

ANGLICAN
DIOCESE
MONTREAL

ANGLICAN MONTREAL



Re-opening
*Is your church
ready? page 5*

Photo Credit: Lightstock

Fall 2020 • A section of the *Anglican Journal*

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A photograph of a protest. In the center, a person holds a sign that reads "BLACK LIVES MATTER" in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters on a white background. The sign is mounted on a wooden post. The background is a blurred crowd of people and a brick building.

Expressions of Raw Anger, Deep Shame and Fresh Resolve
*institutional racism...callous brutality...feeling hunted...“The Talk”...wrongly
accused...internalized beauty standards...micro aggressions...white privilege...
apathy...awakening GenZ ...solidarity...Black Lives Matter...on pages 6-9*

Photo credit: James Eades, Unsplash

Bishop's Message



In the last six months we have witnessed so much change and upheaval around the world. It's not only the pandemic which has brought this unrest. We continue to experience climate change and its consequences, financial and political instability near and far, uncertainty about the shape and future of our society, and the need to address systemic injustice, particularly anti-black racism.

Even those of us who know that racism is wrong sometimes struggle with our own ability to accept and love others. And while Black Lives Matter is our current focus, many of us have grown up with racism and religious prejudice that we were not even aware of or that have simply felt normal. This contributes to what is known as 'systemic' injustice. I encourage you to read the personal reflections on BLM found on pages 6 – 9 of this issue.

We have a wonderful opportunity as we prepare to reopen our church buildings, and as we continue to reach out in online services. We have a chance to make some changes, to search our hearts and to prepare for a new chapter in our ministry and mission.

I invite us to do some spiritual preparation by searching our hearts and the legacy of unexamined assumptions and judgements, and by deciding to change our ways. John the Baptist told his hearers: "Change your life. God's kingdom is here" (Matthew 3:2 MSG).

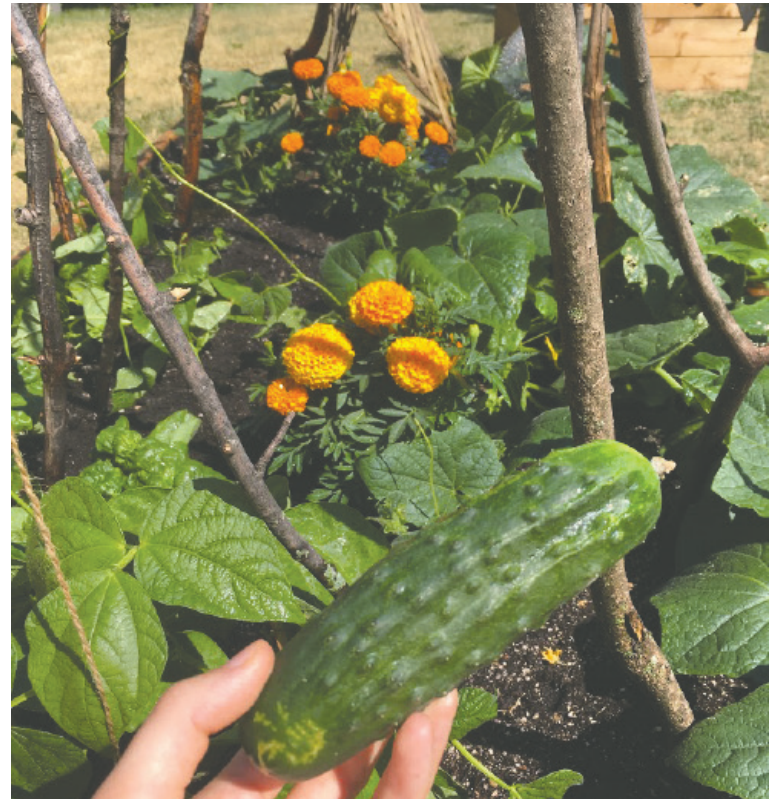
We might want to frame this self-examination of our hearts and our ministry around the Marks of Mission. Let's be ruthless in our reflection and in our willingness to change our ways as we sense that God's Spirit is pointing out something we need to repent of.

Here are some questions that ought to be part of our reflection:

- How do we reopen our churches (and continue online) so that we reach new people and let them know that they are welcome? (And not just the people who are like us!) How do we teach them to recognize God's kingdom here and now? (*Mark of Mission 1: Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom*).
- How do we share our faith with newcomers? Are we committed to supporting, praying for and encouraging them? (2: *Teach, baptize, and nurture new believers*).
- How are we loving our neighbour as ourselves? What if it was you in that situation? (3: *Respond to human need by loving service*).
- Are we willing to 'do' justice as much and as fully as we can—beginning with ourselves and our own lives as disciples of Jesus? By our own actions and how we treat each other; by ambitiously standing with the powerless and the oppressed and denouncing systemic racism; by praying about how we need to change 'the way we have always done' something or the attitudes that we have always harboured; by searching our hearts for hardness against another? (4: *Seek to transform unjust structures of society, challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation*).
- Where is our selfishness and ease giving us excuses for how we treat creation and waste its resources? How can we change so that we contribute to a healthy planet? What can we do that is ambitious, authentic and holy? (5: *Strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth*).

Let this be a fruitful season in our church as we move into the autumn and into life in God's Kingdom!

+ Mary



Community Garden Receives Grants

JIM PRATT

The Rev'd James Pratt is incumbent of St Philip's Church and Regional Dean of Western Montreal

For the past several years, a few volunteers had been tending flower beds around St Philip's church and hall, and one person had taken upon herself to create a small patch of herbs and vegetables. In the spring of 2019, in response to a suggestion by a neighbour, St Philip's decided to look at how we could use our land, the largest parcel of privately-owned, undeveloped land in Montreal West, for mission to the community. Although Montreal-West is an affluent community, just across the railroad tracks lies the Westhaven sector of NDG, a pocket of poverty and a food desert, where residents do not have easy access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The church land has a sunny, southern exposure, and would be a great place to grow fresh food.

We started talking with Incredible Edibles, a group within Transition NDG, which has constructed and sponsors a number of community garden boxes in NDG. They connected us to a professor at Concordia University, who teaches a class on Food and Sustainability. A team of five students from the class met with us, and as a class project, designed a plan to cre-

ate a community garden. They constructed one raised garden bed, and volunteers planted it with radishes, lettuce, bokchoy and mustard greens that produced a fall harvest.

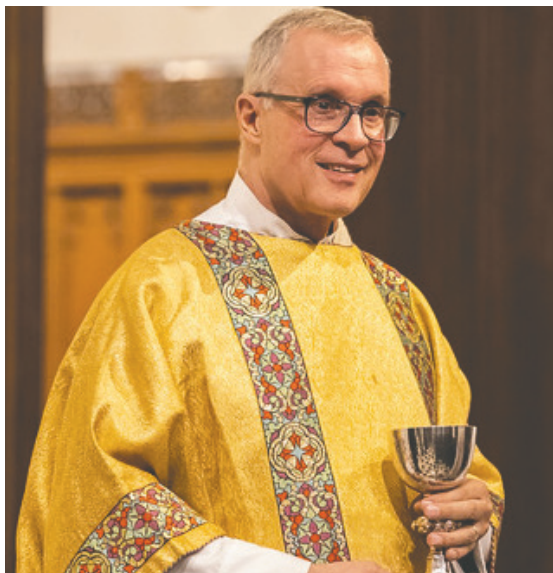
In the fall, Incredible Edibles connected us to a local student, Lumi Kirk, who was studying for a certification in permaculture. (Permaculture is a consciously designed landscape for agriculture which emphasizes diversity and sustainability, and harmonious integration of nature with human activity.) She agreed to expand the Concordia students' rough plan, to create a permaculture landscape for the whole of the property, incorporating fruit trees, berry bushes, an herb garden, pollinator gardens, and windbreaks. The plan also includes some open space that can be used for picnics, St Philip's annual outdoor service, and outdoor weddings.

The Anglican Foundation of Canada's 2020 call for proposals invited parishes to submit projects addressing climate change. We felt our plan - to plant 20 or so fruit trees, transforming what is a sterile lawn into a leafy expanse, to create shade, reduce the urban heat island, and sequester carbon - was a good match. We submitted our proposal, and in May received a grant of \$2500.

Planting began with two

continued on page 5

Digital Ordinations this Summer



The Rev'd Tyson Rosberg, (above left, with friend, photo by Tim Smart) was ordained on Saturday, July 25, 2020 at the church of St James the Apostle and Martyr in Stanbridge East. The Rev'd Geert Jan Boudewijnse (above right, photo by Janet Best) was ordained on Thursday, August 6, 2020 at the Church of St John the Baptist, Pointe Claire. Pictures and video are online at montreal.anglican.ca/latest-news.

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The Evolution of Ethnic Diversity in the Montreal Church

STANLEY BROOKS

The Rev'd Stanley Brooks is a retired priest of the Diocese and serves as the assistant at St Thomas, NDG

On Sunday, 16 February, 2020, I had the privilege of giving the Black History address at St. Thomas Anglican Church NDG. This allowed me to reflect on the wide-ranging social and economic progress that has been made by African Americans and Black people from the Caribbean since the 1950's, as well as to recognize how much more work there is to be done.

Black religious experiences have consistently evolved in an environment dominated by racism. This statement is as true of Canada as it is of the United States. When dealing with the history of race relations in North America, there is a tendency to ignore our awful past as though it does not exist. However, the social attitudes and behaviors of white North American society cannot be ignored.

Even worse, we often disregard and downplay the extent to which the Church has been implicated. The fact is that reli-

gion has played a large part in the life of Black people in their history of unbelonging.

The term ethnicity is used in this article to encompass both cultural and physical aspects of difference between people. The influence of ethnicity on our thinking or our interaction with other people is often subconscious. It is particularly difficult for majority ethnicities to imagine how it feels to be in a minority. Christians need to awaken their consciences in this area, and reflect on their thoughts, words and actions.

Rather than denying that we often stereotype people on the basis of ethnicity, or subtly seek to disassociate ourselves from people of other ethnicities, we need to take positive and practical steps to appreciate the wonderful unity that is the one body of Christ.

Undeniably, racism is widespread in the Anglican Diocese of Montreal in the early 1900's. This was a period when people were often stereotyped on the basis of skin colour and occupation, resulting in subtle and not so subtle forms of social distanc-

ing and disassociation. Consequently, poor working-class Blacks in Montreal who were employed in factories and as porters on the railway were not considered good enough to be welcomed into the White downtown Anglican churches. This accounts for the founding of Union United Church in Montreal, Canada's oldest Black congregation.

"The fact is that religion has played a large part in the life of Black people in their history of unbelonging."

This worshipping community was founded in 1907 by several members of Montreal's Black community who were banned from entering all-White churches. Union United Church emerged as a small congregation in the evolving Black community in Montreal providing a welcoming haven in a city where too often race defined privilege, social advance and success.

Four decades following the founding of Union United Church, racial attitudes in the Montreal Anglican Church

toward immigrants from the Caribbean had scarcely changed. Research conducted by Ms Margot Blackman, (to whom credit is given for sharing her research), reveals that in the 1950's, many educated middle-class Barbadian young women were recruited to work in Canada as domestics.

Many of these women who were assigned to Westmount homes attended St. Matthias Church and were made to feel comfortable there. A very close relationship eventually developed between the Clergy at St. Mathias and the Barbadian community in Montreal.

In 1970 when Barbados House was founded and dedicated primarily to the organizing, promoting and encouraging the Educational, Economic, Social and Cultural activities of Barbadians living in Montreal and surrounding areas, the Rector of St. Matthias, Arch-deacon Ian Doige, welcomed Barbados House Montreal and allowed the members to use its hall for meetings and activities.

Following the Immigration Act of 1962 and the 1967 reforms, when about 64,000 West

Indians came to Canada, the spatial distribution of migrants from the Caribbean changed significantly. Black Anglicans from the Caribbean now constitute one of the largest non-European ethnic groups in Canada. Those migrants settling in Montreal concentrated mainly in the Côte des Neiges District, Notre Dame de Grace, and Ville LaSalle.

By the mid-70's, pockets of Anglicans from the Caribbean had diffused to most of the churches in the city. Given the white, Anglo-Saxon culture prevailing in the Montreal Anglican Church at that time, a relevant question is how did the Montreal Church respond to the unavoidable growth of ethnic diversity and cultural differences in worship and expectations these migrants brought to the Church?

Ms Blackman's interviews of some of the early worshippers from the Caribbean suggest that there was a slow movement toward integration and greater inclusiveness within the life of the churches themselves. This process was

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Planting a Seed - Announcing the Launch of The Stewardship of the Environment Committee's Short Film

RICHARD MATTHEWS

Richard Matthews is the Chair of the diocesan Stewardship of the Environment Committee.

The Stewardship of the Environment Committee (SEC) in the Anglican Diocese of Montreal is pleased to announce the launch of its short film *The Seed*. This six-and-a-half-minute film takes us on an allegorical journey through a fallen world. The film reflects the serious reality of the climate crisis and environmental degradation without succumbing to futility or despair.

This simple yet authentic parable was produced by NorthSky Films and directed by Sundance Ignite Fellow, Aziz Zoromba, who

has produced and directed award-winning films that have screened at TIFF, SXSW, IDFA, Festival du Nouveau Cinema, RIDM, and more. *The Seed* was narrated by voiceover artists Ruth Capri and Lileina Joy, whose commercial work was recently nominated for an Emmy. The film's editor and co-producer, Ashley Gilmour, was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award and is a fellow of the Doc Accelerator Program at Hot Docs, as well as an upcoming resident at the Canadian Film Centre. The colourist and co-producer, Max Machado, was the recipient of the Jean-François Bourassa Memorial Award and was nominated for a Canadian Society of Cinematographers Award. The writer,

Alexander MacKenzie, has likewise worked on award-winning narrative films, documentaries, and music videos. Richard Matthews is the film's executive producer, and he is a sustainability advocate and the chair of the SEC. He collaborated on the film *The Search* for Greta Thunberg.

The making of *The Seed* has not been without challenges. After months of consultations, developing the concept, writing and re-writing the script, the coronavirus hit - halting production and forcing us to reimagine the film. However, we believe these difficulties fostered creativity and benefited the film.

We also believe that this film is particularly relevant today,

not despite the pandemic but because of it. As Primate Linda Nichols said, we "absolutely" should continue to advocate for climate action in the era of COVID-19. She went on to say that our response to this virus has revealed that we can reduce climate change causing greenhouse gas emissions. Our film is buoyed by the growing realization that the coronavirus can be an inflection point and perhaps even help to augur a much-needed paradigm shift.

This film is a call to action and a reflection of the fact that faith communities are increasingly assuming leadership roles. Recently, the Church of England committed to net zero carbon emissions and Canadian Anglicans passed a resolution that called for climate action from both the church and government. Anglican churches in the Canadian north are on the front lines of the fight against climate change as their way of life is being destroyed by rising temperatures. As home to the world's largest ever climate march, this crisis also resonates with people in Montreal.

Faith groups have both a moral responsibility and an opportunity to be relevant in an increasingly secular world. As explained by the Interreligious Eco-Justice Network, "In an age of growing cynicism about the role of religion in our society, the credibility of our faith communities as moral agents may increasingly rest on our collective response to the unfolding climate crisis."

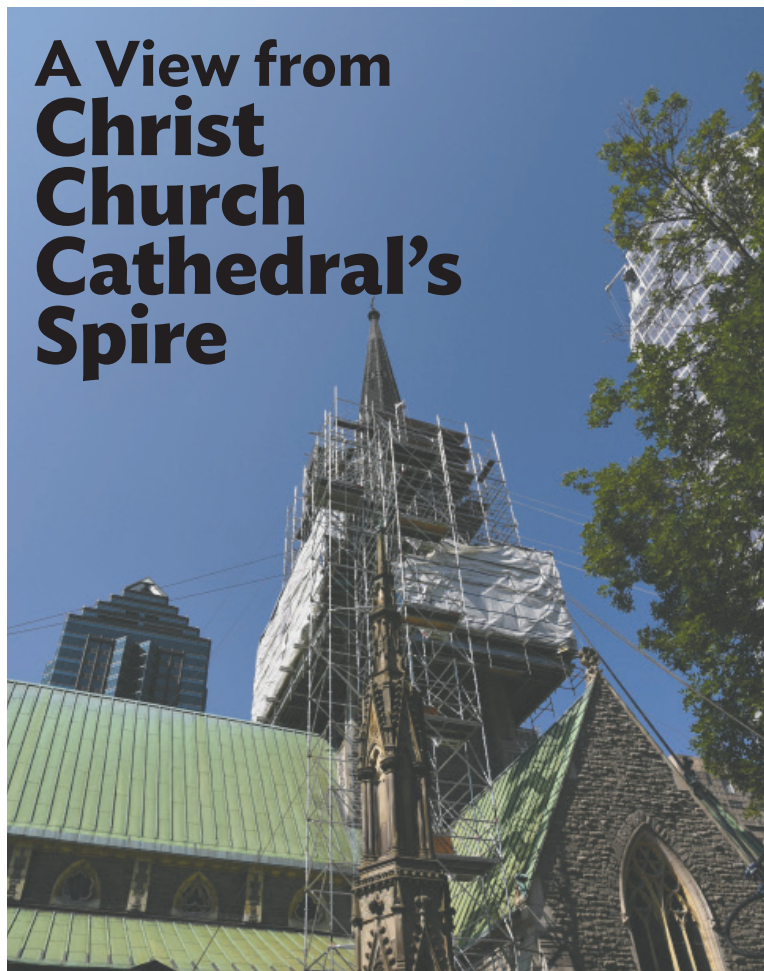
As its ethical and spiritual implications become more obvious, climate change is increasingly taking its place as a central concern of communities of faith.

It is our hope that the accessible narrative in our film will resonate with a broad swath of people, who share a common interest in environmental stewardship. We made this film to appeal to people of faith and secular society because we believe that in a world rife with divisions the love of creation can bring us all together. We also made this film in support of environmental and climate justice which is intimately connected to a host of social justice issues including LGBTQ+ rights, Indigenous rights and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Our film is a call to protect biodiversity and human civilization from the ravages of climate change and environmental degradation. We know what must be done, now we must do it. The urgency of these crises calls us to radically reduce greenhouse gas emissions. However, the window of opportunity to act is closing, so the urgency of this situation cannot be overstated.

We do not have the time to incrementally address the crisis nor is individual action enough on its own. As Primate Nicholls said, we must do more than advocate for lifestyle changes. She also calls us to reflect on market idolatry, saying "we failed to notice when that stewardship had been subverted by economic forces, human greed and an attitude of complacency. We answered God's very first call to us with neglect, disregard and denial". As explained in a statement by the World Council of Churches (WCC) Executive Committee, "The time for debate and disputation of established scientific facts is long over... We will all be held to account for our inaction and

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BERTRAND OLIVIER

The Very Rev'd Bertrand Olivier is the Dean of Montreal and the Rector of Christ Church Cathedral

Some time has passed since we started the project to restore the Spire at Christ Church Cathedral. The journey has been arduous, the fundraising complex and challenging in the Montreal context, and – like everything else – COVID-19 did not help in keeping things simple.

But despite setbacks not of our own making, I am glad to report that *Phase 2* of the project is now under way, and all being well, should be completed by late 2021/early 2022.

The scale of the project continues to feel overwhelming for the Cathedral, and the changes around us have sometimes caused us to ponder on other courses of action. However, our engineering consultants were so alarmed at the gravity and precariousness of the situation that we had no other options than to make this happen.

Phase 1 of the project, which began in 2017, was plagued with delays from the outset, when preparatory work had to include significant unforeseen repairs to the tower masonry. This was finally completed in the summer of 2019. Parks Canada and Conseil du patrimoine

religieux du Québec (CPRQ) both contributed to this *Phase*, as well as a number of generous private donors, foundations, and our own Cathedral parishioners.

Tenders were received in September 2018 for *Phase 2* of our project, and after extensive negotiations to reduce costs, we signed the contract in mid-October 2019. Work was started at that time. But no sooner was the contract signed that the announcement of further construction works on St Catherine St, de Maisonneuve and other adjacent roads meant the whole plan had to be redrawn.

“The Cathedral is the Mother Church of all Anglicans in the Diocese of Montreal, and we thank the many of you who have supported us... which will ensure our ongoing presence as a living symbol of the love of God in the heart of Montreal.”

The initial plan for *Phase 2* involved the removal - in sections - of the spire and its aluminum panels for restoration, which required a large crane to bring the weight down to ground level. Because of the closing of St Catherine St, the City of Montreal informed us that this would no longer be possible.

With the new plan, which took further additional time

to finalize with our architects EVOQ and our contractor Maçonnerie Rainville et Frères, the spire structure is to be restored in situ, after the aluminum panels have been removed and taken off-site to Ottawa for decontamination and restoration. All being well, the 1500 panels and 6000 bolts will be reinstalled in a reverse process, bringing this major architectural feat to completion. As you can imagine, we are all looking to that day with great anticipation.

Inevitably, our initial budget of \$6M for the Spire Restoration nearly doubled in the process, due to the extra work in *Phase 1*, the complexities caused by our heritage site being situated above a shopping mall, and the continuing buoyancy of the Montreal construction market.

We are deeply grateful to the Quebec Government for their ongoing support of this project through the Conseil du Patrimoine Religieux du Québec, and for all those private individuals and philanthropic organisations who have supported us so far on this journey. Since the launch of our Rising Up Campaign, fundraising has become more challenging, partly because of the impact of Bill 21 on the views of funders towards religious institutions, and also because of a lack of support for core infrastructure projects even of a heritage nature. COVID-19 is obviously not helping.

The Cathedral is the Mother Church of all Anglicans in the Diocese of Montreal, and we thank the many of you who have supported us along the way with this project which will ensure our ongoing presence as a living symbol of the love of God in the heart of Montreal.

I continue to ask for your prayers for a successful completion of this work and, also, to consider – if you have not already done so – contributing to our appeal and so adding your own mark on this once-in-a-generation project.

There are many ways to donate towards this important work, details of which are on our website at montrealcathedral.ca/donate.

We now look forward to the day when we can all gather together again and celebrate what God has and continues to do in Montreal even today.

Une vue de la flèche de la cathédrale Christ Church

Un certain temps s'est écoulé depuis que nous avons lancé le projet de restauration de la flèche de la cathédrale Christ Church. Le processus a été ardu, la collecte de fonds complexe et difficile dans le contexte de Montréal et - comme partout ailleurs - COVID-19 n'a pas aidé à faire en sorte que les choses soient simples.

Mais malgré des revers dont nous ne sommes pas responsables, je suis heureux de vous annoncer que la phase 2 du projet est maintenant en cours, et que tout va bien, elle devrait être achevée fin 2021/début 2022.

L'ampleur du projet continue de peser lourdement sur la cathédrale, et les changements autour de nous nous ont parfois amenés à réfléchir à d'autres pistes d'action. Cependant, nos consultants en ingénierie étaient si alarmés par la gravité et la précarité de la situation que nous n'avions pas d'autres options que de faire en sorte que cela se réalise.

La phase 1 du projet, qui a débuté en 2017, a connu des retards dès le début, lorsque les travaux préparatoires ont dû inclure d'importantes réparations imprévues de la maçonnerie de la tour. Celle-ci a finalement été achevée à l'été 2019. Parcs Canada et le Conseil du patrimoine religieux du Québec (CPRQ) ont tous deux contribué à cette phase, ainsi qu'un certain nombre de généreux donateurs privés, des fondations et les paroissiens de la cathédrale.

Les appels d'offres ont été reçus en septembre 2018 pour la phase 2 de notre projet, et après de longues négociations pour réduire les coûts, nous avons signé le contrat à la mi-octobre 2019. Les travaux ont commencé à ce moment-là. Mais à peine le contrat a-t-il été signé que l'annonce de nouveaux travaux sur les infrastructures de la rue Sainte-Catherine, De Maisonneuve et d'autres rues adjacentes a obligé à redéfinir l'ensemble du plan.

Le plan initial de la phase 2 prévoyait la suppression de certaines parties de la flèche et de ses panneaux en aluminium pour les restaurer, ce qui nécessitait une grue de grande taille pour ramener le poids au niveau du sol. En raison de la fermeture de la rue Sainte-Catherine, la ville de Montréal nous a informés que cela ne serait plus possible.

Avec le nouveau plan, qui a pris plus de temps à finaliser avec nos architectes EVOQ et notre entrepreneur Maçonnerie Rainville et Frères, la structure de la flèche

doit maintenant être restaurée in situ, après que les panneaux d'aluminium aient été enlevés et transportés hors site à Ottawa pour décontamination et restauration. Tout étant bien, les 1500 panneaux et 6000 boulons seront réinstallés selon un processus inverse, ce qui permettra de mener à bien cette prouesse architecturale majeure. Comme vous pouvez l'imaginer, nous attendons tous ce jour avec beaucoup d'impatience.

Inévitablement, notre budget initial de 6 millions de dollars pour la restauration de la flèche a presque doublé au cours du processus, en raison des travaux supplémentaires de la phase 1, des complexités causées par le fait que notre site patrimonial est situé au-dessus d'un centre commercial, et de l'essor continu du marché de la construction à Montréal.

Nous sommes profondément reconnaissants au gouvernement du Québec pour son soutien continu à ce projet par l'intermédiaire du Conseil du Patrimoine Religieux du Québec, ainsi qu'à tous les particuliers et organisations philanthropiques qui ont soutenu ce projet jusqu'à présent. Depuis le lancement de notre campagne "Rising Up", la collecte de fonds est devenue plus difficile, en partie à cause de l'impact du projet de loi 21 sur l'opinion des bailleurs de fonds à l'égard des institutions religieuses, et aussi à cause du manque de soutien pour les projets d'infrastructure de base, même de nature patrimoniale. COVID-19 n'aide évidemment pas.

La cathédrale est l'église mère de tous les anglicans du diocèse de Montréal, et nous remercions tous ceux d'entre vous qui nous ont soutenus tout au long de ce projet qui assurera notre présence continue en tant que symbole vivant de l'amour de Dieu au cœur de Montréal.

Je continue à vous demander de prier pour la réussite de ce travail et d'envisager - si vous ne l'avez pas encore fait - de contribuer à notre appel et d'ajouter ainsi votre propre marque à ce projet unique en son genre.

Il existe de nombreuses façons de faire un don pour cette œuvre importante, dont les détails sont disponibles sur notre site web à l'adresse suivante: <https://www.montrealcathedral.ca/fr/votre-soutien-financier-de-la-cathedrale/>

Nous attendons maintenant avec impatience le jour où nous pourrions tous nous réunir à nouveau et célébrer ce que Dieu a fait et continue de faire à Montréal, même aujourd'hui.

Notable

The virtual annual meeting of the Diocesan Synod will be held on Saturday, November 14, 2020. Look for the Convening Circular and other information online at: montreal.anglican.ca/synod.

Sunday School in September at CCB

Christ Church Beaurepaire is a community of faith that believes that we are all God's children. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. Children and their families are a valued part of our community.

We invite all children and families to join our Fall Sunday School program, starting September 6, 2020, to not only hear about God's love but to engage in sharing that love in fun and practical ways in their

everyday lives.

We adapted to the pandemic by transitioning our worship services online. Because we wanted to continue to share God's love and teach stories about Jesus, we also transitioned our Sunday School to an email program so that everyone can participate in their own way, their own time.

Society has changed and families are so busy. We want to be responsive to that change and busyness, but also to be a

constant, consistent presence; a place of warmth, openness and welcome. Whether we get to meet in person or share virtually by email, our Sunday School Team will be there for you!

Christ Church Beaurepaire,
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Back to Church Guidelines

NICKI HRONJAK

It's probably an understatement to say it's been a long five months; we're all anxious to get back into our buildings and worship together. The guidelines established by the Diocese will allow us to do so on September 6th. However, prior to opening our buildings parishes must take steps to keep all who enter safe. With that in mind, the Diocese has provided a detailed plan for parishes to meet

safety standards; you can find all of the relevant information (in both English and French) online at montreal.anglican.ca/covid19-response.

In order to start in-person worship, a safety plan and application must be submitted by the incumbent and wardens at least ten days in advance of your targeted re-opening date.

Of course this virus is unpredictable - so we will continue to follow the Quebec Provincial Health guidelines.

If and when health orders change, we all need to be prepared to respond quickly to new directives.

If you have any questions about the process for re-opening please contact the Vicar General (vicar.general@montreal.anglican.ca) or your Territorial Archdeacon. In the meantime, an overview of re-opening phases can be found in the chart below. As of September 6th we will be in Phase 2.

COVID 19 PANDEMIC REOPENING PHASES		 ANGLICAN DIOCESE MONTREAL WWW.MONTREAL.ANGLICAN.CA			
	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4	
EUC-ARIST	Not permitted	Not permitted	In person with restrictions	In person no restriction	
SERVICE OF THE WORD	Online only	In person with restrictions	In-person with restrictions	In person with no restrictions	
FILMING & LIVESTREAM WORSHIP	Yes, with restrictions	Yes, with restrictions	Continue for those who cannot physically attend	Continue for those who cannot physically attend	
OTHER SERVICES	Permitted with light restrictions	Permitted with light restrictions	Yes with physical distancing under 50 people	Unrestricted	
FORMATION FELLOWSHIP FUNDRAISING PASTORAL CARE	Online or telephone only	Online or telephone only	Yes with physical distancing under 50 people	Unrestricted with some online recommended	
OFFICE BUILDING USE	Limited Access	Limited Access	Yes with physical distancing under 50 people	Unrestricted	
SERVICE & OUTREACH INITIATIVES	With permission from the Bishop's office	With permission from the Bishop's office	Yes with physical distancing under 50 people	Unrestricted	
USER GROUPS AND RENTALS	Suspended or limited to suspend	Suspended or limited to suspend	Yes with physical distancing under 50 people	Unrestricted	

Finance Committee Concerned for Parish and Diocesan Finances

KAREN EAGAN

The Rev. Dr. Karen L. Egan is the Chair of the Diocesan Finance Committee

Late in March the Finance committee, which has a broad mandate to examine and make financial recommendations within the diocese, met at an emergency meeting, very concerned with the emerging pandemic and its effect on parish and diocesan finances. Recommendations were sent to Diocesan Council, which convened and decided to take action.

The results of the Council's deliberations were revealed to the parishes in the Bishop's letter of April 1, 2020, which outlined a number of provisions, including the relief for parishes of the diocesan assessment for six months (April -September). In addition, they committed to implement, if possible, the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy, which they have succeeded in doing since April. These subsidies are granted by ongoing applications, and the diocese has continued to successfully apply through the summer, and the parishes continue to be blessed by the relief they have been granted. This has given the parishes a considerable boost in these troubled times.

"...the pandemic has had significant effects not only on parish finances, but also on the financial health of families in our church."

In June the Finance Committee continued to discuss strategies, and found that we lacked the data that they needed to make informed recommendations. As a consequence, a short form was sent out to parishes asking for data on parish giving, and revenue from rentals for the period of March 2020 through May 2020.

The committee received report-backs from 19 parishes, and we thank those who took the time to provide this information to the Finance Committee. An average loss of giving of 33.0% was reported overall. This loss in giving was seen in both large and small parishes, rural and urban. Remarkably however, two parishes on the

West Island were able to report that their giving had suffered very little and were both down by less than 6%!

The loss of rental revenue was a much larger mix, though almost everywhere where rentals made up an important part of revenue, losses were significant. An average loss of 58% was recorded, but averages were calculated only for parishes which had losses. Several parishes have very few rentals and were not included in the calculation. There is no question that overall revenue in parishes is down considerably, and many parishes would be facing significant losses were it not for the relief from assessments, and the wage subsidy.

The effect of the loss of assessments to the Diocese is significant. The Diocese is running a deficit of over a million dollars. It is also considering how to respond when the planned relief for assessments expires at the end of September. The survey will be helpful as the Finance Committee makes recommendations in September.

The committee realizes that the pandemic has had significant effects not only on parish finances, but also on the financial health of families in our church. We realize that, in many instances, giving to parishes has had to be put on hold. If this is the case in your family, we offer much sympathy and our heartfelt prayers for a return to financial health and wellbeing. On the other hand, if you have fallen behind in your giving, and are able to catch up, or even top up, this is a very good time for you to consider renewed giving to your parish. 90% of parishes are concerned for their 2020 budget, even while they understand that these are extraordinary times, which have brought difficulty to many of their fellow parishioners.

We ask you to continue to hold the church in your prayers, as we work our way towards the end of the year, hoping beyond hope that the New Year will see us gathering again in our churches, and praising the God who heals and sustains our families and communities.

Community Garden

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"Arctic Hardy" plum trees (a variety found growing on an abandoned farm in the Eastern Townships), two "Montreal Snow White" mulberries (a variety that will produce berries all summer long), and a crabapple. We had a dozen volunteers come out to plant the trees, all while maintaining social distancing. A second lot of fruit trees will be planted in the fall.

In addition to the \$2500, we received a grant of \$1150 from the discretionary budget of Christian Arsenault, the city councillor for the Loyola district of NDG. This allowed

us to construct three additional raised garden beds, one of them of a height to be accessible to persons who are in wheelchairs or unable to stoop down. These are now planted with herbs, rhubarb, zucchini, salad greens, radishes, carrots, tomatoes, peppers, beans, cucumbers, and various herbs. Signs on the gardens, created by Incredible Edibles, invite passers-by to pick what they need.

A local resident heard of the project, and donated an arbour bench and archway. The arch has been placed at the entry to the garden from Sherbrooke Street, and we transplanted a

few wild grape vines that we found growing in a hedge, so that they will climb the arch. The arbour bench now sits in the middle of the garden, with a climbing rose, and will eventually be surrounded by a pollinator garden. Other elements to come will include an herb spiral, berry patches and a sea buckthorn hedge, and guilds of complementary plants around the fruit trees, which will attract beneficial insects, repel pests, or help balance nutrients in the soil.

Our project has attracted the interest of many in the wider community. We have about

a dozen regular volunteers, a mix of parishioners and local residents not previously connected to the church, who plant, weed and water. Given the size of the garden, several people can work at the same time while maintaining plenty of distance between themselves. Finally, the garden has given those who work in it an opportunity to connect with many of the people who enjoy walking through our green space. Transformation of the property will be an ongoing project for the next five or more years.

Notable

The Corporation of the Parish of St. Stephen's with St. James, Chambly, in conversation with our Primate, the Most Reverend Linda Nicholls and our Bishop, The Right Reverend Mary Irwin-Gibson, have decided to postpone our September 13th, 200th anniversary celebration. We will book another date to celebrate this important anniversary when we are able to safely come together to worship with Communion, song and sharing a meal.

Black Lives Matter



JULIET OPPONG-NUAKO

Black Lives Matter.

This statement incites many emotions, some confusion and some misconceptions. What exactly does it mean? Simply, that there is value in black lives. There is value in lives that have been denigrated for generations by the legacy of slavery and racism. Yet, you may ask, why are black people screaming this message now? Why must we voice this simple message that should - after all this time - be self-evident? Because, even in the 21st Century, we are told, even if implicitly, that our lives have less value through oppressive systems that put whiteness at the forefront. We are told we are inferior with stereotypes and perceptions that continue to denigrate black people to this day.

In July of 2013, Black Lives Matter began as a twitter hashtash following the acquittal of George Zimmerman, who shot and killed Trayvon Martin in February of 2012. In subsequent years, more deaths of black people followed at the hands of the police. Recently, the death of George Floyd on camera led to a special awakening for many. George Floyd was killed by Derek Chauvin, a Minneapolis police officer. His death led to an awakening for many because it brought again the issue of racism to the forefront of everyday conversation. Protests for BLM spread far and wide. This was pivotal and necessary to the cause.

"...no amount of academic credentials or successful assimilation to the Canadian culture would protect my black son from deep rooted prejudices that are held by many..."

My own awakening began in 2015, when I was introduced to the phenomenal powerhouse that is Shanice Nicole, a Montreal-based educator, speaker and poet. Back then, Shanice made me uncomfortable. This outspoken black woman was talking about how we should push against the systems that continue to oppress black people. She made me uncomfortable because I remember having deep-seeded convictions and distrust for my own colour. How was I to reconcile all these emotions?

Shanice made me remember how I told a black friend

of mine, "I wish I was white so I could have the long blond hair like the white girls." She brought to mind my parents constantly preparing me to assimilate to the white culture, by telling us such things as, "Your skin colour will always stand out, so you have to learn to conform. You have to excel. You have to be educated. You have to dress in a certain way." Shanice made me feel emotions that I wanted to suppress. How could I go on assimilating if I confronted these emotions? In my mind, assimilation equalled greater opportunities in life, and I was not going to feel or do anything to jeopardize that! I was uncomfortable with what Shanice was offering but I understood that it meant something powerful.

Shanice made me realize that no amount of academic credentials or successful assimilation to the Canadian culture would protect my black son from deep rooted prejudices that are held by many, subconscious or otherwise. My husband and I began "The Talk" with our son at the tender age of five. Every black parent has "The Talk" with their children. My parents had many talks about race with my siblings and me as we grew up. Our "Talk" involved letting us know that in many situations, the colour of our skin will play a factor in how people treat us. "The Talk" involved warning us to always be respectful of authority (especially police officers), not just because respect

is an important behaviour to cultivate but because disrespect of an authority figure might lead to us being apprehended, hurt, or killed. "The Talk" is heavy and is done gradually. But it must be done to keep our black children vigilant. To bring our black children safely home. Back in 2015, I started discussing Shanice's views with the rest of my family, who being supportive, listened. Life, however, moved on and I returned to living my life the best that I could.

"I have felt free to embrace the natural hair that grows from my scalp and the beautiful melanin that makes my skin glow."

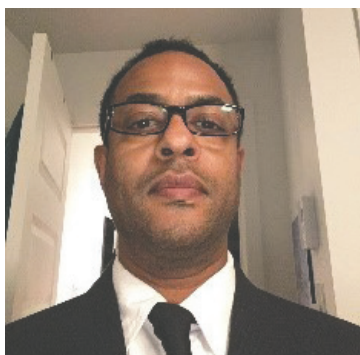
On May 25th, 2020, George Floyd was killed, and my feelings resurfaced. The death of George Floyd coupled with the current crisis of COVID-19, has led us into a state of global unrest. This situation pushed me to engage in a great deal of reflection and introspection. I was ready to confront my reality as a black woman. Shanice Nicole states, "We are all in this air, so how complicit are we?". Are we examining our own actions, the conscious and the subconscious, towards black people and other people of colour? Are we bringing awareness to the social and economic injustices that we see daily? I am choosing to not be complicit anymore. To abandon comfort and to lean into what I had previously considered as uncomfortable territory.

In the past few months, I have felt free to embrace the natural hair that grows from my scalp and the beautiful melanin that makes my skin glow. Standards of beauty have historically centred on strait hair and light skin. So, in a sense, I am returning to myself. This knowledge and appreciation of the black body has led to a deeper spiritual awakening within me, and the need to spread awareness so that black children can understand their worth and have the tools to let their natural value shine.

It is of the utmost importance to examine thoughts, words and actions towards black people and other people of colour. In the face of racism, we should call out those who continue to uphold racist belief systems that are detrimental to equal opportunity and equal access for black and marginalized lives. These systems continue to lead to the devaluing and the death of black people at the hands of those in authority who should protect us.

Truly, for all lives to matter, black lives and all marginalized lives must matter. Black Lives Matter helps us live what Scripture has taught: "Do what is just and right. Rescue from the hand of the oppressor the one who has been robbed. Do no wrong or violence to the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place" (Jeremiah 22:3).

Black Lives Matter and Social Media



DEREJE TAYE

Dereje Taye is a parishioner and assistant warden at St. Hilda, La Petite Chapelle Rouge.

Trayvon Martin. The movement then took to the streets after the killing of Michael Brown and Eric Garner in 2014. The movement has been growing globally, touching every sector, ever since.

Believers and non-believers of various nations around the globe are rallying alongside civil right activists of BLM because discrimination, oppression, brutality and use of excessive force against fellow humans is fundamentally wrong. In both secular and theological ethics.

It is arguably more wrong when we sin against or devalue our fellow humans based on racial differences, which is a social construct, a misconception. Race and racial differences are narratives designed to exploit people, much against Christian theology. The scripture in Genesis 6 evaluates the weakness of the 'human race' as a collective - not as unequal creation where one is superior and another is inferior - that we're made after semblance of "God [who] created mankind in his own image... male and female" (Genesis 1:27).

Different from the Civil Rights movement a few de-

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Black Lives Matter



GENEVIEVE JOSEPH-GAGNON

BLM for me represents an awakening of collective consciousness, like a continuation of the civil rights movement. I am so glad that others have come to view the unequal treatment of Black people as something that damages democracy as a whole. They are starting to understand that they do have a role in racism. Non-Black people have finally started to care. I just hope it isn't a facade.

BLM is a call for equality and education. Unfortunately, to this day, many people still deny the existence of institutional racism; personally this can make some things highly uncomfortable on a daily basis

when I'm confronted by such ignorance. Lack of recognition of the internalized racism and colonial mentality within religious institutions has also led me to feel estranged from the church.

Ignorance of the reality of racism is shown when people say things like "you're stuck in victim mentality", "slavery was over a century why don't you guys get over it", "damaging property is not the solution", "kneeling during the national anthem is disrespectful", "you always make it about race" are words I have myself heard spoken and seen written. Micro-aggressions like these prove the lack of knowledge of how oppression of Black people has been maintained throughout the years. For example, someone has said to me "but you gotta admit that Black people exaggerate" showing they don't know the full history because if anything we're minimizing it.

Many people also still hang on to the "what about Black on Black crime?" counter argument, showing they don't understand how the War on Drugs and historical practices such as redlining or blockbusting have created racially segregated and impoverished ghettos as well as fractured family units. From this poverty comes violence. White people also kill

each other at similar rates so truth be told "Black on Black crime" is a false argument.

I've also heard "but here in Canada it's irrelevant" showing they truly have no idea of the scope of the issue. They are truly unaware, or maybe willfully ignorant. They also are forgetting how Indigenous people are treated, and what they go through is definitely relevant in my mind to BLM because this movement is about equality; even if the centerpiece is how Black people are treated, ultimately it will help everyone.

And yet, recently I have seen such an incredible show of solidarity from friends who've been taking the time to educate themselves, that I find it quite moving. It has made me more able to speak on these issues without fear of being made into the "the angry Black woman" or someone with a "victim mentality". I just hope that people realize this is a lifelong struggle and we will not be rid of racism in our lifetimes, but that we must always strive for a more moral and ethical society for all. And that means acknowledging and repairing damage done by years of colonialism and institutionalized racism, and thoroughly analyzing how we over police Black people.

La Vie des Noir-e-s Compte

I Am Not Your Negro



AYLENE SUTHERLAND

Ms Aylene Sutherland was a longtime member of the former diocesan Race Relations Committee

The goal of Black Lives Matter and anti-racism learning is to try to mend the fractured human family - in order to understand and internalize what it really means to be "Children of God." If that is our goal, then the Church needs to free itself from its own emotional attach-

ments and those myths and false beliefs that have created this fracture in the first place.

To attempt to reach this goal, clergy and lay people as individuals need to address their own prejudices, and racist attitudes, although they may not be aware of them. Firstly, they need to expose themselves to historical and scientific information to confront their own prejudices- to explore the insidious nature of racism - what the writer Nathan Rutstein refers to as "the white- woven web of institutionalized racial prejudice."

The Talk

Of course, "The Talk" is what all people of colour have to have with their children before they leave the house: things such as, "Remember you are Black, and the cops are not your friend, so conduct yourself properly."

They will also discuss racial profiling, so if their children are driving, parents tell them to

leave their license on the glove compartment not in it, so the cops won't think you are reaching for a firearm, etc.

Imagine what it's like for a parent of colour to have to engage in "The Talk" with their Child without making the Child lose his/her self-respect, sense of dignity, fundamental goodness as a person (Child of God).

In short, losing their very joy of life, while knowing that the White world perceives them as being inferior because of the colour of their skin.

Internalized Oppression

Persons of colour may actually believe that their true self is what the Oppressor thinks of them. Topsy, the Black servant in *Gone with the Wind*, acted as a stupid, ignorant girl because that was how her white Mistress regarded her, and so she came to regard herself in that way.

Many accepted what white people believed: that the natural features of Blacks such as skin colour, facial features, and hair are inherently ugly. For

example, their hair is woolly (nappy) and so they straighten it by using chemicals or, in the past, placed iron combs into hot coals to straighten their hair to look more like white people. Some people of colour use face creams to lighten their complexion. They internalized the notion that a dark skin was not beautiful and they were somehow inferior to Whites.

The notion of true beauty was the Nordic blue-eyed blonde. "Black is Beautiful" developed as an ethos to address the notion of "self hate" among Black people. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_is_beautiful

Double consciousness

The term, 'double consciousness' is discussed in the book: *The Souls of Black Folk* by W.E.B. Du Bois. (See YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrW4F-Ua510>) Persons of colour have one way of thinking about themselves but they also believe what white people say about them.

Recommended Resources:

Ta-Nehisi Coates: *Between the World and Me*. To have a black body is to be in a constant state of danger.

Nathan Rutstein: *Healing Racism in America: A Prescription for the Disease; Coming of Age at the Millenium: Embracing the Oneness of Humankind*. Rutstein discusses the concept of "A National Pathology": we have been locked into the beliefs held by the White Settlers and Founding Fathers, that Whites are the superior race and all peoples of colour, the inferior one.

James H. Cone: *For My People: Black Theology and the Black Church*

The Academy Award-nominated and BAFTA winning documentary about James Baldwin: "I Am Not Your Negro: Race, Identity and Baldwin" by director Raoul Peck <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBmZ68pxJiU>

Black Lives Matter

SHARISSA SINTIM-OLSON

Sharissa Sintim-Olson is a member of the Mile End Mission family.

BLM is a movement run by the newest generation, Gen Z. Apparently, the wake up call was an innocent man being killed. Ahmaud, George, and Breonna still haven't gotten the justice they deserve. That's because the police is a corrupt system. ACAB doesn't mean all cops are bad, because not all cops are bad. It stands for *all cops are bastards*, in response to white people and police classifying POC (people of colour) as all bad people; the darker you are, the more of a thug you are.

So the point of ACAB is to do what people do to POC, classify all of them as bastards even though there are some good police.

TikTok is one of the largest social media platforms, and every since the murder of Ahmaud Aberly, creators, activists, and everyone in between have been spreading awareness.

Soon enough, a sign for the BLM movement was made; a fist punching the air. It signifies that we are strong, and that we will never stop fighting for equality. No justice no peace.

People are talking about the president of the USA, Donald Trump, being a sexist, homophobic, fascist bigot, racist, pedophile. Which he is.

So a TikTok creator got the idea to completely trash a Trump rally that was happening in Tulsa.

The tickets were free, so what we did was get a bunch of tickets but, of course,

nobody showed up. 300,000 people were meant to show up that day, but less than 7,000 came. This was the start of Gen Z taking over.

Soon after, another TikTok creator made a petition to change the U.S. flag to the Manny flag. Manny is a character from the book *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, and the flag's colors are black and yellow.

The petition got over four million signatures, and Gen Z realized how powerful we could be with just our phones! Teenagers all over the world are teaming up together to stand up for injustice.

"Nobody should have to be scared of the people who are supposed to protect us."

Take Charli Damelio for example. She took the world by storm with just her dance moves, and now has over sixty million followers on TikTok. She uses her voice and her platform for good and to educate her millions of fans. She is honestly the nicest person, and she's only 15.

The BLM movement is still going strong, and everyday creators make amazing videos about it. There are thousands of petitions you can sign to make a change. It might have cost a life to wake up the youngest generation to make such an impact on the world, even though it shouldn't have. Breonna Taylor still hasn't gotten her justice. Elijah McClain hasn't gotten his justice. Innocent black men and

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La cathédrale Christ Church Nous sommes passionnés par l'inclusion



DEBORAH MEISTER

La Rev'd Dre Deborah Meister, Prêtre Associée

Le meurtre de George Floyd le 25 mai a provoqué une onde de choc dans le monde entier. La brutalité et l'indifférence qui ont dû être nécessaires pour qu'un homme serre le cou d'une autre personne pendant huit minutes et quarante-six secondes ont révélé la réalité de la violence policière contre les Noirs et les autres minorités racialisées d'une manière qui ne pouvait plus être ignorée. Des milliers de personnes sont descendues dans les rues des États-Unis, du Canada et du monde entier en criant "Black Lives Matter / La vie des noirs compte."

La réaction à la cathédrale Christ Church à Montréal a été presque immédiate. Avant même la marche "Black Lives Matter" à Montréal le week-end suivant, les paroissiens et le clergé ont commencé à exiger que nous montrions notre soutien en accrochant une bannière "Black Lives

Matter" sur la cathédrale elle-même. Lorsque cette manifestation pacifique a été perturbée par la violence policière, les demandes se sont intensifiées, tout comme l'engagement des paroissiens qui ont commencé, de leur propre initiative, à intégrer des enseignements sur le racisme dans des groupes de lecture et des forums de discussion, ainsi que dans d'autres initiatives laïques de la cathédrale.

Dès le début, le doyen de la cathédrale, le très révérend Bertrand Olivier, a été clair sur deux points : premièrement, si une bannière devait être accrochée, elle devait avoir le soutien de la congrégation et pas seulement du clergé ; et, deuxièmement, tout geste de la cathédrale devait être soutenu par une action de fond.

Le doyen a prévu une réunion en ligne du Forum de la cathédrale (une réunion des des laïcs et pasteurs) pour discuter de la question. La réunion a débuté par le témoignage personnel de Jean-Robert Belarmin, un des lecteurs laïcs de la cathédrale, sur son expérience en tant que Noir d'origine haïtienne vivant à Montréal. Les participants à la réunion se sont ensuite répartis en petits groupes pour discuter de la question du racisme et de la manière dont la cathédrale pourrait l'aborder. La discussion a également été alimentée par deux sermons prêchés les dimanches consécutifs du début juin pour ouvrir la question du racisme systémique dans le contexte de Montréal et commencer à explorer la

complicité de l'Église dans ce domaine.

La réunion a abouti à un consensus clair :

1) Nous accrocherions une bannière dans les deux langues principales parlées au Québec.

2) Nous accompagnerions la bannière d'une déclaration expliquant pourquoi nous croyons que l'opposition au racisme est une partie fondamentale de notre engagement chrétien.

3) Nous nous sommes engagés à travailler aux processus même de la cathédrale: nous examiner, nous-mêmes et nos structures, et chercher à éliminer les obstacles à la pleine inclusion de tout le peuple de Dieu.

La Cathédrale a maintenant organisé son travail de contre le racisme en quatre sous-comités :

1) Examiner notre propre histoire, tant écrite qu'orale, en termes de participation ou de résistance aux récits d'esclavage et de dévalorisation du peuple noir.

2) Identifier, au sein de nos propres structures de direction et de notre vie communautaire, les obstacles à une participation égale et au partage du pouvoir entre les personnes de toutes origines, et développer une culture d'égalité d'accès.

3) Développer des initiatives éducatives continues sur le racisme systémique pour tous nos membres.

4) Trouver des moyens de célébrer à la fois notre diversité et notre unité en Christ.

La bannière a été accro-

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Black Lives Matter



HOLLY RATCLIFFE

The Rev'd Dr Holly Ratcliffe is an Honorary Associate of St George's Place du Canada. Pictured here with Dr Cassandra Joubert-Jackson.

If You're Looking for God, You're Looking for Trouble: An Article on Anti-racism

Tulsa, Oklahoma was not in the conscience of Quebecers until recently when the U.S. Republicans decided to kick off their election campaign there, initially on Juneteenth. But I spent three of my early years in Tulsa as a parish priest serving the biracial St Aidan's Episcopal church, on the north side (read black side) of town. This was where the 1921 race riot had demolished what was then called the Black Wall Street in the Greenwood neighbourhood. To this day, Greenwood remains a grassy park memorial of that dark time.

Serving St Aidan's was a steep learning curve for me

from the get go. At the end of the meeting with the selection committee, when they decided to call me as their next vicar, a member of the committee Dr. Cassandra Joubert-Jackson looked me in the eye and said, "The problem is not that you are white or that you are a woman. It is that you are Canadian. You won't understand race relations." I had the feeling that this was not entirely a compliment about Canadians and our history.

Fast forward to the last night that I was in Tulsa in 1991, about to leave for Montreal. I had been asked to preach at an annual community enlistment service. This service was for all North Tulsans, but it was organized by the North Tulsa Ministerial Alliance, of which I was a member. An all Black, all male and essentially all Baptist organization, the NTMA has as one of its main reasons for being the social welfare of the larger community of North Tulsa. Why I got asked to preach is still a mystery to me.

But as I prepared to write this article now, at a time when discourse around systemic racism has become more engaged and accepted within the white community worldwide, I thought again of that sermon written almost 30 years ago. Writing it then engaged me in a process of publicly naming my own complicity in racism. The sermon was given in

the context of a sea of faces of Tulsa's black community. The context is significant. It was my confession.

I was shaking in my boots. Normally in the black tradition, the congregation urges the preacher on with encouragements: "Preach on, brother!" or "halleluya!". Well, in the beginning of my sermon there was just silence. It was only later on I began to hear an occasional quiet "preach on, sista!" Also, you may be aware that black preaching moves toward a climax, which engages the choir in call and response. So I chose a spiritual that I knew would be very familiar to them and, by now, to me.

When I came down from the stage, the eldest, most esteemed pastor of the community came up to me and gave me a bear hug I have never forgotten. Here is that sermon:

I speak to you in the name of the divine community of love: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The last time I was here at Shiloh Baptist Church for a community enlistment service, Bro. Laurence Lakey preached on the paralytic who lay by the pool of Siloam for 38 years, waiting for someone to lower him into the pool on those occasions when an angel of the Lord troubled it, so that he might be healed in the troubled water...

We all seek healing. But we are here tonight because we also want to be part of the Body of Christ that seeks to help others in

our community. As I prepared this sermon I asked myself, how can we identify ourselves as united in the work of healing the body?

For me there is a resonance of the biblical notion that God's healing action is to be found in troubled water in that great sorrow song, which moves me more deeply than I can say:

Wade in the water; God's gonna trouble the water.

So much is packed into those two sentences: God's call to every Christian into healing and restoration; Harriet Tubman's warning to fleeing slaves to wash off the scent of human sweat to fool the bloodhounds; the call to enter the death and resurrection of Christ by the water of baptism. But what I hear most profoundly expressed is the deep trust that no matter what happens, no matter how foreboding and uncertain the storm ahead looks, God will be in the midst of it, in the midst of us. God will not leave us alone, no matter what is happening.

The trouble in our community is overwhelming. And the solutions are scarce. And trust is not popular today in the way that it was sung out with such conviction back then. The call to make sense of the ambiguity, the chaos, the trouble in our lives and the life of our community, as somehow bound up with trusting in the presence of God, is even less popular. But I am convinced that if we want to look for God's presence in the world, we in some sense need to trust that God will be found there in the worst of it. If we are

looking for God's presence in the world, then we will be looking, in some sense, for trouble.

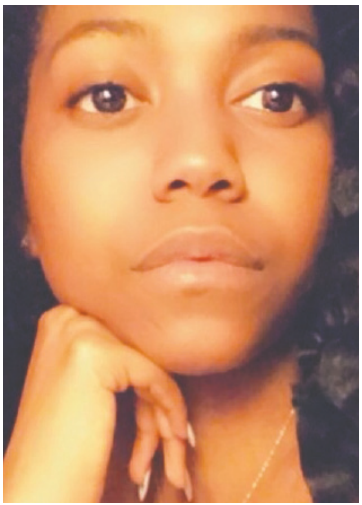
If we're looking for God, we're looking for trouble.

You may wonder why a Canadian white woman was asked to preach at this gathering for the upbuilding and encouragement of community participation in this black community. What on earth could I have to say to you? I do not speak as one who has answers to the problems we in North Tulsa face. I can only speak to you as one who sees it as her work to discern God's Spirit at work in the world and to preach that good news. I speak as one who has come to love the people of North Tulsa dearly, and who has learned from you how deeply the Gospel speaks to our condition, if we know our need.

I arrived as vicar of St. Aidan's, a biracial mission, almost three years ago. My naïve understanding of equality was to treat everyone alike. What I didn't then know is that even though I might think I was making myself available to everyone equally, not everyone would see me as equally available to them.

Cassandra Joubert-Jackson, senior lay officer of the church took me by the hands early on and, looking straight into my eyes, told me I must actively seek out relationships within the black membership; that I could not expect all people to seek me equally in this congregation; that I must initiate,

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NAELA AGBESSI

Naëla Agbessi is a member of Église de la Nativité-Saint James

Why Does My Life Matter?

Why does my life matter...? A question that has such a simple answer; some might find it logical while others will sit back and ponder... is one life worth more than another? Take a minute and think about how much money life is worth? Should the circumstances of those who've raised people like me affect it, who our parents were, the titles and jobs they

held, the amount of money or social status they had?

One thing that's been stated clearly in the Bible as one of the 10 commandments, forbidden and straightforward; "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13). Never was it mentioned that it was okay to take someone's life because of the colour of their skin. As black women, we should be able to voice our concerns without seeming arrogant, bitter or ignorant, or brushing off our emotions with sentences such as "It's not that serious", or "You're over thinking".

Truth be told We are Tired and Angry! I do not believe that it's normal for us to fear for our safety or for those of our loved ones when they want to take a walk to the convenience store, party with their friends or just enjoy life. Looking back on these simple things, I understand now why our grandmothers would have us recite a prayer for protection each and every time we would step just a foot out the door, giving us a big hug before leaving and reminding to us to be careful. They feared for our safety - but why is that normal? Haven't we evolved as human beings? We're constantly being bombarded with negative messages yet the only reaction we have is to expect it simply because we are black. Getting treated like we're "less than",

hunted like we're animals with constant targets on our backs.

Screaming Black Lives Matter at the top of our lungs isn't just for those who are suffering from police brutality now, it's also for those who've lost their lives at the hands of horrible human beings who don't fear God.

I do not want future generations to march for this, I want to speak on how our generation ended this... how we paved the way for better things, took action and created a different narrative.

"I understand now why our grandmothers would have us recite a prayer for protection each and every time we would step just a foot out the door..."

Who deemed it acceptable to take someone's life and face no repercussions? As brothers and sisters, we need to stand for one another. Underneath this flesh we are all "formed man from dust of ground" (Genesis 2:7). All equal none superior to the other.

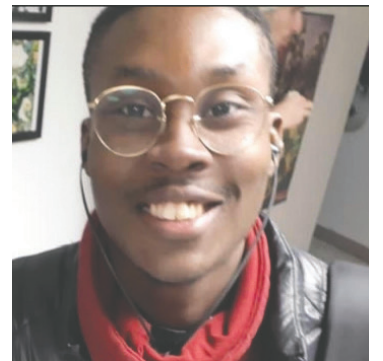
Black lives matter doesn't mean that others' lives do not matter; it means that you should value black lives as much or more because we are your neighbors. If our house is on fire it wouldn't make much sense to throw water on another house that is not

burning down; you'll help the house that is ravaged with the flames. "But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?" (1 John 3:17)

To conclude, we must take some actions collectively. By educating yourself and helping your black brothers and sisters you can uplift and amplify their voices. Be an ally, fight against racism. Donate to causes that need funding, participate in marches, show some solidarity and use your privilege for good. You are not a mannequin or puppet but a human being with full knowledge and capacities to learn and push forward.

In James (2:14-17) it states "Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed, but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."

May the peace be with you my friends and remember that there's always something that can be done in order to help your fellow black brothers and sisters; the cheeks have been turned already and the time to HELP is now.



JUSTIN PIERRE

Justin Pierre is a part of the Mile End Mission family

Black Lives Matter

Two years ago I was working at a studio and was wrongly accused of theft. It was my first day on the job and my supervisor seemed to be panicking. I ignored her and went back to working. Then when I turned my back, three security guards tackled me to the ground, placing my hands in zip ties, throwing around everything that was in my bag, searching for whatever it was they assumed I stole. I was wrongly accused of stealing. I was humiliated and the only reason I was accused was because of my skin colour. I was called racial slurs and the studio's way of making up for it was to give me "hush money" and the rest of the day off.

La Vie des Noir-e-s Compte

Waking Up to Truths: A Challenge to Understanding What It Means to Be White



ROS MACGREGOR

The Rev'd Roslyn Macgregor is a retired priest of the diocese, Chaplain of Mile End Community Mission and long-time member of the former Race Relations Committee.

I feel as if, for much of my life, I was asleep.

In the late 60s and 70's, I was a member of the Sisters of St Margaret, a convent in the heart of Boston. I didn't see the news or read the papers; I had very little idea what was going on outside convent walls. The March on Washington. The death of Freedom Riders. Sit-ins at lunch counters. Selma. The sickening brutality. I do remember the assassination of MLK. I remember the rage over bussing in Boston. A few years ago, one of my best friends who grew up in South Boston said, "You notice they didn't bus children from Roxbury and Jamaica Plain to Newton or Wellesley. They bussed them to poor white neighbourhoods like Southie." Oh!

In 1971, as a young, white Sister of St. Margaret, I was sent as a missionary to Haiti. I had always been a good little girl, and had become a good little nun - out of touch with some of the deeper emotions. In Haiti I began to discover anger, even rage... I was young and immature, though that is no excuse, and was asleep to issues of race and racism. I realize with shame that I was sometimes arrogant and patronizing. I did amazing

ministry and yet ... the extreme poverty, lack of medical resources, oppression by outside forces, along with the resilience, determination, courage, and faith of the people of Haiti led to the beginning of my conversion to a lifelong process of focus on justice.

Twenty years ago, I discovered the family secret of my Black slave roots in Bermuda. When my Gram emigrated with the family as a child they passed for white. This began a process of integration - of learning about my roots, slavery, and racism from present day Bermuda cousins and from research.

However, I am 93% white - perceived as white by the world - and have every white privilege. All my life - even growing up lower middle class --- I had advantages. Now - Lots of questions. What does it mean to be white?

In the mid 1950's there were 5 or 6 Black families (called coloured then) who lived, literally, on the other side of the tracks in Ville Jacques Cartier, a step 'lower' than our Montreal South and way below St Lambert. We all attended the same little elementary school and high school. Montrealers thought of themselves as not racist --- hmmm... As the numbers of Black increased so did the apparent threat to the status quo of systemic racism and incidences of racism.

I'm challenging myself, and I challenge you, to ask what it meant and means to be white. What was so much a part of me/us that I/we never noticed and still find it hard to see?

First images of God: Stained glass windows and Sunday school materials showed us that God/Jesus and other religious figures were white - very white.

Clergy and other church leaders: Male. White. Left me out of the power structure as a girl-child, and Blacks saw no church leaders of colour. Even today - Black priests are, in our

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Black Lives Matter in the Church: Action is the Answer to our Affliction



NICK FORTE

The Rev'd Nicholas Forte is half-time incumbent at St George's Chateauguay & Parish of Bedford

Black Lives Matter. From the movement's first actions in calling attention to the systemic and brutal murder of black men and women in 2013, and long before with ongoing personal experiences and stories of racism from those around me - I have wondered what this phrase means in the Church; a Church I have dedicated my life to, which financially allows me to make a living doing work I genuinely love.

Beyond wondering how the Church can respond to such a bold and necessary claim, that black lives do matter, I have been angry; an anger that wells up from a deep sadness at how people are treated for nothing other than the colour of their skin, at how lives are treated with such dismissive disdain and callous brutality, at how our governments and systems - even those within the Church, have caused such seemingly irreparable harm to those who have built up our culture with such creative richness, such diverse beauty, such Spirit-inspired complexity. I have also been angry at people I have known, served, loved, and had held such high hopes for. Perhaps you have known this anger as well.

The hideous face and form of racism has been proven to be alive and well in our society. And lest we delude ourselves,

it has been shown to be alive and well in our churches as well. Living in Québec, often cited as one of the most racist provinces in Canada, it strikes me how rare conversations about racial justice are here. Should it not be that the most racist places in our society are where churches are the least racist? Or to go further, that where the injustice of racism abounds, the radical justice of the Church should flourish in response? But we don't see that. Not here in Québec, nor throughout the Anglican Church of Canada. And so, again, I wonder: What does it mean, what could it mean, for us, as Anglicans, to say, "Black Lives Matter"?

"The Body of Christ, of which we are all members, does not seem to have felt the pain of some of its members."

For it is not some bandwagon for the Church to ride as long as it is fashionable and in the news, nor is it some slogan with which to further embrace the token gestures of a few as representing the whole. If we are the Body of Christ, then let us move as such a body. The warmth of a hug (as foreign as that may seem during this Pandemic) is not felt solely in the hands, or on one's chest, but throughout the body and far deeper into one's soul. Likewise, a stubbed toe may be primarily felt in the afflicted toe, but its pain ripples up the leg and echoes throughout the body. The key is to feel what one part of the body is echoing out to the rest of its members.

Are we to say that the Church is striving for justice towards and with Indigenous peoples, because portions of the Church participated in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2015, while anti-Indigenous sentiment and apathy has stymied the majority of efforts to respond to the Calls to Action? Or are we to say that the Anglican Church of Canada is a true ally to all LGBTQIA2+ peoples because the Diocese

of Toronto (most notably) marches proudly and boldly in Canada's largest Pride Parade, and yet is stymied by a refusal to acknowledge the damage it causes by blocking efforts to amend the Canons to allow for same-sex marriage?

Are we now going to say that we are active on matters of racial justice, that we support and believe that Black Lives Matter, just because Bishops issue pastoral letters stating that fact and lay and ordained Anglicans can be seen marching in protests and preaching bold messages?

The Body of Christ, of which we are all members, does not seem to have felt the pain of some of its members. The black neck that was kneeled on, the black pregnant stomach that was kicked repeatedly, the black necks that were fitted with nooses and hung from modern day lynching trees... this pain does not seem to have been echoed and felt throughout the body. And this is something that the body must feel, from the tips of our toes to the skin of our scalp.

Rather, it seems as though something else has spread like a virus through its veins, clogged its major arteries, and eroded its nerves. Apathy. Apathy is our affliction, and its symptoms are racism, homophobia, and so much more, but in a word: sin.

A powerful and favourite song of mine, by a band called The Psalters, includes the line, "If you long to join in the song of the slaves [who cry out for liberation and justice] let your apathy be burned up with action." Action is the answer to our affliction, not just from handfuls of our Church, but until every member of this Body, feels it in every part of their bodies, until our affliction is purged, and we can say as much with our voices as with our hearts in action: Black Lives Matter.

La cathédrale *continued from page 7*

chée, et était accompagnée du message suivant : "La cathédrale Christ Church est une congrégation multiethnique du centre-ville de Montréal, et nous sommes passionnés par l'inclusion. Nous avons entamé un processus de révision de notre propre vie communautaire, afin d'identifier notre propre histoire de racisme ainsi que les façons dont notre structure exclut systématiquement des personnes en raison de leur couleur. Le fait de brandir ce drapeau est un symbole de ces tâches pour la justice que nous

entreprenons dans la douleur et la solidarité.

Nous espérons que notre histoire pourra contribuer à encourager chaque congrégation à entreprendre ce travail souvent difficile, afin qu'ensemble nous puissions devenir la Communauté bien-aimée dans laquelle tous les gens sont vraiment honorés en tant qu'enfants de Dieu.

This article is available in English online. Montreal. anglican.ca

Black Lives Matter

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women all over the world are being killed off camera, but we won't ever know about it. Children having to be scared just because they're a darker shade of white. Truthfully, white people are literally mutations of black people, lol.

Nobody should have to be scared of the people who are supposed to protect us. Hairdressers have to have more training to hold a razor than police officers do to hold a gun.

Arrest the cops that killed Breonna Taylor.

BLM: What can I do?

The following sites provide information as well as concrete ways to help:

www.blacklivesmatter.ca/

www.thekit.ca/life/black-lives-matter-movement/

www.freshdaily.ca/news/2020/06/black-lives-matter-canada-donate/

www.montreal.ctvnews.ca/black-montrealers-create-list-of-anti-racism-resources-in-the-city-1.4971046

www.apathyisboring.com/antiracism

The Post-Covid 19 Exilic Church



TAPIWA HUGGINS GUSHA

The Rev'd Tapiwa Gusha is interim priest in charge of St Lawrence, LaSalle. He is pictured here with his wife Jean.

"...as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever, world without end..."

It is very interesting to note how words and phrases change meaning in different epochs and societies. The doxological words, "as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever, world without end..." in their Antiochian context pointed to the Glory of God the Father through the Son and the Holy Spirit. Later in the 16th century the same words were used universally to emphasize the undivided and unchangeable nature of God as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Currently in some quarters, the same words are also used sarcastically to describe the rigidity of the Anglican Church in view of different topical issues which have bedevilled the Church throughout history. It is in this context that I explore some of the possible challenges the Church in general and Anglican in particular may face if she decides to "do business as usual" in the post COVID 19 period. My analysis will be informed by the Israelites' exilic and post exilic experience as well as the Anglican Diocese of Harare exilic and post exilic experience.

The history of the Israelites would not be complete without mentioning the Babylonian captivity or exile which arguably lasted for about seventy years. Equally the same, the history of the Anglican Diocese of Harare in Zimbabwe cannot be complete without mentioning the five years (2007-2012) exilic experience. This was after the excommunication of the then Bishop Norbert Kunonga

who tried to unprocedurally withdraw the Diocese of Harare from the Anglican Church of the Province of Central Africa. This caused a terrible division among the clergy, as well as the parishioners, leading to the excommunication of Bishop Norbert Kunonga. However he had strong support from the then long-serving president of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe. As a result, for five years the judiciary gave Norbert Kunonga the custodianship of the Church's properties, preventing thousands of Anglicans access to their Church buildings and forcing them to worship in either school halls or other "Mainline" Churches' rented facilities.

That period gave Anglicans in Harare a clear understanding of what it means to be in exile and they then developed a better understanding of the Israelites' experience. The same exilic effects which affected the Israelites are by and large the same that were faced by the Anglican Diocese of Harare and I strongly believe that the contemporary Church will not be spared from the same effects come post-COVID 19 era. Three exilic factors were shared in common between the Israelites and the Anglican Diocese of Harare and the contemporary Church should expect the same. These are: Change of Theology, Superiority of Reasoning over Faith and Unplanned Growth.

Theology

Due to the exilic experience, Jews developed a "post-temple" theology. Prior to the exile the Jerusalem temple was the "heart" of Jewish worship. For the Jews, by then, Yahweh could only be worshiped in Jerusalem, the moment one moves away from Jerusalem implies also drifting away from the holiness of Yahweh. During and after the exile, they began to realize that Yahweh could not be confined to a building but can be worshiped anywhere.

The same manner that the Jews were detached from the temple is similarly the same manner that the people of Anglican Diocese of Harare were detached from their Church buildings. I believe that some people in the Anglican Diocese of Montreal never thought that

a Church service can be done online worse without Eucharist. The Israelites also changed their perception about the Ark of the Covenant and other religious objects. In the absence of these objects the Rabbi's role was suppose to be redefined. This also happened in the Anglican Diocese of Harare, the relationship between the clergy and the laity changed. I believe that even in the current context, the Church should be prepared for such a change.

Superiority of Reasoning

In the Israelite context, people were not allowed to question whatever the prophet said because prophets were the mouthpiece of Yahweh. Exile made Jews question almost everything, including the declaration of freedom. When they were told that Jerusalem was safe and ready to welcome them back, they returned not at once but in batches. It should be anticipated that on 6 September (the official date for the reopening of churches in the Anglican Diocese of Montreal); a good number of parishioners will not be comfortable to congregate or to receive Eucharist.

Unplanned Growth

Inasmuch as Exile diluted Judaism, it also facilitated the spread of Judaism and opened it to criticism. This made Judaism a bit relaxed and tolerant. In the Anglican Diocese of Harare, three quarters of the parishes acquired new Church and Rectory stands or even buildings. In the Anglican Diocese of Montreal, I feel this could be an opportunity to reach out as well as devise modern ways of worship i.e.; replacing the traditional hard copy hymn and missal books with overhead projections and so forth.

Conclusion

While others see opportunities in every difficulty, some see difficulties in every opportunity. The Church has proved over ages that she is always slow to react and rigid, "... as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever, world without end..." The Church should concentrate on the positives brought about by COVID 19 and this is only possible if she accepts that after reopening "it should not be business as usual".

I feel it's my turn as a white person to take risks. POC have been, and are, on the front lines – are being held back, discriminated against, killed because of the colour of their skin. I'll make mistakes. I'll say or do something racist. I will show my ignorance. I'm committed to listen, read, learn, join the struggle.

Ethnic Diversity

continued from page 7

met in some churches by a slow exodus of White worshippers. However, the mid-70's ushered in a period of greater acceptance of worshippers from the Caribbean, as well as their greater involvement in the overall responsibilities and life of the Diocese and individual parishes.

I came to Montreal in the late '60s and reflecting on that time, the Church's leadership must have realized that rather than stereotyping people on the basis of ethnicity, or subtly seeking to disassociate itself from people of other ethnicities, it needed to take positive and practical steps to appreciate the wonderful unity that is the one body of Christ.

"The affirmation and embrace of ethnic diversity and inclusiveness caused a sense of cohesion and belonging to develop in the heart of the Montreal Church."

The affirmation and embrace of ethnic diversity and inclusiveness caused a sense of cohesion and belonging to develop in the heart of the Montreal Church. Ultimately, Churches characterized by racial and ethnic minorities evolved to serve the religious and social needs of those groups.

By the mid-70s the Montreal Church had begun to reveal an identity which was culturally diverse and inclusive. Ms Blackman, reporting on St. Paul's Cote des Neiges, states that there was a gradual but consistent exit of white worshippers. This may be explained by the fact that the Cote des Neiges district is one of the most densely populated immigrant corridors in the City of Montreal, characterized by a high population turnover.

It was during Bishop Kenneth McGuire's tenure (1963-1975) that St. Lawrence Church was built to provide a place of worship for the rapidly growing multi-ethnic community in LaSalle. When this church opened in 1969 its composition was a healthy mix of White and Black worshippers. Today, 50 years later, the church is practically 100% Black.

Credit must be given to Bishop Reginald Hollis (1975-1990) for being at the forefront of change and for three achievements in particular: 1. promoting an authentic appreciation of ethnic differences in the Church; 2. encouraging the nurture of ethnically distinct congregations and the spiritual gifts they bring; 3. diversifying the cultural mix of its leadership at work and worship.

It is important to note that in 1978 Bishop Hollis recruited the Rev'd John McNab, a Caribbean priest and educator from Jamaica to become Rector at St. Paul's, Cote des Neiges, which was rapidly becoming majority Black. In 1982 Bishop Hollis recruited another West Indian priest, the Rev'd Anthony Jemmott of Barbados.

Fr. Jemmott spent one year at St. Paul's with Dr. John McNab before being moved to St. Lawrence, LaSalle, to be appointed their Rector. In 1991, Fr. Jemmott became Rector of Trinity Memorial Church in Montreal, also the home church of many Caribbean worshippers.

When the Rev'd Dr. John McNab was appointed Director of Pastoral Studies to the Montreal Diocesan Theological College in 1983, Fr. Jim Bennett was recruited to come from Guyana to Montreal with responsibility for the ministry of leadership at St. Paul's. Archdeacon Bennet has been serving this community and the Montreal Diocese since becoming rector, January 15, 1984, and has taken on major diocesan responsibilities.

It is important to stress that Bishop Hollis never sacrificed the installation of priests with high clerical qualification for the sake of recruiting priests who represented the majority ethnicity of the parish. Following in the footsteps of Bishop Hollis, his successor, Bishop Hutchison, in 1992, on the sound advice of the lay leadership at St. Lawrence, recruited the Rev'd Peter Fenty of Barbados. Father Peter subsequently relocated to Toronto, and was elected a suffragan Bishop and appointed to the York Simcoe area on April 6, 2013.

Bishop Hollis's actions revealed how passionate he was in his rejection of the idea that cultural factors should remain divisive forces in the life of the Anglican Diocese of Montreal. He embraced the spiritual needs and gifts of the Church's expanding multi-ethnic population, and his visionary leadership reflected a deep understanding of how being in Christ eradicates ethnic differences amongst believers.

Bishop Hollis was a true innovator. He used his God given gifts to respond to the emerging cultural needs of worshippers from the Caribbean, and reshaped the image of the Montreal Church. It is safe to say that the thinking that resulted in radical changes in Clerical leadership which Bishop Hollis introduced to the Montreal Church were in line with the vision of the National Church symposium on multiculturalism in the early 80's. The symposium led to the production of "Strangers no More" by the late Dr Romney Moseley. This report affirmed its belief in the equality of all peoples and the value of the richness that comes with racial and ethnic diversity. With credit to Bishop Hollis' effective leadership, the Montreal Anglican Church was at the forefront of significant cultural change.

Waking Up to Truths *continued from page 9*

diocese, in Black parishes.

Colour of teachers: Our first teacher of colour was a man from India in Grade 11.

Brownies and Girl Guides: Why were all of the sixers in Brownies and patrol leaders in Guides, white? Same in cubs and scouts.

Bank leaders: My brother worked his way up in the bank. There were no Blacks in positions of authority in the banks.

This is a beginning to understanding, making conscious,

what I never thought about. I didn't have to. That is white privilege.

I watched 13th on Netflix. I watched Dr. Carol Anderson speak about White Rage. The rage and hopelessness I felt make me want to hide. This is too hard. I don't know what to do. If I were to choose to hide, that would be my white privilege – because my brothers and sisters who are Black, brown, Indigenous, Asian don't have that option.

Open Letter to Diocesan Council Concerning the Approval of the Loan for St Paul's, Greenfield Park

To my colleagues and friends on the Diocesan Council,

This week, our council approved a 45,000\$ loan to the Church of St Paul's in Greenfield for the replacement of their furnace. I have voted in opposition to their application, and this letter details my reasons why.

If this were a request treated "within a vacuum", meaning, treated on face value, according to how loans were granted routinely in the past and without additional circumstances coming into play, I would be tempted to approve it. St Paul's demonstrates good financial management and has repaid loans in the past.

But we are not in a vacuum. We have many circumstances to consider, not the least of which is the Diocese's dire financial situation since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic which is leaving our institution in a state of uncertainty: we have lost over a million dollars in our market investments and have only managed to continue to pay salaries thanks to the federal government's salary subsidy program which will end in December 2020. Now is the time to reflect carefully and make courageous decision. It pains me to do this on the back of St Paul's, a parish which, at first glance, seems to be doing some genuinely good work.

Concerns over general strategy in the South Shore deanery

St-Paul's is part of a deanery of 13 churches, and 7 of them are located in the Greater Montreal South Shore within a 47 km radius. While St-Paul's is amongst the best attended parishes, their number of attending parishioners is still not at a level that can guarantee long-term sustainability. According to the 2018 statistics available in the 2019 Convening Circular, the total average attendance of the deanery is approximately 363 parishioners. This total number could fit into a single, medium-to-large church. And yet, we have 13. On this point, my opposition to the loan is not directed specifically at St-Paul's Anglican. I am simply baffled at the fact that we are still investing so heavily into buildings, one at a time, when what is clearly needed is a strategic vision for geographical districts, so that 45 000\$ - which is non-negligent - could be better invested into a growing, thriving community, one that has a long-term concerted plan for innovative ministry and mission.

In other words, I would gladly approve the amount requested (and more!) if it were, for instance, to support renovations needed to merge parishes, as was the case for St Mark's and St Peter's in 2018 or of Church of the Epiphany in 2010. I put to the entire South Shore deanery the question and the mandate to carve out a strategic, contextualized and concerted mission for this region.

Concerns with the process for loans application

I recognize that the staff and volunteers of St-Paul's have put considerable time and care into this application. The quality of the application is not under question. I am concerned however with whether the application truly corresponds to the criteria listed for granting loans.

The three first areas of interest stated in the form are:

- Projects that will help the parish expand its ministry
- New projects that might have difficulty finding financial help

- Projects that can be replicated and shared with others

I fail to see how the purchase of a furnace truly and honestly fits any of the above criteria. Let us be frank: this is an old building that needs a new furnace and the parish doesn't have the savings to pay for it. It is not innovative mission or ministry.

I do not deny that St-Paul's has a presence in its local neighbourhood and uses its building to the best of its capacity. Buildings can be a hub for ministry. But resources are needed for more than just building upkeep.

Concerns with the building model

The burden placed on parishes presently to care for these buildings is unconscionable. St-Paul's paid 35 000\$ in 2019 for their building and maintenance out of a budget of 137 000\$. That is nearly 26% of their entire budget. In the meantime, they spent 4605\$ on education, worship and missions - less than 4% of their entire budget, and those are the categories that are ACTUALLY ministry-oriented.

This is not a criticism of St-Paul's; many parishes are in exactly the same situation. But on the criteria for the loan application, the first item listed is whether the project is "Mission-oriented", and item number 5 states, "allows the congregation to flourish".

In other words, we might replace a furnace but we are not offering further support, financial or other, to help a church become a place of spiritual growth, of real community development, of strategic ministry and of financial sustainability. Our volunteer wardens and committee members are spending countless hours figuring out how to maintain buildings. Our clergy, trained in homiletics, Anglican liturgy and in Old Testament languages actually spend significant portions of their time fundraising for roof repairs and masonry.

Concerns with financial sustainability

I am concerned with the sustainable financial future of parishes such as St Paul's and of our entire Diocese. While St Paul's has an excellent track record at repaying loans, we simply do not know what is in store, economically, for the next 3 years. The governance structure being what it is, we at the Diocesan Council have very few cards to play when it comes to moving parishes in one direction or another. But the loans process is one card we can play. We can use this opportunity to motivate and incite discussion, dialogue, innovation and strategic planning.

I am pleading with the council to use this opportunity to dig into our very concerning financial situation and begin having deeper, more difficult conversations about the future. I am pleading to my colleagues on the council to use our position in leadership to work alongside parishes such as St Paul's to help them in this process as well.

Your sister in Christ,

Jenna Smith

Equipping the Saints

JESSE ZINK

The Rev'd Dr Jesse Zink is the Principal of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College and the Canon Theologian of the Diocese

Meeting the Messiah

For the last several years, Montreal Diocesan Theological College has been offering online non-credit courses that introduce the gospels to participants. This year the focus is on the Gospel of Mark—and it couldn't be more timely.

The Gospel of Mark was written against the backdrop of a society in tumult. It was the middle of a hugely destructive war between Jewish people in Palestine and the Roman army. This war would culminate in the destruction of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. Jewish people broke into different fac-

tions as they pursued different ways of responding to Rome: engagement, withdrawal, rebellion. Rome itself was in turmoil. Nero, the emperor, was making his horse a senator and setting fire to Rome while playing his proverbial fiddle. He was also making time to blame Christians for his trouble, unleashing a wave of persecution against the early church that would result in the death of Peter, Paul, and many other early leaders.

In the midst of this, an unknown author whom the church has long called Mark, sat down to write "the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1). In his gospel, Mark explains why the life, teachings, ministry, and, ultimately, death and resurrection of a little-remembered Jewish leader from a remote region of Palestine called Galilee was

of central importance to the tumultuous world. This Jesus was the messiah, but he was a messiah who brought about transformation in the world not by military or political victory but by death on the cross. It is a strange story of "good news" but it has one that has fascinated and transformed Christians across the centuries. It brings the reader face-to-face with Jesus and asks the reader to wrestle with who Jesus is and what he means for the world.

It hardly needs saying that we also live at a tumultuous time: pandemic, race relations, economic inequality, climate change, migration—these are all massive questions that are causing uncertainty, fear, and turmoil as we seek our way forward. Our own future as a church can seem uncertain too, making many of us ask what it is that people of faith have

to contribute to this changing world.

Our course is called "Meeting the Messiah: Reading the Gospel of Mark" and I'll be teaching it. Over five evening sessions together, we'll look at Mark's portrayal of Jesus in several ways, including more about the background in which Jesus ministered, the politics of Jesus, and what might Jesus might have to say to our own world. Whether you've done one of these courses before or if you haven't, I encourage you to register. Engagement with Scripture is one of the best ways to build a culture of discipleship in congregations. The Gospel of Mark is an incredible gospel and it is perfect to read against the backdrop of the world we live in now.

"Meeting the Messiah" meets for five Tuesday evenings from 7pm to 8:30pm,

beginning on October 20 and ending on November 17. We use Zoom to meet together. In past years, we have had groups of people gather together to participate in this course and use our resources for discussions afterwards. If you're interested in this, I encourage you to be in touch and we can provide more details. The cost to register is \$80 per connection or \$60 for members of our College Corporation (which anyone can join). More information is on our website: www.montrealdio.ca.

Questions? Feel free to drop me a line: jessezink@montrealdio.ca or info@montrealdio.ca. Can't do e-mail? Give us a call: 514.849.3004 x221.

A Prayer from the Diocesan Representatives The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer - Canada



Heavenly Father, thank you for your guidance and protection as we wrestled with COVID-19. We are grateful that, despite the fear this pandemic instilled in us, we were able to find new ways to function as a society.

We are grateful that through this pandemic, you opened our eyes to see the many flaws in our systems that seemed fool-proof. The festering issues of racism, underemployment, affordable housing, and climate change have all been glaringly exposed during this short time. We beseech you, Lord, to guide us in ways that will create lasting change. Help us to work with all responsible agents who are trying to reform these broken systems. We pray for our bishops who are lobbying for a guaranteed basic income, for policy makers who need to draft new legislation, and for corporations who must better compensate their employees.

Lord, we confess that in our self-centredness, we had not truly understood how those in long-term care residences were treated by the system. We did not pay attention to the caregivers who were forced to work at

multiple residences because they were not being fairly remunerated. We were ignorant of how great a family's contribution was in maintaining their loved one's health and not having access to them became life threatening. This reality was at the detriment of the clients. We pray to you, gracious God, that we will remain vigilant witnesses and continue to force those in authority to make lasting and meaningful changes.

Heavenly Father, we give thanks and appreciation for teachers and all school employees. This shut-down proved how difficult it is to teach our youth in meaningful ways. As schools reopen and everyone goes back to the classroom, we pray dear Lord that you guide them in creative ways to maintain physical distancing and safety as children are equally susceptible to this virus.

Heavenly Father, we implore you to be with us as we return to our church buildings for worship. Help us to stay safe and healthy as we share the Gospel and bring comfort to those in need through these still uncertain times.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.
God Bless, Valerie and Stacey

For more information on AFP-C, contact Valerie Bennett and Sacey Neale at valstacey@bell-net

Trouble cont from page 5

I must be the one to come across. Suddenly I saw that, yes, white people tended to group around me at the coffee hour, even if it wasn't my intention. Why had I never noticed that before?

I think of when I first began attending the North Tulsa Ministerial Alliance two years ago. Those Saturday evenings in the presence of all black, all male Baptist preachers I became very quiet, not expecting any sign that I was wanted in their midst, just listening and learning a lot. It was not a comfortable place to be at first. I'm sure you know the feeling! And yet I wanted to be there. I remember how it felt having someone stand up for me, as when Rev. Mel Bailey paid my dues, thereby making me a member.

At some point in that first year I acknowledged the unconscious guilt behind thoughts like "I didn't cause this discrepancy of opportunity," or "I can't help it if I live on the south side of town," etc. Until that time, I had denied those insidious pangs of guilt that went along with them. But once the feeling of guilt was conscious and named, then it couldn't be denied any longer. Then I knew myself to be a systemically implicated racist.

If we're looking for God, we're looking for trouble.

Somehow the naming of the unconscious complicity had the effect of releasing or changing it. The release from unconscious guilt over what my ancestors and contemporaries have caused your ancestors and you has come only through accepting my participation in that oppression: that it is a part of my history and so a part of me whether or not I wish it to be there. It helps me know my own historical roots and see them in a larger context. I would even say it is part of my identity now, not a part I am proud of, but a part I can attend to and work on. I see myself as a recovering racist. And as those in recovery know, it is a lifelong process. I say this not in a self-critical way. Rather, the effect of it has been freeing. I know something of my need—for the wideness of God's mercy.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 12 Paul speaks of the diversity in the community of Christians at Corinth on the analogy of the body having many members:

If the foot were to say 'because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body' that would not make it any less a part of the body... but if one member suffers, all suffer together with it...

Not many white people would accept that because black people are suffering and oppressed, they too are suffering and oppressed. In fact, I would be surprised if many black folk would accept that white people suffer too.

There is a distinct vulnerability in making ourselves open to learn what we have been unconscious of before, something we have denied, shielded our consciousness from. But the consciousness which whites shrink back and refuse to give any reality or credence to is the very thing which, when acknowledged, can give a sense of identification with

others in their suffering. It is the unknown and oppressed member of our own spirit which we deny in ourselves. The effect of denying it is to continue to foster the unconscious oppression of the other within, and to express that in the unconscious refusal to receive and welcome the other who is unlike us in our society. It is to say with the Pharisee who prayed with himself, "I thank God that I am not like that man."

By contrast, the effect of opening ourselves up to otherness both in the world and in ourselves brings forth in us a new depth of compassion. It is to go out into the houses of those very different from ourselves and listen to their histories, told their way they know them, which may hurt. It is to accept that this may trouble us, but that somehow God is going to be in it.

If we're looking for God, we're looking for trouble.

As I have come slowly, with resistance, to grasp my identity as a beloved child of God, simultaneously I have become increasingly aware of my identity as a member of a body, the body of humankind in this time and place, and yet somehow joined with others throughout history and in all places. A body which includes others very different from myself, and yet all struggling to know God's presence in their lives, seeking to know who they are, what the meaning of their existence is and how they are to identify in heart and action with others in their suffering.

What can lead me out of the bondage of defense and denial is the reality of God's grace. If the Gospel is not about grace, it is not good news. Christ conveyed this to Paul in his vulnerable state when he said, "My grace is sufficient for you." James Weldon Johnston knew this—another recovering racist—when he wrote the hymn Amazing Grace. Grace is God's power to transform fear into love. Grace is not about rescue, not about delivery from our problems. Grace is not about believing we can get God to do what we want. "My ways are not your ways, says the Lord." But neither is grace just spiritual, unrelated to our material existence. Grace is about the transformation of denial into a wider trust, the dissolution of apathy into compassion, the breaking in of hope where there was before only cynicism. And that kind of change affects who we define ourselves to be. It affects how we interact with others, where we believe God to be at work in the world. It can change the world.

If we're looking for God, we're looking for trouble.

I have known grace here in your midst in this community of North Tulsa and I have found a kinship with you and your ancestors in the trust which you place in God in the midst of oppression. You have taught me much. If we are looking for God today in this broken world, we are still looking for trouble—the kind of trouble that God stirs in us which can bring healing and trust.

So, as Harriett would say, "Wade on in the water. God's gonna trouble the water."

BLM and Social Media continued from page 6

decades back, BLM has made its mark in the world as perhaps the most popular movement for one main reason - the existence of social media. A platform for eyewitness accounts, social media broadcasts uncensored news items, in their entirety, much more quickly than the traditional news medias- directly to personal handheld devices. Vloggers record questionable events, such as police using excessive force, as people conduct

their daily lives. In other words, we minister wholly and truthfully to each other as events unfold daily.

Most of us believe what we see, we verify the content, we empathize with victims and thank the people that took their time posting videos of their observation. Citizens have taken the reporting of news items into their own hands. No interpretation, no false persuasion, no smooth-talk, no ulterior

motives but private videos of crimes against humanity. Proverb 12:17 assures us that "An honest witness tells the truth, but a false witness tells lies."

Perhaps we will continue to minister truth to each other, to nurture each other in ways we haven't done before, perhaps a true change is in the not-so-distant horizon below the rainbow.

The Seed continued from page 2

our disastrous stewardship of this precious and unique planet". Our film reflects the understanding that our failure to act makes us complicit.

Faith leaders can leverage the ethical dimension of the discussion, amplify the call to action and press political leaders to act. It starts by telling the truth. The World Council of Churches issued a Pentecost message that reads as follows: "To prophesy is to tell the truth".

Theologian Stanley Hauerwas challenges the church to be a counterpoint to mendacity. In a post-truth world, Stanley said, "perhaps the Church can become known as the community that tells the truth".

Religious leaders around the world have declared climate emergencies and we encourage Bishop Mary to join them. The most important thing we can do to reduce emissions is to move away from fossil fuels. In

the Anglican Diocese of Montreal this means acting on the 2015 divestment motion and prioritizing climate action.

Despite the seriousness of the situation, our film concludes with a welcoming and hopeful invitation.

We will be launching the video during the Season of Creation (Sep 1 – Oct 4). Stay tuned to the Diocesan or SEC websites for more details.

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