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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 — Since 1955

NOVEMBER 2025

Take My Life

THE REVEREND STEWART CAROLAN-EVANS

The hymn line chosen as the theme for our diocesan Synod this year, “Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee,” is both familiar and unsettling. Familiar, because many of us have sung it countless times. Unsettling, because when sung with attention, it is a deeply dangerous prayer. If God truly takes our life, nothing remains the same.

We are a Church that has often thought of “vocation” as a word for the ordained. And rightly so, there is a unique call and sacramental responsibility in those

ministries. Yet Havergal’s hymn does not limit consecration to clergy. It names the tongue, the hands, the voice, the silver and gold, even “moments and days” as gifts set apart for God. This is a total vocation, an all-of-life consecration.

It is no accident that chaplaincy is highlighted at Synod. In hospitals, prisons, military bases, long-term care homes, universities, and airports, chaplains embody this hymn. Their ministry is presence, walking alongside people in crisis or transition, often when the Church as an institution is far away.

During my short spells in chaplaincies of prisons and



“TAKE MY LIFE AND LET IT BE CONSECRATED, LORD, TO THEE.”

THE 151ST SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF NIAGARA

hospitals and in serving in the armed forces, I’ve seen chaplains hold the hand of a frightened patient, sit quietly with a pris-

oner no one else will visit, listen to a grieving parent, or pray with a young soldier before deployment. Such ministry appears

‘small’, yet it is the Church’s most public face. Chaplains take consecrated life out of the sanctuary and into the raw places of human existence. They remind us that vocation is not only about what happens in church buildings, but about bringing Christ where life hurts.

If chaplaincy draws us outward, curacy draws us inward, to the careful formation of new clergy. Every generation of Anglicans must ask itself: who will carry the Gospel forward? Curates, those newly ordained, are the Church’s fragile and hopeful answer. Their training is

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Saints: The Chosen Family of God



Photo: Ramez E. Nassif/Unsplash

THE REVEREND ANDREW RAMPTON

So often, when we think of the communion of saints, we imagine people from centuries gone by, surrounded by halos, living in a world where angels and miracles are somehow much closer than they are today. Sainthood seems more akin to tales told in comic books than it does to the experience of everyday life. After all, how could ordinary people like you or I aspire to the kind of holiness we see in Hildegard, Maria Skobtsova, or John of the Cross?

On the other hand, on 7 September 2025, we saw the Roman Catholic Church canonize St. Carlo Acutis, an Italian boy who died in 2006 at the age of 15. The most striking images from that day, other than of

the new saint’s own mother seated among the prelates of the church, were of St. Carlo’s tomb. His casket has glass panels so that his body can be seen and he looks, for all the world, like a teenage boy at rest. Track suit, sneakers, and all. He looks just like countless young people in every one of our neighbourhoods. Several times it has been said about his canonization that he is proof that “holiness is in the ordinary.”

We all come to God as ordinary people. Every one of us who has been baptized knows what it means to give up our lives, be joined to Jesus’ death, and to share in his resurrection and eternal life. Of course, if I share in the life of Christ and you share in the life of Christ, then this means that you and I are related through the life we

share. In choosing Jesus Christ as our brother, we have also chosen one another as Christian siblings, even if by accident. And, by extension, we have also chosen Carlo, Hildegard, Maria, and John, along with every other Christian who has lived and everyone yet to be. It’s a very big family.

And, like any family, not all of the relations get along. St. Jerome, famously, was so ill-tempered that hardly anyone was speaking to him by the time he finished his translation of the Bible. Legend says that 1,700 years ago this year, St. Nicholas punched his brother in Christ, Arius, at the Council of Nicaea in the midst of an argument.

Saints are not held up as examples because they were per-

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Seasons Change, The Spirit Remains

ZOE OLIVEIRA

GENESIS 8:22 TELLS US THAT "WHILE THE EARTH REMAINS, SEEDTIME AND HARVEST, COLD AND HEAT, SUMMER AND WINTER, DAY AND NIGHT, SHALL NOT CEASE."

With the end of yet another fun-filled summer at Canterbury Hills Camp comes an inevitable Fall, often full of time for rest and reflection. The hills are quiet, the trees are turning red and yellow, and it is during this time that we can look to God and thank him for the many blessings we received this past summer.

Especially when there is so much to be grateful for! Summer 2025 saw the largest number of campers ever, a staggering near-1,300 participants spread across our Day, Bridge, Overnight, Adventure and Teen Camp programs. Beyond sheer force of numbers, this summer was exciting for other reasons as well. One such triumph was the successful running of three sessions of our Adventure Camp program, enabling participants who registered for all three sessions to canoe the entirety of the paddleable Grand River.

This was also the first summer of our Teen Camp program, a nine-day, eight-night program complete with a two-day campout, offsite canoeing, extended evening activities, and senior staff-led "Choice Chunk" programs. Some choice chunk activities this year included Underwater Hockey, Bird House Building, Door Mural Painting, and a Story Telling Workshop. A total of 24 campers, ages 13 to 15, participated in the program and walked away with forever memories, as well as much interest in applying for our Leaders-in-Training (LIT) program next summer.

Our LIT program brings us to

yet another numerical record, given that this summer, we had 29 participants across our LIT1 and LIT2 cohorts. The sheer size of this LIT class was one we haven't seen since pre-pandemic summers, and their excitement and willingness to learn were greatly appreciated in the camp atmosphere.

And of course, at the end of it all, none of these campers' experiences would have been possible, nor any LIT mentorship, without the care and passion of our exceptional camp staff. Made up of 53 highly enthusiastic individuals with a love for all things camp, they carried on a 65-year tradition of fostering friendship, growth, and unforgettable memories. From campfire songs to creek walks, home-cooked meals to expertly maintained facilities, our wonderful staff work tirelessly to bring camp magic to life. Though our site is much quieter without them and the many children they led, we are excited for the many new adventures they are facing this fall and hope to see many of them return for another summer at Canterbury Hills Camp.

After all, Genesis reminds us, even now in this time of Autumn and thanksgiving, that as long as the earth God so lovingly created remains, there will be summer. I'm personally of the opinion that as long as summer remains, summer camp and all the magic that comes with it will remain too.

Zoe Oliveira is Assistant Director at Canterbury Hills.



Clockwise from top: Leader and camper; showing camp spirit; the 2025 Adventure Camp group; 2025 camp staff.

Photos: contributed by Zoe Oliveira

A Time to Remember

**THE REVEREND CANON
STUART PIKE**

I have spent more times than I can remember formed up into a platoon in dress uniform, standing at attention at various cenotaphs across Canada on the 11th of November over the years. First in the scouting movement, then as an air cadet, then in the militia and finally in the regular Canadian Forces. Skies were often grey, or it was a cold rain, and sometimes it was snowing. The poor weather always seemed to me to fit the mood of the ceremony, and it helped me to remember the horrendous conditions that our veterans experienced in war, not just for an eleventh hour, but often for years. Canadian military and military around the world still put themselves at risk and still suffer, often for a cause they think is right. I remember them too.

Remembrance in its deepest form is really about re-membering people. Bringing people back into the



Photo: Chris Robert/Unsplash

membership of the living—into our consciousness—and claiming some sort of spiritual bond with them. We do it to give thanks for them, but, more importantly, we do it to recall the noblest reasons why people risked or gave their lives, and to commit ourselves to the cause of justice and peace.

In the far past, such as the First World War, the focus on Remembrance Day has been on those who have served in the military or paramilitary. The greatest number of casualties

were often among those in active military service. Things shifted significantly during the Second World War, when civilians were deliberately targeted, such as during the Blitz on the German side and the bombing of Dresden on the Allied side. Of course, there was also the deliberate targeting of Jews and other groups by the Germans as well. To cap off the Second World War, the Allies dropped the atomic bomb on the military targets of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, resulting in many civilian deaths.

This is what war does. It takes away lives and cripples those who survive. Tactics have shifted so that now, most of the casualties are civilians. That is how modern warfare works today. The sheer number of innocent men, women, and children who have been killed or wounded in the genocide of Gaza seems unthinkable and has increasingly weighed on this writer's mind over the past two years. Incredible to me has been the relative silence among the media and in the discourse I've encountered in my daily life. There seems to have been a shroud of silence over it all, perhaps because of the appalling magnitude of the carnage and also perhaps because of the fear of being branded an antisemite. This is, of course, nonsensical, and fortunately, the voices have started to speak out against injustice, inhumanity and genocide. Courageous people are putting their lives at risk in a flotilla aimed at breaking the planned famine and forcing open

a channel of humanitarian aid. This Remembrance Day, I will remember those who chose to put themselves at risk and those who gave their lives for the defence of their country or their ideals, but I will also remember the countless innocents whom I do not know. The countless civilians in Palestine, in Ukraine, in Sudan. I've seen some of their stories through social media. Perhaps you have too. I will be remembering children who have died or lost their families. I will be remembering the grief of parents and grandparents. I will remember doctors and civilian aid workers, and journalists who have died in service to the suffering or trying to tell the truth. Remembrance Day is a sacred day for me. Let us bring back into membership – into our consciousness, those whom we never knew, but whose lives are just as sacred as ours and who are treasured by God. And let us use our voices and choices to commit to peace and an end to war.

Thousands Visit the Cathedral for Supercrawl

**ALEXANDER (SANDY) L.
DARLING**

Each September, on the third weekend, the street in front of Christ's Church Cathedral is closed for Supercrawl from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon. Supercrawl is primarily a musical event that grew from the monthly art crawls that promoted the local art studios and galleries. The cathedral congregation has opened our doors and welcomed visitors to these events since 2008. This has provided what Dean Tim Dobbins called an "easy on-ramp" for those who are searching and wish to find out more about religion. Those who enter are Christians,

people of other religions, of no faith and people who are just exploring, but we do not seek to proselytize. This year, 6,783 visitors came through the doors.

Welcoming such numbers involved an army of over 40 volunteers from the congregation who greeted people and answered questions, which varied greatly from "When was the church built?" to much more searching questions. The volunteers are supported by having at least two clergy present during opening hours. Our two permanent clerical staff (the Very Reverend Tim Dobbins and the Reverend Monica Romig Green) were supported by our associates, the Reverend Dr Canon Sharyn Hall, the



Photo: Ian Mobsby

Reverend Dr Eric Griffin, and the Reverend Canon J. Lefebvre. The Reverend Dena Thomas, the Reverend Rob Miller, and the Very Reverend Peter Wall provided additional support.

Many visitors were simply awed by the high, decorated ceiling, the sparkling stained-glass windows, and the intricate wooden and stone carvings. We encourage our visitors to wander freely to look at carvings closely, which gives rise to questions. We have found that many of our visitors return, and some have joined our congregation.

Given the roots of art crawls and Supercrawl, and the traditional role of cathedrals

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**CALLED TO LIFE
COMPELLED TO LOVE**

In other words

Formation and Discipleship for the Whole Person



JOHN BOWEN

Leonardo da Vinci is sometimes credited with being the first to say, “Everything is connected to everything else.” Whoever said it, it has become something of a cliché, but clichés become so because often they are true! And if God is the Creator of all things, then we should not be surprised. Of course, everything is connected.

Because of this, when I find words floating around in the church world with no obvious connection to anything else, I am always curious to see what the connections might be. So, how about these three: discipleship, formation, and catechesis: do they relate? And if so, how? Here’s my theory.

Discipleship means apprenticeship to Jesus Christ, learning from him the ways of God’s Kingdom, and growing like him as we do so. The word formation reminds us that this is primarily God’s work: it is God the Holy Spirit who forms us. Jeremiah uses the image of God as the potter and us as the clay being formed into a beautiful pot:

discipleship is our choice to cooperate with the potter’s hands. And catechism is learning to use our minds to understand this whole process, to “love God with all of our mind.”

Our problem is often bringing these things together. For example, I remember my own catechism when I was around thirteen, being prepared for confirmation. The rector simply took us through the catechism in the old Prayer Book (by “old” I mean 1662, not the Johnny-come-lately of 1962), and explained it point by point. Not a lot of help with my formation in discipleship.

But I have come across some places where discipleship, formation, and catechesis came together—and the results were, well, impressive. See what you think.

1. Act Five

Back in the spring, I attended an unusual graduation night. Act Five is a Christian gap year for up to a dozen young people between high school and university. (The phrase “Act Five” is shorthand for learning the Christian way in today’s world). I have been involved in this program since its beginning, some five years ago, and have grown to have a huge appreciation for it.

What I especially like about this program is its emphasis on Christian discipleship as a thing which affects not only our “spiritual” lives in the narrow

sense, but our social, moral, physical, and intellectual selves, our relationships and our life-choices.

The program has a holistic range of components: living



in a community in a house in downtown Hamilton, where they pray, work, study, and play together. They provide hospitality for their neighbours on the street and for the wider church community in Hamilton. They intern with local ministries in Hamilton, where they learn to participate and serve and learn, and go on a week-long trip to Central America, to “serve and observe.” And they are taught the faith—catechism! The program is bookended by a canoe trip at the beginning and end of the program.

One young woman from our church’s youth group (well, to be honest, last year she was our youth group) did the program last year, and it was transformative.

2. Leaders in Training

When Deborah and I came to Canada in 1977 to do student ministry, our summer placement

was at a Christian camp in Muskoka. If you know us, you will not be surprised to learn that we are not by nature “camp people,” but we finally found our niche in the Leader in Training program—and stayed there for seventeen summers.

Looking back, I realize this, too, was an exercise in the formation of disciples by various means, of which catechism was one. Here, too, the young people lived in a close community for six weeks. They received instruction in the faith—there’s the catechism piece. Part of my contribution was to teach eight sessions on a Christian worldview. Each teenager met regularly with a mentor. And they learned servant leadership: teaching camp skills and leading games for children, engaging in service projects around the camp, and organizing their own worship. Here, too, a canoe trip was an important part of the formation.

Again, many found it life changing. It was not unknown for some from church families to look back and say, “I think that’s when I really made my faith my own.”

3. Campus fellowships

As I thought about these things, my mind went back to my own time at university, and the formation in discipleship that went on there. Deborah and I belonged to a large campus ministry of 300 or so students, studying everything from engineering to sociology and

medicine. This was a less intense experience than either of the above, but over three or four years, it became pretty deep.

The components were similar to the other programs. Regular high-quality teaching in scripture, theology, and the Christian life, combined with prayer and outreach, helped us integrate our faith into our daily lives as students, whether in study or social life or recreation.

What about us?

But I hear you cry, these are all unique situations, very far from the daily lives of most of us. They all involve young people and long programs in unfamiliar situations. Most of us will never experience such things. Most of us certainly couldn’t manage a canoe trip!

Nevertheless, there are principles that we can incorporate into our lives. Indeed, what happens in these programs is really no more than normal spiritual disciplines compressed into concentrated form—prayer, catechism, service, and working with others in the Body of Christ.

So how are we doing in these different areas? How can we encourage them, in ourselves and in our congregations? They are the tools of the Divine Potter, shaping us into the image of Christ, if we are willing.

SAINTS: Our Chosen Family

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

fect people. Quite the opposite. We look to saints as examples because, in spite of their imperfections, flaws, and sins, we still see the glory of Christ reflected in their lives. They have managed to run the race that was set before them and, along the way, to show others the truth of a life truly given over to God.

If we can think of the saints, not as superheroes whose feats are impossible to replicate, but as ordinary people—our own extended family, even—who managed to show forth in their lives what they believed



St. Carlo Acutis, a 15-year-old recently canonized by Pope Leo XIV. “Holiness is in the ordinary.”

Photo: carloacutis.com

in their hearts, holiness suddenly becomes so much closer. Being holy does not become any easier, but it ceases to be something only attainable by an elite few, the especially gifted, or those who lived in eras gone by. Instead, we remember the great cloud of witnesses mentioned in the letter to the Hebrews, cheering us on and encouraging us because, in spite of our struggles, our older siblings believe that we, too, can be signs of holiness in the world.

All Saints Day is one of the feasts in our calendar marked

as especially appropriate for baptisms and the renewal of our baptismal promises. One of my favourite traditions at baptisms is the singing of the Litany of Saints. As the candidates, families, and congregation move through the church to the baptismal font, a list of saints new and old is sung, inviting each one to pray for us, especially for those being baptized. What better way to leave an old life behind and begin a new one in Christ than surrounded by the family one is joining?

The congregation of the

local church is there, but so are hundreds of new aunts, uncles, and grandparents. Hildegard, Maria, John, and Carlo, rather than being far-off, legendary figures, are gathered around the font with us, praying, singing, clapping, and waiting with open arms. Behind them are prophets and sages, patriarchs and patriarchs, apostles, and martyrs who have been waiting for generations to welcome this new relation to the great chosen family of God. Welcome to the communion of saints.

Breaking Isolation with Connection: The Mission to Seafarers Seeks Volunteers for a Ministry of Hospitality



Photos: Kelly Noseworthy, Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority (HOPA).

Each year, over 500 ships arrive at the Port of Hamilton to drop off and reload raw goods such as corn, grain, phosphate, and steel products. Every ship is crewed by 15 to 25 seafarers who often work long hours and go without setting foot on shore for months. This can be isolating. Dan Phannenhour, Chaplain of Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario, fills his backpack with bags of chocolate, brochures, and other treats, and with a smile on his face, visits the ships that come to port. He greets the crew members, gives them a bag of chocolate to share, and engages them in conversation about work, life, and any issues at hand.

While on board, Phannenhour encounters people like John, a young seafarer from the Philippines who had been at sea for close to nine months without seeing his family. The strain of isolation had taken a toll on his mental health. Phannenhour offered John emotional support by providing a listening ear and a care package to encourage him. But most importantly, John was given access to Wi-Fi to video call his family for the first time in weeks. John's smile was priceless after seeing his family, and he thanked Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario for their care and support, which gave him renewed strength to continue his journey.

The Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario is a ministry of hospitality where no seafarer is left behind—a place that aims to show seafarers that

Above left: The Algoma Bear arrives in Hamilton Harbour. Above right: Steering the Algoma Bear into Hamilton harbour. Below: Officers of the Algoma Bear pose alongside their ship.



they are not alone and are deeply valued. We are called to serve all seafarers regardless of their ethnicity, culture, faith, or gender. Since 1961, seafarers arriving in the port of Hamilton, Toronto, Oshawa, and Port Colborne have been unconditionally welcomed into our mission stations, and we are proud to be a part of this large, global, multi-faith, non-denominational ministry.

But as a charity, we heavily rely on volunteers and staff like Phannenhour to serve the seafarers who arrive in our ports. Gaining new volunteers is a constant challenge. That is why we need your help. We need a large network of volunteers across Southern Ontario to host, drive, and visit with seafarers. Anyone with a heart to serve is eligible to apply to become a volunteer, even teenagers.

Not able to volunteer? There are three other practical ways to support the Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario:

1. In-Kind donations: Knit hats and scarves, gently used clothing and hygiene products such as toothpaste, soap, shampoo, shaving cream, socks, etc.
2. Financial donations: a monthly or one-time financial gift will help us to continue to serve seafarers.
3. Prayer: commit to praying for the ministry and for seafarers who travel the globe, ensuring that products and goods arrive in port safely.

To learn more about Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario, check out our website at mtsso.org or email us at getinvolved@mtsso.org. We're excited to hear from you!

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General Raydon Share and his team are growing and distributing food and supplies to those in need.

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Staff at Village Health Works serve homemade peanut porridge to children, while the production facility is being built.

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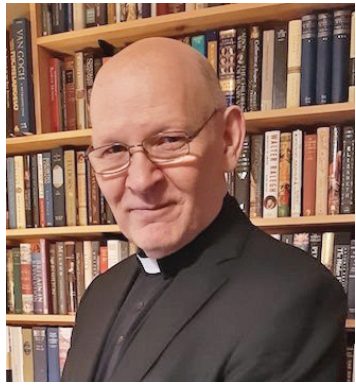
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Lessons in Christianity, Without Belief



THE REVEREND MICHAEL COREN

I have been privileged over the years to meet some of the finest and purest Christians in the world. They have inspired me and changed my life. But I always think of a person who embodied the spirit of love, forgiveness, sacrifice and humanity more than anyone else I have ever encountered. Yet he wasn't even religious, let alone a Christian. He had never really been taught about Christianity, knew little about Christian beliefs, and was convinced that the sandpaper of hypocrisy had rubbed away much of the splen-

dour of organized faith. He was a secular Jew, his name was Phil Coren, and he was my father.

Take Christmas for example. The season for me began at around 2 a.m. on Christmas Day. That was when I heard the distinctive sounds of the London black cab diesel engine driving up the suburban east London Street to my house. To a child, work means nothing. I didn't realize, and my father would have been angry if I had done so, that he was not paid when he didn't work; but that whatever happened, he would always devote Christmas Day to his wife and children. So, he worked 14 hours on Christmas Eve. It was why he was always so sleepy when my sister and I ran into our parents' bedroom horribly early and screamed about Santa's generosity. Sometimes we almost resented Dad's tiredness. I wish I could hug him right now and weep my sorrow. I'm sure he would tell me not to worry about it.

Very Christian that.

My father had driven a cab for most of his working life,

after his years in the RAF and time spent as a boxer. The armed forces, tough sport and a rough upbringing had formed him into a hard but wonderful person. He told off-colour jokes, sometimes swore, and spoke his mind. When I met the woman I would later marry, I proudly showed my dad a photograph of this gorgeous girl whose mother was born in India. He agreed that she was beautiful, but said, "A bit dark, isn't she?" I shouted at him and stormed off. Ten minutes later, he found me. "Mike, I'm an idiot. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I was wrong. Please forgive me." Not a human rights commission story, but a tale of fleshy reality. He was a product of his age and his environment, and he had reacted rather than thought. But when forced to consider what he had said, justice smashed pride. Here was authentic humility. We are not Oprah clones but broken people. What defines us is not pretending to be perfect but acknowledging when we're not.

Very Christian that.

In 1985, I was received into

the Roman Catholic Church. My dad's reaction was, "Whatever makes you happy must be good." But he was not a saccharine man. When I married my Catholic wife in a Catholic church, he said, "Mike, I love you, I'll do anything for you, but I can't come, I can't. It wouldn't feel right, I'd be a fraud." But he cashed in all his savings and gave them to us to buy furniture for our rented apartment. Four months later, when my wife and I went to Britain for Christmas, he'd made a note of all of the local mass times for us.

Very Christian that.

Can people be good without God? Actually, it's the wrong question. Better is, can people be good without knowing that God is working in their lives? Undoubtedly, yes. The atheists have it so wrong—even their denial is a product of a mind given by the creator, and conscious and creative thought is no more an accident than my father's love for me, and my understanding that while I wish he had joined me as a believer,

the God of love will welcome him with a smile as broad as the ocean.

Phil Coren died on Aug 14, 2002. He had had a second stroke, was suffering from cancer and had nursed my mum through Alzheimer's. It was not a good death, if any death can be described as good. Yet he'd never complained, never blamed anybody for his suffering, tried to make the best of it and saw purpose in what was happening. The last time I saw him alive was when he came to visit us in Canada, and this time he came to Mass with the family and remained on his own while we went to receive the Eucharist. As I returned and sat down, I saw that he was crying, not with sorrow but with joy. I held his arm and thanked God for a father who, more than so many people who boast belief, taught me about the real thing.

Very Christian that. Thank you, Dad. I love you.

Take My Life

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

not simply an apprenticeship in liturgy or parish administration. It is a unique season where gifts are tested, callings refined, and limits revealed.

We commonly underestimate

the vulnerability of curacy. Curates stand at altars for the first time, preach sermons that falter, and lead meetings where they do not yet know the dynamics. They discover that

ministry is not only about what you say on Sunday, but how you answer the doorbell on Tuesday. And they need the patient support of experienced clergy and congregations to grow. When Havergal wrote, "Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love," she could have been describing the sometimes awkward but grace-filled journey of the curate learning to serve. In supporting them, we are not indulging beginners but shaping leaders who will, in time, shape us.

Many Anglicans still think of vocation as "something for them, not me." Yet the diocesan Mission Action Plan insists otherwise: every baptized person is called to life and compelled to love. Parents raising children in faith, lay readers leading prayers, wardens managing parish life, volunteers at food banks, choir members, unseen intercessors, these are not hobbies. They are vocations.

It is telling that Havergal includes not only taking voice and heart, but also 'my silver and my gold.' Money, too, is a vocation. How we give, spend,



act. Havergal's hymn is clear; consecration without compassion is hollow.

It is easy to sing Havergal's hymn sentimentally. But if we mean it, if we dare to pray it with open hands, we are consenting to risk. We are saying that our diaries, our money, our careers, our voices, even our days, are not our own. They belong to God. That is frightening. And yet it is the only path to joy.

The Synod theme is not a slogan to get us through another meeting. It is a reminder that vocation is never safe, never abstract, never someone else's business. It is our own.

So, this November, as Synod gathers, as we remember saints and soldiers, as we listen again for God's call, perhaps the most faithful thing we can do is whisper those deeply dangerous words again:

"Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee."

The 151st Synod of the Diocese of Niagara is Saturday, November 1st. Watch our December edition of the Niagara Anglican for all the highlights.

Diocese Announces New Grants for Meaningful Missional Initiatives

This October, the diocese announced a new grant program, the Missional Innovation Grants. This program is replacing the previous Walking on Water (WOW) grants, which began in 2014, to provide support and encouragement for new ministry initiatives that renew or deepen the scope of current ministry.

The Missional Innovation Grants seek to encourage parishes, missions, and chaplaincies



Photo: Shawn Reid/Unsplash

to develop innovative missional initiatives emerging from attentive listening and a desire to connect meaningfully with those outside the church.

“A profound cultural shift is taking place in our diocese,” says Emily Hill, parish development missionary for the diocese. “We are learning to pay closer attention to where God is already at work in our communities and neighbourhoods — and to join in with faith and courage.”

This new grant was inspired by the ministry of Jesus, to whom missional innovation was a central part of his work. Jesus constantly reached beyond religious norms to reveal God’s love by healing on the Sabbath, speaking and eating with outsiders. He sent his disciples into local communities to proclaim the Kingdom in simple, relational and context-sensitive ways.

Luke 10:1-9 tells us that Jesus

appointed seventy others to go in pairs to the towns he himself would go, bringing news of the Kingdom, conversing with the people, caring for the labourers, and the sick.

Jesus shows us that mission is not about preserving the familiar but discerning and joining where the Spirit is making all things new (Revelation 21:5).

The Mission Innovation Grants offer two levels for applicants to choose from. A Pilot Grant offers up to \$5,000 for those who want to test a new idea based on some form of listening or engagement that has been done to shape the idea. The Development Grant offers up to \$12,000 for those who have already tried out a small-scale or experimental form of missional activity and who now want to build on what they’ve learned to grow it into something more lasting, structured and sustainable.

“This new granting program embodies that shift and aligns beautifully with our diocesan Mission Action Plan.” Hill explains, “Parishes and missions are discerning, creative, Spirit-led initiatives that arise from listening deeply to their neighbours’ needs and gifts. Now, with funding to support them, those visions can take shape and become reality.”

The deadline for submissions for this first round of grants is Monday, December 1st, at 5:00 pm, and presentations will happen January 17th, 2026. An online information session will be hosted on Thursday, November 6, 2025, at 7:00 pm to provide those working on applications an opportunity to ask questions,

seek clarification and learn more about the grant and the process. The full details on the grant requirements and how to apply can be found on our diocesan website by visiting <https://niagaraanglican.ca/resources/grants/missional-innovation-grant>.

Any questions about the grants or the process can be directed to Emily Hill, the parish development missionary, by emailing Emily.hill@niagaraanglican.ca or the Reverend Canon Ian Mosby, community missionary at ian.mosby@niagaraanglican.ca.

St. Simon’s Elegant Evening with Sidebar

A Farewell Celebration

BILL MCKINLAY

It is sure to be a memorable night of music and dining on Friday, November 7, as St. Simon’s presents An Elegant Evening with Sidebar at the St. Volodymyr Cultural Centre (1250 Dundas St. W., Oakville). Doors open at 6:00 PM.

Guests will enjoy a four-course gourmet dinner followed by a heartfelt concert from Sidebar, the beloved jazz-pop-gospel

ensemble that has been uplifting audiences and raising funds across the Diocese of Niagara for more than 25 years. Formed by members of St. Simon’s in Oakville, Sidebar features three vocalists in tight harmony, supported by a talented band on guitar, bass, piano, and drums.

Over the years, Sidebar has raised over \$500,000 for churches and charities, both beyond and within the Niagara Diocese, including at St. Simon’s,

St. Cuthbert’s, and Grace Waterdown, always offering their musical gifts as volunteers. This event marks their final performance, with members returning from British Columbia and Brighton to reunite for this special farewell St. Simon’s fundraiser.

Tickets are \$125 each and include a \$25 tax receipt. To reserve your seat, please contact admin@stsimon.ca.



Sidebar will be performing their farewell concert November 7, as part of a fundraiser for St. Simon’s Oakville.

Photo: Contributed by Bill McKinlay

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There is Always the Further Question



THE REVEREND DR. DANIEL TARNIC

This summer, I took vows and entered the novitiate of the Anglican Dominican order. Naturally, people have been curious. What does this mean for my life and ministry? How is this helpful to the church? Why now?

Early in my doctoral studies, my programme director recommended that I read Bernard Lonergan's *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*. Lonergan was a Canadian Jesuit priest. He was a philosopher-theologian and one of the great intellectuals of the twentieth century. He was first and foremost a man of prayer and contemplation. Spanning seven-hundred-seventy pages, *Insight* is an arduous task for the reader. But as an act of obedience to my director, I persevered, and I asked myself, "What's the insight?"

At page five-hundred-seventy,

the insight manifested as if backlit by radiant light and the songs of angels! In beautiful simplicity, Lonergan states why philosophers, theologians, and mystics are driven to dedicate their lives to the pursuit of Truth. The insight: "There is always the further question."

Truth isn't something we're comfortable talking about these days. Admittedly, the church hasn't been consistently gracious in the stewardship of truthful things. After all, nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition. Has the pursuit of Truth been nullified by past failings? Isn't it enough that I have my truth and you have your truth? Relativism is easier to deal with than Truth.

I'm old-fashioned enough to believe that Truth is still a worthy pursuit. After all, doesn't the desire to know come from dis-ease? The quest for Truth begins with a sense of lacking it, and not with feelings of having achieved it.

Lonergan reminds us that the more we know, the less we understand. This safeguards the contemplative disposition. There is always the further question. It was during the fourth Lateran Council (1213-15) that the famous doctrine of dissimilitude was formally promulgated. When it comes to our knowledge of

God, human understanding inevitably results in an ever-greater experience of unknowing (dissimilarity).

But, here's the problem: from the time we walk into our first classroom as grade-schoolers, we're indoctrinated into a fallacy. It has been driven into our minds and constantly reinforced that providing correct answers is the goal of learning. As Western Christians, we've been spiritually stultified by the pedagogy of an education system driven mostly by market values.

The impoverishment of modern education is that it no longer values the cultivation of souls as a foundational part of human thriving. This has affected us spiritually and not only intellectually. I know this because I've witnessed it leading bible studies. How often I hear participants pre-emptively apologize for giving wrong answers, for not being intelligent enough to read the bible.

Generations of Anglicans are afraid to speak up in bible studies because they're afraid of giving wrong answers, or of being perceived as asking silly questions; Be encouraged! Wrong answers and silly questions are basically all we've got in the journey toward Uncreated Light. So, what are we to do?

Reclaim the contemplative tradition of the church. Real contemplation. Serious contemplation. Lean into the mystery, paradox, darkness, the bewilderment. There is freedom in our humanity. Our limitations and ignorance stretch out beyond ourselves to God. So, risk the possibility of being visited by angels.

Why take on the Dominican Rule in midlife? I failed grade twelve religion class. I didn't flourish. My teacher told me that I'd never amount to anything. Harsh stuff. Why did I fail religion class? First, not because I didn't know the answers, but because I wasn't satisfied with the answers I was getting in class. Second, I was bored. I needed to move on to different pursuits. I wasn't interested in regurgitating fodder. Notwithstanding, that wasn't the only reason I failed grade twelve religion.

I needed a place where I could lean into the further question. I needed to challenge and to be challenged without fear of punitive retribution. I misjudged the system. But it wasn't just I who failed religion. My teacher failed, recklessly and irresponsibly, as an educator. Repeating grade twelve religion was an agonizing

and suffocating experience, but it gave me perspective on why habits and dispositions of the soul are so important. You cannot hand on to others what you do not have within yourself to give.

To contemplate, and to share the fruit of contemplation. That is the motto of the Dominican spiritual tradition, along with Truth (Veritas). In a nutshell, that's what I find so deliciously compelling about committing to a contemplative rule of life. In a world where it is increasingly difficult to discern between Truth and falsehood, and where it is uncertain as to how we flourish alongside the dehumanizing and strident advances of AI, if the church doesn't safeguard matters of the soul, no one will. We all need to take this seriously, each and every one of us. There is always the further question.



Bernard Lonergan, author of *Insight*.

Photo: Wikipedia




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The Diocese of Niagara is celebrating 150 years! At our 150th Diocesan Synod, Bishop Susan Bell initiated a special anniversary fund to support local curacies throughout the diocese. Equipping right skilled and well-formed spiritual leaders is crucial for the flourishing of ministry like that which has been demonstrated by our new canons.


The vision for this anniversary fund is to better equip newly ordained clergy who would benefit by working alongside seasoned priests allowing for a focused time of apprenticeship.

We invite you to visit our diocesan website to learn more about this special anniversary fund and if moved to do so, make a donation by using the information below:

Your support of this diocesan initiative will be a blessing to the Church for generations to come.

To donate by cheque:
Make a cheque out to The Diocese of Niagara and include in the memo line "150th Anniversary Curacy Fund." It can be mailed to:
Cathedral Place,
Attn: Finance Team,
252 James St. N,
Hamilton, Ontario L8R 2L3.

To donate online:
visit niagaraanglican.ca or scan the QR Code



If you desire more information about the 150th Anniversary Curacy Fund, please be in touch with Canon Drew MacDonald at drew.macdonald@niagaraanglican.ca.

A Calling in the Quiet of the Night

THE REVEREND DEACON MARK MCGILL

As I muse about why I am a deacon, I try to remember when I wanted to become a deacon. What was I thinking?

How was I called? When? I don't remember lying in bed and hearing, "Mark, Mark," the way Samuel was called. So how did it happen? If you are like me, maybe you are asking yourself, "Why me?"

These thoughts were always in the back of my mind until I read Fr. Richard Rohr's thoughts "On being grounded in reality." He states, "The genius of the Bible does not let us resolve all our questions in a theological classroom—in fact, nothing about the bible appears to be written out of or for academic settings. We can

only achieve wisdom through living to experience suffering, birth, death, and rebirth. This cannot be learned in books."

There are certain thoughts that can only be known if we are sufficiently emptied, sufficiently ready, sufficiently confused, or sufficiently destabilized. Read Romans 12:1-3.

Unlike Samuel, I reflect on nights of lying in bed and having a calm fill my being, a feeling of peace and restfulness easing me back to sleep. I can remember sitting quietly and just knowing that this is what I feel called to do.

Funny how some things are better seen in the dark. We spend so much time in the light of the day, and when that light goes out, we try to recreate the light artificially with light bulbs. We are called children of the light and learn throughout our lives

that darkness and evil are one in the same.

Jesus was never afraid of the dark. That is when He would go out to talk to His Father. I feel that Jesus used the night to help eliminate the distractions that occur when our senses are looking for life-threatening situations (our natural instinct for survival).

Should we be afraid of the dark? Deacons work in the darkness of people's lives; when we talk to the homeless person who is waiting for a hot coffee and a sandwich, when we sit with a friend from the parish in the hospital as they wait for test results, and then with the family who has to deal with those results. It is sitting with an inmate as they tell their story and just being there. In all these, it can be dark times for all



involved.

We were not called to be flashy and to tell those who are hurting that it's God's way. We are called to listen, to hold their hands, and let the love we have for God flow through us, to let the peace and love of God that we receive each night as we pray to the Father to rest on those who are momentarily lost. How? You may ask? Malachi 2:5-7 God's covenant with Levi; God bestows a special blessing of "life and peace" upon those he calls.

Do you remember when you were called? Was it like Samuel, or was it a quiet voice that helped you sit quietly in the dark, only to give you the daylight of the new day and a new beginning?

Our greatest calling is when we sit with those who are anxious, hurt, hungry, and afraid. That is when we can be the new dawn for them, just by sitting and listening, giving God time to expand his love for us into a feeling of peace to those we are with.

Jesus' great commandment was to go out and share the love of God with those who are in a darkened place. Let us be the Deacons of light needed for all to see.

Now, I know why I am a Deacon.

The Rev. Deacon Mark McGill serves at Holy Trinity Welland.

Leadership Sharing at the University of Guelph

In January 2025, the Ecumenical Campus Ministry (ECM) at the University of Guelph entered into a leadership-sharing partnership with Two Rivers Church. The arrangement sees the two ministries evenly sharing the leadership and energy of the Reverend Andrew Hyde, who has served as ECM's full-time chaplain since 2015. Hyde was ordained as a minister of Word, Sacrament, and Pastoral Care in the United Church of Canada last Spring.

Two Rivers Church is a missional expression of the

Presbyterian Church in Canada. Founded as a house church in 2012, the experimental community has been guided by the Reverend Dr. Glen Soderholm, who also directs Moveable Feast Resources, until his retirement in December 2024. Two Rivers Church gathers around 4 Ls... Liturgy, Living Rooms, Learning Rooms, and Living Missionally... and a posture of "inviting all to come alive in Christ". Sunday liturgies happen at 4 pm in the church hall of St. Andrew's Presbyterian in downtown Guelph.

Partnering with Two Rivers Church not only helps the campus ministry cover staffing costs, but it also opens up some creative synergies for the two communities. Some ECM alumni have already made Two Rivers their new church home. The afternoon time slot allows Hyde to continue offering Sunday morning Church Hops (where ECM takes students to visit local churches) and limited pulpit supply. The two ministries are looking at offering some shared programs this Fall.

The shift to a shared

leadership model has required some adjustments for the campus ministry, which have largely been managed by a renewed emphasis on student leadership. In recent years, ECM has developed a team of four student leaders, who give direction to the areas of Prayer & Spirituality, Social Justice, ECM's Queer Christian Community, and Encouragement.

The Ecumenical Campus Ministry has been the home of

the Anglican, Presbyterian, and United Church at the University of Guelph since 1968. To learn more about ECM's ministry on campus, visit www.ECMguelph.org or follow @ECMguelph on Instagram.

To learn more about Two Rivers Church, visit www.tworiverschurch.ca or follow @tworiverschurch.ca on Instagram.



Hamming it up for the camera at the Ecumenical Campus Ministry at University of Guelph.

Photo: contributed by Andrew Hyde



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Setting the Groundwork for Mixed-Ecology

DANI LEITIS

The Reverend Canon Dr. Michael Mondloch will be retiring on November 23rd, but he leaves St. Barnabas Church well-prepared for a mixed-ecology parish.

Canon Mondloch became rector of St. Barnabas in 2020. The parish, known for its Anglo-Catholic tradition and formal liturgy, had shown interest in reaching out to the community. Canon Mondloch knew this was the ministry he was called to do: connecting beyond the church walls.

“Essentially, for me, a mixed-ecology is a way of reaching out to people who find more traditional church, or the way we’ve been doing church in the Anglican world for a long time, not something that touches them, or moves them, or draws them into the Christian faith and Christian community,” he says. “So, what a mixed ecology does, is it does that, while meeting the kind of spiritual needs of those who find our traditional ways of doing church appealing, while meeting their needs as well.”

He adds, “It’s making real, concerted efforts to reach out to others and getting to know and develop relationships with people who don’t come to the services.”

Canon Mondloch emphasizes that the first step is knowing the people in the parish and the neighbourhood, then building relationships that can later lead to spiritual connection.

His first Sunday at St. Barnabas coincided with church closures for COVID-19, requiring him to find new ways to reach people, even parishioners. Like many clergy, he turned to virtual communications, recording services, and using social media to main-

tain connections. As restrictions lifted, new faces began coming to church, easing the parish into wider outreach.

“Some describe St. Barnabas as being in the epicentre of the social ills St. Catharines faces,” he says. “Drug addiction, mental health issues, homelessness, poverty, food insecurity...you name it. It’s in spades in Queenston, and St. Barnabas is right in that neighbourhood.”

Already involved in social justice and outreach in the Greater Saint Catharines area, Canon Mondloch knew many local agencies and brought parishioners along as he expanded initiatives. The parish, long accustomed to hosting self-help and 12-step groups in its halls, began broader community work.

Working with the United Way, St. Barnabas introduced pop-up markets to address food insecurity. “We are scouring sources for fresh produce all week long; a couple of key volunteers have really embraced this,” Canon Mondloch says. The market, now held every Friday, serves 40–50 people with 20–25 varieties of fruits and vegetables.

Another initiative is weekly silent meditation, held on Tuesdays from 6:30 to 7:00 pm. Participants join for 20 minutes of silence, followed by a reading from John Main, then a closing benediction with refreshments. Canon Mondloch notes that the meditation has fostered meaningful conversation and spiritual connection outside the church service.

A third venture, estuaries, is designed to bring a variety of people and perspectives together for conversation. “In nature, estuaries are places where salt water and freshwater sources intermingle. It’s a wild and crazy environment with a lot of mix-

ing of different kinds of plants and animals, and it can change in a hurry. It’s got tides, floods and droughts of all sorts, so it’s a wild mix that’s the natural process,” Canon Mondloch explains. In this context, the gatherings encourage participants to listen and share thoughts, building community and combating loneliness.

St. Barnabas also partners with initiatives such as Dismas Niagara, supporting reintegration for former offenders, and a community kitchen with the United Way, where participants cook meals to take home.

Canon Mondloch acknowledges that creating a mixed-ecology parish takes time and patience. “Those partnerships can be a challenge when you know the church members have been used to being able to come in and out of the kitchen whenever, and now it’s busy with other people here. Space can also be a challenge sometimes, especially figuring out how to manage a space set up for mixed use,” he says.

He also warns against approaching mixed-ecology for the wrong reasons. “Going into it with a mindset like ‘this is going to save our parish, or this is going to attract people and they will come to our church services...I mean, that’s the great temptation. It’s the wrong approach,” Mondloch explains. “The mixed ecology offers more landing spots for people who are going through challenging times, that you know, maybe can’t sit through church service but could sit in silence with a dozen other people. I can help you with that community kitchen, or I’ll drop in on the pop-up market because I like these people. It’s just a more holistic approach to the faith.”

A key principle is collaboration. “It’s important to welcome volunteers from outside of the church to support the community kitchen, or the pop-up market, etc., to continue making those connections and building trusting and safe relationships.”

Canon Mondloch reflects, “A mixed-ecology done right is just because it’s the right thing to do,

and when you do the right things, good things happen.”

As he retires, Canon Mondloch leaves St. Barnabas grounded in relationships, community, and faith. The parish is ready to continue offering diverse ways for people to connect, inside and outside the church walls, and to live out a ministry that meets people where they are.

St Barnabas Produce Market, Friday September 26th 3:30-5:30		
Fruits	Vegetables	Vegetables
Lime	Cabbage	Celery
Mango	Broccoli	Yellow Peppers
Dragon Fruit	Sweet Potatoes	Green Peppers
Green Grapes	Avocados	Tomatoes
Red Grapes	Iceberg Lettuce	Beans
Cantaloupes	Yellow Onions	Carrots
Pears	Romaine Hearts	Potatoes
Seedless Oranges	Brussels Sprouts	
Watermelons		

Items typically on offer at the weekly produce market.



The community kitchen at St. Barnabas.



Celebrating the Eucharist at St. Barnabas

Photos: Contributed by St. Barnabas parish



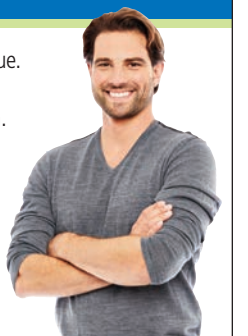
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Learning to be a Conduit: Returning Well Into Ministry

THE REVEREND DR. CHARLES MEEKS

I'll admit that my time as a curate has been rather abnormal to this point.

In an ideal world, if you're headed toward priesthood, you're first ordained to the diaconate, serve in a parish for perhaps a couple years, and then you stand (kneel) before the bishop and are invited to the order of priests.

In reality, I was ordained to the diaconate on June 4, 2023, began my curacy at St. Paul's Westdale on October 1—and swiftly went on medical leave as an acute case of pancreatitis morphed into non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

When I returned from this medical leave, one parishioner remarked after concluding worship on my first Sunday back in action at St. Paul's that they were still thinking about the only homily I had had the opportunity to preach. They didn't mention anything about



Charles Meeke at his ordination to the priesthood. Photo: William Pleydon

how yellow my skin had turned, or how gaunt my frame had become. I had somehow succeeded in preaching the Gospel that day. This is an enduring lesson for anyone in a curacy: as long as the Gospel is proclaimed, whether by Word, Table, or a combination of both, you're doing what you're meant to be doing.

That sentiment has fuelled my ability to slowly hop back into

the saddle. If you've ever been on a horse, however, or seen someone mount a horse, you know that unless you have designs of being a gunslinger or running in the Kentucky Derby, getting into a saddle is not something you want to rush. There really is no "hopping" happening with me. Rather, I am grateful for being able to slowly resume my duties as assistant curate at St. Paul's. Since I was ordained to the priesthood this past summer, this means additionally that I can now celebrate the Eucharist, which was one of the things I looked forward to most in this new phase of ministry—and indeed this is something that called me toward ordination in the first place.

I suppose it's possible the image of sitting astride a horse in one saddle is actually inaccurate—I am more like a rider standing atop two horses, as in trick riding. One of the reasons I am attached to St. Paul's in Westdale is because it

is just down the street from my primary vocation: the ecumenical chaplaincy at McMaster University. My return here has necessarily been slow, as I am coming to terms with the ways my body still witnesses to the physical losses of my long-term illness. I don't have quite the energy reserve as I did before, and I have had to carefully measure my commitments. But I am still grateful to be back on campus. The semester is in full-swing, and the energy is contagious. The viruses are also quite contagious! With a weakened immune system, I must be vigilant in that area, too.

And so, returning to ministry feeling weak and inadequate in many ways, there is a significant lesson learned in both spheres that has been difficult—and rewarding—to learn. The point of a curacy is not to learn how to do everything yourself; likewise, a chaplaincy does not succeed in creating a spiritual home for

students with the work of just one person.

When I was considering ministry again after various roles with the diocese and teaching, I believe I had latched onto the idea that ministry was going to be a terribly lonely affair, that I would be "the person" (in both roles) and success would be defined by numbers, by participants, by grant winnings. I have had to recalibrate this sort of thinking. Success in ministry is learning when to be a conduit for the Spirit in the delivery of the good news of the Gospel, and when to get out of the way. When to rely on a partner in ministry—whether lay or ordained—and when to use whatever authority you may have to make things happen.

I look forward to the joys and challenges of this dual-ministry, and I will continue to express my gratitude to the Lord that I get the privilege to continue in them!

Cathedral Opens Its Doors to Supercrawl Visitors

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

as centres of art and music, the cathedral presented both visual arts and music. This year visual arts were displayed by Debra Carson and Mary Pat Forani. The Director of Music Ministries, Bruce Burbidge, organized organ and piano recitals, instrumental music and singing – many participants were members of our congregation. One group of strings, the James North Chamber Ensemble, comprises McMaster graduates who have played together for many years and love the opportunity to play in a building with good acoustics. Many visitors delight in hearing the 4,000-pipe Casavant organ in such a large space and watching organists playing on three keyboards and their feet playing the pedals.

Although we do not proselytize, we seek to educate using signs to explain objects such as the font, the altar, the reredos, etc. and the role that they play in Christian worship. For children, we offered a laminated sheet with eight photos for a popular treasure hunt – many parents thanked us! We collected 558 prayers and requests for prayers, written on small slips of paper, and we prayed for these people after Supercrawl. Another big hit was a table filled with 340 rocks, each of which had an encouraging word or image handwritten on it, taken entirely from Scripture. All rocks were taken up by midafternoon on Saturday. Some visitors take time to pray, contemplate or sit to take time

out from a busy world.

This all involved a lot of work, but our visitors welcomed the chance to visit, have their questions answered and, in some cases, the opportunity to discuss



a variety of topics. The cathedral is blessed by its location on James Street North during

these festival events, and the opportunity to provide ministry.

Niagara Anglican Deadlines and Submission Guidelines

Upcoming Deadlines:

- January – November 17
- February – December 12
- March – January 19

Submissions:

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

Original cartoons or art –

- Contact the Editor.
- Photos** – very large, high resolution (300 ppi), action pictures (people doing something). Include name of photographer. Written permission of parent/guardian must be obtained if photo includes a child.

All submissions must include writer's full name and contact information. We reserve the right to edit or refuse submissions.

Questions or information:

- Contact the Editor at editor@niagaraanglican.ca



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Play Without Ceasing:

A Day Retreat for Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Leaders

The Diocese of Niagara invites all leaders of Sunday School, Messy Church, Youth Groups, Young Adult gatherings, and other ministries nurturing the next generation to a refreshing day of fellowship, prayer, good food, and joyful play

About the Retreat

On Saturday, November 8, 2025, Play Without Ceasing will be an interactive day retreat that introduces participants to the fundamentals of improvisational play, combined with prayerful reflection and meaningful group sharing. Through activities that engage heart, mind, body, and spirit, attendees will explore new ways to:

- Stay present and attentive in ministry and relationships



- Respond with creativity and flexibility to the movement of the Holy Spirit
 - Foster deeper connections with God and one another
- Mindfully designed for all personality types and physical abilities, this retreat has been

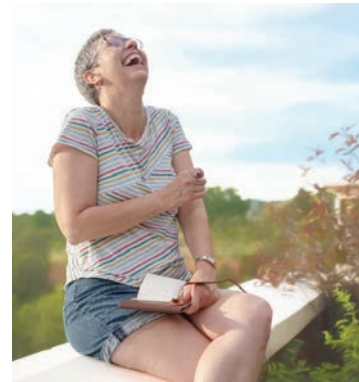
offered at seminaries, churches, and spiritual formation programs across North America and Europe.

What to Bring

- Comfortable clothing and footwear for movement

- A journal and writing tool for reflection
- An open spirit, ready for play, prayer, and connection

Meet Your Retreat Leader



The retreat will be led by The Reverend Monica Romig Green, an experienced spiritual director and former professional actor.

Monica has been leading Play Without Ceasing workshops and retreats on spiritual formation, ministry, and improvisation since 2005. She currently serves as Priest Associate at Christ's Church Cathedral in Hamilton and as Faith Formation Coordinator for the Diocese of Niagara.

Registration

Spaces are limited. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with fellow ministry leaders, nurture your creativity, and deepen your connection to God and your ministry. Please email sarah.bird@niagaraanglican.ca to register today!

More Than Memory

THE REVEREND STEWART CAROLAN-EVANS

In the Anglican Church of Canada, we do not mark an official "Season of Remembrance". Yet each November naturally takes on that character as we gather for All Saints and All Souls, and then pause as a nation for Remembrance Day. It is a time when the church gently invites us to consider the meaning of memory, of the saints who have gone before us, the faithful departed, and those who gave their lives in war.

So perhaps this is a good time to ask ourselves: what does it mean to remember someone? For me, remembering someone often means remembering my older brother Simon, killed in a motorcycle accident on April 1st, 1998. (You don't forget those dates, do you?) I remember him telling me that being without his motorbike was like being without his essence. That was who he was, and how he felt alive, and how he met his end. I also remember my grandmother, who had first-hand memories as a 15-year-old girl watching "those handsome young men" (as she put it) proudly marching down the hill in 1917 to board the ships to France. "Oh, they were so good looking," she recalled, smiling. Then her face would change. "What they had not seen," she declared, her expression quite

altered, "were the men on those same ships arriving back from France, blind and broken." Her words carried the weight of both pride and sorrow, a mingling of admiration for their courage and grief at the terrible cost.

Scripture has much to say about remembering. In dark times, the people of the Old Testament were asked to "remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand and outstretched arm" (Deuteronomy 5:15). Memory was a way of keeping their identity alive. It worked both ways, because at the same time they are told that God will remember His promise made to them (Leviticus 26:45). In the Gospels, we see the thief crucified alongside Jesus asking, "Remember me when you come into your kingdom." Whereupon the thief is immediately reassured: "today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). The most poignant and powerful of these 'remembering' passages tells us of Jesus sharing his last meal with his friends, when he "took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them saying, 'This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me'" (Luke 22:19).

On all of these occasions, remembering is much more than just a simple recollection of information about the past. It is remembered in such a way



"Those handsome young men" Canadian troops march along Harbour Street in Folkestone to board the boats to France, many never to return.

Photo: greatwarforum.org

that the facts remembered have some impact on the present. In particular, remembering God makes Him present in a distinctive and moving way. To remember is to allow the past to become alive in the present, shaping our faith, strengthening our resolve, and reminding us of who we are. Remembering does not seek to keep us anchored to the past; it transforms, motivates and uplifts.

So, again, what does it mean to remember, and what do such memories do to us? The use of memory to somehow bring a person or a good time back serves only to anchor us in the past and, in so doing, prevent us from living in the present. I could be embittered by the sudden loss of my brother and decide to discourage all that I meet from



My older brother Simon and his 'pride and joy' Kawasaki 1100. My eldest daughter Heidi is on the bike.

Photo: contributed by Stewart Carolan-Evans

riding motorbikes. But instead, I choose to remember his infectious joy when he returned from a particularly inspiring ride across the North York Moors in

England, the landscape that was his home. That joy is something worth holding on to. My grandmother remembered all the soldiers she had seen, both the handsome and the broken. She spoke of both with equal respect. Later in life, she was an advocate of peace, both between countries and within families.

As we stand in silence on Remembrance Sunday, will we be incensed at the loss of so many young lives, or inspired by their selflessness and sacrifice? When we hear the bugle sound the Last Post, when we place our poppies, when we whisper a prayer in church for a loved one long departed, what stirs within us? Remembering our friends and family members, and those who gave their lives in war, should not be an act that ties us to the past, holding us back. Rather, it should be something that motivates us here and now to look ahead, transformed by the work they did in us and for us.

And in that way, God, and in so many ways our friends and family, now invisible, can lift us, inspire us, and give us hope and strength. To remember faithfully is not to dwell in the shadows of yesterday, but to allow yesterday's light to illuminate today and guide us toward tomorrow.