

ST. AUGUSTINE'S
ANGLICAN CHURCH



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Welcome to our Patronal issue! On August 28 we celebrate the Feast of St. Augustine of Hippo, our patron saint. We hope you will enjoy these articles that continue to explore God's work in the life of our parish, as well as St. Augustine's influence on the Church and western civilization.

The Hippo Herald

SUMMER-FALL 2026 LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

A conversation with Femi and Tosin Ofundimu

But on God Who Shows Mercy

"We scheduled our first date, and that was it," reflects Rev. Femi. In a recent conversation with Femi and his wife, Tosin, they shared glimpses of their lives through anecdotes and laughter. Our chat opened with Femi announcing they had been married for 10 years and seven months.

Both grew up in Ibadan, Nigeria, though their paths did not cross in childhood. Years later, a mutual friend intro-

duced them, and they were married in 2015 in a Christmas wedding. Their love story has since unfolded across countries and through changes in studies and careers.

So it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who shows mercy.
Romans 9:16

Femi had worked as an English teacher and briefly in IT, but something did not feel quite right. Through prayer, discernment, and conversations with family and friends, he began to recognize a call to ordained ministry.

Growing up Anglican, Femi was deeply involved in church life, singing in children's and youth choirs and

practicing with the Boys' Brigade Band. He recalls making the vicarage his second home, reading newspapers, watching CNN, and even "eavesdropping on the priests' conversations." Several of his closest friends came from church.

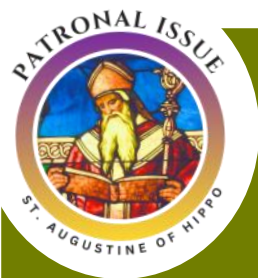
Still, he wondered, "Was God really calling me to be a priest? Can this be?" Consulting those who knew him best helped him see himself more clearly and trust what he felt God was calling him to.

Femi studied at the Ezekiel



Tosin and Femi Ofundimu with their children Ire and Anu

CONTINUED PAGE 2 >



Femi & Tosin continued...



See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you

Isaiah 55:5

College of Theology in Ekpoma, Nigeria, received his B.Th., was ordained a deacon in 2016, and served as a missionary in Liberia for a year. He returned to Nigeria in 2017 as he and Tosin were expecting their daughter, Anu, and received orders as an Anglican priest in 2018.

Tosin had been working with the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria, focusing on research, conserva-

tion, and sustainable management of forest and wildlife resources. Having already earned a master's degree in wildlife management from the University of Ibadan, she came to the University of Lethbridge in January 2023 for further studies.

When her request for study leave was not approved, pursuing this opportunity meant resigning from her government position.

"It was one of the biggest leaps of faith I've ever taken. I truly believed God was calling me into something new, and I had to respond in faith."

And their family was growing. Tosin arrived in Lethbridge pregnant with their son, Ire.

While Tosin was exploring the University of Lethbridge, Femi discovered St. Augustine's online and reached out to Rev. Gillian via email. "I saw love. I loved the music," he recalls. "The setting seemed peaceful. The feeling was

that people were there to worship. I saw the presence of God in that church. I saw unity."

Since then, Tosin, Femi, and their children have become part of our in-person church family. We have been blessed to experience Femi's ministry among us. He remains a teacher at heart, a fact evident in his preaching and his thoughtful Advent and Lenten reflections.

The family loves living in Lethbridge and hopes to continue building their future here. Tosin is seeking the right employment opportunity as they work toward their long-term plans in Canada. Please join us in praying for that opportunity and for God's continued guidance over their family. Ω

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1



Femi receiving the blessing of the bishop at his ordination service in Nigeria

What are the kids up to?

Growing together in faith and community

BY STEF COLLINS

CHILDREN & FAMILIES MINISTRIES

Our church is a wonderfully vibrant community, and nowhere is that energy more apparent than in the heart and soul of our children, youth, and family ministries. Whether we are diving into creative lessons or preparing our older students for confirmation, there is always something meaningful happening to support the next generation of our church family.

A PLACE WHERE KIDS BELONG

At St. Augustine's, we believe that young people are not just the church of tomorrow; they are an active, vital part of our church today. From the moment families walk through our doors, our goal is to create a welcoming, safe, and engaging environment where children of all ages can explore their faith. We know that growing in a spiritual community takes time, patience, and a lot of fun, which is why our programs are intentionally designed to meet kids right where they are in their developmental journeys.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Every week our kids meet up for a lesson during the church service. In 2026, we worked through an eight-week lesson plan from the Sparkhouse curriculum about the Kings and Prophets of the Old Testament, including Deborah, Gideon, Samson, Saul, David, Solomon, the divided kingdoms, and right up to the exile to Babylon. We learned about the timeline of events and how they relate to the New Testament and our lives today. Then, we spent all of the Sundays in Lent talking about Holy Week, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection. We can't wait to dive into more stories and lessons this fall with some really exciting new plans coming!

CONFIRMATION

We are heavily focused on walking alongside our older students through confirmation classes and youth programming. As children grow into teenagers, their questions become



deeper and their need for a grounded community becomes even more critical. Our confirmation

classes provide a dedicated space for youth to unpack their beliefs, ask hard questions, and take real ownership of their faith journey. We want our teens to know they have a safe harbour here, surrounded by mentors and a church family that genuinely cares about who they are becoming.



YOUTH GROUP

Our teens and preteens have been meeting every alternate Sunday through the 2025–2026 school year. We have played many games and eaten many bowls of soup! Our most popular event in the past school year was definitely our Halloween Murder Mystery Party.

GET INVOLVED

None of these wonderful programs would be possible without the dedication of our incredible volunteers and the supportive parents who bring their children week after week. Whether you are interested in helping out with Sunday school, assisting with youth events, or simply keeping our programs in your prayers, there is a place for you to contribute.

To learn more about what is happening week to week, be sure to check out the weekly Parish Pulse.

Thank you for your ongoing support, your enthusiasm, and your commitment to raising up our children in love and faith. I look forward to seeing you this Sunday!

With gratitude,
Stef



This month's big question

What impact did St. Augustine have on Western Civilization beyond the Church?



BY THE REV. BR. JASON CARROLL

All the ways that Augustine impacted life in the West would be the subject of a whole book (or several), but I will point to two critical ways that I think Augustine's thought *most* impacted "Western Civilization."

First, Augustine heavily influenced the transformation of Western Civilization from a *pagan empire* into a *Christian society*. As Augustine watched the Germanic invasions of the Roman Empire, and heard the accusation that this disaster was the fault of Christianity, he wrote his great work *The City of God*. In it, Augustine portrayed human society as two opposing cities – The City of Man and The City of God – eternally in conflict upon earth until Jesus returns to establish the

IT WAS NOT JUST SOCIETY WHICH WAS OF IMPORTANCE, BUT THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL. FROM THAT POINT FORWARD, WESTERN CIVILIZATION HAS GRANTED A REMARKABLE IMPORTANCE AND VALUE TO THE INDIVIDUAL PERSON.

New Creation. One serves itself, the other serves the true God. He writes:

Accordingly, two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self. The former, in a word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord. For the one seeks glory from men; but the greatest glory of the other is God, the witness of conscience. (City of God, XIV.28)

So, on the one hand, Augustine describes the Roman Empire as the City of Man – fallen, pagan, corrupt, anthropolatrous and *uncivilized*. Similarly, he portrays the Church as the City

of God – fallen but redeemed in Christ, and on pilgrimage through time until the New Creation. From there he argues that the Church can attempt to bring true civilization (i.e. the worship of God) to human society, and that human governments, though flawed

and necessary for maintaining order and justice in a fallen world, can be guided by the Church.

Whether he intended it or not, when the Empire did collapse, and the only institution still functioning in the West was the Church, many

looked to Augustine's thought in *The City of God* as the justification for reorganizing society as a *Christian society*. For the next 1200 years, Western Civilization would be committed to the idea that to be a just human society, even a flawed one, it must be a *Christian society* which seeks God as its foundation. The medieval story would be flawed and complicated, but Augustine's belief that the Church could guide society was the foundation of the West as a Christian society.

Second, Augustine's view of society was matched with his view of the human soul as a *microcosm of the divine-human drama* being played out in *The City of God*. In his most famous work *The Confessions*, Augustine tells his story as a small-scale account of that conflict between the two loves *within himself*, the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self. As he tells the story of his conversion, he affirms the deeply *personal* nature of his relationship with God, and how his love for God had been hijacked by love for other things. He reflects on his life as a long, agonizing journey



of being drawn back to his creator by the gravity of grace present in every moment of his life by God. It is the story of *grace in the individual soul*.

As such, Augustine deeply influenced the valuation of the human soul in the West. It was not just society which was of importance, but the individual soul. From that point forward, Western Civilization has granted a remarkable importance and value to the individual person. In the medieval age, much of society was organized around the means for the individual to know and love God (sacrament, liturgy, feasts, pilgrimages, cathedrals). While there were a multitude of voices echoing this across the medieval age, in a sense they were all echoing Augustine's opening lines of *The Confessions*: "... and our heart is restless until it rests in you."

As you might have guessed, though, Western Civilization in the modern era has abandoned Augustine's vision, but that is another story... Ω

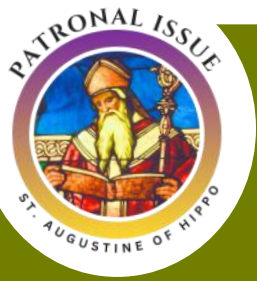
Prayer books for Sudanese congregation



The St. John Jieng South Sudanese congregation needed copies of the Book of Common Prayer and St. Augustine's was able to help. Thanks to a partnership between the two congregations, Parish Council approved a donation of \$600 to the project with the rest raised by St.

John's. On July 12, the Rev. John Mach Ayuen and members of his congregation celebrated the arrival of the prayer books which are translated into the Dinka language. According to Rev. Steve Bateman, they are beautiful leather-bound books that include hymns and the prayer book in one volume. St. Augustine's is pleased to partner with St. John's in this and other ways, such as the use church facilities on Sunday afternoons.





Focus on Discipleship & Evangelism

Opportunities to learn and grow

BY PAT HAMMOND

St. Augustine's is blessed with an excellent Christian education program for children and youth. And thanks to a renewed push for adult education, grownups are seeing increasing opportunities to learn about the Bible, church history and theology.

According to Shelby Martens, Deputy Warden for Discipleship & Evangelism, there is strong interest in both the basic as well as the deeper aspects of the Christian life. But during the pandemic, opportunities for in-person learning dried up, although services and lecture series that could be delivered by video did continue. She says many programs on hold never did resume after COVID.

Now, that situation has turned around with 2026 being especially rich with a lecture series about the travels of St. Paul during Lent, and a

women's Bible study currently underway. January to March featured the Foundations of Anglican Faith course focused on Anglican theology and practice, while the summer months featured Living and Learning: Faith Conversations.



"This is a fairly new role for me – I just started in March," she says. "A lot is new to me and I'm learning as I go."

Even so, she got off to a great start with the Living and Learning course, working closely with clergy to plan the course and with Wanda Kopp to deliver it (see story page 7). Each session featured a parishioner sharing their faith story followed by an informal discussion with the group.

"We thought that maybe five to 10 people would show up. But then 25 people showed up and then 40, so we had to move it upstairs to the Parish Hall," says Shelby.

"Wanda did such a fantastic job leading that. She was able to reach people in ways that other can't."

Parishioners can look forward to a course on truth and reconciliation starting soon, and sessions dealing with grace and atonement being offered during Lent in 2027, in cooperation with the Lethbridge Mennonite Church. A return to home group Bible studies is also up for consideration.

"We're always looking for new ideas," she says. "We're hoping to make it an area of ministry that responds to what people are interested in learning about." Ω



Adult education at St. Augustine's

Living and learning — faith conversations

BY WANDA KOPP

"Faith Conversations" was a four-week discussion group held immediately after the service on Sunday. Each week a different parishioner was interviewed about their faith journey and then space was given for questions and response from the listeners. The goal was to facilitate conversations surrounding the beautiful diversity of experiences that have led us to St. Augustine's and to deepen our sense of belonging within this community. Shelby Martens approached me with an invitation to moderate this discussion group, interviewing a member of our parish for each of the four sessions, and then leading the discussion that followed.

Shortly after Lawrence and I returned to Lethbridge from five years on Vancouver Island, we had a phone conversation with a Methodist minister somewhere in the US, who after hearing a bit of our story, said to me, "Wanda, the bride of Christ is a big woman!" For the past three years, I have been pondering this statement and trying to allow my mind and heart to receive this "big, beautiful Bride" as something more than I have allowed her to be, as something bigger than my limited understanding. As I contemplated leading Faith Conversations, I couldn't help but wonder if this was another way to give witness to a fuller expression of this Bride. I was honoured to be given this opportunity to host and hold the stories of others in a safe and intentional space. I was also very curious and expectant about the potential of these shared stories to inspire and connect us. We settled on four questions for the interview as a place to start the conversation:

1. What are some of your earliest experiences or images of God?
2. What was the place of the church in your early faith journey?



A COMMON THEME CENTRED
AROUND THE GRACIOUS
WAY THAT ST. AUGUSTINE'S
MAKES SPACE FOR QUES-
TIONS AND UNCERTAINTY.

3. What questions were you holding or desires/ invitations from God were you sensing just before coming to St. Augustine's?
4. How have those things been addressed here?

I knew that the answers to these questions would provide a sacred glimpse into individual faith journeys, but what I wasn't really expecting was the beautiful thread of God's faithfulness that wove itself through every single story. Something that was said at the beginning of the interview — an answer to the first question, for example — would often be picked up again in a beautiful and redemptive way near the end of the interview. Listening to the answers to the questions was like watching a stone being skipped across the surface of the water, and we could clearly see the unique and unmistakable 'markers' that God placed along the journey of each person.

Once the interview was complete we invited the group to ask questions for clarification, offer encouragement or comment on places where they resonated with the journey being shared. This discussion was always so affirming, compassionate and insightful. Tears were shed and laughter was shared. A common theme centred around the gracious way that St. Augustine's makes space for questions and uncertainty. Something tells me our patron saint would approve... We had anywhere from 15 to 35 people joining this conversation group and it has been an absolute delight and privilege to make this journey together. I'm grateful for the opportunity, the courage of those who told their stories, the compassion and grace of those who held these stories and for the continuing revelation of the "Big, Beautiful Bride" at St. Augustine's. Ω



Jo's husband
Jackson



Hiking in
New Mexico

Our missionary friends

The liminal zone

BY JO WILLS

We find ourselves in this tension of here and not yet. When we look at the Bible this tension is all over the place; look at the kingdom of God for example... here and not yet. So even though everything feels unclear and uncertain, there's this strange peace in our juxtaposing God.

Here we are in Las Vegas, New Mexico, in the meadows of the southwest, knowing God



Jo Wills

has spoken about it and called us to come. Yet we came here burning for Indigenous North Americans, burning for them to walk in their identity carved by Creator, burning for the Great Spirit to move in our midst, burning for the Bible to come alive through oral storytelling, burning to listen to stories, current life stories and stories of old. However, we look around and wonder *where are they?*

where are the people? which then leads to the questions ... have we got it wrong? Transitions are hard. No matter how many times you do it! With my life constantly changing in the last eight years of missions, everything has felt quite temporary. Short-term. Transient. This time we've tried to shift our perspective to prolonged. How often are you supposed to put yourself out there? Am I listening to Holy Spirit enough? How do I get connected? What does it look like to establish yourself? At least for a little bit. There's this limbo – of shifting to this long term



mindset, yet unsure if we're exactly content where we are, wondering if God spoke about Las Vegas to just get us to New Mexico as a stepping stone into moving to a reservation, or trusting that who the Lord has for us here, and now, doing what we're doing is exactly what he has for us.

Every week we have the opportunity to volunteer with a food pantry to distribute fresh produce and commodities to homeless and low income families. A couple years ago a huge forest fire swept through the area and many people are still dealing with the repercussions.

What we are dreaming for and planning next is a scripture hike in only another week or so, to have people encounter the True Human Being through story. Five young adults have said yes to leaving the distractions of life and join Jackson and me in the wilderness for a few days, where we'll lead them through the method we learned for internalising long chunks of Bible stories. We have felt the longing of devotion, so pray for us as we go through the stories of the river flowing from the temple, Mary's alabaster anointing, and the road to Emmaus.

So, again, here we are. And while we are here, we want to see and serve the one in front of us as we know Jesus is so good at doing. Ω

Book review from the Rector's Desk

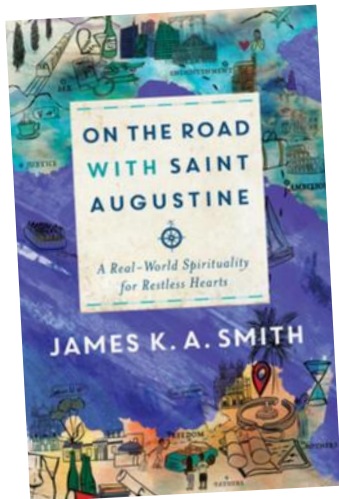
A hitchhiker's guide to the cosmos

On The Road with Saint Augustine – A Real World Spirituality for Restless Hearts

by James K.A. Smith. Brazos Press, 2019

BY THE REV. STEVE BATEMAN

James K.A. Smith's wonderful book, *On the Road With Saint Augustine*, reminds us of the ongoing relevance of St. Augustine in a world ... where transcendence still haunts but where consumerism threatens to domesticate everything. Says Smith: *You might think of Augustine as offering a hitchhiker's guide to the cosmos for wandering hearts.*



Smith begins the book autobiographically. This is appropriate given that Augustine himself invented the genre with *Confessions*! Smith recounts his own time at university studying the 20th century existentialists. Here, he discovered that the road to Heidegger, Sartre, and Camus runs through the writings of Augustine: *The notion of inauthenticity that will be so*

central to existentialism's diagnosis of our malaise is generated in the chemical reaction of Heidegger's reading of Augustine's Confessions.

The logic of the book is straightforward: We, like Augustine (not to mention Heidegger, Sartre and Camus), are restless travellers. Could it be that his wisdom can speak to our situation? *Imagine ... an understanding of human longing and estrangement that not only honors those experiences of not-at-home-ness but also affirms the hope of finding a home, finding oneself.*

This, says Smith, is precisely what Augustine offers the modern pilgrim. Augustine's most famous words – *We are restless until we find rest in you* still have resonance, and Smith

explores the ways in which they remain helpful in our contemporary world.



The heart of the book is a section entitled "Detours on the Way to Myself." It is composed of 10 chapters. The titles alone make the case for the book's relevance:

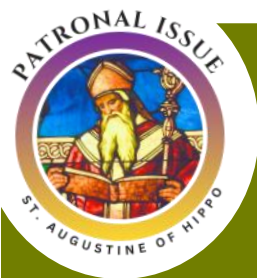
Freedom: How to escape
Ambition: How to aspire
Sex: How to connect
Mothers: How to be dependent
Friendship: How to belong
Enlightenment: How to believe
Story: How to be a character
Justice: How to protest
Fathers: How to be broken
Death: How to hope

Each of these explorations invites us to consider the possibility that *Hope is found in a certain art of saying goodbye, but also in looking ahead to the day when Someone will greet us with, Welcome home – and knowing how to navigate in the meantime.*

This book is more than an exploration of Augustine's thought. With frequent references to *Confessions*, it speaks also of his life, his experiences, and his circumstances. It helps us get to know Augustine with a view to better understand what he is saying.

On The Road with Saint Augustine is also not an apology *per se*. Smith is bold enough to disagree and challenge on occasion. In the chapter on sex, we read *I have my own disagreements and frustrations with Augustine on this score*. The result is an honest, if mostly positive, treatment of Augustine and his thought, curated with special attention to the ways in which this theological giant is helpful in our time.

If you are interested in getting to know our Patron Saint while addressing some of your own restlessness in the process, this book is a very worthwhile read. I highly recommend it. Ω

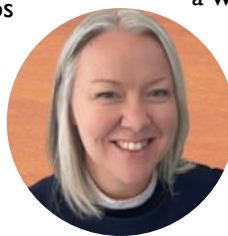


Christian living

Keeping the sabbath

BY THE REV. DR. GILLIAN BRECKENRIDGE

Summer is a time for many of us when we have a chance to step back from the busyness of our lives, or at least to embrace a different routine. For some, this means taking time away at the lake or the cabin, perhaps travelling to see relatives, or planning activities with the kids while school is out. As a priest, I have learned that July is really the only month at St. Augustine's where it feels like things quieten down. And that, if I want to have the energy and drive to keep going the rest of the year, I really need to embrace a quieter time in July. To allow my days to look different. To take time to read. To be outside. To spend more time with my family.



SABBATH IS AN INVITATION TO EMBRACE THE TRUTH, TO FIND SOME SMALL WAY TO LET THE TRUTH TRULY SINK INTO US, THAT WE ARE LOVED, AND THAT SO IS THE WORLD. AND TO LET THAT TRULY CHANGE US.

With all of this in mind, this summer I picked up a book that has been on my bookshelf for a while: *Living the Sabbath*, by Norman Wirzba. And it has been a delight.

Wirzba calls us to think of sabbath not just as one day off a week, not just as a time when we take a break. *What is at stake in Sabbath observance*, Wirzba tells us, *is not simply that we manage to pause and refuel enough to continue on in our frantic and sometimes destructive ways*

(*Living the Sabbath*, 2006, p. 23-4). The practice of taking sabbath is a practice that is intended to shape us, and transform us. To open us up to the world, to others, and to God's presence with us, in

a way that does not let us return to the world unchanged. The true fruit of sabbath is not found on our day of rest, Wirzba says, but *in the middle of our working week, as we are building, teaching, healing, [and] cooking* (p. 23).

Our world and our lives can be so underwritten by the idea that unending productivity and hard work are an unquestionable moral good, that it can be hard for us to hear the call of sabbath rest. We fear that doing less, that slowing down, that taking time to delight in what is right in front of us, makes us less than. Maybe even irresponsible. Even in our faith, we can be plagued by the feeling, by the anxiety, that we ought to do more, to be more.

Perhaps we fear that sabbath is about *not doing* something. About inaction. When we know that so much in our world needs to change. When we know that we need to be changed. But sabbath is not about stepping back from the world, or even from ourselves. The practice of sabbath simply gives us the space in which we can ask ourselves (in which we can be asked) to "reconsider and question – with depth and seriousness – what all our striving is ultimately for" (p.38).

To refuse the Sabbath is to close the world in

CONTINUED PAGE 12 >

Giving and receiving

Financial update

BY CATHY GILLESPIE
TREASURER

A summary of the church operating fund up to the end of July is provided below. It is gratifying to see that parishioner givings in total are higher than last year at this time. This financial support for the operations of the church is greatly appreciated. However, year-to-date givings are less than the budget target. Hopefully givings will increase through the latter part of the year (which is the typical pattern) such that the annual budget can be achieved.

Most expense categories within the major groupings in the summary are under their budget targets so far this year, other than a few that are trending over budget. For example, we are experiencing higher than anticipated building maintenance expenses, particularly for fire safety monitoring equipment, lighting and minor repairs. Church supplies and computer services are also running a little over budget. On the flip side, many expense categories are trending un-

der budget, resulting in being under the mid-year budget target for expenses in total.

As we head into the latter part of the year, we are keeping an eye on areas that might need special attention when developing next year's budget, such as those mentioned above.



Many of the church expenses are impacted by increasing prices as well as increasing attendance at church services and programs. The annual stewardship campaign will be launched in a few months, inviting parishioners to prayerfully consider how much they will be giving to support the operation of the church next year. Please respond to the campaign on a timely basis. The responses, considered collectively, will provide key input for the development of the operating budget for next year.

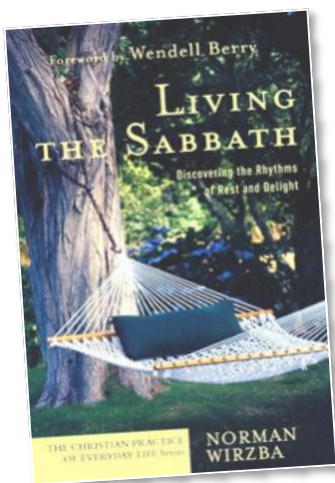
If you have any questions about the church's financial situation, or would like more details, or information on the different options for giving, please feel free to contact me by leaving a message at the church office. [Ω](#)

	Year to-date (July 31 2026)	Last year to-date (July 31 2025)	2026 Budget
Parishioner givings	\$ 285,740	\$ 273,084	\$ 542,200
Other income	<u>16,646</u>	<u>20,799</u>	<u>60,900</u>
Total income	<u>302,386</u>	<u>293,883</u>	<u>603,100</u>
Staffing expenses	\$ 206,430	\$ 199,927	\$ 357,700
Administration & apportionment	74,433	66,235	131,000
Facility expenses	53,884	51,093	92,900
Christian education & outreach	<u>8,932</u>	<u>8,120</u>	<u>21,500</u>
Total expenses	<u>343,679</u>	<u>325,375</u>	<u>603,100</u>
Net deficit	\$ <u>(41,293)</u>	\$ <u>(31,492)</u>	\$ <u>0</u>

Sabbath, continued from page 10

upon ourselves, by making it yield to our (often self-serving) desires and designs, and to cut ourselves off from God's presence and purpose... It is to claim that our worrisome ways are better or count more than the intentions of God. (p. 34)

St. Augustine of Hippo knew about this. About closing the world in upon ourselves. *Incurvatus in se* (literally, being curved in upon oneself) was one of the ways that Augustine described sin. Sabbath asks us to stop, and to look



up. From that inward curve. To see our world, to see creation, to see one another. And to see it all through the eyes of God's delight. And to be called into a different way of living, not by the constant pressure of productivity, or by the constant low-hum of anxiety, but by the promise, the telos, of God's peace.

When we hear the story of creation in Genesis 1 and 2, we tend to think of humanity as the crowning moment in all of creation. The moment at which everything was made complete. But what if it is the seventh day that completes creation? The day on which God rests. And God delights, in the beauty, and the wholeness, of all that he has made. Delight. Wholeness. Peace. This is the moment to which the creation story leads us. And this Genesis story, as faithful people have known for generations, is not just about beginnings. It is also about present truth. And it is about purpose.

Sabbath is a practice in which we are invited to remember who we are, and what we are made for. As influential Jewish thinker, Abraham Joshua Heschel tells us, *All our life should be a pilgrimage to the seventh day.* (Sabbath, 1951, p. 89).

A closing word: some of us live lives that are busy and overwhelming and difficult in ways that feel truly beyond our control. So now I want to take a moment to remind you of what you already know – that the invitation to sabbath is not meant to become another weight we place

around our necks, another way in which we can measure ourselves, measure our faith, and find ourselves wanting. Sabbath is not really about being able to take a whole day off a week. It is about finding the space, somewhere in our days, finding the small moments, in which we can quiet our minds and our anxious hearts long enough, to be reminded that we were not made for anxiety, that we were not saved by the cross of Christ so that we might spend our days trying to save ourselves. Sabbath is an invitation to embrace the truth, to find some small way to let the truth truly sink into us, that we are loved, and that so is the world. And to let that truly change us.

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Ω

St. Augustine's Church

A Church Family in the Heart of the City

411-11 Street South
Lethbridge, Alberta
T1J 2N9

Phone: (403) 327-3970
Email: office@staug.org
Website: www.staug.org



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

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