

# LENT & Easter WITH MATTHEW and Friends

A DAILY DEVOTION FOR INDIVIDUALS, COUPLES OR GROUPS.

PART 2: APRIL 1 TO EASTER, APRIL 20, 2014  
PAGES 5-8



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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 2014

## The Bishop's Easter letter

# Challenged to live in new ways

As I write this letter in early March we are anxiously watching the reports on our television newscasts as the political situation in the Ukraine threatens to pull the fabric of Ukrainian society apart at the very seams. The population is dangerously divided between pro-Russia and pro-European sympathies, and political decisions made by the President in the past several months have now led to his expulsion and a parliament that is trying to restore order between these two factions.

It is now clear that Russia has entered the equation by involving itself in the Ukrainian province of Crimea and fear, anger and violence have risen to alarming levels. Rioting and protesting have broken out in a number of centres across the country.

The whole world watches with great trepidation as this situation continues and has implications

for relationships well beyond that part of the world. It is not clear how events will unfold and it is very difficult to know what we can do as citizens or even as nations to promote peace in such circumstances.

What we do know is that our faith calls us to live in such present moments in new ways.



—See BISHOP'S Page 2 Responding in faith, praying over riot police.

Photo: ©Larry Trowell/Magnum

# Returning home to an exciting new space



JUSTINE COTTON

Excitement was in the air as parishioners at the Church of the Transfiguration in south St. Catharines returned home to a very different building on Sunday, February 23, 2014.

Throughout 2013, the Church underwent extensive renovations transforming the structure (founded in 1959) into a mod-

ern space, while keeping the essential elements that made the building feel like home. For the church family, it was a long and sometimes arduous journey requiring much faith, but the general feeling on the first Sunday was that the end product was well worth the wait!

The new space includes a

—See NEW SPACE Page 4

Representatives of the congregation present the gifts during worship in the newly renovated modern facility.

Photo: Elizabeth-Connor-Elliott



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The Rt Rev'd Michael A. Bird, *Bishop of Niagara*  
The Very Reverend Peter A. Wall,  
*Rector of the Cathedral and Dean of Niagara*

### HOLY WEEK AT THE CATHEDRAL

SUNDAY, APRIL 13:  
THE SUNDAY OF THE PASSION  
PALM SUNDAY

8:30 am Holy Eucharist  
Choral Eucharist  
10:30 am The Blessing and Procession of the Palms and Dramatic Reading of the Passion

THURSDAY, APRIL 17: MAUNDY THURSDAY

7:30 pm Solemn Eucharist, Stripping of the Altar and Procession to the Altar of Repose

FRIDAY, APRIL 18: GOOD FRIDAY

11:00 am The Celebration of The Lord's Passion

### EASTER AT THE CATHEDRAL

SATURDAY, APRIL 19: HOLY SATURDAY  
9:00 pm The Great Vigil of Easter

SUNDAY, APRIL 20: EASTER DAY  
THE DAY OF RESURRECTION

10:30 am Procession and Choral Eucharist

SUNDAY, APRIL 27: SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

8:30 am Holy Eucharist  
10:30 am Choral Eucharist *Guest Choir: The Chapel Choir, Royal St. George's College, Toronto, Douglas Jamieson, director; Rev. Canon Tim Elliot, Chaplain and guest preacher*  
4:30 pm Regional Confirmation

### WEDNESDAYS IN LENT – Anglican Prayer and Song Through The Centuries

with Peter Wall and Michael Bloss  
March 26, April 2 & 9 – in Myler Hall

6:00 pm Light supper  
6:30 pm Presentation  
7:45 pm A service of Compline

### LENTEN TWILIGHT RECITAL SERIES

SATURDAYS 4:30-5:30 pm  
Admission by donation

March 29 The Cathedral Choristers  
April 5 Michael Bloss, organ  
April 12 The Toronto Mendelssohn Choir;  
Noel Edison, conductor; Michael Bloss, organist

# Bishop's Easter letter

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Let me share an example of what I mean. One day last week I was listening to the popular CBC radio program "The Current". On that day Anna Maria Tremonti, the host, was interviewing a photojournalist by the name of Larry Towell who had just returned with some remarkable pictures from the Ukraine. In one of these pictures, reproduced with this letter on page 1, you see a woman who is in the midst of the protesting and rioting. She has moved beyond the safety of the crowd, however, and has grabbed hold of the shield of one of the government riot police!

In the radio interview the photographer told the incredible story behind this picture and it turns out that she is doing more than just touching the shield. With her hand extended, the woman offers a prayer and what is even more incredible is that she went down the entire line of police, touching each shield and saying a prayer over every one of them. He said that it was a profound, powerful moment as this woman stepped forward and offered this inspiring display of courage and such a dramatic demonstration of her faith.

On Easter Sunday we will be challenged to respond to Mary's amazing and wonderful news; news that she had seen the Lord! This incredible proclamation of joy and hope, and the reality of Jesus' resurrection, had a dramatic effect upon a gathering of grief-stricken and frightened disciples. In time it would transform them into a band of followers whose faith in the living God would give



them the courage to live out the meaning of true discipleship in the face of any obstacle. They too had been raised up above the fear and brutality of the struggle for power and the sad divisions that continue to be part of our troubled world today.

On Easter Sunday, and on every Sunday, we respond by gathering around an altar; and as we do this, we are also invited to experience the transforming power of God's love. We are invited to respond in faith to the presence of the risen Christ in our own lives; and at the altar rail we are met and embraced by our God who walks with us every step of the way.

My Easter prayer this year is that all of us in the Diocese of Niagara may find new hope and much courage as we follow Christ passionately; and that we may respond with open and joyful hearts to the news that Mary brings to us this day: Jesus Christ is risen today! Alleluia!

Susan and I wish you every blessing for the Easter season,

*Bishop Michael*

[See more of Larry Towell's photos on the CBC program's website: <http://bit.ly/1cbHPRZ>]

## To the Editor

### A lovely surprise

What a lovely surprise I received when the *Niagara Anglican* arrived in my mail, after enquiring about subscribing to it several weeks ago.

As I mentioned to the lady I was speaking with at the time, my husband and I lived in Guelph for some years attending St. George's Church, where amongst other members of our close community we came to know Dr. and Mrs. Michael Burslem. Since having to move to Toronto after my husband's death, I've missed reading the *Niagara Anglican*, and in particular Michael's column.

I'm enclosing a cheque to cover a year's subscription and look forward to receiving future issues.

Thank you for your attention to my request.

Joan V. Hill  
Toronto

## People

### Personnel changes

The following changes have occurred in the Diocese recently:

The Reverend **David Thomas** was issued a licence as Priest-in-Charge (part-time) of All Saints Ridgeway.

The Reverend **Susan Channen**, Associate Priest at Christ's Church Cathedral, accepted the Incumbency of the three point parish of Three Harbours, in the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

The Reverend **Wayne Fraser** was appointed Interim Pastor at St. John the Evangelist Niagara Falls.

The Reverend **Barbara Pettit** and the Reverend **Alan Cook** were issued a Bishop's Permission as Honorary Assistants at St. James the Apostle Guelph.

The Venerable **Lynne Marchant** was appointed Director of Stewardship and Chairperson of the Cathedral Place Development Task Force.

Canon **Jim Powell** was appointed as Interim Pastor at St. John's Port Dalhousie (St. Catharines).

The Reverend **Nirmal Mendis** became Rector of All Saints Dain City and Christ Church Wainfleet.

The Reverend **Elizabeth Sipos** is the Rector of St. Paul's Fort Erie and St. John's Ridgemount.

**Nick Lawson** resigned as Property Manager at Cathedral Place to pursue a career in home renovations.

Canon **Margaret Murray**, Rector of Norval, Hornby and Stewarttown, and Missioner of the Halton Hills Cluster Ministry, retired from full-time ministry.

**Nancy Clause**, O.N., retired as Administrative Assistant in the Episcopal Office.

The Reverend **Jack Cox** has been appointed Interim Priest-in-Charge of St. Alban the Martyr Hamilton.

**Mary Anne Grant**, O.N., has accepted the position of Administrative Assistant in the Episcopal Office.

**Derek Smith** accepted the position as Property Manager at Cathedral Place.

Canon **Susan Wells** accepted the appointment as Pastoral Associate (half-time) at St. Luke's Burlington.

The Reverend **Daniel Tatarnic** is the Rector (half-time) of St. Barnabas St. Catharines.

The Reverend **Elizabeth Steeves** accepted a four month contract as Priest Associate for Outreach and Family Ministries at St. James Dundas.

The Reverend **Martha Tatarnic** has accepted the position of Rector of St. George's St. Catharines.

### Double blessing

Congratulations to Canon **Barry and Kathleen Randle** on the birth of their first grandchild Oliver Dennis Randle (February 17) to Stephen and Jeanette Randle... *and again* on the birth of their second grandchild Bradley William Joseph Randle (March 3) to Jessica and Nicholas Randle.

### Condolences

Our deepest sympathies to the following and others who are grieving the loss of loved ones. Pray for them as they cope with the new realities of life.

The Reverend **Arthur Tribe** passed away on October 19. He was predeceased by his wife, June (January 2013). A Memorial Service was held at St. Alban's Acton.

Canon **John Hesketh** died on January 26. Funeral Service was held from his parish church of St. George's St. Catharines. He is survived by his spouse, Mary.

**Joyce Mitchell**, O.N., died on February 3. A Service of Celebration was held on February 15 from her parish church of St. Paul's Port Dover.

## Churchwarden's memories and suggestions

### MITCH BANKS

I was a Church Warden at St. Elizabeth's Burlington for three years, from 2007 to 2009. During that time I was also a member of Synod Council and followed that with the Bishop's Financial Task Force and the Financial Advisory Committee for four years.

Our church grew under Canon Jean Archbell's leadership and our parish was able to eliminate our very large DMM (Diocesan Mission and Ministry) outstanding debt in 2009. I think this was the major accomplishment during my term as Churchwarden.

Through the financial committees I learned a great deal about the "financial operation" of the Diocese. I met and worked with some wonderful people such as Jody Beck, Judy Conning, Tim Huxley, Ruth Anne Martin and many others from the Diocese.

From my involvement I would suggest that the Diocesan leadership team re-think the membership of our annual Synod.

I strongly believe that each parish should have

at least one Warden and their Treasurer included as their delegates. These are the people who have a firm understanding of their parish. Finally, there should be an annual training and development session for Wardens.

*Mitch Banks can be reached at [mbanks1@cogeco.ca](mailto:mbanks1@cogeco.ca)*



**Rector Jean Archbell and Churchwarden Mitch Banks presented a cheque to Bishop Michael repaying their very large DMM debt/arrears that had built up over many years.**

Photo: reprinted from March 2009 Niagara Anglican.

**HOLLISTorial**

# Faith of women

Women were the first witnesses to the resurrection of the male Jesus Christ, according to gospel recorders.

I have always been fascinated by that fact, since it first registered with me during my early days of university studies.

I am also excited that years later God chose to enhance and expand the Jesus birth experience. The gospels mentioned that shepherds and astrologers were the official welcoming human delegations invited by God to witness the Bethlehem happenings. They were all males, and even though undoubtedly some females were present in the stable at the birth, nonetheless it could be construed that God only asked males to observe this history changing milestone in human/divine relationships.

If that indeed were the case at the time of Jesus' birth, it was not repeated at his resurrection some three decades later. Then women were "chosen" as the first, not only to witness the event, but to publicise the good

news of Jesus conquering death by rising from the dead.

Women were shut out of the hierarchy of the structured church for centuries, but their faith and action shone brightly in the mission and ministry of the gospel community throughout the ages, and continues today.

I was reminded of this again recently while reading three independent accounts of women and their faith.

Richard Ouzounian interviewed Celine Dion for his "The Big Interview" (*Toronto Star*, January 25, 2014), where she spoke about her beliefs. She said it is important to have something to "touch and believe in." Expanding she added, "I say that to believe in yourself is to believe in God. For me God is life itself, the birds, the air, the sunrise and the sunset, the children. Yes, that is where I find God. Not in a church." She ended by saying, "if you don't believe in something, then you're a little bit dead."

Malala Yousafzai nearly died physically but her faith in

God spurred her to become an advocate for girls wishing to attend school and be educated. See Sharyn Hall's review of *I am Malala* (page 8), then read Malala's incredible story.

British Columbia Premier Christy Clark was featured in the *Anglican Journal* (February 2014) as "natural—born politician—of faith." Journalist Diana Swift described Clark's faith as "an essential part of her survival kit in the often-hostile territory of partisan politics." Clark claimed her faith allows her to find peace in her "very loud and busy environment." It reminds her "to be forgiving, kind, compassionate and thoughtful of others."

These individuals reminded me how fortunate I was to witness and experience the faith of women who broke the cathedral glass ceilings of ordination.

In 1981, I sponsored Elaine Ferris Hamilton when she was ordained the first female deacon in the Anglican Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland-Labrador. As a woman she

brought a unique, effective dimension to our parish ministry.

Nine years later, at St. John's York Mills Toronto, our honorary assistant was the Reverend Marjory Pezzack, the first female ordained in Toronto diocese. Some of her male clergy colleagues were not very friendly and treated her rather nastily, but her faith and perseverance enabled her to prevail and thrive.

In 1994, I voted for the Reverend Victoria Matthews to become the first female bishop elected in the Canadian Anglican Church. She served as a bishop in Toronto, bishop of Edmonton and now in Christchurch, New Zealand.

I feel honoured to have known and worked with these women of faith during my ordained ministry.

In addition, my life has been enhanced and strengthened by other women of faith—my wife Helen, our daughters, family, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, strangers—with whom I have shared and continue to



share my earthly journey.

I can best describe it this way. If a female and a male were equal in talents and experience, the female would bring something special to the situation which the male could never bring. Perhaps Jesus/God recognized that when God made possible for women to be the first witnesses of Jesus' resurrection. Who knows?

Certainly my life has been enhanced and enriched through my association with women of faith.

This Easter, while sitting in my comfortable space I will give thanks for the resurrection of Jesus and its benefits for humankind. Also, I shall express gratitude to those women of faith who have shaped my past, secured my present and offered hope for my future.

May I suggest you do likewise during Easter this year.

*Your feedback is always appreciated at editor@niagaraanglican.ca*

## Clergy Deaths

### Ann Copland Macdonald

"May you sew a mile a minute for the Lord" was one observation offered as a message of condolence for the Reverend Ann Copland Macdonald. Others, writing in the funeral home online guest book, mentioned her excellent pastoral care talents and her work as Chaplain with

the Mothers' Union in Niagara.

Ann, a retired priest in the Diocese of Niagara, served as an Honorary Assistant at Christ's Church Cathedral, where her liturgy, preaching and pastoral skills brought peace, joy and understanding to many.

Ordained to the Diaconate

on May 26, 1996, Ann became a Priest on November 24 of the same year. She served at Queen's Garden Long Term Care (Chaplain), St. Paul's Hamilton (Interim), Holy Trinity Welland (Interim), Church of the Ascension Hamilton (Priest Associate), St. John's Winona

(Rector) and St. John's Ancaster (Assistant Curate).

She was President of the Caledonia Grand River Quilters Guild and has left many beautiful quilts for others to enjoy.

Surrounded by her family she died on February 13, 2014. Her funeral service was held

in Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton

Our condolences are extended to Peter, her husband of 45 years, and their family.

### Steve Coombs

Worshippers, both laity and clergy, were asked to wear bright colours, "non-liturgical", to the service celebrating Steve Coomb's life, following his death on February 22, 2014.

The service was held at St.

Christopher's Burlington where the Reverend Stephen Coombs served as Honorary Assistant for 44 years.

The dance tune "Mairi's Wedding", retitled for the occasion "Steve's Joy", was performed

by the Scottish Country Dancers as the family entered the church. It was a celebration of the dance, a vital part of Steve's life.

Steve, made a Deacon on May 19, 1957, was ordained a Priest less than a year later on May

6, 1958. During his ministry, he served at St. Bartholomew's Hamilton (Rector), St. George's St. Catharines (Assistant Curate), All Saints Erin and St. Chad's Alton (Rector) and St. Simon's Oakville (Deacon-in-Charge).

His life-long work in education included that of teacher, vice-principal and principal in Hamilton.

Our condolences are extended to his wife Betty and their family.

## NIAGARA ANGLICAN

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# New space at Transfiguration celebrated

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

beautiful and much larger fire-side room for social gatherings, bright Sunday school classrooms and nursery, large offices and much needed accessible washrooms.

The sanctuary was also refreshed: pews replaced with chairs (easy to move for events) and a new state of the art sound system to support the innovative music and worship, an essential part of the Transfiguration worship experience. In many ways, the renovations have given us

the ability to do the wonderful things we have always done in exciting new ways.

As a church community, we were fortunate and remarkably blessed to have the means to undertake these renovations through a very generous bequest from the late Jack and Beulah May, long-time parishioners of the Transfiguration, both of whom served the church faithfully.

In 2009, the Church learned of this unbelievable monetary gift and collectively decided to use the bulk of the money to

dramatically enhance our church building.

The Mays' incredible generosity allowed us not only to redesign and upgrade our space but also to envision our future ministry and instill a sense of hope and purpose for the parish. We look forward to being an active and visible part of the Anglican Church in south St. Catharines for many years to come.

*Justine Cotton is a parishioner of and Newsletter Editor at the Church of the Transfiguration. EMAIL: justinelcotton@gmail.com*



▲ Honorary Assistant Donald Brown helps the youth cut the cake.

Photo: Elizabeth-Connor-Elliott



◀ St. Christopher's Burlington was proud to raise their Pride flag to support LGBTQ brothers and sisters in Russia and around the world and all the athletes competing in Sochi, Russia, during the 2014 winter Olympics.

Photo: Rob Pawson

## Longest serving president

HOLLIS HISCOCK

Jack Stevenson is serving his 52nd consecutive term as President of Chi Rho Fellowship at Christ Church Niagara Falls.

He was first elected President in 1963, just 16 years after Chi Rho was introduced to the parish in 1947.

Vice-president and Treasurer Kathy Lowe noted, "We continue to fulfill the Chi Rho aim to be a fellowship, to serve and promote spiritual, intellectual and social programs."

Chi Rho meets monthly beginning with a pot luck supper, then a short business meeting followed by a speaker or social time. Speakers have been from the community, for example, a speaker on osteoporosis, or their own members share an interest, like origami. They take a turn hosting the coffee hour following the 10:00 a.m. Sunday service and help at the annual Strawberry Social and Parish Bazaar.

"And we always welcome new members," Lowe concluded.



Kathy Lowe presented her father, Jack Stevenson, with his updated pin after his election as Chi Rho President for the 52nd consecutive term. Additions have been made to his original President's pin over the years.

Photo: Melissa Whitman

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# LENT & Easter WITH MATTHEW and Friends

A DAILY DEVOTION FOR INDIVIDUALS, COUPLES OR GROUPS.

PART 2: APRIL 1 TO EASTER, APRIL 20, 2014

**WHAT TO DO ...**

1. Read the daily passage from your own bible, download a bible app or view free bibles on [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).

2. Read the commentary on the gospel reading.
3. Answer or discuss any questions.
4. Ask how it applies to your life.

**FEEDBACK ...**

We appreciate your comments, suggestions or questions. Contact Hollis Hiscock at [editor@niagaraanglican.ca](mailto:editor@niagaraanglican.ca) or 905-635-9463 or 710 Ashley Ave, Burlington, ON, L7R2Z3.

*This special feature is also available for download from [www.niagaraanglican.ca/newspaper](http://www.niagaraanglican.ca/newspaper)*

**Tuesday, April 1 Matthew 17:1 – 27**

I think we've all had "transfiguration experiences" – moments when the veil between heaven and earth, if not lifted, becomes very thin, and we see the glory of God manifested in Jesus. When this happens, we so get where Peter was when he said to Jesus, "Lord, it's good for us to be here." Ahhh, the joy and hope and peace that come with mountain top spiritual times—we're so sure, so committed, so inspired.

But they never last, do they? We always need to come down to walk the regular path that can bring such hard slogging and uncertainty. Like the disciples, we find ourselves struggling with little faith, and so challenged to live and share it effectively with others. Pray that you might have faith that will move mountains.

*Cathie Crawford Browning, Rector, St. John's Thorold*

**Wednesday, April 2 Matthew 18:1 – 14**

This excerpt from Matthew records how Jesus addressed his followers' misunderstanding of true greatness. How frustrated they must have felt when Jesus mocked their efforts to win power and position!

How could a child be greater than the friends of the great teacher? Jesus did not even choose a specific or a special child to teach these misdirected adults. Any child, every child, deserves adult respect because the child has no power. Twenty centuries later, Jesus still puzzles our sense of logical propriety.

Matthew had the brilliant idea of writing down what Jesus said and did. Thus Matthew, probably unintentionally, achieved greatness. We, reading his record, can learn how to achieve true greatness without making the mistakes of the egotistical disciples. Still, we tend to resemble them, not Jesus.

Perhaps Shakespeare had these verses from Matthew in mind when he had Malvolio fail so painfully to raise himself up from servant class to head of the household. "Some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them." Malvolio had no perception that his understanding of what greatness means was limited and pitiful.

Today, let us curtail our egotistical desires and nurture the innate greatness of children.

*Eleanor Johnston, St. John's Niagara Falls*

**Thursday, April 3 Matthew 18:15 – 35**

Most sins between church members would be stopped before they began if, as Jesus says, everyone loves each member of the church and shows all members the respect, forgiveness, understanding and compassion they would want for themselves. Often problems between members arise because one member is relatively new and other members may be upset because that one member does not appreciate the way things are done.

Do many people sit in the same pew each Sunday? They won't get to know many other members that way. Does anyone make a point of sitting in a new place during coffee hour from time to time? Taking a new place at coffee hour is a good way to meet other members. When members of a congregation start assuming they already know everyone that church is in trouble.

Does learning about and loving all the members of a church require more of the members than they are able to give or can it be revealed in constant, small, ordinary acts of mutual care, support and openness?

*Lynn Brubaker, Member, Grace Church St. Catharines*

**Friday, April 4 Matthew 19:1 – 30**

As large crowds followed him, Jesus frequently found himself tested by questions from Pharisees and others as to the Law and relationships. In each of these cases in chapter nineteen we learn from his answers that people have trouble following the Law, and need God's help making decisions that reflect God's will. "For mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible."

In Jesus' answer to the Pharisees about the lawfulness of divorce we learn how difficult it was for God's people to obey the law, such that Moses allowed divorce. Jesus acknowledges the imperfections of people in reply and teaches his disciples that although not everyone can accept the teaching, that anyone who can live like a eunuch should do so for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus upends the imperfect treatment of women and children and teaches his disciples a different value system. Children, who have little societal power, come to him for laying on of hands, "... for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs."

The rich young man's search for eternal life through good deeds leads him to discover how hard it really is to follow God's law. To be perfect he would have to sell his possessions and give the money to the poor, setting his treasure in heaven. The disciples learn that to rely on God for the impossible, and to give up earthly things for Jesus' sake, yields eternal life - a gift of grace from God.

In these lessons, Jesus teaches us to weigh our relational decisions in terms of where we are to place our trust and treasure. How hard is it for you to let go of possessions in favour of helping others?

In a world that bears the marks of centuries of inequality of value of human lives according to gender, age, affluence and power, how do we reconcile ourselves to Jesus' statement that "many who are first will be last, and the last will be first"?

*Ruth Reid, Pastoral Assistant, St. John's, Thorold*

**Saturday, April 5 Matthew 20:1 – 16**

This parable is, for me, one of the more troublesome that Jesus chooses to share with his followers. It is troublesome because it strikes at the very core of something that is important to me - fairness. Why, indeed, should those who have worked for one hour get paid the same amount as those who had put in a full day in the vineyard? You can hear the unhappy labourers saying - "It ain't fair!!" - with probably a few expletives thrown in to boot. Fairness and justice are foundational to our understanding of human relations. Special deals are not looked on favourably. It was for this reason that labour unions were put in place. Fairness is indeed the basis for our understanding of justice.

What I think Jesus is getting at in this parable is the reality that there is no seniority in discipleship. In Jesus' view the twelve have no more of a preferred place in the total scheme of his ministry than those who come late to discipleship. By extrapolation there is no seniority in the church. Ideally the person who comes to the church today is to be as equally valued as those who have served as the bedrock of a congregation over many years. There is no seniority in the kingdom!!

1. How does this parable resonate with you?
2. How well does your parish accept the newcomer as an equal in the fellowship?

*John Ripley, Interim Priest, St. Paul's Mount Hope*

**Lent 5, Sunday, April 6 Ezekiel 37:1 – 14**

Dem bones, dem bones!  
The Dream: The prophet, Ezekiel, had a dream. It was a time of national and personal brokenness. God's Spirit showed Ezekiel a valley full of bones. God asked, "Can these bones live?" Ezekiel replied, "You know," dodging any expression of faith or hope. God, however, did not take the bait. God made the bones live. Then, God explained the dream's significance for Ezekiel and Israel. God comes. God speaks. God creates (new) life.

So What? Sometimes, what we observe in other people's lives or experience in our own, is catastrophic. We feel broken, helpless and discouraged. This is when Ezekiel's story can help us:

- God's Spirit comes – before we think to ask
- God communicates – in prayer, dreams, Scripture, Church community
- God creates – healing us to go forward in life with God

Who God is, and what God does, do not depend on our perceptions or feelings. God's love and power are infinitely greater than these, as Ezekiel learned and shared. Therefore, when we think that God has abandoned us, let us think again. God is with us, communicating and creating.

*David Browning, Rector, Holy Trinity Fonthill*

# LENT & Easter WITH MATTHEW and Friends

A DAILY DEVOTION FOR  
INDIVIDUALS, COUPLES OR GROUPS.

PART 2: APRIL 1 TO EASTER, APRIL 20, 2014

Monday, April 7

Matthew 20:17-34

In the world today we are all familiar with the games of one upmanship that pervade our lives. People seem to have an air of entitlement. Everyone wants to start at the top of the ladder in life, not satisfied to start on the bottom rung and slowly climb to the top.

In this passage we are told of the indignation that the rest of the disciples feel when the mother of James and John asks Jesus to give her sons seats of honour in his Kingdom. Jesus replies that those seats are not his to give, that "these places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father." He reminds all twelve disciples that, "whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave."

We too, should remember to take the time to serve. Serve as volunteers, serve others, serve your country, serve your God and ultimately you serve yourself.

*Pat Thorsteinson, Member, St. John's Thorold*

Tuesday, April 8

Matthew 21:1-22

My house shall be called a house of prayer.

Is your church a house of prayer, is your home a house of prayer, is your body a temple of prayer?

These are questions that we should ponder. What does it mean to be a house of prayer?

There is a small book called *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence. ([www.ccel.org/ccel/lawrence/practice.pdf](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/lawrence/practice.pdf))

Brother Lawrence found God present in all things and prayed continually; peeling potatoes was just as much a prayer as falling on one's knees in chapel. He wrote:

"Pray remember what I have recommended to you, which is, to think often on GOD, by day, by night, in your business, and even in your diversions. He is always near you and with you; leave Him not alone. You would think it rude to leave a friend alone, who came to visit you: why then must GOD be neglected? Do not then forget Him, but think on Him often, adore Him continually, live and die with Him; this is the glorious employment of a Christian; in a word, this is our profession, if we do not know it we must learn it. I will endeavour to help you with my prayers, and am yours in our LORD."

I invite you to reflect on how you can be more present to God.

*Susan Wells, Interim Priest, Diocese of Niagara*

Wednesday, April 9

Matthew 21:23-46

"They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet."

Jesus is now teaching regularly in the temple. His authority to do so is challenged by "the chief priests and the elders of the people." Being the good Rabbi that he is, Jesus answers their question with a question: "Did the baptism of John [the Baptist] come from heaven, or was it of human origin?"

In response, the elders draw into a huddle to decide how to answer this question. Finally, worried about the crowds who respected John, they answered Jesus: "We do not know."

This is leadership by default. This is a common practice throughout history on the part of those who seek and respect a certain kind of power. We see it in Canada today. Parties poll the constituents to determine the issues which will garner votes and then espouse those issues or opinions in the hopes of winning the election. Those who do not hold to the agreed upon opinions are ignored or ridiculed. The common good is irrelevant.

Do we not lose our identity and spiritual health in relationships and government when we seek, above all else, to maintain our grip on power?

*Max Woolaver, Rector, St. Andrew's Grimsby*

Thursday, April 10

Matthew 22:1-22

We live in a world that does not easily accept judgment. In some ways judgment feels unChristian. Yet, it is part of the story that Christ Himself left with us in the Gospels. And yes, there are consequences to accepting the gospel message and not responding appropriately.

Such is the case with the man who comes to the wedding feast without proper attire and that makes this parable disturbing. Parables always point to the greater reality of God and this parable is a metaphor about the invitation God gives to all of us to participate in His Kingdom and most especially in the life to come. In Matthew's community one put on "new clothes" in Christ when becoming a Christian. St. Paul uses the same idea in Romans 13:14.

The unfortunate man in this parable (vv. 1-14) is someone who shows up at the great banquet God has planned for all of us without first having been clothed in Christ. In other words, he accepts the invitation to be a Christian but then does not do anything with it. Many will find this judgment harsh and will discard it. Others may feel that it does not fit in a multi-faith politically correct society.

Those who understand this parable will know that to put on Christ changes your life. Quite often, it means allowing Christ to change our lives repeatedly as we grow in faith. That means that the wedding clothes we had on yesterday may not be the right ones to wear today, because the Gospel is always lived in context.

*Kevin Bothwell, Rector, St. Thomas St. Catharines*

Friday, April 11

Matthew 22:23-46

When we read the Gospels, the groups who gathered around Jesus seem to fall into two distinct categories.

First, there are the "tax collectors and sinners," those who have feared that they are not good enough for God and who hear a message of hope in Jesus' teaching. They come close, hungry to soak up his teaching, knowing that in His presence they are brought into the presence of a God who loves them more than they can imagine and who offers them a way to be in a life-giving relationship with God.

Second, there are the "scribes and Pharisees" (and a few Sadducees). They think that they are quite good enough for God, and as a result, get to pass judgment on those who aren't so clearly "on the in." They too draw close to Jesus, but for quite a different purpose - they are looking to challenge, to correct, to "test" Jesus.

It's no surprise that Jesus always seems generous with the former group—understanding, forgiving, reassuring. But with the latter group, His tone is quite different—He is harsh, critical, silencing.

Our assumption may be that we belong to the first group, but that's not necessarily the case. Although we may not be as audacious as the Pharisees, we can have an edge in our prayer lives of challenge, demand, and presumption (especially when things aren't going our way and we can't understand why).

Lent's a good time to search our hearts and ask, "With what attitude do I approach Jesus?"

*Cathie Crawford Browning, Rector, St. John's Thorold*

Saturday, April 12

Matthew 23:1-39

The Jewish people were to be a light to the Gentiles (Isaiah 49:6.) Their God-centered values were God's plan to attract everyone to God. By the time of Jesus' ministry, however, the Scribes and Pharisees had perverted God's plans. This background is the context for Jesus' anger at the religious leaders, and his weeping for Jerusalem.

Jesus told the crowds to obey the Pharisees' and Scribes' teachings, but reject their personal examples. Much of what the leaders did was the opposite of what they taught. Jesus scolded them, publicly.

Jesus challenged the Scribes and Pharisees for their response to his teaching on the kingdom of heaven. Jesus taught: the kingdom is wherever God's love, justice and mercy prevail for all people. The religious leaders denounced Jesus and his followers.

So what?

1. God loves everyone, unconditionally.
2. Feelings are neither good nor bad; feelings are. It's how we use them that counts. Jesus used anger against hypocrisy.
3. God has zero tolerance for those who deflect people from Christ-centered teachings.
4. Let us adopt, advocate and practice Jesus' values.
5. When institutional religion fails us, let us trust and follow Jesus.

*David Browning, Rector, Holy Trinity, Fonthill*



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PART 2: APRIL 1 TO EASTER, APRIL 20, 2014

**Palm Sunday, April 13 Matthew 21:1–11**

**P**alm Sunday is a "peak and valley day." The peak is triumph with crowds in Jerusalem in awe of Jesus, while the valley is despair when the situation changes so quickly. As in life peaks and valleys represent poignant moments—we rise to the peak as we rejoice, love, succeed; we slide into the valley when we mourn, are sad, are maligned. Our path to God leads us through the glorious mountain peaks and the frightening valleys below—it is the path that endures.

In Matthew 21:1-11, the peak is described. "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" the crowds shouted as they deliriously led him and followed him spreading palm tree branches before him. The prophet Jesus entered Jerusalem. They were witnessing something new, someone who talked of God and who cared for outcasts. They expected a king dressed like a king, not someone on a donkey dressed as an ordinary person. Later in Matthew 27:11-54, the valley is described. The religious leaders in Jerusalem perceived him to be a false messiah and a threat to their authority. They wanted his death.

The palm is a symbolic reminder to us of the peak. As in all Anglican parishes, we receive a palm at the beginning of the service and wave it at certain points. When my daughter was small she would gather up the palms left in the pews after the service. At home she would spend hours making perfect crosses where they ended up everywhere in the house--on tables, on nightstands, as bookmarks, on mirrors, on bed pillows, everywhere. They would be there in their comfortable places for as long as they went undisturbed. The palm is a present reminder of that "peak and valley day" so long ago.

*Jim Higginson, Member, St Luke's Smithville*

**Monday, April 14 Matthew 24:1–51**

**A**s Christians we are asked to be "watchful" and to pay attention to what is happening around us, to care for those who need assistance. This concept of "helping" others was radical in the days Jesus was first proclaiming the Gospel ... but it has become such a part of our lives, to the point it is almost an automatic response to life's difficulties. We reach out to feed the hungry, shelter and clothe the needy and be the voice of the voiceless. The struggle we face today is remembering who it was that first asked us to "assist" others.

Gracious God, you are the reason for all my journeys. I pray to always have the presence of mind to give you thanks in all situations. Amen.

Question to ponder: The disciples asked "when will the temple be destroyed?" Think about how they would have felt listening to the answer.

*Pam Guyatt, Rector, St. James St. Catharines*

LENT IS A SEASON FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

**Tuesday, April 15 Matthew 25:1–46**

**W**hen have you experienced prejudice in your life? How are you doing in overcoming prejudice toward another person or to an entire group?

God beyond borders  
 We bless you for strange places and different dreams  
 For the demands and diversity of a wider world  
 For the distance that lets us look back and re-evaluate  
 For new ground where broken stems can take root,  
 Grow and blossom.  
 We bless you for the friendship of strangers  
 The richness of other cultures  
 And the painful gift of freedom.  
 BLESSED ARE YOU, GOD BEYOND BORDERS.  
 But if we have overlooked the exiles in our midst  
 Heightened their exclusion by our indifference  
 Given our permission for a climate of fear  
 And tolerated a culture of violence

Have mercy on us,  
 God who takes side with justice.  
 Confront our prejudice  
 Stretch our narrowness  
 Sift out our laws and our lives  
 With the penetrating insight of your spirit  
 Until generosity is our only measure. Amen.

Kathy Galloway

From *50 Great Prayers From The Iona Community*, selected by Neil Paynter, 2009. www.ionabooks.com. Reprinted with permission.

*Dorothy Hewlett, Rector, St. George's Homer and Christ Church McNab*

**Wednesday, April 16 Matthew 26:1–35**

**I**n these verses we sense a movement of events leading towards the climax of Jesus' purpose and ministry among his disciples and the people of Israel. While Jesus continues to teach his disciples, we increasingly read of him telling them what is going to happen to him, and what to expect when he has risen. The disciples are being prepared for the time of Jesus' leaving them, being prepared for change and being prepared for the start of their own ministries.

Jesus continues to teach his disciples, pointing to the brief time he has left among them. The woman who anoints his head in Bethany is praised for performing a good service - for preparing Jesus for burial. They are told they will always have the poor among them, but that they will not always have Jesus. Jesus is quoted saying "Truly I tell you" three times in these passages. Each statement he makes reflects him overturning the beliefs or thought processes of his disciples:

1. the importance of what the woman with the ointment did, in demonstrating the utmost importance of the son of God and what he will do for them
2. one of the disciples will betray him - utterly unthinkable for all but one
3. that Peter will deny him three times

Movement is also seen in the actions taken by the chief priests and elders as they conspire to kill him. What is noteworthy is that they and the people have such respect and reverence for law and ritual, that it was unthinkable to proceed during Passover, a

remembrance of the delivery from death of their firstborns in Egypt through the sacrifice of a lamb. What they do not see is that they are about to sacrifice the Lamb of God, moving from pure ritual to actual and ultimate sacrifice.

Jesus prepares his disciples, sharing what is to come; he shares and institutes the celebration of the new covenant with bread and with wine, with his body and blood, for the forgiveness of sins - a sacrament we share in today.

While they were at Bethany, the disciples were focused on the cost of the alabaster jar of ointment. How often do we focus on the cost of things instead of their good use?

Jesus was preparing his disciples for what was to come as his time was near, saying "it is written" about actions they would take and reactions they would have. Peter and all the disciples had trouble believing Jesus when he told them what was written about them being scattered as sheep. Would you have a hard time hearing that you would be denying Jesus or betraying him or putting other things, such as fear, before him?

*Ruth Reid, Pastoral Assistant, St. John's Thorold*

**Maundy Thursday, April 17 Matthew 26:36–75**

**I**f you have made it this far through the daily Lenten devotions then congratulations, your spirit is willing and your flesh has at least a modicum of strength (see Matt 26:42).

In today's passage the disciples' flesh fails them. As Jesus prays in the garden the disciples cannot keep their tired eyes open. When Jesus is arrested one follower violently erupts cutting off a slave's ear. As Jesus is being tried, the disciples desert him and flee. Peter denies even knowing Jesus. Each of us from time to time finds that, like Jesus' first followers, our spirit may be willing but our flesh is weak.

Should we take comfort in the fact that these pioneers of our faith were weak when faith and strength were demanded? Should we like Peter, when we realize what we have done, go out and weep bitterly? Or should we place our trust in Jesus who, with willing spirit and frail human flesh, perfectly carries out His Father's will?

*Michael Mondloch, Rector, Grace Church St. Catharines*

**Good Friday, April 18 Matthew 27:1–31**

**O**ne of the saddest stories in the New Testament has to be the suicide of Judas.

His betrayal is hard enough - we wonder how someone who had been so close to Him, who had heard His preaching, witnessed His miracles, experienced His love could have SO missed what He came to do. Was it a lack of ethics that allowed him to betray Christ for a few silver coins? Was he trying to force Jesus' hand, in the hope that God would intervene? Had he lost faith and trust in the leader he'd followed for several years? But whatever motivated his betrayal, the fact that he was unable to experience grace and forgiveness, once he had it, is the most telling thing of all about where his mind and heart were - he just didn't understand Jesus' nature or mission. (Compare this to Peter, who also betrays Jesus, but is able to accept the mercy of Christ and use it for good in his ministry following the resurrection.)

Pray for grace to deal with your guilt in the times you let Jesus down, that you betray Him.

*Cathie Crawford Browning, St. John's Church Thorold*

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PART 2: APRIL 1 TO EASTER, APRIL 20, 2014

Holy Saturday, April 19

Matthew 27:32-66

**S**igns and wonders. Matthew's story of the crucifixion of Jesus is deeply sad, even two thousand years after the event. One insult is added to another, one injury follows the next. What's worse, he is deserted by his disciples. What's worst, he feels deserted by God. Jesus, the powerful healer and wise teacher, the heroic messiah, is abruptly silenced by death.

Matthew piles horror upon terror, telling of the temple veil torn apart by earthquake, the appearance of dead holy people.

But after these most fearful events imaginable, life goes on. The body of the champion of the poor is cared for by the only disciple left, a rich one. The real irony is that the priests and Pharisees imagine the disciples stealing Jesus' body to claim he has risen from the dead. They could not imagine the countless disciples who have celebrated his resurrection for two thousand years.

The final wonder is the silent witness of the female disciples. Unable to prepare his body, they just sit, watching the tombstones, their witness proof positive that love endures all fear and suffering.

*Eleanor Johnston, St. John's Niagara Falls*

Easter Sunday, April 20

Matthew 28:1-20

**E**aster completes Christmas. The same angel, who announced Jesus' birth over 30 years earlier, probably declared His resurrection.

"Be not afraid" - this advice given to those experiencing the newborn Saviour in a stable was also needed by those encountering the empty tomb.

Men received news about Jesus' birth ... women were the first to hear about His resurrection ... the equality of humanity was achieved.

Women "angels" delivered Easter's resurrection news ... male shepherds and astrologers were "angels" telling the glad tidings at Christmas ... each brought messages from God.

Although frightened and apprehensive, both were filled with joy to carry out the angel's instructions.

Herod wanted to kill the newborn Messiah ... at the resurrection, authorities paid guards to say it was a hoax ... hostility is ever present.

Shepherds, astrologers and others rushed to Bethlehem to see what God had done; Jesus' disciples, no doubt accompanied by the women, rushed to a hillside to meet the risen Lord and received their new commission - Go, make disciples, baptize and teach people the Gospel.

We too have Jesus' promise ... "I am with you always". Since their commission is also ours, are we achieving God's mission?

*Hollis Hiscock, Editor, Niagara Anglican*

## Three Days

ANGELA RUSH

Three long days of mourning,  
Could it truly be.  
He would rise as He said,  
Resurrection sets us free.

Surely they felt broken,  
As they turned away.  
Even Peter turned his back,  
"I do not know him I say",

They flogged Him and they beat Him,  
Nailed to a cross for all to see.  
Crucified in His crown of thorns  
They set Him high on Calvary.

Some gathered just to mock Him.  
His blood dripping to the ground.  
Heaven's sinful suffering,  
For all of those around.

Darkness covered all the land,  
From noon until hour three,  
Then Jesus cried out to our God,  
"Why have You forsaken Me".

How did they feel that very moment,  
Watching him die, feeling Him leave.  
Three days, they must have thought,  
Wondering, do I truly believe.

Joseph took His broken body,  
Laid Him in a stone carved tomb.  
The Prince of Peace, He was the Christ.  
Born of a virgin's womb.

Three women came at early dawn,  
What we now call Easter Morn.  
Spices in hand, He was not there,  
Only the shroud that he had worn.

Then, the ground began to shake,  
An angel arrived like lightning,  
Holding tightly to each other,  
That moment was quite frightening.

Dressed in white, the angel spoke,  
Go, He waits in Galilee.  
Alive He has risen, as He said,  
Easter's Holy Trinity.

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## BOOK REVIEW

### I am Malala

**I am Malala: The girl who stood up for education and was shot by the Taliban, by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb** Little, Brown and Company, New York, 2013.

SHARYN HALL

*"Who is Malala?" the young gunman demanded. No one spoke, but her friends glanced at her. Before she could answer, he shot her in the head.*

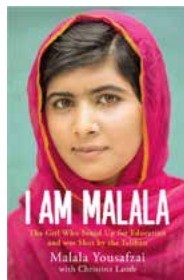
Malala Yousafzai purposely entitled her autobiography *I am Malala* to assert that the bullet has not silenced her and she is not afraid to speak out for the rights of children to receive an education. The book is the inspiring voice of this young girl, whose faith in God and brave support of her family enable her to seek justice for all children, especially girls, who are denied the opportunity to go to school.

In her native Pakistan, it is traditional for girls to stay at home

to learn domestic skills before a marriage is arranged for them. An education for girls is considered unnecessary by most people and violently opposed by religious extremists, such as the Taliban. They burned schools which allowed girls to attend and threatened anyone who defied them.

With the courageous support of her father, a teacher, Malala began to speak publicly for the rights of girls in Pakistan. In October 2012, she was shot as she was returning home from school. The world was shocked that the Taliban would target a child. Miraculously she survived and has continued her campaign for education for girls and all children in cooperation with the United Nations and several organizations.

Only the last quarter of Malala's book is about the shooting and her recovery. For most of the book, Malala describes her life as a child in a culture which struggles with the demands of tradition and the



dangers of religious extremism. Her story is not relevant only to young girls. Anyone who wishes to understand how religion, culture and politics intersect to determine the destiny of a child will find this book enlightening.

Since her recovery, Malala has received numerous awards for her courage and advocacy. She is the youngest person ever nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. She has inspired people around the world to advocate for education for all children; to work for peace, as she says, with a book and a pen, not a gun.

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

*Wishing you all a happy  
& blessed Easter*





# On being Anglican

MICHAEL BURSLEM

In a *New York Times* op ed, "On Being Catholic", Gary Gutting, professor of philosophy at the University of Notre Dame, said the two things that had influenced him the most were the Enlightenment and his Catholic faith. The latter he defended for those who questioned whether he still believed "that stuff." He affirmed that he did because it provided the fundamental truths of human life.

He qualified his faith, however, by turning it upside down. Traditionally the foundation had been the Scriptures, from which were derived the metaphysics, the miracles, and from these the ethical teaching of Jesus. He made the ethical teaching his foundation. He was agnostic about the metaphysics; and he interpreted the historical stories of the Bible as parables, illustrating moral and metaphysical teachings. He claimed that this liberal drive for reform was the best hope to save the Church. He was not willing to abandon it to

the conservative hierarchy.

To this I said "Amen." I would consider the same about being Anglican, but would add that Jesus is Lord, not just because the Bible says he is, and not just because of his ethical teaching either, but because of his resurrection. But how Jesus appeared after his crucifixion is open to debate. Perhaps in the past I've been too skeptical about the metaphysical. It would be wiser, as Gutting, to be agnostic. For, just when I was so sure there was no supernatural, the Lord sent us a church ghost to consider.

Our ghost appeared on March 13, 2013, exactly 100 years to the day after an organ tuner, Mr. J.T. Hannam, had been tragically pummeled to death by the organ pump handle in the "Glory Hole," a store room below the organ. He was seen by Ron our verger, and Grant his assistant heard footsteps. When told, I thought Ron was pulling my leg, but I now believe him. So we're forced to ask ourselves what the disciples, when they said they saw Jesus after he died,

actually saw. I don't know, but Luke records he ate a meal with them and John says he prepared breakfast after a fruitless night's fishing. Are these objective news reports or word pictures illustrating an extraordinary life well-lived?

Our ghost suggests that there is much more to life than what we can perceive by our senses. Perhaps, there is something

*... just when I was so sure there was no supernatural, the Lord sent us a church ghost to consider.*

metaphysical, para-normal, supra-natural or whatever we wish to call it; something we just can't understand or logically explain.

The more I learn from science, however, the greater God

becomes: the more I know, I discover there's a lot more yet to learn. But God is not the God of the gaps, of what we don't know, but of what we do know. Faith does not fill those gaps. Faith is a loving relationship with the living God. There is no one faith because everyone's relationship with God is so different.

We do, however, try to fill the gaps in our knowledge with beliefs, which are what we all too often argue over. Faith unites us to God, to Jesus and to one another; beliefs label us. They separate us into conservatives and liberals. How can we love our brothers and sisters if we're separated from them? The Creeds are a 4th and 5th century explanation of what happened when Jesus lived on earth. In some churches that don't have any creeds, the whole Bible replaces them. They're "Bible believers." I think, in a true sense, we should all be Bible believers and proclaim its inerrancy. But we should also interpret it in accordance with our increasing knowledge of the universe, the

enlightenment.

The Bible is the window through which we all see Jesus. But do we all see the same Jesus? Scripture is not the foundation of our faith, according to Gutting, but Jesus is and his teaching. Gutting has taken the Bible off its pedestal, and has replaced Jesus up there instead where he was in the earliest days of the church, when it was "the way," before it became an organization. One cynic has said that today it's a business.

But what of the authority of the Bible? Jesus is Lord, but without Holy Scripture, how would we know him? Perhaps, neither would we know God. It's a subtle paradigm shift, but one that I agree with Gutting we need to make to maintain the relevance of the church's proclamation to the world today.

*Michael Burslem is a member of St. George's Guelph. EMAIL: m.burslem@sympatico.ca*

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**Submissions –**  
 News – 500 words or less  
 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.

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**EVERYONE WELCOME**

## Children learn to knit scarves—leave them outside for people to take

LYNNE TIMMINS

The children and youth of St. Stephen-on-the-Mount Church Hamilton have started a new project this year – the Scarf Project. They were inspired by a group from Ottawa who knit scarves and left them tied to trees, statues, poles, etc. around their city with a note attached to each one saying “I Am Not Lost. If you’re stuck out in the cold, take this scarf to keep warm.” These scarves were meant for anyone who could use a warm scarf on a cold day. (We’ve had a few of those!)

So, during one Sunday school class in February the children were taught how to knit and encouraged to make a scarf and bring it in the following Sunday – which they did! We received 10 scarves which were then tied in various places outside in front of the church. The following day, all the scarves were gone!

Now the word has spread and

we are receiving scarves from parishioners and from those around the city who wish to participate in this wonderful project. Each Sunday the children put tags on the scarves and place them in front of the church and a couple of days later all the scarves have been taken by those who could use them!

Thank you to all those who have supported this project and to all the Sunday school children and youth of St. Stephen’s!

*Lynne Timmins is Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator at St. Stephen-on-the-Mount Hamilton. EMAIL: ststephenonthemount@cogeco.net*



▲ A scarf, tied to a pole in a public place, waits to be adopted by a person who needs to be warm.

◀ Sunday school knitters display the products of their new skills as participants in the Scarf Project.

Photos: Lynne Timmins

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



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905-527-1316 Ext. 220 michael.bloss@niagaraanglican.ca



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## Top reasons to attend Youth Synod

ALICIA ARCHBELL

It's spring! Which means Youth Synod in Action is fast approaching.

Youth Synod has always been one of my favourite events. Perhaps it's the extrovert in me that has always loved talking into the microphone or maybe it's my social justice side that has loved debating global and local issues and trying to change the world.

Youth Synod, in its former model, was designed to mirror diocesan synod. We voted on motions that made us think about how we act as Christians and how we can change the world around us for the better. We were proud of the decisions we made: to support same-sex blessings, to ban things that were harmful to the environment and to stand up for those in need of a voice.

Last year, the Youth Synod model was changed from motions to actions. Eighty youth were sent out all over Hamilton to get hands-on knowledge and experience in the social justice arenas that had been debated at past Youth Synods. One group helped in a community garden; one learned about social corporate responsibility; another learned about the local issues of poverty, refugees and so much more. The experience was amazing for those who attended.

This year the two models, motions and actions will be combined to get the best of both worlds.

I asked the youth on my Facebook Opinion Poll # 71: Best Reason to attend Youth Synod?



Young people working in a community garden as part of 2013 Youth Synod.

Photo: Jane Wyse

- Such a great experience. You can learn about new topics and concerns in our world and locally. You can have a say and can be part of the change. And it's a lot of fun.
- To make a difference in the world and express your opinions and passions, also the socials are always really fun.
- Seeing old friends and making new ones.
- You can learn about local, national and global issues while still having fun with wonderful company.

Youth Synod is happening May 2-4 at Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton.

If you are between the ages of 13 and 22 and want to go, talk to your priest about representing your parish. Each parish can send an unlimited number of delegates, so encourage others from your parish to join you!

*Alicia Archbell is a volunteer to market Diocesan Youth Events to the young people of the Diocese. EMAIL: aliciatowncrier@gmail.com*

# Scattered Seeds: Death, Life and the Kingdom

C.T. (TERRY) GILLIN

Death, especially one's own, can be a daunting topic. My recently completed cancer journey increases my awareness of my own mortality, though I want to be clear that while ill I was not in imminent danger of dying. Being seriously ill, however, was a rehearsal for death.

In one sense death is straightforward. It is our natural end. As we hear each Ash Wednesday, "For dust you art, and to dust you shall return" (Gen 3:19). Death is certain. Life is a gift, daily given, daily received. In more openly facing death I find my life is revitalized.

While I was growing up my father would say, "The minute you're born, you're headed for the grave." His aphorism encouraged me to reflect on the fundamental purposes of life. My experience is that this view from the grave urges living more fully in the moment. Every day is a gift to be shared.

During my recent illness I discovered that as I diminished, my gratitude and my peace of mind and heart grew. By dimin-

ishment I mean a loss of control over my body and my life. I could not control the tumor growing in my throat, nor the nausea and weakness caused by the chemotherapy. Nor could I materially affect the power of the medicine to heal me. I am not disregarding the importance of attitude. My point is grace shaped my attitude toward the experience.

Of necessity I became more dependent on the care provided by family, friends and my spiritual director; and of course I was reliant on the expertise and kindness of nurses, doctors and other medical staff. Through them I became aware that I was in the hands of that vital and unconditioned mystery, the love of God. While illness opened me up to this mystery in new ways, now I want to reaffirm my commitment to the gifts of love that come with the Cross and Resurrection.

Christ brings life out of death on the Cross. Similarly, our own suffering can bring life by letting God's justice and compassion fill our hearts and guide our actions. In this way we share in the passion of Christ, as he shares in our

humanity. An experience of the Cross – whether that is bereavement, illness, hopelessness or some other serious loss – prepares us to be more open to the Risen Christ.

In our weakness we discover God's strength. By shattering the security of our lives, our rehearsals for death deepen the Resurrection happening in us. The gift of the Resurrection is that God continues to be God working through us. Our own personal resurrection is allowing God to extend the Kingdom of his love through our thoughts, words and actions. With the grace of God's unconditional love we are called to bring life to the world.

Suffering can be self-absorbing and isolating. But shared as a faith journey, suffering strengthens our personal and communal identities and our resolve to live the Resurrection, to let God be God in us.

It has been a privilege to share in these pages some of the graces offered while I was ill. May these disclosures encourage you to reflect and share your journeys. We have much to learn from one

another. In strengthening our collective bonds and encouraging each other we live more fully in God's Kingdom.

My illness has let me experience God's love more richly and strengthens me to let God be God. In the face of death, I renew my desire to be part of the Resurrection community, to follow Christ in the service of others. Daily we pray, "Thy Kingdom come." Reflecting on death leads me to a renewed sense of calling to the life we share with one another interpersonally and socially. To be fully alive in God's Kingdom means to contribute to more just structures of wealth and security, a more equitable distribution of the planet's food and water, the liberation of the oppressed, the protection and care of creation, the comfort of all who suffer – which is all of us – and in all ways, great and small, justice and mercy. Make present the Kingdom!

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



[Editor's note: Terry had already written several articles for the *Niagara Anglican* when he informed me he was facing cancer treatment; I asked if he would share that journey with our readers. He agreed and wrote the series *Scattered Seeds*. Since then, he penned the following in 2013: "Pray in the Moment" (May), "Compassion" (Summer), "Gratitude" (September), "Invincible Grace" (October), "Cross" (November) and "Hope" (December); and in 2014 "Friendship and Faith" (February) and completing the series with "Death, Life and the Kingdom" this month.

We express our gratitude to Terry for sharing his journey with our readers. If you know somebody needing encouragement and inspiration as they experience their journey with cancer, recommend they visit [www.niagaraanglican.ca/news-paper](http://www.niagaraanglican.ca/news-paper) and read Terry's articles.

We also look forward to other articles from Terry in future editions of the *Niagara Anglican*.]

## Tales from Canterbury

PADDY DORAN

Last summer a sponsored camper sent us a beribboned card. On the back she wrote:

*"Thank you for the opportunity to go to camp. It was the most amazing experience of my whole summer!! It was great meeting new friends and the activities were so much fun. My favourite was the camp fire because we sang and did acting and games.*

*Thank you so MUCH!*

*- Micayla"*

Camp Canterbury Hills transforms lives. That's the real business we are in. Campers leave home, often for the first time, to enter a new life in a cabin group and find adventure, caring and, yes, even joy as they discover who they are and what they can do. Their activities might be on the high ropes course or swimming; hiking to the falls or campout; it might be archery or acting but the magic of camp is in the discoveries that are made. For confirmation see Micayla's

note, or this parent's comments: "We love your camp—the location, the wonderful staff, the inclusiveness... I have nothing but praise for the place."

The Camp itself is being transformed this year. We hope to fill eight residential cabins plus our day camp. We have a new Director, Lana Lowe, whose energy and many connections are already building off the solid base Nate Seroski built.

Nate's nine years at Canterbury, four of which he acted as Director, engendered the kind of response Micayla had. What greater praise can we give him? Thank you Nate, and blessings to your new work as a certified life specialist at the McMaster Children's Hospital.

Lana brings a wealth of experience as the Executive Director of the Children's International Learning Centre in Hamilton; former Canterbury Board member; Alumni Co-ordinator and even as a volunteer staff at the end of summer. To support her work (and to affirm Camp Canterbury's appeal), the major-

ity of residential and day camp leaders are returning from last year. That makes a potent team to realize Canterbury's potential!

As the Executive Director, I encourage you to consider sending children to Camp this year. Perhaps you would like to sponsor some or send members of your own family. If you do, they will discover that it's a great, great camp, this Camp Canterbury – a jewel in the heritage of the Diocese of Niagara.

Camp registration is available online! Registrations pick up as the weather grows warm. Secure your favourite session at [canterburyhills.ca](http://canterburyhills.ca). Regular registration forms are also available on our website. If you have any questions, contact Alex Glass, camp registrar, at 905-648-2712 or [camp@canterburyhills.ca](mailto:camp@canterburyhills.ca).

We welcome you to join us at the Camp Open House on Saturday June 7 from 1:00–4:00 p.m.

*Canon Paddy Doran is the Executive Director of Canterbury Hills.*



**Camp Director Lana Lowe helps a camper into the harness to ascend at the High Ropes course.**

Photo: Canterbury Hills

## Golden opportunities to make money

JOHN DENNIS

Churches are always looking for interesting and unique ways to raise money for special projects. St. John's Rockwood found it needed money to re-shingle its parish hall and decided to go for gold. They raised money by collecting old jewellery and coins and carrying out a "Gold and Silver Road Show". Churchwarden Barbara Reed said, "I think it brought in people who felt they couldn't give any more money but were glad to get rid of their old jewellery, silver and gold items."

Parishioners were able to donate old, broken and unused gold and silver items in envelopes that were collected over a three week period. All items were valued based on their gold and silver content, and then sold. The proceeds were given to the church and tax receipts given to the donors. As the gold and silver were sold directly to a wholesaler, the church and the donors were able to gain greater value for the items than if sold to a retailer by the individual donor.

The second part of the fundraiser involved parishioners bringing their antiques and having them evaluated. Items such as silver tea sets, gold watches and old coins were brought to the church. The event was a social occasion as participants had tea and coffee and exchanged stories about

their items. Pam Ferguson of St. John's said, "it was a fascinating process and I learned a lot."

The fundraiser could not have occurred without Doug Froom. Doug is very experienced evaluating antiques and jewellery, and donates his talents to these campaigns. He is a long-time member of St. Christopher's Burlington and has helped a number of churches in the diocese raise money. He has been doing these fundraisers since 2005, which started when his own church was looking for a way to raise money. He said, "his goal is to keep the campaigns simple but with a high impact."

Doug stated there have been many unique and interesting items brought in for him to evaluate. One item recently was a set of Greek and Roman coins that had many unique and valuable components. He said it was, "fascinating to hold something that was used when Christ was born."

Whatever the item, it is evaluated and the owner can choose to donate it to the church or simply have an up to date evaluation. Many donors tell Doug they have no idea of the value of their items and are happy to donate them to the church. Barbara Reed said she "found the campaign super easy to run, in fact I think it was the easiest fundraiser we've ever done."

*John Dennis lives in Guelph.*



Doug Froom and Pam Ferguson at the fundraiser in Rockwood when people could bring items for appraisal.

Photo: John Dennis

Next month in the Niagara Anglican  
First of its kind in Canada  
St. Cuthbert's Oakville installs unique new organ.

## Have a question? We will try to get it answered

A reader suggested that we start a "question-answer" column, where people pose church, faith related questions and the *Niagara Anglican* would ask officials to provide the answer.

Here is your opportunity ...

Send your questions to Editor Hollis Hiscock at editor@niagaraanglican.ca or 710 Ashley Ave, Burlington, ON, L7R2Z3, and we will attempt to get them answered.

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