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The Mustard Seed.

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School Bus Driving: A Lesson in Practical Theology

Text and photo by Dawn Gardy Administrative Assistant, Neepawa Anglican-United Shared Ministry



Father Chad McCharles OSBCn has decided to go back to school, twice a day, five days a week to be exact, and it is not for a theology refresher. At least, that was not his original intention! When the Transport Supervisor a school bus years later to train as a driver. of the Beautiful Plains School Division approached Father Chad early in 2020 to inquire if he would be interest in training to be a bus driver, the priest thought he would indeed like to explore the opportunity. Throughout North America there is a mounting shortage of qualified school bus drivers, and this is no different here in Manitoba, especially in rural areas. Chad knew this to be the case and liked the idea of helping out where there was such need.

The first part of the process was to speak with Bishop William to acquire permission to move ahead with the endeavour, which was an easy "yes" from the bishop, as the bishop was quick to point out that it was a real opportunity for community connection in Neepawa

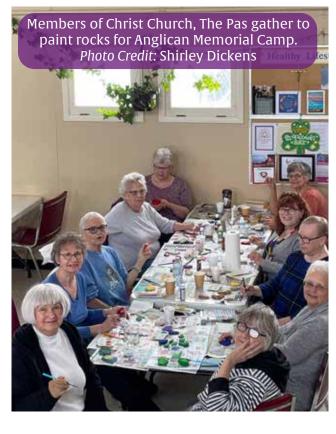
and area, and for the Anglican cleric to live out his vows to serve those in need.

Once Father Chad entered the lengthy, indepth, highly detailed, multi-stage process of qualifying to be a bus driver, he was quickly reminded of another depth of meaning to this endeavour, one from his childhood. As a farm boy who grew up South of Shoal Lake, riding the school bus was a daily routine for Father Chad, but one that was kept from being monotonous by his bus driver, Mr. George Isaak, or Pastor Isaak as he was known in the Shoal Lake Baptist Church and wider community. Mr. Isaak was a very kind, friendly, good humoured man, who always had time to listen to Chad's boyhood ramblings when he would stand behind him and chat away as one of the last kids on the bus route each afternoon. Through this relationship, Pastor Isaak invited Chad to attend Pioneer Kid's Club at the Shoal Lake Baptist Church one evening each month, which turned out to be one of the key steppingstones towards the priesthood for Chad. Mr. Isaak's friendly smile and daily greetings came to embody Christian love for the young farm boy, although Chad wouldn't realize it until stepping onto It was this realization that galvanized Father Chad's decision to complete his school bus driver's certification, and he has been driving the big yellow buses ever since.

His parish, Neepawa United-Anglican Shared Ministry, has supported him in this endeavour too, realizing that having their Minister on the school bus allows for important community connections with children, parents, teachers, and division staff, all of which stands the faith community in good stead to be better able to reach out through those connections to share and live out the Gospel. Jesus got into boats with fishermen, into the temple with the faithful, into the country with the crowds, and came alongside the suffering in the streets,

all to share the Good News. It is this model from Jesus that drives Father Chad to climb the steps of the bus each day and be the first and last encounter each child has with the school system, offering them a warm greeting, smiling eyes behind a mask, and a wish for a good night at the end of each school day. All of which leaves him feeling like he has received more than he has given, emblematic of the peace and perfect freedom promised to us by Christ if we choose to give freely of ourselves.

This is the best theology lesson Father Chad has learned since seminary, he says, as it has remined him that it is through such simple, everyday acts that we learn and live radical Christian love. The wheels on the bus go round and round, and we as Christians carry the love of God in Christ to the world as it goes round and round, through simple, everyday acts that transport us ever nearer each other and God.



A Word From Our Bishop

Tn the last month or two we have heard plenty about **▲**Ukraine and the battle that is raging there. We are fervently praying for peace. The bombs fall and armies posture and the people seem trapped between the proverbial rock and hard place. We have been praying regularly for the people of Ukraine, the people of Ruswar, and death.

It is also the Easter season when was raised.

is not easily recognizable. Mary more to the picture. Magdalene did not recognize him, the road to Emmaus did not



sia and for a change in the hearts recognize him until he broke the world will be fully present. We canof all those who have been drawn bread in front of them. There is not know the height and beauty into this terrible tragedy of sin, something about resurrected life and strength of the resurrected life which leaves us baffled when it is we will occupy in that new, deathobserved from this side of death.

we are meant to think long and Jesus kept teaching over and over That is how I maintain hope in the hard about the new life which Je- again that our resurrected life is between time of here and there. sus offers us in his resurrection. as different from the life we know I know that we are called to live The question that haunts us is how now, as the seed is different from faithfully in the here, caring for do we get from here (our current the full grown plant. In honour one another and working for the world, rife with destruction and of Ukraine, I will use their sun- broken and the lost. But at the same pain) to there (the kingdom of love flower as my illustration. We all time, the way to there is to see in and light which is promised to the recognize sunflower seeds. I have every broken human, in every perchildren of God.) I want to remind happy memories of eating bagfuls son in need, and in every circumyou of some of that story from the as a child and enjoying spitting stance of life the seed of what is to garden on the morning when Jesus contests with my friends with the come when God gathers all of us to shells. A sunflower seed is delicious himself. That is how I live between as a snack, as a garnish on a salad or here and there; between what I see Mary did not recognize Jesus. all alone by itself, roasted or plain. now and what I know is coming. It wasn't until he said her name But looking at a sunflower seed that her eyes were opened and she does not in the least hint at the So for this Easter season, have a could see him. You have heard me height and beauty and strength of thought about the process of getsay that the resurrection to eternal the full grown plant. Only when I ting from here to there. Think life is the offering of Jesus to each see the full flower standing tall, do about the ways we will carry who of us, but one of the details we of- I see the small part that the seed we are into death and then into ten forget is that resurrected life is of the whole. There is so much that new and deathless life. This

light, but God has so much more ful than who were are now - even

planned for us that our hearts can barely perceive what God is up to. The new life will be glorious and it will be a profound change and that new life will be a great mystery, but who we already are will still be there, in the middle of that resurrected life, except we will be so much more than we have been. The tiny seed that was us in this less, and resurrected life to come.

is what it means to be in the resurrected world. To know that we even though she had sat at table. Our lives are like the sunflower are seeds of something so much and served him. The disciples on seeds. They have a purpose and de- bigger, stronger and more beauti-

The Mustard Seed

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Contributions to the expense of the paper are normally requested each March but donations are accepted anytime. Changes of address can be made through your parish or directly with the Anglican Journal. Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Bishop or of the editor.

Deadline for submissions: the first of the month. Please note: All submissions are subject to editing for clarity, timeliness, appropriateness, or length. Submit writing to the Editor in Microsoft Word file format or in the body of an email. Photographs must be large, high resolution jpg files. Please ensure you have permission from parents or guardians of all minors who have their photos or names published in The Mustard Seed. If including a photo, please send a name of who took the photo along with it, so the Editor can give proper credit!

when who we are now is beloved of God. You will always be you, but you will also be so much more.



Don't forget to check out our Facebook page! Search "The Diocese of Brandon" on Facebook, or go to http://www.facebook.com/brandonanglicans

You can find an electronic copy of the Mustard Seed there each month. Morning Prayer services with the Dean, Sunday Eucharists with the Bishop, as well as photos from recent events in the diocese.

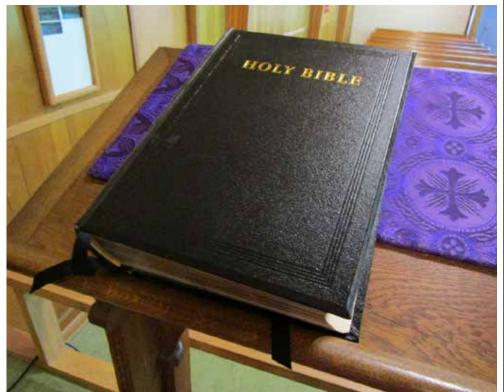
News from the Pews

PELLY PLAINS PARISH as submitted by Virginia Beelaert

Following the closure of their church, Christ Church, Roblin has gifted Christ Church, Russell with a Bible. The Bible had been presented to Roblin by the Rev'd Karen and Bob Binding "in loving memory of former members of the Parish."

Several members of Russell's Christ Church and Knox United participated in a Lenten Bible study hosted by Grace Lutheran Church. Discussion followed readings from Voices at the Crossroads by Paul K. Peterson.

The members of St. George's Birtle have enjoyed the return of their coffee gettogethers following Sunday services. They had been halted due to Covid-19.



NEEPAWA ANGLICAN-UNITED SHARED MINISTRY as submitted by the Rev'd Chad McCharles osbcn

Throughout February, parishioners of the Neepawa United Anglican Shared Ministry challenged themselves to raise funds for the Vaccine Equity Fund of the PWRDF. As an outward and visible sign of these efforts, the Mission Service and Outreach (MS&O) Committee committed to posting one heart in the sanctuary for every \$5 that was raised. By the end of the month, \$2,762 was raised, which meant 552.4 hearts had to be cut out and posted on the walls of the sanctuary! This became such a task, that the MS&O Committee had to employ Sunday School to help with posting all the hearts. Across Canada, this PWRDF initiative has made a massive difference, with over \$60,000 going towards ensuring everyone around the globe has access to the Covid-19 vaccinations. NUASM gives thanks to all who generously donated towards this initiative, both United and Anglican alike! Yet another outward and visible sign of the inner, spiritual ties that bind us together in love, with our ecumenical congregation, and our brothers and sisters around the globe.



THE TRI-VALLEY PARISH (St. MARY'S, VIRDEN; St. MARK'S, ELKHORN; St. JOHN'S, RESTON; CHRIST CHURCH, MELITA) as submitted by the Editor



parish who acknowledged with this cake that wasn't expecting it,

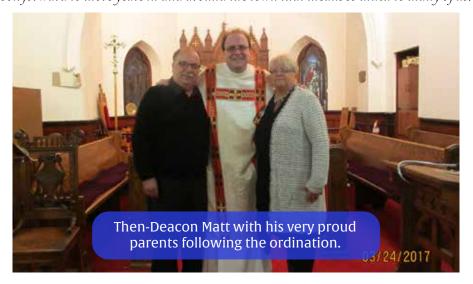
and I'm thankful for the cake, the recognition, and my time here in Virden. Later that week, the article below appeared in the local paper, the Virden Empire-Advance. I include it below for your reading pleasure.

Yesterday [the article originally appeared on March 25], I celebrated my fifth year of ordained ministry in Virden. On March 24, 2017, I was ordained as a deacon (the first ordination for many Anglican clergy) over at St. Mary's. It was a day that was not only a long time coming, but it was also a day that I'll never forget. However, all that being said, the first couple of months here I struggled, I wasn't struggling because of anything anybody did (or didn't do), but because I was going through culture shock. Some of you may know that prior to moving to Virden, I had really only lived in big cities. Sure, I had done a few stints in small towns in Saskatchewan and southwestern Ontario, but this was a different kettle of fish. I was moving from cities, where I could get anything I wanted at any hour to minister to small towns where the local grocery store closed at 6pm on weekends.

On March 24th, I I was ordained on the Eve of the Feast of the Annunciation, the Feast in the Church celebrated my fifth calendar where we reflect on the announcement that Mary was to become the mother anniversary in or- of Jesus Christ. At the end of the story, we hear Mary say these words: "Here am I, the dained ministry. I servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." As I was moving and mentioned it to the starting out here, these words rattled through my head, as a kind of assurance that secretary, things were going to get better as I settled in.

it and went back to And frankly, dear reader, they did (but you probably knew that was coming.) I've been work. She eventually here five plus years now and I have learned that small towns have a charm about them left the building to that cities can never have. There is a sense of community here that isn't present in cities "run some errands." - when I lived in cities, I didn't know many people in the varied neighbourhoods I lived About 20 minutes in. That isn't the case in small towns – I've been made to feel very welcome here over the later, she returned past five years. I feel like I'm part of this community and am known.

you see below. I So, thank you for opening my eyes to the charm of small towns. Thank you for welcoming this city boy with open arms and making him to feel like a part of the community. I look forward to more years in and around the town that means so much to many of us.





HIRING FOR SUMMER 2022

We're searching for multiple PAID positions:

- Cook 1
- Cook 2
- Kitchen Assistant

We are also looking for the following weekly VOLUNTEER positions:

- Family Camp: Leader, Health Officer and Chaplain
- Intermediate Camp: Health Officer
- Counsellors for ALL camps



Send resumes to camp@brandon. anglican.ca

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to train the
right
candidates

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"The Three In One: A Love Story" scheduled for June 2022

The Ladies Getaway

This event has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is our hope to have it in June 2023!

The Anglican Fellowship of Canada Let Us Pray

MAY 16 AT 12:00PM:

Re-Imagining Prayer (Imaginative Prayer)

UNE 20 AT 12:00PM:

Praying with Icons (including Indigenous Icons), led by the Most Rev'd Anne Germond

For more information, check out their website at www.anglicanprayer.org or contact the Rev'd Deacon Barry Nadolny at barrykn@zoho.com or 204-638-6531.

ANGLICAN MEMORIAL CAMP INFORMATION

2022 SUMMER CAMPS

<u>Teen Camp:</u> Saturday, July 2 – Friday, July 8
<u>Family Camp:</u> Sunday, July 11 – Wednesday, July 13
<u>Junior Camp:</u> Sunday, July 17 – Saturday, July 23
<u>Intermediate Camp:</u>

Sunday, July 24 – Saturday, July 30

Early-bird date: May 13, 2022, Cut-off date: June 13, 2022

Every camp registration in by June 13, 2022 receives a free ticket into our raffle.

CAMP FUNDRAISING BARBEQUE
Rideau Park in Brandon - June 4, 2022

2022 CAMP RAFFLE Draw Date: June 14, 2022 at Noon 1 ticket for \$10 & 3 tickets for \$20

Tickets available to purchase through your parish or by contacting Deacon Cheryl in the Synod Office (204-727-2380 or admin@brandon.anglican.ca). Payment can be made by etransfer to finance@brandon.anglican.ca. Use the password raffle.

1st Prize: 3 Night stay at Geiler Corner, Wasagaming, on Thanksgiving weekend 2022 (a \$1650 value) 2nd Prize: Kayak w/ Paddle (an \$800 value) 3rd Prize: Meat Package (Donated by Robert Jasper, a \$500 value)

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