



# The Church of St. John the Evangelist, Kitchener

# ON EAGLE'S WINGS

February 24, 2019

Available online at [StJohn316.com/OEW](http://StJohn316.com/OEW)

## How Much is Enough?

*Elaine Duncanson*

Recently in the news two judges passed sentence on two murderers which aroused noisy comments about the length. We were all shocked by the stories that led to the sentences. We had great sympathy for the victims and those who loved them. The judges too are human beings with emotions who must protect society but also stay within what the law allows.

When the law allows consecutive sentences, should that be the choice every time? Would that reduce the hurt and revulsion we feel? Would that make each victim count for more with us?

Alexander Bissonette will be a senior citizen if he is granted parole at the end of his time. He is a young man now and could leave prison with little or no work experience, no RRSP, and no savings. He will have no chance for love and marriage and children. His parents look like decent people from the photo. Just like us and our neighbours. They said, "he is not a monster". He was probably a fine little boy and much like many others in the neighbourhood.

His parents said that they heard too late about the bullying he endured. Then there seemed to be some mental health issues. Those things would have an effect on how he looked at the world around him. He killed innocent men and left families in disarray. We can understand the anger expressed by one of the survivors when he talks of the 'orphans' having to go to the parole hearing in forty years' time to keep the man in prison.

Will the world have changed much in forty years or will there still be bullies to pick on the vulnerable? Will we have a more sympathetic view of mental illness? Will we support mental illness the way we support physical illness? While the young man adjusts to life in prison, we have the same forty years to adjust our attitudes and make the world a more comfortable place for those who hurt before they hurt others.

In the other case, the murderer will be 91 when he goes to the parole board to show why he should be released. If he lives that long. For Bruce McArthur it would mean moving from prison to a long term care residence. His crimes were planned and carried out over a long span of time. Questions have been asked why he was not caught sooner.

Each man he killed was important to someone else. They had family and friends and lived in the community. Did those left behind not notice enough detail to link the stories together? The police are good at investigating but they need a few solid clues to start with. Something must tie one story to another. How much do we know of the details of our neighbours' lives? Do we notice things or just remain in our own bubble?

As the story unfolded, we felt shock, horror, disgust, and revulsion. A group of people had lived in fear for years because they felt targeted. Then we heard about the homeowners where the remains were found. The street name sounded familiar to me so I looked it up. It was across Pottery Road which is now Bayview extension. I had gone there once with a new girl in my class who lived in an apartment building on that street.

The photo shows the house next to a series of apartment buildings. Even with a huge gap of time and considerable distance, the thought that I know the area gives me a creepy feeling. It was a good neighbourhood in my time, many doctors, a number of professors, some upwardly mobile families, a couple of journalists, and a young Margaret Atwood. Just think how it would feel knowing that the planters which bloomed so well in your garden had contained human remains. The homeowners had

*(Continued on page 4)*

---

The next issue of On Eagle's  
Wings will be available on  
March 31st.

# Nurses Notes

Elsie Millerd, Parish Nurse

## Lenten Food and Fasting

***“One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”***

*(Deuteronomy 8: 3 and Matthew 4:4)*

In the Christian tradition, the season of Lent brings two traditions related to food: eating meatless meals and fasting. Lent is a time when we practice sacrifice as a way of remembering Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. In eating simply, we honor Christ and the fundamental connection between bodies and spirits. Refraining from eating meat—or other favorite foods—reminds us to be mindful of the food we consume and the reasons why. Fasting from particular foods or entire meals intertwines intentional prayer into the discipline of how we eat.

### ***Lenten Fasting***

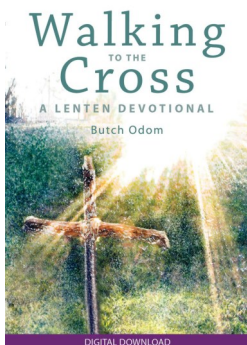
- The purpose of fasting is not to become weak or ill but to create a hunger for God.
- Fasting removes dependence or excuses that the comforts of food may give us, instead pointing us to the sufficiency of God.
- Traditions that encourage adherents to fast suggest two small meals during the day that together do not equal a regular meal, no snacks, and a modest regular meal at the end of the day.
- Drink water throughout your fast, letting the simplicity of this choice remind you of the simplicity of your purpose in fasting.
- Be sure **to always take your daily medications as appropriate** with your fast. You may have to adjust insulin or refrain from fasting if your health would be compromised.
- As your hunger increases, allow your prayers to also increase.

Resource: *Church Health Reader*, Winter, 2019. <http://chreader.org/lenten-food-and-fasting/>

## Think exercise!

Physical exercise, especially walking, is a prescription for good health in so many domains. It is believed to prevent such diseases as cancer, heart disease and diabetes. It has been demonstrated that it helps improve mental health and memory. Linking exercise with a spiritual practice provides an opportunity to experience wholistic health.

With spring just around the corner Lent is a great time to commit to an exercise routine. Both Kitchener and Waterloo are distributing their Active magazine (see Health Bulletin Board in the Upper Parish Hall or check online) with registration for spring programs opening on February 26<sup>th</sup> and March 6<sup>th</sup> respectively. Community Support Connections provides free exercise programs throughout the Waterloo Region. To find a location near you, go to <https://communitysupportconnections.org/services/exercise-2/> or call 519-772-8787.



*Walking to the Cross* is a 40-day devotional designed for the Christian season of Lent. It invites you to make walking, reflecting and prayer a part of your daily Lenten practice. Just as Jesus traveled the long journey to the cross, we believe that walking is an act of spiritual and physical devotion.

Every week begins with a psalm and the opportunity to set a “movement goal,” or a reasonable physical challenge for yourself. Your movement goal may be taking more steps each day, going for a daily walk, wearing a pedometer to count the distance you walk each day, or any other challenge you wish to set for yourself. Each day in Lent also offers a passage of Scripture along with a reflection and prayer.

This resource is available as a digital download at <https://store.churchhealth.org/collections/lenten->

*(Continued on page 3)*

*(Continued from page 2)*

[season/products/walking-to-the-cross](#)

## Who Is our Neighbour?

On January 30<sup>th</sup> Preston Parsons, Simon Guthrie and I had an opportunity to get to know some of our neighbours in the area surrounding St. John's Church. We were part of a consultation group of people occupying premises near the three proposed sites for safe consumption of addictive substances and treatment services in the Kitchener downtown. This group of neighbours was invited to share their thoughts about the advantages and challenges related to each site. Through the discussion we were able to hear the fears and anxieties of our neighbours as well as their hopes and dreams. We were also given an opportunity to share our own perspectives on the sites.

Sitting down and listening to folks is a wonderful way to get to know one's neighbours. As we listen with attentiveness and respect, we begin to recognize our common life and concerns. We also earn the opportunity to speak into the concerns with words of hope and encouragement. I came away from this meeting with a sense that the challenges of drug addiction in our downtown might actually be an opportunity for us to join our neighbours in helping create a safe and caring environment for all those who frequent our neighbourhood. Let us pray that this might be so.

The upcoming Lenten study on "Who is our Neighbour?" will be another opportunity to learn about our neighbours and to explore our potential as good neighbours. I look forward to seeing you then and hearing your perspective.

## The Biology of Desire: Why Addiction is Not a Disease

With the opioid crisis playing out right in our "front yard," I have been interested to try to understand more about the nature of addiction and what drives people to take tremendous risks with drugs. Marc Lewis's book, *The Biology of Desire: Why Addiction is Not a Disease*, (2015, New York: Public Affairs) is quite illuminating, especially for those of us with a scientific mind. As a neuroscientist, he is able to describe the changes which happen in the brain as substances are used to create a feedback loop that is powered by desire. He also provides stories of various people with whom he has worked who describe the process and the hold that it had on them. The illustrations helped me to have greater understanding and empathy for those people who are caught in the addiction journey.

What is the hope that Marc Lewis holds out for people with addictions? As someone who has walked the journey himself, he realizes the hope of freedom from addiction lies in the desire of the person to find a better way of life. He sees recovery as a developmental process that involves major changes in thought and behaviour through ongoing neural development. He believes that the process of reflection and perspective taking helps to overcome the "now appeal" of substance use. It is a realignment of desire, switching from the goal of immediate relief to the goal of long term fulfillment. It comes with the alignment of desire with personally derived, future oriented goals. When the person reaches this point, treatment can begin.

This book is helping me to understand how I might pray for our neighbours who suffer various addictions. It is available in the Kitchener Public Library.

**Reminder:** If you are hospitalized or have health needs, the only way that the church can know and support you is by letting us know. Please call or have someone call the church office, rector or myself if you would like us to be involved in your healing process through prayer, presence or any other practical ways.

*(Continued from page 1)*

trusted him with access to their property while they were away and he repaid them with a large criminal investigation.

So much of the talk around the sentencing sounds like a thirst for revenge. The sentence must be severe enough to deter a thinking person from committing such a crime. It must also protect society from people who do not think before acting or have some impairment in the thinking process. The hope is that the person will come to understand how society views the crime and take responsibility for their actions. They might learn a useful skill or complete their education and find a way to contribute to society while in prison.

No matter how long the sentence is, it can not bring back the dead. The grief and anger remain until each person can find peace and move on. The rest of us can learn about helping our neighbours and perhaps prevent some of these horrible crimes.

## **World Day of Prayer**

*Enid Emery*

Just a reminder that the World Day of Prayer service for the downtown churches will be taking place here, at St. John's, next Saturday March 2nd at 11.00 am. This will be followed by a short film about Slovenia, the country whose ladies designed this years service.

This will be followed by Lunch in the Upper Parish Hall . In order to help with the catering we have asked all ten churches to give us some idea of how many people will be attending from their congregations. We have put a sign-up sheet on the table in the Narthex for St. John's congregation.

### **What is World Day of Prayer?**

In 1918 some ladies in Saskatchewan came together to found *The Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada*. This is a national ecumenical organization which encourages Christian women to work together in prayer and action. Today's mission for WI-CC is to empower all Christians to pursue justice, peace and reconciliation by prayer and action. World Day of Prayer grew from this council and now takes place in 170 countries around the world. Because of the political situation in Europe, Slovenia was only able to hold their first services in 2000.