

A message from Dean

Dear all

As you know, the government of Québec announced new measures for the province with regards to COVID prevention.

While there are some unclarities about the treatment of religious buildings such as the Cathedral which are being followed up with the Government, I regret to have to announce that the Cathedral building will be closed for in person worship and private prayer from this Saturday 9 January until 8 February 2021. Our services will continue on Zoom as per the existing schedule. Evensong will be suspended during that time. As of Sunday, the offering of the Eucharist will no longer be permitted, and therefore we will return to the form of service of the Word which we used until November until the end of this lockdown.

It may be hard to discern the movement of God in all of this, but I trust that as we go through these challenges together, we will grow stronger as a community of faith. Should you have any pastoral issues or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our clergy and lay leaders.

With love and prayers,
Bertrand

Dear Friend of the Cathedral

Well, here we are again in another lockdown which will prevent us having in person services in the cathedral for the next four weeks.

However, we have good memories of the hybrid Advent and Christmas services. It was lovely to see the beautifully decorated church and our clergy celebrating the Eucharist there.



The music provided by Jonathan, Nick and the choir during this season has also been beautiful. You might enjoy this snippet of Jonathan being interviewed on CBC by Sarah Leavitt (daughter of parishioner Ralph) https://youtu.be/o7_mk-dyO9c The section on the Cathedral includes a shot of Angèle singing during a service in Montreal and Jonathan playing his organ in Oxford.

You can hear Jonathan's compilation of **music offered at Advent and Christmas services** here:

<https://www.montrealcathedral.ca/2021/01/advent-christmas-music-from-christ-church-cathedral/>.

It's a wonderful collection with commentary by Jonathan about the pieces being sung. It's great fun to be wished a merry Christmas by singers holding cats, babies and children. A particularly touching piece is Blake's Cradle Song, set to music by Ralph Vaughan-Williams, sung by Anna holding her tiny baby. In his introduction Jonathan wrote *The tracks ... represent many cumulative musician hours in practising, recording, and production, and we are enormously grateful to all the Cathedral musicians for their exceptional hard work, dedication, and talent in making Christmas 2020 the liturgical celebration that it was.* A huge thank you from all of us to Jonathan and the choir, and also the clergy and all who contributed to our liturgies, and the vergers who spend many hours maintaining the building safe, beautiful and hospitable.

The Sunday after Christmas, Adrian and his team provided the usual **end of the month lunch** for people in need. Here's his letter describing the event

I was quite concerned that our numbers would be down this month since I found both The Open Door and St. Michaels' Mission were closed when I went by with fliers.

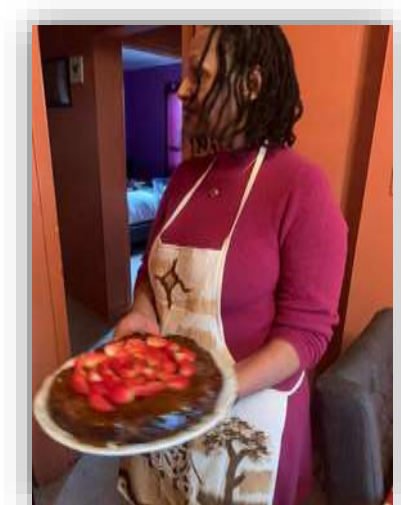
Despite this we had over 50 people come by. John made Salisbury steak with carrots, potatoes and thick gravy. Vivian made up her delicious vegetarian quiches. Donna and I went by Peggy's on Saturday to pick up several shopping bags full of her famous cookies and squares. John spotted charming little red bags in a local dollar store last week which Deborah and Carol Manning had much fun stuffing with Peggy's desserts. In response to Deborah's request for Christmas and Holiday greeting cards Mary Sue Gibson contacted a former colleague at Miss Edgar and Miss Cramp's School to ask her class of grade three girls to make them up. The result was heart warming and delightful. Rather than put these in the bags with the food I gave them out individually. I was quite touched with the response. So many of them were so grateful to receive a card. Something small can mean so much. Our lunch was generously sponsored by a Selwyn House School parent. Next month it will be sponsored by Selwyn House School.



John and Adrian

The next end of the month lunch is in January when the Social Service Society hopes to distribute **warm socks** to all the guests. Since it's not possible to bring socks to the Cathedral, the Social Service Society is collecting money with which to buy socks. Janet writes "If you can help us, please send a donation to the Cathedral, by cheque or e-transfer, c/o the Social Service Society - nothing is too small. Can you picture yourself wearing the same socks day and night in snowy streets without being able to wash and dry them at night?" Mark your donation For Socks.

I wonder how many of you made a **Christmas cake** using the gluten-free vegan recipe demonstrated so charmingly by Bertrand and Gabrielle? My family gave a big thumbs up to my cake, and so did a friend who joined me in my backyard on Christmas Day for a slice of cake and a mug of mulled wine. Spes sent us this picture of herself holding her cake.





As always, the Cathedral is a busy place at the start of the New Year.

Our treasurer Jane has to **prepare a budget for the year**, and she needs our help to take it out of the realm of guesswork. You can do this by making a pledge for 2021 – soon please. Thank you to people who have already pledged and special thank you to PAR supporters who make life much easier for the bookkeeper.

You can find several ways to contribute financial support along with pledge forms on the website here <https://www.montrealcathedral.ca/your-financial-support-of-the-cathedral/>

I'm sure we all realise that the Cathedral's finances normally rely heavily on donations from visitors and tourists, which of course are not possible at the moment, so it's up to us to make a special effort to keep our ministries afloat. One thing you can do is donate a picture of flowers as a memorial or a thanksgiving to be included in the newsletter along with your message. Contact me, Elizabeth, Vera or Rob.

Elizabeth, our administrator is facing the huge task of putting together the **Annual Report**. She needs contributions from anyone who was in charge of a ministry or an event last year by January 27.



January events

1. This coming Tuesday, the 12th, our monthly online **Contemplative Prayer group** will meet at 6:00. Vivian Lewin will be leading us in a meditation on New Beginnings. No experience is necessary. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84034989612>
2. January 16: Reflection Day for Immigrants & descendants of immigrants. 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 pm via Zoom: **Called to Journey: Discovering our Sacred Stories**
"As people with an immigrant past, our stories are very much rooted in journey. Come explore together the impact of that journey in our lives and discern our response to God's ongoing invitation." The day includes Ignatian prayer with time for reflection, live music, conversation in small groups, and Mass. Suggested freewill offering \$25.
To register, contact dinaamicone64@gmail.com or vitaclewis@gmail.com.
3. January 19: **Forum** meets on zoom at 5 pm to discuss important Cathedral matters.
4. Monday Jan 18 to Monday Jan 25, **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

*Abide in my love
and you shall bear much fruit (Jn 15,5-9)*

Dr Adrian Bara, Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism invites you to a service on Sunday, January 24, 2021, at 3:00pm via Zoom or Youtube. Registration can be found on their website: www.oikoumene.ca/eceive.



5. Jan 16, à 16h30 : Prochaine rencontre du **groupe de lecture français**. Le prochain livre est: *La Symphonie Pastorale* d'André Gide.
6. January 31, at 7 pm, the **English Book Group** will discuss *The Jane Austen Society* by Natalie Jenner. This book was on CBC's list of best Canadian fiction 2020. One hundred and fifty years ago, Chawton was the final home of Jane Austen, one of England's finest novelists. Now it's home to a few distant relatives and their diminishing estate. With the last bit of Austen's legacy threatened, a group of disparate individuals come together to preserve both Jane Austen's home and her legacy.

Around the parish

The celebration of Catherine Riley's 100th birthday was a delight. Catherine has been seen at all the zoom services since then with balloons behind her chair. The final word of congratulations goes to Marilyn Williams who has a theory about Catherine's long life.



"I believe I've solved the mystery of Mrs. Riley's longevity," she writes. "She never passed up the opportunity to grab & pull the rope in the tug-of-war at parish picnics, even when she was in her eighties! I think we should restore this exercise once Covid is over."

There are several new babies in the Cathedral congregation. Here are pictures of Greg, Amy, Saoirse and Bowie the cat. Amy says "Our household pretty much revolves around our cat, Bowie. He is quite placid and is like a plush toy. He can be carried around and is what comforts all of us in times of sadness or anxiety" We look forward to seeing a picture of Saoirse's brothers in a later letter.



Greg and Amy, both holding Bowie and Saoirse

I'm sure all the readers of this letter are longing to see each other in person again, shake hands at the peace and drink a convivial cup of coffee accompanied by Peggy's cake, but meanwhile, we're patient and hopeful. There's an interesting **meditation about masks on this Jesuit website** which can be offered as a prayer <https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/coronavirus-prayers>

Please help us to stay a connected and loving community in this second devastating wave of the pandemic. Share your thoughts, your prayers, your poems and your lockdown pictures as an offering in the newsletter.



*"Hope" is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -"*
Emily Dickinson

Happy Epiphany Season
Ann Elbourne,
with thanks to Elizabeth and contributors to this letter
January 8, 2021