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PWRDF provides \$5,000 for wildfire-ravaged B.C. town

Money to aid Telegraph Creek, reported to have lost at least 27 of its buildings to fire in August. See p. 7.



FIRE RAGES ON A MOUNTAINSIDE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, AUGUST 2018. PHOTO: SHAWN TALBOT/SHUTTERSTOCK

Clergy should show their wounds, says priest who opened up about past alcoholism



PHOTO: AMANDA JACKMAN

▲ “We need to talk about our struggles,” says the Rev. Matthew Martin.

Tali Folkins
STAFF WRITER

An Ontario priest who opened up to his congregation last winter about his past struggles with alcoholism and depression says clergy might be more effective if they worry less about trying to seem flawless.

“We need to talk about our struggles,” says the Rev. Matthew Martin, priest at Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Lucan, Ont., diocese of Huron. “If we do have something that we’ve been able to go through and overcome, then we need to be able to share that and not worry so much that we don’t portray an image of perfection.”

Many people—especially, perhaps, since a CBC profile last November—know Martin for his impersonations of Elvis Presley, replete with sequined jumpsuit and pompadour.

But Martin reportedly left many in his congregation in tears after preaching a sermon Feb. 18, 2018, in which he related how he had found new life in faith, and a call to the priesthood, after many years of living in a “tomb” of alcohol addiction and despair.

Martin tried his first beer as a nervous and insecure teenager, he says in the sermon, (which can be viewed on Holy Trinity’s website at www.holytrinitylucan.net/sermons--songs.html). From his first encounter with it, alcohol seemed like a “magic bullet” that could remove his social anxiety and make him the life of any party. But it soon became a self-reinforcing habit that took an increasing toll on him, he says.

“It didn’t take long before the gun was pointing inwards, and the magic bullet that took the form of

See Ontario priest, p. 4

Indigenous church takes shape

Sacred Circle voices concerns on marriage canon, governance as it looks forward to self-determination



▲ The Rev. Manasee Ulayuk, diocese of the Arctic

PHOTO: TALI FOLKINS

Tali Folkins
STAFF WRITER

Shortly before it concluded its business, the ninth Indigenous Anglican Sacred Circle, which met in Prince George, B.C., August 6-11, offered suggestions, questions and concerns to the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP) on issues including the marriage canon, the governance of a self-determining Indigenous church, mining and climate change, missing and murdered Indigenous women and the opioid crisis.

See Sacred Circle, p. 7

Lutheran, Anglican youth connect at CLAY



▲ Singer-songwriter Shy-Anne Hovorka performs her song “Only the River Knows,” at the Canadian Lutheran Anglican (CLAY) gathering held in Thunder Bay, Ont., August 15-19.

PHOTO: JOELLE KIDD

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER

In the darkened athletics facility, crowds of teens filled bleachers and gathered before the stage, swaying, singing, jumping, and even doing the Macarena dance as the band played. Colourful flashing lights and lasers lit up the room. The music was interspersed with readings of Scripture, prayers and a drama team’s short pieces, ranging from a superhero parody to a powerful personal reflection on living with chronic illness.

It was a typical evening at the Canadian Lutheran Anglican Youth (CLAY) gathering, a biennial event that this year drew almost 800 people—515 of them youth aged 14-19—to the campus of Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ont., August 15-19.

The gathering was packed with activities, including the launch of a new two-year project for Lutheran and Anglican youth—an initiative addressing housing and homelessness—and the second-largest-ever enactment of the KAIROS blanket exercise (a tool for teaching Indigenous Canadian history).

But for many who attended, the highlight of the week was simply being with other young people in worship.

See CLAY youth learn, p. 8

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2 Getting physical with prayer

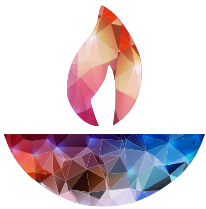


4 Mystery worshippers visit B.C. churches



11 Finding grace at the movies





PRAYER ▶



▲ Aids to prayer don't have to be artificial. "The tools can be the world around you, the natural world," says the Rev. Kara Mandryk.

PHOTO: DUDARVE MIKHAIL

Incarnating prayer

Engaging your body and the world for a richer spiritual life

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER

In the gospels, when Jesus' disciples asked him to "teach us to pray," he responded with the Lord's Prayer. For centuries, Christians have used this passage as a guide for talking to God. Yet most would probably agree there's more to prayer than words—there's also a physical aspect that has taken many forms over the ages.

Anglicans, for example, may have certain preferred physical positions—kneeling, perhaps folding their hands or closing their eyes—or they may like to use aids, such as candles or prayer beads.

"Using tools in prayer helps us engage our entire beings," says the Rev. Kara Mandryk. "A lot of times, at least the way I grew up, prayer is either in your head or in your mouth. But once prayer is in your body, you engage with God in a different way."

Mandryk is the co-ordinator of Henry Budd College for Ministry in The Pas, Man., diocese of Brandon. Formerly, she was an associate professor for worship and Christian spirituality at Providence University College and Theological Seminary in Otterburne, Man., where she taught a class on the rituals of prayer

to students from across different Christian traditions.

"The way we hold our bodies is very reflective of what's going on inside of us," says Mandryk. In Scripture, she says, there are many examples of different physical positions of prayer—standing, kneeling, prostrate, arms upraised. In her class, Mandryk says, she encouraged her students to repeat a simple prayer, like the ancient Orthodox Jesus Prayer—"Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner"—while moving through various positions, making note of how they connected with the words in each physical position.

Other types of "embodied prayer" use small tools that help people to engage physically with prayer, like rosaries or finger labyrinths, says Mandryk. "For those of us who are very kinesthetic and fidgety, it just helps us focus," she says. People have different approaches to learning and understanding, she notes, and "there's no reason why that shouldn't translate into how we meet and commune with God."

Look around you

The many rituals and types of prayer Mandryk has taught over the years include saying the rosary, centering prayer and even praying through drawing. In an exercise drawn from the book *Praying in Color* by Sybil MacBeth, Mandryk had her students write someone's name and, as they prayed, add "shapes and patterns and colours—almost like prayer doodles."

Similarly, Mandryk finds walking while praying a good tool for intercessory prayer, or praying for others. "Walk around the community and use the physical world around you as your intentions for prayer: what you see, what God opens your eyes to," she says.

Aids to prayer, Mandryk says, don't have to be artificial. "The tools can be the world around you, the natural world."

For those who want to explore new ways to pray, Mandryk suggests looking into writing on the subject. "There are so many books written on ancient traditions



or contemplative traditions, using language that might be more accessible to people" that can introduce new forms of prayer, she says, though she cautions against co-opting a ritual from another tradition "without understanding it."

She says people should also recognize that not every type of prayer will fit everyone's personality or learning style. Spiritual disciplines require work and may not feel natural the first time. However, she says, don't worry if something doesn't work for you.

"I grew up with, 'Read your Bible, pray every day and you'll grow, grow, grow,' which is absolutely true. But how do we read our Bible? How do we pray every day? How can we engage each other, our environment, our bodies?" asks Mandryk.

"Experimenting in prayer can be a lifelong pursuit. There's just so much depth there." ■

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Tools of devotion

There's hardly a limit to the objects you can use to help you pray. Here's a sampling to get you started.

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER



▲ Having a physical item to count and move through one's fingers focuses the mind, says Sr. Sarah Jean Thompson, a member of the monastic community of the Sisterhood of Saint John the Divine, Toronto.

PHOTO: TOLIKOFF
PHOTOGRAPHY

The rosary

Sr. Sarah Jean Thompson of the Sisterhood of Saint John the Divine (SSJD), an Anglican monastic community in Toronto, regularly teaches workshops on how to make and use Anglican rosaries. She sees the rosary as a way to aid focus while praying. "People often find that their minds wander during prayer," says Thompson. "Sort of like popcorn. Like: 'I wonder what I'm going to have for dinner?' or 'I need to make that phone call' or 'Is my kid OK at school?'" Having physical items to count and move through one's fingers focuses the mind, she says.

Thompson has long been interested in prayer beads. "When I was seven years old, my six-year-old neighbour had her first communion," she remembers. "She was Roman Catholic and I was Protestant. She got gifts, got to dress up pretty and have a big party, and I was so jealous! And the thing that most interested me was her rosary."

When she entered SSJD more than 40 years ago, Thompson asked for a rosary and began to read up on using prayer beads. She began by using the Marian (Roman Catholic) rosary, with an adapted set of prayers and meditations based on English theologian Austin Farrer's book, *Lord, I Believe*.

Over time, she discovered and learned to make different types of rosaries, including the Orthodox prayer rope—which is made with 33, 50 or 100 knots—and an Anglican rosary developed by a parish prayer group in Texas.

Designed in the 1980s, the Anglican rosary features 33 beads, representing the age of Christ. It begins with a cross, then a large "invitatory" bead, followed by sets of seven small beads interspersed with four larger beads. The larger beads are called "cruciform" (if you draw lines between the two sets, they form a cross), while the smaller are "weekly," representing the seven days in a week. Prayers can be assigned to each bead, as the one who prays moves around the rosary to the right.

The practice of counting something physical while praying goes back to antiquity, and is not only a Christian practice, Sarah Jean is quick to note. Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam all have a version of prayer beads.

Sarah Jean says she does not pray with a rosary these days, but she has seen interest continue to grow in the Anglican church. "They are really popular here," she says, adding that she once brought 100 to sell at General Synod and found herself making even more as they sold out.

The rosaries can be made with different colourful beads or even crystals—though Thompson prefers knotted rosaries or simple wooden beads. "If it looks like jewellery, I get distracted," she says.

In the notes for the workshops that she runs on using prayer beads, Thompson writes that "the beauty of the Anglican rosary is its flexibility." Many prayers have been written for the purpose of the rosary, but people should feel free to assign or write their own, she says. One common use for the Anglican rosary is praying the offices, or daily prayers of the church.

"Over time, you will find the form of the prayer will be less significant," and the experience of entering into a silent moment after prayer becomes more profound, she writes in her workshop notes. "The rosary is only a tool to enter into that silence."

Prayer shawls

Many Anglican congregations in Canada have prayer shawl ministries. Started in 1998 by Janet Bristow and Victoria Galo, two American seminary graduates, ministry involving prayer shawls is meant to reflect the "unconditional embrace of a sheltering, mothering God," according to Bristow's and Galo's website (www.shawlministry.com). The knitter (or crocheter) begins with a prayer of blessing and may continue to pray throughout the creation of the shawl. When the shawl is completed, a prayer of blessing is prayed over it. The shawls are often given to someone in need of comfort.



Prayer boxes

Some religious traditions feature some form of box where prayers can be stored physically. This practice is common in Judaism, wherein tefillin or phylacteries, small boxes containing verses from the Torah, are worn on the head and left arm during prayers, as an expression of Deuteronomy 11:18 ("Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads"). Writing down prayers and keeping them in a small box is a way both to externalize prayers and to keep a record of prayer requests and expressions of gratitude to look back on.

Prayer journals

Prayer journals are also popular. Like a prayer box, a journal holds a written record of prayers to return to and reread. The journal format also allows for longer prayers, letters to God or the working through of emotions, and all these thoughts and prayers can be collected in one place.



Prayer stones

Small stones can be carried or placed somewhere noticeable to serve as reminders to pray. Many versions of prayer stones are commercially available, often decorated with inspirational messages, images or Bible verses. While any small object can serve as a prayer reminder, stones have added symbolism, recalling biblical metaphors for God as a rock.

Sand trays

Sand trays are often used therapeutically. Sand has a calming texture, and you can use it to work through your feelings by drawing on it, writing on it or moulding it. Sand trays can also be useful tools to express prayer. Simple drawings and words can be traced in the sand, or you can comb the sand or run it through your fingers as a meditation tool.



Finger labyrinths

Labyrinths have been used for centuries for meditative prayer. A labyrinth is made up of a single winding path that leads to its centre, typically in a garden or other secluded area where it can be walked in peace. While a full-scale labyrinth may not be easily accessible to everyone, finger labyrinths provide the same focus and movement, in miniature. Typically carved from wood, they feature a raised path you can trace with your finger while you pray.

PARISH LIFE ▶



IMAGE: STEGWORKZ/SHUTTERSTOCK

How friendly is your church?

‘Mystery worshippers’ see church through a visitor’s eyes

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER

It’s difficult to know what someone is experiencing when they walk into your church, says Tasha Carrothers. “They come and they may or may not stay, you don’t know why,” she says. “Even with newcomers, we don’t pull them aside three months in and say, ‘What was your experience like when you first came here? What was it that enticed you to stick around?’”

Carrothers is the missionary for parish development in the diocese of New Westminster. As facilitator of a team of consultants engaged by the diocese, she helps parishes understand how to better welcome newcomers to their churches. Now, with a program she recently launched in the diocese, a small group of incognito visitors are helping to do just that.

The idea of “mystery worshippers” was popularized by British website Ship of Fools, which publishes reports about churches across denominations all over the globe. The model is simple, based on that of a restaurant reviewer or “secret shopper.” The mystery worshipper attends a church as a visitor and reports back on how they enjoyed the service, whether they felt welcomed, whether the church was easy to find—details that regular parishioners take for granted.

There are some things that can make a visitor feel awkward or uncomfortable that regular church attendees may not be aware of. Carrothers points out common problems—churches with large, decorative front doors, where everyone uses the side entrance; announcements so full of insider language as to be incomprehensible for first-timers; close-knit communities that inadvertently cause a visitor to feel like an outsider.

New Westminster parishes that want to identify and address these issues can now request a mystery worshipper. Carrothers sends someone only if the service is requested, but doesn’t specify when the visitor will be coming—“so that by the time this person shows up, [people are] no longer on their best behaviour,” she laughs.

After submitting feedback, the mystery worshipper attends a parish council meeting for a question-and-answer session.

“If you just get a form evaluating you, it can be kind of depressing,” says Carrothers. In a personal meeting, “there’s a chance to nuance the whole experience and really affirm what went well, so that it’s a good experience for everyone.”

Mystery worshipper Tracy Tobin says it was a “fantastic experience,” and one that she hopes to be able to do again. A longtime Anglican, Tobin is currently pursuing ordination as a deacon.

Tobin visited St. Laurence Anglican Church in Coquitlam, B.C. when the rector, the Rev. Eric Mason, was “fairly new” to the parish. While Mason had experienced the congregation as friendly and welcoming, he wanted to see his church through the eyes of a visitor. “We don’t hear the voice of somebody who is a genuine stranger,” he says.

Tobin enjoyed the service and liturgy at St. Laurence and said her criticisms were “easy to fix.”

Two mystery worshippers sent out so far reported that they were not invited to join coffee hour following the service, Carrothers says. After waiting for 15 minutes, Tobin says, she struck up a conversation about the bulletin and was invited to coffee, but found herself with no one to talk to.

“Inevitably, it’s weird,” Mason says of the process, “because it’s like somebody coming into your home and

“Inevitably, it’s weird, because it’s like somebody coming into your home and telling you they don’t like the furniture.”
—The Rev. Eric Mason, St. Laurence Anglican Church, Coquitlam, B.C.

telling you they don’t like the furniture.” However, he says, Tobin’s notes reinforced some of the conversations parishioners had already been having around hospitality. Of the changes she identified, he says, “we had ears to hear them because we were already asking the question.”

Tobin also found that visiting a new church helped her realize what could seem unwelcoming in her own parish. “I really instantly changed my approach,” she says. When she went back the following Sunday, she says, she became more aware of visitors and how to make them feel more comfortable. “It just opened up my brain to, ‘What are we missing? How can we address it? What can we do differently?’ It was an invaluable experience.”

Carrothers says the response so far has been positive, with both parishes that participated indicating they would like to do it again.

When asked what was the most valuable take-away from the experience, Mason reflects, “We need the stranger to help us know ourselves better.”

Tobin encourages everyone to also become that stranger. “One Sunday, go visit another church that will have no idea who you are,” she advises. “It’ll change how you see your own space.” ■

Ontario priest walked brink of despair before Easter of new life

Continued from p. 1

any variety of alcohol was tearing away at my soul,” he says. “I was miserable, I was depressed, I was lonely and anxious, and the more depressed I felt, the more I would drink.”

Alcohol addiction eventually led him to absolute despair. “At one point I remember my desire to escape everything and everyone was so powerful that I found myself hanging out the window of an apartment building,” he adds. “Thankfully, a cop and common sense prevailed that night.”

Eventually, he ended up in a hospital room with a chair and table bolted to the floor. It was there, Martin says, that he experienced an Easter of resurrection. He prayed, and as he did so he felt confident of the gospel promise of new life.

“God’s grace washed over me,” he says in his sermon. “When I was finally given the all-clear to go home, I stood up and I looked at that steel table bolted to the floor and somehow I understood that I wasn’t



PHOTO: AMANDA JACKMAN

The Rev. Matthew Martin with a young parishioner

coming back.”

Since that moment, Martin says in an interview, he has not touched alcohol. And

although he had already begun reading and studying the Bible, he says, it was from that moment that he felt with certainty he was called to be a priest.

A number of considerations, Martin says, drove him to speak openly about his experiences in his Lenten sermon. Two events within the previous week and a half had clearly shown an intense need in the community for help with addictions: in that time alone, he received a call from someone who had come close to suicide as a result of an addiction, and addiction had caused the death of someone in Lucan.

He also found he was becoming increasingly uncomfortable with the notion of the priest as perfect.

“If you walk into most Anglican churches, there’s polished brass, we have our robes neatly pressed, we have our chasubles and our stoles, the stained glass—all of these things project an image to those people who sit in the pews,” he says. “And the priests can sometimes

be viewed as deities—they’re the people who’ve got everything together. Yet it’s just not true.

“Too often, the people sitting in the pews can feel like failures and they don’t realize we’re all struggling,” he says. “We struggle with faith questions, we struggle with questions of prayer, we struggle with, ‘Has God left us? Are we alone?’”

It’s possible that priests could help people more with their inner struggles if they open up more about their own, Martin says.

“When we’re able to share ourselves... then we’re leading with love, and I think that’s when people recognize we’re in this together. And I think that’s what Jesus was all about.”

Martin says many of his parishioners were deeply moved by and appreciative of his sermon that day. Since he gave it, he says, he has been approached by people with their own stories of struggle, and he hopes their talking about these struggles will help them heal. ■

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COME AND SEE ▶



Fred Hiltz
PRIMATE

I AM WRITING this column from a cottage near lovely La Malbaie in Quebec, where I was delighted to preside and preach on Sunday, August 26. From the deck there is a magnificent view of the mighty St. Lawrence River. As I sit and watch the river, I am intrigued by the many colours that accompany the patterns in the currents and in the rising and receding of the tide. Last night the full moon cast shimmers of gold from one shore across to the other. This morning the river is shrouded in fog. From “up along,” I hear the sound of a fog horn. Today’s forecast includes a few showers.

I enjoy watching the river traffic. There are tankers, container ships and sturdy tug boats hauling heavily laden barges. There are lots of sailboats, too. How I would like to be on one of them! In the wind there is a scent of sea air and a taste of salt. I feel so at home here by the water. Lynne (my wife) is with me and our beautiful Dory Belle (our six-month-old black Labrador Retriever). I am actually beginning to relax and feel refreshed in



▲ **Dory Belle**
ponders the St. Lawrence River at La Malbaie, Quebec.

PHOTO:
LYNNE SAMWAYS HILTZ

body and soul, and I am grateful.

The people here are so gracious in their welcome and so generous in their hospitality. In the midst of conversations about the climate of current global politics, the North American Free Trade Agreement, Canadian-American relations and the news of John McCain’s death, everyone comments on how hot a summer it has been. Still, everyone here says it has been absolutely beautiful.

As I tune into the news, I am immediately reminded of the kind of summer it has been in many other parts of Canada, particularly British Columbia, ravaged by hundreds of forest fires. I think of the thousands of people who have had to evacuate and the thousands more on notice. I think of those who have lost homes and farms. I think, too, of all those men and women who are fighting these fires with the back-up support of Canadian Forces personnel. I think of how hard they are all working and how exhausted they must be at the end of their shifts. I am thankful for all those who are relieving them on the front line, feeding them and making provision for them to rest.

I join everyone who is praying for rain,

lots and lots of rain, to fall over the mountains and into the valleys. I hope that by the time people read this column, those rains will have come and drenched the land so scorched by summer’s heat and fire’s fury.

I ask you to join me in continuing to remember the peoples of British Columbia as they recover from this very hard summer. It has been traumatizing for children and the elderly, for families and family pets, for farmers and their livestock. Pray for them as they begin to rebuild their lives and livelihoods.

As we anticipate the Thanksgiving weekend this year, I ask that as we give thanks for the labours of all those who till the land and tend the crops in the hope of a good harvest for all to share, we also remember those whose life’s work is the preservation and protection of woodlands and forests. Give thanks for their skill in fighting fires and their courage through days of danger. Give thanks for their counsel in reforestation initiatives. Give thanks for their part in the care of God’s creation. ■

Archbishop Fred Hiltz is primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

WALKING TOGETHER ▶



Mark MacDonald
NATIONAL INDIGENOUS ANGLICAN BISHOP

IN AUGUST, the Indigenous network of congregations and peoples met for their ninth Sacred Circle. There were two interrelated themes at the gathering: discipleship and Indigenous self-determination. Some might wonder how these two could be closely related to each other. Discipleship is often thought to concern the personal disciplines that are necessary to practice and grow in the Christian faith. This is important for Christians, individually, and for the church, as a community, but what does it have to do with Indigenous self-determination?

In Indigenous communities, the elders have consistently advised us to join spirituality with self-determination. The two are inseparable and can only be realized together. The collective individualism that is the ideal of Indigenous culture and governance is expressed and realized in the realm of spiritual practice. Spirituality, which is intimately individual, is realized in a family relationship of service to a community of land and humanity. This is a foundational idea for Indigenous culture

▲ “[The Word] calls us to become a part of the New Creation that has begun in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.”

ILLUSTRATION: GD
ARTS/SHUTTERSTOCK



and society. Here, we begin to see the link between discipleship and self-determination. As a spirituality informed by the traditional values of Indigenous life, discipleship serves the whole of life.

This is very much in line with the teaching of the early Christian church. The apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians that he was “in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you” (Galatians 4:19). He speaks here of the way that the life and reality of Jesus becomes living and real in the communal life of faith. Spiritual formation is an activity and reality of Christian community. Christ is formed in us, and not just in me. It is the local community’s right, calling and destiny to realize and see the presence Christ promised in its own context, culture and language.

Indigenous churches have seen the possibility of a truly Indigenous faith restricted and denied. Church and government law and policy have tried to limit Indigenous peoples to another culture’s way of expressing faith, in belief and practice. Though Indigenous Christian communities have still managed to quietly express many culturally relevant aspects of Christian

faith in their local communities, cultural colonialism has caused much hardship and trauma. To heal this trauma, to recover Indigenous self-determination in church and the larger community, Indigenous Christians are committed to discipleship, often summarized as “placing the Gospel in the centre of the Sacred Circle.”

Jesus promised a special presence wherever two or three are gathered in his name. This is a Sacred Circle. Attending to this presence is the heart of discipleship. Discipleship is the practice of the disciplines that will receive, welcome and embody the life of Christ in Christian community. The presence of Christ affirms, enhances and fulfills the personality and life of the local community—this is a massive part of what the Word becoming flesh means. But the Word challenges, as well as affirms. It calls us to become a part of the New Creation that has begun in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. ■

Bishop Mark MacDonald is national Indigenous bishop of the Anglican Church of Canada.

LETTERS

‘One church, two services’ for marriage?

The change in the marriage canon, which will become church law if passed again in Vancouver next year, changes the heterosexual union of marriage to a gender-neutral union, but there is not instruction to change the 400-year-old marriage ceremony.

It seems to me for the change in the marriage canon to be legal and complete, an amendment must be added, such as, “and an alternate service be composed and added to the prayer book, to accommodate this change in eligibility.”

The amended resolution would allow a choice between the traditional service, which we have had for four centuries, and a service of recognizing the legal, civil, secular equality of same-sex unions.

When Jesus was asked if it were lawful to render tribute to Caesar, he said, “Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar’s and to God that which is God’s.”

Let us do the same and exit New Westminster next July united. One church, two services, not two churches, each with its own marriage ceremony. With more time and less emotion, our church will solve the problem.

G.K. Higgins
Calgary

Church needs to lead on assisted dying

The recent articles on assisted death have raised important questions (“Assisted dying: One Anglican family’s story”; “Study guide encourages Anglicans to grapple with realities of physician-assisted dying law in Canada,” pp. 6 and 1, June 2018).

I have always placed the emphasis in my ministry on leading with love and empathy rather than regulations and law. The problem that assisted dying

presents is that our society is sending contradictory messages. If suicide is wrong, how can it sometimes be acceptable? As followers of Christ, our lives are not our own: we belong to Christ. Thou shalt not kill—we need to value life and protect life as a precious gift of God. Is the way of love to stand by while people take their life, or to encourage them to choose life and to support them until natural death?

Our church has a long history of seeking to serve and to speak for the vulnerable. The church now must speak for the suffering, the dying and their families. We need to lead the conversation about how to provide them with the best medical care and social and financial support, rather than the assisted suicide that our wider society is offering.

Canon Stewart Murray
Ottawa

The Anglican Journal welcomes letters to the editor.

Since not all letters can be published, preference is given to shorter correspondence (300 words or less). All letters are subject to editing.

CANADA ▶

Anglican Church hires two new suicide prevention workers

Tali Folkins
STAFF WRITER

The Anglican Church of Canada has hired two new suicide prevention workers as part of its Indigenous ministry.

Jeffery Stanley, a master of divinity student at the Vancouver School of Theology, began work June 25; Yolanda Bird, a former member of Council of General Synod (CoGS) with extensive experience working with children and youth, began July 3.

Each is responsible for helping deliver existing suicide prevention programs in the dioceses in their areas, as well as helping develop new ones, said Indigenous ministries co-ordinator Canon Ginny Doctor. Their work also includes developing teams of volunteers in dioceses where the need for suicide prevention is especially high, she said.

Stanley, based in Gingolx, a Nisga'a community on the Pacific coast of British Columbia northeast of Prince Rupert, is responsible for British Columbia, Yukon and Western Arctic; Bird is based in Montreal Lake First Nation, about 100 km north of Prince Albert, Sask., and covers Alberta and Saskatchewan, and, if necessary, also Manitoba and northern Ontario.

The new hires are both full-time posi-



▲ Both Jeffery Stanley, left, and Yolanda Bird, right, have been personally affected by the suicide of a loved one.

PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED

tions. Bird and Stanley join the church's current Indigenous suicide prevention worker the Rev. Norm Casey, whose position is half-time. The Rev. Nancy Bruyere, who was hired in 2013 as suicide prevention co-ordinator for Western Canada and the Arctic, has left the work, Doctor said.

The work combines Anglican and Indigenous traditional spiritual teachings—which, Doctor says, aren't in contradiction with one another—to restore a sense of purpose and identity, especially to young Indigenous people.

The two new positions are part of the national church's 2018 budget, approved by

CoGS in November 2017.

Both Stanley and Bird have been personally affected by suicide; Stanley's twin brother took his life in 2003, and Bird's best friend committed suicide in 2016.

Stanley's background includes some schooling in suicide prevention and youth ministry, and he has done a significant amount of work with children and youth—including teaching the Nisga'a language to school children.

Contacted by the *Anglican Journal* July 5, Bird said she was unavailable for an interview because she wanted to support the family of a young woman on her reserve who had committed suicide earlier that day.

Reached later, Bird said spirituality can be a powerful source of hope for people at risk of suicide.

"It's the most important thing...because that's where the strength comes from," Bird said.

Bird's background includes working with children and youth for many years, some university study in psychology and a number of training sessions on suicide prevention—including a workshop hosted in March 2017 by the Anglican Church of Canada's Indigenous ministries department. ■

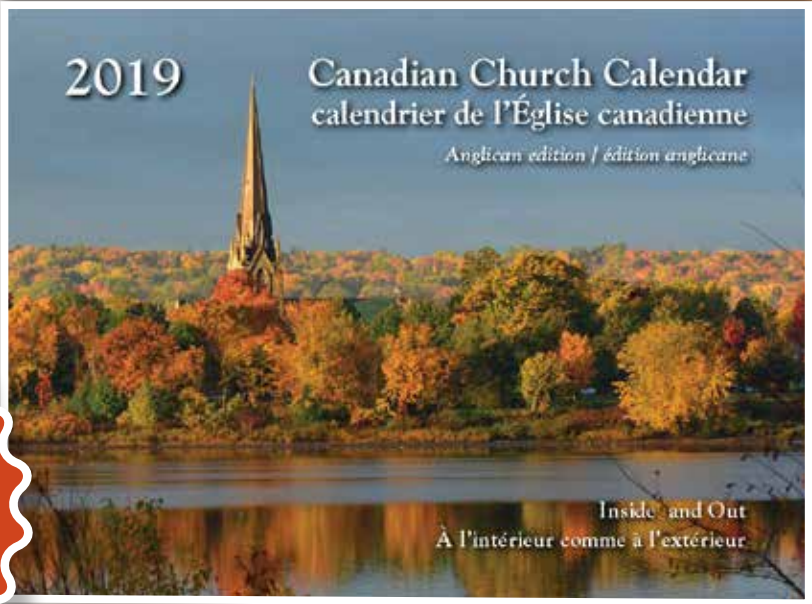


▲ The logo of the church's suicide prevention program is the traditional Christian fish symbol in the colours of the medicine wheel, which represents healing in Indigenous tradition.

FILE PHOTO

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INDIGENOUS CHURCH ▶

Sacred Circle discusses own vote at General Synod

Continued from p. 1

Sacred Circle is a national decision-making body of Indigenous Canadian Anglicans that meets every three years. ACIP, a much smaller body, guides the work of the Anglican Church of Canada's department of Indigenous ministries.

On August 8, Sacred Circle broke into focus groups to discuss topics selected by organizers, with a view to recommending action to ACIP. Two days later, these groups reported back to the larger gathering. Part of that day had been set aside for work on resolutions that might come out of the work of these groups, but representatives were told they could offer recommendations instead, which they chose to do; no resolutions ended up being proposed.

One question raised during discussion by the focus group on the marriage canon was how an amendment to the canon would affect a self-determining Indigenous Anglican church, said the group's spokesperson, the Rev. Tracey Taylor, of the diocese of Qu'Appelle.

When it meets July 2019 in Vancouver, General Synod will give the required second reading to a proposed amendment to the marriage canon that would allow for same-sex marriages. If the resolution passes this second reading, it will be adopted. The same General Synod is expected to vote on a resolution creating a self-determining Indigenous church, which some have called a "fifth province," within the Anglican Church of Canada.

One focus group member, Taylor told the gathering, said the painful debate would mean yet more wounds for the church's Indigenous people, who have already experienced much suffering. Another said there was a need to translate the canon itself into Indigenous languages, since, the spokesperson said, many Indigenous Anglicans are confused about exactly what the amendment means.

Another focus group discussed the governance of the planned self-determining Indigenous church; National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald served both as its facilitator and spokesperson to

“We are trying to...see change in a step-by-step way, giving priority to the local community and not forcing anyone into any particular situation.”

—National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald



▲ **Members of the ninth Indigenous Sacred Circle, held in Prince George, B.C., August 6-11, make their way to the site of the gathering's opening Eucharist, August 7.**

PHOTO: TALI FOLKINS

Sacred Circle. A participant in this group, MacDonald said, expressed a desire for Sacred Circle to have its own "voice and vote" in General Synod. This, MacDonald said, is a "longer-term goal" for Indigenous Anglican leaders.

MacDonald said the group also expressed the desire that self-determination not put Indigenous Anglicans in an "adversarial" position with their dioceses and other church structures—which MacDonald said he expected would be avoided.

"What we are trying to do is see change in a step-by-step way, giving priority to the local community and not forcing anyone into any particular situation," he said.

A focus group on resource extraction and climate change said Canada's North was "ground zero for climate change," according to the group's spokesperson, Lorraine Netro, of the diocese of Yukon. Global warming, she said, is affecting all aspects of life in the North, and she urged the church to act against projects such as the extension of the Trans Mountain pipeline in Alberta and B.C.

Her group, she reported, said it would like to see a resolution on resource extraction and climate change before General

Synod 2019.

The Rev. Barbara Shoomski, of the diocese of Rupert's Land, co-spokesperson of a focus group on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, urged the church to reach out to Indigenous sex workers. She also spoke out against what she said were judgmental attitudes toward these women and girls; she knew from her own experience working with them as a chaplain, she said, that some of them were working in the sex trade because they could find no other way to support their loved ones.

"They actually are there to help feed their family, some of them—cute little girls that nobody should even touch," she said. "I don't understand how we allow this to happen to little kids."

Aaron Sault, of the diocese of Huron, spokesperson for a focus group on the opioid crisis and substance abuse, said drugs were "taking over a lot of our First Nations communities across Canada," including his own reserve. Many of these communities, he said, offer very little in the way of social services to people with addictions and their families. There might be some way the Anglican Church of Canada could reach out to help these people, he said.

The reports from the focus groups capped Sacred Circle's four working days, which included speeches, presentations, group discussions, the election of new ACIP members and Bible study. In an address to the group August 8, MacDonald said he saw discipleship as the future church's key principle. If the Indigenous church is to be effective, he said, it will be by putting Jesus at the centre of everything it does, and creating disciples rather than mere church members.

In a closing sermon, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, urged the church to continue to move ahead with reconciliation and the creation of a self-determining Indigenous church. He also encouraged it to reflect on the idea of redesigning the crest of the Anglican Church of Canada to show, he said, "the partnership to which the Covenant of 1994 continually reminds us." ■

CANADA ▶



▲ **Hundreds of people are reported to have fled wildfires around Telegraph Creek in August.**

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

PWRDF, Sacred Circle members provide \$5,000 for town damaged by wildfires

Tali Folkins
STAFF WRITER

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), the Anglican Church of Canada's relief and development agency, has given \$5,000 to the diocese of Yukon to support wildfire-ravaged Telegraph Creek, B.C.

PWRDF executive director Will Postma announced August 9 at Sacred Circle, the decision-making body of Indigenous Canadian Anglicans, that he was providing the funds to Larry Robertson, bishop of Yukon diocese, to support the mostly Indigenous community. In an email to the *Anglican Journal*, Robertson said the diocese would work with the local band to help those affected by the wildfires that have ravaged the area.

In addition to the PWRDF grant, Robertson said, the diocese has received funds for the same purpose from other sources—including almost \$1,300 donated by members of Sacred Circle.

Hundreds of people were reported to have left the area around Telegraph Creek, in northern B.C., in early August, fleeing from wildfires. In a PWRDF news release,



▲ **St. Aidan's Anglican Church in Telegraph Creek, B.C.**

PHOTO: NATALIA BRATSLAVSKY/SHUTTERSTOCK

Robertson said fire had destroyed at least 27 buildings in Telegraph Creek, including the Roman Catholic church of St. Theresa and its rectory. The town was already suffering from a housing crisis, according to band leaders.

St. Aidan's, the Anglican church in Telegraph Creek, survived the wildfires, according to Sarah Usher, executive archdeacon of the diocese of Yukon.

St. Aidan's is one of a handful of northern B.C. Anglican parishes that fall within the diocese of Yukon.

On August 15, the B.C. government declared a state of emergency in response to the many wildfires ravaging the province. More than 2,000 wildfires were reported to have burned in the province between April 1 and September 6, when the *Anglican Journal* was being prepared for printing.

The impact of the wildfires was felt at Sacred Circle itself; at the university campus, where the event was held, the air was hazy throughout the week. A planned talk on PWRDF, which would have taken place outdoors, was moved inside after air quality warnings.

Also at Sacred Circle, Postma and Judith Moses, representative of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples on PWRDF's board, gave a presentation outlining the agency's intention to increase its work in Canadian Indigenous communities in coming years and asking for feedback on what its priorities should be. PWRDF is currently developing a five-year strategic plan, Moses said, and one of its goals is to support more projects within Canada, and to respond more to Canadian disasters. ■

YOUTH ▶

CLAY youth learn the healing power of story

Continued from p. 1

“I was able to be surrounded with... youth and teens, young people worshipping God and just praising him. I found that really powerful,” said Becky Coholan, 17, an Anglican from the diocese of Nova Scotia and PEI. “I was able to grow in my faith, too, but also my confidence.”

“We don’t really get to interact with a whole lot of people nowadays,” she adds. “We’re all kind of glued to our cell phones.”

The theme of the gathering, “Threads,” referred to the stories woven throughout each person’s life. Speakers, given the title “storytellers,” shared their own life stories as well as teachings about the importance of storytelling in faith.

Coholan says the teachings on storytelling also taught her a valuable lesson about listening. “I feel that this whole week they’re testing us to listen. Everyone is telling their stories, and we all have to listen, and not just hear—because I feel there is a difference between listening and hearing.”

On August 18, hundreds gathered in Thunder Bay’s Marina Park for an event meant to emphasize the healing power of story. Against the backdrop of Lake Superior, attendees heard the story of the “seven fallen feathers,” the seven Indigenous teenagers whose bodies were found in Thunder Bay’s river system between 2000 and 2011.

The event featured several storytellers—including Anglican Bishops Anne Germond (Algoma diocese) and Linda Nicholls (Huron diocese) and Archbishop Gregory Kerr-Wilson (Calgary diocese), along with members of local Indigenous communities. CLAY youth attendees, church leaders and Indigenous elders also participated in the event. As the lead sponsor of the public event, the Anglican Foundation of Canada provided \$10,000.

After hearing their stories, CLAY attendees moved in procession to an outdoor pavilion. A smudging ceremony performed by CLAY Elder-in-Residence Esther Diabo was followed by local singer-songwriter Shy-Anne Hovorka performing a song she wrote in tribute to the seven Indigenous teens,



PHOTO: JOELLE KIDD

Elder-in-Residence Esther Diabo performs a smudging ceremony.



▲ More than 800 people form a procession through Thunder Bay’s Marina Park August 18.

PHOTO: JOELLE KIDD

“Only the River Knows.”

Among the crowd were Tom and Dora Morris, whose nephew Jethro Anderson’s body was found in Thunder Bay’s Kaministiquia River in 2000. The couple was among the storytellers who had earlier shared their experiences with CLAY youth in the park.

Anderson, who came from Kasabonika Lake First Nation to attend high school in Thunder Bay, was staying with the Morris couple when he went missing. “We were entrusted by the parents to look after him, our nephew, when he went missing... It’s hard as a guardian when you lose somebody that

you’ve been entrusted with,” Tom Morris told a circle of CLAY youth.

Anderson’s cause of death, like that of several of the teens who were found in the river, was deemed “undetermined” by a 2016 inquest, which advocates have suggested indicates flawed handling of the cases by police.

Following Hovorka’s performance, Diabo read from a reflection she had written after the discovery of one of the bodies. It described a gathering of people at the riverside—an evening of “anguish, sorrow and pain,” as well as prayer and the singing of hymns.

“As we departed, I looked up to the sky above and said, ‘*Miigwetch* for life and death.’ Life and death, the greatest mysteries,” Diabo said. (*Miigwetch* is an Ojibwe word for “thank you.”)

The next CLAY gathering will take place in Calgary, in 2020. ■

HELLO NOVEMBER

BIBLE READINGS Nov. 2018

DAY	READING	DAY	READING
<input type="checkbox"/> 01	John 11.17-44	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Mark 13.3-23
<input type="checkbox"/> 02	Isaiah 25.1-9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18	Mark 13.24-37
<input type="checkbox"/> 03	Mark 12.28-37a	<input type="checkbox"/> 19	2 Samuel 19.24-39
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 04	Ruth 1.1-22	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	Psalms 18.1-29
<input type="checkbox"/> 05	Ruth 2.1-23	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	Psalms 18.30-50
<input type="checkbox"/> 06	Ruth 3.1-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	2 Samuel 23.1-7
<input type="checkbox"/> 07	Ruth 4.1-22	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	Revelation 1.1-8
<input type="checkbox"/> 08	Hebrews 9.16-10.10	<input type="checkbox"/> 24	Mark 14.53-15.5
<input type="checkbox"/> 09	Psalms 127.1-129.8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 25	John 18.28-19.16a
<input type="checkbox"/> 10	Mark 12.37b-13.2	<input type="checkbox"/> 26	Psalms 25.1-22
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 11	Isaiah 26.1-19	<input type="checkbox"/> 27	Jeremiah 33.1-13
<input type="checkbox"/> 12	1 Samuel 1.1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 28	Jeremiah 33.14-26
<input type="checkbox"/> 13	1 Samuel 1.12-28	<input type="checkbox"/> 29	Romans 10.1-21
<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Psalms 16.1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> 30	Matthew 4.12-25
<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Hebrews 10.11-25		
<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Hebrews 10.26-11.2		

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NEWS IN BRIEF ▶



▲ Bishop David Irving

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

By Anglican Journal staff

David Irving, who has served as bishop of the diocese of Saskatoon since 2010, will retire as of October 1, 2018.

Irving announced his decision May 31, at a meeting of the diocese's executive council.

"This has not been an easy decision but after much prayerful consideration I know it is the right decision," Irving wrote in a letter to members of the diocese. "Your parish and all the parishes in the diocese will always have a special place in my heart and I want to thank you all for the many gifts and tireless service you have brought and continue to bring to your parish and the diocese."

An electoral synod to find a successor for Irving was to be held in Saskatoon September 8.

Irving studied theology at the University of Oxford, and was ordained a deacon in Edmonton in 1986. He served as priest in Wainwright, Alta., and then in a number of parishes in British Columbia. Irving had been serving as executive archdeacon in the diocese of Kootenay when he was elected bishop in 2009. He had also served as a consultant for the Anglican Church of Canada on gift planning and stewardship.

Worley hired by ACNA church

The Rev. Jacob Worley, who was elected bishop of the diocese of Caledonia but not consecrated, and was subsequently fired from his position as rector, has



▲ The Rev. Jacob Worley

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

been hired to serve a church of the breakaway Anglican Church in North America (ACNA).

In a news release dated July 23, the Episcopal diocese of Fort Worth, an ACNA diocese that shares the same name as a diocese in The Episcopal Church (TEC), stated that Worley had been chosen as rector of St. Andrew's Church, Fort Worth, Texas, to begin September 2.

The Alabama-born priest was elected bishop of the diocese of Caledonia in April 2017, but was not consecrated when the provincial House of Bishops objected to his election. The objection cited ministry Worley had performed years earlier in the United States for the Anglican Mission in America (AMiA), a collection of theologically conservative churches that was originally a mission of the Anglican Province of Rwanda. Worley, the House of Bishops said, believed it was permissible for him to have performed this ministry, even though it was done in the geographical jurisdiction of TEC without TEC's permission.

Worley was terminated from his position as rector of Bulkley Valley Regional Parish in the diocese of Caledonia in November 2017.

St. Andrew's is a member of ACNA, a grouping of theologically conservative Anglican churches that formed in 2009 because of differences with TEC and the Anglican Church of Canada over human sexuality and other issues.

Retired Anglican priest sentenced to four years for sex abuse

David Norton, a retired Anglican priest, was sentenced to four years in prison August 24 after pleading guilty in February 2018 to a charge of sexual interference against a child.

Norton sexually abused a boy from age nine to 13, after the boy's mother, believing he would be a good influence on her son, entrusted Norton to take him on camping trips and other outings. The offences took place in the early 1990s.

In a statement released the same day as Norton's sentencing, the diocese of Huron, where Norton was a priest when the abuse took place, said "the Huron family feels deeply disappointed and betrayed by Mr. Norton's actions. We are hopeful that the end of this trial will mark the beginning of a healing process for those who have been hurt. The Diocese of Huron is holding them in prayer and continue[s] to pray for healing."

Norton faces a number of other charges; in 2015, he was charged with sexual assault and indecent assault against three boys, alleged to have taken place between 1977 and 1983 when he was rector of St. Andrew's Anglican Church at Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. These charges are expected to go to trial this fall.

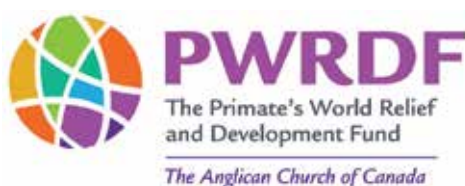
According to the diocese of Huron, Norton relinquished his exercise of ministry in 2016.

Norton was also a part-time professor at King's University College in London, Ont. ■



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CANADA ▶

Indigenous church could help Canada, priest says

Tali Folkins
STAFF WRITER

A self-determining Indigenous church could bring new spiritual life not just to Canada's Indigenous Anglicans, but to the country as a whole, Anglican priest and psychologist Canon Martin Brokenleg said in an address to Sacred Circle, a national gathering of Indigenous Anglicans, August 7.

"The strength of Indigenous cultures is our spirituality. We speak easily about the remarkable spiritual experiences we have and the dreams and visions that are given to us," he said.

"Canadian culture is less and less religious and more and more embarrassed and silent about spiritual happenings. An Indigenous Anglican church can help Canadian society recover its spiritual vocabulary and its boldness in speaking about its souls."

Indigenous Anglican leaders anticipate bringing a resolution to General Synod next



▲ "An Indigenous Anglican church can help Canadian society recover its spiritual vocabulary," Canon Martin Brokenleg told Sacred Circle.

PHOTO: ANGLICAN VIDEO

July that will effectively create a self-determining church within the Anglican Church of Canada. (See *Indigenous church takes shape* in this issue, pp. 1 and 7.)

The creation of a self-determining church for Indigenous Canadian Anglicans, Brokenleg said, will mean an end to their being "passive observers" of church affairs. The new church will, he said, "develop its own theology to enhance all other Christian theology;" it will raise up its own spiritual leaders and it will restore "Indigenous Christians to the godly dignity that has always been ours from time immemorial."

The traditional spirituality that Indigenous people knew before contact with Europeans, he said, was given to them by God, and members in the new Indigenous church can be expected to use these teachings to help them understand Christianity.

"God gave songs and prayers, ceremonies and stories to our ancestors and to us,

and we always turn to them first, especially if we are going to be able to hear clearly the teachings of Jesus," he said.

As a reflection of Indigenous culture, he said, Indigenous liturgy will also likely look and feel different from non-Indigenous Anglican liturgy.

"Indigenous cultures are colourful and vibrant with the arts," he said. "Our cultures are what anthropologists call warm cultures—they are expressive, artistic, musical and highly ceremonial. An Indigenous Anglican church is a church with good music, fancy clothes and fancy ceremonies filled with smoke and rhythm, designs and totem figures."

Brokenleg, co-author of *Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future*, holds a doctorate in psychology and was director of native ministries and professor of First Nations theology at the Vancouver School of Theology before his retirement. ■

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MOVIE REVIEW

PAUL, APOSTLE OF CHRIST
1 h 48 min
PG-13

GOD'S NOT DEAD: A Light in Darkness
1 h 45 min
PG

I CAN ONLY IMAGINE
110 min
PG

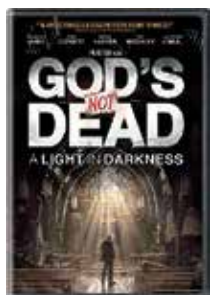
A WRINKLE IN TIME
1 h 49 min
PG-13

Intimations of grace at the movies

John Arkelian
REVIEWER

Seeking intimations of grace at the movies can be hit-and-miss. Films that overtly address faith typically have a proselytizing agenda, and their preoccupation with preaching usually gets in the way of good storytelling. Four recent movies touch on aspects of grace: three are explicitly Christian in perspective, while the fourth is implicitly grounded in faith.

The best of the quartet is *Paul, Apostle of Christ*. It's the year 67 AD, and the apostle Paul (James Faulkner) is imprisoned in Rome, awaiting death, while the Christian community there is facing brutal persecution. Into this fraught, perilous setting comes the apostle Luke (Jim Caviezel, who played the lead in 2004's *The Passion of the Christ*); he ministers to the beleaguered flock and visits Paul in prison to comfort his mentor while recording his story for posterity. Paul has unshakeable faith; he will not respond to violence and hate with more of the same. His strength and Luke's gentleness are admirable without seeming artificial. Solid performances, and a message that feels unforced, combine to pleasing result.



PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED

In *God's Not Dead: A Light in Darkness*, a historic church situated on a secular university campus is no longer welcome. Its pastor fights the attempt at expropriation; things escalate. The minister is jailed for refusing to hand over transcripts of his sermons, though what is so controversial about their contents is never revealed. The result is artificial (real people don't talk like this), heavy-handed and didactic. It suggests that organized religion is under attack by secular foes; but, so far (in the West, at least), that's a hyperbolic premise. There's a message here about forgiveness, humility and healing, but the film is slow to reach those self-evident conclusions. The writing and cast are uneven, with the standout (the engaging John Corbett) unexpectedly being a character who has lost his faith.

I Can Only Imagine is based on the true story of the lead singer for MercyMe, a Christian music band that struck a chord with the song that gives the film its title. It's well-intentioned stuff—about turning pain to inspiration. But its protagonist (J. Michael Finley's Bart Millard) is dull. The story gets much more emotional traction from others: Dennis Quaid, as his

physically abusive father; Trace Adkins, as his gruff agent; and Nicole DuPort, as the Christian singer Amy Grant.

A Wrinkle in Time, which sends children on a trans-dimensional journey to find their missing father, is a disappointment. The 1962 novel by Madeleine L'Engle is a classic about love, family, courage and self-acceptance. And director Ava DuVernay did first-rate work with 2014's *Selma*. But authenticity is missing here, in a film hampered by inconsistent casting (the actors playing the young siblings are awkward), an overreliance on effects and a misreading of the story as an action piece, when it is actually anchored in relationships—the bonds that tie us together through thick and thin. It inflates the potency of evil. ("The only thing faster than light is the darkness.") And the heart of the story, which is about grace, is neglected: "What if we are here for a reason? What if we are part of something truly divine?" ■

John Arkelian is an award-winning author and journalist.

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