



# FAITH matters

**January 13, 2025**

I am writing this Faith Matters in mid-December. When you read it, I will be in India. I understand that some of my fellow St. Andrews members 'wonder' why anyone would go to India. May I remind you that there are over 350 years of missionary service in my family on that subcontinent and that I grew up there. Our daughter Sarah and I have over the years, traveled extensively in India, places I never saw nor knew about as a child. This journey is likely my last trip 'home'. We are traveling in central, southwest and near Darjeeling, India visiting reserves and national parks to try to see the vastly diminished wildlife. We also are visiting two UNESCO World Heritage sites - Gwalior and Sanchi. I saw these two sites at a teenager and the change will be amazing. Sanchi has the distinction of having the finest specimens of almost all Buddhist Architectural Forms - Stupa Chaitya Temples and monasteries dating from the 3rd century B.C. We will be enjoying the culture, places of worship, people, food and each other.

Faith has been with us for centuries. People of differing cultures have been around since the beginning of time. Their colors, customs, and faith journeys are perhaps not 'ours' but as a song sung to me as a child says, "Jesus loves the little children, All the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white are all the same in His sight. Jesus loves the little children of the world." As Jack Harnish said to me recently, "the dedication, determination and service of those missionaries over the years is amazing." Our Christian brothers and sisters are all over the world.

As I prepare for this journey, I listened to Yo-Yo-Ma on You-Tube and his words below struck home. Yo-Yo-Ma - December 9, 2024:

"I was so moved to witness the reopening of the Cathedrale Notre-Dame de Paris. It's an example of what the combined

generosity, skill, and will of a people can accomplish, of humans choosing collaboration and creativity instead of division and destruction. I'm reminded that we always have that choice, that it's a choice that has been with us since the beginning, a fundamental paradox of the human experiment."

May it be so!

Faith Matters!  
Peace to you and the world in this New Year!

~Written by Pat Sheafor

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