

Jeanne Bryan

I was raised in the United Church... baptized, confirmed, and married at St Paul's United Church in Souris, Manitoba. I attended Sunday School, CGIT, Youth Group, and Junior and Senior choir. I also attended St Luke Anglican Church in Souris with my aunt as a teen and was in their choir, as well. I had a wonderful religious foundation.

After many moves and teaching positions across Canadian cities, we settled in Ignace. We owned a tourist resort, and I began teaching there. Emmanuel Church [Anglican as there was no United] was closed at that time as we wanted our baby baptized, but we had to wait until he was almost 2 for the church to reopen. In 1970, Matabi Mine began causing an influx to the population in Ignace. There was interest in a United Church, and they attended Emmanuel Church. With much collaboration and discussion, in 1975, the first United Church service was held, and then alternating between Anglican and United services began monthly. Sept 27, 1976, marks the date of officially becoming an Anglican and United shared ministry. Why is this background information important? Well, by 1994, the last paid accountable minister left, and so once again it became lay-led.....myself [I had been admitted to the Anglican Church years before] and another United person, Pam Graydon. We were joined by a missionary for a short time. After a year or so of distinctly different services, I realized this was not sharing. I began as the lay-leader, and Pam began as the Sunday School and Youth Group leader. IF we were to be a shared ministry, we needed to share liturgy as well as monetary funds. I devised a service where each denomination was recognized and included, which we used until June 1, 2025, and I retired. So now you know the church history, which is important to my ministry. I had always felt I was called to "feed my sheep." In the 1970s, I began a charity, White Elephant Fund, that I ran through the Ignace School, and it fed, clothed, and supported Ignace residents at Christmas and through emergencies for 30 years. After being the lay leader, I felt a call in my heart again to "feed my sheep." One day, the message came through loud and clear. I was ordained Deacon on February 22, 2004, and ordained priest on September 22, 2007. Now I realize God had plans for me ever since I was a child, attending both denominations!

Some of the programs we created which included the whole community: Prayer blankets, Beads of Courage, Senior bags for seasons and reasons, Evening of Christmas Music, Music in the Park[ing] Lot, Light the Night for Hallowe'en, Ecumenical Outdoor services, home visits to all, Food Box by the church, Blessings in a Backpack feeding school children in need on weekends, Cold water accessible in the summer, Clothing box of hats, Mitts, socks, caps outdoors, Ladies Night out, online services, nightly Compline through Covid days, church yard decorations to give fun and hope - some were interactive, sidewalk messages, our version of the "Garden on Gethsemane" to visit and pray, Christmas memory tree in doors and by the sidewalk, rock painting in the church yard, outdoor services in the yard, had a crosswalk painted honouring all Indigenous, services for Missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, nightly services in the church yard for the children of residential schools, bell ringing nightly for special important events and

reasons, Display with children figures and sign "All Children Matter" and so many other things! We were a very welcoming and inclusive church!

I thank God daily for the strength He has granted me for this incredible journey in His Name and love. Thanks be to God!

Thank you to the United Church for allowing me to represent you, as well as the Anglican Church, in Ignace for 31 years. Blessings. PS... you never know where God is calling YOU!