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Taking care of your body—the temple of the Holy Spirit

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Young people find spirituality outside the Church

What one young person thinks will bring them inside

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A section of the Anglican Journal

NIAGARA ANGLICAN

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

FEBRUARY 2012

Primate's Fund takes on a new focus in Niagara

DORIS M'TIMKULU

JUSTFOOD is the name of our work for and on behalf of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) in Niagara Diocese. It was launched at Synod in November 2011 to

From a humanitarian view, hunger is an unacceptable scandal, given our knowledge, skills and resources to provide enough food for all.

From an economic-political view, lack of food security wastes precious human capital and

to increase the yield of their land. Here's an example:

A couple of years ago I met Ruth and Reuben. They live in east-central Kenya on one quarter acre of land. They used to grow coffee trees, but due to falling prices on the world market they could no longer feed themselves and their three children, let alone produce food for the market. They and others in their region got together with Charles Macharia, a staff member of Christian Community Services (CCS) - the outreach arm of three Anglican dioceses in central Kenya. CCS receives funding from PWRDF for development work. Ruth and Reuben learned about intensive, sustain-

—See *JUSTFOOD* Page 2

JUSTFOOD

sharing the bread of life

focus our reflection, prayer and action on the most pervasive human need in the 21st century—food.

One in seven persons is hungry day in and day out. One in seven children cannot fully develop because they lack essential nutrients - their growth is stunted for life. Hunger and malnutrition are the number one health issue in the world.

Hunger knows no boundaries; there are hungry people in Canada, China, Bangladesh and Brazil. Famine, as in the Horn of Africa, is only the tip of the iceberg. The chronically hungry and malnourished children, men and women are hidden below the surface; their voices are largely silent or ignored.

frequently leads to civil strife or outright war.

The biblical imperative to share bread and all of God's creation is crystal clear. Bread signifies God's provision for our life on earth (from manna in the desert to food for the thousands), and the fullness of his reign to come, in the person of Jesus Christ and the Eucharistic celebration.

Root causes for lack of food security are interrelated and complex, as are solutions to the problems. There is widespread agreement, however, that food security rests largely on small-scale farmers, not on large-scale plantations. Through PWRDF we here in Niagara can assist small farmers in many countries

Bishop Michael expresses concerns about Bill C-4

Bishop Michael Bird of Niagara Diocese has written the Federal Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Jason Kenney conveying his concerns about Bill C-4, the *Preventing Human Smugglers from Abusing Canada's Immigration System Act*.

In his letter, the Bishop wrote, "Bill C-4 has the potential to severely impact the dignity of refugees fleeing persecution. This legislation will punish the refugees whom we—as Canadian and international citizens—have pledged to protect rather than the smugglers for whom it was intended."



All MPs representing districts covered by Niagara Diocese have received a copy of the letter and the Bishop encourages you—lay people and clergy—to follow up with them about this issue.

The full text of the Bishop's letter can be found on page 3.

The church year: Lent

Lent is a season to pause, reflect, reframe and renew our spiritual directions.

This season in the Church's year is based on the experience of Jesus -fasting for 40 days in the desert and being tested or tempted as to the directions he should travel as the Saviour sent by God. (Read the full account in the Gospel of Matthew 4:1-11.)

Lent becomes the season to "withdraw" from some ordinary daily routines and spend time

fasting, examining one's life and practices, praying, reading the Bible and helping those in need.

This year Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22, and continues until Holy Saturday (the day before Easter Sunday), April 7.

Some do not count Sundays as part of Lent. The last week—referred to as Holy Week—has its own special emphasis.

Hymn writer Katherine Hankey in 1886 described Lent

this way:

Those three Sundays before Lent will prepare us to repent; that in Lent we may begin earnestly to mourn for sin.

Those three Sundays leading up to Ash Wednesday were Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima – heralding roughly 70, 60 and 50 days before Easter.

To help you in your spiritual life this Lent, we offer several suggestions on page 8.

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JUSTFOOD offers ideas for Lenten observance

Continued from Page 1

able and organic farming. To start them off, each participating family received one dairy goat of an improved breed. Reuben and Ruth now have four dairy goats, get milk for the family for improved nutrition and sell about four liters daily. The milk is collected via motorbike unless the "roads" are impassable during heavy rains.

With the cash from the milk sale they saved enough money to replace their mud hut with a wooden house. They paid for a membership in a water co-op, linking their land to piped water which flows by gravity from the mountain. Now, with year-round irrigation, and with manure from the goats, their small shamba produces corn and vegetables for the kitchen, bananas for the market and papyrus grass for the animals. The children can buy school supplies and continue their education. All on one quarter acre of land! *and* they give a tenth of their income to

the church! This rural, isolated community had just erected four walls and a roof to serve as their church, and a deaconess arrived to minister to their spiritual needs.

When we examine and reflect on the root causes of hunger, we are challenged by two facts. One, we are deeply involved in the things that bring about and sustain food insecurity. Secondly, the causes are almost all created by people and states, *therefore they can be changed*. Why not start during this Lenten season to make some changes in your life, such as;

- **Fast from fossil fuels:** reduce your thermostat by 0.5° C, walk or use public transport, or arrange your appointments back-to-back.
- **Fast from over-consumption:** Leave your wallet at home and commit to a "buy nothing" day or week, buy only the essentials and learn the value of simplifying your life.
- **Fast from complacency:** Speak up against injustice and defend the right to enough

good food as God's will for everyone.

- **Fast from disconnection:** Take time to prepare and eat food with others. Better yet, invite fellow parishioners, neighbours or friends to a weekly reflection time during Lent. Use the "Fast for Change" or "Food as if Faith Matters" study guides. They are in your parish's JUSTFOOD resource folder or you can download the material from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank website: www.foodgrainsbank.ca - click 'resources' and 'free resources'.
- **Fast and pray:** Pray for people like Ruth and Reuben, Charles, CCS and PWRDF staff; pray for the Episcopal Church of Haiti and its leaders as they continue to re-build schools, clinics and the livelihoods of families and communities. Pray for yourself that you may steadfastly continue making changes in your own life.
- **Fast and give:** Every time you find yourself wasting food,



A passion for justice

Ray Biggar, Geraldine Smout and Doris M'Timkulo were commissioned as representatives for the Primate's Fund at Niagara Synod

put a loonie or toonie into a PWRDF coin box, and offer your gift to God during Holy Week.

May God bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we really *can* make a difference in this world, so that we are able, with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done. (Franciscan blessing)

Doris M'Timkulo is the Diocesan PWRDF Coordinator. mtimkulu78@gmail.com

Jesus said...

Give us this day our daily bread. (Matthew 6:11)

I am the bread of life; the person who comes to Me will not hunger, and the one who believes in Me will never thirst. (John 6:35)



Staff changes at St. Matthew's House

On November 25, 2011, *The Hamilton Spectator* ran a story stating that Canon Wendy Roy had been "let go of her position" as Executive Director of St. Matthew's House, Hamilton, by the Board of Directors. The paper also quoted Canon Susan Wells, Board Member and Acting Executive Director, that it resulted from a Board decision to take "a different direction." Wells is reported to have told the Spectator that "Wendy [did] an awful lot of good work at St. Matthew's House over the past 19 years. I don't want that to be discounted in any way, shape or form," and "All I can say is it was a board decision. And there was no wrongdoing... on her part."

Just before Christmas, the Diocese of Niagara issued a release thanking Canon Wendy Roy for her "tireless effort and ceaseless dedication in the work of justice and care of those in the greatest need." The release also thanked her "for all that you have done for thousands of people and we wish you many blessings and best wishes in the new chapter that is before you."

The *Niagara Anglican* tried but was unable to contact Canon Roy.

Also in December, on St. Matthew's web site, Chair Doug Smith on behalf of the Board of Directors announced two interim appointments: Marion Emo as Director of Community Engagement and Advancement (part-time) and Canon Susan Wells as Director of Operation. Smith said that "Both Susan and Marion will be working closely with the Board of Directors on strategic planning for the organization and looking closely at how we best serve our community and advocate for social justice." He continued, "The Board is excited about the hiring of our two new Directors. We have more plans for the future and continue to encourage your input as we transition and grow."

According to their web-site, stmatthewshouse.ca, St. Matthew's House is a charitable, non-profit, multi-service agency and an outreach of the Anglican Diocese of Niagara that has served the City of Hamilton since 1963 through a variety of supportive services.

Bishop "Charles Dickens" Spence brought the house down

The fire alarm went off as retired Bishop Ralph Spence arrived at the heritage site—Cottonwood Mansion Museum, Selkirk—on St. Nicholas' Day (December 6).

He remarked that he was delighted with the "warm welcome." Apparently a plastic container accidentally left in an oven when volunteers were heating a Dutch style dessert was the cause of the smoke. The situation was immediately contained.

Undaunted, Bishop Spence, garbed in suitable muffler, fingerless gloves, and Victorian-style hat, delighted his audience

with a reading of Stave Five of Dickens', "A Christmas Carol".

Earlier curator Jill Walters-Klamer, in her introduction, explained that Dickens shortened the reading to 80 minutes when he himself performed, and gave any proceeds to charitable causes. This version has been a CBC Radio production for years and is now widely used for fund raising purposes.

The first four staves (verses or stanzas) were read by retired English teachers and current authors, John Passfield and Neal Paul; Catherine Berry Stidsen, retired educator and author,

performed dressed as a Victorian household servant; and historian and author Cheryl MacDonald wore a replica of a lady's day dress.

According to Catherine Stidsen, Vice President of Cottonwood Mansion, guests were complimentary on the quality and drama of all the readers, but admitted that the bishop brought the house down, when he read of the redeemed Scrooge's plan to visit with his employee Bob Cratchitt in his home and rejoice over a "bowl of Smoking Bishop." She said that participants were delighted that Bishop Spence was able to explain that it was, and is, a special kind of punch.

Further research has identified the item as one of several described in various Dickens' novels, she concluded.

Cottonwood Mansion Museum, depicting the Victorian era, is located north of Selkirk near Lake Erie on land originally owned by the Hoover family, the first settlers to the area.

More information is available at www.cottonwoodmansion.ca.



Bishop Spence in "A Christmas Carol" reading

Bishop Bird's letter to Minister Kenney

December 1, 2011

The Hon. Jason Kenney, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Citizenship,
Immigration and
Multiculturalism
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Minister:

On behalf of the Anglican Diocese of Niagara, I write to express my concern over Bill C-4, the *Preventing Human Smugglers from Abusing Canada's Immigration System Act*.

For many years the Diocese of Niagara has been a proud holder of a Private Sponsorship Agreement with the Government of Canada. Over the years we have sponsored many refugee

families; most recently through The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund's 50th Anniversary refugee sponsorship initiative. I am grateful for the funding Citizenship and Immigration Canada provided for this initiative; it enabled two of our churches to welcome a family from Iraq to Canada. I am also delighted with the government's commitment that by 2013 6500 refugees will be arriving in Canada each year under the private sponsorship program.

Our sponsorships have helped us live into our biblical tradition of 'welcoming the stranger' and to more fully experience what it truly means to love our neighbours. Underpinning these traditions is a moral imperative to respect the dignity of every

human being; a value which I believe all Canadians can affirm. Yet Bill C-4 has the potential to severely impact the dignity of refugees fleeing persecution. This legislation will punish the refugees whom we – as Canadian and international citizens - have pledged to protect rather than the smugglers for whom it was intended. Moreover this legislation is unlikely to act as a deterrent as refugees will do what needs to be done in order to save their families. I believe that penalizing those who are already persecuted by threatening them with lengthy detention and by separating families is contrary to the Canadian way.

In solidarity with The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, I urge you

to withdraw this proposed legislation based on the following considerations:

- Bill C-4 violates the Charter and Canada's international human rights obligations. While human smuggling is a serious problem, discriminating between the two classes of refugees (based upon mode of arrival) that Bill C-4 creates is not helpful.
- Bill C-4 proposes mandatory detention without independent review. This is arbitrary detention and as such is contrary to the Charter and to international law.
- Bill C-4 refuses designated refugees the right to apply for permanent residence for five years and consequently for reunification with their

children. This separation of families is unconscionable and a clear violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

It is my hope that in consultation with refugee serving organizations and agencies, the Government of Canada will go back to the drawing board to address the problem of human smuggling in a way that does not penalize refugees, but rather seeks to uphold the dignity of all human beings.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours truly,

The Right Reverend Michael Bird
Bishop of Niagara

War is over – a parable

ELEANOR JOHNSTON AND WAYNE FRASER

The authorities of church and state in Jesus' time fixated on establishing and maintaining power over the people, using rules and violence. The people surely felt no love for or trust in the Pharisees or the Romans. When Jesus spoke to the people of his society, they were drawn instinctively to him because he could teach and heal them. He loved them and this freed them from the top-down structures that impoverished them. His love was stronger than the rules of the Jewish religion or the laws of the Roman state.

Imagine that Jesus grew up in an Anglican family and worshipped regularly in an Anglican Church somewhere in Niagara. He was a well-adjusted, gentle but strong child who dropped out of high school and took off to the poorest country in the world where he worked for an NGO. He kept in touch with his parents who worried about him but respected that he had to do what God called him to do.

One day, as the winter lessened its hold on the frozen land, he returned, walked into the office of the priest and introduced himself. The priest had heard of this young man and welcomed him. They sat down to tea and the first thing Jesus said was, "The cookies haven't changed."

They laughed and Jesus asked, "What are you and your people doing for God's kingdom?"

After the priest had described the outreach program, Jesus asked, "How do you reach out to your parishioners?"

The priest started to feel uneasy. "I visit those who are sick or troubled in any way." Jesus kept silent, and she continued, "Do you mean the care of their souls? You know, I try but they are so busy that they don't have time for reading the Bible, studying it, praying together." Her voice trailed off.

"What do they care about most?" "Whether the server hands me the holy hardware in the right order."

"What do you care about most?" "The kids whose parents are abusive to fellow churchgoers, the street person who lives in the alley beside our church, the man who got rich illegally."

"What's the point of your Sunday service?"

"To worship God, to lift people's hearts and minds and souls out of their everyday concerns, to inspire them to do God's will through the coming week."

"Does it work?"

The priest was overwhelmed. She put her head down on her desk, trying not to cry, wondering how this young man could do so quickly get to the essence of her failure. "Only sometimes. Sometimes it feels like gang warfare."

"What do you do about it?"

"They bully me. I'm afraid they'll fire me."

"Why don't you want to be fired?"

The priest sat up and laughed. She started to feel a kind of peace she remembered from long ago.

Jesus said, "Let me tell you a story. A teacher walks into a classroom of screaming children and shouts, "Stop shouting!" The students ignore the teacher who says to herself, "These are badly behaved little brats. I'll teach them who's boss." Using the school's disciplinary system, she subdues the children and tries to teach the curriculum. The children spend the year irritating her without breaking any rules. They learn only that their hatred is stronger than the school's rules.

"A second teacher walks into a classroom of screaming children and starts speaking to them in a normal voice. She works for eye contact and smiles. Within minutes, there is silence and she keeps asking and answering questions, not repeating what they missed when they were noisy. She trusts that most of the children want to learn and to be liked. She models interest in the curriculum and respect in her treatment of every student. The children spend the year learning the curriculum, helping her and each other. They learn that love is stronger than rules.

"Now tell me, which teacher is of God?"

"The one who loved her students."

"Now look at your church. Where is Emmanuel?"

"In you." This was easy for the priest to say, but Jesus waited. Finally the priest had the courage to continue. "And in me."

"And?" "And in everyone in the parish." "Even in those who are chronically angry over customs?"

"Yes. And even..." She paused. Jesus nodded. "Yes. Even those whose belief in God is based on threats and power."

"Okay, that's a hard one for me." "And?"

"And in everyone in the world. And in every other species, and every other living thing." The priest was exhilarated by hope.

Then the reality of her problems swamped her. "What can I do? I'm not a great teacher or a great healer. I can't save the world or even..."

"Remember me when you are about our Father's business."

"I know, the still small voice of calm. I know."

"War is over."

Eleanor Johnston and Wayne Fraser can be reached at eleanorjohnston@gmail.com

Parish Events

Chili Supper

Christ Church, McNab
February 17 – 5 to 7 p.m.
905-646-2417 or 905-934-2211
Chili, fresh bread, veggies, homemade pies and beverages. Tickets in advance only.

Cost: \$10 - Adults; \$5 - Children 5-12 yrs; Free - under 5

Shrove Tuesday Supper

St. Columba, St. Catharines
February 21 – 4:30 to 6 p.m.
Join us for the best pancakes in town.
Cost: Adult - \$5/Child - \$3

Pancake Dinner

St. Elizabeth's, Burlington
February 21 - 5:30 to 7 p.m.
Enjoy Pancakes and Sausages.
Cost: \$6 per person

Shrove Tuesday

St. Cuthbert's, Oakville
February 21 - 6:30 to 8 p.m.
All Ages Event!
Cost: Depends On Meal

Social Night

St. Columba, St. Catharines
February 25 - 7 p.m.
Cards, fun, snacks and prizes.
Cost: \$2

Parish Breakfast

St. Columba, St. Catharines
February 26 - 9 to 10 a.m.
Come dine with parish family members.

Cost: Free Will Offering

For more Parish Events go to niagara.anglican.ca/events.

One hundred and fifty three dollars and eighty-five cents per person per week



GRAHAME STAP

I am glad to be a Canadian. We have a pretty good health system. Our education may not be the best in the world but it's not bad. We have freedom of speech, freedom of religion and we have the right to vote without corruption of the voting system. Compared to other countries our crime rate is relatively low. Perhaps best of all we have wonderful scenery from coast to coast. My wife and I pay our bills, put food on the table and we have a roof over our heads.

We have, without thinking about it, the dignity that we take for granted. We can hold our heads high as we go about our daily routine. Is this not our right

and the right of all Canadians?

I wish with all my heart that it was the inherent right of all Canadians to feel a sense of dignity. Unfortunately this is not the case. There is no dignity in having to accept handouts from the food banks, but each year 900,000 people in this country need to do this - they have no choice - it's either the food bank or starve. Please do not get me wrong I am not against food banks - in fact I thank God for them, but I am against the need for them.

This, however, is just one of the difficulties facing some Canadians. For our First Nations the difficulties are magnified by a thousand and for some reason we seem to want to blame them

for creating the problems they face.

Attawapiskat is just one disaster, a symptom of the problem. It seems their difficulties are repeated in nearly all First Nations reservations. Why is this? I believe our governments are throwing money at the problems, and expecting the problems to go away without understanding that the need for individual dignity mainly causes it. And some of us are no better. We want to ask the questions: Ninety six million, where did it go? Did they just waste it?

The ninety six million was over six years and there are two thousand people in Attawapiskat. This breaks down to one hundred and fifty three dollars and eighty-five cents per person per

week.

I guess we need to ask ourselves could we live on this? And the answer for most of us is no. But that's not all this money was for - it was also for roads, water hydro, sewerage, health and education.

Even this is not the point. We must understand that for generations there has been very little or no employment. Nothing to do, day after day, and this causes more and even worse problems of alcoholism, drug addiction and abuses that we can only imagine.

If we don't understand the need to give back the dignity we have taken away, no matter how much money we throw at the problem it will not go away.

Please this Lent don't give something up. Sit down at your computer and write to your member of both the Ontario government and the Federal government and let them know that we cannot accept this situation any longer, and do it every day during Lent. If eight thousand Christians did this, governments would receive three hundred and twenty thousand letters - then perhaps they might start to give back the dignity to the First Nations that we have frankly stolen from them. Because if we do not do it who will?

As always it is only my opinion.

The Reverend Grahame Stap is Rector of St. Simon's Parish, Temagami. gstap27@aol.com

Loaves and Fishes

Sometimes they look like Co-op Students and Radio Shows

SUE-ANN WARD

Each summer, HARRRP has an opportunity to hire students through programs for which we receive subsidy.

Last year, one of these students was a young man named Alex. He is studying Labour Studies and Political Science at McMaster University, Hamilton. His role at HARRRP consisted of acting as a youth facilitator in our YOUTH Create program at Prince of Wales School and developing the Hamilton Youth Engagement Initiative.

As part of staff training, we work on helping new HARRRP team members to understand the ethos of our organization.

One thing we believe strongly is that "No" should not be the default answer to questions. We seek to inspire creativity in our staff and volunteers, and encourage them to find innovative ways to say "Yes" to community member requests. This may look like finding a community partner agency to help out, or working with clients to help them develop a program or service that does not currently exist.

We also encourage our team members to find ways to get others to say "Yes" to things that we

know are wanted or needed.

Alex worked for HARRRP full-time for 3 months and then had to return to his studies at McMaster in September.

At our August staff meeting, I asked him to be a link between

other Hamilton neighbourhoods are terrific too.

So Alex's first task on behalf of HARRRP was to obtain permission to distribute HARRRP's Community Connections newspaper around the university

I thank God that Alex was willing to try ... even in the face of many "Nos"

HARRRP and McMaster University. I believe that exposing McMaster faculty and students to the kinds of things that HARRRP does is beneficial for the whole community.

Data shows that most graduates of McMaster leave Hamilton to take jobs in other Canadian cities. We need them to stay and invest their intellectual resources in Hamilton. I have heard that many McMaster students are afraid to spend time in certain parts of Hamilton. They tend to stay west of the 403 and out of what they perceive to be harms way.

We need them to discover the great people, businesses, arts and cultural centres and other assets located in the central, north and east areas of the city. While Westdale is a beautiful place,

campus.

This was not as straightforward as Alex and I thought it might be. Being sure that those with the power to say "Yes" would immediately see that the content of the periodical would enrich the lives of McMaster students and faculty, we thought it would be fairly easy to get a "Yes" response.

What actually happened was that Alex was passed from person to person without an affirmative response. Along the way, as he spoke to a number of people about Community Connections, Alex got other ideas for communicating with the folks at McMaster.

The result was more than we could ask or imagine... more student co-op placements with HARRRP and... (drum roll)...

HARRRP Radio. Yes, HARRRP now has a half hour radio show on CFMU 93.3 Monday mornings at 9:30. If you do not live in the Hamilton broadcast area, you can tune in on the internet.

God provides. When followers of Jesus needed to be fed, Jesus' disciples thought it could not be done because they only had five loaves and two fish. Their default answer was "No." They focused on the scarcity. Jesus showed them the abundance that comes from God. God provided. All ate and were filled. The disciples had to be willing to try, and willing to do some of the leg work, but God provided. Life is so much richer when we find ways to say "Yes" and share God's abundance with others.

I thank God that Alex was willing to try and do the legwork

that was required, even in the face of many "Nos" or redirections. As a result, HARRRP has many McMaster students contributing their time and talents to the community and... (pause to build the anticipation)... a radio show. We are pretty excited about it! We want to use our air time to highlight wonderful things that are happening and opportunities that will enrich people's lives.

If you would like to share a project in which you are involved on the radio, please contact Brittany Browney at 905 544 0050 or bbrowney.harrp@gmail.com.

The Reverend Sue-Ann Ward is Executive Director of HARRRP. sueann.ward@gmail.com

Job Opportunity

Niagara Anglican - Advertising Sales Representative

The NIAGARA ANGLICAN has an immediate opening for an advertising sales representative.

The successful candidate will possess initiative in order to solicit advertising, schedule ad placements and act as liaison between advertisers and the Diocesan newspaper.

For more information or to apply, contact the Editor, Hollis Hiscock, at editor@niagara.anglican.ca or 905-635-9463

Letters

Great Christmas Stories

Very much enjoyed the December edition of the *Niagara Anglican* with all of the great Christmas stories.

In the preamble to the "Christmas In Baker Lake" story you mention that Elizabeth Whitton wrote a series of articles about what it was like in the north. I was wondering if it was possible to get a copy of these articles?

Thanks and keep up the good work.

Dennis Hurst, Burlington

[Editor's note: Elizabeth and Dennis have since been in contact with each other.]

Happy to see the Bishop's Christmas message in paper

Congratulations on a much improved *Niagara Anglican*. I have been a critic of the paper for sometime because of its lack of spiritual items and articles that were "uplifting to the soul!"

Thank goodness there was a Christmas message from the Bishop in the paper. Yes, he wrote a Christmas message in the past but it was only on the website.

The website is a marvellous means of communication if you have a computer. I know of many seniors who do not have computers and would not receive the Bishop's message. If my research is correct this is the first Christmas message from Bishop Bird appearing in the December issue of the *Niagara Anglican*.

Last year I obtained the December issue of all 31 Diocesan publications and there were five Diocesan papers where there was no Christmas message in the December issue. Perhaps a message appeared in January but as you well know the excitement of Christmas is over on Boxing Day (sadly).

I found every item in this month's paper interesting.

Please keep the articles by Michael Burslem coming. I sent him an e-mail regarding his September article which he acknowledged with gratitude.

Keep up the good work and best wishes to you and your staff.
Murray Rathbone, Ancaster

Article read in Church

Thank you for using part of my Christmas article.

A lovely serendipity was that one of our newer Church members was an Arctic pilot! It was so good for us to exchange northern stories and agonize over fingers frozen so often that they are a strong reminder of those days!

On Sunday morning, one of our readers asked permission to read that excerpt (see December 2011 *Niagara Anglican*) at the end of the service. It had a remarkable reception.

Elizabeth Whitton, Ridgeway

Send your letters immediately so we may include them in our next paper. Submissions must include full name and contact information (mailing address, telephone and e-mail). We reserve the right to edit. Send letters to the Editor at editor@niagara.anglican.ca or 710 Ashley Ave, Burlington, ON, L7R 2Z3

New submission deadlines for the Niagara Anglican

Good news! We are able to extend the deadlines for sending your news items, photos, articles, letters, etc. to your *Niagara Anglican*.

April issue March 1
May issue April 1
June/Summer issue May 1

make it your
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The paper is distributed by the first of the month

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Reasons to be a Canadian Anglican

David Partridge liked it so much he bought the t-shirt.

On the back of the t-shirt are the ten reasons why comedian Robin Williams likes being a member of the Episcopalian Church in the United States.

Partridge, an active member of St. Christopher's Church in Burlington, agreed with the Editor of the *Niagara Anglican* that we should develop a Canadian version.

Your reason to be a Canadian Anglican should be truthful, with a hint of humour. Here are some preliminary examples...

- Canadian Anglicans can laugh and have fun and not feel guilty.
- The Bible was written by different authors in eras poles apart... so the contradictions don't bother us.
- We see more than black or white... sometimes even colour.
- Our Bishops, both men and women, look great in purple.
- Variety is the spice of Canadian Anglican Church life.
- Don't like the colour scheme in the church? Just wait a few weeks.
- We can be catholic, protestant and pentecostal all at the same time.

Now it's your turn to do better. Keep each reason to 20 words or less, but send as many as you wish to the Editor at editor@niagara.anglican.ca or phone 905 635 9463.

We promise to read them all, publish some, and who knows, some may end up on a Canadian Anglican t-shirt or website.

After two decades – ready for retirement

As the choir sang, "Go now in peace; never be afraid, God will go with you, each hour of every day" and the crowded church congregation applauded, Mary Jane Price completed her 21 year music ministry at St. Christopher's, Burlington on Christmas Eve 2011.

Mary Jane began her work as Director of Music on September



1, 1990 and she has served with three rectors. She was also a frequent music leader at Diocesan events.

Several weeks earlier the parish sponsored an appreciation evening for Mary Jane.

In her farewell, Ms. Price said that her plans for the near future included "not getting up at 5:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings."

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Oakville, Ontario 7:30 pm

In Essentials, Unity; In Non-Essentials, Liberty; In All Things, Charity

EVERYONE WELCOME

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The Diocese of Niagara lies at the western end of Lake Ontario, encompassing the Niagara Peninsula, Hamilton, Halton Region, Guelph and portions of Wellington and Dufferin Counties to include Shelburne and Mount Forest in the north and west.



Yoga and Tai Chi for Lent

Two clergy in Niagara Diocese are taking seriously Paul's (1 Corinthians 6:12-20) statement—do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit? So glorify God in your bodies—and applying Tai Chi and Yoga to bringing it into life.

The Reverend Own Ash, St. John's Rockwood and the Venerable Rick Jones, St. Paul's Westdale said in a statement that "despite the devaluation of the flesh that has long been prevalent in Western Spirituality our own scriptures remind us that God sent us a message. In becoming flesh in the person of a human being, Jesus of Nazareth, God is identified with and discovered within the experience

of our own humanity. God is discovered through living out our lives in the body we have been gifted."

They also quoted the Rev. Thomas Ryan of the Community of St. Paul – a society of the apostolic life in the Roman Catholic Church – located in Washington. He wrote that, "we have not been burdened with this world and this flesh in order that we might weasel our way out. Rather, we have been gifted with this planet and these bodies because this is where God dwells. All flesh is holy and the ground of all human endeavors is sacred. It is in these bodies that we will work out our salvation. Since the only life we know is earthly and sensual, it follows that this is the

stuff of our spirituality."

It was in this spirit, according to Jones and Ash, that St. Paul's, Westdale introduced Tai Chi and Yoga as spiritual practices in the Christian context. Since the beginning of Lent last year, approximately 20 – 30 people have been gathering every week to practice and celebrate God in their bodies, they reported, and as a fresh expression of the Church, the practice has gathered new people into the Church community.

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Owen Ash can be reached at ownash@gmail.com



Two afternoons of music and singing

Worship, inspiration and entertainment will be featured

On Sunday, February 5, 2012, at 4:00 p.m., St. John's, Ancaster's choir will sing the Holden Evening Prayer service, followed by a short organ recital by Richard Hansen, Director of Music at Port Nelson United Church, Burlington.

Holden Evening Prayer was composed by prolific composer of liturgical music Marty Haugen, while he was on sabbatical in the village of Holden during the winter of 1985-86.

Holden Village, located in the North Cascade Mountains in Washington State, was formerly the site of one of the largest copper mines in the United States, and is accessible only by passenger ferry across Lake Chelena or by hiking through the Cascade Mountains. After its closing in 1957 it became a year-round Lutheran retreat centre open

to people of all faiths, ages and backgrounds, offering classes focusing on science, theology, art and philosophy.

Holden Evening Prayer, a contemporary setting of the time-honored service of Vespers, begins with the Service of Light and includes the traditional Evensong worship. The setting, led by a choir and cantors, also encourages congregational participation.



Redeemer University College Concert Choir

Richard Hansen, originally from Windsor, Ontario, began his formal organ studies at thirteen. He has studied, worked and performed in many countries, leading to his present appointment as Director of Music at Port Nelson United Church in Burlington. Richard enjoys an active and diverse freelance career as a conductor and artistic director, and has given organ recitals across Canada and

throughout Europe.

On Sunday, March 4 at 4:00 p.m., the Concert Choir of Redeemer University College, Ancaster, will join St. John's choir, directed by William Murphy, to sing a traditional Choral Evensong. Following the service, the talented group of young people in the Redeemer choir will present a short concert.

While some of the approximately 35 members of the Redeemer Concert Choir are music students, others are majoring in a variety of disciplines, including history, biology, theology and sociology. Their repertoire spans five centuries of choral music treasures, including Anglican Evensong liturgy.

For the past 20 seasons the concert choir has been directed by conductor/organist Dr. Christiaan Teeuwssen.

Church Wardens – Let's hear your stories

February for parishes in Niagara Diocese means delightful annual meetings – a time to receive reports, approve budgets and set goals for the coming year.

It also means certain Church Wardens complete their tenure – no doubt some with sadness, and others with the sigh "thank God it's over".

Either way, if you are com-

pleting your term as a Church Warden, the Niagara Anglican would like to hear about your experiences. Here are some questions you may want to address.

What did you learn about the Church or the Christian faith from being a Church Warden?

What were your biggest highlights?

What were your most pleas-

ant surprises?

What were the challenges you faced?

What advice or suggestions would you have for incoming Church Wardens—or any other thoughts you want to include?

Send your article to the Editor by March 1. (Contact information page 6)

Manual for Treasurers

Joanna Beck our Diocesan Treasurer has revised the Church Treasurer's Manual. It can be downloaded from the Diocesan website www.niagara.anglican.ca or by contacting Synod Office.

Make certain that your Parish Treasurer either has a copy of the manual or is aware of the link.

The cost of drawing young people into the church



MICHAEL BURSLEM

Ellen and I took an old friend out to lunch. He was the pastor of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Moncton, N.B., when we lived in Moncton, and we often went Sunday evenings to hear him preach good old solid Calvinist sermons, lasting no less than half an hour, often longer. He was from the Scottish ghetto in Hamilton, and served pastorates in Kirkwall and Hespeller before coming to the Maritimes. Widowed 15 years ago, he now lives in Woodstock near his daughter's large family of 7 children, who are all home schooled. This summer he had a granddaughter and her husband from the States staying with him, who has recently born him his fourth great grandchild, whom they proudly showed off to us.

Over lunch, thinking of the new generation, I asked him why our churches were filled with so many old people, like ourselves, with relatively few youth. His immediate reply was that if church people would

only live more like Christ, the churches would be packed with young people. They would be clamouring to come in to discover for themselves what was so different about the church

for yours is the kingdom of God." People believed, and still do, that the rich, not the poor, were blessed by God. Poverty is a curse from God, not a blessing. "Blessed are you who hunger

now, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets." Honestly, would we really want such reward in heaven if it meant rejection by those whom we esteem in this world?

Then come the Woes (Matthew 23: 1-36), which do certainly apply to us. "But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort." Who in the West is not rich? "Woe to you who are well fed now, (us again) for you will go hungry." (That wouldn't be such a bad thing after lunching at a fancy restaurant.) "Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep." And, here's the real hard one, "Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets." Do we not wish to be well spoken of before others?

Then Jesus follows this explosive teaching with something even more explosive, to love our enemies. "But to you who are listening (Is anyone not listening or falling asleep?) I say: Love your

enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you." Wow!

Is this really how Jesus expected people to live? I think, Yes. But I know I don't. What if we did? Who knows whether there would be many more young people in church? Perhaps there would be even children running and playing in the aisles that we would ask them, if they couldn't be quiet, to leave. Would we then be behaving like Christ? Let's be honest, do we really want young people in the church if it's to cost us our serenity?

Michael Burslem is a member of St. George's Parish, Guelph. m.burslem@sympatico.ca

If church people would only live more like Christ, the churches would be packed with young people...

from their world. Programs had never attracted them, and he admitted that he had tried quite a few in his years in the ministry, all without success. That may sound easy – to live more like Jesus Christ. But if and when we really try it, we find it quite a challenge.

Jesus was such the revolutionary that he contradicted everything people had been brought up to believe, in his day and in ours. Take for example the opening of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5: 3-11). "Blessed are you who are poor,

now, for you will be satisfied." Tell that to those in the Drop In Centre in Guelph. Fortunately, there are members of St. George's Parish there helping Sister Christine. "Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh." That's hard to believe for those whose families are filled with discord or the passing of a loved one. "Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man." When did this ever happen to us? "Rejoice in that day and leap for

Young people find spirituality outside the Church—What will bring them inside?

SARA-MICHELLE BRESEE

[Editor's note: A grandfather asked his grandchild to respond to the question about young people not attending church. Here is her reply.]

Hi Grandpa,
I have been thinking about Church and worship and the young population and the best way I can do this is to compare it to my own experience. I think what it comes down to can be summed up in three different experiences:

- 1) A disinterest.
- 2) A marked interest in spirituality that is not met by the church's vision: therefore no expression of spirituality anywhere.
- 3) A marked interest in spirituality that is not met by the church's vision: therefore expression of spirituality elsewhere.

In my eyes, church represents

the opportunity to meditate (pray), to commune (build and find community support) and to respond to a human need—giving meaning or purpose to life.

However, the church experiences I have had have often been quite hollow—the community seems hard to break into, there is a lack of humour and joy, and the sermons don't get to the heart of what I am looking for. The experience falls short. If I were to bet on it, I would say that within the community of young people who are seeking and interested in a spiritual experience and a community that supports it, most don't find what they are seeking at church and end up finding it in other places, such as meditation groups, more Buddhist-style practices, yoga, community outreach, volunteering, chi-gong and music.

I think it would be interesting to measure how many feel their spiritual needs are met, if they

consider that they have spiritual needs at all. If I look around me, I would consider that I am surrounded by a group of friends who are certainly spiritual, but none are church-going. Most meditate, many are interested in native-American practices (vision quest, sweat lodge), many have group practices (yoga, etc.) and all believe in God but have different names to designate God.

It would also be interesting to determine if young people are deterred because of a lack of inclusivity—that is, a failure to include newer practices into 'acceptable worship.' I'd also be interested in talking about judgement, and would advance that many are afraid of being judged. Finally, and this is an interesting one, I would say that Church is often a place of habit. What I mean is that

there is something very safe and traditional about the church's formula. I think in order to "reform" the church, certain traditions would need to be put on the table and earnestly discussed, i.e. more transparency, so that older (perhaps outdated) practices or even language might be replaced.

For me, in order to feel fulfilled by Church, I would need to feel uplifted when leaving the church. Ideally, I would leave with questions, my spirit

wondering. A good sermon is one that would make me think, make me wonder what I could change in my life and relationships to better the world. Again, ideally, Church would stimulate my sense of critical thought, and the church community would be a safe place to discuss and philosophize on these big life questions.

Sara-Michelle Breesee can be reached at sarebear09@hotmail.com



Shalom Justice Camp planned for August

BILL MOUS

Registration is open for this year's Shalom Justice Camp, hosted by the Diocese of Toronto. It will take place from August 19-24, 2012 in Peterborough, Ontario, and is open to everyone over sixteen years of age.

The theme of this, the sixth justice camp of the Anglican Church of Canada, is: "Uniting Us All: Rural and Urban."

This camp follows on the

Diocese of Niagara's successful Community Justice Camp which was held in May, 2010.

Justice Camps bring people of all ages and denominations from across Canada together, to live and learn for six days. Those that attend will uncover the injustices in society and learn how to combat these issues in their parishes when they return home. Past participants have described the camp as "eye opening, fun, inspiring, challenging, life changing, empowering, thought-

provoking and intense."

"Justice Camp 2012 will be an excellent opportunity to deepen our commitment, with others in the Anglican Communion. We are called by our baptismal promises to live and work together in community, learning from and with each other," says Bishop Linda Nicholls of the Diocese of Toronto.

The camp will have 100 participants, the largest Justice Camp to date. The campers will be placed within small immer-

sion groups, each focusing on a particular justice issue. These groups will visit local groups and advocates striving for social justice regarding their topic.

Christian Harvey, the Youth Social Justice Coordinator for the Trent-Durham area of Toronto Diocese, said, "Justice Camp is about taking our passion for justice and using it to make real change. And what better place to have such a camp than Peterborough, a city that attempts to bridge the gap

between urban and rural, young and old, rich and poor."

For more information, visit the Justice Camp website at www.justicecamp.ca.

Financial assistance is available; contact Bill Mous for details.

The Reverend Bill Mous, Diocesan Coordinator of Social Justice, can be reached at 905-527-1316 ext. 330 or bill.mous@niagara.anglican.ca.



HOLLISitorial

Family values – what does it mean?

HOLLIS HISCOCK

One day after Boxing Day, I am sitting with over 500 of my not so closest friends in a mall Food Court thinking about family values.

Traditionally, Boxing Day was the day when money and gifts were given to the needy - in contemporary society it is the day when we return gifts we received and give money to retailers which, in turn, causes us to be needy.

Sorry, I digress. You may be wondering why I am sitting with my best friend, eating our favourite fast food meal and thinking about such a weighty subject as family values.

Well, it all started around the winter solstice.

A newspaper reported that a politician, whose campaign for mayor of a United States city

included "family values", later declared himself to be gay. It seemed to imply that if you were gay you could not endorse family values.

Then, while travelling by train to Canada's largest city, I read in a newspaper's classified section about parents advertising for a matrimonial partner for their daughter, who apparently has "strong family values" and wanted her spouse to have "similar values".

Then her Majesty the Queen, in her Christmas message, emphasized the importance of the family, especially during difficult times.

All three prompted me to ponder what was meant by "family values" - has it changed its meaning, and can we be assured that the speaker/writer and the listener/reader are operating on similar wavelengths?

Firstly, what does "family" mean today?

One generation defined "family" as a married heterosexual couple with 1.5 children. Not so today.

Modern Family, one of the hottest comedies on television, includes several configurations. An "older" American male is married to a much younger, passionate Columbian woman, who has a preteen son from a previous relationship; the American's daughter and husband - free spirits from the 1980's - attempt to inculcate their generation's lifestyle onto the behaviour of their two daughters and son; and the American's son and gay partner went to Asia to adopt their infant daughter.

Although *Modern Family* attempts to mirror the multiplicity of the contemporary family, it falls short of being totally comprehensive. In fact one television production is not big enough to include all the potential scenarios of what constitutes a family today.

Even Jesus' family was atypical. Mary was a teenage mother and the much older Joseph reluctantly assented, after some serious divine intervention, to be the adoptive father. Three decades later Jesus would add another dimension to the meaning of family. Informed by an assistant that his mother and brothers were waiting to see him, Jesus curtly retorted (Matthew 12:46-50), "Who is my mother and who are my brothers?" Then

he declared whoever does the will of God is my brother, sister and mother.

Similarly, we vary on what constitutes a family, and we interact with every type of family in our churches, schools and other meeting places. And that is probably a good thing, especially for us faith people who, as part of our baptismal agreement, promise to respect the dignity of EVERY human being.

This segues into our next question - what are values?

If we have a tough time understanding what family means, then we are in for another rough ride when we jump on the values train.

Values, or principles upon which people base their decision making and behavioural practices, fluctuate drastically within our closely knit small community units, as well as in the global village.

Our actions do not always reflect our values and vice versa. Perhaps the New Testament writer James began at the appropriate starting point when he dared his listeners to show me what you do and I will tell you what you believe. Try that exercise at your next family party and watch the fireworks.

As Christians we may put forward Jesus' two great commandments as the foundation upon which peoples, institutions and nations should build their economies, diplomacies, life styles and other activities.

However, we must realize

that even before our words soar on the air we exhale, we will be seriously challenged by those who do not believe in God, and by those who believe that God has no place interfering in the real world of people's lives. But, that should not deter us from continuing to sow the seeds of our belief - to love God with all our being and to love others as we love ourselves.

Recently while celebrating at a Christmas party, our conversation centred on the place of Christmas in a multicultural world. This gave me an opportunity to ask others their views on "family values." The sentence "since family and values have so many diverse meanings around the globe, we now have more options from which to choose" basically summarised our tête-à-tête.

Maybe we do "cherry pick" our values unconsciously and then incorporate them into our behavioural practices. Conversely, maybe after doing the same action for a while, we adjust our values or principles to better reflect our actions. For churches and other "society consciences" - comprised of all types of families following all kinds of value systems - this may be their biggest challenge.

I end this HOLLISitorial with no "family values" solutions.

Perhaps you have an insight you could share with our readers by expressing your thoughts in a letter or an article for the *Niagara Anglican*.



Suggestions For Lent

What the Church asks

1. Fasting
2. Examine your life and practice
3. Pray
4. Read the Bible
5. Help those in need

What you can do

- Give up a favourite food or change a behaviour.
- Spend 3-5 minutes daily reflecting on your quality of life.
- Pray for the people you see in the news, read about, network with online and encounter in daily life.
- Read the Gospel of John. Send your thoughts to editor@niagara.anglican.ca and we will share them.
- Support with your time, talent and finances *Hands Across Niagara*, the *Primate's Fund* or a local agency.



Please clip and carry with you as a reminder of what Lent is all about.