

NEWSLETTER OF CHRIST CHURCH DEER PARK

ISSUE NO. 4 SEPTEMBER 2016

What More Might God Be Up To?





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By Canon Kevin Robertson

July, I was honoured to represent our Diocese at the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. There were many items on the agenda, but the one that attracted the most attention was a motion to amend Canon 21 to allow for the marriage of same-sex couples in the Church.

Before voting on the amendment, we met in small groups to share relevant stories and perspectives from across the country and across the theological spectrum. Then we moved into several hours of debate at which many delegates spoke passionately. When the vote was taken and tallied, the amendment to the marriage canon failed. It appeared to pass by the necessary two-thirds in the orders of bishops and laity, but failed by one vote in the order of clergy. For many of us, there was deep disappointment. It was as if all the air had been sucked out of the room when the Primate announced the outcome.

But the next day, everything turned upside down. Concerns had been raised about the closeness of the vote and about the accuracy of the electronic "clickers" that we had used to register our votes. As a result, I came to the microphone, with the support of another delegate, and we moved that the officers of synod make public the results of the recorded vote so that each voter could ensure that his or her vote had been correctly recorded. Within an hour, a copy of the results was made available. It was then that we realized there had been an error in the tabulation of votes. The decision from the day before was overturned, and the motion to change the marriage canon passed after all.

Personally, when the amendment finally passed, I felt a sense of profound joy. As a member of this Church all my life, I felt that I and my family belonged in a way that we never had before. This was the decision many of us had hoped for, that the sanctity and sacramentality of committed, same-sex

relationships might be understood and embraced in the same way as that of heterosexual couples who come to exchange vows in our churches, and that LGBTQ Anglicans are not second-class members of the Body of Christ.

Yet my joy was tempered by an awareness of the anguish of those who hold a different point of view. I was touched by the reflection of the Bishop of Edmonton, Jane Alexander, who reminded synod that everyone in that room had felt both desolation and consolation within a period of twenty-four hours: This gave everybody a chance to be in the other person's shoes as it were. In that sense, this synod united us in our ability to empathize with one another.

Many of you will be wondering where we go from here. Archbishop Johnson has committed to consulting and working on a pastoral protocol regarding same-sex marriages in our diocese. I am aware that not everyone in our diocese—or perhaps in our parish—will welcome such a move. Others will applaud the Church's embrace of this change. As your rector, I am committed to continuing to offer pastoral care to this entire community, regardless of your views on this matter. I take to heart the words of our Primate in his pastoral letter to the Church following General Synod: More than ever we must make efforts not to turn away from one another but rather to one another, not to ignore but to recognize one another, not to walk apart but together. We need as a Church to work hard at maintaining our communion in Christ, for in his reconciling love is our hope and our life.

Please pray for the peace and unity of our Church in the months ahead as we strive to continue to walk together.

• Canon Kevin Robertson is the Incumbent of Christ Church Deer Park. He is also a member of the Council of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada.

THE OTHER SIX DAYS

How does Faith fit into Lego, Lists and Laundry?

By Andrea Christensen

Life with young children is always busy. How do families with two working parents, extra curricular activities, and hectic travel schedules make it work? Time and time again, I hear from others—and understand from my own personal experience—that one of the most basic needs of the millennial family these days is to learn how to nurture and grow their relationship with God in the midst of the craziness of being a young family.

So, as a church, how do we help our young families to thrive? How do we equip parents to raise great children and put Jesus Christ at the centre of the home?

When it comes to the overall direction of the church there are two main points that are often discussed—function and form. The essential function of the church has to encompass at a minimum two things. The first is that the church exists to glorify God. The second is that it must fulfil the Great Commission, the instruction of the resurrected Christ to his disciples to spread his teachings to all the nations of the world. These two functions take place in a variety of ways, which is what we call "form." The function of the church can never be lost, but the form can be carried out in a multitude of ways. (Continued at top of page 2)

Sunday School has been, for most churches, the traditional method used to create a sense of community within the body of the church. While there is nothing wrong with this approach, at Christ Church Deer Park, we have a vision of ministry that reaches out to people beyond our four walls, and we appreciate that part of our commission is to bring people in—to build rapport and relationships with our neighbours. Millennial families are looking for people that they can live their lives with, not just a group they meet with once a week for an hour at Sunday worship. It is therefore essential for us to meet with the local community and spend time with individuals and families in our community on a regular basis.

As a response to our Christian commission and the needs of millennial families, and through a time of prayer and discernment, Hilary Keachie and I have decided to embark on a new ministry this fall what we have entitled The Other Six Days. We are inviting young families from within our PromiseLand and Nest programmes as well as in the larger community to come together for a series of Wednesday gatherings to talk about the issues that matter most to our families. Childcare will be provided, and topics will include: Unrealistic expectations: are we hurting our kids? How to raise debt-free, generous kids, and The four most important prayers for your kids.

The gatherings will consist of music, worship, food, adult conversation, and prayer. The adult component might also include a little wine! The purpose of bringing the adults together and providing childcare is to help them think creatively and concretely about how to bring faith into the everyday. That is the purpose of this new initiative.

As we live together and do ministry together we (the church) should be ministering to the needs of one another. When we do so, it has a great impact on the millennial family because both parents and children see us as Christians making a difference in their lives and the lives of the people around them.

Millennial parents who are struggling to live out their faith want to know what it is that God has called them to do as spouses and as parents. We, as the church, are called to provide them with the opportunities to develop, learn, and grow, and to implement what they learn. Families that we support may, in turn, want to share what they have learned with others who may not be as far along in the process as they are. They want to make an impact and teach the families that are coming up behind them. The young families behind them likely face the same challenges and have similar needs but the last thing that they—and most millennial families—want is someone who is twenty or thirty years older than they are (outside of a blood relation) telling them how they did it twenty-five years ago!

All young families are welcome to The Other Six Days. No church experience is necessary; we are learning together. Dinner and childcare will be provided.

Please show your support by praying for this exciting new ministry venture, and if you would like to help out in other tangible ways or know a young family that would benefit from this ministry, please speak to Andrea Christensen or Hilary Keachie. With God's help, we will make this an incredible ministry!

⊕ Andrea Christensen is the Associate Priest at Christ Church Deer Park.



Join families from the community for an informal, weekly gathering of music, prayer, food and adult discussion. We'll talk about issues that matter to you – and think creatively and concretely about how to bring faith into the everyday.

Topics include:

- · Unrealistic expectations: Are we hurting our kids?
- How to raise debt-free generous kids
- The 4 most important prayers for your kids
- Observing the Sabbath in the midst of the busy-ness

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FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT REV. ANDREA OR HILARY AT 416.920.5211



As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

-1 Peter 4:10

he word "volunteer" in part means to do things or give of your time to help a cause or situation without expectation of monetary gain. Volunteering is about giving of yourself and using your talents. It affords the opportunity to meet people and learn new skills as you share your own skills with others.

Yes, our lives are busy. Thus we might ask the question, Why volunteer? Simply put, volunteering is about working with others to make a meaningful contribution. The Church needs and depends on volunteers to help carry out its different ministries. Regardless of your background, age, or status, there are always reasons

to volunteer, including the following: Volunteering gives a benefit to both the volunteer and the community. The volunteer gives back, helps, or simply puts a smile on someone's face. Volunteering enriches the emotional and spiritual life of the one who helps. It encourages and builds communication skills: in addition to learning how to follow direction, the volunteer learns how to work with others for the betterment of the particular organization.

I believe that volunteering makes one feel needed and valued. It means being kind by giving some time to help. At Christ Church Deer Park there is so much to do. I encourage each of us to think about giving a few hours per week or per month to help in some way. As the saying goes, "Many hands make work lighter."

On a personal note, I remember being asked to volunteer on a temporary basis, to which request I agreed. When the last day of my assignment arrived, I said my Thank Yous, having been happy to have helped. But an end was not to be.

"Could you come back next week?" The question was followed by a warm smile and a glint of appreciation in the eyes of Paul, our director of parish operations. How could I say no? His request meant that the work I had been doing behind the scenes was appreciated. I was humbled and thankful for that sentiment. And now, I am a permanent volunteer. I look forward to coming in to the church office once per week or at other times when I am asked. I am encouraged by the warmth and the greeting from our staff, Paul, Denis and Elisabeth. I feel blessed, and I am assured that I have done and continue to do worthwhile work. I enjoy the camaraderie and give God thanks that He has allowed me to help in this and many other ways.

I encourage you to try volunteering. You will be surprised to discover how much you enjoy the positive feed back you get from helping in the church and in the community at large.

• Elsa A. Jones is a member of the team that writes and reads the Prayers of the People for the 10 am Sunday Eucharist at Christ Church Deer Park.

PromiseLand & Young Anglican Leaders (YAL) Report

By Hilary Keachie

An Amazing Technicolour Bible Camp!

This August, we held our third annual Vacation Bible Camp (VBC) and what a week we had! We travelled back a few centuries to the land of Canaan where we met wise and loving Rachel, proud young Joseph, kind eldest brother Reuben, and jealous Judah. The thirty-six children registered for the camp were part of the story each day as we threw Joseph down a deep hole, visited the Baker and Cupbearer in prison and were summoned before the great Pharaoh of Egypt. We tie-dyed our own technicolour t-shirts, built pyramids with unlikely materials (like marshmallows and toothpicks), baked bread, and decoded secret hieroglyphic messages. Every morning, we began with the Godly Play inspired "Sand Story," sang about Joseph (to the tune of *Good King Wenceslas*), and prayed for patience, perseverance, and understanding, especially with our siblings. On September 11, 2016, we celebrated all those who participated in VBC with a special Everybody Upstairs service, and with certificates and a memento from the week presented to each VBC participant.

Eggplants & Peppers Galore!

This summer, the children of PromiseLand took environmental stewardship to a whole new level. They planted, cared for, and harvested a bountiful vegetable and herb garden full of dozens of eggplants, peppers, turnips, tomatoes, and more. By August, our tiny plants had quadrupled in size and were producing more than we could ever have imagined! The children shared their bounty with family and friends, and even tried some new recipes including a delicious pesto with all the fresh basil. The "Creation Garden", as it came to be known, was blessed by Rev. Andrea in June, and inspired many conversations, questions, and new relationships over the course of the summer. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Ed, the enthusiastic and hard-working gardener who made this all possible!

This fall in PromiseLand, we will be turning our attention to the history of the People of God. We will use Godly Play to delve deeply into the narratives of the Old Testament and learn about how the people—Abraham, Sarah, Jacob, and Samuel, to name a few—sought the elusive presence of God. The children will have opportunities to wonder aloud about their favourite part, the most important part, and where they see themselves in the story. The atmosphere of the Godly Play room is one that encourages questions and fosters a sense of trust and community, where all children are welcome to hear and respond to the Word of God.

Questions, Breakfast & Sardines!

This fall, we are starting a new programme that will help our teens explore their hard questions about God and Faith. Does God discriminate against women? Does God endorse violence? Does the Bible contradict itself? Based on the Sticky Faith curriculum "Can I Ask that?" our teens will be encouraged to think critically about their ideas and assumptions, to ask questions, and wrestle with their doubts. We will meet bi-weekly on Sundays from 11:30 am—12:30 pm and tackle these tough questions together. YAL will also continue to serve the community by hosting one Community Breakfast a month. We will gather bright and early on Saturday mornings to prepare a hot meal for those in need. After all these hard questions and faithful community service, we are going to need to have some fun together! Building on the relationships begun during our Confirmation classes with the teens of Grace Church-on-the-Hill, we are planning a few joint socials for the fall. We will cook, play Sardines, watch movies, and go trampolining. All teens are invited to join us for fun, food and friendships!

It continues to be my privilege to learn and grow in faith with young people of Christ Church Deer Park.

• Hilary Keachie is the Director of Children and Youth Ministries at Christ Church Deer Park. She is also a theology student at Trinity College.









What a Parish!

By Tony van Straubenzee

hen I began writing my book, *Rind in the Marmalade*, six years ago, I had no deadline. But in 2012, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer and the diagnosis prompted me to get cracking on the book.

I wrote *Rind* because I didn't want to forget my life experiences, and I wanted my family to know about them. I am now approaching 80 years of age—the home stretch—and I was determined to celebrate my life here and now, while I'm still in bodily form! But I also wanted to remember the people with whom I have connected over the years.

Christ Church Deer Park was and is full of interesting characters, and I wrote about some of them in my book. For over half a century, these individuals have played an important part in my life and the life of our community. They have made a great contribution to the parish. Many



have left us, and when I look around the congregation during Sunday worship, I remember where they sat. I have rich memories of their participation in the parish, and many of my recollections have a lighter side. Here are just a few.

Betty Howson—the tenacious champion of the Book of Common Prayer—who now, impossibly, is gone.

David Byers—who wrote a screamingly funny letter to the Corporation, insisting that we change the combination of the safe after he retired as Warden.

Ed Saunders—who after a few martinis one night recited Shakespeare's *Henry V*, which Ed knows by heart.

J.R. Thornton—who has a great welcoming smile accompanied by an ever-changing and interesting collection of stockings.

Bob Reeves—who once sang the Rhinestone Cowboy in drag at a church fundraiser.

Terence Bredin—who loved to perform in skits and should have been an actor.

David Moore—who once won a car by getting a hole-in-one at a charity golf tournament.

I could go on. So many stories, and don't get me started on the clergy!

How about the current crowd? Maxine Henry, Hilary Keachie, Barbara Johnston, Andrew van Nostrand, Genevieve Chornenki, Anne Larkin, and Henry Zaluski, to name just a few. They too have earned my affection, my appreciation, and my confidence.

What a parish!

• Tony van Straubenzee has been a parishioner of Christ Church Deer Park for fifty years.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For more information on Tony's book, visit www.rindinthemarmalade.com

Music Library Notes

By Emily Chatten

As a parish community we have lost a few significant members over the summer. While we all have preferences for the music we might like at our funerals, some hymns have been traditionally associated with funerals over the decades.

One in particular is "Abide with Me." The text was written by Irish Anglican priest Henry Francis Lyte. In the months prior to his death, Lyte was ill, and he wrote "Abide with Me" following the last service that he led. He wrote almost 300 other hymns, but his family considered this one to

be his "immortal hymn"—the one that would be remembered forever. Those close to Lyte say he was inspired by Luke 24:29, but he used the word "evening" as a metaphor for the end of life. The hymn is meant to bring comfort.

You will find "Abide with Me" as No. 24 in *The Book of Common Praise*. I recommend the text to you and hope that you too will find comfort in Lyte's hymn.

• Emily Chatten is a Christ Church Deer Park chorister who helps to maintain the parish music library.

When the Frost Comes Early

BY WARD LINDSEY



Summer months are swiftly followed by the days of autumn – It is this time of year that a great injustice seems to occur – for the flowers of summer have reached full foliage – becoming pastures of nectar from which the slumbering bee takes it's last sip –

a time of abundant and glorious bloom, more then the eye can take in at a single glance.

But this season also brings the dark night during which the glories of the previous day become – before the rising of the sun – humus –

To be turned back into the ground

- for the frost has come early

The beauty is gone The injustice is done.

Why it only seems like yesterday (but it really wasn't) that the seed found it's way to the fertile ground, warming under the new rays of Spring

- Spring with its many hazards – will the birds returningtonest find the seed and think of it only as feed stock?

- as the first tender roots fight to grasp the ground will a cold March shower wash it away?

- what of the late snow which will freeze the fledgling leaves as they receive their life-giving strength from the sun?

Ah, but nature prevails and June produces a vibrant

young plant

- all green - all growth - all life

- living in communion with its environment

- resilient to the gust of a sudden summer shower

- undaunted by the great flash and crash of thunder in the night.

August arrives - dry

- dry -very dry- hot - very hot

- and the former seedling

may wiltmay tire

but the roots have gone deep – able to tap the life-giving waters –

Cicadas drum the summer away – dusk comes sooner

- dawn later

Autumn is upon us

- blooms overflow their beds

- a plateau of contentment is reached

- not too hot - nor too cold

moisture in proper proportionsunlight at a soft angle

- unforgettable twilights

But then

The frost comes early and we foresee the bleakness

the loneliness the cold winter

Take heart though – for we have a loving Gardener
A Gardener who knows our needs –
when to plant
when to sustain

when to harvest And the future has been provided for from generation to generation. Book Review

By Ward Lindsey

BLACK BOX THINKING The Surprising Truth About Success (and Why Some People Never Learn from Their Mistakes)

by Matthew Syed John Murray (Publishers), 2015

he journalist Matthew Syed is a graduate of Oxford University with a degree in philosophy, politics, and economics. This is an interesting amalgam of studies that he has applied in his book *Black Box Thinking*, *The Surprising Truth About Success*. The relevance of this book has led him to present his thoughts to diverse organizations ranging from global finance ministers meeting at Harvard University, the presidents of Royal medical colleges, and the global partners of Goldman Sachs, among others.

During routine day-surgery, the patient dies. During a routine flight, an airplane crashes and many on board die. These are the initial, real life situations that Syed uses to reveal how an organization's mindset reacts to and responds to errors. He delves into that mindset and the phenomenon of cognitive dissonance, which he defines as "the inner tension we feel when, among other things, our beliefs are challenged by evidence." To cope with

the tension, we reframe the evidence. A good example of this—what Syed refers to as intellectual contortions—is how the egos of politicians interacted with their belief in the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Matthew Syed views success not as the opposite of failure but the result of failure. The reality of failure and how we respond to it is the crux of this book. Rather than viewing failure as defeat, Syed views our mistakes as the route to discovery and innovation. He believes "we have to engage with the complexity of the world if we are to learn from it." For the reader, the journey into complexity is quick and well outlined.

Black Box Thinking is a book of theme development that uses varied current life and historic situations to explore the culture of failure. Yet overall the goal is to reveal a culture of growth. At times the book seems a bit repetitive but this is the result of his interweaving of evidence and argument. In a society that tends to confound itself, Matthew Syed provides an anchor of logic and moral purpose that lies within the paradox of failure and success.

• Ward Lindsey is a parishioner and volunteer chorister at Christ Church Deer Park. He is also an avid reader with a wide-ranging curiousity about human beings and how they make sense of the world.

EDITOR'S NOTE: To find out more about Ward's interests, activities and thoughts you can go to his YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/channel/UCk9CfWaZ0YiGnZnQKHQmMxw



Growing Healthy
Stewards is
a personal
stewardship
education program
intended to fulfill
individual Christian
discipleship
and ensuring
the vibrancy and
future of CCDP.

WHAT IT IS

The **Growing Healthy Stewards** program has been developed by the Diocese of Toronto and encourages the generous giving of our time, talent, and treasure. It is different than our traditional approach to stewardship which has focused on fundraising.

The program has three key features:

- It is coached by an external lay advisor from another parish who has participated in the program
- It has been widely tried, tested, and refined by many parishes and has been successful at both St. Clements and Grace Churchon-the-Hill
- Its outcomes are measured in terms of success in mission and financial results

Growing Healthy Stewards

is based on the belief that stewardship is part of how we live out our discipleship—essentially our call to be fully committed followers of Jesus Christ. As stewards, we commit to a life of generosity in all aspects of our lives. The program teaches us how and helps us to do this.

HOW IT WORKS Growing Healthy Stewards is

designed to grow members of our congregation into active disciples, committed to generous stewardship of their time, talent, and treasure. The year-round format of the program and its components are user-friendly, self explanatory, and organized according to the liturgical calendar. Key features include the following:

- An active stewardship committee
- Clergy committed to stewardship education and regular sermons on stewardship themes

- An annual joyful/intentional giving campaign
- Full congregational participation through time and talent
- Ongoing testimonials from parishioners about why they contribute time, talent, and treasure to the parish
- An annual narrative budget
- Distribution of a proportionate giving work sheet to all identifiable givers
- Development of a legacy giving program

Activities and events are organized on a monthly basis, and we plan to launch aspects of CCDP's Healthy Stewards program in the fall of 2016.

For further information or to get involved, please speak to any member of the Management Team, Bob Hutchison, the Chair of Stewardship or Carolyn Kearns, the Vice Chair.



CHURCHES-ON-THE-HILL FOOD BANK



By Ben Dibben

NOW THAT WE ARE HALFWAY THROUGH THIS YEAR, it is very appropriate to recognize the generous in-kind donations to the Churches-on-the-Hill (CoTH) Food Bank that have been made by members of the congregation over the last seven months. These have been accumulated mostly in the attractive contribution box in the Atrium.

The box is organized by PromiseLand and YAL under the leadership of Hilary Keachie and, this year, it has collected a total of 328 items up to the end of July. Contributions represent a real variety of items such as canned vegetables and fruits, macaroni/cheese, cereal, soups, coffee, and so on.

Heartfelt thanks are due to all who have contributed and to Hilary and her PromiseLand and YAL team for their efforts in accomplishing this achievement.

We now look forward to continued success in the coming months which will include our work in the annual Food Drive in the fall. Thanks again!

• Ben Dibben is an active and involved parishioner who volunteers at the food bank.



It's never too early to start Christmas planning! Our organizing committee for the Christmas fair got underway in July, expressing lots of fun ideas and energy, to deliver a new take on this long-standing Christ Church Deer Park tradition.

Committee members Caroline van Nostrand, Angela van Straubenzee, Mohan Sharma, Su Laine Varkey, Hilary Keachie and Barbara Johnston are working to create a memorable Christmas festival for the whole community! Expect fun activities for children, including the chance to experience life in a Bethlehem market, carol singing, puppet shows, silent auction and popular homemade gifts. You can also look forward to such old favourites as the Treasures Room, Jewellery Table and our famous Christmas cakes and shortbread.

Hold the date and invite friends & family: Saturday, November 19, 2016, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. We'll be reaching out for volunteers and donations in the coming weeks, so stay tuned!

Oops. The interview with Vivien Jenkinson published in Issue No. 3, January, 2016 incorrectly described her as an assistant nurse at St. George's Hospital and should have described her as a Ward Nurse (Head Nurse). The interview also incorrectly identified her preference for the *Book of Alternative Services* and should have said *Book of Common Prayer* instead. Apologies.

Dear Church Mouse



Dear Church Mouse,

I attend Sunday worship at Christ Church Deer Park on a weekly basis and write regular cheques, but I am not a believer. I try to follow Christ's example, but don't believe in a loving supreme being or that Jesus was divine. I'd like to talk openly about this because the secret is weighing on me, but I'm afraid that I'll be criticized or—worse—evangelized. And look what happened to the United Church minister who admitted that she wasn't a believer! Do you think a person like me really belongs in this parish?

Scared

Dear Scared,

A wise man would pass your enquiry on to the clergy, but I am not a man. I am a mouse, and I say, relax. Christ Church Deer Park is a big tent. Yes, you have a secret, but if you had heard what Church Mouse has heard over the years, you would be a lot less troubled. There are more "secrets" like yours out there than you can imagine, and no one else is advertising theirs. Who can know or should know what goes on in the privacy of another's heart? Who should say what spiritual prescription is right for someone else? Not this mouse. Besides, you can't compare yourself to an ordained minister who signs up to be the guardian of a tradition.

Church Mouse is intrigued by your short letter and would love to learn more, but only you can judge whether that would be the right move. In the meantime, *Scared*, keep in mind that Christians, including the ones at Christ Church Deer Park, are individuals who come in all shapes and sizes. If, like you, they really follow Christ's teachings, they will remember the one about casting the first stone.

Sincerely yours,

Church Mouse

EDITOR'S NOTE: For more information on Gretta Vosper, an ordained minister with non-traditional views, see the report of the Toronto Conference in the United Church of Canada: www.torontoconference.ca/2016/09/review-rev-gretta-vosper/



Editor: Genevieve A. Chornenki

Creative Design: Henry Zaluski

WANTED CONTRIBUTORS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS OF ALL AGES AND STAGES.

Would you be willing to take on a specific assignment or take pictures? Is there something you would like to research and write about? Do you have a constructive comment? Or, is there an activity or initiative that you would like others to join? If so, please contact us at spiritus@christchurchdeerpark.org

Submissions should be 250 words long and in Word format, and all submissions will be subject to edit.

Copy deadline for the next Advent edition is Friday, October 21, 2016.

A big thanks to all of the contributors for this inaugural issue of *SPIRITUS*.



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