



# Niagara Anglican

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## Thinking outside the box

PHIL JONES  
CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION OAKVILLE

Each year, one or more people are invited to undertake the daunting task of trying to describe the indescribable experience of the Niagara Youth Conference (NYC) to the rest of the diocesan readers. This year, this charge fell upon me, the new co-dean for the August 24-29 conference. Alongside my co-dean and long-time friend, Pat Ruggles O.N., the diocesan Program Department staff and 16 highly talented volunteer staff spent the last eight months planning for the six days that mark the pinnacle of the Youth Ministry calendar. With a new theme and activities every year—this year's theme was "The Law". NYC demands a lot in terms of creativity, planning and organization from a highly dedicated group of volunteers who range in age from nineteen to mid-sixties. They provide a safe supportive space for teenage delegates to express themselves, grow together, challenge their spirituality, and make friendships they might not make anywhere else. The 2008 theme allowed for exploration of the rules that we live



by, how we can change injustices, and the distinction between the rules of religion and faith.

The conference was centered around a base group model—assigned

small groups of delegates and staff facilitators that meet throughout each day to discuss and debrief the week's activities. Highlights of the activities this August included:

■ Calvinball (delegates could impose any new rule simply by yelling for all to hear).

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## A Harlem church shines a bright light

ALAN HAYES  
THE ITINERANT CHURCHGOER

This is one of those rare occasions when I tell you about my itinerating outside the diocese. Earlier this year I attended a Sunday service at what's often regarded as the most prominent and influential church in North America. No, it's not an Episcopal cathedral or a seeker church. It's a black Baptist church in Harlem, New York.

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## When it seems there is no answer

NISSA BASBAUM  
RECTOR, TRANSFIGURATION ST CATHARINES

When I was a curate I was called upon to do a funeral service for a 30-year-old woman who was killed on the highway as she stopped on the side of the road because of car trouble. It wasn't the first time I had to do this kind of tragic service nor would it be the last.

This particular death came back to me this past summer, however, when I found myself having to pull into the right-hand lane and slow down on the 401 because of a flat tire.

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## When we miss a friend

GRAHAME STAP  
RETIRED PRIEST

It was one of those infrequent summer days when the sun shines, soft fluffy clouds drift across the sky and the water sparkles as a light breeze wafts down the lake. I was in my little boat fishing with not a care in the world when a sudden sense of sadness totally dampened my spirit. You see a very good friend, mentor and part of my life had just died.

My wife Ina and I have known Carol Skidmore and her family for 35 years. We lived on the same street. Carol and Harry even lived in the same house design although Carol always told us our house



was backwards. Our children played together and grew up together. This was long before either Carol or myself started to listen to what God was trying to tell both of us. I guess it started when Ina, Carol and Vickie Hiedlieus formed a bible study group. Ina is fond of saying that she is a carrier of the religious gene but never gets the disease. When Carol felt the call of God and talked to Bishop John Bothwell he suggested she attend McMaster University, which she did with dedication and a strong work ethic.

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## God, suffering, and Serbia

COLIN CAMPBELL  
ST. HILDA'S BURLINGTON

In the Hamilton school where I teach, about a third of my students are Serbs, refugees from the brutal civil wars, which tore apart Yugoslavia in the nineties. I found that they were usually tall, wrote in the Cyrillic alphabet and belonged to the Eastern Orthodox version of Christianity. However, there were others, who spoke the same language and were just as tall, but who wrote in the Latin alphabet, and could be Roman Catholic or Muslim. Motivated only by curiosity, in 2005 I decided to visit the countries of the former Yugoslavia. There I saw, not only the devastation of war but also the resilience of the human spirit, when it is infused with the Christian faith.

I returned again in 2006 and went to Knin, where so many of my students had been the victims of ethnic cleansing by the Croats. I also visited Jasenovac, where 600,000 Serbs perished at the hands of the pro-Nazi Ustashe. It was there that I finally understood God's response to suffering. When I learned of the destruction of so many Orthodox churches in Kosovo, I decided to visit again this year. While in Serbia, I read the statements made by the Serbian Patriarch Pavle to encourage his people. They shine with the Spirit of Christ. His understanding of suffering is identical to the one which I found in Jasenovac. Naturally, he draws his conclusions mainly from the Gospels.

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## God's mission and our ministry

MICHAEL THOMPSON  
RECTOR, ST. JUDE'S OAKVILLE

In July and August, the bishops of the Anglican Communion gathered in the Lambeth Conference, and among the focal elements of their gathering was mission. Over the past year, our Primate, Fred Hiltz, has continually reminded us of the centrality of mission in the life of our church.

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## PARISH NEWS

# St. George's Lowville holds end of summer picnic



St. George's, Lowville held its family picnic on Sunday August 24, 2008. The party was hosted by Jim and Kay Mighton at their Campbellville home. More than sixty church members and their families enjoyed fellowship and fun and games - horseshoes for the adults and a variety of races, etc. for the younger ones. Barbecued burgers and hotdogs and fattening desserts completed a wonderful afternoon.

## The Ascension goes green



**PETER SWIRE**  
CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION, HAMILTON

At last fall's Synod, Reverend Laura Marie cosponsored a motion to encourage the entire Diocese to go green through some very thoughtful acts to stop the devastation caused by global warming.

Well, in the past few months, the Church of The Ascension have changed out the energy consuming light bulbs in

the lower hall, breezeway and just hours before the Gala, the nave lighting in the Church. On top of that, our sexton, Chuck Parker, had adjusted the air conditioning cycle in the Church to cover a smaller period of time surrounding our worship times. We no longer are using the very old and marginally functional window units in the Wallace Room and Corktown Hall. Over the past two months, our power usage between May 2008 and 2007 was down 69%. Even with the Gala, our June's consumption was down over 25%. Our working papers to the parish budget show our consumption of water, natural gas and electricity provide us with a meaningful benchmark to measure our progress.

A 15% reduction in these items along would represent a \$5,000 annual cost savings yet alone the reduction in greenhouse gases.

We still have some more lights to change out but every kilowatt does count!

Going "green" does not just stop there. In the next month, Kate Morrison's suggestion of adding more recycling boxes will improve our recycling of waste materials within the kitchen and hall. A water barrel will be added to use run-off rain water to help water the plants around the Church and within the Courtyard.

Yes, going Green does save the "Green"



## Christmas in August

St. Paul helps St. Matthew's House

**RICK JONES**  
ARCHDEACON AND RECTOR OF ST. PAUL'S, WESTDALE

It was one of the hottest Sundays in August and the congregation of St. Paul's, Westdale was singing Christmas Carols in a Church decorated for Christmas complete with a tree. Why would they commit such liturgical heresy? The answer is St. Matthew's House needed the generous spirit of Christmas, especially this Summer.

Several of St. Paul's parish volunteers to St. Matthew's House had warned the congregation that the shelves of the food bank were literally bare. The school breakfast programmes were suspended for the Summer and inner city families, especially the children, might be going hungry. Unfortunately, Summer is the time that parishes tend to be in holiday mode, and often the needs of organizations such as St. Matthew's House can be forgotten.

Not this year at St. Paul's, they organized the Christmas in August Campaign which started in July and culminated on "Christmas Eve" August 24th. Through the two months of the Summer \$4,000 cash was sent to the food bank as well as the van loads of food collected in the church. Jane Howard, a St. Matthew's House volunteer and one of the St. Paul's organizers explained, "This campaign was easy and fun to organize, with a few Christmas lights up in the Narthex, a tree donated by David Dewar of Meeting Management Services, and some announcements in the church. The response from the congregation was enthusiastic. Next year we want to look at getting more local businesses involved as well as the church members. Christmas in August gave St. Paul's a gift of Spirit, as well as providing a helping hand to so many others."

## Gala evening at Ascension was a resounding success

**PETER SWIRE**  
CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION, HAMILTON

The evening of June 20th was filled with magic! Through careful planning and a lot of brute force, the Church nave was transformed from its Sunday best to a festive dinner and concert venue. Over 150 people attended the Gala most of which were not from the Ascension. Our notable dignitaries being our former Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Lincoln Alexander, Mr. David Mitchell and Mr. Bob Bratina. Our local MP, Mr. David Christopherson could not stay but wished

us every success.

Canon Kristine opened the meal with a prayer recognizing that the proceeds for the evening cover our costs to keep our facilities open to the myriad of non-for-profit groups. Many non-parishioners were stunned by the over three thousand meals served through Out of the Cold annually and the various Scouting groups and recovering addictions programs offered here!

After sampling an array of canapés and wines in the courtyard, Patrons feasted on lamb, salmon and coq-au-

vin! After the sumptuous dinner and dessert, the Three Cantors performed for over two hours filling the Church with both sacred and popular music.

What most people do not realize is that most of the fee paid to the talented singers goes to support the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund. Reverend Laura-Marie is on the national committee for PWRDF and they welcome the Cantors efforts.

Over \$6,000 was raised in one night! Many are asking when the next Gala will be...

# Soulprints: Ecological Footprints

**SARAH CLARKE**  
ST. DAVID AND ST. PATRICK, GUELPH

*Happy is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways. You shall eat the fruit of the labour of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you...* This portion of Psalm 128 (vs. 1-2, NRSV) is one of the many places in our scripture where I now hear a call to me to be more aware of how I interact with the environment. These verses speak to me of a Creator God who sees the 'big picture' of creation; of the balance of life that comes from treading graciously through creation; and this spring and summer, a greater awareness of the value of growing & tending my own garden and eating as locally as I can and of my increasing concern about some of the food products available in our local stores... Although I hear a call to personal action, I also feel that I am meant to be active within the context of the wider community; I should contribute to and receive from those around me. This Fall, my urban neighbourhood is working towards a 100 metre meal! I can supply zucchini, tomatoes, cucumbers, pumpkin, parsley and hot peppers, but for protein, we'll depend on the eggs from another neighbour who has urban chickens. So we share what we have and rely on others to share what they can offer.

Your impact on those around you

is unique. You are connected to your family, to your friends, to your community, to all of us—your diocesan community—through an intricate, elaborate, pattern of unique dependencies. You are who you are because of how you depend on others and how you respond to their dependence on you in their lives. We put independence on a pedestal while we promote the value of connecting with others, and we end up striving for inter-dependence. But that's just our society trying to convince us we can have our cake and eat it too. The truth is, we are all dependent upon one another and being more aware of our impact on each other makes us better able to be community.

You are unique and you have a unique and identifiable impact on the world around you. Your fingerprint is unique and identifiable. So is your footprint, your eco footprint. A few years ago, Canadian scientists developed a way for us to measure our impact on the earth. We call it our 'environmental footprint' or 'ecological footprint' or 'eco footprint'. It helps us understand how much of the earth's resources we use and how long it takes the planet to absorb what we waste.

It's easiest to measure specific eco footprints. One specific eco footprint

might look at the vegetables we eat; how much land does it take to produce the vegetables we eat and how much land to absorb what we waste? Another eco footprint might look at our impact on global warming; what are we doing that uses and wastes energy from fossil fuels? This one in particular is often referred to as our 'carbon footprint' because it measures how much carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) we release into the atmosphere as we go about our daily routines.

On a daily basis we use energy that comes from fossil fuels such as oil, coal and natural gas. Turning on lights in our home, running water from a tap, driving a car, leaving your computer on, cooking a meal... the list goes on. These activities use energy from fossil fuels and the production and waste of that energy releases CO<sub>2</sub> into our atmosphere. Canadians are using far more fossil fuel these days than generations ago. It is the buildup of CO<sub>2</sub> and other such gases that are released through human activities that is the most significant cause of global warming.

Bishop Michael, inspired by a motion from Youth Synod, asked us to be especially aware of our carbon footprint during Earth Week, April 20-26. He encouraged us to bike or walk, to take public transit or to carpool when-

ever possible. He offered us a fun and relatively easy, one-week challenge to become more aware of how often we use fossil fuels to get around, but the scope of his challenge is huge.

Every church community in the Diocese of Niagara has been asked by Synod to assess its carbon footprint and commit to reducing it by 15%. This motion was an awakening moment for our diocese and resulted in the formation of a diocesan Greening Niagara committee. Many parishes are pondering their eco footprints for the first time. Quite a few parishes in our diocese have already begun work on reducing their carbon footprints. My parish, for example, has installed a high-efficiency furnace and programmable thermostat. The renovations reduced the amount of energy needed to heat the building while also reducing the amount of energy lost in leaked heat. Now we are looking at other actions we can take to continue reducing our carbon footprint.

Since we're assessing our collective carbon footprint already, we might as well start taking a serious look at other aspects of our parish (and diocesan) eco footprint and how our actions impact the world around us. We can address questions such as, how wastefully or how resourcefully

do we use water at our parish and at diocesan events? How are we using our properties, our parish buildings and the space around them? Does our parish property witness to God's message of love and redemption of all creation?

Over the coming months, the newly formed Greening Niagara committee will begin investigating ways in which we, as a faith community, can reduce our carbon footprint and become generally more aware of our eco footprint. We have many ideas but we are a small group spread out across the diocese and if you have any ideas or suggestions (or questions) we welcome your input. You are a unique part of this, our diocesan community and your unique 'social footprint' leaves its mark on the parish you worship with and the wider Anglican and secular communities where you interact. Sharing your thoughts, ideas, experience and expertise, will help us collectively to define how we proceed and what mark our future eco footprint will leave on the earth. Let us tread this earth wisely, sensitive to our footprints upon God's creation and alert to environmental awareness within our lives. May our eco footprints leave soulprints of renewal upon the communities where we tread.

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## A Harlem church shines a bright light

Pretty much every guidebook to New York City recommends the worship services at Abyssinian Baptist.

Its brilliant preaching and its fabulous gospel music draw huge crowds.

**Experiencing the ugliness of anti-black racism in America steeled Bonhoeffer, when he returned home, to oppose anti-Jewish racism in Germany.**

The morning I was there, so was Senator Hillary Clinton. If you go there, try to beat the tourist buses. (Tourists are a bit of a problem, actually, because the church can hardly accommodate the members.)

The church building is in a thoroughly urban context without any lawn or grounds. You enter the three-story Tudor and Gothic structure directly from the sidewalk, and then go up a side stairway to get to the service. I found the worship space designed in auditory style; it was a broad room with curving pews and galleries above. This design made the space feel almost intimate, even though it has seating for 1800.

### Unusual announcements

After some wonderful opening music and some prayers, the minister launched

into announcements. These weren't like Anglican announcements. It was a twenty-minute tour de force by the minister about the pleasures and privileges of being the Abyssinian Church community. At one point various celebrities in the congregation were introduced, including the stars, director, and crew of the current African-American production on Broadway of "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," with James Earl Jones.

The preaching was inspired. It exalted Jesus, made people proud and glad to be African American Christians, and invited them to Christian lives of hope, discipleship, and social justice.

I was there on a communion Sunday, which happens once a month. Two thousand of us held hands during the confession of sin beforehand. After communion, the choir director and choir sang "This little light of mine" in call-and-response style with an electrifying intensity that persuaded me that at that moment in all of New York City there was no more exciting place to be than Abyssinian Baptist Church.

But it's not the worship alone that has made the church important. Later I visited the Schomburg Center of the New York Public Library to see an exhibition of Abyssinian's history, in commemoration of its 200th anniversary this year. I discovered how rich its life has been: its passionate ministry

for social justice, its relentless advocacy for the oppressed, its prophetic civic leadership, its work in community development, its global profile.

### A spiritual homeland

Its achievements are rooted in its faith. The church's name derives from Psalm 68:31, "Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God." (Abyssinia is another name for Ethiopia.) Ethiopia, a black Christian country which has never been colonized, was for many African American Christians in 1808, and still is, a spiritual homeland. We white westerners sometimes act as if Christianity belongs to us, but we know from Acts that an Ethiopian was converted to Christ before Paul ventured into Europe.

By the 1930s Abyssinian Baptist Church was the world's first Protestant mega-church, with 14,000 members. It was taking the lead in desegregating the city services and retail stores of New York City, thus laying the ground for the southern civil rights movement two decades later. Its musicians included W.C. Handy and Fats Waller.

It was interpreted to white Christians by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who attended here in 1930-1931 while he was a teaching fellow at Union Seminary. This German Lutheran pastor was developing into one of the outstanding theologians of the century.

### Inspires Bonhoeffer

Bonhoeffer at the time was disillusioned with the establishment white liberal Lutheranism of his day. Accustomed to bowing to social fashion, scornful of the Old Testament and the Jews, and eager to make the gospel relevant to modern Germans, Lutheranism was growing into the Nazi church.

At Abyssinian Church, by contrast, Bonhoeffer experienced the church of the oppressed, where the gospel comforted the afflicted and afflicted the comfortable. And like a thirsty hart he drank in the powerful preaching of the minister, Adam Clayton Powell. "In contrast to the didactic style of White churches," Bonhoeffer wrote in 1931, "the Black Christ is preached with rapturous passion and vision." Bonhoeffer's friends reported later that after his year in Harlem his own preaching improved dramatically!

Long before Bonhoeffer was born, Powell had coined the phrase "cheap grace" to describe forgiveness without repentance, and liturgical solace without the Cross. Bonhoeffer made Powell's condemnation of "cheap grace" the cornerstone of his own theology in his most important book, *The Cost of Discipleship*.

And experiencing the ugliness of anti-black racism in America steeled Bonhoeffer, when he returned home, to oppose anti-Jewish racism in Ger-

many. He was hanged by the Nazis just a month before the end of World War II. In our BAS we commemorate him on August 14th.

### Reasons for success

So what makes Abyssinian a successful instrument of the gospel? Well, great music, great preaching, and great leadership are certainly part of it. So is clarity of purpose, rootedness in Scripture, a commitment to the oppressed, and a critical sympathy with the local culture.

But what came across to me most strongly was the sense I got from the pastor, musicians, and people that what they do together as the church is really important. This isn't just a group of people who like to act out their common tastes in the realm of spirituality, or who like the opportunities that churchland affords for pleasant fellowship. This is a community exuberantly united in Christ and committed to making a difference both locally and globally.

If you've read "Dreams of My Father," you know that when Barack Obama was a graduate student at Columbia, he occasionally came to Abyssinian Baptist Church to catch a glimpse of the vision for America that he was seeking. If Obama becomes president, he'll take the spirit of Abyssinian into a new chapter of world history. I'd love to see more of that spirit in the Anglican Church of Canada, too.

# The conservatism of Niagara

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

The Diocese of Niagara prides itself on being a “liberal” diocese. Voting in favour of the blessing of same-sex unions is a recent example, but there are many other examples. We also like to avoid masculine language for God, and replace hierarchical terms like “kingdom” and “lord” with less inflammatory terms like “reign” and “God.” Some of us don’t hesitate to declare “old” doctrines such as the Trinity, the atonement, and the second coming, passé and dispensable. Others of us opt out of saying the creed. Would it be unfair to suggest that we even have a sneaking sense of superiority that these things are hallmarks of our diocese?

Yet I believe that, far from being liberal, these are actually deeply conservative moves, every one.

## Christ transforming culture

Some will remember Reinhold Niebuhr’s classic, *Christ and Culture*, where he divides the ways Christian have responded to culture over the centuries into five types, from “Christ against culture” (those who want to separate themselves from secular cul-

ture) at one extreme to “Christ of culture” (those who see little distinction between the church and the surrounding culture) at the other end, with three mediating positions. His own chosen position is the middle one, “Christ transforming culture,” which he sees as most faithful to the way of Jesus.

Our “liberalism” is really just an expression of the “Christ of culture” position. “Liberal” is supposed to mean free, independent, liberating, unafraid to be oneself, open to change. Yet our kind of “liberalism” actually means we are shackled to passing social and intellectual fashions, unwilling to think for ourselves. On same-sex unions, for instance, one leader in this diocese told me with a shrug a couple of years back, “Well, this is the way Canadian culture is going, so that’s the way the church has to go.” Where the world goes, the church has to go along.

The same with doctrines that the secular world finds unacceptable: “You don’t like them? Can’t believe them? We’re desperately sorry, we’ll get rid of them tomorrow, if not sooner.” It’s basically a policy of appeasement, allowing the world to set the agenda for the church. Something Jesus modeled? I think not. And in any case, the world

is pretty uninterested in our discussions about rearranging the deck chairs.

## Fresh expressions

Let me give you a couple of examples of where I see a church truly trying to be “liberal.” Both concern church planting and evangelism, which are among the marks of a truly liberal church—though not the only ones, of course.

One Canadian diocese has a Bishop’s Church Planting Working Group, attended regularly by the bishop. At their synod last year, the bishop announced that he hoped to see five new churches planted in the diocese in the next ten years. He said, “If you are looking for permission to plant a new church, you have it!” There is true liberalism: free to go against the trends of society, open to new things, however counter-cultural, helping the church be true to its God-given nature—which is (among other things) to grow.

My second example concerns the Church of England. If people have an image of the dear old C of E, it is generally of an elderly, genteel and sleepy church, centering on ancient, decaying buildings in delightful rural settings. That still exists, certainly,

but there is also a renewal movement there called Fresh Expressions, which is changing the face of the church—and the country. Fresh Expressions are new ways of doing church for groups and cultures in the UK where there is no church. There is a church of Goths and a church of skateboarders; there are churches in police stations, churches for parents and children after school midweek, network churches, café churches, cell churches, Messy Churches (yes, really) and youth churches (not to be confused with youth groups).

Who is doing this? Those stuffy old conservative evangelicals, whose Anglicanism is rather suspect? Actually, though evangelicals are (as one might say) liberally involved, the movement is headed by Archbishop Rowan Williams, who has put his personal authority (and significant discretionary money) into this movement, and embraces true liberals of many persuasions. So far, there are around 650 “fresh expressions of church” listed on the official Fresh Expressions website. You can check it out—or ask Bishop Bird his impressions of the self-select session on Fresh Expressions at Lambeth.

## Radical Liberalism

Of course, starting a new church, especially a “fresh expression of church,” is not for wimps, whatever label they may put on themselves. A timid theological liberal (a phrase which should be an oxymoron) is more likely to ask, “Will anybody be offended?” or “Let’s not think about starting new churches while so many old ones are struggling,” or “Would I still be on the diocesan pension plan?” or even “Why would we bother?” There might be some symbolism in the fact that, while the Niagara diocesan office has five people in the finance department, we no longer have even one Director of Evangelism.

The way of Jesus is not just to bless whatever society dictates—to add a mildly religious veneer to the culture. You don’t get crucified (or resurrected for that matter) for doing that. The way of Jesus is rather to preach and live a way of doing things that is radically different from the world around. That radical difference is what is truly liberal—and truly liberating. Let’s shed our false, timid “liberalism” and embrace the true, radical liberalism of Jesus.

# Season’s Greetings!



**ALAN COOK**  
ANGLICAN BOOK CENTRE

Greetings for October! I wrote this article for the September edition of this paper, but unfortunately it was lost in the Bermuda Triangle of the world-wide web. This somewhat altered version still has some relevance, I hope!

As the season changes from summer’s abundance to autumn’s “mists and mellow fruitfulness”, churches across the land gear up for the high-energy seasons of fall and winter. Changes in season mean different levels of activity, so we here at ABC and Augsburg Fortress have learned to stand ‘ready, aye, ready’ for the gale of calls that comes our way after the summer doldrums, when clergy are on vacation and programmes are done for a season. Sunday School is now under way but if you have an influx of new children after your Vacation Bible School, call us and we’ll happily rush you a few extra kits!

What about study groups? Are you planning a study course before, or during Advent? Have you seen the latest from Wood Lake Publishing? Churches that use ‘Seasons of the Spirit’ Sunday School curriculum will have seen advertising for the new ‘Experience!’ study series on *‘Experiencing the Bible for the first time*

*again*’, as well as *‘Experiencing Jesus again for the first time’*. These large packages ready for 12 participants are great value at \$175. Created by Marcus Borg of the ‘Jesus Seminar’ fame, it is a creative, visually stimulating and intellectually challenging resource. Come into the stores, or find me at an event to view it. *‘Kerygma’* offers a wide range of courses, as does the *‘Intersections’* series, which you can see in our catalogue or online. Churches that want to grow in ‘passionate spirituality’ are usually ones that realize the need to meet and learn together as adults and move beyond ‘maintenance’ in faith and understanding towards ‘mission’.

The summer was quiet in the parishes as well as in the office. But out in the Anglican Communion, the winds of change were blowing strongly. First there was the Gafcon meeting in Jerusalem and then the big event in Lambeth. There will be a rush of publications later this year reflecting on the summer’s powerful conventions. Conferences are already coming where we can see again the horizon now that the bishops have sailed home. For example, Dr Tom Wright, Bishop of Durham and the ‘commodore’ in charge of the Anglican Covenant document is blowing into St Paul’s, Bloor Street, Toronto in late-November for his first Canadian appearance since Lambeth to discuss where the Anglican Communion is going from here.

Some books that came out in advance of Lambeth are still well worth a look. Gene Robinson, the

Bishop of New Hampshire (and perhaps Anglicanism’s ‘man over-board’) published a biography that hit the shelves in June. *‘In the eye of the storm: swept to the center by God’* (Church Publishing, \$27) is a passionate review of the theological and social debate around same-sex issues from this man’s standpoint. It’s also an engaging personal history of the man who, in the end, was not at the centre of a storm in Lambeth: maybe more like a ‘humidity factor’, who increased the temperature and made for some sweaty moments (to continue the meteorological metaphor!)

Radner and Turner’s *‘The agony of Anglicanism and the fate of communion’* (Eerdmans, \$27.50) is a series of essays from the more conservative side outlining the issues we are facing in several areas. In choppy waters, it helps to call upon an old master-mariner for a word of assurance. Former Archbishop of Canterbury, the late Dr Michael Ramsey led us through the turbulence of the 1960’s and his steady hand is to be felt again in *‘The Anglican Spirit’* (re-published by Seabury Press, \$15.95) Hearing his voice in these accessible yet profound lectures reminds us that, while we have our issues today, they are not just of our own making but arose from larger swirling systems of theology and culture and their relationship to the changing world. Like the weather, they have become more varied and extreme over the last several decades.

Recalling that the church is shaped as much by persons as by theo-

ries, Canadians Moore and Rayner’s *‘Audacious Anglicans’* (\$19.95, Morehouse) shines a spotlight on 20 Anglicans, from Wilberforce to Henry Budd (Canadian) to Desmond Tutu who have been formed by and have shaped the Anglican ethos. It offers our ‘saint-poor’ tradition some lively heroes (male and female) to inspire our life of faith. Keep a weather-eye out for a new history of the Anglican Church in Canada from ABC Publishing, *‘Seeds scattered and sown’* (\$29.95 till Jan 09).

This lively, “grassroots” compilation is the first history of “our beloved church” (as the Primate refers to us), since 1963. It will be an immensely helpful resource to help us understand who we are and why we have followed the course that has led us to the present.

Like Bishop Bird and many who followed what was going on in Lambeth, I was deeply impressed by the call to action on the Millennium Development Goals. I have put together a list of resources for Christians working towards the eradication of poverty, as the UN goals envisage. Please contact me for details, but at the top of the list sits *‘What can one person do?’* By Alkire and Newell, (Church Publishing \$21.50) it is one of the most practical Anglican resources for individual and group study I’ve seen. In the current election campaign in Canada, the voice of the poor beyond our borders may not be heard. These resources will help equip Christians to strengthen their consciences and inform their minds

so that they can speak up for those who have no vote, but who are profoundly influenced by the choices of the affluent in our land.

Finally, I had a chance to lead some services over the summer to cover clergy vacations. I took the opportunity to trim my sails to the lectionary’s prevailing wind and was blown headlong by the Spirit through the Letter to the Romans. Paul’s powerful breeze often carries odours of intolerance that makes our liberal noses wrinkle. However, I found this experience to be a refreshing one that cleared the mist and revealed new vistas that have very practical and dynamic implications.

I have already referred to Bishop N.T. (Tom) Wright, but I do want to recommend his profound yet accessible writings which helped me to stay afloat in the depths of Paul’s theology and find ways to expound it for the congregation. His *‘Paul for everyone’ Commentaries* (\$19, WJK and SPCK) are excellent resources for anyone who wants to learn more about what this most influential -but often misunderstood (or ignored) saint- was really trying to say. We’ll be in Thessalonians and Philippians for the rest of this season, so why not get a commentary and follow Paul through to Advent? (Now THERE was a man who knew how to “preach up a storm”!)

For me, this summer was one of great inspiration. I am delighted to be “your priest in publishing” during this season for the Anglican Church in all of its climatic variations.

# A church for the future



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

As I opened my e-mail yesterday I discovered that my parish in Hamilton is to hold a Special Vestry following the Eucharist this coming Sunday. Alas, I shall not be able to attend as I am enjoying the end of this summer on the Manitoulin Island, where my "summer parish" is also called All Saints. I had already typed the title of



For centuries people have believed that the church building is the "House of God", that God somehow dwells in the reredos behind the altar.

this effort and was wondering how to approach the future from the present when I remembered that I have a third All Saints in my life.

All Saints, Swinford, is located in a village just six miles outside the town of Rugby, home of the famous public school in the English Midlands. It is typical of the churches of the past for it was built during the years immediately following the Norman Conquest at the end of the eleventh century.

When I knew it, it was joined to the neighbouring parish of St. Nicholas, Stanford-upon-Avon, because there was not the congregation to support two churches. Stanford was no longer a village; it could best be described as a hamlet, but its church was just as old as that of its partner. The parish was known as Stanford-cum-Swinford and the incumbent was our old family friend, the retired Army chaplain who had been put out to grass in his eighties. He died while presiding at the Eucharist during WWII.

St. Nicholas, Stanford, is a relic of feudal times. It had been built by the new Norman Lord-of-the-Manor as his own family church and for the sake of the peasants who lived on his estate. As a result, the incumbent was his own family chaplain. Such a parish priest was known as the Rector, whose appointment was in the hands of the Lord-of-the-Manor and not of the diocesan bishop. On the other hand, the incumbent at All Saints, Swinford, was appointed by the Diocesan and was known as the Vicar. Our family friend was very proud of the fact that he was a Rector. Stanford church contains memorials to succeeding Lords-of-the-Manor, many of whom are buried in the church, but when I last visited it the church was closed, but the key was available from a neighbour. There were no regular services, except for one service a year, possibly on the Founder's day.

Both churches were originally part of the Roman Catholic communion and

were priest dominated. It is easy to forget that, until the end of the nineteenth century, the vast majority of people in the congregations were comparatively uneducated. The priests had received an education and the local nobility, at least the males, would also have had tutors and, possibly, some university, but the peasants had their noses to the grindstone and most would not be able to read or write.

In spite of the Reformation little had changed over the succeeding centuries. Congregations remained comparatively uneducated; only a few people could meet the clergy on equal terms so far as education was concerned. It should be remembered that even universities were originally established by the Church.

It is easy to forget how rapid have been the changes since the middle of the nineteenth century. My own father was a teenager when the Wright brothers succeeded in flying a heavier-than-air craft. He lived to see a man on the moon. Compared to the twenty centuries that have elapsed since the time of Our Lord, the modern age of education for all pales in comparison. Add to this the amazing advances in science and one has to ask if humanity has been able to cope with such rapid changes. We hear that many people will require psychiatric treatment during their lifetime. Have we gone too fast?

Our clergy have not escaped from these pressures. During the 1800s they could still dominate their congregations; education had not yet established a self-confidence in the average person in the pew. As the twentieth century progressed, the picture changed and clergy self-confidence was challenged. Education encouraged the people in the pews to think for themselves and the clergy found themselves no longer the founts of knowledge that they had been in previous centuries. There were now people in the pews who were better educated than they were.

We are now in the 21st. Century. We are capable of seeing the Church of the past in the context of its times. With vastly improved communication systems we are also able to see what is happening in our world today. How will Christianity adjust to the 21st. Century when so many of our illustrations still revolve around twelve men who followed their leader around the Sea of Galilee?

Are we still to build great edifices "to the glory of God", but in reality so that humans may glory in their own ingenuity? The result has been that for centuries people have believed that the church building is the "House of God", that God somehow dwells in the reredos behind the altar and that one goes to church to meet God. We've made little progress since the Ancient Hebrews believed that God was seated above the cherubim in the Holy of Holies. *The Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands* (Acts 7:48).

So, do we need churches? Obviously we do, for as Christians we gather together as a community to praise

God and to celebrate the Eucharist. We also need a place where we may gather for instruction and for service to the community in which we serve. It should be an all-purpose building. In an age when heating and maintenance costs divert funds from service in the community in order to heat great Victorian Gothic buildings that are usually closed or barely half occupied during service hours; when heating adds to atmospheric pollution and climate change and when such buildings require the presence of a parish hall in which "secular" activities may be conducted, surely it is time that we made better use of our space.

What, then, should the church of the future be? It must surely be an all-purpose building, a place where worship may be conducted in an environment that encourages meditation and a sense of holiness, but which can readily be converted for more secular (less holy?) purposes.

Furthermore, it must be a place with ready access at all reasonable times, a place where people may come for relaxation, for reassurance, for advice and for information about Christianity. It must therefore be a shop-front facility, a place which holds no secrets for the passer-by, a place where the casual enquirer is made to feel welcome. The presence of a small chapel in which the drop-in may meditate and/or pray is necessary. The present practice of locking the church doors after service is self-defeating; it may avoid vandalism, but it also excludes the seeker after God.

What is necessary for the operation of such a facility? Obviously, staffing can be a problem, but there are parishes where this has been overcome. The incumbent must not be made to feel that he or she is tied to the building; he/she should have a schedule of consultation hours. Most parishes can afford a part-time secretary who should be able to supervise access to the facility. But this is not enough: there must be a body of volunteers. Clergy who like to keep a close check on their volunteer workers must learn to relax. They must trust their volunteers to relate to visitors, especially of the drop-in variety, and to spread the Good News as is the responsibility of all true Christians. A cup of tea or coffee is always a help.

There will be difficulties. Volunteers may be slow in coming forward; take the direct approach and regulate "open" hours accordingly. Success breeds success. As the congregation sees the success of such efforts, more will be prepared to give of their time. A visit to St. Matthew's House may well prove to be an inspiration. There may even be an increase in the Sunday offerings, enabling the employment of a full-time secretary or supervisor. The first responsibility of any congregation should be to its own community. This is not self-interest; it is local service in the name of Jesus. As the fruits of faith grow the parish will find that its outreach can expand to the world beyond the parish boundaries.

# Gas Pains

**JERRY SALLOUM**  
RETIRED VICAR, DIOCESE OF NIAGARA

Have you been to the gas pump lately? I have. And it's not funny! Some months ago when the price of gas soared beyond my IQ score, and with the weight of my wallet dropping precipitously, I worked out some proactive ways to reduce transportation costs. Among my many brilliant schemes were these:

- Regularly wash the Honda so as to haul around less dirt;
- Mothball the Honda the day the car becomes cheaper to be picked up, my boxed and shipped to church each Sunday via Parcel Post;
- Sell the engine of the Honda the day it becomes cheaper to hire people to push the car than for me to burn gas to run it;
- Pour over real estate listings for that special home location from which all destinations are downhill.

Silly schemes, you say? Indeed they are. But so are gas prices silly! This silliness is captured in a current TV commercial. It shows a man placing a small suitcase on a counter before a gas bar attendant. The case is filled with neat packages of bills. The man, somewhat dejected, leaves the suitcase and its entire contents with the attendant, uttering the brief comment, "Pump number 3!"

I am repeatedly amazed at the frequency with which I fabricate schemes of avoiding the expensive. I do so because in the back rooms of my brain, I have concluded that the stuff of life ought to be a bargain. In other words, I expect to get a lot for a little. It is reminiscent of that old song in which the crooner reflects on life as he slides money into the jukebox: "I only put in a nickel, but want a dollar song". We are all bargain hunters. And it might surprise us to learn that the greatest "bargain" of all is found in the Christian faith.

Rumour has it that "grace" is a definite bargain. In fact, grace is such a great bargain that you get so much more than a lot for so much less than a little. Sound like the bargain of all bargains?

You betcha! Grace is the BIGGEST bargain of all. And it costs nothing! No need to ever search for a better deal down the street because there is no such thing as a better deal when the best has been found! Grace is an incomparable gift. It is a gift because someone has picked up the tab on a gargantuan debt. I incurred the debt. God picked up the tab. And Jesus paid the bill.

God is a cosmic Grace Dispenser. He gives us what we don't deserve. I am encouraged that while I do not qualify for heaven on my own, I DO qualify for His

love on my own. He loves me because He chooses to love me, and for no other reason. I (as well as you) am the apple of His eye. The One who made matter merely by calling it into being, who then assembled it into gigantic packages called galaxies with His fingers, chooses to regard each of us as precious.

His love for us and not our conduct prompts this unusual, wild and crazy conduct. Recently, I celebrated the Lord's Supper. Anglicans know it also as Holy Communion or the Breaking of Bread. Among its many names, my favourite is "EUCCHARIST". The word "EUCCHARIST" comes from the Greek. It is a form of another word meaning, "I thank you". When that word is broken into its parts, one discovers other words which mean "good" and "gift".

Looking even further, one discovers two additional words: "joy" and "grace" somewhat hidden in the same package. Thus, packed into the word EUCCHARIST is the reason for our celebration: God is wonderfully kind. He is extravagant in his dispensing of gifts of joy and grace to his children. Celebrating the EUCCHARIST is an opportunity to do what our parents taught us to do whenever we receive gifts that delight: we express gratitude by saying "Thank you". The EUCCHARIST is an opportunity, not to win points with God, but rather to applaud God and scream out with joy, "Good Gift!" It is a time to acknowledge the Gift's true nature: favour that is unmerited and grace that is without cost, without cost that is for us, but certainly NOT for Him.

So, in light of all this, I have concluded that gas pains are something I can live with. I can live with them, not merely because I have little choice in the matter, but more importantly because the one thing that is of eternal and incomparable value, far beyond the value of "Shell Regular", even when it is paid for with a suitcase of money, is absolutely free. Purchasing the stuff of this life may well empty our pockets. But purchasing the stuff of LIFE fills them to the point of overflow.

The best thing in life IS free. And the best thing involves the priceless gift called Grace, from "the Lord, the Giver of Life". This "best thing" is referred to in Paul's letter to the Ephesians as the incomparable riches of God's grace made available to us in Christ Jesus. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2: 8, 9). Praise God!

## Living on earth as if we want to stay

Christ's Church Cathedral  
252 James St. N., Hamilton  
Welcomes guest speaker

MIKE NICKERSON  
Grass Roots Activist & Author  
On Monday, October 27th at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Nickerson will challenge us to think in new ways about sustainable living – well beyond changing what kind of light bulbs we buy.

## Liturgy 101: A long journey



FRANCEAN CAMPBELL-RICH  
CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Once upon a time I was a church musician. I needed to know something about liturgy, so I went to Trinity College. Professor David Holetan gave us an assignment on 'liturgical renewal'. I hadn't a clue.

How could I 'renew' something I knew nothing about, yet? All these years later I am still learning, and asking.

We at the Cathedral are blessed with opportunities to share space, listen, observe, and ask questions of clergy, when you can catch them; they are always willing to help, or when they can't, or won't, they refer you to reliable sources for information. Such was the case recently when I called Canon Bill Thomas just before suppertime. He not only answered my question about the Benedictus, but suggested that I might find it helpful to consult Google. I did, and while I was at it, I entered the words liturgical renewal. Bingo! Surely I could find all I needed about the Benedictus and anything else—especially the subject that is in the air again now—and ever has been, apparently.

Then, like the Maeterlinck story of the bluebird, I awoke to the fact that among my own books, pamphlets and litter the word 'renewal', or its equivalent, is ubiquitous, overwhelming. I gave up at seventeen mentions before it dawned on me that the church has been 'renewing' from its earliest house meetings until the present day. St. Paul must have known about renewal and change, from his own life experience and in his dealings with the far flung groups in his charge. He may even have thought of it as the work, the leitourgia (Greek), of the church.

Returning to Liturgy 101: I had joined the liturgy committee of the Cathedral, with the understanding that liturgy meant the worship, the prayers, the literal traditional expression of the faith, the words that were spoken, or sung, the gestures, the attitudes you were expected to follow—with the history of changes through the centuries, not the least of which was the Reformation. It was not long before I learned the broader meaning of liturgy—thanks to the leadership of our dean, Peter Wall. Liturgy is the work of the church. But there were still questions in my mind, and they remain.

A few years back, an old friend from my teen years surfaced. He had been a surveyor, and in his retirement, a church musician. He said he was uncomfortable in the environment of the Eucharist, couldn't bring himself to accept the words about eating the flesh and drinking the blood of our Lord.

On another occasion (mentioned in these same pages some months

ago) I was told by a ten year old boy that he didn't want me to "go to hell". I was at a loss to respond to either one of them: the old friend or the little boy. More recently, a young theology student told me she could not understand the relevance of sin in the baptism of infants. She must have worked it out for herself. She is a priest now, and has perhaps baptised a baby or two as, said priest and liturgist Kevin Flynn, "fire insurance".

I could not respond to their concerns; nor can I answer my own. Short of distilling something from the history of Christianity, the scholarship of translation, the message of theology, the fine-toothed combing of interpretation, I am still left with doubts, with skepticism, even embarrassment when time and again I stand with the others and recite the words of the creed—especially the Nicene—which strikes me as a hodgepodge of earlier controversies resulting from what must have been sheer exasperation on the part of those delegates after a long day in 325, and had to be shortened to the Apostles' creed later. Unlike Lambeth 2008!

There are others. Surely not everything old is new again, nor should be. Do we believe that heaven is 'up'; that Jesus came 'down' to earth, that he 'descended' into 'hell' (BCP); that he 'ascended' and is 'seated' on the 'right hand' of God? Can we accept all this as symbolic if not literal, and continue our faith regardless? I came—but no thanks to the words imparted to us in our liturgy.

And the General Confession: Why do we recite a list of sins provided, never mind what we leave out—and why uniformly, in public, addressing God, the same old items. As for loving everybody, I'm not so sure about that. I recall a New Yorker cartoon: A clergyman visits a psychiatrist and confesses his problem: "I dislike my neighbour."

Does God need our prayers? Do we need God to need our prayers? Does God not know our hearts, our faults, our needs, our talents and our potentials? Do others need us to intercede for them, as if God will act only if we do? Of one thing I am certain, and grateful for: Our faith and our church allows us the freedom to ask, to listen, to learn, and even to speak. If at our peril, then so be it. We will not be excommunicated, or excluded.

And now, here comes the retired Canon Charles Stirling, as if on cue in the September issue of the NIAGARA, with the last word on liturgy, and with the authority of his years of active ministry in this diocese. Fr. Charles calls for a changing liturgy for a changing world. He identifies the dilemma of the church today and the 'way we still do our liturgy'. He challenges us to embrace the society in which we live and minister to it; we must work for positive change, and keep on changing what we do, and the way we teach what we believe—which is what we have cherished for centuries. Thanks be to God.

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## When it seems there is no answer

Faced with the possibility of wrecking the rim of the tire or getting out of the car on the side of the road, I chose the former and proceeded to drive to the nearest exit. In the end, the rim was fine. I, on the other hand, was somewhat shaken by the return of the memory of that funeral. That kind of service—unfortunately taken by clergy all the time—is not something that is easily forgotten.

As I write this article, it is Sunday evening. Robin was doing the services this morning and, while I didn't preach, a portion of the Gospel remains with me as I try to sort out whether it is true or not (and I don't mean *factually*).

### Explaining the unexplainable

*"Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."*

Really? Anything? I have to respond: "Uh-uh, not always." There are, in fact, too many times when two or more of us request the same thing and it doesn't get granted. Of course, the pat answer to this is that it does get answered, just not in the way we would want. Yet, I am left unconvinced. Instead, I think sometimes there just isn't any answer and, while I'm not terrifically fine with this, I'm much less fine with a response that tries to explain what is frankly unexplainable.

Only yesterday, while I was visiting with the family of a woman who died suddenly and unexpectedly, one of the people in this family hesitated before saying to me: "I just think sometimes God isn't fair." Quickly, he apologized

for expressing such "unfaithful" feelings. But were they unfaithful? Accepting a sudden and unexpected death without question immediately after this happens seems far more unfaithful to me than revealing just how hurt and angry we are about that death.

On my shelf is what is by now a rather old book called *The Rock of Doubt*, written by Sidney Carter, the author of the song *Lord of the Dance*. Is the title of this book an oxymoron? In fact, I think the very opposite. Often, there is more faith in a statement of doubt than there is in an unquestioning commitment. Life does not happen in such a way that we shouldn't be asking questions. Life is full of instances that provide fodder for me to doubt. And I'm afraid I just can't buy the idea that it's the devil putting temptation in my way. Instead, it's just life, which sometimes has a way of leaving me feeling exactly as my parishioner does, that "God isn't fair."

### Surviving the hardest moments

It's the darker side of life which makes me doubt and our world hardly needs a devil to bring on this darker side; it's just there. Like the response that our prayers are always answered, just not always in the way we would want this, the presence of a devil is yet another attempt to explain the unexplainable.

Certainly, there are many times that I wish these answers would work for me, many times in my ministry when being able to conjure up a quick pat response to ease people's pain would help rid me of the terrible feeling of helplessness that I so often feel. What

I have learned, however, is that, while such answers might save me (I am not even sure this is true), they do little to heal the painful situations in which people often find themselves.)

So, without any explanation for the pain, what do we do to survive the hardest moments that life sometimes throws our way?

Surprisingly, the rather archaic reading this morning from the Hebrew texts seemed to provide some help with this even as it might not have seemed so, filled as it was with an entreaty to the ancient Israelites to perform all sorts of bizarre rituals before they headed out over the Red Sea—rituals intended to prevent their children from being killed because, according to the text, God was about to smite every Egyptian's firstborn. Here in this text that at first blush might have been laughed off as having nothing to offer our modern 21st century community, was, in fact, the light we all need when the chips are down. Robin's interpretation of this scripture reading in his sermon, however, said it much better for us today than the passage did on its own.

"Remember our roots, remember our calling and remember our community, and pray God that when I am in pain you will be there to hold me and when you are in pain that I will also be there for you. No one of us does it alone."

When the miracle for which two or three of us prays doesn't actually come to pass, rather than finding an explanation for this, try to remember and focus on the person or people with whom you are praying. They may well be the miracle you seek.

## Enhancing your narrative budget

CARL SNEYD  
DIRECTOR OF STEWARDSHIP & FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT

A lot of parishes are successfully using the narrative budget to show how and to what ministries within their community their financial resources are being allocated. The 8.5" x 11" template for St Swithin's found on the Diocesan website, under Programs, Stewardship Development, provides a valuable starting point for parishes beginning to use this format. Call us at the Diocesan Resource Centre if you need help in getting going on this part of your year round Stewardship program

The parishes that are already using that format as part of their successful year round stewardship program can make their narrative budgets more memorable with just a couple of changes.

When I speak to parish councils and corporations, I stress the need to keep the work of the community in the forefront, using informative bulletin inserts and lively announcements. One way to keep the announcement interesting is to add a human element. So why not enhance the Outreach section of your narrative budget with a quotation or an excerpt from a letter or e-mail received by the incumbent or staff from someone deeply affected by a particular pro-

gram or action: 7 year old Janie said at the end of this year's popular Vacation Bible school, "I was really sad when it was over. It was the best time ever" or (from a note received by the rector) "I want to say thank you to your secretary Mary for listening to me the other day. I've been having some grief issues and she helped me get through a really bad time last week. Things are looking better now. Thanks again."

Another way of enhancing the narrative budget is by using pictures. The proliferation of inexpensive digital cameras, including phone cams, means that reasonably high quality pictures of parish events can be readily available for easy reproduction in the narrative budget. Happy smiling faces shown at an event say far more about what's going on than just a bulleted laundry list of groups and programs. A picture of a particularly well lit piece of stained glass or its vibrant colours splashed on the walls and floor of the sanctuary will draw the eye in worship section. A call for pictures from the congregation will probably result in a flood of good quality, usable images in a versatile digital format.

A picture may be worth a thousand words, but a well-composed colour picture is worth even more. Colour print-

ing greatly enhances the effectiveness of pictures and coloured charts. High speed colour laser copying is available at the Diocesan Resource Centre at a very reasonable (that means cheap) cost for parishes who want to make use of this resource. Call the Finance Department for details.

Changing the format from the 8.5" x 11" tri-fold to a larger 8.5" x 14" four fold or an even larger news-magazine format, allows more room for stories and pictures. Enhancing your narrative budget now means it can also become an information piece for new people coming to your parish, because it clearly says this is who we are, this is some of what we do and this is what our plans are for the next year and by the way, here's a snapshot of our finances. When your narrative budget becomes an attractive, eye-catching, up-beat, information-filled publication, it can help answer a lot of newcomers' questions and spark interest in your community. When people can see that your parish is a lively, active place filling the needs of many different people, they will want to join and participate in the life of their new church home with their time, their talent and their treasures.

# Reflections of a theological student on St. George's Lowville



**DAVID M THOTH**  
THEOLOGICAL STUDENT

In light of the controversy at St. George's Lowville I did not know what to expect when I attended for the first time. In mid June I had heard from a mutual friend that the Rev. Susan Wells was in Lowville, on her own so I thought I would offer my assistance. What I found was a dynamic and loving community that welcomed newcomers as long lost friends. Because of a court ruling, the building is being shared between the

Dioceses and the Anglican Network. We have the church building for ten hours a week and we are trying to make the most of our time in the parish.

While reflecting on the state of St. George's, a song from 1970 came to mind, by the "Five Man Electrical Band" called "Signs." One verse in particular seems to sum up what St. George's is about, at least for me the positive attitude of the congregation.

"And the sign said everyone welcome, come in, kneel down and pray.

But when they passed around the plate at the end of it all

I didn't have a penny to pay, so I got me a pen and a paper and I made up my own little sign

I said thank you Lord for thinking about me I'm, alive and doing fine."

St. George's is alive and feeling fine, and I dare say blessed in spite of the challenges we face. On Sundays we gather for coffee at 8:00 am, which Diane and Kay work hard at making happen each week. Many others share their baking skills with us thereby keeping with the Anglican tradition of cake with fellowship. This fellowship is followed by a worship service at 8:30 am and then breakfast at a Milton restaurant to continue fellowship and discussion.

In July we had a Baptism and another one scheduled for September. On Wednesdays we have the church from 1-5 pm and again from 6:30 till 9:30 pm. During the afternoon we

do building maintenance, but stop between 2:00 and 3:30 pm for Bible study. The Bible study is open to everyone so if you are in the area with nothing to do come out and join us. The evenings are left open for further study and reflection or a friendly chat with Rev. Susan.

The parishioners have opened their doors for any other meetings during the week. Also if you are a baseball fan you could come out and play or cheer for our team the St. George's Knights coached by our very own Richard and Ruth Mills. Our team is made up of many people from the community because they like the coaching style. Like our service the team is open to anyone who would like to play and everyone gets to play no matter his or her skill

level. After the game we stop for wings and pop (code name for beer) at a local pub to continue our fellowship. A parish picnic is planned for mid August were we will be exploring the three F's: Fun, Fellowship, and Feasting. It will be a time to bring the whole family together for a great afternoon.

We don't have a sign on the road but if we did I am sure it would read, "Everyone welcome, come in, kneel down and pray." We would like to thank everyone in Niagara for the prayers and ask that you continue to keep us in your prayers. We will keep everyone posted on future events and happenings at our parish. If you are in the area come out and visit us as we celebrate the richness of God's blessings.

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## God, suffering, and Serbia

However, he also credits the survival of his people, despite five hundred years of Turkish occupation, to their Christian faith. His message is neither his own nor mine, but is the eternal message of the Good News, which gives hope to all of us, when the bottom falls out of our lives, when we are up against the ropes, and when we feel that we simply cannot carry on.

Two things. Before encountering the Serbs as my students, I knew only two things about their country. The first was that it was a Serb, who shot the Austrian Archduke, Franz-Ferdinand, in 1914, setting off the chain of events,

**Evil people can take life from the human body, but cannot take the comfort of God from the human heart.**

which led to World War I. The second was that the Serb soldier in Shaw's play, *Arms and the Man*, kept chocolate drops, instead of bullets in his ammunition pouch. I knew nothing of the Serbs' history and little of their suffering during the civil wars of the nineties. During my visit in 2005, I saw first-hand the wreckage of war - the shrapnel-scarred buildings, the amputees, the traumatized minds, the rubble from the NATO bombings, and the huge cemeteries in Sarajevo and Srebrenica. I also saw the restored bridge at Mostar, the yellow buses gifted by the Japanese, the rebuilt towns, and a people who value family life, and know how to have fun.

In 2006, I visited the site of the Ustashe concentration camp at Jasenovac. This turned out to be traumatic. The day began mundanely enough. First, I had to get there, asking my way in little villages, where no English was spoken. I arrived at mid-day, under a blazing sun. As I walked towards that evil place, for some reason that was soon to become clear, the words of

the Twenty-Third Psalm began to run through my mind. I had learned them as a boy of eight and so, they were in the language of the King James Bible.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me down to lie in pastures green. He leadeth me the quiet waters by. My soul he doth restore again and me to walk doth make within the paths of righteousness, even for his own name's sake."

"Yea, though I walk through death's dark vale, yet shall I feel none ill, for thou art with me, Lord. Thy rod and staff me comfort still."

Then, I understood. The answer to suffering lies not in the mind but in the heart. It is permitted for evil people to take life from the human body but they cannot take the comfort of God from the human heart.

With tears streaming down my face, I reached the memorial site. Buildings were being torn down. Was this an attempt to rewrite history? No one wanted to answer my questions. Taking care to stay on the path, for fear of mines, I walked over the field to the huge memorial.

The Psalm continued to play in my head, now with a note of victory. "My table thou hast furnished in presence of my foes. My head thou dost with oil anoint and my cup overflows. Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me and in God's house for ever more my dwelling place shall be."

Standing before the memorial, I recalled the horror for which it stood. I remembered the story of Petar Brzic. On August 29, 1942, the guards had a competition to see who could kill the most Serbs. Petar won by killing 1360 in one night. For this, he was awarded a gold cup and a suckling pig was cooked in his honour. After the war, Petar retired to the United States, with his gold cup and his memories.

For whom did I feel the more pity? Certainly, my sympathies were first for the innocent Serbs, but they knew where they were going. Even more, I

felt a guilty pity for one, made in the image of God, who had so defaced that image and who, one day, would have to stand before Him, and give an account of his actions on that terrible night.

After fifteen minutes or so, I turned and picked my way back across the field, past the workers rewriting history, over the train tracks that once brought their cargo of death. As I walked, I reflected: How could the same DNA that produced Mozart, have produced the creatures that ran Jasenovac? I decided that any answer would trivialize the mystery of evil. Jasenovac is the ultimate absurdity. There is no answer for the mind; only for the heart.

As I neared the village, I heard a clack-clack above my head. Looking up, I saw a large nest on the top of a hydro pole. The noise was made by a male and female stork kissing as their babies looked on - a voice of sanity, in a place which, sixty years ago, went mad - quite, quite mad.

To my surprise, I later found that this interpretation of suffering is embedded in Serbian culture. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to state that its culture grew out of a particular Christian understanding of suffering. When the Ottoman Turks invaded the Balkans, most Christian nations converted to Islam, in order to survive. The Albanians did. The Bosnians did, and so did the Bulgarians. The only nation, that did not, was Serbia. How were they able to survive with their identity intact? When Prince Lazar's army confronted the Turks at Kosovo Polje in 1389, he said, "The Earthly Kingdom is short-lived but the Heavenly One is forever." His message has inspired Serbs with the virtues of courage, sacrifice, and honour, for hundreds of years. Unlike everyone else in the Balkans, the Serbs held on by trusting in the grace of God.

Let me turn now to the words of Patriarch Pavle, head of the Serbian Orthodox Church. He begins, "The Orthodox Church is against all oppres-

sion and it pities all distressed people, regardless of their nationality and religion. We have never been against the right of the Albanians in Kosovo to live in this country, but we must also say that we, the Serbs, have our shrines and holy places. It is apparent how much this hallowed ground means to Serbs. The future of the Serbian nation will depend on whether it acts according to what is holy and honest. If our nation stays with Christ, it will hold out and survive everywhere, including Kosovo. If it repudiates Christ, it will vanish both in Heaven and on Earth.

"An interviewer said to him, "The West tells us that we disturb European and world peace. Then they kill us and carve up Serbia. What should Serbia say to the world and herself at this moment?" Pavle replied, "Our instinct of self-preservation has been given to us by God, but we should defend ourselves like righteous men, and not as evil men." Quoting one Marko Miljanov, he continued, "Bravery is when I defend myself from my enemy and righteousness is when I defend my enemy from myself. If we wreak vengeance, we destroy our soul. There are many honourable ways to defend ourselves from oppression.

"People in the outside world find it very difficult to understand our external relations. For example, when the Muslims say that they are Bosnians, people in the outside world wonder what Serbs are doing in Bosnia. They have no idea that Serbs have been living in Bosnia for more than a thousand years."

Referring to the Battle of Kosovo Polje, he continued, "Are there just wars? The Holy Archangel Michael and his host waged a war in heaven against Satan. If there are such wars in Heaven, there are also here on Earth. A war in which a nation defends its freedom, hearths, graves, creed, and dignity is just. The saintly Prince Lazar did not fight to seize others' land, or to oppress their freedom, or to impose his creed, but to defend what was his."

He was then asked, "How can a Serb love his enemy without bringing into jeopardy his national interests?" Pavle responded, "If a criminal came towards me wanting to kill me and I spread my arms and said: 'Welcome, brother!' that would indeed be ridiculous and excessive. But we see that those who killed Serbs have also suffered. Many have been killed. What is the use of waging war against the distressed or the dead? As far as we are concerned, we refuse to be tormentors. We refuse to be vultures. We refuse to be corpses! If we have to be martyrs, we can be martyrs but we cannot be criminals." He concluded, "If we did not do to others what we did not want to done to us, perhaps this war would not be waged. I believe that even if the war had broken out, it would have been terminated soon."

He was then asked, "Many Serbs have lost all hope of retaining Kosovo. What do you say to them?" He responded, "I can only say: Nothing is lost until it is actually lost. There are numerous difficulties, but were there not difficulties during the Turkish times? We must strengthen ourselves and our perseverance."

Patriarch Pavle might also have quoted his namesake, St. Paul: "I am pressed on every side by troubles but I am not crushed. I am perplexed but not driven to despair. I am hunted down but never abandoned by God. I get knocked down but not destroyed. Through suffering, my body continues to share in the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in my body."

Closer to our own time and tradition, Winston Churchill, in his final years, addressed a group of students with these words: "I have only one thing to say to you. Never give up. Never, never give up! Never, never, never give up!" He sat down to a standing ovation. So, all of us, who are people of good will, Serb or non-Serb, Orthodox or Anglican, let us keep faith with God.

We win in the end!

## OUTREACH AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

# Good, acceptable and perfect



**SUSAN CRAWFORD**  
ST. MICHAEL'S HAMILTON

One of Paul's letters to the Romans was the Pentecost 15 lesson. "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect." What does God see as our purpose or vocation in this world? Each of us has a purpose. Some of us take longer to realize what that purpose is. (Canon Lynda Kealey's homily on the same day). I believe that many of the parishioners in our church of St. Michael have found their purpose and go beyond what God's calling them to do.

In May 2007's edition of the Niagara Anglican—"Making life better one child at a time", I related the work of George Foster in India with Sleeping Children Around the World. George's recent trip to Kenya demonstrates his continued

commitment to God's purpose.

I asked him to compare the two trips. Basically, he said everything was similar. The children are the same (needy) just a different "colour". The health issues are similar but in Africa HIV/Aids and malaria are more prevalent. In some countries service clubs, such as Rotary, look after the distribution of the bedKits selecting the neediest children. "Without them (service clubs)," George says, "distribution would not happen." In Kenya the Rotary Club was the distributor for SCAW.

Why did George choose Africa this time? His name was on the travelling volunteer list and an opening came up. George found Kenya to be a beautiful country although there was a tense feeling after the spring elections. There are many security issues. Everything has to be protected with guards. George Foster recounts his experiences:

### Days and Nights to Remember

"On one of our early distributions, we travelled to a school in the area of Methare, Nairobi's second largest slum area. During a drive of an hour, we passed through contrasting environments from luxurious homes, business areas, modest dwellings, to slums. After greeting some children in the courtyard, we proceeded to the Head Teacher's office for words of welcome and the signing of the guest book. On this occasion, the office was very small and allowed only two or three to squeeze in at a time. As one of us went in, another would get on the platform in front of 800 children dressed in their multi-coloured SCAW clothing. As each team member emerged from the door, a huge cheer erupted from the crowd of children. One of our team commented that it felt like a sporting event when the athletes come on the field. When we were all assembled,

our team was entertained by singing and dancing children. What an awesome experience it was to look out at 800 children with their eyes dancing with joy and hands clapping to the beat of the music. What an honour and privilege it was to be selected on behalf of our donors to present the bedkits to these children, some of whom would be receiving a gift for the first time in their young lives.

"After we had distributed 4,000 bedkits in the Nairobi area, we went to a distribution in Thika. This was a new site for SCAW. Our team leader, Duncan, had arranged with our Overseas Volunteers for us to be billeted in private homes. The women stayed in one home and the men in another. As I unpacked, I realized that my luggage had been separated and part of it had gone to the home where the ladies were staying. My insect repellent was in that luggage. Unfortunately, our host had not provided mosquito nets in the guest rooms. I was to find out the importance of sleeping under a mosquito net in this country. After midnight, the whole night was spent shooting buzzing insects from around my head, and in the morning, I awoke with numerous bites.

I can now understand the discomfort that Kenyan children have in their living conditions and I am so glad that we are helping. Many parents we talked with said that the net and mattress were the most important items included in the bedkit. We were told that one child in Sub-Saharan Africa dies from malaria every thirty seconds. An Olyset LLIN (Long-lasting insecticide-treated mosquito net) can help reduce this figure.

"The next morning, some very tired team members turned up for the distribution at Thika. Our contact for this distribution was a volunteer named Eleanor Harrison, a young

woman from Wales who has given up her life there to help children in Kenya. She is now ministering to the abused and rejected street children and those affected by and suffering HIV/Aids and malaria. What a blessing it was to see her working with the children of Thika. We were so pleased to distribute bedkits to Eleanor's kids.

"Thanks to our donors and our Overseas Volunteers, we are helping provide a comfortable night's sleep and saving many children's lives from the ravages of malaria."

George Foster's report is available online at [www.scaw.org](http://www.scaw.org) along with reports from the other volunteers who travelled with him.

George has enjoyed his years with SCAW. When first interviewed and accepted he was welcomed into the SCAW "family". All the volunteers are close and think it is a wonderful cause. They must as everyone pays their own way. SCAW is one of the few organizations that is totally committed to using every dollar raised for the bedkits.

I asked George where he would like to go next. He listed far too many places. He did state, however, that he prefers rural settings; somewhere remote. He would also like to look into training to be a team leader. The only drawback - he would have to return to the same country three years in a row.

What's next? Why Haiti, of course, in October! I am so proud to know this quiet and unassuming gentleman whom I feel has gone beyond the boundaries of God's purpose for him. I am sure God feels that what George does is "good, and acceptable and perfect!"

Because the World Health Organization (WHO) is now recommending the LLIN (Long Lasting Insect Net) the price of a bedkit has increased from \$30.00 to \$35.00.

# Live the change you want to see



The same theology that makes Christians Islamophobic, which I've previously written about, also makes them anti-Semitic.

**COLLEEN SYM**  
SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

"The world now has the means to end extreme poverty, we pray we will have the will." ("The Counting Prayer",

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

In September 2000, world leaders came together in New York to adopt the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The Millennium Declaration is a blueprint to reduce extreme poverty. The Millennium Development Goals are the targets to be reached and the timetable is 2015.

We are half way to 2015. We are not half way to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Once again in September 2008, world leaders met in New York to renew their commitments to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and to set out the next steps for action.

This past summer, when church leaders met at Lambeth they concluded in the Human and Social Justice

Indaba Reflection that the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) are "an essential framework for engaging with social justice issues across the Communion at Provincial, Diocesan and Parish level." They called for a day of prayer and fasting and witness on 25th September 2008 to coincide with that special session of the United Nations.

Faith communities can play a vital role in translating the moral imperative of the MDG's into concrete action. This may not be a role that we are comfortable with or can easily embrace. The Church leaders realized that we need to help each other to engage with and act upon the Millennium Development Goals as best as we can.

However, in doing so, we must be mindful that those we seek to help are not the object of the MDG's, but must

be our partners and the co-designers of the steps for action and change. They must shape their own future. We must also not forget that even in the most developed of countries, such as Canada, we are far from eradicating poverty and social exclusion.

Education on the issues is essential to be able to live out our faith in Christ in a way which demonstrates our commitment to the Millennium Development Goals. It was recognized at Lambeth that there needs to be education at every level (in the diocese, parish, theological institutions and schools), formally and informally, on social justice issues regularly and systematically.

One way we are doing this in our Diocese is through the 2010 Justice Camp—Community Justice Camp—

Live the Change You Want to See. The goal of the camp is to better equip us and empower us to be agents of change working towards the ending of injustice and the restoration of right relationship with God and between human beings and between humanity and creation.

### Be a part of it

The success of the Camp depends on the involvement of the parishes, individuals, groups, justice partners and local organizations in Niagara.

### Attend the orientation workshop

The Community Justice Camp orientation workshop is on Saturday, October 18, 2008. To register call Christy Perkins at 905-527-1316 x 460.



# PWRDF Launch of 50th Anniversary Program

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) is a good news story for the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC). Since 1958 Anglicans in Canada have raised more than \$88 million to support PWRDF's work, believing that we can all share in the creation of a more just and peaceful world.

Our 50th anniversary program, launching in October 2008 and continuing until General Synod in June 2010, is an exciting time that will focus on celebration, awareness, fundraising and education. An important initiative will be facilitating the sponsorships of fifty refugee families for resettlement

to Canada under Canada's unique Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. Since 1979 Anglican dioceses have changed the lives of many refugees through private sponsorship.

The Primate's World Relief Fund (as it was first named) came into existence as a result of the Springhill Mine Disaster of 1958. On October 23rd of that year, in Springhill, Nova Scotia, an underground explosion trapped 174 men in a coalmine at a depth of 14,000 feet. 75 men died as a result of the disaster. The tragedy moved Anglicans and other Canadians to respond with assistance for the stricken families and community. As a result of this experi-

ence the church recognized the need for an efficient process to direct assistance quickly in emergency situations. Within its first decade of existence the word "Development" was added to the name as PWRDF came to see that deeper, long-term development needs were strongly connected to most of the suffering caused by natural or human disasters around the world and that the people who experienced these problems first-hand were in the best position to develop long-term solutions.

Today, with the support of Anglican parishes across Canada, PWRDF makes financial and human resources available to support partners' initia-

tions and to promote knowledgeable actions of solidarity at home and around the world. PWRDF addresses the issues Canadians care about: HIV and AIDS, emergency relief, sustainable development, global justice, climate change, food security and food justice. PWRDF offers focused, effective partnership as an expression of our baptismal covenant to strive for justice and peace and to respect the dignity of every human being.

As we reflect on and celebrate the accomplishments of our first fifty years we also look to the future, to bring new inspiration to a world in crisis in a uniquely Canadian Anglican way.

Fifty years after the Springhill disaster we are asking Anglicans across Canada to continue to make a difference by joining us, working together, and helping to inspire the next fifty years of changing lives, changing communities, and changing the world.

For further information please contact: Carolyn Vanderlip, 50th Anniversary Program Facilitator: 416-924-9199 ext 266.

*The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund is the Anglican Church of Canada's agency for sustainable development, relief, refugees and global justice.*

# Getting to know you more

The Reverend Valerie Kerr Assistant Priest, St. George's Church St. Catharines



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

## The Story in the First Person

In September, this column described the response of the Reverend Valerie Kerr, Assistant Priest, St. George's Church, St. Catharines, and member of the Turtle Clan, Mohawk Nation, Iroquois Confederacy, to the apology offered to the First Nations of Canada by the Prime Minister. This month, we offer the story of Val's own journey to the life she now leads, fulfilling all those labels, while still being true to herself, the person God created her to be.

Ordained Deacon in 2004 and Priest in 2005, Val says, "It feels like I've been here forever, and in some ways as if I've just arrived!"

Val's journey began at Tyendinaga, the reserve near Belleville. In 1957, Val's family moved to Belleville, and seven-year-old Val went from a two-room school to a city school with eight grades - "Culture shock!" Both parents worked in the city, their home had been destroyed by fire, and their two middle children had died. Like many people who make such a transition, the hope was for a better life.

For Val, church was an important part of that better life: "I always had a close connection to the church from a very young age... I found a safe place (there), a place where I was accepted and loved for who I was, no strings attached! Unlike some First Nations people I fit... When I was young I would go to church without my parents knowing where I was. I would listen to the hymns, the scripture and try to figure out what all this meant in my life. I would dream of studying scripture and I did join the choir...but of course when I was young the role for women in the church was quite limited."

Her Aboriginal heritage was also a strong influence on young Val: "I heard our stories then tried to live them." Guided by native tradition and by the Christian commandment to love, "You could be sure if there was someone no one would play with I would find them and make friends... my parents never knew who I would bring home!" Val keeps in touch with one friend, who was both deaf and mute, and seriously abused at home, "but we managed just fine to communicate. I guess once you are on the outside looking in you never forget."

## Challenge and Change

Val attended high school, married, and had two children. "It was my wish always to go back to school. I gave it up to have my family, (but) I don't regret that because of my joy in my family." The marriage broke, and Val worked to keep her family together.

She moved to Dain City, in 1975, to be near her eight-years-old sister and her now 85-year-old mother in Welland. "In our culture, she wouldn't go into a home, unless she asks."

In 1976, while a cook on a Great Lakes freighter, Val was injured and offered retraining. "The Spirit works," she grins. Taking courses in recreation and leisure studies, Val hoped to get into Social Work. She worked at the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre in "Lifelong Care," entailing long hours, considerable paperwork and such tasks as arranging rides, access to care and subsidized housing. "It was an interesting job, I liked the interaction with people, but (there were several drawbacks):" Leaving, she asked, "Now what, God?"

In February, 1983, Val met Joe Kerr, Irish like her Father, and now retired from his work as a marine engineer; they married in June. "I don't know who was more surprised," laughs Val, "but it worked! He's a wonderful man, and we've shared the journey in every way!"

A parishioner at All Saint's Church, Dain City, Val was "in the choir, then parish council, then chalice bearer, then

reader, then lay reader, then I took an introductory pastoral care unit at the hospital and did home communions and pastoral care for the parish, lay delegate to Synod, YLTP, NYC, (Youth Leadership Training Program and Niagara Youth Conference, exciting programmes both developed for youth in the Diocese of Niagara), started a youth group, palliative care... Each time I would take on something new I would say, "This must be what God is calling me to"... and each time I would feel "Well, almost, but not quite..."

Supporting others who were dying led Val to studies in Palliative Care, and thirteen years of work in that crucial area of human life. "It will always be, for me, a very sacred time to journey with people as they complete this earthly part of their journey. They have such wonderful stories, so much to share, so much to teach."

Val's "almost but not quite" still niggled, and more was to come. "Each time I thought I had found what God was calling me to there was always something or someone there telling me differently.

## Resolution, Adventure and Fulfillment

"There weren't any women clergy when I was young, and coming from a conservative diocese I had never experienced a female clergy until... Marni Nancekivell. We would spend long hours talking, and it was Marni who 'planted' the seed that perhaps God was calling me into ordained ministry. Still I dug in my heels and was scared to death even at the prospect. After all who was I to think God would call me to ordained ministry!" Finally, Val's spiritual director suggested that she listen not only to God but also to her community.

"It was a huge decision, because it meant three more years at school, full-time. So I had "the conversation" with Joe, and of course his response was, "Honey, whatever you decide I will support you in any way I can."

All Saints' Rector was now The

Reverend Cathie Crawford-Browning (now the Reverend Canon Dr. Cathie Crawford-Browning, Rector of the Church of St. John the Evangelist, Thorold). She too encouraged Val's adventure, as did Val's family and friends: "...there were no surprised people... they said they had known all along. Actually, my youngest son said, 'Mom, you're doing that already!'"

"...after that doors just kept opening and any blocks I may have put up began to come down." Val began studies at Huron College, London, in September 2001, just at the time of the destruction of the World Trade Centre in New York City.

"Seminary was the best experience of my life, as well as the hardest." The Dean of Huron College encouraged Val, "Look at what you have, not what you don't have."

After ordination as Deacon in 2004, Val served as Assistant Curate at St. John's Church, Niagara Falls, with the Venerable Lynne Corfield, Rector and Archdeacon of Brock, also a great support and friend for Val. Ordained Priest in January, 2005, Val was appointed to St. George's Church, St. Catharines, at Easter, 2005, to serve as Assistant Priest with the Reverend Canon Rob Fead: "Rob is great to work with," Val beams.

Beyond her ministry at St. George's, which includes pastoring two bereavement support groups, Val is an on-call chaplain at Welland County Hospital, "which I love, because you never know what you're going to walk into!" As Vice-Chairperson for Bethlehem Projects Niagara, which develops affordable housing, Val fulfills her commitment to the "hand-up, not a hand-out" approach so important to her in lifting up the less fortunate.

Fulfilling her love of learning and meeting people, Val delights leading groups and teaching, especially in travelling: for now, the "draw is to Israel, where I find my rest in God."

Val's greatest delight is in her family, "dates" with her beloved Joe,

with whom she celebrates their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary this year, their children (her own two sons and Joe's son and daughter,) grandchildren and now two great-grandchildren, one each for her and Joe.

## Hope, Wisdom, and Blessings

The wisdom Val brings to her life and ministry has grown from her own life experiences, her faith, her tradition, and her observation of the human response to events. Understandably, she carries deep concern for the people of the First Nations of Canada: "I see such waste - some in my family are on a self-destructive journey; what a waste of a life. They all want to be around me because I have what they want; I've healed. It was hard work; no one could do it for me. (When) I wonder what they want, I think that's it... As a child, I didn't have choices. (Now), I've made choices, taken what has happened to me, used them for good." Val credits much of her successful journey to being able to spend extra childhood years with her Grandmother.

"Innate in us are gifts God gives us. In the First Nations, we are taught it's okay to go away to be educated, but we are to come home." Truthfully, Val says, "I don't want to go back there now (Tyendinaga), but there will come a time of restlessness." For now, Val's joy and contentment is in Welland with her family, at St. George's in her ministry, and in fulfilling the best of her Aboriginal heritage.

The Christian journey of the people of this Diocese of Niagara is unimaginably enriched by all the gifts she so generously offers.

A better understanding of even something of the stories here will enable other folk to support First Nations people in their struggle to overcome the tragic effects of colonialism. It will bring us all to a richer relationship in which we can continue to learn from each other, honour each others' ways, and move with delight into the future for which Jesus prayed, "that we all might be one."

## SHOOT READY AIM »

# A hail of a summer

**HOLLIS HISCOCK**  
RETIRED PRIEST - BURLINGTON

## SHOOT - The photograph

Weather wise 2008 will go down in history as a 'hail of a summer'. On two separate occasions we were bombarded with those golf ball size projectiles flung from the upper atmosphere.

On a sunny afternoon, while driving along a quiet city street heading to our favourite box store, thousands of white 'bullets' bombed our car without warning, and with an intensity that we expected our car exterior to be permanently dented and the windshield shattered. Like other drivers, we sought shelter and protection underneath highway ramps or by becoming stationary in parking lots.

Our second summer hail storm rolled in off Lake Ontario with a vengeance, bent on mass destruction or, at a minimum, a reminder that winter whiteness can cover green lawns in the summer heat.

We scurried from window to doorway to watch this classic movie play out in our neighbourhood. I grabbed my camera and photographed our green lawn furniture 'floating' in a sea of shimmering white pellets, our car wrapped in an ocean of shifting ice flows and our street providing the perfect trampoline for nature to perform a frenzied rain dance atop an asphalt stage.

In the midst of this somewhat frightening scenario, I noticed a small bird perched on the downspout underneath the roof overhang of our house. Quietly, alone and seemingly unperturbed, it waited, in its safe haven, until the storm had retreated to another section of the province.

My photo sends a message to us from the other inhabitants of God's

creation, namely, when the storms of life overtake us, we need to find a place of shelter and put our trust in God.

## READY - Words behind the photo

Three hymns, reflecting Jesus' words, swirl within me as I ponder the significance of watching a tiny bird ride out a deadly storm, perched on a downspout underneath the eavestrough of our house.

As children we sang 'God sees a little sparrow fall' on numerous Sunday School and Church occasions. The 19th century American hymn writer, Maria Straub of Indiana, assured us that if God loves each little bird, then surely 'I know He loves me too', and God never forgets God's 'little ones', which include all of creation, but especially human beings. She probably based her hymn on the insight described by Jesus when He told His listeners to 'look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds and protects them. Are you not of more value than they?' (Matthew 6:26). The answer is obvious - we are.

In 1763, Anglican priest Augustus Montague Toplady was walking along a rugged coastal road in Somerset, England when a torrential rain storm cascaded down the mountainside. He found shelter from the rain, lightning and thunder in a small rocky cave. While waiting for the sun to shine, he mused on the concept of a 'rock of faith' being a shelter during the 'storms of life' and began to write the words to his now famous hymn 'Rock of ages, cleft for me'. As he thought about people going through stormy happenings in their lives, he concluded that trust in God or hiding 'myself in thee' was all we



need to bring us through what the Old Testament Psalmist called 'the valley of the shadow of death' (Psalm 23). Maybe Toplady was thinking about Jesus' two houses parable (Matthew 7:24-27), where one house (our lives) can withstand the rains, floods and winds (our illnesses, disappointments, sadness, struggles in life) because of the strong foundation (our trust in God).

Kentucky born Southern Gospel legend, songwriter and singer Dottie Rambo died tragically on Mother's Day 2008, when her tour bus encountered a severe storm in Missouri, ran off the road and hit an embankment. She wrote more than 2,500 hymns, which puts her in the league with Charles Wesley, the 18th century writer who penned more than 6,000 hymns. Dottie wrote the hymn 'Shel-

tered in the arms of God', in which she affirmed that whether walking through the streets of life or the path of death, we should not be afraid because 'I'm sheltered in the arms of God'. Apparently she based her song on Psalm 61, verse 3, where God is acknowledged as a shelter or a refuge or a strong tower. Jesus probably felt the same assurance as He travelled His earthly journey, which included rejections, hatreds, threats, disappointments, etc.. Except for one or two moments of doubt, Jesus knew that He was surrounded and protected by the love and power of God's presence. He reiterated this trust when, on the Mount of Olives (Luke 22:39-46), He declared that He would follow God's will, not His own, and later on the cross (Luke 23:44-46) He entrusted His spirit into the hands of

God for shelter, protection, safety and eternity.

## AIM - Questions and actions for you

- Find these three hymns in a book or on the Internet, read the words slowly and ask what message is there for you.
- Where do you go for shelter when the storms of life (problems, rejections, doubts, etc) swarm around you?
- What kind of shelter do you provide for others who need a shelter or safe place in life?
- 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.

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**Highlights:** Sound and light show at Pyramids, morning climb of Mount Sinai, four-wheeled drive into the Wadi Rum, Petra, time of rest and relaxation on the shores of the Gulf of Aqaba, boat ride on the Sea of Galilee

ALL-INCLUSIVE - FIVE STAR

**Information meeting: 2 PM Sunday Sept 28**

St. John's Church, St. Catharines

## OBERRAMMERGAU

June 2-16, 2010

\$300 Early Booking Discount

**Highlights:** Oberammergau Passion Play, Musical/Folklore Show in Prague, Hungarian Dinner and Folklore Show

**Information meeting: 2 PM Sunday Oct 05**

St. John's Church, St. Catharines

For brochures or information, contact:  
Canon Gordon Kinkley M.A., M.Div.  
St. John's Church, 80 Main St., St. Catharines  
(905) 934-1020; OR  
Rostad Tours 1-800-361-8687

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St Thomas' is wheelchair accessible.

# The scandal of our disunity



**MICHAEL BURSRLEM**  
ST. GEORGE'S, GUELPH

Muslims know only too well that Christians are a divided community. Every Muslim knows there are Cath-

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Rather than loving our enemies we create enemies of those who aren't like us; we're too eager to commit them to 'the axis of evil.' We consign one another to hell.

olics, Orthodox and many different types of Protestants without being able to explain the differences. They only know there are differences.

This past summer I read John Watson's *Among the Copts*, in which he tells the story of a sheikh at the Azhar, the centre of Islam in Cairo, and of an American missionary with a small staff who went to Egypt for a summer mission in the 1960s. The title chosen for the project was 'the Jesus Mission.' His purpose was to bring Muslims to Christ, but he soon

found this was a complicated political and legal task. Converting Muslims to Evangelical Christianity was going to be tough. In the same mission field, however, there were many Copts; obviously nominal adherents to the ancient Church, who needed to be 'saved.' They were considered ripe for conversion. So the missionary turned his attention to them. A number of 'conversions' followed.

In the following summer the Jesus Mission experienced some doctrinal debate amongst staff members, and there was a rift over the issue of mission to Muslims which led to the establishment of 'the true Jesus Mission.' In the third year further theological controversy and questions about the mission to Islam led to the formation of a splinter group calling itself 'the truer Jesus Mission.'

In the fourth year a controversy about predestination led to the fourth division when the 'the truest Jesus Mission' was born. The tale, if true, is comic, but bittersweet. Watson writes, "The Muslim teacher recognizes the endemic disease of Christian disunity and its infection of the Christian church."

Back when I attended King's College, Halifax, Canon H.L. Puxley was president. He had previously taught economics in Agra, India, but had come to Canada after the war, had studied theology at Trinity College,

Toronto, was ordained and served as National Director of S.C.M., before coming to King's. He advocated ecumenism during the 1960's, and attended World Council of Churches meetings around the globe. In his lectures he spoke about the scandal of disunity in the church in India, and the introduction of comity or a state of mutual harmony, friendship, and respect between the various 'churches' in India. (The etymology of the word comes from the Latin *comis* meaning courtesy or friendship.)

In practice it meant that the churches didn't compete with one another. Where there was a Presbyterian church, Anglicans didn't build one next door. Canon Puxley recommended such an agreement in Canada, but he was far ahead of his time.

I would like, however, to go beyond what Canon Puxley challenged us students to do, and practice comity, not just between Christian denominations, but between all people of all faiths, or no faith at all; that is to show courtesy and friendship to all people.

I believe that xenophobia is the antithesis of Jesus' message, and it reveals itself in anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, as well as in homophobia. Rather than loving our enemies we create enemies of those who aren't like us; we're too eager to commit them to 'the axis of evil.' We con-

sign one another to hell. We reserve heaven only for ourselves, Christians like us. The teaching of the Sermon of the Mount has been so twisted by our interpretation of it, that what we now tell others is the true faith is no longer 'the faith once delivered to the saints.' No one today is an 'orthodox Christian.'

What Jesus did through his life, death and resurrection, was to open eternity, the kingdom of heaven, to all; but only 'the last, least, lost and dead,' as Robert Farrar Capon explains, can enjoy it. The rest have to face judgment, either before, or after, physical death. Christians have no berry points in God's eyes; he sees us all as miserable sinners. We're all on a level playing field.

Christians though do perceive through eyes of faith that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.' Heaven, the New Jerusalem, or whatever we like to call it, is here and now, thanks to Jesus, the lamb who was slain. This is why we worship him. The Gospel is not how we may become saved, as the American 'missionaries' believed, because we, all of us, Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, agnostic or atheist, already are. The Gospel is rather 'Jesus is Lord.' Only he is worthy to be called Lord, and of our worship.

He has commissioned us to freely give away this Gospel; to 'go to make

disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything he has commanded us.' Then he promised 'to be with us always, even to the very end of the age.'

Therefore, if we really want to obey him, we need to be 'disciples making disciples,' as our Network friends of St. George's, Lowville, remind us. But, he has also shown us by his teaching and example how we should do this; by loving one another and being servants to one another, some of whom we may not entirely agree with; by being cross bearers, not Crusaders.

Around the 4th century, following severe persecution, Christianity deemed the Sermon on the Mount impractical, and we became just another religion, indistinguishable in practice from the rest.

We who profess Christ as savior of the world, however, should do better. We need to show comity to all whom we meet, in the street, at work, at home, and especially in our churches. Our worship is a foretaste of heaven, where no one is excluded. If we do exclude anyone here, we don't take Jesus at his word, and if we don't, can we expect the Azhar sheikh to? That is why disunity is such a scandal to those whom we are trying to make Christ's disciples.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 »

## God's mission and our ministry

Over the next year, including through a Lenten study programme to be made available across the Anglican Church of Canada, our whole church will reflect on the nature of mission, reflections that will influence the strategic

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God is up to something new and transformative, resisting the kingdoms of stuff, status and power and establishing a kingdom of compassion, justice, and generosity

plan to be presented at the General Synod of 2010 in Halifax. Mission is back on the agenda of the church.

At the same time, new language is catching on, in which we don't talk about the mission of the church, but about the ministry of the church in the mission of God. God initiates mission, calls for human participation in that mission, and equips us for that participation in the power of the Holy Spirit. This language of the *missio dei*, the mission of God, has been with us for several decades, but only quite recently has it begun to have traction in our common life. Roughly speaking, when we say "mission", we mean

the initiative God is taking for the sake of the world, and when we say "ministry" we mean human response in service of that mission.

### Beer Bottles and Redemption

God calls the church into being, not to generate a mission of its own, but to foster human participation in the mission God has initiated, to invite people into a redeeming relationship with God in Jesus Christ.

Out in my garage, over the course of a long long time, empty beer bottles accumulate. Sitting on the garage floor, they are not in any sense purposeful; indeed, sometimes they roll around underfoot and become a menace. After a time, I take them back to the beer store, and there, they are redeemed. My reward in this process is the deposit I paid when I purchased the beer. The bottles are redeemed, set again to the purpose for which they were called into being, that is to say, to contain and transport beer.

Redemption, thus understood, is redemption to a purpose. And the redemption of human persons is redemption to human purpose. Jesus, who accomplishes our redemption by courageous and costly love, enacts the fullness of human purpose in that same love. He is both the divine initiative and the human response. So, when

we turn to the cross of Jesus, we see both the love that redeems us and the love that seeks passage into the life of the world through our lives. The purpose of the church is to proclaim our redemption and to nourish in us the desire and capacity to love God and God's creation.

### Divine Initiative and Human Response

The beginning of that work is marked in our baptism, our initiation into the common life of the community of the followers of Jesus. And in particular, the Baptismal Covenant offers an account of the divine initiative—the *missio dei*—and the human response.

Do you believe in God? Do you believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God? Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit? Though the questions seem to ask for our intellectual assent (in much the same way as we might believe that snow falls mostly in winter, or that water can dissolve rock), there is an element of heart in the world "believe" that literalist modernity has forgotten or lost. Do you give your heart to God? Do you hold Jesus dear? Do you entrust your spirit to the Holy Spirit? That is to say, these questions are not about facts; they are about relationships. And in response, we tell the story of God's nature and

God's mission, especially in creation, in the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and in the sending of the Spirit to the church. The longer Nicene Creed includes the *missio dei* in the story of Israel as well.

If the first part of the Baptismal Covenant tells of the divine initiative, the second invites the human response. That response includes five core missionary activities:

- To continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers;
- To persevere in resisting evil, and whenever we fall into sin, to repent and return to the Lord;
- To proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ;
- To seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbours as ourselves;
- To strive for justice and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being.

In Matthew's gospel, John appears in the wilderness with this invitation: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." In Jesus' baptism, he joins the community that proclaims this news, and following his testing by the adversary, takes up the proclamation himself in his first words of public ministry, identical to John's words, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." Not "Repent, for you

have been wicked and should feel ashamed of yourself" or "Repent so that God won't be so mad at you", but "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

### Source of our joy

Repentance comes from a Greek word that means something like "beyond-knowing" or "transformation of heart and mind". God is up to something new and transformative, resisting the kingdoms of stuff, status and power and establishing a kingdom of compassion, justice, and generosity, answering the world's insistence on what can and cannot be with the freedom to create a living alternative to "just the way things are". The kingdom of heaven has come near. You might want to turn from the other kingdoms that bind and constrain you, and inhabit this one in which, in your redeemed humanity, you can serve with joy and gladness in the transforming, healing, life-giving mission of God.

I think if we listen, we might hear good news again, that God is alive and active in the world, and calls us, though we are a bunch of practiced sinners, frail and foolish and careless of truth, to enter into the deepest joy we can know—the joy that comes from standing with God in service to the world.

# Emails of a faithful priest

**ELEANOR JOHNTSON**  
 RETIRED TEACHER, ST THOMAS' ST CATHARINES

Dear Jordan,  
 Lambeth-I'm about ready to completely give up. As you can imagine, the church has really hurt some of us again. We can only take so much hurt.  
 Carol

Dear Jord,  
 Thanks for getting back to me so quickly. Since you're such a devoted church-goer, your support counts for so much. I read your email to Linda at breakfast and she smiled for the first time in days. I'm worried about her sliding into depression again.

For that matter, I could barely drag myself to the church this morning. Thank goodness we're at the start of the week. I pray that I won't have trouble preaching, let alone celebrating, on Sunday.

No-one in our church knows that Linda and I are legally married. Or that your Toronto priest blessed our marriage. Linda's mom continues to call her a sinner and a disgrace; that's all we can try to cope with right now.  
 Carol

Dear Bro,  
 Okay, Okay, I hear you. I shouldn't get so down. I took your advice and prayed, and I forwarded your last note to Linda.

I'm used to being the strong wise one helping my parishioners. This is a humbling situation on many fronts. I suppose it's good for the soul.  
 Thanks again,  
 Carol

Jordy,  
 You have thrown me on another roller-coaster! I was calming down and then you bring on your lawyer logic that it's not right to let alone legal what my church, my employer, is doing. I really can't handle this!

I know that I have to get it together, that if those First Nations survivors can be brave enough to stand up for their rights, I can, too.

Right now I don't think Linda and I can do anything but continue to pretend we're just friends sharing an apartment. And when the church's position on same-sex unions comes up in the parish, I keep quiet.

Carol

Dear Jord,  
 You must be between clients or something: I've never had so many emails from you in one day!

I kept wondering why there seems to be so little response to the Lambeth "retrospective moratorium" announce-

ment. Now I think I know: so many of us are in a state of shock. And maybe no-one knows what it means.

You know (or probably you didn't) that the Anglican Journal sends me via email all the articles as they are posted on its website so I get the news before the paper is officially published? Well, I kept watching my email and saw that our Primate "expressed frustration that the Canadian church has not been given an opportunity to present its situation with regards to the blessing of same-sex unions." That was August 1. Then there was basically nothing. A few days ago came the big announcement: "British government grants licence to move body of Cardinal Newman." Out in left field picking dandelions?

It seems like Williams decided he would focus on every topic except the white elephant crowding us out of the room. As if he hopes we'll just forget about it. How likely is that?

I know all the other justice issues are important. I'm just saying.

I've read speculation, on the net, that the next Lambeth will attempt to decree that women and gays can no longer be ordained! That'll knock me out on two counts.

Dear Jord,  
 I do appreciate your helping me all day. Don't worry. I'm not going to leave the church. I feel that God wants me to be here and that if God can forgive those who want to exclude me, I will, too.

I've been thinking that if the United Church of Canada weren't a national church (if it had an international communion like the Anglican and the Roman Catholic churches), maybe it too would have stayed anti-women and anti-gay. And if the Anglican Church of Canada were not in the world-wide communion, it would be more liberated. It's a wonder that the United Nations gets anything done.

Carol

Dear Jordan,  
 My last email for today. This afternoon I had conversations with two same-sex couples who have just decided they are leaving. They're walking quietly. They feel that it's now over between them and the church.

The Lambeth thing, well, I'm over it, I guess. I think more than its offence to Linda and me, what I care about is the fact that it's another nail in the church's coffin. Who wants to see that? I can't imagine God does.

Carol +  
 PS Thanks for caring. It really does mean a lot.

AGED RECEIVABLES AS OF JUNE 30, 2008						
	PAYROLL		DMM		MISC	TOTAL
	2008	Prior Years	2008	Prior Years		
St. Alban's, Acton			9,026.46		185.00	9,211.46
Canterbury Hills	(96.87)					(96.87)
Canterbury Hills Camp						-
St. John's, Ancaster					1,563.49	1,563.49
Grace Church, Arthur			5,546.76	18,171.72		23,718.48
St. Alban's, Beamsville	5,941.92		5,714.56		3,231.90	14,888.38
St. Christopher's Church					(7,081.47)	(7,081.47)
St. Elizabeth's, Burlington				58,186.49		58,186.49
St. John, Burlington	4,999.47		1,963.02			6,962.49
St. Luke's, Burlington			8,870.87		1,039.56	9,910.43
St. Matthew's Church	12,226.60		3,680.23			15,906.83
St. Philip, Burlington						-
St. Paul, Caledonia			7,784.64		170.38	7,955.02
St. John The Divine, Cayuga			2,291.10		2,108.77	4,399.87
St. John's, Cheapside					515.10	515.10
St. James Church, Dundas					245.00	245.00
Dunn Parish, Dunnville					1,583.47	1,583.47
St. Paul, Dunnville			10,370			10,369.90
St. John's Church, Elora	5,123.90		14,990.61			20,114.51
All Saints Church, Erin			4,043.36			4,133.36
St. James, Fergus					2,939.00	2,939.00
Christ Church, Flamborough	4,800.74		1,426.70			6,227.44
Holy Trinity, Fonthill			14,024		83.40	14,106.99
St. Paul's, Fort Erie					192.00	192.00
St. George's, Georgetown			7,854.48		185.00	8,039.48
St. Paul, Glanford	5,231.95				189.27	5,421.22
St. Alban's, Glen Williams			1,884.85			1,884.85
St. Alban's, Grand Valley	(36.03)					(36.03)
St. Andrew's Church, Grimsby					765.08	765.08
St. Philip, Grimsby			9,614.88			9,614.88
St. David's & St. Patrick's						-
St. George's, Guelph						-
St. James The Apostle, Guelph			30,708.90	64,477.36	254.63	95,440.89
St. Matthias, Guelph	15,561.60	48,104.88	9,114.24	30,981.14	182.00	103,943.86
All Saints, Hagersville			3,555.93	29,845.83	700.13	34,101.89
All Saints, Hamilton		10,837.56	10,144.65	31,621.68	45,406.20	98,010.09
Church Of The Ascension	57,205.92				23,969.29	81,175.21
Christ's Church Cathedral			25,887.88		46,600.57	72,488.45
Holy Trinity Church, Hamilton			8,168.20		278.14	8,446.34
Church of the Resurrection						-
St. Alban, Hamilton					142.40	142.40
St. John The Evangelist					9,504.19	9,504.19
St. Luke, Hamilton			8,204.64	82,000.00		90,204.64
The Church of The Nativity					6,415.19	6,415.19
St. Matthew's House						-
St. Michael's, Hamilton						-
St. Paul, Hamilton	11,002.49		6,433.30		25.74	17,461.53
St. Peter's, Hamilton	6,597.78		10,082.36		271.00	16,951.14
St. Stephen, Hamilton	32,222.41		11,301	1,110.11	5,734.43	50,368.22
St. George's, Homer						-
St. Stephen, Hornby					2.00	2.00
St. Paul's, Jarvis	9,742.93	29,397.54	7,081.20	27,087.59	709.63	74,018.89
St. John's, Jordan					1,916.00	1,916.00
St. Mark's, Louth						-
St. George's, Lowville	36,405.52	2,484.56	29,399.64	3,002.73	13,003.14	84,295.59
Christ Church, McNab	5,670.18					5,670.18
Grace Church, Milton			13,535.25		92.58	13,627.83
St. Paul's, Mount Forest			1,101.70			1,101.70
Christ Church, Nanticoke			5,620.80	3,648.60		9,269.40
St. John, Nassagaweya					46.61	46.61
All Saint's, Niagara Falls		3,110.79			4,272.78	7,383.57
Christ Church, Niagara Falls						-
Holy Trinity, Niagara Falls			723.94			723.94
St. John's, Niagara Falls					(0.03)	(0.03)
St. Mark's, Niagara on the Lake	(3.54)		5.08		7,328.37	7,327.91
St. Paul's, Norval	3,901.90		866.30		125.00	4,893.20
Epiphany, Oakville			2,963.16		(0.47)	2,962.69
Church Of The Incarnation	48,977.59	5,250.75			968.14	55,196.48
St. Aidan's Church, Oakville	6,463.66		2,009.07		284.78	8,757.51
St. Cuthbert's Church					306.54	306.54
St. Hilda's, Oakville	5,575.51		21,786	23,017.14	173.21	50,551.80
St. Jude's Church, Oakville					970.83	970.83
St. Simon's, Oakville	28,724.72				1,677.72	30,402.44
St. Mark's, Orangeville						-
St. Luke's Church, Palermo	2,100.21	10,995.30	780.13	44,794.11	185.00	58,854.75
St. James, Port Colborne	7,874.27		3,304.29		125.00	11,303.56
St. James, Port Colborne-Youth	2,261.37					2,261.37
St. Paul's, Port Robinson	5,285	25,359.57	1,858.74			32,503.20
St. Saviour's, Queenston					160.00	160.00
St. John's, Ridgemount						-
All Saints, Ridgeway		28,387.42		43,194.15		71,581.57
St. John's, Rockwood	7,753.25		3,556.94		3,615.05	14,925.24
Church Of The Good Shepherd			2,561.88	12,669.15	459.46	15,690.49
Grace Church, St. Catharines					83.03	83.03
St. Barnabas, St. Catharines				63,242.17		63,242.17
St. Columba, St. Catharines						-
St. George, St. Catharines					185.00	185.00
St. James, St. Cath. (Merriton)						-
St. John, St. Catharines						-
St. Thomas, St. Catharines						-
Transfiguration Church						-
St. Paul's, Shelburne			3,334.08	25,520.52	267.00	29,121.60
St. Luke's, Smithville			3,047		300.00	3,346.96
St. John's, Stewarttown	2,626.62		2,520.40		425.73	5,572.75
Redeemer, Stoney Creek						-
St. John's, Thorold			15,616.50		189.35	15,805.85
Christ Church, Wainfleet						-
Grace Church, Waterdown						-
All Saints', Welland						-
Holy Trinity, Welland					(428.93)	(428.93)
St. David's, Welland			18,658.14		77.08	18,735.22
Christ Church, Whitfield						-
St. John's Church, Winona	2,751.02		938.83			3,689.85
Christ Church, Woodburn						-
St. John's, York	5,015.61		1,366.08		634.49	7,016.18
MISCELLANEOUS	4,184.00				61,553.03	65,737.03
SUB-TOTALS	347,976.44	163,928.37	373,437.58	562,570.49	247,193.98	1,695,106.86
TOTALS PER CATEGORIES			511,904.81	936,008.07	247,193.98	1,695,106.86

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

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 »

## When we miss a friend

We could see her studying through the living room window, head bent over the books, pen in hand trying to get back in the study mode after so long out of school, a time in the business world and a full-time mom. I don't know if Laura remembers coming over to our house and baking cookies with Ina and sometimes even helping to make the beds. It was a time of change for the whole family.

A few years later I finally started to listen to what God was trying to tell me and I also visited the bishop. He suggested I attend either Trinity or that other place across the street. He also suggested I get used to working in a church environment and suggested St Matthew's where Carol was the rector. I jumped at the chance to work with Carol and I was at St Matthew's as student, deacon and as priest from 1996 to 2001. I could not have found a better mentor and teacher than Carol. At times she could be a hard taskmaster and at other times lead with a gentle hand but always with a deep devotion to God and God's church.

I will never forget the time a member of the parish called her and explained that her son, aged 22, had a stroke and an aneurism and was not expected to live the night and would Carol go to the hospital with her. Carol with her incredible sense of compassion went without hesitation and found at the hospital an overwhelming feeling of despair that there was no hope of survival. She anointed the young man and said prayers with the family but more than this she brought God into the room and a sense of hope.

Six months later the young man was M.C. at a wedding I was doing. I asked how he felt. He answered that he sometimes had a hard time running. I laughed and said I remember when you could not blink.

Carol was never better than when she was dealing with people's hopes and dreams and helping them to handle the tragedies and joys of life. She never took credit for her work; she always said it was God lifting her up on eagle's wings and gave her power when she felt weary.

Once, when I was still a student, we went together to see a man coming to the end of his life. He was sitting in a wheelchair, his head bent over and you could see every muscle in his body tense. He was quite literally terrified of his coming death. Carol went to him, put her arm around his shoulder and talked very gently to him. As she talked I could see the tension leave and his body relax he even smiled. I don't know what she said but the power of God was very clearly working through her as she helped this man realize life does continue, death does not mean an end.

I could go on with more stories of this woman's life but enough to say she will be missed by all who knew her and although I know we will meet again I also know my life was better for Carol being in it and now is a little less because of her death.

Good-bye dear friend. May God always bless you and all your family and friends still walking our earthly journey.

## The Clutch Trick

MARTHA TATARNIC  
PRIEST, ST JUDE'S OAKVILLE

I have a love-hate relationship with driving.

Getting in my car makes me particularly aware of the desperate global crisis of climate change and my ongoing contribution to that problem every time I put my key in the ignition. Filling up the tank with gas is a particularly painful way of separating myself from my preciously-guarded time and dollars. And there is nothing like sitting in GTA rush-hour—drumming my fingers, or worse, cursing the rude and obnoxious behaviour of my fellow drivers, watching the minutes trickle uselessly away from me—to cause a funhouse-like effect of both mirroring and amplifying back to me every superficial anxiety about the overload of commitments and responsibilities and expectations that I believe await me whenever I finally get to wherever it is I'm going.

And now for the part I hate about driving...

Just kidding. There is a balance to the negativity. I like singing along to my iPod at the top of my lungs without anyone to hear me except the odd person I might meet at a traffic light who still chooses to roll down their windows instead of using A/C. In some perverse way, I like the challenge of navigating around these ridiculously over-stressed Southern Ontario roads. And I like driving a standard.

Which brings me to my point. A wise friend of mind, Michael Thompson, taught me a driving trick that has made this activity—which as a commuter occupies such a lion's share of my time—much more interesting, pleasurable, thoughtful, and... well, I don't think it is too strong to suggest that this trick makes driving a little more spiritual.

It is the Clutch Trick. You have to have a standard car. And then you challenge yourself to cover as much ground as you possibly can without using the gas pedal. In other words, you throw in the clutch when circumstances align to allow the car to drive on its own momentum, to maintain, or even pick up, its speed by the force of gravity. And when you are approaching an inevitable slowing or stop, you let the car slow on its own accord rather than gassing it forward only to have to throw in the brakes when lights or signs or the car in front of you make it necessary to do so.

There are surprising benefits to this Clutch Trick, other than merely providing a mildly amusing distraction to a potentially tedious road trip. Most importantly, it increases your car's fuel efficiency significantly. Our planet is warming up as a direct result of our lifestyle choices, and our entire social and economic infrastructure is built around the burning of cheap fossil fuel. For many of us, driving remains a necessary means for seeing family, getting to work, meeting with friends, acquiring basic household supplies. Doing something toward using less fuel—even if that something is only small potatoes—blunts some of the hard edge of guilt that can accompany our participation in car culture.

And hand-in-hand with this practical conversation, comes the more elusive benefit of awareness: awareness of a lot of the surroundings that can escape our attention when driving. Have you ever walked or biked along a street on which you normally drive and realized that the road is on an incline? The terrain on which we travel, the slight variations of incline and decline which typify even our smoothest, blandest highways, so easily escape our notice when we are blasting over them with the pedal down

or the cruise control set. For example, on a quiet Sunday morning, you can actually drive from Hornby to Oakville mostly coasting.

Or how much do we ignore about the feel, the weight, the natural speed of the car, the dynamic inter-relationship between our vehicle's engineering and the forces of gravity and friction which work upon it? How often do we blithely gun our cars down streets as if it is a race to the finish line, only to have to bring the car to an abrupt halt, even though a moment's reflection would have told us that the light in the distance will without a doubt be red by the time we make it to the intersection and a smooth, unhurried approach to that light will not lose anyone a moment of time on our harried trip and will probably give the brakes a longer life to boot? How often do we unquestioningly grant allegiance to the assumption that faster is better, even when faster saves no time?

So. Who cares, right? So I use the clutch a little differently, save a bit of gas, find myself driving more thoughtfully. Big deal.

That's the thing. That's the Good News thing. It isn't a big deal. None of this is a big deal.

Except that being careful about a little fuel is part of a larger invitation to be stewards of God's good, abundant, but not unlimited gifts. Except that reclaiming a small piece of sanity through intentional awareness, rather than giving in to the rage and panic and numbness so typical of road culture, has to be a victory for the soul. Except that being creative about the health of our spirits and bearing witness to that health wherever we find it, no matter how mundane the circumstances, is part of our offering as people on this road trip of faith.

## A new approach to meeting people's needs



RICK JONES  
ARCHDEACON, RECTOR, ST. PAUL'S WESTDALE

Some of us in The Diocese of Niagara have been struggling with a challenge that goes back to at least the year Lorne Mead published the "Once and Future Church" and subsequently spoke at a clergy conference here in Niagara. In his "Once and Future Church" series, he outlined the decline of mainline churches and identified as the central reason the end of "Christendom". The days of the Church building being the tallest spire in the town and the central moral or political force has long past. The challenge he put forward was, "How do we reinvent ourselves from a church on the sidelines, somewhat irrelevant to the culture, and struggling with the pluralism of post modernity to a faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in a new era?" This challenge is renewed in the visit

of Diana Butler Bass and her excellent analysis of post modern culture and the role of the Christian Church.

### Serving in small program size churches

Those of us on this journey have sometimes looked to the big "successful" churches like Willow Creek or the local mega churches and wondered how we could possibly translate that Corporate Church culture into our family or pastoral size churches. Our facilities and church culture are very different and those who have tried to incorporate the ideas of large program churches into worship services, or alternative services have only had mixed success. There are few program size churches in our diocese that have the staff and resources to provide the range of program offerings to meet the needs of a very pluralistic society. The majority of us serve in small to program size churches (less than 200 in worship) and run the risk of volunteer burnout and sacrifices in quality if we try and mimic the program style of church. There is a place for being big church but, the notion that we can invite people into a church that

will meet their needs and then incorporate them into our church community is simply an extension of the patterns of the past—the notion that the role of the church is to invite people in!

There is another approach, however, that has serious appeal to those of us in small to medium churches with limited staff and financial resources. It is more an ideological shift than a new church movement and is based on the idea that the primary purpose of the church is *not to invite people in to meet their needs, but to send people out to meet other peoples needs!* This is an ideology driving the missional church and emergent church movements but that also has its roots in Apostolic Christianity and in the ministry of Jesus. Before Constantine created Christendom in the third Century the early disciples were organized as small groups living in communities that witnessed to a different value system than that of the surrounding culture. They were called out to be leaven, and salt and to incarnate the Dominion of God. What is interesting is that, following in the footsteps of Jesus, who focused his ministry on the poor and

marginalized, the early church did the same. They modelled God's unconditional love by embracing those who were hurting in society, one of Paul's clear rebukes to the Corinthian Church was that they were moving away from this focus on the poor and following leaders who appeared to be more successful in the eyes of the Roman society. This was the church of pre Christendom, a church as Butler Bass would say that is, "on the edge."

### Different models of ministry

Just as Jesus spent his time equipping a few disciples with gifts to do ministry, in missional churches people are invited to enter into small, but deep communities of faith, and train to be disciples in the world. The focus of missional churches is not on developing new programmes to attract people, but to look at where God is already at work in the world and to join in. Jesus still walks with the poor, the stranger, the disenfranchised, the refugee, the sick and the lonely. Jesus still joins people in pubs, and clubs, in hospitals, and shelters, in coffee shops, and community halls. The question is,

"Are we following Him there?" In our Diocese of Niagara we are seeing missional experiments of following Jesus in different models of ministry. Congregations are reaching out in their local context, asking the question, "Where is God at work and how can we help?" I know of breakfast programmes, coffeehouse and coffee shop ministries, church in a pub services, messy church ministries for young families, and other creative responses to the real needs of people in our communities. Small groups of dedicated disciples of Jesus are making these experiments happen. If you have a story of this kind of approach to ministry please share it with me and we can create a learning community. We can learn from one another and discover what missional church might look like in Niagara. We may discover that what is critical is not the size of our resources but the focus of our ministry. Our relationships with one another and those we serve maybe the most important gift we share. "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18:20 NRSV

## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

- The Reverend Edward J. Sewell passed away on Sunday the 31st of August after a short illness. A private family memorial service was held. Please remember Ted's family and friends in your prayers.
- The parishes of Christ Church, Woodburn, and St. Paul's Church, Glanford, will come together to create a new two-point parish effective November 30.
- Wendy Phipps was ordained to

the diaconate on September 14 at St. George's Church, Lowville.

- Dr. Brian Ruttan has been appointed interim pastor at St. Andrew's Church, Grimsby.

- The Reverend Amy Cousineau will begin a six month medical leave of absence from All Saints, Erin, on October 1. Dr. Nigel Bunce will assume duties as priest in charge beginning November 1.

- Congratulations to Vaughn and

Margaret Kohler, long time faithful members of Church of the Epiphany, Oakville, on their 50th Wedding Anniversary in October.

- Congratulations to Nancy Clause (Administrator of Accounts Receivable and Payable) and her husband, Terry, on the birth of their first grandchild. Gavin Wade Clause was born August 22 to proud parents Wade and Amanda. Auntie Rebecca is pretty happy too!

## This is my story

**MICHAEL BURSLEM**  
RETIRED PHYSICIAN, ST GEORGE'S GUELPH

I am eternally grateful for my solid Christian heritage. I was brought up in the West Indies, the Middle East and England as an Anglo-Catholic, a faith that I absorbed from my parents. It was not until I came to Canada and went north to the Arctic that I encountered any other tradition than catholic. I lived in Frobisher Bay, now Iqaluit, for almost three years, and later in Cambridge Bay and Resolute Bay, working with the Meteorological Service of Canada. In retrospect, I was somewhat churchy, zealous for God, but not really knowing Him. I abhorred the excessive drinking that some in isolation got themselves into, and, like the Pharisee, thanked God I was not like other men. In Iqaluit I spent much of my spare time in the building of the church at Apex, the Inuit settlement close by. In Resolute there was an excellent library, and I read Hakluyt's Voyages, stories of Northern discovery, large sections of Grey's Anatomy, a text in physiology and H.P.V. Nunn's *New Testament Greek* I had taken north with me, and a Greek New Testament. I was very self-satisfied, until I saw the lives of the Inuit, when something unsettled me.

On returning south I offered to serve in the Diocese of the Arctic, and studied at King's College, Halifax, where I had settled. However, the working theology of the day was not that of the Bible, but rather of Bishop John Robinson's *Honest to God*. The summer of 1963 Bishop Donald Marsh sent me to Coral Harbour on Southampton Island to build a mission house with another student, Nigel Wilford. I well remember my teenage interpreter, as I was asked to do some preaching, bursting into tears as I tried to explain some aspect of this new theology. This left me so confused, that one Sunday when a boat appeared destined for Rankin Inlet, I asked to go with them, and they took me aboard.

That evening we moored on a sandy beach on the south coast of Southampton Island to eat and to wait for the weather forecast at 9:00 PM. This said fair weather for sailing, so we raised anchor and set out across Roes Welcome Sound. Around midnight the wind began to blow from nowhere, totally unexpected, as there were only few clouds. As a weatherman I was baffled. I was asked to take my turn at the wheel and was told to keep the moon over my left shoulder, but it circled around

us, not once but many times over. The skipper finally grabbed the wheel and growled, "You idiot, don't you realize that we are in dangerously shallow water?" On examining the chart I could only see that we were wallowing in the Bay of God's Mercy.

That night the clouds became thicker, and the winds stronger. The sun rose only for a few minutes before it disappeared above the clouds, and it again became eerily dark in the spray and thrashing rain. It didn't let up till evening. The food was under the forward hatch. We didn't dare go on deck to fetch it lest we be washed overboard. By the time we arrived in Chesterfield Inlet we were exhausted. We hadn't eaten for 22 hours and were very tired. That night and day were a turning point in my life.

The next day we sailed down the coast from Chesterfield to Rankin Inlet. At Rankin I had to wait till the bishop took me the fare to return south, which took a week. I flew to Churchill via Baker Lake. On the strip at Baker there was a gathering of about 100 seeing off an elderly kabloona, Canon William James, their pastor for the previous 30 years. On boarding the aircraft he came to sit beside me, and we became acquainted; he the faithful shepherd and I the runaway. At Churchill there was a similar gathering, and we immediately went into a hanger where he greeted them in the name of the Lord and celebrated The Lord's Supper. There was nothing churchy about this.

In Churchill there was a letter awaiting me from the bishop. It was the most blistering letter that I had ever received, expressing considerable anger at my leaving Coral Harbour without his permission. On the train from Churchill to The Pas I showed it to Canon James, when we were alone in the Parlor Car, and we prayed together before going to our bunks, and the next day also, I remember, walking along the side of the train at one of its frequent stops. For three days we visited Inuit patients at the TB hospital at The Pas, and then we continued to Winnipeg, where we parted, he to Toronto, and I stayed there a week.

On my return east I stayed in Toronto only long enough to see Bishop Marsh. He explained that he would never ordain me, because, as he put it, I had no gospel to preach. Before leaving him, however, he came to my side of his desk and we knelt down together to pray for one another. That was real Christianity.

Not knowing exactly what to do next I continued my studies at King's, and achieved a Licentiate in Theology, but not with the intent to be ordained. I was much helped at this time by Rodney Stokoe, professor of Pastoralia at King's. Having read some anatomy and physiology in Resolute, I knew that medicine was an option. In one week in June 1964 I made two decisions that forever changed the course of my life: the first to apply to Dalhousie Medical School, and the second to give my life totally to Jesus Christ at a Leighton Ford Crusade that week in Halifax.

It was through the latter that I met Tony Tyndale with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. He invited me to a study of Romans 5 which he led every night for the first week after the Crusade. I was also encouraged by Ron Cunningham, also with I.V. I also found a church, Trinity, where Dennis Andrews faithfully taught the scriptures Sunday morning and evening, week after week. It was in this newly found New Testament fellowship that I met my wife, Ellen, who was from Egypt.

Afterwards I discovered that I no longer needed to achieve to be accepted by others, as I had already been accepted by God, warts and all. I had become a *nobody*, and even though I later graduated in medicine, I preferred the company of *nobodies* to those, who like me before my finding Christ, thought we were *somebodies*. I think I had lost my *Phariseism*. In God's eyes only I am a *somebody*. Problems arise, however, between Him and me, and between me and my fellow *nobodies*, when I see myself in my own eyes as a *somebody*.

Over the years since I have thought that if the church really be a collection of nobodies we have nothing to boast about to non Christians, for whom Christ also died. We are like the street sweepers in Cairo, cleaning up the mess which the world discards. I feel a special kinship with Muslims. I'm also much influenced by the Anabaptists. Since I share a common humanity with all peoples, war is an anathema. So this is where I now stand; from Catholic, to Evangelical, to Anabaptist, or whatever; but yet still very Anglican, as Anglicanism runs through my veins. I have received the torch from my parents and forebears, and now pass it on; different, perhaps, in its outward form from that which I received it, but still the same Gospel once delivered to the saints.

## The Listener



**CHARLES STIRLING**  
RETIRED CANON, CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

I was introduced to a curious book just recently. It is by Taylor Caldwell, a name that has seemed to have passed out of some minds, since her death in 1980. I was intrigued and I quickly read the book, *The Listener*, by Bantam Books. I think it might be helpful to anyone who is looking for something of enrichment in their faith and of a positive hope for the future, and of their own will to help make that happen.

No end of material on Taylor Caldwell can be found on the internet and her books are still bought and sold. This book manages to offer something in personal renewal and resolution that we all might want to explore. It is by no means the future way, truth and life, but perhaps a tool by which we can find and renew these things for ourselves. The book was published in 1960 and reprinted many times through the next 10 years or so.

### Inherent Problems

It is not a bad read at all, but I am well aware of its now inherent problems of which there are many. To begin with, it is dated in language and in simple reality. Much of the world has gone on to the ordination of women, the recognition and inclusion of gay and lesbian people, and has, in many places, recognized their union through the power of the law. Theology has become restless and many writers seem to be pointing in different directions to faith, witness and order for a new age. Some folk, of course, continue in a dated faith and order which can only lead to the death of the Church, and defies any comprehension.

### Pressures on the Clergy

One of the appeals, for me, was Caldwell's view of clergy, who she sees as burdened with tasks that members should be doing. She envisions clergy as people who not only take on shepherding, but also our trivialities, our social aspirations and we expect them to be expert business people, politicians, accountants, play-mates, judges, and settlers of local quarrels. We offer them scant time for listening, nor do we listen to them. What we need to do is offer them concrete help and assume more of our responsibilities. We demand of

them more than we would demand of any other person. If we think on this, we can find that we often do stretch our priests every way from Sunday. We also need to support and help bring to resolution some of their concepts and objectives. Lucky indeed is the priest who has in her or his congregation someone to whom they can turn to test the resolution of dilemmas and challenges that face them daily.

### The Procedure

The building in the story is both elegantly and simply laid out, and there are 15 Souls who seek the Listener, each one with a pressing personal challenge or concern. They go to a two room windowless marble building built on the site of the home of an obscure, modest lawyer. Continued funding is through his estate and it sits on 4 acres of land. The property, already well cared for has been further enhanced. It was erected in memory of his wife. The larger room is where Souls gather to await their turn, while the smaller room had only one chair and one wall hung in fabric. This fabric has an electronic button to open it, but it only opens at the right moment when the Soul is exposed to the brightness of the Listener, who seems to appear in different forms, according to the needs of the Soul. It is in this place that Souls who have been contemplating their problem deeply and with great concern are confirmed in their answer or resolution. The figure, although seeming to speak, in reality does not. The Souls in truth answer their own concerns. Affirmed in their resolution of the problem, they joyfully leave to undertake what they now know they have to do.

A fantasy to be sure, but also an exercise to be contemplated for certain, for in reality the author is simply telling us we can deal with the troubling issues of life and resolve them ourselves. I suspect a plan would be to be alone, and to use some space creatively, and in the reality of real pressure consider all aspects of our concern and move to resolve them. The confirmation would come perhaps in another space where the focus could be a cross, crucifix or perhaps a statue. Indeed, any place where resolution would be born and brought to reality would work. Often the troubles we keep pent up are almost more than we can bear, and it might just be, by being very intentional, and we can experience a time of serious and eventual resolution of personal issues and those of faith as well... it is certainly worth a try.



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Muslim Perceptions of Christianity

I agree with John Bowen, and St. Athanasius, that it's vitally important to believe that Jesus is Lord, which is tantamount to saying he's God.

He says that there's one group today who believe as Arius did, that Jesus wasn't God, the Jehovah Witnesses. There is of course another, and that is the Muslims. This summer I've been reading Hugh Goddard's *Muslim Perceptions of Christianity*, and I came across this quote from an Iranian, Sayyid Husain Nasr, whom Goddard said had given the most succinct statement about the real difference between Christianity and Islam, by either a Christian or a Muslim:

"Christianity is essentially a mystery which veils the Divine from man. The beauty of Christianity lies in the acceptance of God as mystery, and in

bowing before this mystery... In Islam, however, it is man who is veiled from God. The Divine Being is not veiled from us, we are veiled from Him, and it is for us to try to rend this veil asunder, to try to know God... Islam is thus essentially a way of knowledge; it is the way of gnosis."

Nasr could only write that the Divine was veiled from man because he believed that Jesus Christ wasn't God. God is not veiled from man, but he's revealed in Jesus Christ. He and most Muslims believe as Arius did. Some Muslims believe as Athanasius, and I wrote about one last March.

The sad thing is that since 313, the year of the Edict of Milan, when Christianity became the state religion of Rome and the Western Civilization, most Christians by and large have believed as Arius did too, which is why Christians, in the way they live out their lives, are indistinguishable from the world around them. I don't

believe that we need to leave the ACC to prove to the world that we're different, but I do believe that we ought to be different, and that is the point, I think, Athanasius was making.

MICHAEL BURSLEM  
*St. George's, Guelph*

## Encounter with God

For many years now, I have made a practise of reading the Bible to start each day. A helpful guide to me has been Scripture Union [www.scriptureunion.ca](http://www.scriptureunion.ca), an international, intergenerational, interdenominational study guide.

In the specific guide I use, 'Encounter with God', a Psalm is featured each Sunday. This has been a wonderful way to orient my heart and mind for church - a time to worship and praise our great God and his son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Often after contemplating one of

the Psalms, I wonder how a person can dismiss them as bigoted, violent statements of a time long ago. Yes, there are some places that make me cringe, but I have never been in a 'life or death' situation. If I am honest, there are times when my thoughts, words or actions would make anyone cringe. How can I judge another?? Invariably, the writer moves on to praise.

Perhaps, if we had a good 'moan' to God more often, we would slander and gossip less and rejoice in the LORD more.

May I suggest Psalm 116 for next Sunday, in a modern translation such as the NIV, which helps make these ancient poems and hymns more accessible to us today.

The Psalms are also found at the back of the BAS and have a helpful prayer for us to use as well.

MARY KRUCKER  
*Diocese of Niagara*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 »

# Thinking outside the box

- Biblical Game of Life (a full scale reenactment of biblical life).
- All in a Day's Work (groups either water hauling, making placemats, or video reporting to experience the inequality of work and money in the world).
- 40 Days/40 Nights (quiet journeys within the Canterbury Hills forest allowing delegates to reflect on their faith and life choices).
- Jesus: The Musical (a staff-written and performed musical weaving sub-themes together through the week).

The week, of course, would not have been complete without evening socials (including Hip-Hop dance lessons, movie night, and the delegate Variety Night), live music provided by the NYC Band, and varying forms of contemporary worship (including an agape dinner, a private service in base groups, delegate planned evening complines, and a high-energy final worship).

That, of course, is the easy part to describe. The difficulty comes in trying to describe the actual experience that brings delegates and staff back year after year. It is not easy to describe the life-long friendships and trust that formed in just six days,



The staff performing *Jesus Christ: The Musical*.

and the sense of community that I have never experienced outside of the holy space of NYC set within the nurturing forests of Canterbury Hills. For delegates each year, NYC provides profound experiential learning, friendships they can turn to in the darkest of times, renewed faith in human spirit, and an excitement for the future of the church. However, my best attempt to describe NYC is illustrated by the true act of

kindness of one delegate this year. On the Wednesday night, while delegates gathered in the tent to watch the Beatles-inspired movie *Across the Universe*, one delegate spent all two hours running back and forth from Lions Hall carrying popcorn, snow cones, and cotton candy so that no other delegate would have to miss any part of the movie that he loved so much and wanted to share with everyone. This simple act is just one

example of the NYC spirit so evident in the delegates that makes NYC the life-affirming and life-changing event that it is.

However, after more than 60 years of NYC, one law has not changed: we left NYC on August 29th knowing that we were called to go into the world, witnesses of God's transforming love, to support and challenge each other, and bring healing and justice to the world around us. Amen.

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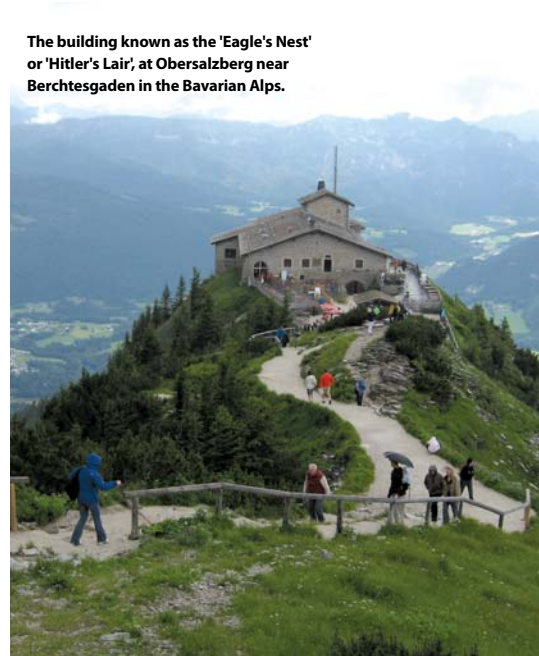
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The interior of the church is from the cathedral church in Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia.



The building known as the 'Eagle's Nest' or 'Hitler's Lair', at Obersalzberg near Berchtesgaden in the Bavarian Alps.

Last month we published an article by Geoffrey Purdell Lewis entitled "Jesus Shall Reign Where're the Sun". We inadvertently omitted the excellent pictures that Geoffrey had included. You can find the article on the internet at [www.niagara.anglican.ca/newspaper](http://www.niagara.anglican.ca/newspaper).

# Who are these like stars appearing



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

This summer, while at the cottage, I presided twice in the small, summer only parish where we spend time every summer. A wonderful and vibrant community church, it is populated by a large and diverse summer congregation, all of whom come to church by boat. Coming from a wide variety of denominations, this summer they were without their usual summer theological student and were relying on a changing group of lay readers, diocesan officials, and, for two weeks, on me! One of the Churchwardens, a wonderful Presbyterian laywoman from Chicago, asked for some help in determining the Sunday by Sunday reading, and asked me if 'we' (those who lead worship) simply 'chose whatever bible passages we liked the best'. I laughed and assured her that there was rhyme and reason to what we did and proceeded to write out for her the lectionary readings for the subsequent summer Sundays. On reflection, it made me realize just how fortunate we are in the church to have the richness of the lectionary and the diversity of the calendar.

**Great days to plan for remembering**  
Further to my theme of September; just take a look at what lies ahead of us

in October. Yes. On Sundays we continue to hear the story of the people of Israel from Torah, and *pericopes* from Matthew's gospel with the teaching and miracles of Jesus. One could, if one wished, transfer *St. Luke* from Saturday to Sunday; one could also make a point of keeping *James of Jerusalem* on October 23. We know that October will close with the great triptych of *All Hallows Eve (aka Halloween)*, *All Saints Day* and *All Souls Day*. Great days to plan for remembering, for honouring saints old and new, for keeping alive the memory of all those souls who have died and are at rest. This, after all, is the great tradition of Church, handed down from generation to generation.

But one could also look at this month in terms of the diverse and wonderful people we remember day by day—we can learn about them, and read about them, particularly in *For All the Saints (Reynolds)* which I mentioned last month.

From the great biblical scholar and translator, William Tyndale (October 6) to Bishop Robert Grosseteste (October 9) to the English saint King Edward the Confessor (October 13) through to good old Etheldreda, Queen and Abbess (October 17). From the Canadian missionaries and fathers of the church, Jean de Brebeuf, Isaac Jogues and their Companions (October 20) to the melodiously named Crispin and Crispinian (October 25) through the apostles Ss. Simon and Jude (October 28), the reformer John Wyclif (October 30) and even the Saints of the Reformation Era on October 31—October

is a fascinating and colourful journey through the ages of the Church leading up to the culmination of all of this in All Saints Day.

**A rich tapestry**

Some will wish to study and learn about the sixteenth century heroes Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, both of whom we commemorate on October 15. Joining the 11th century King Edward the Confessor, mentioned above, we might also want to remember King Alfred the Great of the West Saxons from the 9th century. And even one of the earliest saints, St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch from the early second century, is remembered on October 17.

Common Praise includes some wonderful hymns for saint's days – try 283, with the great tune *King's Lynn (Vaughan-Williams)* and its verses focused on specific saints and saints' days. *Holy Manna*, a 19th century American hymn tune, is included at 284, to an ancient Latin text, *O beata beatorum*. And the beautiful Isaac Watts hymn 'Give Me the Wings of Faith', to the much loved tune *Westminster* can be found at 286, with its majestic last verse:

Our glorious Leader claims our praise,  
For his own pattern given;  
While he long cloud of witnesses  
Show the same path to heaven.

October, with its gentle autumn breezes and magnificent weather, also provides a rich tapestry for us in the church catholic. Enjoy this month and all its saints!

Caralei Peters MSc, ND  
DOCTOR OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

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**John Bell**

at  
**St. Christopher's Anglican Church**  
662 Guelph Line, Burlington

**February 5 – 7, 2009**

**Music from the Iona Community**  
(especially for singers, choirs and music directors)  
February 5 (7:30 pm - 9:30 pm)

**Worship/Resources for Holy Week & Easter**  
(especially for clergy, worship leaders, worship planning teams)  
February 6 (9:30 am - 3:30 pm) – lunch included

**Celtic Spirituality: Ancient Gifts for Modern Times**  
February 7 (9:30 am - 3:30 pm) – lunch included

**Cost**  
Thursday, February 5 \$10  
Friday, February 6 \$50 } Or both days  
Saturday, February 7 \$50 } for \$85

All events are open to the general public.  
For more information or to register go to:  
[www.stchristophersburlington.com](http://www.stchristophersburlington.com)