

# CONTACT

Christ's Church Cathedral | Christmas 2019



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# IN THIS ISSUE

- 4 [PIVOTING IN HOPE AND JOY](#)  
Advent
- 6 [GOOD KING WENCESLAS](#)  
In blessing others
- 8 [EVERYTHING IS A PROBLEM](#)  
With God all things are possible
- 10 [HARMONIZING](#)  
Unification of spirit and purpose
- 12 [WARDEN'S WORLD](#)  
The journey
- 14 [LEARNING](#)  
From the biblical prophets
- 16 [CALENDAR](#)
- 18 [PAROCHIAL COMMITTEE](#)  
Who are we?
- 19 [3...2...1...CONTACT](#)  
Libby Simpson
- 26 [BOM CAMINHO](#)  
In Portugal
- 28 [BRING YOUR BINOCULARS](#)  
To Church
- 30 [FROM THE ARCHIVES](#)  
Remembering a world at war
- 31 [FINANCIAL REPORT](#)  
Year end approaches

WHEN I'M 64



p. 11

145th SYNOD  
INSPIRED



p. 20

AWAY FROM  
HOME AT  
CHRISTMAS



p. 21 - 25

## CHRISTMAS

 The warmth of loved ones

by Paula Esteves



I've been hosting our family Christmas dinner for decades with only a few exceptions.

It all started when my sister started having kids. She appreciated the opportunity to fully enjoy Christmas morning with the "little ones" without having the extra burden of putting together a Christmas meal. From my perspective, simply being at home on Christmas day was a bonus. Steve and I would often go for an early morning Christmas walk, attend the service at the Cathedral, mostly to listen to the Harvey/Wall singers (oops – did I say that out loud?), and sip some home-made eggnog while we opened our presents to each other. And then get into high gear to greet our guests.

When the mothers were still with us, the guest list sometimes included both sides of the family. Depending on the year, that could be as few as 8 to 10 people or as many as 22! Somehow, we always managed to make it work.

The mothers are no longer with us, nor is Steve, and the kids on both sides of the family are now fully formed adults, in many cases with kids of their own! And with that comes their own obligations to in-laws and the making of their own traditions.

So, now the family Christmas dinner is less predictable. I still host it, but sometimes it's on Christmas day, sometimes it's on Christmas Eve, and some-

times it's on Boxing day. We no longer combine families on Christmas day (I rather miss that); there are just too many of us. So, I have a 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas at the Varey Family Christmas dinner, usually several days before Christmas – it's absolutely chaotic but I wouldn't miss it for the world. And there's a cherished 3<sup>rd</sup> Christmas dinner with friends. I'm grateful for them all!

And the exceptions to my hosting Christmas? I only recall that happening three times. In 1997 when we moved from Sudbury to Hamilton, the year Steve passed away, and in 2011 when the eight of us got on a plane and spent Christmas and New Year's in Funchal, Madeira, my birthplace. I would do that again in a heartbeat!

And therein lies the impetus for asking a few parishioners to tell us about their Christmas away from home in this issue of *Contact*, pages 21 to 25. Christmas away is not necessarily better or worse than Christmas at home. But it is different. Or at least the 'props' are different. What I appreciated the most was the absence of the usual trappings of the season without giving up Christmas with loved ones. (The mild weather was nothing to sneeze at either!)

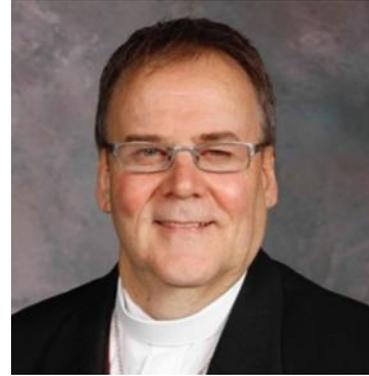
Wherever you are this Christmas, may you too bask in the warmth of loved ones.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. ■

## ADVENT

### Receiving the gifts of God

by Terry DeForest †



Looking back on the now ending Christian year, the focus in our worship has been on the job we have been given in our baptism. We are called to grow as disciples and live out our part in God's mission all moving towards the inbreaking reign of God – a “kingdom” in which peace, justice, healing, and reconciliation prevail. Throughout a long season of Sundays after Pentecost we have been tending to that job.

Pivoting to look ahead at the new Christian year beginning on the First Sunday of Advent, we discover, perhaps surprisingly, the focus is still on that same reign of God. The scripture readings on both sides of this turning point look towards receiving and working for the reign of God.

As Jesus' disciples (apprentices, really), our purpose is to share the good news of God's loving reign. But in order to truly fulfill that purpose, we must first receive that good news for ourselves. The waiting, preparations, hoping, and anticipating of Advent, invite us (as individuals, faith communities and indeed the whole of creation) to view things from the perspective of receiving the gifts of God.

Our Christmas gift is that God makes the first moves in our creation, redemption, and sanctification. We love because we have first been loved. When seen through the eyes of faith, we are entering a time of receiving the graces and gifts of a loving God – a God who wants fullness of life for us and for all. Let us, as Jesus' apprentices receive

those gifts and open them up with all the joy of a child on Christmas Day. Renewed by the knowledge of that love, we can then enter afresh into the work of sharing it. Each year and each day involve us in continuously making this pivot from receiving to giving (to receiving...) so that in the end we are nothing but blessed by the resulting circle of God's unfailing companionship.

In the journey of faith, we are constantly making such pivots, so it is not surprising that we are also doing so as the Diocese of Niagara and as Christ's Church Cathedral.

The emerging mission action plan [MAP] for our diocese starts with an invitation to create and implement opportunities to ignite and strengthen faith. It moves us to a call to reimagine and adapt the structures and culture of our shared life, and urges us to prioritize social justice action with an emphasis on environmental justice. This MAP seeks to map out for us a pivotal path to the blessedness for which we are being created.

Here at Christ's Church Cathedral, receiving the gifts of common worship (in which you are heartily invited to take part) – music, art, community service, justice-making, leadership, and fellowship one with another – we too are pivoting to a new time. As we continue to make that pivot into a new ministry partnership with one another and as you contemplate such a partnership with the next Rector and Dean, I invite you to pray regularly our In-

*(Continued on page 5)*

(Continued from page 4)

terim Prayer (found below) with its echoes of the Lord's Prayer. Not yet knowing what the future offers, let us re-connect with the God who loves us so much to come to us in person in any circumstances and at any cost – in the infant Jesus, in his bold ministry, in his crucifixion and glorious resurrection. Seeing that we are divinely accompanied by the Holy Spirit in each step of our journeys, let us look back, around, and ahead and then enter into the hoped-for future set out before us. ■

### **An Interim Litany for Christ's Church Cathedral**

Beloved God,  
**our Father in heaven,**  
your bountiful providence has graced us with a  
long and rich past;  
**hallowed be your name.**

Your holiness calls us into a future shaped by  
justice and love;  
**your kingdom come.**

Your faithful companionship in the present is  
our comfort, challenge and guide;  
**your will be done  
on earth as in heaven.**

Feed us with your presence now;  
**Give us today our daily bread.**

Change us by and for your love;  
**Forgive us our sins as we forgive  
those who sin against us.**

Embolden us as your servants in the world;  
**Save us from the time of trial, and  
deliver us from evil.**

Inspire us with a vision for Christ's  
mission and ministry;  
**For the kingdom,  
the power and the glory  
are yours, now and for ever.**

**Amen.**



## **CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

### **CHRISTMAS EVE December 24**

#### **4:30 p.m. Family Eucharist & Crèche Blessing**

Presider: The Reverend Canon Terry DeForest

Storyteller: The Reverend Canon J. Lefebvre

#### **9:30 p.m. Congregational Carols with Organ**

Animator: Michael Bloss

#### **10:00 p.m. Procession & Choral Eucharist**

(Incense will be used)

Presider & Preacher:

The Right Reverend Dr. Susan Bell

### **CHRISTMAS DAY December 25**

#### **10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Hymns**

Presider & Preacher:

The Reverend Canon Terry DeForest

### **CHRISTMAS ONE December 29**

#### **10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist**

Presider: The Reverend Dr. Dan Tatarnic

Preacher: The Right Reverend Dr. D. Ralph Spence

### **THE NAMING OF JESUS January 1, 2020**

#### **10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Hymns**

Presider & Preacher:

The Reverend Dr. Dan Tatarnic

### **FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY January 5, 2020**

#### **8:30am Holy Eucharist**

Presider & Preacher:

The Reverend Canon Terry DeForest

#### **10:30 a.m. Choral Eucharist with Lessons & Carols**

Presider: The Reverend Canon Bill Thomas

## IN BLESSING OTHERS



Be blessed in return

by Sharyn Hall✦



*Good King Wenceslas looked out  
on the feast of Stephen,  
When the snow lay round about,  
deep and crisp and even.  
Brightly shone the moon that night,  
though the frost was cruel,  
When a poor man came in sight,  
gathering winter fuel.*

So begins a popular Christmas carol which many of us have sung every Christmas. Often, we do not stop to think carefully about the meaning of the words or the message of the story. Like many of you, I almost know this carol by heart, but it was a long time before I began to ask questions about the carol. Who was King Wenceslas? Why is there a Christmas carol about him? Did the story really happen? Who wrote the poetry of the carol? Does the carol have a Christmas message?

Wenceslas was born c. 907 in the Duchy of Bohemia, an area of Europe which is now called the Czech Republic. His father was the Duke of Bohemia, so Wenceslas was a prince and the heir apparent to the throne. He was raised in the Christian faith by his grandmother, a holy woman who is revered by many Czech people as St. Ludmilla. When his father died, he took over the government even though he was not yet twenty years old.

Wenceslas was respected as a pious, young man who worked tirelessly for the well-being of his people. He hoped to develop cultural ties with

other European countries. He encouraged the work of German missionary priests to teach the Christian faith, but this created resentment with the non-Christians among his subjects. In 929, Wenceslas was assassinated by political conspirators. Very soon after his death, Christians in Bohemia began venerating him as a martyr. He was made a king posthumously by the Holy Roman Emperor and known by his Czech name, 'Vaclav the Good.' He is revered by Czech people as a saint and his relics are preserved in the church of St. Vitus in Prague.

There is a legend which describes the piety and generosity of Wenceslas. 'He would rise every night from his noble bed, with bare feet and only one chamberlain, then go around to God's churches and give alms generously to widows, orphans, those in prison, and those afflicted by every difficulty.' This legend was likely the inspiration for the text of our carol.

The text of 'Good King Wenceslas' was written by John Mason Neale (1818-1866), an English priest who excelled as a hymn writer. He translated ancient hymns for modern use, for example, 'Christ is made the sure foundation' and 'Jerusalem the Golden'. He also wrote many new texts for hymns and carols, the best known being 'Good Christian men, rejoice' and 'Good King Wenceslas'.

This Christmas carol about King Wenceslas is very popular, but it is unusual because it does not men-

*(Continued on page 7)*

(Continued from page 6)

tion the birth of Jesus. The text begins by painting a picture of a very cold and dark winter night. The feast of St. Stephen is the day after Christmas when the northern hemisphere is in the grip of winter. The fuel to ward off the cold was likely wood, but the peasant in the story is gathering branches and brush, which suggests that he is poor with meagre resources.

The King will take fuel and food to the man's home, which is a fair distance away, but the King will not ride in a carriage or on horseback. He and his page will walk in the snow together. When the boy becomes frightened that he may freeze to death, the King invites him to walk in his footsteps

to give him courage and to sustain him for the journey. We might wonder if the author had a message here for every Christian. If you are anxious or frightened, walk with Jesus to have courage and to be sustained by faith. Another message to Christians is stated clearly in the last words of the carol. Every Christian, regardless of wealth or status, is called by Jesus to be kind and generous to people in need. Those who care for others may be surprised to learn that in blessing others, they will be blessed in return.

As we await the coming of the Messiah with hope and thankfulness, may we all be blessed by blessing others. ■

*Congratulations!*



*Bishop Susan with Tom Davison*

At the Order of Niagara service on November 17, Bishop Susan honoured two of our own for their contributions to the Cathedral and the Diocese.



*Bishop Susan with Elizabeth Wensley*

*Photos courtesy of William Pleydon*

## WITH GOD

➤ All things are possible

by Dan Tatarnic✠



People sometimes ask: why is there something rather than nothing? Good question; but I'd like to know the answer to this question instead: how is there *everything* rather than one thing? I can almost wrap my head around the idea that the Big Bang, or whatever amounts to having been the start of the physical universe, could have produced one thing (i.e. a single atom); and one thing would have been a miracle. One thing out of no-thing, now that's something! St. Thomas Aquinas might call the Big Bang an exercise in large-scale efficient causality: a big bang, a massive force of energy, an explosion blowing stuff all over the place. Wow! Oversimplified, I admit, but you get the point.

Aquinas says that there are two forces at work in creation: there are forces that push (efficient causes), and forces that pull/impel (formal causality). Efficient causes (pushing forces) are like the Big Bang – you end up with a whole lot of stuff being released into the world, like a kid dumping a box of Lego on the floor. But any parent knows, that the Lego remain on the floor unless an 'intellect' acts, and a 'will' animates the mess of blocks. And so we come to the second force – Formal causality. It's a very different force, an impelling force. Imagine, a strong 'pulling along' that *animates* life, and draws out co-creativity; sustaining, nurturing, and vivifying. The hard force of efficient causality, without the gentle nurture of

formal causality, results in nothing less than a mess of meaningless stuff strewn about.

And that's how it could have been – Big Bang – lots of stuff, done! Like a firework, it would have been impressive, but it wouldn't have lasted long. But sitting here, today we know that's not what happened (at the origin of the universe), and when you suddenly go from no-thing to one-thing, well that's like going from no-thing to every-thing. And when every-thing happens to be an expanding universe, capable of producing and sustaining complex life, it is worth asking a few questions: *everything* is a problem.

We know that the universe isn't just comprised of a mess of physical things. There are other forces at work, forces that impel and draw out a response. Every physical thing is governed by non-physical laws: the laws of thermodynamics, the laws of gravity, there are laws governing chemical interactions etcetera, etcetera. Scientists talk about the invisible laws as though they are real, existing things.

The inconvenient truth behind the universe is a truth that materialists seem reluctant to admit, that behind all the physical *stuff* that makes up the visible world, there's an invisible reality forming and

(Continued on page 9)

in-forming nature. Nobody has actually seen the law of thermodynamics, but it would be hard to explain the origin and the ongoing sustainability of the physical world without appealing to this law.

About a decade ago, the “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse” (the name given to four popular atheists of the 21<sup>st</sup> century), began to vie for the intellectual allegiances of modern people. A lot of people bought into this type of militant atheism whole-hog, and they also bought into the idea that you can’t be a person of faith (superstition) and a person of reason (science) at the same time. It’s a false polemic, and it happens to be nonsense. Nevertheless, the stage was set, and the bar was set even lower; you couldn’t possibly be Christian without being an evolution-denying simpleton.

But, Aquinas’s thought (and Christian theology in general) is hardly inconsistent with science and good evolutionary principles. In many respects, the theory of evolution might uphold a Christian principle: with God, all things are possible. You see, the evolutionary universe is one of limitless possibility! The trajectory of evolution is hardly a straight line from point A to point B; it’s not even random interaction. Evolution is complex, fluid, and inter-dynamic; a web of relationships, forces, counter-forces, interactions that are forming (efficient causes) and in-forming (formal causes) one another. This isn’t the idea of the universe, let alone the idea of a Creator-God that militant atheists attacked. True, we live in a world of complex, diverse, paradoxical, illogical occurrences where terrible things happen to good people and the animals; and yet, none of that abrogates the possibility that *possibility itself* is a transcendent compositional principle of life.

We could be living in a world without possibility, a world of impossibility – that would be the universe of the Big Bang that went poof and fizzed-out, and it would be nothing short of hell. A one-thing world filled with meaningless stuff: nothing to ask, nothing to seek, nothing to find. We could be not-living.

But we *are* living, and we are graced to inhabit a world in which inter-personal communication is possible, in which questions are possible because answers are possible; we inhabit a world in which mystery summons us to deeper recollection; love is real, and so is romance. But so is hate, and so is divorce. Children get cancer, and the good die young. Bad things really do happen to good people, and that doesn’t please me very much at all.

Nevertheless, we have a certain dignity, and with God all things are possible. I am not an unwilling captive in the hell of a meaning-less existence. I am a complex person capable of heroic living, and so are you – even if you have cancer, depression, or low esteem. I can communicate, I can understand, I can imagine, I can query, I can love and be loved, and so can you. I can pray, and often I get an answer to prayer, even if it’s not the answer I want.

Amongst the millions and billions of other things, and other ones (like you) out there in the world, notwithstanding, here I am! Someday – it’s possible – I might get cancer. I might, God forbid, bury my child; I hate the thought of it, but it’s possible. I might live to ninety-three, and my children might live long successful lives; Martha and I might retire early and move to Rome: it’s possible. With God, all things are possible. Which brings us to an irony and a paradox: *Everything* is a problem. ■

## UNIFICATION

 Of spirit and purpose

by Michael Bloss



As we proceed from Advent through to Christmas, we are encouraged to ponder ways in which we, like Our Lady, can prepare ourselves to receive the Gift of God. This indwelling, or Incarnation, is a major theme during Advent.

Musically there has been much written about the (pardon the pun) noteworthy elements of hymn and anthem during this season, but this column takes on a more fundamental stance. Singing is the first and best thing we do as a species (before other presumably well-meaning people tell us we should just sing quietly) to restore our centre.

My airplane reading (when I'm a passenger not a pilot) is *The New Yorker*. The current issue has an article which caught my eye. It had to do with singing as a group but in the most unlikely of contexts – The British Parliament.

On the evening before the stymied British Parliament decided that the best course of action was to dissolve itself, Dame Caroline Spelman, a Conservative M.P. who has represented the Midlands constituency of Meriden for twenty-two years, cast her vote on the Prime Minister's call for an early election, then descended to the Chapel of St Mary Undercroft, for a restorative hour and a half of singing. Spelman is an alto in the Parliament Choir, a cross party choral society that rehearses every Monday night in the ornate, gilded Chapel in the bowels of Westminster. Spelman says that, "coming to the

choir is a source of sanity and serenity."

The Parliamentary Choir is open to anyone who works in Parliament. Singers are drawn from both Houses: its current ranks include a hereditary peer, an M.P. who was Theresa May's de-facto deputy and Sir Bernard Jenkin, a hard-line Brexiteer who is fond of saying that in the choir there are only four parties: sopranos, altos, tenors, and basses. Given a political climate where Parliament is divided between sopranos and basses who persist in singing loudly in different keys, the choir offers a rare opportunity for harmony.

In a remarkable moment, Lord German, the treasurer of the Liberal Democrats and who sings bass, remarked, "In an enterprise where we are designed to work against each other, in tribes, this is a way of us trying to see through and make an understanding for ourselves about how we relate to each other."

It seems to me that choral singing of every kind – including congregational singing which is the singing of the big choir – promotes this unification of spirit and purpose. Whether we sing in the congregation or in a choir, we are drawn together in community to express emotion and soul. When we step into that great circle of sung faith, we experience something great and wonderful – the Rose e'erblooming – which in the words of the Leader of the House, "gets us to somewhere where things will be better." ■

## FINDING THE SACRED

 In the ordinary

by Sue Crowe Connolly



It is the eve of my 64<sup>th</sup> and the Beatles' song *When I'm Sixty-four* is running through my head..." will you still need me, will you still feed me, when I'm sixty-four". Actually, what really touches me is the little things that the singer hopes to continue to share with their love...mend a fuse, knit a sweater, go for a ride, dig weeds, go to a cottage, ordinary, everyday things, including losing some hair, definitely getting older together.

Initially, out of necessity, my husband Gary and I found ourselves embracing a life that is simpler than either of us really thought about. Never had delusions of grandeur, but for a very brief time as a young person found myself bombarded by the advertised "marks of success". Thought I had to have certain things in my life in order to be deemed successful. This includes a home, clothes, friends, the right car and gadgets, and especially a recognized public position or career. Some of these things I do enjoy with gratitude for what they enable me to do for having stable housing, enough food to eat, and adequate clothing to cope with the elements.

Curiously and thankfully God's Spirit led me on quite another journey in learning to be whole and holy...to see the sacredness in ordinary things and life. I'm sitting here on a rare quiet day, the cat asleep beside me on the couch. Just a short time ago she was tearing around sounding like a herd of elephants upstairs...how can one small animal make such a racket!? But she was having the time of her life. Before that we were checking out the backyard, looking at our beautiful "baby" trees that came to live with us this past summer, and pondered if chasing a squirrel was worthwhile...definitely stalking was a noble task. She reminds me about living in the moment.

And I'm thinking about people I've come to know, some have become friends, some mentors – both intentional and by happenstance of coming together – grateful for all of them. They have taught me about being a caring community with each other, to share our gifts together, to be there for one another, to listen, laugh, sing, dance, speak, cry, celebrate, mourn...life, the only "thing" that really matters. The only thing God deems important...living, breathing creation, of which we are a part, and have taken on the role of stewards. It is a serious, joyous responsibility, and a humble, sacred trust.

I think the one main thing I've learned is to not be afraid – so much of what drives our current world is fear— of want and poverty (quite a natural fear, yet one our chosen socio-political systems perpetuate), of position in the community (as someone who generally flies under the radar, it's actually quite liberating to do so, though one still takes on responsibilities as a part of the community). There is a deep joy in seeing some small seed you've planted, or helped to plant start to grow, especially when you can accept that you will not be around to see its future life). I DO fear FOR the next generations if we don't learn to live more simply, and to care more deeply about each other, the other creatures, and the planet. This, to me, is the message Jesus wants us to "get". Everything else IS just "stuff"... hmmm...think that was in a recent sermon...clearly stayed with me.

We find ourselves profoundly grateful that we have learned and are learning to live more simply – to need and want less, love more, pray lots, laugh often, cry when our hearts are broken, and plant trees... ■

## THE JOURNEY

### Times of change

by John Bradley



Bob Dylan sang, “the times they are a changing”. Others have said that the only thing that is inevitable is change itself. Parish life is always a journey. New faces, new ideas, new programs and saying good-bye as loved ones move on. At CCC our journey is facing significant times of change.

Change can be like a trip to a foreign country. There is planning, anticipation, excitement, frustration, yearning for home and when the trip is over, reflection and memories. Lori-Lyn, Sheila, J., another friend, and I recently spent a week in Rome. J. returned home and the rest of us stayed on for a seven-day Mediterranean cruise. Before the trip there was lots of planning - booking our flights, finding the perfect accommodations, and making dinner, train and attraction reservations. In the days leading up to the trip there was so much anticipation the hours seemed to crawl by. We arrived in Rome tired but ready to explore. There was much to see and enjoy - the Vatican City, ancient Roman ruins, Catacombs, popular tourist traps, out of the way gems, day trips to Orvieto and Florence as well as much wine and delicious food to consume. Then it was time for our cruise with stops to visit Pisa, Lucca, Cannes, Palma de Mallorca, Barcelona, Napoli and the Amalfi coast. There were a few frustrations amongst the many wonders. At the end of the two weeks we were ready to return home to familiar routines and beds. Many photos were taken that will be the basis for reminiscing and conversations in the future. In the CCC parish we learned that our long-term

Dean had decided to retire. After months of planning and anticipation (dread?), the day came when we said our good-byes. Our adventure launched and we were greeted by our Interim Priest Terry on October 1. I would suggest that Terry is our tour guide as we enter unknown territory. Fortunately for us, Terry has led this tour before. We are in good hands. He knows the things we must do on this journey and also knows the challenges that can arise. He is prepared and has the support of Bishop Susan, diocese resource personnel, parish staff, and the parish corporation. Along the way Terry will update us on changes to the itinerary, provide necessary counsel and information to make our journey as comfortable as possible, and challenge us to learn and grow through new experiences. While things are different on a vacation, our days are still similar. Meals, accommodation, etc. are still needed. While we experience some changes, it is still somewhat business as usual during this parish journey.

Every vacation comes with its unexpected “bumps”, wrong turns, misunderstandings, missing information, and disagreements between fellow travellers. As a Corporation, we are committed to manage the bumps on our interim journey by providing timely updates and clarifying misunderstandings should they occur. While it is a new journey for most of us, we are fortunate to have J. as a member of Corporation and a Bishop’s appointee to the parochial (search) committee. J. has

*(Continued at bottom of page 13)*

# HAVE YOU JOINED THE BISHOP'S COMPANY?



**the Bishop's  
Company**

Our Anglican Church is more than an institution. In many ways, it is a family of spiritually minded people. As a family we seek to care for those who require assistance for extraordinary and specific purposes.

The Bishop's Company fund allows us to do just that – care for clergy and lay leaders of our churches in our Diocese who are encountering difficult situations. This fund also allows us to support those engaging in leadership next steps. Specifically, the needs met have included emergency crisis support, relief in the face of extenuating financial hardship, funds for vocational transitions, as well as bursaries and scholarships to support church leaders in retooling for mission and entrepreneurial ministry.

Our Bishop compassionately and strategically responds with the funds provided to meet the needs of our diocesan leaders, lay and ordained. The fund, originally established by Bishop Walter Bagnall over 60 years ago, was created in recognition of a need of a financial support to assist clergy members and their families for extraordinary and specific purposes. **With your support it can continue. Will you join?**

**Benefits of Membership:** By becoming a member of the Bishop's Company, you help members of your diocesan family in need.

Another benefit of membership is invitations to various events. These include an annual Spring Dinner (mark your calendar for May 25, 2020!), and an annual Fall Reception. The dinner features an engaging keynote speaker and both provide an opportunity to renew connections with other members.

**Membership:** An annual individual membership is \$225 or \$425 for a couple, which includes an invitation to the dinner; receptions are an added cost.

The Diocese of Niagara is a Registered Canadian Charity and tax receipts for the donation portion net of the dinner cost are issued annually.

To learn more about membership please contact: Mary Anne Grant, Registrar, The Bishop's Company, 905-527-1316 ext 380, or email [maryanne.grant@niagaraanglican.ca](mailto:maryanne.grant@niagaraanglican.ca)

**To donate directly to the Bishop's Company or any ministry of our Diocese contact:** Gillian Doucet Campbell, MA, CFRE, Director of Stewardship and Development, 905-527-1316 ext. 440, email [gillian.dc@niagaraanglican.ca](mailto:gillian.dc@niagaraanglican.ca) ■

*(Continued from page 12)*

taken this journey before, having served as chair of the parochial committee that selected our last Dean 22 years ago.

Once we have passed through the stages of our journey - development of a parish profile and job description, recruiting of potential candidates, selection and recommendation of a candidate to our

Bishop - we will have learned much. Not only will we learn about the journey, but will learn more about who we are, what we value, and our hopes and dreams for the future of our beloved parish.

One day, in the not too distant future, we will sit around and reminisce about our parish's journey. We will laugh, pour ourselves another glass of wine, and start planning our next adventure. ■

## LEARNING

 From the Biblical Prophets

by Rob Jones



A few months ago, I was asked to teach a one-day course on the biblical prophets. And though I accepted with great enthusiasm, I was almost immediately overwhelmed by the enormity of the task. The goal of the course was to provide a historical perspective on the prophets, to unpack the central features of their message to Israel, and to draw some conclusions about what they might have to teach the contemporary church. To do all that in one afternoon would be no small matter!

Preparing for this course, however, reminded me why I loved reading these ancient writers in the first place, and so I thought I would share a few reflections on the prophets in this edition of *Contact*.

Flipping open the prophetic writings and reading them at random can be a strange and disorienting experience. Some passages contain words of fierce judgment and condemnation, while others contain words of sincere comfort and hope. Understanding what to make of these prophetic pronouncements, both negative and positive, requires that we understand something of the context in which the various prophets spoke.

**Prophetic Speech in Context:** The prophets spoke on either side of the most catastrophic event in Israelite history: the destruction of the Jerusalem temple and the exile of the people to Babylon. To oversimplify just a bit, the prophets who spoke before the fall of Jerusalem were typically addressing a contented and complacent people whose comfortable lifestyles contributed to the ravaging of both the poor and the land.

Take Amos as an example:

*“Woe to you who are complacent in Zion, and to you who feel secure on Mount Samaria... You lie in beds inlaid with ivory and lounge on your couches. You dine on choice lambs and fattened calves... You drink wine by the bowlful and use the finest lotions...” (6:1, 4, 6).*

And what was the cost of this life of complacent contentment? According to the prophets:

*“They covet fields and seize them, and houses and take them. They defraud a man of his home, a fellowman of his inheritance” (Micah 5:2).*

*“Woe to you who add house to house and join field to field till no space is left and you live alone in the land” (Isa 5:8).*

Many of their fellow compatriots would have seen these predatory practices as simply the cost of doing business. If poor farmers lost their land to rich oligarchs, it was a small price to pay for increased economic growth and development. The nation was becoming more and more prosperous and powerful. The poor were just collateral damage.

Needless to say, the prophets saw things differently. The prophets understood the mistreatment of the poor as a fundamental violation of God’s justice and righteousness, and proclaimed that such practices would invite God’s judgment on the entire nation. For the prophet, the nation bore collective guilt because of its mistreatment of its poorest and most vulnerable citizens. The nation even bore collective guilt for its mistreatment of immigrants and migrants, and for its mistreatment of the land. Destruction and exile, according to the prophets,

*(Continued on page 15)*

would thus be visited upon the people.

And yet, condemnation was not the final word. To Israel in exile, the prophets articulated a new, radically different message.

It's hard to overestimate the utter devastation wrought by the exile. Jerusalem was in ruins, the king was a prisoner in Babylon, and the people had been forcibly removed from their homeland. The psalmist captures well the utter despair of the exiled community with these words: *“By the rivers of Babylon—there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows there, we hung up our harps”* (137:1–2).

To this community, the prophets spoke a new word of hope and restoration. According to the prophets, the nation had suffered a kind of death at the hands of its enemies as a result of their penchant for violating the way of justice and righteousness, but they assured the people that Israel worshipped a God of resurrection and life.

As Ezekiel put it: *“This is what the Sovereign LORD says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel...I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land”* (37:12, 14).

When the people could see only death and destruction, God would start afresh: reviving the bones of a broken people, rebuilding the rubble of a broken city.

**Being Prophetic Today:** What might it mean for the church to learn from the prophets, for the church to be a prophetic voice in our context here and now?

The first thing to note is that the prophets had harsh words for the religious leaders of their day for minimizing the extent to which the nation was violating the principles of justice and righteousness. Jeremiah chastised the religious leaders of his day, saying: *“They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. ‘Peace, peace,’ they say, when there is no peace”* (6:14). The prophet thought that such words of premature comfort were

counterproductive, and that such religious leaders failed to grapple with the true depth of the situation. The people had suffered a self-inflicted wound. It was the prophet's task to point out the seriousness of their condition. To pretend everything was alright was a dereliction of duty.

The Jewish theologian, mystic, and activist Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote in his classic work on the prophets: “Prophecy is the voice that God has lent to the silent agony, a voice to the plundered poor, to the profaned riches of the world.” For Heschel, the prophet speaks on behalf of the poor because the prophet speaks on behalf of God and God speaks on behalf of the poor.

What would it look like for the church to be “the voice that God has lent to the silent agony” in our neighbourhoods, our cities, our countries, and our world?

At the very least, a prophetic church would not go around saying “peace, peace” when there is no peace. A prophetic church would bear witness to the cost of our society's contented and comfortable existence: a climate catastrophe, Indigenous communities without clean water, homelessness and housing precarity, poverty and despair. It would see these and other crises not as simply the cost of doing business in a prosperous society, but as violations of God's justice and righteousness. It would not aid and abet the ongoing devastation of God's precious creation and creatures by providing society with a false sense of comfort and peace.

However, a prophetic church would also recognize that our God is a God of hope and of resurrection. It would recognize, with Jeremiah, that the prophetic task is both *“to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow”* and *“to build and to plant”* (1:10). But the hope of the prophet is not a death-denying hope. It is not a hope that attempts to *“dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious”* (Jer 6:14). Rather, prophetic hope is a resurrection hope. It is a hope that acknowledges death, stares it unblinkingly in the face, but recognizes God's intention to bring new life in the midst of it. Death is real, but it won't have the final say.

As the Church, as the community gathered around the baptismal font, we know something about death and resurrection. ■

# December/January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>15</p> <p><i>Advent Three</i></p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 8:30 am</p> <p><i>Choral Eucharist</i> 10:30</p>	<p>16</p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 12:15</p>	<p>17</p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 7:30 am</p> <p><i>Meal Tickets</i> 9:30 -11</p> <p><i>Family Yoga</i> 7 pm (last session until Jan 15)</p>	<p>18</p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 12:15</p> <p><i>Prayer Shawl Knitting</i> 1:30-3:30</p>	<p>19</p> <p><i>Centering Prayer</i> 7:30 am</p> <p><i>Brass Monkeys</i> 9 -11 am</p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 12:15</p> <p><i>Choir Practice</i></p>	<p>20</p> <p><i>Meal Tickets</i> 9:30 -11</p> <p><i>The Litany of Reconciliation</i> Noon</p>	21
<p>22</p> <p><i>Advent 4</i></p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 8:30 am</p> <p><i>Choral Eucharist</i> 10:30</p> <p><i>Christmas Decorating after the 10:30 service</i></p>	<p>23</p> <p><b>Reception Desk Open 10-2</b></p>	<p>24</p> <p><i>Christmas Eve</i></p> <p><b>Reception Desk Open 9-2</b></p> <p><i>Meal Tickets</i> 9:30 -11</p> <p><b>12:15 service withdrawn</b></p> <p><i>Family Eucharist &amp; Crèche Blessing</i> 4:30 pm</p> <p><i>Congregational Carols with Organ</i> 9:30 pm</p> <p><i>Procession &amp; Choral Eucharist</i> 10 pm (incense will be used)</p>	<p>25</p> <p><i>The Birth of Our Lord</i></p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 10 am</p>	<p>26</p> <p><b>Reception Desk open 10-2</b></p>	<p>27</p> <p><b>Reception Desk open 10-2</b></p>	28
<p>29</p> <p><i>Christmas One</i></p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 10:30 (one service only)</p>	<p>30</p> <p><b>Reception Desk open 10-2</b></p>	<p>31</p> <p><b>Reception Desk open 9-2</b></p>	<p><b>Jan 1</b></p> <p><i>The Naming of Jesus</i></p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 10 am</p>	<p>2</p> <p><i>Meal Tickets</i> 9:30 -11</p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 12:15</p> <p><i>Choir Practice</i> 7:30 pm</p>	<p>3</p> <p><i>The Litany of Reconciliation</i> Noon</p>	4
<p>5</p> <p><i>The Epiphany of the Lord</i></p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 8:30 am</p> <p><i>The Feast of the Epiphany with Carols &amp; Lessons</i> 10:30 am</p>	<p>6</p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 12:15</p> <p><i>Team Leaders Meeting</i> 7:30 pm</p>	<p>7</p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 7:30 am</p> <p><i>Meal Tickets</i> 9:30 -11</p>	<p>8</p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 12:15</p> <p><i>Prayer Shawl Knitting</i> 1:30-3:30</p>	<p>9</p> <p><i>Centering Prayer</i> 7:30 am</p> <p><i>Holy Eucharist</i> 12:15</p> <p><i>Choir Practice</i> 7:30 pm</p>	<p>10</p> <p><i>The Litany of Reconciliation</i> Noon</p>	11

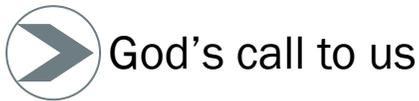
*Cathedral Place Offices will be closed from  
Dec 23 to Jan 1 inclusive.*

# January/February

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
12 <i>The Baptism of Jesus</i>  <i>Holy Eucharist 8:30</i>  <i>Choral Eucharist 10:30 followed by Cathedral Town Hall</i>	13 <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15</i>	15 <i>Holy Eucharist 7:30 am</i>  <i>Meal Tickets 9:30 -11</i>  <i>Family Yoga 7 pm</i>	15 <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15 pm</i>  <i>Prayer Shawl Knitting 1:30-3:30</i>	16 <i>Centering Prayer 7:30 am</i>  <i>Brass Monkeys 9 -11 am</i>  <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15</i>  <i>Choir Practice 7:30 pm</i>	17 <i>The Litany of Reconciliation Noon</i>	18
19 <i>Epiphany Two</i>  <i>Holy Eucharist 8:30 am</i>	20 <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15</i>	21 <i>Holy Eucharist 7:30 am</i>  <i>Meal Tickets 9:30 -11</i>  <i>Family Yoga 7 pm</i>	22 <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15 pm</i>  <i>Prayer Shawl Knitting 1:30-3:30</i>	23 <i>Centering Prayer 7:30 am</i>  <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15</i>  <i>Choir Practice 7:30 pm</i>	24 <i>The Litany of Reconciliation Noon</i>	25
26 <i>Epiphany Three</i>  <i>Holy Eucharist 8:30</i>  <i>Choral Eucharist 10:30</i>	27 <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15</i>	28 <i>Holy Eucharist 7:30 am</i>  <i>Meal Tickets 9:30 -11</i>  <i>Family Yoga 7 pm</i>	29 <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15 pm</i>  <i>Prayer Shawl Knitting 1:30-3:30</i>	30 <i>Centering Prayer 7:30 am</i>  <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15</i>  <i>Choir Practice 7:30 pm</i>	31 <i>The Litany of Reconciliation Noon</i>	<b>Feb 1</b>
2 <i>The Feast of the Presentation</i>  <i>Holy Eucharist 8:30</i>  <i>Choral Eucharist 10:30</i>  <i>Deadline for Vestry reports</i>	3 <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15</i>	4 <i>Holy Eucharist 7:30 am</i>  <i>Meal Tickets 9:30 -11</i>  <i>Family Yoga 7 pm</i>	5 <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15 pm</i>  <i>Prayer Shawl Knitting 1-3</i>	6 <i>Centering Prayer 7:30 am</i>  <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15</i>  <i>Choir Practice 7:30 pm</i>	7 <i>The Litany of Reconciliation Noon</i>	8
9 <i>Epiphany Five</i>  <i>Holy Eucharist 8:30</i>  <i>Choral Eucharist 10:30</i>	10 <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15</i>	11 <i>Holy Eucharist 7:30 am</i>  <i>Meal Tickets 9:30 -11</i>  <i>Family Yoga 7 pm</i>	12 <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15 pm</i>  <i>Prayer Shawl Knitting 1:30-3:30</i>	13 <i>Centering Prayer 7:30 am</i>  <i>Holy Eucharist 12:15</i>  <i>Choir Practice 7:30 pm</i>	14 <i>The Litany of Reconciliation Noon</i>	15

***Vestry will be held on Feb. 16.  
One service only at 9:30.  
Annual vestry to follow.***

## WHO ARE WE?



by **Kerry Lubrick**



December marks the beginning of Advent, the beginning of the new church calendar, a time of waiting, hoping, preparing, and celebrating the birth of Jesus. This is also the month that the Parochial Committee is “formally” meeting to prepare, reflect, and engage on the search for our new Dean of Niagara and Rector of Christ’s Church Cathedral.

Our interim rector, The Reverend Canon Terry DeForest, has been actively participating and learning all aspects of our parish. He has attended two corporation meetings and has been meeting with other committees. He has exhibited curiosity by asking important questions which will assist him in supporting the Parochial Committee.

On December 4th, the members of the parochial committee met with Reverend Canon Terry DeForest to receive an orientation and set out the plan for the next steps in our journey to support and advise the Bishop on the recruitment of the new Dean of Niagara. Membership of the Parochial Committee is as follows:

### **Christ’s Church Cathedral Representatives:**

- Janina Vanderpost, Warden
- John Bradley, Warden
- Kerry Lubrick, Warden
- Rob Jones, Warden
- Wendy Newman, Lay Delegate to Synod
- Jeremy Ludwig, Lay Delegate to Synod

(replacing Kymme Sun)

- Brian Kreps, Alternate Lay Delegate to Synod

### **Diocesan Representatives:**

- The Venerable Suzanne Craven
- The Reverend Canon J Lefebvre
- Peter Rughi
- In addition, The Reverend Canon David Linn has been identified as the Transition Consultant who will work with the Parochial Committee on the Parish Profile development.

We are now starting our self-study and reflecting on the important questions of “Who are we now?” and “How is God calling us in mission?”. Please plan to attend our Christ’s Church Cathedral Town Hall on January 12, 2020 to provide input.

Once the self-study is completed, it will assist in drafting the Parish Profile. This Parish Profile will be shared with you for feedback before it is presented to the Bishop for her approval.

This continues to be a time of hope, anticipation, and new beginnings. Thank you for your continued contribution to this process.

Wishing you the blessings of peace, joy, and hope during this Christmas Season. ■

## LIBBY SIMPSON



A Gift from the Sea and anything chocolate



**1. What is your idea of a perfect day?**

One spent with my family in the outdoors enjoying nature, perhaps a hike through the Dundas Valley.

**2. Why did you choose the Cathedral as your spiritual home?**

So many people and events in my life have taken place at the Cathedral – from my baptism on.

I have found support and guidance from its leaders especially through the loss of family members. My family has a long connection here and as the fourth generation, I feel that connection too. I have happy memories too like watching my niece and nephew riding donkeys at Easter, and time spent at church with my Aunt Jane was always very special.

**3. What is the one thing that you most look forward to at the Cathedral?**

I always look forward to the music at the Cathedral. The sound of the organ is so beautiful; it can be stirring and peaceful. I used to love the Carol service at Christmas as a child and I eagerly anticipate *Once in Royal David's City* to this day.

**4. If you could change one thing at the Cathedral, what would it be?**

A change, there will always be change and as we will be welcoming a new Dean there will be more. I would like to see a more diverse congregation including more youth so there can be hope

for the future of the Cathedral.

**5. Which living person do you most admire?**

A living person I admire is Michelle Obama. Having just read her book *Becoming*, I see her as an inspiration to women of all ages in what she overcame to become a lawyer, the First Lady, an excellent speaker, writer, and all-round human being. It is very hard to pick just one person because I admire my parents, my husband, and many of my friends and family – too numerous to list here.

**6. What would be your desert island pick for a book, a piece of music, and food?**

Book for a desert island, hmmm, how long would I be there? Of course the Bible would be best, but I would like others to talk to about it. One book I have always read over and over especially when I need peace is *A Gift from the Sea* by Anne Morrow Lindberg, but I would need many more books of course depending on the length of my stay! Music: I love the *Planets* by Gustav Holst, *Lark Ascending* by Vaughan Williams, the Abbey Road album by the Beatles, James Taylor's greatest hits and anything by Lorena McKennit. Food: Anything chocolate of course if you please!

**7. Where would your dream vacation spot be?**

Dream vacation sounds like an advertisement for a travel agent or expedia. It is nice to get away, but I think it is the people you are with who make the difference no matter where you are. ■

## INSPIRED



## Motivated and challenged

by Jeremy Ludwig



Among those gathered for two days at the Lincoln Alexander Centre in downtown Hamilton for the 145th Diocesan Synod of Niagara were Wendy Newman and me, Jeremy Ludwig, your lay delegates. It was a busy couple of days, but much was discussed and accomplished, and it provided us with a valuable opportunity to connect with the ongoing work in various parishes around the diocese.

We were treated to some moving presentations which in turn inspired, motivated, and challenged us. The first of these was Bishop Susan's charge to Synod. Reflecting on the account in the Gospel of Matthew of Jesus walking on the water, the Bishop encouraged us to see the turbulent, chaotic times in which we live as also a time of opportunity. As with Peter, Jesus calls us to step out of the boat into the waves, trusting in the faithfulness of the One who reorders the chaos.

In a similar vein, Bishop Bill Cliff, in his Friday address and his homily in the closing worship on Saturday, shared with us some of the lessons he has learned from his challenging work as the Bishop of Brandon. He exhorted us not to give up believing in God's miraculous provision, but to take up in faith the challenges that are before us.

Also of note were a number of presentations on ongoing ministries in the diocese, from work in the Chinese community in Oakville to work with mi-

grant farm workers in the Niagara Peninsula. We were also given an opportunity to view the Primate's Apology for Spiritual Harm delivered in July by Archbishop Fred Hiltz.

A number of significant motions were passed including a motion concerning inclusive marriage in light of the events at General Synod in Vancouver this past summer. The motion expressed solidarity with the LGBTQ2S community and affirmed the practice in this diocese of the solemnization of the marriage of all persons who are duly qualified by civil law. It also affirmed the sentiments of *A Word to the Church* issued by the Council of General Synod including the right of Indigenous spiritual self-determination in this issue and the commitment to preserve communion within this church despite diverse understandings and teachings.

Synod also passed a motion declaring a climate emergency and committing diocesan staff to phasing out the use of single-use plastics for diocesan services, meetings, and events by 2022.

A new canon was approved enabling more flexible structures for Diocesan missions.

Finally, Synod received and affirmed the work of the Mission Action Plan committee which has

*(Continued at bottom of page 21)*

## AT CHRISTMAS

 On the road

by Brian Kreps and Dale Guenter



This year will be our 21st Christmas together, all of them in Hamilton. It always seemed like we might establish our own routines, rituals, and traditions for Christmas as a couple. But looking back, this has never really happened. “Home” at Christmas has been more about returning to one of our families, both very far away. Brian's in Indiana. Dale's in Alberta. Very rarely (maybe twice?) we have spent a Christmas at our own home in Hamilton.

So now, "Christmas on the road" defines our relationship. And possibly the most notorious was sometime in the first few years. We decided to be with both families in the same year. Of course, not for Christmas day, but for a combination of Christmas and New Years. We started with the 4-hour flight to Calgary loaded heavy with skis and gifts. Then an hour drive to Canmore and the bliss of the Rockies. As others arrived in their own ways,

Dale's parents' home gave birth to a warm and festive event. A few short days later, we turned around, got back home, unpacked, did laundry, and then packed up the car for 7 hours of driving to North Manchester Indiana. There a second fun-filled Christmas unfolded with Brian's family. After a stormy drive back to Hamilton, we were a bit bewildered and nearly passed out. We quickly got ready to head back to work the next day.

This memory has stayed with us – a reminder of our abundance of love in family – and of how NOT to do Christmas. Now we alternate year to year. We sometimes envy those who have a Christmas routine, something they can count on, create, anticipate, prepare for. But spending the time with parents, siblings, nieces, and nephew is something we have grown to love. What more could we really wish for? ■

(Continued from page 20)

drafted a new missional mandate for the diocese under the title *Called to Life, Compelled to Love*. If you haven't yet, we encourage you to engage with this important work, especially as we undergo a period of discernment and transition here at the Cathedral. A copy of the presentation can be found

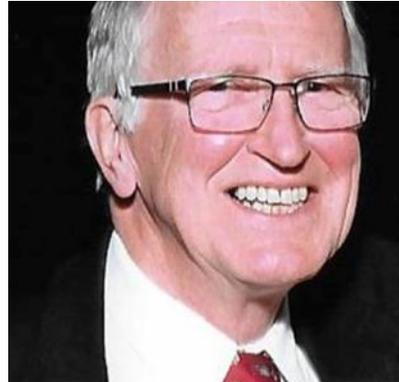
at the diocesan website.

Despite some soreness as a result of two days in auditorium seating, Wendy and I thank you for the privilege of representing the laity of the Cathedral at Synod. If you're interested, we encourage you to explore more of what went on at the 145th Synod on the diocesan website at [niagaraanglican.ca](http://niagaraanglican.ca). ■

## AT CHRISTMAS

### ➤ England & Canary Islands

by Sandy Darling



In the early 1970s I worked in Edmonton and my busy period at work was in the summer, so I used to take winter holidays. My mother was not well and so I returned to England, and one special memory of Christmas Eve was carol-singing in a small maternity home to expectant mothers, and to tiny new-borns and their mothers. This was a fitting activity for celebrating the birth of baby Jesus.



Shortly after Christmas I left for the spring-like weather of the Canary Islands in Las Palmas. Spanish customs for gift-giving are different from

ours, and Epiphany was the time for this. The front at Las Palmas is about two kilometers long and follows the curve of the bay. At the mid-point there was a struggling conifer that was decorated for the occasion. Late in the afternoon there was a parade of kings arriving on camels to bring their gifts. Gifts were exchanged on this day, and so most of those attending the parade of kings were dressed in their new clothes and finery. There was much excitement as family groups walked the length of the parade and stopped to chat with friends. ■

## PWRDF NAMED TOP CHARITY



The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) has been chosen by Maclean's magazine as one of the [100 best Canadian charities for 2020](#). To be considered for the Maclean's list, charities must be listed in the [Charity Intelligence](#) report and have at least \$2 million in annual revenue.

“PWRDF staff work extremely hard with our 35 implementing partners around the world to ensure transparency and financial accountability, and to share results with Anglicans and other donors in a meaningful way. We are grateful to our network of dedicated volunteers who further spread the word,” says Will Postma, executive director of PWRDF. Read more at [pwrdf.org](http://pwrdf.org).

## AT CHRISTMAS



Montebello

by Elizabeth Wensley



What could be better than spending a snowy Christmas Eve afternoon in front of a roaring fire in the largest log cabin in the world, listening to a Québécois fiddler, warm and dozy from the blood sugar crash that follows a generous portion of chocolate fondue and bûche de Noël? In my opinion, not much!

I was very lucky to spend Christmas with extended family at Chateau Montebello, on the Quebec side of the Ottawa River between Ottawa and Montreal. Built in 1930 as the Seignory Club for wealthy businessmen and politicians, the large log building with its six-sided fireplace extending up three floors is now part of the Fairmont Hotels chain. Every year, the resort hotel offers a 3-night Christmas experience that I'll never forget.



The plan to spend Christmas 2002 at Montebello originated with my father-in-law, who suggested it when asked what he and my mother-in-law would like to do to celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary. His idea was met with enthusiasm, and so my in-laws, my husband's sister and her family from North Carolina, my father from Montreal, and my husband and I and our children agreed to forego Christmas gifts to each other and booked and paid

for a 3-night Christmas getaway.

Sadly, my father-in-law was hospitalized with cardiac problems on December 21 and couldn't make the trip. After some negotiation the hotel agreed to refund the cost of my in-laws' stay, but not the rooms the rest of us had booked. So, after assuring ourselves that my father-in-law was recovering and my mother-in-law would be well looked after over Christmas by the clergy and good friends at St. John's, Ancaster, and at their urging, the rest of the family headed for our home province of Québec.

To say that we had a good time would be an understatement. Wonderful food, hiking, cross-country skiing, sleigh rides, ice-fishing, curling, skating, swimming, live music, dancing, and Santa's arrival by dog sled kept us going from early morning to late at night. From my perspective, the best part of the experience was that it was completely stress-free – no worries that year about gift shopping, meal preparation, scheduling, or clean-up, just the chance to be together to enjoy each others' company, to reconnect with our roots as Québécois, and to share that experience with our kids – Christmas memories that we will all always treasure. ■

## AT CHRISTMAS



by J. Lefevbre



I have been away, out of the country, at Christmas the last two years. Both times I went on a Royal Caribbean cruise to the sunny Caribbean. Being on a Caribbean island on Christmas Day is a unique and I would say, a rather odd experience. Last year on Christmas Day, the boat docked at St. Martin on a bright, sunny, and hot day. I spent most of the day at one of their beaches. Not the kind of Christmas experience I was accustomed to back home!

The various islands we visited throughout the trip were obviously decked out for us tourists. At the entrance to each port there was invariably an artificial Christmas tree adorned with Christmas lights, ornaments, and tinsel. And, there were usually a couple of yard figurines strategically placed for us to see – reindeer with Santa being the most popular one. All in sunny, hot weather, so quite amusing to see these when they wouldn't have lasted two seconds in the heat if they were real. The local musicians on each island also played Christmas carols... at the ports and even on some of the beaches. Weird, weird, weird! But, kind of fun and amusing at the same time! We'd be basking in the sun and enjoying the warm waters while being serenaded with Christmas carols!

The cruise line decorated the various common areas of the ship with all things Christmas. A very tall, several story high artificial Christmas tree in the main promenade, complete with twinkling lights and wrapped presents underneath. Wreaths and snowflakes also adorned the walls of the com-

mon areas. And, the restaurants and dining halls were filled with poinsettia plants, more lights, and lots and lots of garland.

On Christmas Eve, during both of my cruises, the captain and the main officers of the ship appeared in the main promenade area, and with the help of a small orchestra, sang Christmas Carols. We were provided with Christmas Carol books to sing along. The place was packed, and it was good to get caught up in the joy of singing Christmas carols together – knowing that we were all so far from our regular observances back home.

On both occasions I also attended the Christmas Eve midnight Eucharist held in the main theatre. The theatre wasn't full by any means but enough of us to make a joyful sound. Well, at least we tried our best! There was only an electric piano for sound, not the thunderous sound of Christ's Church Cathedral's organ.

Turkey with all the fixings was available in the dining room but on Christmas Eve, not Christmas Day. That was the only part that didn't quite fit with routines back home. On Christmas Day, the cruise line provided a gift to all kids 16 and younger, given to them by Santa Clause who, it was announced, had been flown onto the ship via helicopter. I never did really see any helicopter but then, being at sea during Christmas is already quite weird so what was one more tall tale! ■

## AT CHRISTMAS



by John Bradley



In 2014, Lori-Lyn and I decided to spend Christmas and New Years in Scotland with family and friends.



We were fortunate to be able to book into a lovely hotel on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh for four nights over Christmas. Our hotel was situated in the middle of The Mile, halfway between Holyrood Palace and Edinburgh Castle, right across from St. Giles Cathedral.

The highlight for me was midnight mass at Old St. Paul's on Christmas Eve.

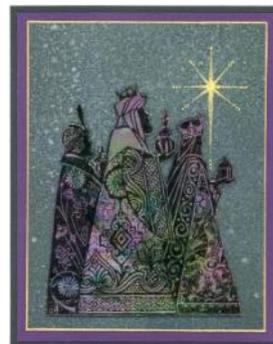
Bishop Ralph had told us one could visit Old St. Paul's and never know the reformation had occurred. He was so correct! Full on smells and bells, over a dozen servers and a wonderful choir of about forty. Going up to the high altar for the Eucharist in the candle lit church was truly a spiritual experience.

When we left the church at nearly 2 am on Christmas morning, we found nearly deserted streets and gently falling snow - another spiritual experience in that magical medieval city! ■

## PASSAGES

Death:  
Isabel Taylor – Nov 15

Baptism:  
Jensen Robert Woodfine – Nov 3



**EPIPHANY**  
**LESSONS & CAROLS**  
With  
**HOLY EUCHARIST**

Sunday, January 5, 2010: 10:30 a.m.

The Cathedral Choir  
under the direction of  
Michael Bloss

## COBBLESTONE STREETS

➤ And a hike with bikes

by Janina Vanderpost



Many of you have learned, either in person or from stories in *Contact*, about the **Camino de Santiago** experiences of some of our parishioners. The camino you most likely have heard about is the most famous one, the Way of St. James, across northern Spain. However, many people aren't aware that there are many, lesser known camino routes throughout Europe, all leading to Santiago de Compostela in Spain.

Santiago de Compostela is the reputed burial site of James the Apostle (James, son of Zebedee and brother of John) who is believed to have preached in Spain. This city became a primary Christian pilgrimage destination after the siege of Jerusalem in 1187. No longer permitted to visit Jerusalem, millions of Christians during the Middle Ages followed the Way of St. James, and other routes across Europe, to the City of Santiago.

Of the various caminos in Europe now becoming popular with today's pilgrims and adventurers are those in Portugal, with routes both through the interior of Portugal and the lesser known Portuguese Coastal Camino. It was this Portuguese Coastal Camino that 20 of us from the Halton Outdoor Club decided to bicycle in September of this year.

Now I don't claim, unlike some of the others with whom I travelled to Portugal, to be an avid cyclist. But the tour company had advertised the cycling as "easy to moderate" and I thought, if I trained hard for a few months I should be OK. And training is indeed what I did for much of the spring and sum-

mer of 2019.

So, with high expectations and some trepidation, we set out in September for Lisbon where we spent a couple of wonderful days exploring the sights of this city. Then it was on to Porto to connect with the cycling company and our guide.

While things went well enough the first day of cycling, on the second day reality hit. We started off through some Portuguese villages with cobblestone streets. One has only to cycle a little while on cobblestones to realize what a jarring experience it is. Then we negotiated some narrower, woodland trails with rocks and tree roots. We walked our bikes over these trails. There followed some steep, dirt-road hills, and most of us walked our bikes up these also. By this time, we were joking that we were on a hike with bikes. Towards the end of this day we reached paved roads, but then we had to ascend one hill after another. In all, we pedalled 55 km with a total elevation gain of about 2100 feet (the equivalent of the very top of the CN tower plus 200 feet).

By the end of that day I was the most physically exhausted I had been in a very long time. My thought was, if things continued in this way, I would have to quit. Fortunately, not all the days were quite as challenging as that one. We cycled by some spectacular scenery, with Atlantic waves crashing on the rocky Portuguese and Spanish coasts. We travelled through picturesque coastal

*(Continued on page 27)*

(Continued from page 26)

villages and along woodland paths, and we enjoyed views of the beautiful countryside, beaches and harbours, churches and monasteries.

Highlights I will remember: We had a wonderful group of encouraging, good-humoured people who kept us all going. Because the Portuguese Coastal Camino is only now becoming a more popular pilgrim route, the local people were very supportive and often waved and called out "bom caminho" as we passed by. In Esposende, a gentleman led us in his car to our hotel, when we were unable to find it. And once, when we had stopped on one of those steep, narrow village streets to catch our breath, a lady came out of her home and gave me three ripe,

juicy plums...I did give two away And the sun shone and the skies were blue all the way.

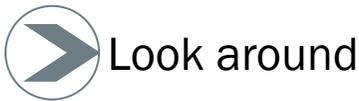
In retrospect, having also walked some 200 km of the St. James Way through Spain in 2017, my conclusion is that caminos should be walked, not cycled. It may have something to do with the pace of travel, and a deeper connection to the villages and countryside one is passing through. Cycling is definitely not contemplative, at least not when the terrain is varied and difficult.

In conclusion, if being a pilgrim should be a challenge, then we underwent a true pilgrim experience. Tough though it was, in retrospect, I'm glad I did it. ■

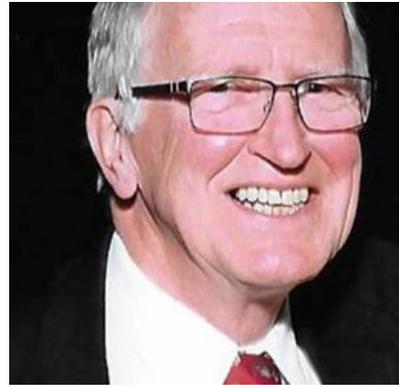


*Photos courtesy of Janina Vanderpost*

## TO CHURCH!



by Sandy Darling



In the Easter edition of *Contact*, I noted that Jeni and I take binoculars with us when we visit large buildings such as cathedrals, castles, and other historic sites. Why don't you bring your binoculars to the cathedral and find details that you have never noticed before? All I ask is that you don't start looking during the sermon or other parts of the service!

A good place to start is at the colourful window in the north-east corner of the chancel. I have heard this described as the "All Saints" window, but this is incorrect as one discovers by using binoculars to read the writing. At the top are two angels robed in red and a lamb; under them appear the words, "Holy, Holy, Holy." The nature of the window is confirmed by the text in the bottom right panel, which reads, "Holy, Holy, Holy. Lord God almighty." This is the "Sanctus" window. If one returns to the top, there are four names and figures that are referred to in the Book of Revelation": a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle. These are the symbols associated with the four gospel writers – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. A careful scrutiny at the bottom left provides the name of the maker, "Rt McCausland Studios Toronto".

When the chancel was extended in 1926, the intention was to have the windows on the north and south sides depict some of the great music of the Anglican liturgy: The Sanctus and Gloria from the Eucharist, and Te Deum and Benedictus from mat-

ins. The Gloria window is on the south side opposite the Sanctus window, but I believe that it would be hard to guess the subject of the window without some clues gained from using binoculars. At the top left appear the Latin words "Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra", and they continue on the right "pax hominibus voluntatis". The English version appears on the bottom right "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of goodwill". The musical intent of the window is supported by small panels at the bottom on each side that show musicians. Just above the musicians, on the right, with careful searching one can find that the makers of the window were "Cowan & Hollister Toronto 1928". I do not know why the music of matins did not make it to the remaining two windows. Perhaps someone had a premonition that the service of matins would fade away at the cathedral!

The window outside the Dean's Vestry or Reading Room is clearly depicting the Annunciation and Nativity scenes, and this is confirmed by words that are not readable with the naked eye. Underneath the white angel at the top of the window appear the words "Hail Mary" spoken by the angel Gabriel. Below this on each side are two musicians and a third figure holding a cross in one hand and a banner in the other. The left-hand banner reads "Behold a virgin shall conceive" and this is continued on the other banner "a son and shall call his

*(Continued on page 29)*

(Continued from page 28)

name Emanuel”. These words from Isaiah relate to both the annunciation scene and to the nativity scene at the bottom.

Sometimes the words at the top of windows give a message rather than explaining the subject of the window. Just west of the “new” font, which is over 125 years old, is a window that I know as the Young Jesus window. At the top is an exhortation to “honour thy father and thy mother” which I read for the first time as I planned this article. In the west window high up, the three people depicted are identified as Fides, Charitas, and Spes – Faith, Charity, and Hope.

In talking about the windows, I have focused on the writing, but you will also find great beauty as you get to look more closely at the artwork of the windows.

These examples taken from selected windows are simply used to demonstrate what you can find if you take time with suitable equipment. There are also details high up that are worth examining. For example, lean back in a chair to examine the plaster bosses in the nave ceiling. Sometimes one is left with unanswered questions, such as “Why do the angels in the chancel at the top of the walls all wear crowns?” Is the answer related to the reasoning behind the adornments on the outside of the windows? At the base of each window outside is the head of a person; those outside the chancel windows have crowns whereas those on the outside of the nave windows do not.

There is much more to explore, so bring your binoculars and look around. ■

## Cathedral Christmas Cards

*(Featuring stained glass windows)*

**\$1.25 each or \$15.00/12**

## Cathedral Gift Tags

*(Featuring stained glass window)*



**.60¢ each or \$5.00/12**

available in the narthex on Sundays or  
by calling 905-527-1316 ext 240.



## Vestry Notice

Please note that our annual vestry meeting will be held on Sunday, February 16<sup>th</sup>. As in previous years, there will only be one service at 9:30 a.m. Annual vestry meeting to follow. We encourage all parishioners to attend.

In preparation for vestry, committee reports are to be submitted by no later than Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please send to:

[alison.meredith@niagaraanglican.ca](mailto:alison.meredith@niagaraanglican.ca)

or deliver to Alison’s mail slot. Thank you.

## REMEMBERING

 A world at war

by Wendy Newman



I am often at the Cathedral for the 7:30 am Tuesday Eucharist. Participants in our regular Tuesday morning Eucharist usually gather near a plaque commemorating the sacrifice of Cathedral men who died in the two world wars of the twentieth century. When I read the stunningly long list of names, I think of a community at prayer during those perilous times. As Advent proceeds, I think of sad and brave Christmases here while the sons and daughters of the Cathedral served overseas.



*Crowd at C.P.R. Depot Watching Hamilton Soldiers leave for the Front, Aug. 22 –1914 (photo: hamiltonpostcards.com)*

Between 1910 and 1914, Hamilton's population grew from some 70,000 to over 100,000 residents. Its booming industries eventually helped to meet the Canadian and British wartime needs for steel, arms, munitions, and textiles, but when war broke out in 1914, the city had yet to emerge from tough economic times.

By Christmas 1914, it was obvious that the “over by Christmas” expectations were a cruel fiction. The

Hamilton Herald's December 19 editorial noted that “with our empire in peril, with half the world at war, with each day claiming its ghastly toll of dead and wounded by the thousand”, Hamiltonians must “stimulate the growth of true Christian charity, without which Christmas is no more than Yuletide.” It further urged big spending by all who could afford it “as a matter of public duty as well as private choice...Generous, even lavish spending at this time is good for the whole community. It puts life into trade, it enables tradesmen to meet their obligations, [and] it provides employment for many who would otherwise be in unprofitable idleness.”

Before the war ended, about 11,000 Hamilton soldiers would serve in uniform and more than 2,000 of them would not return.

Thirty years later, in 1944, Canada was again at war. The tide had turned in this war, at last. Decorative Christmas lights were back, the Pigott Building being a special spectacle of lights. But mid-December was marked by what the Hamilton Spectator called “the storm of the century”. Streets were almost impassable for several days. The last farmers' market day before Christmas was very small indeed, as so many farmers were unable to get into town. During the War, many of the usual choristers were absent due to military service, so great efforts had to be made to maintain the Cathedral's choir at about fifty voices.

The long tradition of beautiful Christmas music continued. ■

## DECEMBER

 Year end approaches

by Corporation



Parishioner giving is behind our 2019 year to date plan but ahead of where we were at this time last year, which is a good sign as we head into December year end.

We expect to finish the year with expenses lower than plan although some of the expense savings shown here will narrow in December. While our lower expenses will help us budget wise, we are hopeful that there will be an extra push in December giving wise so that we may end the year on a positive note. ■

Income	30-Nov-19	2019 Budget	Variance	2018 Actual
Parishioner Givings	\$263,564	\$276,562	-\$12,998	\$261,454
Other Income*	\$14,965	\$16,635	-\$1,670	\$13,360
Open Collection	\$5,061	\$6,600	-\$1,539	\$5,555
Misc Income	\$4,702	\$4,600	\$102	\$4,451
Fund Income	\$131,135	\$131,135	0	\$153,750
Special Offerings	\$17,050	\$16,500	\$550	\$18,983
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$436,477</b>	<b>\$452,032</b>	<b>-\$15,555</b>	<b>\$457,553</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Staffing	\$270,396	\$280,439	-\$10,043	\$266,876
Diocesan Assessment	\$38,658	\$38,658	\$0	\$38,658
Property	\$58,936	\$60,684	-\$1,748	\$61,158
Admin and Programs	\$69,886	\$84,106	-\$14,220	\$100,536
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$437,876</b>	<b>\$463,887</b>	<b>-\$26,011</b>	<b>\$467,228</b>
<b>Net Income (Deficit)</b>	<b>-\$1,399</b>	<b>-\$11,855</b>	<b>\$10,456</b>	<b>-\$9,675</b>

\*Other Income includes Choral Scholarships, Dean's Discretionary, Memorial Flowers and Festivals and Outreach.

In 2018 both our fund income and our admin and program expenses were higher than usual due to the maintenance and cleaning of the swell chest of the organ.

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