

St. Brice's Anglican Church Newsletter February 8, 2025.



St. Brice's Anglican Church

<https://www.stbriceschurch.com/wordpress/>

Office email: stbrices.northbay@yahoo.ca

Rector: peter.armstrong2023@outlook.com

Phone: (705) 474-4005

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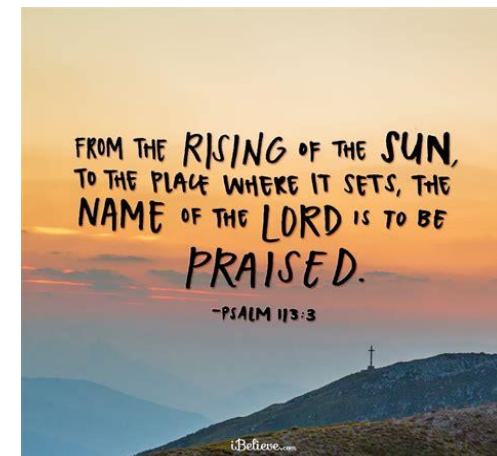
Something To Make Us Smile

God is talking to one of his angels and says, "Do you know what I have just done? I have just created a 24-hour period of alternating light and darkness on Earth. Isn't that good?"
The angel says, "Yes, but what will you do now?"
God says, "I think I'll call it a day."



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

Confirmation



There are plans for Bishop Michael Oulton, the retired Bishop of Ontario (Kingston area), to come to North Bay on Sunday, June 29, for a service of Confirmation.

If you are interested in being Confirmed or Received, or if you would like more information, please contact the parish office (705 474-4005; stbrices.northbay@yahoo.ca).

Follow-up from the 2025 Vestry Meeting



Annual Vestry Meeting

Suggestions from the small groups:

- Have a Nigerian service with Nigerians (for example, on the first Sunday of the month, with a focus on thanksgiving, *etc.*)

PA: We will be offering a Nigerian Anglican liturgy periodically, at the 10:30am service time. I am happy to encourage a sign of thanksgiving as is customary in Nigerian culture. Certainly, solos and duets, *etc.*, can be offered on occasion.

Regarding having a monthly birthday observance (for example, celebrating everyone who has a birthday in the month of February, on the first Sunday in February, with a birthday cake) -- this used to be looked after by a parishioner who can no longer look after this, due to health reasons.

If there is someone who would like to take on organizing a birthday cake each month, that is fine.

If people are looking for the parish to purchase a birthday cake monthly, then I suggest that be brought to a Board meeting

- Continue supporting the Teen Lunch Program. Agreed
- Work to increase the balance in the Building Fund. Agreed
- There was discussion about offering fundraising for operating expenses. Some concern was expressed. Churches that fund-raise for operating expenses don't survive long-term. It's all right to fund-raise for missions or capital projects

PA: Related to this, it seems that people are aware of Take Home Meals, the volunteer work that goes into preparing them, and the revenue which comes after expenses (about \$5000 in 2024). Since the Vestry meeting, I realize that most parishioners don't meet the people receiving the meals, and the difference it makes

- A question was raised about periodic spring flooding in the basement: This is being addressed
- Sunday School needs: We will support them as the need arises
- There was some discussion about volunteers. Do we need more?

PA: Everyone is welcome. We don't want to pressure people, but invite them

- Restoration of Games Night proposed. Agreed. Let's start 15 February, 7pm
- Explore another time for Evening Prayer besides Wednesday before supper, or have other services like Communion

PA: I am open to suggestions, bearing in mind we can't identify services and service times which are equally workable for everyone. Please speak to me personally, or contact the parish office (705 474-4005; stbrices.northbay@yahoo.ca).

Heat Pump Discussion (for the Church building): General feeling is not to proceed at this time, but be open to it if we have the resources; it's anticipated that costs of new units may decrease with wider adoption rates.

Organ: The condition of the organ, and repair or replacement issues, are being referred back to the Board, to be addressed.

Community Supper to benefit St. Brice's Food Bank

St. Brice's Food Bank has had more clients needing their services, and prices of food have gone up.

There are plans to offer a Nigerian Dinner for the community, on Saturday, 1 March, 5-6:30pm. Tickets are available from St. Brice's office (\$15/ person; \$40 for a family).

Please see the promotional poster on the next page, for details.

Devotional Books for Lent

The Spiritual Development Committee is grateful to Eva Black, who, when requested, proposed two books which would be suitable for parishioners to read during the season of Lent, which begins on 5 March this year.

One is *A Clean Heart Create in Me: Daily Lenten Reflections from C.S. Lewis*. This short book contains a Bible verse, a short reflection, and a prayer. More information can be found at:

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/22147730-a-clean-heart-create-in-me>

The second book is *Turn My Mourning into Dancing*, by the late Roman Catholic devotional writer, Fr. Henri Nouwen. The Kindle edition (for those who read on tablets or other devices) can be found at <https://www.amazon.ca/Turn-My-Mourning-into-Dancing-ebook/dp/B006YY525O>

Nigerian Dinner

**(a fund-raiser to support
St. Brice's Food Bank)**



St. Brice's, 1225 Cassells St.
Saturday March 1, 5-6:30p.m.

**Fried Rice, Jollof Rice, & Meat Pie
Tea & Coffee**

**\$15.00 per person
(\$50.00 for a family of 4)**

Please call 705-474-4005 to reserve your tickets,
by February 23, 2025.

For parishioners who would like “hard” copies of devotional books for Lent – that is, books we can actually hold in our hands – please contact the parish office (705 474-4005; stbrices.northbay@yahoo.ca), and we will try to get copies for all the parishioners who ask. If you would like one of these volumes, please contact the parish office soon, as Lent will be upon us in about 3 and a half weeks.

Women’s Gathering Report (from Jan. 28)

Hello!

A few of us braved the elements and enjoyed a time to gather together last night.

We talked about the term 'gathering' and how it might differ from the word 'meeting.'

That we are gathered together and through the common thread of God's love, we are gathered and bound together. (Those who sew will understand this illustration. ☺)

In this gathering of God's loved ones, we can 'gather' wisdom and insight from each other, and thus build and strengthen our community.

We then looked at a map of the world to consider where we've come from to be 'gathered' together in this way.

Thank you very much to [a parishioner] for bravely telling her story. This young woman is a lovely testament of strength and steadfastness. Some people seem to so resilient when faced with changing circumstances, I believe [she] is one of those. ☺

And, thank you to everyone who brought out treats.

Yum yum yum ♥

Our next Women's Gathering is on February 24th at 6:30pm.



Resettlement Committee Update

The family we hope to sponsor to Canada were originally from the Republic of Iran, but they fled to Turkey in 2017, where they are now living. They have been recognized as refugees by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. The family unit is parents and two young adult sons.



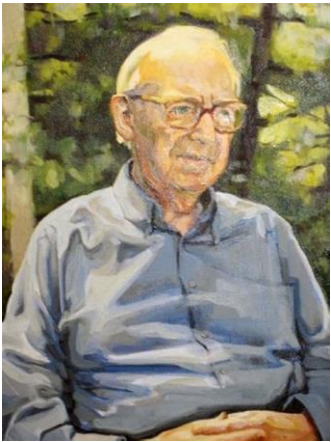
We are working in partnership with a Methodist pastoral charge in New Hampshire, U.S.A. We have agreed to submit the paperwork for consideration, and to guide the family when they first come to Canada. The other church is committed to providing the financial resources which are needed.

In Canada, we are working in conjunction with the Mennonite Central Committee of Ontario, which has a legal agreement with the Canadian federal government. (MCCO is a “SAH” – a Sponsorship Agreement Holder.) We have completed the first two stages of the process for consideration.

Substantial challenges remain. The number of refugees outside their countries of origin, who are unable or unwilling to return, is at an all-time high – even exceeding the numbers following the end of the Second World War. At the same time, a number of countries are no longer welcoming refugees, and/ or are sending refugees back outside their borders. (Please note, “refugees” are not the same as “migrants,” “illegal workers,” or “refugee claimants.”) Canada has reduced but not eliminated the number of refugees it will allow to settle in Canada, for at least the next 2 years.

As well, we realize that the co-sponsors are finding it challenging to meet their financial commitment. They need to raise about \$48 000 by 30 September, and have raised about \$31 000, which is currently in trust in our bank account. They are fund-raising meet the \$17 000 or so which is needed, but it is something of a struggle. A couple of folks in the Diocese of Algoma have contributed toward the goal, but the challenge remains substantial.

Excerpt from a Sermon about “Glory”



This sermon excerpt was part of the Opening Devotions for the Vestry meeting on 2 February. Because the passage is fairly long, it was suggested that it be printed for our consideration. The Rev. Canon, Dr. Robert Crouse was a professor to me, and a profound spiritual influence on many priests and teachers around the world. R. C. Crouse died in 2011.
-PA

Reading: St. Luke 14: 7-11

“Then shalt thou have glory in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.”

In this week’s Gospel lesson we find Jesus’ advice to socially ambitious dinner guests: When you are invited to dine at high table, don’t rush headlong to the seat beside the President. He might have special guests, and ask you to move further along to make room for them, and think of the humiliation of that! Far better to go directly and conspicuously to the lowest seat. You might be asked to move up higher, and “then shalt thou have glory in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.” This is sound advice for glory-seekers, even if Jesus is making fun of

them in giving it. But behind the fun of it, there is a serious meaning. The whole episode has rather the nature of a parable, and the point of it is summed up in the general conclusion: “Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.’ It’s a parable about glory-seeking, and the right way to go about that. The point is that we are seekers of eternal glory, and we need to know how to attain it...

In modern times, ‘glory’ has become almost a bad word, especially if it is coupled with ‘seeking’. There is a prevalent superstition that glory-seeking is a mean, unworthy business. Good people, and especially Christians, are supposed to be committed to service without thought of reward. We’re not in it for the glory; we only want to serve. God’s love is disinterested, and so is ours.

But that is very bad psychology, and even worse theology. It’s important to notice a difference between us and God. God has no need of glory, but we do; in fact, it’s our most fundamental need. Our desire for glory, however stunted or distorted, however side-tracked into vanities, is at basis the desire for the vision of God, the knowledge of God as he is in himself. We dire to be ‘partakers of that glory’; ‘to perceive with open face the glory of the Lord, and to be transformed into the same image from glory to glory.’ As St. Augustine puts it, ‘Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee.’ [...]

We are surely glory-seekers, and we must know how to do it. We have lots of devices for achieving vain glories, though there may be some question whether the game is worth the candle. In so far as real glory is concerned, we hardly know how to go about it. ‘Sit down in the lowest seat’, says Jesus. The point is that the glory of God is not something

we can put together, or seize for ourselves. We have only the desire; the glory must be given. The lowest seat is the position of humility—the humility of accepting what we cannot achieve. That is to say, the beginning of glory in us must be the free gift of God’s grace. “Friend, go up higher.’

This gift of grace in us is the seed of future glory. As St. Thomas Aquinas puts it, in his incomparably clear way: ‘Grace has five effects in us: First, our soul is healed; second, we will the good; third, we work effectively for it; fourth, we persevere; fifth, we break through to glory.’

Our part is the thankful acceptance of God’s grace, in word and sacrament, and in a thousand occasions of grace which surround us every day: in our work and leisure, in our associations with one another, in our troubles, and even in our sins. Through the manifold workings of his grace, ‘may the Lord of eternal glory make us partakers of his heavenly table.’ ‘Then shalt thou have glory in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.’ Amen.

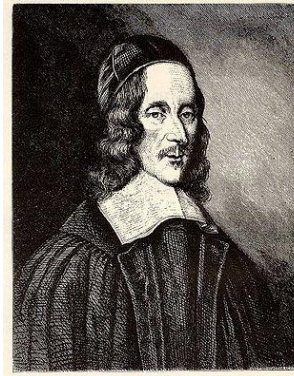
FINANCIAL UPDATE (1-31 January, 2025)



Income: \$11 684.05
Expenses: \$13 868.23
Deficit: \$2184.16

The Rev. George Herbert

Born in Wales and educated in England, George Herbert was ordained a priest, in 1629. He served his entire ministry in a rural parish in the west of England. He became very well-known for his writings, as well the dedicated pastoral care he offered to his parishioners. His health was never robust, and he died of consumption at the age of 39, in 1633.



Some of George Herbert’s sayings have become expressions today -- such as "His bark is worse than his bite;" and "Who is so deaf, as

he that will not hear?"

George wrote one prose work, *A Priest to the Temple* or, *The County Parson: His Character and Rule of Holy Life*. It remains a resource for pastoral care to this day. His main point is to meet people where they are, and to be sensitive to their interests and the lives they live, as the way to draw them into Christ’s love.

George Herbert also wrote a remarkable range of poems and hymn lyrics, writing in English, Latin, and Greek. His adoration of God was self-evident. He was both grounded in the living God, and in the humble local environment where he served God and others.

One of his hymns, “King of Glory, King of Peace,” includes:

Wherefore with my utmost art/ I will sing Thee,
And the cream of all my heart/ I will bring Thee.
Though my sins against me cried,/ Thou didst clear me;
And alone, when they replied,/ Thou didst hear me.

Sev'n whole days, not one in sev'n,/ I will praise Thee;
In my heart, though not in heav'n,/ I can raise Thee.
Small it is, in this poor sort/ to enroll Thee:
E'en eternity's too short/ to extol Thee.