

We wait for a world on the way. *Living Faith* tells us that Christians are people who hope, not in their own potential, not in progress, but in God whose will for the world will get full traction on earth one day. God has prepared a future and will usher it in, and it will blow our minds. The planet will flourish and life brimming over will come to all. Lions and lambs will lie down together, swords will get hammered into plowshares, and the whole planet will be detoxified. God will do it. Finally, God will triumph over all opposition and everything that disrupts creation. Salvation full on.

While we wait for God to act decisively, we pray. We pray the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples: "thy kingdom come." Prayer is doing something. Prayer is an act of defiance at the way the world is—say "thy kingdom come" and you start holding out for better arrangements in the world than those currently on tap. Say "Our Father, let your kingdom land right here in this world," and find that certainties about the way it's got to be become, well, combustible. Prayer for God's Kingdom is a subversive act, as Karl Barth said, "to clasp one's hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world."

In a class H. Richard Niebuhr taught on the Lord's Prayer, he said that praying "thy kingdom come" is like yelling at the bottom of a snow-laden mountain. You're asking for an avalanche! Hope in the form of prayer for God's Kingdom is asking for an intrusion into the world that changes everything. Praying Christians participate in the coming of the Kingdom by divine invitation.

The Rev. Dr. Richard Topping is principal of the Vancouver School of Theology



Jesus, who comes among us as the Prince of Peace,
transform us to be people of truth, justice and love.

Open our minds and those in power
that we may lead with care and love
to break down the barriers that divide us,
to strengthen the bonds of love among us.
Amen.



When the followers of John the Baptist came to Jesus and asked if he was really God's Anointed One, he gave them a very concrete answer: "Go, tell John what you see and hear: those who are suffering from lameness, blindness, deafness, etc. are healed. Tell him also that those who are poor are hearing good news" (Luke 7:22). In effect, people who were marginal in society were to be treated with respect and compassion; in fact, they were at the very heart of Jesus' mission.

According to Jesus, there is no good news (or gospel) if the grace of God does not affect the lives of those most in need. In saying this, Jesus realized that he was being radical because he added, "Blessed are those who do not take offence [literally, are not scandalized] because of what I have said" (Matthew 11:6).

From the Social Action Handbook of The Presbyterian Church in Canada



Photo: Stained-glass window detail of Mary

I'm a strong believer in reason
But every once in a while
When I hear something that sounds impossible
And I'm banking on my incredulity, suddenly
That quiet voice
You know—the one in your heart's ear
That says strange things like "do not fear"
(When it's clear that being afraid makes sense)
That voice speaks
And I want to argue, "you're kidding, right...?"
But it presses
And just as I feel my skeptical eyebrow raising
I remember Joseph's story:
Joseph, who woke from a strange dream
With a strange word whose call he heeded
And I can see him make his decision,
Take a deep breath,
And then find the frightened young woman
He could have left
To tell her instead, "Well, Love...
we've got a long way to walk, so I can't build it yet,
But I'll start drawing up plans for a cradle."

Joseph doesn't get much attention in the Christmas story. That's really too bad, because he took a leap of faith in listening to the angel's word and protecting Mary, soon-to-be mother of God. Since the birth of Christ is a one-time occurrence, none of us will face the same choice as Joseph. Nevertheless, he reminds us that sometimes we are called to step into important secondary roles, despite how impossible they seem, to help God's promise unfold.

Dr. Allyson Carr is Associate Secretary of Justice Ministries



Photo: Image of Joseph from a Presbyterian church in Malawi

Fourth Sunday in Advent

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Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. In him all things in heaven and on earth were created, all that is seen and all that is unseen. Christ Jesus our Lord was revealed in flesh and vindicated in the Spirit, he was seen by angels and proclaimed among the nations; he was believed in throughout the world and was taken up in glory.

(Colossians 1, Titus 3 and 6, Hebrews 1).

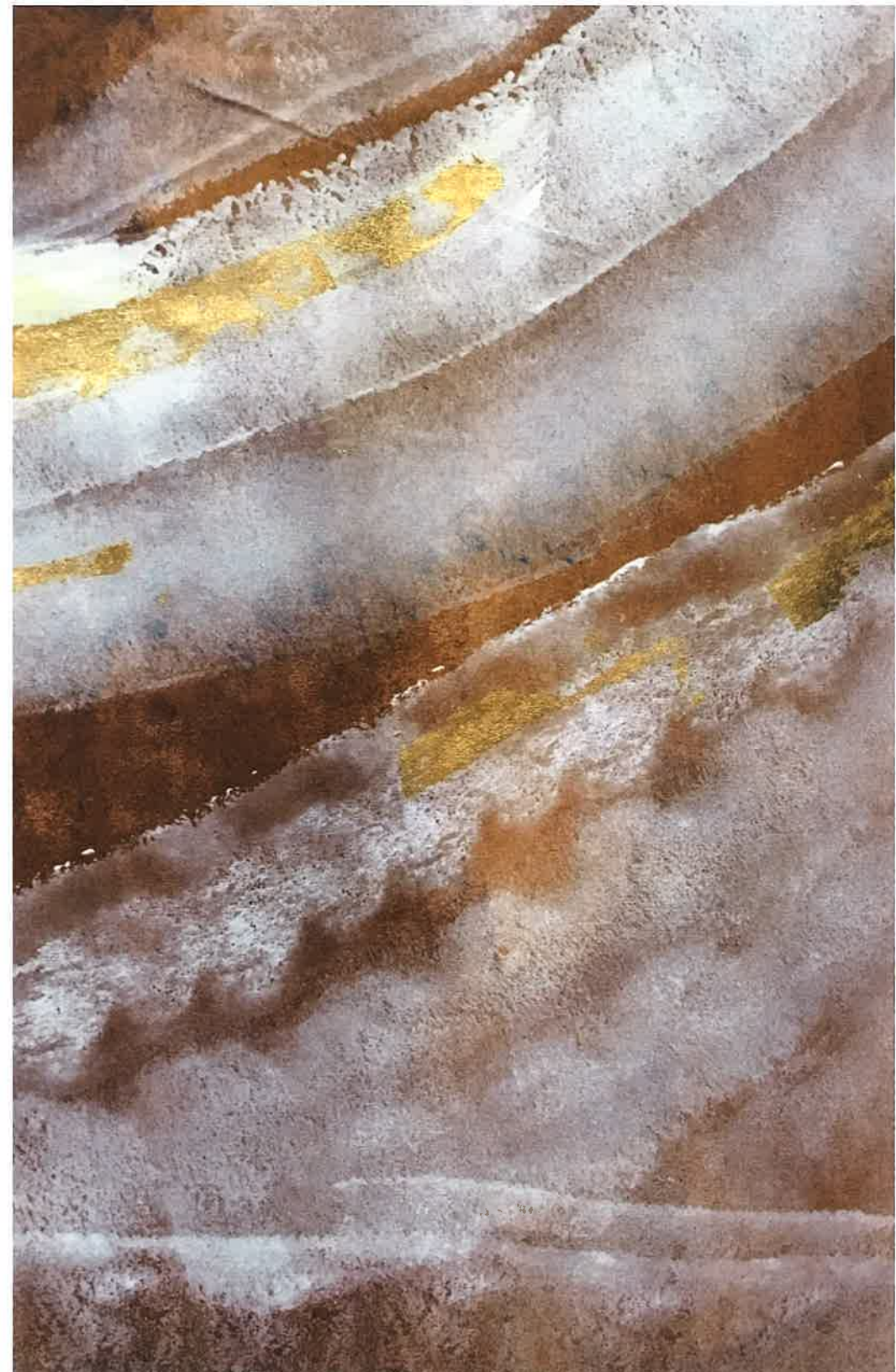
All this and more we say that Christ is. But tonight, the Word of God is made flesh and speaks in baby-talk. Christ is born among us as a fragile infant who is born as the Light of the World.



*Without any doubt, the mystery of godliness is great:
He was revealed in flesh,
vindicated in spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among Gentiles,
believed in throughout the world,
taken up in glory.*

(1 Timothy 3:16)

Painting by Lynn Vissers



Gathered by a Star

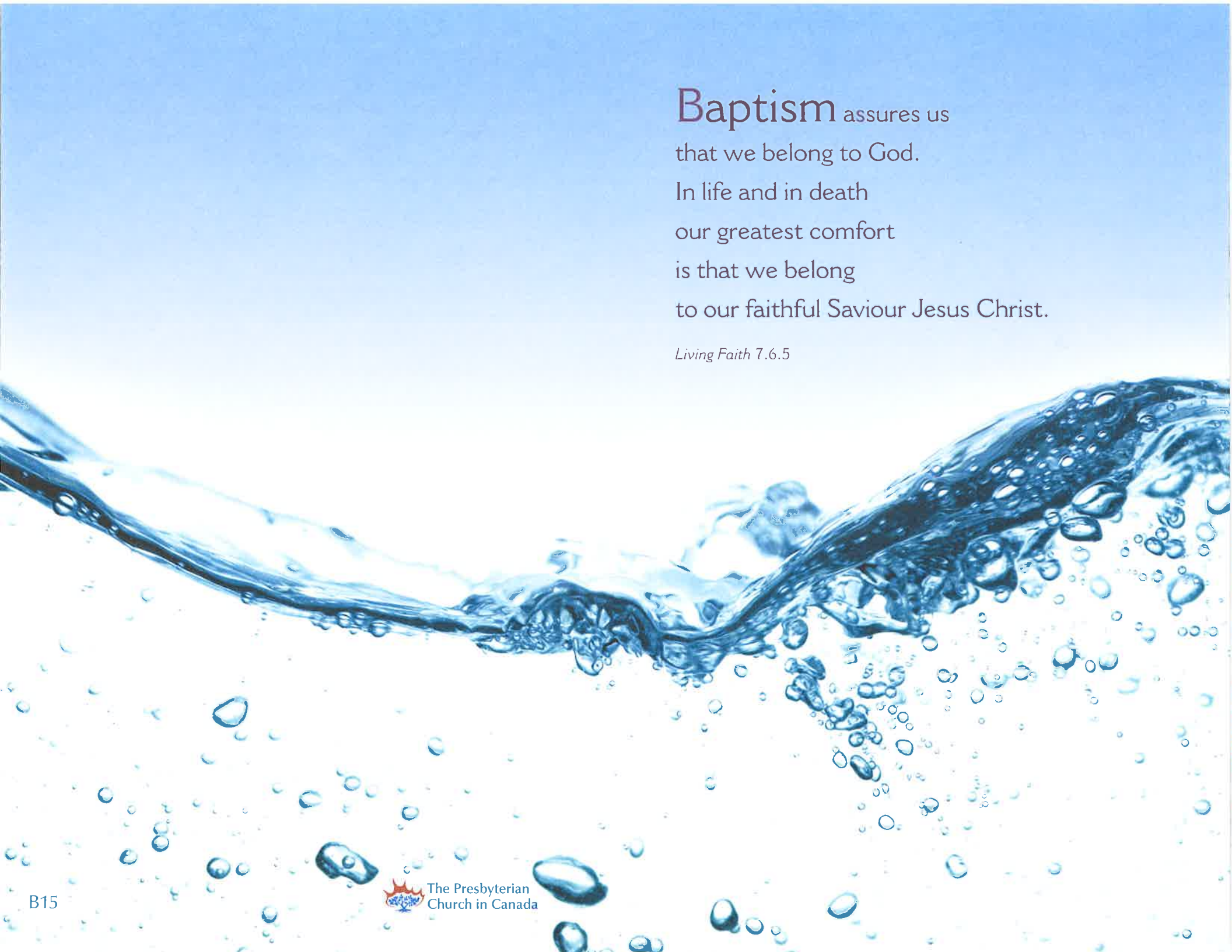
Immediately after Jesus' birth, God gathered a collection of unexpected people to seek out and honour his newborn son. Through angels, poor shepherds were invited to meet the infant child. Through a star, God reached out and led the wise men from far off lands to celebrate the newborn king. On Epiphany Sunday we celebrate the coming of these travelers to bring gifts to the saviour. The wise men did not know entirely what to expect when they set out to follow the star. Yet, when they arrived at the place the star had led them, they entered the house and saw the Christ child and bowed down and worshipped him.

God continues to gather people from all walks of life and from different nations to come and receive the good news of Christ's birth. As Christ's church, our calling is to share this message! Are we, as followers of Jesus, opening our eyes to the signs God is giving us and helping others to see them as well? Are we seeking to share the good news of Christ's birth? Let us go out, through the power of the Holy Spirit, and take notice of the angels and stars that call us to Christ.

The Rev. Torrey Griffiths, Kensington Presbyterian Church and St. John's Presbyterian Church PEI

Photo credit: Hannah Dickie, Lucknow Presbyterian Church ON





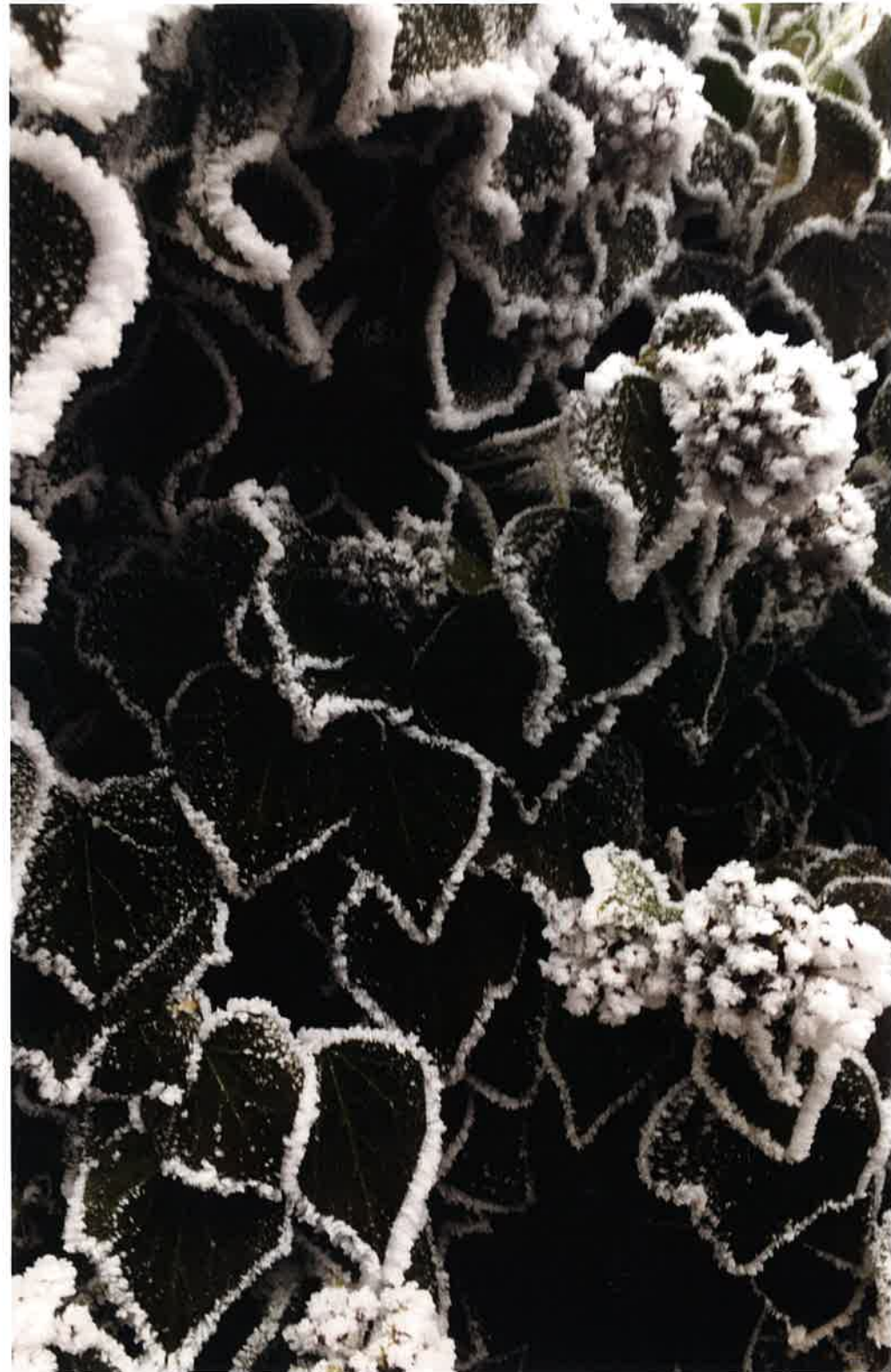
Baptism assures us
that we belong to God.
In life and in death
our greatest comfort
is that we belong
to our faithful Saviour Jesus Christ.

Living Faith 7.6.5

The Holy Spirit, sent by the Father and Son, is alive in the world, sustaining all creation and bringing about the renewal and reconciliation of all things.

It is only on account of the triune God's loving mission to and in our world that human persons come to know God and enter into relationship with God. Those who love God also love the world God is redeeming and they are decisively located in that world.

From Living in God's Mission Today, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 2019



Before God, who made all things and called them good:
We cannot keep silent!
Before God, whose love is beyond the heights of heaven:
We cannot keep silent!
Before God, whose commandments are true:
We cannot keep silent!
Before God, who heals:
We cannot keep silent!
Before God who is gracious and compassionate:
We offer unending praise.

Photo Credit: Livia Barkhouse, Dartmouth Nova Scotia



Inspired by God's promise of abundant life, Presbyterian World Service & Development envisions a sustainable, compassionate and just world.

For over 75 years, our church has demonstrated God's love in some of the most marginalized corners of our global community. In partnership with local organizations, PWS&D responds to situations of poverty, hunger, injustice and disaster. PWS&D also supports congregations and groups as they welcome refugees and help them build new lives in Canada.

The faithful support of Presbyterians from across Canada has enabled life-saving food security, health, livelihoods and human rights programs in countless countries since PWS&D began.

Your support helps make this possible—thank you!



Presbyterian World Service
& Development

We Respond



 Presbyterian World Service
& Development

50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
1-800-619-7301 ext. 291

WeRespond.ca

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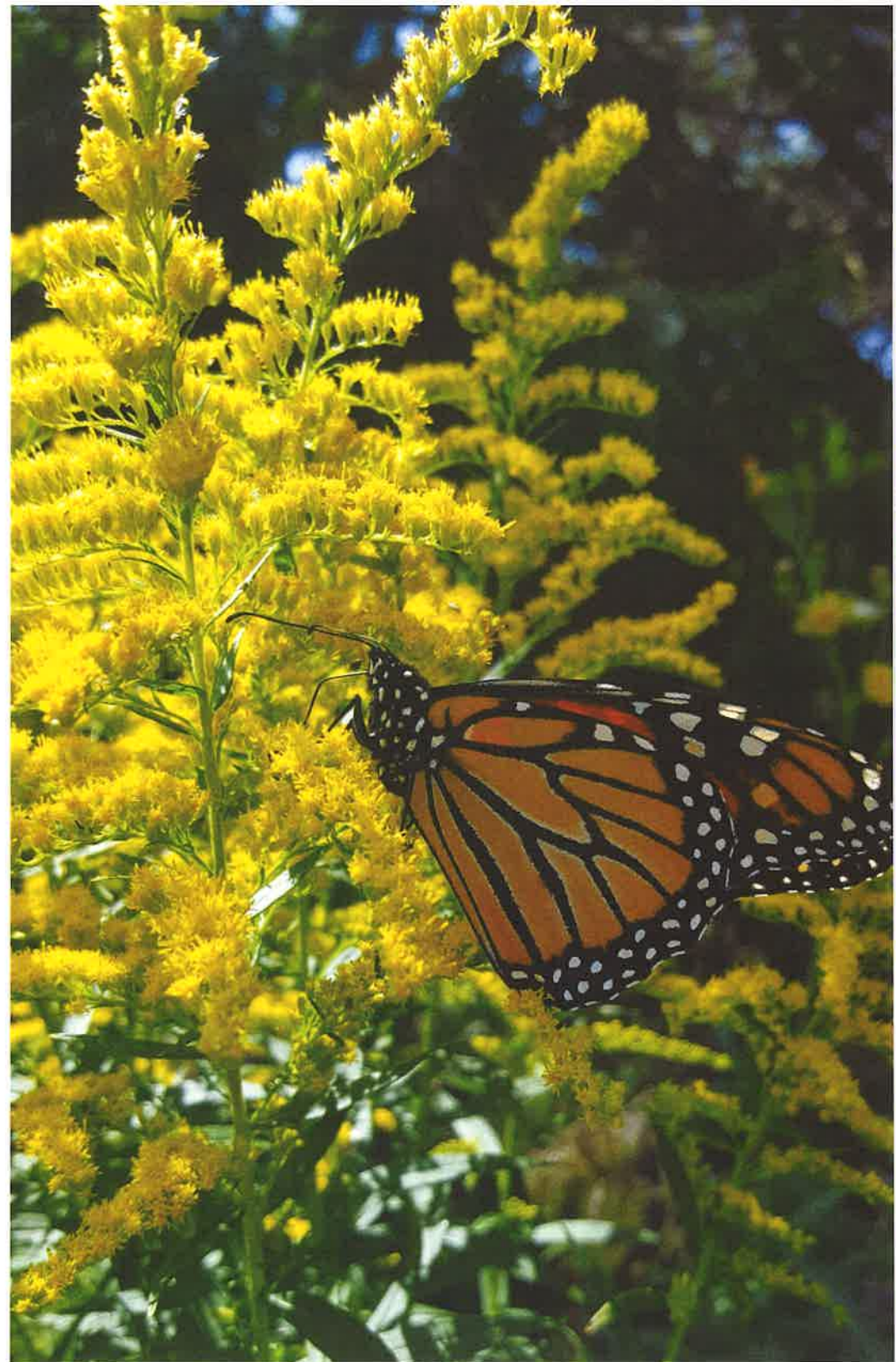


Change is a reality we have come to expect, but when it happens suddenly, it really catches our attention. Peter, James and John were surprised by the change they saw in Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. His face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as light.

What God was doing was giving these disciples a glimpse of the glory Jesus had before he came to earth in human form, and they knew he was the Son of God. Later, John would write, “the Word became flesh and lives among us, and we have seen his glory” (John 1:14). A cloud then enveloped the disciples and they heard the words, “this is my Son...listen to him.”

If we believe Jesus is the Son of God, we are to listen to him. We listen to Jesus because he alone speaks with the authority of God. As we listen to him, our lives will be changed.

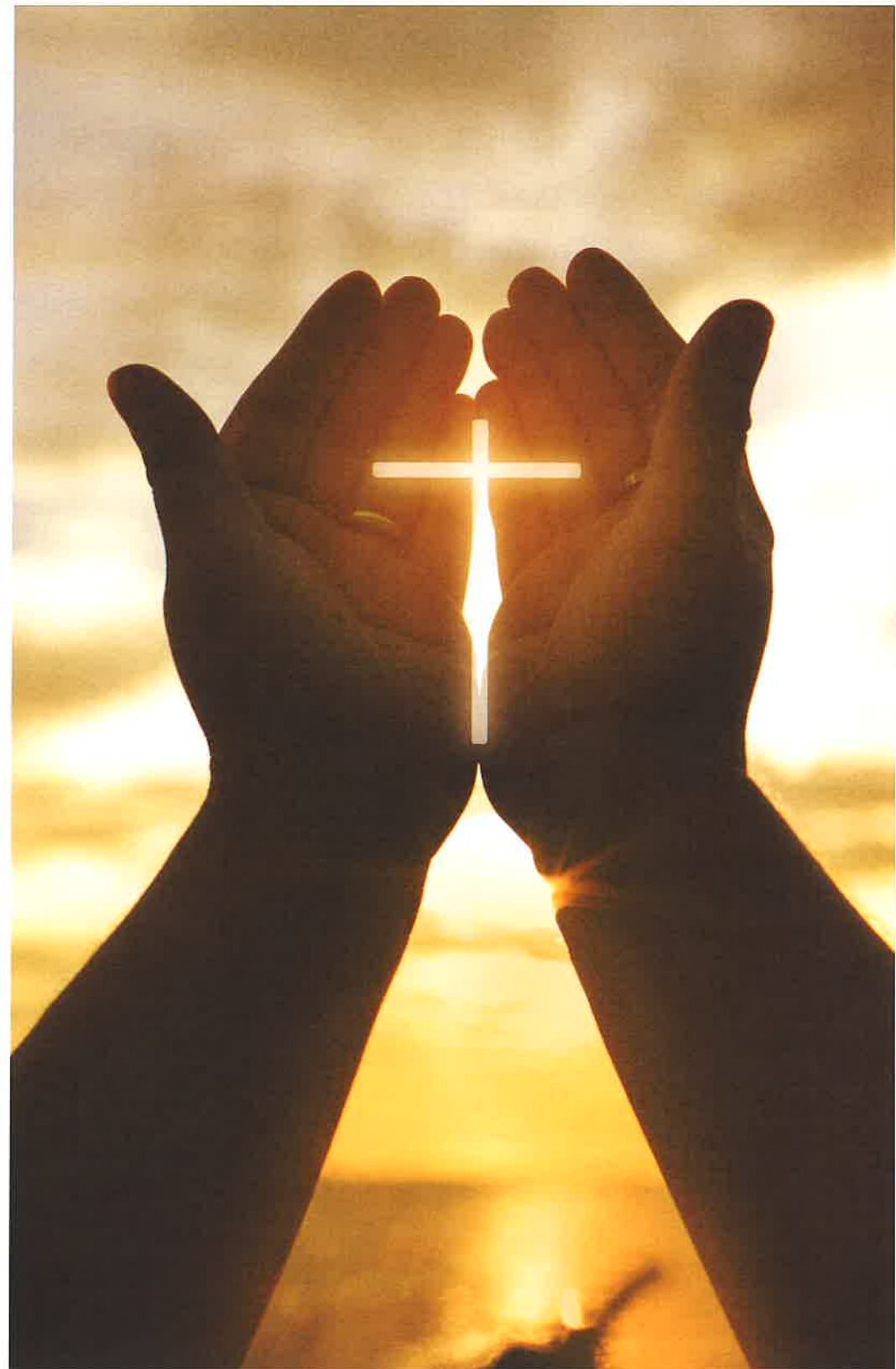
The Rev. David Sherbino, minister in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is Professor of Spirituality and Pastoral Ministry at Tyndale University College and Seminary in Toronto, Ontario



God of all times and seasons,
God of grace and reconciliation
God of liberation and new life;
in this holy season of Lent,
give us grace to lead a life of discipline,
as we journey to the cross.

Christ knew in body, mind and soul
all the temptations and struggles of human life
and was obedient to you in all things.

Help us to discern by your Spirit
what we must reject
and what we must embrace,
what we must lay down
and what we must take up;
what we must end
and what we must begin.



Jesus' response to Nicodemus was that whole and lasting life is available to all in the midst of discouragement, fear or doubt.

The love of God through Christ is such that the world is forever altered by that love.

The perishing world, a dark, dangerous place is transformed by God's love.

That is the good news for us.

The Rev. Dr. Emily Bisset is minister at Calvin Presbyterian Church in Toronto, Ontario



The Holy Spirit creates the church, drawing people together into the resurrection life of Christ, into the triune life of God and into meaningful relationships with one another and all humanity. The Holy Spirit equips the church for service in the mission of God.

By the power of the Spirit and in unity with Christ, the church is called to be a community that witnesses to the joyful and hopeful reign of Christ. The Spirit leads the church to celebrate and support manifestations of the reign of Christ where it discerns them in the world.

*Based on Living in God's Mission Today,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 2019*

Photo credit: Cross Purple Pulpit Fall , Mary Campbell, Claude Presbyterian Church Caledon, ON



God has given us the law to show us how to live.
Yet, we confess that we are sinners.
We do not care for the world as we should.
We do not fulfill our calling to serve God.
Our lives do not reflect the Creator's love.
We do not love God without reserve nor our neighbour
as ourselves.

(From Living Faith)

But God, who is rich in mercy,
out of the great love with which he loved us even when
we were dead through our trespasses,
made us alive together with Christ —
by grace you have been saved...
for by grace you have been saved through faith,
and this is not your doing; it is the gift of God...

(From Ephesians 2 NRSV)

Give thanks to the LORD who is good;
God's loving mercy endures forever.

Psalm 107

Photo credit: Cross Purple Pulpit Fall, Mary Campbell, Claude Presbyterian Church Caledon, ON



A mighty fortress is our God!

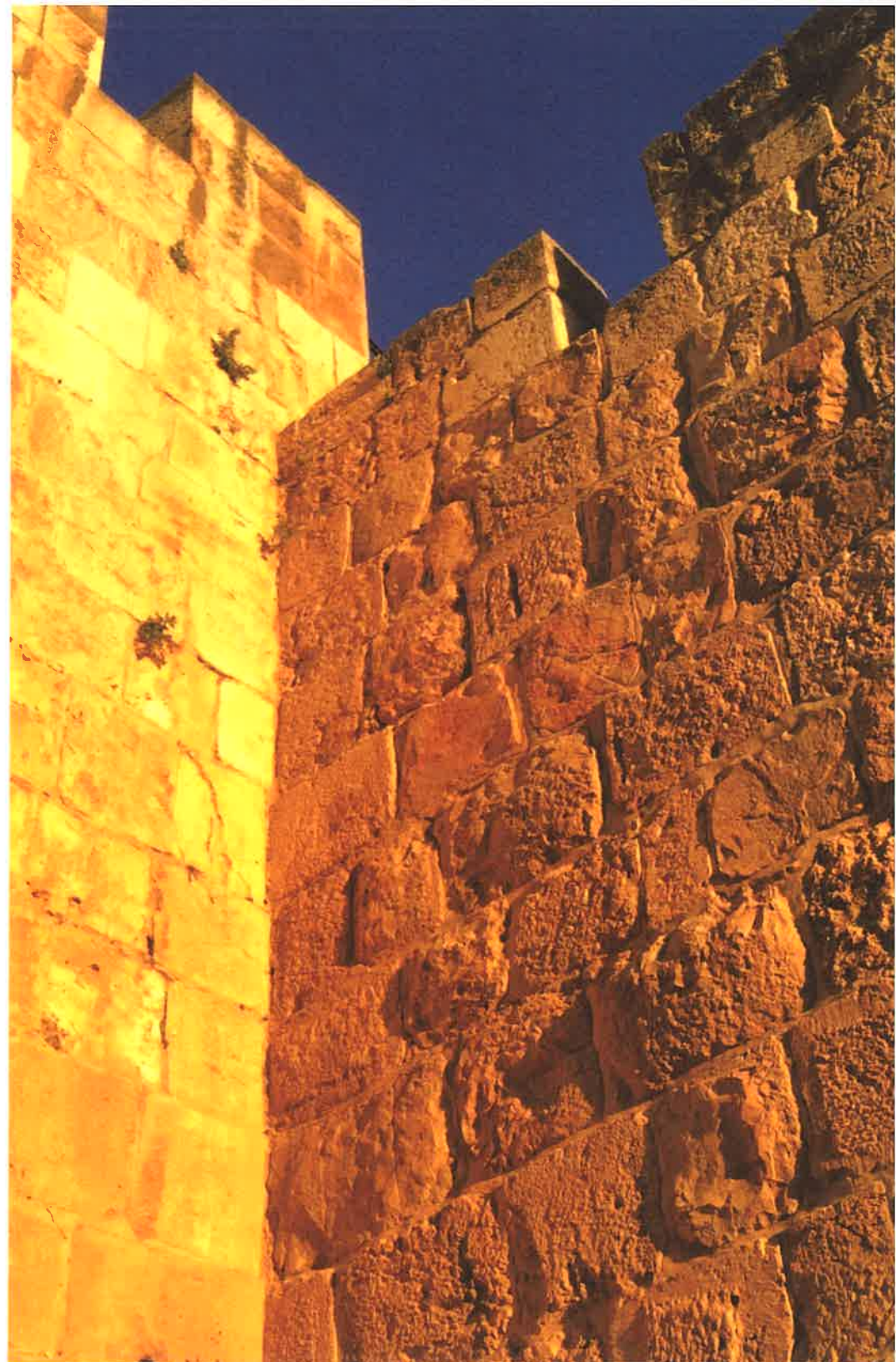
Based on *Psalms 46*

God most high,
most merciful and most just;
unchangeable and all-changing;
hidden but moving among us;
you are worthy of praise, for
your wisdom is beyond our understanding.
We approach you in wonder for
you are a mighty fortress,
beautiful and most strong;
supporting and sheltering.

But the houses of our souls are narrow;
enlarge them, we pray, so that you may enter in.
Where the houses of our souls crumble, rebuild them.
And where they are unkept, order them.

Based on prayers of Augustine of Hippo

Image: Walls of Old Jerusalem, Israel



Amid shouts of Hosanna,
Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem
for the redemption of the world.
Betrayed by friends,
rejected by all,
he accepted the shame of the cross.
By his suffering and death
he defeated the power of death
becoming for us the source of eternal life.

From the Presbyterian Book of Common Worship



What are we to do with these stories and the visions of Christ as the victim of so much betrayal, anguish, violence and pain that we reflect on today?

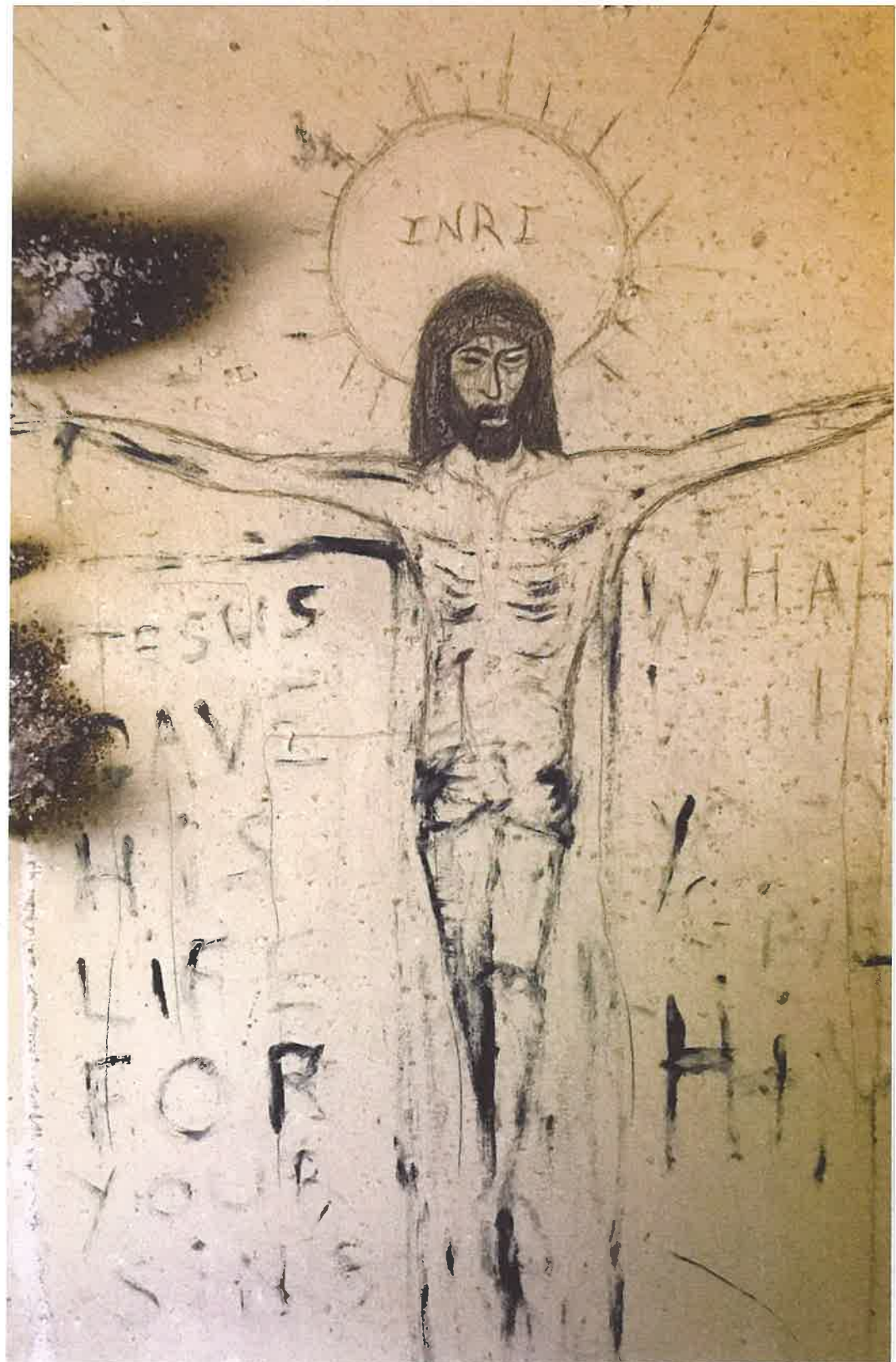
While Jesus is praying in the garden, he asks his disciples to keep watch with him and to wait. Our task this week is to watch and wait, to contemplate the mystery and grace of God that converts hatred into love, bondage into freedom, enemies into friends, violence into peace and death into life. We are to gaze upon the crucified Christ and see in him all life's pain and disappointment, all of our disorientation and confusion, all the world's failures and failings and to consider what it means that all of this was taken up into God. And then to be patient, to keep alert, to not be distracted or discouraged or fatigued, but to watch and to wait to see what God will do with it all on Easter morning.

The Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald is General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency

Photo: Drawing by an inmate on a prison wall in Malawi

Good Friday
100420


The
Presbyterian
Church
in Canada
presbyterian.ca/worship



He is risen!

He is risen indeed!

Christ is risen from the dead;

Trampling down death by death,
and giving us life!

God of glory, life and power,
who through the resurrection of your Son
overcame the powers of sin and death
to make all things new in him,
we praise you and pray that
you fill your Church with faith, hope and love;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open to all
through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Photo credit: Christ Crown Gold Pulpit Fall, Mary Campbell, Claude Presbyterian Church Caledon, ON



Peace be with you.

Lord Jesus,
When evening falls
and we contemplate the pleasures
and disappointments of the day
we are soothed by your whispered,
"Peace be with you."

When, in fear, we hide behind the locked doors
of our churches, or our homes, or our hearts,
shutting out that which we do not like or understand—
we gain courage from the promise,
"Peace be with you."

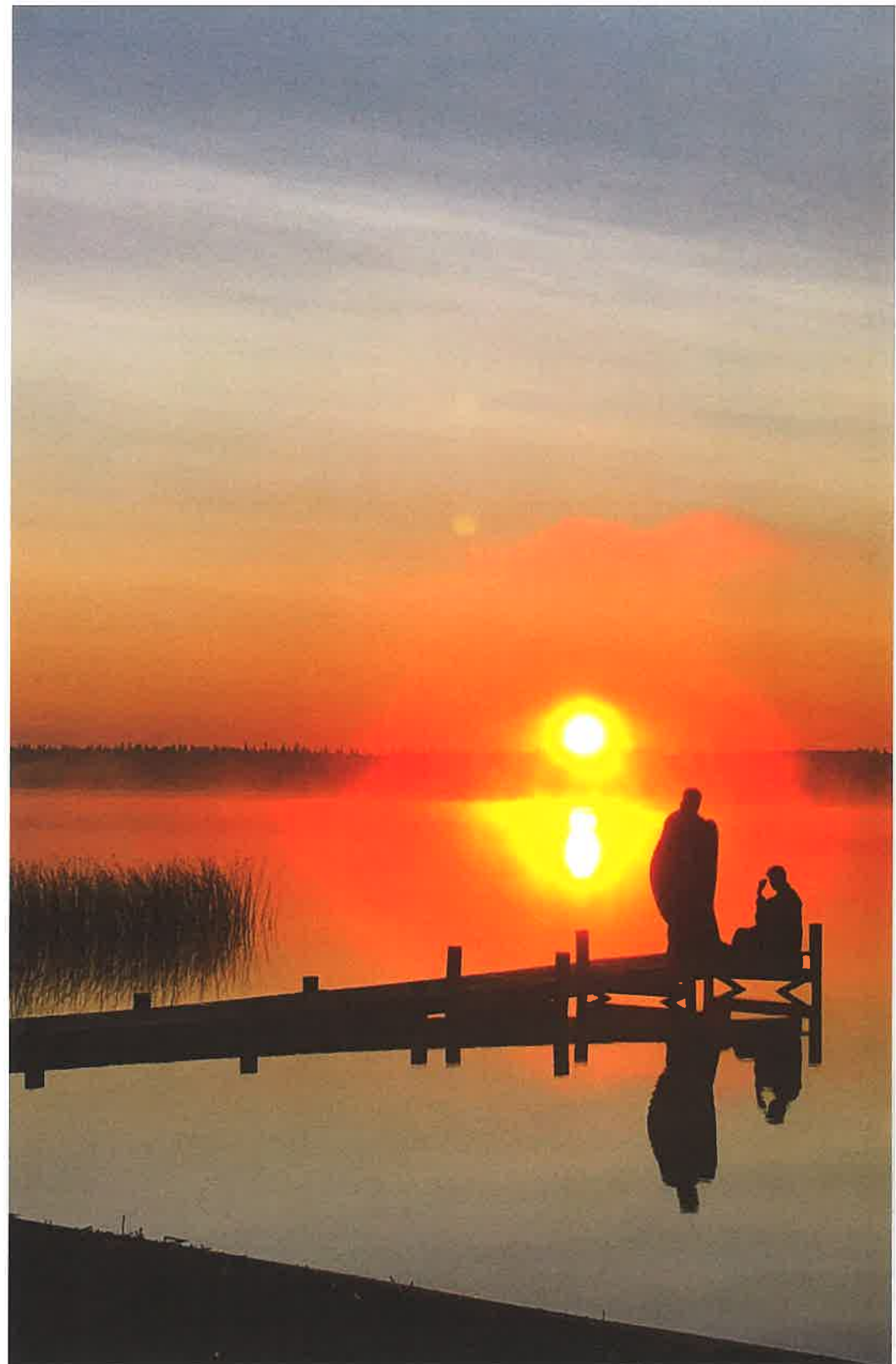
When we contemplate our calling to be sent into the world, some
dance with pleasure while others cringe in terror. Whether we dance
or cringe we do so in the comforting company of "Peace be with you."

When our transgressions are forgiven,
or when we are gracious enough to pardon those
who cause pain or grief,
we understand more completely what you mean by
"Peace be with you."

Receiving the breath of your spirit anew,
We pray for peace.
We make room for peace.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.

Written by the Rev. Don Muir, Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly

Image: Camp Christopher, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Credit: The Rev. Isaac Euisak Lee



Alleluia!
He is risen.

Jesus suffered, died, and was buried,
but God raised him from the dead.
Risen and ascended,
he is now, the living Lord.

His resurrection means that our faith is not empty,
that final victory is assured over all evil powers
which destroy and deform life,
and that death, the last enemy, is conquered.

Living Faith 3.5.1-2

Image credit: Miranda, age 5, St. Giles Presbyterian Church, Sarnia, Ontario



I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.

Wait for the LORD;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the LORD!

Psalm 27:13–14



Image: "Arboretum Irises." Credit: Shirley Moulton, St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Ottawa, Ontario

The God of covenant and creation is made manifest by a mission of redemption and re-creation in our world – a mission that is embodied and fulfilled in Jesus Christ and realized through the moving of the Holy Spirit for the well-being of all of God’s creation.

From *Living in God’s Mission Today*,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 2019

Photo credit: Antonio Siracusa, Camino de Santiago Pilgrimage Spain Portugal

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Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own...I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:12-14

Writing to the community of people following Christ in the city of Philippi, in current Northeastern Greece, the Apostle Paul writes about his own faith journey and his desire "to know Christ" and "to become like him." This journey is called sanctification. What is sanctification?

Sanctification is God's work in us by which we grow in conformity to the image of Jesus Christ and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. The process of sanctification is never completed in this life.

From Question 92 in A Catechism for Today,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Image: Camp Geddie, Nova Scotia. Credit: James Pan



presbyterian.ca/worship



God almighty,
creator of all things:
build your kingdom among us.

Jesus Christ,
son of the living God:
give us your grace.

Holy Spirit,
breath of the living God:
renew all things.

Let us serve you willingly and joyfully
to the benefit of each other,
to share one faith,
and respond to your calling.
Amen.

Image: Details from a cloister walk, Spain



The Holy Spirit, sent by the Father and Son, is alive in the world, sustaining all creation and bringing about the renewal and reconciliation of all things.

The Holy Spirit reconciles and renews individuals and communities, opening hearts and minds to the way of the risen Jesus Christ—a life of repentance, reconciliation, compassion, righteousness, justice and peace.

The Holy Spirit creates the church, drawing women, men and children together into the resurrection life of Christ, into the triune life of God and into meaningful relationships with one another and with the wider human family. The Holy Spirit equips the church for service in the mission of God.

By the power of the Spirit, and in unity with Christ, the church is called to be a community that witnesses to the joyful and hopeful reign of Christ. The Spirit leads the church to celebrate and support manifestations of the reign of Christ where it discerns them in the world.

From Living in God's Mission Today, The Presbyterian Church in Canada



Photo: Detail from a tapestry at Central and Galilee Presbyterian Church in Vancouver, British Columbia

Today is Healing and Reconciliation Sunday, a day to refocus the church's attention on repentance and recommit to work for healing our harmful legacy of colonization and operating residential schools.

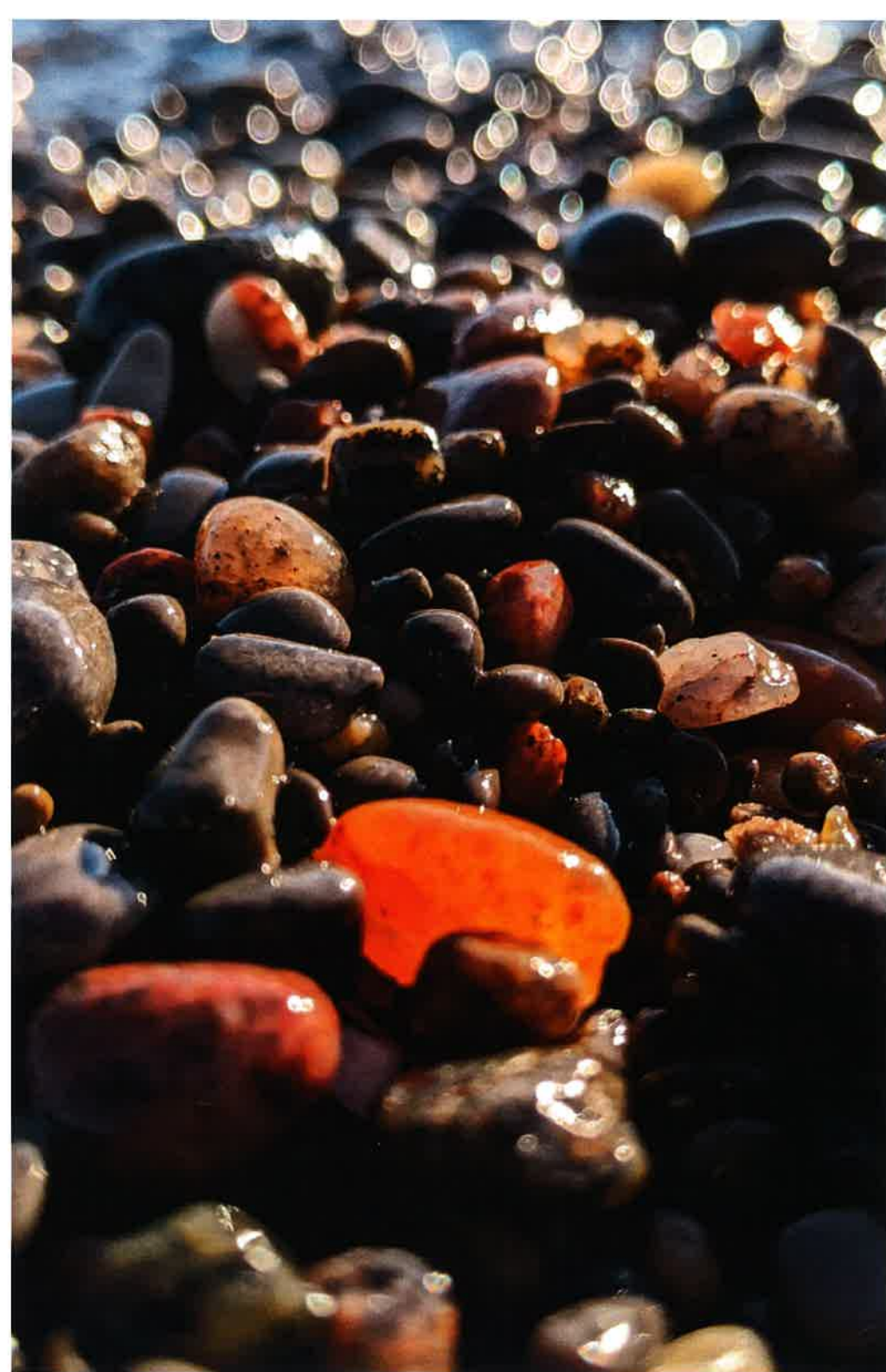
Colonization is the process by which Indigenous people all over the world, as here in Canada, have been dispossessed of their language, culture, land and resources, among other things. Colonization actively works to erase Indigenous identity. The residential schools the church operated—from which many children never came home—were among the most significant targeted ways that erasure was attempted.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada operated twelve residential schools beginning in the mid-1880s. Those schools were: Ahousaht Residential School and Alberni Residential School in British Columbia; Stoney Plain Residential School in Alberta; Crowstand Residential School, File Hills Residential School, Muscowpetung (later known as "Lakesend") Residential School, Regina Industrial School and Round Lake Residential School in Saskatchewan; Portage la Prairie Residential School and Birtle Residential School in Manitoba; Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School in Shoal Lake, Ontario, and Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School in Kenora, Ontario.

Following 1925 all but two of the schools that were still open were transferred to the United Church of Canada. A history of the PCC's role operating Birtle and Cecilia Jeffrey, the two schools the PCC continued to operate after 1925, is found online at:
presbyterianarchives.ca/2018/08/17/narrative-history

The schools left a legacy of profound harm. The Presbyterian Church in Canada confessed our sinful complicity in colonization and operating residential schools in 1994, and is preparing to issue a renewed apology as we mark thirty years since that confession.

Resources for learning and a history of the church's work toward reconciliation can be found at:
presbyterian.ca/justice/social-action/indigenous-justice



By the Spirit, Christ calls the church into being
and unites us to himself and to each other.
The Holy Spirit is in all who know Christ.
The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth.
We pray as a church to be guided into truth
knowing that such truth may disturb and judge us.
The presence of the Holy Spirit is seen
in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,
goodness, loyalty, gentleness and self-control.

From Living Faith 4



The true character of the church is revealed through the way in which it exercises hospitality. When it is reluctant, calculating or measured, it points to an insular community. When it worries about its dwindling numbers and tries to increase its attractiveness to outsiders through welcoming strategies, it is still turned inward by self-interest. When, however, the church truly grasps what it means to be a company of the Spirit of Jesus called to share the grace and love of Christ, there are no limits to its welcome, and the radical hospitality of grace becomes a given.

From Radical Hospitality: A Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Art Van Seters, past principal of Knox College and Vancouver School of Theology and former Moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Photo: Art by Samantha, age 11



June 1 marks the beginning of Indigenous History Month in Canada. We can learn about and celebrate the rich diversity of Indigenous governments, economies, legal systems, spiritualities, languages, cultures and traditions that have been practiced by hundreds of nations and millions of people for thousands of years. We can learn about the deep relationship between Indigenous peoples and the land that they have lived on and cared for, and continue to care for, since time immemorial, and the significance that the land holds to Indigenous cultural and spiritual practices, and for the families and communities who hold these sacred connections.

Our learning must be grounded in an understanding of the destruction and harm of colonization which sought to erase and replace Indigenous identity with European Christianized values and traditions because of the false assumption of its superiority. Rooted in a commitment to seek healing and justice, marking Indigenous History month is one way we can continue to build our common memory and learn from Indigenous peoples.

You can get involved by:

- Attending National Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations on or around June 21
- Visiting friendship and cultural centers
- Attend Indigenous events open to the public
- Doing land acknowledgements

Church resources are available from the Social Action Hub (presbyterian.ca/justice/social-action)



With our arms around the shoulders of the homeless,
we walk in love, as God loves us.

With our hearts breaking for those who are hurting,
we walk in love, as God loves us.

With our eyes flashing in recognition of injustice,
we walk in love, as God loves us.

With our feet standing in solidarity
with those who are persecuted,
we walk in love, as God loves us.

With our hands helping up those who have fallen,
we walk in love, as God loves us.

With our mouths speaking kindly and truthfully,
we walk in love, as God loves us.

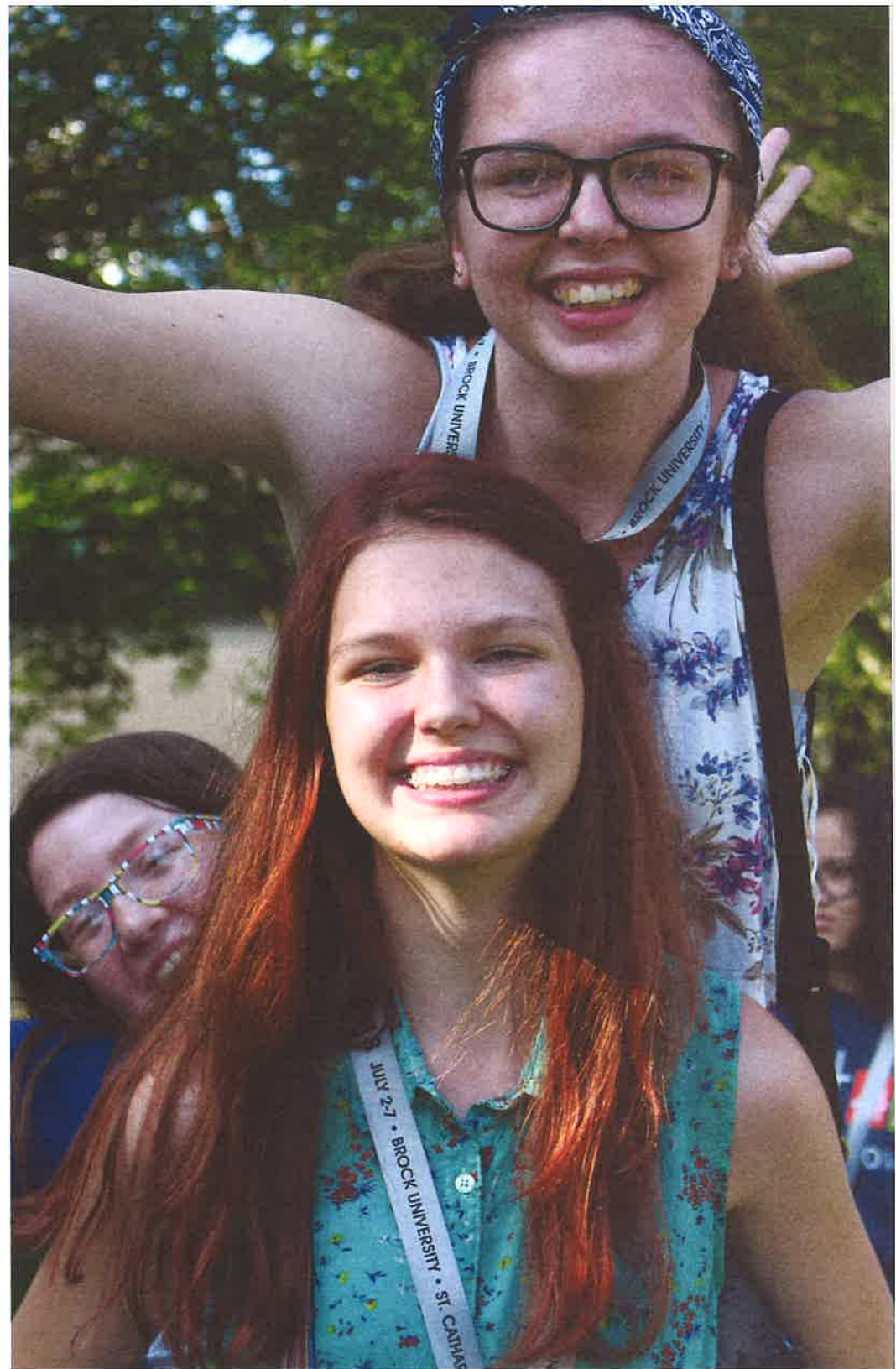
*Heather Chappell is Education Program Coordinator in Stewardship and
Planned Giving*



In a world where we can feel lonely in a crowd;
God is among us and we are not alone.
In a world where it is hard to know who we are;
we have been created in God's image
and called by name.
In a world where we are not always sure
of the path to follow;
we have Christ to follow,
the spirit to lead us
and a community where we see God
face to face.

From the worship life of Canada Youth

Photo: Every second summer at Canada Youth, hundreds of youth, young adults and leaders from across our denomination join together with guests from around the world to celebrate their vibrant faith



Our mission is to share God's love through Christian camping and to ensure that its family of camps, and their leaders, provide supportive ministry and transformative programming.

Camp Cairn

Young people across Canada have their faith nurtured in the following camps that The Presbyterian Church in Canada supports with grants and curriculum:

- Camp Geddie
- Camp MacLeod
- Camp Keir
- Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre
- Camp d'action biblique
- Cairn Family of Camps
- Camp Kintail
- Huron Feathers Centre
- Camp Christopher
- Camp Kannawin
- Camp Douglas

Learn more about Presbyterian camps in Canada at presbyterian.ca/camping

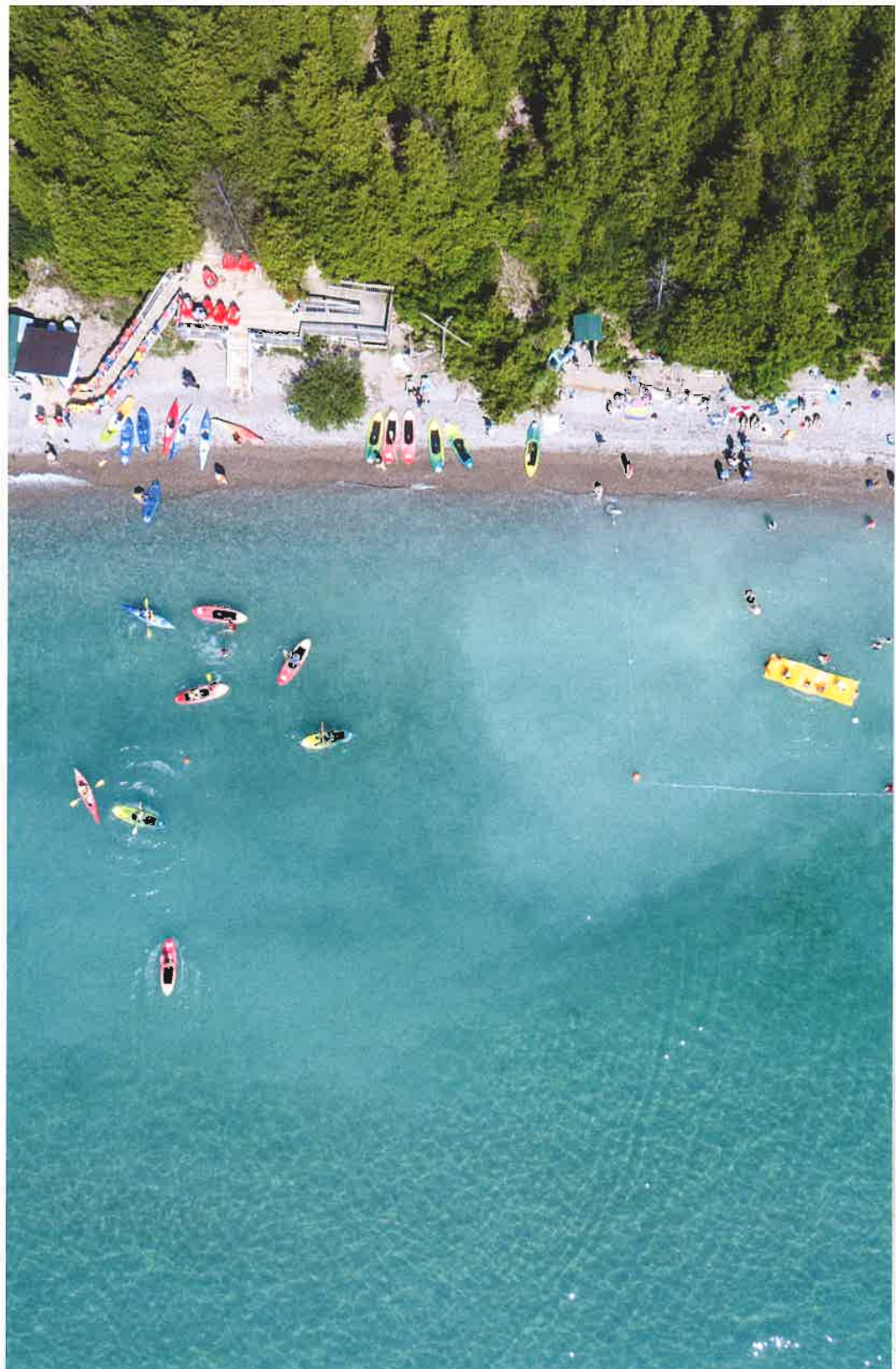


Image: Camp Kintail, Ontario. Credit: Hannah Dickie, Lucknow Presbyterian Church, Ontario

What is next for us? That is the question that the congregation of St. James Presbyterian Church in North Yarmouth, Ont., has been asking. It is a common question that New Beginnings, a renewal program offered to congregations in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, helps churches answer.

St. James is a 182-year-old church in rural Ontario that is known for its loving community dedicated to hospitality, sharing food and raising funds for justice-based projects. Engaging in the New Beginnings process is helping the congregation to discern God's will for their congregation and establish a plan for how to best use their resources to love and serve their community.

There are currently 15 congregations going through the year-long New Beginnings process. Each congregation is paired with a coach who supports them through a process that involves spiritual practices, practical assessments, small group discernment and determining future directions. They are all on the road to a new beginning.

Please pray for St. James and other congregations involved in this program. May it lead them to a renewed sense of vibrancy, a deeper connection with their communities and faithful decisions about their next steps in ministry.

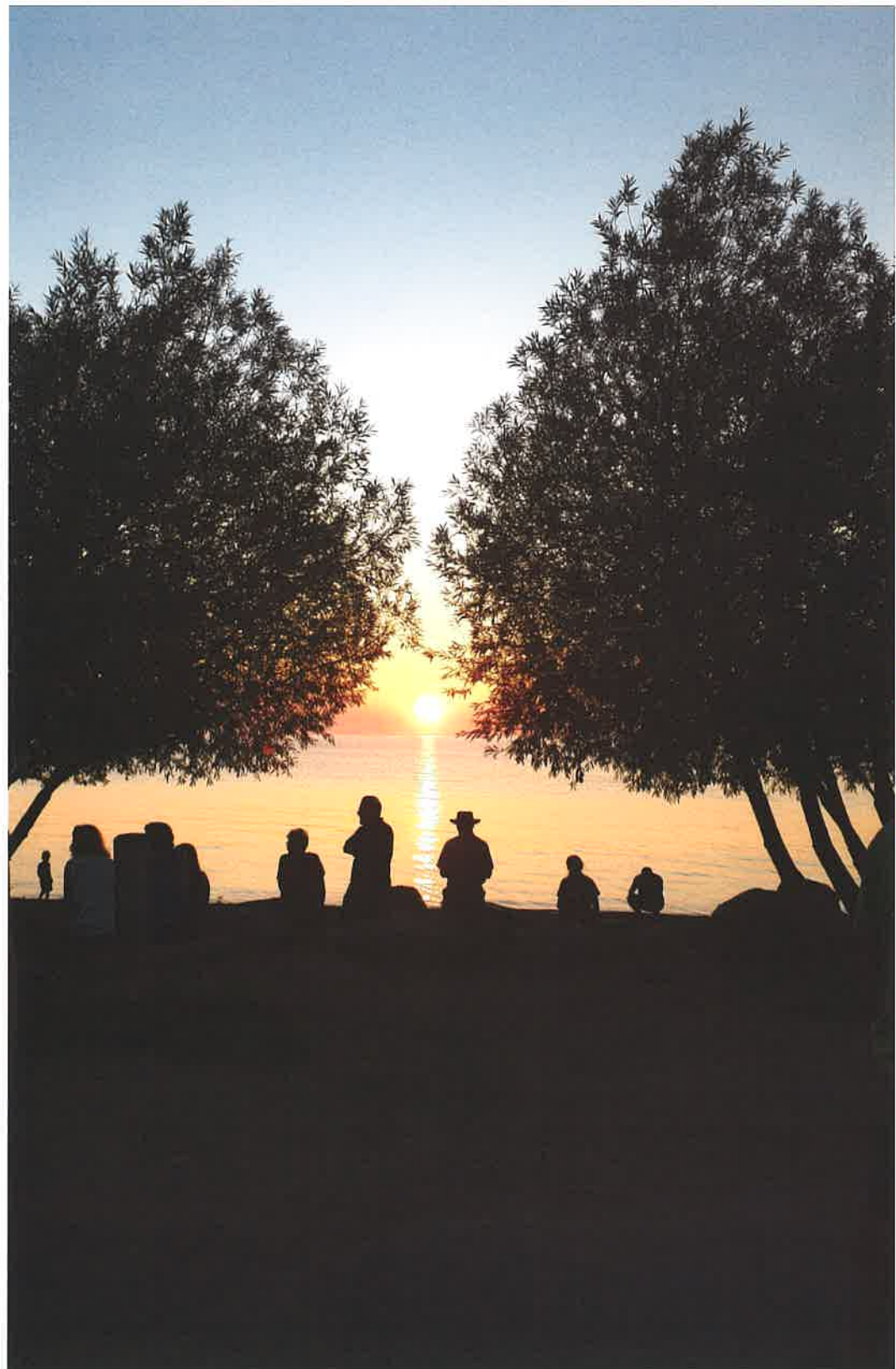


Image: Southampton Sunset, Saugeen Shores, Ontario. Credit: Grace Currie, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Southampton, Ontario

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth...
Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who live in it.
Let the floods clap their hands;
let the hills sing together for joy
at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming
to judge the earth.

Psalm 98:4a, 7-9

The writer of Psalm 98 sings about the fullness of creation joyfully blessing God; all creation erupts in praise and adoration. The hills and waters revel in God's presence and in God's coming judgement. The hymns we sing are not just pretty tunes. Rather, they are the verses we sing in creation's choral prayer for God to come and to judge things as they are in order for the world to be restored to what it was meant to be.

Image: Waterfall, India. Credit: Prachi Shailendra



We may miss the socially subversive nature of Jesus' stories if we do not read them in the context of their first century setting. To single out a Samaritan man as the conveyer of God's mercy, for example, is to use not only an outsider but a despised individual whose religious convictions are as suspect as his ethnic origin. The action of the father who welcomes his prodigal son back home and throws a big party for the whole community seems absurd. For a mere widow to confront a judge over what appears to be a family inheritance issue is surprising, but for her to outwit him is shocking. The idea in the parable of the vineyard that the workers who laboured for only an hour are to be paid the same as those who had worked all day seems patently unfair. Such stories are sometimes introduced with the phrase "the Kingdom of heaven (or God) is like..." which signals a new order where God's reign is everywhere evident. The parables, in other words, picture another way of being where the rejected and the unworthy are included, where evil systems are undermined and where generosity reaches beyond merit to grace.

How might the agenda for the church reflect this new order?

From the Social Action Handbook, The Presbyterian Church in Canada



“Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the faithful” (Psalm 149:1).

The church’s musical worship is a gift from God that allows it to express the richness and depth of life in Christ – lament, hope, joy, service, justice, redemption, peace, reconciliation, resurrection and grace.

The church’s musical worship provides congregations with a vehicle to be attentive to the context in which they live – this attentiveness could be expressed instrumentally, lyrically and musically.

The church’s music should seek to link with the questions, aspirations and pains that are particular to the wider cultural context.

The church as a worshipping community should share musically with the community around it – listening compassionately for themes and struggles that provide an opportunity to witness to the reign of Christ.

The church should be in touch with and share in the music of global Christianity – so that it can learn from and be shared by the gospel’s inculturation in other contexts.

*From Living in God’s Mission Today,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada*

Photo credit: Cairn Campers Baysville, ON by Jotham Sennema



Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ.
(1 Peter 4:10-11 NRSV)

All of life is stewardship.

As God's stewards, we are called together to pass on God's unearned, unconditional love – receiving and sharing God's grace.

with God,
with neighbour and
with creation.

God has called us and continues to call us to live out the mission of Christ by making a difference in the lives of others and caring for God's creation. We manage and share the gifts God has given us – our time, talent, and treasure – in a manner that follows what God would do.

And when we respond to God's call, God's grace and love refracts through us into the world, like a bright ray of light hitting a prism and bursting out into brilliant colours for everyone to enjoy. When we do this together, as congregations and individuals across Canada, we call it Presbyterians Sharing. Thank you for your gifts.

LIVE IN GOD'S GRACE



A Prayer For the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation

Creator God,

We continue to learn about the devastation of thousands of Indigenous children whose lives were lost because of residential schools.

We pray for Survivors – for those whose pain is carried in silence and for those who have shared their experiences so that the truth of residential schools is never forgotten.

We pray for healing for the children's families and communities who continue to encounter pain and trauma that no one should ever have to bear.

We pray for Indigenous leaders and Elders working with their communities to discern community wishes regarding searches for unmarked burials and cemeteries on and around residential schools, and memorial initiatives. We pray for people who are living with intergenerational trauma from residential schools and the harms of colonization. Bring healing and justice so that Indigenous people may thrive, and that Indigenous rights are protected.

We acknowledge the actions of the Presbyterian church as an agent of harm and complicit with running residential schools and taking Indigenous children from their families and homes. While we have sought forgiveness, we understand that no words will undo these harms. Guide us in our lament, that we may speak through actions that reflect the principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

Holy Spirit, grant wisdom as we seek to walk in a good way toward healing, wholeness, and right relationships. Amen.

We do this and we remember
that as we were welcomed at the table
we will make room for everyone.

We do this and we remember
that as we have been fed
we must ensure none go hungry.

We do this and we remember
that as we have been served
we are called to serve others.

We do this and we remember
that as we have seen God's goodness
we are sent into the world to show it.



We believe in God, Creator and Sustainer of all life, who calls us as partners in the creation and redemption of the world. We live under the promise that Jesus Christ came so that all might have life in fullness (John 10:10). Guided and upheld by the Holy Spirit, we open ourselves to the reality of our world.

We believe that God is sovereign over all creation:
“The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it” (Psalm 24:1)

We believe that God has made a covenant with all of creation (Genesis 9:8-12). God has brought into being an earth community based on the vision of justice and peace. The covenant is a gift of grace that is not for sale in the marketplace (Isaiah 55:1). It is an economy of grace for the household of all creation. Jesus shows that this is an inclusive covenant in which the poor and marginalized are preferential partners and calls us to put justice for the “least of these” at the centre of the community of life (Matthew 25:40). All creation is blessed and included in this covenant (Hosea 2:18ff).

Therefore, we reject the culture of rampant consumerism and the competitive greed and selfishness of the neoliberal global market system or any other system which claims there is no alternative.

From the Accra Confession, adopted by the General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in Accra, Ghana, 2004

Hannah Dickie, Lucknow Presbyterian Church On



We believe that Christ calls leaders to renew and nurture God's people to be Christ's hands, voice and heart. This belief is grounded in New Testament passages such as Ephesians 4:11-13: "The gifts Christ gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ."

Effective, well-equipped ministers are trained for faithful service at the three theological colleges supported by the national church.

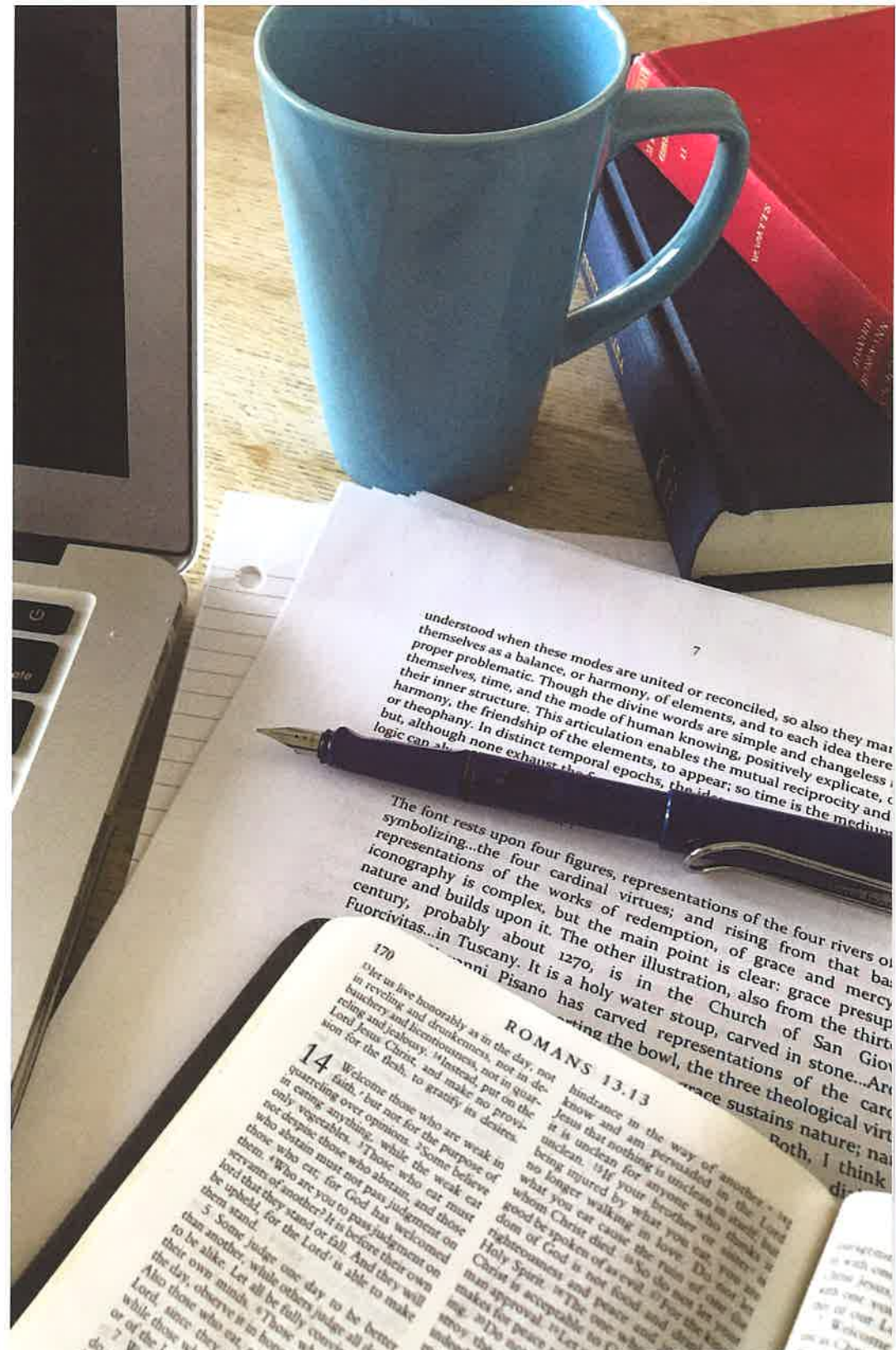
St. Andrew's Hall is home to faculty and staff engaged in theological education who are committed to preparing generous, thoughtful and engaged Christian leaders for the world. St. Andrew's Hall exercises its teaching charter through the Vancouver School of Theology. Several programs are offered every year for those who are seeking ordination to ministry, are enquirers, desire a deepening of faith, or in other ways are seeking a degree program in theology.

Knox College is a postgraduate theological college located in the heart of the University of Toronto. For 170 years, Knox has been a progressive leader in Reformed theological education in Canada, offering programs for laity and those preparing to serve the church in ministry. Knox is a founding partner in the Toronto School of Theology, one of North America's largest ecumenical consortia.

Founded in 1865, **The Presbyterian College** is a centre of theological education and research. Students benefit from an ecumenical arrangement as part of the Montreal School of Theology, a consortium of three theological colleges: Diocesan College (Anglican), The Presbyterian College, and the United Theological College. Students with the requisite gifts, abilities, and call prepare for various forms of Christian ministry.



presbyterian.ca/worship



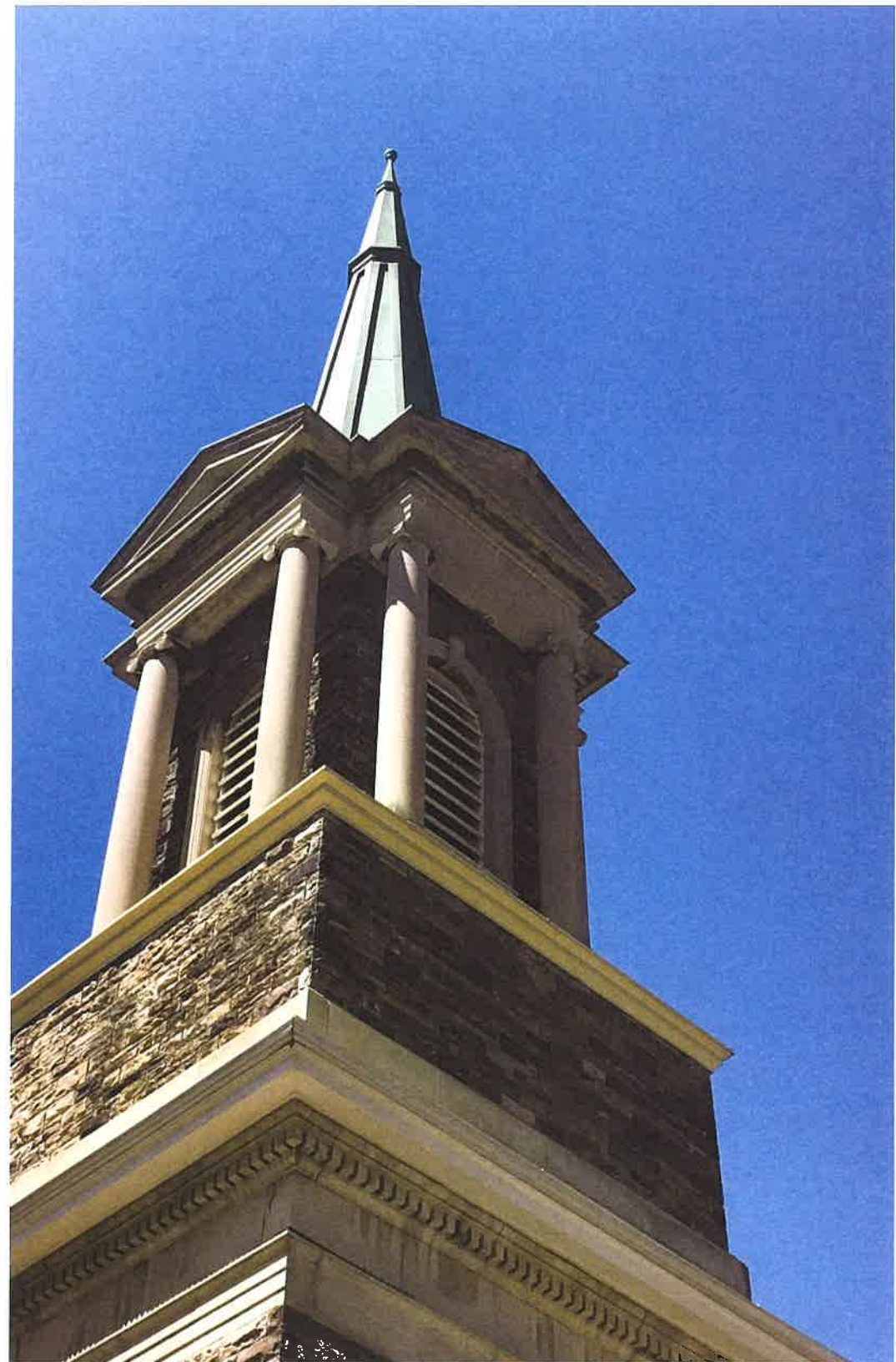
Living God,
to turn away from you is to fall and
to turn towards you is to rise.
By the power of your Spirit,
reform your church and
help us to hear your word
in ways that we will understand it truly;
so that in understanding we may trust fully;
and that in trusting we may follow you always.
Give us, dear God,
your help in all our responsibilities;
your guidance in all our uncertainties; and
your wisdom in all our discerning.
Where we are corrupt, purify us.
Where we are in error, direct us.
Where we are divided, reunite us.
And use your church to your glory
and the service of your people.
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

A prayer for the church from the writings of the Reformers

Photo: Calvin Presbyterian Church in Toronto, Ontario

Reformation Sunday

251020



To celebrate All Saints is to affirm hope.
Christian hope trusts that all things
are in the hands of the God of
yesterday, today and tomorrow
who is on the side of life;
who is always bringing new life
from what is past,
who is even now in the midst of
whatever is broken or painful
working wholeness and healing;
and who has prepared a future
where all will be redeemed
and made new.

The Life and Mission Agency

Photo: Art by Sophie, age 10

All Saints Sunday

011120



We Remember

We remember God's grace and care
in times of need and crisis.

We remember the courage and sacrifice
of those who serve in the
Canadian Armed Forces and their families.

We remember those whose bodies, minds and
souls were scarred in battle and whose lives
will forever bear the wounds of war.

We remember refugees, the poor, children and
all those who are caught in struggles of power.

We remember the pride and nationalism
that often leads to war.

We remember those who make and keep peace.

We remember those who fell in war and who
now dwell in the eternal peace of your presence.



My father-in-law, Adam, was an amazing man, generous with time, money, encouragement and love. When he passed away, we were particularly grateful for his talent for planning. He'd thought of everything—and thank goodness, because there was so much to think about. At every turn, he had provided all the decisions and information we needed. Adam never stopped giving, even after he died.

My wife, Linda, and I are following his example by maintaining a loving gift of an up-to-date estate plan for each other and for our children. I can't think of a better way to leave a legacy of love that I know my family will appreciate. It's important to me that my wishes will be known and the things I care about will be remembered.

None of us likes to think or talk about death. And yet it is going to happen to us all. Estate planning—making plans to disperse the things we own after we die—is both meaningful and kind. We can take care of our family and support causes that reflect the generosity we shared in life.

Jim MacDonald is Development Manager for Stewardship & Planned Giving, part-time M.Div. student at Knox College and an elder at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Vaughan, Ontario

Photo: Adam MacDonald and his grandson



Christ is King, but not like the kings of history
and of grandeur and wealth.

We know that from our salvation history.

We know it from the biblical story.

We know it from our hymns.

We worship a king who not only sits on a throne
but walks daily with the least of all the people
in the kingdom.

We worship a king who chooses love over wealth,
who influences by giving rather than demanding,
and whose power is not over and against us
but in us and through us.

Christ's crown is of thorns; Christ's throne a cross.

Christ is powerless; Christ is vulnerable.

Christ our King is servant of all.

*The Rev. Dr. Emily Bisset is minister at Calvin Presbyterian Church in Toronto,
Ontario*

