

**In conversation with...**

Bill Mous, Diocesan Co-ordinator of Social Justice



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**Parish wins national contest**

Puppet ministry teaches young people



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A section of the Anglican Journal

# NIAGARA ANGLICAN

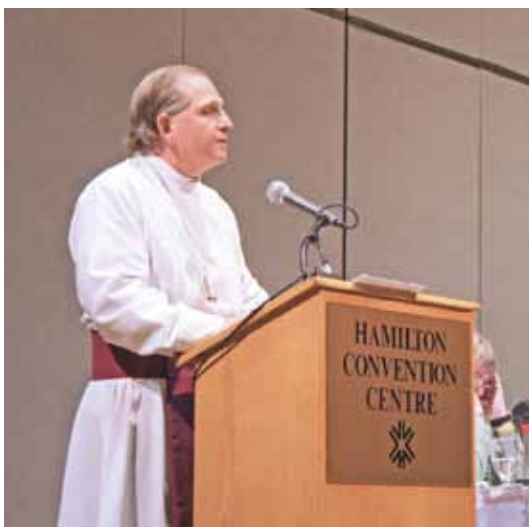
A Gathering Place and a Sounding Board for the People of the Diocese of Niagara

JANUARY 2012

## Synod Report 2011

# 2012 Year of Social Justice declares Bishop at Synod

*The 137th Synod (annual meeting) of the Diocese of Niagara was held November 18 and 19, 2011. Bishop Michael Bird's Charge to Synod (his opening address) was the cornerstone of the proceedings. It covered a number of themes. We begin with the portion on the issue of social justice:*



The work of Prophetic Social Justice Making will be a particular area of focus for us in the coming year. My remarks [...] turn to this aspect of our ministry as a diocese and my own reflections on what will be required of us in 2012.

The gospel passage that was read in our gathering worship this morning is Luke's account of Jesus' first call to discipleship (Luke 5:1-11). Jesus is standing on the shore of Lake Gennesaret and as he stands there he sees two boats and nearby some fishermen washing their nets. First he gets into one of the boats, they push off from the shore and he offers the people who have gathered there a teaching. How many times have we pictured this inspiring scene in our minds' eye: the crowds of people lining that shoreline and Jesus out on the water speaking to them

about the Kingdom of God?

When he had finished Jesus turns to Simon, one of the fishermen, and says to him: "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." Now for an instant, just an instant, we hear Simon uttering the words that continue to echo down through the centuries: "Master we have worked all night long but have caught nothing." We've been there, done that, bought the tee shirt and nothing is working! The fishermen down the lake seem to be packing them in but

not us! We're all getting older and we don't have any young fishermen wanting to join the crew! I remember the day when the fish were so plentiful they practically jumped right into the boat but times have changed and we were out all night and have caught nothing.

Perhaps with nothing more than the look on his face Jesus says to Simon... I know all of that... I know you're frustrated... I'm now asking you to believe and trust in me... get back into  
—See SOCIAL JUSTICE Page 2

## What IS Synod?

Canon Marni Nancekivell, Secretary of Synod, answers: The Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Niagara is the legal entity (established by statute in the Province of Ontario) of the Anglican Church within our diocesan boundaries.

There are a number of legal responsibilities that we must fulfill at the annual meeting, called Synod, including: approving minutes, electing Synod Council, approving financial statements and budgets, and authorizing the actions of Synod Council.

But Synod is more than that: it is an expression of who we are as the church. It gives us an occasion to meet and give expression to our diverse community under the leadership of our Bishop.

### Bible theme for 2011 Synod

What does the LORD require of you? To act justly... to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. —Micah 6:8

## The church year: Epiphany

The third season of the Church's year begins on January 6, 2012, and ends on Tuesday, February 22, 2012.

Epiphany centres on the visit of the Eastern astrologers or Magi, who came to pay homage to the new born saviour in the stable in Bethlehem, and brought symbolic gifts to foretell his future ministry to God's people.

Their visit was taken as a sign that God/Jesus came into the world to bring peace, hope, love and joy to people of all nations.

The nineteenth century hymn writer explained Epiphany as a season in which we trace all the glory of God's grace to every person:

**Advent** tells us Christ is near;  
**Christmas** tells us Christ is here!  
In **Epiphany** we trace  
all the glory of his grace.

For the full Bishop's Charge, other Synod reports and news, go to [www.niagara.anglican.ca](http://www.niagara.anglican.ca), select Synod of Niagara, and follow the link to 2011 Diocesan Synod.



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## Synod 2011

# Prophetic Social Justice the focus of Bishop Bird's Charge

*Continued from Page 1*

your boats...and let down your nets.

**Whenever I hear a story about a boat in the gospels,** I think about another story that I first encountered many years ago in one of Anthony DeMello's books. It had something to say to me then but as I stand before this Synod this morning it seems particularly meaningful and important for me to offer it to you on this occasion:

On a rocky seacoast where shipwrecks were frequent, there was once a ramshackle little lifesaving station. It was no more than a hut and there was only one boat, but the few people who manned the station were a devoted lot who kept constant watch over the sea and, with little regard for themselves and their safety, went fearlessly out in a storm if they had any evidence that there had been a shipwreck somewhere. Many lives were thus saved and the station became famous.

As fame of the station grew, so did the desire of people in the neighbourhood to become associated with its excellent work. They generously offered of their time and money, so new members were enrolled, new boats bought, and new crews trained. The hut, too, was replaced by a comfortable building which could adequately handle the needs of those who

had been saved from the sea and, of course, since shipwrecks do not occur every day, it became a popular gathering place; a sort of local club.

As time passed the members became so engaged in internal concerns that they had little time or interest in lifesaving, though they duly sported the lifesaving motto on the badges they wore. As a matter of fact, when some people were actually rescued from the sea, it was always such a nuisance because they were dirty and sick and soiled the carpeting and the furniture.

Soon the activities of the club became so numerous and the lifesaving activities so few that there was a showdown at a club meeting, with some members insisting that they return to their original purpose. Finally these people left and started a new operation a few miles down the shore and their selflessness and daring was such that soon their membership was enlarged, their hut was reconstructed and the mission was soon smothered once again.

If you happen to visit that area today, you will find a number of life-saving stations dotting the shoreline. Each one is justifiably proud of its origin and its tradition. Shipwrecks still occur in those parts but unfortunately the only lights that are turned on are the ones that light the comfortable interior and none shine out into the storm.

**My dear friends, Jesus stands before this gathering this morning,** he stands before us in the Diocese of Niagara, and, just as he did with the first disciples on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he has one simple message: "Get back into your boats.... head out into deep water....and let down your nets!" And the good news that I want to share with you today is that from my vantage

So if this story has anything to teach us or anything to caution us about, what might those lessons be? Let me suggest at least five things we might want to consider as we venture forth in the coming year:

1. If we are going to chart a new course then we need to know who we are, where we have come from, who we follow and what God's mission asks of

us. We heard today in the gospel reading that before he called the disciples, Jesus engaged in the ministry of teaching and it was in the context of hearing the Kingdom proclaimed and articulated that Simon was able to follow in the way of Jesus. **Over the coming year I want to call our diocese to a new commitment to the study of the scriptures,** to

—Continued Page 3

Lively discussion at Synod



point as your Bishop, I can see a number of boats on the water...

I can see lots of our members on the shore mending their nets and making their boats more sea-worthy. Even more exciting is the fact that some parishes and parishioners are realizing that they have a good solid boat but no net or they have a net but not enough people to pull in the catch. They are joining forces with other parishes and now they are back out on the water and going to places they could never have dreamed of, just a few months before.

## Reports to Synod

Many groups and ministries submit written reports of their work annually to Synod. Here are four which may be of interest to you. To read all the reports and obtain contact information, go to [www.niagara.anglican.ca](http://www.niagara.anglican.ca) and on the left side of the opening page scroll down to Synod of Niagara, click and follow the link to 2011 Diocesan Synod.

### Advisory Committee On Church Buildings

If, in your parish, you are anxious about some structural weakness in the church fabric, or some maintenance issue with the potential to cause trouble, call Karen at Synod Office and get yourself some expert advice: it could save you some sleepless nights and save the parish a bundle.

### Task Force For A Safe Church

It is our desire that the Church be a safe and holy place for all whom our ministry affects.

As a Christian faith community, the Anglican Diocese of Niagara is committed to creating and maintaining an atmosphere in which our members, volunteers, staff and those who use our buildings, can work and worship together in an atmosphere that is free from all forms of harassment, exploitation, intimidation or discrimination.

### Investment Subcommittee

The Investment Funds total \$23,382,000 as of March 31, 2010. The annualized rate of return for the period 2003 to 2010 is 7.23%.

Diocese of Niagara Investment Fund investment returns have been volatile in recent years reflecting the world financial market turmoil and volatility.

### Division Of Congegational Support

Puppet Ministry: Eighteen puppets along with puppet skits, instruction guides, and training manuals are available for loan to parishes to use in Sunday morning children's programs, children's talks, worship, Bible storytelling and church announcements. Mini training workshops can be provided to parishes by the consultant, and training days by a professional at a puppet training school are offered as interest dictates.

## Bishop's Charge to Synod

# Reports tell of Accomplishments

"As you read through the Synod Journal (available at [www.niagara.anglican.ca](http://www.niagara.anglican.ca)) you will see that so much has been accomplished. We have ushered in a new level of financial stability with a firm commitment to continue to work toward a solid fiscal foundation to take us into the future. What is particularly remarkable about this is that, at the same time, we have increased our capacity to offer new staffing support for youth work, vision

advocacy and justice making. We have also met with a number of our partners in ministry and mission whose work has been affected by decreases in last year's budget and we are finding new and creative ways to strengthen this work at both the parish and diocesan levels. The Hands across Niagara initiative, if it is well supported by all of us, will increase dramatically our ability to do this and I invite every person in the Diocese of

Niagara to join Susan and me in making a monthly commitment or a generous once a year offering. In previous years, on the floor of Synod, we witnessed a great deal of passion and concern for the work of outreach. Let's harness that passion through the Hands across Niagara program which will allow parishes to create the local partnerships that will change lives and change the world."

**Bishop's Charge to Synod**

**Prophetic Social Justice** *Continued from Page 2*

learning more about the faith we profess, to equip our members to share their own stories of faith, to explore practices of spiritual growth, and make new resources available for Christian education and liturgical expression. I am announcing today that a group has already begun to meet, which I have commissioned to bring these new resources forward and to make them more accessible to the people of the Diocese of Niagara. "Journeys in Faith" is a new initiative that will find its way into the life of the diocese in 2012.

2. If we are going to head out into the storm then we will need to be people of courage and courage comes from strong leadership, a leadership that inspires excellence, that instills confidence and nurtures a deep trust in the God who sails with us at every turn. It will require strong leadership from clergy and lay leaders alike who are willing to take intelligent risks and to be prepared to fail. In my four years as Bishop, I have had the privilege of experiencing the life of the wider Church both nationally and internationally. I can say with a great deal of conviction that **no diocese is better positioned to offer this kind of passionate, courageous and inspiring leadership than is the Diocese of Niagara.** People in the Diocese of Niagara join with others across the National Church in giving thanks and celebrating this 35th Anniversary Year of the ordination of women. In light of this wonderful milestone, I

would be remiss if I did not pay tribute to the women clergy in our diocese, past and present, who have served the Church with such great distinction and have contributed so much to our common life and work. I want to pay tribute to my gifted colleagues in ordained and licensed lay ministry who continue to amaze, uphold and inspire me. As I promised last year I have freed up more opportunities for me to interact personally with the clergy and I will continue to do this in the coming year. I also want to acknowledge our lay leaders, wardens, parish councils, group leaders, lay delegates, diocesan council and committee chairs and members who have a commitment and a love for our Church and for God's mission that often leaves me speechless and overwhelmed.

It is truly, truly a privilege for me to serve with you as your Bishop and I give thanks to God for all the many gifts and blessings we have to share.

3. When we talk about leadership, however, we need also to keep in mind that a lot of speaking and writing about leadership these days is intended to help people increase their personal power and influence. In this year's Archbishop of Canterbury's Lenten Book *Barefoot Disciple: Walking the way of passionate humility*, Stephen Cherry deals with this subject and says, "Leadership so fascinates us today because it combines two contemporary compulsions: power and celebrity. What an intoxicating

combination! No wonder there are countless shelves of books and endless programs which offer to help us become better leaders, more powerful in our influence over others... The goal of Christian living is to follow Jesus and to share with other disciples in seeking the kingdom of God. The witness of the New Testament is that this requires distinctive virtues: patience, charity and above all else, humility. Humility is not an option for a few who like that sort of thing. It is not a mere by-product of exceptional discipleship. Humility is central and of essence; indeed humility is, in the context of the new values and new life of God's kingdom, both strength and integrity of character." I believe that if our work of participating in God's mission bears the marks of this kind of humility then it will resonate with and capture the imaginations of those who we are attempting to reach out to. As I mentioned earlier it will also require us to encounter people and communicate in this same way; walking with people, and talking *with them*, not to them. We will need to share our stories with each other as well; stories of where we have found clear sailing and where we have come upon the rocks. **The days of the lone ranger are over in parish ministry!** It is absolutely essential now that we share our resources and work together. Our overall theme and scripture passage for this Synod is the passage from Micah 6:8: "...and what does the Lord require of

you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."

4. The story of the ramshackle life-saving station reminds us that we will probably have to redefine some of our measures of success. In this regard, let me ask you a question: "In the story of the life-saving station, what period in the station's life would we identify as the glory days?" I think you will agree that that answer is not found by using the measures of success that are so present and all consuming in our world today. I want to say, once and for all, please... **let's put aside our comments about the church down the street that is packing them in. Let's give ourselves a break... let's cut ourselves some slack.** That is where they are in their journey, this is where we are... we have things to learn as a Church, there is no doubt about it, but only God knows how this all fits into the grand scheme of things. Even more radical than this, however, I want you to consider seriously the notion...that this is our golden moment... that at this very moment we are on the brink of our glory days as a Church!

5. As we continue to push off from the shore we will, of course, need to follow our charts and watch for the markers that our Diocesan Vision has outlined for us. I want to thank all those who came to St. Christopher's Church on October 1, all those who gathered to take stock of how far we have traveled and to fine tune our vision for the next leg of the journey. I also

want to acknowledge two people who will be instrumental in this work in the days ahead: Canon Terry Deforest, our Vision Advocate and Coordinator for Excellence in Ministry and Rev. Bill Mous, our new Coordinator of Social Justice. I am not sure whether they will be helmsmen, mid-shipmen or deck hands and perhaps a little of each, but we welcome them and we are already blessed by their ministries among us.

*When he had finished speaking, Jesus said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signalled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink.... Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people."*

In the coming year may these words of Jesus guide us and strengthen us and move us forward! **Let's continue to get those nets mended! Let's get those boats out and unto the water!** May we hear and answer Jesus' call to prophetic discipleship with a renewed sense of commitment and passion, that offers a beacon of hope and God's gift of unconditional love to the people we are called to serve."

*Other portions of the Bishop's Charge can be found throughout this issue.*



**John Stephen and Mary Jane Price lead worship at Synod**

**Synod... Then and Now**

- 1877 – Synod lasted 3 days ...
- 2011 – Synod lasted two days
- 1877 – 41 clergy and 49 lay people attended ...
- 2011 – 96 clergy and 177 lay people participated

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# Compassion is a gift from God

GRAHAME STAP

The room was about eight feet by six feet. No window, just a bed and a chair and a buzzer. I lay on the bed in total darkness and prayed, "God if I am called please don't let it be a child," not a very sensible prayer as I was on call at the neo natal unit of McMaster University.

The year was nineteen ninety-eight. I was training to be a chaplain and hoping it would be an easy time. I had yet to realize God was not about to let me, or anyone who felt called, have an easy time.

The buzzer rang, and I almost fell off the bed. I called the switchboard and was told to go to the premature birth ward. A feeling of dread came over me - "How can I help parents in that situation?" I started the journey

of about one hundred feet and wished it were a hundred miles. I had often read of 'leaden feet' but never really knew what it meant. That day I knew exactly what it meant but I had a deep feeling that I could not refuse to go and also knew that God walked beside me.

The nurse met me at the door and asked, "Have you got your kit?" I stood in confusion and wondered what she meant. She continued, "Angela Joe has been born 16 weeks premature and the parents want her baptized." I said, "I'll get it," and ran quickly back to my room. As I returned I saw the incubator and the parents standing beside it holding hands.

I went forward slowly. "Are you the chaplain?" they asked. I stammered, "Yes, I am." The mother said, "Thank you for

coming, will you baptize our baby?" I could not answer. I had looked into the incubator and had seen this tiny baby no bigger than the palm of my hand. Tubes sticking out of it seemed everywhere. Unbidden thoughts ran through my mind. How can something so small and so completely vulnerable be alive? How can I baptize her without hurting her? The mother seemed to sense my reluctance, she touched my arm and said, "It's ok you can't hurt her." So I baptized Angela Joe.

I had never felt so completely useless or inadequate. It totally escaped me that I did not have to be anything other than who I was. God was in that room and it was God that baptized Angela Joe. I still thought it all rested on my shoulders.

During the baptism the nurse

had taken pictures with an instant camera and gave them to the parents. I left and returned to my room. I could not stop the tears streaming down my face. "Dear God please let her live," I prayed, but it was not to be.

Sometime later, after I had composed myself, I went back and saw the mother holding Angela Joe. The tubes were gone and she was breathing with very shallow breaths. As I reached the mother's side she held out her arms with this so tiny baby and asked, "Would you like to hold her?" I could not answer but held out my arms to receive her. As I took her, her breathing stopped and she died. Suddenly with clarity I never knew existed I physically felt the presence of God. I knew Angela Joe was with God and one day we would meet again. This feeling has never



left me, and each and every Christmas as I think of Jesus coming as a tiny baby, I seem to know why. It was to allow the shepherds then, and us now, to have compassion for those in our society that are vulnerable and who need us to be the presence of God in their lives.

God bless you Angela Joe and thank you for allowing me to be a part of your very short life.

As always it is only my opinion.

*The Reverend Grabame Stap is Rector of St. Simon's Parish, Temagami. [gstap27@aol.com](mailto:gstap27@aol.com)*

## Ten parishes face the future together

A bold new approach to Ministry in the Undermount Region has been initiated by Bishop Michael Bird of Niagara Diocese.

Susan Little, Chair of the Undermount Regional Council, wrote in her report to the 2011 Diocesan Synod that, "Undermount consists of 10 very disparate parishes. Stretching from the agriculturally rich lands of Winona through the suburban sprawl of Stoney Creek, sweeping through the downtown Hamilton and some of its poorest areas, the Undermount Region touches the considerably comfortable residential areas tucked beneath the escarpment and then concludes in the residentially prestigious part of Westdale. The parishes compris-

ing Undermount Region are as varied as the demographics they represent. Its downtown Hamilton ministries, as well as its community-based parishes, include a wide spectrum of people very much like those throughout the rest of the diocese."

The new approach is in response to declining church attendance, historic buildings and aging congregations, reported Archdeacon Rick Jones.

Speaking at a two evening "Mission" in the fall, Bishop Bird encouraged church members to "think prophetically, and move into God's mission in the world." He challenged the 130 church members in attendance to "work collaboratively," since "we are often isolated from one another

in our church 'silos' and fail to see the ways that we could share ideas and resources."

Using the Gospel passage of Luke 10:1-12, he noted that Jesus sent out the early disciples in a very specific way. Jesus told them what to take with them and what to leave behind. Similarly, Bishop Bird asked the gathered members what they believed the church today was being asked to leave behind and what it should take into the future.

The Bishop fielded questions from the floor and many were complex, including questions about the grief of change, and his view on the future of our Anglican churches. He emphasized that he has no master plan or hidden agenda, but said that the status quo could no longer

be an option. He challenged individuals and groups to pray and work together "to discern the future shape of ministry for this Region." He stressed that "we are people who have good news to give voice to... hope is one of the priceless gifts God has to share with the people of this generation through us."

In describing the conversation with church members, he said, "I felt that we were on Holy Ground."

The two nights with Bishop Bird were followed by a four-week study, entitled *Practical Hospitality: Re-imagining the Church*, where the conversations begun with the Bishop continued. The November sessions, led by Archdeacon Rick Jones, brought together 80 members

from all the Undermount Churches, and energy was high as members got to work with others from different churches. New ideas about being a "missional church" were explored, using materials from the Fresh Expressions movement, Wycliffe College and Dr. John Bowan.

"This Undermount initiative will continue into the New Year with ongoing meetings of church representatives to develop and implement mission strategies and answer the Bishop's challenge to work collaboratively and discern how the Anglican Churches of Undermount might together engage God's Mission in the World," stated Archdeacon Jones.

### Bishop's Charge to Synod

## Thanks to Many People

"Again this year it has been my privilege to work with my colleagues at Cathedral Place who have all served the people of Niagara with commitment and dedication that is second to none. Every member of the

Synod Office team has worked so hard in the wake of intense cost-cutting measures to bring to the people of Niagara a high level of service and support. Bringing us together for these meetings is a mammoth job and I want to offer

a sincere word of thanks to all of the Synod staff, the planning committee and to our team on the ground today, for all their many efforts."



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**Bishop's Charge to Synod**

# Speaking out Everywhere

"Niagara's voice continues to be heard boldly around the world, in our National Church gatherings and committees, in town and city council chambers, in the offices of MPs, MPPs and Cabinet Ministers. We have been there at Go Stations, on street corners, at Poverty Round Tables, community events and

market places, to speak words of truth and reconciliation wherever they are required. We are learning what it means to be a "prophetic" Church in this generation. For me this involves three things: speaking truth to power, discerning and articulating a vision for the future and proclaiming hope and good news

to a troubled and broken world. For years now some of the most effective prophets in our midst have been our young people and I am pleased to see that this year at Youth Synod they have made a renewed commitment to our work and worship at the local parish level."

## Men and Women should attend *The Vagina Monologues*

PAM GUYATT

Why would a group of Female Clergy want to perform a V-Day Production of the Vagina Monologues? Especially in a church setting?

Maybe I should start at the beginning, and take you on my journey of discovery.

I first experienced a V-Day Production of *The Vagina Monologues*, by Eve Ensler, while I was a student at Trinity College, Toronto in 2003. It was an amazing experience. In 1997, after having performed the Monologues as a one woman play for 3 years, Ensler recognized how many female victims of sexual abuse had never shared their story. Night after night someone would knock on her dressing room door and want to share her very personal stories with her. She came to the conclusion: "In order for the human race to continue, women must be safe and empowered." [Quote is taken from the introduction of *The Vagina Monologues*, The V-Day Edition, by Eve Ensler]. Together with like minded individuals, the V-Day movement was launched. For the last 14 years, on or around Valentine's Day, women from all walks of life gather, and with permission from the author perform the monologues. Ensler insists that all who are involved with the production have to be volunteers, and the proceeds of the shows must be given to organizations that are working to combat violence against women in their local communities.

During one of our Clergy meetings in the Lincoln Region of Niagara Diocese, we had a guest speaker from Bethlehem Housing and Support Services.

I was fascinated to discover the group's origin. Over 25 years ago the downtown churches in St. Catharines conducted a study on poverty within the local area. The study found that the largest common denominator was violence against women - a cycle from which they could not break free.



But, with the help of numerous volunteers, Bethlehem Housing and Support Services have helped many women in the St. Catharines and Niagara Falls communities to break free to live in safety.

Two years ago, the Niagara Synod deleted Bethlehem Housing and Support Services from our budget at the request of Lincoln's regional dean - knowing that the people within our communities give to this organization in a very generous fashion. Last spring I approached the Reverend Val Kerr, Board member of Bethlehem Housing and Support Services, with the idea of doing a V-Day Production of the Vagina Monologues as a fund raiser for Bethlehem. She liked the idea, and the plan was launched.

Our cast is made up of Women Clergy in the Niagara Diocese who are passionate about stopping violence against not only women but all people. One joins us from the Guelph area,

two from Hamilton, three from Lincoln and one from Brock. We chose to perform the dramatic reading in church settings on purpose, because the church is a place where we should be voicing our concern and outrage about what is happening to women from all walks of life,

here and around the world. Yes, the language is explicit - but the language is not the 'point.' The message the language conveys is the point.

Is it just for women? Certainly not. It has been my experience that when men and women are in the same audience, we tend to listen in a different way.

The cost is \$20.00 a ticket, available at the door. The proceeds are being divided among Bethlehem Housing and Support Services in the Niagara area, the Women's Centre in Hamilton, and the Sexual Assault Hot Lines in both communities. The first performance is on February 7, at Christ's Church Cathedral in Hamilton, and the second on February 14 at St. George's Church in St. Catharines. Both events begin at 7:00 p.m. Please join us.

*The Reverend Pam Guyatt can be contacted at [sjamesanglican@coغوco.net](mailto:sjamesanglican@coغوco.net) or 9056828853*

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**Bishop's Diploma Course**

This program provides an opportunity for lay people to grow in their commitment to Christ and Christ's Church through a deepening of faith. This winter will feature an eight-week course on the **Ethics**. Registration is held on first evening; dates indicated below. Attend the parish centre of your choice. Registration fee: \$35 (includes sessions plus text)

Area	Parish Centre	Start Date
Burlington	St. Luke	January 9 - 7:30pm
Flamborough	Christ Church	January 18 - 7:00pm
Jordan	St. John	January 17 - 3:00pm

For further information contact Jane Wyse at 905-527-1316 x420 or [jane.wyse@niagara.anglican.ca](mailto:jane.wyse@niagara.anglican.ca)

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*In Essentials, Unity; In Non-Essentials, Liberty; In All Things, Charity*

**EVERYONE WELCOME**

## Synod 2011



### Good reading

Jacqueline Johnson and Jim Powell browse the book table

### Generations together »

(L-R) Braden Morgan, Danielle Kelly and Penny Johnstone were part of the same discussion group.



## Moments at Synod



### A job well-done

Secretary of Synod Marni Nancekivell (right) presented Administrative Assistant Karen Nowicki with a gift of appreciation for all her work in preparing for the 2011 Diocesan Synod.

# Vision Advocate and Coordinator for Excellence in Ministry

## TERRY DEFOREST

Bearing a lantern presented to me at the enlightening high-energy service of installation held at the annual synod meeting, I feel wonderfully supported as I formally take up the role of Vision Advocate and Coordinator for Excellence in Ministry in the Diocese of Niagara. The resulting encouragement that we not hide the light of our vision under a bushel, the received momentum from the October 1 "Fine-tuning the Vision" consultation, the consequent revising of the "living document" or "work in progress" which is Niagara's vision and the partnership of so many gifted volunteers and staff all make for a hope-filled beginning.

Who is it making this new beginning? As a child of this diocese, an earnest and active member of St. Aidan's, Oakville and an enthusiastic delegate to the Niagara Leadership Conference (as NYC was then called – yes that dates me), I found a calling to live and share good news – the good news of the empowering and liberating vitality of faith in the living God. Deeply passionate about so many aspects of ministry, I have been blessed by the chance to live out that vocation as a deacon and priest

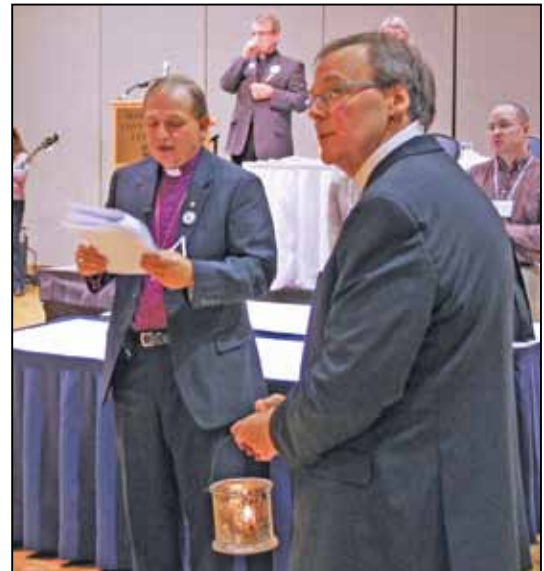
in Niagara since 1983. Those years have afforded me chances to serve in both settled and interim ministries in all shapes, settings and sizes of parishes across the diocese, at Christ's Church Cathedral and to teach at Trinity College, Toronto. In addition, I taught at the Renison Institute of Ministry at Waterloo and briefly, while a student there myself, at the Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, MA. I have also been given the privilege of working at national and international levels through recent Justice Camps, and through General Synod and its former EcoJustice Committee on a range of justice, peace and environmental stewardship concerns. While continuing fulfilling and challenging parish ministries as the half time Priest-in-charge at the Church of the Incarnation, Oakville, I am delighted to add a new dimension in this half time diocesan role.

The title for this position is, admittedly, long and indecipherable (not unlike my writing style at times). It is a new role intended to help us - as lay and clergy leaders, parishes and diocese - engage more fully with our diocesan vision. In it I will support the various Vision Group teams and leaders, with a special responsibility as the designated staff-person for the Outstanding Leadership for Ministry team. I

will, as requested, assist Vision teams in pursuing their goals and objectives. I will work to strengthen lay and clergy ministry partnerships. I will be assisting the development of ministry covenants between the Bishop, Rector and lay leaders as we strive to be more intentional in the ministries we exercise in pursuit of God's mission. I will be facilitating training for excellence in lay and ordained ministry. I will be working to develop performance and development programs and to promote the development and consistent application of personnel policy.

Of course, I will be doing very little of this on my own. As is characteristic of excellence in ministry, it is approached in partnership. In my case, those partnerships are with volunteer covenant and transition consultants; Vision Groups; lay and clergy leaders across the diocese; and with our Bishop, Executive Officer and the diocesan staff. In all our cases, that partnership is with the living God whose mission we serve.

In the next few months, I look forward to receiving invitations to visit, speak or guest preach about our vision work - up to monthly on Sunday mornings or more often at other times - in parishes, at clergy meetings and Vision Groups, as well as calling together those who are



### Showing the light of Christ

Terry DeForest receives a lantern as part of his installation as Vision Advocate and Coordinator for Excellence in Ministry

interested in forming learning communities. Perhaps these could be called "Circles of Excellence" (is that a "C of E"?), focused on particular distinctive kinds of ministry, or consulting on several newly begun parish ministry partnerships or about "pilot" ministry covenants, or to considering how we can make lay leadership development an

even higher priority in Niagara.

I also look forward to hearing from any who wish to explore how this new role might evolve and assist them in their ministries. Together taking our vision to the next level, may we hold high lanterns which shed the light of the risen Christ further throughout Niagara's corner of God's world.

Canon Terry DeForest can be reached at [terry.deforest@niagara.anglican.ca](mailto:terry.deforest@niagara.anglican.ca) or 905-527-1316 ext. 340



# San Gabriel Hispanic Community

JAVIER ARIAS

St. Gabriel is the archangel who announces good news to the little and humble people (read Gabriel's announcement to Mary in Luke's gospel chapter 1, verses 26-38). We held a contest and our members decided to name our new and fresh congregation - St. Gabriel - since we are Christian people who from now on will be the announcers of good news and hope.

We started in August 2008 with a prayer group of five people, at my home, and after that we felt the need to pray together frequently. On September 6, we formally celebrated the first Eucharist with approximately 30 people attending. Later my wife Ruth called the Anglican Diocese and asked them for a place and support. Immediately the Diocese offered to us the Cathedral and under the support of Dean Peter Wall, Sue-Ann Ward and Matthew Griffin we started our service according to the Anglican rite in November 2008. At the end of January 2009 we moved to St. Luke's Church, Hamilton.

Presently, we have 26 families

registered, totaling approximately 80 members. Our regular attendance numbers between 50 and 60 people. It is a very young community representing all Latin-American countries from Mexico to Chile.

Our worship is every Saturday at 6:00 pm. (Well, 6:10 in Spanish time!) We celebrate a contemporary, charismatic and warm service. On special occasions we celebrate a bilingual Mass to include our brothers and sisters of St Luke's. Regularly six to eight Anglo members take part in our Spanish service every Saturday. We always have a social time after our service, including a karaoke night and dance monthly.

As well as the church activities, we have also created a community centre to support and help the wider community. A variety of programs are offered, including Spanish classes for adults and children, guitar lessons, yoga and zumba classes, children's garden, summer soccer program, fundraising program and other activities that bring the community together. It makes us feel good that we have a house where we meet, pray, share and help



People gather around the altar for worship and then reach out into the community

others.

Because everything is new for us—country, weather, culture, language and church—it is not easy for us to accommodate easily to this new world. In addition 100% of the members come from the Roman Catholic Church, and sometimes it is a little bit hard to understand the differences.

Our dream is to continue being a vibrant and healthy com-

munity as well as being a new expression of faith and love. We hope to grow and expand our services to other nearby cities where we have some concentration of Spanish-speaking people, and to continue our ministry in line with the Diocesan Mission and Vision.

It is a good time to express our gratitude to Bishop Michael Bird for his support and help to our

congregation, as well as to St. Luke's parish for opening their doors to us and their support of our ministry and service in many ways.

*The Reverend Javier Arias is Priest in Charge of St Luke's Parish and Sacerdote, Comunidad Hispana San Gabriel, Hamilton. jariasprada@yahoo.com*

## Bishop's Charge to Synod

### New Day is Dawning

"I and many others across the diocese are feeling a new sense of confidence. Something is beginning to take hold and emerge that is very exciting. We continue to discern God's will for our work together and in every region of the diocese. We are creating spaces to listen to each other and to open ourselves to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Something is shifting, a new day is dawning and I hope that this Synod will give us an opportunity to celebrate and to give thanks to God for the blessings we have experienced in our work over the past twelve months and the gifts we have in each other."



**Flash mob**  
the Youth delegates to Synod got people up and dancing

## Parish Wins National Contest

When Sharan Austin, Janet Cress, Chris Devereux and Nancy Wilcox of Christ Church, Woodburn get together, something amazing is bound to happen. This creative team, working together for the past couple of years, is running a youth program that involves puppets and as many as 12 participants. With the help of the young people, they named it the Youth And Puppet Program or YAPP.

Last summer, when the team met to plan the program and events for the coming year, they were aware that the Anglican Church of Canada was promoting the Marks of Mission campaign. So they decided to develop a program around the Marks of Mission in a way that would engage the young people at Christ Church. The Marks are a ministry framework used throughout the Anglican Communion and a priority for the Anglican Church of Canada.

When General Synod launched a contest to encourage Anglicans to enliven the Marks

of Mission in their Sunday schools, the team entered the national contest. In October, they received the good news that Christ Church had won.

Along with three other winners, one from each ecclesiastical province, Nancy and Janet spent a weekend in Toronto working with Susan Graham Walker, a renowned educator and expert in this field, to develop a resource that will animate the Marks of Mission for kids across Canada.

"It's no secret that we've entered an era when our Sunday

schools are shrinking and the attendance is sporadic," said the Reverend Patricia Stansfield, Rector of Christ Church, "but with a creative spirit, a variety of gifts and teamwork, Janet, Nancy, Sharan and Chris have found a fun and inspiring way to share the gospel with our young people and we are so proud that they'll be working on a resource for the national church. Way to go!"

For more information about YAPP email woodburnanglican@shaw.ca.



**The winning team**  
(L-R): Sharan Austin, Nancy Wilcox, Janet Cress and Chris Devereux with their puppets

# In Conversation with ...

## The Reverend Bill Mous, Diocesan Coordinator of Social Justice

*Editor's note: Prophetic Social Justice is the petal of the Diocesan vision to be emphasized this year. Bill Mous will play a valuable role in fulfilling that mission. The Niagara Anglican interviewed Bill to introduce him to our readers, and for us to gain further insights into his goals and hopes for the coming year.*

**NA: Tell us a little about your past, and what brought you to your new responsibilities.**

**BM:** These days I spend much of my time in the beautiful community of Dundas, with my wife Courtney and eighteen month old son John. But I grew up in the Niagara peninsula and much of my early Christian formation took place at Holy Trinity, Fonthill and through the youth ministry programs of our diocese. My justice journey began in high school with issues of inclusion –through discussions at Youth Synod about discrimination based on sexual orientation, and through my participation in the International Year for Mobilization against Racism and Racial Discrimination. While completing a science degree at McMaster University, I was inspired by the witness of people like Canon Paddy Doran and Doctor Jim Quinn as they engaged with environmental justice issues pertaining to the Red Hill Valley expressway. While my interest in biology continued, my passion for ministry flourished and I had a growing sense that God was not calling me to use my gifts

in a lab. Consequently I pursued my vocation to ordained ministry by attending Trinity College in the University of Toronto. After returning from an internship in the Diocese of the Windward Islands at the parish of St. George's Grenada, I began my ministry at St. James Anglican Church, Dundas. I've been blessed to work there for the past four and a half years, most recently as Associate Priest. During this time I was also fortunate enough to work on several local justice initiatives related to poverty and climate change, and to serve as the founding co-chair of the Greening Niagara Committee, co-led the Environmental Justice immersion group at our Community Justice Camp, and be a member of the Partners in Mission and Ecojustice committee of the Canadian General Synod.

**NA: Now that you have accepted a new ministry in the Diocese, what do you understand is the purpose of your new half-time position?**

**BM:** As part of our vision of prophetic social justice making, the Diocese of Niagara is committed to being "a leader in advocacy and justice for all; a faith community that practices what it preaches thus, with God, transforming lives." The goal of this position is to support, equip and animate people and parishes to discern and prophetically respond to justice issues in our neighbourhoods, communities and world.

**NA: Within the context of those broad aims, what does your work envisage?**

**BM:** Most justice work happens on the ground; in places and spaces of all sorts of descriptions that allow stories of injustice, oppression, exclusion and marginalization to rise up. My role is to help create space for these stories to be shared in our communities, to support the many important justice ministries already happening, and with our partners, to advocate within the church and beyond for systemic change.

**NA: What would you expect to accomplish in your first year?**

**BM:** First and foremost, I hope to listen to the people, groups and partners within and beyond our diocese about the important work that they are undertaking with regards to social justice. One of the key priorities for the coming year, as identified by the Prophetic Social Justice Making vision group, will be the formation of the Niagara Social Justice Committee (NSJC). The purpose of this committee is to develop ministry resources for parishes, to provide support and counsel for diocesan social justice initiatives and to collaborate with partner organizations. I'm also hopeful that I'll be able to intentionally companion a few parishes in our diocese as they endeavor to more fully live out our baptismal call "to strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity

of every human being."

In addition, I will also be supporting Bishop Michael in his advocacy work as he raises up the stories of injustice heard through our ministries to our elected officials and others in positions of power.

**NA: Parishes are the front lines of our Church's work, how do you plan to work with parishes and other diocesan groups?**

**BM:** Part of my role is to be a point of connection between our diocese and parishes, social justice committees and community groups. There is already a great deal of social justice work happening – on issues as diverse and important as social assistance reform, access to affordable housing, refugee rights and climate change. I look forward to working with parishes – wherever they may be on their justice journey – to lend support, resources or perhaps just be a sounding board. I am available for consultation, workshops and preaching related to social justice ministries. I am also the staff person for a number of our diocesan committees and represent the

diocese on several partner boards and coalitions.

**NA: Sounds like a full schedule, is there anything you wish to add?**

**BM:** I'll be publishing a monthly electronic newsletter to help connect people with work happening in our parishes, communities and diocese as well as with our partners. To subscribe, send an email to: bill.mous@niagara.anglican.ca with 'newsletter' in the subject line. I can also be reached by phone at 905-527-1316 ext. 330 or bill.mous@niagara.anglican.ca.

**NA: Every blessing as you head into known and unknown areas of the social justice journey.**



## Synod 2011

### More Justice Journeys

During Synod, **Archdeacon Michael Patterson** spoke of his and the Bishop's experience as anti-poverty activists advocating for adequate social assistance, by listening to the stories of those living with poverty. He told about doing a "social audit" and engaging in several social action campaigns which demonstrated the limitations of social assistance, especially those living on a food bank diet. He said the Diocese, with community partners, is bringing about change in

the system.

**Sue Carson** related her experience in finding a welcome at St. James' Parish, Dundas, as an environmental steward and activist. She reminded her listeners that we are borrowing the earth from our children.

**The Reverend Sue Ann Ward of HARRRP** (Hamilton Association for Residential and Recreational Re-development Programs) and former Vicar of Christ's Church Cathedral, related the chance meeting

which led to the Cathedral hosting a breakfast program and forming HARRRP, which is a vibrant community development agency serving the needs of and empowering local residents in several of Hamilton's neediest neighbourhoods.

**The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund** made a powerful presentation around JustFood - exploring food aid, security and justice. Their presentation culminated in the commissioning of many

newly-trained parish PWRDF representatives.



**Archdeacon Stephen Hopkins** described the journey of St. Christopher's, Burlington towards justice, starting with a free clothing store which led to five "Open Doors" programs. This resulted in establishing relationships with people who started out as customers but became dinner table companions. "Isn't that what the kingdom of heaven is," he asked, "people of all conditions gathered around a table together?"



# Tell me a Story

JIM NEWMAN

It was mid September when, with the encouragement of the Diocesan Generous Culture of Stewardship Committee, I contacted clergy at several parishes in Niagara to explore the idea of recording stories about parish outreach, parish revitalization and personal spiritual transformation. The deadline was looming - November 2011 Synod; and we were looking for stories that would illustrate the judicious use of resources as well as demonstrating courage and inspiration.

The response from every clergy contact was overwhelmingly positive. Initially I had been in touch with more parishes than I could accommodate in the end, and my sincere apologies go to those who missed out on this round. The only questions were about logistics.

**How long will the story be?**

Just a 4-5 minute video!

**That's all?**

Yes.

**Is there a script?**

No, but here's an outline. The

story should include something to capture the viewers' imagination, an outline of how the parish moved the idea forward, the results, and some words of inspiration for those who might take up a similar project.

Two or three topics would be suggested by the rector and we would settle on one.

**Can you give me a few days to line up some people?**

Certainly, and we'd set a date.

The live recording sessions at St. John the Evangelist, Thorold; St. Luke's, Burlington; St. George's, St. Catharines; and Grace Church, St. Catharines proved to be exciting for all participants, and especially for me - I was learning about video production as I went along. For reasons unknown, the first take was always the best. The videos needed titles and captions and in one case I wanted to combine two separate recordings into one. I discovered Microsoft's Movie Maker was available on our laptop computer, and that did the trick. The Synod deadline was met with the expert help of Chris Grabiec of The Dunham Group, two enterprising par-

ishes - All Saints, Erin and St. Elizabeth's, Burlington that created their own videos, and Jim Blake, multimedia specialist and a member and church warden at St. Matthew on-the-Plains, Burlington, who burned the DVDs.

Every parish represented at the 2011 Synod received a take home DVD of six parish success stories. They are inspirational, and ideal for generating discussion at your next Parish Council and Outreach Committee meetings. Don't miss them!

On a separate note, I retired from my position as half-time Stewardship Consultant on December 31, 2011. This date coincided with the end of the year of focus on stewardship. The level of stewardship activity in parishes is stronger than ever. Stewardship and DMM (Diocesan Mission and Ministry), long seen by many as burdens, are acquiring new status as leading indicators of spirituality. Cases of remarkable and sustained increases in parishioner giving show that people give generously when

offered a compelling vision of the good their giving will achieve.

While I look forward to enjoying my retirement, I will miss being part of the Diocesan staff team and I will miss working with the superb Diocesan Generous Culture of Stewardship Committee. And I will miss my association with many clergy and parishioner friends in parishes across the Diocese and with my colleagues at the Anglican Church of Canada and the Ontario Stewardship Network. However, it's time to apply principles of



stewardship to other important areas of my life! Cheers and blessings to you all!

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Thank you Jim for being our Stewardship Consultant for the past three years, for bringing the true meaning of Stewardship to so many people, and for sharing your thoughts with our readers through your regular columns in the Niagara Anglican.*

## Bishop's Charge to Synod

# Stewardship

"You will see in the Synod Journal reports that the work of keeping our Diocesan Vision front and centre is alive and well in the work of the Vision Petal Leadership Group - we have focused upon and cultivated a generous culture of stewardship in Niagara.

The report and the stories you will hear in these proceedings are a real testament to the outstanding leadership that Jim Newman has given to the diocese and to the vast majority of our parishes, as our Stewardship Consultant."

# My Justice Journey

ELIZABETH HUETHER

Let me begin by saying that this is a journey that is a lifetime pilgrimage. I have been asked to share with you my personal journey and so it begins... in this way.

Upon my return to Canada, Ontario and specifically to the Diocese of Niagara after spending 6 years living and working in the Diocese of Umzivubu in South Africa, I looked for places and people who took matters of justice making seriously.

In spring of 2010, I entered the Justice Camp. I had a desire to meet others who had a passion to seek and do justice. I had a curiosity and scepticism to see how "church land" dealt with matters of justice and in particular those who are, in my words, "fringe dwellers" of society at large - those who are weakened by prejudice and misunderstanding because they are different.

My experience as a member of the Aboriginal Justice Immersion group that week in May 2010,

changed me forever and I am still on the journey discovering what all that means for me in my justice journey. My very core beliefs and understandings about who I am in society and my own prejudices were challenged and inspired all at the same time.

Mahatma Gandhi said, "be the change you wish to see." Justice begins with me. Justice begins with my being aware of my own prejudices and learning to live with those for the greater good. While we all know that the systems of society seem inadequate and broken when it comes to matters of justice (or so we feel), we must keep calling leaders and those with decision-making power to bring about changes in the system.

What are you and I doing in our daily lives to see that true justice is found and made? Recently, at St. Matthias, Guelph, we had the privilege of welcoming the Good Hearted Women to share with us for a Sunday morning celebration of the community. The Good

Hearted Women is a group of Indigenous women who gather to sing and drum as part of their journey to healing from the wounds of life and life's situations they have found and continue to find themselves in. The leader of the group asked, before we began, if she could lay their altar, a simple blanket with sacred symbols, next to ours. We shared together readings, prayer, music, dance and Eucharist. At the time of offering we thanked the group for coming to be with us, I felt the need to also thank those of the group who took the risk of entering a church, which for some might symbolize hurt in their lives or that of members of their family. It seemed right in the situation to offer an apology to our sisters and brothers who had been hurt by the Church in the residential schools and other places, and so with a depth of humility words of apology were spoken.

As we were preparing to leave the church that day one member of the group came to me and

said, "a number of the members of the group have heard many apologies... I want you to know that this is the first one I believed." A profound moment on my personal justice journey.

Bishop Mark Macdonald said to those of us who had the privilege to meet him during our time at Justice Camp, that if there was to be real healing it would only come if white people recognized their own need to be healed as well. I now am beginning to see and understand what he meant.

Prophets are those who, in my understanding, speak truth in a world where the message of truth may not be welcome. As we each walk our path seeking justice may we have courage to speak the truth, act in love and live humbly with God, ourselves and one another.

Recently, in one of his Rants on the Mercer Report, Rick Mercer called us to pay attention... It Gets Better... but only when we all take responsibility for our actions, words and thoughts.

Justice begins with me seeking to live in right relationship with you and seeking to right the injustices that are a part of my daily life.

My ethics professor Dr. Terry Anderson, at the Vancouver School of Theology, taught us that God's preferential gospel message is favour for the dispossessed in the world. Let's seek to create communities that are educated and intentional in their actions to welcome and include those who are living on the fringes of society. If we cut the threads of the fringes the whole woven cloth will unravel.

I may not be able to change the whole world but I can change my world and how I live in it.

Thank you for the privilege of sharing some of my journey with you all.

*The Reverend Elizabeth Huether is Rector of St. Matthias Church in Guelph.*

*rector.stmatthias@rogers.com*

# An eternal Synod?

TERRY DEFOREST

F.D. Maurice, a remarkable 19th century Anglican theologian, was asked about eternal punishment. Before Maurice can reply, one might be tempted to wag – eternal punishment is an everlasting, contentious Synod meeting. As someone who likes meetings, I could resist this temptation. Yet, I do understand the cynicism and despair out of which it arises.

Maurice's actual response is an insightful gem, worth being known by all, making even an eternal Synod desirable. Concerned that eternal punishment is inconsistent with God's loving nature, Maurice interpreted John 17:3 with revolutionary impact. "And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

Usually, we understand this to mean that "those who obtain that knowledge or that life will retain it through eternity." But making a clear distinction

between "eternal" and "everlasting," he suggested that John 17:3 defined "eternity." It is not a reward for knowing God and Jesus; eternity is the knowledge of God and Jesus. He then argued that "eternal" has the same meaning when qualifying either "life" or "punishment." Eternal life is knowing God and Jesus. Eternal punishment is not knowing God and the One whom God sends. "Eternal" becomes an adjective which addresses the quality of life or punishment, not their really long duration. This makes a great deal more sense of our belief that we experience the eternal in our lives.

During the solemn, joyous celebration of sacraments; in deeply felt prayer; in the presence of great beauty, courage or forgiveness; in feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, welcoming a stranger, clothing the naked, caring for the sick, visiting those in prison, advocating with those who have been marginalized – in all these

we meet and know God and the One whom God sends. Those are eternal moments.

Maurice's teaching came to mind when I reported about Synod to my parish. There were many ways in which it seemed "vision-shaped." The first day focussed on last year's diocesan theme – a Generous Culture of Stewardship. The second kicked off this year's theme – Prophetic Social Justice Making. Sandwiched in between was talk of vision revisions and a wonderful, from my biased perspective, installation of two new half time diocesan staff-persons dedicated to helping us engage our vision more fully. Read more about their work elsewhere in the Niagara Anglican. The budget projected future vision-related investments. Synod Council was changed, ensuring that all Vision Groups are at the decision-making table.

Niagara's vision is in evidence in how we do diocesan business. It is also in evidence in the stories which were told to delegates

and those which we told to one another around Synod tables. Each day's focus was achieved by sharing stories of what had happened when particular parishes or individuals sought to live out vision-embodied values. These heartening, inspiring and challenging stories helped us understand how an abstract vision can be applied practically. The many narratives recounted at Synod as part of each day's focus on either Stewardship or Justice are explored in this issue of the Niagara Anglican. Those tales made this year's Synod quite remarkable. Some might have thought this Synod was dull, since heated debates about budgets and motions were absent. I found it, à la F.D. Maurice, replete with eternal moments where we could know God and Christ's Way.

*Canon Terry DeForest is the Vision Advocate and Coordinator for Excellence in Ministry EMAIL: [terry.deforest@niagara.anglican.ca](mailto:terry.deforest@niagara.anglican.ca)*

## DVD tells of success stories

Six parishes recorded their Generous Culture of Stewardship Success Stories in a video presentation, which was shown at the November Synod.

**St. John's, Thorold** showed how they are being transformed by being more intentional stewards of faith.

The ministry team of **All Saints, Erin** shared their mission in providing food for the

journey through a breakfast club, food bank, children's vegetable garden, and then hosting dinners for the wider community and breaking the Eucharistic bread of life.

The people of **St. Luke's, Burlington** related that their participation in Halton Region's Food for Life food recovery program has opened up the good news of the Gospel for them.

The leadership of **St. George's, St. Catharines** told the story of their long-standing daily breakfast program for 75 to 100 people. In that program, approximately 300 volunteers and many donors give of their time and talent to serve meals, and use their treasure to provide the \$27,000.00 needed to support the program annually.

Members of the parishes of

**Grace Church, St. Catharines** and **St. Elizabeth's, Burlington** told about the profound impact that a personal stewardship program had on their lives in reducing financial anxieties, eliminating debt and enabling them to live their lives more fully as gifts from God.

A copy of the presentation on DVD was given to each parish for their use.

## People

### Appointments by the Bishop

The Reverend **Elizabeth Steeves** is now Associate Priest at St. James, Dundas.

The Reverend **Barbara Sykes** is the Interim Pastor at St. James, Guelph.

The Reverend **Jean Ruttan-Yates** has been appointed Deputy Director of Deacons.

**Jan Savory** was issued a Lay Reader's licence at St. George's Church, Lowville.

The Reverend **Robert Hurkmans** becomes the Team Chair for the Continuous Culture of Innovation Petal and **Carolyn Vanderlip** takes on the

Team Chair for the Prophetic Social Justice Making Petal of the Diocesan Vision.

### Canons Named

Bishop Michael Bird announced at the recent Synod that the Reverend **Keith Morrison** and the Reverend **Paula Crippen** had been appointed Honorary Canons of Christ's Church Cathedral.

### Condolences

It is with sadness that we announce the death of **Patricia Harton-McCord**, on November 19. Our thoughts and prayers

are sent to Canon **Robert McCord**, and to their daughter, **Alana**. Funeral service was held at St. Mary Magdalene Anglican Church, Toronto.

Deepest sympathy to the Cairns family on the death of **Roy Cairns**, on October 26. Mr. Cairns was a faithful and long standing member of St. George's Church, St. Catharines, as well as a long time member of the Bishop's Men. Funeral service was held at St. George's Church.

Deepest sympathy to the Wigle family on the death of **Seymour Wigle**, O.N., on October 25. Mr. Wigle was a

long time and faithful member of Christ's Church Cathedral, as well as a long time member of the Bishop's Company. A Celebration Service was held at Christ's Church Cathedral.

### Birth

Congratulations to the Reverend **Tom Vaughan**, Rector of St. David and St. Patrick's, Guelph, and the Reverend **Krista Hilton**, on the birth of their second child: Ivy Gail, born November 28th. Big sister, Joy, is excited to help out with the new baby.

## NIAGARA ANGLICAN

The official publication of the Diocese of Niagara, published 10 times a year from September to June as a supplement to the *Anglican Journal*.

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We welcome letters, news and articles. Submissions must include full name and contact information of the author. We reserve the right to edit submissions. Contact the editor if you have an idea for a feature article.

### Submission Deadlines:

March issue January 19  
April issue February 16  
May issue March 22

*The paper is distributed by the first of the month.*

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By special arrangement with the *Anglican Journal*, we have been able to print this issue of the *Niagara Anglican* in colour throughout. We hope you enjoy it!



## Parishes affected by Disabilities Act

Parishes have to comply with new regulations contained in The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, which came into effect in the Province on January 1, 2012.

Although The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act became law on June 13, 2005,

the private sector and non-profit organizations were given until January 1, 2012 to comply.

Niagara Diocese has produced an online document, containing a template and resources which parishes can utilize to comply with the new requirements.

## Sweep away winter at Funspiel

The fifth annual Bishop's Company Funspiel will be held on Saturday, January 28, 2012, at the Hamilton Victoria Curling Club from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. This is an opportunity to have a lot of fun and at the same time to raise funds for the Bishop's Company Endowment Fund. Contact Karen Nowicki at Cathedral Place 905-527-1316 ext. 380 to register.

## Equals

ELEANOR JOHNSTON AND WAYNE FRASER

When a poet uses metaphor we understand that his "love is a red, red rose" and also that his love is a human. A is not B and yet A is B. Our acts of worship articulate a faith in Jesus who is man and God. And God is one and three. At the heart of the language of poetry and worship are found metaphor, mystery and unity.

Let's look at other equal signs. In 20th century democracies, the great movements insisted on equality for all people. All deserve equal access to food, water, medical treatment, legal aid, education and democratic rights and freedoms. Now we are learning that we need to function in terms of respect for all species. We have no right to exploit other species. Jesus was certainly a radical socialist who meant what he said: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." What's important is that Jesus spoke in metaphors and parables. The Kingdom is here, now, in you. For Jesus to be called God Incarnate, as for Paul to say we will meet God "face to face," is to speak in metaphors that reveal the essential oneness of creation. A equals B.

In Jesus' pre-democratic time, order depended, as it still does

in most countries, on the power of military hierarchy controlled by a Caesar. The problem is that, two millennia after Jesus explained his message, our society and many of our churches, worshipping the God of power and might, still cling to hierarchical power structures. This is a great stumbling block to the church in democratic countries: the struggle between top-down expressions of faith and new ones that articulate Jesus' message in the language of our egalitarian time.

Jesus did not articulate creeds. Instead, he commanded his followers to love (not just fear) God, each other and themselves. The BAS (Book of Alternative Services) suggests (page 42) that congregations can recite the ancient "Hear, O Israel" after the homily instead of either the Nicene or the Apostles Creed. Why should a church make this major liturgical change? To begin with, it is more biblical—it is the Great Commandment of Jesus based on the ancient commandment in Deuteronomy. In medieval times when most people were illiterate, the Creeds told the story of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Church in their language. Today, clinging to these medieval Creeds has become destructive because people are driven away by the

## Surplus budget for year

Niagara Diocese is projecting a quarter of a million dollar budget surplus for 2012.

The expected \$255,831.00 additional revenue will be used to offset non-operating expenses, such as reducing the Diocesan long term debt and Parish bank loans, as well as purchasing capital equipment and further development of the Diocesan website.

The majority of Diocesan revenues is derived from the parishes through the Diocesan Ministry and Mission monies. In 2012, this means parishes will be responsible for \$2,950,000.00

of the total income of \$3,132,000.00. The remaining dollars will come from investments, administrative fees, bequests and donations.

During this year the Budget predicts that \$2,876,169.00 will be expended for programs, employment, Diocesan administration, Cathedral Place, Hands across Niagara and ministries beyond the parishes. Some \$649,643.00 will go to support the work of Provincial Synod and the mission of the national Canadian Church and our work overseas.

Chairperson Andrew

Clinkard, in presenting the positive budget, told the members of Synod that the Diocesan finances are in a better position than they were several years ago, and the budget is tied to the Diocesan Vision. He also said that 7 regional meetings, held throughout the diocese, enabled people to discuss the budget and ask questions, and the final budget reflected the input from the valuable gatherings. He assured the members of Synod that the Diocese is doing an excellent job managing its resources.

## Easter reflections?

The *Niagara Anglican* wants to hear from you.

In 300 words or less, tell us why Easter is meaningful to you. Send your submissions to editor@niagara.anglican.ca or mail to the Editor (address page 10) by February 16.

churches' claims that Christians must believe the Creeds literally or not call themselves Christians.

This is a double bind. If we, in 2012, read the metaphors of a pre-scientific civilization literally, we imagine Jesus sitting at the right hand of God up in the sky and say, this no longer makes sense, literally or metaphorically. The church needs to recognize that the church fathers wrote the Creeds for their people in their time, and then rethink and rewrite its liturgy for our time.

Indeed, that is the purpose behind the progressive theologians in all the Christian churches of North America. They refuse to be labeled "heretic" and banished from worshiping in the churches of their faiths. They work from within to "sing a new song unto the Lord," to reaffirm and redefine the way of the Lord. They work to replace pre-scientific metaphors with language that will draw people back.

Well, there's another problem. Worshippers might wonder, if the central message of love was downplayed in the two Creeds but is now given prominence by the Affirmation of Faith, why do some churches still present themselves as notoriously hostile? Enter the "Safe Church." Does it not strike you as amazing that we, disciples of the Incarnation of Love, need to

fill out these forms? Indeed, we very much need to engage in this process. There is a negativity that is hurtful in many churches, and this, like the Creeds, also drives people away.

Many congregations, thankfully, are focused on worshipping the God of love, working together on outreach, seeing each other through difficulties, celebrating a Christ-like inclusion. Example: Mary, a four-year-old, was offered a cookie after church, and she explained to the person serving her that she has an allergy so she can't have "a church cookie." The adult spoke to the parents and learned that the girl's gluten-intolerance had just been diagnosed. The next Sunday, on the cookie table, there was one more plate than usual, "Mary's Cookies: Gluten-free." Mary likes helping at the coffee hour and her parents feel welcomed.

We can glimpse Christ Incarnate in a church's justice issues, beautiful music, thoughtful sermons, trusted, caring and humble leaders, eagerness for new ideas in study groups, guidance for those in trouble, positive environmental action and respect for and inclusion of young people and of anyone who comes to worship with us.

If the word "inspiration" suggests that the Spirit is incarnate,

a most inspired claim of our liturgy is the metaphorical conclusion of the Eucharistic Prayers, for example: "Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours, almighty Father, now and for ever." In this new year, may Christ be born in us anew and inspire us to sing a new song of Jesus who is God.

Eleanor Johnston and Wayne Fraser can be reached at eleanorjohnston@gmail.com

## Next Month in the Niagara Anglican...

**Planning for a meaningful Lent**

**Loaves and Fishes**

*Sue Anne Ward describes about a modern day version of the miracle*

**Michael Burselm on**

*The cost of drawing young people into the church*

**Introducing JUSTFood**  
food security

**JUSTFOOD**  
sharing the bread of life



# Importance of Prayer

## a Personal Journey

NOREEN MCNAIRN

There is a printed list each week in the bulletin of my home parish - St. Christopher's Church in Burlington - naming those individuals for whom prayers are requested. I continue to be a recipient of this recognition for the past several months. In addition, my own prayer circle has widened to include Dutch Reform, Muslim, United Church, Lutheran, Ukrainian Orthodox, and Roman Catholic—all of which really appeal to my ecumenical focus in faith. The reason? I need all the support that I (and you) can muster in order to confront what is in my future.

A chest x-ray on August 30, 2011 showed that I had pneumonia, non-responsive to antibiotic therapy. Thus I became a patient at the Joseph Brant Hospital in Burlington, one of twenty or so

in the emergency room, where I received excellent care and even got my appetite back when I dug into my oatmeal and biscuit for breakfast!. Two specialists and two blood transfusions later, I was discharged on the Friday but with a much more sobering diagnosis- a growth on the pancreas, possible bone marrow involvement, probable common bile duct tumour and two growths in a now non-functioning left lung. That lung has since re-inflated and bone and brain scans were negative for cancer; and I await the outcomes of chemotherapy.

I have been privileged to attend the Juravinski Cancer Clinic in Hamilton and treated by a very special group of people from maintenance to clerical to health professionals. These have all been very specially selected individuals who provide an environment of care for which I have the greatest admiration,

and from which I draw great comfort.

During these past few months, I have had the unique opportunity for some intensive introspection to define the inner me, to truly define how I am reacting and why. I have complete faith in my own health care system and those who are caring for me. I am not afraid of the future, nor am I denying it. Death and life are part of the inevitable human cycle. I have had my life experience in many years of nursing, surviving my son's death by suicide and my husband's sudden death when my attempts at CPR were ineffectual. I have very supportive daughters and grandchildren who are ready to share the future travails with me. My friends in and outside our community are extremely supportive. But you all need to know that my church family is extremely important to me now.

Thus, it is a privilege for me to have your prayers on my behalf. These petitions are not aimed at cure but are rather requesting enhanced strength to deal with an as yet unknown, although dark and probably brief, future. I am not alone on that list and know that all for whom your personal attention is requested need your on-going support and concern through the strength of

prayer. Take your list home each Sunday and truly appreciate the power that your prayers can and will have.

*Noreen McNairn, a parishioner at St. Christopher's, Burlington, wrote this article for her parish newsletter and has given permission for it to be reprinted here. You can reach her at [njm@bserv.com](mailto:njm@bserv.com)*



We make a *living* by what we get ...  
but we make a *life* by what we give

— WINSTON CHURCHILL

Have you ever wondered how easy it can be to make a difference? Or how you may support your community? Maybe you want to support those around you who are the most vulnerable, or you may want to simply be remembered. Everyone wants to *do* or *give* more, but just don't know how easy it is to achieve.

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