



## A Word From Our Bishop

*THE LORD is my light and my salvation;  
whom then shall I fear?  
The LORD is the strength of my life;  
of whom then shall I be afraid?  
- Psalm 27:1  
(Book of Common Prayer translation)*



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

It is ironic that we dig so deeply, first into Christmas and then into the Epiphany Season in what is the darkest and coldest part of the year. This of course is both a cultural inheritance to us which is the result of the northern hemisphere having its winter in these months. I am reliably assured by friends in the Southern hemisphere that the stories of light triumphing over darkness, of Christmas and the holy family hiding from the evil King Herod on a winter road strike differently in midsummer.

For us, the triumph of light over darkness, one of the central themes of Epiphany is summed up beautifully by Psalm 27, the psalm which is regularly sung in this season. The Psalm is reminding us of both the faithfulness and power of God to be the very bedrock of our life. That we need not fear any of the slings or arrows that might be sent against us while we celebrate and revel in the light of Jesus Christ which has been a revelation to us. A revelation which is the sovereign act of God for our good.

In the early church, when the teachers and preachers wanted to explain the will of God and the desire of God to love us completely, they used the language of light. Think back to how many prayers you have heard talk about “the light of the world” or ask God to “illumine our hearts”. The scriptures themselves are meant to be “light to our path and a lantern to our feet”. The language of light seems to be a natural one in explaining what it is we are seeking from God, or what God is Christ has been sent to do for us. I want you consider one more way in which light is used in how we think of our Christian life together.

No one gets to “own” light. If you strike a match in a darkened room, the light can be seen by everyone. Depending on where the lamp is placed, the whole room can share in its warmth and power to show the way. Making your way through a darkened place, holding your torch (or cell phone, I suppose) makes the

way safer for any who are following. Share the light! Share the light of God which you have received. Lift it high so that others might find their way to the same peace and serenity you desire in your walk with Jesus. The world is already filled with so much darkness that we need to lift one another up into the light of Christ’s presence, through prayer, through fellowship, through our daily life and walk together. We all know the passage “let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven”. We say it at every baptism, and it is meant not only to be an encouragement, but a way of life for daily living that we might lift one another up. This new year of 2023, let us all commit to lifting one another up into the light of Christ and showing the way forward for those who are struggling.

Do not let judgement or jealousy lead us to darken other’s paths. Let us not lay stumbling blocks before those who may be struggling, but rather let us help one another pray, and ask the Lord to illumine the way forward “out of darkness and into his marvelous light!”

### The Mustard Seed

*Publisher:*

The Rt. Rev'd William G. Cliff

*7th Bishop of Brandon*

*Editor (and Secretary of Synod):*

The Rev'd Matt Koovisk

*mustardseed@brandon.anglican.ca*

*Mail:* The Tri-Valley Parish,

c/o Box 15, Virden, MB, R0M 2C0

*Phone:* 204-748-1379 (OFFICE)

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 November 13th, the Bishop collated the Venerable Jonathan Hoskin as the Archdeacon of Brandon. Joining the clergy of the Diocese in this photo is Archdeacon Andrew Hoskin, Archdeacon Jonathan's father. Archdeacon Jonathan, in addition to his new role, will continue as the Rector of St. George's, Brandon & St. Luke's, Souris.

## News from the Pews

### CHRIST CHURCH, THE PAS as submitted by the Rev'd Jann Brooks

The Rev'd Jann Brooks officiated at the Remembrance Day commemorations for St. Paul's Care Home in The Pas. The local Legion, air cadet corps (303 The Pas Elks) as well as local bagpiper Don McKay participated in the service.

They paused for a photo to commemorate the occasion (which you can see below).



### ST. MARY'S, VIRDEN as submitted by the Editor

On November 20, the Bishop came to St. Mary's, Virden to baptize Kyler Clayton, as well as confirm Brooke McIntosh and Mckenzie Robertson. It was an extra special day for Mckenzie's and Kyler's family, as Kyler is the nephew of Mckenzie.

I'm told that the day was wonderful (and I was sorry to have missed it in person due to me contracting COVID-19, although I did watch via Zoom).

Congratulations to Kyler, Brooke, and Mckenzie!  
We couldn't be more thrilled for you all.



Kyler (the little boy on the left) and Mckenzie (in the blue blouse) gather for a photo with their families, the Bishop, and the Rev'd Anna Sproule.

## The Editor Reflects on the Eucharist

*Editor's Note: I was asked to contribute an article to the Saskatchewan Anglican on the Eucharist for their December edition. I was asked to answer the question: "why is the presence of Christ in the Eucharist a mystery?" I hope that you, the reader, can be spiritually edified by this article.*

The simple answer is this: we do not (and can not) fully understand the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Add to that the fact that as Christians, we don't all agree on the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Some (like Roman Catholics, and some Anglo-Catholics) believe in transubstantiation, the theological concept that the substances of the bread and wine offered at the Eucharist change into the Body and Blood of Christ, while the accidents (or what it looks like) remain as they had previously been. There are others that believe in sacramental union (like Lutherans), where Christ is "truly and substantially present in, with and under the forms of the consecrated bread and wine, so that communicants eat and drink the holy body and blood of Christ Himself as well as the bread and the wine." Ask an Anglican, and the common thought is something changes in the Eucharist, but how that change occurs is a mystery.

While I believe that the exact mechanics of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist remains a mystery to us mere mortals, I believe that the presence of Christ in the Eucharist is real and very present. The Eucharist is more than a mere memorial to me (although when we do partake in the Eucharist we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes). I believe that that presence of Christ as found in the Eucha-

rist has strengthened me throughout my life. Let me tell you a story about the Eucharist in my own life.

I remember back to my seminary days at Huron College at Western. As any seminary-trained priest can tell you (and will, if you let them), seminary is a time filled with highs and lows. I remember on more than one occasion where I was feeling those lows that come with the seminary experience. As I was going through those lows that happen from time to time, my thoughts turned to the Eucharist, and how I could always count on that to help strengthen me spiritually to be in seminary.

How did it strengthen me as I worked through all the changes that come with being in seminary, though? Well, to be frank, I didn't really know how the Eucharist strengthened me as I did this work. I just knew that after attending the Eucharist, I felt better and strengthened to do my work in the world. If you had asked me how it all worked, I probably would have said, "it's a mystery to me". I knew that Christ is present in the Eucharist, but if you were to press me for more details, I wouldn't have been able to give them to you.

The presence of Christ in the Eucharist is very much a mystery, and theologians have been spilling ink on it since the early days of the Church. I imagine that they will continue to do so until that day that Christ appears on earth once again. However, until that day where we will meet Jesus Christ face to face, we can and will meet him in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. This presence is a mystery, but in

this case, a little mystery isn't a bad thing. When we lean into the mystery of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, whenever we receive Him in the Bread and the Wine, our relationship with the Holy and Undivided Trinity is strengthened, and we are strengthened to go forth into the world to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love our neighbour as we have first been loved by God.

The next time you approach the altar to receive the Body and Blood of Christ, may you be renewed by Christ's presence in the Eucharist, and may your soul be fed so that you can live a life that reveals the Father's love to the broken world around us.



The Rev'd Chris Evetts celebrates the Eucharist during Anglican Memorial Camp's Junior Camp in July 2022.

## A Priestly Ordination in the Church of God

Photos by the Editor, the Rev'd Canon Jeanine Friesen, Samantha Friesen & the Rev'd Chris Pilon

On December 6th (the Feast of St. Nicholas of Myra), the Bishop ordained the Rev'd Jacob Friesen to the sacred order of Priest. Participating alongside clergy from around the Diocese was the Rt. Rev'd Nigel Shaw, the Bishop Ordinary to the Canadian Armed Forces; and Lieutenant-Colonel the Reverend Marc Torchinsky, Canon Recruiter for the Anglican Military Ordinariate, who preached the sermon. In addition to these clergy, chaplains from Canadian Forces Base Shilo were in attendance to support Fr. Jacob, who will, God willing, be military chaplain following his time in the Diocese.

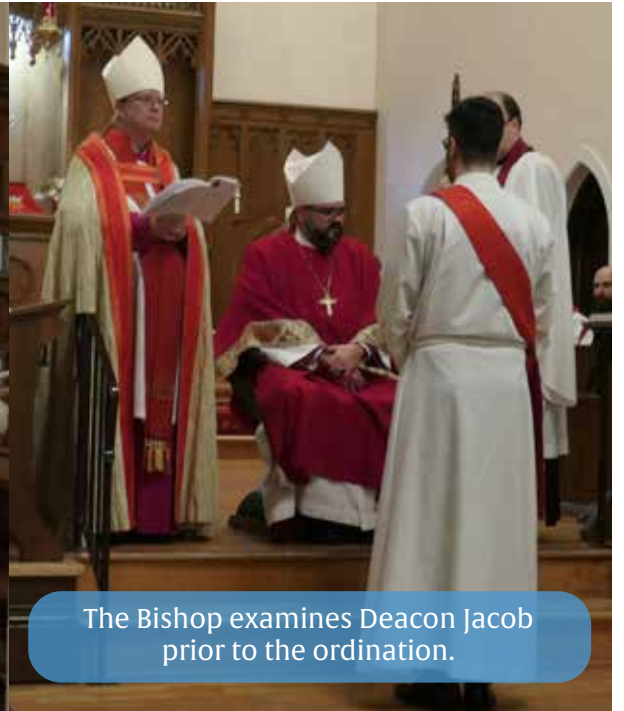
Below are some photos of the occasion. You can find more on the Diocesan Facebook page in due course!



Deacon Jacob processes into the Cathedral with his presenters and Bishop Shaw.



Canon Marc Torchinsky preaches the sermon.



The Bishop examines Deacon Jacob prior to the ordination.



The Bishop of Brandon ordains Deacon Jacob to the priesthood (assisted by the other bishops and priests in attendance).



The newly ordained priest is vested by his parents.



The group photo following the service.



Samantha, the ordinand's wife, reads the first lesson.



In the Lady Chapel the next morning, the newly ordained priest celebrates his first Mass with family and friends in attendance.



# Brockie Donovan

FUNERAL & CREMATION SERVICES  
332-8th Street, Brandon, MB, R7A 3X4  
TELEPHONE: 204-727-0694  
Web: <http://www.brockiedonovan.com>



The Bishop presents at the lay reader day held in Neepawa on December 3, where participants learned about the Eucharist.