



IMAGE: BERNARDO RAMONFAUR

Divine embrace

An image by Mexican artist Bernardo Ramonfaur depicts the return of the Son to the Father in love. For reflections on Lent and Easter by the primate and national Indigenous Anglican archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada and by the *Anglican Journal*'s editor, see pages 4-5.

Are Canada's Christian statutory holidays discriminatory?

Question may loom larger in coming years, researcher says

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

Christian holy days like Christmas and Easter are likely to remain statutory holidays in Canada in the near term, a legal scholar says—but the question of accommodation for non-Christian religious holidays could become more important in the future as the country welcomes half a million immigrants each year.

Paige Thombs, an associate fellow at the University of Victoria's Centre for Studies in Religion and Society and PhD candidate in law, spoke to the *Anglican Journal* about a discussion paper on religious intolerance published in October 2023 by the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC). The paper caused a

political stir in the House of Commons—specifically, a passage that called statutory holidays linked to Christianity an “obvious example” of “systemic religious discrimination.”

In a statement from the paper that the House of Commons unanimously voted to denounce, the CHRC said, “Discrimination against religious minorities in Canada is grounded in Canada's history of colonialism. This history manifests itself in present-day systemic religious discrimination. An obvious example is statutory holidays in Canada.

“Statutory holidays related to Christianity, including Christmas and

See ‘NO EASY ANSWER,’ p. 2

Anglican-owned hospital endures ‘catastrophic situation’ in Gaza

THE INTERVIEW ▶



▲ Dr. Suhaila Tarazi, director of the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital, spoke to the *Journal* from Gaza.
PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED BY PWRDF

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

Dr. Suhaila Tarazi is the director of North Gaza's Al-Ahli Arab Hospital, which is owned and operated by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and is a partner of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), the Anglican Church of Canada and the Canadian Companions of Jerusalem. Since the war between Israel and Hamas began Oct. 7, the hospital has continued to serve the people of North Gaza, and at times has been the only hospital still functioning there. It has carried on amid tragedy and disruption; an October explosion in the hospital's courtyard killed and injured about 500 people who had taken shelter there, and in December, the hospital was

See ‘SOMETHING,’ p. 6

Churches hosting encampments report multiple challenges

WELCOMING THE STRANGER ▶

Cities forcibly clear tents as housing crisis spurs rising homelessness

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

Second in a two-part series

Churches that have tried to welcome homeless people by allowing them to sleep on their property say they have faced diverse challenges, and as the housing crisis continues with no end in sight, some are calling for deeper structural changes.

Encampments on church properties have proliferated in recent years amid an explosion of homelessness and soaring housing prices. Multiple Anglican parishes across Canada have seen large numbers of people set up tents on their properties.

One such parish is the Church of St. Stephen-in-the-Fields, located in

See IN SEARCH, p. 8

CHURCH AND SOCIETY ►



IMAGE: MAMA BELLE AND THE KIDS

Statutory holidays related to Christianity, such as Christmas and Easter, are the only ones in Canada linked to religious holy days.

‘No easy answer’ seen to holidays question

“You’re going to get religious people that are just like, ‘Meh, my employer is really flexible, I can make up the time,’ and then you may get other people that really find it extraordinarily oppressive and discriminatory.”

—Paige Thombs

Continued from p. 1

Easter, are the only Canadian statutory holidays linked to religious holy days. As a result, non-Christians may need to request special accommodations to observe their holy days and other times of the year where their religion requires them to abstain from work.”

Thombs says while there is no easy answer to the question of statutory holidays, she cannot recall a single court case on religious freedom in the last 20 years that revolved around them.

“You’re going to get religious people that are just like, ‘Meh, my employer is really flexible, I can make up the time,’ and then you may get other people that really find it extraordinarily oppressive and discriminatory,” Thombs says.

“I think many people just accept the status quo,” she adds. For some people in the religious minority who face larger issues of discrimination, she says, “it’s possible that there’s bigger fish to fry than a statutory holiday.”

However, with growing numbers of immigrants to Canada, including many non-Christians such as Muslims and Sikhs, Thombs says conversations about statutory holidays could become more important. In November 2022, the federal government announced its intention to bring in almost 1.5 million new immigrants to Canada by 2025. “If we continue this trajectory, those numbers [of non-Christians] are only going to get bigger,” Thombs says. “Are things going to have to change? I think so. I hope so.”

Paper misinterpreted: professor

Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet brought up the CHRC’s statement in the House of Commons Nov. 29, asking, “According to the prime minister, is Christmas racist?” The next day, the House of Commons voted to denounce the CHRC’s statement.

In response, CHRC interim chief commissioner Charlotte-Anne Malischewski published an opinion piece stating that the paper had been misinterpreted. “Of course, Christmas is not racist,” Malischewski said.

“Our discussion paper explains that, based on current Canadian law, providing a statutory holiday for one religion, and not providing reasonable accommodation for other religions may be considered discrimination,” she said. “It simply mentions Christmas as an example of a religious holiday that is also a statutory holiday.”

David Seljak, professor of religious studies at the University of Waterloo,

“There’s no intention to discriminate. But it’s part of the Canadian social structure that is a legacy of how Canada was created.”

—David Seljak

agrees the CHRC statement had been misinterpreted.

“What the paper says is that Canada was created as a fundamentally Christian country,” Seljak says. “And even though we’ve moved away from that in terms of adopting a broader culture of religious tolerance and ethno-racial tolerance in our multiculturalism policies and practises, there are these remnants of our Christian past, of our colonialist past. It just seems like it’s impossible to deny that.”

Along with Christmas and Easter being statutory holidays, Seljak points to other institutional aspects of Canada’s Christian heritage, such as Sunday being a day of rest. In Ontario, this was institutionalized under the Lord’s Day Act, which banned commercial activity on Sundays—until 1985, when the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the law as unconstitutional.

Nevertheless, Seljak says, the most common day of pause remains Sunday, which is also the day most Christians meet for worship services. Other religious communities can therefore face challenges Christians do not.

“A Buddhist community may want to meet on the date of the Buddha’s birthday,” Seljak says. “But they would postpone the celebration to the following Sunday because that’s when they can meet as a community, when most of them have a pause from their working life.”

“It’s just structural. There’s no evil intention, there’s no malice, there’s no intention to discriminate. But it’s part of the Canadian social structure that is a legacy of how Canada was created.”

Reasonable accommodation

Seljak, who served as a consultant to the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) in 2015 when it reviewed its policy on preventing discrimination based on “creed” or religious freedom, says right to reasonable accommodation of religious practices is the law of the land.

The Supreme Court of Canada established this precedent in a 2004 case which allowed orthodox Jews living in a Montreal condominium to construct succahs—temporary huts to mark the Jewish festival of Sukkot—on their balconies even though this was against condominium rules. The court ruled that any request based on religious belief or practice must be accommodated to the point of “undue hardship.” An example of the latter, Seljak says, might be a small business with one or two employees that cannot accommodate an employee’s request to take religious holidays.

Thombs says requests for reasonable

accommodation of religious holidays tend to be granted, since an employee who cannot take a day off to mark a holy day could launch a complaint and any tribunal would likely decide in their favour.

But Thombs points to a key difference between Christians and non-Christians celebrating religious holidays, which she says is discriminatory: when non-Christian workers want a holy day off, they generally need to take it as a vacation day.

A “relatively straightforward” solution, she says, would be giving all workers a set number of paid days off in order to observe their religious practices. However, Thombs foresees “a tremendous amount of pushback” to any attempt by government to remove Christmas, Easter and Good Friday as statutory holidays.

The 2021 census found 53.3 per cent of Canada’s population identify as Christian, down from 67.3 per cent in 2011 and 77.1 per cent in 2001. By comparison, less than five per cent identified as Muslim, the second most commonly reported religion in Canada, and 34.6 per cent identified as having no religious affiliation.

While the census said immigration is one of the key drivers of non-Christian religions in Canada, Christianity is still by far the most popular religious affiliation among immigrants. In 2021, 47 per cent of all immigrants and 39.7 per cent of recent immigrants—those who arrived between 2016 and 2021—identified as Christian. Meanwhile, 23.7 per cent of all immigrants and 21.2 per cent of recent immigrants had no religious affiliation; 13.4 of all immigrants and 19.6 per cent of recent immigrants identified as Muslim.

“I have certain sympathy for the conservative argument about keeping Christmas and Easter holidays as they are ... For good and for bad, Canada was created in a certain way,” Seljak says. “I think many people have become self-righteous about Canada as a secular society, about the degree to which it has overcome the problems of religious intolerance and discrimination as if secularism has cured everything,” he adds.

“Not only has it not solved everything, it’s introduced its own kind of discriminatory practises in a rigid secularism,” Seljak says. In his OHRC report on creed, Seljak said many Indigenous people have faced systemic barriers when practicing Indigenous spirituality, for example by employers that believed workplaces should be “secular.”

“If we wanted to take that hard line ... we would ban Indigenous healing practises in our health-care system, which we’ve actually introduced and expanded,” Seljak says. ■

Roman Catholic document on blessings could bring new perspectives to Anglican same-sex marriage debate, leaders say

Sean Frankling
 STAFF WRITER

A document released by the Roman Catholic Church reconsidering its policy on blessings—including those to people in same-sex relationships—offers Anglicans a new way to think about divisions within their own communion, says the Rev. Iain Luke, principal of the Saskatoon-based College of Emmanuel and St. Chad and a member of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue.

The declaration *Fiducia Supplicans*, endorsed by Pope Francis on Dec. 18, lays out a shift in the Roman Catholic Church's approach to blessings. It encourages clergy to offer blessings from the church to any who ask without first scrutinizing whether they are in compliance with the church's doctrines or meet some moral standard.

When someone asks for a blessing, the document says, regardless of their marital or moral status, they are showing their openness to God's love and assistance. "This request should, in every way, be valued, accompanied, and received with gratitude," it states. "People who come spontaneously to ask for a blessing show by this request their sincere openness to transcendence, the confidence of their hearts that they do not trust in their own strength alone, their need for God, and their desire to break out of the narrow confines of this world, enclosed in its limitations."

Though the new policy does not allow Roman Catholic priests to bless same-sex relationships, it does allow them to bless the



PHOTOS: PETER COOLEN; QUIRINALE.IT; CONTRIBUTED

Left to right: The Rev. Iain Luke, of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue; Pope Francis; and Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

people in them, whose relationship status would previously have been grounds for a priest to deny a blessing, says Luke. He compares this approach to that of the early days of Christianity in the first century AD.

"The kind of welcome and help that the church tried to offer to people like runaway slaves for example, wasn't conditioned on anything," he says. "And that's something that's right there in the document—to say there's a blessing that God offers always to everyone without our needing to do anything. It's unconditional."

While many LGBTQ-supporting Anglicans in Canada may feel this move still leaves a wide gulf between themselves and the Roman Catholic position on marriage, he says, the document also shows that as a dialogue partner, the Roman Catholic Church is trying to be responsive to issues

of sexuality. It may even offer some insight, he says, for conversations within the Anglican Church of Canada, which is not of one mind on the question of same-sex marriage.

General Synod voted down an amendment that would have made language in the church's marriage canon fully gender-neutral, though since the canon does not explicitly prohibit same-sex marriages, some dioceses have allowed them.

For those who cannot see their way to a change in doctrine, he says, *Fiducia Supplicans* offers a model of what it might look like to be as welcoming as possible, even when remaining in disagreement. It also offers food for thought for those who advocate for same-sex marriage. Luke says they may recognize that this document shows even those on the other side of the

debate—who are not able to reconcile same-sex marriage with their beliefs—may still want to be as welcoming as they can to LGBTQ people.

Archbishop Linda Nicholls, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, says she expects *Fiducia Supplicans* and the reasoning behind it to be a topic of continued discussion and debate within the Anglican Church of Canada and in its dialogue with Roman Catholics.

For some, the new approach does not go far enough in recognizing the legitimacy of same-sex marriage, she wrote in a statement emailed to the *Anglican Journal*, but for others it will be a step too far—even though, she said, the Roman Catholic church still does not consider same-sex relationships in any way equivalent to marriage. Still, she said, the dialogue between Anglicans and Roman Catholics has continued despite deep disagreements before, and she does not expect the new policy will change that.

Luke, meanwhile, says the new policy may offer some nuance to an issue that too often results in an all-or-nothing attitude between its two sides, both within and outside the Anglican Communion.

"We tend to think in terms of pro- or anti-, and either you're pro-gay couples and you want everything that you can get for them, including marriage, or you're against," he says. "My hope is that what we could take away from what the Catholic Church has done here is a step back from the polarization that seems to come along with that way of viewing things." ■

CANADA & NEW ENGLAND

Montreal to New York

OCT 6, 2024 • 12 DAYS

Indulge in breathtaking scenery onboard Oceania's *ms Insignia*, featuring visits to Quebec City, Corner Brook, Halifax, Saint John, Portland, Boston, Saguenay, New York and more!

AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES IN CAD

Inside Cabin from \$7,275 per person*
 Outside Cabin from \$8,075 per person*

Enjoy 2 for 1 Cruise Fares, Free Roundtrip Airfare, and Airport Transfers* PLUS:

- FREE US\$800 Shore Credit
- FREE Champagne, Wine, & More
- FREE Gourmet Specialty Dining
- FREE Unlimited Wi-Fi

*Amenities per stateroom. Terms and conditions apply, offer is subject to change.

Contact Craig Travel

1-800-387-8890

craigtravel.com/AJ

cruises@craigtravel.com

*Prices are are per person based on sharing a twin-bedded cabin, with airfare from included gateways and all inclusive features. Visit our website for full details and single rates. Conditions apply, contact Craig Travel for details. 1092 Mount Pleasant Rd, Toronto, ON M4P 2M6. TICO REG #1498987

FROM THE EDITOR ▶



The Easter egg and Christian hope

By Tali Folkins
EDITOR

IN A 2013 article for *Scientific American* (“Beyond Ishtar: The Tradition of Eggs at Easter”), writer Krystal D’Costa helpfully demolishes the hoax, circulating on the internet at the time, that the ultimate origin of Easter was the celebration of Ishtar, ancient Babylonian goddess of love and war (an interesting combination of spheres over which to preside, I’ve always thought).

She also writes of the remarkable frequency with which the egg has cropped up as a symbol in the world’s religions. Clearly there’s something universally fascinating about the egg—as though it has reminded humans, across time and space, of some great truth.

The tradition of the Easter egg, D’Costa writes, originates in the ancient



◀ Christians adopted early on the symbolism of the phoenix, which burst into flame and arose from its own ashes—or in one version, its own egg. Over time their focus shifted from bird to egg.

PHOTO: CATMANDO, ALGO AND S. ROWLEY

Greek legend of the phoenix, the beautiful bird which periodically bursts into flame, only to be reborn from its own ashes. In one version of the story, it arises from its own egg. Christians started to adopt the symbolism of the phoenix as early as the first century AD, and over time, their focus shifted from the bird to its egg, until the bird was forgotten. This is not the only theory of the Easter egg’s origin, but it shares with most of the others the idea that the tradition passed into Christianity from older polytheistic religions.

It’s fascinating stuff. D’Costa misses something important, however, when she ascribes the motive for Christianity’s adoption of the egg and other pagan symbols and rituals (the use of mistletoe at Christmas comes to mind) to nothing more than a scheme to lull polytheistic peoples into conversion by giving them

See EASTER, p. 11

LETTERS ▶

Balanced journalism does not suit Gaza war

The lead article in the December 2023 issue (“Pity the innocents,” p. 1) was a masterful example of balanced journalism with its positive prose and strategically ordered content. But here’s the thing: in the real world, there is no balance. The civilian population of Gaza that is kettled into a smaller and smaller area cannot match the relentless military attacks that have killed over 20,000 people to date.

Readers who have not done so are encouraged to read the full text of South Africa’s urgent application to the International Criminal Court, specifically paragraphs 101 and 102: <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20231228-app-01-00-en.pdf>

In a Christmas sermon delivered in Bethlehem the Rev. Munther Isaac of the Evangelical Lutheran Church called those of us in the West to task. He said, “We are tormented by the silence of the world,” and “are outraged by the complicity of the church.”

The Anglican Communion need to be an unequivocal voice for those subjected to collective punishment, rather than trying to be all things to all people.

Genevieve Chornenki
Toronto

Using science well is a way of thanking God

I was heartened to see the importance of science recognized for our faith journey (“Science is a God-given resource,” December 2023, p. 1).

As a recently-retired research engineer, I have long believed that science and faith are intertwined and inseparable. Science addresses our understanding of God’s universe (e.g., atoms, physics, geology, biolo-



IMAGE: LESHIK MEMORY

gy, astronomy) and faith addresses the unknowable (e.g., life beyond death, why the universe exists). God gave us the gift of brains and using them to our full potential is an acknowledgement of that gift; not using them to explore and understand the immense universe is like keeping a Christmas present under the tree but never opened and enjoyed. Using science for the betterment of the earth (and all of those living in it) is a way of thanking God for the gift of brains.

Science and technology are often wonderful but can also provide great challenges. One area that comes to mind is medical science, where the ability to preserve life can sometimes be in conflict with the quality of life. In such challenging cases the Church is necessary to help provide guidance.

“Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them.” —Psalm 111.

Morgan Brown, P.Eng., FCNS
President, Society for the Preservation of Canada’s Nuclear Heritage, Inc.
St. Barnabas Anglican Church
Deep River, Ont.

Worth noting clergy, laity voted to extend primatial term

With respect to “Primate yet to fix final day” (January, p. 1), I think it bears noting that the resolution at last summer’s General Synod that

would have allowed any sitting primate to finish out their term if their 70th birthday fell less than one year before the next General Synod, was defeated by the House of Bishops. The houses of both clergy and laity voted in favour of the resolution.

Tannis Webster
St. Mary Magdalene Church
Winnipeg

Church talks too much to itself

I have just finished reading my copies of the *Anglican Journal* and the *Niagara Anglican*, and my, was I impressed: reports from the highest levels of the church down to all the work going on at the street level. There are reports of churches who have lost their congregations, using property to offer affordable housing, to food banks, and warming centres, and so on being offered to the needy and a thing called missioning.

Lots of things going on, and all indicating a dynamic and growing entity.

Did I say growing?
When I sat back and reviewed all I had read, as impressive as it was, I was struck by one thing. We are talking to ourselves!!! We are operating in a closed environment!!

The big issue—that the Anglican church is slowly dying while other churches are growing, and thriving—seems to be ignored, except for a headline in the *Journal*, which says it all: “Fewer members, abundant wealth” (January, p.1). (Reminds me of the parable of the talents.)

I guess you could say the Anglican church is infected with the *Titanic* syndrome.

On the *Titanic*, people were



IMAGE: ELENA ALDONINA

enjoying life. Until—well, you know what happened.

It is said that the band played on as the ship was sinking.

The Rev. Trevor Jones
Stoney Creek, Ont.

Should the church advertise?

The article “Fewer members, abundant wealth” (January, p.1) begins, “Memberships in Anglican

and other churches in Canada are shrinking,” which we all know is largely the case. My question is, why are we not using media to invite lapsed Anglicans (and others) back to the Church? What might be the results if the church produced some short commercials aimed to invite people to attend a service?

I am no media expert and I fully appreciate that what I am suggesting represents a large expenditure, but if we don’t start bringing people back, the church will be no more in a few short years (and of course you know this better than I). A thoughtful media campaign might just reach some of those longing for a connection to a lifestyle that includes thanking God for giving us the words of Jesus by which to live a richer life.

Vallance Patrick
St. John’s Anglican Church
Cheapside, Ont.

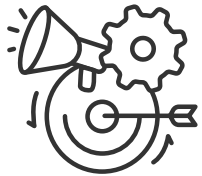


IMAGE: ANTSTUDIO

The Anglican Journal welcomes letters to the editor. Since not all letters can be published, preference is given to short correspondence (300 words or less). All letters are subject to editing.



PHOTO: GEBHARD FUGEL, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The risen Christ calmed the hearts of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, the primate writes, each knowing he had seen them fully.

Celebrating the gift of an all-accepting love

By Linda Nicholls

HUMAN BEINGS were created by the love of God for love of God and neighbour, expressed in a variety of ways through friendship, marriage, family and community. Whenever we begin a friendship or an intimate relationship we long for it to be one in which we can be honest and truthful, accepted, respected and loved no matter what we have said or done. While the relationship may not be free of consequences for words and actions that harm others, we hope it will provide a safe space in which to receive and give forgiveness, and where renewal can be discovered and lived.

Many years ago, while on retreat, my group and I undertook the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius. Beforehand we spent several days rooting ourselves in the love of God. This was an essential foundation for the retreat exercises that would follow, in which we were invited in silence and prayer into an intimate honesty with God. We needed to know and be secure in the love of God to have the vulnerability required by that honesty. Then we experienced God's deep grace—a grace deeper than we had imagined.

What does that have to do with Easter? In the days following the Resurrection, the disciples encountered the risen Christ in different ways and places—on the road to Emmaus; in the upper room; while having a beachside breakfast. Grappling with the enormity of the Resurrection, they encountered Christ and knew that they had all abandoned him at the most critical hour—that of his arrest and trial.



SINGING WITH JOY

Imagine what it was like for them to now meet him in the Resurrection, knowing he could see into the darkest places of their souls. In those moments, the risen Christ offers what they need. The hearts of the disciples on the road to Emmaus are calmed and reassured as he breaks bread with them. Upon the disciples in the upper room he breathes peace. To Thomas he offers the visible signs he needs. Peter he commissions to love and feed those entrusted to him. They each know Christ has seen them fully and in his presence they are safe. Here they have all they need, and nothing will be able to separate them from his love—even if they fail again in the future.

This is the gift of the Resurrection appearances, guaranteed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, that is ours too. In this relationship with God we can be known—warts and all—and loved. That complete acceptance is the root of the love we can then give to a world that longs for it.

As we celebrate the Resurrection at Easter, let us celebrate the gift of a love in which nothing is hidden and of one who loves us as we are—and as we will become, by God's grace.

Alleluia! ■

Archbishop Linda Nicholls is the primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

FEATHER AND SAGE

A prayer for Lenten humility

By Chris Harper

FEATHER: Creator God, we, your children of creation, come before you in this prayer with humble and open hearts. Continue, we pray, to open our spirits and our understanding to you and lead us on the good path, so that we might become agreeable to you. Humble us that we might speak with peace and that we might serve each other to the betterment of our communities. Forgive us where we have failed and bless us that we might be

true servants and a blessing to others who walk with us in this our journey of life and faith. This we pray, through Him who is the peacemaker, your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

SAGE: Through the Lenten season many Christians “give and take,” with prayer and reflection, seeking to become agreeable before the Almighty. Someone might give up a habit and/or take up a spiritual practice. To give up something of the self is an act of humility, and a

greater act of humility is not calling attention to it—“My goodness, I’m incredibly humble; see what I’m offering of myself!” In Mark 9:33-37 the disciples argue about who is the greatest among them. Jesus, hearing their words, defines humility and speaks about service and sacrifice. The first, he says, must be the last, and in this He must be the ultimate example.

In this, our shared Lenten journey, what will you be talking about, and what lessons have you humbled yourself to? I bid you to

keep our shared Indigenous Ministry in your prayers as we take on a new mandate. Pray for the Indigenous clergy and other leaders as they serve their communities and walk as examples of hope and peace in Christ. Finally, pray that we might all go forward in humility before God and creation, and for peace, healing and hope to all. A blessed Lent to everyone. ■

Archbishop Chris Harper is national Indigenous archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada.

ANGLICAN JOURNAL

First published as the *Dominion Churchman* in 1875,
 The *Anglican Journal* is the national newspaper of the Anglican Church of Canada.

EDITOR: Tali Folkins
ART DIRECTOR: Saskia Rowley
STAFF WRITERS: Matthew Puddister
 Sean Frankling
MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT: Alicia Brown
CIRCULATION: Fe Bautista
ADVERTISING MANAGER: Larry Gee

PUBLISHER:
 General Synod, Anglican Church of Canada
 The *Anglican Journal* is published monthly (with the exception of July and August) and is mailed separately or with one of 16 diocesan or regional sections. We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada for our publishing activities.

EDITORIAL POLICY:
 Since 2019, the *Anglican Journal* has been tasked by General Synod with producing content of “the highest standards of journalistic responsibility, accuracy, fairness, accountability and transparency” that is “fact-based, fact-checked and in-depth, tackling important issues, asking and answering difficult questions.” General Synod, as publisher, respects and defends its journalistic integrity. While General Synod retains the right to intervene in stories which have the potential to bring the church into disrepute, it expects to exercise that right rarely, if ever; in cases of unresolvable conflict or disagreement, General Synod has the right to order changes, but the changes so ordered must be publicly noted in the *Journal*. The policies and practices that govern the *Journal* can be found in full online, at bit.ly/41fG5Q.

EDITORIAL BOARD:
 The editorial board exists to advise the editor on journalistic matters; it does not exercise direct authority over the operations of the *Anglican Journal*. It can be reached at ajedboard@googlegroups.com.

Michael Valpy, chair
 Ray Aldred
 John A. DeCoste

Michael W. Higgins
 Stuart Mann
 Karen Webb

LETTERS: letters@anglicanjournal.com
 or mail to: Letters, Anglican Journal,
 80 Hayden St., Toronto, ON M4Y 3G2

ADVERTISING:
 Larry Gee
 593 Balmy Beach Rd.,
 Owen Sound, ON N4K 5N4
 Phone: 905-483-3553
 Fax: 416-925-8811
 Email: advertising@national.anglican.ca

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS:
 Editor: editor@anglicanjournal.com
 Director, Communications: hpaukov@national.anglican.ca

ADVERTISING DEADLINE:
 20th day of the 2nd month preceding publication date.
 Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement by the *Anglican Journal* or the Anglican Church of Canada. Indexed in the Canadian Magazine Index, Canadian Periodical Index and online in the Canadian Business & Current Affairs Database. Printed in North York, ON by Webnews Printing, Inc.
 PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40069670
 RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO: CIRCULATION DEPT.
 80 HAYDEN ST., TORONTO, ON M4Y 3G2

SUBSCRIPTION RATE:
 \$10 a year in Canada (\$0.50 per issue), \$17 in U.S. and overseas. Excepting these inserts: Niagara Anglican \$15; Crosstalk (Ottawa) \$15 suggested donation; Huron Church News \$15 a year in Canada, \$23 U.S. & overseas; Diocesan Times (NS & PEI) \$15; Anglican Life (Nfld) \$15, Nfld & Labrador \$20 outside Nfld, \$25 in U.S. and overseas.

SUBSCRIPTION CHANGES
 Send old and new address (include ID number on label, if possible) by email: circulation@national.anglican.ca; or phone 416-924-9199 or 1-866-924-9192, ext. 245; or by mail to Anglican Journal, 80 Hayden St., Toronto, ON M4Y 3G2. Depending on when your request is received, it may take up to five weeks for subscription changes to take effect.

ISSN-0847-978X
CIRCULATION: 36,000

Funded by the Government of Canada

THE
INTERVIEW ▶

“ I feel
sorry for all
victims of
this current
violence.
Whether
they are
Palestinians or
Jews, we are
all creatures of
one God.

‘Something breaking all hearts’

Bombed since October, Gaza now fears famine: hospital director

Continued from p. 1

raided by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), who detained most of the hospital’s staff for questioning.

On Jan. 17, with the conflict dragging on, supplies running low and injured Palestinians continuing to pour in, the *Anglican Journal* spoke with Tarazi about life at Al-Ahli Arab Hospital during the war and its outlook for the future.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

How are things at the hospital right now? What’s the current situation?

In Gaza, it is a catastrophic situation in general and also at all hospitals since Oct. 7. The bombardment is unbearable. Up till now we have more than 30,000 killed people. Seventy per cent of them are children and women. Plus the total of injured is about 61,000 up until today. [Editor’s note: As this issue was being prepared, Gaza’s health agency estimated more than 26,000 people had been killed in the fighting and more than 65,000 had been injured.] And the other problem is displaced people; nearly 80 per cent or 85 per cent of the population now are displaced. They are forced to move from Northern Gaza into the south and they are practicing a very difficult, inhuman life there.

And people, even nowadays, are going through another war: not only the bombardment from air and sea and land—also now they are facing acute food insecurity and a risk of famine is coming very soon. And this situation reflects directly to the work of Ahli Arab Hospital.

Ahli Arab Hospital is a Christian hospital; our aim [is] just to serve, to serve all people without any discrimination. And this is the mission of our Christianity. Unfortunately the hospital passed through two catastrophic situations, the first one on the 17th of October, where because of a bombardment directly into the hospital, 500 children and women were either injured or dead. And that was for us really a very major event.

Would that have been the explosion in the courtyard?

Yes, exactly. And when you are among those children and trying to relieve their anxiety and fear and then after two hours somebody phones you and says they are all dead, it’s really something breaking all hearts. Breaking all hearts.

So you were with them in the courtyard before the explosion? Did I understand that correctly?

Yes, that’s right. Very painful memory. Nearly all of them dead.

And the second incident happened on the 18th of December when tanks demolished the infrastructure of Ahli, the outer wall, the play garden of the children, and the [IDF] detained most of Ahli Arab Hospital staff members. It was very hard



▲ Strikes by the Israeli Defense Forces, like the one that destroyed this Rafah mosque, have contributed to a death toll of more than 26,000 people, according to Gaza’s Hamas-run government.
PHOTO: REUTERS STAFF

▶ Gazan children wait to receive food in Rafah. With 80 per cent of the population displaced, many Gazans are living “a very difficult, inhuman life,” says Tarazi.
PHOTO: REUTERS/ MOHAMMED SALEM



to know how to take care of about 150 patients who were taking their treatment at the hospital. The hospital at that time was left with only seven people.

Luckily they didn’t enter the hospital because I’m sure that everybody knows that we are a neutral body, but that’s what happened that day.

Israel has said that Hamas has been operating out of hospitals. Is that why they would’ve been checking?

I don’t know, but not at Ahli. I want to assure you of that. For Ahli, we are a Christian institution. The management are all Christians.

I think they [took] our staff when they had suspicion, but they have released Ahli Arab hospital staff because they are sure that we are not a part of any political party in Gaza.

So they left you with seven staff and 150 patients. Can you give me any details about how staff handled that?

To tell you the truth, we stopped [the] emergency department. We didn’t receive any patients for emergency, and these two doctors, they were working 24 hours a day just to look after, to [keep] stable the cases that we had at the hospital.

And how long did they continue working 24-hour days?

It took us a week. And then after the tanks left the area of Ahli Arab Hospital, we started to repair the damage to the infrastructure and started working again. But thank God recently they released most of the staff.

That was really another issue that was critical for Ahli—how could we continue serving people? Ahli Arab Hospital at



that time was the only hospital left in operation to serve all the northern area of Gaza. We had to adjust our plan and we tried our best to just focus on taking care of the patients who were still at the hospital and on the waiting list for surgeries.

The main problem that we are facing today is big shortages of medicine and medical supplies, especially antibiotics, especially anesthesia, drugs and other consumables such as screws for orthopedic surgeries, dressing sets, all such things. There is a big need for it at this moment and since the 7th of October, there is no electricity in Gaza and we have been depending on solar cell panels and fuel. Unfortunately, the solar cell panel system was attacked and at the time being we can use only 20 per cent power of that system. Most of the nights nowadays, patients and staff are spending nights without any electricity.

Fuel is a big problem. We can't operate the generator all the time, only in certain hours when the operating theatre is working. Otherwise, we are unable to resume our work and save lives.

So is your emergency department up and running now?

Actually, because of the number of staff we are even receiving casualties not related to the war—for example, children with diarrhea, with infections, chronic cases needing urgent treatment. Yes, we receive that, but casualties [are] all the time [coming] directly to Ahli Arab Hospital. We have adjusted our plan to only conduct surgeries for injured patients who are in need of procedures. And we are conducting daily more than 20 surgeries in one operating theatre. [Often] we don't have enough stuff to operate another operating theatre or we don't have enough fuel to keep electricity working in [the whole] hospital.

Since the 7th of October, it wasn't easy to get medicine and medical supplies. During all this time, the

WHO [World Health Organization] has succeeded in giving medicine and medical supplies in [only] minimum quantities to Ahli Arab Hospital, and unfortunately we are still suffering over big shortages of them.

And there is another problem. Nowadays, we don't have food at the hospital, and for more than one month, we minimize the meals to offer only one meal a day—which contains only rice and dates—to the patients and to the staff members. I don't know what we will do if the situation continues like that.

Something you haven't spoken of much is your own day-to-day work. What has it been like?

The work in the hospital is not one person's work. It is collective work. During emergencies, anything that needs your input, you have to work on it. And during war, there is no planning [ahead] at all. You have to plan according to the situation, what the situation imposes on you to do. Possibly at midnight you will have a call and you have to be attentive and react accordingly.

During emergencies, my administration staff were side by side with the medical staff carrying patients, doing first aid and triage and so on. During emergencies, everybody who has something [they can] do has to do it.

At first, we were the only hospital dealing with all [kinds of] accidents. But I think nowadays there are other hospitals [coming] back partially into operation, especially the government hospitals, and they are dealing with direct casualties.

Nowadays, because of the shortage in staff, we're only dealing with patients who are triaged and in need of surgeries.

Who brings them to you?

Ambulances. And sometimes families. It's really very touching when you see an injured patient on a donkey coming to Ahli Arab Hospital because there is no other transportation.

What are the typical injuries?

Burn cases, broken bones mainly, and sometimes those who are in need of abdominal surgery.

I'd like to ask, how are you feeling?

Really, it's a very devastating situation and as a human being, I feel sorry for all victims of this current violence. Whether they are Palestinians or Jews, we are all creatures of one God. And after all, Arabs and Jews are brothers. We are the children of Abraham. It's therefore really breaking [my] heart to see the brothers are fighting. [*Voice shaking*]

I want to thank you for sharing that with me. I can hear that it's not easy for you to discuss.

Yeah.

What does the future look like?

We never lose hope and we are looking for a ceasefire because in war there is no winning. We're all losing, and this thing is urgent. Until we can come together and sit around a table and have negotiations, the situation will be bad.

The big solution is negotiation and a round table, it will solve all problems. ■

In April's Anglican Journal:
The Gaza war seen from inside Israel

Fatigue and hope define outlook for Ukrainian PWRDF partner

Sean Frankling
STAFF WRITER

As the war between Russia and Ukraine approaches the end of its second year, Fight for Right, a charity supported by the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), has changed its focus from evacuating people in urgent need to advocacy for a more accessible Ukraine, says Tanya Herasymova, the charity's director.

Herasymova is from Dnipro, a city in Eastern Ukraine, but she is working from abroad, she says, because while the city is not being shelled at the moment, it could be at any time. And because she uses a wheelchair herself, Herasymova is not guaranteed to be able to evacuate in time.

Once the majority of people who wanted to get out of the country had the chance to do so, she says, Fight for Right, which specializes in supporting people with disabilities, transitioned to taking care of those who remained. First, that meant providing water and supplies to get through a harsh winter with an unreliable power grid. More recently, it has also included advocating for accessible shelters to ensure those with disabilities have somewhere safe

to go when the fighting gets close and pushing for rebuilding efforts to include accessibility upgrades.

"Ukraine is not the most accessible country in the world," she says. "It's very hard to stay safe because we don't have accessible bomb shelters."

That's one of the things Fight for Right is now working on changing, she says, along with fighting for a voice for disabled people in the efforts to rebuild infrastructure that has been destroyed in Russian bombings. Many Ukrainians hope the country will be admitted into the European Union, she says, but Fight for Right's goal is to see an improvement in accessibility policy before that happens. And it's important to note that many of Fight for Right's staff have disabilities themselves, she adds—she wants to make it known that people with disabilities are more than just passive receivers of help, but also active participants in delivering it.

"We're all working for victory. But what we'll have when we win—we need to think about that now," she tells the *Journal*. Fight for Right doesn't want to let things go back to the way they were for Ukrainians with disabilities. ■



When disaster strikes, PWRDF responds.

Wild fires, floods, hurricanes and other climate-related events are devastating to communities around the world, including in Canada. PWRDF's In-Canada Emergency Response Fund allows us to respond more effectively to domestic emergencies. Working with dioceses, PWRDF can support medium and long-term needs of communities as they recover.

To learn more or support PWRDF's In-Canada Emergency Fund visit pwrdf.org/in-canada-response.



PWRDF
The Primate's World Relief
and Development Fund
The Anglican Church of Canada

80 Hayden St.,
Toronto, ON M4Y 3G2
416-924-9192
1-866-308-7973
pwrdf@pwrdf.org
pwrdf.org

[f](#) @pwrdfcan [t](#) @pwrdf [i](#) @pwrdf

HOMELESS ▶



In search of solutions to a national crisis

“There are people here now in Peterborough who two years ago ... would’ve said, ‘I’m not at any risk of being unhoused,’ who are now unhoused.”

—Canon Brad Smith

Continued from p. 1

downtown Toronto’s Kensington Market. Until recently, as many as 25 people at a time camped out in tents on the tiny strip around the church, which priest-in-charge Canon Maggie Helwig says has long been known as a welcoming and safe space for unhoused people.

“There has never been a time in the last 30 or 40 years, if not longer, that there haven’t been a few people sleeping in the churchyard,” Helwig says. For just under two years, the latest encampment marked the entrance to St. Stephen-in-the-Fields.

That changed on Nov. 24 when the city of Toronto forcibly cleared the encampment, setting up fences and concrete blocks to prevent anyone from camping there. A city notice said the land was a transportation right of way and municipal property and that tents were blocking the street.

A handful of people could still be found camping outside the church entrance when the *Anglican Journal* visited St. Stephen-in-the-Fields in mid-December. Helwig called the city’s clearing of the encampment “regrettable”. People camping on church property are not the issue, in Helwig’s view.

“Our church yard has been for over a century a sanctuary, a safe space,” Helwig says. “To see it surrounded by an eight-foot security fence and blocked off by concrete blocks is incredibly painful. It is such a wound on the identity of this parish.”

Struggle to survive

A 2023 study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) found there is no province in Canada where workers who earn the minimum wage can afford an apartment.

In almost every Canadian city, the one-bedroom rental wage—the hourly wage that would allow a tenant in a single-earner household to spend no more than 30 per cent of their pre-tax earnings on rent—is higher than the minimum wage. The CCPA named Toronto and Vancouver as the worst culprits. In these cities, even two full-time workers earning minimum wage cannot afford a one-bedroom unit without spending more than 30 per cent of their combined income on housing.

Churches’ experiences with encampments can vary. Helwig describes a good relationship between St. Stephen-in-

▲ Helwig stands in front of fencing and cement blocks placed in front of St. Stephen-in-the-Fields by city crews to prevent tents from being set up there.

PHOTO: MATTHEW PUDDISTER

▶ Homeless encampment outside Sanctuary church in Toronto in June 2020

PHOTO: GREG COOK



the-Fields and people sleeping on church property. She opposed the city’s clearing of the encampment.

The hundreds of people who have slept outside St. Stephen-in-the-Fields have come from many different backgrounds, Helwig says. She recalls one older woman with cancer whose housing unit was taken over by a gang and who needed somewhere to stay while Toronto Community Housing worked to re-house her. The woman ended up living at the encampment for about six months.

“She was lovely,” Helwig says. “She was great to have around. But she should have been indoors.”

Helwig acknowledges many people who have slept outside St. Stephen-in-the-Fields have mental health problems. She says society tends to stigmatize and stereotype such people.

“Mental health issues are extremely common at all levels of society,” Helwig says. “It’s not unique to people who are homeless. But the stress of being homeless can exacerbate struggles people are already having.”

People camping on church property “have the same frustrations and arguments as any group of people trying to find ways to live together,” she says. “Sometimes I will go out and yell at people about throwing their garbage on the ground rather than putting it in bins and we negotiate and we work things through. Nobody’s perfect. We’re all human beings struggling and trying to survive. But these are people who are trying to survive in tremendous

affliction and against great odds in a society that has very little time for them.”

Tensions with parishioners

Other churches that have hosted encampments say they have faced challenges of a different sort. The relationship of the Anglican Church of St. John the Evangelist in Peterborough, Ont. with people camping on its property changed over time, to the point where it decided it had to ask them to leave.

Canon Brad Smith, rector at St. John the Evangelist, recalls a crisis in the summer of 2019 when one of the city’s emergency shelters closed, leaving many unhoused people with nowhere to go. Soon an encampment sprang up on church property, which at its peak saw around 35 tents set up on the front lawn, Smith says.

That concentration of people living in tents on church grounds lasted roughly six months, he says, with some eventually finding more stable housing and others finding space in the shelter system. Still others, Smith says, continued to live on the property.

However, there was some tension between campers and parishioners—tension that came to a head in March 2022 after a wave of vandalism, Smith says, and other criminal activity. The church informed tenters it hoped they would vacate by the end of the month.

“Some of the folks that were living in tents were dealing drugs and just engaging in behaviour that was drawing a lot of people to the property that were making parishioners feel unsafe,” Smith says. “We had some really significant property damage that happened as a result of some of the folks who were here.”

“It got to the point where we were not really providing a place for people who don’t have options for housing. We’re kind of tolerating really antisocial behaviour. Because we’re right downtown and have a lot of both residential and commercial neighbours, at that point in time, the folks who were here in tents, it was time for them to move on.”

St. George’s Anglican Church in Moncton, N.B. allowed about 20 people to temporarily camp next to its sanctuary for a week in 2020. Canon Chris VanBuskirk told the Canadian Press at the time that he and other parishioners had initially considered asking the campers



PHOTO: MATTHEW PUDDISTER



PHOTO: MATTHEW PUDDISTER



PHOTO: IVY PHOTOS/SHUTTERSTOCK

FROM LEFT: A defaced sign marks fencing and cement blocks in front of St. Stephen-in-the-Fields; a statue of a beggar outside St. Stephen-in-the-Fields; a homeless man with his dogs on a street in Montreal; an unhoused person's temporary box home set up at the entrance of St. James Anglican Church in Vancouver.



PHOTO: TED MCGRATH/Flickr

Continued from p. 8

to leave because of angry reactions from neighbours. Instead they made an agreement for a temporary stay.

Over the following week, VanBuskirk said, community members dropped off food and other items. The church also held a breakfast where it introduced the unhoused camping there to social services.

Looking back today, Esther Mah, who serves as administrator, treasurer and outreach coordinator at St. George's and was present during the encampment, views the experience negatively.

"It was not a good experiment," Mah says. "It was a disaster, in all honesty. We thought we would try it, be helpful. It really wasn't a helpful thing because it just became a magnet for bad behaviour and it was unsightly. It created a lot of animosity in the downtown area ... When they were asked to pack up, it took them almost a week longer to pack up than they should have."

Balance of security

While some churches have hosted large encampments, others are more likely to host just one or two individuals sleeping on church property.

Such is the situation in Vancouver's Westside, according to Joan Stewart, co-chair of the board of management for Westside Anglicans Neighbourhood Ministry, which conducts homeless outreach in the neighbourhood. Each week, Westside Anglican teams go out and assist unhoused people, giving them packages of goods, for example.

Those sleeping on church grounds "don't hang around there during the day," Stewart says. "They don't set up an encampment. But they find a spot that is secluded on the property and they may stay overnight with their belongings. Then they usually disappear in the mornings."

The Rev. David Butorac, rector of St. Alban's Cathedral in Prince Albert, Sask., describes a similar situation at his own church. A semi-permanent structure for homeless people was set up by a friend of his on his church's grounds last winter, but that was really an exception, Butorac says.

"We always have people camping out on our back stoop all the time," he adds.

"But that's always different people and not anything remotely permanent." Usually, he says, individuals will stay overnight on church property in sleeping bags and use cardboard boxes or tarps to try to keep out the elements.

While acknowledging some parishioners may have safety concerns, Butorac says the overwhelming majority of people sleeping on church property have not caused any problems.

"It's a balance of security," Butorac says. "I'm a 47-year-old male. I'm not afraid of a half-frozen homeless person. But a lot of my parishioners are 70 and they're women. That's scary to them and I definitely see their side for sure."

More often it is unhoused people themselves who face threats to their safety. Butorac cites recurring problems in the community with gang members who target the homeless. A typical method of attack, he says, involves three people converging on an individual or couple sleeping under a tarp. One person on each side will step on the tarp to pin them down, while the other people kick them and steal their belongings.

"We don't have visible encampments ... [only] the occasional person sleeping in a doorway," Butorac says. "But they're not there for longer than two days because it's also super dangerous."

During the cold half of the year, St. Alban's hosts a soup kitchen and a warming shelter in its hall that other churches help run. On an average day in this outreach ministry, Butorac says, the cathedral will serve about 50 people, most of whom are Indigenous.

Statistics Canada reported in December 2023 that 29.5 per cent of Indigenous households had experienced some kind of homelessness, almost three times the rate among Canada's total population. Homes in Indigenous communities are often both expensive and poor in quality, lacking adequate insulation. Many First Nations also face problems with substance abuse and gang activity.

"Sometimes families will move off of the reserve because it's so dangerous," Butorac says. "I know young couples who are homeless who moved off reserve because their family were drug dealers and they didn't want to get tangled up in it anymore."

What is to be done?

Statistics Canada reported in December 2023 that financial problems were the most commonly reported reason leading to homelessness. Its report cited deteriorating housing affordability during the pandemic, higher unemployment, fewer job vacancies in recent months, and soaring inflation in 2021 and 2022. In fall 2022, StatsCan said, 44 per cent of Canadians said they were very concerned with their household's ability to afford housing or rent. The high cost of housing parallels the proliferation of encampments and people sleeping outdoors, including on church grounds.

Churches that have hosted encampments or people sleeping on their property have drawn similar conclusions.

"There are people here now in Peterborough who two years ago ... would've said, 'I'm not at any risk of being unhoused,' who are now unhoused, as a product of the fact that we have one of the lowest vacancy rates in the province and extremely high cost of housing for the amount of the median income in Peterborough County," Smith says.

Greg Cook, an outreach worker at the non-denominational Sanctuary church in Toronto, says the city in the past told people sleeping in parks that they would receive tickets for trespassing if they didn't move—but that if they cooperated with a city worker to find shelter or housing, they wouldn't have to move right away.

Now, Cook says, "just because of the cost of housing going up so much and the shelter being more and more full, I would say that kind of approach is just more and more ineffectual. So you have a situation where more and more people just don't have any other option" but to sleep on church property.

The city of Toronto has responded to churches hosting encampments on their property by taking them to court for violating bylaws—as happened to Sanctuary—and by forcibly clearing encampments and putting up obstacles such as fences and concrete blocks, as it did at Sanctuary and St. Stephen-in-the-Fields.

When clearing encampments, the city of Toronto has offered spaces at temporary shelters such as hotels. But the city has also been closing temporary shelters at hotels created during the start of the pandemic. Cook notes that at such institutions, "You

don't have any rights as a tenant. They can kick you out at any point and there's no process. It's not housing."

Cook and Helwig say Canada needs more emergency shelter spaces in the short term and deeper structural changes to address the housing crisis in the long term.

"The solution to homelessness is homes that people can afford," Cook says. "Homelessness happens when rent is out of people's reach, and the situation just keeps getting catastrophically worse." Even if large numbers of affordable homes began to be constructed each year, he says, it would take years to make up for the current deficit.

In the interim, Cook points to the need for emergency spaces and has suggested opening up local armouries, which are under federal government ownership.

"Ultimately it's the federal government that has the deepest pockets and used to be the one who primarily funded a housing programme that made sure that people could afford housing ... More and more, housing is [treated as] an investment rather than a social good," he says.

Helwig says unhoused people need to be supported in the short term where they are, while institutions work towards long-term solutions.

"The city [of Toronto] has said they have a lot of concern about fire risk, but ... they don't distribute fire extinguishers. They don't distribute fire retardant blankets. They don't distribute hot water bottles ... which are a much safer way of staying warm in cold weather. We would really encourage them to take a more pragmatic approach to fire safety and help people find ways to stay warm that are less dangerous."

While long-term solutions aren't likely to come quickly, Helwig says, current short-term measures like simply moving homeless people into shelter hotels "from which they'll probably be evicted within a week" are not viable.

"We need much more emergency shelter space," she says. "We need more flexible types of shelter space. We need more affordable and supportive housing. We need housing that actually meets people's accessibility needs and meets people where they are, rather than rapidly evicting people for not fitting some perfect model of what a tenant in supportive housing is supposed to be."



THE CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES Based in Winnipeg but with students from across Canada, the CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES specializes in deacon formation as well as life-long learning for both clergy and lay people. Our Anglican Certificate in Diaconal Ministry program includes the online “Ministering by Word and Example” course on what it means to be a deacon in the Anglican tradition. Our two-week “Learning on Purpose” intensive is an opportunity to discern God’s call while being introduced to new ideas of theology, biblical studies, pastoral care, social justice, and worship, and to develop leadership skills of planning, group facilitation, and dealing with conflict. Our online and in-person theme learning circles are an opportunity to dive deep into topics such as Relationships, Eco-Justice, Grief and Loss, and Living Scripture in a supportive and creative community of learners. The CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES’ approach to education is collaborative, participatory, and transformative. Learn more. Email info@ccsonline.ca Telephone 1-866-780-8887 Visit our website ccsonline.ca

ATLANTIC SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY Atlantic School of Theology helps develop students for lay and ordained ministry, as well as for meeting the theological and ethical challenges of today’s world. AST is an ecumenical school of theology and Christian ministry, founded in 1971 by institutions of the three founding parties: the Anglican Church of Canada, The Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Halifax, and the United Church of Canada. Accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in Canada and the United States, we offer a variety of programs for all learners: Diploma in Theological Studies, Diploma in Missional Leadership, Bachelor of Theology, Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies, Master of Divinity, and Master of Arts (Theology and Religion) offered in conjunction with Saint Mary’s University. AST has recently expanded offerings for Continuing Education (<https://www.asttheology.ns.ca/con-ed/index.html>). Our programs can be completed on campus, at a distance, or in a hybrid format. Most notably, our MDiv Summer Distance program combines a ministry practicum with online academic study in the fall and winter and students come to campus for courses in the summer. Our Summer Distance degree can be customized in accordance with the needs of a particular diocese. Shaped by a tradition of cooperation and respect, going back over 50 years, AST serves Christ’s mission by shaping effective and faithful ordained and lay leaders and understanding among communities of faith.

For more information, contact us at asinfo@asttheology.ns.ca or 902-430-7662.

COLLEGE OF EMMANUEL AND ST. CHAD Founded in 1879 as the first university in northwestern Canada, Emmanuel & St. Chad equips students with the spiritual, theological, and practical foundations for serving faith communities in a rapidly changing world. Through our shared degree programs in the Saskatoon Theological Union, Anglican, Lutheran and United Church partners study and worship together, on campus and in their home communities. We root our ecumenical commitment in a deep appreciation of our distinctive traditions and future calling. Degrees offered: BTh., LTh., MTS, MDiv., and DMin. Principal: Rev. Dr. Iain Luke Contact: Lisa McInnis, Registrar 1121 College Drive Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W3 Phone: 306-975-3753 E-Mail: esc.registrar@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca www.emmanuelstchad.ca

HURON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE Explore questions of faith and intellect at one of Canada’s oldest and most prestigious theological schools. As the founding college of Western University, since 1863, Huron University College has established a legacy of excellence in leadership. Our Anglican University’s rich history is supported by world-renowned faculty and a global alumni network that includes significant influencers in every sector. Huron offers undergraduate students a Liberal Arts education that has been transformed to meet the complex demands of contemporary society. We are dedicated to cultivating every student’s ethical foundation and their commitment to work for a more hopeful, sustainable, and equitable world. Huron’s Faculty of Theology prepares its students for responsive and resilient leadership in all our program options. Earn your BA in Religion & Theology, or combine courses or a minor with other areas of study. Prepare for a vocation in ministry, law, academics, or public service with our professional (MDiv and MTS) and graduate (MA Theology) degree programs, or with Huron’s LTh program and Continuing Education offerings. In any program, you will always be supported by caring faculty and staff as well as one of the most robust financial aid programs in the country.

To arrange a visit, and for more information on how you will benefit from a transformative education that empowers for tomorrow, while respecting yesterday’s traditions, please contact us at: Email: huron@uwo.ca theology@huron.uwo.ca Telephone: 519-438-7224 Website: www.huronatwestern.ca

MONTREAL DIOCESAN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE is a creative learning community rooted in the Anglican and United Church traditions, helping students to grow in spiritual maturity and exercise leadership in the church and world. The college is affiliated with McGill University and is a member of the ecumenical Montreal School of Theology. Our programs include Bachelor of Theology, Master of Divinity, Diploma in Ministry, Master of Sacred Theology, and Certificate in Bilingual Ministry. We also offer distance-education options such as the Licentiate in Theology program which prepares students for ministry in local contexts across Canada. We are located in downtown Montreal and have students from across the country and globe. For information, please contact: The Rev. Dr. Jesse Zink, Principal, 3475 University St., Montreal, Quebec H3A 2A8. 514-849-3004 x222. info@montrealdio.ca www.montrealdio.ca

QUEEN’S COLLEGE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY Though Queen’s College has been preparing people for varieties of ministry opportunities since 1841, we are acutely aware of the changing needs of the world today and are envisioning a new way to be church as we move into the future. We offer full-time and part-time programs for those preparing for ordained and non-ordained ministries in the Church and community. We have on-campus, on-line, hybrid and correspondence courses that help students complete M.Div., MTS, M. Th, B. Th., Associate, Diploma and Certificate programs. We collaborate and partner with other faith groups to strengthen our programs and the learning experience. Our programs include and foster theological education, pastoral training and supervision, spiritual development, participation in faith-based learning community, and a vibrant chapel life. Queen’s is situated on the campus of Memorial University in St. John’s, NL. For more information about our programs contact The Provost, Queen’s College Faculty of Theology, 210 Prince Philip Drive, St. John’s, NL A1B 3R6. queens@mun.ca, www.queenscollegenl.ca 709-753-0116, Toll free (877) 753-0116.

RENISON INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY (RIM) The newly imagined RIM will now focus on offering retreats and workshops which address the learning longings of the local Anglican church, an annual Youth Event convened by our Chaplain, an annual Lenten lecture series which focuses on theologies of Social Justice and action toward the common good, and two co-sponsored programs offered in collaboration with parishes each year. We also invite you to make suggestions for future programming ideas: reninmin@uwaterloo.ca Please join us at one of our upcoming events. Participation is free. You can support the work of the Renison Institute of Ministry by making a donation during registration; there will also be freewill offering baskets available at the events. All events include parking and refreshments as part of the day’s activities. Find out which of our events will interest you. Visit www.renison.ca/RIM

SAINT PAUL UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF THEOLOGY Would you like to deepen your understanding of your faith and discover fresh ways of bringing it to bear on the questions and challenges of life? The Faculty of Theology at Saint Paul University has been preparing Anglicans for lay and professional ministry for over forty years. Students pursue practical ministry experience in the Anglican tradition in a rich ecumenical and bilingual educational context, beautifully situated in the national capital region. The Faculty of Theology offers a variety of programs: BA, MTS, MDiv, MA, and PhD. Courses are offered online and in person. For more information, please contact Dr. Sarah Kathleen Johnson at Saint Paul University, 223 Main Street, Ottawa, ON K1S 1C4 sarah.kathleen.johnson@ustpaul.ca

THORNELOE UNIVERSITY is an innovative Anglican college in Sudbury, Ontario offering creative programs in Theology. Largely through distance education, the School of Theology offers courses at the certificate and diploma levels, as well as a Bachelor of Theology. Thorneloe University has 58 single rooms in its community-focused residence, which is open to students at Laurentian. For more information, please contact the President of Thorneloe University at: president@thorneloe.ca Website: www.thorneloe.ca

TRINITY COLLEGE Shaped by the generous breadth of the Anglican tradition, Trinity prepares Christian leaders of varied backgrounds to participate in God’s mission to the world. The college offers professional and graduate level programs focused on preparing students to engage with the needs of contemporary society and to contribute to the future of God’s church. The Faculty of Divinity enjoys particular expertise in historical and contemporary forms of liturgy, church history, contemporary ethics and theology, Anglican and Eastern Orthodox studies, philosophy of religion, and congregational studies. In ecumenical collaboration within the Toronto School of Theology and in federation with the University of Toronto, the Faculty of Divinity offers the following degree programs: MDiv, MTS, MA, ThM, DMin and PhD. Short-course Certificate programs are available, with concentrations that include Anglican Studies, Orthodox Studies, and Diaconal Ministry. For more information please contact: Faculty of Divinity, Trinity College, 6 Hoskin Avenue, Toronto ON M5S 1H8 416-978-2133 divinity@trinity.utoronto.ca www.trinity.utoronto.ca/study-theology

VANCOUVER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY is called to educate and form thoughtful, engaged, and generous Christian leaders for the 21st century. With a deep grounding in the local context and a global network of partners, VST is committed to building a community of disciples of Jesus Christ who are inspired, rooted in tradition, reflective, open to amazement, equipped for leadership, and diligent in their determination to serve the world that God so loves. A theological education at VST will stretch you academically, spiritually, and emotionally. Students from all across Canada and the world come to study at VST, bringing their own unique backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives to the common life of the school. Learning with and from Indigenous partners and those of other faith traditions is a key element of VST’s mission, and engagement with tradition and contemporary thought with courage and faithfulness is at the heart of a VST education. VST graduates are thoughtful people, reflective about how to interact with the challenges of our time on the basis of the deep resource of faith. If you love scholarship, seek a generous and hospitable community, and want to deepen your knowledge to serve the world God loves, please contact Samuel Andri at sandri@vst.edu.

WYCLIFFE COLLEGE at the University of Toronto is an evangelical graduate school of theology which provides high quality education shaped by the Bible and mission. Rooted in the Anglican tradition, the College has a long history of fostering spiritual formation and academic excellence since its founding in 1877. Understanding the Bible as the Word of God written, Wycliffe posits the theological interpretation of Scripture as central to the identity and work of the College. As a founding member of the Toronto School of Theology, Wycliffe offers conjoint degrees with the University of Toronto at both the master’s and doctoral levels, as well as certificate programs. The College aims to equip students who graduate from our programs- Master of Divinity (MDiv), Master in Theological Studies (MTS), Master of Theological Studies in Development (MTSD), Doctor of Ministry (DMin), Master of Theology (ThM), Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MA), and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)- for readiness in leadership for Christ’s church and a variety of vocational settings globally. Certificate programs are also offered in Theological Studies and Anglican Studies. Learn more at www.wycliffecollege.ca or contact admissions@wycliffe.utoronto.ca for program information.



FOR ADVERTISING
Please contact:
LARRY GEE
Anglican Journal
Home office:
905-483-3553
advertising@national.anglican.ca

FROM THE
EDITOR ▶

Easter traditions hint at a universal quest

Continued from p. 4

a false sense they would be preserving something of their old beliefs. “It worked pretty well as a strategy,” she writes. “It allowed the conquered peoples to continue a semblance of their observances as they remembered, and with time the population would be replaced with those who only knew the new traditions.”

Of course, the church is an earthly institution, made up of sinners like you and me, and it has not always been above the use of deception—or violence, for that matter—to gain new converts. But I like to think there’s more to this story than stratagem. To me Christianity’s adoption of the symbols of other religions hints at the deep hope it brings to the world.

It’s not hard to imagine why Christians have embraced the egg as a symbol for the Resurrection. As D’Costa puts it, when the egg hatches “life bursts forth from this otherwise plain, inanimate object that gives no hint as to what it contains.” Life seems to miraculously arise from something inert.

Though the origins of Easter certainly aren’t Babylonian, English-speaking Christians do borrow from an older tradition the name of the holiday. The word Easter comes from Eostre, name of a Germanic goddess whose festival was in the springtime and who was worshipped by the Anglo-Saxons before they converted to Christianity. (Almost all languages other than English and German use for Easter some form of the Latin word *Pascha*, which comes from the Aramaic word for Passover.)



IMAGE: ALGO, S. ROWLEY

Sure, the church’s adoption of such symbols could have been part of an attempt to con the pagans. But I believe it is also based on two of the most important messages Christianity brings to the world.

In the spring, green shoots spring up from seemingly dead ground—another wondrous victory of life over death.

Sure, the church’s adoption of such symbols could have been partly an attempt to con the pagans. But I believe it is also based on two of Christianity most important messages.

The first is that humanity is made in the image of God. Being made in his image, it seems natural we would tend to seek him.

The second is that God loves us. And so he does not hide himself from us; the world that he made is good, and full of his signs—signs that humans have always glimpsed, across space and time. “Since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made,” St. Paul writes (Romans 1:20). So our searching is not in vain.

St. John tells us that the divine Light was also Life; and that Life itself cannot die. I believe the recurrence of the egg and myriads of other symbols of rebirth in the world’s religions shows that people throughout history, though the gospels were entirely unknown to them, must have had some intuition of this deep mystery.

It’s clear that Paul also believed that he and the other apostles were teaching to the gentiles something that they already—to some extent and on some level at least—knew. Having seen in Athens an altar bearing the inscription, “to an unknown god,” Paul tells the Athenians that he is proclaiming to them a god they

already worship without knowing it. God, he adds, made the different nations of the earth “so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us” before quoting some words from an ancient Greek poem for Zeus: “For in him we live and move and have our being.” (Acts 17:23-28)

As I write this in late January, conflict founded in differences of religion and culture seems on the rise. War between Israel, Hamas and their related alliances threatens to spread from Gaza outward, and the possibility of more strife between Islam’s two main sects looms; a westward-facing Ukraine seems locked in a frozen conflict with an inward-looking Russia; and we’re all praying (or should be) that China won’t invade Taiwan. When I first entered journalism, in the late 1990s, the Soviet empire had fallen and some hoped—with striking naivete—that this would usher in a peaceful end of history. The years since then, more and more, seem to be showing us the truth of another 1990s vision of the future—that of a clash of civilizations.

But the story of the Easter egg carries a different message. It tells of what all the peoples of the earth have in common, reaching out, each in our own way, toward the mystery of a deathless Life.

Perhaps there’s a kernel of hope here, in this openness to the searches and symbols of the other, that the tragic and horrifying clashes we are seeing could one day—inconceivable though it may now seem—become happy marriages. ■



BIBLE READINGS

| DAY | READING | DAY | READING |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Isaiah 25:1-9 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 | Ezekiel 34:1-10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Psalms 133-134 | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 | Ezekiel 34:11-31 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Psalms 135 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 | Revelation 7:9-17 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | Psalms 136 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 | Isaiah 49:1-13 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | John 20:1-18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 | 1 John 3:7-24 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | John 20:19-31 | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 | John 10:1-16 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 | 1 John 1:1-2:2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 22 | Acts 8:26-40 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 | Acts 3:12-26 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 | Isaiah 52:1-12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9 | Acts 4:1-22 | <input type="checkbox"/> 24 | Isaiah 52:13-53:12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 | Acts 4:23-36 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 | Mark 16:9-20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11 | 1 John 2:3-17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 26 | 1 John 4:1-16a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 | 1 John 2:18-3:6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 27 | 1 John 4:16b-5:5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 | Psalms 3-4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 28 | John 15:1-17 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14 | Luke 24:36-53 | <input type="checkbox"/> 29 | 1 John 5:6-21 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 | Psalms 23 | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 | 2 John |

SOURCE: CANADIAN BIBLE SOCIETY. USED WITH PERMISSION.

CLASSIFIEDS

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!

The book can be ordered by contacting her daughter at: marymathilda@hotmail.com or (514) 487-0126.

1 Peter 5:6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time.

IS GOD CALLING YOU?

A community of Anglican men, lay and clergy, single or married, who find their lives enriched by fellowship, prayer, and service to the church, in many ministries.

For further information about the Gregorian Way, visit our web site www.gregorians.org

Join us in the Daily Office at dailyoffice.app

Soli Deo Gloria

IS GOD CALLING YOU?

The Sisters of Saint Gregory welcome women from all walks of life who are seeking a deepening call of devotion in their spiritual journey. If you feel drawn to a religious life supported by like-minded women who live in their own homes and serve in their own parishes, and would like further information please visit our website or email us for a brochure at stgsister@gmail.com sistersofsaintgregory.org

CHURCH CUSHIONS

Fine quality church pew cushions, hassocks, and kneeling pads. 50 years experience. Free shipping. www.pewcushions.com 1-620-662-0181

TO ADVERTISE

Please contact: LARRY GEE, Anglican Journal Home office: 905-483-3553 Email: advertising@national.anglican.ca

SUBSCRIPTION CHANGES

Send old and new address (include ID number on label, if possible) by email: circulation@national.anglican.ca; or phone 416-924-9199, ext 245 or 1-866-924-9192, ext. 245; or by mail to Anglican Journal, 80 Hayden St., Toronto, ON M4Y 3G2.

Elizabeth Hutchinson, champion of women’s rights in church, mourned

Matthew Puddister
STAFF WRITER

Elizabeth Hutchinson, an Anglican Award of Merit winner known for her support of women’s rights, died Jan. 19 in Rosemère, Que. She was 90 years old.

A longtime member of Grace Anglican Church, Arundel, Hutchinson served on multiple occasions as a member of General Synod, chairing its worship committee and serving on the Anglican Church of Canada’s Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee.

In 2023, Hutchinson received the Anglican Award of Merit, the Anglican Church of Canada’s highest honour for lay people at the national level. Bevin Boyd, a parishioner at Grace Church, says Hutchinson was “one of those dedicated church people that was involved in every way in the church community” across Canada and around the world.

Hutchinson was also a staunch activist



PHOTO: JANET BEST

Hutchinson received the Anglican Award of Merit in September 2023.

for the rights of women. From 1997 to 2001 she served as president of the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC), a nationwide advocacy organization for women’s welfare, and was an active member of the Provincial Council of Women in Quebec and the Montreal Council of Women. She also served on the board of the homeless women’s shelter Auberge

Madeleine.

Bishop of Montreal Mary Irwin-Gibson first met Hutchinson in 1978 when the latter arrived in Canada from Britain with her husband, the late Rev. Raymond Hutchinson, who would serve as priest at Grace for many years.

“Elizabeth was a very intelligent, intellectual, practical, honest, kind, discreet person,” the bishop says. She describes Hutchinson as gifted with a great sense of humour and always championing different causes, continuing to advocate for the ordination of women in the Church of England long after the Anglican Church of Canada began ordaining women in 1976. “I really admire her for the hard work she did on national church committees,” Irwin-Gibson says.

As a young woman, Hutchinson studied in India, learning Sanskrit and taking part in the country’s Student Christian

Movement. Susan Winn, a fellow Anglican Award of Merit recipient who serves on the partnerships committee in the diocese of Montreal, met Hutchinson when the two travelled to Brazil in the early 1990s for a gathering of hundreds of Anglican women. She calls Hutchinson “a good friend who had many stories to tell about her time living in India,” adding, “she was a great storyteller.”

Marianne Wilkinson, current NCWC president, says Hutchinson was always a very thoughtful person. “She would work with others all the time and she would support individuals if they were working on something that they had some difficulty with,” Wilkinson says. “She was always there to give a helping hand and she wasn’t afraid to take on any job. If something needed to get done, if she was available, she’d do it.”

A mother and grandmother, Hutchinson is also survived by her brother, sister, nephews and nieces. ■

For nothing
will be impossible with God.

—LUKE 1:37



**YOUR commitment
helps the Church
make a difference in
the world through
these ministries**

ANGLICAN HEALING FUND
Financially supporting locally led community healing projects

COUNCIL OF THE NORTH
Providing pastoral and sacramental ministries to those in isolated communities in Canada’s North

FAITH, WORSHIP & MINISTRY
Nurturing Canadian Anglicans in areas such as Anglican identity, worship, ethics, ecumenism, interfaith relationships and theological education

GLOBAL RELATIONS
Fulfilling our commitment to being a global church partner for God’s mission in the world and our need for community in Christ

INDIGENOUS MINISTRIES
Supporting Indigenous Peoples of Canada (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) spiritually, socially, economically and politically

PUBLIC WITNESS FOR SOCIAL & ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE
Working in partnership for creation care and social justice

Support the ministries of the national church with a gift today.

Donate, or find out more at anglican.ca/giving or call 416-924-9192 or toll-free at 1-888-439-GIFT (4438)



DONATE ONLINE



IMAGE: STAINED GLASS WINDOW OF THE ANNUNCIATION, MARY WITH ARCHANGEL GABRIEL