ANGLICAN JOURNAL

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Christmas with a twist

Fiction from Canon Harold Munn, p. 3 A blessing from the Primate, p. 5 Christmastide reflections, p. 8



2 stained glass art 4 the dalai lama 10 house of bishops 12 church house redux

Finney to head PWRDF as executive director

Adele Finney, a writer and spiritual director from the diocese of Toronto, has been appointed executive director



of The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), effective Jan. 1, 2011. Finney has served as interim executive director at PWRDF since

March 2010; she

Finney

also served as interim director from 2006–2007. Prior to that, Finney worked with PWRDF's parish and diocesan partnership program and as fundraising and promotions co-ordinator.

Archbishop Fred Hiltz said her leadership is "born of a deep passion for the vocation of PWRDF in working for a more just, healthy and peaceful world."

Fletcher named Archdeacon of Military Ordinariate



John Fletcher has been appointed Archdeacon of the Anglican Miltiary Ordinariate, effective Nov. 1, on the Feast of All Saints. The announcement was made by the

Col. the Venerable

Fletcher

Rt. Rev. Peter R. Coffin, Anglican Bishop Ordinary to the Canadian Forces. Col. the Ven. Fletcher was installed at Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa on Nov. 14.

Anglican Foundation appoints Rois executive director



The Anglican Foundation has announced that the Rev. Canon Dr. Judy Rois will be its new executive director, effective Jan. 1. Canon Rois has

Rois

been the rector of Christ Church Deer Park in Toronto since 2004. Previously, she was the vicar of St. James' Cathedral in Toronto for seven years. She is the co-ordinator for the postulancy committee for the diocese of Toronto and has served on

Tapestries of glass

PATRICIA MCGEE

THE STAINED GLASS windows of Christopher Wallis have been unveiled by the Queen, photographed by Karsh, exhibited in the Museum of Civiliza-



Wallis

tion and chosen by Canada Post for an international stamp. Each design is as unique as a thumbprint. In the small

Ontario town of Petrolia, parishioners of Christ Church are

amazed to learn their well-loved 13 stained glass windows are the work of one of Canada's leading artists, Christopher Wallis.

For years, they have known their Memorial Window was special. Installed in 1983, the massive window incorporates the entire oil heritage of this historic town known as "Canada's Victorian Oil Town." Visually stunning, this exceptional window was granted Ontario Heritage designation in 2004.

While the Petrolia parish has taken pride in their stained glass windows, it has only recently learned of Wallis' stellar career as a stained glass artist. Other parishes with Christopher Wallis windows may be equally surprised.

His windows grace Rideau Hall in Ottawa (two unveiled by the Queen), Osgoode Hall in Toronto and Government House in Victoria, as well as the University of Western Ontario and the University of Alberta. His list of noteworthy commissions is extensive. And throughout Canada, his stained glass windows are celebrated works of art in many Anglican churches. His art is famous; his name is virtually unknown.

His most remarkable commissions for the Anglican church can be found at two Christ Church Cathedrals, one in Ottawa, the other in Victoria. The Ottawa cathedral honoured its 150th anniversary with Wallis creating a magnificent West Window towering over the entrance. Yousuf Karsh photographed it for the special publication produced for the window's dedication in 1982.

The cathedral's committee wanted the window to be "religious, depicting the history of the Ottawa-Hull area" with the lesser themes of discovery, settlement and confederation. It was also to reflect Canada's multicultural nature and "it should emit a sense of hope and confidence in the future." In this tapestry of glass, Wallis has deftly woven in images of the Parliament Buildings, the cathedral, heraldic shields, Christ, the Virgin Mary, the Holy Spirit and John the Baptist. Symbols and stories abound in this window, all lovingly detailed in a 24-page booklet from the cathedral. Wallis' window at Christ Church Cathedral in Victoria comprises three Gothic arched windows in the Chapel of the New Jerusalem. Installed in 1994, they measure an incredible seven metres high and three wide. The design, one huge image of St.



DEBRA BRASH / TIMES COLONIST

AT CHRIST CHURCH Cathedral in Victoria, three seven-metre high windows with Gothic arches are installed in the Chapel of the New Jerusalem.

The stained glass windows of Christopher Wallis are celebrated works of art in many Anglican churches. His art is famous; his name is virtually unknown.

John's vision of the New Jerusalem, was hailed as "ravishing, radiant and a revelation" by Robert Amos, the arts reporter for the *Times Colonist*. Wallis, he wrote, "has made a lasting contribution to the cultural environment of this city."

In the tiny Ontario hamlet of Arva, north of London, is the Church of St. John the Divine. Here, his Memorial West window is entirely based on the ecclesiastical sonnets of the 19thcentury poet William Wordsworth. At St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral in London, Ont., a huge series of windows was added between 1991 and 1996. One window traces London's history from 1893 to the cathedral's coat of arms in 1989. In another, Wallis encapsulates the full nativity story. St. Mark's Anglican, in Brantford, Ont., prides itself on having eight Wallis windows including one commemorating the history of Scouting and Guiding. And when Trinity Anglican Church in Cornwall, Ont., wanted something extraordinary for its 200th

anniversary in 1987, they chose Christopher Wallis to create six masterful stained glass windows for the church entrance.

The design of each window he creates is painstakingly tailored to reflect the themes, symbols and history most cherished by a particular church.

St. Stephen's Ukrainian Catholic Church in Calgary asked Wallis to design in a Byzantine style. A detail from one of these windows, showing the Madonna and Child, was chosen by Canada Post in 1997 to be featured on an international Christmas stamp.

In all, Wallis has created more than 800 windows since arriving in Canada in 1957 from Britain. He opened his studio in London, Ont., and his works can be found in more than 20 churches there. In 1968, he helped found the Environmental Art Program at Fanshawe College in London, Ont. Trained in England at the Hammersmith School of Arts and Crafts, he apprenticed at the renowned studio of Martin Travers and Lawrence Lee. His first love is heraldry and in addition to being a fellow of the British Society of Master Glass Painters, Wallis is a fellow in The Royal Heraldry Society of Canada. Soft-spoken with a trace of a British accent, Wallis is busily working past the standard retirement age. His two new windows for Victoria Hall in Petrolia are to be unveiled in May 2011. Ω

national and diocesan committees.

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We are \$240,000 short of our Anglican Journal Appeal goal of \$600,000. Your cheque, credit card or online donation at www. anglicanjournal.com is crucial. Funds are shared 50-50 with the diocesan newspapers. Thank you!

Patricia McGee is the author of Wonders of Light: The Stained Glass Art of Christopher Wallis and The Story of Fairbank Oil.

Christmas with a twist

The Babe had brought them all together as a Holy Family, and they knew it.

HAROLD MUNN

HE WAS WORRIED and didn't tell her boyfriend. She went to the drugstore to get what she needed and now the fiveminute wait in her bathroom seemed like nine months. Her heart stopped as she watched. At first misty, easy to imagine it wasn't really there, but soon all too clear. Like a great black arrow pointed straight at her heart. A second line appeared on the thin paper strip.

Thoughts raced through her mind. She could abort it. She could kill herself. She could ignore it and maybe it would go away. She stood in the bathroom in silence.

And in the silence she could hear a spring robin calling. So unconcerned, so full of life. Its chirps sounded like, "It's OK. It's OK."

Suddenly she knew what to do. She sat down and wrote to Jack.

The guys were crowding around the stainless steel desk. "Hey, Mr. Middleton, who's got one this time?"

"Hold on, Mr. Taylor, I'll get to you," Mr. Middleton replied.

"Hey, Jack, there's one for

you!" someone yelled. "Sure there is," Jack yelled back from his bed.

"Yeah, there's one for you!" "Quit mucking with my head," Jack threw back the threat.

"I ain't mucking with your head. There's one for you."

Sure enough, there was a letter for him, the envelope slit neatly open, the contents already photocopied.

Back in his cell, he sniffed the envelope to see if she had scented it. Bet they couldn't photocopy that. He spread out the paper. She loved him, she wanted him back, she wished he was with her, she cried thinking about him. She hoped he wouldn't hate her. She was pregnant.

He'd never got very far with arithmetic in school, but you didn't have to be a genius to figure this one out. He'd served six months of his 10year sentence, and she was just now pregnant.

It was hard to sleep that night. Anger and depression surged back and forth in waves. He decided to cut her off. When he did drift off to sleep, his cell-mate had a nightmare and kept waking him up, yelling, "It's OK! It's OK!"

In the morning Jack couldn't be sure if he had dreamed that voice or not, but he began to think. By mid-December he was ready to break his silence. He bought a stamp and some paper with money left over from his two-dollars-a-day pay for cleaning toilets on the unit, got permission to use a pen and wrote back. He wrote that he loved her and asked her for a favour.

Last year her deputy had worked the Christmas shift, so this year it was her turn. Mrs. Stanley walked through the units, knowing this was a tough time of year for the guys. "Hey, Mrs. Stanley, happy Christmas!" "Same to you, Mr. Browning!" Her cheerful manner lifted spirits and of course it never hurt to be cheerful around the warden.

When the electric bolt slid back and she stepped into Jack's unit, she greeted the crowd of guys. Everyone greeted her back.

Except Jack. Jack was standing in front of the barred window. Ignoring the warden. Transfixed by something outside.



STANDING IN THE SNOW was a young woman holding a baby.

Mrs. Stanley came up behind him and looked out the window. There, standing in the snow in the parking lot in the distance was a young woman holding up a baby for Jack to see. Being close to the window and behind Jack, Mrs. Stanley could also see the reflection of Jack's tears silently running down his face. She was taller than he was, and she manoeuvred her body so that his face was hidden from the

rest of the unit. "It's OK," she said quietly, so he could wipe the tears before anyone saw them. They continued gazing on the babe in silence.

"It's OK!" the Babe still says to us, and we proclaim that Good News to all humankind—to everyone without exception. Ω

The Rev. Canon Harold Munn is the rector of The Church of St. John the Divine in Victoria, B.C.





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COLUMN WALKING TOGETHER



Ten unexpected prophets

MARK MACDONALD

S NOTED last month, Peter's use of the prophecy of Joel to interpret the events of Pentecost is highly significant. The big miracle, we are told, is the unexpected revelation of what has been, up until now, a hidden Word. It comes to us in and through the mundane ranks of all kinds of ordinary people. The thing which seems to distinguish these messengers is that they are people we don't expect to be in this position.

Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions; your old men shall dream dreams. Joel gives us a description of the multiple, unexpected and unique ways in which God will choose to unveil the ongoing and relentless purpose which is hidden in Creation. The Word, which is an embryo of a New Universe, is unfolding before us. It is revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and now, with the giving of the Spirit, through the proclamation of some unexpectedly normal and formerly ineligible messengers.

We are prepared by this event to listen for God's Word in the unexpected; we will be amazed and astonished, not by razzmatazz but by that which is, by its normal and mundane character, the unexpected.

In our day, we have seen this prophesy come true in the amazing and powerful expansion of prophetic voice and the role of women in the churches and in the world. Not too long ago, this appeared impossible. Whatever else we might say about this time of struggle for the churches, we are witnessing some blessed, surprising and prophetic events. We might think, for example, of the ordination of Lydia Mamakwa as the bishop of Northern Ontario.

I attend St. Matthew's, Riverdale, with my family. Just a few years ago,

EDITORIAL

Hangin' with the Dalai Lama

KRISTIN JENKINS

HE 14TH Dalai Lama loves to laugh and does so frequently, with obvious delight. But while he may be full of child-like joy, he is nobody's fool. He will meet with just about anyone who asks, but it takes only few short minutes for him to sort out the pretenders from genuine folk.

No matter how important you may be, if you are insincere, he will quickly signal the end of the conversation. He simply puts his palms together and bows slightly. "Thank you," he will say, brightly, eyes twinkling mischieviously. And just like that, your time is up.

The Dalai Lama insists that he's an ordinary mortal, no different from you or me. The people of Tibet and all his followers around the world, who believe him to be the reincarnation of Buddha, would disagree, I'm sure.

A simple Buddhist monk who, since 1953, has been living in exile in Dharamsala, India, the Dalai Lama recently visited Toronto on one of his many speaking engagements. It was his fifth visit and I had the good fortune to see His Holiness up close and personal for the first time. (Well, if you can call sitting at the Rogers Centre with 18,000 Dalai Lama devotees personal. But I was sitting pretty close.)

My interest in the Dalai Lama deepened last year after I watched a documentary by U.S. journalist Rick Ray. Called 10 questions for the Dalai Lama, it tells the story of this tiny, unpretentious and humble man, and Ray asks him some pretty good questions, the kind of questions that you or I would ask if we had only had a bit more time to think about them. Some of the answers surprised me; all of them inspired.

The Dalai Lama leans neither right nor left but travels down the middle. This road allows him to move across polarized terrain with the sure-footedness of someone not committed to one side or the other. He may be the Switzerland of spiritual leaders, but make no mistake, he is a passionate ambassador for modern life. He is a pacifist with deeply held convictions. He is opinionated. His personal hero is Mahatma Ghandi, a man he never met. His *modus operandi*? Talking and listening. The Dalai Lama's greatest inspiration? Every person that he meets, he tells Ray.

When Ray asks him why the happiest people in the world are often the poorest, the Dalai Lama says it is because of "limitless desire, too much greed." The wealthy person driven by a bottomThe Dalai Lama travels down the middle. This path allows him to move across polarized terrain with the surefootedness of someone not committed to one side or the other.



less feeling of "one more, one more, one more" will never be satisfied, right up to his or her last breath, says the Dalai Lama. Why? There is no contentment. "That

person is very poor, very hungry," he points out. Add drugs and alcohol to the mix, and now you're got self-destruction on top of everything else. "In order to save [yourself] from self-destruction, you need some self-discipline," he advises. "You need to analyze the value, the consequences."

Ray makes it clear that one of themost urgent tasks of the Dalai Lama is to preserve the Tibetan culture, which has been systematically destroyed by the Chinese. The Tibetan culture is rich in creative arts—architecture, art, music and dance—but these can only be nourished outside Tibet.

On his visit to Toronto, which has a Tibetan population of about 7,000, the Dalai Lama visited the Tibetan Canadian Cultural Centre. He wholeheartedly supports their work to preserve the culture, but he is also pragmatic when it comes to which traditions continue to serve a purpose and which do not.

The tradition of caste is out of date, he tells Ray. So is thinking that a widow cannot remarry. Traditions worth keeping? Caring for the environment and all living creatures. The family and close relationships are important. So is religious harmony and respect for every major world religious tradition. Not only are these traditions worth keeping, they are also good examples for the world community and to humanity, the Dalai Lama tells Ray.

"Today, everything is inter-connected," he points out. "So my interest is very much linked to your interest and your interest is linked to mine. Therefore, destruction of my neighbour, of my so-called enemy, is actually destruction of myself."

It follows then, when the Dalai Lama calls the concept of war, "old-fashioned, out of date." Violence is a sign of weakness, he says. The "power of the gun is short-term and only truth will stand the test of time, more powerful than ever." The power of truth, he adds, comes out through openness and information. "Peace, smiling, warm, share. This is more powerful."

All major world religions have the same potential to create harmony and peace of mind, he says. Each major religious leader is able to contribute to the well-being of his or her followers. The Dalai Lama recognizes that religions produce people who are spiritually evolved and who have a sense of understanding, compassion and tolerance, as emphasized in Buddhism. He points out to Ray that "if other religious traditions are able to do this and transform human beings, this is every reason to respect these traditions."

The Dalai Lama models the patience and tolerance he urges others to seek. Despite decades of bloodshed, occupation and cultural genocide at the hands of the Chinese, he seeks a way forward for Tibet that is of benefit for both countries. Now, he'll work to convince his fellow Tibetans to "forgive and move forward with optimism," he tells Ray.

He offers food, shelter and a private audience to each Tibetan who survives the perilous 1,200-mile trek to Dharamsala, at the foot of the Himalayan mountain range in northern India. He lives in a modest Buddhist monastery overlooking the town, which is filled with hippies, writers, artists and musicians, many too young to remember Tibet.

At the end of his 90-minute Toronto talk, the Dalai Lama confesses he is ready to retire. "If there is a human right for just one human," he tells the crowd, "then I think I have the right to retire."

What does retirement look like for the Dalai Lama? Complete devotion to spiritual practice. "My real wish is to remain in a remote area like a wounded animal," he tells Ray. "And all the energy, all the time, [I will] concentrate on spiritual practice and use my brain." He pauses and adds, a twinkle in his eyes, his lips upturned in delight, "But without much expectation, so no regrets." Ω

Kristin Jenkins is editor of the Anglican Journal.

living and prophetic history was observed in that place through the ministry of Florence Li-Tim Oi, the first woman ordained in the Anglican Communion. It moves me to think that she was there, one of the great cloud of witnesses that is pointing us towards our true home in Jesus.

More and more, we hear God's Word in normal voices. This is the miracle we have seen in the past and live in today. For the future, at the very least, we should expect to be amazed. Ω

Bishop Mark MacDonald is national indigenous bishop of the Anglican Church of Canada.

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CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS:

Anglican Journal Editor: editor@anglican journal.com;

Bishop M. George Elliott, President of Anglican Journal Board of Directors: ajpresident@anglicanjournal.com; Vianney (Sam) Carriere, General Synod Director of Communications and Information Resources: scarriere@national anglican.ca

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LETTERS



Amen

FRED HILTZ

Y MOM DIED three years ago, the summer that I was elected primate of our beloved church.

I had always hoped for just a few things from our family home. One was a very old print of a choir boy in a beautifully carved frame. For years it had hung above the sideboard in my grandmother's dining room. Vested in cassock and surplice, he

is holding his

"Amen" to every loving purpose of God, in and through his Blessed Son, whom we know as Saviour and Lord of all.

hymn book. He has the face of an angel. Don't all young choristers? His eyes are lifted heavenward. As if the hymn has ended, the print is entitled "Amen." I always loved this print and I am happy to have it.

But it was only when we moved to Toronto and I was about to hang the print in my study at home that I noticed the very fine black print in the top left corner that reads, "Supplement to The Christmas Globe, 1899." I realized in that moment that this print had actually belonged to my great-grandmother, whom I never knew.

"Amen" sang the choir boy. Before the mystery of the word made flesh and dwelling among us, the apostles, saints and martyrs of the church sang, "Amen." To that great truth, that in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, all our forbears in the faith have sung, "Amen."

To those wondrous words of St. John the Evangelist, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son...not to condemn the world, but so the world might be saved through him" (John 3:16–17), the people of all ages sing, "Amen."

"Amen" we sing to his naming as "Mighty God, Wonderful Counsellor, The Prince of Peace."

Got sugar?

Who says the Anglican Church of Canada can't roll with the times? Mary Lucky sent us this photo of Emily Price and her equine worship guest, Ginger. They attended the blessing of the Animals on the Feast of St. Francis last October at Christ Church—St. Jude's, in Ivy, Ont. We wonder if Ginger would like to meet Charlie. (See "Shining Example," below.)

ZERO LIVING

The article (*Green your life*, Oct. 2010, p. 1) raises some valid issues regarding actions to combat rising greenhouse-gas emissions. Yes, we need firm commitment by government, but that is only half the story. The crisis facing our once-green world is global. The solution lies with each and every one of us.

I live on Vancouver Island. I grow much of my own food, cycle, irrigate my garden with rainwater, eschew "disposable" containers, dry my laundry out of doors, mend things that break and use elbow grease not power tools. I call it "zero living" and I invite others to follow suit. In the words of Professor Lynn McDonald, "Anglicans need to green their lives." But so too does everyone else. Now.

Elizabeth Griffin Victoria, BC

STARING US IN THE FACE

Climate change has been happening for billions of years, long before humans and the Industrial Revolution. The probable reason for environmental damage was postulated 200 years ago by the Rev. Thomas Malthus. He forecast global destruction caused by global overpopulation. **M.J. Pringle**

Ottawa

ALARMING STATEMENT

While our bishops have every right to meet in private to share fellowship and pastoral care, when they are acting in an official capacity as the House of Bishops, they should do so in the open. I am alarmed by the statement that came from their October meeting in Montreal that it is their "consensus that the media should attend our meetings only when invited." About the only media consistently interested in what anyone in the Anglican Church of Canada does these days is the church's own media. To exclude them is to keep official episcopal deliberations from Anglicans. This violates the cooperative nature of governance that we expect in our church. Neale Adams Vancouver



TWO THUMBS UP... AND ONE DOWN

In the article *Been there, done that* (Nov. 2010, p. 9), you referred to HMCS Discovery as "the HMCS Discovery." Since the letters HMCS stand for "Her Majesty's Canadian Ship," they are never preceded by a definite article.

On a more positive note, congratulations on a deeply moving editorial on the subject of sexual bullying. And congratulations on the well-written and well-balanced essays on the Anglican Military Ordinariate.

The Anglican Journal also deserves the highest praise for the "Walking together" column by Bishop Mark MacDonald. The insight and wisdom of his monthly column are a joy to read.

K. Corey Keeble Toronto

SHINING EXAMPLE

Recently, I was in Calgary and attended Cathedral Church of the Redeemer. The first person I met there was Verne W. Trevoy, who, along with his dog, Charlie, greeted me most warmly (*A helping paw*, Nov. 2010, p. 5). Charlie's gentle demeanour and faithful obedience to Mr. Trevoy's needs (including taking him up for communion) was inspiring. Many church greeters could learn from Charlie's shining example!

Jon Ted Wynne

Winnipeg

STORIES OF SURVIVAL

Survival in the age of uncertainty (Oct. 2010, p. 4) is a beautiful story

DEATH RATTLE?

Now that our Anglican Church of Canada has closed its Partnerships department and is shrinking on all fronts, is that a death rattle we hear... and does anyone care? Our money problem is a symptom. We do not have a financial problem but a spiritual one. **The Ven. William Portman Regina, SK**

COME AS YOU ARE

This year's theme for Back to Church Sunday was "Come as you are." Our welcome is sadly limited. A gay or lesbian person will hear, "Do come, but we can't accept your relationship." By contrast, Jesus' invitation to each and every one of us is unconditional. If only we had his courage and compassion.

Winifred Perryman Corbyville, Ont.

MOST DISTRESSING

It is distressing that the bishops in Toronto have ordained to the priesthood a person who is civilly married to a same-sex partner. They have set in motion further departures from our beloved Anglican Church of Canada. Such actions make it very difficult for those of us who are trying to encourage people to stay.

The Rev. Canon Dr. Brett Cane Winnipeg

REAL ELDERS

I think the solution to the shortage of priests to administer the eucharist is the one proposed by Roland Allen almost a century ago: ordain the

"Amen" we sing to the glories of his righteousness and the wonders of his love.

"Amen" we sing to the increase of his reign of peace among the nations. Indeed, with people of every language, race and nation, we hail his birth and with one voice sing a resounding "Amen" to every loving purpose of God, in and through his Blessed Son, whom we know as Saviour and Lord of all.

May you know the blessings of his love this Christmastide. $\underline{\Omega}$

Archbishop Fred Hiltz is primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

when so many need encouragement, understanding and love. Keep up the good work. Barbara Dreury

Arborg, Man.

Paisley, Ont.

FOUND HER NAME

I found the name of RCAF Airwomen veteran Dorothy Chambers [*How to wear a poppy*, Nov. 2010, p. 2] in my reunion memorabilia. I joined the RCAF Airwomen in October 1942 as an equipment assistant. Later, I played clarinet for parades and recruitment concerts. **D. Fern McFadden** natural and recognized leaders of local congregations as priests (presbyters). Howard E. Green Saskatoon

WHAT ABOUT VIETNAM?

Shamefully, Canada excludes from Remembrance Day ceremonies those who fought—and died—in the Vietnam War. We should keep in mind that the vast majority of those who fought in that war did so with honourable intentions.

Frank G. Sterle, Jr. White Rock, BC

Looking for all the places to meet God

Something significant needs to happen

KRISTIN JENKINS

BISHOP MICHAEL BIRD of the diocese of Niagara is a glass half full kind of guy. He has only been in the job for two and a half years, so one could argue that he's just not tired enough yet. But spend some time with the man, and you come away certain this is not lip-service.

"Everything can be seen as a negative or as an opportunity," he says. As an example, Bishop Bird points to 10-year statistics for the U.S. Episcopal Church, where attendance has declined 18 per cent. "There's a lot of doom and gloom about that," he says. "But that puts us in the position to say something significant needs to happen."

Bishop Bird actually sees resources where others see scarcity. He gets inspired by the opportunity that comes with change despite not knowing where that change might lead. He feels passionate about moving forward despite mind-boggling odds. And he is unafraid about not having all the answers because he trusts they will come.

"We've spent a lot of time trying to discern where God is leading us as a diocese," he says. In spite of a "strong sense that the Holy Spirit is moving us, just where we're heading isn't exactly

clear," he admits. "I don't think any of us knows this [yet] in the life of the church."

Instead, he supports the notion that the way forward lies in the process of taking risks and then sharing the stories. Making mistakes is inevi-

table, he adds, and if you don't share the stories, you could miss something important. "We don't always know what success looks like," he explains. "Sometimes, the things that look like mistakes or failures may actually be the first step in some great breakthrough."

He declined to provide a vision for the diocese before he was elected, instead reflecting on the direction of his own episcopal ministry. His journey to Lambeth Palace in London, just three months after he was elected, had a profound impact. Following meetings with fellow Anglican bishops from around the globe, Bishop Bird visited the Bernardo Children's Charity, an organization that ran orphanages across the U.K. from the mid-1800s to the end of the 19th century. There, with the help of official records, Bishop Bird learned that his great-grandfather had been a beggar on the streets of London and that his grandfather and great-uncle had grown up in an orphanage. "It was a story that wasn't talked about in my family," he says. Weeks after returning home, he received a package containing photographs of his great-uncle, on the day he arrived at the orphanage and on the day he departed. "You can imagine how



BISHOP Michael Bird: "We've spent a lot of time trying to discern where God is leading us."

that story changed my life," Bishop Bird tells me in his office at Cathedral Place in downtown Hamilton, one of the poorest urban neighbourhoods in Canada. Statistics show that living conditions there are akin to subsisting in a Third

World country. "You can begin to understand why I think I've been called as the bishop of Niagara, sitting in this office in this place," he says.

Bishop Bird also learned about incredible challenges and obstacles to ministry facing bishops in Africa. In spite of this,

he saw "an incredible passion and joy at seeing their churches grow." When he returned home, the diocese of Niagara looked very different.

"I saw the rich resources we have here. I began telling people that I had just come back from an experience that told me loud and clear that we are actually operating out of a place of abundance. God gives us what we need." He adds, "Nowhere is that more true than in this diocese. I believe that with all my heart and soul."

He sent out an invitation across the diocese saying that he would clear his calendar to attend any kind of gathering. "I had no idea if anyone would take me up on it or not," he admits. Within two weeks, he was booked solid. In all, he attended 22 different gatherings in just a few weeks, sharing his own story of transformation and inviting others to share theirs. At each gathering, stories were recorded and a "Speaker's Corner" set up so people could also share their thoughts and feelings on video. In addition to his own story, Bishop Bird began to share his passion for the diocese and his conviction that resources were plentiful. He also began to talk about the pursuit of excellence for ministry,

"another thing that I believe we're called to at this time."

A vision for the diocese began to emerge. It had five distinct areas of focus, like petals on a flower. They include outstanding leadership for ministry; continuous culture of innovation; life-changing worship; a generous culture of stewardship; and prophetic social justice making. "I can say them in my sleep," says Bishop Bird. Each petal has a leadership team that supports congregations, where the real work of change and transformation is taking place.

* * *

When Bishop Bird looks around the diocese, he sees a lot to be thankful for, including knowl-

We don't always know

what success looks

like. Sometimes, the

things that look like

actually be the first step in

some great breakthrough.

mistakes or failures may

edgeable, capable leaders, an energized, vibrant youth ministry and a passion for social justice and environmental stewardship. "I think we are people who have the leadership ability, the creativity and so forth, but we need to do better

at getting resources into the hands of people who need them.

on Tap ministry. The priest who runs it out of a pub vows the group is attracting people "who would never set foot inside a church," notes Bishop Bird.

It's not about convincing people to think like you do, he insists. It's about having the conversation. "God is in the conversation," says Bishop Bird, "not when you and I have come to a common mind on something, after I've ranted and raved enough or brought you around to my way of thinking."

It's no longer enough to expect people to come to us, he points out. "We've got to encounter people and we've got to do it with humility. We need to listen to people and meet them on common ground, such as care for the environment."

For all his forward thinking, Bishop Bird is also a big believer in getting back to basics. He says that in order to share faith stories, Anglicans need to be knowledgeable about the Bible and scriptures, "which are at the very centre of what we do." Anglicans also need to be knowledgeable about the church intself, and the Anglican Communion.

"If we are going to be inviting people and talking to them about what our church means to us, how it's changed our lives and what the presence of God means in our lives, then we need to be able to do that on a fairly firm footing."

It's also important to acknowledge that while Anglicans are learning to do new things, such as connecting with the unchurched, such as through the Back to Church Sunday initiative, the problems they are designed to address may have been difficult to avoid. Let's not "beat ourselves up too much," says Bishop Bird. "A number of things have been beyond our control." In many ways, he points out, the Anglican church is a victim of its own success. "The more success you enjoy," he says, "the harder it is to change when you need to change."

It's a challenging time to be a bishop, he admits. With the church no longer

> tied to the state, it's also "pretty clear" the church is moving away from a hierarchical model. So where does that leave leaders who still want to build consensus but also have to make the tough decisions?

> Without knowing the answers, Bishop Bird still feels passionately that the

church has a voice that's listened to. "We may not have the place in society that we had 40 years ago, but in actual fact, I think it's a healthier place now because we're freer to say what we need to say and be prophets." In the end, he says, it's really about the conversation. "I really believe that we meet God in the dialogue, in the journey, and I think that in fact that's part of being Christian. "It's not so much about feeding people the right answers," he adds. "It's about walking with them on the journey. That's where we meet God." Ω

God gives us what we need. Nowhere is that more true than in this diocese. I believe that with all my heart and soul.

> "At this moment in the life of the church," he adds, "I think we have to be very disciplined around our work, our thinking and our actions."

Bishop Bird believes in getting better at advocacy that targets the root problems and encouraging congregations to engage politicians in strategies for dealing with matters like poverty reduction and social justice.

The way forward includes getting out to meet people where they are. On the wall of innovation on the diocesan website, for instance, where parishioners are encouraged to share their ideas and stories, you'll read about fresh expressions such as the Church

Kristin Jenkins is editor of the Anglican Journal.



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You'll never be the same.

Christmastide

A cross-country collection of poignant memories

DIANA SWIFT

N THIS SECULAR and multifaith society, Christmas past and present still resonates deeply with Canadians. My proudest hour as a child was playing Magus Melchior in the Sunday school pageant, wearing my grandmother's velvet "evening turban" from the 1930s and carrying my "myrrh"-mother's pointy, bronze incense burner. And over the years, I've been fortunate to experience a few of what I call quintessential Christmas moments, when the force and power of that longago but ever-new event stand out in crystal clarity.

A few years ago, I was making a late start on my shopping on a drizzly Toronto afternoon in mid-December, dashing in and out of posh stores and buying rashly and resentfully. By chance, I dropped into the Anglican Church of the Redeemer, where a full-costume rehearsal was in progress for a concert of Italian **Renaissance Christmas** music—exquisite and, to me, unfamiliar pieces that enthralled me for an hour. When I emerged, darkness had fallen and the grey city was miraculously covered in a blanket of fresh snow.

Elated by the music and then the snow, I was overcome with a feeling I can only describe as reverence. I pressed a handful of bills under the sleeping bag of a homeless man huddled on a grate nearby. I went my way, thinking: "If you do nothing else this season, you have had a true Christmas experience."

Christmas means many things to many people. To the man on the grate and others like him, it may mean a time when people are more generous and mindful of the needs of others. To the lover of music, it may mean the performance of sacred works that thrill Christians and non-Christians alike.

The Anglican Journal spoke with people across Canada to find out what the season means to them and to tap into their recollections of moments when they felt touched by the joy and goodwill that define the spirit of this holy time. Here's what they told us. * * * *

For **KEITH BOECKNER**, people's warden for the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Quebec City, the highlight of the season is always the late-evening service on Christmas Eve, which in Quebec City usually involves deep snow.

Keith was raised in the Lutheran Church

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MICHAEL HUDSON



| | i x | Ja | nua | ary Bible Re | adir | gs | - incl |
|------|------------------|----|------|----------------------|------|------|-------------------------|
| Date | Reading | | Date | Reading | | Date | Reading |
| 01 | Psalm 8.1-9 | | 11 | Matthew 2.13-23 | | 22 | 1 Corinthians 1.1-17 |
| 02 | John 1.1-18 | | 12 | Isaiah 49.1-13 | | 23 | Matthew 4.12-25 |
| 03 | Isaiah 60.1-22 | | 13 | Psalm 40.1-17 | | 24 | Acts 26.1-18 |
| 04 | Psalm 72.1-20 | | 14 | John 1.29-42 | | 25 | Acts 26.19-32 |
| 05 | Ephesians 3.1-21 | | 15 | Amos 5.1-15 | | 26 | Micah 6.1-16 |
| 06 | Matthew 2.1-12 | | 16 | Amos 5.16-27 | | 27 | Psalm 15.1-5 |
| 07 | Isaiah 42.1-13 | | 17 | Deuteronomy 10.12-22 | | 28 | Psalm 146.1-10 |
| 80 | Isaiah 42.14-25 | | 18 | Matthew 16.1-20 | | 29 | 1 Corinthians 1.18-31 🗌 |
| 09 | Matthew 3.1-17 | | 19 | Acts 15.1-21 | | 30 | Matthew 5.1-12 |
| 10 | Jeremiah 31.1-22 | | 20 | Isaiah 8.11–9.7 | | 31 | Psalm 37.1-20 |
| | | | 21 | Psalm 27.1-14 | | | |

and he recalls celebrating Christmas in small Ontario towns with his maternal and paternal grandparents, all of whom were of German descent. A horse-drawn sled would meet them at the road to take them into his grandfather's farm, and often they would head off to their rural church in a one-horse sleigh. "We always set up a crèche at home," he says.

His family celebrated on Christmas Eve, exchanging gifts after the candlelight service.

* * * *

BEVERLEY WHITEHOUSE of

Whitehorse, Yukon, remembers the 11.00 p.m. Christmas Eve service from her early childhood as the most powerful symbol of the season. But one December about seven years ago, she had a life-altering spiritual experience. "I was having a very hard time at that point in my life," she recalls. "I was on a bus crossing the bridge over the Yukon River and on the other side there was a huge sign saying, 'Christ is the reason for the season.'"

The truth of those words hit home. "I thought to myself, 'Christ is also the reason I'm alive.' I had been a lifelong Anglican but had not yet dedicated my heart completely to Christ and his work," she says. That was a pivotal point for Beverley, who is now a lay minister as well as secretary to the Parish of Whitehorse at Christ Church Cathedral.

* * * *

Christmas is also a time when our awareness of and sympathies for others may be heightened. **SHEILA BOUTILIER**, a retired nurse who attends St. Nicholas Church in eastend Toronto, recalls one year when she felt pained by the sharp contrast between the joy of attending Christmas Eve service, as is her custom, and the sadness of caring for critically ill patients in the hospital. "I was working that Christmas Eve and was so saddened by the patients, many of whom were so ill they were not aware of the season," she says. "I couldn't even wish them Merry Christmas."

On a more uplifting note, Sheila recalls a modern footnote to the journey to Bethlehem. About five years ago, her then 20-year-old nephew, Jason Dunnet, was serving in the Royal Canadian Dragoons in Afghanistan. His squadron was carrying military equipment up a steep mountain path when they came across a farmer viciously abusing his donkey. "The boys all chipped in and bought the donkey for \$100," says Sheila. "Then they took the animal to an army medic, who announced that it was pregnant." That donkey was pampered like a princess and eventually gave birth to a healthy foal.

VALMA PARSONS is a retired

elementary school teacher in Spaniard's Bay, a small former shipbuilding town (pop. 3,000), an hour's drive from St. John's. For Valma, a member of the Parish of Spaniard's Bay and Tilton, Christmas revolves around religion and family. The Christmas that stands out most in her mind is quite recent, about four years ago. "I said to myself that year, 'The one thing I really would love is for the whole family to go to Christmas Eve service together.' And so it happened that her sons and daughters-in-law and her two-year-old grandson all came home for Christmas and went to church as a family.

"There were seven of us all together in the front pew, worshipping God. It was a wonderful feeling. I could feel the Holy Spirit. I was so full of joy, love, hope and peace that my heart was ready to explode," says Valma.

As an added bonus, some of the



There were seven of us all together in the front pew, worshipping God. I could feel the Holy Spirit. I was so full of joy, love, hope and peace that my heart was ready to explode.

Valma Parsons, Spaniard's Bay, Nfld.

students she had taught years before had also come home for the holiday and stopped to speak to her as they passed by the front row. "It was the best gift I could ever have," she says.

* * * *

Reverence, generosity and connectedness with our fellow human beings may be the cornerstones, but Christmas is also about revelry and good food. **STEVE PITT**, who trained to be a United Church minister, is now a writer of children's books based in Bonfield, a tiny hamlet in northern Ontario. One Christmas in Toronto, his Sri Lankan in-laws won a huge 45-pound turkey, frozen rock-solid of course, and donated it for Steve's annual dinner, always a celebration of Dickensian proportions.

"It wouldn't fit in the fridge or the sink for thawing, so I decided to thaw it out in the car, which was the right temperature for thawing," he says. "I put it in my son's long-discarded car seat wrapped in a blanket, with a maple leaf toque stuck on top at a rakish angle and drove it around on my errands."

As Steve emerged from the beer store with his supply of Christmas suds, an irate lady was waiting to upbraid him for leaving his child in the car while he bought alcohol. And it got worse. "Later, I was pulled over by a police officer checking for drinking drivers under the RIDE program. When he saw the outdated car seat, he wanted to write me up a ticket for using an obsolete model in the front seat!" I showed him the turkey, and all he could say was, 'Move along.' " The bird, incidentally, thawed perfectly, though it had to go in the oven propped on its head and at 3 a.m. to be ready in time for dinner.

May your Christmas be a blend of reverence, joy, peace, merriment, generosity and connection with others. Ω

Diana Swift is editor of Canadian Health magazine and a parishioner at St. James' Cathedral in Toronto.





As the season of Advent approaches, it is a wonderful time for Canadian Anglicans to reflect on the needs of people at home and around the world and the impact that faithful gifts can have in growing hope and compassion in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This year we are inviting Canadian Anglicans to support our beloved Church, and its work in the service of the Gospel, through our new gift guide, Acts of Faith.

With each passing year, more and more people are opting out of the Christmas shopping rush and are making the choice to put their faith into practice by giving gifts that improve the lives of people in developing countries, promote justice and equality, advocate for Indigenous peoples and nurture the work of the Church in the world.

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God is looking for 'willingness of our hearts,' says Arctic bishop



SUFFRAGAN Bishop Benjamin Arreak and the Rev. Eileen Steele at St. Stephen's Church in Chambly, near Montreal.

Harvey Shepherd is the editor of the *Montreal Anglican*, the diocesan newspaper of the diocese of Montreal. He filed the following reports on the meeting of the House of Bishops, Oct. 22–25, on pp. 10–11.

Montreal

The church was St. Stephen's—the old stone church in the historic community of Chambly, located in the Montreal South Shore area near the Richelieu River. The hymns included Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah accompanied by two young men on guitars, and the gospel was the passage from Luke about the tax collector who said, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

The guest preacher was Bishop Benjamin T. Arreak, suffragan bishop for the Nunavik region of the diocese of Arctic.

"God is not looking for perfect things," he told a congregation of about 50. "He is looking for the willingness of our hearts." Also in attendance were a few members of the former Church of St. James in nearby St-Jean-sur-Richelieu.

The bishop was one of more than 48 bishops from across Canada attending the joint meeting of the Anglican House of Bishops and Lutheran Conference of Bishops. Each of the bishops visited different parishes in and around Montreal as guest preachers.

The Rev. Eileen Steele, the current priest at St. Stephen's, said local parishes will be looking at ways to support the diocese of the Arctic, including prayer books from two South Shore parishes and possibly, a financial contribution to rebuilding the "Igloo Church"—St. Jude's Cathedral in Iqaluit, on Baffin Island, destroyed by fire in 2005.

Bishop Arreak said the building could be ready for worship by the end of 2011. "The future is up in the air, but people all over Canada are supporting us," he said. "We appreciate and thank God for that." Ω

EDITOR'S NOTE

At press time, it was announced that Bishop Benjamin Arreak had decided to retire for personal reasons. The retirement was effective when it was announced in early November.

Bishop Arreak was elected in May 2002. He also served as deputy prolocutor of General Synod from 1995 to 1998 and on several national committees. He has been part of a team translating the Bible into Inuktitut.

Bishop Arreak and his wife, Susan, have eight children.



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TURKISH DELIGHT

Verieus Departure Detas * 14 Depa

From Istanbul we cross the Bosporus into Asia Minor and Bursa and continue via Gordion to Earth Tumulus and Ankara. Discover the fascinating histories of Agakarahan, Cappadoda,



ames and Caroline, ages 77 and 76, are looking forward with anticipation and joy to a special Christmas calabration this year. Friends are coming over from the United Kingdom to spend the holideys with them - all looking forward to beautiful carol and Christmas Eve services, wonderful dinners, a theatre outing, and lots of talk. They are feeling very grateful to God for his many blessings over the years and have decided this Christmas to make an investment in the ministries of General Synod, supporting particularly the work of the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop and the Anglican Bishop Ordinary to the Canadian Forces. They know their gift will make a very significant difference in the lives of many by providing support for these vital and cutting-edge ministries.

(fully taxable), and will invest this sum in a charitable gift annuity through the Department of Philanthropy of General Synod. They will receive \$248.25 a month for the rest of their lives, or \$2,579 a year, a yield of 5.958 %. 82.29 % of this income is tax free. In addition, they will receive a donation receipt for income tax purposes for \$15,260.63 which will provide a substantial tax credit for their 2010 tex return.

Caroline and James are thriled they have come to this decision, responding at this special time of year to God's generosity, and sharing with other members of the Anglican community.

Through these gifts we go where we cannot travel, witness where our voices cannot be heard; speak languages never learned and love those whom we have never seen.

They will withdrew \$50,000 from their GIC's, which are only paying a yield of just under 2 %

– C. William Nichoboe





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Archbishop Fred Hiltz is flanked by ELCIC national bishop Susan Johnson and Paul Feheley, principal secretary to the primate.

Brainstorming solutions

Montreal

Canadian Lutheran churches appear to be faced with many of the same problems known to Canadian Anglicans. These include shrinking congregations and increasing demand for weekly eucharist.

According to Susan Johnson, national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), this is leading Lutherans to look at such measures as the use of ordained pastors as "circuit riders" bringing the eucharist to a number of parishes. Speaking here at the joint meeting of the Anglican House of Bishops and Lutheran Conference of Bishops, she added there has also been pressure to revive a practice of permitting lay people to preside at the sacrament, as

some Lutheran churches did at one time.

Bishop Johnson also spoke about joint partnerships between large urban and small rural parishes as well as "locally called" pastors ordained to serve their own parishes with less stringent educational requirements than exist for other pastors.

Her remarks led several bishops, Anglican and Lutheran, to discuss various proposals for opening up ordination more widely, especially among people already ministering to isolated communities. "If they are recognized in the community, what is stopping us from ordaining them as priests?" asked Anglican Bishop Larry Robertson of the Yukon. Ω

—HS

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Reclaiming identity and voice

Montreal

There has been too much sex (as a topic of discussion) and too much lobbying by special interest groups at gatherings of Canada's Anglican bishops in recent years, say Anglican bishops.

Instead, a statement issued at the Oct. 22–25 joint meeting here of the Anglican House of Bishops and the Lutheran Conference of Bishops outlines plainly that bishops want more education and theological discussion and less show-and-tell from outside groups.

Calling this fall's meeting "one of the most holy and historic meetings the House of Bishops has had," Archbishop Fred Hiltz added: "You [bishops] are claiming your identity, your authority and your voice."

In an interview with the



Archbishop Fred Hiltz greets Bishop David Torraville of Central Nfld.

Anglican Journal, Archbishop Hiltz said there needs to be greater emphasis placed on cultivating "holiness, a genuine desire to grow together in Christ and [in] our relationship with God and with one another as servants of God." The joint meeting included 42 Anglican bishops and six bishops from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Ω

–HS

Working together to face the future

Montreal

As parishes and dioceses in Canada's Far North struggle with ever more scarce resources, new faces in the House of Bishops are helping the Anglican Church of Canada look to the future.

Bishop Lydia Mamakwa consecrated May 14 as area bishop for what the diocese of Keewatin refers to as "Northern Ontario" parishes—was one of two Anglican bishops present for the first time at the joint meeting of the Anglican House of Bishops and Lutheran Conference of Bishops in Montreal.

Bishop Mamakwa's election was described as historic, the first time an aboriginal





HARVEY SHEPHERI

BISHOP Lydia Mamakwa, Mary Atagotaaluk and Susan Arreak.

bishop has been elected by aboriginal people using traditional methods. Bishop Mamakwa heard Archbishop Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, describe her election and consecration as a "holy moment."

Bishop Mamakwa, a member of the Ojicree people related to both the neighbouring Ojibway and Cree people—is married to Chief James Mamakwa of the Kingfisher Lake community where they live. She was previously archdeacon of the area she still serves.

The diocese of Keewatin

tween 300 and 1,000 residents each.

In an interview, Bishop Mamakwa said that her election as a bishop has been an important morale-builder for the community. In addition, being able to perform confirmations in an area where travel is difficult is particularly useful, she said. She supervises 43 priests, some of whom are retired but still quite active.

Also in attendance was Bishop Thomas A. Corston, who was elected bishop of Moosonee on July 16. Bishop Corston succeeded Bishop Caleb Lawrence, who for decades was at the helm of the diocese, which wraps around James Bay, covering a large area of Ontario and Quebec. Its cathedral is in the Timmins area. Ω

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straddles the Ontario-Manitoba border and extends from the U.S. border to Hudson Bay. Bishop Mamakwa's area of the diocese starts north of Kenora, where the diocesan cathedral is situated, and covers 16 communities of be-

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Extreme makeover

Church House restructuring shuts down Partnerships department

LEIGH ANNE WILLIAMS

Restructuring at the Anglican Church of Canada head offices in Toronto has resulted in the closure of the Partnerships department as of November 1.

In addition, there will no longer be a full-time librarian on staff at General Synod library, beginning in 2012. Yet to be determined is how best to maintain services, including online databases.

In all, 14 positions were affected by the restructuring

of Church House. Ten positions were eliminated. In some cases, staff were offered different or new positions; six staff received layoff notices. The next year will be used as a transitional year to evaluate the restructuring, said Archbishop Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, in a meeting with staff.

The Partnerships department, from which four staff positions were eliminated, focused on three program areas—Partners in



Henriette Thompson

Mission, EcoJustice and the Anglican Healing Fund. The primate says this work will now be done in partnership with other churches and overseen by staff in two newly created positions: Henriette Thompson, formerly director

of Partnerships, will assume a new role as co-ordinator of ecumenical, interfaith and government relations. Andrea Mann becomes the new co-ordinator of global relations within the Anglican Communion.

However, the work of the Partnerships department in other key areas will no longer be supported by staff. This includes the Internship Program for Theological Students, the Volunteers in Mission program (support for the remaining volunteer ends in early 2012), companion diocese program support and most grants to global partners. Oversight of The Anglican Fund for Healing and Reconciliation has been transferred to the Office of the General Secretary as of Nov. 1.

"We think we've achieved a structure that reflects

a capacity to live within our means and that's a huge achievement," said Archbishop Hiltz.

The cuts are the result of a 2009 decision to eliminate deficit budgeting by 2012. Deficits have been reduced each year since. The amount left to be cut from the 2011 operating budget was expected to be in the vicinity of \$1.1 million, but information on the actual amount was not available at press time. The draft budget is subject to approval by the Financial Management Committee and the Council of General Synod (CoGS), which meets Nov. 18-21.

Archbishop Hiltz noted that 80 to 84 per cent of General Synod revenue depends on contributions from dioceses. These contributions have been declining since 1992. Ω

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A society in precipitous decline

JOHN ARKELIAN REVIEWER

N LAW, there is a principle known as "fruit of the poisonous tree," which holds that if a taproot is nourished by poisonous soil, the fruit it produces will be tainted. But what if our entire society is built upon a set of deadly illusions—an elaborate house of cards that propels us toward catastrophe? This is precisely the premise of Chris Hedges' compelling new book. The result is a brilliant, not-to-be-missed critique of "a society in precipitous decline." Some 80 per cent of households in our society never buy or read a book over the course

EMPIRE OF ILLUSION: The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle *by Chris Hedges* Alfred A. Knopf Canada 2009, 240 pages, \$29.95 ISBN 978-0-307-39846-8

of a year; instead, the average household has a television turned on for nearly seven hours a day. When it comes to war, popular culture most often offers up the illusion of "a ticket to glory, honour and manhood." Elsewhere, we are force-fed the lie that each of us may rise up from the undifferentiated masses to take our very own place in the sun. In the process, we come to believe that "real life, our own life, is...next to the life of celebrities...inadequate." Is it any wonder, then, that we hang onto every word of every "expert" who seeks to seduce us with the illusion that our very own "extreme makeover" is just around the corner?

Then there's pornography, which has become ubiquitous on the Internet as it strives to excite ever-more jaded consumers with images of once-unimaginable degradation. Meanwhile, our Ivy League post-secondary schools make it their chief business to condition students "to placate and please authority, never to challenge it." It means

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glorifying undisciplined self-interest. It means accumulating money and power without heed to conscience or social values.

For Hedges, democracy is in greater peril than it has ever been. Widespread unemployment, wanton de-industrialization, declining real incomes, the alarming erosion of basic civil liberties, costly (and probably futile) foreign wars, wildly unsustainable levels of public and private debt, the conversion of North American economies from production to consumption and a cutthroat variant of capitalism that remains unrepentant and grossly unregulated even in the aftermath of financial calamity-all these point to a society heading for a fall. When that happens, the

siren call of a homegrown totalitarianism dressedup in patriotism may prove irresistible for the beleaguered, disillusioned masses.

"Individualism is touted as [our] core value....Yet most of us meekly submit...to the tyranny of the corporate state." It's time to forgo our illusions about the world of limitless prosperity. If we are to avert calamity, we need to push unregulated corporatism aside in favour of democracy—"a democracy based not on personal gain but on self-sacrifice"—and the common good. For "where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29). Ω

John Arkelian is a writer,

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