

Held in the Spirit's Tether of Love

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A section of the Anglican Journal



NIAGARA ANGLICAN

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OCTOBER 2022

Annual Synod Set to Gather in November

Theme is *God's Church for God's Mission*

THE VENERABLE BILL MOUS

The theme for the 148th Synod of the Diocese of Niagara has been announced. "God's Church for God's Mission" is the theme chosen by Bishop Susan Bell, drawing inspiration from the theme of the recent Lambeth Conference. This year the synod will take place November 4-5, 2022.

Throughout the synod, members will explore and pray on this theme alongside our diocesan Mission Action Plan and Lambeth Calls. The Book of 1 Peter, the biblical foundation of the Lambeth Conference, will also be used as a lens for reflection throughout the synod. "It's a book that raises an utterly compelling and inspiring vision of God's kingdom," says Archbishop of Canterbury



**GOD'S
CHURCH
FOR
GOD'S
MISSION**
The Synod of the Diocese of Niagara
November 4-5 2022

Justin Welby. "Through our faith in Jesus Christ, Peter encourages us to live lives of witness, hope and holiness as God's chosen people."

Synods are a key structure in the governance of our diocese,

but they are much more than that. The synod seeks to build up the whole Church through prayer, story-sharing, relationship-building, discernment, and decision-making. This year synod will convene virtually on Friday, November 4 and in person at the Burlington Convention Centre on Saturday, November 5.

On Saturday, Bishop Susan Bell will share her charge to members, reflecting on the synod's theme and drawing our attention to the ways the Spirit is working in and through us in Niagara.

Over the course of the Saturday, there will be several presentations about our shared ministry as a diocese. Members of synod will hear how, through the diocesan Mission Action Plan, we are enlivening our faith, reshaping our culture and structures for mission, and fostering God's justice, with particular attention to environmental action in response to the climate crisis.

Archbishop Anne Germond, metropolitan of Ontario and



Sarah Bird, Program Consultant—Children, Youth, and Family Ministry, delivers her report to Synod 2019

Photo: Contributed

archbishop of Algoma and Moosonee, will be our very special guest during the synod. Archbishop Anne's pastoral and visionary leadership has been a blessing to our province, especially during the pandemic, and we will be richly blessed by her presence among us at synod.

The business parts of the synod will include receiving the 2021 auditor's report, consideration of the 2023 diocesan budget, as well as some changes to the canons.

This year only Synod Council representatives will be elected (no elections for Provincial or General Synod delegates are required) and this will once again happen using online voting in advance of the synod.

To learn more about the upcoming synod, be sure to review the convening circular which includes all synod reports and resolutions, on the Diocesan Synod webpage (<https://niagara-anglican.ca/synod/2022>).

In the coming weeks, I would also invite you to hold the mem-



Archbishop Anne Germond, metropolitan of Ontario and archbishop of Algoma and Moosonee, will be our very special guest.

Photo: Contributed

bers of synod in your prayers as they discern how best to equip our diocese—and our parishes—to be a Church for God's mission!



Bishop Susan Bell delivers the Charge to Synod 2019

Photo: Contributed

Lambeth: Held in the Spirit's Tether of Love

THE RIGHT REVEREND SUSAN BELL

The Lambeth Conference is a big event in a bishop's life. Depending on which end of the decade in which it occurs, you're either about to go, or have it to look forward to. In my case, it was the latter and after two postponements, it has finally happened.

Over 1,500 bishops and spouses from 165 countries gathered at the University of Kent this summer to attend the Lambeth Conference, the global once-in-a-decade gathering of Bishops across the Anglican Communion. We came to walk, listen, and witness together. The theme for the conference was "God's Church for God's World." The aim and goal of Lambeth is to gather the Anglican Communion and to work together for the sake of the world that God so loves. Through bible study, prayer, worship, and fellowship, we tried to learn how to respond to the needs of the 21st century world.

The business of Lambeth

After a two-day retreat on the book of 1 Peter, we began the work of the conference. The plenaries were eye-opening, the biblical exposition and keynote talks by the Archbishop of Canterbury were superb, the ecumenical guests were eloquent and brave, and the worship was heart-achingly beautiful at times—particularly the opening Eucharist.

We learned, discussed, and prayed about many things: Mission and Evangelism, Safe Church, Anglican Identity, Reconciliation, Christian Unity, The Environment and Sustainable Development, Interfaith Relations, and Discipleship. Flowing from these themes were the "Lambeth Calls." These were shared declarations, affirmations, and calls for action to the Church that will shape the Anglican Communion in the decade ahead.

We had time to gather to get to know each other at receptions, evening meals, and in social spaces. The Welby's graciously hosted us all at the Old Palace in Canterbury—it has housed all Archbishops of Canterbury



Scenes during the service as Bishops, their spouses and invited guests attend the Opening Service at Canterbury Cathedral during the 2022 Lambeth Conference.

Photo: Richard Washbrooke



Above: Zechariah Manyok Biar, bishop of Wanglei, South Sudan and Bishop Susan Bell, Canada pose for a photograph in one of the sound booths in the media centre at the University of Kent during the 2022 Lambeth Conference in the United Kingdom

Right: The symbolic tree planting ceremony at the Environmental and Sustainable Development day at Lambeth Palace during the 2022 Lambeth Conference.

since the 11th century. As the newly appointed co-chair for the global Anglican-Methodist Coordinating Committee I was invited to attend the Nikean Club reception for ecumenism, alongside The Patriarch of Jerusalem and other guests from the global church.

Women well-represented

I was proud to be one of 97 female bishops at a reception to celebrate and support the female bishops in the Anglican Communion. In 2008, only 16 female bishops attended Lambeth. In 1998, only a brave 6 did so. Of course, Primate Linda Nichols was one of those early female bishops. She was duly honoured within that group at the reception—and represented Canada so well throughout the conference. It was an incredible moment to watch her concelebrate at the closing Eucharist with Archbishop Thabo Makgoba—the first time at Lambeth that a woman has ever celebrated the Eucharist!

The climate crisis made real

The day that the Welby's entertained 1,500 for lunch at Lambeth Palace was particularly important. It was dedicated to learning about the climate crisis grounded in the lived experience of those with whom we broke bread. At my table were couples from around the world dealing with the consequences of the climate crisis. One couple

from Madagascar shared about the constant cyclones and long drought they are experiencing. From Pakistan, a couple spoke about the impact of political failure and devastating flooding—fully a third of Pakistan is under water as I write. A couple from South Sudan shared about the flooding of the Nile River, which has created a tense political atmosphere and rising tensions over access to fresh water in the region among those who share that precious resource.

It was a humbling and convicting day—comfortable and safe as we are in Niagara. My job was to listen and to pray and then to ask how we could help. We were invited to take part in the launch of the Anglican Communion Forest, which is a project with real impact. I left that day knowing first-hand the impact of the climate crisis and that our Church has a crucial role to play in protecting God's creation.

Study of Scripture

If you asked me what the most important part of the Lambeth Conference was, I would have to say that it was the Bible study groups. As all of us know that when we gather to study scripture, when we speak about its meaning and importance in our lives, special things happen—relationships form, the understanding of context grows,

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Photos: Neil Turner

Held in the Spirit's Tether of Love

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

concern and care for each other blossoms, and gospel friendship is established. The Holy Spirit wove her love and warmth among us and we truly became a Communion in miniature. I was deeply blessed, and educated by my Bible study companions—bishops from Liberia, Wales, South Sudan, West Virginia, and Greece. Some will be lifelong friends, while others were agents of the Holy Spirit

teaching me important things in that moment. Each person was grounded in the experience of Lambeth and the power of the Gospel in real circumstances and in real peoples' lives and I will be ever grateful for their company during the conference.

Learning to disagree well

If it all sounds wonderful, that's because it was. However, this does not mean that it was easy.

In Bible study groups, in discussion groups, and in fellowship, we had difficult conversations. At times it was tense—it was emotionally and spiritually exhausting. Some bishops found it impossible to maintain communion, which was a visible sign of division and a cause of pain and anguish for all of us. At times we argued, other times we listened deeply—at all times we were held in the Spirit's tether.



Above: Bishop Susan Bell takes part in a press conference in the media centre at the University of Kent during the 2022 Lambeth Conference.

Left: The women bishops pose for their group photograph during the 2022 Lambeth Conference at the University of Kent in Canterbury, United Kingdom.

Photos Neil Turner

Right: Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and his wife Caroline Welby on the River Thames en route to Canterbury after the Environmental and Sustainable Development day at Lambeth Palace during the 2022 Lambeth Conference.

Photo: Andrew Baker



Bishop Susan Bell shares a laugh during a break in proceedings. Photo: Neil Turner

With the guidance and support of the Archbishop of Canterbury, we disagreed well. He led us to a place of acceptance of the diversity of views on the question of same-sex marriage within our Communion. Archbishop Welby did this grounded in an interpretation of 1 Peter that was faithful and grace-filled. This process and result, to me, was a miracle! It also proved to me the viability and the vitality of the Anglican Communion.

In the midst of all this, I had a precious experience. Two journalists observed myself and Bishop Zechariah Monyot Biar from South Sudan, speaking fiercely one afternoon. What looked like an argument was really Bishop Zechariah and I speaking from our hearts and contexts about same-sex marriage. We disagreed then and we will continue to disagree but we understand each other's realities far better now. Bishop Zechariah and I later had the privilege of being interviewed by the BBC to tell the story of how, through difficult conversation, through bearing with one another, and through hearing each other, we became friends—and more than friends—siblings in Christ. I believe that this experience was emblematic of the conference itself. I am grateful to God—and the Diocese of Niagara—for the opportunity to represent the Niagara region and to have had this experience.

Unity in diversity

Years ago, I was so captivated by the idea of the Anglican Communion that I chose this Church to be my own. I loved the idea of a church that transcended national boundaries, that lived according to the principles of unity in diversity, that embraced that genius principle of reception that allows us to do new things—to hear the call of God to be prophetic and brave. I was enthralled with the idea of nearly every country, race, gender, and language finding a place within this particular expression of the body of Christ. I have wondered over the years if that idea would become tarnished by the reality—especially recently. But it wasn't. If anything, it became the opposite—burnished.

I am newly inspired by our determination to embrace unity over uniformity. We fight so hard to stay together. That's worth a great deal in a world that seems bent on the destruction of beautiful, complicated, whole things. I am inspired by the priorities that were established as a global church at Lambeth. I look forward to sharing and exploring these with you at Synod and beyond because, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we have work to do—locally in our parishes, in our diocese, and nationally in order to contribute meaningfully to becoming God's Church for God's World!

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Creating Pockets of Community in an Isolated World

THE REVEREND TOM VAUGHAN

There are a lot of studies coming out now about the impact of isolation. In the last two years, we have seen a breakdown in the normal way of relating to each other. A number of years ago, we were used to a variety of social circles—from family and close friends, to our church community, to friends and neighbours, to moms and dads at the soccer field and the hockey rink. All of these circles have been changed and become smaller.

The Bible teaches us from the first chapter in Genesis that we are made in God's image. We are designed for relationship with God and with others to work to bring the ways of heaven to earth in the realization of the Kingdom of God among us as followers of Jesus.

At Holy Trinity in Welland, we sought to respond to the isolation we saw by creating pockets of community. We ran an initial Alpha online program to train the leaders of the parish to run the program. We then opened up the program to the community, offering a space

for exploring the basics of the Christian faith and a safe place for the questions people have about Christianity. What has resulted is a group of people who continued to meet after Alpha was over!

This group is now watching the television series *The Chosen*, all about the life of Jesus and his followers. Group members will view an episode on their own and then come together on Zoom to discuss it. The group is made up of people from all over.

What we are seeing is that people are connecting more widely to Holy Trinity's ministry in a variety of ways because of creative approaches like this

to alleviate isolation. This is what happens when we provide people with the aroma of the Christian faith in a community that seeks to learn to be followers of Jesus.

All of this started from running the Alpha program at Holy Trinity. As our parishes engage the Parish Mission Action Planning process, consider how you might think about creating new pockets of community in a world of tremendous isolation.

To learn more about the work of Alpha in the diocese, and how your church could create doors to faith, email Tom at tvaughangs@gmail.com.



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A Canticle for Jennifer

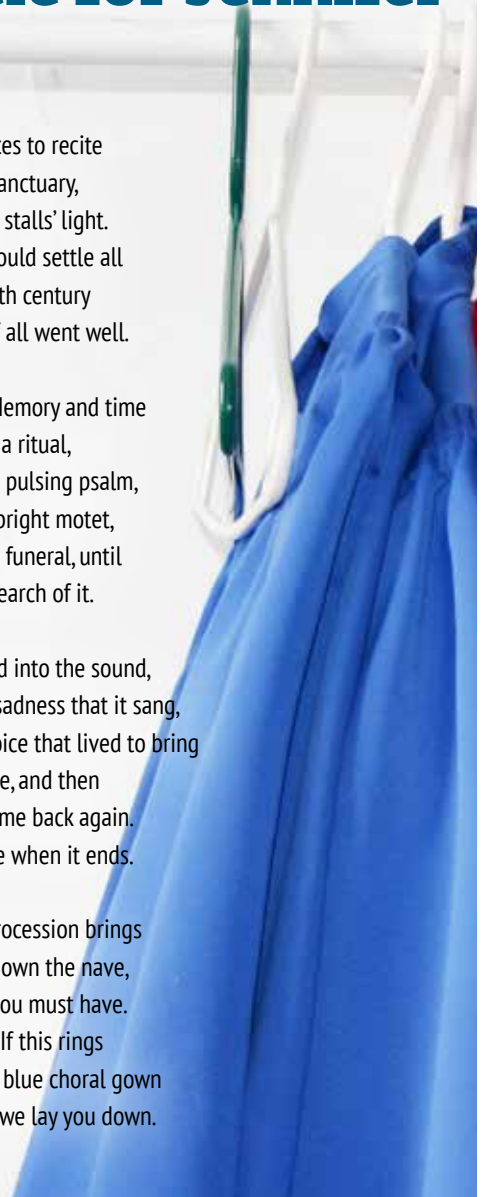
HAMISH GUTHRIE

Rehearsing, we'd take places to recite music to shadows in the sanctuary, dark rafters over us, in the stalls' light. The discipline of sound would settle all to listening to the sixteenth century come back in our voices, if all went well.

Good nights felt echoes. Memory and time rehearsed the progress of a ritual, followed the hill path of a pulsing psalm, combined the voices in a bright motet, poured hymns, practised a funeral, until music forgot the time in search of it.

Now you have disappeared into the sound, a voice that weighed the sadness that it sang, schooled in the score, a voice that lived to bring a line to its crescendo, fade, and then to feel the bright motif come back again. And music makes a silence when it ends.

So now in sound a slow procession brings due mourning ceremony down the nave, offering the ritual which you must have. Our coming is your going. If this rings true you are wearing your blue choral gown and stones are singing as we lay you down.



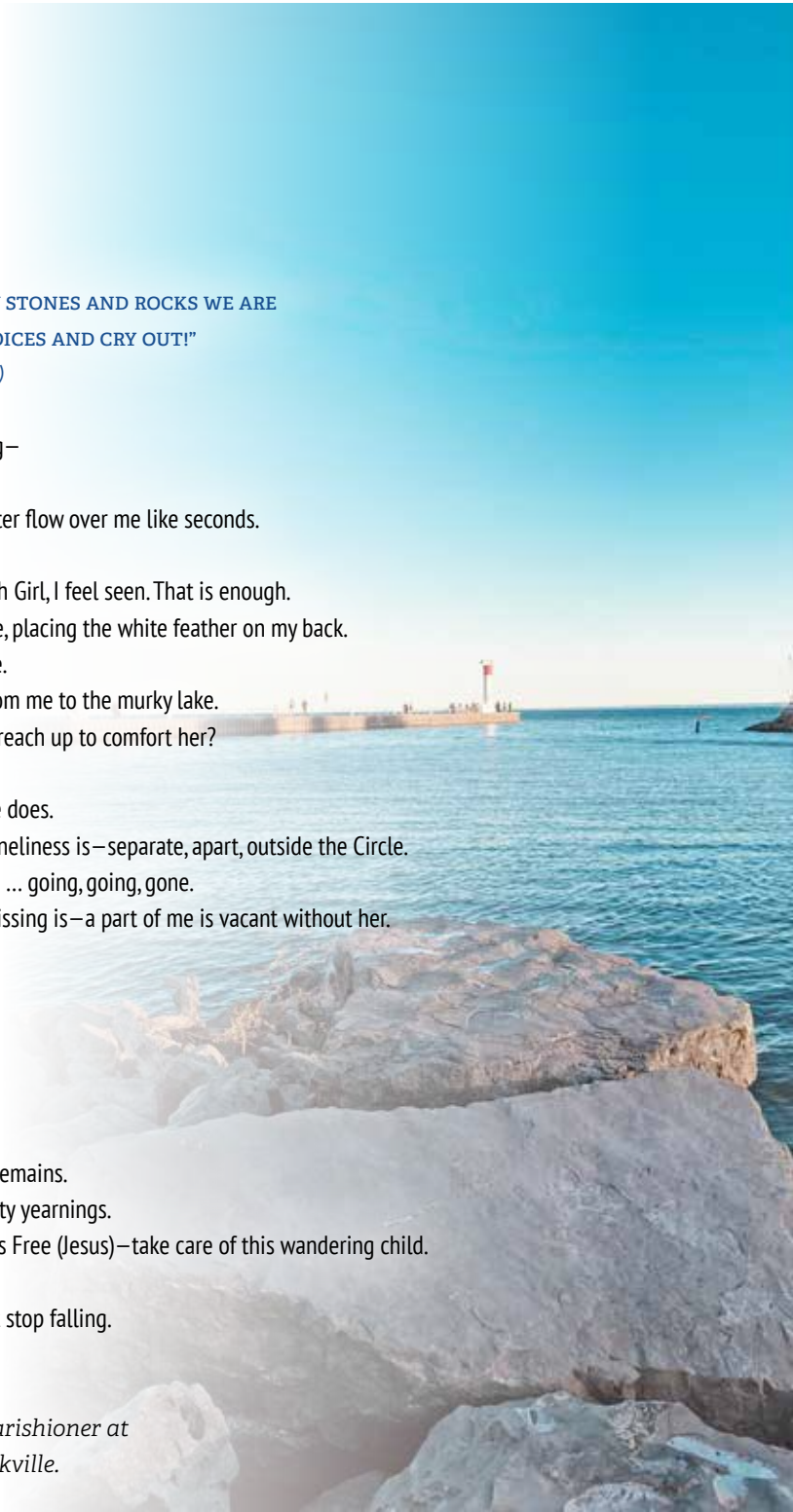
Lake Rock

NANCY COOMBS

"IF THEY WERE SILENCED, THE VERY STONES AND ROCKS WE ARE WALKING ON WOULD LIFT THEIR VOICES AND CRY OUT!"
Luke 19:40 (First Nations Version)

I am rock, waiting, watching, wondering—
 Why can't rocks cry?
 Lake's edge is where I live. Years of water flow over me like seconds.
 Each day Girl runs to me—
 To everyone else I am invisible but with Girl, I feel seen. That is enough.
 She bows down to Creator, dripping life, placing the white feather on my back.
 I listen for her words—they never come.
 But silence is loud, as her tears flow from me to the murky lake.
 I am rock, only receiving ... why can't I reach up to comfort her?
 I like Girl being here.
 Will she take the feather with her? She does.
 When she leaves, I understand what loneliness is—separate, apart, outside the Circle.
 I hear Girl's heart, missing her relatives ... going, going, gone.
 When she leaves, I understand what missing is—a part of me is vacant without her.
 Turbulent waves speak my pain.
 Only the lake knows, rocks do cry.
 Water below, hear us!
 Sky above, find us!
 Great Spirit all around, fill us ...
 Ancient souls were here first
 But the water, where I live with them, remains.
 It never stops moving, cradling our misty yearnings.
 Until Girl comes back, I tell Creator Sets Free (Jesus)—take care of this wandering child.
 And me.
 The Earth catches her tears that at last stop falling.
 It rains—we are one.

Nancy Coombs is a writer and parishioner at St. Jude's Anglican Church in Oakville.



Taizé Services Provide Space for Worship during Pandemic

BEV GROOMBRIDGE

Every Tuesday at 3:00 p.m., The Church of Our Saviour The Redeemer, Stoney Creek, holds a Taizé service. For those unfamiliar, Taizé worship involves sung and chanted prayers, meditation, a period of silence, liturgical readings, and icons. Singing is one of the most essential elements of worship. Short songs, repeated again and again, give it a meditative character.

Our Taizé service is a little different from a traditional Taizé service in that it provides the opportunity for those attending to come forward for anoint-

ing and prayers for healing, as well as the opportunity to share in the Holy Eucharist.

During this time of precaution due to the pandemic, it provides the perfect opportunity for participants to meet in a less crowded, more intimate setting. All COVID-19 protocols are strictly adhered to.

If you have never attended a Taizé service, or if Taizé is already an important part of your spiritual life, we invite you to join us!

The Church of Our Saviour The Redeemer is located at 25 Lake Avenue South, Stoney Creek.



The Blanketeers of St. Simon's, Oakville

Over the last few years, the Blanketeers of St. Simon's have been contributing their time and talents in the production of knitted blankets for Project Linus, whose purpose is to "[provide] much-loved blankets full of hugs to children going through a crisis in their lives." Recently, blankets knitted by the St. Simon's Blanketeers were included in a donation from Project Linus Oakville Chapter to World Vision's Knit for Kids program. Pictured from left to right are Ruth Baldwin, Sylvia Ashman, Jill Howe, and Shirl Davis.

Submitted by Celeste Bryant, Parish Administrator, St. Simon's, Oakville

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ANTI-RACISM: *A Journey Towards Healing and Wholeness*

A Special Series



Embodied Anti-Racism: Valuing the Body in Faith and Practice



THE REVEREND NAOMI KABUGI

Each season in the Church calendar year involves the Body. Think just of Advent and Christmas, which evoke the most detailed images of an embodied Jesus. Our theologies of Incarnation, Resurrection, Baptism all in some way involve

the body. As much as we would like our faith to be simply a matter of spirit, it is never just about the spirit but equally about the body. A balanced faith recognizes both.

To develop a theology of the body, we must acknowledge that we live in our bodies. Emotions, memory, and trauma reside in both the mind and the body. We are learning more and more that memories and trauma can be passed from one generation to another through our very DNA.

A brief survey of human history—a history of enslavement, colonization, oppression—shows that bodies have not always been valued. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries people were burned at the stake for heresy, and the Tower of London was a torture chamber. When the Great Plague raged through much of the United

Kingdom, many people fled to colonies. Whether trying to get away from starvation, poverty, or violence, most of the new immigrants to the New World brought both the trauma and punishments to the New World English Colonies. In North America, bodies were devalued just the same, primarily the bodies of Indigenous Peoples and People of African descent.

Today, the bulk of anti-racism work is done by African, Asian, and Indigenous bodies. These bodies are reclaiming the faith after God surveyed creation and saw “Everything that was made, and indeed it was good” (Genesis 1:31). As the author of 1 Timothy says, “Everything created by God is good” (1 Timothy 4:1-5).

In light of this bodily reality, a few things stand out about Anti-Racism work. The work of Anti-Racism is about calling

out generations of racism and trauma. It is the work of breaking an inter-generational curse. As in the words of Jeremiah prophesying salvation as he pointed to the coming of Christ Jesus: “In those days people will no longer say, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge?’” (Ezekiel 18:2).

One of the reasons we remain Christian is because of the seriousness with which the Christian traditions honour flesh and blood. We believe God loves flesh and blood, no matter what kind of shape it is in. This is no small thing. It is the physics of divine love! This divine love calls out our culture which separates the physical from spiritual as nothing more than being confused if not outrightly wrong.

Faith-based anti-racist work creates a culture where all belong and where each body feels safe. By basing anti-racism work on our baptismal covenant, we are claiming a cultural shift. Anti-racism is not a private affair but a collective experi-

ence. Not only is the experience communal, but the approaches to healing and reconciliation must be as well. Healing does not occur in a vacuum. We must collectively make connections with other bodies—in groups, in neighbourhoods, and in communities.

Anti-racism is a privilege that you still have to exercise. No matter what I think of my own body, what I am, or what you are, we can still offer our bodies to God to go on being useful to the world. It is an opportunity for a renewed culture that is body-centred with a focus on the healing of bodily trauma. Of course this takes time and effort. It may take ten years—maybe three generations. This is not a cause for despair, but a recognition of where we are, where we must go, and where we have been. Either way, the time to begin is now! Anti-racism is not about pointing fingers. We all carry traumatized bodies which bear the wounds of racism and white supremacy. Anti-racism work is about healing these known and unknown wounds.

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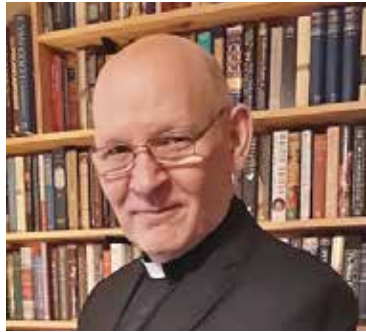
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Revelations from Vatican Archives:

The Difficult Papacy of Pope Pius XII



THE REVEREND MICHAEL COREN

There have been easier times to be the pope. I don't mean now, with the relatively gentle divisions between conservative and reformer, but during the Second World War, when the irrational became the norm, and genocidal madness dominated Europe. Eugenio Pacelli had been elected to the papacy in March 1939 and as Pius XII remained pontiff until 1958. The times demanded a man of strength and resolve, whereas Pacelli was a diplomat and a compromiser.

Those attributes, rather than any extremes of personality or policy, characterize his reign. But because he led the Roman Catholic Church during the Holocaust and eventual Nazi occupation of his country, such anodyne skills were simply

inadequate.

It's been genuinely difficult to gain a firm and fair understanding of where he stood when faced with tangible evil. Immediately after the war, Pius was regarded as a friend of the Allies and a rescuer of the Jewish people. That portrait changed dramatically in 1963 with Rolf Hochhuth's play *The Deputy*, in which the writer claimed that Rome not only ignored the suffering of the Jewish people, but tacitly and sometimes explicitly supported the Nazis.

In 1999 came British author John Cornwell's *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII*, the title indicating the arguments of the book. Six years later there was a counterblast in *The Myth of Hitler's Pope: How Pope Pius XII Rescued Jews from the Nazis*. The author was David G. Dalin, who is not only Jewish but a rabbi. This back and forth continues even today.

In 2020 Pope Francis ordered previously secret documents concerning Pius and the Holocaust to be released to academics, and they recently became available to the general public. What began to be discovered two years ago is



Pius XII Photo: Michael Pitcairn/Public domain

that Pope Pius XII was neither as grim as his critics claim, nor as noble as his defenders maintain. As a Cardinal, he had drafted an encyclical condemning Nazi racism and had it read from every pulpit, and as Pope he employed Vatican assets to ransom some Jewish families held by the Nazis. There were even Roman Jews hidden in the papal palace of Castel Gondolfo. Pius saved individual Italian Jews, worked on behalf of Jewish people who had converted to Catholicism or were married to Catholics, and wasn't a friend to National Socialism.

While a friend of the Jewish

people, the problem is that Pius was not a significant enemy of the Nazis. His considerable intelligence sources—some of them strongly anti-Nazi—had informed him of the extent and barbarity of the extermination of the Jews. But at no time did Pius explicitly condemn the Holocaust. He had, after all, previously been the Vatican's ambassador to Germany and knew the beliefs of the Nazis.

As to the often-made argument and defence that any public condemnation would have been impossible, or led to further suffering, the question has to be asked—further suffering for whom? 1.5 million children were murdered in death camps! It was also during the Pius XII pontificate that the Church issued the *Decree against Communism*, declaring that any Catholic who became a Communist was an apostate and to be excommunicated. This was after the war but at the height of Stalinism. Had Pius learned a lesson, or was Communism viewed with far more distaste than Nazism?

My father's family wasn't Italian but eastern European. They died in large numbers in

the Holocaust, and in western Ukraine many of the Nazi fellow travelers, and fellow murderers, were Catholic, as were Holocaust facilitators all over Europe. Jozef Tiso was a Catholic priest, Slovak leader, and known obsessive antisemite. Imagine what would have happened if they'd been held fully accountable by the papacy, even threatened with excommunication? The countless Catholics who were resisting Nazism, and risking their lives to save their Jewish neighbours, I'm sure would have appreciated the support.

The King of Morocco requested yellow stars for himself and his family when told that Moroccan Jews would have to wear them. The Dutch Carmelite priest Titus Brandsma publicly opposed Nazism, rescued Dutch Jews and Allied airmen, and was eventually murdered by the Nazis for his resistance. He was canonized by Pope Francis earlier this year. There are many such heroes.

More could and should have been done, and the obscenities of the Holocaust perhaps may have been limited or even halted. Millions still cry out for justice, as does the Jewish Jesus.

Trading Pavement for Paradise:

Transformation and Renewal at St. Cuthbert's, Oakville

MALCOLM LITTLE

Work has started on transforming the old children's playground at St. Cuthbert's Church in Oakville into a paradise garden. The project involves removing the children's playground equipment and de-paving the area. The photographs show the Grade 10 volunteers and a couple of parents starting the process of clearing the site.

The proposed plan will be multi-purpose and will have trees, plants, flowers in planters, and seats. The garden will be a place of quiet, for meditation, BBQs, and gatherings for both adults and children. The project is being led by Halton Environmental Network and has been partially funded by a grant from TD Bank. The funding will pay for the removal of the asphalt surface. St.



Cuthbert's relies on volunteers in order to create and landscape the garden.

These are the hardworking volunteers who are helping remove the old children's playground. From left to right are Andrew, Bob, Albert and Hadi, they are grade 10 students who attend Appleby College, White Oaks and Oakville Trafalgar. So far they have dismantled the

climbing frame, broken up and removed the sand pit, taken down the wire mesh fence, cleared out all the old branches and leaves, and started to remove the gravel and store it for future use in the new garden.

Malcolm Little is a parishioner at St. Cuthbert's Anglican Church in Oakville.

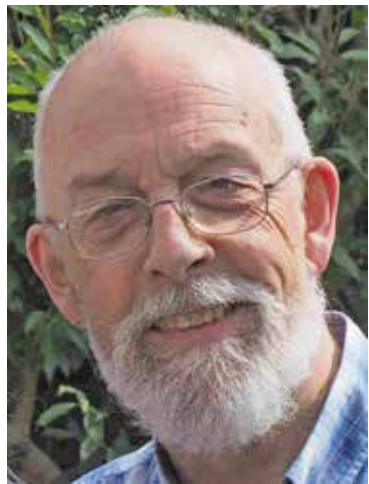
Photos: Contributed by Malcolm Little



In Other Words

Mission & Outreach: Is Missional just the Flavour of the Month?

JOHN BOWEN



“Mission,” “missional,” and even “missionality” seem to be everywhere. Bishops are talking about it. Candidates for ordination are talking about it. The leader’s guide to the recent Mission Action Plan uses the word “missional” no fewer than fifty-five times! And, of course, the Diocese of Niagara has its own School of—guess what—Missional Leadership. Everyone, it seems, is trying to be missional.

Quite rightly, people are asking, “Is this just the latest flavour of the month?” Is “missional” just one more in a long line of bright ideas guaranteed to solve our problems and grow

our churches? We’ve seen this before: terms come and go, like those famous Baskin-Robbins “Flavours of the Month”—horse-radish ice-cream, anyone?—but nothing really changes. How is “missional” any different?

One way to explain missional is to contrast it with a more familiar term, outreach. We often treat outreach and being missional as the same thing, but actually they’re not. Make no mistake about it, both are important, and many churches naturally engage in both. But I think it is fair to say that historically we have been better at outreach than at being missional.

What has changed? Fundamentally, our cultural situation has changed. It’s a familiar story and hardly needs repeating: the Church has moved from the centre of society to the margins. That means our ministry has to change.

Imagine a church which once had a thriving youth ministry but whose neighbourhood is now a community of empty-nesters and retirees. What should the church do? Our instinct is to look for a dynamic new youth leader who will

miraculously renew the youth ministry out of thin air! But no, it is better to think about how to minister to those actually in the community already. This is not failure, but change. The shift from outreach to mission is that kind of change. Let me illustrate the difference:

- **Outreach:** collecting food from church members to donate to a local church-run food bank
- **Mission:** working with the local Neighborhood Association’s annual food drive
- **Outreach:** running Alpha or a similar introductory course out of a church basement
- **Mission:** running Alpha or a similar introductory course out of a local restaurant
- **Outreach:** praying for the Church and Church leadership around the world during the Prayers of the People
- **Mission:** praying for the restaurants, offices, stores, and homes around the church during the Prayers of the People
- **Outreach:** clergy having open office hours at the church every week
- **Mission:** clergy having open “office” hours at the local coffee shop every week

- **Outreach:** inviting neighbours to attend the annual Carol Service at church
- **Mission:** inviting neighbours to go carolling with you around the neighbourhood
- **Outreach:** inviting someone from the Primates World Relief and Development Fund to speak in a Sunday service
- **Mission:** inviting the local councillor to speak about their work in a Sunday service
- **Outreach:** having a church website which is inviting to Anglicans or other churchgoers looking for a spiritual home
- **Mission:** having a church website which makes people with no church background say, “Wow, I should go and check this out!”

None of these, whether outreach or missional, is a bad thing—they’re all good! Who wants to decide whether a speaker from the PWRDF is more or less important than hearing from our local councillor? But I think you can see that there is a difference of emphasis:

1. **Outreach** focuses more on the building and inviting people in. **Mission** focuses more on going where people are and working with them there.
2. **Outreach** works with what we perceive to be important. **Mission** asks people outside the church what they find important.
3. With **Outreach**, we remain in control. With **Mission**, we are partners, and not necessarily in control.
4. We don’t usually need to know someone’s name to engage in **Outreach**. **Mission** is by nature relational.
5. **Outreach** assumes God is at

work in the Church. **Mission** assumes God is at work outside the Church, and seeks to work with God at work “out there.”

So are mission, missional and missionality the flavour of the month? Well, it’s a flavour we are not particularly accustomed to, certainly. I grew up in a small town in north Wales, and the culinary range of my home and town was healthy enough but, well, pretty limited. As a result, it was not until university that I encountered such exotic flavours as Chinese food, chili, and mango. Now, of course, I take those flavours for granted as a delightful part of life. So the missional flavour may be unfamiliar, but if we can experiment with it, it can be life-giving for us—and for our neighbours.

I remember Archbishop Michael Peers, a former primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, saying how he remembered the days when social justice was the passion of a small fringe minority of the Anglican Church, folks who were regarded as somewhat peculiar and off-centre, in some cases not even very Anglican, and easy to dismiss.

But those who saw the importance of social justice persisted, and gradually persuaded others that it was central to authentic Christian faith. Today, as a result of their persistence and faithfulness, social justice is rightly considered central to the life and ministry of the Anglican Church. You can see where I’m going with this—social justice may at first have seemed like the flavour of the month, but it has become a normal and welcome part of our daily life. May the same happen with the idea of mission.

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Singing a New Song Faithful Witness Amidst Tides of Change



THE REVEREND CANON CHRISTOPHER PRATT

"HOW CAN (I) SING THE LORD'S SONG IN A STRANGE LAND?"
Psalm 137:4

One of the amazing things about the Anglican Communion is that no matter where we are in God's global village there is a link which may be discovered within the small family we know as the Church.

Since March 8 of this year, I have had the unique privilege of serving as the Interim Priest-in-Charge at St. George's, Guelph. After 43 years of parish ministry in the Dioceses of Toronto, Fredericton, and Huron, as well as a seven-year retirement, I entered the COVID-19 pandemic-shaped ministry of 2022. I could not stop reflecting

on the question posed by the Psalmist—how will I sing the Lord's song in this moment and place?

In 1963 the Anglican Church of Canada hosted the Anglican Congress. Clergy and laity gathered together to reflect on the mission and ministry of the Church. Out of that dialogue emerged a statement which was offered as a framework around which an Anglican identity could be defined in every part of the Communion. Anglicans were and are called upon to see ourselves as "mutually responsible and interdependent members of the body of Christ."

Looking back over the almost sixty years since that statement was first presented, the Anglican Communion has experienced significant change, yet the essential truth of that statement remains. As we continue to live through the COVID-19 pandemic, the temptation to live our lives in isolation, both personally and within the confines of our communities, remains very real. If we are truly called to be both mutually responsible and interdependent, a new vision of ministry needs to be identified.

Through the heaviest days of the COVID-19 pandemic the Dean of Canterbury, the Very Reverend Robert Willis, provided a wonderful ministry as



From the Gardens of Canterbury Cathedral, the Dean offered morning prayer readings and a reflection which gathered a global audience. Photo: YouTube

he used social media to connect the worldwide Anglican Communion. From the Gardens of Canterbury Cathedral, the Dean offered morning prayer readings and a reflection which gathered a global audience. His devotion attracted the attention of those outside the Communion who were drawn by his faithful and sincere witness.

Walking through the front doors of our church buildings offers us the opportunity to be nurtured and fed by Word and Sacrament when we gather for worship with others as a community. We are empowered to go out into God's world and discover how we are being called to offer ministry through our words and actions. It is important for us to take the words of

his cup, bring life to others; we, whom the Spirit lights, give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so that we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name." (BAS pg. 214)

It seems to me that in whatever changing landscape we find ourselves, we find comfort in knowing that the Lord's song of faithful witness is ours to sing no matter where we are.

The Reverend Canon Christopher Pratt is the Interim Priest-in-Charge of St. George's, Guelph and may be reached through the Church Office or at interimpriest@saintgeorge.ca

our shared worship and turn them into reality as we live through each day.

"May we, who share his body, live his risen life; we, who drink

Bishop Bell celebrates Holy Trinity Chippawa's 202 years



From left to right: Deacon-in-Charge Rob Duncan, Lay Reader Sue Weaver, Bishop Susan Bell, Lay Reader Dean Glendenning, Barb Bezil in period dress, and Director of Music David Tupper.

Photo: Contributed by David Tupper

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The Act of Giving Thanks

An Occasional Reminder of a Daily Reality

THE REVEREND DEACON HEINO CLAESSENS

I adore October, especially because it is the month of Thanksgiving—a time to gather with family and loved ones to give thanks. Historically we associate this celebration with the Pilgrims of 1621 in Massachusetts, yet Canadian celebration of Thanksgiving predates the traditional story of our American friends. In 1578, explorer Martin Frobisher and his crew gave thanks and communion was observed. Later, on November 14, 1606, inhabitants of New France under Samuel de Champlain held Thanksgiving between local Mi'kmaq and the French. This is the history of Canadian Thanksgiving, yet the Bible predates even this with the first act of thanksgiving found in Leviticus 7:12, and a further 31 acts of thanksgiving

can be found within the pages of the Bible. In fact, a theology of thanksgiving permeates throughout the whole of the scriptures.

At the risk of taking a text out of context and making it a pretext for a proof text—I've always wanted to say that—Paul writes in Ephesians 5:20, "Give[ing] thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Earlier Paul rebukes in Romans 1:21, "for though they knew God, they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him." Additionally, Paul considers the act of thanksgiving to be missional, writing in 2 Corinthians 4:15: "Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God."

By giving thanks, always, for everything, we cultivate an atti-

tude of gratitude. An attitude not only substantiating our Christian spirit, but one that radiates out to others, and helps us become the light Jesus calls us to be. True acts of thanksgiving are not just mere acts of thanks, but an authentic attitude of the heart leading to missional ministry as a lifestyle—a single word calling us into community, calling us into sharing our faith while and through ministering to people's needs with justice, love, and humility on Christ's behalf.

How does one cultivate an attitude of gratitude? Easier said than done. Amongst many ways is a form of Examen Prayer I use daily. Before sleep, I give thanks to God for all the blessings and tribulations in my day, both small and large, beginning with: "I awoke to a new day." I give thanks that I awoke in a bed with clean sheets. That I

walked 15 feet accessing not only drinkable water but also hot water—33 per cent of the world's people lack access to safe water. I pray through my entire day, remembering and giving thanks.

Most of us live by the 80/20 rule—80 per cent of our lives are mostly wonderful, but we allow that 20 per cent of tribulation to taint how blessed our lives are. By examining our day in prayer, we do so in the presence of God, and to God we give thanks, including our tribulations by praying: "We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone." (BAS 129). The hymn *Count your Blessings* "When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed; When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost; Count your

many blessings name them one by one; And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done," is spot-on.

As a Deacon, my focus of thanksgiving is not limited to a single day in October. For me, thanksgiving is an ongoing and deeply spiritual exercise, an ever-present reality that flows naturally from a transformed heart. We read in 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 Paul's command to "rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

As we sit down to our Thanksgiving dinner this year, let us give thanks not just then, but always and for everything. Our attitude of gratitude makes life a beatitude—a blessing radiating out to others.

St. George's, Guelph Music Director Retires After 35 Years

NANCY HEWAT

Gerald "Gerry" Manning retires this summer after 35 years as organist and director of music at St. George's, Guelph. According to Gerald, who some call Gerry, one of the biggest shifts in Anglican Church music over the years is the growing recognition that congregational participation in the music of worship is important, regardless of whether a church has a choir or not. This is even more important when trained singers are hard to find. Gerry has noticed a similar concern these days regarding organs and their role in church music. People who love the pipe organ for its own sake, as well as its function in worship, should look for opportunities to give it prominence.

The role of a music director, according to Gerry, is to respond to the particular interests and needs of the local congregation, and to lead people towards a deeper knowledge of how music can enrich worship and support theology. This calls for working closely with others and respecting different points of view.

And Gerry did just that—



working with the choir and choral scholars he enriched St. George's worship with a robust music program, as well as the lives of many involved.

"I am so grateful to Gerry for reaching out to Guelph Collegiate Vocational Institute when I was in grade nine and welcoming myself and a handful of other dedicated teenagers to a constant environment

where I always felt welcome and where I always knew I would have a place to explore, escape into, discover so many new things, grow as a musician and a person, and of course, sing," says Sarah Schmidt-McQuillan, choral scholar.

Although Gerry's main career was teaching English Literature (35 years at the University of Guelph), his interest in church

music took him to three churches in Guelph over his career: The Church of St. James the Apostle (1970 – 1973), Dublin St. United (1973 – 1987), and St. George's (1987 – 2022).

In each of these appointments, he strengthened the choirs and expanded the congregations' repertoires of hymn-singing. At Dublin St. United and St. George's, he oversaw the renovations of the organs.

"It is his mastery of service-playing that brought some to St. George's church," says Harry Oussoren, a choir member. "His ability to challenge the choir that kept many of us and his good nature that let all be his friend. It is a fine legacy indeed."

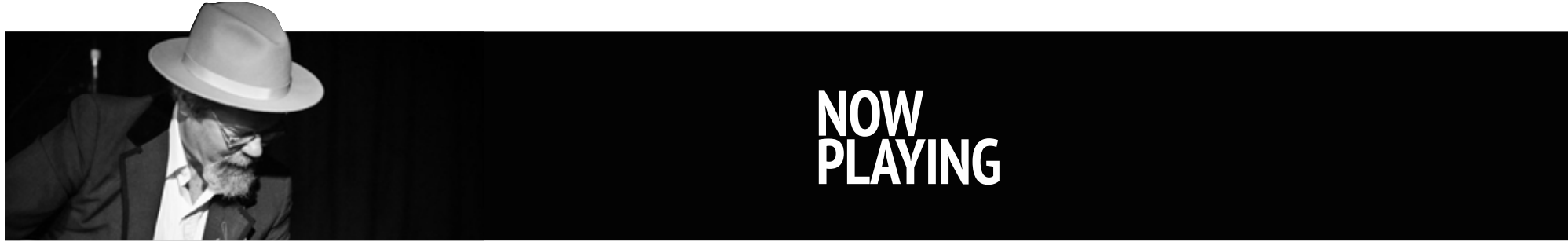
Like many organists, Gerry was attracted to the instrument after studying piano for several years, loving the music of J.S. Bach, and wanting to discover more about Bach's favourite instrument. He also admired the English choral tradition which led him eventually to want to have his own church music position.

"Working with Gerry for most of the last 13 years of his active work as director of music and

Organist at St. George's was an immense pleasure," stated retired St. George's Rector Ralph Blackman. "Gerry's musicianship, vision, and connection to the wider community music world were instrumental in transforming a strong parish music program into a dynamic, relevant 21st century program both within the parish and within the wider community. Gerry's generosity of spirit was a profound gift."

In retirement, Gerry is embarking on a small volunteer project in association with Wellington Hospice. The hospice has a large number of affiliated families and offers support to those with life-limiting illnesses, their caregivers, and those who are bereaved.

In conjunction with St. George's, once a month Gerry will offer a meditative hour of organ music for the hospice community. While this will be explicitly non-religious, the building with its inspiring architecture and fine organ will give another opportunity for the organ, and the church, to offer outreach to the community.



Moments of grace and vision

Unintelligibility in the face of divine mercy

THE REVEREND MAX WOOLAVER

Our son is in a good and loud rock band. As I have been listening to the songs there is one particular tune that seems to stick in my mind. The detail of this song that I keep coming back to is the unintelligible phrase that is repeated quite often at the opening of the returning chorus. The phrase is in two parts.

The first part sounds to me like: “whuofahsaydah”. The second phrase is only a little clearer: “Hnnpahuvvuchr life ...” What are they saying? I want to know!

This unintelligible phrase generated a couple of surprising thoughts. Did you know that the names of G-d with which most of us are familiar: Jehovah and Yahweh are ‘made up’ words? There are no such names of G-d. The Hebrew name of G-d has no vowels: JHVH. This is the famously unpronounceable ‘Tetragrammaton’ or representation of the name of God. You might remember the occasion when Jesus was approached by the man who addressed Jesus as: “Good Rabbi” and Jesus responded immediately as any Jew

would: “Why do you call me ‘good’? There is only one who is good. No one is good but G-d alone.” G-d is above and beyond us all.

Our hymnody is replete with references to a divine mercy beyond understanding. The example that comes readily to mind describes the hiddenness of G-d: “... in light inaccessible, hid from our eyes ...”

In both the New and Old Testaments any close approach to the Holy One was thought of, to say the very least, as not only ‘risky’, but an experience of overwhelming awe and wonder. St. Paul speaks of not knowing whether he was ‘in the body’ or ‘out of the body’ when he shares his ecstatic experience of ‘the third heaven.’ It is important to note that Paul in his humility speaks of himself in the third person: “I know a man ... he was caught up in paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which is not lawful for a man to utter.” Again, the nearness to G-d is of such an overwhelming nature, that even in the presence of Jesus, on the Mount of Transfiguration, the Voice of G-d speaks to Peter, James, and John from within the cloud which has descended upon them. You can almost

hear Peter’s voice trembling as he cries out: “It is good for us to be here!” I wonder if ‘good’ is exactly the right word!

Our faith journey through the ages has also brought us to engage the profound experience of the seeming absence of G-d in the lives of individuals and peoples. This has been the subject of intense and profound inquiry in our post-Holocaust era. Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg in her astonishing series of reflections on the Torah has this to say in her reflections on the Book of Esther (483 BC). Esther, as a self-hidden Jew, who risks a self-revealing action, manages to stave off a genocidal action against her people. “[Esther] has lost her place in time, as well as in space. G-d inhabits the navel of her dream, where it plunges into the unknown. In this dark dream, she cries to the G-d who has abandoned her, invoking Him as the terror of unknowing possesses her ... In the twilight of prophecy, she is named the last prophetess. But unlike the prophets before her, she has no way of knowing if she is dreaming or awake. Perhaps, as mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, her dream will make her

fall back inside herself, lead her into the unknowable future. Here, perhaps, is the chink through which another voice is heard.” (*The Murmuring Deep*, pg 132.)

We cannot hear these words without thinking of Jesus Himself who from the cross cries out: “My God, My God, why have you abandoned me?” Words from Psalm 22, as a Jew, his Scripture and now as Christians, ours as well.

Our G-d is a G-d of infinite love, mercy, and creative power. Our G-d is also a G-d of mystery, hiddenness—ineffable holiness. No wonder then, that our walk of faith brings us into unintelligible moments of grace and vision—where speech fails us.

No wonder then as we look back on the lives of those who have gone before us, in the Scriptures and in our parishes, we find moments of both glory and heartbreak, divine presence and seeming divine absence.

My curiosity concerning the unintelligible words mentioned earlier? I had to ask our son: What in the heck are those words David is singing?

“Holy Lights light up ... in the path of future life ...”

The Spirit calls us “to know this love which surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of G-d.”



Niagara Anglican Deadlines and Submission Guidelines

Deadlines:

December – October 21
January – November 25

Submissions:

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

Original cartoons or art –

Contact the Editor.

Photos – very large, high resolution (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:

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Say Yes to Kids Campaign Awards Diocese for 5G Project

Three Niagara parishes also awarded grants by Anglican Foundation of Canada

SARAH BIRD

The Diocese of Niagara has been awarded a grant from the Anglican Foundation of Canada for a new pilot project called 5G: 5 Ways to Share God's Love Through Technology. The project will offer support and break down technological barriers for faith leaders and families in Canada. The project will also support parish and diocesan programs that will adapt to hybrid models to include both in-person and virtual options as we move towards a post-pandemic season. The 5G project will offer support and break down technological barriers for families and faith leaders within the diocese and beyond. Beginning in April this project will have five areas of focus:

1. A lending library of tablets for families. Throughout the pandemic there have been several instances where children, youth, and young adults were unable to attend virtual gatherings due to only having one device that was used by a parent or partner for work purposes, or by siblings who were attending other virtual extracurricular activities. Providing a secondary device to households will provide more access to virtual events.
2. A lending library of tablets, laptops, and other technologi-



cal needs for Children Youth and Family Ministry volunteers and leaders.

3. Educational workshops for volunteers and faith leaders who plan to offer virtual programming/events. Example of workshops include: Knowledge for inclusive access to virtual spaces specifically for disabilities, exceptionalities, and other barriers for marginalized participants; and training on virtual platforms and communications.
4. Subscriptions to virtual resources for Children Youth and Family Ministry leaders and volunteers across the diocese, such as Kahoot!, an online platform that engages children and youth through fun games and stimulating quizzes.
5. Training and educational opportunities for the diocesan Children Youth and Family Ministry staff, so that

they can continue to offer workshops and trainings to volunteers and faith leaders. Example: Learning healthy boundaries and applying it to virtual spaces offered through Faith Trust Institute.

God has led us through new doors of innovation and creativity that have forever changed the landscape of how we gather children, youth, young adults, and families. Virtual gatherings are crucial to the life of the church as they continue to break down barriers, provide a sense of safety and comfort, and build trusting relationships amongst participants.

One child, during "Sparkling Children's Faith" (a virtual program exploring Bible stories and life's big questions) shared that it was his first-time exploring faith and asking questions about God. He felt safe to be

himself, and he felt a sense of belonging. This participant struggled with in-person interactions and revealed that it had been hard for him to make friends because often children would say that he was weird or different. The 5G project will help to amplify the message to more children, youth, and young adults that they belong, they are not alone, and most importantly are loved by God.

The grant is part of a fundraising campaign for children, youth and young adults called Say Yes to Kids, an attempt by the Anglican Foundation of Canada to respond to the effects of the pandemic and profound impact on families across Canada. They requested proposals for projects that contribute to the physical, intellectual, emotional, and/or spiritual well-being of children, youth, and young adults in a post-pandemic world.

The Say Yes to Kids campaign also awarded grants for parish initiatives at St. George's in Guelph, Grace Church in Waterdown, and St. Luke's in Smithville, for a total of over \$21,000 in parishes across the Niagara Diocese. We are incredibly grateful for the leadership team at the Anglican Foundation who offered much support to clergy, lay leaders, and diocesan staff. The Anglican Foundation's Say Yes to Kids campaign provided leaders the opportunity to dream again after two long years. Across Canada the campaign ignited new energy, hope, and excitement for children, youth, and family ministry.

We look forward to supporting new initiatives this year. Be sure to watch out for Niagara's new Say Yes to Kids projects!

Alpha: A Report from the Field

THE REVEREND ROB DUNCAN

I've recently completed running two Alpha courses via Zoom. The Alpha course has had a tremendous impact on our people and our parish and has established itself as the initiating foundation for our faith formation both now and moving forward in our Mission Action Plan. In the fall of 2021, I hosted an online Alpha at Holy Trinity Chippawa with ten participants; in the winter of 2022, another online Alpha with fourteen participants. While Alpha is designed for those who don't identify as Christian, everyone in our two groups was a long-time member of the church.

I have experience with Alpha from previous parishes, but



this was my first with a new video series. The eleven video presentations run between 20 and 25 minutes and from every standpoint they are engaging and excellently produced. It should be noted that the real dynamic of Alpha is not the teaching or information that's presented—it's the conversation between participants that follows. The purpose of Alpha is not to indoctrinate people, but rather to provide a welcoming and safe way for them to share their own thoughts, responses, and stories. Alpha is really about

hospitality—welcoming people into a place where they're free and affirmed to speak their mind—and heart!—about their encounters with God.

In the feedback from these two courses, people were enthusiastically appreciative! When asked the ways in which they benefitted, everyone indicated "strengthened in my faith." A majority also noted:

- "feel more at peace,"
- "made new friends,"
- "feel more loved," and
- "discovered a relationship with God through Jesus."

In their individual comments, people wrote:

- "I now describe myself as a renewed Christian," "I feel more connected to God and want now to experience more

of God in my life,"

- "The videos were alive and interesting, presenting people from different backgrounds. The discussion was relaxed and non-judgmental, accepting of our questions and different points of view," and
- "I found out that I am not the only person going through trials in this life."

The online training provided by Alpha Canada was also very good. They were instructive in practical ways and stimulated good discussion and prayer. One of the lines in the training underscores what the course is all about: "Alpha is designed to fail ... unless God shows up." This underscored the importance for us to pray, to trust and, yes also, to wait for God in each and

every session.

As the specific course was drawing to a close, I would remind folks of the date of the last session. Each time, this drew audible groans of disappointment—people wanted more! They wanted more especially of the company and discussion with each other. It underscores that Alpha is not also omega; it's not even beta or gamma. Alpha is a beginning. Alpha starts something in people that needs to be followed up and built upon. Thankfully, I had learned this years ago, so I was ready this time with further opportunities for people to grow deeper in their encounter with God and in journeying together with others.

Rob Duncan is Deacon-in-Charge, Holy Trinity Chippawa.