

THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, KITCHENER

ON EAGLES' WINGS

Advent 2011 | December 4

Greetings,

The Advent Season of 2011 and the beginning of a new year in the life of the church mark a time for renewed beginnings after the experience of my sabbatical. Members of our Parish Family contributed in very different ways to the ministry of our congregation from July through October. The Pastoral Care Team with the leadership of the Reverend Paul Kett has enabled many individuals to offer their talents in our shared ministry. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity for personal renewal which the Parish Family enabled me to have and I believe that it was a positive experience for us all.

One stop along the way during my physical and spiritual journey was the town of Assisi. The remarkable story of St. Francis has so many different facets to it. The church building which surrounds his tomb has suffered damage from earthquakes and has undergone a physical renewal. The frescoes glow with a warmth which was intended by the original artists. Pilgrims enter the church for prayer and members of the Order of Franciscans come to Assisi to study and grow in their faith.

An essential story associated with the ministry and witness of St. Francis comes from his experience of hearing the voice of Jesus. In deep prayer, he asked, "Lord, what do you want of me?" he heard this answer, "Francis, go and rebuild my church...". What struck me about the story was that some people have told the story and used the phrase, "Francis, go and edify my church...".

Our story at St. John's in 2011 has been a story of physical and spiritual renewal. The restoration of the brick walls of our church building has been completed and paid for with the financial support of members of the parish, both past and present. The edification of the living stones of our parish continues to

be accomplished through the sharing of the Word and Sacraments offered during our liturgies and the group studies which have drawn people together for learning and reflection.

The experience of the Season of Advent is an experience of preparation. It is a time when we open our hearts and minds to be built up and renewed for the service of our Lord. Our life of service is then offered as a response to the gift that our loving God has given us, the gift of our Saviour.

Let us all use this Advent Season well, so that we may sing with all sincerity, "How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given...where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in." **

Faithfully yours,

The Reverend Canon Christopher Pratt

Rector

** "O Little Town of Bethlehem" verse 3



Advent and Christmas Services at St. John's

Wednesday, December 9

7:30 am Holy Communion

Tuesday, December 13

9:30am Eucharist with Bishop Dance

Wednesday, December 14

7:30 am Holy Communion

Sunday, December 18

8:00 am Holy Communion

10:00 am Eucharist

Saturday, December 24

4:00 pm Holy Communion

7:00 pm Holy Communion

11:00 pm Eucharist

Sunday, December 25

8:00 am Holy Communion

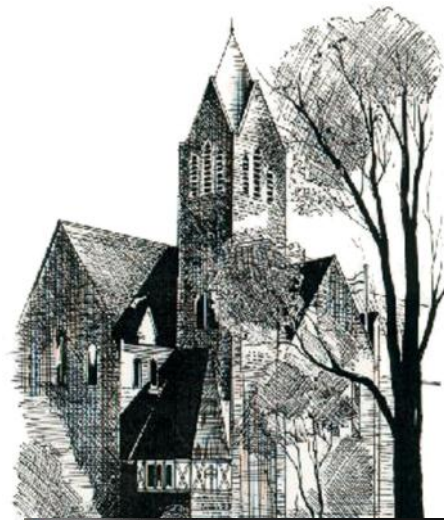
10:00 am Eucharist

Sunday, January 1

8:00 am Holy Communion

10:00 am Eucharist

St. John's Buy-a-Brick Cookbook



They did not build in vain who founded here a church

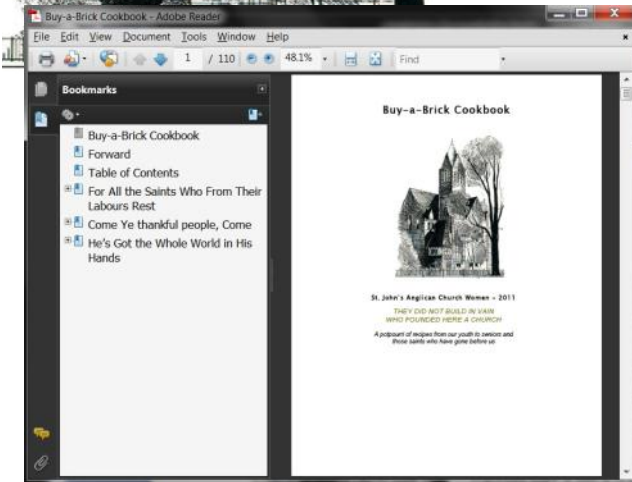
St. John's Buy-a-Brick cookbook is available. Thanks to your participation it contains a potpourri of recipes from our youth to seniors and those saints who have gone before us – a great gift. All proceeds from the sale are designated for Buy-a-Brick.

A printed copy is just \$15 or an electronic copy \$10.

The electronic version is distributed on a CD and requires Adobe Reader – freely available for download from Adobe. Printed instructions are included on the inside cover of the CD.

The image at the left shows the initial view when the document opens.

Copies are available from the Gift Case.



Morning Bible Study with Bishop Terry Dance

On Tuesday December 13th, 2011 at 8:00 am at The Church of St. John the Evangelist, 23 Water Street N. Kitchener, Bishop Terry Dance will lead a Bible study. All Anglicans within the Waterloo Deanery are invited to attend and encouraged to bring a friend too, even if they're not an Anglican or from this deanery. A light breakfast will be available, but to assist us with preparations, please let Canon Pratt know by December 4th if you're planning to attend.

Bishop Terry Dance will lead us in our study, and will preside as we celebrate the Eucharist at 9:30 AM

(Clericus will gather with the Bishop following the 9:30 service)



St. Jude's Cathedral, Iqaluit

As you may remember, St. Jude's Cathedral in Iqaluit was destroyed by fire in 2005. The rebuilding of this unique, igloo style church is currently in process and, as it always is with these projects, cost are increasing. St. John's has received an appeal from Bishop Andrew Atagotaaluk, Bishop of the Arctic for donations to help meet the expense of rebuilding this iconic building.

There is a website, www.arcticnet.org, that provides more information, or, if you'd prefer, there is a package of information in the church office about this. Please see Doug Woodley if you would like to either receive additional information or inquire about making a donation.

St. Monica House

Our ACW has received a wish list from St. Monica House. St Monica House offers support to pregnant young women/new mothers (usually teenagers) when they have nowhere else to turn.

New Personal Items such as shampoo, toothpaste, deodorants, razors, new combs/brushes, nursing pads, q-tips, cotton balls etc.

New Baby Items such as Baby shampoo, baby lotion, baby formula/cereals, Vaseline/ diaper creams, baby wash cloths, towels, bibs, toddler outfits (newborn to two years), crib sheets, disposable diapers (newborn to toddler

sizes), baby toys, seasonal wear-snowsuits/mitts/hats/boots etc.

New Miscellaneous Items such as disposable cameras, towels, tea towels, nightgowns, socks slippers

These are just some of the items listed. To see a complete list of items, please see the bulletin board in the upper parish hall.

Perhaps you and your children/grandchildren would have fun putting together a goodie basket for the moms and babies. What a lovely Christmas donation that would make!

The New Advent Altar hangings, the Chausable, and the Stoles

Rev. Canon Christopher Pratt

Two seasons of the Church calendar stand out as times when waiting is a key element in the passage of time. Prior to Easter the Season of Lent creates an opportunity for prayer, fasting and penitence. The focus of the seasonal readings draws us along with our Lord as he journeys towards Jerusalem and the Cross. The deep purple colour associated with Lent offers a visual expression of the darkness of those days and the solemnity of the season.

As we draw closer to the celebration of the Christmas Season there is a very different sense of waiting which the readings for the Season of Advent convey. The fulfillment of God's promises which are found in the Psalms and in the words of

the prophets offer hope and create a heightened sense of expectation in the hearts and minds of the People of God. Rooted in the 11th century liturgical life of Salisbury Cathedral, the colour, known as Sarum Blue, has been gaining an increasing acceptance around the Anglican Communion, as a visual expression of the hope and expectation associated with Advent. Pastor George Strack has also affirmed the use of blue during the Season of Advent as a familiar practice in the Lutheran tradition.

The Altar Hangings, the Chausable and Stoles which were dedicated on the First Sunday of Advent are also decorated with a Celtic Cross. The design for the Cross follows the pattern of the Celtic Cross that was circulated throughout the homes of the Parish

Family of St. John's during the Sesquicentennial of the congregation in 2006. That same style of cross has also found a prominent place on the peak of the steeple of our Parish Church.

The gifts given by so many people as offerings of Thanksgiving for the life, work, witness, and ministry of the Reverend Grace Schaefer at St. John's have found a place in the liturgical life of our congregation. The use of the Sarum Blue Hangings and Vestments during the Season of Advent will continue to remind us of Grace's impact during her all too brief ministry at St. John's.

In the words of the Book of Proverbs;

"...a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised...let her works praise her in the city gates." (Proverbs 31: 30 & 31)

St. John's at the Princess

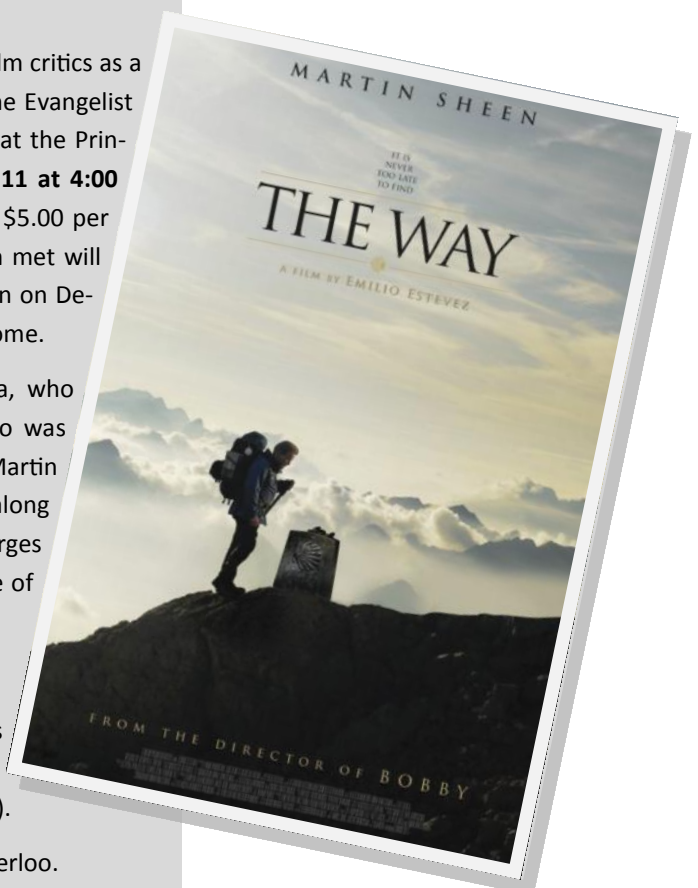
In recent days the movie *The Way* has captured the attention of film critics as a powerful piece of story telling and healing. The Parish of St. John the Evangelist invites the Deanery of Waterloo to a private screening of *The Way* at the Princess Cinema in Uptown Waterloo on Sunday afternoon, **December 11 at 4:00 pm**. Tickets are available at the door for a special reduced price of \$5.00 per person. Any money which will be realized after expenses have been met will be given to St. John's Kitchen for the Christmas Dinner at the Kitchen on December 22nd. The seating capacity of the Cinema is 155. All are welcome.

The Way is the story of Tom, a grieving doctor from California, who makes a pilgrimage to the Pyrenees in honour of his late son who was killed while walking along a Christian pilgrimage route. Tom (Martin Sheen) vows to complete the treacherous journey. As Tom sets out along the 800km path with only his son's guidebook and backpack, he forges powerful bonds with three fellow travelers who alter his perspective of the world and remind him what it means to lead a meaningful life.

The film is 120 minutes long and has been rated 14A.

Space at the Lion Brewery Restaurant at the Heuther Hotel has been reserved for an after movie meeting place for anyone who is interested in gathering for food and fellowship (at their own expense).

The Princess Cinema is located at 46 King Street N. in Uptown Waterloo.



A.C.W. Deanery News

Enid Emery, Waterloo Deanery Representative

The Fall Deanery meeting was held on October 29th at St. Columba's Church in Waterloo. The theme for the day was Lutherwood. Thirty-seven ladies from 7 churches in the Deanery were present. We began with Holy Communion led by the Rev. Julia Gill and in place of the sermon Sunny Field, a member of St. Columba's A.C.W. and a Board member at Lutherwood, told us how it began in the 1960's when a group of K-W citizens were concerned that the only way of dealing with children who were in trouble with the law was to put them in adult prisons. From that beginning Lutherwood has grown and expanded as our understanding of children's mental health has grown, to-day there is a school which offers Day programmes as well a Boarding School for those children who cannot go home. As the children became adults a programme to help with finding jobs and accommodation developed, this programme is available to anyone who needs it. There is also an in-home counseling service offered for children who do not attend the school.

A number of years ago the Lutherwood organization expanded into the area of

Seniors accommodation and health care with the award winning facility at Village on the Park and the Sunshine Centre.

After an excellent lunch provided by the A.C.W ladies of St. Columba and Holy Trinity, Kitchener. The meeting was opened to the general public as had been advertised in the community. The afternoon speakers were Kathy Payette and Steve Sherrer. Kathy is a psychiatrist specializing in children's mental health. She works in the school. Steve is the Chief Operating Officer of the whole Lutherwood project. Together they shared stories of their work with the children and young people and were able to tell us of actual case studies which we found informative and moving.

Lutherwood has become the model for similar facilities in Newfoundland and B.C. It is 60% government funded but relies on public donations for the remainder of the budget. At the meeting the A.C.W. ladies collected donations of hats, mitts, scarves, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, bus tickets, etc. for the school.

I think that we all left the meeting with a feeling of hope and encourage-

A.C.W. Outreach Report

In January we will be packing the Bale for Keewatin and would appreciate any donations of GENTLY used CLEAN clothing for men, women and children, also household linens, fabrics and knitting wools. There is always a particular need for boys clothing. Once again we will be working with All Saint's and St Columba, Home Hardware in St Jacobs have again graciously agreed to take the Bale north for us at the end of January. We had almost 3 skids full this past January.

We recently were able to send a large package of stamps to the Leprosy Mission and approximately 30 pairs of used prescription glasses were sent to the Lion's club for re-use in the Third World, also Freeport Hospital received a large bag of Zehrs Tapes from us, so please keep your donations coming-- and don't forget Campbell's Soup labels, these are sent to the School for the Deaf in Whitby. Thank You. Bernice, Eleanor, Nancy, Enid.

ment that such good work is being done in our area and I have had some very positive 'feedback from the groups.

Our Spring A.C.W. Meeting will be on May 13th at St. Thomas' Church, Cambridge.

Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations

Frank Millerd

On Saturday, October 22, 2011, at Trinity Anglican Church in Cambridge, Robert Schnase, Bishop of the Missouri Conference, United Methodist Church discussed his book *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*. The practices are offered as practices to shape and sustain congregations. Bishop Schnase developed the practices from his observations

of healthy congregations and from consultations with pastors and church leaders. Vibrant, growing, fruitful congregations have been found to repeat and deepen these fundamental activities, seeking to perform them with excellence.

Practice 1. Radical Hospitality

Christian hospitality refers to the

active desire to invite, welcome, receive, and care for those who are strangers so that they find a spiritual home and discover for themselves the unending richness of life in Christ. (p. 11) It describes a genuine love for others and a willingness to change behaviors in order to accommodate the needs and receive the talents of newcomers. (p. 11-12) Radical hospitality includes encouraging all

members to invite and welcome people, contacting visitors in the first days after visiting, inviting visitors to further involvement, and connecting those on the outer edge of our church community to the people at the core.

Practice 2. Passionate Worship

Passionate connotes eagerness, anticipation, expectancy, deep commitment, and belief. Passionate Worship is alive, authentic, fresh, and engaging. In churches marked by Passionate Worship, people don't merely show up and sit passively in their pews; they are actively engaged, genuinely connected, personally addressed, and deeply challenged. (p. 50) Congregations must work hard, particularly, to speak the language, engage the culture, and use the voice, music, and methods that offer authentic and effective worship experiences for younger generations. (p. 46)

Practice 3. Intentional Faith Development

Intentional Faith Development describes the practice of churches that view the ministries of Christian education and formation, small group work, and Bible study as absolutely critical to their mission and that consistently offer opportunities for people of all ages, interests, and faith experiences to learn in community. (p. 68) ... growth in faith does not come easily or automatically but requires placing ourselves in community to learn the faith with others. (p. 65)

Practice 4. Risk-Taking Mission and Service

Risk-Taking Mission and Service includes the projects, the efforts, and the work people do to make a positive difference in the lives of others for the

purposes of Christ, whether or not the recipients will ever be part of the community of faith. ... failure to practice it in some form results in a deterioration of the church's vitality and ability to make disciples of Jesus Christ. (p. 83)

Practice 5. Extravagant Generosity

Extravagant Generosity describes practices of sharing and giving that exceed all expectations and extend to unexpected measures. (p. 112) Churches that practice Extravagant Generosity don't talk in general terms about stewardship; they speak confidently and faithfully about money, giving, generosity, and the differences giving makes for the purposes of Christ and in the life of the giver. (p. 119)

Note: Page numbers refer to *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*, by Robert Schnase, Abingdon Press, 2007

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Experiment with Christian Community

Matthew Kieswetter

I have had the wonderful opportunity of taking a course on the life and thought of Dietrich Bonhoeffer at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary this semester. It gave me the chance to reunite with a former professor of mine who led a Bonhoeffer-themed trip to Germany and Poland while I was studying at the University of Waterloo.

My primary interest in Bonhoeffer concerns his ideas and experiments with respect to Christian community life. While many Christians in Germany aligned themselves with the Nazi regime during the 1930s and 1940s, Bonhoeffer was outspoken in his opposition to Adolf Hitler, becoming an important figure in the Confessing Church, which remained separate from the state-endorsed Protestant

churches of Germany. Bonhoeffer led an underground seminary in Finkenwalde, which is now part of Poland. With this Confessing Church seminary Bonhoeffer was able to put into practice his diverse interests and influences that came from his many travels and ecumenical impulses. Bonhoeffer corresponded with Gandhi and hoped to visit his ashram in India (a meeting that, unfortunately, would never come to fruition). Gandhi was not just a teacher of non-violent resistance, but the leader of a community that welcomed people from disparate cultural and religious backgrounds.

While leading a German-speaking congregation in London, Bonhoeffer became friends with George Bell, Anglican bishop of Chichester. Bell helped bring Bonhoeffer into contact with

three Anglican monasteries. Bonhoeffer saw the restoration of the church relating to a new conception of monasticism, and saw much to admire in the way these communities balanced regular prayer, work and recreation in their structured community life.

Bonhoeffer also engaged in dialogue with Hardy Arnold, son of Eberhard Arnold, the founder of the Anabaptist religious society the Bruderhof community. The Bruderhof offered proof that community life might be adapted to a more Protestant and evangelical context.

The daily life of the Finkenwalde seminary would not seem very unusual to those familiar with monastic life and worship. The day began and ended with a prayer service based upon the recitation of Psalms and the reading of Scrip-

ture. Hymns were sung, though most often limited to one verse, to aid in memorization. Interestingly, these services were celebrated in the dining room, as opposed to the chapel. Rumours abounded among members of the Confessing Church concerning the unevangelical and Romish tendencies of the Finkenwaldian group, but the seminarians stuck to their structured life, not out of pure legalism, but as a way of developing their inner discipline.

Morning Prayer at the seminary was followed by a half hour of individual meditation on a Bible passage, which was changed every week. This practice did not come easily to many members of the community, though many of them would find strength and comfort in this meditative practice during the dark days of the war, especially those who would eventually serve on the front lines.

The community observed an extended period of silence after Evening Prayer, which lasted through the night until the

recitation of Psalms that initiated the following day's first prayer service. That way, the first words spoken each day were God's Word.

Life was not limited to obviously religious and inward-looking traditions, however. Sunday was a day of rest and recreation, wherein the townsfolk were invited to partake in sports and games. Evenings were spent discussing subjects such as current events. Theological teaching and Biblical exegesis was always seen as relevant and applicable to everyday life. Life in the Finkenwalde community was aimed at cultivating a spirituality based on the teachings and example of Christ, open to engagement with the wider world.

I wonder how our church (at a local, national or denominational level) might look differently if we were to apply some of Bonhoeffer's principles today?

Are we taking full advantage of our ecumenical ties by incorporating helpful practices from other traditions into our

personal and corporate prayer times?

Are we willing to commit to regular daily prayer and Scripture meditation instead of merely praying when it is convenient?

Might we experience communal prayer in a powerful way if we gather to share in liturgical worship in new and diverse settings?

How might ordained ministry, social outreach, religious education and spiritual development change if we reinterpreted or expanded our expression of Christianity by encouraging the formation of grassroots communities based around a common prayer life and the service of others?

Like Bonhoeffer, do we seek to discover who Christ is for us today? Is our spirituality a single layer of our life, or does God truly encompass all of it? Does our religious reading, worship and fellowship close us off from the world, or rather inspire and equip us to seek Christ in others?

Nurse's Notes

Elsie Millerd, Parish Nurse

In Case of Emergency

Recently, I heard of a person who collapsed when out for a walk and who spent the next days in the city morgue. The person carried no identification and so no loved ones could be notified to claim the body. When hearing the story, I realized that this could happen to me. How often do I go out for a quick walk and carry no identification? I wonder if there are others like me.

There are resources available to help us ensure that we carry the information necessary "in case of emergency" without having to carry a wallet with all our precious cards. One such resource is the

web site www.medids.com/free-id.php This site helps one to create an emergency ID card which holds all relevant information: name, date of birth, address, telephone number, emergency contacts, doctor, OHIP number, medical conditions, medications and allergies.

If you carry a cell phone, as so many people do now, it is possible to program into it an "In Case of Emergency" (or ICE for short) contact. The applications for this can be found on the internet as well as ICE stickers to alert paramedics of availability of the information.

While on the topic of emergencies, what kind of protection and alert do you have in your home? If you live

alone, it may be a good idea for you to subscribe to a medical alert service. There are several systems available with varying monthly fees, options and installation fees. Feel free to discuss the options with me. The companies sometimes send me promotion information with "special offers" which may be of interest to you.

Making arrangements to cover our emergency care is as much for the peace of mind of our loved ones as for us. Being proactive and wise about this matter can be a special gift to those who care about us.

The Immune System: Who Gets Sick

With the onset of winter the incidence of seasonal colds and influenza rises and our concern for protection from these should increase. What are some of the considerations which lead to staying well?

Realizing that infections are transmitted by direct or indirect contact, drop-let or through the air, one can protect oneself by hand washing (the single most important infection prevention and control practice) and maintaining a distance of one metre when talking with infected people.

By now everyone should have received a seasonal 'flu shot. If not, be sure to make arrangements with your family doctor or the Public Health Department to do so.

As well as 'flu shots, there are other ways to boost our immune systems. In a

recent seminar Dr. Nick R. S. Hall, a neurobiologist, outlined some of these areas:

- Eat anti-inflammatory nutrients found in fresh (raw or lightly steamed) fruits and vegetables, raw nuts and seeds (ground), and fish. Decrease or eliminate from your diet red meats, dairy products, refined sugar and caffeine.
- Have regular physical activities which enhance endurance, strength, and flexibility. This is acquired in 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity (brisk walking, cycling, swimming, calisthenics, aerobic and balance exercises) every day.
- Resist depression by seeing challenges as temporary, solvable and impersonal.
- Replace hostility and urgency with caring and mindfulness.

- Nurture close relationships with friends and family for their protective effect and overcome social rejection, loneliness and isolation.
- Develop emotional resilience by adaptively responding to thoughts that could trigger stress and immune suppression. By becoming aware of emotions, responding to challenges with action rather than fear or self-pity, realizing one's control of one's life, developing an optimistic world view, rallying a supportive network of friends, maintaining your sense of humour, exercising, being in touch with your spiritual side through meditation, reflection and prayer, and persevering, one is able to "roll with the punches" of life and so be resilient.

Please let me know if there are any ways I can support you in your efforts to boost your immune system. It is my prayer that we all have a healthy winter.

Green Passion Award November 26, 2011

The following speech was given by Al Coughlin, member of Green Passion, The Church of St. John the Evangelist Kitchener, Ont. It was delivered to the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, Waterloo branch and the Greening Sacred Spaces committee. At this event the Church accepted the Green Sacred Spaces Award for 2011 Evangelist on November 26, 2011.

Green Passion began at St. John the Evangelist in the fall of 2009. A small group of interested parishioners began talking of the possibilities for a concerted effort, an organized set of goals to bring the topic of the environment to the wider community of St. Johns.

It began with discussion during Sunday coffee hour. In this upper parish hall

where our faith has built a structure that has seen receptions held, band practice, basketball games, badminton, theatre, dances, fish fry's, art fest, St. John's kitchen and the Pudding factory.

The environmental movement has a mantra of reduce, recycle, and reuse. Our pudding factory, which has run for more than sixty years, has re-used the pudding cans for that long. Most of the cans are down to the bare metal, a few still contain the outside painted label of Heinz Tomato Juice, Canadian Maple Syrup or Pure Honey.

We first received a Huron Diocese assessment form to fill out for 2008. Our submission earned us a Bronze Award. This was a status quo effort that led us to thinking of a better and

focused method to enviro-action at St. John's.

In late 2009 we had a flurry of activity and passion for the environment at St. Johns.

The Kitchener Musical Society Band offered to split the cost and volunteer power of installing three dozen high efficiency fluorescent bulbs in our 1950's era incandescent fixtures. Once completed, the hall seemed twice as bright and our hydro consumption has reduced by 70% for this space. With this success we gradually introduced fluorescents into our worship space fixtures too; and added 16 choir pew lamps with cool burning mini fluorescents.

Another project tackled was much needed insulation in the huge brick bell

tower, adjoining sacristy eaves, ceiling and outside walls. We increased the r-value to between R20 and R30 in these areas.

A green roof pilot project was begun with 3 square meters of sedum panels. After giving parish council and congregational presentations with paperless Power-point, we took parishioners on roof top tours of the sedum installation.

In January 2010 we produced a Green Passion presentation for the congregation and sparked a wide range of interest in the possibilities for greening our facility. Our team produced a demonstration solar panel which generated much interest. It resided in the gym to remind us of the potential of the solar power future. Green Passion lapel buttons and fridge magnets were produced to splash the word around that St. John the Evangelist has Green Passion. Earth Day celebrations, Dr. Al-Abadleh presents, and the Green Action tree in the upper parish hall have all served to keep our eye on the connection between the environment and our daily lives. Green Passion transcends many areas of the congregation to help influence our future plans, our sustainable gardens and young minds.

In the spring we were awarded the Gold level by the Huron Diocese Environmental group. The Green Passion Initiative members are very proud of our achievements. The congregation encouraged our efforts and continue to support the sustainability concept.

We also created a mission and purpose statement. It reads:

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST ANGLICAN CHURCH
~ OUR GREEN MISSION AND PURPOSE
~

The ongoing **GREEN MISSION** of the parish family of Saint John the Evangelist Anglican Church is to continually conserve, preserve, and renew the materials and resources that define the physical spaces our faith built.

We are called, both as individuals and in community, to be mindful stewards for all of God's creation, by every means and opportunity available to us.

We thankfully embrace the care of our buildings, grounds, community and the natural environment as a growing ministry of faith in action.

* * *

The **IMPLEMENTATION** of environ-

mental ministry at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church is carried out through the Green Passion Environmental Initiatives program.

This ad hoc group of parishioners seeks to inform, engage and support our church family in undertaking hands-on projects to reduce our dependency on non-renewable resources and increase our positive environmental impact.

Our church family is committed to investing annual funding support to realize our environmental stewardship mandate.

During 2011 we concentrated on some outdoor micro projects. We added 2 garden composters along with one rain barrel. In May we began a one month trial of a cordless lawn mower and cordless grass trimmer. These two items proved to be up to the task and on one charge could finish the lawn in approximately one hour. We were able to remove the older gasoline powered lawn mowers as well as the gas powered trimmers and liquid gasoline from the premises. For the winter ice problem we increasingly moved away from ice salt to either an organic and eco friendly mixture or pure sand. This reduced our impact on the environment and reduced the salt tracked inside the building.

Our most recent endeavor is the effort to participate in the Faith Community Solar City process. With the support of our Parish Council, we will complete an OPA conditional offer. This will enable us to investigate the feasibility of a solar array on our roof. If all goes well, we will be able to pursue this awesome opportunity. Just this past week we met with Glen Woolner from CREW – Community Renewable Energy Waterloo to discuss our next steps. Our Parish Council will host Glen for a presentation to the council where we hope to garner support to carry forward. This is very exciting!



Beyond the Gods and Back

Frank Millerd

On Friday, November 18, 2011, Waterloo Lutheran Seminary sponsored a day with Reginald Bibby, probably the best known observer of religious trends in Canada. Bibby, a sociologist at the University of Lethbridge, has published thirteen books on social and religious trends in Canada, including his latest book 'Beyond the Gods and Back.'

His earlier work reported on the secularization of Canada, the decline in the influence of organized religion. Weekly church attendance fell from 60 percent of the population in 1945 to 25 percent in 2000. He saw little hope for a better future for religion. Mainline churches were especially hard hit due to changing immigration patterns with few new immigrants being members of mainline churches, the low birth rates of members, inadequate policies and strategies for retaining children, and the low priority many assigned to evangelism.

Major shifts in the outlook of boomers, the large group born in the twenty years after World War II, also significantly affected church participation. The principal shifts in outlook:

- Dominance to diversity: Movement from sameness to diversity, a vast increase in choices in life. "Any religion that did not champion flexibility and freedom could expect to see its market share shrink."
- Obligation to gratification: Duty and loyalty replaced by a market model, participation in that which is good for me. Attendance at services, not out of a sense of obligation, but rather because they find it worthwhile.
- Deference to discernment: Boomers are informed, reflective, and critical; they want input. Institutions, including churches, are scrutinized and have to earn the right to be respected.
- Homes to careers: The increasing

participation of women in the labour force reduced family church attendance

Since 2000 however, Bibby reports, the downward trend has halted and some new life is being seen. Some vitality is being shown by evangelical Protestants, some mainline Protestant groups and Roman Catholic dioceses, and in groups from other parts of the world (such as Muslims and Hindus).

The most recent trend is "religious polarization". A solid core continues to value faith but, for a growing group, religion is irrelevant. Overall, 30 percent attend church weekly or monthly, 30 percent occasionally, and 40 percent never attend. For teens 21 percent attend weekly but an increasing number, now 48 percent, never attend church.

But there is good news. Religion has a place in many people's lives; the desire for religion persists. Many others have not shut the doors to religion and are receptive to greater involvement if it is worthwhile. Many of these are not looking for churches but looking for ministry. Greater involvement for them would be worthwhile if spiritual needs are fulfilled, they are provided with the personal resources to help live out their life, and they are helped in their relations with family and friends.

Commenting on the Anglican and United churches Bibby states that, given their membership base and despite declines, they are not yet out of the running. But they have to move quickly. Their numbers are dropping and their resources are shrinking. Both have a mega-crisis with respect to young people; they have not been successful in retaining children and young people. On the positive side, Bibby states that people who are inclined to give religion a serious look can be expected to start with the traditions with which they have some affinity, the religions of par-

ents and partners.

Does religion's presence or absence make any difference? Bibby says non-religious people appear to be as happy and fulfilled in their lives as those who are religious. But, significantly, he also says that religion does have a positive impact on concern for others. This includes traits such as honesty, civility, forgiveness and generosity, including the donating of time and money to organizations and causes. Those who are not religious do not lack for civility and compassion but tend to lag slightly behind Canadians who are religious.

What are the implications?

- There is a solid faith core; things are anything but over.
 - ◇ The desire for religion persists
 - ◇ But churches need to get off the side lines; get into the game
 - ◇ There is a demand for religion; the question is who will supply the demand?
 - ◇ The key for individual churches is performance. "Churches will rise or fall on the basis of whether they can adapt and provide the right religious product."
- Like-minded groups need to explore ways of working more closely with each other
- The presence of significant numbers of people who are ambivalent but receptive to faith calls for far better ministry
 - ◇ If you welcome people, have something for them.
 - ◇ Time for newness and freshness, new eyes, new energy
 - ◇ Some needs only God can satisfy.
- This is a time for new commitment to good ministry to both the initiated and to others.

December 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 8:00 AM Holy Communion 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist 12:00 PM Health Council - UPH (Tentative) 1:30 PM Cantata Rehearsal 4:00 PM Bach Vespers Cantata	28 7:00 PM KWS Band UPH	29 1:00 PM Prayer Group 6:30 PM Believe Theatre UPH 7:00 PM Study Group P Kett - LPH 7:00 PM Renaissance Singers SANC	30 7:30 AM Holy Communion & Breakfast 7:00 PM Sine Nomine CPR	1 7:00 PM Choir Coffee FSR 7:00 PM Fireside Rm booked 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal CPR	2 6:30 PM Gilpin Singers-Sanc	3 6:30 PM Gilpin Singers-Sanc
4 8:00 AM Holy Communion 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist	5 7:00 PM KWS Band UPH	6 1:00 PM Prayer Group 6:30 PM Believe Theatre UPH 7:00 PM West Gallery Rehearsal-Sanc 7:00 PM Renaissance Singers SANC	7 7:30 AM Holy Communion & Breakfast 7:00 PM Council Meeting LPH 7:00 PM Sine Nomine CPR	8 10:30 AM Julian Group FSR 7:00 PM Health Council-FSR 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal CPR	9	10 9:30 AM West Gallery-Sanc
11 8:00 AM Holy Communion 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist 1:30 PM West Gallery-Sanc 4:00 PM West Gallery-Sanc	12 7:00 PM KWS Band UPH	13 8:00 AM Clericus FSR 9:30 AM Eucharist - Bishop Terry 10:30 AM Clericus Meeting FSR 12:00 PM Clericus Lunch 1:00 PM Prayer Group 1:00 PM Clericus Meeting FSR 6:30 PM Believe Theatre UPH	14 7:30 AM Holy Communion & Breakfast 7:00 PM Sine Nomine CPR	15 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal CPR	16 7:00 PM Renaissance Singers-Sanc	17 7:00 PM Renaissance Singers-Sanc
18 8:00 AM Holy Communion 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist 7:00 PM Lessons & Carols	19 7:00 PM KWS Band UPH	20 1:00 PM Prayer Group 6:30 PM Believe Theatre UPH	21 7:30 AM Holy Communion & Breakfast 7:00 PM Sine Nomine CPR	22 10:30 AM Julian Group FSR 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal CPR	23	24
25 8:00 AM Holy Communion 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist	26 7:00 PM KWS Band UPH	27 1:00 PM Prayer Group	28 7:30 AM Holy Communion & Breakfast	29 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal CPR	30	31