

**Bishop's Easter Letter**

God leads us from death to life

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**My days as a Church Warden**

Jean LePan recalls the highs and lows of being Rector's Warden

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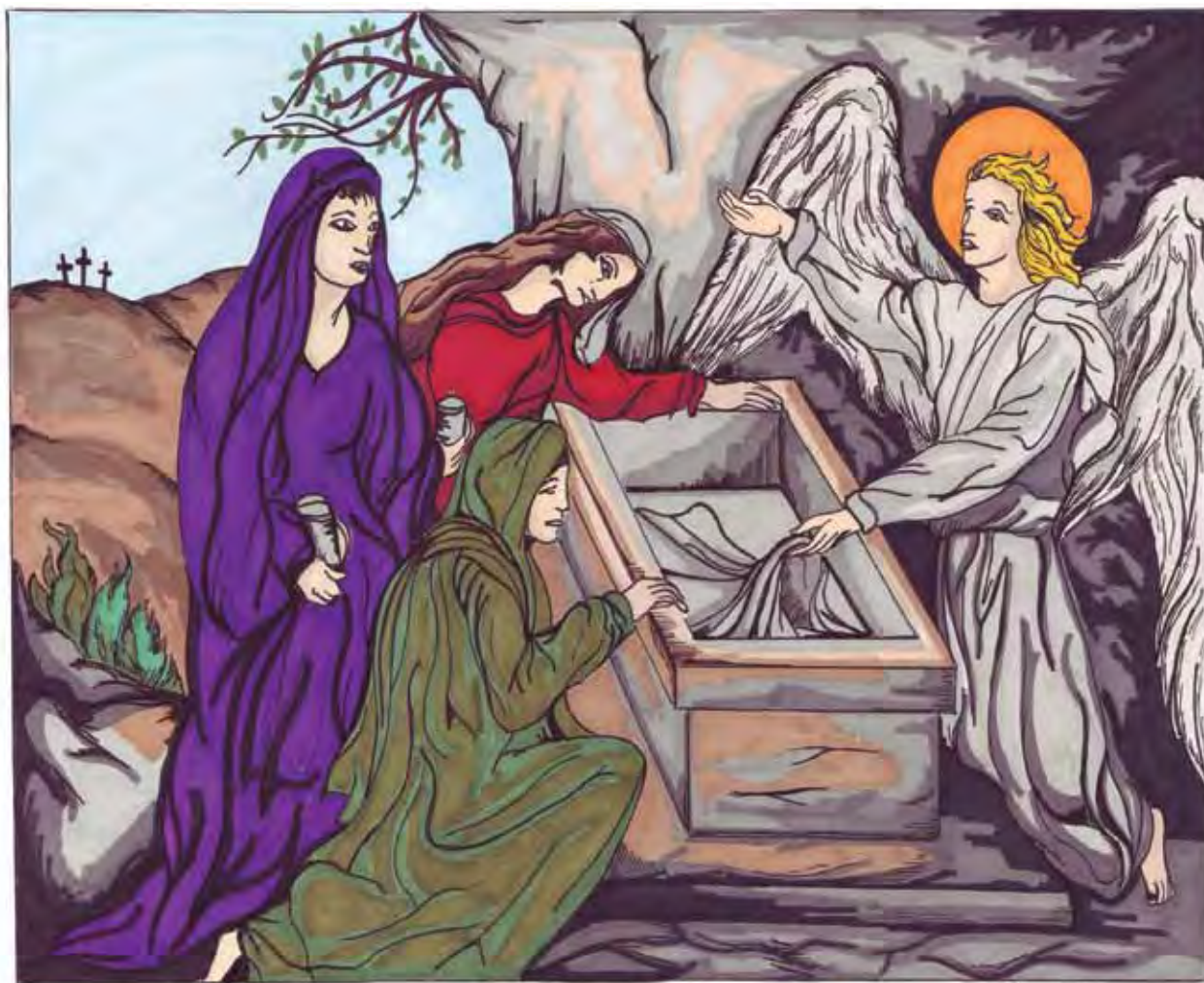
A section of the Anglican Journal

# NIAGARA ANGLICAN

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

APRIL 2012

## Jesus Christ is risen from the dead! Allelulia!



*LeAnn Claring 1/12*

### Blessings of Easter to you all!

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# Diocesan cemeteries: Grave responsibility

BRIAN CULP

In the fall of 2008 with the passing of the Venerable Steven A. Witcher, the former Diocesan Cemetery Consultant, it was felt that there was still a need to have someone that parishes throughout the Diocese could turn to for help with cemeteries.

I was offered the position of Diocesan Cemetery Consultant based on my involvement at St. John's Public Cemetery, located at St. John's Anglican Church in Jordan.

The duties are just as the title implies: to consult, help and guide the cemeteries throughout the Diocese in their day to day operations.

The day to day responsibilities of any cemetery in Ontario (and certainly the Diocese) can be quite extensive.

These would include correct mapping, price list, rights to interment certificates and up to date by-laws—all approved by the Cemeteries Regulation Unit in Toronto.

The annual responsibilities include the Annual Report for the Cemetery which shall identify the yearly sales, cost of grounds care, number of burials and financial commitment to the Care and Maintenance Fund. There is a very stiff penalty for not completing this report.

The Anglican Diocese of Niagara has 52 cemeteries according to the last complete census of 2008. Like anything

else there is a large variance. For example, one cemetery has not performed an interment since 1888, while at the other end of the scale, one has 2,000 available lots with columbaria and scattering gardens. All are of equal importance to the Diocese. All must be licensed if there are sales of lots and burials. This license includes any interment of human remains, including scattering gardens, memorial gardens and columbaria. This means that even if the Church is offering interment for free (i.e. scattering garden) there still must be a

license and a commitment to the Care and Maintenance Fund.

In the 1940's the Province of Ontario, as with most Governments of North America, felt there was a need to regulate cemeteries in the Province. The present (and soon to be previous) Act that governs cemeteries is The Cemeteries Act, RSO 1990 Chapter Four. On July 1, 2012 this Act will be replaced by the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act SO 2002 which will initiate significant changes concerning the operations of any cemetery.

The most significant of these changes will be the Cemetery By-Laws! All cemeteries will require new by-laws by July 1, 2012. These new by-laws must recognize the new Act and state the cemetery policy on the resale of previously purchased lots, i.e. whether the cemetery repurchases the lots or the lots are offered to the open market.

I will do my best to secure a sample by-law from the Ontario Association of Cemeteries and Funeral Professionals (OACFP) for everyone to use as a template.

Presently the Diocese has requested a 2011 cemetery survey to assist the Diocese in identifying the current number of cemeteries and their structure. Please take time to complete the survey even if your Church does not have a cemetery.

There is only one constant in life and that is change. This constant change certainly applies to cemeteries.

When we think of traditional cemeteries, the Anglican tradition is to visualize headstones row on row. There has been a massive shift in the methods concerning the disposition of human remains in Ontario, and indeed throughout North America.

Cremation is now the leading method of disposition!

I try my very best to steer all Anglican cemeteries towards columbaria and scattering gardens. These placements are very easy to maintain and equally important and provide the great-

est income per footprint.

It is also good management to keep all headstones in stable repair or lay the headstone down



Brian Culp

for safety reasons. Otherwise there is (and it has happened) a chance of lawsuits if someone is injured. Please take time to review "Keeping Cemeteries Safe" on the Diocesan website.

All cemetery legislation is predicated on consumer protection. Therefore, the cemetery books should always be in good order and completely transparent.

All changes in Diocesan cemeteries concerning the establishment, expansion, alteration and additions—such as scattering gardens and columbaria—must have permission from the Bishop and the Cemetery Regulation Unit in Toronto.

Plan to attend the Cemetery Seminar on Saturday, May 5, from 9:30 a.m. until noon at St. John's Anglican Church, 2878 St. John's Dr., Jordan.

Brian G. Culp, Diocesan Cemetery Consultant, can be reached at 905-562-5945 or [bculp2@cogeca.ca](mailto:bculp2@cogeca.ca)



The earliest burial in St. Luke's Cemetery in Burlington was William Campbell in 1832.

## National Worship Conference

Beyond the Fortress is the theme for the 2012 National Worship Conference to be held from June 29 to July 2, at St. John's College, University of Manitoba. It will include workshops on a variety of aspects of worship, intended to draw people outside the walls of the church. The biennial conference is sponsored by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada.



The main speakers are Douglas Cowling, a musician and writer with a lively commitment to the liturgy and the arts, and Craig Van Gelder, a professor of congregational mission at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, who describes his current role as "bringing congregations into a conversation with theological education."

The conference promises to be a safe and exciting environment in which participants can gather together, engage with the changing world, share ideas around worship and develop new ones.

For more information or to register, go to [NationalWorshipConference.org](http://NationalWorshipConference.org) or contact the Reverend Diane Guilford at 202 661 2432.

## The Church Year: Holy Week and Easter

**Sunday, April 1 – Palm Sunday:** beginning of Holy Week, when Jesus Christ entered triumphantly into Jerusalem.

**Thursday, April 5 – Maundy Thursday:** Jesus institutes the first Holy Communion or Last Supper with his disciples in the upper room.

**Friday, April 6 – Good Friday:** Jesus is crucified

on a cross and buried in a tomb.

**Sunday, April 8 – Easter Day:** Jesus returns from the dead and appears to his followers.

**The Season of Easter** in the Christian's calendar this year runs from Easter Day until May 26, 2012.

### On the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a human being. (1 Corinthians 15:21)

If we have become united with Jesus in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. (Romans 6:5)



Let us give thanks to God... for because of God's great mercy God gave us new life by raising Jesus Christ from death. This fills us with a living hope. (1 Peter 1:3)

All I want is to know Christ and to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his sufferings and become like him in his death. (Philippians 3:10)

# Celebrating Jack Cox's ministry

Thank you ... for helping us hear the voice of God here at St. John's, Winona

After approximately nine years as Priest-in-Charge of St. John's Church, Winona, the ministry of the Reverend Jack Cox was celebrated on his last Sunday there, February 26, 2012. Parishioner Heather Joy Nowe Brinkman spoke at the service and here is an excerpt of what she had to say.

"Jack is an exceptional teacher – a 'rabbi' in the truest sense of the word. His homilies are dynamic, scholarly interpretations of the scriptures. These exciting encounters take us from the Hebrew or Greek text to what it means for us to live as Christians in today's world. Your homilies so excel in thought and presentation that I've always wished they could be heard by a



**Jack Cox with his wife Alison McDonald**

larger listening body.

At Christmas and Easter, Jack deepens the adventure. Versed in modern scholarship, he takes us on an exploration of the meaning of the metaphorical narratives of the gospels. Here, our minds are challenged and

opened to see the deeper truths that these familiar 'faith stories' express. How enlightening! How affirming for our faith!

Through Jack's words we discover that our scriptures really do make sense for all people today, who are struggling in this

broken and unjust world to live a better life.

And so we may squirm in the comfortable pew and perhaps let a few tears fall as we realize what Jesus really asks us to do in our families and in our communities when he said, 'Follow me.'

Your Sunday Eucharist was vibrant – both visually and vocally! Your liturgy engages the whole person – in mind, body and spirit!

And the children – how eager they were to team up with you! Their faces reveal all their wonder and joy as they participate in the offering of the bread and wine.

You lead your people on through word, song and homily with amazing skill, energy and

graciousness.

Can you imagine how the followers of Jesus must have felt in the crowds as he spoke to them? For many there were tears running down their faces and joy springing up in their hearts as they heard him say, 'God forgives you and God loves you unconditionally!' And Jack would add that as we journey with Jesus, we must go and do likewise, especially within our own congregation.

Thank you for the tears, the dance and for helping us hear the voice of God here at St. John's."

*Heather Joy Nowe Brinkman can be reached at heatherjoynowe@yahoo.ca*

## Cursillo: Not just another retreat

SHIRLEY KITCHEN

In fact, I wouldn't call Cursillo (pronounced kur-see-yo) a retreat at all!

This three day weekend—from Thursday evening until Sunday afternoon—is not for those looking for a quiet time away from home. Often attendees complain because there is not enough free time, since participants listen to a progression of 14 talks, followed by times of discussion.

Cursillo means "short course" and that is what this is, a short course in Christianity.

Everyone's experience is different. Some find that the knowledge in their heads moves to their hearts as a result of the weekend; others, like me, were encouraged in their Christian walk to take a more active role in the church; and for some it is a wonderful experience of Christian community. God touches each heart in a unique way.

Cursillo is for people who already have a faith in Christ. It began in Majorca Spain in the 1940's in the Roman Catholic Church to encourage the leaders in the town to be more active in their Christian faith. At that time the majority of church attendees were women. The weekend made such an impact on the men attending that other weekends were planned. Thus the Cursillo Movement was



**Rita Predon promoting Cursillo at Synod**

birthed and is now open to both men and women. It is no longer only given in Spanish, though many Spanish words have been retained. Cursillo is now international and offered by several denominations.

Cursillo began in Niagara Diocese in March 1983 with the first weekend at St. Mildred's Lightbourn School, Oakville with about 34 men attending. The women's weekend followed the next week with the same number attending. Now our attendance is much smaller and coed, but just as vital, and we no longer sleep in the gym!

After experiencing a Cursillo Weekend, if not before, we have the opportunity of gathering together, usually monthly, to encourage each other in our Christian walk at Ultreyas. An Ultreya is a time of prayer, praise and sharing during which a Cursillista – someone who has been on a Cursillo Weekend –

shares an experience in their Christian walk.

The Cursillo Movement is part of our Bishop's pastoral plan for the Diocese of Niagara and fits within the Diocesan vision of Excellence in Ministry. The Dioceses of Niagara and Huron work together in Cursillo.

I have been on many different kinds of weekends and retreats, but Cursillo is unique.

The next annual Cursillo Weekend, weekend #47, is May 3-6, 2012 at Mount Mary Immaculate, a beautiful convent in Ancaster. The cost per person is \$75.00.

To find out more about Cursillo check the Niagara Cursillo web site at [www.niagaracursillo.org](http://www.niagaracursillo.org).

*Shirley Kitchen is the Weekend Chair Niagara Cursillo Secretariat. p\_skitchen@hotmail.com*

## He is Risen Indeed

Sharon Lathrop, Elora

As I kneel at the foot, of Christ Jesus' cross  
I bow my head in the anguish of loss  
I don't understand why this happened to Him  
The future looked bright, now He hangs by His limbs  
I cry out to the Father, was this not Your Son?  
Was He not the Messiah, is He not the One?  
I'm so afraid now, with the others I'm hiding  
Trying to figure it out, our future deciding  
Three days have passed now, we're still in the room  
When some women come in, say He's not in His tomb  
The stone's rolled away! The body is gone!  
How could this be true? Our faces are drawn  
A strange light fills the room, "peace be with you I hear"  
Then I see Christ Jesus, the Lord I hold dear  
He says, "don't be afraid, it is true, it is Me  
I've broken sin's power, and now you are free"  
As you look on His cross, may your mind be lifted up  
To eat the bread of His body, to drink from His cup.

## The Front Page

Our Easter scene was created by 16 year old artist **Grant Irving** of Guelph, Ontario.

Grant, a grade 11 student at John F. Ross Collegiate Vocational Institute in Guelph, is enrolled in an arts major program there. He attends St. George's Church in his home city, and enjoys biking and skiing.

He told the *Niagara Anglican*, "I have always enjoyed art," and "one unique activity which I



enjoy is unicycling."

Thank you Grant for sharing your talents with us and bringing the message of Easter so vividly alive for our readers.

# The Paschal mystery in community

**BAHMAN KALANTARI AND  
DEREK ANDERSON**

*(Derek and Bahman engage in a dialogue comparing Christian Mysticism and Sufism, a mystical branch of Islam.)*

**Bahman:** Growing up, and in the course of my travels, I have watched Sufis at prayer. Sufism, of course, is a mystical branch of Islam. The Sufis that I have observed use the word *Hou* (this word means He or She and refers to God) while they are dancing to the rhythm of their uplifting music. Their energetic worship seems to transport them to a higher level that appears to bring them into the direct presence of God. I mention this because Sufism is growing quickly around the world. What are the resources from the Christian mystical tradition that could hold a similar appeal for people?

**Derek:** Our tradition is certainly rich. In fact, I think we might find new depth in some of the practices we currently hold dear. But I'm curious about the Sufi practice of prayer: would you say that the outcome of their prayer is primarily an individual

encounter with God? Or is there a communal element to their mystical experience?

**Bahman:** The individual is aware that he or she is a part of a group. When these individuals dance together in a harmonious way, the boundaries that separate them disappear. Then this unity of individuals welcomes the Unity, i.e. God. Therefore,

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*We become the body of Christ as we, by grace, receive the body and blood of Christ.*

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I would say that the individual appears to experience the direct presence of God through the group. Still, the goal of prayer for the dervish (Sufi) is union with the singular God.

**Derek:** Right. Well, the goal for both Eastern and Western Christian mystics includes an individual approach to God, but there is also a sense where the community has an important role to play in our encounter with God. Jesus' familiar words apply: where two or three are gathered together in my name,

there I am in the midst of them. Think also of Paul's imagery for the church as a body with many parts, all unified by our connection to our head, Jesus Christ.

One of the goals of the mystical path is for the boundaries of self to become permeable. That is to say, through the practice of prayer—through living the gospel in our daily lives, through

participation in the sacraments, through sustained practice of the spiritual disciplines—gradually we may find that hard lines between self and other become blurred.

Maybe you have had an experience like this: you are singing challenging but uplifting music with a group. As you focus your attention on your part, as you listen to the other voices singing around you, as your attention becomes absorbed by the complexity of the music, your self-awareness shifts from the

individual self you inhabit in the day-to-day. You may lose track of time. You may feel a connection with the other singers, or with God. Athletes report a similar blurring of the boundaries of their self-awareness when they get lost in their game. There is a sense where the game draws us out of ourselves as we play, or that the game plays us.

Of course, these are analogies. But they offer a sense of what might be happening when we pray as a community.

**Bahman:** And the high point of our prayer life as church is when we gather for the Eucharist.

**Derek:** Christian mystics will sometimes refer to the Eucharist as the paschal mystery—reliving the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. As the church prays, by faith, we encounter the resurrected Christ in the bread and the wine. We become the body of Christ as we, by grace, receive the body and blood of Christ. Together we are drawn into the paschal mystery.

**Bahman:** It's fitting to think about this during the Easter season. The story of the empty

tomb can become personal. Time and space fall away and we share in Jesus' resurrected life in the here and now.

**Derek:** And, as church, we seek ways for the paschal mystery to shape the way we live our everyday lives. Because we are the body of Christ, the decision of one member to take a stand against injustice can be backed by the same life-giving power that raised Jesus from the grave. A commitment to non-retaliation can become a point of insight into the life of the Christ, who held nothing of himself back in order to bring peace between humans and God.

**Bahman:** And it is really very important that Christian mysticism includes a way of being a community in the presence of God, who is revealed to us as divine community: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*The Rev. Bahman Kalantari is Rector of St. John's Burlington, pupak96@yahoo.ca and the Rev. Derek Anderson is Rector of St. Matthew's Burlington derek.anderson@stmattthewburlington.ca*

## Letters

### Reasons to be a Canadian Anglican

First, about me, I was a resident of the Diocese of Niagara for 40+ years before moving to Shaker Heights, Ohio (a suburb of Cleveland), quite some time ago. I still contribute to, and receive the "Niagara Anglican" and the national "Anglican Journal."

I just received the February, 2012 issue of the "Niagara Anglican" and have read the piece on page 5 entitled "Reasons to be a Canadian Anglican."

My contribution to your collection is that:

**"We allow our priests and bishops to have husbands."**

*Robert Elliott  
Shaker Heights, OH*

### Correction

A friend from Grimsby spotted a photo of me in the March 2012 *Niagara Anglican* - she thought I had developed a twin!

On page 5 (*Ceilidh Burns Party*), I am the lady in the photo and I addressed the Haggis.

I don't know who Shirley Hamilton is, but she's not me.

I expect you were given the wrong name by the the people at St. Cuthbert's.

*Anne Harrison*

[Editor's note: Sorry about the mix up.]

### Regarding Bishop's letter to Minister Kenney

Bishop Michael Bird's open letter of December 1, 2011 to Minister Jason Kenney, published in the *Niagara Anglican*, prompts a reflection on the role of the Church and the State, and the appropriateness of his intervention on the issue of human smuggling.

Bishop Bird makes it clear that his letter is written on behalf of the Anglican Church in Niagara. As spiritual leader of the Diocese, he has full authority to speak on behalf of church members in the Diocese on matters of spirituality. I am not so sure that church members would agree with his undertaking to intervene, as he has, on matters of the State.

I am certain that Bishop Bird will appreciate that the Government of Canada, for many years, through private sponsorship and government

assisted resettlement, has supported humanitarian causes. Surely Bishop Bird will agree that Canada remains at the forefront in the assistance of persons in need of protection. He points out in his letter the support the Church has received from the government with respect to private sponsorship, and congratulates the Minister on this.

What Bishop Bird does not seem to recognize is the problem that human smuggling represents and the need for government to address the issue. For Bishop Bird to claim that what the government is doing to attempt to solidify the country's refugee program is wrong, and needs to be rethought, is unfair. Many in Canada will recognize that arriving in Canada, by whatever means and through whatever other country, claiming refugee status, does not in any way confirm a need for protection and a right to settle in Canada. For a number of years the Government of Canada has been trying to deal with the issue of unfounded refugee claims

and claims based on economic betterment, with the hope that claimants seek prior approval to settle in Canada through the immigration or resettlement program.

Is it Bishop Bird's position, and that of my Church, that all who seek to come to Canada be unquestionably welcomed? Is it that there should not be a control on the arrival of persons to our country? Requesting further consultation with refugee agencies, as Bishop Bird recommends, may or may not lead to action that will better deal with this issue. As Bishop Bird should know, it is very likely not in the interest of refugee agencies to support efforts to limit or control arrivals to Canada.

With the utmost respect for Bishop Bird as our spiritual leader, I remain unsure how the Bishop's letter, whether written on behalf of the Church or as a personal note to the Minister, assists in addressing the issue of human smuggling.

*John Creary  
Burlington*

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## Recital follows Choral Evensong

John Vandertuin played his debut piano recital in Paris, France at the young age of 14 years, and on Sunday, April 22, 2012 – following the 4:00 p.m. choral Evensong – he will be the guest organ recitalist at St. John's Church in Ancaster.

He began his formal study in piano and Music Braille at the Ontario School for the Blind, now the W. Ross Macdonald School, in Brantford, Ontario, and holds many organ and piano degrees and diplomas. He earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University

of Michigan.

Twice he has been invited to compete in the International Improvisation Competition in Haarlem, The Netherlands, only the second Canadian to be so honoured. Dr. Vandertuin is the recipient of numerous scholarships, prizes and awards, and has performed in most major world countries.

Since 2007 he has composed various commissioned organ works including the Children's Sacred Suite, Passaglia in A Minor, and Variations on "Aurelia", which will be per-

formed at the April 22nd recital. Dr. Vandertuin will also perform Suite Orbis Factor, a work by his mentor and teacher, Conrad Letendre, an important Montreal organist, teacher and composer.

For information about upcoming events and tickets, call 905-648-2353 or email [admin@ancasteranglican.org](mailto:admin@ancasteranglican.org)



John Vandertuin

## Fiftieth annual baby shower

JOYCE DE FOREST

Fifty years of quilting, crocheting and knitting for Community Care.

Can you imagine the number of quilts, afghans, baby sets and toys that have been created in the past 50 years?

Since 1962, a weekly meeting of 12 to 15 Grace Church Dorcas members, St. Catharines, have been busy creating beautiful gifts for new babies to be included in baby layettes distributed through the St. Catharines branch of Community Care.

Once a year a "baby shower and tea" is held to display these lovely articles. This year's "tea" will be held on Tuesday, May 8, 2012 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. Members of the parish, friends

of Grace and representatives of Community Care meet to admire the work and share a "cuppa" and home-baked treats.

Each year the number of gifts increases and the evaluation for the year 2011 was over \$5,000, plus cash donations from guests at the tea and men of the parish.

We have been told that the ladies who volunteer at Community Care to create the layettes are able to put together over 100 layettes each year from the baby shower. These are most gratefully received by the new moms.

Father Michael Mondloch, our priest, is delighted with the efforts of the Anglican Church Women (ACW) in this project of outreach to our community and often visits our meetings on

Tuesday afternoons and shares a cup of tea with us.

The current members of the ACW are so very proud to be able to carry on this service begun 50 years ago at Grace.

In addition to the annual Baby Shower, the ACW is able to make financial donations as well as quilts and afghans to Community Care and Gillians' Place (a local Women's Shelter); we send wee "preemie" jackets and bonnets to McMaster Hospital in Hamilton (via a friend of the ACW). We are delighted to be able to financially support Grace Church through various projects undertaken.

*Joyce De Forest is ACW Secretary at Grace Church in St. Catharines.*

### What is your parish doing this summer?

Unique worship, creative children's activities, new education programs, adult ventures, sales, outreach projects, other things.

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## Reflections on being the rector's warden

JEAN LEPAN

First it was truly an honour and privilege to serve as Rector's Warden at the Church of the Ascension, Hamilton. The image I have of the position of warden is like being at the country fair or the Toronto Exhibition riding the rollercoaster, never sure what was going to happen from one day to the next. It was always interesting and never a dull moment, nor the opportunity to become bored.

There were many good times and yes, some challenging and frustrating times. (What job only has good times? I do not believe it exists.) The good times at

Ascension abundantly outshone any of the challenging times.

I will not miss coming in to the church and finding it cold, or babysitting the boiler. I will not miss the shoveling of the snow on Sunday morning so the parishioners, choir and clergy could get into the church. I will not miss the photocopier being temperamental. I will not miss the alarm system being triggered by the moisture from the rain or the humidity; thereby signaling an emergency alarm. It was a false alarm, and no real emergency. (Nor was the time I accidentally set off the alarm myself!)

What was great was the oppor-

tunity to get to know the parishioners beyond the faces that I saw sitting in the pew on Sunday or Wednesday morning. I have developed wonderful friendships through working closely with various parishioners. I had the opportunity of putting my life skills and professional skills into good use. My professional skills were still needed even though I had retired. By the same token there were opportunities to learn new things. In the past I always worked as a team member and was usually in the follower's role. I never felt comfortable in the leadership role. The Ascension parishioners and leaders of the church gave me the opportunity

to develop leadership skills and to feel comfortable and competent as a leader. I was often reminded that in many cases the skills we develop in another milieu can be transferable to a new setting and that is so true. The amazing collective creativity of our parishioners that keeps Ascension alive week to week, month to month and year to year, as the youth would say, is "awesome" and a joy to witness.

There were pearls of wisdom from past wardens giving support, "Remember that people have different learning styles." "Always have compassion for others and yourself, don't just react; try and understand where

the other person is coming from." "Don't sweat the small stuff." "Some times you need to be like a Teflon frying pan just let some things slide off." The greatest gift you can give to others is your ability to actively listen to the other person.

As a warden you see the wider picture, understanding the workings of the parish church, the connection to the Diocese and the National Church. It was an opportunity to have input into some of the decisions that would be affecting us now and in the future.

As a female warden, it is

—See **RECTOR'S WARDEN**  
page 11

## I remember... an Easter at Baker Lake

ELIZABETH WHITTON,  
RIDGWAY

It was a glorious sunny morning. People leaving the early service greeted those, who came 40 minutes early for the 11:00 a.m. service, hopeful to find a seat.

There were no "Spring Outfits" in this -30°F weather, but some had new parka braids, a new headscarf or gleaming new sheepskin soles on their kumik, (skin boots). Faces beamed.

Children settled themselves on the floor between the front benches and altar rail. Soon they would overflow into the sanctuary itself. Pre-schoolers sat at

their parents' feet or slept on a folded parka under the benches. Babies had the best of it, snuggled on their mothers' backs.

As I returned to church I knew there was no hope of getting in, even the aisle was packed solid. During the first hymn, those standing on benches opened the door and the 11 of us gathered in the tiny porch so we could share the service.

About the time we reached the Creed, the warmth from the church began to affect the ice which coated the ceiling and walls of the porch. For the rest of the service we stood with our hands shielding our prayer books

from dripping water, while our parka covers ran with rivers of 'rain.' Now and then, with an apologetic glance at the rest of us, one man whose hands were occupied with his prayer book, would shake his head like a dog, and the water drops would splash us all. There was no feeling of rancour or ill humour, even though the sheepskin soles of our kumik were freezing to the damp icy cold floor, and we were constantly shifting our weight from one foot to another to avoid tearing off the whole sole.

By complicated manoeuvres, everyone reached the communion rail and shared the body

and blood of the risen Lord. The little church, now so hot that the stove was turned off, reverberated to the sounds of the final hymn "Alleluia! Christ is Risen," prolonged as if no one wanted to leave. We had been there two hours. Now would begin our reunion with those who had left for their camps last October, or even on the last snow of the previous spring.

We who had been in the porch stepped outside and our wet parkas froze instantly. We looked down at our wet "sandwich board" armour, tapped the solid Grenfell cloth experimentally, glanced at each other and

laughed. We moved together shaking hands. Easter had really come. The laughter over the frozen clothing served as an excuse to express the joy we all shared.

I had come a long way from the dignity and beauty of the Anglo-Catholic worship of my Norfolk "home" church. This just wasn't Easter... not a flower, not even a candle, only a ten foot snowdrift outside to clamber up. Yet I knew that standing under that dripping ceiling stripped of all familiar "props", even of my own language, I had shared deeply with my Inuit family in Christ, the real joy of the Resurrection.

## Bishop of Cuba to visit Niagara Diocese

STUART PIKE

The Diocese of Niagara has been in a Companion Diocese partnership with the Episcopal Diocese of Cuba for over 10 years, and their new Bishop will visit our Diocese this month.

Over the last several years there has not been an active Partners in Mission (PIM) Committee in our Diocese. The partnership has been ticking along, with visits happening and some interesting mission projects which have brought together partners from Cuba and Niagara.

What has recently changed is that Cuba now has a new Bishop, Bishop Griselda Delgado Del Carpio, and she has had some firsthand experience with our companion relationship when she was in her previous parish. Her parish in Itabo had a terrific relationship with the parish of St. Jude in Oakville. An amazing project which happened in that partnership was the develop-

ment of an Eco-agricultural project on the parish land in Itabo. This project brought some people from St. Jude's and Itabo together, and the experience was life changing for both.

Bishop Griselda has expressed that she would like to strengthen our companion relationship and to get it back on the front burner. Of course, since the original formation of the Companion Diocese relationship, we too have a new Bishop. Bishop Michael asked me to form a new PIM Committee to help us renew our relationship with Cuba, and we had our first meeting in February.

One of the things which we are interested in doing is hearing the stories of your relationship with Cuba in the past. What visits have you participated in? What projects happened? In what ways has this relationship been life-giving and faith-forming for you? Send your stories by e-mail to me at [pikes123@sympatico.ca](mailto:pikes123@sympatico.ca)

and we will share some of them in the future.

Another thing we are looking forward to is the visit of Bishop Griselda and her husband to our diocese following the House of Bishops meeting in April. We will be hosting them for a few days. We will be holding a Meet and Greet Fiesta at the parish of San Gabriel, 454 John St. in Hamilton on Saturday, April 21st from 3 p.m. until 6 p.m., when she will be joining the San Gabriel parish for their regular Saturday evening Spanish Eucharist. You are very welcome to join us for the Fiesta and Eucharist, and to meet Bishop Griselda and her husband in person.

Bishop Griselda will also be worshipping on Sunday, April 22nd at the Parish Church of St. Luke, 1382 Ontario Street, Burlington at a 10:00 a.m. bilingual Eucharist. You are welcome to join us.

She will also be meeting with

the PIM committee and some other groups during her few days with us.

In September, Bishop Michael and Susan Bird, PIM committee member Shirley Griffin and the Venerable Michael Thompson, General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Canada will go to Cuba to visit their diocese. Meanwhile, we will be working on a new covenant to renew our relationship, which possibly could be signed at that time.

The PIM committee is thinking that a strong engine which will power our relationship in the future will be that of getting people from our two dioceses to work together on projects of many kinds. We have found that often the strongest relationships happen when we work together shoulder to shoulder with a common goal. We hope that with ideas from both Cuba and Niagara, we can get groups from our two dioceses together to form strong bonds of friendship

and common experience. Instead of simply twinning parishes, we are hoping that a projects-based relationship might involve groups of parishes working together and will ultimately engage more people.

We are interested in your ideas, so if you have a good one, please send me an e-mail.

May God bless our renewed relationship with our sisters and brothers in Christ in Cuba.

¡Hasta la proxima!

*Canon Stuart Pike is Chair of the Partners in Mission Committee.*  
[pikes123@sympatico.ca](mailto:pikes123@sympatico.ca)

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For information on rates and deadlines call our Advertising Agent (see page 8)

# Of the sacred and the profane

Monologues of a different subject played at an Anglican Church near you



**JEFF MAHONEY**  
The Hamilton Spectator  
(Reprinted with permission)

I was at the Christ's Church Cathedral on Tuesday [February 7] for a special performance of *The Vagina Monologues*, Eve Ensler's still controversial (not to mention funny) play about some defining things that make a woman a woman, and a girl a girl.

Throughout the evening words were spoken that presumably had never been heard before in this hallowed space. Four-letter words some of them, with hard consonants, resounding profanely in the Gothic-Revival splendour of vaulted ceilings, stained glass and fluted columns. The hundreds who filled the church on this night would frequently drown out the sound of those words, not with indignant protest but laughter.

I was shocked. You might imagine. A "mainstream" church, with its pews full!

The cathedral on James

North, the centrepiece of the Anglican Diocese of Niagara, was built 1852-1876. Back then they didn't envision plays in the church, certainly not with such language and content, and certainly not with the lines being delivered by ordained Anglican priests.

Back then, they really would've been shocked. You might imagine. But mostly because those ordained priests were... worst outrage of all... women.

Eight of them — female Anglican priests, from Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, Guelph, Cayuga, Hamilton. They dressed in black vestments and red scarves, and at least one in stiletto heels.

Some even now will find it offensive that something called *The Vagina Monologues* was staged in a church, a sacred place, that priests said the "f" word and worse.

Of course, part of the rationale behind presenting this particular play, in this context, is to point out the irony of our various outrages. People, especially women, have traditionally been told to shut up about things like sex and genitalia, especially when in the

realm of religion, reserved as it is for higher matters like morality, soul and justice. Yet most world religions, even now, are interested enough in genitals that they exclude half a world from offices such as priesthood solely on the basis of what's between people's legs. Justice?

Some may say sex has no place in the church. But better *The Vagina Monologues* openly from the altar than abuse swept under the carpet. The eight priests brought to their large audience the gift of recognition without shame or judgment, which was both hilarious and poignant if not always subtle.

They were rewarded with howls of mirth and applause and a most spontaneous standing ovation. This, at the end of 16 monologues. There were stories of the gynecological exam room with paper dresses and speculums (hilarious), of sexual awakening (tender, ribald), of humiliation, rape and persecution here and abroad (harrowing), and of courage and love (inspiring).

The last story was called *I Was There in the Room*. About watching a woman give birth, about a baby being born. This one hit with full force. I was



## Controversial and funny

*The Vagina Monologues' female priest presenters with their lay director. (Front row) Elizabeth Huether, Lynne Marchant, Dorothy Hewlett, Valerie Kerr; (second row) Sheila Van Zandwyk, Pamela Guyatt; (third row) Marion Vincett, Director Tara Ryan, Katherine Morgan.*

there, in a room like that. Twice. Three years apart. It's some room. Even the door said "Push." There was language. There was explicitness, graphic content, nudity. Still I'd have to say, it might've been the most "sacred" place in which I've ever stood.

I watched them come out. I didn't know what they'd be (we didn't want to), but because they were born without clothes, as tends to be the case, I could see right away, both times, what they were. Baby girls. You know how

I knew.

The proceeds from the performance benefit the Women's Centre Hamilton and the Sexual Assault Crisis Line and it was presented by the V-Day Global Movement to End Violence Against Women and Girls. There's something to believe in.

*This article originally appeared in The Hamilton Spectator Friday, February 10, 2012.*

[jeffmahoney@thespec.com](mailto:jeffmahoney@thespec.com)

## Parents of Multiple Births Association

POMBA (Parents of Multiple Births Association), a non-profit volunteer based peer support group for families with twins and triplets living in the Niagara Region, is holding their spring and summer Baby and Kids Clothing, Equipment and Toy Sale on Saturday, April 14 from 9 a.m. to noon at St. Paul's High School, 3834 Windermere Rd., Niagara Falls (easy access off of QEW, take Thorold Stone Rd to Dorchester). The sale helps support outreach and member services, educational resources, social recreational family events, monthly newsletters and more! Not a member yet? More information at [www.nrpomba.com](http://www.nrpomba.com)

## Update from last month

# Temporary reprieve for Charles

Last month in the Niagara Anglican (front page), the Venerable Rick Jones reported on the struggle of Lucene Charles to stay in Canada. The paper went to press before her hearing was scheduled. Here is an update from Rick Jones.

"Lucene Charles, the Hamilton woman ordered to be deported on Family Day, received a temporary reprieve in the form of a Federal Court

Stay of Deportation, pending further court action. This means that Lucene and her daughter will not be separated from her three Canadian born children at this time. The word came to Charles' supporters Friday Feb. 17th, only minutes before a large rally was to begin in front of the Federal Building in Hamilton. The protest then became a street party as tears of joy ran down the faces of many in attendance.

Among those who came out to support Lucene Charles were Diocesan Bishop Michael Bird, Diocesan Justice Coordinator the Rev. Bill Mous, MP for Hamilton Central David Christopherson, as well as many members of local Anglican Churches and the wider community. Support for her cause is still requested—see [lucenecharles.wordpress.com](http://lucenecharles.wordpress.com) for more information."

## Show raises awareness and much needed money

Eight courageous and talented female priests in Niagara Diocese performed Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues* in front of 416 people in two Anglican churches—the Cathedral in Hamilton and St. George's in St. Catharines—and raised \$8,460.00 to help people similar to those portrayed in the stories dramatically presented. The 16 monologues included each evening are based on the actual interviews conducted with the women who had lived what was being described.

The proceeds from the shows will benefit the work of Bethlehem Housing and Support Services (Niagara) and the Women's Centre in Hamilton, as well as the Sexual Assault Hot Line in both communities.

Maggie Patterson, Development Manager of one of the recipients told the Niagara Anglican: "Bethlehem Housing and Support Services helps people facing issues of abuse, poverty, homelessness and family breakdown. Many women who turn to Bethlehem for assistance have suffered abuse either as a child or adult and at times, have survived a pattern of abuse throughout their lives. Bethlehem helps people to address the trauma and break the cycle of abuse. Through in-house and community supports, women are assisted to build a life free of violence for themselves and their children. The funds from the *Vagina Monologues* will help to provide essential counselling and community outreach services to support women as they work to rebuild their lives."

# In Conversation with...

## The Venerable Peter Scott, Archdeacon of Greater Wellington

Niagara Diocese is divided into six regions (formerly known as deaneries): Brock, Lincoln, Mohawk, Undermount, Greater Wellington and Trafalgar. Each is overseen by a regional archdeacon and regional dean.

The *Niagara Anglican* held a conversation with the Archdeacon of Greater Wellington about his ministry as an Archdeacon.

In addition to his ministry as Archdeacon, the Venerable Peter Scott is the present Incumbent of St. Mark's Anglican Church, Orangeville. He also served at St. James, Port Colborne and St. Luke's, Burlington. Peter was a teacher at Kashechewan in Northern Ontario and at St. John's-Kilmarnock School in Maryhill, Ontario. He is married to Elizabeth and they have two children, Rebecca and Ethan, and a dog named River. He was appointed Archdeacon of Greater Wellington in 2009.

**NA: Tell us about Greater Wellington, your area, number of parishes, territory covered, geography, etc.**

**PS:** The name of the region I serve is Greater Wellington which includes all the parishes north of Guelph. There are 13 parishes covering an area that is predominately rural dotted with small towns. The map of the diocese on the diocesan website is to some extent outdated as the ministry at St. James', Dundalk was concluded a few years ago, Christ Church, Whitfield is now with Toronto Diocese and St. George's, Harriston with the Diocese of Huron.

**NA: Describe the parishes and people who minister there.**

**PS:** Most of the parishes in the region are single point with one priest serving the congregation. There are a few exceptions as some parishes have a priest serving two churches while others have an honorary assistant, deacon or an assistant curate. All of us like it "up here" and for the most part have chosen to live and serve in the region because we enjoy the area and what it has to offer. I have derived great satisfaction in working with the parishes of the region. The people are committed to building the church and want the best for the communities that they serve.

**NA: What are the roles and responsibilities of an Archdeacon?**

**PS:** One description of the role of the Archdeacon is that

she or he is the *oculus episcopi*, the bishop's eye. This description is a bit daunting and does not describe the way I operate. In the early church the Archdeacon was the senior Deacon in the diocese. The role has evolved into that of a priest who looks after a region for the Bishop and acts as a liaison between the diocese and the parishes.

**NA: What are the challenges facing your particular region?**

**PS:** The region of Greater Wellington is a beautiful area of Ontario that, possibly with the exception of Guelph, many people live in but work elsewhere. Commuters often look for community within the area that they live in. The church today is challenged how to serve families and individuals who are constantly on the go. In many of the communities there are one or two churches that are seen to be the big church in town. At one time, the Anglican Church was more than likely one of these churches, but this is not longer the case for most communities. The Anglican Church does, I feel, have something to offer and can bring a unique perspective to the ecumenical table in the areas of liturgy and social justice. Our congregations are our strength and it's through our ministry that the church will grow.

**NA: How do you view your work from a personal priestly perspective?**

**PS:** I have visited all of the parishes within the region at least once and many of them, a number of times. Generally, if there is good news, or not so good news, the Archdeacon is the first person who is called. I have very much enjoyed working with the clergy and laity of the region. There have been a lot of changes during the 10 years that I have served at St. Mark's. In that short time I have become the longest serving active priest in the area. One of the challenges of being an Archdeacon is to strike a balance between serving St. Mark's, Orangeville and the region. Although the first year was a busy one I have since been able to balance the two.

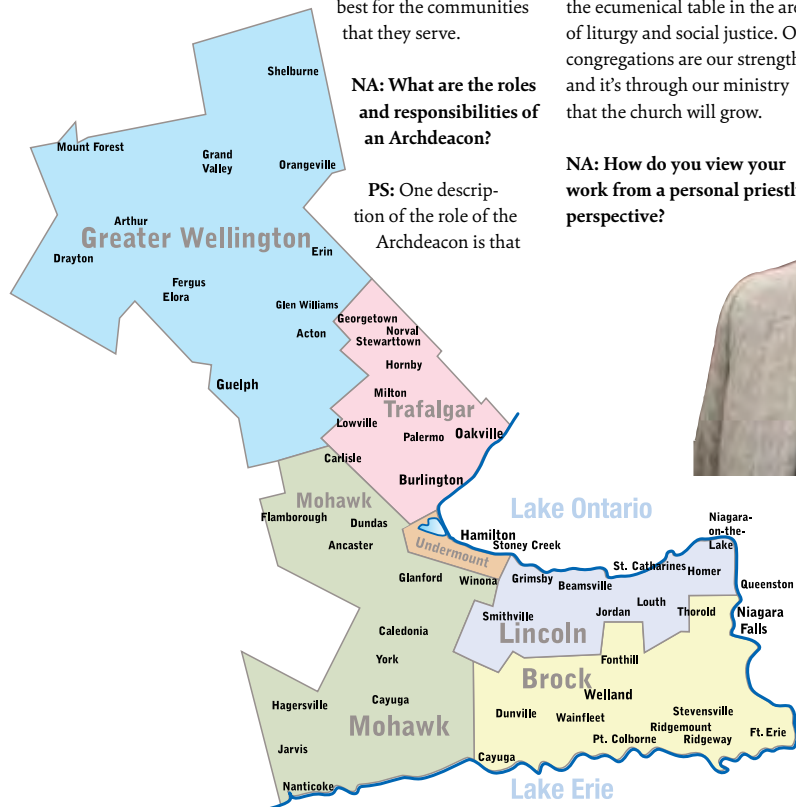
**NA: How could people get in touch with you?**

**PS:** People can generally find me at St. Mark's. I do have a smartphone and like many, have trouble turning it off or even putting it down. Email me at [rector@saintmark.ca](mailto:rector@saintmark.ca).

**NA: Every blessing in your ministry.**



Is there somebody in the Diocese you would like to see interviewed? Let us know. [editor@niagara.anglican.ca](mailto:editor@niagara.anglican.ca)



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[www.niagara.anglican.ca](http://www.niagara.anglican.ca)

The Diocese of Niagara lies at the western end of Lake Ontario, encompassing the Niagara Peninsula, Hamilton, Halton Region, Guelph and portions of Wellington and Dufferin Counties to include Shelburne and Mount Forest in the north and west.





# Water for life

In March, a group from St. Andrew's Church, Grimsby spent nine days in Masaya, Nicaragua, installing a water tank, which they had purchased, so that some 700 school children could have access to water for life.

Their journey began in the summer of 2011, when the group got together to discuss what they could do, as individuals and as a church, to help give back to the world as humanitarians. "When you are so blessed in life, you just want to make a difference to someone else's," said Rob Simmons

referring to his family. Their obvious destination choice was Nicaragua, since group member Suzy Campbell had been working there for almost 10 years and had contacts in many of the poorer communities.

They identified Masaya because the town is on elevated ground and in the dry season the public water is shut off, sometimes for days. They also found a school of 700 pupils who are directly affected by the lack of water. Their project was born and baptized "Water For Life."

In November 2011, they held a Latin American night and

raised over \$11,000.00. It was enough to buy the water tank, install it and help the school in other ways.

While in Nicaragua, the group hoped to use the time, said Campbell, "to look within ourselves and move closer to our walk with the Lord."

She said prior to going, "We know that our church has already been very blessed through this humanitarian mission trip and we pray that we will touch the lives of many other people."

They plan to tell about their experiences in Nicaragua in an upcoming Niagara Anglican.



## Ready to leave

Water for Life group from St. Andrew's prepares for Nicaragua

# Is God your friend? Conference will explore

A couple of years ago an innovative conference—called "Comfort and Hope"—was held at Brock University, St. Catherines. The conference was the brain child of Kathy Belicki, a professor of Psychology at Brock. She, with the help of people—largely from St. Andrew's Church in Grimsby—provided participants with the opportunity to explore grief. Some participated to deal with their personal grief, and others, for a broad understanding of the grief process. The workshops and

discussions explored grief from a spiritual dimension.

This year's "Comfort and Hope" conference is scheduled from June 8-10 at Brock University. The theme is "Deepening our friendship with God and each other in times of trial", with an emphasis on dealing with the spiritual and affective. By exploring relationships with God and neighbours, participants will have the opportunity to enhance the essential relationships in their lives.

Keynote speakers will be

Wanda Malcolm, the Rev. Harry Nigh and the Rev. Max Woolaver.

Malcolm, a Professor of Pastoral Psychology at Wycliffe College and a registered psychologist who specializes in Emotion-Focused Therapy, will deliver an address called Shalom: The peace and wholeness that is Jesus' gift to give.

Hanging out with convicts is Nigh's job. As a community Chaplain for the Central District of Correctional Services, he brings 30 years of direct experi-

ence working with prisoners and ex-prisoners. His presentation is called: The Joy of Hanging out with Convicts.

I Have Called You Friends: the Indwelling Love of God provides the framework for Woolaver's address. He brings his experience as a parish priest and a spiritual director, and with his gentle and compassionate approach will speak to you of your relationship with God.

Participants will have the opportunity to engage more intimately by participating in a vari-

ety of different workshops. The keynote speakers and workshop leaders will deal with our disappointments—with both friend and God—praying through the Psalms, God's gifts in creation and other related topics.

This conference provides an opportunity to grow in self-understanding as attendees discover new ways to relate to God and people in their lives.

The conference website is [www.comfortandhope.ca](http://www.comfortandhope.ca) or call Lillian Haworth at 905-945-2433 for information.

# St. George and the Dragon are coming to church

The musical that is!

A 25 minute operetta, describing the story behind the famous legend, will be presented at the Church of the Ascension, Hamilton, on Saturday, April 21, 2012, at 7:30 p.m. Other musical numbers will also be included in the program, followed by a reception, said parish correspondent Ruth Roberts.

The music was composed by John Laing, and the libretto by John and Gillian Ferns. The four main singing and acting parts - the king, his daughter, St. George and the Dragon—are backed by a chorus of townsfolk, who provide narration and comments upon the action. A piano and drum accompaniment will round out the musical performance.

It was premiered with great success in Hamilton in 2009, and presented the following year in

Burlington and Guelph.

John Laing has had a distinguished career. After 18 years as organist at St. Jude's Church in Oakville, he presently works with the choir at the church of the Ascension. In 1982, he founded the John Laing Singers which perform locally and abroad. In the past year he has composed several works, including, "A New Commandment" and "A Paean of Honour."

## St. George and the dragon—its history

The legend of St. George and the slaying of the dragon is an ancient one, writes Roberts. She continues, "History relates that the man was born into a Christian family about the year 280. He subsequently joined the Roman army where he served with some distinction. Upon proclaiming his belief in Jesus

Christ, he was killed on April 23, 303. This date is now recognized by the Christian Church and is commemorated as St. George's Day. His good deeds were told by many and soon became the legend of his marvellous victory over the dragon.

In the Middle Ages many considered the dragon to represent evil, and about the twelfth century this marvellous story was credited to St. George. The tale was embraced by the Christians in many parts of the then known world, and is especially important to the English who have embraced several aspects of the story as their own. The qualities of courage, chivalry and charity embodied in the legend are all important to the ethos of the English people.

The legend itself revolves around a town that was often terrorised by a dragon to such an

extent that the king was bound to take action. The first attempts to appease the beast with sheep and other offerings were to no avail. Finally, in desperation the king offered his daughter, the princess, to the dragon. When George heard about this situation he rode to the village to rescue it from this evil presence. George killed the dragon and rescued the princess. With

thankful hearts the villagers returned to calm but retold the tale for generations to come."

For information and tickets (\$25.00 each or 2 for \$40.00), contact the Church of the Ascension (corner of John St. South and Forest Ave., Hamilton) at 905-527-3505 or [secretary@ascensionchurch.ca](mailto:secretary@ascensionchurch.ca)

**St. George and the Dragon**

**A Musical Presentation**

~~~~~

**Saturday, April 21, 2012**  
7:30 p.m.

**The Church of the Ascension**  
64 Forest Ave @ John S. Hamilton

**Tickets: \$25 or 2for \$40**

Call: 905-527-3505 or E-mail: [secretary@ascensionchurch.ca](mailto:secretary@ascensionchurch.ca)



**HOLLIS**torial

# Grant, Whitney and Easter

Grant Irving and Whitney Houston provide insights into Easter, albeit from their own unique perspective. Grant illustrates his interpretation of the first Easter, and Whitney's Easter message comes from a gathering of her friends after she died.

When I approached Grant about drawing our Easter front page, we discussed various options. He then produced his adaptation of what happened in the days before and on that early morning when the women went to the tomb of Jesus.

I met Grant several years ago when I was the Interim Pastor at St. George's Church in Guelph. Occasionally after Sunday worship, he would show me a drawing — depicting some aspect of the Bible reading or homily. It beats what some people do during the sermon! So when I was planning our Easter paper, and wanting a young artist, I immediately thought about Grant.

He did not disappoint me. His drawing combines the death of Christ on the cross with the new life of the resurrected Lord, which gives us a glimpse of eternal life and assures us of life

nought. They came to prepare the dead for burial; instead, they left knowing the dead had prepared new life for them. The angel confirmed what had happened through a 'show and

*The women who came early on that earth-shattering morning brought their burial spices for nought.*

after death. He places the Good Friday cross in the background, noting the path Jesus had travelled because of God's love for people. But the cross fades into the distant past, as the glory and joy of the Resurrection replace the powers of temptation, sin, suffering and death, and we become the beneficiaries.

The women who came early on that earth-shattering morning brought their burial spices for

tell' revelation, and jogged their memories about the promises made earlier by the one they called "My Lord and my God."

In all probability the women laid aside their burial spices or took them home for they were no longer needed, since Jesus had already gone beyond the physical, to "his God and our God." Later a group gathered in an upper room, and the women would retell what happened

that morning. Others there would share their significant moments and encounters with Jesus. It was all part of the healing and understanding process.

And that brings me to Whitney Houston. I never met her and know her only through her singing and the occasional public stories about her lifestyle. Apparently, her funeral celebration lasted four hours and aired to millions via the internet. I missed the broadcast; during that time, I was attending a fire-side concert in a Toronto living room, listening to songs about life, death and resurrection.

However, media reports mentioned two elements of Whitney's service that caught my attention.

Firstly, a reporter wrote that Whitney's coming home service in her childhood church was really her "going home" experience. Jesus had spoken about "going home" to God, even telling his followers that there he would prepare a place for them, and at the appropriate second, he would come back and take each soul to that special place he had prepared solely for each individual.

Secondly, the reporter mentioned how friends and families shared stories about their relationships with Whitney. Jesus' followers did likewise. One can hardly imagine what that must have been like, as people told about their encounters with Jesus.

Peter probably spoke first, he seemed always anxious to dive

in. A look of anticipation crossed his face as he told about Jesus calling him from his fishing boat to be a "fisher of people"; a tear trickled down his weather beaten cheek as he recounted the occasion when he denied, three times, knowing Jesus; and his huge smile illuminated the room as he described his ordination by Jesus to "feed my people".

Thomas possibly spoke last. People chuckled as they heard him talk about his childhood and being constantly admonished by his mother for asking too many questions (Jesus probably reprimanded him for the same reason); they nodded when he spoke about his determination to go with Jesus to visit their sick friend Lazarus, knowing it could mean death for all of them; and they understood what Thomas meant when he said his faith in Jesus was restored when the Risen Lord invited him to touch the nail marks on his hands. As Thomas moved away from the podium, wiping his eyes, he was heard to whisper, "My Lord and my God".

That day, the celebration for Jesus continued long past the four hour mark.

So spend some time looking at and reflecting upon Grant Irving's Easter painting, as you recall and re-live your life encounters and experiences with the risen living Jesus.

May Easter 2012 be a pivotal point for individuals, groups, nations and the universe. Alleluia!



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- 4 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 3 dinners
- Guided tours of Boston, Salem, Gloucester and Hyannis Port
- Theatre in Boston and Salem
- "Lobsta" experience in Gloucester

**WOW!**

\$839 DBL

\$1069 SGL

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**Myrtle Beach** April 21st - 29th, 2012

\$999 DBL

\$1389 SGL

**Tour Highlights:**

- Stay at the Ocean Reef Resort in Myrtle Beach
- 6 Nights Stay at the Ocean Reef Resort in Myrtle Beach
- 8 Breakfasts, 3 Dinners, 3 Spectacular Shows
- Brookgreen Gardens tour and narrated creek excursion
- Day trip to Charleston with guided tour and shopping
- Shopping and sightseeing at Broadway at the Beach, Barefoot Landing and the Tanger Outlets

**Mackinac Island** June 10th - 13th, 2012

**Lilac Festival**

\$559 DBL

\$689 SGL

**Tour Highlights:**

- 3 night stay in St. Ignace or Mackinaw City
- 3 Breakfasts, 2 Dinners
- Ferry to Mackinaw Island and Carriage Tours
- Shopping at Birch Run Outlets
- Plenty of free time to enjoy Mackinac Island

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**Alaska Inside Passage** August 7 - 16, 2012

Holland America Cruise with AIR

\*Includes 2 nights in Vancouver & touring!

\$2599 DBL

Price is for Inside Stateroom \*call for other pricing

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People

Our sympathy is extended to ...

**Karen Farrar-Germaine**, the Reverend **Marc Germaine** and family, on the death of Karen's mother, Connie McKee, on February 1. A Memorial Service was held in Welland.

**Elizabeth Wensley**, Archdeacon **Steve Hopkins** and family, on the death of Elizabeth's father, Roland, on February 7, in Montreal. The Funeral Service was held in Montreal.

**The Bishop has made the following appointments:**

The Reverend **Marc Germaine** is the honorary assistant at St. John's, Hamilton; the Reverend **Wayne Fraser** becomes interim pastor at St. John's Church, Winona, and **John Shaver** received his lay reader's license at St. Saviour, The Brock Memorial Church, Queenston, under the direction of Canon Paul Taylor.

**Congratulations to ...**

The Reverend **Paul and Violet Whitehouse**, Grimsby, on the birth of their second grandchild: Jackson Paul, born February 27.

**Eleanor Proctor**, O.N., St. Paul's, Dunnville, who celebrated her 90th birthday in March.

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# Hands Across Niagara

Deadline for Grants approaching

**DEREK ANDERSON**

April is a key month for groups preparing applications for Hands Across Niagara (HAN) grants since application materials must be submitted to your Regional Archdeacon by April 16, 2012.

One of the goals of HAN is to provide resources to help us live out our diocesan vision. This is why one of the key elements of each grant application will be a discussion of how your ministry plan addresses the root causes of injustice in the lives of your neighbours. Since Eco-Justice is one of the ministry areas targeted for grants, you may also choose to advocate for justice as it relates to the natural environment. The grace of our baptism empowers us in the work of prophetic social justice making

as we embody our baptismal vow to strive for justice and peace.

Another goal of HAN is to foster deeper relationships with community partners already working in the neighbourhoods we serve. Part of the application for a HAN grant includes a requirement that applicants work with a community organization to carry out their ministry plan. This requirement recognizes that God is already at work in the world, even before we set foot outside the doors of our churches, and it recognizes the value of sharing resources and expertise in the context of partnerships based upon the shared goal of addressing the root causes of injustice.

Because we know that time for working on grant applications is short, members of the HAN are

keen to support groups preparing applications for our inaugural granting cycle. If you are part of a group preparing an application you may contact me directly to talk over your plans. Together we can look for ways that members of the HAN committee can support your planning process.

I look forward to being able to share good news stories about the ministries we are able to support in this granting cycle.

By grace, because of the generosity of Anglicans in Niagara Diocese, we can make a difference in the neighbourhoods that God is calling us to serve.

*The Rev. Derek Anderson is Chair of Hands Across Niagara. derek.anderson@stmatthewburlington.ca*

# Rector's Warden is a rewarding role

*continued from page 5*

vitaly important to remember when you are on duty, particularly Sunday and Wednesday, that you wear an outfit that has pockets. You need a pen and small note pad. You are asked many questions and requests are made of you before and following church services. And of course you need a place to keep your keys. The male wardens are fortunate with all the pockets they have in their standard clothing. I was truly frustrating the days I did not remember to wear an outfit with pockets while on duty.

I know that my wardenship will not end at this time, but will shift to one of a consultative role and stepping in when help

is needed. At a previous parish council meeting, it was noted that as the wardens completed their term of office, they were then placed on a roster for Sunday duty to serve as past wardens with the current wardens of the day. The past wardens were called upon approximately once in three months for Sunday service duty.

I thank everyone at the Church of the Ascension for the wonderful rollercoaster ride and the opportunity to explore church life as the rector's warden. I appreciated their faith and their trust in me during my term of office.

*Jean LePan is Immediate Past Rector's Warden, The Church of the Ascension, Hamilton.*

# No happy ending

**EMILY MURPHY**

On February 9th, the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance released its long awaited options paper. Promised in 2008, as part of Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Commission was established in 2010 to reform the province's two social assistance programs, Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program. After four years of waiting, consultations involving more than 2000 contributors, including employer and labour groups, here at last was the result.

Within days of the release of the report, members of Voices for Change-Halton, met to review and discuss its contents. Voices for Change is a grass roots poverty advocacy group. We are all people who have lived with poverty, whether on social assistance or working for a low wage. We do not accept that poverty is an inevitable and unalterable part of our society. We work to improve the standard of living and decrease the poverty rates by building real bridges out of poverty.

The first thing we noticed was that the options paper is no longer called the options paper. It is now Discussion Paper #2. An innocuous enough distinction,

but we will get back to that. The first line of the paper informs us that, "The government has identified employment as a key route to escape poverty." Well, thank goodness someone sorted that out. We can see why it took four years.

The paper seems to operate on the theory that the way to fix social assistance is by getting people to work by offering incentives. Let us ignore for a

moment the way the paper proceeds to explain why nothing can actually be done.

For example, the paper examines the situations of those exiting social assistance as opposed to those working for low income. Two workers could have the same part-time low-wage job, and the one exiting social assistance would have residual health benefits while the other would not. Clearly it is unfair that one

feel the report attempts to drive a wedge between us, reinforcing the idea of the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor. We face many of the same issues, and are glad for each other's victories. We are disheartened by the idea that social assistance cannot improve, but insulted by the idea that it should not.

Perhaps the paper's lowest point is where it asserts that a methodology to set social assistance rates cannot be established due to the lack of agreed upon benchmarks for adequacy. This is remarkable, given that the Ontario Government has already set the Low Income Measure as the poverty measure in its Poverty Reduction Strategy and that this whole Review process emerges from that Strategy. Re-opening this debate is unnecessary and we see it as a stalling tactic at best or an attempt to switch to a more politically expedient measurement at worst.

We find it unacceptable that the commission chooses to dither about measurements tools, rather than addressing the clear lack of adequacy. If the commission can't decide what poverty looks like, we invite its members to try living off social assistance for a month or two, and see for themselves.

The pattern throughout the paper is that for every good idea

acknowledged, there is an explanation why it cannot be implemented. Rates are not adequate, but it would be unfair to increase them. Comprehensive case management shows promise, but resources aren't available. No wonder they changed the name from "options" to "discussion." The paper is a series of hanging questions. The commissioners acknowledge that it is an opportunity for further discussion "rather than a comprehensive discussion of options for reform." We can tell how much our input matters by the fact that we were given until March 16th to submit it, 39 whole days. It's a disappointing end to a process that missed the point entirely, focusing on people failing the system rather than the system failing people.

*Emily Murphy is the Co-Chair, Voices for Change-Halton. vfchalcon@gmail.com*



**Voices for Change members at their Christmas get together**

moment that this contradicts studies like the Salvation Army's Dignity Report, which described children, seniors, the disabled and people with two jobs as those most likely to be poor. Let us ignore that the paper fails to acknowledge the stigma attached to living in poverty and perpetuates stereotypes of those relying on social assistance by operating from the assumption that we don't want to work. Let's focus

worker is disadvantaged. We are left to assume that "fairness" dictates both be disadvantaged. This does not seem a sound way to reduce poverty.

We recognize why the government cannot endorse a system that makes it more profitable to live on social assistance than to work, but much of the logic here offends us. As a group composed of both social assistance recipients and low-income workers we

Voices for Change-Halton has a Speakers Bureau. If you would like a speaker for your parish, contact Archdeacon Michael Patterson at michael.patterson@niagara.anglican.ca

## Bishop's Easter letter

# God leads us from death to life

Dear Friends:

In Luke's account of Easter morning, as the group of women comes to bring spices to the tomb, they are confronted with an angel who says to them: "Why do you seek the living among the dead?"

At the Easter Vigil we hear reading after reading of how God has acted throughout history to lead people out of death to life. The heavens and the earth are created from chaos and void, light springs from darkness, release and freedom are attained from an experience of bondage

and slavery. And as God's people travelled through the wilderness, the gifts of hope and strength and challenge were given and received at every stage of the journey.

On this Holy night, in churches across the diocese, as the light of one candle breaks forth into the darkness of our places of worship, we proclaim and celebrate the truth that we are in the hands of a God who meets us and embraces us with the promise of abundant life.

It seems to me that these words have great meaning for us,

particularly at this moment in the life of our church and as we discern the future for our work together. In so many ways we are being challenged to choose life over death and to be instruments of God's life-giving love for a troubled and broken world. The same loving power of God that was revealed to us in Christ's resurrection from the dead!

I have been so moved to see this played out in parishes and ministries across Niagara. Many of our churches are providing innovative and creative opportunities for spiritual

renewal and faith development. Congregations are engaging in new outreach initiatives, food distribution programs, refugee sponsorship, justice advocacy and Anglicans are offering strong and frontline leadership in the fight against poverty in so many of our communities. What is even more exciting is that our "Hands Across Niagara" appeal is allowing us to take this work and mission to a whole new level. In so many ways we are bearing witness to the awesome and inspiring truth that God continues to act in this generation

and leads us from death to life. "Why do you seek the living among the dead?"

As we gather together to celebrate the wonderful news that "Christ is risen" perhaps we might want to reflect upon our own response to this question both in our personal lives and in terms of how it would apply to our parishes.

Susan and I wish you every blessing in this Easter season.  
*Bishop Michael*

## Leaders meet to tackle poverty

**BILL MOUS**

On an ordinary Thursday evening in February an extraordinary gathering took place at our Cathedral.

Over 65 faith leaders from

across the city of Hamilton gathered in Myler Hall, along with four Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) or their representatives, to start a conversation about how to mobilize the Hamilton community around

the goal of eradicating poverty.

As Bishop Michael Bird observed in his opening remarks, what brought the leaders together was a shared "passion for a society that respects and upholds the dignity of every human."

This non-partisan inter-faith gathering was hosted by Bishop Michael in partnership with Hamilton 25 in 5, the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC). As a tangible follow-up to ISARC's provincial election campaign, Faith to End Poverty, the evening was an opportunity to confirm, along with community partners, our faith leaders' ongoing commitment to issues such as food security, housing, employment and strong communities and to ensure that they remain a part of the ongoing provincial debates at Queen's Park.

Michael Skaljin, Executive Director of ISARC, pointed out our need to "balance charity with justice to move families out of poverty." While the meeting affirmed the positive role faith communities are playing in their neighbourhoods through breakfast programs, clothing cupboards and food banks, there was a clear sense that more needed to be done to address the root causes of poverty. This notion was strongly affirmed by the Reverend Cheri DiNovo, MPP for Parkdale-High Park, who is both the NDP's poverty critic and a United Church minister. She told the group how important it was for faith groups to not only identify social justice issues, like poverty, but to rise up and speak truth to those in power.

Through small group discussions leaders emphasized an urgent need for cooperative efforts that will produce systemic change.



Solidarity, education and action were identified as crucial elements in mobilizing faith communities around the goal of eradicating poverty. At the end of the meeting a passionate group of leaders expressed interest in being part of a coalition of faith leaders to work together to engage their communities in finding solutions to ending poverty.

The Spirit is clearly at work through our vision of prophetic social justice making as we strive for justice for all people through events like this gathering of faith leaders and MPPs.

Faith leaders in other communities who may be interested in hosting a similar gathering are encouraged to contact the Reverend Bill Mous, Coordinator of Social Justice at bill.mous@niagara.anglican.ca



**Geraldine McMullen, a representative of the NDP, and Bishop Michael Bird engage in a small group conversation about how to mobilize faith communities around poverty issues in their communities.**

## Winter Shoestorm

**NIGEL BUNCE**

It started raining shoes!

Canon Susan Wells, Director of Operations at St. Matthew's House, Hamilton, noticed that many of her clients were coming to the food bank wearing shoes with holes in them in the dead of winter.

Susan mentioned this to her friend Jan Savory of St. George's, Lowville, who immediately told

members of the parish about this desperate situation. The need was for shoes and short boots, because many of the clients of St. Matthew's House do not have even a single change of footwear.

Soon, shoes and boots began arriving at St. George's—single pairs, bags, boxes of them. One Sunday, two black garbage bags of shoes were waiting outside the doors when the first person arrived for church. One parishioner

even brought in a bag of new socks because, she explained, "people should have new socks if they are wearing pre-worn shoes."

By word of mouth, the need was also communicated to Michelle Normandin, peoples' warden at St. David's and St. Patrick's Church, Guelph, and more footwear started to arrive at St. George's, in transit to Hamilton. Both parishes blessed the shoes and boots before send-



ing them on their way.

What a blessing a chance remark gave rise to!

Parishioners were able to donate old shoes and boots that they no longer wanted, but

which still seemed "too good to throw out." And those in need in Hamilton were remembered by their Anglican brothers and sisters, for as Jesus said, to the extent that you do these things for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do them for me.

Amen to that!

*The Reverend Nigel Bunce is Priest-in-charge, St. George's Church, Lowville. nigelbunce@hotmail.com*