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The Hippo Herald

SUMMER/FALL 2024 LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

The amazing colours of the church

BY ALISON GOODWIN

“The Church calendar is a way of telling the Gospel,” explains Canon James Robinson during a conversation about the liturgical seasons. “It begins at the Reign of Christ, celebrated using white vestments, and followed by Advent, signified by the colour purple at St. Augustine’s. Blue is also correct.”

The point of our conversation is to clarify the use of different colours at different times of the year. It became a fascinating two-part, three hour interview. Let’s call this part one, in which Canon James goes through a summary of the liturgical year.

“The colours go way back in the life of the church, allowing people who were illiterate to have some

sense of what season of the year it was. The colours represent the different seasons in the church,



as well as feast days and the commemoration of saints.”

Canon James observes that in the church the Gospel is told in many different ways: “We use music, scripture, hymns, colour, candles and the visual arts. These are all God’s gifts that help us to tell His story.

“Advent is a time of preparation. Purple, the colour of royalty, is used to prepare for the coming of Christ, the Messiah, or blue is used as a reminder to us that there is celebration in the midst of this as well.

“Then there is Christmas Day. For the season of Christmas, from December 25 until Epiphany, white and gold are used. White is the colour of purity and gold represents royalty and God’s glory.

“White is also used for the Feast of Epiphany on January 6. For the rest of the season of Epiphany, also called ‘normal time,’ green is used. Green represents growth and renewal.

“Epiphany fully comes to an end at Ash Wednesday. On this day, the colour is purple. Again, the colour of

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From the Rector's Desk

A commitment to our children

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

ANONYMOUS

The St. Augustine's Vacation Bible School program began (in its modern form) in 1994 as the result of a conversation between Murial McCuaig and another much-loved St. Augustine's parishioner. It was the first time in nearly 50 years that a VBS had been undertaken by the Parish. Apparently it had last been held in the mid-1940's around the end of the Second World War.

It has been a going concern ever since! That makes this the 30th anniversary of our Parish's renewed commitment to VBS.

Thirty years is a long time. A long legacy of faithful service. Vacation Bible School is important for so many reasons:

- ◆ It reaches out to many who don't normally attend services at St. Augustine's (or perhaps anywhere else).
- ◆ It offers a safe and loving environment



to children and keeps the spirit of Jesus' command to "Let the little children come unto me."

- ◆ It ministers to parents who appreciate a break from childcare for a few hours.
- ◆ It provides an opportunity for a team of volunteers to come together to do something extraordinary!
- ◆ It develops leadership skills among our Middle and High School students who often help.
- ◆ Each year it reminds us that God is faithful to provide the right number of helpers and leaders and the financial resources needed.
- ◆ This year, it offers a chance for ecumenical cooperation as we work together with Southminster United from across the street.

Thirty years of VBS! What a wonderful legacy of faithfulness! Thanks to Stef and her wonderful crew for their hard work this year and may God grant us the energy and dedication to continue in the years ahead.

Your Rector,
Steve

P.S. If you have an opportunity, look at the VBS photo album Murial has placed in the Narthex and see how many of your St. Augustine's friends you can recognize from years gone by. In the meantime enjoy the photos on the next page.



VBS requires a whole church, perhaps two

BY THE REV. DR. GILLIAN BRECKENRIDGE

For almost a week in the height of summer, St. Augustine’s joined forces with our neighbours at Southminster United Church to lead a hugely successful Vacation Bible School program. This is VBS’s 30th Birthday here at St. Augustine’s; Murial McCuaig ran the first one back in 1994! I always say that it takes a whole church to run a VBS and once again, church family, you really showed up to make our VBS this summer a massive success.



Here are a few things you might not know about our VBS this year:

- ◆ We had over 75 kids registered; some were from our church, but many were not.
- ◆ We had the help of over 35 other volunteers – both teens and adults – during the week itself and many, many more of you helped to decorate, brought snacks, made financial donations, and prayed for us. Thank you!

- ◆ Speaking of snacks, we were overwhelmed with your generous response to our last minute request to help us with snacks. In less than a day, we had more than enough snacks for the whole week!
- ◆ This year, we put on this VBS in collaboration with our neighbours across the road, Southminster United Church. Members of their church volunteered and their minister, The Rev. Taylor Croissant, joined us every day at the registration table.
- ◆ The theme this year was water and the kids learned the stories of Jonah and the Whale, Jesus walking on water, Lydia and the woman at the well.
- ◆ Over the last few months, while most of us were sitting in the pews on Sunday mornings, the middle school youth were planning, rehearsing, and recording fun videos that introduced the four stories. These were played at the start of each day before kids went to their first activity station.

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Young parishioner wins U of L award

Kimoya has always been a runner

BY RACHEL ROBINSON

“Growing up in Jamaica, we played a lot outside and most of those games involved lots of running. As well, sprinting is a big thing in Jamaica,” says Kimoya Edwards. “Running was always a given because it was a part of my culture and how I grew up.” However, she only found her footing in track and field later on: “Coming to Canada in grade 8, everything was new and I had a hard time making friends but the one thing that was similar for me between both countries was track and so I fully went with it and it’s become my thing ever since. It gave



PHOTO by Lars Photography

me somewhere to start in realizing who I was and my capabilities.”

After competing throughout high school, in her first year at the University of Lethbridge she joined the Pronghorns track and field team, where she specializes in sprints and hurdles.

Now, she is the recipient of the Women’s Hockey Alumni Award. This annual

scholarship was originally only intended to support women’s hockey players. However, its foundation has rewritten its criteria, opening it to all continuing female athletes in any University of Lethbridge degree program. Kimoya is the first non-hockey athlete to receive the scholarship.

This recognition is richly deserved.

She is a highly accomplished athlete, ranked 9th nationally as of March 2024. In February of this year, she finished first in the 60m hurdles at the Jim Daly Bison Classic, a national track and field event. She is the recipient of a Pronghorn Citizenship award, which honours her extensive community involvement; she works three jobs; volunteers for Big Brothers Big Sisters, Chinook Regional Hospital, and assorted community events. She is also a member of the Rotaract, Pre-Med, and Black Students’ Association clubs on campus. At St. Augustine’s, Kimoya helps with the youth group and is a video operator on the tech team for our weekly livestreams. Oh, and she’s also a third-year neuroscience student!

Ultimately, Kimoya intends to go into medicine. She was inspired to enter this field at ten years old – after hearing stories about people suffering from HIV, she decided she wanted to help them. Her goal of healing is unchanged, but now she hopes to become a child neurologist or a paediatrician: “I adore children and I love knowing what is going on in the body and helping others fight illnesses or sickness

and to me, if you can understand a little about the brain, other areas of the body will fall into place. What better way to combine both interests than working with children in a clinic!"

And in the meantime, she will keep running. When I ask what brings her joy about her sport, she replies: "The excitement of getting a PR (personal record). You train so hard and sometimes it feels like it's going nowhere. But then when you compete and look at the results like,

no matter what, it always amazes me that I could go that fast or that human beings are going that fast. I love my sport, the excitement, competition, joys and pain, and I would not trade it for any other sport!"

Kimoya has already done a remarkable job of running both literal races and the race of her life. We will wait with bated breath to see where the track will lead her next. Ω

Financial Update

BY CATHY GILLESPIE
TREASURER

A summary of the church operating fund up to the end of June is provided below. I am pleased to report that total income, which is mostly made up of parishioner givings, is higher than the budget target for this first half of the year.

Most expense categories are within budget so far, although we are experiencing higher than expected cost pressures in a few supplies categories. This is due to higher than anticipated prices as well as requiring increasing amounts of supplies of some items. In

total, expenses are slightly below the mid-year budget target. There is a fairly large net deficit at this point, however this is as expected because income tends to increase in the last month or



two of the year versus expenses which are fairly consistent month to month.

Looking to the future, we anticipate that costs will continue to increase in many budget areas. The goal is that parishioner givings will also grow and that we will be able to phase out planning (budgeting) for a year-end deficit in future years. I am cautiously optimistic that the financial results so far this year reflect that we are on a good path in that regard.

Your financial giving in support of the operations of the church is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about options for giving or the church's financial situation, please feel free to contact me by leaving a message at the church office. Ω

	Year to-date (June 30 2024)	Last year to-date (June 30 2023)	2024 Budget
Parishioner givings	\$ 237,069	\$ 210,245	\$ 497,600
Other income	<u>10,123</u>	<u>10,275</u>	<u>58,750</u>
Total income	<u>247,192</u>	<u>220,520</u>	<u>556,350</u>
Staffing expenses	\$ 173,335	\$ 163,942	\$ 347,000
Administration & apportionment	59,844	57,821	120,200
Facility expenses	45,628	46,115	85,000
Christian education & outreach	<u>8,148</u>	<u>6,629</u>	<u>19,150</u>
Total expenses	<u>286,955</u>	<u>274,507</u>	<u>571,350</u>
Net deficit	\$ (39,763)	\$ (53,987)	\$ (15,000)



Volunteers make the difference

Kids dive into the bible at VBS

BY STEF COLLINS

We couldn't have made this year's Vacation Bible School a success without your help!

In July, approximately 75 children joined us for a Vacation Bible School to remember! We dived into a watery adventure, learning about Jonah, Peter and Jesus, Lydia, and the Woman at the Well. Some of the children were from our congregation, while others came from neighbouring churches or the community. Teen leaders guided the kids be-



one involved – whether leading a station, bringing snacks, managing registration, or offering prayers. Running a VBS truly requires the effort of an entire church community, and we are grateful to be part of such a supportive community.

We started planning way back in January with our dedicated leadership team, who met regularly to ensure everything was perfectly arranged. Their commitment, innovative ideas, and hard work were key to our success. They organised a variety of activities, from interactive stations that explored biblical truths to lively outdoor games that helped everyone bond. Their meticulous planning paid off, creating a seamless and enjoyable experience for everyone.

One of the highlights of this year's VBS was teaming up with Southminster United Church. This collaboration strengthened our community ties and made the experience richer and more inclusive for all participants. Working together allowed us to



Music and movement are enjoyed by all.

tween stations where they explored crafts, heard the Bible story of the day, discussed the story at the video station, and enjoyed energetic activities at the games station. Our youngest attendees, in Pre-K and Kindergarten, had their own engaging activities in the nursery school classrooms.

Many dedicated individuals contributed to the success of this year's VBS, and it was a tremendous achievement. The VBS team extends a heartfelt THANK YOU to every-



Jim, Pat and Elaine (peeking over Jim's shoulder) prepare the snacks

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This month's BIG question

Why is Jesus taking so long to return?



BY BROTHER JASON CARROLL

In many ways, this question is really two questions: Why is Jesus taking so long to come back? And what do we do until then?

The simplest answer to the first question is to quote Jesus himself, who said: “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.” (Matt. 24:36) In a sense we can simply have confidence that he will obey the command of the Father and return when the time is right. But, being human, we are suffering and there is injustice all around us, and the length of the delay makes us question God’s judgment. Surely, whatever the plan entails, God could bring things to a close in such a way to end unnecessary suffering?

Why then the delay? It will seem counterintuitive, but the answer is that the delay is happening because God wants to be merciful, and give as many people as possible the opportunity to experience mercy and repentance. St. Peter picked up on this in the first century when he wrote: “But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient

“WHY THEN THE DELAY? IT WILL SEEM COUNTERINTUITIVE, BUT THE ANSWER IS THAT THE DELAY IS HAPPENING BECAUSE GOD WANTS TO BE MERCIFUL...”

with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:8-9) So while on the one hand Peter is trying to get them to see that God’s timetable doesn’t work like ours, he is also trying to get them to see the delay is for the sake of God’s “patience” which does not want anyone to perish. When you are frustrated with the delay, remember that it is for the sake of mercy that the delay occurs, quite possibly for our own sake.

As to the second question, what do we do until Jesus returns, Jesus has a fair bit to say about that too. In the Olivet Discourse of Matthew 24-25, Jesus addresses his disciples and gives them warning signs of his return and advice on how to prepare. While the signs of his return are apocalyptic and difficult to interpret (I wouldn’t try), his advice for what to do until his return is laid out in

three parables – watch, work and be ready. In the Parable of the Ten Virgins we are encouraged to watch for his return and keep our lamps full of oil. In the Parable of the Talents, we are told that even though we are waiting for Jesus’s return, we must use our gifts and resources to bring the kingdom of God to pass as best we can.

And in the parable of the Sheep and the Goats, we are told we must still love our neighbour and that we will face judgement too.

So, though we do not know the day nor the hour, we know that this time of waiting is necessary for the salvation of as many souls as possible, and that in the mean time we watch for the Lord’s return and continue to build his kingdom as best we are able. So keep your lamps lit in the sure knowledge and hope of his return, and keep working for the Kingdom in what ever way you can so that when he returns you will have prepared the way for his coming. Ω



Shining God's light in the world

Are you seeing what I'm seeing?

BY GREG YOUNG
VERGER (RETIRED)

Over the years as a parishioner and verger, I have had the opportunity to observe many people and situations at St. Augustine's. Occasionally, through the Spirit's prompting, I catch vignettes that confirm to me the working of the Holy Spirit here at St. Augustine's. On Sunday, June 23, one of those images hit me powerfully. As the gospel was being



read, my attention was on the glow of light reflected on the face of one of the servers. I was profoundly aware of how the light of Christ is reflected in His people gathered in worship and prayer. Each one of us reflects God's light in wonderful ways as we share our faith journey with each other.

How God draws us to serve is vastly different as Paul's words from Ephesians 4: 15-16 say: **"We will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ."** When we leave our place of worship, filled with encouragement and prayer, we, the church, work to further God's kingdom on earth. How do we achieve walking in faith as we leave the church building? GO IN PEACE TO LOVE

AND SERVE THE LORD. Thanks be to God!

I have had the privilege to work in the building and witness the work of the people of St. Augustine's as we go about our ministry. Being in the building when it is empty is a moving experience; I sense the Holy Spirit encouraging people to grow as the body of Christ. There is the usual flow of people in and out of the building to work, clean, organize and plan – drifting in at various times of the day. I see the hands and feet of Christ as the altar is prepared and cleaned by many people on different days. Some come in groups, others by themselves. Calls to the church are answered and responded to by the office administrator. Our parish treasurer and envelope secretary wander in when able to update financial affairs. Priests are busy; meeting with individuals and groups; meetings of deanery (a gathering of priests, deacons from the Lethbridge/ Medicine Hat and southeastern Alberta churches); meetings with Corporation and Parish Council; Lethbridge Ministerial Association; ministry at the seniors' residences in towns; visits to those in hospital or with grieving families, plus a myriad of other tasks including preparing sermons and taking care of administrative tasks.

It is truly inspirational how the Holy Spirit moves people to minister in their various ways. Youth groups gather for fellowship, fun and developing deeper spiritual roots.



Tuesdays and Fridays, a small group gathers for morning prayer, leaving just as quietly as they enter. Members of the Bell Choir and the Senior Choir wander in to practice hymns and songs for worship. Thursday morning sees a quiet contemplative service creating those spiritual relationships with others. The hospitality/coffee people drop in with supplies for various functions. In the courtyard, people gather to work in God’s creation as the gardens are tended. The most unnoticed group is the Prayer Quad which quietly comes in to pray for the needs of the parish, keeping track of their prayers and noting how God responds. Young moms and children gather for fellowship and support developing key friendships. Stephen Ministers gather twice a month to support each other and lift their care receivers up with prayer and encouragement.

Groups not associated with our parish come in the evening

for support in dealing with the issues in their lives – what a wonderful outreach provided by the church. The piano and organ tuners make their appearances to ensure our instruments are tuned so we can praise our Lord with beautiful melodies. Occasionally we have concerts, recitals, and music festival that reach out to the community.

Most evident of all is the love and support parishioners have for each other in the worship and fellowship each Sunday, getting recharged to carry out their own ministries in their own lives.

Jesus has richly blessed us so the Holy Spirit may work in all to further the kingdom of the Father. *“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”* Remember to reflect God’s love and light to those you encounter. You are God’s Light that shines in this world. Thanks be to God. Ω

“THE MOST UNNOTICED GROUP IS THE PRAYER QUAD WHICH QUIETLY COMES IN TO PRAY FOR THE NEEDS OF THE PARISH, KEEPING TRACK OF THEIR PRAYERS AND NOTING HOW GOD RESPONDS.”

Rev. Gillian, continued from page 3

- ◆ Since our theme was water, each kid got a water bottle which they carried with them. Each day, they got new stickers related to the stories they learned to decorate it. It was HOT at VBS this year, so this turned out to be super practical as well as fun.
- ◆ At the end of each day, the kids were invited to write something that they wanted to thank God for on a little paper fish and we made an incredible sea of gratitude in the parish hall.



each year, I am reminded of the love and commitment of our church family to this task. We are so grateful for all the contributions that so many of you made to make this week such a success. We are indebted to Stef Collins, our Coordinator of Children and Family Ministries, for the endless hours of planning that she put in to bring everything together. And most of all, we are grateful to God for keeping us all safe and for bringing light, laughter, and the love of Jesus into all the halls and rooms and courtyards of our church, and for teaching all of us, once again, the truth that when we share the love of God with those around us, we so often end up receiving more than we give. Ω



Colours, from page 1

royalty and sacrifice. This is the only day in the church year that we approach the altar twice. The two journeys to the altar; one to receive the ashes, our mortality, and one to receive the Eucharist, our immortality.



The Rev. Canon James Robinson

“The vestments remain purple throughout the season until the fifth Sunday in Lent, Palm Sunday, or Passion Sunday.

“The colour for the Sunday of the Passion, this year on March 24, was red. Palm Sunday is the only time in the church calendar when the service features two readings from the Gospel. The first describes Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when the people are praising Him with *Hosanna!* The second is the full reading of the Passion, when the same people are calling *Crucify Him!*

“Every Sunday, for the Church, is considered a feast day. Palm Sunday is the one Sunday when we read of the crucifixion. The other time it is read is on Good Friday, when it is typically dramatized.

“What follows Palm Sunday is Holy Week, when the predominant colour is red. St. Augustine’s commemorates all Holy Week services – there are services every day. From Monday to Wednesday, services are held in the chapel. On Maundy Thursday the services are moved into the main part of the church.

“The focus of Maundy Thursday is on the Last Supper. The colour used is white, until the end of the mass. It is at the Last Supper that Jesus gives us a new commandment: *Love each other as I have loved you.* At the Last Supper, we are also given the gift of the Eucharist. We perform the act of foot washing as Jesus, in His humility, washed the feet of His disciples. This is also the evening in Holy Week when we recall Jesus’ arrest. For this reason, we leave the church in silence. As the service proceeds, the sanctuary guild quietly strips the church of all its vestments. A black veil is raised to cover the cross.

“For Good Friday, some churches will use the colours of red and purple. We leave it



stripped and with the large black veil covering the cross. Some churches will have a Eucharist and use the reserved sacrament, so a mass is not celebrated on Good Friday. St. Augustine’s follows a common practice of not receiving the Eucharist on Good Friday.

“The next day is Holy Saturday – the Great Vigil of Easter. Holy Saturday begins bleak and black. While the story from cre-

ation through to salvation is told in readings from the Old and New Testaments, the church is quietly being re-vested. The candles are lighted, the black veils are taken away and flowers are placed on the altar. The first part of the service often features baptism and the renewal of baptismal vows.

“The culmination of the service is when the priest says: *The Lord is Risen, the Lord is Risen Indeed, Alleluia!* This is the first time since the beginning of Lent that we use the word Alleluia and that we sing the Gloria. We receive the Eucharist.

“The season of Easter lasts 40 days. This is followed by Pentecost and Trinity (green) which continues until the new liturgical year that starts in late November with the feast of the Reign of Christ, or Christ the King.

“The first half of the church year tells the story of Jesus, then we enter the green season that asks the question *how, then, do we live?* How do we respond to everything we’ve gone through?” Ω

CURRENT LITURGICAL YEAR 2023-2024

The Reign of Christ, November 26, 2023, White

Christ the King

Advent, December 3 - 24, Purple

Purple is the colour of humility, inward reflection, penance, wisdom stemming from inward discernment

Christmas, December 25, 2023 - Jan 5, 2024 White & Gold

White is the colour of celebration, joy and peace, the colour of funerals, the observation of the passage of soul into the Kingdom of God, the colour of baptisms (the arrival of a child of God into His house of faith) and weddings (the union of soul mates into one family under God).

Gold is the greatest work of God on earth, i.e., the Incarnation at Christmas, the Resurrection at Easter

Feast of the Epiphany, January 6, 2024, White

Season of Epiphany, “normal time,” Green throughout until Ash Wednesday

Green is the colour of revelatory experience, new life, physical and spiritual growth and renewal

Ash Wednesday, February 14, Purple

Season of Lent, February 14 - March 30, Purple

Holy Week, March 24 - 30

Palm Sunday, March 24

Maundy Thursday, March 28, White commemorating Christ’s gift of the Eucharist

Good Friday, March 29, No Colour

Holy Saturday, March 30, starts without colour but ends in White & Gold

Easter Sunday, March 31, White & Gold

Easter, March 31 - May 12

Ascension, May 9, White

Pentecost, “normal time,” May 19, 2024, Red

Red is for the fire of the Holy Spirit

Season of Pentecost “normal time,” May 9 - November 22, Green

Trinity Sunday, May 26, White

First Sunday after Trinity, June 2, 2024, Green

Season of Trinity, June 2 - November 2

VBS, continued from page 6

pool our resources and talents, creating a more diverse and vibrant program that benefited everyone involved.

To Esther, Diane, Amy, Rev. Gillian, Jayla, Rachelle, Elaine, Sheila, Terry, Jonathan, Shelby and Tosin – you are the heart and soul of our VBS success. Your leadership, creativity, and hard work since January have created lasting memories and fostered spiritual growth in our kids and community. Each of you brought unique skills and perspectives that enriched the program and ensured its success. Thank you so much.

As we move forward, let’s continue seeking God everywhere and nurturing a spirit of joy and inclusion in our con-

gregation. Together, we will keep spreading joy and sharing the light of Jesus in everything we do. The connections we’ve made and the lessons we’ve learned during this VBS will continue to inspire us as we embark on new adventures of faith and fellowship. Ω





HERE ARE YOUR CLUES:

Some are coloured red for Christ's blood that was shed
To save you from sin, that all may enter in.

Some are carved with a Cross, a reminder to all
That Christ died for each one, both great and small.

Although unadorned, with a façade quite bare

Without symbol or sign,

I welcome you here.

So, sinner or saint, old, young, rich or poor,

Christ's love will enfold you

When you enter my...

Can you guess what these clues are referring to?

The answer is printed somewhere in this newsletter.

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The Hippo Herald is published tri-annually by St. Augustine's Anglican Church, Lethbridge.

St. Augustine's is a warm and growing Christian community. We are part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, although many of us come from a variety of Christian backgrounds or none. We are located near the centre of Lethbridge, Alberta but our congregation is spread all over the city and region. Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome to join our church family as we learn to follow Jesus.

