



Anglican Church of Canada

Diocese of Ontario

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Dear family in Christ,

Some of you may recall my mentioning on Sunday during my sermon, some of the people of my childhood parish experience of community, friendship and love. One person mentioned, Joyce Westcott, a true friend, neighbor and a carer of my mother in her untimely decline in 1982, who was a wonderful Paradigm of loving generosity. As I preached yesterday, and mentioning her, Joyce died, just shy of her 100th birthday. Her son Mark, my contemporary and childhood friend contacted me with the news on Sunday evening.

The great value of parish life is the relationships we form along the way, the way we influence one another in the journey to Jesus with just the snippets we know, which have been handed down through the generations.

I was fortunate. My parents believed in the value of the faith community, my grandmothers who I saw regularly encouraged me in the faith in different ways, my schooling had a faith/religious focus, not demanding, but inviting us into the adventure of the mystery of the divine, always present, always open to question and to growth. I couldn't have imagined being without those signposts, those gateways which honestly brought joy and courage to be with God and my faith families through the years to now.

Even as a child, I derived great comfort in sitting near to our Sunday regulars, their presence, smiles, singing, their silences and listening were the gifts that gave us courage to be there.

I'd hear the negatives from disbelievers, the rumours, the outrageous stories, the fear, the bitterness and at times anger. And because of the love of my faith community, was able to see and live a better way beyond all that in the truth and safe haven I belonged.

Jesus reminds us, that we don't need to be lost and focused on sinfulness, but to live the life of redemption and hope brilliantly lived in the resurrection. To live by faith can only bring us to love and gives us permission to be a community where justice is the gift for all, not just the few and that we see and find a better way.



Joyce, played the little church organ, arranged flowers and helped with the cleaning roster. She formed a Christmas children's choir each year. She sat with my mum in her dying, visited her in hospital, baby sat my sister, and was there in minutes without complaint. She and mum recalled stories and laughed easily in the joy of recalling. She passed on the faith and the way by simply living her faith.

May she rest in peace.

Our little church is a powerhouse of transformation, if only we would let go enough for the embracing of the gift found in each other and our focus on the Jesus of today as our hope and joy.

Blessings in the midst of this hot summer, and may you be refreshed in the unconditional love that can only be found in Jesus.

Fr. Jeff and team

Joyce Westcott 1925-2025

