



Niagara Anglican

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Archdeacon Ian Dingwall



CHRISTOPHER M. GRABIEC
EDITOR

Ian MacLeod Dingwall was born in August of 1934 in Inverness Scotland where he grew up for his first 14 years. He emigrated to Canada where he completed high school. He attended UBC where he achieved a BA in 1960. He graduated from Anglican Theological College in 1961 (L.Th.) and Vancouver School of Theology in 1968 (S.T.B.). He was ordained Deacon in 1961 and Priest on Ascension Day 1962 in New Westminster Diocese.

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Leap to faith

ELEANOR JOHNSTON
ST. THOMAS' CHURCH, ST. CATHARINES

A friend recently asked me, out of the blue, "Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God?" I could have simply said, "Yes," but hesitated instead.

Why? I felt that it was a simple question to which I should, as a Christian, have an immediate and satisfactory answer. Racing through my head, however, were various interpretations of these words, some more valid than others. Furthermore, what answer would be most useful to my friend at her stage of questioning? Other progressive Christians joke about being labeled heretic.

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The generous heart of Lent

PETER WALL
DEAN AND RECTOR, CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

I was having lunch recently with a colleague and we got talking about Lent—as I write this, Ash Wednesday is just peeking over the horizon—and the many and varied practices which take place around this interesting season. Often, people want to know what I am panning to give up, and I try to convince them that what I prefer to do is to take something on—it might be something very small and seemingly inconsequential, but doing a little something extra is an important way for me to approach the discipline that can be found in Lent.

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Jazz Vespers and Healthy Holiness



MICHAEL THOMPSON
ARCHDEACON, RECTOR ST. JUDE'S OAKVILLE

Not I, not I, but the wind that blows through me!

A fine wind is blowing the new direction of Time.

If only I let it bear me, carry me, if only it carry me!

If only I am sensitive, subtle, oh, delicate, a winged gift!

If only, most lovely of all, I yield myself and am borrowed

By the fine, fine, wind that takes its course through the chaos of the world.

"Song of a Man Who Has Come Through" D. H. Lawrence

I'm writing after Jazz Vespers, where in the late-afternoon stained-glass sunlight we settled into the music of Duke Ellington and greeted the approaching dusk. I'm writing in anticipation of Lent, a season that acquired the flint-hard edge of self-denial in my Southwestern Ontario childhood. I'm writing in light of an e-mail I received earlier in the week,

someone wondering whether holiness as commonly understood is an irrelevant, maybe even dangerous spiritual idea.

I remember kneeling in church while in high school, wanting nothing more than to achieve humility, associated at that time with tracking down all the "not enough" in my life, all the ways in which I fell short of "should". I don't think this was anybody's fault, really. The language of "not enough" and "should" was always close at hand. And it was, of course, dangerously accurate. Every life is "not enough" if you put "should" and the gifts of others far enough away.

This was, I imagined, what it meant to cultivate a holy life. Looking back, it isn't surprising that almost none of my friends from those days has anything to do with church anymore. When I started elementary school, the school day began with a Christian hymn and prayer. Church membership and participation was a social necessity. By the time I began university, church could no longer lay that claim on the lives of my contemporaries. We all woke up one Sunday morning and realized that nobody could make us go to church. That Sunday, most of us didn't.

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

On becoming a leader

STEPHEN MURRAY
CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION, HAMILTON
FORMER CANTEBURY HILLS CAMP COORDINATOR

Last month I had a job performance evaluation. It was a little embarrassing because the wardens had a lot of positive feedback except for some concerns about overwork and possible burn-out. If this was the Oscars, the acceptance speech would begin with thanks to God and my parents, but next on the list of "thank yous" would be Canterbury Hills Camp and the Diocese of Niagara.

For some reason, people still think that leaders are simply born that way.

Wrong! At least that has not been my experience. Anyone who thinks that leaders can't be developed, nurtured, grown and empowered is probably looking for a way to avoid taking responsibility for their own leadership potential and has never been to summer camp.

It all started when I was a scrawny, pimple-faced 14 year-old and offered a position as a Leader-In-Training (LIT) at Canterbury Hills. An LIT is expected to work with campers along side the cabin leaders. But LITs also spend time in sessions learning different skills and theory

about leadership—not just about camp, but leadership in the broadest sense that can be applied to school, work, church, and in our communities.

As an LIT the combination of learning and hands-on work was like being in a laboratory where everything we learned had an immediate chance to be applied. There were 3 surprises about being an LIT: first, I loved learning about leadership and was hungry to learn more. Second, it was hard work and demanded that I discover the best in myself in order to meet the challenges. Every summer I swore that I wouldn't

go back because it was too hard, but was drawn back by the desire to apply the previous summer's learning and to learn more. Third, nearly 20 years later I still consider myself an LIT. No matter what we do in life and ministry we are always leaders in training.

As the Canterbury Hills Camp Coordinator (2001-05) I was consistently amazed and inspired by the young leaders at camp. They often came to camp simply looking for a fun summer job or to build their resume.

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Turn out your lights, show support

They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 11:9

DEAN SUTTON-GREENHALGH
ALL SAINTS PARISH, HAMILTON

In 2009 hundreds of millions of people around our diocese, our city

and around the whole world showed their support for the environment by turning off their lights for one hour called Earth Hour.

Our churches are aware of our call to be stewards of God's creation, and to be leaders in this area. Our diocesan vision and our marks of mission call us: "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the earth". It is our hope that a heightened awareness among members of the Diocese of Niagara will inspire others to preserve the beauty of this great gift from

our God. This awareness is building and will continue to grow by joining together for Earth Hour.

Earth Hour 2010 will continue to be a global call for action to every individual, every business and every community. It is a call to stand up, to show leadership and be responsible for our future. Please show your support and turn off your lights for one hour, Earth Hour, 8:30 pm, Saturday 27th March 2010. You can join together as a parish and host a community Earth Hour vigil or simply enjoy some time with friends and

family over conversation or card games by candlelight.

Parishes and parishioners can do all sorts of things in their churches and homes for Earth Hour as well as Earth Sunday (April 18th). As a start, you might take a look at the Green Parish Accreditation Program and the Niagara Home Challenge which is available on our diocesan website (www.niagara.anglican.ca/green). Bishop Michael, at Synod in November, challenged all parishes to strive to be accredited as Green Parishes in time for Earth Sunday 2010. By hosting an Earth Hour or Earth Sun-

day service you'll achieve one of the categories towards accreditation! Spending some time promoting the Niagara Home Challenge will add another category in your completed column!

This year, the Greening Niagara committee hopes that everyone will put their faith into action and show their care for creation through something as simple and symbolic as turning your lights out or something as life-changing as planning an Earth Sunday celebration.

Enjoy your Earth Hour and Earth Sunday this year!

Jazz Vespers and Healthy Holiness

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A church engaged in God's mission is, I believe, the only ground in which a healthy holiness can grow.

I did. I wouldn't have, though, had it not been for my summer community at Huron Church Camp. I didn't realize it at the time, but there I was learning practices of holiness not governed by "not enough" and "should", shaped instead by shared purpose, gifts differing, and love. The grace of community softened the sharp edges of holiness. Together, we accomplished things that mattered in the lives of the children we cared for. We laughed, sang, wept, paddled and prayed. We hiked along rivers, took tents into the woods, ate hotdogs on the beach. Some of us were wonderful in the craft shack,

others played guitars, and some were the ones we trusted to listen and care. Sometimes the cook was the best pastor, and the chaplain turned out to be a wonderful campfire leader. We had, as they say, "gifts differing." Every one of us alone was "not enough", but together we lavished our abundance on the campers.

Looking back, what we were practicing together was a kind of real and organic humility that had nothing at all in common with my futile self-regarding attempts at humility in the pew. Looking back, I realize we were cultivating holiness without the toxic chemistry of "not enough" and "should".

None of this means that there was no conflict, no failure of friendship among us, no misunderstanding, sharp words or disappointment. It's just that, having given ourselves to—having been borrowed by—the demanding work of caring for the campers, and stuck as we were with one another,

we found our way back to friendship and a rich common life by way of our common work.

I wonder if that's what's missing sometimes in the church. Clergy and lay leaders can end up in the crowd-pleasing business for a bunch of picky religious consumers, instead of as leaders among God's people as together we give ourselves to some demanding part of God's mission—God's care for the earth and all creatures. When the church is a religion club, we don't have the common work that helps us find our way back to friendship and a rich common life, that is, to real and organic holiness. And in its absence, I wonder if we replace it with religious activities varnished with some affectation or another that we think of as "holy". Like being busy and tired all the time and not having time to live. When the church is a community serving God's mission, the shape of holiness shifts seamlessly among the inner life, the life in com-

munity, and the transforming work of God in the world.

If that's what's missing in the church, what's missing in the world is the church. Distorted ideas of holiness as sin-troubled inwardness or pious self-regard keep our focus on private things, at the very time that the world cries out for the determination of a holy people to join Jesus in God's transforming work. The hard rock of inevitability that has settled over the world needs communities and persons who will allow the Wind to borrow us and aim us at that rock until it begins to crack open, yielding to the Spirit-blown focused witness to—and then enactment of—another kingdom, a new creation.

A church engaged in God's mission is, I believe, the only ground in which a healthy holiness can grow. In a church like that, we will say, "I can" more than "I want". In a church like that, we will say, "We can" more often than "I can't". In a church like

that we will practice the humility of gifts differing in service of a shared purpose. In a church like that, our conflicts, disappointments and failures of friendship can be addressed out of the shared passion that has borrowed us for God's holy purposes in the world.

During Jazz Vespers, I watched the musicians. Their humility is not the shame of "not enough" in the face of "should", but the gladness of a "we" in which every "I" can shine. They take turns shining, as the music borrows them. Their song takes us safely into a darkening day.

Lent is upon us, a season of humility, but not, I pray, of shame. A season of honest self-regard, acknowledging all the ways that each of us is not enough, without the toxic catalyst of "should". A season in which we find each other in the wilderness, and emerge into Easter and Pentecost to ready to receive together God's victory and together to put it to work for the life of the world.

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Hospitality and healing

CHRISTOPHER GRABIEC
EDITOR

Some weeks ago I experienced the death of my mother, Eleanor. She was a faithful Roman Catholic and remained so until her death. For an RC mom, having a son in the priesthood is the equivalent of being the Queen Mother. For many years, my mother enjoyed that privilege until I chose to exit from active ministry in the RC church at which point I believe she really and truly crashed. Our lives would become very difficult and our relationship strained from that time until about a year ago when she discovered that serious illness was setting in. She would soon discover that she had renal cell cancer which would ravage her earthly body and within 6 months claim her life. I wanted to and did spend time with her healing the past for both of us.

When my mother made her final decision that there would be no more intervention—it only took a few days until she began to exit this life. We eventually were able to get her a room at the Dr. Bob Kemp hospice for her last two and half days. This was indeed a gift to her and to the family. I could imagine no better place for her or our family during these days. Knowing that she was going to the hospice a friend of mine asked me to visit his mother who was also there. Anyone who has been attending to the death of a parent or loved one knows of the madness and insanity that sometimes can occur in the family dynamic. So there was a point at which I thought that I needed to get out and to visit Irene (my friend's mother). Irene was 90 (10 years older than my mother) and she was also dying.

I went into her room and said that I was Chris and that I was a friend of her son and that my mother was also dying in the next room. She looked at me intently, as she could not speak. She raised her very thin and very long arms up in the air ever so slowly and encouraged me to come near. She took her hand and put it to the back of my head and gently drew me into herself and hugged me for what seemed to be a wonderful eternity. In her dying, Irene welcomed me into her life, and afforded me the healing gifts which had been hers through life as she was a practising nurse. When I was finished being healed by her I ran into my mother's room and told John (my husband) that he needed to go visit Irene. He did and she offered him the same comfort. I went back six times more in the next day! My mother died and then Irene died a few days later.

I tell this story, because I am thankful for what Irene did for me—even as she was experiencing the pain of her death. Her hospitality and healing will never leave me for the rest of my life. But then reality set in. My mother's funeral rites were before me and of course I had to attend her funeral in the Roman Church. This was particularly difficult. I believe that every Roman

priest has it bred into him (sorry no "hers" just "hims") that he should accept the responsibility of presiding over the rites of Christian burial for his parents. I did so for my father but was forbidden to do so for my mother—as a priest who has resigned is never permitted to function in any way in the church. In fact since my allegiance has changed to the Anglican Christian community—I was not even eligible to go to communion at my mother's funeral. The pain returned—and it really hurt.

I presided at Irene's funeral a few days later and it was a wonderful reminder of what she had done for me. I was able to share that with the four hundred people who attended. The next day I had the privilege of being at Archdeacon Ian Dingwall's funeral as well. I have always counted Ian among my friends and I have always admired him as a person, a colleague, and a priest. At the communion rite Bishop Michael issued the following invitation:

*This is the table of the Lord,
ready for those who love God
and those who want to love God
more.*

*So come,
You who have much faith
And you who have little,
You who have been here often
And you who have never been before,
You who have tried to follow Jesus
And you who have failed.
Come, because it is Christ who invites
us to meet him here.*

Perhaps many of us would take such an invitation for granted or consider it positively normal. There are others who feel that our church is a closed club and the table should be for us alone. I know only one thing and that is that I was deeply moved by the words.

I felt the healing and warmth of a dying woman and then went to a church who's Eucharistic understanding or theology necessitates rules which excluded me from its meal—even at the time of the death of my mother. I'm really not sure if every Anglican in Canada knows what a gift they have in a church that opens its arms and urges hospitality at its Eucharistic meal.

Every community has its own ecclesiology and its own understanding of the table. This is not about bitterness or judgement or trying to make people see things through my eyes of faith. It is simply about my gratitude to those who know how to show hospitality and warmth, healing and love to those who are living through their darkest moments. It's hard to say how Jesus would have reacted to me and to my pain if he were physically present. Or is it? I suppose, I'd be willing to bet that he, like Irene, would open his arms and draw me to himself, feed me, nurture my faith and hope, and then send me forth in love. Yes... that's the Jesus, the Christianity, the church that I know, love and need.

Electoral Synod Team Completes Work

ROBERT MORROW
COMMITTEE CHAIR, ST. JAMES', DUNDAS

The Electoral Synod Planning and Nominating Committee has completed its work related to the election of Bishop Michael Bird in June, 2007. Following the election process, the committee evaluated the process and reported its findings to Synod Council in January, 2010.

This committee is established when a new Bishop is required and it oversees the process of the election. In the most recent election the team put an emphasis on the process of discernment and tried to provide an atmosphere of "safety" for all the nominees. The committee followed up with a series of recommendations.

Two recommendations were passed along to Synod Council. One has already been implemented and that involved the decision to modify the canons to allow interims who have been licensed at the time of the election a vote in the process. The second recommendation, now in the hands of Synod Council also requires canonical change in that it recommends that the House of Bishops be asked for (up to) two names as nominees.

Four recommendations were presented for passing along to the next Electoral Synod Planning and Nominating Committee—whenever that will be! These included:

- continuing with a methodology to facilitate communication between nominees and voting delegates. In the past, telephone interviews and most recently, a podcast were used. What technological advances will be available in the future remains to be seen, but the concept of keeping voting delegates (and other members of the Diocese) informed was the central idea of the recommendation.
- continue with the "meet and greet" scenarios developed and implemented for the 2007 election process. The settings were informal and the discussions were important to both nominees and delegates.
- pay special attention to the timing between the casting of ballots and the announcements of results. There were opportunities for "ministry moments" and announcements... but the timing proved a bit difficult and needs to be reviewed.
- The committee recommended that delegates NOT nominate more than one person and that Synod Council mem-

bers who have the potential to nominate three individuals, refrain from nominating further. This was a recommendation based on the "safety of the nominees". It was felt that an individual should not be nominating more than one person because it made it difficult for the nominator to decide on a specific nominee on the first ballot.

Two recommendations were passed along to Synod Council for its consideration. The first involved a consideration of whether the Electoral Synod should END with a Eucharist; by canon, it is opened by a Eucharist.

The second recommendation involved the removal form the canons of all references to gender related to the election of a Bishop. The situation currently involves very specific numbers for nominees of the two sexes at various stages; many felt that this had been necessary in the past, but perhaps by the time of the next election would not be necessary.

Many thanks to Archdeacon Marian Vincett for her guidance in the process, the parishes who hosted the "meet and greet" sessions, all the committee members and those at the Cathedral who were so helpful during the process.

Threescore and Ten

JOHN RIPLEY
ST. ANDREW, GRIMSBY

Well this is the year. This year, 2010, I will turn seventy. I will have reached my "threescore and ten" (Psalm 90), the proverbial (well, really the "psalmatic") Biblical life span. Over 252,000 babies were born in Canada in 1940. Add to that those who have immigrated to Canada, less those who have died in the past seventy years, and it would seem that many will be celebrating this milestone birthday this year.

Seventy is sort of a pivotal birthday. It is a birthday when you reflect on your life. Your life becomes a kaleidoscope of events. You delight in your accomplishments and regret your failures. It is a birthday when you are tempted to accept that the great dreams are now tempered by the reality of age. You certainly become more conscious of your mortality. You motor on with hope for the future recognizing that your 'dash' is getting shorter. It is the life yet to be lived that motivates you to carry on to further accomplishments. As Cicero said, "While there's life there's hope."

Integral to my past seventy years has been my connection with the Anglican Church. I am a cradle Anglican who has maintained close ties with the religion of my birth. There have been ups and downs through the years but for the most part I have been loyal

to the Anglican expression of Christianity. As a young lad I attended Sunday School, as a teen I served at the Altar and was actively involved in A.Y.P.A. As I matured I assumed the more adult roles in the life of the church. And now I am blessed as a priest in the "Church of God". Anglicanism has shaped my worldview. The tenets of the faith have been foundational to who I am.

I have seen my church in times of abundance. At Christ Church in West St. Catharines the growth during the late fifties and early sixties was phenomenal. A new church was built to service the large number of people wanting to worship God. Buses would travel the neighbourhood picking up people to come for Sunday worship. Parish life was vital with the community engaged in a variety of activities to enhance the fellowship and serve the community. The attendance at worship reflected to a degree the times in which we lived. Something happened!

Over time the numbers fell off. Fewer people were left to carry on the work of the parish. The congregations got older. Balancing the budget was more challenging. Fundraising, replaced the collection plate as the source of income. Investment funds were targeted as a means to maintain parish viability. Sadly, over time, the reality that the parish could no longer

carry on was recognized and the doors were inevitably closed.

This is the situation that many of our parishes find themselves in at this time. The things that have worked in the past no longer seem to be the answer. Simply opening the door is not good enough. As has been said so many times the status quo is no longer acceptable. Something like "Fresh Expressions" is but one of the many diocesan initiatives that parishes are encouraged to implement to restore vitality to their life together. The Diocesan Vision gives a useful framework for the exploration of a whole range of possibilities in a variety of different areas (petals). Sitting back and doing nothing will reap nothing. It is past time that parishes must begin to rethink their future directions.

Now I look back on seventy years of living. I know I won't be around seventy years from now, but, I know I want my church, the Anglican Church, to be around seventy years from now. How we respond to the present will largely determine what the future looks like. The future is in our hands. Inaction is not an option.

On a personal note I invite anyone out there who is turning seventy this year to help me write a book tentatively titled Turning Seventy. You can contact me through my website: www.turningseventy.ca.

Correction

In the article "Truth and Reconciliation" by Len Fortune, the quote assigned to Duncan Campbell Scott was incorrect. The following is the correct quote: "It's true that Indian children die at a much higher rate in our Indian boarding schools from communicable diseases, but such is in keeping with the policy of this department which is geared towards the Final Solution of the Indian problem." We apologize for an inconvenience caused.

ISARC partnering with Community Justice Camp

COLLEEN SYM
SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

The Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC) is partnering with Community Justice Camp to host an interfaith justice forum during the camp which is being held in our Diocese from May 9-14, 2010.

Brice Balmer of ISARC says: "Justice Camp has many people in Southern Ontario excited. We are looking forward to meeting people from across Canada and comparing notes. We are anxious to show the many ways social justice and advocacy springs from our programs.

There are many initiatives across Canada to reduce or eliminate poverty! I think Justice Camp will add to our energy and commitment as

people of faith to move from providing survival services to seeing people actually have enough income, food, and housing!"

In the evening of May 12, 2010, ISARC and Community Justice Camp will bring together a diverse group of faith leaders, including those from other than Christian faiths, to share their thoughts on justice and to hear their reflection on participation in the ISARC Social Audit. The forum will be open to anyone in the Diocese to attend. Details of location and time will be announced later.

ISARC's Social Audit is being undertaken this winter and into the spring of 2010. Hearings will be held in 30 communities across the province in urban, rural, northern, and Aborig-

inal communities, where people living in poverty can safely come together.

Social Audit committees are being formed in at least three areas of the Diocese. The committees are made up of ISARC's faith and community based justice partners who will act as rapporteurs, recorders, facilitators, and conveners who listen and have the opportunity to reflect on the difficult experiences of people on the margins.

Brice Balmer describes: "The Social Audit process will not bring revolutionary changes to the lives of Ontarians most marginalized by social assistance and low wage jobs. It will not build affordable housing nor put food on the table. But it will allow for a different kind of power or influence to emerge for all who participate in the

Social Audit. People testifying feel a spark of dignity returning."

Using a modified UN rapporteur model, people with the lived experiences of poverty, whether they are single parents, disabled, working poor, people of colour, new immigrants, or single adults, will have an opportunity to share their stories, be heard, and offer solutions from their experience.

If we want to advocate for change to the current system, it is imperative that people directly affected by government policy be given voice to how these policies are helping or hindering them in their struggles with poverty.

Archdeacon Michael Patterson says: "We believe now more than ever, in these tough economic times, that we, as Anglicans and all people of faith must

look to the future as people of hope standing in solidarity with those living in poverty in our province. We must listen to those with lived experience of the injustices of poverty, deprivation and exclusion and we must act together with them to make their lives better."

It has been said that "To hear the cry of the oppressed is the first act of justice". To ensure the voices are heard and we act collectively as people of faith to build a society where we are all in right relationship, get involved in the Social Audit and come to Community Justice Camp!

To learn more on how to get involved in the Social Audit in your community go to www.isarc.org.

To register to attend Community Justice Camp go to www.justicecamp.ca.

Who is this man called Jesus?

GRAHAME STAP
RECTOR, ST SIMONS TEMAGAMI

Who is this man called Jesus who calls us to follow in his footsteps? Who asks us to love our neighbour as ourselves? Tom Harpur asks us to believe he is a figment of our imagination. Literalists want us to believe Jesus was God on earth from the time of his birth. Dan Brown wants us to believe the descendants of the children of Jesus walk the earth today. Others try to tell us that Jesus, although real, has, since his death, no interaction with humanity. What are we to believe? How can we

weave our way through all this rhetoric and find some sort of truth?

We are now in the middle of lent and some time somewhere a clergy person or parent told us this is the time to fast, to give up one of our pleasures, for six short weeks and by this become closer to God.

Perhaps the time has come for us to start reading between the lines and feel the Holy Spirit flow within us. I believe if we do this we will find the truth and the truth will truly set us free.

Free to find a God that loves all things God created regardless of race

creed or colour. Free to find that place in our hearts that houses the love that God so freely gives. Free to stand and witness what God has done for us and how through all the pain and suffering of this world God is with us.

The North Bay Nugget recently had a picture of the devastation in Haiti on the front page; it emphasized the suffering and pain of a people that have already suffered too much. The picture showed a church completely destroyed. The beams, windows and walls smashed beyond repair; it seemed to project such a sense of loss, of complete and utter

sadness it was hard to see where the presence of God could be found.

In the front of the picture with the devastation behind it was a cross. Bits were missing but it was still standing. The cross, on which Jesus suffered so terribly and died, was still standing. It seemed to be saying 'I am with you be not afraid I know what you are going through and I will catch you when you fall.

So who is this man called Jesus? He is the Son of God who died to make us whole. He is the very essence of the love of God in human form and through him, and us working with him, all things

do come right. He is the one, who was and is prepared to do whatever is necessary even dying on the cross so we may understand the presence of God in our lives and that there is more to this life than we can ever understand.

So no matter what you hear or read, no matter what some people say or do, the truth is that Jesus came to eat with outcasts and sinners and to help us know whatever life thrusts upon us, whatever ugliness the world portrays we are in good hands even if we don't give up candy for Lent. But as always it is only my opinion.

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■ **THE BAKER'S DOZEN** Back row: Lee Burtenshaw, Dorothy McBride, Gord Melmer, Al Olsen, George Foster. Middle row: Joan Gibson, Pat Melmer, Sue Miller, Barb Olsen, John McBride. Front row: Bette Kinnaird, Carol Foster, Sue Crawford

500 birthing kits assembled

SUE CRAWFORD
ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH

It took only 1 hour and 42 minutes for the Outreach Committee and a few other parishioners from St. Michael's to assemble just under 500 birthing kits. Some will tell you it took longer to take the picture of the group! If we hadn't run out of sheeting to wrap around the baby we would have completed 500.

As with any St. Michael's venture, we began with a few people from the Outreach Committee on Saturday, February 6 and in no time the numbers grew. Women from the Altar Guild and one their husbands joined us. By 10:30 we had 13 people working diligently, assembly line style, packaging the kits. Each person took on a sec-

tion of the assembly line which helped speed up the process. Five or six of us assembled. Two or three folded clean white paper, two people packaged and one person sealed at the final stage before being placed in bags. Others folded clean white sheeting or counted out the gloves. No one assigned the jobs—we just did it!

Barb and Al Olsen were the “conveners” of the project. Al had contacted Lea Jefferson and found out that they were in desperate need of birthing kits. Some kits will go to International Child Care in Haiti and the rest will go to OMS Haiti to the Bethesda Medical Centre. This is in the same compound that Al and Barb stayed this past October when they

travelled to Haiti. A date was set and then they arranged to pick up the supplies. When the call to help put the kits together was made, we were there—ready and willing. Thanks to all who came out and helped with the task.

We are constantly reminded of the Niagara Diocesan Vision which enables us to reach our mission and goals at St. Michael's. We feel we are certainly a “Flourishing Culture of Innovation.” We always have another Outreach project in the making. We have “Outstanding Leadership in Ministry” with people like Barb and Al arranging days similar to the one we have just enjoyed. And at the end of the morning—pizza, cake and fellowship to celebrate—mission accomplished!



On becoming a leader

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

They often left camp with a greater sense of self-confidence and empowered to offer their leadership skills in the world.

There are many stories about young people who were transformed by the Canterbury Hills LIT program. At the end of each summer the LITs are challenged to plan and lead their own ‘Adventure Experience.’ It's supposed to be a culmination of everything that they've learned and usually includes multi-day trips such as hik-

ing, cycling, canoeing, etc. Fun stuff! But one year a group of LITs said to us, “This shouldn't be about us and what we're going to get out of it. We want to do something that will help to change the world.” So they planned to camp on church lawns, to volunteer in social service agencies, to run programs for local kids, and to clean up polluted areas. They learned that being a leader is often about serving others.

As Canterbury Hills celebrates its 50th anniversary I marvel at the hundreds of people who have been LITs. I wonder at where they are now and how

they're applying their learning from camp. I also think of Jesus' Parable of the Sower. Often in the church we'd like to see immediate results for our money and ministry. But the Kingdom of God involves nurturing tiny seeds over the course of years before they bloom and even longer to be good fruit-bearing plants. I'd like to consider myself a product of this long-term kingdom vision that was planted at camp many years ago. And I pray that our Diocese, the Canterbury Hills Camp ministry and our churches will continue to be places that nurture this type of growth.

Questions to ponder

ANDY KALBFLEISCH
MISSION STRATEGY COMMITTEE

Sue and I attended the Fourth Annual Vital Church Planting Conference sponsored by the Diocese of Toronto and Wycliffe College in early February to discuss and dream of new ways of being church in the twenty-first century be they Fresh Expressions or green field church plants (with or without a dedicated building). It was the largest conference to date and it was truly ecumenical with attendees from various Anglican Dioceses from across Canada, the United Church of Canada, the Salvation Army, Baptists, Presbyterians and Mennonites as well as students and faculty from Huron, Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges. After attending the plenary sessions and workshops we came away, not with all the answers, but with a lot of questions that need reflection. Perhaps you would like to join us on our journey and choose a question that might resonate with you, think about it and perhaps discuss it with others in your parish. Then, after some discernment, pray and ask for God's guidance how you might meet the challenge that the question poses.

- When is the last time you didn't go to your church on a Sunday morning so you could go out into the community around you to ask, listen and find out why other people don't go to church?
- When is the last time you went to another church, perhaps even a different denomination that has the buzz of success in one of their ministries, to see what they are doing and what you might learn from them?
- If someone wants to do something different or if someone suggests that things might be done differently in your parish are they marginalized or are they encouraged to proceed?
- Are our church doors open for people to come in and join us for worship or are they open so we can go out into our communities to meet those who have yet to hear the good news of the kingdom (know who Jesus is and how he can transform their lives)?
- Do we give people a safe space that not only protects their vulnerability, but also allows them to tell their stories?

- Do we talk more than we listen?
- Do we hold on to our old structures when new ones might serve God better?
- God already has a mission in our local communities. Have we found it yet? Have we joined in?
- If you have tried something before and it failed will you allow someone else to try it again with a new approach?
- Are you a permission giver or a permission denier?
- Is it time to prune for growth in your parish?
- Have you ever asked, “Why do we do it this way?”
- Have we pursued inclusivity to the point of exclusivity?
- Are you prepared to move outside your comfort zone and take a risk—by doing something radically different in your parish or by listening to a stranger to find out how you can make their life better?
- Do we think that spending all our time raising money to keep the doors open so our members can continue to worship in our increasingly expensive to operate buildings is doing God's mission?
- Are you adapting to the culture in which you live or are you trying to transform the culture to make it more welcoming to Jesus?
- Is clinging to the past more important than building for the future?
- Do you gauge the success of your church by the Sunday morning attendance?

Many of us have been writing in this newspaper about Fresh Expressions of church for some time now. If you aren't familiar with the Fresh Expressions movement and how it might transform your mission in your community and help you meet people outside the church in new and different ways, consider attending a Fresh Expressions Vision Day or Messy Church Fiesta being held this spring.

Vision Day: St. Mark's Anglican Church Orangeville, April 17

Messy Fiesta: St. George's Anglican Church, Georgetown, April 24 and St. John the Evangelist, Thorold, May 15.

For information and to register, visit www.niagara.anglican.ca/Fresh_Expressions.

Letter to the editor

MARK SPROULE-JONES
MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

How delightful the article by Michael Thompson on the “Eight O'clock”!

As I regular communicant in the dark hours of winter, I gloried in his poetic understanding of “its grooved and holy sameness waiting... in the circle of light...”

We loyal few, wrinkled and experienced, have felt the isolation from the mainstream and large congregations, like an elderly widowed aunt taken in to the spare bedroom out of charity rather than love.

Two points perhaps: it would be nice if priests and bishops would stop prescribing changes to the service; those things not in the BCP but

which the priests and prelates think we need... homilies, psalms, old testament readings, word changes (atonement is NOT the same as propitiation), congregational recitation of confessional and other prayers.

I sense already that readers think that list is from a pedantic old fuddy-duddy.

Second, we know that substance can be best revealed through form.

Substance without form can be only topical. An instant sort of communion.

So let us continue, without announcements that we follow the BCP which is needless fraudulent advertising. And a grand thank you for priests like Michael Thompson who have twiggled our love of 8.

Leap to faith

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Life is not a problem to be solved, but a reality to be experienced.

Søren Kierkegaard

I'm impressed by their bravado but remember that, not so long ago, heretics were excommunicated, shunned or burned at the stake. Also, the use of the word "heresy" in any discussion immediately stops it; I prefer to keep talking.

Back to the question of the identity of Jesus. He called himself "the Son of Man," a more modest label than "Son of God." Like "Messiah," with its overtly warlike associations, "Son of God" was an aggressive, politically loaded term from the Old Testament that some of Jesus' followers must have pressured him to claim. They also called him "Teacher," "Rabbi," and "Lord." The Christian Church has used all these titles as well as "Christ" and "Emmanuel."

What these names all mean today may be very different from what they meant to Jesus or to the early Church. First, there's the problem of meaning being lost in translation over time. What Jesus said in Aramaic, translated over the ages into Latin and Greek, has now surfaced in English, a language that has itself evolved immensely even in the past 400 years, as any student new to Shakespeare realizes. The nuances of a term such as "the Son of God" have certainly shifted over the past two thousand years from language to language and from Jesus'

Middle Eastern society to ours.

Moreover, we do not know exactly what words Jesus spoke since the gospels were written decades after his death by disciples who heard what his immediate circle remembered that he had said and done. His actual witnesses were likely illiterate, unable to have recorded his sayings. The gospel writers were apologists, choosing stories to make their points, not objective reporters—as if any writer can ever be objective.

By the time I had realized that this information was merely the tinnest corner of the scholarship on the topic, days had passed. I began to consider that the key word in my friend's question was "believe." That posed a second challenge. Have I any business expressing my ideas let alone my beliefs if I do not believe in Jesus in an orthodox way?

This is a variation on the Nicene Creed debate. Many church leaders have stopped reciting it during church services because they can no longer believe it to be literally true. No wonder many loyal Anglicans feel torn! Another friend said recently, "I like to recite the Creeds because they remind me of what I believe. If I throw out these beliefs, which I realize are limited in terms of common sense, it's like jumping from the familiar into the unknown and I don't know where I'll land."

As Søren Kierkegaard, the early 19th century Danish theologian, put it, to be a Christian requires a leap to faith because of the logical absurdity inherent in orthodoxy. How else, for example, can we assert that Jesus is both God and man when our rational

minds say that this, let alone the doctrine of the Trinity, doesn't make sense? To take a leap to faith requires a leap of faith. The pervasive 20th century response to the claims of religion was the existential despair of nihilism.

In the current theological study group at St. Thomas's, the progressive American theologian, Marcus Borg, has been shown to address this angst that still nags at the core of Christian belief. Pre-critical naivety is characterized by innocence—total belief, for example, in the birth narratives. Critical thinking leads to a skeptical analysis of everything, assuming that truth equals factuality. The necessary third step for contemporary theologians is post-critical naivety, belief in the Bible stories as true but not necessarily as historically factual. Reaching this stage of Bible study is a great relief: here is religious language that works.

I called my friend and gave her my rather long answer to her question about my belief in Jesus as the Son of God. She said, "Oh, really, I didn't know it was so complicated! I'm sorry to put you to all this bother. What matters to me is not right or wrong theology but that we are friends!" As Paul put it, "if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."

"Who do you say that I am?" Jesus seems to have been pleased by Peter's prompt response: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Two millennia later, the question, "Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God?" should not be asked as a test of orthodoxy. It deserves an answer only if asked in the spirit of friendship.

The generous heart of Lent

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

It is also the time of year when many of us will just have completed our parish Vestry meetings, important events in our common life which help us to focus and plan, to commit and set intentions. One of the things which I think we too often gloss over at Vestry meetings—often because we are uncomfortable addressing such things—is the inspiring generosity of our fellow parishioners and pilgrims on the journey who support our parishes and our ministries. We clergy, oftentimes very generous givers ourselves, stand in awe of the faithful members of our congregations who give—of their time and talent—yes, but also significantly of their treasure in order to fund the many and varied costs of the church today. We are all part of one of the last endeavours in our culture which is completely financed from the free will offering of its members—no 'core funding'; no 'matching' government grants, no 'seed' money—just simple gifts, lovingly and regularly given by loving people. Indeed it is sometimes baffling that faith based organizations get even shorter shrift

than many other not-for-profit organizations simply because they are faith based. (I even heard recently that one major computer software company no longer considers faith based organizations to be worthy not-for-profit groups and has stopped giving them the discounts they give to other not-for-profit groups. Go figure!) The importance of each of us giving as generously, as faithfully, and as often as we can, cannot be overstated. As we often hear when we talk about church finances, we do not have an expense problem (we run the church pretty carefully and responsibly); we have a revenue problem—some people just don't get it and don't give!

So, what does all this have to do with Lent, you ask. Lent, for me, is all about story—it is about giving birth to new life, about claiming honesty over temptation; it is about love that overwhelms and overflows; it is about being turned around to see life in new ways. The Jesus we encounter during Lent calls us to a generosity of spirit and of love, a generosity of forgiveness and of grace. Perhaps the extra thing that I should think about this Lent—that maybe you should think

about—that we all could contemplate—is being a little more generous. It is in giving away what we have that we gain what we shall be. We give away our love and our affection for others—the more we can give away of that love, the more is given back to us. Similarly, with our treasure, the more we can give away, the more is returned to us. It is the best investment we can make!

It's easy to find ways not to give—we don't like the book we use, we don't like the Priest, we don't like the hymns that are chosen; we don't like this or we don't like that. It would have been easy for the father, in the story of the Prodigal Son, to turn his back on his son when he came home; it would have been much easier for Jesus simply to give in to all those temptations set in front of him. But Jesus loves us enough to turn away from that and to shower us with his love; the father opens his arms and covers his son with his generous and abundant love.

This Lent, challenge yourself to an extra dose of generosity—generosity of spirit, of affection, of time, and, yes, of money. It's so much better than simply giving something up!

Children's Festival 2010



Your parish is invited to participate in this wonderful event for children – worship, storytelling, music, games, banner, friendship, and more...

Saturday, April 24th - 9:30am - 3:00pm

Greater Wellington Regional Festival
St. Mark's, Orangeville (5 First Avenue)
Contact: Judy-Anne Chapman – 519-579-2996

Lincoln & Brock Regional Festival
St. John's, Niagara Falls (3428 Portage Rd. N.)
Contact: Beth Kerley – 905-685-1286

Mohawk & Undermount Regional Festival
St. John the Evangelist, Hamilton (320 Charlton Ave.)
Contact: Susan Little – 905-528-3326

Trafalgar Regional Festival
Grace Church, Waterdown (157 Mill St. N.)
Contact: Rev. Susan Wells – 905-741-8007

It's Not Complicated God Loves Us (but it is only my opinion)

by Grahame Stap



A story of a search for God and can be bought at lulu.com/christianity/author/grahame-stap or by sending a cheque for \$23.00 which includes shipping and taxes, to Grahame Stap c/o general delivery Marten River Post Office, Marten River ON P0H 1T0

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The Niagara Anglican

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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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Make preparation | Mark 14:15



FRANCEAN CAMPBELL-RICH
CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Plan, plan, plan, says Paul Gibson, from the beginning of his new book on liturgy. All liturgy is planned, either well or poorly, he says. Plan, and collaborate. Clergy will agree, of course, though just how many of our churchgoers are prepared to take part in the planning is open to question. Paul Gibson has the ideal: At Trinity Divinity in Toronto he has a team system. Students are required to belong to a team, meet with the team on the assigned week, plan the liturgy for the following week and even attend a rehearsal.

Mr. Gibson's book is directed to churches large or small, and in a tone half instructional, half informative, drawing on his vast experience not only with students but as former Liturgical

Officer of the Anglican Church of Canada, together with his contributions to the Book of Alternative Services and to the hymn book, Common Praise.

There are twelve areas of planning to be considered, each of them essential to the smooth and worshipful service of the Eucharist. Of the twelve, Mr. Gibson places emphasis on the reading of scripture. "It is not a perfunctory act, realized by a mere recitation of words. Planning the liturgy begins with choosing and training readers. The readings are the primary source of the theme of the day." He goes on to say that everyone involved with the planning should be familiar with all the readings, building on what he calls the framework and invisible architecture of the occasion.

Another area of special concern to Mr. Gibson is the planning of the Prayers of the People. For this, he has in the past prepared written instructions for his students, but has developed these into a more comprehensive form, of interest to the general reader as well as the church community, tracing the practices of the early church, back to Justin in Rome

in 150 CE, and the development of the prayers over the centuries. The role of the prayers, or intercessor, evolved over the years to the bishop and the deacon, but their origin, according to Justin, was distinctly with the people, and of the people. A major responsibility of those who are assigned the task of leading the prayers of the people is "to actually make the prayers a common experience rather than another form of clerical control." And Mr. Gibson is not in favour of using the prayers on page 110 of *The Book of Alternative Services*. "The intercessions are in the hearts of the people and it is the job of the leader to get them out."

Mr. Gibson deals with one after another of the issues that arise in the planning of the service, treating the occasion much as a performance—one that must be studied and understood and practiced—as, in fact, a liturgical art. Nothing is too small to be ignored or treated carelessly, from the greeting of a visitor to the minutiae of the holy meal itself. Every thorny detail that has bothered parishion-

ers over the years, such as the Peace, comes in for an intensive examination by Paul Gibson. Reading his account of the beginnings of the Peace—the original kiss—the act of forgiveness, of penance—of social expression—of simple friendship is enough to make one rethink the tradition and give it new meaning—personal and corporal.

It will be observed that many of Paul Gibson's propositions have their basis in the ancient past—though not so ancient if one thinks only in terms of a thousand years. Was human nature, sense of right and wrong, of compassion, of love, of spiritual capacity, all that different when Jesus delivered the beatitudes on a mountainside? Is it not logical that we should recall and consider how his followers in those early house churches chose to express their wonder and their joy as they sang and worshipped and shared a meal?

We can surely do no less, as we plan and collaborate and sing a new song.

.....
Make Preparation by Paul Gibson is available online www.abcpublishing.com.

Archdeacon Ian Dingwall

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In 1972 Ian came to Niagara as rector of St. Jude's until 1987. From 1987 until 1992 he was appointed Executive Archdeacon of Niagara and Executive Officer. He then went to St. Mark's in Niagara on the Lake as rector from 1992 until 1997. He was appointed for a second term as executive Arch Deacon from 1997 until 2000. Ian retired on January 30, 2000.

He celebrated his family life with his wonderful wife Dorothy, and with

children Stephen, Brenda and Christine. He is the proud grandfather of Michael, Taylor and Katie Clarke as well as Noah Matthew Pollard.

On January 24, 2010, Ian gave up his earthly life and moved to life eternal. He had battled long and hard with cancer. Throughout his battle, Ian chose to continue to turn outward and give to the community though his on-going writing and prayer. Ian walks with the Lord and for this we are thankful.

All of Ian's contributions to the Niagara Anglican can be found on the dio-

cesan website: www.niagara.anglican.ca/newspaper. Please enjoy this poem that Ian wrote on October 19, 2008:

*I yearn to sink myself into another Space
To escape being captive on this
anonymous Island of Somewhere
To Sink', words I choose to remind
myself
That this 'holy' call is not just a pretty
frivolity
Instead it speaks of deep down Desire
To heed the Holy One who beckons me
To rest into the Silence of Life's Mystery*

*Come, Holy One of Love, come to lure
and love me Home*

*To that place I am deeply and truly
what I am*

*Or, better by far, what the Holy One
desires me to be.*

Ian, good friend, you will be dearly missed by all of us in your diocesan family. Your thoughts and writings have changed our lives. We are a better people, a better church because of your faith, your hope and your love. We will not forget.



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Spirit of giving | A Lenten Fast



MICHAEL BURSELM
ST. GEORGE'S, GUELPH

How do we give the Good News to people who are so different from us; those who dress, or speak differently; or are of a different socio-economic level, or culture; even those of a different faith?

I think we must try to see others as God sees them, as his children, and, if so, they're our brothers and sisters. There's no place for pride or condescension. We're not their older brother. And yet there are real differences. In the streets of Cairo we see so many beggars, even skinny children who tell us they're hungry by putting their fingers to their mouth, and then stick their hand out to receive a buck shish. They're so skilled in making our hearts bleed.

In the early church Christians shared their worldly possessions in common. But if North American Christians were to share theirs with those less fortunate, they would soon be reduced to their level of barely a subsistence living. There's far more of

them than of us. Is this what the Lord demands? For some, perhaps. There are many examples, as St. Francis and Mother Theresa, who have done just that.

In the church I grew up in, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, England, before the days of welfare, they tried to share the wealth by having a 'poor box.' Some would put money in; others take it out. No track was taken of either the givers or the receivers, and no distinctions were made. Poor boxes weren't always free of vandalism, as I recall to my shame, when three friends and I wanted to go to the movies one Saturday afternoon.

We had worked in the church all morning. Rather than go home first, where the two and sixpence each would have been forthcoming, with the only question, "Will you be home for supper?" we decided to borrow from the poor box. In our haste the box came away from the wall and disintegrated in our hands, scattering money on the ground. We scooped up what we could, and bolted, but we had guilty consciences. None of us enjoyed the movie. I don't even recall its name; but to this day, only the guilt.

Today, churches have rector's discretionary funds instead of poor boxes. These put the responsibility on

the rector, to both collect and to distribute money as needed. Also, there are Outreach Committees with their community projects, and PWRDF to contribute aid to people suffering in mega-disasters, such as the recent one in Haiti.

One way to share the wealth is that of St. John the Baptist in Maadi, a suburb of Cairo, where many expats in Egypt live; this is our Friday church. They put out each year a glossy booklet, SPIRIT OF GIVING. CHARITY GIFT CATALOG. Gifts of Hope for the Needy in Egypt. It may also be found at www.maadichurch.org/spiritofgiving. It lists 22 items, from a Food package for a refugee for a month, LE 40 (Egyptian pounds) or US\$7.00, to the most expensive, a micro-loan for an Egyptian woman, LE 960 or US\$175. Each item provides food, schooling, health care or general well being for needy Egyptians. There's even an item for medical care of a working donkey, the only means of transport of many Egyptians. When I see a man and his donkey, straining to pull a loaded cart through congested Cairo traffic, my heart goes out to the donkey, and I wish we could transport it to the Donkey Sanctuary near Guelph.

Parishioners may either take their

money to the church, or else donate online through PayPal. Income tax receipts are issued to American citizens. There's no tax exemption for Canadians, but that shouldn't prevent our giving. The whole world is invited to go online to give. Paul-Gordon Chandler, rector of St. John's, tells me that \$60,000 is raised annually. Because the overhead is voluntary, 100% of that goes to the needs designated by the giver. He writes on the first page of the booklet that compassionate services are offered to Muslims and Christians alike. This doesn't completely save my conscience when I pass a beggar by, but it helps.

St. John's is unique in this diocese because there are so many ex-pat residents from North America, working in Egypt, compared with other parishes in the diocese. All Saints' Cathedral in Zamalek, our Sunday church, has tremendous programs for the needy, including a hospital in the Nile Delta at Manouf and a prison ministry. The congregation consists mostly of Sudanese refugees and transient visitors to Egypt. That congregation depends on enormous grants from the church in England, and I trust Canada too, rather than from individuals.

People have real needs in Canada

also, though not of the same magnitude as here in Egypt. To our shame we have homeless among us. Perhaps we could have a diocesan Spirit of Giving booklet, with such items as St. Matthew's House in Hamilton or Sister Christine's work in Guelph. Congregations in Niagara are more homogenous, without such conspicuous differences as in the Diocese of Egypt. Having served on the Outreach Committee at St. George's, Guelph, for several years I think we could do more to support our needy, if we coordinate our congregational efforts. Doing it together and making it easier to give online through PayPal or CanadaHelps should accomplish more than our present outreach projects. A Lenten "fast" could be to donate to our less fortunate in this way, but their needs are year round.

We need to tell the Good News, that God loves all people, just as much as he loves us, not only by word, but in deed also; thus letting our light shine, so that all people will glorify our Father in heaven. That's the objective of our evangelism. I would trust, though, that we're not only concerned about our own needs in the Diocese, but we think of the donkeys, and their drivers, in Egypt. God loves his donkeys as much as he loves each one of us.



The John Laing Singers
present

Spring's Joy

A cantata by John Laing

Choral works of Antonin Dvorak, Samuel Barber and
Arrangements of Canadian Traditional Songs
by Imant Raminsh, Keith Bissell and Donald Coakley

Saturday, April 24 at 7:30 pm

Central Presbyterian Church
165 Charlton Avenue West, Hamilton, Ontario

Admission

Adult \$25 Senior \$20 Student \$10
To order tickets please call 905-628-5238

For information on the John Laing Singers
visit our web site at
www.johnlaingsingers.com

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