that will be ready in August.

In the fall there are plans for upcoming events: the Kairos blanket exercise; another Circle and supper with our AIWG counsellors, Mike, Murray & Kim; a book club to study and discuss *Wrongs to Rights*, a collection of essays on the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Lastly, our *Travel for Learning* program will join with the neighbourhood churches in a day trip to Six Nations, the Mohawk Institute and the Woodlands Cultural Centre on Sunday, October 2. Bishop Mark McDonald has offered to lead us in an Indigenous liturgy in God's cathedral, the out of doors at Six Nations. Details will be available soon.

If you are interested in the work of the group and want to become involved, you can join one of the small groups to assist in organizing any of these events. The time commitment is six months. Please contact Pamela Thomson or Mark Plummer at aiwg.redeemer@gmail.com with your interest.

Thank you to all those who have contributed to make the spring and summer events such a success helping to create cross-cultural opportunities for dialogue.

Miigwech, Nya"weh. Inishic (Thanks be to God) 



Life Chats

Megan Jull

Megan prepared this reflection on the youth service trip in early July, while on her way home with the group.

It's the end of a long, busy day. I'm exhausted. The midnight sun shines through the blinds on our windows; it is disorienting and yet strangely energizing. This is the time of day when I long for sleep. But it is also the time of day when the adolescent mind awakens and our group begins to talk and reflect and process their experiences. We've begun to call this time, "Life Chats." Their openness and willingness to share makes this hour sacred. And so I keep awake.

Perhaps I didn't prepare the group well enough. We went to Yukon, to Dawson City, and to Mayo, so that they could see firsthand one of Canada's healthiest examples of right relations with our First Nations peoples. It turns out, our group was shocked.

They were expecting poverty. They were expecting despair. They were expecting dire need. Instead, they discovered a proud and self-governing people. People who love the land and have regained control of it. First Nations land claims in Yukon were settled in the late 1970s.

"I guess I've always thought of Indigenous people as victims" one teen announced one evening. "yeah," chimed another, "that's certainly what we're taught in school." "But, here, it's like they don't even need us. They

are the ones teaching us. They are showing us what it could be like at home."

It seems we've changed a lot over the last ten days. We've travelled through pristine wildness. We learned about the gold rush of the 1890s and about the impact that mining continues to have in the north. In Dawson City, we toured Dredge Number 4. And we learned about how the discovery of gold drew thousands north to seek their fortune. It was a detailed tour. But not detailed enough for our young people. "I can't believe they didn't say anything about how the gold rush and mining affected the First Nations people" one teen remarked. She was indignant. She had grasped that mining ripped apart the river beds. It destroyed the fish stocks. It destroyed the landscape. It drew settlers north. It brought alcohol and gambling and prostitution. Missionaries followed close behind. In their wake, a culture and a way of life was nearly obliterated. "I can't believe they didn't tell us about that part" she said.

A few days later, under the careful guidance of elders, we toured the former mining town of Keno City. We climbed to the top of Sign Post hill. The elders blessed our gifts of tobacco and as they tossed pieces over the edge of the mountain, they prayed that survivors of residential schools would find peace. That families struggling with drugs and alcohol would find healing and health. There is hurt here. And yet, there is hope here too. The elders guided us through the history of mining in the region. We began to understand the impact on the land. And we could see their pride, now that they have reclaimed that

land. Young, confident, and capable summer students taught us their water sampling methods. These students monitor the water quality in the traditional lands of the Nacho Nyack Dun First Nation. They use this data to hold the mining companies to account. They taught us about modern stewardship of the land. New bio-reactor methods they have developed now filter the water and remove the heavy metal contaminants from their watersheds. They taught us about their current case that is before the Supreme Court of Canada. They are working to preserve the Peel Watershed and the salmon stocks it nurtures. We have seen with our own eyes the land they want to preserve. Seeing it makes it real in a whole new way. We understand their cause, and similar claims across the country, differently now.

We couldn't believe that we got to tour the government buildings of the Nacho Nyack Dun First Nation. To be truthful, we couldn't believe they had their own government buildings and council chambers. We've never seen anything like that at home.

We couldn't believe the generosity of the people we met. They fed us. They guided us. They taught us how to do their traditional beadwork. "They don't even know us," one teen said, "why are they being so kind to us? We haven't done anything to deserve their kindness."

We spent Canada Day as participants in the local festival. We raised the flag and watched the parade. We watched the Northern Tutchone fashion show. We played their games. We listened to their music. We cheered when the helicopter came and dropped a hundred pounds of peanuts from the sky. That night, during our "Life Chats" we marveled at the integration of the Indigenous and

Settler communities. "We just celebrated Canada Day, a celebration of this country, with the people who lived here first. It was totally integrated. I didn't know it could be this way" one teen observed.

The elders and their families made a special effort to enter into our traditions too. They brought their children and grandchildren to attend our *Messy Church* program. They came to church with us on Sunday and filled that church for the first time in years. We had a picnic together. And we took pictures and hugged one another as we made our goodbyes.

Tonight, after our plane lands, I will get to go home and sleep in my own bed after ten nights of camping out on the floor. While I long to sleep and recover from this adventure, I am wistful and somewhat sad. I will miss our night time "Life Chats." I will miss the wisdom, trust, and insight of this remarkable group of young people. They have taught me and shaped me for ministry.

Many thanks to all those at Redeemer who generously supported this trip and faithfully support the service trip each year. Thanks to the Anglican Foundation, whose grant support helped to fund this trip. Thanks to friends of Redeemer, the Diocese of the Yukon, Bishop Larry Robertson and lay ministers Charles and Valerie Maier, and the Nacho Nyack Dun First Nation, whose generosity and commitment made this trip possible. Please know that you have all helped to shape and form a group of young people as ambassadors and agents of healing and reconciliation. You helped to give them a hopeful glimpse of how things could be. You've given them something to reach for and a goal worth achieving. Thank-you so very much. ☒





2010

2016



Youth Ministry Sunday

On Sunday, June 12, we marked Youth Ministry Sunday. As is tradition, one of our graduating youth is invited to be the preacher at the 9.30AM service. This year David Krol took up the challenge. In his sermon David spoke about serving for the first time. We found the pictures from 2010 and tried to take matching pictures for the occasion. If you didn't get the chance to hear him, the sermon is posted on our website.





Goodbyes

On May 29 we said farewell to our student intern Jean Charles Denis.



The Dulmage family has been a vital part of our community and we had to say goodbye to them in June when they moved to Vancouver. Will Reed led the children in a farewell song.



We Shall Not Cease from Exploration: *Parish Selection Committee*

Chris Jones

Six months back, just after the annual Vestry meeting, the board chairs and the six additional parishioners who comprise the Parish Selection Committee (PSC) met with our area bishop, the Rt. Rev. Patrick Yu. During that meeting, the bishop provided the PSC with an overview of the process of exploration and discernment that was about to unfold within the parish.

The first stage of that discernment process was to develop the parish profile. The parish profile provides a narrative snapshot of the present reality of a parish's life and ministry, as well as a sketch of its hopes for the future and its understanding of God's call. A thorough and accurate profile is essential to the later stages of discernment.

Potential applicants will review the profile to determine their interest in being the next incumbent of the Church of the Redeemer, and to assist them in determining whether or not they have the gifts, skills, and experience to support us in our ministry here at the corner. The profile also provides the PSC with a framework for reviewing applications and interviewing candidates, and assists the bishop in determining whether or not our ultimate recommendation is an appropriate fit for appointment to the role.

The work of exploration began immediately for the PSC, and the first step was to take stock of where the Church of the Redeemer has been. That exploration yielded an embarrassment of riches: over a decade's worth of Vestry books, narrative budgets, ministry area reports, past learning events, Board of Management and Advisory Board activity, capital campaigns, and *Growing with the Spirit at the Corner*—our strategic planning documents. Added to that were the archives of the parish, which record nearly 145 years of ministry in Yorkville and beyond.

After reviewing what has been, the PSC began to seek insight into where the Church of the Redeemer is currently, both figuratively and literally. A parish-wide survey sought details about the members of

our community: who we are, where we live, why we come, what we regard as the parish's strengths, and what we see as our growing edges. Conversations with individuals and key groups within the parish, like our youth group, the Drop-in Meal Program, and church school parents, helped to paint a vibrant picture of life within our walls. A town hall meeting with a panel of representatives from our neighbourhood, followed by a series of conversations about what we can learn from the

community outside our walls, helped us to see the many ways we might reach beyond the parish to serve our neighbours in the name of Christ.

The many conversations we have had over the last six months have enabled the

PSC to "ask the right questions." Reflecting on those questions about what our mission and vision are and ought to be, we turned our eyes to the future. Given all that we had learned and confirmed about our life in community, we discerned the trajectory of our ministries, our hopes for the future of the parish, and what God is calling us to be and to do at the corner. From there, we further discerned the knowledge, skills, abilities, and gifts that we seek in our new incumbent.

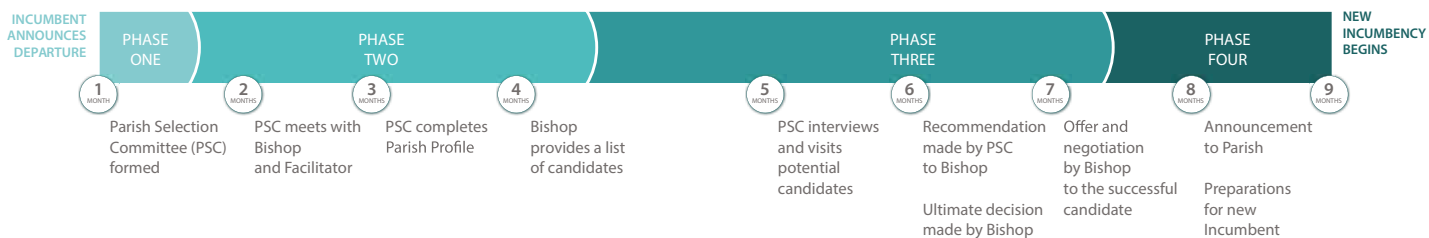
The parish profile is now complete. Upon approval from the bishop, it will be made publicly available on the parish website.

For potential applicants, the profile will confirm or confound their impressions of the Church of the Redeemer as a community. For parishioners, it will provide a window into the life of a large and complex parish that is difficult to capture in Vestry books and financial statements. For newcomers and those seeking a spiritual home, it will provide a unique perspective on who we are and what we are about here at the corner.

From now on, the work of the Parish Selection Committee will be largely confidential. While primarily an activity of discernment, the calling of a new incumbent for the Church of the Redeemer is also a significant human resources process. The privacy of

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

from Little Gidding, Stanza V, by T.S. Eliot




applicants and the integrity of the application process must be maintained. The PSC will not communicate any additional details about the process until it is time to make a formal announcement regarding the appointment of a new incumbent.

Although the consultative phase of the process is complete, the work of the parish is ongoing. In addition to the everyday ministry that parishioners provide through worship and service, we ask that you continue to support the PSC as they continue their work of discernment.

First and foremost, you can support the PSC through your continued ministry of prayer. We have felt quite strongly the cloud of witnesses that has surrounded us throughout this process, and we ask that you continue to remember us in your public prayer and your private devotion. We have also been struck by the expressions of encouragement and trust that members of the community have shared with us over the last few months. It has made our journey of exploration a true joy.

Finally, we would ask that all parishioners read the parish profile and reflect on the observations and aspirations that it contains. Many parishioners have already approached the PSC with the names of clergy

known to them, whom they believe might be a good fit for ministry with the Church of the Redeemer. All suggestions in this regard are passed along to the bishop, who will manage the receipt of applications.

As T.S. Eliot observed in his masterpiece *Little Gidding*, “We shall not cease from exploring.” The PSC’s work of exploration and discernment will soon come to a close, but the Church of the Redeemer will continue to discern God’s purpose for us. We will make a beginning with our new incumbent—whoever she or he may be—and with them we will come to “know the place for the first time,” moving into the future with fresh insights and a commitment to listen for the call of the Spirit at the corner. 

If you know a priest – or know of a priest – who you feel possesses the gifts and aptitudes presented in our parish profile, please e-mail their full names and a brief description (e.g. current parish, why they come to mind for you, etc.) to: psc@theredeemer.ca.

Redeemer Readers 2016-17

The Costs and Complexities of Compassion: Themes of Justice, Mercy and Grace

Each year the Redeemer Readers book group read selections that centre around a particular theme. Read on for details of this year’s theme and the books chosen and then mark your calendar so that you can join the conversation.

What role does compassion have in our lives and in the institutions of justice in our country? How central should it be in our everyday lives? What do religions have to say? What, specifically, does Christianity have to say?

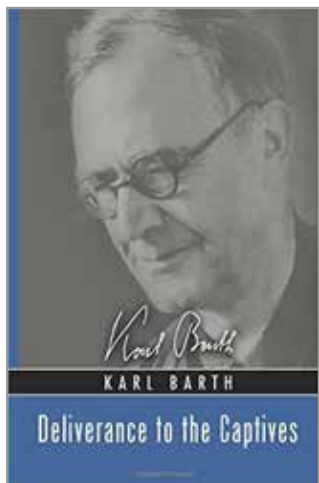
The need to see justice done, on the one hand, and to seek revenge and punishment, on the other, seem to be basic human instincts. What is the difference between justice and revenge? Should all crimes and misdemeanors be punished? Where do compassion, pardon and mercy come in?

We shall look first at a volume of sermons preached to prisoners in Basel by the great twentieth-century theologian, Karl Barth. The title, *Deliverance to the Captives* is, of course, taken from Luke 4:18 (quoting Isaiah 61:1) and will get us to focus on the biblical good

news not just for people in literal prisons, but also for all those captive in other ways. Next we will read an account by an American lawyer, Bryan Stevenson, about his work in Georgia and Alabama aiming to free the wrongfully convicted and those on death row. Although we no longer have the death penalty in Canada, race and poverty are big issues in Stevenson's book, and reading it can prepare us for tackling the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission here in Canada. Karen Armstrong's book, *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life* seeks to bring the practice of compassion into our own individual experience. And *Good to a Fault*, by Marina Endicott, is a novel which tells the story of the difficulties encountered by a woman who decides to act compassionately towards a family she had inadvertently injured.

Redeemer Readers meets five times a year. Anyone free at 12 noon on the dates below is welcome to join us in the board room on the lower level, for all five discussions or for any individual sessions that appeal to you. If new members are interested in attending any or all of the discussions, or want more information, please contact Pauline Thompson at pauline.thompson@utoronto.ca.

Thursday, October 20, 2016



Deliverance to the Captives

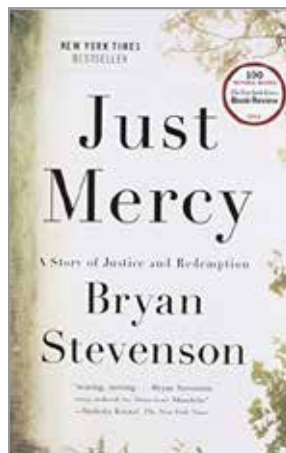
Karl Barth

(*Wipf and Stock, repr. 2010*).
160 pp.

These sermons were preached by Barth between August 1954 and June 1959 to prisoners in the Basel prison in Switzerland. It was Barth's view that, although the people he

was preaching to were imprisoned for crimes they had committed, we all live in prisons of one sort or another, and are all in need of the deliverance that Jesus said he had come to bring. They are simple, straightforward, and yet profoundly compassionate.

Thursday, December 8, 2016



Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption

Bryan Stevenson

(*Spiegel and Bray, 2014*). 352 pp.

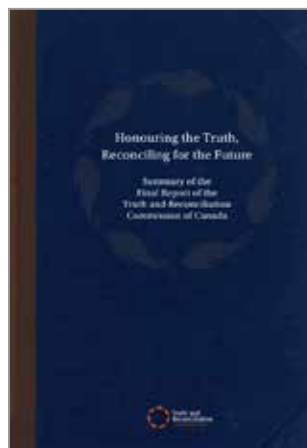
Bryan Stevenson is the grandson of slaves, a Harvard-educated lawyer with a strong Christian heritage, who has written a remarkable book about his work in the American south. Last year a number of American colleges and universities required their incoming freshmen to read this book before they began their studies. It deals not only with the problems associated with the death penalty, but with the legacies of racism and poverty that afflict American society to this day. It is about the potential for mercy to redeem us. This book was the winner of the Carnegie Medal for non-fiction, and many other awards.

We will also take a look at two short pieces:

Yanan Wang: "**Judge goes to jail with convict**"
(*Washington Post*)

Seamus Heaney: "**Punishment**" (a poem, in *North*, 1975, in *Selected Poems 1966-1996*).

Thursday, February 9, 2017



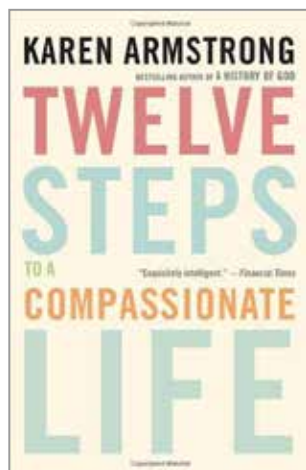
Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future

Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

Volume one: Summary Selections from the Report

This report is a result of a six-year investigation into the residential school system for Aboriginal youth. It tells of the history of the schools and their legacy and gives 94 recommendations for action. This history is not well known in Canada outside the aboriginal community. All of us need to understand what happened and gain some understanding of what true reconciliation might entail.

Thursday, March 30, 2017



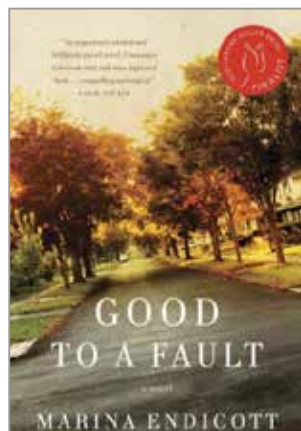
Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life

Karen Armstrong
(2011)

This book is a call to restore compassion to the centre of religion and morality, and to develop empathy with the sufferings of all human

beings—even to love our enemies. There is an exploration of all the great religions, including Christianity, and what they have to say about the centrality of compassion. The book also has a lot of practical suggestions about how we might become more adept at living together in harmony.

Thursday, May 18, 2017



Good to a Fault

Marina Endicott

Repr. 2013 by Anchor Books.
388 pp.

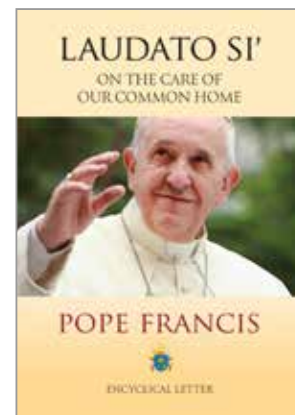
This is a story of how a single moment of distracted driving led Clara Purdy into the mess of another family's life, about

how she tried to help and what that helping cost her. This novel won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize and was short-listed for the Scotiabank Giller Prize. (Endicott is the sister of a former Redeemer parishioner, Timothy Endicott, Professor of Legal Philosophy in the University of Oxford.)

An Evening with Laudato Si' and Stephen Sharper

Pamela Thomson

Laudato Si': Care for our Common Home by Pope Francis was the book chosen for the Redeemer summer reading selection. We spent a wonderfully encouraging evening with Professor Stephen Sharper to start us on our journey in June.



Stephen, an engaging and stimulating teacher, whose areas of research include religious ethics and the environment, religion and social movements, biotechnology, human rights, and globalization, reminded us at our opening plenary that we are never alone since the Divine is here with us, giving us hope and courage.

From his presentation, we recalled that is important that we enter into dialogue with science for the good of religion, economics, sociology, history, and wisdom traditions. Education without re-balancing our values is worth nothing. Christianity is mistakenly anthropocentric, and must stop looking at creation as its own to exploit. We must work to change our world view to "creation IS us." The reign of the 'conquistador world view' is coming to an end, as the stronger vision of creation takes hold in awe and joy: Everything is connected. We were reminded that the message of St. Francis is that all parts of creation are kin. He, upon looking past the 'animal rights,' confirms the Indigenous view of all being related as cousins. This is the message of Rachel Carson and Lynn White Jr. Creation is born in love, and needs love to be in relationship for liberation and revelation. One memorable quote was from Thomas Berry, "The universe is a communion of subjects, not a group of objects."

With this as our starting point, over the summer many of us have been meeting in study groups or engaging with the book on our own. We will gather on Wednesday, September 14 at 7PM for a closing plenary. David Howells will lead us in our conversations about what we read and learned. All are welcome to come together for this event. Registration is available online (www.TheRedeemer.ca) or by phone (416.922.4948)

Ramzes: *A Remembrance and Reflection*

Paul Pynkoski

I did not know him as well as some others. We crossed paths every Wednesday at Redeemer's Drop-in Meal Program over a three-year period, and occasionally bumped into one another on Yonge Street near the corner where he hung out. But Ramzes' (or sometimes Ramsey, or Rammstein) sudden departure has torn open a hole in my heart and the hearts of his friends at Redeemer and Sanctuary. There is a short obituary at bit.ly/ramzeswhitefish that you could read, but more importantly, there is a video of his performance of one of his poems that *must* be viewed and heard.

A TV news station reported Ramzes' death as the result of an ongoing altercation between two rooming house residents—it is what they left unsaid, implied, that seemed so wrong. Another news article spoke of criminal charges for murder against someone else at a party he attended, and then mentioned his First Nation's heritage and drunkenness in a single paragraph. Again, the implications: a life of violence, aboriginal alcoholism, a violent end to his life. Perhaps Toronto is safer and better off being rid of his kind.

But the Ramzes I knew, we knew, was not at all like this. He was fiercely proud of his First Nations heritage, well read, intelligent, an edgy but insightful poet, who exhibited a prankish sense of humour. And he struggled...with loss, with his internal demons, and with the bottle. He cared deeply for his friends at Redeemer and Sanctuary. In his own way, he supported staff when they were sick or overwhelmed. He was one of the first through the doors when Redeemer opened for the Eucharist on Sundays.

Whether drop-in program or church, he knew he was accepted no matter what state he was in when he showed up. I always got a grin and a fist pump. We conversed about Nietzsche, Canadian literature, and the art of Emily Carr. One Sunday, at coffee time after the Eucharist, and in front of a group of people, he flashed his impish grin and loudly asked if I was "getting any?" This past Pentecost, just before the start of the 9.30AM service, he stood in the centre of the chancel and with a



shout of "Alleluia!" he reminded us once again that he was in our midst. It was also the last Sunday he was with us.

Watch the video of his poem: Yes, he's holding a bottle, is partially inebriated, and drinks from the bottle at one point. But the power of his performance is heart wrenching. He runs with Shakespeare's "To be or not to be," and makes it an existential question, a lament. The agony of his loneliness, the depth of his despair, and the fierceness of his defiance come through.

Does he not echo the despair of the poet in Psalm 142?

I cry to the Lord with my voice;
to the Lord I make loud supplication.
I pour out my complaint before him
and tell him all my trouble.
...my spirit languishes within me...
I look to my right hand and find
no one who knows me;
I have no place to flee to and
no one cares for me...
Listen to my cry for help,
For I have been brought very low...
Bring me out of prison...

When he performs this poem, he forces me to acknowledge my white privilege, my upscale isolation from others, my middle class judgement and bias. His is a life I was never asked to lead, and if asked, I would have refused. He becomes the incarnate voice of First Nations people, of street people, systematically pushed to the margins, disregarded, unrepresented, not at all attractive or desirable. But at the same time, so deeply human; he brings to the surface and into focus all that we fear lies deep within us. He lays open *our* isolation and brokenness. He stands in the darkness and names the demons, and in his act of confrontation alludes to our fundamental solidarity and our need for grace and redemption.

Ramzes poetry and performance are true prayer, a gift to us. He will be deeply missed, not just for all the reasons I mentioned earlier, but because Ramzes was willing, in his too brief life, to bring us grace from places we were unwilling to go ourselves. ☒

Our community gathered to remember and give thanks for the life of our brother, Ramsey, on June 7.

SAYINGS SIGN FAREWELL

With construction of new front steps, our old sayings sign is being retired. We gathered our teams of sign-changers to get pictures with the final sign. Or what we thought was going to be the final saying to go up. With General Synod considering a change to the marriage canon there was a callout to all allies to post pictures showing a message of support as part of the #EquallyAnglican social media campaign that was happening. What better place to post a message than our sign—so there was the final, final saying to go up. Thank you to all in our community who faithfully changed the sign week in and week out. In blistering heat and finger-numbing freezing cold; in sunshine and pouring rain. And particular thanks to Jack Howard for putting together the sayings that found their way onto the sign and to Charles Klassen for keeping all the letters in order. ☒



And so we write...

Susanna Jacob

Yecenia is free. Homa is not.

And so we write.

Yecenia Armenta, mother of two young children, was taken into custody by the Mexican police in July 2012, accused of murdering her husband. She was raped and tortured into making a confession. Despite the lack of any proof of her guilt, she was incarcerated for four years, only being released on June 8, this year.

This is part of her thank you to Amnesty International and other human rights groups who worked for her release. ***To everyone who has stood by me, I give my heartfelt thanks. Without this support, my freedom would have been almost impossible. I want to thank you and to urge you to continue your efforts, don't stop the beautiful work you are doing for the human rights of others. Sometimes justice is delayed, but it comes.***

Professor Homa Hoodfar, a noted anthropologist at Concordia University in Montreal, is incarcerated in notorious Evin Prison in Tehran. She was in Iran

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visiting family and doing research on the history of women's participation in public life there. Members of the Revolutionary Guards detained her in March,

and after repeated interrogations, she was arrested on June 6. She has had no access to family or to legal counsel, suffers from myasthenia gravis, a neurological condition, and is unlikely to be receiving the specialized medical care she needs.

According to Amnesty International, "Research is not a crime. No one should be targeted for the peaceful

exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and association. Amnesty International considers Dr. Hoodfar to be a prisoner of conscience."

And so we write.

Sometimes we write to authorities in foreign countries. Sometimes we write to our own government. In Dr. Hoodfar's case, we write to Iranian officials in care of the UN, and call on the Government of Canada to "take all possible diplomatic measures to ensure her immediate release and safe return to Canada."

Critics sometimes say, "What's the point? You can't save everyone; you can't save the world." You may be familiar with this story:

A young man was walking by the sea when, far ahead, he saw a figure bending down, standing up, and throwing something into the water.

As he approached, he saw that it was

an elderly woman. She was picking

up starfish and throwing them into

the sea. The young man approached

and asked her, "What are you

doing?" The old woman replied,

"I'm saving starfish." Surprised,

the young man said, "But there are

so many starfish dying here on the

beach. What difference can you be making?"

As the old woman threw another starfish into the water, she

answered, "It made a difference to that one."

Our letters made a difference to Yecenia Armenta, to

journalist Mohammed Fahmi, and to Hamid Ghassemi

Shall, an Iranian-Canadian living in the Beaches, who

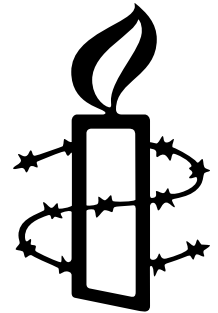
returned to Toronto after years of incarceration in the

same Evin Prison where Dr. Homa Hoodfar is now

imprisoned.

And so we write.

Please join us (watch for announcements each month in the service leaflets).



A Message from the Refugee Settlement Committee

Dear friends,


As June 20 marked World Refugee Day, it is a fitting time to take a moment and thank you for your participation with us in supporting and welcoming refugees from around the world.

In making ourselves available as sponsors, the committee made a conscious decision not to ask specifically for Syrian refugees, reasoning that the severity of their plight does not diminish the severity of others' plights. With this mandate in mind, we were delighted to accept 19-year-old Ibrahim as our first refugee. Ibrahim comes to us from The Gambia, and over the past month and a half, he has been busy settling into his new life in Toronto. Our team has been busy helping Ibrahim with the many practical tasks facing a newcomer: identification papers, medical appointments, banking and finances, enrolling in school, finding appropriate housing, etc. as well as offering welcome, support, and guidance in whatever ways we can. He is settling in well, excelling in school, making new friends, and loving his new city.

Our hope is that this will be just the start of an ongoing ministry to refugees, and we are in the queue to welcome a family sometime later this year.

It has been our privilege to support Ibrahim in this life-altering move, and we recognize that it is truly a community effort. Thank you so much for joining us in the journey!

With thanks,
The Refugee Settlement Team

If you have any questions about our sponsorship ministry please contact Luke McRae at luke.j.mcrae@gmail.com. Any questions about pledges should be directed to Carolyn Mackie at cmackie@icscanada.edu 

Telling the Story

Cherith Muir

What is this recurring event about?

Telling the Story is a series of informal evenings devoted to increasing our biblical literacy. The aim of the series is to explore the biblical texts in a way which will engage the intellect and the heart of the listeners

Each *Telling the Story* evening begins at 7PM. Tea and squares are offered to participants for a nominal donation. Between 7 and 8.45PM we explore the evening's theme through music, readings, reflections and informal discussion.

The reader begins the evening with the first of the biblical passages selected. Over the course of our time together, the readings continue, interspersed with reflections from the presenter, and musical selections that are appropriate to the message of the texts


Who should attend?

The evening is designed to appeal to adult learners who are curious about the themes in the biblical texts.

2016-17 series theme

September 13	Genesis: the descent to Egypt
October 11	Exodus I: the escape from Egypt
November 8	Exodus II: forming a community
January 10	Numbers: the desert journey from Egypt
February 14	Deuteronomy: on the brink of the Promised Land
March 14	To be announced

We want to keep the focus on these history narratives, that are foundational for both Judaism and Christianity, letting the narratives speak for themselves, what they meant in the times they were written, and how they inspired and were used by later writers of Scripture.

Registration will be available shortly for the first evening of the series. It helps the committee plan seating and resources if all who plan to attend, take a moment and sign-up online or by calling the church office. 

Pride Parade

It was our delight to be part of the huge group of Proud Anglicans who participated in the Pride parade on Sunday, July 3. We waved, we smiled, we greeted as we walked along and we were waved at, smiled to, and greeted in return by the enthusiastic crowd.



Remembering Orlando

The news coming from Orlando on Sunday, June 12 was devastating. The murder of LGBTQ individuals and their friends or family at a nightclub was beyond words. At times such as this our response is to open our doors and to welcome in. In the candlelight we offer space for those who need to find sanctuary. That was the first step. We also took the rainbow banner and draped it around one of our big wooden crosses and put it in our entryway during the week and on the front steps on Sunday morning. One of the comments heard from survivors of the attack in Orlando was that the club was a place of sanctuary. May we be reminded that places of sanctuary are still needed.



YOU ARE MY WITNESSES:

The 41st General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada

Chris Ambidge

General Synod happens every three years. The members are all the active bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada, members of the clergy and laity from each diocese—from two of each from smaller dioceses like Yukon or Qu'Appelle, to eight of each from rather more populous Toronto. Each diocese also has one youth member; and the total membership is just over 200. This year, General Synod was held at a hotel in glamorous Richmond Hill¹, from July 7 to 12. I was a member of this Synod.

When we arrived and registered, we all got name badges, and iPads and voting clickers, making this Synod pretty much paperless with all information on an app on the iPads. The voting clickers look like a small TV remote. We were also given bags with swag, from water-bottles to thumb drives and notepads, and biscuits for snacking. We all got a fortune cookie—and for everyone the fortune was “You Are My Witnesses” – Isaiah 43:10—the theme of Synod that gave focus to our deliberations.

There were many people across the country praying for us, including people here at Redeemer, and knowing that that prayer support was ongoing was tremendously helpful to the delegates. One of the things that Anglicans do when we gather is worship, and the worship services at General Synod—both the big Eucharists and the

shorter morning and evening prayers—sounded really good. That many involved Anglicans in one room can certainly make a joyful noise unto the Lord.

Of course, at all of those worship events, we used the prayer that Jesus taught us. That was always introduced with the instruction, “quietly, so that all voices may be heard.” There would have been many different languages being spoken: English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Mandarin, Inuktitut, Oji-Cree, Kwagu'l, and I suspect more than I've mentioned. The idea of all voices being heard is quite deliberate, trying hard not to have one group steam-roller over another.

There would have been many different languages being spoken: English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Mandarin, Inuktitut, Oji-Cree, Kwagu'l, and I suspect more than I've mentioned.

And, in that spirit of all voices being heard, for the first time at a General Synod, there was simultaneous translation provided in three Indigenous languages from English.

Ecumenism was a strong thread

Representatives of many different denominations and religions were present at the opening worship and several stayed for the whole of Synod. We heard from Archbishop Josiah, General Secretary of the Anglican Communion; from Presiding Bishop Michael of the Episcopal Church USA; from Bishop Griselda of Cuba; from Archbishop Francisco, Primate of Brazil; and from the leaders of the United Church of Canada, and Mennonites in Canada. We also heard from the Archbishop of Athabasca, and from a General Synod member who actually lives in Fort McMurray (and of course had to evacuate precipitously). All of these words

¹ Not that I would know about Richmond Hill from this visit: I arrived Thursday morning, and left Tuesday evening, and other than pushing someone in a wheelchair from one door to another (to avoid internal stairs) I wasn't out-of-doors at all in the interim.

from different parts of the Vineyard build up the web of relationships which is the church, and open our eyes to God's work in distant places.

Indigenous Members of the Church

The Indigenous members of the church were the focus of activity all day Sunday—both in worship, and in reports and events. Sunday's Eucharist began with smudging (by Redeemer's own Andrew Wesley), the singing was acapella (just like almost all Indigenous services, where church organs are few and far-between), the readings were polyglot, in several Aboriginal tongues, and of course there was drumming. A significant part of the afternoon was given over to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the church's response to that. We saw the inauguration of a council of Indigenous Elders and Youth—whose task is basically to hold the church's feet to the fire, and make sure that commitments made in regards to the TRC are kept, and built upon. There was talk of a separate ecclesiastical province for Indigenous parishes. There are presently four provinces—British Columbia and Yukon, Rupert's Land (the prairies and arctic), Ontario, and Canada (everything east of the Ottawa River). A new province would be non-territorial, rather like an overlay area code for your phone.

During the Indigenous discussions, Archbishop Fred was honoured for his tremendous and pastoral work on behalf of the Indigenous people. One of the elders gave Archbishop Fred an eagle feather: that is a mark of enormous respect, and I have no doubt very well-earned.

The Business of Routine Business

There was of course routine business—dealing with budgets, pensions, and other non-controversial motions. The rules of Synod provide that one may not abstain in voting if in the hall, except for a declared conflict of interest. One must vote yea, or nay, or leave the hall. Synod voted to suspend that rule for this session, to allow for abstentions. This allowed people who would have difficulty voting for option A OR for option B to avoid that dilemma without fleeing the hall. I'm sure

that this made Synod a lot easier for some people—especially on the controversial motions.

Speaking of which, there was a motion to delete a prayer for the conversion of the Jews from the Book of Common Prayer. One version of this prayer, the third collect for Good Friday, was recognised long ago as being inappropriate (and downright anti-Semitic). General Synod 1989 directed that it not be used, and deleted from future printings of the BCP. A couple of years ago, an oversight was discovered: a very similar prayer was found on page 41, in "Prayers and Thanksgivings." It was

probably overlooked because it was barely if ever used. So a motion came forward, presented as a housekeeping motion, to delete prayer four on page 41. Someone objected to it being on the no-debate list, so that particular change was debated. Some people seemed

to think that they were somehow denying the Lord Jesus if they allowed this prayer to be deleted. I suspect even those who were arguing for its continued inclusion in the BCP haven't used it in public worship in the last five years. However, it failed to attain the required 2/3 in the House of Bishops, and thus remains in the BCP.

The headline could have been, (with some justification), "Anglican Church Anti-Semitic." However, the votes on amending Canon XXI, on Marriage, were all that the general public noticed.

Canon XXI, on Marriage

General Synod back in 2013 directed that a motion to amend Canon XXI to allow for same-sex marriage in church be brought to this Synod. A task force was called together to receive submissions from all over the church, to study the theology, and to draft changes. Synod 2016 heard a report from them on the first full evening of sittings. We then had group discussions of about 24 members, around the proposed changes—"what do you hope will happen" and "what are you afraid will happen." The groups were constructed with care to ensure a diversity of viewpoints, of geography, of sexualities. There were three separate occasions for these discussions. They were conducted with fairly standard norms in place: speak in the first person, assume those you speak of are present in the room, don't preach, and so forth. We spoke about what our

One of the elders gave Archbishop Fred an eagle feather: that is a mark of enormous respect, and I have no doubt very well-earned.

hopes were for the resolution, and what our fears were. My discussion group went well; opinions on both sides were present, everyone spoke respectfully, and listened to others. This was not the case in all discussion groups, unfortunately, and some people felt fairly battered by the process and the conversations.

The group discussions came up again on Monday morning. Before we went to them, Primate Fred spoke quite directly to the members of synod about having “church manners,” and having care for others present. He spoke in terms of 1 Corinthians 12, all of us being different parts of the Body of Christ, but no part being able to say to another “I have no need of you.” He quite deliberately did not say this from the Chair, but instead went to the Altar, to remind us all that we were indeed the Body of Christ assembled.

Then on Monday afternoon came the debate on the motion to amend Canon XXI. The debate took hour-and-a-half hours, and 60 members were heard from. There were points made in favour of change, and opposed to change. Painting with a very broad brush, in general, opposition to the change comes from rural, and northern, and Indigenous areas; and support for change comes from urban, and southern, and European areas. This is not to say, of course, that there are not people in “unexpected” areas wanting to change, or not change. Even in urban Toronto, there were two of 22 votes cast against changing the canon.

To pull two examples from the formal debate: Canon Kevin Robertson, rector of Christ Church Deer Park, spoke from direct experience. He has had a partner for many years, and they have four-year-old twins. He has been under some pressure to get legally married. He would love to do that, as soon as he can get married in church. He doesn’t want his children to grow up thinking that there is something sub-standard about the relationship between their Daddy and their Papa. [I think that was a proposal on the floor of Synod]

The Bishop of the Arctic also spoke, quite literally brandishing his bible. He spoke of Sodom and Gomorrah, and from Romans 1, and how the church would be being faithless by changing from the BCP concept of marriage.

Because this is a change to Canons involving doctrine and worship, passage of the motion requires a 2/3 majority in all three orders, bishops, clergy and laity. We

sat quietly in prayer before the actual voting, and then at the appropriate time voted using the clickers. The vote was recorded, that is, who voted which way was noted (by the clicker computers). It was expected that it would probably pass in clergy and laity, and fail in the house of bishops. When the numbers were released, it passed in the laity and in the bishops, but failed in the house of clergy. The failure was by one vote: 51:26.

At the direction of the Chair, we sat quietly afterwards. There was disappointment and pain—and, I assume, relief on the part of those opposed. I was disappointed, certainly, but not devastated—I’ve had too many churchy disappointments to put too many emotional eggs in that basket. The clergy from Toronto, by contrast, were terribly affected—basket cases in some instances. And none of us were feeling very good. The vote ended the day’s business, and we moved into evening prayer—in this case, BCP Evensong. That was probably

the best thing that could have happened: something lovely and peaceful and very familiar, while dealing with hurt.

A Way Forward

Archbishop Johnson had asked at lunchtime that the Toronto delegation meet together immediately after the vote, however it turned out. So we duly huddled over to one side of the hall. Archbishop Colin then read to us the text of an announcement he was about to videotape and release. In it, he said that as a pastoral measure, he was prepared to move forward on authorising same-sex marriages in churches in Toronto diocese. I must allow, that did a great deal to take the sting out of the General Synod vote.

The Chancellor² of General Synod had earlier ruled on two things: that the current Canon XXI does not explicitly forbid same-sex marriages in church³, and that the definition of marriage in the preamble to the Canon is gender-neutral (no he’s or she’s present). Bishops may authorise all manner of liturgies for use

² Chief legal beagle

³ Mostly because same-sex marriage wasn’t a legal possibility when the Canon was initially passed, several years ago.

in their dioceses for pastoral reasons, as long as they're not in contravention of the Canons. So this move was not against church law. Archbishop Colin was not acting alone. Within the next few hours, the bishops of Montreal, Ottawa, Niagara, Huron, New Westminster and British Columbia [Vancouver Island] all said that they would move forward towards equal marriage, with varying degrees of consultation en-route.

Tuesday morning everyone was feeling a little battered with the heightened emotions of the previous days. The Primate put half-an-hour into the morning agenda for table discussions to talk about the process, and how we could have done it better. Those insights discussed and recorded while the memories were still fresh, will certainly advise future considerations of this and future contentious issues at General Synods in years to come. Speaking for myself, I need to be very careful not to demonise those who voted in the opposite direction to me, and particularly the First Nations members. I must be clear here that I am not being patronising when I speak of what I observed. For a number of the Indigenous members, this was their first time south of 60N, and for more of them, their first time in a large urban setting. This whole system was new and very different to them, and in such situations, when asked to change from the familiar; the immediate reaction is to resist, to say NO. That is not to say that I'm attributing their decision to the venue, far from it. General Synod was not well served by the Westminster system of parliamentary procedure, motions, amendments and votes. That may work well for budgets and pension plans, but it is not good at all for such emotion-laden subjects as this. Synod has a policy that there is no applause (or the opposite thereof) after a vote or speech on a substantive motion. That's because applause means "we've won," and if someone has won, then someone else has lost. And the church should not put people in the position of being losers, that's not how a church functions. It may well be that we could learn from First Nations practices of talking circles, and of consensus; I don't know. Westminster meant all of us were battered, but that's the system we have at the moment.

The Final Day – Canon XXI Continued

Tuesday was the last day of Synod, and all manner of other business was tidied up. A motion was made to have the lists of who voted which way on the Canon XXI motion be made public immediately (normally it would be published with the minutes of Synod, a few months down the road). Since the counting was computerised, the list was available very readily, and posted to everyone's iPad. Some people did some counting, and a discrepancy was found. I was actually an Assessor for Synod, so was one of the four who did

the official recount⁴. It turned out that one clerical vote, the General Secretary of General Synod, had been assigned to the wrong group. He had voted in favour of the Canon change. When his vote was counted correctly, the House of Clergy vote became 52:26, which is exactly the 2/3 majority needed for change to the canons. That meant that the amendment to Canon XXI, to allow marriage in church for same-sex couples to be allowed on the same basis as for opposite-sex couples, passed on first reading. It will now go to the

dioceses for discussion (though not for approval) over the next three years, and will be considered for second reading at General Synod 2019 in Vancouver.

There wasn't a huge amount of jubilation—or any, really; after all, we knew exactly how the no-change side felt, having been in that situation eighteen hours previously.

We are ALL God's witnesses. That's not as simple as it looks.

Change is coming. Not tomorrow, not next week, but the snowball is now rolling down the mountain. ☒

*...applause means
"we've won,"
and if someone has won,
then someone else has lost.
And the church should
not put people in the
position of being losers,
that's not how
a church functions.*

.....
⁴ We recounted five times. Just to be completely sure.

Construction continues...



Parish Notes

Wrongs to Rights Reading Group

The Aboriginal Issues Work Group is planning a Thursday evening discussion group on the essays in *Wrongs to Rights*, as we reflect on how to embrace the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Each evening of this 10 session series will begin at 7PM and the discussion will conclude at 9PM.

The first meeting will be on Thursday, September 29. The rest of the dates in 2016 will be October 20, November 10 and December 1. The dates for 2017 will be confirmed at the October session but have been tentatively scheduled for January 19, February 9, March 2, March 30, April 27 and May 18. Copies of the book are available from Pamela Thomson or Mark Plummer. Registration is available online.



Drop-in Meal Program Updates

While the drop-in program has been on summer break there has been time to put plans in place for the autumn. The program leadership looks forward to welcoming the participants back in early September. There are also a host of events for the whole Redeemer community to become involved in. Here is a run-down of upcoming dates.


Drop-in program reopens: Monday, September 12 from 8 – 11.45AM (Monday to Friday)

Book Sale Fundraiser: Thursday, October 13 and Friday, October 14 from 1 – 5PM
Donations of books will be gratefully received

Fall Cottage Fundraiser: This wonderful opportunity to support the drop-in program and book your vacation at the same time returns. Bids open on Sunday, November 6 and conclude at the Christmas Carol reading

A Christmas Carol: Our annual reading of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* will be on Sunday, December 4 at 2PM



Save the Date! A two-session workshop for those who lead the prayers of the people or who would like to learn more about how to offer the intercessions during the worship service is planned for this October. *Strengthening the Prayers of the People* will take place on Saturday, October 1 with The Rev'd Canon John Hill, chair, Liturgy Canada, and Diane Marshall, therapist, Institute of Family Living. On Wednesday, October 12 a second opportunity to focus on some of the questions that arise from the workshop and about leading the prayers within the Redeemer context will be offered. Further details will be coming soon. 


Gathering Notes

This summer the Gathering team decided to let the publication date for this issue of the newsletter be more fluid than usual. The rest of the year we have very clear deadlines that reflect the liturgical year and life in the parish. In the summer we have a little more flexibility and so we waited until the time felt right. What was in our files at the published deadline would have made a very fine publication. But in being still, in waiting, in letting life in the parish be still, in knowing that new things were being worked on we have so much more to share.

In these pages you will have found updates from the Aboriginal Issues Working Group and from Chris Ambidge who was at General Synod. You will have read the latest news from our Parish Selection Committee and will know that they are about to embark on exciting work. You will see news about upcoming events that are about to be launched and will carry us into the fall.

With this issue we hope you have pulled out your calendars and marked the learning events, Rock Eucharists and Bach Vespers that you want to attend; we hope you have found your way to the website to the registration pages for those events and are now signed up.

And with that done, we hope that there will yet be time to find a quiet place—by the water, in the woods, in the backyard, in the countryside—to be still, to listen for God's voice, to hold this community in prayer, to discern what God is calling you to in the weeks to come.

May your summer have be one of re-creation and hope; may your autumn be one of exploration and joy. 

Worship Services to Note Summer–Autumn 2016

As summer moves toward autumn, we note the following worship services that will be on our calendar come September and October.

Sunday, September 4

In the morning, through the laying on of hands for healing, prayers are offered.

Sunday, September 18 – 7PM

Our first Rock Eucharist of the autumn will feature the music of Prince. Join us for word, sacrament, and song.

Sunday, September 25 – 7PM

Bach Vespers – BWV 23 ~ *Du wahrer Gott und Davids Sohn*. Our Bach Vespers service combines glorious choral music with thoughtful preaching.

Sunday, October 9 – 8, 9.30 and 11.15AM

We celebrate and give thanks for the bountiful harvest of God's abundance. And we offer thanks for being citizens of this land. Thanksgiving is time of gratitude and a renewed call to embrace God's ways of love, equity and generosity. There is no evening service.

Looking ahead:

Sunday, October 23 – 7PM

A Doo-Wop Eucharist. Come gather to hear the word opened through song and sermon; be fed as bread and wine are blessed and shared.

Sunday, November 13 – 7PM

Rock Eucharist featuring the Wine Before Breakfast band and worship leadership.

Sunday, December 11 – 7PM

Bach Vespers ~ BWV 248 – Christmas Oratorio Part III: *Herrscher des Himmels, erhöre das Lallen*.



Parish Notes

BAPTISM

Emma Ruth Bronwen Alsop

May the power of the Holy Spirit work within her, that being born of water, and the Spirit she may be a faithful witness of Jesus Christ.

MARRIAGE

Jessica Kate Howsam and

Jeffrey Vincent Scholl

Karen Lynn Clarke and

Lionel Michael Marks

Stephanie Lucie Martine Corriveau and

Victor Manual Miranda Santos

May their lives together be a sacrament of your love in this broken world.

IN MEMORIAM

Brian Jeffrey King

Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with all your saints, where there is neither pain nor sorrow nor sighing, but life everlasting.



Remembering Mark Ensting

Members of the choir and Megan Jull joined with friends and neighbours to remember fellow chorister, Mark Ernsting when this art was installed in front of the gardens he helped to build and maintain.