



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL OTTAWA
Harvest Thanksgiving 2020

Dear Friends,

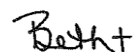
The autumn that I began kindergarten, the younger of my two older brothers began university, which meant that both of my real-life heroes lived away from home. I missed them dearly, and longed for Thanksgiving weekend when they would return. That was when I learned that each of my brothers held (and still hold) completely different senses of time. One of them would say precisely when he would be arriving, and he would always arrive on time or even earlier than expected. This brought me great excitement and I would squeal with delight. My other brother would say when he might arrive, and then would often come much later or even the next day. This brought me great anxiety and I would hug him with relief. My mother, being used to these differing behaviours, advised me: "Beth, there is no sense in worrying, as you will know when your brother is arriving when he arrives." And somehow, this made me appreciate both my brothers even more.

As these pandemic days move into autumn, it is clear that our sense of time has shifted. Once we could plan and expect things to happen according to our agenda. Time was concrete and measurable. No longer! Planning needs to have contingencies, and then contingencies for the contingencies. Time is surreal and fluid. Just think about the cathedral: no one would have expected that March 8th, one week before the episcopal election, would be the last service held until September 6th, and that the leadership would have changed, without goodbyes or thanks, celebrations or hellos. For each one of us, the experience of time has been completely different than our expectations. But no matter what we expected, and what feelings we have had, God has clearly been at work in the midst of it all – calling forth leadership, giving us signs of new life, reassuring and encouraging us that all shall be well in God's time.

And now, at Harvest Thanksgiving, we will celebrate our brother, our bishop, arriving home to his cathedral – perhaps not when we expected but rather when we can appreciate it most. Bishop Shane and Katherine will be with us at the 10.30 am service on October 11th; he will celebrate the eucharist; we shall give thanks for him being called into a new ministry; and together we will begin a new relationship. Fortunately, our capacity for attendance has been increased whilst still maintaining safe distancing, so please do be in touch to let us know if you wish to attend.

May we appreciate one another, the time that we have been given, and the gift of God's presence moving among us with purpose and power, even more than ever, this Harvest Thanksgiving.

Blessings,



The Very Reverend Beth Bretzlaff
Dean of Ottawa