



ST. JAMES AND L'ARCHE STRATFORD

As many of you know, one of the passions in my life is the L'Arche Stratford community. The ties between St. James and L'Arche run deep and strong. Next year, 2023, will mark the 50th anniversary of L'Arche in Stratford. We are one of the oldest L'Arche communities in the world and St. James has played a major role in the life and growth of the community over those years.

I first got to know L'Arche when I began my ministry here at St. James in 2001. I remember joining in Louise McColl's Bible Study sessions together with L'Arche core members Dalton Heard and Roland Rhodes. I soon became aware of Dalton's deep faith and looked forward to him leading our prayers at the end of each session, and of Roland's curious and inquiring mind. At the end of our Sunday services, Neil Senior would often come forward and play the piano – he was a wonderful musician.

At the heart of L'Arche's values is the belief that God blesses each and every one of us with gifts, and part of L'Arche's mission is to walk with each member of the community - core members and assistants and leaders - to celebrate and grow in those gifts. Twenty years ago, Dalton and Roland and Neil introduced me to the mission of L'Arche and touched my heart in a special way.

Over this past while that I have been serving as your interim priest, I have especially enjoyed leading worship together with Sean Arnold, one of our excellent servers and a member of the L'Arche community. I was especially grateful to Sean for his presence on the Sunday following the death of Her Late Majesty the Queen; he really helped me get through that difficult service. Thank you, Sean!

Over the years, many members of the St. James congregation have been involved in the leadership of the L'Arche community. When I looked over a list of past board members and presidents recently, I recognized at least fourteen St. James folk who have filled those roles, as well as one Community Leader! There may well have been more who served before my time. All of them have played a central role in the development and growth of the L'Arche Stratford community and everyone at L'Arche is grateful to them. L'Arche Stratford has grown a great deal since its early days, and continues to do so. Twenty-three core members now call it home, either living in one of our four homes or in Supported Independent Living, and we provide support to three more individuals through the government's Passport program.

We continue to work towards making the property at 426 Britannia a new heart of our community. Our vision for the property includes eight residential suites (providing much-

needed housing), space to hold activities for the L'Arche core members and others from the wider community, and a new home for our offices (thereby saving on rental expenditures.)

The pandemic has certainly had an impact on the Britannia project. Needless to say, the focus of our leadership team had to switch to keeping everyone in the community safe. As with all charities, our fundraising took a hit. And the cost of building supplies and services rose considerably. Some have described it as "the perfect storm". Earlier this year, the L'Arche Board struck a task force to examine the feasibility of the project and to explore our options for developing the site. I am glad to report that their findings are exciting and encouraging as we gradually move forward in bringing our vision to reality. I have been part of L'Arche's board of directors for nearly ten years now, the past six serving as the board chair. Over and over again, I have seen God's hand working directly in the life of the community. Often it has been through the love, joy and healing that comes through hanging out with core members. And on several occasions, I have seen God provide for us in very real ways, turning what at first seems to be an impossible situation into a situation of abundance.

At L'Arche, we can see the gospel of Jesus Christ in action. Thanks be to God!

*Respectfully submitted by Elaine Clark-Siberry,
Interim Priest-in-Charge*

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION



I'll just ask you to imagine the first time you heard about meditation. What did you feel when you heard about it? Did you feel an immediate attraction; did you feel 'oh, this is what I've been waiting for'? Or was it something more vague or something less clear but there was still some interest, some fascination maybe? And then remember the first time you tried to meditate, and maybe you thought that it's going to be very easy and you're going to be enlightened within three or four days. And then you discovered that this is going to be a journey. And taking the first step is the most important thing, but we continue to take that first step all the way.

(The Brick Wall of the Ego, by Laurence Freeman OSB)

If you are interested in taking that first step, please join one or both of the following groups of meditators here at St. James. We meet on Wednesday afternoons at 4:30 and on Saturday mornings at 10:30 at the back of the Church. For further information, please contact Doug Ayres (519-273-0494) or Nancy McCallum (519-273-0297).

CLARIFICATION ON THE NEW CLERGY LICENSES FROM THE TERRITORIAL ARCHDEACON

The Ven. Megan Collings-Moore
Northern Territorial Archdeacon, Diocese of Huron

You may have noticed something unusual in the announcements from the diocese about the appointment of the Rev. Canon Rob Lemon as well as Allie McDougall. Both have been licensed to two congregations! Rob will be licensed to St. James and St. Paul's, and Allie (who started her ministry at the end of August) is licensed to St. Paul's and St. James. What does this mean?

Perhaps best to start with what it does NOT mean! This is **not** an attempt by the diocese to force an amalgamation, and there is **no** joint financial arrangement. St. James is fully responsible for the stipend and housing costs for Rob and St. Paul's is fully responsible for Allie's stipend and housing.

There are two reasons that they are licensed to both congregations. First of all, Allie is brand new, having just graduated from Huron University College with her M.Div. She will be deaconed on October 23 and ordained priest in the new year. She is an assistant curate under the supervision of Rob. To allow for that to take place, both of them need to be licensed to both parishes.

But beyond that, Anglicans here have come to understand ourselves as part of a Stratford Anglican community that happens to attend three different parishes. Increasingly we work together in the wider community, e.g. through SALT, or the Stratford Missional Forum. And yet sometimes clergy can act as "lone wolves", focussing on our own individual parish. This joint licensing means that Rob and Allie will have to take a collaborative approach and will need to work together as a team. That will benefit all of us Stratford Anglicans!

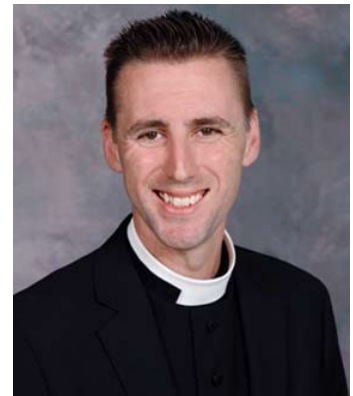
While Rob will primarily do ministry with St. James' and Allie with St. Paul's, they will be a team. Sometimes Allie will lead worship at St. James and Rob will be at St. Paul's. I hope that they will discover other ways of working together to offer joint programming or create new ways/times for worship. The idea is not to diminish the activities of each congregation but to increase what might be possible. Allie's job description includes a focus on outreach in Stratford as a whole so I hope this will create ministry possibilities for all Stratford Anglicans.

This is a new approach to parish ministry which Bishop Todd has enthusiastically endorsed. We will be assessing as it goes forward, looking for feedback as it unfolds.

If you have any questions or concerns, I am happy to chat. You can reach me at megancollingsmoore@diohuron.org or 519-933-7132.

THE APPOINTMENT OF OUR NEW RECTOR: A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION AND A CALL TO SERVICE

When our rector-elect, the Rev. Canon Rob Lemon, announced to his parishioners a couple of weeks ago that he would be leaving St Mark's By-The-Lake, Tecumseh, to take up an appointment at St. James, Stratford, he was quick to assure his audience that he was not leaving because he was in any way unhappy with his position as rector of St Mark's; indeed, Rob emphasized how much he and his family have enjoyed their years in the parish and how difficult it is going to be for all of them to move away from the friends they have made there. As heartfelt as they obviously were, such sentiments are pretty much the stuff of which these kinds of announcements are usually made. That was hardly the case with what followed, however, when Rob went on to state that he considered his appointment to St. James to be "absolutely 100% God's call". Although I would ordinarily respond to "absolutely 100%" as hyperbole, overstatement was by no means the response that registered with me when Rob uttered this phrase. What I heard instead was a man declaring both a deep faith in a calling that he believes to have come from God and a strong sense of confidence in his ability to respond to that calling.



As much joy and hope as such a declaration should bring us as a parish, the wardens are eager to impress upon the congregation how essential it is that we recognize from the outset that Rob alone is not going to be in a position to resolve all the challenges that St. James will be facing in the years that lie immediately ahead of us. Indeed, this was something that the Selection Committee sought to impress upon him when Rob was asked the following question during his interview: "***We are not looking for a saviour but for a leader who will be able to help our congregation save a parish that we all love***". As our leader, how would you go about supporting the parish in addressing three of its current priorities: a congregation that is declining as opposed to growing; a congregation that has no youth/young family component whatsoever; and a congregation that is facing both short term and long-term financial challenges?"

For the present, the preamble to this question is more important than the question's component parts or Rob's responses to them. I say this because, as the prefatory remark suggests, it is not Rob, but the members of the parish under Rob's leadership, who are being called by God to shape whatever it is that God has in store for St. James in the next few years. It is time, in other words, for each of us to begin reflecting prayerfully on the role to which God is calling us both individually and collectively to deal with such pressing challenges as the age and size of our congregation, the financial pressures we will be under to raise sufficient funds to be able to meet our operating costs and the construction costs that will be required to repair the roof and tower, and our need to "grow" our congregation by attracting new people into our midst. As daunting as these challenges will almost certainly prove to be, it is my belief that, with God's help, Rob is going to afford us the leadership we shall require to take on these challenges bravely, faithfully, and probably even more effortlessly than even the most optimistic among us

may be inclined to expect. This is a gut instinct and not a promise, but it is a very strong instinct of the type in which I have learned to trust.

Indeed, as I write this, I cannot help but be reminded of lines from the last of the narratives constituting Alfred, Lord Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, a text that I used to love to teach. As he is lying on the battlefield surrounded by his dead knights and expecting to die himself, King Arthur says to Sir Bedivere,

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfills himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

No doubt these lines come to mind because we, like Sir Bedivere, find ourselves at a time of transition. St. James has had a good "custom", indeed probably a series of good customs in its long history as a parish. Much of that custom will remain in the liturgy we shall continue to use at St. James, even if we were to begin to experiment occasionally with ways of making our worship more accessible and inclusive for people who are unfamiliar with the way Anglicans do things on a Sunday morning. That said, the proverbial Writing on the Wall suggests that we will survive as a parish only if we are prepared to yield to whatever the "new custom" is that God seems to have in store for us, a custom that, as Tennyson suggests, will allow God to "fulfill" God's self in new ways at St. James and that will promote renewal, revitalization, and expansion in the parish.

At this stage we can have no idea what this new custom may look like, other than that it seems meant to take us, more often than has perhaps been the case in the past, outside the confines of our church buildings and into a more intimate relationship with the other Anglican parishes in Stratford and with the wider Stratford community. It is noteworthy in this regard that Bishop Todd has appointed Rob as the rector of both St. James and St. Paul's, and Allie McDougall, the new curate at St. Paul's, as the Assistant Curate of both St. Paul's and St. James. Just what these cross-appointments will mean for us in practical terms has yet to be spelled out, although it is probably safe to speculate that we are going to be invited to enter eventually into a broader program of Outreach and a deeper exploration of Ecumenism within both the spiritual and the secular spheres. We shall have to wait and see how things unfold over the course of the next few months. What I am prepared to say at the moment, however, is that having now met Allie McDougall, I have every confidence that she and our new rector are going to make a very dynamic duo indeed, a leadership team who, if given a chance, could well take St. James and St. Paul's on spiritual Star Trek journeys to places that neither parish has ever gone before!

Submitted by James Noble, on behalf of the Wardens

LOOKING FOR SUNDAY DRIVERS



We are currently looking for volunteers who would be willing to pick up a parishioner who requires a ride to church every other Sunday. If we had enough drivers, a schedule could be made so that the commitment could possibly be once every four to eight weeks. If you are interested, please contact Nancy McCallum (519-273-0297).

LORNE'S RETIREMENT SUNDAY

A picture paints a thousand words ...



A MUSICAL NOTE FROM ST. JAMES CHOIR

Mark Allwood

The choir is back and should have had its first Thursday evening rehearsal by the time you read this. As you may know, we were all delighted to recently welcome our new Music Director, Stéphane Potvin. His vast experience in matters choral, accomplished keyboard work and genuine good humour are already much appreciated. Some in the choir have the double pleasure of singing with Stéphane as members of the Stratford Concert Choir. I refer you to their website for an intriguing season of choral music coming up.

The last two and a half years were very trying for many - tragic for some. And to be honest, it was a shock to lose Susan Nagtegaal in the middle of the pandemic stress. Her many years of service will always be fondly remembered. Last Monday during Queen Elizabeth's funeral it was poignant to reminisce about a rather glorious celebration Susan led us through for the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

While there is an abiding sense of gratitude for what we have gradually been able to add musically to services recently, there is yet a lingering sense of some loss in the music ministry. Two and a half years have taken their toll on the fabric of the choir. No surprise, we are reduced in numbers, particularly in the tenor and bass sections. Peter McColl has found it necessary to retire from his very long and loyal service to the choir. We all wish him well and miss him - especially his low D's!

If you have ever had any thought about singing in a church choir, whether or not you have any experience, please get in touch with Stéphane or talk to a choir member. Singing hymns, whether old or new, amongst a group of like-minded individuals can produce an unique deepening of one's faith as well as being a pretty fine stress reliever. And, a highly effective antidote to the commercialization of Christmas and Easter is preparing music of those seasons for weeks or months in advance. Proficiency in reading music has never been a prerequisite (nobody asks ... that's how I got in!). Please consider this request.

GET NOISY!!



NOTES FROM THE ST. JAMES GARDEN GROUP

Two years ago, when we began the restoration of the beloved South Garden, we did not anticipate the subsequent pandemic and all the challenges that would follow. When we proposed planting one of the barrel planters in the colours of the Platinum Jubilee in spring, we did not anticipate the poignancy of the act in light of the subsequent death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. When we envisioned the restored garden as a sanctuary to serve the wider community, we did not anticipate the myriad interpretations of the word sanctuary in the lives of a very divergent population.

Every week, it seems, we gardeners have encounters with members of the community who express their deep appreciation of the gardens at St. James. Some are neighbours from the William Street apartments; some are parents coming and going to swimming lessons throughout the summer; some are joggers and walkers and dog walkers pausing to tie a shoe, untangle a leash, or catch their breath on one of the benches. Some have come to hear the bells; some are waiting for the bus after visiting the food bank. Some are parishioners coming and going from worship, meditation, meetings and duties. Some are tourists, politely inquiring about the age of the church and its history. For all, the gardens seem to invite them to pause and share words of admiration and encouragement. And after each conversation, no matter how brief or long, we share the satisfaction that our efforts (and resulting sore muscles) are worth it.



We also have regular visitors who struggle with addictions and afflictions in varying forms and for whom the gardens, too, are a sanctuary. Some come to smoke and drink; some are riding out their highs or lows on the south steps, heads resting on folded arms across their knees. Sometimes our transient population visits in the night or early morning hours. These visitors don't offer us accolades; they don't tell us what a good job we're doing, but in some ways, perhaps the gardens serve them most of all. Who knows why they come? But they do. Every week. Sometimes every day. Perhaps the answer can be found in the words of poet Edwin Curran who wrote that "Flowers are the music of the ground from earth's lips spoken without sound." Perhaps our gardens are the soundless music that soothes and calms, a visual soundtrack to accompany the complicated narrative of a troubled life. Regardless, their presence in the outdoor sanctuary, as we go about the task of tending the gardens, is a humbling reminder of the words of Matthew 25:40 – "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."



The Garden Group meets on Tuesday mornings to care for the gardens at the same time as the Food Bank operates. We bear quiet witness to the increasing number of people who come and go throughout the morning. I often wonder if what we do as gardeners is a frivolous indulgence and expense juxtaposed against the demands on the food bank. And then, I am reminded of the Japanese proverb: "Bread for one yen, for the other, white hyacinths". We are a community that can feed the body as well as the soul.

As the autumnal equinox approaches, we look back over the challenges of this past season: drought, squirrels and rabbits. All three did their best to set back the new plantings in the South Garden, but through the diligent and persistent hard work of our team of volunteers, we have triumphed. Already the garden is filling in, and we look forward to increased abundance next year. Spurred on by our success,

we gave the Spencer Garden a much needed overhaul, too. Encouraged by our most successful plant sale ever this past May, we are looking forward to a repeat performance next year. Already we have amassed about 300 plants (we had over 400 in the sale this year) to winter over. Looking ahead to the coming weeks, we have hundreds of bulbs to plant in the various gardens, an investment in the hope of spring that will follow the necessary winter ahead. We think it's worth the effort to make the grounds the most beautiful sanctuary that we can. Experience teaches us that a lot of people are counting on it.

The 19th century botanist Edward Curran wrote that "If, amid the cataclysms of anguish that clamour round us everywhere nowadays, you declare that all this babble about beauty and flowers is a vain impertinence, then I must tell you that you err, and that your perspectives are false. Mortal dooms and dynasties are brief things, but beauty is indestructible and eternal, if its tabernacle be only in a petal that is shed tomorrow." In these troubling and challenging times in which we live, there is still beauty to be found around us, and it is within our power to make it even more so.

*Respectfully submitted by John Hindley,
St. James Garden Group*

**Beauty Surrounds Us.
But Usually We Need To Be Walking In A Garden To Know It.**

A NOTE FROM THE BELFRY

from Peter Ryde

For five consecutive years Doug Roth and Stephanie Shore hosted a neighbourhood party on the lawns of their home at the corner of Mornington & Caledonia, just across the street from St. James' Church – and the Bell Tower! At their invitation the Bells of St. James has had the fun of providing the bells half of the “Bubbles & Bells” party with a half-hour of light chime music. August of 2019 marked the 5th consecutive evening of festivities. Unfortunately for Doug & Stephanie (and the rest of us!), the Covid pandemic quashed the prospects of another party for two long years; but it's now 2022, and Bubbles & Bells was again possible!

Thank you, Doug & Stephanie, for putting so much time & effort into what was a terrific evening with the neighbours, and many thanks for including our wonderful Bells of St. James and giving us the opportunity to showcase such a great instrument to its fans!



September 2022

The view across the road. Looks like a party!

Bubbles & Bells VI

Chime Concert

Thursday, August 18, 2022 7:00 p.m.

*Bells of St. James”

Here Comes the Sun (for Sophie)

Suite from “The Inner Light”

Let's Go Fly a Kite

Part of Your World

Cornell Changes (a.k.a. “The Jennie McGraw Rag”)

Georgia On My Mind

Both Sides Now

Over The Rainbow

Harrison

Chattaway

Sherman Bros.

Menken & Ashman

Carmichael

Mitchell

Arlen & Harburg

“The Day Thou Gavest”

MIGHT YOU HELP WELCOME A SYRIAN FAMILY TO CANADA?

On Sunday, October 2nd at the 10:30 service, the SALT (Stratford Anglican Lutheran Team) presented an update on their most recent activity. Rev. Canon Tom Patterson invited parishioner, Carol MacDougall, to speak on behalf of the team. Carol's talk included the following message, after which Roua Alta'eh spoke.

"My name is Carol MacDougall, and I have had the privilege of assisting the Alta'eh family with health matters since they arrived in Canada in 2016. Now Riad's brother's family is coming to Stratford in the near future. It will mean a lot to the Alta'ehs to have some of their extended family right in their same town!! But we urgently need volunteers to assist with the various aspects of settling Rifaat, Intissar and their 6 children into their new home. You can contribute whatever time you are able—we share the work amongst the group -- "Many hands make light work". I can tell you that it is an immensely fulfilling experience, the new family becomes like family to you. You watch them grow and establish themselves. You also come to know others in the congregations that are part of the volunteer group. It will be much easier this time, as Alia, Riad and the children can help with translation and support. I sincerely hope you will consider signing up to assist in some capacity. We are also accepting financial donations, as there is a 6th child since the original fundraising was conducted, and rents are very high right now. Perhaps you have some skills that would be useful. Some examples of areas needing volunteers include the following:-

- Housing
- Banking (including teaching our currency)
- Health (family doctor, specialists as needed, obtaining OHIP number, vaccinations, etc.)
- Dental (dentist and/or Healthy Smiles application for children)
- Pharmacy
- Optometrist
- Furnishings for the home
- Grocery shopping
- Car/Transportation (e.g. bus routes)
- Driving License (including driving lessons if needed)"

Roua Alta'eh kindly provided her talk for insertion in this edition of The Parishioner and it follows in her own words.

"First I just want to say thank you to all the church volunteers because you have helped us settle really well in Canada!

Hello, my name is Roua. I am here to talk about how well we have settled in Canada. It has been six years now. Me and my family have our citizenship. My dad is still working, my sister started working awhile ago and my brother started working last summer. My mom and dad have their driving licences and they can drive great. My dad is done taking

his English classes and he is doing great but mum is still doing English classes and she is also doing great. My brother and I are doing house league – we all love soccer, it is an amazing sport. My older sister used to play it but not anymore. She still loves it. We all used to do swimming lessons but now it is just me and my younger siblings. Next year I will go on to the 6th level. My sister will be in the 4th. My brother will be an alligator. I got to skip a level because I was so good. We are all doing amazing in school and we love it. One thing I love doing is art. It is my favourite and the thing I like most about art is drawing because it is so calming to do and it is so fun. I just love it.”

+++++

HONOURING HER LATE MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

A Message from Peter Ryde:



It is hard to believe that Queen Elizabeth II, the only reigning monarch in my entire lifetime, has died. Andrea McCrady, the Dominion Carillonneur in Ottawa, passed on the official protocol for bells in such events to me and the Bells of St. James, in honour of the Queen's passing, is adhering to them. Last Friday at 12 noon we played a somber version of "God Save The Queen" for the last time and tolled the #2 bell 96 times. Fittingly, this bell was dedicated to the memory of Queen Victoria in 1909 (and was refurbished by the Gladding family in

2010). The bells are now silent until the funeral on Monday, September 19th. The tower clock continues to ring the hour with the clock strike hammer muffled and the Westminster Quarters are silent.

A Commemorative Service:

Following the funeral for Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, a Commemorative Service was held at St. James on Sunday afternoon, October 2, 2022. An invitation was extended to the wider community of Stratford and included contributions from St. James, St. Paul's and St. Stephen's Anglican churches as well as from Zion Lutheran Church.



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