



Niagara Anglican

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NEWS • PERSPECTIVE • REFLECTION • FOR A GROWING CHURCH • JUNE 2009

Fresh Expressions: A mixed economy approach!



ANDY KALBFLEISCH
MISSION STRATEGY COMMITTEE

On Saturday May 9, over eighty people, clergy and lay from Niagara and Huron attended our first Fresh Expression Vision Day at St. James Dundas. Over twenty parishes were represented with some bringing teams of four or more. Presenters Nick Brotherhood and Ryan Sim led the group through a variety of video and PowerPoint presentations as well as interactive, hands on activities designed to help participants to think about doing church in new and innovative ways to reach out to the unchurched and dechurched alike.

The day emphasized a mixed economy approach to mission, where fresh expressions of church and traditional forms of church as we know them appear together. We concluded with a question and answer session where Bishop Michael joined the panel and articulated his passion for the role Fresh Expressions will play in the Diocesan Vision.

New Hall, New Opportunities

In the spring of 2008 the people of St. James and St. Brendan were faced with both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge was addressing the problems with the historic, but dilapidated Guild Hall. It was run down, inefficient, and across the street from the church which presented its own set of problems. But along with the challenge came a great opportunity: the opportunity to completely rethink our presence and ministry in our city of Port Colborne.

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Members of Youth Synod gather outside St. Christopher's Church in Burlington.

One to many: The power of community



CHRISTYN PERKONS
MINISTRY CONSULTANT

"You have the power to change the world," said Caustan de Riggs, from the 'Me to We Darfur Now' speaking tour, as he addressed the delegates of Youth Synod 2009 on Friday, May 1st at St. Christopher's Burlington. And indeed, those delegates were agents of change as they made strong commitments to advocating for the end of genocide in Darfur and educating people at their parishes and schools about the crisis in the Sudan. They sent postcards to Prime Minister Stephen Harper urging him to take a more proactive role in the crisis, and they called 1-800-GENOCID(E)

to leave voice mails about the same issue for the Prime Minister and their MPs.

These change agents, ranging in age from 13 to 21, emptied their pockets of change and sent \$165 to Me to We for clean water projects in Darfur in addition to the \$345 they had already donated at registration for Free the Children's project liberating children from sweatshop labour. But they did far more than ask leaders to take action! They committed themselves to becoming mindful consumers; to donating saved money to their churches or other charities, and to becoming part of their parish stewardship teams. Delegates will be asking their local municipalities and schools to fly the rainbow flag on International Day against Homophobia, and they challenged themselves to offer support to those who have been hurt by homophobic language.

They vowed to take a stand against homophobia and bullying wherever they encounter either. At the successful passing of the Homophobia motion, delegates presented a rainbow flag to St. Christopher's asking them to fly the flag every May 17. The delegates pledged to volunteer their time and energy to a youth ambassador program that connects parishes to diocesan youth ministry events, and is a presence at diocesan events.

And they didn't stop at challenging themselves! They invited the church to use gender-neutral language in liturgy in diocesan worship services; asked the Diocesan Youth Ministry Committee and the Program Consultants to set up the Youth Ambassador Program, and to provide training to volunteer staff and Youth Ministry program participants about bullying. Finally, the delegates of Youth Synod 2009 affirmed the Diocesan vision and resolved to continue the leader-

ship role of Youth Ministry as the vision unfolds and they invited Bishop Michael to affirm his commitment to living out the diocesan vision in partnership with them.

Youth Synod would not happen without the fabulous volunteers from our host parishes; this time, St. Christopher's whose many volunteers were welcoming, interested in the delegates, and very engaged with the whole process. The time and talents of the small group leaders, the delegates, and very engaged with the whole process. The time and talents of the delegates, and very engaged with the whole process. The time and talents of the delegates, and very engaged with the whole process. The time and talents of the delegates, and very engaged with the whole process.



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New hall, new opportunities



By faith, the parish undertook a sizeable renovation project that would ultimately see the Guild Hall become the new face of our parish to the community. It was no small undertaking for a parish of our size. We embarked upon a three year financial campaign, applied for financial grants, and dipped into our savings. But what was the purpose? To simply restore a beautiful old building, and continue on with ministry as we had before? No! Along with these renovations our parish re-launched our ministry into the community in fresh and new ways. Several intentional changes were included in the work that held the keys to new ministry.

The first intentional change was the incorporation of a fully-functioning, storefront café where the old nursery used to be (who wants to leave their baby across the street when they come

to church anyways?). The HUB was intentionally designed to be a "youth-friendly" but "all ages" café serving fairly traded coffee and tea, as well as standard café fare (sandwiches, soup, cookies, biscotti, nachos, pizza, etc.) A common refrain among Port Colborne's youth is that there is "nothing to do" and "nowhere to go". The HUB was created to intentionally address both of these concerns. To this end, Aaron Moore was recruited to be the café manager and through hard work and community connections The HUB is now open 40-50 hours a week, largely staffed by volunteers. Aaron states that "our goal is to become a cool, safe place for kids to connect in Port Colborne." Since opening its doors in October 2008 The HUB has launched weekly after school programs, open mic nights, karaoke com-

petitions, video game tournaments, as well as monthly band shows. And the first ever Church at the HUB was held on March 29th. This aims to be an inter-denominational, monthly youth service with live music, video and discussion.

The second adaptation of the renovation project to the new hall was the creation of a small-scale cinema that has become known as the Cinema at the Guild. There is no movie theatre in Port Colborne, the nearest ones being in Wexford, Niagara Falls, or St. Catharines. We felt this was another way we could meet a need in our city that would enable us to build community at the same time. Therefore, the renovations included the installation of quality sound and video equipment, partitions, lights, and even a popcorn maker. Of course the necessary licenses were acquired that enable us to show first run movies (not yet on video) and even charge admission! Bradley Shea jumped at the opportunity to manage the Cinema and has also been recruiting community volunteers to assist him. "As manager of the cinema I am proud of the opportunity we have to provide affordable entertainment for those within our community," says Bradley. The Cinema at the Guild is catching on and presently three or four movies are shown per week. Included in this schedule of movies is a monthly event known as "Reel-Faith". On the last Wednesday of every month a

small faith community is growing around the love of films: the community gathers to watch a movie (one with meaningful spiritual connections) and is followed by a time of discussion and prayer (in The HUB of course!).

A third intentional decision of the church was to use the newly renovated hall as the location of an artisan's market. The Marketplace runs every Friday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and capitalizes on the Farmer's Market that runs concurrently across the street. Already more than a dozen vendors from the local community have set up tables in the hall on a regular basis and this number is growing. Marie Butt has taken The Marketplace under her wing and in doing so has made the Guild Hall a weekly destination for many local shoppers. "The only provision for marketeers is that their products are locally produced or hand made." Hence on any given Friday, dozens of shoppers venture into the hall to find artisanal breads, soy candles, hand made jewellery, or unique pottery. The ladies of St. James and St. Brendan have begun serving breakfast every week at this event with many 'regulars' making their weekly visit.

While The HUB, the Cinema at the Guild, and The Marketplace are new initiatives, many of our existing programs have continued and even expanded with the hall's renovation:

a high school class is taught out of the Guild Hall, Youth Dances run every two weeks (now through the summer with the inclusion of Air Conditioning), Out of the Cold serves meals every week, quarterly seniors dances are being run in conjunction with "Just for Seniors", and the hall is now a much in demand building for rental by outside user groups.

The most exciting thing about these new ministries and initiatives is the way they feed into each other. For example, a woman visiting the Marketplace may also grab a coffee at The HUB and pick up a schedule of upcoming shows at the Cinema. Perhaps a week later she sends her daughter to a homework program at The HUB and the mother returns to participate in the monthly "Reel-Faith" discussion forum. In this system, needs are being met, community is being built, and faith is being nurtured.

The people of St. James and St. Brendan have stepped out in faith by putting some exciting new spins on something as boring as a 'parish hall'. What once was an obstacle has become an opportunity to do ministry in a new way. We all look forward to seeing how God leads us across the street and into the community.

Written by Marie Butt, Chris Rasch, Linda Lamarche and Robert Hurkmans of St. James and St. Brendan in Port Colborne

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Anglicans need their own Vatican II



We're depending on a Vatican II theology which was never really ours to begin with and which is now showing signs of age... we need to discern our distinctive theologically grounded mission.

ALAN L. HAYES
THE ITINERANT CHURCHGOER

Fifty years ago the pope announced the Second Vatican Council. That changed Anglicanism forever.

That's my conclusion after completing a little historical project. I went through every issue of the *Canadian Churchman* (now called the *Anglican Journal*) between 1959 and 1967 and every General Synod journal between 1950 and 1969 to gauge the impact of Vatican II on Canadian Anglicans.

Stuffy anglophilia

Some readers may remember what the Church of England in Canada was like in the 1950s. Union jacks on church walls, toasts to the queen at church dinners, and loyal addresses to the queen at synods. On Sundays, sixteenth-century liturgy, sentimental Victorian hymns, and lots of prayers for the queen, culminating in an earnest "God save the Queen." An English accent gave clergy an edge for the best pulpits and the best salaries. Anglicans had a reputation for being—how do I put this delicately? Kind of stuffy.

In most places, that ethos couldn't and didn't survive the 1960s. There were lots of reasons why stuffy quaint anglophilia could no longer serve as the defining characteristic of Canadian Anglicanism. Maybe sometime I'll talk about those reasons. But for now, let me focus on how Anglicans tried to build a new identity for themselves.

Some advocated "secular theology". Others liked Billy Graham. A charismatic renewal broke out in several parts of the Anglican world. Many gushed over interpersonal training groups. Several envisioned a non-institutional religion. ("People are leaving the church and going back to God," said the comedian Shelley Bertram.) Some of these alternatives had friends and supporters in Very High Places. But none took hold.

Anglican Congress

A global Anglican Congress brought thousands of people to Toronto in

1963. The archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Ramsey, gave one of the most brilliant Anglican orations of the twentieth century. People for a few weeks felt a huge sense of renewal and a great enthusiasm for mission. But, afterwards, there lacked the leadership in Canada and elsewhere to build on it. Within a year or two, all that was left of the Anglican Congress, so far as most people in the pew were concerned, was documents gathering dust on a shelf.

So many false starts! But then between 1962 and 1965, Vatican II happened. "Hold onto your hats!" said George Luxton, the Anglican bishop of Huron, in the Canadian Churchman. He had gone to Rome, checked in on the Vatican Council, and secured an audience with the pope. He was blown away by the Roman Catholic Church's new and totally unexpected spirit of self-criticism, its re-thinking of Christian basics, its ressourcement (its return to essential sources, especially Scripture), and its *aggiornamento* (its passion to come to faithful terms with the modern world). Luxton wanted Anglicans to follow suit, and he wasn't the only one.

The main Canadian Anglican interpreters of the Council were George Wheeler, a Wycliffe graduate, and Eugene Fairweather, a professor at Trinity College. Both had taken courses at St. Michael's College, the Roman Catholic university in Toronto. Both went to the Vatican Council and were transformed by it. (You can read Fairweather's diaries in the Trinity archives.) They both wrote scores of articles and spoke at scores of church events.

The TST

The Toronto School of Theology was formed in 1969, and as a result, students at Trinity and Wycliffe, which trained most of the country's Anglican clergy, began to take many of their courses at St. Michael's and Regis Colleges, which happened to have some of the most brilliant Roman Catholic theologians in the English-speaking world. Anglicans and Roman Catholics started formal dialogue groups. Anglican leaders read and digested the Vatican II documents, which were passionate, intelligent, and persuasive. The fruits of Vatican II were ripening in the Anglican climate.

In the 1960s, under a kindly but weak primate, Canadian Anglicans accomplished rather little that was good (but quite a bit that was bad). But between 1971 and 1986, when Archbishop Ted Scott was primate, it was time to "hold onto your hats". Vatican II blew in strongly.

It was most obvious in liturgy, where Eugene Fairweather and two of his students (William Crockett and David Holeton) were among the dominant architects of the *Book of Alterna-*

tive Services. Indeed, the Eucharist in the BAS isn't easily distinguishable from the Vatican II mass. But you could also see the influence of Vatican II elsewhere in Canadian Anglicanism: in the Church's recommitment to social justice, in reforms of theological education, in huge new opportunities for lay ministry, in the reinvigoration of Anglican monasteries and convents, in the flourishing of ecumenical agencies, and in new ventures of inter-faith dialogue.

I think you could see it too in the ordination of women. Of course Vatican II didn't endorse the ordination of women, but it did open the way for nuns and sisters to take higher theological education and assume more visible roles of ministry. One who did was Sister Anne Anderson, C.S.J. (Hamilton), who in January this year became the first woman president of St. Michael's College.

Abrupt end

The excitement stopped pretty abruptly in 1986, among both Anglicans and Roman Catholics. The church historians I talk to aren't agreed on the reasons. It may have to do with the explosion of clergy malpractice issues, church sexual abuse scandals, and then residential school revelations, all of which sapped the Church's energy and damaged its credibility.

But by 1986 the Anglican Church of Canada had become, in its liturgical and missiological core, a Vatican II institution. To my mind, this was better than any alternative that was realistically open to it. But, as a downside, with the old markers gone and the new markers borrowed, it became very hard for people to figure out what it meant to be an Anglican. A huge number of books came to be written about Anglican identity, starting with Stephen Sykes' *The Integrity of Anglicanism*, but most were deconstructive and came to uncertain conclusions.

And now, in 2009, the Anglican Communion gives a very good impression of falling to pieces. Some of this gets blamed on debates about sexuality, but, if you've followed me so far, you'll know that I see deeper and more enduring causes than that.

What's the way forward? If our problem is what I suspect—that we're depending on a Vatican II theology which was never really ours to begin with and which is now showing signs of age—then the way forward is theological too. We need to rediscover, together, the faith of our Church. We need to agree on what we stand for, and we need to discern our distinctive theologically grounded mission. I doubt that techniques of church growth or strategies of relevance will move us ahead until we've had our own Anglican Vatican II, and that will mean prayer, self-criticism, ressourcement, and *aggiornamento*.

The Word of God or the Holy Bible?

In Anglicanism we have neither an infallible pope nor an infallible Bible.

MICHAEL BURSLEM
ST. GEORGE'S, GUELPH

Which is the final authority of the church, the Word of God or the Holy Bible? To answer this we should look at the life and work of Richard Hooker; but first, who was he, and why is he still so important in the church today?

Richard Hooker (ca 1554-1600) lived in the time of Queen Elizabeth I. He was a scholar, an assistant professor of Hebrew at Oxford, and a priest of the Church of England from 1581. He was master of the Temple (i.e. dean of the law school) from 1585 to 1591. He would probably not be so well known today if his assistant at the Temple had not been Walter Travers, a Puritan.

The Puritans believed that the Reformation in England had not gone far enough, and what was needed was a total reconstruction of the church, and society, on Biblical principals. England should be governed by all the laws of the Old Testament, a Christianized *Sharia* law. On the other side were those who wished to return the Church of England to the Church of Rome.

It was in this climate that Richard Hooker and Walter Travers debated. Out of this came Hooker's classical masterpiece *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie*. It's a long work in eight books; the first four were published together in 1593, the fifth in 1597, and the rest appeared long after his death. What Hooker proposed was the *Via Media*, the middle way between Puritanism and Catholicism.

He said that there was no God given discipline laid down, once and for all, in the Bible. Neither the church, nor the state, needed to return to the past, as God had guided both through their journey, and would continue to do so, even though they were not in strict conformity with the Bible. What had developed was not necessarily all bad or evil.

This view has come down to us as the *mish-mash* of Anglicanism, which is why Hooker is so relevant to the church today. There are those who still believe that the church should be in strict conformity to the Bible. Canon Carmen Stone, professor of Reformation Church History at King's College, Halifax, used to tell us that there were two visions of the church; the first that of the Puritans, who believed that the church should be a school of, and for, 'saints' only; and the second that of the rest of us, who hold that the church is a hospital for sick sinners. The church may look rather messy with ordinary fallible folk in it, who mess up, but it is nevertheless holy, because its holiness depends, not upon the 'holiness' of its saints, but upon the shed blood of Jesus Christ at Calvary.

Contrary to what the Puritans say, Holy Scripture is not the church's final authority; The Holy Bible is not exclusively the Word of God. Richard Hooker steered the Church of England away from such a Puritan path. In Anglicanism we have neither an infallible pope nor an infallible Bible.

The Word of God is our supreme authority, not exclusively the Bible. This is the *Logos* of St. John's prologue, which he defines as Jesus Christ. However, since his Ascension he is no longer with us in person, but he did promise to send his Holy Spirit, who is the *Logos* in the world today. The Spirit certainly speaks to us through Holy Scripture, but also through other means, such as our culture and traditions, other people, (especially our spouses) through visions, dreams, through music, poetry, drama and literature; through the wonders of science; yes, and through common sense. He deals with us individually. There is no 'one size fits all' which would be if the Bible alone were our supreme authority.

The Bible has to be rightly interpreted for the 21st century, not that of 100 years ago, nor even that of the past 2000. Hooker said in effect that the Bible has to be re-interpreted according to the culture of every age and every place. We in Canada are not as *macho* as those in the Southern Cone. Our culture should never be forced on them; nor, conversely, should theirs be forced on us. Puritans do claim to uphold the authority of scripture, but the Lord had harsh words for those who did that in his own day. In any event the scripture needs no defender. Our job is not to defend the authority of scripture, but to proclaim it. The Bible is a holy book, worthy of daily study (in prime time, not just when we feel like it) because its principal character is the Lord, Jesus Christ. However, in following him we are not to read the Bible as a legal document, any more than we should read it as a scientific text.

There are then major differences between these two points of view. To the one the Bible is a window through which we see Jesus Christ, our Lord; to the other it is a school book, a rule of law for all time and all places. The one, through the eyes of faith, sees the world as light and goodness; the other sees only darkness and evil. The one welcomes sinners; the other shuns them. The one is inclusive, the other exclusive. The one is the church of the Publican, the other the church of the Pharisee. The one is a holy church, the other a 'holiness' church. Between these two it's hard to see any *Via Media*, the Anglican way.

In the final analysis, our Puritan friends, whom we all know, and to whom we must reach out in love, have missed the whole point of Jesus' teaching. God can use only sinners in his kingdom, not 'saints.' This Puritan misconception is the end result of placing the Holy Bible before the Holy Spirit, the Word of God.

Inquiring minds...

Would anyone have the books, Volumes 1 & 2 of *The Anglican Episcopate in Canada*?

If so, please contact

Archdeacon John Rathbone
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■ A few women and one gentleman wearing Easter Bonnets at Holy Trinity Anglican (Chippawa) on Easter Sunday.



Unearthing the vibrancy of St Cuthbert's, Oakville

SUSANNE ROBINS
ST. CUTHBERT'S, OAKVILLE

People everywhere dream of a better world where we are one and whole. St Cuthbert's is no different. We have always been a strong parish in many ways, but as of a few years ago seemed to have lost some of our vibrancy.

In an attempt to understand what was needed to turn this around, the parish had previously commissioned a survey to determine if changes or additions in programs should be considered. While this yielded some direction, it did not dig deep enough to uncover how we experienced God and the ways in which we could become stronger as a community in Christ.

So in 2007-08, we more deeply examined the spiritual health and vitality of St Cuthbert's by introducing Natural Church Development (NCD). Through research with thousands of churches around the world, NCD has identified eight quality characteristics that are critical components of the life of healthy, growing churches. They are Empowering Leadership, Gift-based Ministry, Passionate Spiritual-

ity, Effective (Functional) Structures, Inspiring Worship Service, Holistic Small Groups, Need-oriented Evangelism and Loving Relationships.

The NCD process involves identifying the barriers hindering "all by itself" growth and then taking steps to remove them.

Throughout 2007-08, the NCD committee raised awareness of the 8 quality characteristics and the NCD process. More than 30 involved St Cuthbert's members completed the first NCD survey to help us determine our strengths and areas for improvement. While strong in several areas, the survey revealed our weakest characteristic was "Passionate Spirituality"—a not uncommon weakness for Anglican churches.

The parish held focus groups to identify barriers to improving Passionate Spirituality and ways for all members to grow or help others grow in this aspect of their faith. At the start some people found "spirituality" a difficult concept to define and we admitted that we may be a bit scared of it and not sure how to express ourselves. But overwhelmingly, the parish dis-

covered that the discussion process was a good exercise that helped them examine their own spirituality.

As the recommendations took root, we have grown both inwardly and outwardly. We are closer to each other and more open about sharing our thoughts and faith. A recent study series (pictured here) explored Henri Nouwen's book, "The Return of the Prodigal Son". Our parish retreats have also been well attended and, more importantly, have helped us become more spirit-directed. There is most definitely a renewed energy in the parish.

We are now embarking on a follow-up survey later this year. If the follow-up survey indicates we have grown exponentially in our Passionate Spirituality, we will take time to celebrate this achievement as a parish. But then it will be time to get to work on the next stepping stone to our continued health and growth, whatever the next NCD survey indicates that may be.

For St Cuthbert's, the process of Natural Church Development has been a supremely worthwhile and rewarding endeavor.



St Judes Oakville | A Cuba diary

MICHAEL HOWARD
ST. JUDE'S OAKVILLE

While March break provides a welcome respite to many who can vacation on beautiful sandy beaches on Caribbean islands, in March 2009, a group of seven youth from St. Jude's Anglican Church in Oakville took part in a mission trip to Itabo, Cuba that involved less relaxation and much hard work. To get to Cuba, the youth engaged in a wide range of fund raising activities including raking leaves, car washing, raffle tickets, bake sales, Chapters book night and serving a Victorian Tea. Additionally, they collected numerous supplies to provide to the residents in Itabo including over 500 tooth brushes and countless nails.

It was a mission trip in the true sense of the word—sharing hospitality and community while providing skills and resources to assist the Cubans with sustainable agriculture. The following diary, kept by 14-year old high school student and youth group member Michael Howard, relays the caring and sharing that the youth will remember for a lifetime.

Day 1 - Saturday, March 14

Waking up at 6:00 a.m. was tough for a Saturday morning. Some of us car pooled to make it a little easier. Arriving at the airport, most of us at the same time and all meeting at Gate L made the trip finally seem real. After checking our bags, we left our parents behind—and started on the final leg of our journey—one that started many months ago with much planning, fund raising and collecting supplies to bring to Itabo, Cuba. In fact, we each checked two full bags of luggage that contained everything but our clothes—gardening tools, tooth brushes, medical supplies, etc. As we would learn on our mission, the people of Cuba sustain themselves on very little.

Michael Howard, Kevin Murray, Robert Warren, Juliana Rock, Luis Juarez, Amanda Hudson and Isabelle Herrington, along with St. Jude's curate Fr. Aaron Orear and adult chaperones Julie Dawson, Janice Ilines and Allan Smith arrived mid-afternoon in Havana, Cuba. We were met by Mother Griselda Delgado del Carpio, the rector of Santa Maria Virgen, in Itabo, and transported in a hippie-looking van for an extended bus ride that included several stops to drop off medical supplies. We arrived at our final destination, Itabo, around 11:00 pm and found our living arrangements... interesting. The guys were in one room at the back of the church and we had to squat to use the toilet; the girls had much better arrangements.

Day 2 - Sunday, March 15th

I woke up a bit early to see a frog on our closet door-frame. I went to get it but it jumped towards our clothes—I never found the little critter. After breakfast, we toured the town and went to church; it was conducted in Spanish but we were able to worship and follow along. We went to the beach for lunch and our "bus" was a truck with a tarp covering—the beach was beautiful but the recent hurricane left it with a lot of scattered rock and debris. There were multiple ruins of abandoned property.

Day 3 - Monday, March 16

We get to work!
Our first day of work started off for me with a short run through Itabo. Getting back to the church a bit late left me scrambling to get to breakfast. The hospitality of the Cubans had us eating like kings. Shortly after we started working in the garden beside the church. The long term plan was to prepare a small patch of patch of land for planting corn and beans. First, we picked all the ripened tomatoes off the existing vines and then uprooted the

plants for compost. There was a huge composting pit at the site. We dug up the ground and emptied everything into the pit—and I had to go into the composting pit to even out the plants. We then worked on preserving the vegetables—cutting them thin, boiling them, putting them into a water-vinegar solution and then boiling them for canning or bottling. In Itabo, the people have very little supplies for canning so we would use anything—including beer bottles collected on the side of the road. The hard work resulted in us falling asleep earlier than usual.

Day 4 - Tuesday, March 17
Second Work Day

Day four started much like day three except Isabelle joined me for a run and we ran past the city limits; breakfast was at 8:30 a.m. and it was great—eggs, fruit, butter, jam and bread. There were a few Cuban grandmothers looking after our meals so not only did they insist on giving us the best of everything, but they did it with love as well.

This was a day of hard work. We had rotating teams and different jobs. One was to shovel mortar and sift it so it is soft and thin. Another job was to prepare soil; one person shovelled the fertilizer into wheel barrows and wheeled it to the patch of land; then soil was put on top of that. The last job was to sort large and small rocks and line the patch of land with them. After that, the mortar was mixed with concrete and water to create a solution to hold the rocks together to form a wall. This method has been used since the time of the Conquistadors.

Later on that day, with very sore muscles, we played baseball with some of the local townspeople. One of the workers decided to take us for a beautiful horse drawn tour of Itabo—mainly a one-street town but it does branch off to a few neighbour-

hoods. Surprisingly, Itabo is home to 6000 people. Dinner followed our tour. Soon after, we sorted through the school supplies we brought including paper, pencils, calendars, crayons, note books and so on. It turned out the school is a state school and wouldn't accept "charity"—so the supplies will stay with the church.

Day 5 - Wednesday, March 18
Another Work Day

Every morning we were woken up bright and early by the resident roosters! Breakfast was at 7:30 a.m. Right after, we started making tomato sauce—basically blended tomatoes without the seeds. The Cubans make it in an adapted washing machine that spins with a blade. The sauce was amazing. Following this work, we then planted bean seeds in the garden we had prepared the day before.

That evening we were treated to a Cuban cultural experience of stories and dance. Even if we couldn't understand everything, it was interesting to see their expressions and to learn more about who the Cubans are and about their lives. And once again, we had great food including the never ending supply of rice and beans!

Day 6, Thursday, March 19
Last day in Itabo

Today we took part in a symbolic tree planting. Each of us was given a fruit tree sapling to plant in the yard of the church—so we planted seven in all. It felt nice knowing that something that was part of us would be remaining at the church for years to come—and hopefully, we can get back to see how our trees have grown. Mother Griselda said there were three things you had to do in Cuba to become a man: plant a tree (check), write a book (check if you consider this diary) and found a family (that's later!). We had a thank you celebration in the church and a final good bye with the people we had come to

know. Leaving was hard for us and we were grateful for the hospitality. We then had the good fortune to be able to go to Varadero Beach for the afternoon. We went to a restaurant for dinner—funny though, the food wasn't as good as the simple but bountiful meals we had in Itabo. We then had a long bus ride to a church hostel in Havana—the conditions of which were interesting... But it was a place to sleep.

Day 7 - Friday, March 20
Havana

This morning we were woken up – not by roosters- but workers, trucks and people in the streets. We ate breakfast, had a small service in the church and then were taken on a tour of Havana. The old cars in the streets made us feel like we stepped back in time—sort of like an episode of *Lost*. We saw the capital building which resembled Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. The building was not used after the revolution and became a museum. We went to an art gallery and a theatre, which, while no production was being performed, the outside was a cigar factory museum and the only air-conditioned building we experienced. We took a tour of a street market and purchased some final souvenirs. Afterwards, we crossed the bay via underground tunnel and saw the fort and the giant statue of Jesus. The view of Havana from the fort was incredible.

Day 8 - Saturday, March 21
Going Home

We were woken again by the sound of trucks. It was raining and we were all sad to be leaving. We said our final goodbyes to Mother Griselda and headed to the airport. I could tell that in our heads, we were each saying personal good-bye to Cuba. This trip will live on in our memories and hopefully, we will be able to take part in a future St. Jude's Youth Group Mission Trip in a few years.

Can green become too green?

NISSA BASBAUM
RECTOR, TRANSFIGURATION ST CATHARINES

Our dog, Oliver, nourished on a pet food brand called *Taste of the Wild*, eats better than we do. It is the same product he was fed before we purchased him from the breeder. I know, however, that if I had seen the bag before being told this, I probably would have happily chosen the same brand anyway. The bag, you see, sucks me right in—pictures of energetic, happy dogs that look a bit like wolves (they're as healthy, of course, as those animals that really do live out in the wild), eating nothing but pure protein, just the right amount of fat, blueberries, sweet potatoes and heaven knows what other wonderful things a wolf could find in its natural habitat. The *piece de resistance*, of course: the bag also pictures them idyllically roaming the mountainside.

When it comes to food packaging, I have to admit I'm a sucker, whether the food is for my dog or for my family. Sadly, the dog story gets worse. The other day, while I was waiting at the cash at the pet store, I picked up some training treats for Oliver—not just any training treats, mind you. These were Newman's Own Organic Chicken and Vegetable training treats. I told myself I was supporting a good cause. Secretly, I knew better...

Some of you may remember when Loblaw's first introduced the *Insider's Report*. I hate to admit it but I was an avid "Insider," gobbling up the magazine that came out twice a year, along with many of those elegantly-packaged products that were advertised in that same magazine. I like to fool myself into thinking that I am committed to good food but I cannot deny that this is only half the truth. The other half is that I am easily swayed by "natural" packaging. As I walk down the supermarket aisles, for example, I have to be careful not to stay too long in the drugstore section where I might be tempted by soap and hand cream that looks good enough to eat, things like Goat's Milk Soap and Olive Oil Hand Moisturizer.

Knowing so well my penchant for being seduced by all things natural, organic and green, I cannot help being somewhat suspicious nowadays of just how mainstream these things are quickly becoming. I find myself wondering who is really being converted to what. Are people's attitudes about the environment actually changing or has our corporately-minded society begun to recognize environmental concerns as big business, therefore making these issues just another thing to sell in a

seller's market? I don't think my attraction to scrumptious packaging is unique. Most everyone is seduced by good advertising; if this weren't the case, companies would not bother doing the advertising in the first place.

Are not issues like organic produce and fair trade products about more than just making these products available for purchase? Should they not also be about a shift in how we live our lives—particularly in western society—a shift that forces us to reconsider what is important to us; to reassess what seems to be a presumption of deserving the biggest, the best and the most beautiful no matter what impact this presumption has on the rest of the world?

This current malaise was provoked by an article in a recent issue of *Canadian Living*. Naturally, I read this magazine primarily for the recipes and, of course, for the pictures that make these recipes look so tantalizing. While doing this, however, I came across an article about handbags made from recycled materials. It was a fashion statement, a fashion statement with some extremely high price tags; three hundred dollars, for example, for a purse made out of recycled plastic water bottles. Granted, this was the most expensive of the bags being advertised, yet I couldn't help but

wonder if there was something very wrong with this picture.

Instead of reconfiguring our lives to incorporate environmental concerns, it feels to me as if we have begun to reconfigure environmental concerns to incorporate our lives. As Christians, what is missing in this for me is the necessity of something having to die in order that something new might live. What I am feeling, perhaps, is the contrast between the implementation of a carbon tax and a cap and trade policy. While the former forces us to pay for a lifestyle to which we have become accustomed unless we rid ourselves of some of the structure that maintains this lifestyle, the latter seems to encourage the exchange of one thing for another while allowing for the preservation of the same overall structure. It is a little like Mary "holding on" to the old Jesus rather than moving forward with the resurrected Christ.

Way back when the environment was a new issue, the tagline read "reduce, reuse, recycle." I don't regard it as an accident that years later we seem to have forgotten the order of this same tagline. Undoubtedly, it is more convenient for us to have done so and convenience, at least in western society, is too often what we are all about.

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The Diocese of Niagara

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

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Susan Westall | A life of dedication

CHRISTOPHER GRABIEC
EDITOR

On Friday April 17, 2009, Susan Westall gave up her earthly spirit to return to her maker for all eternity. Susan's rite of Christian burial was conducted by All Saints Parish Community and celebrated in Christ's Church Cathedral. Her remains are entombed in the Cathedral Columbarium.

Susan was a regular writer in the Niagara Anglican. In her last articles (Why on earth are we here, February 2009 and Our God is too small, April 2009) she mused about the ultimate realities in life. "Is it possible that the conscience is an echo of some purpose that we were given before we left the "heavenly home" to which we are destined

to return". In both of these articles she wonders about whether God has given us a specific purpose to fulfill on this earth – a mission to which we are born.

Susan's life was dominated by and devoted to her church. She was/is a faithful Christian and Anglican. Her journey and her thoughts were shared with us through her many writings which will remain on the Diocese of Niagara (Newspaper) website.

As a church we are thankful to Susan for her strong faith, her pioneering spirit, her courage and above all her willingness to share and teach from the very depths of her being. Undoubtedly she has fulfilled her purpose and the Lord has welcomed her home.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

■ The Reverend Paul Maynard has submitted his resignation as Assistant Curate at St. John's, Ancaster, effective July 31.

■ Ordinations will take place at Christ's Church Cathedral on Sunday June 7 at 4 p.m. with Bishop Michael Bird presiding. Ordained to the Diaconate: Susan Channen (Deacon in Charge of St. Philip's, Grimsby), Brian Galligan (Deacon in Charge of St. Matthias, Guelph), and David Toth (Assistant Curate at St. Jude's, Oakville). Ordained to the Priesthood: Wendy Phipps (Priest in Charge of St. John's, Nassagaweya)

■ Lori Bodner has resigned as Youth and Children's Worker at St. James and St. Brendan's, Port Colborne, effective May 17.

■ Canon Mark Tiller has submitted his resignation as Rector of Acton and has accepted the position to be Rector of Grace Church, Waterdown, beginning May 10.

■ The Venerable John David Rathbone celebrated his 50th anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood on May 6.

■ The Reverend Canon Elaine Hooker, The Venerable Richard Jones, and The Reverend Canon Marni Nancekivell celebrated their 20th anniversaries of ordination to the priesthood on May 7.

■ The Reverend Canon David

Thomas celebrated his 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood on May 23.

■ The Reverend Nissa Basbaum and The Right Reverend Michael Bird celebrate their 25th anniversaries of ordination to the Diaconate on June 10.

■ Canon David Thomas and Mrs. Paula Thomas celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on July 15.

■ The Reverend Dr. Barbara Sykes has been appointed interim pastor at St. Alban's Church, Acton.

■ The Reverend Canon Dr. Margaret Murray has submitted her resignation as rector of St. Matthias, Guelph, and has accepted the appointment as the new rector of St. Stephen's, Hornby, effective May 1. In addition to being the rector of St. Stephen's, Margaret will also be appointed the Missioner of Halton Hills and Milton with responsibilities that will include developing a ministry plan for that area.

■ The Reverend Joanne Beacon has concluded her ministry at the Ridge Parish of Ridgeway and Ridgemount and remains in good standing in the Diocese of Niagara.

■ The Venerable Kenneth Cardwell has been appointed interim pastor of the Ridge Parish.

■ The Reverend Paul Tinker has submitted his resignation as Assistant Curate at St. Luke's Church,

effective April 30. The Reverend Paul has accepted the call to minister at Farrington Independent Church in Brantford.

■ Our thoughts and prayers go out to Canon Elaine Hooker and the bereaved family on the death of Elaine's daughter, Edie, on April 26. Service of Remembrance was held at St. Andrew's Anglican Church, last Friday, May 1.

■ Our thoughts and prayers go to Anne Harvey and Dean Peter Wall, and family, on the death of Anne's mother, Leah Ramsay, in Vancouver, on April 7. Memorial Service & Interment was held on Saturday, April 18, at Trinity Anglican Church, Barrie.

■ Our thoughts and prayers are with Paula Thomas and Canon David Thomas, of Fort Erie, on the death of Paula's father, Garnet Phillips, in Wales, on April 17.

■ The Reverend Dr. Wayne Fraser has been issued a bishop's permission to minister as Priest Associate, part time, at St. Thomas, St. Catharines, under the direction of the rector, effective April 1.

■ Our thoughts and prayers are with Mr. Ralph Malashevsky and Canon Marni Nancekivell, and family, on the death of Ralph's father, Walter, on March 19. Funeral service was held from his parish church of St. Alban's, Hamilton, on March 23.

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CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

General Synod 2010 Volunteer Opportunity!

The Synod of the Diocese of Niagara is calling for nominations to the General Synod which will be held at St. Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, from June 3rd to 11th, 2010.

The Diocese of Niagara is entitled to elect five (5) lay delegates and five (5) clergy delegates. Those nominated that are not elected to General Synod as the delegates from Niagara will become the alternate delegates to General Synod 2010.

- Individuals must be members of the 2009 Diocesan Synod in order to be eligible for nomination and members of Synod may self-nominate. The consent of a nominee must be given prior to his/her name being submitted. A 60-word biographical sketch will be requested of each nominee after the deadline, in point form. Only biographies received by September 18th will appear in the Convening Circular.

Deadline for nominations is August 21st, 2009, and nominations must include name, parish and location (city/town), gender, email address (if available), and phone number(s). The ballot will be presented to the November 2009 Diocesan Synod.

This is a terrific volunteer opportunity for members of Niagara's Synod who wish to support the work and life of the Anglican Church of Canada. Further information about this volunteer opportunity is available upon request.

Please send nominations to:

Mrs. Karen Nowicki
Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of Synod
252 James Street North
Hamilton, ON L8R 2L3
karen.nowicki@niagara.anglican.ca
905-527-1316 ext. 380
905-527-1281 fax



St. John's Port Dalhousie welcomes the Primate during its 175th anniversary

CANON GORDON KINKLEY
ST. JOHN'S PORT DALHOUSIE

The parish of St. John, St. Catharines (Port Dalhousie) is now celebrating her 175th Anniversary Year. It all began in 1834 when the Reverend James Clarke, rector of St. George's Church, St. Catharines, began taking services at a schoolhouse adjacent to where St. John's cemetery now stands in Port Dalhousie.

On Sunday April 19 as part of the anniversary celebrations, the people of St. John welcomed to the parish our Primate—the Most Reverend Fred Hiltz. It was a wonderful and celebratory day.

For many years outreach has been a very important part of the life of this parish and amongst our many outreach projects the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund has a special place.

Each year on Good Friday at the noon hour the congregation gathers

in the church for the Stations of the Cross; then about 1 PM they assemble in the Lower Hall for hot cross buns and final instructions before our annual walk-a-thon begins. The walk takes us through the streets of ol' Port Dalhousie and a handcrafted wooden cross, made by the late George Cook, leads our way. We begin the walk with a prayer for those who have died to this life recalling many of them by name and an addition of prayer is said for God's blessing on the work of the PWRDF. In 2009, 75-80 people plus a number of pets made the walk and raised \$1531 for the Primate's Fund.

This very important event in the life of St. John's Church began in 1995 and has been organized each year since by Barb Stone. In 1994 Barb & Jim Stone's daughter Becky died at the age of 33. Becky was an amazing young woman who had been very active in the life of the parish. She also had particular interest in the work

of the PWRDF. A friend of Becky, Doreen Haywood, suggested the idea of a walk-a-thon to Barb as a way of celebrating Becky's life and raising funds for a cause dear to Becky's heart. Barb grabbed the idea. Over a twelve-year period St. John's Church has sent along to the Primate's Fund from the annual walks and other donation in excess of \$36,000.

When Archbishop Fred visited the parish on April 19, Barb Stone on behalf of the congregation presented the Primate with a cheque for \$5700 for the work of the PWRDF.

A motto I am old enough to remember comes from the Anglican World Congress of 1963: "the church that lives to itself will die by itself." Outreach has always been most important to this parish and it may well be an important part of the reason she is looking forward to the challenges of the next hundred and seventy-five years.



The silence

MARSHA LETMAN
SENIOR YOUTH GROUP, ST. JOHN'S ANCASTER

Our youth at St. John's Anglican church got together to join in 24 hours of silence to raise money for the people at Homestead and Mental Awareness. There are many words to say and I think silence is good for the soul and body to reflect on life. We first got together to talk about how the day would work and what we might gain from this experience. We heard the rules for the day and were told we had 5 words without penalty. It would cost us \$1.00 per word after our 5.

At first, I thought it was going to be easy, but then without thought I said my first word. I had to be careful. We stayed in the Gathering space at St. John's and got settled into a routine. Some played cards, some watched Movies, or played video games. The evening moved along. The Dioceses lent us a labyrinth to walk and it was interesting.

Father David led a night prayer service for us in the evening. We had to write a prayer or message to God about our feelings and who we think needs help with things. We then got to burn the papers outside. We had some

snacks and watched a movie before we went to sleep. Lots of people listened to their iPods and things weren't too noisy, but we did manage to get some sleep. The next morning when we awoke, some people let a few words slip out before they realized what happened. They forgot their silence after they slept. We are usually very active and talkative at church. Homestead provided us with nice black shirts to remind the people of our quest not to talk. We all sat together at the front of the church and just listened and watched the church service unfold.

It was all fun times getting to know each other and learning to look deeper into ourselves and think about what is on our minds. The 24 hours of silence was a wonderful event and experience to do. We had lots of food to eat and drink. We were so excited that people stood behind us in support to raise the money we did for Homestead and to raise awareness of mental illness. We all enjoyed being silent for voicing our opinion and concern and to make a difference by helping out the people at Homestead, the very people we have been supporting all year with our youth groups.

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