



Niagara Anglican

NEWS • PERSPECTIVE • REFLECTION • FOR A GROWING CHURCH • FEBRUARY 2006



PHOTO: MARION VINCETT

The little church of St. Mary, and the ruins of St. Cuthbert's priory, on the Island of Lindisfarne. Read more about this 'thin place' on Page 9.

Moving Furniture: A Reflection on Change

LYNNE CORFIELD
RECTOR, ST. JOHN'S, NIAGARA

I have been serving St. John the Evangelist (Stamford) for five and a half years now and we have certainly accomplished a great deal together in that time. Most of the building has had a facelift and now reflects a truer picture of the life and vibrancy that is St. John's. The area that now needs our attention is the worship space and we all know that it is risky business to mess with the worship space.

On the first Sunday of Advent we moved the furniture around in the sanctuary; from the chancel we removed the choir pews and the chairs, a font and other items that served to block the view of the altar, and then moved the altar forward into the space that

was now clear.

Although a somewhat temporary measure (because I actually had a few different layouts we could try), it has required people to think about their faith and what they value most and what we as a community value most.

For example, I expected flack because the most holy of holies, The Altar, had been moved. Not so, in fact it has had a huge positive impact on people and several have actually been able to put into words that when they see how central the altar is to our worship, so indeed should God be central in our lives. They get it.

One unfortunate, and not particularly planned for change, is that people can no longer come to the rail

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Where do we go from here?

PETER WALL
DEAN, CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Epiphany. As a Feast, we celebrated it some weeks ago in early January.

The Church though, continues to celebrate Epiphany as a season, right until Ash Wednesday. Long after the 'Spirit of Christmas' has left Canadian society, the Church would have us ponder the whole business of God becoming human, and how this effects our individual and common lives.

We, who keep Christmas, know that Epiphany (indeed, even the very word epiphany) has to do with revelation, with manifestation, with showing something wondrous to the world. Earlier in January, we gathered in parish offices, clergy groups, and various ecclesiastical 'moments', and reflected on Christmas 2005 - How was it? What did you do? Who did you see?

The good old days

Often these conversations end up focusing on Christmas Eve/Christmas Day attendance and how much better it used to be; how good the old days were; how increased our attendance was before everybody else started doing late Christmas Eve services, etc. etc. In reflecting on our experiences here at the Cathedral, one person whose opinion means

a great deal to me said that if we were really trying to attract people on Christmas Eve, then perhaps it should not be such a long and involved service, but maybe something simpler, more accessible, easier for the visitor, the neophyte, the lapsed.

And so, while we are aware of the wonder of the Epiphany message and showing the Incarnate Christ to the world, we need to reflect on what we do and how we do it...

Christmas and Easter

How many of us have heard the lament in the narthex, or at the church door, on Christmas Eve and on Easter Day - where are they all the rest of the time? (I remember one notable Easter when a relatively new and very involved parishioner, thrilled at the crowd on Easter morning, asked me if I had all their names and addresses so that we could incorporate all these newcomers into the parish. There was a crestfallen response when I replied that, out of over 300 people, only a handful were visitors - the rest were all parishioners who only showed up once or twice a year!)

We all read late in 2005 the dramatic predictions that, at the current rate of loss, the last Canadian Anglican will close the

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Peter Wall

MARION VINCETT
EXECUTIVE ARCHDEACON, NIAGARA

Thank you to close to a hundred synod delegates who took the time to fill out a survey which was distributed at Synod in November. The staff at your Diocesan Resource Centre is looking for ways in which we might serve you better and so a simple survey was circulated amongst synod delegates to assist us in our planning.

The following is a summary of the responses. We do know, however, that we have only scratched the surface with this survey and that there are many others in our parishes who use our services and who may have thoughts

about how we can be more responsive to your needs. To that end, the survey which was circulated at Synod is now on the website so that we can hear from even more of you about the services offered from this Centre.

It looks as if the Episcopal office is the busiest when it comes to contacts from clergy and synod delegates although the Finance department and Jane Stewart who coordinates conferences and youth programs were not far behind in numbers of contacts

50% of respondents said that they were satisfied with the response they received and most

were "somewhat satisfied" We should like to improve on that first number and will strive to do so this year.

In some cases, the improvement needed is simply to make the experience of calling the DRC easier by changing the way we run our phone system. This has already been modified recently so we are hoping that things have already improved. However, we are open to trying other new ways of making your call-in experience even more user-friendly.

Another area for improvement seems to be helping people to know whom to call and thus which extension they need. We are thinking about how we can improve in this area too.

We offered a list of those

workshops which are currently offered and of those which might be added if there was sufficient interest in the diocese for us to introduce them.

The most popular of these options were:

- Year Round Stewardship (39);
- Outside Funding Opportunities for Outreach ministry (37)
- Joint Youth Ministry Opportunities for a cluster of parishes; (35)
- Puppet Ministry (32)
- Understanding Evangelism for our Context (31)

There were others that scored nearly as high, like the ongoing Wardens and Treasurers Workshops which take place annually but if you want to see what else is on offer please take a look at the survey on the website.

Our diocesan website got all

kinds of praise from the respondents, so if you are not already using it regularly please make that one of your new year's resolutions. It really is a mine of information and will help to keep you informed, and, in some cases inspired, about what is happening in the diocese and in the wider church. Our webmasters are always keen to get feedback too so that they can make our website an even more useful tool for our parishes and the whole diocesan family.

Your Diocesan Resource Centre - formerly known as The Synod Office, - is here to serve the parishes and ministries of the diocese of Niagara. The staff is always willing to assist with answers to questions and with helping you access information from other sources if necessary.



Marion Vincett

FOCUS ON YOUTH

Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe



(From Left) Maggie Kerr, Allison Lorimer, Allison Verroche, Bill Mous, Ross Shelton, Scott Lorimer & Katie McCann pose for a photo at the end of their discussion.

KATIE MCCANN

During the Christmas vacation, the youth group that I am in (Holy Trinity, Fonhill) spent an evening seeing *The Chronicles of Narnia*, then afterwards, went back to the church for dinner and a discussion.

This movie is based on C.S. Lewis' second book in his *Chronicles of Narnia* series. Four siblings, Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy Pevensie, were sent to live in the house of an old professor during the war. On a stormy day, in a game of hide-and-seek, Lucy accidentally steps into a magic world inside a wardrobe. It is

a seemingly wonderful world of creatures she had never laid eyes on, where animals talk... and it is always winter, but never Christmas... Narnia. It hadn't always been winter, but ever since the White Witch "ruled," it was under her spell. Nobody would believe Lucy, but Edmund got through the wardrobe too!

Good and Evil

In Narnia, he met up with the White Witch herself, who claims to be the Queen of Narnia. There was a prophecy that when two sons of Adam, and two daughters of Eve sat in the thrones of Cair Paravel, the evil would recede and Narnia will be free

of the White Witch. The White Witch naturally assumed that the four Pevensie siblings were the ones in the prophesy. She would do anything to stop them, including tempting Edmund to betray them all. When all four children got into Narnia, it wasn't long before Edmund betrayed them and went to the White Witch by announcing where they were. The other three with the help of their beaver friends now had to find the only person powerful enough to help them - the almighty lion, Aslan; the true King of Narnia.

Not only is this a great story, but the whole story is filled with elements of Christian allegory, as we explored in our discussion afterwards. There are some obvious relationships between characters, like Aslan as Jesus, Edmund as Judas (the betrayer), and the White Witch representing evil. We started our discussion by taking the sections of the Baptismal Covenant and relating them to parts of the story.

Christian Connections

The connections are plentiful: when the children are at the beaver's house eating, it was like the last supper because moments later Edmund betrays them to the witch. The three others leave with the beavers to find Aslan and they meet Santa Claus. He gives them each gifts. This symbolizes the coming of Christ/Aslan. This is the first step in overcoming the spell. Soon, they find Aslan, and he helps them rescue their brother. Aslan of course, talks to Edmund and he is forgiv-

en (the parable of the Prodigal Son). When the White Witch came to take back Edmund, Aslan instead gave himself up for death on the stone table. First, they cut off Aslan's mane (Cutting off Sampson's hair), then he is killed. Lucy and Susan mourn over Aslan after everyone leaves (like Mary Magdalene and Mary, Jesus' mother, over Jesus). Thankfully the witch didn't know that the deep magic states that if someone is killed on the stone table for no reason, that person would receive new life. Aslan has risen as did Jesus! Aslan then heads off to the war with Lucy and Susan. When Aslan kills the White Witch, he says "It is finished" and all the dead people suddenly move very fast like they are finally going to heaven. Similarly, when Jesus died for all of our sins, evil was killed to allow us to all go to heaven. Finally, when they all got back home, Lucy confides in the Professor, who now you can tell represents God.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult." - Psalm 46:1-3.

The professor was always Lucy's refuge. These are just some of the many allegories to watch for in this wonderful movie. Even more than my popcorn, I loved watching this film, and exploring the meaning behind everything with my youth group.

Resource Review for Youth Ministry

MARY GORDON

Do you have questions about how to live a better life as a Christian? I did and still do. I have been looking for some resources to help myself as well as the youth I work with and was recommended the book *Way to Live: Christian Practices for Teens*. It is a great book to keep you questioning and also give you some insight to some answers. This book has been written by 18 teens and 18 adults and tackles questions and offers different points of view on how to live a better life as a Christian.

At the beginning of each chapter or section there is a quote or an opinion from a teen based on the topic of the section. Each chapter is written by a teen and an adult and offers different points of view, activities to do and more questions. Some of the sections/chapters are

The Story, Life, Stuff, Friends, Bodies, Choices, Prayer, and Forgiveness... just to name a few. Each chapter also refers to scripture readings and how they fit into the real world. This is a book that you don't have to read from page 1 to the end; you can jump all over.

The one chapter that jumped off the page for me first was the one about *Stuff*. It talks about good stuff, bad stuff, how do we tell the difference between the two and how does this all fit in with God and living a Christian life. After reading this chapter I realized how I need to make some changes in my life concerning my 'stuff' and how it fits into me living a good Christian life.

The next chapter I read was about *Choices* and how many different choices we have to make in a day. One of the big questions of this chapter was about starting to

ask questions and trying not to get the standard answer of "that's the way we've always done it." The natural questions asked by youth are 'Why?' and 'Why not?' and are important steps in anyone's process of making good decisions. The chapter goes on to give a couple of different scenarios about making good choices. It finally ends with a list of ways to help make good choices and not to forget to bring God into those decisions.

Those are just a couple of the chapters and what they have to offer. This is a great resource for youth group leaders, parents with teenagers, teenagers and of course anyone on the journey of life. Kenda Creasy Dean says about this book, "If you're up for some life-rattling, world-shaking, head-turning, boat-rocking twists and turns in your life journey, then *Way to Live* is your global positioning device... You can't just read this book. You do it."

I really enjoyed this book and will add it to my resource library. It is a book that I will keep on reading and using for a long time. You can borrow this book from The Program Department. For more information please contact Joyce Wilton or Christyn Perkons at 905-527-1316.

Good Friday Children and Family Ministry Resources

Are you beginning to make plans for Good Friday and looking for resources? The Children & Family Ministry Library at the Diocesan Resource Centre has just what you need.

A lovely picture book called *The Legend of the Three Tree* retells the classic story of three young trees who dream of being a treasure chest, a ship and a marker on the mountain pointing to God. Instead, they become a vehicle for God's dream illustrating that God often has bigger and more wonderful dreams for us than we can imagine. There are a variety of other story books including *Love is...*, an exquisite illustration of Corinthians 1; *The Jewel Heart*, which uses a ballet story to show the transformative power of love; *In God's Name* by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, which celebrates the diversity and unity of people and their belief in one God; and several offerings from Max Lucado. Finally, you might want to borrow Brian Wildsmith's vividly illustrated *The Easter Story*, *The Legend of the Easter Egg* or the Veggie Tales' video *God Wants Me to Forgive Them*.

In response to the query "what can we do with children and families for a Good Friday program?" there are a variety of craft ideas such as creating an Easter Garden, a Tree of Life poster, Flower Cross, and Resurrection cookies (make on Friday, serve on Sunday). Also available to borrow are plans for a children's day at the church, creating a Seder meal, and recipes for making prayer pretzels. Instructions for a variety of ways to make/decorate eggs which symbolize new life from fingerprinting eggs to string art eggs might also be of interest to you. Another possibility is using the diocesan puppets to create puppet plays for Holy Week or Easter Day. Each bag contains 8 large puppets and a dozen sock puppets, a variety which allows children of all ages to manage the puppets.

Each of these resources can be borrowed for a three week period. If you're interested in any of these, please contact Christyn Perkons at 905-527-1316 ext. 460 or christyn.perkons@niagara-anglican.ca. Let us know if there's a good resource that's missing from our repertoire!

The Reverend D. Linda Corry

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A safe place to become...

The Lutheran Youth Event

In the summer of 2004 the Canadian Evangelical Lutheran Biennial Youth Event was hosted in Hamilton and for the first time in its conference history, Anglicans were invited. We saw this as a wonderful opportunity to join our Lutheran community in a local youth event. The Rev. Canon Barry Randle was on the conference planning team for a 2 year term as our Anglican representative. Niagara sponsored 6 teens from across the diocese and Christ Church, Flamborough sponsored three others.

Well the summer of 2006 is fast approaching and we have again been invited to attend the upcoming Lutheran Youth Conference, this time in Winnipeg Manitoba, from August 17 - 20. The exciting part is that Ontario participants will be chartering a bus and heading out around August 15 and be returning around August 22, just think of the fun. Parishes along the way will be hosting the overnight accommodations. The cost of the conference for each participant (including transportation, conference fees and hotel lodging and travel food) will be approximately \$1000.

Anglicans can be part of this conference in two ways; we can either create our own "home group" or base group or individuals can be matched up with a local Lutheran home group before the conference. Just think of all the great team building on the bus ride! The most exciting aspect of the conference is that over 1,000 young people and leaders will gather at the Winnipeg Convention Centre to share their faith and to be in community with one another.

We are looking for interested young Anglicans between the ages of 14 - 19 and leaders over 21 to be part of this experience. If you would like to know more about the event, check out the web at www.youth.elcic.ca or contact Joyce Wilton at the Diocesan Resource Centre at 905-527-1316 or by email at joyce.wilton@niagara.anglican.ca.

Getting to Know You

Cheryl Barker & Matthew Griffin

FRAN DARLINGTON

Across the Diocese of Niagara, men and women are exploring a 'call' to ordained ministry. It is a time of discernment, excitement, apprehension, joy, uncertainty - and deep prayer and reflection. Spirituality is one of the most mysterious elements of being human, and everyone involved in the discernment process discovers new challenges in responding to the infinite mystery we call God.

A third year student at Trinity College, Toronto, Cheryl Barker has almost completed the academic and experiential preparation for ordination. Matthew Griffin has completed his first semester of study, also at Trinity College. Together, they bring years of study in other fields, several degrees, professional experience, participation in the Church, and deep commitment to their recently chosen path.

A member of St. Jude's Church, Oakville, since the age of four, Cheryl admits that she "walked away from the Church when I was about 15 or 16. I felt I didn't have a place there; I wasn't good enough to be there... I always had a good relationship with who I now understand as Jesus, said my prayers." She admits, "I thought about the priesthood, but had no young women (as role models)... Then Nissa came! She taught confirmation classes, and showed me maybe women can do this!" (The Reverend Canon Nissa Basbaum is Co-Rector of the Church of the Transfiguration, St. Catharines).

Journaling

Cheryl began nurturing a talent as a photographer. As well as art, it was also "a conversation with myself and with God. It was my way of journaling..." (Many people, both spiritual and secular, find help in discerning what is happening in their lives by entering daily thoughts, feelings, and ideas into a notebook for that specific purpose. Matthew Griffin comments on journaling: "The process of careful attentive reflection is the real teacher...")

After earning a B.A. and a B.F.A. (Bachelor of Fine Arts) in art history at the University of Toronto, Cheryl realised that she had "developed a really spiritual base... a very personal awareness of God being in images... (In) the Book of the Revelation, my favourite book in the bible, the images appeal to artistic sensibility, (identifying) God as ultimate Creator." As well as nurturing her own gifts, Cheryl has taught photography courses for the Halton Board of Education.

Matthew's Anglican mother and Presbyterian father "left us to discern" the personal choice of denominational affiliation. He grins, "The extent of my religious upbringing was an illustrated children's Bible! I had fun exploring, responding to the power of the stories." In high school, friends brought him to St. James' Church, Dundas. Matthew was baptised and confirmed on the same day by Bishop John Bothwell. "I had gone to a bunch of different churches, (but Anglican) was the one that felt right - not just St. James'... There's something in my response to Anglican services that convinces me, 'Yeah, I'm in the right place.'"

The importance of listening

Matthew holds a B.I.S. (Bachelor of Independent Studies) from the University of Waterloo. He comments "It seemed ludicrous... (but) more reading than anything" lead to his thesis on myth in the works of Robert Kock, whose works include "magic realism, some pretty strange things!" At Waterloo, Matthew served as a Don at Renison College, the Anglican residence. "It was an incredible experience, to be able to sit and listen to peo-

ple... It was a training ground to pay attention to more than words... We tend to minimize the importance of quietly listening, being actively present, (which is) a big part of my conception of ministry. God calls us to do two things: to be present, and to love. It isn't always the Hallmark version, but far more complicated. It can even look not nice, but still be love."

Doing "virtual classroom work" in an Ottawa research centre while he considered doing an M.A. at the University of Western Ontario, Matthew realised that "the call to ordination would keep coming back." Accepted at Trinity College, he approached the Reverend Brian Ruttan, a priest and faculty member at Trinity College, to inquire about the process, and had "a chat with Marion" (the Venerable Marion Vincett, Executive Archdeacon of Niagara). Given application forms and essay questions, Matthew "went away and prayed, and had long talks with my spiritual director. I was pretty convinced, had that feeling that it was coming together. It makes sense, feels right."

Signs

Cheryl too wrestled with the question of ordination. "I kept questioning, pushing it aside. I got married and divorced, dated again." Looking at her pictures, she found "God speaking to me. Every single one had a scriptural reference! I asked 'How can I be a priest?' I'd had many experiences, but done nothing really bad. I was a C & E (Christmas and Easter) Christian, but I was excited. It felt right!"

Cheryl applied to audit classes at Trinity College. The Reverend David Neelands, Dean of the Faculty of Divinity, invited her to an interview with himself and Brian Ruttan. When she said "But I just want to learn a little!" they replied, "We don't think you should be doing this halfway," and, to her amazement, offered her a place. "I threw up all kinds of roadblocks (money, accommodation, etc.) but when I got home I had four phone calls." The first was a request for her to help in her father's office, the second an uncle offering a two bedroom apartment in Oakville, the third her real estate agent saying that her house had sold, and the fourth a friend looking for a roommate! "I said, Okay, God! I get the message! I'll do it!"

During a course for seminarians and newly ordained men and women from around the world at Canterbury, England, in 2005, Cheryl's vocation was 'cemented'. "I learned so much (about) what it means to be part of the Anglican Communion!" Meeting the Most Reverend Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, "I thought, 'What's he going to think of me? I've never been one for smells and bells!' (But) there's something about him, he's down-to-earth, never more than his alabaster and cincture. It moved me most how easily people came up to him after services to request prayers." Her experience was fulfilled when "they asked me back to be chaplain in 2006!"

Fun

Both Matthew and Cheryl are energised by their experiences at Trinity College. Matthew says, "I keep using that word, 'fun!' It really is! I truly believe God wants us to be happy, so I think if we're not doing something we enjoy... (something) meaningful, rewarding, then we're not doing what God is calling us to. It's been my experience (observing others) that if you love it, even if it frustrates you to no end, then it's what you're meant to do." Cheryl enthuses about "all the stuff I find so stimulating. Where else can you go and have lunch and theological

discussion? It's a supportive environment."

What lies ahead? Matthew admits to "a degree of uncertainty, nervousness. I feel a vocation to the priesthood, (but) I don't know what the Diocese of Niagara thinks... I don't think there's much we can do but be unsettled. God calls us to be unsettled... As I read the Gospels, if I find 'Hmmm, I can be comfortable and relaxed here,' then I haven't entered deeply enough..." He speaks thoughtfully, "Most of what I've hoped for in terms of specifics over the years has ended up looking remarkably different... so essentially it means I have to be open to whatever happens... Working on the M.Div. gives me the opportunity to learn, to meet new people."

Diocesan discernment

Matthew has also begun the Diocesan discernment process. "I've submitted my application and essays, and hopefully the parish recommendation (will be in soon). Then there's the Candidates Committee, where I'll be interviewed by three people, who will discuss me, and make a recommendation to Marion (Vincett) and the Bishop, and hopefully accept me as a candidate." Matthew is pragmatic about his quest: "I don't know if that's worth worrying about, (but) a huge part of me hopes they do! Whatever happens, I'll learn a lot... Whatever happens, I'm going to grow in my faith; it won't be wasted time. It's that simple - and that complicated! So long as I'm open and doing my best to follow Christ. I believe I'll end up essentially okay - it may not look like what I'm hoping now."

Cheryl too admits that "it's exciting and scary at the same time, when you don't know how it's going to work out, to manifest. I love the idea of being a parish priest, but (I love) teaching and photography. It's nerve-wracking at times, (but) when all the doors are flying open, you know something's going to happen. It's a very definite process." Her formal preparation and examination process almost complete, Cheryl has experienced Candidates' Committee and A.C.P.O., a weekend of examination by the Acceptance Committee for Postulants for Ordination from several Dioceses of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario. She comments philosophically, "Everything's done. I basically have to finish school and hope they have a place for me. The Diocese never promises until right before (ordination)."

Many ways to find God

For both Matthew and Cheryl, the presence of God is revealed in many ways in daily life. Matthew says, "Anything and everything you can enter into can become prayerful." He enjoys many activities both with friends and in solitude, and learns about life from his family and their pets, an Irish Wolfhound, an English Sheepdog, and two cats. Cheryl too loves animals: "One thing that informs my ministry of late are dog guys!" Over time she has adopted three Great Danes through a Rescue Organisation for the breed, and they have accompanied her in her work in the Church. Inevitably, she enjoys "the media/art world in the sense that it can teach us. I discover who I really am going to art galleries."

Two very different people who share a common goal, Cheryl and Matthew have come to this point in their lives with courage and faithfulness, offering themselves, their experiences and energy to the Church's strenuous examination and training for the life of ordained ministry. However the Diocese of Niagara responds to their gifts, God will surely fulfill his will in them to the benefit of his Church and his people.

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Narnia and Evangelism Part 1 of 2

John Bowen teaches evangelism at Wycliffe College in Toronto, and is a member of St. John the Evangelist in Hamilton.

JOHN BOWEN

Many churches, particularly in the MUSA, regarded the release of the movie version of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* on December 9 as a wonderful evangelistic opportunity. I thought it was a wonderful movie, but was it evangelistic? I suppose it depends what you mean by evangelism, and what C.S. Lewis thought he was doing in his Narnia stories. Lewis is clear about both.

First, it is helpful to know something of his background. He was born in 1898, and grew up as an Anglican in Northern Ireland. He was alternately bored and terrified by church, and by the age of thirteen declared himself an atheist, which he remained for fifteen years. During those years, however, he had what he later came to recognise as spiritual experiences, flashes of what he called "joy" which spoke to him of something beyond present material experience (hence the title of his autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*). These experiences came to him through the beauty of nature and through ancient mythology, particularly Norse mythology.

For years, he made no connection between his experiences of joy and Christianity. Indeed, his head told him there was no God and that life was meaningless, and the cry of his heart that "joy" still mattered went unheeded. Then, at Oxford, he made friends with Christians who were thoughtful academics and delightful people, and he began to get worried.

No God

One of those friends was J.R.R. Tolkien. When Lewis argued (as others have done since, most recently Tom Harpur), that Christianity was just another of the world's great mythologies, Tolkien offered a different point-of-view. He said (in effect) that of course these mythologies are universal, because they contain glimpses of God's truth, but that the point of mythology is to prepare our imaginations for their fulfillment in Christ. As Lewis wrote later:

"The heart of Christianity is a myth which is also a fact. The old myth of the Dying God, without ceasing to be myth, comes down from the heaven of legend and imagination to the earth of history. It happens - at a particular date, in a particular place, followed by inevitable historical consequences."

Lewis and evangelism

Once he had acknowledged that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, he started going

to church again, and began to explore and write about his new-found faith. From that time on, he published on average one book per year till his death in 1963, every one demonstrating a deep integration of his faith with his learning and his life.

So what did Lewis think about evangelism? Certainly he was ambivalent in his attitude to conventional evangelism. In an interview with *Decision*, the magazine of the Billy Graham organization, he said, "There are many different ways of bringing people into His Kingdom, even some ways that I specially dislike." Among other things, he deeply disliked evangelical jargon. When Sherwood Eliot Wirt (the editor) asked him: "Would you say that the aim of Christian writing, including your own writing, is to bring about an encounter of the reader with Jesus Christ?" Lewis replied: "That is not my language, yet it is the purpose I have in mind."

At the same time, Lewis had a high view of evangelism itself. He wrote: "The glory of God, and, as our only means to glorying him, the salvation of human souls, is the real business of life." And for him, this was not merely a theory. He wrote in a letter in 1949:

"I have two lists of names in my prayers, those for whose conversion I pray, and those for whose conversion I give thanks."

The little trickle of transferences from List A to List B is a great comfort."

He developed an understanding that different people with different gifts contribute different things to the process of evangelism, and that evangelism was best done by a team. He wrote:

"I am not sure that the ideal missionary team ought not to consist of one who argues and one who (in the fullest sense of the word)

preaches. Put up your arguer first to undermine their intellectual prejudices; then let the evangelist proper launch his appeal. I have seen this done with great success."

Heart and head

He had seen it done because he had been involved in just such a scenario. When Lewis started doing lectures to the RAF during the Second World War, he worked with an English bishop, A.W. Goodwin-Hudson, to whom he said:

"I wish I could do the heart-stuff... I can't... I wish I could... I wish I could press home to these boys how much they need Christ... You do the heart stuff and I'll do the head stuff."

They agreed that Lewis would first of all do a 20-minute lecture presenting the rational case for Christianity, and Goodwin-Hudson would then follow up with the evangelistic appeal.

Lewis clearly sees himself as playing a part in the work of evangelism, though not the only part or necessarily the most important part. The way he understood his role was as preparation for the Gospel rather than the Gospel itself, "preparatio evangelica rather than evangelium"

If this is how Lewis sees his own role as an evangelist - as an intellectual John the

Baptist - there are nevertheless two distinct ways in his writing in which he fulfils this role. One is epitomised in *Mere Christianity*, the other in the Narnia stories.

Mere Christianity began life as three series of radio broadcasts on the BBC. They were finally published in the form in which we know them in 1952. At the beginning of the series, he wrote to Dr. James Welch, the producer of the series, to explain what he was trying to do:

"It seems to me that the New Testament, by preaching repentance and forgiveness, always assumes an audience who already believe in the law of Nature and know they have disobeyed it. In modern England we cannot at present assume this, and therefore most apologetic begins a stage too far on. The first step is to create, or recover, the sense of guilt. Hence if I give a series of talks I should mention Christianity only at the end, and would prefer not to unmask my battery till then."

Right and wrong

His intention, then, was to start where he believed his hearers were at - with humankind's innate sense of right and wrong - and to work back from there to the necessity of a lawgiver, and thence to a sense of sin (our failed responsibility to the lawgiver), and to a saviour from sin. It was a rational, logical, step by step approach, illustrated profusely with brilliant analogies and metaphors.

For many, *Mere Christianity* has been, as he intended, a preparation for the Gospel. I spoke just last night to a theology student for whom the book had been the first step in her coming to Christian faith--a couple of years before she ventured to step inside a church.

The paths people take to arrive at Christian faith are many, and have many different starting points, like the spokes of a wheel. The "spoke" he followed in *Mere Christianity*, the one which begins with conscience and reason, is perhaps not as often followed as it was fifty years ago. What Lewis was doing in the Narnia stories, however, was to pursue a quite different spoke - the path of imagination - which was in fact much closer to the one he himself had followed in his own journey to Christ.



Diabetes Hamilton Answers Some Frequently Asked Questions

What are the types of diabetes?

	Type 1	Type 2
How common?	10% of all diabetes	90% of all diabetes
Age of diagnosis	Usually before 35	Usually over 40
Who is at risk?	Family history of type 1 diabetes or thyroid disease	See below
What's wrong?	No insulin is made because the immune system attacks the pancreas	Insufficient insulin is made for unknown reasons

Did you know that diabetes affects 1 in 8 adults over age 45 and 1 in 5 adults over age 75? There are about 40,000 people with diabetes in the Hamilton area alone.

What happens in diabetes?

The body uses glucose (a form of sugar) as fuel. Glucose comes from both the diet and from the liver where it is stored. Insulin, which is made in your pancreas, allows your

body to use the glucose as fuel. Diabetes occurs when the pancreas does not make enough insulin to properly use all of the glucose. Glucose levels then start to rise.

What are the symptoms of diabetes?

The most common symptoms of diabetes are fatigue, thirst, frequent urination, blurred vision, and weight loss. However, many

people with type 2 diabetes don't have any symptoms, or may dismiss tiredness as due to stress. In fact, many people with type 2 diabetes are diagnosed "by chance" on routine blood tests.

How is diabetes diagnosed?

Diabetes is diagnosed with a fasting blood test. A glucose level of 7.0 mmol/L or higher, taken on two different occasions, indicates

the presence of diabetes.

Why is diabetes so important?

Diabetes costs Canadians about 10 billion dollars a year. It is the most common cause of kidney failure and amputation, and people with diabetes are at much greater risk of heart attack, stroke, and eye disease. The reason that diabetes is so important now, is that research has proven that it is possible to prevent (or at least delay) almost all of these long-term complications.

Should people be checked regularly for diabetes?

Yes. People over age 40 should have a simple blood test to measure their glucose level every 3 years. Earlier or more frequent testing should be considered for those with additional risk factors:

- a parent or sibling with diabetes

- members of high-risk ethnic groups (i.e. Aboriginal, Hispanic, Asian or African descent)
- overweight
- diabetes during a pregnancy
- high blood pressure
- high cholesterol and glucose
- giving birth to a baby over 4 kg
- the presence of complications of diabetes (e.g. heart disease)

Can Diabetes be Prevented or Cured?

Currently, there is no cure. However, researchers are busily looking for one, as well as new ways to prevent diabetes and its complications. For example, we now know that modest weight loss and moderate physical activity can reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes by more than 50%. The future is likely to provide lots of new approaches to this common disease.

This Is My Story...

The Niagara Anglican is beginning a series titled *This Is My Story*. As the title says, the articles will be the journey, and the ongoing Christian faith, of Anglicans in the Diocese of Niagara. We look forward to telling what God is doing in their lives today. Anglicans in our Diocese are invited to let the Niagara Anglican Editor know if they would like to tell their faith story. The "reporters" - Geoffrey Purdell-Lewis and Carol Summers - have a series of questions to help guide the interview process in order to write the article. We are looking forward to presenting exciting and interesting stories - truth is better than fiction any day. The first story is that of Hal Devins, a long time member of St. John the Evangelist in Hamilton.

GEOFFREY PURDELL-LEWIS
ST. GEORGES, LOWVILLE

Hal was born in Saskatchewan and moved to Hamilton with his family when he was five. Since then he has lived in Hamilton, retiring from Stelco in 1998 after 33 years in their finance department. He played competitive baseball until he was forty and competitive hockey until he was fifty. Today, Hal is blessed with a wonderful wife, three great daughters, three great sons-in-law, and two wonderful grandchildren (two more due to arrive in early 2006).

Hal has a long linkage with the church; a grandfather was a Lutheran minister and his parents belonged to the United Church and they were always brought up in a faith in God, but didn't really talk about it. As Hal got into his teens, going to church became less appealing. That was until he met his wife-to-be, Adrienne Walker, "whose faith was greater than mine." He joined her at St. John the Evangelist where he was confirmed in 1968 and they were married later that year. At this time, hockey was higher on the priority list than church.

God first became real to Hal in 1972 when his first daughter was born. You see, Hal had promised Adrienne that when they had children his priorities would change and he would move church ahead of hockey, so now his family started attending the 11 o'clock service with Adrienne rejoining the choir.

At that time Hal promised God that if He helped him in his marriage, helped him raise his family, and helped him be successful at work, he would do all that he could for His church.

"A deal was a deal" so Hal got involved and served on Parish Council, on the Finance Committee, as a Warden three times, as a Lay Delegate and a member of the old Central Deanery and the new Undermount Regional Council, and also served on the Diocesan Grants Committee.

Hal looks back to the support he received from older members of his congregation - they were mentors to him. Hal also notes that most of the work he did during that time was done out of fear - fear that if he didn't live up to his part of the deal with God, God wouldn't live up to his.



In 1988 Hal and Adrienne attended a Billy Graham Crusade and what impressed him most was when Dr. Graham talked about the unconditional love that Jesus has for each one of us. In 1995 Hal was part of the Future's Planning Committee at his church. All the members worked extremely hard and after four months one of the members made the comment that "we were not in charge", but rather "God was in charge." This had a big impact on Hal and although the work didn't get easier, they could bear the burden more easily.

In 1996 Hal and Adrienne attended the Christian Festival in Hamilton and heard Jean Vanier speak about the unconditional love that Jesus had for each one of us. He also heard James Forbes talk about the "J" and "E" words, Jesus and Evangelism. Hal was

becoming more aware of the people in his parish who actively talked about their faith and what it meant to be a Christian. "This was totally foreign to me." Around this time, Hal began feeling guilty about making the "deal" with God until a friend of his suggested that it was not a deal at all, but rather a covenant, and that he had formed a relationship with God.

What has happened since then? Hal started to do God's work in the church out of love rather than fear, and began to build a different relationship with God, built on prayer, thankfulness, and the realization that all he had was a gift from God.

God has taken Hal in the direction of serving others. He works in his parish mainly with Congregational Care, he and Adrienne support St. Matthew's House and

he has volunteered his service six times at Hôpital Albert Schweitzer in Haiti. God has taught him that "everything that we have is a gift from Him and that we are to use these gifts of time, talent and treasure to help others."

What would he do differently if he could have his life over again? As Hal did not always recognize the opportunities God put in front of him, he would want to be more aware of them and act on them.

And Hal's advice to a new Christian is "Open your heart to the Holy Spirit, surround yourself with Christian friends, and be open to opportunities that God puts in front of you each and every day."

It is Hal's wish that by telling his faith story first it will encourage other Anglicans to tell their faith story to the Niagara Anglican and in their parish.

Transforming Lives, One Woman at a Time

BRIGITTE FOISY

Tsunamis, hurricanes, wars, terrorist attacks, outbreaks of a new virus for which there is no cure - all seem to be signs of God calling. Closer to us in Canada, violence, gang shootings and even the recently introduced anti-Biblical legislation, are unmistakable "wake-up calls" from God to His people.

What an encouragement to learn that hundreds of Christians in the GTA have heard that call and are taking action to ask God to revive His Church. Women from across the city are working together in unison to bring to the Air Canada Centre, in September 2006, a two-day revival event called Just Give Me Jesus. Their prayer? That 20,000 women will be on fire for God to transform the GTA.

"I've never been involved with anything that I have felt had such eternal value," explains Co-Chair Cathie Ostapchuk. "I feel privileged to be part of God's greater purpose for Toronto; To see this city bear lasting fruit, see lives transformed, one woman at a time."

"Nothing is impossible with God," continues her co-Chair Hilary Price, author of *The Life that Changed my Day* and wife of Charles Price, the Pastor of Toronto's People's Church. "I'm grateful for the women that stepped up to obey Christ's great commission to 'go make disciples of all nations'. In Toronto, we have the world at our doorstep and He has called us to pre-

pare the city for revival in His name. What a privilege to be called to such a partnership with The Living God."

For the last six years, Anne Graham Lotz, best selling Christian author and daughter of internationally renowned evangelist Billy Graham, has traveled the globe, on the invitation of Pastors and influencers, to bring revival to the hearts of His people through the Just Give Me Jesus crusades. God has already poured out His Spirit in twenty-four cities through these free-of-charge events enabling thousands of people to be born again into God's family and thousands more to recommit or totally surrender their lives to Him, as they experienced a fresh encounter with Jesus.

Until Then...

This journey will start in March, as Anne will be coming to Toronto for a kick-off event for both Clergy and Women of Influence. Along with long-time friend Henry Blackaby, Anne will first be speaking to pastors on March 8 at the Richmond Hill Chinese Community Church, to inspire them to pray and support the group's effort through their local church. On March 9 at 7 p.m. at People's Church, Anne will be addressing 2000 Christian women's ministry leaders and other key influencers to encourage them to be part of this citywide transformation by inviting friends, family and colleagues, praying for the revival or

by getting involved.

"The organizing committee has embarked on this exciting journey by faith on behalf of the Churches in Greater Toronto. Please prayerfully consider opportunities and ways you can come alongside them: with your prayers, with your presence at the Kick-Off and the Revival, and other practical means of sup-

port that God places on your heart," concludes Anne Graham Lotz. "I look forward to coming to Toronto as together we prepare our hearts for revival."

To learn more about Just Give Me Jesus Toronto, the March kick-off events or how to get involved, visiting www.jgmjtoronto.ca, www.annegrahamlotz.com, or call 416-467-3174.



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A Greater Appreciation for What Lies Ahead

BILL MOUS

Ah February! It's the shortest, bleakest and perhaps most wintry month in our year which by the time it comes along most of us are crooning for summer. Perhaps that is why there are so many unique days which have landed in the month of February: Groundhog's Day, Valentine's Day, National Flag of Canada Day and every once and a while (just to keep things interesting) a Leap Day!

Being born in February, I feel that I should be a loyal supporter of this month, and reject the assertion that it is the month of the February blues. Well... so much for loyalty. It turns out that my favourite month of the year is September - the beginning of fall and the time when school begins again!

Last September, as you may recall, I started out on a new path in my journey. I began my Master of Divinity studies at Trinity College in Toronto. Like most new beginnings it was full of transitions: a new city, a new apartment, a new peer group, and a new spiritual centre among other novelties. It was an exciting time in my life! I often made my

daily walk down Bloor Street with a smile from ear to ear thinking about how blessed I was to be able to hear God's call, to be at Trinity taking the courses and to be in a city with so many Thai and Sushi restaurants!



Bill Mous

It wasn't until late October, however, when I realized that I was lost. As so often is the case, we do not realize we're lost until we've been lost for some time. I think it may be because we live in hope that the next town will be familiar and not another unknown town like 'Drumbo' in the middle of nowhere. Yet with an ever increasing amount of reading and essays, a growing feeling of disconnectedness from home and my friends, and a deep desire to feed an ever increasing desire for spiritual nourishment, I found myself in Drumbo: lost.

As I wandered around Trinity over the coming weeks I came to an understanding that being lost was okay. I think sometimes we need to be lost in order to find ourselves - especially in a world which has constant demands on us and bombards us with continuous amount of information and stress. Yet in these circumstances, God

was with me. I think the band Blue Rodeo had it right with their lyrics "and if we're lost, then we are lost together." Though I often couldn't see the forest for the trees in my first few months at Trinity, God was with me, allowing me to pick out signposts that would guide me along the way. It was during these 'God moments' - as simple as a game of Settlers with friends in the Divinity Common Room or a quiet informal prayer service before an exam - that carried me through the semester despite a feeling of being lost.

I think my experience of starting out at Trinity is a lot like that of many people's experience of February. While we generally have a high from Christmas and New Years celebrations that euphoria generally fades by the end of January and thus we find ourselves in February - lost in a bleak and wintry month. But while February may keep us indoors and leave us with a feeling like winter will never end... look for God in times of blueness! God will be there with you, and guide you on your journey - through February and through life! Though we may be lost, we are not alone, and perhaps in our blueness we will learn more about ourselves and have a greater appreciation for what lies ahead of us on our journey.

A Reflection on Change

Continued from Page 1

to receive communion, and due to space restrictions and safety matters, must now receive communion standing up at the chancel steps. I have had one or two niggly comments about this... okay, more than that. Comments like "it does not seem reverent somehow," "I like to kneel," and "I feel like I am lining up for groceries." You get the picture. It is true that we are just trying something and it is not perfect, and the point is to 'play with the space' until we have the money to lay new carpet, and paint the walls... but none the less it is change.

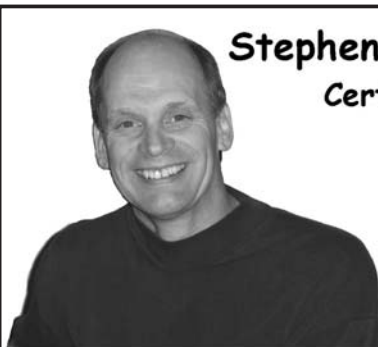
I had not prepared myself for the huge impact it would have on me as celebrant! I am not particularly moved by the BCP Eucharist as a rule, but found myself bathed in light (from the spotlights overhead) and being able to see the people and feel so much closer to them, literally.

When it came time to receive communion I noticed that the woman in the front row was the first to move forward and stand in line to receive. What is the big deal about that? Well in all the five and a half years that I have served this congregation she has never been able to come and receive because she walks with a cane, and therefore cannot manage all the steps. As I gave her communion the tears (the prayers of my heart) began to fall down my cheeks and continued to do so throughout this amazing and overwhelming experience. At the later service a woman who could no longer process with the choir since her hip replacement last year is now able to join in with them again. During the week I have heard more personal stories from a man who has macular degeneration (and was worried

each week about the return trip from the altar rail because his vision is so bad and his depth perception, or lack thereof, has caused him to fall on occasion and he is always worried about falling, even though he has never complained, and prefers not to receive in his pew), a woman with a walker, and a woman who has had a stroke. They can come and receive the Eucharist, all by themselves, and yet together with everyone else. An elderly gentleman from the early service (BCP) has also expressed that he cannot put into words the feeling when he comes for communion now and stands and looks me in the eye - too powerful an experience to describe in words. God has made us worthy to stand in God's presence. And they came, the weak and the lame, the blind and the infirm, and Jesus welcomed them.

So even though I am not the worlds most popular person just now, (who would want a quiet life?) we are learning together that more by accident than design we were excluding the most vulnerable in our midst from participating in as full a way as the rest of us in the most important part of our worship. If many more people have been made to feel uncomfortable now that they have to receive standing up and don't particularly like it... so that even one in our midst that was excluded can now be included, then is it worth it? A resounding yes!

Then let this be a lesson to us when we also consider our brothers and sisters who are gay and lesbian in our midst and who are excluded from full participation in the life of our community... so if some of us need to feel uncomfortable in order for even one person to be included is that okay? A resounding yes, I would say!



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CHRISTYN PERKONS

We've all gazed in awe and wonder at the linens of the church; the altar frontals, the pulpit falls, the antependia, veils, burses, purificators, corporals, fair linens and even funeral pallis. The beauty of the chasubles, copes, and stoles adorning our priests and bishops has filled us with wonder. The fine workmanship, the glorious fabric and the powerful images have delighted us and heightened our sense of the sacred in our worship. Chances are we have, at one time or another, been gazing in admiration at the work of the Diocesan Altar Guild - Embroidery group.

This dedicated group meets weekly to serve the Anglican Church in Niagara in the creation of vestments and church linens. Pure Irish linen, silks from the East and embroidery thread in more colours than you can imagine are the stuff of their service. Their most recent large commission, the green set for St. Paul's, Jarvis seen in the accompanying photograph, took this group of five talented needlework artists 10 months to complete; roughly 600 hours of work. Unlike much of the other church soft goods in the marketplace, all of this work is hand stitched.

Christine Bernal-Twist

Group members come from across the diocese and were called to this ministry in a variety of ways. Christine Bernal-Twist, the president, learned to embroider as a child at school in England where standards were such that if the back didn't look as lovely as the front, the work had to be ripped out and begun again. This Grace Church, Hamilton parishioner came to the Embroidery group looking for a frontal. Then president, Grace Hornby, agreed to provide one on the condition that Christine join them in working on it. She never left, and took over as the intrepid leader when Grace stepped down. Christine is the standard bearer for the group. She can identify the work of each member by her mitered corners. Bonnie echoes the sentiment of all the members when she says with a grin, "When I bring in my work and Christine says, 'Let's have a look', I shake."

Bonnie Vanni

Bonnie Vanni from All Saints, Hagersville joined the group after seeing their work displayed at a Diocesan Altar Guilds gathering (held biennially in the spring). While she was very impressed with the quality and reasonable cost of the hand-sewn work, she was equally excited by the work supported by the Embroidery group. All proceeds, after the cost of supplies, are given to support the work of God's people in various areas of outreach; among them the North End Children's Centre, St. Matthew's House, Doctors Without Borders, The Bishop's Discretionary Fund, the Salvation Army, Northern Anglican Clergy, and Sleeping Children Around the

The Handmaids of the Lord



World. Bonnie, who knew basic embroidery, decided she wanted to be part of the ministry that provided such beautiful linens and vestments for the church while at the same time supporting those we are all called to care for.

Edith Austin

Twenty years ago, Edith Austin, who had never embroidered before, came looking for linen for the church near the family cottage in Magnetawan. Once again, a customer was invited to participate in the creation of the work. Overwhelmed by her lack of knowledge, Edith was unsure how to begin. "Grace told me to draw a leaf and imitate the stitches I saw the others creating." A needlework artist was born! Currently, Edith is working on an elaborate lace-edged fair linen for her home parish of St. John's, Ancaster. Fair linens typically take 80 hours of work. Edith loves to see the look on people's faces when they see the quality of the work of the Diocesan Altar Guild - Embroidery group. It gives her a deep sense of satisfaction to create work that awes people and enhances their worship experience.

Pam Leslie

Pam Leslie, from Christ Church, Flamborough, was invited to join by Christine. She knew basic embroidery but nothing of the intricacy and caliber required by church linens. Since beginning in 2000, she has learned as she goes; feeling intimidated at the start of large new projects but well satisfied with her new skill as each piece is completed. Pam assures readers who are intrigued by the possibility of participating in this ministry that it's easy to pick up. When the group took on the commission from St. Paul's, Jarvis, Pam's first reaction was "I'm in over my head here." but she soon mastered new techniques and is proud of the finished set.

Brenda Moss

Many years after an initial interest, Brenda Moss of Holy Trinity, Hamilton joined the Diocesan Altar Guild - Embroidery group. Around 25 years ago, she, Charles Stirling and a group of others were determined to make a set of stoles for their lay reader, Jack

Pearce, as a gift on the occasion of his priesting. They found themselves in dire need of guidance and sought the advice of "the pros". The stoles duly created, Brenda remained fascinated by the work of the group and vowed to investigate further upon her retirement. Five years ago, retirement began and avid participation in the group ensued. A high point for Brenda is that moment when Christine looks at her work and compliments her with "That's absolutely wonderful!" For Brenda and the others, working on linens and vestments at home in the evenings is part of the fabric of their daily lives.

The group also repairs linen and vestments for the Cathedral and churches across the diocese. Worn edges, tears and holes are expertly mended and linens sent back into service. Fair linen that is beyond repair is transformed into lavabo towels, purificators, baptismal towels and corporals. Linens are salvaged from parishes that are closing and renovated to fit the altars in their new church homes. When old linens are disintegrating but gorgeous fine embroidery remains intact, the gorgeous stitchery is lifted from the linen and framed for posterity. These framed pieces can be purchased at the Cathedral

Gift Shoppe.

The Reverend Canon Charles Stirling, chaplain to the group, has a multi-faceted role. Opening each season of work with prayer, weekly visits to the meeting, and being a pastoral presence for group members are the parts of the assignment one might expect of a chaplain. Charles does those with love but he also frames the salvaged needlework that the Embroidery group sells, assists in setting prices for commissioned work and "markets" the work of the group in his travels around the diocese. Charles, who has made some of his own vestments (with help from the group) celebrates their selfless work; "art given to the glory of God."

Like to embroider or want to learn? Interested in meeting weekly (or less often if travel is an issue) with a charming, welcoming and talented group of embroidery artists/teachers? This might be the ministry for you - come and visit them as they work!

Linens or vestments need some restorative work? Want to purchase linens or discuss commissioning a piece or set (their design or yours)? Have questions about the care, folding, and storing of linens and vestments? Please call Christ's Church Cathedral (905-527-1316) or visit on Tuesdays between 10am and 2pm. Ask for the Geddes Room and you'll be in touch with this gifted and creative band of handmaids to the Lord.

Are You Ready for a Fresh Start?

MARNI NANCEKIVELL
DIRECTOR OF TRANSITIONAL MINISTRIES

The scenario is a familiar one. The Incumbent of a parish has departed, and after an interim period, a new Incumbent has been appointed. Spirits are high, and there is a renewed spirit of optimism about the new phase of ministry which is about to begin.

How do we make the most of this new opportunity?

People who are wise in the ways of church growth and development tell us that the time of a new appointment is one of the most fruitful "learning moments" in the lives of both clergy and congregations. It is because of this that the Bishop of Niagara has made this program available to parishes and clergy in the Diocese of Niagara who have recently experienced a change in pastoral leadership - the Fresh Start program.

Fresh Start is a wellness resource for clergy and congregations in transition. Initiated originally by the Episcopal Church in the United States, the program has been enhanced by the creative contributions of the Anglican Church of Canada. Clergy participation in the program is an expectation of the Bishop that is written into every new appointment within our Diocese. But equally important is the participation of the lay people within the congregation.

At the arrival of a new clergy person, everyone is "paying attention" to the new beginning. In a time of heightened sensitivities, when everyone wants to "make a good impression" and get this relationship off to a good start, it is a time for both clergy and lay people to express who they are and what they hope for in their ministries. Inevitably, there is concern about how this relationship will work. Fresh Start, which is designed to pick up where the interim process ends, is an opportunity to offer guidance and support both to the congregation and new Incumbent.

A Multi-Dimensional Program

Fresh Start is multi-dimensional in its program. Clergy, who meet about once a month, work in small groups to learn from the "modules" provided on everything from entrances and exits from church communities through understanding a congregation's history. Issues such as the reality of the new ministry (in contrast to what the new Incumbent might have "expected" the new ministry to be) are discussed. Facilitated by both trained clergy and lay people, newly appointed clergy reflect together both on their experience and their hopes. Case studies are presented by the group. Not only is this a time of learning, but of deep personal support. Patterns of healthy ministry are begun that will make the best of this new appointment. There is a program designed for lay people as well. Lay people are invited to gather at designated times for learning, both on their own and with the new incumbent several times a year. At the beginning, we suggest that the Wardens or others on the Parochial Committee might accompany their priest to the first Fresh Start meetings. However, on the Diocesan website (www.niagara.anglican.ca) Fresh Start section (under Programs) there is a listing of meeting topics as well as dates and times for clergy and lay leaders. It is best if two or three lay people accompany their cleric to clergy and lay days - and "who comes" in time, may be determined by the topics being discussed.

Although Fresh Start originally was an initiative of the Episcopal Church, Fresh Start Canada held its first training session which is tailored to the realities of the Canadian Church last year, in this Diocese. Another time of facilitator training will take place after Easter this year.

The goal of Fresh Start is to provide tools and training for a healthy relationship in a new time of ministry. Is your parish ready for a Fresh Start?



Marni Nancekivell

Shalom, Salaam, Peace Be With You

In the November issue, we featured the first half of this article about how the Church of the Transfiguration approached Multi-Faith learning in their Sunday Morning Children's Program. The first sessions - and the November article - focused on Judaism. Read on how they embarked on learning about Islam, and came to a deeper understanding of Christian faith in the process.

JUDY STEERS
TRANSFIGURATION PARISH, ST. CATHARINES

Learning about Judaism was a little easier for us, as one of our priests grew up Jewish, and had the stories, foods, experiences, symbols, 'props' and books, and she could resource us in the planning and preparation of this program. But the next program presented a whole different challenge.

Learning about Islam

We were eager, but tentative to embark on learning about Islam. None of us knew anything, though we all had casual or work acquaintances who were Muslim. How do we teach this with integrity? How do we accurately and fairly teach about a faith tradition we do not know? We didn't want to merely do this as a quaint 'cultural study', but to engage with Islam as a faith that shares some of the same heritage that we do. We wanted to learn about their spirituality, and what do they have to teach us about prayer, their understanding of God, their faith practices and how that is integrated with family life. We wanted to know, as we had with our encounter with Judaism, if there are things to learn that would enhance our understanding of God, and help us to live our Christian faith with more depth and integrity.

Equipped with a few books and a passing familiarity with 'Google' (finding an amazing number of helpful websites about Islam in the process), we got a handle on the basics and designed a series of initial workshops that would help us to learn some of the foundational ideas. The more we read, the more interested we became. I visited Zam Zam, a Muslim store in St Catharines (named for a famous well in Mecca) to buy figs and 'Halal' treats to serve during the workshop. I was overwhelmed by hospitality and generosity at the shop. My children were given sweets, and the shop owner insisted on giving me bottles of guava, mango and melon juice from Egypt. "You won't find this in 7/11!" he smiled as he handed me several bottles of juice. The shop next door sold clothing, and we went to buy 'Hijab', the traditional head covering for women, just so we could show the children what it looked like and they could try it on. Sayid, the shop owner, told me about coming to Canada from Sudan. He talked with me about our plans and was delighted that Christian children would be learn-

ing about Islam. "This is such a good thing to do. The world would be better if we all tried to learn about each other and understand each other." My eight year old looked around the whole store, and tried on different garments. My six year old was less impressed with Muslim clothing; his attention was riveted by "The Lion King," dubbed in Arabic, playing on Sayid's VCR.

"Asalaam Aleikum"

In the Sunday morning workshops, we took our usual approach of using a variety of learning modes. In the creative art room, we made mosaics, and learned something about Muslim theology - that no religious art should contain images of humans, thus we are reminded to worship God alone. In the computer lab, we did an on-line scavenger hunt to answer questions about faith practice:

- Can you eat something called "Haram"? What is it anyway?
- What do you take off before you go in a mosque?
- What would you not serve on pizza if a Muslim friend came to your birthday party?
- How do you greet a Muslim?
- What have you seen in Muslim practice that reminds you of what we do as Christians?

In response to the last question, most children discover that "Peace be with you," our greeting in worship, is the very same as "Asalaam Aleikum" - peace be with you - the usual and daily greeting for Muslims. "What would that be like," I ask them "if every time you came home from school, your family members said 'Peace be with you' to you? What if every time you walked into a store, or met someone on the street, they looked at you and said 'Peace be with you'." What if Christians made those words part of their every day life, instead of just saying it to each other once a week in church?" One small voice in the group said shyly, "That would be really nice. I'd like that if my mother said that to me every day!" Another voice said "People would have to think about how they treat each other, if they said that all the time!"

All that week, unprompted, my daughter starts saying "Asalaam Aleikum!" to me every day when I leave for work. I wonder what all our daily lives would be like, if we were all committed to being such intentional peacemakers?

A visitor from the local Islamic community

Through the family of one of my daughter's friends at school, I was referred to the local mosque, who passed on my name to Zakia Hamdani. Zakia teaches middle school grades at a public school in Grimsby and she is involved in education and awareness at the mosque in St Catharines.

After Easter, Zakia joined us one Sunday morning. The children

were thrilled. Zakia told us that she chose to begin wearing Hijab (head covering) while she was in university, and told the children about that choice. "It reminds me, all the time, that I am Muslim, that I submit to



Part of the celebration of Purim includes dressing up as characters from the Story of Esther.

God and should live and treat other people in a good way. If I am about to do something I shouldn't, like, say something bad to someone else, my wearing Hijab reminds me not to. Nobody told me I had to wear Hijab, and nobody forces me to wear it. I chose it for myself."

I ask the children if they have ever worn something that reminds them to practice and live their faith. A few of the children had worn a cross. One had a 'fish' symbol on the back of the family car. These Christian symbols of faith took on a new relevance for children in light of someone who chooses to wear Hijab - rather than proclaiming something, maybe these symbols are also meant to be a reminder for the wearer of why they wear it!

Zakia taught the children the form of prayer, and why they pray in the direction of Mecca, and three children demonstrated the body movements of prayer. "We put our forehead and nose on the ground" Zakia told them "to remind us to be humble before God." She played a tape with the call to prayer on it - "Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar."

What does this phrase, "Allahu Akbar," say to me as a Christian? It is again a call to humility. Whatever I think God is, God is bigger than that. It's a good thing to remember when I think I've got God in a box, or believe that my theological understanding is the 'right' one. God is Greater. I find this thought very freeing and yet grounding at the same time.

The children think about humble approaches in our own practice - we kneel for prayer, and bow our heads - perhaps we too have prayer rituals that remind us to be humble before God.

Anglicans at the Mosque

The following week, we loaded into cars and headed off to visit Masjid Am-Noor, the mosque on Geneva Street in St Catharines. "Noor" is the Arabic word for Light. Over thirty children, youth and adults from our congregation go on this visit - about one quarter of our congregation that day.

In the parking lot, we meet up with Christine, a woman of great energy and humour. She has only recently moved to St Catharines and misses big city life in Toronto. She is one of our tour guides. Christine grew up Christian and became Muslim a couple of years ago. She and I talk

about getting together to have coffee one day to share stories. I am amazed how people in our group respond to the visit - but then, how often do we do 'field trips' at church? We leave our shoes inside the door, and are first taken to the wash area for "Wudu," and Christine takes us through the steps. A couple of eager volunteers among the children go through the Wudu - washing hands, mouth, nose, head, arms and feet - and get very wet in the process! We go to the main space for prayer, divided into men's and women's areas. I am conscious that many churches in the Middle East and Asia have men and women sitting on opposite sides of the worship space - this practice is the norm in, but not restricted to, Islam. We hear Qu'ran in Arabic, take photos, are given a variety of treats: guava juice, grape juice, Turkish delight and... Timbits! Our visit is a source of giggling intrigue for the children in Arabic classes. We end up back in the prayer space and one of the men from the Mosque leads us in prayer. They are surprised, but glad that we ask to pray with them.

Zakia helps us by showing us the movements; when to kneel, when to stand. Suddenly something feels very familiar to Anglican experience - visitors don't know all the 'moves' in liturgy! We smile at our own fumbblings. I wonder what everyone is thinking. I'm sure different people have different reactions to this very new experience. Just a few adults choose not to join in, mostly I think because of difficulty with alternately kneeling and standing on a carpeted floor. The adults are beaming by the end of the visit - fascinated with their new understanding, warmed by such open and gracious hospitality. Our whole congregation is invited to their open house next month.

How then shall we live?

As Christian people, what is our approach to Multi-faith awareness? How do we teach our children about living in a multi-faith society? How are they meant to

live as Christian people in a multi-faith world? Clearly (though I know there are many Christian churches who would disagree) we are moving out of a crusader-like notion that our role as the Christian church is to convince the world that ours is the correct and only way of thinking and believing. But is multi-faith awareness a process of polite acquiescence to which we give lip service? Is learning about other faiths something we approach with a faintly arrogant or paternalistic air? - as if to say, 'we know we are right, but we want to tolerate your quaint but rather incomplete/uninformed theology.' Is our role in a pluralistic society to water down any and all religious practice so that our spiritual lives become an amorphous pool of "spirituality." Do we borrow things from any faith practice that strikes our fancy. Does pluralism mean that we have to find the lowest common denominator so as not to 'offend' anyone? I think the answer is clearly 'no' to these questions.

How do we live as Christians in a multi-faith society? By following Jesus, and not apologizing for it. Followers of Jesus are people who embrace and embody a life of forgiveness, love of enemies, inclusion and welcome, prayer and humility, servanthood, caring and compassion. Followers of Jesus proclaim the love of Jesus. Stanley Hauerwas, Christian theologian and ethicist spoke last spring about 'the end of pluralism' at a public lecture in London, Ontario. He stated that pluralism - the melting-pot approach to religion - is not a movement with any integrity. Christians must be Christians. Jews must be Jews. Muslims must be Muslims. We have much to teach each other, and much to learn from one another. In all our human imaginings, writings, theologies, scriptures - God is greater than all we can imagine. God will be God, despite all our attempts to confine and describe why or how God is God. This is at once discouraging and yet liberating.

Why Jesus?

"I like learning about Islam, Mum" said my 8 year old enthusiastically. "So, why are we Christians when some people are Muslims?" It's funny how children have a way of coalescing our thoughts into blunt questions. I considered her question for a moment. "I think," I replied, "That what I know about Jesus, and what he taught leads me to follow him." I went on to describe how, for me, Jesus was about three main things: Forgiveness, which makes human community and relationships possible: Welcome and inclusion, which tells us that everyone is a part of the love of God. Finally, Love. In the Holy Spirit, Jesus unleashed our capacity to love. It is the power that made you and me, the power that made the universe, the aspect of the "Divine Milieu" which draws us beyond ourselves into a relationship with our selves, one another, the world and the Creator.



Thoughts from Away

MARION VINCETT
EXECUTIVE ARCHDEACON, NIAGARA

It is a gentle winter's day on Holy Island. Waves break lethargically in the sunlight. The wind has withdrawn for a spell and a quiet sense of expectancy hangs unseen. The long island grasses, tangled and rough, are springy underfoot. They hold a myriad secrets in their dampness - ground nesting birds from four continents nest here during the winter. The tiny bouffant castle guarding the entrance to the harbour at the far end of the island, with its steep, worn, stone steps, looks almost comical - a mere child's construction. How could anyone ever have hoped to keep out marauders in such a flat and uncluttered landscape?

A little cluster of buildings further towards the centre - and clearly visible from all parts of the islet - announces the presence of a village, along with a water tower, three churches and Cuthbert's ruined priory. Further off, on the mud flats, a causeway is slowly emerging. Soon the island will be an island no more but connected, until the next high tide, to the rest of Northumbria.

Welcome to Lindisfarne, the Holy Isle of the Celtic saints who brought Christianity to pre-Norman England.

Lindisfarne is one of a group of tiny islands, the Farnes, in the North Sea, just off the N.E. coast of England and only a few miles south of the Scottish border. No more than 1.5 miles from causeway to castle and 1 mile wide, it is home to a great many more sheep and birds than people. The permanent population of the island is approximately 150 souls, but this number is regularly enhanced by visitors and pilgrims like me. Most of them arrive during the summer months, but a winter visit, like mine, will give you a much better feel for the mystical quality of the place. Every step on the path which circuits the island feels

like a step through history for me, raised as I was on the stories of Aidan, Cuthbert, Hilda and Bede. This is holy ground, "a thin place" as the Celts would have said; "thin" because the veil between the sacred and the ordinary seems to be diaphanous in some special places on earth.

North Wind

I am here on an early Advent retreat as part of my two month sabbatical from my work at the Synod Office. Today, is the first day since my arrival four days ago, that the wind has abated and it is heaven! Normally even the sound of the waves is drowned out by the roar of the ferocious north wind that predominates here in the winter. Today, without that roar, there is room for other sounds: gentle waves, sheep, bird calls and wings, the rustle of tiny animals in the grasses, the soft sounds of footfall on the muddy paths, the distant call of a shepherd to his dog. There is no traffic here, not today anyway while the causeway is flooded by the tide. There is simply no where for folks to go.

Halfway along the island, between the causeway and harbour, but facing out across the isthmus towards the mainland sit the ruins of the Norman priory. This priory was itself the replacement for the original Saxon one which was savagely destroyed by the Viking raiders in 793 A.D. The little church of St Mary is part of this complex and built from the stones of the ruined priory. It is charmingly simple inside and, despite the minute island population, still maintains a rhythm of thrice daily prayer for all comers.

As on Iona, from which the first monks who settled here hailed, a dispersed community of Christians from many denominations has evolved from here. People who seek a simpler life, like that modelled by the early Celtic saints, close to nature and with respect for all creatures, support each

other in this endeavour. But this is not a group of people who are seeking to escape the evils of the world. Rather, they are committed to being informed and involved in issues of justice, ecology and peace.

Celtic Christianity is more than a few earthily simple prayers offered in the liturgy on a Sunday morning. In its purest form, it calls for a deep commitment to the world - an incarnational presence.

Research

I came here after three intense weeks of visits to urban dioceses in England:

even though they may have long since ceased to be functional or useful for the purpose for which they were built, they cannot be altered without great trouble. Like us too, there is a workforce of dedicated clergy and lay leaders who are just as challenged and bewildered as we are in Niagara about how to address the great need for mission to a society which is clearly seeking for spirituality and wholeness. I had some fascinating conversations with some of these leaders and visited some exciting projects. I shall report on these in a future article here.

I am on Lindisfarne now and enjoying the



Sheffield, Nottingham, Coventry, Southwark, and Newcastle. My goal was to view and learn more about creative approaches to urban ministry and I was not disappointed. The ecclesial urban scene in England is similar to that in Niagara in many respects. There are shrinking and aging congregations here too - except where immigration swells the numbers as in London. There are too many, often large, church buildings, many of which are "listed" as heritage buildings. This means that

time to reflect on all I have heard and to give God thanks for the inspiration of the Celts who came here to teach the good news of Jesus to the hooligans of the Saxon north. They found a way to tame these unruly and frightening people through prayer and patient, loving presence, waiting on God for guidance in their work. We too are called to witness in a culture which seems alien to many of us. Perhaps this place, and other "thin" places like it, can provide us with the key to our search for answers. Amen.

Developing a Blueprint for Evangelism

A day for evangelism reps, clergy and those passionate about evangelism

The day will include:

- Congregational Leadership and Evangelism
- Evangelism in our Post Christian Culture
- Evangelism and the Twenty- something's; Where are they now? What have we done?
- Evangelism in the Parish; Needs, Challenges, Inhibitors

Saturday, February 18: 9:30 - 3:00

St. Christopher's, Burlington

Coffee and Registration at 9:30 a.m. • Session begins at 10 a.m.
• Lunch will be provided

Phone: 905-527-1316

ask for: Ruth Anne Martin or Kim Henhawke

RSVP no later than February 14, 2006 - Please!

Bruce Kuhn presents:

The Gospel of Luke

The Gospel of Luke is a solo performance of these stories, memorized word for word from the New Testament and told with the same passion and surprise as the first telling. In 90 minutes the words come alive with the urgency and humour of someone who was there.

Performances:

- Friday, May 5, at 7:30 pm - Theatre Aquarius, Hamilton
- Sunday, May 7, at 7:00 pm - The Arboretum, University of Guelph
- Friday, May 12, at 7:30 pm - Holy Trinity Roman Catholic School, Oakville
- Sunday, May 14th, at 7:00 pm - Ridley College, St. Catharines

Bruce will also be leading workshops:

- Public Speaking, Preaching and Storytelling - Tuesday, May 9 from 9:30 to 3 pm at St. Matthew's, Burlington
- Dramatic Reading, Public Speaking and Communications - Saturday, May 13 from 10:00 am to 2 pm at St. George's, Lowville

Ticket Information

Tickets are \$20 each for general admission and are available from TicketMaster at www.ticketmaster.ca or by calling Ticketmaster at:

Hamilton: 905-481-4444
Guelph: 519-763-9277
Toronto: 416-870-8000

Tickets also available through Ruth Anne Martin at the Diocesan Resource Centre ruthanne.martin@niagara.anglican.ca or 905 527-1316 (ext. 200)

PARISH NEWS

Acknowledging Important Work

During the Season of Advent, as they prepared for Christmas, the parishioners of St. Stephen-on-the-Mount, Hamilton kept in mind the important work done by St. Matthew's House as well as Neighbour to Neighbour. On the First Sunday of Advent parishioners were given to take home an Advent coin folder and scripture passages for each day in Advent, as well as a brown paper grocery bag to fill with canned goods and non-perishable items to be returned the following Sunday. The Chancel steps were filled with these brown paper grocery bags on the Second Sunday of Advent, and then sent to St. Matthew's House and Neighbour to Neighbour.

On the Third Sunday of Advent all the parishioners brought mitts, gloves, hats, scarves, and socks to decorate the 'Mitten Tree'. It was hard to see the tree as the final decorations of toiletry items and toys were placed around the tree. These decorations were also sent to St. Matthew's House and Neighbour to Neighbour.

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent, not everyone was in Church that morning, some were in the parish hall practicing for the Christmas Eve Pageant, while others were in the kitchen preparing the food for that day's annual Christmas Luncheon. Now it's time to celebrate Christmas!



Parishioners decorate the 'Mitten Tree' with mitts, gloves, hats, scarves, and socks.

Christmas Dinner at St. Alban's Broadway Bound?

CATHY HORTON



Christmas Day saw about 50 people gathered at St. Alban's, Glen Williams, after the morning service for a traditional Christmas dinner of turkey with all the trimmings. Originally conceived by Pastor Grahame Stap as an outreach for anyone in the community who would otherwise spend Christmas Day alone, it became a joyous occasion for all, as members of the local commu-

nity joined with parishioners in fellowship. The food was fantastic, the laughter and joy that filled our parish hall was wonderful.

"Let them all come"

Local businesses contributed food and gifts, including the McGibbon Hotel in Georgetown who cooked the turkeys with stuffing, the Glen Oven Bakery who provided rolls, and Ares Restaurant who donated the salad. People from the community came in on Christmas Eve and Christmas morning, with desserts, cookies, gifts and other extras, making it a truly festive event.

It made us realize that this event must be held every year and that 2005 has now become St. Alban's First Annual Christmas Dinner. God willing, next December 25 we will be celebrating with those who would like to be part of the fellowship and fun that we experienced Christmas Day 2005.

Could be! On Thursday, December 15, 2005 Bishop D. Ralph Spence reprised his role as Ebenezer Scrooge in a dramatic reading of Rev. John Ripley's adaptation of Dicken's, *A Christmas Carol*. The reading was the first venture of St. Catharines City Parishes, a laity-led group working together to integrate parishioners from various Anglican parishes to collaborate, share ideas and pool resources.

Held at St. Columba Church, St. Catharines, the fundraiser featured the talents of Bishop Spence as Scrooge, Archdeacon Bruce McPetrie as Marley and all the Spirits, with narration and other roles read by The Rev. John Ripley, Fran Inglis, John Laroque and Cathy Horton. Music was provided by Diane Williams, the Anglican Singers and St. Columba Choir.

This production of *A Christmas Carol* proved to be chock full of

surprises as Archdeacon McPetrie donned various costumes and provided props (the smoke machine and Marley's chains proved especially effective!) To borrow from the Ghost of Christmas Present "You've not seen the likes of this before." It was a great success and so much fun. Many parishes in the city pulled together to promote this event, sell tickets and participate.

The result of this collaboration was a successful fundraiser with donations going to both the breakfast program at St. George's Church and the Kate Leonard Circle crisis program at the YWCA on behalf of the Anglican Parishes in St. Catharines. A big thank you to Bishop Spence, Archdeacon McPetrie, John Ripley, Fran Inglis, John Laroque, the good people of St. Columba Church who were very gracious hosts and all who participated in any way - big or small. City Parishes is hoping to pursue more projects, and hopefully another fundraiser.

St. Christopher's, Burlington Hosts Special Guests

On the first weekend of Advent, parishioners and members of the community were delighted to host The Reverend Dr. Randall Bailey, and his wife Jean. Dr. Bailey lead three public sessions that weekend. The first lecture, open to the public dealt with issues of interpretation: "Sex and Sexuality in the Bible". Bailey delighted the audience with a mix of solid scholarship and humour. The next two days were spent in Advent preparation with the theme "For whom are we waiting?" Dr. Bailey, a member of the International Denominational Centre in Atlanta Georgia, took to the pulpit at St. Christopher's, six years to the day he was barred from doing so in his own Baptist denomination because of his 'progressive' ministry. He spoke eloquently

and with passion about the nature of advent and social justice.

Twice during Christmas celebrations, the congregation - young and old - were pleased to have Nicholas, Bishop of Myrna, Asia Minor, preach at services. Bishop Nicholas responded enthusiastically to the opportunity to share his story of charity and faith with those assembled, bringing renewed meaning and significance to the tradition of gift-giving. Leo Podetz, who arranged the visit, says that Nicholas has international appeal, "Over the years many countries adopted his history to their cultures. In Russia he became St. Nikita, in Switzerland St. Niklaas; in France, Pere Noel, and in many places simply Father Christmas."



Reverend Dan Tatarnic, Reverend Dr. Randall Bailey, and Reverend Steve Coombs.

St. Cuthbert's, Oakville

Caring and Sharing



Peg Coleman with David and Mary Ann Knowland.

Each year members of St. Cuthbert's Outreach Ministry Team in Oakville partner with the local Salvation Army and volunteer to "staff" one of their kettles. In December, the parish sponsored two full days in the Oakville Place Mall and the Salvation Army kindly produces a poster to thank the parish for their support. The project supports families in need at Christmas time and demonstrates to the wider community that St. Cuthbert's joins with the Salvation Army in caring about their neighbours.

Church of the Redeemer, Stoney Creek



The Ladies of the ACW, Afternoon Group, at the Church of the Redeemer have been very busy knitting and quilting this past year and have completed the following: 64 pairs Mittens, 30 Scarves, 11 Headbands, 4 pairs Gloves, 39 Hats, 11 pairs Slippers, 1 Vest, 2 Dolls, 1 T-Shirt, 1 Sweater, 1 Child's Jumper, 1 Knitted Baby Jacket, 9 Baby Quilts, 5 large Quilts, 8 Knitted Afghans, and 10 small Quilts. These pieces were all donated to St. Matthew's House recently.



At St. John's Thorold Epiphany Eve Celebration (left to right) Sophie Irving and Melanie Riley and Martin Irving help the Maji visit the newborn Christ child.

Anglican Church Ministries Foundation, Niagara

ROBERT MCKINNELL
DIOCESAN TREASURER AND CFO

The Anglican Church Ministries Foundation, Niagara (ACMF, Niagara) was incorporated by an act of the Provincial Government of Ontario, assented to on January 1, 1999 and is a registered charity under the Income Tax Act.

The ACMF, Niagara has been set up to receive and maintain funds and to apply all or part of the principal and income, from time to time, for charitable purposes, and in particular to assist The Synod of the Diocese of Niagara, its Bishop or Archbishop: to preach, promote and advance the spiritual teachings of the Christian faith; and to support and maintain churches and the mission of the Church in order to propagate and express the Christian faith.

The Foundation operates at arms length from the Synod of the Diocese of Niagara which effectively creates a 'firewall' from legal issues that might arise within the Diocese. This is important in ensuring all funds are protected as evidenced by recent liability concerns stemming from the Residential Schools matter, which has since been dealt with.

Initially, two funds were set up to receive monies raised through the Survive & Thrive campaign. The case for that campaign included 37.5 % of net proceeds being placed into two endowment funds. The division was one-third into the Outreach in the Name of Christ - Endowment Fund and two-thirds into the Education and

Training for Leadership in the Church - Endowment Fund. In May of 2001 the Foundation received a cheque in the amount of \$452,041 being the first transfer from the Survive & Thrive Campaign. As of September 30, 2005 the cumulative amount raised has now reached \$1,692,910.24.



Robert McKinnell

The first monies distributed from these funds occurred in 2005 when \$10,000 and \$20,000 respectively were transferred to the Diocese. Any amounts unused by the Diocese in one year will be forwarded for use in the next year. When the Board of Directors of the Foundation met in November of 2005 they approved a further disbursement of \$25,000 and \$50,000 respectively for 2006. At the same time the Board allowed for inflationary increases by approving a 3% growth allowance in the fund at the end of 2005 to be added to the 1.5% growth allowance approved at the end of 2004. This was only achievable due to the great rate of return for the past few years from the Niagara Investment Fund where the Foundation's monies are invested.

Five New Funds

Five new funds have been set up within the Foundation as follows: Divinity Students' Endowment Fund, Clergy in Transition Endowment Fund, Youth Ministry Endowment Fund, Evangelism Endowment Fund and the Bishop's Company Endowment Fund.

The Bishop's Company Endowment Fund has been the most successful, to date, of the above five funds. This fund is

totally separate from the ongoing activities of the Bishop's Company wherein the proceeds are normally distributed each year. The purpose of this fund was to ensure there was an income stream available to future Bishops that was not dependent on the annual success of the Bishop's dinner. The fund balance has grown to over \$60,000 and was the recipient of the net proceeds (almost \$6,000) from the diocesan annual golf tournament held in September of 2005. We anticipate this golf event will become a new tradition and grow over the years. In the case of this fund, as well as all the funds mentioned above, the principal sum is to remain intact with only the earned income being available for distribution.

In April 2000 we assisted the McMaster Chaplaincy Program by setting up the McMaster Campus Foundation Trust - Chaplaincy Fund. This fund, like those of the Diocese, will protect the principal while providing a future income stream when needed.

I have met with a number of parishes that are considering setting up endowment funds. These funds can be placed under the umbrella of the foundation without parishes having to set up their own corporate structure. This is a significant factor for parishes and also meets an objective of the Diocese when the foundation was originally set up. I am available to meet with parishes and discuss how this would work best for them.

Individuals may contribute to any of the ACMF, Niagara funds mentioned above and receive a tax receipt for their donation. If there is significant interest in setting up a new fund please call and we can discuss that possibility.

Terrific Teens Elate Elora

This year at St. John's in Elora, the Terrific Teens decided to try something a little different for the Christmas pageant! With a little creativity they managed to put three skits together in order to maximize the number of children that could take part.

Our play opened with Curtis asking some of the Sunday school children what gifts they would bring to Baby Jesus if they could take a gift to him, to discussing with Holly and Andy the wonderful world of the Internet and how it portrays Christmas through dancing candy canes, singing jingle bells and Santa Claus. Calee and Erin with the help of the other Youth group and Sunday school children explained the true, wonderful meaning of Christmas.

Our band of Angels sang the joyous news of the birth to our little herd of sheep being lead by Anna and Aidan our little Shepherds and our Lead Shepherd Steve.

Gabriel, (Gavin) announced very boldly the great news to our Wise people, played by Maggie, Camille and Erik. Joseph (Darren) watched on proudly as Baby Jesus (Narissa) was in awe over all the excitement. Everyone had a great time from the littlest sheep to littlest singing Angel.

As tradition would have it the Terrific Teens and Gavin then took their show on the road to the Wellington Terrace, where they delighted the residence!



ORDINATION REFLECTION

We asked the people ordained to the priesthood in December 2005, to write a reflection on what they felt as a result of their ordination. This is what they said:



New priests and consecrating bishops at the ordination: (From Left) Sue-Ann Ward, Jeff Ward, Bishop John Bothwell, Bishop Ralph Spence, Stephanie Pellow and Eleanor Clitheroe.

ELEANOR CLITHEROE

My friend stood beside a lake under a cloudy sky after a long day. He was tired and feeling unsure about what lay ahead of him tomorrow. As he stood there, a big full moon slipped out from behind the clouds and bathed the lake in light, lighting up the beauty of the rocks and water around him.

In that moment, he had an image of the moon, being lit up and casting this beauty, by the sun behind it, which he could not see. The moon reflected the light of the sun. And he had an image of himself as that moon, a piece of rock, circling the earth, until he was lit up by God and reflected God's light on the earth. And he caught for a moment an image of the relationship between God and himself, and who he is.

I related this story to the other five people who were ordained together, with me, on Sunday, December 11. We were led in a pre ordination retreat the week before ordination at Canterbury Hills.

We were led in the retreat by another priest, who opened our retreat, prior to beginning the silent periods, by talking about joy. His words were "Be joyful priests." Amid all the leaky roofs, stretching of budgets, and everyday concerns and hectic pace, be joyful.

Joy is a forgotten word in our society. We are interested, busy, sometimes sad, or troubled. But too infrequently, are we joyful.

What puts joy in our hearts? What brings a tear of joy to our eyes? Is joy something that just happens to us, or is joy something that we can develop, and be receptive too? Is being joyful the same as not having any troubles at the moment? Can you think of someone who is a truly joyful person?

One person that I know who is joyful says that he has learned to smile from the heart. I have tried to stop and smile from the heart, but for a long time I couldn't figure out what that meant.

One day someone handed me a Hoberman's sphere and said to me, press on the sphere. Press hard enough to show me how joyful you feel. On that day, I realized that, truly, I could only press the sphere together a very little bit. But it taught me what

I was looking for. I was looking for those moments, where I would be able to press deeply into the sphere. Those moments were not necessarily the perfect moments with the happy endings. Sometimes those moments are the sad moments. Sometimes they are the loving moments. Always they are the moments when I can see the good in others, the Christ in others, the divine in others; and when they can see that reflection in me.

I had an experience of that a few weeks ago, when after a very stressful morning, I felt I needed to take

a little break and went downstairs in the building I was in to the Timothy's coffee shop that was on the main floor. I sat in the window, on one of

those stools, that face the street, looking out into what was a very dismal rainy day, and asked God why in the world I was doing what I was doing. To be honest, I said that I thought that I had been through enough stress, and I didn't really want any more.

As I sat there, a man that I had met in the drop in center at Sanctuary downtown, and seen around on the streets, a homeless individual, came in and quietly sat down on the stool beside me. We sat there quietly, companionably for about ten minutes. Neither of us had a coffee, we didn't speak. We just shared that time together. Then he got up and walked out. That was a moment of joy for me, because I believe that Christ came in and sat down beside me. Because the reflected glory of Christ shone for me from that human being.

What is joy? Joy is being wherever or whatever reflects the light of Christ to others and allows us to see the reflected light of Christ in them. It is finding those opportunities where we can be more than just a pile of rock circling the earth, but a big full moon, reflecting the glory of the sun, and shedding that light in the world around us.

It is being and seeing Christ in others, in this new age, that all the prophets, from Isaiah through to John the Baptist prayed, hoped for, and announced. Let us look for those moments when we can be and see Christ every day.

My journey has been one of Spirit. My ordination was a day filled with the Spirit and of my call to be and see Christ in others always, with God's help.

STEPHANIE PELLOW

As a person of "riper years," my path to ordination has been lengthy. Various lay ministries and a full career in the field of education gradually led to the discernment that I could follow Christ, help others along their paths and serve most fully as an ordained person. Three years of training in the Master of Divinity program proved to be very intense - academically, emotionally and spiritually. I was ordained deacon in May 2005 riding high on the crest of excitement that comes with the sense of having accomplished something difficult and the anticipation of beginning a new job. Seven months later as a candidate for ordination to the priesthood, I believe I came to the event with a matured awareness and sobriety.

The immediate journey began with our pre-ordination retreat. Another ordinand shared that she was reviewing her journal as part of her preparation. As I also read through the past year's writing, I could see more clearly where I had been led by the Spirit to deepen my understanding or to respond in faithful action; both when I had recognized that leading and when I had missed it. Most strong was the voice of affirmation that said, "You are becoming what you are meant to be." So, I came to Christ Church Cathedral on December 11 with a feeling of deep peace and calm,

happy but not particularly excited.

Two parts of the service stand out most for me. I wanted to truly pray the litany and not be caught up in the pageantry of the procession. As I listened to the words being sung clearly and beautifully, I had a wonderful image of the catholic nature of our church and our faith not only as worldwide but also in its comprehensiveness. The words of the litany brought forth the thought that all our human condition of faith and doubt, fortune and misfortune, good decisions and bad ones, our celebrations and desert times are held inside the body of Christ.

The second moment of insight came as the bishops and priests laid hands on me. Their touch was very firm. As I physically resisted crumpling I had a sense of the weight representing the heaviness of responsibility placed upon me. At the same time, the warmth and steadiness of the pressure was reassuring. There was nothing tentative about the action. This physical sign really did mark an inward spiritual grace. I felt both the responsibility of the promises I had made and a comfort in the assurance that my work will not be done in isolation but in the company of the Spirit and in the body of the Church.

In some ways the deep calm I came with was disturbed. It was disturbed with joy, which for me has more substance and is more lasting than excitement.

Introducing

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Rev. Linda Corry,
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Free Open Seminar

Mon., March 6, 2006
7:30-9:30 p.m.
St. Philip's Anglican Church
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Linda will address the experience of loss and introduce the Grief ♥ Recovery® Program

The Grief ♥ Recovery® Program

will begin Monday, March 13th,
7:30-9:30 p.m.
at St. Philip's Anglican Church, Burlington. 
(Group size is limited)

For information and reservations for the seminar or the 12-week program, please call Linda Corry at 905-634-7858

SUE-ANN WARD

The day before my ordination to the priesthood, I read, in a book of meditations, these words: "You grieve that you have failed Me. Remember it was for failures that I hung on Calvary's Cross. It was a failure I greeted first in the Easter Garden. It was to one of the failures I entrusted My Church, My Lambs, My Sheep. It was to one who had thwarted and despised Me, who had tortured and murdered my followers that I gave My great world Mission to the Gentiles. But each had first to learn to know Me as Saviour and Lord by a bitter consciousness of

having failed Me. If you would work for Me, then you must be ready for the valley of humiliation through which all My followers have to pass."

The spirit came to me with these words of comfort, encouragement, and warning. I had been feeling a profound sense of unworthiness. I had been reflecting upon the many mistakes and poor choices that I have made throughout my lifetime. God took me in her arms and crooned words of comfort against my cheek. She told me that she loved me for who I am, not in spite of who I am. She reminded me that her spirit is

always with me and that all I need to do is to rest in her.

During the service, as I witnessed my friends being ordained, I promised God that I would work every day to bring her love to all those whose lives touch mine. I thanked God for the gift of journeying with my partner through all of the experiences that brought us to that moment and into a future of serving God and God's people in a new way. I remember reaching out to take Jeff's hand and rejoicing in the fact that he was close enough to hold onto as we shared the prayers that prepared us for the laying on of hands.

I wondered at the privilege of

having two bishops preside at our ordination service. Bishop Ralph Spence has been a rock of support and wise guidance to me in my ministry. Bishop John Bothwell is the bishop who ordained the first women in our diocese on St. Andrew's Day, 1976. I am thankful for Bishop John's leadership as our Church grew (and reached back to its roots) in its understanding of ordained ministry. I experienced a profound sense of gratitude to Bishop Ralph, Bishop John, and all saints and prophets who have worked and sacrificed to keep Christ's Church on the path God would have us walk.

During the laying on of hands I

was awash in a tide of emotion. I knew that I was starting to cry, and I could feel myself begin to shake, when a priest who stood behind me squeezed my shoulder. I did not know who it was, and it did not really matter. What mattered was the Holy Spirit acting through this hand, these hands, these souls, all intimately connected with mine, and yours, and Jesus', and the souls of every person present, past, and future. We are all called to minister on God's behalf, comforting each other, sustaining each other, loving each other, communing with each other. I have never felt less alone and more a part of community than at that moment.

JEFF WARD

I remember feeling a deep sense of dread a few days before I was ordained to the Diaconate. Deep reflection and prayer surfaced a sincere sense of unworthiness at the prospect of serving God and the community as an ordained person in the Anglican Church. I had been fortunate that some very faithful and deeply spiritual - and significantly wiser - people than I, had counseled me against this feeling as they were more convinced than I that I was in fact worthy. This conviction seemed to fade as I approached the day of ordination. Further prayer and reflection and a restful nights sleep resulted in a mental space of accepting God's will for me and placing my life in her hands. I figured if she and the church knew what they were doing, then I should stop arguing and do my best to serve her and the church to the best of my ability and I hoped that I would grow into the new demands presented to me.

As I approached my ordination to the priesthood this feeling of unworthiness to serve as a priest in the Anglican Church faded and I became much more comfortable with my place as a clergyman. What I found myself considering the week before ordination was more the overwhelming sense of responsibility and the knowledge that this responsibility would grow. I found myself ruminating on the demands that would come, not as much as the spiritual leader, but as the one responsible for the care and development of a congregation. This was not a feeling that caused me to freeze, but certainly one that caused me to pause and reflect very seriously on what it would mean to me and to those I love.

I imagine that most people feel a sense of dread at the moment in the presentation of candidates where the Bishop says, "Therefore, if any of you know any impediment or crime for which we should not proceed, come forward now, and make it known." It is not that you know of any reason yourself that there is an impediment, after all, the many hoops that one jumps through in the process usually surfaces such obvious barriers. It is just the nightmare of seeing someone jumping up or running forward is an image that is hard to avoid.

We are reminded throughout the ordination service, right up to the moment of consecration, of the awesome responsibility that we are called to accept as priests; a responsibility that none of us wish to fail at accomplishing.

Fortunately the moment passes and a new sense of calm and confidence builds and for me reached a crescendo at the moment of the laying on of hands. Many small things happened just prior to this moment: The litany procession caused me to feel an overwhelming sense of love and solidarity with family, friends, colleagues, and sisters and brothers in Christ; The sermon inspired me and gave me a renewed feeling of purpose; Someone, I cannot say whom, adjusted the hem of my alb, just before it was my turn to be consecrated so that I would not stumble when I rose to move forward; I was blessed to be consecrated by two Bishops, both of whom had demonstrated immense love and support toward me; and then the breathtaking feeling of the physical and spiritual lifting up within me caused by my fellow priests as they reached out to me.

I was not expecting a bolt of lightning to strike when I was ordained, but I wondered how I would feel; whether there would be a perceptible change in my physical and spiritual being and what form that would take. I was emotionally overwhelmed by the experience; felt the air in my lungs and around me pulled from my immediate surroundings and a feeling of great warmth overtook me. I felt close to tears, yet I could not wipe the smile off my face.

My feelings of being blessed, especially from having my colleague and mentor Bishop John Bothwell present for the consecration, was only surpassed by my feelings of happiness for my friends being ordained. Only moments later I witnessed my life partner Sue-Ann being ordained a priest and I was overcome with joy and pride for her. The glorious church we are a part of had recognized her calling and her gifts and I knew that she was finally home. God is great and good and our life together in ordained ministry had begun in earnest. We were blessed in so many ways; a touch and a glance and a wink from Sue-Ann confirmed this reality.

In the Meantime: Transfigured

MICHAEL THOMPSON

As Jesus stands on the top of the mountain, glowing bright and huddled in conversation with Moses and Elijah, it is not hard to believe that this is the moment, to leap with Peter to the obvious conclusion - that Jesus is entering into his glory. Peter's response is a desperate embrace of that possibility - because the alternative, the journey Jesus outlined six days earlier, is the road to a violent death. This shining moment on the mountaintop seems to promise a way out of that suffering, a lifting of Jesus into glory. Peter wants the story to end here. He wants Jesus to stay here. He proposes a dwelling for him, and one each for Moses and Elijah. He wants what he cannot have, a safe and painless journey for Jesus - and for himself.



Michael Thompson

A safe and painless journey

Peter is not the first or last to want to stay on the mountaintop. But the wedding day is not the marriage and the birth is not the life. Weddings and births can be and often are transcendent times; marriages and lives are lived lower down. Down where there is pain, and loss and betrayal, down where dreams don't come true and hearts break, down where people hurt one another, down where life's sharp edges wound us, wound those we love. All the way down to death.

A dangerous and costly journey

Between Jesus and glory there is a long road of downward mobility, of loss, of dereliction. So Jesus turns away from Peter without a word and begins his descent. Down the mountain, down the road, down into the deepest of the depths of grief and terror. Down to what wakens us in the howling night and will not let us sleep. Down to the jangling dissonance that dissolves every attempt to make sense of our lives. Down to the cold silence where there is no longer a life to be made sense of.

It is the journey we all must make, the journey we all are making. It is not that there is no beauty or warmth or goodness in the meantime. It simply is a journey all the way down, and if there are moments that seem to shine with the light of eternity, those moments do not steal us out of time forever. This journey will cost us everything.

But we have some choices about how that cost will be exacted, about how we will make the journey. We can be deliberate about the meantime. We can embrace the cost and direct it towards a purpose. We can spend ourselves for something worth it, something worth us. Because we know we are going down, we can be tenacious in telling truth - telling truth with our words and truth with our bodies. Our lives, downward arrows, can begin to probe the depths into which time and its losses drive us, can begin to find, in those depths, surprising things.

This meantime, this downward mobility that lays such an absolute claim on absolutely all of us, can lead us home. When the scales drop from our eyes, when we see, and when we know, and most of all when we

can say that there is no way out, our energies can turn away from all our frantic pretending and deliberate inattention. And once we embrace that piece of truth, however hard, we become a friend of Truth, who greets us with other truths as well. Jesus, having assented to "going down" as the only way, also embodies those other truths, truths for the downward journey.

Truth one

There is no way out, but there is a way together. The people Jesus had the most trouble with were the people who could still pretend. They had power, or wealth, or status. With a little cultivated inattentiveness, they could imagine themselves as rising above instead of sinking into the human predicament. Sinking people seemed drawn to Jesus, not because he could bend the road upwards, but because around him on the downward journey people found each other in new and life-giving ways. Around him shone something that brought people together, that contradicted the estrangement that plagues our common life. Once they were not standing on each other to rise above, they could embrace each other, we can embrace each other, meet each other, see and serve and love each other as pilgrims on the same downward way.

Truth two

There is no way out, but there is a way that is worth it. The spending of self as a gift to others is a choice we can make; the loss of self to our circumstances and the grasping choices of others is the only alternative. The choice the world poses is not honest - self-giving or self-preservation. There is no such thing as self-preservation on the journey all the way down. But there is giving that is worth it, and if you have ever waited in emergency with a sick or injured child, if your heart has broken at the suffering of your beloved, if you have stayed up way past your bedtime to listen to a friend pour out grief or betrayal, if you have done your best when you don't feel like it for the sake of a customer you will never meet - if you have done any of those or a thousand other things, you have touched the hem of this healing garment. You have spent a bit of yourself on something worth it.

Truth three

There is no way out, but there is a way home. A way together and a way that is worth it is the way that Jesus illuminates. It is the way on which he travels with us, all the way down. Down to Jerusalem and its toxic whispering power. Down to the pavement in front of Pilate's home, down to the chief priest's house. Down hostile streets before pitiless eyes. And then, lifted up for the first time, and redefining glory for ever, down to death.

And yet, on every step of the way, the hungry fed, the sick healed, the lost found, the leper cleansed, the outcast welcomed home, sinners and tax collectors sharing the heartbeat hospitality of Jesus' table. All the way down he goes, all the way sowing seeds and promises of a life that God yearns to give, and that we can enter by joining in the giving.

EDITORIAL

Three Wise Women...



Grace Cathedral, San Francisco

CHRISTOPHER M. GRABEC

John and I were standing at our hotel; up the street three blocks away from us was the imposing gothic Grace Cathedral of San Francisco. The difficulty, for those who know San Francisco, was that those three blocks were virtually straight up! I felt like a hot air balloon could have easily got us there. So we took a cab and

arrived two hours early for the Christmas Eve service. The early service was coming to an end, and the magnificent organ was roaring and rumbling to the point that I wondered if this was the day that the "great" earthquake would take the city into the sea!

We rushed up to claim a seat, with many other people, as soon as the previous crowd cleared out. The cathedral which seats thou-

sands was filling very quickly. In a matter of minutes three women wanted to sit in front of us, but seemed very careful about whether or not someone else had already claimed the seat. "No," we said, "we haven't seen anyone else."

And so it began. We chatted with these women for most of the two hours before the service, and ultimately found out that they were not Christians but were of Jewish heritage. We were fascinated by their stories of faith and life and they seemed fascinated by ours. After fifteen minutes of conversation, Rita grew concerned about whether John and I had had a chance to have our supper! We told her that we had, and in her loving way she seemed quite relieved.

They explained to us that one of them had been to the cathedral for the Christmas Eve service before and she thought that her friends would enjoy the festivity. However, as the cathedral began to fill after a time, I could not help but overhear one of them say that they should leave because they were taking up spaces that didn't belong to them. I was somewhat appalled and leaned over to them and told them that they should not move and that they had every right to be in the cathedral on this special night. They seemed surprised by my insistence and after talking for a moment together, two of them were somewhat teary and they were all delighted with the hospitality.

The service went on and truly it was one of the finest shows in the

country. Clergy were decorated in their finest robes of gold and honoured lay folks were displaying all their medals and hoods. Banners and streamers were everywhere. The thurifer was skilled at swinging the incense in full 360's and in every direction. Frankly, as I was standing at the end of the pew, at one point I did tilt to the left exhibiting a small amount of fear that I could possibly be clobbered should he go slightly off course! The choir (men and boys) was fabulous and of course the organ roared. The symphony orchestra and trumpet section were amazing. The Dean's homily was filled with wit and humour and the Bishop exhibited a great deal of humility and yet strength as the president of the assembly.

The Jewish women were as warm as could be during the exchange of peace and seemed to truly enjoy the festivity of the evening, but when it came time for communion - they looked at each other and then us and bid us farewell. This was the place of exclusion. What a sad moment. Just a short while before that, the great doors of the Cathedral were opened and the gospel was read from the middle of the church - the reader facing out the doors - symbolizing the gospel being read to all humanity. But when it came time for communion - the essential moment in our faith lives - these three women did not feel welcome. We could not break bread and share the cup with them.

As we walked back to our hotel (this time straight down hill), we admitted to each other that the service itself was a great show, but it left us spiritually empty. All the trap-

pings, efforts and good intentions of our hosts had left our hearts untouched.

Looking back on that night, I can't say that I felt the love of an incarnate God at the hands of those who planned and executed this magnificent service. I can say, however, that I had a visit from the Magi that night. They were not men and they were not Christian. They were three Jewish women who laid down their gifts before us. The service was "great," but the love was in a fast relationship that developed between John and I and our "wise women."

I have realized that we as Christians have not even scratched the surface of our call to gather in Christian assembly. We are there to hear the Word and to break bread and share the cup not only among ourselves but with the world that so desperately needs God's love. As the women left I had protested: "Stay," I said, "there's lots of food, bread and wine - lots for everyone." But truly they could not. I know God is born among us... but my wise friends taught me that we really haven't come to understand how we should live that out.

I shall never forget the wise women, Rita, Eryn and Tirzah, and I know now how much more I must do to live out the joyful and inclusive Christmas message that has been entrusted to me.

Enough Already and Listen Up!

CHARLES STIRLING
HONORARY, CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

The 'great sexuality debate' goes on and many people wish it did not. But, it must in the interests of love, justice and truth. Speaking personally, I don't find these in abundance in the Church these days. One is more likely to find these virtues among those who choose to remain outside of the Church for any number of good and valid reasons.

One day while coincidentally working on a homily about the lack of these three virtues in our midst the TV was on and I was arrested by parts of a program in which fundamental American Christians, in interview, avowed the New Orleans natural disaster, which we were in the midst of at that time, was God's vengeance, brought upon that city because of its openness toward gay and lesbian people. These enlightened folk seemed to have overlooked any number of people who perhaps held opinions like their own, but none-the-less lost family members, home and the means to earn a living. I would suppose this is some curious scriptural version of God's equal treatment of the just and the unjust and that is supposed to make it alright. This begs the question, are these folk, who lost so much just more cannon fodder toward the great victory in which the arch-conservative groups will triumph against their more liberal brothers and sisters?

I recalled another occasion when a (I hate to use the word) clergyman, no doubt a graduate of the Billybob Joe School of Theology, proclaimed that God hated fags. I can't seem to find love, justice or truth in his version of Christ's Church either. I can see ignorance, perversion and hate. There is also a fear out there among these folk, which I cannot define nor understand. What was more terrifying was a blind belief that God truly works in this way. Not my God!

I would like to proclaim the Good News that God is still at work in creation. We learn, we discover and we are enabled as God continues to reveal the many facets of his creation and of the human condition to those willing to embrace them. Those who don't want to come to personally own all of the realities of creation are under no obligation to do so. I defend their right to work out their own personal relationship with God on a level they can comprehend. Conversely those who choose to embrace what has been and is being revealed, and to marvel at the wonder of God, must be free to understand and appreciate what they discover and work out their living relationship with God accordingly.

The Old Testament, on which many conservatives want to base their beliefs, has to be handled with extreme care. It is a mix of myth and historical reality, of rules for life, of wars and natural disasters, of music and wisdom, of prophecy and fulfillment, of

greed and lust, and yes about human sexuality. It reflects the search of a people to find, define and come to know, praise, worship and love their Creator. In the New Testament, where caution still must apply, there is a focus on loving God, neighbour and self, of story telling as teaching aid, of healing and new beginnings, all from the perspective of clarification of the Old Testament and the Good News of Jesus Christ. Somehow there is virtually no reflection on human sexuality. The Bible was not intended to be used by choosing a verse here and a verse there, or cobbling verses together to make points, more often than not, unrelated to the point that is being made.

I have always been somewhat galled by the overuse of 1st Corinthians 13 as the definitive scripture for weddings and the sentimentality of locking it and what it says to us in that context. To be sure it can say much to the bridal couple, but it has more to say to the way we live as Christians. It has much to say to Christians who are bent on beating up on other Christians and denying love, peace and justice for everyone. I would encourage them to read it, mark it and inwardly digest it. Then I would like them to tell what they have discovered and how they intend to alter their lives from that discovery toward the common good.

One individual or group has no moral or legal right to control, censure, coerce or disenfranchise another individual or group in terms of what is or is not to be believed, read or seen on the screen. Such action is a direct rejection of God's gifts of memory, reason and skill, given to each and every human. Yet conservative elements continue to use every dubious trick in the book to block liberal justice and equality issues, which they never fully comprehend in the first place.

It is time to call a truce and come to the realization each of us comes to God along different paths, with different understandings of the role and being of the Creator in our lives. When I was a teenager, going to A.Y.P.A., I recall a priest from the Mar Thoma Church, explaining Christians were all making their way to God by way of a ladder, and people were on all different rungs, but all on one ladder. There are far greater issues of global poverty, AIDS, social justice, education, advocacy and those elusive issues of truth justice and poverty on which to be expending our concerns and energies. Listen up.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DAWN VANSON

Dear Bishop Ralph, Greetings this Advent season and blessings to you and yours this Christmas and New Year! I am writing to thank you for the permission you granted to the Rev. Gale Macaulay - Newcomb to attend at and participate in our marriage ceremony on December 4, 2005. Since Gale has been such an integral part of most of the crucial moments in our lives together, it seemed only appropriate that she participate as fully as possible in our marriage.

After almost seventeen years together, the day was an appropriately happy one. We were surrounded by folks who care a great deal about our family and the support we felt was phenomenal. Our (nearly) eight year old son was pleased to participate in many ways, and while many people say that on wedding days brides often glow, on our day, it was our son who glowed the brightest. He has, after all, waited his whole life for this event!

For my spouse and I, while there was much joy, there was also considerable juxtaposition. On a day which brought us great delight, some from our immediate families and many from our wider (church) community considered it troubling and painful. While it was a day about freely declaring our commitment to each other, it was something which could not be publicly celebrated within our parish. While it was a day to celebrate love, it also emphasized how distressingly separated we are from some within our Anglican community; it's difficult to not experience the position of conservative members within the diocese who are prepared to attempt to bring the work of the diocese to a halt (by failing to pass a budget) as anything but the polar opposite of love. This sense of juxtaposition led us to begin our ceremony with anointing for healing; it felt like an essential place to begin, and Gale, the spirit-filled pastor she is, helped us sense God's touch of grace through it. And, while Gale may tell you that I'm a chronic pessimist (and my spouse is a chronic optimist!), I do believe that love conquers all - at least if we give it the opportunity to do so. I've learned that after

seventeen years of challenges.

Of course, the most troubling part of the day was that Gale could not be the one to marry us, nor could we be married in the parish we have called home for many years. While we were blessed to be married in a lovely little country church by a wonderful United Church minister who welcomed us whole-heartedly and yielded to all our mysterious Anglican ways, that we could not be married by the priest who has been our primary spiritual support for almost twelve years in the parish where we have, between the two of us, held roles as vestry clerk, lay delegate to synod, member at large to parish council, nursery coordinator, convener of chalice bearers, and deputy rector's warden, and for the past several years, parish secretary. We were grateful that some folks from our parish, including clergy and their families, the wardens, the organist and his wife, part of the choir and some parishioners did manage to carpool for the journey out to the country on that snowy day. That they came out to support us had a huge impact not only on us, but on our son who sometimes struggles in his community about the acceptance of our non-traditional family.

I am aware, from Gale, that you extended your best wishes to us and expressed discomfort with the fact that we could not be married by her at All Saints and I thank you for your caring. I still, however, feel the need to express to you the deep hurt we've experienced through the recent events of the last two diocesan Synods. As I said from the floor of Synod last year during the discussion around the motion on the affirmation of same-sex relationships, neither individuals nor the Anglican community can even begin to heal when there is no decision, only waiting; that waiting is much like a wound that is constantly disturbed - it will never heal.

For us, we made the decision that it was time to begin the healing regardless of what this diocese chose to do. Within two days of this year's Synod, we made the decision to proceed with our marriage, and within two weeks, it was a fait accompli. It was not without cost.

Financially, we incurred costs for the church and the clergy, both of which would

have been waived had we been married at All Saints by Gale; while it may not seem a significant amount, it was a sacrifice for our family during the Christmas season - my spouse is under-employed and I am only able to work part-time so it means this season, there will be some doing-without.

Emotionally, we felt quite abandoned. Please understand, we did not feel abandoned by the people of All Saints, but by the larger Anglican community.

Finally, there is a spiritual cost. To us as we continue to struggle to reconcile that God loves us even if some of God's people choose differently. To the people of All Saints who want desperately to shine as a community that welcomes and appreciates all. And I believe, to the larger Anglican community.

At a time when you as bishop have directed the focus of this diocese to the "three-legged stool", I find myself asking several questions. To whom should we evangelize, the members of our gay-lesbian community who are not fully welcomed into the sacraments? With whom should my spouse and I share our time, talents and treasure if we are not fully welcomed? What viable roles in leadership do we have in this diocese when we are not valued for the richness of our difference as well as our sameness?

This Advent, our little family is celebrating differently than the past many years. This year, we understand the waiting of Advent differently; for us, this year, there is a deeper understanding that with waiting, sometimes great things come; we know because after seventeen years, we are finally married. We also understand hope differently; for years we have hoped, but this year we learned that seeking fulfillment in what one hopes does not necessarily require passive patience, but sometimes requires action to come to fruition. And this year, we are not celebrating Advent as part of any organized Anglican community; this year, the sense of separation is too raw and so we choose a more private way. But, chronic pessimist that I am, I still know this, Bishop Ralph: love conquers all. So our family's wish to you, your family and this diocese is for the peace of Christ and the love of God to shine on you and light your way. Blessings.

DAVID KNOWLAND

A year ago, the whole world was shocked by the news of the tsunami in south-eastern Asia. There was a terrible loss of life and devastation of people's homes; there was a world wide response of money and help. There is an ongoing catastrophe and even greater loss of life, every month, in Africa and yet this is largely ignored. More people die needlessly of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and starvation every month than those who died in the tsunami disaster.

What are we, as Anglicans doing to help alleviate this suffering? Are we practicing what is preached in our churches? As in the parable of the Good Samaritan, we seem to be passing on the other side of the road. There was a wonderful story, woefully buried almost at the back of the January Niagara Anglican, What Can I Do? This should have been on the front page. I hope that in 2006 we will see some leadership from our church and other churches to help alleviate the suffering of these people. What St. Paul's, Dunneville is doing is a fine example to the whole Diocese, where are our leaders who will make this happen throughout the Diocese?

Let's make it happen in 2006. We need to make a lot more noise to get people's attention to this terrible situation.

HILARY AINSLIE

To the Editor,

I read with disconcerted astonishment, "Correction and Clarification" in December's Niagara Anglican which aimed to correct the contents of Miss Schroeder's letter to the Editor, published in November, with regard to the 150th Anniversary of All Saints, Niagara Falls. Quoting from her letter, I see that she says, "We look forward with anticipation... as we enter the 150th year of our church at All Saints, Niagara Falls, in 2006." Your corrections says that, "It is necessary to point out that All Saints Church will not celebrate its 150th Anniversary as the parish has been dis-established." Miss Schroeder, organist at All Saints for over 50 years, does not mention the parish of All Saints, but rather the church. Indeed, All Saints will be celebrating the 150th Anniversary of its historic building in 2006 and will do so with pride. The fact that the Parish of All Saints has been dis-established has no bearing on the age of the Church of All Saints. Your commentator, whoever it might have been, makes the usual mistake of thinking that "Parish" and "Church" are one and the same thing. Miss Schroeder made no mistake.

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March 3 - 4, 2006
St. Christopher's (662 Guelph Line, Burlington)

John Bell, an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland and a member of the Iona Community, will lead four workshops.

March 3	March 4
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1:00 pm The Last Journey	1:00 pm Rediscovering the Psalms

Participants may register for one or all workshops!
Fee (including lunch): Whole Day \$40, Half Day \$25
Registration Deadline: February 26, 2006

For more information contact Helen Hicks at 905-634-1977 or check out the web site www.stchristophersburlington.com

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Let Your Voice be Heard:

The Niagara Anglican welcomes submissions from readers as Letters to the Editor. All submissions must include a name, telephone number, and e-mail or physical address of the author for verification purposes. The newspaper reserves the right to edit submissions.

OUTREACH

Uruguay: A Land of Contrasts



(From Left) Bill Welch, Susan Snelling, Stuart Pike and Judith Godfrey (wife of Bill Godfrey, the then Bishop Uruguay, and current Bishop of Peru).

H. STUART PIKE
RECTOR, ST. ANDREW'S, GRIMSBY

It was over 18 years ago in August, 1987 that I packed up my couple of suitcases and hopped aboard a Varig Airlines flight to Rio de Janeiro and then on to Montevideo where I would spend the next four months on a practical field placement in Uruguay. It was organized by the Director of Field Education, John Chapman, who is now the Dean of Theology at Huron College where I studied. Two other seminarians went with me, Susan Snelling and Bill Welch who were married earlier in the year. Uruguay is the second smallest country in South America and is on the coast of the South Atlantic Ocean, nestled in between Brazil and Argentina.

There is a wonderful photo by Gustavo Moreira of Uruguay's Capital City, Montevideo, taken from the air looking west. Closest to view is a small bay enclosing some ninety sailboats dotted around the few

docks of a marina. Lifting the eyes you see the larger bay of Montevideo with a beautiful wide white beach curving to the south to form a peninsula which juts out into the sea. Most of the peninsula is covered with graceful white buildings. Hints of dark green give the lush promise of a park to the west. What you are seeing is just part of the city including the promenade called the Rambla Gran Bretaña and the Ciudad Vieja, the Old City. It looks like a jewel of a city: a place you would love to visit. This picture, by the way, is the first you will see if you search for Montevideo under Google images.

Arrival

We landed at Carrasco International Airport and were met by Bishop Bill Godfrey and a contingent from the Anglican Diocese of Uruguay. Our adventure had begun.

The original idea was for the student to be placed with the Roman Catholic Church in the north of the city for an authentic

experience of Uruguay, as most of the religious population of Uruguay is Roman Catholic. That worked fine for me, but it proved to be, for the Roman Catholics, too much of a theological hurdle regarding Bill and Susan, for, not only were they married, but they were both candidates for ordination! Bill and Susan lived in a small sublet apartment in the old city and worked with the Anglican Diocese of Uruguay, and I was placed in the North at the edge of Montevideo in the Pueblo of Peñarol.

During our second day there we had a big meeting with those who would be our mentors and supervisors during the four months, including the Anglican Church team, the Priest with whom I would live, Fr. Pepe Bonifacino, and Maria Teresa Porcile-Santiso. She had been a nun and was a Roman Catholic Professor of Theology who had taught in Europe as well as Uruguay. Along with her was a Lutheran Deaconess, Traute Bodien, who was doing a two-year field placement in the poorest barrios

in the North of Montevideo not far from Peñarol.

For my first ten days, however, I lived with some theology students and attended an intensive course on Catholic Social Ethics with them. The Fathers who ran the seminary were imports from Quebec and having spoken French most of my life, and only recently learning Spanish, we got along wonderfully speaking our own particular dialect of Esperanto. Every day the dozen students and I would take copious notes and listen to the professor speak to us about everything from marriage and birth control to God's preferential option for the poor as well as, students and professor, smoked horren-

dous black tobacco cigarettes and flicked our ashes into sardine-can ashtrays. Each night I would be exhausted from the effort of thinking in Spanish during the day.

At the end of those ten days I moved into the parish of San Alberto in Peñarol. It was a squarish modern-looking stucco building with had seen better days but included the Church, small living quarters, meeting rooms and a courtyard with citrus fruit and other trees, a chicken coop and a German Shepherd dog named Tiana. It was here that I would be welcomed into a warm and lively community of working-class Uruguayans.

Uruguay had only been two years free of the military dictatorship which had brutally ruled for 12 years. During those years Uruguay became known as the torture chamber of South America. The social and psychological effects of this regime were still very much in evidence in the gentle people amongst whom I lived. Uruguay, I would learn, was truly a land of great con-



San Alberto Parish in Peñarol

trasts: amongst these people who so greatly valued their liberation walked their former torturers; there existed a playground for the wealthy elite not so many miles from the

poorest barrios of San Vicente and Santa María. Above all, I remember the solidarity of a people of amazing hope who taught me that sharing is a matter of survival, and who showed me the true meaning of community.

This article is the first in a series which I hope will give readers a glimpse of Uruguay as we start a new companion relationship with the Anglican Diocese of Uruguay.

Supporting Prison Ministry

DOROTHY JOHNS
AND RON CRAWFORD

Calling for change in the criminal justice system is to feel like "the voice, crying in the wilderness."

Our society envisions only harsher and longer penalties for every offender. Therefore, Eleanor Clitheroe's excellent article on Restorative Justice gives fresh encouragement to the Bridge Program here in Hamilton. We have been preaching, promoting and practicing Restorative Justice, right here in Niagara Diocese for over 15 years. The Bridge operates both within the Hamilton Wentworth Detention Centre, which is the catch basin for most of the Diocese, leading self-help groups and providing discharge planning, but also after-care for community reintegration following release from detention.

During the past two decades there has been a decline in programs offered during incarceration. For instance the library was closed and turned into a staff

room and now no adult education courses are available and professional drug counselling has been reduced. With the de-emphasis of programming for rehabilitation, The Bridge is valued by inmates and staff alike for its maintenance of a positive force with the Institution to serve the rehabilitative needs of our clients. The Bridge's Discharge Planner, Ron Crawford, is a retired teacher, who prior to his retirement, used to tutor inmate-students enrolled in correspondence courses. In the face of the decline and eventual elimination of the education program at the Detention Centre, he has assumed the additional role of Executive Assistant of the Bridge, administering its finances.

Self-help groups, led by volunteers, help inmates reflect on their lives, what brought them into detention and help to change their lives around. Inmates are referred to Ron for Discharge Planning to deal with such issues as drug or other treatment, welfare and/or employment, educational

opportunities, etc.

Following incarceration, services for ex-offenders are centred at Bridge House, a few blocks west of St. Matthew's House on Barton Street East. In fact, St. Matthew's House is one of the community agencies that The Bridge "bridges" our clients to.

Concentrate on services not offered

The Bridge's philosophy is to utilize services in the community already available and concentrate on services not offered by other agencies, but which complement them. One of these specialized services is transitional housing for those not able to return to their previous residence. This diverts clients from already overcrowded hostels and is a "step-up" from being on the street and makes stable long-term accommodation more attainable. Individual and group counselling is offered in its meeting rooms and offices. Teams of volunteers are matched with clients to provide mentorship to

stay on the course to wholeness.

The Bridge also offers help to meet very practical needs:

- A start-up toiletry kit of shampoo, razor, shaving cream, washcloth, toothpaste and toothbrush, soap, etc.
- Bus tickets to get to appointments, find work and accommodation
- Meal tickets and food staples
- Free laundry facilities
- Emergency clothing

These services are critical as welfare often takes a week or more, following incarceration, to provide such requisites.

We leave it up to the imagination of our readers what recourse our clients might otherwise have to resort to for survival. As Clitheroe points out, these folks, often seriously disadvantaged, have life experiences from an early age that most of us can scarcely imagine. A simple gesture like a \$5-10 dollar kit of toiletries, a word of encouragement from a mentor-volunteer, a meal ticket, etc. is a real tangible sign of respect and belief in their value as a human being. As Ron has observed: "During my teaching career, it was evident that children whose parents encouraged their children, by reading to them

and helping them with their homework, attending parent-teacher interviews, etc. were more likely to succeed; similarly, ex-offenders who have family or community volunteers who encourage them in the pilgrimage to wholeness, are likewise more apt to succeed in attaining their goals.

The Bridge is grateful for the support it has received from the Diocese's outreach budget for our work including the hosting of our web page noted below. Many individuals and parishes have caught the vision and we would be pleased to make a presentation to a parish Council or Outreach committee, or indeed preach or speak during a service about the Gospel Imperative of our mission to "visit those in prison" (St. Matt. 25) Please contact our office at 905-523-0388 or email us at hamiltonbridge@netscape.net or visit our web page at www.hamiltonbridge.ca

Canon Dorothy Johns, Past Chair of the Bridge, Church of the Resurrection, Hamilton

Ron Crawford, Executive Assistant and Discharge Planner with The Bridge, Christ's Church Cathedral.

Endowment Fund Outreach in the Name of Christ

The Diocesan Division of Outreach committee announces that the following Outreach initiatives in the community have received grants from the Survive & Thrive Outreach Endowment Fund in 2005.

All Saints Church, Hamilton

The GLBT Parent Support Group provides a warm and welcoming drop in centre for Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual and Trans-Identified (GLBT) parents looking for support and mutual self help.

Bethlehem Projects of Niagara

Bethlehem Projects of Niagara's New Affordable Supportive Housing Project aims to build 40 affordable, supportive apartments on James Street in St. Catharines for people of moderate to low income, including those with specific needs; such as people with disabilities, victims of violence and the homeless. The housing project will provide a safe, affordable and pleasant environment for tenants and most importantly, a coordinated support service will be available to assist people with the transition to greater personal independence.

McMaster Campus Ministries

Hymn Festival for Chaplaincy Outreach consists of choir anthems, congregational singing, and a mass anthem sung by choirs from the greater Hamilton area. Prayers, readings and reflections will be offered in-between the music. The goals

and objectives are to increase awareness of the role of the Ecumenical Chaplaincy in the McMaster and wider communities and to help secure the future of the Chaplaincy by highlighting the ministry and the opportunities for services and support.

St. Alban the Martyr, Glen Williams

Transitional Housing Project in Conjunction with Halton Hills Community Support and Information (HHCSI) provides transitional housing for families that find themselves in financial difficulty and/or an abusive situation. The objective is to give families a place that they can call home for a period of up to three months. During this time help will be given to establish a permanent residence and financial help given to help families stand on their own. This project is supported by ten local churches.

The Bridge Prison Ministry

"The Bridge - Youth at Risk Ministry" provides volunteer programs that might "bridge" the gap between institutions and the street. The goal is to provide programs for the youth incarcerated in the Hamilton-Wentworth Detention Center. These programs might better help them deal with their issues, offer opportunities to build skills, develop self worth, grow in faith, and to hopefully feel a part of and become contributing members of the community. The Bridge Support Group will

address critical youth at risk issues, and included will be an Art from the Heart program and The Bridge Library program.



Working with you to create healthy, vibrant, outward-looking congregations

The Survive & Thrive Outreach Endowment was established to provide funds to parishes wishing seed money for new parish-based outreach initiatives and new projects from affiliated historical diocesan outreach ministries. The goal of any long-term projects should be for them to become self-sustaining by the end of the grant period. A plan for future financing will be required on initial applications, as well as a progress report by April 30 of subsequent grant years.

All grants will be determined by June 30 in each calendar year. The 2006 application deadline is Friday, April 28.

To download an application form go to www.niagara.anglican.ca/outreach. For more information contact Karen Nowicki at 905-527-1316, ext. 380 or through email at karen.nowicki@niagara.anglican.ca.



Division of Outreach Anglican Diocese of Niagara

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Will Our Children be Good Stewards?

JIM NEWMAN
DIRECTOR OF STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT

I bring my 12 year old granddaughter to church occasionally. She's full of life, fun to be around, and a gifted student both academically and musically. Much to my chagrin she hasn't grown up in a church-attending family. Maybe I'm overly concerned about that - some things are happening that show me that God is working in mysterious ways.

Take last Sunday - the day of the annual Christmas Bake sale. It was also Intention Sunday - the day when parishioners are asked to return an Intention Form on which they indicate their intended weekly or annual giving for the coming year. The Stewardship Committee of which I'm part was hosting Coffee Hour - sort of a wrap up to our year-round stewardship efforts.

My granddaughter had helped my wife wrap a variety of Christmas cookies and cakes that morning. Wendy dropped the baking off in the parish hall on her way to an early choir practice, and when my granddaughter and I arrived about 45 minutes later, she proudly pointed out the cookies she'd help to wrap. She noted that the cakes were already sold.

My granddaughter is in a good family where there's enough but not much extra. So, just as she ran off to church school I gave her a little money - \$2.75 to be exact - to buy a snack from the Bake Sale table. After the service she appeared at coffee hour, smiling. She was holding a small, partially eaten plate of cookies; and change of 75 cents which she promptly returned to me.

Initially I declined, but she insisted, so I put the three quarters in my pocket. A moment later she politely asked for them back.

Thinking she was about to buy something else to eat, I was taken aback when she tossed it all straight into the basket where parishioners voluntarily make donations for coffee supplies.

Instantly I thought about how often I have mentally objected to that basket for voluntary donations.

After all, didn't Andrew Weeks (the Magnetic Church Conference guru) strongly advise us not to put out a plate for such donations when he said "You wouldn't expect your house guests to pay for coffee, would you?" But I guess Andrew wasn't thinking about 12 year olds. It wasn't much, but the gesture touched my heart in a way that was quite unexpected.

There is a direct connection, I think, to the story told in Mark 12:41-44: "Sitting across from the offering box, he was observing how the crowd tossed money in for the collection. Many of the rich were making large contributions. One poor widow came up and put in two small coins--a measly two cents. Jesus called his disciples over and said, 'The truth is that this poor widow gave more to the collection than all the others put together. All the others gave what they'll never miss; she gave extravagantly what she couldn't afford - she gave her all.'"

It was certainly not a widow in this case, just a 12 year old girl. And she didn't give her all, just the leftover change that she had that morning, but something or someone along the way set an example for her about giving.

We're all setting, and living, examples about giving all of the time. We do it by what we say, and do. That's how we'll create a culture of stewardship in Niagara, and we never know who may be watching.



Jim Newman

Gift Planning: What's in it for Me and My Parish?

JIM NEWMAN

Here's what every clergy and lay leader needs to know about gift planning - and how it would make a very significant difference in parish ministry.

The Venerable John M. Robertson, National Gift Planning Officer for the Anglican Church of Canada will lead a Gift Planning Workshop on Saturday March 4, 2006 from 8:45am-11:45am at St. Matthew on-the-Plains Anglican Church, 126 Plains Road East, Burlington.

Everyone interested in the tremendous potential of Gift Planning to parishes, to the Diocese, and to individuals is encouraged to attend. This

Workshop will be of particular importance to Clergy and Parish Gift Planning Representatives.

Archdeacon Robertson is extremely well versed in all aspects of gift planning. His workshops are upbeat and lively, and filled with personal anecdotes. He stresses the importance of planned gifts by the living, noting that gifts which result in the realization of a Diocesan or parish vision bring much joy and satisfaction to the heart of the giver.

The workshop will be largely non-technical, and include topics such as:

- What Gift Planning is all about
- Gift Planning - a sacred and pastoral ministry

- Why it's absolutely essential to have a valid will... and other important documents
- How to do gift planning and still be alive to see the results!
- Wonderful opportunities to witness about your faith
- Gift Planning vehicles such as annuities and listed securities, and tax considerations
- Preparing your parish to receive planned gifts

John will share with participants 11 brand new colour brochures and 5 detailed guides for light bedtime reading.

To register contact Karen Nowicki at the Diocesan Resource Centre at 905-527-1316 ext. 380, or karen.nowicki@niagara.anglican.ca.

Cathedral Gives Distinguished Leadership

ALAN L. HAYES
THE ITINERANT CHURCHGOER

The church where I worship most often, next to my own parish church, is Christ's Church Cathedral. That's true of many Niagara Anglicans.

Many of us go to the Cathedral when our friends and family members are confirmed, or when our new clergy are ordained, or when our senior clergy are installed as canons, or when laypeople who have made a signal contribution to the Church receive the Order of Niagara.

We go to the Cathedral when we want to attend a beautiful evening with a stellar choir. Sometimes when the diocese needs to discuss a serious issue, as it did in recent memory concerning Indian residential schools, its representatives meet in the Cathedral.

Symbol of unity

A cathedral is the bishop's church. Like the bishop himself, the cathedral symbolizes our unity in our common faith in Christ. In our own times, and indeed in all the times of Church history, issues have threatened to divide us. These symbols of our common faith can remind us of St. Paul's exhortation to try to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4).

There's nothing really wrong about having confirmations and ordinations in parish churches, and indeed there's a practical advantage: they're a more convenient location for parishioners. But on the other hand, for a special occasion, it's nice to gather in a special place. For the events that are central to our diocesan life together, it's very fitting to meet in the symbolic centre of the diocese.

No doubt about it, though, cathedrals have been controversial. After the American Revolution, the Episcopal Church in the U.S. steered clear of them. Its leaders criticized them as relics of old-country tory hierarchical thinking. Even today, you won't find cathedrals in sixteen Episcopal dioceses.

Oxford movement

When Anglican cathedrals finally did begin to appear in North America in the 1840s, it was in the wake of the big international Anglican catholic revival called the Oxford Movement. The catholic revivalists valued the traditions of medieval Christianity, and cathedrals represented the romantic past of gothic architecture, elaborate liturgy, and episcopal discipline. Some people liked that, and some didn't.

Most evangelicals didn't (and in the 1840s most Canadian Anglicans were evangelicals). But there were exceptions. Archbishop Robert Machray of Winnipeg, our first primate, and a hugely effective missionary, was the most prominent Anglican evangelical in the country in the late Victorian era, and he enthusiastically promoted cathedrals as strategic instruments of evangelism, church growth, mission, theological education, charitable work, and social justice. Frankly, I think that his vision for the role of a cathedral is still a compelling one.

Cathedral history

Our own Christ's Church Cathedral isn't the oldest church in the diocese (that's St. Mark's, Niagara), but it's the mother Anglican church of the see city, Hamilton. The congregation began as a handful of Anglicans meeting for worship in the village courthouse. They borrowed the priest from Ancaster to lead them.

They got their own minister in 1835. He was John Gamble Geddes, aged 24, a Nova Scotian, who had spent seven years studying in Chambly at the seminary sponsored by the bishop of Quebec. Geddes and his lay leaders were the ones who decided to build the church at its present location on James Street North. This was (and is) a few blocks north of the centre of town. In those days it was on a stream feeding into Burlington Bay. The rationale for this location, apparently, was that it was reasonably accessible by boat.

The site has had two church buildings. The first was designed

by the architect who created the 72-room Dundurn Castle for Allan MacNab. Not coincidentally, MacNab was the chair of the church's building committee.

The congregation had to decide on a name for the church. The story goes that someone suggested "Geddes' church." Geddes protested that it should certainly not be that, but Christ's Church. He got his wish. This explains why the cathedral is called Christ's Church instead of the more usual Christ Church.

In 1873 it was decided that a new diocese of Niagara would be carved out of the diocese of Toronto. It seemed proper and natural to the people of Christ's Church that their rector should become the first bishop, and their church should become the cathedral. Since the existing church building, in their opinion, wasn't worthy of a cathedral, they tore it down and built a new one - the present church. The expense of it almost deep-sixed them.

Actually, some members of Christ's Church would have preferred to move to a new location altogether. By the 1870s, James Street North wasn't a particularly nice neighbourhood, and most wealthy Anglicans lived south of King Street. But the Anglican churches that were already south of King, such as All Saints and Ascension, wouldn't have wanted the competition.

Too high church

Although Christ's Church did become the cathedral, its rector didn't become bishop. Many considered Geddes too "high-church," and brandished placards warning the electoral synod, "A vote for Geddes is a vote for popery!" The episcopal election went to his more evangelical seminary roommate, Thomas Brock Fuller. We're kinder now, of course.

Geddes continued as dean and rector in name until 1891. But in 1879 he was involuntarily pensioned off and replaced by a rec-

tor-in-charge.

Interesting pieces of the Cathedral's history regularly appear in its newsletter Contact. The author is the archivist, Katharine Greenfield, a descendant of Geddes.

Today, Christ's Church Cathedral has an excellent dean and assistant curate, several fine and hard-working honorary assistant clergy, a very capable staff, a first-rate music director and choir, and a growing and generous congregation. The dean reports "a dramatically refreshed sense of vision and mission." The bishop recognizes the cathedral's strategic position and gives strong support to its work.

With its long history intimately connected with the city of Hamilton and the diocese of Niagara, an impressive ministry both inside and outside its walls, and a vision and a will for distinguished future leadership, the Cathedral - our Cathedral - is a place to watch, and a place to visit.

Evangelism... It's all about Good News

MICHAEL PATTERSON

It hardly seems possible that our diocese is two and a half years into the five year commitment to evangelism that was identified as a priority by our Bishop in 2001. To reflect on this time, I cannot but lament that we have only just scratched the surface of this elusive and sometimes difficult area of ministry; it feels like we have only just begun. The time has passed by more quickly than I would have liked and, half way in, there is so much more I thought we might have accomplished at this juncture along the way.

However, as would be the case with good friends, one of mine reminded me of my stubborn impatience and tendency to set unrealistic goals! What he also reminded me of was that what we are doing is in God's time and not our own, what has happened was meant to happen and at the pace it was meant to have happened. And that's it! "Why not come at it from the other angle," he encouraged. "What angle?" I questioned. "Take a look at what really has been accomplished so far!" he said. What a concept, I thought!

So where are we now? Over the last number of years, our Church and our diocese have been under siege, it seems, by an ongoing series of challenges and crisis; the residential schools settlement and, for a time, the uncertain future of our National Church, the ongoing and very troubling uncertainty regarding the debate over same sex unions, the declining attendance numbers and the asso-

ciated financial concerns. These conditions have only served to test the very spiritual fabric of all our communities.

Yet in the midst of it all, much has been accomplished and evangelism is happening in wonderful ways across our diocese. Presently the evangelism working group is made up of nineteen people from across Niagara who actively and regularly engages in developing, implementing and supporting evangelism initiatives from major diocesan wide conferences to local parish events. Over the last two and a half years, now that I really look, much has been introduced and much has been accomplished.

In this time, 59 parishes have invited me or members of the working group into their communities for consultations or preaching engagements on evangelism. Of those, 24 are growing parishes and an additional 17 parishes have developed a specific and detailed plan for evangelism. There have been two Magnetic Church conferences; two of the better attended conferences of our diocese in recent memory, there have been three day long conferences (Day on Evangelism for Frightened Anglicans Dec '04, Day on Evangelism for the Somewhat Timid April '05, and the recent Evangelism Consultation; Developing a Blueprint Jan '06). Presentations have been made in all regions of the diocese, there have been nine Ministry of Hospitality workshops offered, Via Media has been brought to the diocese as an additional evangelism

resource, the Evangelism Tool kit was created and offered with countless hands-on resources and ideas for evangelism. Presentations have been made to Essentials, to the Niagara Continuing Education group, as a keynote address at an Alpha Conference, to Provincial Synod, to a conference on evangelism at Renison College at the University of Waterloo, and at Huron College. The Broadway actor Bruce Kuhn came to our synod in the fall of '05 to give us a taste of his one man show "The Gospel of Luke", that he will perform in its entirety at four performances in May of this year. The word is out that Niagara is embracing evangelism because consultations have been provided to the Dioceses of Huron, Toronto, Keewatin, Ontario and Saskatoon. Most Sundays are full with invitations to the evangelism working group for parish visits and it is our hope that all parishes will have been visited by the end of 2007.

Looking at it from the perspective of where we have come from, it has been a fruitful time over these couple of years. I think for me one of the key indicators of progress is that the word 'evangelism' is becoming, more and more, a word commonly heard as part of the common Anglican vernacular of the diocese of Niagara. No longer do we have to refer to it as the E-word, I hope. It is, slowly and steadily, becoming understood as what we called to as Christian people. And it is my hope and prayer that in three years hence, evangelism will not only be what we are called to, but we will have become effective and confident evangelists of the good news of Jesus Christ. Thanks only be to God!



Alan L. Hayes



Michael Patterson

Caralei Peters MSc, ND
DOCTOR OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

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DON PELLOW
ORGANIST, ST. MARK'S, ORANGEVILLE

In my twenty years as organist/choir director at St. Mark's Anglican Church, Orangeville, it has been my experience to embrace much in the way of variety, change and challenge in our music program. Early in my tenure, I worked with both a junior and a senior choir, each with a respectable number of members and a diversity of musical talent and training. Children have so many opportunities available in sports and the Arts these days, that a junior group is assembled only occasionally for an event such as a Youth or early Christmas Eve service. The number of dedicated members in the senior choir has remained consistent although the names and faces have changed. It is a pleasure to prepare and perform music with such a hard-working group of people who willingly embrace a variety of styles of music.

Mainstream churches observe a pattern of worship called "The Christian Year," such that the life of Jesus Christ is reviewed annually. The year begins with anticipation of the coming of Christ in the season of Advent (December) followed by a celebration of Jesus' birth at Christmas and the arrival of the Three Kings at Epiphany (early January). In winter, the penitential season of Lent leads up to Palm/Passion Sunday, Good Friday and Easter. After forty days, the celebration of Christ's Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples (Book of Acts, Chapter 2) introduce the long season of Pentecost. "The Reign of Christ" in late November brings us around to the beginning again. The music chosen for worship services should relate to the major yearly festivals and others like All Saints and special saints' days found within them. Psalms, hymns and anthems are chosen to emphasize and augment the biblical readings for each Sunday. In addition, in the Anglican Church, we observe international events like the "World Day of Prayer," and national holidays like Canada Day, Thanksgiving Day and Remembrance Day with music suitable for each.

Ensemble

At St. Mark's, we also have a special repertoire of music for "Taize" worship (based on the model of the ecumenical community in Taize, France) and for a monthly Celtic Communion service. At some Celtic services, I direct an ensemble of musicians from the congregation playing flutes, guitars, keyboards and sometimes bagpipes! This is a particularly enjoyable and interesting adventure that has proved to be popular

with the worshippers at St. Mark's. The choir goes "on the road" when we are invited to join the cathedral choir in Hamilton for events such as Ordinations, Confirmation and the annual Order of Niagara service. The choirs of Anglican parishes in our geographical area (St. Mark's Orangeville; All Saints, Erin; the Parish of Shelburne, Dundalk and Whitfield; St. Alban's, Grand Valley; St. John's Mono/Hockley, (Diocese of Toronto) meet three to four times a year for an



Evensong. This ancient form of daily worship is noted for beautiful service music and gives the choirs the opportunity to work together on anthems and hymns. We sing psalms in the cantor/response model, taken both from the authorized Psalter and more modern settings by George Black in "In the Midst of the Congregation." The next Evensong is to be held at St. Mark's on February 26 at 4:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend and enjoy an hour of worship with excellent music and a special preacher. Sometimes we even get a bishop!

Common themes

The aim in selecting music for a worship service is to achieve a common theme in the spoken word of the readings, sermon and liturgy and the "sung word;" a theme that the worshippers can "take home with them." As I mentioned above, the yearly cycle and Sunday Bible readings guide this process. Early in my career, I would read the lectionary for the Sundays, made my own choices based on my knowledge of the words of

hymns and kept lists for future reference. The tools available to me now make this part of the job easier. The "Book of Common Praise" includes biblical and topical references for the hymns. I use it extensively but not exclusively. Also, McCausland's "Order of Divine Service" provides weekly lists of hymns related to the readings. Sometimes it is helpful to turn to the authorized hymnals of other denominations and non-denominational materials. This provides richness and variety in the selections made.

For major festivals, our choir is called upon to produce special music in the form

was a contemporary cantata called "Rescue in the Night," the story of Daniel in the lion's den, in which we were able to involve players from eight to just under eighty. One helpful children's Christmas cantata called "Sing the Christmas Story" came from my teacher/wife's Scholastic book orders. It contains a particularly poignant response of a youthful Mary to the Angel Gabriel, in "Lord, why choose me?" Preparing special music with the choir and presenting it in the context of worship is one of the greatest joys I experience in my ministry.

Other times

Besides preparing the regular music for Sundays and festivals, there are many other occasions when the services of the church organist may be required. Preparing for a funeral can be challenging if requests are hard to fulfill on short notice and difficult when the deceased has been a member of our own choir. Requests for special wedding music has challenged me to do everything from learning the throne room march from "The Empire Strikes Back" in the Star Wars series to reproducing a complete service from the 1930's to match the bride's mother's wedding. At St. Mark's, stewardship dinners and fund raising events have provided parishioners, choir members and myself an opportunity to use our talents for entertainment purposes. I have accompanied budding and accomplished instrumentalists and soloists, singing as themselves or disguised as anyone from Sophie Tucker to Cher. It has been great fun to work up comedy routines in which I have played Mozart and Victor Borge.

In the 1980s the only instrument available in the church was a large electric organ. On rare occasions I enjoyed playing a pipe organ when the choir visited other locations. In 1992, I purchased a synthesizer. This allowed me to develop much greater variety and fullness in the music and to record and "play over" the basic tracks as well. The first time I moved to direct the choir and left the synthesizer playing it caused a bit of a stir in the congregation but everyone is quite used to the technology now. St. Mark's has recently purchased an electric piano for the sanctuary and a parishioner donated an acoustic piano for practise. This allows for flexibility in accompaniment and also enables visiting musicians to play at joint events. Such commitment is most appreciated.

Being organist/choir director at St. Mark's, Orangeville has been my "other job" for twenty years but, as I hope I have been able to show, it is also my ministry. It is the gift that I have to offer in the work of the church. It has been said that, "Music is the laughter of the soul." If this is so, then may we, as musicians, continue to bring joy to all who will listen with their hearts?

Where do we go from here?

Continued from Page 1

door on the last church sometime mid-century! And no matter how much we may think that is only somewhere else, or in another parish, or another diocese that such unhappiness could exist, we need to be honest and look at ourselves and our own environments as well. After all, we're doing our best here, aren't we? My parish is exciting, dynamic, and fun-filled - isn't it? We're trendy, current, and topical - aren't we?

Sunday Morning

The truth is that, however much

we want sometimes to avoid it, most people experience Church on Sunday mornings. Yes, mid-week services, bible study groups, parish education opportunities, and social events all add to one's appreciation and enjoyment of parish life, but it is still how and what we do as we worship Sunday mornings that is at the heart of who we are and how we manifest the living God in our midst, joyfully, reverently, and substantially. In my opinion (and, believe me, appearances and others' rhetoric to the contrary, I am a very conservative

churchman!) we must begin to look seriously and critically at our liturgical lives. Why would a 19 year old come to our Churches? At the other end of the scale, in what ways do we make hard unforgiving pews comfortable for arthritic 90 year olds? How dare we assume that all coming to our churches know the Lord's Prayer, or any Creed, or any hymns? Why would we think that any particular kind of language from any particular century would 'work' for a contemporary 'audience'?

Facing Reality

All too often, I fear that we

Anglicans, in a way that is unbelievably arrogant, look at other churches and preen about how we have our liturgy, the beauty of Anglicanism, and its glorious history, and therefore all will be well. We know, however, that we are still seen as an irrelevant, unnecessary, even inappropriate place by so many. I am not advocating throwing all the babies out with the bathwater, not by any means. I am advocating serious and intentional work - beginning with study, about worship - its history and its meaning.

Can, or should we, continue, for example, to worship in spaces designed and conceived a thou-

sand years ago? Is the Church of hierarchical architecture, inaccessible stairs, fixed pews, and even more fixed attitudes the one which is going to survive past mid-century?

Is it not time that we asked probing and meaningful questions about relevant and excellent preaching; interesting, beautiful and engaging music; and helpful and sincere praying?

It is, after all, until the very end of this month of February, the Epiphany season - the season of manifesting forth, or showing the world, of living lives of incarnation. Surely it is time to do it well!

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Becomings

This world of spring surrounds me with becomings,
The promise of new life about to burst.

And I alone in all of God's creation
Remain in winter's static frozen curse.

But I will join the wondrous world of springtime,
Become what God intended from the first.

Ethel Paterson
St. Hilda's, Oakville

- The **Reverend Cheryl Fricker** has accepted the position to be rector of St. Aidan's Church, Oakville. This appointment will be effective on January 2.
- The **Reverend John Ripley** has accepted the position to be Priest in Charge of the All Saints Mission in Niagara Falls, working cooperatively as part of the Niagara Falls Ministry Team, effective January 8.
- The **Venerable Dr. Richard Jones** has accepted the position to be rector of St. Paul's Church, Hamilton, and Secretary of Synod, beginning February 1.
- The **Reverend Dr. Steve Hopkins** has accepted the position of Rector of St.

Christopher's Church, Burlington. This will be effective February 13, 2006. He will relinquish his duties as Secretary of Synod as of January 31.

- The **Reverend Mark Gladding**, rector of Arthur and Mount Forest, has been elected Regional Dean of Greater Wellington Region.
- **Reverend Canon Fran Darlington** was appointed Priest Assistant at St. James the Apostle, Guelph, on December 15.
- The **Reverend Mary Ranger** was reappointed Honorary Assistant at St. Paul's, Shelburne; St. James, Dundalk; and Christ Church, Whitfield effective December 1.

- Permission renewed for **Maurice Moss** as Licensed Lay Reader at Holy Trinity, Hamilton, under the direction of the rector, effective December 19
- Permission to administer the chalice issued to **Darlene Moorese, Penny Matthews** and **Jean Allen** at St. Paul's, Shelburne, under the direction of the rector, effective December 1
- Our thoughts and prayers are with The Reverend David Long and family on the death of his mother, Hetti; Mrs. Ina Stap and family on the death of her mother Margaret Batty; Canon David Howells and family on the death of his mother, Nell.

Canterbury Hills: Plans, Work, and Dreams



Courtney Evers is pictured here (second from right) receiving the Order of Niagara with mother Susan, father and co-recipient Fred, and sister Jerry Humes.

COURTNEY EVERS

Winter days don't seem so long any more. Growing up, winter was never my favourite season. There are elements of it that I loved: snow angels, hot chocolate, and the joy of Christmas. I have never been, however, a person who skis or skates or plays hockey or enjoys dog sledding or snow shoeing. Most winters, after the light and excitement of Christmas, I was ready for summer.

When I reflect on this anticipation for summer, I realize that it had less to do with the cold furry of winter, and more to do with an all-important event in my young life. An event that happened once a year, in the midst of sunshine and humidity, in the freedom of school-free days, an event I looked forward to all winter long: camp. As a camper I loved Canterbury Hills for the friends I made, the songs we sang, and the activities we did. From crafts to ropes climbing to archery to swimming, I loved them all. We camped in the woods and saw animal prints near the creek. We laughed and had group cheers, and hiked to a nearby waterfall where I saw a Fairy for the first time. Next year I will stand up at the wedding of one of my closest friends - a friend who I met in Poplar cabin, at the age of 10.

As a Leader-in-Training, Cabin Leader, and, later, on the senior staff, I started to love Canterbury Hills for different reasons. I learned how the unit-camping approach allowed chil-

dren to grow in a group of their peers - through problem-solving, compromise, and shared experience. I realized how the staff at Canterbury Hills do much more than lead crafts and sing songs. A Canterbury staff member is someone who can facilitate a group of campers to an exciting decision, who works well in a team environment, and puts the campers first, always. I grew tremendously as a person, and as a leader - in my work and in my faith.

I moved on from camp, but it never left me. Last winter, I longed for the anticipation that summer used to bring for me. I craved the feeling of working in a team that I had at

Canterbury. To do work for something I believe in, a ministry I am passionate about. To work with skilled and energized people that I care about; people who are striving to make a difference.

I started day-dreaming about where I might find that feeling again. It occurred to me, on the front step of my apartment building, with snow falling lightly, that I knew where to find it. I knew exactly where that magic, team, and contribution were waiting for me.

Now, heading into my first summer as Camp Coordinator, I feel blessed. Winter days are not long any more. They are filled with plans, work, and dreams for summer 2006.

Canterbury Hills is now accepting camper registrations and staff applications. The deadline for new staff applications is March 1, 2006. For more information please visit www.canterburyhills.ca, or call 905-648-2712.

As a camper I loved Canterbury Hills for the friends I made, the songs we sang, and the activities we did.

Bishop's Calendar

February 2006

7th, 5:00 p.m. - Meeting of Synod Council

12th, 10:30 a.m. - Church of St. Columba, St. Catharines, Parish Visit

12th, 4:00 p.m. - Grace Church, St. Catharines, Evensong/Dedication

14th, 12 p.m. - Meeting of Mohawk Clericus

18th, 11 a.m. - St. John's, Ancaster, Anniversary Service for Sister Benedetta

19th, 10 a.m. - St. Paul's, Fort Erie, Parish Visit

19th, Evening - Mount Carmel Retreat Centre, Niagara Falls, Lutheran Retreat until 22nd after lunch

26th, 9:30 a.m./11:00 a.m. - St. John's, Hamilton, Parish Visit

26th, 3:00 p.m. - Christ's Church Cathedral, Trafalgar Regional Confirmation

Gift Planning Workshop

For clergy, Gift Planning Reps, and everyone interested in financially assuring the future of our Church

Join us at **St. Matthew on-the-Plains**
Burlington on Saturday, March 4



Coffee and registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the workshop will run from 9:00 a.m. until noon.

The workshop will be facilitated by
Archdeacon John Robertson, National Consultant.

Please pre-register with Karen Nowicki by Wednesday, March 1.
karen.knowicki@niagara.anglican.ca or 905-527-1316 (ext. 380)

Calling all Anglicans

Across Canada,
Anglicans just like you
are making a difference
by providing assistance to
children and families affected by
the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa.

We're calling on you to support the
Partnership for Life Campaign for as little as \$10 a month.

Primate's World Relief and Development Fund
Sign up now at www.pwrdf.org/lifetime,
or contact PWRDF toll-free at 1-866-308-7973.

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