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Epiphany

A section of the Anglican Journal



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JANUARY 2018



Photo: Hollis Hiscock

The Last Charge ...

Delivered by Bishop Michael to the 143rd Niagara Synod

"At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release ... therefore, I command you, you shall open your hand wide."

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

OUR two readings from scripture today from the Book of Deuteronomy (15:1-18) and Luke's Gospel (4:1-20) speak of liberation, renewal, release to those who are oppressed and held captive, and they speak of being set free.

These themes were echoed in last year's Synod, in the material that we produced together when I asked delegates to reflect upon this question: "What should our new directions and our priorities be as a diocese for the year and years ahead; what is the Charge we are creating together?"

In the wake of the release of the document generated from the responses we received on that day, I stated: "Never in my 33 years of ordained ministry have I seen such an outpouring of passion and commitment to the proclamation of the gospel."

This morning, as I offer you this, my last Bishop's Charge to Synod, I want to begin by giving thanks to God for the empowered, hopeful and impassioned place we find ourselves in as a diocese today. I also indicated in that letter it was my sense as I looked to the future that we could see ourselves moving into 2018 as a Jubilee year and a year of liberation. Little did I know then that the liberation the Diocese of Niagara would be experiencing was a liberation from having me as your Bishop!

It is my hope, however, that in all the excitement and in all our attention to the details of discerning new episcopal leadership for Niagara that we not lose sight of the dreams we articulated last year of the ways in which we can continue to be set free:

- Liberating leaders and leadership in the diocese
- Liberating our lives to embrace the call to discipleship
- Liberating our ministries to move beyond our church buildings and become more visible in the public square

- Liberating our imaginations and our understanding of our calling to be the church and re-imagining our diocesan and congregational structures to help empower us for this ministry in the 21st century
- Liberating our parishes from the burden of financial restraints
- Liberating our voices to stand with and for God's people who are bound by the forces of poverty, violence, prejudice and warfare.

God is calling us to be liberating forces in the lives of others and we are being called to set our own lives free as well!

In the Gospel lesson today Jesus recites the powerful, missional and liberating words of the prophet Isaiah that speak of a sacred calling — an anointing ... "the Lord has anointed me" to bring good news to the poor, sight to those who are blind, release to captives and those who are oppressed.

Reading further we find this will be Jesus' sacred calling as he gives back the scroll from which he has been reading and with the eyes of all in the synagogue fixed upon him, he says: "today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." It was central to Jesus' mission and ministry and, dear friends, it is central to our ministry as well. The people in his hometown were impressed and delighted with his message up to that moment.

This sacred calling, however, has a clearly defined role of prophecy for Jesus.

In the next few lines, he takes on the more challenging role of the prophet; one who is to be inspired by the Spirit to proclaim our old messages in new ways. The prophetic voice offers both good news and words of challenge and reproach. It is a voice that is at odds with what is familiar and comfortable.

A prophet must step outside the boundaries and Jesus tells those who were gathered in the synagogue that there are times when God's loving purposes will pass them over and embrace the foreigner and the stranger instead. It is a mission that calls them to look beyond their own limited vision,

See *BISHOP'S LAST CHARGE* Page 2

Bishop's last Charge

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

beyond their own comfort zones and their own mistaken ideas of divine blessing.

This message was not very well received. In fact, the people were filled with rage on that day and it would not be the last time that Jesus confronted this clash between human and religious self-interest and the work of God's abundant, reconciling, transforming love in the world.

I welcome you to the 143rd Synod of the Diocese of Niagara, and our time together over the next two days will offer us an opportunity to look back, look around and look forward to the future. Not surprisingly, the task I have taken in delivering this charge is to look back over these past ten years.

On March 2, 2008 I stood outside of this Cathedral and knocked on those large wooden doors as part of the traditional ceremony for the installation and seating of the Diocesan Bishop. I am not sure if it was my imagination or not, but there did seem to be a rather long and awkward pause before the doors were opened!

In my sermon on that installation day, I spoke about the many doorways that we stood in front of as a diocese. While those doors opened inward to welcome your new bishop, I said we would then strive together to open our doors outward. Those words were very much in



Bishop Michael spoke of how his first official day on the job as Bishop was in the courts and in the media over breakaway parishes. Photo: Submitted

keeping with the words of the scripture readings today.

As I recall, it was a day of great excitement and promise, but there was also a good deal of anxiety for the future.

In the days preceding this celebration, local and national newspapers and media spoke of the conflict and division in the life of the Anglican Church. The Toronto Star had a running commentary on the status of three breakaway parishes in our diocese. On February 20, the headlines read as follows: "Breakaway Anglicans asked to hand over keys." On February 28, it was announced that "Talks with dissident Anglican parishes end," and then on March 3, the day after my installation, a picture appeared in newspapers across the country with the

caption reading: "A House of worship divided."

The Toronto Star article went on to say: "For Niagara Bishop Michael Bird, the court case opened on his first official day in office—he spent the day in court and talking to reporters outside—[this issue] threatens to dominate his entire time in office."

If this were not enough, 2008 was the year that the economy crashed or at the very least took a dramatic down turn. With this loss of investment money, mounting court and legal fees and a multi-million-dollar debt we had some major and painful financial decisions to make.

One of the things I am most grateful for, as we gather here today, is that we find ourselves in a sound financial position and

that having stood our ground and brought our legal proceedings to a successful conclusion, not one cent of those court costs was paid for out of the collection plates of our parishes.

We were able to position Canterbury Hills for long term sustainability, initiate a process for Cathedral Place revitalization, deploy resources for mission and ministry in a number of regions in the diocese, and bring leadership and oversight to countless building developments and property matters.

There were indeed some anxious times for us in the Diocese of Niagara and you and I had a decision to make. Would we allow these challenges and all the challenges we faced back then, to force us into the kind of paralysis that communities and institutions find themselves in from time to time? Could we liberate ourselves and set our parishes free to be open and inclusive communities? Could we open our doors and our hands wide to those who God was calling us to serve? Could we find the courage in this moment to embrace our own sacred calling and allow our lives to proclaim and embody the loving and transforming presence of the risen Christ in our midst?

Our answer to all these questions came in the form of our diocesan vision. While our difficulties back then may have threatened to dominate our entire time together, in the end

nothing could have been further from the truth!

Following Christ passionately we committed ourselves to the following:

- A Continuous Culture of Innovation
- Prophetic Social Justice Making
- Outstanding Leadership for Ministry
- Life Changing Worship
- Generous Culture of Stewardship.

For many of those early years, not one of the sermons I preached failed to reference and uphold this vision of ours that evolved out of the 22 visioning meetings we held across the diocese. Much of our diocesan ministry at Cathedral Place was already well-aligned with these dreams and aspirations, and we were blessed with the arrival of several new champions to help focus on living the vision and add capacity for justice and stewardship efforts.

Teams were formed to initiate the work for each of the Vision's areas of focus and in later years I would appoint two new Archdeacons—one for leadership development and one to help move us toward a renewed and restored life with the Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

In partnership with the clergy and lay leaders of the diocese, it has been wonderful to behold how this template and this

Continued Page 4

More Synod coverage starting on page 6.

Song of the Grand

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A standing ovation for Bishop Michael followed the passing of a motion thanking him for his courageous, inspiring leadership over the past 10 years.

Photo: Bill Mous

HOLLIStorial

Winter growth

HOLLIS HISCOCK

Happy New Year.

As we enter the 2018 time and space allocated to us by the rhythm of seconds, minutes, days and months, those three words, which have been echoed since time immemorial, express eloquently our future hopes and expectations.

May the coming YEAR be filled with HAPPY-ness and NEW-ness as we discern and work out God's purposes for our various personal situations against the backdrop milieu of our global community.

As we step, slide, jump or are pushed into the dawn and opportunities of each new day, let it be with the confidence that God waits there to greet us wherever we go and whatever we encounter.

Winter is a splendid season to grow spiritually - a time to examine, evaluate and transform our relationships with God and other humans.

To provide much needed guideposts to chart our journey,

I turn to Victor Parachini's "Nine ways to deepen your spirituality," which first appeared in the newspaper, *Episcopal Life*. Here his suggestions appear in bold and my commentary follows.

1. BE QUIET – set aside time for solitude and meditation.

This could involve one long meditation session or a series of short moments captured throughout one's busy day.

2. BE ATTENTIVE – take time to listen to God as well as pray.

Praying is a two way street ... a dialogue, not a monologue.

3. BE LOVING – work to soften your judgement and widen your mercy.

My grandmother-in-law would chide us, "if you're big, be merciful." Similarly true even if you are small or medium, strong or weak.

4. BE OPEN – spiritual growth can happen in any life situation.

Such opportunities can occur anywhere, anytime, under any circumstances and often

when least expected.

5. BE KIND – acts of kindness bring us closer to God.

As Jesus reminded us, "When you do an act of kindness to another human being you are doing it to me." Some examples include donating to a food bank, visiting a sick person, giving your slightly worn clothes to a charity, visiting someone imprisoned in life or welcoming a stranger.

6. BE CURIOUS – spiritual opportunities come disguised in unexpected forms.

To see God's face in every person you meet may be a challenge at times, but out of such encounters, occasionally, your spirituality may grow and become stronger.

7. BE OPEN TO PAIN AND GRIEF – often the greatest spiritual growth emerges from pain and grief.

Perhaps, when we are most vulnerable or at our lowest living point, is when we are most receptive for God's presence

to transform us into stronger more capable human beings.

8. BE HONEST – we are human, confess to God and ask for what you need.

I find great solace and comfort in the invitation used in our public worship, "Let us confess our sins confident in God's forgiveness." Others may perceive this as arrogance, but I see it as a living example of God's love spoken by Jesus from the cross, "Father (GOD) forgive them for they do not know what they are doing."

9. BE FORGIVING – forgive others, let grudges go and move ahead.

The "other" could be you, and forgiving oneself may be the most difficult to accomplish. Forgiving yourself or another human may not be easy to do, but because of it your spirituality could grow tremendously.

Celebrate and have fun as you put these principles into practice during the coming year.



Take a print or digital copy with you for your own reference throughout each day.

Observe and flag any improvements occurring in your spiritual life with God and/or your relationship with others.

Remember, improvements achieved by one individual benefit everybody.

Nine ways to deepen your spirituality

1. BE QUIET
2. BE ATTENTIVE
3. BE LOVING
4. BE OPEN
5. BE KIND
6. BE CURIOUS
7. BE OPEN TO PAIN AND GRIEF
8. BE HONEST
9. BE FORGIVING

Victor Parachini – Episcopal Life



Letters

Need to re-affirm the Jesus of the New Testament

Your article (October 2017) "Who is Jesus to me"—and your Facebook friend's comments—go to the heart of what ails us as Anglicans. You have captured in a nutshell why churches are closing and people are staying away in droves.

Church as we know it cannot survive unless it offers something we need, want, can believe to be true and can't get elsewhere.

Your correspondent notes we can be "very good people" without going to church, and those who pursue social justice can do so through political par-

ties and interest groups.

We meet our need for community through family, work, service clubs and shared hobbies. We get counselling and absolution from friends, therapy groups and drinking buddies. A lot of academics tell us the universe is self-explanatory and doesn't need an external agent. So when you ask, "Who is Jesus to me?" many must reply, "superfluous" and "irrelevant".

Certainly, Jesus invites a personal response from each of us, but you can-

LETTERS continued Page 11

Different focus on worship needed

For the future and wellbeing of our Church today, we need leaders educated in the field of Progressive Christianity to help us in Niagara to transition the expression of our faith back to the understanding, faith and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.

We need to listen, read and take to heart the words of our leaders in our evolving church, those of Matthew Fox, Michael Morwood, David Felton and well-known others.

They courageously speak out as progressive theologians regarding the critical need to replace our presently misleading services of worship, especially the prayers

and creeds, and to center our gatherings with stimuli for intensive listening prayer overflowing into joyful song, dance and compassionate action.

We do not need to reinvent this transition. It has already taken place in churches round the globe and available to us in Niagara through the internet. The words are already written. We only need to choose with eco-centric, knowledgeable, inspired minds centered on the wisdom and faith of Jesus.

Heather-Joy Brinkman

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Bishop's last Charge

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

beacon of hope and promise has renewed and transformed us as God's people in Niagara.

One of the analogies I used on a number occasions in my preaching was to compare the people of the diocese to passengers on an airplane. I have traveled a great deal in my work as your bishop and I suppose I had airports and air travel on the brain. I told parishioners that we were like a group of passengers on a 787 Dreamliner, and that we had already left the departure gate with our flight plan in hand. The flight plan was our new Diocesan Vision. In order to take off, however, we were going to need to lighten the load and we were going to need to build a longer runway.

One person really resonated with this analogy; it was not surprising given he was a pilot himself and he sent me an actual copy of a flight plan that he had recently filed and I still have that piece of paper to this day.

This morning, I want to pick up on that analogy once again and say to you: "Dear people of

the Diocese of Niagara; this is your pilot speaking ... we have achieved lift off!!!" It was not without many challenges and sacrifices and we have a great deal of altitude yet to attain, but I believe we are in the air and on our way to an exciting and glorious future.

Here is what our diocese in flight looks like to me from my vantage point in the air traffic control booth:

- Creative worship teams
- Canterbury Hills
- A safe church for all
- Canadian and African Bishops in Dialogue
- Mission to Seafarers
- Hands Across Niagara projects
- Living wages
- St. Matthew's House
- Strong PWRDF support
- Community lunches and dinners
- Bishop's Diploma Course
- Extraordinary Pastoral Care
- Global Outreach
- HARRRP
- An inclusive church
- The Niagara Youth Conference
- Food and Hygiene banks
- Green Parishes
- Youth Synod in Action
- KAIROS Blanket Exercises
- Community gardens
- Advocacy to eliminate poverty
- University Chaplaincies
- Balanced budgets
- Migrant Farm Workers Ministry
- Phenomenal Choral Music
- Messy Church
- Open Doors
- aWay
- WOW grants
- Celtic and Taizé worship
- Out of the Cold
- Ride for Refuge
- Cathedral Place Revitalization
- Ecumenical partnerships
- Participation at UNCSW
- Faithful discipleship
- Bishop's Company
- Bless the City
- Over 200 sponsored refugees
- Equal marriage
- Community partnerships
- Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation
- Investments aligned with mission
- Holy Conversations

Dear people of the Diocese of Niagara; this is your pilot speaking... we have achieved lift off!!!

- Bishop's Lenten Book Groups
- Congregational partnerships
- Deep relationships with Cuba and Ghana.

It is the result of dedicated and inspiring leadership from our parish clergy and lay leaders, our chancellors and solicitor, Synod Office management team and staff, Archdeacons and Regional Deans, Synod delegates and Synod Council members, Committee members, partners in ministry and countless others

who have borne faithful witness to our Lord's sacred calling and mission that comes from our gospel reading today. Jesus' words find profound meaning once again as we reflect upon all that has transpired: "today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Let us give thanks to God for this remarkable journey that we have taken together; one that has changed our lives and has renewed and transformed us as God's people in Niagara.



Archbishop Colin Johnson and Bishop Michael compare notes at Synod.



Moments That Matter

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The meaning of Christian Unity

DAVID W. T. BRATTSTON

What is Christian unity in the Biblical sense? Jesus called for unity among Christians, but did not say what Christian unity is or how we can know when it exists.

Is Christian unity merely two neighbouring congregations of the same denomination sponsoring a joint meal? Or two congregations of different denominations doing so? Or co-operation in the World Council of Churches, and similar national and local organizations? Or intercommunion agreements? Or did Jesus and his first followers intend nothing short of the thoroughgoing structural union of two previously independent denominations?

The earliest Christian writings help us to understand what "unity" means and how to work towards it. This article looks at Christian literature before AD 250, when Christians could recall from living memory what Jesus and the apostles did in practice, teachings on their unwritten teachings and Bible interpretations.

In John 17, Jesus prayed that Christians be united in the

"The earliest Christian writings help us to understand what unity means and how to work towards it."

same way he and the Father are united. Not knowing the way heaven is organized, we are little assisted by this in determining what "united" means, except to observe that the Father and Son are two persons in constant contact with each other.

The essence of Christian unity later in the first century AD was the considerate treatment and mutual forbearance among Christ's followers on a frequent basis. (Romans 12:4f, 1 Corinthians 1:10, Ephesians 4:3 and Philippians 1:27 and 2:2)

Also in the first century, the congregation at Rome wrote to that at Corinth urging them to heal a rift in the congregation, and to re-establish peace, love and unity among Christians who were in at least weekly contact with each other.

About AD 107, Bishop Ignatius of Antioch encouraged Christians in three congregations to be united to their local clergy. An early third century

church manual stressed unity of clerics within a congregation. Both Ignatius and the manual pressed for greater consolidation within the church to improve relations between Christians who had daily or weekly interactions with each other.

In AD 197, the church father Tertullian saw Christian unity as being the gathering together of Christians in local public worship.

About AD 249, Origen identified unity in Christians agreeing to pray for the same request (Matthew 18:19), and in the apostles praying together (Acts 1:14). These are persons in each other's presence co-operating towards a common spiritual goal. Origen was the foremost Bible scholar and teacher of his time, and was frequently called upon as a consultant by bishops throughout the eastern Mediterranean.

The above authors classed unity with such other inter-

personal traits as peace, love, gentleness, courtesy, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, hospitality and recognition of the spiritual gifts of others. The same authors believed that unity is incompatible with strife, jealousy, arrogance, repaying evil for evil and snobbishness. All these are attitudes or modes of relating to people with whom one is in personal contact.

In the Biblical sense, unity is a pattern of mind and behaviour, a mode of conducting one-to-one interpersonal relations among Christians in frequent contact and the fostering of peace, love, and harmony at the neighbourhood level.

Not mentioned in the Bible, although Christianity had divided into different sects during the first century, official interdenominational mergers contribute to Christian unity

only to the extent that they promote these local objectives. The original meaning of "Christian unity" entailed constant—at least weekly—interaction, not just formal annual meetings nor dry scholarly discussions on doctrine.

The shared Communion between Canadian Anglicans and Lutherans is one such local objective, for it enables us to accept each other as equals in Christ and share together in a foretaste of heaven.

David W. T. Brattston is a member of the oldest Lutheran congregation in Canada, and sometimes attends the midweek Eucharist at the second oldest Anglican Church in Canada, both in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.

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This is a one-time non-exclusive Canadian reprint right.

Activities in Stoney Creek



Country legend Minnie Pearl (performed by Wendy Klassen) sang up a storm to a capacity crowd following dinner at the Country and Western Pub night sponsored by The Church of Our Saviour The Redeemer Stoney Creek.

Over 50 people attended a presentation on Mass Marketing Fraud and Cybercrime at The Church of Our Saviour The Redeemer Stoney Creek. Brock Godfrey, Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre Senior Support Unit Volunteer, and Constable Johnathon Coleman of the RCMP led the worthwhile and informative session. "Those in attendance will be more prepared when approached by those hoping to take advantage of them," concluded Churchwarden Bev Groombridge.

Photos: Bev Groombridge



Special week for Christian unity

In 2018, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity runs from January 18 to the 25.

In many parts of the world, people are invited to pray for Christian unity, study the Bible together, worship jointly and share fellowship.

An ecumenical team from the Caribbean developed the theme and some resources this year. They chose the song of Moses and Miriam (Ex. 15:1-21)—a song of triumph over oppression—as this year's motif.

According to their website Caribbean Christians of many different traditions see the hand of God active in the ending of enslavement. It is a uniting experience of God's saving action which brings freedom.

More information at weekofprayer.ca

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 A roundup of Synod 2017

Smudging and sprinkling—the beginning and the end



Canon Donna Bomberry led the smudging ceremony at Synod. Photo: Bill Mous

Smudging began Synod and sprinkling began the exodus into the world as Synod members left Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton to take their messages and actions back to their parishes and wider world.

The purpose of the smudging ceremony is to clear away negative energies so people can centre their full attention on the task at hand. As members gathered for their two days of receiving presentations and making plans for the future, they symbolically permitted the smudging smoke to enter their total selves.

At the end of Synod, following the renewing of their baptismal covenant, two bishops walked among the delegates sprinkling them with water. Water became the sign of their commitment to take the good news of Jesus Christ with them as delegates continue their ministry and mission outside the walls of the structured church.

Lastly, Bishop Michael dispatched God's people with his final blessing as the Bishop of Niagara's regular Synod.



Bishop Michael sprinkling participants at the conclusion of the 143rd Synod.

Photo: Marni Nancekivell

More than a political meeting—Archbishop reminded Synod delegates

"Synod is not just a political meeting but a gathering under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to worship and pray, to listen and discern, to debate and decide on the priorities for ministry, to determine the resources you will allot, to support the infrastructure that you will require, and to recommit to how you chose now to follow God who has chosen you to participate with him in Christ's mission to the world," the Most Reverend Colin Johnson reminded those attending the 143rd Synod of Niagara Diocese.

He is the Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, of which Niagara is a member diocese. The seven dioceses, located in southern

and northern Ontario and a part of Quebec, comprise about two-thirds of the Anglicans in Canada.

Calling the Synod "a moment of transition" in the midst of "challenging times amid a culture of polarity and disrespect", he said, "It is an opportune time for an alternate word, a word of God, Good News, to speak of new life and renewed relationships."

Noting he was at Bishop Michael's consecration and now at his last Synod, the Archbishop praised him for his extraordinary contribution to the life of the church.

"It has not been easy, and at times, he has borne a considerable burden personally and

professionally for the clear and courageous stands he has taken."

He mentioned the Bishop's "fearless with humility" advocacy for LGBTQ communities, not only in terms of same sex marriage but "the full inclusion of all people in the life of this church."

He included the connections Bishop Michael made with the wider church, particularly with Cuba and Bishops in Dialogue—the latter gathering over the last eight years brought together 52 bishops, archbishops and primates mostly from Africa and Canada.

"As your bishop, he has done you proud! I am honoured to call him friend," concluded the Archbishop.

A youth worker's view of Synod

ALICIA ARMSTRONG

During Synod, we had the opportunity to hear from a few different people who were all working within the Anglican Church to support the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

One speaker who really stood out to me was the Reconciliation Animator, Melanie Delva. She said if you can read to the end of the 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and not find something to do, then you need to go back and re-read them!

As a youth worker this particularly resonated with me.

The Calls to Action is not something I have shared or reviewed with the youth. One misguided reason was the belief that the topic was too broad and too painful to really be tackled successfully. I didn't want to present a painful problem, and then be unable to help them develop a plan of action or a way to help.

I connected this to the gospel parable of the talents and the idea that people have lots of talents. Sometimes we have to stretch ourselves in order to discover those talents.

For me, the connection was less about recognizing the way we use talents currently, but more of a promise to provide the opportunity for the youth to learn about and discuss these problems.

As a group, we can read about the 94 Calls to Action and identify the opportunities to help, and then give the youth the chance to tackle topics with responsibility and demonstrate their talents.

Alicia Armstrong is the Youth Worker at St. Cuthbert's Oakville. arms8540@mylaurier.ca

Special fund supported over 700 projects

From 1992 to 2017, the Anglican Church of Canada has funded 710 projects at a cost of \$8,114,896, Esther Wesley of the Healing Fund told the delegates attending the 2017 Niagara Synod.

The Healing Fund, established in 1991 to address the impacts of residential schools on Indigenous peoples, has a mandate to assist the Anglican Church of Canada in responding to the residential schools issues in an ongoing, sensitive and just manner, she explained, and "to educate the church about the residential schools and its legacy."

Projects funded have included community development, training and community capacity build-

ing, those related to language as well as children and youth programs.

In 2017, the church set out to renew the Healing Fund's capacity by setting a new goal to raise \$1 million—"enough money to allow the fund to continue for the next five years," she went on. Seventy percent of that amount was raised by November 2017.

Esther said Anglicans should be proud of what they have done through the Healing Fund, and her work continues by listening, encouraging and supporting its work.

Donations to the Anglican Appeal (Healing Fund) can be made at anglican.ca/giving

A roundup of Synod 2017

Call for Calls to Actions

Believing reconciliation to be a spiritual practice, Melanie Delva, the Anglican Church of Canada's Reconciliation Animator, invited members of synod to engage deeply with the *Calls to Action* of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

The TRC *Calls to Action*, released in 2015 at the end of the Commission's mandate, included calls to churches, all settlement parties, the Canadian government and various sectors of society, covering everything from education, to sports, to business and media.

These *Calls to Action* were based on the pursuit of equality and reconciliation, as well as on

the spirit of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Melanie suggested parishes adopt a Call to Action to work on together by finding out on whose traditional territory you work, worship and live, as well as taking part in acts of solidarity with Indigenous peoples.

Reading Indigenous authors, attending local Indigenous cultural events and talking to others about Indigenous justice and how the church is involved can also be effective in achieving reconciliation, she reiterated.

Do not forget to pray, she reminded the church members at Niagara Synod.



The gospel at the opening worship was read as drama by Nathan Arcari, Claire Christoff and Sheila Van Zandwyk.

All unattributed Synod photos: Hollis Hiscock & Bill Mous

Sister Margaret Hayward spent time at synod knitting a mermaid tail as a gift for a friend.



A priest views Synod

MICHELLE BOOMGAARD

I attended my first-ever synod in the Anglican Church of Canada in November.

As someone who worked for decades in the Episcopal Church (USA) as a layperson and a priest, I have attended a number of Diocesan Conventions.

Conventions vary somewhat from one diocese to another—some are held in cathedrals, others in larger churches or nearby convention centers; some dioceses have resolutions on controversial issues, others only courtesy resolutions thanking the hosts.

However, there were some ways in which the Niagara Synod differed from what I have experienced thus far.

One main contrast is the business of the two gatherings. In most conventions, one main purpose is electing people to a variety of diocesan positions, from cathedral chapter to the commission on ministry to disciplinary committees, to governance committees (Council or the Committee on Constitution and Canons), as well as representatives to the larger (triennial) General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

The names of candidates and their biographies often constitute a large part of the pre-convention materials, and voting usually begins shortly

after worship on the first day. This allows time to count ballots, and for a second (or in rare instances, third) ballot to break ties. These committees do a lot of diocesan work, then report back to convention, usually in written reports.

With less time devoted to this kind of voting, it seemed there was much more time for other things.

I was very impressed by the ways in which the heritage of Canada was recognized and came through in Synod—beginning with Bishop Bird's recitation of the territorial acknowledgment noting the peoples who had lived in the Hamilton area before the Europeans arrived.

I also felt there was a lot of time at synod to draw inspiration from the good work being done in Niagara and the larger Church. I really appreciated the work the staff had done to make the Cathedral space conducive to holding a meeting—like all the video screens, the good sound system and the thoughtfulness of the layout.

All in all, I would say my first-ever Canadian Anglican Church Synod was a great experience.

The Reverend Michelle Boomgaard is Rector of St. Christopher's Burlington. mbloomgaard@stch.ca

New assessment formula approved

After three years of work, a simpler, clearer and fairer formula determining each parish's DM&M (Diocesan Mission and Ministries) was approved at the 2017 Niagara Synod.

In reviewing the old formula, DM&M Committee Chair the Reverend Canon Richard Moorse said the committee found many parishes were having difficulty understanding the calculations, the process was complicated, there was often confusion regarding the definition of some deductions which leads to inconsistent interpretations by parishes and 75% of all submissions contained inaccuracies.

After researching practices in other dioceses, the committee decided this question would be the basis for any new formula: "What expenses are necessary for every parish to operate?"

Accordingly, they identified the following as "common expenses to all parishes": worship and ministry space, ordained leadership, housing for clergy and licensed lay workers and outreach expenses.

"These are necessary for every parish, no matter the size. All deductions then would be related to these common ministry expenses," continued Richard.

Because the new formula standardizes allowable deductions for parishes, facilitates calculations and places all parishes on an equal footing, the DM&M can be reviewed on one page.

"Our goal is to eliminate misunderstandings and misinterpretations and better reflect a variety of parish realities. Above all, we seek to create a method that is fair and transparent

while greatly simplifying the calculations," Richard wrote.

In his report to Niagara Synod, Chair of the Financial Advisory Committee the Reverend Deacon George Henry maintained, "The new formula, will lower the annual assessment to smaller less affluent parishes while increasing the assessment to the larger more affluent parishes and will be revenue neutral to the Diocese."

Several workshops to explain the formula in greater detail were held prior to the November Synod.

"We realize that this is an important change, and one which will impact every parish and so we ask for your prayerful discernment as we seek to share the many gifts God has given us in an effective and faithful way," concluded Richard.

Surplus budget approved by Synod

The 2018 Niagara budget should result in a small net surplus of \$29,648, Chair Andrew Clinkard of the Finance Budget subcommittee predicted in presenting the financial picture to the November Synod, "continuing the tradition of building sustainability."

This means investing "more than \$3.1 million in spreading God's love and fueling life change," he stated.

The majority (\$2,950,000) of the diocese's support comes from DM&M (Diocesan Mission and Ministries), with the remainder from interest, fees and sundry items, totalling receipts of \$3,251,314.

The parish assessment DM&M rates remain the same for 2018.

Expenditures (\$3,221,666) centre around the church's mission and its support, congregational support and development, youth and children, education, outreach and social justice, as well as caring for diocesan held properties.

"I trust your review of the proposed 2018 budget, combined with this overview, has given you a glimpse of the good news in this Diocese made possible by all of you with God's help," Andrew concluded.

 A roundup of Synod 2017

An archdeacon views Synod

SUZANNE CRAVEN

Synod—any year—I just love it!

I'm there early (also to find parking) and I love to watch as the space slowly fills with colleagues from all over the Diocese. I think I have attended 20 Synods now—as a student, intern, priest, Canon and Archdeacon. In my latter position, with the opportunity to move around the region, I am also getting to know the lay delegates from other parishes, so this is another opportunity to interact with the larger Diocesan family.

2017: Before we started, there was a real buzz in the room—yet tangibly, a different buzz.

This would be our Bishop's final Synod and Charge to the Diocese of Niagara. For some lay delegates and also some clergy, Bishop Michael is the only bishop they have known in their

tenure of serving as lay or clergy reps of their parishes.

The atmosphere, to me, was charged with a nostalgic glow of thanksgiving for our Bishop, of anticipation as we awaited the Charge, of acknowledgement as Archbishop Colin Johnson spoke of this time of transition and change for all of us. (How many Anglicans does it take to change ... anything?)

One of my colleagues referred to Synod this year as a "Love-in". Maybe it was. The standing ovation following Bishop Michael's Charge, and the standing ovation in agreement with the final motion of thanks to our Bishop, could only speak to the love, admiration and acknowledgement of the work and leadership he has provided, not only in the Diocese, but in the wider Anglican Communion over the last 10 years.

Bishop Michael has brought many gifts to this episcopacy,

with a quiet yet strong confidence of God's direction for us. We have succeeded on so many fronts from those challenging early years of dissident churches and challenging economy to which he referred in his charge. We took hold of the vision and flourished in many exciting new ministries.

As an Archdeacon only for the last two years, I have been privy to the inner workings of our relationship with the Diocese, privy to support wonderful examples of ministry in our Trafalgar parishes and very grateful to serve our Bishop.

God bless us all as a Diocesan family, strong to serve those in every walk of life, as we proclaim the Good News of our faith.

The Venerable Suzanne Craven is Archdeacon of Trafalgar. scraven@bserv.com



Pews were removed from the Cathedral so synod delegates could confer in parish clusters at long tables.

Delegates met in their respective regions to elect their representatives to various diocesan councils and boards.



On the way to a new bishop

On March 3, 2018 Niagara Diocese will elect a Coadjutor Bishop to succeed Bishop Michael in June.

In December a slate of nominees was named by the Synod Council, which serves as the nominating committee. Other may be nominated at a later date.

A special portal on the Diocesan website will house information about the election, canons that govern the process, a refreshed diocesan profile, a prayer for parishes to share

regularly to discern the Spirit's will, as well as the profiles of those individuals who have been nominated.

An opportunity is being planned throughout the diocese to meet and greet the nominees during the last week of January. Information will be on the website.

The Niagara Anglican hopes to carry profiles in the February paper.

Committee Chair the Reverend Ann Turner commented, "For those of us

involved directly in the planning and orchestration of this election, it is an incredible privilege. The Diocese of Niagara is a community embodied in its fresh expressions of worship, its creative ideas in outreach and mission, and a heart that is open to welcome all to gather round the table. Pray for this committee, our diocese, those discerning their own call to serve us as bishop, and for the wisdom and guidance of the Spirit throughout this whole process of call and response."

Sign all registers—Some forget

Diocesan Archivist John Rathbone reported, "It would be very helpful to further archivists if you PRINT all names and signatures clearly as well as sign. And don't forget to sign all registers—some forget."

Parishes are urged to bring their parish register to diocesan confirmation services for the bishop to sign.

The Archivist can get parishes copies of their parish records, histories and other archival

material kept at the Mill's Memorial Library, McMaster University Library, Hamilton.

Recently, a summer student brought Niagara's archival records up to date. "It will be faster and easier to locate archival material," John maintained.

John requested that archival records of closed or amalgamated parishes be catalogued, identified and brought to Cathedral Place (not McMaster) to his attention, as mandated by

diocesan policy.

He will take them to McMaster and promises, "You will receive a digital copy for your personal researching. Remember I have access to all records at all times so you are not without reference to your parish records."

Let John know if you want a tour of Christ's Church Cathedral.

John Rathbone can be reached at 905-527-1316 ext. 450.



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The Sermon on the Mount

Lenten Devotions for 2018



Starting on Ash Wednesday, February 14th you can read in the Niagara Anglican Lenten meditations prepared by the College of Deacons in Niagara Diocese.

The Deacons have chosen Jesus' Sermon on the Mount to explore what it means in understanding his teaching and how to grow our faith in living today.

You can also have the meditations delivered directly to your email by signing up at niagaraanglican.news (see FOLLOW in the right hand lower corner).

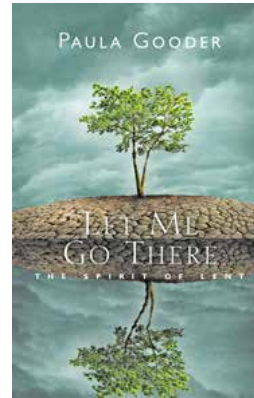
Bishop Michael's choice for Lenten book Let Me Go There

The desert can be a place of fear and desolation, as well as a place where God meets people and calls them to a new way of being and living.

Bestselling author Paula Gooder in her book *Let Me Go There: The Spirit of Lent* takes her readers on that journey of exploration.

In 40 short sections suitable for daily reading, Paula explores themes associated with the season of Lent: wilderness, journey, fasting, taking up your cross, discipleship, prayer and temptation.

She reflects on some key events in the life of God's people that occurred in the wilderness as a



way of preparing them to enter more fully into the experiences of Jesus' 40 days and nights in the desert at the beginning of his ministry, and to hear afresh the call to the disciples that ensued.

In her writings, she gives not only a deep understanding of God's nature but a picture of the character and the cost of discipleship, as well as a pattern for living as followers of Jesus in today's world.

The Lenten book (\$15) must be pre-ordered by January 15, 2018 from jane.wyse@niagaraanglican.ca or 905-527-1316 (420).

Epiphany

REBECCA CLIFFORD, CALEDONIA

The star which [the Magg] saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house,

they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in

a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. (St. Matthew 2:1-14)

This series of Haikus were inspired by the above scripture:

A star led them there
Small one made of hope and love
came for us, for all

--

A dream warned them off
Take an alternate way home,
Avoid King Herod.

Quick warning to flee
Rapid packing, little thought
Sand gets everywhere

--

Leaving for Egypt
Bundle and bag everything
—hope no one follows.



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Making the real world like camp — Canterbury Hills Camp

LANCE WRIGHT

Our theme verse for summer 2017 was 1 Timothy 4:12: "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

Through our daily superhero story at chapel, campers were encouraged to use their abilities to be effective role models in the world. In response, we saw campers show leadership by including someone who struggled to fit in, planning an exciting theme activity for the rest of camp, or creating memorable songs, stories or prayers at Eucharist celebrations.

As campers went home with bright smiles and full hearts, we were encouraged by their desire to shine brightly in their communities and beyond.

I love what happens when campers find a safe place to discover their potential. They are affirmed for who they are and who they are becoming. Parents so often see a difference after

camp, noting that they see more confidence or more motivation in their child. So, as much as I love what happens at camp, I get even more excited about what happens after camp.

A camper often leaves camp more open.

They're a little more ready to try new things, engage with others or show some faith. This openness leads to new experiences and a new trajectory. Then down the road, they can look back and see how camp has shaped them. I have known countless people who have described camp in this way. Some are ordained leaders, some are lay leaders, and all are leaders in some form or another who are making the world a better place.

In my life, there's no doubt that I was significantly influenced by positive camp experiences. So now it's my pleasure to give back and help staff and campers form character, faith and direction through a Christian camp community. It really is a slice of heaven on

earth. After camp, some people call it "going back to the real world," but I like to say that after camp we get to go and make the "real world" like camp.

At Canterbury Hills, we have been chasing down some big dreams and seeing those dreams come true. This past summer, our sparkling new gaga ball court was enjoyed all day, every day. Our new off-site Adventure Camp engaged and challenged budding leaders with wilderness camping, hiking, rock climbing and a canoe trip on the Grand River. Registration numbers continued to climb higher as we filled just about every space available.

It's so very exciting and rewarding to see a dream move from an abstract idea to reality at camp. So we're charging forward with more dreams as we move into summer 2018 and beyond. This summer we're launching new camps and expanding our existing camps!

Alumni Camp will be June 23-24, as we invite past campers and staff (age 18+) to enjoy a



Rock climbing was very popular with campers.

Photo: Canterbury Hills Camp

mer as we build on last summer's successful pilot.

Day and overnight camps in July and August will each include an additional unit group.

We're very grateful for all of the people, parishes and prayers that have helped Canterbury Hills be in a place where we can dream and move forward with much faith and anticipation. Thanks be to God.

Lance Wright is Camp Director of Canterbury Hills. director@canterburyhills.ca

camp experience while reconnecting with old friends and making new ones.

Family Camp will be July 6-7, as we invite parents to a first-hand camp experience that is far beyond the drop-off and pick-up role.

Adventure Camp (ages 13-15) will be offered twice this sum-

YLTP – Equipping youth for leadership



Photos: Submitted.

Niagara's Youth Leadership Training Program (YLTP) equips young people to take active leadership roles in their churches, schools and communities.

YLTP's mission involves having fun with good friends, understanding and practising service to others, enriching one's spiritual life through Christian worship and study, working with others in an intentional safe community, enhancing leadership and related skills and articulating a sense of personal identity, awareness and mission.

The young people are asked to commit themselves for three

years of training, including residential sessions during March Break in each of the three years, and attending a fall overnight planning session prior to year three. In addition, they are to participate actively throughout each year in at least one parish, school or community activity or organization, as well as keep in contact with their YLTP staff advisors.

First year applicants must be between 12 (Grade 7) and 15 years, and recommended by their rector.

Once you're accepted into Year One (with 12 youth), you're

automatically registered for years two and three.

In 2018, YLTP is scheduled for March 11-14 with January 31 as the deadline for applications.

Su McLeod is Program Consultant, Children, Youth and Family Ministry in Niagara Diocese.

For more information or to receive an application form, contact Su at 905-527-1316 (430) or su.mcleod@niagaraanglican.ca

Seeking the face of Christ in the refugee

"As the world in some places moves in the direction of inward focus, protectionism, xenophobia, racism and other closed-minded attitudes, we are continuing to seek to offer a more radical welcome to some of the world's most vulnerable people in the name of Jesus Christ.

We continue to seek the face of Christ in the stranger, whom we are working to welcome as our neighbour and friend," the Reverend Scott McLeod, Coordinator for Niagara's Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (NRSI), reported to Synod.

For over a decade Niagara Diocese has come alongside those seeking protection. Through the Private Sponsorship Agreement with the Canadian government any congregation, as well as affiliated ecumenical or community groups, can become sponsors for overseas individuals or families who are classed as refugees.

While sponsorship represents a significant commitment, there are a variety of options available

to interested groups to make sponsorship both affordable and manageable.

At the time of writing 12 families arrived, 16 sponsorships were completed in 2015 and 2016, five cases are awaiting decisions and nine new applications being developed.

In addition, a limited number of family-linked cases to reunite refugees with Canadian relatives are in the works. The demand for this type of sponsorship is almost unlimited, yet government caps prevent NRSI from presently taking on new family-linked cases.

Niagara continues its work to welcome refugees, one person, one family at a time into our communities, be they Christian, Muslim, any faith or no faith.

The future direction of the Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is to achieve the dream that every parish in Niagara diocese would be sponsoring refugees for resettlement, alongside all of the other good work that they do, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Lectio Divina

MICHAEL BURSLEM

During the past two summers, on the Guelph walking pilgrimage, I first heard the term *Lectio Divina*. I knew sufficient Latin to know its meaning, Divine Reading, and condescendingly rejoiced that Roman Catholics were finally reading their Bibles. What I didn't realize was they've been reading their Bibles all along, even during and after the Reformation.

Why then, in the 21st century, the fancy Latin name? It's a link to the past history of the church, theirs and ours, when Latin was the common language.

From early times the Bible has been seen as the Word of God, although not until the third century did the church have all the books of the Bible we know today. To say the Bible is the Word of God is to admit it is as much a sacrament of God's real presence as the Eucharistic elements of bread and wine.

However, very few could read, and so had to have it read and explained to them in order to

receive the grace ensuing from it.

In the Western church, the monasteries preserved Bible reading and transmitted it to everybody. It became part of the 6th century Benedictine rule.

In the 12th century Guigo, a Carthusian monk, devised the four steps of *lectio, meditatio, oratio* and *contemplatio* (reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation), known as Guigo's ladder. It fell out of use by the 16th century as the monasteries became more lax in their discipline, but the Protestant reformers, Luther and Calvin, revived it, as more Protestants were literate.

Although Roman Catholics continued to read the Bible, it wasn't emphasized as the Word of God until the 1960s constitution *Dei verbum* of the Second Vatican Council. This recommended *Lectio Divina* to every Roman Catholic. Pope Benedict XVI further confirmed it, stating "This practice will bring to the Church—I am convinced of it—a new spiritual springtime."

What is *Lectio Divina*? If we don't like the Latin, just call it Divine Reading.

Reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation may be thought of as answering four questions:

- What does the Word of God say? Perhaps, on reading the text, the whole or part, may jump out at us.
- What does it say to me? We should try to personalize it. God is speaking to us through his Word; we need to listen and take note.
- What do I say to God in response? I think the most common word would be "thanks", but let's try to say more. Be bold. Be daring. You can say to God what you wouldn't tell your mother, still less the queen. God's majesty is exceedingly greater than hers, yet he longs to hear our childlike prattle.
- How have I changed through reading the Word of God? Think about it. God is changing us every day.

It's a good idea to answer these questions on paper, or, in my case into a computer, as my medical script is no longer legible, even to myself.

There's tons of stuff on *Lectio Divina* on the web. Google it.

From my study online, sometimes watching a teaching on YouTube, I've encountered at least two more stages to Guigo's ladder.

- Resolutio - What do I propose to do about it? Without a resolution the whole exercise is pointless!
- The other, somehow in which the Word of God becomes incarnational in us, such that we become the Word of God to others who don't know God. It's a great way to get to know God ourselves.

I commend *Lectio Divina* to Anglicans. I believe passionately, not judgmentally, that we too need "a new spiritual springtime."



Michael Burslem is a member of St. George's Guelph. m.burslem@sympatico.ca

✍ Letters

Need to re-affirm the Jesus of the New Testament

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

not give an informed answer to "Who is Jesus to me?" until you first know the answer to "Who is Jesus?" If parishioners cannot answer the "to me" question, it's because we have not given them clear and convincing answers to the "Who is Jesus?" question.

I met a retired minister recently who had a copy of Tom Harpur's *The Pagan Christ*. I mentioned Tom was my thesis supervisor at Wycliffe, and I had watched with sadness as his faith unravelled over the next 45 years. My friend mentioned he too had lost his faith and was

no longer attending church. He said the turning point came (of course it did!) when he stopped believing in the resurrection.

We in the church have nothing to offer that can't be found better outside the church, unless we can re-affirm the Jesus of the New Testament and the creeds — virgin birth, incarnation, atoning death, bodily resurrection and second coming. We must show how those things are still credible within the scope of current Biblical and scientific knowledge, and how the 30-year gap between the Jesus-events

and the writing of the New Testament was bridged by a reliable oral tradition.

It's difficult to have a personal relationship, or even a brief conversation, with a Jesus who you suspect may not objectively exist. So it's time to scrap those 12-minute feel-good homilies and replace them with solid Biblical exposition and apologetics.

Robert Lyon
Guelph

Women's Groups

Tell us how you are doing

ACW, Altar Guild, Mothers' Union, Daughters of the Church and Women's Auxiliary are some of the names of women's groups in the Anglican Church.

We want to hear from you.

Complete the following (400 words or less) and forward to the Editor (contact information on page 3).

- ✎ Name of group and Parish
- ✎ Why you exist
- ✎ Number of members
- ✎ Frequency of meetings
- ✎ Activities (worship, social, fund raising)
- ✎ Outreach projects
- ✎ What about the future
- ✎ Add any other thoughts

Thank you for sharing.

Deadlines and Submissions for Niagara Anglican

Deadlines:

- February – December 30
- March – January 15
- April – February 15

Submissions:

- News, Letters, Reviews** (*books, films, music, theatre*) – 400 words or less
- Articles** – 600 words or less

Original cartoons or art –

- Contact the Editor.
- Photos** – very large, high resolution, action pictures (people doing something). Include name of photographer. Written permission of parent/guardian must be obtained if photo includes a child.

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

Questions or information:

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



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Guelph ... Two tales of four churches

A church is born



Photo: Brian Janzen

BRIAN JANZEN

"We are living in a different time, and for this time we need to explore ways of being and doing that may look different from our past."
Willard Metzger, *Daring to Dream Again*.

November 20, 2013 marked the beginning into a journey of dreaming between two congregations in Guelph—St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church and St. David & St. Patrick's Anglican Church.

That evening a simple dinner invitation brought together representatives from St. Paul's to St. David & St. Patrick's to share a meal and entertain ecumenical ministry possibilities for the near future.

In recent years, the two congregations had extended themselves into the occasional pulpit exchange, as well as a yearly shared service. Despite this somewhat limited exposure, commonalities began to emerge, particularly with the Church's true mission and outreach into the community.

At that November meeting bold individuals were willing to dream differently.

Propelled by possibilities, in addition to financial realities, a proposal to begin talks on a new congregational model between the two churches was agreed upon, on both a local level and between the Lutheran Eastern Synod and the Niagara Anglican Diocese.

That winter, lay and clergy from both congregations began to define what that congregational model might look like. Although potential possibilities of ministry as one body drove many of the conversations, one could not ignore the "Lutheran" and "Anglican" labels. Some obstacles were very real. Although the National churches have been in full communion since 2001, as defined in the Waterloo Declaration, governance models are very different. Tradition and personal church attachments also played a role.

In April 2014, Bishop Bird (Niagara Anglican Diocese) and Bishop Pryse (Lutheran Eastern Synod) met in Guelph with councils, clergy and wardens to present their views and answer outstanding questions. Their support

and resources would play a central role and anchor point in conversations moving forward.

A formal task force between the two local churches was established and carried these conversations into 2015. Amid many questions, a basic education of specific terms and practices of both churches was begun. It's quite amazing how many assumptions we carry. We had to learn a common language.

In the spring of 2015, both congregations formally voted to enter a two-year partnership agreement, St. David & St. Patrick's moved all of its resources to St. Paul's. This was determined after evaluation of both physical properties and abiding finances.

During this time, both communities lived, worked and prayed together with the hope of creating a permanent shared Anglican-Lutheran ministry that would result in a long-term covenantal and legal relationship. It truly was a time of engagement between two individuals.

A dedicated transition team provided a bridge between the two governance models, and provided a hub where existing teams or committees could talk and plan. This team was facilitated with support from the Niagara Anglican Diocese and the Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Eventually, a Joint Council was formed and ran parallel to the traditional governance models.

Following congregational votes on April 30, 2017, both churches were excited to announce that they accepted a formal merger agreement which would see a new church born to serve the people of Guelph.

This new church—All Saint's Lutheran Anglican Church—is one to be celebrated as it created the potential for us all to dream differently in our ministry.

It wasn't the fact that we reached some kind of finish line but rather we were at a new epiphany, a new beginning point, a new opportunity in mission.

On Sunday, September 24, 2017, All Saint's Lutheran Anglican Church, 210 Silvercreek Parkway North, Guelph was officially launched with a special worship service. More information about the parish can be found at allsaintsguelph.ca

Brian Janzen is a member of All Saints Lutheran Anglican Church.
bjanzen33@gmail.com

Charting a new course together

LAURIE DOUGLAS AND TRUDY LEBANS

After 39 years of passionate and creative worship, outreach and spiritual practice, and despite a great desire to maintain a strong Anglican presence in the south end of Guelph, it became increasingly evident that the parish of St. Matthias was being led in a new direction.

In recent months, St. Matthias' congregation engaged in an intentional discernment process—reflecting on its ministry since the difficult decision to leave its building on Kortright Avenue in Guelph—with the support of the Reverend Amy Cousineau and Canon Christyn Perkons.

More and more it became clear that the next step was to disestablish the

which is a living document that will govern us over the next two years, "our desire is to root our coming together in prayer, discernment and dialogue; living into Christ-like relationships and practicing the work of grace and reconciliation."

With an adjustment of Sunday start times at St. James, the first Holy Eucharist (BCP) service moved to 8:00 a.m. and the Choral Eucharist (BAS) moved to 11:00 a.m., opening up 9:15 a.m. for the new Contemporary Family Eucharist, which is very much in keeping with the style of the St. Matthias congregation. Already, there is a mingling of attendance among the three services.

The words of thanks and appreciation for the warm welcome expressed



(Above) Welcoming the congregation to celebrate Canada 150.

(Right) Members of the Garden Committee beautify the property around the church building.

parish of St. Matthias in order to share a discipleship journey in partnership with the faith community of St. James the Apostle.

A covenant was established and approved by the congregations' vestries, and at its September meeting Synod Council voted to approve the voluntary disestablishment of St. Matthias Guelph.

Building on the history and traditions of each church, we now come together to continue and embrace creative ways of leading and nurturing ourselves and the greater community.

It is exciting to view ourselves as one body rather than "us" and "them". The power of "we" has filtered into committees, teams, studies, communication management, music and worship.

From the words of our Covenant,



at the first official service by a St. Matthias founding member, Fran Taylor, captured the gratitude felt by many, and set a new course in motion for a renewed Anglican presence in Guelph being referred to as the Churches of St. Matthias and St. James the Apostle.

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