



# The Church of St. John the Evangelist, Kitchener

# ON EAGLE'S WINGS

November 28, 2021

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

## People, Look East: The WAT Advent Devotional 2021

*Tianna Gocan*

First Sunday in Advent

Amos 1:1-5, 13-2:8, 1 Thess 5:1-11, Luke 21:5-19

You don't need me to tell you that change is hard, especially after living through the past two years. Perhaps this is why we have a tendency to correlate destruction as something negative as well, because destruction makes change necessary. I, however, would like to challenge our view of destruction, and change it from something we dread, to something we look forward to.

Humanity has found itself, time and time again, caught in corrupt and fallen institutions. From slavery to the prison industrial complex to capitalism, we have been victim to these systems that are rife with sin and that further remove us from God.

We see an example of one such fallen institution in the Gospels. When Jesus visits the temple in both Matthew and Mark, He flips tables and calls out those who were misusing its courtyard for their own gain. Even though the temple was beautiful (Luke 21:5), the fallenness of humanity allowed corruption and sin to run rampant inside its walls.

Jesus saw the sin and injustice that was happening around Him, and He called it out. Jesus also knew that these flawed institutions which were corrupt would have to fall in order for sin to topple along with them. At first glance, it can seem extreme that He predicts the destruction of the temple, an ancient and sacred space of His faith, but we have to remember that, in many cases, it's best to destroy these corrupt institutions completely and begin again from the ground up. Dismantling corrupt institutions allows for the opportunity for something better to take its place.

I think that this type of destruction mentioned in these readings can also be a much more personal experience. It takes time and effort to truly look inwards at ourselves to determine what sinful habits and mindsets we have integrated into our lives. It takes even longer to dismantle these ideas in order to become better people. In our liturgical calendar, we know that now is the time where Joseph, the fiancé of Mary, a young woman who is heavily pregnant with the Son of God, is doing the exact same thing.

When Joseph first found out about Mary's pregnancy, he "had in mind to divorce her quietly" (Mat 1:19), because, at the time, having a child with someone other than your husband was grounds for a divorce according to Mosaic Law. It was only through God's intervention that Joseph changed his mind. I'm almost sure that, even after he decided to stay with Mary, Joseph had to deconstruct some of his beliefs in order to be fully at peace with marrying Mary and raising Jesus. Joseph's own "temple" (in this case, his beliefs on marriage) had to be destroyed in order to allow something more beautiful, namely being the spouse of Mary and earthly father of Jesus, to exist.

We know that soon, Mary will feel her birthing pains, and as an unwed teenager experiencing her first pregnancy, it very well may feel like destruction which she cannot escape. However, these birthing pains do not bring about the end of this world, nor even the end of her

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The next issue of On Eagle's  
Wings will be available on  
December 19, 2021.

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world, instead, they bring about our salvation in the next world, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Just like Jesus predicted the fall of the temple, we must have faith that the broken institutions that we are faced with will also fall, and that something better, healthier and more fruitful will take its place. I know that amidst the growing police brutality, soul-crushing capitalism, and a planet that is literally on fire, I find myself praying "Come, Lord Jesus" under my breath when I feel like my soul can't take any more. I've caught myself admitting that I'd be a much happier person if God just got on with the apocalypse already. I'm yearning for the destruction of sin, and for the new Heaven and the new earth that has been promised to us.

Despite this, I still try to find hope in remembering that our God is a God that destroys injustice to a point where not even a brick of the old, painful, sinful institutions can be found amongst the rubble. So, until this happens, we need to run with endurance the race that is set before us (Heb 12:1), through famine, through earthquakes, through war, through corruption and through broken systems. Most of all, we need to remember that everlasting salvation is coming, and I, for one, can't wait until it's here.

## The Christmas Story

*84th year from the Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto*

When the pandemic shut down live theatre last year, the cast of ***The Christmas Story*** took to the streets of Toronto to create a one-of-a-kind "Pandemic Pageant". This innovative film returns on-demand, online December 1st - January 6th. Suggested donation: \$10. ASL version available.

[www.thechristmasstory.ca](http://www.thechristmasstory.ca)



# Vaccine Status and Worship: Theological Considerations in Summary

*Bishop Todd recently asked Preston to write up a theological background for his vaccine policy, specifically the policy of asking some leaders to be vaccinated, but not requiring vaccines for people to attend worship. We are printing a condensed version of it here for your consideration.*

## Part I: The Ordering of Ministries

Can the bishop ask some people to be vaccinated, other than clergy? The answer here is that yes, the bishop can ask lay ministers to be vaccinated because the bishop is chief pastor, and his or her oversight extends further than clerical orders. The bishop already licenses people to a variety of lay ministries such as lay reading and communion administration. Part of that licensing process includes ensuring that preparation has taken place, including a safe church procedure intended to keep people safe from harm. To ask for people who are in ministry in the church to be appropriately vaccinated in a time of pandemic would be an extension of our existing practice of ordering ministries, including some lay ministries, an ordering that is concerned with safety and has its roots in Anglican episcopal ministry and practice.

## Part II: Worship as Public

Worship is *public*, an assumption that is made clear in the Articles of Religion, in particular articles 23 and 24.

Article 24 is about language in worship, saying that it is “repugnant ... to minister the Sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people.” The principle at work here is that unreasonable obstacles to worship should be removed. This raises a question for us, in our time: does proof of vaccine create an unreasonable obstacle to worship? Or alternately, does a policy necessitating people to be vaccinated constitute a reasonable obstacle to worship?

The reasonability of a vaccine passport for worship has to do with the balancing of risk and safety, and benefits from the work of epidemiologists who can inform our understanding of the degree of risk to our safety. Current variants do not create extreme risk when other mitigating factors are in place, such as masking and distancing, making the addition of a passport—in order to increase a small increment of safety—an unreasonable demand. This is in differentiation from the more political and coercive nature of some provincial guidance; it is not clear that we should be concerned with participating in a program where vaccine passports are used to motivate the unvaccinated to be vaccinated, for example. We are not interested in coercion, but persuasion.

There is another way that worship is public, in addition to the question of reasonable or unreasonable obstacles, and this has to do with a more clearly theological aspect of worship: the relationship between God’s work in Christ, and the proclamation of that Word in worship. Paul, at the end of his speech/sermon to king Agrippa in Acts 26:26, sums up a theme throughout Luke and Acts: “Indeed the king knows about these things, and to him I speak freely; for I am certain that none of these things has escaped his notice, for *this was not done in a corner*” (italics added for emphasis). Paul is speaking here of two things: the life, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus as something that “was not done in a corner” but rather in a public way, and of Paul’s preaching of Christ as similarly done in a public way. So we already have a sense here that the “publicness” of the life of Jesus is linked to the “publicness” of its proclamation.

But there is, here, a deeper ordering of our proclamation. The life and the proclamation of that life are ordered not

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simply according to form, but also according to *content*; that is, proclamation makes present, in worship, the same Word that was incarnate in Christ. And if the Word incarnate in Jesus worked in the world in a public fashion, the proclamation that makes that same Word present in worship would be public as well. If the church developed a habit of making worship somehow restricted or private, and including in that worship a proclamation of the Word that was restricted or private, it is unclear that we would be proclaiming the same word that was made flesh and whose ministry was "not done in a corner."

The position here is that these two arguments about the nature of worship as public, that 1. unreasonable obstacles to worship should not be put in place, and that 2. the proclamation of the Word is public according to both form and content, are arguments that lean heavily against making worship private through such things vaccine passports.

### Part III: Boundaries to Participation in the Eucharist

This is the strongest argument against vaccine passports: not admitting the unvaccinated to eucharistic worship, and thereby limiting their reception of the sacrament, creates a boundary to the reception of the Eucharist other than baptism and effectively excommunicates the unvaccinated and those otherwise unable to provide proof of positive vaccine status.

We can, and should, say that people should get vaccinated and that Anglicans are effectively pro-vaccine; but we cannot, in good faith, raise non-vaccine status to the equivalent of rending the fabric of the church. To be unvaccinated, or otherwise unable to provide proof of positive vaccine status, is not something that could be considered equivalent to rending the fabric of the church, and therefore is not grounds for creating a barrier between them and the sacrament.

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<sup>1</sup> See Jaroslav Pelikan's commentary on Acts, pp. 275-78 and throughout, for a discussion of the importance of Acts 26:26 for Luke-Acts; (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005).

## Collecting Stamps and Spectacles

*Enid Emery*

It's Christmas Time and hopefully everyone will be getting Greetings from friends near and far. Could you please collect all the stamps that come with your Christmas cards, they can be dropped off in an envelope through the letterbox at the church office.



Also if you have changed your glasses recently we will still recycle them for you. If you are able to get to church there are still two boxes on the shelf in the lower cloakroom for both the glasses and the stamps.



The stamps are recycled to "effect hope"--- formerly the Canadian Leprosy Mission and are sold to stamp dealers to raise funds for the organization. The glasses go with optometrists to third world countries where they are reused.

# Cultural Cooking Session

*Al Coughlin and Rihanat El-Alawa*

The Community Kitchen Co-operative Kitchener-Waterloo Inc. received a grant from the United Way with the charitable partner: St. John the Evangelist to deliver a program called Food and Belonging. We hosted our Kitchen Coordinator: Obi Nwanguma originally from Nigeria who now lives in Hamilton with her family. Obi led the cooking with Fadhilah Balogun from the African Women's Alliance.



The following is an excerpt from our storyteller, Rihanat El-Alawa, who interviewed our session volunteers and participated in the cooking sessions. The group produced 50 meals to distribute in the community for each session. Weeks 1 and 2 appeared in the October OEW.



## Week 3

**Recipe:** Moi-Moi (Bean pudding) with grilled plantain

**Participants:** 10

As participants arrived, things were put together as the chosen recipe takes a lot of time to cook. It is worthy to note that most African foods are cooked from the scratch and so it takes a lot of time to prepare. The beans used had already been peeled; a measured amount was washed and soaked for some time. Some red bell peppers, onions and Jalapeno peppers were washed and kept aside. The peppers and soaked beans were blended until smooth. Some seasoned and cooked sole fish fillets, along with some quartered boiled eggs were added to the blended beans and peppers mix. This mixture was then scooped into aluminum foil moulds and cooked for about 35-45 minutes.

On the side, some ripe plantains were sliced and oven roasted till brown.

Moi-moi is a very delicious staple in the Western parts of Nigeria. It is also a very popular street food that is enjoyed by all. Some people love it spicy, some love it when cooked with dried shrimps or dried fish. As the ladies cooked, there was a discussion of how people enjoyed moi-moi. Someone said she loved it with a cold garri (soaked cassava flakes), some enjoyed it with fresh bread, and some enjoyed it with rice. The discussion also included if our kids still enjoyed African dishes or preferred Western food. It could be seen that as families settle in Canada for years, they begin to drift away slowly from African foods, not because they don't like them but because it takes time, it may be spicy or may have certain herbs and spices that have become less pleasant.

In these very strange times, there is very little connection especially among immigrants who are new, reaching out to them and inviting them to join the circle has really helped them to feel more welcomed and feel at home. Participants feel good knowing that there are other folks with same or similar cultural background to talk to and ask questions, increasing one's self-esteem which in turn builds stronger relationships and a stronger community. The goal is to create a sense of belonging, while breaking isolation and boredom. Participants looked forward to meeting again and learning from each other. Every week had a different theme that may be planned or unplanned. But in the end, there is always a rewarding discussion.

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**Week 4****Recipe:** Geema (Fried diced potatoes with ground beef sauce)**Participants:** 9**Theme:** Helping women understand financial 'health'

Participants gathered to prep the items and ingredients for the meal of the day. The potatoes were washed and diced and soaked in salty water for some time. The ground beef was seasoned and spiced and cooked with some blended tomato and bell peppers and onions and garlic. The soaked diced potatoes was fried and then mixed with the ground beef sauce. Geema is a Sudanese dish somewhat similar to shepherd's pie but using diced potatoes instead of mashed.



The discussion was about financial management. One of the ladies, who is a financial analyst at Sunlife Financial explained to the rest of the group how to save money for future use, especially RRSP and high-interest saving accounts. It was a great discussion and some questions were raised and addressed. Most newcomers are not aware of the RRSP benefit that is available to all eligible residents of Canada. Setting aside some monthly deductible will be topped up and the beneficiary can take the money for use at the right time. It was noted that parents can save for their kids' future higher education.

*Additional excerpts will be shared in the next edition of OEW*

## The Ballad of the Bread Man by Charles Causley (1917-2003)

Mary stood in the kitchen  
Baking a loaf of bread.  
An angel flew in through the window  
'We've a job for you,' he said.

'God in his big gold heaven  
Sitting in his big blue chair,  
Wanted a mother for his little son.  
Suddenly saw you there.'

Mary shook and trembled,  
'It isn't true what you say.'  
'Don't say that,' said the angel.  
'The baby's on its way.'

Joseph was in the workshop  
Planing a piece of wood.  
'The old man's past it,' the neighbours  
said.  
'That girl's been up to no good.'

'And who was that elegant fellow,'  
They said, 'in the shiny gear?'  
The things they said about Gabriel  
Were hardly fit to hear.

Mary never answered,  
Mary never replied.  
She kept the information,  
Like the baby, safe inside.

It was election winter.  
They went to vote in town.  
When Mary found her time had come  
The hotels let her down.

The baby was born in an annex  
Next to the local pub.  
At midnight, a delegation  
Turned up from the Farmers' Club.

They talked about an explosion  
That made a hole on the sky,  
Said they'd been sent to the Lamb & Flag  
To see God come down from on high.

A few days later a bishop  
And a five-star general were seen  
With the head of an African country  
In a bullet-proof limousine.

'We've come,' they said 'with tokens  
For the little boy to choose.'  
Told the tale about war and peace  
In the television news.

After them came the soldiers  
With rifle and bomb and gun,  
Looking for enemies of the state.  
The family had packed and gone.

When they got back to the village  
The neighbours said, to a man,  
'That boy will never be one of us,  
Though he does what he blessed well  
can.'

He went round to all the people  
A paper crown on his head.  
*Here is some bread from my father.*  
*Take, eat, he said.*

Nobody seemed very hungry.  
Nobody seemed to care.  
Nobody saw the god in himself  
Quietly standing there.

He finished up in the papers.  
He came to a very bad end.  
He was charged with bringing the living  
to life.  
No man was that prisoner's friend.

There's only one kind of punishment  
To fit that kind of a crime.  
They rigged a trial and shot him dead.  
They were only just in time.

They lifted the young man by the leg,  
Thy lifted him by the arm,  
They locked him in a cathedral  
In case he came to harm.

They stored him safe as water  
Under seven rocks.  
One Sunday morning he burst out  
Like a jack-in-the-box.

Through the town he went walking.  
He showed them the holes in his head.  
*Now do you want any loaves?* he cried.  
'Not today' they said.

### Note by Andrew Brockett

Charles Causley spent most of his life as a schoolteacher in Launceston, Cornwall, England. He wrote "The Ballad of the Bread Man" in 1962. It was first published in his collection *Underneath the Water* (London, UK: Macmillan, 1968) and was subsequently republished in *The Sun Dancing – Christian Verse*, Compiled and Introduced by Charles Causley (New York, NY: Viking Children's Books, 1982). Unfortunately, neither of those collections is available in the Kitchener or Waterloo public libraries.

Fortunately, however, shortly before his death the Poetry Archive was able to record Causley himself reading the poem: it can be accessed online at <https://poetryarchive.org/poem/ballad-bread-man/>. There is also a clear reading by Tony Price on YouTube at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGYNYiACzvc&ab\\_channel=TonyPrice](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGYNYiACzvc&ab_channel=TonyPrice).

The *Norton Anthology of Children's Literature* says "it is often difficult to distinguish between [Causley's] writings for

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children and those for adults. He himself declared that he did know whether a given poem was for children or adults as he was writing it, and he included his children's poetry without comment in his collected works."

Although the poem may initially shock our sensibilities, I find that it illuminates the Gospel. For example, consider these lines:

*Here is some bread from my father./Take, eat, he said./ Nobody seemed very hungry./ Nobody seemed to care.*

*He came to a very bad end./ He was charged with bringing the living to life.*

*He showed them the holes in his head./ Now do you want any loaves? he cried./ 'Not today' they said.*

## Bales

Rosemary Cliff

For many years, each January, St. John's has packed boxes of gently new and used clothing to be shipped to Kenora. We do this in conjunction with other churches in our Deanery. Kenora is located close to the Manitoba border.

Our clothing boxes are shipped free of charge by Home Hardware. In Kenora, the clothing is delivered to a shop called Twice Is Nice which is operated by St. Alban's Cathedral. While the store is located in Kenora, clothing is also delivered to surrounding First Nations Communities.

We will begin collection of clothing in late December and early January so please put aside any items that you wish to donate. Any clean, gently used, washable clothing is accepted, as well as warm winter items. This year the need is a little different. **What is needed this year is more men's clothing –**

**pants, preferably black or blue jeans, as well as dress shirts but in darker colours or even jean shirts. As well, we have had a request for infant wear up to 6X and blankets for street people.** Shoes or boots are accepted as long as they are in good condition. We are hopeful that this year clothing may be left in the labelled boxes in the upper parish hall as in previous years but if not, we will announce drop off details for the items in the bulletin.

Volunteers will be needed for packing which will take place in the upper parish hall between 10:00 and noon on Saturdays Jan. 8, 15 and 22. Volunteers will also be needed to load the boxes into cars and to deliver them to St. Jacobs on Jan. 29 or on a date to be determined. If you are willing to volunteer or have any questions, please e-mail Rosemary Cliff at [rosemarycliff@rogers.com](mailto:rosemarycliff@rogers.com).

Clothing will be collected until January 22.





## Altar Guild Christmas Flowers

*Enid Emery*

We are once again able to ask for donations towards the Floral decorations for our Christmas services. If you would like to have a friend or relative commemorated in this way or to give thanks for a Personal Blessing, we have placed envelopes on the table at the top of the stairs at the Duke Street entrance.

Please make sure that your name and the person/persons you wish to be remembered are written on the envelope. The envelopes may be put on the collection plate or left at the church office. Any cheques should be made payable to St. John's ACW with Christmas Flowers marked on the memo line.

Many thanks to those folks who have already donated Poinsettias which will also be used to decorate the Church.



## Building, Celebrating, and Strengthening Wrap-Up

*The Rev. James Brown*

At worship on Sunday, November 21, we received the happy results of the *Building, Celebrating, and Strengthening* stewardship program we held in October. The St. John's Stewardship Working Group chose the terms "building, celebrating, and strengthening" to capture the vision they held and continue to hold for St. John's as a vibrant church community that is well equipped for the wide sweep of ministry the congregation undertakes in the very heart of downtown Kitchener.



The financial results of the program are impressive, and are much needed to undergird our programs and broaden our mission efforts; but the building, celebrating, and strengthening also happened as we reflected on our life together and on the grace we have known among God's faithful ones here at St. John's. The heart-to-heart reflections at worship on October 3, 10, and 17, especially those given by Mohan Thomas, Margaret and Andrew Brockett, and Simon Guthrie, allowed us to see St. John's through another's eyes as the faithful, caring, and welcoming community it is.

Not surprisingly, our parishioners responded in love and generosity when they were asked to review and renew their financial support for our shared mission and ministry. For the year 2022, 64 households pledged almost \$186,000, a 20% increase, or approximately \$32,000 more than they gave in 2021. Add to this another 43 households who, we anticipate, will continue to support St. John's at their present level, and our total giving for the year 2022 will be approximately \$235,000. This is wonderful news, but there is more! Just under 10 households have signed on with regular pledges through the Direct Electronic Funds Transfer program (also known as DEFT). And three of these households are new contributors!

For their behind-the-scenes work crunching numbers and preparing stewardship reports and communications from August through November, we especially give thanks for Judy Shantz, Marianne Mellinger, and Rebecca McKay. And now, as we enter a new year of God's grace, mindful of the abundance of gifts we share in our life together, we give thanks for the whole community of St. John the Evangelist, Kitchener, generous, loving, and faithful.

# Thank you so much to everyone who came out to help with the Pudding Factory!

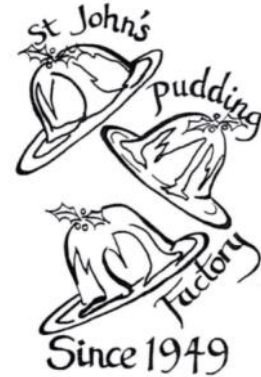
*Jennifer Uttley & Judy Shantz*

*Pudding Factory Coordinators*

We had so many wonderful helpers, starting with the "before the week" people.

## **Thank you to those who;**

- arranged for advertising in the newspaper and on social media
- wrote bulletin announcements
- took pudding orders
- contacted corporate people
- coordinated volunteers
- contacted family and friends to purchase puddings
- entered all of the orders and made labels
- folded recipes
- helped to cut circles
- cut waxed paper to wrap puddings
- made sure we had stoves that worked
- cut the dates then weighed and bagged them
- cleaned raisins and currants
- emptied out the Pudding Factory room and set up for us to begin production early Monday morning



**Thank you** to the kids who carried all of the ingredients upstairs.

**We are grateful** to all of you who came out during the week to help;

- grease cans
- measure ingredients
- mix and mix and mix and mix some more!!
- fill the cans, weigh them (on scales that had been calibrated to make sure they were accurate), tap them down, put on their paper circle caps, and get them ready to be steamed for hours and hours by our wonderful steamers, then "knocked them out"
- hand-wash the cans before putting them through the dishwasher, dried, and stacked the cans so we could use them again next year

After sitting overnight, the puddings are ready to be wrapped in waxed paper and put in Christmas bags with recipes. **Thank you** to those who came and helped with wrapping and bagging .

**Thank you** to the crew who came in on Friday to make sure everyone's order was bagged or boxed and to those who delivered the corporate orders locally.

Thank you to the parishioner who made wonderful shortbread cookies and handmade items to sell and contributed the profits to the Church. You can see what a devoted and committed group of people we have who have made this a success for 72 years.

**Thank you** also to those of you who were unable to physically join us in the work and fellowship, but kept us in your prayers.