



Niagara Anglican

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Behold I make all things new

"It is not produced by the strength of our will, nor by the power of our emotion or even... by the clarity of our intellect. But the new is being born in us, just when we least believe in it."

Kerry Ramsay, Cambridge UK



Six ways to believe in the resurrection



JOHN BOWEN
PROFESSOR - WYCLIFFE COLLEGE

I dislike some sermons more than others. One of them gets preached periodically at Easter (not in my present parish, I hasten to add). It is based on the story of Thomas, and it goes something like this. "Maybe you consider yourself a doubter. Well, so was Thomas in

today's reading. And clearly, Jesus accepted him, loved him, and solved his doubts. In the same way, Jesus accepts us too with all our doubts. For us, however, unlike Thomas, we don't get to touch Jesus' hands. Jesus says that, in our case, we must just believe. But he does then promise a blessing for folks like us who do not see and yet believe."

I don't know how you feel about that sermon, but the reason I dislike it is that, to be honest, it seems a bit of a rip-off. Personally, I'd be willing to give up 10% of the blessing for 10% more certainty.

I remember once doing a debate with a philosophy professor in Montreal. In the course of the debate, I

said something about Jesus coming back from death, and he immediately shot back, "Sure Jesus is alive. You mean like Elvis?" So is that what the resurrection means? A combination of wishful thinking, sentimentality and superstition, on a level with thinking that Elvis is alive?

Let me offer you six ways I have come across for thinking about the resurrection which might be more helpful than simply being told to "believe anyway":

1. The historical approach

The first is what I would call the historical approach. By that I mean that

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Brand Xianity

ELEANOR JOHNSTON
ST. THOMAS, ST. CATHARINES

Journalists and political commentators like to evaluate the success of the 'branding' of products, leaders and groups. Consider, if you will, how our brand, Christianity, is faring in the eyes of contemporary society. We should first consider how our brand is faring in the eyes of God, but that's a challenging topic for another time.

To return to brand Xianity, most of us can remember a sense of complacency from the 1950's. We were Christians and almost everyone we knew was Christian. Then came the years when our brand tanked, when secular society considered church-goers backward and escapist: how could a modern person believe in miracles? Science was respected and the church was out-of-date.

Along came Pope John Paul and George W. Bush, conservatives who revived the status of Christianity. Churches, especially conservative ones, thrived. As praise churches boomed with their simple, old-fashioned religion, all Christian churches retained most of their congregations; we felt connected, under the overall label of Christianity, to a power base. The Bush brand of Christianity was conservative and successful.

What about Anglican churches during the years of Bush's ascendancy? Were conservative voices not more dominant? Were liberals not silenced except in some theological colleges and diocesan headquarters? The Essentials group, started in 1994, seemed until very recently to have the more confident voice. The anti-gay letters to the editor of *The Anglican Journal* seemed stronger and more numerous than the pro-gay.

But now the conservative party is over. John Paul is gone and Bush's credibility has nose-dived. What he stands for, what he says are Christian values, are now despised, not just by believers of other religions, not just by countries who resent what they see as American imperialism, not just by liberal academics

and journalists, but also by the majority of Americans, Canadians and Europeans.

Society no longer divides nations into good (America and its allies) and "the axis of evil," as Bush did. Our multiracial and multicultural society has discovered that there's no more 'we' opposing 'them.' *The Little Mosque on the Prairie*, which opened on CBC to record-setting audiences, celebrates an interfaith marriage and the friendship of a Moslem Imam and a Christian priest as they share a church building and as their people learn to respect each other.

But this show is an idealized fiction. What about values in real life? Throughout the world, the quarrel rages between those on the one hand who identify with traditional beliefs and tribal loyalties and those on the other hand who identify with humanity as a whole and work for justice for all. In other words, between religious conservatives and the uneasy alliance of the secular with the religious liberals.

How do the secular and the religious liberals interact? The secular like to say, "I'm not religious but I am spiritual." To many churchgoers this assertion seems like just an excuse not to get out of bed and off to church on Sunday morning. But the secular people who make this claim are trying to explain that they have lost faith in the churches, temples and mosques, and in the God worshipped there. The liberals believe that they can be both religious and spiritual, that there's hope for the church, however compromised it may now appear.

If there's a hymn that would have to be updated to express one perspective shared by both secularists and religious liberals, it's "Onward, Christian soldiers." The concept of holy war and crusade that Bush evoked is now seen as no more respectable or ethical than the jihad of Moslem extremists. Jews, Christians and Moslems worship the God of Abraham; it seems ludicrous, 'backward' instead of 'onward,' that

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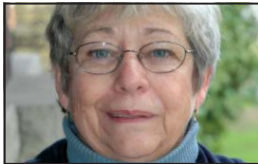
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Resurrection after the fire



SHARRON HILDEBRANDT
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, THOROLD

On Saturday, November 20, 2004, St. John's experienced a tragic fire which destroyed our parish hall and caused extensive smoke and water damage to our church proper. Construction of the new parish facility was completed in January. Bishop Spence will dedicate it to the Glory of God on March 25, 2007.

Tears flowed freely that day, from each and every person we met. Our beloved church hall was on fire and fears that our beautiful church itself could be next played on everyone's mind. Parishioners, our priest Cathie Crawford Browning, and our Bishop Ralph stood in disbelief as the water poured onto the roof and the resulting smoke billowed into the air.

However, God spoke to Cathie and Bishop Ralph on that fateful day when, several hours later, they could not believe their eyes, as through all the water that had been used to douse the flames, our sanctuary candle still burned brightly, a glimmer of hope from our God perhaps to say that everything would be alright.

The next morning was Sunday, and over two hundred people packed a room at the Four Points Sheraton in Thorold, which had been generously offered for our worship service. Again the tears flowed, but with determination and love everyone knew we would rebuild. Maybe it would be a year or so, but we had to push ahead. Because of the kindness of many people, including two of my grandchildren who gladly gave money from their piggy banks, enough resources appeared for the Sunday



School to continue on that day.

Through the generosity of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Thorold, who even changed their service time to accommodate us, we were able to continue our Sunday services until our church proper was cleaned from top to bottom and our basement was made 'kid-friendly' for Sunday School classes. Also, Cathie and Dawn, our Parish Administrator, were invited to set up their offices there. As well, Trinity United Church offered their hall for our bi-monthly Youth Dances. Who would have thought that these temporary quarters would be required for more than two years?

Money and help to rebuild came from many unexpected sources, for which we will always be grateful:

- Club Capri, our local Italian club, held a spaghetti supper, with all proceeds going to our Fire Restoration Fund.

- St. Barnabas Church sponsored a Cuvée evening, including a fabulous gourmet dinner with all proceeds for our hall.

- Several choirs freely gave of their time and talents to entertain, and the proceeds of their concerts were given to our building fund.

- A huge fundraising campaign was taken to raise \$200,000. Amazingly, this goal has already been

exceeded, and the campaign continues as we continue to address building expenses.

- As well, the Reverend Canon Keith Whittingham of St. Barnabas Church very kindly provided beautiful vestments for Cathie to wear at worship until we were able to replace our own.

Our amazing Building Committee, headed by Walt Eggleton, Wayne Thorsteinson and Fred Neale was besieged, from day one, with problems, unexpected delays and unexpected costs, but they handled these with dignity, even though at times the frustration level was very high. Each and every one of our parishioners should be very proud of the hours of work and commitment put forth by these gentlemen. The stunning results of these efforts, under the leadership of Cathie, could not be more beautiful, from the fabulous stainless steel kitchen to the wonderful roomy offices, the choir room with closet space to fill with a mountain of music, and the gorgeous bright Sunday School rooms, we are all so proud of our new parish facility.

God definitely did speak to Cathie and Bishop Ralph on that terrible day, and as always his promise was kept, everything definitely would be alright; In fact, it's absolutely alright.

ST. MICHAEL'S FELLOWSHIP GROUP finds out who we really are

At the February Fellowship Group meeting, members braved the snow and cold to a "Who am I?" evening. The event was coordinated by Bill and Ellie McCaughey and Sue Crawford.

A questionnaire was compiled and parishioners provided a baby picture or a picture from their youth or early years. Questions such as "What is the worst thing that has ever happened to you?," "What was the craziest or most dangerous thing you ever did as a young child or youth?" and "What was the furthest place you have travelled?" helped to make the evening fun?

The evening evolved when Sue realized after attending a number of funerals of parishioners how little she knew about many of the families at church. She wondered if having a "Who am I?" evening would draw people out for the evening. Each month two or three couples and parishioners volunteer to plan an evening event. Sometimes we attend a play, take a bus tour, have a speaker or play games. When Sue took the idea to Bill and Ellie, her

partners for the month of February, they were keen to give it a try. After sorting through a list of possible questions they came up with six. Questionnaires were printed and handed out at the January games night.

At first the response was really slow and they worried whether the night was going to be successful. But in the end twenty-seven people responded and the answers were collated and compiled into a format for the parishioners to guess "Who am I?" When the group arrived they were given an answer sheet and roamed the room to try and test their knowledge of their fellow parishioners. The picture gallery (which had captions under each picture with information taken from their bios or made up) was quite a hit.

In the end not many people were able to guess the correct answers but most of the attendees enjoyed the evening. What we learned about each other was what made the night so successful. Why don't you try a "Who am I?" evening at your church?

ORDER OF NIAGARA RECIPIENT JEAN TELFER honoured at 90th birthday party



From left: Helena (Daughter-in-law), Brian (Son), Jean and Bryant (Grandson).

On Sunday February 10, St. Michael's Church hosted a 90th birthday celebration for Jean Telfer. Jerry and Jean Telfer were long-time parishioners of St. Augustine of Canterbury on the Mountain. Both were very active in the church. Jerry passed away several years ago. When the church closed, Jean chose St. Michael's Church as her new parish. Jean and her sister, Lila Gledhill, both attend our 8:00 am service. Last year, Jean was honoured by Bishop Ralph with the Order of Niagara. We were pleased that her son, Brian, chose the parish hall as the venue for the celebration. Former St. Augustine parishioners, Bill and Ellie McCaughey,

eagerly helped set up the room with Brian and his family. Since the celebration, Jean has received cards and wishes from as far away as Australia.

Throughout the afternoon, children, grandchildren, friends, people from out of town and even former St. Augustine's parishioners travelled to give their best wishes. The room was predominately decorated in purple, Jean's favourite colour.

Jean's greatest surprise of the day was flowers sent from Bishop Ralph who had to send his regrets because of a former commitment. How many of us will be able to say the Bishop sent us flowers on our 90th birthday! Congratulations again Jean.

This letter from Bishop Spence was sent to the people of All Saints Mission, Niagara Falls on February 21, 2007. Sandra Sinclair's reply was sent on February 25, 2007.

To the people of All Saints Mission



THE RIGHT REV. D. RALPH SPENCE
BISHOP OF NIAGARA

I write to you as Rector and Bishop of your church to correct a few mistaken opinions that have reached my ears this week.

While I understand how angry and upset many of you must be at the Synod Council decision to close your building for regular worship as of March 5, I want to assure you that I only assented to this move recommended to me by Synod Council after much prayer and careful listening.

You may remember that I prom-

ised to do all in my power to ensure that your building would remain open for as long as I was your Bishop. I believe that I have kept that promise.

Your congregation, despite being disestablished and turned down as a Chapel of Ease by another Niagara Falls congregation, remained open when others closed. It was given a new lease on life as a potential 'Mission' and I read and listened carefully to the reports that I received from the Rev. John Ripley while he served your community and tried to hear that changes were happening which would point to the new way of being Church we had tried to encourage.

It was not sufficient, you see, for you to continue to worship as you always had; we needed to hear that mission was the foremost thing on your mind and that you were using

your location in one of the poorest areas of Niagara Falls to respond to the needs around you. We did hear a little of this from your representatives, Dr. Ainslie and Mrs. Donna Parkhill, at a recent Synod Council meeting but their concept of being a mission was far removed from my own.

However, I want to assure you that this decision was not made lightly, or with any malicious intent being expressed by others in Niagara Falls, especially those on Synod Council who have been incredibly supportive of your situation. In fact, my wish that we would work to preserve ministry from your beautiful little building was taken very seriously by all, especially the Archdeacon of Brock whom many are now maligning for her efforts.

It has also reached my ears that some of you are afraid that the

building and grounds will now be neglected and allowed to fall prey to vandals and the forces of nature. I want to assure you that although regular worship may not be scheduled there as of March, there is every intention on the part of the diocese to see that the building and the grounds continue to be well maintained so that they can be used once a ministry plan has been adopted by all concerned. The money from the sale of your parish hall will be invested and used to allow this ministry to be developed.

It is my hope and prayer that many of you will find another Anglican home in the community and that you will continue to work with others to envision a new way of offering ministry from that site.

If you are interested in seeing how others are interpreting this kind of mission-oriented church, I

point you to Canon Rick Jones' article in the March edition of the *Niagara Anglican* and to St. Aidan's, Oakville where the church is being opened up for all kinds of community uses—and, yes, I do mean the church itself with the enthusiastic support of the parishioners.

Our lives together as a Christian community inevitably include death as well as life. Jesus taught us that death is followed by resurrection and I pray that a new and lively way of offering mission from that little building will be found so that others who do not yet know the love of God may receive life from the warmth of its welcome. I urge you to join the quest for such a future for All Saints.



SANDRA SINCLAIR
ALL SAINTS, NIAGARA FALLS

Dear Bishop Ralph,

My grandparents and parents attended All Saints Anglican Church. My sister, brother and I were all christened, confirmed and married there. My sons were christened and married there. The congregation is my family. The church is my second home. With so much of my family history tied to the building and the congregation, I am horribly upset with how the closure of All Saints has been handled, and I am left with three unanswered questions.

First, exactly why were we closed? Second, why were the locks changed on the parish doors on February 13 instead of March 5 which was the announced date of the closure? Third, what do you hope to achieve by our closure?

Why were we closed?

In addressing the first question, we were not a financial drain on the diocese. Unlike some other churches, our debt was small and eliminated after the sale of the Parish Hall. We are able to cover our present expenses ourselves.

Our numbers were not falling off. Unlike some other churches, our attendance each Sunday has

doubled over the last few years.

According to Lynne Corfield's article "All Saints Niagara Falls continues transformation" in the March issue of *Niagara Anglican*, demographic studies in 2000 indicated that Niagara's projected growth could only sustain four parishes, not six. With our closure, we are down to only three.

We embraced our role as a Mission by the following actions which were decided upon at a meeting with Management Board Members present:

- We supported the YWCA, located about 5 blocks from All Saints, the best we could. We purchased Christmas gifts for the women and children and provided Christmas dinner as well. Every Monday food is picked up by parishioners from local restaurants and delivered to the kitchen at the YWCA to be prepared for their residents.

- The congregation contributed to and my neighbour and I personally delivered twenty boxes of books to Nova House for their Book Riot fundraiser which raises funds to enable them to provide shelter and assistance to abused women and their children. This was to be a year round project.

- We were beginning to make contact with the doctors and social

workers who run the Methadone Clinic about three blocks from the church. They were very excited that we included their clients in our invitation to a neighbourhood barbecue to be held on the church lawn this spring.

- I did encourage the congregation to participate in a venture not geared towards Niagara's poor. I asked them to look beyond the poor of Niagara to the even poorer people of Africa by donating money towards providing either clean water for a village or a medical clinic which would serve many villages. Our goal was to raise the money by Christmas 2007. If the scope of the Mission's activities was local, that was never communicated to me.

From your letter, I read that "their concept of being a mission was far removed from my own." Why didn't you explain your concept clearly so we could have fulfilled that potential instead of working so hard going down a path that was wrong in your eyes but not ours? When you came to Niagara Falls to break bread with us in celebrating our 150th anniversary in November 2006, why didn't you communicate exactly what you wanted from us?

According to Lynne Corfield's

article there were "hurt feelings in parishioners from other closed parishes." This couldn't be the reason for shutting us down. Our Sisters and Brothers in faith would surely support us in our struggle to stay open, having suffered the loss of their own parishes. As Christians they would empathize and work with us, not against us.

Why were the locks changed before the date of closure?

My second question concerns your announcement that we would be closed as of March 5, 2007. And yet the locks on the parish doors were changed on February 13. I have never heard of a church's parishioners being locked out of their place of worship. Surely, Jesus is weeping.

After the letter announcing the closure was read to us on February 11, we sadly accepted the inevitable and met after the service to decide how we would like to say good-bye to each other and to our beautiful church over the next three Sundays. But our desires were never considered, and Lynne Corfield had the locks changed two days later. Gerda Schroeder, our organist, who for 53 years had been opening the church/mission early to prepare

it for service, now was to ask Lynne's permission to enter the church. She insulted Gerda. She insulted Dr. Ainslie, our strongest advocate. She insulted the whole congregation by her actions. Did she think we would go en masse into the church and leave with church possessions shoved under our coats? So why were the locks changed on February 13th instead of March 5th? In fact, why were the locks changed at all?

What do you hope to achieve with our closure?


It is still unclear as to what you and the Anglican parishioners of Niagara hope to achieve by shutting us down. As you can see from the above statements, we have met the directives as they were communicated to us from you and your representatives in order to remain open.

If your intent from the beginning, in 2000, was to shut us down, we should have been told this immediately. To string us along and give us false hope over the last 6 years has done more damage than simply shutting us down in the first place.

I am hopeful that in your response to this letter, you can answer my questions satisfactorily and help to heal an extremely deep wound.

Holy Trinity, Welland

The year 2007 marks the 150th Anniversary of Holy Trinity Church in the City of Welland. Many events are planned to commemorate this milestone, the chief of which is our Anniversary week-end, June 1-3. Invitations will shortly be in the mail to former parishioners whose names and addresses we have been able to identify. We know we will miss some folks. Please contact the church by telephone at 905-734-3543, email at holytrinity@on.aibn.com or regular mail addressed to 77 Division Street, Welland, Ontario L3B 3Z8 if you would like to receive information on the upcoming events. Come join us for our celebrations!



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Living in true Christian community



RICK JONES
RECTOR - ST. PAUL'S WESTDALE

In my parish of St. Paul's, Westdale, the focus for Lent this year has been to try to move beyond giving something up or taking on more, and instead to look at the real issue that informs these two behaviours. That issue is being intentional about our spiritual life and relationship with God. "How can we deepen our love of God and one another?"

In the midst of this questioning came the Primates' meeting and ultimatum to the Episcopal Church, and by extension to our own Synod, and that voted in favour of the blessing

of same sex unions. Quite apart from the politics of this Primates' meeting and communiqué, leaving aside all the issues of jurisdiction, and governance, and the fundamental critique, "Since when does policy for any of us get decided only by the clergy?" we must ask the spiritual question, "Is this conversation bringing us into a closer relationship with God and one another?"

More in common than not

As it happens, in one of life's many ironies, I happened to be reading Archbishop Rowan Williams this Lent, and in his book, *Where God Happens*, he writes, "The church points to the all-sufficiency of Christ when it is full of people whose concern is not to separate others from the hope of reconciliation and life by their fears and obsessions." Earlier in this wonderful book about the desert monastics, Williams points out the lesson learned long ago by them, "the impossibility of think-

ing about contemplation or meditation or 'spiritual life' in abstraction from the actual business of living in the body of Christ, living in concrete community."

In the church, whether at a parish or Anglican Communion level, we like to use words like family and community. If we mean by that, people related by the all-sufficiency of Christ or the sacrifice of Christ, or the self-giving love of Christ, however you want to come at it, we need to take family seriously. For me, that means not separating others in some kind of 'tough love' approach that may as easily be grounded in fear and obsession than in any kind of Christ-like love. Surely family means we are related by blood, and have become one in the body of Christ. We have more things in common than we do separating us.

How we live in the body of Christ

If we are to be spiritual people the

test of our spirituality will be if we can find a way to live in concrete community. There are many stories from the fourth and fifth century monastic tradition that point to the importance of the injunction, "Judge not, that you be not judged." In contemporary terms, Dr. Scott Peck is helpful with his distinction between community and pseudo-community. We all like to think we live in community but the test comes when a point arises on which we disagree.

True community is a place where we argue passionately, but if we cannot agree, we agree to disagree, and stay in community out of the deeper love that brought us together in the first place. Scott Peck would say you cannot have true community without having been tested by serious disagreements. I believe we are being tested, but not in the way many believe, over correctness of doctrine. We are being

tested in a more fundamental way in the practice of our spiritual life in community. Our spiritual life is reflected in the way in which we live in the body of Christ.

Our values must be different

At this holy time of year as we walk with Christ during Holy Week we may want to think again what it means to be family, community and Communion. Rowan talks about his own truthful awareness of frailty and a church that needs to have different values than the world. He reflects, "how depressing if all the church offered were new and better ways to succeed at the expense of others, reinstating the scapegoat mechanisms that the cross of Christ should have exploded once and for all."

May we who are constantly tempted with the need to be right, remember our own frailty and in that knowledge keep the family together in the deeper love of Christ.

Six ways to believe in the resurrection

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

it seems to work for some people to consider the historical evidence for the resurrection. My wife became a Christian at university, under the influence of some friends who had themselves recently come to faith in Jesus, and they gave her books on this subject. Her conclusion, like that of many others who have followed that route, was that Jesus must indeed have risen from the dead, and that therefore she should follow him.

The Bishop of Durham in England, Tom Wright, has written an 800-page book on the resurrection, *Jesus and the Victory of God*. He points out that, at the time of Jesus, there were dozens of so-called "Messiahs" around, and not a few of them ended up getting crucified. However, in all cases but one, once that happened, that was the end of the messianic movement. But in the case of Jesus, the opposite happened: the movement he started, instead of dying, grew until it reached the whole world. Something must have happened: but what was it? That's the question—The authors of *The Jesus Family Tomb* don't seem to have considered this. The resurrection, impossible though it may seem, makes perfect sense.

Now, of course, this is not the only way to approach the resurrection. If it were, the church would be full of historians. But I don't need to tell you there are historians who don't believe, and non-historians who do believe, though for other reasons. But this still seems to be a helpful avenue for some.

2. Defining human resurrection

Then there are some people who say, Hey, I don't have a problem with the resurrection. It happens all the time. Look at the spring: trees and flowers which seemed to be dead a few days before come to life, butterflies burst out of apparently lifeless chrysalises. There's resurrection for you. No problem.

Now, I confess this approach doesn't work for me. It seems to me there is a world of difference between a seed that appears to be dead and a person who is actually dead. And seeds "come to life" millions of times every day, yet there is only one recorded instance of a human resurrection. So I don't think it's a fair comparison.

At the same time, you might point out that it is the same God who is behind the spring and the resurrection; and Jesus did say his death would be like a seed falling into the ground to die and then bearing fruit. So there is a kind of artistic style in the spring and the resurrection which is similar. So maybe this is an approach which will work for you.

3. Without God, there is no resurrection

Some people are helped by not looking at the question of the resurrection in isolation. After all, whether you believe in the resurrection depends on what you believe about God. If there is no God, of course, it's highly unlikely that there could be a resurrection. But, on the other hand, if there is a God like the God Jesus spoke about, then resurrection makes perfect sense. In fact, what would have been strange would have been if there had been no resurrection.

So for this approach to work, the question is: Is there a God and, if so, what is this God like, and what does this God think about Jesus?

4. Stories from others

Other people are helped by listening to people's stories when they say that the living Jesus has had an effect on their lives. Three examples spring to mind:

One friend of mine is a librarian and historian, and not the sort of person we generally think of as given to mindless religious fanaticism. Yet he says in a firm, matter-of-fact kind of way, that Jesus changed his life.

Another friend who grew up Jewish had a vision of the risen Je-

sus, and became a Christian. He is now an army chaplain, and recently served a term in Afghanistan. Again, not someone you would exactly identify with religious hysteria.

A third friend is a criminal lawyer—not a group known for their gullibility—whose son was miraculously healed a few years ago in answer to prayer. The local newspaper wanted to write an article about it with the headline "God healed my son" but my friend said, "No, I want the headline to say, 'Jesus healed my son.'"

And there are so many stories like this. The question is, do these stories ring true? I remember a sermon (one I did like) on Newton's second law of

see what happens.

Bishop John Spong once said, "My daughter-in-law is a scientist. How can she possibly believe in a physical resurrection?" To which Bishop William Willimon replies, "Has she really that little imagination?" Imagination is not against reason, but it can illuminate reason.

6. Choosing to believe

My last suggestion is this: A friend in Ottawa is a senior civil servant. For years he went to church with his wife because she believed and he wanted to be supportive. But he didn't have what he considered the necessary feelings to call himself a Christian. Then a mutual friend said,



"Believing" like "following" is something you do with your feet and your hands and your heart.

motion, which if I remember rightly, says that a body moving in a particular direction will only change direction if a force from outside, moving in a different direction, impacts it. That's what these people are saying: my life was going in one direction, then it changed direction, and I believe that the "outside force" was that of Jesus. So what do we make of all this? For some, that's a fruitful approach to thinking about the resurrection.

5. How it affects our lives

If the historical question appeals to the mind, this one appeals to the imagination. Some people find it helpful to do a thought experiment; not so much looking into the tomb to see if we can figure out what's there or not, but rather standing at the door of the tomb and looking out at the world. How does the world look different if Jesus did rise? How would my life look different today? This week? How would death look different if Jesus did rise? Would it make more sense or less? Try it and

"Dave, faith isn't a matter of feelings. It's a matter of choice. You choose to believe." Dave isn't particularly into "getting in touch with his feelings" anyway, but the idea of choice is something that makes sense to him. So he chose to believe, and his life changed. And maybe that is the approach that will work for you.

Most people, however, don't believe in the resurrection because of any single thing. Maybe that's true for all the most important things we believe in. After all, if I ask you why you think Canada is a great country, you would probably give me lots of answers: the Rockies, the CBC, Shania Twain, the Maple Leafs (well, maybe not the last). And all of our answers would be true because it's such a big part of us. So with the resurrection: it may be any combination of these six approaches (or of any others, of course) that helps you.

It may be that you say, "Well, I still can't believe." Personally, I am encouraged that the first disciples also had a hard time believing, and

yet they were still considered true disciples. After all, when Jesus first told them he would die and rise again, they basically told him, "Jesus, that's really not a smart idea." They just didn't get it. And even after forty days of appearances after the resurrection, as he was about to return to heaven, Luke tells us "and some doubted." These were the diehard doubters, far more so than Thomas. And yet they are still called disciples.

Maybe our problem is that we think of believing as something that happens in our minds. But John's Gospel uses the word "believe" more or less as the equivalent of "follow." So in Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus says, "Follow me," whereas in John he says, "Believe in me." In other words, for John, 'believing' like 'following' is something you do with your feet and your hands and your heart in the first place: the head figures things out afterwards.

And I'm encouraged by the fact that Jesus, like the good teacher he is, is patient with doubters, not just with Thomas but with those who doubted at his ascension—and with us too. My hunch is that we will always have doubts. In fact, doubts are good for us, because they help separate the wheat from the chaff in what we believe. We don't get extra brownie points from God for believing without question.

The thing to do with our doubts and questions is to do what those first disciples did, to bring them to Jesus, and to say, Lord, I don't know whether I believe, I don't know what I believe, but I do want to learn to follow you, and I'm open to learning if you're open to teaching. And you know what? He is. And as John's Gospel promises, as we learn and follow, we will figure out what to believe and find "life in his name."

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

A dozen pointers for welcoming visitors



ALAN L. HAYES
THE ITINERANT CHURCHGOER

My column usually affirms the healthy diversity of worship styles around the diocese. But this month I'd like to focus on one feature of worship that should be constant in all churches, whether they're liberal, conservative, high, low, big, small, formal, casual, urban, rural, activist, or meditative. Visitors should be warmly welcomed.

Over the past few years I've shown up unexpected at scores of worship services in Niagara, and the good news is that, in my experience, our congregations are generally welcoming. We can thank our bishop and our director of evangelism for giving real leadership in keeping this matter before us.

On the other hand, rather few churches seem actually geared to visitors; fewer make it easy for them; and fewer still go out of their way to make themselves attractive to them. For instance, most churches have bulletins packed with information for their regular attendees, but seem to assume that no one else could possibly be interested, and therefore don't do publicity.

I'm not sure whether this insularity stems from defeatism, lack of imagination, discomfort

with strangers, fear of change, or something else, but it really inhibits church growth.

Here are a few pointers that might be useful for congregations that want to attract visitors.

1. Take advantage of the Internet

Use the diocesan website. List your congregation in community websites. Develop your own website, and link it in as many other sites as possible. Keep your website current. St. George, Guelph (www.saintgeorge.ca) is one church that does a great job keeping announcements updated—which maybe is one reason they keep getting new members. Take ten minutes a week to make sure that the announcements tab at your parish page on the diocesan website doesn't say "There are no announcements."

2. Give yourselves community exposure

Send little press releases about your news and activities to community newspapers. Advertise yourselves in local newspapers and telephone books, if you can afford it. Put attractive leaflets in the public library, in the information area at your town hall and civic centre, and on grocery store bulletin boards. Connect with community television. Offer your church space for functions, meetings, elections, and so on. Lots of visitors to your worship have first visited your space for non-religious reasons.

3. Give visitors information they'll need to find you

Several parish pages at www.niagara.anglican.ca don't give a

street address, or don't give specific directions, or, in some cases, don't even give a time of service. I often have to do a lot of 'googling' and 'mapquesting' before I come to your church.

4. Make your publicity appealing

Use #1 and #2 above to make your church attractive to strangers and seekers. A lot of churchy terms like 'solemn Eucharist,' 'season of Epiphany,' and 'chancel choir' will limit your appeal. But lots of people are looking for a closer connection with God, or at least some religious education. Emphasize the substance, not the form.

5. Aim for truth in advertising

Don't advertise yourself as a 'friendly church' if you're not ready to deliver. You'll probably only get one chance. And if you advertise a service, make sure it happens. (That seems obvious, but twice I've driven to morning services to discover that they had been cancelled without public notice. People thought it was enough to inform the regulars.)

6. Reduce anxieties of seekers

Large Gothic buildings peopled with strangers engaged in unfamiliar cultic acts can be intimidating. Ridge Parish (www.ridgeparish.com) and St. Matthew's-on-the-Plains, Burlington (www.bsrv.com/community/stmatts.html), among others, tell prospective visitors what to expect when they come.

7. Introduce visitors through non-eucharistic events

Many seekers and non-Anglicans

view communion the way Joanne Woodward in the movie *Rachel*. *Rachel* viewed the sectarian altar call. Church suppers, study groups, lectures, and films make less threatening entrées.

The largest Anglican church in North America, St. Martin's in Houston, with 7000 members, makes good use of Morning Prayer.

8. Make things easy for drivers

Erect signage at nearby intersections. Make sure that signs on your church building are clear and conspicuous. If you have parking problems, do something about them. Church of the Resurrection in Hamilton has some parking reserved for visitors, which is a good idea, if you can keep regular members out of it.

9. Make it easy for visitors to find their way inside

Aside from really small churches with only one way in, I often find myself puzzled as to which entrance door I'm supposed to use. So I find myself coming into what I think will be a vestibule but it's offices and Sunday school rooms, or I think I've found the door to the narthex but I'm actually entering in front of the pulpit, which makes me more conspicuous than most visitors want to feel. Identify the main entrance really clearly.

10. Train your service greeters

Greeting is an incredibly crucial job. There's a lot more to doing it well than handing out a leaflet and chatting with friends. There's a greeter at Grace Church, Milton, who should be giving lessons

across the diocese in making visitors feel at home. Or maybe you just need to choose people for whom it comes naturally.

11. Encourage members to notice and welcome visitors

I've had good experience of being greeted warmly before services, during the peace, and after services by ordinary folks who just wanted to be hospitable. This counts for a lot. Just a few examples are St. John's, Niagara Falls; St. George's, Georgetown; St. Paul's, Norval; St. John's, Rockwood; and St. Stephen on the Mount, Hamilton.

On the other hand, I've occasionally been treated like a biblical leper. At one church, the rector noticed me during the service and issued a clear, pointed plea to his congregation to make sure to welcome visitors, but still, no one did, except for the rector.

12. Use the coffee hour wisely

Make sure some of your regulars are seeking out visitors. Personally, I've become pretty good at barging into conversations with strangers at coffee hour, but most visitors aren't so practiced at that. Sometimes I'll join people standing alone with a cup of coffee looking lost, and it turns out that they're visitors too, and we carry on, invisible to the regulars. Also, it really helps if the clergy can come to the coffee hour too.

Many of these rules are probably little more than manners and common sense. But I think if they were more enthusiastically observed, we'd find our church numbers growing.

Discussing the Christian brand

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

any of them can claim to be God's warriors against the others.

We have to acknowledge that the outlook for Christianity is bleak. Why is this so? Because our message is no longer trusted, not even by many church-goers. We Christians fell too easily for Bush and his brand. We enjoyed our short-lived popularity. "Marching as to war," his Christian administration arrogantly asserted that they alone were righteous.

Christ as a victorious warrior is an image perhaps appropriate in medieval feudal society; today "the sign of triumph" is held suspect. And Bush further overworked the holy war metaphor with his unsuccessful "war on poverty," "war on drugs," "war on terrorism" and, most obviously, his war in Iraq.

Our brand, Christianity, whether we are liberal or conservative, is now seen by the public as consistently conservative, however eagerly we try to distance ourselves from Bush. Perhaps we will return to the sense of spiraling ir-

relevance that many of our churches felt before he became President. We are in danger of being marginalized again.

Some ask if the American Republican leaders of the past decade or two ever seriously believed in Christianity. Did Bush simply claim to be born again in order to win votes and gain power? Certainly his administration has brought great discredit to his fellow Christians. Christian Coalition leader Pat Robertson called for the assassination of Hugo Chávez, the democratically elected president of Venezuela. Ted Haggard who once preached against homosexuality was forced to admit to hiring a male prostitute and to taking illegal drugs. Bush handed Halliburton, Dick Cheney's company, multi-billion dollar contracts to provide arms for the war in Iraq. If Bush and his friends are Christians, goes popular logic, it's morally responsible not to be Christian.

To give you an idea of how despised and rejected we Christians are at this point, the February 24 is-

sue of *The Globe and Mail's* Books section contained an ad for *American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America* with a subtitle, "Can we tolerate intolerance?" "We" refers to North American society, and "intolerance" refers to the "Fascist Christian Right." Mean-



Today, liberal theology, best summarized in the Beatitudes, uses positive words such as "inclusive," "original blessing" "transformation," "postdenominational" and "progressive.

while, the number one book in the Non-Fiction Top 10 was *The God Delusion*. Talk about bad press!

Former Democrat Vice-President Al Gore's campaign to address the environmental crisis of climate change is now the brand of secular idealism that is respected.

The necessity of saving planet earth, until recently considered a bee in the bonnet of a few mad scientists and grey-haired hippies, is society's main concern. Conservative churches will be sidelined in this discussion, however, because

the dominant social voice rejects their resistance to the theory of evolution. Only the scientific voice is trusted. Liberal Christians' beliefs on ecology are largely unknown, but still damaged by their association with conservative views.

Where can liberal Christians



turn to redefine their identity, their brand? Over the past 2000 years our savior and saints have been minority spokespeople, from Jesus to St. Francis to Martin Luther to Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa, and Bishops Romero and Tutu. These leaders have challenged the entrenched power structures in both the secular and the ecclesiastical worlds. They, like contemporary theologian John Dominic Crossan, have spoken for justice for the poor and oppressed.

Today, liberal theology, best

summarized in the Beatitudes, uses positive words such as "inclusive," "original blessing" "transformation," "postdenominational" and "progressive." It's in the theology of Marcus Borg, Bill Phipps, Anne Squire, John Spong, Tom Harpur, Thomas Berry and Matthew Fox. It's in the worship of God the Creator, Christ the Healer and Teacher, and the Holy Spirit of Love and Wisdom. It's in the lyrics of many rock groups such as U2 and singers such as Sting and Cohen. And it's preached in some churches.

From the *Niagara Anglican's* articles in the past year, it seems that liberals are beginning to feel more confident about expressing their perspectives.

If liberal Christians can distinguish themselves from both secular society and the religious/political right, they may be able to communicate their exciting new understandings of scripture and clarify their Christ-based values so that their secular and conservative neighbours can trust them and then again, hopefully, choose Brand Xianity.

Troubled Water Feeling welcome in Cuba



DORIS M'TIMKULU
ST. JOHN, ELORA

What images come to mind as you hear or read of 'water'? Scripture speaks of water as a sacred gift, reflecting God's spirit, free to all, life giving, part of all creation. Refreshing, cleansing, purifying, water.

We are also reminded of water's devastating power: the flood, the sea that engulfed Pharaoh's army may recall images of New Orleans or Mozambique. "By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept..."

Recently a friend expressed her outrage at the fact that families in Southern countries have to buy the water for their own consumption from private owners or local governments at exorbitant costs. "What's the point of bringing clean water to villages through development projects if the people can't af-



Water will be the precious and lucrative commodity of the 21st century as oil was to the 20th century.

ford it and a few get rich from it." Her anger was totally justified, and it challenged me to look more deeply into the issue of 'water.' The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund's most recent materials on water, *Water: Life Before Profit* and *Water: Tap Into It!* (available at www.kairosCanada.org) were most helpful and led me to many other reliable sources.

The debate over water—or should I say the scandal of water?—covers two main areas: the growing and alarming scarcity of water due to overuse and contamination, and the question whether water is a human right or a commodity.

Scarcity of Water

Here are some facts about water and how scarce the safe water supply is:

- 97.5% of the earth's water is salt-water, unfit for human and most industrial use.
- Less than 1% of freshwater is usable, amounting to only 0.01% of the earth's total water.
- The Great Lakes hold the largest surface area of freshwater, 20% of the world's fresh surface water.
- World-wide 1,300 million people were without access to safe water in 2000, 300 million in Africa and 693 million in Asia.

We are told that the fast melting arctic icecap will dangerously raise sea levels. At the same time, Environment Canada forecasts a 1-1.5

metre drop in water levels for some of the Great Lakes over the next 50 years due to climate changes.

Overuse of water

Some facts will illustrate the case of use of water throughout the world:

- Canada uses 326 litres of water per person per day, ranking a dismal 28th among the 29 nations of the OECD.
- People in Gambia use 4.5 litres per person, Cambodia 9.5 litres.
- Canada uses 80% of its water for industrial purposes; Japan uses 17%.
- Average amount of water in litres needed to produce a kilo of food: Potatoes (1,000), Corn (1,400), Chicken (4,600), Beef (42,500).
- To produce 1 metric ton of steel takes 215,000 litres of water.
- Households with dishwashers, washing machines and sprinklers use 1,000 litres a day.
- Households with piped supply and taps, 100-350 litres a day.
- Households using a stream or distant water, 2-5 litres a day.
- A 5 minute shower with a standard head uses 100 litres.
- Fifty percent of the world's wetlands have been lost since 1900.

The wetlands of Lake Ontario have suffered severe loss over the last two centuries due to agricultural drainage and urban encroachment.

Contamination as a result of industrial waste and agricultural pesticides has further reduced the availability of safe water. Just consider that one drop of oil can render up to 25 litres of water unfit for drinking. Over 360 chemical compounds have been identified in the Great Lakes; many are persistent toxic chemicals potentially dangerous to humans and already destructive to the aquatic ecosystems. In a recent search in a grocery store for a safe type of household cleanser, I could not locate a single one among dozens of brands; being on a septic system, I am much aware, though not enough, of the toxic chemicals that I flush directly into the soil and the underground water system.

The extraction of oil from the tar sands in Alberta needs huge amounts of water; by the time water is disposed, it's loaded with a wide range of chemicals and can't be returned to the environment. Instead it is stored in enormous ponds for an indefinite period and no one knows the full consequences of a leak or rupture.

A human right or a commodity?

The May 2000 issue of *Fortune* magazine predicted that water will be the precious and lucrative commodity of the 21st century as oil was to the 20th century. A current investment website states that the growing scarcity of water makes it the "best and hottest investment."

When the supply or treatment of water is privatized, as is currently debated in most major cities in Canada, the primary obligation is to



JEAN RUTTAN-YATES
PRIEST - ST. ANDREW'S, GRIMSBY

Upon arriving to Cuba, one of the first things I noticed, besides the heat, was the friendliness of the people. The second thing I noticed was the severe poverty and the third was the strength of the faith of the Christians I met.

We three from St. Andrew's arrived in Cuba February 8 2007 in the early afternoon. Some of the items we took with us were medical humanitarian aid from the Not Just Tourists organization located in St. Catharines, run by Dr. Ken and Mrs. Denise Taylor. We were of course overweight in the luggage department. We were travelling under the ecclesiastical visa, required by the Cuban government, as we were going to be living with the Reverend Juan Antonio Gonzalez, take part in the worship and various groups. Being novices we did not know that you could ask for and get exemption from the airlines for the overweight luggage. However, as we were checking in we asked for and received this exemption. God was surely looking after us.

God protected us

Arriving in Cuba two of us sailed through customs, however one of us was stopped. Of the entire luggage we carried, only one duffel bag and one carry on were checked. The carry on held a chalice for San Pablo and the duffel bag held fabric, ribbons and thread for the women of San Pablo in Camaguey. The medical supplies were not even looked at; once again we felt God protected us. Then we met our friends, The Venerable Juan Antonio Gonzalez and Jose Hidalgo. What a happy reunion we shared. Both men had been in Grimsby five years ago.

Juan's home was the American Consulate back in the days before the revolution. As with most homes in Camaguey, it is in a state of disrepair, but completely filled with love, faith and humour. Our Cuban friends love to laugh. Believe me we all needed humour in our first few hours in our hosts' home. First as I opened suitcases it was discovered that large plastic containers of black pepper do not fly well! The entire contents were covered with black pepper. The second incident

involved a dropped nail polish bottle, red, tile floors, green. But Juan just laughed as we cleaned the mess, with gasoline. All he said was welcome to Cuba, Jean, don't worry.

Cubans are loving and giving people

All those we spoke to are very proud of being Cuban and although life is hard for many of them they have tremendous faith. Most of the homes in Camaguey are in need of restoration, some more than others, and they are very poor. Our friend's wife, upon first meeting us, told us she was ashamed at having us see the condition of their home. My heart broke. But in due time we were sitting at her table laughing, talking and eating ice cream in the dark, because there was a power outage. I was told, "when a person is working hard to feed one's family, there is no energy left to worry about little things in life, like painting a room, or the exterior of one's home." This is very true, and soon we were looking beyond the structure and state of the homes. It reinforced the fact it is what is in the heart that matters most. Cubans are loving and giving people, at least those we met fit that description.

I was blessed and very humbled to be able to take part in not just one but two Sunday worship services. There were members of the congregation who spoke both Spanish and English; life would have been far more difficult without Jose and Albert. These two men translated Juan's sermons, aided in our conversations with other parishioners and also translated our greetings to them. We also attended a women's meeting while my husband attended the men's group. We took part in their Bible study class; both Juan and Jose have been to St. Andrew's and attended Bible study with us. It is in fact Jose who makes St. Andrew's Bible study class an international group. Ash Wednesday found us still in Cuba so we were able to take part in that very special service. Although the entire service was conducted in Spanish we found it very easy to follow using the one English copy of the Book of Common Prayer. I found this to be a very spiritual time. It did not matter where I was; regardless of the church, I was always at home.

Worshipping much easier today

We visited museums and art galleries and many churches. Camaguey is known as the city of churches. The Baptist church is in beautiful condition, at least on the exterior, and most of the Roman Catholic churches have been or are being restored to their former glory. There is a German Catholic church in Camaguey, which the government is involved in restoring; it is of the Gothic design. During the revolution many churches were vandalised. The government I am told encouraged such action, or at least did nothing to stop it. But now they realize that not only are these places of worship there is also a cultural history attached to these buildings. The stained glass windows in this church are magnificent. St. Andrew's is partnered with San Pablo Episcopal Church and it has still not been restored. St. Andrew's and San Pablo are about the same size but that is where the similarities end. There are cedar planks at the back of the church, which will be used to repair the window frames, and shutters and they are planning on building a new parish hall.

Worshipping in churches in Cuba is much easier now than it has been in the past. There was a time, I am told, when cameras were used to track the people who were entering churches. The government never closed the churches themselves, but there were some professions, like teachers and doctors, who could not attend worship. Now the restriction has officially been lifted, my friend tells me that when people at his work speak of him they will say he is a hard worker and a good manager, and he is a Christian.

They taught us so much

Still as poor as the people are in this city, their homes and the streets are very, very clean. The people are extremely generous, very loving and have a deep and profound faith in God. They taught me so much.

Would I go back? Absolutely, because the people of San Pablo are now my brothers and sisters. I shall always remember the love and generosity they showed to my husband, our friend and me. I pray that God will continue to bless each and every one of them.

Awareness raising or fund raising?

DORIS M'TIMKULU
ST. JOHN, ELORA

When we plan some event for the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, or any other such cause, we tend to want to do both: we aim to raise awareness about a burning issue, perhaps mobilize folks into some advocacy activity, and we also want to end up with a substantial cheque going to the Primate's Fund. Sometimes these two goals can be combined, but only too often they are at logger-heads. You see, raising awareness often creates discomfort, maybe even anger. We react defensively and may withdraw at least temporarily, rather than reach out

to people and situations that may be hard to understand. Or our giving is done as a band-aid for discomfort—hardly what we had hoped for as the outcome.

Separating the two goals, awareness raising and fund raising, may work better in many situations. Here is an opportunity to share of our wealth on an ongoing and very meaningful way.

Eat to Give is an initiative of Community Charity Services (CCS), based in Elmira, ON. The founders negotiated with grocery stores to donate to registered charitable organizations in return for the monthly purchase of gift cards or gift certificates; now all grocery

chains, Costco and Tim Horton's are participating, as are major gas stations like Sunoco, Shell, and Esso. This is how it works:

■ Your parish registers with Community Charity Services.

■ Individuals or families sign up and commit to a minimum of \$150.00 a month in grocery store certificates or gift cards. They come in different denominations, can be combined in any way the purchaser chooses, and are valid for one year.

■ The purchaser designates to which charitable organization the donation should go, in this case your local parish which would forward the amount to PWRDF, or to PWRDF directly.

■ The cards or certificates are mailed to the purchaser at the beginning of each month.

■ The cost is debited to the purchaser's account at the beginning of the month, or in two or three installments, if that is your preference.

■ Your parish or PWRDF receives a monthly cheque from CCS.

■ The percentage going towards the charitable organization is around 3.5%, depending on the monthly amount to which you have committed; the higher the amount, the higher the donation.

■ If you pay with your credit card rather than have a debit made to your account, the minimum purchase per month is \$400.

I have been participating in Eat to Give for several years and find it convenient, very flexible and, yes, very meaningful. Every time I use a gift card I am reminded that I can, and am able to share and make a difference. If 20 families of your parish order an average of \$500 a month in grocery store and gas station gift cards, PWRDF receives \$350 a month or \$4,200 a year.

Ruth Matthews loves to tell you more about Eat to Give. You can phone her at 519-648-3976, she can send you a package with a DVD, come to talk to a group, or you can write to her at ruth.matthews@allstream.net. Why don't you give it a try?

Becoming a new church



PETER WALL
DEAN - CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

We have just completed the season of vespers (annual congregational) meetings. A time of review and reflection, tied with looking forward to what the future may hold for our mission and ministry. It is also a time of statistics—always invidious things, at best, but also important as we measure ourselves and report such things to Synod offices, congregations, etc. As I have reflected on such things as statistics here at the Cathedral, a relatively small congregation but a large and complex organization, I wonder about our need to see things through new eyes.

For example, around here (and I do not think that we are alone) people often lament the 'good old days' and the number of children that used to be in Sunday School. It somehow seems that we are doing something wrong nowadays in that those glory days of the 50s and 60s no longer abound!

And yet, if I look carefully at our statistics, I see that we serve breakfast every weekday during the school year to over 50 children; we have a Daycare centre housed here that serves over 60 children every day, 52 weeks a year. Because of partnerships which we have established with a local school and other community agencies, we are involved in a community centre which serves literally hundreds of people in the community, many of them children, week by week. So maybe the glory days are here after all.

Community use of the Cathedral
I would venture to guess that this old and interestingly located place might just serve more children than it does adults! Similarly, I often see statistics about churches which talk about 'average' Sunday attendance. Now I know that we are simply trying to find a measure which we can apply

across the board to virtually all parish communities, but I think maybe its time to look at other things. If your parish is like this Cathedral (and we are not all so different, really) then your community serves a huge number of people outside of Sunday morning, maybe even more on a weekly total than come to church on Sunday. Church groups, bible study, community groups, daycare centres, community meetings, Scouts and Guides, community choirs—all of these things are part of our ministry.

I know, from where I sit in Cathedral Place, that this building (and I bet yours is often much the same) is hugely busy during the week. We have some absolutely wonderful community use – from a long standing relationship with the local Roman Catholic diocesan Justice Office through to a support group for schizophrenia which has met here for years. Two or three times a year, we host an Adult Day School graduation ceremony in the church itself, for those who have returned to high school as adults and completed their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (If you want to be moved deeply, just drop in on one of these).

At least once a year, we host a remembrance ceremony for the local branch of the Kidney Foundation, at which those who have died are remembered, including those who have donated kidneys. Again, a stunningly inspiring moment in our life here.

Welcoming the stranger without preconceptions

All of us, in our own communities carry out our ministry in these and a hundred other equally moving and significant ways. As I reflect on these things, I am even taken back to scripture – Jesus never told us to go to Church; he did invite us to reach out to others, to provide hospitality and care, to feed, clothe, and nourish.

Becoming something 'new' is never easy; birth is always hard, after all. I know that we are called to 'build up the body,' and we know that the most effective way of doing that is by inviting people into our fellowship, to encourage them to be part of the worshipping community, week by week, Sunday by Sunday.

However, for a lot of people, that too is hard. They don't know the language, the customs, the 'dance' that is ours. We still, however much as we try otherwise, assume an alarming amount about someone coming to church, and we have more difficulty than we could, or perhaps should, acknowledging that we must learn to welcome the stranger without laying on them a whole set of our preconceptions about how they are to behave, what they are to do. Many of our communities are much better at this than others. We all need to re-commit ourselves to the endeavour.

This past Christmas week, I was in the office all alone since our staff is usually not in during that week. The dreaded buzzer sounded, and off I went from the comfort of my cocooned office to the door. Two middle aged men were there—one a long time resident of Hamilton and the other a Christmas visitor. They had read a piece in the Hamilton Spectator about our stained glass. The visitor was a stained glass enthusiast and artist who wanted to see our windows. I took them around and told them some of what I know about the windows and invited them to stay as long as they wished and simply enjoy the space and the 'dance' of light which our windows provide. They stayed about an hour, and were simply astounded at what they saw and felt. The local person, having lived in Hamilton for over 50 years, had never been inside the Cathedral and was blown away!

New ways of measuring

Neither will appear in a statistic about 'average' Sunday attendance; neither made their communion or perhaps even said a prayer (although I would argue that their presence was a prayer); neither signed up for a group nor offered to host coffee hour. Both, however, are part of the Church, because they were served, not by me, but by God.

So maybe, just maybe, we will become a 'new' church; maybe we will find new ways of measuring things; maybe we will accept the ministry that we all do, each and every day, as we reach out to the world God made and gave us.

AN EASTER MEDITATION FOLLOWING JESUS TODAY IN THE LIGHT OF HIS RESURRECTION

Will you come and follow me,
If I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
And never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
Will you let my name be known,
Will you let my life be grown
In you and you in me?

John L. Bell (1949-) and Graham A. Maule (1958-)

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The church of Erehwon



SUSAN HUXFORD-WESTALL
ALL SAINTS, HAMILTON

"They have gone nowhere. They live with us, and beside us; they work with us and play with us, they laugh with us and cry with us. Now it is up to us to listen and learn and invite them home to a place that they know" (Patterson, M. "So what are you selling?" *Niagara Anglican*, February 2007)

By all the Anglican rules, I should have gone to Sunday School in the mid twenties of the last century. I didn't. Neither did my brother, although his godfather had been Assistant Chaplain-General to the Forces during the First World War; his god-

father was never any suggestion of attending Sunday School. The Vicar of St. Mark's, Kennington, was the Reverend Dr. John Darlington who, in the mid 1930s, was complaining that his congregation was not what it had been when he became Vicar in 1897. He failed to realise that the whole community had changed in forty years. He duly prepared me for Confirmation, which involved "learning" the Catechism as set out in the Book of Common Prayer. I got nothing out of it except a curiosity as to what was its use.

What, then, inspired me to become a lay reader, a church choir director, active in my diocese and a writer for this paper? In my teens I was told that I should never query anything that the Padre said in his sermons, but I did sing in his church choir when I was on holiday and staying in his vicarage as he had moved "in retirement" to a rural parish.

I credit my headmaster with encouraging me to ask questions about

After a lifetime during which I have been involved in education (my own and other's) I realise with a start that it is thirty years since I retired as a secondary school teacher. Who were the people in my classes at that time? I recognise that many of them were in that group of absentees from the church pews, now aged 30 to 45. I also recognise that my efforts as a geography teacher were to make students think for themselves. I used group discovery methods. I concentrated, not on mere memorization, but on discovery; how do I find out things for myself? I suggest that such a philosophy is contagious; the present generation and its parents are searching for their own answers to spiritual questions. How can we help them to find their own answers?

Forty years ago man had not landed on the Moon. Space travel was a dream. Today we know that "up there" is relative. To a Canadian "up there" is "down under" to an Australian. Where, then, is Heaven? Where is Hell? To a geophysicist it's super hot! Environics reports that 73% of the 30-45 age group believe that "organized religion tells you what to believe." I agree with them. I have called religious education "indoctrination" or at worst, "brain-washing." The result has been fragmentation of the church for which Jesus prayed "that they may all be one." We condemn Islam because Shi'a and Sunni cannot get on together when we have Christian denominations that claim a monopoly on salvation.

As I closed my last article, "There is not one of us, clergy or laity, who can claim to really know God." St. Paul himself admitted it when he wrote "now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Corinth 13:12, KJV) or as the RSV has it, "Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood." Life is an exploration into God's Great Adventure, His Creation. We are intended to use the discovery method, to try to understand, not to swallow everything we are told without digesting it. We like to believe that more has been discovered during the last 150 years than was discovered in all the preceding millennia, but we have finished up by learning that the more we know, the more we know we don't know.

The Church of Erehwon is only nibbling at the surface. There must be more to come.

I had learned that I had to make my faith my own and not what somebody else told me to believe.

mother was his godfather's housekeeper, our aunt. "The Padre", as the Reverend George Henry Colbeck was known in my mother's family, had retired from the Army and was serving as assistant at St. George's, Hanover Square, in London, England. My brother and I were taught to call him "Uncle Padre," a contradiction in terms if there ever was one! My own godfather was my mother's elder brother, a colonel in the Indian Army; my godmother one of her younger sisters, a career school teacher. When we were young we were taken to church by my mother's eldest sister, as my mother was involved in household chores every morning. My father did not go to church although I know him to have been a spiritual man.

Shortly after my tenth birthday, in the midst of the Depression, my father lost his business and we were forced to move to London and live briefly with our two godmothers, who shared an apartment within hearing of Big Ben. My godmother took us to her own parish church nearby. Within a year my parents found their own flat and my father insisted that we attend the local parish church, but

the Faith. My school had been founded in 1685 by the Vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, the well-known church beside Trafalgar Square in London. The Vicar, Dr. Tenison, was later to become Archbishop of Canterbury. Pupils at Tenison's were required to have some religious education, and I certainly was able to recite I Corinthians 13 and Psalms 23 and 121 by heart. As a prefect in my senior years, I was required, in my turn, to read the Bible aloud at the school daily morning assembly. During our final year, Dr. Robinson, the Headmaster, had the senior students listen to a series on the BBC concerning the Codex Sinaiticus, which had just been purchased by the British Library from the Russians. I had been introduced to Biblical Criticism and have been hooked ever since. I had learned that I had to make my faith my own and not what somebody else told me to believe.

In a sense I had joined the Church of Erehwon, but I was convinced that I was going to form my private faith within the folds of the Church of England. If God willed, I might find a way of reconciling the two. It's been a long battle, but at last I see daylight.

MASKED

By MARIANNE VESPRY
St. Paul's, Westdale

I
My grandfather told me of a far country where all men, women and children wore masks: elaborate, carved cunningly, decorated fantastically, fitted minutely, no expense spared.

Everything else—ploughing, seeding, weeding, harvesting, cooking, eating, procreation, education, inspiration, expiration—took second place to care, maintenance, augmentation, elaboration of masks. Time passed. Some questioned: "Why wear masks?"

It was agreed: at the New Year's ball, they would all remove their masks.

At midnight, by candlelight shaking hands unclasped masks, lifted or lowered or slightly shifted or whipped off masks.

Gasps greeted shown faces, each a twin to removed mask—in all features identical! Why?

The hand that made the mask, the life that made the face, were one. They shaped alike.

II
My mother told me that same story with another ending. Masks removed, they saw faces bland, like babies, indistinguishable, unwritten, waiting for life to happen.

III
My uncle told me the story too, but as he told it, when the hour came to unmask, they could not. Mask and face had fused.

IV
My old nurse told me, when the masks came off, nothing was left to hold them together. They unmasked at the ball, and that was all.

The ballroom next morning was ankle deep in dust.

V
My cousin said they were found, all dead.

Whether in terror of the face in the mirror they killed themselves, or they killed those others, now seen as strangers, was never known.

VI
My teacher told me, when the masks came off, there was nothing there—just a space, no face at all.

VII
A friend recounted a similar story, but as he told it, under the masks were other masks, and others under those.

As they tookoff the masks, one after the other, they grew smaller and smaller, until they dwindled below the size the human eye can see.

By now, he said, they may exist as wave-particles, masked and unmasked at the same time.

VIII
A travellers' tale told of a tribe at war with its neighbours.

Tribespeople wore beautiful masks, and conducted themselves with grave dignity, fair courtesy; in all things amiable.

The neighbours, of course, were ugly, bad mannered, ridiculous, descended from apes.

When the tribe's elders, its teachers, its heros, its shamans unmasked, they saw, to their horror faces indistinguishable from those of their neighbours.

The war collapsed. It took a generation to find justification to start it again.

IX
My grandmother's sister told me that story, but she said, when they saw true faces, they knew them to be faces of angels, and time stopped.

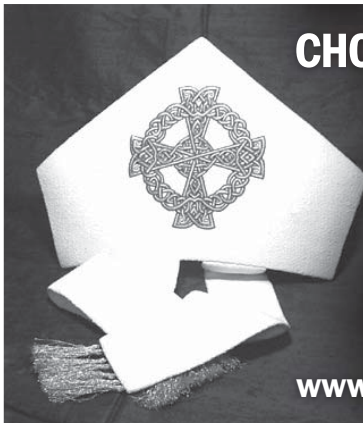
X
'So what do you think? Shall we take off our masks?'

'You first.'
'After you.'
'I'm afraid.'
'Go ahead.'
'Someone else.'
'You first.'
'After you!'

CHOOSING OUR NEW BISHOP

For up-to-date information about this important event in our local church, please check our website daily.

www.niagara.anglican.ca/election



A Christian approach to conflict

"In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us" (New Zealand Prayer Book)



LYNNE CORFIELD
ARCHDEACON OF BROCK

Once upon a time, long, long ago, when I worked in the field of Human Resources I read thousands of resumes! I remember reading one particular resume that had an interesting word under Hobbies that I had to look up in the dictionary to find that it meant whatever we do in life comes in handy at some point... no matter if we were doing a paper route at 13 years old, to volunteer work, to whatever life throws at us. We will at some point utilize a skill that we learned at that point in life, somewhere else along the way... I just wish I could remember the word! Perhaps it would explain the complex ways we are in relationship with one another, and why it is that we can be so hurtful, or hurt by each other. Yet some people seem to be able to cope with conflict and upset without it getting them down. How do they do it?

Different coping skills

My daughters have both played soccer from a young age. They were age 6 and 8 when they first became involved, and my youngest daughter has now played for 22 years. When they got to be about 10 and 12 they had the opportunity to referee some games. They certainly knew the game and the younger refs are given the younger players games to begin with, as they hone their skills in calling plays. It should be a good learning experience for both the players and the budding refs and a way to make a little bit of pocket money. Parents who were on the sidelines watching their 6 or 7 year-olds playing in a tournament would scream and shout and sometimes

be incredibly aggressive—almost abusive. These games were not the World Cup! Now, the 12 year old had a hard time coping with the screaming abuse from parents and quickly decided that it was just not worth it. It disturbed her to think that the children were being damaged by seeing their parents go crazy in such a negative way; not to mention that she could just not take the abuse herself. My youngest daughter let the comments go 'like water off a ducks back!' She seemed to have the ability to tune it out and remain focussed on the game. Consequently she was able to ref games for some time and make a little extra money too. Same experience, different responses. We could debate the parents who get out of control and become poor role models for their children, but that is not the point I want to make.

My oldest daughter became a primary school teacher and a good one at that. She respects and nurtures her grade 4 students and is particularly gifted in working with children who have extra challenges. Working at an inner city school in Toronto many of her students have had scary life experiences and/or language and learning challenges. They are extremely fortunate to find themselves with such a kind and caring teacher. The other daughter became a paramedic which is a profession that benefits from her ability to tune out the chaos around her at a trauma scene and stay focussed on her patient—she was always able to tune me out too when she was busy playing and didn't want to hear that it was time to clean up her room! Personality traits or training? Perhaps both, and different coping skills.

Truth finds its way to the surface

We have the capacity as human beings to be very hurtful to one another. I have always gone through life trying to give people the benefit of the doubt, and thinking the best of each person I meet, preferring to turn the other cheek—perhaps they are having

a bad day? Perhaps they have a lot on their plate just now. Who knows what difficulties another person might be dealing with at any given time that might lead them to be unpleasant? However, that does not mean that I will back down or avoid a conflict. It means that some things are best let go, and some things are worth the extra effort to chase. The defining line for me is always about relationships. Choosing ones battles is a real art. If the relationship is important then it will also be important to instigate difficult conversations and perhaps to speak the truth in love. It will be worth the time and effort to sort things out and make amends.

"Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-Bearer, Life-Giver—in the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us." This seems to be an appropriate refrain as we go through this Lenten season and consider the people that we may have hurt, by the things we have done, or the things we have left undone; knowingly or inadvertently. I don't think people wake up thinking or deciding that they are going to be rude to whoever they meet on this particular day! The point is that as we go through life we are sometimes the ones on the receiving end of behaviour that is unjustified and that we cannot control, or even begin to understand, and sometimes we are the ones dishing it out! In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

Over the years, I have had experiences where I have tried extremely hard to communicate and to make attempts to sort out a complicated upset, all to no avail, and after a great deal of effort have to walk away with the issue unresolved and a lot of misinformation being touted as facts. It was a hard thing to do at the time, but what I have found is that even though it may take some time, eventually the truth finds its way to the surface. People who were willing to think the worst of someone may perhaps experience them in a new

way and realize that they are not such a bad person after all.

Give the benefit of the doubt

Dealing with conflict should be a course that is taught in lower grade school, reinforced in high school, and on and on throughout our lives. Conflict is important and means 'to fight together.' This is an important skill to learn and is beneficial in our family life, in our places of work, and most definitely in our church communities. In the latter place it would seem to me that we could be hopeful that people would be willing to first think the best of someone and not immediately think the worst, and that when something does not seem to make sense, it probably means that some information is missing and we could withhold judgement until more information is gathered... give the benefit of the doubt.

Not all conflict can be resolved, but it is important to make every effort to seek resolutions and to make amends. About a decade ago I heard a marvellous folk tale that has been a big help to me in the times when I have had to walk away leaving a situation unresolved. Perhaps this can be of help to others:

"There was a village, and in that village lived a monk. The monk was hard working and kept himself to himself. He lived in a small cottage on the edge of town, tended his garden, said his prayers regularly and helped the people in many ways. One day the butcher's daughter came home and had to tell her parents that she was pregnant. They were furious with her and demanded that she tell them who the father of the child was. After hours of fighting the young girl gave in and declared that the father of the child was the monk!

"This was scandalous! The butcher and his wife marched through the village and pounded on the door of the monk. When he answered the door he was accused of being a sinful man who had taken advantage of their young daughter

who was now to have a child. They declared that when the child was born he would have to look after it and raise it as they would not have such a child in their home. And the monk said, 'Is that so?'

"In the meanwhile the story is spread around the village and the people who once respected the monk will no longer speak to him. He continues to tend his garden and say his prayers. Time passes and the child is born. As promised the child is brought to the monk and the butcher and his wife demand that he look after the child. They shout and scream and say he is a disgrace to his order, and the monk said, 'Is that so?'

"Several years later on her way home through the village the young girl sees her child out in the garden with the monk. She is full of remorse and when she gets home to her parents she confesses that it was not the monk who was the father of her child. Oh my goodness! The parents feel wretched that they have caused so much trouble for the monk and that no one in the village has spoken to him in all this time. They leave immediately and march through the village and knock on the monk's door. When he answers they apologize profusely and fall all over themselves trying to make amends. They tell the tale of their daughter who has come home and confessed that it was not him after all, they are so sorry and will of course take the child to live with them, and will tell everyone in the village what has happened. And the monk said, 'Is that so?'

A time in your life

The monk who knew the truth did not have to use his energy defending himself. He could not do or say anything that would make a difference. He also knew that just because everyone believed this of him, did not make it so... and eventually, the truth which was buried, found its way into the light. There might come a time in your life when it will be helpful to simply say, "Is that so?"

The poor and sick are loved by God but are they loved by us?



GRAHAME STAP
RECTOR - ST. ALBAN'S, GLEN WILLIAMS

Lent is a time for us to reflect on our relationship with our God. It is a time to try and understand the awesome love God has for us all. It is also a time to try and understand why God would send his son to live with us and a time to get our heads around the fact that Jesus was

totally prepared to die on a cross so that we may know the path to God is open to all people regardless of race, creed, or colour.

We must not overlook that Jesus came especially for those who had no hope of a better life here on this earth. He came for the poor, the lonely and the sick. Jesus healed the sick and never asked if the person receiving Jesus' healing touch if they could afford to pay for the cure.

Last week I listened to a conversation between two people on television, both of whom are multimillionaires, talk about bringing two-tier health care to Canada. They could not understand what all the fuss was about and wanted the government to

stop waffling and just do it.

I cannot think of anything the government could do that would be more unchristian. In the UK two-tier health care has been a fact for many years and frankly the rich get well and to a large extent the poor wait. Hospitals in England exist side by side national health and private. The same doctors work in both hospitals. If you need an operation which hospital do you think would give the quickest service?

In the United States forty million people do not have health insurance or any coverage for medicine needed during a hospital stay and many die because they cannot afford to pay the high cost of health.

I know we do not have a perfect health care system but if it is a life threatening situation that causes us to go to hospital, we are looked after. In my own case a heart problem necessitated angioplasty; within four days I was given an angiogram, angioplasty and back home. Our daughter diagnosed with third stage breast cancer was on chemotherapy within a week, radiation quickly followed; as did radical surgery and today thanks be to God and our, perhaps imperfect, health care she and I are fully recovered; and it did not cost a penny.

We, as Christians, say we stand in the light of Jesus Christ. If this is true, how can we not stand for

the poor, the lonely and the sick and with all our power make sure that there is never a cost to health. I know, of course, we pay for our health care in our taxes. I believe it is a small price to pay for loving our neighbours as our selves.

This lent let us do something, instead of giving something up. Let us by the thousand write to our member of parliament and to the minister of health letting them know we as Christians will not stand by and allow the poor of this land of such abundance to not have the same health care as the rich. If we do this any government afraid of not being elected will listen and we can truly say that we do stand in the light of Jesus Christ.

Called to be people of new life



MARNI NANCEKIVELL
DIRECTOR OF TRANSITIONAL MINISTRIES

Like many Diocesan Resource Centre staff, I am frequently seen lugging a variety of resources into Cathedral Place. For example I have what appears to be a "file box on wheels" (bearing the *Star Wars* moniker R2D2) which contains my secret stash of program supplies for Fresh Start events or work with parishes in transition. If you peer inside, you will see name tags, masking tape, markers, dots, sticky tack, scissors, card stock and so on. As well, I am inevitably accompanied by my ever present lap top, my briefcase, and a purse. Some times, we extend some form of hospitality for a group, so I may also be carrying grocery bags containing items such as tea, milk or fruit. Other times, I may be transporting a PowerPoint projector. Not very long ago, one person who frequents Cathedral Place was watching me juggle my various packages, while carrying my keys and attempting to answer my ringing cell phone. They observed: "Look at all the things you're carting into this place today! You certainly take the job of being Director of Transitional Ministry quite literally. You're always "transitioning" from one place to another!"

Which way are we going?

I am aware, with the announcement of Bishop Spence's retirement, and with the upcoming retirement as well of Archdeacon Vincett, that my work in Transitional Ministry takes on yet another dimension. While normally, my work in Transitional Ministries involves engagement with a handful of parishes at any given time, at present, the entire Diocese of Niagara is needing to absorb the implications of a transition in Episcopal ministry. Having weathered several Episcopal transitions during my time in ordained ministry, I see already some of familiar dynamics at play that have marked other times when a Diocesan Bishop has announced his retirement. In addition to the inevitable specula-

tion about who might and might not allow their name to stand, for election as Bishop, there are other forces at work. In some committees and working groups, I am hearing questions about whether certain policies should be proceeded with, or whether we should "wait until the new Bishop arrives" to receive approval for a given direction. Among my colleagues at Cathedral Place, there is the same kind of uncertainty, but one that takes a more subtle form. People are wondering about the jobs they do. Not only are dedicated staff members concerned about the direction of their work, but they are wondering if there will be room for them as ministry at Cathedral Place takes on a new form.

Just like a parish

The uncertainty that surrounds lay people, clergy, and staff members in the Diocese at the time of an Episcopal transition is similar to the uncertainty that surrounds a parish when there is a crisis point in ministry. Whether that point of change is the announcement of the departure of an incumbent, or whether it is an unexpected financial crisis, there are moments in our communal life that make us stop and take stock.

■ What is this particular ministry about?

■ What do we need to continue to do?

■ What do we need to do differently?

People engaged with Church growth and development name this kind of critical moment as a time when anxiety is high.

Viewing the time of transition from a different perspective, the work of Anglican priest and author Kenneth Leech might be a resource in understanding this moment as being a time in our common spiritual life when "subversive orthodoxy" comes to play.

"This is a tradition that seeks to combine fidelity to the past to the subversive memory of the people of Israel and of Jesus of Nazareth, and openness to the future toward which God is leading us. Any dynamic and growing life needs to engage with the past, for as evolutionary theory shows, if a break with the past is too radical or lacks continuity, then things fall apart, and coherence and solidarity are threatened. Similarly, in the renewal of spiritual life, there must be a mingling of old and new, a recovery of lost traditions, insights, memories and truths, combined with an openness to the future and

a willingness to grasp the vision of the new reality that is just beyond our grasp" (Kenneth Leech, *The Eye of the Storm* p. 213).

Indeed we are living at an uncomfortable moment, simultaneously looking both to our past and our future while being precariously positioned in an unstable present. This uncertain reality is an accurate description for life in some parishes. Certainly it is true for the Diocese of Niagara at the present moment, and it is also an accurate portrayal of the current time in our larger life in the Anglican Communion.

So now what?

While we may well have a 'gut reaction' of anxiety at anytime of organizational evolution, I believe that if we remember our Story, our apprehension will lessen. In remembering—literally, in becoming 'joined' or 'membered' again—within the context of our Call to be people of Resurrection, our focus will change.

Questions of life and death

If we are focused on anxiety, on giving voice only to apprehension and dread, our questions will be Questions of Death.

■ If we take action presently, will we have to change it all when the new Rector/Bishop arrives? Let's just 'mark time' for now.

■ This system is doomed to fail no matter who the Bishop or Priest is, so what's the use of trying?

■ The church is going 'down the tubes' anyway, so it really doesn't matter who our next Priest or Bishop will be.

That kind of perspective brings its own defeat before the words are even formed in our minds.

However, questions of life carry with them room for the creative movement of the Spirit.

■ What might be in the future before us?

■ What can we learn from our recent past?

What have been the gifts of this time?

■ What do we need to grow into a church that can minister even more effectively in the 21st Century?

Transitional ministry, you see, is like everything else in our faith tradition.

We are called to be people of new life. In this particular time of transition, may the voice of Resurrection be the one to which we listen. And may our words and lives give witness to our Resurrection calling.

Easter is like D-Day



MICHAEL THOMPSON
RECTOR - ST. JUDE'S, OAKVILLE

The angel at the empty tomb (Matthew 28) has a lot to tell: "Do not be afraid." "He is not here, for he has been raised." "Go to Galilee. There you will see him." Not, as it turns out, "get some people to come here and see," but "Go there and see." It is the founding moment of the church's evangelical calling, and it is about disciples going out, not about people coming in. I don't think I'm the only one who feels the abrasive rasp as our vocation cuts across the grain of our habits.

Jesus, raised by God's power from the tomb, has set out for Galilee, has plunged back into the predicament and possibilities of the world and its human creatures; the empty tomb is not just an end to death's dominion, but also a new beginning in God's mission in and for the world. And it is into that mission that the angel calls the disciples. He sends them on an errand into Galilee, where there is healing to accomplish, hope to embody, transformation underway, a kingdom to proclaim and live, and

done makes possible what we will do for kingdom and new creation, we are withholding the best part of the good news, the part that offers back the fullness of our humanity in God's image. There is struggle, mud and loss for God in Christ, and then an empty tomb. There is struggle, mud and loss for us who follow, and then a blossoming of new creation—forgiveness, healing, hospitality, compassion, stewardship—in some unlikely place where we have followed Jesus on our errand.

When Jesus appears in the fear-locked upper room, it goes like this: "He showed them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. It was the wounds that sealed the deal for them—the real thing, the one whose body bears the wounds of love. Evangelism is not less than that, not less than a Body that bears the wounds of love.

If we did not already know this, we might easily say, "That's crazy talk." But we know it, and have seen it in a hundred ways. The persevering staying-there-of those who sit at bedside, watching illness steal the life of a beloved. The painstaking work to redeem a friendship when harm has been done. The night-long listening of a parent, patient in embracing the cry of a child with warmth and few words. The challenging of words that demean the different other. The patient calling forth of the truth of a person, trusting the beautiful grain

Evangelism is, then, not just bringing people in to remember that victory day; it is also inviting people to participate in proclaiming and embodying that victory in the world, for the sake of the world.

a new creation to discern and delight in. In Galilee, from which there was some early doubt—according to Nathanael in John's Gospel. "Can any good thing come from Nazareth?" Whatever it was that made Galilee an ill-reputed place, that was where the errand called the disciples, that was where the work was to be done. God has a mission, one that includes every Galilee's redemption by God's justice, grace, and love. And God sends disciples on errands in that mission, as servants of that mission, for the sake of and in the midst of every unlikely Galilee.

Easter, a veteran of World War Two once shared with me, is like D-Day. When the beaches were secured and the troops began to advance, everyone knew that victory was assured. And yet, everyone knew there were months and months of struggle, mud and loss ahead before that victory would be realized in its fullness. So Easter is both victory and the beginning of victory, and we can anticipate much struggle, mud and loss before the new creation is realized in every Galilee beloved of God, for every creature in all earth.

Evangelism is, then, not just bringing people in to remember that victory day; it is also inviting people to participate in proclaiming and embodying that victory in the world, for the sake of the world. If we offer people good news about what God has done in Jesus Christ, and do not offer good news about how what God has

hidden under layer upon layer of paint. The song of freedom in South Africa, with a chorus of reconciliation. A young man given trust to do a new thing well when the elder could so easily do it better and more quickly. A young woman allowed and encouraged to dream beyond the constraints that bind her mother and her father. A spouse who says, "I'm sorry" and the partner who forgives. The cop who brings the young offender home from jail for Christmas dinner. The family who embraces his decision with warmth and hospitality. The three who push the car out of the snow-bank. The homeless man who calls 911 to report the tycoon's heart attack. The tycoon who just walked by without seeing him. The cassette role that comes to the house of loss or danger. All risk, all cost, all giving something to another that might well be kept for self. All rooted in the heart of love that beats at the heart of the universe, all deserving to be caught up and celebrated when we celebrate love's redeeming work, all errands on which love has sent a person to embody love's desire. It is not crazy talk to invite people into the conversation that has been going on since Calvary and empty tomb. Seeds of love to be nourished by the story of love's victory, lovers in struggle, mud and loss to hear how love redeems love's work.

How rich our evangelism if it touched the many lives who long to love like that—who love like that and long to know it matters.

The Reverend
D. Linda Corry
B.A., B.Th., Dip.Min., OACCPP
Psychotherapist

(905) 634-7858
526 Guelph Line
Burlington ON
L7R 3M4

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A safe place to become...



Being in Grenada



BILL MOUS
DIVINITY STUDENT

Greetings from the beautiful island of Grenada—all three hundred and fifty square kilometres of mountainous rain forest terrain! With temperatures in the high twenties to low thirties, lots of sun and a great breeze, Grenada is a wonderful winter tourist destination. The island also has a strong agricultural sector producing much of the world's spices, including nutmeg, cinnamon and cloves, and thus Grenada is aptly nicknamed the Spice Isle.

As great as it might seem to be here for a vacation, rest and relaxation is not actually my primary goal. Instead I have been living here in the Diocese of the Windward Islands since early February as part of my second year internship through a programme of the General Synod, the Theological Students' International Internship programme (TSIIP).

A lesson in patience and humility

My first couple weeks of life in Grenada were ones of intense learning! Everything was new, from superficial things like the food and driving on the other side of the road, to more substantive things like societal values and attitudes. Even my first year at university couldn't compare to the sense of wonder and bewilderment I experienced during my first week on the island. Although the intensity has decreased somewhat, the learning has not ceased. There is so much to take in that I find myself frustrated at times trying to handle the amount of new information I need to assimilate! Finding my way into the culture of Grenada and Caribbean Anglicanism has certainly been a lesson in patience and humility; however, slowly but surely, I'm beginning to grasp the basic values and practices of each.

So how was I so fortunate to go abroad for my internship? I am one of four students that, through TSIIP, the Anglican Church of Canada sent abroad to serve in a few of our partner churches throughout the Anglican Communion. The programme aims to increase awareness of global concerns among theological students, to increase students' commitment to our church's mission and ministry and to give prospective clergy some cross-cultural experience.

In its fifteen year history, TSIIP has placed forty-one students in countries throughout the world. Placements are generally three months in addition to a three week pre-internship training session and a post internship debriefing at the Scarborough Mission Centre run by the Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries. Travel and training costs are paid for by the programme, while the host diocese or parish picks up costs relating to accommodation and meals.

Having arrived in February, my stay will take me through season of Lent and into Easter. During Lent, we in Canada generally begin looking forward to the arrival of spring. Yet there is no distinct transition here in Grenada. Although it may seem strange, I actually miss how our Canadian weather seems to parallel our religious season of Lent and come Easter, life springs forth abundantly once again, as we celebrate the Resurrection and warmer weather. In any case, the weather here is quite nice; the norm being about 30° C and sunny.

It's all about 'being'

So what exactly will I be doing here? Well, in addition to participating in the daily services, preaching on Fridays and a couple of Sundays, and undertaking pastoral visits at the local hospital, I'll be leading a weekly assembly at the Anglican junior school, leading a Christian Education series on the nature and role of the Anglican Communion, making a trip to Barbados to visit the Codrington College, the provincial seminary of the West Indies, and even leading a weekly devotion programme on Radio GBN!

It'll be a busy time, with much to

do and learn. But a lot of the internship, I think, will be about being. Being present in the community of St. George's and, in the larger context, the country of Grenada; participating in the life of the community, observing, sharing, and in a lot of ways being dependent. I think this is where the transformation will take place—sure we can do lots of things, but it seems to me that it is in being that we are transformed.

My internship, by invitation of Bishop Leopold Friday of the Diocese of the Windward Islands, is taking place under the direction of the Rev'd Canon Christian Glasgow at the parish of St. George's Anglican Church. St. George's, located in the capital of Grenada which bears the same name, is a five point parish. The mother church, St. George's, remains heavily damaged and without a roof from Hurricane Ivan. Sunday services are conducted at St. George's Anglican Senior School, while daily Eucharistic services are conducted in the side chapel of the ruined church.

Ivan the Terrible

In 2004, Hurricane Ivan ripped through Grenada as a category 3 hurricane, with winds of up to 210 km/h, causing 39 deaths and nearly one billion dollars in damage. It was perhaps the most significant event in Grenada's history, certainly in the last century. I can only compare "Ivan the Terrible," as some Grenadians refer to the hurricane, to what North America faced immediately following the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Life after the fateful storm ripped through the island has been irrevocably changed. Time in Grenada is now measured in terms of pre-Ivan and post-Ivan, and with it has come many changes to life on the island.

St. George's four daughter churches fared no better in the wake of Ivan and are still in various stages of disrepair. St. Alban's in Mt. Moritz and St. Vincent's in Morne Jaloux have their roofs back on and are able to hold worship services again, while St. Luke's in Grenville Vale has only recently, thanks to the efforts of a reconstruction team from the diocese of Calgary, been rebuilt from the ground up.

While an Ash Wednesday service was conducted at St. Luke's, regular services won't resume for a while because the interior of the church remains in poor condition. The Ash Wednesday service was an incredible service to take part in—the first in two years at this church. In addition the Ash Wednesday liturgy, it included a special prayer of thanksgiving for the Calgarians who had reconstructed it. The local parishioners were visibly happy to be back worshipping in the building, and although there is still much to do, I think a bit of healing happened that afternoon as the community mended another wound left by Hurricane Ivan.

St. Peter's in Beaulieu, on the other hand, still sits exposed on the side of a hill, its bare foundation as the only visible reminder that a church once stood there. Yet the faithful congregation of St. Peter's has given to me a very real and concrete example to the expression "a church is more than its building" as they continue to meet in the local Catholic Church every week.

It was quite a shock for me to view the damage and imagine worshipping in churches so badly damaged. Yet the parishioners of St. George's have done just that, with faith and devotion that I'm only beginning to comprehend. Throughout all of this, their hope shines through the carnage of Ivan.

are grateful that God has provided them with a place to gather for worship. In adopting the government's motto "building back better," the parish of St. George's has also taken time to discern the new possibilities for its churches left in Ivan's wake. Canon Glasgow estimates it will still be another five to ten years before repairs to all the churches are complete.

Our commonality

The context of ministry in Grenada is without a doubt different from the context of parish ministry in Niagara. Yet despite the differences of our context, I continue to smile when I overhear conversations about the church offering nothing for people in their twenties or people worrying about church finances; when I see the front row of the church empty, or see the Sunday school children rush into the service at the offertory hymn; and when I hear the collect for purity or hymns like "great is thy faithfulness" being sung aloud.

I smile because I am reminded that even though our contexts are vastly different, we have so much more in common. Paul writes in Galatians that we "are all children of God through faith" (3:26). "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female" (3:28); no longer black or white, rich or poor, gay or straight. It is through



Canon Christian Glasgow stands in front of St. George's Anglican Church.



The view of St. George's church from the back of the church. Only the sanctuary and side chapel remained standing in Ivan's wake.

It has also been a time of renewed ecumenicalism, as no denomination was spared Ivan's wrath. Congregations of all denominations have shared resources. In Grenville Vale, for example, the Methodist congregation which suffered less damage offered its space for worship on Sundays after Ivan. While one has to compete with booming public address system of the local Pentecostal church, the parishioners

our faith and common humanity that we are able shed these cloaks which separate or makes us distinctive, and be united but not uniform in faith.

My time in Grenada, though only partly complete, has opened my eyes to many new realities—both theologically and culturally, and will without a doubt shape my life and my ministry for years to come.

On the outside Spirit Quest strikes again looking in



JOSH MORRISON
STUDENT - UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

As I write this, I realize that the Diocese is a-twitter over the news of Bishop Ralph Spence's impending retirement, and the upcoming election of his successor. I also realize that with all that has happened recently in the wider Anglican Church that the most likely 'elephant in the room' at the election will be the debate over blessing same-sex unions. And this is where I've started to see a problem arising for the future of our Diocese.

Not at home

I myself am currently without a parish. After my father, a priest, went on full time disability with multiple sclerosis, I have floated through two parishes, neither of which fulfilled my new spiritual needs. I have had the fortune to be involved in several events run by the Diocese's Youth Ministry program, and these have spiritually fed me for the time being as I attend university. As the son of a priest I have seen the inner workings of this Diocese and the Anglican Church on an intimate level. As a young man I have seen how youth struggle to find a place in our diocese. As a recent synod delegate I have seen firsthand how the Diocese is handling this issue and it worries me.

Personally, I have not felt at home in this Diocese the way I used to because of the way that both sides of the same-sex union dispute have become forces of division, rather than unity. Movements like Essentials and Integrity have both become antagonistic to each other, and have fanned the flames of this debate.

There has been talk of separation, of legal action over the buildings of congregations who may choose to leave the Anglican Church of Canada, and the politicking has gotten out of hand. It has come to the point that I am afraid to try and join a new parish lest I be drawn into the middle of the fatalistic posturing and petty squabbling like I was in my last parish, so I remain on the outside, looking in with fear for the future of our Diocese and hoping that the future will bring about a change in the way we as a Diocese look divisive issues.

Unity of the diocese a priority

As I grew up in the Anglican Church and the Diocese of Niagara under

the levelheaded leadership of Ralph Spence, I came to love both for being able to overcome divisive issues like the ordination of female priests through the Christian love that allowed us to find compromises with each other.

I saw this unity first hand at my father's last parish. There were members of the congregation who disagreed with women being involved in church to the point that they didn't want young females to act as altar servers. But through compromise, faith and love they continued to come to church while expressing their opinions, and people who dissented with them welcomed them, because it was the Christian thing to do. And the best part was all the parties involved did not feel obligated to agree to disagree with one another; they did it with a happy and open heart and by remembering the Two Greatest Commandments.

As the debate over blessing same-sex unions has heated up, I have felt like I'm caught in between two giants fighting, both claiming to have the best interests of our Diocese in mind. It doesn't matter what my own opinion on the matter is, because to me, the unity of the Diocese is my number one priority. So far the Diocese of Niagara, which has always been an example of love and devotion, has stayed together, much of which I attribute to the strong leadership of Bishop Spence. The harmony we have shared up to this point could be threatened based on who is chosen as the next Bishop.

It's about the love of neighbour

On the ballot there will no doubt be candidates from both sides of this debate, all of whom will carry partisan agendas into the election with the hopes of furthering their own ideals. It is my hope however that there will also be candidates who are more interested in finding a peaceful solution to this debate that will keep the diocese unified. It is my hope and prayer that the delegates at the election look at the candidates before them and put aside their personal opinions on all issues and choose a bishop who will work in the best interests of unity and Christian love to keep together the wonderful, diverse and loving community we have built in Niagara, regardless of what is decided by any Synod.

The Diocese of Niagara has been my home for all of my life. It is also home to many other faithful Christians. I would hate to see it torn apart by politics when it has lasted through so many storms already in a demonstration of the love we have for our neighbours and fellow Christian brothers and sisters.



Front: Vanessa Rundle, Mac Armstrong, Maggie Armstrong, Ken Garland, Clair Macaulay-Newcombe, Josh Morrison, Todd Miles, Meg DeForest, Barbara Jean Lick, Amberlee Boulton. In tree: Ben Reid-Howells, Joel Ellis, Joel Pastway, Pam Dudych.

AMBERLEE BOULTON
STUDENT - UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

Once again Spirit Quest has proven to be a relaxing and worthy retreat. This year was especially interesting because of the raised age, university and high school students alike were able to communicate and share on a common spiritual level. The theme of "Soul Tending" brought the delegates together in a common bond of reflection and observance.

Having participated in Spirit Quest for five consecutive years,

it is always wonderful to see the new individuals come and experience a program that is theological and spiritually rich to a degree that I believe, is the pivotal part of this program that separates Spirit Quest from other ministry events. From the movie Jesus Camp and topics such as "forgiveness" and "keeping the Sabbath" the community had a number of in depth discussions and chances to hear one another's opinions and the varying degrees of ideas and faith within our Anglican youth and young

adult community.

Walking away from this weekend, I feel I have observed another pilgrimage in which my soul is allowed to rejoice, grieve, and be tended. It is interesting to walk through this program over so many years, coming in as a youth and leaving as an adult. I feel this program has grown with me and continues to change and develop into a wonderful venue for young adults to spiritually explore themselves and question ideas in a safe and loving environment.

JOSH MORRISON
STUDENT - UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

Three times I've attended the program Spirit Quest, and for the third time I'm happy to write about it to try and spread the word to other youth in the Diocese. Spirit Quest is a small program that is much quieter and more reflective than the other youth programs like the Niagara Youth Conference. It runs for a weekend at the Unity Retreat Centre in Hamilton, and its aim is to provide a time of spiritual exploration for youth who are looking for something more on their journey.

Every time I arrive at Spirit Quest, I have felt lost in some way. Every time I leave I feel like I've put myself back on the path, even if I didn't find the answers to my

problems. It's a time to make realizations about yourself, which the quiet atmosphere is very conducive too. It's hard to run from yourself and God when there are no distractions around.

Every year the staff at Spirit Quest aim to guide the thinking of the weekend by providing a theme and meditations, prayers and worship based on that theme. This year the theme was "Soul Tending". It focused on facilitating discussion on what is a soul, how do we interact with our soul, how can we tend to it and keep it healthy, and how it connects us to God. After all of the activities around the theme the weekend always closes with a worship service put together entirely by participants in the program. This

kind of collaborative and interactive worship is one of the most unique and special experiences because of how personal everything in the service is. Spirit Quest provides from the busy world, and ending on this kind of worship is one of the best ways to feel ready to take on the universe again with a loving heart and confident in your connection with God.

Spirit Quest is one of the best events I have ever experienced, and I heartily recommend it to any youth who is looking for guidance, calm or just a break from life. It has a way of coming out of nowhere and helping you grow in the Spirit in the most unexpected way. It's an adventure, and it's 110% worth it for any youth in the diocese.

BEN REID-HOWELLS
STUDENT - ST. DAVID AND ST. PATRICK'S, GUELPH

Spirit Quest is an event like none other. I remember signing up for it half an hour after getting home, after a life changing week at Niagara Youth Conference. I had been so affected by Niagara Youth Conference that I knew I would need another shot of personal growth sometime in the

near future. It didn't let me down.

This year's Spirit Quest was my first, and it had every element necessary to be a "Soul Tending" retreat. The quiet solo time allowed for illuminating introspection, the dynamic leaders and participants made for a unique weekend, full of imaginative activities, even the building itself was full of a certain

peacefulness. Although the weekend seemed only casually enlightening, I found myself returning to regular life with recharged batteries and a new fire in the belly, or clarity of vision I had not expected. Without hesitation I suggest Spirit Quest to any and all youths who feel that there's something within that cannot be fully exercised at the gym.

Love is the Family Winter Retreat weekend



JEFF WARD
ASSISTANT CURATE - ST. SIMON'S, OAKVILLE

Last fall, I was invited by Christyn Perkons, Program Consultant in Children, Youth & Family Ministries, to be the Chaplain for the Family Winter Retreat. Christyn and I met to do some planning around this weekend event which brings together families from all over the diocese to spend time playing, worshipping, recreating and resting. While our meetings had given me a sense of the agenda for February 16-18, when I arrived at Canterbury Hills early Friday evening, I really had no idea what to expect. As I prepared for worship, I kept looking to the door anticipating an onslaught of children and their parents. Well, the onslaught was gradual in coming as people slowly filtered in. Busy people struggled to break away from their very busy lives, and drove to the Camp after making their trek home through busy rush hour traffic from work and school.

Helping Children feel comfortable

By the time the pilgrims arrived at the camp, they were a little tired and a little desperate. They were also eager to settle in and begin the process of relaxing and having fun. It took a little while to get people in the mind set that they really had escaped the busyness but soon they were able to let go and enjoy time with siblings, children, and parents. By the time the worship was half over, people were loosening up and having fun. Families joined together to enact what love is and isn't to them, and by the time worship ended, everyone was having fun, laughing, and embracing.

As chaplain at the retreat, I thought that my job was to offer

some different and meaningful worship experiences for the weekend campers. As I came to learn, this was only a small part of my role. Perhaps my most important mission was to help the children feel comfortable and help the parents to cope with the inevitable challenges of the weekend away from home. I also found out that I too could have some fun!

Laughter and smiling faces

The agenda offered all members of the family lots of time to play together, sing together, make music together, hike together, eat together, toboggan together, worship together, and even nap together. This is the most important aspect of this weekend retreat; to spend lots of time together—a challenge for many families in their busy 'real' lives. It has been a long time since I have heard so much laughter and seen so many happy smiling faces.

The programming that is scheduled offers activities for children and young teens under the supervision of volunteer staff and allows time to spend with parents sharing in fun together. The volunteers, Rosie Hopkins, Glenis Boyce and Jay Blackwood, offered age-appropriate games, crafts, hikes, snow play, and music in a safe environment so parents could spend some quality time alone. Even the parents were offered the opportunity to share and learn in a parent workshop intended to help them thrive in relationship with their partners and in their relationships with their children. We were blessed with amazing weather. It was brilliantly sunny both Saturday and Sunday and though it was not very cold,

it was cold enough to preserve the pristine and deep white snow. The children played for hours on the "luge" run that they built and others enjoyed a crisp and challenging hiking experience.

The theme of the weekend, "Love Is..." was adapted from a beautiful children's book by Wendy Anderson Halperin. The book illustrates the love passage from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 13, "The way of love." The book's story offered a backdrop, both literally in the family souvenir photos and figuratively in the worship and activities for the weekend and the theme provided a gentle and nurturing flow for families seeking rejuvenation.

Love is...

It was hard not to smile often during the weekend and there were many stories for each of the families to take home that were unique to their experience there. We played cards, read in front of the fire, ate truly wonderful and eclectic meals, watched movies together, and got to know each other in the slow and relaxing time available to us. Highlights for those at the retreat were the drumming, the sacred circle dancing, and the adult jazz café. It is hard to imagine a better way to spend a few days with family on an otherwise blah February winter weekend whose greatest possibilities might be more driving, running around, cooking, cleaning, and seeking something else to occupy our children.

Love is two days and two nights with family and friends in a beautiful forest taking time for fun and relaxation. Just like those who came this year, you may never want to go back home!



ALL MY RELATIONS: THE JOURNEY CONTINUES



William, and his mother, Judy Steers, enjoy "The Art of Crafting a Hand Drum," one of four workshops offered by First Nations presenters. Over seventy participants gathered for drumming, dancing, workshops and an aboriginal dinner. More pictures of the event can be found online at <http://www.jsimkins.wondernet.ca/gallery>.

Encounter World Religions

Saturday, May 12, 2007

1:00 – 5:00 pm

St. George's, St. Catharines

Guest Speaker:

JW Windland, Founder
Encounter World Religions Centre

Presenting:

To See, To Be, To Do: How World Religions Define God, the Universe and Reality, and Sacred Symbols

An interactive and fun experience for interested people of all ages!

No cost but please register at
905-527-1316 (ext. 460) or
christyn.perkons@niagara.anglican.ca

Sponsored by Diocese of Niagara Children & Family Ministries and St. George's Church

Developing an effective Parish Youth Ministry



CHRISTYN PERKONS
CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

Youth Ministry is about more than getting a couple of volunteers to meet with the teenagers in the parish once a week to have fun or do a service project. It's about more than asking the teenagers to set up for the pancake supper. It's about more than having teenagers who serve. Those are elements of youth ministry but to be effective, you need more. But getting to the 'more' is not a quick fix.

Effective youth ministry accomplishes the following:

- Develops young leaders.
- Supports youth in moving through the many challenges of adolescence.
- Encourages youth to develop meaningful relationships with adults other than their parents.
- Responds to the particular challenges of the adolescent's faith walk.
- Teaches young people spiritual tools and provides them with resources.
- Helps young people identify their God-given gifts.
- Draws youth into parish life as functioning team members.
- Provides a safe and inviting faith-based space and activities for youth to socialize with their peers.
- Allows the parish to be refreshed and renewed by the energy and perspective that youth bring to worship, formation and play.
- Helps youth to broaden their perspective of the world outside the parish and how they can impact it
- Encourages and advocates for young people to fully participate in the mission and ministry of the church.

To get there, you need a plan and the following begins the description of a process to help your parish develop such a plan. If you don't have a current youth ministry program, now is an excellent time to begin this process. If you have a youth ministry program that has elements that don't seem to be working

for you, you may find this process helpful. If you have a functioning youth ministry at your parish, some aspects of this may serve as useful check ups. So, your goal is to develop a framework that supports your current and future youth ministry needs.

You need to determine needs, develop a vision, and identify directions, goals and roles.

And you need a team to work on this! A team shares the load so that the work does not fall on one person's shoulders and the results do not represent one person's perspective. Youth Ministry is the responsibility of the whole congregation, and representatives of the whole congregation should undertake this planning process. Ideally, the parish needs to create a Youth Ministry planning team comprised of young people and adults, and should include both genders, varying ages, lay and clergy, and the differing cultural groups which make up your community. You might want to consider including parishioners who work with youth in their work or other volunteer arenas.

How do you get parishioners to agree to serve on such a planning team? You create a job description so prospective volunteers know what their responsibilities will be, how much time you anticipate the task taking, who on the staff will be supporting their work, and what training will be provided. And you make it very clear that you are not asking this group to assume responsibility for youth ministry in the parish; this is a working group for the planning process only. It's important that people are individually invited to participate on the planning team so that they understand you are inviting their particular gifts to this work. A blanket announcement to the parish is unlikely to net you any volunteers because people will assume that the announcement is directed at someone else or that they don't have the gifts you are looking for. A personal invitation says "I value what you have to contribute to this work." Once you have a working group of 5 to 6 for a smaller parish, 8 to 10 for a larger parish, then the planning team begin the needs assessment.

Next month we'll be discussing the how to determine the needs and develop a vision. If you don't want to wait for the next two installments, Christyn Perkons or Joyce Wilton would be happy to work with your parish on developing an effective parish youth ministry. Just call us at 905-527-1316.

A taste of Heaven on Earth



CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

SUSAN A. LITTLE
ST. JOHN, HAMILTON

What single event in the Diocese of Niagara gathers more people together, albeit in different locations, than any other diocesan event? Children's Festival!

Each year this celebration draws together over 600 children, adult volunteers and parent supervisors for an exciting day. And this year, there are two extra-ordinary notes to this: Children's Festival is both celebrating its 25th anniversary in Hamilton as well as having a fourth location as it spreads to Oakville for the second year in a row.

Twenty-five years ago the first Children's Festival took place in Christ Church Cathedral, gathering together the children from parishes in central Hamilton in what was then known as the Hamilton Archdeaconry.

When the planners greeted over a hundred people that June day in 1983, the children were much different than they are today in 2007. So, too, were the songs, crafts and games that happened at that first Festival. Although some of the original songs and games have reappeared at the Festivals in various forms and frequencies over the past twenty-five years, most of them have changed.

Are you old enough to remember being at Children's Festival? What year? What was the theme?

If your memory is fading or you think you need someone to accompany you as you travel down 'memory lane', then plan on attending Children's Festival 25th Anniversary party on Saturday, June 9 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Hamilton.

The 25th Anniversary Celebration will

take place from 4 pm until 7 pm. There will be displays and special activities to help you enjoy yourself while you refresh your memory. A potluck supper will begin at 5 pm.

Twenty-five Children's Festival banners will be at St. John's, too, one for each of the Festivals. Will you be able to find your name on the ones you attended?

Who's invited? If your name is on a banner or you're a guest of someone who qualifies, you're invited. That could be thousands! Yikes!

Indeed, a whole generation of children has grown up in Children's Festival! People who were once children attending the Festival now bring their own children to the event. People who once danced down the aisles in time to a song now lead children from activity to activity. Grandmothers bring their grandchildren, and neighbours bring their families and friends.

Why is Children's Festival so popular? Some say it's the wide variety and the high-quality crafts, or the lively singing, while others cite the inventive games and the interactive drama to explain its popularity. Some comment on the wonderful cooperative tone and the love that seems to permeate the whole event. Others say it's the gathering of all sorts of people together in God's name that explains it. Whatever it is, the truth is evident in its longevity and its ongoing appeal in Lincoln and Brock, Mohawk and Undermount, Trafalgar and Wellington Regions.

Most who attend say Children's Festival is a taste of heaven on earth but that's for you to find out for yourself. If you haven't been to one, plan to attend one that is happening near you!

Servers Fest through the lens of an eight year-old



KIENAN SHORTT
ST. SIMON'S, OAKVILLE

This was my first time going to a workshop. I love being an acolyte at St. Simon's. My step-dad is the priest there. When I got to the Servers Fest, I said, "Mom, this used to be your workplace right?" My Mom said, "yes." When I walked by the guy at the front desk, he said, "hello," and I said, "hello back." When I walked into Myler Hall, I signed up for the Artful Prayer workshop and

then we went to another table to get a name tag. I didn't know that the colour of the name tag had an age group so I picked my favourite colour, green! This part is funny. I then went into the big church to find my group. When I found which group I was in, I was surprised it was the 14-19 group! Wow! I had to run back to Myler Hall to get a yellow name tag so I would be in the 8-11 group! I turn 8 on March 4.

I watched a video. After awhile it started to get interesting! My favourite part about going to Servers Fest was eating pizza, drinking Coke (we don't drink this at home very often) and having a scavenger hunt in the Cathedral for church things. Did you know there is someone buried at the front of the church? I was excited to put on my robe because I didn't know we got to dress up for the service. I want to come back next year!

CHRISTYN PERKONS
CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

Servers Fest is an annual diocesan event hosted by Christ's Church Cathedral and planned by the staff of the Cathedral and the Program Consultant in Children, Youth and Family Ministries to celebrate and affirm the ministry of serving. Volunteer staff and presenters dedicate a Saturday to educating, engaging and fostering relationships between approximately 80 servers of all ages from across the diocese through a rotation of morning activities that give everyone a common experience. Exposing the servers to the minutiae of Cathedral lore, a rousing game of Servers Quest, a power point meditation "On Holy Ground" and the tools of the ministry—bells, smells and more—broadens their experience and knowledge of their Anglican heritage and gives servers a taste of church through other eyes.

The afternoon workshops allow them to focus on one area, an ongoing passion or trying a new experience, and this year's offerings included choral singing, drumming, baking Eucharistic bread, artful prayer and labyrinth/hip hop meditation. It's another opportunity to learn, to cement new friendships, to develop faith tools. Servers Fest invites people from across the diocese to connect with their Cathedral; teaches and engages participants in a wide variety of faith activities, and celebrates and affirms their serving ministry. Servers Fest also highlights the many gifts of a variety of presenters from across the diocese!

Take part in Refugee Rights Day on April 4

WHAT IS REFUGEE RIGHTS DAY IN CANADA?

April 4, 1985 was a milestone for refugee rights in Canada. On that day, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects the right of refugee claimants in Canada to life, liberty and security of the person, and that claimants are therefore entitled to an oral hearing, in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice and international law.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY TO OBSERVE REFUGEE RIGHTS DAY

Endorse the Canadian Council for Refugees Manifesto on Family Reunification.



COLLEEN SYM
SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

Many of us have received those postcards from family and friends sent from exotic locations informing us that they wish we were there. The more fortunate of us have sent those "wish you were here" messages to those back home.

The "wish you were here" message takes on a whole different perspective when you view it through the lens of a refugee family in Canada waiting for re-unification with a family member who had to be left behind.

The Canadian Council for Refugees has started a campaign to raise awareness and promote change to address the problem of delay in reuniting families separated in the process of escaping persecution or fear of persecution in their homeland. The campaign is called "Wish you were here: Campaign for speedy family reunification."

The federal Immigration and Refugee Protection Act promotes refugee family reunification by allowing refugees recognized in Canada to include family members overseas by adding them to

their application for permanent residence.

In order to be recognized as a "refugee" in Canada, everyone claiming refugee status from inside Canada must satisfy the Immigration and Refugee Board of the legitimacy of their claim. If successful in doing so, the refugee is entitled to apply for permanent resident status in Canada. This process usually takes six months to a year. After being a permanent resident for three years, the person can apply to be a Canadian citizen.

Once the refugee status of the person here in Canada is recognized as legitimate, they become a protected person. Only then can they start the process of family reunification. This means adequately proving relationship with those left behind to the satisfaction of Immigration officials and including them in their application for permanent residence within 180 days of being found to be a protected person. The application must include processing fees of \$550 per adult and \$150 per child. Those included in the application must undergo a medical examination for public safety and clear security provisions.

Statistics from the Canadian Council for Refugees indicated that in half of the cases like this, refugees have to wait more than 13 months for family members to be processed, one in five has to wait more than 26 month and some have to wait much longer.

The impact of prolonged separa-

tion on these families is enormous. Those left behind are often left in situations of enormous risk from threat of war, poverty or insecurity. Refugees in Canada describe that the anxious waiting causes severe psychological and physical upset.

Many suffer from depression that impacts their ability to integrate into Canadian society. Those left behind may lose trust in those in Canada thinking that reunification is not being taken seriously or it would have happened sooner. Finally, if reunification is achieved the relationship between the family members can never be what it was. Feelings of abandonment and betrayal or simply a growing apart because of separation take their toll.

Carolyn Vanderlip, a member of the Diocesan Outreach Committee and who is the Diocesan Refugee Sponsorship Coordinator says:

"We really have to think about the impact that delays or bars to family reunification have, both on refugee newcomers who are separated from their loved ones, and on Canadian society. We cannot expect people to integrate and "get on with their lives" when their loved ones have been left behind in poverty, facing persecution, or in dangerous situations.

"We need to consider how we ourselves would react to being separated, for years or even permanently, from our child, our spouse, our parents, brothers, sisters, etc. How would we feel knowing that they were still living a precarious existence, while we were safe in Canada and being expected to learn a new language, adjust to a new culture, and become productive members of society?"

In that situation I know that I personally would use every ounce of energy I had to reunite my family before worrying about my own settlement and integration issues."

The reasons cited for the long delays include: The permanent

resident application for the person in Canada must be granted before the family members outside Canada are able to travel here, this may take up to a year; medical examinations are current only for a year so if processing takes longer examinations must be repeated; proving relationship is often difficult because of inability to produce identity documents; DNA testing may be required.

Carolyn Vanderlip describes the delays as a "terrible situation for the newcomer to Canada, and a terrible situation for Canada - instead of working on settlement and integration into Canadian society, people are caught in limbo, concentrating on trying to reunite with their family members."

This April 4, Refugee Rights Day, take action to persuade politicians that policies and practices must be changed to promote speedy family reunification and to encourage the federal government to make speedy family reunification a priority.

You can do this by endorsing the Manifesto on Family Reunification. Many groups including the PWRDF and KAIROS already have.

Endorsing the Manifesto on Family Reunification is an easy process:

1. After discussing and approving the Manifesto within your parish or organization, post it in a visible location testifying to your commitment.
2. Let the office of Canadian Council for Refugees know that you have signed on to the Manifesto at ccr4@web.ca, so that the Council can add your organization's name to the growing list of groups that have endorsed it.
3. Talk to other groups in your community that might support the CCR Manifesto on Family Reunification: community service organizations, unions, professional associations, faith assemblies, schools, colleges and university groups, your city or town council among others.

Manifesto on family reunification

We recognize that all refugees and immigrants contribute to society and that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society, which governments have an obligation to protect, under international human rights law.

We affirm as central the need to respect the integrity of the family unit and ensure that families are not separated for any longer than necessary. We further recognize that the notion of 'family' has different meanings in different cultures, and encourage a definition of that which respects the reality of many family clusters.

We have particular concerns for children separated from their parents and affirm that speedy family reunification should be of the highest priority for any society.

We deplore any immigration or refugee system that is indifferent to the hardships caused by separation of families, and we call for the removal of any and all barriers to family reunification. We underline the costs of family separation, most importantly for those kept separate, but also for society at large which is also the loser when families are kept apart by the immigration system.

We particularly grieve the ongoing stress and anxiety that is imposed on refugee families separated by persecution and violence, and we make a renewed call for these families to be reunited as quickly as possible. We denounce any government that acts in our name to arbitrarily and cruelly turn a blind eye to the risks to which these families are unnecessarily exposed once a family member has been accepted for protection in Canada.

We therefore call on our government to promote an immigration and refugee system that respects basic rights by favouring the speedy reunification of families in the interests of the healthy, humane, respectful and productive integration of newcomers. We also call for the processing of family members of refugees, especially separated children, to be done in Canada.

AN EASTER MEDITATION
JESUS' RESURRECTION ACCORDING TO MARK

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body.

Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.

As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

"Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him.

But go, tell his disciples and Peter, "He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you."

Mark (New International Version)

www.reunification.ca

Wish you were here!

CONSEIL CANADIEN POUR LES RÉFUGIÉS
CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR REFUGEES

Family Reunification Campaign



We've been there before

CHRISTOPHER M. GRABIEC
EDITOR

In the first 4 centuries the church struggled with its view of Christ. As one would expect the views of Christ's nature and existence were myriad. The Council of Nicaea in 327 declared the Church's position on the co-existent full divinity and humanity of Christ. The First Council of Constantinople made it known in its first canon where everyone stood who did not agree:

"The Faith of the Three Hundred and Eighteen Fathers assembled at Nice in Bithynia shall not be set aside, but shall remain firm. And every heresy shall be anathematized, particularly that of the Eunomians or Eudoxians, and that of the Semi-Arians or Pneumatomachi, and that of the Sabellians, and that of the Marcellians, and that of the Photinians, and that of the Apollinarians."

That same council would define the divinity of the Holy Spirit and declared that Holy Spirit "proceeds from the Father." Later the Council of Persia in 410 would say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the "Father and the Son" (Filioque). The synod of Toledo in Spain would actually add the phrase "and the Son" to the Nicene Creed.

By 1054 the argument about Filioque would contribute to the great divide between the East and the West. In 1274 at the second council of Lyons the Roman Church condemned those who "presume to deny" that that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

In 1517 Luther posted his 95 objections to the Church and indul-

gences on the church door in Wittenberg. In 1520 Luther's writings were burned in Rome and in 1521 Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther. This was accompanied by an order to burn all of Luther's books. That same year Luther was declared an outlaw and a heretic by Emperor Charles V.

Without much reference to the turbulent relationship between Henry VIII and Pope Clement the VII, we look to the ongoing historical battle regarding Anglican orders. In September of 1896 Leo XIII, Bishop of Rome, decided that Anglicans were so far from the Christian tradition that the orders of their clerics were invalid.

History lesson over and, well, let's just be thankful that this is all a part of our ancient past. People in the church were obviously far more primitive and unable to deal with differences in opinion. They certainly could not accept criticism and when they had strayed were most unwilling to change their ways. So, excommunication, war, division and worse were all part of how they handled things. Yes, thank God it's part of our past.

Just one more thing: The Primates Meeting Communiqué on February 19, 2007. Perhaps this is an example of how we continue to deal with conflict in the 21st century. Let me quote from the primate's communiqué:

■ At the heart of our tensions is the belief that The Episcopal Church has departed from the standard of teaching on human sexuality accepted by the Communion in the 1998 Lambeth Resolution 1.10 by

consenting to the Episcopal election of a candidate living in a committed same-sex relationship, and by permitting Rites of Blessing for same-sex unions. The Episcopal ministry of a person living in a same-sex relationship is not acceptable to the majority of the Communion.

■ In particular, the Primates request, through the Presiding Bishop, that the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church:

1. Make an unequivocal common covenant that the bishops will not authorise any Rite of Blessing for same-sex unions in their dioceses or through General Convention and
2. Confirm that the passing of Resolution B033 of the 75th General Convention means that a candidate for Episcopal orders living in a same-sex union shall not receive the necessary consent unless some new consensus on these matters emerges across the Communion.

■ The Primates request that the answer of the House of Bishops is conveyed to the Primates by the Presiding Bishop by September 30, 2007.

■ If the reassurances requested of the House of Bishops cannot in good conscience be given, the relationship between The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion as a whole remains damaged at best, and this has consequences for the full participation of the Church in the life of the Communion.

One has to wonder if in 2000 years plus, we've learned anything about how we treat one another in the midst of our pluralistic or diverse points of view. Yes, we've certainly been there before.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Taking a stand for an inclusive church

My first read through of the article "Taking a stand for an inclusive church" in February's *Niagara Anglican* left me with a very strong feeling of wonderment. There was so much hurt and anger and frustration expressed, along with some things that need more research and some that I don't think are true. But I thank Ronald for his honesty.

Do people really think that Essentials has caused this division in the church? Would it not be the synod that decided to go ahead and not wait for the next Lambeth? Who defied the majority of the world-wide Anglican Communion? Was it not a Bishop rather than Essentials? Do people really think that Essentials is being funded internationally? I checked with the national treasurer and was assured that that wasn't true. Once, in the years following 1994, an individual from the States gave a nominal donation. Many people give of their time and energy as volunteers and pick up their own expenses and some of the National leaders get financial assistance. None of that comes from outside Canada.

The Scriptures are described as

being sharper than any two edged sword, able to separate between joints and marrow (please don't take that literally). It cuts both ways. So to use Scripture to bludgeon someone is a dangerous task. Remember that when pointing a finger at someone, three are pointing back at the pointer. There are safeguards for those who truly seek to follow our Lord Jesus to be found in Scripture. Jesus encourages each of us to seek, look and find.

My heart goes out to Ronald. To feel like a second-class person, denied his rights, is not easy to accept for anyone. To feel that the church is dragging its collective feet is very frustrating to say the least. Of course some of us don't like to be considered bigoted, intolerant and ignorant. Actually, I know that I am a sinner, loved, repentant, forgiven and redeemed by the mercy and love of God, through the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I say that in humility and amazement. What Amazing Grace! Thank you Lord! MARY KRUCKER
St. Georges, Lowville

The greatest priority for a Bishop

The list of attributes for leadership printed in the February issue of the *Niagara Anglican* was quite impressive, but nowhere did I find any mention of the need or expectation for the individual to have faith in God, have the ability to mentor someone in our Christian faith, or any knowledge of the Christian Faith or personal experience of 'knowing God', trusting in His mercy and forgiveness, etc.

It seems strange that the list provided for us in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 9-13 was not pointed out for further consideration. There Paul advises Timothy to look for someone who

holds the deep truths of faith with a clear conscience. Words like temperate, self-controlled, hospitable, with one wife, able to teach, not violent, gentle, not a lover of money, able to manage his own family well, a good reputation with outsiders are in Paul's list.

I would want to think that the spiritual maturity of an applicant would be of the greatest priority for a leader in a church and for a Bishop of a Diocese. After that a sociological assessment would help decide between applicants. MARY KRUCKER
St. Georges, Lowville

Finding the right person will be no small task

A thought provoking article in the March issue of the *Niagara Anglican*, "Choosing a Leader" identified a number of leadership attributes and skills that one might expect to find in the next elected Bishop of Niagara.

Although mostly secular, these concepts of leadership are certainly a necessary component. But there are other factors that are at least if not more important. Bishop Ralph Spence raised them in a recent charge to Synod when he spoke of the "three-legged stool" of Leadership, Stewardship, and Evangelism—the foundation for quality, development and sustainability of our parishes.

Our parishes face turbulent times, and I fear that relentless media coverage and politicized language may validate their sense of vulnerability. So I pray that we'll elect a strong leader who, like Bishop Spence,

will encourage them by emphasizing and promoting our Diocese's excellent Christian Stewardship and Evangelism programs.

Being Bishop is a tough, challenging job, and it takes an exceptional person to rise above myriad issues, positions, and ambiguity with full clarity, conviction, and perseverance. I pray that the new Bishop possesses the deep spirituality and liturgical knowledge of our current Bishop and a comparable sense of humour too.

Finding the right person will be no small task, and the impact of that decision will be remarkably significant and ultimately historical. All parishioners need to pray that the Spirit will bring clarity to the process, guidance to the candidates, and courage to the delegates who are directly involved on our behalf. JIM NEWMAN
Christ's Church Cathedral



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The scarcity and overuse of water

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

shareholders, not to the public. The City of Hamilton had a very negative experience and finally went back to public ownership.

Bottled water is being promoted so successfully that worldwide, its consumption has grown 18 times in the past 13 years to a staggering 138 billion litres. That's an industry of \$43 billion a year. For more myths and facts, read *Water: Tap into it!*

The CEO of Nestlé is quoted stating, "Selling water? We must be clever!" Clever means promoting bottled water as safe, safer than tap water. It's the symbol of a healthy, chic lifestyle. Yet at least 25% of bottled water sold in Canada is municipally generated water, sold at a minimal cost to Nestlé, Pepsi, Coca-Cola or Danone, and sold at high price to us naïve consumers.

You may wonder at this time how the concern about water relates to the work of the Primate's Fund. Add globalization to privatization and you have a new, yet old form of exploitation. When I recently bought a small bottle of water in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, I not only paid a staggering price of \$4.00, but discovered that the water was bottled in Fiji!

Cochabamba in Bolivia is a fa-

mous example. At the insistence of the World Bank, water supply was sold to a California based firm, Bechtel. The corporation demanded a 16% return on its investment. Consequently, the monthly cost of water for a household rose to \$20, out of a total income of \$100. Extensive and extended protests by the residents during which many were jailed and at least one person killed, brought about a reversal of the government's action.

Coca-Cola extracts so much water from the aquifers in Medhiganj, Uttar Pradesh, India, that the water level in a 3 km radius fell by 18 feet, causing many wells and ponds to dry up. Furthermore, the factory floods fields with highly contaminated waste water which has ruined previously fertile land and made many residents sick with skin and gastro-intestinal diseases. An Indian newspaper comments "If privatization of water is not curtailed soon, it is not difficult to imagine a scenario where all the water resources will be controlled by private waterlords, the interlinked river network will be in the hands of one of the big multi-national corporations, and water will be available in bottles only for a price that will be beyond the purchasing capacity of most common citizens of the country."

Multinational mining corporations have a scandalous track record

of poisoning water and ignoring human rights. The US/Canadian mining company Golden Star Resources has had two large scale cyanide spills in Ghana. I searched for "Ghana, cyanide" on Google and got 145,000 articles. A website "Mines and Communities" states, from Guyana to Ghana, disaster follows the Golden Star. Yet another cyanide incident has afflicted communities in Ghana. This time the

operation was safe! 16 tons of cyanide mixed with 32 million litres of water are used each day in a gold extraction process called cyanide leaching. In March 2005, KAIROS church leaders (coalition of Canadian churches) visited Cerro de San Pedro, the first Canadians not associated to the mining company. As a result a delegation from Cerro de San Pedro testified before a Parliamentary Standing Committee in

■ Invite a group of parishioners, neighbours, friends or colleagues to come to your home and brainstorm ideas of saving water; then meet again and compare what worked well for you; include all members of the family and make it a fun contest.

■ Find out whether your municipality has a clean water declaration; are there local groups that try to stop run-off pollution of ground water or industrial discharge of waste water into streams? Hear about their work and join them.

■ Write a letter, or better yet, start a letter writing campaign urging your local MP to ensure that the Canadian Government pass legislation that will hold Canadian corporations accountable for their actions at home and overseas.

■ Raise funds for PWRDF projects through which partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America bring safe drinking water to villages and homes.

■ Meditate about water, the source of all life. Pray for the courage and commitment to do all you can to sustain it.

Let not the enormity of the issue paralyze us into non-action. One voice breaks the silence; One flame denies darkness; One step forward propels motion; We can all make a difference.

“We are very good, as different nations and different cultures, to have a collective amnesia about our own [problems].
”

Deepa Mehta, Filmmaker

culprit is Bogoso Gold, owned by Golden Star of Canada. This was the company which, together with Cambior, operated the Omai gold mine in Guyana whose tailings dam collapse in August 1995 was among the worst environmental disasters ever recorded in Latin America."

Another Canadian mining company, Metallica Resources Inc. mines gold and silver in Mexico. Metallica's own environmental impact assessment showed that drinking water would be poisoned with cyanide and local residents would be displaced, yet concluded that the

Ottawa and asked for the Canadian Government to impose binding environmental and human rights on Canadian corporations overseas. However, in a ten year battle, the company has shown no accountability to either the residents, the Mexican Government or the UN related Food and Agricultural Organization. Read about these and other stories in *Water: Life Before Profit*.

Making a difference

The issue of water offers us many opportunities to doing something to make a difference:

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Editor
Christopher Grabiec
905-312-8444 (ext. 101)
newspaper@niagara.anglican.ca

Advertising
Ted Manning
905-680-0615
advertising@niagara.anglican.ca

Layout: Kayn Leduc

Proofreading: Bryan Stopps

Mailing Address
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Publishers Advisory Board
Pam Claridge: 519-941-6804
John Janisse: 905-312-8444 (ext. 102)
Geoffrey Purdell-Lewis: 905-628-4176
Canon Charles Stirling: 905-383-1088
Carol Summers: 905-772-5641

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 email or physical address of the author for verification purposes. The newspaper reserves the right to edit submissions.

CROWD FEVER: THE POWER OF EVIL

NISSA BASBAUM
RECTOR - TRANSFIGURATION, ST. CATHARINES

The auditorium was dark. The audience was hushed. On the screen before us, that particular day's viewing was just about to begin. It was a documentary, as were many of the movies in that class.

Film Studies 101, or whatever it was called, was not, by a long-shot, one of my favourite courses. I barely came out of it with a passing grade. In fact, I have a vague memory of dropping the course. It's so long ago, I actually can't remember the final outcome. Whatever its fate, however, what I do recall is that before I decided to opt out of critiquing high-brow cinematic presentations, I did take in a few of these esoteric films. Of these, Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* is the one which remains vividly etched in my memory.

What was I thinking?

Riefenstahl, for those of you who have never heard of her, was one of Adolf Hitler's most important 'right-hand men.' Of her, Wikipedia says, "Upon meeting Riefenstahl, Hitler, himself a would-be artist, saw the chance to hire a visionary who could create the image of a strong, proud Wagnerian Germany radiating beauty, power, strength, and defiance, an image he could sell to the world." Riefenstahl was a main cog in the wheel of the Third Reich's propaganda machine. The movies she produced were meant to sell Hitler's image to the masses, and *Triumph of the Will* did just that. Yet, what I mainly remember about this film was not so much its content but the music which so magnificently backed up that content.

As I sat there in the dark, watching real-live shoots of crowds upon crowds of people cheering Hitler on, I suddenly became painfully aware of my right foot tapping to the music and, thereby, keeping pace with the film. I was overcome by a wave of sickness and an over-riding sense of astonishment, guilt and dread. How

could I, Jew that I was, be tapping my feet to the music in a movie whose sole purpose was to immortalize Hitler and his Third Reich? What in heavens name was I thinking?

Well, the truth is, I wasn't thinking anything. Instead, I was mindlessly responding to the power of art. In that one sickening instant, I was unconsciously caught up in the immediacy of the moment. Like everyone else in that audience and, even more disturbingly, like all the people in those real-life clips of Hitler's rise to power, I had been swept up by what was happening before me, lulled into submission by the magnificent music of Wagner, a man recognized by many as an anti-Semite and ultimately, swallowed up by the power of the crowd.

Resisting the impulse

Years earlier, as a teenager, I saw the movie *Cabaret*, a Hollywood rendition of the events leading up to Hitler's reign of terror. My memory of the crowning moment in that film was a scene in the park in which a young Nazi stood up and began to sing *Tomorrow Belongs to Me*, a song regarded, for the purposes of this movie, to be the German national anthem. Slowly but surely, almost everyone stood up to join voice with this member of Hitler's Youth; everyone, that is, but a few hobbling, elderly people seen to be shaking their heads at the crowd gathering quickly about them. Few of the people in the park seemed able to resist the impulse to join the chorus.

Just how many of us are able to resist this same impulse? How many of us actually can do something beyond simply shaking our heads in despair of what is to come? Worse still, how many of us find ourselves tapping our feet to the music? Crowd fever is certainly a frighteningly scriptural opiate, isn't it?

Christians read scripture, particularly the gospel accounts of Jesus' last week, and wonder how it is that, one by one, many of those who followed Jesus during his ministry of preaching and heal-

ing fell away at the time of his crucifixion. How were the palms waved on Sunday so rapidly replaced by the cries for death on Friday? Yet, it really doesn't take much more than a glance back through history to uncover the answer.

Hitler's Germany is only one example of the power that exists in the formation of a crowd. Too often, so much of what we believe to be right and true is quickly lost in the face of a gathering of people before us, a gathering that becomes for us both frightening and captivating at the same time. Suddenly, we are not only afraid to speak the truth but, in the face of those around us, we also may begin to wonder what our truth really is. The music of the crowd has a way of taking over and we are swept up in its melody, even if this melody hums a tune we will ultimately live to regret.

Our vulnerability to the power of evil

It's at this point that I begin to wonder if there is any way to prevent this from happening, and slowly, it begins to dawn on me. Certainly, my tapping foot is a sure sign that I am not immune to crowd fever. Yet, the fact that I noticed the tapping in the first place is also a sure sign, a sign that serves to tell me that even though I am susceptible to this disease often, my awareness of this susceptibility is half the battle.

When Leni Riefenstahl captivated the German people through her films, she didn't just captivate them; years later, she also grabbed my attention, and I need to keep reminding myself just how easy it is to get caught up in something, even something I might abhor. If I do this—if we do this—then the story of the last week in Jesus' life, the story of Holy Week, becomes that much clearer and its characters become that much more sympathetic.

God's capacity to prevent the triumph of evil ultimately may only be measured by our own capacity to recognize our vulnerability to its power.

This is my story Reaching out



SUSAN A. LITTLE
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, HAMILTON

My parents (both of whom are ethnic Magyars, (Hungarians) with my mother born in Caledonia and my father an immigrant, emphasized the importance of working hard, eating well and listening to good stories. When my second oldest brother died suddenly at just ten and a half, the whole community came to support our family. One of the parish curates especially, took our family under his wing, making sure each of us continued to function in the various groups that the parish provided in those days: Sunday school in the afternoons, choir in the mornings and evenings, girls to Junior Auxiliary and boys to Scouts. And, of course, every child at St. John's went to Camp Artaban. I was too young to go as a camper, so I went with my mother when she helped in the kitchen, and I learned how to swim in the mud-hole we called the Baby Pool.

Padre Holmes, the founder of Camp Artaban, a visionary and a charismatic leader by all accounts, was leaving St. John's in December 1950 and my mother insisted that the remaining four children get baptized before he left. Years later, just before I was to attend Girls' Camp, when I wanted desperately to graduate from the Baby Pool to the Big Pool, it was Padre who showed me how to put my head in the water and swim properly, thereby qualifying me to swim in the Big Pool with the rest of the campers.

It was Padre Holmes and I am sure many others in our parish who encouraged my growth in the faith that made me very aware that I was somehow 'marked' by God early in my youth. I had the most wonderful Sunday School teacher, Kath Coltart, who taught me spiritual disciplines that have stayed with me all these years. Camp Artaban taught me the value of team work and the exhilaration of winning. As an assistant head cook, kitchen help or cabin leader, I discovered that I wasn't simply one of six children in a family or one of 72 campers but a special child of God, called into a special relationship by my baptism.

The best part of Camp was that it never really left me. When it closed in 1967, I had a real crisis of faith. How could God shut down such a productive positive place? Strangely enough, the next year, I found myself offering my services as a cabin leader at Artaban's archival camp, Canterbury Hills.

God also continued to weave into my life people who worked with their faith. They didn't just put in their one hour on Sunday in lip-service. My best friend during my high school years had a number of Bab-

yst friends and it was with her that I first attended a REAL bible study, real in the sense of opening the bible myself and feeling that my reactions were valid ones. It was during my high school years that I discovered that God had given me talents to work with literary texts so it wasn't surprising that I studied English at University and went on to teach.

The Church's strength is in your hands

The most profound influence in my faith came with falling in love with my dear David, my husband of almost thirty three years who died of cancer last year. He and I had been in the same class in Grades 4 and 8 and we were in the same Grade 13 History seminar group and we certainly detested one another. He thought I was too prudish and a goody-goody and I thought he was too arrogant and full of himself.

It was at one of our Servers' monthly breakfasts, early into my sophomore year that we suddenly had changed. To me, David suddenly seemed to have become humble and to David, I had become intelligent, thereby throwing us together in conversations about religion and faith, academics, philosophy and politics.

Our courtship and our long-distant relationship in our first years of our marriage because of David's law business and my teaching career, made us very independent and yet a powerful team when together. Yet, as I look back at our wedding photo taken at the church door where we greeted guests, a campaign poster for stewardship reads "The Church's strength is in your hands."

When we were living in Woodstock, we had our first child, Jacob, and then two years later, our daughter, Rebekah. As a stay-at-home mom, I cherished the imaginative play time I spent with them, and the thousands of books we read in our lovely Victorian-style home. I discovered that it was next to impossible to go to study groups so I organized a bible study to come to my house. I had over 30 people attending on a regular basis.

God must have a wonderful sense of humour

Now I had always attended bazaars and teas at St. John's and the privilege of 'pouring for the first hour' had never ever appealed to me. The thought of having to wear hot white gloves on a sticky day in June was even more convincing to avoid such organizations. Well, God must have a wonderful sense of humour because it wasn't too long that I had been in Woodstock when a dear, dear friend of mine, Constance Clark, who I had just met by her attendance at our home bible study, invited me to an ACW potluck supper in a local park. The glove-wearing group met in the afternoons. We met in the evenings when spouses could provide child-care.

Risk-taking, big and small

I learned about risk-taking. It was in my first year as a Sunday school teacher that I volunteered to take

the bus with the children who wanted to attend a big rally in London called Children's Festival. So, with 45 rowdy children I joined the parade through the downtown streets and entered the cathedral filled with over a thousand others. Little did I know that four years later I would be planning an event modelled on the one I had attended, but in between these two festivals, two other big events occurred.

David had long felt a call to ministry, at first just before we were married and later on, in Woodstock. When David asked me one wintry day what I thought about his going into the ministry. I told him that we had to do it then because if the call were returning, then it was God's will, and we had to obey it this time. But with this revelation I knew that God had sent in the 'big guns,' so to speak.

Moving from a five-bedroom home to a two bedroom cottage, moving from financial security to total insecurity, moving from a comfortable town where I felt appreciated and useful to an unknown role as the chief income earner with probably no room for any of the 'fun stuff' I had been doing, was daunting, to say the least. So we ventured to Hamilton together in September of 1982.

The ACW had given up their gloves but not lowered their median age

The second important event was that upon returning to St. John's, we discovered that we had changed since we had left. People were unprepared for our experiences, perspectives and attitudes, especially about worship, children and church groups. The ACW had given up their gloves but not lowered their median age. I looked for ways to supplement the Sunday program. Lenten programs and Special Sunday events once a month were great starting points. But I felt that I needed something more, some framework to put it all together. The light in my darkness came from Huron Diocese where we had been for the past six years. Huron's Leadership Workshop that David had attended two years earlier and which had catapulted him into putting ministry into practice, attracted me and my friend, Susanne Adams. So in February of 1983 we attended a weekend event in London, one that concluded by challenging us to implement the process we had just learned to an event we were planning any time in the near future.

Never go to bible study and expect God not to be part of the meeting

Right after bible study shortly after our leadership weekend, Susanne and I thought of trying out a rally idea in Hamilton, to supplement what the parishes do week in and week out. So, with some crazy plans, tons of enthusiasm and a million phone calls, the first Children's Festival occurred in June 1983. We used our newly acquired planning strategies to make our own unique Festival, which is

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

"I have made thy name known to the men that thou didst give me out of the World." (John 17:6)

"I pray for them; I am not praying for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me, because they belong to thee." (John 17:9)

"But it is not for all these alone that I pray, but for those also who through their words put their faith in me." (John 17:20)

ROGER HARRIS ANGELICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

Several years ago on a visit to England, my wife and I decided to take a trip out to do some shopping. While waiting for her at one point, I found the opportunity to sit down and relax, and generally watch the passing scenery. During my sojourn I happened to notice two young men coming towards me deep in discussion and each with a book in their hand. It did not need a degree in recognition to realize that these two young men belonged to one of our sister churches, and as they passed by they made eye contact, said hello, and then moved on.

A few minutes later in my roving vision they had stopped in an open space, still deep in discussion. My eyes moved on taking in people and pigeons, flowers and trees, until once more they came to rest in the direction of these two young men. This time they were earnestly in discussion with a woman who, as time went on appeared to be becoming more and more agitated with what was being said and written down. When my gaze returned to the scene, the group was just breaking up, and as the woman walked towards me, I could see that what had happened had given her course for distress. As she passed me by, she looked at me and said, "what have I done, what have I done," and then she was gone.

Reflecting on this experience brings to mind what we can do when we go out into the world to spread the gospel, and how careful we must be in our zeal. For as much as we can help to win souls for God, we can also lose them, because they are not ready to take that step at that time, which could lead to resistance that could last a lifetime.

My belief is that God knows when each one is ready to acknowledge Him and want to have him in their lives. When this time comes He gives us to Jesus, because Jesus is the way to God and gives us the truth and the life that we must lead to reach Him. Once our faith in Jesus is kindled, He sets the path before us, and the Holy Spirit is enabled to provision and comfort us each step of the way. Once we have made that first step we become stronger as time passes, and then we are the ones who are used by God to show Him to others, so that hearts, minds and ears may be opened by our example.

We do not convert, we only show by example, and it is by a free will that the reply to the call of God takes place. We stand in the gap providing the witness that can help others to take that first step.

Evangelism is a most essential part of our Christian nature, but as with all things of God, has to be approached in a non-compromising manner. If we do not find a commitment in one place, we move on to another, for we

can waste our witness by too much persistence with one, when there may be others waiting for us to show what God can be to them. We have sown the seeds, but rather than force feeding the plant we must wait for the seed to reach out to the sun and rain provided by God for nurture.

Jesus was quite specific when he sent out first the twelve Apostles and then the seventy-two disciples. He told them what he wanted of them, and this did not include dwelling long where there was barren soil. As with Himself, Jesus wanted them to be a witness to God and to reach out with that witness to those who were open to it. Even if we feel that we do sow seeds on stony ground, there is always the possibility that the wind will blow them to fertile ground where they may be fed and watered in another growing season.

To accept and connect with God, we must decide where our reality lies. The more we grasp the material and all that it implies, the less we embrace the spiritual and all that is offered. We have a lifetime to do this, which was emphasized by Jesus in his parable of the laborers in the vineyard, but we must keep in mind that our years may not always be three score years and ten.

God is pure spirit, neither male nor female, and the more we reach out to him the more pure we become, because we receive of the fruits of the Spirit. We can never expect to reach His level of purity, because to do that would put us on the same elevation as He, and we know what has happened in the one instance, where God was, and is still being challenged today.

There is one thing, which we need to protect ourselves from, and that is indifference (Revelation 3:14-22). A take-it or leave-it attitude to the requirements and provisions of God leave us in a vulnerable position, not only in relationship to our adversary, but also in our relationship with God. We have the freedom to accept or and reject God, but once we have committed ourselves into his care, ours is not the choice to pick and choose what we shall accept or reject. We have to let God to the best that our human nature enables, so that the Holy Spirit is enabled to make up the shortfall.

I will probably never know what happened to the woman who passed me by that morning. I can only hope and pray that at least seeds were sown with a time for reflection. For all God's children there is hope, and to support that hope there is prayer. If the only hope for humankind is the return of the Lord Jesus, then the only hope for one individual is the Lord Jesus, and those who stand in the gap, witness and pray for an enlightenment, that will give God the joy and pleasure of placing a child of His on the path, and starting the journey to meet Him.

Getting to know you

KIM JOHNSTON Hospitality Coordinator and Head Greeter, Christ's Church Cathedral



FRAN DARLINGTON
HONORARY - ST. JAMES, GUELPH

Energy! Commitment! Organise! Volunteer? Kim Johnston's work as Hospitality Coordinator and Head Greeter at Christ's Church Cathedral means these qualities and more, for both the Cathedral itself and for Diocesan functions.

The logistics of it all

People enjoying refreshments or a meal in the Cathedral's Myler Hall may not realise Kim's preparatory work, purchasing basic supplies, arranging details with Alison Meredith, Parish Administrator, and property staff, and drafting volunteers: "With 400 to 600 people in the place, we need dependable helpers!" Before hungry, thirsty folk parade into the Hall, tables must be set up and all the necessary accoutrements provided, even for a potluck supper.

Usually first out of the Cathedral itself after a service, Kim makes sure that everything unfolds as planned, and everyone feels welcome and safe: "I'm always bleaching everything! Some church kitchens get a bad rap, and that's something I'd rather avoid!" Kim's "biggest concern is if there's an emergency, a fire, that there are proper exits. It's like the food thing: we don't want to kill anyone!"

Technically, Myler Hall holds one hundred seventy-five people. Kim's eyes widen as she remembers the crowd that gathered for the first Order of Niagara service at Christ's Church Cathedral. "There were a thousand people in the place! There were people on the stairs, in the hallways... even Bishop Mitchell had to sit on a desk because there was no chair for him!" Now, "it's much better in two separate services, but they're the biggest ones. If the weather's good, it's great to go outside" (to Bishopsgate, the landscaped area outside the Cathedral's west doors).

And another, and another...

During Lent, Easter and Spring, Kim prepares for a number of functions, often close together.

Confirmations usually bring over three hundred people to the

Cathedral, and by the time the service is over, everyone is ready for refreshments. Congregations for Evensong services (at 4:00 pm on the first Sunday of each month) are smaller, but Kim is looking forward to the service on April 1, 2007, Palm Sunday, when the Bishop will recognise the ministry of this Diocese's former Bishops, Executive Archdeacons, and Deans, and install seven new Canons of the Cathedral. As with all Evensong services, hospitality in Myler Hall will follow worship in the Cathedral.

After the recent Jazz Mass organised by the Cathedral's Canon Pastor, the Reverend Canon Paddy Doran, Kim and her team provided a Creole dinner. On Ash Wednesday, it was lunch for fifty people. On Maundy Thursday, the Bishop calls all Diocesan clergy to the Cathedral for the observation of the Last Supper, including a re-enactment of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples, renewal of their ordination vows and sharing of the Eucharist, followed by lunch. The Cathedral congregation will enjoy an evening pot-luck supper.

Kim smiles, "I like Good Friday; it's a quiet day off!" But it's only one day: after the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday evening, Kim will facilitate a Resurrection Party. On April 29, there is Confirmation for the Regions of Trafalgar and Greater Wellington; May 5 and 6, Doors Open Hamilton, for which Kim, as the Cathedral's Head Greeter, has "to be there to make sure the tour guides are ready, and that coffee is prepared for visitors," all organised well before the event; May 6 and 13, the Order of Niagara Services; May 27, the Ordination of Deacons; June 2, the Episcopal Election... and on and on.

Multi-tasking

Once everything is going smoothly, Kim stations herself at the Link door: "It's the best area to see everywhere. People get lost, or need to be shown the bathrooms; visiting choirs and clergy need to be shown their way. I won't be able to do this much longer at this pace; it takes me a day to recover!" She emphasises, "I'm not complaining; it's what I like to do!"

Working with Alison Meredith, who "does the scheduling and gives me a list," each Monday Kim telephones or emails everyone needed for Cathedral services and hospitality that week.

Occasionally, Kim serves as a parking lot attendant, and more! "Otherwise it's the Wardens, Assistant Curates, hospitality people. Yesterday, I grabbed the toilet plunger out of Sue Ann's hand; she did it last week!" Kim warmly affirms the Reverend Sue Ann Ward, Assistant Curate at Christ's Church Cathedral, "She's always good about saying 'thank you'; 'thank you's' are good!"

All this ministry is offered voluntarily. Kim is actually hired only "two or three times a year," to serve lunch for graduates of the Bishop's Diploma Course, for example. "I get paid, but I try to hire others and pay them."

Essential others

Kim recognises that 'others' are essential. She works "along with so many others; that's the thing! Always!" Kim emphasises, "It's like the Academy Awards, they're all up there thanking others. Nobody does this alone; it's inconceivable!" Depending on the size of an event, Kim needs up to six greeters and six hospitality helpers. "They often overlap, and we have several husband and wife teams." Kim continues, "Look at Peter (The Very Reverend Peter Wall, Dean of Niagara and Rector of Christ's Church Cathedral) up there. He depends on the servers, the altar guild, other clergy... We're kind of this family down here, dysfunctional as families are, especially when we're exhausted. I really don't think the average person out there has any idea how busy the place is." One volunteer is 91: "She clears tables, carries trays... Amazing! She tries to take the mop out of my hand, I draw the line!"

Family history, family life

For six years, Kim was also a Warden: "I kept thinking I can't do this job (doing hospitality at the same time). Find someone else!" She remembers, "At one point, I was on thirteen Cathedral committees and one Diocesan one." But at heart, Kim acknowledges, "Volunteering? I don't think I want any more than that. I'll always help out." But "I look over my shoulder, and I don't see anyone coming up."

Her life-long Anglican affiliation guided Kim, "a Book of Common Prayer fan," into this ministry. Moving from Hamilton to Burlington when Kim was six,



her Father was one of the founders of St. Christopher's Church there. She remembers her Grandmother vacuuming the sanctuary of St. John's on Locke Street, "up where God was. I was very impressed!" Her Mother's Aunt "did a lot at St. Alban's, Beamsville. She got me into the kitchen stuff. If you're accepted by the kitchen and bake sale ladies... they scare the daylights out of me!"

Kim studied Hotel Management at Cambrian College in Sault Ste. Marie: "I wanted to get away, I felt too sheltered, so I stuck my finger on a map. It came down at the Soo. I was the only woman in 1969, but the Board of Directors had to meet to decide if they could accept my application. They were worried that I would hear off-colour language, but I told them that I had two brothers! They asked if I realised that housekeeping would be my only option. I didn't believe them, but I didn't say so! It was fun; I ended up with a whole bunch of people looking after me." Kim's Mother bought her "a lovely wardrobe, but I didn't wear much of it, though the fur coat came in handy!" Kim chuckles, "I was so shy in High School, but I got into the Hospitality group, got involved in fundraising, front and centre, where I couldn't hide any more!"

After the two year programme, Kim studied food management for one year at Toronto's Centennial College, which offers preparation for work in institutions such as hospitals and nursing homes. Marriage to Michael, who now directs customer service for a mechanical spring manufacturer in Toronto and has a sales territory, meant staying home to raise their three sons (Christian is a musician, Benjamin runs a school for people injured in work-related accidents, and Patrick is a cook), running a daycare in their home, then work in customer

service and retail. Kim also "did a lot of hospitality when the boys were at Hillfield. The boys would work at the functions, and bring their friends. Where else am I going to find young legs?"

After living in Stoney Creek, Hamilton, and Beamsville, the family returned to Hamilton to avoid the frequent demands of driving. Invited by neighbours, Michael and Kim became Cathedral parishioners about twenty-five years ago. "I think by the end of the first day I was on a Committee" laughs Kim. Like many Cathedral parishioners, Kim has deep roots there. Her Great-great-great-Grandfather was a Warden with Dean Geddes: "It's so neat! I've seen his signature on things. I found out the family left because the buggy ride was too long. I've come home again!" Kim's husband, Michael is also a Warden: "We were back-to-back Wardens; not fun, too much stress."

Thank you!

Originally, Kim helped Ana Maria Calero, a member of the property staff, with coffee hours and receptions. When the job changed, Kim assumed the position, but as a volunteer. She remembers a "huge reception for the Mothers' Union," with people from all over North America, the Installation of the Primate after General Synod in St. Catharines in 2004, and many other celebratory events.

Kim has only one regret; Grinning widely, she explains, "When they talked about calling me 'Hospitality Director,' I suggested 'Parish Hospitality Director,' so I could finally have a PHD, but it just didn't happen!"

Kim Johnston may not be a PHD, but her accomplishments are impressive. On your next visit to Christ's Church Cathedral, please be sure to say "Thank you" when you see her. Her vital ministry helps to bring us together as a Diocesan family.

AN EASTER MEDITATION

THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS ACCORDING TO MARK

And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get. It was the third hour when they crucified him.

The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS.

They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left.

Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, come down from the cross and save yourself!"

Mark (New International Version)

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God bless Thursdays with Sami



KERRY WEBB
ST. GEORGE'S, GUELPH

It started out as one of the most uncomfortable conversations I had with another guy; circumcision! A co-worker of mine who is of Muslim faith had returned from a doctor's appointment where he had taken his 3 month old son. He was amazed to find this practice quite popular in Canada. He thought it was strictly an Arab practice and I proceeded to explain that both Jewish and Christians believe in having this procedure performed, thus starting a dialog which in today's political and religious climate could easily become a heated argument.

My co-worker I'll call Sami proceeded to tell me about his Islamic faith and what he believed in. He would provide me with examples from the Qur'an to illustrate his point. One of the points he was explaining to me was that Muhammad was the final prophet that

God spoke of in Deuteronomy. In the verse God tells about sending a prophet like Moses to spread his word. Sami's argument was Muhammad was more like Moses than Jesus therefore he must be the true prophet God spoke of. I countered with 12 prophecies from the Old Testament that Jesus fulfilled and told him that was just a sampling. As well statistically speaking for one man to complete 332 prophecies in one lifetime just as Jesus Christ did it has been calculated to 1 in 84 times 10 to the power of 97. That's 840 followed by 97 zeros!

The following Thursday Sami brought some examples from the Qur'an of God telling to Muhammad of medical and geological theories that would be proven by science thousands of years later. After reading these to me Sami would say, "How could Muhammad know this if God himself not tell him?" He had a good point especially since I myself believe God had created these miracles of nature. However, keeping with our theological discussion I gave him a verse from Job 10:8-12 and from Psalm 139:13-16, which describes the development of an embryo. These words were written 1100 years before Islam and would've been known by many

before Muhammad.

It wasn't my intention to dismiss what is written in the Qur'an or to discredit the faith of Islam. In fact it was quite the opposite I wanted to learn more. In these current times it appears that the West and Islam are suspicious and fearful of one another and I feel it stems from a lack of understanding one another. Also Sami isn't very popular in our office. He doesn't intend to be abrasive. It was more the result of his 'A-type' personality, culture and lack of experience in a manufacturing industry. And like most office environments it's a microcosm of society and I wanted to be part of the solution rather than be part of the problem. Truthfully, the major driving force behind my intentions was God. How could I ask God for forgiveness if I can't forgive someone else or follow the second greatest commandment to love thy neighbor if I participated in the office politics? Then I eventually started seeing Sami as more of a friend than a co-worker.

By the time the third Thursday arrived I was comfortable enough with Sami to ask him the more serious questions I had about Islam. Questions I think most of us in the west have such as; what is Islam? What are Islamic beliefs and the

obvious one, what does Islam say about terrorism. I mean one can't read the paper or watch the evening news without being reminded what is going on in the Middle East and Afghanistan. And Sami was well aware of this as well. In fact he broke the ice by saying "I'm sure you're wondering what Islam's position is on terrorism?" I replied sheepishly "Well, yes." He gave me examples

We all travel down different paths, but we all end up with God.

in the Qur'an of God dismissing the use of violence towards others and said to me, "The people who commit these acts are not true Muslims because they are not following the Qur'an." That was comforting to know because I wasn't sure where this dialogue was going. And when I'm confused I turn to God and he tells me through the teachings of Jesus Christ to "love thy neighbor and love thy enemy." Either way, whatever direction this conversation was going I knew what I was supposed to do.

Once we acknowledged the elephant in the room Sami told me that

"As a Muslim, I believe that God is merciful and we humans are slaves or servants to God. And he tests us while we're on earth. Also that God has no son. We believe Jesus was a great prophet, but nothing more." I actually found this statement more upsetting then the terrorist connection to Islam. As a Christian I truly believe we are children of God, that God doesn't hesitate to save us and that God loves us. I don't know if I could worship a God who is impersonal and distant. However I know I don't have to because I experience God's love for me on a daily basis. It's in my amazing family. It's in my health. It's in the comfort of knowing that whatever crisis I experience I'm not going through it alone.

I wanted to end the conversation on a positive note so I told Sami a parable that I once heard at a multi-faith seminar at my church, St. George, Guelph. I told him, "Sami you live in Kitchener, I live in Guelph. If we were to go to Kitchener airport we would take different roads, but we would still get there. Neither way is right or wrong. The main thing is we got to the airport. And that's what I feel about Muslims, Jews, and Christians. We all travel down different paths, but we all end up with God."

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Wilder-ness

I need, right now God,
to escape from distractions.
To find a place apart from the noise

A place just for listening
to breathe in and breathe out.
But never a nice place; not even a safe place
Someplace outside of my comfort zone.

I search for this place that makes me uneasy
someplace that's harsh
someplace extreme.
Where glimmers wither
and pretenses crumble.
Where sun and wind and hard, blinding rain
strip away all that's untrue.

What I am craving is time in the wilderness,
Where untamed without frees untamed within.
Where you can show me
a small piece of who you are
and you can show me
what I was created for...
my part in your vast and incredible plan.

And then when you've purged me of all that is useless,
so all that I have is all that I need,
then I'll be ready
to journey forever.
Through the wild and the wilder
with my God-given wilder-ness,
Reflecting your glory,
fully human...
complete.

By ERICA OLLWEN WALTER
Transfiguration Parish, St. Catharines

Gifts for giving This is my story

CARL SNEYD
DIRECTOR OF STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT

As we started our journey through Lent toward the great festival of Easter, I was delighted to read the Old Testament lesson for the first Sunday of Lent, Deuteronomy 26, 1-11. This is a reading which exhorts us to make sure we give generously to the church from the abundance that God has given us in order to recognize our love of God and celebrate all God has given us. It also reminds us that whatever we have comes from God and God alone.

A short introduction

My name is Carl Sneyd and I now have the position with the Diocese as the Director of Stewardship and Financial Development. I follow along the well prepared path blazed by Dr Rick Jones, Rev David Ponting and, most recently, Jim Newman. Over the years, I have worked in parishes and with other social agencies in stewardship programmes, fundraising projects, and capital fund raising for new buildings both on the front-line and in the back rooms. Although the theology of stewardship is the bedrock of all

Christian giving, my skills are generally more of a practical and technical nature and being able to translate the theology into just how stewardship can work successfully in a parish or through an individual.

Stewardship is, of course, far more than the dollars and cents the wardens plead for once a year to try to reduce the expected shortfall. All year long we give from our 'first fruits.' Stewardship is also our offering up to God the personal competence and abilities that all of us have, no matter how insignificant we may think they may be. Paul tells the Corinthians that each of us has different strengths and qualifications from the next person; each is called to a different ministry. But we all belong to the body of Christ and our God-given know-how and aptitudes need to be used for the advancement of God's kingdom here on earth.

Over the years, the committee and staff of Stewardship and Financial Development have collected and developed a wide array of materials, 'tools' and expertise to help with your parish's just-started stewardship programme or with a re-vitalized approach to year-round stewardship. These are methods

and resources that have worked with other parishes and can work for you. Just as some of us learn best by reading, some by listening and others by doing, the great variety of available diocesan resources will certainly be able to provide assistance to your parish. We continue to explore and discover new methods and resources for use in your parish. As part of the Diocesan Resource Centre team, we are here and available to help you in your parish with your stewardship programme.

We can also assist with your Planned Giving programme, with a variety of ways for leaving our worldly assets to our beloved church community to carry out the work of building a better world for those who will follow. Contact us, we can help.

A Stewardship idea for Lent

Have you given up something for Lent? Does your parish have a specific fundraiser going on right now? Make your Lenten discipline doubly effective and set aside what you would normally spend for that forgone pleasure during the 40 days of Lent and give the money you "saved" to the church on Maundy Thursday.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

now preparing its 25th celebration at the end of this April.

What would I do differently if I could have my life to live over again? If I could have changed the course of my husband's health problems, I would have done so in an instant. Shortly after David became paralysed, we were going through the customary 'what if's' one asks after such a tragedy occurs. David was adamant that it was useless to contemplate the 'would've's, 'could've's, 'should've's. So, that is how David and those he loved lived out the last of his days. I continue to give thanks for the hundreds and thousands of prayers, phone calls cards, visits and conversations that God occasioned

my way through hazardous waters, God continued to fill my ballast with such signs of love. Grace filled my ballast. It was God's Spirit working in others upholding me and my loved ones. Jesus led my step by step, sharing my pain and lightening my burden.

A God locked up in a tradition that says only some may enter

This brings us to where God has led me and what God has taught me. My work on Synod Council, my privilege serving as Chair of Undermount and my role as Provincial Synod delegate last October, have taught me that the Church possesses many committed people who serve in many capacities. Mostly, these places need people of deep

What we probably need more practise at is at how to be a really good friend, a friend in the faith who can respond to daily needs and answer simply and honestly the deep concerns and questions that good friends share.

to happen because of David's illness and death. How could I have asked for a better weekend than that of Children's Festival for his death, visitation and burial? How many people get three days of celebration of their life? Sounds theological, doesn't it? That's David, breaking moulds and making people think about the ordinary.

For me, I wish I would have praised the influential people in my life more: Marg and Doug Firth for their support since I was a little kid. Constance Clark whose faithfulness and hospitality put to shame whole centuries of godly women and women's guilds; Ralph Spence whose Order of Niagara has affirmed the selfless contributions of countless men and women throughout this diocese; my brothers and sisters whose flaws and virtues and unconditional love continue to nurture and sustain me.

Walking through the Valley of the Shadow of Death

For me, I don't think I would have done much differently. When I was walking through the valley of the shadow of death last year, I was always being surprised by God's unfailing support and grace. On the weekend of our annual Epiphany Pageant, a major dramatic production at our parish, I came home to a hot three course meal that had just been prepared, and the next day, another and the same evening, two other sets of meals arrived for the upcoming week. I kept teaching and working day by day, bracing myself for the inevitable.

I know that many people took on extra jobs to lighten my load but the fact is that they enabled me to keep on living with some degree of normalcy. Precious people in the Cursillo movement, dear friends in Scouting and in the teaching community continued to shower me with kindnesses and support. I often sensed that I was a ship set sail upon a stormy journey, but equipped with ballast kept me at an even keel. As I had to navigate

faith to think outside the box. It needs people who are dependable, who respond to change and, most importantly, those who are in touch with God in the here and the now. I see the Church often presenting to complete newcomers a god foreign to us 'old-timers', a God locked up in a text or in a tradition that says only some may enter and even fewer may stay. That's not my God!

Preparing for life in the big pool

As a person who has grown deeply in what I learned at SSJE in Bracebridge or from the Sisters of the Order of St. Helena or St. John the Divine or from my catechism in the Book of Common Prayer, I also run with open arms into the music of Taizé and the Vineyard music, and feel God's peace in labyrinths, indoors and out, and I return to the Handel and Wesley of my childhood and the Rutter of recent decades.

I hope a new Christian has an entry point in any one of these of our rich traditions but most important, I pray for the new Christian to have a friend walk beside them. What we probably need more practise at is at how to be a really good friend, a friend in the faith who can respond to daily needs and answer simply and honestly the deep concerns and questions that good friends share. A parish can offer many things but it must chiefly offer to the new Christian total and unconditional acceptance; then it must provide a place where the new Christian can feel safe in growing up and trying to learn how to swim, no longer relegated to the baby pool but preparing for life in the big pool.

My Sunday school teacher once told me that as a child I possessed incredible faith. If Faith is a gift from God, I am truly blessed. But if Faith is something attainable by children and adults, then I will work my whole life through trying to get it for them.

God has taught me to listen, to work hard, and to eat well. Sounds like my parents were more religious than they ever imagined!

Dead fish in Kangirsuk



BRIAN A. BURROWS
PRIEST, DIOCESE OF NIAGARA

I have recently returned from my second stint as interim pastor in Kangirsuk. In thinking about what more could be done for my successor, I tried to assess which members of the fellowship had more life than others. I also prayed that the spirit of Christ would make us all more alive in our work for the Kingdom.

A matter of pride

I had a conversation with the layreader about a rival community. "Those people," she said, "eat dead fish!" Responding with the logic of my English culture, I said that I thought all fish which were to be eaten were dead. "Ah," she said, "some fish are more dead than others." By this time we were both laughing and then she explained that some fish caught in a net under the ice could have been there several days, but the freshest fish were the ones caught today. "We" she explained, "only eat the freshly caught fish."

It set me thinking about the church in Kangirsuk. Obviously some of the members were more alive than others. The new Rector

would want to know which of the congregation was alive to Christ.

Using the imagination

One of the priorities I set for my time as interim pastor was to support the Sunday school and to introduce the children to Boys' and Girls' Brigade. It was decided instead of using another evening for busy leaders, to extend Sunday school by half an hour. In this way, games crafts, figure marching and action choruses could be included in the programme. To make the transition from Sunday School to Brigade, I chose a game called "dead fish." The idea of the game is to make the children lie perfectly still, like 'dead fish,' then the first child to wriggle or move is out until only one child remains.

Imagine my surprise, when at the command of "dead fish," no one moved. Everyone lay perfectly still. These children had obviously seen a lot of dead fish. So, I had to adjust the game by telling the children to come alive. This went on to become the most popular part of the programme and even the leaders, mothers and grandmothers, had a go at pretending to be 'dead fish.'

This simple device became a turning point in the Sunday school attendance. Children began to tell their friends about being 'dead fish.' To me it was also an encouragement in the overall work of bringing the church in Kangirsuk back to life.

Furthering the Kingdom

My second visit to Kangirsuk co-

incided with the completion of the new church of Holy Trinity. Great efforts were made to complete the building before the onset of winter. My aim was to use the new church for the Christmas Eve services. Many of the loyal worshippers, however, had doubts about the church being filled for Christmas. They said, "Most of the people in this community seem dead to Christ."

As well as preaching in Inuktitut in the Sunday and mid week services, I had been trying to interact with many of the people. Chance meetings with individuals at the Post Office often started lively conversations and much leg-pulling. Some of these people eventually turned out to see the new church and to celebrate the birth of Christ.

"Dead fish" of course reminded me also of Jesus' words to his disciples. The translation of the children's chorus puts it like this: "If you follow me, I will make you like those who go fishing, but you will get people!" The act of fishing requires going out to where the fish are, just as Jesus himself went to the towns and villages of Galilee. Let us all, then, go out to people in the name of Christ.

My experience in Kangirsuk brought home to me the vision of the church. Are some members more alive than others? With imagination and with the Spirit of Christ, 'dead fish', so to speak, can come alive.

EVENTS

22

April 2007

Palm Sunday Procession

The Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

Our servers will not be coming down a fashion house runway on Palm Sunday as they first wear the new outfits they have acquired thanks to the efforts of the sponsors and sewers and all the many people in the parish who helped with this. The black and white robes with the Hospitalers cross is a link to the fact that Saint Luke's is the Chapel of the Most Venerable Order of Saint John of Jerusalem. The general public however will see our servers during the Palm Sunday Procession as the Parish of Saint Luke circles the outside of the church. If you want to get a firsthand look, just come on in and have a seat in the front row before the service starts.

April 1

Sunday Brunch

Holy Trinity, Fonthill

After Palm Sunday's service, a few good men of the parish will serve lunch in honor of Charlene Duliban, and our continuing outreach to children in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Cost: Optional donation

April 1, 11:30 am

Parish Hall Open House

St. John the Evangelist, Thorold

Construction of the new parish facility has been completed and the new parish hall will be open to the community for all to see.

April 1, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Lenten Book Study

St. Paul's, Shelburne

Henri Nouwen's *Return of the Prodigal Son* will be the focus of our discussion during this Lenten Book Series. Please call 519-925-2923 to register.

Cost: Books will cost \$20.00

April 4, 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Lenten Lunch and Discussion

St. Paul's, Shelburne

Everything you wanted to know about Christianity but were afraid to ask; alright, maybe not everything, but we are open to discussing the questions that are on your mind about Christianity and the Anglican expression of it. You are invited to join us for a lunch of soup and scones following the 11:30 am Eucharist as we discuss the beliefs we profess or wonder about.

April 4, 12:15 pm

Seder Meal

St. John's, St. Catharines

Maundy Thursday authentic Seder dinner viewed through the Passion Narrative and The Solemnity of the Lord's Supper with the ceremony of the washing of the feet and the stripping of the altar.

Cost: \$8.00 per person

April 5, 5:30 pm

Seder Meal and Service

St. John the Evangelist, Winona

Join us for a Seder meal and service. Everyone and their families are invited to enjoy this event.

April 5, 6:00 pm

Annual Lenten Vigil

The Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

The parishioners of Saint Luke's have for a number of years observed a shortened Len-

en Vigil. The Liturgy and Worship Committee sponsors the Vigil and encourages everyone who can to take part.

April 5, 9:00 pm - April 6, 9:00 am

Good Friday Walk

The Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

Directly after the Good Friday morning service our crew of walkers are heading out on the Good Friday Walk-a-Thon to raise money for church outreach. It's mostly along the harbour's edge and then our foot weary teams will finish back at Saint Luke's for a delicious luncheon provided by the Ladies' Guild. Pick up your pledge sheets soon. All donors will be issued a tax receipt for donations of \$10.00 or more.

April 6

Good Friday Walk-a-Thon

St. John's, St. Catharines

Annual Walk-a-Thon through the streets of Port Dalhousie to support the PWRDF. The walk will be followed by hot dogs and fellowship.

April 6, 1:15 pm

Xbox Tournament

St. Simon, Oakville

St. Simon's in association with EB Games present an Xbox/PlayStation tournament for youth in grades 4 to 8. Tickets will be on sale at 5:00 pm on the day of event or contact the church office at 905-845-8351. Food and drinks will be available for purchase.

Cost: \$10.00 per person

April 13, 7:00 pm

Youth Group Retreat

The Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

Members of the Youth Group will be attending the Saint Michael's Conference Alumni Weekend. It is at the camp near Durham. Please get your registration in early so further arrangements can be made.

April 13 - April 15

Bishop's Visit

St. Saviour's, Queenston

Join us as Bishop Ralph Spence dedicates our renovated sanctuary and presents the Order of Niagara to Charlie Campbell and Phil Crosthwait. A potluck luncheon will follow in the parish hall. Everyone is invited.

April 15, 10:30 am

Auction-Parish Social Event

Holy Trinity, Niagara Falls

This year our Social Committee has planned another fun evening where roast beef on a bun will be served along with beverages and delicious dessert.

Cost: \$5.00 per person

April 21, 5:00 pm

175th Anniversary Reception

St. George, Guelph

Join us for this festive dinner at Guelph Place as we celebrate St. George's 175th Anniversary. For tickets call 519-822-1366.

Cost: \$45.00 per person

April 21, 6:00 pm

Annual Dinner and Silent Auction

St. Columba, St. Catharines

We'll be serving the ever popular roast beef on a bun, salads, and desserts. If you can donate

wine, a door prize, gift certificates or a new item for auction, please bring them to the church office. Tickets are available at the church office.

Cost: \$15.00 per person

April 21, 6:00 pm

St. George's Day Pub Night

St. Paul's, Mount Forest

An evening to celebrate our English heritage in song, games, and fun!

Cost: \$ 10.00 per person

April 21, 7:00 pm

Decades Dance

St. Simon, Oakville

Dress in costume from your favourite decade and enjoy an evening of dancing, fellowship, and your favourite music. A cash bar will be accessible.

Cost: \$15.00 per person

April 21, 7:30 pm

Gregorian Style Concert

The Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

Featuring the Gregorian Institute of Canada's Hamilton ensemble and Dr. William Renwick of Mac Master University on the tracker organ. Proceeds are to help with the restoration of the famous Spencer tracker organ of Saint Luke's.

Cost: To be announced

April 21, 8:00 pm

Growing Our Spirituality

St. John the Evangelist, Thorold

This educational day is sponsored by Niagara Cursillo and features the Reverend Paul Tinker. Thorold. Tea, coffee, muffins and homemade soup will be provided.

Cost: \$5.00 per person

April 21, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Earth Sunday

All Saints, Erin

Everyone is welcome to join us as for the dedication of the McGibbon Oak Tree in the Celebration Garden.

April 22, 10:30 am

Spring Brunch

Christ Church, McNab

Belly dancers will be here to entertain and teach us this new form of fitness! Lunch with dessert, coffee and tea will follow.

Cost: \$8 per person

April 25, 10:00 am

Craig Kielburger

St. George, Guelph

Craig has been an advocate for children's rights since age 12. He is the founder of Free the Children, a global youth-driven charity, and the author of *From Me to We*. Income from this event will support the Free the Children Foundation.

Cost: \$20.00 for the general public, \$10 for Students

April 25, 7:30 pm

Prayer Book Society Meeting

The Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

The Prayer Book Society of Canada's Ontario branches will be having a meeting in the parish hall. Members from many parts of Southern Ontario and as far as North Bay are expected to at-

tend. The meeting will end with the beginning of Saint Luke's Spaghetti Dinner and Salsa Dance to which members of the society are invited.

April 28, 4:00 pm

Wine Uncorking Gala

The Parish of St. Luke, Hamilton

Our latest Parish of Saint Luke VQA red, The Bloodied Ox, and the VQA Riesling, The Souffle Soprano, will be uncorked in Burn's Hall during Saint Luke's Spaghetti Dinner and Salsa Dance. This will be a gala event with tastings followed by an award ceremony.

April 28, 6:00 pm

Children's Festival

St. Columba, St. Catharines

Mark your calendar for the Lincoln/Brock Children's Festival. The planning committee is hard at work on developing the program for this fun event. There will be worship, music, drama, crafts, games and more for children ages 5 and up. Contact Beth Kerley at 905-685-1286 for more information.

Cost: \$5.00 per person

April 28, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Children's Festival

St. John the Evangelist, Hamilton

The 25th Children's Festival for the Undermount and Mohawk Regions focusing on the theme "Extraordinary." There will be worship, singing, games, crafts and drama for children ages 5 and up. For more information contact Susan Little at 905-528-3326 or Susanne Adams at 905-575-1815.

Cost: \$2.00 per person

April 28, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Children's Festival

Children & Family Ministries, Hamilton

Mark your calendars for the Children's Festival for the Trafalgar Region. The planning committee is hard at work developing an exciting program focusing on the theme "Extraordinary!" There will be worship, singing, games, crafts and drama for children ages 5 and up. For more information contact Reverend Jeff Ward at 905-845-8351.

Cost: \$5.00 per person

April 28, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Merrie England

St. Luke, Burlington

A celebration in music prose and verse of Shakespeare's Birthday and St. George's Day. Evening includes roast beef on a bun with a cash bar selling English beer and wine.

April 28, 8:00 pm

Pizza Lunch

St. Cuthbert's, Oakville

Cuthbert's K.I.D.S. hosts an intergenerational lunch with their favourite food!

Cost: Optional donation

April 29, 10:00 am

The Winds of Spring

St. Barnabas, St. Catharines

An afternoon of music spanning three centuries with the Aeolian Winds, a Canadian quintet founded in 1989 that has dazzled audiences in North America and the Far East.

Cost: \$25.00 for the general public, \$15.00 for students

April 29, 3:00 pm

Discipleship: At the root of a growing Church



MARTHA TATARNIC
ASSISTANT CURATE - ST. JUDE'S, OAKVILLE

I'm a twenty-something year old, otherwise known as one of the 'young people' we hear so much about these days, so let me tell you about some of the people I know, some of my friends.

I have a friend who tells me that she enjoys her church because the music is upbeat and because the congregation is young and lively. I have a friend who has attended a traditional mainline church all of her life and wishes that her church could live things up a bit. I have a friend who feels frustrated by the church's failure to 'get it' on issues like the marriage of homosexuals.

But I also have a friend who chose her church for the traditional music, for the formality of the structure and ritual. I have a friend who gladly attends the church she's attended with her family all her life and enjoys it primarily for the sense of community. I have a friend who believes very strongly that the marriage of homosexuals is contrary to the will of God.

The reason I'm writing about my friends is that we all, myself at times included, have a tendency to somehow equate 'evangelism'

with 'getting the young people into church.' With a little reflection, we all know this equation doesn't add up. We know it as soon as we stop to think about it. But it's tempting to connect the two anyway, because when you take a look around a struggling church, the most apparent element missing in the room is young people. Because of all the people that are hard to get into church, young people are the hardest of all. Because it is easy to jump to the conclusion that unless our church is populated with the emerging generations, there will be no church as those generations emerge.

From time to time, therefore, we all need a reminder: 'Evangelism' does not equal 'Getting the young people.'

Why is this an important reminder? Well, to begin with, as my friends so nicely illustrate, young people are not a homogeneous group. We are, as surprising as it seems to be to some, as diverse as any other demographic slice. Young people come from different backgrounds. We have different tastes, different preferences, different hopes and different needs. We each have blind spots, areas in which we need to learn and grow, ideas that need challenging. And like most other people in the world, we feel cheated when we are judged by an external quality like skin colour, language, sexual preference, or age, and lumped into a category where the rest of the world can safely and happily assume they have figured us out.

In fact, in attempting to make our worship 'young people friendly' as a way of doing evangelism, we can actually be doing the exact opposite of proclaiming our good news. Something at the core of our good news is about how we are called to be persons; persons unique, varied, creative, diverse and interconnecting; persons who have the amazing privilege of deepening into who we truly are in and through our relationships with others. We do not become persons by placing other persons into manageable cat-

consumer-driven culture, sometimes the most refreshing and challenging thing any of us can hear, no matter which generation, is that me and my preferences are not the centre of the universe. And maybe there is an alternative to the insatiable appetite for newer, richer, faster, younger, better. Maybe there is a way of wisdom and compassion as we journey into the reality that I won't have wrinkle-free skin forever, someday my body will let me down, I will know what it is to have a loved one die, and I will

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If the good news is simply youth-bait, that's bad news for us all. Young people don't stay young.

egories. However, we might have a better chance of becoming persons through the hard work of listening, through the hard work of actually getting to know one another.

The problems don't stop there. Evangelism has never been about matching God's truth to human preference. It has never been about making ourselves popular with the greatest number of people possible, or with the most desirable people possible. Again, this is something we all know. Thankfully meeting people's preferences is not the good news we have to proclaim, because as my friends also illustrate, there is no such thing as a church that will be universally attractive to young people.

In fact, in our youth-obsessed

not live forever. If the good news is simply youth-bait, that's bad news for us all. Young people don't stay young.

Overall though, the problem that we encounter when we wrongly define evangelism is an aesthetic problem. It is a problem of worrying only about making ourselves beautiful on the outside. It is a problem of shallowness. It is a problem of focussing our energy and attention in a way that is understandable, manageable and simple, even if it is not easy to fix. Maybe it's not easy to get the young people into our pews, maybe Anglicans aren't wildly successful at winning the title of Prom Queen, but at least we can fantasize where to put the blame. It's because we

don't have the right hair-do, the most fashionable dress, the right entourage of friends. When we fantasize like that, we don't have to do any of the hard work of growing, developing, challenging, learning, listening, becoming, sharing, proclaiming. We don't have to do the real work of evangelism: the work of figuring out who we are, what our good news is, why it can't possibly be something that we keep to ourselves. When we fantasize like that, we can relieve the pressure of having to get serious about education, formation, justice and servant ministries, care for the vulnerable and disenfranchised, engaging in the ethical and global issues of our times.

Should we be doing worship that is diverse, risky, creative and new? Of course. Should we be concerned that young people can lay claim to the Gospel, to the tradition, to the community as a thing that is vital and real? You bet! Are young people an important part of our present and future as church? Who would even dare to argue with that?

But getting the young people won't save the church and it doesn't fulfill our baptismal calling to proclaim the good news. And guess what? If we, the young people, do take up the call of discipleship somewhere along the way, it's in the same hope that all disciples have been made: not that we might have our preferences met, but that somehow, someway our lives can be transformed by finding in discipleship our true heart's desire.

A NEW NAME, A NEW RECTOR, AND TWO BAPTISMS



The amalgamation of Grace Church and St. Mary's Church in East Hamilton has resulted in a new name, The Church of The Nativity, a new rector, The Reverend Marcus Germaine (formerly Dean of the Cathedral for the Diocese of Moosenee in Timmins), and now the first two baptisms. This is the first time in this Diocese that a church has been named The Nativity.

Pictured from left to right is Julie Phillips holding her son Samuel Robert P., The Reverend Marcus Germaine (Rector), The Reverend Jack Pearce (Honorary Assistant), and Jeanette Collinson holding her son Nathan William C.

ON SPRING AND EASTER

What a glorious spectacle we witness each year as nature awakens from her winter slumbers! What transformation in field and forest as the pall of ice and snow is blown aside by spring's warm winds and buds appear on tree and bush. If our gaze could but penetrate nature's workshops and see the tremendous activity in every sector, how tiny roots are bursting with life-giving sap, ready at a moment's notice to break forth and form the thick, soft carpet of leaves and flowers upon which spring will make her triumphal entry into the land. Today, as I am writing this, the entire landscape is bleak, gray, dead. But in two months the meadows will be green, the trees will be full of blossoms, the birds will be singing, a sense of joy and happiness and well-being will fill the land. For nature will have come to life again.

It should be one of our objectives to regain this sense of close association with nature. The natural rhythm of the seasons should be a source of constant delight. Every tiny flower, every little animal, the rays of the sun, the chirp of birds, everything that spring brings back to us should inspire sentiments of joy and gratitude over our good fortune.

However, we must not remain on the plane of nature; for us nature is a holy symbol. It is a picture-book given by God to his children in which they may see his beauty and his love; a picture-book which tells of another world which now at Easter is likewise celebrating resurrection, the world of supernatural life within us.

Spring with its transformation of hill and meadow is, accordingly, a great symbol of an event in sacred history and of an event now taking place within the church. Springtime is nature executing her Easter liturgy. Neither poetry nor art can even approximate her grand display. In every corner of her vast cathedral a thousand voices are shouting Alleluia, the voices of creatures that have come to life. Yes, nature holy, sinless, eternal, is holding her Easter rites. Oh, that we had eyes to see this mystery!

Plus Parsch

A mid-wife for change



MICHAEL PATTERSON
DIRECTOR OF EVANGELISM

I don't think it was an accident that when Jesus rose from the dead he appeared first to women. Why? During his ministry before the betrayal, at least so it seems, he called mainly men to be the principal actors. Why then the reversal at the resurrection?

We can only speculate, but one reason might be that women are midwives. Something new is being born in the resurrection and women are the ones who attend to birth.

That's a metaphor worth reflecting on in this Easter season, not just in terms of the importance of women in ministry, but especially in terms of the new birth of changing leadership that is happening within our diocese. How are we all, women and men alike, called to respond to the resurrection, namely, by becoming midwives of hope and trust in the face of uncertainty and change as we seek to prepare to elect a new Bishop.

And it's a needed vocation because all of us, perpetually, are in the agony of struggling to cope with change and to give birth to trust. Why?

Because change elicits an image of an uncertain future; certainty and direction give way to powerlessness and anxiety. As we grow through life we've all been wounded by betrayal, broken promises, broken relationships, and empty words. By the time we reach adulthood there is enough disillusionment in us to make it natural to say: "I like it the way it is! Why should I trust you?"

Why should I believe this? Why is anything different this time? The older we get, the harder it is to trust and the easier it is to become skeptical and cynical. That is why change can be so difficult for us.

Yet none of us wants to be this way. Something inside us wants to trust, to hope, to believe in the goodness of things, to again feel that trustful enthusiasm we once had as a child, when we were innocent, when we could still take another's hand in trust and be led into destinations we did not know. We want assurance that in the future, that is so unknown and scary, we will be safe and cared for. No one wants to be outside the circle of trust.

But it's a struggle, an agony of sorts, as we know. We'd like to trust in the face of uncertainty, but often we can't give birth to it. That's where a midwife can be helpful.

When a baby is born, normally the head pushes its way through the birth canal first, opening the way for the body to follow. A good midwife can be very helpful at this time, doing everything from giving support, through giving reassurance, through giving instruction, through teaching us how to breathe, through actively helping to pull the new life through the birth canal. Her help can sometimes mean the difference between life and death, and it always makes the birth easier and healthier.

That's true too for trust and hope in the face of significant change. A good midwife can be helpful in bringing these to birth. What can she bring that's helpful? Insight, support, reassurance, certain spiritual 'breathing exercises,' and experienced hands that can, if necessary, help pull the new child through the birth canal.

And one of the things a midwife of hope needs to do is what Jesus did when he met people, women and men alike, after his resurrec-

tion. He sent them back to "Galilee" where he promised they would re-find their hope and trust. What is "Galilee"?

In the gospels, "Galilee" is more than a geographical place. It's a place of the heart: the place that was known and comfortable. It is the place where faith was borne, where the path was clear, where we trusted in the sure confidence of God's spirit to lead us, where we believed that we could walk on water because one is naive and trustful enough to believe that this is possible. "Galilee" is the place we were before our hearts and ideals got crucified on the cross of fear for the future.

A good midwife of hope, like Jesus on the morning of the resurrection, invites people to "Galilee" even as the winds of change swirl about. I remember as an eight year old the loss of my innocence and trust when I was informed by my friend Tim that there was in fact no Santa Claus and no Easter Bunny. If that was indeed true, then what else was suspect in my reality; in that moment everything changed; what and who could I trust? However, in the fullness of time, through the in-between time from loss to re-birth, a new spirit and hope of those symbols was rekindled in the reality of the birth and resurrection of Christ. In these days, we are called to be the 'mid-wives' of hope and trust to one another as we begin to live in the 'in-between' times.

Somewhere in the midst of this time we must become as children again, trusting in the comforting Spirit of God, unconditionally without fear. We must reach out to one another and be mid-wives to those who struggle and are held captive by uncertainty. It's a painful struggle to give birth, to trust in the face of fear and, in that struggle, a midwife of hope, someone who believes in the resurrection, can indeed be a wonderful friend.

People in the news

■ The Reverend Trevor Jones has submitted his intention to retire from full-time ministry effective June 30. Best wishes!

■ The bishop has appointed the Venerable Marion Vincett as Interim Archdeacon of Undermount, effective February 1.

■ Our deepest sympathy to the Reverend Gerry Brodie, and family, on the death of Gerry's father, Keith, on February 5. The funeral service was held on February 8.

■ On Sunday, April 1 at 4:00 pm (Choral Evensong), at Christ's Church Cathedral, the following persons will be Installed as Canons of Christ's Church Cathedral: The Reverend Joseph Asselin, The Reverend Sandra Copland, The Reverend Dr. John Course, The Reverend Chris McMaster, The Reverend Robert Park, The Reverend Peter Scott, and Mr. Robert Welch.

■ Our deepest sympathy to the Reverend David Long, and family, on the death of David's father, Harold, on February 27. A Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of Harold Long will be held on March 14 at Christ Church, Brampton.

■ Mrs. Fran Richardson ON, passed away on February 27. She was a long time and faithful member of Church of the Redeemer, Stoney Creek. A private family service was held.

■ Canon Elaine Hooker has been appointed Interim Pastor at Christ Church, Woodburn, effective March 1.

■ Captain Steele Lazerte, on leave from Niagara, and serving as Chaplain to the 2nd Royal Cavalry Regiment, was deployed to Afghanistan on February 14. Please remember Steele Lazerte in your thoughts and prayers

■ The Reverend Haynes Hubbard submitted his resignation as Rector of St. Paul's, Dunnville, and the Dunn Parish, effective April 30. Haynes has accepted a position in the Diocese of Europe, specifically as Chaplain at St. Vincent's, Algarve, Portugal, beginning May 1.

■ Mr. Derek Clendening was given permission to administer the chalice at St. Paul's Church, Fort Erie, effective February 1, under the direction of the interim pastor.

■ Joan Urquhart, Dianne Leslie Boyko and Nicky Forsyth were licensed as lay readers at St. Paul's Church, Dunnville, under the direction of the rector, from February 1 to April 30.

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TRAVEL TO ENGLAND

With Christian Journeys Inc. led by Archdeacon Ian Dingwall

September 16 to 29, 2007

The tour will take us to several places of both general and Anglican interest.

Some of the locations include, Salisbury (Stonehenge), Bath, Durham, York, Glastonbury, Oxford, London, Canterbury.

We will also visit Lindisfame (St. Aidan) and the Holy Isle where we'll join in the Sunday worship of the parish church.

The cost will be \$3695 and includes air and land travel with all breakfasts and dinners.

If you wish to receive more details, please contact Ian Dingwall by calling 905-637-3449 or sending an email to idingwall@cogeco.ca.

Where two or more are gathered...

Prayer For Our Church

... in my name, I am there...

Matthew 18:20

Join together on Sundays at 7:00 pm

Mar. 25 **St. Paul's, Dunnville** 905-774-6005

Apr. 15 **Good Shepherd, St. Catharines**
905-934-9672

May 6 **St. Peter's, Hamilton** 905-544-7710

Prayer for National Synod and its delegates
Praise for our loving Father, Son and Holy Spirit
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Sundays at 7:00 pm

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