

“one plants ...  
another waters  
... God causes the  
growth”

1 Corinthians 3:7

RBG Rock Garden

Photo: Ian Youseman



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# NIAGARA ANGLICAN

A section of the Anglican Journal

A Gathering Place and a Sounding Board for the People of the Diocese of Niagara — Since 1955

SUMMER 2016

## My Call: Easing end-of-life, maybe my own someday



Photo: Vicki Gopal

### SUE CARDUELIS

A long-forgotten piece of paper showed up this week: a list I'd made between me and myself 25 years ago about what was important in my life. (Coincidence? Hmmm ...)

Among the usual suspects was one line: "visiting old or sick people." If anyone were to ask me how long ago it occurred to me to take a course in hospice

volunteer training, I never would have placed it so far back. As with most lives, the steps progressed lurchingly but somehow always pointed in the same direction. In 2010, I completed Acclaim Health's wonderful 10-week course to train people for community volunteering. In 2011, I joined the Palliative Care group of volunteers at Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital (OTMH).

As Ontario policies move toward "aging at home", the implications abound at every level. Everyone knows someone whose much-needed long-term care is affected by wait times or out-of-reach costs. While it might be the wish of most everyone to die at home, it is not a realistic possibility in many cases, especially for those living alone. Then think

—See SUE CARDUELIS Page 2

## YOUTH immersed in social justice

### SU MCLEOD

It was the first weekend of spring, not officially but certainly in temperature; more significantly it was the first session of Youth Synod in Action (YSA).

April 15–17 saw 47 young people from across the diocese gather at St. George's St. Catharines to engage in a weekend of immersion experiences in social justice initiatives and issues.

The immersion experiences which the delegates engaged in



▲ Youth Synod in Action participants presented immersion experiences to other delegates.

Photo: Su McLeod

—See YOUTH Page 5

### The Empowerment of Women

Sharyn Hall links this issue with the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.



Page **5**

### Changing perceptions of an unchanging God

Eleanor Johnston and Wayne Fraser explore the evolution of our understanding of God.



Page **8**

### A Summer Tale

Doug Crosbie tells the story of God moving in a mysterious way.



Page **9**

## Carol Spence

An indomitable spirit



Photo: Spence family, submitted via Christ's Church Cathedral

"A character, a petite and gracious lady who cast such an inordinately large shadow of goodness, humour, elfin like joy and infectious wisdom on us all."

With these words Dean Peter Wall described Carol Spence, echoing the feelings of the overflowing congregation who had gathered in Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton for the celebration of her life.

Surrounded by her family Carol died peacefully on April 28, 2016 after a courageous battle with cancer. "Her indomitable spirit stayed with her to the end," eulogised the diocesan obituary.

She will be dearly missed by her husband, Bishop Ralph Spence, their family and everyone who knew her. As Peter said in his homily, "We will miss her in so very many ways, and we are grief stricken at her death. And yet Carol would not want us to look backward, only forward. She would not want us to be overwhelmed by our sadness, but rather overjoyed at what she has meant to each of us."

Carol was a mother, friend, primary teacher for over 40 years, choir member since the age of six and avid gardener, stated her obituary, but "most importantly she was a partner to her husband in serving the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Niagara for almost 50 years."

Peter agreed, "Carol, as a companion and spouse, well understood the beautiful words of Ruth: 'Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people and your God my God.' From rectory to rectory, while raising three children and working as a teacher, Carol lived out that particular hospitality of the blessed—everyone was welcome; no difference was made between the highest and the lowest. Everyone was fed, nurtured and loved."

Her gospel choice was the story of the good Samaritan, which Peter reminded people, Carol "would want us to hear about that one man who cared, who stopped, who nourished, who went out of his way to make a difference in another's life. Mostly, Carol would remind us of the last line: 'Go and do likewise.'"

Peter drew attention to Bishopsgate, the garden at the front of the Cathedral. "(There) is a small patch of beautiful pink tulips—bulbs which Carol planted in the fall. They bloomed this past Thursday—the day Carol died. A wonderful gift to us all, just like her life."

## Sue Carduelis: My call

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of those with dementia and no family help. This means it is mostly women, often with scant financial resources, bereft and bewildered, invisible among us, who are left by the wayside, not even aware of what support they might have.

A new factor is the reduction of hospital admission for patients known to have end-of-life conditions. In the last two years our volunteer group has seen palliative care hospital stays diminish from weeks or even months to days or even hours. Where we once established a rapport with the patients and families, it is now a brief offering of compassion to the families, the patients by this time being so strongly medicated that no engagement is possible. Recognizing that not all extreme situations can be cared for at home, we ask, "Where is hospice?"

Personally, I've chosen to add a new dimension to my volunteering. I love my many relationships with chronic-care patients at OTMH and will not abandon them. I love playing my soft-voiced wooden flute there and my heart is full when I hear, "My heart feels milder now." However, the strength of that early call has now "made" me apply to volunteer once a week at a Toronto hospice. In May, I participated in intensive training with Philip Aziz Centre and Emily's House, and now feel more gratified in pursuing my path. The learning curve is steep, inspiring a new



▲ Sue Carduelis with Richard Bradley leading Celtic worship at St. Aidan's Oakville

Niagara Anglican file photo

font of energy within myself. I was surprised to learn funding depends largely on individual and business donations. Emily's House, a pediatric hospice, has 10 beds but funding for only six. Terminally ill children and their families are not publicly supported for hospice care.

Returning to community support, one effect of "aging at home" is that while caregivers help at a person's home, it's often different people all the time. The continuity of a familiar face, the same compassionate voice as last week, is invaluable to a very ill person. More and more, this is

where neighbours and church friends can provide a gift of peace and comfort.

As physician assisted death becomes the law of our land, I deeply believe it behooves all of us to become more aware of the changing issues, learn more about our expanding resources and open our hearts for the best transitions, including our own.

*Sue Carduelis is a member of St. Aidan's Oakville where she plays her flute at the Celtic worship on Sunday mornings and during the monthly Taizé service.*  
songfinch@sympatico.ca

## Visit a garden – help a child

The flowers are in bloom so it's time to explore some of Burlington's hidden treasures.

After visiting five gardens and enjoying English afternoon tea in St. Luke's Parish Hall, you can savour the feeling your money will go to children in need.

The children will be helped through Food Banks (St. Matthew's House Hamilton and Partnership West Food Bank Burlington), Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (clean water for the First Nation community in Pikangikum Ontario and pre-natal care in developing nations) and the Anglican Church of Canada's Council of the North (Youth

Suicide Prevention).

Mark the date—Sunday, June 26 from 10 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.—at St. Luke's, 1382 Ontario Street, Burlington.

For more information and tickets (\$25) contact Outreach Committee Chair Veronica Richards-Miller at 905-637-6341.



Experience beautiful June flowers on the garden tour and help children at the same time.

Photo: Craig Fairley

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**HOLLIS**torial

# Following the rules is not the same as being good

The headline caught my attention and reminded me of Jesus.

The article, written by Mark Bulgutch—former senior executive producer of CBC news who teaches journalism at Ryerson University Toronto—appeared in the *Toronto Star* (April 3, 2016).

“No problem at all. Glad to spread the word,” was Mark’s reply when I asked his permission to quote from his article.

He began, “If you follow the news closely, there’s a phrase, or a version of it that comes up again and again. ‘We followed all the rules’ or ‘We broke no laws.’”

Then he described examples from government and politics.

He could have included religious, community and charitable institutions where individuals adhere strictly to legalistic rules.

Rules or regulations, probed Mark, “set the minimum standard for behaviour. Don’t we

deserve better than that?”

We do deserve better than that, but often the minimum becomes the maximum, which we take for granted.

This brings me to two specific quotes attributed to Jesus Christ.

Unlike Moses, the go-between who climbed Mount Sinai, carved God’s Ten Commandments on stone “iPads” and then brought them down to the masses, Jesus (Matthew 5-7) delivered God’s two new commandments and behaviour codes personally to people, without any intermediary.

Jesus noticed how the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law justified their behaviour by referencing thousands of “man devised” miniscule regulations. William Barclay, the great lay Bible expositor, observed “they were right in seeking God’s will and profoundly dedicating their lives to obeying it; they were

wrong in finding that will in their man-made hordes of rules and regulations.”

Jesus wanted his followers to be more, “unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Pharisees and the Teachers of the Law, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20)

For them the minimum had become the maximum, but Jesus wanted God’s people to live the maximum and “walk the second mile.”

He cited an example which his hearers would have already experienced. In occupied countries like Palestine, soldiers could conscript individuals to carry their heavy baggage for one mile. It was the law so people had no choice but to comply.

As citizens, they were following the legal requirements; however Jesus demanded more; “If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.” (Matthew 5:42)

The difference between following legalistic rules and doing what Jesus/God expects, explained William Barclay, is attitude and behaviour. “Don’t do a mile with bitter and obvious resentment; go two miles with cheerfulness and good grace.”

Mark Bulgutch reiterated going the second mile, and I repeat it here for emphasis, “Rules set the minimum standard for behaviour. Don’t we deserve better than that?”

Jesus/God would applaud with a resounding, “YES.”

We expect our leaders to function well above the minimum legalistic requirements even when no regulations exist or are too fuzzy to interpret.

Likewise, they should expect the same from us.

Mark Bulgutch ended his article with this keen observation: “There is a lot of grey in

our world. But not everything is grey. Some things are right. Some things are wrong. Weasel words do not change that.”

William Barclay agreed when he wrote that the reverence and respect offered by Jesus/God “did not consist in obeying a multitude of petty rules and regulations” but rather having our actions based on love and doing good.

“Complete the maximum, ignore the minimum” should be our moral compass.

If the maximum of good became our minimum behaviour standard in carrying out our human responsibilities, the world would be a better place for everyone.

*Feedback is always welcome. Contact Hollis Hiscock at editor@niagaraanglican.ca*

## Letters

### Replace gay with race

I rather suspect if the current debate were about extending marriage rites to people of different races and not LGBTQ individuals, we would not be having this discussion. Neither would we be worrying about the possible “consequence” of being sent to the naughty corner for being inclusive. In fact, the Anglican Church of Canada would wear any such sanction as a badge of honour!

Sadly, some persons still view sexual orientation as a choice (despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary) and so they believe that LGBTQ people should sit (at the back of the church) and wait for a hopeful changing of minds by some bishops.

To those persons I commend

the words which Martin Luther King, Jr. penned in his famous letter from the Birmingham jail. In it, he addressed white sympathetic pastors who opposed his strident civil rights actions on behalf of persecuted southern blacks as being premature. Martin paraphrased a US Supreme Court Justice and reminded these religious leaders that “justice delayed is justice denied.”

LGBTQ people continue to dream that we will be judged solely by the content of our character. Nothing else.

There is simply no difference between our struggles for equality. To claim otherwise is to be disingenuous at best and hypocritical at worst.

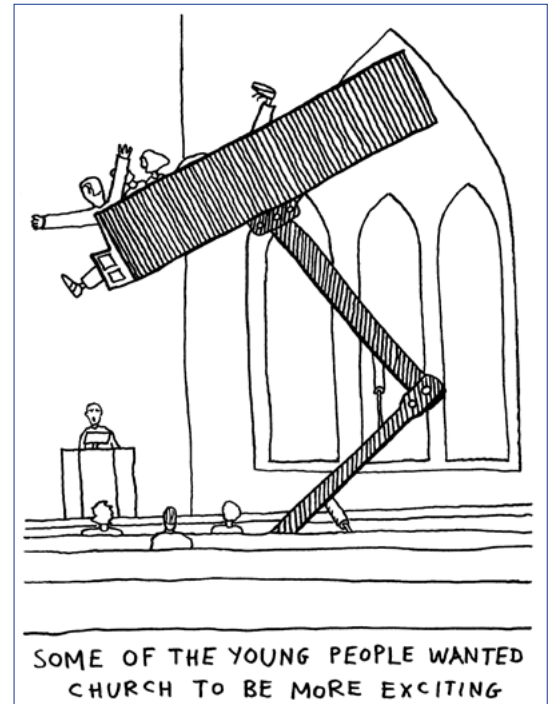
*Maurice Tomlinson  
St. Jude’s Oakville*

### We are all alive in God

With many others I stand in solidarity with the LGBTQ community. With many others I share the deep sadness expressed by Bishop Michael in his pastoral letter. We all need the boundless love of God in our lives, and we all need to make present that divine love in our hearts, actions and institutions.

In Luke (chapter 20) some Sadducees tested Jesus concerning marriage (conjugal relations) and the resurrection. If a man’s brother dies leaving a childless widow, and if this happens seven times, whose wife will she be in the afterlife? Jesus responds that life in the age to come is not the same as this life. His rejoinder implies the Sadducees are raising

—See LETTERS page 4



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**Letters**

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the issue too narrowly and too literally. I think some are making a similar mistake today. They are missing the point. God is God of the living. We are all alive in God. It does not matter that the woman had seven husbands; nor does our sexual orientation matter. God loves and welcomes all of us who turn to him. Who are we to bar some from the full range of graces available through the Church?

*C.T (Terry) Gillin  
St. Cuthbert's Oakville*

**What would Jesus do?**

Thank you for expressing publicly the thoughts I've had about the Anglican Church for a long time.

Re general Synod structure: I agree that it should be one body with equal voting rights for every delegate—lay, clergy or bishop. It is not right that one "house" rep-

resenting a minority of delegates should have the power to negate the wishes of the majority. This has become painfully obvious with discussion of the marriage canon revisions.

I am greatly disturbed that the House of Bishops has announced in advance of General Synod that the revisions will "likely not pass this year." I would have expected their decision to have been made only after hearing full discussion of the issue by ALL delegates. Are their minds closed to what the majority of the church may wish?

Re marriage: all couples should be legally married in a civil ceremony. Then, if church actually means anything to them, have a religious blessing ceremony.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our opinions.

*Shirley E. Gibbon  
St. Stephen on the Mount  
Hamilton*

**Women of the Bible**

Lent 2017 Theme – Call for contributors

"Women of the Bible" is the Niagara Anglican's planned daily meditation series for Lent next year, beginning on Ash Wednesday, March 1, 2017.

We are seeking 40 female volunteers to each select a woman from the Bible and write a short meditation (175 words or less) about her. Your meditation should include Bible references, the woman's life/faith story and why you have chosen her.

If you need assistance in making a selection, Google "women of the Bible" or check out the entry "List of Women In The Bible" in Wikipedia, the free online encyclopedia.

To volunteer or receive answers to your questions, contact co-ordinator Mary Anne Grant at [maryanne.grant@niagaraanglican.ca](mailto:maryanne.grant@niagaraanglican.ca) or 905-527-1316, ext. 380.

Volunteer immediately to reserve your favourite person and help the Niagara Anglican get a head start on Lent. The summer is a marvellous time to sit in your comfortable venue, to read, reflect and then write your meditation.

This will be the fifth year the Niagara Anglican has featured



Lenten meditations for the season preceding the great celebration of Easter. Every year, three or four other diocesan papers have reprinted all or some of the daily reflections, which were also available worldwide on our diocesan website.

The previous four years focused on the gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John—and included meditations from a wide variety of lay people and clergy, as well as students from Trinity Theological College Toronto.

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**Don Smith**  
owner

# Youth immersed in social justice

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

were food security, led by the PWRDF, welcoming newcomers, diversity and LGBT human rights and all our relationships.

These offered an incredible opportunity for delegates to engage in social justice concerns and issues affecting people locally and globally. The youth heard very personal first hand stories and experiences from those for whom these issues are very real, from those who are responding to God's call to bear witness and from those who are working as allies and advocates.

Such opportunities offering intentional learning are few and far between as we often dismiss the interest, compassion and comprehension of young people.

I invite and encourage you to find out who represented your parish and speak with them about their experience.

Fraser Passmore from Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton describes his immersion experience.

"I had the pleasure of attend-



Delegates to Youth Synod in Action pose for a group shot. The event was held at St. George's St. Catharines.

Photo: Submitted

ing YSA (Youth Synod in Action). At first I was nervous, being away from home and my normal routines, but as I met new people and got settled in, it became an amazing adventure.

My immersion group had the

honour of spending an afternoon with Maurice Tomlinson, a Jamaica born LGBT activist and his husband Tom Decker, a former Catholic priest who was forced out of the church due to his sexuality, but was accepted

within the Anglican Church.

These two were quite outstanding, giving us insight on diversity within communities and how to battle discrimination.

We also were able to watch a documentary called *The*

*Abominable Crime*, which featured both Maurice and Tom and discussed the issue of how LGBT members and supporters are treated in Jamaica. It was truly eye opening. Never before had I known what other people around the world had to live like.

I myself, being an openly gay man, can't imagine the fear of being killed by your own neighbours or when casually walking down the street. Many teens are too afraid to come out for the safety of their lives. It's the hardest decision one can make, either coming out and having a physical gun held to your head, or staying closeted and having a psychological gun held to your head. You're trapped.

Now I have a new view on LGBT activism and I hope to become involved more where I can—now and in the future."

*Su McLeod is the Program Consultant for children, youth and family ministry for Niagara Diocese.*

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## The empowerment of women

SHARYN HALL

The Empowerment of Women was the main theme of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) for 2016. For 60 years, the UNCSW has organized an annual conference in New York City to address issues affecting women and girls in many cultures and countries. I was privileged for the sixth time to be a delegate from the Anglican Church of Canada.

Thousands of women travelled to New York in March as representatives of governments, non-governmental associations and faith-based organizations to raise concerns and present strategies to overcome injustices. Numerous topics included: forced migration, human trafficking at home and abroad, poverty in rich and developing countries, equal access to education and gender-based violence.

The empowerment of women and girls is linked to the new UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, see graphic page 11) presented by the UN as an expansion of the Millennium Development Goals. The SDGs include 17 topics, some of which have direct impact on the welfare of women and girls, ranging from Zero Hunger to Clean Water to Climate Action. Sustainable development is defined in

terms of economic growth, but females often are at the bottom of the economic ladder. The goal of development must emphasize that no-one is left behind.

Concerns for women and girls are numerous and varied; here are a few examples:

- legal rights to safety, to child custody and to property rights
- access to health care and reproductive rights
- child slavery and forced marriage
- climate change and food scarcity
- clean water and disease control
- trafficking of women and children
- domestic and social violence
- sexual violence as a weapon of war
- literacy and equal access to education.

Women of faith are acting for the wellbeing of women and girls in local and global situations. The common slogan was "Think Globally, Act Locally", but now we can say "Think and Act, Locally and Globally." The first task is to educate ourselves about the issues facing women and girls in our own communities and in situations around the world. With the tools of global communication, information is readily available. It is no longer necessary to choose between local and international needs.

—See EMPOWERMENT Page 11





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## Ancaster's Fieldcote Museum opens special exhibit

**MARY MELLISH**

On Wednesday, March 30, Fieldcote Museum in Ancaster celebrated the grand opening of an exhibit entitled Memories of St. John's: The First 200 Years.

Many photos and pieces of art on exhibit came from the St. John's archives. Also on display are samples of the prayer shawl, card and baptismal quilt ministries. In a place of honour is a re-creation of the St. John's stained glass window, honouring our patron. Another interpretive panel identifies many people associated with the history of Ancaster and Hamilton who are buried in St. John's churchyard.

This exhibit, created as part of the celebration of the Bicentennial of St. John's Ancaster, was curated by Lois Corey.

Among the civil and church representatives speaking at the official opening was MP Filomena Tassi who brought greetings from the Government of Canada. She commended the partnership between faith and cultural communities which created the exhibit. She offered gratitude and best wishes to St. John's and its people for the service they have offered the community in the past and will continue to offer into the next

200 years and beyond.

The Fieldcote Museum exhibit runs until October 22 and is open 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., from Tuesday to Saturday.

For more information: [pr@ancasteranglican.org](mailto:pr@ancasteranglican.org)

► The planners and creators of the Fieldcote Museum, highlighting the 200 year history of St. John's Ancaster, include Marlene Patterson, Wanda Perdue, Curator Lois Corey, Gillian Horn and Myrna Brownlie.

▼ ► Artifacts on display at the exhibit include articles used in worship over the years (below), memorabilia and a prie dieu (right).

Photos: Submitted by Marlene Patterson



## A personal reflection on stewardship

**NEIL CULP**

Stewardship is one of those words that sounds old, and in a time of new, exciting innovations coming out every week, it seems to be a word people are feeling less connected to. In a world where it's cheaper and easier to buy a new TV than fix an old one, assuming it's even broken, a concept like stewardship may seem to be out of place. But I don't think it's a word we should be looking to get rid of anytime soon, because as the world shifts so does the meaning and importance of the word.

When I think back, my first real lessons in stewardship occurred when I was involved in Scouting. I am not shy to share that in my life I was a Beaver, Cub and Scout. Some of my best memories growing up came from my time camping, canoeing and learning as part of Scouts.

Living in the north end of St. Catharines, my brother and I joined the 22nd Scout troop housed at St. Columba. Later, I followed many of the key leaders to found the 57th Scout troop at the Grantham Optimist. Both troops were very active with dedicated leaders, and as such we went on about five camps per year including a week long summer camp.

What's important about that is every time we were camping the leaders would drill into our minds that part of our responsibility was to leave the camp site and surrounding area better off than we found it. It was our responsibility to take care of nature because it was a special resource that warranted our time and attention if we wanted to have it into the future.

That notion, of leaving a place better off than when you found it, really resonated with me. It is,

in fact, a large part of who I am today and is a key motivation in my career. Those experiences defined my sense of what stewardship really means.

Stewardship, to me, is fundamentally about a sustained commitment to taking care of and investing in the things that are important to us, so that we have those things when we want or need them in the future. More than that though, stewardship is about making those important things better for being in our care.

Earlier I suggested the notion of stewardship is not outdated, but changing.

Stewardship is about commitment and an enhanced level of care. In a world where we throw out so much, the number of things worthy of true stewardship is narrowing to those central to human need and definition.

You wouldn't say that steward-



Neil Culp is Associate Director of the Human Resources department at Brock University and practices his stewardship at St. George's St. Catharines. [neil.culp@sympatico.ca](mailto:neil.culp@sympatico.ca)

Photo: Submitted

ship is an appropriate term to care for a fridge, microwave or even perhaps IKEA furniture. But church, family, true friendships and even one's reputation and/or career are, I hope, things that are important enough to us to warrant a special level of continued attention.

Stewardship to me is about making the choice that something in our lives, like church, is important. We then make the space in our lives to actively look after it; to try and make it better than it is because we have chosen to become its stewards.

# The Barton Union Church

**JOACHIM BROUWER**

As St. John's Ancaster, which was given the sobriquet of "Methodist Mountain" by the Society for Propagation of the Gospel (the Church of England's missionary outreach in the new world), since it had fallen into the baleful grips of the "circuit rider" and "tent meeting revival," is celebrating its 200th anniversary, we could examine an even older group of Anglican worshippers in what was then Quebec Diocese.

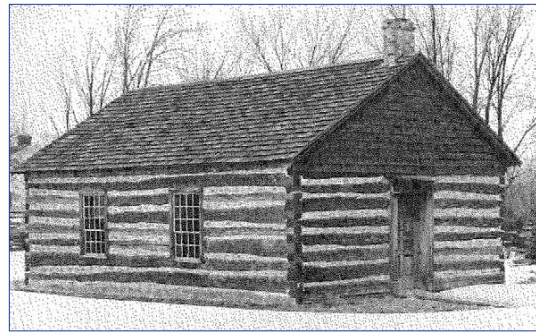
St. John's was located at a high point of land on the Detroit trail leading to the Mohawk Iroquois village (Cainsville) and then onto the Thames river valley and points west. A better known aboriginal trail fronted a simple frame two story structure with a choir loft over the front door erected about 1810. This is the fabled Barton Union Church which served Anglicans, Lutherans and Methodists on the West Mountain.

The Mohawk trail (the Great road) was the principal thoroughfare for the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations) Iroquois and Attawandaron (Neutral) Iroquois

to fight or trade with the Wendat (Huron) Iroquois to the north, and was also the prime east-west migration route for the Palatine Pennsylvania Dutch United Empire Loyalists, on their way to begin a new life in Upper Canada after the American Revolution.

Barton Union Church was located on the east side of William Rymal's farm. The west side of land he donated for a cemetery. Hamilton's Mountain Heritage Society, authors of *Mountain Memories*, believes the location of the Barton Union Church to be where Westcliffe Mall is today. Rymal's log cabin was just to the west on the other side of Upper Paradise Road.

Over the decades, Barton Union Church—along with St. Peter's, its Anglican successor—became associated with the pioneer cemetery, now known as St. Peter's Cemetery. Even though the cemetery was the final destination for all faiths, it was conveyed in 1821 to the Quebec Diocese of the Church of England. A plaque at the entrance to St. Peter's Cemetery, marking the Barton Union Church, continues to fuel the



This log church at Upper Canada Village is probably what Barton Union Church looked like.

Photo: Submitted

misunderstanding that the church was in the cemetery. Actually, it was situated about 200 metres west.

During the 1812 War, Barton Union Church served as a military hospital with a chaplain occasionally doing services. It served as a convalescent facility during the early 1830's cholera epidemic, since the Mountain was a considerable distance from Hamilton's port, the epicenter of this highly contagious disease.

After the Presbyterians secured their own church—

although they didn't move into Barton Stone Church (Stone Church Road and James Street) until 1845—the Barton Union Church passed into the hands of the Anglicans.

Many in the recently created "police village" called Hamilton trekked up the steep John or Mountain Road path—the only access to upper Barton township at the time—to attend services in Barton Union Church.

In 1836, Bishop George Jehoshaphat Mountain of Quebec Diocese consecrated

Barton Union Church, but three years later the aging structure was condemned. It sat unused for many years. By then the Reverend John Geddes began serving the lower city Anglicans in the stone court house on the south-west corner of Jackson and John, which would become Christ's Church congregation.

In his memoirs the Reverend Clarence Bull, Rector of three churches on the Mountain, said the old Barton Union Church was sold at public auction in 1850 for 40 dollars, the amount being equally divided between Anglican widows and the Presbyterians.

In 1852 St. Peter's Anglican Church opened to the east of Barton Union Church squarely in middle of St. Peter's cemetery. It too has disappeared from the landscape—the victim of changing demographics.

*Joachim Brouwer is a local history advocate in Hamilton, co-secretary of the Gibson-Landsdale Neighbourhood Association and a member of the Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society. joachim\_brouwer@yahoo.ca*

## Inmates read books and send CDs home to their children

**JOHN DENNIS**

St. Matthias Anglican Community in Guelph is bringing books to inmates at the Toronto South Detention Centre and the Vanier Centre for Women in Milton.

The book recycling program was started at St. Matthias by Mary Ann Robinson and is run through the Environment and Social Justice Committee. Books are collected, inspected and passed along to the two institutions for use by the inmates.

One program coordinator at the Vanier Centre wrote to Mary Ann that "the Centres are very grateful for anything they can get. Both centres have a large transient population moving through the prison system, so many of the books move on with the inmates. We always need more material." Both centres accept paperback books and magazines with no staples. The highest demand is for thrillers and detective stories and other forms of light reading. They are



▲ John Dennis and Mary Ann Robinson with books donated from John McCrae Public School and Ponsonby Public School for the Toronto South Detention Centre and the Vanier Centre for Women in Milton.

Photo: Ann Chidwick

also eager for material in other languages.

The Environment and Social Justice Committee, currently meeting at St. James the Apostle Guelph, is made up of members

from St. Matthias, St. James and Sugarbush Community Church, all in Guelph.

The group is always looking for projects to take on and was thrilled to be able to use some of

its community connections to obtain books for the program. Committee Chair John Dennis said, "St. James has a connection with John McCrae Public School and we were able to get books that were moving out of circulation. The teacher/librarian at John McCrae also passed along our request to other librarians in the Upper Grand District School Board and donations have come from a number of schools."

Of particular importance are donations of new or lightly-used children's books. Vanier Centre runs a program in which inmates record themselves reading books. The book and the CD of the recording are sent home to the inmate's children. According to the Vanier Coordinator, the recordings have travelled as far as Florida and Texas, while many go out of province.

The collection and inspection is not an easy task. Books must be individually examined and hard cover (inappropriate) and damaged books are not submitted. As well, staples must be

removed for safety precautions at the jail. St. Matthias' program coordinator Mary Ann examines each book and when required removes the staples and sews the books or magazines back together. She said, "Providing materials that enable parents to maintain family connections strengthens the family, and better enables the parent to keep a position of value in the family and thereby makes it easier to reintegrate into that family upon release."

The program is aiming to collect and pass along at least 500 books in 2016 to the two jails. John concluded, "our next goal is to find children's stories in Indigenous languages. We hope to raise money and find a good source to purchase these children's books this summer."

*John Dennis is Chair of the Environment and Social Justice Committee and a member of St. James the Apostle Guelph. office@sjapostle.ca*

# The evolution of our understanding of God

**ELEANOR JOHNSTON AND WAYNE FRASER**

The Reverend Gretta Vosper attracts a lot of media attention. The minister of West Hill United Church Scarborough is in conflict with the authorities of the United Church of Canada, who want to examine her effectiveness as a minister by challenging her faithfulness to her ordination vows. Presumably Gretta, an avowed atheist, is unable to renew her first vow, "Do you believe in God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and do you commit yourself anew to God?" For now, she carries on with the full support of her congregation, and her lawyer.

Gretta believes her calling is to "niggle" organized religion. She has certainly succeeded in doing just that. After all, it surprises most people to hear a Christian minister declare herself an atheist. When she explains in greater detail what she means, she sounds more credible. She does not believe in the traditional understanding of a theistic God, a human-like but supreme power, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, able to intervene in human history whenever He wants. She challenges the "God in the sky" image, the one who

*We have issues about who's in and who's out.*

can cure our loved ones if we pray hard enough, ensure the sun shines on our picnic and let our team win the big game.

Gretta's beliefs and leadership in the church have been praised by retired American Bishop John Spong, another clergy who likes to express himself in a provocative manner: "An atheist is not someone who does not believe there is a God. An atheist is one who has rejected the theistic definition of God."

They are not alone. The concept of a non-theistic God began as the great "I AM," a name of God given to the Israelites of Old Testament times. Protestant theologian Paul Tillich developed this concept of God as "Ground of all Being" in the mid-20th century. Many clergy and laity experience God in this way every day, as do many of our interfaith sisters and brothers.

Wayne uses the term "atheist" when he encounters someone, usually a lapsed parishioner, who thinks she can block theological

talk with a statement like, "I think I'm an atheist." Wayne usually responds, "I think I am too." Once the shock language has done its work of focusing attention on shared questions, constructive conversation can provide the opportunity to talk about God as Presence, Life, Love.

Gretta's problems are not unique, though timely. Who do we worship? God remains unchanging, but our understanding of the divine changes over time, as does our expression of that experience. We can look back in history and find the "jealous God" who protected his favored tribe. Then came Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit, expecting us to love God, ourselves and our enemies. We have had a difficult time being Christian. Some saints and scholars have grasped and applied Christ's vision, but generally people maintain an Old Testament mindset.

Now we face another way of seeing God. The spirituality of our time, built upon a post-Darwinian God, is difficult to grasp. There is hope because people need to worship, to follow God. One step we need to take is out of tribal religion and any church that excludes love. We must look at what all humanity shares:

life on planet earth and a divine creating Spirit moving us always toward well-being, truth, wisdom.

Renaming God creates a challenging division in our churches. At the heart of this conflict is the power to include and exclude. The United Church deserves credit for having the courage to debate this issue in public. Meanwhile, Gretta stands up for those who want to include her and her theology.



Eleanor Johnston is a contributor to the Niagara Anglican and the Reverend Wayne Fraser has served as interim priest in Niagara. [eleanorjohnston@gmail.com](mailto:eleanorjohnston@gmail.com); [fraserwayne@gmail.com](mailto:fraserwayne@gmail.com).

**"Say your grace before you eat"**



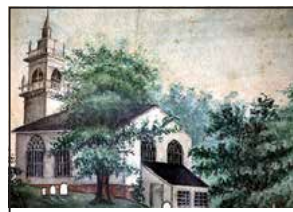
Susan Campbell Bowman of Waterdown recalls her introduction to her favourite grace:

"In the early 1950s our family stayed at a summer cottage on Sandy Lake in the Kawarthas owned by George and Betty Parlour. We were all members of St. James Dundas.

Betty taught us this grace—said at the evening meal. It has been a favourite ever since, especially at family gatherings."

**We thank you Lord for happy hearts  
For rain and sunny weather  
We thank you for this, our food  
And that we are together.**

Want your favourite grace included in a future Niagara Anglican? Send it with your story to the Editor (contact information page 3).



## Celebrating St. John's Bicentennial

**Memories of St. John's: The First 200 Years**  
March 12–October 22

An exhibition exploring St. John's first 200 years. Fieldcote Museum, 64 Sulphur Springs Road, Ancaster.

**A Bevy of Biblical Beauties**  
Wednesday, June 1

A fashion show of women of the Bible, 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall, 37 Halson Street. Free-will offering to benefit The Native Women's Centre.

**Open House**  
Sunday, June 12 (Heritage Day Weekend)

**Self-guided tours** (1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.) of the church and churchyard in which many Ancaster historical figures are buried.

**Fair Linens Display:** displays of liturgical vestments, fair linens, and prayer shawls.

**Afternoon Tea** at 3:00 p.m. by advanced ticket sales only. (No tickets sold at the door)

**Homecoming of Past and Present Clergy and Parishioners**  
Sunday, September 18

Please join us at the 10:00 a.m. service, followed by a BBQ. Walk around the building, reminisce with past and present friends.

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St. John's Anglican Church  
200 Years in Christ's Love

## Thanks for supporting our papers

The Anglican Journal Appeal completed another successful year in 2015 with 9,640 donors across Canada contributing \$517,449.

In Niagara Diocese, \$43,682 was received from 886 donors, with an average donation of \$49.30.

After expenses the donations are divided equally between our national paper, the Anglican Journal, and our diocesan Niagara Anglican. We received \$16,521 towards the Niagara Anglican budget.

The Appeal, completing its 21st year since its inception in 1994, is supported by 25 dioceses comprising the Anglican Church of Canada.

Over the years your generosity has ensured both the Niagara Anglican and Anglican Journal continue to publish and be vital communication links for the church in our world.

We thank you for your faithful support and trust that you will continue to contribute to the Anglican Journal Appeal in 2016.





**A summer tale**

# God works in mysterious ways

**DOUG CROSBIE**

It was a beautiful warm late afternoon in 1953 when a 14 year old boy left his high school to walk home. He noted the air had turned breezy and the blue sky appeared threatening.

Soon, he was due to report for work as a delivery boy at a drugstore located downtown. Arriving home, he detected the aroma of freshly baked cookies. Opening the door he saw his mother standing at the stove with her back to him, and the cookies laying on the countertop within easy grasp.

He palmed a cookie. His mom, reputed to have eyes in the back of her head, said, "Take TWO. A thunderstorm with strong winds is developing; you'll need your rain slicker which is in the garage."

Teen-age boys have selective hearing. He grabbed two cookies, changed into his work clothes and totally forgot the slicker. Jumping on his bike he rode to the drugstore; the wind had picked up and the rain was started.

The owner/pharmacist said he had a rush order - medication for a very sick baby, and the young mother was anxiously waiting. He said, "I hate to send you out in this bad weather, but it is an emergency."

On the way the boy returned home to get his slicker. He dashed into the garage, retrieved the raincoat, put it on and was soon on his way. (His mom saw him enter the garage. She turned away before he exited. She thought, "Surely he'll wait there until the rain lets up.")

The rain and wind had picked up considerably. The boy arrived at the sick baby's home, delivered the needed medication and began the return trip to the store.

He heard an incredible roaring sound and suddenly was no longer making any progress on his bicycle; instead he was lying on someone's lawn. When his vision cleared, he saw dangling wires, uprooted trees and downed hydro poles. People were running, shouting and screaming.

Slowly regaining his senses, he pieced together what had happened. He struggled to his



Photo: Submitted

feet, relieved he was not seriously injured and began walking through the broken glass and downed wires to the drugstore. It had been hard hit also. The front door was impassable. He scurried to the back. The very relieved druggist told him to go home.

He could hardly believe what had happened on his street. Every house had some damage but his was a mess. A falling tree crushed the front porch, but the worst was in the back-yard where a tree had fallen on the old garage, flattening his dad's car.

His parents and siblings were trying to extract something from the garage. They stopped when they saw the boy walking toward them. They had made the terrible assumption he was still in the garage, buried under a ton of debris.

"You're alive," they shouted, and embraced him like never before. His father located the old charcoal bar-b-cue, and having no stove, they enjoyed hot dogs on the grill.

The family joined hands and gave thanks to God for delivering them safely from a tornado which touched their community for a very few minutes, but left in its wake three dead, many injured and millions of dollars in damages.

The boy has reflected on this "act of God" and his role in it many times over the years. He always concludes that God does indeed work in mysterious ways. He is extremely grateful that having come quite close to an early meeting with his Maker, it didn't happen.

I know; I was that boy.

*Doug Crosbie is a member of St. James' Dundas. fitzus@cogeco.ca*

# New Archdeacons



Valerie Kerr



Steve Hopkins



Suzanne Craven

Three priests in Niagara Diocese will take on added responsibilities following their appointments by Bishop Michael Bird.

Canon **Suzanne Craven**, the Rector of the Church of the Epiphany Oakville, has been appointed Archdeacon of Trafalgar. In her new capacity, Suzanne joins the team of six regional archdeacons who serve Niagara Diocese by taking particular responsibility for church buildings, the well-being of clergy and their families, and the implementation of diocesan policy within the region to which they are assigned. Archdeacons also serve as members of synod council.

The Rector of St. John the Evangelist Niagara Falls, Canon **Valerie Kerr**, becomes the Archdeacon for Truth, Reconciliation and Indigenous Ministry. In her new role Val will be charged with helping the Bishop implement the Anglican Church of Canada's commitment to truth and reconciliation in Niagara Diocese. Her ministry will include teaching, building relationships and fostering healing and reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples.

Shifting roles, Archdeacon **Steve Hopkins** has agreed to become Archdeacon for Ministry

Leadership Development, after serving as Archdeacon of Trafalgar. He now focuses on supporting the Bishop by promoting adult leadership development among lay and ordained ministers. As part of God's mission, he will focus on equipping people to pursue the goals of creating and nurturing disciples, and growing missional communities.

"These individuals represent excellence in ministry and I am so pleased that they have agreed to share their incredible gifts with our diocese as an extension of my episcopal ministry," said Bishop Michael.

A service to collate the archdeacons into their new roles will be held at Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton on June 19 at 4:00 p.m.

## All are welcome

Morning Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer will precede the annual general meeting of the The Royal School of Church Music Canada (RSCMC) scheduled for Saturday, June 11, 2016 at St. Aidan's, 70 Silver Birch Ave., Toronto.  
Info: Joy Horswill, jolibays@netrover.com



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# The empowerment of women

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

We need not tackle issues alone. When we look for partners in our communities or worldwide organizations, we can see the potential to make a difference. Ecumenical Women is a large, active association in the United States, but a similar group on a smaller scale locally could be effective in addressing concerns and opportunities for women and girls. Other organizations to investigate include the YWCA, which has branches in

many countries, Malala Fund devoted to education for girls, International Anglican Women's Network, Canadian Voice of Women for Peace, Global Fund for Widows and many, many more.

Women of faith need to be courageous to challenge the attitudes and practices which deprive women and girls of their dignity and human rights. This is a grass-roots undertaking. Compassionate people are God's greatest resource.

Over the summer months, con-

sider how the women and girls (and men) of your parish could become active in local, national and international issues related to the wellbeing of women and girls. Investigate what is needed, what is being done and what you could do. Watch for an opportunity to discuss your hopes and plans at a diocesan gathering in the autumn.

Canon Sharyn Hall is a member of the International Anglican Women's Network. [halls@cogeco.ca](mailto:halls@cogeco.ca)



## Clergy News

The Reverend **Charles Easson** (former Honorary Assistant at St. Cuthbert's Oakville) died on Easter Sunday surrounded by his family. The funeral liturgy in celebration of his life was held at St. Cuthbert's Oakville. Remember his wife Gail and family in your prayers.

Canon **Kevin Bothwell**, Rector of St. Thomas' St. Catharines, was elected Regional Dean of Lincoln at Clericus on April 12.

The Reverend **Leslie Gerlofs** has accepted the incumbency of St. John's Burlington, on a 2/3 time basis, beginning June 9, 2016.

Effective August 1, 2016, Dr. **Patrick Patterson**, Rector of St. John's Elora, submitted his intention to retire after serving

that parish for the past 11 years.

Archdeacon **David Pickett** resigns as Rector of St. John's Ancaster and Archdeacon of Mohawk effective September 30, 2016. The next day he becomes Rector of Christ Church Elbow Park in the Diocese of Calgary.

On May 15, 2016, the Reverend **Javier Arias** resigned his

leadership role with the San Gabriel Spanish Congregation, which worships at St. Michael's Hamilton.

The Reverend Deacon **Ronald Vince** submitted his resignation and intention to retire as Deacon at Christ Church Flamborough on June 1, 2016.

## St. Luke's Garden Tour and English Tea Saturday June 26

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## Deadlines and Submissions for Niagara Anglican

### Deadlines:

- September – July 25
- October – August 25
- November – September 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](mailto:editor@niagaraanglican.ca) or 905-635-9463.

St. John's Celebrates

## Festal Choral Evensong



**St. John's celebrates the ministry of the Venerable Dr. David Pickett with a Festal Evensong and dinner**

**Sunday, August 28 4:00 p.m.**

Dinner \$20 by advanced booking only  
Limited seating Debit, VISA and Mastercard available

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## Refugee initiative surpasses goal

On St. Patrick's Day 2016, the Diocese of Niagara's 140th anniversary year came to a quiet conclusion. Its impact, however, continues in bold and transformative ways.

In response to the global refugee crisis, Bishop Michael Bird's ambitious goal was to welcome 50 refugees to mark this anniversary. The goal is expected to be significantly surpassed by the end of the current year. That total number represents five to ten times more refugees than would normally be welcomed in any given year.

People and parishes responded in all sorts of incredible and unexpected ways, and continue to respond generously to the diocesan anniversary initiative.

As of the beginning of April, 28 refugees were welcomed by parishes within the Diocese, and 51 more are expected to arrive in the coming weeks and months. In addition, nearly a dozen parish sponsorship groups are working towards submitting applications.

Hundreds of volunteers across the Diocese are engaged in sup-

porting these efforts, which often bring renewal and energy to the parishes, groups and people.

"Our anniversary sponsorship initiative has allowed us to shine a strong beacon of light, hope and peace into the darkness of this global crisis," said Bishop Michael. "It is changing people's lives; changing our lives and the lives of refugees, and is making a real difference in the world."

Having fled persecution and violence from countries like Syria, Iraq and Myanmar, the recently arrived families appear to be doing well in their new communities, including Port Colborne, Hamilton and Burlington. The children attend school, the adults are enhancing their English and all are connecting with groups and individuals. In addition, health issues get addressed and community orientation is ongoing.

Generally, sponsorship groups walk with newcomers throughout their first year in Canada and assist with their orientation and participation in local communities. This includes financial

support, with people throughout Niagara and beyond generously opening their wallets. Several parishes raised over \$20,000 in a matter of weeks, others organized concerts and hundreds of Anglicans contributed funds ranging from five to thirty-thousand dollars. Donations can be made through the refugee sponsorship webpage at [niagaraanglican.ca/ministry/refugee-sponsorship](http://niagaraanglican.ca/ministry/refugee-sponsorship)

"Our role as sponsors is to help facilitate the newcomers who are literally regaining control of their lives," said Scott McLeod, our diocesan refugee sponsorship coordinator. He noted many refugees have their lives on hold for months and years, waiting, sometimes in camps or cities, without the ability to work or receive an education. "We are helping those we have sponsored regain their self-determination and self-sufficiency, and we do this on our part with compassion, solidarity, flexibility and adaptability. We offer support that gives them back the freedom to live their lives."



▲ One of the many Syrian families being sponsored through the diocese's 140th anniversary initiative was welcomed by St. James and St. Brendan Port Colborne.

Niagara Anglican file photo

Niagara Diocese is also working with several community groups, faith organizations and local families to assist their efforts to welcome refugees through our sponsorship agreement. It is expected an

additional 50 refugees will be sponsored this year through such partnerships.

(From the diocesan website. For more information and news go to [niagaraanglican.ca](http://niagaraanglican.ca))

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