

The Bishop's Easter Letter



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A Year in Review  
Director of Canterbury Hills  
looks back and looks forward.

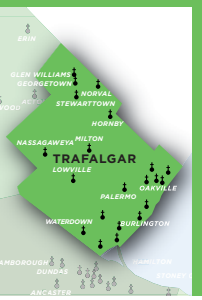


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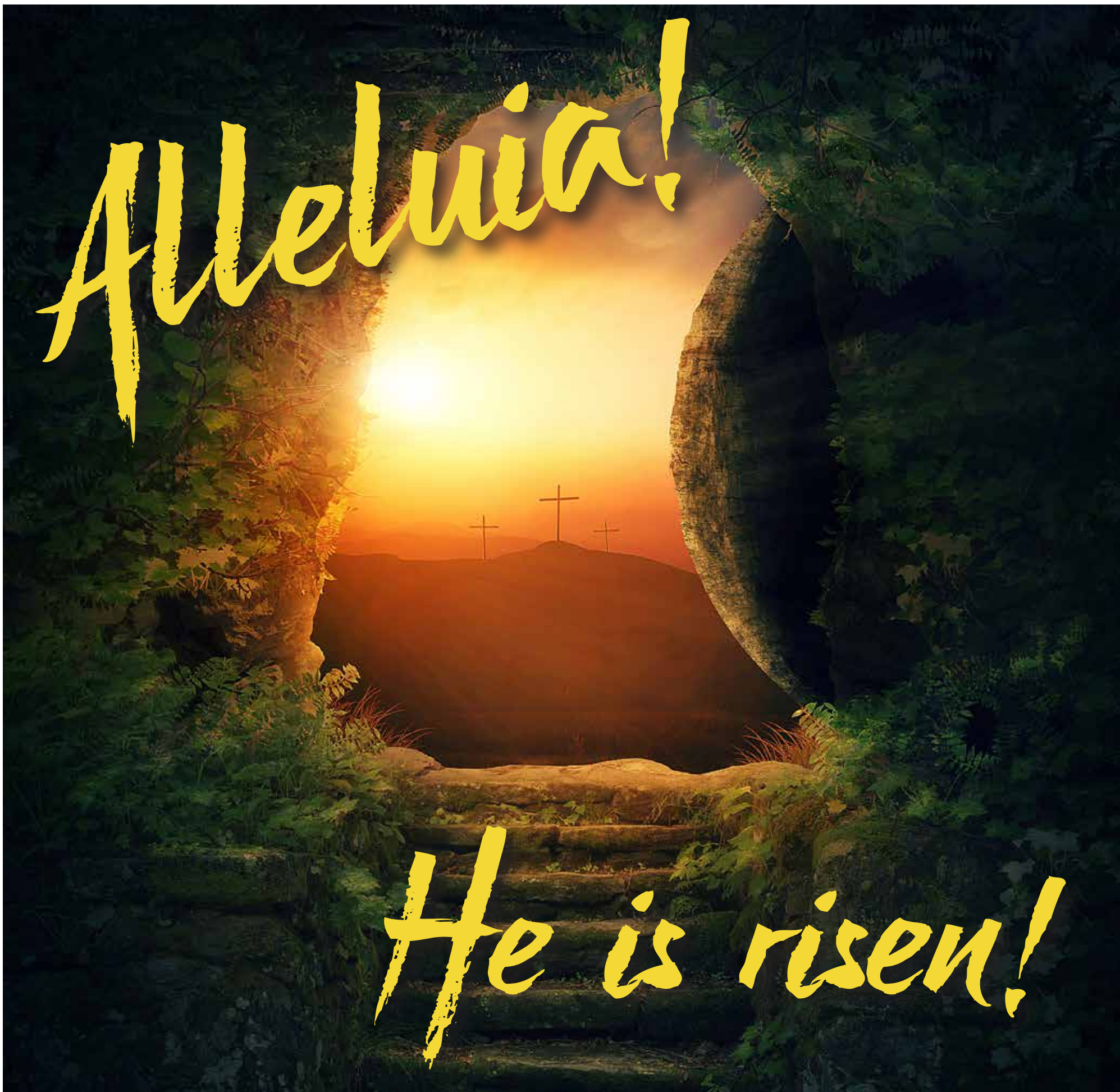


# NIAGARA ANGLICAN



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

APRIL 2020





**Michael Coren**

# How We Respond...

I'm not a fan of Jordan Peterson. I've always found his views to be surprisingly disappointing and sometimes downright harmful. Put simply, I just couldn't see this emperor's new clothes. He's also sometimes used irresponsible hyperbole, and some of his followers are cultish and abusive. I know, because I've been on the receiving end of their brutal certainty.

There are many people who feel far more strongly, especially those in the trans community. They believe that his writings have caused them enormous damage. Others believe that his self-help theories have transformed if not saved their lives. The latter I simply cannot understand, the former I certainly grasp. As I say, I'm no fan.

But in mid-February Peterson's daughter issued a video explaining that her father

was severely ill, and in trying to withdraw from an addiction to benzodiazepine tranquilizers had developed a paradoxical reaction, had been suicidal, and eventually placed in an induced coma. He was being treated, she said, in a Russian clinic after various hospitals in North America had misdiagnosed him. The background to all of this was a history of depression, an autoimmune reaction to food, and then, tragically, Peterson's wife's being diagnosed with terminal cancer.

Some years ago my parents died, too young and also close together. I always regarded myself as tough, but this shook me more than I knew. I was prescribed Clonazepam. It helped a great deal but, as I had been warned, I became dependent. It took me more than six hellish months to come off the thing.

I say this as someone who has experienced agonizing rugby injuries, and while reporting from a war zone was shot at and saw a soldier killed two feet in front of me. In other words, I know pain and I know trauma. This was far worse.

I was on a relatively low dose yet when I initially tried to come off cold turkey I went into what I suppose was shock. After that I would cut my tablets by a quarter every three weeks, and each time I did so there would be days of what felt like small electric jolts in my head, lack of sleep, mental turmoil. My wife and children were loving and supportive, and I'm not sure how I would have coped without them. While it was a horror story, I think of it as a lesson in experience, helping me to empathize with those going through the same experience.

And empathy is surely the quintessence of all this. We need to try to feel what others feel, and thus stand with them in an emotional solidarity. That is the Christian way.

Yet as soon as Peterson's condition was made public, social media was drenched in celebratory and mocking comments: Peterson deserved it, they hoped he would die, this was karma (that's not really what it means), and so on. The ghouls were out in force, in their dark dance of Schadenfreude.

I understand that there is a certain inconsistency involved, in that Peterson has long emphasized strength and fortitude, and I'm not suddenly saying that I support his views. On the contrary, my point is that his views are irrelevant and that it's his need that should inform our reaction. How we respond in



fact says far more about us than it does about Professor Peterson, and our humanity is measured not by how angry and self-righteous we become, but how communal and caring we grow to be. Mere self-interest makes us kind to those we consider on our side, something far deeper and revealing leads us to be generous to those we find objectionable. The first is instinct, the second is grace—something we must never forget.

*This is an edited version of a column that originally appeared in Macleans. The Rev. Michael Coren's website is [michaelcoren.com](http://michaelcoren.com)*

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## Three Days

BY ANGELA RUSH

Three long days of mourning, could it truly be.  
He would rise as He said, resurrection sets us free.

Surely they felt broken, as they turned away.  
Even Peter turned his back, “I do not know him I say”,

They flogged Him and they beat Him, nailed to a cross for all to see.  
Crucified in His crown of thorns they set Him high on Calvary.

Some gathered just to mock Him, His blood dripping to the ground.  
Heaven's sinful suffering, for all of those around.

Darkness covered all the land, from noon until hour three,  
Then Jesus cried out to our God, “Why have You forsaken Me”.

How did they feel that very moment, to watch Him die and feel Him leave.  
Three days, they must have thought, wondering, do I truly believe.

Joseph took His broken bod and laid Him in a stone carved tomb.  
The Prince of Peace, He was the Christ, born of a virgin's womb.

Three women came at early dawn, what we now call Easter Morn.  
Spices in hand, He was not there only the shroud that he had worn.

Then, the ground began to shake; an angel arrived like lightning,  
Holding tightly to each other that moment was quite frightening.

Dressed in white, the angel spoke - Go, He waits in Galilee.  
Alive He has risen, as He said. Easter's Holy Trinity.



# The Bishop's Easter Letter

These past weeks, I have been very involved in reading N.T. Wright's newest offering: *The New Testament in its World*. I say 'weeks,' because this tome is significant in size and significant in content and it takes a while to get from cover to cover!

Bishop Wright writes that the meaning of Easter—the meaning of the Resurrection—is at the heart of the New Testament; and that believing in the Resurrection is not just believing in a set of statements of faith that we make in our historic creeds. It means something far more than that; something much more personal and involved. It means “trusting in God—this God—who raises the dead, who calls for a commitment to discipleship to the worldwide mission that the Resurrection has launched.”

Now that's a statement that has caused me to pause and think deeply over these past weeks. Not about the trust part—that I'm committed to, wholeheartedly. Not even about the raising of Jesus from the dead part—I believe the Creator can manage that just fine and then some. No, the bit

that makes me pause is this: the worldwide mission of God was launched by the Resurrection! So, what God was doing through Jesus was recreating and remaking this world starting with Jesus—and the thing that launched this mission was the deepest and most committed love there is.

I know it seems like it's all pretty heady stuff but actually, it's not really—because it starts with God's love for us. If in Jesus, God is bringing together heaven and earth and out of that making a new creation, we have literally been loved into action and we have work to do. Our job as Christians—the ones who recognize what God has done through the Resurrection, is to get busy building this new earth—the kingdom of God.

What does that new mandate look like?

Well, it looks like justice for the widow and the orphan, the migrant worker and the refugee. It looks like guaranteed basic income, food security, clean drinking water and adequate healthcare, so that all people have enough to flourish. It looks like bold action to safeguard

the Earth and renewal of our commitment to care for all of God's creation. It looks like all people fully acknowledged as beloved children of God: victims of human trafficking, LGBTQ2S+ people, and Indigenous peoples ... all living a life free from oppression, discrimination, and marginalization, in harmony as the whole people of God.

It means, in the words of our new diocesan vision statement, we are **called to life and compelled to love** ... again and again and again.

It looks, in fact, like the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

And you know, I find this inspiring—it literally gives me breath and helps me to find ever more expanded and deepened meaning in the Resurrection of our Lord.

May this Eastertide renew your faith and deepen your love for God and for our neighbour.

*Christ is Risen! Alleluia!*

The Right Reverend  
Susan Bell, 2020

## From The Editor

I love our diocese !! I cannot say that enough ...

As a teenager I was introduced to the depth of Niagara. Born and raised in the northern section of the diocese, my best friends (thanks to NYC and Servers Festival) lived in four different regions—and road trips were at least a monthly occurrence.

And while the diocese I knew then has changed somewhat, some things have remained: Our diocese is small (in comparison to others across our country), and we are incredibly diverse.

The road trips of my youth introduced me to worship very different from my home church (not better, not worse, just different). Those trips introduced me to the societal differences that existed in such a small part of our province. Those trips helped me to understand the concept of wider church.

Today, there are many who know no other incarnation of “church” than their

own parish. And that is why I chose to present the Regional features—each month focussing on one of the five different regions of our diocese. A journalistic road trip.

Last month we were introduced to Lincoln (wine country, Laura Secord, and migrant farm workers). I've already heard from a number of individuals about how happy they were to learn about this region, a mixture of rural and urban and quite dynamic.

In this issue we are introduced to the Region of Trafalgar, and future issues will highlight the Regions of Hamilton/Haldimand, Brock, and Greater Wellington.

Regional Deans were asked to oversee the gathering of information: The geography and features of their area, issues confronting ministry, good-news stories, shared ministries. Parishes were also invited to contribute articles.

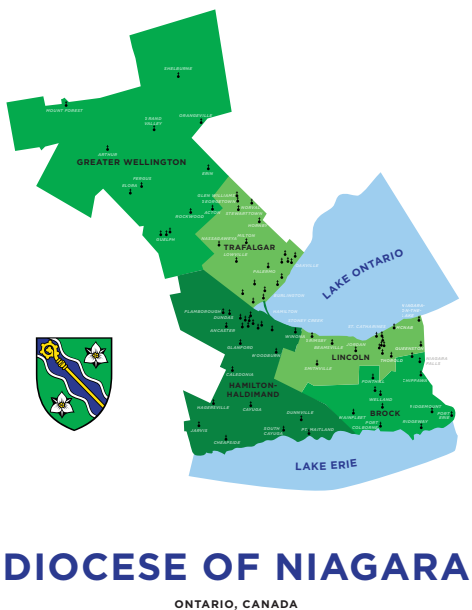
The purpose of this feature is to help



us get a deeper look at who we, are and what we do, in our diocese. Sometimes an article will catch your attention and maybe inspire you to try something similar in your parish or area. Other times it may shine some light on an issue in another part of the diocese. I believe all of this helps us to know one another better.

I hope you enjoy getting to know the regions of our diocese (either again, or for the first time). I look forward to receiving even more submissions from the regions, parishes, and people ... in the future.

*Rob*



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**BY THE REVEREND DEACON SHEILA PLANT**

When we see Burlington, we see tree-lined streets with stately homes, we see a downtown core full of shops, boutiques, and a large variety of restaurants. We see a waterfront that we are so proud of, we see parks, playgrounds, high end condominiums springing up everywhere and we see large subdivisions.

What we don't see are the homeless, those living below the poverty line, and those who wonder how they are going to put the next meal on the table for their families. At St. Luke's (Burlington) we have made a concerted effort to reduce this problem and to reach out to members of our community who suffer from food insecurities.

Ten years ago we began a partnership with Food for Life to become a downtown site, where

people would be able to receive free groceries on a regular basis.

Food for Life is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. It is a food recovery program, not a food bank, and it supports over 100 programs in our community.

Over 18,000 neighbours are helped each month. Food donors include Costco, Fortinos, Longos, Whole Foods, area farmers, and wholesalers. Four refrigerated trucks are on the road everyday from Monday to Saturday picking up and delivering products to the many sites.

In the spring of 2010 St. Luke's officially became a site for Food for Life and since then we have been open every Tuesday morning except for Christmas and New Year's, with one cancellation due to a severe snowstorm. With the blessing of our rector, Canon Stuart Pike, I and a small group of volunteers began putting things in place to get our site ready. On a hot July morn-

ing in 2010 we opened our doors to receive our neighbours for the first time. The truck had come, we had organized everything, and were ready to go. On our first Tuesday, six people came. We were deflated! However, in the coming weeks, thanks to advertising by Food for Life and an article in the newspaper, things changed drastically.

Since that humble beginning we have seen an average of 40-50 people per week. We became a model site for other facilities wanting to become a site for Food for Life, and we have many visitors wondering what we are all about. We are extremely proud of our accomplishments, and the impact that we have had on our community.

We have had some of friends with us since the very beginning ... they continue to come weekly for food. We serve snacks and drinks, hot soup in the winter, and provide a safe, warm caring environment for those who need it. We have seen friendships develop, neighbours helping neighbours and have also had several join us for Sunday services. They have developed a rapport with the volunteers and many are willing to share good news with us.

It is so gratifying when we hear someone say, "I'm sorry but I won't be coming anymore. I have a job now and things are

looking up for me." We celebrate with them. They also know that if their situation changes, they are welcome back at anytime, no questions asked.

There is often a language barrier but between hand signs, and friends acting as interpreters, we keep the lines of communication open. We pray with them if they ask for prayer and most of all, we listen.

We have been fortunate to have received donations from some of our parishioners, and the box in the Narthex is often filled with non perishable items to add to our supplies.

Over the years we have tried to make Christmas a special time for all. Everyone who needs a turkey gets one. We have done reverse Advent gift bags, we have done special treats for them, and two years we did a mitten tree so that no one would have cold hands. This was a great success thanks to our parishioners.

Over the past two years, we have partnered with École Renaissance, a French school near the church. Each December a group of students come and bring all sorts of paper products, toothpaste etc. and stay and help sort food. They love helping and it brings such joy to see these young people so actively involved, going about the tasks and listening to them speak

French. What a blessing they are.

Last year at St. Luke's:

- 31,966 total pounds delivered to St. Luke's
- 8,870 pounds meat
- 13,469 pounds fresh produce
- 1,315 pounds dairy
- 1,940 pounds prepared foods
- 4,005 pounds bread
- 582 pounds juice
- 1,785 pounds dry goods
- 121 neighbours/month
- 328 visits/month
- 31% served are children
- 30% are single parent families
- 26% are on ODSP
- 23% rely on their old age pension for income
- 55% of households say the main reason for attending the program is lack of an income.

Food for Life is a very important part of my ministry as I continue to minister to the church scattered. This program has touched the lives of so many people in our community. For that, I give thanks to God.

*The Deacon's Bench is a regular feature in The Niagara Anglican. Each month a Deacon will inform us about the ministry s/he conducts in their parish and the wider community. This month's columnist is The Reverend Deacon Sheila Plant, of St. Luke's (Burlington).*

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## Book Review

# Resurrecting Easter

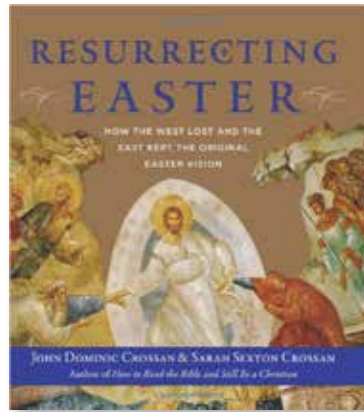
BY REV. DR. WAYNE FRASER

In November I received as a birthday gift a beautifully produced book, *Resurrecting Easter* by John Dominic Crossan and his wife Sarah Sexton Crossan. (It helps to send a wish list to family members.) The book offers clear, thoughtful analysis of fascinating colour illustrations from many locations throughout Europe.

The result of twenty research trips, *Resurrecting Easter* demonstrates through the prism of art the developing understanding of Resurrection over the first one thousand years of Christianity.

The Crossans ask: if the “moment of Christ’s Resurrection as it is actually happening” is not described in the Bible, then “how can it ever be depicted in an image?” The Bible presents only the immediate aftermath of that moment, the soldiers guarding the tomb, the women approaching, the angels appearing. What actually happened?

The first illustrations of that crucial moment, called the “Anastasis,” literally the “up-rising,” were symbolic only, for example, a stylized cross or beams of light. While the other figures mentioned above had long been portrayed, only gradually does Jesus appear in bodily



form. He is pictured emerging from the tomb, sometimes half in, half out, other times, standing beside and completely out.

In or out, Christ is often portrayed striding a figure of Hades or Satan and leading various shades out of Hades, first always Adam, followed by Eve, King

David and Solomon, and then others. This depiction presents universal resurrection, not just the individual resurrection of Jesus.

Near the beginning of the second millennium, in the Great Schism of 1054, Eastern and Western Christianity split, and, as the subtitle of the book suggests, “the West Lost and the East Kept the Original Easter Vision.”

The Western Church emphasized the image of individual resurrection by downgrading the universal, renaming it “the Descent into Hell, or the Harrowing of Hell.” For the West, Resurrection came to focus on what happened to Jesus and

thereby lost the universal implications. The Eastern Church in contrast maintained the imagery of universal resurrection, the idea that Resurrection happens for all of humanity, indeed, all of creation.

Richard Rohr delayed publication of his recent book *The Universal Christ* (see Rob Roi’s review in the June 2019 Niagara Anglican) until the Crossans’ book was published so that he “could include [their] artistic, historic, and archeological evidence for what I am trying to say theologically.” Both books together, remarkable companion pieces, will inspire deep spiritual contemplation.

# Tuesday Morning Prayer

BY JOHN RIPLEY

About twenty-five years ago a small group of clergy met to pray. It was a Tuesday.

Every Tuesday since then (except for Christmas and Clericus days) a small group of clergy continue to meet for prayer. That is a meeting with staying power. By and large clergy do not like meetings, but, those who gather at Tuesday prayer find the experience meaningful and enjoyable—some might even say fun.

It was Malcolm Evans, a former rector of St. Andrew’s (Grimsby), who proposed the idea in the early 90’s to the rectors of the former St. Philips (Grimsby) and St. Alban’s (Beamsville). The initial group consisted of five people—today, if everyone shows up there could be ten.

These ten priests (active and retired) and deacons join in community to say Morning Prayer and review the Lectionary Readings for the next Sunday.

Ostensibly we gather to read scripture and discuss potential sermon directions—and we do that, but the relaxed camaraderie affords an opportunity for much more. Those in “the business” know the many challenges of ministry. To honestly share a particular challenge requires a community of trust. Many a time one of our number leaves

a lot lighter because of understanding ears and thoughtful advice.

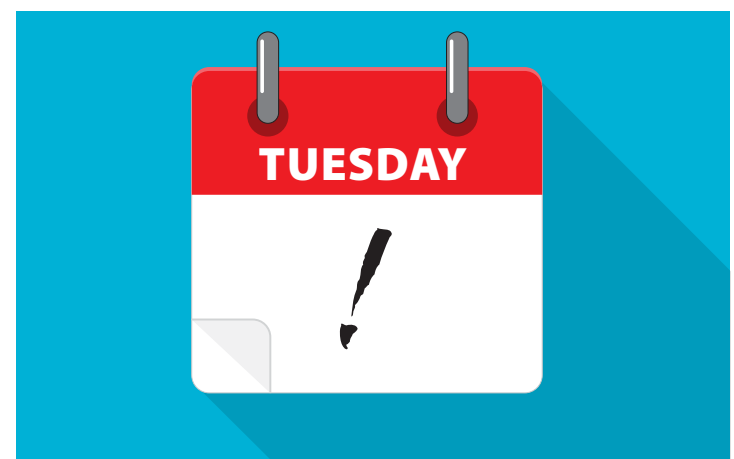
Of course, coffee and healthy snacks (no Timbits) are a part of the sometimes raucous discussions. Theological perspectives are fairly broad, which means that theological understandings are strenuously debated. Current events are always a part of the dialogue. We search for ways to make the events out there relevant to our church communities. Sometimes it gets very interesting.

Over time the faces around the table have changed. A Baptist minister, a Roman Catholic priest and a Canadian Reform pastor have joined us at various times. With clergy deployment, new rectors of the respective parishes willingly become a part of the group. One priest has been a loyal participant for many years, driving in from St. Catharines every Tuesday. While the faces may change, the group continues to exist as a positive fellowship.

Meetings alternate between St. Andrew’s church and the residence of one of the clergy involved. We say we start at 9:00 a.m. but we seldom, if ever, do—9:15 is more the norm. Most often the session ends about 10:30 a.m., however, an interesting discussion might see us still around the table at 11:30. I know that I for one always try

to keep my calendar open for this special time of the week. Discussion and fellowship is extremely important. Gathering with friends is always valuable.

Yes, “Tuesday Morning Prayer” is a good thing and, God willing, it will continue.



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## A Year in Review



**BY EMILY LLOYD**

I have spent many summers over the years at Canterbury Hills, but the first summer with the director title is a whole different ball game. As the preparation for summer 2020 quickly picks up speed, I thought that this was the perfect opportunity to pause for a moment to reflect on the amazing, hectic, beautiful, and magical year that was 2019.

Shortly after I began my position, I was lucky enough to join the Board of Directors in participating in a workshop focused on visioning and creating our official mission statement.

"Canterbury Hills creates inspiring and engaging experiences that develop leadership skills, confidence, and resilience in a safe and inclusive environment. Immersed in nature, we experience God in and around us and build community values".

I am so proud of this sta-

men as I believe it perfectly describes the magic that makes Canterbury Hills so special. The leadership and spirit that our young staff put into their work to create fun and safe moments every day, is a sign of God working through them to build community and empower our youth.

Our outdoor chapel is one of mesmerizing beauty; when we meet for Eucharist in the afternoon, the sun is at a point where it shines down through the tree-tops, perfectly hitting the stone altar in a way that makes your heart feel full. Experiencing the connections that are built through belly laughs, singing, playing, and reflecting in the beautiful Carolinian forest helps remind us that God is always with us.

One of the reasons I have enjoyed working at Canterbury Hills so much, is that no matter the background our campers come from, or the trials they may have faced, they are welcomed into our space with open arms and hearts. In a cabin group, they immediately have eight new friends that support their growth and ideas.

This past summer gave me the unique view on how this is the same for our young staff too. At the camp we have a leader in training program for 15-16-year-olds to work as staff, while receiving additional leadership training. While I was leading a session on spirituality, I asked

each leader in training to take a few minutes to reflect on their spiritual timeline, focusing on what life experiences have helped shape who they are leading up to that moment. When it came time to share, I was shocked to hear some of the hardships of death, bullying, family troubles or school issues that they had faced throughout their young lives, but they all echoed similar endings: Canterbury Hills had been a refuge for them as they grew up through our camping programs, and allowing them to partake in this program and give back to campers while bonding with each other so deeply gave them a strong sense of purpose and direction. I definitely had lots of emotions to reflect upon after that session!

I began working at

Canterbury Hills Camp as an overnight cabin leader in the summer of 2013. My mom saw a flyer for the camp hanging on a bulletin at our church one day, and brought it home to show me. At the time I was a shy sixteen year old kid who was used to spending my summer days at our family cottage; I wasn't sure that camp life was for me. If only I knew then that I would end up making it my career!

Camp changes lives for the better. Each year I am lucky enough to return, regardless of the role, I can reflect back and feel grateful for the growth in my leadership, confidence, and faith. No matter how exhausting or hectic a day (or even a week) may feel, I can take a break to pause and stand on my office porch and just listen. Listen to the sounds of splashing and

cheering of the kids cooling off in the pool. Listen to the sound of songs coming from the campfire pit, and the familiar sound of crackling twigs that goes along with it. Or maybe just listen to the sound of silence after the day campers have gone home, and the overnight campers are asleep in their bunks, and look up at those beautiful stars that just don't shine the same from the city so close by.

It is in these moments I am reminded of how blessed I was to have called the number on that flyer all those years ago, and made the call again to apply for the position as director in November 2018. I am a camp person at the best camp in the world, and I cannot wait to take all that I have learned and make summer 2020 even better.



## Book Review

# Finding God in the Faith of Others

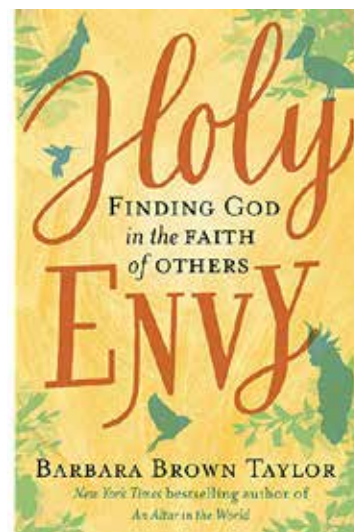
**HOLY ENVY, by Barbara Brown Taylor**  
Harper One 2019

**BY THE REVEREND DEACON ROB ROI**

"No one owns God" is explained by Barbara Brown Taylor in her book *Holy Envy*. She writes that we are not born with a belief system or a worldview. We get these from our elders, along with our DNA. She believes that what we have in common is not our religion but our humanity.

Taylor continues her spiritual journey begun in leaving the

church to find out what the world looks like after taking off her Episcopal clergy collar. In *Holy Envy*, she contemplates the countless ways other people and traditions encounter the Transcendent, both by digging deeper into those traditions herself and by seeing them through her students' eyes as she sets off with them on field trips to monasteries, temples, and mosques. In 1998, she began teaching world religions at Piedmont College, which she expected would help her learn the subject matter. What she did not expect,



though, was that the classes and students would challenge and deepen her own Christian faith.

Taylor believes that God created variety over uniformity, that God created conditions for many interpretations, and that there is no longer one way to say a true thing.

The theme of the Bible, Taylor shows, is this all-abiding love for the religious stranger, for our neighbours of other faiths. We shouldn't fear learning more about their relationships with the divine, because their understanding will lead

to greater understanding for ourselves, and will enrich our own relationship with God.

The author writes, "The only clear line I draw these days is this: when my religion tries to come between me and my neighbour, I will choose my neighbour...Jesus never commanded me to love my religion... treat every human being as if he or she were Jesus in disguise."



# Discovery

BY DEIRDRE PIKE

When I attended the launch of the National Anglican Church's, *Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands; Strong Hearts*, last March in Toronto, it was as if the scales fell from my eyes. I saw, as if for the first time, the truth about lies we have been taught, often by omission, about colonization and the subhuman definition and treatment given to the Indigenous People who are the original inhabitants of this land. Those of us who must come to terms with the piece of our identity that names us as settlers may find it un-settling but it is a necessary step in Truth and Reconciliation.

Following Bishop Bell's example of publicly screening the film at the Cathedral in Hamilton last June, about a dozen parishes (that I know of) have hosted a film screening and I have had the privilege of being at seven of those events.

Some parishes have already taken a step or two toward increasing understanding and ally-ship to Indigenous people and others have used at a screening of the *Doctrine of Discovery* for step one in their community. Some parishes host the film on their own and others have co-sponsored it with other Anglican parishes, church communities of other denominations and even national organizations like Kairos. No matter how it has unfolded it has been a rich experience for all involved.

One example of a recent screening took place at St. Luke's (Burlington), where an Indigenous Peoples Awareness Team was established in early 2017. The Team set out to identify educational opportunities and experiences that will build an awareness of historical and current issues and culture of Indigenous People. Believing increased levels of understanding will provide a foundation



for future relationships based on respect and justice, the team knows these relationships will be necessary to travel down the road of reconciliation.

A number of possible actions were identified such as guest speakers, worship, an Indigenous book study group and building relations with the host First Nation. Early highlights included the Blanket Exercise led by Archdeacon Valerie Kerr, with participation from the Mississauga's of the New Credit, a tour of the Woodlands Cultural Centre and Mohawk Institute, and hosting guest speakers (including former Chief of the Mississauga's of the New Credit Carolyn King). *Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands; Strong Hearts* was also presented as the topic for the parish Advent Study.

A new tool the Diocese will be bringing is an opportunity in which to participate through the PWRDF (Primate's World Relief and Development Fund), "Mapping the Ground We Stand On". Dates and locations will be available soon

Connect with me if you're interested in bringing either of these powerful tools in Truth and Reconciliation to your parish community in 2020! I have some resources you may find helpful and I'd be happy to help you implement a post-film study group for more in-depth discussion.

You can reach Deirdre at 905-527-1316, ext. 470, or [deirdre.pike@niagaraanglican.ca](mailto:deirdre.pike@niagaraanglican.ca).

# The Little Church With A Big Heart!

BY PETER FORSBERG

The first time we came to Smithville, three years ago, we entered the town and passed by this beautiful little, white-washed church, St. Luke's Anglican Church. We were living in Ottawa at the time. What we saw in Smithville was a community that seemed to be the ideal place in which we could settle.

Some months later friends informed us that they were considering a move closer to Toronto, and would we be interested in buying their place in Smithville. We decided that if we wanted to get to know more about St. Luke's Anglican Church we had better buy while the opportunity was there.

Following the close of the purchase of our new home we wasted no time driving to Smithville to open up our new

residence. That was a Saturday. All we had brought with us were a few clothes and a couple of exercise mats on which to sleep – our chattels would arrive later. We got up the next morning and made our way to St. Luke's just in time for their 9:30 AM service. At first we wondered what was going on since we couldn't open the bright red door to enter the church...I pulled instead of pushed! We entered and sat in a pew near the rear of the congregation. All eyes were on us and we just smiled.

At the end of the service it was announced that coffee would be available for all in the parish hall; so, we decided to stay. During the coffee-hour everyone came to us and said "welcome"; and, indeed, we did feel welcomed. I had never felt such a warm welcome as I did on that Sunday morning in St.

Luke's Anglican Church.

My wife and I attend Sunday worship at St. Luke's every week we can. The congregation is very committed to supporting the Church's activities, from peach peeling, to putting on festive dinners, to donating to Smithville's Community Care. We enjoy participating with the dedicated members of the congregation in the church's activities. It is a great way for us to get to know everyone and feel an important part of the St. Luke's family.

St. Luke's is, truly, the Little Church with a Big Heart!

*Peter Forsberg and his wife, April, are members of the congregation of St. Luke's (Smithville).*

# Reaching out for Lent

St. Paul's Anglican Church (Westdale) is a small but active Anglican Church located at the corners of King West & Haddon in Hamilton. It has a rich tradition of outreach programs.

The tradition continued this past Fall with :

- support to McMaster Students both at Thanksgiving and during examination time by members of our Welcome Committee
- an Amnesty letter-writing project
- our annual St. Matthew's House Christmas project
- the choirs who practiced weekly at our church visiting a Hospice and several Nursing Homes throughout December
- the regular visits of parishioners to Parkview Nursing Centre and the Shalom Village Nursing Home.

Last spring, at a Parish Council meeting Archdeacon Jim Sandilands (our Priest-in-charge) challenged us to try to come up with another outreach project for the winter months. Because we are a smaller Anglican congregation, we realized that we needed a project that was somewhat "low organizational" in nature but also had the potential to have a major impact.

It was decided by Parish Council in the Fall of 2019, that during Lent 2020, St. Paul's would support one of the major projects of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF). This fund was selected because of its reputation for quality sustainable development, low overhead and responsible stewardship. Some members of our Parish Council volunteered to act as a steering committee to bring this project to fruition, and we received valuable assistance from Janice Biehn of the national PWRDF Office. On the first Sunday of Lent Deirdre Pike, Diocesan Justice and Outreach Coordinator, spoke to the congregation.

The initiative we chose is the Kenya Shallow Well Project, which covers the cost of a shallow well improves the health and opportunities for families. A gift of \$3,000 will purchase one whole well including piping and a pump. If our efforts exceed our goal we may be able to purchase more than one well. The Utooni Development Organization (UDO) in Kenya receives the funds and uses the same to bring clean water to rural communities by building shallow wells. UDO supports disadvantaged communities in the arid

and semi-arid lands in order to transform their environment in a sustainable manner thus enabling farmers to improve their water supplies, food production, income, and health through inter-community education, peace and justice.



It was decided that our campaign would run for the entire Lenten season. Any monies raised will be "matched" by St. Paul's Corporation. We believe this campaign correlates nicely with the recently released Diocesan Mission Action Plan under objective three and strategies A & B.





## In other words

# Who needs the church?

JOHN BOWEN

Business guru Peter Drucker used to advise every organisation to ask itself, "What business are we in?" So what exactly is the business of the church? Are we in the religion business? The business of teaching "values"? The business of adding a spiritual dimension to life? The business of promoting justice? In these days of church decline, we had better know the answer.

Let's start with what the church actually is. Steve Croft is Bishop of Oxford, the biggest diocese in England. When he

was in Toronto a few years back, he suggested a very simple definition of the church that I have never forgotten. He quoted Mark 3:13-15. "Jesus went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message, and to have authority to cast out demons."

It's a good summary: Jesus called people, they responded. Their job was (a) to be with him and (b) to be sent out as his apprentices. Their job as

they went out was to speak the message and to demonstrate the truth of the message. What was that message? In a word, it was the Gospel, the good news that through Jesus Christ God is putting right in the world all that we have put wrong, a message that Jesus summarized as "the kingdom."

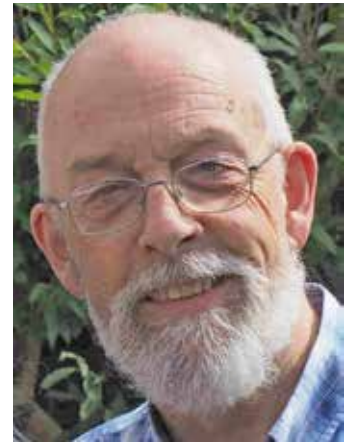
It's a very stripped-down definition, I realize. If it is that simple, we might ask, what is the place of buildings, clergy, synods, liturgies, budgets, seminaries, and everything else that goes into what we think of when we think of "church"?

Let's begin with the Gospel: God's promise to renovate all things through Jesus Christ. One image Jesus uses for the Gospel, for that renovating work, is water, living water (John 4:10). This water is pure, refreshing and life-giving. But water of any kind only does its job when it remains pure H<sub>2</sub>O. There are other compounds whose components sound very similar—H<sub>3</sub>O (Hydronium); H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> (Hydrogen Peroxide); Ho (Holmium); and so on—but none is a substitute for H<sub>2</sub>O, and some of those things would be very bad for you. Hence Paul's strong reaction against those who "want to pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. 1:7). Of course he's upset: they are trying to sell contaminated water to thirsty people.

And the church is the guardian, the steward, of that precious

water, to make it available to the world. All the structures of "the church" are to make sure the water stays pure and accessible to all. Let's push the analogy one step further:

- One Christian says, "All my life I've drunk the water from the best cut-glass wine glasses. To me, that represents the preciousness of the water, and links us to the generations who drank from those same glasses before us. That's really the only suitable way to keep the water."
- Then someone else responds, "But I need the water while I'm driving around, and I really can't carry an expensive wine glass around in my car. It's asking for trouble. Why can't I carry the water in a travel mug?"
- Perhaps a third person only has a cheap plastic tumbler from a convenience store. Will that do for carrying the water? It is far from aesthetically pleasing, it's bad for environment, and it hardly conveys a sense of dignity or tradition. But actually, it does the job.
- Finally, if you're stuck out in a scorching desert with nothing to drink, and someone offers you water in a flower vase, would you drink it? I suspect you would. Not under normal circumstances, of course, but those are not normal circumstances.



You can probably think of other water containers, and when they might be appropriate, but you see my point. What is important is the water, the container not so much. We have our personal preference for one container rather than another, depending on our taste and our tradition, but the important thing is that the water be available to those who need it.

Of course, there are some characteristics that all those containers have in common—I'll say more about that next time—but for the moment I want to stress the diversity. They all work—for different people and in different contexts.

So here's the question: what are the forms of church that will make the living water Jesus offers accessible to people, particularly young people, in our culture? Are we bold enough, passionate enough—progressive enough even—to explore different models of church?

Yes, it will be uncomfortable. And disturbing. It certainly won't be your grandmother's church. But it could be your grandchildren's church.

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## Create and implement opportunities to ignite and strengthen faith

**SARAH BESSEY**, sought after speaker, podcast guest and co-founder of the Evolving Faith Conference as well as author of the weekly e-newsletter *Field Notes*, and several books, the most recent of which is *Miracles and Other Reasonable Things*, will be speaking at Christ's Church Cathedral on June 3 from 7 to 9 pm.

Sarah (an avid Dr. Who fan) weaves theology and story, questions and transformation moments alongside a deep sense that God is always with us, making us whole in the midst of our everyday lives, the joys and the sorrows. This self-described dangerous woman tells stories of risk and dying and rising to faith as though she is whispering straight into your heart.

You'll leave this talk feeling like your faith has been revived; like the Spirit has swept through you! Do come and feel your faith strengthened ... or even ignited!



Tickets are available for \$25 at [Eventbrite.ca](http://Eventbrite.ca) (search Sarah Bessey) or can be purchased at the door for \$30.

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## A Room of One's Own — Part 2



Great books can launch great adventures! In this particular case, *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross* and *Spiritual Friend* by Tilden Edwards.

And so, in the summer of 1989, at 3 o'clock of a July morning, after an epic 9 hr. drive, I found myself in Washington, DC, unlocking a dorm room door. I was there to begin the residential component of a two-year program in spiritual direction offered by The Shalem Institute of Spiritual Formation. Tilden was then Director of the Shalem Institute.

I had no idea of the impact the program would have on my life.

A simple two-part prayer exercise in the next few days intimated the depth of what was to come. We sat in pairs, in prayer, with our eyes closed, facing each other. One the listener, one the sharer. How strange to listen to another with eyes closed while in prayer! How strange to speak to another with eyes closed while in prayer! Can we listen and speak to one another while in prayer? What exactly does it mean to be in prayer?

The exercise was then repeated — with eyes open. Can we be speaking and then listening in prayer while looking

into the eyes of another? As I write this now, many years later, the words of Jesus from the Sermon on the Mount come to mind: "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." (Mt. 6:22 KJV) To look into the eyes of another while in prayer is to see beauty, pain, truth, fragility and humility incarnate. And yes — we can listen and speak to another while in prayer, while held in the gaze of another — while being held in gaze of God ... "thy whole body shall be full of light."

Two other great teaching moments come to mind: The Group Chant and The Free Dance.

After being introduced to chant as a personal prayer practice we gathered together one day for a practice of group chant. This was entirely new to me. We stood loosely together for some time. I was never sure where the first note came from. Slowly, the room itself seemed to breathe sonorous, uncentered, enveloping harmonies of sung prayer. Each voice in its own time brought its own tone to the blossoming warmth of a single intention: to give voice to the Holy Condescension of Our Creator — the Risen Anointed



One who laid Life down only to pick it up again for the sanctification of all humankind. Wave upon wave of gentle caesura of breath, of gentle return in harmony fell upon us all. We were no longer single in our gifts but shaped by the Indwelling Spirit into one, indivisible choir of angelic character and solemn joy.

This gentle river of holy music all on its own came to the delta of an all-enveloping Consecrating Silence. We stood together like an ancient, silent forest. No one breathed a word.

Do we all have this capacity for Grace? Does this dignity live in us each and every day?

The Free Dance likewise brought its charism. I remember the trepidation as Tilden gave us our brief instructions: "Move when you want to!" I sat

in my chair as the solo piano music began. I felt like a boy at a school dance: embarrassed. One by one, folks began to stir ... I sat ... and sat ... and sat ... soon the room was now swaying, folks were smiling ... glowing ... passing one another ... woven into embodied music ... sublime flowing courtesy ... I felt the call ... I wanted to be in the dance ... I felt the invitation ...

I stood up... took a shy step forward ... drawn by the current of a shared second naivete ... I danced with my friends ... gently, silently to the solo piano ... when suddenly she swept by, so close the breeze brushed my cheek, on a Divine Wind, arms extended, head lifted, her eyes filled with ecstatic joy — the glory of God, humankind fully alive.

### Transitions

Deepest sympathy to the family of The Reverend **Canon Scott McNaughton**, who died on February 17, 2020. Scott was the beloved husband of Isabella Guthrie-McNaughton, and loving father of Sambath. Over his 36 years of ordained ministry, Scott served with the people of St. George's (Guelph), St. Stephen's (Niagara Falls), St. Paul's (Jarvis) and Christ Church (Nanticoke), and St. Stephen's-on-the-Mount (Hamilton).

Our deepest sympathy to the family of **Margaret Firth**, O.N., long time and faithful member of St. John the Evangelist (Hamilton) who died February 23, 2020. Margaret was well known as the coordinator of Hamilton Out of the Cold at James Street Baptist Church for many years.

The Reverend **Allison Courey** has submitted her resignation as Director of Children's, Youth,

Young Adult, and Young Family Ministry at St. Christopher's, (Burlington) effective February 29.

The Reverend **Robert Brownlie** has been appointed priest-in-charge of St. Stephen-on-the-Mount (Hamilton) beginning March 1.

The Reverend Dr. **Michael Mondloch** submitted his resignation as Director of Social Justice and Outreach at St. George's (St. Catharines) effective March 15. He has accepted the position of Priest-in-Charge of St. Barnabas (St. Catharines), on March 16.

The Reverend **Mike Deed** has been appointed as the diocesan liturgical officer, effective February 1, for a three-year term. In this role, Mike will work with the Bishop to promote excellence in liturgical worship and assist with planning for episcopal visits and diocesan services.




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# Welcome To Trafalgar Region

The Region of Trafalgar is basically Halton Region and Waterdown. This is the area sandwiched between Hamilton and Mississauga/Brampton and from Lake Ontario in the south to almost Guelph. We embrace the communities of Georgetown (including Glen Williams, Norval, Hornby, Stewarttown), Milton (including Lowville and Nassagaweya), Oakville, Burlington, and Waterdown. There are 21 churches of varying sizes and ages. Halton Region has experienced heavy population growth for more than two decades and it has been projected this will continue for at least another decade.

The current population is approaching 600,000. This is a bedroom community for thousands who daily commute to Toronto for work, filling many GO Trains and associated parking lots and clogging the QEW/403 and 401 highways.

The region has transitioned over time, from a predominantly British, United Empire Loyalist, concentrated set of very separate communities, to interconnected and extremely diverse communities. This has led to many changes of our parish communities; the boundaries, the languages, the food, and the culture, have all become broader and richer.

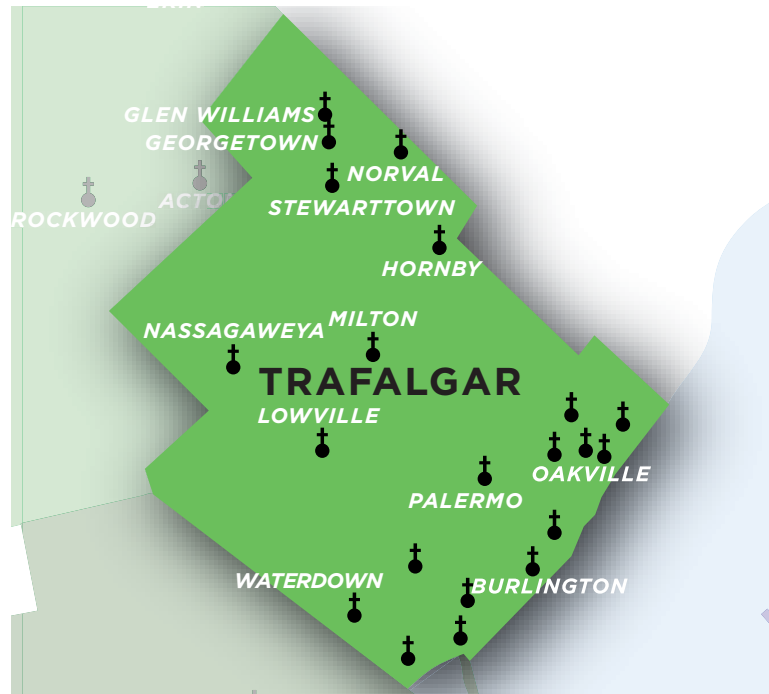
We may still hold some traditions of worship and ritual events, but we now have many food and music festivals featuring a variety undreamt of only one generation ago. We are home to many newcomers to Canada, including many refugees. We are, whether we like it or not, learning to reach out to people who have no experience in Anglican churches or faith communities of any kind.

All of this is forcing us to rethink how we are church, even in very entrenched parish com-

munities. Mostly, it is forcing us to learn how to communicate our faith to our new neighbours in ways that we didn't need to in the past. We can no longer take for granted that everyone we meet in the grocery stores, or coffee shops, or parks, or by the lake, even know what we mean when we say the word "church". We are learning to introduce ourselves, our church, and our faith to people with zero knowledge or experience of Christ or the Anglican church.

We have parishes begun in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries and new mission ministries begun in the 21st. We have embarked on efforts of trial and error, seeking to find new (hopefully effective) ways to share who Christ is to us and how it can enrich the lives of others.

This has offered us new challenges for explaining and encouraging the stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.



- for some we are place where they can learn new languages, culture, traditions
- for others we are a place to meet neighbours, learn how to paint, or write, or dance
- and for others we are a place to get help learning how to navigate life in a new land and

obtaining the essentials of life, such as food, clothes, and caring for our families even during climate emergencies. Our region is definitely a field of challenge and opportunity; a place to truly exercise the potential of our new diocesan vision and mission action plan.

## Helping Those In Need – A Group Effort

On Sunday, January 26, St. Jude's (Oakville) hosted a hugely successful information/networking event with parishioners and St. Jude's community outreach partner organizations. St. Jude's Justice and Servant Ministries offers a wide range of community outreach programs, all designed to help those in the community who are in need.

The purpose of the event was to make parishioners aware of all of the good things happening to help those in need

and to strengthen the working relationships with the many folks involved with the various initiatives. Chair of St. Jude's Justice and Servant Ministries Blair Richardson indicated after the event "relationships with our community partners were definitely strengthened and our fellow parishioners benefitted from the excellent displays and conversations, as well as the lunch, which almost completely disappeared."

The event was also a wonder-

ful opportunity for St. Jude's new rector, Mark Andrews to meet informally with representatives from the many different organizations in Halton that are partners in St. Jude's outreach programs.

Outreach is a true community team effort. Anyone interested in learning about volunteer opportunities should contact Blair Richardson at [blair.richardson@sympatico.ca](mailto:blair.richardson@sympatico.ca)



## Ecumenism In Lowville

St. George's Lowville is working to deepen its friendship with Lowville United Church.

Following a successful pulpit exchange in January, a joint hymn sing at Lowville United was held on February 23rd. On Ash Wednesday, Rev. Nigel Bunce (St. George's) and

Rev. Kelly Thomson (Lowville United) jointly offered the Ash Wednesday service at St. George's, which will be followed by a soup and bread lunch. Plans are developing to bring the two congregations together in Holy Week.



St. George's (Lowville), above, and Lowville United Church are deepening a friendship.





# In Trafalgar Region

## St. Christopher's (Burlington)



## What's New at St. Christopher's?

In addition to passing the Synod motion "Reduction of Single Use Plastics" at its February 23rd vestry meeting, St. Christopher's changed its site use agreement to require site users to sign a statement that they will not provide or sell plastic bottled beverages at any events based at St. Christopher's. The same practice will be followed at Open Doors and for St. Christopher's own hospitality. As Christina Mulder, Director of Programs and Partnerships for Open Doors, said, "It's a challenging proposition and it does make us a little uncomfortable but it's the right thing to do. Will it be hard? Yes. Can we do this? Absolutely!"

As the parish works to connect the St. Christopher's vision and the Mission Action Plan, the liturgy for Lent is based on the renewed parish vision themes which are closely aligned with the MAP. At the beginning of each Sunday worship service, a lay person will articulate what St. Christopher's means to them in their faith journey and in how that faith impacts their daily life.

The Lent sermons will echo

this as preachers address Jesus and...

- His temptations
- Living the faith and nourishing living
- Engaging all people through relationships
- Caring for creation/ environments
- Stewardship and sustainability through discipleship
- His triumphant entry into Jerusalem
- Responding to God

As The Reverend Hollis Hiscock, Priest-in-Charge, says "we want the vision to be wrapped in worship and aligned with the diocesan vision." This liturgical focus is enhanced by twenty-two avid disciples engaging in a book study focused on the bishop's book for Lent; Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water and Loving the Bible Again.

The St. Christopher's community is excited to immerse themselves this Lent in how they are **Called to Life, Compelled to Love!**

## St. George's (Georgetown)

In early August of 2018, there was a phone message left at the church from a person doing genealogy research on their family. Certainly, not an uncommon phone call to receive for a church over 165 years old. St. George's Church, Georgetown was established around 1852 and until 1888 had its own burial ground.

The person calling was Carol Ann Currie, who was inquiring about Evan & Sarah Price, and one of their sons Robert, her great great grandfather, who she understood had been buried here at St. George's.

As the parish priest, I was happy to call Carol Ann back and help her with genealogy but also introduce myself to her, not just as the rector of St. George's but also as a descendant of Evan & Sarah Price myself! They were my 4th Great Grandparents.

It is a small world, isn't it.

Carol Ann, and her husband Jim soon came to visit the cemetery and pour over the archives.

Unfortunately, the cemetery stones, which had been gathered together in the 1970's to preserve them, had been vandalized in the 1980's and never properly repaired and the fenced in area of concrete hadn't been weeded since early spring, so the stones were tough to read.

I told her that the first burial in the St. George's "burial grounds" in 1855 was, in fact, our shared ancestor Evan Price and that the stone he shared with his wife Sarah, had been broken and the top part with Evan's name was missing. But from our meeting, we shared a desire to have the stones repaired.

Soon after her visit, I received an excited note from her saying, "I was inside the fence cleaning off the stones and almost fell over as I couldn't believe my eyes. There as clear as can be and very well preserved is the headstone of my Great Great Grandfather who I was looking for, Robert Price."

Carol Ann, using our records,

did further research, looked for other descendants of those named on the broken stones. She also contacted other Price family descendants to begin to raise funds for repairs. I secured some funds from the church budget and from the support of our Thursday Morning group.

Over July and August of 2019, Alan Ernest, a local historic cemetery specialist began the work of repair and restoration. With the repair work done, the stones are in much better shape, although not all the damage could be undone.

Carol Ann and I hope to find a way to record the names of all those who had been buried in the old cemetery on a plaque or sign, so that all their names would be remembered and not just the ones on the stones we were able to restore.

Evan and Sarah would be proud of their family and their church.



## Deadlines and Submissions for Niagara Anglican

### Deadlines:

- May - March 25
- Summer - April 24
- September - July 24

### 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(300 ppi), action pictures (people doing something). Include name of photographer. Written permission of parent/guardian must be obtained if photo

includes a child.

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

### Questions or information:

Contact the Editor at [editor@niagaraanglican.ca](mailto:editor@niagaraanglican.ca)

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## A Special Day

People gathered Sunday February 23, 2020 at Christ's Church Cathedral (Hamilton) for the ordination to the priesthood of three people and the collation of The Venerable Bill Mous as Archdeacon of Niagara.



Above: Bishop Susan Bell with the newest priests in the Diocese of Niagara: The Reverend Fran Wallace, The Reverend Judy Steers, and The Reverend Jody Balint.



Right: Bishop Susan Bell with The Venerable Bill Mous, following his collation as Archdeacon of Niagara, at Christ's Church Cathedral.

## God or Science?

### BY THE REVEREND CANON MARTHA TATARNIC

I sat down with Owen and David, members of my parish, on a Tuesday night. I needed to hear from two scientists about their thoughts on a statement that my ten-year-old son had brought home from school. "My friends believe in science not God," he informed me.

Owen is thirteen and a self-described science geek. David is his grandfather and a retired professional engineer with a degree in Applied Science. Both are extremely faithful members of our congregation, among other things—Owen sings in our youth choir and David sings in our senior choir.

"You are both people of faith, and you are both people with a great passion for the teachings of science. How do you work it out?" I asked.

Owen was the most talkative of the two of them, but they were both eager to share their thoughts. Interestingly, both were around my son's age when they found themselves on a precipice of belief. "I didn't really think about it before then," they both explained as they each told me their story. Growing up, they simply compartmentalized

the things that they were being taught in different aspects of their lives. When they were in Sunday School, they accepted those teachings. When they were reading a scientific book or watching a scientific documentary, they accepted those teachings. "Then I was listening to a program on a Sunday afternoon after church," Owen told me, "And it just occurred to me: Wait! That's not what the Bible says. Can both exist? Or is one wrong?"

Instead of rejecting his faith, Owen thought carefully about how these various pieces of learning might be related. He described to me that basic starting point of insight that no matter how much we would come to understand about the physical universe, there were always more questions than science could answer. "How did it all get started?" he asked. And what

seemed to be even more of an important point to him, "why have human beings even got a thought about God unless God gave us that thought?"

His grandfather chimed in with insight to offer about Genesis 1, the Bible's seven day creation story. "They are writing about things that occurred before earth existed. And they aren't writing a science textbook. But as long as you understand that a day didn't mean 24 hours, Genesis 1 is right? It's the Big Bang theory and the evolution of the universe written out in poetry. It's almost spooky the level of insight. How could people understand that so early in time, except that it was revealed to them?"

Our conversation from there was exciting and wide-ranging. We talked about the discernible and mysterious order that can be observed in the universe, from the Fibonacci series to the number Pi, which is a transcendental number with an infinite series of non-repeating decimals that tries in vain to pin down the mathematical formula for all circular objects. We marveled that

the circle shape would universally contain this mysterious number when the circle has also so long been associated with the Divine, because it has no beginning or ending. They told me of the puzzle between micro and macro physics. That is, the ways in which subatomic particles behave make no sense in terms of what we know about the physics of the universe. "Scientists keep looking for a unifying theory, but what if that unifying theory is God?" Their religious passion for delving into the mysteries of the universe came out at every turn.

Woven into this conversation, they told me about a few brushes with the apparently supernatural that they had in their lives. They know that, throughout the world, across our congregations, and down through time, the conclusion that they have reached—that there is no conflict in loving scientific principles and believing in God—is a conclusion that is widely shared.

"We now know what happened a nanosecond after the big bang," David told me. "But what happened before that and why? Why do these physical laws exist at all?"

We enjoyed our conversation

so much that we were all almost late for our Tuesday night church programs.

As one who serves in ministry in our church, I get to experience the blessings of our faith tradition, and to feel grateful for the resources of our church, on a daily basis. In response to my son's questions from school, I am profoundly glad for being part of a faith that has abundant resources for dismantling the either/or nature of the faith and science question, making it clear that Christians can pursue knowledge of both spiritual and scientific kinds without being conflicted in doing so.

Here is the amazing thing, though, and maybe the thing that we haven't been clear enough to name and claim: no resource is as compelling as our very own people. All across our churches are scientists, doctors, researchers, teachers, philosophers, plumbers, stay-at-home parents, poets, artists, contractors and mechanics, who understand intimately how human relationships, car engines, toilets, subatomic particles, computers, or the human body work and who also believe, know, experience, the fingerprints of God all across their lives and all across our world. Thanks be to God!

