



# The Church of St. John the Evangelist, Kitchener

# ON EAGLE'S WINGS

February 28, 2021

Available online at [StJohn316.com/OEW](http://StJohn316.com/OEW)

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## **Liberal Arts Education: breadth of thinking and mental agility**

*Elaine Duncanson.*

Yesterday, I joined a zoom meeting with Dr. Barry Craig, President of Huron University College in London Ontario. His invitation said he had been thinking about the future of this fine institution and wanted to discuss his ideas with the alumni. I knew him from Fredericton where he, as an Anglican priest, became Vice President (Academic and Research) at St. Thomas University, a Catholic institution.

On occasion, he would share an Advent or Lent series with Bishop Bill Hockin. It astounded a number of people that a couple of clergy could attract a crowd of 150 or more on a weekday at lunchtime in a downtown venue where parking was a problem. That is where I first learned about the painter Caravaggio – 1571 – 1610. He was one of Dr. Craig's interests and the details of one of his paintings were the starting point of the talk that day.

When I heard that Huron had a new president, I stared at the name in disbelief. I had to find visual evidence for truly, seeing is believing. Now my alma mater has the benefit of his innovative thinking. Some of his ideas sound a bit goofy out of context but he made a quick connection to students, faculty and alumni with them. His current idea is solidly backed by experience gained in Fredericton and in discussions with other academic administrators.

Apparently, across the continent, liberal arts colleges are in trouble. Some have gone bankrupt, some have closed their doors due to falling enrolment, some have stopped teaching history and literature and turned to physiotherapy and nursing. A number of administrators have turned to international students as a cash cow to save their college and make the bottom line black.

At Huron, international students are welcomed for the new perspectives they bring. There is an association for Indian students and one for Asian students. They have cultural events that are attended by a great mix of people. They contribute their understanding of the human experience in the classroom which will sometimes startle or challenge Canadian students.

When Dr. Craig arrived at Huron July 1, 2016, the Freshman class had been chosen and the next class was being targeted with the same marketing strategy. There was nothing he could do to change the trajectory and enrolment was falling. Sharply. For 2018 a new strategy was in place, the 'Huron story' was being presented to show the value of a liberal arts education and enrolment more than doubled. Students were offered small classes that were taught by professors, not TAs. The profs knew each student by name and were accessible out of class hours and for more than just formal 'office hours'.

Each year since the enrolment has climbed until the student body reached 1200 to 1300 in Arts and Theology. Students are being prepared to be leaders. Some people wonder what a liberal arts degree prepares the student for in the real world. Well, Sobey's, Wealth

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Simple, Brookfield Asset Management, Loblaw's, and Rogers Communications can answer that. All of those companies have Huron grads at or near the top of their organization. Every piece of mail I received from Huron talked of "Leading with Heart" which was the theme for the students to think how their class work could be applied outside in required volunteer work and other aspects of the community.

When I have talked to Huron students they have been bright, articulate, full of interesting stories about their studies and their professors. On my last visit the young woman who was giving me a tour told me in detail about a course in children's literature she was taking. Wow! I wish I could go back again except I rarely did well in exams. She had not read Harry Potter so I told her enough to whet her appetite and tried to relate my spiel to what she was learning in her course. We both enjoyed the conversation.

Before beginning the zoom meeting, Dr. Craig told us that one of the hardworking alumnae had died. As he talked I kept thinking 'no, not her!' but it was my friend Bev. In my last year the big project was a real residence for women students. Until then it had been three small residences with ten to twelve students each and the rest were 'out students'.

Once a year there was the glorious women's edition of the Huron Times. Bev was Head Girl and called a meeting to prepare our issue. No one volunteered to write the feature article about the new residence so she turned to me and said: "Elaine, you do it." When I finally got out of panic mode and the deadline was upon me, I went out and talked to someone with a white hard hat who explained and showed enough for me to put something coherent together. When I met Bev once again in 2013 I reminded her about the incident and we had a good laugh.

There were interesting students at Huron in my day and plenty of them now. The questions that were asked during our zoom meeting showed some hesitation about the new idea but generally interest and acceptance. I could see the experience gained at St. Thomas University and the hard data in the graphs painted a clear picture of progress and stability. I wanted to check a few details and found an article by Dr. Craig which gave me the subtitle above. It also contains the details of the illustrious grads but my laptop is playing games with me so I can not be more precise.

With innovative ideas and support from students, alumni, and the community, Huron University College is looking with optimism to in-person classes in the fall and with assurance to a solid and stable future.

## Altar Flowers

*Enid Emery*

We are in the season of Lent when we do not need flowers for the Altar. However, I have completed the list of donors for the remainder of the year and we have quite a number of Sundays which are still open. If anyone is considering putting flowers on the Altar in memory of a friend or family member, please let me know. I can be reached at 519-896-0637 or by e-mail: [davidemery@rogers.com](mailto:davidemery@rogers.com).



## Faith Climate Justice Waterloo

*Kathleen Kett*



The Covid-19 pandemic has given many of us time to review what is important in our lives. My sister had been prodding me to be more active in advocating for climate justice for some time—she would send me emails of events that she felt were important. She is very involved with the 50 by 30 Waterloo organization “for her children and grandchildren”. This group sponsored an event on climate justice with another local group, Faith Climate Justice Waterloo which I did attend on line.

Since then I have been looking into Faith Climate Justice Waterloo—an organization started by our Mennonite neighbours. It has become a growing collective of faith communities in Waterloo region who are deeply concerned about both the climate crisis and recovering justly from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The original group felt compelled to reach out to other faith communities so that more effective work could be done together rather than as individuals—work together to advocate for a sustainable, low carbon local economy that generates prosperity for all—work to bring a faith perspective to the conversation while working with other local organizations to present a vision to our local governments and ask them to act.

They are now asking other faith communities to join them.

Is the Church of St. John the Evangelist ready to come to the plate? Are there others who feel that the time is now to work with other faith communities in speaking out about these issues and work to transition our Region to a sustainable future that is more equitable for everyone?

Please if there is interest, email me at [kluscott@gmail.com](mailto:kluscott@gmail.com). If there is interest, we can bring this forward to parish council and have a more definite plan of action.

## Reclaiming faith and heritage

*Tiana Gocan —Reprinted from St Luke's Faithful News—Feb 15, 2021*

Growing up, I didn't recognize my identity. Although I felt a strong connection to my Jamaican culture, I didn't see myself as Black. Perhaps this partially has to do with the fact that as someone who is mixed, I struggled a lot with not feeling "Black" enough. Furthermore, no one really ever made a point of pointing out my race to me, neither positively or negatively. Then, as high school started, I'd get called 'the whitest Black girl'; a term which I accepted, simply because I didn't realize how harmful this was. When I accepted this title, I was invalidating my own Blackness, and therefore, invalidating a part of my identity.

It wasn't until I went to university that I started to take pride in my Blackness. Part of this came from being invalidated that I wasn't "Caribbean enough" by a school club, another part came from the Black Lives Matter movement picking up steam, and also in part because I took a DNA test (which revealed that I most likely have ancestors from West Africa, where many people were enslaved during the Atlantic slave trade). These events helped me become comfortable identifying as a Black woman.

Throughout this time of self-discovery, I also found myself coming back to my faith. I was raised Christian, but like my racial identity, I never really thought about it or was intentional with it. Recently, I felt a desire to return to the Church. I've been blessed to find a wonderful Parish that I can call home, and have been involved in several projects, groups and communities there. I have come to learn that (at both at my home church and in the Diocese) my voice as a 24 year old Black female is crucial, and because of this, I've been speaking up. Furthermore, it has challenged me to start my own discernment journey about where God might be calling me to use the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given me. I know that I have the support of both lay people and clergy in my attempts to make the Church a better, more inclusive space for BIPOC people, especially BIPOC young adults, such as myself. I feel this passion and this fire burning in my soul for justice, reconciliation, peace and restoration both in the Diocese of Huron and beyond.

There is one lyric in Beyonce's "Brown Skin Girl" which gives me chills every single time I hear it. It goes... "Same skin that was broken be the same skin takin' over". This line impacts me because I believe that some of my ancestors way way back on my father's side were enslaved (I say "I believe" because, unfortunately, those who knew this history have passed away and there is no way to track these ancestors accurately). That legacy of broken skin, trauma and pain from those who were enslaved has been passed down throughout many generations to me, however, I now get to live in an age where being Black is beautiful, celebrated and respected. I can feel my Black ancestors beam with pride and cry tears of joy in Heaven at this most blessed turn of events. This journey of reclaiming my heritage and my faith has enlightened me and made me the happiest I've ever been, and I'm honoured to be included in this project.



## To Lent or Not to Lent? A Personal Confession

*Charles Stuart*

I love the season of Lent.

A confession of enthusiasm for the season of sackcloth and ashes may not be politically – or is that canonically? – correct. It might betray a fundamental misconception on my part of what Lent is actually all about, or should be about. Perhaps what appeals to me is the form of Lent rather than the meaning, the actions rather than their significance. It is possible that my stated affection for Lent is to miss the point from the outset. In fact, it occurs to me that everything you're about to read, should you choose to continue reading it, may demonstrate nothing more than my capacity for error, misconstruction, and simple inattentiveness when it comes to matters of faith and religious practice.

No matter. I've got to do Lent, and I've got to do it big.

Lent would not seem to be the most congruous Christian season for someone like me. Scriptural study and prayer? As a surface skimmer, the deep dive into biblical text and reflection is a hard slog. Fasting? I'm a gourmand: I don't eat to live, I live to eat, and I'd like seconds, please. Penitence? I'm down with confession and such public expressions of repentance, but six weeks seems a bit much. Almsgiving? Good luck cracking open these miserly clenched fists for change.

Lent is like opposite day, but times forty: I don't overeat, I fast; I don't procrastinate on my intention to read scripture, I actually get down to it; I don't wait for Sunday to pray, but I pray daily. These things that seem practically impossible during most of the year quickly become woven into the fabric of life during Lent. Perhaps the conventions of the season give licence to make a priority of what are not usually primary concerns during the busy week.

There is an intensity to devotional life during Lent that is certainly not matched by any other part of the year. I would go so far as to say that, at times, my usual Anglican reserve succumbs to an element of fervour; indeed, I have experienced moments during Holy Week that verged frighteningly on the ecstatic. There is at times a heightened sense of the numinous and the transcendent during these weeks, or there can be. These moments are immensely gratifying. And as mysteriously as this spirit can materialize, after Easter it ebbs away, abruptly and inevitably.

My devotion to Lenten devotion was not always thus. In fact, most of my life has been lived in blissful ignorance of it. But since I've embraced it, I've found it hard to let go. Maybe I'm just making up for lost time.

It wasn't until I became a congregant at St. John's that Lent became a defining part of the year. Although a cradle Anglican, I don't remember my parents acknowledging the season in any particular way. As an avid reader, I must have encountered references to Lent in literature, but I probably skimmed the passages quickly and without curiosity.

## Used Postage Stamps

*Enid Emery*

Please remember to save all the postage stamps you receive on letters or cards. For many years these have been collected by the A.C.W. and sent to the Canadian Leprosy Mission, re-named "effect hope". It would be appreciated if you could trim the paper around the stamps to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch. Stamps may be saved until we are back in person, or placed in an envelope marked "stamps" and pushed through the church mail slot.



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My first real encounter with this, to me, obscure Christian practice occurred decades later. One Sunday at St. John's eight or nine years ago I was intrigued to overhear my fellow congregants discussing their intentions for Lent – their fasts or abstentions, their more focused reading of scripture and intentional prayer, their involvement in a Lenten study group. My curiosity was aroused. I wanted to be in on this Lent business, too. But what was it all about, really? I would need to learn more.

The search for knowledge and enlightenment took me, predictably, to Wikipedia and various Anglican sites as well as a couple of Roman Catholic web pages. I accelerated from Lenten ignoramus to informed know-it-all in no time (much to the irritation of my family and at the expense of my small talk from February through to April). I was eager to try out the life of temporary, small-scale piety and renunciation.

During my first observed Lent I took up the practices of partial fasting (two small meals, one regular, no snacking); abstaining from red meat; daily prayer and scripture reading; and sometimes further reading in theology or church history. I have observed Lent the same way ever since, although I have augmented these practices with participation at times in Lenten study at St. John's and compline services at St. Andrew's. Over the past three years Lent Madness has become an entertaining, and informative, feature of the season. This year I am also participating in an online Zoom course on Anglican Church history through the Montreal Dio. (The Anglican Church of Canada website is chock-full of Lenten activities.)

During the ten months I lived in Brussels with my wife and kids in 2017–18, I wondered whether I would observe Lent quite so closely. For instance, how could I possibly fast, even partially, when I was living around the corner from a *boulangerie/pâtisserie* with its buttery croissants and rich macarons? Effortlessly, as it turned out.

I faced a similar question this year. I was fifty-nine during Lent 2020. The sources I have consulted concur that that is the last year during which one might consider observance of Lent an obligation. Did this mean that my time as a Lenten devotee was now past? As a sixty-year-old whose sixty-first birthday is fast approaching, should I pack it in?

The idea of being excused from the rigours of Lent was tempting. But I couldn't break the habit. Anyway, I figured the age rule must have come from a time when most people didn't live to celebrate their fortieth birthday let alone their sixtieth and were probably in less than robust health if they did.

So, to Lent? Yes, most emphatically. And for many years to come, God willing.

## My Pandemic Bubble

Brian Hendley

As we continue to struggle with trying to stop the spread of cover-19, we find ourselves creating our individual pandemic bubbles. For me, my bubble includes my wife and a select few friends in our condo that have already had their vaccine shots or have been safely isolating. Sadly, this means we can't see our grandkids in person, though the occasional Zoom meeting tries to fill that gap. When our grandson Sam turned 11, we drove to Guelph, parked outside his house, and flashed a large "Happy Birthday Sam" and gingerly handed him a present and a bunch of helium-filled balloons.

On a day to day basis, I do say hello to fellow masked folks on the condo elevator, or others taking their regular walks around the neighbourhood. We shop every other week at Zehr's and I make regular trips for essential supplies to the nearby LCBO store. There I usually find a slim, somewhat haggard man in his 40 or 50's, standing respectfully distant from the entrance, with a small cardboard box at his feet displaying an assortment of small change. I've taken to dropping in some quarters as I pass him by and he always smiles and politely thanks me. Sometimes we also exchange a few remarks on the weather.

I've found that I look forward to our brief encounters and even save up my quarters for the occasion. For the past two weeks, however, he hasn't been there. This I find quite concerning. Has he taken ill? Is it now too cold to stand outside? Who is he anyway? Could I have truly helped him if I knew his personal story? This in turn made me reflect on how we all have our own bubbles, pandemic or not. People asking for money on our streets are all too commonplace. "Feel-good" small donations may assuage our consciences for the moment, but really do little to deal with the problem. Even sending off a check to some social relief agency is to stay comfortable in our social bubbles.

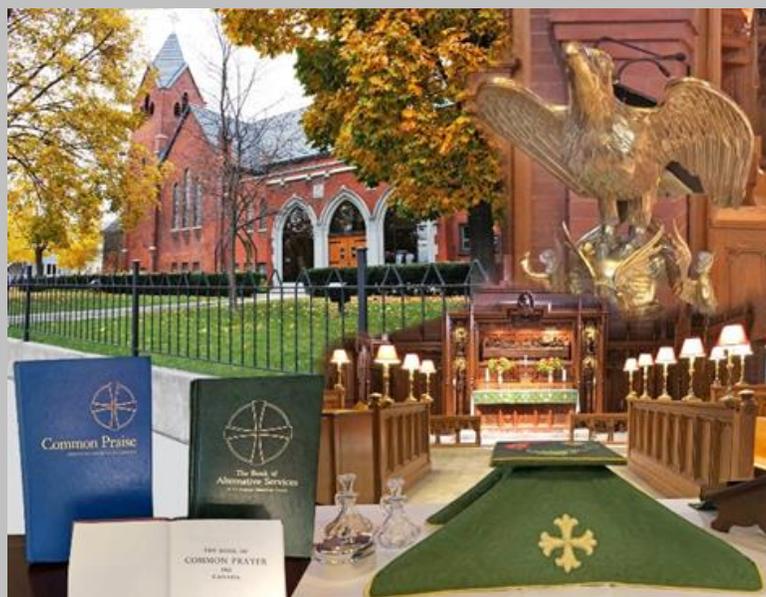
I guess the message that Jesus gives us is to try to connect, in person, and do what we can to help those in need. Never an easy task and not part of our usual Anglican sense of personal space and identity. I'll keep looking for my man outside the LCBO and hope that next time I'll have the guts to try to bring him into my bubble.

## St. John's Note Card

Jennifer Uttley

St. John's ACW has a new hasty note as shown in the image. The collage shows the exterior of the church, the chancel, service books and the eagle. Use them as thank you notes or to send a note of encouragement to you haven't seen in a while.

A package of 5 for \$10 can be purchased from St. John's ACW by email [acw@stjohn316.com](mailto:acw@stjohn316.com) or by calling Jennifer Uttley (519-578-6052).



## From the Refugee Committee

*Syd Reginato*

### NEWS FROM OUR NEWCOMER FAMILY (Esperance, James, Cedric (9) and Ariane (7) Behavu):

- The Behavus are thrilled to have been given a free, nearly-new king-size bed from Sleep Country's Beds for Charity program. Sleep Country has donated many beds to The Working Centre and various other local organizations and people in need over the years. THANK YOU SLEEP COUNTRY!
- Pregnant with twins, Esperance's due date is April 18. As at the third week in February, the babies weigh a total of 10 pounds! Esperance is receiving excellent physical, emotional and practical care from her Obstetrician, who is a specialist in multiple births. Pray for Esperance's continuing good health and the safe delivery of two healthy babies, and that she will receive the help she needs after their birth. (If anyone would like to reach out to this lovely, hard-working family, contact Ann Coughlin, Dave Whitfield or Syd Reginato.)
- The family recently purchased a 2014 Dodge Journey SUV - their very first vehicle!
- James continues to enjoy his full-time work at Permacon in Cambridge, while Esperance is taking a bit of a break from sewing for her successful international fashion and design business. She will return to being the head designer and tailor when she is able. Check out her website below - it'll take your breath away!

[esperanzafashiondesign.wordpress.com](http://esperanzafashiondesign.wordpress.com)

In 2019 BBC News Africa wrote, "Tabisha from DR Congo didn't allow life as a refugee to dim her goals of becoming the 'biggest fashion designer in Kakuma.' She's made a name for herself at Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya and dreams of dressing celebs like Yemi Alade with her stunning designs."

On her upbeat, colourful website you'll see her gorgeous fashions modelled by herself, her family and others, and hear that she journeyed from her home in Congo to Kakuma Refugee Camp after she was separated from her family due to an insecurity. Her website is a must-see, and will make you proud to be a part of this remarkable family's continuing Journey.

## Bales

*Rosemary Cliff*

I am very happy to tell you that the Bales project is to go ahead with delivery to Home Hardware on March 17<sup>th</sup> for shipping to Kenora. As before, we are looking for donations of clean, gently used clothing, as well as boots.

To make life easier for you during this pandemic we will come and collect your donations directly from your home on either Wednesday March 3 or Wednesday March 10 between 10:00 a.m. and 12 noon and would appreciate your putting your donations in bags/boxes.

Please e-mail the church at [acw@stjohn316.com](mailto:acw@stjohn316.com) if you are able to make a donation and state which day you would like your donation to be picked up. If neither of these days/times work for you please let us know in your e-mail. If you need to speak to a member of the team please call Rosemary Cliff at 519.578.4405.

