

A photograph of a forest scene. In the foreground, a large tree trunk is covered in vibrant green moss. The background shows a dense forest of thinner trees, with some sunlight filtering through the canopy. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

Reports of the **Annual General Meeting**

*King's College Chapel * June 18, 2020*

Cover Image: Caora McKenna, Fall Retreat 2019

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CHAPLAIN'S REPORT

The Rev'd Dr. Ranall Ingalls

A STUDENT summed up this past year at King's by saying, "We began in a hurricane and ended in a plague." And so we did. Hurricane Dorian struck Saturday in Orientation week. Weeks later we very nearly were not able to hike to Cape Split because of trees uprooted in the storm. And in March we dispersed very suddenly after announcements at King's and at Dalhousie University about the COVID-19 pandemic. In a certain way, these events have framed the academic year for many of us, and kept before us the question, "How are we to live with uncertainty?"

Those of us who were fortunate enough to hear three meditations at Evening Prayer from Fr Christopher Snook in the week before Orientation Week last summer were called to courage from the beginning. Fr Snook introduced us to three twentieth-century saints marked especially by courage and perseverance: Fr Alfred Delp, Mother Maria Skobstova, and Dorothy Day. Fr Alfred Delp served a Roman Catholic congregation in Munich during the Second World War and was imprisoned, tortured and executed by the Nazis.

Fr Snook placed before us first Fr Delp's Advent exhortation to his people during a time when the city was being repeatedly bombed to "light the candles" for the city and for one another; and then, secondly, his call to his parishioners to "trust life" in the midst of danger and uncertainty "because we do not live it alone".

This past year, students have "lit the candles" and some have discovered through difficult times that it is possible to "trust life" and that such trust can be rewarded. In the months between late August and mid-March, with the regular pattern of worship in the Chapel, a series of events were planned and led by students that went really well. The reports in this book describe many of them. To those reports I would only add that the commitment of students and especially of our Wardens to hospitality and care has been exceptional. The Chaplain has a front-row seat, and what I saw was often an extraordinary courage, perseverance and care. We owe a great debt of thanks to student leadership in a year where the absence of people who for years were deeply involved in the Chapel was strongly felt as grief and loss. The candles were lit and placed before us as an invitation to "trust life" and discover for ourselves that "we do not live it alone".

Mother Maria, also known since 2004 as “St Mary of Paris”, lived out a religious vocation in occupied Paris not by the traditional monastic “withdrawal” or “*anachoresis*”, but by a profound engagement with the world and with suffering, discovering for herself the truth taught by the greatest of Christian hermits, St Anthony, that “My life and my death is with my neighbour.” Fr Snook drew our attention especially to two “words” from her. The first was “*Love one another, so long as it is love to the end and without exception.*” Fr Snook pointed out that the suggestion here is not that we are capable of such love, but that the desire to be loved in this way and to be capable of loving in this way belongs to us as human beings. If we cannot attain such love simply by trying hard, we can at least acknowledge its beauty and learn to reverence and seek it. The second “word” was “*Our relation with people should be an authentic and profound veneration.*” The analogy is with the Orthodox veneration of icons. Mother Maria calls us to a kindred veneration for our fellow human beings, particularly those we find difficult and those whose suffering tempts us to turn away.

This past year, students have engaged the world and suffering, testing the truth of St Anthony’s words. The culture says that our life is to be found in ourselves and the choices through which we construct a “self.” Some have gone another way. The way Mother Maria lived even in the concentration camp in which she died was to find life in giving life to others – a life nourished and sustained by prayer. This openness to the world and people led her toward joy, and not away from it, though it cost her everything. In this past year there have been students who have walked in this way of engagement with the world and care for others, discovering that

“Everything you see’s not the way it seems
Tears can sing and joy shed tears.”¹

In some cases, they have done so at great cost.

Some of us spent some time this year thinking and praying about what icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary we ought to ask our resident iconographer, Benjamin von Bredow, to write, to replace the “paper icon” at the back of the Chapel on loan to us from the monks at the Russian Orthodox Hermitage of the Annunciation in New Germany. The veneration of Christ and his saints by means of such icons is something that belongs to the piety of some. But the veneration of the living image of God in other people as described by Mother Maria points to something universal. This reverence for one another is not something that belongs only to some of us – not even to those who would describe themselves as “religious” or even “spiritual”. It is common, something human, something not foreign to any of us,

¹ Bruce Cockburn, ‘Hills of Morning’, from *Dancing in the Dragon’s Jaws* (1979).

whatever our religion or culture or humanist commitments. The language can be very different. The practice of attentive, reverent love remains the same, and can draw us together.

It was to this practice of personal sacrifice as the sign of love that we were called by the example of Dorothy Day, activist and founder of the Catholic Worker Movement. But what Fr Snook had to say about a second practice seems particularly important now. Day freely and willingly embraced poverty, and encouraged others to do the same. Fr Snook pointed out that she understood this to include embracing human fragility, including *the precariousness of institutional life*.

“For this poverty to be authentic and not simply romantic, it presupposes a willingness to live with the fundamental reality of all poverty – an intense and anxiety-inducing precarity, the sense that things may crumble. As one priest notes in an article by Day, the desire to build and grow and get bigger which often animates parish and community life is fine as far as it goes, but the first casualty of this yearning is as often as not the poor. To be in solidarity is to live together on the edge that induces or compels or requires of us, faith. And so Day offers us a way of seeing, even here at the College where fears of institutional instability often plague us -- whether of the chapel's life or of the College's – Day offers us a way of loving this precarity as an instance of identity with the poor. Indeed, taken rightly, the instability of institutional life is in fact a manifestation of their reality – they are transient.”

We have lived with uncertainty this year at King's and at the Chapel. And all of us have been catapulted into uncertainty by events of the past few months. But in the Chapel we have been nourished this past year in a way of life that does not leave us captive to fear. In what became the last Chapel event of the year, Archbishop Mark MacDonald, National Archbishop of the Indigenous Anglican Church of Canada, placed before us the question how to live in times like the ones in which we find ourselves in the clearest possible way. The Saturday immediately following the announcement that campus would be closing he led us in reflections that spilled over into conversations that continued well into the afternoon. The title for the Quiet Day was, “A Pillar of Cloud by Day and Pillar of Fire by Night: Finding the Way of Life in the A World Beguiled by the Culture of Money.” It is difficult to imagine a more timely or appropriate way to end the year. Events in the news since then have only underlined the importance of the question, and brought to light the diseases of the culture of money and power.

The life to which we have all been invited through the Chapel this past year is a life not of fear, but of courage; not of self-making and isolation, but of vulnerability and communion; not to be lived in a corner separate from the world, but lived precisely in the world and for it. Students have taught me much about the joy of such a life: about the place that poetry, song, art, food, dancing, good humour, conversation,

hospitality and conviviality have in it. So, for example, I will not soon forget singing Nova Scotia folks songs in the little Church in Lakeland after the Cape Split Hike, or reading poetry with Johannah Bird in the Chapel early in Lent. As far as I can tell, all the things that belong to what Alexis de Tocqueville called “human grandeur” belong to this kind of life. There is so much reason for thanksgiving in the fact that students are discovering and growing in such a life at just this time in the history of our universities and of our world. I am in good hope that they will teach it to their Chaplain as they teach it to one another, and take something of it with them to the places where they go when they graduate.

MUSIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Paul Halley

THE BEGINNING of fiscal 2019/20 found us presenting Bach's "St Matthew Passion" on April 7th at All Saints Cathedral. Two weeks later, the Holy Week marathon concluded the choral services of term.

On September 11th we held auditions, and our choral services for the Michaelmas term began with the Eucharist on Thursday, Sept 12th commemorating the Eve of St. Cyprian. Sunday morning services in the Chapel resumed on September 7th with Gabriel O'Brien at the organ. Alan Rempel continued as choir organizer for these services. Gabriel began coaching Shawn Sneddon, a chorister in *Capella Regalis*, in service playing. Shawn took over as organist at the end of November.

On October 24th the Chapel Choir assisted Nick and me in a Foundation Year Programme evening talk on Gregorian Chant. All Hallows' Eve fell on a Thursday and the choir sang the Langlais *Messe Solennelle* at the Solemn Eucharist, which was just as well since we were unable to sing that wild and wonderful setting of the mass for the post-Covid Easter Vigil. All Saints' Day was celebrated with our annual three choirs Festal Evensong at the Cathedral. The attendance at this service continues to be gratifying.

Our "For All the Saints" concert on Sunday November 3rd featured Schnittke's "Requiem" with instrumentalists, soloists and organ. After all these years the piece continues to shock and impress with such originality and beauty. All Souls, with the Fauré was transferred to the following Thursday. The liturgy was particularly moving this year.

Now that Remembrance Day falls during Reading Week, our Organ Scholar played and conducted the music for the Evensong that day. Gabriel and members of the Chapel Choir who were in Halifax did a fine job offering music that was deeply appreciated by all in attendance.

The annual Lessons & Carols service took place on December 1st and we concluded the sung services of term on Thursday, December 5th, the Eve of St. Nicolas. We gave three performances of "A King's Christmas", one in Lunenburg on the 15th, and two performances in Halifax on the 16th. Our narrator was 'Old Man (Chris) Luedecke' who was a great favourite with our audiences. At our matinée performance

at the Cathedral following the Lunenburg show, Chris mentioned it was only the second time that he had played the banjo from a pulpit.

Sung services resumed for Lent Term with Evensong on January 15th. Our annual ‘Winterlewd’ weekend, for which the choir heads to the Martins River/Chester Basin/Lunenburg hot spots for general mayhem and merriment, took place over the weekend of January 24th – 26th. During the celebratory dinner on the Saturday night, one of our sopranos took an ambulance to the local hospital in the company of three charming EHS paramedics, but was back in time for dessert, hobbling, but not too much the worse for wear.

Ash Wednesday arrived on February 26th. As always, the choir sang for the noon service in the Chapel and for the traditional Alleghi-laden Evensong at the Cathedral at 5 P.M. As in previous years, this service began our Wednesdays-in-Lent-at-the-Cathedral series. This year our ‘Evenspeak’ series was to consist of talks on the Magnificat, complemented by settings of that text by modern composers. We made it through the Wednesdays of Lent I and II with musical settings by Howells and Pärt and talks by Johannah Bird and the Most Rev'd Mark MacDonald, when life as we knew it came to an abrupt halt.

As of this writing, life as we knew it continues to evade us. Due to emergency measures required by the arrival of Covid-19, the King’s Chorus concert scheduled for March 15th was cancelled, and all public services of worship were discontinued. It needs to be said that the President and College Administration handled this very difficult business (one of hundreds of challenging situations) with clarity, compassion and thoughtfulness. The musicians that had been hired months previously for both the Chorus concert and the “St. John Passion” (scheduled for April 4th and 5th) were compensated in a very fair and reasonable fashion. This was not necessarily their experience across the board. King’s College will be held in high regard for its integrity by all those musicians for years to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Halley, *Director of Music*

June 11th, 2020

REPORT OF THE CHAPLAIN'S ASSISTANT

The Rev'd Benjamin Lee

IN my capacity as chaplain's assistant, it has been my great privilege to hold the chaplain, his ministry, and the chapel community in my heart before God, and to accompany and support the chaplain in his discernment. While I have sought to offer myself in this way, it is probably more true to say that I have received far more than I have been able to give. I've found the chapel to be a community that dares to engage honestly in the struggle of entering into community, friendship and communion. Perhaps this venture is simply a willingness to learn and practice "the art of being loved" (as Fr Christopher Snook once put it) in all our brokenness. Being a part of such a community over this past year, even in the very limited way that I have, has been a blessing and encouragement to me, and has allowed me to tap into deeper springs of prayer I did not know existed. I wish to thank Fr Ingalls and many others of the chapel whom I cannot here name, for welcoming me and my family, for patiently and graciously supporting me in my first year of diaconal and priestly ministry, and for the many kindnesses I have received at your hands.

Respectfully Submitted,

Father Benjamin Lee+

WARDENS' REPORT

Alan Rempel, Apolonia Perri, and Katy Weatherly

WE BEGAN the year with a hurricane. In the city, it is easy to dismiss the impact of an event like a hurricane—fix up your sidewalks, restore power, and just keep going. But as we planned events throughout the year, we kept bumping into the storm. We nearly had to cancel the Cape Split hike because the park was closed and trees were down all over the province. At St. Anne's camp, it looked like a giant had torn up the edges of the lake. We couldn't ignore the hurricane. Of course, the storm provided its own blessings—like plenty of firewood! But long after the city had moved on from the hurricane, the land still bore the marks of the storm.

For all of us, being a warden felt like being asked to carry an impossible load. We tried to carry that load alone too many times. We struggled to keep up with the scripts for programming that were already in place when Fr. Ingalls started at King's. It's tempting to think that we can overcome—by force of will—the circumstances that we are given. In the first year of Fr. Ingalls' chaplaincy, lots of people who had been around for a while stayed to help with the transition. This year the leadership team was smaller and less experienced. The year was shaped by cycles of pulling apart from one another followed by continual attempts to pull ourselves back together. All three of us felt disconnected from the college in different ways.

Nonetheless, we hope that our efforts as wardens have helped more than we know to facilitate the connection of senses with beauty and souls with souls. Although we have sometimes attempted to persuade ourselves that we were not just event planners, it is true that when large groups of people are involved, much planning is required in order to create space for spontaneity, vulnerability, perception of beauty, and the possibility of friendship. Whether or not we succeeded in creating such space, these events were for many students their main way of interacting with the Chapel; for us, at least, they provided a structure for the year, on top of the church calendar to which they are connected: therefore we list the main events of the year below, followed by a reflective note.

O-Week Concert

For the past several years, the Chapel has hosted a concert as part of King's Orientation Week. This year, George Woodhouse and the Public Service, of Dartmouth, were the main act; Jenny Lapp and Arden Rogalsky played the opening act. The concert was very well-attended—the Chapel was full of students,

many of which were first-years. (Having the concert on the Monday in O-Week, rather than the Thursday, as in the previous year, probably helped.) We could sense a quiet attentiveness and receptivity in the atmosphere—the students were generous listeners, and, as far as we could tell, seemed to have a good time. For the most part, this was our first encounter with this FYP class. This year, donations at the door went to St George's YouthNet. Sarah Griffin, ex-Warden and current director of YouthNet, spoke briefly between acts about what YouthNet does and how students can get involved. (Unfortunately vanishingly little money actually appeared in the donation basket! We were perhaps a bit shy to actually ask attendees to donate.)

Open Mic

The Chapel began hosting open mics—not always regularly, but always on FYP Mondays and oriented towards FYP students—in the academic year 2017-18, and this continued in a less vigorous form in the fall of 2018. This past fall we attempted to revive them again, with mixed success. The first open mic was excellent—well-attended, with a completely wonderful array of performers, mostly first-years. Unfortunately, virtually no one signed up to perform at the following open mics! The spiritual reasons for this are neither very definite, nor is there space to explore them here. A fortunate thing, though: in November, Jenny and Arden played a show at Gus's Pub with Raquel, a musically talented first-year whom they had met at the first open mic.

Cape Split

This year we took about 70 students to hike up to Cape Split. It continually seems to be important for first-years to leave the city and encounter in awe, on their own feet, both the ocean and the very material of which the peninsula is formed which they have, for the most part, mostly just seen from an airplane window. But we almost didn't go to Cape Split! We realized a week out—thanks to a timely e-mail from Andrew Thorne—that the Cape was closed because of fallen-down and uprooted trees after the hurricane. We scrambled to come up with a new plan. A day before the trip, we found out that Cape Split Provincial Park had been re-opened, and rejoiced.

After last year's hike, we had vowed never again to rent buses for transportation, and instead to rely entirely on carpooling and individual drivers. We think this was the right call. There were perhaps five ravens there when we got to the Split. Communion in the grove overlooking the ocean was extraordinary, as always. We were very graciously hosted for supper by the Church of the Holy Spirit, in Lakelands. So many thanks go to the wardens Blaine and Lois and to everyone at Holy Spirit who worked hard to feed and welcome us. We had to eat in shifts because of limited space in the parish hall. We elected not to sing

compline (as we had done after the previous two hikes); instead, we had Jenny Lapp and Isaac Grainger play maritime music in the church. It was an exceeding jolly time!

Hermitage Visit

On October 6th, about 20 students and friends spent the day visiting the Hermitage of the Annunciation in New Germany. Apol came straight from Kejimikujik—she had been on a camping trip there; the rest of us left from the quad, to make it to the 8:00 AM matins and liturgy. Afterward, Papa Luc talked to us about the spirit of monastic life and prayer. We shared a potluck meal together. Later, Fr. Jean-Baptist and Fr. Nathaniel led us through the grounds. There was a palpable sense of quiet over the land. Students came back refreshed.

Thanksgiving Retreat

This year we took 37 people to St Anne's Camp, on Gibson's Lake, to spend Thanksgiving weekend—smaller than some past retreats, but a delightful group. The weekend was both overflowing with beauty and rife with misfortune. Three people were ill or injured, another had to go back to Halifax. At one point the generator caught on fire—Tim Lapp's engine expertise saved the day. Later the water tank had a problem and we had to haul water up from the lake. On the other hand: Ben von Bredow and Aidan Ingalls, the cooks, provided us with unfailingly nourishing and tasty meals. Apol hosted a weiner roast to welcome the students for lunch on the first day. The music at the services at the little church across the lake was beautiful: notably, Alan transcribed a shape note hymn from memory and adapted it into three part harmony, for a communion motet.

The effects of the hurricane were still very evident there, much more than in the city: we didn't hike over the North Mountain, because the usual trail, which already involved some bushwacking, was rendered impassable; and the dock had been badly damaged, so lay disassembled on the beach. Delaps Cove was still reachable, so some students went there; others went into Annapolis Royal.

Fall Retreat

About 70 people came to Mersey River for the Fall Retreat. The speaker, Alan Hall, spoke about vulnerability, brokenness and celebration, by way of—among other things—Jean Vanier, his own experience at L'Arche, and a variety of poetry. He read to us William Blake's poem 'Auguries of Innocence', emphasizing in particular that "Joy and Woe are woven fine / A Clothing for the soul divine". This thread of thought resonated with many on this retreat.

Evangeline Freedman cooked, which was fantastic; she was assisted by 'Kitchen Mama' Rylan Pembroke. Little Flora called Eve 'our kitchen angel'! Nick Halley was not able to attend, so Alan Rempel

led the singing of the psalms and canticles instead. As usual, a group of students spent the Saturday afternoon hiking in Kejimikujik National Park. As for the all-night vigils, their half-hour slots seem to have been half populated by providential grace (partly in the form of Joe Blackwood). We are extremely grateful for all who helped, prayed, spoke, listened, were patient, and cared for others on this retreat.

Wardens' Decorating Party

We did not have a 'Christmas tree hunt' event this year; instead, Apolonia and Joe went on an expedition to get the tree the day before the party. It was the perfect size! Neither too big nor too small.

The Decorating Party was a grand old time, although it had a distinct chaotic overtone. Helen Hillis is to be commended in the extreme for her careful oversight of the day's essential tasks—pew-oiling, wax-scraping, garland-hanging, pomander-making, and more. Fortunately, many students, not only old hands but also first- and second-years, turned up over the course of the morning to pitch in with all these tasks. They polished, dusted, and decorated with vigour, fortified by cider, mulled wine, and homemade baked goods. The YouthNet gift drive took place again this year, so the partiers also wrapped the gifts donated and made cards to accompany them. It took a long time to get everything done—especially the garland—but by the end of it all the chapel looked (and smelled) beautiful.

Robert Crouse Memorial Lecture

Dr Roberta Barker delivered the 2020 Robert Crouse Memorial Lecture, on the subject of Helen Waddell (1889–1965)—a once-celebrated but now unjustly-forgotten medievalist. About 35 people were in attendance: this was a smaller turnout than in previous years, but it included a significant number of first-years and Early Modern Studies students, in addition to the regular crowd. A reception followed with lively conversation.

It was a wonderfully compelling lecture. Roberta put it together on relatively short notice during her sabbatical—it was the only lecture she gave that term. We are very grateful!

Winter Retreat

Ron Halfidson, a former FYP tutor who now teaches at St John's College, Annapolis, was the retreat speaker, on the theme of "Solitude and Solidarity". The Lapp siblings, Jenny and Tim, were our creative and skillful cooks, with Harrison Rockel as their Kitchen Mama. Notable among the participants were Thomas Haslam, visiting from Fr Colin Nicolle's parish in PEI, whom it was a joy to have with us; and dogs Ayla and Bubba, who together engendered a delightful energy.

The first day of the retreat went remarkably well, so of course it must have been providential necessity that caused the power to go out on Friday night. The running water at Mersey River depends on an electric pump, so we had to get water from the lake to flush toilets and to boil for cooking. Everyone pitched in to haul water, do dishes, stoke fires, and get extra blankets. Tim and Andrea, who run Mersey River Chalets, were of tremendous help, giving advice and retrieving piles of extra blankets. As twilight fell on Saturday evening, the lights flickered on a couple of times; during Evensong the power returned decisively. Everyone rejoiced, but we quickly decided to turn the lights off so that we could continue singing Evensong by candlelight.

Ben von Bredow, our new Chapel Administrator in the winter term, began coming into his own as our resident “fixer,” making multiple trips into town to pick up supplies and care for students.

Right as the moon was reaching its zenith on Saturday night, a rhythm emerged in the kitchen—it started with banging on pots and pans, and quickly grew in spiritedness. We who found ourselves in the midst of it danced and sang till we collapsed.

In addition to those already mentioned, many thanks to J-S Rutgers for tending the fire; to Thomas for his invaluable practical assistance at the Sunday afternoon departures; and to Tim and Andrea for being wonderful hosts.

Shrove Tuesday

The Shrove Tuesday pancake breakfast in the Manning Room was a casual affair, with students meandering in over the course of the late-morning, settling down at the table and on the chairs and couch-arms and carpets of the Manning Room with pancakes and bacon, both of which were present in abundance. Alison, George, Cameron, Isaac, Izzy, Nathan, Helen, as well as various wardens and passers-by, pitched in to mix batters, flip pancakes, wash dishes, etc. Several distinct waves of students appeared; some dropped in for a brief pancake and hello; others hung around for longer; yet others stayed and helped with the dishes, while those who had been helping out sat down to chat. We forgot to tell anyone what Shrove Tuesday is and why one might eat pancakes on that day, and unfortunately I don’t think anyone asked about it (as the poster encouraged pancake-eaters to do). Nonetheless, it was a fun morning!

Big Cookie Day

In February, Gillian Schmid from ARK Halifax got in touch to ask whether the Chapel could contribute to a walk-a-thon fundraiser they were running—the local instantiation of the national Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser—by baking “400–800” cookies for the walkers. How could we resist a challenge like that? Since the walk-a-thon took place at the end of the winter reading week, we saw this as

an opportunity for a fun activity with residence students who remained in Halifax over the break. We advertised it as “Big Cookie Day”. We took over the North Pole Bay kitchen for a day and set to work! A handful of delightful first-years showed up to help (some of them from the West Coast, who could not go home for the week)—within a half-hour we had a great assembly line going. The oven was on for several hours on end. By the time we were done, we had made over 800 cookies. None of us had ever seen so many in one place! Alan said that day was the most fun he’d had all term. We had also sent out a call for cookies to the Chapel community: among others, Bill Lahey dropped off a plate of cookies that he had baked, and Joe Blackwood and a team of YouthNet kids baked several pans’ worth. ARK was very grateful for the plenitude of cookies. We hope to continue this friendship in the future!

Lenten Quiet Days

Johannah Bird: “Consider the blackbird, the beetle, and the dung”

Johannah Bird had first visited King’s in Holy Week of 2018, along with then-bishop Mark MacDonald, who was the Holy Week missionary that year. This winter, knowing that she would be in Halifax to give a FYP lecture, we asked her to give, in the same week, both an EvenSpeak and a Quiet Day. The Quiet Day was titled “Consider the blackbird, the beetle, and the dung”. A small group of students and faculty—hovering perhaps around twenty—sat in a large circle of chairs at the back of the Chapel and listened, discussed, and were in silence. The day centred around several poems that Johannah had selected, all having to do in some way with relationship to the land. We alternated between listening to the poems read aloud, discussing them together with Johannah’s guidance, and dispersing or remaining in the Chapel in silence. Afterwards we ate a delicious meal of chili and cornbread, made by Ben von Bredow, as the discussion transitioned into conversation. It was a beautiful day.

Archbishop Mark MacDonald: “A cloud of dust by day and a pillar of fire by night”

Abp. Mark MacDonald also returned to King’s to offer a Quiet Day, a week after Johannah’s. He talked about idolatry and the culture of money and how we are called to walk in a particular path that is centred around the words of the Gospel. We sat dispersed amid the choir stalls and listened. We gathered in the Senior Common Room afterwards and ate a yummy Thai soup that Alan had made as Mark kept telling stories. We laughed and cried! This was the last Chapel activity (other than the daily offices) before the campus shut down because of COVID-19.

Concluding Thoughts

Even while we felt ourselves to be collectively strained, we could see that many of the events we put on continued to be sites of friendship and joy. There was a student on the Cape Split hike who was so

excited because they had never seen the ocean before. At the Thanksgiving Retreat, a first year commented on how all the music felt like rushing water. Small little moments of beauty kept happening throughout the year, and we made new connections and new friends.

The problem was: did we stay friends with one another? The Chapel leadership saw its limits at every single turn. Moments of mutual active love did happen this year, but most of the time it felt like we were all individual wills in a room. We almost lost sight of friendship and what it means to work together—to seek co-inherence. How can you draw someone into a community when you are fragmented and at odds with one another? There is little to be commended in successfully running ‘chapel programming’ if we forget the central importance of working together and of breaking bread with one another.

As we told the students before embarking on the Cape Split Hike, it’s all about the buddy web. We have to take care of one another. Carrying one another is often an eminently practical task. It’s like when the power went out on the Winter Retreat—everyone pitched in to start fires, haul water, and flush toilets. The whole body worked together.

When we began breaking—both as individuals and as a community—we were really challenged to see the reality of how it is that the Eucharist is at the center of what we did. When we break, Christ breaks with us. Christopher Snook’s meditations at the beginning of the year challenged us to live in that desperation. He reminded us how devastating living in woe can be if there isn’t joy beside it.

Hopefully, we did emerge from the year nurtured and held together by what is greater. Desire sparked a few times, but it was mostly cooling embers. We often want to have control over the spiritual beauty in our life, but we don’t and maybe that’s OK. All you can do is put your heart in it.

God is present in both the darkness and the light.

Respectfully submitted,

Apolonia Perri, Alan Rempel, & Katy Weatherly, *Wardens*

TREASURER'S REPORT

Alison Kitt

Be angry, and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent. Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the Lord (Psalm 4:4-5).

THE ROLE of the Treasurer is rather straightforward: receiving and counting the offering from services on Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday, acquiring Fr. Ingalls' signature, delivering the money to the Advancement Office, being in communication with regular givers to make sure they have pre-labeled envelopes at the beginning of each term, and refilling the envelopes at the back of the chapel from time to time. It requires someone who is attentive to details and willing to regularly come to services. Primarily, the treasurer is responsible for the tithes, to bring the gifts of the people up to the altar to be blessed before God.

However, beyond the tasks themselves I found attending multiple services each week gave me structure for prayer and a better sense of the liturgical calendar. It meant I was a participant in the solemnity of the liturgy and learned how the year itself shapes and is shaped by the Christian tradition. I am so grateful to have been nurtured by the chapel leadership this year.

Oftentimes the giving of a university student is not centrally financial, but an offer of time. I hope for the upcoming year we can get more students involved in giving themselves, if only in small ways.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Kitt, Treasurer

ALTAR GUILD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Helen Hillis

I BECAME Altar Guild President last autumn in the knowledge that other commitments would make it impossible for me to attend much of what goes on in the Chapel this year. My absence this year has frustrated me, and I was and am sorry to have been unable to witness much of the liturgy and corporate prayer for which our work is done. I am thankful to those who polished and ironed with me and to those who continued it without me after the university's closure.

The Altar Guild did a number of things this year, and most of them many times over. We met each Tuesday evening to polish the brass, vacuum, and tidy. Flowers were arranged on Thursday mornings in preparation for the celebration of the Eucharist those evenings. Vestments were steamed (and a steamer acquired!). A great thanks is extended to Cameron Lowe, Samuel Landry, Benjamin von Bredow, Fr. Ingalls, and Faye Hiscock for their work and reliability. A particular gratitude is owed by both myself and all who worship at the Chapel to Jonathan Downing, who washed and ironed linens weekly, set the Altar for Harvest Thanksgiving, and, among many other things, makes excellent fruit cake.

This year, flowers were procured weekly (with the exceptions of the periods of Lent and Advent) from Pete's. With a great deal of help from Henk Fisher, garlands were made during the Wardens' Decorating Party with greenery sourced from LJKR Balsam Fir Christmas Tree Farm in White Rock. I was gladdened by the number of people who came to the Decorating Party and helped with the making of garlands, ironing of linens, and polishing of brass.

I hope that next years' Altar Guild will be able to attend to some of what we did not this year; the cassocks, surplices, and albs should have numbers embroidered into the inside collars to aid servers in finding the correct size each week. Additionally, many of the maniples should have their elastics replaced.

I left Halifax very abruptly when the university closed this semester and am therefore unable to make comment on the doings of the Altar Guild during Holy Week. I regret my abandonment of this work, and thank those who saw it through Lent and Easter; especially our Sacristan, Wardens, Chapel Administrator, and Chaplain.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Hillis, Altar Guild President

INTERCESSOR'S REPORT

Nathan Ferguson

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26).

SINCE, in terms of essential function or responsibility, the intercessor does not preside over events or undertake any worldly projects of significance, there has never been much for those who occupy this position to report. A cursory glance through the record of Annual General Meeting reports will show this to be more or less true. In lieu, then, of a report on what the intercessor happened to do this year, you will find here something more like a record of what happened to the intercessor. I want to share three lessons I learned this year about intercession, or three shifts that occurred in my thoughts about or attitude towards prayer. Hopefully, these reflections might be of some assistance to those who take on this position in the future, if such a thing should ever happen. Because without guidance, assuming responsibility for a collective life of prayer can be pretty disorienting.

I

The first lesson or shift came about through two conversations that did not happen in the right order. There were probably a great number of moments that surround and hold up these conversations, against which they take shape and so become meaningful, or in which I first or finally became able to articulate the real idea at the heart of these discussions, but those auxiliary moments are too many to enumerate, and I don't remember them all anyways.

The first conversation in time — though the second in order — was in Saskatchewan, in the summer of 2019. It was a conversation with Joe Blackwood, who was the intercessor a couple of years ago here, and a man named Jake, although really it was mostly just us listening to Jake and not having anything at all to say in response to the things he was telling us. Jake was explaining how some people will pray for parts of the natural world — pray for the trees, pray for the sun, even pray for the sky. At the same time, this praying-for is also a praying-to. So, what Jake was saying was that you don't just pray for the trees, but to them, and this was a really amazing discovery for me. Not only did Jake teach me something about the direction or orientation of prayer — namely, that the possibilities for this directionality are radically open, and that all creatures and creations are things that you can rest before with your prayers — but he also gave me the words to discover something about the nature of prayer. This second discovery was that the

line between praying-for and praying-to (and recently, I have begun to expect or hope, even praying-with) is not necessarily one that needs to be respected or upheld. I think there is something in this reflection that is not so distant from the word Fr. Snook gave us at the beginning of the year, from his meditation on Mother Maria Skobstova: “Our relation with people should be an authentic and profound veneration.” There is an element of standing before and resting with God even when we are simply in the presence of the other in our prayers.

This is obviously a significant discovery for intercession, which is the practice of praying for others, including the dead. In the way Jake was speaking of prayer, this practice can also be something like praying to them, or perhaps praying with them. One of the things he was really trying to get across was that praying in this way doesn’t compromise the idea of having a God: you can pray to the things, and the prayers will still go to God. He put it this way: “all the prayers go the same direction: straight up.” This was a helpful place for me to begin the year, as it allowed me to move past a kind of prayer that just feels like solitude before the Big Other of what God is or isn’t. In this dwelling place between the various postures of praying with things, for people, and to God, I found it possible to discover a community or parliament of things inclined towards and resonant with each other in a movement towards the divine, otherwise too foreign to become familiar with. It also allowed me to navigate, or sometimes avoid entirely, the problem of praying to Jesus or the Divine Mother — practices which never became comfortable for me as a Jew — by furnishing a world dense in spiritual presences and mediators of intercessory mercy.

The second conversation, which is what allowed me to inhabit a lived practice of this kind of praying-through things and people, occurred much later in the year, at the Hermitage of the Annunciation in New Germany. I was speaking to Fr. Jean-Baptiste about the ways in which liturgy is a physical activity, and we began to reflect upon the possibilities of a thoroughly embodied practice of prayer. Certainly we had no ‘Klopstock’ moment that day, but that thought of praying through the body remained with me. Ultimately, this idea of praying with my hands, with my feet, while chopping carrots, or in the shower, or while biking to school, became very closely consonant with Jake’s lesson about praying through and to the material of the world. If I had carried that thought in my heart when listening to Jake, I would have been so much more ready to truly hear what he was trying to tell me. It also helped me to understand the uplifting power of icons, in a way I’m not yet able to articulate. Praying for relief from sickness or for the repose of the soul through the body — not just with words, but with my throat; not just by knowing the names, but by writing them onto paper — these activities of the body helped me finally enter into a lived ritual practice. Praying the intercessions thus became a kind of play for the heart (not the soul, but of the beating heart and of the living blood.) By gaining an embodied relationship to my prayer, I was able to understand with a greater clarity why Jake was so insistent on bringing the things of this world into the work of intercession.

Similarly, the idea of a 'sacred space' only really makes sense as a place that is inhabited in embodied reverence.

II

I wrote earlier of the foreignness or Big Otherness of God. It was necessary for my practice of intercession to radically familiarize or mediate the 'receiver' of prayer — to bring them into the fold, as it were — through the dual shift towards embodiment and reorientation towards material creations. At the same time, there were ways in which praying for the dead only made sense if it remained suspended in a kind of separateness or remoteness. While there are so many divine truths in Judy Blume's *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*, I realized pretty early in the year that the familiarity of the conversational had little place in the practice of intercession. While I felt alienated from the crossed-out God of the secular imagination (who speaks directly to the soul, but politely leaves the physical world to its own devices), I also felt alienated from the idea of a Divine Mediator that you could speak to like an agony aunt. Jake and Jean-Baptiste helped me overcome the *deus absconditus*, but, for many reasons, I was wary of the modern Jesus who takes the wheel.

This is one of the spiritual problems which I found resolve for through a rekindled connection to Judaism and Jewish thought. Only at King's had I any experience of liturgy in a language which I knew. I began praying in Hebrew again, and the long-familiar foreignness of that language allowed me to find a space in which the sacred became appropriately distant from the mundane. Not long after the trip to the Hermitage, I also began saying the *Salve Regina* in Italian, about once a week — a language I have no familiarity with, but which is the native tongue of a number of names on the intercession list. Although I ultimately failed to carry on with the Italian, my rediscovery of Hebrew prayer (though in a context many would rightly find inappropriate) remains a pillar to which I can cling when the waters run dry.

III

A final lesson I learned about the role of the intercessor involves what I call 'the two P's'. These two qualities — of which I possess neither — are vital to the Chapel's lived and embodied practice of collectively bringing souls before the throne of mercy: punctuality and penmanship. Indeed, the chapel should never have any problems filling this position, because it is the easiest one around. What you actually have to do, in all practical truth, is write out a list of about sixty names, each week. Compared to the unholy workloads of the warden and sacristan, it is almost laughable that the intercessor even gets a line on the service leaflet. Ideally, this list of names should be compiled and completed before the Sunday morning service, but, to be honest, I quite rarely accomplished that feat, and Fr. Curran certainly never accosted me over my habitual tardiness. So, in the future, if the chaplain should ever need to find some student to

fill the role of intercessor, they would do well to remember, when explaining the job, that the work consists almost entirely of practicing good punctuality and respectable penmanship. The rest is silence.

KING'S CHORUS AND CAPELLA REGALIS

Nick Halley, Director

THIS being the tenth season for **The King's Chorus**, we decided, for the first time ever, to do a repeat performance. On December 6th, 2019, the Chorus took its second shot at Benjamin Britten's *St Nicolas*, on the Feast Day of that blessed Bishop. The last time we did this was in 2013, when December 6th was a Friday and we managed to fill St Mary's Basilica almost to the brim with a lovely, warm audience. When I got home that night (well, really next morning no doubt, given the nature of Chorus parties) I immediately made a note to do that phenomenal piece again, as soon as St Nicolas day landed on a Friday. So there we were, Friday December 6th in St Mary's again – this time truly filled to the brim with an even bigger, lovely and warm audience. The concert also featured the mystical settings of four O-Antiphons by Arvo Pärt, the ancient Advent Prose (*Rorate Caeli De Super*), and a heart-raising piece by Paul Halley, 'The Bright Daystar is Comen of His Heav'nly Towers,' which weaves the musical themes of the Advent Prose with traditional Scottish melodies. Hannah Griffin worked her marketing miracles, our volunteers did their stellar work (special mention must go to John Power and Sarah Hilton, in their respective roles as Concert Advertising Assistant and Music Librarian), Nils Brown was appropriately larger-than-life as the Saint himself, the orchestra was enlightened, and the Chorus did its thing: there were many hundreds (some say six, some seven) of people pouring out of the Basilica afterwards, the smile still on the face, the flush still in the cheeks, the glow of the journey through time and space and 4th Century Myra transporting their benevolent frames back out into the world and 21st century life on Spring Garden Road. These were the days of our insouciance.

All was well and everything seemed in its right place when the Chorus regrouped in January to begin rehearsing its spring programme: two settings of Dixit Dominus (Charpentier and Handel), and the beautiful ancient antiphon for that much-in-demand psalm text. Sure, there were those prescient few sounding the alarm, but we sallied forth, rehearsing right to the end. Our concert, slated for March 15th, was not to be. On March 13th, following the Premier's recommendations (soon to be mandates), we canceled the concert. The University, thanks to President Lahey's clear-thinking handling of the situation, helped us to make sure that the professional musicians (players and soloists – "gig" workers whose livelihoods have been severely threatened by the pandemic) were paid 50-100% of their fees for this bit of work that was taken away at the last minute. We were proud to be part of an institution that behaved in this way during a time of crisis. As President Lahey said, these are relationships worth preserving. I would

say too that this is a reputation worth preserving: King's will be viewed with affection for many years, by many people, for just this kind of gesture toward the good-for-all that we espouse. Our everlasting thanks to the Chapel for being our home, our strength, and our stay these last ten years. It may be a while before we're placed again under those glorious beams, attempting to raise the roof with sound, but we will be back, *in tempore opportuno*.

It was also the tenth season for **Capella Regalis**. Many things were supposed to take place this spring/summer that didn't (a Canada Westward tour in May, an anniversary party in June, Choir Camp, etc.). We did not cancel these things, but they are postponed.

What *did* happen in 2019? We kicked off with the usual festival of mirth that is Choir Camp. To our delight, we were back at dear trusty old St Anne's Camp over on Gibson's Lake. The boys began work on Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*. Then rehearsals kicked off in earnest (and the Chapel) in September. We sang the usual spate of Evensongs and the occasional Eucharist at the Cathedral throughout the first term and held our annual service of Investiture in November. Sam Swain carried on doing great work as Head Boy. Our first full-length CD (*Love Came Down*) was released in late November, just in time for the Christmas season to which it appertains. In Lunenburg and Halifax we performed our most ambitious *To Bethlehem with Kings* programme to date, featuring *A Ceremony of Carols* (the boys accompanied by the fabulous harpist, Lori Gemmell) and an entirely new second half featuring a band of traditional Irish/Scottish/Cape Breton musicians and carols from those respectable traditions, all arranged smartly (in every sense of the word) by The Maestro Paul Halley. Between *St Nicolas*, *A King's Christmas*, and *To Bethlehem with Kings*, as well as the holy deluge of services in the Chapel and All Saints Cathedral, 2019's Christmas season was one to be remembered (and hopefully not repeated) for quite some time by the music staff.

The second term began so much like another, in those years around the sea-town corner now and out of all sound except the distant speaking of the voices I sometimes hear...oh, wait I've wandered off a bit. Sorry about that! Did I mention that the CBC's Tom Allen came and narrated our Christmas shows? How could I not: he was a great shot in the arm for us, a huge source of encouragement as well as inspiration. But where was I...ah yes, the second term began much like any other, with rehearsals and services commencing in January. We had survived many a Feast Day relatively unscathed and were happily engaged in studying up for Holy Tuesday in the Chapel (featuring *O Saviour of the World* set to the music of John Goss, which the boys seem to sing more and more beautifully as the years go on) when all the world went into hiding and the darkness descended on dear Nova Scotia and we've all been missing one another ever since. This is good, this "saudade", as the Brazilians call it. It has been made clear to me that Capella Regalis holds a particularly warm spot in the hearts of its choristers, their families and friends. In

my case, not having rehearsals has certainly resulted in an increased appreciation of them. There is a void now, and I am being asked how we might fill it. Virtual Choir does little to scratch the itch: it is a process in which each choir member makes their own video, by themselves, in their own room: an experience that is ipso facto quite the opposite to the real thing. So Capella Regalis will wait to sing *together* until we can be in the same space. If for a while we must be split into smaller groups, so it shall be. In the meantime, aside from finding ways to encourage everyone to do their singing and playing and music-making and life-giving stuff as much as they and those around them can stand, we (Vanessa, Hannah, and I) are also investigating and preparing for the ways in which, once we're back singing unto the Lord a new song, we can most effectively and accurately bring that song to the ears of congregations and audiences. John Adams, our nearest and dearest recording engineer has been and will continue to be instrumental to that endeavor.

On behalf of Capella Regalis, the boys, parents, men, staff, volunteers, and friends of the choir, I would like to express our deepest gratitude to the King's Chapel, for being our home, and such a welcoming one at that, these many years.

SUNDAY MORNINGS

The Rev'd Dr. Thomas Curran, Faculty in Holy Orders

IT HAS BEEN a great honour to take responsibility for Sunday morning worship in the King's College Chapel from Sunday September 8th in 2019 to the 3rd Sunday in Lent (Sunday, March 15th) in 2020. I should like to underline the profound privilege of addressing such a diverse and receptive congregation.

The congregation which attends on Sunday mornings has provided me (and others) with an opportunity to live out the fullness of Christian devotion (in community). This spiritual vocation has been inexpressibly deepened by "the sacrifice of thanksgiving" which is offered week after week by our musicians. In the Autumn of 2019, Gabriel O'Brien was offered, and then accepted, the position of Organ Scholar at All Saint's Cathedral in Halifax. We sincerely thank Gabriel for years of devotion to the Chapel on Sundays, but we are very fortunate to enjoy the dedication of Sean Sneddon in then agreeing to serve as King's Sunday Morning Organist. There are so many others who regularly perform in our Sunday Choir, under the dedicated direction of Alan Rempel — thank you with admiration to all of you. On a personal note, I need particularly to thank Megan Krempa, not only for performing in the choir faithfully, but also for her words of encouragement in advising what themes might be usefully considered in the weekly addresses.

Further recognition is required for those who assist so reliably in enabling the smooth operation of the Sunday service — not exclusively recognizing the regular presence and service of both Aidan Ingalls, and Isaac Grainger, King's Sacristan. The Sunday morning service could not be successful, were it not for Matthew Scott who prepares us for Holy Communion by, first, leading us in Morning Prayer. Jonathan Downing acts as our Sunday morning Host, and he ensures the possibility of fellowship for the congregation after each Sunday service.

Also, of course, Sunday morning worship would be unthinkable without the army of volunteers who sing in the choir and who always make visitors most welcome. By identifying the few, I wish to express my profound gratitude to the many.

We cannot put into words sufficiently our good fortune in having Fr Ranall Ingalls as our Chaplain. We are truly blessed by his presence among us, and his care for all of us. It has also been a great honour to have our King's President Bill Lahey, as a member of the Sunday morning congregation.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev'd Dr Thomas Curran, *Faculty Member in Holy Orders*

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE'S REPORT

Megan Krempa

“Turning and turning in the widening gyre / The falcon cannot hear the falconer . . .”

William Bulter Yeats, “The Second Coming”

I THOUGHT I knew what I would write for this report, but as I face a blank page, it all seems a bit insurmountable. How do I write about a year when suddenly everything before the last few months seems like a distant and foggy memory? When my struggles before this seem so incomparable, so obsolete?

This year I devoted myself to a lot of things—perhaps too many, most would say—that for much of the time, a space for making art was shoved into a proverbial corner. I paint, which means I don’t have the luxury of bringing my supplies wherever I go, so I need to manage my time to make art (something I can never seem to do). I am also not a photographer, so I continue to find myself lacking in photographic inspiration.

But another difficulty I have faced is that the chapel, for me, is a place which is more colour than figure. It is more memory than image, and more sensorial than physical. All of which to say, I am still trying to create this year’s art, and I am still trying to create art that represents what I view the chapel is. This is particularly difficult when I am so used to just painting an image without any sort of underlying connection to it. The chapel, and this year, have been so much more than can be depicted in a painted photograph.

I would also like to say that, even in the midst of a pandemic, I hope we have seen (during times before all of this) the harm that complicity and complacency can do to ourselves, but more importantly the harm it does to others. We see it in our chapel and University community, and we see it now as racialized violence permeates our societies and institutions.

As a singer, as a parishioner, as a student, and as an artist, I think of the chapel as a place that ought to be seen and depicted as what it is beneath the veneer: flawed, old, a little bit broken, but immensely beautiful and worthwhile. But this beauty can so easily be lost when we choose silence over sound, when we choose normalcy over justice, and when we choose community over compassion.

Christ calls us to be compassionate to all, but how can we do that when one person hurts another? How can we be compassionate to both? We must realize that compassion and care is not just one-sided, and it does not come with one answer. For one person, compassion is supporting their journey. But for another, we must accept that perhaps the most compassionate thing to do is to let them find their way back to wherever we hope to meet them. We began this year reading Jean Vanier's "From Brokenness to Community", and it was only in February, a few months ago, that we learned that Vanier sexually assaulted members of the L'Arche community. We must never forget the cost of silenced voices, but we also must continue to struggle to find beauty and community where it seems like it has been irreparably lost. Silenced voices can never be heard if we continue to pretend everything is normal.

In art, I am still trying to find that meeting place that awaits me. I do not know where it is, or what it looks like, but over the last several months I have begun to understand better that my art must not be simply a photographic recollection, but it must allow for those colours and senses to come through in all their splendour and all their beauty and all their brokenness. I have failed in so many ways this year, but still I wander until I find that meeting place.

Until we meet again in person, dear friends,

Megan Krempa

BARD-IN-RESIDENCE'S REPORT

Jenny Lapp

LAST YEAR Father Ingalls asked me if I would fill a position under this name, which was vaguely defined as someone who attempts to intentionally bring poetry and song into the life of the community, especially through a practice of writing poetry and song. I agreed, although I was dubious, because I'm certainly no bard. And maybe I shouldn't have agreed because I definitely failed at doing these things. I experienced a year where I struggled to notice the poetry in the world, let alone write poems or songs. What little I shared came from this place of frustration.

Failures aside, it was not a year without song and poetry. The FYP open mics were short lived due to lack of attendance, but there were outstanding performances at the ones which did happen. After the Cape Split hike Isaac put together a soaring collection of Nova Scotian folk songs which we sung to pews of FYP students, ending with spontaneous dancing and shanty singing. It was outstandingly good, joyful, and hilarious. Campfires this year were lit up by Kip's repertoire of songs (recently I wrote: *watching leaves turning, hearing strings singing, with the last breath of summertime*, remembering the thanksgiving retreat fires). Both fall and winter retreats had musical late night hours. Arden organized a concert in the chapel. In Lent, Katy took on the onerous task of sending poems out every day. This year I've been overwhelmingly carried by the poetry of others.

NORTHWOOD VISITING PROGRAM

The Rev'd Dr. Ranall Ingalls, Chaplain

A FEW WORDS from last year's report sum up the vision for visits by King's students to residents of the Northwood Manor long-term care centre.

“Students have sought to make these visits a time to build relationships, a time to be present with those whose day-to-day life is often characterized by loneliness. The goal has been to cultivate friendship – a simple but ambitious goal which carries the same struggles and failures as our other relationships carry and which requires the same courage, compassion, humility, and forgiveness.”¹

In 2019 and 2020, there was no one to oversee this program. A student who had volunteered early in the year was not able to continue due to illness. However, a number of students who had been visiting regularly in the 2018-2019 academic year continued to do so, and at least three new visitors began in 2019-2020.

Northwood has been at the centre of the COVID-19 crisis in Nova Scotia. As of the day before this was written in early June, 53 residents had died. Many caregivers have been sick with the virus, too. Residents have lived and caregivers have worked in an extremely difficult environment.

At least one student has tried to keep in touch by letter or phone with the person they were seeing since the pandemic struck. There may be others.

The importance and the need for the kind of visiting that King's students have done at Northwood over the past few years is clearer than ever. The pandemic has brought attention to the way we care and fail to care for our elders. It was long overdue. But if very necessary and welcome improvements in facilities and policies are put in place it will still not replace that attentiveness which Simone Weil identifies as the root and substance of all human love, nor human presence and the offer of friendship.

If visiting is not possible in the autumn, it should be possible to write letters, make phone calls, or connect with the help of technology. I am hopeful that we will have a co-ordinator for 2020-2021 to help connect King's students with seniors.

Respectfully submitted,

Ranall Ingalls+, *Chaplain*

¹ Madelaine Wheeler in the 2018-2019 AGM Report.

YOUTHNET TUTORING PROGRAM

Sarah Sharp

FOR the past academic year, each Monday afternoon, while classes were in session, the children from St. George's YouthNet (twenty in the fall semester and twenty-two in the winter) were accompanied in cabs and cars to the University of King's College campus. There they meet with their tutors, an eager and thoughtful group of King's students, for one-on-one tutoring sessions. While some tutors were in their second, third, or fourth year at King's, the majority of tutors, as has been a standing tradition in this tutoring program, were students in the Foundation Year Program. Although many were new to Halifax, all were excited to share their new home on King's campus with the children from YouthNet.

This year's batch of children, like their tutors, were a mix of old and new faces to the program. And while their range of learning interests were as diverse as their ice cream flavour preferences—each session always caps off with a highly anticipated celebratory cone from Prince Hall—the kids love of coming to King's and spending time with their tutors was nearly unanimous. This love too came in many forms. For some, it was a boisterous love; one that was not easily contained (to assigned classrooms, to in-door voices, to the A&A steps). For others, it was a quieter love, one that required more careful listening and the gradual build-up of trust. Just as the kids have much to learn from their tutors, I think the tutors and the college also have quite a bit to learn from the kids. Strong friendships are always ones that are built on and continue to foster mutual growth.

Sarah Griffin, YouthNet's director, and I originally intended to honour the connection between King's and YouthNet, and celebrate all the friendships such a connection has helped form, with an end of term fundraiser open to the wider King's community and to the children's families which would be hosted in the President's Lodge. Throughout the winter semester each tutoring pair worked on a personalized project, one that was centred around a particular learning interest of the child and which the pair could work on together over the course of many weeks. These projects, which included elements such as an original comic book, oil paintings, and even a self-coded website, were to be displayed at this celebration. Local businesses around the North End and King's campus had agreed to donate items for a silent auction. Lemonade and cookies would have been served. There may even have been a live musical performance

from a some of the kids. One day we'll celebrate together in this way. For now we need to find ways to continue to support and care for one another that are both lively and attentive.

At this time it's difficult to imagine what next year will look like. With King's classes going online for the fall semester and possibly remaining online for the winter one as well, it's unclear whether students from the college and the kids from YouthNet will be able to safely learn and play together on campus during the 2020-2021 school year. However, just as physical proximity alone cannot make a community, physical distance need not break one—or put it on pause for year. Quite the opposite, if anything this scary, uncertain time in which we live reasserts our responsibility to care for one another and to find thoughtful, creative ways of doing so. Distance highlights the fragility in our relationships. Connections can splinter, and so we must continually tend to them. The King's-YouthNet relationship is one that has and must continue to evolve. As September draws nearer, I plan on working with Sarah Griffin and the university's staff to ensure that King's connection with YouthNet continues in a way that is safe and thoughtful for all individuals involved, a pre-existing concern that is amplified in light of current circumstances.

ROBERT CROUSE MEMORIAL LECTURE

The Rev'd Dr. Ranall Ingalls, Chaplain

IN the fifth annual Robert Crouse Memorial Lecture, Dr Roberta Barker helped to right a wrong by recalling the life and work of a distinguished twentieth-century medieval scholar whose work has been largely and unjustly forgotten. In 'The Passions of Helen Waddell: Meditations on a Forgotten Medievalist', Dr Barker brought into view the medieval world that was the subject of Waddell's passionate interest, and helped us to see something of that world as Waddell understood it, in all its complexity, with many distinct and sometimes stridently opposed voices. It was a fitting tribute to Fr Crouse, who taught generations of King's and Dalhousie students to know the medieval world in this way, and who loved Waddell's work. A small but enthusiastic audience braved bad winter weather and treacherous roads to be there, and they were not disappointed. The best evidence of just how well the gift of this lecture was received was to be found in the reception in the Senior Common Room afterward. The room was loud with lively conversation for nearly two hours.

Dr Barker is Associate Dean (Academic) of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Dalhousie University, Associate Professor (Theatre Studies) in the Fountain School of Performing Arts. She continues to be well known at King's, often lecturing in the Foundation Year Program.

Respectfully submitted,

Ranall Ingalls+, *Chaplain*

CONCERTS IN THE CHAPEL

Arden Rogalsky

BETWEEN last summer and the abrupt end to campus activities this spring, a number of musical events took place at the Chapel. In August, I had a very special opportunity to record a set of acoustic songs in the space with the help of my father, who was visiting at the time. Over the course of an afternoon, we worked on capturing some of the totally unique acoustic qualities of the room—some imprint of the choral beauty that has filled it over the years. I hope that others will be able to make similar use of the space in future. Perhaps it would be encouraging for others to know that it is already equipped with a built-in recording system that requires no special experience to use. At the beginning of the fall term, the Chapel hosted singer-songwriter George Woodhouse, along with myself and Jenny Lapp as openers. George’s music and energy was wonderfully suited to the occasion, and brought out a strong showing of FYP students. Shortly afterwards, the wardens, Jenny Lapp and I put together an open mic for FYP students, which apart from featuring some excellent performances, hopefully helped to connect some of the new students who were seeking musical community. In March, Kurtis Eugene and Rachel Bruch McAllister put on a small concert in the Chapel, featuring Kurtis’ beautiful songwriting and guitar work, with Rachel on violin. I was also lucky enough to reprise the songs I had recorded in August, this time with the help of Henk Fisher on percussion. This event was a reminder that the Chapel space is one of the best venues for un-amplified music—not only for its acoustics, but also for the welcoming, intimate energy it brings to musical performances

PILGRIMAGE TO THE HERMITAGE OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Jenny Lapp

SOMETHING about waking up in the dark to drive before eating or drinking or thinking puts the small quiet in the soul which is necessary to visit such a place as the Hermitage. The trip happened in October, and we were a large group, almost twenty five of us. I hadn't visited before, and I was feeling apprehensive about what it would be like to take so much of our world there.

Fathers Luc, Jean-Baptiste, and Nathaniel welcomed us to their morning liturgy and received us completely; it became very clear that their life of prayer made it possible for the visit to not simply be us intruding upon them, but for their life to generously hold all of us. Such an act of holding their life open was later when Father Jean-Baptiste took many of us on a walk of the land, showing the places themselves and his deep memory of them. Going up and down through the forest and settling by the pond, Father Benjamin Lee passed around yerba mate, and Ata passed around equally perplexing and flavourful poetic fragments. Another generosity was the monks' invitation to stay in touch and visit again (this has been a huge gift to me, and a few of us managed to go this winter).

Over tea and food Papa Luc spoke to us, and one question was asked, I don't remember who asked it, but it has stuck with me and seems to be even more pressing now than then. It was about how we can manage when we lose those who are central to our life as a community, or lose common places and rhythms of life with others who uphold us. Papa Luc replied using the phrase "community of the heart", which is not the same as being physically present to each other. I remember his hope and encouragement that something like this is possible between people who are physically displaced from each other but are nevertheless attempting to live a common contemplative life.

CHAPEL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Benjamin von Bredow

WHEN Madelaine Wheeler left this position in December, I was sad to see her go, and I have missed her friendship this semester. However, I am also grateful to Fr. Ingalls and the Wardens for allowing me to take over as Chapel Administrator. I have enjoyed my responsibilities, and I have found them fruitful as I continue my formation for (God willing) ordained ministry.

I have spent the semester **1)** discovering what is consistent about the position, so that I can learn from people who have previously held it and pass on wisdom to whomever will follow me; and **2)** discovering what I in particular have to offer.

In general, my approach has been to emphasize the administrative aspects of the position, for a few reasons. I have done my best to support the Chaplain and Wardens without taking on many of the Chaplain's pastoral responsibilities or the Wardens' student leadership roles, so that they can with integrity grow into their own positions and give the community what they have to offer. Further, I have seen a need in the community for continuity, as we continue to be a spiritual transition from Fr. Thorne's ministry to Fr. Ingalls', and as we adjust to life far away from a number of supportive alumni who moved away from Halifax in Summer 2019. I realize that I also will, at some point, go away. In my administrative capacity, I want to leave behind helpful systems which will allow future administrators to serve the community well without an unnecessarily long learning curve. I have also emphasized administration for the simple reason that it is one of my strengths. Put more spiritually, my emphasis on administration springs from my delight in serving my friends by being reliable in the performance of the behind-the-scenes duties on which they depend to serve our community in their stations.

Despite this focus, about 60% of my time in the position is spent giving support to the Chaplain and Wardens in on-the-ground programming. This has taken a multitude of forms—from printing and posterizing to cooking and cleaning—depending on what the most pressing need is.

Practically speaking, these are some of the larger tasks which I have focused on this semester:

- 1) Overhaul of our electronic archives, for easy storage and retrieval of documents related to past programming activities and financial administration.
- 2) Development of a Chapel Administrator Handbook, to assist with future transitions in the position.
- 3) Development of systems to ensure that all invoices, suppliers, and guest speakers are properly and timely paid.
- 4) Communication with suppliers to build and restore smooth working relationships.
- 5) In progress now: gathering of texts, photos, etc. which have been shared with the community this year, archiving; revitalization of the website as a public archive for accessing this material; and preparation for a very unusual Fall term.

IN THE PAST, it has also been the Admin's responsibility to answer questions at the AGM about the Chapel budget and actual expenses, so I here I would like to provide the essential numbers and make a few comments about the story they tell about this year's activities.

Income Accounts

Account	Budget	Actual	Shortfall
Chapel Retreat – Income ¹ <i>(Participant Donations)</i>	8,000.00	3,766.00	(4,234.00)
Chapel Wedding Rentals ²	4,000.00	1,500.00	(2,500.00)
Chapel Offerings ³	21,200.00	14,607.13	(6,592.87)
Divinity Funds and Endowments ⁴	72,000.00	70,874.67	(1,125.33)
Totals⁵	105,200.00	90,747.80	(14,452.20)
Annual Gifts ⁶	-	37,237.63	-

Notes on Income Accounts:

(1) We have a notable shortfall on retreat donations, even though the target of this budget is already significantly lower than the cost of hosting retreats. This shortfall is due, I think, to the fact that the approach to retreat costs for most of that program's history has been somewhat relaxed lately. Retreat forms used to list the cost as a "fee," designating a specific amount for students and another for the employed, with a note encouraging those who could not pay to contact the Chaplain (who would tell them that it is not necessary to pay). Now, the retreat cost is advertised as "pay-what-you-can" or "optional" with only a suggested donation. Reversion to the previous approach to covering our substantial retreat costs would be welcome, and might also have the side effect of generating greater buy-in to the programmed activities on retreat.

(2) These weddings took place last summer but fall in this year's budget. Little can be done to increase wedding income. Whether we get wedding inquiries is mostly not up to us.

(3) Our failure to meet our offerings budget most likely has to do with poor service attendance, partly throughout the year and acutely at the end of the year when our final services, including Holy Week, were cancelled due to COVID-19 closures. However, this income only accounts for money that is physically put in the plate during worship (or given the specific designation "Chapel offerings" through the online system). Most of the money donated to the Chapel annually, received through the King's website, is put into the separate "Annual Gifts" fund (see below).

(4) This income is roughly fixed, and is generated by the university's investments, especially of "Divinity Funds" set aside for the Chapel when the King's Divinity School closed. This is the largest source of our income.

(5) Do not be distressed by our \$14,452.20 shortfall of our income targets in these categories, because, although we under-received, we also under-spent by a larger margin, landing us in a surplus overall.

(6) The "Annual Gifts" fund represents money received through the King's website. It is set aside, rather than included with the other offerings, because it is a "restricted fund" for the Chapel, which means that we must identify which specific projects we undertake with this money when we spend it. This fund tends to get spent if there are large, unusual projects on the go, and is not spent if there are not. In a deficit year, we may also have used this fund at the end of the year to cover our shortfall. Since there were neither exceptional project expenses nor a shortfall this year, this amount was carried forward to next year.

Expense Accounts: Programming

Account	Budget	Actual	Over (Under)
Graphics & Printers	7,200.00	3,805.89	(3,394.11)
Liturgical Supplies	7,500.00	6,603.19	(896.81)
Honoraria	4,000.00	4,196.00	196.00
Hospitality	7,800.00	5,597.30	(2,202.70)
Clergy, Speakers, Preachers Expenses	6,800.00	1,481.66	(5,318.34)
Chapel Retreat	24,000.00	20,208.67	(3,791.33)
Outreach	3,000.00	3,401.83	401.83
Miscellaneous	500.00	2,081.87	1,581.87
Totals	60,800.00	47,376.41	(13,423.59)

Notes on Programming Expense Accounts:

In a few categories, we were pretty well on-budget, or would have been had not the year been cut short by COVID-19 closures, and there is little to comment on. These categories are honoraria, liturgical supplies (which would have come close to the budgeted amount after Holy Week), hospitality (which would have approximately met the budget, or perhaps exceeded, post-Resurrection Feast), and outreach.

In three categories (graphics and printers, speakers, and retreats), we were well underbudget. The retreat budget was not met probably because the retreats had slightly fewer participants than last year, which meant that costs were also lower. In the other two accounts, our end-of-year numbers suggest that we relied more on our in-house resources this year than we have in the past. We did more of our advertising using small batches of posters printed on-campus for campus use, rather than having them professionally printed for distribution around the city; and we hosted fewer guests to the university than usual, and generally more local guests for whom we didn't need to provide flights or hotels. This has not been intentionally pursued as a way of cutting costs, but rather reflects a difference in scale between the chaplaincy's past and current projects, or perhaps a contraction of the human resources (in the form of

student involvement) with the consequence that we could not support a more ambitious schedule of hosting guests and advertising our programming.

We overspent in the “misc.” category, which includes professional development for the Chaplain, organ maintenance, and office supplies.

Expense Accounts: Salaries and Fees

Account	Budget	Actual	Over (Under)
Salaries	36,400.00	33,524.98	(2,875.02)
Investment Management Fees	8000.00	6,558.54	(1,441.46)
Totals	44,400.00	40,083.52	(4,316.48)

Notes on Salaries and Fees:

The “salaries” numbers do not include the half of the Chaplain’s salary which is paid by the university (the other half being paid by the diocese), because the university does not expect us to fund his salary out of our income. The Chaplain’s salary is the only expense to the broader university of the chaplaincy program. As such, the “salaries” number is mostly for the Chapel Administrator, aside from some benefits contributions to the Chaplain.

The “investment management fees” are the cost to the university of having our portion of the university endowments managed by external financial professionals.

Totals

	Income	Expenses	Surplus
Budget	105,200.00	105,200.00	-
Actual	90,747.80	87,459.93	3,287.87
Annual Gifts	37,237.63	-	37,237.63

In general, our totals tell two stories. First, it was a financially successful year, in which we spent slightly less on our programming and operating expenses than we brought in through plate offerings and our

regular endowment income. Taking into account our untouched annual gifts income, which will carry forward to next year, it was an extraordinarily successful year from a financial standpoint.

Second, even though we have a surplus, both our income and expenses were significantly lower than predicted (income 14% lower, expenses 17% lower), which indicates a general contraction of the chaplaincy program by comparison to recent years, both in student involvement (hence our smaller expenses) and donor enthusiasm (hence our smaller income). Neither contraction is catastrophic, but each is significant. The causes and solutions to this problem—insofar as it is a problem, although it may instead reflect a transition in the chaplaincy's goals—are a matter for communal and pastoral reflection.

SACRISTAN'S REPORT

Isaac Grainger; appended post-publication

And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne (Revelation 8:3).

UPON assuming the role of Sacristan on last year's Easter, having received a picture of the position from my tenure as assistant of the same in the previous year, I immediately felt the weight of responsibility the position entails. The sacristan is chiefly responsible for all-things-liturgy and worship in the Chapel's programming. Being responsible for and attempting to uphold the robust wealth of traditions that make the Chapel what it is this year has been difficult and frustrating whilst also being a privilege and a blessing.

Before getting into the meat of things I should like to offer my deepest gratitude to all of the servers and officiants who worked with me this year. I would also like especially to mention Father Ingalls our Chaplain and Cameron Lowe my assistant together with Apolonia Perri and Benjamin von Bredow, upon whom I depended immeasurably this year and without whom many of the duties of the sacristan would have gone undone. Furthermore, it obviously need not be said, and I am sure it will have been said a number of times thus far in the booklet for which I write this report, that this "Liturgic-Academic" year at the Chapel has been rather peculiar. I shall commence, however, from the beginning!

Fall Term

September marked the usual taking up of the regular practices and traditions of Chapel worship from the reduced form that they took over the summer months. This includes Sunday morning worship, daily Morning, Mid-Day, and Evening Prayer, daily Mass, Monday and Tuesday Night Compline, chorale Evensong on Wednesdays, and of course the much-beloved Thursday evening Solemn Choral Eucharist. The Fall Term also brought with it the resurrection Wine Before Breakfast on Wednesday mornings.

Out of doors, there were three primary events: the Cape Split Hike, the Thanksgiving Retreat, and the Fall Retreat. The unsheltered liturgies were largely far simpler than what is regularly celebrated in the Chapel; the importance of offering to God the best that we can reasonably offer reverently, without overstepping, was emphasized. Samuel Landry took the role of Retreat Sacristan for the Thanksgiving

Retreat. Being the semester of the hurricane, there was some degree of panic concerning especially the Cape Split Hike, but in the end, all went largely according to plan.

Winter Term

It is likely that this academic year will forever be known as “the year of the plague” or something similar. Nevertheless, before the calamity, worship restarted in January according to the usual rhythms. It was decided that Wine Before Breakfast should not continue in the Winter Term. Though we lost power on the Winter Retreat, the Offices were kept and the Eucharist was celebrated. On March 12th, Apolonia Perri was confirmed by Archbishop Mark MacDonald, the High Mass to mark which was the last celebrated in the Chapel to this date, as the weekend following brought with it the Covid-19 lockdown.

The Chapel was given both ecclesiastical and civil approval to continue the liturgy through the lockdown, provided that all the legal regulations were followed. The Daily Offices were kept and the Mass was celebrated on Sundays and Feast Days. The community which remained in Halifax was small yet dedicated to maintaining the flow of the liturgy. Holy Week and Easter were also celebrated according to a far simpler formula than that of past years. Once again, the importance of offering to God the best that we can reasonably offer reverently, without overstepping, was emphasized. A love of plainchant was either cultivated or deepened in those of us who were present.

Respectfully Submitted,

Isaac Grainger, *Sacristan*

SOME THANKS FROM THE CHAPLAIN

The Rev'd Dr. Ranall Ingalls; appended post-publication

On behalf of the College and the Chapel, I would like to thank especially

- **Paul Halley**, Director of Music, for the vision and care he brings to our worship and the music program. If 'to sing is to pray twice', music in the Chapel invites us to pray many times over.
- **Vanessa Halley**, Music Program Manager, whose care with respect to the practical details is singular, and makes all the difference.
- **Our Wardens**, Alan Rempel, Apolonia Perri and Katy Weatherly, for their care for King's and for students this past year. Often the Chaplain has not made it easy for them, and this was a difficult year in many other ways, too. And yet they continued, determined to pass on to others good things they have received. Our prayers and good wishes go with Alan, who has moved to Ottawa. He is much missed.
- **Alison Kitt** for her steady, consistent work as Treasurer.
- **Isaac Grainger**, Sacristan, for his care for our worship both in the Chapel and on retreats. He was assisted by Cameron Lowe and Apolonia Perri, to whom thanks are also due.
- **Our servers, cantors, and officiants**, too many to try to name. When it is said (rightly) that the vast majority of the worship that takes place in the Chapel on a weekly basis is student led, so much is left unsaid, and so many left unnamed.
- **Helen Hillis**, Altar Guild President, who faithfully sought to bring people together on Tuesday evenings to prepare especially for the Choral services each week. She took on this often thankless work with a quiet faithfulness all too easy to overlook, rooted in an intelligent and prayerful awareness of its real importance.
- **Nathan Ferguson**, our Intercessor. In his report he speaks of how he came to recognize 'a community or parliament of things inclined toward and resonant with each other in a movement toward the divine'. This vision of the universe as in some way 'one' – as a *cosmos* – is essential to

everything that we are and do, and it is everything to have people praying who are rooted in that vision and can recall us to it.

- **Nick Halley**, Director of the King's Chorus, of Capella Regalis, and who, without title, our mentor and coach on retreats who year by year introduces the singing of the psalms and canticles in a memorable way. Our life together and our prayer is so much richer for your part in it.
- **Fr Dr Tom Curran**, for the Sunday service, for assistance especially at the Thursday Eucharists, and for sermons like none delivered anywhere else on the planet, challenging, occasionally bewildering, and always surprising and delighting.
- **Megan Krempa**, Artist-in-Residence, for her work and for her patience. Many will have seen the Chapel Christmas Card and the cover of the Holy Week meditations booklet.
- **Jenny Lapp**, our first Bard-in-Residence, for gifts of poetry and song, for encouraging the love of these things in others, and for some memorable performances.
- **Sarah Sharp**, YouthNet tutoring co-ordinator, for her attentiveness to many moving parts for the sake of the kids.
- **Arden Rogalsky**, for his report on Concerts and Open Mics and his part in organizing them and his performances.
- **Madelaine Wheeler**, Chapel Administrator for the autumn term, for the courage and determination with which she took up the position, the attentiveness to and care for students that she brought to it, also demonstrated as a Don. Her departure due to illness was a great loss. Ginny Wilmhoff spoke for many when she talked about this at the AGM.
- **Benjamin von Bredow**, Chapel Administrator for the winter term, for the humility quietly to undertake work that will never be noticed unless it is not done, and carrying it out with an efficiency that can be terrifying. For the most part he has worked behind the scenes, out of sight, but we owe him very much. The very peculiar year that lies before us would be almost unthinkable without him. I am also grateful for his friendship, encouragement and, occasionally, correction.
- **Maria Bartholomew**, for directing the Women's Compline Choir until a family emergency called her away, and to
- **Cristalle Watson**, who has continued Maria's good work.

I would also like to thank

- **Chaplain's Assistant Fr Benjamin Lee**; Dean of Students Katie Merwin; Assistant Dean of Students Ginny Wilmhoff; Associate Director of FYP Susan Dodd; Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Officer Jordan Roberts; Director of Facilities Ian Wagschal; Tutor, Poet, Priest and physician of souls Fr Christopher Snook; Fr Nicholas Hatt, Schema-Igumen Luc and the monks of the Annunciation Hermitage in New Germany; Vice-President Peter O'Brien; and President Bill Lahey.

Each of these has been a friend to the Chapel and the Chaplain. Such friendship has been expressed in many different ways.

This list is in no way exhaustive.

On a personal note, I must mention my friend and predecessor, **Fr Gary Thorne**, who has continued to pray, keeping his mind in hell but refusing to despair.

'To pray for the world is to shed blood' (St Silouan the Athonite).

ALTAR GUILD NOTE

Meghan Kitt, former Altar Guild President; appended post-publication

The following note was to be included in the minutes of the AGM 2018/2019, and was discussed briefly at the AGM 2019/2020. It was composed for an e-mail to the Altar Guild in preparation for Holy Week 2019.

Briefly, the altar guild's responsibility is to care for the chapel space. This is for the sake, primarily, of two domains: supporting the liturgy and creating a contemplative space. The care of the chapel is largely practical, with many small, repetitive tasks, as well as an careful eye to the state of things, particularly at the back of the chapel. This is all to make it possible to pray: creating outward order to carry the inwardly disordered. There are many people who attend the services in the chapel; there are also many who only enter the chapel when it is empty, and it is possible and crucial to care for them, though we may never meet them, by caring for the building we share.

It is my hope, always, for the altar guild that we do not carry out these tasks understanding them to be only preparation for others' prayer, but that our attentiveness and service are the very offering of ourselves and those we care for to God.

A WARDEN'S MEDITATION

Apolonnia Perri, Warden; appended post-publication

The following meditation was composed by Apolonia in her personal preparation for writing the Wardens' Report with her co-wardens.

PAY attention, then, to nature, which surrounds you. In nature everything is obedience, unconditional obedience. Here "God's will is done, as in heaven, so also on earth"... In nature it is the case that, as scripture says, "not one sparrow falls to the ground without his will." And this is so not only because he is the Almighty, but because everything is unconditional obedience; his will is the only thing: there is not the least objection; not a word, not a sigh is heard; the unconditionally obedient sparrow falls to the ground in unconditional obedience if it is God's will. In nature everything is unconditional obedience. The sighing of the wind, the echo of the forest, the murmuring of the brook, the hum of summer, the whispering of the leaves, the hiss of grass, every sound you hear is all compliance, so that in it you can hear God as you can hear him in the music of the obedient heavenly bodies. –Sören Kirkegaard, *The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air*

I began the year thinking about obedience; about obeying the will of God, which means also trying to discern how to obey God. It was the only way I could think to start off the year serving the Chaplaincy and clinging to a path of light. So Fr. Ingalls left copies of *From Brokenness to Community* at the back of the Chapel, and I read it a number of times. Jean Vanier's two lectures to a Harvard class about his vision for L'Arche and his experience in intentional community. L'Arche is undoubtedly a place of deep compassion, despite the news about Vanier this year we cannot discredit their vision, nor do I believe we can discredit the words we started reading together in September 2019. Vanier says that it is in community that he discovered the cry for friendship and communion. He describes being in communion as being present with someone, to see their beauty inside and exceeding their pain. Loving others involves suffering with and for them; such is the literal sense of compassion.

"Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2).

How do we obey this law? We must pray for one another, we must hold up each other's affliction and desires to God and courageously but humbly bring his attention to them. He hears our cries for one another and has mercy on us. We must also practically show up for each other. Nothing could happen in

the Chapel if we don't show up for each other. I have tied my hands many times this year and failed to hold you up, both practically and spiritually. But I think together these levels mingle when we remember what keeps us together—that is religion, or a community of friendship and prayer.

Vanier sets up a challenge in his second lecture, he says, “I don't believe we can really put roots down in community unless there is a consciousness that God has called us to be there” (42). Far from marrying the secular with the sacred, but I think Vanier points us to a consideration of vocation and place. In a perfectly natural way, we are called to be here—in Halifax. But answering the call to be here, answering a call to be in community and obey the law of Christ, involves loss. Vanier says that obeying this call includes the grief of sacrificing ourselves for this call. So he calls community a place of conflict and death, but also a place of resurrection. He says, “belonging should always be a means to personal becoming,” because by obeying the call to community, we learn to discern what that call is, how we fit into that vocation individually. Vanier says we become conscious of the way community is a place for us of purification, “that will lead us into a deeper love and liberation, a place where cleansed of our egocentric attitudes we will be able to give new life to others” (40). Community is a place we learn to shed our egocentricities to be present to one another.

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (Eph. 4:14-16).

We cannot carry one another by our own strength and power. Vanier says, “I think we can only truly experience the presence of God, meet Jesus, receive the good news, in and through our own poverty, because the kingdom of God belongs to the poor, the poor in spirit, the poor who are crying out for love.” (20) In our poverty we discover that we are still loved and sustained by a given benevolence. We must realize how wounded we are, and the prevalence of love in our wounds. In our weakness we discover the strength of divine love and friendship. By a mystery God brings peace, compassion and healing in our wounds, just as he promises life in death. God's incarnation reveals his humility and patience, the power and wisdom in his weakness and foolishness. It is by the power of God's mercy and forgiveness that we can recollect our communion with one another.

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. (2 Cor. 12:9-10).

Vanier says that true community is the realization that evil is inside us—it is inside me: “I cannot think of taking the speck of dust out of my neighbour’s eye unless I am working on the log in my own. Evil is here in me. Warfare is inside . . . me and I am called to seek wholeness inside myself. If I am growing toward wholeness, then I will be an agent of wholeness” (50). So we are called to work on the evil inside of us, and from there we can turn outward with the hope that we are learning to love. This evil is not abstract; it’s the pride inside me, the fear, delusion, lies in the cracks of my heart. Vanier’s words teach us that by obeying our vocation we can become aware of our conscience, and of our dependence on the gift of friendship. We cannot be present to one another in any real capacity without love, without transforming our desires into friendship and admitting our own poverty of spirit. This love and transformation is a miracle. Friendship and charity are miraculous signs of God’s healing power and of his sacrificial love for us. Human love is a site of betrayal but also a sign of divine love, of forgiveness and transformation. By becoming aware of our conscience we liberate ourselves to give to each other joyfully. I have experienced it in my time as a Warden too, and it has been a joy to learn to give myself to all of you these past two years. Thank you for teaching me to shed my self-love and desire to love God-ward; thank you for the gift of friendship.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. (1 Cor. 13:1-2).

Forgive me, all of you, for Christ’s sake.

Respectfully submitted,

Apolonnia Perri