

The Anglican Church of St. Paul, L'Amoreaux

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Diocese of Toronto
Anglican Church of Canada

November 4, 2023

Dear Friends,

In this time after Covid, two large challenges present themselves.

The first has been to Reopen the doors as we restart the services and programs that were in place before Covid. We weren't certain what to anticipate. Had Covid changed things radically? Would what we did before Covid still be fruitful after Covid?

So far, it all looks good and is very encouraging. I'm writing this on a Thursday evening. The ESL class is full, the homework club is full, and along with a great team of volunteers Fr. Milton is preparing for the Tamil evangelical mission and fundraiser for the Bridge of Hope Palliative Care program in northern Sri Lanka.

There are new opportunities that have presented themselves, in particular, an outreach to the African community in the parish as well as to the Indigenous community. The African outreach has had a full year, we've welcomed Fr. Pierre Niyongere to assist, and we've received generous support from the Mustard Seed Foundation and the Diocese of Toronto. Fr. Arthur Boers has taken up the outreach to the Indigenous community and a great support group is now forming.

This alongside the restoration of ordinary practices in the liturgy. On Anniversary Sunday we welcome Archdeacon Theadore Hunt as our guest preacher and will restore the practice of receiving both the bread and the wine at the eucharist, with no embarrassment for those who prefer the bread only. A week later, during the eucharist anointers will return to the station along the west wall where special prayers and anointing for the sick will be offered once again.

It hasn't happened overnight, which is why I've encouraged us to treat this as a five-year project, but the signs are all pointing upward and the strong support of the parish in giving and volunteering has given us the courage to move ahead boldly.

It is a busy and encouraging time. We thank God. We continue to say our prayers and do our best.

The second large challenge is to Rebuild . This, as I see it, has two parts. The first is the ordinary growth that matches or exceeds the ordinary attrition of a parish due to members who have moved and members who have died. The working average is to expect about 10% attrition each year, and therefore, in a manner that is true to our nature and our convictions, to welcome that number or more into the parish.

But the second part is to see the times clearly as a time of missionary opportunity, to take up the evangelical challenge of bearing Christian witness in our place and time - the challenge to all of us to share our faith in word and deed.

This can be off-putting. One reason is that evangelism in our time is still often associated with TV evangelists some who were corrupt, some who were abrasive like a pushy telemarketer. It goes without saying that neither is on our minds for how we will proclaim the faith at St. Paul's.

But another reason is that sometimes we have an insufficient view of what's stake. Our Friday night Bible study about the Acts of the Apostles answers this.

Do you realize, for instance, that every time Paul was hauled before a court, he treated it as an opportunity to proclaim the faith - to evangelize! That in court in Jerusalem, then after being hauled away to court in Caesarea, his great hope was to be hauled into court in Rome.

How could that be? How in the world is a defense in a hostile court evangelism?

Because evangelism is both about what Jesus Christ does for us personally and what Jesus Christ is doing for the world. And at its heart, evangelism is to proclaim that God has promised to put all things right. This he has declared triumphantly in Jesus Christ as the first taste of what's to come, and what he continues to do through all those who bind themselves to Jesus Christ.

As Fr. Arthur Boers put it so memorably at this year's evangelical mission, Jesus Christ is the one who sees us. He is the one who hears and answers our prayers. He is the one who touches and heals us. He is the One who has shared our tears and sorrows, who has suffered on our behalf to reunite us to God and restore what God has intended. All of this is true. All of this is part of our witness. And all of it has a breathtaking purpose. Coming to Jesus Christ our lives are yoked to the very best in life and, as Fr. Arthur said, free us for all that is good, beautiful and true. Coming to Jesus Christ we become bound to God's ambition which is nothing less than for the peace of the world.

I may be reluctant, I may be afraid. But I cannot shrug off a calling like this. And God as our helper, in every corner of the parish, by every hand and tongue, we will humbly but boldly proclaim that "God so loved the world" and Jesus Christ is the center of all we do and say.

Let this flow through every pore of the parish of St. Paul, L'Amoreaux.

Every year at this time is our Stewardship emphasis. Its purpose is threefold:

- *To give an account of how the gifts received by the parish are applied.
- *To highlight the fundamental areas in the Christian mission of the parish.
- *And to emphasize the central place and grateful obligation of stewardship in the life of every Christian.

St. Paul's has seven fundamental areas of ministry and service. This remains unchanged and we are pursuing each one of them wholeheartedly, adapting to the new circumstances as quickly and creatively as we can. Here is a brief description and the percentage of the gifts received that are committed to them:

*Christian worship (38%) - the beating heart of the parish offered through daily prayer, through sacramental service throughout the week and climaxing at the Sunday Eucharist. Online services and recordings continue to be offered, along with a return to the services in the church.

*Outreach (23%) - with our gifts and our hands we act out the riddle of the Christian life: that in giving our lives away in the name of Christ, we discover in full the meaning, depth and joy of the life God has given to us. Generous support throughout the year and the 2023 International Food Festival and Walk-a-thon have encouraged this ministry.

*Education (14%) - for every member, infant through elder, families and individuals preparing for baptism, young people in their discernment, couples for marriage, all Christians in our faith.

*Pastoral care (12%) - by the clergy and by every member, bearing witness in the world that this Christian community will be known by their love for one another (John 13.35).

*Evangelism (7%) - the presentation to those who seek of what it means to accept and practice the Christian faith in the person of Jesus Christ.

*Fellowship (6%) - the responsibility to meet together as the Scripture teaches (Hebrews 10.25). This was an area of great loss during the pandemic, but we thank God that this is being restored and for the lessons that our Lord taught us. The beauty of silence and rest. The beauty of the natural world which we are always free to enjoy. The priceless gift of our families. The depth of Holy Scripture. The grace of our Lord's touch when other distractions are set aside.

*Administration. Like so many other professions, in a matter of days the parish converted much of its daily administration to online methods as well as establishing safe and secure means for receiving the gifts of the parish when receiving them in person was no longer possible. Now as the office re-opens, last year's work of innovation and upgrading has been integrated and is serving us well.

In spite of Covid we have continued in our Christian duties in all these areas. And because of the amazing financial support from the congregation throughout the pandemic, our income remained well above 90% of our targets - a remarkable result.

Here are our five-year projections for envelope gifts:

2024	\$327,000
2025	\$331,900
2026	\$336,900
2027	\$341,900
2028	\$347,100

So, three things to say in conclusion.

First and foremost, regular giving according to the standard of the Biblical tithe is one of the fundamental practices of a Christian. It is the offering to God of our first and best gift. It is the support of the body of which Christ has made us a part. For his sake, it is our hand extended in service to those in need and in invitation to those drawing near to Christ.

Secondly, the ideal is and will remain the gift given on Sunday while attending Sunday services, another of our fundamental practices. But in this time when regular weekly attendance has been interrupted, we appeal to everyone to consider alternatives. The recommended alternatives are Pre-Authorized Giving or E-transfers. Both are secure, the P.A.G. is regular and the E-transfer can be made regular, and both are cost efficient, in most cases less expensive than writing a cheque.

With both P.A.G. and E-transfers, the amount is up to you. P.A.G. contributions can be changed with a simple note or a phone call to the Envelope Secretary. They are safe and secure. And they are regular, matching the regular and day to day obligations of the parish.

The regular Sunday giving of our faithful members has made St. Paul's strong and has kept us strong. But so long as this exceptional time continues, we ask you to consider one of the online alternatives. We recommend the P.A.G. or a regular E-transfer.

And thirdly, in our annual Stewardship Emphasis three requests are made.

- 1) First, you are asked to indicate your intended offering for the 2024 fiscal year on the pledge card. The parish remains strong and stable but we need everyone's support. Your pledge offers enormous help in planning for the year ahead.
- 2) Secondly, in a time of interrupted Sunday attendance, you are asked to consider a pre-authorized gift (described above) that provides regular support for the regular expenses that the parish faces.
- 3) And thirdly, every member is challenged to give at least 2% on the way toward the Christian ideal of the 10% tithe.

Weekly Offering						
Annual Income	1%	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%
\$20,000	\$4	\$8	\$15	\$23	\$31	\$38
\$30,000	\$6	\$12	\$23	\$35	\$46	\$58
\$40,000	\$8	\$15	\$31	\$46	\$62	\$77
\$50,000	\$10	\$19	\$38	\$58	\$77	\$96
\$75,000	\$14	\$29	\$58	\$87	\$115	\$144
\$100,000	\$19	\$38	\$77	\$115	\$154	\$192

The stewardship of our time and resources is one of the most important aspects of Christian life. The people of St. Paul, L'Amoreaux have given generously from the resources with which they have been blessed so that the church can remain financially sound and vibrant. This generosity is reflected in regular from which the operating costs are met and the various outreach and community programs funded. The people of St. Paul's recognize that while we should enjoy the good things the

Lord has provide, we cannot consider ourselves true Christians without giving generously to the work of God.

Despite all the challenges of the last four years, the support and generosity of the members St Paul's has remained strong. We thank you. We seek your continuing support as together again we seek to fill the air with the praise of God and serve wholeheartedly in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

A COLLECT FOR STEWARDSHIP

O God, in whose image we are created, guide us to make this parish a wefalcoming home where spiritual growth is encouraged. Inspire us to use the gifts you have entrusted to us to serve Christ in all the communities of the world You love. We pray as disciples of Jesus, and in His name. Amen.

God bless you.

Michael Gregory, Chair of the Stewardship Committee
Fr. Dean Mercer, Parish Priest

Bernie Bellis, Treasurer
Daisy Lucas, Envelope Secretary
Ivy Matthews, Volunteer Coordinator
Peter Conliffe-Layne, Incumbent's Warden; Keith Morris, People's Warden
George Millington, Ravi Thirugnanam - Deputy Wardens

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Stewardship 2024
FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT CARD

While the weekly Sunday offering remains the giving ideal, of the alternative methods available St. Paul's recommends either the Pre-Authorized Giving program or E-transfers as the securest and most efficient.

*I/We pledge a total of \$ _____ for the year 2024 toward the ministries, programs, and operations of St. Paul's, L'Amoreaux.

*I/We select the following payment option for 2023:

- Continue Pre-Authorized Giving
- Convert to Pre-Authorized Giving
(Application form here: www.stpl.ca/give.html)
- Convert to Online e-transfers
(Application form here: www.stpl.ca/give.html)
- Continue to use Weekly Offering Envelopes
- Continue to use Monthly Offering Envelopes

Name: _____

Address: _____
(No. & Street) City

Province Postal Code

Telephone Number: _____

Email: _____

THANK YOU FOR BEING A FAITHFUL STEWARD
Tax receipts are issued for all gifts.
Commitment starts January 2024.

For assistance or information, contact:

Michael Gregory, Stewardship Committee Chair
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