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What are fresh expressions of church?

JOHN BOWEN
ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST HAMILTON

If people have an image of the Church of England, it is generally of an elderly, genteel and sleepy church, centering on ancient, decaying buildings in delightful rural settings.

Although those churches certainly exist, the full reality is very different. I think this came home to me some years ago, when two people independently told me that the Church of England had been planting new congregations at the rate of one every two weeks for the previous ten years. This was news to me, as maybe it is to you. A church report, *Breaking New Ground* (1994) dealt with this new reality, and the opportunities and challenges it brought.

Mission Shaped Church

Some of these new churches, however, did not fit the mould of what one might traditionally think of as an Anglican church. To give one of the more famous examples, how many Goths do you know who go to church? Probably not a lot. (OK, maybe I should have asked first of all how many Goths you know.) Yet there is a thriving church specially for Goths in Cambridge. Or what about skateboarders? The Church of England has a church for skateboarders. Another priest holds a weekly Eucharist in the local police station: for those police officers, that is their church. The examples are wildly varied. (Editor's note: Andy Kalbfleisch tells the story of one fresh expression of church in the article, "Acts 10 and the Disco Pig", on page 7 of this issue.)

Once again, a church report marked this new transition: *Mission Shaped Church* (2004). 30,000 copies were sold before it was decided to make it available free online.

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Archbishop Fred Hiltz addresses over 400 people at St. Christopher's Church in Burlington. Read more about Archbishop Hiltz visits on PAGE 2.



Lent: An opportunity for Spiritual Growth



MICHAEL BIRD
BISHOP OF NIAGARA

The month of February is here and although the days are still short and the air is cold, I am already dreaming of the joys and blessings of spring that will hopefully be with us in the not too distant future. We are about to enter a new season in the church year that if observed with some intentionality also has the potential to offer us the blessing of spiritual renewal and growth.

The liturgical season that we call Lent has its roots in the preparation of catechumens to become full members of the Christian community. In the early centuries of the church, Bishops would be involved in the instruction of those preparing for membership in the church and would celebrate various rites which would lead to their Baptism at the great vigil of Easter. With my schedule being what it is, this bishop is somewhat thankful that a different pattern has emerged, however it

is still very much a part of my work to encourage and support the spiritual and faith journeys of all the members of our Diocesan family.

An important part of that journey is the role we play in furthering God's mission for our church and for the world. We have some good news to offer to the world around us and it is my hope and prayer that we might use this season of Lent to reflect on how we can allow that good news to penetrate our own lives and to transform the lives of others. Archbishop Desmond Tutu in his book "A Vision of Hope for Our Time" writes this: "Dear child of God, before we can become God's partners, we must know what God wants for us. "I have a dream," God says, "Please help me to realize it. It is a dream of a world whose ugliness and squalor and harsh competitiveness, its alienation and disharmony are changed into their glorious counterparts, when there will be more laughter, joy and peace, where there will be justice and goodness and compassion and love and caring and sharing ... that My children will know that they are members of one family, the human family, God's family, MY family." It is a wonderful dream that I believe we have responded to in our new Diocesan

Vision. In the coming months you will be hearing more about how this Vision that is leading us to some concrete goals and objectives for our work together over the next several years.

I encourage you to take the time to come to church on Ash Wednesday and, if it is your custom, to be sealed with the sign of the cross in ashes. That sign can symbolize our commitment to participate in God's dream and vision for a broken world.

May these 40 days of Lent, provide us with an opportunity to reflect upon our own faith stories, and our own spiritual journey. In the course of bible studies, education programs and individual and corporate prayer, it is my hope that we will be given the courage and the strength necessary to engage more fully in this divine mission.

Lent is an important season of spiritual growth, individually and for our parish communities. Let's not let this one pass us by. I am so incredibly moved and grateful for the impact your prayers have had upon my life as a Bishop in the church and I ask that those prayers may continue. Please be assured that you will be in my prayers in this Holy season.

Yours faithfully in Christ.

From candles to ashes

PETER WALL
DEAN, CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

February begins with the Feast of the Presentation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple (also called *Candlemas*) on February 02 and concludes, on February 25 this year, with Ash Wednesday, two important feasts, both known by their important symbols. *The Presentation*, in which we hear the magnificent words of Simeon that we have come to know as the *Nunc dimittis* and hear about Anna speaking about the child to the people of Israel.

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Possibilities on the margins

MICHAEL THOMPSON
RECTOR, ST. JUDE'S OAKVILLE

But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. (Jeremiah 29.7)

Reading Nissa Basbaum's reflections on Christian entanglement with the state brings to mind another such entanglement in another time. In pre-exilic Jerusalem, court and temple were mutually legitimating powers – the temple invoking divine privilege on behalf of the king, and the king using his authority to entrench the temple.

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Cursillo weekend at the Table of Trinity

CAROL SUMMERS
ST. JOHN'S YORK

At the end of November, the weekend winter began to take over from fall, a group of people from across the dioceses of Huron, Niagara and beyond met in the beautiful setting of Mount Mary Retreat Centre, Ancaster. We had different reasons for going. I think it's fair to say that most of us were a little apprehensive.

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This beloved Church of ours...

Archbishop Hiltz visits Niagara

CHRISTOPHER GRABIEC
EDITOR

On Thursday January 15th, St. Christopher's Church in Burlington welcomed the Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, to a full church of some 400 listeners from across the diocese. The Primate's intention was to offer reflections on the National Church and the Diocese of Niagara, particularly with respect to the blessing of same sex unions along with other issues that face our communion.

The Primate began with a detailed presentation on the five marks of mission of the Anglican Communion which dated back to 1984. These marks are:

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- To respond to human need by loving service
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

He spent a significant amount of time emphasizing the role of Baptism

in the life of the church. The primate called for a renewed understanding of the rites of initiation and a deepening sense of the ministry to which every baptized member of the church is called. From the commonality and oneness that we experience in our baptisms, he reflected upon the notion of communion. "We are always called to be in communion – to stay in relationship with one another to the best of our ability". He reflected sadly upon the division that has occurred in our church over the past few years – a division that the diocese of Niagara knows so well.

The primate was clear that the interference of Primates and Bishops of other jurisdictions in this country has created havoc among us. "Not one bishop in the Canadian Church approves of these interventions".

He spoke passionately about issues of poverty and justice with regard to our aboriginal peoples. The church has issued and apology as has the government. "It is now the Church's role to help the government and the church live out the apology". He pointed out that there is a huge economic gap between most of us and the aboriginal people. "We are called to address the

poverty of our country – the systemic and underlying causes".

In speaking about the blessing of same sex unions he said that at Lambeth last year, "we tried to tell our story with accuracy. For those who had the ears to hear – they received our story with great respect." He indicated that our church was in "very different places – as indicated by the fall meeting of the House of Bishops". Some dioceses have not even had the conversation about this issue. Other dioceses, such as Niagara have been in conversation for years. New Westminster made its decision about same sex marriage in 1998 – over ten years ago.

His experience in the church across Canada is that some are saying "How long must I wait" and others are saying "we need more time. Some have decided that they cannot stay at the table, which has created the pain that we know in Niagara. Others are feeling good about the blessing of same sex unions but cannot call it marriage. Others do not agree with the overall direction of the church but "can live with it". The House of Bishops struggled with this issue for two and a half days at its last meeting. In the end the majority called for a moratorium until

the next General Synod in 2010. The bishops who voted in favour of the moratorium were also able to make a commitment to continue walking with and praying for the bishops who were not able, in good conscience, to support a moratorium. He lauded this historic show of collegiality and commitment to stay at the table despite different choices. The bishops also committed to having a discussion in every diocese before the next General Synod.

The archbishop indicated that he clearly understood that the Diocese of Niagara was in a very different place than most of the other dioceses. He understood that this discussion had gone on for years here. He was challenged by one questioner who suggested that this discussion had not gone on for years – but for decades. The questioner urged the archbishop not to "under-sell us" in this matter.

He then moved on to speak about the financial crisis in General Synod and in our diocese. He suggested that in 2010 the General Synod will be presented with a motion which will prohibit a deficit budget at the national level. He also said there was a plan in place for "budget equilibrium" by 2012.

Another question was raised about the exclusion of Bishop Gene Robinson from Lambeth. Bishop Robinson is the openly gay bishop of New Hampshire. Bishop Robinson is legally joined to his partner Mark Andrew. The question was about how the archbishop felt about this exclusion. The primate indicated that the opening hymn that was sung at St. Christopher's that evening was the same hymn that was sung at the opening celebration in Canterbury Cathedral. He said that he and many other bishops, because of this issue with Bishop Robinson, had difficulty in singing the refrain of the hymn: "All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place".

In the end, Archbishop Hiltz indicated that we are not a one-issue church. There are so many issues that we must confront in our communion. He several times referred to "this beloved church of ours". Unquestionably he came across as a "pastor" to the Anglican Church of Canada. This pastor has love for his church and sincerely and personally feels the pain of division. He appeared very conflicted about the same sex blessing issue, but offered support to the Diocese of Niagara in our journey.

Shifting the Prism: A Reflection on the Primate's Address

CHRISTYN PERKONS
ST. CHRISTOPHER'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

So much of what Archbishop Hiltz said on January 15 as he addressed the Diocese of Niagara resonated with me. His eloquent and passionate commentary on the five marks of mission of the Church and our call to action with regard to poverty, First Nations and stewardship issues was powerful. I appreciated how he clearly connected Niagara's new vision to the Church's understanding of mission. And I was so grateful for the thoughtful and sensitive responses he made to the questions, comments and advice he received.

I would, however, like to suggest that if we shift the prism just slightly, the light refracts very differently on some aspects of our common

life. There are three ways in which I noted a different illumination of our common life from that shared by the Archbishop.

I would like to suggest that to frame what Niagara has done around the issue of full inclusion and same gender blessings as discussion, dialogue and learning is to miss something significant. It's certainly true that we have engaged in dialogue for decades, both at the synodical level and in our parishes. And we have, indeed, made and honoured a significant commitment to dialogue, not debate – a way of listening to one another that asks us to listen deeply; to hold our assumptions in abeyance as we together explore the issue. We have offered many resources to our parishes to help them have these dia-

logues. A panel of speakers travelled around the Diocese. Small group programs were provided. Bishop Spence convened a Dialogue Task Force that generated a three month series in the Niagara Anglican featuring dialogue between six diocesan folks with different understandings of this issue as well as a Parish Guide for Same Gender Blessing Dialogues. Experienced facilitators are available for parishes wanting help with dialogues. Our intentionality and integrity around this process is indeed something that others might want to share. But that's not the whole picture!

Time after time, again and again when we have come together around this issue, we have invited the presence of the Holy Spirit to permeate our gathering. Time and time again,

we have prayed for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and we understand ourselves to be acting in response to that guidance. Niagara has not weighed the pros and cons of making the decision to bless same gender unions. We have not positioned ourselves as conservatives and liberals contesting our own righteousness. The Diocese of Niagara is responding to what we believe is the call of the Holy Spirit – to create a rite to acknowledge a blessing that God has already conferred on same gender unions. This is not to suggest that other dioceses are wrong in their discernment of what God is calling them to right now. I have no trouble believing that God could be calling Niagara to one course of action while the call to other dioceses is different. Consistency is not a hallmark of

God's call. Quite the opposite; God's call is marked by surprise, risk and courage – the courage to step out of the boat when Jesus says 'come'. The courage that the Primate lauded in our Bishop is, I believe, the courage to say 'Yes' to the Holy Spirit in the face of unimaginable opposition; a courage grounded in a diocesan discernment that 'Yes' is indeed what Niagara is called to; a courage rooted in a humble response to the Holy Spirit.

The light refracts differently for me when I consider the relationships of the Church. I understand the bonds of the Communion; the ties of friendship and the commitment of Anglicans to our life together are important, even vital to our identity

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Quarks and providence



COLIN C. M. CAMPBELL
TEACHER, DIOCESE OF NIAGARA

The Christian faith claims that all events are subject to the sovereign Providence of God. Not even a sparrow falls without God being aware of it (Matt 10:29). Yet our technological culture believes that the world operates according to the principles of scientific law and explains it without reference to him. In this, the second of two articles dealing with the connection between science and Christianity, these contending world views will be reconciled using ideas borrowed from Aristotle, quantum

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Modern science does not explain how we can live a full life. Christian faith does.

mechanics, and Biblical spirituality. Faith in science does not give purpose and meaning to life. The Christian faith does.

When Western science began, there was an established world view called Scholasticism. It used the philosophical methods of Aristotle to explain the Christian religion. Scholastics believed that they had proved the existence of God, described his nature, and explained how he acted in the world's affairs. Its weakness was that the scientific method could not investigate its claims. Its validity depended on a revelation, held to be true by faith in the authority of the Church. Post-Enlightenment thinkers were simply not willing to commit this kind of intellectual suicide. H. L. Mencken made the trenchant comment: "A philosopher is a blind man

in a dark room, looking for a black cat that is not there. A theologian is the man who finds it." The scientific method seemed to deny any entry-point to metaphysics.

Greek metaphysics, like modern science, was concerned with establishing truth and explaining change. Parmenides believed that there is an absolute truth, which does not change. Heraclitus believed in a world of chaos, where the only constant is change. Plato's solution was to hypothesize two realities, one unchanging and one in constant change. Aristotle was a materialist. He believed in a single universe and explained change using two concepts: form and matter. (His theory is hylomorphism, from the Greek "hylo" meaning matter and "morphe" meaning form.)

According to Aristotle, a form makes a thing what it is. A dog is different from a cat because it has a different form. Today, we know that it is different because its DNA is different. Aristotle believed that, embedded within the form was a goal and a purpose. The purpose of a puppy is to become a dog. Since we now know that this purpose is coded in the puppy's DNA, Aristotle's insight was amazingly perceptive. He argued that a form changed the material from which it was made. He called this material matter. Unlike Heraclitus, Aristotle believed in an ordered universe. Like Heraclitus, however, he believed in change. He explained it in terms of ordered forms operating on disordered matter to seek their final destiny.

Modern science has clarified Aristotle's theory of matter. Water and alcohol have different forms because they have different chemical formulas. A water molecule is composed of two hydrogen atoms and an oxygen atom. The molecule is the form and the atoms are the matter from which it is made. However, the atoms are also forms, made out of the matter

of electrons, protons, and neutrons. Protons and neutrons are forms made from quarks, and quarks may be forms made out of strings. This chain of building blocks terminates with the most elementary particles, from which everything else is made. Since they have no constituents on which to operate, they cannot be forms and must be pure matter. Formless matter is pure potential. It is acted on by a cause, the effect of which is to produce objects with forms. For example, chemistry is the study of molecular cause and effect. It studies what causes atoms to combine to form molecules.

The scientific laws of cause and effect break down, however, if we seek the cause, which orders matter, within the material universe itself. If matter is pure disorder, it cannot be the cause of its own order. From the viewpoint of Christianity, the cause of formed matter is the Providence of God. This assertion provides an entry from science to metaphysics. Pure materialism is ultimately irrational.

Aggressively atheistic scientists, such as Richard Dawkins, believe that people are purely material beings. This belief contradicts the orthodox Christian position that people are both material and spiritual beings. Both Christians and atheists would agree that our world is composed of biotic forms (plants and animals) and abiotic forms, such as air, water, and rocks. Abiotic forms are made of atoms and molecules, which obey the laws of physics and chemistry. However, DNA is simply a molecule and so, from the viewpoint of science, biotic forms turn out to be no different from abiotic forms. This would be true, unless biotic forms contain a spiritual dimension, opaque to scientific investigation. Quantum mechanics provides just such an entry-point for this spiritual reality into the world of matter.

It was an axiom of classical physics that every effect observed was caused by particles obeying Newton's

first law of motion. The universe was a large machine, whose past, present, and future were determined by this law.

However, quantum mechanics later demonstrated that, at the atomic level, the law breaks down and the cause of effects is unknowable. For example, a radioactive rock may contain particular atoms, which decay by releasing alpha particles. Although it is certain that each radioactive atom eventually will eject an alpha particle, it is impossible to determine in advance when a particular atom will do so. The rock and its atoms resemble a group of students in Hampton Court maze. An outside observer knows that, given enough time, every tourist will emerge from the maze but it is impossible to know when any particular tourist will do so.

Scientists of the Dawkins variety would deny any distinction between the brain and the mind. To them, both are aspects of the same material reality. Yet, phenomenologically, they are quite different. The brain reacts to many stimuli simultaneously. The reptilian brain registers temperature. The mammalian brain responds to affection and the neocortex develops ideas. All three inform the conscious mind, competing for its attention.

It is a feature of everyday experience that the mind is able to resolve such conflicts by selecting one sensation on which to concentrate. In that sense, the mind is not the brain by another name. It is the organizing principle of the person's behaviour. The fact that the mind can only be detected by its effects does not make it less real. If the brain is a quantum mechanical system, the responses created by many stimuli coexist within it. It is like the Hampton Court maze, with its tourists. When the mind is relaxed, it is uncertain which activity will claim its attention. However, it is capable of choosing one activity on which to concentrate. In that sense, it is like a deus

ex machina, who invades the maze and blocks a single tourist into a dead end. The mind locks in one of many impressions in order to deal with it. In this way, the Scholastic and Aristotelian world-views are compatible with the findings of modern science, answering the criticisms of Enlightenment-influenced scientists.

It was not only the Age of Reason that objected to Scholasticism. Martin Luther called it "a science of wind." According to him, the primary purpose of Christianity was to enable the believer to have a healthy relationship with God. In that sense, he agreed with Aristotle that the purpose of philosophy is for us to find out what we are for.

It is clear that modern science has enabled us to make better baked beans. It is also clear that it does not explain how we can live a full life. The Christian faith does. Also, it is more than a set of theological propositions. It provides the believer with the spiritual power to live out these truths. This experiential view of God has often received a frosty reception. Bishop Butler rebuked John Wesley thus: "Sir, this pretending to extraordinary revelations of the Holy Ghost is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing."

Jesus promised his followers joy and peace, but he quickly added not peace such as the world gives. His followers knew no such peace. However, they felt themselves to be fully alive because they knew what they were for. They did not try to become happy by willing and contriving. They did not spend their time fretting about their success or trying to climb some greasy pole. Happiness for them was the discovery of how to become an instrument of God. They had found their will in the will of God. They did not desire anything for themselves, not even the glory of being used by God.

May we all lose our wills in the will of God, so that we make the world a better place, simply because we have lived here.

What's wrong with this picture?



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The spread between the rich and poor in this country is sinful.

JOHN RIPLEY
INTERIM RECTOR, HOLY TRINITY WELLAND

You may have missed it. In the event that you did, I share this news article from The Canadian Press. At 9:04 on January 2nd, 2009, the first working

day of 2009, the top CEOs in Canada will have "pocketed an average of \$40,237". These individuals will have earned the average amount that a Canadian worker earns on average in an entire year. In four minutes these million dollar executives could go to the local car dealership and buy with cash a 2009 Cadillac. And that's only after 4 minutes.

For the top 100 Canadian CEO's the average annual earnings are \$10,408,054. The head of BlackBerry maker Research in Motion based in Waterloo, Ontario, pocketed more than \$51,000,000. These statistics are drawn on 2007 data and future stats indicate the annual salaries are spiraling upwards. Even in the face of the financial challenges there seems not to be a decline in the

numbers. How much is enough?

We live in a capitalistic and free enterprise system, a system that rewards entrepreneurial success. In other words if you have the gifts of leadership, or, are in the right place at the right time, you can write your own ticket. Now I know that the system is much more complex than that, but, I think it fair to say that if you are gifted in business you can become a millionaire. In fact if you are a gifted athlete, singer, actor, writer, etc. you will be rewarded financially directly proportionally to your perceived gifts.

And now the other side of the coin—in those four minutes on January 2nd, more than 720,000 people in Canada faced another day of hunger. According to the Canadian Association

of Food Banks 1 in 6 Canadian working families do not get paid enough to live and eat. Christmas always profiles the need. In the season of good will we become more attentive to the human needs that are often hidden from view. In light of present economic conditions the food banks are stretched to meet the ever increasing needs of those who could not comfortably buy a pound of hamburger in the four minutes of January 2nd.

Those who find themselves in dire economic straits often find themselves in this situation as a result of circumstances—circumstances that they often have no control over. Some, indeed, are gifted, but are not in the right place at the right time. Many face the challenge of elusive fulfill-

ment. Whatever the reason there are a significant number of people who are counted among the working poor. 1.9 million Canadians live in those families. What's wrong with this picture?

The spread between the rich and the poor in this country is sinful. Now, I don't know how much the high priced executives contribute to the food banks. In fact their philanthropy might be exemplary. The root of the disparity is in my mind more systemic. As the rich get richer and the poor get poorer our system perpetuates a system of rewards that bears no relationship to the needs of humanity. It certainly doesn't give expression to the Gospel imperative. But as Jesus said, "For you always have the poor with you." I guess that makes it right.

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Possibilities on the margins

It was into such a cabal that the prophets invoked godly truth. It is not right, they insisted, for power and wealth to accrue to the elites of court and temple while the widow and orphan are neglected. They reminded any who would listen that Israel had been called to



...our common work is to collect the stories, to consent to becoming a people, to trust the promise, and to be renewed in our purpose.

bear witness in practice as well as in words to God's justice, healing, and compassion.

What followed Jerusalem's failure to heed the prophetic call to justice was the Babylonian exile, a forced relocation of the citizens of Jerusalem from their city, land and temple to Babylon, and from the role of subjects in their own narrative to objects in the Babylonian narrative.

From the time of Constantine until sometime in the twentieth century, the church in Europe, and subsequently in North America, colluded in one way or another with the power of the state. In many places the church was established as a department of the state, providing religious services in the way

that the post office delivered the mail – as a servant of the state. The church legitimated the state, and the state sponsored the church, in a symbiosis eerily similar to the court and temple in the time of the prophets.

Walter Brueggemann, the greatest living Christian scholar of the Hebrew scriptures, notes that the witness of the prophets was purposeful only in light of the need of court and temple to appear faithful to the way of the Lord God. That is to say, as long as Jerusalem was nominally faithful, the prophetic witness could attempt to call court and temple to account. But that call to account has no traction in Babylon. Court and temple have been humbled, and the people humiliated, forced into servitude in a hostile land. The curriculum of Babylon is not prophetic, says Brueggemann, but scribal.

For it is in Babylonian exile that the people of Israel gather together the narrative of their life with God – the stories of patriarchs and matriarchs, of Moses, Aaron and Miriam, of judges, prophets and kings. The first healing act of an exiled people is to gather the story.

If we find ourselves, as followers of Jesus, involuntarily relocated from the town square to the industrial park, I wonder if we might spend a little less time wishing for restoration of the collusion between court and temple (Christmas carols in schools, bibles

in courtrooms, Sunday closing) and a little more time finding out what's possible on the margins.

Here's what became possible for our ancestors in their exile. First, they gathered, ordered, and embraced the story of their continuing encounter with the living God. They relished the witness of their ancestors so deeply that they took the time to collect it and write it down, some of it recorded for the first time.

Second, they allowed themselves to become a people, distinct from their captors, unwilling to adopt the ways of their captors, but neither hostile nor indifferent to them. They came to believe that by becoming a distinct people they would in fact serve the wellbeing of their captors. A people who had desired to be "a nation like other nations" allowed themselves to become, instead, a nation distinct from other nations for the sake of all nations.

Thirdly, a significant distinguishing element learned in Babylon was their trust in God's promises and their enacting of a common life that took those promises seriously. They became a community proclaiming and enacting a human ethic responsive to God's call and promise.

Finally, they were renewed in their purpose. Jeremiah reminded them that their unique call was to serve God in

the midst of and on behalf of the world. This renewal of purpose is, of course, just the thing we mean when we use the word "redeem". I owe it to another of my Niagara colleagues, Steve Hopkins, that he pointed me towards a life-changing book, Jack Biersdorf's *Healing of Purpose*, part of whose message is that redemption is not God's action to rescue us from the world, but rather God's action to restore our purpose in and for the world.

Five days ago my mother died, and that's what makes this much more than an exercise in theological reflection. Three nights ago I woke up in the middle of the night with a clear conviction that those who loved Anne, and who delighted in her love for us, were now "in exile", involuntarily relocated from a world that was both coherent and familiar to one that was confusing and strange. In the middle of that night, it became clear to me that our common work was to collect the stories, to consent to becoming a people, to trust the promise, and to be renewed in our purpose.

The next day we gathered to do those things. My brother Hugh not only told my mother's story, but awakened in those assembled their own stories of her life. We consented to be a people shaped not by success and accomplishment, not by power and status – the currency of our environ-

ment – but by our relationship with a woman no longer living, but loving and loved.

We proclaimed in song, scripture and prayer our trust in love's victory over death, God's promise proclaimed and enacted in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

And we heard the call of the angel in Matthew's gospel, "Go to Galilee; there you will see him." Take up your purpose and encounter the living embodiment of love's victory and love's purpose.

Somewhere in our bones we know that we are not meant to be written in the centre of the page, where the winners, the movers and shakers, are featured. Somewhere in our bones we know that there is no path to resurrection that does not pass through the valley of death's shadow. Somewhere in our bones we know that this is not about our accomplishments, our status, or our power, but about God's call to us to be a people, to trust in the promise of Love's victory, and to recover a sense of purposeful living for the sake of the world.

This is our exile, a time for renewal in the promise and the purposes of God, time to root our lives once more in the witness of our ancestors, and to meet the world as a people called out in our baptism, not to despise the world, but to serve it.

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What are fresh expressions of church?

This report not only described some of the "fresh expressions of church" which were springing up all over the country, but talked about the theology of such things, and gave encouragement to those who wanted to experiment with forms of church that would reach those presently "unchurched."

Fresh impetus was given to this movement by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, who in 2004 set up an organization called "Fresh Expressions", under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Steven Croft. Fresh Expressions has a website, which among other things provides a place for people to "register" their "fresh expression of church." Presently there are some 650 registered, from all over Britain. Fresh Expressions also offers a variety of training opportunities in Mission Shaped Ministry to those who want to learn how to "do church" in a way that relates more closely to the culture.

So is this just the latest "flavour of the month" ministry gimmick, which will pass like so many more within a year or two? Rowan Williams thinks not: he sees it as the genuine spiritual response of a mission-minded church to the changing culture around it:

Essentially the Fresh Expressions programme is not simply about a kind of scattered set of experiments... it's

about that gradual, but I think inexorable, shift, the whole culture of our church that has been going on in the last few years, and which will undoubtedly continue to grow and develop. (General Synod, February 2007)

Changing structures

One sign that this is a change that will last has been "a principled and careful loosening of structures" (Rowan Williams) in order to provide new wineskins for the new wine. For example, it is now possible to be assessed, training and ordained specifically to "pioneer ministries." In other words, you may not have the gifts or the interests to pastor a traditional Anglican church, but the church still acknowledges that it needs you! Or again, General Synod recently approved what is called a "Bishop's Mission Order" whereby a bishop can give formal approval to a fresh expression of church in his diocese which does not fit traditional ministry categories, and may cross traditional parish boundaries. In fact, Steve Croft says one of the symbols of his ministry is a can of WD40—to help loosen up traditional procedures to make possible more of these fresh expressions.

The Canadian connection

There were exciting recent develop-

ments on this side of the Atlantic in 2008:

■ In May, Bishop Graham Cray, a leader in Fresh Expressions UK, came to Toronto and talked to enthusiastic audiences about what is happening over there.

■ In July, during the Lambeth Conference, several Canadian bishops attended the self-select session on Fresh Expressions.

■ In September, the Wycliffe College Institute of Evangelism appointed the Rev. Nick Brotherhood (an Anglican church planter from Montreal) to be Team Leader of Fresh Expressions Canada.

■ Shortly after that, Nick was invited to be a plenary speaker at the Edmonton Diocesan Synod.

■ In November, Trinity College hosted one of the leaders of Fresh Expressions UK, and invited Wycliffe College students to share in the event.

Then, coming soon in the first half of this New Year:

■ In February, the Diocese of Toronto and the Wycliffe College Institute of Evangelism are co-hosting the third annual Vital Church Planting conference (see www.vitalchurchplanting.com for more details), with leaders from Fresh Expressions UK as guest speakers. Already registration is 50%

ahead of what it was last year.

■ In May, Bishop Graham Cray, newly appointed Team Leader for fresh Expressions UK, will be in Toronto, talking about how theological education needs to change to train for pioneer (rather than maintenance) ministries.

How does Fresh Expressions Relate to the Bishop's Vision of "Excellence in Ministry"?

There are a number of intriguing ways that the values of Fresh Expressions coincide with the Bishop's Vision, as shared at the November synod. Here are the five points of the Vision, interspersed with quotations from the synod presentations:

1. Prophetic Social Justice - Fresh expressions of church normally begin with service in response to a local need. By practicing a "go" rather than a "come" form of witness, by their nature they "show the world that the gospel is alive and well in the world and in us."

2. Effective use of resources - Fresh expressions of church do not require a lot of start-up funding, often run with volunteers, and are relatively low-maintenance. Thus they "model a theology of abundance rather than scarcity." Because they are often

small-scale and ecumenical, it is in their nature to depend on "economies of scale, shared best practices and partnerships."

3. Life-changing worship experiences - Fresh expressions of church normally develop forms of worship appropriate for the culture in which they are developed, and thus enriching the life of the people.

4. Outstanding Leadership for Ministry - Fresh expressions of church often call forth the best of ordained and lay ministry. They "support and encourage initiative and creativity in the whole people of God." The service component also means that they "build relationships in the community around us and respond to their needs."

5. A culture of innovation - Fresh expressions of church are by their nature innovative, and flourish when the leaders of a diocese "give permission to take intelligent risks and to learn from failure."

The weather forecast may say winter is still with us, but to me there seems to be a whiff of Holy Spirit springtime in the air. Good things are happening, and there is much for us to learn.

.....
This is an adapted version of a presentation made at the Bishop's request to Synod Council in January 2009.

One does not live by bread alone



IAN DINGWALL
RETIRED ARCHDEACON OF NIAGARA

Recently, in burrowing through some odds and ends hidden away in my computer, I found a short article that had intrigued me when I first read it. I had discovered it amongst some material from an essay on North

Gracious hospitality is an essential commodity in the Divine Economy and the Church ought to exemplify that virtue.

American Aboriginal Spirituality. It is for me most helpful to acknowledge and use Spiritual resources that are so easily available to us through the Internet etc.: doubly so when we read the insights of so many people of different faith traditions than our own, as in this story:

"One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside all people. He said, 'My son, the battle is between two 'wolves' inside us all. One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego. The other

is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith. The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, "which wolf wins?" The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

A poignant piece that reminds us of the people who lived here in this land that we now call Canada long before the 'white man' arrived on the scene. It was a Community that had its own culture and traditions and myths and, as we learn of these, we ought to be proud and thankful with them for their unique and profound heritage.

Feed yourself

Reading this article again, I am reminded to pause at the word "Feed", for it has deeper meaning than simply sitting down to satisfy hunger pangs by eating food. We can be fed in all sorts of different and important ways. I invite you to consider one or two of them.

You can feed yourself by giving priority in your life to consider and work on more creative avenues along which to travel on your faith journey. Do not forget the words of Jesus: "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God". In our daily living it is very easy to become so busy with all the little things (many of which, it is true, are important and should be attended to), that we often neglect the larger picture that calls us to consider the Meaning of Life, the Purpose of

our existence, and how we can tackle these things. And there are all sorts of support to help us along the way: reading, friendship with others on the Journey, the Community of Faith we call Church, poetry/prose/plays and movies.

Indeed it is so true that all of us are fed in many different ways of which should be conscious and work with day by day. Think about that.

Prioritize

You can feed yourself by giving priority in your life to more profound objectives. You will remember that Jesus admonished people with the words: "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." To itemize these life-style directives, you could identify the following:

Be concerned with other people and their ideas and concerns as well as their needs and goals. Others need our interest, our attention and our support as they strive to discover the meaning of their lives and how they can be more creative in this realm.

You can feed yourself by prioritizing your own time in order to avoid waste and use your time by giving more of it over to things of Spiritual importance. Too often we get preoccupied with pettinesses. I cannot speak for any of you but I shudder when I think of the many hours that I waste in all sorts of ways, not least in watching television, much of which is of little significance. As a prominent sociologist of earlier days said: "Through television we have perfected the Art of

trivializing the most profound matters of our society".

Sharing life experiences

We can feed ourselves and our friends. Instead of feeding them lunch of a noon time and in ending to say to yourself, "Well that's it, I have done my duty", feed your friend with deep and gracious hospitality (Hospitality is, after all, an essential commodity in the Divine Economy and the Church ought also to exemplify that virtue). Feed them with friendship which is the glue of hospitality. Many people we associate with day by day are expert in hiding their real selves deep down inside their psyches and we do not find out who and what they really are because we allow them that anonymity. Unbeknownst to us, they may be lonely and frightened and would benefit from an invitation to connect in more meaningful ways. Their need (as well as our own in many cases) is together to identify the realities of life. You can help to do that by sharing your own life experiences. That is, allow your friend(s) to see the inner shadows of your own life and share the burden of your own vulnerabilities and challenges. You can help, but only if you determine to get involved with others in the deepest kind of way. Become attached to others with intentionality and time, and determine to go with them as far as they will allow.

To accomplish some or all that the preceding implies, you will have to recognize something of your own sense of meaning and worth. You may

have to recover honesty about yourself. And, having started down that road, you will, in concert with them, walk the journey with them: please note, not for them alone but for the both of you. Join the journey of life, faith and meaningfulness with your friends in the deepest of ways and it will be Gift and Blessing for all.

Serious honesty

Many other examples will come to mind regarding this business. Who and what to feed? Whether, in the Cherokee's words, to feed the bad or the good? His answer was clear and concise. Do give it some thought and help yourself, your church and our society to choose the correct path. We have the potential to assist our world to be a better model in which humanity can enjoy more fully the Love of the Holy One.

God's Love for all of Creation is unconditional and absorbing in its scope. Let's commit ourselves to the task along with like-minded pilgrims on the Journey of Life.

Perhaps you will need to recognize the importance of having to be seriously honest about yourself and to seek support in your journey.

There are all sorts of other examples that you and I could identify regarding this business of what to feed; whether to feed the bad or the good. The wise Cherokee's simple reply was clear and concise. Give it some thought and help yourself and your church and our society to choose correctly in order that we can help our world to be a better model of God's unconditional and absorbing love.

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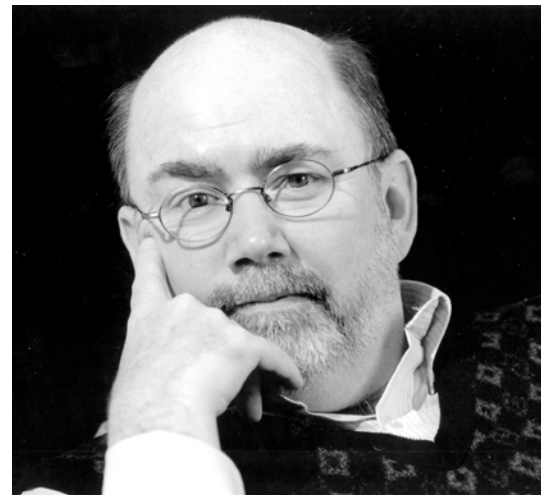
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St. Paul comes to life

MARGARET BRADY
HOLY ROSARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

I was recently invited to attend a rather unique event. An Anglican Priest was coming to a friend's parish church and offering what was billed as a dramatic presentation of St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. Quite frankly, I wasn't sure what to expect. Would it be a dry reading of the New Testament book? Would it be a paraphrase of scripture? What we got from the opening sentence of Canon Tiller's 80 minute presentation was absolutely compelling.

He came out in costume and we were immediately transported back to the time of Paul. Through his superb acting and simple staging he brought to life the events and obstacles faced by Paul and the other apostles during the difficult times immediately following the death and resurrection of Christ. He gave us the whole 16 chapters of Paul's letter, taken from the New Revised Standard Version, from memory. This was an outstanding feat in itself. Then, right before our eyes, through a unique and seamless costume change we were transformed from ancient Ephesus, where Paul pens the letter, to modern times, articulating, quite clearly, the time-



lessness of scripture. It was amazing.

Like many people, I have often heard Paul's words, "love is patient, love is kind" and "women should be silent in church." I came away from the event with a much improved and deeper appreciation of what this early church father meant as Canon Tiller

was able to put these snippets of the letter into the full context of how, where and when Paul lived. Because of this, I want to know more about Paul and the early history of our faith.

If anyone gets a chance to attend Canon Tiller's presentation I would highly recommend it.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 >>

Cursillo weekend at the Table of Trinity

The leadership, known as Team, wanted this to be a wonderful experience for the people who were the guests or, as they are called, participants. There has been a major reworking of the whole process and so this was the first Weekend with these changes in place.

The participants were not sure what to expect or what the other people would be like. Some people naturally wondered what they were getting into.

The following are reflections from four people who attended the weekend. Three of them were participants and the fourth was a fellow leader. Together we made up one table in the conference room and instead of using a number we named it the Table of Trinity.

LUE LAU, Grace Church Brantford.

I had fairly mixed feelings coming into Cursillo, not because it didn't sound interesting, but because it had been really busy and I had been sent away for work, family problems, etc. etc. I didn't have much time to think about these things. I also wasn't sure I was able to arrive for the Friday programs. However, God must have intervened because my boss decided to send me home early. Hence, I was able to have a day to begin thinking about how I could prepare myself to hear God speak.

I didn't know what to expect from Cursillo, the only thing I really knew going in was that I hadn't felt like I had heard God in a long time. In between all the speaker sessions - listening to all these people who had heard God, the discussions, prayers and creative outlets of expression, it made me realize that perhaps I had not been listening for the right things in a long time.

The theme "Come Away and Rest Awhile" was exactly what I needed at this season in life. Being busy, I had forgotten what it means to have rest, and not just temporarily rest, but the kind that refreshes your soul. I had forgotten what it means to "Let go, let God".

Fortunately, God looks after His kids. Mt. Mary's was beautiful, with the

perfect balance of art, civilization and nature for one to reflect on God's goodness and greatness. Each meal was so good and so filling that I left wondering throughout the weekend whether or not I should have been repenting for gluttony. The dorms were good, although I was so tired, I could have slept through almost anything.

Our table (Trinity) was just right. Through the different situations, personalities and spurred on by our Table Enablers at the table, we were able to open up quite quickly. This allowed us to experience deeper sharing, confessions, learning, mutual understanding and a greater sense of why and who God has made us into. All mixed together with a sense of gravity and a sense of humour (verging on ridiculousness) that reminds us that God wants us to live with joy.

The prayer times were wonderful, especially for our group (since we got the chapel!!!). So my only complaint would be that prayer times were too short or sometimes felt slightly rushed. I'm someone who has a million things going on in my mind or I'll be busy listening. It takes me a while to calm/clear my mind.

I would recommend it to others. In fact, the next day, I was able to share with a few closer co-workers about my experience. I may have been unprepared, as I hadn't finished all my thoughts on the weekend, but God is already opening doors so that at least they feel comfortable enough to ask me questions.

Perhaps, it is through these small conversations that God opens us up to that He continues to teach us how we can take action on all the learning and study that we have acquired and live the life of faith and fullness that He promises.

MARGARET WILDING-DENEW, St. John the Evangelist Hamilton

I actually did not want to come on Cursillo at first. I went to the youth version when I was in high school, and it was not a great experience. I got into immature arguments (imagine that!)

with some very literal nasty types about evolution, they literally backed me up against a wall, trying to gang-save me. So I was a little suspicious.

I thought the talks were great; my only suggestion, if it seems helpful to anyone else, is to outline the structure of the talks more clearly. Maybe they did this and I didn't notice, not the first time I would have missed the point. But I didn't see the overall plan that clearly at the beginning.

I thought the emphasizing of some points which we so masterfully displayed with our crayons and markers, was helpful (let go, let God, make a friend etc...) with stories to illustrate from the speakers' lives.

I think we would have benefitted from more chapel time earlier in the weekend. I think our table changed after those times for the better.

Our table would also have benefitted from a quiet place to draw/work/talk, not in the big room.

I think I will continue to evaluate the whole weekend in the context of the Ultreyas and the "group" meetings. I think the Cursillo weekend is an intro to those. I have met once with my sponsor at Tim Hortons! I found that challenging, mind-bending and helpful. I feel like I am more of a disciple now. I hope so.

I will recommend Cursillo to people and I would definitely help out/write/pray/sing in the morning if I were invited.

BETHANY GEORGAS, Cornerstone Community Church in Meadowvale Mississauga

I wanted to attend Cursillo soon after my Mom attended hers four years ago. However, I was not spiritually ready and I believe God held me back so that I could have the pleasure of being apart of the Trinity table! When my time arrived, I was a little hesitant because I wasn't sure if I would feel comfortable and be engaged. My view changed very quickly and come Sunday, I did not want to leave!

I had certain expectations because of what I was told by others. I knew I

had to let go and let God do the work in me. I really let my hair down and was pleasantly surprised; I found a place where I belonged. The weekend far exceeded my expectations in so many ways. The amount of support was breath taking, inspiring and uplifting. I knew that I had a purpose in life, and that I matter to God and those around me.

I really enjoyed the talks. I like how they all connected with each other and each speaker was able to give a story, or example that would help support their topic. I learnt a lot from these testimonies. I especially liked being able to express my thoughts and learn from others through their perspectives.

The most significant and emotional aspects of the course I found were the worship and prayer moments. The music was the best I've ever heard and the prayers were so powerful, it moved me to tears. Having someone pray for you is so special. It has changed my life forever just knowing that others are praying for me.

Everyone was AMAZING. The love, support and kindness will remain in my heart forever. I would go back in a second. Pay it forward! I have already told so many people (Christians and non-Christians) about it. I have planted the seed! I look forward to seeing who blooms.

ANN MULVALE, St Jude's Oakville.

It had been 26 years since I made my Cursillo at the Aurora Conference Centre in November 1982 at the table of St. Margaret so when asked to prayerfully consider the invitation to join Team I pondered for a while. Cursillo had been much more the thing of my late husband Peter and anyway I had not been to Leader's School and my fall schedule was quite full.

Marion Binns, Cursillo Coordinator, indicated that Leader's School was not a requirement: 'yes' I could be excused from a meeting which fell during my long planned vacation. I checked the balance of my schedule only to discover that I could accommodate the remaining Team meet-

ings and the Cursillo itself: seemed like God had a plan, one I eventually agreed to follow.

The theme of Niagara Cursillo 43 was "Come Away and Rest Awhile: a coed affair, at least in terms of the talks, chapel, meals but not the dorm accommodation. I was thankful for the latter because I understand the men had more participants who snored!!"

The location, other than the dorms, was perfect: we were well fed both physically and spiritually with all our needs, except my ability to secure adequate sleep, more than met.

The talks: despite me having heard most of them previously during Team meetings, each had something to feed my mind and soul. The table top discussion added to the return on the investment of my time! There were many precious moments within the Table of Trinity as we became a caring, sharing and open community within the wider Cursillo experience.

Singing, worship, laughter and more serious moments filled our time as we all experienced growth and God's blessings alert each to the fact that by accepting God's blessing we could become a blessing to others in our circle of life. We could be God's voice, outstretched hands the means to witness and deliver practical assistance illustrating God's presence in the world around us.

I am not sure that it will be a further 26 years before I engage with a Cursillo again clearly the theme of 'Come Away and Rest Awhile' was very appropriate for me, similar in fact to my 1982 Cursillo theme of 'Be Still and Know that I am God!!'

I was privileged to be present with my fellow table enabler and participants at the Table of Trinity, to bask in the Presence of the Holy Spirit and be renewed.

Planning has begun for the next weekend in the fall. So, if this sounds like something you might like to experience ask your Rector or anyone who has been to Cursillo for more information and there is also a web site at www.niagaracursillo.org.

Is that all there is?



GRAHAME STAP
RETIRED PRIEST

I find this time of the year to be very strange. Christmas is over and Lent is around the corner; Easter is only a few weeks away. Is it time to relax and thank God for all our blessings or is it time to feel out of touch. A time to wonder why

we are here and what does it all mean?

For me it is part of both. Ina and I have so many blessings it is hard to count them all. We have a wonderful family and good friends, we live in a fairy tale place with all the wonders of snow and ice and a log fire to snuggle by.

But something seems to nag at the back of my mind. We are not getting any younger; aches and pains seem to come for no reason; sitting reading or watching television under a blanket seems to be the norm after four o'clock and bed by 10 is not unusual. Is that all there is?

It is at times like this I start to

think about our relationship with God whatever God is or whoever God is. Why on earth would the creator of all things come as a baby? Why not with power and influence? Why would the all-powerful omnipotent being allow himself to be crucified. And if that is not enough why would a loving God send the Son of God to die?

I guess the answer is that there is no answer we cannot know what makes God tick we can only accept whatever God did, God did it because it was the thing to do.

There are, however, some things

we do know. We know that God gave us control we are in charge. We make all the decisions as to what will or will not happen in this world it is our choice as to whether we reach out to others or not. But while this is true, it is much more than this. It is how we respond to the love God has sent us each and every minute of the day.

This no-man's land between Christmas and Easter is I believe a time to try and come to terms with the fact that we don't know what we don't know and we probably never will. Just as our parents were giants of stature and knowledge

when we were very young, so is God no matter what age we are at. But as our parent loved and cared for us, so does God and this is all that matters.

We can safely say no, this is not all there is. And yes in the time to come we will, as all will, shuffle off this mortal coil but not into nothingness as some would have us believe but in to the loving hands of God. That is what Christmas and Easter is all about. There is a lot more to come but in the meantime we need to make the best of what we have and truly count all our blessings.

But as always it is only my opinion.

Acts 10 and the Disco Pig!

A fresh expression of doing church differently

ANDY KALBFLEISCH
MISSION STRATEGY COMMITTEE

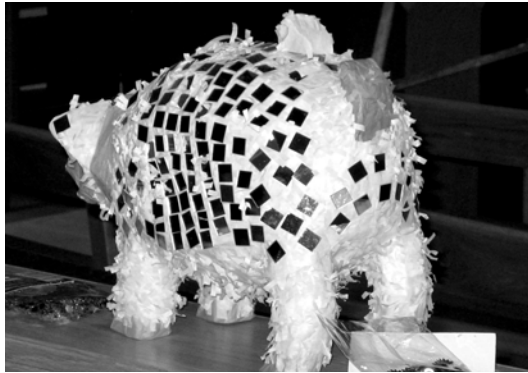
About noon the next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat; and while it was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. Then he heard a voice saying, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean." The voice said to him again, a second time, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven. (Acts 10: 9-15 NRSV)

Now imagine this. It's eight o'clock on a cold, dark and rainy Saturday night in West London and we are about to experience a new way of doing church. The pews have been pushed aside and we are lounging on oversized beanbag chairs spread around the sanctuary. There are over fifty of us including about fifteen clergy from the Netherlands who, like ourselves, have come to experience and learn. The lights have been dimmed and soft ambient music plays in the background.

A voice begins reading Acts 10 starting at verse 9 then slowly a black sheet is lowered from above by its four corners. As it reaches the floor spotlights show all manner of four legged animals as well as reptiles and birds – all plastic replicas of course. Then, as the voice continues, our attention is drawn to a figure dressed in a white robe walking into our gathering. He is blindfolded and carries a staff. He gazes upward as he hears a sound and the lights follow. Slowly descending is a pink piñata pig covered in small disco mirrors. The spotlights seek it out and the light is reflected around the sanctuary in a strange eeriness, as if something important is about to happen, as the voice continues, "Get up Peter; kill and eat." Going off script Peter says, "Wait!" "What is it now?" asks the voice. Peter replies, "I am about to beat the stuffing out of a pig in front of all these witnesses and some of these people might be vegetarians." The voice responds, "Good point! Now that I am freeing you from all those rules and regulations, these are exactly the sorts of things you need to bear in mind. I shall make it clear to them that this is merely a metaphor – no matter how sweet it looks."

Peter swings at the piñata and candies cascade downward when it bursts. "Gather around," says the voice. "Take and eat. Find something tasty or sparkly that will remind you of the freedom you have. Everything is clean."

This is Grace, a Christian community that meets twice monthly at St. Mary's Church (Church of England) in South Ealing, London. Grace is unique in many ways, but most interestingly they have no staff and no budget; everything is run by volunteers. Dean, a Chaplain at a nearby college, is a member of one of the planning teams and is available to celebrate the Sacraments when they are included



as part of a service. A large part of the mission of Grace is to develop cutting edge, multi-sensory worship experiences for its members, the wider church in the UK and around the world. Grace has just celebrated its fifteenth anniversary as an alternative worship community for people who are seeking non-traditional ways to engage with God and the Holy Spirit. Grace is about worship using ways and forms that relate to our culture, an authentic offering to God out of who they are, not something they target other people with. It is not unusual for visitors from abroad to worship at Grace to discover how Grace's style connects with those who seek liberal alternatives to traditional worship styles. Following each service everyone gathers for conversation and fellowship around food and drink.

The theme for this worship experience was "Clean" and the planning team arrived at six o'clock and spent the next two hours setting up for worship and the café afterwards – the service itself was approximately ninety minutes. At first the furniture in the sanctuary was moved to make room for the beanbag chairs, then the projectors and the screens were set up. Members were also in the galleries setting the rigging for the lowering of the sheet and the disco pig. Behind the scenes there were many hours of planning, preparing and procuring. Of course, since every service is different, there is always some anxiety on the part of the planners as to whether their ideas will effectively translate into a meaningful worship experience that those present can engage in.

As worship continues with the theme we are invited to take a fallen leaf – gathered from one the large trees outside the church – and write something on it that we do or use that might be wrong or bad for us. Then we broke into small groups to explore why the writing on the leaves might be bad or unclean. For example, my group discussed the dangers of too much television. Not that watching TV is bad or unclean in or of itself, but because it may disrupt our relationship with God and other people if it consumes our lives. Then a bare white tree made of branches and bright lights is brought to the centre of the worship space. We were invited to attach a leaf to the tree to symbolize the reconnection of all our broken/unclean things to the source of life – God who redeems all the ways we harm ourselves.

Then the following confession was said:

One: Most of us would prefer to live in a castle than a tent. Castles have stout walls that protect us from the contamination of the outside world. Within your walls you can bring order and control. In your castle you can admit nothing that may be bad. You can banish the unexpected and the unpleasant, and live a life that is secure and protected.

But in a tent, you aren't in control; you are open to the world. You can't shut it out; you have to learn to live with it. The green and vital grass outside becomes dirt when you bring it in on your feet. It's your choice whether you call it muck, or consider it a natural carpet. You learn to see that what you might call dirt. God has made to be exactly what it is. Whether we might use it for good or bad doesn't change its essential nature. It is what it is.

All: Help us to be tent-dwellers rather than castle builders, ready to see the hand of God in all creation. Forgive us when we divide the world into things that are good or bad. Remind us that good and bad can be found in our actions, not in objects.

One: Living in a castle, you can create exactly the impression you want to the outside world. People can't see inside; all they can see is the exterior that you want them to see; the carefully manicured flowers around the walls, the polished paintwork and the trim lawns. No matter if the inside isn't quite so clean and tidy; no-one sees it anyway. All that matters is the front you put up.

In a tent there's nowhere to hide, and no appearances to keep up. By day, you never know when a gust of wind will billow the tent flaps, giving passers-by a glimpse of your inner world. By night, your lamp casts shadows on the canvas wall. You learn to live with your inner and outer worlds in sync.

All: Help us to be tent dwellers. Forgive us when our righteousness is skin-deep.

Give us strength to dismantle the walls behind which we hide.

Give us courage, in community, to drop the front,

Come out from behind the mask of respectability.

And greet others with love and acceptance as they do the same.

As I continue to contemplate this worship experience I keep asking myself if I am ready to sell my castle and move into a tent. I pray that some day I might be able to.

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- 2:00 review financial aid and costs
- 3:00 campus tour of Huron and Western
- 4:00 review options for housing
- 5:00 your questions and closing reception

Register:

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HURON
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE THEOLOGY

Why on earth are we here



SUSAN WESTALL
ALL SAINTS HAMILTON

In the beginning God... In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God...

Those words were coined, perhaps as much as a thousand years apart, certainly seven hundred. What do they mean to us, two thousand years later?

Psychologists, anthropologists, theologians and others are suggesting that we humans are hard-wired to believe in "something" beyond our knowledge and understanding. We call it by different names, but fundamentally it is the same "being". In English we call it "God". As Shakespeare wrote some four hundred years ago: *There's a divinity that shapes our ends, Rough-hew them how we will* (Hamlet, V:2). I believe that all human beings must ask themselves at some time in their lives *Why am I here? What is life all about? Why me?* All too often we end up in puzzlement; there seems to be no answer, unless we hypothesize

"God". The atheist seems to conclude that there are no answers to these questions; life is like that, so let's put up with it and/or enjoy it as much as we can while we are here.

We are forgetting things that modern science and mathematics are teaching us: things of which even the psalmist, writing two and a half millennia ago, had an inkling: *A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night* (Psalm 90:4). Space travel has taught us that time is relevant; it seems to be relevant to the speed at which we travel. In the twentieth century we have exceeded the speed of sound and we talk of other solar systems that are light years away from us -- distances calculated in terms of the speed of light. The very Creation story begins with *light* in darkness: the *Spirit of God moved over the waters... and there was Light* (Genesis 1:1,2)

Our problem is that we are faced with the task of describing the infinite in terms of the finite. Mathematicians (e.g., Stephen Hawking: *A Brief History of Time*) tell us that there are more dimensions than we are aware of; they claim to be able to prove them mathematically, but cannot enter them. In other words, there are dimensions which exist, but

which we humans cannot enter because we do not have the senses necessary to do so. We know that certain animals have acute senses; dogs can hear and sense occurrences before humans are aware of them. With our human senses we certainly cannot hear radio waves, but our ingenuity has produced equipment that can detect them and turn them into the range of our auditory sense.

So, why not other dimensions of which we may yet become aware, and why not dimensions that have already been sensed in an incomplete manner by human beings from time to time? What prompted the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews to write *Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses?* (Hebrews 12:1) What is the significance of the growing conviction that the God whom we worship is indeed the God *in whom we live and move and have our being* (Acts 17:28)?

Let us hypothesize in these terms. Is there a dimension of the subconscious? Is it possible that, at times, we do enter another dimension? Are we granted an extra sense that permits us to experience events beyond our normal ability? There seems to be pretty good evidence in support of these experiences and, if this is true, *where is this other dimen-*

sion? Do we enter "heaven"? Is this the dimension to which we travel when we depart this life?

Let us dream further. If Heaven is simply another dimension beyond our normal powers of perception, then the concept of "a great cloud of witnesses" is quite legitimate. So, also, is "the God in whom we live and move and have our being". God is all-encompassing; we live in "Him". Where then is our natural home? This life is transient; we are here today and gone tomorrow. Where do we go and, since we assume such a place, where do we come from?

Is there a "home" where we really belong? Are our human physical senses so limited that we cannot see the whole picture? St. John's Gospel tells us that *God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth* (John 4:24). When we enter this "spirit" -- in other words, "the God in whom we live and move and have our being" -- do we "see" something of the purpose of our existence? Does God, in fact, ask us: "What are you here for?" -- expecting us to answer with the purpose that He gave each one of us as our lives began? To take it further, does each one of us have a pre-ordained purpose in this life?

A pre-ordained purpose! What a

terrible thought! How on earth are we expected to know what that is? But is it so far-fetched? Is it possible that each one of us, as James Redfield (*The Ninth Insight: Holding the Vision*, p.235) has suggested, is given a task to perform in this world and to choose the parents with whom we will live? Do we lose some of that vision as we pass through that veil that separates the heavenly dimension from the earthly and enter this world as human infants? Do we all have an inkling of what we *should* do in this world, but we find that the pressures of this world interfere with our idealistic dreams? Is this what leads to frustration, to anger, to nervous breakdowns? Is the fact that we lose contact with the Ground of Our Being, with God, the reason that our lives can become pointless? When we are able to re-establish contact with our true home, then we shall be able to recover our true purpose in life. When life in this present dimension concludes, will we stand before our Maker and be presented with the task that we were originally given and be asked the question *How did you match up?* And, if we have failed the test, will we, in God's mercy, be given a second chance?

Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

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Moving forward in the third millennium

ANDY KALBFLEISCH
MISSION STRATEGY COMMITTEE

Where do we go from here?

It is no secret that Traditional Church is in decline. In the Diocese of Niagara, as in many Dioceses across Canada and other mainline denominations, churches have been closed due to declining membership and attendance and the ongoing inability to secure the necessary financial resources to continue operations. In Hamilton, two Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) parishes are currently discussing merger and relocation to a green field site since they are no long viable individually. Many of our churches have ever decreasing numbers of young people (age 45 and under) attending traditional worship giving meaning to the phrase 'churches grow younger and die older'. All this is happening at a time when more and more people are eager for community and spirituality in their lives. Do they satisfy this hunger with more stuff (consumerism) or with a relationship within a Christian context?

Perhaps it is time to ask ourselves;

- What do we, as Christian communities, have to offer?
- What are those looking for community and spirituality seeking?
- How do we close the gap?

Recently John W. Moses, lay member St. Barnabas' Church (Diocese of Quebec) wrote;

"...our parish is at a critical juncture in its history. In recent years many of our older and more supportive members have died and they have not been replaced by a new generation of church members and supporters. Though we have engaged in stewardship campaigns in recent years, the results have been modest and they are not likely to improve without an influx of new members. To attract new members and raise our visibility we must offer programs that serve our community. Merely keeping the doors open on Sunday is a losing proposition.

We need to have faith that if we can offer a lively worship community, that is, known to be an active force for good in our neighborhood, people will want to join and support that kind of ministry."

In other words, we need to look at and do things differently and trust in God's guiding hand to help us close the gap.

In the 80's and 90's the Church of England embarked on a journey to explore ways of arresting the decline in church participation. In 1984 'How to Plant Churches' was published. In 1994 the report 'Breaking New Ground' was published, and in 2004 the 'Mission Shaped Church' report was published. It is this later report that examined church in the postmodern context. Then in 2007 the Rev. Ian Mobsby published 'Emerging and Fresh Expressions of Church - How are They Authentically Church and Anglican'.

Inherited, traditional church will continue to be viable in many communities as long as there are people

who continue to participate. But, as John W. Moses pointed out, that may not last forever or in fact much longer. Increasingly it is becoming important for declining traditional church to ask these questions of lapsed members;

- What would need to happen on a Sunday morning to make it meaningful and worthwhile for you to participate in worship?
- What could we do or what should we avoid to create an experience of community that is life-giving, life-affirming, and life-changing for you?

Many of our churches are firmly rooted in the inherited traditional model of church - a proper liturgy in a proper building with the proper clergy at the proper time on the proper day. And many congregations have evolved so that attendance has replaced discipleship, membership has replaced community, and internal functions have been prioritized over both evangelism and social involvement. In other words maintenance has overtaken mission.

Today we live in a postmodern world;

- A world that is driven by technology and consumerism.
- A world where we seek identity by what we have and what we wear.
- A world that is fast paced, fragmented and highly mobile.
- A world where traditional social structure has been turned on its head.
- A world where networking is common.
- A world where young people have come to see that the impossible can indeed become the possible.
- A world where young people are no longer comfortable with hierarchical leadership models, and
- A world where people no longer view Sunday as special or church time.

If we break church into three categories we have;

- Pre-modern or traditional church,
- Modern or an Evangelical style where participants are seeking truth, and
- Post-modern where people aren't necessarily searching for truth at the beginning, but rather something that works for them, which we might call entry level church.

Pre-moderns and moderns believe before they belong to a worship community. But post-moderns want to experience before they believe. Thus it is important to avoid attitudes that result in 'who is in and who is out' thinking. Post-moderns generally don't relate well to the old 'come to us' attitude. The new reality for being church can no longer expect people (newcomers) to conform themselves to 'our' way of thinking. Instead church must relate to society as it is and people as they are. That is, newcomers need to be ministered to on 'their turf' with a 'go to them' approach. This doesn't always mean relocation to a different physical space although some mission strategies may necessitate relocation. Both traditional and post-modern styles can co-exist in a mixed economy church where the trad-

itional functions alongside a more fluid, experimental style of ministry. Church has always been changing and emerging over the centuries to adapt to local conditions as well as cultural changes and understandings. This re-engagement with the cultural change to post-modernism requires a missionary response from the church.

Traditional thinking poses an either/or option which can result in polarization or factions within the church and individual parishes. We see this in the reality of today's traditional parish life. This is partly the result of the traditional hierarchical leadership structure that is still predominant in inherited church. Emerging church offers a both/and approach which is more inclusive and balances worship, mission and community. This results in a flatter leadership model where ordained and lay leaders participate more closely in the decision making process. If people feel they are part of the process they are more comfortable participating in it and more comfortable in inviting others to do so too.

As noted above, we live in a consumption, technologically driven society where we are identified by affiliating with various trends and styles. Some people who have become fully immersed in this experience of life begin to ask 'Is this all there is?' when consumption and technology no longer satisfies their search for meaning of life. Furthermore, because of technology, people no longer develop the same interpersonal relationships that were common in the pre-modern and modern eras. We now live in a network society where the importance of place is secondary to the importance of loyalty to the people in ones 'network'. For example, an arts community may be widespread yet tied together by the internet. Their loyalty will be to each other rather than those who are geographically nearby. This poses a challenge for mission since physical boundaries are no longer valid dividing lines between ministerial jurisdictions.

In England, where parochial boundaries may be more clearly defined than in Canada, Episcopal governance has been changed to permit emerging and fresh expression projects to not only cross parish boundaries but also deanery and diocesan boundaries as well. This evolution is necessary at a time when the importance of place is secondary to the importance of loyalty to the network. Networks know no geographical boundaries.

- Emerging churches;
- Are experimental,
 - Are open to change,
 - Are not restrained by institutional expectations,
 - Are missionary congregations, and
 - Are ones where the distinction between clergy and laity will be one of function and not of status or hierarchical division.

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

All hands on deck



COLLEEN SYM
SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

Breaking the Cycle: Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy concludes with the Chair of the Cabinet Committee on Poverty Reduction, Minister Deb Matthews' call for all hands on deck. As we called on her and her government to play their part in reducing poverty, quite rightly her report acknowledges that everyone has a role to play in reducing poverty: "We need all Ontarians playing their part in realizing the vision of this strategy. Of creating a place where every person has the opportunity to achieve his or her full potential and contribute to and participate in a prosperous healthy and just Ontario."

It doesn't matter where you start. What matters is that you act. If we each take a step, even if it is a little step, little things together can mean a lot and take us far.

Acting through prayer

Just consider Member of Parliament Ken Dryden's definition of poverty quoted in the report: "a pregnant mother just a little less healthy, her newborn baby just a little underweight, a little less developed. A young child growing up just a little more sick a little more often, away from school just a few more days than other kids, just a little behind. Poverty is every day running a 100 metre race as if all the other kids are at the starting line - and they're 10 metres behind. Poverty is that 'just a little' that isn't 'just a little' at all."

As people of faith we can act through prayer. The December Inter-faith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC) news letter invites us to participate in a prayer vigil at Queen's Park.

Twenty years ago ISARC held a prayer vigil in front of Queen's Park legislative building for over a month before the government announced its budget. Then as now, the issue was

would the government put poverty reduction and increases for people on social assistance in the budget?

Brice Balmer, ISARC's secretary, relates that experience: "Robert Nixon was then the Minister of Finance. People came to a tent, lit a candle, and prayed that the MPPs would have the courage and strength to act on their convictions. Many MPPs came to the tent; they were curious to find out who was on the prayer list that day. As he announced the budget, Nixon said that people should be aware of the power of prayer. He then announced monies to increase social assistance and address poverty issues."

ISARC is beginning to plan for a prayer vigil in March 2009. Are you willing to pray? Are you able to come to Queen's Park and join ISARC? Participants and groups will be able to volunteer for a half or whole day. At noon, a religious leader will join the two groups and lead in prayer and reflection. ISARC is hoping that the noon hour will be an interfaith experience with groups from different traditions participating.

Watch for further announcements as we work on getting a delegation from the Diocese lead by the Bishop to take their turn at the vigil.

Parish Action

In the Diocese of Toronto, Bishop Colin Johnson is sending to all clergy a request that the 220 parishes in the Diocese pass the anti-poverty motions at their upcoming vestry. The hope is to get at least 150 parishes to pass the motion. The motions will then be collected and a report will be sent to the government likely in early March. The draft motion reads:

The vestry of (name of parish) commends the Government of Ontario for its commitment to a poverty reduction plan for Ontario, and urges that the government's 2009 budget contain specific anti-poverty measures so that substantial progress is made toward poverty reduction and in alleviating hardship among the poor during 2009.

Consider a similar motion at your vestry and consider it a project for justice to accompany an act of charity.

Let's all act 'just a little' and soon that isn't 'just a little' at all.

The 2nd Session of the 134th Synod of the Diocese of Niagara

Saturday, March 28, 2009

Christ's Church Cathedral
252 James St. North in Hamilton

Delegates who attended Synod on Saturday, November 8, 2008 are the voting Members of Synod for the 2nd Session of the 134th Synod in March.

Please mark this date on your calendar.

Hamilton at war

Memories of a child on the upcoming 70th Anniversary



CHARLES STIRLING
RETIRED CANON OF CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

My first real recollections of the Second World War came into focus on December 7th, 1941, when I was five and a half years old. The Imperial Japanese forces attacked the American military installations at Pearl Harbour, Hawaii, and global conflict was upon us. I had started school the September before and my world was beginning to expand. I remembered that day well, as all hell seemed to break loose. Of course it all started two years before, in 1939 when Great Britain, the then Dominions and the rest of the Empire went to war against Nazi Germany and a sort of phony war began, the lull before the storm as it proved to be.

I can't say that those earlier events had registered much with me; after all I had more important things on my mind. Toward the end of August, 1939, I had a new sister and I knew life would change, and I suppose I would have had some concerns about that. After nearly 70 years I can say her arrival has been, and remains a lasting blessing of my life.

I had started school, as I said, in the fall of 1941 at Red Hill School, at the corner of Albion and Hixon Roads almost in the middle of nowhere. Now of course the Red Hill Valley Parkway's exit to King East sweeps

by the place and its life now is that of a day care. It is all very, very much in the City of Hamilton and miles west of the city limits. By now we, both young and old, were caught up in this strange new excitement, which consisted of events and tragedies which touched many families in our rural community.

Excitedly with a sense of adventure we watched the puffs of white in the sky from the school yard, during anti-aircraft firing practice and yet we knew this was very serious business.

Having said that, I also have to say, for me, these were something like good old days. This does not suggest a lack of sensitivity as a child, but rather what that child could absorb in terms of anxieties and tragedies in the war-time Hamilton area.

I can easily recall a sense of solidarity, flag flying patriotism and a sort of openness to others with a friendliness and cooperation I have not seen much of since. I became well aware that good old days for some are not remotely good old days for others. Indeed the openness allowed a time when we all seemed to know the baker and the milkman and even their horses, which made welcome contributions to gardens for those who would gather up the road apples. We also knew the postman and the iceman and the people who worked in the butcher shop and corner grocery stores, A&P, Carrol's, Loblaw's, Quality and Dominion were all known to us, and why not, people shopped among them almost daily for their tables.

Folks regularly greeted one another with courtesy in the streets.

For a child this was all safe and comfortable, even if that child could not wholly articulate what he felt. Added to this comfort, our family lost no one in the war which raged on until 1945. My father had flat feet and punctured ear drums, consequently working for a plant which had been converted to what was called war work, so we were able to see him every day. He also served as an air raid warden during the most worrying time of the war. When sirens began their eerie wail, it was his job to see that people put their lights out and kept them off until the all clear sounded. As some memories and recollection begin to die, one can never fail to recognize the sound of a Lancaster bomber.

This was a wonderful adventure for a young fellow, whose patriotic emotions were being fed by the American motion picture industry classic war films and Pathé news reels. I was lucky enough to attend the cinema once a week. Twenty-five cents could buy a lot of pleasure for a child; the cinema for 12 cents, a candy treat for three cents and 10 cents for a soda afterwards. Scenes from some of the new reels have stayed with me, etched in my mind forever. One of these was a captured German film showing the mass shooting of men, women and children in a Dutch village, whose crime had been the harbouring of downed allied flyers. Another was the horrific death of Mussolini.

We all lived with shortages, meat tokens and stamps, but we lived well enough. Our school seemed the heart of our patriotic fervour. There, we could buy war savings stamps for 25

cents each, which we all took quite seriously. I can also recall more than one Empire Day (May 23rd), when we gathered in the wide hallway that separated the classrooms to sing anthems and say prayers, while rain-water was being collected in a dozen pots.

Another factor indicating these were not normal times was all of our teachers at Red Hill were female, some coming out of retirement to fill the places of men in service. We also had a family of Japanese origin, tragically uprooted from British Columbia and sent east. I particularly remember Jimmy, who was in my class, to this day. He became a teacher on the Hamilton Board.

There was huge rubber scrap drive when I was in grade two or three. I struggled the mile and a half to school dragging a pair of hip waders, each one bigger than I was. I have no idea where they came from, as my father did not fish. I was certainly going to be late, when a long came Tommy, who was usually late. I could tell all sorts of tales about him, for he was the Huckleberry Finn of our class. He helped me and we were late, but because of the load of rubber we brought in, we were celebrities. I am certain it was Tommy's first and last legitimate time of being late for school.

After school, in the fall, we gathered milk weed pods in burlap sacks with such vigour and thoroughness; I was amazed to discover the plant still survives at all. The milkweed pods provided the silky down, used for life jackets. As young as we were, we were doing our part for the war effort. We

had fun, but we knew what we were doing mattered greatly and that the lives of service personnel depended on it. All of these things had a lot to do with responsibility, doing good things and making choices and I suppose this had a lot to do with who and what I am. It was a very good time to be growing up. I learned to make choices and be both independent and part of a group. St Mary's Church also had a lot to do in the forming of character and choice.

We all tuned into the radio, which occupied a spot much as the TV does today to hear the news. My Grandfather's floor model got European stations on short wave. Then of course there were the red, white and blue street cars. I would beg my Grandmother to let a green and cream one go by so we could go on the coloured one. Automobiles were tenderly coaxed to longer life, because none were being made, and tires were hard to come by.

Looking back one realizes that we did survive, we gained an education beyond the class room and we found responsibility. In some ways our lives were shielded and protected from the worst of the war, but we were not restricted in our adventures, for a system did exist and it comprised our families, our schools, our churches and our communities, who collectively were there to guide us, protect and defend us. One wonders if it would not be better to have our young people today follow a similar society anchored by these four pillars of nurture, learning, support and faith. These were wonderful years.

Diocesan Golf Tournament



BOB MCKINNELL
DIOCESAN TREASURER AND CFO

The 7th annual diocesan golf tournament was held on Friday September 19th at Chippewa Creek Golf & Country Club in Mount Hope. A group of 98 golfers gathered around 11:00 a.m. with a best ball format and a shotgun tee off at 12:00 noon. It was a wonderful sunny day.

The tournament was a fund raiser for the Bishop's Company Endowment Fund. The fund itself is deposited with the Anglican Church Ministries Foundation, Niagara. As only the interest can be used each year, we are assured that future Bishop's will have a source of funds to assist clergy and their families in need.

After an exciting round of golf, we enjoyed a great steak dinner with

wonderful fellowship. Bishop Michael Bird joined us for golf and said the grace at dinner. A trophy, for the lowest foursome score, was presented by Bishop Bird on behalf of the Welch family in memory of their father Robert K. Welch a former Chancellor of this Diocese and Deputy Premier of Ontario. Bishop Bird also participated in both the draw for the first team prize and closed with a word of thanks to the organizers and all the attendees.

The lowest team score was achieved by Darcey Lazerte, Geoff Marshall, Jordan Hoggood and Joe Fazakas. Also recognized were the closest to the hole for men and women and the closest to the line for both men and women. All participating golfers received a prize. A special thanks to the many corporate suppliers and service providers that donated prizes for golfers.

Many people contributed time and talents to make this tournament so successful. A huge thank you to Wendy Duncan our Controller who did a great job in organizing the tournament and helped obtain prizes and

sponsors. Wendy's contribution was critical to the success of this tournament. Thanks to the staff in the Diocesan Finance area who registered golfers, handed out information packages and took team pictures, plus action shots. Others joined in and helped as necessary. Thanks to all of you. Also a special thank you to my friend Barry Coe from Mission Services who successfully contacted the media for prizes and provided advice on hole sponsorship signs.

We encouraged both companies and parishes to sponsor holes for a contribution of \$150.00. The response was overwhelming with 13 corporate sponsors, 1 parish and 2 individuals. There were also 8 corporate sponsors of golf carts who each contributed \$250.00. Included above were 5 major sponsors who contributed \$500.00 each and a major sponsor who provided the golf brochure. Next year, we hope more parishes will participate given the good cause this tournament is supporting. All 20 sponsors are listed below.

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This year the golf tournament raised over \$7,500 and the four year total now exceeds \$27,500 that has been given to the Bishop Company Endowment Fund.

We have already booked Chippewa

Creek for next year. The 8th Annual Diocesan Golf Tournament will be held on Friday September 18th, 2009 with the same format as this year. Mark it in your calendars now to make sure you don't miss it.

Changing church for a postmodern world



CHRISTYN PERKONS
CATHEDRAL PLACE STAFF

There is a changing Christian church emerging in the world. No, I'm not referring to the conflict in the Anglican Church that many fear will lead to our demise. I'm talking about something exciting; a deepening of faith; a different way of expressing our spirituality; a reclaiming and reframing of our oldest Christian traditions. The leaders of this wave of Christianity have emerged over the past decade from a myriad of backgrounds - from the most conservative of American fundamentalist churches, and traditional Anglican and Methodist churches in the United Kingdom to the unchurched who in their spiritual hunger sought the disciplines of the early church. They can be characterized by a desire to orient their lives to gospel living, and a penchant for contextual worship rooted in the traditions of the past. There's a sense among the new religious leaders and those who comprise their faith communities that the churches we grew up in are not meeting the needs of the world today. Some of what characterizes the modern churches (large physical plants, programming, bureaucracy, shaped by seminary training and theology formulated by academics) is experienced as a barrier by the same generation who are turning away from the corporate culture, away from big government and bureaucracy; away from a large-scale world view. Many of the children of the sixties and their children are connecting with a world view or paradigm that emphasizes small-scale; what works for the individual rather than one-size-fits-all; a sense of network or connection to the planet and everyone on it; and relationships and community that are marked by a fluid response to context and situation.

This innovative theology and practice is not noted for a loyalty to particular denominations, creeds or practices although many of these small communities of faith are sup-

ported by or birthed by the historical churches. They are most clearly marked by their sense of having been birthed out of the needs of a particular group of people in a particular time and place, and by a commitment to exploration and experimentation rather than tradition. They tend to be described in two ways.

Fresh Expressions is a form of church that seeks to reflect the culture from which it emerges and is primarily aimed at those who don't go to church. These communities emerge out of active listening on the part of an organizing team (sometimes a solo initiator) to people where they are in a particular community. The "church" setting reflects the needs of the group as it coalesces around a growing conversation and the theology typically focuses on transformational Spirit-centred relationships and serving others in the midst of everyday life. It's a way of being church that focuses on bringing the message to where people are rather than inviting them to hear the message where we are. Fresh Expressions is also an initiative of the Church of England and the Methodist Church begun in 2004 with a mandate "...to resource mission through encouraging new and different expressions of church life." This initiative has spawned thousands of Fresh Expressions communities of faith all over the UK; check out www.freshexpressions.org.uk. Fresh expressions of church take many, varied forms, and initiators have been both parish-based clerics and mission-focused lay leaders whose sphere of influence grows from outside of parish ministry.

Emerging or emergent church is the other common phrase for describing this new manifestation of church, and it might be characterized as North American in origin, driven by disaffected, young church leaders. Out of their questioning, out of their discussions (because yes, indeed, they found one another and created opportunities to explore their questions together) emerged a growing understanding of church as community whose focus should be to support one another in a relation with God lived through the Spirit; a community unfettered by doctrine, or binding statements of faith that purport to capture the truth

about God for all time. Like Fresh Expressions, the emergent churches are developing to speak to and connect with people in a particular cultural context, and their focus is more about "the mission to which we should commit ourselves than...the propositions to which we should assent." Interestingly, the emergent church has unfolded over the internet; a social network that is also a postmodern response. Much more information about the emerging church and Emergent Village, the online conversation, can be found at www.emergentvillage.com.

All very interesting, you say, but what's the connection to what's going on in Niagara? The connection is the same here as anywhere else... in a postmodern world, the way in which the traditional expression of church shares and lives the gospel doesn't speak to a lot of people. Many of our children and grandchildren, many of our siblings and our neighbours no longer attend church weekly for a variety of reasons - the language is a barrier, the sameness week after week doesn't appeal to them; they are looking for something personally meaningful; they are not attracted to doctrines or positions but are attracted to relationships and networking; or they want to experience something life-changing. Is the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Niagara responding to this? Yes, we are!

Burgeoning fresh expressions can be found in Port Colborne where St. James and St. Brendan's has launched Church on Tap, a monthly worship service that embraces folks from the parish, other local churches and those who don't attend a church. While participants drink beer and have a bite to eat, secular music with a spiritual message plays in the background and the focus is facilitated discussions about faith and everyday life.

St. James, Dundas has a variety of fresh expressions; Sacred Circle Dancing (experiencing spirituality through movement), Jazz Vespers (a service heavy on jazz and interspersed with readings and prayers), Third @ Four (contemporary, multi-generational, creative worship experience), and a Saturday morning ball hockey community impelled by a lay person's desire to minister to people where

they are.

At St. Paul's Westdale, Red Doors is a space into which people from the neighbourhood and the McMaster campus have been invited to build a community around social justice and spirituality through relationships developed within a coffeehouse framework.

At St. John's Niagara Falls, St. Matthias Guelph, and St. David and St. Patrick Guelph, contemporary liturgy is a hallmark of their weekly worship services. Every year, Holy Week at Church of the Transfiguration is marked by a creative dramatic experience involving many parishioners. At Church of the Incarnation in Oakville, one of their basic tenets is experimentation with spiritual expression through worship. A worship committee comprised of the rector and members of the congregation plan weekly worship that invites participants to experience God's presence in innovative ways.

St. Christopher's has a liturgy planning team that creates and leads contemporary, contextual liturgy in connection with the church seasons, and they are planning the launch of a "high innovation" service in the spring of 2009.

Youth of the Diocese have been creating liturgy and worshipping together at The Gathering which meets four times a year in the Hamilton area over the past three years, and this birthed The Gathering North which has just finished its first year in Greater Wellington.

And at the diocesan level, there is a year-long ongoing conversation around Alternative Liturgy that involves roughly thirty clergy and laity. A growing lending library of books and DVDs are available to anyone interested on a three week loan. As well as examples of contemporary liturgy written by clergy and laity in Niagara, the library offers books on emerging church, the journal, *Encounters on the Edge*, from The Sheffield Centre in England, the series of Nooma DVDs by Rob Bell (www.noom.com), books by John Bell and the Wild Goose Resource Group, and a vast array of liturgies, prayers, and worship resources.

Imagine Music and Word, a conference for musicians, songwriters

and liturgists engaged in or interested in contemporary liturgy, was held at Canterbury Hills in October 2008. From this highly successful experience planned and led out of the Congregational Support and Development office, we see networks of musicians and liturgists emerging as well as two upcoming events in response to the high demand from conference participants. On March 1, Church of the Incarnation will host *Imagine Music and Word: Do It and Live*; a Sunday afternoon and evening that will bring musicians and liturgists together to plan for Pentecost. This event is open to anyone interested in creating liturgy and/or bringing new music to their parish's worship experience. As well, *Imagine Music and Word '09* is in the early planning stages; mark your calendars for October 23-25, 2009!

Niagara is definitely part of this movement in the church. Bishop Michael encouraged the clergy of the Diocese at the recent Clergy & Licensed Layworkers' Day to explore the Fresh Expressions material and to engage their parishes in discussions about liturgy. The new vision of the Diocese focuses on life-changing worship as well as flourishing cultures of innovation, and is an invitation to think outside the box as we discern how to fully engage people in liturgical experiences. Plans are underway to hold a Fresh Expressions Vision Day in the Diocese with Nick Brotherhood, Team Leader for Fresh Expressions Canada and leader of Emerge Montreal.

If this work excites you, if this is a direction that speaks to your parish, there is support available to encourage and assist you in many ways. If you want to borrow any of the library resources, suggest new resources to add to the collection, or if you would like to be part of a diocesan conversation about fresh expressions in Niagara or the *Imagine Music and Word* events, please contact Christyn Perkons.

And if you have a story to tell about some aspect of fresh expressions in your parish, please share it with Christyn and consider sharing it with the Diocese through writing an article for the Niagara Anglican.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

- Deepest sympathy to Canon Scott McNaughton, and family, on the death of Scott's mother, Eileen McNaughton, on December 14. Funeral service was held at St. Stephen on the Mount, on December 18.
- Deepest sympathy to Dr. Gordon Ralph, O.N., and family, on the death of Audrey Ralph, O.N., a long time and faithful member of the parish of St. John the Evangelist, Thorold, who died on December 20.
- Congratulations to Canon Darcey Lazerte and Dawn Lazerte on the

- arrival of Denver Hudson, on December 20, at Oakville Trafalgar Hospital.
- St. Luke's Church, Hamilton will be under the pastoral and sacramental care of the clergy of Cathedral Place, coordinated by the Rev. Matthew Griffin, the Assistant Curate of Christ's Church Cathedral. Matthew Griffin will serve as the priest in charge and will be the principle pastoral contact for the parish.
- The Reverend Tim Morgan concluded his ministry as Priest Associate at St. Columba's, St. Catharines,

- effective December 31.
- The Reverend Susan Wells, St. George's, Lowville; the Venerable Bruce McPetrie, Good Shepherd, St. Catharines and Dr. Richard Jones, St. Peter's, Hamilton, have had their appointments extended as Administrators until December 31.
- The Reverend Sue-Ann Ward has been appointed Diocesan Administrator at St. Hilda's, Oakville, effective January 1, replacing Rev. Martha Tarnatic. The Reverend Cheryl Fricker from St. Aidan's will look after the

- services and pastoral needs.
- The Reverend Jason van Veghel-Wood, from St. Peter's Church, Erin-dale, Diocese of Toronto, has accepted the position to be Chaplain at Ridley College, St. Catharines.
- Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of Conrad Cunningham, O.N., faithful member of Holy Trinity, Welland, who died on January 3.
- Deepest sympathy to Dr. Michael Thompson and family on the death of his mother, Anne, on January 3. The funeral service was January 6 at St.

- John the Divine, Arva.
- Roger Cassey began his position as Property Supervisor/Lead Hand at Cathedral Place, on January 5.
- Sue Channen has been appointed Lay Pastoral Associate, half time, at St. Aidan's Church, Oakville, under the direction of the rector, effective January 1, for a six month period.
- Our deepest sympathy to the Reverend Gordon Walls, Rector of Arthur and Mount Forest, on the death of his mother, Dorothy, on January 8th, in Toronto.

A eulogy of large families



MICHAEL BURSLEM
ST. GEORGE'S, GUELPH

We have recently celebrated the 100th birthday of my mother, Ruth Portia Burslem. She was born on December 12th 1908 in the precincts of Canterbury Cathedral, house No. 6, as her father, the Reverend William Rashleigh was a minor canon and precentor of the cathedral. He was married to Harriet, (but she was known to friends as Nancy) the daughter of a Dr. Eddoes of Loughborough, Leicestershire. They had six children. Mother's older siblings were Marjorie, Bill, (who married Joan Scott and came to Canada with their son, Billy, in 1936. Bill taught Latin at The Grove School, Lakefield.) and Phyllis. Her younger sibs were Katherine, known as Kitt, and Jonathan, the baby. My grandfather later became rector of St. George's, Canterbury.

In 1916 the parish of St. Mary's, Horton Kirby, became vacant by the death of Grand-Dad's uncle, the Reverend Henry Burvill Rashleigh, who had served in the parish for 30 years as curate to his father, the Reverend George Rashleigh, then for 42 years as vicar himself. Naturally a Rashleigh had to succeed him, so the family moved to this rural parish in Western Kent, in the diocese of Rochester, but with a much larger vicarage and a glebe, a small farm holding from which he could draw some income. Their happiness was short lived as on February 26th 1919 my grandmother, aged only 39, died of a pulmonary embolus following surgery, the day before she was due to return home. Her sudden death devastated the family, and mother still speaks of it with sadness.

On July 22nd 1919, eye brows were raised by Grand-dad's marriage to his second cousin, Katharine Maria Theodosia, a war widow. Her maiden name had been Rashleigh before her marriage to Evelyn Worsley, who died on the battle field in 1916. She was affectionately addressed by the family as Little Mother, later just L.M. Grand-dad made a wise decision in choosing her as step-mother to his children. Our generation called her Little Gran. She had two daughters, Diana and Margaret. That made eight children. They had four more, Frank, Jean, Portia and Alison. They also took in Jack, a first cousin, whose family had been divided among relatives due to the scourge of Tb. Jack had eyes only for Phil whom he later married. That made a Baker's Dozen in the vicarage of Horton Kirby. There were no luxuries but, with Little-Gran's careful budgeting, all necessities were met. Large families, such as theirs, are breeding grounds for Christ-like selflessness, as they learned to appreciate the needs of one another.

Sixty-two family and friends descended on Canterbury from many



Grand-Dad with his family, early WW1, when mother was about 6. Front: Bill, Granny, with the rectory mutt, Mickey, on her lap, mother, clutching her doll, Marjorie and Phyllis. Back: Nanny with Katherine (Kitt) and Grand-Dad with Jonathan.

parts of England, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. We each wore name tags that showed the relationship to mother, designed by my cousin Richard, Jean's son, on his computer. Our party hosts were Elizabeth, my cousin, the daughter of Marjorie, and Fr. Paul, her husband, who are the caregivers to mother, and in whose home we gathered to greet her; but we ate at the 'stable' at the bottom of the garden, where Philip and Akane, (three syllables,) his Japanese wife from Australia, and their twin boys, Alasdair and Elliott, live. They're all great friends of the family. The only other members of Grand-dad's family still living are mother's half sisters, and they were all there. So were Mother's three sons, myself, the eldest, and Ellen, my wife, from Canada, Jeremy and Susan, his wife, who live in Derby and who organized the party with Akane, their children, spouses and grandchildren, and Quintin from New Zealand; also many nephews and nieces, great nephews, a great-niece, Caroline, who came with her father, Hugh, Marjorie's eldest, from Ottawa, great-great nephews, and many, many friends, who affectionately call her 'Auntie.' It was truly a very joyful occasion, as many of my aunts, cousins and Quintin I hadn't seen for many years, and my great nephews and great niece and the two first cousins twice removed I had never met before.

I couldn't help but think though that all this would never have happened if the birth control pill had been discovered 100 years ago. I may not have been here today to write this essay. We would have missed such a happy celebration with so many people we love. It has been argued that over population is a cause of our troubles today. If numbers continue to grow, it is said, the planet won't be able to sustain us

and there will be insufficient food and other resources for everybody. Even for those who do have sufficient, there will be standing room only. This may be an exaggeration but it could only be a concern to us if we disregard the Lord's command to seek first the Kingdom of God. He said that all *these things* would be added. He encouraged his hearers not to worry about things which we consider so necessary today; those material things, but rather to live only for God and for one another, and he seemed to suggest that they wouldn't go wanting.

However, I've noted that those who do seek first the Kingdom of God - I'm thinking of such people as Brunette, my nanny in Trinidad, *los campesinos* whom I have treated in Guatemala, and the *jellaheen* in Egypt, both Muslim and Christian - do indeed go wanting. They miss out on the very material things we consider so necessary. But they have something else instead in abundance; that is love, the kind of love which was in my grandparents' home.

Money should be no excuse for our smaller families today, since Grand-dad's stipend was peanuts, and yet he raised thirteen children. Besides he enjoyed his life to the fullest. He was a cricketer and played for Kent and England, but could never afford to join the team in Australia. He was also a beekeeper to satisfy the sweet tooth of the family. He also kept goats for their milk, which was Tb free, and chickens for their constant supply of eggs. There were rabbits galore in the fields, who with the help of Mickey, the vicarage mutt, would end in the pot, (though no one can entice me to a bowl of rabbit stew now.) Grand-Dad grew vegetables in the kitchen garden, and would occasionally make pastoral visits in his gardening cloths and gum boots, which endeared him

to the villagers. Apple trees in the back garden and blackberries from the hedgerows all around provided fruit. (My favorite pie is still blackberry and apple.)

Many of the chores were shared with the family, but it was always fun, blackberry outings turned into picnics. Little-Gran was always baking, and I still remember the wonderful smells from her kitchen. Grand-dad always made time for his daily offices, and mother, after she had brought him his slippers, would say Evening Prayer with him in the drawing room. He loved the English country side, and especially the birds that he could identify by their songs. He passed his passion for birds to Jack who became a noted English ornithologist, but also a country parson. It was in Jack and Phyl's home that mother and my brothers spent part of WWII, with their three sons, Robin, Peter-William and James, making six boys in the household, with whom we also enjoyed, as did our mothers, the simple pleasures and chores of vicarage life. (Sadly they have all died, but Peter's son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren were there.) Grand-dad left nothing to the family but his good name, and advice to each of his off spring on the eve of their wedding day; that their children would behave as little animals until they taught them not to.

I think we would all be better off with more people like my grandparents. Barack Obama has said that a man proves his manliness by supporting children, not just by pro-creating them. In that case Grand-dad was a super man, but he was also a *gentle*-man. My life would have been so much the poorer if he hadn't produced and then supported so many children, and we would all have missed out on one fabulous party!

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Christianity has blown it

Susan Westall's problem with the Athanasian Creed appears to be a) that Athanasius was not a nice man, and b) that the Athanasian formula is difficult, if not impossible, to understand from a logical viewpoint. Both these ideas are irrelevant to the truth of the Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity grew out of the consequences of making Jesus a secondary being to (i.e. a creation of) God while His own words called out to us that He was co-equal with God. "He who has seen Me has seen the Father;" is not just a figure of speech. Anything less than the idea of One God with three Personae strips away the Divinity of Jesus, and makes Him nothing more than the itinerant good man that some claim He was, and makes His death irrelevant to our salvation.

Now, were there heresies in the early centuries of Christianity? Sure there were. And it was important that they be set aside in order that a coherent vision of Christ be preached throughout the world. Most of the Gnostic beliefs were declared heresies

for good reason. Admittedly, burning the heretical texts was a useless idea, because someone would have eventually thought up the heresies all over again, and that does happen.

The concept of the Trinity is confusing and apparently contradictory because it is beyond our full understanding. We have neither the vocabulary nor the intelligence to fully comprehend God. The foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of human beings, and yea verily, sometimes we just have to accept things on faith. Athanasius did his best, but no-one should pretend that his statement is an explanation of the Trinity.

We have reached the point in our understanding and teaching of theology where Anglicans can question the reality of the Trinity and the Resurrection, where the filioque can be casually dropped from the Creed, and the Prayer of Humble Access gutted without anyone raising a protest. Perhaps, after all, Christianity has blown it.

ROGER N. TULK
St. Barnabas, St. Catharines

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Shifting the Prism

as a church. I would like to suggest that those relationships are grounded in the Gospel; in the love that Jesus had for his disciples, for God and for us. And our relationships with one another are at their best only when they reflect that love. Relationships grounded in Christ's selfless love are relationships that support each one of us in becoming whole, in being fully alive in God. Such relationships do not ask that the other behaves in ways that lack integrity. When one party in a relationship chooses action rooted only in a desire to be more loving, to be more inclusive, to be more like Christ, I would suggest that the loving response would be to honour that understanding, to support that desire to manifest the glory of God, humanity fully alive.

Finally, I'd like to go to where the Primate started; God has a mission and that mission has a Church. For us, that mission has the Anglican Church. I love the Anglican Church. It's my home, my buttress; the place where I am supported, affirmed and challenged, and where I am called

to love others in the same way. But I would like to suggest that sometimes God calls us to uphold the mission rather than the church. And I believe this is one such time. Just as some in the church were called to uphold freedom when the church espoused slavery; just as some in the church were called to ordain women when most espoused a male-dominated church; just as some in the church were called to consecrate women bishops when most decreed that call - so some are called to acknowledge God's blessing of the partnerships of same gender couples.

The Primate's emphasis on our togetherness really shone for me. We are all at the table to which God has invited us, and we are all called to stay at the table. But the invitation to be with one another is not an invitation to sameness. We can only discern the mind of Christ if we are present in the fullness of who God has called us to be. As the Primate said, our faith calls us to reshape the world around us and I would suggest that Niagara is doing just that.

Who will be a witness?



ELEANOR JOHNSTON
ST. THOMAS, ST. CATHARINES

The terms "Stormageddon" and "Snowageddon" were invented by the media predicting the snowstorms that battered Southern Ontario in the days before Christmas. These popular puns were uneasy jokes combining the words "storm" or "snow" with "Armageddon," three words that are objects of contemporary fear. By early January the terms had fallen out of use from overuse. Such is the fate of slang.

Their instant popularity is nonetheless intriguing. Major storms are now seen as signs of the extreme weather that humanity is suffering in these early



Important matters, such as how to respond to contemporary crises, should not be left in the hands of extreme right-wing thinkers.

days of climate change. The balance of nature seems lost and we, the victims of our own greed and willful ignorance, can expect increasingly chaotic and violent storms. We scoffed when the 2004 Asian Tsunami and the 2005 Hurricane Katrina were interpreted as God's punishment of humanity's sins. Now, the term, "Stormageddon," suggests a new level of panic. Not only is God using Nature to punish human sins; Mother Nature, long the victim of mankind's exploitation, is seen to be consciously fighting back, like a wily and malevolent monster.

Scientists who claim to have a more objective explanation than this simplistic, quasi-religious teleology of sin and punishment also disagree with each other on how to interpret our winter storms. Some say that December's weather was just normal winter storms. Others say that these storms resulted from climate change and that we will experience even more destructive weather in the future as the "balance" of nature goes more off-kilter. In other words, science doesn't help much.

Since our business is theological, let's return to the varieties of theological interpretations of this subject. The usual argument is between end-times fundamentalist theology that focuses on the evils of those who are not "born again" on the one hand and, on the other, the mainstream which espouses the God of Love and Life, Christ who heals and teaches, and the Holy Spirit here and now as we do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God. When it comes to environmental issues, right-wing churches have generally been content to ignore the care of the planet whereas more liberal churches have felt the need to be active stewards of God's creation.

A theology of fear

What is most amazing about the term, "Stormageddon," therefore, is that it sounds like a new kind of environmentalism: fear-mongering using the right-wing eschatology of "Armageddon." And what is dangerous about our society's immediate grasp and acceptance of the term was our acceptance of a theology of fear. Is primitive retribution what we really believe in when we watch the apparent breakdown of our weather (and our economic system, for that matter)? As a leader of many community groups has told me, if you want to get people to do something, "give them fear or beer." This strategy may work in the short-term, but Christians are called to appeal to the love of God and to work for the common good. Out of fear, greed and ignorance we march with the likes of Hitler.

A positive strategy against fear-mongering is to explore a Biblically-based theology for our time. Modern theology? First, we need to get used to being labeled radical or weird. Many of our leaders, both ecclesiastical (the bishops) and theological (the professors of our priests in training), read and accept what is frequently called "Progressive Christianity." But still, new theologians such as Marcus Borg and other modern Biblical scholars are condemned by those who have not read them, those who support a theology of judgment and punishment, those who label all innovative thinkers heretics. I invite the great majority of Anglicans who generally try to avoid theological controversy to look at these new thinkers with confidence and urgency. Important matters, such as how to respond to contemporary crises, should not be left in the hands of extreme right-wing (or extreme left-wing) thinkers.

The power of love

For believers who find reading theology too abstract (or just plain dull), there are accessible writers of fiction who, like Progressive Christian theologians, emphasize the power of love. One such contemporary Anglican writer, popular with children and adults worldwide, is J. K. Rowling, creator of the Harry Potter series. Typically, Rowling has been criticized, usually by those who haven't read her novels, for promoting witchcraft and evil. This is the nonsense she addresses in "The Tales of Beedle the Bard," her recently-published collection of fairy tales. A major character from the Harry Potter series, Professor Dumbledore, comments on the tales, emphasizing "their themes of generosity, tolerance and love" and explaining that no magician has "managed to create the truly unbreakable, eternal, unconditional attachment that alone can be called 'Love.'"

Like the British C. S. Lewis and the American Madeleine L'Engle, 20th century Anglican authors who wrote children's fantasies highly popular with adults, Rowling has heroes who suffer very human conflicts and emotions and display very human weak-

nesses and doubts. Magic does not solve their problems. The main themes of all these authors are the life-giving power of love and the heroism of characters who base their actions on love.

What Rowling rails against is the denigration of the intellect. "The Tales of Beedle the Bard" is a criticism of the sweet pieties of Beatrix Potter's "The Tales of Peter Rabbit and Mr. McGregor's Garden" (1901). Since that book became famous, children's entertainment has been overrun by cute inanities, such as the Walt Disney's cartoons that sugar over the real problems, the real emotions found in classic children's stories such as those of the Brothers Grimm. Robert Munsch, the brilliant Canadian children's author, is another religious writer attacked by those too fearful to appreciate the deeply affirmative and thoughtful themes in his works.


Theological Junk Food

As a society fascinated by evil and love, we are afraid of the real thing. The staples of popular culture are war and rumors of war, tsunami, constitutional crisis, collapsed bridge, gun "play" (another strange term), organized crime, child abuse, avalanche, murder, economic chaos and scandal, preferably involving American movie stars or British royalty. These distractions speak to deep-seated fears in our psyches that we don't want to look at and analyze. We want easy answers and so we get angry at Rowling when she introduces a truly evil character such as Voldemort; we prefer a campy, vaudevillian kind of bad guy.

The hysterical (pun intended) pun, "Stormageddon," then, is the theological equivalent of junk food. Deep theology and slow thought celebrate the Christ "born in us anew." It takes patience and strength to read the book of our times from Christ's positive perspective and then to take constructive action in our everyday world. With the Christmas message of incarnation as our backbone, we can witness both the love and the evil around us.

One hopeful development is a fruit of new communications technologies. On the talk shows of the CBC and the American National Public Radio (88.7 Buffalo), listeners are invited to express their varied and generally constructive observations; instead of hearing the thoughts of a few paid reporters, we profit from the richness of many thinkers committed to maintaining the well-being of society. Younger citizens express themselves through blogging. "News" is now often captured on video by bystanders' cell phones. Freeware, the sharing of knowledge as opposed to profiting from patent or copyright, is the refusal to play the old game of "monopoly." We can all be witnesses.

Quiz question: What did Christians of the Middle Ages believe were the Seven Heavenly Virtues? Answer: Faith, hope, love, prudence, temperance, courage and justice. The Seven Deadly Sins? Here's a hint: all are based on the fear that separates us from God.



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Moving forward in the third millennium

As noted, emerging church can be stand-alone projects affiliated with a traditional ministry or they can share worship space in a host parish. In either case they are mixed economy. It is important for the success of these projects that lay and ordained leadership merge. However it is also important that leadership boundaries be properly established and well defined. That is, what lay leaders can and can not do and what clergy must do. For example if there are no sacraments being celebrated it may not be necessary for ordained clergy to be present to legitimize the authenticity of lay lead worship. Also the leadership team must be prepared to adapt to the change in group dynamics when new members enter with new energies and new ideas. It is this fluidity and continued openness to change that encourages the work of the Holy Spirit in the community.

Preliminary action plan

The national and/or regional church leaders should encourage new styles of worship to minister to the post-modern generation and beyond while at the same time not alienating the existing traditional membership.

A flatter worship leadership structure must be encouraged where the skills of laity can be combined with those of clergy to offer a more participatory worship experience.

We need to realize that weekly Eucharist may be a barrier for some who are seeking a Christian experience, but do not yet believe.

Move parish thinking from maintenance, membership and structure back to mission, discipleship and community.

Encourage more effective use of websites to reach out to seekers and spread the Word.

One of the easiest entry points for change is the development of an alternative worship experience where the use of flexible seating and technology is encouraged to engage post-modern participation. This type of service might have a praise team instead of an organ and choir, encourage joy and laughter, not have a set liturgy, not celebrate Eucharist on every occasion, use still and video imagery to supplement and enhance the worship experience.

In conclusion, new forms of church often attract younger folks or people at the fringe of society who don't have

the financial resources to support the infrastructure of inherited church. This means, to be successful emerging church will have to operate on a much reduced budget from what traditional church is accustomed to.

Following are some examples of Fresh Expressions of Church that are currently operating in England (some of these ideas already exist in Canada in non-traditional church communities);

Café church

People meet in a local coffee shop to discuss their faith in an informal environment. They began with varied clientele (singles, families etc) and are showed a video followed by discussion. The program evolves with the discussion and input of the whole group.

East meets west church

Church for Asians - people of other cultures and faiths don't know what to do when they enter a church so they often feel threatened. A non-threatening environment is created, often lead by a Christian from that culture, with the understanding that it is OK to be a follower of Jesus without losing their cultural identity.

Messy church - new congregation

Families attend together perhaps, once or twice a month, to focus on arts and crafts followed by a short worship service and a meal. Focus is on family time together and fun.

Network church

Create spaces where people can meet and discuss the worship theme of the evening. Have a variety of styles of worship as some people engage through music or arts or meditation etc. Meet in small groups in many places including hotels.

Cell church

Geared to ages 18-40. Based on a series of small groups meeting in people's homes. Each cell has 8-12 people. The idea is to grow and multiply (this is different from small group bible studies where there is no growth strategy). People come in as they know someone - meeting with friends for coffee at someone's house is not threatening for newcomers who might be intimidated going into a "traditional" church. Cells come together once a month in corporate worship.

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From candles to ashes

One of the traditions around this feast, and from whence it gets one of its 'other' names, *Candlemas*, is that candles to be used in the ensuing year are blessed and set aside for use in the Church. This tradition arose because of the use of 'light' imagery in Simeon's speech in the temple. Hence, we begin the month with one of our most elementary Church symbols: candles. Come the 25th of February this year, we keep the holy day we call 'Ash Wednesday' - the first day of Lent, a most important and symbolic day for us all. A day in which we acknowledge our own mortality and frailty and, to those haunting words: *Remember, you are dust and to dust you shall return* we have a cross of ashes imposed on our foreheads. Another deep and important symbol.

We Anglicans have great affection for our symbols and we make important use of them. Many of these symbols - the cross, candles, ashes, bells, holy water, incense, the sign of the cross we make, even the symbolic clothes we wear - white albs, seasonally coloured chasubles, copes, maniples, mitres, stoles, crosses around our necks - all of these are symbols of our faith and our church - some are very simple; some are more complex. All work at different levels - candles provide light and remind us

of the presence of Christ in our lives. As we gaze on flickering candles, we 'see' things around us in a new light. Ashes - made from burning the blessed palms of the preceding Holy Week, remind us of our own mortality; because we use the form of the cross to 'mark' them, they also remind us of our immortality. To those we meet on Ash Wednesday, we demonstrate in a real way, our faith and our commitment to the cross of Christ.

Incense, often one of the most 'controversial' symbols amongst Anglicans, involves our olfactory sense and also symbolizes our prayer, rising as the smoke rises. Long a means of 'purifying' the air (hearkens to yet another name we have for Candlemas - *The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary*); incense transforms the space we are in and, for many, deepens their experience of the holy.

From the most basic of our symbols - the cross - so omnipresent in nature, in architecture, in our churches to the most complex - perhaps the vast array of vesture with which we clothe our churches and our clergy - symbols surround and strengthen us. They speak to us at deep and sometimes inexpressible levels. It is fascinating to see how significant a source of reflection and prayer a bank of votive candles can be, for example.

For some, these symbols are uncomfortable; strongly disliked, even. For others, they are an integral part of their personal devotional lives. Each of these many signs and symbols can be of great importance; none is 'required'. The great strength of Anglicanism is that we can be broad enough to accept and use these symbols in ways which are appropriate and meaningful to each one of us, and to the communities of which we are a part. The good old adage: 'All may, none must, some should' applies perfectly to all of these. We should all encourage those who plan and lead worship to try some of these symbolic things; to help us experience them; some we will like; others we will not. That's perfectly OK.

If you have not experienced a *Candlemas* observance in which boxes and boxes of candles have been blessed, followed, often, by a Procession 'round the Church with everyone holding aloft a taper, signifying that light about which we sing, try it - it can be a transformative moment. If you've never quite reached the point where you have had ashes marked on your forehead, why not experience it this year - it is powerful and deeply moving.

Have a great - and *symbolic* - February! Happy Candlemas! Happy Ash Wednesday!

EVENTS

Annual Vestry Meeting

St. Alban the Martyr, Hamilton
Immediately following our 10:00 AM Eucharist Service we will enjoy a soup and sandwich lunch before we begin our annual meeting.
February 1, 12:00 PM

Woodwind Concert

St. John's, York
Come and cheer yourself out of the winter blues or just come to enjoy great music. Compass Rose Quintet will be giving a concert with a variety of music from Gilbert and Sullivan to Mozart. Refreshments will be available.
Cost: Adults \$10, Children \$5, Families \$25
February 1, 3:00 PM

John Bell Conference

St. Christopher, Burlington
February 5, 7:30 PM - Music from the Iona Community especially for choirs and those who love to sing; February 6, 9:30 AM-3:30 PM - Worship for Holy Week and Easter; February 7, 9:30 AM-3:30 PM - Celtic Spirituality: Ancient Gifts for Modern Times. For more information, visit our website at: www.stchristophersburlington.com.
February 5-7

Beer & Blues Tasting

Transfiguration, St. Catharines
Plans are now heating up for an evening of fine foods, beer tasting and great music. Music tasting will trace the birth of the blues to early rock. So bring your family members, friends and neighbours for a fun night. What a great way to raise funds for Transfiguration and fight the February 'Blahs'.
Cost: \$20.00 per person (includes food and beer tasting tickets)
February 6, 7:00 PM

Follow the Soul Train

St. Paul's, Fort Erie
Choralis Cameraata Chamber Choir in concert at St. Paul's.
Cost: Adults \$22, Students \$15
February 8, 2:00 p.m.

Martin Mans Organ Recital

St. Luke, Burlington
We are honoured that this world famous Dutch organist has chosen St. Luke's as the site of one of his North American recitals. We expect a large Dutch/Canadian audience so book you tickets early. As usual calling 905-639-7643 will reserve tickets for you. Series tickets are \$90. Seating is limited so please order your tickets early to avoid disappointment.
February 11

Valentines Dinner Dance

St. Paul's, Fort Erie
Chef Abdul Manan-Arefi will prepare an amazing meal followed by a dance.
Cost: \$60.00 per couple
February 14, 6:00 PM

Tobagganing

St. Cuthbert's, Oakville
A snow covered hill, new and old friends and an opportunity to enjoy a truly Canadian tradition!
February 22, 1:00 PM

Bread and Wine People

St. Cuthbert's, Oakville
Join us for an intergenerational worship experience as together we explore our full participation in the Eucharist.
February 22, 10:00 AM

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

St. Columba, St. Catharines
Join St. Columba on February 24 for the best pancakes in town.

Cost: Adults \$5, Children \$3
February 24, 4:30 PM-6:00 PM

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

St. John's, Ancaster
Come and join us for a delicious pancake supper, including ham, sausages, desserts and refreshments. Purchase your tickets through the office or at the door. Office Number 905-648-2353.
Cost: Adults \$10, Children (under 11) \$8, Families \$30
February 24, 5:00 PM-7:00 PM

St Elizabeth's Burlington, Pancake Supper

St. Elizabeth's, Burlington
Come and enjoy the best pancakes in the area and join in a social time with your neighbours.
Cost: \$6.00 per person
February 24, 5:30 PM-7:00 PM

Social Night

St. Columba, St. Catharines
Another night of fun, cards, laughter, snacks and prizes. Couples and Singles Welcome.
Cost: \$2.00 per person
February 28, 7:00 PM

Servers Fest

Diocesan Program Department, Hamilton
Servers gather at Christ's Church Cathedral, Hamilton from across the diocese to show appreciation of their ministry, to build community and network and to celebrate their gifts and what they offer in regular parish worship. For more information contact Christyn Perkons at 905-527-1316 x460.
Cost: \$10.00 per person
February 28, 9:30 AM

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PARISH NEWS

A visioning vestry at the Ascension

PETER SWIRE
ASCENSION HAMILTON

At the Ascension's Visioning Vestry, held on January 11th, members of the parish broke into eight table groups to discuss and share the Bishop's Vision for a reinvigorated Church. Armed with markers and flip chart paper, the small table groups discussed the content of the vision and placed that through the filter of a large, historic church struggling with financial and demographic issues as many of our sister parishes have seen for years. Group and group reported their discussions to the whole with some degree of commonality.

What was abundantly clear is that the *status quo does not work!*

The bunker mentality of trying to survive was curtailing the opportunity to help the Corktown neighbourhood just outside our Church walls. While the vestry may not have realized it, they were doing a very simple SWOT analysis.

One of the historical strengths of the Ascension was the realization that there are hungry kids in our local schools. This was met with a breakfast program supporting the children at Queen Victoria School. Due to that school's recent closure, it has provided the parish with

an opportunity to reflect on its baptismal servant role by helping those less fortunate. Our rector, Canon Kristine Swire, and a cross section of the parish leadership believe the time is ripe to restart the program once the rebuilt Queen Victoria School has opened. Preliminary discussions with local business leaders believe that the community can get behind this with the Ascension as the driver. Building partnerships for community outreach with the Church at the forefront – where have we heard this before?

Plenary discussions included how we draw the circle wider by inviting more people into our Church through connecting with the community. A heart felt statement from one younger mother inviting the parish to shift the demographic to a more balanced profile drew applause as we all knew that we do need to shift our age profile through a warm invitation to share the Christian message of hope and love in these troubled times.

As the meeting drew to a close, we realized that a lot of work needs to be done to refocus and grow the parish. We are up to the task. Canon Swire stated that we are not in this alone – our Bishop and the Synod Office has resources to guide us when we ask.

World renowned organist to play at St. James Dundas

ERIC OSBORNE
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC, ST. JAMES DUNDAS

Christopher Herrick is no stranger to some of the world's finest organs. His career has taken him from St. Paul's Cathedral as a boy chorister to Exeter College, Oxford University as an organ scholar and to Westminster Abbey. During Herrick's ten years at the Abbey he played for many Royal and State occasions, including the state funeral of Lord Mountbatten, the funeral service for Herbert Howells, and for both the 80th birthday concert and the funeral service of Sir William Walton. And now he will come to play at St. James Dundas on Friday March 20th at 8:00 p.m. as part of the Musica St. James Concert series.

The New York Times music critic wrote in 1998: 'He is a virtuoso, no question. He was at the peak of his considerable form, combining precision with panache, interpretive freedom with sheer joy in virtuosity. The playing was, in a word, triumphal.' At that time, Herrick played the complete organ works of Bach during the 1998 Lincoln Center Festival. The invitation to undertake this challenging project - to give fourteen concerts on fourteen consecutive days - came directly because of the success of his complete Bach organ works recordings.

Since 1984, he has enjoyed a highly successful career as an international concert organist. Highlights include playing his own 'Organ Prom' in the BBC Henry Wood Promenade Concerts at the Royal Albert Hall, giving the opening concert at the Stockholm International Organ Festival and three inaugural concerts on the Rieger organ in Christchurch Town Hall, New Zealand, as well as dedicating numerous organs in North America, including the Létourneau organ at Edmonton's Winspear Centre Concert Hall.

2009 is a very special anniversary year for Christopher Herrick. It will be 25 years since his first CD recording for Hyperion 'Organ Fireworks from Westminster Abbey'. It is also 40 years since Vista issued his first ever commercial disc, 'Organ Music from St Paul's Cathedral'. By the middle of 2009 he will have recorded 40 solo discs for Hyperion, the Organ Fireworks and Organ Dreams series, Buxtehude, Daquin, Sweelinck, Rheinberger and the complete organ works of Bach.

Herrick's concert will feature works by Bach, Vierne, Bartók, and Guillemant. Tickets (\$20) are available at the door or in advance from the church office. For more information please call 905-627-1424.

Rededication of Mary Magdalene and Ruth Windows

St. James the Apostle's stained glass windows rededicated at St. Michael's



SUE CRAWFORD
ST. MICHAEL'S HAMILTON MOUNTAIN

When St. James the Apostle Church (Hamilton) was disestablished on May 2, 2004, little did the congregation realize that many of the stained glass windows that adorned their church walls would continue to shine light into the lives of other churches and congregations.

St. Michael's has already reported (Niagara Anglican, November 2007) that their St. Michael window was rededicated. On Sunday December 7th, 2008, Canon Patrick Doran (St. Michael's long-term interim) rededicated two new light box stained glass windows. The Mary Magdalene window was rededicated to David Maxwell Gibson by his wife Joan Gibson. The Ruth window was rededicated in the name of Walter John Whitlock by his wife Gwen Whitlock. Some of the children in the parish arrived a little late for the actual rededication, but Paddy took the time to take them back to where the windows were mounted and related the story of their rededication to them.

The Mary Magdalene window was originally dedicated to the Glory of God in memory of Ellen Huscroft, wife of John Charles Baylis (1850-1923) along with their daughter Elizabeth (1876-1966) and son Albert 1892-1916 who gave his life for his country.

The Ruth window was originally dedicated to the Glory of God and in loving memory of James, Emily and Jack Adamson given by friend James Monaghan.

I had hoped to find out the history behind the original dedications of both windows, but Archdeacon John Rathbone, with whom I spoke at Cathedral Place, was unable to unearth anything. I appreciate the information that Archdeacon Rathbone was able to give to me in order to write this article.

If any one who reads this article has knowledge of one or other of these



original dedications, the families mentioned in the dedications or who was a former parishioner at St. James who might know more about the history, our church and I am sure the Diocese would be most pleased to find out more information on the families to whom the original windows were dedicated. We certainly invite former parishioners

of St. James to visit our church to view the stained glass windows in their new settings. We are delighted with their addition to the nave of our church. We also thank Joan and Gwen very much for their generous donations to have the stained glass windows remounted to the Glory of God and in memory of their wonderful husbands.

Need Assistance with Parish Accessibility?

In the spring of this year the Federal Government made available funds to assist large and small organizations with accessibility.

If you have any intentions in improving your accessibility issues in the parish please contact Ken Schroeder, Bishop's Advisory Committee on Church Buildings, at 905-561-7023. He will be pleased to help you with the process.

SHOOT READY AIM »

Summer thoughts in winter

HOLLIS HISCOCK

INTERIM RECTOR, ST. GEORGE'S GUELPH

SHOOT - The photograph

Labour Day 2008 was a day to remember.

We walked the sandy shores of Lake Ontario near Burlington, Ontario. The blazing sun heated the sand to temperatures almost unbearable for human feet. Children romped gleefully in the tepid water amidst shouts of fun and laughter. Adults reclined in lounge chairs, threw Frisbees or cooked gourmet wieners on portable barbecues... a summer experience etched in thousands of memories, to be recalled from the mind's filing cabinet a half a year later to help ease the wintry days of snow storms, biting winds and freezing temperatures.

But the boats, of all shapes and sizes, bouncing lazily on the gentle wave-rippled lake was the image which was captured both in my mind and on my camera. I thought, 'this scene would be fantastic for my February article in the Niagara Anglican'. So here it is. Enjoy this last year's memory as we eagerly anticipate creating new memories this coming summer.

READY - Words behind the photo

Boats, like people, come in a myriad of sizes and shapes, and have talents to be employed in a variety of waterways and ocean conditions. You only have to picture the cruise ship, the oil tanker, the cargo barge, the sailboat, the motored recreational jetski, the canoe, the gondola, etc. to illustrate my point.

The 'ship' symbol appears throughout the Bible and is prominent in the

teachings of Jesus Christ. In fact, the design of most traditional church buildings resembles the architectural plans of a ship, albeit upside down.

So it is not surprising that religious writers, serious and humorous, would include nautical images to describe the variety of people who make up their communities. One humorist described Christians as follows:

Three kinds of Christians...

■ **ROWBOAT CHRISTIANS...** have to be pushed wherever they go.

■ **SAILBOAT CHRISTIANS...** always go with the wind.

■ **STEAMBOAT CHRISTIANS...** make up their minds where they ought to go, and go, regardless of wind or weather.

Jesus must have had the STEAMBOAT CHRISTIANS in mind when He performed the miracle which we dub 'the calming of the storm' (Mark 4:35-41). An account of this miracle is also included in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, but I prefer Mark, because it has added details to help us in our reactions to the storms in our lives, and to refine our understanding of and relationship with God.

As I read the account of this miracle, here are the poignant features upon which I focus.

■ As Jesus and His disciples headed across the lake in their boat, 'other boats were with them'. We never traverse this life without having the company of others. They may be family, friends and colleagues, or they may be others, even unknown to us, whose lives are interwoven with ours. They follow to see where we are going,



what we are doing and how we will get there. Other 'boats' (lives) are affected by what is happening in our boat (life).

■ After calming the wind and waves, Jesus asked His disciples, 'why are you so frightened? Do you still have no faith?'. I wonder if the people in the 'other boats' accompanying Jesus reacted similarly. We can pose the same question to ourselves as Christians when we face personal, social, emotional, intellectual and other upheavals in life. As global citizens our local situations are affected by national and international occurrences, and our faith is there to act as a bulwark against the economic down-

turns and violent tragedies buffering our world.

■ 'Who is this man?' is the very haunting query posed by the disciples. They knew externally it was their friend and companion, Jesus, with whom they had ministered for several years. However, there were dimensions of the man standing before them, giving commands to the forces of nature and being obeyed, which the disciples could not fully comprehend and left them in a state of awe. We could ask ourselves, 'how well do we know this Jesus?'.

AIM - Questions and actions for you
■ Read the calming of the storm in

Mark (4:35-41), Luke (8:22-25) and Matthew (8:23-27) and compare them.

■ How are other boats (people) affected by what you do in life?

■ What role does your faith play during the times of life which frighten you?

■ Answer the disciples' question for yourself, 'Who is this man?' (Jesus).

■ Hollis would appreciate your feedback on this series.

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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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