

SPIRITUS

NEWSLETTER OF CHRIST CHURCH DEER PARK

ISSUE NO. 20 NOVEMBER 2020

Christmas Cannot be Cancelled

By Cheryl Palmer

What a year! It has been indelibly marked with sorrow and disappointments. COVID-19 has brought us illness, death, and cancelled lives. It has heightened society's social and cultural deficiencies and devastated economies. Yet here we are, getting ready for Advent and Christmas, as if the world is not falling apart... And that's because it isn't!

A glorious aspect of our lives of faith and the seasons of the church is that they cannot die or even be cancelled. In the interest of our safety, our political leaders may tell us to ignore Thanksgiving this year and not entertain trick-or-treaters at Halloween, but Christmas cannot be unhinged. Indeed, we will not celebrate as in years past with our wild shopping, numerous parties, and large gatherings of family and friends...we may not even attend church this Christmas...but the Christ Child will still be born!

The foundation of Christmas is not primarily about our relationships with each other, but is first about our relationship with God, and no one can take that away.

Christ is born in us. "This is the wonder of Christmas that God has come among us and remains with us. The promised child is born to us this day. God comes down—in the Word made flesh—bringing life to all. To hear this news is to risk being changed—transformed. The faith to believe it and the courage to retell it means profound conversion.

"In God's story we have something spectacular to tell. Our voices join a larger—and heavenly—chorus. Receiving God's love in the Word made flesh, how can we keep from singing? How can we keep from going into every corner of our lives and world to proclaim the Good News? The Word does its amazing work not only in us but surely through us." (The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, Former Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)

A blessed Advent and Christmas to you and your family!



Cheryl Palmer is the Incumbent of Christ Church Deer Park.

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Notes from the Music Library: Advent 2020

Late October, 2020, Brighton

By Emily Chatten

I'm sitting with a cup of tea. The last few leaves are persisting on the trees, and much to our surprise this morning it's been snowing (actually accumulating!). I still have lots of work to do in the garden, but this morning I'm writing to you about the music of Advent and Christmas. In a normal year, the choir would be starting to practice Advent music about now. We all know the overplayed radio music of Christmas, but such music represents a fragment of the Advent and Christmas music that spans centuries, cultures, and languages. As we won't be able to share music as a

major part of our Advent and Christmas worship this season I thought I would share a variety of resources to explore the music of anticipation and celebration of Christ's birth.

either click the blue hyperlink title or the red "access online" button (clicking the blue hyperlink title is going to bring you to an information page on the recording, and another "access online" button you'll need to click at this point).

4. The in-between step: now you'll see a page with a red "continue" button and a note explaining that you are leaving the library website. Click the red button.
5. You're now on the Naxos Music Library site for the recording you have selected.
6. You will see a large "play" button toward the upper right of the page (generally blue). Click that button and enjoy the recording.

Some Advent and Christmas recordings you can enjoy on the Naxos site include:

- **Joseph Haydn:** Missa Sancti Nicolì 'Nikolaimesse'
- **Benjamin Britten:** A Ceremony of Carols
- **Marc-Antoine Charpentier:** Pastorale de Noël
- **Heinrich Schütz:** The Christmas Story
- **Louis-Claude Daquin:** Livre des Noëls (instrumental music of the pipe organ)
- **Dietrich Buxtehude:** (short oratorios on multiple recordings) Das neugeborne Kindelein, BuxWV 13 and In dulci júbilo, BuxWV 52
- **Johann Sebastian Bach:** Weihnachtsoratorium/Christmas oratorio

Last year's service of Lessons and Carols from Kings College Cambridge is available online: <https://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/chapel/a-festival-of-nine-lessons-and-carols>

For a completely different take on the music of Advent, check out this blog from late November last year: <https://artandtheology.org/2019/11/16/an-advent-playlist/>

Anticipation is in the air this year, though not currently regarding the birth of Christ. However, with limited activities we have an opportunity to take time to more deeply reflect on some of the sacred music of the season. We can use sacred music as a tool to help us focus ourselves for prayer as we anticipate the arrival of Christ, which will be a balm for us in these chaotic times.



Emily Chatten is a Christ Church Deer Park chorister who helps to maintain the parish music library. She is patiently awaiting the day when the choir can resume!



Tonight, a new boy born

By Andrew Harding

The Christmas story has an almost unbearable pathos—a new baby, born in difficult surroundings in winter to a family in transit. We know what will happen to the baby in just over 30 years, and every year we hear the passion cry: “Erbarme dich, mein Gott” (“Have mercy, my God” from Bach’s St. Matthew Passion). Only two of the Gospels mention Jesus as a baby; Matthew with the story of the wise men and Luke with the shepherds. “Out of the pinpoint light of a star, out of the journey cold and hard... tonight, a new boy born.”¹

Jesus was born into a world divided and anxious—governed, ruled, and administered as a part of the Roman empire. Israel was divided internally, with Jewish purist groups, a local government sympathetic to Roman rule, and with the temple priesthood trying to keep the peace.

How could God make himself heard in that world, especially by coming as a baby? Babies were targets, as we see in the response of Herod (Matthew 2:13).



It isn’t a cliché to say our present-day world is divided and anxious. People talk about feeling “triggered,” “having anxiety,” and “feeling depressed,” phrases that are becoming part of everyday speech. How we perceive our reality and speak about it shapes who we are and how we live. Living with such a background of anxiety and a search for solace and comfort, “triggers” our reptile brain, the most primitive part of our brain, which goes into a rapid fight or flight response. That’s not a good way to embrace vulnerability or open out to people who are different from us.

How can God make himself heard today? Anxiety does not have the last word in either its acute or background forms. Let’s look more closely into the eyes of a baby for guidance. “We shift out of our reptile brain when we see the face of a baby,” says Ann Morisy, a UK theologian and community worker. “It’s almost as if God knows what an anxious species we are. How else can the saviour of the world be made manifest without provoking more anxiety, than to manifest as a baby in a manger? When I work with older people I often say: ‘make sure you’ve got a photograph of one of your grandchildren as a baby.’”² She notes the difference it makes when we park our anxiety and practise calmness. This softens the tone of our eyes which otherwise become hard when we are anxious. While writing this article I looked at photos of our boys when they were babies, and something shifted.

As we begin Advent and look forward to celebrating Jesus’s birth, let’s look anew at Jesus, into his eyes as a baby. “It’s an extraordinary gift to have a saviour who shows himself to the world as a baby,” says Ann Morisy. “Our eyes soften and our hearts moisten, and our appreciation of Jesus’ incarnation increases even more.”³



⊕ Andrew Harding and his family joined Christ Church Deer Park in 2019. He has since become a regular contributor to Spiritus.

References:

¹ *New Boy Born*, Carol Ann Duffy, set by Sasha Johnson Manning in *The Manchester Carols*, 2009.
² Ann Morisy interviewed on: www.nomadpodcast.co.uk/ann-morisy-enacting-hope-in-troubled-times-n213/
³ Ann Morisy, *Bothered and Bewildered – enacting hope in troubled times* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2009). 76



By Emily Chatten

This fall, Northumberland County has been ablaze in colour. The conifers are heavy with cones, the old farmers lore that a heavy winter is on the way.

Following my recent visit to the Pengelley Cemetery (see “Notes from the Music Library”, Issue 19, September 2020) my sister and I made a trip to Red Cloud Cemetery, a gem in our area, though thankfully not well known. Prior to settlement, there was a scattering of prairie and savannah throughout southern Ontario (the difference having to do with the number of trees per hectare). Red Cloud Cemetery’s lands were characterized by species such as big bluestem, little bluestem (tall grasses), shagbark hickory, black oak, the orange flowering butterfly milkweed, wild bergamont, prairie buttercups, and blazing star, among others. The Rice Lake Plains, south of Rice Lake and east to the Trent River, are the northern most prairie and savannah lands in Ontario.

The deep roots of prairie tall grasses signalled fertile land. Following the War of 1812, a community of Shakers settled on the patch of prairie. Shakers were celibate and lived in community. New members were welcome to join, but Shaker communities have been slowly dying out all over North America. The last members of this particular community were buried in the Red Cloud Cemetery in the 1940s.

In the 1990s, after being approached by a local ecologist about restoring the cemetery to a prairie, the cemetery board stopped mowing the grass. As is often the case, some species returned on their own, some via the seed bank, and some by being planted. In addition, the cemetery has been the site of controlled burns in the spring for a number of decades.

When you visit Red Cloud Cemetery there’s a large mowed parking area with a beautiful sign, making clear that the cemetery is not forgotten, but ecologically managed. Yet there’s a feeling of wild peace, that the souls as well as the prairie seeds have been set free.



⊕ Emily Chatten is a member of Christ Church Deer Park and has an interest in Ontario history and ecology. She was brought up in a community about 30 kilometers away from the Red Cloud Cemetery.

COMMUNITY
REFLECTION
SECTION

Click here to play video by Ward Lindsey

Going to church doesn’t make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car. Where does that put you?

Advent days are short, cold, and dark. What if, instead of asking everybody else to show you the light switch, you flipped on the one inside?

PLEASE RESPECT
PHYSICAL DISTANCING

9 feet
(2.7m)

As seen at Mount Pleasant Cemetery

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Refugee Sponsorship

MADE IN CANADA

By Karen Hamilton

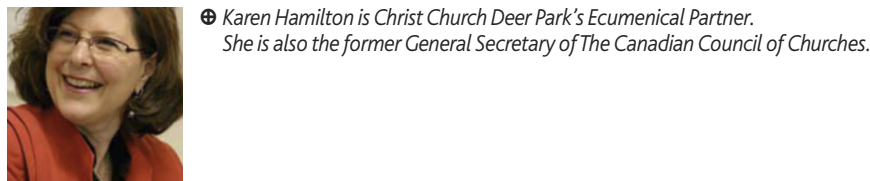
Christ Church Deer Park has a faithful history of sponsoring refugees, of enabling people made in the image of God, as we all are, to leave horrendous situations of violence, oppression, and deprivation and start a new life here in Canada. Most recently, the parish has deeply engaged with the two AlQadiri families, seven children in total, who are both doing very well here with apartments, jobs, schooling, friends, and wondrous joy, energy and peace in their lives.

In following this divine call to care for those in our world who are vulnerable, Christ Church Deer Park is responding to the theme of the Bible that is stated over and over again throughout both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Jesus states that call so clearly in Matthew 25—"Just as you did this for the least of these my sisters and brothers, you did it for me."

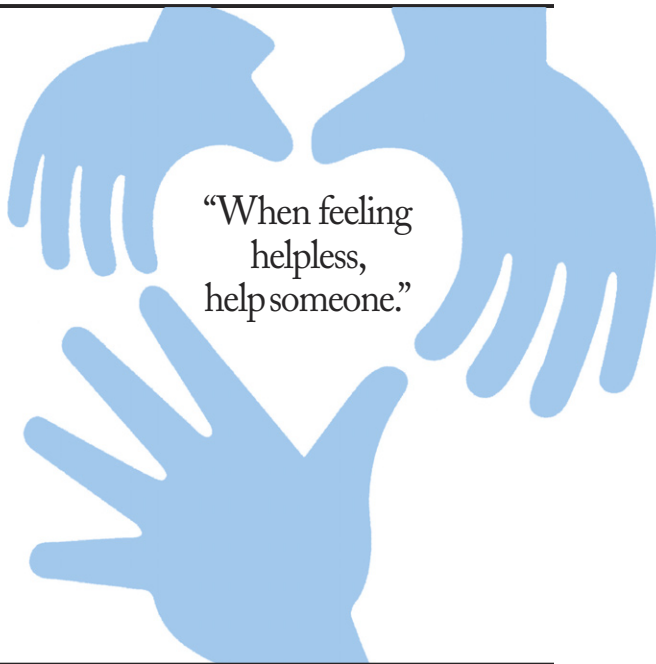
Christ Church Deer Park has sponsored the two AlQadiri families and others through the years under a uniquely Canadian system of private refugee sponsorship that was created in Canada and is not only quite unique in the world but has become a much discussed model of compassion and justice looked at with admiration by many other countries. Prior to 1978, all immigrants and refugees could only come to Canada sponsored by the Canadian government—a system that was slow and very restricted. In the face of many crises and much suffering in many places in the world, the churches of Canada got together, partially through The Canadian Council of Churches to which the Anglican Church of Canada has belonged since its beginning in 1947, and lobbied, pushed, and advocated with the Canadian government. It was a hard process but in 1978 a new law was passed that enabled denominations, parishes, churches, and small groups to privately sponsor refugees.

Churches, parishes, and faith communities of every tradition have really stepped up since then, have really followed the call of God to care for all people. Hundreds of thousands children, women, and men are now safe in this country because of the private refugee sponsorship agreements that the churches pushed for in 1978.

Thanks be to God that Christ Church Deer Park and so many others have been salt and light in the world.



⊕ Karen Hamilton is Christ Church Deer Park's Ecumenical Partner. She is also the former General Secretary of The Canadian Council of Churches.



Stewardship Committee Report

By Caroline van Nostrand

2020 HAS BEEN CHALLENGING. We are fortunate to have been able to return to Christ Church Deer Park in September. Having services available, whether in person or online, has been a blessing, since we're all looking for joy as we struggle with the isolation of COVID-19.

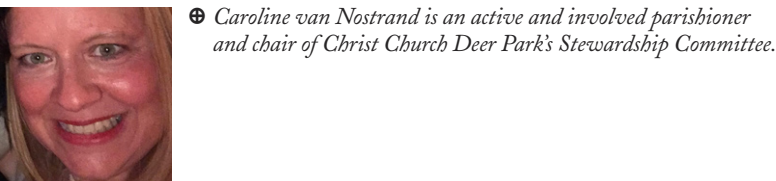
Perhaps you're like me and look to quotations or scripture to lift you up when feeling lost. One quotation I came across said "When feeling helpless, help someone." It's good advice. But we have to ask: after six months of decreased giving and income—from not having people at church at the start of COVID-19 to our now non-existent rental revenues—is CCDP, during this period of hardship, still in a position to help others?

Annual revenue is down \$74,000, with an additional loss of \$30,000 expected due to cancellation of our rummage sale and Christmas festival. Some of these setbacks have been offset by decreased expenses. The Diocese covered our clergy costs for a period of COVID-19, and we spent less than budgeted on musicians and support staff. Yet we still expect additional expenses before year end.

This is the Advent issue of *Spiritus*, so we're entering the church's season of preparation. As it approaches, we should prepare ourselves to each do what we can to ensure Christ Church Deer Park will still be able to serve when growing community need makes our parish's outreach programs especially important. During COVID-19, we've continued to offer Saturday Community Breakfasts and even added Wednesday Community Lunches for neighbours in need.

With ongoing parish support, these programs and others will continue, and we'll end 2020 in a stable position. Unfortunately, 2021 will be a challenging year with no further Diocesan offsets, negligible rental income, and no fundraising events. As such, please give serious consideration to the mailed package you will have recently received from your Stewardship Committee.

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee, I thank you in advance for your consideration and support. Remember, we are blessed by the King to have the opportunity to be a blessing to others.



⊕ Caroline van Nostrand is an active and involved parishioner and chair of Christ Church Deer Park's Stewardship Committee.

Editor's Choice

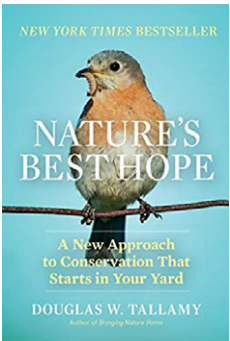
What is God?
Jacob Needleman
(Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2009)

What is God? That's not a question typically asked in faith communities, at least not at Christ Church Deer Park, but a person's answer can be revealing. Needleman, an Ivy-League-educated professor of philosophy, began knowing little about Judaism save what he had absorbed from family life. And as for Christianity? He hated and feared it. Only with time did Needleman accept "that which the religions call God," ultimately understanding that the great *I AM* is also the *I AM within*.



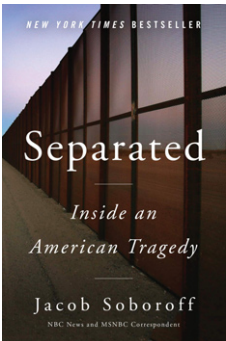
Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard
Douglas W. Tallamy
(Timber Press, 2019)

Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation and respect, sustain, and renew the life of the earth? For Anglicans who answer "yes" and own a piece of property, however small, this book is mandatory reading. Tallamy explains, thoroughly but gently, how every landowner can take environmental action into their own hands. Who knew that nesting birds bring insects to their fledglings over 4,000 times a day so surrounding vegetation must sustain those insects? Tallamy invites homeowners to examine the basis for their monoculture front lawns (social conformity), gain a more sophisticated understanding the web of life, and plant a few non-alien, "keystone" plant and tree species.



Separated: Inside an American Tragedy
Jacob Soboroff
(Harper Collins, 2020)

A blow-by-blow account of state-sponsored child abuse. When Soboroff, a television journalist, first saw children incarcerated in a former Walmart store in Texas, he made it his business to find out as much as he could about the practice of separating children, even toddlers, from their parents at the Mexico-U.S. border. *Separated* details the history and implementation of the zero-tolerance policy for illegal border crossers (including asylum seekers) and explains how incomplete and fragmented record keeping hindered reunification of parents and children.





By Brad Lennon and Lizzie Nyburg

Even as our dread of COVID-19 has drastically changed our behaviours, including coming to church as we have for centuries, another threat has continued to loom. This year we ran out of alphabet letters to name all the hurricanes in the Atlantic. The temperature in Death Valley rose to 54.4°C.

COVID-19 has clogged up climate action too. Canada signed the Paris Agreement in 2016 but a more ambitious COP26 conference, set for this November, has been postponed. Brazil is now fighting a raging COVID-19 problem while miners take advantage of the distraction to cut down the Amazon forest. The U.S. and Ontario have diverted funding from climate research, flood control, and renewable energy to the COVID-19 fight.

The personal changes that we have made—flying less, selling our car, eating less meat—seem inconsequential compared with the gaping void of environmental inaction by governments and some corporations.

Nevertheless, there is hope. When COVID-19 lockdowns around the world resulted in huge decreases in transport and industry, daily global carbon emissions dropped 17 per cent in April. Pope Francis said the COVID-19 pandemic has “in some ways, given us a chance to develop new ways of living...we can see how the earth can recover if we allow it to rest.”

As well, Steve Westlake, a Researcher in Environmental Leadership at Cardiff University, has studied whether personal actions like giving up flying are a mere drop in the ocean or whether they can have “knock-on” effects. He reported in 2019 that in a survey, half of the respondents already knew someone who had given up flying because of climate change and said they flew less because of this example.

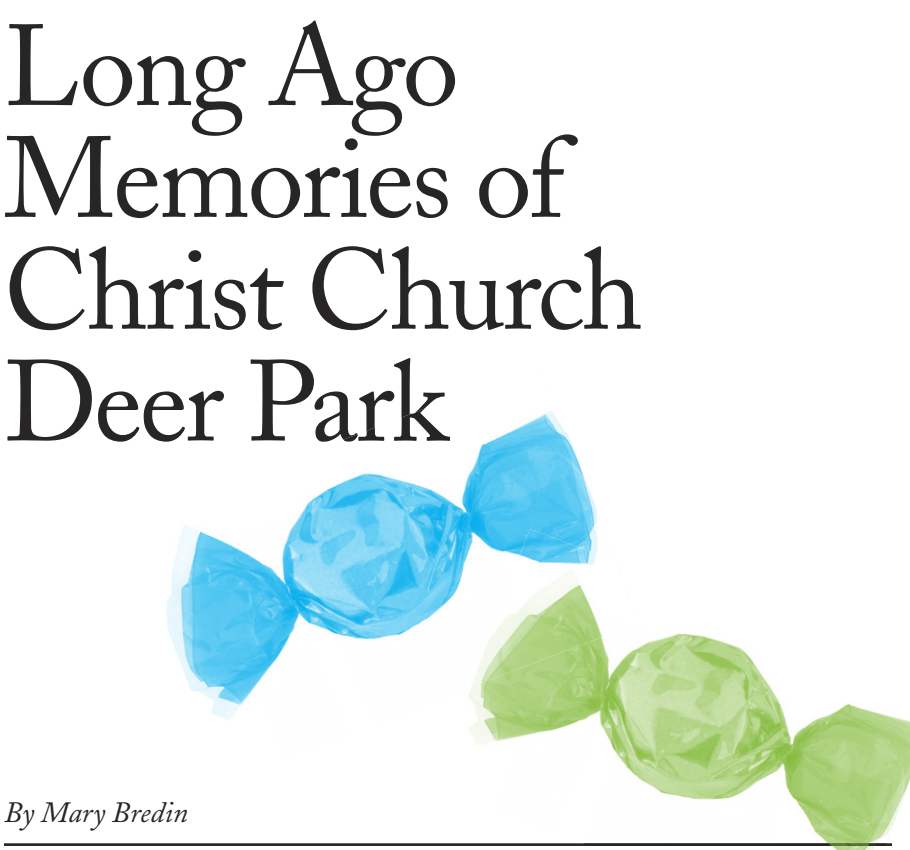
But what about public action? For COVID-19, we wear masks, but we also expect the government to persuade everyone else to. We expect them to tackle problems at private longterm care homes and to distribute safe vaccinations. Likewise, a large chunk of our climate change footprints come from government spending on cement, roads, pipelines, defence, and heating buildings. Climate-engaged people, in addition to acting privately, have to push governments to make systemic changes.

It is, as Westlake says in his article, a false dichotomy when we set up individual action against joining in with others. Westlake compares it to voting: I can ask myself, “What does my single ballot contribute in the election of my political representative?” But I can set an example by voting, and if my candidate gets in, she can get things moving.

No matter what the outcome, maybe the U.S. election can inspire us. In spite of COVID-19, voter turnout could be the highest since 1908. As much as a quarter of the early vote, nationwide, has come from people who did not vote in 2016. Many have been mobilized for the first time through grass-roots groups such as Black Lives Matter, and their own churches.



⊕ Brad Lennon and Lizzie Nyburg are active and committed members of Christ Church Deer Park’s Climate Action Committee. Their article is submitted on behalf of the committee.



By Mary Bredin

I have been thinking about the Christ Church Deer Park of my childhood—maybe it is COVID-19 or my father’s dying, but I want to share my memories from the 1970s.

Around 1969 when I was about 8, I started at Christ Church Deer Park. I thought Canon Davidson (who died last January) was a lovely, jolly man. I remember the new organ going in and, vaguely, the old one. My paternal grandfather was a Minister who lived in England. We saw him only on summer holiday but went to church because of him and how he had raised my father. A commitment to the spiritual life was clear in our family, though there was very little discussion about it.

My mother’s family had always gone to church in Port Hope, so she shared the same tradition as my father. Her other Sunday tradition was “roast” panic; she stressed about getting it in the oven on time to be ready for lunch when we got home from church.

I have strong memories of standing in church, knowing I was supposed to be following the text but seeing how far my mind could wander instead. I could make it go anywhere—a very exciting revelation! Getting me, my brother, and sister to sit still was my parents’ main goal, and my father always had sweets—usually in crinkly paper—to assist him. He was the king of hard-boiled “sweeties.”

Scrambling to get dressed for Sunday services was a race, though church was at 11am then. My mother would be shocked to see me wearing pants to church now, but I expect she would have gotten into the notion pretty quickly. In truth, she preferred pants.

In 1972–73, as a sixth grade student, I was in the parish choir. My friend Louise from Brown School was so curious about church that she came too. I couldn’t imagine someone being interested in going to church without their parents “forcing” them, but Louise joined the choir with me. (She got to listen to the “Hair” soundtrack at home, whereas in our house we listened to opera.)

A few years later, Confirmation seemed the most important time, and hanging out with all the teenagers was huge.

In the summer of 1980, I painted the mural on the wall of the creche with Beatrix Potter characters. It was slow work: the summer was hot and the room lacked ventilation. Mom brought snacks to keep me motivated. She and my sister were both artists—Mom had gone to OCAD and my sister would go to NASCAD—so I had something to prove.

As it is now, the parish was a wonderful community. Many of today’s families were there when I was growing up, including the van Nostrands and the Symonses, and their children were always around too. I recall rummage sales, bake sales, constant talk of the Chancel Guild, the summer outing to the Island church, and many other fragments of the spirit of Christ Church Deer Park. I am comforted by the memories of my parents there too. It is a place that meant so very much to them.



⊕ Mary Bredin is the daughter of fun-loving Terence Bredin and his wife, Elizabeth Bredin, who were both long-time parishioners of Christ Church Deer Park.





Volunteer Spotlight: Lito Pena

By Deborah Wilkinson

Lito, when did you first start coming to Christ Church Deer Park?

My partner, Robert, and I moved into the area around 10 years ago. We saw the rainbow flag on the church sign and felt this might be a safe and welcoming place to go to church. We found this to be the case and have been very happy here.

Please tell us about yourself and your family.

I grew up in the Philippines and am a twin. I moved to Canada 26 years ago. I have worked at the Eaton's Downtown Marriott Hotel since it opened 25 years ago. My partner, Robert, and I have been together 15 years.

I am a father of two children, Mark and Christine, who both live in North York. I have two sisters. One lives in Italy, and my twin lives in Manila. My mother is also still living in Manila with her grandson and his family.

What is your dream vacation?

Hawaii is one of my favorite places to vacation.

Favourite sports team?

The Toronto Blue Jays.

What book are you currently reading?

I am reading the novel *Conclave* by Robert Harris.

In what ways do you volunteer at Christ Church Deer Park and why is it important for you to do so?

I volunteer as a sides person and help with the community breakfast when I can. Robert and I used to take turns at coffee hour before COVID-19.

I have always been active in any parish I have been part of. Church has always been part of my life. I feel blessed to be a member here and like to give back to the community that fills my soul.

How has giving to the parish had an impact on you?

By giving of my time and talents to Christ Church Deer Park I have been able to make new friends and truly feel part of the church community.



Deborah Wilkinson currently serves as People's Warden at Christ Church Deer Park. If you would like to be interviewed for an upcoming issue or want to offer someone's name, please contact Deborah at ccdpcoffee@gmail.com.

Even in a Pandemic We Celebrate!

ADVENT 2020

Join us in Church each Sunday at **8:00am, 9:15am or 10:30am or online at 9:15am** as we worship together and await the birth of our Saviour! And participate in the various in person and virtual events planned for this season of anticipation.

ADVENT WREATH MAKING... ON ZOOM

Everyone in your home can make a wreath on **Saturday, November 28th at 10:00am** for Christmas. Make sure to register at childrenyouth@christchurchdeerpark.org in order to be provided with wreath making materials! Go to our website for the Zoom link.

ADVENT CALENDAR MAKING

Children and youth age 10+ are invited to come to church on **Sunday, November 29th at 9:15am** and participate in making their own Advent Calendar.

ADVENT COFFEE HOUR

Missing fellowship with your pew mates after Sunday services? Let's get together for Zoom Coffee (half) Hour on **Sundays during Advent on November 29th, December 6th, 13th, 20th at 12:30pm**

ADVENT STUDY

Advent is the Christian season of waiting, and eight months into the pandemic, we know how to wait. Let us wait together for the birth of our Lord, as we Journey the Way of love and faith through the lens of friendship, community and the world. Zoom in **each Tuesday in Advent, December 1, 8, 15, 22 at 7:00-8:30pm** Register with Cathy Gibbs at adultministries@christchurchdeerpark.org and get the Zoom link.

CHRISTMAS 2020

CHRISTMAS EVE

3:30pm Carols in the Church
4:00pm Casual and fun liturgy for young families – Interactive Christmas Story and Eucharist
7:30pm Carols on the lawn
8:00pm In person or via livestream, have a swinging Yule with jazz musicians and Eucharist

CHRISTMAS DAY

9:00am Quiet, reflective, and traditional Christmas Service with Eucharist

Please Note:

At the time of writing, we are still meeting in person for our worship services. Check the website christchurchdeerpark.org each week and register on Eventbrite before attending any in person service. If we are in lockdown at Christmas, one of our three liturgies will be livestreamed.



Hi-ho, Silver! Away!

Tony at eight years old, pretending to be the Lone Ranger (out in B.C.)



By Tony van Straubenzee

These days, with all this mask business, I am reverting to my childhood and letting my imagination wander. I have this vision of jumping on my horse, Silver, with my friend Tonto by my side, and cantering through Queens’s Park yelling, “Hi-ho, Silver! Away!” Wouldn’t that be fun! Or how about jumping on a camel á la Lawrence of Arabia, with Arabian garb, and charging up Philosophers Walk scattering all the pigeons.

There is much written about masks in the Bible. I am not qualified to make any sensible theological comments, but I did read an excellent article by Joel Ryan entitled “10 Ways Christians Can Exemplify Faith and Peace during COVID-19” <https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/spiritual-life/10-ways-christians-can-exemplify-faith-and-peace-during-covid-19.html>. Ryan’s seventh point is important to me: “Don’t isolate yourself from the body of Christ.” Stay in contact with fellow believers, he urges us, and encourage them through text messages, phone calls, even Face Time and Skype—and prayer! Thankfully, Cheryl, Molly, and Cathy have set up Zoom programs for us to do this, and I am grateful.

Still, I wonder...

When the great opera composer Giuseppe Verdi wrote A Masked Ball (Un ballo in maschera), a wonderful opera, the Metropolitan Opera production had the singers in the most fantastic masks. Was there a pandemic when Verdi wrote it?

Would David have refused to wear a mask before going up against Goliath just as he refused to wear armour before he threw his stone that killed the Philistine?

And if there had been a pandemic during the Last Supper, would Christ and the disciples have maintained social distancing? How would they have managed masks during the meal? Whatever happened, Jesus would no doubt have healed everyone.

Some fresh air could settle down my imagination, so I’m off to Queen’s Park now to walk my dog. I am wearing a plain old white mask. It makes me look like an elephant with my ears sticking out. Maybe it improves my looks!

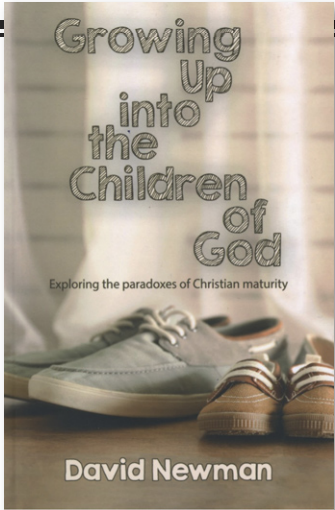


Tony van Straubenzee is a long-time parishioner of Christ Church Deer Park and a faithful contributor to Spiritus.

Book Review GROWING UP into the CHILDREN of GOD Exploring the paradoxes of Christian maturity

David Newman
(Sacristy Press 2019)

By Ward Lindsey



In most instances first impressions are everything, and that certainly is the case when one reflects on the title of this book. Growing up to become children appears to be counter-intuitive. Then there comes the acknowledgement that Christians mature and that the journey to maturity is grounded in paradoxes. However, author David Newman, a former archdeacon of Loughborough, states that his “aim is to enable a child-like faith while rejecting childish patterns of thought.” He also observes, “my sense is that people are left spiritually vulnerable because their understanding of God has not kept in step with their experience of life.”

From my perspective as someone who is now in their early seventies, one may assume that I have the advantage of age enabling me to comfortably recognize what David Newman expounds on. However, the relevance of what he has to say is, in his words, based on an “interdependent human-partnership” with God which is ageless. This relatively small book cannot be discounted.

David Newman early in his book sets in place the thread of his own life experiences. At the age of 16 a school teacher wrote, “I think it’s about time that David grew up ...” This led him to ask the question: “What did ‘growing-up’ actually mean?” After 40 years in congregational ministry he has provided answers set out in chapters that touch on specific aspects of growth. Ease of context is enabled as each chapter topic builds on the previous topic. Chapter titles include “What is a grown-up child?”, “Living with God”, “The mystery of mercy and suffering”, “Grown-up Jesus”, “Grown-up church”, and “A faith that keeps on Growing.”

Growing Up into the Children of God is a book that places your individual relationship with God where “we don’t have to try to be anyone else, and that’s really good news.” It’s a book of openness and insight that will result in positive discussion and reflection.



Ward Lindsey leads the “Challenging Christianity” discussion group at Christ Church Deer Park. He is also a volunteer chorister.

Dear Church Mouse

Dear Church Mouse,

I’m feeling torn right now about in-person worship on Sundays. I want to support the parish and clergy, but don’t want to take any chances with my health or that of my family. Am I being too cautious or, worse, lacking trust in God?

COVIDly Conflicted

Dear *COVIDly Conflicted*,

I’m sure you’ve heard this one before, God helps those who help themselves, so don’t rely on this mouse to endorse your choice or comment on your moral worthiness. As resident rodent, my view from the ground is that the parish is doing everything it can to make in-person worship safe. However, if the thought of stepping through the Bell Tower gives you the willies, then go ahead and respect that feeling.

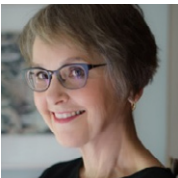
Church Mouse applauds your instinct to support the parish and the clergy, and points out that there are other ways to do that such as joining the e-mail prayer list, taking part in a Zoom discussion group, adding Christ Church Deer Park to your daily prayers, and—here’s a good one—writing a generous cheque.



SPIRITUS

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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 to 500 words in length and in Word format, and all submissions will be subject to edit. **Copy deadline for the Lent issue is Friday, January 22, 2021.**

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



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