

Dear Friend of the Cathedral



Candles in the Church of the Nativity Bethlehem

We will be observing Candlemas this Sunday, blessing candles and remembering how the Infant Jesus was presented in the temple. This is the hinge between Christmas and Easter when we pivot from celebrating the birth of Christ, and the revelations of the Epiphany season, to a solemn remembrance of his Crucifixion and Resurrection. The service this Sunday will again be on zoom, but we are happy to note that churches can reopen on February 7. Please have a candle and matches ready so you can participate online when candles will be blessed at the end of the service while the celebrant

prays for the darkness of our souls to be dispelled.

The Gospel will remind us of the joy felt by Simeon and Anna when they held the infant Jesus in their arms. The music for Evensong Sunday afternoon will also reflect on the story of the presentation with music by William Byrd. The words of the anthem *Senex Puerum* start: An old man carried the child, / yet the child ruled the old man.



Fra Angelico, The Presentation in the Temple

Easter is a traditional date for baptism, confirmation, and reception (being received into the Anglican Church from another denomination), and Deborah invites anyone interested to e-mail her to

learn more. For confirmation/reception, the clergy need to know of your interest by the end of February so they can plan the requisite class. For baptism at Easter, they'd need to know by the second week of Lent. Please contact deborah.meister@montrealcathedral.ca



Monday, January 31, marks the end of Muslim Awareness Week. There are some activities remaining on zoom in French and in English which you might like to join <https://ssm-maw.com/activities/> For example, there's a session Sunday afternoon about countering hate speech and Islamophobia. I admire my devout Muslim friends who follow the five pillars, professing their belief in God, praying at set times daily, giving alms, fasting at Ramadan and – more rarely – going on pilgrimage.

Empathizing with those in need and reaching out to them: This is a value shared by Christians and Muslims. The **lunch on Sunday** is a good example of the Cathedral's outreach effort under the leadership of Adrian King-Edwards. It will be sponsored this week by a neighbour of Adrian's, who insisted on helping when he told her about our venture.

Another important outreach activity is seen in the work of **Communitas**. As we mentioned last week, a book called **Open Door**, the name of a group which works with prisoners and ex-prisoners, has just been published. It is not in bookstores. Michele Rattray and Peter Huish are distributing them from their office in the Undercroft or mailing them out on request. This is a fundraiser celebrating over 20 years of ministry, so people are being asked to donate \$20 or more to Communitas. The Open Door meets every Tuesday in Fulford Hall. <https://communitasmontreal.org/donate/>

We also reach out to people in need of help through the **PWRDF**. There will be a panel discussion by zoom on February 3 at 11 am, called Maintaining the Gains: People, Projects and Partnership in the Time of COVID-19.

For the past two years, PWRDF and the Government of Canada have supported partners in Burundi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Rwanda as they responded to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Designed to maintain the gains achieved through the four-year All Mothers and Children Count program, these projects have ensured vital COVID-19-related work could be carried out. In this panel discussion, PWRDF staff and partners will explore and share the impacts of COVID-19 through gathered data and real-life experiences. [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

This meeting has relevance to the Cathedral community which has supported the All Mothers and Children Count programme through donations and participation in events.

Cathedral Activities for your calendar

<https://www.montrealcathedral.ca/events-calendar/>

- **Queer Space**, this Sunday, January 30 at 12:15
- **Christian Meditation**, Tuesday, February 1 at 6 pm
- **Adventures in Travel**, Friday, February 4 at 1:30 pm
- **English Book Group**, Sunday, February 27 at 7 pm (See information below)
- **Brown Bag Bible Study**, every Monday at 12 (in English)
- **Prière du soir avec discussion biblique**, chaque mardi à 19h00

A book to read during February

You are invited to join the Cathedral Book Group in reading *Fight Night* by Miriam Toews during February and (probably) *The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle* by Stuart Turton in March. *Fight Night* is described by its Penguin publisher as “a funny, smart, headlong rush of a novel full of wit, flawless writing, and a tribute to perseverance and love in an unusual family” The narrator is nine-year-old Swiv, who lives in Toronto with her mother and grandmother.



A CBC Interview with Karla Holmes, currently Rector of St Thomas' Church and formerly Associate Priest at the Cathedral

Barbara Winter, a Cathedral singer, wrote to us about an article in the CBC news describing a documentary on "face blindness", which Karla (among others) apparently has. It's an interesting article featuring someone well-known to the Cathedral community. "Trying to differentiate people is ... for me, like trying to differentiate golden retrievers," says Holmes. "How do you tell one human being from another?" Face blindness must be particularly difficult for a priest who has to tell one member of her congregation from another, yet I have never been aware she has this problem. The documentary has been advertised for a while, so some of you might have seen the programme. The link is here:

<https://www.cbc.ca/documentaries/the-nature-of-things/this-woman-can-t-recognize-her-own-daughter-s-face-but-technology-is-helping-her-1.6312174>

Last Monday we commemorated Francis de Sales, 1567 – 1622, who was the catholic Bishop of Geneva, during the upheaval of the Protestant Reformation. His advice to his flock living in turbulent times resonates with us today

“Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset. Nothing is so strong as gentleness, nothing so gentle as real strength.”



Ann Elbourne, with thanks to contributors and to Deborah Meister and Marie-Claire Fournier

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