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Restful Walks

How many of you have added walks to your daily routines? I’ve seen more of my neighbourhood in the last month than I have in five years of living in my house. With all the uncertainty right now, it’s nice to be able to put in some earbuds, listen to music, and get out of my head for a bit. But I’m also wondering if it might be time to put a new spin on an old tradition.

In October 2019’s issue of RLN on Harvest, I included a spread on the Agricultural Church Year. In it, I briefly mentioned an old Anglican practice called “Beating the Bounds.” In this practice, priests, wardens, and parishioners would proceed around the parish boundaries; it was a method of reaffirming the boundaries before the introduction of maps. Young parishioners would be given long birch or willow sticks, and they would beat specific landmarks while prayers were read from the Litany of Saints.

My church, saint benedict’s table, has done its own version of Beating the Bounds for two years now. Since we don’t have our own parish (we worship in All Saints’ Anglican), the walk takes place around the West Broadway neighbourhood: up Broadway, down Maryland, then Wolseley, Sherbrook, Langside, Westminster, Balmoral, and back to the church.


Participants are encourage to notice and think about what they are seeing on the walk: cafés and markets, different types of housing, and divided benches in front of apartments.

And, they recite the following prayer for the neighbourhood from the *Book of Alternative Services*:

O Lord, our creator, by your holy prophet you taught your ancient people to seek the welfare of cities in which they lived. We commend our neighbourhood to your care, that it might be kept free from social strife and decay. Give us strength of purpose and concern for others, that we may create here a community of justice and peace where your will may be done; through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

So, a new twist on Beating the Bounds. If we’re going to be outside anyways, I propose we pray for our neighbourhoods. Take some time to visit schools, landmarks, and favourite stopping points and recite the above prayer.

I think, now more than ever, we are being called to be the Church with this reminder that, while we cannot worship together in person, we can still be the Body of Christ to our neighbours and city.



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Kyla Neufeld is the editor of Rupert's Land News.

Sacraments on the Road

GEOFFREY WOODCROFT



“And [Jesus] said to them, ‘What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?’ They stood still, looking sad.” –Luke 24:17, NRSV

The story of the road to Emmaus is a story of walking – of walking away, stopping, and then turning back. Two disciples are embarking on a journey to Emmaus, when a stranger approaches them on the road and asks a most difficult question: “What are you talking about?” The two disciples stand still, looking sad, and then tell him that they are talking about “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him” (Luke 24:19–20).

I often require a good *walking away* from a problem, deep sorrow, or intense anger to clear my head and connect the dots. I wonder if it was not the same for the two disciples walking toward the village of Emmaus after they discovered that Jesus’ body was no longer in his Good Friday resting place. The disciples must have been in a terrible way following the events of Jesus’ trial, persecution, and crucifixion. They must have felt fear of the authorities, fear that they had no leader, and great disappointment that their cause had been thwarted. I visualize the disciples needing some well-earned time to process following the events of their day.

As a Christian community, we do more than rehearse the annual Holy Week and Easter exercise, we do more than simply remember the facts, and we do much more than honour tradition. Our practices of rehearsing, remembering, and narrating Christ’s life, death, and resurrection are absolutely essential to us as the story continually becomes our story. Once in

a while that story, like that of the story of the disciples going toward Emmaus, causes us to take the necessary time to process what has just happened. Luke uses *movement away* and *movement toward* to illustrate how the disciples grow, and today’s disciples employ the same rhythm to grasp God’s call in the Body of Christ.

Through these extraordinary days, the Church has walked toward Emmaus, stopped in sadness, and now journeys to Christ in fullness. It has embraced new ways of communication and presence, and it has made way for new and essential initiatives to be brought forth.

The Church has struggled to adjust quickly to pandemic conditions, physical distancing, anxiety, loneliness, uncertainty, and yearning for answers. Online presence, regular weekly contact with community members, and renewed support for community ministry and mission have yielded overwhelming results in all areas of the Church and wider communities. I think that the Church is presently connected and working well to meet mission and ministry needs.

The Church has also grown. Just last week, a fledgling a new community began to gather online, yearning for the day they may all meet in person. The Church is intentionally reconnecting with folk who have reached out to find us online. The Church is striving to maintain daily prayer, fluid generosity, and watchful care of neighbours.

You and I are sacrament for this hungry and thirsty world, the Body of Christ broken for everyone.



Geoffrey Woodcroft,
Bishop of Rupert’s Land

A photograph of a forest path. The path is a narrow, dirt trail that leads into a dense forest. The path is flanked by tall, green grass and various trees and shrubs. Sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a dappled light effect on the path and the surrounding vegetation. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

**I want to go walking in Winnipeg's Assiniboine Forest.
I want to go walking in the forest whenever and however I can.**

When I go for a walk in the forest, my goal is to go for a walk in the forest. And so, having met my goal the moment I get under its trees, I'm content to spend two or three hours wandering around, getting sort of lost in the woods.

And if I fall in a puddle or can't find any mushrooms or get swarmed with bugs, I've still been for a walk.

Walking on Sacred Ground

ALEX JACKSON

Photo: Aoigail Keenan

An old bush-trail cuts through the back of my neighbour’s property, weaves its way around various hollows and high places, and opens at an old, grassy roadway, on the other side of Coney Island, on Lake of the Woods. The roadway connects a small seasonal community, a large beach, and children’s play structure. It echoes of an older time. My grandmother introduced me to this place. I was very young, and we would collect material for fairy gardens, adventuring further and further through the undergrowth, looking in all the small places for pebbles, moss, and toadstools. The island was her playground. In her youth, the trail was well kept and well travelled, part of a bustling pedestrian social scene.

By the time I arrived, two generations later, it was overgrown, and most of it existed as an elder’s memory, but the little discoveries and deep places we found always seemed magical to me. We’d duck under fallen trees and stretch over old logs. I’d stomp and tiptoe barefoot, hitting everything I could with a stick.

Along the way, we’d pause, take our time, and soak in the moment. There’s a high exposed clearing of sun-warmed naked bedrock. Then, a deep and broken drop of basalt boulders is cushioned by a carpet of moss and clover. Balsam trees are grouped at

the bottom, to the rear of a bog. The trees always run with sap, which forms great big blisters under their smooth grey skin-like bark. I’d take my stick and poke them until they burst and I was splattered with the sticky, watery, acrid liquid.

Further on, hopping across a waterline and tracking under the power wires, the path curves right before jutting hard left. Then, it’s almost a straight shot over tree roots and half-exposed boulders and under seasonal deadfall, until it reaches a three-way intersection in the woods. At one time this might have been a deer trail. In the centre of the way is a tall birch stump, like a signpost for raccoons and woodpeckers, and a sometime scratching post for bears. We’d stop to recognize it, and see by the patches of fur and claw marks who else had lately been there.

After, we’d turn left and stumble into a vast and prickly raspberry patch. Long gone wild, it has large, sweet berries. The path goes on beyond, but I never have. If you want to visit the beach and all the places in between, you turn right at the woodland crossroads. That way is full of stories too.

The land rises to a mystery. In my memory, I am barefoot, or sockless in my summer shoes, or cursing my awkward flip flops snapping on my heels. My grandmother follows behind me,



A photograph of a forest floor in early spring. The ground is covered with a thick layer of moss and small white flowers, likely snowdrops. A large, moss-covered log lies diagonally across the foreground. In the background, many thin tree trunks stand vertically. The overall scene is lush and green, with some brown leaves still on the ground.

The ground feels springy like a mattress,
and I feel if I bounce hard enough I could
just jump right up into the clouds.

then beside me holding my hand, then ahead calling me to notice the hidden plants and small creatures around us. We squat down to see pink lady slippers and poke at carnivorous pitcher plants. We see a bird's nest, a mouse burrow, and a woody fungus that grows on birch trees. It's soft on the bottom where we can leave our initials.

We climb over more bedrock. It's fractured by the elements and covered again by soft moss and colourful lichen, like carpeted stairs. An inviting blue sky welcomes us at the top. If it were a lake, I'd jump in.

The ground feels springy like a mattress, and I feel if I bounce hard enough I could just jump right up into the clouds. This place doesn't belong to us. I'm standing on a bed of white pine needles, hundreds of years deep. The owner, a White Pine, stands above us, like Jack's beanstalk to the giant's castle.

This is a giant firmly rooted in the bones of the earth. It's older than nations. It stands, without concern, like a bridge to the beyond. The world may well be anchored to it, not the other way around.

The first time I climbed it, I wasn't prepared for the view. I clung to the rough trunk and thrilled as the whole tree moved gently with the chilling wind. Miles and miles opened up around me even though the peak of the tree was still impossibly high above. I've never reached the top. I saw in those moments how tangential and small I was in Creation, but how blessed to be witness and part of all that beauty.

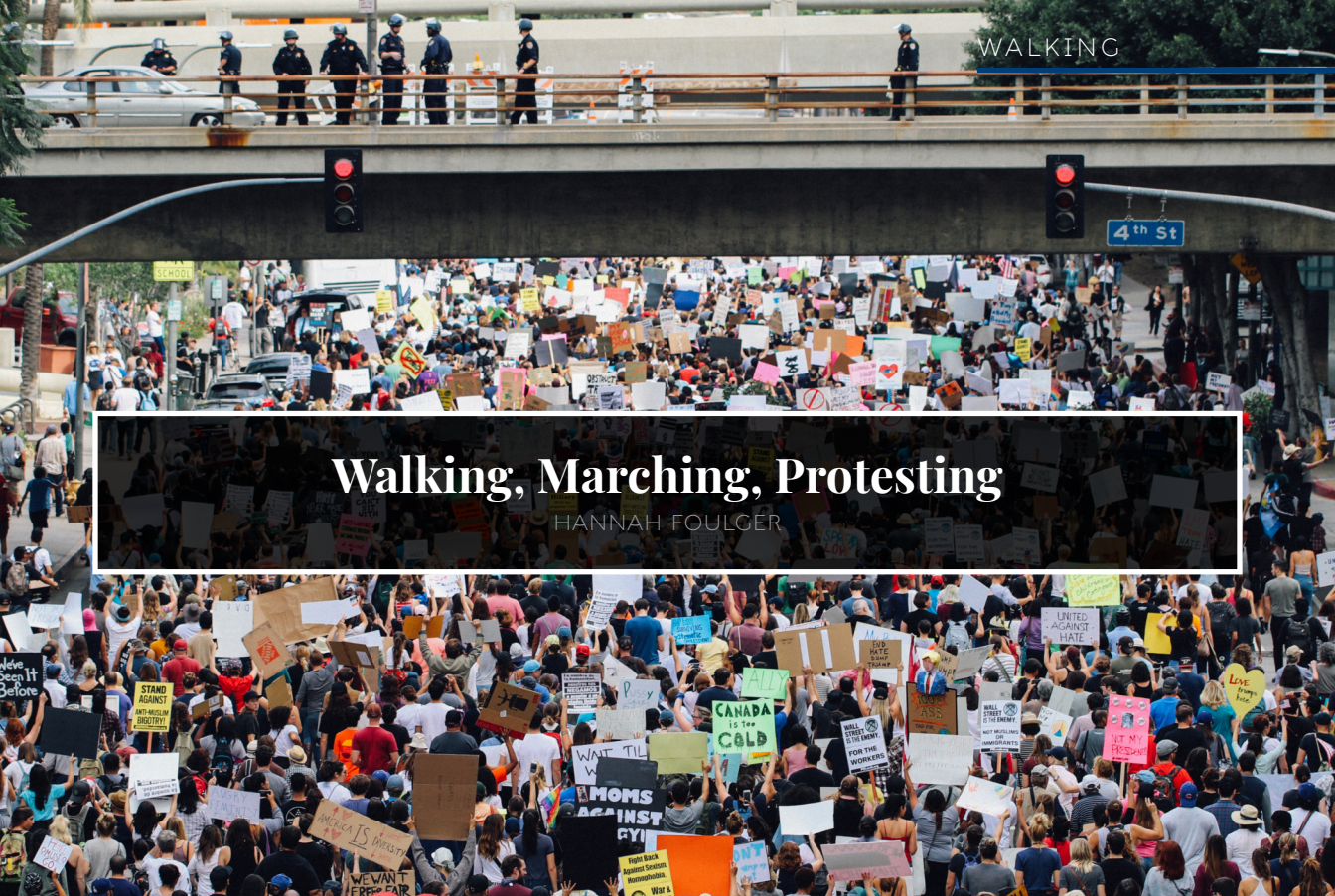
Back on the ground there is still something else to be discovered and explored. An actual concrete staircase is tucked away in a far and shadowed corner. It's well-crafted, modest, and obviously very old. Made by humans, etched and decorated by nature, the steps lead down the backside of the tree's clearing and there the trail seems to end.

I forged on once and found some old round timbers laid down like a pioneer road, but only tangled impassable brush beyond. It was a cool and dark place for crawling things and the creatures that feed on them. The air was impossibly close, and I felt like if I didn't respect the limits before me I might suffocate or lose my way. I returned to the steps then climbed back into the light and the clearing between the deep earth and the high blue sky.

We know we're walking on sacred ground when every step we take feels like part of an unfolding ritual. Moments become laden with significance, connections, and discoveries. Our lives are framed and formed by these times and places. The path, the place, and the traveller are inseparable. I cannot say where the transition into sacred territory is, or even if it exists, but if there is no boundary then every place is sacred, and every action recognizing and respecting this, is a ritual of faith. When we can feel and understand all of Creation as holy, then every being and place is one, joined in a sacred and eternal community. We know when we are there.



Alex Jackson is a writer, teacher, learner, father, husband, amateur philosopher, and beginner martial artist. He feels called to work in reconciliation.



Walking, Marching, Protesting

HANNAH FOULGER

Photo: [Alex Radelich](#)

In this time of social distancing, we may think wistfully back to the days when we were able to congregate in church, in theatres, and in protest. It was only six months ago that people from all strata gathered at the Manitoba Legislature for the Strike for Climate Action, inspired by Greta Thunberg. That march feels like a thousand years ago. Gathering and moving together feels like a memory or a dream these days. But there was once a time when people gathered together to march for political and climate action, Pride, water sovereignty, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

What's often key in protests, and what is most exciting, is the walk, parading down Broadway, or, in the more exhilarating circumstances, blocking off Portage and Main for the parade or for a round dance. More often,

these routes are chosen for their accessibility to those with mobility aids, canes, walkers, and wheelchairs, who may not march the route, but parade with us nonetheless.

But, despite what the pictures tell us, disability is more than wheelchairs and walkers. It's chronic illness. It's neurodiversity. It's being deaf. It's having a brain injury. Many rallies and marches are organized without adequate funding for an ASL interpreter, and there are many who are unable to handle the raw intensity of a protest. All aspects of the protest, parade included, can be exclusive to those with invisible injuries.

"I have missed out on almost every protest since my brain injury," Jane Orion Smith says. Smith is a Winnipeg Quaker who used to work as a stage designer at Buddies in Bad Times.



“I made it to Pride for a bit in 2017 – because, compared to Toronto, Winnipeg seemed like it would be at least a viable outing! Most of my social action work was rooted in my writing and advocacy behind the scenes, not out in the street. I no longer have the capacity to think through issues or communicate them in writing, in the kind of clear way needed, nor the energy to sustain myself on an ongoing issue. My brain feels like it’s going to explode within a half hour of actually ‘thinking.’

“Pivoting to do in-the-streets protests as an alternative to the more cerebral work of yore is also tough – lots of noise, lots of people, lots of stimulation. Attending any protest is going to cost me – and I won’t know how much until two days later. Pain. Fog. Fatigue. Cognitive difficulties. The list goes on. At the time, I get disoriented, can have balance problems, certainly aphasia. I get overwhelmed quickly and have a hard time making decisions – which means I always need to go with a support person when I go to a public event. And being able to go means I have to be having a ‘good day.’ I really pay if it’s not a good day and I push myself.”

Smith isn’t alone in this struggle. Johanna Hedva is a writer and academic who lives with chronic illness. In 2014, she wrote an essay called “Sick Woman Theory” for *Mask Magazine*, questioning Hannah Arendt’s proposal that the political is any action performed in public, and how someone who cannot march in the parade, hold a sign, or shout a slogan can participate in protest: “If being present in public is what is required to be political, then whole swathes of the population can be deemed a-political – simply because they are not physically able to get their bodies into the street.”

Indeed, we are all suddenly finding ourselves in the same boat – unable to gather, unable to venture outside except for necessities, unable to show up at the Leg and tell Brian Pallister exactly what we think he should be doing. Instead, all the forms of protest that have been disregarded at times – social media activism, slacktivism, Tweeting for the cause – have become our only forms of protest. We carry on and hope that our voices will be recognized just as much as they would be if our politicians saw us from their offices.

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Climate Strike, 2019



How do we engage when we can't physically engage in the march?

"How I have decided to stay engaged, at this moment in time, is to be supportive of the people that have the capacity and energy and ability to do it. You could say I have moved more into a more pastoral care role," Smith says. "Given most of my social action work was within a faith-based setting over the past 20+ years, this seemed a natural transition. By being a listening ear, a caring presence (even if that means only via text, email, or phone), a supporter of their work, I know I am making a contribution of value – because people used to do this for me. Often they were older folks who were no longer as active. They provided a model. And I can only read or be on a computer so much (planning and pacing is the order of the day for me every day!), so actual involvement seems like a future goal right now."

I am seeing every day the kind of mutual and pastoral care offered to people at this time. People on Facebook have bought groceries for complete strangers. Handed out toilet paper. Radical expressions of love from people with mobility and those with reduced mobility.

As Hedva writes in "Sick Woman Theory,"

"The most anti-capitalist protest is to care for another and to care for yourself. To take on the historically feminized and therefore invisible practice of nursing, nurturing, caring. To take seriously each other's vulnerability and fragility and precarity, and to support it, honour it, empower it. To protect each other, to enact and practice community. A radical kinship, an interdependent sociality, a politics of care."

We may not be able to walk or parade together, but we can learn something from those who have been in protest of harmful systems and support each other with the love and care Jesus showed us.



Hannah Foulger is a British Canadian theatre artist and writer. Her disability poetry has been published in Blue Mountain Press' *Disabled Voices* anthology and performed in Sick + Twisted Theatre's *Lame Is...* cabaret. Her plays *Clink* and *My Frozen Heart: A Comic Tragedy* have been produced at the Winnipeg Fringe Festival. She lives on Treaty 1 Territory in Winnipeg, Manitoba.



Parish News Roundup



Online Services Around the Diocese

These parishes are offering online worship services.

- **All Saints, Winnipeg:** Service recordings are [available on YouTube](#).
- **St. John's Cathedral:** [Live streams](#) on Sundays at 10:30 a.m.
- **Emmanuel Anglican/United Church, Ignace, ON:** [Live streams](#) Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. and Sunday evenings for Compline at 9:00 p.m.
- **St. Aidan's, Winnipeg:** Service recordings are [available on YouTube](#).
- **St. Alban's, Kenora:** [Live streams](#) on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
- **saint benedict's table:** [Live streams](#) Evening Prayer at 5:00 p.m. daily. | Sundays at 7:00 p.m.



Rev. Canon Jeanne Bryan leads Sunday worship from her home for Emmanuel Anglican/United Church in Ignace, Ontario.

- **St. Thomas, Weston:** [Live Streams](#) on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
- **St. Luke's, Winnipeg:** Recordings of the Daily Offices are available [at their website](#). [Live streams](#) on Sundays at 10:30 a.m.
- **St. Chad's, Winnipeg:** [Lives streams](#) Morning Prayer at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays.
- **St. Mark's, Winnipeg:** You can join a free teleconference call on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. | Call Number: +1 867-292-3030 | Code: 531-9209#.
- **The Anglican Lutheran Centre:** Sunday services with Bishop Geoff can be [found on Twitch](#) at 10:00 a.m.
- **St. James, Winnipeg, and St. Stephen and St. Bede:** They will be alternating live streamed services from their locations: [St. James:](#) May 3, 17 and 31 at 9:30 a.m. [St. Stephen and St. Bede:](#) May 10, 24 at 11:15 a.m.
- **St. George's, Crescentwood:** [Live streams](#) on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m.
- **St. Saviour's, Winnipeg:** Recordings are available [at their website](#).
- **St. George's, Transcona:** Service recordings are available [at their website](#).



This page of the Parish News Round Up is sponsored by Richard Rosin. For more information, see his ad on page 3.

Rupert's Land in the Media

The *Winnipeg Free Press* recently published a piece about how Winnipeg churches were celebrating Easter online, and included a look at Holy Trinity's service with Cathy Campbell and Donald McKenzie.

"Scattered within the pews, with several metres separating them, are Richard Greig, a Scotsman who's played the church's 4,600-pipe organ since 1997; Johanna Mast-Kolb, a cheery Sunday-school teacher; and the Rev. Donald McKenzie, an affable man in blue shirtsleeves with shaggy, greyish hair.

On this day, the trio make up [Cathy] Campbell's de facto film crew as she produces what will be a Saturday evening address to the Holy Trinity congregation, sent out ahead of Easter Sunday: Greig is providing the soundtrack, Mast-Kolb is doing a bit of prop work and backup vocals, and McKenzie is the gaffer, the cameraman, and the lighting technician.

'What I want to do isn't to recreate a service,' Campbell tells the group. 'We don't have the capacity for that, and to me, it would feel wrong.'

What she wants is to offer some sort of reminder that even if a congregation can't exactly congregate, the church is still a rock, it is still standing there."

[Read the full article here.](#)

Canadian Foodgrains Bank

The Canadian Foodgrains Bank has put together a prayer resource for this time. It's available [at their website](#) or as a [downloadable pdf](#).

Prayer for leaders and those giving care

Thank you, Creator, for all forms of governments and leaders around the world. Lead them as they determine how best to govern in these uncertain times. Let this be a time of care, not fear. Unite them and us in this time where we are seeing that borders mean nothing. Form their leadership and decision-making with mercy, compassion, and wisdom.

Please be with all of the emergency responders, doctors and nurses, and others whose service is essential. We are grateful for all those who stock the shelves at the grocery store and help keep things as normal as possible. Cover all those who are exposing their own health to save others. Protect them physically and emotionally. Guide their hands and give them wisdom. Protect their families as they spend extended time away from home. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

COVID-19 Update from PWRDF

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund [has announced] a plan to allocate \$200,000 to respond to COVID-19 around the world and in Canada. The money will be spread across four partners: Village Health Works (Burundi), Partners in Health (global response), ACT Alliance's Global Appeal and HelpAge Canada, supporting vulnerable seniors here.

To address the needs of underserved communities in developing countries, PWRDF has granted \$60,000 each to Partners in Health and Village Health Works. Both are long-time partners of PWRDF and are well placed to support people dealing with COVID-19. PIH Rwanda and VHW have been key partners in

PWRDF's All Mothers and Children Count program, supported by tens of thousands of Canadians and with funding from the Government of Canada.

"As always, we are heartened by your solidarity, support, compassion, and tenacity," writes Cathryn Christensen, Clinical Partnerships Director at VHW. When VHW first reported back to PWRDF on March 19, there were no identified cases of COVID-19 in Burundi, and 11 cases in Rwanda. Since then, Christensen notes two cases of COVID-19 have been diagnosed in Bujumbura, Burundi. There are now 75 cases in Rwanda. These numbers can be partly attributed to low rates of testing and access to tests. Health care professionals at VHW are concerned they don't have sufficient equipment or staff if COVID-19 infections follow a trajectory similar to that of Italy, Spain or the United States. "There are fewer than 10 ventilators in all of Burundi (with a population of more than 11 million people) and, as we know, the health system's capacity is challenged even without the additional threat of a pandemic," says Christensen. "Our sewing co-op face masks, made from local kitenge fabric, have since been improved."

Given the lack of ICU beds, personnel and treatment options, VHW's strategy is in line with Burundi's Ministry of Health and will focus heavily on containment efforts. Initial measures will be education, prevention and protection, with the goals "to protect patients, health workers, the population (including workers who are building our urgently needed hospital), and to treat what we can treat," says Christensen.

A further allocation of \$40,000 will contribute to the ACT Alliance Global Appeal to support organizations building awareness about COVID-19 and working closely with health officials to prevent fatalities and intense pressure on already fragile public health systems. The global budget for this appeal is \$12 million U.S.

Major vulnerable groups of people are in countries where PWRDF works, such as the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, and migrants in Venezuela, Syria and other

places. ACT notes that infections are "expected to rise exponentially" when COVID-19 hits small shelters and holding and detention centres.

"The work of our global partners to respond to this pandemic is critical right now," says Will Postma, Executive Director of PWRDF. "They are helping the most vulnerable in areas where even the basics of soap, running water and two metres of physical distancing can be a luxury."

To support needs in Canada, PWRDF is also allocating \$40,000 to HelpAge Canada to support vulnerable seniors in Canada coping with COVID-19.

HelpAge Canada provides grants to organizations across Canada who are responding to seniors who are at the highest risk of COVID-19 infection. Initiatives include providing food, medications, personal care as well as supporting those who are putting themselves in harm's way to care for them.

HelpAge Canada has raised almost \$110,000 towards its COVID-19 appeal, including the gift from PWRDF. It continues to expand its partnerships with agencies across Canada.

"We are grateful and humbled to receive this grant and to work together to serve the most vulnerable among us," says Gregor Sneddon, Executive Director of HelpAge Canada and coincidentally, a former Anglican priest in the Diocese of Ottawa. "We are excited to work together on this project and maybe more in the future."

The economic fallout of COVID-19 has been devastating, for some more than others. We encourage you to do what you can to support PWRDF and our partners, both in Canada and around the world during this unprecedented global crisis. Please hold in your prayers those who are unwell, vulnerable to illness, facing financial uncertainty and for whom physical distancing is not possible. We continue to lift up our hope for a more just, peaceful and healthy world. – Janice Biehn, Communications Coordinator, April 1, 2020

Walking: A Soliloquy

CHRISTOPHER TROTT

Photo: [Atanas Dzhangarov](#)

I am one of those people who much prefers to read about walking than to actually walk. I am not talking about those healthy “hike a nature trail across half of North America” types of walking books, but rather those that reflect on philosophy and walking, or perhaps the philosophy of walking. It turns out, there is an entire genre of books on this subject that allow one to meditatively reflect on walking while sitting comfortably in a chair at home.

As usual, we can blame it on the Greeks. The early philosophers were called Peripatetics – Socrates, Plato, and the crowd – because of their habit of walking around while they disputed. Rousseau walked from Paris to Geneva and back a couple of times (mainly because he could not afford the stagecoach fare). Nietzsche was famous for his long walks in

the Alps, especially after his mental break down. Kierkegaard paced the streets of Copenhagen being very glum. The list goes on to include poets galore, not only those who wrote romantic nature poetry, but many others as well. Walking and thinking.

And Jesus walked. He walked everywhere. Those few occasions when he did not walk, when he took a boat or rode a donkey, are so freighted with significance that each alone would require an entire essay. He walked and he talked. Jesus did not walk alone, but was followed about by great crowds who wanted to listen in as he taught his disciples. It must have been very exciting to be in this crowd walking along behind Jesus, getting caught up in the movement to bring in the Kingdom of God. It must have been noisy, dusty, and smelly. With



the crowds and the noise, it is no wonder that not everyone heard things well, and we have different versions of the same stories ("Blessed are the cheesemakers," according to Monty Python).

There were times when Jesus had to walk apart. He had to seek out the quiet and the solitude in the hills to pray and to think, and he walked through the desert for 40 days and nights. Walking and praying.

In one of the most common metaphors we hear, we are invited to walk with Jesus. We walk with Jesus because of the sheer physicality and materiality of walking. The physicality of our own bodies exercising and exerting, sweating and being chilled. We become very aware of our bodies, our embodied existence. And we are reminded that God embodied Jesus with the same strengths and limitations as our bodies. And as he walked Jesus was exercising and exerting, sweating and being chilled.

As we walk, we are reminded of the very materiality of the world around us. On pleasant sunny days, we can glory in the joy of the world. On rainy, snowy, -40 days (we are Rupert's Landers after all), the physical world is much more "in your face," and it is difficult to give thanks. As Jesus walked, he pointed to the vines and the vineyards, the workers in the fields, the fig trees, the sheep and the goats and told stories about them. The very material world is also called into the Kingdom of God.



Christ on the road to Emmaus, Leicester Cathedral, Richard III window detail,

Photo: J. Guffogg & J. Hannan

As we exert our bodies and we are stung in the face by blowing snow, we have time to think. We can think about what we are going to have for supper, give thanks for what God has granted us this day, or wonder about the relationship between essence and existence. Or do them all at once.

That is the joy of walking. Our minds can fly to the highest heaven and the deepest problem while remaining connected to the nitty, gritty of the everyday world. We are whole: mind, body, spirit, world all united.



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