



St. Augustine's Clarion

6110 Fulton Road
780-466-5532

November 2009

Your Rector's Musings

One of my most favourite Gospel passages is Matthew 25: 34-40. This passage has been the "root metaphor" of my ministry. It is a call to serve all people of God and holds my vision of a world where all are taken care of.

Working toward putting an end to poverty and to end homelessness is not a "pie in the sky" goal. It is and can be a reality for all of us. However, there is a need to orient ourselves as to how this can be accomplished. The Symposium which was recently held on homelessness produced some amazing statistics which debunk the four most commonly held myths about homelessness. In the past decade the count of people living in Edmonton without a home has tripled to more than 3,000 people. The numbers have increased in good economic times and in bad. The biggest myth is that HOMELESS PEOPLE CHOOSE TO BE HOMELESS to quote from Anne Smith (a symposium attendee who presented Edmonton's 10 year Plan to End Homelessness).

"Apart from a few people that might think that there is something romantic about experiencing homelessness, a reality that is quickly shattered, people experiencing homelessness have usually had some hardship befallen them. It might have been an abusive partner or a parent; loss of a job; eviction from an apartment; mental breakdown, etc. Homelessness strikes the young, the old, males and females, new Canadians and aboriginals... It could happen to any of us."

One example Anne cited was that of a typical middle class guy married with a family, a job, living in the suburbs. Tragically his 18 year old daughter was killed in a vehicle accident. The marriage, as so often happens in these situations, couldn't survive this loss. He found himself separated, he lost the house and he turned to the bottle to kill his emotional pain. He lost his job and within a two year span is on the street.

Yes, some of us would argue that he made some poor choices in dealing with his loss. I have counseled many who have encountered a similar loss and their grief is a deep pain which overpowers any personal logic, affecting appropriate choices. Did this guy purposely choose to live on the street? I think you'll agree with me that he did not.

The second myth is HOMELESSNESS HAS LITTLE IMPACT ON ME OR MY COMMUNITY.

It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking of this issue as one which is a social or humanistic one; however, there is a tremendous financial cost to homelessness. Following are a couple of examples.

- a) in severe weather a homeless person is 40 times more likely to need emergency services than the general population (surgery to remove frozen fingers and toes).

- b) Victoria, B.C. lost a major international convention due to the presence of homeless individuals on their streets.

And the list goes on.

I won't tire you with the other two myths other than to say that the arguments to end homelessness are compelling.

So what can we at St. A's do? Let's take time to educate ourselves about the issue. There will be a report published (we hope) in the next Anglican Journal. Likewise, it's available in a downloadable version from our parish office – rector@staugustinesedm.ca.

I propose that we hold small group in-home meetings during Lent to do further study of this issue.

I know our community has the resources and the capacity to fashion a response that will lead to ending homelessness. We are called in our Advent preparation to "Make Room." May God give us the grace to discern what that means for us personally and communally.

Blessings,
Bob+



Announcement!!

The Rt. Rev. Jane Alexander
will be among us on
the Fourth Sunday of Advent,
December 20, 2009
to dedicate our new Altar and
Roof.



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Fall Fiesta Fundraising Dinner and Silent Auction

Saturday November 21st 5:30 p.m.
at South East Edmonton Seniors Association
9350 – 82 Street

Tickets: \$23 Adult, \$15 Children
Bid on a Mexican Condo and many other quality items

Children's Activities
Cash Bar

Be Part of History!

The Greater Edmonton Alliance invites you to the launch of **Sustainable Works**, a new, exciting and innovative non-profit cooperative built to help lower utilities bills, create new green jobs, and reduce carbon emissions.

Join us at St. Theresa's Catholic Parish 7508 – 28 Avenue on Wed., Nov. 18 from 7:30 – 9 p.m. when GEA leaders from a range of families will be sharing what they have learned from GEA's series of pilot eco-retrofits. We will also be making substantial collective commitments, announcing exciting partnerships and detailing the strategy to retrofit thousands of homes in the Great Edmonton area in the coming years.

This is expected to be a major GEA rally. The Seniors' Care Team and the Local Foods Team will each make short presentations at this meeting. We are committing to having at least 20 people from St. Augustine's at this event.

GEA invites you to stand with us on this night. Be part of this important celebration and public action.

A New Face for Us

by Bob Peel

The sanctuary is going to have a change in personnel. The Rev. Wayne Masliuk will be with us for the next few months. He comes to us as a Vocational Deacon who is now seeking a Transitional Deacon role leading to ordination as an Anglican Priest. Our Bishop has invited us to participate in his journey.

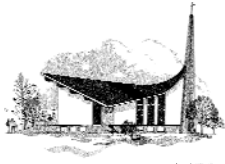
GEA is Alive and Well at St. Augustine's!

by Joe Sparling

Five members of our community took part in the very successful Diocesan "Action for Homelessness Symposium" on Saturday, October 17. GEA's lead organizer Michael Walters led the discussion periods. Our appreciation goes out to Bob Peel, who organized the entire conference, Hazel Love-McLaughlin who set up and coordinated the logistics for the meeting, and to Donna and Bill Buchanan who were active participants.

St. A's is also an active participant in the GEA Seniors' Care Team. The next meeting of this group is Tuesday, November 3rd from 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at the Catholic Pastoral Care Center, 8241 – 101 Avenue. Please plan to attend this meeting if you have attended previous meetings or if you are interested in this area of service.

GEA is currently bringing together a number of organizations working in the area of seniors care. It has become clear that the real issue here may be too many groups working in isolation, so the effort to connect a greater cross section of the community is being made to find common issues and strategies. Basically we are raking up a bunch of small fires into one big bonfire.



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It is an honour to be asked to help Wayne in his shift toward ordination. Please welcome him warmly as his first Sunday with us will be November 8th.

The sanctuary is also going to change furniture-wise. We have received the gift of a new oak altar. The new altar will be dedicated by our bishop, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Jane Alexander on Sunday December 20th (Advent 4). This gift is given to the glory of God and in memory of Morris Wilson by his family. Please try to be with us this Sunday as we have our Bishop among us.



Introducing Wayne Masliuk

Wayne is currently pursuing his M. Div. through Newman Theological College. He has been involved in various churches during his youth, including Catholic, eastern Orthodox and evangelical/Pentecostal and has been a Christian since the age of 13. He has always been involved in various church activities and groups.

Wayne has been married to his lovely wife, Diane for 26 years. They are the proud parents of 22 year old twins Brian and Kimberly.

He is involved in the International Order of St. Luke the Physician Healing Ministries, the VP of the Canadian Board of Directors, the Chairperson of the Directorate for Alberta, the Chaplain for North Central Alberta and Area Director for North Central Alberta.

In his "day job" with Hewlett-Packard, Wayne is an Escalation Manager who deals with high level crisis situations involving financial institutions, defense departments and telecommunications providers in Canada, the USA and various NATO countries. He assisted in the 9/11 disaster recovery efforts. He has worked at this job for 28 years.

Welcome to our community Wayne!



Families with Young Children

Please mark your calendars for December 6th. The 10 a.m. Service will be our Christmas Pageant. We have a visiting 60 voice Youth Choir from Mills Haven Elementary School and there's a pizza lunch to follow. I hear that St. Nicholas may also be here and you know what that means (treats).



Learning Opportunities for Exploring Faith by Val McCormack

First Light Program
Featuring John Dominic Crossan
and Marcus Borg
Monday Evenings 7:00-9:00

This is a 12 part DVD and discussion based study of the historical Jesus and the Kingdom of God with two of the world's leading Jesus scholars on location throughout Galilee and Jerusalem.

You can still be part of this group. Contact Val McCormack at 780-410-1571.

After Church Interest Groups Next Meeting Sun. Nov. 22

Once a month following our worship service we gather in the lower lounge to learn more about topics of interest to our congregation.



Advent Outreach

Our theme for Advent this year is "Make Room." The outreach focus is for donations to "No Room in the Inn" and/or contributions of new winter wear for the Bissell Centre.



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H1N1 Response

Our community's H1N1 response was fashioned at the Congregational Meeting held on October 3rd. It is as follows.

Respecting our neighbour and following the commandment of loving our neighbour, it has been decided and adopted that we will observe the health guideline directives and avoid points of transmission for the virus.

This means:

1. Sharing the Peace will be done through eye contact and spoken word. Hugging, kissing and handshakes are discouraged for the time being.
2. The Administration of Eucharist will be in one kind using wafers. Kneeling to receive is discouraged as hand contact with the Altar Rail is a transmission point.
3. Preparation of sacred vessels for the administration of the host will necessitate observing clinical practices.
4. People who are feeling ill are encouraged to remain at home.

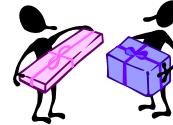


Reaching out to the Folks Next Door Contributed by Sandy VanRiper

At the congregational meeting held October 3 to discuss the shape of Outreach at St. Augustine's, one of the unanimous results was the decision to reach out to the folks who use our old church hall, Iglesia Evangelica Mennonita. Sometimes, we refer to them as the "Spanish Church". For me, the fact that we have shared this close-in-space relationship has meant several things. In the days when I would spend time at the only copier we had in the church office copying things for Sunday School lessons, I used to listen to the music that was being practiced and used for worship. Always a lovely soundscape for the work.

And just this past June, a number of those folks dropped by during the Grandmothers to Grandmothers garage sale we had in our church basement and I heard the lovely stream of Spanish and English that flowed around the room. This leads me back to a couple of the ideas we discussed on October 3. The Puerto Vallarta condo week contributed the theme for our fundraising dinner in November and it seems a great reason to reach out to our Spanish speaking renters. We want to invite them to participate with us in some form of ecumenical work and

fellowship. We have invited them to attend the Fiesta (in Spanish a feminine noun that means holiday or feast day). Draw the circle wide.



Stewardship Sundays

Our Stewardship Sundays are November 8th and 15th this year. Please, as usual, thoughtfully consider your response to the letter and commitment page enclosed with this newsletter.

Margaret Mead said, "A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

In a letter from Miles Berry about the new roof he says...

"I am writing applaud a tremendous achievement: reconstruction of St . Augustine's bright and beautiful, new energy efficient steel roof. This has been a remarkable transformation where the quality of building materials is clearly evident.

"As a long time resident of the area, I've always admired the unique architecture and neighbourhood focus your church offers to the community. Its restored brilliance is a clear proclamation of faith, a labour of love and thoughtful stewardship that reminds us all of God's presence and permanence."