

# Christmas Greetings

May the love, peace, joy and hope of Christmas come alive for you once more as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and that his good news be your guide during the coming year.

From all of us at Cathedral Place,  
Bishop Susan Bell  
Diocese of Niagara



# 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

DECEMBER 2018

## First female bishop seated in Niagara

**BILL MOUS**

Stirring cello melodies, gleeful banter of children, inspired words, reflection and invitation, moving intercessions mingled with familiar hymnody and the loving words shared by Jesus millennia ago were some of the sounds that poignantly filled Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton as Bishop Susan Bell was seated as the 12th diocesan bishop of Niagara.

"These are the things to which we have all been called: renewed leadership, the rejuvenation of faith, to be a humble church anointed and set apart for God's mission of love to our world," said Bishop Susan.

The service on Sunday, October 21st drew hundreds of people from across the diocese, including many dignitaries.

Before the Seating could take place, Bishop Susan was required to knock on the Cathedral doors to seek admittance—a symbolic action underscoring the rights and privileges of the Cathedral church.

With a declaration by Chancellor Greg Tweney that the Bishop had been duly elected and consecrated, Bishop Susan—accompanied by representatives of the diocese—was admitted by the Cathedral churchwardens.

In her homily, delivered from the nave of the Cathedral and adjacent to the baptismal font, Bishop Susan emphasized her ministry would model the incarnational leadership of Jesus, and stand alongside the people who have called her to serve. "We are all in this together—past and present—lay and ordained—a great cloud of witnesses across all space and time."

The Bishop also acknowledged that rapid societal shifts have presented challenges for the Church, at the same time asserting that "new skills and strengths in our leadership" are being called forth, creating new possibilities for ministry. She also declared that "God honours the trying" as we seek to adapt and explore new ways of being the Church and urged the diocese to "be brave" in its witness.

The ancient rite by which a diocesan bishop formally takes office focuses on the seating of the bishop in a special chair within a Cathedral. "This bishop is very conscious that she takes this chair, this cathedra, as a pledge of presence among you," Bishop Susan told the congregation. The bishop's seat signifies the bishop's central place amidst the faith community.

A reception at Liuna Station followed the service, with uplifting and celebratory music provided by the NYC Band, a mainstay of diocesan youth ministry worship services and events.

The clergy and people of the diocese elected Bishop Susan on March 3, 2018. She was ordained a bishop on May 5th and succeeded Bishop Michael Bird as diocesan bishop on June 1st, becoming the first woman to serve in this role.

*The Reverend Canon Bill Mous is Niagara's Director of Justice, Community and Global Ministries. bill.mous@niagaraanglican.ca.*



Bishop Susan, with a little help from young friends, knocked three times on the door to seek entry into the Cathedral, "the symbol and centre of your pastoral, liturgical and teaching ministry."

Dean Peter Wall escorted Bishop Susan to her cathedra, the chair designated for Niagara's bishop, as the people acknowledged her as their pastor and leader.

Bishop Susan blesses the people at the conclusion of her seating celebration.

Photos: Michel Hudson

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# Chi Rho Fellowship 70 years young

**ELAINE TUCKER**

This year at St. George's Guelph we celebrated the 70th anniversary of our Chi Rho Fellowship and hope to enlighten the reader by explaining the work of the organization.

We are often asked by members of the congregation, "What is Chi Rho? What does it mean? What does Chi Rho do?". We hope the following will better acquaint you with the activities of Chi Rho members.

Let's start with the name! Chi Rho (XP) are the first two letters of the Greek word *Christos* or Christ.

Without getting too complicated, the words and logo were used as early as the second century to identify Christians. They appeared on Roman soldiers' helmets and shields, and on coinage in the third century. Reference to it is found in the Book of Kells, an early Irish document found in Trinity College Dublin.

The symbol was adopted as the identifying logo of the

Anglican Chi Rho Fellowship, which was established as a successor organization to the Anglican Young People's Association (AYPA) for members who had succeeded to young adulthood. Chi Rho was specifically targeted for couples and singles.

In 1948, a Chi Rho Fellowship organization was started at St. George's Guelph, with Mr. Bev Strain as its first president. The first meeting, held in the parish hall on October 8, 1948, was chaired by the then Rector Stuart Brownlee. A charter was issued by the Anglican Church of Canada commemorating this event.

We are especially happy to have a charter member, Lee Allen, attending our monthly meetings.

An excerpt from St. George's Chi Rho Fellowship Constitution (article three) best describes the organization and principles as follows:

The aim of Chi Rho is fellowship in which adults, either single or married, may grow (a)

in service and responsibility to the Church, (b) in their relationship to Jesus Christ, (c) in relationship to each other and (d) to meet their spiritual, intellectual and social needs.

Chi Rho meets the first Friday of each month, except July and August, at 7:00 p.m. Some exceptions can occur if outside events are unable to be arranged to meet our schedule. Regular meetings consist of a short business session followed by interesting educational or entertaining lectures, games, barbecues, local plant visits, picnics and many other fun events.

It is also an enterprising organization, devoting much of its fellowship time to social events at the church. St. George's Christmas Festival and spring and fall dessert card parties are key events which have contributed thousands of dollars to the church and outreach commitments.

Chi Rho's outreach has touched many parts of everyday life in the church, the community and throughout the world.



Bev Strain, Fran Strain, Lee Faulkner Allan, Jim Faulkner, Jane Parisotto and Nick Parisotto were there when Chi Rho celebrated their 25th anniversary at St. George's Guelph.

Photo: Submitted

Examples include: Sister Christine's Welcome Inn Drop In Centre Guelph, Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (annually), St. George's deficit, St. George's Memorial Fund, St. George's Restoration Fund, Rector's Discretionary Fund, Guelph Wellington Hospice, missionary ventures, Guelph Bible Chapel Oasis Camp for Children and assistance to our associate Missionary Church in Cuba.

It is estimated Chi Rho has raised over \$100,000 for church

and outreach in recent years.

Chi Rho Fellowship encourages each individual to bring their unique experience, talents and perspective to our organization. Here, you are encouraged to work to the outer edge of your ability and thus participate in the growth of Chi Rho.

Our momentum is fueled by our relationship to each other and to Jesus Christ.

We always welcome new members.

## Chi Rho Sunday celebrations

Two hundred people, from Guelph and surrounding communities gathered at St. George's Guelph on Sunday, October 28th to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Chi Rho fellowship in that parish.

The afternoon began with Robert Jewell playing the Carillon, filling the streets with beautiful hymns, calling people to worship at 4:00 p.m.

After Gerry Manning's organ

recital, worship continued with a choral Evensong. "Nostalgia was evident as happy memories of one's own Christian family life and how Evensong had influenced one's early life," reported Elaine Tucker, Chair of the 70th Anniversary Committee.

After Evensong, Chi Rho members hosted a wine and cheese reception for all attendees.

"The success of this event has

encouraged us to pursue similar occasions in the future," Elaine stated.

Later the celebration continued as the Chi Rho fellowship enjoyed their 70th anniversary dinner, filled with memories of special moments over the ages presented by several long-term members.



Two hundred people crowded in St. George's Guelph for a choral Evensong to mark, with thanksgiving, the 70th anniversary of Chi Rho Fellowship in that parish.



To commemorate their 70th anniversary, Chi Rho donated a garden bench to St. George's. It is placed at the front of the church to welcome passers-by to rest and relax awhile. Lee Allan demonstrates.



Bob Bould, Jessie Bould, Marg Ready, Joyce Wilburn and Wallie Ready attended the special Sunday events marking the 70th anniversary of Chi Rho at St. George's.

Photos: Elaine Tucker

### Song of the Grand

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**HOLLIS**torial

# These three remain – Faith, Hope



“There are strange things done in the midnight sun,” poet Robert Service penned beginning The Cremation of Sam McGee.

Sometimes strange things happen when preachers sermonize.

Like the morning I waxed eloquently (so I thought) about the Lord’s Prayer.

This rarely happens when preachers use the pulpit, but standing in the aisle, people can become so absorbed that anything can happen.

It happened to Jesus, so why not us?

**She:** I have a question.

**Me** (looking somewhat surprised): Yes?

**She:** Why do we need so many versions of the Lord’s Prayer?

**Me** (wondering how to answer her and get back to my sermon, with every eye focused on me): Let’s discuss it at coffee after the service.

We had a marvellous conversation.

Another morning, my sermon on hope triggered a similar

encounter.

Standing in the aisle surrounded by pew sitters, I was tracking world happenings while explaining how we as God’s people need to believe in hope and bring it to reality.

I was illustrating High Hopes, a song written by Jimmy Van Heusen and Sammy Cahn, a story about never giving up when things seem impossible.

An ant hoped to down a huge rubber tree plant—an impossible task, voiced observers—until the sound of the plant hitting the ground heralded a hope achieving fruition.

Similarly, a ram wanted to poke a hole in an enormous dam. “Impossible!” shouted the masses, until water trickled between their toes flowing from a “billion-kilowatt dam”.

Then I caught sight of somebody waving from the pew. He handed me his handiwork, embroidered with the word HOPE. “I’ll explain later”, he

mouthed.

Later he explained, “HOPE is the acronym for Have One Positive Experience”.



Perhaps that is the essence of hope. I watched a Roman Catholic pastor in Florida surveying the devastation of their church, parish hall and rectory caused by hurricane Michael. Wearing another priest’s shirt and collar because his was lost in the storm, he viewed the mangled debris and commented reassuringly, “we are more than optimistic; we are hopeful for the future.”

The same hope motivated millions to leave their countries, navigate deadly seas, walk through treacherous lands and

cross unfriendly borders to have one positive experience.

They are living examples of what Archbishop Desmond Tutu meant, “Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.”

Physicist Albert Einstein suggested we, “learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.”

Paul, noting early Christians were encountering hostile circumstances - challenges, struggles, hatred - wrote, “suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character, and character, hope.”

According to the gospel writers, Jesus rarely spoke the actual word, yet his whole life, message and purpose were founded on hope.

However, the New Testament letter writers, especially Paul, more than compensated. He wrote we are saved by hope, we hope for eternal life and we should be joyful in hope.

Contemporary hymn writer Marty Haugen described the church as a place where all are

welcome because it is “built of hopes and dreams and visions.”

Bishop Susan, speaking at her “seating”, echoed similar hopeful expectations. Even though, she said, today’s world may be a tough place to be the church, it is not the end, because it is God’s church and God has us.

My Facebook friend Jan responded this way: “Hope means knowing things work out for the good and that Jesus’ words are true (not being given more than I can handle).”

The last words come from Emily Dickinson ...

“Hope is the thing with feathers

That perches in the soul,  
And sings the tune without the words,  
And never stops at all.”

(In his letter to the Corinthian Church, Paul wrote, “these three remain, faith, hope and love”. HOLLIS

## Hope – an exercise

### What about you?

Here are some questions about hope for you to ponder in the quiet of your minds while sitting in your comfortable location.

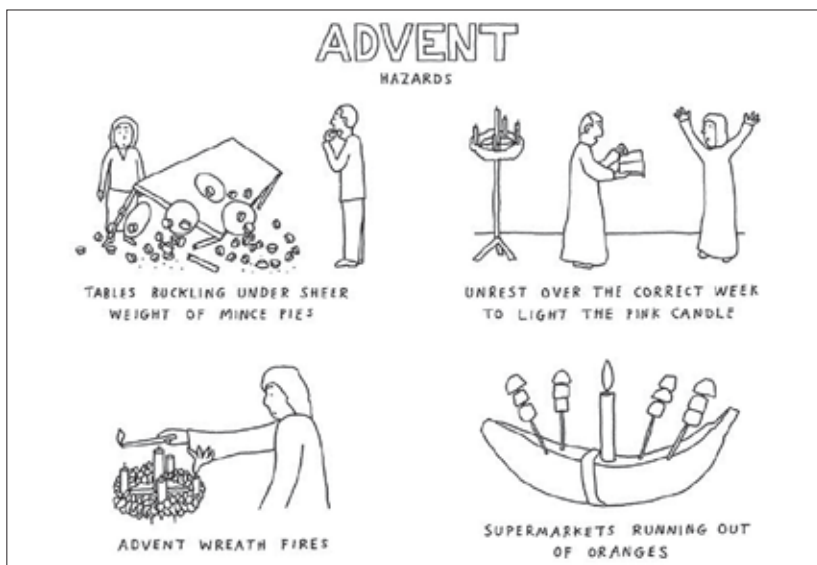
**Firstly:** think about these questions ...

- What does hope mean for you?
- How does hope fit into your own life?
- How does hope fit into the future for you, your family, your church, your community and your world?
- How do we deliver hope to the hopeless?

**Secondly:** you may want to share your hopes with the Niagara Anglican (contact information below).

**Thirdly:** memorise these words from the prayer attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, and use it often over the coming days ...

“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,  
Where there’s despair (sadness, illness, violence, other), let me bring hope”.



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cartoonchurch.com

## NIAGARA ANGLICAN

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# Bishop Susan seated — *Photos from the day*

All photos: Michael Hudson



(Left) Clergy and dignitaries process into the Cathedral heralding the beginning of worship.



(Right) At the font, Bishop Susan led people through the renewing of their baptismal promises.

(Right) Following the renewing of their baptismal covenant, Bishop Susan, with great glee, sprinkles the congregation with water from the font as a tangible reminder of their baptism.



(Above) Representatives from Niagara Diocese present Bishop Susan with the diocesan crozier as "a symbol of pastoral care in our diocese."



(Above) Bishop Susan preached from the back of the Cathedral near the font, the symbol of our baptismal covenant.



(Left) Bishops from other dioceses and other dignitaries came to support Bishop Susan in her ministry.



(Right) Father and son bishops. Former Niagara Bishop Walter Asbil walked with his son Andrew, who was recently elected and installed as the Bishop of Toronto.



(Above) Tom Bell and Michael Bloss provided music to enhance the celebration.



(Above) Following the service, Bishop Susan walked from the Cathedral into her

(Below) Following the seating worship, people relaxed and enjoyed the reception and the music of the NYC band.



# A letter from Cuba — written before leaving Canada



## DEAN CORMACK

*The Reverend Dean Cormack, Rector of St. John's Winona and Chaplain at San Gabriel Hamilton, was granted a leave of absence (up to six months—he began November 1, 2018) to seize an international mission opportunity serving the Bishop and Diocese of Cuba as a volunteer. Dean plans to write regularly from Cuba for the Niagara Anglican.*

Dear Niagara Anglican reader:

In 2015 I was able to do a ministerial internship in Cuba working under the direction of Bishop Griselda, the Bishop of Cuba. Throughout my four months there, I was exposed to many experiences ranging from diocesan administration to remote parish ministry.

I spent one month in Havana and two months in the remote communities of Bolondron, Guida and Bermajas. The contrast between placements was stark.

In Havana, I experienced a metropolis with many opportunities, then moved to rural towns with no infrastructure, no fresh water, no dairy, no meat, no vegetables or no stable food sources. This is the Cuba not many get to see.

The last month was spent touring 80% of the island's parishes and home churches with Bishop Griselda. I couldn't have asked for a more diverse and

challenging start to my ministry.

I have been going to Cuba for more than 40 years as a tourist, but only through my internship opportunity in 2015 was my passion for the Cuban Church and all Cuban people fully realized.

It is a challenging time for the Cuban Church as they rejoin the Episcopal Church of the United States and become a full member once again. This membership in the Episcopal church was taken away from them when Fidel Castro declared the entire island an atheist state post revolution, and all Americans were forced to leave.

My last visit to Cuba was in June when I was asked to be godfather to Bishop Griselda's granddaughter, six-month-old Elena. I had the joy of assisting in her baptism in the oldest church on the Island in Matanzas.

Following that visit, my missional opportunity to again volunteer for Bishop Griselda

Dean Cormack (back row, left) and Bishop Griselda (front row, second from left) toured 80% of the island's parishes and home churches during his ministerial internship in Cuba. "We always dressed in full vestments when we visited a typical home church," commented Dean. Photo: Dean Cormack

came about after numerous discussions about my ability to go to Cuba and help the Bishop in any way she thought necessary.

Upon further discussion and discernment once home, Bishop Susan graciously granted me a six month leave of absence to take advantage of this missional opportunity.

This is a unique time for the Cuban Church. Niagara Diocese has always been very connected over the years, not only on a diocesan level but also parish to parish.

My hopes are to communicate, when I can, and give a Niagara perspective to the changes that are taking place.

I thank God for this opportunity to expand my ministry and thank all those who have made this possible.

Until next time,  
Dean

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**10:00 a.m.** Contemporary Eucharist with choir and Sunday School

### Christmas Eve Worship

**4:30 p.m.** Family-Friendly Communion Service

**9:00 p.m.** Candlelight Choral Eucharist

### Christmas Day Worship

**10:00 a.m.** Traditional Eucharist

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# A hopeful church in changing times

## what impressed Niagara delegates



## Provincial Synod

The Anglican Church of Canada is divided into four Ecclesiastical Provinces—British Columbia and Yukon, Rupert's Land, Ontario and Canada.

Niagara Diocese is part of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, which includes six other dioceses—Algoma, Huron, Moosonee, Ontario, Ottawa and Toronto. It covers most of the geographical province of Ontario and some of Quebec.

Our Provincial Synod meets every three years with Niagara sending ten delegates, including the Bishop, Chancellor, laity and clergy.

Earlier this fall, Provincial Synod met for three days in Ottawa and centred its deliberations around the theme, "A Hopeful Church in Changing Times".

For a comprehensive overview of what happened there, go to Niagara's website and check out the online article, "Hope Abounds as Ontario's Synod Meets in Ottawa".

The *Niagara Anglican* asked our delegates to respond to three specific questions about their Provincial Synod experience and what that experience means in their own faith journey, as well as its impact on parishes and Niagara diocese.

Here are some stories (edited to avoid duplication where similar thoughts overlap and for space limitations) ...

### What were your overall impressions (highlights, low points) of Provincial Synod?

**Siobhan Bennett:** The biggest highlight was the election and induction of the Metropolitan. Learning how a Metropolitan is elected and going through the process was something I had never done and was very excited to do.

The induction service was beautiful. Archbishop Anne Germond (Algoma Diocese) was so humble in receiving the honour, saying a couple of times that there were others who were much more qualified than her for the job.

As for low points, I can't really say if there were any. There were a couple of points when things sort of went over my head, but only because they weren't in my frame of reference. It was a

learning opportunity, so I took it for what it was and listened and learned from the process.

**Andrew Clinkard:** I regard my time at Provincial Synod as all positive.

The liturgy and music were uplifting and spirit filled, the agenda well planned out and the various speakers excellent.

The hotel rooms, food and banquet facilities were very good, and the proximity to Ottawa's Cathedral, Parliament Hill and surrounding green space a huge plus.

My highlight was experiencing the presence of God through interaction with the other Synod delegates, up close and personal and from afar.

The drive to and from Ottawa with Niagara friends was filled with laughter and sharing some of our life journeys. Having breakfast with a rector from Moosonee and hearing about life in the north, as well as an evening of fellowship with Niagara delegates were other highlights.

**Pat Davis:** The spiritual direction provided by Bishop William Cliff (Brandon) in his sermons and bible studies were spell binding and humorous. The diocesan Missional Moments shared the wonderful works that people are engaged in all across the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario.

The lowest point came when we had to say farewell to two of our beloved leaders—Primate Fred Hiltz and Metropolitan Colin Johnson, who are both on the path to retirement. They will be greatly missed.

### What actions were taken that will affect Niagara Diocese or your parish?

**Andrew Clinkard:** Three things occurred at Provincial Synod that will affect Niagara.

The election of our new Metropolitan Anne Germond looms large in my mind. Her election was a no brainer in many respects as the slate of eligible candidates was small, but God placed in our midst the right person at the right time to be elected. Originally from South Africa, she has spent many years in Algoma Diocese

and exudes the humble, joyful fresh spirit of Ontario's north-erners that will reverberate throughout the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario.

A second impact on Niagara and my Church of the Resurrection was the selection of new priorities for the provincial synod council's work over the next three years. These include addressing the issues of climate change, missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, human trafficking as well as mental health and suicide prevention.

Lastly, the passing of a budget that called for modest increases in the provincial assessment—a cost that although negligible will flow through to each diocese, and thus all churches including my own.

**Pat Davis:** The proposed budget for 2019 will have a minor impact



Archbishop Anne Germond, the first woman to be elected Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, with Bishop Susan, the first female bishop elected in Niagara Diocese.

Photos: Submitted



Niagara Diocese was well represented at the Provincial Synod, sending the Bishop, Chancellor, lay and clergy delegates.

on Niagara with a slight raise in our diocesan assessment.

We passed a motion to work together as dioceses but in fact, I found the bishops to already be in tune with each other and working together for the betterment of all.

### How did your experience at Provincial Synod affect you personally, and how will that influence your life in the church in the coming months?

**Pat Davis:** I was grateful that the Niagara delegation was such a cohesive group and the leadership provided by Bishop Susan was outstanding.

This experience confirmed for me that we are called to

serve others and in so doing we strengthen and are more confident on our own faith journeys.

**Siobhan Bennet:** While at Provincial Synod, I learned that some people in Huron Diocese had spent the day at the Mohawk Institute and Woodland Cultural Center. They invited survivors to go with them and learn first hand through stories that they shared.

I also learned that the first week in November is Treaties Recognition Week, which was introduced in 2016, to honour the treaties and teach Ontarians about treaty rights and relationships.

**Andrew Clinkard:** I find attend-

ing a Provincial or General Synod provides opportunities to gain a greater understanding, appreciation and respect for the depth and breadth of the Christian faith exemplified by the Anglican Church of Canada.

It also provides a similar appreciation, understanding and respect for differences at the local church and diocesan levels. This year's Provincial Synod was no exception.

Additionally, my faith was inspired by sharing a bit of life together with fellow Christians over the course of Provincial Synod. I appreciated getting to know other Anglicans better—lay, clergy, bishops—through times of fellowship, worship, church business and politics.

# The most blessed Christmas in my life

It was Christmas 1992, and it was a bleak time.

Just eight weeks earlier, my husband had walked out the door. There were no warning signs. He was gone, and he wasn't coming back.

I was a stay at home mom: my five-year-old son had just started half-day kindergarten and my seven-year-old had been released from the "special needs" program as not exactly "meeting the criteria".

I was receiving minimal child support payments, but nowhere near enough to cover the mortgage, the car payment, food, etc. My parents were already suffering from geriatric issues and unable to help.

And now it was Christmas.

I was, however, an active member of my church, and they became my family. A week before Christmas I learned that a parishioner had put my name forward for the Christmas gift hamper and turkey at a local car dealership. I would have turkey dinner and treats. Under the tree there was a lovely boxed set of the *Chronicles of Narnia*, a gift provided by a parishioner.

It was beginning to look like we would be just fine.

On Christmas Eve, after we returned from late Mass, the boys were sleeping soundly. I sat listening to Handel's Messiah on CBC radio, sucking the centres out of the box of chocolate liqueurs in the hamper.



In the wee hours of the morning, a knock came to the front door. I was startled but answered it. There stood my neighbour (and fellow parishioner). In his hands he held a full Nintendo System and extra games. He told me that there were too many presents under his tree and he was sure that my boys would enjoy this Nintendo more than his daughter would anyway.

I was overcome: with surprise, gratefulness, unbelief and joy!

He didn't have a long white beard and a red jacket. He wasn't wearing swaddling clothes and lying in the manger, but there in my doorway, the Word was made Flesh: God among us in the form of my neighbour. Astounding.

Christmas morning my boys were thrilled! The gift that Santa had brought gave them years of joy, as it did me. Years went by and the boys began to ask where the Nintendo really came from. My answer has always been "the true Spirit of Christmas".

It was Christmas 1992, and the most Blessed Christmas in my life.

(a true story)

ANON.

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(See Luke 2:1-16)

12-20-2013

ANYTIME I SEE A BRIGHT LIGHT IN THE SKY, STAR OR NOT, I CHASE IT DOWN FIRST AND ASK QUESTIONS LATER

# Christmas wishes

Helen Wortman, Stoney Creek

It's nice to remember Christmas and Santa and snow  
 Gifts and parties and friends that we know.  
 The hot turkey dinner and to family we go  
 We greet all our friends and our families with love  
 But do you remember our Saviour above  
 We forget it's his birthday we celebrate too.  
 We're too busy thinking of things we must do.  
 We can celebrate in prayer and by singing his praises  
 And by knowing thy neighbour from here and afar.  
 Pray for each other and wish on a star  
 Be friends with each other, be helpful and kind  
 Doing these things with his birthday in mind.  
 If you continue to follow these simple things year after year  
 Then you might continue all the year through  
 Attend a church of your choice  
 Find a seat in the pew.  
 He'll be happy you did for God sure loves you  
 Your Christmas will be jolly  
 Your other days too.  
 Forever peace in the world  
 Would be wonderful too.

So, Christmas brings memories.  
 Snowflakes, Christmas carols and  
 Cards to the north pole  
 Merry Christmas to all  
 And may the Lord love your soul.



# How wonderful

M.B. Martin, Welland

How wonderful it is each year  
 that Christmas brings us such good cheer!  
 Amidst the woes of war and strife  
 and all that plagues a human life.  
 That God in wisdom sent His Son,  
 Our fears and pain to overcome  
 with Peace and Love, Compassion, Care  
 and Joy for all his Love to share.



# Share your Christmas happenings

## Christmas is coming ...

We know you will be extra busy ...  
 We know some exciting events and worship will be happening in churches and parishes around Niagara Diocese.  
 We would like you to share your "Christmas glad tidings" with readers of the *Niagara Anglican*.

### Send us ...

- **Photos** (high resolution, action shots, captions, photographer's name, permission to publish children's pictures from parents or guardians, etc.)
- **A short article** (300 words or less) about your Christmas experiences

Because of our deadline dates, timing is crucial. We need to receive your Christmas items **by January 3, 2019 at the absolute latest** (earlier would be greatly appreciated).

Send items to editor@niagaraanglican.ca

**Thanks and have a peace filled Christmas.**



# Blessing of the animals is our partnership with creation

## SUSAN LITTLE

The people of All Saints Hamilton have been spreading the Good News in a public way.

This year, close to their meeting place at Erskine Presbyterian, they gathered at nearby Victoria Park on the main thoroughfare of King Street West and blessed animals of the community.

In promoting good stewardship of creation, All Saints partnered with the Hamilton Burlington SPCA offering low cost spay/neuter of pets in conjunction with PetSmart Corporation. People lined up for hours and by the end of the event, over 88 cats had been booked for their procedure.

Not everyone knew what to expect that day and many were curious about people in white robes being very friendly with everyone's dogs and cats. In fact, it was the Rector of All Saints, the Reverend Ronda Ploughman and her server, Leslie Harschnitz, who approached the pets and their owners and offered to bless their pet(s).

As a token of All Saints' passion for pets, the owners received a personalized certificate confirming their blessing

and scrolled up with a St. Francis medallion.

Among the groups who participated were Pantry Four Paws - a local emergency food bank for pets, Ralph's Retreat: Sanctuary for Pot Bellied Pigs, Greyhound Lovers of Hamilton Wentworth (GLOHW) and others.

Although they are still without their own building, the people of All Saints seem to be good at building relationships in the community. Currently they are partnering with Erskine Presbyterian Church until they can move into their new project on Queen and King Streets.

Partnering with community groups, organizations and businesses certainly proclaims that all creatures are precious in God's sight and reinforces the sixth vow of our baptismal covenant. Even more than that, it draws people together on a sunny Sunday afternoon to talk about their loved ones and best friends.

The event also provides opportunities for some very tender pastoral conversations and powerful moments of healing, as well as some lighter ones such as "Will my dog go to heaven?"

"It's a wonderful way to proclaim God's redemption for

Server Leslie Harschnitz and Rector Ronda Ploughman of All Saints Hamilton approached the pets and their owners and offered to bless their pet(s). Two dogs owned by the Parkinsons receive their blessings.

Photo: Submitted



all of creation," says Ronda. "It's a message that cannot be heard often enough."

*Susan Little worships at the neighbouring parish of St. John the Evangelist, the Rock on Locke, Hamilton. She wrote the article after she "stumbled upon a local church blessing animals."*

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## Blessing the animals in Stoney Creek



Wendy Passmore was one of many parishioners and people from the community who brought their pets to the annual blessing of the animals at The Church of Our Saviour The Redeemer Stoney Creek. Rector Bahman Kalantari blessed the animals.

Photo: Bev Groombridge

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## The Arrival

Marie Leone, Hamilton

He was born in a place where love was in danger  
surrounded by gentle animals  
who waited for Him.  
Mary cast a look upon His face and smiled.  
Joseph was in awe of his beautiful son.  
And far away in the heavens, a magical star  
shone bright over the land.  
Three wise men were called to his side,  
bringing adoration, and gifts from afar.  
This was a special birth ... a Holy Birth.  
Gloria in Excelsis Deo sang the angels.  
The baby was comforted by this glorious love.  
Never before and even now had there been such a joyful birth.  
The baby's knowing look foretold of what was to come.  
The concerns of his loving parents secretly hidden.  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!  
The Saviour has arrived.



## Foster parents extraordinaire

Radcliff and Velma Worrell have been foster parents to 32 children over the past 15 years.

They attend St. Michael's Hamilton, and according to Rector Sheila Van Zandwyk, "together they have been a

strong team providing nurture, support, stability and a loving family home."

Sheila congratulated Velma and Radcliff and thanked them "for the love of Christ you have witnessed to in your life by

opening up your home to so many children."

Velma and Radcliff were honoured at a dinner at the Catholic Children's Aid Society.



St. Michael's Rector Sheila Van Zandwyk attended the dinner where Velma and Radcliff Worrell were honoured for being foster parents to 32 children over 15 years.

Photo: Sharon Worrell



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**An idea to share**

# Check the directory!

**ANDREA ROWBOTTOM**

MACCWT is an acronym for Milton and Area Christian Churches Working Together—I stress the “working together” because that is central to who we are. We are a registered nonprofit organization of laity representing our local member churches.

At present there are 19 member churches. At one time there were 31—but sadly churches do come and go.

Each church pays an annual membership of \$400 (for a full membership). The fees support our annual projects which include a Christmas dinner for the less fortunate, Kids Against Hunger Milton, On the Way to Bethlehem Nativity Pageant, a colouring book and a directory.

In the past we had Milton Transitional Housing under our umbrella until they were well established and independent (and doing marvelous things).

In addition, the membership must cover printing costs, office supplies, insurance and the web-site.

Member churches each have a page on the MACCWT website. They are entitled to advertise

upcoming services and activities. This in turn keeps everyone informed and gives an opportunity to support each other's events.

The colouring book and directory costs are greatly supplemented by the sponsorships of individuals and local businesses. Three thousand copies of the colouring book are printed as our gift to all children who attend On the Way to Bethlehem, as well as the children of our local churches.

Fifteen hundred directories are printed each January for distribution to our churches, offices, prison, hospital and libraries. Each church has an allotted page ad about 3"x5" for church photo, service times, history and activities. This year I wish to include a list of local outreach activities offered by the churches. The directories are well received and replenished by request.

MACCWT has been a working group for 18 years.

The colouring book is 8.5" x 11", while the directory is 3.5" x 8.5" with the ads adjusted accordingly.

The colouring book ads are Nativity themed—Shepherds



are individual sponsorships (\$25 or more); Innkeepers are businesses who supply goods or services; Myrrh - \$100 sponsorships; Frankincense - \$200 sponsors (about a business card size) and Gold - \$400 sponsorships given a ¼ page ad. Churches who support our special projects well over the annual membership of \$400 are rewarded with a ½ page Magi ad.

The colouring book and directory truly represent our focus and commitment to work together in the name of Christ.

Find more information at: [miltonchristianchurches.ca](http://miltonchristianchurches.ca) or email contact@[miltonchristianchurches.ca](mailto:miltonchristianchurches.ca)

*Andrea Rowbottom is a member of Grace Church Milton. [dr.andrea@bell.net](mailto:dr.andrea@bell.net)*

# St. Matthew's House moving in new directions

**HOLLIS HISCOCK**

A new van and a pilot project for isolated vulnerable seniors will enable St. Matthew's House (SMH) Hamilton to better care for people, according to their press release.



The new van not only advertises what St. Matthew's House does for the community it serves, it also reminds the public of some stark realities in our society.

With one year of funding the Senior's Isolation Pilot project focuses on working with newly isolated vulnerable seniors in the Keith and Gibson/Lansdale neighbourhoods.

"Seniors in this part of the city face an average age death of 65," said SMH Vice Chair David Savage. "The overall average for Hamilton is 80 plus."

He predicted, "This project will outreach to seniors who are newly isolated and offer support to assist with housing, finances, healthcare, diet/nutrition and socialization."

The recently acquired six-foot cargo van, used mainly for food pickups and deliveries, will benefit SMH's food bank users at the Barton Food Bank and Roxborough Food Bank, and in partnership with the new East End Food Centre planned for early 2019.

"As we prepare to open our third food bank, we will need a reliable vehicle to ensure all three are properly stocked," said Executive Director Renée Wetselaar.

"We will also use the new van," she continued, "to make home deliveries for seniors and other food bank users who are economically vulnerable but unable to access traditional food banks."

Over the last year, SMH gathered over 200,000 pounds of food, and in August over 2,000 individuals were served at its food banks. In addition, it regularly feeds 20-30 seniors two hot meals daily and provides each with weekend food kits.

More information on St. Matthew's House at [stmatthewshouse.ca](http://stmatthewshouse.ca).



Staff member Mary Lou and Volunteer Sami work at St. Matthew's House food bank, which served over 2,000 individuals during August 2018. Photos: Renée Wetselaar

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# First female rector for Grace

Grace Church Milton has its first female rector in 174 years, since the first travelling missionary arrived on horseback in 1844 and services were held in homes or the first area school.

The Rev. Karine Snowdon was inducted as the 21st Rector on October 14, 2018. The service officially marked the beginning

of her ministry with the people of Grace Church, even though her appointment was effective May 1st of this year.

Ordained in Huron diocese in 2007, she has served in various capacities in Huron and Rupert's Land dioceses. She was an Honorary Assistant at the Church of the Apostles Guelph prior to

her appointment to Grace.

Correspondent Lorrette Shermet wrote Karine "is greatly looking forward to her continued ministry with the people of Grace, as we go forward together in love and service to God and God's Son Jesus Christ."



Churchwardens Frank Johnson and Carey de Pass presented the symbolic key of the parish to their first female Rector Karine Snowdon.

Photo: Lorrette Shermet



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- ANTLERS** (I CANNOT EXPLAIN THESE)
- CHRISTMAS JUMPER** (IF YOU WANT TO BE ESPECIALLY WITTY AND UNUSUAL)

@davewalker / dave.walker.cc

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cartoonchurch.com

### Deadlines and Submissions for Niagara Anglican

**Deadlines:**

- February - December 21
- March - January 25
- April - February 22

**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.

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# The unchurched – the church of the future

## HOLLIS HISCOCK

Pray for the people who will lead the church tomorrow, was one of several challenges Bishop Susan Bell presented to the 375 people attending the Bishop's Company annual dinner.

She also mapped out present realities and future strategies facing church leaders—lay and clergy—in Niagara Diocese.

Leadership in the church today is more complex and is multi layered, she explained, so we cannot do things the same way as we did before.

Basically, leaders today and tomorrow must love God and love people, as well as follow Jesus. She continued by saying that being a Christian is not about "me", but about Jesus crucified and risen.

Leaders have to be transparent and mobile, able to go where the mission field is situated.

Today, she reiterated, the mission field is with the unchurched—people who do not belong or have any connection with traditional structured churches.

Calling them the fastest growing group in society and the future of the church, she continued, we must do things differently because we cannot call the unchurched to what they have never

known. "One size does not fit all," she cautioned.

Our approach to the unchurched should be gentle and loving as we share our Christian faith following Jesus, she concluded.

Bishop Susan also shared stories from her own faith journey and invited her listeners to recall individuals who shaped or influenced their spiritual lives.

In introducing Bishop Susan, long time friend and Rector of the Church of the Evangelist Elora, the Reverend Paul Walker said she has a "keen eye for building and equipping the church to have eyes and ears for the stories of people outside our walls: people in our communities, our neighbourhoods, our workplaces ... (she) has been a leading light and an articulate embodiment of the church at the missional margins of our world before it became part of our vocabulary."

Chancellor Greg Tweney described the Bishop's Company as both a community of members and a discretionary fund to assist Anglicans in need in the diocese with a primary emphasis on clergy, lay workers and their families.

The fund, established in the early 1950s, has hosted an annual dinner since 1995.



Musicians Kirk Starkey and Colin Maier of Quartetto Gelato set the mood as people gathered for the evening.



The candy table was a sweet gathering place to congregate and enjoy.



Piper Jim Yates ushered in the head table guests to formally begin the festivities.



Bishop Susan shared stories from her own faith journey and invited her listeners to recall individuals who shaped or influenced their spiritual lives.

The head table.