Parish expenses reduced in revised 2021 Synod budget

Decision leads to deficit budget but supports goal of sustainable Anglican presence in Quebec, say two senior staff members

By Matthew Townsend
Editor

When the Synod of the Diocese of Quebec met in November 2019, the diocese set itself on a course towards sustainability: aiming for a balanced budget in 2021. The diocese hadn’t seen a balanced budget in more than a decade.

As fate—and the coronavirus pandemic—would have it, the Diocese of Quebec will again see a deficit budget this year, following a decision by the Diocesan Executive Council (DEC) to reduce the “fair share”—the proportion of parish income paid to the diocese each year.

“Because of COVID, we made the decision to modify fair share,” said Marie-Sol Gaudreau, director general of the diocese, during a Feb. 9 Zoom call with the Gazette and Archdeacon and Vicar General the Ven. Dr. Edward Simonton OGS.

Fair share for any given year is calculated from two years prior—so this year’s assessment is based on parishes’ 2019 income. With the pandemic, the full amount “makes no sense for parishes, since they’ve been closed—most of them—since March,” Gaudreau said. “Parishes probably don’t have the liquidity to pay on their income from two years ago.”

Simonton agreed, noting that parishes would need to pay out of income they earned in 2020—what went into their bank accounts last year, much lower than in 2019.

The relief applies to regular income—around a 50 per cent decrease on the assessed amount. The assessment on investment income has not changed, however, as it was barely affected by the pandemic.

“The credit that we’re giving to parishes is roughly between 40 to 45 per cent of their fair share,” Gaudreau said. A parish with larger investment income will see a smaller decrease of fair share, such as 38 per cent; a parish that lacks investments may see a 52 per cent decrease, for example. “It averages out.”

This amounts to a deficit of around $125,000 in the diocesan budget.

No cuts made for now

To manage this shortfall, the diocese is avoiding cuts, Gaudreau said. Instead, it will manage the deficit with cashflow.

“That’s where it becomes difficult,” she said. “We’re going to have a cashflow issue. So how do we pay

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Interview: Naskapi Chief Noah Swappie

‘Working together—as one, as a group, as a team—is key to success’

By Matthew Townsend
Editor

The Anglican Diocese of Quebec is often described as vast—and one reason is Kawawachikamach, home to St. John’s Church and the Naskapi First Nation. Kawawachikamach, as it’s often called for short, is a two-and-a-half-hour flight away from Quebec City, and can only be reached by plane or train. The community sits on the border between Quebec and Labrador, about 200 km north of Labrador City—but it’s about 1,000 km away from the see city.

To learn how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the thousand or so people who live in the isolated nation, Quebec Diocesan Gazette editor Matthew Townsend spoke with Chief Noah Swappie of the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach.

The interview, which was held on February 19, has been edited for brevity and clarity.

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CONSIDER THE ZUCCHINI
(how they grow)

Bethany Paetkau in her garden

Gardening is a faithful way to discover the bounty of God in the world

By Bethany Fehr Paetkau
Parishes of New Carlisle and Chaleur Bay

Sometimes I have the feeling that I was born in the wrong era. Gardening satisfies and excites me. Here I am, in a time and place where gardening is viewed as optional, sometimes even as a “luxury” for people with extra time, oversized yard space, and overflowing energy. However, humankind has survived for thousands of years thanks to successful efforts of gathering the fruits of the earth, both domesticated or gardened produce as well as the things gathered from the wild. Gardening has its roots in simply taking wild plants and encouraging them to grow in a place that was more convenient, in a time-frame that was more expedient, or with traits that were more palatable. In other words, humankind sought to grow food close to the home, producing predictable, delicious and nutritious harvests.

Here and now, in the 21st century, I find myself still desiring these same things. People around the world continue to rely on their gardens for reliable, daily nourishment. The processors and grocery stores, however, send out an underlying message that vegetable and fruit gardening is just for fun or even unnecessary, since anything and everything we could want can be bought.

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INTERVIEW: NASKAPI CHIEF NOAH SWAPPIE

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Continued on page 4
Resurrection cancelled due to technical difficulties

By Louise Blair

Columns

This long pandemic absence from church has made all of us take a second look at the whole rignarole. Why spend half my precious Sunday getting to church and back, instead of a quick visit to Facebook to see how the bishop’s hair is getting along without moving my rear end off the sofa? By the time you read this, I hope we will be meeting again in our cold, expensive buildings to celebrate the resurrection of the god-man whom we killed.

Why do I hope for that, apart from the comforting assurance (2) that two-thirds of men and a quarter of women would rather self-administer electric shocks than sit without moving my rear end off the sofa? By the time I wrote this, I had found a place where people before me had left a rusty barrel of burned-out votive candles. I took off my skis and pushed my way in. It was a cave, papered floor to ceiling with 1940s kitchen linoleum. The front door was an altar and a kneeler. Jesus, Mary, or Joseph had deserted the chapel long ago, or at least their statues had, but animals had been taking shelter there ever since. The farmer and his family must have once stopped here to pray. By the cave door was a rusty barrel of burned-out votive candles. I had found a place where people before me had prayed and felt the presence of God. I need that. A lot of people in this world have to do this mysterious thing called worshiping at home, alone. But if I’m blessed enough to have place where I can go, physically, on my two legs, to celebrate the Resurrection, I’ll be there.

carrying our burden of private pain and hope, up to the front to con- sume the body and blood of our god, not even knowing what that means. Sharing the waiting (and sometimes this is all we share) for something deep and true, a word, a taste. “Only say the Word, and I shall be healed.” Sharing the thirst for that moment, which I can never take for granted but almost always happens, when a word or phrase from all the mum- bu-jumbo actually sinks in, and I know that my Redeemer liveth.

When we’re in our remnant, bore-dom transforms into waiting. Couldn’t we do most of this by Zoom? A permanent physical sepa- ration, not only from my remnant, but from a physical place of worship, reminds me of death, the Great Sep- aration. On Zoom my soul may be offered virtual eternal life (if I’m not defeated by technical difficulties), but my body stays rotting on the sofa. Is there a resurrection from this kind of death?

I’m not the first to long for ways to be in a physical place of worship when church is out of the question. I have spent the last nine months on Île d’Orléans, an island settled by French farmers in the early 1600s. In the old days, when saints’ days were almost every other day, farmers got fed up with going to Mass so often. They couldn’t keep up with the field work. So they built croix de chemin (roadside crosses) and wayside chapels where they could stop to pray. On the island, in addition to eight churches, there are six pro- cession chapels, 24 roadside crosses and an oratory. But I recently discovered a place of worship that isn’t even on a road or a path. One day out skiing in the fields, I was passing by an old hunting blind on a bend in the Maheux River and I noticed a doorway in the mound underneath, blocked by an old apple tree. I took off my skis and pushed my way in. It was a cave, papered floor to ceiling with 1940s kitchen linoleum. The front door was an altar and a kneeler. Jesus, Mary, or Joseph had deserted the chapel long ago, or at least their statues had, but animals had been taking shelter there ever since. The farmer and his family must have once stopped here to pray while ploughing, planting, or raking hay. By the cave door was a rusty barrel of burned-out votive candles. I had found a place where people before me had prayed and felt the presence of God. I need that. A lot of people in this world have to do this mysterious thing called worshiping at home, alone. But if I’m blessed enough to have place where I can go, physically, on my two legs, to celebrate the Resurrection, I’ll be there.

DIEU ET SA MUSIQUE

Petite histoire du psaume chanté (2)

Par Irène Brisson
Organiste, Église Saint-Michael à Sillery

L’article précédent était consacré aux racines bibliques du psaume et à sa transmission aux premiers chrétiens. Nous verrons dans les lignes qui suivent quelques étapes simplifiées de son évolution.

Le psaume au Moyen-Âge

Durant le Moyen-Âge, c’est principalement dans les communautés religieuses qu’on a chanté le psaume, en latin, selon la Liturgie des heures qui réglait la vie monastique quotidienne en moments de prieres, allant des laudes ou louanges matinales aux vigiles nocturnes. Cela incluait les vêpres, au coucher du soleil, qui comprenaient de ces psaumes, le Magnificat et des hymnes à caractère poétique. On l’in- trodut également dans les églises et dans les chapelles privées sous forme de chant d’intérieur (entree) ou de Graduel (qui se chantait au pied des marches – gradus – du chœur ou du jubé, d’où son nom).


Cette cantillation sur une seule note s’est transmise à de nombreuses prières du chant grégorien, dont le Magni- ficat. Durant le Moyen-Âge on a aussi chanté le psaume en faux-bourdon, c’est-à-dire plusieurs voix parallèles, un procédé qui a évolué au fil des siècles et dont on trouve des échos dans l’harmonisation des psaumes anglicans. Dès la Renaissance, quelques compositeurs catholiques au service de chapelles privées ou éparques met- tent des psaumes et des vêpres en musique, en suivant les règles de composition de leur époque. Ainsi, parmi les chefs-d’œuvre du répertoire figurent les Psaumes de pénitence d’Orlando di Lasso (1565), le célèbre Mise­ renre en faux-bourdon de Gregorio Allegri (1639) chanté régulièrement à la chapelle Sixtine, las fastueuses Vêpres de...
Assembler un nouveau vêtement

Lors d’une conversation que j’ai eue avec la primat de l’Église anglicane du Canada pendant le Carême, j’ai demandé à l’archévêque Linda Nicholls ce qu’elle souhaitait que soient nos intentions de prière.

Sa réponse a été de nous inviter à prier pour la clairvoyance de parvenir à distinguer « ce que l’on doit conserver et ce qu’il faut abandonner alors que la COVID-19 (nous l’espérons) se dissipe. Priez pour qu’à travers ce pays nous soyons en mesure de reconnaître ce en faveur de quoi il faut militer - pour le bien de tout le peuple de Dieu, pour le bien commun. »

Tenter de discerner entre ce qu’il est bon de maintenir et ce que l’on devrait mettre de côté n’est pas seulement un bon exercice à faire pendant le Carême; c’est un travail urgent et essentiel alors que nous commençons lentement à émerger de cette pandémie qui dure depuis maintenant un an. Et il ne s’agit pas seulement de décider des conséquences de la COVID-19 que nous pouvons nous pousser, mais aussi de quelles pratiques nous pourrions avoir à abandonner et des attentes que nous pourrions avoir à ajuster, en reconnaissance du fait que nos manières de faire les choses avant la pandémie étaient insoutenables - tant pour nous que pour notre planète.

Sonya Renee Taylor a parfaitement exprimé ces sentiments dans un poème qu’elle a écrit dans les premiers jours de la pandémie: [traduction libre]

Nous ne reviendrons pas à la normale. La normalité n’a jamais existé.
Notre existence pré-corona n’était pas normale
alors que nous avons normalisé la cupidité, l’injustice, la débilitation, l’épuisement,
lextraction, la désconnexion, la confusion, la rage, la théâtrauxisation, la haine et la pénurie.
Nous ne devrions pas avoir envie de retourner là, mes amis.
On nous offre la possibilité d’assembler un nouveau vêtement.
Un vêtement qui conviendra à toute l’humanité et à toute la nature.

L’opportunité qui nous est offerte est d’assembler un nouveau vêtement, pas simplement de réparer les déchirures révélées ou agrandies par la pandémie. Confectionner un tout nouveau vêtement prend plus de temps et d’efforts qu’un travail de rapiéçage, mais ce qui en résulte est plus durable. Pour être Jésus présentait-il un défi similaire à ses auditeurs lorsqu’il a dit: « Personne ne coud une pièce d’étoffe neuve à un vieux vêtement; tout nouveau vêtement prend plus de temps et d’efforts qu’un travail de rapiéçage, mais sinon le morceau neuf qu’on ajoute tire sur le vieux vêtement, et la déchirure est pire. »

Jésus n’est pas venu prêcher une approche fragmentaire visant à faire du monde un espacement d’il y a peu moins négligé pour vivre nos existences. Il est venu proclamer un royaume de justice et de paix rapidement transformé - un royaume qui renonce à la litanie de maux normalisés que Taylor décrit dans son poème et qui embrasse plutôt leurs opposés: générosité, équité, repos, entente, restauration, communauté, clarité, paix, partage, amour et abondance.

« Sans précédent » est peut-être l’expression la plus utilisée de la pandémie. Mais les conséquences de la COVID-19 nous offrent une opportunité sans précédent - mais bien éphémère - en tant qu’individus, familles, communautés, églises, société et famille mondiale, d’assembler un nouveau vêtement du type que Jésus propose: « qui conviendra à toute l’humanité et à toute la nature. » On nous pouvons simplement essayer de rafistoler les choses dans l’espoir de restaurer une normalité qui n’a jamais existé, et risquer que des déchirures plus graves se manifestent dans notre tissu collectif à l’avenir.

Alors, comment allons-nous y prendre?

FROM THE BISHOP

Stitching a new garment

In a conversation during Lent with the primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, I asked Archbishop Linda Nicholls what she would like us to pray for.

In response, she invited us to pray for discernment about “what to hang onto and what to let go of as (we hope) COVID releases itself. Pray that within this country we will know what to advocate for—for the sake of all God’s people, for the common good.”

Discerning what to hang onto and what to let go of isn’t just a good exercise for Lent; it’s an urgent and essential task as we slowly begin to emerge from the year-long pandemic. And it doesn’t just involve deciding what possessions we need to do without, but also what practices we may have to abandon, and what expectations we might have to adjust, in recognition that much of the way we’ve been doing things pre-pandemic were unsustainable—for us and for our planet.

Sonya Renee Taylor gave expression to this in a poem she wrote in the early days of COVID-19:

We will not go back to normal. Normal never was.
Our pre-corona existence was not normal
other than we normalized greed, inequity, exhaustion, depletion,
extraction, disconnection, confusion, rage, hoarding, hate and lack.
We should not to long to return, my friends.
We are being given the opportunity to stitch a new garment.
One that fits all of humanity and nature.

The opportunity before us is to stitch a new garment, not simply to patch up the holes revealed or made bigger by the pandemic. Crafting a whole new garment takes longer and is harder work than a patching job, but the result is lasting. Perhaps Jesus was placing a similar kind of challenge before his hearers when he said, “No one sews a piece of unshrank cloth on an old cloth; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made.”

Jesus didn’t come preaching a piecemeal approach to making the world a slightly less miserable place to live out our days. He came proclaiming an utterly transformed kingdom of justice and peace—one that renounces the litany of normalized ills Taylor describes in her poem and instead embraces their opposites: generosity, equity, rest, stewardship, restoration, community, clarity, peace, sharing, love and abundance.

“Unprecedented” is perhaps the most overused word of the pandemic. But the consequences of COVID-19 are indeed providing us with an unprecedented—and rapidly fleeting—opportunity as individuals, households, communities, churches, societies, and a global family to stitch a new garment of the kind that Jesus envisions: “one that fits all of humanity and nature.” Or we can just try and patch things up in hopes of restoring a normal that never was, and risk worse tears in our collective fabric in the future.

How then shall we sew?

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How then shall we sew?
INTERVIEW: NASKAPI CHIEF NOAH SWAPPIE

Protecting the people from page 1

What has life been like in Kawawa since the pandemic began?

Ever since the announcement last year, March 13, things have been quite different. Less travel.

There has been a drastic improvement in actions taken by the government. We’re accessing different funding for areas where the pandemic has drastically impacted our everyday life in the community. We were able, with that additional funding, to keep our community safe. We put up a checkpoint. We actually recently dismantled it, but if need be, it’s ready to go up again.

We’re not letting our guard down. Now they’re talking about this third wave, with the new variants. We try to prepare for the unexpected all the time.

How have people felt about the pandemic? Does it feel close—or more like something that’s far away?

Well, I don’t want us to feel that we’re close to it, and I don’t want to feel that we’re far away from it. Because if we start adopting a mindset that we’re far away from it, we’re going to let our guard down, eh?

Right now, in the community, people are pretty much at ease because we’ve always added these extra measures. The government announces these measures, and we always do a bit more than the government is doing.

Have any cases come into the community?

In our community, no. But we have a neighbouring community, which is the town of Schefferville. And in the town of Schefferville, there’s the Innu, the Matimekush-Lac John.

There was a case there, but that was quickly investigated, contained and controlled, so there was no outbreak.

In our community, there are two objectives when we have an emergency: to keep COVID contained, and controlled, so there was no outbreak.
The first round of vaccines was 177, and 200 more came in this week.

Some people are still hesitant to take the vaccine because of social media—you know how people can react to it. But the majority of the community are pretty OK with the vaccine.

We’re recommending that people get vaccinated, but we’re not forcing anybody to do it.

Is there a big impact from social media in Kawawa?

The thing with social media is we have good access to it. We’ve managed to roll out a direct fiber link to the south—which means we have super-fast internet.

Given the misinformation that circulates online, that sounds like a mixed blessing.

I guess you could say that, but we try to get the facts out there.

What else should the Diocese of Quebec know about life in Kawawa right now?

I think the diocese should inject more money into our church, St. John’s. We’ve been trying to do virtual mass and ceremonies, but the church is lacking that technology.

And the church is owned by the diocese.

We’ve been telling people, “You can’t have so many people gathering at the church at any given time.” But people—it’s only human that they want to go to a funeral. We are closely knit as a community. Everyone is related.

So you’re suggesting investment into technology for different ways of doing things?

Communication is key to everything right now.

The condition of the church building, too, is not very healthy. We injected monies into the church for repairs to plumbing, and making it look welcoming. Right now it’s pretty run down, and I’m sure it’s due for a new roof. I come from a construction background, and every 25 years you have to change the roof.

The church needs to feel more welcoming, inviting.
Les psaumes de la page 2

de la Vierge de Claudio Monteverdi (1610) et les Vêpres solennelles d’un Confesseur de Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1780), connues pour leur sublime Laudate Dominum.

La Réformew luthérienne et le psaume


« En traduisant les textes sacrés et les psaumes en langue vernaculaire, les instigateurs du protestantisme ont cherché à les rendre compréhensibles à tous. »

Certaines de ses mélodies, notamment celle pour le psaume 119 (exemple 2), font toujours partie du répertoire religieux. Ce thème figure à quatre reprises dans le Common Praise : CP 231, CP 320, CP 344, paraphrasant le psaume 117 et, sans doute le plus connu de tous – même de Mr Bean – All Creatures of Our God and King, CP 355.

Le psautier huguenot

Jean Calvin, exilé pendant quelques années à Strasbourg, y découvre les psaumes luthériens et en traduit plusieurs en français. Il emprunte à Greiter sa mélodie du Psaume 119 pour sa paraphrase du psaume 36 (En moy le secret pénitent et le réjouissance pour le psaume 68 (Que Dieu mètre seulement)). Pour Calvin, le psaume est la seule musique digne d’être chantée dans les temples, et elle doit l’être à l’unisson, sans instruments, la mélodie étant au service de la parole, afin « qu’il y ait grande différence entre la musique qu’on fait pour réjouir les hommes à table et leur maison, et celle des Psaumes que se chantent en l’Église, en la présence de Dieu et de ses Anges. »

Ces ans de patience ont été récompensés par le succès soudain du psautier huguenot, telle la série de 1560 par le poète huguenot Claude Flocard et le compositeur Jean Goudimel, avec pour hymne de clôture le fameux psaume 150, basé sur des thèmes de Michel de Noblet.

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...
THOUGHTS FOR THE EASTER SEASON

Connected—forever—by the power of baptism

By Joan Boeckner
Parish of Quebec at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity

On January 10, 2021—the Baptism of our Lord in the liturgical calendar—Bishop Bruce, due to last-minute, unforeseen technical difficulties, could not lead worship. With only a few moments to prepare, Matthew Townsend stepped in to offer the online and telephone service. In Matthew’s concise, inspiring message, he reflected on his own adult baptism, expressing his sensation of feeling loved and of being responsible to God and to a community.

Then Matthew invited us, following this service, to reflect on our own baptism. This prompted me to pen a few thoughts on baptism or christening, as I like to call it.

I was a baby, so I don’t have personal memories of my baptism—only those I was told later. Without a doubt, my devout Lutheran parents considered it the key moment in my little life. Everything I later believed and did hinged upon the fact of God and truly feeling that, and knowing as well, that I was a full and responsible member of the community of my fellow believers and church family, my church families, as I grew and when I lived in different places—but always connected.

Later that Sunday I was again struck by this warmth and strength of connectedness when I received several contacts from fellow cathedral family members and also a call from friends in my Lutheran church family back home in Walkerton, Ont.—extremely significant for me.

Pandemic’s effects on parishes

By Joan Boeckner
Parish of Quebec at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity

In the Diocese of Quebec, Simonton said, many parishes have been doing better than expected at the start of the pandemic, in financial terms, thanks to subsidies and low spending across the diocese.

Parishes that have participated in the diocese’s pooled funds, part of its investment portfolio, also weathered 2020 more easily, Gaudreau added. While global stock markets all declined substantially in the first months of the pandemic, they recovered and ended the year with significant gains. Thus, investments proved to be a reliable source of income in 2020.

“Our investment portfolio historically pays out 5.5 per cent in dividends each year. It’s a well-managed portfolio, and its value has increased in the past decade.”

This return has helped the diocese manage its deficit this year. Parishes that were down to six or 10 individuals may say, ‘We’ve been closed for a year. We don’t see the objective—we don’t see the point,’ Gaudreau believes. “Certain parishes that were down to six or 10 individuals may say, ‘We’ve been closed for a year. We don’t see the objective—we don’t see the point.’

We have no idea what’s coming,” he said. “But what we do know is: what has been entrusted to us, we must pass on to the next generation—whether that next generation wants it or not. And one of the things that the older churches can do is to remain present, so that we’re still here in 100 years, and can offer what we need to offer in 100 years.

Others may not be able to do this, he said.

“I always use the metaphor of getting as big a hump on a camel as you possibly can as we go through the desert. A lot of institutions like ours won’t make it across the desert—they’ll run out of a hump. We probably won’t. So, we can pass on to the next generation whatever that next generation wants or not. And one of the things that the older churches can do is to remain present, so that we’re still here in 100 years and can offer what we need to offer in 100 years.”

Fair share lowered for 2021 from page 1

by Joan Boeckner
Parish of Quebec at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity

On this day of reflecting on the meaning of baptism and of being an integral part of a community of believers.

I also wish to mention that my godparents were my two grandfathers, both of whom passed away within 12 days of each other, before I was three years old. But the godmothering continued as I grew, since three aunts filled this role. Even at my confirmation, they were present to carry out this commitment—excellent model for me, Gaudreau believes. As a faith-filled couple, and perhaps since we did not have children of our own, my husband, Keith, and I received the blessing, privilege and responsibility of being godparents to several special children in our lives: children of family and of friends. We took our commitment to godparenthood very seriously, both from a religious belief and with the understanding of moral support and involvement. Two of our godchildren grew up knowing if anything happened to their parents, they would come to live with us here in Quebec—even though that would have meant a change of province and a change of education and language.

The baptism of each of our cherished godchildren brought us the gift to spread our love. We felt so privilieged to share so vitally in the lives of these dear little beings, beginning their Christian lives and journeys. A poignantly vivid memory is the joy and deep feeling of responsibility being godmother, and Keith her godfather, to a very precious little girl here in Quebec City. I will never forget and always feel the power of that moment, when the sign of the cross was made on her forehead and in my arms, her eyes flew open and she looked directly into my eyes, little though she was. It was like our souls were being bonded together, and this electrical impulse went up from her body and into my arms, joining our spirits forever. I knew without any doubt that she, too, was a blessed, chosen child of God.

I shall close this reflection on baptism by remembering my beloved Keith. I know he was a chosen son of God, and he always felt that. He lived out God’s plan, will, and purpose for his life. I feel it was so fitting and so very meaningful that Keith was baptized Oct. 14, 1945, and his funeral was Oct. 14, 2017—full circle, when he was blessed and commended back into God’s keeping in heaven.

Joan Boeckner is a member of the Parish of Quebec at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. During the pandemic she has called in weekly to Home Prayers with Bishop Bruce.

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BUDGET & STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship for a future ‘in flux’

If parishes do decide to close in the aftermath of the pandemic, a long-term strategy exists for the proceeds of any property sales: investing them in pooled funds and using the dividends to fund regional ministry. Simonton said maintaining a sustainable Anglican presence in the diocese is among the senior staff’s guiding principles, even if it’s hard to imagine what the future might hold while the world is “in flux” —as the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates.

“We have no idea what’s coming,” he said. “But what we do know is: what has been entrusted to us, we must pass on to the next generation—whether that next generation wants it or not. And one of the things that the older churches can do is to remain present, so that we’re still here in 100 years and can offer what we need to offer in 100 years.”

Others may not be able to do this, he said.

“I always use the metaphor of getting as big a hump on a camel as you possibly can as we go through the desert. A lot of institutions like ours won’t make it across the desert—they’ll run out of a hump. We probably won’t. So, we can pass on to the next generation whatever that next generation wants or not. And one of the things that the older churches can do is to remain present, so that we’re still here in 100 years and can offer what we need to offer in 100 years.”

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As Christians, however, we know that not everything we need can be bought. The desires of our hearts, souls, and minds are best satisfied by the grace of God at work in the people and places around us. God blesses us with love, comfort, peace, mercy, and healing. When I am at work in my garden, I daily know the comfort, peace, and healing power of uniting myself with the life of the world around me. Gardening with a friend, with my husband, or with my children—that is when I am encouraged to be patient is required to begin a new garden. My son Peter tucked under his feet and chard bagged and nestled in the soil itself. We know that life above ground depends on the life underground. Gardening—any approach—is a wonderful way for Christians to connect and participate in our dynamic, created world. Through gardening, we recognize and mimic the natural scheme of plant-and-pollinator communities, we can play a positive role. Each place in this world is full of the bounty of God—whose power works in all agricultural zones, in innumerable ways. I have been fascinated throughout my whole life by the unique gardening approaches developed in different lands. Knowledge and understanding of how to encourage gardens to flourish stems from a person’s close attention to the touch of the soil. In our Biblical creation narrative, the living creatures are brought forth from the ground itself. We know that life above ground depends on healthy life within the ground. In fact, I think that the multitude of approaches to gardening arises precisely because of the dynamic and particular characteristics of each place, of each climate and microclimate. In addition, gardening techniques vary widely due to cultural and social factors, and as an example I name the “three sisters” of the Hopi Native Americans. They planted corn to enhance their garden with the help of bees, and turkey to enhance their garden with the help of rabbits. And I am overjoyed that gardeners around the world continue to rely on the plants and soil to tell them if all is well, or if something is out of balance. Christian gardeners with whom I have spoken have an understanding that God’s intentions for this earth are life, and life abundant. I am faithful to the example of Christ through the simple act of tending a garden. So are millions of people in all their unique gardens across the globe. If you join us this year, may God bless you through your efforts, no matter how big or small.

Bethany Paetkau finds fulfillment in teaching in local elementary schools (Bay de Chaleur area, Quebec) and giving private music lessons. She walks the beach and the woods together with her husband, Rev. Joshua Paetkau, and children, Solomon (12) and Rose (9). They often also join her cross-country skiing, camping, hiking, and reading good books.

The bounty of God
from page 1

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Hail the much-remembered day!—for the most part

By Meb Reisner Wright
Diocesan Historian

The April issue of the Diocesan Gazette one hundred years ago had nothing to say about Easter.

Although that Glorious Feast is being celebrated this year on April 4—always a significant date to our faith, and first at his tomb when the Sabbath was past. A mark of distinction as this? Had Peter been the most loyal and faithful of all the Master’s friends? For those who ever consult the list of translators in the back of the book, Neale’s name also appears for as many as 44 hymns. “O come, O come, Emmanuel” and “All Glory, Laud and Honour! To Thee, Redeemer King” are among them.

Among the hymn writers, one name also appears for as many as 44 hymns. “O come, O come, Emmanuel” and “All Glory, Laud and Honour! To Thee, Redeemer King” are among them.

The hymn was an ancient one, by Adam of Saint Victor, and noted as translated by J.M. Neale. Neale’s name would have been familiar as the author of nine hymns in “the little blue hymnbook,” including, “Good King Wenceslas Looked Out” and “Good Christian Men Rejoice.” For those who ever consult the list of translators in the back of the book, Neale’s name also appears for as many as 44 hymns. “O come, O come, Emmanuel” and “All Glory, Laud and Honour! To Thee, Redeemer King” are among them.

Adam was a 12th-century monk, a poet and musician of the first order, attached to the Augustinian Abbey of Saint Victor just outside Paris. By opening the Easter issue with this 54-line hymn, the editor was striving to locate his readers firmly within the rich tradition of celebrating the Easter story with music and song.

Then follow three short commentaries, quoted from Come Ye Apart, on passages from the 16th chapter of Mark’s Gospel: the description of the first Easter, when the three women who had been witnesses to the events at Golgotha on the previous day, went to the sepulchre very early in the morning to anoint the body of the crucified Christ in the belief that all was over.

We are all alike. Even these holy women on this most sacred errand went forward to borrow trouble. There was a stone in the way that must be rolled aside, and they had not the strength to do it. Naturally enough, they began to be anxious as to the removal of this obstacle. When they came near they saw that the obstacle had been already removed. The Divine love had been beforehand in preparing the way for them. Angels had rolled the stone aside.

Love and faith always have an advance of angels to roll away stones. The practical lesson is, that we are never to hesitate nor shrink back because obstacles seem to lie before us; we are to go right on, and God will take them away for us. When he wants us to go anywhere he will open the path for our feet. Knowing this, we may go on feeling confident of our own safety.

Why “and Peter”? Why was Peter named, and none of the other disciples? Had Peter been the most loyal and faithful of all the Master’s friends that he deserved such a mark of distinction as this? Oh no; we remember how Peter had fallen. The last word that had dropped upon the ear of Jesus from his lips was a bitter word of denial. Peter had acted worse than any other of the disciples.

Why, then, did Jesus send this special word to Peter? It was just because he had sinned. That last look of the Saviour broke his heart, and he went out into the night a penitent man, weeping bitterly. Those had been dark days for him since Jesus died. Not only was he overwhelmed with sorrow at the death of his Lord, whom he truly and most dearly loved, but his grief was made bitter beyond endurance by the remembrance of his own denial. Deep must his sorrow have been, and all the deeper because he would never be able to ask forgiveness. How he must have longed to have Jesus back, if but for one moment, to confess his sin and crave pardon!

Appropriate as these selections are in conveying the blessings and spirit of Easter to readers of the Diocesan Gazette, it is surprising that they are not prefaced by nor even accompany Easter greetings from the Bishop. The year before, Lennon Williams’s message, titled “Easter Joy,” had opened the Easter issue.

At this distance in time it is difficult to know the circumstances of such an omission, but presumably there was good reason for it.

Knowing his conscientiousness, it seems fitting, therefore, to supply this absence now with a few of the phrases from Bishop Lennon’s message from the preceding year. It opens:

From the bottom of my heart, I wish all Church people in the Diocese a very happy Easter. May the Queen of Festivals be to you all a day of deep spiritual joy.

The letter concludes:

May Christ our Lord vouchsafe to deepen in us all this true joy in His blessed resurrection, and may it have its practical effect upon us in causing us now to rise to “newness of life,” keener loyalty to Christ our risen Lord, deeper love for Him and all that is good and pure and true, and greater willingness to follow Him and serve Him.

“Gleanings” delves into back issues of the Quebec Diocesan Gazette to share nuggets of our past.