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A section of the Anglican Journal



NIAGARA ANGLICAN



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JUNE 2021

Migrant Farmworkers Project

A New Season Underway

Grocery Bag Drop-Off & Bikes for Farmworkers initiative

BY THE REVEREND ANTONIO ILLAS
with contributions from Gillian Doucet Campbell and Canon Christyn Perkins

The Migrant Farmworkers Project (MFWP) is a missional outreach ministry focused on building relationships with Spanish speaking seasonal workers in the Niagara peninsula. This ministry has been creating supportive spaces in which the liturgical, religious, spiritual and pastoral needs of the workers are met.

Since March 2020, when COVID-19 restrictions began to impact Ontario, MFWP has transformed the basis of these interactions to continue to respond to their needs while

maintaining strict public health guidelines.

With support from the diocese, three parishes sponsor and host the MFWP activities: St. Alban's Beamsville, St. John's Jordan and Christ Church McNab. In a pre-COVID-19 season, Sundays saw MFWP providing for the celebration of the Eucharist in Spanish at one of these parishes, followed by a community meal giving the migrant workers time to socialize and connect with farmworkers from other farms and with the ministry volunteers. A medical clinic, clothing depot and bikes were also available depending on the site location. Access to those sites all vanished with the pandemic restrictions and so the ministry was

transformed.

Early in the pandemic the volunteers and missioner learned of the vulnerability of their migrant farmworker neighbors. Although considered an essential work force and an important component in the Canadian food security link, their isolation

during the early days of the pandemic really highlighted the inadequate living and working conditions for migrant farmworkers. As a result of the outcry about this injustice, new federal legislation and provincial housing guidelines are being implemented to better support

temporary workers who live and work in the farmlands.

And so, in response to a desperate need, MFWP pivoted their programs and initiated a grocery bag drop-off program in April 2020, moving the initiative

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Mexican groceries, not readily available or affordable to migrant farmworkers, are part of the grocery bag drop-off.

The Pandemic, Technology, and Our Resilience

BY GILLIAN DOUCET CAMPBELL

It has been, as Canon Katherine Morgan wrote in response to her parish, St. John's, Thorold, receiving a Parish Technology Support Grant, "a year of incredible challenges and constant adaptation to engage and connect to our parish family and the community around us."

In expressing gratitude to the diocese for the support to adapt with the pandemic, she observed



The Reverend Canon Katherine Morgan preaches via Facebook to the St. John's Thorold virtual congregation.

that how we use technology is very different now than it was well over a year ago. "There has been a lot of learning and a lot of change in how we reach out."

It is the dedication to retooling and the learning of how to maneuver through what was never taught in seminary that has been amazing to behold. It is seeing new volunteers engaged in church ministry by sharing a technology-based skillset rarely sought before that is inspiring. It is the weekly numbers

of people tuning into online church services, showing that the faithful are still gathering and this pivoting while hard has demonstrated resourcefulness and versatility.

Many parishes have been broadcasting their worship services live, some even reaping new attendees. Other parishes have been offering online Facebook live prayer services or pre-recorded YouTube prayer

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The Pandemic, Technology, and Our Resilience

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gatherings. Many parishes have created or continued in-person Bible studies, book clubs, and social gatherings through videoconferencing. All parishes have held meetings related to church business, including vestry meetings, through one online meeting platform or another. Other church-related activities have taken place with the support of technology too, such as fundraising events like a ticketed wine and cheese or a silent auction.

Technology has now become a tool much used by our parishes. While research showed churches needed to embrace the capabilities offered by technology such as online donations, some churches were slow to embrace these tools. As with many things though, the pandemic forced our hand and made us engage even more with the tools of technology.

For some, having the option to engage in worship from



The Reverend Audrius Sarka preaches to the people of St. John's Stewarttown via YouTube using new equipment purchased with support of their technology grant.

home has become a blessing as they were already homebound or unable to attend a Sunday morning service or an evening Bible study, due to work or family needs.

Recognizing the importance and value of improving technology for parish life, Synod Council approved a one-time

Parish Technology Support Grant. As applications rolled in, it became apparent that the allotted \$30,000 would not be sufficient. Synod Council then approved an additional \$30,000. Each dollar has since been earmarked to 34 parishes totaling all but \$22 of the \$60,000 total.

While some parishes had

parishioners who generously lent video cameras, microphones, and other equipment, as the pandemic continued this was not sustainable. Other parishes had to start from scratch, perhaps installing wi-fi or upgrading from a desktop computer to a laptop.

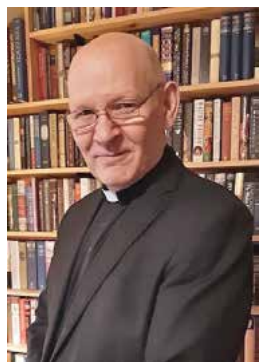
The Parish Technology Support Grant applications spoke of parishes connecting with one another to learn what systems were best for creating live or pre-recorded services. For instance, the application from All Saints, Dain City references reaching out to the rector of St. David's, Welland who recommended a technology consultant that they had successfully used.

The ability to attend worship services remotely and meet online afterward or throughout the week has been life-giving to many during this unsettling time. It has also provided learning opportunities not only for clergy but also parishioners.

Barbra Mansfield, a warden at St. John's, Stewarttown, shared how the funds from the technology grant enabled her parish to purchase the needed equipment to produce online services. She shared how her church's Easter services were shared online and were viewed by many. "We are a small church, but each person has their own strengths. We had fun producing the services and because everyone was involved in planning the services, they were extra special."

Online platforms have, for the most part, been a gift during this terrible pandemic. Technology has allowed us to continue to be a community of faith. Many parishes plan to continue offering classes, meetings, and other gatherings virtually even when we can get back into the church building. Certainly, what we have seen during this pandemic is the resiliency of our parish leadership and parishioners and that we can adapt to change.

A Contemporary Grief Observed



BY THE REVEREND
MICHAEL COREN

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to people considering mortality in a way they've seldom done before, which makes the timing of Richard Coles' new book, "The Madness of Grief: A Memoir of Love and Loss", extraordinarily appropriate. Yet timing can be a swine, because the book is the result of the horribly early death of Richard's partner David in December 2019.

I had lunch with Richard the month before, when he told me, "David is seriously ill." I asked how serious. "He's dying," I did

what people so often do when given terrible news — tried to be empathetic and loving, which often comes across as concerned anger. I mumbled that I loved him as we parted, and a few days later flew back home. Just weeks after that I woke to read that David was gone.

For those who don't know Coles, he's something of a national treasure in Britain. A Church of England priest, but also a weekly BBC radio host, and a regular on television. He was once a pop star too, with the Communards—Don't Leave Me This Way was the biggest-selling single of 1986!

Now comes this honest, beautiful, compelling work. But it's not a guidebook, not some clerical manual on how to deal with the numbing ache of bereavement. "I felt like a war correspondent, even though I've never been one, with bombs going off and windows smashing," he says. "I simply tried to record all of that as accurately as I could. The book wasn't cathartic, not at all, and many people advised me not to write it. I understand what they

meant, because it's not until the second year that you realize he's not coming back. I was in the early stages, they said, and this was long-term, it was forever."

But that doesn't negate the book's importance. Precisely because those left behind in these cases need accounts of that first year, need to be accompanied rather than advised. What they soon realize is that, while there may be some mildly helpful devices and techniques available, there are no genuine cures and solutions. It hurts, and it'll continue to do so. Even for a priest, even for someone who has seen the horror before. Witnessing is one thing, participating quite another.

"I spent Christmas with Charles and Karen Spencer at Althorp House, who have been so kind to me" he says. "They also have a wall around the house, which helped because I was getting some unwelcome media attention at the time. On Christmas Day I went for a walk in their grounds, and there was Diana's grave, the resting place of someone whose death had been so public, so known. That

rather focused it all."

The book is a story of loss, but also a captivating tale of a romance — it has to be, because without understanding the depth of love we can't fathom the clawing darkness of losing it. That symbiosis, that paradox, is the foundation of an intimate partnership, and one part of it can't be had without the other.

Richard and David had been a couple for twelve years and were in a civil partnership for nine. David had made the first move after one of Richard's sermons, later sending him a text asking, "Don't you get it?" Eventually, he did. And the book explains the love of his life, the former nurse, musician, family man, husband, traveller, priest. Mingled in all of this is faith in God, the constant theme and thread in what is written and woven, implicitly and gorgeously, into the text.

On death and loss and suffering he writes: "A bit rich coming from you, you may think, but Christianity does not offer you a palliative or an escape from this. On the contrary, it insists on the fact of death; without it, there's no hope of a new life

beyond that last horizon. For some that means Aunt Phyllis and the family spaniel bounding towards them across the spring meadows of eternity to greet them. For others, me included, it conjures no cast of best-loved characters, no misty shore, or flowery field, but something more like geometry."

Many years ago, when experiencing a crisis that I thought might never end, I read *A Grief Observed* by C. S. Lewis. I'd still recommend it to anybody dealing with loss and its terror, but I'd give them Richard's new book too. Not merely because he's a friend, or someone I admire very much, but because I read his book through the night, unable to break the story. It's a genuinely memorable and important volume which will help countless others. I only hope it can help Richard as well, because this walk never really ends.

"But we skipped the wedding, and went straight to the funeral, and our last walk together up the aisle, or rather my walk, and his trundle, was for a parting not a union." Thank you, Richard. And bless you.

John Bowen Receives Prestigious Lambeth Award

The Archbishop of Canterbury has announced that John Bowen, parishioner at Church of St. John the Evangelist in Hamilton and regular columnist of this paper, is receiving the prestigious Alphege Award for Evangelism and Witness. The Lambeth awards recognise outstanding contributions to the Church and wider society.

"I was very surprised," said Bowen, "because all I have done is try to be the person God made me to be, and do the things God has put in front of me—and isn't that what we all do anyway?"

His award citation reads, in part, "for his attractive articulation of the love of God for all people, with a particular heart for those who have not yet heard the name of Jesus, and for his mentoring and discipling of Christian leaders."

Bowen served with Inter-



John Bowen displays the Alphege Award he received from the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Varsity Christian Fellowship in universities and camps in both Canada and the United Kingdom for a quarter century. He then joined the faculty of Wycliffe College in Toronto to teach evangelism from 1997 until his retirement in 2016.

"John Bowen has devoted

his life to winsomely sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ," said Bishop Susan Bell in response to the announcement. "He is known and loved across our church, across denominations, as a mentor, a soul friend, and innovator. In all things, Christ is his centre. I am so pleased that

his ministry among us has been honoured in this way."

In retirement, Bowen continues his pioneering witness and mentorship to the church-planting and missional movement in Canada. He is also spending more time on the things he loves best, including teaching with the fledgling Niagara School for Missional Leadership, preaching, and writing. His latest book, *God is Always Bigger: Reflections by a Hopeful Critic*, was published earlier this year.

In announcing the awards, Archbishop Justin Welby said that during the pandemic, "we have seen just how vital the contribution of churches is to the fabric of our society" and that this year's recipients embody a spirit of service through years of faithful work. "I commend them and their efforts, and look forward to the time when we

meet to celebrate their contributions to society."

With his characteristic humility, Bowen notes that "if award-winners do get to meet the Archbishop in October—which is the plan, COVID allowing—I will have in my back pocket to give him a list of dozens of folk in Niagara who have been doing the same, and who should also get one of these awards."

In addition to Bowen, three other Canadians were among this year's 30 recipients, which included scientists, musicians, academics, activists, peacemakers, doctors and clergy from around the world. Dr. Rupert Lang received the Thomas Cranmer Award for Worship, while Archbishop Colin Johnson and Canon Isaac Kawuki-Mukasa received the Cross of St. Augustine for Services to the Anglican Communion.

Book Review

Want to Grow a Generous Church? Read This.

Growing a Generous Church: A Year in the Life of Peach Blossom Church. by Lori Guenther Reesor

REVIEWED BY GILLIAN DOUCET CAMPBELL

I have read many books on stewardship and church fundraising, but none with a picture of a volunteer snow blowing the church sidewalk. This image is indicative of what this excellent resource is, as practical as it is necessary for any church.

Lori Guenther Reesor, researched Christian giving for her Doctor of Ministry degree. She met with faithful givers in churches across Canada and heard why they give. Her research, along with her experience as a stewardship and fundraising consultant, gave rise



to this incredible tool for church communities.

The key to this narrative on stewardship is found in the opening paragraph, "Often people just want their church to have more money, but generosity is a discipleship question, not a budget question. More money for the church is merely a nice by-product of generous discipleship."

Like many in our diocese, the members of Peach Blossom Church are concerned about parish finances. Through monthly coffee shop meetings, some parishioners of Peach Blossom Church gather because they want to address this. Overtime, they share stories of generosity and learn that giving is a spiritual discipline like prayer. They also act on their

learnings and assess their progress—and their group grows in members.

While Peach Blossom Church is fictional, you can almost hear the parishioners of your parish having the conversations these characters have around giving, gratitude, debt, church budgets, estate planning, and cherry pie. This is what makes this book on stewardship and church fundraising so engaging and inviting. While fictional, you can learn what happens when a small group of people decide to make stewardship a priority.

Each chapter centres around a month—and each month has a clear focus as well as discussion questions. The conversations and stories shared between the characters of Peach Blossom Church provides actionable ideas for a parish. These conver-

sations are also instructive as to why a church might engage in these ideas.

Throughout the book, there are Bible teachings from both the Old and New Testament, personal stories of how people learned to give, and practical ideas your church can use.

As an accessible way to talk about money and the church, I cannot highly recommend this book enough. It will truly help to teach the economics of generosity and change lives. It will show as Guenther Reesor says, that "Fundraising is the ministry of helping believers become the joyful stewards God has created us to be. When believers talk about their giving, their generosity becomes testimony and helps nurture generosity in others."

To order your copy today, visit www.lgreesor.com



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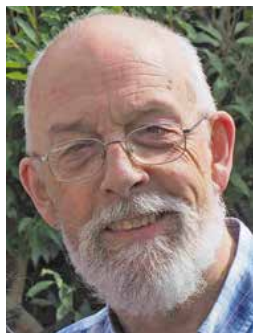


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**CALLED TO LIFE
COMPELLED TO LOVE**

In other words

Everything is Connected: but How?



BY JOHN BOWEN

What holds everything together? For many of us, the Christian faith is made up of fragments. Over here is the story of David and Goliath. Over there is the story of the feeding of the five thousand. And let's not even mention Adam and Eve. Then there is that assortment of weird ideas that makes up the creed. The list could go on indefinitely. All these strange, unrelated ideas.

And now we are expected to add these some new words that nobody seems able to define—"mission" and "discipleship" and even "evangelism." Just more free-floating bits in the alphabet soup we call our faith.

A fragmentary faith like that, quite frankly, is weak, like a spider's web made of individual unconnected strands. In order to catch the spider's dinner, those strands need to be connected up into a pattern that is resilient—and, as it happens, beautiful!

Here's one way to connect the fragments of the faith. See what you think.

Beginning with the Gospel

What is the Gospel? It is the good news that our Creator loves us enough to want to mend all that is broken, forgive all that is sinful, and liberate all who are oppressed. And as Christians understand it, that love is in some mysterious way focused in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus whom we call Christ. The coming of Jesus is therefore good news, or Gospel, for the world. That's where Christianity begins.

The Gospel connects to Discipleship

C.S. Lewis said that God "seems to do nothing of Himself

which he can possibly delegate to His creatures." When Jesus came, one of the first things he did was to gather around him a community of disciples who would learn the ways of the Gospel, who would live and teach the way of God in the way that he did. They are in a sense his apprentices—part of whose work is to help others become apprentices too.

Discipleship connects to Evangelism

Yes, yes, I know. We all love to hate evangelism. And yet, and yet, there would be no church without evangelism. Someone told someone the Good News, and they told someone who told someone—until yet another someone (a parent, a friend, a Sunday School teacher, a priest?) told us the Good News of Jesus, and encouraged us to follow him. And here we are. We were evangelized—Good News-ed—and it stuck!

Discipleship and Evangelism connect to the Church

There is a famous book, Models of the Church by Avery Dulles, which discusses five ways of thinking about the church—Church as Institution, Mystical Communion, Sacrament, Herald, and Servant. Here is another way—that the church is the gathering of disciples of Jesus—people who have had the Good News explained to them, have said yes, and have embraced it as their own. It is the trade school in which Jesus by the Spirit continues to teach his apprentices how to live out his way in today's world.

Church connects to Mission

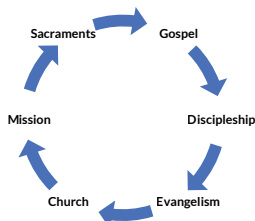
"Mission" is not a word Jesus ever used. But it's not a bad way to describe his work. After all, we use the word today when we talk about a rescue mission or a fact-finding mission or a reconnaissance mission. Jesus' mission is closest in nature to a rescue mission. God sends Jesus to bring "salvation"—healing, restoration, wholeness—to a world that desperately needs those things. That's his mission. So what is he likely to want to teach to a school of his followers? Mission. How to share in his work. It's a useful shorthand for a big thing.

Mission connects to the Sacraments

Think of it this way: baptism is how we register in the school of Jesus. You may ask how a child can understand that. They can't, of course. But the commitment of parents and godparents is to bring up that child, not neutrally (as if such a thing were possible) but learning the love of God and the way of Jesus. Does that exhaust all there is to be said about baptism? No, of course not. But baptism is a multifaceted diamond, and this is certainly one of those facets.

The same can be said of Eucharist. Here, after all, we identify with the first disciples, who also received from the hand of Jesus bread and wine, his body and blood. Here the life and love of Jesus in us are renewed. Here we identify anew with this Jesus who came to live out the mission of God to renew all things. No wonder that at the end of the service we say, "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord." Of course. That's why we are here.

Augustine called the sacraments "visible words," elements which communicate the Good News of Jesus to us in non-verbal form. We can actually think of the sacraments as sacraments of the Gospel. Which brings us back to where we started.



All of these things are therefore connected strands of the spider's web which is Christian faith. Even David and Goliath have their place, and the feeding of the five thousand, and Adam and Eve. And the creeds? They simply remind us of some of the key intersections of the spider's web which hold it all together.

So yes, everything is connected to everything else. But in a world created and held together moment by moment by a loving Creator, how could it be otherwise?

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Church of St. John the Evangelist

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St. John's Elora in the Diocese of Niagara is seeking a Director of Music to lead one of Canada's only fully professional church choirs. St. John's choral music program has a strong regional outreach, online presence, and recording discography. This is an exciting opportunity for a choral leader who can work collaboratively with parish leadership to inspire excellence in the expression of an Anglican musical tradition and practice for singers.

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Taking Action on Climate Now

BY THE REVEREND DON BROWN

"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

— Matthew 6:21

Irene Pang's article in the April Edition of the *Niagara Anglican*, "Systemic Change Needed" touched my heart. Since we cannot change what is happening to our landscape, and with few clear guidelines from government or corporations to deal with the climate emergency, Irene's description of her looking inside herself and her family — "the way they drive, the food they eat, where to invest their money, what to buy and what not to buy" — I found very inspiring. Changing our behaviour is

part of taking climate change seriously.

While Irene knows that individual effort will not be enough, and that corporate and political decision making is necessary to effectively address the climate crisis, she shares her thoughts and contributions to lowering her own carbon footprint. Learning about things that contribute to the climate crisis provides us opportunity to speak up about them and to act.

It was heartening to listen to the recent Anglican Communion webinar: *COP26, Divestment and Investment for Climate Justice*. The participating Churches were from South Africa, New Zealand, Oxford and West Yorkshire, England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Their main theme was divestment from fos-

sil fuels as an act of social and economic justice. The urgency of their message is expressed in their vision of achieving zero emissions of greenhouse gas for their country, due largely to the burning of fossil fuels, by the year 2030. This underlines the need to act now and not wait till 2050.

The Church in Wales declared recently, "We've opened our eyes: there's no time to waste. As we declared today — this is an emergency."

In Canada, three Canadian dioceses (Ottawa, Montreal and Huron) have declared that they have divested their investments from fossil fuel industries. By contrast, our diocese has taken an Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) approach to its investments. Our global



equity investment fund, for instance, seeks to reduce its carbon footprint by at least 50%, eliminate exposure to companies with more than 20% of revenue from coal related activities; invest in companies expected to positively contribute to the transition of renewable energy sources; and reach zero emissions by 2050.

In the April issue of the *Niagara Anglican*, Irene offered us steps we can take in support of the General Synod 2019 Resolution that addresses the climate emergency by ending our purchase and use of single use plastic.

In 2019, members of General Synod passed a resolution

presented by the youth of our church. Recognizing that there is a global climate emergency, it encouraging dioceses and parishes to make the Baptismal Covenant and the fifth Mark of Mission a priority in our faith: "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth." Our diocesan Mission Action Plan (MAP) prioritizes environmental justice in keeping with the spirit of this prescient resolution, and I hope parishes will take up this call to action too.

What *can* be done, needs to be done *now*, for "where your treasure is there will your heart be also."

Migrant Farmworkers Project Ramps Up for 2021 Season

from church buildings to the fertile and beautiful agricultural fields of the region. Groceries were sorted into bags at two of the parish sites thanks to a hardworking cadre of volunteers (socially distanced, masked and sanitized). Team members then took bags of groceries directly to workers at 81 farms residential addresses while maintaining strict public health guidelines for the safety of the workers, and of the missioner and volunteers. The grocery bag drop-off initiative, in partnership with GBF Community Services and a 2020 support grant from United Way Niagara (funded by Government of Canada), enabled the MFW program to provide nutritious grocery products as well as traditional and ethnic food products to the migrant farmworkers we serve in the Niagara region.

MFWP started the 2021 season in February and anticipates running the project through November. This season, the program has again been the recipient of two substantive grants. A Second Harvest \$15,000.00 grant (funded by the Canadian government) will be used to provide Mexican food products, some of which are not found in the local grocery stores or are not affordable locally. These dropped-off groceries include corn tortillas, totopos (tortilla chips), tostadas, mole, maseca (corn flour), red &



green hot sauce, galletas Maria (cookie), refried beans and chilorio (shredded, seasoned pork) — all tastes of home and reminders to the migrant farm workers that their preferences and their dignity matters. The migrant workers' smiles and words of gratitude are an inspiration to the volunteers who weekly donate their time, skills and resources to serve their seasonal Spanish-speaking neighbors.

The Diocese was also delighted to receive a grant of \$10,000 USD (\$12,124.79 CAD) from the United Methodist Committee on Relief of Global Ministries (UMCOR) for the MFWP Bikes for Farmworkers initiative to provide safety and maintenance equipment, and Spanish language safety and bike maintenance videos along with refurbished bicycles the program has always provided.

Above: A grocery bag drop-off

Right: The Rev. Antonio Illas (left) and a volunteer mechanic look over a refurbished bicycle to be distributed to farmworkers.



Without bicycles, farm workers are primarily dependent on their employers for rides off the farm. Bikes give the migrant farmworkers control over their travel in the community to meet their needs for food, personal care and recreation, thus preserving their dignity and their right to move freely in the community.

Beginning in June, MFWP will start the distribution of 100 helmets, 100 safety vests, and 100

maintenance kits to accompany the refurbished bikes that the program currently provides, and we are grateful that the riders will be better protected and able to navigate our roads more safely. In addition, St. John's Jordan is building a new bike storage and repair shed to house part of this program with support from a 2020 diocesan WOW grant and a portion of the grant from UMCOR. The Spanish language safety and maintenance videos

are being shot locally and will be accessible on YouTube in June.

Volunteer bike mechanics refurbish about 100 bikes each season. If donated bikes cannot be restored to working order, they are used for parts to make other bikes roadworthy. If you have a bike that you would like to donate to this program, please contact the Rev. Antonio Illas, Migrant Farmworkers Missioner at 905 685-3500 or migrantfarmworkers@niagaraanglican.ca.

Delving into the Meaning of National Indigenous Peoples Day

JUNE 21 IS NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY, A DAY FOR ALL CANADIANS TO RECOGNIZE AND CELEBRATE THE UNIQUE HERITAGE, DIVERSE CULTURES AND OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS OF FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND MÉTIS PEOPLES.

WE ASKED SEVERAL PEOPLE IN OUR DIOCESE FOR THEIR REFLECTIONS ON WHAT THE DAY MEANS FOR THEM, AND FOR OUR ONGOING WORK OF RECONCILIATION.



The Venerable Valerie Kerr

Years ago while working within an Indigenous community, not my own, I learned much more about my culture than just that June 21st is celebrated across Canada as National Indigenous Peoples Day.

In 1992 on the 500th anniversary of Columbus' first voyage, American Indians in California initiated and organized the first "Indigenous Peoples Day." Why were they called Indians, you might wonder? As some say, the story goes like this: when Columbus landed in what would eventually become the United States of America, after his long voyage he thought he had landed in Asia or India. So the people encountered there were referred to as Indians.

Here in Canada, June 21st wasn't set aside as a day to celebrate Indigenous Peoples until 1996 in a Proclamation by then Governor General Roméo LeBlanc. Why June 21st? In our Indigenous communities we celebrate the summer solstice,

the longest day of the year on June 21st, so the powers that be decided they could also mark this day as a day all Canadians can recognize and celebrate our unique heritage, diversity of culture, and the many outstanding contributions of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples to Canada.

How might you celebrate National Indigenous Peoples History Month? When we're able to gather and travel again, you might take a road trip and explore a reserve near you, watch a pow wow — which you can find online since the pandemic started — or learn more about our culture and history by reading and exploring. I am sure you will be pleasantly surprised to find out about the many gifts of artistry: carving, painting, drumming, singing, dancing, and drum making given to many Indigenous people by our Creator. Do some research around the diverse languages spoken by different nations perhaps even learn some words. See if you can find out places that still use traditional Indigenous names. Find out what games are played in our communities and how Indigenous spirituality is practised.

I am very proud of the contributions First Nations, Inuit and Métis people have made to our society and appreciate whatever way you choose to celebrate with us in June.

For now I say "nya:weh" (pronounced nyah-wenh) which means "thank you" in Mohawk.



Bruce Weaver

As June 21st, National Indigenous Day, approaches, I am again feeling mixed emotions. I feel pride in celebrating this day but I also recognize that the day recalls the shame my mother must have felt about her native heritage.

It was only four years ago, at age 96, that my mother finally asked me if she had ever told me about our ancestry. I had known for about 12 years that my grandmother was a Mohawk from Tyendinaga or Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte. Growing up I was always told that her side of the family was Irish. Today I recognize that Mom was trying to protect us by being a model middle class woman. Children's Aid was unlikely to come knock-

ing at the door of the president of the Home and School Association. I am sure that there was also shame. A shame that led to her keeping her skin as light as possible and not visiting our relatives at Tyendinaga after I was old enough to take notice of the differences between us children as we played on the shores of the bay.

For the last few years, I have taken pride in attending celebrations in Guelph on this day. To stand in a circle with my brothers and sisters drumming and singing, fills me with joy. Smudging in community gives me both strength and peace. For a number of years, the day has been marked with a flag raising at city hall, followed by a welcome and demonstrations of dancing and drumming. Two years ago I was asked to keep

a Sacred Fire on the bank of the Speed River in downtown Guelph, from sunrise to sunset. Other firekeepers joined me and we discovered a special bonding. It was particularly powerful to have some of the women join us for a sunrise ceremony and for them to return to the fire at times over the day to sit with us and our ancestors, recognizing how important and powerful it is when fire and water, men's medicine and women's medicine are in balance and harmony.

I feel pride when I hear our younger folk answer questions from allies and onlookers. I hear their words as they respond without shame but with knowledge and love for their heritage. This is especially heartening when I watch Anishnabe, Maliseet, Haudenosaunee, Mi'kmaq and many other nations come together to share and honour different traditions and happily share the things we know while acknowledging the many things we have lost through the traumas of residential schools and Indian Act rules. As urban indigenous people we come together, valuing our commonalities and celebrating our differences.

This year may have a different look, but I will be at the fire to honour this special day. Join me, keeping our social distance! Niawen'kó:wa

A Collect for National Indigenous Day of Prayer

**Creator God,
from you every family in heaven
and earth takes its name.
You have rooted and grounded us
in your covenant love,
and empowered us by your Spirit
to speak the truth in love,
and to walk in your way
towards justice and wholeness.
Mercifully grant that your
people, journeying together
in partnership,
may be strengthened and guided
to help one another to grow into
the full stature of Christ, who is
our light and our life.
Amen**





Janice Whiteley

Reflecting on what National Indigenous Peoples day means to me reminds me that this is still a continuing journey. What it means may have changed a few times over the years, and like the journey itself, evokes different emotions.

It took time to adjust to the fact that the Indigenous people were now going to be acknowledged and celebrated for who we are. Exactly what did that mean?

This occurred at a time in my life when I was beginning to seek more knowledge of my own

peoples' history. I am Cree, from the Chapleau Cree First Nation in Chapleau, Ontario.

Simply to be able to say that, publicly, may give you some idea of how difficult it has been to learn about my own culture. This journey has involved shame, the need to deny, and resistance from some who are very close to me. The fact that I can say it now does not mean that the struggle to get to the other side of those feelings is complete. It has, though, become a journey that now allows me to say it with pride. I understand with more clarity and compassion some of the struggle my ancestors encountered.

Stories similar to this play out for many Indigenous people across Canada. What has changed for me, is that I see the day now with hope. There is of course a long way to go, how-

ever within my vision there is now some clearing on the path. Patience and resiliency play strong roles.

I acknowledge honest pride now in being able to fully claim the roots of who I am, and all that that means. The drums beat. We dance. We celebrate and speak our truth. We tell the stories and by telling them there is healing. It has taken a long time to get to this but that does not diminish what we have and are learning.

I can say with pride that it is an honour to stand as an Indigenous person this National Indigenous Peoples Day. There is, of course, work still to be done. I believe that we are all up to this task of reconciliation together. Creator's grace and our willing hearts can continue to clear the path for the way forward. Meegwetch.



Canon Donna Bomberry

This day was designated on the calendar back in the 1970's and I, a young woman then, grew up in Niagara and didn't know much of what this might be about. I was searching for community outside of my immediate family, local church, school, and work. I found a growing Indigenous community around the Niagara Regional Native Centre where I worked and volunteered. I was also connected with my father's homeland on the Six Nations of the Grand River, and my mother's homeland on Rice Lake at Alderville, Ontario where we visited family and community events. I grew in my knowledge and understanding of what family, community, and faith meant to me as an Indigenous woman of Cayuga and Anishnawbe people.

Descended from a people of faith being Longhouse and later Church of England / Anglican, and as a people of the land and waters that surround us, the families were raised each summer harvesting crops and fishing the lakes and rivers.

I welcomed the day to recognize our peoples, the First Nations, Inuit, and Metis in Canada. I especially took notice when our national church designated this day as the Aboriginal Day of Prayer in Canada. As a national church staff person working in

Indigenous Ministries, I got to participate in developing these resources and distributing them to our church across Canada as well as share them with our Anglican Indigenous Network (USA, Australia and Aotearoa / New Zealand).

I also got to travel across the land, from coast to coast, to coast and often got to participate in the local activities on June 21st. I was humbled to witness the communities when the families come together in a variety of ways like prayer services, cemetery clean-ups, feasting and community BBQs, always followed with musical entertainment, traditional drumming and dance, prayers and speeches.

I've seen the people grow and begin to heal from the colonial, and inhumane trauma and displacement that has been dealt to Indigenous people by the settler and colonial relationships. And it still carries out today. We acknowledge and remember those lost and recovered family members taken away in the Indian Residential Schools, the '60s Scoop, incarceration, lost to alcohol and drug abuse, our missing and murdered women and girls. Much of our traditional lands and waters, lost and polluted.

But, we are here. Thriving and striving to raise our children and grandchildren, making a way for the generations to come. It's a time to bring the family together, share in the feast and the culture, and offering our grateful hearts to one another... so we sing and we dance. We give thanks for our ancestors and to the Creator for all the blessings of this life. Nia:weh.



The Reverend Cheryl Barker

Caledonia. Every time someone asked me where I was from, they would gasp, look really interested, and lean in for a little more. It has been 12 years since I moved to Caledonia and while

the level of interest may have waned, there is still interest. There is curiosity about living in a town where land claims are an active part of everyone's life but not in the way that the media has portrayed it.

Moving to Caledonia has been a humbling, life-altering experience of living with the realities of having a settler's mindset and learning to grow out of that. It has increased my awareness of how we impact one another and the care that we need to take to extend Jesus' message into our communities. The growth has not always been easy for me and my growth is far from over.

Our neighbours are crying out for an independence that I always took for granted. Indigenous identity cannot be tied simply to one day of learning, although it is a start. For me to intentionally take June 21st and pray, go out and meet our neighbours, to learn, and to listen is one way to learn. Listening is the key, as Archdeacon Val Kerr told me. She said that to

push, ask, and then try to figure out a solution from my perspective is to put my experience of the world upon someone else.

I have taken that to heart and learned over the years that my neighbours are inherently spiritual, and that even within the community of faith, it can be hard to be both Indigenous and Christian. I have learned that my experience is not my neighbour's experience.

I remember once talking with a gentleman who lives on Six Nations; we were talking about hunting. He simply said, "those sumac trees, when the leaves start to turn red, I know that deer hunting season has begun." I have never forgotten that and every time I see those sumac trees turning that vibrant crimson, I am reminded that someone else can open my view of the world.

National Indigenous Day is like that. It gives me an opportunity to pray and know that there are stories and a future coming that I will listen to.

To learn more visit:
niagaraanglican.ca/ministry/truth-reconciliation

ANTI-RACISM: A Journey Towards Healing and Wholeness

A Special Series



White Fragility and the Privilege Knapsack

This is the third installment of this series

BY DEIRDRE PIKE

It has been just over a year since one man's last breaths were literally heard around the world. George Floyd's murder at the knee of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin reignited support for Black Lives Matter protests in North American communities and beyond, and inspired authentic action in leaders at tables of all kinds, naming and addressing systemic racism.

The bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada issued a statement in June 2020 to remind everyone of the Church's commitment to confronting racism in its own life and acknowledging the place of racism and colonialism in Canada. They noted that this commitment "needs to be renewed daily" and that "our own

house is not in order."

By the fall, Bishop Susan Bell had initiated the diocesan Anti-Racism Working Group. The members span not only the geography of the diocese, but also cross the demographic range of age, gender, race, culture, sexual orientation, and religious roles and backgrounds. As we started down the path of Tuckman's group development—forming, storming, norming, and performing, (and, eventually perhaps, adjourning)—the idea of a shared book study came forward as a first step. It was a big step.

"My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending our Hearts and Bodies," is written by Resmaa Menakem, a Minneapolis-based therapist and trauma specialist. He is

also known as a pioneer in an emerging field of science, "about how all of us carry in our bodies the history and traumas behind everything we collapse into the word 'race.'"

While this "new science," takes time to experience and a diocesan plan for action is still months into the future, some people have reached out to ask what they can do in the meantime. I have a few suggestions involving listening, reading, reflecting, and acting.

A good way of entering this work for me as a racialized white person, was listening to an episode of one of my favourite podcasts, "On Being." Host Krista Tippett sat down for a powerful conversation last July, with Menakem and Robin DiAngelo. DiAngelo is most known for her work, *White Fragility: Why It's so Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*. This book

guides racialized white people to engage more constructively when challenged by racial inequality, than the anger, fear, guilt, and tears, that often arise and inappropriately turn the camera and attention back to the one with the privilege.

This listening and reading, led me back to an anti-oppression tool I first used in the early 1990s, *Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack of White Privilege*. Created by Peggy McIntosh, a social work professor at the Wellesley Centers for Women in Massachusetts, the checklist was a way for white people to lead in very tangible ways, how we were able to operate in the world that people who were not white, could not.

For example:

- I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.

- I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
- I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to "the person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race.

In 2010, the author amended this work with important facilitation notes. I highly recommend this, even if, like me, you think you did it "so many times already."

Finally, after that reflection, I urge you to take into consideration McIntosh's response to the question from white people, "How can I help?"

"You can use unearned advantage to weaken systems of unearned advantage. I see white privilege as a bank account that I did not ask for, but that I can choose to spend."

May those of us with this unearned privilege, choose to spend unreservedly.

The Faith of the Squiggling Puppy

BY THE REVEREND CANON MARTHA TATARNIC

Our little puppy Bruce needs to be carried down the stairs every morning for his first outside of the day. He finds this almost unbearably exciting. His older dog brother, Dr. Pepper, walks calmly down the stairs, and Bruce is always eager to be reunited with Dr. Pepper, to check out the yard with him and to have morning treats, breakfast and a play. He is too small to navigate the steps on his own, but this doesn't register in his puppy brain. Every morning he squiggles desperately in my arms all the way down the stairs. He squiggles with the faith that there are arms there to catch him, with the lived understanding that there is a support system around him that will prevent him from squiggling right out of my arms, falling down the stairs, and hurting



himself. He squiggles because he is loved and cared for.

This past year has been a lot of survival and a lot of questions. We have learned to adapt to a situation that is constantly changing, pivoting from pre-Covid days, to online worship, to a strange combination of welcoming limited numbers back into our sanctuaries for services while most opted to continue online, only to go back

to online exclusively just before Christmas. Now we are asking questions about what our churches will look like in the anticipated future of a post-Covid world.

We have also asked questions about belief, why it matters, and what our faith might have to offer a world in crisis, a world in recovery, and a world that has come face to face with many of the critical fault lines that have existed across our society and that we have, until now, thought we could leave unaddressed. Not surprisingly, some of our churches have found there to be a new and powerful level of engagement with providing forums for learning and discussion on the core questions of our faith. We're all a bit (or a lot) wounded from this past year, highly uncertain about the future and asking a lot of questions.

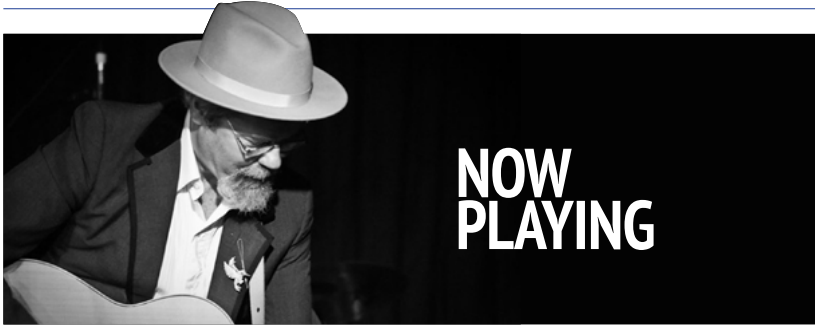
There will be strategic

planning to do in many of our futures, as well as major challenges to work out in terms of how we rebuild parishes, balance budgets, and pursue the right technological resources to support our new hybrid future.

In the midst of all of that, I submit this image and invite us not to lose track of the relationship in which everything we do begins, ends and finds its life and guiding light. Jesus tells us that unless we become like children, we can't enter the Kingdom of God. Elsewhere, he takes that directive one step further: we are to be born again, to become like babies in our relationship with God. His words are not a call to check our brains at the door or to think that knowledge, wisdom, discernment and even some long-term planning wouldn't have a place too in our lives of faith. They are, however, the insistence that everything that we do, every

decision we make, and every step we seek to take forward, is taking place in the context of God's arms of love.

Jesus doesn't mention anywhere that our faith is to be like that of a squiggly puppy, but I am sure that in knowing Bruce, Jesus would approve. We can let ourselves, and one another, access our inner Bruce too. Like Bruce, knowing that we are loved and cared for allows us some squiggling. In other words, drawing on that absolute promise that we are held in Love, we can look forward with anticipation, no matter what lies ahead. We can tackle challenges that are too big for us, because we aren't alone. We can wrestle and wonder and play, we can ask big questions and we can greet the new day with joy because we have learned, and we keep learning, that God's arms are strong and tender enough to hold us.



The Third Day's Mind

BY THE VENERABLE MAX WOOLLAVER

This writing is dedicated to the memory of two men. The first on my mind is Randal, who was struck by a car when he was young boy and thrown face down into shallow water. His breathing was interrupted for long enough to give him problems for the rest of his life. He was a fine painter and he loved the sharing of the peace.

One Easter Sunday, after church, he ran up the central aisle and threw his arms around me. He shouted: "Max! Max! That's the first sermon of yours that I have ever understood!!" For that Easter Sunday's sermon, I had written a long poem — which was very unusual for me. I have never forgotten his enthusiastic, loving, excited

embrace.

Murray Bowman was also struck by a car while riding his bicycle. He was likewise thrown into a ditch by the side of the road. He too struggled for the rest of his life, in care, with the consequences of that tragic accident. Murray, too, gave his life to art and kindness. His mother, Ruth Bowman, was much loved in our parish—one of those bright lights of energetic, intelligent, and indomitable charm. I wept at his funeral as we heard 'Turn, Turn, Turn' by The Byrds — the magnificent rendering of Pete Seeger's version of "... to everything there is a season," from the Book of Ecclesiastes. He was exactly my age.

So—thinking of these two men and thinking of Randal's thrill of discovery prompted by a poem, I wrote for Easter

2021, a long poem entitled: *The Third Day's Mind*. It's too long to print here but let me tell you what I was trying to say in the poem. If you'd like to hear the poem, go to our website at St. Andrew's, Grimsby, 4th Sunday of Easter for a YouTube link to the service. (Make sure you don't go to St. Andrew's, Grimsby, UK! We once booked a wedding for folks who didn't realize we were in Canada!)

The poem is in three parts: 1st Day, 2nd Day, and 3rd Day. The hope of the poem is that the reader will be drawn into the mystery of "The Third Day's Mind." The Third Day is the Day of Resurrection. The hope of the poem is the hope of St. Paul: "Be of that mind in yourselves that was also in the Anointed One Jesus ..." The poem means to bring the reader to the point

of entry into the mind of Christ — The Third Day's Mind— The Mind of Resurrection.

The 1st Day traces the mind of the predicament of humankind: "The wake of every passing ship Grows wide and yet more wide only to fail before the horizon; Each generated wave of expectation thinning out / With ever-extending distance from the turning screw / Before assimilation with the moon drawn wave / Of a greater power upon a greater sea / A greater sea whose extent measures the curve and planetary scale of our thinning and meekly flailing hope."

The 2nd Day traces the development of the martyr's mind. I quote from Bonhoeffer's poem *Who Am I*: "He appeared to his captors calm, cheerful, and poised. Like a squire from his manor ... Yet ... restless, yearning, sick, a caged bird ... too tired, too empty to pray, to think, to work. Weary and ready to take leave of it all ..." And Jesus is quoted: "Now my soul has been troubled, and what may I say? Rescue me?"

In the 2nd Day, the predicament of the fallen world for which the martyr dies is evoked in a distressing image: "Imagine the sea and beyond the sea, Morocco at the foot of your bed ... All that falls in the pit

of empire ... The refugee somersaults for days 100 fathoms down ..."

The 3rd Day reflects on the hiddenness of the secret power of God: "And not by what the eyes see shall he judge, And not by what his ears hear shall he render verdict" (Isaiah 11:3). The mystery of God's work drawing life from death is at work in us: "Let me tell you how it happens / I have forgotten all I have never known / I am remembering all that I have never known / As the Rabbis would have said: this is love dependent on no material thing ..."

The Third Day's Mind, the silent power of God, raised Jesus from the dead. That same silent power and grace is at work in the story of your life and the history of humankind. It is the power which raises the future. "Let this same mind be in you which was in the Anointed One, Jesus."

"This is how Resurrection comes: Not by what the eyes shall see, Not by what the ear shall hear: Grace abiding Grace abiding"

God bless Randal, God bless Murray — God bless us as The Third Day's Mind seeks expression in our lives, our care for our world and one another.




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Job the Innocent Sufferer

BY THE VENERABLE DR. JOHN COURSE

There is perhaps no greater stumbling block to faith in a loving, all-powerful God than the vexing problem of human suffering. One oversimplistic explanation is to say those who suffer have brought it upon themselves, a position supported by the following proverb: "Misfortune pursues wrongdoers, but prosperity rewards the righteous" (Proverbs 13:21). This understanding has become known as the law of retribution: do good and God will bless you; do evil and God will punish you.

The Book of Job was written to contest this troubling supposition. In the prologue, Job is presented as the epitome of an innocent person, however, after the Adversary questions his integrity as self-serving, God allows Job to be severely tested to the extent that, amongst a number of tragedies inflicted on him, all ten of his children are killed. Nevertheless, the prologue ends with Job, saying,

"Shall we receive the good at the hand of God and not receive the bad?" It's good to know this section of the book is likely based on a folktale, otherwise this is one scary portrayal of God!

Having misgivings with the approach to innocent suffering upheld by this folktale, the author rends it in two, inserting a lengthy midsection. It consists of a series of poetic speeches in which an utterly different Job, who, in his opening speech, rails that he wishes he had died at childbirth.

His three friends who have come to console him are of no help whatsoever. Eliphaz, the first to speak, tells Job he is overreacting. Bildad argues that Job will be restored if he is truly upright. Zophar enters the fray last to accuse Job of wrongdoing that warrants even harsher treatment.

Job defends his innocence throughout this disputation, while his so-called friends only intensify their attack on his integrity, driving him away from them. Job concludes his only recourse is to take God to court



Silvestro Chiesa, The sufferings of Job

Source: Wikimedia Commons

here I might add, I like to think in the next life we will gain the wisdom required to comprehend such intricate matters.

The significance of God's appearance to a suffering Job should not, however, be overlooked. Although God does not address the 'why' of Job's suffering, that God shows up portrays God as caring enough to come to Job in his time of need.

It is also notable that Job, who accuses God of being a hostile and violent assailant (e.g., 16:9-14), is nevertheless pronounced in the right at the end of the book, for it sets a helpful precedent. Would it not be better to follow Job's lead and direct our rage at God rather than taking it out on one another or ourselves? If any being can absorb our aggression and help us heal, it is surely God.

Finally, the book underscores the value of loyal friendship. Had Job's friends stood with him and listened compassionately to his protestations, perhaps they too would have been exonerated at the end.

for treating him so unjustly.

God finally makes a surprising appearance and bombards Job with a series of questions that reveal Job's lack of insight concerning the inherent design of the cosmos. God then challenges Job to demonstrate how he would equitably apply the law of retribution.

Job, in response, recants his accusations directed against God for not upholding this law as he and his friends believe God should.

In the epilogue, which brings the reader back to the limited folktale used to frame this debate, God vindicates Job yet condemns his friends for their flawed understanding of God's ways. This resolution indicates that despite Job's misrepresenta-

tions of God, his overall stance of maintaining his innocence lies closer to the truth than the positions held by his friends.

God then restores Job, awarding him with twice as much wealth as he previously had. God also replaces Job's children who had been cruelly taken from him, which falls well short of a satisfactory resolution.

Beyond rejecting the law of retribution, no overall explanation to account for human suffering emerges from this work. The poem on wisdom strategically placed earlier (chapter 28) is instructive on this point, as it implies the degree of wisdom required to understand the why of human suffering is beyond reach for the finite mind. And

The Deep Roots of the Water Lily

BY THE REVEREND DEACON SHEILA PLANT

It seems that more and more people are jumping on the genealogy bandwagon these days. They are using computer programs like ancestry.ca or Family Tree, or sending swabs away for DNA testing, eager to find out about their ethnic origins. It also seems that once uncovered, people want to embrace the customs and traditions of that culture.

This leads to deeper questions about our roots: how deep do they go, how do we preserve them, and what has grown from those roots? No matter what our family tree looks like, or how it

changes when branches die off or when new shoots sprout forth, the root is always there providing nourishment and strength to what grows from it. These roots are the lifeline to the past and future of the Tree of Life.

This month, we observe National Indigenous Day of Prayer. As we celebrate and walk in solidarity with the Indigenous peoples of this land, I invite you to see their struggles, to empathize with their pain, and most of all to pray for them.

We regularly acknowledge the land on which we gather for worship is the traditional territory of First Nations peoples, whose roots run deep on Turtle Island.

These roots offer much wisdom and I want to share with you an excerpt from "The Legend of the Lily and the Root." This is an Ojibway discovery story used by teachers across Canada. Such curriculum development comes in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls for Action for age-appropriate curriculum on Residential Schools, treaties, and Indigenous peoples' historical and contemporary contribu-

tions to Canada.

Although simple like a parable, it offers a strong message that speaks to the strength of one's roots.

One day, Shomis (used in certain Ojibway-speaking communities to mean 'old man' or 'grandfather') and his grandson were walking in the bush.

They came upon a small river with a big pond. Shomis saw some water lilies in the pond. He asked his grandson to get him a lily root. Lily roots were important to Shomis. When he dried the root and ground it into powder, it became medicine. Shomis would use this medicine to keep healthy.

His grandson removed his boots and socks. Then, he rolled up his pant legs. When he stepped into the pond, he felt the mud ooze between his toes. Shomis stood on shore and pointed to the lily plant he wanted.

"Be careful," Shomis told him. "You must not break the root when you pull it up. The medicine will be spoiled if it is taken from a broken root."

When his fingers were around



the root, his grandson gave a hard yank. Nothing happened. He put his other hand around it. "Be careful, now," instructed Shomis.

Very slowly, the boy bent over the beautiful white lily flower. He reached with both hands for a better grip around the root. The root refused to budge.

Finally, he bent right over the plant with both hands deep around the stubborn root. He pulled and pulled. When the root came free he almost fell over in the water.

He walked back to shore to Shomis. He carried the lily in his muddied hands. At one end of the plant was the beautiful white flower. At the other end was the muddy root.

As Shomis cleaned the mud from the lily root, he hummed softly. Then he cut off the flower.

Shomis held the lily root very gently. "This will make me feel strong and healthy," he said to the boy. Next to Shomis,

the beautiful white flower lay discarded on the ground. "The root is more important than the flower," he said. "Many people are interested only in the pretty flower," he said. "Remember the lily root."

In our prayers for National Indigenous Day of Prayer, let us give thanks to God our Creator for the wisdom, culture, spirituality, and traditions which flow from the deep roots of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.

My own prayer is that all who share in the bounty of this country may learn to live in peace and respect all who came before us. In the spirit of reconciliation, may we walk hand in hand with Indigenous peoples and be open to learning and growing in relationship.

Gitchi Manitou waanakiwin. God's peace be with you.

Sheila serves as a deacon at the Parish Church of St. Luke in Burlington.



New Program Revives the Lenten Journey

BY THE REVEREND CANON LESLIE GERLOFS

Revive Lent premiered in churches across our diocese and around the Anglican Communion for six weeks during this extraordinary Lenten season.

Small groups which formed in several Niagara parishes met online in the hopes of growing in intimacy with God as followers of Christ through engagement in spiritual practices and conversation.

This supplemental initiative builds on the foundation of Revive, a discipleship program for lay leaders, and complements the focus of faith formation articulated in the diocesan Mission Action Plan (MAP).

Here is what Lynda Clark, parishioner of St. Christopher's in Burlington, has to say about her experience of the Revive Lent program:



"The Revive Lent program was truly a blessing to me. It had been a long time since I was in a faith sharing small group. I must admit I was hesitant to join the program as sharing my spiritual journey is not always

easy, as it feels so personal. It was helpful to talk about the confidentiality expected of the group as it created a safe place to share personal experiences.

"I have to say that although I had experienced many of the

spiritual exercises in the past, I had not been practicing them for quite some time. I was quite excited to spend time in prayer using the different methods (Lectio Divina, the Anglican Rosary, Centering Prayer etc.) and to find what was comfortable and meaningful to me. It was challenging, at first, for me to share my prayer experience as we gathered to reflect on the prayer method used each week. I soon realized that God meets us each in a unique and personal way and my experience may have been different from that of others but it was still very real and meaningful to me.

"Participating in this program

was a very enriching experience. Listening to how others experienced God in their prayer times and the bond that developed between participants was a gift. Finding new ways to spend time with God has refreshed my prayer life and was just what I needed as this pandemic journey continues."

Revive Lent will again be offered in 2022 with a few enhancements to ease in the facilitation of sessions. In the meantime, as we begin to move out of this pandemic and move forward into a new normal, consider Revive, where we can equip ourselves and shape our new future together.



Revive, a small group discipleship program, is coming in September to a church near you, although it is much more than a church 'program'!

Revive will take you on an experiential journey of self-reflection, prayer, engaging conversation and spiritual formation that equips participants to become confident spiritual leaders.

Here's a reflection by John Atkinson, a parishioner at St. Aidan's in Oakville and current participant of Revive:

"The Revive journey has been absolutely transformative for me. I don't see the program as developing me as a church leader, rather I see it more as a guided pathway of personal spiritual growth. For me leadership did become part of it but it is not the only opportunity for everyone. I believe that every participant will have a unique and very personal experience. I think the program truly shows the difference between knowing about God and being in a relationship with God. For me

that was moving from the mind towards my heart in my relationship with the Lord. I still more often than not, think, rather than feel, but I now know the difference. I now have an idea of what I need to do, it will take a commitment."

Three modules of six sessions each make up Revive with an opening and closing retreat to bookend your experience. Module one - Communicating with God - delves into prayer. Module two - Engaging in Scripture - focuses on scripture meditation. Module three - Called for Ministry - digs deeper into discerning your spiritual gifts.

All that is required to participate in Revive is a desire for deeper intimacy with God and a desire to grow spiritually. Still not sure if Revive is for you or if it's happening in your area? Check with your local parish priest or contact Canon Leslie Gerlofs at revive@niagaraanglican.ca.

Niagara Anglican Deadlines and Submission Guidelines

Deadlines:

- September - July 30
- October - August 30
- November - September 27

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



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Called to Life, Compelled to Love: Welcoming Refugees

BY THE VENERABLE BILL MOUS

For more than two decades, parishes in our diocese have been helping refugees regain their self sufficiency and self determinacy, warmly welcoming them into the communities of the diocese, providing emotional, physical, and financial support and protection as they resettle in Canada. It is just one of the ways we continue to live into our diocesan vision of being disciples of Jesus, himself a refugee.

World Refugee Day is designated by the United Nations to honour refugees around the globe. It falls each year on June 20 and celebrates the strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their home country to escape conflict and/or persecution.

According to information from the United Nations Refugee Agency, by the end of 2019 at least 79.5 million people around the world have been forced to flee their homes due to human conflict. Among them are over 20 million refugees, having crossed an international border, around half of whom are under the age of 18.

"As COVID-19 has drastically affected the world, one thing is certain—those who were vulnerable before, are now, due to COVID-19 even more vulnerable," said Scott McLeod, diocesan refugee sponsorship coordinator. "With borders closed, and flights canceled there has been a massive slow down in sponsorship activities, from submissions and processing to arrivals."

Still, despite the challenges of the pandemic, in 2020 the Diocese of Niagara:

- submitted applications for 27 cases totalling 49 people.
- welcomed 15 newcomers to Canada; and
- completed the resettlement of 14 sponsorship cases.

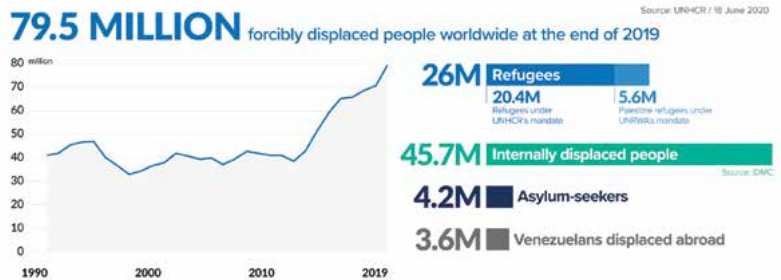
The diocesan refugee sponsorship initiative is always working away in the background, even through the pandemic. As one of over 120 Sponsorship Agreement Holder organizations in Canada, parishes of the diocese, as well as interested community groups, provide care and hospitality to sponsored refugees as they resettle in Canada through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees program of Canadian government.

"We continue to respond as we are able and urge as many par-

ishes as possible that are able to consider taking part in this work and ministry of the diocese," says McLeod. "This resettlement work undertaken would not be possible without the work of people in our parishes, and in our community; their generous and inspired compassion, their dedication, commitment, time, talent and treasure that makes this ministry possible."

On World Refugee, pray for refugees around the world and consider how the Spirit might be calling you to life through the ministry of resettlement and compelling you to love our newcomer and refugee neighbours, in Christ's name.

Learn more about the diocesan refugee sponsorship initiative at: niagaraanglican.ca/ministry/refugee-sponsorship



Canterbury Hills Offers Summer Adventures

Bring the magic of Canterbury Hills right to the comfort and safety of your own home through one of the camp's online programs this summer.

Camp In A Box offers a variety of activities that encourage spiritual growth, independent play, creativity, and exploration, with opportunities to connect and share with staff and fellow campers. Each week has a different theme and campers will receive a box of pre-packaged program supplies, along with an activity book, and access to the Canterbury Hills YouTube channel with staff prepared instructional videos.

There is also a new pen pal initiative to which matches two campers of similar age and interests. Participants receive five pre-addressed and stamped envelopes, as well as prompt cards to help get spark initial conversation ideas. It's a great opportunity to meet a new friend who might even become a cabin mate in future summers!

To register or learn more, visit canterburyhillscamp.ca/virtual-camp

Video Review

Seaspiracy — Revealing The State of Our Oceans

BY CARLEON HARDIE

Not all of you will have a Netflix subscription but if you do, or know someone who does, I highly recommend watching the 2021 documentary, *Seaspiracy*, by director Ali Tabrizi.

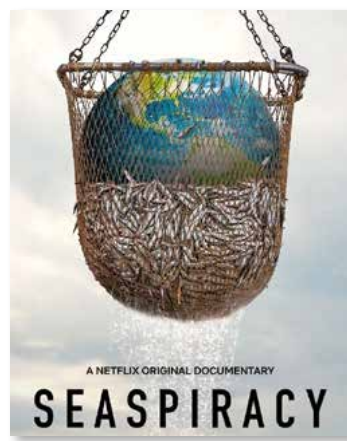
In his tremendous love of our oceans, he set out to film their amazingness, all the breathtaking species in them, and explore how humans were challenging the habitats there with our plastic waste. He risked his and his crew's lives only to discover that while waste plastics were a huge problem, a much bigger insidious secret was being kept about the whole commercial fishing and fish farming industries.

Be warned that while the film is very well written and the artistry is impressive, the message given is terrifying. In many talks about the need for us to collec-

tively stop burning fossil fuels and get corporations to stop their polluting and wasteful ways, advocates are urging the average citizen to get in touch with their political representatives to demand change at the policy level. The dire situation with commercial fishing is no different.

We need policies that make it illegal to dump so many nets and other waste off of fishing ships as that waste dwarfs the advertised plastic waste there that we are made aware of. It is abhorrent to kill so many other species trying to catch a certain one when there is better technology to reduce bycatch, and it is far-fetched to assume diseased fish farms are an acceptable alternative, and unthinkable to use as slaves so we can eat seafood at will.

Similar to household recy-



cling distracting from the fact that corporations keep using more and more plastic and non-recyclable packaging it is a distraction that dolphin safe labels have been on certain tuna labels for many years. It was sickening to learn that the

people and organizations behind these labels cannot and will not guarantee any such thing as dolphin safety.

Our oceans are poised on the brink of dying and since they have so much to do with providing the oxygen we breathe and

regulating weather patterns that keep our Earth habitable, we too will face harmful effects if our current practices are not ended immediately.

Similar to Greta Thunberg's assertion that Mother Earth could heal herself if humans and their destructiveness and gluttony got out of the way, Ali assures us that our oceans could heal and rebound if left alone. The film asserts that plant-based alternatives to seafood consumption could provide as many helpful oils and nutrients as seafood without supporting such a tremendously destructive industry. It is a film worth seeing, talking about, praying about, and sharing with anyone you meet! For the love of Earth, God help us!

Carleon is the Climate Justice Facilitator for St. James Dundas