



FROM THE DEAN

Harvest Thanksgiving 2022

Dear Friends,

Autumn is such an interesting season as the air becomes crisp and the leaves begin to turn colour, never exactly in the same way as they did in the year before, creating unique beauty and energy. This is mirrored in our lives as we land after the summer season, reconnect with familiar routines, discover new interests, and forge a path into the months ahead. At our cathedral, this rhythm of life is deeply felt every autumn, and this one in particular, as pandemic restrictions have lifted and we discover who we are now.

Across the Anglican church, both attendance and income have decreased by 40 to 50 percent. And most churches and cathedrals, including ours, are experiencing new people attending and choosing to be involved. The landscape that used to be familiar is changing in this season.

We are blessed in our diocese and cathedral with strong lay and clerical leadership, clear vision, and shared resources. In our diocese, the upcoming synod will make important decisions about the shape of parish ministry so that our resources clearly fund ministry that is right-sized and mission that is relevant. In our cathedral, new intergenerational events will gather us to learn and grow in faith, all the choirs are recruiting and building on foundations kept strong over the past three years, volunteers are engaged in every aspect of our life, and as the tower grows beside us ideas about creating community with our new neighbours are developing. As in this autumn season, beauty and energy similar and yet different than in the past, altogether unique, are colouring our life.

Whilst by times the path ahead may feel unfamiliar and look daunting, God's steadfast love is everlasting and God's faithfulness is enduring. We need only to look to Philippians 4:8-9 to be reminded: "Finally, beloved, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you."

With blessings and gratitude for each one of you,

Beth

The Very Reverend Beth Bretzlaff
Dean of Christ Church Cathedral Ottawa