

Live well in community
An opportunity for women is offered to spend a year in community with the Society of Sisters of St. John the Divine.
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My life as a bishop
Bishop Michael shares a few of many photographs covering his days as Bishop of Niagara.
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St. John's Jordan.
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NIAGARA ANGLICAN



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

A section of the Anglican Journal

MAY 2018

The Vision was our guide ... Bishop Michael reflects on the Diocesan Vision

I was asked a few days ago what I thought was the greatest accomplishment that we had achieved in the diocese over the past ten years.

It was a good question and a thousand different answers came to my mind. However, I eventually settled on one answer.

I believe that in all the ways we have answered the sacred calling to be God's people in the Diocese of Niagara; it has been our Diocesan Vision that has inspired us, challenged us and guided us since we set out upon that journey a decade ago.

Many of you will remember that we came together in a number of different gatherings in those early days, and I had the privilege of sharing my faith story—as well as some of my initial hopes and dreams for our work in the diocese—with you. I also invited you to do the same.

In those meetings it was clear that God's Holy Spirit was moving among us and empowering us for the task that was ahead. God was calling us to open ourselves up to the promises that were made in our baptisms, to accept our calling as followers of Jesus, to be renewed in a life of discipleship and to go beyond the walls of our churches to embrace and participate in God's mission for the world.

Our Diocesan Vision was never intended to be the final word or the ultimate itinerary for our journey. It was, instead, a rudimentary map and a set of sign posts that would point



Photo: Niagara Anglican files

us in the right direction. It was a template that would guide local congregations to engage in their own discernment and to respond to their own contexts for ministry.

Oh, what an incredible journey it took us on!

Sometimes we travelled down well-worn paths but many times we blazed new trails and encountered exciting new possibilities and gazed upon new vistas. A few times we took a wrong turn and had to double back, but at every turn there was never any doubt that our loving and gracious God walked with us every step of the way.

Thank you, dear friends, for your companionship and your faithfulness and for the love that we have shared so richly on that road together.

I wish you every blessing as that glorious journey continues here in Niagara.

The Diocesan Vision was developed under the guidance of Bishop Michael. He referred to it as a compass for our journey as a church.



Michael Bird

Susan Bell's consecration as bishop

BILL MOUS

A service to consecrate the Reverend Canon Susan Bell as a bishop in the Church of God to serve as Niagara's coadjutor bishop is planned for Saturday, May 5 at 11:00 a.m. at Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton.

Archbishop Colin Johnson, metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, will preside and act as the chief consecrator for the ordination. Bishop Linda Nicholls of Huron Diocese will be the preacher.

The ordination will be

livestreamed so that as many people as possible can take part in this sacred event.

Each parish will also be issued two tickets so that, in addition to clergy and licensed lay workers and invited guests, people from all our churches will be able to bear witness to this celebration of ministry.

Additional tickets may be available; if you are interested please email Canon Alison D'Atri at alison.datri@niagaraanglican.ca.

Unfortunately, those without a ticket will not be able to attend.

A reception will take place

after the service at the John Weir Foote VC Armoury, one block south of the Cathedral.

We ask that you remember Bishop-elect Susan and her family in your prayers, as well as Bishop Michael and his family, and our whole diocesan family in the midst of this important transition.

The Reverend Canon Bill Mous is Director of Justice, Community and Global Ministries - Communications Coordinator for Niagara Diocese.
bill.mous@niagaraanglican.ca



Photo: Michael Hudson

Book Review

Unbelievable is believably clear and concise

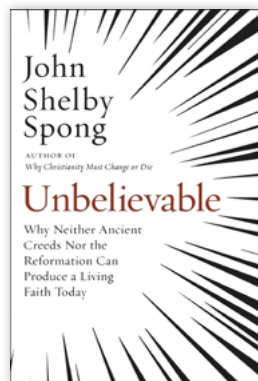
Unbelievable: Why Neither Ancient Creeds Nor the Reformation Can Produce a Living Faith Today
John Shelby Spong
(HarperCollins, 2018)

WAYNE FRASER

I returned at the end of February from the Wycliffe tour of Israel to find Bishop John Spong's latest book in the mail.

Spong, two years ago, suffered a stroke which curtailed his weekly essay writing and his many speaking engagements, but he has finished what he says is his last book. I rather doubt it: just as this book is based on a series of his weekly essays from the last two years, so his publishers and literary executors will no doubt produce posthumous collections of his essays and his speeches. We will hear more from this modern day prophet for many years to come.

And prophet is what Spong is, for, in the Biblical tradition,



he calls people to renew their connection to God. What he challenges are traditional explanations as he calls for new language to describe our 21st century understanding of the Divine, because, as his title suggests, traditional expressions of the Christian faith have become "unbelievable" to modern day minds. His book explores, as his subtitle says, "why neither ancient Creeds nor the Reformation can produce a

living faith today."

Spong posits 12 theses to encourage a new reformation, a new re-formation of our spiritual lives. He begins with the theistic image of God, replacing the vision of God as a Supreme Being with God as Being itself. That first thesis challenges many fundamentals of creedal faith. Without a judgmental god to appease, there is no need of "God's great rescue plan" for mankind, no need to limit our understanding of Jesus' crucifixion as a sacrifice for the sins of all: "There can be no 'substitutionary atonement' in the

Christianity of tomorrow."

Excellent Biblical scholar that Spong is, he examines what the scriptures actually say about the crucifixion and the resurrection. Freed from reading the Gospel accounts literally, Spong discovers the spiritual enlightenment behind the New Testament writers' Easter experiences.

Finally, Spong examines the outcomes for a living faith in the areas of ethics and prayer. The yardsticks for both are that which enhance "living, loving and being".

Unbelievable is believably clear and concise. It reads easily

but provocatively, calling for Christianity, or at least its contemporary expression, to change or die.

Spong's last book summarizes the clarion call of his career for a new Christianity for a new world.

The Reverend Doctor Wayne Fraser can be reached at fraserwayne@gmail.com

Song of the Grand

A Musical

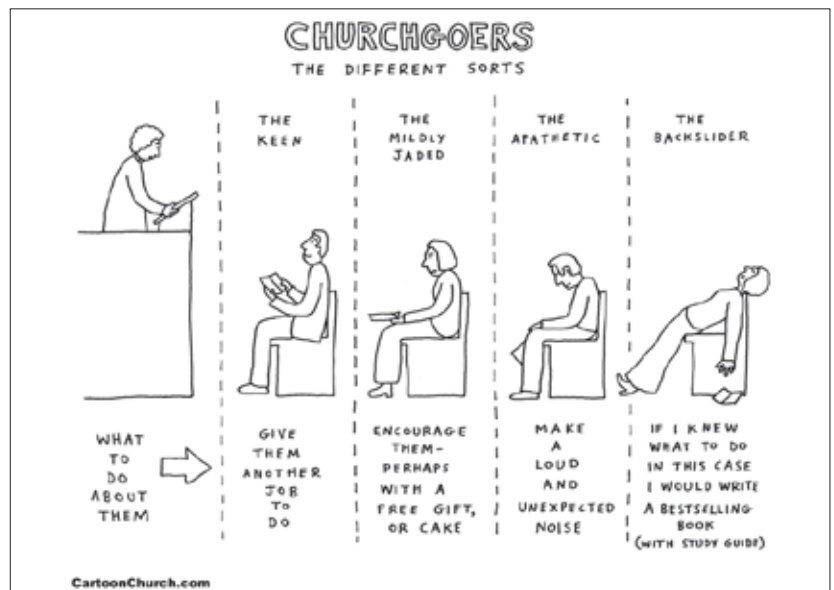
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HOLLIStorial

Fare thee well, Bishop Michael... Newfoundland style

In 1984 a car arrived at the rectory in Burin, Newfoundland.

Newly ordained deacon Michael Bird, wife Susan and son Michael had travelled over 3,000 kilometres from their Ontario home to his first parish posting.

They did not know what to expect.

Suddenly, the rectory door opened. A group of parishioners hurried out to welcome their new pastor and integrate him and his family into their community.

When Michael returned to Niagara Diocese three years later, no doubt he lamented leaving behind his new found friends in Central Newfoundland Diocese.

Since then he has ministered at St. George's St. Catharines, St. Paul's Church Dunnville and the Dunn Parish, St. Cuthbert's Oakville and St. Luke's Burlington, before being consecrated and enthroned as the 11th Bishop of Niagara Diocese on March 2, 2008.

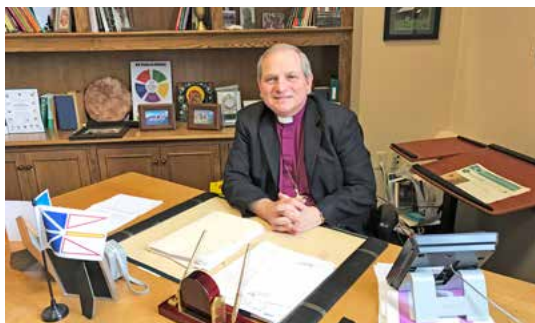
Soon he moves to another location and chapter in his life and ministry.

The ebb and flow of ordained ministry involves looking forward to new possibilities, as well as yearning for what is being left behind.

When Moses led God's people from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land, they complained and hankered for the good old slavery days when they had food to eat and places to sleep.

When God's people were exiled to Babylon and were asked to sing their traditional songs, they responded (Psalm 137), "How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?"

Otto Kelland — police officer by profession and songwriter by design — captured



The Newfoundland and Labrador flag, Niagara's vision for ministry and the Niagara Anglican enfold Bishop Michael sitting at his desk in Cathedral Place Hamilton.



Bishop Michael enjoyed this lighter moment at a Bishop's Company dinner.

these sentiments succinctly when he penned his iconic Newfoundland folksong: Let Me Fish Off Cape St. Mary's. Check it out!

We all experience similar sentiments associated with hellos and good-byes as we journey from the familiar to the unknown.

Now, as Bishop Michael equips himself for another changeover, perhaps the assurances of these Newfoundland sayings with their Bible complements will help during the transition.

Newfoundland saying: Wait a fair wind and you'll get on.

Bible complement: It means to watch for and seize every presented opportunity. Paul (Colossians 4:2-5) gave the same

advice to the Christians in Colossae. He suggested they should pray for opportunities to preach Jesus' gospel and make good use of "every opportunity".

Newfoundland saying: Fair weather to you and snow to your heels.

Bible complement: It means wishing you good fortunes as you travel life's highway. Paul's wish for Timothy (1 Timothy 1:2), was "May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord give you grace, mercy and peace."

Similarly, we send people from worshipping God to service in the world with the guidance, "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord."

Newfoundland saying: Fish in summer and fun in winter.



Photos: Hollis Hiscock

Bishop Michael, with the renovated Chancel of Christ's Church Cathedral as the backdrop, presided at the Bishop's Eucharist during Holy Week. The service also included the renewal of vows for licenced lay persons and clergy, as well as the blessing of oils. In his message he thanked them for the support and encouragement during his tenure as Bishop of Niagara.

Bible complement: It means everything has its appropriate place and time. The Preacher (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8) said it best: "There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven," including tearing down, building up, weeping, laughing, being silent, speaking out, keeping things, throwing things away, loving and hating — all gifts from God.

Newfoundland saying: Long may your big jib draw.

Bible complement: It means wishing you all the best in the future. On his missionary journey, Paul (Acts of the Apostles 21:1-6) arrived in Tyre and stayed

a week with the Christian community. When the time came to leave, they gathered on the beach where "we all knelt and prayed". After bidding farewell, Paul and his companions boarded their ship to continue their voyage and the believers returned to their homes in Tyre.

Bishop Michael, may the power of these Newfoundland and Bible sayings sustain you and yours in the coming days.



NIAGARA ANGLICAN

The official publication of the Diocese of Niagara, published 10 times a year from September to June as a supplement to the Anglican Journal.

The Diocese of Niagara lies at the western end of Lake Ontario, encompassing the Niagara Peninsula, Hamilton, Halton Region, Guelph and portions of Wellington and Dufferin Counties.

Publisher: Bishop Michael A. Bird
905-527-1316
bishop@niagaraanglican.ca
Editor: The Reverend Hollis Hiscock
905-655-9465
editor@niagaraanglican.ca
Advertising: Angela Rush
905-630-0390
niagara.anglican.ads@gmail.com

Art Director: Craig Fairley
Imagine Creative Communications
Proofreader: Helen Hiscock
Niagara Anglican Publication Board:
In addition to the above:
Richard Bradley (Chair)
Paul Clifford
Janet Gadeski
The Reverend Canon Bill Mous
(Bishop's Designate)
The Reverend Canon Rob Park
Geoffrey Purdell-Lewis
Sarah Whitaker

Printed and mailed by:
Webnews Printing Inc., North York, ON

Available online at:
niagaraanglican.news (blog)
niagaraanglican.ca/newspaper (PDF)

Subscriptions: \$15/year.

Submissions:
Submission information and deadlines are printed elsewhere in the paper.

Mailing address:
Cathedral Place
252 James Street North
Hamilton Ontario L8R 2L3

For a complete staff directory and more information, visit the diocesan website: niagaraanglican.ca



Women's Groups in Niagara Diocese

St. Elizabeth's Burlington

Heather O'Connor writes ...

Our ACW group consists of all the ladies of our parish.

Our meetings are once a month, except for the summer. On average we have about 11 ladies per meeting. In the winter months nobody likes to venture out on cold nights so we meet in the afternoon, while in the better months, early evening.

We have multiple fund raisers.

One of our biggest is our Easter Egg making event. We spend a full day at our President Debi Clarke's home making opera cream, peanut butter eggs, chocolate covered peanuts, almond bark and many other treats. Last year, after expenses we made over \$1,000.

We also sell Christmas wreaths, spring flowers and church calendars.

Another fund raiser is making over 100 loaves (lemon, pineapple, apple cinnamon) to sell at our annual bazaar. At Pearl



The women's group at St. Elizabeth's Burlington spends a whole day making Easter eggs, their biggest fund raiser for the year.

Photo: Submitted

Butler's home and under her direction, we make them over several weeks. We also make various crafts to sell at our bazaar in November.

At our Lenten meeting in 2017, we made Anglican rosaries.

We participate in many outreach activities in which the church is involved. Our biggest last year was a Canada 150 celebration lead by Adele Reynolds and Pat Hemingway.

We also participate in World Day of Prayer.

We have speakers from the community come and talk to us on interesting topics. If anyone has been on a trip of interest, we enjoy a presentation by the

traveler with their pictures.

We have no set plans for our future and over the years many ladies have come and gone, but we have a wonderful group of

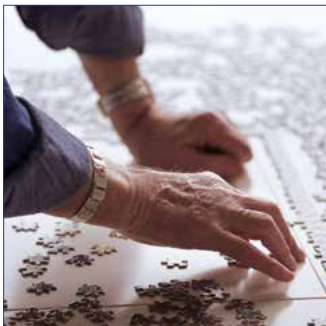
women with a passion for St. Elizabeth's. Any way that we can help sustain our church and community, we are on it.

Women's Groups

We want to hear from you.

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.

Write a short piece about who you are and what you do in your parish (400 words or less) and forward to the Editor (see page 3). Don't forget to include photos.



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Learning to live well in community: an opportunity for women

FRANCES DROLET SMITH

Today many Christians are seeking fresh ways to express ancient truths. The Sisters of St. John the Divine (SSJD), an Anglican order based in Toronto, is planting new seeds of community life and mission, renewing the monastic life both in and for the church.

Companions on an Ancient Path (ssjdc Companions.org), an 11-month program begun in 2016, invites women of any denomination, age 21 and up, to spend a year in spiritual formation, learning to pray, serving others and studying while living among the Sisters.

Why would anyone, much less a woman in her twenties or thirties, want to embark on such an adventure? The experiences of those who embraced the program bear witness to its value.

Amanda Avery, a Companion last year and a director for a low income children's program in Halifax, described her experience as exciting and stressful ... yet joyful.

"The experience has changed me and has given me new insights and new ways to look at



Above: Companions attending a class. Left: Companions learning music.



Photos: Constance Gefvert

not just God, but myself and my community and the people that are in my community."

Mathematics teaching assistant Christine Stoll found the Benedictine balance of the Sisters' life formative. "Living here, for me, has been good and healing ... I wasn't expecting to have everything all figured out at the end of this year, but I think I have a clearer sense of what it is I need to do."

SSJD's community life, based on the 6th century St. Benedict's Rule, has guided individuals and groups to engage in a balanced life of prayer, work, study and leisure. Benedict invites readers to "listen with the ear of your heart"—a welcome invitation in a noisy world.

This early monastic rule, part of the Wisdom tradition of Christianity, is firmly rooted in and inspired by Scriptures.

It remains fresh for our time — primarily as a guide to daily life lived in Christ, and as a call to live extraordinarily well with others.

The Companions, who step into a challenging daily rhythm of prayer, study and service, will be surprised by what they discover about themselves. Alongside their personal spiritual quest, they are committing to a life lived fully, faithfully and authentically with others. Community life, inside or outside a Convent, calls us to be our best selves. Where better to discern gifts and explore calls than within a community already engaged daily in those very things and whose members have insights to share?

Current Companion Maria Potestio, formerly a bank Customer Relations Co-ordinator, found the program to be a life-changing experience. "Through the acceptance and love of the sisters, I have been able to see God's love for me in a way I never saw it before. I am learning to be more vulnerable, open and honest with myself which has been healing."

Hospital Chaplain Alice Chiu,

another participant, appreciates the convent as an oasis in the city. "Companions have a schedule similar to the sisters, which at the beginning felt overwhelming. But after several months, I am learning how to find balance in the program. I go to the chapel ten minutes before each daily service and let the Spirit hold me in a few moments of peace. It is in the silence and stillness that I feel God is really near me. Spending time in nature, in the garden or the labyrinth, also grounds me and makes me feel more able to give myself to my work."

Women interested in the Companions' program may request a program description and application from the Companions' Coordinator, Sister Constance Joanna at cj@ssjd.ca or 416-226-2201 (316).

The 2018-2019 cohort begins in September. Applications will be considered anytime before June 15.

The Reverend Frances Drolet Smith is Rector of St. Alban's Anglican Church, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia and SSJD Oblate.

Come to the garden

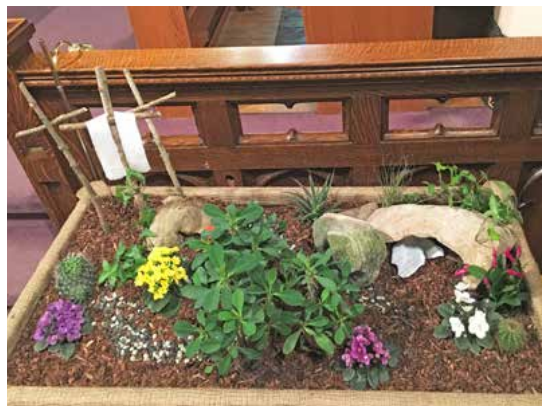


Photo: Rob Park

ROB PARK

An Easter Garden brought focus and deeper meaning to worship at St. George's Georgetown this Lent and Easter.

Our first Easter garden, designed by Janet Armstrong and Sue Graham, was a powerful addition to worship.

In Lent, the garden was dotted with succulent plants and decorated with stick crosses and a number of stones.

At Easter, small flowering succulents were added; the round stone was rolled away from the tomb-like stone.

Many parishioners were moved by its symbolic meaning and delighted by its enhanced beauty on Easter Day.

The Reverend Canon Rob Park is Rector of St. George's Georgetown. rector@stgeorgesgeorgetown.com



Christmas tree becomes Good Friday cross

Barbara McCallen and Eleanor Alcock, Altar Guild members at St. Cuthbert's Oakville, place their Palm Sunday crosses on the large 2018 Good Friday cross made from the parish's 2017 Christmas tree.

The lights, ornaments and branches adorning the Nova Scotian balsam fir at Christmas were removed and replaced with a rough wooden cross which became the centre of the Good Friday worship.

During the service people came forward and pinned their individual palm cross on the Jesus' cross symbolically renewing their Christian covenant and commitment.

Photo: Hollis Hiscock

My life as a bishop

a snapshot

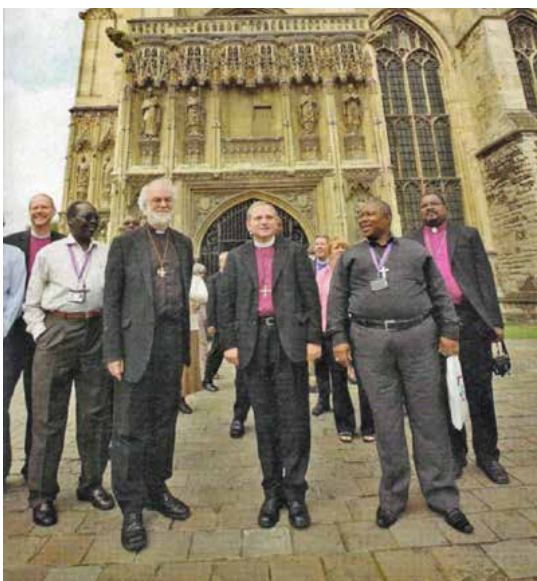
Bishop Michael shares a few of many photographs covering his days as Bishop of Niagara.



This page, clockwise from upper left: Visiting an Anglican school in Ghana, 2015; Chairing Synod Council meeting; With speakers at clergy day, 2017; Audience with Pope Benedict at the Vatican, 2014; Habitat for Humanity building project, Hamilton; "Food for Life" collection at GO station in Hamilton; Susan Bird marching at the United Nations, 2016; Primate Fred Hiltz blessing Michael, Holy Tuesday 2017.



This page, clockwise from upper left: Little bishops at Incarnation Oakville; Meeting with a newly arrived refugee family, 2016; Receiving a gift from Bishop Douglas Crosby of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hamilton on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, 2017; Overseas representatives visiting Mission to Seafarers in Hamilton, 2017; The ordination of Dean Cormack, with visitors from the Diocese of Cuba, 2016; Lambeth Conference, 2008; Administering Holy Communion at Canterbury Hills camp; Dedicating a new facility with Canon Katherine Morgan at St. John the Divine Cayuga, 2017.



Doing a new thing is theme of Cursillo conference

Participants at the Canadian Anglican Cursillo Triennial Conference this year will hear from the Primate and be able to attend several diverse workshops.

The Niagara Huron Cursillo Community is hosting the three day conference (June 22 – 24, 2018) at Renison University College in Waterloo.

Behold, I am doing a new thing (Isaiah 43:19) is the theme for the conference, which hopes to attract people from across Canada.

Cursillo, according to their press release, has proven to be a valuable tool to strengthen individuals in their purpose and everyday walk. "Our life styles have changed a lot since Cursillo was created in the 1940s and this scripture challenges us to look at our era and develop more relevant and effective programs."

All participants will have a choice of two out of three workshops:

- Sister Elizabeth Ann Eckert, Novitiate Director for the



Photo: anglican.ca

Primate of Canada, Fred Hiltz, is the keynote speaker at the Cursillo conference.

Sisterhood of St. John the Divine Toronto, leads the session Discernment;

- Your Spiritual Autobiography to be led by the Reverend Canon Peter Davison from Niagara Diocese, and;
- Certified Labyrinth Facilitator Lori Haskings-Barber from Brantford will feature the workshop: Labyrinth.

Representatives from the Anglican Foundation, PWRDF, the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer and Sperlings Church Supply plan to be there.

At their Sunday morning business meeting the new Cursillo National Executive—the Canadian Anglican Cursillo Secretariat (CACSS)—will be

elected for a three year term.

Here's a chance to meet people from all over Canada in a setting filled with prayer, praise, worship and new friends. If you haven't already booked, pray about it now. Think about what "new thing" God could be calling you to do in your life, suggested Cursillo.

For more information go to www.anglicancursillo.org or CursilloTri18@gmail.com

Submitted by Marion Bailey. marionbailey419@gmail.com



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Praying for someone

REBECCA CLIFFORD

I'll keep this meeting short and sweet. I won't tie up the lines.
I'll make my case, swift and fleet ... Now I must clear my mind,
And concentrate on things that matter ... If I could shake You by the collar
And say, "Stop the noise and idle chatter!"; stare You in the eye and holler
"Other things can be deferred!"
For I must be heard, I must be heard,
I'm praying for someone.

Silence the bells and the gong, quiet all the senseless dins,
Keep them down where they belong and listen as my plea begins ...
To be silent in this moment, to touch a heart, a soul,
To manage a miracle for a friend, a sister, a mother, a daughter, a wife's the goal.
For better news, I would have preferred –
So I must be heard, I must be heard!
I'm praying for someone.

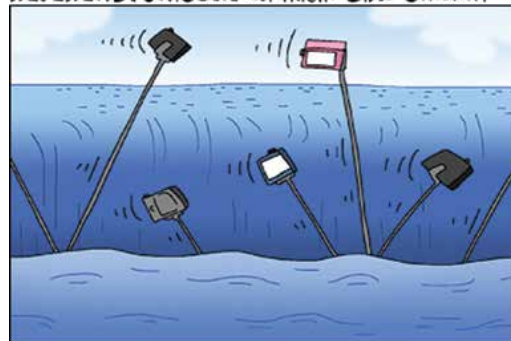
Please take away the fear and pain, let the years be bright and golden.
Bring the laughter back again and I'll forever be beholden.
Whatever You desire or ask of me, I'll gladly, eagerly do
No matter how hard or great the task. Such bargaining's not new to You
Though it may sound absurd,
But I must be heard, I must be heard ...
I'm praying for someone.

Let heaven listen now to only my selfishness -
Answer me, and make it quick, and let the answer be 'yes'!
Whatever need be undertaken to make it go away
The cost is slight compared to the value of each day.
When You said, "I shall comfort those who come to me with cares",
I took to heart Your every word.
Now, dear Lord, I must be heard,
I must be heard, I must be heard –
I'm praying for someone.



Send your original poems to the Editor
(contact information page 3)

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(See Exodus 14) 05-29-2015
THERE WERE SO MANY SELFE STICKS AT THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA THAT IT WAS NEARLY CLASSIFIED AS ANOTHER PLAGUE

Learning about their new diocese

HOLLIS HISCOCK

In a compact four hour time frame, recently appointed clergy were given everything they need to know, and more, to be effective in Niagara Diocese.

The New 2 Niagara orientation started with a tour of Cathedral Place to familiarize the clergy with the physical facility. Along the way they were introduced to the personnel who would be their contacts for information and resources about a myriad of topics. They ended their tour in the crypt, containing the columbarium and chapel.

Back in the Niagara Room, they heard about liturgical and sacramental protocols as related to same sex weddings, assisted dying, confirmations and ecumenical partnerships.

Employees' services, including pensions, lay

employment information and other benefits, were discussed.

They learned about annual and legacy giving, leadership workshops and other tools available to strengthen parish stewardship.

Managing conflict and the support obtainable from Archdeacons, Administrators and the Bishop were explained.

Everything the new clergy needed to know about finances, data collections and reporting procedures formed a significant portion of the day.

The day was rounded out with information about programs for youth and families, a primer for justice making, resources for congregational support and development, safe church protocol, communications, continuing education programs and much more.



Photo: Hollis Hiscock

On the tour, the new clergy met many of the diocesan staff, including Cleaner/ Housekeeper Lisa Wilson. She has served in that capacity for over five years and walks up to six kilometres daily to complete her work. When asked to describe all her duties, she smiled and with a laugh said, "Anything else that no one else will do, I do."



Photo: Hollis Hiscock

Canon Terry DeForest (left), Vision Advocate and Director of Human Resources for Niagara Diocese, organised the day long New 2 Niagara orientation event. Clergy attending included the Reverend Leonel Abaroa-Boloña, Assistant Curate of St. John the Evangelist and Church of the Ascension Hamilton; the Reverend Michelle Boomgaard, Rector of St. Christopher's Burlington; the Reverend Paul Walker, Rector of St. John the Evangelist Elora; and the Reverend Audrius Sarka, Rector St. Paul's Dunnville and The Dunn Parish.

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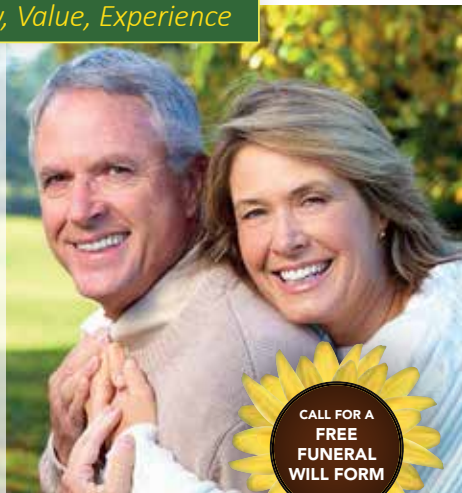
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Spreading the love

Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day occurred on the same day this year.

Churchwarden Sandra Harper of St. Paul's Westdale in Hamilton described it, "As this year's calendar events—both secular and liturgical—have, in a sense, collided."

She and several other parishioners, with their Interim Pastor, The Venerable Jim Sandilands, took the opportunity to make it a way to "spread a little love" on February 14.

They stood on the sidewalk in front of St. Paul's and handed out 100 red carnations to passers-by, wishing them a happy Valentine's Day as well as a blessed Ash Wednesday.

In only half an hour, Sandra reported, all the carnations had been given away to university students on their way to mid-term exams, parents dropping children at the nearby daycare and neighbours starting their day.

"This small gesture was well received with many smiles, a few hugs and at least one photo!" noted Sandra.



Photo: Submitted by Sandra Harper

Interim Pastor Jim Sandilands gave red carnations to university students, parents and neighbours outside St. Paul's Westdale, wishing them a happy Valentine's Day and a blessed Ash Wednesday on February 14, 2018.

Canadian Museum of Natural Science honours our own

PAUL GROSS

Heather Gross from St. John the Divine Cayuga burst onto the botanical art scene in early 2018 by gaining national attention in the Art of the Plant botanical exhibition. She is one of 18 artists from across Canada to have a painting selected by jury. Her watercolour of *Gymnocladus dioica*, a rare tree native to the Carolinian forest, will hang in the Canadian Museum of Nature's renowned Stone Wall Gallery in Ottawa during summer/fall of 2018.

Heather has always enjoyed art, fitting it into her busy schedule of wife, mother and school administrator. Now, in retirement, she has energized her art with a little nudge from her husband.

Her first mediums were oil and acrylic. Something was missing though. Watercolour showed Heather the subtle play of colour, value, tone, light and shadow achieved using a transparent medium.

Heather ventured to take her first workshop in botanical art, January 2017, because of her love of plants. The Dundas School of Art offered a four-day workshop devoted to drawing and painting bulb flowers with Margaret Best, a renowned Canadian botanical artist. Heather absolutely loved it and has never looked back. After several workshops and a serious schedule of drawing and painting, Heather started her watercolour of the



Photo: Paul Gross

Kentucky Coffee-tree.

This show, Art of the Plant, is Canada's contribution to the first simultaneous worldwide botanical art exhibition initiated by the American Society of Botanical Artists (ASBA) and involves 25 countries. The purpose is to celebrate the earth's precious plant diversity of indigenous species and to link people to plants through botanical art.

Heather is now fully committed to developing her God given gift in art. She shares her passion and talent offering lessons at her church. Sessions centre on exploring and having fun, painting different subjects using a variety of watercolour techniques that she teaches.

Heather's Facebook page is www.facebook.com/ArtByHeatherGross

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The Angelic Acre

PAULETTE ALAKAS

Last spring the seed of an idea was planted.

The new Rector William Alakas, observing the vast green space beside St. Columba St. Catharines, envisioned using the land to provide fresh vegetables for those most in need in the community.

When he shared this idea with the congregation, parishioners Mark and Tammy Houtby stepped forward and offered instead a sizeable garden plot of their farm property, affectionately dubbed "The Angelic Acre".

The entire parish was thrilled with such an idea and immediately voiced support and excitement about a new and unique project to help transform and broaden their parish's involvement in St. Catharines community.

A group of interested parishioners, along with the



Photo: Paulette Alakas

rector, came together to formulate a plan.

Very quickly seeds were acquired and a working team assembled. Mark ploughed and prepared the soil. He offered small tomato and potato plants started in his greenhouses. Along with generously donated seeds, a wide variety of vegetables was planted.

Parishioner Peter Proctor, with much experience and skill in this area, led teams who took turns caring for the plants, watering daily, inspecting, then weeding. The parish finally harvested over 100 pounds of carrots and potatoes, 25 bags of

kale, nearly 40 squash, 75 large zucchini and dozens of smaller ones, over 50 cabbages and about a dozen watermelons.

Deliveries were frequent during the summer and fall to Community Care where they were received with excitement. Eventually deliveries were also extended to Start Me Up Niagara on occasion, all to benefit our community.

Plans are well underway for an expansion and growth of this "garden of plenty" this year.

It has become a reminder, for each parishioner at St. Columba, of Christ as the new gardener and the theology of abundance in God's creation for the care of all people.

It is an exciting and holy endeavour that surpassed all of our expectations and hopes, just as God's gifts always do.

Paulette Alakas is a member of St. Columba St. Catharines. palakas@cogeco.ca

The Angelic Acre project at St. Columba St. Catharines produced a bumper crop during its first year of operations to provide fresh vegetables for those in need. Preparations for its second year are well advanced.

Amazing home grown entertainers



Photo: Bev Groombridge

Jean Jaggard and Wendy McEachern performed Dancing Queen at A Musical Journey, sponsored in March by The Church of Our Saviour The Redeemer Stoney Creek. Following a meal, the sold out audience enjoyed songs made famous by Abba, Peter Paul and Mary, Celine Dion, Dolly Parton and others. "There was a lot of laughter and clapping going on," said Churchwarden Bev Groombridge. A similar evening is already in the planning stage.

LIGHT THE FIRE! Pentecost - May 20

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. (Acts 2:1-3)

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Deadlines and Submissions for Niagara Anglican

Deadlines:
 September - July 25
 October - August 25
 November - September 25

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

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

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

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

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SPOTLIGHT ON ...

St. John's Jordan

THE REVEREND PAMELA GUYATT, RECTOR

I arrived at St. John's on November 1, 2017, All Saint's Day.

All Saints is a special day in the life of the parish, due to the rather large cemetery that surrounds the church and parish hall. Every November 1 the parish hosts an evensong service to "remember" those who have died, not only for the past year, but for all who have been interred over the years.



I had the honour of leading that service on my first day, not knowing what to expect. I welcomed over 60 people, most of whom were non-members of the parish. After the service we held a reception in the Hearth Room for all who wanted to stay. It was a time of sharing stories, laughter and a few tears.

Prior to my arrival, the parish had decided it was time to retire and sell "The Holy Grill", the parish's chip wagon. This was a major change for the parish. A lot of time and energy had gone into the various events the chip wagon had been involved in; it meant rethinking stewardship, outreach, time and treasure allocations. They have met the challenge.



"The Holy Grill" French fry truck served the parish for 20 years.

The refugee sponsorship committee, based at St. John's, has worked with others in the community raising funds to bring a family from Syria to Canada. We are now waiting for the government approvals that are needed before they can immigrate. Sometimes waiting is the hardest thing to do.

We have just begun to work with the Spanish-speaking migrant workers ministry, in conjunction with the Reverend Javier Arias and St. Alban's Beamsville. On the last Sunday of every month (started in February 2018), the weekly service and dinner have been held here at St. John's. We hosted 95 people for worship and a meal on March 25th. There was lots of energy, laughter and hard work. It will be fun to see where we are led in this new relationship.

One of my biggest learning curves since my arrival is the cemetery. I am extremely grateful for Brian Culp and his ongoing work as the Superintendent of St. John's Cemetery, along with the Cemetery Board. Not only do we have a large public cemetery with plenty of space available for full plot burials, we also have two columbaria, a sprinkling garden and a natural burial area (one of the first in this area). They all have different rules and regulations that govern how they should be operated and maintained.

St. John's is a busy parish, filled with hard working people, who strive to live out the Gospel.



During the 175th anniversary in 2016, some antique cars came to visit.

Location

St. John's is located on a hill and plateau of the Niagara Escarpment (known as "the Bench") overlooking the Village of Jordan. This lovely hamlet in wine country attracts many visitors. On Pioneer Day (first Saturday in October) members of St. John's often give historical talks.

Quick Figures 2016 stats

- Parish members – 141
- Family units – 108
- Donors – 90

Contact

St. John's Anglican Church
2878 St. John's Drive
Jordan, Ontario L0R 1S0
905-562-7238

niagaraanglican.ca/parish/st-johns-jordan
Email: pam.guyatt@gmail.com

Historical highlights

More detail can be found on St. John's webpage.

- Construction began in 1841 using local stone.
- The first service was held in 1842 and dedicated in 1854.
- By 1841 Jordan was already an established village on the Queenston to Grimsby stage coach route, with shipbuilding in the harbour and flour milling.
- For many years St. John's was a mission church under the leadership of St. John's Port Dalhousie.
- The theme of the stained glass window above the altar, "the sower went forth to sow," is fitting for a farming community.
- The church property was extended to the west, creating space for a second entrance, an enlarged cemetery and a new parish hall (1975).
- St. John's has two Baptismal fonts, including one from St. Mark's Louth, which closed in 2007.

What St. John's means to me ...

The place where I was called to be

From the moment I first entered St. John's, I knew I had found the place where I was called to be. I felt very warm and welcomed with a sense of calm and peacefulness I had not felt for some time.

I came to admire so many parishioners for their profound, yet quiet faith in God ... how they went about their worship in the church and in the community and the selfless giving of oneself sometimes through the smallest gesture.

This led me to give a lot of thought to my own spiritual journey and how I could be my best self in serving God.

St. John's gave me the ability to re-evaluate what's truly important in life ...

- To think outside of oneself and try to make someone else's day just a little bit brighter;
- To strive to be a good and just person;
- To give what I can, when I can, and
- When faced with difficult situations in life or personal struggles, I try to ask myself, "What would Jesus have done?"

Sandra Dudar, Altar Guild



The columbarium in the cemetery

All photos: Submitted

To have your parish featured in the SPOTLIGHT series, contact Hollis Hiscock (contact information on page 3).