

Sharing Stories



**What do our stories mean to us
as Julian of Norwich?**

Introduction by Rebecca Gregg

Seasons of Storytelling started with a simple idea: how do we tell our tell and record our stories, as we look forward to the redevelopment of our land? This was a very intriguing premise when I saw it in Diocesan Youth Internship Program (YIP) project proposal Rev. Monique had submitted for a YIP work placement. Work placements are one of the five components of YIP, with the others being Faith Formation, Leadership skill development, coaching and mentoring. Each parish has a unique history and story that shapes who they are and as a relative newcomer to the Diocese and city of Ottawa for university, I was excited to learn more about one of the communities in the diocese and its people.

This community welcomed me right away, particularly the storytelling team of Paul Dumbrille, Laura D, Rosemary Anderson, Rev. Elizabeth December and Rev. Monique Stone, which was assembled to work on the project in October. One thing was immediately clear to all of us: the process of storytelling was the focus of our work and the end product would be determined by what was shared over the following months. Before Advent we set out the following outline of what Seasons of Storytelling would look like.

As we move towards the redevelopment of our building, we start to think about who we are as a community; our past, our present and our future. Our community is more than a place or a building. Those are the locations for some events that are part of our community story. *Our goal with this project is for everyone to reflect on and share all your Julian of Norwich, St. Michael and All Angels and St. Richard's stories with each other. We want you to think of all the moments that stand out to you: the funny, the sad, the happy, the moving and the inspirational. To share with*

one another the stories of the journey, so far, in the life of our community and parish(es).

Over the months we moved through three Seasons of Storytelling that align with the liturgical seasons. In every Season how we shared our stories changed to align with the Season. As we shared with one another, we remained aware that storytelling requires an audience and the important role that the Ministry of Listening plays; the importance of being present and witnessing each other's stories. The Ministry of Listening is the primary focus in every Season.

The Seasons of Storytelling began in Advent with the theme of '*Telling our stories as we journey*'. Throughout Advent, parish members were asked to bring photos of their lives of the parishes. The photos were to be displayed on a board at the back of the church. Participants were asked to take the time to look at all the photos and share the stories they brought to mind with one another. There was also a paper available to facilitate the writing down of stories related to each week's theme and add them to the board. Additionally, instead of sermons, there was a time to share stories in small groups on the weekly theme.

During the second Season, Epiphany, our theme was '*What do our stories mean to us as Julian of Norwich?*'. We took this opportunity to record some of the stories that were remembered in the first Season. There are many ways to tell stories, so paper and online forms were made available. As well, recorded interviews were done on the phone and in person. We also held an in-person event as the Season of Advent concluded.

The Final season was Easter, when we asked ‘*How our stories have equipped us for our continued journey?*’. At this point we started working on how we would share the highlights from the first two Seasons.

This document is the result of the second and third Seasons and I want to thank everyone who was involved in making these Seasons a success. Everyone who shared and listened during the sermon time in Advent, those who contributed to the board at the back of the church during Advent, those who helped prepare and facilitate our luncheon and everyone who shared their stories in the interview portion. A special thanks to the team behind the project and to David Dow for making all our resources available on the website. Lastly, I want to thank everyone at Julian of Norwich for welcoming me into your community for the last eight months and letting me witness your stories and be a part of a vulnerable and emotional process. I am honoured to have been a part of making this possible.

Rebecca Gregg, YIP intern & Co-ordinator of the Seasons of Storytelling

What brought you to this community?

For years my wife worked as the Office Administrator at St. Richard's Anglican Church and over time I came to know many members of the community. Whenever I volunteered to assist in some of the many community events, I was always amazed at the dedication of their efforts and with the inviting spirit they exhibited. Eventually I decided to become a full time member of the community. (David D.)

I was a member of St. Michael and All Angels since 1985. The historic vote on September 27, 2015 meant that the St. Richard's parishioners felt as I did that amalgamation with St. Richard's was the way forward. St. Michael's closed in October 2015 and I became a member of St. Richard's and St. Michael's until we became Julian of Norwich. (Mac L.)

**When we moved to Ottawa in 1984, we came to St Richard's because it was the closest Anglican Church.
(Marg D.)**

**We had moved to the area and were looking for a church "home".
(Laura D.)**

I was coming back to this community as an adult, having worshipped here as a child, was confirmed here and came back when my parish of St.John the Divine lost our church and church property to the NCC at the end of our 40 year lease. (Martha C.)

Nancy & I were long time members of another Anglican parish in Ottawa. We were members of the choir for many years and also coordinated the counters and were active on various committees and projects. At some point we decided that we needed a change so we explored other Anglican parishes in the area and, knowing Monique from her training days at our parish, we decided to check out Julian. It felt right from our first visit, even though we knew only one other parishioner. The idea of re-purposing the property for affordable housing was a meaningful and challenging outreach legacy that we could get behind. (Nancy and Barry C.)

We had recently moved to Ottawa and had been going to St. Peter's on Merivale. We missed a few Sundays and then met the Rector in the grocery store. He very crossly asked Roy (my husband) where we had been and why were we not in Church. Roy was so offended that we immediately looked for another parish, saw an ad for St. Richard's in the paper, and when we attended were given such a warm welcome that we remained. That was 52 years ago (as of 2023). (Marg H.)

I moved to Ottawa in January 1981 from Fredericton, New Brunswick when my husband, John, had decided to take a job transfer with the federal government. The only person that I knew in Ottawa was John's sister, Judy. It was quite a move! I was 26, had given up my job as a teacher in Fredericton to move to a city where I had to start all over. It was quite scary for me because I was attached to my family in St. Andrews, N.B. and it was a long way from 'home'.

I decided to check out the Anglican churches in the area and had attended a few times at St. Richard's. One of the first people who approached me at coffee was so kind and made me feel welcome. In 1983, my son, Alexander was born and I periodically came to church with him, placing him under the pew in a baby seat. I had met a woman at prenatal class and she told me that

her parents came to this church and she did sometimes as well. She introduced me to her parents. Alison was born in 1987.

At this point, Alexander had started school at Cityview. I met a couple of young mothers at Crestview Pool and they told me that they went to St. Richard's. The children are all around the same age. I started to see them at church and our children became friends. Gradually, I met more young mothers with their children and we decided to get Sunday School going. At that time, there were quite a few young people who were searching to give their children a church community. (Mary K.)

I come from St Michael and All Angels and it became part of Julian in the merger. The course cooking for one [brought me to St. Michaels], after my wife died I took a course there and I got to know some of the people there at which point I decided I would join. (Howard)

I started coming to Julian with my partner George after we left another church. One of the first things that struck me about Julian was the sign that said "All Are Welcome". My previous experiences had been full of barriers and I found that this saying is lived out in this community. This church gives me the freedom to be myself. I can laugh in the church and no one will say don't do that which I was told in the church I grew up in. Here I know that who I am is enough and I am sorry to leave. (Cathie G)

Tell us about a memorable ministry, activity or event at Julian of Norwich

**Religion, or specifically worship, was never my thing. I had always viewed church as a place where zealots hung out (yeah, my bad). Then, I believe it was in the Spring of 2017, I attended an event titled “The Seven Pathways to God” based on John Ortberg’s “God is Closer Than You Think”. When we completed the exercise, we broke into small groups to discuss how we had individually listed the seven spiritual pathways. I, of course, had placed worship into the 7th slot. My preferred paths were Contemplative and Intellectual. That is when my eyes were opened. You see, one member of the group was the then incumbent and she also had worship listed near the bottom. When I asked how that could be, she replied that although worship is an important part of church, there is so, so much more that makes the community what it is. The Relational pathway had been opened for me. Talk about a sea change!
(David D.)**

A memorable event occurred when the parishioners of St. Richard’s joined us at St. Michael’s for worship services in 2014 and 2015. Attending the eight o’clock services the congregation multiplied ten-fold! It was equally memorable when we joined the St. Richard’s services and the welcome that we received. I will always be grateful. More recently, it has been a most interesting and eventful occurrence at Julian with the arrival of technology and our on-line services.

(Mac L.)

Between the years of 2003 and 2013 a St Richard's parish family camping trip took place every summer. I regret not having kept a diary and there may be inaccuracies, but here goes. Each summer for 3 to 4 nights, 6 or more families would pack up and head to a provincial park within 2 to 3 hours from Ottawa. Each family had various means of accommodation such as tents, tent trailers and a trailer, and two families would share each campsite. Oh yes, and some of us had canoes and kayaks. It was a wonderful time of sharing; for instance, each campsite providing a supper meal for all, stories around a camp fire, someone with particular knowledge of rocks and rock formations at Charleston Lake, bird, animal and flower identification, Bible discussions, and more. We sang with guitar accompaniment and prayed as well as having a Sunday morning prayer. Those who were able enjoyed hiking together, swimming and trips in our canoes or kayaks. It was cold at times and it rained, but nothing seemed to dampen our enthusiasm. There was also a forest fire at Algonquin Park one year and we were asked to leave for our safety. That was a quick pack-up! Some of us came home and others found another park to complete the time away. The trips became a highlight of the summer, affirming the importance of community and forming lasting friendships. (Marg D.)

At SMAA (St. Michael of All Angels) I remember a certain Sunday when we had several members attend who we hadn't seen for a while. All three were terminally ill, at different stages of the end of life. We arranged a drive for one, stopped by the Queensway Carlton Hospital to "kidnap" the second for a few hours and were delighted to have the third one already at the church. We also had a young mother with her new baby. There was such a spirit of joy and support that was wonderful. To have a chance to visit with friends in their final days and to welcome a new baby in their midst was a very special Sunday and one I will always remember. (Laura D)

This is a really a transfiguration story. When my grand daughter was 3 years old, I brought her to the Ash Wednesday service. It was held in the chapel. I think there were many more parishioners attending than had been anticipated by Reverend Monique. When preparing for the Eucharist, Monique asked for a volunteer to help. Beatrice shot her little arm up to be a volunteer. Monique invited her to help. She was so respectful and careful, making eye contact with each person as she offered them the little wafer. The light of Christ shone so brightly from her face. (Martha C)

Our history at Julian has been brief and has been mostly during the COVID era, when activities have been stifled. Having volunteered as the Givings Secretary Team just prior to the onset of COVID we have gotten to know the names of the parishioners but still have trouble putting faces to names since many are still attending virtually. We look forward to the day when we can safely attend fellowship gatherings as a community. (Barry and Nancy C.)

It's hard to pick just one. Our social life was centered around St. Richard's and the "Social Club" was an important part of our life. Many of St. Richard's parishioners became close friends of ours and still are mine. (those who are still living!) (Marg H.)

I taught Sunday school for years and I ran the parish picnic for many years. It was so fun to be part of a church community. I tried to mix up the age groups so I asked some of the older and younger parishioners to help with the games at the picnic. There were so many parishioners at that time. It was a fun time with people bringing bagged lunches, playing games (sack races, wheelbarrow, break the balloon) on the side property and there was ice cream for everyone. We used to have the greatest Christmas pageants on Christmas Eve at 7:00! We also had a fun afternoon during March Break where we learned to make pretzels(praying arms) and the kids made crafts and played games. I was also asked to help early on with the Christmas Bazaar, so I got to know people that way. I found out that there were many Maritimers in the church and I got to know them. One of my favourites had this lovely way of making me feel that everything was great! I curled for years with the St.Richard's League and got to know more people. I guess the best way to get to know people in your community is to put yourself out there. That's what I did and I am so happy to be a part of this church community! (Mary K.)

I started there on Palm Sunday and the August after I had major surgery and I found that when I got home from the hospital, at that point St. Mike's had a list of people that they would pray for, and I saw my name on there for a few weeks and that that was nice. After a few weeks I saw that my name was not there anymore and I thought "Oh, I better get back to church". I had a very good recovery how much of it depended on the prayer group I don't know. (Howard)

The service before Christmas for those who have lost somebody. They had candles in a sand square frame which we each lit. It gave me a chance to feel better so that I could be around other people who were enjoying Christmas and put myself back together. I could get back to living because of that service. It was comforting to be around other people who were also feeling a loss. It made Christmas better for me, it is a blessing every year. This year I invited my sister after she lost her husband, and she was able to attend via Zoom. (Cathie G)

How has your faith journey been impacted by your involvement in this community?

Outside of my own family, I viewed other people as just that, 'Other People'. The other people I had known over the years always placed themselves first. As I walked through a mall or grocery store with my wife and other people approached us, I would silently mutter under my breath "Get away from me. Get out of my space!" Here, at Julian, I have witnessed so much love for others, so much commitment to ministries, so much dedication to the task(s) at hand. I view the world through a completely different lens now. (David D.)

My faith journey has been impacted by our worship services. My volunteer work with Parish Council and other endeavours has been very rewarding. Many friendships have developed. (Mac L.) My gifts were affirmed and I was encouraged to use them. (Marg D.)

My faith journey has been enriched by the community. There are so many ways to participate in the parish. The book studies, classes and groups have really helped me grow in my faith. People feel comfortable enough to share freely and we learn so much through hearing others' stories. (Laura D.)

[My faith has been] strengthened. When I was quite young I was very active in the church when we had kids and were living in Oakville. When we moved to Ottawa and started going to a church near where we were but it was very cliquey and no one in the family liked it so we stopped going for years until I started back at St. Mike's. There was nothing specific, but I think with the people you see every week and deal with during with the week. The whole point of congregations and groups like that is to

strengthen people's faith in whatever they are doing whether it is a church or a service club or something else. (Howard)

How I view my relationship with God has changed, now I see that he can be anywhere and that it is just between me and God. There were many very difficult patches in my life before I came to Julian that took away my faith. After I started coming my mom asked me "Are you happy there dear?" and I told her that I believe in God again. For me being able to ask questions and have them answered is very important and people here do that. I feel free here to believe in God again, this church allows me to learn and grow and take risks which lets God back into my life. Now I want to go to church on Sunday. Now I know that I can say prayers in church, before bed or at any time and they are all equally valid.

George and our deacon, Elizabeth, were good friends always joking and poking fun at each other. At his celebration of life she had a very hard time talking at the front because she had lost a friend too. It was wonderful to realize that he was loved that much by more than me.

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The steady decline in our old parish and the lack of a decision on the future viability of the parish was frustrating. Since coming to Julian we have a renewed sense of hope for the future and look forward to what is in store for this community. (Barry and Nancy C.)

I have been totally influenced by the Discussion groups and House Groups. They have given me a whole new vision of the meaning of Christian faith. (Marg H)

What is life giving about this community?

The people, plain and simple. Picture a ship and a boat. You can put a boat (the people) into a ship (the often general perception of a church) and that ship can sink. What steadfastly remains afloat is the boat. This is one boat I feel that we can all thoroughly depend upon.

(David D)

The worship services, the camaraderie brought about by the volunteer efforts and the friendships that have developed as a result are all life-giving, making Julian a foundation in my life.

(Mac L)

The people and the opportunity to learn without being judged.

(Marg D)

There is such a feeling of inclusion and genuine welcome to new people. (Laura D)

Like most modern churches, Julian has a dedicated group of workers who, unselfishly, keep things going, no matter what challenges come our way. The fact that we can continue to provide an online service is but one example of the vitality of this parish. It's hard to imagine that one of our dear parishioners, who relocated to Alberta during COVID, is still with us every Sunday. That says something about what Julian meant to her and continues to mean despite the distance between us.

(Barry and Nancy C)

The warmth and caring exhibited by so many in the Parish. (Marg H)

The philosophy of outreach to the community. I know there is an alternate school across the street and I know that Monique has been involved in functions they have and we have been involved in fundraising for them. Other events like animals at Christmas, hot dog and hamburger day, fundraising for women's shelters and other organizations. I have always given to those sorts of organizations so that fits in with me. (Howard)

When I am there, there are friends, and they are not fair weather friends. They remember who I am and I remember who they are. I know I am not in a group of strangers, and I think we need more places like this in our lives. When we have problems, we can talk to each other about them. Seeing children being able to be themselves. (Cathie G)

As we transition into the future, what are your hopes for Julian of Norwich?

That through trying times, what with the generally declining population of the Anglican Church as a whole, we can remain focused on our beliefs and our goals for the future, both as a community and as a beacon of hope for the extended community in which we exist. All we need do for inspiration is to recite Psalm 18:2 each and every morning. (David D)

We have survived the Covid pandemic in better shape than before, our parishioners becoming much closer. We have learned a number of things about our parish – how strong, determined and resilient we are. I join others with the faith and hope that our parish will continue to grow and that our community activities and ministry will continue to flourish. Our Anchor redevelopment is continually on my mind and I hope that it commences soon and that things go smoothly. (Mac L)

That Julian will remain a welcoming community to all. (Marg D)

I would like to have more of an outward focus. I think this will happen partly by the new development, but I think we need to be even more intentional. (Laura D)

Our hopes are that we live to see Julian complete the redevelopment that attracted us to this parish on day one. If that does not happen, we are encouraged by the recent arrival of young families to the parish and hope that they can help create this legacy for our community. (Barry and Nancy C)

That the Parish can continue to exhibit love and outreach. (Marg H)

I don't have any since I am 90 years old and don't have much time left but I like idea of using our 2 acres of land for low-income housing. (Howard)

The idea of helping people to have a home blew me away. Building a place that does not cost a fortune, that gives them some dignity and we can be part of that in ways other than monetary. I have struggled with housing in the past and I know this is a big step but I am right behind them all the way. This is a serving church that uses its head when it picks its projects and I like doing things that help. (Cathie G)

A Story by Peter J. Anderson

Some places or communities become nodes in our lives, the point to which things converge and from which they branch out again. St. Richard's was a community like that for me growing up. In St. Richard's or because of it, I had some of the most important experiences and made some of the most significant friendships of my teenage years. When Mum mentioned the effort to collect stories, I was suddenly and quite literally awash with feelings and memories of this place and the people who made it a community. Quite apart from the very few stories below, I hope that the young people and many adults who were part of my life through the church understand the positive impact they had on a young kid who wasn't very sure of himself and who was pretty good at getting into trouble.

We came to St Richards when I was 11, I think. We had just returned to the Ottawa area from Nova Scotia. My recollection is that as a family we went initially to Christ Church Bell's Corners, where we had been before Dad was posted to Halifax. I know that CCBC had been a church home for us before (Jenny and I were baptized there, and maybe Colin too), but I have no enduring memories of the place. My first memory of St. Richard's involves a visit to meet Father Bruce (Crockett). I think it was to find out about serving as an acolyte, but it might simply have been a visit to see the church. There are three specific things I remember about that visit, though. The most heartwarming is the memory of Father Bruce's smile, which lit a twinkle in his eyes. I learned then that a stern face (and boy, could he do a stern face!) does not mean a stern heart.

What a lovely man, may he rest in peace. The second was the view of the nave, altar and sanctuary wall, as you come in from the Narthex, under the balcony. For a young boy who had (I think)

very little experience of church before that, it was a very grand space and something I look for even today as a signal that I am in a “real” church (silly, I know). I also remember someone leaving through one of the “secret” doors – which immediately caught my attention. The last thing was the sanctuary lamp, which used to hang in front of the balcony, centered between the old font area (right at the Narthex) and the altar. It was on a pulley system and could be dragged down to be lit or replaced. It was also a tempting height to jump at, which my Mum (ever attentive) warned me not to do. Like so many things in that space, the sanctuary lamp has moved, but for me it will always be hanging over the aisle, begging me to jump and grab it.

I’ve been in a number of Anglican and Episcopal church communities since St. Richard’s. I’m always struck that some of them do not have youth serving at the altar. For me, as much as I might have groaned at having to get up to serve, being an acolyte is a touch stone for my time at St. Richard’s. Some of the stories are quite funny (and probably shouldn’t be shared), and I learned some neat tricks (trimming candles, how to keep one foot outside the robe so you don’t pitch backwards when you stand up, how flex your leg muscles when you kneel for a long time, how to take a quick nap while you look like you’re praying, how to stop giggling). To this day, the smell of a snuffed candle evokes church. We had to be trained, of course – there was a surprising number of things to keep track of, from exactly the right moment to collect the offerings, to the ritual of the Eucharist and the cleanup, when to bow and when to genuflect, which side of the altar the gospel moves to and when. My love for the ritual of the Anglican communion comes out of serving, I think. I also have fond memories of the people I served with, many of whom were also were in the youth group or youth choir. I remember being very excited – and a little nervous – when I was big enough and probably responsible enough to be crucifer.

We always had at that time two acolytes with different roles and the crucifer. Carrying the cross high and straight (while also avoiding the sanctuary lamp) was critical, but it was the steps up to the sanctuary that were the trickiest – that would have been a bad time to trip. I had a ton of fun as a server – and I suspect it kept me going to church as a teenager when I'd rather sleep in. And I found out where the “secret” doors in the sanctuary wall go. One of the funniest moments was always the hurry, after robing and a brief prayer, to go down the back stairs with the cross, get through the basement, and then to the back of the Nave in time to form with the choir and clergy for procession. There were times, I admit, when it was less a stately walk and more a mad dash, robes hitched up and the cross like a lance in my hand. I always wondered why we didn't just walk through the Nave... but loved the mystery of the back stairs. Have you been down them?

One of the most important older “young people” during my time at St Richard's was C. He became head server right as I was being trained and he most definitely was the person who invited us to youth group and set the tone for me of what it meant to be serious about church and spirituality as a youth ... and have loads of fun. My early Christian formation happened in and because of St. Richard's, and Charles was at the center of it. The FYCE squad (Friday Youth Christian Education) met in the Curate's office or one of the basement rooms every Friday, for bible study and conversation, before youth group kicked off in the Church Hall. My heart is full thinking of the clergy who were part of our lives, David Clunie, Michael Fleming, Rosemarie Payne... each in their own way represented what I came to understand as a “pastor”. Youth group, in the church hall, often involved dodgeball and casual conversations – in my mind it was principally a social time with kids even from outside the church. We of course did service projects and so on, but those social connections were very good ones in my teenage years, and it was because of St. Richard's that I found good friends who could

limit the kinds of trouble I found. My involvement in what the church provided for us led directly to my involvement in Diocesan Youth Challenge (to which C also invited us), where I made some of the best friends I've ever had in my life and began to understand my faith in a deeper way. I also learned that church is much wider than one place or one experience, even though we are one Body.

The church hall and the whole building... I had an interesting relationship to the physical structure of St. Richard's. There were all sorts of neat things about it: the secret doors in the church proper, of course, but also how the tables were stored under the stage in the hall, the different parts of the basements, the balconies in the hall and the church, the little rooms in the undercroft that were part storage, part church school, the choir rooms, the bell tower... I was fortunate to have had a hand in caring for the building directly and I think my memories are shaped by what I did in there as much as what I saw there. I mowed the lawn, when the old fellow who was the sexton was too old, and did other odd jobs too. I even painted the inside of the Church Hall, the first job for "Peter Anderson Painting", which then went on to paint the exterior of the Bishop's Offices downtown and many homes of parishioners and others in the early 90s. At some point before I painted it, I can't remember exactly when, I inherited the job of cleaning up after wedding parties.

This usually involved me showing up around midnight on a Saturday to clean off tables in the hall and the messes left behind (sometimes pretty nasty), to take apart the table extensions and stack them back under the stage, and sweep and mop the floors. After I was done, I would check to make sure all the doors around the building were locked. That part, especially, was either a holy or a creepy time, alone in dark hallways with a vivid imagination. But the silent church sanctuary, either after cleanup

or during things like our overnight Easter vigils (do you still do that?), was always a holy wonder for me. It was a place I knew people who cared prayed in. Part of me still would love to sneak in and kneel at the altar in the middle of the night.

There are literally thousands of memories that I could share – they build on each other, bringing up more as I think about events and people. My crazy teenage rock band, Catharsis, played our one and only concert at St. Richard's. Many Diocesan youth dances filled the church hall. Youth group meals and retreats, contests to see how many hot pepper flakes on spaghetti were too many, coffee hours after church, cooking in the kitchen, bottle drives, car washes, sitting on vestry and learning hard truths about church finances, S's constant and happy presence in the office, Fr. David's rueful grins dealing with the youth group, Fr. Mike belting out "Prepare ye the way of the Lord" at Easter, Fr. Bruce reminding us that anger was a sign we care, Rev. Rosemarie singing the Eucharist even though (as I thought) she was not at all confident in her voice, so many other adults and kids... quite a flood.

But the deepest memories are of the people who made St. Richard's a kind and welcoming place for a teenage boy. Too many to name of course, but I know it would not be right to not mention Brian Hubelit and the youth choir. I was always musical, but I believe Brian taught me to sing properly. He gave us kids so many opportunities and fun music to sing, of course, some of it his own. And he was famous among those who knew for working "Happy Birthday" into the postlude for people in the choir. But most of all, I remember that he showed us how making music was not about being perfect or putting on the best show (we did, sometimes!) but about praising God with our hearts through our voices. It's a lesson I didn't really understand until I was older, but I'm grateful for how the seed was planted.

To this day, there are hymns that throw me back into St. Richard's, into that vaulted space, with Brian at the organ.

I know that for some reading these memories, the community is not St. Richard's but Julian of Norwich, and that's as it should be. St. Richard's, what and who it was when I attended in my teens and twenties, is mostly gone except in memories. But it truly did shape how I understand church and my faith. This is true even now, as I worship in the church where my wife's grandfather was Bishop of Vermont from 1961-1974, which tragically burned to the ground in 1971 but was rebuilt in a new location, and which is working to reimagine its physical building and its role in the wider community 50 years later.

So, I can say, "I belong to St. Paul's" now, like I "belonged" to St. Mark's in Grand Rapids, MI. But whenever I come back from receiving communion, I sit quietly and say St. Richard's prayer (which I learned during confirmation classes), as I have at every church I've ever attended. Like my memories of St. Richard's Church, it is an anchor, even when the buildings and people change around me:

**Thanks be to thee, Lord God,
For all the benefits thou hast won for me,
For all the pains and insults thou hast borne for me.
Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother,
May I know thee more clearly,
Love thee more dearly,
And follow thee more nearly, day by day.**

A Story by Paul Dumbrille

In the early 90s Rev, later Bishop, Peter Coffin came to St, Richards, and preached on the first chapter of the book of the Acts of the apostles, particularly on chapter ,1 verse 8, where Jesus says: But you will receive power when the holy spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” The call in that verse is to reach out to the local area, Jerusalem (local community), Judea (the province you live in), Samaria (the country you live in), and the ends of the earth (the wider world).

Using Acts 1:8 as a guide, the Outreach Group was formed, to act in coordinating the efforts of the parish in reaching out beyond St Richard’s to help others. In addition to encouraging parishioners to help with, and donate to, outreach activities, a line item was established in the parish budget for the Outreach Group to use in outreach activities.

With these funds, and the donations received from Lenten Envelope offerings, the outreach group acted as a focus for the parish ”Mission” activities. Some examples of what this group spawned, and which are an important part of my story, are as follows:

- 1. In our local area, the Outreach Group was the key in the parish establishing a relationship with the Carlington chaplaincy, that we supported with money as well as providing volunteers to help with that ministry.**
- 2. In the world beyond our borders, we formed a refugee committee, which was responsible for sponsoring several refugees from Africa, Central America and Bosnia. I have special memories of the times when a family from El Salvador stayed in our home as well when a man from Ethiopia stayed with us.**
- 3. In the wider community, the parish established a relationship with the Diocese of the Arctic, and the Diocese**

of Moosonee. This resulted in our funding and arranging for the printing of several hundred hymnals the contained hymns in English as well Cree. These Hymnals were sent to the North, and several of us visited to Chisasibi on James Bay for a few days, which forms a story in itself. The Outreach Group operated until St. Richard's amalgamated with St, Michaels to create Julian of Norwich parish. This group and its Mission activities has had a great effect on my spiritual growth and my sense of the Christian community taking action to follow Jesus.

FROM OTTAWA TO CHISASIBI TO MOOSONEE

In the early 1990's, the Outreach Group of the Parish of St. Richard, in Nepean, decided that simply funnelling money to worthy charitable organizations was just not enough. As a result, it was decided to embark on an endeavour to connect directly with those whom we might support. So, a project was initiated to connect with the Diocese of Moosonee, resulting in an effort to help its parishes obtain copies of a hymn book that contained words to hymns in the Cree language, along with music scores of many of the hymns.

The hymn books they were using were wearing out, and replacements were needed by many parishes and congregations. The project that the Outreach Group took on was to raise funds, in the thousands of dollars, to pay for the printing and production of a sizable number of copies of the hymn book. With the leadership of John Collins, a St. Richard's parishioner, and the encouragement and assistance of the Bishop of Moosonee at the time, Caleb Lawrence, the project was accomplished.

Over a number of years, the Outreach Group raised funds, predominately from members of the parish, including special Lenten donations and direct appeals for funds. A printer was engaged and a number of books printed. They were received gratefully by the parishes in the Diocese of Moosonee and put to

immediate use. They were appreciated so much that, over time, sufficient funds were raised for three separate printings that were sent to the Moosonee Diocese.

The first printing took place in 1993, and the last printing was in 2003 when 512 copies of the book were printed at a cost of \$5,093.58. After the first printing, and in recognition of the relationship between the parish and Moosonee Diocese, Bishop Lawrence invited members of the Outreach Group to come to Chisasibi, a Cree community in northern Quebec located on James Bay, to be part of a Deanery consultation.

In August of 1994, six members of St. Richard's, rented a van and drove to Chisasibi, a trip of about 1,300 Kms that took two days. Over several days, we attended the meetings, events, and celebrations that were part of the gathering and were billeted in the homes of Cree families. It was an unforgettable experience where we learned about how the Christian Cree community worshipped using the hymn books we had provided, as well as how differently they discussed issues and made decisions.

A search of Archives of Ottawa Diocese will reveal an article co-written by myself and Rosemary in the September, 1994 edition of Crosstalk. Copies of photographs contained in that article are included here. Fast forward to January 2016. As a member of the national Executive, and Resources Coordinator for Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Canada), I led two workshops at Diocese of Moosonee Prayer conference, held in Cochrane, Ontario. This resulted in a subsequent invitation for me to lead some workshop sessions for parishes in Moose Factory and Moosonee at the end of May, 2016.

Imagine my surprise and the joy that filled my heart, when I entered the church hall where the workshops were being held, and saw several copies of the Cree hymn book that our parish had printed those many years ago, including the acknowledgement of their production by St. Richard's.

At the Eucharist service at St. Thomas Anglican Church in Moose Factory on that Sunday morning, I was privileged to sing hymns with the church community, in English and Cree, using those books that we had caused to be printed years before.

I am humbled to realize that God had used our Outreach Group to take on, and bring to fruition, a ministry for which we would have no idea what the result would be.

As an aside, the current members of St. Richard's Outreach Group have amalgamated with people from St. Michael and All Angels as part of Julian of Norwich parish. The connection with the church in northern Canada and our Indigenous people remains today. In 2016, a portion of Julian of Norwich's special Lenten donations was sent to the North to help with the needs of people of our First Nations. God stirs his people to do things that are "more than we can ask or imagine".