



Belonging



By Cheryl Palmer

There are people and places in our lives that make us feel we are home when we are in their presence. Joy and comfort are our overwhelming emotions when we are with that easy companion, surrounded by a loving group of family and friends, or sitting in that relaxing home or swimming in that familiar lake. In those times, even if we are not physically home, we know that in that moment, we are where we belong.

Last month I was on vacation in Vancouver. Coming from Ontario, the city was much more open than Toronto, and that surprised, even frightened, me. Unmasked people were everywhere, inside and outdoors as well as on public transit. Yet, none of that readied me for my first Sunday in Vancouver when I attended church. I was completely unprepared for singing. We were all masked, six feet apart from each other, and we sang. As we stood and sang that first hymn, I cried. Once again, I was worshipping Christ in song! But not only was I caught off guard with singing, I was also totally unprepared for my emotional reaction. In that instant, I knew I was home. This is where I belong: in a church with people who are singing. I was far from my physical home and from most of the people whom I love, yet I knew I belonged in church.


Wikipedia states that “people tend to have an ‘inherent’ desire to belong and be an important part of something greater than themselves.” That statement tells me that

belonging is not about nostalgia. Rather, it is about deep bonds of love and commitment. It is about attachment and connectedness. It is also about safety and stability. Belonging is an innate and fundamental human need throughout our lives, necessary for our comfort and joy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has rattled many of those bonds of love and separated us from each other. It has caused most of us to suspect others as unsafe. And it has destabilized our relationships, communities, and places of belonging. It has made us question where we belong. As we slowly emerge from lockdown, how do we return to a state of belonging? Where and to whom do we belong?

My sense of belonging in church was immediately triggered that Sunday morning in early August as I attended an in-person worship service and sang with others. It was sheer joy.

Attending in-person worship may not have the same effect on everyone as it did on me. You still may not feel safe attending worship, and thus you should stay home, but please make yourself known. Christ Church Deer Park is a place of belonging for hundreds of people, and communal worship is powerful. We want to know you and foster your sense of belonging. So, whether you remain at home worshipping with us online or choose to attend in person, I invite you to reconnect or connect for the first time, experience the love, renew relationships, encounter new ones, feel the joy and stability...worship our living God together. Come home to where you belong.



Cheryl Palmer is the Incumbent of Christ Church Deer Park.

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God Laughs First, Last, and Best!

By Ali McIntosh

Someone once told me that every seven years all the cells in your body will have regenerated so, technically, you become a brand new person. I think about that all time, mostly because I really do feel like this pattern has played out in my life. From angsty teen with dyed black hair, sneaking out to watch bad music, to a university student studying equity and reading Foucault while going to protests every weekend, and then to a woman preparing for ordination and working too hard to keep her house plants alive. The past versions of me would shake their heads and wonder what on earth happened—this was not supposed to be part of the plan.

I'm not sure I could give my former self a coherent, linear account of how I have come to this place, but the first thing I would say is that God is hilarious. God cobbled together all my strengths and weaknesses and showed me how they wanted me to work in the world. This process was a strange one, but studying Scripture has helped me rest in the knowledge that I am in good company.

I've been diving into the prophets of the Old Testament this summer, and the more I look, the more I see examples of God having the greatest sense of humour. God uses the most unlikely people in ways they didn't think they wanted to be used and never would have imagined for themselves. God takes their hesitance, pride, grumpiness, and flaws and uses them exactly as needed to build the kingdom on earth.

The prophet Jonah was so afraid of the work that God was asking of him that he ran away, but God converted all of the people whom Jonah encountered along the way. Moses, who had a bit of an anger problem, was confronted by God's call in a literal fire in the wilderness (this is one of my favourite examples of God's irony). The prophet Isaiah was part of a society that only worshipped God in word, not action, so an angel used a burning coal to purify Isaiah's lips. Finally, my favourite example of humour in the Bible is the prophet Elijah's wanting to give up, lie down, and die because he was so tired and exhausted from the work. Instead, God patiently told Elijah to have a nap, have a snack, and see how he felt afterward.

There are many more examples of humour and irony in Scripture, and each story may spark different lessons for each of us.

I've learned that the seven-year saying is a myth, but I still like to repeat it sometimes because it reminds me we are capable of radical change and massive action. After studying the prophets this summer I'm left with the hope that, as we come out of this pandemic, looking for the humour in our lives will help us see past our immediate problems to tomorrow's solutions. With God's help I believe we will eventually get there, and share some laughter along the way.



Ali McIntosh is a lay pastoral associate at Christ Church Deer Park.

Tip of the Iceberg

By Tony van Straubenzee

Twenty years ago, when I first retired, I was able to spend close to four months at my cottage in Quebec. The cottage is near Le Club de Golf Algonquin which is next door to the Kitigan Zibi reservation.

The golf club had a men’s group which played every Wednesday, and I was invited to join. Three of the members were Indigenous, and their names were Eddie, Thunder, and Chucky. Of the three, Eddie was the best golfer, and I got to know him well. In one of our games together I sank a difficult 40-foot putt much to our amazement, and Eddie has never forgotten it.

One year I was asked to co-chair a United Way campaign for the town of Maniwaki, the nearest town to the golf course, and I was responsible for getting the artists and the sponsors for a fundraising concert. Fortunately, I had a connection to a concert pianist and an opera singer. The pianist had a boyfriend who played in a jazz group, so I hired them as well as the other two. I also knew of a cellist whose grandmother lived in Maniwaki so, of course, the grandmother was included. But that wasn’t all! Eddie played the fiddle and came on board, and his friend, a policeman on the reserve, played the guitar. The policeman had a nephew who tap danced. That made eight performers in total.

The evening before the concert, my wife, Mary, and I had a dinner party for all the performers. During the dinner, we talked to Eddie and his sister and learned that they had been taken from their family and sent to a residential school. They could not speak their native tongue (they knew no English); they could not look at each other or talk to each other. They were abused. After three years of this, an agent from the then Indian Affairs Department made a deal for their release. This personal information was new to me. Until then, Eddie was a golfing buddy whose company I enjoyed. I knew nothing of his personal circumstances.

Recently, I asked Eddie what the morale was like with all the news about the discovery of the graves of so many children. He told me that each announcement caused his people to be depressed and that they had held a protest parade and a gathering in the town. I told him it was hard for someone like me to know what I could do to show I recognized the suffering and cared about it.

Subsequently, when I learned about an Indigenous hockey player who needed financial support, it occurred to me that I could help make a difference, however small. Geronomo Whiteduck had been invited to do university studies and play for a team at King’s College in Pennsylvania but needed help to pay tuition. I made a contribution.

Eddie knows Geronomo and thinks he is a winner. So is Eddie—a privilege to know.

As I readied myself to return home last month, Eddie’s parting words to me were, “Let’s not forget your 40-foot putt.” But I realize now that there is a lot more that we should never forget!



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



An Unusual Holiday Mood

By Pat Butler

In the past, a holiday at a cottage with loved ones has brought me a state of bliss. I love being immersed in a forest, listening to birdsong, near a lake that invites a delicious swim several times a day, and reading an absorbing book or creatively writing at will. This July holiday in a Quebec cottage on a tiny Laurentian lake has felt different right from the start. Why?

Perhaps the overriding dissonance I’m experiencing is due to the relentless COVID lockdown we’ve all endured during the last 16 months. For well over a year, my husband, Eric, and I have been isolated from our normal social life and regular activities. We weren’t allowed to volunteer at Sunnybrook Hospital, travel to exciting destinations, see family and friends over dinners, enjoy our indoor/outdoor sports, or participate in our separate group pursuits like his art classes or my choral singing and church services.

The fact that my first waking thought has become “What day of the week is it?” indicates that all days are boringly identical. The only weekly variation in our lives since March 2020 has been Sunday’s lack of a *Globe and Mail*. Even the Christ Church Deer Park online service can be accessed at any time.

When faced with inclement weather on previous cottage holidays, I’ve always been quick to immerse myself in a good book or a writing project. (Moaning about cloud or rain gets you nowhere.) But when neither pursuit presents its usual thrill due to infrequency, its pleasure is somewhat diminished. For months I’ve been reading extensively and writing practically non-stop. I even took up the habit of listening to audiobooks from the library while I strolled the streets and ravines of Toronto.

As soon as I find myself thinking, “But I’m tired of reading and writing—bring on the warmth and sunshine!” I am consumed with guilt. How self-centered and ungrateful I’ve become.

I am healthy as are all my loved ones. I am now fully vaccinated as are all my loved ones. Nobody I know personally has died of this terrible plague. Countless people around the world have suffered; millions have died.

This too shall pass.



⊕ Pat Butler is a volunteer chorister and regularly prepares flower arrangements for Sunday worship at Christ Church Deer Park.

A Contemplative Engagement with Music

By Christina Labriola

As a musician and a person of faith, it has often delighted and moved me to notice how musical experiences overlap so readily with what might be termed sacred experiences. How frequently are moments of profound prayer—the awareness of God’s life moving in us, God’s love surrounding, healing, empowering us—prompted by music! The ecstatic rush of a crescendo, the hushed awe of a cadence, the intense longing of a melodic phrase: these seem to give voice in a mysterious manner to the innermost stirrings of our hearts. Perhaps, dear reader, you have your own particular inventory of “sacred” musical moments—experiences of music as a conduit of the divine presence, an occasion of holy encounter; or simply, as a moment of insight, which puts you in touch more fully with what it is to be alive, so that, as T.S. Eliot puts it: “You are the music while the music lasts.”

Music seems intimately wound up with our inner lives, capable of stirring our religious emotions and tendencies, and drawing us more deeply into the mystery of God. That music possesses an innate connection to the spiritual is an intuition that many people of differing religious affiliations and even in secular contexts would affirm. St. Hildegard of Bingen, medieval composer and mystic, says that *the soul is symphonic*—that is to say, there is a kind of kinship between music and the inner movements of the soul.

One way in which we might begin to understand the potential of music in the spiritual life is to see its relationship to contemplation. While other forms of prayer involve an active element of striving, contemplation involves attentiveness, stillness, and a simple welcoming of God’s presence. Contemplatives speak of interior gazing or listening, silence, union, and love. Contemplation cuts to the heart of reality. Thomas Merton understands it as the experience of wonder at existence itself and, especially, the awareness of God at the core of our being and of the reality of our true identity as united to God in Christ. In St. Teresa of Avila’s view, contemplation is the

highest form of prayer, “a close sharing between friends” wherein God and the soul simply behold one another in love. To experience this reality requires a quieting of the heart and the adoption of an interior listening posture.

The engagement with music teaches us to *listen well*. Music requires us to quiet ourselves, to make space to welcome it. It demands a sacrifice of our time, patience, humility, and a disposition of attentiveness. This attitude parallels that of the contemplative, placing oneself before God in a loving receptivity that echoes that of the Virgin Mary. By fostering this open, acquiescent, contemplative composure of heart, music can ready us to receive that which God longs to bestow: joy, love, peace, healing, a share in the divine life. As such, we allow ourselves to be overtaken and transformed by the beauty of God, mediated through God’s sublime gift of music.

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✚ Christina Labriola is the interim director of music at Christ Church Deer Park. Her academic pursuits as a professor and scholar on the intersection of music and spirituality trickle over into her practice as a liturgical musician. She is passionate about musical beauty as a way to God.

Washing Hands or Washing Hearts?

By Andrew Harding

Many churches have gone out of their way to feed and comfort people most affected by the pandemic. While this is partly what churches are for, I find myself feeling that something is missing and wondering what should be said about living through a pandemic. So many problems have been exposed, both personally and as a society. We need some deep guidance, and churches are well placed to offer it by connecting us to the wisdom of those who have lived through times of plague, pandemic and suffering. While public health advice to wash my hands, wear a mask and keep six feet from others is fine, what I expect to hear most from churches is how to cleanse our hearts and reorient ourselves to God.

The desire to return to normal and to get on with life is commonplace. Who doesn’t want to see other people face to face, meet freely without fear, and do some travelling? I do. And yet, for all that longing, I think churches should do two things to guide us forward.

The first is to rewrite the “normal,” something churches have been doing ever since Jews began to worship Jesus as Israel’s Messiah. And, for hundreds of years before that, the prophets called for social justice and fair treatment of everyone in society. Christian communities have often been at their best when living a “new normal,” both as monastic communities dedicated to prayer and service, and as wider churches that reshaped social priorities and reformed social systems that were oppressive and unjust.

The second thing churches should do is to connect us to our history. Not only do we have 2,000 years of pandemic experience to draw on, but the story of Job is the deep

taproot into a life made almost lifeless by suffering and loss, and then gradually renewed. How to live through loss; losing yourself is to find yourself, is part of the ethos that defines Christianity.

In the mid-third century, there was a growing movement of people who saw that the best way to live the Christian life was to withdraw to the desert, away from life in the city and from other urban churches. While this may have been in part a response to pandemics of the time, withdrawing from normal life to get closer to God has given us a rich tradition of Christian life. Known as the desert fathers and mothers, these people lived in prayerful solitude, self-examination and reflection, sometimes doing so in close community with other similarly devoted Christians. This laid the foundations for monastic life.

While the monastic tradition has never been the mainstream option for Christians, it has been a kind of startup incubator from which new forms of life and spiritual nourishment have emerged. What I find so striking is the desert fathers and mothers clarity of vision—life’s fullness is to be found not in participation in public life, but in withdrawal from it to create an entirely new normal.

Cleansing of the heart, unmasking self-deceptions, and closeness to the divine life is surely what the church and the full Christian tradition has to offer. We are all called to question and redefine the normal.



✚ Andrew Harding and his family joined Christ Church Deer Park in 2019. He has since become an active member of the parish and a regular contributor to Spiritus.

Many people think that contemplatives and mystics have tuned out the world, but British poet Ruth Padel sees it differently.

“...psychologist say that painters, theoretical scientists, philosophers, poets and mystics make particular use of withdrawal and displacement. If you displace pain you escape it, not by denying it or distorting reality but by migrating to a different (and with any luck creative) perspective. You’re not misunderstanding or denying the world, you know the massacre has happened, but you’re making something of it. Goya paints *The Disasters of War*.”
— *We Are All From Someplace Else* (Vintage, 2020)

Always a Silver Lining... an Update from Your Stewardship Committee



By Caroline van Nostrand

*Not that I speak from want,
for I have learned to be content
in whatever circumstances I am.
I know how to get along with
humble means, and I also know
how to live in prosperity; in any
and every circumstance I have
learned the secret of being filled
and going hungry, both of having
abundance and suffering need.
I can do all things through Him
who strengthens me.*
— Philippians 4:11-13

Here we are, eighteen months in, still being impacted by COVID-19. This long period of feeling isolated has seemed endless, hasn't it?

Like many of you, I've so missed attending church. Still, I've been grateful to have the opportunity to regularly be inside our beloved 1570 Yonge Street in order to prepare and serve community breakfast. Such a blessing. After all, when things have us anxious and maybe even a bit down, having the opportunity to stay busy and to focus on others acts as something of an antidote to whatever might ail us.

How important our outreach efforts have been! More neighbours than ever have been hard hit financially—some struggle chronically from the high costs of living in this city, and others are newly disadvantaged in the wake of the pandemic.

Challenges surround us, and that is true at Christ Church Deer Park, as much as anywhere.

At our Vestry Meeting earlier this year we learned that we were anticipating an operating deficit of over \$180,000 in 2021, a sobering amount resulting from numerous factors: lowered rental income, fewer people in pews to donate, no community fundraising initiatives like rummage sales or our Holy & Holly Christmas Festival.

The projected deficit was coupled with the fact that after years of deferring capital projects and building upgrades, our beloved church began to demand we no longer drag our heels in attending to it, as a matter of some urgency.

So many challenges.

And yet, among all those negatives, a wondrous and unexpected thing happened...

David and Joan Moore introduced a different kind of challenge to us: They asked parishioners to consider the needs of Christ Church Deer Park at a unique time, and they so kindly offered to match all donations up to a value of \$100,000 to inspire us to do what we could to raise \$150,000 for overdue capital improvements.

Happily, the challenge was accepted! Many parishioners stepped up willingly to give when asked and, led by the Moores, we raised \$252,000. Wonderful news, to be sure. We are all extremely grateful to those who contributed. Thank you.

Even so, we still have work to do as a community.

Due to the extended duration of the pandemic, our ability to raise money has decreased and will continue to do so for a period into the future. That could translate into continuing operating deficits. Thanks in large part to the Moores, the \$150,000 needed for immediate capital improvements has been raised so priority projects will be addressed. Still, we know our building will need continuing attention and, when our situation allows, also some redevelopment.

So what does this mean for our community?

1. If you were not approached to make a special donation but are in a position to offer your support, we hope you will contact the office or go online to donate today or pledge to give on an ongoing basis. **Sincere thanks to all who do so.**

2. Time and talent are also valuable supports to be shared. Christ Church Deer Park runs in large part because of the time, commitment, and caring of our community members. Please consider whether you can volunteer in any one of a number of roles. Reach out to our Ministry or Management teams to discuss possibilities. **We are grateful for the support of all volunteers.**

Times of challenge bring opportunity, as Christ Church Deer Park knows from past and present experience. Each of us is invited to respond in our own way—to help produce the silver lining to any dark cloud which might threaten our parish community.

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

Christ Church Deer Park Investment Committee: Investment Fund Update

By Michael Butler

In the summer of 2020, the Management Team made the decision to change the administration of our parish's funds, specifically the Endowment Fund, 1870 Fund, Ministry Fund, Re-Imagining Church and St Andrew's Group monies, from a self-managed model to a discretionary investment manager. The Rectory Fund was not included, as it is separately managed by the Diocese of Toronto on behalf of Christ Church Deer Park.

In September, four investment management firms were invited to submit proposals. An integral part of our criterion was that the manager adhere to an Environment, Social and Governance policy (ESG). Following receipt of these proposals and interviews with each of the firms, the Investment Committed selected Philips Hagar & North (PH&N), a wholly owned subsidiary of The Royal Bank of Canada to be our manager. A recommendation to this effect was made to and approved by the Management Team. PH&N is an investment industry leader in following to ESG principles. A separate note on this subject will be included in a future issue of Spiritus.

A series of meetings were then held by the Investment Committee with PH&N representatives to review and revise our Statement of Investment Policy and establish operating guidelines prior to the transfer of funds. This process was completed with the account opened and funds transferred during April 2021.


PH&N's initial investment on our behalf was on April 28th. The task of investing the monies was made more challenging as the domestic and international equity markets were at or near all-time high reflecting the fact that global economies have begun to recover as we work through the pandemic.

As of June 30, 2021 the combined value of Christ Church Deer Park's funds was \$2,271,309. The Endowment Fund, which was merged with the 1870 Fund at Vestry in February, makes up the

largest component of the total. The portfolio has had a very satisfactory performance since inception with a return of 2.4% (14.4% annualized).

Portfolio Asset Mix as of June 30, 2021	
Asset Class	%
Cash & equivalents*	8.7
Fixed Income	25.9
Equities	60.0
Alternatives	5.5

*Cash is at the high end of our Investment Policy guidelines as PH&N has yet to complete the process of investing the funds. This will happen during the current quarter.



Ⓜ Michael Butler is a churchwarden and chair of the Investment Committee. He submits this report on behalf of the committee.

Benchmarking to Shrink the Parish's Carbon Footprint

By Bradley Lennon

Cavernous spaces hold hundreds of worshippers. Soaring ceilings lift human spirits from mundane concerns. Colourful stained glass windows vividly depict the Bible's stories visually. Such distinctive architecture, now instantly recognizable throughout the world, developed as the early Church grew in numbers. Larger congregations could no longer assemble into the biggest homes of the wealthiest members.

As Christianity spread northward from the Mediterranean into colder climates, builders had to find systems of warming these structures. We Canadian Christians have come to rely on carbon-based energy materials to fuel such heating. Yet the greenhouse gas vented from such sources has caused our climate to change, producing long-term alterations of temperature and weather patterns that now threaten human existence.

Greening Sacred Spaces www.faithcommongood.org/greening_sacred_spaces is a national, multi-faithed organization that is helping local Anglican churches like Christ Church Deer Park learn how to retrofit and reduce the carbon footprint that our buildings produce. In the past three years it has worked to help us develop a benchmarking report to measure our current energy use as the first step in reducing it. This study provides us with a baseline to determine if our building's energy performance is getting better or worse each year.

Having this report in our hands means we can now compare ourselves with a number of other Anglican churches near us that have comparable buildings of the same size and age. Donna Lang of Greening Sacred Spaces says that most of the ten Anglican churches involved in the complete benchmarking project, including Christ Church Deer Park, came in a middle range of yellow, rather than the excellent green or the poorer red.

This benchmarking study also enables property committee members to target areas for lowering further our energy consumption. It will help us to learn from the "best practices" of the other Anglican churches involved in the Toronto benchmarking. Improving our building's energy efficiency not only helps our church to address climate change. But it also means improving our church's cost-effectiveness, saving money which can be used for other badly-needed social actions or community outreach programmes in our Deer Park neighbourhood.

If you want to know more about Greening Sacred Spaces or the report, please be in touch with me or Andrew Harding, chair of the property committee.



⊕ Bradley Lennon is an active and committed member of Christ Church Deer Park's Climate Action Group of the Property Committee. His article is submitted on behalf of the group.

I Became a Better Singer Because of COVID



By Emily Chatten

Of all the things that could have happened over the past year, becoming a better singer seems one of the least likely. Early on, singing was deemed one of the worst possible activities for spreading the virus. Since childhood, I've turned to music during times of stress. To be banished from it, on top of everything else, seemed to compound the injuries of pandemic living.

Choir practices over Zoom don't remotely fill the void. In fact, I would argue that in many cases they make it worse. Despite the efforts of our musical leaders, Zoom practices are an ongoing reminder that we're each in a room alone. We have to turn off our mics when we start to sing to avoid overloading the platform. As far as I'm concerned, being forced to listen to one's own voice singing is a bizarre form of punishment. More recently, technology has finessed page turning, but initially music scrolling on the screen made me motion sick.

Last fall, choristers were offered an opportunity to take music lessons with our choir leads. During my first lesson with alto lead Julia Barber, it became clear that I had untapped potential. We decided that I would pay for supplementary lessons myself.

In the spring, choristers were offered two challenges. The first was to participate in a group project: we would each record a track of the same piece and our tracks would be combined. The second challenge was to work on piece for a small recital for our last choir practice.

There is nothing easy about recording your voice. While we sang for the group project, we listened on headphones to an organ track that also had spoken cues. That was just the beginning. Beyond that, I had no idea: What was the software? How did you use it? What file type choices would or should you use? How large should the file be? Where did the computer save the file? It took me a few tries to get a track I was happy with, and I sent it in before I could get cold feet!

There was great turn-in response on the group project. I was impressed that my fellow choristers worked through the challenges (though I know a few weren't successful), and I was amazed when I heard the finished product. If you attended the June 27th service, you heard our project, "Praise My Soul The King of Heaven" as the final hymn. Thank you, Kelsey, for your work putting it together.

I also undertook a piece for the second challenge. We have discovered I can sing a tad higher than alto. My fellow choristers learned this when they heard the piece Julia and I worked on for a few months leading up to our little recital: Cole Porter's "True Love."

Without the work Julia and I have done over the past year I would never have considered recording myself singing, regardless of the circumstances. I didn't feel confident enough. I'm thankful to have had this opportunity and to be able to rise to these challenges. Like the other choristers, I'm itching to get back to singing at church. In the meantime, my hymnbook is open and there's a song in my heart.

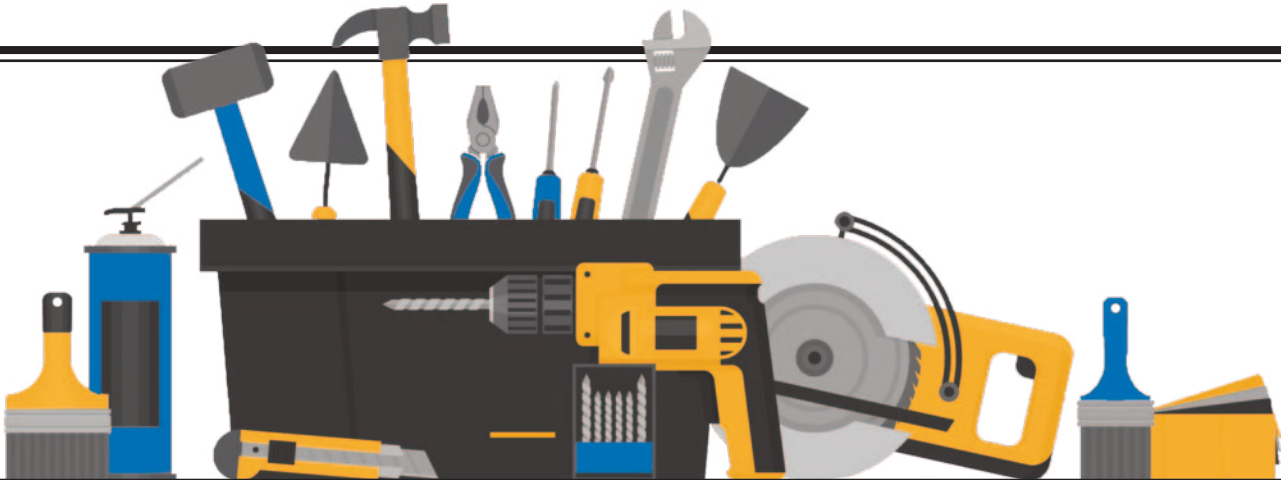


⊕ Emily Chatten has been riding out the pandemic in her childhood hometown, among the rolling Northumberland Hills.



Property Update

By Andrew Harding



With a huge thanks to David Moore and family and with the support of many generous parishioners, we have an approved budget of \$150,000 for long-needed repair and maintenance projects.

Basement carpet replacement is scheduled for the start of September, with the parish office, hallways and pastoral associate’s office scheduled soon after.

On the exterior of the building, pointing repair of the west side of the hall is the top priority. Detailed quotes have been received to fully restore the plaster in the ceiling of the narthex, side chapel and restore the paintwork in Elliot Hall. Further repairs including the Yonge Street steps are also quoted. These are expensive items beyond the current budget and the committee is deciding how best to prioritize these repairs.

Energy conservation and recycling are priorities, and we will build on the energy benchmarking project of recent years to see how best to minimize the carbon footprint of the church. With programmable thermostats in place, well-serviced boilers and AC units, good basic design, and a focus on recycling, Christ Church Deer Park is recognized by Greening Sacred Spaces as being in a good position already. See also Bradley Lennon’s article in this issue of *Spiritus*, entitled “Benchmarking to Shrink the Parish’s Carbon Footprint.”

The elevator has been extensively serviced and is now reliable with all key electronic components replaced. The exhaust fan in the basement kitchen has been replaced, and the downstairs sterilizer unit is soon to be replaced.

While the building is in basically good repair, the committee is aware of non-urgent but significant repair items to the drainage and building fabric—especially the North East stairwell and basement wall. Other items such as the effloresce on the Yonge Street door arch are being monitored. We will be doing regular detailed inspections to develop annual and long range maintenance

plans, bringing in outside expertise as needed, while drawing on the close observation and technical/operational knowledge of the property committee and service technicians. Plans will cover all building equipment and facilities, plant equipment, building envelope, décor, and grounds. As they say, regular checks prevent large cheques.

It is worth pointing out that some of the more expensive repair items are not always the most visible but are essential to the integrity of the building, such as the mortar between the wall stones and the foundation drainage. Other matters appear simple but mask deeper issues that must be dealt with if repairs are to last—Elliot Hall paint and the chapel and narthex plaster repair being two examples here.

It is also worth mentioning that we are looking at the potential wider use of the building by the community, and we welcome your ideas on issues that affect the maintenance and upgrade of equipment and facilities.

Property is truly a team effort to which committee members Andrew Van Nostrand, Paul Marritt (director of parish operations), former chair Don Dority (welcome back on board Don), Walter Blackwell and Brad Lennon contribute. Irma and Ed deserve our thanks for all their work on the gardens during the hot months in particular.

Please contact me with any questions at andrewharding70@gmail.com. (Make sure the 'd' is after andrew).



⊕ Andrew Harding is chair of Christ Church Deer Park’s property committee and brings his experience as a home renovator to the role.

Notes from the Music Library: Fall 2021: In the Ash Grove



By Emily Chatten

While looking through our stack of hymnbooks for something in the correct range to use as a warm-up, I came across an old favourite. The hymn was “Sent Forth By God’s Blessing” to the tune THE ASH GROVE. I always loved the lilt in the tune. As I read from the text of the second verse “With your feast your feed us, With your light now lead us; Unite us as one in this life that we share,” I was sorry I hadn’t relocated this jaunty hymn sooner as I felt the warmth of its fire penetrate. I worked through a variety of vowel sounds to the tune and wondered why it had been so very long since I had spread out under the long reach of the Ash Grove.

A few weeks earlier, a team of arborists with chainsaws pulled up in front of the ash tree at the edge of the pasture immediately across the road from us. This tree was only just beginning to shows of an infestation of emerald ash borer beetle. The beetle, native to Southeast Asia, was first detected in the Detroit area in 2002. Despite containment and quarantine measures on both

sides of the border (we’ve seen how seriously people take those), the beetle has spread beyond control, wiping out ash forests throughout North America. (Ninety-nine percent of all ash trees are killed once the beetles are in a region.) Ash trees in parks, along roads and sidewalks are all being removed to prevent dead stock from causing injury or property damage. This is of a little consolation for a tree that was generations old.

It turns out, we have been singing THE ASH GROVE, but to a different set of words. The Ash Grove is a Welsh folk tune. If I were writing this in Toronto, rather than in Brighton, I’d head down to the Toronto Reference Library and look up the 1862 record of the tune in one of the four volumes “Welsh Melodies, with Welsh and English Poetry” by Thomas and Jones. It’s possible that’s where Katherine K. Davis found the tune when she wrote the text “Let All Things Now Living” in the 1920s. In the second stanza, Davis wrote, “God’s law still enforces the stars in their courses and causes the sun in its splendour to shine; the hills and the

mountains, the rivers and fountains, the depths of the ocean in praises combine.”

When I was in university and not making time to come to church, it was easy to tell myself that I was spiritual and not religious. Like many of my peers in environmental studies, I felt an amazing recharge from being in nature. It took some maturity to realize that religion provided me with something different from the spirituality I experienced in the woods or on the lake shore. As I stand beside the stump of the beetle-ravaged ash tree, one of millions in North America, it is yet another familiar hymn, the unchanging ASH GROVE, that gives me strength. I hope you will also find joy and strength under its branches.



⊕ 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!

Saint or Settler? Sheep or Goat?

By Genevieve Chornenki

When I was growing up it was permissible to sort people by socioeconomic status. A boyfriend’s mother castigated him for talking to *the workies* at the golf club, and people considered it polite to ask, *What does your father do for a living?* In 2021, class preoccupation has been replaced by labels like “Boomer” and “settler” or invented concepts like race.* Conformity of thought is assumed. if not required.

But I wonder about this impulse to sort. Social sorting is not and has never been benign. Instead, it is a way to assess the moral worth of others. Now, possibly more than ever, we apply labels to indicate whom to punish and whom to reform. Gratifying stuff.

From where do we derive our authority to sort sheep from goats? With what assurance that our judgments are correct? Complete?

Consider “Dewi” who was born in Indonesia after World War II to a woman released from a Japanese internment camp. Dewi started school speaking a foreign language, wearing a hairstyle unlike other little girls. No one could pronounce her last name. She and her siblings eviscerated chickens to support the family.

When Dewi finished high school she owned a single pair of jeans. To launder them, she sat pantless on a dryer in the laundromat. She enrolled in university but couldn’t stick with it. For her first job she punched a clock. When she married (young), the household often ran out of food by month’s end. For money, Dewi drove a school bus and sewed clothing for other people.

What feelings does Dewi arouse in you? What labels apply to her? Would you offer prayers on her behalf? Why?

Today, Dewi no longer fits through the eye of a needle. She drives a BMW SUV. The kitchen in her second residence is the size of the Arthur Smith room, and a \$375,000 wakeboarding boat docks in her newly built boat house. Moreover, Dewi admits to Dutch heritage. Her father was born on a plantation in the Dutch East Indies where his parents were overseers from Holland. Dewi knows all about the slave collar on display at the Rijksmuseum.

Might you be using some different labels for Dewi now?

Well, wait.

Dewi’s family carries the gene for a lethal illness.

At the hospital last year, she cried through her mask while holding the body of her brother, her second sibling to die.

Dewi’s own son is raising two children in a same-sex relationship, and Dewi plays an enthusiastic role in their life.

So...?

In Tolstoy’s *Resurrection*, the protagonist Nekhlyudov questions our human propensity to judge others and has a sudden insight of enduring relevance for him and for us:

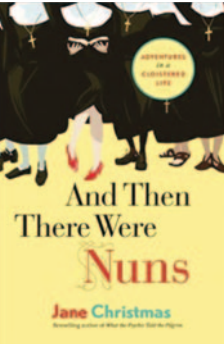
The thought...suddenly appeared to him as the simplest, incontrovertible truth. He realized quite clearly that the only sure means of salvation from the terrible wrongs which mankind endures is for every man to acknowledge himself a sinner and therefore unfit either to punish or reform others.

* See *The History of White People* by Nell Irvin Painter (W.W. Norton, 2010), *Transcending Racial Divisions* by Christine Louis-Dit-Sully (Zero Books, 2021), and *The Body* by Bill Bryson (Doubleday, 2019): “That’s all race is—a sliver of epidermis.”



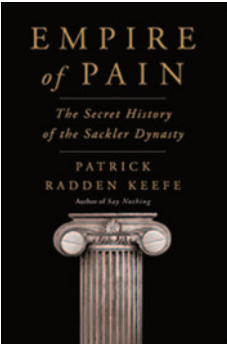
Genevieve Chornenki is the editor of Spiritus and the author of Don't Lose Sight: Vanity, incompetence, and my ill-fated left eye.

Editor’s Choice



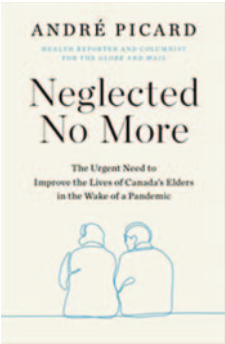
And Then There Were Nuns: Adventures in a Cloistered Life
Jane Christmas
(Greystone Books, 2013)

When Jane Christmas’s boyfriend proposes marriage, she demurs in favour of the cloister. Is she nun material? She needs to know. As the author explores her spiritual impulses, readers, especially Anglicans, are invited to explore theirs. “I’ve never understood why the church was so anxious to bring out a new book. You don’t rewrite Shakespeare’s sonnets to make them more understandable; you grow in understanding with the words.”



Empire of Pain: The Secret History of the Sackler Dynasty
Patrick Radden Keefe
(Bond Street Books, 2021)

Want to know how OxyContin became a leading drug of abuse? Curious about the sales and marketing techniques deployed for such a painkiller? Radden Keefe documents the introduction and distribution of the drug, the wealth that it generated, and the strained attempts to impose accountability on a family once celebrated for its philanthropy.



Neglected No More: The Urgent Need to Improve the Lives of Canada’s Elders in the Wake of a Pandemic
André Picard
(Penguin RandomHouse Canada, 2021)

Picard gets to the point quickly: “Eldercare in this country is so disorganized and so poorly regulated, the staffing so inadequate, the infrastructure so outdated, the accountability so non-existent and ageism so rampant, there seems to be no limit to what care homes can get away with.” His book explores the problems and suggest constructive solutions. Required reading for Canadians whatever their age and financial resources.

Dear Church Mouse



Dear Church Mouse,

My great aunt Lola brought Jesus to mainland China in the 1920s and returned home with beautiful porcelains, one of which I inherited. I admired Lola and treasured the vase until I learned about “rice Christians.” Now I feel ashamed at the thought of her exploiting hungry people to gain converts. I also feel personally implicated. What should I do?

Burdened Beneficiary

Dear *Burdened*,

That’s quite a load you’ve concocted for yourself! Instead of straining under its weight and attributing sins to Lola that she may or may not have committed, why not put the load down? Then, look around. You will see countless causes here and now that cry out for your prayers and your engagement. To begin with, you might sell that troublesome vase and donate the proceeds to a worthy cause—a foodbank, an interfaith organization, an educational body, for instance. Just trust this mouse: once you stop brooding and begin to act, your conscience will quickly clear up.



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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 next (Advent) issue is Friday, November 5, 2021.

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



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