

March 22, 2020

St. George on Yonge Anglican Church: 5350 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario

## Lent 2020 Signs of Life this Lent

Parishioners have been gathering on Thursday evenings in Lent, to discuss the signs and symbols at the heart of Christian worship. This five-week series was made available through The Society of Saint John the Evangelist and Virginia Theological Seminary.

We have joined with the College of Bishops, clergy and people from across the Diocese of Toronto and beyond to talk about the significance of **light**, **water** and **food** as symbols of our faith. This week, starting March 22, we will discuss **shelter**, and reflect on where we feel most at home. Our final week will focus on who is our **community**.

You might be looking at the weekly videos, receiving the daily emails or following the daily practices recommended by this program outlined at "signsoflife.org". If so, I hope that you have found it helpful on your Lenten journey.

I see so many signs of life in the parish this Lent, including the rejuvenation of the Wednesday morning group, the Lenten circle of prayer, hosting the world day of prayer service and the presentation of our Mission Action Plan. Green shoots of ministry and opportunities for Christian

service are growing right here at St. George on Yonge, to help us live closer to God and develop habits that could turn into meaningful change in our lives.

May we be open to what God is doing all around us, and respond faithfully as we observe a Holy Lent.

*Leonard* ✝

Rev. Leonard Leader  
Priest-in-Charge

**Please note** this was written before the decision to close everything down was decided. See the letter from the Bishop on page 3.

**Also see:** Website for coronavirus updates from the Diocese  
[www.toronto.anglican.ca/2020/03/13/covid-19-updates/](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/2020/03/13/covid-19-updates/)

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## From the Wardens

Thank you to everyone who attended and participated in our 2020 Vestry Meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. It is important to have as many parishioners as possible involved in making decisions for the parish.

We accepted motions to support deacons at St. George and nominated Doug and Margie to be considered for preparation for the diaconate. Thank you to both of these individuals for their decision to further their ministries with us.

A motion was passed with respect to Taking Action on Climate Change, with specific actions to reduce energy consumption by 10% and eliminate single-use plastics. You will be hearing more about these initiatives in the future, but for now, if we all turn off lights when leaving a room, it will be a good start.

We look forward to growing the congregation with the assistance of our Mission Action Planning and hope everyone will support this initiative. We encourage you to take part in one of our special programs or services in the season of Lent.

Your Wardens,  
Lorraine Baillie, Kwan Luk, Kay Yuen

### Save the Date!

Sunday, May 3 will be a special celebration for St. George's Day (a little belated), with Bishop Kevin visiting, at the 10:30 service, followed by lunch. There will only be one service that day.

## The Music Committee



The Music Committee has been busy lining up concerts at St. George on Yonge. Two string quartets, The Goethe String Quartet and Interro String Quartet will be presenting chamber music of the listenable variety. With the help of Father Leonard, we expect to have a Steel Band performance on a Saturday evening during the summer. We also hope that Schumann Piano Competition winner, Aljosa Jurinic will give a recital, which will likely include works of Beethoven and Chopin. Dates and programmes will be advised later.

## Light – a personal experience

I cannot tell you how amazing it was to see the Cross outside our chapel lit and shining so gloriously as we came out of the discussion about light as the first sign of life.

Personally for me, that Cross is the first and last thing I see every day from my Living Room giving me so much hope and comfort.

May St. George On Yonge be a beacon of light to all those who gaze on this beautiful Cross, so majestically proclaiming the Light of Jesus Christ.

Roshni Sircar.

The Right Reverend  
ANDREW J. ASBIL  
Bishop of Toronto



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To the Clergy and People of the Diocese of Toronto -

Beloved in Christ:

It is an indication of how quickly things are changing regarding the Covid-19 pandemic that we need to update our message of earlier today.

Since this morning, the Ministry of Health of the Province of Ontario has issued directives that recommend “the immediate suspension of all large events and public gatherings of over 250 people.” In response to this, the Provincial House of Bishops has decided that the time has come to suspend public worship in the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, including the Diocese of Toronto. Please see our Metropolitan’s letter here.

Until further notice, and starting Sunday, March 15, 2020, the College of Bishops is cancelling all corporate worship and all other gatherings in our churches. Ministries of service to marginalized and disadvantaged communities may continue using the utmost care, acting consistent with the Ministry of Health directives. (Those licensees and other outside groups who do not fall under our authority may continue to utilise our spaces as agreed, provided that they too are acting consistent with the Ministry of Health directives.)

We make this decision with a heavy heart, not out of a sense of fear but in confidence that it is the right, safe and caring decision to make for the Church, and for the world, at this time.

Although we cannot gather for corporate worship, it has never been more important that we lift our prayers and praises to a merciful God, and to exercise care and charity for ourselves and our neighbours. Please continue in your personal devotions, privately and with your family, particularly on Sunday. Pray for this situation and for those most affected by it, especially the sick. Check in by telephone or email with others, particularly the isolated and vulnerable. I urge the clergy of the Diocese to provide pastoral care and support as best as you are able, using the guidelines already shared earlier.

Finally, we urge the clergy and lay leaders to facilitate worship as much as you are able using the technology available to you. There are many fine worship resources available online, and all of our liturgical texts are posted on the Anglican Church of Canada website. Please help every Anglican to feel connected to their parish family. I am planning to offer a short online service on Sunday morning; a link will be provided soon.

This has been a remarkable time in our life together. I am inspired by the caring response of all who are engaged in ministry at this time. Please continue to work to uphold the Light of Christ as we journey through this Season of Lent.

The Provincial House of Bishops and the College of Bishops for the Diocese of Toronto are continually monitoring the situation and will be communicating with you frequently in the days to come. Please keep us in your prayers.

Yours in Christ,



The Right Reverend Andrew J. Asbil  
Bishop of Toronto

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**MISSION:** To worship God and proclaim Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and to embody—in word and action—God's reconciling love, justice, compassion and liberation—through which knowledge of God's reign is extended.

## Lent and Easter at St. George on Yonge

When more information is known about when we will be able to get back to worshipping together, we will be notifying everyone by email or phone.

### A Lenten Prayer

Because temptation is woven into the fabric of our lives,  
and we know the weariness of forty days in the desert,  
and the beckoning power of sweet fruit,  
and the vain promises of the world,  
we need you, God.

Because we see the broken before the whole,  
and the half empty cup, and the unfinished task,  
and the thirst in freedom's quest,  
we need you, God.

Because we trust in what we can see,  
and we are blinded by our prejudices,  
and we do not know what we do not know,  
we need you, God.

Because our need for correctness exceeds our need for truth,  
and our excuses pre-empt the cry of the wounded,  
and our celebration of blessing is mindless of those displaced,  
we need you, God.

Because you came among us,  
and breathed into our sinewy souls,  
and healed our pain and let us wound you,  
and loved us to the end,  
and triumphed over all our hatred,  
we need you, God.

## Connecting To The World Around Us

Submitted by Doug Heyes

Here at St. George on Yonge we have the incredible opportunity to make a real connection to the community in which we are situated and to make a difference in people's lives. Our unique position here, physically on Yonge Street (not many churches can make that claim) gives us the chance to meet and connect with those around us that most other churches just dream about. That is the reason that we chose this part of the original property when we divided it and sold a portion to build our new, modern building. I was at a conference a number of years ago now where clergy in our small group discussion were literally drooling over the fact that while they were losing sleep every week trying to figure out how to draw new people through their front doors, we only had to open our doors and allow them to walk in off Yonge Street. It is of course not that easy, or simple. While we still see new people dropping in to join our services each week, we need to also give them a reason to stay. To come back again a second time and to choose to continue to worship here with us.

How do we do that? We show them a church that is warm, welcoming, and caring. It is everyone's mission, not just something that we expect our clergy to do for us, as Christians to live out our baptism promises and faith. Being a Christian does not mean coming to church every Sunday morning and 'listening' to the service. It is a call to action, to get up off your seat and do something. In that action we make a difference, we change or enhance people's lives, and let the light of Christ shine forth in the world.

A great example of this is the Community Lunch and movie held by the Community Connection team on Feb 8th. These events are held a few times a year by St George on Yonge and are well received and looked forward to by our guests. Everyone has lunch together, eating and talking with each other as one group, not a situation of 'us and them'. Many of the people who come to the lunch are also here on the 1st Tuesday of each month. They receive a gift card and are each given the opportunity to 'go shopping' among the food offering dropped off over the month by each of you. On March 3rd it was rewarding to see how much food was offered in the 'cart' last month. Keep up the great work, and remember, the more offering placed in the cart each month the more items they can each choose. Through your generous contributions and assistance, in Time, Talent, and Treasure, we can make a difference in people's lives.

A new opportunity to connect with each other and the community, for all age groups, is the start of possible 'Games' events. We have the Ping Pong table. We have some people willing to take part. All we need is a desire to join in and take part by some others to make something like this happen.

A couple of decades ago a member of the congregation told me that they stayed at St George on Yonge when they first arrived here because they believed that being a Christian meant taking action, and getting involved, to make a difference in people's lives. It meant spreading God's love and compassion to everyone, not just a chosen few. Thankfully, they are still an active and involved member of our congregation. If any of you feel that same way, please let Leonard know that you are ready to truly live out your faith.



## World Day of Prayer 2020

Submitted by Laura Pummell

The World Day of Prayer (WOP) is an international ecumenical Christian laywomen's initiative that is held in the beginning of March. The movement aims to bring together women of various races, cultures and traditions in a yearly common Day of Prayer. The goal of the World Day of Prayer is to welcome people to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. The international committee selects a nation to be highlighted each year. The service for the World Day of Prayer 2020 was written by the World Day of Prayer Zimbabwe Committee and adapted for use in Canada by The Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada. The theme for this year's service was taken from the scriptures, John 5: 2-9a, "Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk". Annually the ecumenical worship service is held at one of the participating churches within a geographic area.

On Saturday March 7<sup>th</sup>, St. George on Yonge hosted this year's service. Our WOP committee was led by Margie Lyttle and music during our service was provided by Geraldine Sperling. At noon approximately 80 people (mostly women) gathered together for fellowship and food as our event started with a luncheon in our parish hall. Our group then moved to the sanctuary for the prayer service. Readings, lessons and biblical meditation sessions were led by representatives of the various area churches. The offering of the day is remitted to the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada and will assist with grants to Canadian projects to restore hope to women touched by injustice. The whole experience resulted in a meaningful, warm, inviting event and intentionally provided all who attended an opportunity to reflect on God's love and how everyone can commit to supporting communities with actions of love, peace and reconciliation.



## Children's Ministry



While the services at the Church have been cancelled, you can access the resources for the children's program at [www.sermons4kids.com](http://www.sermons4kids.com)

## Did you know?

Single-Use Plastics – What are they?



They include plastic straws, water bottles, lids on coffee cups, plastic take out containers, plastic wrap, plastic cutlery, plastic cups and six pack rings.

Canadians send more than nine million tonnes of trash to landfill every year. More than a third is estimated to be from plastics.

Plastics and other debris are choking our oceans and waterways. It is estimated that plastic kills over 100,000 marine mammals and 1 million birds each year.

There are many ways we can reduce the use of plastic in our lives. They can be eliminated or replaced with sustainable products.

Last fall the Advisory Board decided that disposable water bottles should not be used at the church.

Whenever possible, St. George is using real cutlery and dishes for special events.

Parishioners are invited to bring their own mug for coffee hour. Place it on a table in the parish hall before coming upstairs to worship. (Label with your name)

***Now you know!***

## Black History Service Luncheon





## Shout Outs!

Hazel, for her work on the Welcome Desk and preparing bulletins.

Damiana, for suggesting a movie afternoon. Parishioners enjoyed watching the movie "Hidden Figures" on March 1 after the 10:30 service.

Geraldine, for taking excellent minutes from the Vestry Meeting.

Wilson, Edwin and Ronald – our pancake makers extraordinaire!



All those who helped at our many events in February – Community Lunch, Black History Month service and lunch, Pancake Supper



## Looking For...

People to form an Anniversary Celebration Committee

People to sit at the Welcome Desk

Someone to look after FaithWorks for this year

People who like looking through and organizing archival material

Green commitment cards from anyone who has not yet handed it in

### Staff

Priest-in-Charge	The Rev. Leonard Leader
Honorary Associate	The Rev. Canon Sister Constance Joanna Gefvert, SSJD
Assistant Curate	The Rev. Morning Wang
Organist & Director of Music	Michael Leach
Parish Administrator	Craig Gustafson
Custodians	Philip Ikhuria / Ramey (Faisal Ramme)

## Services

Sunday	8:00 a.m.	Said Eucharist (BAS 1962)
	9:00 a.m.	Mandarin Fellowship
	10:30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist (BAS)
Wednesday	12:00 noon	Worship at Midday

BAS 1962 (Book of Alternate Services) uses the 1962 rite which is the traditional language as in the BCP (Book of Common Prayer)

Mandarin Fellowship is offered in the Sanctuary. We hope our Mandarin Fellowship can be a "harbour for love," where we seek truth together, while experiencing and receiving the abundant grace of God.

衷心欢迎您来到圣乔治教会大家庭，我们的国语团契每周日上午9点举行主日聚会。

盼望国语团契可以成为一个爱的港湾，在这里我们一起寻求上帝的真理，一起经历上

帝的同在，一起领受上帝的恩典。

BAS (Book of Alternate Services) uses contemporary, inclusive-language

The next edition of the newsletter will be coming out sometime in the fall.

**Deadline** will be announced closer to the date.

Email articles to the editor: Kathy Baillie at [fambail@hotmail.com](mailto:fambail@hotmail.com)



**REMEMBER,  
EVERYONE IS WELCOME  
AT ST. GEORGE ON YONGE CHURCH**

**"To nurture our relationships with God in Christ,  
with one another, and with our community."**

**We're on the Web! See us at:  
[www.StGeorgeonYonge.ca](http://www.StGeorgeonYonge.ca)**

**5350 Yonge Street, North York**