

Christmas 2004



The Nativity

BAROCCI (OR BAROCCIO), FEDERICO (b. c. 1526-1535, Urbino; d. 1612, Urbino). Italian painter whose elegant and expressive style made him one of the leading mannerist painters of central Italy. The Nativity 1597; Oil on canvas, 134 x 105 cm; Museo del Prado, Madrid. For more information, see page 2.

\$88,900 Trillium grant for St. Alban's

St. Alban's, Glen Williams, has received a grant for \$88,900 from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The grant will be used to support accessibility for all at St. Alban's.

Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh joined Ontario Trillium Foundation representative Don Mitchell in congratulating the church on its funding to create more accessible facilities for all community members.

"I'm pleased that this grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation will allow community members to more easily participate in the many activities that take place at St. Alban's," said Mr. Chudleigh.

The \$88,900 funding over one year will be used for renovations to the property and to upgrade the facility to be fully barrier free.

The community is focused on fostering inter-gen-

erational relationships and developing caring nurturing support networks.

"We are thrilled that the Ontario Trillium Foundation is supporting our community, and all those who use this vital community space in Halton Region," said The Reverend Grahame Stap, rector of the Church.

St. Alban's Church was incorporated in 1903 to meet the Christian and humanitarian needs of Glen Williams and the surrounding area.

The facilities are used by several community groups including Halton Hills Toastmasters club, an Ontario Early Years Centre satellite location, Glen Williams Senior Drop-In Centre, Glen Williams Girl Guides, a square-dancing club and North Halton Power & Sail Squadron.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of
See TRILLIUM / page 2

Synod votes in favour of same-sex blessings

Bishop Spence withholds assent

Nearly 67 per cent of delegates who attended the 130th session of synod last month took a step forward in the same-sex unions debate.

But, a visibly "torn" Bishop Ralph Spence withheld his assent to the motion, the third of three on the matter at this year's synod.

After hours of debate, the house voted 66.67 per cent "that the bishop grant clergy permission to exercise their discretion in blessing the relationship of gay or lesbian couples who have been married civilly, once they with their congregations, have petitioned the bishop for permission to be a Blessing Community."

In a gesture of outreach, Bishop Spence said "as bishop I hear the will of the House. I am inwardly torn. I would have personally voted with those in the majority. The role of the bishop is unique in our tradition. I am the bishop of all people and try to keep unity with the rest of the Church. It is with certain personal pain but it is my responsibility.

"I am not able to give my assent to this legislation and hence will not. This is the first time the synod has voted on this issue. My expectation is that you go back to your parishes – and any parish that has not had the conversation on this should be challenged. Many parishes in our midst have not yet talked about this issue.

"I grieve with the gay and lesbian community. I am close to them and understand what my actions mean to them. However, I am the bishop of this entire diocese with a responsibility to the wider Church. I know those who are opposed also believe that they are doing so in concert with the Spirit of God. I pray that we will continue to discuss this matter at a future synod. It will come back at next synod."

Bishop Spence thanked delegates "for your honesty and clarity in this matter."

There will be more synod coverage in the January issue of the Niagara Anglican.

Second synod called to decide budget

Delegates to synod will get another chance to vote on a budget for 2005 after they were unable to reach consensus last month. At stake at the second session, which will be held Jan. 8, at Christ's Church Cathedral, is the fate of the Niagara Anglican, among other items.

Delegates were unable to agree on any of five 2005 budget scenarios prepared by the diocesan finance committee. This year's budget process included extensive input from Anglicans across the diocese. Through the New Niagara consultation process, thousands offered their visions and dreams of the Church of the future. All input was processed and categorized. Participants were asked to rank in order of importance three top and bottom priorities for the diocese.

The Niagara Anglican consistently ranked in the bottom three by more than 400 people who voted at four regional budget meetings in September. Since then, it was learned the diocese is under contract with the national paper, the Anglican Journal, to pay a fixed amount per subscription for the creation and delivery of the Journal, regardless of the existence of the Niagara Anglican.

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Barocci's Nativity

Federico Fiori Barocci, Nativity (1597, oil on canvas, 134 x 105 cm, Museo del Prado, Madrid)

In Barocci's Nativity, the luminous lustre of the light (sfumato), the charm of the figures, and the colour scheme intensify the sentimental effect. Joseph points out the Christ Child to the shepherds, who appear behind the half-open door, along a diagonal line running from the dark background to the light foreground with its group of mother and Child. The Child is the source of light. Mary gazes lovingly at her new-born Child, holding her arms open in a manner typical of Mannerist paintings. The physical distance between mother and Child is bridged by characteristic intimacy. While Mary in her gold- and pink-coloured dress radiates warmth and actively takes a step towards the Child, the weakness and passiveness of the Child is underscored by its blue maphorion.

Correction

Nicholas Tupper, the boy who was photographed on the front page of the November Niagara Anglican, was incorrectly identified. He is a parishioner of St. Mary's, Hamilton.

Nicholas, who owned the rabbit, was baptized, along with his older brother, in November at St. Mary's, Hamilton.

The Niagara Anglican apologizes for the error or any embarrassment it may have caused.

We also wish to congratulate Nicholas and his family on achieving the important milestones.

On page 2 of the Niagara Anglican's November issue, some information about the photo was incorrect. The voter said he had ranked the Niagara Anglican as a "medium" priority, therefore bucking the trend to rank it in the bottom three priorities.

The regional budget meeting he attended was held, as stated, at the Church of the Resurrection, Hamilton.

The Niagara Anglican apologizes for the error or any embarrassment it may have caused.



THE REVEREND GRAHAME STAP, right, MPP Ted Chudleigh and parishioners of Saint Alban's, Glen Williams, celebrate the good news of the Ontario Trillium Foundation grant of \$88,900. The money will be used to improve accessibility to the church.

Trillium grant

Continued from page 2

The Ministry of Culture, receives annually \$100 million of government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative. The Foundation allocates grants to eligible charitable and not-for-profit organizations in the arts and culture, environment, human and social services, and sports and recreation sectors. For more information, visit www.trilliumfoundation.org.



Photo by Marilyn Madill

RETIRED NIAGARA BISHOP JOHN BOTHWELL (left), with the Reverend Grahame Stap, priest-in-charge of St. Alban's, Glen Williams, blesses parishioners after the Sunday dedication service. St. Alban's recently converted its rectory to The Alban House, a community and parish meeting place.

A reason to celebrate

St. Alban The Martyr, Glen Williams, recently converted its rectory into a community and parish meeting place.

To celebrate its completion, a dedication service was held in October with retired Niagara Bishop John Bothwell.

The former rectory, now known as The Alban House serves as the church offices, youth room, nursery, the choir dressing room and the Langtry Room.

The dedication service took place Oct. 3 during the 10:30 a.m. service.

At the same time inside the church, two memorial cabinets and an organ pipe were dedicated.

On the south wall, a cabinet holds a book that acknowledges the generosity of many and is in memory of Vera M. (Kemshead) Norton and Grover C. Norton.

On the north wall, a cabinet holds a book that acknowledges the generosity of many and is in memory of Violet Rose Preston.

Organ Pipe 132 F# was dedicated in the memory of Mary Elizabeth Fry.

The church was beautifully decorated to celebrate the Harvest Thanksgiving. A luncheon followed the dedication service. The parish wishes to thank Dr. and Mrs. Goodfellow for all their hard work.

\$15 charge for police checks begins January in Hamilton

The Hamilton Police Service has advised the diocese that, effective Jan. 1, 2005, a \$15 charge will be introduced for a Police Records' Check for volunteers.

The Rev. David. H. Long, director of ministry support and human resources,

said since the Volunteer Management and Screening in Faith data needs to be updated, these costs would be taken into account when parishes are producing their 2005 budgets.

Any Records Checks submitted before

Christmas will continue to be free of charge.

For more information, contact The Rev. Long at (905) 527-1316 ext. 330 or email david.long@niagara.anglican.ca

Boar's Head Festival at St James, Dundas

Ancient English festival celebrates Christmas

An idea that blossomed in the Rev. Canon Jim Sandilands' office at St. James, Dundas, this summer will animate a British Christmas-tide tradition that dates back to 1340.

Quite possibly a first for the town of Dundas, the Boar's Head Festival celebrates the birth of Christ. The presentation of a boar's head symbolizes the triumph of the Christ Child over sin.

Director of music Douglas Brownlee said the festival is based on English lore.

"The wild boar in England was a ferocious beast and legend has it that an Oxonian on his way to Christmas Eve Mass choked an attacking boar with his only weapon, the metal-bound book he was carrying," Mr. Brownlee said. "Later that night, in the dining hall, at Queen's College, the head of the beast, finely dressed and garnished, was carried in pro-

cession accompanied by carollers. "The tradition spread to the great manor houses of England and grew to include lords, ladies, historical characters, the Holy Family, angels, shepherds, and wisemen."

St. James will host a concert of music and processions at 5:30 p.m. on Wed., Dec. 29. The concert is free and will include St. James' Senior Choir and Junior Choir, the resident early music ensemble, the Rosewood Consort and a guest quartet, The Waterloo County Carollers.

Featured in the festival will be music, dramatic processions, the Nativity play and carols for all to sing.

Following there will be a dinner - reserved seating with purchased ticket only - in the Dundas Room, which will be decorated with medieval flair.

The battalion of volunteers, cast members and musicians presenting this festival invite everyone to come celebrate Christmas-tide at St. James.

For tickets or more information, call (905) 627-1424.



ST. JAMES, DUNDAS' junior choir with junior choir director Sara Chappel pose in their "Wood Sprite" headdresses they will wear for the Boar's Head Festival being held Dec. 29 at the church.



PHARMACIST PERCY COLE AND OPTOMETRIST HANS SCHUSTER enjoy the Missions Meal at St. John the Evangelist, Elora.



THE REV. CANON ROBERT HULSE (centre), who retires Dec. 31 after 41 years at St. John's, chats with others at his table at the missions Dinner Oct. 29.

St. John's, Elora, raises \$800 for missions

By JUDY-ANNE CHAPMAN and PERCY COLE

St. John the Evangelist, in Elora, held a very successful missions dinner on Oct. 29, raising over \$800 for the two missions it supports.

St. John's supports two missions: one in Uganda, and one in Guatemala.

The Uganda mission is a clean water project by Africa Community Technical Service (ACTS, www.acts.ca) which does work prioritized by the Church of Uganda. The second group is Missionary Ventures, Canada's annual mission to Guatemala, which is a building/medical/ministerial project.

This year the project in Guatemala is to build a Christian summer camp for children, run a medical clinic in San Pedro Necta, to liaise with local churches and arrange home visits. Clothing and school supplies will be distributed.

The medical clinic will have physicians, nurses, an optometrist, a dentist, a pharmacist plus auxiliary personnel and translators.

Percy Cole, a parishioner at St. John's, will be the pharmacist, and he will have nine 70-lb hockey bags full of medications to be used at the clinic and distributed to missions.

Medicines have been donated.

At the October dinner, Dr. Hans Schuster, an optometrist from Brantford spoke of his experiences in Guatemala, where he

fitted many correction eye glasses. He also spoke of the spiritual side of the mission and his own journey.

Slides were shown by Judy-Anne Chapman of the water project in Uganda and progress being made through ACTS.

ACTS is just completing 100 tapstands that will service 12,000 people. Each tapstand was placed a maximum of 500 metres from local residents.

Two new initiatives of Canadian volunteers on the water projects were described: sack gardens that can be hung on walls of mud huts to grow greens and protein, and communities of 12

widow grandmothers raising AIDS orphaned grandchildren. These grandmothers band together to work church land sponsored by ACTS donors.

The food for the dinner was donated. Stephen Truchan prepared chili, homemade bread, and a gourmet salad. A dessert table of freshly made chocolate rounded off the meal.

Proceeds from ticket sales could go to mission work.

The total funds raised were about \$700 plus direct donations to each organization, including \$112 from the Sunday School children who regularly follow news about both missions.


Christmas Bazaar
 at Grace Church
 1401 King Street East @ Grosvenor
 Hamilton
Saturday, Dec. 4, 2004
 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
*Featured will be crafts, a bake table,
 silent auction, attic treasures, kids only
 shopping, tea & lunch room.*


Editorial

Save the Anglican

It seems peculiar that in times of fiscal restraint, one of the first instruments to feel the lead of the pencil is communications. Unlike sales, communications does not contribute to the bottom line. At least not directly. So it's easy to trim here and there in a communications department, with the anticipated hope that small changes will go unnoticed.

In its budget deliberations presented to the 130th synod last month, the finance committee created five budget scenarios for 2005. All but one sound the death knell for this newspaper. We think people might notice.

Historically, the role of the secular press in society has been that of watchdog. Reporters, editors and publishers were sworn to uphold the highest standard of objectivity in order to serve society. They promised to pass no judgement – offering information only to allow people to make informed decisions. People have a right to know. Informed decisions depend on that mantra. They still do.

But the religious press is somewhat different. Our ministry is to inform, unite, challenge and impassion people in the name of Jesus. We are biased. We admit to spreading the Good News of Christ. We are a resurrection people.

It is our ministry to keep people informed of the events, triumphs and blessings we share as a family of believers.

It is also our ministry to deliver the news when it is not so good and when it's controversial.

That's when it gets tough. And there has been plenty of controversy as the Church grapples with some historic issues.

Our goal is to provide context to the developments in our faith community. It has been to stimulate discussion and offer a safe forum for people to give their views.

We've pushed the envelope at times. But we believe that the Spirit moves us to do so. It is through challenge that faith is strengthened.

Our goal is also to unite this great diocese by publishing stories and photos of achievements – big and small – because sharing is what families do.

Like all newspapers, The Niagara Anglican is a historical reference for future generations. No where else will you find photos and stories of parish news from across the expanse of this diocese.

The Diocese of Niagara is facing challenging times financially. One of its cost cutting measures includes saving as much as \$32,000 by ending its run of this newspaper. That represents almost one-quarter of the budget deficit.

The decision lies with synod delegates. They'll meet again Jan. 8 at a second meeting of synod with the intent of finding consensus.

Perhaps the time has come for the Niagara Anglican to retire. Many people are on-line after all. Yet many are not. Perhaps there is still some merit to continue publishing. The decision, of course, is yours.

Balance in being and doing with God

The goal of life is to be with God. Our task is to find the balance between being with God and doing with God.

Finding that balance is hard. The pace of life is frantic, full of noise, and overloading in its demands and priorities. Trying to live a balanced life with God often seems impossible – but it is possible.

For those of us who struggle with balance, the experiences and words of a soldier, Lt. Gen. Sir William Dobbie, give us encouragement. He wrote of his experiences in his book, *A Very Present Help*.

As a teenager, William Dobbie learned and came to appreciate that: everything with God is possible; Christianity is more than a religion, it is a way of living with power; separating Christianity from daily living doesn't make sense; God came into the world, in Jesus Christ to lay down his life for our sins, deliver us from sin's penalties and set us free.

As a soldier, William applied what he believed in three guiding principles:

- Seek God first. He must live in this world, but He must never let either its pleasures or problems be the centre of his attention.

- Witness to God. He must share what he knows and believes with other people.



Christ in the workplace
– Canon
David Browning

- Acknowledge God. He must always give God his gratitude, prayer, obedience and faith.

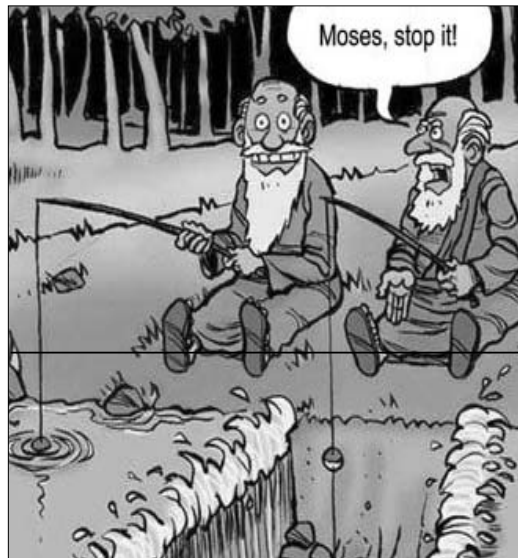
In Spring 1940, William was appointed governor of Malta. That summer, Europe was invaded; the Battle of Britain began and Malta stood alone to guard the entrance to the Mediterranean.

King George told Governor Dobbie that Malta must be held!

Defense of Malta was a challenge. Its garrison had only 5,000 men, 16 anti-aircraft guns, and four slow, out-of-date fighter aircraft. The island's population density was 2,700 people per square mile, with a large number of children.

The enemy was as determined to capture Malta as Britain was to defend it.

Governor Dobbie believed God would help him in whatever work he had to do. He believed God would be Malta's shield and defender, an ever present help in the people's time of need. He shared his faith with soldiers and civilians, encouraging them to do their best and leave the outcome to



Letter to the Editor

Concerns shared in pews

Re: *A Reflection on Process*, written by Susan Huxford-Westall, *Niagara Anglican*, Dec. 2004.

Congratulations on turning over your Letters section to Susan Huxford-Westall, O.N. Her gentle, but seminal, concerns are shared in the pews, and out of them, in spite of cheering solutions offered under a rubric Evangelism.

Our children are not here. As a result, good people, like Archdeacon Marion Vincett, must close doors pried open with love and commitment of forefathers, long ago.

It is time to take stock and forge an agenda to bring back our kids. We cannot close the divide by cheering, or shouting slogans across it, and no comforting expressions of regret will expiate the neglect that decimated any church community..

Bill Hyde
St. George's, Georgetown

God.

Over the next two years, God's saving hand was evident to Governor Dobbie, the garrison and civilians in several ways. He recorded with emphasis three events. The first concerned Britain's new aircraft carrier, *Illustrious*, which was bombed on its way to the Mediterranean. The carrier was put into Malta's port for repairs. Four days were needed for repairs, giving enemy bombers an easy target. Curiously, while *Illustrious* was in port, the enemy changed its bombing tactics. Where low altitude bombing had been devastatingly effective, the enemy now adopted highly inaccurate, high altitude bombing. There were many misses. *Illustrious* was spared, repaired, and left Malta, safely.

Next, the British light cruiser, *Penelope* was put into port for repairs. She, too, was spared destruction from continuing high altitude and inaccurate enemy bombing. The dock workers and the port were also spared.

The dome of the village church of *Mosta* was the third largest in the world. A 4,000 lb. bomb was dropped on it, but did little damage. A hole was punched through the roof, and the bomb landed, unexploded, on the floor. Damage was minimal.

In response and awe, soldiers and civilians told Governor Dobbie: "It's a miracle. I think someone up there has been helping us today. We asked God for help, and today, we watched God doing it."

They believed God had answered their prayers. God had been their very present help in difficulty. The garrison and civilians had practiced what their governor had taught them.

A skeptic might say Malta's miracles were coincidences. The experiences and comments of those who lived there, however, have the ring of authenticity. Amid overwhelming odds, God was Malta's very present help.

Dobbie's experiences, beliefs and practices can inspire and encourage us as we struggle for our own sense of balance with God in our lives. God invites us to bring our faith to Him – however simple or complex it may be.

Like Dobbie, we too must do our best in whatever we face and do, and leave the outcome to God. We need to encourage others by sharing our faith. We need to develop a sense of gratitude to God for all the blessings we enjoy.

We can experience balance in being and doing with God, thanks to God's abundant grace and faithfulness. Thanks be to God.

Niagara Anglican
News Perspective Reflection
for a growing church

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The *Niagara Anglican* welcomes submissions from readers as Letters to the Editor. This forum is available to everyone. All submissions must include a name, telephone number, e-mail address or physical address of the author for verification purposes. The newspaper reserves the right to edit submissions.

Viewpoints

Niagara Anglicans have a seeker service

A seeker service is Christian worship in a safe setting where non-Christians can discover the gospel without feeling pressured to make a commitment to Christ.

The term was invented in the early 1970s by a church outside Chicago called Willow Creek.

You can guess why seeker services were being developed in the early 1970s. Christendom had finally expired. No longer could you assume that most North Americans were Christian. You couldn't even assume that they had a clue about the Bible. New strategies for church growth were required.



The Itinerant Churchgoer
— The Rev. Dr. Alan L. Hayes

U.S. seeker churches

Today Willow Creek attracts over 17,000 people to seeker services every week-end. And because it has taught lots of other churches how to be seeker-friendly, it has been

called the most influential church in America.

There are several other mega-churches for seekers. A conservative one called Saddleback, begun in 1980 north of San Diego, attracts 20,000 a week. (If you add up the people who attend all the churches in the Anglican Diocese of Niagara on an average Sunday, and then double the number, you'll be approaching the weekly attendance at Saddleback.)

A theologically liberal seeker church is the Crystal Cathedral, built in 1980 near Los Angeles. It's seen on television by 20 million people a week.

Nearer home, a seeker church connected to the Brethren in Christ came to Oakville in 1985. It's now called Meeting House, and about 1,000 attend. Its lengthy and intelligent sermons attract young people like a magnet. It has a second church in Hamilton.

Since 2001, the Southern Baptists have targeted seekers with churches in Oakville, Burlington, Hamilton, and Milton. They're called Sanctuary (partly suggesting safety for spiritual explorers).

An Anglican seeker service

Now, we Anglicans have potentially one of the best seeker services going. Maybe its name, Morning Prayer lacks the panache of Meeting House or Sanctuary, but the format of the service is just what it should be. It puts no pressure on the uncommitted. It invites congregational participation at some points, contemplation of holiness at others. It highlights Scripture, but also incorporates music, poetry, and prayer. It gives the preacher room to develop a strong sermon that teaches and inspires.

One of the ironies of Anglican history is that in the 1970s, just when we should have been capitalizing on this service, most of our churches abandoned it. By my arithmetic, 95% of our principal Sunday morning services in the diocese of Niagara are Eucharist.

The Eucharist is great for baptized communicant believers, but not for seekers. That's because when everyone else receives communion, seekers aren't allowed. Making seekers feel conspicuous, embarrassed, and excluded isn't a good strategy for evangelism.

One alternative is practiced at the highly evangelistic Trinity Anglican Church, Streetsville, in the diocese of Toronto. With the bishop's permission, they invite unbaptized unbelievers to communion. But even if you endorse that theologically, I'm not sure that all seekers will feel comfortable buying the product before they read the label.

A conversation I had with one of my students showed me the problem. At the University of Alberta he and some friends were attracted to Anglican worship, but they didn't feel comfortable attending a parish Eucharist where they would stand out as non-communicants. Fortunately, the cathedral in Edmonton began a service of Evening Prayer on Sundays. In that liturgically unthreatening environment, they found the space they needed to become Anglican.

St. Luke, Burlington

Closer to home, the thoughtful and able rector of St. Luke, Burlington, tells me that the youth group there has had recurrent debates about what kind of worship they should have when they meet on Sunday evenings. Some members argue that with the Eucharist they don't feel right bringing along their non-Christian friends. It would be like inviting people to a dinner where they could say amen to the grace but not eat.

I've felt privileged to attend Morning Prayer at St. Luke, Burlington; St. John, Elora; Ascension, Hamilton; St. Mark, Niagara; and St. Jude, Oakville. Most of these are large, somewhat traditional churches with fine choirs and great preaching, and the services are glorious.

See SEEKER CHURCHES / page 6

Dangers of polarization

"The course of the righteous is like a morning light...." Proverbs 4:18a



Signs & Wonders

— The Rev. Canon William C. Thomas
wthomas@interlynx.net

It was one of those bright clear fall days, as I was driving south along one of those secondary paved highways that wind their way through the countryside. It was early enough in the morning that the sun was still very low in the sky, and I was glad I wasn't driving east, directly into it.

And then I moved from more open rolling farmland into a series of woodlots that came right to the road's edge. For up to 30 seconds a time, as the road sliced through the woodlot, I felt like I was being swept by a strobe light.

With the leaves off the trees, the rays of sunlight coming through the naked branches and trucks laced the road with brilliant light and deep shadows.

Mesmerizing

It was surrealistic, and unnerving. I couldn't focus on the road ahead, and changing speed didn't help much. It was like being caught in a 1970s disco light show. Mesmerizing.

And it occurred to me that the experience was as stressful as living in (or near) the U.S. these past few months.

The U.S. has become a deeply divided society, continually being hammered by sound-bites and photo-op-flashes, from two highly contrasting views of the world. So much so, that apprehending the big picture, and a clear view of the road ahead, becomes nearly impossible.

While in the light, one cannot see the details hidden in the dark. And when in the dark, one is dazzled and blinded by the light. And the oscillation between the two sets up a rhythm which draws one into motion, rather than into reflective stillness.

That polarizing contrast cuts through all elements

of society and drives the normal full spectrum of diversity into one of two sharply defined clusters.

But such sharp divisions are not real, and prevent us from seeing the wonderful diversity and fine nuances of all the elements of creation. Moreover, they make it more difficult, not easier, to see the way ahead, and numb us into forgetting

that most wonderful and unique of all God's gifts, reason.

That growing polarization is most keenly felt when it approaches those central values that we associate with faith.

It is a polarization which is being exported from North America into the rest of the world, and it leads to dangerous over-simplification of complex situations.

Affecting many

And, it is affecting Islam and Judaism as well as Christianity. It demands an unquestioning choice between a God of judgment, hard discipline, reward and punishment, and a God of unrestricted love, forgiveness, and compassionate justice; between an unapproachable word of God cast in stone; or the inspired poetry of finite humans attempting to share a glimpse of an infinite Mystery. And it blinds us to the similarities between the "Christian Right", "Al Queda", and "Zionists", and leaves moderate people feeling as though their faith has been hijacked by fanatics.

The sharp divisions with their clear boundaries, demands for unquestioning conformity, numb us into the hypnotic comfort of never having to think, or decide between greater or lesser evils, between greater, or lesser, acts of love, and we become spiritually stunted.

"But the ways of the wicked are like darkness at night...." Proverbs 4:19a

Happy New Year

Just as November was coming to an end, we celebrated the New Year of the Church!

November 28 was the First Sunday of Advent and marked the first day of the Christian Year 2005. It is Year A in our three-year cycle and moves us from the



The Very Reverend Peter Wall, Dean

Gospel of Luke, which was the common time Gospel for Year C, just ended, into the Gospel of Matthew.

How strange, you might say, that we begin a new year with either the last Sunday of November or the first Sunday of December, depending on the calendar, when the rest of the world looks forward to celebrating the beginning of the calendar year on Jan. 1.

But, as always, there is infinite wisdom in this setting of the rhythm of our common life: we begin the year by setting in place the events surrounding the birth of Jesus, and we conclude the year with the Feast of the Reign of Christ, wherein we call to mind the eternal reign of the Lord Jesus in our lives and in the world.

The Church year, of course, begins with the season of Advent, moves into Christmas and Epiphany, leads us, after the season of Sundays known as the Epiphany season, into Lent, then to the Paschal Cycle, which concludes with Pentecost, and through the spring, summer, and fall with the Sundays of ordinary time back to the Reign of Christ. It is a procession of events, feasts, themes, and remembrances which is centuries old and is kept by the Church around the world.

To observe it faithfully, creatively, and properly in our parishes and communities is an important part of who we are as Anglicans. These observations will benefit greatly from careful planning which both recognizes the unique nature of the parish and also brings to the gathered assembly the strength of worshiping together with other Christians around the world. We Anglicans have always held common

prayer to be one of the hallmarks of our identity. Common prayer means not so much using identical language or identical books (indeed Anglicanism around the world uses a host of different service books and liturgical sources) but rather a common shape, a common

understanding and, moreover, a common lectionary, which allows us to hear the same passages of Scripture as most Anglicans and, indeed, hundreds of millions of other Christians of all denominations.

Parish planning should involve representatives of the worshipping community: clergy, musicians, liturgical assistants, Church school staff, and a variety of worshippers.

What often works well is to look ahead for a few weeks, or a season, and read together the Scriptures appointed, the Collects and Proper Prayers for the Sundays involved, and to bear in mind the particular events which are taking place in the parish or the local community. On some Sundays there will be choices to make: either because of options in the lectionary, or about which day is to be kept that Sunday.

The Calendar for the Church Year in the Book of Alternative Services (pp. 15-33) and the same in the Book of Common Prayer (pp. ix-xiii). Another valuable resource is McCausland's *Order of Divine Service*, published each year, and showing all of the important information for every day of the Church's year.

We are blessed in our Church with a rich calendar of Principal Feasts, Holy Days, Commemorations, and Memorials. It is a dynamic, infinitely varied, and multi-faceted list, including holy people from the First Century to the 20th.

We have a process nationally to monitor and add to (or subtract from) our calendar and, while we have many, many days which we share with the universal

See HAPPY / page 6

Literary Offerings

Rejection of a traditional doctrine

Retired pastor takes new look at hell

The Hell Jesus Never Intended, (Northstone, 1-896836-65-8, \$21.95)

(Kelowna, BC) – In the new book *The Hell Jesus Never Intended*, Keith Wright states that the traditional doctrine of a fiery, eternal hell needs to be rejected, that there really is no such place as hell.

As a pastor for more than 45 years, Wright has seen the fear hell instills in people. The fires of hell have captured the terror, imagination, and passion of Christians across two millennia, and those fires continue to rage today.

In his thought-provoking book, *The Hell Jesus Never Intended*, Wright offers a clear alternative to reckless words about hell.

Through a careful analysis of biblical texts, theological trajectories, and pastoral situations, he

offers welcome words on a topic that has proved embarrassing and horrifying.

Rejection of hell

At the centre of Wright's work is a rejection of hell as eternal punishment that awaits the unrighteous. He also reclaims hell as a reality that we create for ourselves and others in the present.

Tom Harpur, author of *The Pagan Christ*, says, "Few warped ideas in all of history have inflicted more horror, cruelty, and unnecessary psychic pain upon

untold millions than the concept of a literalistic, fiery, eternal hell.

"None have done more to negate the core of Christianity's message of Good News. Keith Wright's liberating exposition lays bare the lies surrounding this issue and powerfully points the way to the true hells we create for ourselves and others here and now."

Warning

Wright reminds readers that judgement is not intended to warn us about an eternal punishment in the afterlife, but rather to cause us

to turn from our destructive behaviour so that we may avoid our present hell.

The theology in *The Hell Jesus Never Intended* suggests that by taking away a major source of the fuel that feeds the conflict between religions, we will take a step towards making our world safer and more peaceful.

Wright is also the author of *Religious Abuse: A Pastor Explores the Many Ways Religion Can Hurt as Well as Heal*. Website www.woodlakebooks.com.

Society normalizes its own moral sickness

Slipping to Normal, A Matter of Leadership, (Ingram, Baker & Taylor and iUniverse, Inc. \$26.95 U.S.)

Many people have a sense that moral decline has become a serious issue in the fast-paced, bottom-line driven world of executives moving up the corporate ladder.

Executives are under pressure to improve profits, expand market share, grow the business, with inadequate attention to following the high road.

Bill Arthur, author of *Slipping to Normal, A Matter of Leadership*

has been a business owner/executive and business school dean for 35 years and founded the Leadership Morality Institute in Columbus, Georgia.

Degenerating habit

Arthur is convinced that immorality is a degenerating habit developed as leaders climb the corporate ladder and frequently ends in the headlines. But there is much more unethical conduct that never comes to the surface.

"Bill Arthur's call for Christian values education is compelling and essential if we are to restore our rapidly depleting moral her-

itage," said Merrill K. Seggerman, former vice-president of Shell Oil Company. "A real wake up call for businesses, churches, and educational leaders."

Moral standards

For many executives the objectives of their organizations are consuming, and distracting from consideration of moral standards.

But, *Slipping to Normal* also points to the habitual distractions of large systems such as the economy, the corporate form of business organization, deficiencies in management education, and the decline in influence of the church.

Dr. Arthur does not attempt to expose misbehaviour in specific organizations and does not offer prescriptions for treatment of moral sickness.

He does isolate some of the systemic problems and suggests approaches that need to be developed to help leaders resist the normalization of moral sickness, such as:

- Everybody does it, so why bother trying to change now.
- As long as subordinates do their work, I don't worry about how they do it.
- "Bill raises important issues for

all societies, and of vital concern for a Christians everywhere, even though his emphasis is on the American culture," said Dr. Robert R. Bell, president of Tennessee Technological University.

"His message is important and you'll benefit from reading *Slipping to Normal*."

Bill Arthur has owned and managed his own business and has been dean of business schools for 35 years. Bill has spoken and written extensively on leadership ethics issues.

Happy New Year, happy planning

Continued from page 5
church, we also have some uniquely Canadian entries as well.

This rich diet provides much for parishes and communities to include in daily and weekly prayer. While many congregations do not worship together on a daily basis, individuals may be encour-

aged to remember these holy people in their personal devotions. Mid-week and/or daily services in a parish church or congregation could include these commemorations and memorials in the intercessory prayer offered. Some parishes take everything in the calendar in a particular week and

name them in community intercessions the preceding Sunday.

While the Book of Common Prayer was strict about observing so-called red letter days on the days themselves, the Rules of Precedence (BAS, p. 17) provides somewhat more relaxed and perhaps realistic advice about how local communities might respond.

In any case, these holy people, through the ages, some well-known, others much less so, remind us of our history, the stories of the heroes and heroines of the Church and of our rich collective history throughout the world.

So, happy planning together. Have a rich and blessed New Year!

Seeker churches in Niagara

Continued from page 5

St. George, Lowville, has a more contemporary ethos. When I attended Morning Prayer there I found an overflow crowd. Many are attracted there by the solid preaching, and with Morning Prayer you can have a full service with a lengthy sermon without worrying that the hour is getting late.

St. Andrew, Grimsby

Recently I went to St. Andrew, Grimsby, for Morning Prayer, which is scheduled on the last Sunday of those months that have five Sundays. I found a surprisingly good choir which obviously enjoyed the opportunity to sing this lovely service in offering to God. I spoke with several people who liked this occasional change from the normal liturgical pattern.

But do these churches get seekers at Morning Prayer? I asked some of the rectors. Most have a hunch that they do, but it's not easy to check. We don't survey visitors.

One rector warned, though, that the type of Morning Prayer service that uses 16th-century language and 18th-century music might not be right for seekers in 2004. Another cautioned that to grow the Anglican Church we'll need to do more than just make liturgical adjustments.

No, changing the liturgy won't by itself revive the church. (We discovered that when we introduced the Book of Alternative Services.) But if Anglicanism is to have a place in God's future, we need a pattern of worship that incorporates hospitality to the unchurched.



Mark your Calendars!!!

A Family Ministry Initiative sponsored by Niagara's Children's Ministry

God's Paint Brush...

A Retreat for Families

Feb. 4-6, 2005

Canterbury Hills Camp

* This retreat is a gathering that aspires to create opportunities to enrich faithful, nurturing relationships and homes. The program will be based on four key factors developed by the Augsburg Youth and Family Ministry Institute: 1) caring conversation; 2) family devotional life; 3) family service; and 4) family rituals and traditions. This year's theme is based on the book, "God's Paintbrush" by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso and its accompanying family curriculum. Brighten up your winter with...new friends, spending time with your family in the Carolinian Forest, workshops for children, youth and adults, hearty meals, tobogganing, outdoor activities, lively music, creative worship times, family crafts, family cabaret and much more. *

Fee: \$100/person

5 and under free

\$375 Family Rate

Start time: Feb. 4, 7 p.m. – End time Feb. 6, 3 p.m.

For Registration & Information
Contact Dawn Alexander-Wiggins
Consultant in Children's Ministry at
(905) 527-1316 ext. 440 or
dawn.wiggins@niagara.anglican.ca
Registration Deadline is January 28, 2005

*

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Those without Internet access are encouraged to visit their parish churches to have a copy of the survey printed out.



Feel the Beat of Youth Ministry in Guelph

By JOYCE WILTON

I received a call in my office one day in September.

"How can we capture the energy, friendship and spirit that was created at this past summer's Niagara Youth Conference and make it continue in Guelph?" asked the Reverends Pauline Head and David Howells, of St. David & St. Patrick's.

The question was brought up after their children, and many other Guelph youth, had come back from NYC energized and hopeful for their church and youth ministry.

We decided we needed to get them together, to try to gather as many of the Guelph youth as possible and invite other area youth to join us as well.

So, what is important to youth and would bring them out, we asked ourselves? Music, and make it good!!

We asked the NYC band to join us and "Feel the Beat" was created.

On Fri., Oct. 28 over 40 participants got together at St. David & St. Patrick's (St. D&P as they are

fondly called) in Guelph to sing, worship, have fun, see old friends and make new ones.

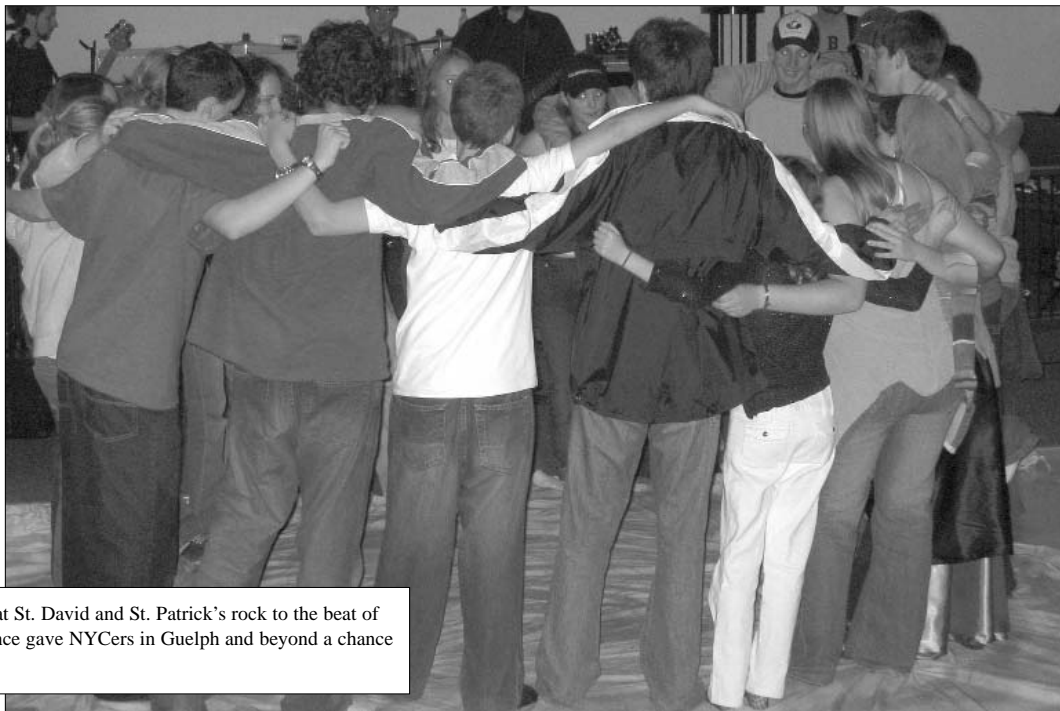
The band was awesome and we

sang and danced the night away both in worship and beyond.

St. D&P is hoping to continue this ministry. They hope other

youth will join them. All are welcome. The next event, still in the planning stages, is likely to take place in early January. Stay tuned

or contact Joyce Wilton at (905) 527-1316 ext. 430 or The Rev. Pauline Head at (519) 822-8719 for further details.



OLD AND NEW friends alike at St. David and St. Patrick's rock to the beat of the NYC band. The reunion dance gave NYCers in Guelph and beyond a chance to reconnect.

Year-round stewardship is necessary

Reflections on a personal theology of giving

Part three of a three-part series by Jim Newman, chair of the diocese of Niagara's Stewardship and Financial Development Committee. This article is based on a talk given at Christ's Church Cathedral in April 2004. Jim is a volunteer parish planning consultant for the Diocese of Niagara and helps parishes with long range planning, stewardship, narrative budgets and planned giving.

The first part of this series dealt with the need to refocus on strong year-round stewardship programs across the Diocese of Niagara. The second installment dealt with practical actions and attitudes.

As I continue to rethink my own theology of giving, I found some excellent thoughts in a little book called *Giving - Unlocking the Heart of Good Stewardship* by Ortberg, Pederson and Poling.

It begins with a passage from St. Mark's Gospel - the story of the woman who came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on Jesus' head.

Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another; "Why this waste of perfume? It could have been sold for more

than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly.

"Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. I tell you the truth, wherever the Gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her."

The authors note, "This touched Jesus' heart so deeply that he memorialized it forever. One might have expected a grand sacrifice or something of high impact. But it was a woman named Mary and her alabaster jar.

We all have alabaster jars. They come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Sealed in our alabaster jars are our treasured earthly possessions. Occasionally we break the seal and share more than usual, maybe it's for Survive and Thrive, or the residential schools appeal, and then we put the lid back on. Much of our life is spent preserving and conserving the contents of our alabaster jar.

The question is, what will you do with your alabaster jar?

Do we understand how extravagantly the love of Christ was

shown for us?

The Saviour Christ came to earth to break an alabaster jar for humanity. And Mary had come that night to break one for him.

In the words of another writer, Michael Morr: "God gave us an extravagant gift in the person of Jesus Christ. It was an outrageous gift, worth far more than we deserve. Grace is extravagant. Jesus gave everything he had for us. He gave his very life. And it was even more than necessary - he died for the whole world and yet the whole world does not accept him. He died even for people who reject him."

Some people said, "That can't be right. That's not the way God normally acts with us."

But God does things out of the ordinary. He shows us total commitment, total sacrifice, so that we might respond to him with all that we have."

Don't bargain with God

Instead there's a tendency, I think, to make giving conditional. You know, "I'll give more if I have some extra at the end of the month..." or "if the sermons improve..." or "if the bishop does..." You can fill in the blank.

But that's not the way God acts with us.

Conditional and unrealistically low levels of giving marginalize our parishes and hurt the entire community. Think about your own parish.

The process of discovering

God's will about money and possessions has been tremendously liberating for me. I now realize that I had to learn about giving from a spirituality of abundance before I was able to learn about spiritual growth.

Let me say that another way. In order to grow spiritually, I had to first understand the true meaning of stewardship. One would think it would be the other way around but it's not. The more I have been enlightened about giving, the more I understand about faith, trust, grace and commitment.

We are called to give out of a spirituality of abundance, not scarcity. God deserves better than leftovers. God deserves first fruit giving.

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Dean Wall provides challenging leadership

Rector of Christ's Church and Dean of Niagara

The Very Reverend Peter Wall identifies his role in the Diocese of Niagara as "the rector of Christ's Church and dean of Niagara."

With a twinkle, he continues, "God knows what that means – but God will let me know ... in her good time."

Quick to affirm the support of his administrative assistant, Alison Meredith, who "deals with an enormous number of tasks, and works so well under pressure," Peter describes "what you do" as Cathedral Dean as "both the best job in the Christian Church, and one of the most varied."

As incumbent, Peter fulfills the responsibilities and work of the Cathedral's parish priest, "but the parish is also trying to function as the Cathedral," hosting diocesan events and being "home" to the Synod Offices, which means "another layer of responsibilities."

Hosting diocesan events such as confirmations, ordinations, and celebrations of the Order of Niagara "requires co-ordination from me."

Peter smiles ruefully: "Some say I don't do that very well... but that's what they would say, I guess."

Works closely with Bishop

A senior diocesan staff member, Peter works closely with Bishop Ralph Spence. Although "specific tasks are few," Peter spends considerable time involved in Synod Office activities, participating in discussions and meetings, and sharing diocesan planning both formally and informally.

"In Anglican polity, particularly in Canada, the dean is seen as the senior priest of the diocese. I take seriously my role to be out in the diocese. I average one Sunday a month in another parish."

"Cathedrals are funny places," he explains. "For many people, they are a 'destination church.' They've left another parish, or they're attracted to the Cathedral for particular reasons, music or liturgy for example. (Cathedrals) are the 'neighbourhood church' for almost no one. That's certainly true for us, because less than 10

Getting to Know You

– The Rev. Fran Darlington

per cent (of the congregation) lives within one kilometer.

"I believe cathedrals have a specific and distinctive role in the Church. They've always been places of pilgrimage, places of art and music, places that convey the teaching of the Church through the Office of the Bishop. They are the Bishop's Church, the place of the 'cathedra' (the bishop's seat.)

Challenge

"The challenge in Canada, it seems to me, is that we invest our cathedrals with all these ancient values and characteristics, and then we also want them to be a parish church as well. So that makes for an eclectic marriage of roles and responsibility."

Describing that "eclectic marriage," Peter discusses our Cathedral's ministry. "We've found an enormous amount of energy to be the Church in the north end of the city, to take seriously our role as a place whose doors are always open to the neighbourhood, a place that cares about (and) reaches out to the inner city."

Peter feels that ministry is unfolding through Bishopsgate, the redesigned forecourt of the Cathedral.

"It's a green space, a garden, (where people can) sit and be quiet – the only green space between Gore Park and Bayfront. I believe that being an inviting and open space says something about how we view our neighbourhood."

Currently, the Cathedral is developing a relationship with Threshold, a new program in Hamilton, which teaches people building trades.

"We hope to partner with them," says Peter, "and help them present their program to the neighbourhood and help those we know need their assistance."

Involvement with other helping agencies means close relationships with Mission Services and SISO, and providing a Saturday breakfast at Benetto School.

For years, the Cathedral has



THE VERY REVEREND PETER WALL

been home to outreach through a Hamilton Health Sciences program called Friends of Schizophrenics. For over 20 years, the Cathedral has hosted Operation Lifeline, a grassroots refugee assistance program funded by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hamilton.

Peter's ministry has another vital commitment: "I believe strongly that one of the principal forms of outreach to the local community and beyond is simply – and not so simple sometimes – providing many, many opportunities for worship."

Outreach

Cathedral staff and parishioners do this over 500 times a year, whether for a gathering of two people for Eucharist or office, or for crowds of 700 to 800 people at diocesan services. These events involve welcoming, parking, feeding and watering and toileting all those people – "an act of real outreach!"

Peter's ministry takes him beyond the Cathedral: "Personally, the Cathedral has been a wonderfully supportive place for me to work in terms of the broader work I do for the Church."

Perhaps best known is Peter's

participation in the singing group, The Three Cantors, with The Reverend David Pickett, rector of St. John's Church, Ancaster, and The Rev. Bill Cliff of Huron Diocese: "It means a lot of time away singing to raise money for the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund."

Seven years after a colleague challenged them after their singing at a Huron Diocesan conference, the group has just held its 100th concert, and has raised over \$600,000.00 for PWRDF.

They are booked through mid-2006.

Peter is also a member of both Provincial and General Synods, and for four years has been chair of Liturgy Canada, a national liturgical publishing house. He's also served for three years on the national committee for Faith, Worship and Ministry, "and there are three years to come, (as well as) now being on Council of General Synod for the next three years."

This year, Peter is hosting the mid-continent conference of deans from across North America. Twenty-five to 30 deans, "whichever deans want to come," will gather in Niagara Falls for an informal time of sharing experiences, exploring the tasks of their office and discussing developments in the Anglican Communion.

Niagara's diocesan Evangelism Officer, The Rev. Canon Michael Patterson will also address the group.

Peter affirms, "In all these things, I think the work is important and work I was ordained to do. I consider myself blessed to be working in a parish and diocese who value this work and realize it is our work to share."

Born in Kingston, Peter grew up in Ottawa, London and Calgary, returning to Ontario to earn a Bachelor of Music in voice

at the University of Toronto. He sang professionally with the Canadian Opera Company, and taught at the University of Western Ontario, London. Peter was on the staff at Hart House, U of T, and was responsible for administration of the Student Centre at Western.

Entering seminary at Huron College, London, at 35 years of age, Peter graduated and was ordained for the Diocese of Huron in 1989, moving to Niagara in 1998.

Family life

With his wife, Ann Harvey, who runs the career centre at the Terryberry Library, Peter is parent to Emily, in third-year studies in music and drama at Bishop's University in Quebec, and Patrick, in Grade 11 at Westdale High School, Hamilton. A cadet in the Argyll and Sutherland Regiment, Patrick is seriously considering becoming a career officer.

The whole family plays their grand piano, and Ann, Emily and Patrick all sing in the Cathedral choir.

Peter describes Thyme, the 11-year-old family cat, as "the worst creature God ever put on the face of the earth," and, playing on her name, he adds "(her) time has often come...!"

As well as his music, Peter relaxes by cooking: "I like making jams, jellies, chutneys, bread and crackers. I should run a marathon to get my boyish figure back," he grins, "but I cook and eat it all!"

Peter says, "I've found (the Cathedral) a fun place to work, not glib and silly, but enjoyable, challenging, determinedly feisty, and passionate about ministry. The people of the Cathedral never settle for second best, or unsatisfying or uninvolved experiences. Those things mean fireworks, butting of heads at times over strongly held and expressed opinions. It also means we believe in building the kingdom in ways that are honest, forthright and faithful."

Feisty

Those words, "honest, forthright and faithful," also describe our Cathedral's dean, who also never settles for second best and is known for being "decidedly feisty" himself.

His own passion for ministry may mean controversy at times as well, so his presence at and commitment to our Cathedral and our diocese mean life is seldom dull, and that the Very Reverend Peter Wall will provide challenging leadership into Niagara's future!



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Learning and healing...

TO RAISE AWARENESS of the Residential School Settlement, St. James' Church, Merriton (St. Catharines) invited a speaker and dancers from the Niagara Regional Native Centre on Oct. 17. After a luncheon of traditional soup, parishioners watched dances by Corey Davis, Sean Vanderklif and Miranda Edwards. The three are Native young people from St. Catharines. Youth co-ordinator Harry Hill, of Six Nations, spoke about the food, dances and the work of healing and restoration in the community. Anyone wishing to contact Mr. Hill can call (905) 688-6484 or cathygeneral@hotmail.com

Education for Ministry builds confidence when discussing faith

You are at work. The "R" word – religion – comes up in conversation. You feel uncertain and don't know what to say, so you say nothing. Sound familiar?

It cannot be said enough; evangelism is not about preaching, it's about being comfortable talking about our faith. Education for Ministry (EFM) is one way for that to happen. It is a four-year program of lay theological education, spiritual development and ministry discernment. Its purpose is to equip people to be able to carry out their baptized ministry, whatever that may be.

Participants come together usually weekly in a small group setting of six to 11 people throughout the school year. Under the guidance of a trained mentor, they discuss assigned text readings and explore their sense of ministry, personal beliefs and faith

journey through theological reflection exercises.

Group members have the opportunity to learn about Scripture, church history and theology and then integrate this with their life experience and their core beliefs.

As one graduate of the program describes it: "EFM has allowed me to 'connect the dots' when it comes to understanding my faith. Through EFM I have a better handle on what I believe and have the vocabulary to express it."

There is currently one EFM group operating in Niagara, in Burlington. It is hoped that this program will develop groups across the diocese. For more information on EFM, contact the diocesan co-ordinator Craig Fairley (905)-631-1384 or imagine@imaginecreative.com

Bishop Ralph meets Ralph



BISHOP RALPH SPENCE meets Ralph the hamster, who belongs to Dana Hayward, 10, of Thorold. Earlier this year, Dana sent a photo of the hamster to the Niagara Anglican. She had named him Ralph, she said, after a parish visit by the bishop. After the photo was published, a scheduled parish visit Oct. 28 at St. John's, Thorold, was arranged to get the two Ralphs acquainted. The pair hit it off, Dana assured us.

St. Cuthbert's selling Christmas trees

St. Cuthbert's Church, Oakville, once again is selling freshly cut Christmas trees as a fundraiser. Hours of operation now are Monday-Friday 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturdays 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sundays noon to 6 p.m.

St. Cuthberts is located at Maple Grove and Oakhill in Southeast Oakville.

Christmas Worship Schedule

*St. Cuthbert's Anglican Church
Maple Grove and Oakhill Drive
Oakville
(905) 844-6200*

Advent 4

Sunday, December 19

*8:00 a.m. – Traditional Holy Eucharist
10:00 a.m. – Advent/Christmas Festival of Lessons and Carols with Holy Eucharist.
Nursery, children's and youth program*

Christmas Eve

Friday, December 24

*4:30 p.m. – Children's Eucharist
(45 minute liturgy geared to young children with Messiah birthday cakes following in the Parish Hall)
9:30 p.m. – The Taffanel Wind Ensemble
(Come early for some quiet, pre-service Christmas instrumental music)
10:00 p.m. – Candlelit Holy Eucharist with festive music led by Andre Rakus and choir
11:15 p.m. – Wine and Cheese reception in parish hall*

Christmas Day

Saturday, December 25

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, organ-led hymns

St. Stephen's Day

Sunday, December 26

*8:00 a.m. – Traditional Holy Eucharist with organ-led hymns
10:00 a.m. – Contemporary Holy Eucharist with organ-led hymns
Nursery, children's and youth program*

CHRISTMAS TREES

a quality Anglican Christmas tree at

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On sale now through Christmas Eve

Cuthbert's Church





LYNNE BARKER TAKES refuge in Bishop Ralph Spence's cope after one of the Order of Niagara services in October. Lynne helped design the bishop's new cope.

A goose named Duck

By SANDRA MACKAY

My daughter Samantha and I had just left Lakeside Plaza on the border between Oakville and Burlington. We were walking to our bus stop to head back to Oakville when we saw a poor goose sitting on the road.

A man was telling a grocery clerk that the goose had flown into some wires and was knocked down to the road.

Sam and I headed back into the supermarket to call the Oakville Humane Society. When we came back, someone had picked it up and brought it to a tree.

So we stayed with the goose until someone came to pick it up.

Sam looked at me and said, "Mommy I'm scared."

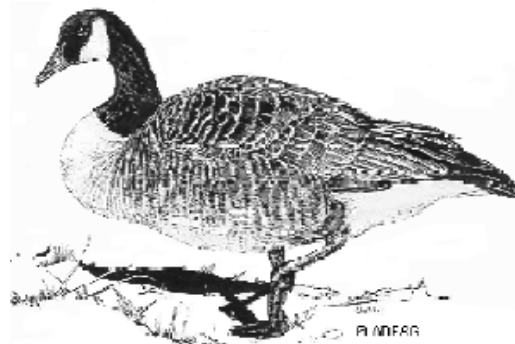
I told her, "It's okay, honey, he's just lying down because he's not well. Someone will come soon to pick him up."

I laid my jacket over the goose (yes I am going to wash it!)

Sam and I talked to the goose in soft voices, reassuring him that everything was okay. The goose was lying with his head down and eyes wide.

A Burlington Animal Control Officer arrived and a young man came over and asked what happened.

After we told him, he said to Samantha, "Why don't you give



him a lucky name and I'll go get a nice warm blanket for him."

When he left, Sam named the goose and we said a little prayer for him.

When the young man returned with the blanket, he asked Sam what she had named the goose.

"Duck," she replied.

"Okay, Duck it is!" he laughed.

He thanked us for staying with the goose.

Unfortunately, when I called Animal Control later that afternoon, we were told Duck died in the van on the way to the vet clinic.

Their best assessment was that he might have been electrocuted. They were impressed by the number of people who helped him.

I told Sam he went to "Goose heaven".

I was so impressed by how calm Sam remained, even while admitting she was scared. She said it very quietly and didn't upset the bird by crying or making too much noise.

She talked to him gently as I did and told him "not to be scared" and everything would be okay.

Although it was a sad ending for Duck, I was glad to see so many people helping one of God's creatures and how much compassion one little girl showed a sick bird.

Sandra MacKay and her daughter Samantha, 5, are members of St. Simon's, Oakville.

Remember Mission to Seafarers this holiday

Could you imagine anything more miserable than spending Christmas Day in the middle of

the freezing cold Atlantic Ocean? This is the fate of many "salties", the majority of whom

are from developing nations, who spend months away from family and friends and receive minimal pay and endure harsh conditions for months on end.

Father Bob Hudson of the Hamilton Mission to Seafarers, has been trying for several years to lighten this burden by providing shoeboxes of goodies to be opened on Christmas morning.

The procedure is simple. Obtain your shoebox(es). Fill with an assortment of toiletries such as toothpaste, brush, soap, deodorant, disposable razors, shaving cream, mini packages of Tylenol®, Kleenex® and BandAids®.

Add some fun items like mini-jigsaw puzzles, playing cards, balsa wood airplanes, dominoes, false noses, etc., include toques, socks or mitts and some hard candy or gum, airmail stationery, pens and notebooks and your shoebox is ready. If you are unable to fill a shoebox, donations of any of the items would be welcome. If you are a knitter and could produce toques or socks, this would be greatly appreciated. Wool can be provided if necessary.

Items can be delivered to the Mission to Seafarers, Pier 10 at the foot of Ferguson St. North on the Hamilton waterfront or to St. Luke's rectory, 454 John St. North, Hamilton, no later than St. Nicholas' Day, Dec. 6. For information, call Roddie Gould-Perks at (905) 318-9276.



The Christ's Church Cathedral Shoppe is now open

Devotional books, gift items, cards, Christmas cards and gifts and Anglican Book Centre publications.

We look forward to seeing you when you visit your Cathedral.

(905) 527-1316

252 James St. North, Hamilton

SHADES OF IRELAND

Hosted by Archdeacon Ian Dingwall



Departure May 13, 2005

12 Days with Highlights:

Limerick, Medieval Castle Banquet, Moher, Galway, Killarney, Blarney, Kerry, Irish Pub Night, Waterford, Kilkenny, Dublin (with optional Day Trip to Belfast). For more details please contact Archdeacon Ian Dingwall @ (905) 637-3449 or email: dorothy.dingwall@sympatico.ca



Cycle of Prayer

HAS MOVED

**onto the Diocesan Web site
www.niagara.anglican.ca**

Resources

Spirituality and Prayer

Churches are encouraged to copy it for use in their parish.

MasterPaints
FACTORY OUTLET STORE

33 Princess St., Hamilton

Special rates for churches & seniors, free custom tints, free parking

905/529-2205 or 905/529-2983

Something about Christmas...

There is something about Christmas, which makes it so meaningful, and at the same time, something that creates an element of hollowiness in the celebration of our Lord Jesus' birth.

On the one hand we are able to celebrate in the joy of the Spirit, and on the other we find that the secular world is encroaching more and more into our celebrations, and diluting the importance of this occasion through other means.

Jesus' arrival was a part of God's plan for His creation, whose commitment was to Israel, but whose mandate was to eventually include all humanity.

Anglican Fellowship of Prayer — Roger Harris

From what we have come to learn about Jesus, we can be positive in that he was perfection at birth, and although born into low-

liness, he had the deity to place fear into the highest in the land.

His birth was celebrated by the heavenly hosts, and spread throughout the land.

Whether he was born in a stable or cave, is overshadowed by the fact that he was born into glory, and that this glory was meant to be the beginning of enlightenment for all who should seek it, king and commoner alike.

Born into a world of diversity, to become a catalyst for harmony and unity, He was God's gift to humanity.

From the moment of his first breath, He began a learning curve, not only about his own mortality, but also about the spiritual needs of our mortality as defined by our Father God.

In bridging the gap between infinite spirituality and finite mortality, we can be sure that Mary, Jesus' mother taught him how to pray, and that from a very early age, Jesus was in communion with God.

We can also be sure that through this, our Father was there to guide Him each step of the way, giving Him all He needed for his journey, so that He could provide us with all that we need to complete ours.

Jesus was constant in his prayers, and encourages us to be the same, so that through him we can foster a relationship with our Father, that will give a sure foundation to the path that we have chosen to tread.

God gave us the means for our access to His Grace, and to partake of what He is offering us, in the place where Jesus came from and ultimately returned.

Christmas without Jesus has no meaning at all. It is not about presents, trees or snow. It is about love, and the love that God has for us in the form of a babe born in a manger.

It is how He guided this babe on His journey from that manger to His sacrifice for us on a wooden cross at Golgotha, in expiation for our sins.

So we celebrate his arrival amongst us once more, thankful that we have the wonder and occasion to see this act of God's benevolence to us in a time long past.

In our celebration of this joyous event, we must never lose sight of the future, for it is this past on which the future has been built. In God's time the future will unfold, and then there will be cause to celebrate a new advent, as Jesus returns in glory.

May the peace and joy of Jesus rest with you all during this time of rebirth.

PEARLS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

February 13 - March 03, 2005

A fascinating journey through Southeast Asia including Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore & Malaysia, topped off with a four-night stay in mysterious Bali.

The tour includes a Bangkok Rice Barge Cruise, a Mekong River Boat Ride, an Elephant Ride and a Bamboo Raft Ride.



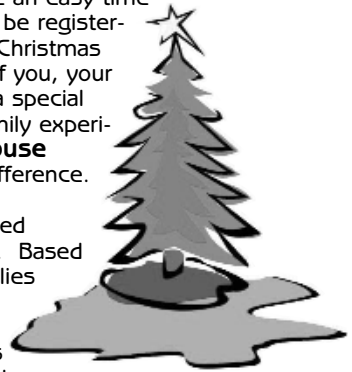
Deposits are fully refundable for any reason until December 15. For a brochure of this exotic tour of the Orient, please contact:

Canon Gordon Kinkley, M.A., M. Div.
St. John's Church,
80 Main St., St. Catharines L2N 3Z3
(905) 934-1020; kinkley@iaw.com

Make a difference this Christmas — share yours with a family in need

Christmas is coming but it won't be an easy time for hundreds of families who will be registering with **St. Matthew's House** Christmas Adopt-a-family program in November. If you, your family, parish or group are looking for a special way to share your Christmas with a family experiencing hard times, **St. Matthew's House** offers you an opportunity to make a difference.

Last year **St. Matthew's House** helped 3,873 family members and individuals. Based on steadily increasing numbers of families who are suffering from the impact of poverty, unemployment, and financial hardships, we expect to help more this Christmas. Too many of them are at risk of becoming homeless.



St. Matthew's House

Celebrating 40 Years of Service Across Hamilton

Three ways you can sponsor a family:

- Provide the food for Christmas dinner for a family of two to five people or for a larger family.
- Or, provide new unwrapped toys for children or gifts for teenagers.
- Or, sponsor a large or small family by supplying Christmas dinner as well as one new gift for each child according to the size of family chosen. **St. Matthew's House** suggests gift certificates from A&P, The Barn, Fortino's or No Frills to cover the cost of meat (for the size of family chosen.) You can also supply potatoes, vegetables and dessert.

As a suggested guideline, you should be able to sponsor a family of four for \$125 - \$150. If it is not feasible to provide food or gifts, you can help sponsor a family by giving a donation to: **St. Matthew's House** Christmas Program, c/o **St. Matthew's House**, 414 Barton Street East, Hamilton, L8L 2Y3. Income tax receipts will be provided.

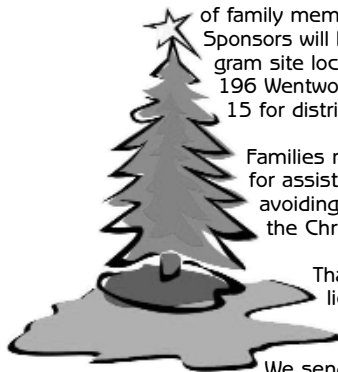
St. Matthew's House provides sponsors with first names of family members, plus ages and sizes of children.

Sponsors will bring the food and gifts to the Christmas program site located at: Wentworth Campus, Mohawk College, 196 Wentworth St. North, Hamilton, on Dec. 13, 14 and 15 for distribution to families.

Families registered at **St. Matthew's House** are eligible for assistance from only one agency, thereby avoiding duplication. Please call Debra House at the Christmas Program (905) 522-4584.

Thank you for remembering children and families most in need at **St. Matthew's House** this Christmas.

We send our best wishes for every blessing at Christmas to you and yours.



Bishop's Itinerary

December 5, 10:30 a.m., St. Paul's Church, Dunnville – Parish Visit and Luncheon to follow at the Dunn Parish

December 5, 3 p.m., St. George's, St. Catharines, Confirmation Service for Lincoln Region

December 7, 2 p.m., St. Matthew on-the-Plains, Burlington, meeting of the Archdeacons

December 7, 5 p.m., St. Matthew-on-the-Plains, Burlington, meeting of Synod Council

December 8, day, St. George's, Guelph, meeting of the Greater Wellington Clericus

December 8, 7 p.m., Church of the Ascension, Ordination to the Priesthood

December 10, 10 a.m., Graduation Ceremony for Chaplain Steele Lazerte at Trinity Chapel, Borden

December 12, 10 a.m., St. George's Church, St. Catharines, parish visit

December 12, 4 p.m., Church of St. Barnabas, St. Catharines – Ordination to the Priesthood

December 13, day, meeting in Huron Diocese

December 24, 11 p.m., Christ's Church Cathedral, Christmas Eve Service

December 25, St. John the Evangelist, Hamilton, Christmas Day Service

January 2, 3 p.m., Christ's Church Cathedral, Hamilton, Evensong, Installation of Canons and Bishop's Levee

An active, busy diocese

Ordinations to the Priesthood Church of the Ascension, Hamilton

The Reverends Dianne Distler, Robert Hurkmans and Peter Woods are candidates for ordination on Dec. 8 at 7 p.m. at Church of the Ascension, Hamilton. The Venerable Paul Jackson will be the preacher.

St. Barnabas, St. Catharines

The Reverends Kevin Block and William Steinman are candidates for ordination on Dec. 12 at 4 p.m. at Church of St. Barnabas, St. Catharines. The Reverend Canon Keith Whittingham will be the preacher.

Church of St. James, Fergus

The Reverends Nigel Bunce and Pauline Head are candidates for ordination on Jan. 6, 2005 at 7 p.m. at Church of St. James, Fergus. The preacher will be The Rev. Peter Scott.

St. Jude's, Oakville

The Reverends Valerie Kerr and Martha Tatarnic are candidates for ordination on Jan. 9, 4 p.m. at St. Jude's Church, Oakville. The preacher will be The Rev. Dr. Michael Thompson.

Appointments

St. John's, Elora

The Rev. Patrick Patterson, from the Diocese of Ontario, has accepted the appointment to be rector of St. John's, Elora, effective June 1, 2005.

Interim priest

The Rev. Lincoln McKoen, assistant curate at St. John's, Elora, will assume the responsibility of inter-

People In The News

– Alison D'Atri

im priest in charge of St. John's, from Jan. 1 to May 31, 2005.

St. John, Cayuga, York

The Rev. Trish McCarthy has been appointed rector of St. John the Divine, Cayuga, and St. John's, York, as of Dec. 1.

Church of the Resurrection, Hamilton

The Rev. Harley Clowater, on leave from Fredericton, has been appointed honorary assistant at Church of the Resurrection, Hamilton, effective Oct. 24, under the direction of Archdeacon Richard Jones.

Congratulations

50th wedding anniversary

Congratulations to Peggy and Jim White, faithful members of St. James, St. Catharines, who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Nov. 17.

St. Paul's, Norval

St. Paul's, Norval has a few good reasons to celebrate! Congratulations to Eva Burton who celebrated her 70th anniversary of attending St. Paul's, Norval, and happy birthday wishes to Mary Maxwell who celebrated her 90th birthday on Oct. 24.

New child is born

Congratulations to The Rev. Colin Cameron and Elayne Cameron on the birth of their third child: Andrew John Marvin was born on Oct. 20.

Ordained deacon

Congratulations to The Rev. Michael Nicholas who was ordained deacon on Nov. 7 at All Saints Church, Hamilton, by Bishop Walter Asbil, for the Diocese of Caledonia. We wish Michael well as he begins his ministry in Caledonia Diocese.

A Happy and Blessed Christmas from
the Publisher's Advisory Board

Ye shall find the babe
wrapped in swaddling
clothes, lying in a
manger.

Luke 2:12

