

Special Edition
COVID-19
May 2020



Salt & Light

Newsletter for Anglican Deacons Canada

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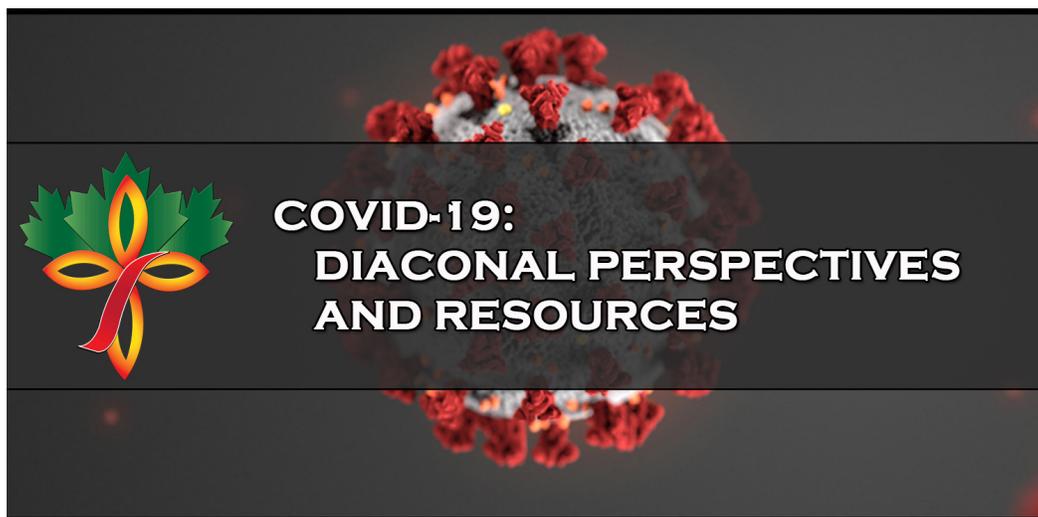
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ADC COVID-19 Perspectives and Resources

Submitted by Deacon Deb Wilson



This special edition of Salt & Light has been prepared to share some of the experiences of diaconal ministry as we move forward in these unusual times and seek to be faithful. Let us be grateful for the presence of the Holy Spirit who opens our hearts and minds to the possibilities that lay before us as we care for our communities, care for each other, and pray for the health and well-being of all.

The ADC has created a new page on their website. Click on the picture or visit <https://www.anglicandeacons.ca/programs/covid-19> for access to resources, prayers, and stories of “diakonia” to help support you in these historic times. To help build ADC’s COVID-19 hub please send an article, resource, or link to in an email to info@anglicandeacons.ca.

Frontline Caregiving

Submitted by Deacon Lynn Cawthra

My name is Lynn Cawthra and I am a Deacon serving in the parish of St. Paul, Nanaimo, in the Diocese of British Columbia. My diaconal work is as a Registered Care Aid, doing Home Support. I go home to home seeing clients who are in their homes, receiving care that is being done in Care Facilities. There are not enough Facilities for everyone who needs to be in care, so seniors get their care at home.

My fellow workers are feeling frustrated, fearful, and scared. We get mixed messages every day. We do not have all the supplies that we need. We are feeling like we are not being heard as we describe symptoms and are told to just wash our hands and keep our distance. How do you keep distance when a person needs a bath? The work we do is barely recognized, however those in facility do get recognized. That is the biggest part of our frustration. The biggest part of all of this is all we have for assistance is a telephone; our

iPhones are the first place we go to for support. We do not even know where the closest worker is. We work entirely on our own. Some of their services are being cut, and our time with these people is being cut. It is causing frustration and even depression.

These are people who are quite often not church people, or they feel they have been abandoned by their churches. How do I break through the bounds of confidentiality, and connect people with a church?

During this time of COVID-19 what I see and hear is people not getting their visits from their family and friends.

Along with that goes some of the phone calls they used to get.

Those who have been lonely are really now feeling isolated.



ADC Triennial Conference Postponed

Submitted by Anglican Deacons Canada Board

Save the date! Anglican Deacons Canada' regrets to announce that our Triennial Conference "Deacons in Community" organized and hosted by the College of Deacons of the Diocese of Niagara has been postponed until **June 24-27, 2021**. The conference will take place next year in the same venue – Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ontario. Further information regarding the agenda and registration will posted in the coming months. The ADC appreciates the hard work of the planning committee.



With one exception, all members of the ADC will continue to serve until the June 2021 conference when board elections will be held as part of the triennial members meeting. The Ven. Bruce Morris, our treasurer, has asked to step down in June to enjoy a well-deserved retirement. If you know of a Deacon who would be a good candidate for appointment as interim treasurer, please email ADC President Nancy Ford at nford@bc.anglican.ca.

Thanks to Bruce for his faithful service and to the current members for their willingness to serve an extra year. Please pray for the College of Deacons in the Diocese of Niagara as they continue their important work. **See you in 2021!**

A Calendar Emptied

Submitted by Archdeacon Kyn Barker

Although I suspect we'll all get used to this soon, I am still surprised how fast the responses to Covid-19 have been put in place and how sweeping they are. Back on March 15, I was involved in several "important activities" including Choir Practice for a concert on May 3, getting Readers ready for Palm Sunday and Holy Week, volunteering at a local Community Information Centre, going on a weeks' vacation in South Carolina, planning a Deacon Retreat for the Toronto Community, helping to plan the triennial Conference in Hamilton, and shepherding several diaconal candidates through the diocesan discernment process.

All of a sudden, **POOF! My calendar emptied!**

As I reflect though, my situation is nowhere as critical as laid off restaurant workers, or the independent motivational speaker who had all six months of engagements cancelled, or the small business man whose rent is due and was told he was not essential.

For many, though, the opposite happened: doctors, nurses, church leaders, grocery store clerks, "Skip the Dishes" delivery persons, people who work alongside those who live on the streets, those responsible for pastoral care, the priest with 3 funerals in a day to lead, but with only immediate family allowed to be present, orby ZOOM.

If one's calendar has suddenly emptied, it is easy to slip into depression even questioning one's worth. I don't get to sing the Exultet or help with the New Fire. As a Deacon I'm called to serve, but my usual ways to serve are cut off. Why not choose ME for some of the work? Deacons' experiences vary greatly. The Deacon's role in each of a "Family," or

"Pastoral" or "Programme" sized parish is likely different.

What Deacons do has always been context-dependent, but COVID-19 magnifies everything.

The parish where I serve is family/pastoral and we are fortunate to be able to afford a full-time priest who understands that she is directly responsible to all the parishioners.

We all need to attend to signs of optimism. Recognizing that, by God's Grace, spring is unfolding and that Easter tide shows that things will get better. This is not forever.

Last evening I helped produce a recording, on ZOOM, of a reading of John's Gospel for a YouTube parish liturgy for Good Friday. There were some technical difficulties, and sound issues, but it was clearly real people from the parish doing what we would normally do together. The Readers were all very keen and serious, which reminds me that one of the principle ways I am called to serve is to help others to serve.

This morning, a friend who is in long term care phoned me~ not me phoning him! He reminded me that one way we are called to serve is by praying and helping others in prayer.

In our Baptism, we are told to

"Seek and Serve Christ in All Persons."

Some of us, right now, will have to do more seeking, but I know that, by Grace, we will discern where and how we are supposed to serve, and where and how we are to help others to serve.

COVID-19 and Discernment

Submitted by Canon Deacon Nancy Ford

It is interesting to see people at work hoping to “normalize” life in pandemic times. Within my context of the West Coast of Canada the trajectory of the virus and the path of Lent have been parallel. Such that as we have come to the great celebration of Easter it seems as though there is a glimmer of hope from the epidemiologists that the difference and the darkness may not last forever.

Throughout the Anglican communion, leadership have scrambled to provide worship resources, ways to connect, and support the faithful. Each community has embarked on a journey of discernment. What is most important for them? Beyond the need for physical community people are wondering what is worship? How can it be meaningful in this time of separation? What gifts of communal singing, prayer and reflection can be tapped? And ultimately what constitutes spiritual nurture? While definitive answers may not be forthcoming-and they will be different for each person and each context-this is an opportunity.

As I have wondered about those questions it struck me that they bear some similarity to the practice of the Examen. Simply, the Examen is a practice of prayer which takes place at the end of each day. It is a review of the day, recalling events and taking note of your feelings. The purpose is to become more

aware of the ways in which God has been present to you, and the times when the Holy Spirit was drawing you towards life. It is an opportunity some might call discernment.



PRAYING THE JESUIT EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

THANKSGIVING

Lord, I realize that all, even myself,
is a gift from you.

Today, for what things am I most grateful?

INTENTION

Lord, open my eyes and ears to be
more honest with myself.

Today, what do I really want for myself?

EXAMINATION

Lord, show me what has been
happening to me and in me this day.
*Today, in what ways have I experienced
your love?*

CONTRITION

Lord, I am still learning to grow
in your love.

*Today, what choices have been inadequate
responses to your love?*

HOPE

Lord, let me look with longing
toward the future.

*Today, how will I let you lead me to
a brighter tomorrow?*

Holy Week in 2020 will live in my memory as the most challenging and the richest. There was a deep sense of loss; of the family rituals of gathering, laughing and eating together, the inability to gather with the faithful to mark the great Triduum from the washing of feet, walking with the cross through the downtown streets of the city, the veneration of the cross and culminating in the Great Vigil of Easter. Yet I gradually became aware of the Holy Spirit weaving an unexpected garment of joy, insight and hope.

Part of this was the Zoom conversation with our diocesan Deacons and postulants on Maundy Thursday. I had planned for us to remember together the Blessing of Oils we had shared and the reaffirmation of our ordination with a

conversation about how that feels in a pandemic.



COVID-19 and Discernment...cont'd

Submitted by Canon Deacon Nancy Ford

However, the conversation went in a very different direction. What was shared were the raw, uncoated challenges of the day, the “impossible” questions and the unnamed fears. This was accompanied by the deeply grounded faith of people who work on the frontlines. The conversation ranged from the practical to the deeply mystical. I was reminded of the old adage ‘Courage is fear that has said its prayers.’

As we meditated on Jesus as he washed the disciples’ feet, it became a moment where we were deeply interconnected and with the disciples we too were prepared to go to the garden of Gethsemane and beyond. We related to the trauma of the disciples on that evening when the celebration of Jesus’ entry

into Jerusalem was cast aside through betrayal. In our conversation there was hope and there was the hovering question, “where is God in this?” I think we were reminded through telling our stories that no matter how intense our sense of desperation, loss or separation, God finds us. The Divine is not limited to traditional worship nor the attempts to emulate it. Whether this is a time for a eucharistic fast, or an opportunity to explore church without walls or even the discovery of the nurturing rhythm of daily offices

We are called now, even more than ever, to be attentive, to be aware of the Holy acting in the midst of incomprehensible events.

This is Pandemic discernment.

Virtual Ministry on Campus during COVID-19

Submitted by Deacon Lisa Chisholm-Smith

When COVID 19 was declared a pandemic, students at Queen’s University in Kingston first got an unexpected week off and then the university made a quick transition to remote delivery of classes. Those in residence were encouraged to move out and return home if possible. In the midst of the significant and rapid changes in students’ personal and academic lives we experienced a few unexpected graces in the ministry of the Anglican Chaplaincy at Queen’s University which operates out of St. James Anglican Church on the Queen’s campus. On Sunday nights during the academic year Queen’s Canterbury Club (the newly minted student arm of the Anglican Chaplaincy) offers

“The Gathering”—a Sunday night contemporary evening prayer service followed by supper geared to post-secondary students and young adults. It was clear that students still wanted to meet so we quickly made the transition to holding virtual “Gatherings” on ZOOM. Our first virtual Gathering took place on March 22 and the need to connect and pray with each other was palpable.



Deacon Lisa offers an online dismissal

Virtual Ministry on Campus during COVID-19

Submitted by Deacon Lisa Chisholm-Smith

Each night we have a guest speaker and on that particular evening our guest was Jonathan Machnee and his topic was “Christianity and Autism Disorders.” Jonathan, who is himself on the autism spectrum and works full-time in cybersecurity, has wrestled with the relationship between Christianity and autism drawing on work he did with Michael Hardin, an American Anabaptist Theologian, in 2017. For Machnee the question of how compatible Christianity is with Autistic Spectrum Disorders hinges on a faith community’s answer to the question as to

how foundational having “a personal relationship with Jesus” is to the Christian faith. Since those with autism experience deficits in “social-emotional reciprocity, non-verbal communication” and “in developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships” how can the church expect them to have a relationship with Jesus? The discussion we had that night after his talk was perhaps the richest we have had to date.

For our second virtual “Gathering” Ross Jansen-vanVurren, a Post-Doctoral fellow in chemistry gave a talk on “Science as a Christian Practice.” This particular evening turned out to be our most international Gathering yet with participants joining the ZOOM meeting from England, Australia and Singapore as well as from Canada. We were

also joined by Queen’s faculty members from the sociology department and School of Business. Since coming to Queen’s in 2017, Ross has worked on developing a water purification method and now he makes deuterated pharmaceutical compounds containing deuterium, an isomer of hydrogen, which confers upon the drugs desirable properties such as improved efficacies and longer bodily lifetimes. In his talk Ross shared how he experienced science as a vocation both in and of itself as a way to experience God’s creation and be a co-creator with God and also through the quality of the relationships he develops with the people who share his lab. He also shared some of the ethical issues that he wrestles with as a scientist including the environmental impact of scientific activity and the challenges facing scientists in the developing world.

In the pandemic environment in which we find ourselves it was perhaps his identification of “perseverance” as a core practice of faithful science that stuck with me the most. Science reports in the media celebrate only breakthroughs and significant new findings. The media don’t chronicle the day and day out hard work of research and experimentation and the many, many failures that precede any progress. Just that week the Queen’s University chemistry lab had been asked to adjust its operations so that it could begin producing hand sanitizer to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, a contribution which Ross looked forward to playing a part in.



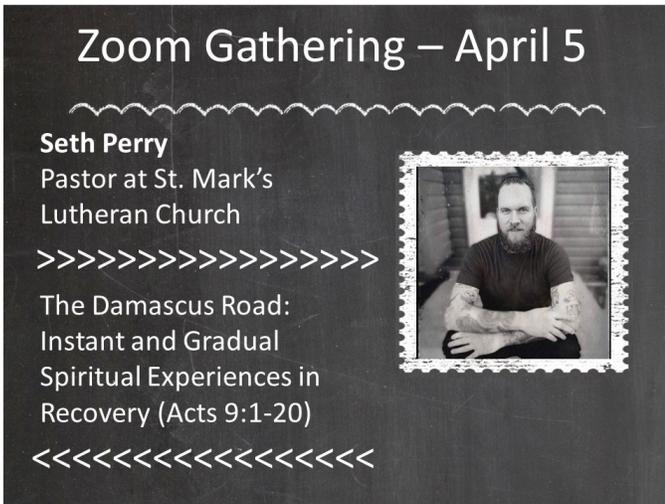
Virtual Ministry on Campus during COVID-19...cont'd
Submitted by Deacon Lisa Chisholm-Smith

Now millions are praying for researchers around the world who are persevering in their efforts to develop a vaccine and treatments for this virus.

The Gathering community turned its focus on the recovery movement through the lens of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus at our third and final ZOOM Gathering. Lutheran Pastor and recovering addict, Seth Perry, helped us to see that Paul's experience was more than an instantaneous "blinding light." It also involved three days of "gradual" restoration of this health in body, mind and spirit until his sight was miraculously restored. Seth shared examples of both "instantaneous" and "gradual" spiritual experiences on the road to recovery from both his personal experience and his experience working in addiction treatment centers and we talked about both the various kinds of spiritual experiences we have had as individuals, and the pitfalls of expecting other believers to experience God in the same way. Although each regular "Gathering" includes a discussion time over dinner the level of engagement and depth of these conversations varies considerably from week to week. Gathering participants now wonder

what it is we can take from our experience of particularly rich discussions via ZOOM back to our face-to-face Gatherings which we hope will start up again as usual in the fall.

ZOOM also enabled the Gathering community to re-connect with a recent MA graduate who had been a core Gathering participant the previous academic year and is now doing her doctoral studies in England. She joined in all three virtual Gatherings and led the liturgy at our final one for the term.



The Young Adult Bible Study which normally takes place after the Gathering on Sunday nights also continued virtually. Their final discussion on the letter of James took place at 9:00 a.m. on a Sunday morning (a "very early" start for the students involved) because their leader, a master's student in Mathematics, had flown

home to Singapore and it was 9 p.m. her time! Now that virtual classes are over, students are doubly hunkered down to study for exams and finish final assignments as well as to prevent the spread of COVID-19. When I was in university just writing exams was stressful enough without the added uncertainty and stress of a global pandemic as well. One student I know is preparing for and writing exams at home and in the same household her parents are working from home and her two younger siblings are doing online classes and trying to keep themselves busy. My heart and my prayers go out to her and other university students. I can't imagine writing exams under such circumstances! Lord, have mercy.

Anglican Diocese Appoints New Canon

Submitted by Deacon Lisa Chisholm-Smith

Congratulations to Deacon Sharon Dunlop of the Diocese of Ontario who was one of five individuals appointed as Canons by Bishop Michael Oulton on April 22, 2020!

Bishop Michael Oulton made it clear that these appointments are "effective immediately" although the Service of Installation for the new Canons won't take place until the pandemic restrictions are finally lifted.

The Reverend Canon Sharon Dunlop was ordained to the Diaconate on June 24, 2012 and she is a Deacon at St. James Anglican Church in Kingston, Ontario. Her ministry focus is on Corrections, Restorative Justice and Victims. Sharon currently serves as a full-time prison chaplain at Collins Bay Minimum Institution and is passionate about this ministry. She is also a member of the Justice and Peace Commission and a supporting member of Innocence Canada, advocating on behalf of the wrongly convicted. Sharon

represented the Anglican Church of Canada on the national board of The Church Council of Justice and Corrections, serving as President for two years. In 2018 she collaborated with the National Church Office and a group of Anglican Clergy across Canada, to assist the Centre for Christian Studies, Winnipeg, MB in developing educational programs on social justice issues, for teaching purposes by the Anglican Church of Canada. These programs have been rolled out across Canada. Sharon has also served on the Diocese of Ontario Synod Council. Sharon is the proud parent of two adult children and grandparent of four adult grandchildren.



Canon Deacon Sharon Dunlop

A Note from ADC President Canon Deacon Nancy Ford

At his consecration to the episcopacy, Bishop James Cowan said he wanted the well-known text from Philipians to shape his new ministry. *"Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."*

This scripture has come to play a large part for me personally and as a deacon in this very different time. It is an edgy scripture. It does not encourage passive engagement i.e. let God take of things for us. Nor does it suggest the ambient worry or anxiety around us is simply to be ignored. No, all this is to be acknowledged in prayer with searing honesty. We must include our fears, our "why" questions and our "Thomas-like" doubts. They are part of the shape of our prayers. Where does rejoice come into it? The Message's version of the last verse says it well: "It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life." Empowered reframed and deescalated we are able to move forward unfettered and assured God is near.

I believe the Pandemic offers us opportunities. It is when our diaconal calling places us on the frontlines in ways that are new and challenging. We are a diverse community separated by geography, yet there are many similarities which connect us. The board of ADC has been present for each of you through social media the webpage and email. During the pandemic we are very aware that there may be a greater need for virtual connection. Please be in touch so together we can "rejoice in the Lord always!"

Belize Mission Trip

Submitted by Deacon Dr. Catherine Keating

A Note from the Editor: Although this article is not especially focussed on COVID-19 ministry, it is relevant as we take the time consider some of our most recent works and pray that they may continue to prosper and flourish even under the measures taken to control and eradicate, we pray, this pandemic.

Under the leadership of Andty Harjula, a parishioner from St. John's Anglican Church in Ida Ontario, a part of Bishop Riscylla Shaw's area – close to Peterborough, John and I were invited to participate in a mission trip to Dangriga, Belize.



We learned about Andy's work in Belize through an article in the June 2018 issue of *The Anglican*. I eagerly contacted my Bishop, Kevin Robertson, for permission for John and me to join this mission and Kevin supported the endeavour. I also spoke with our priest the Rev. Dr. Canon Drew MacDonald, Stephen Monk who leads our Outreach Committee, as well as the Wardens. This was a very unexpected call from God. We so appreciate all the support from our church family. Dangriga (which means Standing Waters in the Garifuna language), is a town in Belize of about 9,000. Most of the local people are Garifuna, descendants of the African slave trade. We learned a lot about the population and culture of Belize – such a lovely country with welcoming people who represent a beautiful blend of many nations.

John did some work on shoreline erosion issues caused by the ocean, helped build fences and plant trees and presented the schools with a challenge to plant gardens. John's offering of a monetary reward was a great incentive to the schools. I hope that their enthusiasm for this opportunity will survive our present circumstances of physical distancing and that these gardens will be planted by the schools involved.



I had the opportunity to work on literacy with four schools: St Matthew Anglican, Christ the King Anglican, Sacred Heart Roman Catholic and Epworth Methodist.



Belize Mission Trip...cont'd

Submitted by Deacon Dr. Catharine Keating

With an introduction from Andy, I was able to meet with the leaders of the four schools and tell them about our literacy project in Jamaica and that the school there had improved to the point that Sandy Bay has met the standard for achievement.

I presented a modified version of what we had done in Sandy Bay. Most of the schools I connected with in Belize were already at various stages of implementing the read aloud strategy. My proposal was to encourage them to 'work smarter not harder' by having them specifically integrate the outcomes of their language curriculum and strategically and intentionally teach them through the Think Aloud. I also added an extension to the think aloud by sharing with them the 'Making the Christ Connection' strategy that I developed about five years ago. Since in Belize the Churches run the schools I was eager to present this opportunity to go further with digging deeper, critical thinking skills, and application and encourage application of biblical principles – living in Christ. What a great way to have the students think about how to apply the message of the Bible to real life – using children's literature juxtaposed with the bible stories. My first week was visiting schools and presenting them with the idea of

learning more about the strategy. The leaders of four schools were interested.

Week two was spent in presenting to these schools listed above. It was a busy time. In between I was trying to escape from being eaten by the mosquitoes and sand flies who were so happy that I had come to Belize – ouch!

Eleanor Usher, a retired teacher and former principal of Christ the King who still volunteers there, was the first person I met in Dangriga and shared my hopes for the project. She was amazing and became instrumental in helping me share my proposal and encourage buy in from the schools. The Director of Education for the Roman Catholic Schools in Belize, Novencia Diego, oversees 4,000 students. She also was very excited about the Think Aloud – especially Making the Christ Connection! None of this could have happened without Eleanor and Andy! Thank you to them both!

The motto of the Toronto Diocese is 'We build healthy, missional Anglican communities that engage faithfully with the world and share the gospel of Jesus Christ. I am thrilled and excited to have been able to do this in small measure in Jamaica and now Belize.

Prayers most appreciated

ADC Membership Please remember to renew your annual ADC and AED memberships for 2020. A link to renew your membership can be found on our website. anglicandeacons.ca/membership

Salt & Light is a compilation of news and events that are submitted by deacons and friends of deacons from across Canada to highlight the ministry of Diakonia. Please submit any articles, pictures, poems, or reflections to Deacon Deb Wilson so that we may publish them for the building up of our community and our lives in ministry. deb@bee-lieve.ca