

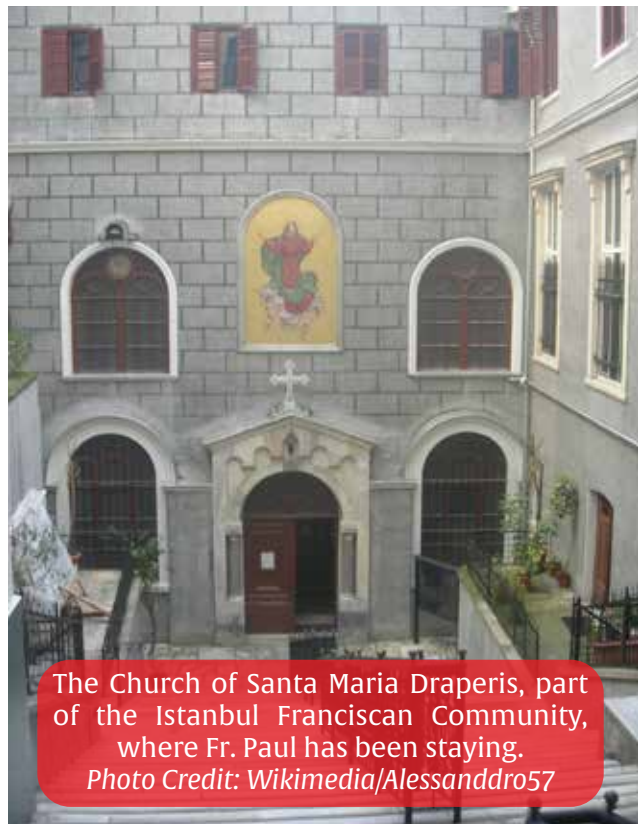
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The Mustard Seed.

A PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF BRANDON • A SECTION OF THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL • JUNE 2022

A Postcard from Istanbul

Text and photo by the Rev'd Dr. Paul Shore
Honourary Assistant, St. Matthew's Cathedral, Brandon



The Church of Santa Maria Draperis, part of the Istanbul Franciscan Community, where Fr. Paul has been staying.
Photo Credit: Wikimedia/Alessandro57

In the vast city of Istanbul, close to the Bosphorus, is a street called Istiklal, which is crowded with shoppers, tourists, and sellers of roast chestnuts and pretzels, from morning till night. Barely visible from the street, beside the looming presence of the heavily guarded Russian Consulate, is the Catholic church of St. Maria Draperis. In a side chapel, on the front of the altar, is an image of a pelican feeding her young: an ancient Christian symbol of love and sacrifice. The image is mostly white on white, and unless you get up very close to it, you might not be able to distinguish the mother pelican from her young. But something you will see at once is a small dot of red in the middle of the composition. For the legend of the pelican (not supported by ornithologists, to be sure) is that she feeds her young

with her own blood.

The metaphor of the pelican of course references the Christ, but is also for all of us. It poses a question: how much will we sacrifice for love? In the past weeks I have been inspired and humbled by people I have met who are sacrificing in great and small ways to serve others. The Franciscans, who are connected with this church, have welcomed me-- as "the Anglican," as the smiling brother greeted me when I arrived. And I keep meeting people who in a far deeper way are working to alleviate the suffering and difficulties of the now more than seven million refugees fleeing from the war in Ukraine. Others are striving to improve communication between ethnic and religious groups that historically have been enemies or strangers. These are not empty headed do gooders; they know that they face risks and dangers. Many governments (and religious institutions) do not want reconciliation and understanding to grow between old enemies. They do not want fear to decrease, nor do they want people to embrace sharing, let alone sacrifice. The message of the generous, loving pelican is a transgressive threat to their own plans, which are to divide, frighten, and subdue. It has always been so with those who would be tyrants.

Istanbul is an old city: for a millennium it was a Christian city, the largest Christian city in the world. Today it is one of the great cities of the Muslim world. I don't know exactly where St. Paul crossed from Asia Minor on his way to Macedonia, after having that dream of a man imploring him to "come over and help us," but it may well have been right here. Istanbul is a place of passage, a city mostly modern with vivid pockets of antiquity, half in Europe and half in Asia; its most famous

mosque, Santa Sophia, itself a former Christian church and its very name "Istanbul" a borrowing from the Christian Greeks who once held sway here.

In a few days, after I give a lecture at a centre here run by Christians studying cultures of the Middle East, I travel on to Vienna, where Christian and Muslim armies battled in the seventeenth century. But first I am going to go back to that chapel and meditate on that dot of red in the midst of the snowy white of the pelican and her brood. Something small, yet ultimately, larger than we can even conceive.



Santa Sophia, built in the sixth century as a church, later became a mosque.
Photo Credit: Wikimedia/Dennis Jarvis

A Note from the Editor

We have reached the end of another publishing year, my fourth one as the Editor of this publication. I'm always amazed at just how fast the year goes. It feels like time goes faster and faster (I'm told that that happens as you grow older.) The end of the publishing year always causes me to sit back and reflect on the year that has just gone by.

It is still a joy and a privilege to be able to get a brief glimpse in to the lives of the varied parishes in our vast diocese. I enjoy hearing the varied stories about what's happening in the different parishes around the diocese. As we start to emerge out of the pandemic and find our way around again, it is heartening to hear all the stories coming out of the

parishes. In all of this, it has become very clear to me that all the parishes in this diocese are trying their very best to live up to our mission of "preaching the Gospel, making disciples, and equipping the saints."

There is life here, to be sure. It may not seem like your parish is doing a lot in this time, especially as we rebuild everything once more. However, I think that our entire society is rebuilding following the whole world changing around us in the blink of an eye. It will take time, but I know that God will accompany us as we seek to discern just how to continue to "preach the Gospel, make disciples and equip the saints."

In the meantime, I think it is time for a rest, and I hope that this summer provides you with rest and activities that will help you to energize yourself once more.

Have a good summer, and I look forward to continuing to hear all the stories that will come in the future.

Grace and peace,

A Word From Our Bishop

For the last number of years, the word “mission” and “missional” have been the stock and trade of the church in all its discussions. In our quest to wake up the necessity of serving the people around us as a function of being church, we have been studying and working and praying through what “missional” means. The folks who have been working so hard through their studies toward the Licentiate in Theology diploma (L.Th.) have heard time and again that we have a purpose in the world and that the love of Christ compels us outward to serve him in whatever form he takes: the poor, the hungry, the lost and every one of our neighbours.

So in fact, the Church doesn't have a mission, but rather that the Mission of God has a Church. If you think about that for any length of time, you will perhaps want me to take a run at deepening what I have written. As a Church, Anglicans are “Directed by Mission” We use the term Mission quite freely. What it means is complicated, but is summed up this way: God is active. God is moving and calling us to move. Through Jesus Christ, God has made a new heaven, a new earth and a new humanity and that we are part of the new thing God is doing in the world. The Church is the mechanism through which God is doing the new thing. As members of the Church then, we are part of “the new thing” God is doing in Christ. So for faithful Christians, aware of God's action in Jesus and focused on the “new thing” God has done, the question that follows now is a simple but deep one: What is God up to now?

I will give a shorter answer. The mission of God is marked always by a consistent theme. In Christ, we do impossible things with improbable people. The story of our Church, the story of every believer when it is told through the lens of God's mission is a story of things which seemed impossible - and yet were accomplished; by people who were the improbable choice, and yet were called by God to “do



The Rt. Rev'd William G. Cliff
Bishop of Brandon

it anyway!” Consider the place in which our church is planted. Contemplate the unlikely group who join with you in worship and then understand the astonishing idea that God is acting in this world: using this improbable people to do impossible things.

This shouldn't surprise us. Scripture is filled with the stories of improbable choices. God has a habit of choosing “the wrong kind of person” for important jobs. They only seem “the wrong kind of person” to us, but God sees things differently and accomplishes impossible things through “the wrong kind of person”. Perhaps it only seems an improbable choice because God chooses the vulnerable, the weak and the broken to accomplish his will. Like St. Paul reminds us, God uses us in our weakness, not our strength and so by using what appear to be foolish candidates for his work in the world, God shows the world how foolish it is.

This will not mean that we will always get it right. It does not mean we will always understand. Sin still separates us one from another. Pride and envy and jealousy and hard-heartedness still have a foothold in all of us. To be directed by mission is to admit that fellow Anglicans, and fellow Christians are all part of the picture. Even how we understand and treat fellow human beings who do not believe in Jesus testify to the truth of God's mission. Unfailingly we believe Jesus is the way that God is doing “a new thing” and all our relationships must reflect that truth.

But this is good news for us in another way. God is acting in the Diocese of Brandon and we as An-

glicans have accepted the mission which God has given us. We may think ourselves “the wrong sort of people” for God to depend on for success, but that is rather the point! If we depend on ourselves we will naturally fail, but if in our weakness we let God work through us, there is a world of impossible things that can be accomplished through us. The deaf will hear, the lame will walk, the dead will be raised and the poor will have the good news preached to them - not because of who we are, but because of who He is! The Spirit of the Lord is upon us, and he has anointed us to go and preach that good news.

This is the natural “attitude adjustment” that comes with being Directed by Mission. An understanding that God is active, and using us, improbable candidates though we are, to accomplish the impossible things God wants done as part of the “new thing” that Jesus brings us. In the end, it is not us, but God who accomplishes in us more than we can ask or imagine. We dared not imagine it because we thought it impossible, and we didn't ask because we were sure we weren't worthy. The thing is, God figured that it made us perfect for the job.

The Mustard Seed

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The Mustard Seed is circulated ten times a year (from September to June), as a section of the Anglican Journal, to all supporting households in the Diocese of Brandon.

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!



On Palm Sunday (April 10), the Bishop visited St. John's, Reston. Members of Christ Church, Melita joined the congregation for the day. In this photo, the Bishop is showing members of Christ Church, Melita how to fold palm crosses (something the Rector admits he is not very good at!)

News from the Pews

PELLY PLAINS PARISH *as submitted by Virginia Beelaert*

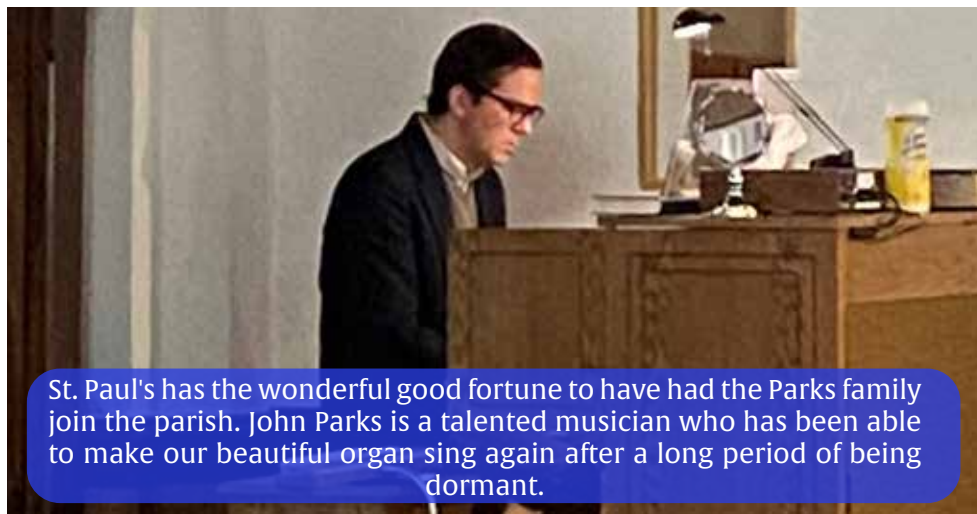
As part of their outreach, St. Matthew's Binscarth has made very generous donations in recent months. One was in support of the Ukraine to the Canada Ukraine Foundation. They also donated a laptop to assist a student recovering from surgery with school work and assisted a former parishioner who lost everything in the Abbotsford flood.

On April 9, the Rev'd Chris Pilon was one of several Russell clergy who attended A Dinner for Ukraine. The money raised was given to the Canada Ukraine Foundation to support humanitarian relief in the Ukraine.



On April 28, Christ Church, Russell enjoyed a social time as well as a delicious meal catered by their local Chicken Chef. This is an important part of their fundraising for the year.

ST. PAUL'S, DAUPHIN *as submitted by Sandy Pacey*



St. Paul's has the wonderful good fortune to have had the Parks family join the parish. John Parks is a talented musician who has been able to make our beautiful organ sing again after a long period of being dormant.



For the first time since the pandemic started, St. Paul's was blessed to be able to have Children's Time during the Sunday service.

ST. JAMES', RIVERS *as submitted by Kathy Roberts*

The ladies of St. James had a busy week when they served lunch on May 2nd and 3rd to the participants of the National Plowing Match held at Ryall's farm, and lunch at a funeral on May 5th.

Tom and Jean Ryall organized the plowing event and Sandy Donald was in charge of fundraising. Plowing participants came from Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia and Vancouver Island. There were three classes, Senior Conventional, Senior Reversible and Junior Conventional. Winner of the Senior Conventional, Brian Davenport from Ontario and winner of the Senior Reversible, Tom Evans of Ontario will both attend the World Plowing Competitions in Estonia in 2023. The ladies were not overlooked as they were treated to a tour of Virden, Manitoba (including the Aud Theatre, a historical site within Virden.) From all reports, the event was a great success!

Below are some photos of the tractors that were at the event.



Palm Sunday

Text and photo by the Rev'd Dr. Paul Shore
Honourary Assistant, St. Matthew's Cathedral, Brandon

I travel with two suitcases: one is known infamously at home as "the Coffin," and holds everything I've brought with me on this six month sojourn in Europe. The other is smaller, although still a bit awkward. I was standing in a line in a train station in a Polish city called Katowice, trying to get a refund on my ticket (that's another story), when the smaller yet awkward case swung around and in a Mr. Beanish way, bumped a lady standing behind me.

Like so many people I've met in the past two months, she was more than gracious about it. We began to talk. She said that she hoped that the person at the ticket counter might speak English, and we both agreed that it would be best not to try to talk Russian at this point!

She was from Lviv, a city in northwestern Ukraine that recently has come under attack. What is more, she was heading back there, because, as she said, her "heart was there." I told her I hoped God would protect her, and a look came over her face that is hard to describe: strong yet full of emotion pulling at her.

Poland is not on the front lines as I write this, but it is very much in the middle of this crisis. In Poznań,

the city where I was staying for a few days, there are 40,000 refugees from Ukraine. In Warsaw, not far off, there are 400,000. More are probably coming. I met a professor from Lublin, another Polish city in the east, who has taken a fatherless family into her home, and a gentleman who has given his apartment over to refugees and moved back in with his parents. Another person, whom I did not meet at the conference, couldn't come because she has contracted Covid-- from the refugee family she is hosting. The war and the ripples of danger and disruption advancing from it are affecting millions who have never even been to Ukraine.

And millions of words have been written about this crime, but I hope you will forgive me if I write a few more. First, when one man (or woman) or a people decide unilaterally what makes up "their land" or even "their part of the world," and decide that those who disagree can simply be eliminated, we have crossed over into a place where rising levels of cruelty-- on either side fighting -- are inevitable. We've been here before. Beware of any political figure using grievance and grudges to push an agenda that might seem reasonable at first but gets more and more extreme.

Secondly, none of our societies are entirely immune from this danger. We have more choices in Canada from which to get our picture of the world, but all of us probably know someone who has retreated into an online echo chamber of strange theories and conspiracies-- or worse. Our online age has increased this danger.

Finally, this is a time when the Good News of the New Testament has much to teach us. The refusal to judge, the essential importance of mercy and charity, the key strength of patience (which I have seen in so many of my Polish colleagues as of late) and the refusal to worry whether someone is "Jew or Greek." And last but not least, as we vote for leaders and for our countries' policies, the need to be as wise as serpents but as innocent as doves!

There will be challenging times ahead, but as Dr. King said, the arc of history bends towards justice. May it be so.

A Correction

In the May 2022 issue, the shared ministry agreement between the Anglican and United Churches in Neepawa was incorrectly referred to as the "Anglican-United Shared Ministry", when it should have been called the "United-Anglican Shared Ministry." The Editor regrets the error.

The Ladies Getaway

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

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

JUNE 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.



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ANGLICAN MEMORIAL CAMP INFORMATION

2022 SUMMER CAMPS

Teen Camp: Saturday, July 2 – Friday, July 8

Family Camp: Sunday, July 11 – Wednesday, July 13

Junior Camp: Sunday, July 17 – Saturday, July 23

Intermediate Camp:

Sunday, July 24 – Saturday, July 30

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 e-transfer 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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