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# The Mustard Seed.

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## The Rev'd Garry MacDowell Retires

Text by the Editor (with files from Lynne Tolton & Karen Mitchell of the Minnedosa Tribune)

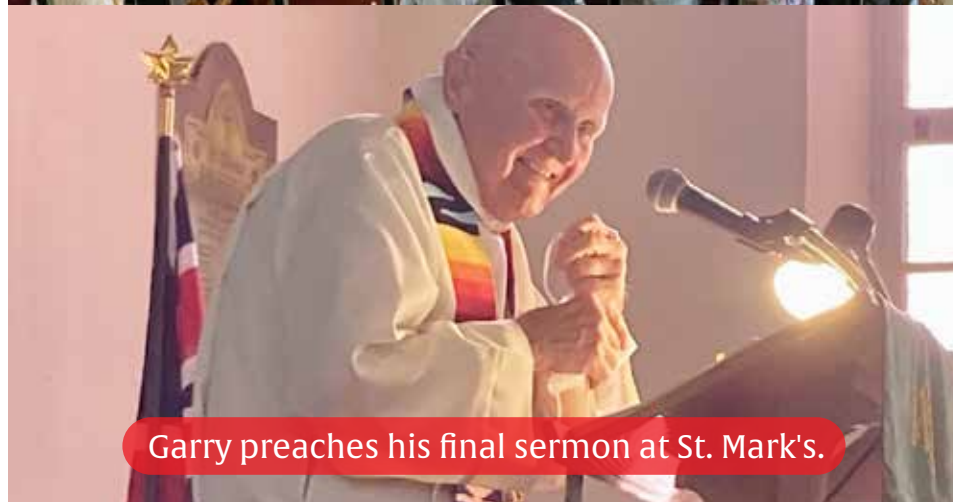
Photos by Lynne Tolton



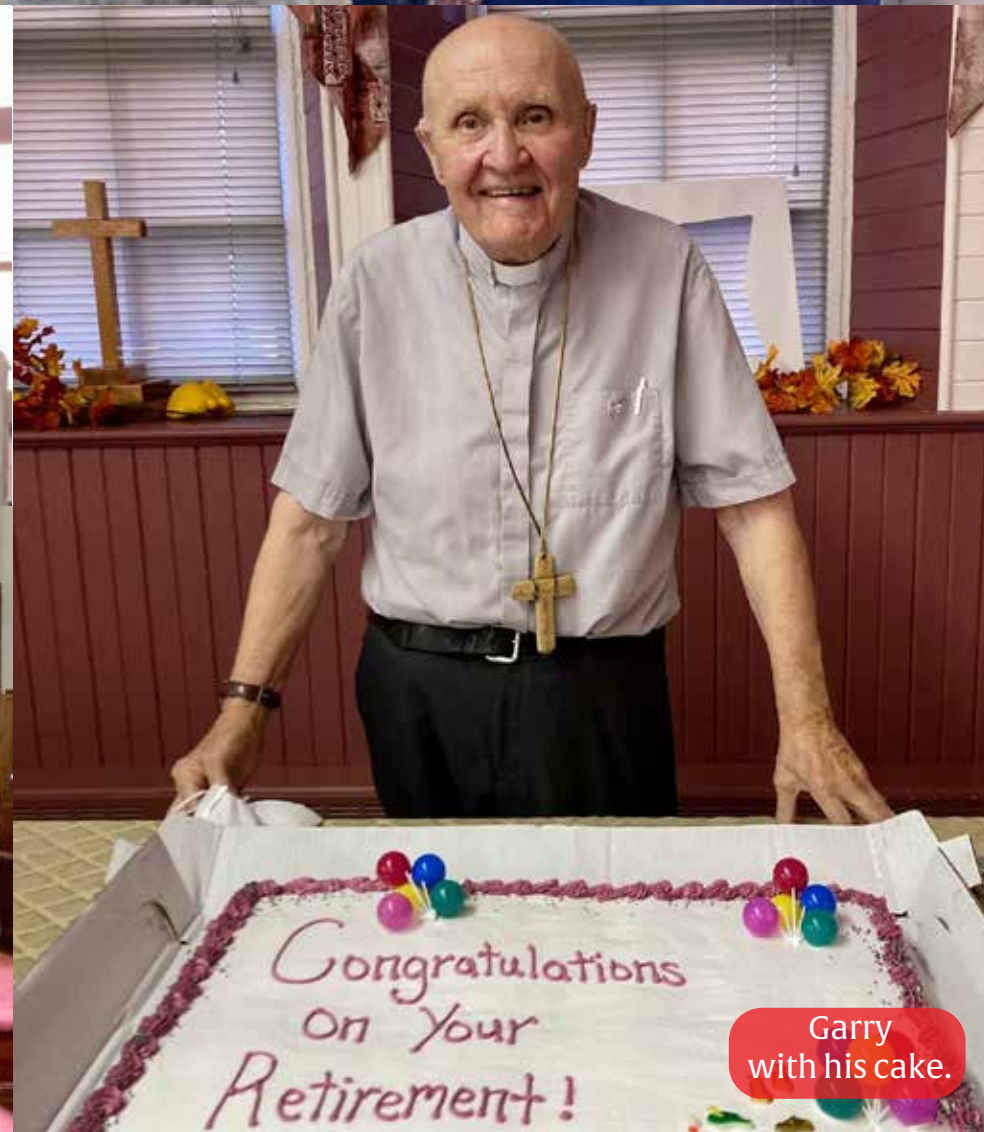
The gathered congregation.



Members of St. Mark's present Garry with a thank you gift.



Garry preaches his final sermon at St. Mark's.



Garry with his cake.



Friends and family with Garry following the service.

As the congregation gathered before the service at St. Mark's, Minnedosa on September 25, the bell tolled 55 times to mark each year of the Rev'd Garry MacDowell's active ministry. This took place before Garry celebrated the Holy Eucharist for the final time at St. Mark's, Minnedosa.

In attendance at this service were family, friends and parishioners from far and wide, including the Rev'd Canon Joy Ruddock, the Rev'd Gordon Stevenson, the Rev'd David Holmes from Stettler, Alberta, the Rt. Rev'd Jim Njegovan, as well as his grandson, Jamie Gibbons.

During the service, Lynne Tolton read a tribute to Garry's ministry at St. Mark's, Minnedosa saying, "what a celebration we are having today" and that the day provided "a great opportunity to reflect on our memories and stories of Garry."

Garry and his wife Judith first moved to Minnedosa in 2003, following his retirement as the Rector of St. Mary's in Brandon. Throughout his time at St. Mark's, Minnedosa, he contributed to many projects within the church, such as collecting pledges to lose weight, with the proceeds going towards a new elevator installed in the church, as well as his work supporting ministries in St. Vincent.

Following the service, John Cullen provided some music entertainment during a lunch where much visiting was had by those in attendance.

In retirement, Garry and Judith have moved back to the Brandon area.

Congratulations on your retirement, Garry!



## A Word From Our Bishop

*For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.*  
- Romans 8:24-25



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

I have made it no secret through the years that I love the season of Advent. The music of this season, the darkening days, the scripture we read which tells us of the expectation of God's might final acts in this world, they all add up to a season of hope for me. This hope is different than the garden variety hope which we all learn as children. This is not the expectation of a coming party on a birthday, or the countdown to the end of school and beginning of summer holidays. Those are all instances of expectation - but the expectation is for something we know, or have experienced before. In Advent, we are expecting a might act of God, which we cannot know, for it is the stuff of faith.

Expectation can be a powerful force in our lives. Anyone who has tried to get a child to sleep on Christmas Eve when the expectation of the next morning is so real will know whereof I speak. Expectation is a state where we allow our minds to wander into the particular delight, the single pleasure for which we have been made to wait. Fantasies of the Christmas Tree piled high with presents, or day dreaming about the long lazy days of summer while sitting in a classroom in the middle of June are good examples of the power of expectation.

But hope, especially in the kingdom of God is not like that expectation. There is expectation to be sure: we expect God to arrive and with a mighty arm set up his kingdom, return to the temple and begin the reign of justice and joy which had been foretold. But we can't exactly daydream about what that will look like because we have never seen it or experienced it fully before. We have definitely had flashes of it. We have experienced moments in our lives where God may have swept us off our feet with the power of his love and the transforming power of grace. These are flashes... inklings of what is to come. They are not the whole kingdom, rather they are a flash of the sun off of a lake: blinding and beautiful, but a reflected glory.

Advent is about what we cannot see, cannot know and yet believe will change everything. Advent is about hope in the coming Kingdom and in the One who will bring this kingdom into being. Hope is the most powerful emotion because it can make suffering bearable. Hope can make expectation and its power fade, for when hope is present, trust in the outcome becomes

a matter of faith, and not a matter of knowledge.

We are now entering Advent, and my prayer for you and the Diocese of Brandon is that you will feel the power of hope which the Christ brings to those who put their trust in him. That there is something, someone, coming that will change everything for you. It was to the forgotten, the hungry and the broken that he came. The rich and the powerful did not need the hope which he came to bring. They weren't even interested in the message which Jesus proclaimed until they began to understand that his preaching might upset their comfortable lives. Jesus is still here, calling us into the deeper hope of the kingdom, still preaching the end of the powers who have oppressed and broken the people of God. Advent is about that hope: the topsy-turvy kingdom of God where the meek inherit the earth and where those who mourn are comforted. May that hope grow in you each and every day as we approach the birth in time of the timeless Son of God.

### 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 the Thanksgiving weekend, a group of youth gathered at the camp to spend time with one another and to learn about Jesus. They spent time with our Bishop, as well as with Su McLeod, Youth Engagement Coordinator for the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund. They also shared in a huge thanksgiving feast together on the Sunday evening. This is a picture of all the youth (and the leaders) that gathered that weekend.



# News from the Pews

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

Members of the Mission, Service & Outreach Committee of the Neepawa United-Anglican Shared Ministry recently presented a cheque to the Principal of Hazel M. Kellington Elementary School of Neepawa. Through the month of September, the parish raised over \$800 to go towards school supplies for children who can not afford them.

In the photo below are the principal of the school, Allen Hanke, as well as Mission, Service & Outreach Committee members Bea Betts, Leona Kucher, Donna Newton, Elsie Slimmon, the Rev'd Chad McCharles OSBCn, and Susan Phillips (the Chair).



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

On October 4, 2022 St. Paul's Anglican Church Dauphin played host to God's 4 legged friends in a Blessing of the Animals Service. Cats and dogs shared the pews with their human families as the Rev'd Pat Langlois led everyone in a short service and then each furry friend made their way to the front of the church for a personal blessing.



## Order of St. Luke Conference

Text and photos by the Rev'd Canon Jim Brown  
Honourary Assistant, St. Mary's, Brandon

The annual conference for the Order of St. Luke was held Oct. 1 & 2, 2022 at St. Mary's Anglican Church, Brandon with the Rev'd Dr. Kevin Goodrich as our Guest Speaker. The topic was "The Christian Healing Ministry".

In addition to Fr. Kevin's talks, we also had some people sharing their personal experiences of healing. Rick Burik spoke of his miraculous healing from 3 cancerous tumours on his spine after aggressive chemotherapy treatment and being put into a medically induced coma. Jackie Brown shared about her healing of a separated shoulder. She hit a grand slam home run in a diocesan baseball Tournament less than a week after injuring her shoulder. She also spoke of Katherine Stafford, a rising ballerina with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet Company. She came down with Lou Gehrig's Disease which affects the muscles in the body. Although she was never physically healed, her faith blossomed as she attended a Prayer Group for about 4 years. Although her body was wasting away, her spirit & love just grew until she verily shone with the love of God. Canon Jim Brown shared a number of healings which he has experienced over the years from heart and abdominal issues. He now has an implanted pacemaker/defibrillator to keep the atrial fibrillation under control.

Bishop William Cliff celebrated the Eucharist on the afternoon of October 1st with the assistance of the Rev'd Chris Evetts, the Rector of St. Mary's. Retired Bishop Jim Njegovan celebrated the Sunday morning Eucharist on October 2nd.

We also accepted the resignation of Hazel Birt of Winnipeg age 92 after some 65 years of service, partly as our Secretary Treasurer. Clarissa Canning of Killarney has volunteered to take over the position. Hazel was thanked and presented with gifts of a beaded necklace and a bouquet of flowers. It was also good to have the Rev'd Raymond & Judy Knight stop in at the Eucharist on Saturday afternoon. Raymond is the former Manitoba Director of the Order of St. Luke. We had a wonderful conference. Thank you to all those who took part!



Canon Jim Brown thanks the kitchen staff.



The Rev'd Dr. Kevin Goodrich gives a lecture.



Hazel with her gift.



Hazel is thanked by Canon Jim Brown.



## Enabling Leaders & Learners

Text and photo by the Rev'd Dr. Grayhame Bowcott  
Program Director, Licentiate in Theology Program, Huron University College

For many faithful Christians serving in the Church today, the opportunity to attend a seminary to explore their faith and equip themselves with the theological learnings for ministry has been an inaccessible dream. For some, it's the restraints of time, balancing work and family commitments with a schedule that can't make room for "full time" study. For others, it's the significant expense of post-secondary education. There are also some people who have always wondered about studying theology but have always felt that perhaps the work might be too difficult for them.

Despite these barriers, many who wonder about these questions faithfully serve in our churches. They are the steadfast lay leaders who are the backbone of small congregations. They step into the gaps when clergy are spread thin. Their care holds our faith communities together, even if sometimes their effort go unrecognized.

Over the past decade, the Diocese of Brandon has partnered with Huron University College to explore new ways of make theological education accessible. Recognizing that the Anglican Church needs to inspire learning in our congregations, affirm the leadership gifts of many already serving in our communities and equip future leaders for ministry, we have come to understand that the best way of doing this isn't always within the traditional training received in seminary institutions. If Christians are called to "go out into the world", shouldn't this be the same commissioning of our theological schools too?

With deep appreciation for the pioneering efforts of Bishop William in his desire to equip leaders and learners in the Diocese of Brandon, the foundations for a new form of distance theological education were laid prior to the Covid 19 pandemic. The idea was simple: bringing passionate instructors of theology to their students and drawing on the gifts of local scholars and ministry practitioners to teach students in their own ministry contexts. A partnership was fostered between Huron University College and Brandon to bring this idea to fruition and courses began to take place beyond the walls of a seminary.

In 2020, when the Covid 19 pandemic disrupted our historic patterns of worship and ministry in Canada; theological institutions too began to explore new ways of innovation to meet the ever changing needs in ministry. Huron's Licentiate Program had been exploring possibilities of reaching new students in remote areas across Canada and the pandemic provided the perfect opportunity for us to try a new approach to providing theological study.



Image: Fr. Matt Koovisk teaches his course "The Practise of Pastoral Care: Equipping Congregational Leaders" from the teaching suite at the Cathedral in March 2022.

What if we could eliminate the barriers of distance, financial burden for students and accommodate the working schedules of many potential students? Would this inspire new students to explore theological education?

In 2021, the Diocese of Brandon applied for a \$10,000 grant from the Council of the North. The goal was to cover the costs of instructors in the LTh Program to then waive the tuition fees for the students attending virtual classes. A second grant was sought through the Anglican Foundation of Canada to augment the courses being offered freely to all students within the Council of the North dioceses/territories.

This is the first time that a complete range of theological courses have been offered freely in a virtual seminary program that can allow for lay leaders and postulants for ministry to access the same quality of

theological education available in seminaries, but now delivered in a format that has dropped all the barriers that made the same courses previously inaccessible.

Would this inspire new students to explore theological education? The answer is YES! Since the launch of the Brandon-Council of the North Cohort, enrolment in Huron's Licentiate program has grown to more than 160 students from fourteen dioceses/territories across Canada. Most are first time students of theology and loving it!

At last year's Huron Convocation, the first Brandon students, the Rev'd Cheryl Kukurudz and the Rev'd Lorraine Bonnell, graduated with their Licentiate in Theology diploma, recognizing the completion of sixteen courses in theology. These look to be the first of many in the years to come.

Thank you to the Diocese of Brandon for your pioneering partnership in providing a new way of making theological education accessible.

Mostly importantly, if you are reading this article and wondering if courses in the Licentiate in Theology program might be a fit for you, please consider exploring more at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/programs/theology/life-long-learning/> or by connecting with the Rev'd Cheryl Kukurudz at:

[admin@brandon.anglican.ca](mailto:admin@brandon.anglican.ca)

*The Rev'd Dr. Grayhame Bowcott is passionate about fostering congregational relationships and sharing our Anglican vocation with others. He serves as Program Director for the Licentiate in Theology program at Huron University College, and holds a doctorate in ministry from Wycliffe College at the University of Toronto.*



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From all of us at Cathedral Centre, we wish you a blessed Advent,  
a Merry Christmas, and a joyous New Year!

Bishop William, Dean Don,  
Deacon Cheryl, Greig and Teresa

