

Dear Friend of the Cathedral,

I expect most of you are aware that this is Black History Month featuring all kinds of plays, music and exhibitions around town telling the often forgotten history of Black People in Montreal.

If you look at the stained glass windows in the cathedral you will see that only one of them (near the baptistry) features a black person – and he is a slave whose shackles are being removed. Unlike our present congregation the cathedral parishioners were monolithically white in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when the windows were installed. The parish records from the second half of the 18th century mention slaves, some of whom would have been black, some Indigenous people. For example. “York Thomas & Margaret McCloud, both negroes, were married by leave of their respective owners the 22nd January 1786.” We should certainly try to become more aware of the history of the black community in Montreal, and this month is a good time to explore the past.

ESJAG (The Ecological and Social Justice action Group) has been sensitizing us to the issues concerning First Nations people, particularly the problems caused by the residential school system. The Segal Centre's current production, Children of God, is a very moving play about one particular family whose children were forced into a residential school. The playwright, director and most of the actors have an indigenous heritage. I urge you to see it if you can. Unfortunately, the last performance is February 10th, so you'll have to act fast.

Thank you to Gabrielle Boyd for an excellent presentation last Sunday about the challenges and solutions to keeping a plastic-free kitchen. ESJAG is planning some follow-up sessions. The fair trade kiosk on this Sunday February 10th at noon will be selling the beeswax reusable food savers Gabrielle mentioned, \$20 tax included for a box of 3. The kiosk will also feature a selection of fair trade Valentine's Day chocolate from Chocomotive in Montebello. Quantities will be limited.

Fair trade hot chocolate and candles, music and art, displays and a selfie station – Le moment est arrivé – I hope these phrases evoke the cathedral's participation in Nuit blanche, the evening of Saturday, March 2. Make sure you come and enjoy the fun, and, if you can, volunteer your help for an hour or so. Carlos is looking for volunteers to make or serve hot chocolate for two hour stretches starting at 4:30 pm to make the drink. Serving hot chocolate will start at 6:00 pm. We usually run out by 10:00 pm! Cassidy is signing people up to help count the number of visitors, greeters and security people who will keep an eye on the exhibitions in the chapel and baptistry. The first shift is from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm and changes every two hours until 1:00 am! You can email [ann.elbourne@montrealcathedral.ca](mailto:ann.elbourne@montrealcathedral.ca) if you would like to volunteer and I'll pass your name on to Cassidy.

In the past, during Nuit blanche, a shuttle bus along Ste Catherine has always stopped in front of the cathedral. It is a little disconcerting to discover that Ste Catherine will be closed to vehicles (not pedestrians) starting this Monday, February 11 and lasting until May. It is predicted that work will be happening 18 hours a day each weekday and possibly the full 24 hours on Sundays and holidays.

LGBTQ+ Ministry at the Cathedral: Please join Donald after the 10:30 am service in the side chapel for an important discussion on the future of the Cathedral's LGBTQ+ ministry. This has been a core outreach for many years at the Cathedral.

#### Baptism, Confirmation, Reception and Renewal of Baptismal Vows

If you would like to have a conversation about being baptized, confirmed, received into the Anglican Church or to renew your baptismal vows at the Easter Vigil please speak to or email Rev'd Amy Hamilton.

If you are feeling the need for a quiet day to meditate, pray and reflect, speak to Vivian Lewin or write to [quiet.day.ccc@gmail.com](mailto:quiet.day.ccc@gmail.com). Fr Paul Geraghty will provide short talks, in a beautiful meditation space at Rivercross near Cowansville. Please reserve your place by February 15 to help us plan. Will you need/ can you offer/ a ride?

The English bible study group will reconvene on Wednesday, February 13 at 7:30 pm at Ann's house. Jane will lead a study of St Peter's epistles. Please email [ann.elbourne@montrealcathedral.ca](mailto:ann.elbourne@montrealcathedral.ca) or [administrator@montrealcathedral.ca](mailto:administrator@montrealcathedral.ca) for the address. Please note I'm only in the office Tuesday and Thursday.

Forum will meet on Tuesday February 19. January's meeting was cancelled because of a snow storm, so let's pray for better weather in February.

The reading group was also cancelled in January due to the weather. It will meet at Helen's house on Sunday, February 25 to discuss Leah's Shadow by Claire Rothman.

There will be a special Evensong Memorial service on February 17 at 4:00 pm to celebrate the life of Bob Gibson, a long time member of the Cathedral choirs.

Edward Yankie has embarked on an ambitious project to make the cathedral building as clean as it is beautiful. He is inviting volunteers to join him on the first Saturday of alternate months. The next work crew will wash and polish on April 6th (a week before Palm Sunday) from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm.

It seems as if this letter has been full of challenges – and certainly the weather has been a challenge too, so perhaps it's a good moment to remind ourselves of the serenity prayer written by Reinhold Niebuhr

*God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference.*

*Living one day at a time;  
Enjoying one moment at a time;  
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace.*

*Taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it;  
Trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His Will;  
That I may be reasonably happy in this life  
and supremely happy with Him Forever. Amen.*

Ann Elbourne  
February 7, 2019