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# NIAGARA ANGLICAN

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

A section of the Anglican Journal



JUNE 2022

# Celebrating Indigenous Culture and Heritage

**T**he month of June marks National Indigenous History Month, and June 21 serves as both National Indigenous Peoples Day and, for Anglicans, the National Indigenous Day of Prayer.

In Niagara, we are working toward fuller expressions of gratitude, celebration, and reparation; most recently, we have released a new resource for developing and implementing territorial and land acknowledgements, which is simply one way of demonstrating our commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, as well as to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

All Canadians are called to recognize and celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures, and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Christians, however, are particularly compelled to engage in reconciliation and to demonstrate the love Christ has shown all of us. We have often failed to do this, and have caused much harm. We seek to repent of this harm not simply through words, but actions; not simply in preaching the good news of Christ, but living it.

Our mission and vision in Niagara calls us to live out the Gospel-shaped mission of Christ as a church compelled to demonstrate love to all, and we must include reconciliation and engagement with Indigenous peoples as a key component to this work in the world.

During this month, we first encourage you to dedicate time to learning more about the rich and diverse cultures, voices, experiences, and histories of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. The Government of Canada has collated a number of helpful resources to do this,

including opportunities to read about, listen to, and watch stories made by and about Indigenous peoples.

As Archdeacon Valerie Kerr, former Archdeacon of Truth, Reconciliation, and Indigenous Ministry, once reflected, "It is my prayer that we, in the Diocese of Niagara, continue to work, study, and learn together about our historic journey with the First Peoples of Canada and find even more ways of connecting, sharing and walking together in love." We thus especially ask that you join with us in praying the Collect for the 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.**

*For resources on Indigenous arts, culture, and heritage, visit [rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1621447127773/1621447157184](http://rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1621447127773/1621447157184). For resources related to the National Indigenous Day of Prayer from General Synod, including liturgical guidance and prayers, visit [www.anglican.ca/im/nidp/](http://www.anglican.ca/im/nidp/). Resources for the Diocese of Niagara are collected at [niagaraanglican.ca/ministry/truth-reconciliation](http://niagaraanglican.ca/ministry/truth-reconciliation).*



Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby met with Indigenous elders in Prince Albert, SK, at the end of April 2022. The Archbishop has apologized for the "terrible crime" of the Anglican Church's involvement in Canada's residential schools—and for the Church of England's "grievous sins" against the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

Photo: Anglican Video

## Cathedral Hosts Platinum Jubilee Service

This year marks the 70th Anniversary of the accession of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth. To commemorate this extraordinary occasion, there will be a special service of Choral Evensong at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 5 at Christ's Church Cathedral, where the whole diocese is invited to join together, in person or online. Bishop Susan Bell will preach, and our time of worship will include music from the coronation in 1953, as well as the anthem "In Our Service," which has been specially commissioned by the Royal Schools of Church Music to mark this Platinum Jubilee. Most importantly, the service will be an opportunity to give



thanks for God's blessings through the past 70 years of her reign as Queen of Canada, and to pray eagerly for our future together; for healing, for peace, for truth, for reconciliation, for our leaders, for the nations of the world, and a reign of love that is on earth as it is in heaven.

# Mobilizing People for Mission

BY THE VENERABLE BILL MOUS



All around us, we find transition and renewal permeating every aspect of our lives.

This is often true at the best of times, but it is particularly true in this moment. The pandemic has shifted—or upended—so many of our patterns and given us pause to reflect on life's priorities. In all of this, the Spirit is at work, breathing new life into our world and inspiring us to explore new directions.

This is certainly true for us in Niagara.

We have seen incredible enthusiasm for the parish mission action planning process, which is designed to be a simple process to ignite local engagement with God's mission and renew our ministries.

We are also in a time of renewal with regard to our diocesan staff team. "As you will have noticed, some of our key leaders and devoted staff have decided that it is time for them to retire or to move on to another season of their lives," noted Bishop Susan Bell in a recent update to Synod Council. "We are so very grateful for their service and will miss them."

Over the last few months, we have prayerfully considered and consulted widely about where God might be leading us in the coming years. Our diocesan Mission Action Plan has rooted this discernment—supporting the implementation of the visionary work and important objectives that were discerned by hundreds of people across the diocese.

For this to happen, we will be "right-skilling" our diocesan staff team to meet our current ministry needs, which have shifted over the years—and that's only been accelerated by the pandemic.

"Our intention is not only to realign ourselves with regard to capacity but to realign ourselves with the realities of the rest of the diocesan budget as well—all while still keeping our eye firmly fixed on God's mission," says Bishop Bell.

Through all of this, we are excited to look at new ways of undertaking our work, new ways of collaborating as a ministry team, and new ways of

servicing the people and parishes of the diocese as we welcome new people to the diocesan offices at Cathedral Place.

To do so, we'll shift some roles and responsibilities and reorganize others into new positions in the coming months. Our senior leadership team will be more focused and we will not be filling some current vacancies, allowing us to expand our capacity for front-line ministry and support.

"We've assessed our present needs and tried ever so carefully to see around the corner to the church of the future," notes Bishop Bell. As a result, we have hired—or will be hiring—a personnel and volunteer coordinator, a communications coordinator, and a stewardship coordinator, alongside a missionary or two, as well. It's exciting to think of the new possibilities: drawing together volunteer corps, innovatively sharing our Gospel stories, and abundantly resourcing our dreams and visions for ministry.

All told, we hope this process will find us better placed to support parishes in responding to ministry needs, while also being fiscally responsible.

It will, of course, take us some time to get where we need to be, and so I want to ask for your prayers and understanding as we navigate this significant period of transition and renewal.

This work is all about mobilizing our whole diocese for mission as we lean into the next chapter of our ministry. It's important work, hard work, but it most especially it is Spirit-led work as we equip ourselves to explore the new ways to which our diocese is being called to life and compelled to love.

Archdeacon Bill Mous is the diocesan executive officer and secretary of synod.

# Fiercely loved: BORN THIS WAY

A worship experience celebrating pride in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community

**4PM, SUNDAY JUNE 12, 2022**  
**IN PERSON**

**Christ's Church Cathedral**  
**252 James St N**  
**Hamilton**

Our third annual diocesan Pride celebration, Fiercely Loved: Born This Way, takes place on Sunday, June 12 at 4:00 p.m. For the first time, Fiercely Loved will take place in person! Worshippers can also participate in the service through a livestream on the diocesan Facebook page.

This will be a spirited celebra-

tion of 2SLGBTQIA+ people in our diocese. Through song and poetry, visual art and prayer, word and Eucharist, The service will offer an important moment to praise the God who rejoices in the diverse and wonderful ways humanity bears God's image. Bishop Susan Bell will preside and Bishop Kevin

Robertson, area bishop of York-Scarborough, will preach.

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# ANTI-RACISM: A Journey Towards Healing and Wholeness

A Special Series



## Building a Curriculum of Justice and Peace

BY SARAH BIRD

The Anti-Racism Working Group (ARWG) is underway mapping the groundwork for an anti-racism training course to be launched early in 2023 for leaders within the diocese, both ordained and lay. A parish-led offering of the curriculum will follow soon after.

The working group members have patiently awaited this moment, as integral work needed to be done before we could begin to build an edu-

cational resource. Enrolment in trainings, listening to each other's stories, relationship building, praying, and reading of resources together has enabled the group to move into a collaborative space preparing us for the next steps to be taken.

At our previous meeting, potential educational topics were brainstormed by the group. We were then asked to select a topic or two to research and find a variety of teaching tools to share, such as articles, podcasts, videos, exercises, music clips,

mediation, scripture, and art. Some members wanted to do this on their own, while others partnered up. A few of the topics included the history of anti-Black racism in Canada, race, language, and micro-aggressions. Once resources were found our task was to create a five-minute presentation of our findings. We did not expect how motivating these mini presentations would be!

Our meeting on Tuesday, April 26 brought forth new energy and enthusiasm. As each

member from the ARWG shared their presentation, new ideas and offerings began to flow freely. We could begin to see the curriculum unfold as topics came to life, providing a fresh glimpse into training areas. The group was encouraged and inspired by all the work that had been done by the members. All the presentations surpassed the five-minute limit as we carefully reviewed, highlighted, and reflected on each person's research. There was not enough time in our two-hour meeting

for everyone to present, so we look forward to hearing and seeing the others present at subsequent meetings.

As we begin this development stage, we remind each other that our focus is to call people in rather than out, and that as Christians we are called to life and compelled to love through our baptismal vows. We ask for your continued prayers as we journey forward building this integral educational training resource for the diocese.

## The Parish MAP Process: God is Doing a New Thing

BY EMILY HILL

**"FORGET THE FORMER THINGS; DO NOT DWELL ON THE PAST. SEE, I AM DOING A NEW THING! NOW IT SPRINGS UP; DO YOU NOT PERCEIVE IT?"**

—ISAIAH 43:18-19

How often do we, as individuals and as parish communities, stop to ask what new thing God is doing in our midst? Or what former thing God is inviting us to let go of? Or what is "springing up" around us that we should be paying attention to?

The words the prophet Isaiah uses to remind the Israelites to trust in and watch for signs of God's redemptive plan unfolding are challenging words in the best of times. Two years into a global pandemic and Isaiah's words inspire hope, but also bring apprehension: Do we have the energy to perceive what is springing up? Are we willing to

stop dwelling on the past?

Do we have the eyes to see what God is doing?

As soon as the Mission Action Plan (MAP) leadership team at St. John the Evangelist in Hamilton started talking to people in the parish about engaging in the MAP process, we realized that the answer from our community was "YES". Not only was there enough energy to engage in the collective discernment process created by the Diocese of Niagara to help churches figure out how God is calling us to join in God's mission, there was also enthusiasm. As we spoke to people about

participating in the process, the common sentiment expressed was: "This is exactly what we need right now."

The MAP process is structured around three conversations about key aspects of congregational life: adult faith formation, reshaping parish culture, and fullness of life in the neighbourhood. At St. John's, the conversations are organized and facilitated by a leadership team made up of six people from our congregation, including our minister and one of our churchwardens. A week before the conversations, we gather to read through the instructions in the MAP Facilitator's Guide and make the small adaptations necessary to suit our specific context. We also determine what roles members of the team will

fulfill during the conversation, which include communication, facilitation, note-taking, small group leadership, and running the online meeting platform. We have found that preparing ahead of time and taking a team approach to the consultations is the best way to ensure the conversations go smoothly.

The goal of the three conversations is to engage in "holy brainstorming" to assess our parish's strengths, gifts, passions, and growing edges with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. St. John's first two conversations, which we hosted on Zoom and were attended by 30-40 people, were filled with helpful insights, new ideas, expressed love for our church community, honest sharing about areas of ministry we need to improve, and a

renewed spirit of enthusiasm for engaging in God's mission. After the conversations, the MAP leadership team gathered to review the input we received. We created summaries of the common themes and made the results available to parishioners on our website.

As I write this article, St. John's MAP leadership team is preparing for our third conversation. After the third conversation, we will review all the ideas shared and invite people back for a final conversation in which we will determine what ideas God is calling our parish to work on over the next couple of years. We are excited to see what "new things" God is inviting us to not only "see" but also to do.

*Continued Page 9*



### NIAGARA ANGLICAN

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**CALLED TO LIFE  
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# New Land and Territorial Acknowledgement Tool for the Diocese

BY DEIRDRE PIKE

In the midst of National Indigenous History Month last June, I bungled the land acknowledgement. It was the start of another online meeting, and I had the document open on my screen ready to recite—but when the moment came, the document disappeared and I was stuck.

Thankfully, most people just thought I was having an extended prayer time. But really, I was panicking as my eyes darted around my screen for the right button to click and bring back the words of the acknowledgement. It happened and all went on smoothly, but I was changed.

How could I be a justice leader if I didn't take time to really know the land on which I stand in terms of its history and my own relationship, my own knowledge and love of the place where I live, work, play and pray? That was about to change.

That experience influenced the development of the newly released land and territorial acknowledgement tool for use across the Diocese of Niagara, and beyond. The land acknowledgement is not a moment to read a paragraph from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, a historic recall, of sorts. It is a deep revealing of both the head and heart knowledge of our reality as settlers and guests on this land, and

our understanding of Canada's relationship with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people.

This new document is meant to guide you in the creation of a land and territorial acknowledgement that is living and fresh to the reality of the now; the meeting, the church service, the meal we are about to share, and how the extreme generosity of Indigenous people, who have cared for these lands long before we arrived, is connected to our opportunity to gather.

It takes some time to immerse oneself in the history and understanding of treaties that govern this land, like the Dish With One Spoon Wampum agreement, but it is worth it. You will find all you need in this new tool to create your own acknowledgement, but you will also find concrete examples of wordings to be recited until you are able to bring those words into your heart and say them aloud as if for the first time.

*If you need any guidance in this endeavour, please reach out to Deirdre Pike, justice and outreach program consultant, at [deirdre.pike@niagaraanglican.ca](mailto:deirdre.pike@niagaraanglican.ca) or 905-527-1316, ext. 470. To read about Deirdre's own struggle to internalize the acknowledgement, visit [thespec.com/opinion/contributors/2021/07/02/putting-our-hearts-into-truth-and-reconciliation.html](https://thespec.com/opinion/contributors/2021/07/02/putting-our-hearts-into-truth-and-reconciliation.html).*



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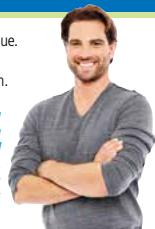
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# LAND AND TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## Anglican Diocese of Niagara

Acknowledging the land is the process of deliberately naming the location in which we are situated as Indigenous land, and the fact that Indigenous people have rights to this land. It is through their generosity and good hearts that we are able to gather in peace.

Acknowledging the territory and the First Nations, Inuit or Métis peoples who have cared for the land, allows us to reflect on our relationship with it, and the continuous process of colonization that deeply impacts the possibility of right relationship with Indigenous people. It also demonstrates the commitment of the Anglican Church of Canada to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration of Rights for Indigenous Peoples.

### TREATY FACTS

In order to undertake an acknowledgement with integrity, it is important to have a basic understanding of colonial history, especially when it comes to treaty-making.

[Find out about the treaties in your area, or Treaties and Agreements](#) and from KAIROS.

### YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAND

A land acknowledgement goes beyond the historical facts of the First Nations peoples or treaties. This is an opportunity for non-Indigenous people to reflect on their own relationship to the land. Have you taken it for granted or are you conscious of the gift from the Creator? Share an experience of being connected to the land and what it means to you.

### PROCLAIM IT ALOUD

While a formal territorial land acknowledgement may be posted at entranceways, on bulletin boards, and projected onto screens, it is essential to offer an oral land acknowledgement to begin a liturgical service or parish gathering.

This can include the facts of the peoples and treaties in which you live or serve, as well as a brief personal reflection on one's relationship to the land as a settler, immigrant, or refugee.

### LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND WHY THEY MATTER

Narrated by Bruce Weaver, a member of Church of the Apostles, Guelph, Firekeeper and Indigenous Educator, this video was created by the University of Guelph to remind viewers that Land Acknowledgements are not just a symbol of recognition but are a platform where meaningful steps towards reconciliation can be taken.



### RESOURCES

The following resources can be used to create a Territorial Land Acknowledgement reflecting your unique context. Should you not feel ready to craft your own at this point, you will find examples to use on the following page.

- [Native Land Digital](#)
- [KAIROS](#)
- [Reconciliation Toolkit, Anglican Church of Canada](#)
- [Amnesty International](#)
- [Listening to Indigenous Voices](#)

*"Land contains the languages, the stories, and the histories of the peoples. It provides water, air, shelter, and food. Land participates in the ceremonies and songs.*

*And land is home."*

*—Thomas King*

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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# Sample Land and Territorial Acknowledgements

**Creativity is encouraged as you develop or employ an acknowledgement for your particular context. What follows are several examples that have been drawn or adapted from a number of sources.**

## GENERAL

- 1) For thousands of years, Indigenous peoples have walked on this land; their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives and spirituality. We are gathered on the traditional territory of several Indigenous peoples, including the Neutrals, the Mississauga, the Anishnaabe, and the Haudenosaunee. We acknowledge their continuing stewardship of this land.
- 2) We acknowledge with respect the history, spirituality, and culture of the Indigenous peoples with whom the Upper Canada Treaties were signed and the territory wherein our church resides, and our responsibility as Treaty members. We also honour the heritage and gifts of Métis people. May our actions be guided by our commitment to reconciliation.
- 3) Welcome to this service of worship. We begin by acknowledging the traditional territory upon which we gather this morning. For many thousands of years, the (name the nation or nations) have sought to walk gently on this land. They offered assistance to the first European travellers to this territory and shared their knowledge for survival in what was at times a harsh climate. We seek a new relationship with the Original Peoples of this land, one based in honour and deep respect.
- 4) We acknowledge our presence on the ancestral lands governed by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Anishinaabe Nation, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the lands and resources around the Great Lakes. In a spirit of reconciliation, may we always seek to respect the history, spirituality, and culture of Indigenous Peoples and uphold our continuing responsibility as treaty people.

## AREA SPECIFIC

- 5) **Hamilton:** We would like to begin this service/event/meeting by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and directly adjacent to Haldimand Treaty territory.
- 6) **Halton:** From the lands of the Anishinaabe to the Attawandaron, the Haudenosaunee and the Métis, the lands surrounding the Great Lakes are steeped with Indigenous history. We acknowledge and thank the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation for being stewards of this territory.
- 7) **Guelph:** We acknowledge that we are on land that, at the time of contact, was held by the Attawandaron as an area of trade and ceremony by the two rivers. At various times the land was occupied by both Haudenosaunee from the south and Anishnaabe from the north. In more recent times the Huron Treaty gave rights to the Mississaugas of New Credit. May we who dwell on or visit this land also be good stewards and honour those who came before us.
- 8) **St. Catharines:** We would like to begin this service/event/meeting by acknowledging that the land we gather on is the traditional territory of Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee people.



## VIRTUAL MEETINGS

9) Before we begin this important conversation, it is essential to ground it in the acknowledgement that, from wherever we are joining, for those of us who are non-Indigenous, we are settlers, and we are guests on this land.

The city in which I stand today is situated upon the ancestral Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Confederacy land as determined by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Agreement. It is also area with longstanding relationships with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Six Nations of the Grand River. All of us are somewhere on Turtle Island today. If you know the traditional name of the territory in which you are located, please enter it in the chat.

We are grateful to the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island who have cared for these lands since time immemorial. We hold our hands up to their amazing resistance, resilience, and strength in the face of ongoing dispossession and colonial violence.

To acknowledge these lands is to take one step in demonstrating our commitment to beginning the process of dismantling the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism. May we bring that same commitment and spirit of truth-seeking and reconciliation to our conversation today. And so be it.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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# Bishop Received Honorary Degree

Trinity College has conferred a Doctor of Divinity (*honoris causa*) upon the Bishop Susan Bell, in recognition of her distinguished pastoral leadership as the 12th Bishop of Niagara, and in recognition of her innovative thinking and future-oriented work in promoting mission and congregational development, and in re-visioning congregational identity, in the Anglican Church of Canada. Congratulations to Bishop Bell! The diocese of Niagara celebrates with you!



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# Spiritual Care for the Inquiring Mind

## Spotlight on Our Ecumenical Chaplaincies

EDITOR'S NOTE: IN THIS ISSUE, WE ARE HIGHLIGHTING THE THREE ECUMENICAL CHAPLAINCIES SUPPORTED BY THE DIOCESE OF NIAGARA AT BROCK UNIVERSITY, MCMASTER UNIVERSITY, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH. OUR CONTRIBUTORS HIGHLIGHT THE CHALLENGES—AND BLESSINGS—OF STUDENT MINISTRY DURING THE PANDEMIC. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE CHAPLAINCIES, AND WAYS FOR YOU TO SUPPORT THEM, VISIT [NIAGARAANGLICAN.CA/COMMUNITY/UNIVERSITY-CHAPLAINCIES](http://NIAGARAANGLICAN.CA/COMMUNITY/UNIVERSITY-CHAPLAINCIES).

## Love in the Time of a Pandemic

BY ANDY CROWELL

When I am asked if chaplaincy has struggled with sustainability issues in a place of higher learning over the past two years (i.e., through the pandemic), the short answer is, yes!

Insofar as local communities of faith (and generous individuals) have had their financials impacted by the pandemic, inevitably chaplaincies at universities like McMaster, where "I live and love and have my being," are affected.

When asked if the work of spiritual care at a university has been dampened or deterred or deemed "unessential" as a result of the pandemic, my answer is equally simple: "I have not been wanting for work, in the least!"

Sustainability impacted? Yes! Spiritually impactful? Yes! Requests for one-to-one



appointments, desire for programing that is simple but meaningful, and appeals—despite covid restrictions—to be of service in the community are all on the increase within our Chaplaincy Centre, in both volume and events, whether in-person or online.

As a place of spiritual care (a place where inclusion, non-judgmentalism, and holistic compassion are the standard), the values we say we believed in before the pandemic have only been reinforced as a result of the pandemic.

The kinds of principles to which I refer range anywhere

from "wherever two or three are gathered," the Spirit is in our midst; to the belief that the Spirit is not confined by distancing (especially when the coldness of a computer can, instead, become an instrument of grace); to risking (while still respecting safety) what it means to demonstrate solidarity with brothers and sisters who testify that the pandemic has not caused systemic injustice, but rather the pandemic has revealed long-standing systemic injustice.

At McMaster, our chaplaincy has not only continued to be ecumenical, welcoming and allying with any and all we can, but we have also aspired to be egalitarian—socially conscious of the need to be reminded that the essence of our existence, and co-existence, is love.

What's more, if this were not our attitude and outlook, then

not only would we be minimizing the integrity of the gospel, but we would be dismissive of the dignity of all people with whom we say we want to enter into authentic relationships.

One of my favourite moments (that I live for) in any program we offer, but especially our weekly "soup and selah" (where we serve hot vegan, kosher, and halal soup made from vegetables produced in local community gardens in the middle of the busiest square on campus, in the middle of the day, in the middle of the week) is when a student actually pauses to say "thank you"—or better still, asks, "So why are you doing this?"

In the question, never mind the answer, is the stuff of curiosity, yes; but also, the desire to discover that there is genuine, no-strings-attached care in this world that isn't naïve about

injustice, nor in denial about life's complexities, and says by its very presence that love is always better than selfishness and indifference.

The secret to spiritual care in an institution of higher learning is not gimmicks or out-thinking young adults. It is actually caring about what you are doing, and why—which in turn allows the young people around you to take care of themselves (and others) and know why.

If spiritual care is not about this, then it is not about anything.

Love in the time of a pandemic is the same as love at any other time. Except the gift of a pandemic (or any crisis) is the recognition that nothing matters more than love.

Andy Crowell is Ecumenical Chaplain at McMaster University.

## Ecumenism at Brock University

BY THE REVEREND KRISTA HILTON



I was appointed the new ecumenical chaplain at Brock University in St. Catharines about a year ago. During that time, everything was

closed and I had to work remotely. It was an interesting challenge, to say the least—to enter this new position where I couldn't actually meet any students! But in September, things opened up so that I could finally be on campus.

The Faith and Life Centre is located in the loveliest part of campus, right on the Niagara Escarpment, with a view of the woods and ravine from the windows of the Centre. With spring in the air, it isn't unusual to see signs of wildlife while walking to the Centre! Many students will use the quiet space to study during the day and maybe drop in to say hello to the chaplains, too.

I work with two other chaplains: one is a full-time Christian Reformed pastor and one is a full-time Roman Catholic lay chaplain. There are also three volunteer chaplains from different Christian

denominations. There are also an imam, rabbi, and Buddhist monk who volunteer their time to connect with students at Brock.

Working in tandem with other chaplains is a great reminder of the things that bind us rather than separate us. Our common love and passion for Jesus binds us together even while our expressions of that love may be different. One example of the ecumenical bonds was when we led a Bible study in honour of International Women's Day. The four female chaplains each led a group study focused on different women from the Bible. I explored the leadership of Saint Priscilla and Deacon Phoebe and it was a wonderful experience to discuss Christian leadership with university students. I was inspired by the enthusiasm and insights the students offered!

Some of the other programs I offered this past fall and winter include: "Praying with the Activists", "Sanctuary" (an exploration of mental health and faith), and "Mission: Joy". The latter was in tandem with the Buddhist monk, Yuttadhammo Bhikkhu, and it explored the work of the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. They co-wrote a book, and then a documentary was made about finding



The Faith and Life Centre at Brock, known as "Alphie's Trough".

Photos: Contributed by Krista Hilton

joy in the midst of turbulent times. I was reminded that even when it comes to interfaith, we have much more in common than what divides us!

Krista Hilton is Ecumenical Chaplain at Brock University.

Right: Social media posting for a recent program offering through the Faith and Life Centre.

Join Buddhist chaplain, Yuttadhammo, and ecumenical Christian chaplain, Krista, for a viewing of clips from the film, "Mission: Joy", followed by discussion.

Monday, March 21, 12:00-1:00

In person at the Faith and Life Centre (Alphie's Trough)  
See ExperienceBU for the event "Mission: Joy"  
ALL ARE WELCOME!

# Spiritual Care for the Inquiring Mind

## Spotlight on Our Ecumenical Chaplaincies

### Graduating in a Pandemic

BY ANDREW HYDE

Spring is normally the season for convocations here at the University of Guelph.

A few weeks after the dusts of final exams settle, campus is typically stirred up again by a steady flow of gowned and grinning graduates, proud and pacified parents, and feather-festooned faculty. Convocation is a time for celebration and ritual and reflection, a time to be sent into the world from the safety of

a formative community, and it's the closest our secular university comes to an institutionalized sacred moment.

As a chaplain with the Multi-Faith Resource Team, I am sometimes afforded a small role to play in convocation ceremonies, and it truly is an honour to come alongside graduating students as they celebrate their accomplishments, and mark the transition from one season of life to the next.

But there have been no con-

vocation ceremonies at U of G since the start of the pandemic.

Like other curators of community gatherings, the university has had to pivot and find new ways to celebrate significant moments like graduation. And like many of us are finding in other forums, adaptations like branded gift boxes, live-streams, and drive-through ceremonies have been equal parts underwhelming and inspiring.

These past years without convocations have reminded me that we all have a part to play in coming alongside young people, to celebrate and support them, at key moments in their lives. Just because a pandemic interrupts the normal flow of events, it doesn't mean that young people aren't still being formed, or that their needs for supportive communities (particularly communities of faith) are any fewer.

I am thankful for the ways communities of faith have continued to support campus ministry, or even kindled new levels of interest and support,

over the pandemic.

One such community, Arthur United Church, gifted our ministry with a collection of quilts, which we had students pray over and present to our graduating cohort this Spring. Another community, All Saints Lutheran-Anglican in Guelph, has formed a team of campus ministry boosters who are exploring ways their congregation might help meet the pastoral, financial, and spiritual needs of our campus ministry. It is so encouraging, at a time when churches might be tempted to become insular and retreat from missional opportunities, to see these communities reaching out and supporting the chaplaincy work being done at U of G.

One of ECM's graduating students, Rowena Hetherington-Wilson, in reflecting on her time at U of G, describes it as an undergraduate experience she could have never predicted.

"First-year me couldn't even imagine that I'd complete half my degree online," she remarked. "I'm so grateful for

the people and little moments that brought joy, laughter, and fun despite constant change and hard learning. This season really taught me I have more resilience in me than I could have ever imagined and—my goodness—I have amazing people surrounding me and supporting me." Rowena is hoping to begin a Master of Divinity program at the University of Toronto this fall.

As we transition into more open and sustainable ways of living with COVID-19, I pray we'll continue to find new ways of supporting young people with the creativity, timeliness, and grace that God calls forth from us.

To learn more about the Ecumenical Campus Ministry at UofG, and how you might support its work, visit [ecmguelph.org](http://ecmguelph.org) or search for ECMguelph on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

*Andrew Hyde is the Ecumenical Campus Minister, ECM's full-time chaplain at the University of Guelph.*



At the Spring 2022 Grad Panel, Ecumenical Campus Ministry students reflect on their experiences, and are gifted quilts from one of ECM's partner churches.

Photos: Andrew Hyde



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 and receive the link and agenda

Presented by Niagara Huron Anglican Cursillo Secretariat

# Youth Synod Dives Deep into the Housing Crisis

BY SARAH BIRD

Youth and volunteers from parishes across the diocese gathered virtually on Zoom last March to dive deep into the social justice issue of the housing crisis—a theme the youth were truly interested in and had selected during the last Youth Synod gathering.

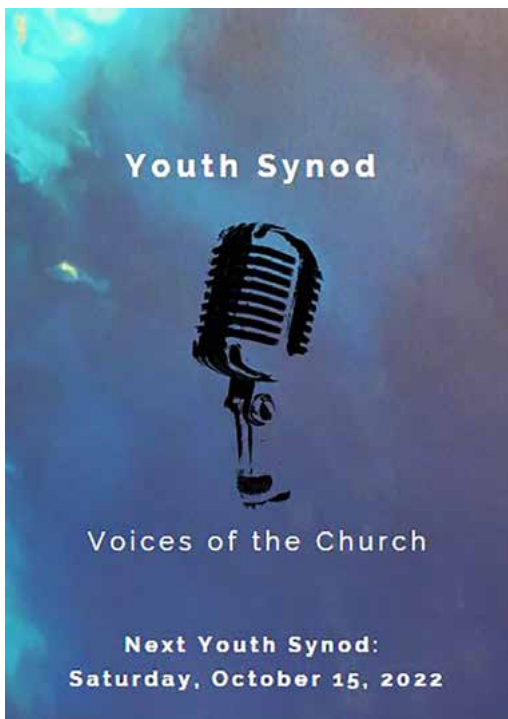
The event started with a morning worship led by youth and the newly ordained Matthew Gillard from St. George's, St. Catharines. The worship beautifully threaded Scripture messages and prayers reminding us to give graciously, that God provides us with all that we need, and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

We were joined by two keynote speakers: Sierra Robertson, from the YWCA transitional housing for adults, and Kait Perkons, from the Good Shepherd Notre Dame House. Sierra and Kait are two alumni youth ministry participants who attended Youth Synod, NYC, and the Youth Leadership Training Program during their adolescent years. Now, as adults, they often volunteer for youth ministry events and programs.

Kait was the first guest speaker to begin answering a plethora of questions in an interview format. She explained that at the Good Shepherd Notre Dame House, her role is to support youth ages 16–21 who are experiencing homelessness and/or need emergency supports.

One of the most talked-about moments of the day was when Kait answered the question: "What is the biggest misconception of people experiencing homelessness?" She responded saying,

"People think of the term homeless as something that is removed from us personally, as if it is something that will not happen to us. What they do not realize is that people you know may be one or two decisions away from a bad situation where they cannot keep their housing. Sometimes it's just really bad luck. Youth are not at the shelter because of their own personal failing or lack of trying; these people are here because something bad happened to them and they just need support to help get them through. This can happen to any of us at



any given time. People experiencing homeless are seen as others, but we need to look at them as our friends and neighbours. This is an important teaching from Jesus; as Christians we must remember to love our neighbours as ourselves."

Sierra Robertson shared her experiences as an employee of three years at the YWCA working in the Adult Transitional Housing Centre. All who were present were taken aback by her explanation of the gender inequalities present within the system. Sierra revealed that there is a large discrepancy in the number of beds available for women. She explained that one of the reasons for this is that abuse and domestic violence force women and their children out of their homes, creating higher precarious housing and homelessness rates amongst women.

Both speakers highlighted hidden homeless or precarious housing. Mary Gordon, a youth ministry volunteer from Church of the Resurrection, was moved by this explanation.

"We probably have all had that one friend who stayed a little longer than we were expecting. Those people who stay a little longer, we typically do not think of it as a homeless situation. Not having a secure place to stay and/or couch surfing is hidden homelessness, often experienced

by youth."

Paige Keller, a youth delegate from St. George's, Guelph, shared this reflection from Youth Synod: "What I learnt and am taking away from Youth Synod is the importance of language. To refer to people without homes as people experienc-

ing homelessness." When asked what your Christian response to the housing crisis would be, Paige answered: "As a parishioner of St. George's, Guelph, I will continue to volunteer at the local soup kitchen and collect supplies and clothing for the shelters and programs in the Guelph community."

Another highlight from Youth Synod was hearing youth delegates voice their frustrations with the clearing of encampments. Our guest speakers explained that the clearing of encampments is not a solution to the housing crisis. People are living in tents because they have nowhere else to go, as the shelters are full. There are several barriers that people face while living on the street as they try to access the supports needed. People are wait-listed for months and are told to call back daily when most of them do not own or have access to phones. Sierra explained, "When we throw away people's belongings, we are throwing away everything they have without giving them a solution." The clearing of encampments usually happens when people call in and complain about not wanting to look at it.

As we reached the end of the

event, there was an overwhelming shared appreciation for the time spent together, our guest speakers, the fruitful dialogue, new learnings, and the opportunity to shine light on this integral social justice issue. The delegates and staff volunteers left Youth Synod with many ways to respond to the housing crisis:

- Drop off supplies to those living in encampments: food, water, hygiene products, money, garbage bags (and help take away their garbage).
- Drop off supplies to local initiatives serving those precariously housed.
- Donate money to local initiatives.
- Follow local community legal aids and community initiatives on social media to stay informed.
- Write to your local governments.
- Be aware of language and join the conversation.
- Pray!

The next Youth Synod is on Saturday, October 15. For more information, please visit <https://niagaraanglican.ca/cyfm/program/youth-synod>.



## Grassyplain After-Funeral Services

### YOU ARE NOT ALONE

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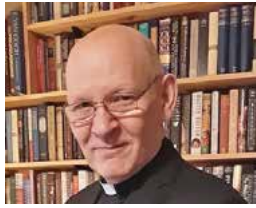
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# The Challenge of Unconditional Love



**BY THE REVEREND MICHAEL COREN**

I married a Canadian and moved to Toronto in 1987. I spoke to my parents in London by phone every month or so, but calls were expensive back then so I was surprised when on one day in the summer of 2001, my mum suddenly telephoned. Dad had had a bad stroke.

Flew over that night, train across the city to the Essex suburb of my birth and upbringing, hug mum, then off to the hospital. There was dad, such a strong

and tough man, suddenly a baby again. Vulnerable, immobile. Good, kind medics told us it was serious, weren't sure what would happen, no positive signs yet.

We sit by his bed, chat, don't know what to do. Then my sister comes in, not knowing what to do either. Then my brother-in-law and niece, the same. Five of us, impotent and ignorant. Then a sixth person enters, and she's different. My younger niece, who bounds in like Disney's Tigger and jumps on the bed. Then cuddles her grandpa, and falls asleep.

Because this is what she does whenever she visits her grandparents' house. Why would a strange place with odd sounds and smells be any different? And then, and then, dad shows emotion. First time in two days. He cries.

He turns his head, eyes seem

to focus, and with superhuman effort says a word. My name. Michael. Then again and again. We call for a doctor, who with pristine innocence says, "This wasn't supposed to happen. It's like a miracle."

I should explain that my niece is what is known as disabled, challenged. She's autistic, which some people find disturbing. Thing is, that disability has liberated her. She loves unconditionally, and in that gift of unconditional love changed our world. My dad had a 90% recovery.

Proof of God and Jesus? Of course not! I may be a Christian, but I'm not a fool. No, I tell this story to remind us of what we're about. Unconditional love.

The problem, of course, is that we live in the midst of Franklin Graham, Patriarch Kirill, clergy abuse scandals, and fierce, crimson red judgmentalism. To be candid, it's sometimes difficult to find the teachings of Yeshua the revolutionary when they're so well hidden behind his followers. Forgive, embrace, include, empathize, judge yourself before others, give away property, turn the world upside down because it's systemically unfair, stand with those who need you the most, be with the lost.

You see, mine is the God of

losers. As Freud said, if we all got what we deserved, we'd get a good beating, and when I consider how I've sometimes behaved over the years I cringe in embarrassment and shame.

I'm not going to argue here the case for Christian belief. I'm privileged to have met many of the most sophisticated and informed Christians and atheists, and both types can make compelling arguments. I prefer Gandhi's reference. "Don't talk about it. The rose doesn't have to propagate its perfume. It just gives it forth, and people are drawn to it. Live it, and people will come to see the source of your power."

What Christianity shouldn't be, but far too often has become, is a moral thermometer.

Consider, for example, the issue of sex. Jesus seems largely indifferent about the subject, and the sin, if we use that word, around sexuality is surely abuse and betrayal. To use another person merely for one's own pleasure, without care or concern for them. Or in adultery, which is more about the heart than the body, and can shatter someone's trust and self-worth. To reduce all of this to sex alone is simplistic and crass, but that's what we see so often in Christian circles.

We've found another culprit, so let's all feel good about ourselves as we march through the village and scream their name.

Jesus roared the opposite path. Treat others as you would yourself be treated. To do otherwise is worse than base hypocrisy, it's a rejection of the very Christian symbiosis, the call to gracious community, that would make the Beatitudes livable.

He died alone and in agony. He owned no property, criticized the wealthy and powerful, gathered the rejected and marginalized around him, detested violence and selfishness, and exposed judgmentalism for the fatal darkness it is. The God of losers, the God of change, the God of children in hospital wards who in their brokenness transform everything and everyone.

That's my Christ. But if we fail to listen to and fail to try to live by Jesus's breathtakingly radical teachings, his words are made empty and his ministry becomes a failure. It's not easy. In fact, it's incredibly difficult. It's supposed to be.

*Michael Coren is leading a tour to the Holy Land in September. For more information, visit [ihtours.com/tour/reverend-michael-coren-2/](http://ihtours.com/tour/reverend-michael-coren-2/)*



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## Parish MAP Process

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

The "action" part of the Mission Action Plan is crucial. The pathway that the MAP process is helping St. John's develop is leading us to deeper participation in God's redemptive work in the world. This is, indeed, something to be excited about.

For congregations interested in or planning to start the MAP process, here is some advice based on our experience at St. John's:

- Build a strong team to lead the MAP process. Skills that are important to have represented on your leadership team: facilitation, organization, analysis, active listening, ability to work collaboratively, and commitment.
- Choose one person to act as chair of the leadership team, preferably someone with strong organizational skills. Empower and support them to keep the MAP process on track and moving forward.
- Review the MAP facilitation guide several times. It

contains a lot of information that takes time to digest. If something suggested in the guide will not work in your context, adapt it. For example, we divided into small groups of four to five people for some parts of the conversation because we felt it would give more people the opportunity to speak even though the guide did not suggest it.

- Do your best to create a spirit of openness in the conversations. You want people to share honestly, so naming outright that all feedback—even difficult feedback—is welcome is important.
- While the MAP process might seem a bit daunting at first, do not be afraid! Once you start moving forward, it easily picks up momentum and the feedback you receive will encourage you to keep going.

*Emily Hill is a member of the MAP Leadership Team, St. John the Evangelist, Hamilton.*

**I am grateful for my family. I am also grateful for my faith.**

**You don't have to choose. Support a charity and the ones you love in your Will.**

To learn more contact your church office or go to [WillPower.ca](http://WillPower.ca).



# Basic Income Now for the Ontario Election

BY KERRY LUBRICK

This is an important time to advocate for a basic income, as the Ontario provincial election is fast approaching and at the federal level the Liberal and NDP parties have joined forces. After the last provincial election in 2018, the newly elected Progressive Conservative government cancelled the Basic Income Pilot in Hamilton, Brantford, Lyndsay, and Thunder Bay. We now have the opportunity to raise the issue of a basic income again as each of us has a democratic right to vote in the Ontario election. We collectively have a voice and the ability to identify a basic income as the foundation of a sustainable economy, and a just and healthier society for everyone.

## Why should you advocate for a basic income?

In May 2020, the bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada wrote a letter to the prime minister in support of a Guaranteed Basic Income. They wrote: "Canada needs guaranteed basic income for all. We need it today."

In a recent article written by The Reverend Deacon Rod



McDowell for the *Niagara Anglican*, he drew attention to an important quote from Bishop Bell's reading of Archbishop Rowan Williams: "To be a Christian is to be in politics—which is the art of humans living together—and people of faith have perspective on how we ought to be living and working together. We have an interest in seeing deep and authentic humanity being nourished. And we have a duty to challenge whenever that deep and authentic way of living is sidelined or diminished whether it's by inhumane policies or inadequate educational provision or whatever. The political is inevitable."

As we are reminded addition-

ally by the work of the Diocese of Niagara's Anti-Racism Working Group, and especially at this Easter season, our baptismal vows commit us to:

- Seeking and serving Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself, with God's help;
- Striving for justice and peace among all people, and respecting the dignity of every human being, with God's help;
- Striving to safeguard the integrity of God's creation and respecting, sustaining, and renewing the life of the earth, with God's help.

## Our political response to this call

In response to this call, the Basic Income Now campaign

is a collaboration between Ontario's and Canada's leading basic income organizations: Ontario Basic Income Network, Basic Income Canada Network, Basic Income Canada Youth Network, Coalition Canada, and UBI Works. Together with grassroots organizations like Basic Income Hamilton, we are mobilizing individuals to raise the awareness of the need for a basic income. We understand that a basic income would be best created and implemented at a national level; however, the provincial government/candidates for the provincial parliament can make a commitment to work towards a Federal Basic Income Guarantee. This would include:

- Advocating and working with the federal government on the development and implementation of a Basic Income Guarantee; and
  - Shifting existing provincial income support system toward basic income principles that require less conditionality while providing recipients a livable income with more autonomy.
- As an advocate with the basic income movement, I am currently the facilitator of the Ontario Basic Income Network

Coordinating Team and chair of the basic income election campaign. I am also a member of Coalition Canada and Basic Income Hamilton. In all of these volunteer roles, we are working together to mobilize people to use their voice in support of a basic income.

## What can you do?

1. Join the Basic Income Hamilton mailing list: <https://www.basicincomemhamilton.ca/#take-action>
2. Subscribe to the Ontario Basic Income Network newsletters at [https://www.obin.ca/take\\_action](https://www.obin.ca/take_action)
3. Monitor the Basic Income Now website: <https://www.basicincomenow.ca/>
4. Connect with candidates and ask them to take a pledge to support a basic income
5. Attend local candidates debates
6. Attend the Ontario Day of Action in Toronto on Saturday, May 14
7. Obtain a lawn sign and/or merchandise (T-shirts, hoodies, stickers, etc.); connect with [kerryllubrick@gmail.com](mailto:kerryllubrick@gmail.com) to obtain a sign
8. Vote on June 2 for candidate champions of a basic income

# Nimble Walking the Way of Love

BY THE VENERABLE DIANA LEIKER

Greetings from the Episcopal Dioceses of Western New York and Northwest Pennsylvania!

First, I want to express that it has been my honor and my absolute delight to meet weekly for almost two years now with deacons from the Niagara diocese and the partnership dioceses in the States. The bonds of friendship that have developed around our shared ministries during a difficult time are nothing short of precious. Out of the darkness came light!

Let me talk about my role as archdeacon and what the deacons are doing in this time of transition within the church, from pandemic to post-pandemic times, from times of social injustice ignorance to times of being "woken up", from times of full-time rectors in each parish to part-time work-

ing priests. As the church has changed, so has the role of the deacon. We are slowly evolving and finding our place within this new landscape. I find that my job is to listen, encourage, listen, walk alongside, listen, convene, listen ... you get the idea.

With so many Episcopal churches functioning without a priest, the role of the deacon has become more complicated. We have always been called on to lead worship and administer the Eucharist from pre-consecrated elements when a priest is not available. Most of the time, it is within our own parish; however, in more recent times, we have been asked to lead worship occasionally in other congregations.

With many smaller congregations feeling isolated, the deacon is becoming a significant part of a process to bring groups of people together through ministry work in the wider community and opportunities

for study. We are no longer just visible in one parish, and some deacons are taking on the role of "deanery deacon", ministering to a group of churches. My role is becoming one of helping deacons discern and grow into their new callings. We empower the laity to be leaders of studies and prayer services, as we ourselves lead and teach.

We have deacons assisting in the organization of the collection and support for the Afghan Evacuee Resettlement project, writing grants that aid refugees in resettlement, socialization, and acclimation in the Buffalo area.

Some Deacons are passionate about creation care. They are working on a diocesan committee, looking into ways to bring alternative liturgies and forms of spirituality that focus on our connection with nature, in new ways. They also sign petitions, preach, and march.



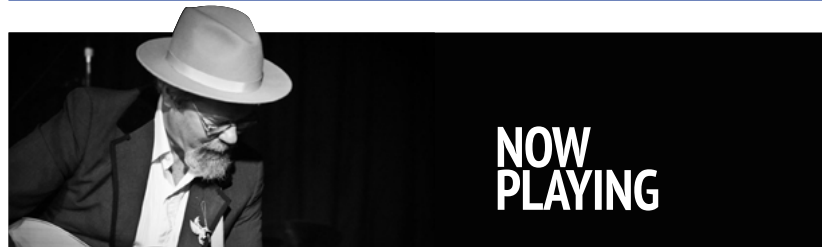
The very complicated issues surrounding racism and white elitism are also involving deacons in the dioceses. I am personally on a commission that has been working to find ways to encourage all parishes to enter into the tough conversations that will lead us to a place of reconciliation with people of color.

Pastoral care brings its own challenges as more churches are without priests and populations are aging. The deacons have stepped up to assist other congregations with visitations to their parishioners, bringing God's love, communion, and a smile. Some lead worship monthly or weekly in facilities

and are waiting for the pandemic restrictions to end so they can begin again. Prison ministry is poised also. A new "parish nurse" ministry among nine churches has begun, and deacons are involved as spiritual support for aspirants in the ordination process.

I am so proud of all the work the deacons are doing, but especially how they embody God's incarnate love and represent the church in the community by walking the Way of Love, as Presiding Bishop Michael Curry would say.

*Diana Leiker is an Archdeacon in the Diocese of Western New York.*



## Seeing and Seeing Again

BY THE VENERABLE MAX WOOLAVER

*"God does not wait until we die to begin this process of opening to the full vista of God's Glory awaiting us beyond the veil of our dying." —James Finley, "Turning to the Mystics" podcast*

The contemporary rediscovery of Christian mysticism is of singular and dynamic importance. The magisterial themes of the best of Christianity as a force for personal, social, and institutional renewal can be traced back to the origins of the Christian mystical tradition.

We use the word "mystical" to refer to knowledge which originates in God. We use the word "mystic" to refer to someone who carries, cherishes, and witnesses to this God-given knowledge. Within Christian life the bearer of this knowledge, which is, in effect, a self-transcending love, is Jesus of Nazareth—the risen and ascended Incarnate Word of God.

The ascension of the Incarnate Word of God is in itself an inspired and distilled expression of the complete mystery of Christ's presence within history. The ascension is at the same time a cogent expression of humanity's birth within God. In God's good measure of time, humanity is now and forever drawn "upward" into the sphere of divine grace. The entirety of biblical revelation orbits around the sublime mystery of the divine-human encounter. The human journey and the place of our habitation are themselves sacralised, made holy, in the

wordless dignity of this divine conversation.

Having said these things, it is critical to see the roots of Christian mysticism (a knowledge born in God) at the heart of our daily lives. God is at the heart of the many finite and temporal ways we know and love one another. To paraphrase James Finley: "God is present in our first stirrings of love ... our loves for one another are but echoes of God's love for us all."

Like the wind stirring the treetops, our love, in turn, stirs up our hunger for deeper knowledge, deeper experience. Can one truly love without hungering for more? This restlessness is the living sacrament of God's indwelling! "Our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee," wrote St. Augustine.

I see "God-knowledge" everywhere in daily life. At the kitchen sink watching the dawn rise; standing still in the forest as the stillness becomes teeming with silent and not-so-silent movement; complete courtesy in a complete stranger; the humility of the dying; the courage of the living; in global anguish, angst, and rage in the face of outbursts of human-to-human cruelty. The entire arc of human experience would be utterly unintelligible without Divine Consciousness informing the simplest act of kindness and

selfless thought.

Even the profound practice of "holy reading", known as *lectio divina*, is at the end of the day simply the practice of an attentive heart. The mystic would say: as we gaze upon the world, we come to know that we too are held in the gaze of God. All things, the mystic would say, are held in a kind of "reciprocity"—as we give, so we receive; as we surrender, so we stand.

All these things, expressed so often in the language of paradox, are only expressions of our experience of the continual round of daily life—with one significant difference: the mystic is continually observing, always watching, bringing care to each action and reaction, drawing divine nurture from the "daily bread" of our life together.

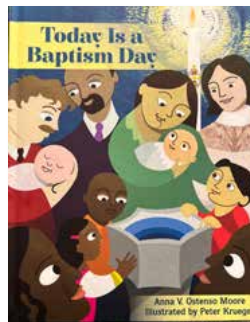
Jesus said: "In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day, you will know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you" (John 14:19-20). Along with the ecstatic cry of St. Paul, "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me", we see the living origins of Christian mysticism.

To close this brief thought where we began: "God does not wait until we die to begin this process of opening to the full vista of God's Glory awaiting us beyond the veil of our dying."



## New Baptismal Resource for the Lending Library

*Today Is a Baptism Day* by Anna V. Ostenso can now be found



in the diocesan lending library. This children's book is brilliantly written and illustrated through a refreshing inclusive lens. The writer, who is an Episcopal priest, beautifully depicts the journey of baptism by highlighting the family, church community, sacred texts, sacraments, and living-out of baptismal vows. The incredibly talented Peter Krueger, who illustrated the book, has been a Godly Play

storyteller since 2012. His artwork captures the diversity of all God's children made perfectly as they are. The book includes same-sex couples, people of different ethnicities, colours, and genders, and people living with disabilities. We highly recommend that you check out *Today is a Baptism Day* if you are interested or curious about baptism and faith formation.

The lending library has several other resources available for borrowing, as well, including: labyrinths, puppets (both people and animals), vacation bible school kits, Sunday school lessons, faith formation practices for children and youth, congregational support resources, and much more!

For more information, please email CYFM program consultant Sarah Bird at [sarah.bird@niagaraanglican.ca](mailto:sarah.bird@niagaraanglican.ca).



Above: Some of the puppets available for loan from the lending library.



Right: Two of the labyrinths available.

### Niagara Anglican Deadlines and Submission Guidelines

#### Deadlines:

September – July 29

October – August 26

November – September 23

#### 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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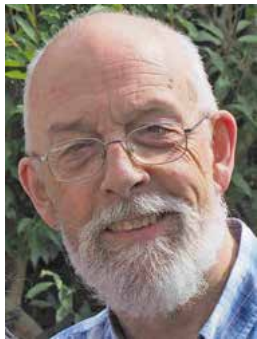
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**In other words . . .**

# Spiritual Formation and Learning the Cello

**BY JOHN BOWEN**

I don't often read books more than once, though I feel I should. C. S. Lewis said it's the mark of an educated person—though that's not the only reason I want to do it! One that I did read twice recently is Rowan Williams' *Tokens of Trust, lectures on the Creed*. I know, I know, that doesn't sound too exciting, but Rowan Williams could make the telephone directory (remember those?) sound

interesting.

One image he uses has stuck with me and continues to make me think. In the section on the Incarnation, he talks about Jacqueline du Pré, the brilliant mid-20th century cellist, whose career was tragically cut short by multiple sclerosis when she was only 28. She was particularly famous for her playing of Elgar's Cello Concerto. (You can still see it on YouTube.) In fact, one of her teachers, Pablo Casals, vowed he would never play it again once he had heard her, simply because her performance was so perfect.

Rowan Williams compares du Pré's playing to the incarnation of Jesus. He says: "Here is someone who is completely themselves, free and independent, and yet for this time the whole of their being, their life, their freedom, their skill, is taken up with this mysterious, different thing that is the work to be brought to life ... Jesus is performing God's love, God's pur-

pose, without a break, without a false note, without a stumble; yet he is never other than himself, with all that makes him distinctly human taken up with this creative work."

The person who wrote the music and the person playing the cello are perfectly one. And yet, at the same time, she is totally herself. Nobody but Jacqueline du Pré plays the piece quite like that. You can see the parallel with the life of Jesus: as Williams says, "There is nothing in this performance that blocks out the composer." This is part of what we mean when we say that Jesus was "fully God and fully human".

My eight-year-old granddaughter has been learning the cello for two years—a quarter of her life. Is she going to be a Jacqueline du Pré? Probably not. But she has a wonderful Suzuki teacher, who makes even the technical exercises fun. And a couple of times a year, parents

and grandparents get to attend a public recital. Recently, we were treated to a solo performance of Purcell's *Rigadoon*, which was, well, superb. Maybe I am wrong to say she could never be a Jacqueline du Pré. But I could be biased.

And so to spiritual formation. Let me start with a bold statement: the heart of spiritual formation is to be made like Jesus. Here it is, in black and white: "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us" (Ephesians 5:1-2). Frankly, we kid ourselves if we think the goal is anything less. And St. John goes so far as to promise that the goal is attainable—in the next world, at least—"What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is" (1 John 3:2).

We tend to think of spiritual formation as learning different methods of prayer, or getting

to know the Bible better. And—don't misunderstand me—those things are good and necessary. I need to keep working on them myself. But those things are not what it's all about. They are simply a means to an end. They are like the technical exercises—the scales, arpeggios, and what-not—that are so hard (and often boring!) for musical beginners. Mastering them gives us the necessary mental and spiritual equipment with which to tackle some of the harder melodies of the Christian repertoire—compassion, forgiveness, generosity, tranquillity, risk-taking, and (dare I say it?) even things like evangelism. In other words, they help us towards Jesus-likeness.

We will never be the spiritual equivalent of the Jacqueline du Pré of the spiritual life. There was only one of those. But if we practise hard enough that we can manage *Rigadoon*, I think our heavenly Parent will be delighted and applaud wildly.

# Caring For Our Beautiful Churches

**BY SUE CARSON AND BOB CHOWN****OUTSIDE ...**

To celebrate the Season of Creation in September, Climate Justice Niagara would like to showcase some of the amazing church gardens that you have created around the diocese.

If you would like to get involved, please take a photo of your parish rain, pollinator, vegetable, or children's garden and send it to [Rosemaryanstey3@gmail.com](mailto:Rosemaryanstey3@gmail.com).

We need the photo to be of good quality; include a couple of sentences about the garden. It would be nice to see people working! Please include the

Vegetable gardens at Grace, Waterdown.

Photo: Sue Carson

name of the photographer. We will try to include as many photos as possible. Entries need to be received by the end of June. Thank you!

**... and INSIDE**

In February, Climate Justice Niagara hosted a webinar to explain how churches could reduce their carbon footprint as mandated in the 2021 synod motion.

The reason for measuring our greenhouse gas emissions is that it will help us make good decisions and become more faithful stewards of our world.

We have created a walk-through energy audit that is easy to use and can be completed by two or three "green" team members. It takes about two hours to complete, plus some time to collect information on gas and hydro usage from monthly bills. The next thing that is needed is to create a five-year plan for reducing emissions; this will involve researching the age of appliances and HVAC equipment, so you are prepared for possible replacement dates.

Finding solutions to reducing our CO<sub>2</sub> footprint is not easy, but it starts with establish-



St. James, Dundas. Photo: Sue Carson

ing a baseline, which is what the energy audits will do. For example, as part of the audit you will collect your total annual energy consumption. If you then take your total cubic metres of natural gas and multiply it by 0.00192, you will have the total tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from your building's gas consumption. This part of the audit can be done for you after you submit the forms.

In terms of electricity, Ontario has a low average CO<sub>2</sub> content in our electrical generation, but it varies. During the daytime (especially in the hottest and coldest months), additional electrical load is often met with CO<sub>2</sub>-intensive natural gas generation, whereas overnight we have low carbon generation available. Accordingly, as we look to solutions for reducing carbon emissions, we want to do three things: 1) look at reducing energy use; 2) switch from gas to electricity; and 3) where possible, move electricity consumption to overnight.

Thank you to the 20 parishes that have started collecting their building data and have

submitted results! We will have some initial findings and recommendations to share in the coming months. We hope that other parishes that were not ready to commit earlier in the year—and we understand the constraints and extra work that COVID restrictions have imposed on you all—might be ready to do the energy audit very soon. Some of the data collection can be done during the summer months, and then once winter returns you can check for heat loss around windows and doors.

Climate Justice Niagara hopes that every parish can complete an energy audit before the end of 2022.

Please contact either of us if you need more information or have questions; we want to try and make the procedure as easy as possible. Thank you!

For more information, please email Sue Carson (St. James, Dundas) at [d.carson@sympatico.ca](mailto:d.carson@sympatico.ca) or Bob Chown (Church of the Incarnation, Oakville) at [bchown@gmail.com](mailto:bchown@gmail.com).