

## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the first page of Christmas ... ISAIAH (737 B.C.) predicted ...

A virgin will give birth to a son, and call him Emmanuel (God with us),

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal One and Prince of Peace.

Of the greatness of His government – peace, justice and righteousness - there will be no end. (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7)



A section of the Anglican Journal

# NIAGARA ANGLICAN

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

DECEMBER 2013

## Bishop Michael's Christmas Letter

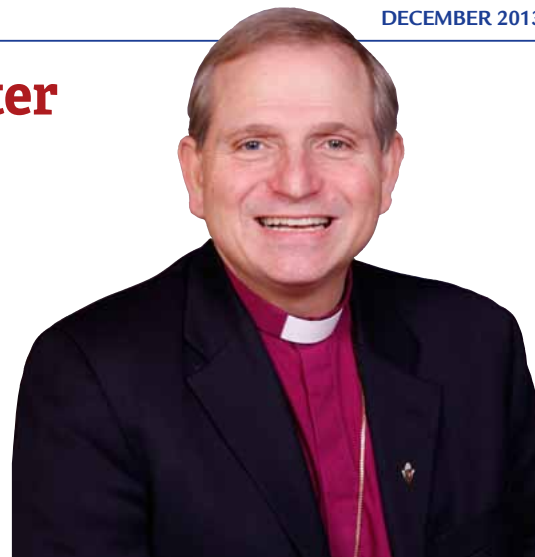


Photo: ingimage.com

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!" (Luke 2:8-14).

At some point in our Christmas services we will hear once again these words of the angel of the Lord who stood before a group of shepherds and said to them: "Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people ..."

Do not be afraid—that phrase is spoken six times in the gospel of Luke; three times by angels and three times by Jesus and we can understand why the shepherds are filled with fear and trembling. They are confronted by the glory of the heavenly host and they encounter a reality beyond the realm of what we see with our eyes and hear with our ears. They come face to face with God's messenger who proclaims a higher purpose

and another perspective from which our world and our lives can be viewed—a kingdom that becomes a reality in the birth of the Christ-child. That kind of encounter with the living God and that connection to this other divine reality have continued to sustain and strengthen Christians down through the centuries.

This year Susan and I had the privilege of coming face to face with someone whose ministry has offered that same kind of proclamation of good news of great joy to people in his own country and to many of us around the world. I am referring to Archbishop Desmond Tutu who pointed the way to God's reign of hope and peace in opposition to the South African

government's policy of apartheid. His was a powerful voice that encouraged people "not to be afraid" to leave behind old prejudices and sad structures and behaviours that divided and marginalized people in all kinds of ways.

We met him in Capetown, South Africa, while attending a gathering of Canadian and African bishops. These bishops' meetings are also a witness to the power of Christ's love to strengthen relationships, to turn fear into understanding, to heal divisions and to bind us together and develop new partnerships in ministry, as we participate in God's mission for the world.

In the final lines of his book, *God Has a Dream: A Vision of Hope for Our Time*, Archbishop Tutu writes this: "All over this magnificent world God calls us to extend His kingdom of sha-

lom—peace and wholeness—of justice, of goodness, of compassion, of caring, of sharing, of laughter, of joy and of reconciliation. God is transforming the world right this very moment through us because God believes in us and because God loves us."

Once again we will encounter that divine love as we celebrate, on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the birth of God's Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. May this good news of great joy fill your hearts and your lives with hope and peace as you gather with friends and family. Susan and I wish you and yours every blessing in this Holy season and much happiness in the coming new year.

+Michael Bird

## Advent & Christmas at the Cathedral

ADVENT 1 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1	ADVENT 2 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8	ADVENT 3 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15	ADVENT 4 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22	CHRISTMAS EVE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24	CHRISTMAS DAY WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25
8:30 am Said Eucharist	8:30 am Said Eucharist	8:30 am Said Eucharist	8:30 am Said Eucharist	4:30 pm A Family Eucharist & Crèche Blessing	10:00 am Sung Eucharist
10:30 am Choral Eucharist <i>sung by the Cathedral Choir</i>	10:30 am Choral Eucharist <i>sung by the Cathedral Choir</i>	10:30 am Choral Eucharist <i>sung by the Cathedral Choir</i>	10:30 am Choral Eucharist <i>sung by the Cathedral Choir</i>	9:00 pm A Congregational Carol Sing	CHRISTMAS 1 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29
4:00 pm Organ Recital DAS BACH III <i>Michael Bloss, organist</i>	7:30 pm Jazz Vespers <i>with Jim Sandilands</i>	4:00 pm Organ Recital DAS BACH IV <i>Michael Bloss, organist</i>	4:30 pm A Cathedral Christmas <i>with The Cathedral Choristers – Carols and stories for the season</i>	10:00 pm Procession and Choral Eucharist	10:30 am Meditation on the Nativity <i>with Messiaen's organ meditations "La Nativité du Seigneur"</i>
4:30 pm An Advent Procession: Carols and Readings for Advent <i>sung by the Cathedral Choir</i>		4:30 pm A Service of Compline <i>sung by the Hamilton Schola Cantorum William Renwick, director</i>			

## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the second page of Christmas ... MICAH (700 B.C.) foretold ...

You, Bethlehem, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times. (Micah 5:2)



# The Child, the King of Glory Christ in Pelham's Workplaces

SHARYN HALL

*No crowded eastern street,  
no sound of passing feet;  
far to the left and far to right  
the prairie snows spread fair and  
white;  
yet still to us is born tonight  
the child, the King of glory.*

Do you recognize this hymn? It is one of the new Canadian hymns in Common Praise (#129).

The text was written by Frieda Major, (1891-1976), for St. Luke's Anglican Church in Winnipeg. In four verses, the author captures the beauty of our vast Canadian landscape, and contrasts our place and time with the scriptural description of the place and time of the birth of Jesus.

We remember that Jesus was born in a stable when we see the red barn of the prairie farm. On our Christmas night there is no angel choir, but the celestial stars flash on the tips of airplanes in the sky. No mysterious kings travel through the snow, but Jesus is born again in the hearts of people here and everywhere.

The music of this hymn was composed by a Canadian composer, Robert J. Fleming (1921-1976). Fleming's deceptively simple music lifts the text forward, and builds to a climax on the central message of the poetry, "yet still to us is born tonight the child, the King of glory."

Every year we celebrate the birthday of Jesus. We remember the manger, the angels, the shepherds and the wise men, but soon after we put away the Christmas decorations, the memory of why Jesus was born into our world begins to fade.

As Jesus often told his followers -Remember the One who sent me. Jesus came to bring God into our daily human lives, to assure us of God's love and to teach us that God's love is to be shared with others.

The text of this hymn reminds us that Jesus does not live in the ancient past. The scriptural stories of his birth carry us to a distant time and place, but God's



love is not a delicate picture of a long-ago Nativity. God's love is a strong and steady presence in the pain and sorrow, love and joy of people today.

The Christmas season lasts until Ash Wednesday. As we go through the winter months, we know that many people suffer without shelter or food. We know that many people suffer with sickness and sorrow. And yet we believe that the message of Jesus lives on in the hearts and hands and compassion of people who share God's love.

Perhaps we could add another verse to our hymn for these winter months in our time and place. *No angels in the sky,  
just people passing by;  
a frozen lake, a cold March wind,  
a homeless man, a hungry child,  
yet still to us is born this night  
the child of love and mercy.*

Celebrate Emmanuel, "God with us", in this season and all through the year!

Canon Sharyn Hall is Niagara's Ecumenical Officer and Diocesan Chaplain for the Mothers' Union. EMAIL: halls@cogeco.ca

DAVID BROWNING

Discerning Christ in daily life and work is central in our worship and ministries at Holy Trinity Church Fonthill.

The workplace is where we spend most of our waking time and energies. Everyone has a workplace: students, parents, volunteers and those who work in offices, hospitals, factories, etc. So, as we connect our daily work with Jesus and our beliefs our faith serves us well.

Holy Trinity is the only church member of our local 120-member Pelham Business Association (PBA). Our goal is to bring the joy and meaning of Christ into each workplace. We participate fully in PBA projects, which include institutional advertising posters (40"x 40", two-sided, colour; \$100).

Our local Sobey's offered to display posters for a few weeks. That was months ago! By popular demand, the posters are still there. Ours hangs prominently

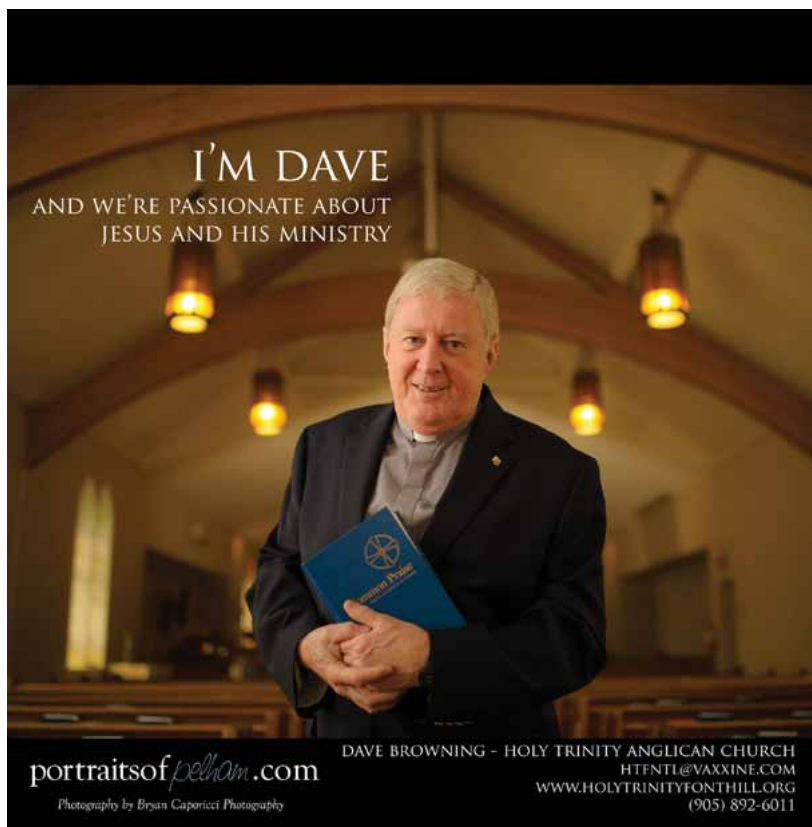
over the service desk and exit.

We receive many comments from staff, management and customers. Cashiers are reminded: we are praying for them.

Customers and management say, "the reverend is watching... we better behave." The mix of message and fun is priceless!

People are responding to Jesus where they are. Thanks be to God.

Canon David Browning is Rector of Holy Trinity Fonthill. EMAIL: btfntl@vaxxine.com



Holy Trinity poster was displayed prominently over the service desk and exit at Sobey's in Fonthill.

### FIND YOUR NICHE AT CHRIST'S CHURCH CATHEDRAL



Ninety-nine new niches have been installed in the Cathedral Columbarium.

Until December 31, 2013, single niches: \$900.00, double niches: \$1800.00  
Effective January 1, 2014, single niches: \$1000.00, double niches: \$2000.00  
(engraving and verger fees to be paid at time of inurnment)

Please call the Cathedral office, 905-527-1316, or email Donelle de Vlaming, ddevlaming@cogeco.ca for an appointment to view the newly renovated Columbarium or to purchase a niche.



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## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the *third* page of Christmas ... JEREMIAH (600 B.C.) forecast ...

The Lord said he will choose a king, called "the Lord our Salvation".  
He will be a wise person, doing what is right and just.  
We will all be safe and live in peace. (Jeremiah 23:5-6)



### HOLLISitorial

## "Be not afraid" – is my Christmas 2013 message

Each year when I read the real Christmas story as recorded by gospel writers Matthew and Luke, a particular phrase, image or personality grabs my interest.

This year it's the phrase "Be not afraid." Angels delivered these comforting words directly to Mary, Joseph and the shepherds, and implicitly to the astrologers, Old Testament prophets and even the ordinary people who came to the stable to see the newly born saviour.

The "12 Pages of Christmas" appearing throughout this *Niagara Anglican* depict some episodes surrounding Jesus' birth.

These should not be confused with the popular song "The 12 Days of Christmas" or compared with the 12 days between Christmas Day and Epiphany. Our title reflects no loftier rationale than that our paper has 12 pages.

Whenever possible, we have juxtaposed traditional Biblical artistic accounts with modern

graphics. The reasoning is simple—the messages and occurrences of Christmas necessitate communication and interpretation through languages, images and symbols understandable to contemporary human beings.

Christmas experiences a rebirth annually: as God continually becomes new in us, we are constantly transformed by God's presence. For that reason, I can add with confidence to the angels' message of "Be not afraid", the assurance of Jesus "I am with you *always*."

These two promises stimulate us to do what God wants us to do, knowing that we are not working alone or relying only on our own strengths and abilities.

This may also conjure up memories in our own life, occasions when we were afraid to deliver certain messages, take unpopular stands or do things we didn't want to do. We probably never doubted God's presence or support, but were more cognizant of what God's people would think, say or do to us.

Perhaps we wish we could reverse the past, but can life be retroactive? Can we return to former times and change our past decisions? Can we rectify what we did and speak out more clearly, stand up more firmly or behave more decisively?

Probably not!

We know it is humanly impossible to relive the past, even if we wanted too. That is why forgiveness of oneself and other people is so vital and effective in human relationships... it absolves the past and enables us to behave differently in the future.

The challenge for us is to get the message "Be not afraid" and "I (God) am with you always" out to a world riddled with seemingly insurmountable problems...

- To youth bullied unmercifully daily thinking suicide is the only solution;
- To adults continually beaten and abused, trapped in devastating domestic situations;
- To individuals confronted and haunted endlessly by failures, frustrations and unbearable

stress professionally and privately; and

- To you and others known to you, facing specific demoralizing life sapping circumstances daily.

Perhaps Christmas provides some guideposts for our journey, namely ...

**Praying** for God's intervention could be the least and best we should do. It worked for Mary, Joseph, the astrologers and shepherds. We know they received visits from angels, and possibly we are today's angels who convey God's message. At our Sunday morning worship when Fran prayed, "I invite your prayers for those that are in trouble, that are sick, for those that are the victims of our society and those who are trapped in a bad situation," she was an "angel" inviting other "angels" to pray and bring the "Be not afraid" and "I (God) am with you always" message to people hurting in society.

We can also **social network**. If I post "Be not afraid" and "I (God) am with you always" on

my Facebook page, hundreds will view it. If my friends and their friends share the post, then potentially thousands of lives may be changed by their reaching out to others.

We can intercede **one-on-one**. It may be slower and a little frightening but more effective than any other means available to us.

For most people Christmas 2013 will be overflowing with traditions, activities and celebrations among families, friends and close colleagues, as it should be. But for those facing special problems, life altering decisions, war, poverty, violence, bullying, prejudices, etc., maybe the greatest gift they will receive this Christmas—whether delivered by word of mouth, prayer, social media, one-on-one or written on a Christmas card—is ...

**"Be not afraid" and "I (God) am with you always."**

*Feedback to Editor Hollis Hiscock is always welcome. EMAIL: editor@niagaraanglican.ca*



◀ **Mission accomplished. Fifteen young people completed their three year Youth Leadership Training Program and were commissioned to faith-filled leadership in their local faith communities and the greater world. Here 13 of the graduates pose following their commissioning.**

Photo: Jane Wyse

### CORRECTION:

A sharp eyed reader noticed that in the November 2013 issue (page 8) of the *Niagara Anglican* Elizabeth Lockhart Manker was referred to as "Marion."

Thank you for pointing it out. We apologise for the mistake and trust that the rest of the article was accurate.

May God continue to bless her in her marvellous ministry.

## NIAGARA ANGLICAN

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[www.niagaraanglican.ca](http://www.niagaraanglican.ca)



## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the *fourth* page of Christmas ... MARY received a visitor ...

God sent Gabriel to advise Mary, a virgin, that she would have God's son and call him Jesus. She questioned how this could happen. The angel explained that the Holy Spirit would come on her, and God's power would rest on her. Mary accepted. (Luke 1:26-38)



# Discerner wanted ... it could be what you are looking for

AARON OREAR

*O Holy Jesus,  
Merciful redeemer, friend and  
brother,  
May I know you more clearly,  
Love you more dearly,  
And follow you more nearly.  
Amen.*

The above words come from a prayer attributed (apocryphally) to St. Richard, a 13th century bishop of Chichester, England, who practised a rigorous life of self-discipline.

While the prayer's actual authorship is unclear, for generations of Christians these words have been an inspiration to live a life devoted to Jesus. Now they have become the inspiration for a ministry of discernment and discipleship.

Last Advent St. Alban the Martyr Glen Williams, with a grant from the Anglican Foundation, launched St. Richard's Bridge (SBR), a residential vocational discernment ministry. Built on a Benedictine model of prayer, study and work, SRB aims to help young people sort out the question, "To what is



Philip Shearin preaching as part of his discernment experience at St. Richard's Bridge Residential Vocational Discernment Ministry.

Photo: Aaron Orear

God calling me?"

The program offers a chance to test a sense of vocational call, away from home parishes in which twenty-somethings might still be seen as "little Johnny" or "little Suzy" and not always taken seriously. (See Mark 6:3) It's a place to try things, fail a bit and figure out if the still small voice is truly that of God. It presents a challenge to develop faith as a lived practice, and tools of prayer

and reflection to help accomplish this - all in the beautiful setting of Glen Williams.

The program is modelled on the prayer of St. Richard.

- Know you more clearly - to develop a deep relational, intimate knowledge of Jesus through Bible study and spiritual direction.
- Love you more dearly - to worship Jesus and pray to him with passion, through the

liturgy and through private devotion.

- Follow you more nearly—to serve as Jesus serves, reaching out in love to the wider world in evangelism and acts of mercy.

In December 2012 we welcomed Phillip Shearin as our first discerner. An American from Virginia, he was quickly made an honorary Canadian and adopted into the parish. For seven months he was billeted with a parish family, and all living and study expenses were provided.

In exchange, he offered himself—no small price—to be challenged and transformed. Philip joined the liturgical life of the parish, serving at the altar every Sunday and preaching on a number of occasions. He worked in our own outreach ministries, as well as through a local youth drop-in centre. He studied scripture and disciplines of prayer with me and Heino Claessens, a well-studied parishioner at St. Alban's. Monthly spiritual direction, as well as informal check-ins, helped to guide and shape his time with us.

In June, with some sadness, we bid Philip farewell... but he hasn't gone far. He is now attending Trinity College in Toronto with the intention of pursuing ordination in the Anglican Church of Canada.

While we are, of course, delighted that Philip's time of discernment with us has led him to take this step, we would have been almost as glad had he decided against pursuing orders—whatever the outcome, so long as he had taken the opportunity to prayerfully hear God's call.

We are now seeking a discernor for the 2013-2014 session.

It's not easy, but it is a deep and rigorous encounter with one's own faith and with the living Christ, and it might be right for you.

More information is available at [www.facebook.com/StRichardsBridge](http://www.facebook.com/StRichardsBridge)

*Father Aaron Orear is Rector of Saint Alban the Martyr Glen Williams.*

EMAIL: [rector\\_saintalban@cogeco.net](mailto:rector_saintalban@cogeco.net)

## Imagine more

*...and great things will happen!*

DIANA SWIFT

The Anglican Foundation of Canada may be the best-kept secret in the Canadian church. Few people realize that since 1957 this organization has disbursed more than \$28 million in grants and loans.

The Foundation wants more Anglicans to benefit in more diverse ways. It's embarking on an exciting journey of renewal to ensure its funding has maximum impact. "By making it easier to apply and increasing the impact of gifts, we're able to help more people with a wider range of projects and programs across the

country," says executive director the Reverend Judy Rois.

- Four new funding initiatives will launch in 2014:
- Multiple-year funding for ministry projects of up to \$10,000 a year for three years;
  - A proactive annual call for proposals to encourage innovative ministry;
  - A donor/project matching program;
  - A streamlined twice-yearly application process for grants and loans.

Symbolizing the new focus is a redesigned maple leaf logo with the tagline *imagine more*, which the Foundation hopes will start people dreaming about the

endless possibilities it's ready to support.

Inspired by the fresh expressions of Vision 2019, its new initiatives include ecumenical youth strategies, hospice and elder care, theological education and projects in the performing and visual arts. "It's all about giving life to people, parishes and visions," says Rois.

No one knows better how ministry-enriching Foundation support can be than Justin Cheng, a postulant with the diocese of British Columbia, who received a grant to intern at St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem. "The experience allowed me to get a glimpse of the church's mission

in the Middle East," he says. "The Foundation's financial support demonstrates the church's commitment to future ordained ministry."

Traditional funding for church renovation continues. "The Foundation's generous support came at just the right time to raise our spirits and our hopes in the early days of our ambitious renovation project," says the Reverend Brian Pearson, rector of St. Stephen's Calgary.

Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Foundation chair, calls the revamped strategy "funding that matters and makes a difference in people's lives." Ottawa's Dean Shane Parker, strategic team

leader, says the Foundation's new direction will "provide abundant resources for innovative ministries across the Canadian church."

Every parish can become a Foundation member by making an annual donation. You can become a catalyst for great things in your diocese. Imagine a project you could be passionate about, and let the Foundation know!

To apply for funding or make donations, go to: [anglicanfoundation.org](http://anglicanfoundation.org)

*Diane Swift is a Contributing Writer with the Anglican Journal*

ANGLICAN  
FOUNDATION OF CANADA   
*imagine more*

## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the *fifth* page of Christmas ... an angel appeared to JOSEPH ...

Mary, pledged to be married to Joseph, was found to be pregnant. Joseph decided to divorce her quietly. In a dream, the Lord's angel told Joseph not to be afraid since the child was God's son. Joseph took Mary as his wife. (Matthew 1:18-25)



## Scattered Seeds 5: Hope

C.T. (TERRY) GILLIN

As I write I am two-thirds of the way through my chemotherapy regime.

I feel myself healing, becoming gradually healthier, stronger in body, steadier in spirit, reengaging with interests, even identifying spring household tasks to tackle.

From this strengthened position I am becoming more aware that throughout my period of illness I have been sustained by the grace of hope. From the very beginning and throughout the health care process, I have known that life continues to be generous. My daily experience has been nourished by an unexpected source of strength—by hope. I am on a bridge that leads from where-I-was to where-I-need-to-be; not just a bridge to

physical health but to a deeper development of wellbeing and greater compassion for others.

Though my prognosis remains very positive, there is no certainty about where this cancer journey will end. In truth, none of us knows what today will bring. Hope exists without knowing the future. It is most certainly not mere wishful thinking, nor even defined expectations. It is more than optimism. By hope I mean openness to the surprising goodness in life and to the spirit that compassionate actions matter, small as well as large. Hope links our personal change of heart with social transformations.

By its very nature, hope encourages us to reach beyond personal experience to address the social issues of our time. Walter Brueggemann, the Old

Testament scholar, explains the connection between the personal and the social this way: "It is in healing leprosy that Jesus contradicts the norms of society concerning clean and unclean. And in causing that rethinking of clean and unclean, Jesus was in fact calling into question all the moral distinctions upon which society was based." Brueggemann argues that in challenging conventional moral distinctions, Jesus rejects the justification of political and economic inequalities. Hope challenges us to envision and make present a new future, a future that feeds the hungry and clothes the naked (see Matt. 25:34-40). It gives us grounds to act and sustains us in our efforts.

Hope tells us that a new reality is possible, despite obvious difficulties. It brings the prospect

of new beginnings, despite the weight of the past. Hope knows that the world can be transformed by justice, mercy and generosity of spirit. Hope, then, is also a bridge between the tradition we have inherited and the transformative actions we take today. The gospel tells us that love and freedom are boundless human capacities. Out of this limitlessness our actions become hope-full.

Hope invites us to consider an alternative view of reality. It refuses to accept the present order of social reality as permanent. Hope's counter-cultural assertion is that, despite the economic, political and social powers that dominate contemporary society, a more compassionate and more just world is possible.

In this sense hope is also counter-intuitive. Our efforts make a difference to others, even when it is not immediately apparent. Despite the power of disease, healing of body and soul is possible. In the face of great need, St. George's Parish in St. Catharines provides breakfast for 75 to 125 people 365 days a year. The 165 million children under age 5 who are stunted from malnutrition can be adequately



fed (UNICEF, "Improving Child Nutrition"). Around the world safe working conditions and a living wage can be provided. Despite ongoing wars, peace is possible. Peace is possible in Syria, despite predictable setbacks. A more just foreign policy may provide better security than increasing surveillance. Proper agriculture and aquaculture can provide sustainable, secure food for all. Actions taken to rejuvenate nature will help life flourish on our planet.

Hope refers to a perspective and commitment we bring to all of life, to each of the vast range of our everyday activities. It is openness to the unanticipated goodness in life and to the potential contributions of human actions. Beyond the reasonable expectations of our era, my hope for our world has been strengthened.

*Terry Gillin teaches at Ryerson University in Toronto and is a member of St. Cuthbert's Oakville. EMAIL: tgillin@soc.ryerson.ca*

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 February 2014 – December 30  
 March 2014 – January 25  
 April 2014 – February 25

**Submissions ...**  
**Articles** – 750 words or less  
**Letters to the Editor** – 300 words or less  
**Reviews (books, films, music, theatre)** – 400 words or less  
**Original cartoons or art** – contact the Editor  
**Photos** – very large, high resolution, action pictures (people doing something). Include name of photographer.

**Questions or information:** contact the Editor at editor@niagaraanglican.ca or 905-635-9463



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**EVERYONE WELCOME**

## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the *sixth* page of Christmas ... MARY AND JOSEPH responded to a pronouncement ...

Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census would be taken of the entire Roman world. Everyone had to return to their birth place to be registered. Joseph travelled from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be registered with Mary. She was pledged in marriage to him and was expecting God's child. (Luke 2:1-5)



# Glimpses of God

## Personhood

### TERRY BROWN

I entitled my "Glimpses of God" program: "What is a person? Melanesians showed me, 'One is a fraction of two.'"

What I tried to explain was that in my relating with friends in Melanesia over the last almost 40 years, my understanding of personhood and ultimately my life as a Christian were profoundly changed.

In the western world, we have usually come to regard the person as an individual, an "ego", with many boundaries and separations towards others. I reflected on my growing up with that understanding of being a person, including the importance of my own autonomy, independence and personal views, from my earliest years. That has been our common western European experience.

But when I went to Solomon Islands in the South Pacific, first as a theological teacher, then as a frequent visitor when working as a church mission secretary to Toronto, then as a bishop of a diocese in the Anglican Church of Melanesia for 16 years, my

whole understanding of personhood shifted; and the Church and Christian faith and living came alive in a new way.

Many ethnologists and missionaries over many years have commented on the highly relational quality of life in Oceanic cultures; that people see themselves as persons primarily in terms of their relationships rather than their individual personal identity and autonomy.

I took my title from a comment of an early French Evangelical anthropologist-missionary to New Caledonia, Maurice Leenhardt: that in Melanesia, relationships between pairs and groups of people are the starting point, the unity or integrity. Therefore, a single person alone is not a unity but a broken fraction of a unity. "One is a fraction of two."

Perhaps one could say that social relationships in our western world are centrifugal; that is, when people have conflicts, they tend to fly off into independence and separation, for example, by moving to a new place. This "flying out" often happens when we have a conflict with someone.



Terry Brown

Photo: submitted by author

But in much of Oceania, social relationships could be described as centripetal: that, even in spite of disagreements or conflicts, people continue to grow closer and closer together in relationships of deeper intimacy, because the relationship is primary and a given.

Therefore, reconciliation becomes very important, to make sure that good relationships are restored and maintained.

Because of this commitment to relationships as primary, I experienced an acceptance and intimacy that I did not expect. This began right from the begin-

GLIMPSES OF GOD was a series sponsored earlier this year at different locations throughout Niagara Diocese. This is one of the many stories presented by Journeys in Faith, which supports and assists with nurturing the faith of the people in the Diocese.

ning. I found that when I shook hands, people did not let go; the conversation continued as we held hands, sometimes for many minutes. That holding of hands signals a wanting to get to know the other better, almost unconditionally. Therefore, I found many of my western boundaries challenged over the years.

How was this all a glimpse of God? God's grace is unlimited and not marked by separation or division. The plenitude of relationships in which I often found myself in Oceania were a grace reflective of God's grace, and certainly a more joyful and fulfilling experience than the self-absorption and the western egoism (individualism) that I had experienced in my own culture and which I took with me to Melanesia. But it was also a challenge; for example, privacy was replaced by a very public life.

The Church as the "Body of Christ" as the unity of a plenitude of relationships acquired real meaning, rather than something just rhetorical or theoretical. And out of that, I came to realize that maintaining

and developing good relationships, rather than my own self-fulfillment or gifts or talents or ego or interests, is absolutely primary and not to be sacrificed for any other good. I believe that is a glimpse of God, for I believe that God does the same through divine love for us.

I asked the group to reflect on how much we are persons because of our relationships, over against our individual achievements. If we recognize this reliance on relationships, Christian communion and fellowship, *koinonia*, are so much easier and the conflicts will often disappear. This is the *kenosis* (self-emptying) that St. Paul writes about; indeed, that is another glimpse of God.

I believe that in the Reign of God, "one is a fraction of two", or, indeed, "one is a fraction of a plenitude of relationships."

*Bishop Terry Brown is Bishop-in-charge of the Church of the Ascension and Associate Priest at all Saints Hamilton. EMAIL: [terrymalaita@yahoo.com](mailto:terrymalaita@yahoo.com)*

## The Walker

### MURRAY BLAND

Near Christmas, my wife and I like to drop into Hopedale Plaza—probably any plaza. We like to just walk around and enjoy all the Christmas decorations. Other things often happen.

On one such occasion we were sitting on a bench outside Tim Hortons—too noisy inside. Just back of the bench was a man in Salvation Army attire with his stand and plastic bowl.

Later, he came over, introduced himself and we chatted. He told us he was originally

from England and was here just helping out. After a time he commented on my wife's cane and asked if she had need of a walker. I said it may well come to that. He called a friend from the plaza cleaning staff.

A little while later, a woman came towards us pushing a walker. She explained that her mother had passed away, she was taking the walker to Goodwill and would gladly give it to my wife.

An act of kindness.

We thanked her, said our goodbyes, pushed it to the car and headed for home.

My dear wife did reach the point where a walker was necessary. However, one that folded in from the sides better suited our needs—thankfully with the government paying three quarters of the cost.

Nevertheless, this act of kindness rings true. We gave the walker gift to Goodwill, trusting it would be of use to someone else, with the certain knowledge that ...

"I know there's a use for one, I know there's a use for the other."

*Murray Bland lives in Burlington.*



Photo: ingimage.com

## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the seventh page of Christmas ... JESUS was born in a stable ...

While Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem, the time came for the baby to be born. She gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger. There was no room available in the inn. (Luke 2: 6-7)



Artwork: Courtesy of Frances Tyrrell ©1990 www.francesctyrrell.com

## SHARE YOUR CHRISTMAS JOY

Christmas is coming ... we know you will be extra busy ... we know some exciting events will be happening in the Churches and parishes around Niagara Diocese ... and we would like for you to share your "Christmas glad tidings" with the NIAGARA ANGLICAN.

Send us photos (caption, photographer's name, permission to publish children's pictures from parents or guardians, etc.) ...

short article (200 words or less) ... what 2013 Christmas joy you experienced ... etc.

Because of deadline dates, timing is crucial, so we will need to receive your Christmas items by January 6, 2014 at the absolute latest (earlier would be much appreciated).

Send items to editor@niagaraanglican.ca

Thanks and have a joy filled Christmas.

## A Life of Service – Edna Russell

"A faithful witness and wonderful example as a passionate follower of Christ," is how Canon David Anderson, Rector of St. John the Evangelist Church Hamilton, summed up the life of Edna Russell, who travelled this earth for 95 years.

Edna was a Deaconess of the Anglican Church and served with the Sunday School by Post in Saskatchewan during the 1940s. She also ministered in the Hamilton parishes of St. James



Photo: submitted by Susan McKay

the Apostle and St. John the Evangelist as well as being secretary at St. Thomas' Hamilton (now closed).

After her retirement as secretary in 1984, Edna continued to be fully involved in all aspects of parish life at her home parish of St. John the Evangelist Hamilton.

In 2003, she was inducted into the Order of Niagara as a Bishop's Appointee.

She died on Thanksgiving Day this year and a memorial service was held in November.

*(Written from a submission from Susan McKay)*

## Action on poverty and housing pushed for with MPPs

BILL MOUS

Anglicans in the dioceses of Niagara, Toronto and Huron are taking the Gospel call to come alongside those seeking justice to Queen's Park this year.

Local delegations of Anglicans and community leaders are meeting with their MPPs as part of a common campaign to call for concrete action to help people hard hit by poverty, hunger and homelessness. "We believe that a socially just society is one in which all citizens have enough to flourish," says Bishop Michael Bird, "and we must all do more to live into this vision."

The meetings are taking place at a critical time, with the province currently renewing its five-year poverty reduction strategy. Today more than 400,000 Ontarians turn to food banks each month to ward off hunger. In Hamilton alone, the number of children using food banks would fill 370 classrooms. Many families rely on food banks because they pay 60% or more of their income on rent, yet very little new affordable housing is being built. We're urging the government to create a strategy that will assist all who live in poverty.

Together the dioceses in southern Ontario are urging bold action. Coming out of July's Joint Assembly meeting in Ottawa, there is a strong and renewed commitment among Anglicans and Lutherans to

address homelessness and affordable housing. The campaign also seeks to address the woeful inadequacy of social assistance rates, whereby many must survive on only \$626 per month. Raising minimum wage rates is another area of common concern. Indexing both social assistance and minimum wage rates to keep up with inflationary increases is also an idea being put forward.

The campaign is being championed by Archbishop Colin Johnson, Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario. "It's gratifying to see Anglicans coming together in a common effort to address poverty and affordable housing issues. The more we can speak with one voice, the stronger our impact will be," says Archbishop Johnson. All diocesan bishops will be actively engaged in this campaign by meeting with cabinet ministers and party leaders. Archbishop Johnson adds, "It is important that our elected representatives hear from us as constituents and citizens. We all have a role to play in building a society in which all of us live in dignity. It is part of our baptismal vows and a response to the Gospel."

Many delegations have already met with their MPP. In October community leaders Cathy Gerrow and Jennifer Gerrard joined local parish priests, the Reverends Brian Galligan and Susan Wilson to meet with their



Canon Michael Patterson and Dr. Susan Curran along with other community advocates met with Oakville MPP Kevin Flynn as part of the common campaign.

Photo: courtesy of Kevin Flynn's office, with thanks

MPP Ted Arnott (Wellington-Halton Hills). "While highlighting the difficulties we all face from Ontario's increasing financial debt, he recognized there is also an increasing human cost if bold actions are not taken to address poverty across the province," says Galligan. He added that one of the positive outcomes of their meeting was that their MPP "committed himself to presenting the concerns of Anglicans to the Progressive Conservative caucus at Queen's Park."

Sharing those concerns is vitally important as the province renews its poverty reduction strategy. MPPs of all parties unanimously supported Ontario's Poverty Reduction Act in 2009, and we need that same level of support in order to realize bold action. In meeting with MPPs, Anglicans are build-

ing support and putting forth a compelling gospel vision for a province where all have enough to flourish.

*The Reverend Bill Mous is Director of Justice, Community and Global Ministries for the Niagara Diocese. EMAIL: bill.mous@niagaraanglican.ca*

### Take Action

Strive for the Dignity of Every Human Being!

- 1) Listen to your brothers and sisters, friends and neighbours who are struggling to make ends meet because of inadequate rates.
- 2) Learn about the issues in your community and about the root causes of those issues.
- 3) Pray for those seeking justice, especially those with lived experience of poverty; that bold action might lead to transformative and systemic change in how our society addresses poverty and homelessness.
- 4) Connect with local community groups, social service agencies and coalitions to come alongside those seeking justice.
- 5) Engage your local MPPs and community leaders on these issues and demand bold action on poverty reduction.

Learn more and act: visit [www.niagara.anglican.ca/vision/socialjustice.cfm](http://www.niagara.anglican.ca/vision/socialjustice.cfm)

## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the *eighth* page of Christmas ... SHEPHERDS received good news ...

Near Bethlehem, several shepherds kept watch over their flocks all night. They were terrified when the Lord's angel appeared. The angel said they were receiving good news for all people: that in Bethlehem the Saviour or Messiah would be born, and they would find him in a stable. (Luke 2:8-12)



# Rethinking suffering and violence in the legacy of ancient Christianity

ELEANOR JOHNSON

Dr. Karen King, Professor of Divinity at Harvard University, published a book of early church history and found herself receiving over a thousand e-mails a day.

She had touched a nerve in the North American Christian community who reacted somewhat like the movie-goers who either condemned as pornographic violence or appreciated as an Easter observance Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. What were the roles of the sufferings of Christ and of early Christians, of the Jewish victims of pogroms and the Holocaust, of today's suicide bombers? Is it acceptable to lump together in one sentence these victims who in such different ways and for such different purposes endured torture and death?

The answers to these questions require reference to historical context. The Christians in the first to the third centuries of the Common Era were portrayed in the historical records of the Roman Empire as well as of Christian churches. Both histories recorded the heroes' tri-

umphs in confessing their identity as Christians. Thus began the literary genre of hagiography, the stories of the saints.

Within the vigorously growing population of Christians, however, martyrs remained a small minority. When the majority asked themselves what God wanted for his believers, it was for them to heal and teach. And so they did both, impressing the Emperor Constantine who emphasized peace in his writings. Christians were known, in societies lacking social safety nets, as people who took care of each other.

One of the great scholars who wrote about suffering was Ignatius, the first-century founder of the Jesuits, whose genius was to maintain higher learning. In his how-to manual, *The Imitation of Christ*, Ignatius encouraged believers to imitate Christ's positive interactions with other people and to overcome temptations that pulled them away from Christ. Ignatius used stories of martyrs to teach how to live and how to die.

A great writer of the second century, Clement of Alexandria,



also called on Christians to work for peace through moderation and justice.

Who, then, is a martyr today? Is one who dies for his faith trying to raise money for his family, or is he a crackpot, or is his use of the role of martyr a somewhat glamorous way out of an impoverished life? Is the army officer administering the torture a monster or a patriot? As Dr. King asked, "Is one society's martyr not another's suicide bomber?"

The longest period of peace

in Europe was, according to Dr. King, a 30-year stretch during the Enlightenment Era. We might wonder why the culture of Christianity, the dominant theology through 2,000 years of worship of the "Prince of Peace," has had a history of more or less continuous warfare.

Dr. King deserves congratulations for tackling an important and difficult topic, and presenting it with humorous irony and strong passion for justice and peace. The Reverend Robert Wright, likewise, plays his

▲ Rector Robert Wright and Lecturer Karen King share a discussion within the historic St. Mark's Church.

Photo: Eleanor Johnson

leadership role in bringing, to his community, theological scholarship, wisdom and ethics.

Dr. Karen King was guest lecturer at the 2013 annual theological weekend at St. Mark's Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Eleanor Johnston can be reached at [eleanorjohnston@gmail.com](mailto:eleanorjohnston@gmail.com)

### St Cuthbert's Oakville - Office Administrator

Small church (150 households) requires a part-time administrator as an assistant to the Rector. Responsibilities include; reception, office management, worship bulletins preparation, record keeping, communications, facility-use coordinating and volunteer screening/management. Up to date computer skills and strong interpersonal abilities are key to this rewarding position. Part-time mornings, 20 hours per week. Possibility exists, by mutual agreement, of shorter weeks in the summer months, banking those hours for use in the busier church season, while keeping pay stable year-round. Compensation \$20 to \$22 per hour with benefits based upon experience. Full job description is available upon request. Send resume with covering letter and indication of interest to:

The Reverend Canon Joseph Asselin  
St Cuthbert's Anglican Church  
1541 Oakhill Drive, Oakville L6J 1Y6

905-844-6200  
[rector.stcuthbert@bellnet.ca](mailto:rector.stcuthbert@bellnet.ca)  
[www.stcuthbertoakville.ca](http://www.stcuthbertoakville.ca)

\*Please note that only those chosen for an interview will be contacted.



## Greening signs translated into Spanish

◀ St. Luke's and San Gabriel Hamilton received their Bronze Accreditation from Greening Niagara. Sue Carson, co-chair of Greening Niagara, presented the certificate to the parish's Green Facilitator Maurice Lyn. Janine Marzec (second from left) ensured that all recycling and Best Practice signs were translated into Spanish for the members of San Gabriel who worship on Saturday nights in the church. Father Javier Arias was also present for the award ceremony.



## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the *ninth* page of Christmas ... SHEPHERDS rushed to the stable ...

When the angels left, the shepherds hurried to Bethlehem to see the baby. They found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. They repeated what the angel told them ... people were amazed but Mary remembered everything. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God. (Luke 2: 15-20)



## What Akita does for me

AL NICOLLS

I have MS (Multiple Sclerosis), diagnosed in 1982, now using a wheelchair and occasionally a scooter. Apart from mobility issues I am in reasonable shape.

Akita, a standard poodle born on June 30, 2008 under the care of Dog Guides of Canada, is a special skills dog for people with a medical or physical disability.

After being separated from her mother she was given to someone who fostered her for a year and taught her basic skills (commands like sit, down, stand, here, come, wait).

Then she went to the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides in Oakville where she received training specific to her special skills training.

The Foundation trains dogs for canine vision (blind or visually impaired), hearing ear (deaf or hard of hearing), autism assistance (children and their families living with autism spectrum disorder), special skills (medical or physical disability), seizure response dogs (epilepsy) and diabetic alert (type 1 diabetes with hypoglycaemic unawareness).

Dogs are trained and provided at absolutely no charge until taken home, and then all expenses are the client's responsibility.

Akita was in Oakville nine months when I went with a group for two days of training without dogs. Then we were presented with our companion dogs: our training lasted 19 days consisting of walking around town, going to malls and restaurants, etc.

Poodles, in the past generally

not used as working dogs, are perfect for the job: hypo-allergenic (good for allergy-suffers) and highly intelligent.

What Akita does for me:

- Fetches dropped items (pill bottles, cushions, car keys). Command: fetch.
- Barks for help. Command: help.
- Pushes buttons to open doors. Command: push-push.
- Tugs doors open (usually a tie or cloth tied to a door handle e.g. fridge). Command: tug. I re-used this command to train her to tug a bath towel over to me on a bath-bench and to tug my pants off.
- Passes the TV remote control across the room to my wife Sue. Commands: take it, and then, go give.

Akita is my company virtually everywhere I go—elevators, cars, buses, trains, airplanes, sailing, playing tennis, the gym, dentist's office, etc.

She has meant a great deal to me in my life and for my independence. When I roll up to the car, I stand up (can't take a step but thankfully can stand), put the wheelchair in the car behind the driver's seat and get in. Before Akita if I dropped my keys, I had to get the wheelchair out, sit, get the keys and start again. Now I simply say, "Akita, fetch." She jumps out of the car, picks up the keys, hands (mouths) them to me and gets back in. No food reward is necessary, just her satisfaction of a job well done!

She is gorgeous and a great conversation-starter. Most people want to talk to her or to me about my dog. Akita is a

bridge for people to talk to me; they see me as a person, not a guy in a wheelchair. Ironically, through seeing my dog, they see me.

When wearing their harness working dogs are generally not to be touched by anyone except the client. The reason for this no touching policy is simple: if other people are giving attention to my dog then she is probably not paying attention to my wishes or needs. I tend to break that rule for children under two years of age and a retired Bishop named Bothwell.

When we help at the 9:30 a.m. service at my church, occasionally I will present Akita with a bulletin and say "take it" then "go give" and she delivers it to the arriving person. As a sidesperson during communion she will back up behind me the entire length of the nave.

While I receive communion she comes and sits beside me. It was interesting the first time we did this, as my wife, the Reverend Sue Nicolls, was handing out the bread; Akita was so excited to see her!

Sometimes with the approval of those responsible for the area, I take her harness off and let her have play-time with others.

For more information about Dog Guides, getting or fostering a dog or making a donation, visit [www.dogguides.com](http://www.dogguides.com).

*Al Nicolls attends St. Christopher's Burlington.*

*EMAIL: [al.nicolls1@gmail.com](mailto:al.nicolls1@gmail.com)*



▲ Al and Akita out for an afternoon of sailing

Photo: Rob Mazza

▼ Akita and Al attend the annual Bishop's Company dinner.

Photo: Hollis Hiscock



- ◀ **A working dog**  
 (four images, left to right)  
 1. Al drops his car keys ...  
 2. On command, Akita picks up the keys ...  
 3. and returns them to Al ...  
 4. Al praises Akita for a job well done.

## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the *tenth* page of Christmas ... ASTROLOGERS were shown a sign ...

Led by a star, astrologers from the east came to Jerusalem seeking to worship the new born Messiah. King Herod conferred with his scholars, who advised him the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Herod sent the astrologers to find the child and report back, then he would go and worship him. (Luke 2: 1-8)



## Workshop equips people for prophetic social justice-making.

Over 50 people from 30 parishes across the diocese attended JUSTconnect, an event focusing on learning, networking and theological reflections about being a missional church in the wider community. Presenter Liz Weaver leads a group discussion.

Photo: Bill Mous

## Cantors become doctors

HOLLIS HISCOCK

All four of The Three Cantors have received Doctor of Divinity (Honoris Causa) degrees.

On September 28 during the service of Evensong in the college chapel, the “for the cause of honour” degree ceremony took place at a Special Convocation during Huron University College’s Homecoming in London.

In 1997, Archdeacon Peter Townshend invited his three clergy colleagues, along with Angus Sinclair, to present a concert in benefit of The Huron Hunger Fund, Huron’s name for the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF). Since then, The Three Cantors have offered over 200 concerts from coast to coast and beyond, raising an estimated \$1.3 million

for PWRDF, in addition to other local causes.

The conferral of this degree was in recognition of not only their fund raising but also their advocacy for PWRDF and for the mission of the Anglican Church. The Three Cantors contribution to awareness of world hunger and development issues has been recognized previously: in 2001 the Cantors were made life members of PWRDF; in 2007 they became Honorary Senior Fellows of Renison University College and received Huron University College’s Alumni Award of Distinction.

The Three Cantors include the Very Reverend Peter Wall, Dean of the Diocese of Niagara

and Rector of Christ’s Church Cathedral; the Venerable David Pickett, Archdeacon of Mohawk Region and Rector of St. John’s Ancaster; Canon William Cliff, Rector of the Collegiate Chapel of St. John the Evangelist Huron University College; and Angus Sinclair, Affiliate Cathedral Organist of St. Paul’s Cathedral London and Chair of the Diocese of Huron Organ Committee.

For more information about the work of the Cantors or to become a concert sponsor, visit [www.3cantors.com](http://www.3cantors.com).

Based on a submission from Mary Mellish, St. John’s Ancaster. EMAIL: [pr@ancasteranglican.org](mailto:pr@ancasteranglican.org)



▲ Doctors Peter Wall, William Cliff, David Pickett and Angus Sinclair display their certificates following the special convocation.

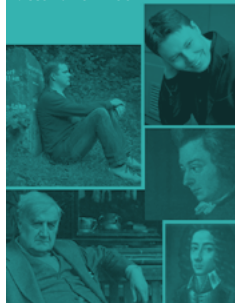
Photo: Patrick Barfoot, Barfoot Productions

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energy memory  
motion emotion  
imagination  
magic mystery

Discover new dimensions of choral music with the JLS in 2013/14.

All concerts will take place at St. Paul’s United Church 29 Park St. W. Dundas, Ontario

Children ages 6-12 attend for free!



### Mystery and Merriment

Saturday, November 30, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. with Sara Traficante, flute, and Colin Meier, oboe

Healey Willan’s *The Mystery of Bethlehem*, Dietrich Buxtehude’s *Das Neugeborne Kindelein*, plus an amazing variety of seasonal works spanning the centuries and the nations

### The Poet’s Corner

Sunday, March 2, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. with local poet, John Terpstra, and string quartet

Choral music based on poetically substantial texts, including *Invisible Harps* featuring music by Canadian composer Andrew Ager and text by James Joyce; *Three Shakespeare Songs* by Ralph Vaughan Williams, *Dark Night of the Soul* by Norwegian phenomenon Ola Gjeilo, *Five Hebrew Love Songs* by Eric Whitacre (with poetry by his wife, Hila Plitmann), and the *Cantique de Jean Racine* by Gabriel Fauré

### Passion and Jubilation

Saturday, May 10, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. with string ensemble

Featuring *Passion and Resurrection*, a work of ancient and modern beauty by the young Latvian composer Eriks Esenvalds, and shorter works by Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and Mendelssohn

### The JLS and Artistic Director Roger Bergs

Founded in 1982 by John Laing, the JLS is a chamber choir of musicians from the Halton and Hamilton regions. Now under the direction of Dr. Roger Bergs, the choir is quickly becoming known for its energetic performances of diverse repertoire, including works by emerging composers and music with an international flavour.

The JLS gratefully acknowledges the support of composers pictured (clockwise from top right): O. Gjeilo, W.A. Mozart, D. Buxtehude, R. Vaughan Williams, E. Esenvalds

The JLS gratefully acknowledges the support of



## Christmas Tree Sale

Buy a quality “Anglican” tree this year at St. Cuthbert’s Church

(Maple Grove and Oakhill, two blocks north of Lakeshore Road East in SE Oakville) 905-844-6200

Sale Hours (staffed by volunteers):

Monday to Friday 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
Saturdays 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Sundays 11:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Advent & Christmas Lessons and Carols  
Blessing and Dedication of our New Organ  
Sunday, December 22 at 10 a.m.

Christmas Eve Worship

4:30 p.m.  
Family-Friendly Communion Service  
9:00 p.m.  
Candlelight Choral Eucharist

## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the *eleventh* page of Christmas ... the ASTROLOGERS arrived ...

After meeting with Herod, the astrologers left for Bethlehem. The star appeared and guided them to the stable. Entering, they saw Jesus, bowed and worshipped Him. They presented their gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh. Being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned home by another route. (Matthew 2: 9-12)



## Forum and workshop focus on better living

SUE CARSON

St. James Dundas belongs to the Eco Churches of West Hamilton (EcoWHam).

EcoWHam and another group, Dundas in Transition, often collaborate on events and use church space to show movies or host speakers.

Educator and environmentalist Grant Linney, in his talk titled *Which Planet Do You Live On?*, commented on the how and why of climate change and what people ought to be doing to mitigate the effects on the planet.

Dundas in Transition is also keen to re-skill people so they can be more self sufficient. They hosted a canning workshop at St. James, where people learned



to can pears and red cabbage. Everyone left with some jars for their winter use.

▲ Churchwarden Jan Southall, Linda Ingraudo, Jim Sweetman, Sue Carson, Jean Wessel and Rosemary Anstey participated in the canning workshop.

Photo: Dave Carson



▲ Grant Linney beside his giant revolving globe.

Photo: Sue Carson

*I will sing with the spirit,  
and I will sing with the understanding also.*



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### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Michael Bloss, Director of Music Ministries  
905-527-1316 Ext. 220 michael.bloss@niagaraanglican.ca



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## Gifts my father made for me

ELEANOR FROST

When I was a child, I had no difficulty imagining Santa Claus hammering, planing and painting my Christmas toys.

It was wartime, and the toys that were available in stores were scarce and not wonderful, being mostly cardboard.

My Christmas gifts, however, were carefully constructed of quality wood and well painted. It was my father who hammered, planed and painted all those amazing things to delight a little girl on Christmas morning.

Over those war time years, I received a doll's cradle, a high chair, a sleigh, a steamer trunk complete with leather handles, a child-size ironing board and a kitchen cupboard.

My father was also a few years ahead in equal opportunity, as I was also the proud owner of a bow and arrow, a wheelbarrow and a little hockey stick.

But the piece de resistance was The Doll House. It was a five room red brick bungalow with green shingles, a fire-place, a chimney and a battery operated light in the roof. Most of the furnishings were store-bought cardboard, but the bathroom

fixtures were hand-crafted in plaster of paris. Those "shingles" were hand cut Bristol board, painted green and sprinkled with white sand while the paint was still



sticky, and the "bricks" were carefully drawn with India ink.

It is humbling to reflect that my father took the time to make all these things in secret, but even more humbling when I remember how ill he was. He was severely asthmatic and died young—at age thirty-seven.

My father was not a spiritual man, but God's love was surely reflected in his labours of love.

*Eleanor Frost is a member of St. John the Evangelist Niagara Falls. EMAIL: eleanorj-frost@gmail.com*

## The 12 Pages of Christmas

On the *twelfth* page of Christmas ... a MESSAGE is sent to all people today ...

A great multitude of heavenly hosts appeared with the angel, praising God and saying ...  
Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth, peace and good will to all people. (Luke 2: 13-14)



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## High Mass returns with great enthusiasm



▲ Father Thomas Vaughan is the driving force behind the High Mass services. Talented musician and organist Rick Avery provides the music. Photo: submitted by Marilyn Bleach

### MARILYN BLEACH AND TOM VAUGHAN

As part of its intention faith development, St. David and St. Patrick's Guelph has embarked on another season of High Mass Services.

The Mass is regarded as "our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving."

These mid-week, well-attended Eucharists have been met with great enthusiasm by our parishioners as well as from the wider community in the region.

Each service celebrates the saints who have contributed so much to the life of the universal church. An order of service bulletin is completed with a vintage picture and brief description of the saint or event that is being celebrated. The High Mass for September was special in that it celebrated the first Anglican Eucharist in Canada. Last spring, Bishop Michael Bird preached and joined with everyone for fellowship after the service.

The celebration of prayers, readings and communion includes the ritual of incense, excellently administered by Server Carlo DeCastris.

Frankincense, a pleasant fragrance direct from the Middle East, has also been used occasionally. At the time of Jesus' birth, frankincense was a gift from the Magi and is symbolic of holiness and righteousness, and is given as a pleasant offering to God.

The service is full of symbolism. Before the celebrant and

ministers approach the altar, they stress the joy of worship and make a confession of sin, followed by the collect for purity. They then cense the altar, a ritual symbolizing the preparation for the coming of our King and the ascent of our penitent prayer for mercy to the throne of grace.

Before the procession for the Gospel reading, the deacon is blessed with incense by the celebrant. This signifies the sending forth of the disciples to preach the Gospel, as well as the devotion and prayers that accompany the missionary journeys of the Church. The consecration of the bread and the wine is punctuated with incense while the celebrant kneels before the sacrament.

Sometimes the ceremony includes the *Asperges*, sprinkling of holy water, in keeping with the phrase, "cleans the thoughts of our hearts ... that we may perfectly love thee."

Following the service there is a sherry and dessert gathering, hosted by Pearl Robinson, in the Parish Room. This time of fellowship has become a warm and friendly get-together of sharing stories and laughter.

High Mass services continue the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Everyone is invited to check out this unique service which could truly add another element to your spiritual journey.

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