

From Your Pastor

Dear Sisters and Brothers:



As I write this greeting, it is already the 5th Sunday of Easter or, this year, the 11th Sunday in Lent. Time has taken on something of a surreal feel for both those who are practicing ‘physical distancing’ and those who, because of the essential nature of their work, don’t have that option.

The long spring fast has become even longer as we continue to not be able to gather for worship, as well as for most of the other things we usually do as a church community. We continue to follow the pattern set forth by the leadership of the Anglican Church of Canada and by Archbishop Anne – a pattern of ‘fasting from Eucharist’ and of ‘feasting on the word’.

I am reminded once again of the biblical passage that says that, in the sight of the Lord, a year is like a thousand and a thousand is but a day. I am reminded, too, of the Psalmist’s cry “How long, O Lord...?” The scriptures have quite a lot to say about waiting – both human waiting on God and God’s waiting on humans.

For most of us, waiting is something we neither enjoy nor are particularly good at. Waiting feels vulnerable because we can’t be in control. It feels passive because there doesn’t seem to be much that we can do. In this, waiting can become an exercise in distracting ourselves to make the time seem to pass more quickly. Bruce Cockburn sings, in a line probably lifted from the title of Neil Postman’s book about contemporary culture, ‘We’re trying to amuse ourselves to death’.

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In the biblical writings, however, waiting is not passive. It isn't a time to be distracted. God may seem to be absent or inactive for periods – may seem to be the hidden God' of whom theologians wax eloquent. Probably most of us have had this experience.

But, if God is hidden, God is hiding in plain view. While God is waiting, God is actually doing many things. As the author of the letter to the Colossians says: 'All things were created through Him and for Him.

He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.' God is at work all around us and within us, had we but the eyes to see.

The waiting of God's people is also and active waiting. 'Hope' in the biblical writings is not just wishful thinking. It is a confident – though not arrogant – trust in the one who has promised never to abandon us. Waiting is full of expectation and anticipation, but it is also a time to fulfill our vocation as the people of God: loving mercy, doing justice and walking humbly with our God.

In that sense, Gathering Table is waiting with anticipation and expectation of being able to physically gather when it is safer to do so. Meanwhile, we are learning how to be a community of faith in a time of pandemic isolation – something few, if any, of us have prior experience.

We are doing what we can – and always open to considering other things. We are leading worship as best we can. Our Food Cupboard ministry continues in modified form. People are praying, and there is a new Prayer Chain ministry. People are making calls, writing notes and staying in touch by email and social media. Meetings have been taken to 'Zoom-land' – we've even begun trying out a Zoom version of Table Talk.*

What seems to be happening – and I have heard this from many people – is that we are learning in a new way what it means to 'be the church'. We are discovering fresh ways to be a community of faith, and a faithful community, in adverse conditions. We have often heard that the Spirit of god is doing a new thing. Just how new, we could not have anticipated, nor would we necessarily have chosen this journey. Nevertheless, here we are and, wherever two or three are gathered together – even gathered together apart! – God is there in our midst. And where God is there in the midst of things, it is never

just waiting for time to pass or wasting time. Regardless of what else is happening or not happening, as the apostolic writer says: "now is the time! Now is the day of our salvation.'

So, even though Lent seems to be extended beyond its appointed season, we are still Easter people. As Easter people we still make our song to be: 'Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!'

Godspeed. George+

*If you would like to get on the Zoom list for **Table Talk**, please email me or call the office during office hours.



May 2020 Musings from your Wardens

My how things have changed since COVID-19! We hope and pray that everyone is staying safe and well during these particularly challenging times. We sure miss the worship and social gatherings at our church building on Sundays, and expect that most everyone feels the same. In the meantime, we encourage everyone to tune into the live streaming service at 10 AM on Sundays, or access the recording later at our website. If you do not have internet access, we encourage you to take time to read scripture and also to keep in touch with others – the “old fashioned” phone is still a great way to do so. A group of volunteers has been calling parishioners on our parish list, and another group has set up a prayer chain. Table Talk is resuming as well, and Man Alive has continued. These are quite encouraging.

While the in-person worship services have been suspended, our office remains open on the regularly scheduled hours (Tues-Thurs 10-2). Our faithful Food Cupboard folks have also been carrying on – at a safe distance, of course - to provide food items to our neighbours on the second and fourth Sundays at 11:30 AM. As you may be able, please support this ministry particularly because access to food items from the RFDA has stopped for now.

For some parishioner volunteers, this will be the first year in decades of not being at Camp Gitchigomee this summer ☹. This is because the camp Board of Directors met recently, and cancelled the children’s camps in July and the 75th anniversary reunion on the August long weekend. These are regrettable measures to have taken, but given the high risks and very serious potential consequences, there was very little choice in the matter. There will still be some routine maintenance going on this summer – cutting the grass, and some painting and project completion – but will be done by individuals or family units.

Back here at our church building, we are also keeping up with some maintenance projects. In particular, painting of the basement hallway and front bathrooms has been completed – thank you Bob and Dave. And the church grounds and gardens are looking quite tidy thanks to our trusty crews. Our solar pan-

els are now humming along at near-peak capacity (10.6 KW) since they have been adjusted for summer operation and a broken connector has been replaced. The broken connector meant that about 25% of the panels were not contributing to the total power being generated.

Your corporate team has been meeting regularly via “Zoom” from our homes, and after some “getting used to it”, is working well. Each time we meet, our Treasurer Sharon gives us a financial update. Sharon will also be providing parishioners a financial update elsewhere in the newsletter. While some costs have decreased, others continue. For this reason, we encourage everyone, as you are able, to please continue donating to Gathering Table. This can be done through the Electronic Offering Program (EOP), donations mailed in or dropped off at the church, or e-transfers can be made. Thank you.

It is likely that we will continue to do/be church differently for the foreseeable future. As always though, if you have any suggestions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. Stay safe everyone.

Your Servants

Marg, Marjorie, Sheila, Jim





While watching the live streaming of the Gathering Table Sunday service, you might have notice that on Palm Sunday there were palms in vases near the Altar and palm crosses on the Altar to be blessed, and on Easter Sunday there were flowers in the Church. With the church closed it would be easy to assume that the Altar Guild work is temporarily suspended but not so. The number of people involved and the amount of work to be done is greatly reduced but some of the responsibilities of the Altar Guild such as colour changes continue.

When the lock down is lifted and we can be together again, the Altar Guild will meet to readjust our plans and to review our responsibilities. No doubt we will need to go through a reorientation of our procedures to prepare for Sunday services. This would be a good time for new members to join us as we go through a review.



The newly formed prayer chain has been active for two months now. We have 22 people connected by email who are diligently praying for the many needs that have arisen. If you would like to be a part of the prayer chain or have any requests that you would like placed on the prayer chain, please contact:

Sheila Chisholm at
chisholmsheilak@gmail.com
or text or phone 306-240-0771.

All prayer requests will be confidential and if you are asking for prayer for someone other than yourself, please obtain prior permission.

Sheila Chisholm

Parish Gardening Thoughts

Spring Clean Up Everyone at Gathering Table extends their thanks to Wayne Hargrave and his buddies who raked all the winter debris off the church gardens and lawns and swept the grit off the driveway and parking lot during the last 2 weeks of April. Our property is tidy, there are over 30 filled paper yard bags, and we are grateful to all of them for their spontaneous offer to undertake this large task.

Summer Plans We would like to transplant some of the perennials from the back gardens to the front flower beds. Over time this should reduce the number of annual plants we need to buy each year. We could use your assistance to identify perennials and make our garden look its best.

We will begin planting flowers in mid-June and we need your help. We work in the garden for a maximum of 2 hours at a time - whichever day & time fits personal schedules. It is a very rewarding and easy physical distancing task.

If you are buying annuals please consider donating some smaller bushy begonias and impatiens in any colour. They are showy and very easy to maintain.

Please contact Erminie Reid at 767 - 4566 or email at dandereid@shaw.ca to donate and/or to help. Happy gardening to everyone whether in flower or vegetable plots or in pots.



Spring Clean Up Thank You

Everyone at Gathering Table extends their thanks to Wayne Hargrave and his buddies, who over the past 2 weeks have raked all the winter debris off the church gardens and lawns and swept the grit off the driveway and parking lot. Our property is tidy, there are over 30 filled paper yard bags and we are grateful to all of them for this spontaneous offer to undertake this large task.



PWRDF

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund

As an instrument of faith, **PWRDF** connects Anglicans in Canada to communities around the world in dynamic partnerships, to **ADVANCE** development, **RESPOND** to emergencies, **ASSIST** refugees and **ACT** for positive change. PWRDF is working towards a truly **just, healthy** and **peaceful** world.

PWRDF has recently responded to emergencies throughout the world, for example:

- PWRDF allocated \$200,000 to respond to **Covid-19** around the world and in Canada. The money will be spread across four partners: Partners in Health (global response), Village Health Works (Burundi), ACT Alliance's global appeal and HelpAge Canada, supporting vulnerable seniors here. Please read the whole story on the website.
- PWRDF has responded to flooding in **Tanzania**. People in the Diocese of Masasi were dealing with a disaster in late January. Heavy rains in the south resulted in flash floods that destroyed homes, crops, telecommunication and electricity lines, bridges and roads, and killed 24 people. In response to this desperate situation, PWRDF organized the Kilwa Emergency Humanitarian Relief Assistance program to run from April 1 to June 30, 2020. The focus will be on food and seed distribution.

These are several of many projects in the world. Please visit the website to see the various ways in which PWRDF and its partners are providing humanitarian aid and to read the stories.

Donations to PWRDF can be made on the website (please visit the online donation page and make your gift in Emergency Response, indicating COVID-19 in the message box), by special church envelope, EOP (electronic offering program), or by phone 1-866-308-7973 toll free or 416-822-9083. You can use mail and please make cheques payable to PWRDF. The address is:

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund,
The Anglican Church of Canada
80 Hayden Street
Toronto, ON M4Y 3G2



Port of Thunder Bay

Caring for seafarers
around the world

Your contributions are gratefully accepted; for additional information contact the Seafarers' Centre (807) 344-8241.

Contacts : The Revd Canon Ed Swayze
Seafarers' Centre, Suite 450
100 Main Street
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6R9

Telephone: +1 807 344 8241
Mobile: +1 807 626 2571

Local website :
www.missiontoseafarers.ca/thunderbay

Opening times : Mon 13:30-14:30;
Wed 10:00-12:00 by appt

May

3	Postponed	Battle of the Atlantic Commemoration
13	Cancelled	Board of Directors meeting and Eucharist and Lunch

June

3	12:10 pm	Eucharist and Lunch
20	Cancelled	Blessing of the Fleet
25		International Day of the Seafarer
29	9:30 am	Meat Orders due at the Seafarers' Centre

July

8	10:00 am	Board of Directors meeting; 12:10 pm Eucharist and Lunch
8	2:00 pm	Meat Orders picked up
12	Sea Sunday	- please pray for seafarers and the organizations that minister to seafarers: Mission to Seafarers and the Apostleship of the Sea

See the **World of Gifts Guide**, on the website or the insert in the Anglican Journal. For a unique meaningful gift at any time of year, you can order seeds for farmers, livestock and contribute to projects worldwide, etc.

For further information go to www.pwrdf.org
Linda Rintamaki (rep)



The Spring Sale is now a Fall Sale

Donations welcome and can be left inside the front of the Church [Main doors - brown]

Tuesday - Thursday 10am - 2pm or Friday - Sat to 12noon or Sunday - before or after church.

If you need a pick up call Sheila Douglas 344-9095 .

Thank you

Sheila Douglas and Anne Strand



The Craft Group

Although the craft group has been diminishing in numbers these past few years, our mighty few have kept those knitting needles clickety clacking making toques, neck warmers and mitts. In this time of isolation and not being able to meet on Friday mornings the group has produced over 50 items. You can only do so much cleaning so might as well knit!!!

Brenda Coopman

The Mission to Seafarers: Port of Thunder Bay

Meat Fund-Raiser 2020

Meat supplied by European Meats a Thunder Bay company

Mild Legion Sausages	5 lbs	\$28.00
Hot Legion Sausages	5 lbs	\$28.00
Cheese Legion Sausages	5 lbs	\$35.00
Pepperettes	8/pkg, 1 lb/pkg	\$ 8.50
Garlic Chub (Kielbasa)	2 lbs	\$17.00
Lenkki (Baloney) Ring		\$12.00
Ham and Garlic Ring (Kielbasa)		\$14.00
Chicken Breast (unseasoned)	4 kg	\$55.00
4 oz Beef Patty	42 pcs	\$58.00
Strip Loin Steak	8 pcs	\$80.00

People appreciate the quality of the meat we sell through this fundraiser. European Meats suppliers are in Murillo and Western Canada. The meat is gluten free and it has no additives or preservatives and European Meats makes the sausage using a mixture of beef and pork. The hamburger patties are gluten-free.

Orders must be prepaid, a cheque is payable to 'The Mission to Seafarers'. Orders must be placed by Monday, June 29th and they will be delivered on Monday, July 8th.

Contact Jonas Riauka to place your order at

630-7769 or 577-2566

Please help support our ministry to the seafarers.

GT Food Cupboard

Of late, your Gathering Table Food Cupboard has been operating in new ways to continue its mission. The Regional Department of Health approved our Covid-19 operational plans which has enabled us to continue distributing food on the second and fourth Sunday of each month. Under the new format, two days of basic foods are pre-bagged for singles and families prior to distribution. As large group assemblies in the church are not permitted, distribution takes place at the red doors to guests who are in the driveway. Thankfully, the weather has cooperated (so far!). We are operating with a reduced staff to facilitate social distancing, personnel masking, client health recording, and with the driveway marked for guest social distancing. The hours of operation have been extended to run from 9:45am to 12:15pm to reduce crowding. It is working well. Everyone has been pleasantly cooperative.

As the Regional Food Distribution Association has concentrated its efforts during the crisis to implement the Provincial Assistance Program it has not been supplying local food banks. Gathering Table has not been distributing any fresh produce, only basic canned and dry foods. We are thankful to the parishioners who have donated cash, goods, and grocery bags during this unusual time. With reduced staffing there are enough volunteers to cover each Sunday with alternate workers. Our regular packaging volunteers have continued their good work. The other churches who support this mission at Gathering Table have remained with us during the pandemic. Thanks to all.

Slowly, our world, Gathering Table, and this mission, will transition back to "normal". Our

efforts at this time, though small, have significantly enriched the lives of many who seek assistance at Gathering Table. There have been many expressions of appreciation, simple thank you's, and friendly smiles, often there is a sense of inclusive community. As we continue the food cupboard initiative it will be important for the congregation to support the mission through givings of food in the Sunday collection basket and in designated cash offerings through EOP or the Sunday plate. Having met the challenges of operating in the Covid 19 pandemic environment, with the support of many, we look forward to gathering again to give thanks and discern tomorrow's calling. Only with your support will Gathering Table be able to operate the food cupboard on a regular basis in good times and in times of crisis. Again, THANK YOU.

Submitted by: Dale Sparkes , GTFC Chairperson

Food Cupboard Grocery List

- Dry cereal (large boxes Cheerios, Bran Flakes etc. We repackage into two day bags)
- Canned soups (Mushroom, Vegetable, Chicken, Tomato)
- Canned tuna, flaked chicken, ham, turkey, holiday meat
- Pasta sauce (not pasta, we have lots)
- Grocery bags
- Or monetary donation to enable sale purchasing

Donation boxes are in foyer of church, or Dale will pick up.



Here are some Things to take note of

The building will remain closed indefinitely, though phone calls will be answered during office hours. All gatherings, events or meetings must either be postponed or conducted by means of various internet tools.

The Food Cupboard will operate every second and fourth Sunday of the month in its present modified format. No emergency food parcels will be distributed during this time.

Pastoral visitation is drastically restricted. In emergency situations please call the office or the Rectory. We realise that, despite the focus on this crisis and the cutting back on medical and social services, other things still go on – and some things get worse. Isolation is hard for many people for different reasons, not only physically, but relationally, emotionally and spiritually. We want to do what we can to help.

There is a new ‘prayer chain’ to supplement our ongoing prayers. Please call the office with potential requests. Remember to pray especially for leaders and for those who must engage in heroic forms of ‘risky behaviours’: medical personnel, emergency responders, those who deal with the dead and their families, those who keep vital services operating, and those mostly unseen people who enable these others to keep going.



Prayer requests from Archbishop Anne

“Please join the bishops of our province in holding our province and our whole world in prayer during this time of crisis, especially those who are afflicted with this coronavirus. Pray especially for researchers, policymakers, frontline workers, and for all those who are caring for those who are sick, as well as for those who have died and those who mourn.”

“Continue to pray for those who are most deeply affected by COVID-19 - frontline workers, hospital staff, those who are stranded and unable to return to their homes from abroad, those who are isolated further because of the new restrictive measures in place, and those who have been diagnosed with COVID -19 and their families and loved ones.”

Reminder about Visitations:

Pastoral care visits will be restricted to emergency situations – please call the office or the Rectory if such a situation arises. Telephone prayer ministry will be ongoing.

Looking forward to Happier Times



Treasurer's Note

I have the task of bringing to your attention the 1st quarter financial outlook for Gathering Table. To be honest, it is not a pretty picture. With revenue drying up immediately with the closure of the church due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Corporate Team has had some worries about our future.

Month	Income	Expenses	Balance (+/-)
January	12,873.53	15,233.28	-2,359.75
February	11,332.06	16,124.37	-4,792.31
March *	22,003.26	16,916.09	5,087.17
March **	12,649.26	16,916.09	-4,266.83

* we received \$9,354 in interest or March would have looked like this **

1st Quarter Totals				
Scenario 1	46,208.85	48,273.74	-2,064.89	With interest
Scenario 2	36,854.85	48,273.74	-11,418.89	Without interest

The trend has been downward, in that we are showing a deficit at the end of every month in 2020. July to November 2019 showed a similar trend with December picking up a bit.

The numbers tell the story. In order to have doors to open when we are once again allowed to gather together, we need to have revenue coming in to pay the bills.

Sharon Corston



Ascension Day Service online
7:00 pm gatheringtable.ca/services

Offering Options

At this time when Sunday worship services have been suspended, we are providing a number of ways that you can continue to financially support our mission and ministries at Gathering Table. Of course, these methods are unnecessary for parishioners currently using the Electronic Offering Program (EOP). But if you wish to begin the EOP or modify your existing EOP, please contact the Diocesan office at: <https://www.dioceseofalgoma.com/about-the-diocese-of-agloma/electronic-offering-programme/>.

1. Drop it off at the church office at 228 Pearl St. Office hours are Tuesday to Thursday 10 – 2 and Friday 9 – 12 noon. Just buzz the door, identify yourself, and the door will be unlocked. Give it to Roberta or Sharon, who will record the offering.
2. Mail it in to: Gathering Table, 228 Pearl St., Thunder Bay, ON P7B 1E4. Please ensure to not mail cash.
3. Send an e-transfer by setting up a profile with your own financial institution, indicate the recipient is Gathering Table church, and use the church email address of office@gatheringtable.ca Use the security question “What is the first name of our Pastor?” (answer: George) In the message box, please include your envelope number or mailing address, and the Sunday date you wish the offering to be applied. For example:

With appreciation,

Marg, Marjorie, Sheila, Jim

Envelope No: 999 for
Sunday, March 22, 2020



228 Pearl Street
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 1E4

Keep in Touch

Watch our Sunday Service during the Covid-19 crisis at:
<http://gatheringtable.ca/services/> and clock on Streamspot.

Phone: 807-345-6898
E-mail: office@gatheringtable.ca
Facebook: Gathering Table

Hall: 807-345-6088
Web: gatheringtable.ca

Service Time: Sunday at 10:00 am
Food Bank Open: 2nd and 4th Sundays starting at 11:30 am

Pastor: The Rev. Canon George M. Porter, D.Phil.
Phone: 626-9650
Mobile: 355-5454
Email: porter.george@gmail.com

Honorary Assistant: The Rev. Gail M. Clifton, M.Div.
Phone: 768-9865

Lay Readers: Frances Bennett-Sutton, Kim Bienvenue,
Rose Jardine, Brenda O'Neill, Jim Sutton and
Frances Bennett-Sutton

Rector's Warden: Marg Boone
Deputy Rector's Warden: Marjorie Tutkaluk
People's Warden: Jim Sutton
Deputy People's Warden: Sheila Chisholm

Co – Music Directors: Vacant (Organist) and Donna Hamill (Pianist)