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Fruitful harvest

"For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9). A group of parishioners and farmers is taking this biblical counsel to heart. See story, p. 3.

Study guide encourages Anglicans to grapple with realities of physician-assisted dying law in Canada



▲ **The Rev. Eileen Scully**

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER

"What does it mean to 'be present' to someone who is dying, and to 'provide care'? What care do I want to experience when I am dying? Can I provide care for somebody who has very different values from mine?"

These are some of the questions posed in a new study guide aimed at helping Anglicans reflect on and respond to Canadian legislation regarding medical

assistance in dying.

The Rev. Eileen Scully, director of faith, worship and ministry for the Anglican Church of Canada, who led the creation of the guide, says changes in legislation have helped to open conversations about "how do I envision how I want to be cared for in my death, in my dying?"

In a historic ruling Feb. 6, 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down laws against physician-assisted dying and

See Guide, p. 7

Bishops discuss concerns over marriage canon



▲ **Archbishop Fred Hiltz**

PHOTO: TALI FOLKINS

Tali Folkins
STAFF WRITER

A resolution to change the marriage canon to allow for same-sex marriages may itself be amended to include protections for Anglicans who have a traditional view of marriage, said Archbishop Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

"There is a possibility" that the resolution, which passed its required first reading at General Synod in 2016, may be amended when it is presented for a second and final reading in 2019, Hiltz said in an interview April 19.

Another possibility is that a separate resolution to amend the canon could be made, one that "would enable the church as a whole, as a General Synod, to say something clearer to conservatives who want to remain in our church" in the event the resolution passes, he said.

Preparing for a potentially divisive second vote on the resolution was an important topic of conversation for the

See Bishops, p. 12

Do you know whose land you're on?



▲ **Archdeacon Travis Enright**

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Tali Folkins
STAFF WRITER

Beginning a service or other gathering with an Indigenous territorial acknowledgment can serve as an important gesture of reconciliation because, when done well, it not only publicly recognizes past injustice but also expresses hope for a better shared future, some Canadian Indigenous Anglican leaders say.

"I'm so blown away when I go somewhere else and I hear it," says Valerie Kerr, archdeacon for truth, reconciliation and Indigenous ministry for the diocese of Niagara and rector of St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Niagara Falls, Ont. "To me, it's just a sign of respect... For years, the powers that be tried to get rid of my ancestors or assimilate them, never mind acknowledging that they were the people who were here when the first settlers arrived."

Travis Enright, archdeacon for Indigenous ministry for the diocese of Edmonton

See Territorial, p. 8

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'It's what she truly wanted'



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Hugs and prayers



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Birth of a family





Prayer: There's an app for that

Faith links with technology

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER

Smartphones dominate daily life, used for everything from ordering takeout to mapping directions to snapping photos to, occasionally, talking on the phone. So why not tap them for prayer?

A brief search of the App Store reveals dozens, if not hundreds, of apps designed to facilitate prayer, available for Apple and Android devices; most are free.



PHOTO: EVERETT COLLECTION/SHUTTERSTOCK

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- *Pop music's Beyoncé inspires Eucharist at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco*
- *Toronto Anglicans join in 'prayer and lament' after van attack*
- *Anglican, Lutheran leaders ask for Earth Day prayers and action*
- *Conference to explore worship as response to disaster*

The most interactive of the bunch is **PrayerMate**, created by a U.K.-based Christian software developer. It has a slick design and is simple to use, with an interface based on swiping through "cards" with different prayer requests.

Within the app, users can create prayer requests and organize them into categories, or can subscribe to "prayer feeds" from Christian organizations. There are also links to prayers in the Bible, a feature that syncs to your phone's address book so you can write to contacts as you pray for them, an alarm to prompt prayer time, a PIN-protected password feature to keep sensitive prayer requests secret and scheduling options to make individual prayer requests appear on a certain date or day of the week.

With such a wide range of options, the app should appeal to many, though it might be overwhelming for those seeking a quick prayerful moment.

On the more contemplative side, **3-Minute Retreat** is an app, also available in a browser version, created by Jesuit ministry Loyola Press. With a new "retreat" every day, the app takes the user through a short selection of Bible readings and prayers centred on a theme.



▲ **App faith: There are dozens, if not hundreds, of apps designed to facilitate prayer. Most are free.**

PHOTO: BLOOMICON/SHUTTERSTOCK

The purpose, according to the Loyola Press website, is to "take a short prayer break right at your computer" and "spend some quiet time reflecting on a Scripture passage."

The simple interface requires one to press a "continue" button after each section, meaning the user can move through the app at his or her own pace. Soft classical guitar music plays in the background, though this can be turned off.

Rather than taking a pause, some apps attempt to integrate prayer into the routines of daily life.



Prayers on the Move is an initiative of the U.K.-based Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), an independent Christian publisher. According to its website, the app is part of SPCK's "outreach to open-minded people, of all faiths and none, who are seeking to connect with the spiritual in their own lives."

The app has 31 prayers—one for each day of the month—that can be read or

listened to as an audio file. Its design is pared down, presenting simply a prayer for each day. (You can move through the days by swiping left and right.) There are some interactive elements, namely the ability to add personal notes to favourite prayers and social media sharing.

Prayers are drawn from a wide range of sources, and include quotations from mystics and theologians to Bible verses to short unattributed prayers ("Help me to get over myself and be a good friend").

This app is ideal for introducing a little mindfulness into the busy moments of the day, with exceptionally short and quick prayers. The app is aimed at those newly discovering the idea of daily prayer, so some may crave something deeper.



The Jesuit Ministries' **Pray As You Go** is more involved, with a daily audio prayer session designed to be

listened to while commuting, travelling or getting ready in the morning. These sessions run 10 to 13 minutes and include litanies, chamber music and songs by Ladysmith Black Mambazo, alongside Scripture and questions for reflection.



For the traditionalist, the Church of England's **Daily Prayer** is an ideal option.

The app is simple and easy to navigate. Morning, evening and night services are provided for each day, including prayers, hymns, psalmody, Scripture readings and canticles.

The app offers services both in the traditional language of the *Book of Common Prayer* (1662) and contemporary language from *Common Worship: Daily Prayer* (2005). The Scripture readings in the app follow the annual lectionary booklet, providing two tracks of readings, each with an Old and New Testament selection.

Whatever the flavour of your prayer life, it's easy to have a pocket full of prayers at your disposal. ■

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There is Something We Can Do

CANADA ►



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“This parish really doesn’t like just throwing money out at things. They like to actually get their hands dirty.”

—The Rev. Kathryn Otley, rector, Christ Church Bells Corners

Farmers, parishes work to help end hunger

Project donates profits to PWRDF, Foodgrains Bank

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER

Like the sprouting of a tiny seed, an Ontario farming project has transformed industrial cash crops into food for people around the world.

Farmer Gary Weir, with the help of donations and partnership from parishes in the diocese of Ottawa, runs the West Carleton Growing Project, which contributes to the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund’s (PWRDF) account with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB).

The CFGB is a partnership of Canadian churches and church-based agencies, including PWRDF, the relief and development agency of the Anglican Church of Canada.

According to the Foodgrains Bank website, there are more than 200 growing projects across Canada contributing to the organization, which make up about half of its donations. A growing project is typically organized by a group of people who farm a plot of land, harvest the crop and sell it on the Canadian market. The profit is then donated to the CFGB.

In 2017, the West Carleton Growing Project raised almost \$7,500. Because the Foodgrains Bank receives a four to one match from the federal government, the growing project’s contribution will effectively make a \$37,500 impact.

That’s what is so great about giving through the CFGB, Weir says. “You get a big bang for your buck.”

The project began in 2009, when Weir and his brother, who were dairy farmers at the time, decided to grow corn and soybeans. Weir says that donating part of their crop sales to the Foodgrains Bank was his brother Ron’s idea. Lifelong Anglicans, they designated the money to PWRDF’s account.

Due to health issues, Ron is no longer farming, but Weir has carried on and the project has grown.

At one point, Weir was farming 25 acres of rented land and donating the proceeds. When he was no longer able to rent the land, Weir designated a 14-acre section of his own farm for the project.

Since 2009, the project has given \$60,000 to PWRDF’s account.



▲ The West Carleton Growing Project has donated \$60,000 to PWRDF’s Canadian Foodgrains Bank account since 2009.

PHOTO: GARY WEIR



PHOTO: PAT WEIR

Gary Weir and his brother, Ron Weir, on their West Carleton farm

To offset the costs of farming, the project has several partners. Bit-A-Luk Farms provides seeds; SynAgri donates weed control. Weir’s home parish of Fitzroy Harbour takes up donations and has helped raise money and awareness for the project through fundraising events like a family-friendly haunted house and

an Oktoberfest celebration. Weir and others also spread word about the project at local farmers’ markets.

Christ Church Bells Corners, an Anglican parish in the Ottawa suburb of Bells Corners, also makes a yearly donation to the project. Its rector, the Rev. Kathryn Otley, says the church is thrilled with its partnership with the growing project.

“This parish really doesn’t like just throwing money out at things. They like to actually get their hands dirty,” says Otley. Christ Church Bells Corners has partnered with the growing project since 2013. It yearly gives \$2,000 to cover costs such as fertilizer, and helped build a sign for the growing project. Rather than simply making a donation to a cause, the church can see its contribution multiply.

In turn, the growing project’s output increases as well. In fact, Weir says, this past year was especially wet, and the amount Christ Church provided for fertilizer made a big difference in the final price he was able to get for the crops.

Being able to invest in the project and see a greater return is “a win-win situation” for the parish, says Otley.

Weir also visited Parliament Hill in spring 2016. According to CFGB public outreach co-ordinator James Kornelsen, this is a regular initiative to connect people who are involved with the Foodgrains Bank with members of Parliament. Committed volunteers, like Weir, are given training on how to share their stories during a one- to two-day “crash course,” then meet with members of Parliament to advocate for the Foodgrains Bank’s work.

Kornelsen says these meetings keep MPs informed and show that global food security is a significant issue to Canadians. Because the Foodgrains Bank has a partnership with the federal government, he says, it also has a “responsibility to engage.”

MPs “can’t necessarily justify doing things or making changes unless they hear from Canadians,” says Kornelsen. He says that part of CFGB’s work is teaching Canadians to use their voice. “That is definitely part of what we consider a Christian response to hunger—the idea of a voice being important.”

Weir is happy to advocate for the Foodgrains Bank. “I think it’s a very good cause,” he says. He says it’s important to remember that “we are a global society,” and Canada is “not just one little island of a country.” ■



PHOTO: MAXPRO/SHUTTERSTOCK

FROM THE
EDITOR ▶



The good news about bad news

Marites N. Sison

IT’S A QUESTION that never gets old. Why do media, including the *Anglican Journal*, write about bad news?

Each time the Journal publishes a story about alleged abuses and conflicts within the church, I find that the phone calls and (sometimes) scathing correspondence are never far behind. I often get asked these questions: “Why does the Journal air the church’s dirty laundry in public? Why are you sowing discord? Why can’t you just publish good news?”

Most of us who are lucky enough to live in a democracy often take freedom of the press for granted. But those who suffer under authoritarianism know how crucial it is to have a media that acts as a watchdog, rather than a lapdog. When it does its job, a free and independent press holds the powerful to account, serves as a check and balance, gives voice to the voiceless, sheds light and promotes healthy discussions on issues that affect the common good, moves people to action and helps bring about positive change.

The same principles ought to apply to churches, which are powerful institutions, given the moral authority they command and often ascribe for themselves.

One would think—following the child sexual abuse scandals that have rocked the Roman Catholic Church worldwide and the sad legacy in Canada of the Indian residential school system that has implicated various denominations, including the Anglican church—that we would have learned that obfuscations, wilful blindness and cover-ups ultimately do more harm than good.



▲ The impact of hiding the truth can be especially profound in today’s digital age, when news travels fast and far.

PHOTO: BLUEMOON1981/SHUTTERSTOCK

Many Catholics were shocked not just by the fact that abuses were committed for decades, but that these were kept from police authorities and from parishioners.

The absence of compassion for the victims, a disregard for their rights and the deliberate deception exercised by church authorities have often been cited as major reasons why some faithful Catholics left the church. They’re also among the reasons why others stay away from religion altogether.

Fr. Thomas Reese, an American Jesuit, makes a strong case that instead of silence and cover-up, “a better strategy would be to recognize that scandals represent bad news and good news.” The bad news, he says, “is that something happened.” The good news “is that the perpetrator got caught.”

Scandals, Reese further argues, “should be seen as an opportunity for the church to show that it can act responsibly in the face of scandal, because scandals are an inevitable part of life.”*

One can argue that even the Bible is replete with “bad news”: Jesus is crucified; Cain kills Abel; Yael drives a tent peg through a general’s head; Schehem rapes Dinah. These are but a few of the violent accounts.

Since churches are meant to be sanctuaries, they need to be safe, especially for children. Victims of wrongdoing, as well as their families, need to know the church cares about them and their plight more than its own reputation and survival.

Writing about abuses keeps parishioners and the public informed about what’s going on, which can help prevent other offences and irregularities from taking place. Cover-ups allow abuses to happen again and again; writing about them can help embolden

others to share their own experiences and receive justice.

Churches depend on their members for financial and material support—stakeholders shouldn’t be the last to know of important developments that affect them. Concealing undermines faith and trust in the institution. Stewardship experts who push for financial transparency often say that folks will assume ownership of their organization’s mission and be more generous with their resources if it is honest and transparent.** On the other hand, they become resentful when something is kept from them or when they are lied to. The impact of hiding the truth can be especially profound in this digital age, when nothing is off-limits anymore, where institutions are subjected to a level of scrutiny and accountability they have never known before and where communication travels fast and far.

Honesty, not bearing “false witness,” is also commanded by God. The Bible has a lot to say about speaking the truth, including this passage that resonates with me: “We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God’s word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God” (2 Corinthians 4:2). Jesus himself said, when questioned by a high priest about his disciples and his teaching, “I spoke openly to the world...I said nothing in secret” (John 19:19).

Offering you a staple diet of bad news is, of course, not something we would advocate. This would not represent reality, either. ■

Email: editor@national.anglican.ca

* Scandals in the Catholic Church: bad news, good news—Religion News Service

** Why the Church Needs Financial Transparency—Chris Brown, *Ministry Today Magazine*

LETTERS ▶



PHOTO: RAWPIXEL/SHUTTERSTOCK

Picture
Your Faith

Do you have photographs that illustrate “Community”? We invite you to share them by email to pictureyourfaith@gmail.com. Deadline for submissions is July 10.

Love for God and others is central element of Jesus’ ministry

I have a great deal of difficulty accepting Bishop Mark MacDonald’s verdict on Canadian society (*Spiritual struggle, systemic evil*, April 2018, p. 5).

I do not dispute that there are incidents of racism that plague our society nor that these incidents may coalesce into significant blots that mar our history. However, to call racism “systemic” and to then claim that systemic racism has a “deep and wide presence in Canadian society” is to suggest, nay assert, that there is a malevolent intelligence nurturing the elements that will perpetuate and grow racism into the future and that that intelligence is human-sourced.

I don’t buy into that ultra-pessimistic view of ourselves and our society’s institutions and the implied duty of the church to enter into combat.

MacDonald goes on to say, “In Scripture, the struggle with systemic evil is a central element of the ministry and life of

The Anglican Journal welcomes letters to the editor. Letters go to Marites (Tess) Sison, editor, and Meghan Kilty, General Synod director of communication.

Since not all letters can be published, preference is given to shorter correspondence (300 words or less). All letters are subject to editing.

Jesus.” I don’t get that either. I understand the central element of Christ’s ministry to be about love—“Jesus said unto him, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets’ ” (Matthew 22:37–40).

When I place this in the context of my reading of the gospels, Jesus’ teachings are about helping humankind to do better rather than mobilizing it to purge systemic evil. Isn’t that what led the crowd to demand that Pontius Pilate crucify Jesus? When it became clear to them that the purpose of the Messiah, unlike their expectation, was not to drive out the Roman conquerors?

Brent Cowan
Pointe-Claire, Que.

‘Justice is done’

In the April 2018 issue, staff writer Joelle Kidd used quotes from Archbishop Fred Hiltz urging prayers for the Boushie family and for reforms in the justice system (*Call for prayers, action in the wake of Boushie case*, p. 1).

You should know that you are obligated to write both sides of a story. It is not your duty to lean towards one side in a dispute.

Nowhere did you or Hiltz mention that Boushie and his friends had no right to be on the farmer’s property.

It was unfortunate that this ended in the death of a young man. However, I believe the farmer had a right to protect his property, and that the jury saw it, too.

I pray for everyone; right is right, justice is done.

Fred Osmon
Chatham, Ont.

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COME AND SEE ▶



A wonderful legacy

By Fred Hiltz

FOR JUST A few minutes, I want to take you to a very special place I was privileged to visit with Bishop Michael Oulton (diocese of Ontario) in Holy Week this year. It is on Cowdy Street in Kingston. There stood the Church of the Good Shepherd Mission, built in the 1950s. I say “stood” because just recently it was deconsecrated and torn down to make way for the next phase of The Good Shepherd Legacy Initiative.

Through a partnership with the diocese of Ontario and Habitat for Humanity, the entire church property is being redeveloped. Phase one has been completed—the construction of the first double-housing unit, providing homes for two families. Phase two is the building of a new ministry centre that will house a number of programs to meet the needs of the neighbourhood. Within the facility, there will be a multi-purpose space easily transformed for Sunday liturgies and mid-week gatherings. Phase three will be the construction of two more double units, housing for four more families.



▲ **Kingston’s Church of the Good Shepherd is being redeveloped for new ministries.**

PHOTO: MARK HAUSER

At the centre of this wonderful initiative is that faithful little congregation and its very big heart. With great courage, they decided to refocus their energies from labouring to maintain what they had to re-imagining their ministry for the future. They are blessed through the ministries of a highly motivated pastor, a faithful retired priest who is tending to their pastoral needs, a socially-minded bishop with strong diocesan staff support and an

enthusiastic ambassador of Habitat for Humanity.

Within months, this congregation has witnessed its property become a construction site. They are now worshipping in the common area of a local residence for seniors. They are watching with great interest the laying of foundations for what will be their legacy, and their excitement is growing with each new phase of construction.

This Good Shepherd Legacy Initiative is indeed a story of a congregation devoted to serving its neighbourhood well, and a story of effective partnerships for amazing results. It is a story so worthy of the name this congregation bears—The Church of the Good Shepherd. “I have come,” Jesus said, “that you may have life, and have it in abundance” (John 10:10).

The decision of this little fold within the flock of Christ will bring much life and blessings to so many others for years to come. A lovely legacy indeed. With them, my heart sings! ■

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

WALKING TOGETHER ▶



By Mark MacDonald

NOT REALLY KNOWING what to do, writing this piece might be merely therapeutic for me; thinking out loud, perhaps. I am speaking about the recently announced decision that Pope Francis would not offer an apology for the Roman Catholic Church’s role in residential schools. The apology was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Call to Action 58.

When I say that I don’t know what to do, it is because it really isn’t clear what would help this get better or even offer some type of explanation for this behaviour. The explanations offered don’t explain much. This leaves us all to wonder if the Catholic church believes it has nothing to apologize for.

The lack of apology is utterly damaging to so many people and at so many levels. Even though I have some distance from the decision, it is something that brings both shame and deep grief. How can this be? Is this the Pope of *The Joy of*



▲ **“We are, quite often, tempted to gain the world at the loss of our soul.”**

ILLUSTRATION: OHN ROBIN/SHUTTERSTOCK

the Gospel and *Laudato Si’* (his recent, well-received writings on evangelism and the environment—the latter mentioning so prominently the wisdom of Indigenous peoples)? In the decision not to apologize, a whole institution seems beguiled by a spirit that is at odds with its deepest beliefs and teachings.

Jesus said it quite clearly and simply, “So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:23–24). This teaching is designed for such a moment. Reconciliation is to precede and have priority over the religious and worshipful expressions of our faith. Without this primacy of reconciliation—so central to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus—we are far from living out the commandments of Jesus.

It is, perhaps, a time to remember what Pope Francis famously said to a reporter, “Who am I to judge?” While we can

mourn the decision and/or be outraged by it, it is also a severe warning to anyone who seeks to follow the teachings of Jesus and, at the same time, be a member of a religious institution. We are always in danger of abandoning our core commitments for the sake of what appears like the pressing needs of our institution. We are, quite often, tempted to gain the world at the loss of our soul.

Let us not forget to pray for the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church. Someday, in this life or the next, there will be an accounting. But, in this, we must also pray for ourselves, that God would save us from the time of trial. Urgently, let us pray for the People of the Land, the Indigenous Peoples of this Turtle Island, whose continued level of poverty and suffering is an offence to justice. We should, finally, pray mercy for all. This decision has added to a level of misery that cries to God for justice. ■

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

LETTERS

‘Nothing pretentious’ about vestments; they teach and inspire

The comments concerning chasubles (*Vestments add to ‘holiness’ of worship, except the chasuble*, April 2018, p. 5) are ill-informed and offensive.

Simply stated, the chasuble, worn over the alb and stole, is the vestment worn by those priests who are celebrants at the Eucharist and is different in form and function from the dalmatic worn by deacons and the tunicle worn by sub-deacons.

There is nothing “pretentious” about [the vestments], and the assertion that it proclaims “Look how good I am” and “I am a big shot” is belied totally by the humble prayer traditionally said by the priest wearing it: “O Lord, who has said, ‘My yoke is easy and my burden is light,’ grant that I may so bear it as to attain Thy grace.”

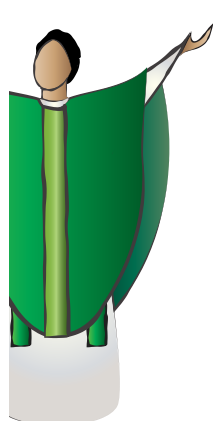


ILLUSTRATION: THOOM/SHUTTERSTOCK

While the vestments worn for the Eucharist symbolize functions of ministry, they are also intended to inspire and teach us of the meaning of the Eucharist, its history and its continuity.

They are to be worn with a due sense of humility. They, and their wearers, do not deserve to be scorned and belittled.

K. Corey Keeble
Toronto

A proud ‘Unican’

As someone who worships in both a United Church of Canada three-point church during the summer months and St. Hilary’s Anglican Church in Mississauga, Ont., when I’m back in the Peel region, this dialogue

gives me great hope (*United Church restructuring could boost dialogue*, April 2018, p. 3).

I often proudly refer to myself as a “Unican” in conversations. While there are fundamental differences in the ways of worship and governance between the two denominations, the message being delivered from the pulpits and the love of congregants for our Lord remain the same. To me, these are most important.

I pray that this dialogue continues in earnest, and that, given the challenges faced by churches across our country, no matter the denomination, we move forward with this co-operative effort.

Graham Turner
Brampton, Ont.

CANADA ▶

Assisted dying: One Anglican family's story

Prayers, Holy Communion on appointed day

Tali Folkins
STAFF WRITER

By the time 68-year-old Carolyn Sitlington was to be given a death-causing drug at a London, Ont., hospital on July 5, 2016, the pain from her Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or ALS, had become considerable.

Her husband, Dave, remembers her getting two or three small doses of morphine through her feeding tube, as she lay in her bed the night before.

And yet physical pain, he says, was never the main reason for her decision to opt for physician-assisted dying. "I truly believe the mental pain was even greater."

ALS, a disease for which there is no known cure and few forms of treatment, causes the gradual paralysis of those who suffer from it by attacking the ability of the brain to communicate with muscles. According to the ALS Society of Canada, 80% of people with the disease die two to five years after being diagnosed with it.

In Carolyn's case, the disease had first begun to show itself in the form of mobility problems with her left leg in fall 2011. By 2014, she was confined to an electric wheelchair; through 2015, swallowing became more and more difficult for her, Dave says, necessitating a feeding tube. When it became impossible for her to talk, she began to use software for her phone that would speak back words she typed in with her right hand, the last of her limbs to remain functional.

When Carolyn could no longer use her right hand, she was still able to communicate, using a special device that allowed her to select letters on a computer screen with a glance of her eyes. She was also able to shake or nod her head until the end. But losing the use of that hand seemed to deal Carolyn a final blow.

"Once she lost the ability to do that, in early 2016, it was getting to be very tough for her to, I guess, accept life as it was," Dave says. "She felt absolutely useless... She couldn't talk. She couldn't move. She couldn't contribute to anything."

Since her diagnosis in May 2013, the Sitlingtons had had discussions about assisted dying. Carolyn told Dave that if it ever became possible in Canada, she would eventually choose it.

By June 7, 2016, when Carolyn had an appointment with her doctor for regularly scheduled tests, Bill C-14, legislating physician-assisted dying in Canada, had been passed in the House of Commons and was being debated in the Senate. The Sitlingtons decided it was time to ask their doctor about it.

The doctor, Dave recalls, "looked right at Carolyn and she said, 'Is it time for us to have that discussion?' And Carolyn nodded."

She explained the options open to Carolyn, and eventually they made an appointment for the following month. On July 4—by which time Bill C-14 had become law—Dave, Carolyn and their daughter, Sarah, arrived at the hospital. He, Carolyn and other family members, Dave says, had spent much of the previous few weeks in the



▲ Carolyn and Dave Sitlington on their 45th wedding anniversary

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

▶ Canon Keith Nethery offered spiritual support to the Sitlington family.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED



rigorous process of completing the necessary paperwork. They were put up in a private room, where they all stayed the night. In the morning, they were joined by other family

members and friends, including Carolyn and Dave's three-year-old grandson, as well as their priest, Canon Keith Nethery, who was then the rector of the parish of Holy Trinity St. Stephen's Memorial, London, Ont., diocese of Huron. (Nethery is now rector of St. James Westminster, also in London.)

As they prepared to give her the injection that would end her life, hospital staff asked Carolyn if it was still what she wanted, and she confirmed that it was, Dave says. Nethery gave Carolyn, Dave and the other family members Holy Communion, and led them in prayer. Some of those who had gathered then left the room, and hospital staff gave Carolyn two injections, Dave says: first an anesthetic, and then a drug to stop her breathing.

Carolyn died some 10 or 12 minutes after the first injection, Dave says.

"She just lay there and she just went to sleep. It was so peaceful," he says.

Dave says neither he nor the rest of his family regret supporting Carolyn's decision.

"It's what she wanted, truly wanted," he says. "And because of those wishes, it's what we wanted for her, too. We didn't want her to continue suffering, just

sitting there, day after day."

Nethery, who has known the Sitlingtons for more than a decade, says that, once Carolyn had made her decision, she and Dave spoke about it with him at length. They believed it was not God's will for Carolyn to continue suffering. They also, he says, wanted to discuss the things that people in end-of-life care often want to talk about: God, heaven, resurrection, being reunited with beloved family members who have died. It was also very important to them that they have a priest to accompany them through the process, he says, to visit them and pray with them as Carolyn's appointment approached, and to be with them and offer Holy Communion on the appointed day.

"They made a decision that they were comfortable with in their faith, and they wanted a priest...to make that journey with them," Nethery says.

In its latest report on medically assisted dying in Canada, released last October but covering the period from December 10, 2015 (when it was made legal in Quebec) to June 30, 2017, Health Canada reported there had been a total of 2,149 medically assisted deaths in the country.

In addition to the Anglican Church of Canada, which released its report on physician-assisted dying in June 2016, and its study guide this March, some dioceses in the country have also been addressing the controversial issue.

Last September, *Niagara Anglican*, the newspaper of the diocese of Niagara, reported that Bishop Michael Bird had released a set of revised guidelines "to ensure pastoral care is available to those who inquire about or qualify for and claim the legal right to medical assistance in dying."

More recently, this April, Archbishop Colin Johnson, bishop of Toronto and of Moosonee dioceses, and metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province of Ontario, released a statement on medically assisted dying.

After referring to a *Globe and Mail* story about another Anglican priest who provided spiritual support during an assisted death, Johnson wrote that he was opposed to the practice "on theological and religious grounds," and urged readers to choose other options.

While Nethery shares many of the concerns that have been expressed about assisted dying, he doesn't oppose it "in those very narrow circumstances where death is foreseeable, where there's no hope of recovery, and there's a lot of pain and difficulty going forward." He felt it was important to respect Carolyn's decision and provide the family with the spiritual support they needed.

"I don't see my role to influence anyone in that situation one way or the other," he says. "My role, what God has called me to do, is to go and be present... so that people have someone to journey with," he says.

Since Carolyn's death, Nethery says, a small number of other people have asked him if he would provide pastoral care to them if they decided they wanted medically assisted death.

He has not, he says, been present personally at any medically assisted deaths other than Carolyn's. ■

CANADA ▶

Guide encourages end-of-life care conversations

Personal reflection, pastoral responses, not a yes-no debate

Continued from p. 1

gave the government a year to produce new legislation.

In the wake of this decision, a task force of the faith, worship and ministry committee produced an Anglican response, called *In Sure & Certain Hope*.

The new law, which took effect in June 2016, allows eligible Canadian adults who have a “grievous and irremediable medical condition” to request medical assistance in dying.

According to the government of Canada’s latest interim report, 1,982 medically assisted deaths were administered in the first year of the practice’s legalization. (An additional 167 medically assisted deaths took place earlier in Quebec, which passed provincial legislation prior to federal legalization.)

“The changed legal landscape has moved us...to a point where many of us are likely to know, love and care for those who will face difficult decisions and may choose to avail themselves of medically assisted dying or to reject such an option,” the study guide notes.

Like *In Sure & Certain Hope*, the study guide does not address “the debate about the moral appropriateness” of medically assisted dying. Instead it aims to provide what Scully says has been missing from the church’s response—“the ability to really sit with the pastoral, ethical questions and just say, ‘So how

▲ **“Can I provide care for somebody who has very different values from mine?”**
The study guide aims to help Anglicans reflect on Canada’s new law on physician-assisted dying.

PHOTO: SASKIA ROWLEY

now do we live?”

The challenge, Scully says, is nudging people to have those kinds of conversations.

“It’s a cultural, societal generalization I’m going to make here, but generally, people [are] more interested in being able to debate an issue, to talk about a thing that’s ‘out there’ rather than enter into their own feelings, experiences, personally and interpersonally—where it’s about real lives and real people,” she says.

Scully says they had always planned to create an accompanying study guide after *In Sure & Certain Hope* was released in 2016. The project took longer than expected, and in the interim, members of the task force had the chance to join and lead discussion groups, panel discussions and clergy conferences on the

topic. Through these experiences, they discovered the challenge of directing the conversation away from a “yes-no” debate, which helped shape the guide.

The guide includes suggestions of where and how it can best be used, notes to help group leaders prepare to facilitate a discussion on the topic, processes for discussion groups and guidelines for constructive conversations, and two case studies.

In response to the case studies, the guide recommends reading the stories up to three times and imagining a personal response from different perspectives—as oneself, as the principal caregiver and as the dying person—and reflecting on what elements of the story resonate each time.

Archdeacon Douglas Fenton of the diocese of New Westminster, a member of the faith, worship and ministry committee, helped create and approve the study guide. He sees the guide as providing an entry point into the complex topic of end-of-life care. “I don’t think it’s something that we’re going to just naturally fall into unless we have some guidance on how to enter that conversation.”

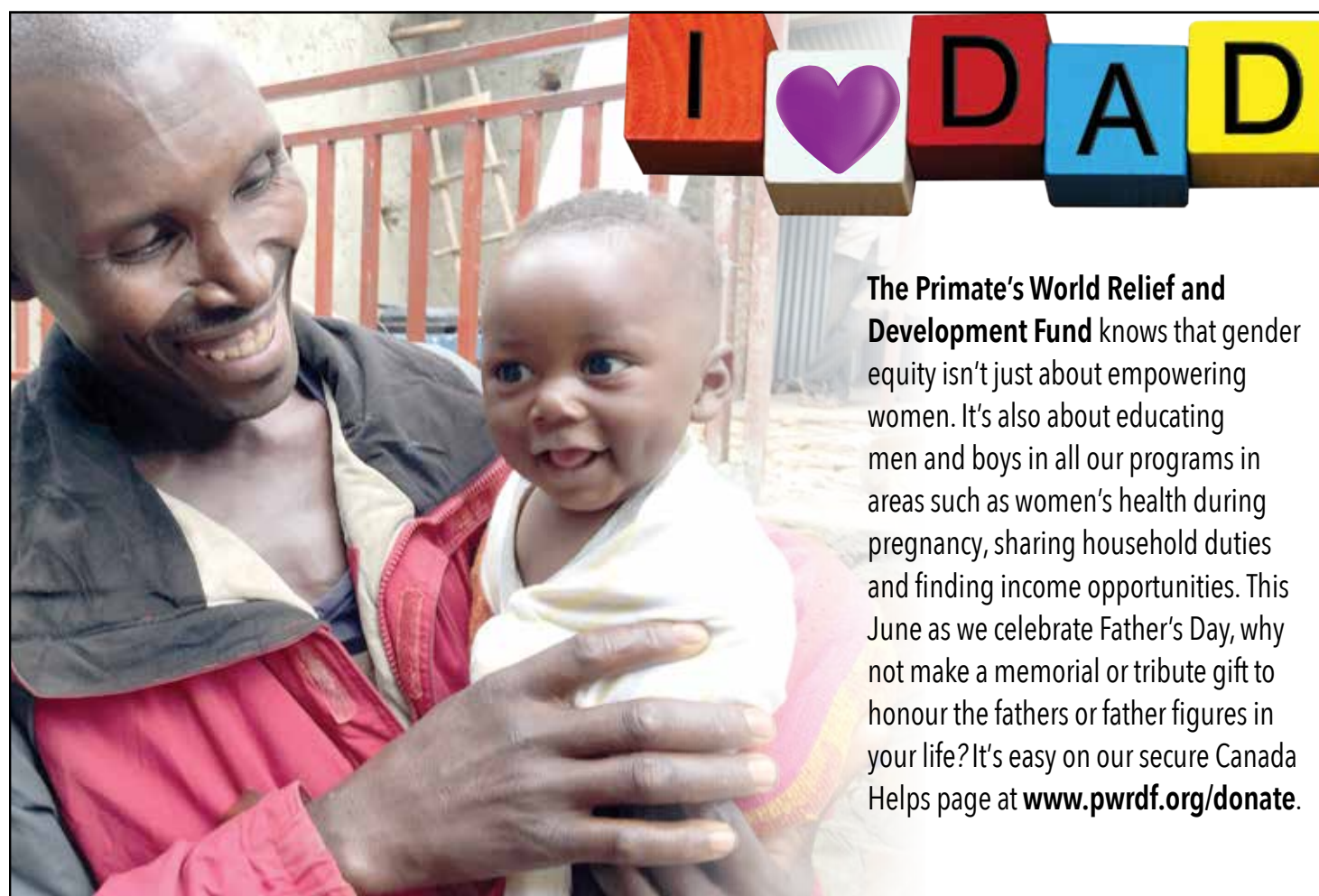
There are many facets to the conversation about medically assisted dying, Fenton says. “It’s not only theological; it’s not only medical ethics and moral theology. It’s also individuals’ spiritual lives that we’re talking about.”

The issue affects not only those making an end-of-life decision for themselves, but family, friends, clergy and caregivers around them.

Scully says the committee hopes to hear feedback from groups that use the discussion guide.

Her next step, she says, will be to reach out to Anglican chaplains and spiritual care providers who work on the front lines of end-of-life issues. “What I hear from them is a kind of loneliness, and the need to talk about this stuff,” she says. She hopes to create a network of spiritual care providers and perhaps a national or several regional gatherings.

“There’s nothing more that we share... as humans than life and death,” adds Fenton. “I think...we so often take for granted the life we live.” We rarely talk about death, he says, pointing out the many euphemisms our culture has for death. “On Good Friday, Jesus ‘dies’; the rest of us ‘pass away.’” The more resources available to facilitate these kinds of conversations, he says, the better. ■



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CANADA ▶



▲ “It’s important to recognize that we’re occupying space on land that isn’t necessarily ours,” says Valerie Kerr, archdeacon for truth, reconciliation and Indigenous ministry, diocese of Niagara.

PHOTO: DIOCESE OF NIAGARA

Territorial acknowledgment an act of restoration

Continued from p. 1

ton and rector of the Anglican Parish of St. Faith’s, Edmonton, says a territorial acknowledgment is an act of restoration—a first step in bringing Indigenous and non-Indigenous people back to a common ground that could serve as a basis for friendship.

In recent years—especially, Kerr and Enright say, since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was established in 2008—it has become increasingly common for gatherings in Canada to begin with acknowledgments of the Indigenous history of the land on which the meeting is taking place.

Such practices are important because they question easy assumptions about the ownership of the land, Kerr says. “For me personally, for the parish even, it’s important to recognize that we’re occupying space on land that was inhabited before.”

Even where land was ceded by treaty between Canadian Indigenous peoples and the colonizing powers, the treaties have not always been observed, she says, so that some Indigenous communities today are left with less land than they should have under treaty; and in any case, territory that Indigenous peoples agreed to give to the newcomers by treaty was still taken from them under duress.

“Of course, it was pretty much force—‘We can agree to this, or we can just take it,’” she says.

Still, Kerr says, the point of acknowledgment is not to antagonize, but to show respect and to spur meaningful conversations and greater understanding. Newcomers to her church, she says, are full of questions the first time they hear her acknowledge, before a service, the names of Indigenous groups who walked the land on which the church stands for thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans.

For Enright, the ultimate goal of acknowledgments is not to get caught up in questions about to whom the land really belongs, but rather to recognize that both peoples are now on it, and to express a hope that each may help the other to heal and flourish.

Thus, he says, it’s important that acknowledgments mention the relevant treaties, because these treaties contain the idea of relationship.

“You start off where there was some kind of accord—not necessarily a great one, but it still starts somewhere: ‘We’re on this land, we came together,’” he says.

“Aboriginal people came into the relationship very, very differently from how the Europeans came into the relationship. We thought, ‘We’re bringing new brothers and sisters into our fold; and you thought, ‘We’re getting new land.’ So we came with different agendas,” he says. “But if you get stuck on the agenda, then there’s no more opportunity for relationship.”

For the same reason, Enright says the acknowledgments he makes mention not only Indigenous peoples, but also the settlers and their descendants who have lived on the land as well.

The most important thing about an acknowledgment is that it’s genuine, Enright says.

“People say, ‘Can you write it down for me?’ I say, ‘No—then it becomes my words, not your words.’ The best kind of acknowledgment is one that actually is sincere.”

Instead of worrying that their acknowledgment will be amiss in some formal way, people should try to focus instead on



▲ Indigenous-themed banners hang on the facade of the new Centre for Indigenous Peoples, directly across the street from Parliament Hill. The City of Ottawa and Parliament Hill are on unceded Algonquin territory.

PHOTO: PAUL MCKINNON/SHUTTERSTOCK

making it in a good spirit—one that sees the acknowledgment as not just a formality or sufficient in itself, but as one step in an ongoing process.

Some acknowledgments he’s heard, he says, have left him with the impression that the person making it felt uncomfortable, perhaps because of a belief—incorrect, Enright says—that an Indigenous territorial acknowledgment should not mention other historically mistreated or vulnerable groups.

“I’ve heard people who...did it with their teeth grinding, because what they wanted to say is, ‘What about all these other people?’” he says. “They could have done that as part of their acknowledgment...but they were so caught up in doing it in the ‘right’ way.”

‘A change in consciousness’

Kerr believes acknowledgments should also express the relationship Indigenous peoples had—and, she adds, continue to have—with the land, the idea of the land as lying at the heart of their lives and

spirituality.

“It’s not just a place to live, or a place to build on; it’s a place that keeps us grounded,” she says.

National Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark MacDonald says he’s greatly encouraged that the territorial acknowledgment is spreading in Canada.

“I think it indicates a change in consciousness on the part of people who are promoting it,” he says. “I’m hoping that it will have an impact on people’s thinking and action in the future—more than just a ritual or a form, but that it will actually influence the way people think about Canada, and the way they think about their life and their role in Canada.”

Including territorial acknowledgments in worship services was one of four means of reconciliation recommended in 2016 by the Primate’s Commission on Discovery, Reconciliation and Justice, tasked with addressing reconciliation and injustices against Indigenous people in Canada. ■

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CANADA ▶

Diocese, parish deny responsibility in assault lawsuit

Joelle Kidd
 STAFF WRITER

The diocese of Fredericton and the Anglican Parish of Saint Stephen (Christ Church), in St. Stephen, N.B., say they are “not vicariously liable for the actions” of the Rev. William Morton, a priest accused of assaulting a woman with a box cutter, and ask that a lawsuit against them be dismissed.

In a lawsuit filed October 2017, Cynthia Mae Moore claimed that Morton assaulted and attempted to kill her in late 2015. The suit named Morton as well as the diocese of Fredericton, the Anglican Parish of Saint Stephen and the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada as defendants.

Court records show that Moore discontinued the claim against the Anglican Church of Canada March 7. As of press time, Morton has not filed a statement of defence.

If Morton committed the actions alleged in Moore’s statement of claim, they “were his independent acts for which he is solely responsible both in fact and in law,” the diocese of Fredericton and the parish of Saint Stephen say in a statement of defence and cross claim filed with the Court of Queen’s Bench in Saint John, N.B., March 21.

The diocese and the parish argue that they “are not vicariously liable” for the alleged actions of Morton and/or the alleged damages being claimed by Moore.

They claim their relationship with



▲ The diocese of Fredericton and the Anglican Parish of Saint Stephen filed their statement of defence at the Court of Queen’s Bench in Saint John, N.B.

PHOTO: GOOGLE STREETVIEW

Morton was “an ecclesiastical relationship,” not an employment or agency one. The statement also says that “if Morton was an employee or agent, which is not admitted but specifically denied,” his alleged actions “did not occur within the scope of his employment or agency relationship and/or were contrary to his ministerial duties or responsibilities.”

They “wholly deny” that they were “negligent as alleged or at all,” and state that if Moore “suffered any injury, loss or damages as alleged or at all,” they “were not contributed to or caused by the Defendants as alleged or at all.”

The diocese and the parish also assert that they “did not know, nor ought to have known, that Morton presented a danger to the Plaintiff (which is not admitted), whether as alleged in the Amended

Statement of Claim, or otherwise, or at all, and at all times took all reasonable steps regarding training and supervision of the Defendant Morton.”

The statement of defence also refers to the Contributory Negligence Act and the Limitation of Actions Act, which addresses limitation periods for claims. It asks that the action against them be dismissed.

In her statement of claim, Moore alleges that the diocese and parish “was or ought to have been aware of ... Morton’s alcohol abuse and it took no steps to oversee or supervise [him] in his role as a clergyman, knowing that in such a role it was usual and normal for parishioners to seek counselling and place trust and reliance in the clergy.” She claims the defendant church “owed her a duty of care to prevent her abuse by... Morton,” and that it “breached that duty of care and in the result, she suffered and continues to suffer severe damages.”

Moore claims that Morton breached his fiduciary relationship with her as her spiritual leader and counsellor when he “took advantage of her vulnerability and commenced a sexual affair, which ended in the horrific assaults on her person.” She says she began counselling sessions with Moore, then rector of Saint Stephen’s, around March 2008.

The diocese and the parish have filed a cross-claim against Morton, in which they claim indemnity and/or contribution for any “damages, interest and costs” that they may be ordered to pay the plaintiff. ■

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CANADA ▶

‘Warm hug’ of God’s comfort for a grieving Humboldt

Joelle Kidd
STAFF WRITER

On April 6, a collision on a northeast Saskatchewan highway between a semi-trailer and the bus carrying the



PHOTO: KELLY SIKEMA/UNSPLASH

Humboldt Broncos junior hockey team to a playoff game ended 16 lives, hospitalized 13 others and left an arena full of hockey fans waiting for a puck drop that never came. Expressions of mourning and solidarity came from across the country and the world. Hundreds gathered for a vigil in Humboldt, Sask., and a GoFundMe page has raised over \$15 million for the victims. One hundred fifty kilometres away in Prince Albert, Sask., Susan Bain felt the call to do something. Bain is the co-ordinator of the prayer shawl ministry at St. David’s Anglican Church in Prince Albert, in the diocese of Saskatchewan. She is also on the chancel guild. “On Sunday, after we were taking everything down,” the flowers that were taken from the sanctuary—usu-

ally given to someone in the parish in need of support—were offered to a parishioner who has a sister-in-law in Humboldt. Bain had the idea to give her prayer shawls to send to Humboldt. She gave her 20 prayer shawls, all that they had on hand at the time. “I just felt we had to do something,” she says. She hopes the shawls will bring some solace to those grieving the tragedy, that they will feel “enveloped” by the shawl. “It’s like getting a warm hug, I think, from God. Getting some kind of comfort.” Responding to the tragedy, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, and the Rev. Susan C. Johnson, national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), issued a joint statement, seeking prayers for

those who died, their families, those who were injured but survived the crash, those conducting services of remembrance, the medical teams and first responders who cared for the victims, and “the very wide community” of the Humboldt Broncos. Ten players, two coaches, a statistician, a radio announcer the driver of the bus and the team’s athletic therapist were killed in the collision. Bain says the tragedy touched her heart because between 1976 and 1986, her family billeted hockey players for the Prince Albert Raiders, taking in some 38 players over those 10 years. Bain says her prayer shawl group may send more shawls if they are needed. The group of eight knitters and crocheters generally makes about 40 prayer shawls a year. ■

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Witnessing the birth of a family

By John Arkelian

FAMILY... Connections... At the heart of those ideas is our sense of self-identity, our very state of being: for we are, in some ways, defined by those to whom we are most closely connected. And, for most of us, what closer connections do we have than those that bind us for life to our family?

Our family is the well-spring of our roots, our history, and very often our fundamental character, as well as the first and most enduring expression of our God-given mission to love our fellow mortals. But what if you have been sundered from your family, unaware that you even have siblings? That's the subject of the National Film Board documentary *Birth of a Family*, directed by Tasha Hubbard, which was broadcast in abbreviated form on CBC in November 2017.

The film follows a few days in the lives of Betty Ann, Esther, Rosalie and Ben—three separated from their Dene mother as babies, and in one case, as a very young child, as part of Canada's "Sixties Scoop," which took an estimated 20,000 Indigenous children and placed them with white families. In this case, they were dispersed across multiple provinces and two countries: "We were never given a choice. We were never asked, 'Do you want to be separated?'"

They are middle-aged now, and they've



▲ Esther, Rosalie, Betty Ann and Ben—taken from their mother during the Sixties Scoop—at their 2015 "family union."

PHOTO: NATIONAL FILM BOARD

had good lives with their adoptive families. "I was raised in a good and decent home. And I've had many people say to me, 'Well, you were lucky.'" At one time, that proposition might have elicited an affirmative response from the adoptees themselves. But there was also a gnawing sense of something missing: "I always imagined that if I met my real family I'd get something that I didn't have."

Fifty years after they were parted, the siblings meet for the first time at Banff National Park. The overwhelming beauty of that place is an apt setting for the powerful emotions they experience. There are long talks, shared tears, group hugs, sharing of childhood photos and a birthday cake to make up for the "211

birthdays we've missed." A visit to a First Nations' interpretative centre leaves one of them in tears, suddenly aware of her lost cultural roots. Discussing their late mother, the siblings note that she had been wrenched away from her family and sent to a residential school. She never returned to a Native community after that. Was it because she'd been inculcated with a feeling of being "inferior" to whites, or was she resentful at her community for allowing her to be taken away? One issue that is never addressed is the reason for the siblings being removed from their mother in the first place. Yes, it was part of a culturally-biased program, implicitly (and presumptuously) designed to purge them of their "Nateness"; but was their mother deemed to be unfit to care for them? And, if so, was such an apprehension about her fitness justified?

The quietly affecting bonding among these reunited siblings makes us feel a warm connection to them. Their story is not one of recriminations and bitterness. There is sadness here for what was lost, but also joy at what has been rediscovered: "It's not a 'reunion.' It's a family union." And that's an irresistibly heartwarming story. ■

John Arkelian is an award-winning author and journalist.

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I Left My Heart in Guyana

Famous for saying "We are all praying to the same God," George Jagdeo Singh, (1924-2016), walked a tightrope between two faiths: Christianity and Hinduism. Born a Brahmin in Guyana, he was brought up in the Hindu tradition. Through his British education, he found himself drawn to Christianity. His multifaceted faith and challenging life on the Sugar Estates of Guyana, and later in Canada, is showcased in this remarkable life story. He was often questioned as to how he could believe equally in two world religions. His answer? "It is very simple..."

The book can be ordered by contacting his daughter-in-law, Mary Shepherd, (editor and illustrator), at 514-487-0126 or marymathilda@hotmail.com.

BOOK



A Bishop's Wife: The Road Less Travelled: A Biography of Ann Shepherd (1928-2016), compiled and illustrated by her daughter Mary Shepherd, is now in print. This compelling collection of letters, interviews and stories spanning eight decades, chronicles her wise words, wild fashions and her time as "Bishop's Assistant". She navigated the road "less travelled" with all its adventures and challenges with wit, wisdom and faith and wowed the critics at every stop!

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CANADA ▶

“There is not one diocese that I know in this country where there aren’t both conservative and liberal clergy. Not one.”
—Primate Fred Hiltz

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• Time to bridge gender gap in education, says UN Status of Women meeting

Bishops want mutual respect to prevail at GS 2019

Continued from p. 1
Anglican Church of Canada’s House of Bishops at its spring meeting in Niagara Falls, Ont., April 9-13, Hiltz and other members of the house said.

Larry Robertson, bishop of the diocese of Yukon, said he and some other bishops expressed concern that if the resolution passes its second reading, those who define marriage as between a man and a woman may lose their status within the Anglican Church of Canada. They fear, he said, they’ll be told, “You are not in communion with the church; you are out of sync with the doctrine of our church.”

Robertson said they hoped that either the resolution would be amended or a separate motion would be passed to ensure protection for members of the church who have a traditional view of marriage.

He said he was very encouraged by the concern other bishops showed in their responses to this idea—and, generally, by the caring spirit that those even on opposite sides of the debate showed one another.

General Synod 2016 was marked by complaints of bullying during discussions of the resolution. After the meeting, eight bishops issued a statement that the resolution “imperils our full communion within the Anglican Church of Canada and with Anglicans throughout the world.”

Now, dioceses across the country seem concerned with ensuring that a spirit of mutual respect prevails at the next General Synod no matter which way the vote goes, Hiltz said. “I think everybody is trying to find ways that will enable our church to re-



▲ General Synod 2016 members pray as votes on the first reading of the same-sex marriage resolution are counted.

PHOTO: ART BABYCH

spect more than one view on marriage,” he said. “Many people, I think, are committed to move in that direction so that we don’t come out of General Synod as a broken and divided church in which people are saying, ‘I’ve had it, I’m gone, and I feel I have no choice but to leave.’”

Hiltz said he recognized there’s some concern in the church about the “portability” of clergy with a traditional view of marriage—whether they would be able to be ordained in liberal dioceses if the resolution passes. He noted, however, the Anglican church’s heritage of including a variety of theological points of view—a tradition manifested in the diversity of views that coexist across the church in Canada today. “There is not one diocese that I know of in this country where there aren’t both conservative and liberal clergy, conservative and liberal parishes. Not one.”

With respect to protections for clergy

with a traditional view of marriage, Hiltz said that both the current and the proposed amended canon give priests the right to decline to marry any couple.

John Watton, bishop of the diocese of Central Newfoundland, said he felt confident, judging by the response of the other bishops, that there would eventually be some provision for addressing the concerns expressed by Robertson.

He also noted that, since the resolution requires clergy to get the authorization of their bishop before performing same-sex marriages, it effectively leaves a decision on whether to allow same-sex marriages up to individual dioceses. Not all, he said, will necessary allow it if the resolution is approved.

“A number of us bishops—I’m not sure how many—have said that if the marriage canon passes second reading, we’ll have our own discernment process, and we will decide as a diocese whether or not we will allow it,” Watton said.

Other highlights of the bishops’ meeting included an update on an ongoing review of the process used across the Canadian church to assess candidates for the priesthood, managed by the Advisory Committee for Postulants for Ordination (ACPO). There seemed a general recognition by bishops, Hiltz said, that there was a continuing need for something like the current process, but also that this should be made more flexible to reflect changes in the life of the church since the program began. ■

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