



IMPORTANT NOTICE
All readers must opt-in to keep receiving the print edition of our paper.

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Dickens rocks for ROAD
Church of the Incarnation Oakville hosts a reading of Dickens' famous story, in support of ROAD.

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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

FEBRUARY 2019

Conversation with ...

Mother Superior, Sister Marguerite Mae

Sister Marguerite Mae is the first Canadian to serve as Mother Superior of the Community of the Sisters of the Church (CSC) since its founding in England in 1870. She was elected the 10th Mother Superior of CSC in October 2018 and is the religious order's international leader. On Saturday, December 1, 2018, in Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton, there was a celebration and blessing of her new ministry.

The *Niagara Anglican* conversed with the new Mother Superior to give our readers an insight into the life, profession and ministry of an Anglican nun.

Niagara Anglican (NA): Tell us a little about your life's journey.

Sister Marguerite Mae (SMM):

I was born in Brockville, Ontario and stayed there until I went to Trinity College. After a master's degree in Library Science at the University of Toronto, I worked for several years in the library at St. Mildred's–Lightbourn School in Oakville before joining the Community of the Sisters of the Church there in 1977.

In 1978, Dean Joachim Fricker and Canon John Rathbone officiated at my clothing in Oakville as a novice. In 1980 I went to our main house in England for further training for five months.

I did not actually return to live in Canada for 23 years!

In England, I worked in one of our children's homes in Broadstairs, volunteered for ten years at the Mildmay Hospital working with children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, worked as a library assistant in the patients' library at St. Thomas' Hospital in London, and as a public librarian working with children in the borough of Harrow.

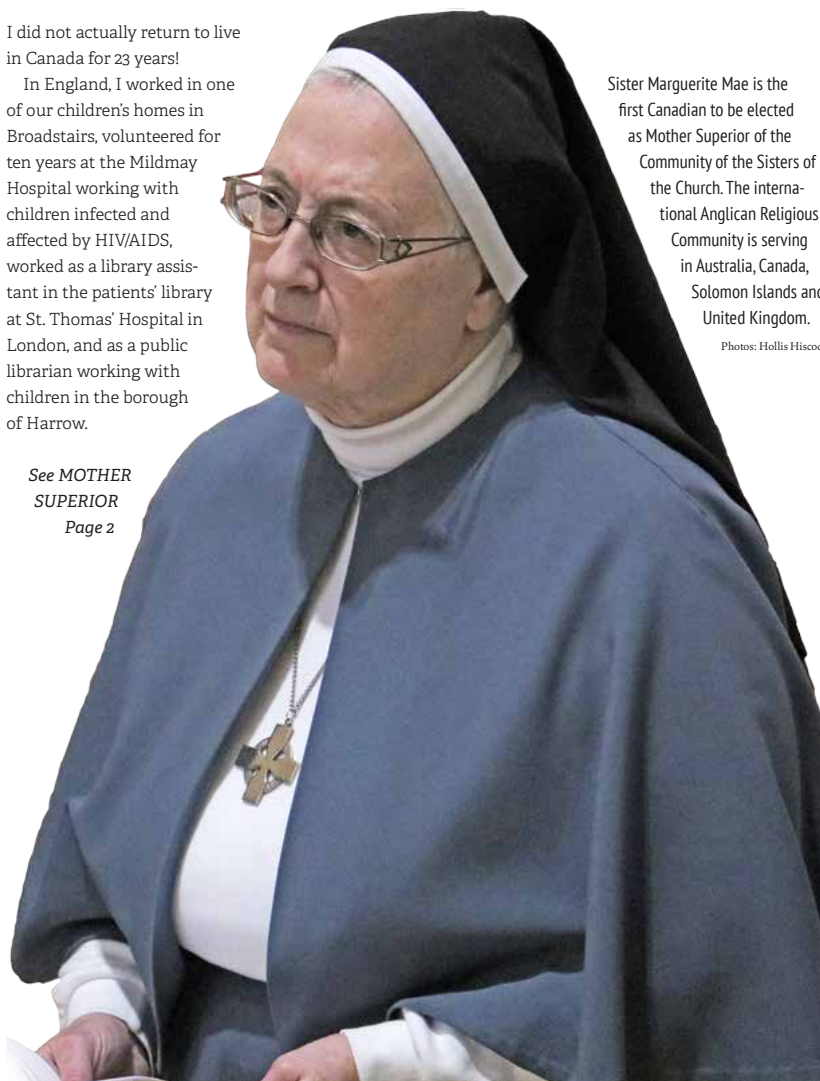
See **MOTHER SUPERIOR**
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Sister Marguerite Mae is the first Canadian to be elected as Mother Superior of the Community of the Sisters of the Church. The international Anglican Religious Community is serving in Australia, Canada, Solomon Islands and United Kingdom.

Photos: Hollis Hiscock



The renewal of vows was held the day before Advent Sunday at Christ's Church Cathedral. Sisters reaffirmed their promise and commitment to love and serve God and all people, while Associates of the Community were given the opportunity to recommit themselves to prayer, support and companionship with the Community and to "show forth in your lives the good news of God's love in our world today".



Mother Superior — Sister Marguerite Mae

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Just after my life profession in England in 1985 I was made archivist for the Community worldwide. I returned to Oakville in 2003 and served two terms as Sister Provincial here in Canada.

In 2010, while on sabbatical, I was asked to fill in for one of our Sisters working as a lay chaplain to the staff at Westminster Abbey. I had three years there, off and on, which was a great privilege.

NA: Tell us about CSC—where the sisters are and what they do.

SMM: The Community of the Sisters of the Church was founded in Kilburn (London) England in 1870 by Emily Ayckbown.

In 1890 the Sisters came to Canada and were involved in education and social outreach. The Sisters went out to various parts of the globe in the ensuing years.

Today there are Sisters living in Australia, Canada, England and the Solomon Islands.

Although most of the schools founded by the Community still continue, the Sisters now are mainly engaged in hospitality, social outreach, preaching and leading retreats, spiritual direction and lay chaplaincy.

Four of our ordained Sisters work in parish ministry.

The largest Province of the Community is the Solomon Islands-Pacific Province, where they are engaged in mission outreach, work with at risk women and children, education and running a retreat house.

NA: How were you chosen Mother Superior?

SMM: In October 2018 I was elected as Mother Superior of our Community by all the junior and life professed Sisters in the four Provinces. It is the first time in our history a Mother Superior has been elected who is not also a Sister Provincial.

NA: What is your role as Mother Superior?

SMM: My role as Mother Superior is to guide and lead the Community in accordance with the spirit and letter of the Rule and Constitution.

I have a duty of spiritual and pastoral care for the Sisters and responsibility for fostering unity among the Provinces.

I act as president of our General Chapter meetings and represent the Community at the international level when necessary.

NA: How do you carry out your duties as Mother Superior?

SMM: My duties are carried out by praying, visiting the Provinces, talking with the Sisters, and by phone, email and letter in between visits. As well I communicate with Associates, friends and people who are in the care of the Community.

NA: As a Sister in the Anglican Church, any thoughts about its present situation or message for the average person in the pew?

SMM: Being in an international Anglican community provides

a wider perspective on the joys and challenges of being an Anglican in the 21st century. It is a great help personally to know that prayer is going on at all times of the day and night somewhere in the world.

NA: Is there anything else you wish to share?

SMM: In 2020 we will be celebrating 150 years of the Community of the Sisters of the Church and 50 years in the Solomon Islands. To God be the glory!

NA: Every blessing as CSC continues its mission and ministry in God's world.

For more information about or to contact the Community of the Sisters of the Church go to sistersofthechurch.org or read "the Anglican nun story" (Niagara Anglican, November 2015 at niagaraanglican.ca/newspaper).



After accepting and confirming her appointment as Mother Superior, Bishop Susan Bell anointed Sister Marguerite Mae with oil signifying her election as the leader of the Community of the Sisters of the Church. Later Dean Peter Wall presented her with a Bible with this hope, "may the word of God continue to guide and inspire the Community and its Associates".
Photos: Hollis Hiscock



The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine, the Order of the Holy Cross Toronto, the Oratory of the Good Shepherd, Associates and friends joined the Community of the Sisters of the Church for the blessing of incoming Mother Superior, Sister Marguerite Mae, and "for helping us to raise the profile of the religious life in this part of the Anglican Community".

(Below) Sister Heather, CSC's Canada Provincial, cuts the New Year's Eve cake. The next day, Advent Sunday, the first day of the Church's year, is when the Community sisters traditionally renew their vows.



(Above) Sister Linda Mary (left), who served as Mother Superior since 2009, presented incoming Mother Superior Marguerite Mae with copies of the Community's Rules and Constitution as symbols of her new ministry.



HOLLIStorial

Stranded... an odyssey parable

Seven people stepped onto a boat for a scenic three-hour tour in the South Pacific.

Disaster struck, they became shipwrecked on an unknown island. For three years, their television series—*Gilligan's Island*—humorously documented their adventures and misadventures, as the castaways explored every possibility to escape their water fenced prison.

After waiting an extra day, due to the wind, Helen and I were elated when our plane finally departed Gander, Newfoundland, carrying us on our three-and-a-half-hour flight to Toronto, Ontario, via Halifax.

Early Tuesday evening among 200 passengers, we taxied to our takeoff position at Halifax airport. The 100 plus km winds buffeted us mercilessly and the torrential rains seemed to threaten our very souls.

After waiting several hours, the pilot announced our flight was cancelled. A collective sigh of relief filled the plane; then reality hit us—we were

"In Halifax, we did not know from where the winds came or where they were headed, but we knew where we were and where we were not going."

stranded in Halifax.

We found shelter in an inn. Wednesday and Thursday dragged by as our flight was rescheduled *ad nauseum*. Finally, late Thursday afternoon, our plane lifted heavenward and winged its way to Toronto.

Our 210-minute flight became a 3,300-minute odyssey.

I thought about Gilligan and Jesus.

Jesus observed everyday happenings, then produced parables to teach about life and our relationship with God.

He watched his mother baking. The yeast, she explained, would permeate the flour and water and transform the ingredients into bread. Years later Jesus would compare his follow-

ers to yeast, suggesting they too would permeate and change the lives of countless people.

Jesus observed children playing a game in the city marketplace. He noted some participated while others refused to join in. People, he told his disciples, would have similar reaction to his gospel. Most would accept immediately, others would offer excuses not to believe and some would totally ignore the good news... totally.

He was right.

So, what messages did we garner from being stranded in Halifax?

Firstly, weather conditions can disrupt the best laid human plans. However, we can embrace the opportunity to learn, enjoy

and understand how each piece of God's wonderful world interacts.

Secondly, nature is most powerful. This time the wind controlled us. From time immemorial, the wind (spirit of God) has guided, pushed or even forced people to pursue a certain direction.

Jesus used the wind metaphor when he advised Nicodemus of his need to be born again. "The wind blows where it will ... you hear the sound it makes ... you do not know where it comes from or where it's going ... so it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

In Halifax, we did not know from where the winds came or where they were headed, but we knew where we were and where we were not going.

Thirdly, communities form when people are stranded. Waiting to register at the hotel, we shared our stories. An executive delivered his keynote speech to a conference in another province from his Halifax hotel room. A couple



heading south for the winter was delayed several days before basking in the summer sunshine.

Maybe we caught a glimpse of what Jesus meant—when two or three are gathered together, I am there among you.

Fourthly, we often need help as we journey life's pathways. The good Samaritans we encountered in Halifax were dressed in Nova Scotian tartan—known as the "Tartan Team". Over a hundred volunteers assist passengers and visitors by answering questions, giving directions and even providing cots and blankets for stranded travellers when hotels have no vacancies.

We need more of these happy, helpful, courteous, caring and kind people in every institution.

Whatever life sends our way, we should look for its silver lining and learn the message of the experience.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

About your print subscription to this paper



"Beginning in January, we will be running a notice in the print edition of the Journal that readers will need to confirm their subscription and opt-in to continue receiving the print version of the paper. We will support this through social media notices as well.

"The notice period will run from January to June 2019. **In September 2019, we will only mail print editions to those readers who have opted-in.** This will ensure that we do not send the print edition to individuals who have either moved, died, or no longer want to receive the paper."

Meghan Kilty, Director, Communications, The Anglican Church of Canada (excerpted from a letter to all diocesan editors. Text bolded by the Editor for emphasis.)

Please notify the Anglican Journal if you want to receive the print edition of the Anglican Journal and the Niagara Anglican. Email your name, address, phone and subscriber ID# (on your mailing label) to yes@national.anglican.ca. See the Journal for more details.



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cartoonchurch.com

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Evangelism: an attractive and invitational approach (Part two)

DARCEY LAZERTE

From a parish ministry perspective, evangelism often gets broken down between the attractive and the invitational.

The attractive looks at what a church offers. What is its music, what does it do for youth, what is its style of worship and how does the community feel?

These are important, since what our Sunday worship is like and how our communities conduct themselves are significant, but there are limitations.

What one person enjoys musically another does not — the same goes for liturgy. In Canada, many smaller pastoral size churches simply do not have the resources to offer many options.

So, what often ends up happening is that those parishes which are resourced and have more to offer retain and attract more newcomers, and those that are less well resourced attract fewer.

The result is that as we look

at our churches it is not a matter of healthy or unhealthy parishes consistently across a diocese, but rather parishes can be broken down between growing, maintaining and declining. This reality one might call contraction and it makes some sense.

As the number of practicing Anglicans declines, it's not that we should close all churches. Rather we need to adjust the number of church buildings to service the adherents we have, since those who continue to walk with us in faith will choose parishes to which they are attracted.

That said, we need to be careful we do not fall into a totally consumerist approach when it comes to looking at what we offer as churches. This is not a very compelling vision, but there is some necessity to it, so that we appropriately deploy the resources we have in order to collectively continue in God's mission.



As some have argued, the defining characteristic of the North American church is that it exists within a free market of religions, and without any state funding it really falls upon the various churches to ensure their own survival.

Turning to the invitational approach, as the name suggests, this is what churches do to invite others to walk with them in faith.

It will surprise no one that this is not something Anglicans

in Canada are traditionally adept at, but it is something we need to grow in, in terms of proficiency.

Invitational evangelism is those acts we deliberately do to invite people to our churches to be a part of our worshipping community. These include adult baptism, engagement in mission and a positive response to stewardship by those who are newer to our churches.

With regards to invitational evangelism there are both passive and deliberate approaches.

The passive are such things as web and/or social media presence, advertising campaigns, church signs and wide community invitations.

Deliberate invitations include an invitation to a church or Alpha program by active members, embracing "Back to Church Sunday" or invitations and follow ups to special services at All Saints and All Souls or seasonal celebrations. Efforts to reach

specific groups, campaigns to reach out to lapsed members or to past baptismal/confirmation candidates and their families are further examples.

These deliberate acts of evangelism can be found both in wider church programming and mission, and in opportunities which are unique to the local context.

Given the new reality that church participation is no longer a given in our society and the contraction we are experiencing as Anglicans, it is important we do not just assume the attitude of "build it and they will come" (which is really the attractive model) - we must begin to be deliberate about invitation.

The Reverend Canon Darcey Lazerte is Rector of St. Simon's Oakville. darcey@stsimon.ca Next month, this series concludes by looking at some invitational models of evangelism more closely.

Celebrate the Lives of Those You love

Pre-planning... A choice this important deserves talking to experienced professionals.

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Don Smith
owner

People in the news

Appointments

Emily Lloyd becomes Director of Canterbury Hills Camp. She started working with the summer camping program as an overnight leader and has since worked in a variety of camping roles. The Board, in making the announcement, welcomed Emily to lead the ministry team at Canterbury Hills and they are looking forward to a successful summer.

The Reverend John Lockyer was issued the bishop's permission to serve as honorary assistant at St. John's Elora, under the supervision of the Rector.

Retirement

Archdeacon John Rathbone, Diocesan Archivist, has formally retired as honorary assistant at St. Stephen-on-the-Mount Hamilton.

Wedding congratulations to

Diocesan Treasurer Jody Beck and Rob Brown who were married on Saturday, December 29, 2018 at Christ's Church Cathedral Hamilton.

The Reverend Jon Forbes, Pastoral Associate at St. Christopher's Burlington, and Laura-Jane Swan were married on Saturday, January 19, 2019, in London, Ontario.

Ordination milestone

Congratulations to the Reverend David Lennerton, retired from full time ministry, who celebrated his 65th anniversary of ordination on December 23, 2018.

(Source: People in the News at niagaraanglican.ca)



This troublesome priest, this uppity woman

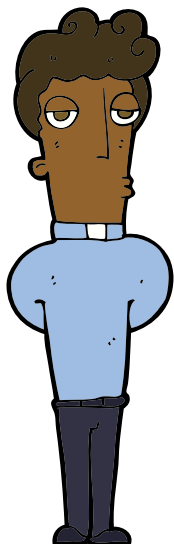
**WAYNE FRASER AND
ELEANOR JOHNSTON**

Atheist United Church minister, the Reverend Gretta Vosper, is in the news again.

The Toronto Conference of the United Church of Canada (UCC) has issued a joint statement with Vosper and her congregation at West Hill United Church in Scarborough, that they "have settled all outstanding issues between them". Gretta is now free, after a three-and-a-half-year controversy, to resume her ordained ministry in her congregation.

The joint statement was short on details but, in interviews, Gretta stands by her atheism, indeed, insists on it. In contrast, the national office of the UCC responded to the joint statement by asserting the church's belief in God, "a God most fully revealed to us as Christians in and through Jesus Christ".

As members of the Anglican Diocese of Niagara, we distinguish ourselves from Gretta in that we joyfully proclaim our



experience of God. We know God not as a person, but as the "Ground of Being". Nevertheless, we affirm Gretta's obvious sincerity and worthwhile ministry.

The United Church's dilemma with Gretta has been played out in the public arena through the media. However, more quietly,

some Anglican congregations today are troubled by theological and liturgical differences.

Some Christians stumble when reciting the Creed, while others insist on its centrality to faith and worship. Some long for contemporary language in liturgy, while others love ancient rites. Some like a lot of music in worship, while others prefer silence. Some Christians lean proudly on dogmatic theological language and ideas; others, meanwhile, question traditional expressions of faith and actively seek new language to articulate their experience of the divine.

There is something empty of soul in angry exchanges over theological abstractions. There is something beautiful in welcoming strangers, angels unawares.

So, how can we all live together in peace? How can we cooperate for the common good? Well, just by doing it, by wanting to do it. By agreeing to disagree and then worshipping and working together for justice and peace.

Why do we need to get along? Because people outside church looking in are puzzled by our disputes, while all people within the church—even atheists—need to feel welcome and included. Shying away from such discussions does not resolve them.

Once challenged for his perspective, the late Marcus Borg responded that Christians could spend a lot of time talking about their theological differences, but it would be more worthwhile to emphasize what they have in common. The central commonality is that we are followers of Jesus, commanded by the Lord to love our neighbours and even our enemies.

Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan taught that there is no limit to the love of God and, consequently, there should be no limitation to our loving. Anyone in need of compassion is our neighbour and deserves our care and support.

Christianity is transformational, personally changing our hearts and politically changing



our society. The current emphasis in the Diocese of Niagara on personal faith formation and the missional church provides the means for such transformation.

Following Jesus is the way we live together in peace. Jesus' mandate as outlined in Matthew 25 will guide us in the joint pursuit of social justice. Working for the common good will supersede all our theological and liturgical differences. As Bishop Susan has recently reminded us, we are all in this together.

When we are gathered together as a community at the table of our Lord, our theological differences become less important than the mystery of blessed bread and wine.

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

Book Review

The problem and the solution

**Not In God's Name:
Confronting Religious
Violence**

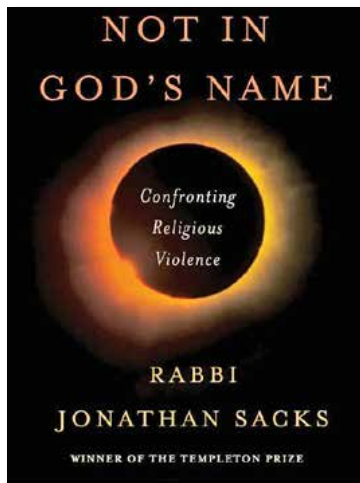
Rabbi Jonathan Sacks,
Schocken Books, New York
(2015)

REVIEWED BY ROB ROI

Rabbi Sacks is one of the most admired and authoritative religious leaders of our time.

He tackles the phenomenon of religious extremism and violence committed in the name of God. If religion is perceived as being part of the problem, Jonathan argues, then it must also form part of the solution. He claims that religions seek peace, but on their own terms. This is not a recipe for peace but for war.

Progressive faiths constantly reinterpret their canonical texts. Jonathan believes that text without interpretation is what makes fundamentalism and is an act of violence against tradition.



The sacred texts of Christianity, Judaism and Islam all contain passages that, if read literally, lead to violence and hate.

Jonathan completes his book by writing, "Today God is calling us, Jew, Christian and Muslim, to let go of hate and the preaching of hate, and live at last as brothers and sisters, true to our

faith and a blessing to others regardless of their faith, honouring God's name by honouring his image, humankind."

*The Reverend Rob Roi recently retired as parish deacon at St. James' Dundas.
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📷 A snapshot of Christmas happenings 📷



← Parish commissioned life size nativity set

This Christmas, St. George's Georgetown had a life size nativity set on their church grounds to tell the story of Jesus' birth. The parish commissioned Ontario sculptor Robbin Wenzoski to hand carve the wooden figures of the nativity.

The wood for these sculptures was re-purposed from damaged or old growth native provincial trees, otherwise left to decay. It provided nature's original creations a second life.

The nativity scene included Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus, and was illuminated during the Christmas season.

"These figures in an authentic setting communicate the Christmas story through their presence and streetscape profile," wrote Rick Gorski. "It is our desire this will be an ongoing annual Christmas community celebration drawing from the congregation and our community at large, to understand, appreciate and enjoy the telling and representation of the Christmas story."

St. George's sponsored an official opening with a community celebration, which included telling the Christmas story, singing carols, ringing bells and enjoying refreshments.

In embracing the spirit of Christmas, St. George's wanted to bring hope and joy to everyone through the nativity set, wrote Rick. Since 1852, St. George's has been a sustainability champion in the Town of Halton Hills and is recognized for its contributions to social well-being and cultural vibrancy in our community, concluded Rick.

Photo: Rob Park

(Based on Rick's article which appeared in St. George's newsletter.)



↑ A Chinese Christmas concert

The event, organized by the Chinese Anglican Mission in the Oakville area, was held at St. Cuthbert's Oakville. Photo: Garfield Wu



↑ Liturgical dance

Dancers, dressed in bright rainbow colours, heralded the coming of Christmas as they performed during the singing of O Come, O Come Emmanuel and other songs during the Advent Carol service at St. Christopher's Burlington. Photo: Paula Ramsay

Staff sorted stuff ↓

One morning, as part of their Christmas gifting, twelve diocesan and cathedral staff members sorted toys and clothing for St. Matthew's House in Hamilton.

This year, 500 families and 200 seniors were registered to receive gifts at Christmas.

The staff was divided into early and late 90-minute shifts. However, Administrative Assistant Mary Anne Grant said the early shift enjoyed the experience so much they stayed for the whole morning.

You can learn more about the needs and work of St. Matthew's House at stmatthewshouse.ca.



(Above) Sarah Bird and Mary Anne Grant sorted clothing which St. Matthew's House distributed to families and seniors.

(Below) Christyn Perkons, Debbie Young and Sharyn Hall enjoyed sorting the children's toys. Photos: Bill Mous



Dickens rocks for ROAD

HOLLIS HISCOCK

A story written in 1843 brought together 250 people in 2018 to hear it read aloud at the Church of the Incarnation Oakville.

Charles Dickens penned *A Christmas Carol* partly to bring attention to the scourge of child poverty in his day. Incarnation staged this year's dramatic reading of the classic tale to support ROAD (Recovery, Opportunity, Action, Development).

ROAD, a youth led recovery support group for individuals 16–29 dealing with mental illness and/or substance abuse challenges, operates from and holds weekly support group meetings at Incarnation (see accompanying article).

Rebecca Taube is ROAD's Program Director and Lead

Facilitator.

Public dramatic readings of *A Christmas Carol* began with Dickens himself, ten years after its publication, mainly to raise funds for charities.

In 1990, CBC host Judy Maddren built on Dickens' tradition by sponsoring dramatic readings as charitable fundraisers throughout Canada.

On Sunday, December 16, 2018—one day before *A Christmas Carol's* 175th publication anniversary—CBC personalities Nora Young, Jeff Douglas, Susan Bonner and David Common joined singer/actor Marnie Kersten (a member of Incarnation) and actor/entrepreneur Cookie Roscoe Hanford to read aloud Dickens' story about being kind and generous, not only at Christmas, but through-

out the year.

Nearly 60 choir members and musicians delivered a wide selection of Christmas carols and related selections, also led the audience in community carolling.

The evening began with Rector Michael Patterson asking the audience, "when was the last time you had a story read aloud to you?" Then he suggested people relax, hear the story and be inspired.

The evening ended with the words of Tiny Tim echoing down through the ages, reverberating throughout Incarnation's building and maybe stirring some hearts, "God bless Us, Every One!"



Judy Vanderwater, Kristin Fitzgerald and Jade Fitzgerald, in period costumes, served refreshments to guests attending *A Christmas Carol* performance. Photos: Rob Moniak

Dickens' classic tale *A Christmas Carol* came alive when read dramatically by six readers. (below, clockwise, from upper left) Nora Young, Marnie Kersten, Cookie Roscoe Hanford, Jeff Douglas, David Common and Susan Bonner.



The Incarnation Festival Choir with Raise Your Voice Chamber (an Oakville choir for girls of all ages) and guest musicians wrapped the dramatic reading of *A Christmas Carol* with music and song.



ROAD youth recovery looking to change the way young people tackle addiction.

ROAD—an acronym for Recovery, Opportunity, Action, Development—offers a drop-in peer support group for individuals (16–29 years) dealing with mental health and/or substance abuse issues.

"One of the leading barriers young people face when they begin recovery is finding accessible care," says Rebecca Taube, the Program Director and Lead Facilitator.

"These kids often get put on waiting lists for months, or sometimes years," she adds, "and in some cases are told that they are unable to access help because there simply isn't enough space for them. After a

while, they give up, because they feel like no one cares."

The program, which ROAD offers every Thursday night from 6:30 to 8:30 P.M. at the Church of the Incarnation Oakville, eliminates these barriers by offering all services on a drop-in basis. There are no waiting lists, registration or costs involved. New members can join at any time.

At ROAD, every member has some type of lived experience, whether its their own or through a loved one who is struggling. "Recovery is about connection," says Rebecca. "Addiction and mental illness want us to disconnect and

isolate, so it's up to us to challenge that and connect with each other."

When new members join, there are no questions asked. Members are encouraged to join, even if their needs are simple. To belong, you simply must walk through the doors.

The facilitators understand how hard recovery can be, so they strive to make the groups and services enjoyable and accessible. Outside of the Thursday night group, the facilitators are available on-call for the members.

"Sometimes people just need someone to talk to," says Rebecca, "or sometimes they

need support at a medical appointment, or a ride to a safe space."

ROAD is committed to its members' success and is proud to offer this unique all-inclusive service.

"We have to remember that having supportive family and friends is a privilege that not everyone has. Some people have no one to help them navigate this journey, and that's where we come in. It's our job to create solutions and offer a community for those who need it," Rebecca explained.

Along with these services, ROAD also offers community events, workshops and sober

social outings. "Step by step, we are making the road to recovery more accessible."

For more information, you can visit www.roadyouthrecovery.com or visit ROAD on Instagram or Facebook.

The facilitators can be reached via phone or text at 289-439-6559, and weekly groups take place at the Church of the Incarnation, 1240 Old Abbey Lane, Oakville.

(This article resulted from a consultative effort of ROAD's Rebecca Taube, Incarnation's Rector, Michael Patterson and Niagara Anglican's Editor Hollis Hiscock.)

My second letter from Cuba



Front row at Christmas movie night.

Photo: Dean Cormack

DEAN CORMACK

The island is going through a change in policies and regulations. A new constitution is being worked on.

Rumors are that the document may contain constitutional protection for LGBTQ, religious affiliations and basic women's rights.

I have been told that these discussions are a distraction from the other issues of workers' rights and fair wages that are not being discussed.

The Government has invited various groups into the discussion, but the real control still is in the hands of the Communist Party. It seems very evident the government administrates and the Party sets policy.

Three weeks ago, we were asked to host a non-denominational meeting at the church, with over 90 people. Many diverse faiths and organizations were represented, like Quakers, Muslims, Masons, Lutherans and evangelical groups. Over 35 different organizations and churches attended.

This event was an invitation only gathering by the Communist Party to promote dialogue and relationships. I had met the Communist Party official heading up the event three years ago at a funeral in Havana, when she came as the government representative.

She is in charge of church relations. As we discussed changes since our last meeting, she seemed to walk a fine line between policy and progress.

The church is sometimes described here as "the uncomfortable neighbour". I believe the party realizes that the church is an important part of community life, but when the church speaks up about social justice issues relations get strained.

The government's focus is on the tourist industry. Every hotel on the island is owned by the government with the major European chains putting their name on the building and splitting profits to manage and promote the hotels abroad.

All resources have been directed to this sector as it provides the lion's share of funding for the government and its social programs. Education, medical, some housing and rationed food staples are provided but are, at times, not enough.

Drugs and vaccines are scarce and greatly needed when dealing with all the water borne diseases carried through a water system whose infrastructure has decayed over the years. Nowhere in Cuba is it safe to drink water out of the tap unless it has been treated.

The Cuban people are paying for their own social assistance programs through the control the government has on keeping wages ridiculously low. The reallocation of money by the government from wages to programs ensures that all social services are provided at a very basic level.

Doctors, lawyers and engi-

neers are earning \$40 per month. Bar tenders and wait staff in resort areas are making more in tips in two days than a university professor in a month.

Incentive is in short supply in this complicated country.

The church here is a small part of this discussion and the impact it will have on the final outcome is unclear.

I am writing this submission from Santiago de Cuba, in the south east. It is a city of over a million people, where there are many choices. It is surrounded by mountains that gave birth to the revolution. This is the city where Fidel was raised and is his final resting place.

I have a busy schedule helping the Archdeacon who has four parishes on his own. He has made me priest-in-charge at San Pedro, which relieves a bit of his workload.

In this Christmas season I am reminded by the people here that it's not about the material gifts we receive, it is about the gifts of our love and compassion that are always ours to share with others every day of the year.

Dean
The Priest from Winona



TEXTING WHILE DRIVING IS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS, SIR, AND IS AGAINST THE LAW

All around is white

CATHY JEANES, BURLINGTON

What a lovely sight, everything is white.
The bushes, trees, the poles, the wires,
the sky, the ground,
and all around is white!

What a pearly sight, everywhere is white.
The city lights, the way too bright,
the gate, the Lord,
and all around is white!

What an awesome sight, everywhere is white.
The people pure, for pain a cure,
our praises sound,
and all around is white!

Cathy Jeanes, a member of St. Matthew on-the-Plains Burlington, participates in the bell choir, prayer team and scripture reading. She has published two books of poetry, one for adults and another for children. Cathy also has one e-book online called, The Rock That Could Talk.



(The Editor welcomes poems appropriate for publication in the Niagara Anglican. Contact information is found on page 3.)

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To print or not to print – more of your responses

In the September 2018 *Niagara Anglican*, the Editor in his HOLLISTorial posed the question: To print or not to print ... that's the answer.

So, what was the question? —and asked readers to respond.

We printed many responses in our November paper, here are more replies ...



More articles from the bishop

In response to your request in the October issue of *Niagara Anglican*, PLEASE leave well enough alone.

The *Niagara Anglican* allows me to know what is going on in the Diocese. I enjoy your article, as well as Michael Burslem.

I'm disappointed that we see few articles from our Bishop. Not our current Bishop because she probably has her hands full knowing the operation of the Diocese. However, in the past any article from the Diocesan Bishop were few and far between.

I subscribe to the Dioceses of Toronto and Huron papers and there always is a message from the Bishop(s).

I realize you could go online and print the paper, but I like holding the current editions in my hand. My concern also is for many seniors who do not have computers.

PLEASE leave things as they are!

Murray Rathbone, Ancaster.



Ask parishes to do a simple survey

As Chair of Greening Niagara, I suppose you might think I would support the emailing of the *Niagara Anglican* (NA), but I have concerns that we may lose new readers if the printed copy disappears completely. The extra copies that we put out at church are usually all taken, presumably by visitors or new members.

I receive email copies of other smaller newsletters and find that I skip some articles, read some only briefly and rarely return for a second reading. Whereas I often re-read articles in the NA, cut them out for future reference, or scan and send to people who may not be Anglicans.

If we lose the NA does that mean we lose the Anglican Journal too? Many of those articles help me to feel connected to national and international stories that I might not bother to read on line.

My thought would be to kindly ask the parishes in the diocese to do a small study – most of this could be done by email, and for those without a computer a sign-up sheet at church would work. This might also ensure that new members have been included on the NA mailing list.

1. Do you receive the NA?
 - a. If no, do you want to receive a copy?
 - b. If yes, do you want to continue receiving the NA?
2. Would you prefer to receive an electronic version? Can we let NA know your choice?
3. If you don't already, would you be willing to pay for a printed version?

An advertised recommended monthly donation to cover the printing/postage cost might also be useful to include for a few months in the NA.

If we are able to have printed copies and email ones, then I think for a few more years this might be the answer to our quandary. It would ensure that older members can continue to feel connected to their church through a printed copy but satisfy the ones who are fully attached to their electronic devices. For the time being count me in with the printed group and I'll continue to make a monthly contribution.

Sue Carson, Dundas



Roving reporter suggested

It is a pleasure to read the *Niagara Anglican*.

I like the brighter colours and clean layout, and the article lengths are quite ideal. I enjoy reading about parish activities from across the diocese.

Perhaps there could be a roving reporter who gets news from each parish on a rotation?

I do like the print version because I can keep it nearby and read it over a period of a few days. With an e-version, it is too easy to forget to go back and finish reading.

Lianne Tan, Oakville



No other choice ... drop the printed version

While I have certain misgivings about rendering an opinion without the benefit of full information (i.e. current mailing costs, monthly circulation within and outside the diocese, the one-time costs of converting from a paper to an electronic version only, the anticipated loss in advertising revenue, etc.), I feel that there is no other choice than to drop the printed version.

After collecting the e-mail addresses of the electronic subscribers, the monthly publication can also be e-mailed to each of the parishes for computer printing and distribution to members of their congregations who have identified themselves as wanting to receive a hard copy.

At least that is one person's thoughts on this matter.

John Murphy, Grimsby



Paid subscriptions proposed

I found your article on "to print or not to print" interesting.

What portion of the expenses of the newspaper is covered by subscriptions?

Are subscriptions payments voluntary? If so, then I think it is time that subscribers are charged an appropriate amount to receive the paper.

I like the printed newspaper and I know if it was discontinued I would not read as much of it online.

Mitch Banks, Burlington



Thank you for your responses. We look forward to keeping the conversation going. Send your comments to editor@niagaraanglican.ca or at the mailing address on page 3.

Please note the special notice on Page 3. You must opt-in to continue receiving the print edition after June 2019.

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The role of faith in Jesus' healing

COLIN C M CAMPBELL

In his healing miracles, Jesus brought the Kingdom of Life to those who were in a place of brokenness. The purpose of healing prayer is to take us from our place of brokenness to the Kingdom of Life.

Surprisingly, Jesus never demanded a formal declaration of faith or repentance before he healed. This fact is worth pondering!

Healing was a consequence of his love for those broken physically by disease and spiritually by evil spirits. His presence was so terrifying to the demons that their malign influence could not stand in his presence.

At the same time, it was so attractive to people that it melted the hearts of tax collectors, adulteresses, Romans and Samaritans, bypassing the need for a formal statement of faith or repentance.

This sheds light on a difficulty that causes many to go astray in praying for healing.

It is a theological truism that our salvation and healing are gifts, won by the finished work of Christ, alone. We do not add anything to it, not even our repentance or faith.

Some have misunderstood

these words, objecting that they suggest faith and repentance are not necessary. This would imply either antinomianism on the one hand, where we could be healed without repenting, or predestination on the other, where we are healed or not, without our participation.

The statements are not antinomian. The gift of repentance is necessary for forgiveness. Unrepented sin keeps us in the place of darkness, unable to enter fully into the Kingdom of Life. Nor do the words imply predestination. The gift of faith and repentance is offered to all who are willing to receive it.

Both faith and repentance are necessary. However, a sound theology will realize that they proceed as a response of gratitude to receiving Jesus' love, not as a way to win that love.

Healing is God's promise to a broken world. Failure is due to our lack of trust in those promises, due to doubt, fear or pride.

Success is not reached by our manufacturing faith and repentance, which only creates anxiety (as Luther reminded us), but by allowing God to lead us into trusting him so that we are able to push through our doubts, fears and pride.

Faith and repentance are a

byproduct of our trust in and love for Jesus, not a means of obtaining them.

If we wish to see healing, then we must first return the Healer's love with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and love our neighbour in the same way. Of course, it is only too easy to make the same mistake with love as we can make with faith. Loving Jesus is not a work that we do to earn his love. It is a grateful response to him loving us first.

This cannot be rushed, but God promises that it will happen if we allow him to have his way of love with us.

Let us praise God for the simplicity, profundity and purity of the Gospel's healing power, when it is correctly understood!

Colin C M Campbell, PhD, teaches high school physics at Glendale Secondary in Hamilton and is a member of St. John the Evangelist Hamilton. ccmcampbell@gmail.com



More Christmas happenings

Lighting the way to Christmas

At Christ Church Woodburn, during Advent, the first season of the Church year, families with Rector Trevor Jones lit candles to begin worship on each of the four Sundays before Christmas.



The Gris boys, with their parents, lit the Advent candles to begin worship at Christ Church Woodburn.



At Christ Church Woodburn, the Ryan twins and their parents began worship with the lighting of the Advent candles.

Photos: Judy Gurman

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CANADA BRIEFS

A roundup of news from other diocesan papers in the Anglican Church of Canada
Compiled by the Anglican Journal's Tali Folkens

❶ N.S. church's parishioners craft 200 quilts for northern babies

Up to 200 infants in Nunavut may be sleeping more snugly this winter thanks to the efforts of parishioners at St. John's Anglican Church in Wolfville, N.S.

As part of the church's 200th anniversary, celebrated through 2018, parishioners decided in mid-March to create 200 baby quilts to send to families in Nunavut by the following winter.

All 200 were completed that fall, and on November 24, the quilts were displayed at an annual coffee party given by the church's Anglican Church Women, blessed and packaged.

As of press time, organizers were hoping to get all the quilts to Nunavut early in the new year.

The idea of creating quilts to send north arose partly from a 2016 talk on some of the needs of northern families given by parishioner Beverly McKee, who had spent more than 25 years as a health care worker in the north. One church member recalled McKee saying some Nunavut families don't have a warm blanket in which to wrap their newborn babies. The project was organized by parishioner and avid quilter Elizabeth Biggs. In the end, more than 40 people took part, including members of Biggs's quilting club.

—*The Diocesan Times*

❷ Community rallies around Ontario church after racist graffiti incidents

The writing of racist graffiti on property belonging to a Toronto-area church this fall spurred a

show of solidarity from local residents, and has led the parish and diocese to take steps against hate crimes.

In three separate incidents in September and October, a man wrote graffiti on a shed behind St. Margaret's Anglican Church in Etobicoke, a district west of Toronto.

The graffiti, which included the N-word, appeared soon after the Rev. Jacqueline Daley, who is black, began as interim priest-in-charge at the church. Daley believes it was prompted by her arrival.

"It's supposed to incite fear and terror, and it's a reminder of the painful history of black people in this country," she said.

Jenny Anderson, area bishop of York-Credit Valley, met and worshipped with the congregation after the first incident, leading it in praying both for the parish and the person who had written the graffiti.

The third incident occurred during a Sunday morning worship service; the man was chased away and identified, but as of press time, police had not arrested anyone.

Three weeks after that incident, about 40 people from the community, who had heard about the incidents from the news media, arrived at the church to help with the cleanup and to offer their support.

One offered to pay for security cameras to improve security on the property. Daley said she was deeply impressed by the show of solidarity.

The church, meanwhile, started a social justice committee, and invited a specialist in diversity and inclusion to speak to the congregation.

—*The Anglican*

❸ Anglican-supported women's affordable housing project opens in Ottawa

Women at a time of crisis in their lives now have more affordable housing in the nation's capital after the opening this fall of a new facility by Cornerstone Housing for Women, a mission of the diocese of Ottawa.

The building formerly belonged to the Sisters of Jeanne D'Arc Institute, a Roman Catholic religious community.

The \$8-million project was supported by all three levels of government, and Cornerstone itself raised \$2 million over a two-year capital campaign.

"Our dream has become a reality thanks to the incredible ground-swell of support by the caring, compassionate and hard-working people of faith within the Anglican diocese of Ottawa and the greater Ottawa community," said Jessie-Lee Wallace, resource development officer for Cornerstone.

Almost 30 parishes in the diocese contributed to the project, financially, through food donations, volunteer work and in other ways, she said.

The newly refurbished building, contains 42 small bachelor apartments, and is intended to provide a secure home for women hoping to recover from abuse or job loss, or get support for mental health and addiction problems, or move past a time of crisis. One-tenth of the units are reserved for Indigenous women and an Indigenous elder will serve on staff.

—*Crosstalk*



❹ Consultation session on human trafficking held in Edmonton

Anglicans from the ecclesiastical province of Rupert's Land—as well as the dioceses of Western Newfoundland and New Westminster—gathered in Edmonton October 21-24 to hear about and discuss human trafficking in their communities.

Participants heard from speakers, including Kate Quinn, executive director of the Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation (CEASE), who spoke about the origins of the organizations, and Taanis Bellerose, an Indigenous survivor of sexual exploitation.

Bellerose, who was brought into the sex trade at age 12 and lived on the street for 25 years, now works as an advocate for others who have been sexually exploited.

Another organization, the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking, is currently developing a hotline to provide round-the-clock help to trafficking victims, and hopes to launch the service in the spring of 2019. CEO, Barb Gosse, told attendants that churches provide valuable help in the struggle against human trafficking.

"You are our eyes and ears on the ground; you have potential volunteers around you all the time and you are a powerful community of assistance providers," she said.

Similar events, funded by General Synod and the Anglican Foundation of Canada, have

already been held in the ecclesiastical provinces of Ontario and Canada. The fourth, for the ecclesiastical province of British Columbia and Yukon, is planned for early 2019, and the results are to be presented to General Synod when it meets in July.

—*The Messenger*

❺ Anglicans help create Indigenous spiritual space in B.C. jail

Indigenous inmates at the Vancouver Island Regional Correctional Centre, a maximum-security provincial jail, have a tent-like meeting house to practice their traditional spirituality after efforts by an Anglican chaplain at the facility and a grant from the diocese of British Columbia.

The spiritual services team at the jail was awarded \$6,000 this year from the diocese's Vision Fund to buy a canvas tent for use by Indigenous elders, chaplains, inmates and staff, says the Rev. Kevin Arndt, who has served as a chaplain there for about nine years. Indigenous inmates have made the 16 ft. by 20 ft. (4.9 m by 6.1 m) tent into a portable meeting house for spiritual practices, Arndt says. The front is now painted in the style of a Coast Salish longhouse, with a raven and eagle on either side of the door. Inside there are cedar benches, blankets, a wood-burning stove and other items.

—*The Diocesan Post*

Deadlines and Submissions for Niagara Anglican

Deadlines:

- April – February 22
- May – March 25
- Summer – April 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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The Gathering, relaunched

The Gathering—described on Niagara’s website as worship “outside the box”, led by youth for people who want to connect with God and one another in a creative, contextual way—was relaunched in November under the leadership of Sarah Bird. She was recently appointed as Program Consultant – Children, Youth and Family Ministry.

Forty-eight people attended the relaunch held in Christ’s Church Cathedral Hamilton.

The evening coffee house featured live performances from the NYC band with volunteers, ages 4-40, who sang at the open mic. The music included a variety of genres, from country to rock, soul to musical theatre.

People travelled from all over the diocese to warm up with decadent gourmet hot chocolate, featuring chocolate pieces, marshmallows, sprinkles, whipped cream and a chocolate wafer cookie straw.

“It was awesome to see such a mix of new and familiar faces, a broad range of ages and a relaxed, welcoming vibe throughout the evening,” said Jennifer Harper, who attended the event with her husband and two little ones, “with a great coffee bar, snacks, cards, board games and an open mic, there was something for everyone to enjoy.”

The Gathering, wrote Sarah, is an opportunity for people to gather and connect with one another for a time of sharing, music, fellowship, snacks and prayer.

All are welcome to join us for any of the 2019 Gatherings, invited Sarah.

The next Gathering is scheduled for Saturday, February 23 at St. Paul’s (Westdale) Hamilton.

For more information contact Sarah Bird at sarah.bird@niagaraanglican.ca.



(Above) Sarah Bird, Program Consultant - Children, Youth & Family Ministry

Photo: Diocese of Niagara Facebook page

(Left) Long time Gathering supporter Ann Snyder took advantage of the open mic opportunity to sing a favourite song.

Photo: Sarah Bird



(Above) People of all ages at the Gathering could engage in discussions or play games.

(Left) The NYC band provided music leadership and backup for singers at the Gathering.

Photos: Sarah Bird



Church building needs a new roof

JUDY ROIS

All Saints’ Church is in Dain City, a small suburb in the southern-most part of Welland, Ontario, built for and by the Marshall Dain Manufacturing Company (John Deere), the area’s main employer.

In this small suburb, All Saints’ is the only building used for Christian worship in the community. While small, it is most certainly vital.

As hospitality is central to the parish mission, it opens its doors as a place for food collections, for worship, as a gathering place for household items for refugees and community services.

The parish has a strong commitment to social justice, inclu-



sion, environmental integrity and peace, making it a welcoming community in the area.

According to Niagara’s Bishop Susan Bell, “the parish is working hard at fostering relationships and filling the role of an established community hub for both faith groups and various programs and user groups’.

Well, the current roof of All

Saints’ is showing its age, with a need for a replacement of the shingle roof and eavestrough.

While a roof or eavestrough may not rouse excitement or delight in the minds of most, imagine a church without a roof. No roof, no people.

The Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) understands the need for infrastructure repair,



maintenance and renovation. While it fosters and cultivates innovative ministries throughout the country, it knows very well that without safe spaces to worship, pray and gather, it may not gather at all. And so, AFC was pleased to offer a grant toward this project.

The Reverend Canon Judy Rois is Executive Director of the Anglican Foundation of Canada. jrois@anglicanfoundation.org