

the seed

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From The Rector

THE REV. KERRI BRENNAN

We have just marked the passing of our first anniversary together. And with Christmas and the New Year swiftly approaching, I find myself reflecting on all that this first year has unfurled. I think this year has been largely spent in teaching and learning. Two teaching Eucharists made us attentive to the liturgical structure, and how we use our sacred space. A new liturgy out of the Iona Community was introduced and has become a monthly staple, and out of that difficult process, we learned the value of hearing and making room for each other. A preaching series on radical hospitality highlighted our call to vulnerability, not only in welcoming others, but willingly being hosted by another. And through Advent, folks are hearing a series titled "Why 'They' Don't Come to Church," which explores how society has changed, personal accounts of why people choose options other than Church on Sundays, and how we as a Church might choose to respond to these insights.

We have had a full year. Filled with new discoveries and insights. Now is the time to put those insights to good use.

Finding ourselves nearly halfway through Advent, we are called to prepare ourselves for the coming of light into darkness; to prepare for new life that promises to burst forth in our midst; and to prepare to welcome and serve all of the People of God.

As you prepare for this Christmas season, recalling the birth of Jesus, I pray you are uplifted by the gifts of Advent: thankfulness, patience, humility, and joy. And may God's blessing be upon you.



Christmas in the Village



Sunday, December 24

Fourth Sunday of Advent - 9:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve

5:30 p.m. Carols with 6:00 p.m. Family Service

7:30 p.m. **Shepherd's Dinner** of Shepherd's Pie and Angel Food Cake will be served for anyone looking for a hot meal, company, or conversation this Christmas. All are welcome. There is no cost.

10:00 p.m. Carols with 10:30 p.m. Candlelight Service

Christmas Day

9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Synod Impressions from your Reps

This was my first Synod...or at least the first Synod I attended as a participant. I'm not sure going at 10 years old to look after my baby brother while my mother participated counts! The opening service was a great reminder of the magnificence of gathering and singing in a cathedral setting. We ended by singing the hymn that was the theme: The Church of Christ in Every Age. The words didn't really sink in until Primate Fred Hiltz framed his keynote addresses around them. The first verse reads: **The church of Christ in every age / Beset by change but Spirit-led / Must claim and test its heritage / And keep on rising from the dead.**

The other verses speak of how we are the servant church, called to address injustices and to provide shelter and food in the world and in our communities. This struck me as a very active call that requires the church to continually review what service looks like, particularly in a rapidly changing society.

We are part of a Diocese that serves in a multitude of ways. Two themes stood out for me: Affordable Housing and the work of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) in northern Ontario.

Affordable Housing is a priority in the Ottawa Diocese and they have committed to 125 new units by 2021. With 42 new units already underway at Cornerstone Housing for Women, the commitment that 10% of net proceeds from Diocesan property sales are to be set aside for affordable housing initiatives, and the availability of innovative grants for parishes considering repurposing buildings, the Diocese is attracting the attention of community and government partners.

I always thought that PWRDF money was directed to international needs, so the presentation on their work in the first nations community of Pikangikum in Northern Ontario was an eye opener. The community didn't have access to safe drinking water or safe waste water services – here in Canada!

For a full summary of Synod topics, please see the pink sheet on the notice board at the back of the church OR visit <http://www.ottawa.anglican.ca/Synod.html>

When we meet at Christ Church Ashton we gather in our immediate community of faith. Synod is a wonderful reminder that we are also part of a much bigger faith community.

Michelle Kay, Synod Rep



Synod Impressions cont...

There were many interesting topics covered during the November Synod weekend, ranging from outreach programs offered in our diocese to the offering of spiritual care to our aging church population. A personal highlight of the weekend was the explanation surrounding the emerging and evolving church structure. It was interesting to learn about the new structures and better understand our shared ministry structure with St. Paul's Kanata and St. John's Richmond. I specifically enjoyed the humorous approach brought forth in describing the amalgamation of St Michael and All Angels and St. Richards Anglican Church. The amalgamation process was described as the two churches entering a dating relationship, starting with the first date and ending in marriage. They started off by comparing their buildings with such descriptions as "we have paneling" and "we have large windows" evolving to questions such as "where are we going to live?" and "is it really necessary to shake everyone's hand during the peace?" My personal favorite was the exchange describing the consolidation of church belongings, one church started with "We have wine glasses" which received the response, "We most certainly will make room for those". It was a very interesting and thought provoking weekend.

Michael McConnell, Synod Rep

I attended the Friday of Synod as the alternate to the alternate. I read the whole Synod "circular", and learned some interesting things (like the difference between an archdeacon and a regional dean in a deanery). And I learned some other things on Friday.

First, that the Anglican Diocese "punches above its weight" on social services. Mayor Watson and two MPPs, Yasir Naqvi and John Fraser took time out to come and address Synod. Their message was of thanks and encouragement, thanking us for the services the diocese provides, and encouraging us to keep it up. And the diocese is keeping it up, looking to find ways to provide affordable housing in the near future.

We were also addressed by our primate, Fred Hiltz, and by Canon Susan Hill, who has a special ministry for reconciliation from Coventry Cathedral. Early in WWII, Coventry Cathedral was destroyed by bombing. Immediately after the end of the, the Dean of the cathedral began by writing letters of reconciliation to two hundred churches in Europe - and received only one reply. But from that seed, a ministry of peace and reconciliation began.

Thank you for this opportunity to be part of the Synod. I was rewarded and educated by it.

Henry Troup, Alternate Synod Rep

Very Merry Christmas Bazaar



Christ Church Ashton's "Very Merry Christmas" Bazaar and Café Noel was a wonderful success. People were able to purchase cookies, baking, knitting, jewelry and boutique items, as well as precious treasures at the white elephant table. There was a red and white Christmas table full of decorations and one-of-a-kind gifts for Christmas. Christmas baskets were raffled off and once you were finished shopping you could stop at the free will offering "Café Noel" and have a bowl of either chicken noodle, hamburger or vegetable soup along with fresh bread and buns as well as a muffin, coffee or tea served to you whilst enjoying the Christmas music and laughter in the air.

The bazaar was truly a parish event, with not only June Warner and the organizing committee having a fantastic time planning and executing this fundraiser for the church; but also the many parishioners offering their time for set up and take down of the bazaar, but also manning the many tables. Many hands made for an enjoyable time.

We are so pleased to say that this fundraising event raised over \$2300 for Christ Church!

God Has Got You Covered

On behalf of the God Has Got You Covered gently used clothing and jewelry Shoppe we would like to thank everyone in the Parish for their donations and support throughout 2017.

Saturday, December 9 will be our last day for this year and we will resume again for business on Saturday, January 13, 2018. The Shoppe will be open in 2018 on the second and last Saturday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. except for the month of August and on December 29th.

We also have homemade fresh and frozen pies, loaves, cookies, muffins, scones etc. for purchase on the days we are open. If you haven't visited the Shoppe as yet, please come in and see what we have to offer. You may be amazed!

Thank you for helping your church help others.

Coming Up...

Community Gathering Place will conduct a rousing Christmas Music/Singing Event on **December 19**, to go along with all the usual coffee/tea, breakfast and tasty goodies. Doors are open at the Ashton United Church, Tuesdays 8 AM-Noon

Church Outside The Walls Advent Program is being run on Monday evenings at The Royal Oak (329 March Rd, Kanata) at 7:00 p.m. Join for conversation on **Mondays December 11 and 18** on the topics of Humility and Joy. Please contact Rev. Kerri (priest@ccashton.org) if you wish to receive the articles and questions for discussion in advance (which is helpful!)

Bishop John and Confirmations On **January 7th**, Bishop John is celebrating at St Paul's, Kanata at **10:00 a.m.** Two of our young parishioners, Erin Lyons and Lauren Vaughn will be Confirmed alongside four other youth. In support of Erin and Lauren, you are encouraged to join us at St Paul's. Christ Church will hold Morning Prayer at 8:00 a.m. Please note, Holy Eucharist will not be held as usual at 9:30 a.m. on January 7th. This is a unique celebration and we hope you'll join us!

