

Harvest in the community (gardens)

CHURCH-COMMUNITY GARDENS provide fresh vegetables freely to everybody in the community, encouraging healthier lifestyles. As people of all ages toil together in preparing the soil, sowing the seeds, watering the plants, weeding the gardens and harvesting the crops new relationships and communities are forged, nurtured and enriched. The harvest is indeed great! The Editor reflects on church-community gardens in his HOLLISitorial on page 3.



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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

OCTOBER 2016

On this page are just a few of the church-community gardens organized by parishes in Niagara.



All Saints Erin



Grace Church Waterdown



Grace Church Milton



St. Christopher's Burlington

What Cubans taught me about justice

Sierra Robertson-Roper reflects on experiences at Justice Camp.

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In conversation with ...

Our delegates who attended General Synod reflect.

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Guelph Walking Pilgrimage

Michael Burslem talks about his experience on this, his second walk.

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Second in a series

Continuing to Break the Silence

KAREN PITT

Our communities are struggling with tragic personal and relational areas of mental health. This month we will explore Suicide and Self-Harm. Breaking through the confusion can build acceptance and foster care for our friends.

Suicide & Self-Harm

Suicide and self-harming behavior affect all our communities across Canada, as highlighted in recent media articles and reports.

The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP) explains that in Canada 11 people die from suicide every day, 210 attempt to end their lives, while up to 110 people will be newly bereaved because of suicide. Suicide and self-harm are central issues in all racial, cultural, social groups and ages. It is easy to assume that self-harm is a failed suicide attempt; however, suicide and self-harm have different focuses and intended outcomes. It is vital for us to understand the

difference to enable the church and community to offer care and support.

The essence of suicide and self-harm is to stop or divert

90% being between the ages of 14-24 and 50% have survived sexual abuse. Though the act of self-harm is not a precursor to suicide, the pain that causes

on its own to cause a suicide. Someone commits suicide every 40 seconds globally. Of the 3,890 suicides (2009) in Canada, men are three times more likely to be

“Suicide and self-harm have different focuses and intended outcomes. It is vital for us to understand the difference, to enable the church and community to offer care and support.”

pain. This pain is emotional and psychological, expressed in depression, hopelessness, shame and a feeling of powerlessness. The individual seeks a solution to the mental torment, either as a final release from the burden on others or a daily managing of life through self-harm.

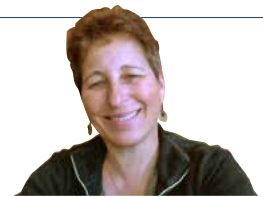
Self-harm is the intentional and deliberate hurting of oneself. It may help the sufferer express or escape feelings of emptiness and depression, relief from rage and fear or release of emotional pain. This is a short-lived reprieve. Each year one in five females and one in seven males self-harm, with

people to self-harm may also drive them to suicide. Suicidal attempts, gestures and plans are more likely to be spoken about; therefore, any act of self-harm should alert others to significant emotional distress.

Suicide is defined as an “act deliberately initiated and performed by a person in the full knowledge or expectation of its fatal outcome” (The World Health Organization). Mental illness is involved in most suicide cases, especially as a consequence of depression, post-traumatic stress or substance abuse. However, no single determinant is enough

the fatalities and those between 40-59 are shockingly the highest level of all suicides. Sadly, suicide is also the second leading cause of death for people aged 15 to 34. For most First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities youth suicides are five to six times higher than non-Native youth.

Both suicide and self-harm have one common objective – emotional pain management. However, suicide is directed at stopping the misery that those impacted by the emotional pain experience, while self-harm seeks to personally manage the pain in their lives. The shame and contempt within each



struggling individual seeks a solution to their personal battle. Each person has either resorted to a deliberate act of distraction or an absolute end to the torment. Both focus on a remedy to the emotional quagmire!

What resolution is there for hopelessness, despair and abuse? For shame that is insurmountable? The answer is in the struggle that we all face – acceptance through honesty, openness and time to be with the pain.

Grieving the loss of different parts of our lives, and the willingness to remain present, is the hardest yet simplest gift that each of us can offer one another.

Karen Pitt, a psychotherapist with more than 25 years practice, has extensive experience in individual and group therapy, as well as facilitating workshops and support groups. She attends the Church of the Incarnation Oakville. karpitt@gmail.com

What Cubans taught me about justice

SIERRA ROBERTSON-ROPER

For the first week of May, I partook in the first ever International Justice Camp in Cuba, organized jointly by Niagara Diocese and the Episcopal Church of Cuba.

The event brought together 25 Canadians and 25 Cubans to explore the theme of “Common Good: The Promise of the Reign of God.”

Together, delegates participated in one of three immersion experiences centred on a social justice topic: Food Security, Social Engagement or Economic Justice. These experiences brought people to justice projects in places such as Havana, Itabo, Cardenas, Matanzas and Varadero. What ensued was a week of deep spiritual connection, life giving reflection and much learning. Visiting Cuba has dramatically changed my views on justice making, and what our role as Christians is within that.



Delegates to the Justice Camp from Niagara Diocese standing on the patio of the retreat centre in Matanzas, Cuba. Photo: Submitted

In Cuba, justice making looks very different than it does here. In Cuba, community aid projects are rarely supported by the government. In many cases they operate illegally. This is because of the rhetoric in government propaganda which states the country is self-sufficient, and the government has created prosperity for all. In the state's view, supporting community based justice projects is equal to admitting they have failed to provide for their people. As a result, such projects are run by Cuban citizens and are privately funded—faith communities especially have taken up this

work. In addition, it is illegal for Cubans to protest or lobby the government for assistance. As a result, the Cuban people must work at a grass roots level without asking for governmental support.

In spite of the challenges, Cuban people are doing amazing things.

In Havana, delegates visited programs such as “Cuba Emprende” which helps young entrepreneurs start businesses, and “The Colony”, a shelter for disenfranchised elderly men.

In Itabo delegates visited a farm—started by Bishop Griselda of the Episcopal

Church of Cuba—which aims to provide sustainable fresh produce to those in the community and education about environmental stewardship.

In Cardenas, delegates visited The Christian Centre for Reflection and Dialogue (CCRD) which provides a number of programs such as clean water provision, organic farming, care for the elderly and disabled, counselling and support for the victims of domestic abuse.

In addition, churches across Cuba are the hubs of communities by providing safe clean water to all people, food for the hungry and friendship for the lonely. The hard work and determination of the Cuban people to care for one another is inspiring.

Cubans can teach us a lot about justice making.

As Canadians, we have many privileges which we take for granted. We have a government that allows its people to voice their opinions. We live in a country where the government invests in aid projects and orga-

nizations. It is our responsibility to utilize these tools to serve our communities.

My trip to Cuba renewed my faith that justice can prevail on earth. Justice happens when passionate people work together for what is right. Justice-making is something anyone can do. Justice happens when we love our neighbour as ourselves, while working to live out our baptismal covenants on earth. It's not about how official what you're doing is. As one of the presenters at the CCRD told me, “We have been doing this work for 25 years, 20 of those years illegally—but being legal hasn't changed what we do. We have always brought people together.”

I pray that we as Canadians can take a page out of the Cubans' book, fighting for justice no matter what challenges stand in our way.

Sierra Robertson-Roper can be contacted at sroberts8845@gmail.com



HOLLIStorial

Church-community gardens: symbols of harvest

They spring up almost anywhere.

Wherever a slice of arable land exists, people visualize the harvest and set about tilling, sowing, watering, weeding and nurturing their gardens, motivated by veggie cornucopias dancing in their heads.

They occupy properties near churches, libraries, schools, on roof tops and even in ditches.

The explosion of church-community gardens countrywide seems to be heralding the resurrection of bygone days, when the land not only produced food for the body but also built community to feed the soul.

Today these gardens become symbols, not only for the food produced, but also for the relationships fostered—both emotional and spiritual.

The original church-community garden probably first appeared shortly after creation, long before either word came into vogue. In the earlier of the two Genesis stories describing the making of the universe we read, "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed and fruit trees bearing



Greening Niagara

Logo: Laura Marie Piotrowicz

The cross in the leaf of the logo of Greening Niagara reminds us to think of other gardens while we care for our church-community garden—where Jesus was crucified, where he was entombed and where the first witnesses met the resurrected Christ.

fruit" (1:11-12). And it was so. God's assessment, "It's very good."

The tradition continued throughout history as people followed God's example.

Those dedicated to the monastic lifestyle are credited with developing the raised-bed garden, which helped overcome meagre landscapes, soil deficiencies and allowed easier tending. The vegetables supplemented their food supplies—most were vegetarian—and herbs helped in medicinal healing. Their locations were also significant, situated so the sick and frail could see, be inspired and comforted by the canopy of multi-coloured

fruits and vegetables.

Helping people in need, especially during turbulent times, is the most common motivation for faith based community gardens, according to Christine Sine.

In her online article "Creating a Faith Based Community Garden," written for Sustainable Traditions, she also included concern for young people, developing healthy eating habits, healing the earth and providing green space for people to enjoy. "Perhaps one reason God created human beings to tend the garden is because God knew that it is in the midst of a garden that we connect most intimately to the character and ways of our

Creator."

Greening Niagara (niagaraanglican.ca/green/) echoes Christine's sentiments in its mission statement, "We believe God calls all of us, through our lives and ministries, to be active in the care of creation. As Anglicans, we have long expressed a concern for creation that is consistent with the fifth mark of mission of the Anglican Communion: 'to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the earth.'"

After eight years Greening Niagara has been very successful in achieving its goals.

In the *Niagara Anglican* (May 2015), Mac Armstrong affirmed Christians as stewards of creation and advocated owning your own garden to offset costs, lower carbon footprints and have fun. He wrote that parish gardens "are also worth the effort since it can be a great fellowship activity to tend a parish garden. The yield can either go into dinners or services the parish may host or partake in, be it food bank donations or catering."

Midafternoon, I am standing in a church-community garden taking photographs.

A stranger approaches.

We exchange greetings and converse about the garden—bumper crop of green vegetables, bad year for tomatoes, advantages of the raised beds and cooperative teamwork.

I mention vegetables are free for the taking, but not many people harvest the crops.

He asks the name of an odd shaped species, enlightens me which veggies are on his naughty list and wonders why people don't take pick the harvest.

Suddenly we drift apart, heading into our respective worlds, and may never encounter each other again. However, for several moments the church-community garden brought us together—the harvest of two human beings intersecting and interacting.

Editor Hollis Hiscock encourages your feedback. editor@niagaraanglican.ca

Letters

Keen observation

The picture accompanying Terry Brown's note on "Celebrant or Presider" (September 2016) clearly shows a deacon—not a priest—doing something, but is he really "leading the Eucharist at the altar"?

Given that the Diocesan Guidelines for Deacons specifies deacons "cannot replace a rector for Sunday Eucharist", and may administer even reserve sacrament only "in accordance with specific rules and conditions (not including Sunday worship),"



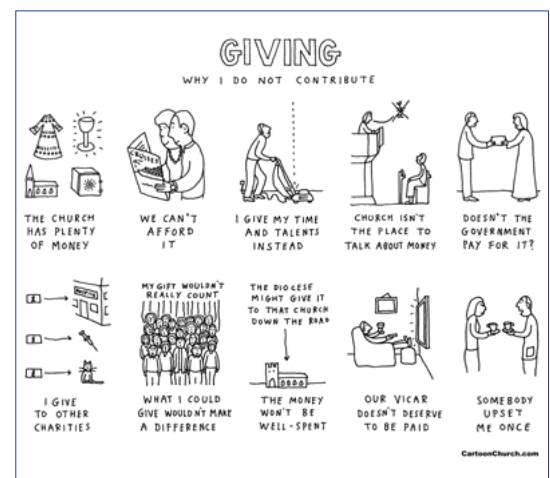
Spotted: deacon, not priest

Photo: iStock

the implicit suggestion that practice might be otherwise is a mite subversive, is it not?

Ronald Vince
Flamborough

EDITOR'S NOTE: When we were finalizing the layout for the September Niagara Anglican, we talked about replacing the picture since the position of the Eucharistic stole indicated a deacon, not a priest. However we decided to proceed, and as Ronald wrote in his email giving us permission to publish his letter, "I'm sure deacons got a kick out of the picture—I know I did."



Copyright © 2015 Dave Walker. This cartoon originally appeared in the Church Times.

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Doctor-assisted dying

NIGEL J. BUNCE

Now that Parliament has passed legislation permitting doctor-assisted dying, the question of whether this should be allowed has become moot.

What has received much less attention is how faithful Christians might respond. The Anglican Church of Canada's latest document on this subject, *In Sure and Certain Hope*, includes a theological reflection, but addresses Scripture only in very general terms, and the Gospels not at all.

What advice might the teachings of Jesus have for us on this subject?

Ancient Jewish tradition calls us to love God, and love our neighbours as ourselves (Deuteronomy 6: 4-5; Leviticus 19: 18). Jesus called us to embrace a new commandment to love one another (John 15: 12), and Paul explained love in his famous passage (1 Corinthians 13).

What, then, is the most loving response to the person who is terminally ill and asks for a merciful release from his/her intolerable suffering?

The Sixth Commandment—You shall not kill (Deuteronomy 5: 17)—makes the deliberate

taking of a life problematic, even if the term is sugar-coated by calling it merciful release; hence the careful exclusions in the parliamentary legislation.

request of their friend, relative or parishioner for merciful release was the most loving option. As recognized in the legislation, this must always be

“doctor-assisted death might be justified theologically as the least bad option in certain circumstances”

Independent of physician-assisted dying, pain control using opioids can incidentally hasten death, as noted in *In Sure and Certain Hope*. Even though the primary reason for giving the drug is pain control, some might reasonably argue that even the incidental hastening of death abrogates the Sixth Commandment, especially when pain control is not implemented at the patient's specific request.

Doctor-assisted dying may be the least bad ethical option when the patient's pain cannot be mitigated by medication, or when the person with a degenerative disease faces a hopeless future with increasing debility and loss of personal dignity. In these situations, a caring friend, relative or pastor might conclude that supporting the

at the instigation of a cognitively aware patient and never through external pressure.

Scripture offers precedent for sometimes upholding the spirit rather than the letter of the Law. In Mark 2:27, concerning plucking grain on the Sabbath, Jesus commented the Sabbath was made for humanity and not the other way round. In Mark 3:5, where Jesus healed on the Sabbath, he was angry at the Pharisees for their hardness of heart. In these passages Jesus favoured upholding the spirit of the Law (the Fourth Commandment) over the letter of the law; he did not rescind the whole concept of Sabbath observance.

Likewise, Jesus' apparently dismissive attitude towards his family in Mark 3:33 can be seen,

not as disregarding the Fifth Commandment (Honour your father and mother). Rather, the accident of his birth did not give them special access.

To summarize, doctor-assisted death might be justified theologically as the least bad option in certain circumstances. Even though it abrogates the letter of the Sixth Commandment, it could be argued to be consistent with the Scriptural idea that the Commandments were given as our guide, and not the other way round. This approach does not rescind the normal prohibition against taking life. Moreover, to deny this course of action to someone whose life has become intolerable could be argued to display the same hardness of heart for which Jesus criticized the Pharisees.

Should the Church decide to take this theological approach to doctor-assisted dying, it is essential that those who hold the traditional position about taking life feel respected and not marginalized. It would also be proper to develop appropriate and relevant prayers and liturgies to support patients and their families in this new situation.



The Reverend Nigel J. Bunce is Priest-in-Charge of St. George's Lowville. nigelbunce@hotmail.com

You can read *In Sure and Certain Hope* – resources to assist pastoral and theological approaches to physician assisted dying, prepared by the Anglican Church of Canada's Worship and Ministry Task Force on Physician Assisted Dying by going to anglican.ca

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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 or 905-527-1316, ext. 380.

Volunteer immediately to

reserve your favourite person and help the Niagara Anglican get a head start on Lent. Now 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.

Church activities slowed but not stopped during renovations

JEANETTE DUNCAN

Renovations can cause even the holiest of saints to falter. But for the people of St. George's Guelph ministry continues in spite of the dust, drills and scaffolding.

The \$1.2 million renovation project is focused on replacing the 60-year-old heating system, though plumbing and electrical upgrades are also involved. Because of the asbestos pipes of the old system the first part of the project, which began in May, was the removal of all hazardous materials.

New water pipes and radiators come later, along with an upgraded electrical system to accommodate the new boiler system and the updated electrical code. Other green initiatives are happening at the same time: low-flow toilets, efficient lighting and new fans in the sanctuary to circulate the air.

The newly installed LED lighting in the church and at the front of the building will significantly reduce energy usage. "At full power, it is estimated that before the lighting was done we were using 15,000 to 18,000 watts. This has now been reduced to between 5,000 and 6,000 watts," says Facility Coordinator Mike Blythe.

The organ, a 1926 Casavant pipe organ, is being renovated and thoroughly cleaned. Solid state components will replace aging leather contacts and digital technology will add to the tonal resources of this remarkable instrument, long regarded as one of the finest in southwestern Ontario. St. George's has become a sought-after concert venue because of the organ and soaring acoustics of the church. To celebrate the newly renovated organ, a screen-



The 1926 Casavant pipe organ is being modernized with solid state components replacing aging leather contacts and digital technology adding to its tonal resources.

ing of the silent film *Phantom of the Opera*, featuring live organ accompaniment by William O'Meara, will be held on October 28. The Guelph Connections Concerts—the popular, free chamber music series offered by St. George's to the community—will resume in the fall.

Like any renovations, the work has been hallmarked by noise, dust, surprises and inconvenience. The removal of water pipes necessitated drilling through old stone walls. Some creative plumbing was discovered and corrected. Contractors' vans fill the already small parking lot throughout the week, causing some parishioners to grumble. During one week, a giant scaffold was installed and disassembled in the church between Sundays, so that the

upgraded lighting and fans could be installed 50 feet up from the floor. Plumbing work meant washrooms were shut down or kitchens temporarily unavailable.

Though normal church activities have slowed down, they haven't stopped.

St. George's has still been able to have regular services every Sunday, as well as most of their mid-week services. The church's major tenant, Workside Early Childhood Education Centre, continued to welcome little children. Weddings have been held, and funerals from small to large (over 450 people). The financial burden of the renovation project has not stopped the congregation from sponsoring a refugee family from Syria. The Atieh family arrived in late April



A giant scaffold was installed and disassembled in the church between Sundays so that the upgraded lighting and fans could be installed 50 feet up from the floor.

Photos: Submitted

with their triplets, and the fundraising golf tournament in June was enthusiastically attended, generating over \$15,000 for outreach.

Nonetheless, in spite of managing through the summer, the people of St. George's will be glad when the renovation project is completed. When the dust settles, the church will be left with an efficient and reliable heating system, a greener footprint and a renewed investment in the city of Guelph. "Not only

will we have made a strong statement of our commitment to remain present and meaningful as an Anglican centre in Guelph," says Rector Ralph Blackman, "but when we're past the immediate physical needs of the building, we will be able to fully engage this question: What other ministry and community partnerships can we build?"

Jeanette Duncan is the Parish Administrator at St. George's Guelph. office@saintgeorge.ca

Messages from heaven clearly received

Personal accounts of those who passed on and returned from heaven brought together church, civic and community representatives when Christ Church Niagara Falls sponsored its second "Messages from Heaven".

A Shema blessing in Hebrew and Yiddish was offered by a member of the University of Toronto's chapter of international educators.

A solo by newest church Cantor Kiernan Lane, combined with other music and a luncheon buffet

added to "the joyful atmosphere", wrote Program Creator Elizabeth Lockhart Manker.

Proceeds from the event support church programs and Project Share, one of the food banks in Niagara Falls.

For the 11th year, Christ Church will host Angels Everywhere on November 10 when the church is filled with school choirs and their "joyful music," Elizabeth predicted.



Celebrating St. John's Bicentennial

Choral Evensong and Recital

Sunday, October 23 – 4:00 p.m.

The Anglican service of Choral Evensong will be sung by the Redeemer University College Concert Choir under the direction of Dr. Chris Teeuwssen.

Organ recital presented by William Murphy

St. John's Anglican Church, Ancaster
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In conversation with ...

Our delegates who attended General Synod

The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada met in July for six days. The September Anglican Journal presented comprehensive coverage. However, the Niagara Anglican sought the unique impressions, findings, experiences and perspectives of the delegates representing Niagara Diocese. Here are samplings of their responses, edited because of space. If you wish to read the delegates' full replies, contact the Editor who will forward your request to the individuals so they can respond to you directly.

NA: What impressed you most about General Synod?

Susan Little: I found the visual impact of the meeting space a powerful dimension, including tripods with three nine-foot tall walking sticks, hand fashioned from young trees culled from Niagara and Ottawa dioceses. They decorated the main stage, where guest speakers or worship leaders stood, as well as the perimeters of the large display screens or main altar. Designer Elizabeth Adams, St. George's Guelph, said the clustered walking sticks depicted people gathered, ready to hear and move with the Spirit acting on God's initiative. Their upper sections were bent in unconventional, unique and whimsical shapes and coloured in many shades to suggest our diversity.

The Reverend Bill Mous: We were surrounded by the faithful witness of all parts of the church; through General Synod's membership, its partners, visitors, observers, displayers and by those who held the synod and its work in their prayers. The scriptural theme "You are my witnesses" permeated all aspects of the synod and grounded our time together. The many reports received and resolutions considered during the week certainly bore witness to the Anglican Church of Canada's work on important issues such as indigenous self-determination, principled investing, liturgical renewal and the full inclusion of LGBTQ2 members.

Sister Heather: I was impressed by our Primate Fred Hiltz. His calm, loving, respectful and strong chairing of the Synod in incredibly difficult circumstances was an example to all.

Andrew Clinkard: I was most impressed by what I'd have to characterize as "peace, order and good church." Order—in terms of the extensive work and planning that clearly went on behind the scenes to organize the agenda, liturgy and music, and kept most everything moving according to the published schedule. Good church—in the form of the thoughtfulness and deep Christian faith exemplified by those attending, no matter where they stood on the issue of same sex marriage. Peace—as evidenced during the evensong following the shock of the initial "No" vote on the marriage canon. The majority were hurting, but Synod carried on.

Archdeacon Max Woolaver: I remembered a dream I had a long time ago. I was walking on a beach, late afternoon, with a small group. We were informally, yet purposefully, following Jesus, about six metres ahead. His footprints were visible in the sand. The dream was powerful, not only because of who we were following but also for that mysterious sense of "moment" and deep joy of belonging. I only wanted to belong. I felt precisely that sense of moment—the dignity of purpose and humbling joy of belonging—at General Synod; its depth of holy earnestness is what impressed me most.

NA: What was a disappointment or low point for you?

Susan Little: I was disappointed when the Resolution concerning same-sex marriages failed to pass on Monday night because there was not a two-thirds majority among the clergy. I was prepared for the Resolution to fail among the House of Bishops. The next day's reversal of the

vote, passing the Resolution, was also a low point. Even with one more vote, I am not convinced that the slim majority is sufficient evidence to move ahead with confidence.

The Reverend Bill Mous: I struggled to hear some remarks made during the legislative sessions regarding the proposed change to the Marriage Canon. Being reminded that parts of our Church are deeply homophobic was a low point. So too was the synod's collective capacity for sound biblical exegesis and theological reflection related to this matter. I was deeply disappointed with issues related to the integrity of our voting system, which made for a procedural and emotional roller coaster during the final two days of the synod.

Sister Heather: I think the hardest part for me was the closing Eucharist. At what should have been a joy-filled sending back into the world, I could not get past the many empty seats of those who had walked out.

Andrew Clinkard: The hotel rooms, food and banquet facilities were excellent, and it was close to major highways, but there was no parkland/natural space adjacent to the conference centre. I would have

benefited spiritually and mentally from some green space close by, or a church to experience God and provide spiritual support. The delegates from elsewhere in Canada must have felt it more keenly than I, Toronto born and raised. It felt to me we were toiling away on the business of the church "in the dungeons of Southern Ontario," not in a sacred space, despite the efforts to make it such.

Archdeacon Max Woolaver: In opposition to the general integrity, I was saddened by the prejudicial attitude on the part of individuals I spoke with in one of our small groups. There were people who came to General Synod with no intention of being open to what the Holy Spirit might say to the gathered community. I found this deeply disturbing.

NA: What did you bring back from General Synod that will help in your parish or Niagara Diocese?

Andrew Clinkard: A greater understanding, appreciation and respect for the depth and breadth of the Christian faith exemplified by The Anglican Church of Canada, and a similar appreciation, understanding and respect for differences at the local church and diocesan levels. We are all unique, but it wasn't until General Synod that I saw first-hand how some more conservative dioceses worship. The First Nations peoples in particular employ a very old yet practical style of worship, and also hold gospel jamborees. My spirit soared during their

Continued Page 7



The nine-foot tall walking sticks depicted people gathered, ready to hear and move with the Spirit acting on God's initiative.

Photo: Susan Little

Our delegates who attended General Synod

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

gospel jamboree, and I saw how big the Anglican Church tent is, and I love it!

Archdeacon Max Woolaver: I feel proud of our national community. I feel confirmed as a disciple of Jesus Christ and made stronger in my faith. The earnest prayers of General Synod are an example of the graced nature of our struggle to bring a living Gospel to the times in which we live. The Diocese of Niagara has an important role to play in the embodiment of that proclamation.

Susan Little: The most important part I bring back is the importance dialogue

Sister Heather: I came back from Synod with an appreciation for the strong, committed, articulate youth delegates. At that age, I would not have had half their courage in coming to the microphones and making their voices heard. The future of the church is in great hands.

NA: What decisions will impact Niagara and how?

Sister Heather: I think it is not so much the decisions taken by the Synod that the diocese of Niagara has to deal with. With Bishop Michael's courageous leadership we know where we will be going. What we



✠ 41st General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada

July 7-12, 2016 • Toronto



Delegates from across Canada gathered around tables at General Synod to become acquainted, share ideas and discuss issues facing the Anglican Church today.

Photo: The General Synod, Anglican Church of Canada

plays in the Canadian Church. I returned with a commitment to more effort as a diocese toward the initiatives demonstrated through General Synod's motions and deliberations. Communication is always important, but face-to-face communication with people involved in the issues was a wonderful learning experience. Having experienced growth in the understanding of diverse viewpoints throughout discussions about our Indigenous people, our international relationships, principles of ethical investments as well as social and ecological justice developments, I appreciate the "bigger picture" of our life as Anglicans in Niagara.

The Reverend Bill Mous: I brought back a deeper appreciation for our diversity as Canadian Anglicans and being part of the global Anglican Communion, and more particularly, a great deal of learning around Indigenous ministry and the Church's work towards healing and reconciliation.

need to work on is how to respond to the fallout of our actions - how to help in the healings of the hurts and the divisions we are all facing. As ever, as Anglicans we are called to unity in diversity, with charity to all - how do we regain our sense of being one as the Anglican Church of Canada?

The Reverend Bill Mous: The decision related to the Marriage Canon already has had an impact. Notwithstanding Bishop Michael's decision to make the sacrament of marriage available to all qualified couples, much work remains to be done to create positive space within our diocese. The decision to engage in formal ecumenical dialogues with the Mennonite Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada may bring us closer to neighbouring churches and foster new ministry partnerships. Synod received the Iona report, which includes competencies for the diaconate and requested a review of the Ordinal with an eye towards a possible revision to this liturgy.

Andrew Clinkard: The initial "no" vote on changing the marriage canon led to Bishop Michael's bold move announcing his intention to proceed with same-sex marriages. I recall well the festive atmosphere in the Bishop's suite that night in light of his courageous statement in the face of adversity. In many respects that initial result allowed our Bishop and similar minded diocesan bishops the freedom to proceed in a way that might not have been possible with a "yes" vote that Monday evening. I hope and pray those clergy and congregations not in favour will be respected and loved by all in Niagara.

Archdeacon Max Woolaver: The deeper inclusion of First Nations people in our national gathering is a powerful witness to the Diocese of Niagara. We have much work to do here in Niagara to help heal the sad history of Canada's treatment of native peoples. I was in fact worried that the focus on the Marriage Canon would overshadow the presence of our native

peoples. The Anglican Church has the opportunity to help heal our country.

Susan Little: One of the most important decisions affecting Niagara is our commitment to dialogue with our parishes and people about the sanctioning of same-sex marriages.

Another concerns the self-determination of our Indigenous people. The recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission spell out what are our next steps: for our part, dialogue and educational events about the issues faced by our Indigenous youth and young families.

Finally, our ongoing commitment to the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund needs fuller support across our parishes. The fund is a concrete way of saying "YES" to international need on a local level.

Niagara Diocese will have a presence at the national church scene as Susan Little and Siobhan Bennett were elected to the Council of General Synod, the executive body of General Synod.

Canada Prays

LAURA MARIE PIOTROWICZ

When the disciples asked, "Lord, teach us to pray," they were not hoping to develop a new skill. Rather, they were working to enhance their ongoing and daily communication with God, with hopes to better align their lives with the will of the divine.

Jesus' response, of course, was the perfect invitation for all of his followers, throughout the ages, to enter into that mystical dance with the Holy One, through the simple and poignant act of prayer.

This fall, the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (anglicanprayer.org) has joined with the Society of St. John the Evangelist (ssje.org) in CANADA PRAYS, a



Photo: iStock

project encouraging us all to delve deeper into the shared mystery of that prayerful experience. Using the seven models of prayer (thanksgiving, petition, penitence, oblation, intercession, praise and adoration), we are all being invited to participate in the daily exercise of prayer.

For the seven weeks starting at Thanksgiving and leading up to Advent, we will focus on one model of prayer each week, highlighted in a blog on The Community (thecommunity.anglican.ca) and in Advent return to one model per day. Prayers will be welcomed through social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) by use of a double-hashtag (i.e. #prayersof #thanksgiving).

These prayers are truly the prayers of the people, reflecting the truth of God active in our lives from the depths of our being. As more people participate, the richness will increase. These prayers will remain on the prayersofthepeople.org website, and we encourage intercessors to consider including them for use in common worship.



Prayer: it's what we do, all of us together, because Jesus has welcomed us into the conversation with God. Thanks be to God.

Pray with us at: prayersofthepeople.org
Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/prayersof/

The Reverend Laura Marie Piotrowicz is Rector of St. John's Port Dalhousie St. Catharines. stjohnsportdalhousie.ca

Guelph Walking Pilgrimage 2016 — rabbit, monkey and turtle

MICHAEL BURSLEM

There is much one can write about the Guelph Walking Pilgrimage—the Christian fellowship as it should be, as Christ directed us and not what it is; the awesome mystery of visiting the holy ground at St. Ignace II, the site of Sts. Jean Brebeuf and Gabriel Lalimant's martyrdom in March 1649; the joy of finally arriving at the martyrs' shrine, after a grueling week due to the blistering sun; that we didn't mind entering the Holy Door and doing the stations of the cross in the pouring, but refreshing rain—O Petrichor, how delightful—before entering the shrine for our final mass; the logistics so well executed, and especially the meals along the way so lovingly prepared by volunteers and friends.

But I decided in one of our silent periods to write about the three "guards" on the pilgrimage, the rabbit up front, the monkey in the middle and the turtle bringing up the rear.

The RABBIT looks out for approaching traffic and other dangers. He or she notifies us by the whistle, one blast to caution us to get onto the left side of the road and two to walk in single file on the verge. He or she is the prophet or shepherd who proclaims the Word of God, warning us of God's will when we want to stray off the path. They show us the way and lead us by example. There are instances in the Bible of prophets and shepherds themselves straying off the path, such as



Michael experienced the awesome mystery of visiting the holy ground at St. Ignace II, the site of Sts. Jean Brebeuf and Gabriel Lalimant's martyrdom in March 1649.

Photo: Submitted

Sampson and David. But the Lord mercifully brings them back. So often we stray from the flock and the shepherd brings us back by hook or by crook, a painful procedure. Sadly, not all shepherds do their job, and Ezekiel 34 has much to say about that. However, the Lord says in verse 11, "I will look for my sheep and take care of them myself." Thankfully, we have a merciful Good Shepherd.

The MONKEY in the middle is us. Need I say more?

The TURTLE is the one who protects the flock from the rear. They lovingly care for the weary and disabled, who can't keep up with the rest or can walk no longer. When necessary they call for help from support vehicles. They are the Sister Christines (Sister Christine Leyser founded the Welcome In Drop-In Centre in downtown Guelph.) or Mother Therasas of the church,

who bind up peoples' wounds and heal the broken hearted.

These (rabbit, monkey, turtle) are three necessary, essential elements of the church. We would all be much poorer without them.

Petrichor is a new word in my vocabulary—learned from my "adopted" grandson Ezechyel—meaning the fresh smell of rain after a hot, dry spell. Its origin is from the Greek petros (stone) + ichor (fluid); coined by Australian geochemists Richard Grenfell Thomas and Isabel Joy Bear in 1964. I feel certain that if he had known of the word St. Francis would have personified it in his Canticle of the Creatures.

This is Michael's second time participating in the eight day Guelph Walking Pilgrimage. He is a member of St. George's Guelph. m.burslem@sympatico.ca

Why do we go on a pilgrimage?

In responses to the question Michael replied ...

1. I think the world is so antagonistic to the Gospel that Christians should withdraw themselves and do crazy things as the desert fathers did in order, in a non-judgmental way, to reprove the world. Going on a pilgrimage is one such way. I believe Christians should live in community, as much apart from the world as possible. The community fellowship on the pilgrimage was more like that of the early church, unlike the church today, in which we're all divided, certainly in the west. Richard Rohr would ascribe that to our dualistic thinking. On the pilgrimage we were thinking, behaving and caring for one another, non-dualistically.
2. It's a great way to make new friends.
3. It's a relatively cheap way to take a holiday. One can enjoy the beautiful scenery on the way, the sights and sounds of the birds and insects, the stars at night, away from the glare of the big cities; all God's creation.

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The Creed's credibility

ELEANOR JOHNSTON AND WAYNE FRASER

In each of six Niagara churches where we have worshipped, Wayne as interim priest and Eleanor as chorister, a few parishioners have expressed difficulties with the content of the Nicene Creed.

Picture this: a diligent, positive parishioner asks to see Wayne and sets a time and date. When he arrives, he closes the door, locks it, takes a seat and confesses: "I feel guilty for doubting the Nicene Creed."

What a relief! He isn't suffering from cancer or about to lose his job. Theology? Let's talk. First he needs to be heard: "The Creed is not even in the Bible. It's all about levels of power. This isn't what Jesus is all about. The word love isn't even in the creed! God doesn't sit on the clouds, for heaven's sake! Most of my beliefs are reflected in the hymns and sermons. I have to tune out when we get to the Creed. I can say about half the words. What's wrong with me? Am I still a Christian?"

The first response must affirm his doubting faith. Jesus helped Thomas when he experienced doubt. Questioning faith is an opportunity for growth.

Breaking out at doubters is singularly unhelpful. We, too, are uncomfortable reciting the Nicene Creed every Sunday. "Uncomfortable?" That's an understatement.

An active lay person in another parish told how, in a conversation with two priests, she expressed similar doubts. Both men harangued her and insisted she take a Bishop's

ible, who insist that it must be spoken at every Eucharist. Alternate creeds like the Apostles Creed or the ancient Shema are deemed second-rate. Yet in some churches experimental liturgy attempts to use contemporary language to reflect today's spirituality!

After all, the Nicene Creed was commissioned by Emperor Constantine in 325 C.E. Imagine

world, to begin with. And a flat earth.

The Nicene Creed teaches us to believe in "one holy, catholic and apostolic Church." Is that in the Bible? No. What good does it do? It does not make much difference to most people's lives. If we are still considering the role of the Nicene Creed in the Christian church after 1,700 years, still fretting about ideologies, we have missed the point.

It's more important to be like Jesus than to repeat words about Jesus. Faith is not recitation of words but living the Word, following the Way of Jesus. Instead of reciting a creed, we should be helping, praying, learning, teaching and curing in Jesus' name. Jesus did not tell us to believe in concepts but to trust in Him, in the Father, in the way of the Kingdom.



Eleanor Johnston can be reached at eleanorjohnston@gmail.com and the Reverend Wayne Fraser at fraserwayne@gmail.com

"There's so much old science reflected in the Creed that does not jive with what we know today about the universe"

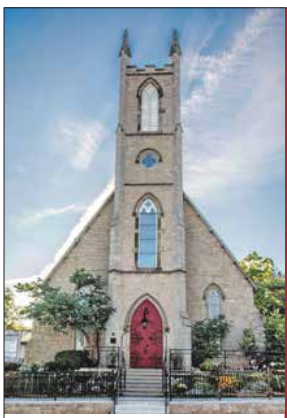
Diploma Course to reconsider her faith, so that she could properly function as a lay reader. When two ordained men gang up on a single lay woman, forcefully telling her that she must believe every word of the Creed to be a Christian, that is bullying—at such a moment, the Creed loses its credibility.

Why is the weekly repetition of the Nicene Creed so important? In most churches this is the case. The ritual must have some meaning for parishioners, and we get that. The difficulty arises with those who are inflex-

ible, who insist that it must be spoken at every Eucharist. Alternate creeds like the Apostles Creed or the ancient Shema are deemed second-rate. Yet in some churches experimental liturgy attempts to use contemporary language to reflect today's spirituality!

After all, the Nicene Creed was commissioned by Emperor Constantine in 325 C.E. Imagine world, to begin with. And a flat earth.

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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.

Gala Bicentennial Dinner
 Saturday, November 5

Help us celebrate the closing of our Bicentennial year. Dinner at the Hamilton Golf and Country Club (\$75 per person). For past and present parishioners of St. John's. Reserve your ticket in advance. VISA, Mastercard and Debit accepted.



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Your gift to share: — Christmas

The Niagara Anglican invites you to share your Christmas with our readers.

In 300 words or less ...

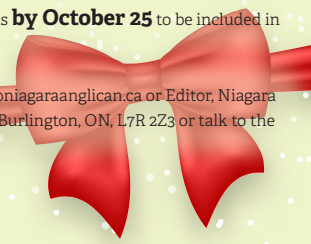
- ✿ recall a special Christmas worship
- ✿ compose a Christmas song (with or without music)
- ✿ relate a humorous Christmas happening
- ✿ retell a Christmas experience in poem or story
- ✿ relive a Christmas tradition or memory
- ✿ write a Christmas poem or prayer
- ✿ reflect on what Christmas means for you
- ✿ draw a Christmas picture or cartoon.

Get your children and youth to submit their items.

Send us a high resolution head shot photo of yourself.

We need your submissions **by October 25** to be included in our December paper.

Send your item to editor@niagaraanglican.ca or Editor, Niagara Anglican, 710 Ashley Ave, Burlington, ON, L7R 2Z3 or talk to the Editor at 905-635-9463.



New development to meet needs of downtown

A new, fully accessible 6,000 square foot church unit will be constructed for the congregation of All Saints as part of a multi-story condominium complex situated at 15 Queen Street South, Hamilton.

In August the derelict church and its associated buildings were demolished to make way for the new facility.

"After almost a decade, All Saints is thrilled to be returning 'home' to continue the legacy of ministry that has taken place on that corner for more than 140 years," said Rector Ronda Ploughman. "Although there are many wonderful memories connected to the old building, safety issues prevented us from staying there. The new space meets the needs of the church and community in ways that are much more consistent with ministry in the 21st century."

Nearly two decades ago All Saints

Church was damaged in an earthquake and in 2009 ongoing structural and safety issues forced the congregation to find temporary meeting space. Since then Niagara Diocese, on behalf of All Saints, has entered into an agreement with Hamilton-based Rise Real Estate to redevelop the property into a new fully accessible church development that will include permanent meeting and worship space.

Consistent with the trend toward mixed-use neighbourhoods, the church exterior will be reminiscent of a storefront, showcasing the work of local artists and community partners and because of its multi-use character will be a valuable resource for its ministries and the community.

Efforts to preserve the heritage of the former church are being undertaken. The



The old All Saints Church building comes down to make way for the new development in downtown Hamilton.

Photo: Courtesy of the Hamilton Spectator

altar, stone font, bell and church cornerstones will be incorporated into the new church unit. Steps are also being taken to retain some of the limestone bricks, which will be carved and sold by a local artist. The congregation, long divested from the

property, will honour its past, mourn the loss of the church and celebrate its renewal at a future event.

(Based on a press release from Niagara Diocese)

Strengthening Parish Sustainability

LISA DIVETO

Over the past year, many Anglican parishes in Niagara Diocese have shared their experience of declining revenues and increasing expenses, which often include significant costs to maintain aging facilities. The situation is difficult, as the majority of our parishes rely almost exclusively on donations from parishioners whose numbers are declining.

Parishes wishing to address this situation may begin by developing an effective annual giving program.

We are well positioned for this as we have ongoing, one to one relationships with our donors; many who have experienced important life events such as weddings, baptisms and funerals within the church. Parishioners and their families also share the year's most meaningful celebrations with their parish family at Easter and Christmas and are present for Sunday services on a regular basis, help with special events and participate in church governance and social committees.

In short, we have an inherent advantage over charities

that hope to connect with their supporters through direct mail, telemarketing and occasional events. Our churches are blessed with knowing their donors and their families well. A large number of them have been members for a lifetime. Parishes also have a physical presence in the community, many with beautiful landmark buildings, gardens and cemeteries that are used by local residents.

This is not the case for charities that have little personal contact with community members and seldom have the benefit of serving others for decades or, in some cases, centuries as our parishes have.

Familiarity with their members makes our parishes perfectly suited to initiate or

Annual Giving Program

strengthen their donor cultivation and recognition practices. We are well positioned to recognize our donors, express heartfelt thanks for their support and ask them to increase their givings as appropriate.

These first steps, as well as clearly defining the parish's mission in the community, are vital to strengthening sustainability.

If your parish needs assistance with developing or enhancing its annual giving plan, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Lisa Di Veto is the Consultant for Stewardship, Legacy Giving and Fund Development for Niagara Diocese.

lisa.diveto@niagaraanglican.ca

Lisa will lead a Grant Workshop to help parishes obtain financial assistance, at St. John's Church, 2464 Dundas Street, Burlington on Wednesday, October 26, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Open to all parish leaders, you will learn how to find and apply for grants from local, provincial and national foundations, as well as government agencies.

Seating is limited, so respond early to ensure your place and to receive a binder of important grant application resources. RSVP to lisa.diveto@niagaraanglican.ca or 519-754-1803.

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Chaplaincy grants awarded

Seafarers and university students are being better served by their chaplains because of grants from Niagara Diocese.

The Mission to Seafarers of Southern Ontario received a grant to support their chaplaincy work. They serve seafarers in Hamilton, the third largest port in Canada, and The Bridge in Hamilton, whose Ananias House Chapel attends to the spiritual needs of socially marginalized adults.

Universities affiliated with the

diocese—McMaster, Guelph, and Brock—received funds through the ongoing legacy of the Survive and Thrive Outreach Endowment.

"The diocesan grant gives us breathing space to focus on the future, rather than on our day to day survival," said the Reverend Carol Wood, recently retired ecumenical chaplain at McMaster. "The grant will help us to focus on the changing demographics, reassess our priorities for programming and

seek ways of reaching out to newer faculty and staff who may be able to participate in programs, as well as providing financial support."

University chaplaincies generally provide personal support, places for prayer, worship and a variety of programs.

Grants are awarded for a two-year period with a maximum of \$8,500 annually. Created in 2014, \$30,000 has been allocated to support chaplaincy ministries.

Healthy Leaders, Deepening Mission

JOHN BOWEN

"I can use all the help I can get!" one church leader told me.

Kevin Martin, former Dean of the Episcopal Cathedral in Dallas, now author and consultant, has lots of experience at helping church leaders.

By popular demand, he will be back at this year's reChurch conference, exploring in more depth some themes he touched on last year, under the title Healthy Leaders, Deepening Mission.

Calgary's Bishop Greg Kerr-Wilson said of Kevin, "We felt encouraged and empowered. His insights, information and stories have given many of our small congregations a new sense of hope."

Mark the date: Saturday October 22, at St. Thomas' St. Catharines.

Register now at rechurchnow.com—a great deal at \$20. for the day, including lunch!

Co-sponsored by Niagara Diocese and Wycliffe College's Institute of Evangelism.

Our new Taizé cart

BAHMAN KALANTARI

During one of our Bible study sessions in the winter, we consulted a passage in the book of Isaiah. The following verse stood out and inspired us:

"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert" (Isaiah 43:18-19).

This passage initiated a conversation about newness of life and the many different ways

to experience it.

One of these ways is through Taizé.

Collectively, we became excited about the idea of holding a Taizé service at our church, a service where all people could come to experience God's healing and transforming presence.

A Taizé service, like many services, often uses a familiar group of liturgical items. In this case, candles, candleholders, worship books and more. We needed a space in our church to keep these items safe and to help us prepare for our service.

The idea of a cart sprang to mind, a Taizé cart.

I knew one of our very active parishioners, Norm Lampman, had completed many artistic projects for our church. I shared my vision with him, and he came up with a truly marvelous and inspired design.

Norm and his friend Phil Burfoot then took God's work into their skilled hands and created what you see in the accompanying picture.

They turned an old, broken pew into a beautiful piece of



Norm Lampman and Phil Burfoot turned an old, broken pew into a beautiful Taizé cart to store items needed for Taizé services at the Church of Our Saviour the Redeemer Stoney Creek. Photo: Submitted

Deadlines and Submissions for Niagara Anglican

Deadlines:

- December – October 25
- January – November 25
- February – December 30

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.

religious art.

Our new Taizé cart stores all the liturgical items necessary for our new service and shines as a piece of religious art! Our first Taizé service will take place in the fall of 2016, and we pray that the Lord blesses it and helps us all to experience a newness of life.

The Reverend Bahman Kalantari is Rector of the Church of Our Saviour the Redeemer Stoney Creek. bahmankalantari96@gmail.com

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Dear Friend:

"There's a lot more in this paper than you think you would get in 12 pages," wrote a professional journalist who critiqued the *Niagara Anglican*.

The same could be said about the *Anglican Journal*.

Together, the *Anglican Journal* and *Niagara Anglican* bring you church happenings from around our diocese, across Canada and the world.

Your financial contributions empower us to fulfill this mission.

Speaking on behalf of our print and online readers, I say a



sincere heartfelt "thank you" for your faithful support during the past years.

In recent months, the *Niagara Anglican* brought you such features as ...

- Parishes sponsoring refugee families;
- Spending Lent with John—daily meditations by students and staff at Trinity College, Toronto;
- The Prayer Shawl Ministry; its

expansion and impact, and
• News and views from reporters and columnists.

Once again, I encourage you to continue with your good work and invite you to contribute generously to this year's Appeal.

Your donation will enable the *Niagara Anglican* and *Anglican Journal* to continue publishing and sharing the wonderful news of God's people ministering to our world.

God bless you.
The Reverend Hollis Hiscock
Editor, *Niagara Anglican*



Framed in a rainbow

"We received this photo from a stranger walking by our church after a storm," wrote Michelle DeGraaf from All Saints' Hagersville.

ANGLICAN JOURNAL APPEAL: BRINGING THE CHURCH TOGETHER

For decades, *The Niagara Anglican* and the *Anglican Journal* have partnered to bring stories that matter to us as a diocese and as the Anglican Church of Canada. Together, we have given voice to Anglicans from coast to coast to coast, and shared thoughtful coverage of religious and secular news that informs, inspires and enriches our Christian lives and prepares us for the mission God is calling us to.

IT'S YOUR PAPER

We can't share the Good News without you. Even a \$10 contribution can help give voice to the stories that matter most to Anglicans here and across the country. The total response from our diocese in 2015 was \$43,682. After expenses of \$10,639.53 *The Niagara Anglican* receives 50% of the remaining funds totaling \$16,521.24 as its share of the appeal. These funds go directly back into making it possible to continue to produce the paper.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING SHARE THE ANGLICAN STORY!

THREE WAYS TO DONATE:

- Complete and return the postage-paid donation card found in your September paper.
- Call 416.924.9199 ext. 259 to make your contribution by phone.
- Visit canadahelps.org and search for "The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada" and select which fund you wish to direct your donation.



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