



# Niagara Anglican

NEWS • PERSPECTIVE • REFLECTION • FOR A GROWING CHURCH • MARCH 2008

## Neither here nor there...



**BILL MOUS**  
DIVINITY STUDENT

Have you ever pondered what birth must be like? Not from the perspective a woman giving birth, as many of you will no doubt have experienced this, but from the perspective of a baby. In the past couple of weeks I've been pondering it, encouraged by a colleague after sharing some reflections about where we find the church today.

From a biological perspective, and under normal circumstances, the womb offers a comfortable existence. The basic necessities of life are provided for and an incredible amount of growth occurs within its walls. Yet there comes a point in time when the womb begins contractions to expel its ever-growing baby into a world of unknowns. This new environment offers a place where the baby can grow and mature in ways it couldn't in the womb; while at the same time being a place where business as usual simply cannot continue. From breathing, to feeding, and even communication, once out of the comfort of the mother's womb, a newborn baby faces a whole series of opportunities and challenges.

In a lot of ways, the church is much like the baby; albeit a baby that is still being born. Slowly, and perhaps reluctantly, we're being pushed from our all too comfortable existence in the modern age, and into the vast unknown region of existence called post-modernity. Like child birth, we're experiencing a natural, but significant, development in our existence as a living entity. Given this, perhaps the role of the contemporary priest should be that of a midwife: guiding and ushering the church into the unfamiliar

surroundings of unrealized potential of our current context.

The modern age was ushered in from about the 16th century onwards. Its source of truth came from empirical observation. Science quickly became the new way of knowing and, it was hoped, it would solve all the world's problems. Democracy, rationalism and the scientific revolution were some of modernity's important movements. Myth and superstition—a hallmark of the pre-modern age—were tested and challenged. Human intervention in the affairs of the world enhanced our life expectancy while at the same time made it possible to destroy the world in a matter of seconds. Personal freedoms and self-determination became cemented as values and rights.

### End of Christendom

The post-modern age is still very much in its infancy. Beginning in the latter half of the twentieth century, we began to see a loss in faith in the reign of science and reason. Neither solved all our problems and so, for example, holistic approaches to medicine grew in popularity. There was also an explosion in the information age—how we gathered information and communicated that information has changed rapidly. Our black and white worldview is gradually fading into a grey one. No longer should one judge the lifestyle choices of others - as there is no longer one mold for living one's life. Distrust in institutions, a rise in both plurality and spirituality, along with the reevaluation or abandonment of established truths have become hallmarks of this new age.

Perhaps even more disconcerting for the church is that the end of Christendom—the alignment of Western civilization and Christianity by Emperor Constantine in the 3rd century - is looming in our future. In fact, many theologians argue that Christendom has ended in North American society, except in the minds of many in the church.

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## WELCOMING OUR NEW ARCHDEACON



Michael Patterson signs in acceptance of his responsibilities as the new Archdeacon of Niagara at Christ's Church Cathedral on the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. MORE PHOTOGRAPHS ON PAGE 19.

## "What are you giving up for Lent?"

### A meditation on mortification

**JOHN BOWEN**  
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, HAMILTON

If I say the word "mortification," what comes to your mind? Nothing very cheerful, I guess. We say, "I was mortified" when we feel we might die of embarrassment. A mortician's job sounds as though it might well have something to do with mortification. And then there's all that stuff about flagellation in *The DaVinci Code*: mortification again.

So, is there anything Christian about such a concept? Certainly the Apostle Paul seems to have thought so: "Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature," he urges in Colossians 3. That's the origin of that ugly term, "mortification." But it sounds so negative! Surely Christianity is a religion about life? Jesus came to bring us "life in all its fullness"—not "death in all its emptiness"!

Of course, this is Paul. And many would ask, 'do we need to worry what

Paul thought?' He was just a crabby, misogynistic old bachelor... We are followers of Jesus, not of Paul.

But there is more of Jesus than we like to admit in the teaching of Paul. (I think I began to realise this when someone pointed out that the Epistle to the Romans is fundamentally a commentary on the parable of the runaway son and his older brother.) Paul was not particularly trying to be original in his teaching. Like us, he was trying to come to terms with who Jesus was and what he taught. He too was a follower of Jesus.

### Not just a weird religious idea

So could this negative kind of talk about "putting to death" have come from Paul's understanding of Jesus? Examples are not hard to find. "Cut off your hand, pluck out your eye!" says Jesus. "Take up your cross! Deny yourself!" So this really does originate with Jesus. Paul is not turning Jesus'

sweet message of happiness into a miserable anti-life diatribe.

Let's say first: the idea of "mortifying" things is not just a weird religious idea. Everybody has experienced this kind of putting to death. Parents who get up in the night to feed the baby put to death their desire for a good night's sleep. People who give up smoking put to death their addiction to tobacco. People who work out put to death their preference for sitting in front of the TV. Now, we know why those people do *these* things. But why does Paul say disciples of Jesus should put things to death?

The blunt answer is: Because there is stuff in our lives which will kill us unless we kill it first. We like to say "There is good in everyone"—and that is true. But—although it's not very popular to say it—there is also evil in everyone—and that's harder to swallow.

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## PARISH NEWS



# Mountain churches Good Friday pilgrimage nearing forty years

**SUE CRAWFORD**  
ST. MICHAEL'S, HAMILTON

The -14°C temperatures (with wind chill) did not 'freeze' the spirits or prevent the 100 or so walkers who braved the cold to carry out the annual Mountain Churches Good Friday Walkathon last year. As I check the date for this year's walk we could very definitely be sporting the thermal underwear again.

Last year I decided to do some probing about the history of the Mountain Good Friday Pilgrimage.

For over 35 years the mountain churches have continued their tradition of the Good Friday Walkathon. Back in the 70s there were six churches who took part in the yearly pilgrimage—St. Timothy's, St. Bartholomew's (now Church of the Resurrection), St. Augustine's, Holy Trinity, St. Stephen's and St. Michael's. The route back then was over 12-15 miles and seemed to take us nearly all day. I can remember one year pushing my infant daughter in her carriage the whole route. She is now 36. Today there are only 4

churches remaining who take part—St. Michael's, Holy Trinity and St. Stephen's and a few faithful from the Church of the Resurrection.

Margaret Read from St. Stephen's remembers a different route in the early days of the walk. They walked in a westerly direction along the mountain brow to the Bruce Trail as far as Magnolia Drive and then turned and came back. Last year the oldest members from the church to walk were Eve and Al Avon who are both in their 80s. Margaret feels the hot snack that St. Stephen's serves is the best on the walk but she loves the muffins she samples at St. Michael's (they are all homemade). Those who helped out at St. Stephen's were Pam Middlemiss, George Neale at the sign-in desk, Susan Rhodes, Sue Moyland and Sandie Pearce who served the snacks. In all St. Stephen's had 35 bipeds and 3 quadrupeds take part on the walk. They raised around \$3000.00.

Thanks to Janice Ormond at Holy Trinity she was able to supply me with

information on their organizers and helpers. Nancy Griffin is the main organizer with Margaret Worsnop, Helen Gregory and Gladys White helping to feed the hungry and cold in the parish hall. Maurice Moss seems to be one of their stalwarts who has been walking since the inception of the Good Friday trek. I know I never miss his tall, upright figure and walking stick. Maurice, I believe, is in his 70s and completes the route in about half the time that most of us take! Although we do not stop at the church of the Resurrection these days, a few people from their church joined the 15 parishioners from Holy Trinity who walked.

St. Michael's, as Margaret pointed out, serve great muffins to the walkers. In the kitchen helping last year were Carol Foster, Georgina and Bruce Honeysett with Bill McCaughey at the sign-in desk. Our oldest walker was Mary O'Hanian, who walked with her two daughters, grandson and his friend. I am proud to say that Mary is also my walking partner

for the event. Mary and I began our Good Friday walkathons when we attended St. Augustine's. Sharon Hatoski often joins us if her husband, Ron is unable to walk.

At St. Michael's our pilgrimage begins with the Good Friday service before we venture out. As we left the parish hall we were greeted with a wind chill of -14°C as we walked west towards Holy Trinity. Many of us felt that it was one of the coldest we had ever experienced. For the past three years our first stop has been at Cresmount Funeral Home who very kindly donate hot coffee, water and cookies for us. Doreen Leaney from Cresmount on Upper James and Kimiko Griffin from Holy Trinity warmed our insides with the hot drinks. We are very grateful for Cresmount's support. St. Michael's had 30 walkers last year who raised money for our Outreach Projects as well as for the church in general. Our final total collected was around \$2000.00.

We would like to thank all the people in the "patrol cars" who keep

an eye on us during the walk. I remember in the early years we even had the St. John's Ambulance crew patrolling the streets for us.

We may not have the numbers of walkers we had in the "old days" but those who take part feel that it is a great way to join with friends and family in communion with one single purpose on this our most holy of days. Has our purpose or focus changed? I would say not. In the early years (at least at St. Augustine's) it was to raise money for the mortgage. Today we raise money to keep our parishes vibrant, alive and to enable us to carry out the missions and outreach of our churches. I think it is important for the community to see us out there on Good Friday. AND as long as Mary is still able and willing, I will be there this year!

(If anyone in the Diocese has an exact date when this pilgrimage began, I would be most grateful to know. 1970 seems to be the date that most people I have spoken with agree.)

# 150 years of history and we're still making it happen

**MIKE MCDEVITT**  
PEOPLES WARDEN - ST. JAMES, FERGUS

This is a big year in Centre Wellington. Fergus is celebrating its 175th year history this and we at St. James Anglican Church are not far behind with our 150th Anniversary. This year we have planned four events to celebrate our 150th anniversary.

The first is a Valentines dance to be held February 15 at the Fergus Legion. This event will have a well know live band, Moonshine, and includes a lunch. Tickets are available at the church office or at Broderick's in town.

The second is May 10. We will celebrate with our newly elected Bishop of Niagara. This event will also be held at the Fergus Legion. We will have some "Highland Entertainment" along with some other special musical guests.

The third event is the "Celebration Feast of St. James," a weekend event

on July 19 and 20. This weekend is our actual anniversary. There is an afternoon tea—2:00 PM - 4:00 PM at the church—and of course we will again hold a "Feast" at the Fergus Legion, with cocktails, a diner, and entertainment followed Sunday by a brunch after the 10:30 AM service.

Our fourth and last event will be a Pork Roast at the church hall on September 20. Eat in or take out. This will be a great way to end our year. Look for more details on this event and all those listed in the local paper and at our web site [www.stjamesanglicanfergus.com](http://www.stjamesanglicanfergus.com).

We are also publishing a short history of the church, tracing our connection with many local families, right from our connection to the Groves family of the local hospital fame right up to the many talented and interesting people of our parish today. If you

have something of interest to contribute to our book, give us a call or connect with us via the web site. A limited number of copies will be for sale and orders are being taken in advance.

If you have, or ever had a connection with St. James or if you just want to have some fun and celebrate with us, call for tickets. All of these events are open to community. You can always get information online or at the church office by calling 519-843-2141.

I look forward to seeing you at the celebrations this year. Since this is an eventful year in our history we have produced a brochure and an historic postcard to mark the occasion. Look for these in local shops and the information office.

St. James will be busy this year as in the past. Join us if the spirit moves you. You are welcome in our church any time. See you around town.



## A young man starts his dance partner into a spin at Saint Luke's Hamilton

**WALTER RAYBOULD**  
ST. LUKE'S, HAMILTON

Held every month, the Spaghetti Dinner and Salsa Dances have been Saint Luke's most successful outreaches to people in the North End of Hamilton. The \$5 admission offers a low-cost night-out, and attracts a faithful dance clientele from as far away as Saint Paul's Dunnville. Free lessons and an all-you-can-eat dinner, plus dinner en-

tertainment, and especially the lack of alcoholic beverages, give the young a great place to meet and have fun in a safe environment.

These dinner dances are posted on the diocesan website and advertised in the local paper. Dinner starts at 6:00 PM and dancing at 7:00 PM, usually on the last Saturday of the month, unless religious observances preclude them. Everyone is welcome.



# Colleagues on retreat



Some clergy from the diocese recently participated in a five day, silent retreat with spiritual direction at the monastery of the Society of St. John the Evangelist in Boston (Cambridge). SSJE is the oldest religious order for men in the Anglican Communion. Attending the retreat from Niagara were the Reverend Kevin Bothwell from St. James in Guelph, the Reverend Canon Stuart Pike from St. Andrews in Grimsby, the Reverend Rod McDowell (Vocational Deacon) from St. Paul's in Fort Erie, the Reverend Audrey Conard from St. Cuthbert's in Oakville and the Reverend Canon Joseph Asselin from St. Cuthbert's in Oakville. While on retreat,

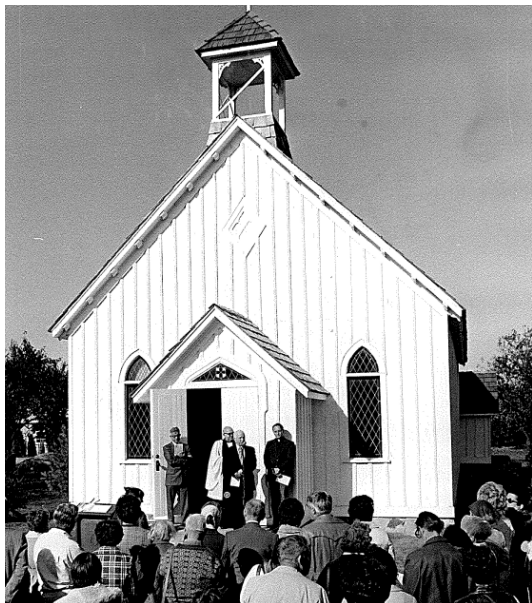
Stuart Pike was installed as a member of the Fellowship of St. John (i.e. analogous to an associate of the order) while Rod McDowell received a new FSJ cross since, as a 30 year member of the FSJ, he had one of the original medallions from the time when there was a Canadian congregation based in Bracebridge, Ontario. Pictured with the clergy from Niagara are Brothers David Allen, Timothy Solverson and Bruce Neal, all of whom served as directors for the participants, along with a couple other of the brothers. Information on retreats at the monastery, which are open to all people, lay and ordained, can be found at [www.ssje.org](http://www.ssje.org).

## ST. CUTHBERT'S, OAKVILLE » Lutheran Bells



Celebrating the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the bell choir from St. Philips' Lutheran Church in Etobicoke visited St. Cuthbert's in Oakville. Combined with the talent and dedication of St. C's choir, they truly made a "Joyful Sound to the Lord."

# An archival moment our story



The rededication of the restored church in its new location at Ball's Falls in 1974.

**JOHN RATHBONE**  
DIOCESAN ARCHIVIST

Have you ever wondered about that little chapel at Ball's Falls? Let me tell you the story...

It all started back in 1865 in Han- non, when St. George's Anglican Church, at Highway 53 (now Rymal Road) at the C.N. railway tracks, just east of Nebo Road was built.

The church was constructed of 'board and batten', costing \$800 and opened on January 6, 1865. A one acre cemetery was purchased adjacent to the church and is still used and maintained to this day. The building served the community well into the 1960's when a new church was built closer to the city on Upper Gage Avenue. But this area

didn't develop as fast as the Diocese had hoped and it was closed and sold in 1972. The building is now a Mosque.

In the meantime the old wooden church on Rymal Road was quickly deteriorating. Vandals had broken in and stole three stained glass windows that were over the Altar of Our Lord, St. George and St. Michael. There was a great fear that the vandals would return to burn the building, so it was offered to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority for \$1. The building was dismantled and reassembled at Ball's Falls Conservation area. It is now part of the collection of old pioneer buildings and is used from time to time for weddings. It is no longer part of the Diocese of Niagara.

**KERRY WEBB**  
ST. GEORGE'S, GUELPH

This past January will mark my eighth year of attending St. George's church in Guelph and it will also mark the end of its 175 year celebration. During the past year-long celebration St. George's offered many special events which I hope some of you from the Niagara dioceses got to attend. Although the events were quite wonderful, in my opinion it's not what makes Saint George so special. Compared to the 175 year history of the church my time spent there is but a mere blip on the screen, however my experiences there will have life-long effects on me. The first thing that grabbed my attention is the church itself. It's one of the largest churches in Guelph and with its Gothic architecture, copper roofed steeples and well-groomed landscapes make it quite inviting.

Once inside, one can't help but be amazed at the arched ceiling, the beautiful stained glass windows (Christ's ascension at the back of the church is my favourite) and the marble railing flanking the altar. While sitting in the pews you are surrounded by Canadian history with plaques of names of fallen local soldiers of World War I to items donated to the church by families from the last century. Equally matched to the sights, are the sounds of Saint George's with its Casavant pipe organ, senior choir with 30 members and the extremely rare 36 bell carillon (only 12 carillons in Canada).

In my short time being a member I've had the privilege of meeting and listening to some of today's and this country's best theologians. Through the adult education committee they've had such socially minded keynote speakers as Archbishop John Bothwell, Kim Phuc and Craig Keilburger to more controversial lecturers as Bishop Spong and Thomas Harpur. Also St.

George's has played host to the former Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada Andrew Hutchison and was one of the first churches visited by our own newly-elected Bishop of Niagara Michael Bird. And of course I can't forget to mention the numerous visits by the former Bishop of Niagara, Ralph Spence who always provided both a hilarious, thought provoking and spiritually moving sermon.

I would also like to mention that Saint George's church in Guelph was Bishop Spence's first church as a curate. This brings me to the one thing that makes Saint George's Church so special and that's the clergy and its people. Since the day I walked through cloister and entered into the church the people there have always welcomed me and my family with a smile and a hello. A classic example of fellowship happened to me about a year ago when my wife Karen and I were attending service with our then six month old daughter Caitlyn. When it came time to take communion we both wanted to attend but didn't know what to do with our daughter who was sound asleep in the car seat. Before we could discuss our predicament a fellow church member offered to watch our child as we went up to the altar. This not only happened once, but several times after. This kind of kindness and compassion comes from the leadership and support the clergy of St. George's offers to their congregation.

Through the years I've met several priests who got their start in ministry at St. George's (Christine, Steven and Derek) and with their enthusiasm made me want to become a better Christian. One of the clergy who has helped me immensely on my spiritual journey is Reverend Jean Mitchell. She helped me with my fear of public speaking to become a reader on the occasional Sunday morning service

which is something I never thought I could do.

The other influential person who has provided me with support is the rector, Archdeacon Tom Greene. Since day one Tom has greeted me with a smile and always asked how I was doing. Now this isn't your typical lip service you'd expect from a flight attendant. With Tom it's genuine. I know because each Sunday I stand in line after service is over and watch as he greets every one by name and seems to know exactly what is going on in their life. I see him treat everyone equally and with respect. Having such a responsible position within the church and in Wellington County he always seems to make time for those who need him. I have written several articles for both the Niagara Anglican Journal and other Christian newspapers and Tom has always offered words of praise and encouragement.

There is one conversation I had with Tom which I'll never forget. It happened this winter as I was a side person during a Sunday morning service in which southern Ontario was experiencing the worst snow storm of the year. Tom asked as he did every Sunday how was I doing? I replied good and asked how his drive to church was? He looked at me kind of perplexed and said with a chuckle "Kerry, I live next to the church." I felt like an idiot for being so ignorant, but as I saw the smile on Tom's face I knew he was somewhat amused and therefore it made me feel at ease. Tom Greene will be retiring from Saint George this May and I know myself and my fellow church members will miss him dearly. I'm sure there's dozens of small churches with their helpful members, beautiful buildings and their own kind hearted clergy throughout the Niagara Diocese, but only one is special to me and that is St. George.

# What makes St. George's a special parish?

# Making poverty a thing of the past



**COLLEEN SYM**  
SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

## Try this quiz

- 1 Do you have two pairs of strong shoes?
- 2 Do you have a warm, waterproof coat?
- 3 Do you buy new not second hand clothes?
- 4 Do you eat meals with meat, chicken, fish or a vegetarian equivalent every second day?
- 5 Do you have a roast or its equivalent once a week?
- 6 Did you not have to go without heating in the last year due to a lack of money?
- 7 Do you keep your home adequately warm?
- 8 Do you buy presents for family or friends at least once a year?
- 9 Do you replace worn out furniture?
- 10 Do you have family or friends for a meal or drink once a month?
- 11 Have you had a morning, afternoon or evening out in the last fortnight for entertainment?

Those questions are not really a quiz. They are questions that are carefully selected empirically through survey research and statistical testing to separate the poor from the non-poor. They are determinates of poverty, a Deprivation Index. In Ireland people are regarded as living in poverty if they earn less than 60 percent of the median income and fail to meet two of the eleven indicators of poverty in the Deprivation Index.

Poverty excludes people from the life of their society because of a lack of resources. Poverty is not a life style choice.

In the examples below, the amount of income that is left, (if any) after paying for accommodation and a nutritious diet, to cover additional monthly expenses such as utilities, telephone, laundry, toi-

leties and cleaning products, insurance, transportation, clothing, debt payment, non-prescription drugs, school expenses, daycare expenses, unexpected expenses is totally insufficient. The examples are taken from a 2007 report, *The Price of Eating Well in Halton*.

### Households on fixed incomes

■ For a single man, age 24, whose income is derived from Ontario Works, the cost of a nutritious diet (\$198.04 per month) and of typical rent for a bachelor apartment (\$704.00) exceeds his income (\$606.70) by \$295.34.

■ For a single mother with a 7-year-old daughter, whose income is derived from Ontario Works, a nutritious diet (\$248.82) plus rent on a typical 1-bedroom apartment (\$869.00) exceeds income (\$1,260.72) by \$142.90.

■ For a single man, age 45, whose income is derived from the Ontario Disability Support Program, a nutritious diet (\$183.79) plus rent on a typical 1-bedroom apartment (\$869.00) exceeds income (\$1,039.12) by \$13.67.

■ For a single woman, age 75, whose income is derived from Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement, a nutritious diet (\$128.82) and rent on a typical 1-bedroom apartment (\$869.00) exceeds income (\$1,233.42) by \$229.42.

### Households earning minimum wage

■ For a family of 4 (parents age 35, boy 12 and girl 7) with one 40-hour per week minimum wage earner, the cost of a nutritious diet (\$527.67) plus rent on a typical 3-bedroom unit (\$1,164.00) leaves \$250.20 to cover all other monthly expenses.

■ The same family, with two minimum-wage earners each working 30 hours per week, the cost of the nutritious diet (\$527.67) and rent (\$1,164.00) leaves 725.92 to cover all other monthly expenses.

It's clear that the dilemma whether to "pay the rent or feed the kids" is still present for many people who rely for their income on Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program benefits or the Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement and for those who work for minimum wage.

In the October 2007 Ontario election campaign, Premier Dalton McGuinty committed to making poverty reduction a priority of his government, stating that he

would introduce firm targets for poverty reduction within a year of re-election.

The Premier has appointed Deb Matthews, Ontario Minister of Children and Youth Services, to be chair of the cabinet committee on poverty reduction. The Cabinet Committee on Poverty Reduction convenes on February 4 to begin planning the government's approach.

A poverty reduction strategy goes beyond anti-poverty initiatives that lead to only marginal improvement in the lives of people living in poverty. A successful strategy must lead to structural changes in living conditions.

It has been announced that the development of a poverty reduction strategy will include consultations with interested parties in Ontario. However, at the time of writing the process and schedule of these consultations was not yet available; however, people of faith need to be alert to opportunities to participate in those consultations, perhaps in collaboration with other community groups or networks like the 25 in 5 Poverty Reduction Network.

The 25 in 5 Network for Poverty Reduction is a multi-sector network comprised of 100 provincial and Toronto-based organizations and individuals working on eliminating poverty. The name reflects the call for a 25 per cent reduction in poverty levels in Ontario over the next 5 years. Meeting this target and timetable would lift 400,000 Ontarians out of poverty.

The 25 in 5 Poverty Reduction Network believes that these key principles should guide Ontario's approach:

If you work full time, you should not be living in poverty. Ontario needs to increase the minimum wage, step up the enforcement of labour standards, and break down barriers based on discrimination.

Ensure adults and children have real income security. Bolster the new Ontario Child Benefit and provide adequate systems of support for those who cannot work full-time. Include policies that address the disproportionate impact of poverty on racialized communities, aboriginal people, women, persons with disabilities and newcomers.

Make affordable housing and quality child care top provincial priorities. Ensure that everyone has real access to medical and dental care. For more information, visit [www.socialplanningtoronto.org/25in5](http://www.socialplanningtoronto.org/25in5).

# Sacred arts

**ELEANOR JOHNSTON**  
ST. THOMAS' CHURCH, ST. CATHARINES

A teenager recently expressed incredulity that I find value in the Choral Eucharist and a Bible-study group. She exclaimed repeatedly, "It's not reasonable!" I, in contrast, find it amazing, when most of our fellow citizens find no need or motivation to attend church at all, that so many of us are called to worship Sunday after Sunday. What



These lost sheep are so obsessed with their own rationality or the church's frosty literalism that they can't hear the deeper, older, truths of its poetry.

makes Anglican worship sincere and effective, our unreasonable service?

First of all, we come to church to meet with and worship God, believing that where two or three are gathered in His name, Jesus is present. Also, we feel that it is our spiritual need and requirement to worship regularly; being in the presence of God refreshes and restores our spiritual wellbeing and reminds us of our ethical priorities.

But what tells us that we are in the presence of God? Basically, for an hour or so, we step out of the everyday, "reasonable" world (that is itself, ironically, often quite irrational) and into a spiritual space, a time and place of sacred ritual. Helping us do this is the gift of the sacred arts.

The Choral Eucharist, the central Anglican service, is a ritual removed from our weekday routines. The ancient tradition of the procession symbolizes our entry into another frame of reference. The Eucharist, the central focus of the service, is usually spoken and sung using the rhythmic cadences of the archaic Book of Common Prayer. These words, like the hymns, are highly poetic in their use of metaphors. A religious metaphor is a symbolic comparison ("The Lord is my Shepherd" - how unreasonable!) that dislocates our rationality and moves us into a holy state of mind and spirit. Majestic music stirs our hearts. Stained glass windows remind us of our ancient predecessors. All these art forms can take us, for the duration of the service, into God's kingdom.

Although some of us attempt to create an exclusively rational religion and morality by ignoring the power of what lies beyond our consciousness, for others the words "spirit" and "in-

spire," like "muse" and "music," connect at a profound level of our being. The Jewish-Christian-Islamic tradition is one "of the book" that is poetic and metaphorical. To call Jesus "Logos" is to speak in poetical language. And Jesus is quoted as using numerous metaphors to describe himself: "I am the way and the truth and the life." Such metaphors, meaningless and unreasonable when taken literally, are what Northrop Frye, the great University of Toronto and United Church scholar of the Bible as literature, called "Words with Power." Metaphor, like all art, has the power to engage us at a spiritual level.

Alternatively, our frequently pale contemporary language and our awkward attempts to be reasonable and relevant to the secular majority are missing something. The worst is an insecure invitation to prayer, "Let's just bow our heads for a minute." "Let's?" "just?" "for a minute?" Compare these diminutives to the assurance of "Come ye before Him and rejoice!" and "The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him!" The old language works better, it seems to me, because it invites awe and worship of a God who is other, sublime, mighty, holy, a God who is outside our everyday experience but also, more wonderfully, incarnate. The mystery of the Trinity and the miracles of love and life can only be hinted at by art, pointed to by liturgy, not explained, but explained away, by theologians or preachers using everyday prose.

However, the Book of Alternative Services does celebrate and encourage goodness in poetical sentences that move us, at times, to tears. For example, the metaphorical Blessing of a Marriage: "Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their foreheads." Or the rhythmic Commendation of the Funeral Service: "Give rest, O Christ, to your servants with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting." Mourners who seek to avoid spiritual language to not offend non-religious family members eliminate talk of the hereafter and call the service a "celebration of the life" of the deceased; in the process they avoid dealing with the horrifying grief of losing a loved one and being comforted by the promise of resurrection.

The refusal to use the sacred arts derives not only from unsuccessful attempts to attract our contemporaries

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

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**SIGO**



# Living in the world—as if

**MICHAEL THOMPSON**  
RECTOR - ST. JUDES, OAKVILLE

*And this is too big for anger, it's too big for blame, we stumble through history so humanly lame, so I bow down my head, say a prayer for us all, that we don't fear the Spirit when it comes to call.*  
(Bruce Cockburn, "Postcards from Cambodia")

Between 1975 and 1978, the Khmer Rouge revolution, led by Pol Pot, killed between one and three million Cambodians. The "Killing Fields", nine miles south of Phnom Penh, have become a popular tourist destination, and in the Phnom Penh, a white marble and glass tower holds the skulls of thousands of those victims.

A lawyer for Ta Mok, one of the Khmer Rouge military leaders threatened with a war crimes trial, threatened in turn to subpoena Margaret Thatcher, Henry Kissinger, Ronald Reagan and three former Secretaries-General of the United Nations to answer questions about their countries' support for the Khmer Rouge. According to Noam Chomsky, a prominent and controversial MIT professor, by the time the Khmer Rouge took over, Cambodia was already "pretty much a wreck" as a result of American bombing during the Vietnam War, and Sydney Schanberg, who covered the Cambodian civil war for the *New York Times*, has commented that "we didn't commit it but we, all the great powers, provided the engine that helped create it."

On the fifth Sunday in Lent, we encounter three texts that assert the final authority of the one who gives life over the one who brings death. Deep in the Lenten shadow, in the discipline of practices that have insisted that we look deeply into the dark reality of death, there we meet this witness of our ancestors.

But we begin, like Ezekiel, in the killing fields, in the valley of dry bones, up to our knees in the evidence of death's power. Like the dying Kurtz in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, we utter the only words available, "The horror! The horror!" Some part of us wants some distance between us and these bones, some monstrous Pol Pot at whose feet we can lay this bonescape. We fight off the gnawing sense that maybe this is what we should expect when we give authority to the logic of death.

The logic of death brings violence, war, and hunger. Dominance at every level finds itself supported by that logic, by the threat of harm to any who might challenge or threaten it. And we are all caught up in it, in the relentless, pervasive logic of death. We come to perceive one another as unwelcome competitors for scarce goods. And, inasmuch as we act on that perception, we create the very scarcity we fear, by hoarding abundance into excess for some and paucity for others.

We perceive the Other as threat, and prepare to meet that threat in what seems like the only safe and reasonable way—by injuring ourselves to reality that some young people must die, or the Other believe that we will sacrifice them—to hold that Other at bay. Meanwhile, the Other sees us preparing to do violent harm, and approaches us in the only sane and prudent way—hostile and armed to the teeth. This is



not something that we decide to do, and while it works most effectively if some monstrously wicked people participate, the logic of death does not require monstrosity. It simply dominates our lives. We define a state in part by its capacity to sustain a local monopoly on the use of violence and deadly force. An election in Kenya is reduced to a contest pitting one side's violence against another. Ballots become irrelevant; bullets become decisive.

The logic of death feeds on fear. And it depends on our willingness to embrace just about any crackpot idea that proposes to "do something" to address that fear. Between September 11, 2001, and March 20, 2003, an edifice of death was founded on the climate of acute fear following the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. Stoking the fear with allegations of weapons of mass destruction and of cooperation between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda, American leaders persuaded a nation to support a war based on nothing but fear and the promise that invading Iraq would "do something" to address that fear.

In truth, there is nothing we can do about death. On the immediate level of our own mortality and the mortality of those close to us, we know this, though it is profoundly impolite in most settings to say so. The logic of death is part of our DNA, built into our bodies. It has what seems to be ultimate authority in our lives. And while Ponce de Leon once sailed in search of the Fountain of Youth, and while the airwaves and fitness centres of the world resound with promises to "do something", mostly we know that we will die, and try to make a life that makes sense in the face of that knowledge.

So, too, in the DNA of cultures, nations, and societies. There is something inescapable about the authority of death, about its dominant, pervasive, and resilient capacity to work its grim agenda. And as much as that truth is hard for me to admit, let alone utter, admitting it and saying it, as we did, for example, on Ash Wednesday—"Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return"—is the necessary first step in living with hope.

Then, ankle-deep in the bonescape, we can hear, perhaps dimly at first, something else—a Spirit who breathing Life across and into the bleached and scattered bones, a Word uttering Life into the reeking tomb. "Mortal, can these bones live?" "O Lord God, you know." "Lazarus, come out." "Unbind, him and let him go."

It is not our work, then, to overcome the power of death, but to refuse it our obedience. We are frail, bounded creatures, with death in the DNA of our bodies, and death in the DNA of our cultures, our societies, our nations. But though we will suffer death, we will not serve it. And even if we are afraid, we will not let that fear decide for us how we will live. We will hope.

The difference between hope and wishful thinking is that wishful thinking is passive, while hope is active. Hope joins itself to an action already underway, to a dynamic already in play, to a kingdom already breaking forth. Hope is an action aligned with the divine initiative to overcome death. Hope is living in the world as if. As if there were something deeper, truer, somehow more real than death at work in our bodies, in our world. As if in Israel, in the prophets, and in Jesus, God had already acted in a way that invites our hope, and gives us another to serve when death demands our loyalty.

And suddenly, not by going around, or over, or under, not by retreating, not by closing our eyes and wishing, but by acknowledging our helplessness before death, we fall into the one thing that we can do when there's nothing we can do. We can in our lives, in our homes, in our communities of faith, allow God to shape our lives hopeward. We can become a witness to hope, offering practices that embody that hope to all who desire to say "no" to death's demand for our loyalty and our fear.

The bones stir, are knit together, vital. Lazarus emerges from the tomb. And if this so enrages the servants of death that they serve up the body of Jesus to their ruler, it is only their last, most desperate act before another vacant tomb sets living hope loose forever in the bonescape.



The Itinerant Church-goer will return next month.

## CONT. FROM PAGE 1 » A meditation on mortification

Russian novelist Alexander Solzhenitsyn puts it this way: "The line separating good and evil passes... through every human heart... Even within hearts overwhelmed by evil, one small bridgehead of good is retained; and even in the best of all hearts, there remains a small corner of evil."

But isn't this a very negative thing in Christianity, something we should have moved beyond by this time? A good principle for understanding the Bible is to approach the difficult stuff from the point-of-view of the stuff that is clear. So let's start with what we know.

### Restoring the image of God

The first and most important thing is this: Jesus teaches us that God loves us: three little words but absolutely amazing—enough to change your life, enough to change the world.

And what does God's love mean? Simply, that God wants the absolute best for us. In particular, it means God wants to shape us into the people God made us to be, not just as individuals but as a community. If you like, God wants to restore the image of God in us.

That's why God calls us to follow Jesus. By following Jesus we become the people God created us to be. God's purpose is entirely positive. God's ultimate goal is that the universe should be filled with joy.

Here is where it is not so straightforward, however. Sometimes the best route from A to B is not a straight line. Sometimes it means going backwards in order to go forwards.

On the one hand, God wants to nurture the good in us, but on the other hand, in order to do that, God needs to deal with what's wrong in us—because in all of us there are weeds which threaten to overwhelm the good growth God is nurturing in us.

So how do we kill bad things in our lives? Sometimes it can be done suddenly, but sometimes it has to be done gradually. In C.S. Lewis' *Great Divorce*, for example, there is a man who arrives at the edge of heaven with a red lizard on his shoulder. The man wants to stay but the lizard doesn't. An angel offers to kill the lizard if the man wants. The man isn't sure: he thinks the angel would end up killing him and not just the lizard. The angel says no: the man would be hurt but he wouldn't die. Only the lizard would die.

Eventually the man agrees. The angel reaches out and breaks the back of the lizard. But then a strange thing happens: the man turns into a new man—big, beautiful, bright and shining—a little like the angel—but even stranger, the lizard turns into a great stallion. Then the man mounts the stallion and they ride off into deep heaven.

### Stepping away from temptation

Lewis, it seems, would agree that there are some things that threaten us which can be dealt with once and for all. His story also makes the point very nicely that the reason we put things to death is so that new life can come.

On the other hand, there are many things that can be put to death only gradually—by starvation, if you like. It takes time. It takes the strength and the courage of the Holy Spirit to say "No" everyday. And it means cutting myself off from the things that feed my temptation.

The story is told of a little boy whose father had told him not to go in the swimming pool. Later that day, his father found him by the pool with his swimsuit in his hand. "Weren't you told you couldn't go swimming?" asked his father. "I'm not going swimming," said the boy. "Then why have you got your swimsuit?" "Oh, that's in case I get tempted." "If you know you shouldn't go in the pool, don't go near the pool... and certainly don't take your swimsuit."

All of us have these things in our lives that threaten the new life God is trying to grow in us. I'm sure you can think of examples from your own life, but here are a few that come to my mind immediately:

Many of us worry. Indeed, we have lists of things to worry about. Mortification can mean saying No to those worries: putting ourselves in the presence of God for a few minutes (what some people call "the sacred pause") and trying to see things from God's point of view.

Many churches sell Fair Trade coffee. They could get cheaper coffee elsewhere, of course. But they mortify their desire to save a few dollars, and help bring life to the coffee producers.

At the end of a Sunday morning service, our instinct is to talk to our friends. But, of course, when there are visitors, that natural instinct has to be put to death, and we try to cultivate something which does not come quite so naturally, at least for us introverts—to talk to new people.

### Positive change

A story about our son Ben—a jazz trumpeter—helps me get my head around this whole thing. When he was in his teens, after some years of learning trumpet, he got a new teacher, who happened to be one of the top trumpet players in Canada. And Mr. Oades said, "You're doing it all wrong. If you want to develop in your playing, you're going to have to start over, and relearn your embouchure."

Did Ben do it? He could have said, "No way, I've spent years playing this way, and I feel comfortable with it. Don't cramp my style," but he didn't. He obeyed the teacher, turned his back on the way he'd been playing before, and, as a result, he was able to move ahead in his playing, way beyond where he would have got to any other way. Sometimes it is the same for students of Jesus. Yes, there are positive things Jesus asks us to do—but sometimes he asks us to do something that seems negative, to turn our backs on things we love, things that seem like death to give up.

But in fact, it's a death that leads to life. Good Friday is the only way to Easter.

# Anglican confession



**FRANCEAN CAMPBELL-RICH**  
CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

*All may; some should; none must.* That great Anglican aphorism—so neat, so wise, so just. And how right for today. How many centuries did it take to evolve? How many martyrs died on the way? What role does confession play in our faith today? Only in Lent? Always on Sunday? Sometimes? Often? Never?

Confession seems a bit quaint to some of us now. Admission of excess, and resolution to give up something appears to be more at home at New Year's. Ask yourself how many times you resolved to give up something, and failed. I knew a clergyman once who gave up smoking for Lent; he became so irritable that he had to give up the idea altogether.

Confession used to strike me as a fictional, romantic notion embellished largely in literature, and especially in opera. I was limited in my narrow world to a few persons who ducked into church to confess, light a candle, and drop a coin in the box, and continue on the way to some mundane pursuit.

## Early memory of guilt

My earliest memory of sin and guilt involved outright theft. My cousin Margann and I had ventured the unthinkable. We had stolen something in Woolworth's. Margann's mother made her take it back to the manager. I had simply dropped mine, a celluloid 'cuppie' doll about an inch long, out the bedroom window, and suffered no punishment. Correction: the punishment was acute guilt, owing to absence of admission, penitence, and forgiveness. It remains with me to this day.

A lifetime later and I am comforted to learn that Anglican confession no longer exacts penitence. Nor do you sit in the little box and speak through a screen to a priest, although some Anglo Catholic churches provide it. I am, however, bothered to recall, not all that long ago, how I was approached by a little boy of about ten, the grandson of someone I knew, who said to

me: "I don't want you to go to hell!" I was not smart enough to supply the right reply, except to say "I don't think so...don't worry".

More recent exposure to the subject of confession has piqued my interest beyond the *general confession* we observe regularly in Christ's Church Cathedral. Though we are no longer the 'miserable offenders' of the Book of Common Prayer, whining that "there is no health in us", the words of the BAS confession fall short, in my opinion, of the opportunity of accepting God's gift to us of reflection, of revelation, and of potential. Nor is it private, or personal, or particular.

## Learning more about confession

To be sure, provision does exist for all these shortcomings—but not easily. Seminars do offer an introduction to the duties of priest-confessor, but it is minimal. Some clergy do offer the service privately, in retirement, as we have noted in newspapers. More power to them. But there is already at hand a rich resource within our own walls, with a little enquiring around. Not always is the search immediately fruitful. A few years back I tested the waters a little. Aware that at least one of our diocesan clergy regularly heard confessions, and that auricular, or private, confession was available on request, I called one of them, at random. There was a moment of silence. "I'll have to get back to you", he said. And didn't.

In time I came to face facts. If I was to satisfy my curiosity, let alone my needs, I would have to learn more about confession, its origins, its history, and why it is treated so half-heartedly now. I hit the books, only to learn that the word hardly existed over the centuries (except in the trivial contexts mentioned earlier). Even now, the term more commonly used is Reconciliation, Penance, or the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Very rarely does the terminology suggest the confession of sin, and almost never, the idea of guilt (*Pace*, that cuppie doll).

What does become clear is that over the centuries the custom of confession and the part it has played in the lives of Christians from the human approach of the apostles—the advice to "confess your sins to one another—James 5:16" through the period of the martyrs who refused to confess their faith to the Roman

authorities, and paid with their lives, and the role played by the desert fathers and the monastics, who probably served as trusted confidants to each other and to the seekers who came to them (my guess). Then the Roman form of institutionalized confession with all its rigid requirements of conformity and finally, to the first big landmark of change, the liberations of Martin Luther, and the Reformation itself.

One thread continues throughout: the Seal of the Confessional, binding Catholic priests to strict confidentiality, on pain of excommunication, written into Canon law and upheld through all denominations, written or not, to this day. And with echoes on the professions of medicine, law, the private press, and simple human decency.

## Walking in his ways

It is not difficult, and certainly it is of much interest now, to observe the mind and hand of scientists, humanists, and artists in shaping the role of confession, so called, even today. Surely Freud and his followers, Jews included, had some influence in erasing the damaging concept of guilt from an otherwise useful tool in human health. "Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned"—may happily close with the present Anglican wording of the general confession: "...that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways..."

Books were not enough. In my private researches, I talked to people, found they were hesitant at first—not sure what I was getting at. Prompted by a few stories of my own, they talked. "In England it was called 'popery' she said, but agreed it could be a good idea here, properly done. I was reminded of the quote from James about talking to each other. Most of all, I was reminded of the words by one of our retired senior clergy, who regularly heard confessions during his active years. He said "The Church requires no penance." I already knew that the good father always dons his stole, and that there are a few prayers. Then he added: "...and end with conversation." It was like hearing of talk between two old friends who trust each other, with perhaps one of them a bit older, or wiser, or both. To all of which, I say, Amen.

# This is my story



**RON VICKERS**  
ST. JAMES, DUNDAS

Born and raised in Hamilton, my first recollection of church was when I attended church parades at St Thomas Church as a cub and scout. I soon joined the Sunday school, and became involved in the administration end of it.

It was not long after that I was invited to become a server. Rising to the rank of head server, it was my job to train new servers and it was then that I became interested in church activities, in church doctrine, and its traditional liturgy. My liturgical training was well founded by the Altar Guild President Miss. Ellen Reiger.

I enjoyed the fellowship of the AYPAs (Anglican Young Peoples Association), especially the conferences.

My appreciation of church music was fostered by our church organists. It was further enhanced when I met Dr. Healey Willan and Dr. Charles Peaker. This interest in church music eventually led to my joining the choir at St James under Douglas Brownlee's direction after I semi-retired as a lay reader.

I do not know when God became real to me; I think it was an ongoing process. As I took on different church duties as a server, lay reader, warden and choir member, God began to show himself in many different ways.

The first true test was when St James' became embroiled in a controversy over the music. I found myself in the middle of the fray, warden on one side and friend on the other. It was difficult but I am sure that my faith in God stood me in good stead.

The second challenge came soon after, when St. James burned to the

ground, leaving only the outside stone walls standing. It was truly a calamity, especially watching the glorious baptism stained glass window blow out onto the lawn. To walk the next day amongst the charred embers of our beloved church is something that I will never forget. But under Reverend Philip Jefferson's leadership we rallied together, redefined and rebuilt St James Church.

I think that God was there in the midst of all the members of the congregation. Again God strengthened my experience with him.

My life since then has been full of ups and downs, including career changes after having a very stable job which ended in a wholesale layoff.

Our family suffered a very serious crisis when our daughter Suzanne developed cancer at age 36 and for 4 years, off and on, my wife, Beth, spent time in B.C. caring for her. It was a time of seemingly never ending battles, winning some, losing some. When Suzanne died I thought that the end of our lives had come too but because of the loyalty, love and compassion shown to us by a group of our church friends throughout the 4 years of her illness we were able to weather this storm.

I am of the opinion that God has made me more aware of our fragile hold on life. We have had our faith strengthened through God's love and through the support of our church family. We find it easier to talk to people who are in similarly stressed situations. We are now blessed with understanding and compassion and are able to help others.

I am not sure if I would do anything different if I had my life to live over again. If ever I was asked to give advice (heaven forbid) to someone starting out in their new life in Christ, my first thought would be that they should be willing to see both sides of a discussion, whether it is theological, liturgical, biblical, pertaining to the every day workings of the church, or to moral issues. Be tolerant of other person's views.

Be ready to accept duties and jobs in the church which you feel you can accomplish, maybe you might flounder, but be ready to accept failure and move on. Enjoy the company of your fellow Christians. Be ready when you notice someone who needs a helping hand.

# Perhaps it is time to change our vocabulary



**GRAHAME STAP**  
ST. ALBAN THE MARTYR, GLEN WILLIAMS

After the day is done and it is time to relax, I read the newspaper from cover to cover while sitting in my favorite chair and having a glass of wine. I know most of you will wonder how I can relax and read the newspaper; it seems, with all the bad news we get each day, to almost be an

oxymoron but there is an occasional good news story. If I am honest, it also helps me to understand that even after what I consider to be a bad day there are others whose day was a lot worse than mine.

However there is a trend creeping into our way of writing and our way of speaking that I find troubling and it seems to reinforce the fact that we are fast becoming a race of people that excludes others from our lives. It is the use of 'I' and 'my' rather than 'we' and 'us.' There is a couple at our church, wonderful supportive people, that I honestly thought were on their second marriages because even when both were present would refer to their chil-

dren as *my son* or *my daughter* rather than *our son* or *our daughter*.

This seems to be accepted as a normal way of speaking but it is strange to walk into a store and a salesperson says, "I will see if I have any." Perhaps this is ok if they own the store.

When I officiate at a wedding I say to the couple, "This is the day you change your vocabulary." They look at me with a quizzical expression on their faces and I explain that from today on instead of *my house*, *my bank account*, *my son* or *daughter* it is *our house* etc. You are entering into a state of unity and in a state of unity you share—you do not hoard to yourself.

Have we become a race of hoard-

ers? I think the society around us has become, to a large extent, a race of hoarders. But as Christians, is it not our place to set the example and show others we follow a God to whom sharing, while he was with us on earth, was a way of life and it our place to do likewise?

I am constantly amazed to hear people say 'my church.' Is it not after all God's church and does God not stand for all people. Perhaps if we change our vocabulary from 'I' and 'my' to 'we' and 'our' we will come to understand that it is not our place to decide who God can have in God's church.

We even use that terrible saying, "There but for the grace of God go I."

Does this mean the person we are referring to does not have God's grace and we do? Do we even try to horde the grace of God? I believe if we truly want to honour our God then we need to accept all people where they are and not where we expect them to be and invite all people into the house of God and not put the agenda we want to cling to the front.

Let us all change our vocabulary not only with our words but with our actions also and show society that the church can be a place of acceptance and of sharing, inclusiveness and understanding. Let us invite others to share what society cannot offer, the love of God which is for all of us.



# Getting to know you

## The Right Reverend Walter Asbil and Mrs. Mavis Asbil Former Bishop of Niagara and Spouse



**FRAN DARLINGTON**  
PRIEST - ST. JAMES, GUELPH

### The view from here—to there

The Anglican Church has weathered many challenges and changes, some better than others. As one who pastored the Diocese of Niagara for forty years, as priest and Bishop, the Right Reverend Walter Asbil looks on the unfolding history of the Church with a particular wisdom and compassion. "I don't like the word 'optimism,'" he says, "but 'hopeful' may be the best word."

Though society's transformation has led to controversy, Bishop Walter identifies Anglican anchors: "In the middle of Anglican comprehensiveness breaking down, we are at our best as Anglicans. We easily disagree, but feel like a family at the altar rail.

Bishop Walter is disturbed by recent developments in the world-wide Anglican Communion, particularly actions by dissenting clergy in Niagara and by other bishops toward them: "It's a breakdown of our comprehensiveness and not necessary.

"In the last five or ten years, lots of things have broken our understanding. Positions have hardened; then it's hard to get things together again. I'm not blaming anyone, but edges that were fuzzy are now clear. I'm still quite hopeful about what is happening in the parishes. Hopefulness is elusive, but there's a sense of people struggling with their faith."

### Hopefulness, fifty years on

Since he was ordained priest on December 18, 1957, "The Church has changed considerably, from being totally priest-driven to involvement of the people. Parishes are still pretty dependent on clergy, (but) there's much more acceptance of what it means to be baptised. People live out their baptism in ways that were not there fifty years ago."

Bishop-in-Residence at St. George's Church, St. Catharines, Bishop Walter describes that parish as an example of hopefulness: "There's a really good atmosphere. It's a happy place; worship is lively and creative with Val (the Reverend Valerie Kerr, Assistant Priest) and Rob (the Reverend Canon Rob Fead, Rector).

"For example, a study group at St. George's attracts up to seventy-five people. They're even looking at the Creed; that's not exciting, but most people want to learn... Most people are content with anything but a literalist (interpretation). They're prepared to wrestle with it. Lots of people are seeking a non-threatening opportunity, where they can ask any question without feeling stupid. (We) had two sessions on same-sex blessings, with about sixty or seventy people, and a wonderful atmosphere: no applause, just listen to each other. It was open,

frank; each person dealt with it in their own way." Mavis Asbil adds, "Everyone remained friends."

When Bishop Walter became Rector of St. George's, St. Catharines, in November 1970, there was "No way!" the people chose their priest. Now parish parochial committees offer considerable input on appointments. Another issue: "...families moved into town from outlying parishes where their children had been receiving communion—the priest broke the rules—and others would say, 'Why can't my child...?' " In 2007, Anglican altars are places of welcome rather than exclusion.

Mavis describes a personal issue that arose when she and Bishop Walter were married: "It irked me that when I became an Anglican I had to be confirmed—that really ticked me off! I was confirmed in the United Church." Bishop Walter teases, "That wasn't a real confirmation!" Mavis continues, "I had gone to Church all my life. I was happy in the United Church!" Then, relenting, "My Father was an elder, it was dull, awful! Fifty years on, I'm an Anglican, but I would never have changed but for Walter!"

Mavis comments on another difference for clergy spouses: "At St. George's, we followed Ed and Isobel Downey. She did so many things in that Church—then I came along and didn't do all that!" Many clergy spouses have also made that choice.

### "It's not a cinch"

On the closing of Anglican churches: "I had to do some, but (Bishop Spence) has had to do many. Some may be legitimate, there may be some more to happen, but maybe we're getting close to not having to (do that)." For example, Bishop Walter points out that "We don't need ten (Anglican Churches in St. Catharines), but it will work itself through."

A parish church may become a "chapel of ease," rather than close. Revising this ancient designation offers another way "to maintain traditional worship, to keep a parish viable rather than rely on money," as local clergy may offer services there, without the appointment of a specific parish priest.

Bishop Walter emphasises the importance of episcopal and congregational discernment on parish leadership: "If they have the right leader with the right gifts at the right time, a parish is not likely to close. When it works, it really works! It's too bad we're still so dependent on clergy leadership. (If) a school principal, who (sets) the tone, is poor or lazy, the school doesn't go well; it's the same in a parish. The catalyst in the business is still the parish priest. Some clergy don't see it that way; one clergy in the Diocese has nothing to do with finances. I don't understand that. You have to accept the whole condition; you can't just pick and choose.

"People need a sense of real stewardship, not making (them) feel guilty, but simply saying, 'Here's the need,' making it an integral part of life. If it is, the money flows." Bishop Walter is working with Canon Fead to create

an "endowment fund for ministry, not for buildings."

Bishop Walter appreciates the cooperative effort among St. Catharines churches on youth ministry. Four churches, two Anglican (St. George's and St. Thomas'), one Presbyterian and one Baptist, share the salary of a staff person who leads a good-sized group in a wide variety of wonderful activities, each week in a different church. "Why don't we do that more?" he asks.

He chuckles, "Fifty years ago, a bishop in England said that the ten busiest people in England were Anglican clergy, but the ten people who do the least were Anglican clergy!" Learning that his nephew was entering ordained ministry, Bishop Walter's "grumpy old uncle" commented, "He won't have to work hard at that job!" Bishop Walter admits, "It's not the cinch he thought it was."

### Liturgical variety a good experience—even for royalty

Regarding varied liturgies offered in Niagara, Bishop Walter affirms, "I'm totally supportive! There's no way I could go back to only the Book of Common Prayer. That doesn't mean we cast it away; it's not passé for everybody. I'm glad it's still around, but I'm glad I don't have to take it out every Sunday. (The service on page 230 of the B.A.S.) is different. The leader used to get up and mumble, now leaders are alive, the whole thing seems alive." Echoing a frequent Anglican complaint, he adds, "I lament Evensong, but if we offer it, nobody comes!"

Bishop Walter describes St. George's popular monthly Celtic service, with bodhran (Irish drum), violin and accordion: "The words are simple, from Iona (a primary Celtic centre in Scotland). Attendance goes up (on those Sundays.) Sophie Wessex (spouse of Prince Edward) came, and people-in-the-know said we should do only BCP, but she was absolutely thrilled!"

Bishop Walter sees all these as "heartening signs that this stuff is going on, in most, though not all, congregations." He offers thoughts on today's Church and its future: "I am deeply grateful for the ministry of Ralph Spence. It's not been an easy ten years, but he's done a great piece of creative work, and he's kept his sense of humour. We'll be very well blessed in the ministry of Michael Bird (the Right Reverend Michael Bird, co-adjutor Bishop of Niagara). We're also blessed in having Fred (The Most Reverend Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada) as Primate. He's a really good person, keeps his feet on the ground, has a listening ear—people like him!"

### Changes for Bishop Walter and Mavis

Since Bishop Walter's retirement in 1997, life has changed for the episcopal couple. He smiles, "I have a little thing here and there, (but) it's mostly Mavis on the calendar.

# The joy of the Lord



**SUSAN C. HUXFORD-WESTALL**  
ALL SAINTS, HAMILTON

A word that I find too seldom used in religious discussions is "Conscience" and yet I read of the "God within" and of the "Christos". What is the Christos, the God within, but the voice of conscience speaking to us?

Conscience is defined as the "moral sense of right & wrong" (Concise OED). I maintain that "conscience" is the voice of God within. We can either



The "hell" that each one of us must endure can be to keep repeating the same mistakes over and over again.

pay attention to that voice or we can ignore—deny—it. It will be argued that "conscience" depends upon society, upon the culture in which the individual develops, but does that deny the voice of God within? Surely in our divided humanity God speaks to us according to our limited understanding?

If God speaks to us in language that we can understand, surely it follows that His voice will be heard in the context of our own surroundings, of our culture? Should it be surprising that God speaks, and has spoken in the past, to different cultures in different parts of the world? Why should He have spoken in identical terms to the Ancient Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Hebrews, the Greeks, the Aryan invaders of India and Europe, the Chinese? The answer is that he didn't and he hasn't.

Let us go back to the beginning, for that, according to the Bible, is God (Genesis 1:1). Let us assume that, after a lot of experimenting with different forms of life, God decided to experiment with humans. A convenient axiom of science is that "Nature abhors a vacuum", then, using our God-given intelligence, we may assume that God does not appreciate nothingness. He or She—or perhaps He and She—created humanity as a challenge (remember that we are using our assumed God-given intelligence). The Bible tells us that God breathed into the dust that He had formed and "man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7). The Hebrew word for "breath" is *ruach*, which may be interpreted as breath, wind or spirit. In any case, God gave part of Him/ Herself to humanity—life, breath, the "Holy Spirit". Is it unreasonable to assume that God wants the return of that Spirit one day? The Bible tells us that "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was and the spirit shall return to God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

Nothing that we have assumed to this point is contrary to Holy Scripture as it is accepted by Jews, Christians and Moslems. Let our assumptions continue. Part of God's spirit resides in humanity, in other words, in each one of us. God has given us freewill, the ability to use that Spirit as we will. We are free to use or abuse it. If we deny it, we abuse it; if we ignore it, it

cannot grow within us; if we recognise and value it, it can grow within us.

Was not Jesus telling us this when he spoke of the man who went on a journey, leaving his servants behind? Before he left them to their own devices, he gave them certain assets. In Matthew's gospel we read that he gave one of his servants five talents, to another three and to another just one (Matt. 25:14-30). In those days a "talent" was a sum of money. Today it has taken on a far more significant meaning. Each of us is given talents which may be developed as we mature. Some are more gifted than others, but we all have abilities that we may develop when the opportunity arises. The gospel story tells us that two of the servants used their talents to their own profit and had doubled their capital when their master returned. One of them was lazy and did not use his talent; he buried it and left it, never to develop.

The end is significant. On the master's return the two who had "cashed in" on their master's benevolence could easily have withheld their profit and handed back to their master what he had given them, keeping for themselves the profit that they had gained. They didn't. They gave the whole lot back to the master who had given them the opportunity for success at the outset. Their master was delighted and rewarded them by opening his estate to them. They entered into the joy of their lord.

What happened to the man who received just one talent? On his master's return he showed no appreciation of the trust that had been extended to him. He simply handed back what had been given him to use. Notice that he knew that his master was "a hard man, reaping where you did not sow", so he had decided not to go along with the game, although he knew his master's character and recognised that his master expected him to use his talent. He handed back the one talent that he had been given, saying, in effect, "You always expect us to use our abilities for your benefit. OK then. Here's what you gave me at the start. It was yours to start with; I'm just giving it back to the owner. Besides, you're a hard master." In other words, No.3 did the usual: he blamed his master for his own fault. He says in effect "If you hadn't been such a hard master, I would have done differently". When one's conscience hits a person, that person may well try to squirm out of the situation—it's human nature.

Now let us put this tale in a contemporary context, as it affects you and me. Is it not that we enter God's world with certain abilities, abilities that we call "talents"? For what do we enter God's world?

This is the eternal question—"Why was I born?". If we believe in God as our Creator, then we must assume some purpose for life. What is that purpose? Does the story that we have just recalled tell us? If we recognise God as our Creator, do we not also recognise Him/Her as Master? If, as Christians, we can accept the ancient Creed that "Jesus is Lord", do we not recognise that we are bound to follow his teachings? May we not conclude that God has put us in His world to do His work for Him? Are we required to do the reaping where He has not sown?

# "THE END OF THE WORLD" Is it coming soon?



**JOHN BOTHWELL**  
RETIRED ARCHBISHOP OF NIAGARA

Some years ago, Morris West's novel, *The Clowns of God*, told the story of a Pope who saw a vision about the end of the world. He is not a fanatic, just a compassionate man who is convinced that the pressures of power politics and the international "arms race" soon will lead to the destruction of the world; so he wants to issue a warning.

However, the Cardinals in the Curia feared that he may be mentally disturbed or lost his faith, and anyway, that any attempt to warn people would cause panic. So good Pope Gregory is forced to abdicate, and there is no public explanation, except ill health. Then, however, a personal friend sets out to investigate the

real reasons for the Pope's removal. The story is fascinating, and raises the question, "How literally are we to believe in the end of the world?"

Herbert O'Driscoll has pointed out that we live in "an age of apocalypse," a time of "special insight." And what causes the insights of an 'apocalyptic age' is often disturbing; usually a series of events that shatter people, relationships, and cherished traditions. Dr. O'Driscoll writes, "...if you could take a time-machine and fly over the last two thousand years of Western History, you would look down and see very varied territory:

- Rolling country-side, the times of peace and consensus.

- Also, some 'desert times' and some 'rocky times.'

- But every now and then, you would see a great chasm—times when history seemed bisected, and a generation seemed to end. Then, on the other side of the cleft, life begins again for a new generation, unconnected apparently, with anything that had gone before."

Great chasms of that kind have occurred for example:

- About 450 A.D., when the Roman Empire fell to the barbarians.

- About 1000 A.D., when the "Dark Ages" gave way to medieval times.

- Many people feel that the Protestant Reformation was that kind of event too.

- It seems to be happening again today, in the opinion of many, including Dr. O'Driscoll, and me too. We live in a time of apocalypse!

In times like this, confusion gains momentum, people begin to wonder if the end of human history might be close at hand, and fundamentalists point to all the Biblical passages which predict cataclysmic "signs", some of which seem to be occurring today.

So what are serious Christians to believe? There are various opinions about the end of the world, but they fall into two main categories:

The most literal one holds that history could indeed end dramatically, and perhaps soon, because "the times

are out of joint". There could be a final cataclysm, Armageddon, and Christ will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, as the creeds and the apocalyptic passages in the New Testament suggest.

But there is another view which is also soundly rooted in Holy Scripture and often is not recognized. It suggests that the Second Coming may refer to Christ's continuing presence in human history through the Holy Spirit, who offers us strength and assistance, but also invites our participation in humanity's continuing struggle towards maturity and fulfillment.

In my opinion, the second view is more realistic, but many might dispute this, and we could debate this for hours, for the true answer is known only to God. It is important to remember, however, that beneath all our different opinions, virtually all Christians share these three convictions:

That evil and tragedies will continue in the future. No matter how ap-

palling and threatening human history may become, God remains in ultimate control.

Even if we can't fully understand God's Plans, we may be sure that how we respond to God in daily life does make a difference!

Still, Father Andrew Greeley offers a word of caution: "A healthy infusion of Old Testament 'saving remnant theology', and the seeming failure of the Lord of the New Testament at his crucifixion, ought to be sufficient grounds to-day, for vigorous effort, with very modest expectations. Realism and modest expectations do not mean either cynicism or despair, but rather, modest hopes, hard work, and leaving the outcome in God's hands.

People with modest hopes may not radiate starry-eyed idealism, but neither are they likely to give up in discouragement. And on occasion, they may even find themselves surprised, when the returns far exceed their modest expectations."

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 » Neither here nor there...

With the umbilical cord cut, the church is now free from conforming to the way of society and better able to conform to the way of Jesus.

Nevertheless, the church still plays a role for many in our society who have no connection to the church. There is still a 'memory' of Christendom in all but perhaps our most recent generation. This sentimentality can most frequently be observed at baptisms, funerals and marriages for people unconnected with the church, but whose ingrained memories—or the memories of their families—tell them that this is what they need to do, even if they don't know why.

Rodney Clapp, in his book *A Peculiar People*, bluntly assesses our situation in this way: "Christians feel useless because the church feels useless. And the church feels useless because it keeps on trying to perform Constantinian duties in a world that is no longer Constantinian." That is to say, we've moved from the era of Christendom, which Emperor Constantine ushered in nearly two millennia ago, to a world which no longer needs the church to raise good citizens.

Yet this transition from Christen-

dom to post-Christendom and modern to post-modern won't happen overnight. History has shown that such transitions generally take centuries and not years. Thus it is highly unlikely that any one reading this article will actually live to see a fully realized post-modern church.

### A new brand

Even so, there is little doubt that the journey from this age to the next has begun in many of our churches. For the most part we're not sure what the next thing is, or even what it might look like, so we're trying to do a little bit of everything. Two of the characteristic elements of the positive responses to this transition are a move by the church to re-brand and market itself and to adopt a 'designer religion' mentality.

One doesn't need to look far to see evidence of branding in our diocese. The "You Mean More" campaign during Advent is a perfect example of how we are attempting to re-brand ourselves from the lingering images implanted in the minds of many who have long been dissatisfied with a modern church. Parishes have sought to brand themselves too. St. John's

Ancaster, for example, "Heart's Open in Christ's Love", St. James & St. Brendan's "Sharing Life", or Christ Church Deer Park in Toronto diocese "There's Life Here". In better reflecting their faith to the world, these communities are proclaiming to their communities that the church continues to have a purpose in the living out of God's reign!

Going hand in hand with branding, is an increased effort to market the church. With the You Mean More campaign, the diocese took out ads in community newspapers, put spots on the radio, and developed a web page for people to find out how they mean more! At St. James in Dundas, this attempt at marketing has recently taken the form of a Facebook ad for our Third @ Four service. Finding new ways of reaching out to people with new brands and new marketing strategies seems one way we're proclaiming Christianity version 2.0.

### Liturgical diversification

Another way many churches are responding to the emerging realities of life in the twenty-first century is by adopting a 'designer religion' mentality. Our liturgies increasingly value

sensation rather than affiliation. It's a shift from coming to church because you're Anglican and want to hear the 'holy hum' to coming to church because you're fully engaged, with all your senses, in the liturgy.

Complementing this idea is the growing trend of liturgical diversification. Many churches now offer alternative services in addition to the stalwart BCP and BAS services in the morning. One only has to glance at the special liturgies section of the diocesan website to see the wide array of services being offered in our churches today. There's everything from jazz vespers to prayers for justice and peace, from choral evensong to messy church, and from Taizé night prayers to sacred circle dancing.

In doing so, we've moved from the modern notion of one-size fits all, to a very post-modern notion that values custom-tailoring to fit one's needs. In many ways this is a time of experimentation; trying to discern who and where God is calling us to be. If we are to take this task seriously, we'll likely fail more often than we succeed; but with each attempt, we'll gain a better understanding of our purpose as agents in God's mission.

### A new and transformed people

In Niagara, I think we live mostly as if we're still in the womb, although more and more our churches and people are realizing that the contractions have started and we're heading into a new world. We're neither here nor there, but someplace in between.

One of the themes Bishop Ralph has repeatedly told divinity students at our gatherings is that the church he was ordained into is most certainly not the church from which he'll retire. Isn't that an exciting thing to hear? Even with all the potential pitfalls, to be amidst a period of change and to have the grace to discern God's vision for humanity in the next millennia is simply awesome! Our work is to reclaim our sense of who we are as a distinct entity from the state and in the same way growing into something more than the sponsor of Western civilization.

In many ways this may be an extended Lenten journey in the wilderness for the church; but with God's grace, we'll emerge from that journey as a new and transformed people, entering into the long sought after Promised Land.

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4 » Sacred Arts

by presenting "reasonable" liturgies. There is also the Puritanical impulse in our tradition: an uncomfortable suspicion that art is egotistical performance, papist idolatry. This attitude becomes destructive when it rejects the eloquence, poetry and beauty that can be vehicles of inspiration.

Further, the theological legacy of 17th century Puritanism is the fundamentalist simplification that enables a believer to criticize and exclude anyone disagreeing with his or her liturgy or theology. We often forget that early Christians interpreted the Bible from different perspectives. Thomas Aquinas, for example, specified that the literal sense of Scripture is the step-

pingstone to the spiritual sense, the subject of meditation. Scripture has spiritual meaning when its literal or historical sense is interpreted on one of three levels: the allegorical (seeing the New Testament allusion to an Old Testament passage), the moral (seeing the moral application of a passage) and the anagogical (seeing the spiritual message of a passage). The fundamentalist's insistence on one literal reading is a more recent and limiting aberration.

A great exception to the narrow mold of Puritanism was John Bunyan, the Puritan preacher whose very popular metaphorical story, "The Pilgrim's Progress," has his protagonist, Chris-

tian, visit the House of the Interpreter on his way through life to the Celestial City. It seems to me that each Christian should interpret the Bible in his or her own experience and respect others' differing interpretations.

Inevitably, we struggle with the recitation of the Nicene Creed, one of the Anglican Church's central traditions. There are those who blithely recite it, weekly, without giving it its meaning a second thought. Of those who do concern themselves with the importance of what they profess, some focus on interpreting its spiritual meaning. Some believe it literally. Others feel pressured to believe it literally but can't; they recite it with their fingers

crossed or they stand silent during this part of the service. Soon they feel so conflicted that they leave the church. We lose people when we insist that the Nicene Creed is literally true and imply or pronounce that people who don't agree are heretics.

I have known many friends leave the church, driven out by exclusivist sermons or simply unable to reconcile fourth-century creeds with their 21st century common sense. These lost sheep are so obsessed with their own rationality or the church's frosty literalism that they can't hear the deeper, older, truths of its poetry.

Our religious services can and should be, in many profound and

valid ways, works of sacred art, ritual re-enactments of our central mysteries. Our use of words, music and images that are metaphorical, multifaceted and majestic moves us into sacred presence. But when we narrow the interpretation of our beliefs to the literalistic and when we fixate on modern relevance in the style of our worship, we easily become judgmental and frustrated. This is the face of Christianity that our non-churched contemporaries reject as "unreasonable" while they tragically dismiss as well the great gifts of our church's liturgies that take us beyond the rational, the great traditions that connect us to God.



# Alive and free

**CHRIS GRABIEC**

EDITOR

"If a person happens to be 36 years old, as I happen to be, and some great truth stands before the door of his life, some great opportunity to stand up for that which is right and that which is just, and he (or she) refuses to stand up because he wants to live a little longer and he is afraid his home will get bombed, or he is afraid that he will lose his job, or he is afraid that he will get shot, ...he may go on and live until he's 80, and the cessation of breathing in his life is merely the belated announcement of an earlier death of the spirit.

"We die when we refuse to stand up for that which is right. We die when we refuse to take a stand for that which is true. So we are going to stand up right here... letting the world know that we are determined to be free."  
(Martin Luther King Jr.)

At our last synod, the young folks in our church challenged us to make some very significant changes to our lifestyles individually and as a church community. The motion suggested that each parish needed to find ways of identifying levels of green house gas emission and to reduce them by fifteen percent. Many of us are so very proud of them for speaking up fearlessly and calling the adult world around them to change and conversion. But herein lays the problem. Have any of us taken this challenge seriously? That's a question that can only be answered by each and every one of us. It's not only about our church buildings, but it's about our own homes—our own lives. As members of the Church in Niagara—have we started this journey toward saving the world that has been entrusted to us by our God and Creator? This is not about next year—it's about now, are we doing anything at all?

St. Christopher's in Burlington is making some changes. Their newsletter advertises their Lenten Journey: "Taking out the Garbage: A spiritual Ecology in Living". The theme is centered on the fact that there is a clear relationship between our spiritual well being



and our planet's well being. Thanks to St. Christopher's for taking the lead and to any other parish that has started an aggressive journey toward living out the commitment that we made at synod.

Recently our social justice chair, Colleen Sym, has been working with others in the diocese, making visits (scheduled by appointment) to many of the members of provincial parliaments in our diocese. She and the others go there with one purpose in mind: stating that the Anglican Diocese of Niagara is concerned about affordable housing for those who are in need. In the face of all the arguments: "They're lazy", "they should get a job", "they're always taking advantage of the system" and worse, our social justice group is simply taking the stand that we need affordable housing for those who do not have the means for anything else.

There are people in our diocese, like Sue-Ann Ward and Wendy Roy,

who spend most of their days working with the poor in our local society. Bob Hudson is another one who cares for another kind of need—the sea-farers at the Port Authority of Hamilton. I'm sure there are other stories that can be told and maybe a few names that I have left out. However, I don't think that the folks who really work for and on behalf of the poor and who are willing to stand up for them really care about acknowledgement as much as they care about doing the right thing in our world.

The other day, I was having dinner in a small restaurant on James Street North in Hamilton. There was a large stretch-limousine outside of our cathedral and it was running to keep it warm. It was there for a long while. While it sat there we watched people that looked like they were either homeless or pretty close to walking by the cathedral. I can only say there

was a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach. It was the image; the picture of affluence, environmental irresponsibility and our (my) failure to solve the problems of poverty and homelessness in the world around us. I couldn't help but wonder if anyone (myself included) truly cared? There was something in the image that was calling me to make changes within myself and to do whatever I could to help some of the poor folks in society that simply cannot help themselves.

Most of my life has been privileged. I grew up wanting for nothing. There was always food, shelter, warmth, recreation, toys, spending money and everything else that I needed. I went to university and into the seminary and then into rectories that were palatial. Everything has always been taken care of. I used to thank God for blessing me—until one day I realized that nothing could be more absurd. My wealth

and comfort could not be a blessing from God. Why would God choose me and leave out the person who was sleeping on the street? My wealth and comfort was and is, simply the luck of the draw. The homeless person was not so lucky and I feel that God weeps as a result.

I've always thought of myself as someone who is somewhat prophetic and able to speak out about what is right and just. Some days, I look at myself now and realize that my prophetic role is pretty pathetic as I continue to enjoy comfort daily and stop so infrequently to think about the poor and more importantly to act on their behalf.

Whether it is fear or some form of apathy that causes us to be complacent about this world and its inhabitants, the important thing is that we are ceasing to live, by the moment. Our apathy or fear only announces the death of our spirits.

Thousands of children starve daily. Thousands die of AIDS in Africa and in other nations. Hundreds of poor folks wander the streets of Hamilton and other cities. Tens of thousands of senior aged people live on minimum incomes and can barely afford food on their plates. I am thankful to the youth, to places like St. Christopher's, to our Social Justice folks and others who remind us that if we want to truly live, and to truly be free, then we need to stand up and be counted. We need to be people of action who care for the world, our environment and for all of the world inhabitants.

The words of Martin Luther King ring out in my head: "We may go on and live until we are 80 or more, and the cessation of breathing in our lives will merely be the belated announcement of an earlier death of the spirit." The will of the God that you and I know is for us to live fully, in concert with everything and everyone that God has created—including the poor and homeless in our world.

I guess if I really want to "live" and to be "free" then I have some standing up to do!

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# Finding directions in Hamilton



Front: Barbara Jean Lick, Maggie Armstrong. Middle: Clare Macaulay-Newcombe, Josh Morrison, Todd Miles, Rev. Mike Deed (Staff). Back: Dave Wright, Alicia Archbell, Jade Hayward, Rosie Hopkins, Mac Armstrong, Vanessa Rundie, Jamie Barnes (Staff), Joyce Wilton (Staff).

**ALICIA ARCHBELL**  
ST. ELIZABETH'S, BURLINGTON

If one was to walk into the Unity Retreat Center in Hamilton during the weekend of February 1-3, 2008 and wander their way up to the 2nd and 3rd floors, one might be confused. One would see 11 delegates and three staff members on a journey. This journey is not a trip from point A straight to point B; rather it is a journey of the experience in between. As the 14 people who attended SpiritQuest this year found out, everything is a journey.

They heard about Jacob's journey in life and where he saw God. They

saw clips from movies and discussed where the characters journeyed. They explored their faith journey, their life journey and the little side journeys that happen, too. They walked around the Upper James area at the top of the mountain access and tried to see God. They had maps and designated places to go and so they journeyed to them.

Though actual figures of Jesus were found in a wedding boutique, most people found God on the journey between those places. God was found in the tracks in the snow, in the snow angels and in tobogganing. God was also found in the awesome sights that

were around and in the nature found—in Hamilton of all places.

That weekend God was found in many different places along the journey. God was found in the joy people found when they successfully used the "well-used" elevator and in the laughter while the participants made crafts. God was found in the silence during solo time where the participants had time to reflect on the journeys they are on, and God was found in the singing that everyone did always. While the participants and staff discussed and prayed about journeying, it was all a part of the journey.

# Time: A significant word



**IAN DINGWALL**  
RETIRED ARCHDEACON OF NIAGARA

Dorothy (my wife) and I have recently returned from a three week stay in Vancouver.

Having left Vancouver for Niagara in 1972, we have visited there infrequently (usually either on church business or for specific family times such as funerals et al).

This time, though, it was simply pleasure and we were blessed in that friends were holidaying in New Zealand and allowed us to live in their beautiful, comfortable home in North Vancouver just below the snow covered Mount Seymour.

Vancouver is such a gorgeous city although I know I could not deceive you into believing we had 21 days of beautiful sunshine. Don't go to Vancouver if you dislike rain!

In reflecting on our most enjoyable time on the West Coast, the word "Time" has provided much to consider. We spent a great deal of time during our Vancouver visit renewing long-time friendships—from AYP

friends to University/Seminary contemporaries to Family, as well as with just 'old-time' friends.

"Time" is a significant word in our Christian vocabulary. "Now is the Time" is an admonition from Saint Paul that asks us to be aware of the meaning of our lives, not in a preoccupation with the past nor with the future. Our Time is now. Whatever is our past or future times, the present moment is what is most important.

## Think on three different ways of looking at Time:

■ Time is always changing. And, as Time changes, so do we. Time sees changes or growth in our personalities, perceptions and perspectives about life. We cannot alter that fact by pretending it isn't so. We need simply to acknowledge and accept. In knowing ourselves and attempting to understand existence accepting change (not without scrutiny, though!) is important.

■ Time is unfathomable. It is Mystery. That's life, after all, I and we should not be dismayed by that truth. Some are driven by fear to either ignore Mystery or to explain it away. That, in my view, is not the biblical take on things. We need to be aware of Mystery and celebrate its essence as we realize that there is always, inside and outside of ourselves, the unknowable. It was the great theologian, S. Augustine, who

asked, "What is time. No one asks me? And I know. But if a person should request me to tell him, I cannot." Rejoice, therefore, in the Mystery of Time and Life. The English poet, Steve Turner, wrote: "These are the good old days. Just wait and see."

■ Time is God's Gift. You cannot alter it to your liking. You cannot control it for your pleasure. You can't extend it. But we can use it. In the midst of our Time we are embraced always in God's love. Our Time may be running out but the Good News is that God is Eternal (Timeless) and we are part of God.

There's a curiously attractive little piece of poetry inscribed on a clock in Chester Cathedral. There's one little bit of it that worries me. It is the words of the final line. In speaking of Salvation it says, "...saved my soul..." which for me is misleading because Salvation is a Journey which is never completed—at least in our life Times.

*"When, as a child, I laughed and wept, Time crept.*

*When, as a youth, I dreamed and talked, Time walked.*

*When I became a full-grown man, Time ran.*

*And later, as I older grew, Time flew. Soon I shall find, while traveling on, Time gone.*

*Will Christ have saved my soul by then? Amen"*

# The alternative story

**MARTHA TATARNIC**  
PRIEST, ST. JUDE'S, OAKVILLE

I was driving to band practice the other night—I play French Horn in a local concert band—and I caught myself thinking, *oh man, I hope I can make it through the evening without making a fool of myself.* Because I have so little time to practice, this wasn't the first time a thought like this has wandered through my head. Increasingly, one of my main goals at these Wednesday evening rehearsals is to escape notice, to not wreck the music everyone else is making so beautifully, to sink into the background.

A memory quickly followed on the heels of this thought. A memory that hasn't always been this way. That there was a long period of time in which I would walk into a similar band practice thinking *I am The Bomb.* I would hope to get noticed. I would want as many high, exposed parts as possible. I would assume it was my God-given right to play first horn, to lead the section, to claim the solos. I knew what I was doing. I had confidence to spare.

## Self-fulfilling prophecies

It was surprising, remembering myself as this person. I had gotten so used to fixating on avoiding negative attention that I had forgotten that I ever used to adopt any other stance. Stealthily, smoothly, without my even noticing it, my understanding of who I am has done a complete one-eighty, a new story slipping itself into my subconscious and imposing itself on me as if it has always been there, as if the other story never existed. One moment I'm walking into practice busting at the seams to prove how good I am, the next moment I'm walking into practice hoping against hope that I can avoid disclosing how bad I am.

Here is an observation about the stories we tell about ourselves: they tend to be self-fulfilling prophecies. When I play these days, I am cautious, I follow others, I don't trust my instincts, I hesitate, and that hesitation wreaks havoc on my phrases, my entries, my rhythm, my accuracy. When I used to play, I played boldly, I believed that I could not so much hit the notes as allow them to soar out of me, and my confidence gave weight to my playing, anchored it with the qualities I believed I possessed.

The more that I tell myself the story that I'm not very good, the more I don't play well, and therefore, the more ingrained that story becomes. The more I tell myself the story that my enormous ego is justified because I rock, the more my ego gets the fuel it needs to keep chugging out these grand illusions.

## Walking a tightrope

Here is another observation: whether inhabiting the story of conceit or the story of inadequacy, each makes the ego walk a precarious tightrope, each has its way of grinding on the soul. When you're on top, the stakes are high and the fall is terrifying. I can attest to just how hard, how shatteringly hard, the thump at the bottom is when you inevitably find yourself out of mojo and a long shot away from measuring up. Being at the bottom is easier, at least there is nowhere to fall. But surely this life is not about safely keeping our voices choked, our spirits inhibited, our personhoods stunted.

Ironically, the two stories go hand in hand. If you want to tango with your ego, it is almost certainly guaranteed that you will experience each story at one time or another, and frankly, it's

amazing how effortlessly the two stories can flip-flop back and forth through the human conscience, each trading off with the other for its turn in the sun. It's also amazing that as fluid as these stories are, the idea of a different sort of story presents itself as a vague impossibility, if it presents itself at all.

Yet, as Christians, we do tell the world of another story. Not the tale of human conceit, of 'I'm okay, you're okay, aren't we all just swell'. Nor the tale of human defeat, of being destroyed by all of the ways in which we aren't good enough. It is instead a narrative on our human calling to be co-creators with God in the work of love.

And as we are partway through the season of Lent, we realize that we must not only tell the world of this story, we must also tell ourselves, because even Christians find it all too easy to forget. We tell it. We tell it again. Again. Again. It bears repeating. It needs repeating. Repeating. Repeating. Turning. Turning again.

## Beloved creatures of God

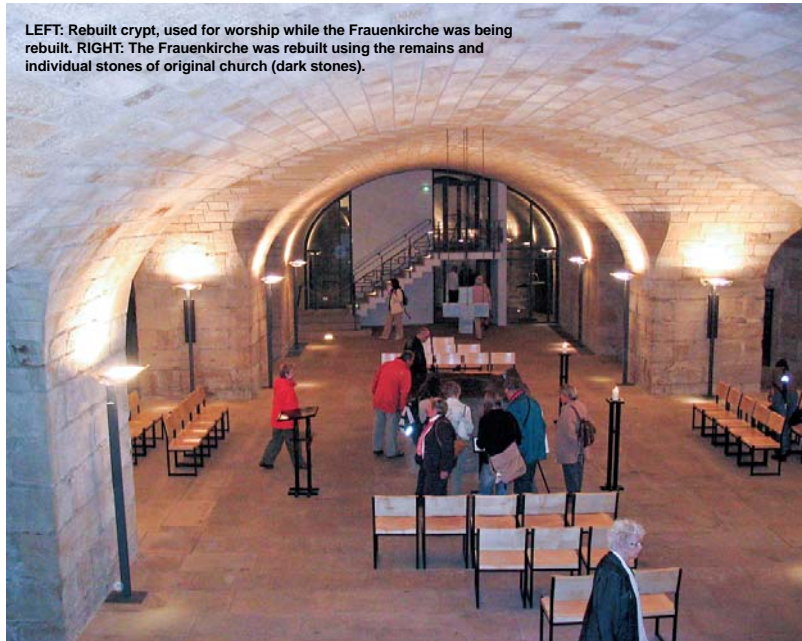
We tell it and we repeat it and we repent and we turn. We try to turn. We try because we believe that wild and ludicrous hope that there is a place to turn to. That the stories that bind us are not the only stories, that human imprisonment is not the last word. Because we know that even Jesus had to confront those demons, had to stare down the one who offered to show Jesus to the entire world as powerful, magical, self-sufficient, special. Because we remember how Jesus raised holy hell throughout his ministry by pricking pins in the over-inflated egos of the self-satisfied, and by meanwhile refusing to see the disenfranchised, devalued, dismissed men and women who abounded in first century Palestine as anything less than beloved creatures of God.

## Creating space in our lives

In Lent, we are invited to engage intentionally in the hard work of re-centering our lives around this alternative story. Maybe we take on works of charity, acts of generosity, so that we might experience—not just pay lip-service to—the intrinsic worth and dignity of every human being. Maybe we are more mindful of the resources that we use, taking care to curb our consumption, to live more simply, so that we might remember our responsibility in caring for God's creation and not simply using it as a means of feeding our insatiable appetites. Maybe we create space in our lives for prayer, contemplation, family, friendship, solitude, so that we might learn again to know ourselves as people who are built to receive and make known God's love. Maybe we intentionally spend time with the Gospel, with the story of Jesus, a poor homeless man who was born into, lived, and died, in disrepute, and who nonetheless refused with every fibre of his being to refrain from showing us the face of the living God in all that he said and did.

Maybe this Lent I'll see how that other story might play out at Wednesday night rehearsals, look for a way through the swaggering and the fear. Maybe it's simple, even if it's not easy. Maybe there is a witness, a metaphor, in finding grace to go to band practice, play my instrument, and, along with fifty other people for two hours, participate in creating something beautiful. Making music.





LEFT: Rebuilt crypt, used for worship while the Frauenkirche was being rebuilt. RIGHT: The Frauenkirche was rebuilt using the remains and individual stones of original church (dark stones).



# MIRACLE IN DRESDEN The rebuilding of the Frauenkirche

**GEOFFREY PURDELL-LEWIS**  
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, HAMILTON

I visited Dresden and the Frauenkirche—Church of Our Lady—while on holiday last summer and marveled at this huge church in the centre of Dresden, built of new sandstone interspersed with blocks of age and heat darkened sandstone. All day, crowds were standing, patiently and quietly, outside the church waiting to go in. And why? The best analogy is that the Frauenkirche is to Germany what St. Paul's Cathedral is to England. And inside? The church was full of people sitting in the pews praying, meditating, thinking, and admiring the magnificently rebuilt baroque interior.

In 1945, as World War II was coming to its close and the eastern and western Allies were fast advancing on Germany, the centre of Dresden was heavily bombed over February 13 to 15—waves of bombing over some two and a half days. This resulted in its total destruction, leaving nothing

but skeletons of buildings, including the Frauenkirche, and huge piles of rubble which obliterated what had once been streets. Photographs taken at the time showed temporary narrow gauge railroad tracks laid in the streets with little trains being used to clear the great mass of rubble, so huge was it. The eight interior sandstone pillars supporting the colossal dome held up long enough for the evacuation of 300 people who had sought shelter in the church crypt, before succumbing to the heat generated by some 650,000 incendiary bombs that were dropped on the city. The dome finally collapsed at 10 a.m. on 15 February. The pillars glowed bright red and exploded; the outer walls shattered and nearly 6,000 tons of stone plunged to earth, penetrating the massive floor as it fell.

The building vanished from Dresden's skyline, and the blackened stones would lie in wait in a pile in the centre of the city for the next 45 years as Communist rule enveloped what

was then East Germany. Shortly after the end of World War II, residents of Dresden began salvaging unique stone fragments from the Frauenkirche and numbering them for future use in reconstruction. Popular sentiment discouraged the authorities from clearing away the ruins for a car park. The heap of ruins was conserved as a war memorial within the inner city of Dresden, as a direct counterpart to the ruins of Coventry Cathedral, which was destroyed by German bombing in 1940 and also serves as a war memorial in England.

In 1982, the ruins began to be the site of a peace movement combined with popular peaceful protests against the East German regime. On the anniversary of the bombing, 400 Dresdeners came to the ruins in silence with flowers and candles, part of a growing East German civil rights movement. By 1989, the number of protesters in Dresden, Leipzig and other parts of East Germany had increased to tens of thou-

sands, and the wall dividing East and West Germany toppled, opening the way to the reunification of Germany.

After the reunification of Germany, efforts were revived to reconstruct the Frauenkirche and the project gathered momentum. Hundreds of architects, art historians and engineers sorted the thousands of stones, identifying and labeling each for reuse in the new structure, and others worked to raise money in Germany and around the world. Rebuilding the Frauenkirche cost US\$217 million. Using original plans used by builder Georg Bähr in the 1720s, reconstruction finally began in January 1993.

The foundation stone was laid in 1994 and the crypt was completed in 1996, and around this time was used once again for worship. The inner cupola was completed in 2000. As far as possible, the church—except for its dome—was rebuilt using original material and plans. Of the millions of stones used in the rebuilding, more

than 8,500 stones were salvaged from the original church and approximately 3,800 reused in the reconstruction. The bronze statue of reformer and theologian Martin Luther, which survived the bombings, was restored and again stands in front of the church.

The rebuilding was completed in 2005, one year earlier than originally planned and consecrated on Sunday, October 30, one day before Reformation Day.

The rebuilding of the Frauenkirche has stirred many and complex emotions. To me it is a monument to God and his saving grace. No one imagined in 1945 what would happen in 2005 and what the intervening history would be. Yet in God's time the Frauenkirche has been rebuilt—with worldwide support—and is used for worship again.

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Geoffrey Purdell-Lewis is a member of St. John the Evangelist, Hamilton and visited Dresden and the Frauenkirche—albeit too briefly—in July, 2007.

# Journey to the mountaintop

**JASPER GOLDBERG**  
OUR SAVIOUR, MILL VALLEY

Every year at advent we hear the story of John the Baptist, crying out in the wilderness that something great is coming. We hear also of how crazy he was, how so few people listened, but we know now that he was right. Something wonderful was indeed coming. That something was a someone, Jesus of Nazareth, who would go on to preach a message of love and equality, echoing John's call to lower every mountain and fill in every valley. We call ourselves Christians because we dedicate ourselves to loving and serving all that God has blessed.

Today, we are that voice in the wilderness, crying out for the earth to be made flat so that every human being may walk on equal ground. We are shunned by "mainstream" Anglicans,

cast out by the community that was supposed to be our home. We are told that the split is our doing, that we are to blame for this schism. And in fact, we are. It was our decision to consecrate a gay bishop, to elect a female presiding bishop, and to insist that it is our right to do these things. But let's be proud of that. Any communion that would not allow us to recognize the equality of God's children is not a communion we should be a part of.

We see in the stories of Jesus' ministries to the prisoners, the lepers and the outcasts of society in his day a message that no one is below the love of God. We are all God's children, and we know that what we do unto the least of the people of God, we do unto God. Every time that we allow an injustice to be perpetrated against a gay man or a lesbian woman, the marginalized of

today's world, we allow the attacker to harm our beloved God, and in our negligence we are guilty. It is not enough to stand on the sidelines, and hope that someday things will be better. We must make our stand for those that society considers "outcasts" if we are to be worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is not easy to take a stand on so divisive an issue. In our fractured world, I would much rather advocate unity and reconciliation. Only one glance at the newspapers is enough to remind me that this world is defined by East vs. West, Shia vs. Sunni, red vs. blue. I do not want to support splitting the world yet another way. But this is not a division on ethnic, religious or political differences. This is liberty vs. inequality. This is right vs. wrong, and there can be no reconciliation with wrong.

This is not just a struggle for members of the gay and lesbian community. I am not gay, but I owe it to my family members and friends who are gays and lesbians to take a stand. I owe it to the individuals who fought and sacrificed for the Goldberg family during the dark years of Nazism. I owe it to all who have taken stands in the past. I owe it to Jesus himself, who gave everything for each and every one of us.

The wilderness is never an easy place to be, but let us not despair as the Anglican Communion leaves us. Someday, those who understand the absolute equality of human life will be more numerous than the stars. In the meantime, it is up to us to proclaim the bold message of Jesus, Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., and Harvey Milk, even if it seems that no one is

listening. The Anglican Communion divided will not stand, but the "fierce urgency of now" demands us to stand up. We cannot compromise with what we know is wrong. Forget your fears, disregard the prevailing opinions, remember Christ and join us on the journey to the Mountaintop.

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This article was found on Bishop Mark Handley's (Episcopal Diocese of California) blog and submitted by Christyn Perkons. Bishop Handley describes Jasper: "Jasper is a high school student and member of Our Saviour, Mill Valley, where I heard him eloquently participate along the line of the post below regarding the heart of the episcopal church and our place in the Anglican communion. I was deeply moved by what he had to say, and by his commitment."

# Muslim or Christian?

## Is it possible to be both?



**MICHAEL BURSLEM**  
ST. GEORGE'S GUELPH

Is it possible for a Muslim to be a follower of Christ, and yet remain within his Muslim culture? I expect, that, depending on the stage in our faith pilgrimage, many in our churches would say, "No way!" A few would say, "May be," and fewer still say, "Yes." I have given, at different stages of my life, all three answers. Since reading, *Pilgrims of Christ on the Muslim Road*, by Paul-Gordon Chandler (published last year by Cowley Publications) I'm now certainly convinced that it's possible. Perhaps I was prepared for it by first spending my early childhood in the West Indies and Iran; then being married to an Arab Christian, and later by reading, some 30 years ago, E. Stanley Jones' *The Christ of the Indian Road*, after which I said "Maybe, but I would like to see the evidence," and more recently books of Robert Capon Farrar, who teaches that Christ's Atonement has a universal application. Chandler provides the evidence that I needed.

The book is about the faith journey of Mazhar Mallouhi, a leading Arab novelist and story teller. He was born in Syria in 1935, into a Muslim family. His early teaching of the Koran was influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood, whom he found too legalistic. He was, however, fascinated by the character Isa, Jesus, about whom the Koran says much, and later began to read the Gospels to discover still more about him. He didn't just read them, but devoured them, and then the whole Bible, many times over; and increasingly he fell in love with this Jesus.

### Created shock waves

He was also influenced by the life of Mahatma Gandhi, whom some have termed the most Christ like man in India, and being a voracious reader, by Gandhi's friend E. Stanley Jones's book, referred to above, by Leo Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is within You* and Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Finally, while serving in the Syrian army on the Golan Heights, he took the step to give his whole life to Christ. This created such shock waves in his home community that his uncle tried to cut his throat, but somehow desisted, so that he is still alive, but has a scar to show for it.

Chandler explained that he had brought shame to his community by declaring that he would follow Christ, not that they were so opposed to Christ, per se, but because Christianity in the Arab countries carries a lot of baggage, being associated with the Crusades, in the last two centuries by European Colonialism, and most recently with the planting of a Zionist state in Arab land. Because of all this, Mallouhi had to leave Syria for Beirut.

**Preaching peace, but practicing war** In Beirut, because he was such a gifted story teller and writer, he began to write

novels to introduce the Muslim reader to Christ. He became involved in the publishing business, initially an evangelical one, where he was taken under the wing of a friend, Hugh Thomas, an Englishman. His first steps in the Christian faith were with evangelicals, even studying at Fuller Seminary, where he met his wife, Christine, an Australian. Gradually, however, he began to feel so out of place in the West and that he had betrayed his culture and his fellow Arabs that he re-adopted their customs, even carrying Muslim prayer beads and going fearlessly into the mosques to teach about Christ. Naturally there has been opposition, and his travels throughout the Middle East and North Africa, as far west as Morocco, have resembled the journeyings of Paul. He has also had his share of prison; once for 19 days on a cement floor in solitary confinement in a Syrian gaol, with his only companion a rat. This experience, more than anything else that has occurred in his life, drew him ever closer to his master, Christ.

### He claims Christ fulfills Islam

He identifies himself now as a Sufi mystic, following Christ within Islam, not outside. He differentiates between Christ and Christianity, as Ghandi did, and he challenges Christians to take the Sermon on the Mount more seriously. He says that we preach peace, but practice war. He has therefore steered away from any Western "church," and now publishes through Muslim publishing houses, rather than Christian. But wherever he goes, he goes first to meet the Imam of the mosque, and there he gathers people around him to teach about his lord and master. There are some aspects of Islam that he no longer practices; the prayer postures (he prefers to pray walking), the *Shahada*, (the Islamic creed, "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is his prophet." He encourages his followers to write their own *Shahada*,) and the *Hajj*, (the pilgrimage to Mecca.) Since two of these are two of the five cardinal points of Islam, is he a true Muslim? Whether he is, or not, he has been accepted as such by many prominent Muslims. He claims that Christ fulfills Islam.

### Bible has been hi-jacked by the West

Being unable, for political reasons, rather than his faith, to live in Syria, he is now living, once again, in Beirut. Besides writing seven novels to present Christ to Muslims, he has also written commentaries to two of the Gospels, Luke and John, and the Book of the Acts, which he considers the Christian equivalent of the *Hadith*, the sayings of the prophet, and to Genesis. His driving passion is to see the scriptures put into Muslim hands in a form that they can readily understand. He claims that the Bible is a Middle Eastern book, but has been hijacked by the West, where we worship the book rather than its author. We also pray to Jesus more than to the Father. Muslims pray to the Father, once they know him, through Jesus.

### Showing kindness and respect to each other

But this book isn't so much about Mallouhi as it is about how Christians and Muslims should live together in

an ever shrinking world, where we meet each other every day. Christine Mallouhi has written on this in her book, *Make Peace with Islam*, published by InterVarsity Press. There has been so much hostility, bred by ignorance of one another, that there are hurt feelings on both sides. He suggests that both should show kindness and respect to each other. These qualities are sadly lacking in the Middle East, even among Christians. In an article in a recent *The Chronicle Review* entitled "A Clash of Obsolete Cultures" by Nina C. Ayoub ([www.chronicle.com/weekly/v54/f20/20b01701.htm](http://www.chronicle.com/weekly/v54/f20/20b01701.htm)) she shows that there had been antagonism from the start between the 19th century American Protestant missionaries in Lebanon and the Maronites, a Lebanese branch of the church in communion with the Church of Rome. There is still enmity between evangelical churches and the Roman Catholic and eastern indigenous churches. This is shameful.

There has likewise been a clash of obstinate cultures between Christianity and Islam, and it's high time that the demonizing of the other stop. Mallouhi disapproves of Christians (Brother Andrew presumably) breaking the law by smuggling Bibles into Arab countries, and making friends with Arabs, only with the intent to convert them to Christianity. He says that friendships should certainly be made, but with no ulterior motive; no strings attached.

If he wishes to speak to a young person about Christ, he first asks permission from the parent, so that everything be above reproach. He suggests that we should learn from each other, first by accepting one another's hospitality, then developing friendship. Arab hospitality is famous, to which I can attest, but it should be reciprocated. Kindness is the hallmark of both faiths. If we need to talk 'religion', we should talk only after a friendship is well developed, not about the differences between the Koran and the Bible, nor between Islam and Christianity, but only about Isa or Jesus. What is so difficult about inviting a Muslim neighbour in for a cup of tea and make him, or her, our friend?

Paul-Gordon Chandler is an American Episcopal priest, who grew up in Senegal, West Africa, and is very familiar with, and respects, Muslims. He has served the church in Tunisia, and is currently rector of St. John's, Maadi, where we have met him. There are only 215 pages, and it's an easy book to read. It's well annotated with notes, but the one drawback is that it's not indexed. The book was recommended to me by Dr. Cornelis Hulsman of the Arab West Report, who is also concerned about relations between Christians and Muslims. It reminds us that the proof of our faith lies, not in our orthodoxy, a word much bandied about these days, but in our likeness to Christ. I think it a vitally important book for our post 9/11 age, and it should be read by every Christian who wants to know more about relations between Christians and Muslims, which I trust every Anglican does. If not on our own shelves, it should be in all our church libraries.

# A NEOS Journey



**Sonya Bolek, Children and Youth Ministry Director, St. John's Port Dalhousie, displays her NEOS Youth Ministry Certificate; the result of six NEOS weekend courses.**

### SONYA BOLEK CHILD & YOUTH DIRECTOR - ST. JOHN'S, PORT DALHOUSIE

Back in April of 2005, I began a program called NEOS, which is Greek for 'youth'. NEOS is a Youth Ministry Training Certificate program offered through Five Oaks in Paris, Ontario. When I began my position as Youth Worker in 2003, to cover for a maternity leave, I had no idea how much I would love the work. Thankfully, I was able to stay on; however, I'd had no formal training other than what I'd learned from motherhood... which could be the greatest training of all.

When I saw the NEOS program being offered in a brochure, I was intrigued. The first weekend offered that year was called, 'Soul Tending for Youth Ministry', I'd always felt a calling towards retreat, and this to me sounded like just what I needed, to learn to tend my own spirit so I could then tend to the young ones that I worked with. The weekend was wonderful, we (a group of 20+) experienced unique and youthful worship, many moments during which you'd see tears in the eyes of participants, including my own.

We shared our meaningful moments through the creation of a small tapestry, we walked a labyrinth, we shared our experience with our small groups and we had personal time to experience the sacred grounds upon which Five Oaks stands. The Five Oaks motto or slogan is "A sacred place to seek God in the heart of all life"; being there for a weekend really allows you to feel the spirit of God within. Many participants that shared this journey with me will remember when I awoke early on the Sunday morning to go for a hike, I came rushing into the dining hall with two beautiful deer antlers which I'd found on my hike.

I'd promised my daughters I'd bring them something back, but had no idea what a treasured find I would make! I came away from that weekend with new friends, and a sense of spiritual renewal that is always greatly needed. Since then I have completed the two required weekends; Nuts & Bolts of Youth Ministry-an excellent resource for any that work with youth, and Beyond Bowling, which gave me some great ideas for ministry along with games and fun activities. Pastoral Care and Programming with Youth were among the others in my six required training weekends, and I graduated this weekend during the Ministry with the Whole Youth: From Whitebread Programs to Whole Grain Ministry program.

The NEOS program is an excellent, resourceful and inspiring training, with excellent and unique leadership, wonderful music and worship times and I'd recommend it to any youth leaders in our Diocese. Though Five Oaks is the United Church Education and Retreat centre, there have been others from our Anglican Diocese and our ideas and presence were always welcomed and honoured.

I'm proud to have completed this journey with the support of my parish, St. John's in Port Dalhousie, and my rector Canon Gordon Kinkley who constantly makes me feel as though I really am making a great difference. I now look forward to my future journey into Spiritual Direction and Labyrinth Facilitator Training, and the benefits that it will bring to my ministry with children, youth and families. Though I'll always be on the watch for another great NEOS program-because even the graduates come back to Five Oaks for more!



# The other dark side of Holy Week



**NISSA BASBAUM**  
RECTOR - TRANSFIGURATION, ST. CATHARINES

I have been a Christian for 30 years. It is now so long ago that many of the moments leading up to the day I

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If liturgy is intended to be symbolic of what is our true experience, then we can't be doing one thing inside the church and saying another thing outside of it.

was baptized are a distant memory. On occasion, I find myself pondering whether or not I have regrets about my decision to convert from Judaism. More often than not, the answer to this question is no. Honesty, however, prevents me from suggesting this is always the case.

Over the years, the hardest thing to swallow has been the historical animosity between Christians and Jews; the seemingly inherent anti-Semitism in the church and in the church's gospels—writings revered by followers of Jesus. Speaking as a Jew (which in many ways I will always be), the most difficult moments for me in the Christian calendar are the latter days of Lent, and then Holy Week, culminating with the crucifixion on Good Friday. If there is any one time in the year that I find myself "in conflict with my-

self" this most definitely would be it. Unfailingly, at this time of year, I am unable to shake off what has become a recurring twinge of guilt brought on by my conversion.

Small wonder... As the calendar moves closer to the events of the crucifixion and the resurrection, the readings from the gospels—most particularly John's gospel—become increasingly more hideous in their depiction of the Jewish people in the time of Jesus.

Yes, if one reads the texts carefully, as John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg suggest in their book, *The Last Week*, it becomes clear that the references to "the Jews" are references to the Jewish authorities in consort with the Roman officials. No different than what we experience in our own day and age, it is usually those who are in power who wield the words and the weapons, rather than the average citizen who is just trying to make it from one day to the next. Yet, other than a few academics, and a few priests and laypeople who read these academics, who actually studies the texts *that* carefully? What, I wonder, do average church-goers pick up from these readings as they sit in the pews during the week before Easter and hear them proclaimed year after year? I wonder this because each time I hear them, I cringe at what seems to be their unequivocally racist overtones.

About a year ago, I was a participant in a conference in which, during a question and answer time, someone asked the guest speaker about Christian exclusivism and his own attitude toward other religions. The response was a perfectly reasonable one; Christianity is not the only truth for all people but the truth for those who call themselves Christian, one of a number of different roads which *leads* us to the

divine. Unsatisfied with this response, however, I questioned the speaker further, referencing our liturgies and our scriptures which, I suggested, depict the very opposite; proclaiming, instead, that because Jesus is divine, there is something unique about him, and not just about him but also about the religion of those who follow him.

The response to this second question was brief—what we say in our liturgies is done in the context of the Christian community, expressing what we believe as followers of Jesus. What I heard in this response was that as long as we say things about Jesus in the context of our own liturgy, it is an expression of *ourselves* as Christians rather than an expression of what we think others are also to believe. While I did not pursue the point any further, *feeling* discretion was the better part of valour, I found myself left still unsatisfied; in fact, perhaps more unsatisfied than before I had asked the question.

For me, the answer was a cop-out. If liturgy is intended to be symbolic of what is our true experience, then we can't be doing one thing inside the church and saying another thing outside of it. Yet, in my encounters with many in the institution this is precisely what we do. Whether it is history or tradition or a fear of critiquing either one of these things, we continue to mouth words in worship and read passages from scripture which at best, are archaic and meaningless and at worst, depict some rather unsavoury things. When we do this, we end up in the place in which I find myself each year as we wind down from Lent and rev up for Holy Week—possessing a terrible uneasiness as I read and hear passages from scripture that contain an unholly and unacceptable attitude towards Jewish people.

Each year at Transfiguration, during Holy Week, we find a way to make what is unacceptable more acceptable, what is unpalatable more palatable. We emphasize our recognition that the crucifixion is not just something that happened a little over two thousand years ago in first century Jerusalem, but something that has continued and still continues to happen in the world today. We proclaim that the crucifixion of Jesus is not unique and somehow worse than other human atrocities that have been carried out over the centuries; rather, that the crucifixion exemplifies the horror of all this carnage. Yet, even as we do this we continue to read the passages as they always have been read; the very passages that many theologians and historians regard as having, in the first place, provoked many of these same atrocities.

A little while ago, my son asked me if I thought we should be able to judge the actions of previous generations based on our 21st century morals and ethics. My response was a qualified yes, believing as I do that if we don't make these judgments we probably will never change. However, I also suggested that I am not in favour of banning such things as the writings of these earlier generations simply because they express things with which we are no longer comfortable; for example, because of its anti-Semitism, William Shakespeare's, *The Merchant of Venice*.

I do think we should be reading literature, listening to music and studying art even as it expresses racist, sexist and hetero-sexist attitudes with which we no longer agree. We should be doing this with a view to critiquing it from the perspective of our present-day values, thereby giving us a chance to learn from our mistakes. Follow-

ing on from this, if this were our approach to the bible, perhaps I would be more comfortable with those not so holy parts being read in church. However, week by week and year by year, most of us do anything but critique scripture. Instead, we refer to the bible as the Word of the Lord, we rise for the proclamation of the gospel and we barely raise an eyebrow at the passages which proclaim a rather exclusionary and supremacist theology. Yes, *sometimes* we interpret these passages, but only sometimes, and even when we do this we are careful to say that we are *interpreting* rather than *critiquing* them because, somehow it seems untoward or unseemly to critique anything that is written in these sacred texts.

Always at this time of year, I can't help but ask myself, "What are we doing?" And worse still, "What am I—a Jew by birth—doing?" In the Book of Common Prayer, the infamous Good Friday petition in which people prayed for God's mercy "upon his ancient people the Jews" and by consequence for their conversion was removed from the liturgy when later generations began to recognize the harm and the error of maintaining this prayer in our worship. In similar fashion, it is time we stopped repeating, proclaiming and defending things simply because they are written in scripture. There is nothing godly about references to the devil as the source of Jewish lineage (John's gospel) or the infamous line from Matthew's gospel, "His blood be on us and on our children." Not only are these kinds of references not benign; in fact, they are dangerously malignant.

We all know *that* there is a dark side to Holy Week. How many of us are aware or even care that there is *also* this other dark side?

## Loyalties: Matthew 10:32-42

**ROGER HARRIS**  
ANGLICAN FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

The picture that comes to mind when we think of Jesus, is one of gentleness, of wisdom, of comfort, and of love. So when we read these words from Matthew, it does seem at first glance to be out of character with His nature. Knowing that Jesus always tells the truth, gives to an understanding of what He is saying, to see what His expectations are and be ready to lay down defenses that will guard against any compromise to the relationship that we have with Him.

In verses 32-33, Jesus is very explicit in that we should acknowledge Him for who He is. Frequently, we read or see evidence of a dilution of His divinity by reference to that which may have happened in the flesh. We can own or disown Jesus, if we disown Him then whatever our thoughts or actions are, they are of no matter. If we decide to own Him, then our relationship is one of total belief in His deity and purity in the flesh and in the Spirit. This is the acknowledgement that Jesus demands, and if we believe and express this, when the time comes for our presentation before God, Jesus will be there to be our intercessor and acknowledge

us before God. If not then Jesus will deny knowing us.

### Freedom to choose

In verse 34, Jesus spells out an underlying element of His ministry here on earth. He knew that His teaching would cause division, and that this division would also give cause to bloodshed. He was not looking only at His present time, but was facing a future that would last until His return. He could see by the reaction of the Pharisees and leaders of His time, that by mankind's very own nature there would be divided acceptance of Himself and the message that He had come to give.

In verses 35-36 Jesus then goes on to provide enlightenment as to where these divisions will be found. In his examples, we see that although they are set in the confines of the family circle, in verse 36 He tells us that we can also find enemies under our own roof. As much as we love family members, outside of inherited characteristics, each of us has been given a God given freedom to choose our way in life. We can choose whatever direction or content that will give us the greatest satisfaction, and a part of the choices that we have—if not the most important, is an unequivocal belief and faith in God.

This unfortunately does not apply to all family members, and the result can be varying degrees of division between family members, and friends and acquaintances who are welcome to the hospitality extended in the home.

In verse 37 Jesus tells us what His expectations are. For those whose faith and belief are focused directly on God, Jesus demands that allegiance which is not compromised by dilution from another source. To care for someone or something more than He, reduces His importance, and as Jesus is the Son of God, this in turn reduces the importance of God. Jesus is letting us know that all relationships with others take second place to Him, and second place to God.

### Taking up his cross

To most of us, the ties of family are a very strong bond, and at times can provide a great deal of soul searching and heartache when divisions arise within it. We are saddled with a burden, and there is the natural inclination to address this in favor of those we love, in an effort to lighten the load. In verse 38-39 Jesus tells us that we have to reconcile ourselves to Him whatever the outcome, and take up this cross however burdensome and follow in His footsteps. Jesus is also explicit in

that giving our lives for Him is not an option should the necessity arise, for denying Him to save ones own life will give cause to lose life everlasting, but to lose ones life for His sake is the open door to everlasting life.

Jesus moves on in verses 40-42 to enlighten us once more. This time He tells us about the rewards that we can expect when we bind ourselves to Him. The important message that He is giving us is that it is all about receiving, and that the reception of our witness by others is to receive Him, and to receive Him is to receive the Father. Our rewards will not be the same for each of us, as we are individuals in the sight of God. We all serve in different ways, and it is this difference, which will designate the manner in which we will be rewarded, and will be commensurate with the acknowledgement we give Him.

### Prayer is increasingly necessary

There is so much going on in the world today that is aimed at diluting and reducing the deity and divinity of Jesus. Much of it is insidious and manifests itself by word and action—what could be called 'low key' Some come from places such as entertainment and media, creating doubt and

questioning tenets of a faith which has remained unchanged for millennia. Or by individuals seeking to enlighten us to the fact that Jesus came to guide us in anything that we want to do, and that there is a new age out there which through our own self sufficiency is there for the taking.

Mankind has known Jesus for two thousand years. He is the same now as He was then. Why are we now trying to change someone who has been our cornerstone for thousands of years, whose divinity and manifestation in the flesh is unquestionable?

In the light of what is happening in the world today, the name of Jesus is becoming diluted, and as time moves on, of less and less consequence to mankind. In these present times prayer becomes increasingly necessary to counteract the pressures that are being placed on God's Church. For it is in this communication that distance from God is eliminated, and unity is maintained through a common understanding of what God desires.

We need to pray for the present, we need to pray for the future, and we need to pray for a continued loving commitment to, and acceptance of the Lord Jesus, that transcends everyone and everything else. He expects no more.

## SHOOT, READY, AIM » Who moved the stone?

HOLLIS HISCOCK  
RETIRED PRIEST - BURLINGTON

### SHOOT - The photograph

A hush of excited anticipation and adventure enveloped the forty adults as we descended the rough wooden staircase. Leaving the dazzling, Nazareth mid-day sun behind us, we entered an underground, cavernous two thousand year old 'village'.

We prayed in its ancient Christian chapel; we walked through houses as our guide indicated the inhabitants' living, dining and sleeping quarters; and then we strolled 'outside the village' and stood before the final resting places of those who had died.

There, we were guided through a two metre high opening into a small sitting area where relatives and friends could spend time with their 'departed loved ones'. From there we could access three or four family tombs, carved from solid rock.

What galvanized our attention was the massive round stone leaning against the rocky opening. It reminded me of grinding stones used years ago to sharpen knives and other instruments, but much larger, taller than the 200 cm (80 inches) red bearded, American theological student standing nearby.

We took turns photographing this round stone, which probably was similar to the one used at Jesus' burial. We know Jesus was not buried in Nazareth, but we assume that round stones were often used to seal the entrance to tombs, so they could be easily rolled to provide access or to close the tomb.

### READY - Words behind the photo

'Sealed in the stone cold tomb' is how the 19th century hymn writer John

Hopkins described the burial of Jesus Christ in his Epiphany hymn 'We three kings of orient are'. He based his conclusion on the Gospels of Matthew (27:60) and Mark (15:46) who reported that Joseph of Arimathea, after placing Jesus' body in the tomb, ROLLED A GREAT STONE TO THE DOOR OF THE TOMB.

The other two Gospel writers do not mention the stone being rolled into place on Friday, but both Luke (24:1-2) and John (20:1) stated that when the women arrived on Easter morning they discovered the stone had been rolled away from the tomb. Simple logic dictates that if it was rolled away from the entrance, then it had to be rolled into place at the burial.

Matthew (27:62-63) recorded in his Gospel that Pilate positioned guards around Jesus' tomb to prevent the body from being stolen during the three day period.

All four Gospels, with varying details, documented the women coming to the garden early on the morning of the third day and finding the stone rolled away and the tomb empty.

Only Matthew (28:1-2) offered a solution to the mystery. He wrote that an angel, whose arrival was heralded by a great earthquake, 'descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it'.

In 1930, a lawyer, Frank Morison, sought to answer the question 'Who moved the stone?' for himself. This question had intrigued and puzzled scholars since that history changing moment occurred. Morison began his search hoping to discredit the Resurrection of Jesus Christ as a myth. However, his research led him to per-



sonally accept the Biblical account of what some call 'the miracle of Easter'.

The book, still in print, was required reading for us theological students in the 1960's, and the question has often been posed and explored in many Easter sermons.

Who moved the stone? The answer may be as elusive as a butterfly. Yet it may be captured in the hearts and minds of millions of Christians who gather in a myriad of worship settings every Easter morning. There they echo the words spoken by the 'young man' (Mark 16:6) or the 'angel' (Matthew 28:6) that 'he is not here, he has risen',

or as we say to each other in our modern liturgies—ALLELUIA! CHRIST IS RISEN! THE LORD IS RISEN IN-DEED! ALLELUIA!

### AIM - Questions and actions for you

■ Obtain a copy of *Who moved the stone?* by Frank Morison and experience his spiritual awakening.

■ Read the accounts of the resurrection in all four Gospels, seeking your own answers to the timeless question—WHO MOVED THE STONE?—and ask why it is relevant in your own spiritual development.

■ Think of the 'stone' in a figurative

manner, and ask questions like "what is sealed away in my life from which I need to be resurrected?", or "what stones do I need to roll away to help me in my quest for wholeness of body, mind and spirit?". If you need assistance contact your priest, counsellor or another professional.

■ Hollis would appreciate your feedback on this series.

.....  
The Reverend Hollis Hiscock, a retired priest, lives in Burlington. He is available to do multimedia presentations on spirituality, the Bible and the Christian Faith.

# What do you mean by that?



MARNI NANCEKIVELL  
CANON, DIRECTOR OF TRANSITIONAL MINISTRY

About a year ago, I heard something on the CBC while driving along the highway that made me laugh so hard that I had to pull over. When I got home to my computer, the first thing that I did was to search for it myself on YouTube.



Healthy communication is particularly at risk in certain moments in our communal life. At a time of transition, when anxiety is particularly high.

Entitled "the German coast guard trainee", it portrayed a young man who appeared to be taking his first shift alone monitoring the coast guard station. His supervisor reminds him of this button and that speaker. Slapping the newbie on the back, the supervisor grabbed his coffee and left. The greenhorn swivelled in his chair, getting used to his new environment, settling in for what

will probably be a pretty dull shift. The buzzer sounds loudly. The voice of an Englishman in distress comes across the air: "May Day! May Day!" Laboriously, the young German struggles to translate his response into English: "This is the German Coast Guard". The English voice on the other end calls out: "Help us! We're sinking!" At first you see the young German struggling to discern how he is going to get more information from this panicked Englishman in distress. Finally, the course of action becomes apparent. Moving closer to the mike, the trainee asks: "What are you 'sinking' about? (Do I need to tell you that this is really an advertisement for Berlitz language school?)

What one means, and what someone else hears are often two realities held in tension. Wise people who need to be clear about human communication—from mothers to teachers to clergy and beyond know how important it is to communicate clearly. Early last week while sitting in the family room, I asked of my husband: "Where did that white mouse come from? Shrugging, my husband responded: "I don't know. It probably is a toy that belongs to one of the cats." "No", I replied. "I meant the one that has M-i-c-r-o-s-o-f-t written on it."

We learn clear communication in a variety of ways. We learn to communicate, to offer and receive information in our families, from our earliest days. Sometimes, we have to practice our

communication skills. I recall years ago, sitting in a church basement being laboriously practicing a rudimentary communication exercise under the guidance of the late Reverend Ron Owston, formerly of the Hamilton Pastoral Counselling Centre. One of us would make a statement, and our partners would "check out" what we heard by replying: "By that do you mean...?" By the end of the day, the phrase had become a bit of a joke of course, but the learning itself was significant, and has remained with me over the years.

Having spent some twenty years of my life in ordained ministry, I am aware that when one has a group of people who come from diverse backgrounds, miscommunication is a real possibility. In our own families, subtle communication patterns exist that we take for granted. If I arrive home from grocery shopping, and call my daughter upstairs, she already knows that I am likely to ask her to bring in some of the groceries. But if I ask someone to do something in a parish, it may be that someone doesn't understand "why" they're being asked to do something specific unless I am very careful in explaining why I am asking "them" to do it. Others may witness my request of someone else, and wonder why "they" weren't asked to do it, and so it goes.

Healthy communication is particularly at risk in certain moments in our communal life. At a time of transition, when anxiety is particularly high, it is

easier to misinterpret something that has (or hasn't) been said. I am living that reality at the present moment because we are in transition at the Diocesan Resource Centre. It is a tumultuous time for Bishop Michael Bird and for Archdeacon Michael Patterson, as they take on new roles, and absorb a multitude of new information. Others of us are "along for the ride" with them, and there are many daily operational questions that can not easily be addressed because of the weight and number of their other responsibilities.

As Bishop Bird and Archdeacon Patterson are wise people and good pastors, there are systems already in place that will correct this difficult "bridge moment". We will meet together shortly as a whole staff, and some of these unavoidable issues will be resolved.

In fact, any uneasy moment, in family or in a parish, can provide an opportunity for "crossed" or inaccurate communication. Assumptions are made, and sometimes are not checked out with others. Worse case scenarios are sometimes spun aloud, and somehow become "facts" that are passed from one person to another. Something that is a remote possibility becomes an inflated certainty in the minds of some. For example, I have heard concerns articulated in parishes many times over the years that: "the Bishop is going to close us when he visits next month". Not once has that fear been borne out in the conversations in which I have been part.

The winter 2008 edition of *Congregations* (published by the Alban Institute), is all about "Narrative Leadership". In the article "The Problem Trap" by Larry Peers, he reminds us of the wisdom of Margaret Wheatley in her book *Turning to One Another* (published by San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler). In the book, she reminds us of the "power of conversation and the role of leaders in creating the kinds of conversations that can promote deep change."

Margaret J. Wheatley in *Turning to One Another* writes, "There is no power greater than a community discovering what it cares about. Ask. 'What's possible?' not 'What's wrong?' Keep asking... Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters."

Every conversation in the Christian community should matter. Sometimes, however, we are tripped up along the way, by a lack of clarity between people.

When I find myself part of difficult and complicated communication webs, I stop myself and ask: "Where is God in this moment, in this situation?" When I do that, I frequently am able to step back, and get a fuller picture of whatever is unfolding.

That is, in fact my Lenten discipline for this year. If you see me with a far away look in my eyes, it may be one of the many times I am stopping throughout the day and asking: "Where is God in this moment?"



# Easter, here we come



**PETER WALL**  
DEAN AND RECTOR - CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

I am writing this from the idyllic surroundings of St. Paul's College, the headquarters of the Paulist Fathers in Washington, DC. I am here attending meetings of the 'LECC'—that is the Lutheran Episcopal Coordinating Committee, the group which does for the American Lutherans and Episcopalians what the Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission, of which I am the Anglican Co-Chair, does for Canadian Lutherans and Anglicans.

The meetings are invigorating and informative—the Americans are facing many of the same challenges in their full-communion agreement which we are, as well as acknowledging the great gift which full-communion between The Episcopal Church and the Evan-

gelical Lutheran Church in America has given to the Church. We have consulted both with the local Bishops—from two Episcopal dioceses and one Lutheran synod—and with the local LECC committee—an exciting group of clergy and laity strongly committed to putting 'legs' onto 'Called to Common Mission'—the American agreement which mirrors *The Waterloo Declaration* of 2001, which initiated our full communion relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

### Using rich symbols

As we move through these days of Lent, with their moving Sunday liturgies, and approach that great week we call *Holy*, it is good to remember that we share so much in common with our ecumenical brothers and sisters and that it is at no time more apparent than during the days leading up to Easter. Those of us who are part of *catholic* and *liturgical* churches (we Anglicans, Lutherans, Roman Catholics, the Orthodox churches, and others) all have a heightened sense of our

common liturgical lives as we mark Palm Sunday, Maundy (*Holy*) Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Day. We share common liturgical patterns and emphases; we hear virtually identical scripture passages, as keep many similar rituals and rites.

It is a time which provides us with opportunities to be creative with our services; to allow ourselves to try some new and different things, to *bend* time a little, as the odd but incredibly satisfying rhythm of Holy Week demands. It is a time to use signs and symbols—water, fire, darkness, emptiness, brilliance, bells, vestments, silence, exultation—all in ways that call us out of our Lenten fast and into the glories of Easter. It can be a time for us to come together with our local partners and friends to share liturgies—the wonderful and moving service of the Washing of Feet and the Institution of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday, the Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday, and the most glorious and sensuous Great Vigil of Easter—each of these, taking place *outside* of our regular Sunday morning

observances, can provide us with great opportunities to share ecumenically. Other services such as *Tenebrae* and *The Way of the Cross* which many communities also keep during Holy Week, can also make meaningful worship experiences for our communities and for others whom we may care to invite to share with us.

### Easter is a "season"

Let us also remember that Easter is a *season* not simply a day. For seven weeks we keep this great Feast of Easter—singing those wonderful hymns and marking our liturgies with all sorts of *Easter* moments—triumphant alleluias, special vestments and decor, perhaps using a new Easter hymn each week of the season, maintaining our Easter decorations and flowers for as long as we can; lighting at each service (*and* keeping in a prominent place) the great Easter (Paschal) Candle. We often do a superb job of having 'extra' things in our parishes—study groups, bible study, etc.—during Lent. With Lent so quickly upon us, perhaps this year we should do some 'extra' things

during the *Easter* season!

We are so fortunate, as members of the church catholic, not only to have rites, rituals, ceremonies, seasonal celebrations, and so much richness in our worship, but also to share those values, that rhythm, those special days and times, those ceremonies with so many of our sisters and brothers of other churches and communions. Just as we focus in our ecumenical and full-communion relationships on those things which *unite* us and not on those things which *divide* us, so we should focus in our own church, particularly this Lent and Eastertide, on those many things about which we *agree* rather than on those very few (but sharp) things upon which we *disagree*.

So, in all the creativity which we will use in crafting meaningful and appropriate liturgies for Holy Week, The Triduum and Eastertide, let us remember both to invite and to welcome our brothers and sisters of other churches and other denominations to join with us! Happy Holy Week... Happy Easter! Alleluia!

# The effortless life



**LINDA MOORE**  
CENTRE FOR LEADERSHIP AND HUMAN VALUES

For too long many of us have existed believing that living a good life takes



We can choose to see our circumstances as a victim of life or see the opportunity in the moment.

It is also a great message in a world of haves and have-nots to keep those without, in line.

As the years pass I am eternally grateful for the wisdom that sage and aware individuals have shared with me. I have been blessed to have many enlightened teachers throughout my life. And I know there is great knowledge of which I know nothing. So much of ancient knowing that could assist us today has been lost. However, what I am discovering is that we have created beliefs about our lives that simply are not true.

All the great spiritual and metaphysical teachers throughout the ages, including Jesus and Buddha have taught about "the effortless life". The essence of this way of being is based in a few powerful principles all related to our own thoughts. We simply need to become aware of them.

We always have a choice in how we view our immediate circumstances and in how we respond. We can choose to see our circumstances as a victim of life or see the opportunity in the moment. The daughter of a dear friend of mine is such a woman. Anne has suffered an excruciatingly painful, debilitating illness for thirteen years. Despite all of her struggles Anne chooses to be as fully present as is possible in all her close relationships, especially with her son and husband. It is the loving that is "effortless".

Knowing our purpose for our existence and following it creates an effortless life. I have a friend, George who is a natural teacher of art and music. He has no formal credentials for his work and is sought after by literally hundreds of people to share his knowledge and wisdom. He gets little pay for this and for him it is still effortless because he is doing what he was born to do.

Another friend of mine, June gets up each morning at 4:00 AM to meditate and do her yoga. For her it is ef-

fortless because it is done in support of her larger life purpose.

Make no mistake! The effortless life requires disciplined practices. Herein lays the paradox. It is the focus of attention in the choices we make, each day and every moment. To learn this well and lead an effortless life can happen in an instant or take a lifetime.

If I choose to be physically fit so that I can carry out my life purpose I need to exercise my body. Some days I wake up and for a moment, unaware, I don't want to do it. However, the moment I remember why I am doing it, I can choose to make it effortless.

I have been in more than one job which was hard and difficult because it was not the work that I was born to do. Even though I was a single mom I chose more than once to quit and pursue what I love. There were many apparently harsh consequences to that choice. And because I remained focused on my search for meaningful work, I dealt with the consequences from a totally different perspective and the process felt effortless and "right".

For those of us blessed to be doing the work we were born to do, each day may be full of activities and yet there is a magical flow that makes the tasks again feel effortless.

In each instance it is in our thoughts that the effortlessness appears. It requires rigorous "noticing" and awareness to stop those thoughts that create the sense that life is hard or unfair. It takes discipline not to judge self or others. It requires intention not to take things personally or assume we understand a situation. It is this fierce attention, each and every moment, to being fully aware, that expands our sense of the effortless life.

The effortless life is more than possible, it is ours to embrace. You can be joyful, fulfilled and alive! It is simply a matter of choice. What do you choose?

## Godly Play Workshop

Children & Family Ministries, Hamilton

March 28, 5:00 PM - March 29, 7:00 PM (\$125.00)

— or —

March 28, 5:00 PM - March 30, 12:00 PM (\$140.00)

Godly Play, a Christian education method developed from Montessori, focuses on telling the key stories of the Bible and engaging children in reflection about those stories. Godly Play must be learned from the inside out. This workshop, co-hosted by the Diocese of Niagara, the Diocese of Huron and the United Church of Canada, will allow participants to experience Godly Play stories, create Godly Play storytelling materials, and learn how to set up and manage a Godly Play classroom. You will enhance your storytelling skills and achieve greater clarity about the foundations of Godly Play. All learning will take place in a prayerful atmosphere with creative, experienced Godly Play trainers, and participants will leave spiritually refreshed. A significant bursary is available to participants from parishes in Niagara (max of 3 per parish). This weekend event takes place at L'Arche Daybreak in Richmond Hill. Local billets are available.

When we pray, we are not to pray for ourselves alone. We do not say, "My Father, who art in heaven" or, "Give me this daily bread"; we do not ask for our own trespasses alone to be forgiven; and when we pray that we may be delivered from evil, we are not praying for ourselves either.

Our prayer is for the general good, for common good. When we pray for all God's people, because they and we are not one.

Cyprian of Carthage  
Third century



# Camp Artaban: A call to return again!



**SUSAN (ANGI) LITTLE**  
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, HAMILTON

Does the name of "Camp Artaban" spark a memory or two? Do you recognize the white haired man in this picture as Padre Holmes, the founder of the camp?

*Our camping days have spent their happy course  
The fire has vanished in the velvet night,  
...But camping days will once again return  
And we'll return again to Artaban.*

#### **Camp changed lives and created life-long friendships**

So goes the song that concluded the two week camping session of girls camps at Camp Artaban. During the 1940s and 50s, Artaban flourished in offering to children and teenagers a strong Christian camping experience that changed lives and created life-long friendships. How did this happen?

#### **An experiment in living**

In 1936, the Venerable Archdeacon A.T.F. Holmes, (Padre Holmes) decided to run an experimental camp near Markham with a group of Jewish and Christian boys, aimed at bringing them together under canvas to learn how to work together to establish good

will. In 1937 and '38, he repeated this in Greenwood near Toronto. In 1939, Camp Artaban was held at a location near Ancaster village. In 1940 the camp was held on Lake Erie where for the first time a girls' session was included. Then, in 1941, the property in Ancaster, located beside Canterbury Hills, was purchased.

For over 25 years, improvements to the property and program drew children, teens and adults to a place where they could escape from the routines of city life and focus on the bonds that bind them together with one another and with God.

The last camping season occurred in 1966. By the mid 60s, society's ethos had begun to change from the 50s. The growing difficulty in getting volunteers and the rising competition from more mobile families prevented the camp from opening in 1967. Sold to the Hamilton Wentworth Conservation Authority, it has remained primarily untouched in offering a natural habitat for people to enjoy on the Bruce Trail that runs through it, although currently the property itself resides in private hands.

#### **The priority in life of serving others**

For many, the fact that the Camp no longer runs is not a problem. Unlike what the song says, former campers do not have to "return again to Artaban". For them it doesn't matter that Artaban no longer exists in the physical realm. What does exist, however, are the living memories of how Camp changed lives and still calls forth from the stillness of the night the priority in life

of serving others. The Camp's name, based on Henry Van Dyke's *The Story of the Other Wise Man*, chronicles the story of a wealthy magi, seeking the Lord among the poor for thirty years. As Artaban lies dying, feeling his life a failure for not finding Jesus, he hears from heaven a voice telling him that by serving others, he has indeed found and served the Lord.

#### **At its centre was relationships**

What was it about camp that changed lives like this? Most people say that at the centre of the Artaban experience was the set of relationships formed from the family-like unit of the hut, where a leader along with a senior camper led the campers in regimented activities each day. Competition and its associated values of good sportsmanship and fair play were at the heart of each day's activities. Sports played throughout the day provided outlets for energy and developed skills in kids at a time when minor sports leagues and community centres were not yet thriving. For girls' camps, the afternoons encouraged the development of skills in arts and crafts, while boys' camps just stuck to crafts.

Swimming was an event in and of itself. In a pool fed by a spring fed stream, the icy cold waters had no concrete bottom: imagine the stress of the lifeguards, watching for campers! Yikes!

In the days before running water in the washrooms, there were kybos, the ultra environmentally-friendly toilet. When a gently zephyr blew the wrong way, into the hut area instead of toward the forest, the campers knew

that Artaban was no place for luxuries. Was it this Spartan setting that affected people so deeply?

#### **The soil of sacrifice**

Some people say that Artaban's real centre was the chapel. Every morning all the camp worshipped together in an outdoor setting, lovingly furnished with benches and the hardest kneelers in Christendom. The focal point, however, was a massive stone altar whose sides were decorated with stones from World War I and II battlefields and underneath the altar was soil from the battlefields where Canadians had sacrificed their lives.

It was at this place that each camp began and ended, with each hut burying their last will and testament to summarize what they had learned about Christian living during their time together and what they exhorted the next group of campers to focus on that might make their experience a greater one together.

#### **The visible unity of the campfire**

Others say that Artaban's true centre was the campfire. Each night, the huts gathered to hear the results of their endeavours of the day: the highest score for huts or tables would cause the campers from the winning hut to erupt into their cheer and stamp on the dry dusty ground, wildly hugging each other in their triumph. Each night, too, the campers who had not been the 'winners', got to sing a variety of songs, some of which today would be dubbed, 'politically incorrect'! Such were the times in the 40s and 50s.

Always at the end of campfire, campers and leaders joined hands and sang "Day is Done", "Now the Light has gone away" and then closed with prayer. Perhaps it was the stillness of the night, and the visible unity of all sizes and shapes, all classes and conditions of the human race standing together, joining hands in relationship with one another and, more importantly, in relationship with God. Or maybe it was simply the settling of the dew on their shoulders that made this moment a 'holy' one. Whatever it was, it had a profound effect on people's lives forever.

#### **The campfire still burns: Reunion details**

For many, the campfire still burns and calls to the depth of their being to return to the holiness and the sanctity of a life lived in relationship with others and God. For some who want to get together again, there is going to be a reunion.

On Saturday, May 10, 2008 at the Church of St. John the Evangelist, Hamilton, people affected by Camp Artaban are invited to gather from 1:00-4:00 PM. There will be displays of memorabilia and space for people to add just for the afternoon their own pictures, badges, candlesticks or such. For the cost of a toonie, people can spend the afternoon rekindling friendships and connecting with others. Refreshments will be served. Please contact Dave McKay at 905-522-6218 to register. If you know someone who once attended, please contact them or send their name along to this number.



## Niagara Cursillo

[www.niagaracursillo.org](http://www.niagaracursillo.org)





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# Original sin after Darwin



**COLIN C. M. CAMPBELL**  
ST. HILDA'S, BURLINGTON

"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom 3:23) All means everyone. In this uncompromising text, St. Paul states the doctrine of original sin and implies its corollary: the universal necessity of salvation. He believed that all people try to be happy and fail. Since God is perfect, this implies that it is not his fault. God must

The desires to control, demand, cajole, manipulate, and withdraw come from a refusal to risk living as a free, creative adult.

not only have created us with a perfect nature, but have placed us in a world, which was perfectly suited for that nature's happiness. This raises the obvious question: If everything was so perfect in Paradise, how could human beings have been tempted to sin? Darwin showed us that the perfect world imagined by traditional theologians, such as St. Augustine, never existed. This creates the challenge of recovering the doctrine of original sin, after Darwin. This article will formulate an explanation, which is compatible with Scripture, reason, tradition, and science.

A wrong direction, taken by many influential Western theologians (though not Eastern), arose from the way in which they conceived original perfection. It resonated with our desire for a perfect world. There was such a time for us all. It was when we were in our mother's womb. Birth means leaving bliss and experiencing pain. The world would seem to be better,

if we could continue our involuntary symbiotic relationship. Our desire for such a world is a projection of our early memory. After birth, we live with a persistent gap between satisfaction and its source. It is God, who created us with this gap. The scientific investigation of human origins has shown us that no single human being or group caused it by a primeval sin.

Fortunately, there is another way in which to understand original perfection. God created us with a nature, which would find fulfillment in loving relationships. We choose such relationships. Imposed relations are tyranny. Babies in the womb have no choice. They have to be happy. Since they are not adults, this symbiosis is not a deprivation. Adults, however, must exercise choice in order to find fulfillment. To fear the risks involved is a deprivation. Drunks and drug addicts live in the self-imposed tyranny of loveless relationships with people, and a symbiotic relationship with the bottle and the needle. Free relationships require a gap between our satisfaction and its source, when that source is another person. She must choose to appreciate his overtures and choose to make him happy. A relationship of mutual symbiotic dependence is not a free relationship because there are no choices. The great St. Augustine, who was also a recovering sexaholic, seems to have had some difficulty with non-symbiotic relationships. The way in which he conceived Adam's relationship with God led him to ponder why Adam would want to sin, since he was already fulfilled.

Those who fear freedom refuse to grow in the nature which God gave them. The desires to control, demand, cajole, manipulate, and withdraw come from a refusal to risk living as a free, creative adult. The gap between our satisfaction and its source may seem a curse or a blessing. God gave it to us as a blessing, but in the form of a weakness, through which it was possible for sin to enter. Jesus reminded us that our nature, the flesh, was weak (Matt 26:41) but that the Spirit could make it

strong. He did not say that the flesh was sinful. How could it be since the Word became flesh? (Jn 1:14-18) The adventure and drama of life is only possible because our nature is "made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor 12:9) It is also more scripturally faithful and helps St. Augustine with his perplexity.

God created us for chosen relationships. The capacity to love is caught from our nature. The capability to love is taught by our nurture. Our mother is the first object of our love. A loving mother is affectionate. A wise mother withdraws affection, when it is necessary to teach her child the difference between right and wrong. Conditional affection is the way by which nurture shapes nature. Unconditional affection is as bad as unconditional neglect, since it teaches a child that it can do as it likes. With good conditioning, a child becomes self-directed, lives as a free agent in the world and can make itself happy.

There is a harmful form of conditional love. It occurs when a mother teaches a child to meet her needs for affection, instead of its own, using the rationalization that "Mother knows best." Mother-direction becomes other-direction, instead of self-direction. For the rest of her life, such a person will depend on someone to tell her what to do. She will not know how to live as a free agent in the world or how to make herself happy. Good conditional love teaches a person how find her happiness by making others happy. Bad conditional love teaches a child how to please others at the expense of her own happiness. Pleasers expect a reward for their efforts. When they do not receive it, they control, demand, cajole, manipulate, and withdraw. The more they try to please, the unhappier they become. The unhappier they become, the less they are able to please. Eventually, tired of the emotional bombardment, their family and friends melt away, leaving them bewildered and alone.

Good nurture consists of giving the right kind of conditional affection. Both conditions and affection are necessary. Affection without conditions

is a licence to sin. Conditions without affection lead to crushing guilt. St. Paul knew this and described God's conditions (the Law) as being a "curse." (Gal 3:10-14) Without affection, the Law kills. A good parent supplies affection with correction. Jesus assured us that God is a good parent. Without this insight, our desire to please God leads directly to neurosis. Neurosis is personal pain, not personal sin. However, biological systems are involuntary. They often urge us to seek relief from pain in destructive ways and so persuade us to commit personal sin. St. Augustine relieved his neuroses by sexual addiction. St. Paul and Martin Luther did it by religious addiction (a warning to us, that we should be careful to discern the origin of religious enthusiasm!). Pleasers do it by demanding that others make them happy. Although neuroses produce false guilt, the means of relieving it leads to real guilt.

The doctrine of original sin expresses the belief that no one receives perfect conditional affection. To a greater or lesser extent, all suffer from neuroses and relieve them in destructive ways. In Christ, affection and correction promise healing. Paul expressed it this way: "Unhappy man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Rom 7:24, 25) Luther wrote of his conversion that he felt as if he had been reborn and "entered through open gates into Paradise itself." St. Augustine observed, "You have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you." This article's version of original sin is not Pelagian or semi-Pelagian, since our healing still completely depends on grace. It is not in conflict with Genesis 3 or Romans 5, the chapters usually quoted as foundational for the doctrine. Not only does it have the advantage of being in complete agreement with the findings of modern psychology and anthropology, it shows that God created us to enjoy excitement and adventure, which the traditional description does not.

## The Niagara Anglican

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**Editor:** Christopher Grabiec

Phone: 905-312-8444 (ext. 101)

**Advertising:** Ted Manning

Phone: 905-680-0615

**Publishers Advisory Board**

Pam Claridge  
Phone: 519-941-6804

Geoffrey Purdell-Lewis  
Phone: 905-628-4176

Charles Stirling  
Phone: 905-383-1088

Carol Summers  
Phone: 905-772-5641

**Staff**

Design/layout: Kayn Leduc  
Proofreading: Bryan Stopps

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## The Diocese of Niagara

The Diocese lies at the western end of Lake Ontario, and is defined roughly by the Niagara Escarpment from the Niagara River in the east to the Dundas Valley in the West and north to Shelburne, Mt. Forest and Orangeville.

**Bishop of Niagara:** Michael A. Bird

Phone: 905-527-1316

**Administrative Assistant:** Alison D'Atri

Phone: 905-527-1316 (ext. 1310)

**Executive Officer:** Michael Patterson

Phone: 905-527-1316

**Program Department**

Christyn Perkons  
Phone: 905-527-1316 (ext. 460)

Joyce Wilton  
Phone: 905-527-1316 (ext. 430)

**Contact the Diocese**

Cathedral Place  
252 James St. North  
Hamilton, ON L8R 2L3  
Phone: 905-527-1316  
Website: www.niagara.anglican.ca

## National Anglican Youth Ministry Forum planned for June



**JUDY STEERS**  
COORDINATOR - YOUTH INITIATIVES

Generation 2008 will welcome lay people, clergy, parish youth leaders, youth ministry staff, camp staff, chaplains—anyone whose ministry puts them in contact with youth and young adults. Organizers anticipate close to 200 people from all parts of the country to attend. Is it an academic forum? A learning experience? An opportunity for spiritual renewal? A conference featuring engaging experiential workshops? All of the above!

How often have you been to a training event that you feel is geared towards people at a different level of experience than yourself? This event has been

planned such that it will offer formation, networking and training for those who are new to youth ministry and those who have many years' experience. With a variety of exceptional guest speakers and workshop leaders, it's an opportunity for a huge re-energizing of youth ministries across the country.

ANYONE in ministry with youth can come to Generation 2008—applications are available through the National Anglican Youth Website—generation.anglican.ca, or from your diocesan youth ministry coordinator or diocesan program office.

The fee for the five-day event is \$375.00 which includes accommodation, meals, workshops, plenary sessions, resource CD and evening socials.

In order to facilitate participation from every diocese three people from each diocese will have conference fees paid for and their travel will be through a subsidized, sliding scale travel pool. It's called the 'Three for Free' option and is intended to

**Generation 2008**  
Empower Renew Equip  
June 10-15, 2008  
Huron University College, London, Ontario

encourage participation from right across the country.

If you are interested in being a subsidized participant, contact your Synod office.

Generation 2008 is organized and presented by Huron University College—Faculty of Theology, The

Anglican Church of Canada, and Just-Generation—The youth initiative of the PWRDF.

More information about Generation 2008 can be found on the National Anglican Youth Website, generation.anglican.ca, or by calling 519-438-7224 (ext. 280).

## EVENTS

## Family Movie Matinee

St. Paul's Anglican Church, Shelburne  
An afternoon of fun family time with popcorn and snacks. Our feature film will be *The Miracle Maker*.  
March 1, 1:30 PM

## Quest for the Historical Jesus

Grace Church, St. Catharines  
Using pictures and resources gathered in Israel, we'll explore together the culture and times in which Jesus lived to help us better understand the events leading up to, and surrounding, Jesus' death, ultimately preparing us for the joy of Easter.  
March 14, 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

## Youth Dance

St. David's Parish, Welland  
Dances are held every other Friday for those in grades 5-8. Pizza and pop will be available.  
Cost: \$5.00 per person  
March 14, 7:00 PM - 10 PM

## Roast Beef Dinner

St. John the Evangelist, Winona  
This will include a Special Auction so bring your loonies as that is what you will use to bid on items. St. Patrick's will be the theme so wear something green.  
Cost: \$15.00 per person  
March 15, 6:00 PM

## Pasta Supper

St. David's Parish, Welland  
Enjoy real Italian meatballs, pasta, salad, rolls, cookies, tea and coffee. Eat-in or take-out available. All welcome on the third Thursday of every month.  
Cost: Adults \$8, children 3-10 \$3.50, Children under 3 free  
March 20, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

## Maundy Thursday

St. Luke, Palermo  
Please join us in the Parish Hall for a pot luck dinner. Everyone is welcome!  
March 20, 6:00 PM

## Maundy Thursday

St. Peter, Hamilton  
Come join us for pot luck supper at 6:30 PM at Church of St. Peter followed by a family walk through some stations of the cross.  
Cost: Pot luck contribution  
March 20, 2008 - 6:30pm

## Sunday Sunrise Service

St. Peter, Hamilton  
Come and join us for a Sunrise service at Dieppe Park, Beach Blvd, Hamilton.  
March 23, 7:00 AM

## Fashion Show

St. Paul's, Caledonia  
Come see the new fashion line for Spring/Summer at McKinnon Park Secondary School.  
March 26, 2008

## Flea Market &amp; Rummage Sale

St. Columba, St. Catharines  
Gently used items and clothing offered for sale. Now this is where you will find some real attic treasures at bargain prices!  
March 29, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

## Dinner Theatre

All Saints, Hamilton  
Youth for Christ presents the play "Neighbours." Come and enjoy a spaghetti dinner with all the fixings and homemade desserts. It will be an enjoyable evening for one and all.  
Cost: Adults \$10.00, Children \$5.00, Family \$25.00  
March 29, 5:00 PM

## Church, not Church Inc.

## Church budgeting from a non-business perspective



JOSHUA MORRISON  
CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The budget. It might be the biggest sticking point in any parish. People bicker, argue, politic and fight over the budget. Divisions grow in the parish for the month leading up to vestry. It's a brutal time, and in my many years of church involvement I have seen some nasty budget conflicts happen in parishes and on the diocesan level.

I will preface the rest of this article by saying that I am not a business-person. I'm not a number whiz, I've never taken a business class at school. I don't have the gift of financial acumen. But since the church is not a business, I will continue with some observations and reflections on what I've seen.

I understand that in our modern capitalist world, a parish does have to make sure that they don't go under financially. That is common sense. But the extremes some parishes go to over trying to turn a profit are, in my view, entirely un-Christian.

The first time I witnessed a terrible circumstance around the budget was when a small parish hired a new priest with a young family. The priest was perfect for the parish, and was excited to begin work there. Then, when the

new priest arrived, the parish council decided to tell the priest that they were going to eliminate the housing allowance from the parish budget to work on saving money. It was only after the priest told them that this would force them to leave the parish right away that they relented. The Parish Council cared so much about brining in more money that they would have made the life of their priest extremely difficult.

Guerilla civil wars over budget politics in parishes only serve to hurt everyone. When parishes pit themselves against the clergy or the council or the wardens, they are essentially paralyzing the workings of the church, and suddenly outreach, charity work and social events grind to a halt or are tainted by politics.

I do understand why it is important to have people who understand money and commerce help with the budget in a parish, but I think that far too often we forget that a parish is not a business. The point of capitalist business is to turn a profit, and that's not what we're here for. No parish should be looking to have a final revenue figure higher than \$0, or the break even point. If we have money left over, then we haven't devoted ourselves entirely to doing God's work. We still have resources we can give to those who need it, or use to improve programs we're running in our own parish. Though society exalts money beyond much else in life, for our purposes it should be just a means to an end. It is the means to which we can do the work we are

called to do, and it shouldn't have importance beyond that. I do advocate parishes making the break-even point of course, since a church that is foreclosed is one that can't help anyone.

Making cuts to a budget to balance it is never easy, but many parishes will take a business approach to this, rather than one that prioritizes doing the work we are here to do. What to cut will come down to the choices and priorities of the parishioners, but why do we cut programs when we have investments sitting in a bank collecting dust? Yes, in business you might leave those alone to continue maturing, but it's money that can be used for our purpose, and again, in the church money should just be a means to an end. Why do we try to eliminate jobs in the church when perhaps we could find other ways around getting rid of our full time priest or youth worker who give more to the church through their labour and gifts than possessions do?

Though the clergy, wardens and parish treasurer are generally called "the corporation", I think this is an unfortunate reflection of how we have come to see parish finances. Thinking and living the way the capitalist society outside our doors does distracts us from how we could use our resources innovatively to do the Lord's work as best we can and often causes rifts and political divides within our parishes. In a world where so many things pull against the church from the outside, perhaps this is one area where we can change our ways and make ourselves stronger against all of the outside factors that divide us.

## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

■ The Reverend Canon Richard Rokeby has been appointed interim pastor at St. David and St. Patrick's Church, Guelph, beginning March 1.

■ The Reverend Jeff Ward has submitted his resignation from St. Simon's, Oakville, and will begin his new ministry as Rector of St. Luke's Church, Palermo, beginning April 1.

■ Bishop Spence has appointed five new Canons of Christ's Church Cathedral: Ian Chadwick, Audrey Conard, Darcey Lazerte, David Long and Jean Mitchell. The Service of Installation will be held on Sunday, February 17 during a Service of Evensong at Christ's Church Cathedral, starting at 4:00 PM

■ The Venerable Thomas Greene has

submitted his intention to retire from full time ministry and St. George's Church, Guelph, effective July 1.

■ The Venerable Richard Berryman has been appointed honorary assistant at St. Andrew's Church, Grimsby, effective January 1.

■ Our sympathy to the bereaved family of Margaret Bamford, who died on January 22. Margaret worked for many years at the Synod Office on Victoria Avenue, Hamilton.

■ Sympathy to the Reverend Howard Gorle and Mrs. Donna Gorle on the death of Donna's father, Tom Laing, on January 30.

■ Birthday wishes are sent to Bishop Ralph Spence on March 10!

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7 » The joy of the Lord

If we look at this world today, it should appear obvious that much is going on that is the result of human mismanagement and not God's fault. Of course, the cynic will say "Why does God (if there is one) let it happen?" But God didn't let it happen. As always, humanity brought it upon themselves.

In other words, we are the servants in God's estate; we indeed have to reap where the Master has not sown and we are given talents with which to do the work. Some of us will develop those talents, others will neglect them, others will not even realise that they have

them. Some of those who have the talent will recognise the failure of others to develop their God-given gifts and will encourage them to do so. Others will ignore the failure of their fellow-workers to pull their weight and will just get on with their own tasks. In the end, will we not all have to stand before our Maker and report on how we have used His talents? Does a loving God send the failure to "Hell"? Not according to the story that Jesus told. We may assume that No.3 was left in the estate to do a better job next time while the conscientious workers received their reward.

To what conclusion may we come? Has James Redfield (*The Tenth Insight*) hit the nail on the head when he suggests that God sends us into His field (the world) to do His work and that, when we die, we simply return whence we came and have to account for our conduct? The "hell" that each one of us must endure can be to keep repeating the same mistakes over and over again. The "heaven" that we may attain is that of a clear conscience and the satisfaction of a job well done. We have fulfilled our purpose in life; we have done our duty in God's domain and can enter into the Joy of our Lord.

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7 » Getting to know you

It's a wonderful freedom not to have that little book with you." Mavis adds, "We've switched! I'm out, he's in. I play bridge and am out for lunch at least four times a week." Bishop Walter affectionately adds the almost irresistible "out to lunch?"

"At St. George's, I putter at things, occasionally a Sunday liturgy. As Bishop, I was Celebrant so often; every time I turned around, somebody said I had to! Every so often I have a Sunday to stay home and sit with Mavis." Mavis grins, "Now you don't have to be chief cook and bottle washer!"

But Bishop Walter does not merely "sit." Over three years, he has researched and wrote a history of St. George's Church. "It's 370 pages,

based on parish archives, (including) original letters from Bishop Strachan in the 1840s—fascinating! I've given the first copy to Bishop Michael Bird."

## Where do we go from here?

Invited to offer advice for all who struggle with the challenges of this time, Bishop Walter says thoughtfully, "There's a fractious spirit about, but there's been worse. Preserve the tradition and pioneer; that seems to meet what parishes are about, and it's certainly what our Cathedral is about, not as a fossil but launching out, falling on your whatever but trying something. We've got a richness, a long story.

"The Church is like a house with a huge attic. We put something away, then two or three generations later go up and find it again, bring it down again, and it's a treasure again."

Perhaps the saying, "No pain, no gain" is applicable to the Church's journey, but there is comfort in the old prayer for God's protection that "we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this life may rest in your eternal changelessness." Bishop Walter's quiet but immovable faith in the unchanging love of God for all creation has enriched his life and the life of this Diocese of Niagara. He has never been consigned to the Diocesan attic, but remains a treasure among us, and we are blessed.

Caralei Peters MSc, ND  
DOCTOR OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

### NATUROPATHIC PERSPECTIVES

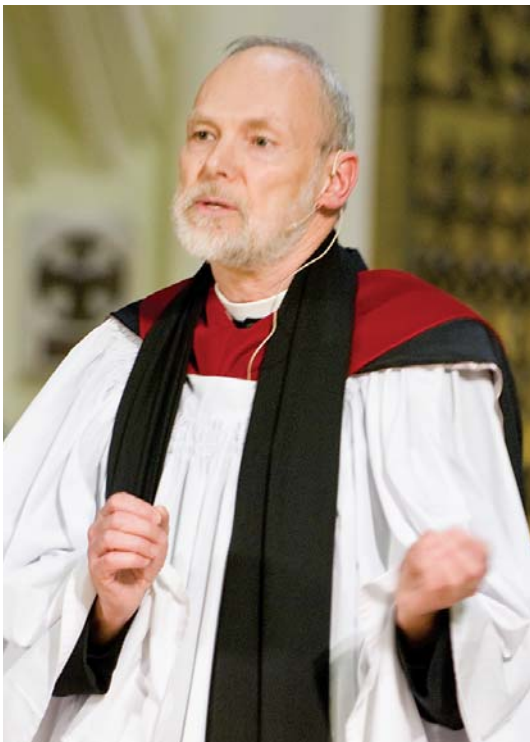
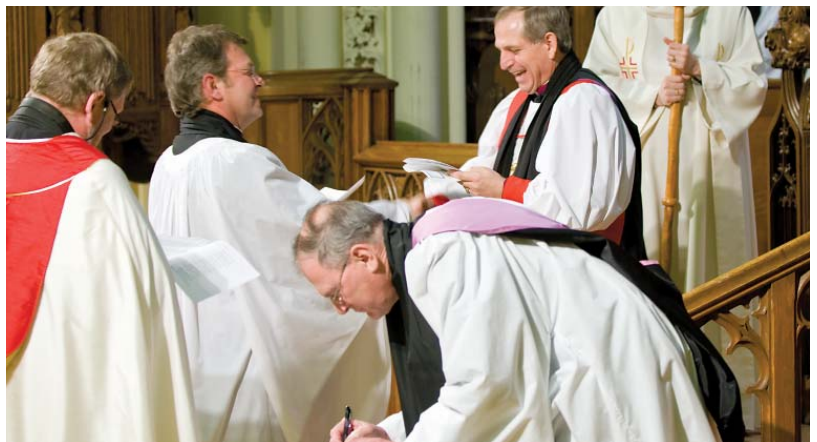
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# WELCOMING OUR NEW ARCHDEACON





# Outreach in the Name of Christ endowment fund

**KAREN NOWICKI**  
DIOCESAN RESOURCE CENTRE

The Diocesan Division of Outreach committee announces that the following Outreach initiatives in the community have received grants from the Survive & Thrive Outreach Endowment Fund. These approved grants total \$58,269.

## Bethlehem Projects of Niagara

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

## McMaster Campus Ministries

Hymn Festival for Chaplaincy Outreach The program consists of choir anthems, congregational singing, and a mass anthem sung by choirs from the greater Hamilton area. Prayers, readings and reflections will be offered in-between the music. The goals and objectives are to increase awareness of the role of the Ecumenical Chaplaincy in the McMaster and wider communities and to help secure the future of the Chaplaincy by highlighting the ministry and the opportunities for services and support.

## St. Alban the Martyr, Glen Williams

Transitional Housing Project in Conjunction with Halton Hills Community Support and Information (HHCSI).

To provide transitional housing for families that find themselves in financial difficulty and/or an abusive situation. The objective is to give families a place that they can call home for a period of up to three months. During this time help will be given to establish a permanent residence and financial help given to help families stand on their own. This project is supported by ten local churches.

## The Bridge Prison Ministry

Youth at Risk Ministry Program

To provide volunteer programs that might "bridge" the gap between institutions and the street. The goal is to provide programs for the youth incarcerated in the Hamilton-Wentworth Detention Center. These programs might better help them deal with their issues, offer opportunities to build skills, develop self worth, grow in faith, and to hopefully feel a part of and become contributing members of the community. The Bridge Support Group will address critical youth at risk issues, and included will be an Art from the Heart program and The Bridge Library program.

## Christ's Church Cathedral, Hamilton

Jamesville Neighbourhood Revitalization Project

To create housing, a recreational facility, green space, and increased parking in the Jamesville/Beasley neighbourhood in the north end of Hamilton. The goal is to build relationships among members of the community, revitalize the Jamesville neighbourhood in Hamilton, provide affordable housing, increase recreational opportunities for children, youth, and adults, create employment opportunities and encourage neighbourhood gentrification while living out the Gospel.

## Christ's Church Cathedral, Hamilton

Jamesville Community Centre (HARRRP) A not for profit corporation called the Hamilton Association for Residential and Recreational Redevelopment Programs (HARRRP) was developed by parishioners and friends of Christ's Church Cathedral. HARRRP undertook the task of creating a community centre with and for North-West End Hamilton neighbours housed in the same building as St. Mary's Catholic Elementary School. Funding was used to subsidize part of the cost of a full time paid staff person who ensures that program partners and user groups have what they need to provide quality recreational, social, educational, and cultural activities and opportunities for our neighbours in the City of Hamilton.

## St. Peters Anglican Church, Hamilton

Pete's Place

Pete's Place is an after school drop-in program, in east central Hamilton. This is a place where inner city youth who have been displaced from their family home environment and are attending secondary school can come to seek homework assistance, emotional encouragement and lifestyle support from volunteer teen mentors. The goal of the project is to plan, develop and deliver a teen-led community-focused outreach project that will assist students at risk of academic failure due to homelessness or other poverty related issues. The program is also to train and develop a group of community-minded youth who wish to volunteer in a meaningful way to be successful Teen Mentors.

## All Saints Anglican Church, Hamilton

George Street Residential Care Facility The parish of All Saints, Hamilton

partnered with the George Street Residential Care Facility and set up a program to help the developmentally challenged who reside in the George Street facility.

## The Bridge - Youth at Risk Ministry Program

Community Worker

This program is designed to provide programs for the male youth currently incarcerated in the Hamilton -Wentworth Detention Center. The programs, while spiritual in nature, are also designed to be very practical and personally supportive. The programs are intended to assist the young boys to deal with their real-life issues, offer opportunities to build skills, develop their sense of self worth, grow in faith and to hopefully feel a part of and become contributing members of the community. This program will offer the skills needed for youth to re-integrate back into the community. The funding assisted in the hiring of a part-time community worker that will be able to assist the youth when they return to the community.

## Church of the Transfiguration, St. Catharines

Vegetable Garden Project

This project created a vegetable garden on the church property that is 484 square feet. It will become a focal point for both the current members of the parish and for the parish to reach out to non-members. The goal is to provide fresh produce for needy people and organizations in St. Catharines and will give members of the parish the opportunity to participate in a project which helps to support those less fortunate

in their community. This unique gardening venture allows parish members to contribute their time and energy to helping others.

## St. Paul's Anglican Church, Hamilton

The Coffeehouse Project

This project will be a regular gathering for people who are looking for a community to explore their creativity and spirituality but who might not be comfortable in a traditional church setting. Monthly coffeehouses will feature local musicians and poets, open-mike nights, discussions and speakers on topics of social justice and spirituality. This will be a safe space for community and spiritual exploration.

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

All grants will be determined by June 30 in each calendar year. The 2008 application deadline is Wednesday, April 30, 2008.

To download an application form go to [www.niagara.anglican.ca/outreach/general.cfm](http://www.niagara.anglican.ca/outreach/general.cfm). For more information contact Karen Nowicki at 905-527-1316 (ext. 380).

## A celebration of New Ministry and Seating of the Bishop

### The Right Reverend Michael A. Bird as Bishop of Niagara

Sunday March 2 at 4:00 PM  
Christ's Church Cathedral

Unfortunately due to limited seating we will be issuing tickets for this event, HOWEVER, the following parishes will show the live webcast of the installation in their parish centres:

- St. Thomas, St. Catharines
- St. John's, Port Dalhousie (Refreshments will follow)
- St. Paul's, Shelburne (Wine and cheese to follow)
- St. Luke's Burlington

A recording of the service will be available online after the webcast.

Advertise with the Niagara Anglican