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Bishop's Charge to Synod

Read the text of the 149th Charge to the Synod of the Diocese of Niagara.

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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

DECEMBER 2023

# Pray Together Maranatha

## Bishop Susan's Advent Message

PEOPLE, LOOK EAST. THE TIME IS NEAR OF THE CROWNING OF THE YEAR.

MAKE YOUR HOUSE FAIR AS YOU ARE ABLE, TRIM THE HEARTH AND SET THE TABLE.

PEOPLE, LOOK EAST AND SING TODAY: LOVE, THE GUEST, IS ON THE WAY.

In this lovely, old carol sung at Advent, faithful people are told to look with expectation to the east and prepare themselves to welcome Love—the Christ.

Well, we have certainly been looking east for months: east to Ukraine, east to Afghanistan, and of course, east to the land of the Holy One. However, it has had a distinctly unholy look to it in recent times.

And yet, that is from where our Saviour comes. That should

tell us something about Jesus.

We have read and wept as the violence has unfolded over all the news outlets this past year. We have donated sacrificially and prayed unceasingly for peace.

And yet—and yet—the fighting and the pain continues unabated.

It may seem hard to prepare to celebrate the birth of the Christ in the midst of this turmoil. But it is what people of

peace have done for millennia, in good times and in bad. Despite what might seem the idealized words of the carols we sing at this time of year, Christ enters into this world as it is, with its wars, chaos, and death. Jesus comes to love this world fiercely and in defiance of the powers of death.

It was the great Martin Luther King, Jr who said that: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that.

Hate cannot drive out hate: only Love can do that."

And I think we need to remember that. I think it helps—that Jesus came to this imperfect, hot mess of a world. He didn't arrive in some perfect world. God chose this world to send God's only son into—so that Jesus could show us what God's love looks and feels like, and how it can transform this world through us. The One for whom we prepare, the One

whom we expect is Emmanuel—God with us.

I think it helps to remember that as we pass through this time of preparation and expectation, that God chose you and me and the rest of this imperfect, difficult world to love.

May God bless you and keep you as we pray together Maranatha,

Come Lord Jesus, Come!

*Susan Niagara*



Photo: Unsplash/Simon Godfrey

## Stewarding God's Gifts for Mission

### 149th Synod of the Diocese of Niagara

Over 200 people gathered together for the 149th Synod of the Diocese of Niagara with the theme "Stewarding God's Gifts for Mission."

The Synod of the Diocese of Niagara is an annual meeting in which elected parish repre-

sentatives, along with licensed clergy and other delegates and appointees, discern the Spirit's leading for the mission of the diocese, which normally includes financial updates, changes to canons and policies, and a number of governance matters. This year, Synod was convened online via Zoom on Saturday, November 4.

At the outset of Synod, Bishop Susan

Bell delivered her charge to Synod, which centered on the Parable of the Talents found in Matthew 25:14–30 and highlighted the many ways the diocese and its parishes are stewarding God's gifts for mission. Bishop Bell encouraged members of synod to remember that God has trusted those

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# Stewarding God's Gifts for Mission

## Highlights of the 149th Synod

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in the Diocese of Niagara with much, and that "God calls us to engage in the risk of faith; to become more and more like Christ and to live into the health and diversity of the mixed ecology—mission and tradition—the new and ancient Church."

The bishop announced that the diocesan Mission Action Plan would be renewed in the coming year. Members of synod had an opportunity to engage with the current plan and explore what was on their hearts for the mission of the diocese in the coming years. Bishop Bell also highlighted the relief efforts underway in Ukraine and the Holy Land through The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, and the almost 500 people resettled in communities throughout the diocese in the past decade through refugee sponsorship. Galvanized by the increasing climate breakdown, Bishop Bell noted that Climate Justice Niagara is engaging with one of the Lambeth Calls to join the Communion Forest movement, tangibly living out the baptismal covenant.

The bishop drew her charge to a conclusion with words of encouragement to continue to dream big and live into the Mission Action Plan process. "God is calling us to a bigger vision than we could ever imagine on our own. Remember that without risk there is no growth. With a vision, the people flourish"

Bishop Bell, in concert with Dean Tim Dobbin, announced the appointment of Pam Guyatt and Nirmal Mendis as honorary canons of Christ's Church Cathedral. The bishop also recognized the recipients of several prestigious awards: Canon Donna Bomberry, who received the Anglican Award of Merit; Archbishop Colin Johnson, who received the Cross of St. Augustine for Services to the Anglican Communion; and Dr. John Bowen, who received the Alphege Award for Evangelism and Witness from the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Synod members heard from Canon Terry Charters, who shared stories about the missional focus of the Bishop's Advisory Committee for Property Renewal, which seeks to help the diocese steward its many and

varied properties for the next season of the Church's ministry. Canon Charters highlighted the recently completed condo development which supports All Saints Mission, the development plans for the former Grace Church, St. Catharines property, as well as the use of the former St. Peter's church by St. Matthew's House in Hamilton.

Canon Drew MacDonald spoke about the feasibility study that is underway regarding a potential parish-focused campaign, highlighting the desire of diocesan leaders to hear from as many people as possible about where they see the Holy Spirit leading the diocese.

The 2024 diocesan budget was presented by Archdeacon Peter Scott, Dean Tim Dobbin, and Treasurer Kemi Okwelum. They highlighted how through the budget and Diocesan Mission & Ministry contributions, we can do more together and that each parish of our diocese is participating in missional work, locally, regionally, nationally, and globally. The treasurer noted that while revenues will decline in 2024, expenditures are more or less flat. Due to draws on the gains on investments as well as a repayment of a mortgage, the diocese is projected to have an overall operating surplus.

"This budget represents the Diocese of Niagara's compelling witness of love and demonstrates there is a growing energy and enthusiasm within parishes for leaning more deeply into Jesus-shaped living and discipleship that moves us all closer to inhabiting God's reign," said Archdeacon Peter Scott, chair of the budget committee. Members overwhelmingly passed the 2024 diocesan budget, representing an investment of 3.7 million dollars in ministry.

Synod members also heard presentations about God's flourishing mission in a variety of contexts. Synod delegates heard from Canon Ian Mobsby, community missionary, and Emily Hill, parish development missionary, about their missional work across the diocese, both with parishes as well as with the de- and un-churched.

Irene Pang and Dierdre Pike spoke about The Communion

Forest initiative, which was described by Archbishop Justin Welby as "a symbol and an act of hope." They recognized that many parishes are already engaged in actions to steward and safeguard God's creation and encouraged parishes to get involved in the Communion Forest, with support from Climate Justice Niagara.

Toward the end of Synod, Chancellor Greg Tweney spoke about a proposed canon change which regularizes the process for Synod membership for clergy and lay representatives of joint Anglican-Lutheran congregations. The change was approved, a significant step in the diocese's living out of this full communion relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

Synod elected the following people as regional representatives to Synod Council, for a two-year term: Jody Szoke (Brock), Thomas Littlewood (Greater-Wellington), Susan Little (Hamilton-Haldimand), Rob Towler (Lincoln), and Amy Collard (Trafalgar). Winston Tinglin was also elected to serve Trafalgar for a one-year term, returning the region to its normal election pattern.

Delegates were also elected for Provincial Synod, which will be hosted by the Diocese of Algoma in the fall of 2024. In the Order of Clergy, Terry Holub, Bill Mous, Sheila Plant, and Rob Towler were elected. In the Order of Laity, Janice Whiteley, Amy Collard, Jodey Porter, and Susan Little were elected. A youth member will be appointed by the bishop at a later date.

After giving her assent to the actions of the Synod, Bishop Bell gave thanks to all who contributed to making it a Spirit-filled gathering, especially members of synod, before concluding the Synod with worship and a blessing.

Read the  
Bishop's  
Charge on  
Page 6.



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# Feasibility Study Nearly Complete

## Online survey available through December 6

A few days remain for parishioners to participate in a feasibility study for a potential major-gift campaign. The online survey can be accessed at [niagaraanglican.ca/survey](http://niagaraanglican.ca/survey) until December 6.

"We're so grateful to all those who have participated in the study," Canon Drew MacDonald, diocesan stewardship and campaign adviser. "Whether through a personal interview, a town hall, a paper survey or an online one, the feedback will be so important as the diocese weighs whether, when, and how to proceed with a campaign."

The Steier Group, a church development and fundraising firm, is conducting the study of the proposed \$20 million campaign. The firm's report will be presented to Bishop Susan Bell in mid-December, and diocesan leaders will share the results with the Synod Council

in January prior to making a decision on next steps.

The proposed campaign is centered on building up the parishes and missions of the diocese which would see 65 per cent of the money raised going back to parishes to support Mission Action Plan (MAP) projects. Another significant element would support the development of new leaders for the Church.

The campaign would also provide major gifts to support healing and reconciliation work through the Anglican Church of Canada's Healing Fund and/or the emerging Indigenous Anglican Church in Canada, as well as provide one-time gifts to support the outreach ministry of St. Matthew's House, Canterbury Hills, and the heritage upkeep of Christ's Church Cathedral.



# Our Lenten Mission PWRDF Program 2023

**BRYAN SCHOFIELD**

St. Paul's is a smaller Anglican Church in the Westdale neighbourhood of Hamilton. We have a half-time rector, Archdeacon Terry DeForest, and a very active congregation with a rich history of mission and outreach ministries. In 2020, St. Paul's participated in a Primate's World Relief and Development Fund project to raise funds to purchase a water well in Kenya. Section seven of our Mission Action Plan sets out our goal to continue to work on our present community service projects as well as explore and identify new social issues and justice concerns.

Two parishioners were the "steering committee" on our 2023 Lenten Mission PWRDF



St. Paul's Westdale raised funds for PWRDF to support four farms. Photo: [pwrdf.org](http://pwrdf.org)

Project with the able assistance of three other parishioners and our office administrator. As Lent approached, we reviewed the information we had received from the PWRDF. After examining the many possibilities in the PWRDF literature, we chose to work on the "Buy the Whole Farm" initiative. This was not an easy decision for St. Paul's

this year because we are in the midst of a financial campaign to pay for the replacement of our malfunctioning boiler. Because of the latter, we took our plan to both Parish Council and Vestry stressing the concept that a church in spite of its financial challenges must still look outside of itself and help others. Both Parish Council and Vestry

gave us unanimous and enthusiastic support.

Our next step was to contact the PWRDF office in Toronto for potential resources. They provided advertising materials plus appropriate stickers that we could use to create special envelopes for donations. A congregational letter was prepared and sent out to all parishioners and it also included the donation envelope. St. Paul's has a weekly information e-mail that is sent out every Friday. The "Buy the Whole Farm" project, would fund seven works in six different countries. A small information piece about a certain country and project became part of each weekly e-blast during Lent. We also placed PWRDF posters about "Buy the Whole Farm" on each of the many bulletin

boards in our church. A diorama of plastic farms animals and an appropriate background was created on our narthex table.

Our parishioners responded with outstanding support to our efforts. As the appeal came to a close, one of our parishioners raffled off three knitted blankets and the funds received topped up the financial donations made by parish members. Our goal at the beginning of Lent was to try to "buy" one farm. By the end of Lent, the funds that we received for this project supported the purchase of four farms. Such funds will provide invaluable resources to 28 farming projects in six different countries.

We thank God for blessings received!

## NIAGARA ANGLICAN

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# Diocese of Niagara Joins the Communion Forest

DEIRDRE PIKE

When Bishop Susan Bell returned home from the Lambeth conference last year, she was energized to act on many fronts. On the climate justice front, the Communion Forest initiative was central.

The Communion Forest is described as a “global initiative comprising local activities of forest protection, tree growing, and eco-system restoration undertaken by provinces, dioceses, and individual churches across the Anglican Communion to safeguard creation.”

The Lambeth Call to Environment and Sustainable Development identifies the Communion Forest as a response to “the triple environmental crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution as an existential threat to millions of people and species of plants and animals across the globe.”

“It is a way we can globally work together to combat climate change,” said Bishop Susan, as she charged Climate Justice Niagara (CJN) with leading the way on the Communion Forest (CF) for the diocese. Two members of CJN made a brief presentation at the Spring



Clergy Conference, seeking a show of interest in the idea. The results were overwhelmingly positive.

The key components of the Communion Forest are:

- **Protection** – advocating and taking action to stop deforestation or prevent the destruction of other habitats.
- **Restoration** – restoring a piece of waste land or another degraded environment.
- **Creation** – starting a forest initiative on church land or support a project in the wider community
- **Growing** – protection and restoration should be considered ahead of setting up something new. Where something new is set up, the emphasis should be on growing, not just planting. It is about growing the right kind of tree in the right

place

- **Multiplying** – helping others get involved. Churches or dioceses can be a ‘multiplier’ by setting up a tree or plant nursery to enable wider participation in afforestation
- As King Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes, “There is a time for planting and a time to pluck up what is planted.”

Extending the scripture parallel, CJN would add, “There is a time for preparing to plant and that preparation time is now.”

Preparation such as training on the execution of tree inventories must happen in advance of Spring 2024, just four months away. The CF initiative recently picked up momentum when approval for a Niagara College student from the Environmental Management and Assessment program was received. The internship will run part-time for 13 weeks starting in January.

The student came out of a conversation between CJN and Green Venture in Hamilton, about conducting tree inventories on parish properties to assess for “planting and plucking.” (“Plucking” would be part of the restoration aspect.)

Through that relationship, there has also been an application put forward to the Anglican

Foundation with the hopes of sourcing funds to spread the inventory process, providing tree kits for planting, and supporting restoration efforts in as many locations as possible.

There are many ways for parishes to contribute their planting and plucking efforts to the diocesan-wide effort of the Communion Forest. Your parish might have space available for planting or there might be an area in need of restoration, or maybe you have volunteers that would like to assist in the inventory process.

As Bishop Susan directed in her charge, “Where can we make a truly significant contribution for our children and our grandchildren and fulfil our baptismal

views? It is in acting together—corporately—in speaking our values and beliefs in the work we have been entrusted with to safeguard creation.”

If you have any interest or many questions about this global and local initiative, please contact one of the CJN Communion Forest members:

Bruce Mackenzie, [brucemackenzie2@gmail.com](mailto:brucemackenzie2@gmail.com) (St. George’s, Guelph)

Fran Wallace, [rector@saintaidans.ca](mailto:rector@saintaidans.ca); (St. Aidan’s Oakville) or Deirdre Pike, [deirdre.pike@niagaraanglican.ca](mailto:deirdre.pike@niagaraanglican.ca)

*Deirdre Pike is the Justice and Outreach Program Consultant for the Diocese of Niagara.*



Forest planting at St. George’s, Georgetown.

Photo: Contributed by St. George’s Church

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# Love Came Down at Christmas

**THE REVEREND DEACONS  
ROD MCDOWELL AND  
SHEILA PLANT**

Miracles do happen, and that is indeed what happened in Welland on Christmas Day, 2022. Welland once had many large industrial plants, was the seat of county government, and home to the Welland canal. Change came in the 1970's. The large factories closed, unemployment soared, and a new bypass of the canal was built, creating a divided city. On the east side of the canal sat Holy Trinity Anglican Church, struggling on the "poor side" of the city.

A large grant & bequest came to the parish and an industrial kitchen was built. The kitchen was used to expand the outreach programs with a hot meal for the community called "Soul Food." The kitchen enabled many missional programs and has become the centre of a daily breakfast program co-ordinated by Jim Butts and a host of leaders and volunteers. Every morning, 70-80 people are fed.

Parish Deacon Mark McGill has coordinated the Harvest Kitchen meal program in Welland, and the kitchen at Holy Trinity has increasingly become a home base for these meals.

Different churches share the schedule of providing a nightly meal to those most in need in Welland.

In the Gospel of Matthew we read "for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me." The community of Holy Trinity lived out that gospel every day.

Jim Butts is the co-ordinator of the Christmas dinner and with his army of volunteers they prepared 431 turkey dinners to be delivered to those in their community who struggle. Anyone who needed a meal could call and register and be guaranteed of a meal for Christmas Day. On Dec. 24, after the breakfast program ended, preparations intensified. The turkeys were cooked and early Christmas morning the volunteers rolled into the church. After a 9:30 Eucharist, meal preparations began in earnest.

The meal included turkey, potatoes, stuffing, sweet potato casserole, gravy, vegetables, and a bag of cookies. All these meals were delivered safely and on time, which was no mean feat given the fact that the city was under blizzard warnings, high winds, cold, and lots of snow.

Thanks be to God and all the volunteers who braved the elements to complete their task.

These volunteers gave up their Christmas Day with family or friends to cook, sort, organize, prepare, and deliver meals. I think if we were to ask all the volunteers what their favourite Christmas gift was, it would have been unanimous. The greatest gift of all? To ensure no one went hungry. Not only was there a meal, but there were hats, and warm socks.

A miracle of love, spreading the light of Christ, happened in Welland on Christmas Day last year. Reverend Deacon Mark McGill, shared this good news with the deacons of Niagara and Western New York on Boxing Day. It was too heartwarming a story not to share with everyone, so we have spoken on behalf of Mark and the amazing people at Holy Trinity. Let us pray in thanksgiving for those who spread the light of Christ.



Photo: Unsplash/Alison Marras



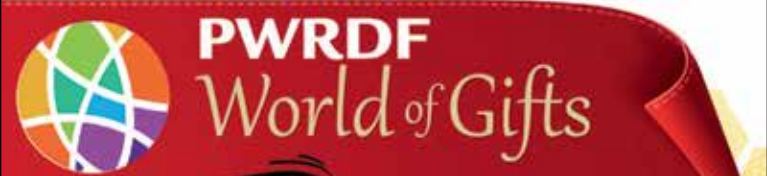
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# Bishop Bell delivers Charge to Synod

THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF BISHOP SUSAN BELL'S CHARGE TO THE 149TH SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE.

I speak to you in the name of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Now I'll bet that at least some of you are wondering about the Gospel this morning—why did the bishop choose that one? Good question. The tricky bit at the end probably needs explaining. We'll get there. But I have to say that this parable really chose me—I didn't really choose it. A little while ago in conversation with our eldest son, who was kindly inquiring what the theme was this year for Synod, I mentioned that I needed to think about a Gospel passage that spoke about stewarding God's gifts. And he replied, what about the parable of the talents? And then he said it was his favourite one. I asked him why—and he said, "because it's Jesus showing us how to live isn't it?"

Well, when your 25-year-old son says something like that, you kind of sit up and take notice, don't you? He's a man of few words, being a deep thinker. So I went away to think, pray, and study about that comment. And you know what, it turns out that he's right.

Now I have to say, parables are such strange things aren't they? They're never straightforward. Jesus uses them in the Gospels to disrupt our thought patterns and to try and almost shock us into thinking in kingdom ways—not the ways of the world. But this parable, well, this one has scholars confused. It's often called a wisdom parable rather than a kingdom parable because it doesn't sit easily with the rest. And I get that: it doesn't begin "the kingdom of God is like ..." But come with me for a bit and I think we can understand this parable in a way that helps us live.

Okay, so Jesus offers us a rich image today—literally. We hear about the example of the master taking off and leaving three servants in charge, we hear that he leaves them with more wealth to tend to than you and I can probably imagine. The talents spoken of here in fact, piles of gold coins. Bushel baskets full, in fact. To my understanding, one talent of gold coins weighed between fifty and seventy-five pounds. So even the 'least' of the servants received enough that he may have been challenged to

carry it all on his own. As Jesus tells the story now, we hear that these piles of gold were left with each one of them to tend and manage and grow. And of course, we know—as must Jesus' audience have known, that there is no growing without risk.

There is simply no growing without risk.

And yet, I completely get the third servant in our parable today. Perhaps you do, too. I mean, many of us have seen what can happen when resources are invested in ways that are too risky. At least by burying the money, he didn't lose it, right? At the same time, we can't help but recognize that his existence is small and timid and not what God would intend for us at all. That is not what God intends for us.

Jesus tells this story to his disciples in order to prepare them for the days ahead when their faith will be tested. This parable shows how the disciples are to demonstrate their faithfulness as they anticipate the return of the Lord.

What does faithfulness look like while they wait? In Matthew's Gospel, faithfulness is becoming more and more like Jesus—in doing the ministry of Jesus. Jesus came to announce the arrival of God's kingdom by feeding the hungry, curing the sick, blessing the meek, and serving the least.

And all who would follow him are to do the same: to preach the good news of the kingdom to the whole world by going about the work that the master has called them to do: visiting the sick and imprisoned, clothing the naked, welcoming the stranger, and feeding the hungry. And those who are found faithful—those who have made more out of what they have been given—will hear their Master say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

I think we can see ourselves in this parable. Like these three servants, God has richly blessed us in a thousand ways. In reality, our bushel baskets are so full we can't lift them on our own. We live in the first world—and even if we think we're strapped, compared to the rest of the world, we are unimaginably rich. God has given us all of it and

asks only that we use it, spend it, invest it, and grow it. God has given it all to us and asks only that we love and trust God enough not to sit on it, hide it, or bury it.

One last thing. At first glance, it seems awfully harsh to me that the third servant was punished so severely. However, don't you think that even before his sentence was pronounced that he was already there? Already in

## There is simply no growing without risk.

that dark place—put there not by the master, not by God, but by his own fear and poverty of vision? What do you think?

Okay, so let's talk about the first two guys. Because I want to put the emphasis on hope and hard work, on trust and expectation, on care and responsibility. I think we can speak with some certainty about all of these things because they have been our lived and grounded experience this year. We have spent the past year stewarding God's gifts for mission. And we have indeed been stewarding ...

I think the meaning of the

word stewardship is perhaps a little different than the one we usually work with; and that's worth noting. If we take our parable, for instance, it is clearly the expectation of the man—from whom those resources have been given—that the servants act in place of, be proxy for, serve, and do business for him.

Let's also sit with the word talent that's used in the parable. The man gives all the servants talents. Of course, in the ancient Near East this word simply meant money. But in our context, and in our language it means something different: it means capability, capacity, and know-how.

So how have we, using our capability, capacity and know-how, served God and God's interests—namely the Gospel this year?

So, given those are God's interests—and, if we imagine ourselves like the servants in this parable—because it's always good to see ourselves in scripture: how have we used what we've been given in all those areas to increase the amount of love in our parishes, and in our diocese, and in our world? Are we living into the bold vision of the multiplication of all that we've been given?



Well, we continue to respond to the world around us, as leaders in refugee sponsorship. Did you know that we have collectively helped almost 500 people—mothers, fathers, children, grandparents—be resettled to our communities in the last decade?

In the midst of new wars, in Ukraine and now the Holy Land, we are generously responding to appeals for donations to support relief efforts through The Primate's World Relief & Development Fund and its partners. And we are fervently and unceasingly praying for peace and end to the brutality of these wars.

We're also galvanizing to address the climate breakdown, Climate Justice Niagara, in addition to its zero-emission church commitments, is engaging with one of the Lambeth Calls to join the Communion Forest movement. This is a tangible

*Continued Page 7*



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# Bishop Bell's Charge to Synod

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

way for us to live our baptismal covenant and care for God's creation.

Leaning into our commitment to truth and reconciliation, and responding to the housing crisis, we've partnered with St. Matthew's House to provide deeply affordable housing for Indigenous and Black seniors. The 412 Barton project is both innovative, compassionate, and just.

Our progress in anti-racism training continues—we are excited that this important training is now in its pilot phase, training the trainers so to speak. This initiative will help us change the way we see our siblings in Christ and be a more inclusive Church.

Speaking of loving our neighbour, the ministry among migrant farmworkers on the peninsula is thriving. Thanks to our missionaries: Cela and Antonio Illas and to all those at St. Alban's and St. John's, Jordan for all their support of those who help put the food on our tables while they toil in difficult circumstances, far from home and community. We are also engaging with other Christian partners to widen the sphere of support we provide to these hidden workers, including our insurer Ecclesiastical, which has invested in this ministry to the tune of \$50,000.

Mission in Acts in Oakville—let me tell you about this ministry. We know that mainland, secular Mandarin speakers come from a culture of religious oppression in China. But many are told to look for a cross on a building when they arrive in Canada—because Christians will help. And so Garfield Wu and the many servants whom God has raised up for this ministry of welcome and integration hold open their arms and greet those whom Christ has brought to our doors.

The All Saints Mission: Canon Mike Deed is the priest-missioner at All Saints. We opened a new church this year folks! The first one for over 20 years, and I hope and pray it will not be another twenty years before the next. This mission is learning to love and to connect with its neighbourhood in new ways.

And we have a couple of people—Susie Kim and Rob Miller—whose unique skills have marked them out to begin new Christian communities. It is

a very difficult task, but they're doing good work on our behalf.

This is what we've made of some of the talents we've been given. There's lots more—lots more, but I'll stop there. You get the picture. No burying the talents around here. We're taking the risk of faith together.

Now some may think that if we could just do what we have been doing only better, working harder, adding more and more programmes that we'll beat this decline we've been experiencing

## Working on deepening our faith is foundational to our sustainability and growth as a Church.

as a Church—across the whole of the Western Hemisphere. I have to tell you that this is another version of burying our talent.

You and I know that we can't keep doing that. You and I know that. We can't keep doing more as if things haven't changed. That's not where we're being called in this new age.

We have to do differently. As parishes, as a diocese, and as a Church.

The path to life abundant does not lie in manyness and muchness. It lies in depth. In the depth of our faith; in the depth of our relationships with each other; and in the depth of our relationships with the world. And of course, they're all connected.

The more we learn of God's love for us, the more that changes our hearts and helps us to love each other; the more we learn about loving each other helps us to love those outside our walls. And the more we love those outside our walls the more we change our world. And our world needs changing—by God it needs changing, for the better.

And it all starts in getting to know Jesus better—this is the foundation: We're building the habit of faith through Revive, Alpha, Cursillo, Christian Foundations, Bible study, and more Bible study. I can't tell you how many times I have been engaged in conversations with folks about the transformative power of studying the scriptures together; how the ability to ask questions and search for meaning together deepens faith and changes community. Working on

deepening our faith is foundational to our sustainability and growth as a Church. Because you gotta know Jesus in order to become like him and do his ministry. And we're not trying to be anything else but the gathered community of Jesus followers. It's in this way—spending time with fellow Christians talking about what really matters—getting to know Jesus better—that we take five talents and make 10.

So, carry on. And if you're to do more of anything, do more

of this. Ask for more of this in your parish communities. Lead more of this yourselves. This is an investment of the greatest value.

With that foundation, we build on it.

And we're doing just that being faithful, through breakfast programs, mental health initiatives, clothing stores, community hubs, and more. We're building a mixed ecology model for our Church—you'll hear that term increasingly—where we build faith and then work to change the world with God's love; a Church that equips the saints for mission in the world. We are becoming a mixed ecology church—all that means is that we are working at both traditional-attractional and missional forms of church. That's healthy, diversified, faithful ministry and it's the model that, although it might have felt risky in the beginning, is starting to become our new normal. And that's exciting.

It's simple but it's also so powerful. And you're doing it.

We can all do it. In ways that fit us. It takes just two or three people of peace to share the love of God in works of love and words of mercy. Two or three. Seriously. Two or three.

Ordinary parishes are recovering and leaning into the future with sure and certain hope and a cautious optimism. I have been so humbled by what is happening and by the trust that leaders are choosing to embrace in these times, places like St. James Fergus, St. Paul's Dunnville, St. John's Elora, our beautiful Cathedral,

St. George's Georgetown, St. Paul's Caledonia, Christ Church Woodburn, The Church of Our Saviour The Redeemer, Stoney Creek. This is just a cross-section—there are so many others who are also facing forward with the godly expectation that if they use what God has given them for good and for love, that love will be multiplied.

And for that reason, I have faith in the future that we'll have faith in the future. You know, a lot of nonsense gets talked about the church being done. Don't you believe it Niagara, don't you believe it one bit.

Yes, we are changing; we are learning what it is to be a Church that puts God's mission at the centre of all that we do; again and again we are being called to life and compelled to love in new ways that are surprising us—delighting us—fulfilling us; we are learning how to engage with our culture again; we are learning how to be the face and hands of Christ in community again. Just the other day, I was sent pictures of the Kenyan asylum seekers finding food and warmth at All Saints as the churches in Hamilton collaborate overnight to urgently feed and clothe a vulnerable group of people.

The MAP process has helped us with all of us, revitalizing and surfacing our vision, while helping us to better understand why we're here as a Church and what we're supposed to be doing about that both now and in the near future.

When you look at the diocesan MAP and what we've accomplished through God's grace, its astonishing. Over the coming year, we'll be working on refreshing our MAP through a process that will help us discern in a way that is even bigger and bolder by the leading of the Spirit. We're on the move again. And if you've done the MAP and you're ready to take a little godlier risk to increase your vision for the present and future, a MAP 2.0 process is available for your parish too.

See, what I know for sure is that as Proverbs 29:18 says, "without a vision, the people perish" but the opposite is true too: "with a vision the people flourish!"

With a vision, we're confident in the fact that we have a future! And that's why we're doing the campaign feasibility study.

Now look. We're living in hard times. It's a risk. But it's

Continued Page 8



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# Bishop Bell's Charge to Synod

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

a faithful one. And we know that there's never a perfect time for a campaign; we know the Church has prospered through hard times many times before. That's because we draw from the well of resilience constantly replenished by the Holy Spirit. We know how to do love, we know how to do hope. We know how to live into hard work for the other. And we are people of expectation: we expect that God will provide. God has been so generous to us—trusting us with so much—and has only asked that we multiply that generosity.

We are living into those things as we discern whether we should engage in a campaign to resource our mission action plans in our parishes and in the diocese—to multiply the talents we have up and down our diocese. The majority of the money we'll raise, if we choose to proceed, is for our parishes. 65% of what you raise stays in your parish to resource your Spirit-inspired vision. And the remaining 35% will also be used to support our common ministries—leadership for the parishes, healing and reconciliation, and other diocesan ministries that you've told us you care about.

Through a campaign, we have an opportunity to steward the resources God has entrusted to our care more faithfully, more richly, and more boldly for the building up of God's Church in Niagara. In our discernment about this, I'm hoping we'll let our hearts dwell in faithfulness, in hope, and in expectation. There really isn't anything to lose by proceeding. And I hope you'll support this the campaign because you believe in God, in your Church, in your parish and in the vision that has been surfaced by your MAP. Folks, this is a road out of the ravages of COVID. I hope we can take it together with faith in the future.

While we're speaking about resources and stewarding, we've been hard at work with the budget. We've made some significant investments in ministry: stewarding soundly, realistically, and wisely, pulling in our belts because the 2024 budget year is challenging. But things are improving as parish finances gradually recover. You'll notice that after the \$200,000 reduction in the personnel line from last



Chancellor Greg Tweney, Bishop Bell and the Archdeacon Bill Mous pause for a picture before the start of Synod.

Photo: Bill Mous

year's budget, we've managed to keep expenditures level this year—and, in a year in which we've seen costs significantly rise, this represents a substantial reduction in our expenditures.

I must just send an arrow prayer of thanks to our forebears who invested theirs wisely so that good ministry and

some 40 years. He cares deeply for all his parishioners and channels the love and compassion of Christ in all aspects of his priestly vocation. Nirmal's service to the Church has spanned the globe, starting in Sri Lanka and continuing in Ontario, where he has served in both the dioceses of Toronto

**... We have an opportunity to steward the resources God has entrusted to our care more faithfully, more richly, and more boldly for the building up of God's Church in Niagara.**

mission could be underwritten today. It is truly a blessing to reap the rewards of faithful stewardship as you'll see in the budget presentation.

Now while I'm on the subject of thanks, I'd like to recognize two people whom I, in concert with our dean, Tim Dobbin, am appointing as new canons of Christ's Church Cathedral:

The Reverend Pamela Guyatt: Pam is a faithful, caring, and devoted parish priest who has served our diocese for 20 years. Her infectious sense of humour, love for those she serves, and practical theology radiate the light of Christ through her vocation. Pam has served in Ancaster and Merriton, in addition to her present role as rector of St. John's in Jordan. Pam is always willing to support our common life, be it as the Regional Dean for Lincoln, as our honorary clerical secretary of synod, or as a member of the Financial Advisory Committee.

The Reverend Nirmal Mendis: is a dedicated, humble, and much-loved pastor who has served in ordained ministry for

and Moosonee before coming to Niagara in 2013. Nirmal has a particular charism for ministry in rural communities, equipping the saints to bear witness to the Gospel.

So, let's congratulate these new canons of our cathedral. We honour your ministry among us and we give thanks to God for your commitment to our beloved Church.

I'd also like to acknowledge Canon Donna Bomberry who is the recent recipient of the Anglican Award of Merit. The Primate visited St. Alban's Beamsville in September to honour Donna with this award for distinguished service. We're proud of her long, faithful, and creative contributions to improving relations and fostering reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in the Anglican Church of Canada, as well as within the Anglican Communion.

Two other people are being acknowledged for extraordinary service to the Anglican Communion by the Archbishop of Canterbury—this time a few

years ago but because of COVID, we were unable to have an appropriate celebration.

Dr John Bowen: The Alphege Award for Evangelism and Witness. For his attractive articulation of the love of God for all people, with a particular heart for those who have not yet heard the name of Jesus, and for his mentoring and discipling of Christian leaders.

And Archbishop Colin Johnson: The Cross of St. Augustine for Services to the Anglican Communion. For extraordinary efforts and leadership in sustaining communion through initiating ongoing dialogue amongst Bishops across the Anglican Communion—especially Canada, Africa, the UK and the USA—following Lambeth 2008 through to 2020.

They'll be celebrated at a Choral Evensong on December 10th at St. Peter's, Cobourg. Many congratulations to them both.

And now it is my time to offer some thanks for the hard work of the last year. I want to thank our regional deans and archdeacons who form such a strong ring of support and contact for our diocesan structures. I want to thank members of our diocesan committees whose talents are invested at a tremendous return for our ministries. Thank you for serving. I want to thank members of Synod Council for their gift of time and care every month in working together for the good of our diocese. You all remind me of what a privilege it is to serve Christ and his Church every day.

On our synod office team, I want to thank Emily Hill and Ian Mobsby for inhabiting entirely new roles with such intentionality. In the newly imagined structures for the diocese, we are very well served

by their experience, imagination, and intelligence. Thanks to Kemi—she is quite a special person who works tirelessly to support all our ministry—she's the real deal and her powers of analysis and interpretation have led to many a breakthrough in our thinking and the stewardship of our resources for God's mission.

My thanks, as ever to our dean, Tim Dobbin. For being a partner in ministry, in prayer, and in the leadership of the diocese. Again, in the newly imagined structure for Niagara, which we are living into, our dean plays a major role in our senior leadership team, and I am grateful for his wisdom and experience. My abiding thanks to Archbishop Johnson who is a wonderful and supportive assistant bishop for us. And my thanks to our tremendously capable and compassionate chancellor—Canon Greg Tweney. You need to know, members of Synod, that we are the envy of the Canadian Church for many of our staff members and most especially for the wise counsel of our chancellor. Thank you, Greg, for your commitment and for all that you do.

And now, my thanks to two people whose price is above rubies: Archdeacon Bill Mous and Jane Wyse. Those of you who have had the pleasure of interacting with them know of their deep competence and kindness. "Busy" is such a bland word and it doesn't begin to adequately describe the complexity that these two people preside over in the episcopal office. So let me say this: Jane, bless you for your patience and for your omniscience. You are the most tremendous gift. And Bill, thank you for your ever-expanding range of gifts—my appreciation for them and for you is profound. Thank

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# Bishop Bell's Charge to Synod

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

you for sharing them with us, and at every level of the Church. We are deeply blessed by your whole-hearted commitment to the Church of God. These two are also a great deal of fun to work with.

Members of Synod, I want

you to know that the folks who work at the Synod office do not merely do jobs. Their commitment to their vocations as the servants of Synod: those who enact your hopes and dreams for all the talents we have in this diocese, is broad and deep. It is

more lifestyle than job. So, my deep thanks to them on behalf of us all.

Friends, God has trusted us with much, and God calls us to engage in the risk of faith; to become more and more like Christ and to live into the health

and diversity of the mixed ecology—mission and tradition—the new and ancient church. And God is calling us to a bigger vision than we could ever imagine on our own. Remember that without risk there is no growth. With a vision, the

people flourish.

And now, I leave all these matters of mission and ministry that I have described to you—to your godly and prayerful consideration.

In the name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

# Appeals Issued for Holy Land Humanitarian Relief Efforts

Anglicans invited to pray for peace in the Holy Land and to give generously

Amid the ongoing violence and war between Israel and Hamas, Anglicans are being invited to support humanitarian efforts in the Holy Land.

"In this time of crisis, let us do

all that we can to support ongoing relief efforts," said Bishop Susan Bell, "and to pray unceasingly for peace in the region and for all who are impacted by the brutality of this conflict."

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby and Archbishop Hosam Naoum, primate of the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East, issued this joint appeal letter, calling for prayers and donations for the Diocese of Jerusalem's ministries throughout the Holy Land which are being greatly affected by the war.

Donations from Canada for this appeal can be made through the Companions of Jerusalem's Anglican Church of Canada webpage.

The appeal comes after Archbishop Justin Welby made a solidarity visit to Jerusalem in the days after the conflict erupted on October 7.

In a related initiative, the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) is also participating in a joint appeal through the Humanitarian Coalition and its partner, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, to support emergency assistance relief

efforts in Gaza. An initial \$30,000 grant has already been provided to support health services at the Anglican-run al-Ahli Arab Hospital.

The Humanitarian Coalition is a collaboration of 12 leading Canadian aid agencies who work together to raise funds so that humanitarian relief is delivered quickly and effectively. Any donation made to the coalition through PWRDF will be matched dollar for dollar by the Government of Canada up to \$10 million.

Donations to PWRDF's Gaza Hospital Emergency Appeal can be made here. People can also donate by phone at 416-822-9083 or by mail. Cheques should be sent to PWRDF, 80 Hayden Street, 3rd Floor, Toronto, ON, Canada, M4Y 3G2. Please indicate "Gaza Hospital" in the memo field.

In addition to these appeals, faith leaders have resoundingly joined their voices to condemn

the violence. "Our hearts grieve at the resurgence of violence that bereaves both Palestinian and Israeli families," said Archbishop Linda Nicholls and Bishop Susan Johnson of the ELCIC in a joint statement.

KAIROS Canada and its member churches, including the Anglican Church of Canada, condemned the current violence, against Israeli and Palestinian civilians, in Israel, Gaza, the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem, and called on Canada to do everything in its power to support an immediate ceasefire and a negotiated solution.

The World Council of Churches has also issued several calls for an immediate cessation of the deadly violence. "We call on all parties to de-escalate this war in order to save innocent lives while serving the cause of justice," said General Secretary Jerry Pillay.



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Photo: Islamic Relief Canada via PWRDF website



# Diocese Has Heart for SSJD's Ministry

"This gift means a great deal to us, and it will give the sisters a big boost of energy in completing this campaign," wrote Sister Constance (Connie) Joanna Gefvert.

Synod Council approved a \$30,000 contribution to the 'Home for the Heart' capital campaign of the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine (SSJD) in support of their \$4 million capital campaign to renovate and upgrade their Guest House. A ministry of the sisters, the Guest House offers a sacred and tranquil place in Toronto where people can come, stay, and be renewed for their vocations. The sisters will contribute an additional \$2 million toward the project from their endowment fund.

"Many people from across our diocese will have received the gift of hospitality and spiritual refreshment in the Guest House at St. John's Convent," observed Bishop Susan Bell. "This community creates a space for so many of our clergy and lay leaders to deepen their faith while attending retreats or workshops."

The convent and its retreat house serve as a spiritual home and primary retreat centre for Anglicans across Canada.

"[They] are a unique gift to the church and the world, especially in a time when we need places of refuge, rest and renewal in order to face the uncertainties



Architect's rendering of the renovated Guest House. It welcomes as many as 2,500 guests annually.

Image: Contributed by SSJD

of our times," wrote Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate, in a letter of support for the campaign.

In addition to being a space for spiritual retreats and workshops, the Guest House is also open to family members of patients at the nearby St. John Rehab, hospital staff overnight during storms, refugee families, and others who need temporary accommodation.

While the building, constructed in 1956, has received loving care over the years, it also needs significant work. Plans for the renovation include the replacement of its roof, boilers, HVAC systems, and windows, as well as accessibility upgrades to its washrooms, meeting spaces, and entrance.

"The re-design of the Guest House is intended to reflect the openness of our hearts in

receiving our guests, helping them to settle in, and prayerfully accompanying them throughout their stay," says Sister Connie.

The diocese's gift will help renovate and furnish a spiritual direction room for retreatants, as well as an additional meeting room for workshops.

SSJD traces its roots back to 1884, when Hannah Grier Coome, made her vows to the Bishop of Toronto, along with two other novices. Soon after the sisters had opened a hospital, a home for the aged, and a mission house. Today, the sisters continue to reach out in teaching, healing, caring, and loving the people who arrive at their doorstep.

*To learn more about the Home for the Heart Campaign, or the ministry of the sisters, visit [ssjd.ca](http://ssjd.ca).*



Workshops (above) and spiritual direction (below) are important aspects of the ministry of the Sisters of St. John the Divine.

Images: Contributed by SSJD



# Bishop Bell visits The Church of Our Saviour The Redeemer



As part of her regular episcopal ministry, Bishop Susan Bell travels around the diocese visiting churches. Recently, The Church of Our Saviour The Redeemer in Stoney Creek hosted Bishop Susan, who preached and celebrated during the service. Following the service, the children of the parish told her how excited and thrilled they were to have her visit.

Photos: Contributed by The Church of Our Saviour The Redeemer



# An Ecumenical Gathering of Deacons

**THE REVEREND DEACON ROD MCDOWELL**

On Saturday, Oct. 14, the deacons of this diocese spent a day with Roman Catholic deacons from the Diocese of St. Catharines. This was the third such gathering since 2012. Last spring, I contacted the director of deacons for the Diocese of St. Catharines, the Reverend Deacon Frank Berardi about having a day this year. Deacon Sheila Plant and I then had two meetings with Frank and a day was arranged.

There were 12 of us who met at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Grimsby. There were four Roman Catholic deacons, seven Anglican deacons, and Reverend Tom Vaughan, chaplain to the college of deacons in our diocese. Following the mandatory coffee and muffins, we were welcomed by the parish priest, Father Rico Passero. Frank led us in morning prayer. Greetings from both bishops were given. I then proceeded to describe some aspects of the Anglican polity and the process for becoming a deacon in Niagara. Frank followed with a detailed version of the very rigorous scheme of the Diocese of St. Catharines. Many questions followed each presentation. There is one real aspect that is common to both processes, the final decision is up to the bishop of each diocese.

Deacons Sheila Plant and Jean Ruttan Yates made a presentation about ministry to the sick and hospital ministry. Deacon Frank Pavoine followed with a prospective of a Roman Catholic deacon. There was much discussion as we talked about issues such as palliative care, abortion, and medical assistance in dying. A central theme was the need to be present to someone who is ill.

After lunch Deacons Sandra Thomson and Mark McGill gave a presentation about ministry to people experiencing homelessness. Deacon Tom Dillon a Roman Catholic deacon, then added how he persuaded his parish to become involved in some of the programs in

Welland along with Mark. A lot of discussion followed. We concluded with a reflection on the day from Reverend Tom and evening prayer lead by



The ecumenical gathering of deacons was held at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Grimsby.

Photo: Contributed by Rod McDowell

Deacons Nancy McBride and Sheila Plant. We all were enriched by the sharing and understood we have much more in common than

what separates us. God willing, we all hope we will gather together again in a few years.

# O Sacred Woods Now Wounded

**JOHN BACHER**

The power of Christian singing paradoxically was testified by the second century critic of our faith, Celsus, who admitted that despite his qualms, "you just want to sing along." One of the most powerful hymns is O Sacred Head Now Wounded, composed by the French Cistercian Abbot and poet, Arnulf de Leuven, who died in 1250.

When composing his passion hymn in Latin, "Salve Mundi Salutare", Arnulf was contemplating the wounds of Jesus from the Crucifixion. What made the hymn so popular however was its German translation

written during the horrific conditions of 17th century wars of religion in Central Europe. The wounds on the body of Jesus appeared then to mark the terrible divisions in Christ's body in the form of the Church. While the 17th century wars scarred the body of Christ's Church, today's ecological crisis mars the forest mantle which once covered most of our Earth.

I got a sense of this suffering when walking around a forest in Niagara Falls, properly called Ramsey Road Woodlot in ecological studies. It has become popularly called the Thundering Waters Forest, derived from its close proximity to the great cataract on the Niagara River.

While most of the woodland is still protected as a significant wetland, lands around it are horribly scarred, with streams being hidden, by woods being exposed, and hurtling surprisingly into previously unseen pits. Ugly scenes of mud and trees pounded into sawdust stand as a warning to the biggest cut of healthy forest seen in the Niagara Diocese since the mid-19th century.

When "Sacred Woods So Wounded" was sung in St. Barnabas Church, a packed parish sang of the need to heal our wounded planet. May its message spread and Christian passion build to heal creation.

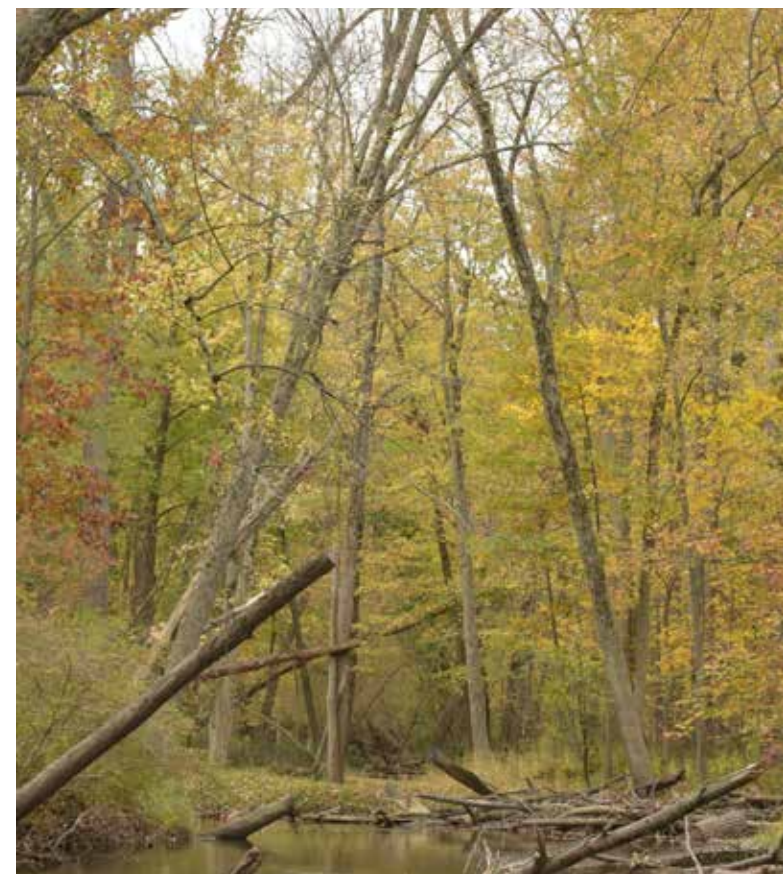


Photo: Unsplash/Laura Baker

## Niagara Anglican Deadlines and Submission Guidelines

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March – January 26  
April – February 23

### Submissions:

#### News, Letters, Reviews

(books, films, music, theatre)

– 400 words or less

**Articles** – 600 words or less

### Original cartoons or art –

Contact the Editor.

**Photos** – very large, high resolution (300 ppi), action pictures (people doing something).

Include name of photographer. Written permission of parent/guardian must be obtained if photo includes a child.

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

### Questions or information:

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# Order of Niagara Celebrates Faithful Lay Ministry

Each year the Order of Niagara recognizes the faithful dedication of lay people, honouring substantial contributions to ministry in their communities.

Parishes are invited to nominate a person for the Order of Niagara annually, someone who has faithfully given of themselves to their parish, diocese, and the wider Church. It is an important way of honouring the vital ministry of lay people in the diocese. The Bishop may also appoint members to the Order.

Since its inception, there have been over 1200 people inducted into the Order of Niagara. Recipients may use the initials O.N. after their name. They are encouraged to wear their medalion at diocesan services, on diocesan occasions, and when the bishop visits their parish.

Here are a selection of those who were inducted into the Order of Niagara in 2023. Those featured here represent the wide range of ministry initiatives and missional dedication that is abundant in the Diocese of Niagara!

## Jim Butts, Holy Trinity, Welland

Jim is generating a warm and compassionate footprint at Holy Trinity Church Welland. He has poured out his heart and soul in service to the community. Jim has served as a warden, treasurer, and a member of parish council. His leadership in the outreach ministry stands out in extraordinary ways. One year ago Jim began a daily breakfast program and trained over 200 volunteers. Jim is an exemplary example of Christian service. It is a prayer engrafted in our hearts to pres-



Inductees to the Order of Niagara from the regions of Greater Wellington and Trafalgar regions pose for a photo with the bishop.

Photo: Contributed by Diocese of Niagara

ent Jim Butts to Bishop Susan for the Order of Niagara.

## Tracey Croft, St. Mark's, Orangeville

Tracey has been St. Mark's children's ministry co-ordinator for over 12 years. She has excelled in attracting children and youth of all ages to an outstanding Christian education program. Her ability to inspire volunteers and garner the support of the parish is exceptional. Tracey has shared her wisdom and experience in many other areas of St. Mark's ministry including parish communication and stewardship. She has been a wonderful source of inspiration and creative energy especially

during the pandemic. We give thanks to God for Tracey's gifts and pray for her continued ministry amongst us.

## Denise Vieira, Grace Anglican Church, Waterdown

Denise exemplifies what it means to be a disciple of Christ. In her role as cemetery representative, she is a balm for grieving souls. She demonstrates servant leadership in her roles as Warden and chair of the Women with Grace. Denise shines the light of Christ through her participation in Diocesan Synod, the Grace Inclusive Cafe, Graceful Abilities Day Program, Food with Grace Waterdown Food Bank, Sunday

worship, Morning Prayer, book studies, and Meditation with Grace. Denise brings great joy when she performs at the monthly Open Mic Nights. She is a faithful friend to all.

## Blair Richardson, St. Jude's, Oakville

Blair has chaired St. Jude's Justice and Servant Ministries, where he promoted the many parish ministries and partnerships of the parish. Blair has been a force in Halton for many years. He was the Chair of the Board for the Food for Life for ten years. He carried the knowledge he gained to many subsequent activities. Blair is a member of the Ally Leadership

Council of the Debwewin Project, a collaboration between the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Oakville Community Foundation. Blair led St. Jude's Church to be the first church to be a signatory of the project.

## Kathy Thomas, St. David's, Welland

Kathy is a devoted, enthusiastic, and energetic member of St. David's Welland. She has served the people of this parish and the surrounding community for many years. Currently Kathy is the People's Warden, and one of the co-ordinators of our Gently Used Clothing Store; which she helped to establish in 2019. In addition, she is the vice-president of the St. David's ACW, a member of the Pastoral Care and Prayer Shawl Committees, and an Altar Guild member. She also was the chair of our Mission Action Plan Process.

## Brenda Lane, St. John's, Jordan

Mrs. Brenda has been a central figure at St. John's in Jordan for 30+ years. She has served as our treasurer, has always maintained impeccable management of parish funds. But that is only one of the things that she does, she volunteers to help out with just about everything that takes place in the parish, in recent years she has helped with the refugee sponsorship initiative, the ministry to the migrant farmworkers, in various capacities, from driving, to serving meals to making hats. Brenda is also active in community events, like the Ice Wine fairs, and Grape & Wine Festival.

# New Canons Named at Synod

Bishop Susan Bell and Dean Tim Dobbin have named two new honorary canons of Christ's Church Cathedral: Pam Guyatt, rector of St. John's, Jordan and Nirmal Mendis, rector of Holy Trinity, Fontill and All Saints Church, (Dain City) Welland. Bishop Susan announced the new Honorary Canons during her charge to the 149th Synod of the Diocese of Niagara on November 3, 2023.

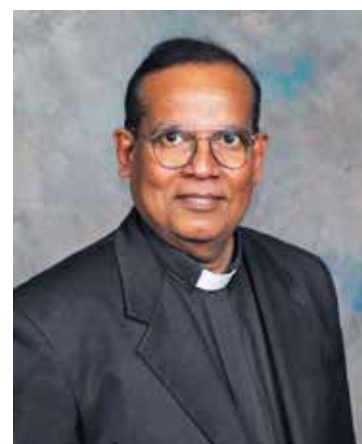
She gave thanks for the min-

istries of both Pam and Nirmal. Of Pam, Bishop Susan stated, "Pam is a faithful, caring, and devoted parish priest who has served our diocese for 20 years. Her infectious sense of humour, love for those she serves, and practical theology radiate the light of Christ through her vocation."

And of Nirmal, Bishop Susan shared that Nirmal "is a dedicated, humble, and much loved pastor who has served in

ordained ministry for some 40 years. He cares deeply for all his parishioners and channels the love and compassion of Christ in all aspects of his priestly vocation."

Canons are named in recognition for their faithful service to the diocese and the Church. A service of installation will take place in the New Year at the Cathedral.



The Reverend Canon Nirmal Mendis



The Reverend Canon Pam Guyatt