



the  
**GATHERING**  
newsletter of the Church of the Redeemer

lent 2020



---

---

---

# Dear Friends,

**S**OME DO, most don't, all should. If that's not the Anglican rule regarding "observing" Holy Week, maybe it should be. Because Holy Week is where sacred time and ordinary time become one. When Palm Sunday dawns, we will have entered into an eight-day liturgy that attempts to celebrate the last week of Christ's life in real-time. So, symbolically speaking, what happens to Jesus is meant to be experienced by us. We walk with Christ and undergo every triumph and trial from the exultation of his entry into Jerusalem through his humiliation and death, in order that we may share in the new life of his resurrection.

We, who accompany Christ with shouts of praise into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday are supposed to embrace the dark and difficult truth that we are also the ones whose shouts will demand that he be crucified. Every step and gesture, every shout and cry in these liturgies are meant to underscore the truth that we are not merely observers of the drama of our salvation, we are its players and participants. We become the story of Holy Week as the drama of Holy Week becomes us. And that is why we need to be here, to be present and participate in worship during Holy Week, to prepare for what awaits us, and to become who God intends us to be.

On Monday, we will accompany Jesus to Bethany and with Mary's hands we will anoint Jesus for burial just as we prepare to bury all that separate us from God's love.

Tuesday, we will express the hunger and hope of the Greeks who approach Phillip. And it is in our own voices that we will hear our own longing for resurrection. With them we will say to Phillip "Sir, we would see Jesus." Wednesday, we will acknowledge the Judas in each of us and we will recoil from our own complicity in Christ's betrayal when we hear him say Judas (and to us in all the betrayals of our own lives) "What you are going to do, do quickly."

Then the drama will reach its climax in the Triduum, the sacred three days of Easter, when we will move from the commandment to love one another embodied in the institution of the Lord's supper, to the passion and death on the cross and finally; to emerge from the darkness of the tomb to behold the light of the Risen Christ with the dawn of Easter's first flame at the Vigil, only to settle into the fullness of the Easter Proclamation when we gaze into an empty tomb. If that sounds like emotional and experiential overload, well, that is because it is. And if the light of the resurrection seems only a faint glimmer distanced by this foreboding sequence of events, well, that is because it is.

For, the truth of Holy Week is this: if you are going to make this journey with Christ, if you're going to become the story and let the story become you, then you need to be present and you need to be prepared. For some that preparation will mean examining their lives and their Lent, discerning what must die with Christ on the cross and participating in as much of Holy Week as they are able.

For others that preparation may also involve offering their confession during Holy Week.

Anglicans are often uncomfortable with Confession, or the Reconciliation of a Penitent as the rite in our Book of Alternative Services names it. It's not that it smacks of Roman Catholic sentiment, for, hopefully, we are beyond those prejudices. No, many are uncomfortable with confession because they don't know what to say or what to do, and they don't see the point of taking one last kick at the can of contrition, just because it is Holy Week.

With respect to what you say and what you do, there is something powerful and liberating about giving voice to how you have fallen short of the glory of God to another person and asking God's forgiveness, and, more importantly, hearing with words of assurance that you have been forgiven. Moreover, regarding the question "why confess in



**THE REV'D CANON  
STEVEN MACKISON**



Holy Week” it is a spiritual discipline that some practice as a gesture of giving themselves over to fully experiencing that sacred time in our liturgical life. The journey from confession to absolution is Holy Week in miniature; for in that journey we offer all that separates us from God and our neighbour so that it may die, and we may begin anew, with our consciences cleared and our souls refreshed. But, of course, confession is not for everyone. In discerning whether that’s the way *you* need to prepare, remember the Anglican rule regarding sacramental confession: “all may, none must, some should.” That said, regardless of how you prepare yourself, in the real-time drama of Holy Week, when Christ is taken from us to be condemned we believe all of our sin goes with him; all that alienates us from God and one another dies with Jesus on the cross and is raised to new life.

In the end, that is the brightest truth of Holy Week. In other words, no matter what is said or kept silent, despite what is done or left undone, Easter will happen anyway.

all may,  
none must,  
some should.

With Christ you are given new life. And that’s not only the story’s happy ending, it is your happy ending, too.

So I urge you to observe a holy, Holy Week, participate fully in the drama of your salvation; become the story and let the story become you.

Steven ✠

## Order of the Diocese of Toronto

On Wednesday, January 1, three members of the Redeemer community were presented with the Order of the Diocese of Toronto by Bishop Andrew Asbil. Congratulations to Heather Bennett, Ann Cope and Marjorie Wrightson. Pictured: The recipients with Bishop Andrew, the many Redeemerites who were at the Cathedral; and all from Redeemer who are recipients to the Order.



# Practicing Reconciliation: *A Look at Opportunities to Deepen Our Understanding*

Carolyn Bett

What a rich learning environment Redeemer offers us. On January 15, at the final session on Thomas Merton, we learned that in the 1960s Merton, in his struggles against racism, defined repentance as the action of relinquishing power and accepting the gifts of the OTHER and reconciliation as breaking out of the box, crossing the boundaries, entering another reality. Reconciliation, according to Merton, begins by reaching out, entering their space.

A question I'm often asked is: "How do I meet Indigenous people and engage directly with them?" Sometimes people ask how they can become friends with members of the Indigenous community. Think about that for a moment: Consider our history together. How easily could you reach out? Yet, from my experience, we are often invited into the experiences of Indigenous communities and welcomed as we learn.

If you want to expand your understanding of Indigenous communities here are some suggestions of resources. Check the on-line catalogue at the Toronto Public Library pick up a brochure at your local branch listing a myriad of current Indigenous authors. My favourite is Richard Wagamese. His *Embers* is a lovely collection of meditations; *One Drum* outlines his spiritual practice; *Indian Horse* tells the difficult story that we hear over and over again.

Events here at Redeemer like the Circle of Survivors and the KAIROS blanket exercise give us the opportunity to hear through story and action experiences that can help us understand what reconciliation can be. Attend any future events to learn more.

At a recent event at Hot Docs cinema, Susan Aglukark told the audience that it was an act of reconciliation to be there that evening for the film *The Road Forward*, or at any the-

atre, lecture or music performances by Indigenous artists for that matter. Hearing stories, asking questions and listening carefully to the answers are all part of our own growth. For information about events in the wider community, contact Pamela Thompson who compiles the Weekly Indigenous News Digest (WIND) about being added to the email list. She lists an overwhelming variety of events to attend and pertinent articles.

In our own neighbourhood, there are resources to explore: the Native Canadian Centre gift shops on Spadina (across from the subway station) includes a shed outside the main building run by the youth in support of youth programs at the centre. More intensive, deepening engagement is available at the Dodem Kanonhsa. Elders regularly give teachings to mixed groups of Indigenous and settler folks. You can read about the Dodem online or give their office a call to learn more. At OISE, Indigenous Education Network (IEN) runs Wednesday teachings beginning at 1PM. in addition to evening events. At each of these places, there is opportunity to question the Elder about the day's teaching and others interested in continuing the conversation.

First Nations House at the University of Toronto might be more focussed on Indigenous students, however, all are welcome. Indeed, Travel for Learning was hatched by three retired strangers who went to hear Andrew Wesley at First Nations House and ended up talking to each other and agreeing to meet and make travel plans.

Travel for Learning, a branch of Redeemer's Indigenous Solidarity Working Group, focusses on a few out-of-town excursions a year to Indigenous-led events. Mark Plummer headed the trip to Tyendinaga, Darlene Varaleau led the most recent Crawford Lake excursion, and I took a group to Curve Lake for Wild Rice harvesting. We rely on each other to pick up details and to work out logistics. In addition, each month we suggest attendance at a local event that one of the Travellers suggests or that strikes us as most interesting from the WIND (Weekly Indigenous News Digest).

For more extended relationships, some people have worked closely with Toronto-based organizations like Council Fire, Winona's House, and Anishinaabe Health. Others support places like Pikangikum or Grassy Narrows and others relate through Facebook at Northern Canada Mini Projects coordinated by Cathy Dhillon.

As you practice reconciliation, you will make a difference—within yourself and to the society we live in. Listening to the stories of the Indigenous community is part of that practice. We hope that the events we encourage the community to participate in are a valuable part of your own growth. ✚





## John Campbell

We mourn the death of our beloved director of music emeritus, John Campbell, who died on Thursday, February 13. John was an incredible gift not only to our community but to the Church across the country. We remember with thanksgiving all he meant to us.

A celebration of John's life and Requiem Eucharist will be held at Church of the Redeemer on Saturday, March 7 at 1PM.

*Rest eternal grant to John, O Lord.  
And let light perpetual shine upon him.*











# Redeemer Kids

## Raising our Children in Faith

Roshni Jayawadena

*“This ministry continues to form community for Redeemer Kids and explore their role as active participants in and contributors to the larger community.”*

This quote is from the ‘Church School Values’ statement that was developed in May 2018, the beginning of my time at the Redeemer. Since then, I have had the opportunity to know the children in our parish, and have seen the above quote lived out:

*I stood at the table as we said five graces before eating because so many children wanted to share a part of their prayer life with the group.*

*I have listened as we wrote down prayers to offer to God, and a child who could not yet write was encouraged by another to draw what they were praying for, because God would understand.*

*And I have supported the child who spoke to me before Christmas pageant rehearsals saying, ‘I know I was a shepherd last year, but I am going to ask to be a shepherd again because I know I can be even better this year.’*

These ‘Redeemer Kids,’ as some may call the collective, are members of this community. They care about their role within these walls, and the impact they make outside of them. They are learning,

asking questions, and living their faith in ways that are creative and thoughtful. These ‘Redeemer Kids’ are not only the future of the Church; they are the Church.

In preparing the vestry report for “Church School, Family Ministry and Nursery,” church school leaders had a desire to look ahead, and communicate our hopes and calls for 2020 with the parish. I have viewed vestry reports as an overview of the past year, but there is great wisdom in reflecting on that overview, to then plan for the future.

Some reading this may recall being part of conversations about the future of children’s ministry. Some can look around on Sundays and recognize that the number of children in church school is in decline from the past. And some may know that this past year we have not had a church school coordinator, a role that should be shared by two people. This is likely to be the case for 2020 and we will also have the



retirement of some of our teachers that puts us in even greater need of action from the parish.

It is my hope that this article, grounded in our strategic plan, highlights the efforts I believe the entire parish needs to consider and act on as we work towards a sustainable future for children and family ministry.

The Redeemer's strategic plan speaks of a vision where we are a place that practices radical hospitality, welcoming and inclusive of all, believing that there is a place for everyone at God's table. Additionally, the plan articulates that we not only value and celebrate the diversity of the Church of the Redeemer, but that this inclusive nature is at the forefront of our ministry. I understand such values and vision of inclusion to apply to all people including the babies, toddlers and children, and am proud to be part of a community that wants to work towards this.

As we look ahead to the future of this ministry there are a variety of roles that need to be filled for a sustainable future, and there are calls to us all as we work to live out the vision and future we articulate in our strategic plan.

1. This ministry is in need of **at least four more teachers** to join our team. This is a call for people who desire to share their faith with the children, teach them, and walk alongside them as they grow in faith.
2. We seek volunteers who are able to take on some of the tasks of the previous church school coordinators; including helping to prepare for events and long-term planning.
3. Finally, as a parish we all have a call to engage with one another, be community together and be welcoming to children and families who may go down to church school or nursery care and those who may not. This can be through conversation and a smile, but there are also other intentional methods to brainstorm and implement together.



I urge us all to take action, not simply because it is important to sustaining and increasing the number of children in our midst, but because it is the only way to live as a community of faith together.

If you feel a call to one of these roles, if you have questions, or if you would like to talk about children's ministry, I would love to connect with you. I encourage you to read our vestry report, and as we reflect on the past year, I request that we all think towards the future of children and family ministry at Redeemer, and our role within it.

*The Rev. Roshni Jayawardena is Assistant Curate: Children and Family Ministry and can be reached by email ([roshni@theredeemer.ca](mailto:roshni@theredeemer.ca)) or through the church office (416-922-4948).*







*We are grateful to Shirley Westmore for her many years of service as office administrator. She has been alongside us through so many changes and been a source of wisdom and support through it all. At the morning services on Sunday, December 15, we had the opportunity to thank Shirley for all she has done for and been to us. We encircled her, and her husband Bob, with a blessing as she prepared for her retirement at the end of the year. Enjoy Halifax, Shirley and Bob, and come home for a visit when you can.*

## I Had to Have This Job

Shirley Westmore

I had to have this job. I wasn't unemployed, I had been temping with a great company that even gave us delicious afternoon snacks and they wanted to hire me full-time. But something was missing. I had worked for Metropolitan Community Church for five years and I missed going to work...at church.

I remember one day I was asked to type some prayer cards and they apologized that it was a little boring and tedious. I

said that it was fine—who (other than clergy and clergy types), gets to pray and be paid for it. How great is that!

More than twenty-one years later and I was still here and feeling blessed. I have always consid-

ered working here to be a calling and not a job. So many amazing people have come into and sometimes sadly, left my life here. I am honoured to have been a part of that. I have worked with some amazing and talented people (and how great it was to begin and end my stay here with Steven Mackison. You are in such good hands!) and served a congregation that I will dearly miss. I have learned so much here and found the love of my life here, too! Thank you for being my second family and for your love and support. And if you are ever in Halifax...!



# Give It Up for the Earth, Lent 2020!

Grant Jahnke

“Creation advocacy [protecting what God loves] is a modern Pentecost where God’s Spirit calls the church to listen faithfully and act courageously to protect creation and participate in the Holy Spirit’s redemptive healing of all of creation.”

*The Rev. Dr. Mishka Lysack*

Once again this year the Anglican Diocese of Toronto will be calling on all congregations to participate in *Give It Up for the Earth*, a Lenten initiative of the Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) aimed at calling every individual in the diocese and the Government of Canada to take immediate action to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that are the primary cause of the present rapid increase in global temperatures.

As CPJ puts it,

“Ambitious action is no longer optional. We must cut emissions and move towards a more secure, sustainable future.

Canada has established an important climate action baseline. Yet even with recent measures, we are far from achieving the Paris Agreement temperature goals. The federal government must improve climate policies and reduce emissions as promised.”

Throughout Lent, *Give It Up For The Earth* information packets and postcards to be sent to the Honorable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of the Environment, will be available in the welcome area calling on the Canadian government to seize the opportunity to act courageously and aggressively to build a green economy.

In addition to challenging the government to act decisively, each post card also contains a pledge of the sender to take personal action to reduce their carbon footprint. Each of us is called to identify where we can align our lives for the good of the community of Earth by stepping up to what Pope Francis has called “one of the principal challenges of our day.”

How will you, individually, and we at Redeemer collectively, participate in *Give It Up For the Earth*, in Lent 2020? ✝



**GIVE IT UP FOR THE EARTH!**

A faith-in-action campaign to increase climate justice in Canada.

Please join us in signalling to the federal government that Canadians are prepared to make lifestyle changes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change — and that we expect policy changes that will move us further and faster towards meeting our international climate change commitments.

We invite you to **GIVE IT UP FOR THE EARTH!** from February 14 to March 29, 2018.

**To participate** complete the pledge card (on reverse) and the postcard below.

**1. Pledge**

**Identify** your action(s) to reduce your emissions.

For example,

- walk, bike, or bus
- buy less, buy local, buy used
- eliminate air travel
- eat less meat; eat local & in season
- reduce electricity use
- support eco-friendly businesses
- divest from fossil fuels
- upgrade windows, doors & insulation
- buy fair trade
- cut waste
- refuse one-use / overpackaged items
- install solar panels or use a green home energy service

More at cpj.ca/greening

**Write** your pledge on the reverse of this card.

**Post** a selfie with your pledge to social media,

**2. Call for Action!**

**Complete** the postcard below. Include your **pledge, name, city, province, and postal code.**

**Return** the postcard to your local organizer

**OR**

**Mail** the postcard directly to Citizens for Public Justice (no postage required) by April 12, 2018.

**Invite** your friends and family to join the campaign and **Give it up for the Earth!**

To the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson,

Ambitious action is no longer optional. We must cut emissions and move towards a more secure, sustainable future.

I will **GIVE IT UP FOR THE EARTH!** by:

name emission-reducing action(s) here

Canada has established an important climate action baseline. Yet even with recent measures, we are far from achieving the Paris Agreement temperature goals. The federal government must improve climate policies and reduce emissions as promised.

How will Canada **GIVE IT UP FOR THE EARTH?**

We call on you to **invest in a National Just Transition and Decarbonization Strategy**. A modernized, diversified green economy will lead to major emissions reductions, create good, secure jobs, and promote the well-being of everyone in Canada.

Minister Jonathan Wilkinson  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ City, Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

postage NOT required







# Rock Eucharist – The Music of David Bowie

---



# Rock Eucharist – The Music of Tears for Fears

---





# THE COMMON TABLE: 'From our basement to the street'

Kathryn Mills

The Common Table at the Church of the Redeemer began when hungry people came to us asking for something to eat. It grew to include health care, an art studio, help with housing and employment, and other services to meet the complex needs of participants. And now the time has

*Redeemer to  
undertake street  
outreach program  
designed in  
partnership with  
nursing students  
from Humber  
College*

come for it to grow again, this time beyond the walls of the building.

During Lent, our director of outreach, Angie Hocking, will offer training to volunteers to prepare them for a new Common Table program in which they will spend six weeks taking supplies, snacks, coffee, conversation and access to important resources to those who are living outside, on the street in our neighbouring community.

In effect, they will carry a portable version of the Common Table out into the world.

"During my eight years at Redeemer, housing options for low-income folks have gone from difficult to find, but possible, to nearly impossible," Angie said recently. "To break into the market right now as a renter is unfeasible for most. Homelessness is increasing in our city, and people are literally dying on our streets. Our work in The Common Table is even more vital now. And we figured it is time to take the important work we do from our basement to the street."

She explained that a few teams are already doing this work, such as the Streets To Homes program, but it is not enough. "The couple of programs that are out there don't work for everyone, and cannot reach everyone that needs help. So it's time we take this step, and be the church to the most marginalized outside of our walls, beyond our corner."

The training and other elements of the new program were designed in partnership with eight third-year students from the nursing program of Humber College, who spent two days a week during their fall term at Redeemer as part of their studies in community-health nursing care.

"This group has been involved with many of the pieces that needed much attention before we can dive into this new and exciting program," Angie said. "They have forged new partnerships, gotten many donations for the supplies that will be given out, raised money for the project above and beyond what was expected, created the groundwork for the volunteer training sessions, put together street outreach resources, and much more."

With the guidance of their teacher, Natasha Parmar, the students spent the first few weeks meeting The Common Table participants, and drew ideas for how to shape the supplies needed for the street outreach program from people who shared their experiences of homelessness with them. They spoke with Toronto Police, outreach counsellors and leaders in the Indigenous community about resources and cultural sensitivities that the volunteers will learn to practice.

To gather the money and other resources required for such an ambitious undertaking, the students began a GoFundMe campaign. Some also raised funds in their own communities, and others visited businesses to gather donations for needed supplies.

From there, they moved up to the third-floor loft to work on the logistics and finalize their recommendations. By the end of the semester, the program and the training were ready to roll out.

The volunteers will make their rounds carrying backpacks that will contain a wide assortment of supplies to hand out as needed, from housing and health information to personal-hygiene products. The trusty backpacks will also have the medication Naloxone, which the nursing students say is used to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, toothbrushes and toothpaste, skin lotion, band-aids, snacks, and coffee. A few sleeping bags and coats are available. The students pointed out that supplies such as band-aids and hand sanitizer—although they might seem simple—are vitally important. For people living on the street, minor problems such as an infected cut can become life-or-death situations.

The students said their goals for their work with The Common Table were to help us find

ways to help the community at large see and understand the humanity of those who, for whatever reason, live on the streets, and to teach everyone that nursing exists not just in clinics and hospitals, but everywhere.

Natasha said she would like the students to become champions for social justice.

"It takes just one person to start a community to work on social justice and change perceptions, leading with love." ✝

**THE COMMON TABLE**  
Redeemer's Drop-in Community

# Voices for Peace 2020

Paul Pynkoski

The inaugural *Voices for Peace Conference* in April 2018 was sponsored by the Church of the Redeemer, The Basilian Centre for Justice and Peace, Citizens for Public Justice, and the Henri Nouwen Society. It explored the witness of twentieth century peacemakers and provided new and seasoned activists with contemplative and artistic resources. Jim Forest, a life-long peace advocate, spoke of what he learned from his friendships with Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, Henri Nouwen, and Daniel Berrigan. Hip hop artist and broadcaster Shad explored the relationship of art and joy, the personal and the political, in peacemaking. Following the conference, Jim Forest preached at Redeemer.

Last year, the conference profiled stories from the front lines of twenty-first century peacemaking. We heard about the devastation of war and the resiliency of communities in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palestine. We explored Thomas Merton's peace writings and heard echoes of his message in contemporary Canadian music.

Each conference created opportunities for attendees to use their voices for peace through petition signing and letter writing, and by facilitating connections to organizations like Pax Christi and Christian Peacemaker Teams.

It is hard to stay grounded these days. It is easy to be overwhelmed and exhausted as we look at the state of our world. Just in the past few months we have been brought to the brink of war, been exhausted by the circus of politics in the USA and the divisive rhetoric of a Canadian election, and seen that our violence towards the Earth has led to the realization that "our house is on fire."

We need to be realistic about the state of things, but at the same time, as people of faith, we need to nourish inspiration and ground our hope for the future.

*Voices for Peace 2020* aims to do just that. This year's theme is "Spirituality, Justice, and the Land."

We gather on Friday evening, April 24, and Saturday, April 25 at the Cardinal Flahiff Centre at the University of Toronto. We are bringing together four speakers from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Fr. John Dear has been involved with Pax Christi, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. He has developed a world-wide network of peace activists, and more recently has been involved in



addressing ecological

issues as part of peacemaking. He has

authored or edited thirty books, the latest of which is *PRAISE BE PEACE: The Psalms of Peace and Nonviolence in a Time of War and Climate Change*.

Sylvia Keesmaat has preached many times at Redeemer. She is a biblical scholar, and, with her husband Brian Walsh, co-authored *Colossians Remixed* and *Romans: Disarmed*. Sylvia speaks frequently on issues related to biblical faith and creation care, sustainable living and radical discipleship.

Esther Wesley was the coordinator for the Anglican Fund for Healing and Reconciliation, supporting healing and reconciliation for First Nations peoples and the Anglican Church. Esther's husband, Andrew Wesley, is an Anglican priest and social worker. He is Cree and attended two residential schools. Esther and Andrew bring insight from a First Nations understanding of the care of creation, and practical experience in fostering reconciliation.

Poetry, prayer, and the music of Wine Before Breakfast's Deb Whalen and Dave Krause will nourish our imaginations as our four speakers guide us through looking realistically at the challenges we face, reflecting on how our spirituality can inspire and inform our action, and assist us to approach our future with hope.

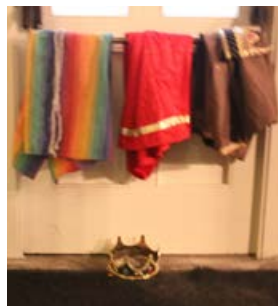
Registration information will follow shortly.



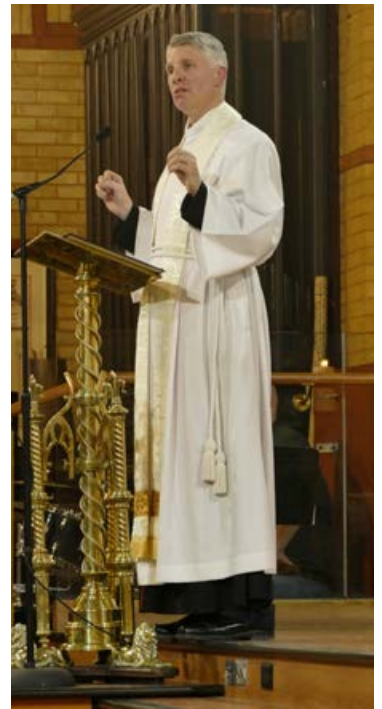






















# Freedom

Susanna Jacob

“Freedom!” That’s what Canada offers.

That was the heartfelt response given by Taha and Abdu, the two Eritrean newcomers interviewed by Paul MacLean at the morning services on Sunday, January 19. As both of them reiterated, the Eritrean government is authoritarian; if you voice any opposition to it, you are arrested and jailed. Abdu emphasized, “I left Eritrea because there is no freedom of speech or belief.” Taha expanded on this sentiment to say, “There is one party controlling the country and one TV channel. It is like the North Korea of Africa.”

In its annual report, Amnesty International highlights the situation with this introduction:

Thousands continued to flee Eritrea while the authorities severely restricted the right to leave the country. Indefinite mandatory national service continued to be imposed. Restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression and religion remained. Arbitrary detention without charge or trial continued to be the norm for thousands of prisoners of conscience. Thousands were denied the right to an adequate standard of living.

Taha and Abdu, along with fellow newcomers Omer and Ibrahim, arrived in Canada in February and March of 2019. Their route had been a dangerous one through Sudan and Egypt, and finally to Israel. Many fleeing along this route fall prey to smugglers or are deported to Libya or Yemen, unwelcoming and threatening destinations for refugees.

Having left Eritrea as teenagers or in their very early twenties, these young men spent the next ten years in Israel as undocumented, and therefore vulnerable, refugees. They worked under the table, and only for cash, with no job security, opportunities for education, or provision for health care.

And then, they heard of a possibility of coming to Canada. Abdul and Mehamed Ali, themselves former refugees from Eritrea, and “cousins” (all member of the Saho tribe are “cousins”!), had raised money in the Toronto Eritrean community to bring the four young men to Canada. They approached AURA (Anglican United Refugee Alliance), the SAH (Settlement Agreement Holder) with which we work, and Redeemer was paired with the Eritreans for the sponsorship.

As with our other sponsorships, the Refugee Settlement Committee gathered furniture and supplies and furnished the apartment. Committee members helped the newcomers obtain official documentation and connected them to medical and dental services, often attending several appointments with them. Other members of the group set up bank-

ing, and ensured the young men were enrolled in ESL classes. Abdul and Mehamed took time from their jobs to serve as translators and were active participants in the welcome.

Now that they have been here for almost a year, the young men’s English is sufficient to answer Paul’s questions. One of those questions was, “Before you came to Canada, what did you think it would be like?” The reply was telling: “Canada is a free country. You can study, work, and enjoy your life. A diverse country that welcomes newcomers.” Another question, “You’ve been here 10 months. What are the best things so far?” Again, a telling reply: “We have the chance to go to school, work, and get legal IDs.”



The things these newcomers most value are freedoms we take for granted, that we can get an education, a job, and have identification. If you have lived for over a decade without the security of any of these, finally having them is a powerful welcome.

And what, Paul asked, are the most difficult things about being in Canada? The answer, naturally, “the weather and the language” (and this from young men who already speak Arabic, Saho, Tigre, and Hebrew).

“And the best thing?” Over and over they repeated their gratitude to the committee and the Redeemer church community for supporting them over the past year—without even knowing them before they arrived.

Then Paul asked about the future, hopes and dreams for the coming year. Of course, they want to learn more English and to find full-time employment (all have part-time jobs now). But high on the list of priorities were to see their families (whom they have not, you’ll remember, seen for over ten years) and to get married. Abdul, who has been here for ten years, reminded us that these young men are now in their late twenties or thirty and are, by this time, eager to be married. Ibrahim and Omer are, indeed, going to be married soon. They cannot, of course, return to Eritrea, but will meet family and brides-to-be in Sudan and Ethiopia.

Paul ended the interview by asking Abdul why he and Mehamed and their mother, Saida, had wanted to do this sponsorship. Abdul responded by reminding us that all religions—Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism—say the same thing.

“... all religions order us to help the needy people. Being a Muslim gives me the belief that I should do my best to help,



and I found all the help from the church and the sponsoring committee to do that. That's what should always happen. People should help each other to make the world a better place for the coming generation."

One of the most important motivations for being part of this ministry is, certainly, to do what Abdul refers to as

"the right thing." Another is to increase communication and understanding with people from different cultures, religions, and backgrounds. We are eager to continue this work and look forward to collaboration with a variety of groups as we open our doors and hearts to "make the world a better place for the coming generation." ✝

## FROM WILDERNESS TO RESISTANCE

Paul Pynkoski

The season of Lent is inspired by the sojourn of Israel in the wilderness, and the recapitulation of that story in Christ's forty-day fast following his baptism. We miss something, though, if we focus on the fast only, and not the larger story.

The story starts with Jesus entering the waters of baptism. Emerging from the waters he hears both an affirmation and a call: *This is my son, the beloved, with whom I am well pleased... then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness...*

His wilderness experience was marked by the spiritual disciplines of fasting and prayer. Jesus was tempted by Satan to plunge himself into a life lived for the idols of power and materialism. He resisted Satan's "If you are the Son of God, then..." with poetry from the Psalms and Torah, choosing instead to live into God's call.

The Gospel story begs the question of our resistance to current systems of idolatry. What shape might our living into the affirmation that we are God's beloved take?

Terrence Malick's film, *A Hidden Life*, can assist our exploration of this question. The film traces the final years of Franz Jagerstatter, an Austrian farmer who was called to serve in Hitler's army. Jagerstatter was known as a bit of a rabble rouser in his youth. He converted to Catholicism in 1936, and became a Third Order Franciscan, making a vow of daily prayer and a commitment to not bear arms.

Visually, the movie contrasts the quiet beauty of the Austrian countryside with the dark confusion of marching armies and Hitler's emotional speeches. We see a life quietly lived out in the manual labour of farming; we witness Jagerstatter's loving commitment to his wife and family. As the community works in the fields, we hear the ringing of the Angelus bells. We see Jagerstatter assisting with repairs to the local church. There are fleeting scenes of Jagerstatter reading scripture or praying the office. These are visual clues of his ongoing spiritual formation, allusions to a life shaped by landscape, labour, and love, and to days punctuated by prayer and sacrament.

He attends basic military training, but as the issue of actually being called up to fight presses on him, Jagerstatter finds

himself saying "no." He seems to be unable to articulate why, but eventually is able to insist in very simple terms that he will not take the life of another person, that the call to participate in war is a call to do evil. He is unable to take an oath of allegiance to Hitler, but he also refuses to speak in judgment against his peers.

He is seen as a traitor to his country and disloyal to his village. Neighbours try to goad him into fights; his wife is insulted, his children ostracized. He seeks counsel from his priest and bishop. Both advise him to save his life and protect his family. If he takes the oath and works as a medical assistant he will kill no one.

He quietly stands firm, refusing the oath, resulting in arrest and imprisonment. Nazi guards beat him. A lawyer insists to him that he can be free if he signs the oath. Jagerstatter responds that he is already free.

Prior to being sentenced to death he has an audience with a magistrate. He questions Jagerstatter. He suggests that he is an obscure person, that his witness is meaningless and will change nothing. Like Christ before Pilate, Jagerstatter refuses to answer. After he is taken from the room, the magistrate leaves his chair and sits in Jagerstatter's. We are left wondering what thoughts ran through his mind as he sat there.

We are witnesses to a gradual, intentional shaping of Jagerstatter's conscience. It seems akin to that slow, day by day transformation wrought in Benedictine monks through vows, work, and daily prayer. This intentionality changed Jagerstatter from a rabble rouser to a non-violent protester against evil. He was willing to accept at face value the commandments not to murder and to love his neighbours and enemies. His was a radical commitment that demanded a "yes" to Christ, and a "no" to the idolatry of nationalism; it was a clear and simple discernment of good and evil that most Germans were unable to grasp.

Jagerstatter provides us with a model of simple faith and quiet resistance. No signs, no marches, no speeches. Just a quiet, emphatic "no." His "no" stands in judgment on the superficiality of the state religion of his time. But his life also calls us to examine the depth of our own commitment to Christ, and the spiritual practices we adopt to shape our resistance to the evil and indifference we witness in our society and in our own hearts. ✝

# Bach Vespers – Cantata 243 – The Magnificat



## Sing and Joyful Be!

– a Shape-Note  
Eucharist  
featuring the  
music of  
*The Sacred Harp*





# Candlemas









# Worship With Your Wealth, But Don't Worship Your Wealth<sup>1</sup>

Peter Bennett

You've read or heard about the science behind climate change. Should I wear fur, or not? Was this product tested on animals first, or not? Do I eat local or do those raspberries from 5000km away look too appetizing in the middle of February? Questions abound and the theme of last year's Season of Creation was itself a question, 'How shall we then live?'

For some, the next step is how they can align their decisions around investing to be consistent with their values. Whether you manage your RRSP or other investment, have a vested interest in your company retirement plan, or participate in the public pension system, each of us have a stake in socially responsible investing (SRI).

On Saturday April 25, join in a three-hour workshop on socially responsible investing. You will explore what the Bible says on the subject, the history of the church's role in SRI, and other resources.

Once you understand environmental, social, and governance issues for fund managers and investors, we will discuss four ways you can choose your responsible investments. With a couple of case studies, you will appreciate the shades of gray between black and white decisions. You will be left with some tools to help you on your way.

I started this article with a paraphrase from Paul's words to Timothy. Let me conclude with the verse which follows.

*'They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.'* †

<sup>1</sup> A paraphrase of 1 Timothy, Chap. 6, vs 17

*As a long-time member of the parish, former chair of stewardship, and currently a volunteer stewardship consultant for the Diocese of Toronto, Peter brings a depth of experience to this workshop. The workshop is not designed to solicit or recommend products or services.*

# We learn together in Lent

For Children and Youth (and Their Families)

## Ash Wednesday Exploration Day

Children and youth ages 6-14 from our community are warmly invited to join other children and youth from across our diocese for the Ash Wednesday Exploration Day at St. James Cathedral. Over the course of the day, they will explore seven essential practices to help follow Jesus through Lent and life: "turn, learn, pray, worship, bless, go, and rest."

The cost for the day is \$5. This goes to help with the costs lunch and snacks, activities, and supplies for the day.

Details about how to register for this event are available from Roshni Jayawardena, assistant curate for children and families.

## Sunday Morning Family Lent Event

Redeemer families are invited to a Lenten event Sunday, March 1 after the 9:30AM service in the parish hall. There will be activities to do as a family and resources to take home as we begin to mark the season of Lent together.

Please RSVP for your family to Roshni Jayawardena, assistant curate, or Hilary Keachie, pastoral associate for youth and young adults.

## Prayers for Lent

What Lent asks of us is simple, but not easy. 'Pay attention,' this season calls to us amidst the worries and distractions and familiar routines that form the architecture of our lives. We are invited, exhorted even, to step aside and look, *really* look, at our ourselves and our lives. Poetry is an invaluable training ground and tutor in what this season requires: the art of paying attention. Learning at Redeemer is providing you an opportunity to incorporate poetry into your Lenten experience. We will send a daily email with a poem and a short reflection on the poem to anyone interested. If you would like to receive these emails, let us know by emailing Amber Aulen: [amber.aulen@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:amber.aulen@mail.utoronto.ca)



# PARISH NOTES

## BAPTISM

Kyle Eid Clavering

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

## MARRIAGE

Theresa Mary Kapusta and  
Jacques Yvan Bernier

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



## Annual Vestry

All reports from our Annual Vestry meeting on Sunday, February 23, are available on the church website. Print copies will be available at church on Sundays or through the church office.

## Mardi Gras

The annual parish celebration of pancakes and fun that is our Mardi Gras party is on Tuesday, February 25 from 5.30 to 8PM. Pancakes and ice cream sundaes, fun activities including a balloon artist and face-painter and music. The cost is \$5 per person and \$10 for a family and this helps cover some of the cost of the evening. In addition, we'll gather on the 'octagon' at the corner to burn the palms from last year's Palm Sunday liturgies and prepare the ashes that will be used in the services the next day.

## Inspired to Give

The stewardship and executive teams thank the community for their gift of time, talent and treasure in 2019. The "Inspired to Give" campaign was very successful. Parishioners responded to the presentations of key ministries and their impact with year-end donation and this is gratefully acknowledged. Please know that the enthusiasm and support of the community in 2019 is inspiring. Together, we will continue to make a difference in 2020.

## Director of Parish Operations

Welcome to our new director of parish operations, Karen Chandler, who began her ministry with us on Monday, January 20, 2020. Karen has more than 14 years of human resources generalist experience to the church in the financial services and biotechnology industries.

She is a part-time M.Div. student at Emmanuel College and is involved at her church, singing in the praise band and as chair of their church council. She is married and has a 16-year-old son who is an aspiring chef.

In the staff update shared in the announcement in November 2019, it was noted that the director of parish operations will "be a key member of our staff team, responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of our church, including facilities and property management, office services, and the human resources of the parish." Please make Karen feel welcome as she begins her new role within our Redeemer community. ✝



Marginalia is a kind of Sunday school for adults. Nate Wall, our scholar in residence, leads these sessions, as we discuss, puzzle over, query, and otherwise seek to make sense of scripture.



# SERVICES OF NOTE

---

## LENT

*We pray. We repent. We give alms.*

### **Wednesdays, Thursday and Fridays in Lent:**

Some of us live near the church or work nearby. Why not consider coming to one of the mid-week services as a way of marking the Lenten journey. We gather in the space at the front of the church at **12.15PM**. Wednesday and Friday are a Said Eucharist and Thursday is Mid-day Prayers for Creation using the Book of Alternative Services form.

## SUNDAY EVENINGS IN LENT:

### **LentSong – Sunday, March 1 – 7PM**

A meditative worship service of ambient music, readings and sound, with guest musicians Calcedon ([www.calcedonmusic.com](http://www.calcedonmusic.com))

### **Evensong – Sunday, March 8 – 7PM**

A traditional evening service with a reflection offered by the officiant.

### **Evensong – Sunday, March 15 – 7PM**

A traditional evening service with a reflection offered by the officiant.

### **Rock Eucharist – Sunday, March 22 – 7PM**

The music of The Temptations is part of our service this night. We gather to hear the Word proclaimed and to receive bread and wine, blessed and shared.

### **Taizé – Sunday, March 29 – 7PM**

Candlelight, song, prayer, silence. Come. Be still.

## HOLY WEEK

We immerse ourselves in the story that brings us from palm branches to upper room; from bread and wine to foot washing. From prayer in the garden to a cross and to an empty tomb.

**Palm Sunday – April 5** We enter the city of Jerusalem with Jesus. We cross the threshold of Holy Week.

The exhortation on Palm Sunday reminds us of our obligation to enter Holy Week with the fullness of our being. We are not dismissed at the end of the service because the liturgy continues throughout the week.

In the morning, there will be processions as part of our morning services. Details of the 9.30AM service will be shared closer to the date. At the 11.15AM service, the procession will be within the context of the beginning of the liturgy. In the evening, at 7PM, we complete the day with Holy Week Vespers. The choir will sing Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostri*.

**Monday in Holy Week – April 6** Celebrations of the Eucharist will be held at 12.15PM and 6PM.

### **Ash Wednesday, February 26**

The tracing of a cross with ashes on our foreheads and the words *You are dust and to dust you shall return* reminds us that we have the season of Lent to turn to God, to bring all of the pieces of our selves that need healing and restoration as we prepare for the joyous celebration of Easter.



### **Ashes Before Work – 8 to 9AM**

Our priests will be on the front steps offering a prayer, imposition of ashes and a blessing for all who pass by our doors and want to observe the day.

The church will be open for prayer and reflection during the day.

### **Sung Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes – 12.15PM and 6PM**

A traditional Sung Eucharist with prayers, hymns, readings, sermon, communion & imposition of ashes. At the 6PM service, the catechumens will be enrolled.

**Tuesday in Holy Week – April 7** Celebrations of the Eucharist will be held at 12.15PM and 6PM.

**Wednesday in Holy Week – April 8** A celebration of the Eucharist will be held 12.15PM. In the evening, at 6PM, the Service of Darkness we continue with the tradition of Tenebrae. Readings, music, and candlelight are the foundation of this service.

**Maundy Thursday – April 9 – 7.30PM** We wash the disciples' feet, we remember the Last Supper, we strip the altar, and we watch and pray in the garden.

**Good Friday – April 10** Two Good Friday celebrations will call us to be still, to descend and to let go. A service for all ages will take place at 9.30AM and a reflective celebration with veneration of the cross and reserved sacrament at 12 noon.

**The Great Vigil – April 11 – 9 PM** The new fire is lit and carried into the church. We hear the story of redemption through song and readings. The catechumens gather around the font and we renew our baptismal vows with them. Gathered around the table, we are fed, ready to be sent out into the world to bring the good news of Jesus. And we party with our famous Resurrection Celebration at the end of the service.

**Easter Day – April 12** Join us at 6.30AM for the sunrise service. The community continues our celebration of the resurrection at services at 8, 9.30 and 11.15AM (the latter service will be Solemn Eucharist with incense).