

### Bible verse of the month

Fill your minds with good things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely and honourable.

Philippians 4:8



### Spending Lent with John

Part 1 of our daily Lenten devotion intended for individuals, couples and groups.

Starting Page **6**



### Multi-Faith Ministry

University of Guelph's ecumenical campus minister supported by Niagara.

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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 — Since 1955

FEBRUARY 2016

## OUR REFUGEE STORY

### Welcoming Refugees: Chronicle of St. John the Evangelist Hamilton

SARAH WAYLAND

**W**e Christians are called to love our neighbours. But who is our neighbour? Our rector David Anderson has been challenging our congregation with this question for quite a while now.

When in the spring of 2015 Bishop Michael Bird called attention to refugees as part of the Diocese's 140th anniversary initiative, various people at St. John's suggested we should sponsor a family. "Yes, we should," I thought, and we all hoped someone else might spearhead such a daunting project.

Months went by, and the refugee crisis was suddenly front page news. Our rector encouraged us to donate to the Diocesan fund, and about \$6,000 was raised almost immediately. We talked again about sponsoring a family and made some inquiries to the Diocese. Retired Bishop Ralph Spence, preaching at our own 125th anniversary celebration, congratulated us for taking steps to sponsor refugees. "What?" we said, "we haven't committed to anything yet!"

But momentum was building.

We decided to put out a call for donations and volunteers. The response would indicate our readiness. Within a few weeks, we had about 25 volunteers, including individuals not affiliated with St. John's. More financial support came in. So we decided to go for it.

A Core Team of eight persons first met on November 16. One member claimed it was one of the best church meetings

he had ever attended. We all felt excited at the prospect of God using us in this tangible way, including opportunities for working with others in our broader community. The next day we submitted our "Expression of Interest" to Niagara Diocese.

We modeled a fundraising initiative on the very successful campaign of St. James and St. Brendan Port Colborne, setting a goal of \$25,000—the average cost to sponsor a refugee family of four—to be raised by Epiphany Sunday. The church was decorated with 25 small covered lanterns, each representing \$1,000. On Advent Sunday, nine were already lit, with more being uncovered each week. At the Christmas Eve services, our rector announced, "We have a problem." Exactly as had happened in Port Colborne, funds raised had exceeded our goal! Such a powerful message of the Christmas promise!

We are waiting to be matched with a refugee family (or individual) that has been identified for resettlement by the United Nations Refugee Agency to come to Canada. There are Syrian and non-Syrian lists, and so our group must decide whether to focus on the crushing need generated by four million Syrian refugees, or on the more than 10 million refugees from other ongoing conflicts. Less than 1% of the world's refugees are ever resettled into a country like Canada (figures from the Office of UN High Commissioner for Refugees).

—See WELCOMING REFUGEES Page 2

### Syrian refugee family arrived on New Year's Day



▲ Mother Hiba, father Belal, son Fares and daughter Jana arrived in Port Colborne on New Year's day from Lebanon to begin their new life in Canada. Story page 2.

Photo: Rob Hurkmans

#### Second refugee family arrived

Just as we were going to press, the *Niagara Anglican* received word a Syrian family of 14 people was being welcomed by St. James' Dundas and the wider Dundas community. This is the second family to arrive as part of our sponsorship initiative.

**BOOK REVIEW**

# Are faith and violence connected in history?

**Fields of Blood: Religion and History of Violence**

Karen Armstrong, Knopf Toronto 2014

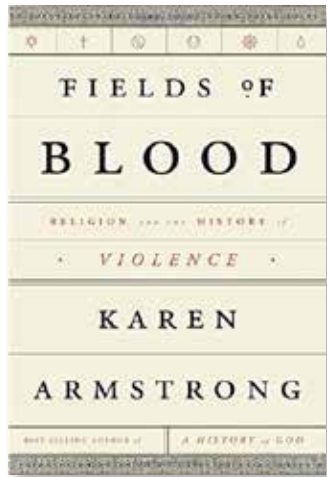
**ROB ROI**

Armstrong is a onetime Roman Catholic nun and the author of several influential works on the history of religion, including *A History of God*.

But as Armstrong points out in *Fields of Blood*, "there is no universal way to define religion." For example, religious belief and practice in, say, ancient Mesopotamia, were very different than what they have become in modern times.

In this book, Karen Armstrong argues against the idea that faith fuels wars. The involvement with politics means that religions have often been tied up with violence: crusaders, conquistadors, jihadists and many more. But—a point Armstrong cares about so much that she makes it several times—the violence almost always originates with the state and spills over to religion, rather than vice versa.

Armstrong mentions several philosophers, and one in particular is the 17th century philosopher John Locke, who firmly believed that religion and government should definitely be segregated for the creation of



a peaceful society. However, the myth of religious violence has become ingrained in the Western belief.

At the end of her book, Armstrong states, "Somehow we have to find ways of doing what religion—at its best—has done for centuries: build a sense of global community, cultivate a sense of reverence and 'equanimity' for all, and take responsibility for the suffering we see in the world. We are all religious and secular alike, responsible for the current predicament of the world."

*The Reverend Rob Roi is a parish deacon at St. James' Dundas. [margrob1@sympatico.ca](mailto:margrob1@sympatico.ca)*

# Welcoming Refugees

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

Selection seems a huge task to us, as we know our actions will change some lives forever. We pray for discernment.

I have heard concerns that we should help "our own" people before helping refugees. In my experience, this is a false distinction. Among our Core Team of volunteers, for example, each of us is already doing good works and advocating for justice in our immediate communities.

Over the past year, we have learned we have neighbours on the other side of the world; neigh-

bours we have not met and who do not even share our culture. Yet we are called to love them, and to help them too.

I hope to report back about our journey in the coming year, a year that certainly has much in store for us, as well as for those refugee families who will become our neighbours.

*Sarah Wayland is Deputy Warden at the Church of St. John the Evangelist Hamilton. [svwayland@gmail.com](mailto:svwayland@gmail.com)*



When people came to the Church of St. John the Evangelist Hamilton on Advent Sunday, their church was decorated with 25 small covered lanterns, each representing \$1,000. If all were uncovered it would be enough to support one refugee family. Read Sarah's story to see what happened.

Photo: Sarah Wayland



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# Syrian refugee family arrived on New Year's Day

**BILL MOUS**

As the world welcomed the new year, St. James and St. Brendan Port Colborne welcomed the first of two related Syrian families it has sponsored in response to the global refugee crisis.

"Nine months ago our church accepted the challenge to make a difference in the Syrian refugee crisis," said Rector Rob Hurkmans. "We prayed fervently and gave generously. We sensed God at work in our midst. As we welcomed our first Syrian family,

our prayers are answered and our joy is complete!"

The family of four, including two children, arrived in Canada after a three-leg flight from Lebanon. After the family spent an overnight in Toronto, parishioners met and travelled with them to their new home in Port Colborne.

"Sponsoring a refugee family doesn't just change their life; it changes everyone's life," said Bishop Michael Bird. "The parish and community's efforts exemplify our tradition of welcoming strangers with compassion and

care."

This was the first family to arrive as part of the diocese's goal to sponsor as many as 50 refugees to mark its 140th anniversary – a goal that is now expected to be surpassed, said a press release from the diocese.

The Diocese has been a private sponsor of refugees under the auspices of a Citizenship and Immigration Canada program for several decades. Donations to support the refugee sponsorship efforts may be made online at [niagaraanglican.ca/140anniversary](http://niagaraanglican.ca/140anniversary)

HOLLISTORIAL

# Charlie Brown, life and the Bible



A Charlie Brown Christmas has reached its half century milestone; quite an achievement!

When first proposed, some producers balked at the idea of an animated television show quoting verbatim the story of Jesus' birth from Luke's gospel. They argued it would never catch on.

Fortunately saner minds prevailed, and in 1965 Charles M. Schultz brought Charlie Brown and the Peanuts gang to life on the small screen.

I don't recall my initial viewing of A Charlie Brown Christmas or when I became an avid follower of the comic strip. However I've read the strips, watched the television specials and enjoyed their movies.

In the 1960s I became acquainted with Robert L. Short, who financed his post-secondary

education by presenting coloured slide lectures on "the theological implications of Peanuts."

He produced two books—*The Gospel According to Peanuts* and *The Parables of Peanuts*. In each he explored and compared the Peanuts characters with the writings and teachings of Jesus Christ, Saint Paul and other Christian writers.

The combination of varying personalities, humour, fun, life, Bible quotes and theological insights enabled Schultz to present a wide range of subjects, issues and attitudes through the experiences of a community of children.

For example, in his December 21, 1964 comic strip, Linus tells Snoopy he is going to be a shepherd in the Christmas play. After reciting his lines—"and

there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night"—he paused and asked, "What a good line, I wonder who wrote it?"

"Interesting," was Charlie Brown's reaction when Linus informed him they were studying the letters of the Apostle Paul in Sunday School. "It is," retorted Linus, "although I must admit it makes me feel a little guilty ... I always feel like I'm reading someone else's mail."

As big sister Lucy supervised Linus kneeling by his bedside praying, he told her he had made a new theological discovery. She asked what it was. Linus explained, "If you hold your hands upside down, you get the opposite of what you pray for."

When Charlie Brown com-

plained about the foul weather, Linus mentioned the Old Testament where God told Job he had no right to complain since he did not create the world.

The Peanuts gang references the Bible often, while teaching about and coping with life.

They described the seasons of life (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8), recommended how to deal with suffering (Job 5:7), suggest ways a righteous person can care for their animals (Proverbs 12:10), warned the last would be first and the first last (Matthew 19:30) and admonished folks about stealing (Exodus 20:15).

Also, they wondered what Goliath's mother said when David hit her son in the head with a stone (1 Samuel), observed how the rain fell equally on the just and unjust (Matthew 5:45)

and encouraged people to shout for joy in all situations (Psalm 98).

Some of my favourite non-Bible insights include ...

- A dapper four year old, wearing a shirt and tie, concluded, "The more mature I get, the more childish the rest of the world becomes."
- Two tots lying in bed evaluated their church experience: "Going to church is something like a having a night light."
- And students who reminded each other they could still pray silently in school, even if the law forbade it.

But the climax belongs to Charlie Brown who described his epiphany as "We were singing 'Jesus loves me' when all of a sudden it hit me ... Jesus loves me ... **ME** ... completely worthless ol' me!"

## A journey called Lent

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 10, 2016.

Lent is a journey ending with Easter on March 27, 2016.

It is a time to reflect on our past, make necessary changes or adjustments in our present lives and renew ourselves for living in the days ahead.

Here are some guidelines and suggestions from the *Book of Alternative Services* to assist us on our Lenten explorations ...

1. **Self-examination** – spend two minutes daily examining what you do;
2. **Penitence** – identify your sins or shortcomings and seek God's **forgiveness**;
3. **Prayer** – devote a few minutes throughout the day to pray for others and yourself;
4. **Fasting** – give up something for Lent or take a day each week to fast;
5. **Almsgiving** – give money to support the outreach programs of a charity or church, and;
6. **Read and meditate** on the Bible—This year we are suggesting the gospel of John. See pages 6–7.

## “Say your grace before you eat”

Barb Brusey from St Christopher's Burlington wrote:

"Here is a grace we have said in our family for years. I was hoping you might know the origin of it and that you will share in the Niagara Anglican other graces that families of the Anglican faith say. I am particularly looking for children's graces that are short and easy to remember."

**Be present at our table  
Be here and everywhere adored  
These mercies bless and grant that we  
Feast in paradise with thee  
Amen.**



*EDITOR's response ...* The lyrics are attributed to the 18th century English preacher and hymn writer John Cennick, whose many hymns appeared in a variety of Church hymnals.

It is often sung to the tune called The Old Hundredth, which is attributed to the 16th century musician Louis Bourgeois. He collaborated with John Calvin in the preparation of the Genevan Psalter, where the tune first appeared.

It was a popular table grace for individual families and church functions. Helen and I remember every church supper beginning with the singing of this grace, though some sang different words.

Want your favourite grace included in a future Niagara Anglican? **Send it with your story to the Niagara Anglican Editor.**

## Hints for writers

When writing or reporting for the Niagara Anglican, follow the "five Ws and one H" guideline.

Make sure your story answers the five W questions—**who, when, what, where** and **why**.

Then complete your article by answering the query—**how**.

Submission guidelines are on page 11.

You have a bonus to help you—the Editor. He is ready to give assistance.

Contact information for Hollis Hiscock can be found on page three.

Looking forward to hearing from you.



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# My walking pilgrimage

MICHAEL BURSLEM

Last summer I joined the eight day Guelph Walking Pilgrimage from the Ignatius Jesuit Centre in Guelph to the Martyrs' Shrine in Midland, 188 km. It was an exhausting slog, but as we climbed the steps to the shrine, at the end of the final 13 km hike from St. Ignace, the site of the martyrdom of St. Jean Brébeuf, tears welled up in my eyes. I had made it!

I didn't need to walk the whole distance. There were cars to ferry those too weary. I did walk 20 kms to the first camp at St. Peter's Oustic. But it was suggested I ride up the hills. We were told to listen to our bodies. Those who didn't walk the full distance helped to set up and take down the camping sites. Walkers and riders alike were all an essential part of the pilgrimage. The youngest who walked the full distance was 12, his fifth pilgrimage. The youngest pilgrim however was just two months. He was carried by his mum.

Mass began the day at 7:00 a.m., in which everyone participated. There was a oneness between Catholics and Protestants alike. The pilgrimage was ecumenical.



▲ Led by the Rabbit, Michael Burslem (in white shorts) and others spent eight days on a walking pilgrimage from the Ignatius Jesuit Centre in Guelph to the Martyrs' Shrine in Midland.

Photo: submitted by Michael Burslem

What are my lasting impressions?

First, the logistics. Providing fodder, (meals were first-class, especially supper, which was sometimes served with wine) and transporting personal gear for about 80 people was no mean task. The preparatory work was phenomenal. Two trucks were rented. The pilgrimage actually began the day before the walking began, with their loading, and ended the day after, with their emptying.

Secondly, the discipline, especially on the walk. There were three security guards, the "Rabbit" leading us, even ahead of the cross bearer, the "Monkey" in the middle and the "Turtle" in the rear. No one fell behind the Turtle. If too tired, they were picked up. We walked on the left side of the roads, and if a car was coming a whistle was blown to get us all into single file. At cross roads we lined up, shoulder to shoulder, to the left of the Rabbit in silence, so that we could hear the whistle to cross. We all crossed together.

Thirdly, the pilgrimage was bathed in prayer. After mass a brief biography of each Canadian martyr was read, and we asked them to pray for us. The sense of the communion of saints and those who had gone before was palpable. Before walking, a portion of scripture was read with questions on which to meditate. The same was re-read after lunch. After the break in the morning and afternoon we walked in silence for 30 minutes, followed by the rosary. Twice we said the Stations of the Cross, once outdoors, the other in a church. After supper was the Sacred Circle, in which some shared what God had done for them that day.

Fourthly, and most importantly, there was love between all the pilgrims, the love that overturns the world. It was this, more than anything else, that lifted me and bore me along to the end. Such love is so rare, but it's what Christians should always demonstrate to the world. I made some new solid friendships with those who truly love the Lord Jesus and wish to follow him. We served one another, not just in word, but in deed. Such Christian community is truly amazing. Robin and Jean, who started the pilgrimages about 10 years ago, as well as all their supporting leaders, inspired everyone by their Christlikeness. They were an inspiration to us all.

Will I repeat the pilgrimage this year? You bet, the Lord willing.

Michael Burslem is a member of St. George's Guelph.

# Women invited to spend year in "God's rhythm"



The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine is inviting young women to spend a year living in "God's rhythm."

The Sisters are inviting up to 10 women, ages 22 to 40, to live with them at St. John's Convent Toronto, where they will experience the Benedictine life of prayer, study, recreation and service to others.

"It's an opportunity to take a year off to deepen their spiritual lives, their walk with God," says organizer Sister Constance Joanna Gefvert.

The initiative, Spend a Year Living in God's Rhythm: Companions on the Way, begins next September. The women will live in the convent's guest house and take part in the Sisters' daily life, including four worship services a day.

They will also spend part of each day in study, either at the convent or Wycliffe College, attending classes on a wide variety of subjects, including contemplative prayer, the monastic tradition and the missional church.

Constance Joanna is hoping that the initiative will raise up a new group of leaders in the church, women who are grounded in monastic values and practices and equipped to bring the Gospel to a rapidly changing society.

"We feel this program answers a need that is expressed by

young people in our church – how to be more grounded in their spiritual life and also to develop skills that will be useful in pioneering ministries that they may be involved in."

Part of each week will be devoted to serving others in the wider community, possibly at St. John's Rehab Hospital. The women will also assist the Sisters with their ministry of hospitality and housekeeping duties.

Each woman will meet with a spiritual mentor monthly and with the Sisters on a regular basis to discuss how things are going. They get four weeks off for vacation and another week for a retreat. Their room, board and daily expenses are paid by the sisterhood. Monday is their day off.

Constance Joanna says one of the most important aspects of the year is to help the women discern where God is calling them.

Another organizer, Molly Finlay, said the year is ideal for young women who are searching for "authentic spirituality" and have a passion for renewing the church.

Molly has been an associate of the sisterhood for several years, an experience that has changed her life. A former communications professional, she is now a divinity student at Wycliffe College. "The convent has been transformational for my life, and

▲ Sister Constance Joanna Gefvert, Molly Finlay and Karen Isaacs are organizing Spend a Year Living in God's Rhythm: Companions on the Way. The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine is inviting up to 10 women, ages 22 to 40, to live at St. John's Convent Toronto, where they will experience the Benedictine life of prayer, study, recreation and service to others.

Photo: Michael Hudson

it has made me a much more brave and dynamic leader within my own church. It has given me an opportunity to do a real about-face and follow Christ in a way that I could not have imagined. Life has become so much richer than it ever would have been if I hadn't had this time of formation with the Sisters."

Constance Joanna says the initiative has generated a lot of interest in the church. "It's very exciting," she says.

For more information visit [www.ssjdcompanions.org](http://www.ssjdcompanions.org)

(This is an edited version of an article written by Canon Stuart Mann, Editor of the Anglican, the diocesan paper for Toronto Diocese.)

# Serving in the Dominican Republic

**BILL RIVERS**

In February 2015 and again in February 2016, a team of Niagara Anglicans and friends travelled to the Dominican Republic to share their skills, resources and the gospel in rural communities surrounding Puerto Plata, a popular vacation destination for Canadians escaping winter's grip.

Organized by St. Thomas' St. Catharines—their sixth mission trip to the area—parishioners from St. John's Niagara Falls, St. John's Thorold and St. James and St. Brendan Port Colborne filled the team. The roster also included a medical team—Not Just Tourists—as well as construction and school teams.

WestJet gave participants extra baggage allowance to bring (literally) a ton of medicines, medical and school supplies, baby bundles and power tools—the very “stuff” of mission work.

Once the team landed, The Samaritan Foundation (TSF) enacted the trip itinerary, planning the week's work, transporting each team to and from a number of small, remote villages in the region where the various projects were undertaken.

For over 25 years TSF has assisted the poorest of the poor in the Dominican Republic by providing modest housing in small rural villages. It is building its 13th village, and has planned, funded and built over 1500 homes, 12 churches, eight schools, six medical centres and sports facilities.

At daily medical clinics, Dr. Ken Taylor and the Not Just Tourists medical team saw and treated 900 patients. The school team measured, assessed and charted hundreds of school children—an annual program tracking the growth and development of students throughout their elementary school years. Medical supplies valued at \$100,000 were distributed to patients in need or delivered to clinics and area hospitals.

The construction team worked alongside local contractors building block houses and framed chicken coops. On this trip, the Niagara team fully funded the building of two houses (\$4,800 each). Happily, before leaving, the team experienced great joy in seeing the houses awarded to two young Dominican families.

Our itinerary also included the “feeding of a village”—the delivery of approximately 30 pounds



◀ A cistern or water supply system similar to this will be constructed in February 2016 by the team of volunteers from Niagara region.

▼ The construction team from Niagara worked alongside local contractors building block houses. The Canadians experienced great joy in seeing the houses, which they financed, being awarded to two young Dominican families.

Photos: Christine Peschke

of basic food items to some 75 families living in houses funded, built and given through TSF.

While rewarding, conducting medical clinics, building houses, working in schools and distributing food is not all that mission teams do. It may not even be the most important aspect of a mission trip.

Sharing our gifts, skills, resources, time and the gospel are our *raison d'être*—the personal and outward expression of a love for the poorest, the disadvantaged, destitute and displaced Dominican and Haitian people. Our faith manifests itself in not only the work we do while there, but in the compassion we feel, the love we share and the prayers we offer. Does it have both an immediate and lasting impact? Absolutely!

For February 2016, St. Thomas' has recruited a mission team, gathered medications and materials and continues to raise funds needed for their work with TSF in the Dominican Republic.

This time, at an estimated cost of \$25,000, the major project is the building of a cistern large enough to supply a safe water supply for the newly built village.

Presently, in addition to raising the money needed for the cistern project, the mission team hopes also to continue to fund and carry out the several other programs that have been part of their past trips.

If you would like to participate in such a mission trip or contribute contact St. Thomas' St. Catharines at 905-684-2339, sign onto the e-mail list or contact TSF at [thesamaritanfoundationdr.com](http://thesamaritanfoundationdr.com)



◀ Dr. Ken Taylor, with a member of the Not Just Tourists medical team, examine a young mother while serving in Dominican Republic.

Photo: Submitted

Bill Rivers is a member of St. James and St. Brendan Port Colborne. [writers1@icloud.com](mailto:writers1@icloud.com)

## THE TABLE *A Place for Everyone*



All Ages Worship, Lively Music, Community Building, Meal

Last Sunday of the Month at 4 p.m. This month: February 28

St Cuthbert's, Oakville (Maple Grove and Oakhill) [www.stcuthbertoakville.ca](http://www.stcuthbertoakville.ca)

**All Welcome!**

# Spending Lent with John

We again present a daily devotion for Lent, this year through the lens of John's Gospel

1. Read the daily Bible passage.
2. Read the commentary about the gospel reading.
3. Reflect on any questions, and ask how the readings apply to your life.

You will notice that there are no readings for Sundays, which traditionally are not part of Lent. You can follow the Bible readings at Church or catch up on any meditations you missed during the week.

Your comments, suggestions or questions are always welcome.

## Ash Wednesday, February 10 John 1:1-18

Georgiana Stewart,  
Master of Divinity Student

A popular song a couple of decades back (Joan Osborne's "One of us") asked, "What if God was one of us? Just a slob like one of us? Just a stranger on the bus trying to make his way home?"

Maybe it's shocking to think of God as a slob, but what makes Christianity unique is the Incarnation—that God actually became flesh and lived among us in the human being Jesus Christ. There are plenty of belief systems that keep the Divine at a distance, whether as super-powerful Olympians or unattainable enlightenment.

Christianity, however, brings us face to face with God, over and over again. And we don't always like it. Whether in the stranger on the bus or in the Word full of grace and truth, looking at God is uncomfortable, and so is becoming a child of God. Lent is a great opportunity to heed the Gospel's call to face God and be reborn—if we can allow God's light to shine into the darkness of our lives.

## Thursday, February 11 John 1:19-51

Adam Brown, Master of Divinity Student

“Among you stands one whom you do not know,” says John to those questioning him; “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,” he says just before.

Time and again we encounter phrases such as these where we are turned to face the unknown. It is this wilderness that the voice cries into, and out from.

As a child growing up in rural Canada, “the wilderness” meant something unique to me; it was a land filled with risk, a land which went on without end, but it was also a land filled with undiscovered life.

Now that I have moved to Toronto, I have discovered this is the same, and yet different; everywhere I look there is still life, with all of its joy and pain. Hidden away in plain sight on College Street sits a small statue of a beggar, frequently tripped over and often overlooked. This beggar made it onto social media recently, and in all the flurry of conversation, nobody seemed to realize it was simply Jesus.

## Friday, February 12 John 2:1-11

Matt Koovisk,  
Master of Theology Student

If you look hard enough, you'll see throughout John's Gospel that there are clues (John calls them “signs”) that point us to the times where there is the “thin space” between heaven and earth. This is “the first of such signs.” (John 2:11, ESV)

For the disciples, this is the time when they come to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Think back for a second—do you remember the first time you believed in Jesus Christ as the Son of God? What did that look like? What were the surrounding events that were taking place? What was the “sign” that showed you that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?

## Saturday, February 13 John 2:12-25

Matthew Bowman, Student Co-Head,  
Faculty of Divinity

In today's reading Jesus cleans house and cleanses the temple—abruptly tossing sheep and cattle out of their pens and telling the money changers to hit the road. He commands the shopkeepers to return the temple to a state of purity, and to cease defiling the sanctity of its walls.

Through Lenten discipline and meditation, we are invited to clean our own houses, to clean out all of the dross and clutter and to place special focus on our relationship with God.

During the Passover Jesus refused to reveal himself to those who observed his miraculous signs, because He needed no one to testify about his mission since he already knew the innermost thoughts of their hearts.

From this, we can gather that our Lenten “house cleaning” doesn't happen to impress God or to somehow earn greater love, but solely for our own nourishment—allowing us to create enough detachment from the tedium of everyday life that we can truly rejoice in His glorious resurrection on Easter Day.

## Monday, February 15 John 3:1-21

The Reverend Canon Doctor David Neelands, Dean of Divinity

Walk in the Light. Nicodemus, a religious leader, came to Jesus in the dark and could not make head nor tail of Jesus' teaching, which he was initially prepared to accept: seeing the kingdom of God requires accepting that kingdom as a new beginning, according to Jesus' testimony.

Jesus will be lifted up for all to see, in the light of day, just as Moses raised a serpent in the wilderness for the people of God to look on and trust. But human beings revert to the darkness of their own presuppositions and assumptions—their burning fiery serpents (Numbers 20)—and cannot see the salvation that is staring them in the face.

In their self-inflicted blindness, they miss what God has done in Christ, and live in perpetual perishing. Those who walk in the light, with open eyes, can believe that God is in Christ, and in believing have the eternal life that is in him—or at least that is what Jesus teaches.

## Tuesday, February 16 John 3:22-36

Georgiana Stewart,  
Master of Divinity Student

Humility—we in the Church have a love-hate relationship with the concept. We either brag about how humble we are, being far more ironic than anything else or we conflate it with humiliation and dismiss it altogether.

The problem is we've forgotten the real meaning of the word. Humility is about being right-sized. We are all beloved creatures of God, so hating ourselves is no more appropriate than hating anybody else.

Our egos pale in significance when compared to God's glory. However in today's passage, John gets this, whereas his followers don't. They want to start a spiritual turf war between John and Jesus. But John reminds them he is but a herald of the Messiah, and in order to make room for and rejoice in God's glory, he—and we—need to get our comparatively insignificant selves out of the way.

It's amazing what we can accomplish when we don't care who gets the credit.

## Wednesday, February 17 John 4:1-26

Adam Brown, Master of Divinity Student

“If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”

Here we have a “worn out” Jesus sitting alone at the hottest time of day by an ancient well when a Samaritan woman quietly walks by. Shunned by her community, she is forced to look for sustenance in a time of isolation, forced to return time and again to a physical reminder of rejection.

Simply by asking for some water, Jesus begins to reveal reality in the midst of earthly signs. The time is coming when the holy space of God will not be on a holy mountain or in a temple, but in spirit and in truth.

Instead of water from the grave of the earth, he will give a spring of living water gushing from inside.

This reconciling spring will be within every person, will strengthen every soul and accept everybody—raising them up to eternal life.

## Thursday, February 18 John 4:27-54

Matt Koovisk,  
Master of Theology Student

Jesus returns to Cana—the place where He had showed us his first “sign” that he is the Son of God—turning water into wine at that (probably very joyous) wedding.

He meets a fairly influential man whose son was sick. Jesus performs another miracle—the “second sign.”

For the man whose son was healed—this miracle proved to him that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

I imagine that this man was quite beside himself—as many parents would be if their child was sick.

Even if we don't have children—sometimes we are beside ourselves with worry or grief about different life events.

In these times—times where we have been beside ourselves—what signs has God shown you that he is with you? How have they shown you what God is like?

## Friday, February 19 John 5:1-30

Matthew Bowman, Student Co-Head,  
Faculty of Divinity

Jesus cures on the Sabbath—a day reserved for prayer and worship in Jewish life.

Seeing the lame man, and knowing he has been there a long time, Jesus immediately asks him if he wants to be made well. The man confides that he has no one to help him into Bethsaida's healing waters, and that each time the water bubbles up someone more agile beats him to it.

Jesus commands the man to get up, take his mat and walk.

Angered, the Pharisees begin to persecute Jesus because they perceive He lacks respect

for the Sabbath and Jewish laws. Jesus ends the discussion by claiming: “My Father is still working, and I also am working.”

How often do we see a person in need and think, “Surely someone else will take care of her”? Or, “I'd love to help but I haven't got the time.”

In this passage Jesus makes it clear that, regardless of our own misgivings or excuses, as Christians we have an obligation to care for those in need—whether they be Syrian refugees or our closest friends.

## Saturday, February 20 John 5:31-47

The Reverend Canon Doctor David Neelands, Dean of Divinity

**Faith in Christ required.**

Christ accuses the people of Jerusalem, who have seen the healing of the paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath and taken it badly, of not recognizing the witnesses to him.

John the Baptist, whom the crowd trusted, had borne witness to Jesus (John 1:29), but the signs Jesus gives on his own come from God, and the point is missed by the crowd.

They do not believe, and without belief neither Jesus' signs nor even searching the scriptures helps, though Moses had prophesied (Deuteronomy 34:10), and all scripture witnessed to the Christ who was to come.

What is needed is belief that Jesus is the Christ, and in that belief is life eternal (John 20:31).

But this is not just about unbelievers. Even Jesus' followers can get tied up in intractable details of interpretation, when it is faith in Christ alone that counts.

It is the simple things that make the difference, not the anxieties of getting it right.

## Monday, February 22 John 6:1-24

Jody Balint, Master of Divinity Student

In this reading, we hear about two miracles of Jesus.

We hear the story of Jesus feeding five thousand people, as well as Jesus walking on water.

The first miracle has two critical yet different stories that it can be connected to—the first being Moses and the Israelites receiving Manna from heaven, and the second being the Last Supper with a foretelling of the story—due to the words in verse 11—“Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks.”

The most powerful words from the story of Jesus walking on water are, “It is I; don't be afraid,” just as the boat lands on the shore.

In both of these stories, we learn of God's

# A daily Lenten devotion intended for individuals, couples and groups.

## Part 1: Ash Wednesday to March 3

infinite power, along with:

1. The power of giving, when you have nothing to give (Jesus feeding 5,000 when there was barely enough food);
2. Even a leader can use the help (Jesus asked if anyone had food to share), and;
3. Trust in God and Jesus and you will land safely where you need to go.

### Tuesday, February 23 John 6:25-59

Matthew Kieswetter,  
Master of Divinity Student

Imagine this scene as one of those interactive sermons with participation from the congregation built right into it; more than just abstract bits of wisdom to be swallowed.

I find it helpful to read this discourse cognizant of its community-oriented context and implications.

Consider, for instance, its setting in a synagogue, the complaints of the crowd (echoing the grumbling in the desert after the escape from Egypt) and the Eucharistic overtones. These all point to the challenge and the potential of “life together.”

That which will nourish and unite us, the Church, on our journey together is “the food that endures for eternal life” (6:27). It is disappointing—or really, tragic—that sometimes we are guided more by negativity, cynicism and the human tendency toward division, than we are by the unity being offered (and given!) to us in Jesus.

This sustaining life-giving bread tastes infinitely better than the bitterness of the complaining crowd.

### Wednesday, February 24 John 6:60-71

The Reverend Andrew Nussey,  
M.Div (Hons), Th.M. student

In ancient mythology, *Dis* is the god of the underworld. *Dis* is the one who divides and disassociates. Think of dismember: the cutting off of a part of the body. Our Lord is a source of unity, yet His teaching concerning the need to ingest life spurs many to disassociate themselves and choose to remain divided from the Spirit-filled Body.

“Do you also wish to disassociate yourselves from life?”

Simon Peter is quick to deny such a desire.

This is when Jesus drops the bomb: “Yet one of you is a devil (*diabolos*).” One of you is a divider; one of you makes two out of one—a separator of flesh from spirit. Flesh alone is dead: even so, for many their allegiance is not to life.

Judas was chosen to be a leader of Christ’s Church, yet he is a devil. Consider this fact

revealed to the whole Church: “Yet one of you is a person of discord, tearing apart the heart.”  
Would not each one of us ask, “Is it I?”

### Thursday, February 25 John 7:1-24

Christopher Samsom,  
Master of Divinity Student

In today’s reading Jesus’ life is under threat by the authorities in Judea.

At this feast, while the authorities seek him out to silence him, he appears in the temple—the heart of their influence—and teaches, “The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it” (promised in John 1:5). Here we see that light shining out of the heart of that darkness.

The religious authorities of Judea call Jesus demonic because he worked a miracle on the Sabbath day. The Law of Moses dictates one rest on the Sabbath. Jesus points out that the Pharisees too work on the Sabbath day, cutting bodies to circumcise them. Jesus makes this man’s body well.

Here in the temple the Pharisees, those gathered and ourselves are faced with a question: Who is Jesus?

Is Jesus demon-possessed? Will he lead us astray? Is he a good man? Or is he perhaps Christ, the fulfillment of God’s plan for Israel, the light for which we wait who will conquer the darkness?

Let us discover him.

### Friday, February 26 John 7:25-53

The Reverend Canon Susan Wilson,  
Rector All Saints Erin

Jesus did not intend to go to the Festival, but he did. He went in secret, and then went public by going to the temple to teach. Jesus did not escape notice. The questions and controversies surrounding his intentions and identity began to swirl.

You can hear the confusion, frustration and tension building amid the crowds in general and the Pharisees in particular. Although several attempts were made to arrest Jesus, they were averted because the time was not right.

The “Festival of Booths” is a time of great celebration, remembrance, anticipation and hope. It is kept to remember the provision of God during years of wandering in the desert, and to celebrate and give thanks for the provision of God in the annual harvest. The atmosphere is of great joy.

But everything is not perfect. Oppression and fear weigh heavily on the Israelites.

Jesus calls anyone who is thirsty to come to him. Jesus, like Moses, gives living water. In the midst of fear, there is hope.

Take time to remember and give thanks for God’s provision in your life.

### Saturday, February 27 John 8:1-30

The Reverend Canon Doctor David Neelands,  
Dean of Divinity

#### The judges are on trial?

Jesus says, “You judge by human standards, I judge no one.”

He has illustrated that, in his treatment of the attempts by the scholars to trap him with an obvious sinner. But no human being is sinless, and so no human being can fairly condemn another.

Jesus has the two witnesses human jurisprudence requires—himself and the Father. And the ultimate witness is to come, when Jesus will be judged by human beings.

Why was just one person—a woman—brought forward for condemnation for adultery? As Gregory of Nazianzen long ago noted, adultery is not a solitary crime.

But human tradition is biased and blames with partiality—it is males who make the laws, as Gregory noted, and guilty human beings who apply them to others.

However judgement is not the ultimate; mercy and transformation are. It has been said that Jesus in the gospels identifies sin as something human beings need to be freed from, not condemned for. Judgement will lift him up to transform and forgive.

### Monday, February 29 John 8:31-59

Mary-Cate Garden,  
Master of Divinity Student

As this passage opens, Jesus is in the temple teaching.

It is not a friendly crowd: some don’t believe, some believe and even some believers are having trouble with the words they are hearing. Not only are the words of Jesus rejected, so too is Jesus himself. But even in the midst of the passage’s complexity and tension the lessons we hear are not just hard truths; they are about truth itself. They are lessons about faith and about committing or continuing in the Word of God.

This passage opens with a promise; a simple, essential promise that by continuing in the word of God the disciples “will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (8:31). But this promise comes with expectations of something offered in return: a commitment to discipleship, not just once but every day, again and again.

These are good lessons for us in our Lenten journeys—a reminder that by believing, by listening and by knowing that glory comes from God, we will remain His children always.

### Tuesday, March 1 John 9:1-23

Matthew Kieswetter,  
Master of Divinity Student

Who sinned, this man or his parents? How can a sinner produce signs like this? How is it that he is now able to see?

These, and many other questions, punctuate this account about healing and the resulting controversy. Some are lobbed like grenades, exploding in bursts of subtext and accusation. Others simply reflect the disorientation and panic that come from having one’s worldview challenged.

Conducting himself so differently from the questioning and accusatory crowd is Jesus.

His words and actions are simple and direct: he sees the blind man, makes the clay and gives instructions. Jesus has no ulterior motive. Neither fear nor hubris guide his decisions.

Using the lingo of the Anglican Communion’s Marks of Mission we could say Jesus has modelled a compassionate response to human need with loving service.

His example is one of challenging the violence and dehumanization that so often come out of the blaming and shaming of others.

### Wednesday, March 2 John 9:24-41

Georgiana Stewart,  
Master of Divinity Student

Blindness is a funny business.

It’s often insidious; sneaking up on us until one day we realize that we aren’t seeing the world quite right. We then have a choice: to admit to someone who can help us that something is wrong, or to carry on all on our own until we’re really in trouble.

Sometimes people around us will point out that we seem to be having difficulty. If we’re lucky, we’ll take the warning to heart. More often we’re too proud to confess even to ourselves, never mind to anybody else, that there’s a problem, and we reject the proffered advice and continue to stumble around insisting that everything’s fine.

Jesus was able to restore sight to the man in today’s passage because he both realized and admitted he was blind. The Pharisees, on the other hand, both deny their blindness, and reject the possibility that anyone else, especially a sinner, might help them see better.

So let’s consider: where are our blind spots? How might a fellow sinner help us see?



St. John the Apostle, St. Martin’s Church, Warmersdorf, Germany, designed by Anton Wendling.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

### Thursday, March 3 John 10:1-21

Christopher Samsom,  
Master of Divinity Student

The Pharisees are at it again! Overhearing Christ’s instruction to the man cured of blindness the Pharisees, asked yesterday, are we blind? Jesus responds by telling them he is the good shepherd; so good a shepherd that he lays down his life for his sheep. Where thieves may come to destroy, Jesus comes to give life.

The good shepherd takes the sheep from multiple folds, gathers them to himself and makes them to be one flock - all following the one shepherd.

We are called away from following our own devices and desires—our own ideologies and lusts—into the flock which follows the good shepherd: who know him and are known by him.

Some indeed are blind and cannot hear his voice, cannot understand his words and see in him not a good shepherd but a demon-possessed man. But can a demon open the eyes of the blind?

Let us pray that we may see the good shepherd.

Thank you to Coordinator Matthew Bowman, David Neelands (Dean of Divinity, Trinity College, University of Toronto) and the team of students and staff from Trinity College for their Lenten meditations on the Gospel of John.

**PART TWO: Friday, March 4 to Holy Week will appear in the March Niagara Anglican.**

# Training to RESTORE hope in helpless situations.

**LISA GOETZE**

Would you know where to turn if you found out your neighbour was in an abusive relationship? Or what if your friend confessed that his series of small loans had ballooned into massive debt? Which agencies would you direct the refugee family toward when they first join your congregation?

Many of us want to help, but don't always know how. That's why RESTORE Halton is training individuals to become one-on-one care planners for others in the community who are experiencing crippling life challenges.

RESTORE Halton, which started last year, already has partnership with 18 churches in Oakville, Burlington and Georgetown. Two of these are Anglican congregations in Oakville—St. Jude's and St. Simon's. The latter has six active care planner volunteers who continue to actively recruit more volunteers to their team.

A grant from the Anglican Foundation of Canada this year will keep the cost down for training new volunteers. The grant totaling \$8,500 helps RESTORE cover costs for training material, administration and travel costs for instructors coming from outside the area.

Care planners go through a Foundations of Care course that prepares them in the Restore Method of Care. The course focuses on a few areas: understanding and verifying the needs

of a participant, creating healthy boundaries between planners and participants, budgeting and confidentiality.

Stanley Redwood, Area Director for RESTORE Halton, says he's focused on training the existing pool of 33 new volunteer care planners in early 2016. At the same time, Stanley will mentor team leaders based on geographic areas.

RESTORE Halton operates out of Oakville's Kerr Street Mission. It is the first off-shoot from the pioneering work of Olive Branch Church in Markham. The church created the Restore Method of Care in 2011 as a way to respond to people that reached out to the church for help.

Whether individuals or families are experiencing financial distress or other struggles, RESTORE care planners provide practical one-on-one care and support. In the end, Stanley

says the goal is for care planners to help a person develop a plan to improve their situation. "RESTORE helps people not just for the time being, but our hope is that they'd get to a healthy place to manage on their own for the long-term," he concluded.

One pastor from an Oakville church called RESTORE an "answer to prayer". Her church is located across the street from a low-income housing complex, and two-dozen families regularly reach out to the church for help. With RESTORE training, congregation members can be confident they'll provide suitable care for those who need it.

To find out more, go to [kerrstreet.com](http://kerrstreet.com) and click on RESTORE Halton.

*Lisa Goetze is Communications Coordinator for Kerr Street Mission in Oakville. [lisa@kerrstreet.com](mailto:lisa@kerrstreet.com).*



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# What is the essence of the radical teaching of the historical Jesus?

**HEATHER-JOY BRINKMAN**



The parables composed by Jesus, challenging and shocking to his listeners, proclaim the good news that Jesus taught his fellow men, women and children who struggled daily, like so many of us today, to live through the worst of times.

And what was the good news that he challenged his listeners to realize?

It was that the one God of all loved each of them as his own child unconditionally. No matter how lost or misled or forgotten or mistreated they were, they were loved and treasured by their God!

God the creator loves his creation, all creatures great and small, unconditionally as a loving father loves all his children.

As Franciscan Father Richard Rohr teaches, God is the divine mystery than we can best understand as love itself, the essence of creation—the universe and of our true selves.


This was the radical transforming message of the non-violent Jesus. We are truly loved by the divine, each and every one of us. Even those whom we consider the outsider or the enemy are loved by God, and our true self is found only in our non-violent expression of love for others.

May we take quiet time to fill our hearts and minds with the healing love of the divine, "in whom we live and move and have our being." (St. Paul)

May this transforming love offered freely to us flow through and between us and overflow in compassionate love and action.

As we commune in quiet with the divine and "do unto others as we would have them do unto us", we become joyful participants in the reign of God here on earth, that is, in the collaborative kingdom of God that Jesus proclaimed.

*Heather-Joy Brinkman welcomes your response at [heatherjoynowe@yahoo.ca](mailto:heatherjoynowe@yahoo.ca)*



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**What do you do?**

**Who receives the prayer shawls?**

**What impact does it have on your life?**

**Tell us about your experiences. Send us photos.**

Send it to the Niagara Anglican Editor. Contact information on page three.



# Canada Briefs

A roundup from other Anglican newspapers across Canada

## 1 Rotting stump transformed into powerful memorial

A wood-carving project funded by the Anglican Church in British Columbia has turned into what some are calling a powerful memorial to victims of the Indian residential school system.

The work by Ivan Rosypskye, a wood carver from the Heiltsuk First Nation, was unveiled before a gathering of some 150 people at Sycamore Commons Permaculture Garden, on the grounds of St. David and St. Paul Anglican Church in Powell River, B.C. The work was a carving made into the remains of a 12-metre-high cypress tree.

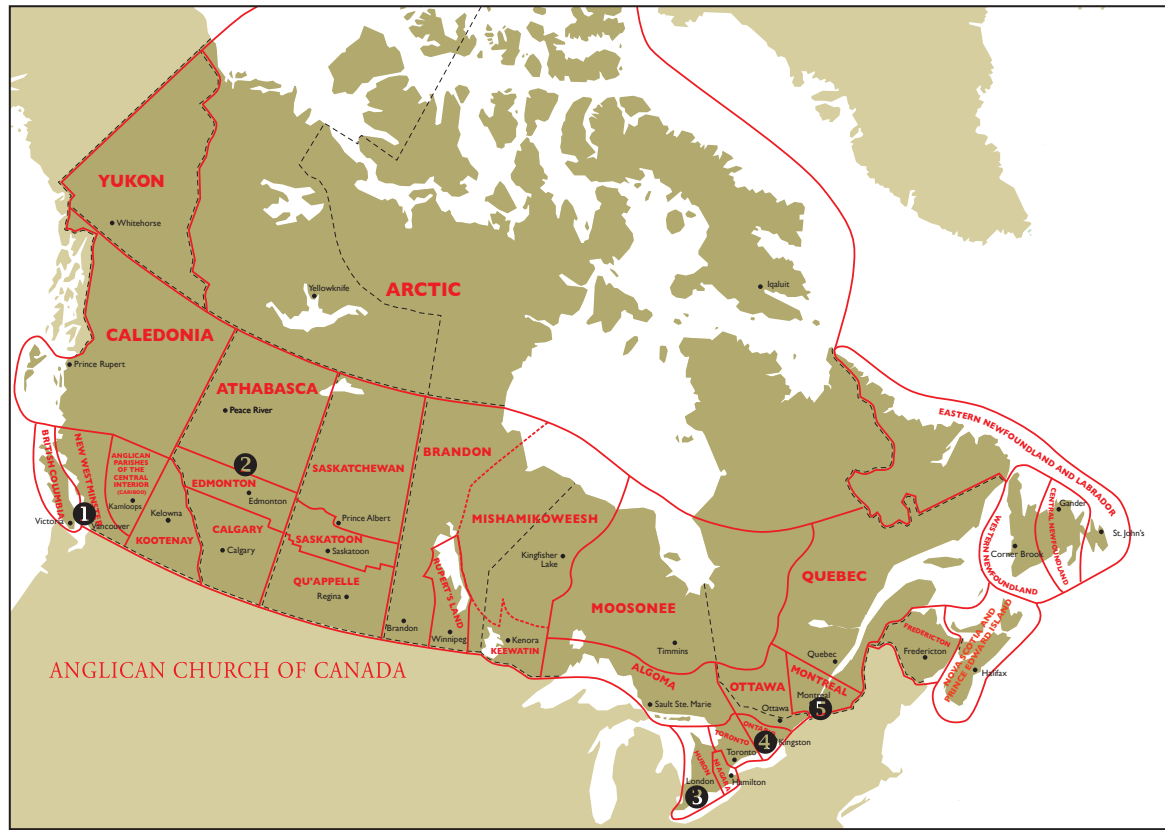
The stump features various symbols from nature: a sun at the top, an eagle, a killer whale, a bear and five salmon. In addition to carving these figures, Ivan also embedded into it, about halfway up, a brick taken from the ruins of St. Michael's Residential School in Alert Bay, B.C., which was attended by the artist's mother and aunts. The brick, interrupting as it does the natural flow of life that unfolds in his carving, is an apt symbol of the way residential schools interrupted the flow of First Nations culture and community in Canada, he said.

Ivan's decision to include the brick "gave such an incredible additional meaning to the power of the work," Ron Berezan, co-leader of the garden project, said. *Topic*

## 2 Alberta churches host Abiding in Right Relations conference

Members of the Anglican, Lutheran, United Church and Presbyterian churches from across Alberta and Montana joined together in Airdrie, AB, for the Abiding in Right Relations conference November 20–21. They listened, learned and talked about how to strengthen ties between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

The conference included an education session on the doctrine of discovery, as well as a panel featuring Bishop Larry Kochendorfer of the ELCIC, Bishop Greg Kerr Wilson of the diocese of Calgary, Bishop Jessica Crist of the ELCA and Bishop Carol Gallagher of The Episcopal Church, who spoke on their



relationships with Indigenous people in their respective churches.

There was also a discussion of the implications of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the 94 Calls to Action that came out of its final event in Ottawa last June, as well as the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Participants were encouraged to put pressure on their elected representatives to ensure Canadian students learn about the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Danielle Black and Shilo Black, two Indigenous youth from Treaty 7 territory in Alberta, shared from their own experience about the systemic inter-generational effects of residential schools.

The conference also featured more hands-on activities, such as the KAIROS' blanket exercise, an interactive way of teaching about the impact of European colonization on Indigenous populations. *The Messenger*

## 3 London cathedral needs \$500,000 in 'urgent' repairs

The priceless stained-glass windows of London, Ontario's historic St. Paul's Cathedral are at risk until money can be raised for \$500,000 of repairs.

"A couple of months ago we received word that immediate repairs to the north wall of the Cathedral must be done to ensure the structural integrity and safety of the building," Paul

Grambo, the cathedral's communications director, announced in an online post. "Our best estimates at this time indicate that we may be looking at a price tag approaching \$500,000 before all is said and done" to repair the damage, he said.

While looking into water leaks inside the cathedral, officials discovered long-term water damage to masonry under the building's eaves and "substantial" damage to at least one roof truss. If the damage is not repaired, the cathedral's walls will be under more pressure. This, in turn, will put at risk four stained-glass windows, the work of 19th-century American artist Louis Tiffany; two of which were signed by the artist himself. The water leaks have damaged inside gold-leaf scrolling and plaster work as well.

The cathedral already has \$100,000 available to start the repairs, and is applying to the diocese and other sources for additional funding, but it is also urgently appealing for private donations, Paul said.

The cathedral was built in 1845 in the Gothic style.

*Huron Church News*

## 4 Ontario group continues to help with refugee sponsorship

Since the photo of drowned toddler Alan Kurdi first appeared in early September, an Anglican committee that works to facilitate refugee sponsorships has been very busy.

Until September, Diocese

of Ontario Refugee Support (DOORS) had facilitated the sponsorship of only about one family a year on average over the past 10 years, says Chairwoman Debra Fieguth.

In the two months that followed, however, the group was flooded with requests for help, and has aided numerous Anglican, Roman Catholic and other community groups.

Those sponsored, Debra says, include an Eritrean widow and her three daughters, who had been living in Sudan for more than 20 years; a Burundian family of 11 (two parents and nine children ages three to 23); a Congolese family of four; and several Syrian families.

DOORS has also been speaking with a number of individuals and families hoping to bring in family members still overseas, she continued.

"The new awakening has made people aware not just of the Syrian crisis, but other refugee situations in the world, such as the protracted Eritrean conflict," said Debra. "It has been extremely heartening to see people put compassion into action. DOORS is grateful for the hard work, the enthusiasm, the commitment, the financial contributions and everything else that generous people in our diocese and communities have offered."

DOORS facilitates the welcoming of refugees by helping with the paperwork and overseeing sponsorships.

*Dialogue*



## 5 Montreal parish to be replaced by 'plant' on U.K. model

A 150-year-old parish in Montreal is slated to be replaced over the coming months by a new "church plant" project aimed at new parishioners through a model of evangelism recently developed in the U.K.

"It is with great joy that the Anglican Diocese of Montreal hopes to plant a new church congregation into the historic Montreal-centre parish building of St. James the Apostle in 2016," announced Bishop Mary Irwin-Gibson of Montreal Diocese.

The goal, she said, is to attract young, urban professional and multicultural people "through a modern Anglican form of worship and evangelism." The project is part of the diocese's exploration of "what [the] 21st-century church will look like in Montreal."

It follows research into work done at the diocese of London, England, which has enjoyed a 70% increase in the size of its adult worshipping population in recent years, and the establishment of a relationship between the diocese of Montreal with a London church, Holy Trinity Brompton. This church is where the Alpha Course, a program introducing newcomers to the basics of Christianity, was first developed.

Many current parish activities and appointments—including that of its incumbent priest—were scheduled to end by Christmas, with a basic program of worship continuing until Easter. Then the new project will take over. It will be headed by the Reverend Graham Singh, a Canadian priest who has already planted three churches on this model.

*Anglican Montreal*

*Canada Briefs, gleaned from Anglican diocesan papers from across Canada, was prepared by staff writers with the Anglican Journal.*

# Christmas glad tidings from Christ Church Woodburn

Photos: submitted by Judy Gurman



▲ Judy Gurman and her grandchildren Julia and Brycen Gottschalk lighting the Advent Candle as the congregation prepares for Christmas.



▲ The sheep (Kieran Bohoslawski), shepherd (Ethan Berg) and camel (Brycen Gottschalk) are ready for their roles in the Christmas story.

▼ The angels (Eve and Kay Wiersma) appear at the Nativity at Christ Church Woodburn's Christmas Pageant.



# Niagara supports Guelph's ecumenical campus minister



Photo: Submitted

Andrew Hyde, a Designated Lay Minister from the United Church of Canada, began his work as the full-time campus minister at Guelph University on November 1, 2015. He was appointed by the Ecumenical Campus Ministry (ECM).

He has a background in youth and young adult ministry, serving congregations in Norval and Waterdown, Ontario and spend-

ing three years on the regional staff of Ottawa Presbytery (UCC).

While in Ottawa, he worked ecumenically with Anglican, Lutheran and Presbyterian partners to create the Open Table—a student ministry that brings uOttawa students to local congregations for meals and learning.

In recent years, Andrew helped launch Norval Intentional Community for young adults and chaired the Design Team for Rendez-Vous 2014, the United Church's national event for youth and young adults.

The Ecumenical Campus Ministry, one of three campus ministries supported by Niagara Diocese, is also supported by Waterloo Presbytery (UCC), the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington (PCC), and a number of congregations, parishes and individuals.

ECM provides students, faculty and staff with opportunities for discipleship, worship, service, informal counselling and links to local churches.

The ECM campus minister also contributes to the university's Multi-Faith Resource Team, promoting diversity and inter-faith cooperation on campus.

To keep up to date with ECM's work on campus, like the ECM Facebook page (facebook.com/ECMguelph) or follow on Twitter (@ECMguelph).

To have the ECM Campus Minister come to your parish—for pulpit supply, to share the work of ECM with your young people or to learn about ways you can support the Ecumenical Campus Ministry—email Andrew Hyde at hydea@uoguelph.ca.

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**Don Smith**  
owner

# One container sent – more medical supplies needed for March shipment

**K. LYNN DYKEMAN**

When we closed the door on “the shipment”, after a year of work - the 20 foot container full of wheelchairs, walkers, orthotic equipment and blankets - I for once in my life was at a loss for words; should we be happy or should we weep?

It felt like we had taken a giant step backwards in time, to a time before my trip to Kurdistan in Northern Iraq.

I stood quietly with my one friend who had gone to Iraq with me. She cried when we talked to the reporter earlier in the day. I could not cry; sometimes I try and act when thinking is too painful.

In 2009 I had the privilege of going on a medical fact finding trip to Northern Iraq’s Kurdistan Province.

Seven health care providers, many from McMaster University, went to complete a needs assessment of health care in Iraq. It was a time of great hope and

possibility, of reconstruction, and the rebuilding of universities, roads, health clinics and schools.

After the fall of Saddam Hussein, the Kurdistan region experienced a brief period of peace while there was great trauma in Southern Iraq. Given the conflict in the south between differing ruling powers, the Kurds were left to rebuild their country and rebuild they did. At every corner there was a building under construction or reconstruction. I can easily recall the children coming home from school in their school uniforms, people in the market and businesses under construction.

Move ahead six short years and the Kurds are once again fleeing for their lives. Thousands have been killed, more have been wounded. The critical need for medical equipment we documented in 2009 (the Iraqi embargo included medical supplies) has increased exponentially. ISIS has destroyed the redevelopment of this province



▲ A jam-packed container reflects the generosity of many.

Photos: Peter Davison

in Northern Iraq. There are tent cities of refugees and once again unmarked mass graves. Are the people we met still alive? Our guards/tour guides were soldiers - I cannot think what happened to them. What would Jesus do?

At the request of the local Kurdish community on Hamilton East Mountain, site of the largest Kurdish population in North America, and a Kurdish refugee organization in Kurdistan, we tried to respond to the chaos.

St. James’ Dundas, McMaster University and the Hamilton Kurdish community gathered medical supplies, wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches and blankets for those in Northern Iraq. We raised \$11,000 through donations and a fundraising dinner held at St. James in October.

We plan a second shipment in March. We hope to send a 40 foot container this time. The cost will be \$15,000. Donations are gratefully received and receipted by St. James’.

A unique gift of healing and hope is medical equipment for Kurdistan. For example, \$50 sends a wheelchair, \$30 a walker and \$10 three sets of crutches.

If your church would like to host a Kurdish dinner, feel free to contact me at lynnd@cogeco.ca

If you have medical supplies, we will come and pick them up.

*K. Lynn Dykeman is a parishioner of St. James Dundas.*



▲ Workers and supporters celebrate their shared efforts.

Photos: Peter Davison

## Deadlines and Submissions for Niagara Anglican

### Deadlines:

- April – February 25
- May – March 25
- Summer – April 25

### Submissions:

#### News, Letters, Reviews

(books, films, music, theatre) – 400 words or less

Articles – 600 words or less

Original cartoons or art – contact the Editor

Photos – very large, high resolution, action pictures (people doing something).

Include name of photographer. Written permission of parent/guardian must be obtained if photo includes a child.

All submissions must include writer’s full name and contact information. We reserve the right to edit or refuse submissions.

### Questions or information:

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

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## Two ways to **WARM UP** February

Curlers can hit the ice and support the work of the Bishop's Company and walkers can don their walking shoes to make life easier for needy people by taking part in two separate activities scheduled for the same date in February 2016.

The ninth annual **Bishop's Company Bonspiel** is scheduled for Saturday, February 20 at the Hamilton Victoria Curling Club on King Street East, Hamilton. Last year 64 curlers had a day of fun and raised over \$5,000 for the Bishop's Company Endowment Fund, which 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.

To enter a team or get more details contact Mary Anne Grant at 905-527-1316 ext. 380 or [maryanne.grant@niagaraanglican.ca](mailto:maryanne.grant@niagaraanglican.ca)

**The Coldest Night of the Year**, also scheduled for Saturday, February 20, is a "fantastically fun, family-friendly walking fundraiser that raises money for the hungry, homeless and hurting in over 100 communities across Canada." The walkers raise money for their locally based charities and "feel a hint of the challenge faced by those experiencing homelessness - particularly during the winter." Last year a number of parishes and groups in Niagara Diocese participated with hundreds of walkers raising much needed money to finance their various charitable outreach programs.

For more information and to participate contact [coldestnightoftheyear.org](http://coldestnightoftheyear.org)

You can warm up the lives of people by participating in one or both of these cool events on Saturday, February 20.

**Send an account—with photos—of your participation in the Bishop's Company Bonspiel or The Coldest Night of the Year to the Niagara Anglican. Deadline is February 25.**



### walk for Hamilton! Sat, Feb. 20 at 5pm

start a team



join with friends



give

sign up at [cnoy.org/hamilton](http://cnoy.org/hamilton)  
for more information please call 905-523-5546 x227



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