

St. Brice's Anglican Church Newsletter October 15, 2022.

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St. Brice's Anglican Church

<https://www.stbriceschurch.com/wordpress/>
Office email: stbrices.northbay@yahoo.ca
Rector: peter.armstrong@ns.sympatico.ca
Phone: (705) 474-4005

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Christian Joke

Q: *Who was the fastest runner in the human race?*
A: Adam. He came first.

St. Brice's Visioning Scripture

“Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus.” Colossians 3: 14, 17 (NLT)



SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT



The Rev. Marie, Going To Bermuda

We are delighted that the Rev. Marie Loewen, our Honourary Assistant, has the opportunity to minister this winter in Bermuda. The Rev. Marie provides more information, below.

Several weeks ago, I wrote "God is the God of surprises." Little did I know how soon that would play out in our lives. Just a few days later, I opened my email one morning to find an invitation to consider an interim ministry for three months in Bermuda! As often happens when God goes before us, all the details have fallen into place quite quickly and so Rob and I will be off by the end

of this month to spend November, December and January at St. George's Parish, at the very north end of Bermuda.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to serve about 16 miles from the Cathedral in Hamilton where the Canon Dr. Jerry Smith is now serving. Many of you will remember Father Jerry and Marjie Smith fondly. We will take your good wishes with us when we see them again.

A little bit about the parish: St. George's parish consists of two congregations. St. Peter's is the oldest protestant congregation in the world, outside of England. There has been a congregation worshipping there continuously for over 400 years. The building itself, which is almost as old, is a popular site when folks visit the town. St. George's is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is also a major stopping place for the African Diaspora Heritage Trail.

Like many of our congregations, they and their sister congregation at the "Chapel of Ease, St. David's" are feeling the effects of COVID, the challenges of smaller attendance, primarily older parishioners and the need to re-vision their place in the service of God's kingdom. They, and I, will appreciate your prayers as they await a new permanent priest and listen for God's leading in their future.

If you would like a look at the parish, which is located at the very north tip of the island, you can check out the website at <https://www.stpeters.bm> or the Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/stpetersbermuda> Sunday Services are recorded on Youtube and these show the unique interior of St. Peter's building. You can access a number of their services at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeJnQEBXOO14zDAk053vkHQ> (The 16th Sunday after Trinity is a service

led by the Bermudian Bishop Nicholas Dill.)

The Chapel of Ease on St. David's Island was constructed when there was only water access between St. David's Island and St. George's. Often worshippers could not get to St. Peter's due to weather, etc. It is also a beautiful, building and an important part of its community and the parish.

You can read a bit about this church here:
<https://www.stpeters.bm/chapel-of-ease/>

Another interesting feature of the parish is the "Unfinished Church" -- another historical site. You can find info about this unique structure at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz2ySzPx8JY>

I understand that the rectory is on its grounds. The house was originally the servants' house when the governor's mansion was in St. George's. When the seat of government moved to Hamilton, the mansion was destroyed but the grounds and servant's house were deeded to the Anglican Church.



I hope to be sending back Advent Reflections and some blog posts about our experiences. For instance, I will send an account of the history of the "Unfinished Church". If you would be interested in receiving these, just send me an email at blessings@marieloewen.ca and a few emails will show up in your email box.

Rob and I covet your prayers as we begin this new adventure.

Here is a picture of St. Peter's:



And one of the Chapel of Ease:



Deanery Layreaders

There will be a continuing education workshop for the Deanery Layreaders (and any others who would be interested in attending), at Christ Church, on Saturday, 22 October. Coffee will be available about 9am, and the program starts at 9:30am. Please see below for details.

Come
and
Be together
for the Layreaders workshop



Saturday October 22
At Christ Church

It has been too long since we have been together

9:00 coffee and gathering
9:30 Morning Prayer
10:00-12:00 Biblical teachings Ven Linda White
12:00 Shared Eucharist

Everyone is welcome



Forces' Concert

The COVID pandemic has been difficult for very many people. The Spiritual Development Committee discerned that we needed to have something to lift our spirits in this season. We are pleased that 2 local musicians, Rory and Dana Force, will be offering a free concert at St.

Brice's, on Sunday evening, 23 October, beginning at 7pm. (There will be a free-will offering to give the Forces an honourarium.) Following the concert, there will be some light refreshments. For this event, masks are not required, but are encouraged.

Women's Breakfast

Now retired, Dr. Marion Taylor taught Old Testament at Wycliffe College, Toronto, for many years. Her specialty was studying how women studied and applied the scriptures throughout the Church's history. Marion's ministry has impacted many students (including your

Save the date for Women's Breakfast

Saturday, November 12, 2022 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. EST. In addition to Prof. Taylor's presentation, accompanied by lively breakout group discussion, you will meet women currently studying at Wycliffe College, and hear more about their personal stories of calling as well as their journey of spiritual formation. Tickets are \$15 and pre-registration is required.

rector!) with her careful study and generous care, for almost two generations. Dr. Taylor will be offering an on-line "Women's Breakfast," on Saturday, November 12, 9:30am and following. For further details, please see the notice in the sidebar.

Altar Guild

Due to a couple of recent retirements, the Altar Guild is looking for someone to help with the quiet ministry of looking after the Church sanctuary and chancel. Volunteers would be part of a small team, and the commitment is about once a month.

Chicken Dinners

The Take Home Meals program made a number of chicken dinners recently, but not all of them were distributed to clients. If you would like one or more frozen chicken dinners, please contact Diane (705-474-4005). Each dinner is \$4.

Parish Website

The good news is that Tara King, who manages the parish website, has a new job. The bad news (for us) is, that she can no longer devote time to managing the parish website, and will be stepping down early this coming month. The parish website is already established; it simply needs to be maintained. If you have some skills and interest, please contact the parish office (peter.armstrong@ns.sympatico.ca ; 705-474-4005) promptly.

Messy Church



Beginning last month, Messy Church resumed their program of informal worship, teaching and a meal. Messy Church usually meets on the third Saturday of the month, beginning at 5pm. Stacy Butcher took a photo of me with some of the kids today, which might bring a smile to you.

OUTREACH

Operation Warmth

St. Brice's used to work with Redeemer Lutheran parish in their initiative to provide coats for the winter – "Operation Warmth." However, the Lutheran parish is no longer offering this ministry during the pandemic. Instead, coats may be *dropped off* at the L.I.P.I. office, 127 Main Street East, between October 24-28, 10am-2pm. Free winter coats can be *picked up* at the Salvation Army office, 134, McIntyre St. Easter, on November 4, 5 and 8, 9am-4pm.

"Celebrate Recovery"



Many of us are familiar with Celebrate Recovery – a program to help with "Hurts, Habits and Hang-ups." Although this program was originally hosted at St. Brice's, for a number of years it has been hosted at First Baptist Church. The program is held on Wednesday evenings, beginning at 7pm. For more information, please contact the Rev. Jason McCutcheon (pastor at Laurentian Wesleyan Church -- laurentianchurch@gmail.com).

Food Bank

Aase Jensen has been the coordinator of the St. Brice's Food Bank for many years, but stepped down from this role a few weeks ago. Thank you very much, Aase, for all your faithful service!



Shane and Jen Auger now coordinate the Food Bank. Just a few days ago they offered a new initiative of "hygiene kits." The local Health Centre generously provided a wide array of items, including for children. These were extremely well-received by a number of the food bank clients. Shane and Jen plan

to offer these kits again periodically, as resources permit.

I mention this because the Food Bank is one of a number of ways in which St. Brice's is "salt" and "light" to the local community, and outside of the food bank volunteers, parishioners might not be aware about the clients' deep appreciation and feedback.

Outside Property Use

As many of us are aware, St. Brice's neighbourhood has evolved over the past few years. We are now between The Gathering Place (which provides free meals) and the low barrier shelter. This means we often have people congregating on the property.

While the large majority of people stay for a short time and then move on (as intended), and clean up after themselves, there is a minority of individuals who cause some difficulties. The principal concern is garbage pick-up, although some parishioners are understandably wary -- for example, when leaving the Church building alone at night. Occasionally, there has been minor property damage.



This now absorbs a noticeable amount of my time and attention, and I have given this a

great deal of thought and prayer besides.

In my view, it is unrealistic to expect that we can prevent people from stopping on the property, especially when the weather is warm. However, it is reasonable for us to establish parameters for people on the property. While the behaviour of some individuals is irksome, we also need to keep in mind that these are brothers and sisters for whom we have a responsibility of care. It is wise to recall

that God loves even the people whom we might find it challenging to love, and part of our Christian journey is for our own sanctification, in our walk as disciples. This development in our neighbourhood might even be God-ordained somehow, to advance his kingdom.

I believe that some of the folk who gather on the property have very substantial and complex needs – chronic homelessness, mental illnesses, and drug addictions. I am skeptical of easy answers.

This past week, I spoke with Dennis Chippa (I might not be spelling his name quite right), who oversees The Gathering Place. I had hoped there could be some common strategies to address our concerns. However, it's evident that they (along with our neighbour First Baptist Church, etc.) are struggling with most of the same issues, and substantial, effective strategies are well beyond our reach. I was taken aback to learn that The Gathering Place, which only recently moved to its present location, has space for an absolute maximum of about 35 people at a time, but serves about 150 dinners daily, along with 70-80 breakfasts and providing other food resources.

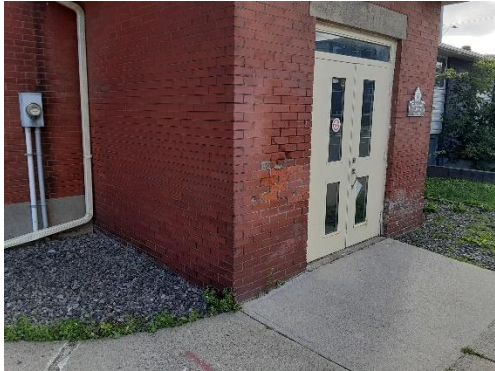
I had been thinking of trying to establish a large Task Group, with political and health support, as well as the local Christian community. There needs to be political policy changes, and substantial financial and people resources. Frankly, I have been feeling quite overwhelmed.

It was very helpful for me to meet with my Spiritual Director this past week. I was challenged to consider that this *might be* beyond God's mandate for me as a parish priest. Rather, perhaps I am being called somehow to shine a light, "you in your small corner, and I in mine." A key way for me to discern God's will is by talking and listening with others. If you would like to join a conversation about these challenges, please let me know (705-474-4005).

PROPERTY

Hall Exterior Doors

After discussion within the parish Advisory Board, and with negotiation with several commercial door installers, we have decided to go ahead to have the parish hall exterior doors replaced. The doors have to be replaced, and we hope this can happen before winter sets in. The cost is significant – about \$4000 before taxes.



The replacement doors will be a little different from what we have now. Instead of 2 quite narrow doors of the same width, there will be one wide door with “panic bar” exit hardware installed, and a smaller door which is only opened occasionally. The large door will have a fixed window above the latch hardware, but will not have a window at knee level. The small door will not have any window installed in it. This change in design is to match modern building codes, for the lowest feasible price.

Snow Plow

We have decided to change who we hire to plow our parking lot this winter. There are two reasons for this: First, there have sometimes been problems with snow accumulation by the roadway. Second, the new vendor provides services more reasonably. There will, however, be two changes. First, the new contract will not begin until November 15. So, if there is a significant snow fall before then, we will be looking for (a) volunteer(s) to help clean the parking lot. Second, the new contractor will not clear the parking lot if the snowfall is less than 5cm (about 2 inches). This means, insignificant

snowfalls will not be cleared. Volunteers already clean the front walkway, and are encouraged to clean by the first “handicap” parking space, if needed.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

St. Brice’s ran up a very significant financial deficit over the summer. The wardens and I wrote a letter to the congregation in late September, outlining the challenges we have been facing. My sense is that parishioners took the letter seriously, and I know of at least several people who are trying to respond to this situation, which is currently quite serious. It will take another few weeks to be able to see if the trend can erase the deficit and advance us to a balanced budget by year’s end. Of course, I hope for a balanced budget, but recognize it will be very challenging for us to achieve this year. In September, our monthly deficit (that is, expenses more than income) was less drastic than in August. However, income was still about \$2398 behind expenses, to \$23,348 since the beginning of this year. (In contrast, our deficit was \$6216 at the end of September 2021, although granted, we received a pandemic government wage subsidy for most of the year.) The exact figures for this year (to the end of September) are:

Income	\$96,243
Expenses	<u>\$119,591</u>
Deficit	\$23,348

On an encouraging note, I understand the offering for the Sunday of Harvest Thanksgiving was very generous. In closing, I want sincerely to say “thank you” to *all* the parishioners (whether we can contribute financially or not), for the ministries you undertake, and for the privilege of being your rector.