

First of its kind in Canada

St. Cuthbert's Oakville celebrates the installation of new organ.

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Partnership visit to Cuba

Grace, faithfulness, hospitality and spirit abound.

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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

MAY 2014



Be leaders

Dean tells new Canons

◀ New Canons (from left) David Ricketts, Patrick Patterson, Christyn Perkons, Suzanne Craven and Val Kerr share a laugh as Val shows where the crest signifying she is a Canon could be placed on her preaching scarf. The Canons were presented with both the Diocesan and Cathedral crests.

Photo: Hollis Hiscock

HOLLIS HISCOCK

Three women and two men—three clergy, two laypeople—were installed as Canons at the Choral Evensong on March 30 in Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton.

After installing the Canons, Dean Peter Wall told them they were being honoured by the church and they should embrace and enjoy their place in the Cathedral as part of the Chapter of Canons. He said, "Enjoy your new title," and then encouraged them to take their place as leaders of the diocese and cathedral, especially emphasizing the mis-

sion of the church as being "out there" pointing to the wider community as it is "in here", referring to the physical building.

The five individuals represent a wealth of experience and talent.

The Reverend Canon Val Kerr's cultural roots are in the Mohawk Nation, part of the Iroquois Confederacy. A member of the wolf clan, she is centered on teaching others about First Nations people, their traditions and history. Social justice is one of her passions; others include her faith, youth, elders, creation, teaching and learning, family and liturgy. She is Vice Rector at St. George's

St. Catharines, a member of Bethlehem Housing and Support Services development committee and is on-call Chaplain Volunteer for the Welland County site of the Niagara Health System. She serves on the Canadian Council of Churches liturgy writing team, is a facilitator for community bereavement support groups, liaisons for local First Nations community and was a staff member for Niagara Youth Conference, Youth Leadership Training Program, and Ask and Imagine. A widow with eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren, she loves spending time with them.

The Reverend Canon Patrick Patterson, born and raised in Victoria BC, obtained his undergraduate degree at the

University of Victoria before moving to England. After three

—See BE LEADERS page 2

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you

927 people contributed \$38,341 to the 2013 annual appeal for the *Niagara Anglican* and the *Anglican Journal*, our national paper. This is the twentieth year for the appeal.

After expenses, the donations are shared equally between the national and diocesan papers to ensure their continuation as effective communications vehicles for the church.

On behalf of our print and online readers, we express our gratitude for your generosity and continued support of the *Niagara Anglican* and *Anglican Journal*.

Hollis Hiscock, Editor



Christ's Church Cathedral • Diocese of Niagara

SUNDAYS 8:30 am & 10:30 am EUCHARIST • MONDAY-FRIDAY 12:15 pm & TUESDAYS 7:30 am

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SUNDAYS

8:30 am Said Eucharist
10:30 am Choral Eucharist

sung by the Cathedral Choir

9:45 am Lectio Divina

an ancient practice of sacred reading
Every Sunday 9:45-10:15 am

SUNDAY, MAY 4, 2014

8:30 am Said Eucharist
10:30 am Choral Eucharist

Special Music in celebration of the Diocesan Youth Synod.
The NYC Band and Cathedral Choir

Be leaders Dean tells new Canons

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

years at Wycliffe Hall Oxford he earned his M.Div. and then served a further three years as a curate in a parish “across the Mersey” in Bebington on the Wirral. Returning to Canada he served parishes on the west coast before coming to Ontario. After six years as Rector of St. James Kingston, and nine years as Rector in a Prince Edward County parish, he took up his present position (nine years ago) as Rector of St. John’s Elora. Patrick was recently awarded his doctorate in theology from Wycliffe College and the University of Toronto. He is married, with five daughters and three granddaughters.

Canon Christyn Perkons, after homeschooling her children and volunteering as a La Leche Leader Director of Leaders, began working at Niagara Diocese (2003) as a half-time Program Consultant in Youth Ministry. She job-shared with Joyce Wilton which she described as “a wonderful partnership.” She added Children’s

Ministry to her portfolio, delighting in the “intimate and life changing relationships that are an integral part of that work.” Feeling called to the work of the broader church she became increasingly involved in congregational development work (2004) and gradually moved into parish consulting. Serving as Director of Congregational Support and Development for the past three years, she works with parishes to support their discernment and visioning processes. She is Chair of the Life Changing Worship vision team, and a member of the Journeys in Faith vision team, Synod Council, Candidates’ Committee, WOW and Hands Across Niagara Grants Committees, and the Management Team.

Canon David Ricketts served as insurance broker for Niagara Diocese from 1997 to 2013. Currently he is a Lay Delegate to Synod from St. James Dundas, a Licensed Lay Reader and a member of the Bishop’s Advisory Committee on Church Buildings. He has been a member of Niagara Diocese’s Financial



New Canons are presented by the Bishop (far right) and installed by the Dean.

Photo: Hollis Hiscock

Advisory Committee, the Investment Sub-Committee and the Bishop’s Task Force on solar panels. He served as church warden in two dioceses: In Toronto at St. George’s Barrie and in Niagara at St. James Dundas. He was the founding chair of the Canterbury Hills Board of Management. He also chaired several diocesan committees, including the Bishop’s Task Force on Telecommunications Towers and Financial Development Stewardship Committee. For three terms he was a lay member of General and Provincial Synods, and in 2003 received the

Order of Niagara.

The Reverend **Suzanne Craven** wrote, “God has called me to many exciting adventures in different times of my life!” Her third year as an undergraduate student was spent in Tübingen, Germany, and her Masters of Library Science degree drew her to Woodstock, Dundas and Oakville Public Libraries where she headed reference and information services, starting online services for the Oakville System in 1986. As an M.Div student, she went to Kenya, serving at St. Paul’s Cathedral in Embu. After graduating from

Wycliffe College, she served at St. Matthew on-the-Plains Burlington and since 2007 has been Rector of the Church of the Epiphany Oakville. She founded Bronte Village Stakeholders, a group of community agencies who discern needs and provide help. Also she is on a number of boards including St. Mildred’s Lightbourn School, Niagara Diocesan Court and McMaster Alumni Association Board of Directors. She and Rick have one daughter Jenny.

There are six lay and 55 clergy canons in Niagara Diocese.

The Popcorn Beat

GORD JACKSON

Welcome to The Popcorn Beat, an occasional column that will suggest current and classic films to stimulate thoughts and questions around issues of faith, discipleship and witness. A retired theatre manager and film buff, I took a Faith, Film and Popular Culture course at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg that gave me many insights on how film tools can be used to enhance critical thinking and personal/parish growth.

The Adjustment Bureau

It’s election night and heavily favored David Norris (Matt Damon), who is going down to defeat, still has to face his supporters in a local hotel ballroom. Free spirit Elise Sellas (Emily Blunt) is also at that same hotel, hiding out in the men’s wash-room to which David Norris repairs to work on his concession speech. They’re young, they meet, they’re vulnerable and they fall in lust, even though

the fates meant their meeting to be a one-time look/see/don’t touch encounter only. Morphing into a near-Lucas/Spielberg co-produced game of hide and seek, David especially is out to thwart those fates. They are exposed to us as other-worldly beings whose sole purpose—on behalf of the mysterious, unseen Chairman—is to ensure that everyone’s life, laid out in The Book, scrupulously proceeds as predestined—no wavering, no wandering off course. But David and Elise, determined to wander off course, must first outfox dastardly henchman Richardson (John Slattery), his even more Machiavellian replacement Thompson (Terence Stamp), along with a gaggle of other assistants and military police types. Only gang member Harry Mitchell (Anthony Mackie) seems to be supportive. But can he be trusted?

Originally sold as just another entertaining thriller/romantic comedy, *The Adjustment Bureau* doubles as a fantasy that also



poses provocative questions around the meaning of freedom, free will, destiny and pre-determination. Do we control our lives or do unseen forces determine our destiny? Do we worship a God who loves and calls us through grace, or are we simply manipulated puppets programmed to follow a course of pre-determined conduct? The henchman, his replacement, assistants and the army, all charged with keeping our heroes on the straight and narrow—are they working in tandem with a benevolent Chairman or are they simply doing the bidding of the prince of this world?

The Adjustment Bureau was screened as part of All Saints 2014 Lenten study.

Gord Jackson is a member of All Saints Hamilton, EMAIL: gsclub55@yahoo.ca

Montreal church turns 150, seeks old friends

Like many Montreal downtown churches, St. James the Apostle has seen many members make the proverbial trip down Highway 401 or move elsewhere over recent decades.

But the church hopes to share memories and show off recent accomplishments, including service and outreach to its diverse multicultural neighbours as it celebrates its 150th anniversary year.

The parish hopes some may make it to Montreal for events around the 150th anniversary of the first public worship in the church - then surrounded by open space rather than the bustling urban community of today - which took place on May 1, 1864.

Activities include a candlelight service on the actual anniversary date (Thursday this year), a gala dinner in a downtown club (May 3) and a special sung Holy Eucharist (Sunday, May 4).

Celebrations began before Advent and will continue into the fall.

The parish also hopes friends from far and wide, especially those who can’t make it to Montreal in person, will send memories, photos and other memorabilia.

Details available from Brenda Gervais (438-889-7854), Lorna Titterton (514-485-7951), email celebration@stjamestheapostle.ca or www.stjamestheapostle.ca

(Submitted by Harvey Sheppard, Editor, Montreal Anglican)

HOLLISStorial

Hollywood rediscovers Bible

... Bible also inspired Newfoundland humour

HOLLIS HISCOCK

Today, as I write, is April Fool's Day. I sit overlooking greenish brownish neighbourhood lawns, a blissful sight after months of whitish blackish mountains of frozen rain ... can't bring myself to write, let alone spell the four letter word S***. Oops—many four letter words begin with "S" ... I meant SNOW—what were you thinking?

In ancient lore, according to *Free Online Dictionary*, a fool was "a member of a royal or noble household who provided entertainment."

Such individuals were invaluable to brighten the ambience and circumstances of multitudes struggling through unforgiving winters, food scarcities and disheartening futures.

This almost describes our world of 2014, especially after a winter not easily forgotten until the "lazy, hazy, crazy" hot sweltering days of summer envelop us mercilessly.

Recently Hollywood turned to the Bible and religion for ideas to entertain. Here are two examples.

The story of Noah. Following

direct orders from God, he built a floating zoo and saved creation from a catastrophic flood—an epic, controversial, blockbuster movie.

Heaven is for Real. This movie chronicles the story of four-year-old Colton. During life-threatening surgery, he visits heaven, converses with Jesus, meets relatives for the first time, witnesses events which occurred while he was anesthetized and returns to tell about his experience. Read my review in this month's *Anglican Journal*, the paper with which your *Niagara Anglican* is wrapped.

Some people may criticize Bible based movies because they may not be "true" accounts of the original versions. They forget the "original" probably changed dramatically as the tale was passed down through generations of oral tradition.

I view it differently. For me it provides a golden opportunity to launch subject matters, such as the Bible and Heaven, into the public domain where people can think, discuss and search for the truth in a world filled with diversity and uncertainty.

Similarly, generations of Newfoundlanders who heard the

Biblical stories during afternoon Sunday school classes applied their new found learning to various forms of humorous entertainment, eons before the advent of mass and social media.

Gerald S. Doyle, while traveling around Newfoundland and Labrador marketing his merchandise, collected local songs that "are racy of the soil and illustrate the homely joys and sorrows of our people", according to the 1927 introduction to *Old-Time Songs of Newfoundland*, the first of many editions.

One such song-writer describes the antics of Jack, who was "every inch a sailor."

Jack entered this world on a dark stormy night, at sea, some thirty miles "south-east of Bacalieu." Bacalieu—Portuguese word meaning codfish—is an uninhabited island in Conception Bay, Newfoundland. His play on words should not escape us ... BORN in CONCEPTION Bay.

Now a man—probably 12 years old—like generations before him, Jack joined his father on a schooner to spend the summer pursuing the lucrative cod fishery in Indian Harbour, Labrador.

On the late autumn trip home their schooner, laden with "salted codfish gold", encountered a dense fog and heavy winds. Jack was washed overboard and swallowed by a whale, not unlike Jonah of Bible fame.

Jack's whale, a speedster at 90 knots (about 166 kilometres or 103 miles) per hour, headed north towards Baffin Bay near Greenland, an eternity from Jack's windswept, smiling homeland.

Not elated about spending the winter in another snow covered frozen terrain, Jack sought a solution. He vaguely remembered his Sunday school class about the story of Jonah.

There God intervened when Jonah was in a similar predicament, and had him spewed upon dry land so he could deliver God's message asking people to change their sinful ways.

Jack had no such message from God for the people of Greenland. He was on his own. Being buffeted around in the unsavoury roller coaster belly of the whale, Jack knew he must find a solution.

He did. The song-writer penned the words accordingly ...



"O now," says Jack unto himself, "I must see what he's about." He caught the whale all by the tail and turned him inside out.

How this feat was managed or what happened afterwards can only be imagined by the creative minds who sing about Jack's escapade.

No doubt, Jonah inspired the unknown Newfoundlander to fashion Jack's yarn. Likewise around the globe the Bible has inspired countless adaptations of song and story. Consequently our global society, with its diverse cultures, traditions and customs has been creatively enriched and blessed.

To the Editor

Spending Lent with Matthew and Friends

The series of reflections in the *Niagara Anglican* is brilliant and well put together.

Great idea, well done, thank you.

Canon Kevin Bothwell
St. Catharines

End eulogies and remembrances

I'm sure there will be people critical of my suggestion that there be an end to eulogies or remembrances at funeral liturgies.

My wife recently passed away and I made it quite plain to my rector that there be no eulogy or remembrances at the liturgy.

There was standing room only at the service in our church, and more people said to me afterwards what a lovely service BECAUSE there were no eulogies spoken. I recently attended a service where five people spoke (all saying the same thing) for 55 minutes (repeat - 55 minutes) before the liturgy began. People left, many had taken time off

work to attend and couldn't stay for the most important part of the service.

There is no mention in our liturgy for a eulogy or remembrance. If the family or friends want to say something, have an opportunity at the reception or a time at the visitation for tributes. The obituary can say something like "visitation hours

2:00–4:00 p.m., 7:00–9:00 p.m. with tributes at 8:00 p.m."

I hope every bishop who reads this letter will make it mandatory to end eulogies and remembrances at funeral liturgies.

Murray A. Rathbone
Ancaster

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www.niagaraanglican.ca



Traditions come together

On Sunday, March 23rd, as part of a year-long Ascension Festival to showcase the church's newly renovated worship space, the congregation of the Church of the Ascension Hamilton invited the Holy Trinity Ethiopian Orthodox Church

congregation, which uses the parish hall every Sunday, to participate in a joint midday Lenten service.

About 120 people from both congregations participated. Abba Gebreyesus from the Ethiopian congregation and Bishop Terry

Brown and the Reverend Ronda Ploughman from the Church of the Ascension presided.

Choirs of both churches participated with worship alternating between the two traditions.

The worship was followed by an Ethiopian-Canadian fellowship meal in the newly renovated space.

"It was a wonderful way to open the new space ecumenically," noted Terry Brown.



▲ Traditions came together during the joint Lenten service.

► Women from Holy Trinity Ethiopian Orthodox Church begin to gather for the service.

Photos: Dean Cormack



Niagara Cursillo

Spiritual second half of my life

COLIN SHUTT

What is Cursillo about? It is a movement with a method to enhance and strengthen our Christian journey: to support and encourage each other in order to change the world for Christ.

All information about Cursillo can be found on the website (niagaracursillo.org).

We get together for Ultreyas (Spanish for keep going or onward) which are open to all. At these gatherings we worship, sing and bear witness to our journeys in faith, study and action.

Also we have three day weekends where people start the above journey in making a friend, being a friend and bringing a friend to Christ. The next Cursillo weekend is Oct. 30 to Nov. 03 at Mount Mary Immaculate Ancaster.

For me it has been the beginning of that spiritual second half of my life (found in Father Richard Rohrs' book *Falling*

Upwards), a great time of reflection, action, love and compassion. There is a wide eyed and bushy tailed enthusiasm of taking Christ with me wherever I go and I am loving it.

You may know that poem "Footprints in the Sand" ... well for a great deal of my life (more than half) I was carried by a most compassionate Lord. Now it is time I gave back all the love I was so freely given to help my fellow—man or woman—when ever the moment arises, and to be teachable in his ways.

Cursillo has given me the opportunity, direction and faith to step out of my comfort zone; uncomfortable but vital!

If you want uncomfortable, try updating a website when the only web site I knew was the fly catcher in my garage window!

God be with you.

Colin Shutt, a member of St. Paul's Shelburne, is Communications Chair for Cursillo Niagara
EMAIL: 4tbdaycalling@gmail.com

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TIPS for CONTRIBUTORS

#4 in a series

"Get it off the website" doesn't work for newspapers. Web images are too small and often too low quality for print. Please send high resolution photos or logos.

St. John's Community Golf Tournament

Monday, June 2
Oak Gables Golf Course
Ancaster



\$100.00 per person includes:

- 18 holes of golf; Golf cart; All contests; Gift for each golfer;
- Bag Lunch; Beef tenderloin or Chicken Dinner;
- Wine with Dinner

Registration:

online form at www.ancasteranglican.org
or call Brenda at 905-648-2353
or admin@ancasteranglican.org

Space is limited – register early
This is a fun day for golfers of all skill levels



Hands Across Niagara: Call for grant applications

DEREK ANDERSON

What sort of impact could your church make in your neighbourhood with a \$5000.00 grant?

Hands Across Niagara (HAN) is enabling churches like yours to engage God's mission in new ways. Together with local partners, we are making a difference in the lives of people in the communities we are called to serve.

There is time, leading up to the May 16 grant application deadline, to talk with community organizations about the sort of partnership that will be fruitful for your church and its operations. Successful applications will propose a strong partnership with a group in your community. Successful applications will also address the root causes of



injustice faced by people who live near you, or by the natural environment.

So that you have an idea of the kind of project that entails both a partnership and a focus on social justice making, let me tell you about a HAN project underway in Fergus. St. James, working with the Social Justice Group of Centre Wellington, is launching two programs to empower their neighbours living in poverty to create opportunities for inclusion.

Through conversations and consensus-based decision making, volunteers from St. James are involving community members and local growers in key decisions about expanding the programs offered by the Food Bank. Their goal is to transform the Food Bank into a Community Food Centre where the community can shape the goals and operation of the Centre. Users of the service are also empowered to make decisions about how the service is

offered!

The partnership in Fergus is also supporting a plan to engage previously unemployed youth to cook and serve food at an Elora restaurant. Youth receive skills training, inclusion and employment. Restaurant patrons are treated to delicious meals!

You can find more information about applying for a HAN grant by visiting <http://niagaraanglican.ca/news/hands-across-niagara-call-for-applications>. Coaching is available to min-

istry groups considering an application.

We are grateful to Anglicans in our diocese whose generosity has made it possible for us to increase the value of our maximum grant to \$5000. Remember your gift to HAN also supports the mission of our national partners at the Anglican Church of Canada, and the prophetic social justice making work of your own congregation.

I trust you will hear more about the work of HAN in your own church on Campaign Sunday, May 4, 2014.

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

Stewardship strategies for the Church today

LYNNE MARCHANT

Fifty people from eleven parishes gathered at St. George's Guelph on Saturday, March 22nd to hear some great information from Doctor Gary Nicolosi of Huron.

Over several sessions, Gary shared some great ways to re-think stewardship, including the very basic but thought provoking concept that stewardship is NOT about money, but is in fact a spiritual issue.

Our minds were enriched by Gary's sessions featuring topics like what inspires people to give, 15 Building Blocks to funding your Church's ministry and how to develop a culture of

generous stewardship in your Church.

Our bodies were nourished by a fabulous lunch provided by the hosting parish's stewardship team.

Putting this day together was the initiative of St. George's Stewardship team and supported by the Diocesan Generous Culture of Stewardship.

If you are kicking yourself for not being there, have no fear as Gary's hefty handout, chock full of good info, is available at the Diocesan website under GCoS.

The Venerable Lynne Marchant, Diocesan Director for Generous Culture of Stewardship. EMAIL: lynnemarchant001@gmail.com



Stewardship day keynote speaker Gary Nicolosi (centre) with St. George's Rector Ralph Blackman and Stewardship Team Chair Ella Turnbull.

Photo: Lynne Marchant

Parish Events

Victorian high tea and heirloom exhibit

Saturday May 3, 12:00 noon-3:00 p.m.
Bishop Spence Hall
St. Stephen on the Mount
625 Concession Street, Hamilton

Tickets - \$12 in advance (\$15 at door)
 Information and tickets - contact the church office (905-383-8663) or Susan Rhodes (905-388-1211).

John Bell coming to Fergus

"Why do God's people sing?" is the theme of an exciting weekend of worship music coming to St. James Fergus.

John Bell, well-known Scottish musician, composer, hymn writer, broadcaster and pastor, will lead the weekend.

He presents sacred songs with beautiful melodies and meaningful lyrics that reach out to people of the twenty-first century. He is always able to draw out enthusiastic audience participation by his sheer talent, joy, energy and humour.

It promises to be an enjoyable and exhilarating

time for ministers, music directors, choir members and anyone in the community.

Friday, June 6, 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. is the "The Big Sing" (\$15, coffee included)

Saturday, June 7, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. "Why do God's People Sing?" (\$35, coffee

break and lunch included) **Sunday June 8, 9:30 a.m.** "Worship and Music with John".

You are welcome to attend one, two or all three days. For information and tickets contact St. James Church, 171 Queen St. E. Fergus, telephone 519-843-2141.



John Bell

Photo: submitted by parish

Book Review

Faith as resistance in the underground church

The Underground Church—Reclaiming the Subversive Way of Jesus, by Robin R. Meyers

Jossey-Bass, 2011

HEATHER-JOY BRINKMAN

“For the Love of God - RESIST!” declared Robin R. Meyers, nationally known United Church of Christ (UCC) pastor, professor, peace activist and author of books about progressive Christianity and American society.

Meyers came to the UCC Church of the Good Shepherd in

Sahuarita, Arizona, to conduct a series of seminars on his non-literal, non-dogmatic approach to Christianity.

I was thrilled to be there, having read his books, and to be able to dialogue with him in person.

Meyers describes his politics as neither left nor right, but rather “subversive for the cause of love.”

He seeks to build a congregation that is not a collection of “believers”, but rather “a beloved community” devoted to embodying peace and distributive justice in a broken world.

His latest book, *The Underground Church—Reclaiming*

the Subversive Way of Jesus is a riveting read. Archbishop Desmond Tutu acclaimed, “Read this book if you dare. The Underground Church tells the story of how the church forgot where it came from and how we must now return to our subversive roots.”

He echoes our own Bishop Michael Bird who said, “This is a time not only of great reform in the church but of transformation!”

Diana Butler Bass praised the book stating that “*the Underground Church* invites Christians to encounter a radical Jesus, to practice a subversive way of life and to move beyond

rightness in belief to loving action in our communities.”

The book is such a passionate and informative read regarding the history of the early movement of the followers of Jesus until the days of Constantine, and what it means for the church today.

It also formed the intellectual base for his amazing series of three lectures focused on Faith as a Resistance to Ego, to Orthodoxy and to Empire, delivered at Yale Divinity School and available on YouTube (Search: Robin Meyers Lyman Beecher Lectures).

The book is available from



Photo: Frans Brinkman

your local bookstore or online.

Enjoy your read and YouTube lectures and say YES to Robin Meyers and his work and his bold claim that God is still speaking to us in our world today.

It would be great to hear from you.

Heather-Joy Brinkman lives in Stoney Creek. EMAIL: heather-joynowe@yahoo.ca

First of its kind in Canada

VICTORIA GAITSKELL

In late 2013, thanks to many generous contributors, St. Cuthbert's Oakville installed a new Heritage Edition RL-58 Organ, made by the family-owned Allen Organ Company of Pennsylvania. It is the first instrument of its kind in Canada and only the fourth installed worldwide.

In 2012, Andrew Stephens, Calgary, son of the late John Stephens who was a longtime Organist and Music Director at St. Cuthbert's, informed Rector Joseph Asselin and Organist-Music Director Bruce DuPlessis that he wished to donate \$50,000 worth of stock to establish a fund, to be matched by the parish, to buy a new organ as a memorial to his father.

DuPlessis secured quotes from three organ companies and, after careful consideration, the Corporation selected the RL-58 as the best option. They also proposed moving the choir from the gallery to the front of the nave, across the centre aisle from the future organ and baby grand piano (a gift from John Stephens in memory of his wife, Evelyn). This move has encouraged better participation in congregational singing and larger choir membership. The Corporation proposed that no money be borrowed and the purchase would not proceed until all necessary funds (\$100,000 all inclusive) were raised.

After unanimous approval at a special Vestry meeting (June 2, 2013) and Diocesan approval the following week, St. Cuthbert's launched immediately into an intensive fundraising campaign. It raised \$73,000 (146 percent of target) in a record three weeks. With the organ fully paid for and money to spare, a contract was signed and construction of the custom-built instrument began. It was installed in time

for Advent Sunday, December 1, 2013.

Despite a disastrous ice storm, dedication of the John Stephens Memorial Organ proceeded at the annual Service of Lessons and Carols on December 22, 2013, with Andrew Stephens and his children, Patricia and Eric, in attendance. The blackout meant the service was conducted by candlelight and ironically prevented DuPlessis from sounding a single note on the new organ.

Just days before the inaugural concert on February 9, 2014, renowned organist Rudolph A. Lucente, who designed the RL-58 and was scheduled to perform, fell ill. He was replaced by DuPlessis's longtime friend Alison Clark, Music Director at Trinity United Church Kitchener. Clark's program showcased the instrument's versatility.

Canon Asselin observed: “We have installed a state-of-the-art digital organ at a time when many people, including friends across the Diocese, think organs and choirs are on their way out and the only way churches will survive is if they abandon the traditional style of music and move towards worship bands. While in no way are we opposed to a variety of musical styles, in moving forward with an organ we are saying that we believe that our tradition of church music can include both the past and the future.

“Now the real challenge for our parish is to let people know about this beautiful addition to our worship life and to reach out to others and invite them to see, hear and experience what Anglican liturgy and music has to offer,” he concluded.

Victoria Gaitskell is a Churchwarden at St. Cuthbert's Oakville. EMAIL: vgaitskell@gmail.com



▲ Rector Joseph Asselin, donor Andrew Stephens with his children Patricia and Eric and Organist Bruce DuPlessis at the blessing of the organ. The service was held by candlelight during a blackout caused by the preceding day's ice storm.

▼ During the inaugural concert President Gordon D. Mansell (see inset) of Glionna Mansell Corporation, the Ontario dealer for Allen Organ Company, turned pages for guest organist Alison Clark (see inset). The organ was positioned facing the altar to give the audience a clear view of how the instrument is played.

Photos: Victoria Gaitskell



Curlers sweep to button for others

For the seventh consecutive February, Funspiel provided a day of curling as well as fun, laughter, prizes and fellowship.

Twelve teams comprised of 48 curlers from around Niagara Diocese raised slightly over \$3,600.00 for the Bishop's Company Endowment Fund.

The Fund assists clergy, licensed lay workers and their families facing extraordinary situations and for specific purposes. These may include extended counselling, unusual medical requirements and support in a situation of extreme stress or financial crisis. All matters are handled directly by the Bishop in a confidential manner.

The 147-year-old Hamilton Victoria Curling Club was the Funspiel site for the third consecutive year.



The winning Funspiel team was skipped by Canon Philip Velpel (with plaque), honorary assistant at St. Thomas St. Catharines. Team members were Mike Powell, Ray Fournier and Tim Kaye.

Photo: Jane Wyse

A contemplative gem

AMANDA TOWE

At 4 o'clock on the third Sunday of every month (September to June) as afternoon becomes evening, St. Jude's Oakville celebrates Choral Evensong in its historic 1883 church.

This short service is sung in the tradition of English cathedrals where, more than ever before, tourists and worshippers seek its beauty.

It is a moment of tranquillity, perhaps even joy, in the midst of life's busyness. Voices intertwine to create mystical beauty of sound; the poetic language of the 350 year old prayers quiets the spirit at the end of the day and before the beginning of the new work week.

Some come to sit, bathed in jewelled light shining through stained glass, for a break from their busy lives; some come for the exquisite music which encompasses composing traditions from the Renaissance to the more contemporary; some love the poetic language of the 1662 prayers which express the spiritual dimension of worship; but many come for all these reasons.

The strong musical tradition of this downtown Oakville church is under the direction of 26-year-old Musical Director Simon Walker. His immersion in the Anglican Church music tradition began in England as a boy chorister at Durham Cathedral and spurred his career in music.

He studied music at Edinburgh University, was Organ Scholar at Chester Cathedral and has an Associate Diploma from the Royal College of Organists.

He has broadened the repertoire of St. Jude's two choirs and raised the musical expertise such that the choir is to go on tour to England next year. He and Assistant Organist Andrei Streliaev, staff pianist for the National Ballet and Rehearsal Accompanist for Tafelmusik Chamber Choir, are an experienced team.

Walker finds an almost monastic peace in the beauty of evensong. He hopes to share this with others, and says, "Of all the liturgies we do it's one of the most meditative - today the spiritual element of worship has a deeper meaning to many people - and the rich tradition of church music is a superb vehicle for this, so I hope that we may see a rejuvenation of evensong across the church—I certainly think the beauty of the music and words deserve it."

Each month the choir sings a special canticle or anthem. In March it was music from the early Renaissance by Orlando Gibbons and Thomas Morley. In May the canticle will be Stanford in B flat and the anthem How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings Fair by Johannes Brahms, followed in June by Walmisley in D minor and Stainer's I saw the Lord.

Evensong, more properly the service of Evening Prayer, has

its origins in English monastic practice before the time of Henry VIII. Then monks sang their devotions nine times a day; evensong combines vespers and compline, two of these evening services. The service has prayers, psalms and anthems sung by the choir, two Bible readings, several congregational hymns and usually no sermon. Walker comments, "The daily choral foundation routine in England is almost monastic in the way the ritual takes place every day in such a set form. I hope our monthly evensong gives people a glimpse of what this is like to experience."

People often comment on the meditative practices of other religions, but Christianity has a long and varied meditative tradition of which many people have lost sight. The combination of music, the sonorous language of the Book of Common Prayer and even the breath control used in both are very calming and lead worshippers into a quiet place with God. Music has the power to nudge us towards transcendence.

There are many wonderful forms of worship but evensong is especially fitting at the end of the day.

(If jazz is more your style, Jazz Vespers is held at 4 p.m. on the first Sunday of the month.)

Amanda Towe is a member of St. Jude's Oakville.



Choir leads Evening Prayer at St. Jude's Oakville.

Photo: Peter Rugh

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Faith in our youth restored

SUE CRAWFORD

Most mature teenagers are away at university or no longer find it “cool” to attend church.

Seventeen year old Paul Clarke is an exception.

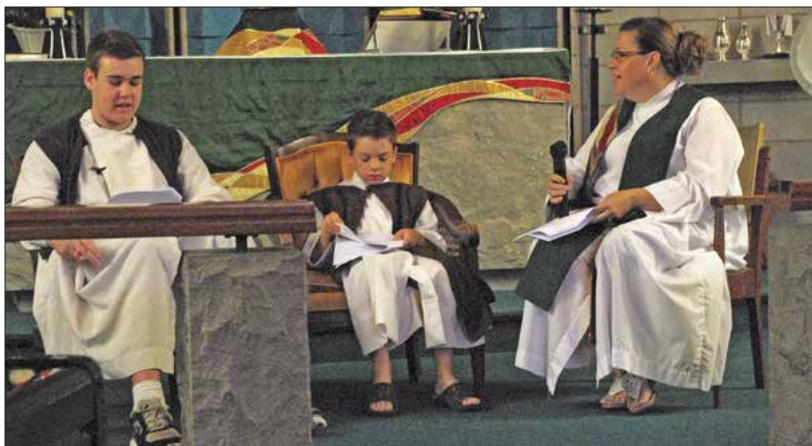
He is a regular Sunday parishioner at St. Michael's Hamilton involved in the ministry of worship as a lectionary reader and Sunday school volunteer. Paul has taken on many roles including St. Michael at our Patronal Festival, Elijah in an “interview” with our rector, Sheila Van Zandwyck and led the children in our PWRDF “Voices of Hope” presentation.

those who came for meals or to visit.

The highlight of his experience was easily the amazing people he worked with in the kitchen. The youth were some of the most energetic, positive and hard working people he had ever met. He got to know each of them really well and formed a close bond with everyone. They would dance and sing together while they cooked, and played practical jokes on each other. The worst part was leaving after spending six weeks with them. They became really close and felt like family by the end. He had been told from the beginning that he

chance and nobody should be judged for making a few mistakes is one that Living Rock focuses on.”

While there he met a member of a gang, with tattoos on his face, who had recently been released from prison. “Most people’s reaction would be not to look at him but I figured if he’s here, he wants to change and he needs a second chance. As Jesus said, ‘those without sin let them cast the first stone.’ I am not without sin, so rather than ignoring him, I went to his table and sat with him. It turned out he was a really nice guy and left the gang looking for a better life.”



Telling the story of Elijah and Elisha – Paul Clarke (Elijah) with Gordie Bruckner (Elisha) and Sheila Van Zandwyck.

Photo: Sue Crawford

Paul is “one of a kind”, which became evident after speaking about his experiences at Living Rock last summer.

How was he afforded this opportunity? Paul found the “Focus-on-Youth” program through the Hamilton Public School Board website. He was accepted and assigned to Living Rock. Paul expected to be working with kids, but when he was told he would be working with at-risk youth he thought that it could be a little scary. He imagined they would be dangerous and would try to steal from him.

Why this position and not with younger children? The answer was simple – the supervisor noticed Paul displayed maturity during the interview process and along with his height (over six feet) felt he would fit better with Living Rock.

The majority of his time was spent in the kitchen preparing 900 meals the Rock serves every week. He took time, not only to get to know the youth with whom he was working, but also

was not allowed to have contact with anyone outside The Rock that he met inside.

His overall impression with Living Rock is nothing short of changing lives. It is one of the most unique “not-for-profit” organizations he has ever heard of. All the staff were amazing and incredibly dedicated to what they do. It was the best summer job he could imagine and he would not take it back for the world.

Will his experience influence his university courses? His career path will stay the same: he wants to start his own business. However, his time at Living Rock has shown him the importance of being involved in the community. The criteria for his company will be involvement in the community, donating not only money but time and resources to local charities.

Did his Christian values and teachings influence or help him to understand the clients he served? Absolutely! “The belief that everyone deserves a second

Paul would have applied again but unfortunately they do not re-hire students after their summer is done. Only two people out of the 200 hired by the board go to Living Rock.

“I think I would rather leave it to someone new, so they can experience what I did.”

Since his job ended in mid-August, he has been back multiple times including Christmas, one of the largest events of the year.

With youth, such as Paul, influencing the children of our parish, my faith has been restored that our parish has a bright future.

If anyone is interested in getting involved with The Living Rock their website is www.livingrock.ca... they are always happy to accept donations and new volunteers.

Written by Sue Crawford in collaboration with Paul Clarke.
Email: scrawford6@cogeco.ca

Niagara Youth Conference ... Reasons to be

ALICIA ARCHBELL

Summer is coming up fast.

It was a long wait for spring, and I’m ready for the heat of summer. May and June are busy months in most churches and it’s no different in Youth Ministry.

May begins with Youth Synod in Action to get the youth ready to pursue social justice over the summer. We then have the Gathering on May 24 at the Church of the Nativity Hamilton from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. This is always one of the favourite Gatherings as the youth are glad to see their friends after making connections at Youth Synod.

For us volunteers and staff members, we are busy planning all the different events but Niagara Youth Conference staff (NYC) really starts going into overdrive during June, making sure everything is perfect for August.

NYC happens the last week of the summer every year. This year it is August 24-31.

The youth delegates, aged 13-21, take over beautiful Canterbury Hills in order to explore their faith and learn more about themselves in a safe environment. Through worship, music, activities, games, workshops and socials the youth are able to let loose one last time with the diocesan church community before heading back to school. While the theme and activities are always kept a secret until the delegates arrive, I can tell you that what we have planned this year will surpass anything you could ask or imagine. NYC is always the highlight of my year and I know many others agree.

Back in February, I asked my Facebook friends:

Opinion Poll #76 – Why do you go to Niagara Youth Conference?

Here are some answers ...

- you can't get that kind of food just anywhere!
- for the surroundings and the friends.
- there are literally no words to describe the feeling of NYC. The presence of God, friends (family), supporters and encouragement can always give us the strength to feel like we can accomplish anything and be anyone we want to be.
- the people are incredible, the air is vibrating with positive energy, and there is so much learning and growing going on there. Why wouldn't you want to be a part of that?!
- there are many reasons why I go to NYC, but to sum it up three-fold:
 1. NYC is an opportunity to be refreshed on a daily basis,
 2. the week is full of engaging and inspiring approaches to worship, and
 3. the people and place emit positive vibes of love, peace, joy, comfort and hope.

It is the best week of my year, every year.

You can learn more about NYC by checking out niagaraanglican.ca/youth/program/niagara-youth-conference

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



NYC: Fun activities and spiritual growth.

Photo: Jane Wyse

What are your theological rocks?

AIDAN MALONEY

On February 28, I was picked up by Alicia Archbell to attend a weekend at the retreat centre Five Oaks in Paris, Ontario. We joined Danielle Kelly and Brian Reusch (diocesan staff person for Children, Youth and Family Ministry) for a training called "Planning and Programming for Youth Ministry."

This was part of Neos (Greek word meaning "youth"), a range of programs providing development for those who do youth ministry. Brian asked me to attend, and I agreed immediately because youth ministry is something about which I'm passionate. The weekend was run by incredible leadership. We had many workshops and lessons that were very informative and helpful. However, that is not why I am so grateful for this opportunity.

Throughout my adolescence I have been attending youth events in the Niagara Diocese, and I've found that every youth program this Diocese puts on has helped me grow as an individual

and as an Anglican.

I'm now at a stage in my life where I am inspired to work within youth ministry; however, I've been stuck. Being nineteen, I am still considered a youth and I have been trying to transition into more leadership opportunities, but it wasn't until this weekend that I felt I had a foundation and a place to start.

As part of the weekend, we discussed "theological rocks" on the first night. Theological rocks are one's own personal beliefs about who God is. I have spent many years exploring what I believe and how I want to live, but never laid down a foundation. I believe God is in everything, every place and every soul in the world. I also believe God can do more than we could ever ask or imagine. I wrote these down in my notebook as I was listening to everyone else share.

After realizing I have a solid foundation to stand on, I recognized that I am more than capable of being a youth leader. Furthermore, I am more than capable of doing everything I ever wanted to do. If I have these

rocks, I can lay stepping stones for anyone else who wants to walk down this path and explore and determine their own theological rocks.

I am so thankful for this weekend and this opportunity not only because it gave me so many tools, ideas and processes to be a good youth leader, but it made me believe that I have so much potential and so much to offer in this field.

It also renewed my inspiration of being called into this position which I have been doubting for a few months. Something as simple as theological rocks gave me the motivation to go out there and make things happen for myself and for others because I know God can do more in me than I could ever ask or imagine.

Aidan Maloney attends the Church of the Incarnation Oakville and is studying towards a child and youth worker diploma. He hopes to go into youth ministry.

Email: AMIMaloney@gmail.com



New grants to train young adult leaders

Beginning in 2014, the Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) will set aside \$50,000 each year to encourage and fund innovative ministry-related projects through a Request-for-Proposals process.

Responding to Vision 2019, this year's focus is new projects that train young adult leaders in ministry, evangelism or mission.

Five one-time grants of up to \$10,000 are available funding new initiative projects being undertaken in 2015. The grants are targeted to 18-30 year olds (lay or ordained), and both leadership skills and project outcomes are to be specific and impactful.

Projects require the endorsement of a diocesan bishop in the Anglican Church of Canada, and proposals submitted in response to this request do not count as one of the three submissions each diocese is allowed per year. Submission deadline is September 1, 2014, following which the AFC Board of Directors will review proposals in November and announce those receiving grants in early December 2014.

For more information, visit www.anglicanfoundation.org

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Deadlines and Submissions for Niagara Anglican

Deadlines –
 September 2014 – July 25
 October 2014 – August 25
 November 2014 – September 25

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.

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

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Walk With Us



LINDA ROSIER

Last July I had the honour of walking with First Nations people in their Healing Walk through the Tar Sands near Fort McMurray. I am still overwhelmed with the realities I experienced.

The Tar Sands are not what the billboards and commercials lead us to believe.

The landscape is soulless. Void of life. Land which once was covered with great boreal forest and pristine lakes is now a wasteland the size of England and Wales combined, covered with toxic tailings ponds.

We walked the 14 km Syncrude Loop through alien terrain, stopping to pray for the healing of the land at each of the “four directions”.

The respectful silence of the Elders’ prayers was punctuated by the frequent blasts of propane cannon-fire used to keep the birds from landing in the deadly water of the tailings ponds.

Side-by-side we walked—First Nations people and people from all “four directions of the sacred circle of life”. Sharing concerns. Discussing ways to stop the madness of this destructive project and to start investing in healthy energy

development.

There was no anger or resentment on the part of the First Nations people, simply a passionate intent to heal the land that sustains us all.

We were respectfully asked not to bring signs. This was not a protest.

One banner only, carried at the front by First Nations youth, read “Stop the Destruction. Start the Healing.”

Drivers in tar sands trucks that drove by, waved, honked and gave a thumbs-up in solidarity with our purpose.

Surely there could be an equal, if not greater number of jobs created for the repairing of the devastated land as there are for the destruction of it. Surely the billions of taxpayer dollars spent in subsidizing the profitable oil companies could be spent subsidizing Canadian jobs in developing renewable energy and its infrastructure. Jobs that would feed, not destroy, the souls of the workers.

Surely there is more sustainable profit and job opportunity to be gained from an economy that is good for the health of us, our earth, air and water on which we all depend.

Until recently I believed that someone was considering all of this: that government was looking after us, corporations

had self-governing watchdogs on our behalf and neither would pursue products, investments or projects that would harm us.

I was mistaken.

Consequently, I am ashamed to say, I have badly misunderstood the vital role the First Nations people have played in our history—and are playing now for our future.

They welcomed us when we came to their continent. They looked after us and taught us how to survive—from transportation, to hunting, gathering and growing food in a way that would and did sustain us.

First Nations people are still the ones looking after us, standing up for our water, our forests and our earth on which all life depends—including our own.

They are the first ones out on the front lines to say, enough! You’ve gone too far! The air we breathe, the water we drink and the earth we grow food in are far more important than another sub-development, quarry or barrel of oil.

When we asked our First Nations hosts at the Healing Walk how we could help, the answer was, “Walk with us. Walk with us on this journey to stop the destruction and start the healing.”

Here’s our opportunity.

We are all invited to the 5th Annual Tar Sands Healing Walk gathering June 27-28, 2014 - for two days of spiritual and educational events on the Fort McMurray First Nations Reservation. The Healing Walk through the heart of the tar sands will take place on Saturday June 28th.

Save the date! Get involved! This is a good starting point for the lifetime walk we are invited to take together, honouring the covenant God made with us from the very beginning in Genesis when He asked us to serve and protect all His Creation for all time.

Check out and register for this year’s Healing Walk at www.healingwalk.org

PS: Download Rob Stewart’s award-winning documentary Revolution ... (therevolutionmovie.com) – it’s beautiful, urgent and hopeful.

Search: TEDx Dr. John Izzo. Click on “The Defining Moment for a Generation-In-Waiting”. Prepare for 15 minutes of pure inspiration, empowerment and purpose!

Linda Rosier, a member of All Saints Erin, is involved with environmental activism. EMAIL: linda@concept3advertising.com

Partnership visit to Cuba hope-filled

BILL MOUS WITH FILES FROM THE REVEREND KATHLEEN SCHMIDT

Grace, faithfulness, hospitality and much spirit were found in abundance during a recent visit to the Diocese of Cuba.

In February, Bishop Michael Bird and I had the opportunity to experience the hope of Anglicans in Cuba as they came alongside God’s work in their world. The visit, at the invitation of Bishop Griselda, was an opportunity to live more deeply into our renewed companion diocese relationship, and to celebrate that partnership with the people of the diocese of Cuba. At

our Synod in November, Bishop Michael and Bishop Griselda renewed our companion diocese covenant for an additional five years.

At one parish visit in Bolondron, the fruits of our partnership were particularly evident through the praise of its priest, Archdeacon Andreis Diaz Dorta. San Pablo, a church built of wood in 1899 and restored in 1992, has been refurbished with new paint. With the support of a number of our parishes, several new initiatives have been undertaken in a way that

—See PARTNERSHIP Page 11



Bishop Michael and Archdeacon Andreis Diaz Dorta in front of the menu for a breakfast program supported by St. George’s Guelph.

Photo: Bill Mous

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



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Coldest Night of the Year

JANINA VANDERPOST

On Saturday evening, February 22, walkers from Christ's Church Cathedral (CCC) and other downtown Hamilton teams braved icy sidewalks and cool temperatures to raise funds for St. Matthew's House (SMH) in a national event organized as Coldest Night of the Year (CNotY).

In all, CCC raised \$6,657 for St. Matthew's House. The Hamilton downtown teams raised \$35,169. The City of Hamilton teams walking for St. Matthew's House and on the Mountain for Neighbour to Neighbour, overall raised \$90,904; placing sixth in fundraising among all participating cities across Canada, a most laudable achievement as 2014 was the first year Hamilton was asked to participate.

For CCC, it all began in January when a notice appeared in our weekly bulletin, Chronicle, saying a team leader was needed for Coldest Night of the Year - contact Brian Reusch in the Diocesan office.

Having no idea what it was, I plunged in anyway and advised Brian that I would volunteer. I then went to the Coldest Night

website to find out what I had committed myself to do. The website is a busy one and it took some time to sort out what it was all about. I put together a couple of pages of information to share with our parishioners and to recruit walkers.

According to the website, CNotY is a "family-friendly walking fundraiser that raises money for the hungry, homeless and hurting in 65 communities across Canada. Since 2011, it has raised \$2.4 million dollars [note: does not include 2014 fundraising of \$2,512,716] for Canadian charities. CNotY partners with selected organizations to support their work to bring hope, help and education to those on the margins in their town or city, in the cold winter months when giving is scarce and resources are dwindling." It is organized, promoted and administered by Blue Sea Philanthropy, a Canadian charitable foundation.

Money is raised by volunteers who find sponsors for their 2 km, 5 km or 10 km walks. At the Cathedral, volunteers quickly stepped up to the plate and in no time were approaching family, friends, co-workers and other parishioners to support this most worthy cause.



Participants leave Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton to begin their Coldest Night Of The Year walk.

Photo: Brian Reusch

On walk night the Cathedral —the start and finish point for all three downtown routes - was abuzz as members of several downtown teams submitted their pledge sheets, signed in and received CNotY toques.

Cathedral walkers were proud and enlightened by this experience. One said, "I am glad I did the walk. My motivation to keep going on the 10km walk was knowing what good it was doing for our charity. I walked most of it alone but when I got back to the church the fine homemade soup and chili really made me feel part of it all. I would do it

again in a heartbeat to help out the less fortunate. Hey, isn't that what Anglicans are all about?"

Another walker had a more difficult time but soldiered on. "I did the 10k. [Others] passed me about halfway through the walk [and] I was now the tail end of the 10k walkers. At Queen and Bold the St. John Ambulance truck stopped and asked me if I was OK, since I was limping a bit and not going fast. They said they would check on me as I completed the walk. When I got to St. John the Evangelist, they were waiting for me [and] offered to drive me the rest of the

route but I said I would complete the walk. I got to the Cathedral about two hours and 15 minutes after I left. The St. John's Ambulance guys shook my hand as I staggered into Cathedral Place and I thanked them for shadowing me. I had a little chill with the Dean and others and was home by 9:00 p.m. I really enjoyed participating!"

Several walkers commented, "one of the most important experiences on the walk was seeing poverty at street level as a pedestrian. When you drive on Barton Street you don't really see the street life closely. When you walk by, you have the time to see into the homes, empty store fronts and really see the level of need."

Besides raising funds this, of course, is another important purpose of walking on a winter night though the streets of needy neighbourhoods. One gets to understand the hardship at a whole new and more personal level.

Janina Vanderpost is leader of Christ's Church Cathedral Coldest Night of the Year team.

Partnership visit to Cuba

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

simply wouldn't have been possible otherwise. For instance, new front steps have replaced the old and a ramp for wheelchairs is well under way. The congregation now grows vegetables in part of the property and there are a number of fruit trees growing in a flower garden, set aside for prayer and meditation. The youth group prepares and offers the needed nourishment of breakfast for all before the Sunday service.

Our Primate, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, along with a delegation from the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) joined us during our time in Cuba. The ACC has offered support to the Episcopal Church of Cuba since the embargo imposed by the USA government in 1960 severed the relationship between the Cuban and the USA churches. This presented a significant opportunity to connect and align

our work in Cuba as a Canadian church. We also met with the Canadian Ambassador to Cuba and embassy officials to build relationships and explore opportunities for collaboration.

The focus, however, was the annual Synod of the Diocese of Cuba which took place at the Cathedral in Havana. Bishop Michael brought greetings on behalf of the diocese and in a moment of levity, he presented Bishop Griselda with an official Canadian Olympic jacket (which will undoubtedly come in handy during her next winter visit to Canada). Among the agenda items was a presentation about the diocese's strategic plan, a youth-led workshop on ethics and values and a report from the Metropolitan Council of Cuba. I also made a presentation to Synod about the ways our diocese was engaging God's mission in our corner of the earth through our diocesan vision. In so many ways our visit to

Cuba gave vivid expression to its vision for ministry: "we seek to become a church that, united in diversity, celebrates, evangelizes, teaches, serves and shares God's love." It was quite remarkable to experience firsthand the similarities we share in our discernment of where God is calling us to engage in mission. For instance, the strategic plan for the Diocese

of Cuba has an emphasis on creative liturgy, justice and evangelism - all of which are elements of our diocesan vision. The visit offered an opportunity to discern new initiatives and ways for supporting one another as we respond to God's call for our ministries.

On May 4, our dioceses will celebrate partnership Sunday.

We hope your parishes will mark this occasion creatively through your liturgies that day.

For resources and more information about our partnership please visit niagaraanglican.ca/ministry/companion. *The Reverend Bill Mous is the diocesan Director of Justice, Community and Global Ministries. EMAIL: bill.mous@niagaraanglican.ca*



Bishop Michael was part of the delegation from the Anglican Churches of Canada and Cuba who met with the Canadian Ambassador to Cuba, His Excellency Yves Gagnon.

Photo: Bill Mous

What really happened the first Easter?

MICHAEL BURSLEM

What really happened that first Easter morning? The short answer is that I just don't know. The longer one is more complicated.

Ten years ago I visited the Coptic church of Sakha, in the Nile delta. It has very ancient foundations, but no written historical record. Tradition states that when the Holy Family arrived in Sakha they were thirsty, but found no water. The child Jesus touched a stone with his foot and water gushed so that they could drink. His foot left an imprint on the stone. A pool of water later appeared. As this happened, he accordingly said, "This water will have the power of healing for those who have faith." The place acquired the name Bikha Isous, or footprint of Jesus. Later tradition says that a monastery was founded at the site of the pool, known as Dayr al-Maghtis, or the monastery of the pool. At some point later the stone disappeared; nobody knows exactly how. Some have suggested that it occurred around the time of the Arab invasion; but it was probably considerably later, possibly the 15th century, when the monastery itself disappeared from the map, leaving no identifiable trace.

Had the story ended there, there would just have been a legend of the imprinted foot.

However, in April 1984 some workers, installing a sewage line to a house near the church, discovered at a depth of about 1.5 meters a block of what appeared to be limestone, 80 cm. long, with a brownish dent, which people immediately assumed to be the footprint of a two to three year-old child. On the reverse side is the word "Allah" in Arabic, so it's unlikely to date to Jesus' childhood. There was also a stroke, which may be either an alif, the first letter of the Arabic alphabet, or the numeral 1. The worker who discovered it, a devout Copt, immediately exclaimed that this must be the footprint of Jesus. From the stone came a sweet odor, (some said that the sewage had a pleasant odor) and the workers

jumped into the hole to drink the water at the bottom. One had an eye infection, and after bathing it in the water, he was healed.

Was it the lost stone? It had to be shown to the priest. He wisely decided to ask his superior.

At that time both the bishop, Bishop Bishoy, and the pope, His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, were confined to their monastery of Amba Bishoy at Wadi Natroun, by order of the late President Sadat, who confined both Muslim and Christian leaders in house or monastic arrest. The stone was therefore taken to Wadi Natroun, where the pope prayed over it, and celebrated three liturgies on it. He declared it to be the long lost stone. Since then it has been venerated, but kept within a locked glass case. On June 1 each year, when the church celebrates the coming of the Holy Family, the stone is anointed with oil and ceremonially paraded around the church by Bishop Bishoy.

Dr. Cornelis Hulsman, a Dutch friend, had previously discussed our Western scepticism with a priest of Samannud, a nearby town. He essentially said that because the church in Egypt had not gone through the Enlightenment it was possible to believe anything, so long as it didn't contradict the Bible and dogmas of the church. Copts are more fundamentalist than fundamentalists. They believe more with their heart. Laity believe what they're told to believe, as we did in the West before the Enlightenment.

Dr. Hulsman told me that Bishop Thomas of al-Qussia had said to him that Copts have over the centuries "salt and peppered" their stories, to make tradition more attractive.

At the time I believed in a literal interpretation of Our Lord's life, death and resurrection, but I couldn't buy this. I found myself to be a sceptic of tradition that a Copt would hold dearly. My own thinking on scripture, however, was much more akin to the Coptic than Western thought, since I was fundamentalist about fundamentals. The faith delivered to the saints was revealed, not reasoned, but it wasn't unrea-

sonable, or so I thought. Then I was fighting liberalism in the church. But after visiting Sakha, I was far less sure and have since become even sceptical of any

who say they know for sure what happened. But I'm still dogmatic that Jesus has risen. Alleluia!



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