

## Church of the Ascension, Sudbury stages annual pageant

By the Ven. Anne Germond

Every year for the last twenty or thirty years the people of the Church of the Ascension, Sudbury, have worried about how the annual Christmas pageant will turn out. The pageant this year was on Sunday, December 18, 2011. Can parents and grandparents be expected to give up three Saturday afternoons in a row for rehearsals? Will enough kids even show up to take the parts of angels, shepherds, wise men and the Holy Family? Who will edit the script and direct the play? Can a 'new' way be found to tell an old story that will still capture everyone's imagination? It is known that the little ones can't count on for a speaking part, but will the teens want to be in it, again this year?

And what about the costumes? The angels have been wearing the same ones for years and they are starting to look their age. A few new headdresses for the shepherds would really be helpful. Who will make new ones? And poor John Howard. He's been a King for three years in a row now. Wouldn't it be great if someone else stepped forward to bring up the gold?

Everyone worries, stresses, fusses, and worries even more when the main speaker can't make the final dress rehearsal. Phone call after phone call is made to invite children to join the production as costumes still must be to filled. Every year after the pageant, someone is heard in the congregation saying, "I think that this year's pageant was the very best ever."

Of course everyone knows that's not true. This year the angels rehearsed their 'flying' across the hills to bring the good news of Christ's birth to the shepherds. They flew down the aisle at great speed, the only time they were ever allowed to run in church, during the rehearsals. When their big moment arrived on pageant day they walked sedately, holding hands, up the aisle. At the very last minute costumes had to be found for seven extra shepherds and angels who showed up for the last practice. Hectic, yes: perfect, no.



**ON THE WAY TO BETHLEHEM:** Pictured are the host of angels who are flying to Bethlehem to announce the Birth of the Saviour. Their flight took place during the annual Christmas pageant held at the Church of the Ascension in Sudbury on Sunday, December 18, 2011.

Memorable in every way; yes, yes, yes!

It would be so much easier to forego the Christmas pageant for something simpler or more manageable. Yet Christmas at the Ascension wouldn't be the same without it. The children and youth understand the story of Christ's birth so much better when they have a part to play in telling it. It is known that this might be the only time a distant cousin, aunt, or fam-

ily friend will ever hear the story that brought good news to those who heard it first some 2000 years ago, and still brings good news to people today.

There is a feeling of joy and expectation in the Church every year on pageant day as those in attendance watch 'our' children, who, just a few years ago were babes in arms, singing heartily. Everyone is reminded of the promise made at their baptism to do everything is

our power to 'support them in their life in Christ.' This is one moment in a lifetime to do that and from the pews they love them on. They know the love everyone feels for them, even the bored shepherds and the fidgety angels and the far too wise kings.

As the author of this article watched this year's pageant, a similarity was seen between what was being done and in Jesus himself.

*See Christmas – p. 2*

### Inside Algoma



#### Chili was on the menu at St. Mary Magdalene, Sturgeon Falls

Over 160 people were served a chili supper at St. Mary Magdalene's, on Friday, December 2, 2011.

*See p. 4*



#### Camp receives special gift

The canoe storage building at Camp Gitchegomee has a new sign, a gift of Mr. Robert Lloyd. Mr. Lloyd also left a substantial bequest to be used for the benefit of camp programs.

*See p. 6*

#### Next deadline

The deadline for the next issue of *The Algoma Anglican* is **Tuesday, February 7.**

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**Mail or courier:**

P.O. Box 221

1148 Hwy 141

Rosseau P0C 1J0

**E-mail:**

anglican@muskoka.com

## St. Peter's, Elliot Lake serves Christmas dinner

*Annual Christmas dinner brings community together*

By Linda Wilkins-Parker

The hall was decked with holly. The warm aroma of turkey and dressing filled the air. The elves

bustled in the kitchen, carved, cooked and placed the food in the warmers. Some set brightly adorned tables and Santa awaited the Christmas guests. All was ready for the tenth annual Community Christmas Dinner, on Sunday, December 25, 2011 in the Ken Maynard Hall of the Anglican Church of St. Peter the

Apostle in Elliot Lake.

Local artist Richard Berghammer had held dinners at his home until 1999. Parishioner Al Collett recalls, "Judy Maddren of the CBC had just presented 'A Christmas Carol' and Rev. Jody Medicoff, then parish priest, and I were driving her to Sudbury when the news came over the radio that

Richard would not be able to continue with his dinners. Maddren and Rev. Jody suggested I might take it over and plans were put in place for an open community Christmas dinner." That first year, of the 35 people who showed up, 20 were volunteers, said Collett. But Mr. Collett, his wife Penny and daughters Katie and Natasha,

along with the support of the church, were not about to give up.

"We had to get the message across that it was a totally free, ecumenical event for anyone, from those experiencing financial difficulty to the recently bereaved and the many without family to

*See Some – p. 5*



Diocese of Algoma  
Anglican Church Women  
DEVOTIONS FOR FEBRUARY



We would be amiss if we did not acknowledge St. Valentine and the love he exudes every year at this time. Christians recently acknowledged him by declaring our love for the Baby Jesus we welcomed into our lives at Christmas. In our family we also acknowledge St. Valentine in several different ways including our love for each other, going on 50 years, and our love for birds, deer and babies. We love the birds who remain with us throughout the cold winter months. Our justification for this was confirmed when we found In *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* that “The reason for the famous patronage is that birds are supposed to pair on 14 February a belief at least as old as Chaucer...”

Come the snow, the dear deer appear at the summer bench and clothes line stoop, now turned into winter feeders. They wait patiently for their feed as they hear Peter rummaging in the barn. We seem to have made a pact: feed them during the winter, and they leave our gardens alone during the rest of the year, most of the time anyway. This winter we have been treated to the sight of young bucks proudly displaying their antlers. By the time this is published they will have battled royally and hopefully left their antlers for our collection.

Our first encounter with deer

was the spring we moved to our present home. We were storing a huge wagon, for the Museum, in our one acre garden. A doe and fawn were in the wagon’s shadow munching on new grass. Then she said to her baby “now you stay here beside the wagon, where no one will see you and don’t move until I come back.” We watched out the kitchen window while the baby literally froze, becoming part of the wagon and waited patiently for the doe’s return. After about 20 minutes the fawn finally lowered its head to eat. Soon mum came back and they went on their way.

Surely one cannot help but draw a comparison between the deer, her youngster and God and us. The fawn heeded the doe and stayed out of trouble. If only we could be as willing to be disciplined by the Lord and wait patiently for the Him to speak to us rather than going ahead on our own and often making a botch of things. You may know this contemporary hymn by Martin Nyström which is in part:

*As the deer pants for the water,  
so my soul longs after You.*

*You alone are my heart’s desire  
and I long to worship You.*

There has been a period of waiting patiently in our family. The nine month wait ended on December 3 when our dear granddaughter, Eilah, was thankfully

welcomed into the world. The night sky in the western hemisphere was lit up with telephone calls and e-mails telling of this marvelous good news.

Eilah is of course the most beautiful baby girl in all the world as we saw when visiting her at two weeks of age. I had no sooner arrived in Ottawa, taken off my coat and the baby was thrust into my arms by the other grandmother. I collapsed into the nearest arm chair and laughed and wept, baptizing this precious bundle with my tears, our first grandchild. We cannot help but think how Mary wept over the precious feet of Jesus as she wiped them with her long hair. Yesterday as I was re-reading a novel, *The Red Tent*. I came to “When the boy was delivered and the cord severed, Rachel held him first, her eyes streaming, for a very long time.” Immediately tears stung my eyes and I wept for joy all over again for our lovely Eilah. Erika is a wonderful mother and it seems our son has a new toy to play with. It was not too long ago he was playing *Hot-Wheels*, putting model airplanes together and creating Valentine cards at school to bring home to his parents.

*The Red Tent* by Anita Diamant, Pacador, New York.

Pam Handley, ACW Devotions Chair.

One hundred, fifty  
three dollars and  
eighty-five cents  
per person per  
week

By the Rev. Grahame Stap

I am glad to be a Canadian. We have a pretty good health care system. Our education may not be the best in the world, but it’s not bad. We have freedom of speech, freedom of religion and we have the right to vote without corruption of the voting system. Compared to other countries our crime rate is relatively low. Perhaps best of all we have wonderful scenery from coast to coast. My wife and I pay our bills, put food on the table, and we have a roof over our heads.

We have, without thinking about it, the dignity that we take for granted. We can hold our heads high as we go about our daily routine. Is this not our right and the right of all Canadians?

I wish with all my heart that it was the inherent right of all Canadians to feel a sense of dignity. Unfortunately this is not the case. There is no dignity in having to accept handouts from the food banks. Yet each year 900,000 people in this country need to do this. They have no choice. Its either the food bank or starve. Please do not get me wrong. I am not against food banks. In fact, I thank God for them, but I am against the need for them.

This, however, is just one of the difficulties facing some Canadians. For our First Nations the difficulties are magnified buy a thousand. For some reason we seem to want to blame them for creating the problems they face

Attawapiskat is just one disaster, a symptom of the problem. It seems their difficulties are repeated in nearly all First Nations reservations. Why is this? I believe our governments throwing money at the problems and expecting the problems to go away and not understanding the need for individual dignity, is the main

cause. And some of us are no better. We want to ask the questions: ninety six million. Where did it go? Did they just waste it? The ninety six million was over six years and there are two thousand people in Attawapiskat this breaks

Thoughts from  
Grahame

down to one hundred and fifty three dollars and eighty-five cents per person per week.

I guess we need to ask ourselves: could we live on this? And the answer for most of us is no. But that’s not all this money was for. It was also for roads, water, hydro, sewerage, health and education.

Even this is not the point. We must understand that for generations there has been very little, or no employment. Nothing to do, day after day, and this causes more and even worse problems of alcoholism, drug addiction, and abuses that we can only imagine. If we don’t understand the need to give back the dignity we have taken away, no matter how much money we throw at the problem it will not go away.

Please, this Lent don’t give something up. Sit down at your computer and write to your member of both the Ontario Legislature and the House of Commons. Let them know that we cannot accept this situation any longer. Do it every day during Lent. If eight thousand Christians did this, governments would receive three hundred and twenty thousand letters. Perhaps they might start to give back the dignity to the First Nations that we have frankly stolen from them. Because if we do not do it, who will?

As always it is only my opinion

Active Christmas season at St.  
Mary’s, Nipigon

By Kathleen Aiken

The Christmas season began at St. Mary’s, Nipigon with the decorating of the church for celebrations of Christ’s coming. Members of the congregation stayed after the morning service on November 20, 2011. Out came the boxes of decorations; up went the tree: the big one beside the altar, the memory tree where people would place the names of family and friends who have passed on, and the mitten tree (to hold knitted garments for school children). The first Advent candle was lit the following Sunday when Rev. Diane Hilpert-McIlroy started the retelling of the Christmas story during the children’s focus.

In the Christmas pageant on December 11, 2011, the children welcomed the Christ child with music and dance. A tiny cradle with a “doll” Baby Jesus was lowered

from the ceiling as the children mimed the lyrics, “This is how God’s love shows ... It’s a wondrous story, to me.” The pageant ended with the children gathered around the cradle, singing *Silent Night*. Thanks must go to Tammy Sacchetti the director, the men who did the rigging and carpentry tasks, the women who fashioned costumes, and the parents who helped their children get to practices.

The annual ecumenical service of Lessons an Carols, on December 18, 2011 featured the Community Choir, readings by Nipigon clergy and lessons read by community lay people. The audience heard special musical arrangements by the choir and soloists, and sang carols together again.

People gathered for special Christmas services, with the seniors at Mountain View Court in

Red Rock, and at St. Mary’s for Blue Christmas, for those experiencing loss at Christmas. The long term care patients were especially in our prayers over the Christmas season since a flu outbreak had led to the cancellation of Christmas worship at the hospital.

The Christmas Eve Eucharist brought a capacity crowd to St. Mary’s to hear Luke’s “news of great joy” before returning to their homes to begin family celebrations. Many returned to enjoy a quiet Holy Communion on Christmas Day with the Gospel from John. All but the very thin, are trying to exercise more and eat less now, to make up for the enjoyable community sharing of turkey, trimmings and desserts. A blessed New Year to all.

Christmas pageant  
allows the children  
to be full  
participants

Continued from Front

With the grace of God, the commitment of his parents, and surrounded by the hopes and dreams of so many, Jesus became the person God fully intended him to be. All of the children are created in the image and likeness of God. Witnessing the young people through

their pageant offering being full participants in the life of our congregation, the writer prayed that they, surrounded by God’s grace, the loving support of faithful parents, and encouraged in their faith journey by all who support them, they will grow into the ‘full stature of Christ’ himself.



# EDITORIAL

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Address: P.O. Box 1168, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. P6A 5N7  
The Right Reverend Dr. Stephen Andrews, Bishop  
Peter Simmons, Editor

## Letter from the Bishop

### Bishop invites all to observe a holy Lent

Dear Friends,

It is reported that an oil tycoon was buried upright behind the steering wheel of his gold-plated Rolls Royce, as stipulated in his will. In fulfilment of his wishes, an immense hole was dug with the help of large earth-moving equipment. And as the crane lowered the unusual coffin into the ground, a workman was overheard to say, 'Man, that's really living!'

When we laugh at that little anecdote, I wonder how many of us are laughing at ourselves. It is not that we would be inclined to make such a ludicrous remark, of course, but the truth is that all of us tend to measure the quality of life in material and sensible ways. That is to say, we assume that what makes people happy is the size of their bank balance, the dimensions of their house, the neighbourhood they live in, the friends they keep, the food they eat and the wine they drink, the success of their children, the ease and comfort of their existence, the availability of entertainment and access to the arts, the opportunity for recreation, and, for some, the kind of car they're buried in. Naturally, the precise definition of happiness will vary from individual to individual. But we can all relate, can't we, to the urges driving us to possess and to experience, to own and to feel. We all know what it is to want and to need, and for most of us our welfare depends on the extent to which our wants and needs are satisfied.

I have been told that back in the medieval period a customary greeting was 'What do you love?' What a revealing question that would be! You could tell a lot about a person by the way he or she answered such a greeting. You would be given insight into what was important to them, to their loyalties and devotions, into what motivated and inspired them. 'What do you love?' Rolls Royces? Trains? Bach? Spending time with your family? Playing golf? Video games? A good book? Sleeping in on Saturday mornings? Pay day? These things do bring pleasure, to be sure. But any of them can become enslaving when self-restraint is not exercised. Moreover, the indulgence of these sorts of desires is no guarantee of fulfilment. I knew a fellow who was cured of his fondness for buying lottery tickets by actually winning a lottery! It caused him so much personal grief that today you can't give him a lottery ticket!

The creation story recognises that human appetites are basic to our identities as creatures made in God's image, but it also acknowledges that they can be misdirected. Genesis 3 tells the tale of a couple in a beautiful garden contemplating a forbidden fruit. When the woman 'saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise', she and her mate gave in to their appetites, took the fruit, and ate. The consequences of that act of disobedience were disappointing, to say the least. Momentary

pleasure gave way to life-long hardship and pain.

It is a serious challenge to God's people today to exercise their appetites responsibly. Contemporary society presents us with limitless possibilities of indulging our appetites. The whole capitalist enterprise is based on demand and supply, and so there is a great smorgasbord spread before us, pandering to every human whim and fancy. How can Christians resist the lure of the material and sensual magic which holds our culture in its thrall? How can we avoid being taken in by 'the sights that dazzle' and the 'tempting sounds'. What can we do when we discover, yet again, that what we have spent our lives pursuing cannot deliver on its promise of happiness and fulfilment?

The answer is that we must redirect our appetites through self-denial. For it is in our self-denial that we come to see just how much control our desires and longings exercise over us; it allows us to see how much of our lives are preoccupied with non-essential matters; it helps us to acknowledge just how tenuous life is, and how dependent we are on our heavenly Father who feeds us. Indeed, in self-denial we come to realise that our primary need and yearning is for God himself, God alone.

My friends, the most decadent luxury of this world cannot even approach the satisfaction of apprehending God. The nineteenth century Scottish pastor and author of children's literature, George MacDonald, exclaimed that 'our longing desires can no more exhaust the fullness of the treasures of the Godhead, than our imagination can touch their measure.' Let me take this opportunity to invite you to 'the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance, by prayer, fasting, and self-denial, and by reading and meditation upon God's holy Word'. May this Lent be a faith-deepening experience for us all, that as our appetites are loosed from what is worldly and temporal, we may be seized by what is heavenly and eternal.



*+Stephen Andrews*

Stephen Andrews  
Bishop of Algoma

## A Modest Proposal

By the Rev. Richard White

The year was 1729. Famed author and satirist, Dean Jonathan Swift was sick. He suffered from bouts of dizziness and nausea. The ringing in his ears was so intense he often lost his place mid-sentence. His gait was unstable. There were whispers of derision throughout the parish of St. Patrick's Anglican Cathedral, in Dublin Ireland where he had been the incumbent since 1713. Swift was convinced he was dying by degrees. He wasn't. He was suffering from Meniere's Disease. He was suffering from grief too. Stella, the love of his life, had died the year before and Swift still clutched a lock of her hair. The disease and the grief was compounded by yet another sickness in his life: his anxiety over the plight of the Irish poor.

The year was 1729. A famine fell across his beloved Ireland. Ireland was also caught in the grip of English colonial policies. The English elite of Ireland were choking the Catholic poor to death through a series of repressive policies.

The English drenched the land with English and Scottish Protestants to drown the voice of the Catholic majority. The Church of England was imposed as the official Church of the land. Catholics were prevented from practicing law, forbidden to buy land or own a farm horse worth more than £five. Their right to vote was suspended. The economy stifled by laws that prohibited the exportation of Irish wool, Ireland's major export, and gave the English Navy the right to board and turn back Irish ships.

The impact of England's policies were described in 1718 by the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The people were in misery, he said. There was a disturbing increase in beggars, and "one half of the people in Ireland eat neither bread nor flesh for one half of the year, nor wear shoes or stockings." The oppression, the famine, moved Dean Swift to respond with the one weapon he could wield well: satire.

Sick of the plight of his people, and spurred on by anger, he wrote one of the most shocking pamphlets ever to be written in the English language, *A Modest Proposal*, or more correctly, *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People in Ireland From Being a Burden on Their Parents or Country, and for Making Them Beneficial to the Public*.

The pamphlet feigned a cold aloofness to the Irish poor. As Swift had written his pamphlet anonymously, he was able to cap-

ture the attitude of indifference, so common among the English as he rationally presented a proposal that would eradicate the surplus population and give the poor an income. And what was his proposal? Cannibalism. It began with these famous words

"It is a melancholy object to those, who walk through this great town, or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads and cabin-doors crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags, and importuning every passenger for an alms."

With 120,000 children born into families annually, who could barely feed and clothe them the

### History Byte

pamphlet proposed the infants of the poor should be butchered and sold in the meat market.

"...a young healthy child well nursed, is, at a year old, a most delicious nourishing and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricasie, or a ragout."

And as Ireland was, as the English were so aware, overpopulated by Catholics, the pamphlet reminded its readers that this proposal would lessen the number of Catholics, which would benefit the English.

After outlining his case like a master marketer hawking the hottest new idea, the tract threw the reader a sucker punch. There were other solutions to Ireland's problem, it said:

1. Tax the English, absentee landlords
2. Reject opulence
3. Learn to love Ireland
4. Teach English landlords how to show mercy
5. Resolved to buy Irish-made goods.

The pamphlet was anonymous, leading some to believe it was a serious proposal. Sadly, it failed to shock or outrage its readers as Swift hoped it would. It was taken as a sick joke no doubt laughed over at garden parties and over tea. Its criticism and dark humour had no reported effect. The plight of Ireland's poor did not abate. *A Modest Proposal* was the last of his essays about Ireland. It would be relegated to classrooms ever since then as one of the finest examples of the satire and essay writing in the English language. Its author was the same priest who gave us *Gulliver's Travels*, an adventure saga which takes a stab at England's ruling elite as well.

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# Rev. Peter Hill remembered

By Conrad Tucker

Rev. Peter Hill, beloved spiritual leader of Christ Church Windermere since 1994, passed away peacefully early Christmas morning surrounded by his family. He was 71. Born in Guelph, Ontario, Rev. Hill was the son of The Ven. F. Allen Hill and Margaret Wallace Hill. He is survived by his loving wife and best friend of 50 years, Nancy, his three sons and six grandchildren.

After graduating from Dundas High School, Rev. Hill received a B.A. from McMaster University, a B.Th. from Huron College, and a Secondary School Teacher's Certificate from Lakehead University. Rev. Hill served as a Curate at St. John's Church, Thunder Bay. He was then the Rector of St. Joseph Island Anglican Parish, and taught at Central Algoma Secondary School. He served as Chaplain,

teacher and Housemaster at Trinity College School in Port Hope, before becoming Headmaster of Queen Margaret's School in Duncan B.C. Latterly he served as Chaplain and teacher at Royal St. George's College in Toronto.

Since the sudden death of Rev. Ron Armstrong in 1994, Peter Hill has been a dedicated and inspirational leader at Christ Church. He spent many summers of his childhood in the clergy cottage, now Mockridge Hall, while his father was summer vicar during the month of August. His teen years found him operating the boats for the old Wigwassan Lodge on Tobin Island on Lake Rosseau. It was here that he met his wife, Nancy. After retiring from Royal St. George's College in 1999, he and Nancy built a new home near Windermere.

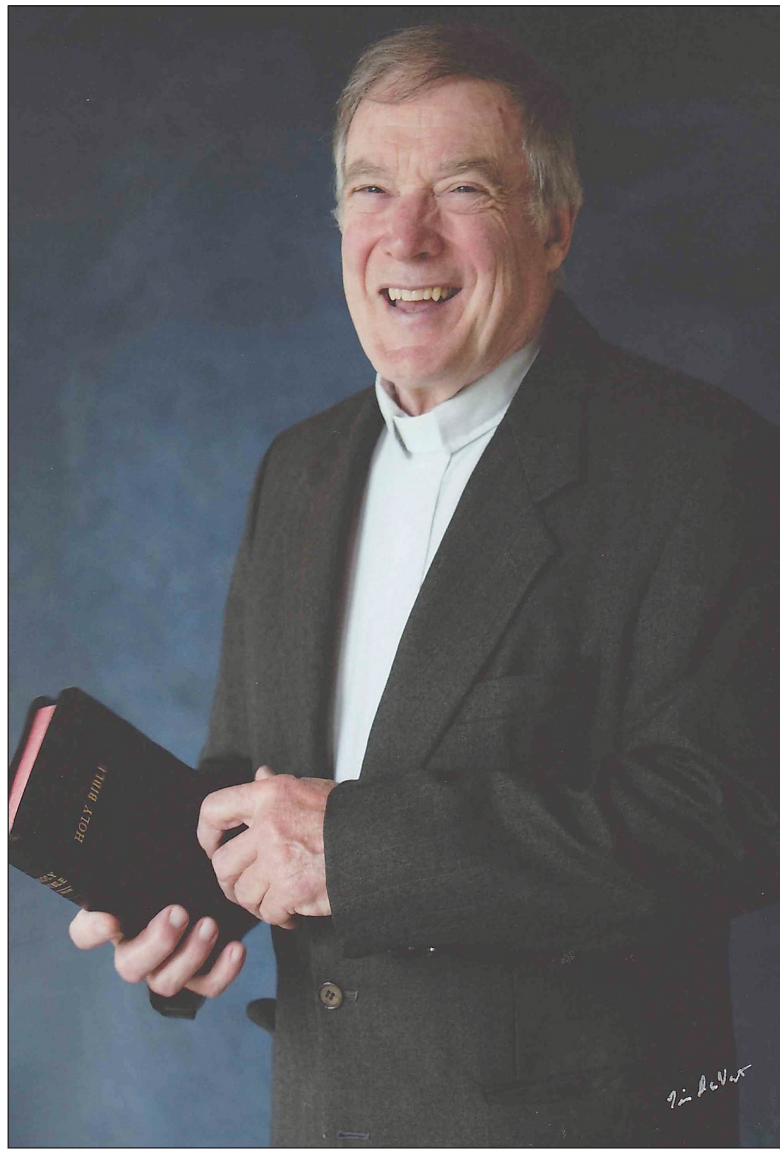
Rev. Hill's background attests

to the fact that he was the epitome of what an Anglican Priest should strive to be. At his ordination, he was called on "to work as a pastor, priest and teacher and to love and serve the people among whom you work". Not only did he fulfill these promises, after retiring he worked tirelessly at Christ Church as a volunteer, refusing any payment.

Christ Church Windermere is part of the Parish of St. Stephen, whose other three points are at Ullswater, Rosseau and Orrville. The Rector is Rev. Peter Simmons. Peter Hill was an Associate Priest of the Parish of St. Stephen.

Because of Peter Hill's exemplary life, it is not hard to imagine our Lord saying to him on Judgment Day: "Well done, good and faithful servant".

The Funeral service for Rev. Peter Hill took place on Thursday, January 5, 2012.



**FAITHFUL SERVANT OF GOD:** Members of Christ Church, Windermere, as well people throughout Muskoka and beyond were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Rev. Peter Hill on Christmas Day. (Photo by Tim Du Vernet).

# Traditions abound at St. Mary Magalene, Sturgeon Falls

By Carole Anne Friedrich

December is a month when traditions abound. The municipality of West Nipissing has long held a "Festival of Lights Parade" on Friday, December 2, 2011. This year the municipal leaders decided to include an "Open House" at the new public boat wharf and restaurant complex located at Minnehaha Bay. This would give citizens an opportunity to come out and view the new project after the parade. To help ward off the chill of the winter's evening, hot dogs, coffee and hot chocolate would be available. In the meantime, two blocks uphill from the Bay, members at St. Mary Magdalene, Sturgeon Falls, discussed how they could reach out to the community in some way as they had done the year previous with a 'Pasta for the People' supper.

The parade gave church members the opportunity to welcome a large number of their neighbours and visitors on an evening which usually sees large crowds collect on the streets to view the parade. That night anyone would be welcomed into St. Mary Magdalene's to enjoy a free chilli supper. On Friday, December 2 2011, ninety-seven brilliantly lit floats graced the streets of Sturgeon Falls, while an estimated 8,000 people lined the route to watch. According to the lo-

cal weekly newspaper, *La Tribune*, parade organizers stated that approximately 4000 people made their way on foot or bus to Minnihaha Bay following the parade to view the new facility.

Most of these people passed by St. Mary Magdalene's where the new sign invited anyone to come in and enjoy a chilli feast. Not to rely on the sign only, Richard Samson transported a boom box, which played Christmas music, onto a bench in front of the church, dressed himself warmly for the occasion and turned into the local "town crier". He encouraged one and all to come in and enjoy the food and fellowship.

In the church hall, various cooks had donated great pots of chilli that ranged in flavour from mild to spicy hot. Warm toasted home made bread, coffee, tea and desserts were also served. Throughout the evening, guitarists Sylvain and Paul Piquette entertained with songs of praise and Christmas carols. Over 160 people from the municipality and other areas of northeastern Ontario, enjoyed an evening of fellowship, food and song. One couple who travelled north to close their summer cottage, talked about the warmth and welcome they had experienced that evening not only from members of St. Mary Magdalene's, but the municipality as a whole.



**SUPPER IS READY:** The people of St. Mary Magdalene's, Sturgeon Falls served up a free chili supper on Friday, December 2, 2011. The event was held in conjunction with the Municipality of West Nipissing's "Festival of Lights Parade."

# The Future of rural ministry

By Jeremy Boehr

*Editor's note: The following article appeared in the Wycliffe College publication INSIGHT. It is published in the Algoma Anglican with permission.*

On the afternoon of October 12, 2011 Dr. Cam Harder director of CiRCLe-M, Centre for Rural Community Leadership and Ministry located in Saskatoon spoke at Wycliffe College to a small gathering interested in the future of rural ministry. CiRCLe-M is an interdenominational, non-profit, charitable organization committed to equipping rural clergy and lay leaders to help revitalize rural Canadian communities. CiRCLe M's mission is to equip clergy and lay leaders in rural and remote places to help their churches be catalysts for the development of healthy Canadian communities.

Dr. Harder argued that the rural church may be the future of the entire Canadian church. Because of

the rural setting, lives are interwoven and communities are more apt to grow more closely together, and with God. People recognize each others needs in this setting and there is a local and deeper connection to history and tradition. People also have closer relationships with their ministers, and adults often become mentors to younger people in the church. These things give the rural church particular advantages in church development. Harder referenced Scripture saying that the promise of salvation is given to communities and not to individuals and that the mission of God is rooted in saturating communities with God's love. Because of the rural church context they can effectively reach out and form bonds with the outside community and thus, rural churches are prime models for the future of the Canadian church. Rural ministry must continue today for itself and for lessons that other churches in the urban context can learn.

Contact

**The Algoma Anglican**

at our E-mail address:

anglican@muskoka.com



# Some 140 were welcomed and fed

*Continued from Front*

share Christmas with.” That message became clear during the third year when Mr. Collett found a man sitting on the church steps.

“Brother, it is cold out here. You can go inside, get warm and have something to eat. Later, that same man carved a cross for St. Peter’s and just last year, a couple that had fallen on hard times later brought in a donation. Such is the appreciation that while there is no expectation whatsoever, many want to and are able to work for their meal and so, “there is always an abundance of help.”

In recent years a number of Canada’s Katimavik student volunteers were among the willing helpers but with the program’s federal funding cut, the hardworking young adults were missed this time around. Still, the 2011 event saw no shortage of ‘elves’ carving the turkeys, setting up the sumptuous dessert table and serving the meals. Many of the diners did not know that along with the elves and Santa, Joe Gillogoly, the city’s mayor, Rick Hamilton, and Councillor Tom Farquhar, were among the jolly servers. Several volunteers offered rides to and from the church and more kept a watchful eye out for people needing assistance with the stairs.

The dinner started at 5 p.m. and went on until approximately 140 people were fed, the food seeming to appear like the loaves and fishes spoken of in the Gospel of Matthew, thanks to the kindness of many individual and corporate donors. In turn, leftover goodies were, as always, donated to a worthy local organisation. Ron Kruger, St. Peter’s organist, played Christmas carols on the keyboard,

as people sang along, candles were lit and the music fittingly ended with *Silent Night*.

Indeed, as Rev. Henk Willems, of St. Peter’s remarked, “It is a marvelous event that takes place at a marvelous time of the year and I cannot help but think about a man who was faced with many challenges.” Referring to George Muller, overseer of five mammoth orphan homes housing nearly 2,000 orphans in 1880s England, he said, “By prayer alone he provided the food, clothing, housing and schooling for these children whose parents had died and while they experienced some hard times, they trusted God to be the Father of the fatherless.” Rev. Willems related how, amazingly, small gifts arrived and the children were fed, clothed and taught through prayer.

“Here at St. Peter’s, we do not have thousands of children to feed every day but over the years, the numbers at the Community Dinner have been growing and we have relied on the same principle that George Muller relied on; lots of prayer and some marvelous support from the people of Elliot Lake. We have never had to turn a person away because there was not enough food or enough volunteer help.”

For all who participate in the Community Christmas Dinner, the word ‘food’ has many meanings. When asking God to “Give us this day, our daily bread”, the prayer may be for nourishment of the spirit, respite from loneliness, comfort for grief or just a chance to share a special social time with others. Indeed, as one happy diner said, “It is all about ‘Loving Thy Neighbour’.”



**CHRISTMAS DINNER FOR ALL:** From centre left, Al Collett, Rev. Henk Willems, and Santa, Joe Gillogoly, are joined by a host of Christmas elves who are prepared to welcome guests at the 10th annual Christmas Dinner held at St. Peter the Apostle, Elliot Lake on Christmas Day 2011.

## Service blends old and new at St. James’, Goulais River

**By Eleanor P. B. Swain**

Christmas, Christ’s Mass. Every year the season seems both traditional and yet new as each Christmas celebration is unique. The wonder of the Season was made more so by the service, to celebrate the Birth of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, through Christmas Carols and Lessons with Midnight Mass, at 7:30 p.m., at Saint James’ Church, Goulais River. Light was provided by oil lamps and candle light which made the celebration even more special.

The inside of the church, beautifully decorated by the parishioners, could be seen in the soft light, and the ambiance was one of hushed, excited expectancy. The service began with Ven. Bill Stadnyk warmly welcoming everyone. Then a verse of *Once in Royal David’s City* was played on the clarinet by Sarita Swain. This was followed by the keyboard, played by her father, Fr. John Swain, joining her as the congregation began to sing the carol.

The candles on the Advent Wreath were lit by two young children, Brianna Penny Elliott, aged six, and Kylee Faith Elliott, aged four. These two children are the grand-daughters of parishioners Peggy and Brian Elliott. During the lighting of the candles, the congregation sang about the candles of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love burning in “December’s dark night”.

After this, the Christmas tree was dedicated. The lights on it shone brightly representing the Light of Jesus shining throughout the church as the congregation sang the Carol *It Came Upon The Midnight Clear*. After The Christmas Collect, four candles, one on each corner window sill, representing The Light of the World, being spread to the four corners of the world, were lit. Following this, each member of the congregation was given the opportunity

to affirm his, or her commitment to God with the words:

“May God our Father grant us the Light of Christ, that we may shine with His Love, be prompt to serve, and ever eager to follow in His Steps, Who is the True Light and Source of Life. Amen.”

Next was sung the carol *Long Time Ago In Bethlehem*. Following this were the six narrations, Bible readings telling of the Birth of Jesus Christ. There were meditations on each, and a carol, beginning with: ‘In the Garden of Eden, GOD pronounces judgement.’; ‘The Prophet foretells the Coming of the Messiah’; and ‘The Birth of Jesus is announced’. The carols were, respectively, *In The Bleak Mid-Winter* and *Lo, He Comes With Clouds Descending*. Then the congregation listened to the Anthem *The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came* (Basque Carol, Sabine Baring-Gould).

After the fourth narration, reading and meditation on ‘The Birth of Jesus’, two children from the congregation, Brianna Elliott, and Kylee Elliott, carried the model representing Baby Jesus to the stable and put ‘Him’ in the manger. Archdeacon Stadnyk then blessed the Crib. Then the congregational tapers were lit, again representing the Light of the World being born. After the carol *Away In A Manger* was sung, the tapers were extinguished.

Following this, the Anthem, *The Shepherds* by Alfred Fedak, was sung. The singing of the Calypso carol *See Him Lying On A Bed Of Straw* and the carol *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night*, closed this section.

The narrations, readings and meditations continued with ‘Visitors from the East’ and the singing of *Good King Wenceslas*. Everyone sang the narrative but the men only sang the part of the king, and the

women only sang the part of the page. The sixth narration was read. This led up to the Gospel reading when everyone stood to hear ‘The Word of Life’. After this, the following prayer was said:

“Almighty God, we beseech You to give us Grace to receive Your Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and to believe on His Name, whose Birth we have this night celebrated in sacred song; and grant that living in Your Faith, we may evermore rejoice in Your Salvation, through the merits of Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, world without end. Amen.”

The Anthem, *Wonderful Counsellor* preceded the singing of *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*. This was followed by The Great Thanksgiving, Consecration and Administration. The Post Communion Hymn was *Gathered ‘Round Your Table*, from a poem by the Canadian hymn writer Margaret Clarkson. Like many of the great hymns and carols of Advent and Christmas, this text contrasts the joy and grief of the Season: the joy of the Messiah’s Birth and the grief of His death.

The Christmas Blessing was given by Archdeacon Stadnyk, followed by the singing of *O Come All Ye Faithful*. The first part of the chorus, ‘O come, let us adore Him’, was sung by women only; the next line “O come, let us adore Him” was sung by the men only, and the final two lines were sung by everyone. This way, the chorus began quietly and gradually got louder and louder for the final two lines: ‘O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!’ Then, as everyone knelt or sat in a prayerful attitude, they quietly sang *Silent Night*. This was an apt and poignant conclusion to our Christmas Eve Mass.



**LET THE LIGHT SHINE:** Gary Boissineau holds on tightly to Frank Butler, who is lighting the oil lamps in preparation for the Christmas Eve service at St. James’, Goulais River.



# I'll cross that bridge when I come to it

By the Rev. Bob Elkin

Not long ago I pulled up to the Customs Officer at the Sault International Bridge, handed over my passport and got ready to tell her the story of my life. "How long were you in the States?" was no problem for I'd just been over a few hours. "What are you bringing back?" was also no challenge. "Nothing" I replied. "I just ate supper and got gas." Instantly she deadpanned: "I'm very sorry to hear that sir!" and waved me through. It was one of my funnier trips through the customs gates.

Living close to the border has me in America quite often. The people are super friendly, they're practically giving their gasoline away and I don't figure I hurt the Canadian economy buying "Made in China" over there for half the price of "Made in China" over here. Besides, the guy who runs their Habitat for Humanity Restore is willing to wheel and deal and I've got a collection of thirty-two headboards from some hotel renovation to prove it. At a dollar fifty apiece, who could resist?

Of course, going over often brings you in contact with the border people often and to quote the Bard: "Aye, there's the rub!" for I was raised to stay out of authority's way as much as possible. I don't hang around my wife and her job list when I've got free time, I make sure I never come to the local By-Law Officer's attention, and you won't find me visiting in Synod Office when I'm in the Sault either. I think of it as an ounce of prevention but you can't avoid the border people if you've crossed the bridge and you're going to talk to them coming and going.

The American side is more creative in their questions and always have a zinger to bust up complacency. "Where do you live?" and "Where are you going?" will instantly be followed with "Have you ever been finger-printed?" or some such thought provoker. My wife got caught once when the officer looked through the window and asked: "What's in the cardboard box?" The box held leftovers from a parish pot luck lunch that I'd stuck in the back seat without telling her. Her bewildered "What cardboard box?" was obviously not the right answer. Five minutes later she was allowed to take her hands off the

steering wheel, restart the car and breathe with the stern admonition to "make sure you know what you're carrying in future!" I guess they were looking for weapons of mass destruction and I must admit that I've eaten things at parish pot lucks that I did wonder about but no fault; no foul and no harm done.

Another time the border guard incredulously pondered my reply to "Why are you going to Marquette?" almost three hundred kilometres away and blurted: "You're going all that way and overnighing so you can take your wife to Menard's Building Sup-

## Letter from Bob

ply?" When I dumbly nodded she roared and waved us through with: "You sure know how to show a lady a good time Mr. Elkin!" Somehow I don't think she meant it.

The people on the Canadian side are more conversational in their approach. One evening, returning to Canada I informed the officer that I'd bought nothing and just had my cat with me as we were returning from having the vet update his needles. Ten minutes later we were still talking about cats as the traffic backed up over the bridge. The nice thing about customs though is "never is heard a discouraging word". Nobody honked, nobody rolled down their window and hollered "Move it!" Nobody did anything proving that their momma's didn't raise fools! Eventually after a very pleasant interlude me and the cat got waved through. It was great.

Recently I toddled over the bridge after having some medical test involving things radioactive. Who knew the sensors could pick that up? Soon I was being scanned in front of all the cars and people who weren't going anywhere until I was cleared while another officer checked my vehicle. I offered to turn around and get back over the border but was advised that there was no point as I'd already plugged things up. Talk about the power of one! The officer gave me some friendly advice when he was done. "Don't come back for a month!" he said. Well my momma didn't raise fools either! I'll see them again: in a month.



**SPECIAL GIFT:** These young people are pictured in front of the canoe storage building at Camp Gitchigomee, located an hour southwest of Thunder Bay. The building now sports a new sign, "Captain Bob's Crow's Nest". The sign was a gift from the estate of Mr. Robert Lloyd as a memento of his sailing days.

## Handsome new sign for Camp Gitchigomee

By Richard Pepper

The canoe storage building of Camp Gitchigomee, on Sandstone Lake, an hour southwest of Thunder Bay, now sports a handsome cast-iron sign "Captain Bob's Crow's Nest".

In June "Camp G", a Christian camp in operation since 1945, received an unexpected and sizeable bequest (\$50,000.00) from the Estate of Mr. Robert Lloyd. Mr. Lloyd requested that this memento of his sailing days be installed on an appropriate camp building. The bequest was given "for the benefit of

the camp's summer camp programs." In keeping with this request, the camp board expects it will assist in enabling children to attend camp, improve watercraft and equipment, train staff, improve the building and grounds, and meet operating costs.

The camp board received this gift with sincere gratitude to Mr. Lloyd for his generosity. On behalf of everyone associated with Gitchigomee wishes to convey publicly our thanks to the family, especially Captain Bob's daughters, Lesley and Judy Lloyd of Montreal.



**INVITATION FROM THE DIOCESAN ACW BOARD:** The Diocesan ACW Board and the Deanery of Temiskaming wish to invite all Anglican women to the ACW Annual Conference to be held from May 15 to May 16, 2012 at the Pinewood Lodge, North Bay. Please watch for more information in the March edition of the Algoma Anglican. Further information will also be sent via personal e-mail and will be posted on the diocesan web site.

The Bishop has a blog!  
It is called  
'benedictus benedicat'  
You can find it  
at  
<http://stephenalgoma.typepad.com/beneditus-benedicat/>



# Algoma Cycle of Prayer

**Sunday, February 5th - 5th Sunday after Epiphany**  
**St. Saviour's, Blind River**  
**Church of the Redeemer, Thessalon**  
The Rev. Roberta Wilson-Garrett  
The Rev. Bob Elkin (Hon.)  
The Rev. Canon Muriel Hornby (Hon. - Thessalon)

**Sunday, February 12th - 6th Sunday after Epiphany**  
**Christ Church, Lively**  
**St. John's, Copper Cliff**  
The Rev. Glen Miller  
Mrs. Beverly Van Der Jagt (Pastoral Asst.)

**Sunday, February 19th - 7th Sunday after Epiphany**  
**St. Luke's, Thunder Bay**  
The Rev. Gordon Holroyd (Interim)

**Wednesday, February 22nd – Ash Wednesday**  
**Retreat Houses**  
**Maison Dieu, Bracebridge**  
Sr. Mary Cartwright, SCL  
Retired Clergy  
Pray for the retired clergy in your deanery, many of whom continue to assist in parishes. We thank God for their dedicated service to Christ and the Church.  
Observance of a Holy Lent  
Through self-examination, penance, prayer, fasting, alms-giving, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God.  
BAS 282

**Sunday, February 26th - 1st Sunday in Lent**  
**Parish of St. Joseph and St. George**  
**Holy Trinity, Jocelyn**  
**St. George's, Echo Bay**  
**The Chapel of the Intercession, Llewellyn Beach**  
Mr. Pat Brown - Lay Pastor and Administrator

# St. John the Evangelist, Thunder Bay welcomes Nishnawbe Aski Nation

By Dale Sparkes

The meaning of community was evident at St. John the Evangelist, Thunder Bay, on Sunday December 11, 2011 when over 250 Aboriginal Anglicans of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) participated in worship and feast. Love of other, respect of elders, compassion, and the relaxed inclusion of children marked the occasion. Many of the participants are in Thunder Bay for medical treatment, and will be unable to return to their Northwestern Ontario homes for Christmas. This event was an opportunity to join with family and community to celebrate the new hope found within every generation in the birth of the Christ child.

Worship was led by Rev. Joel Bighead, Rev. Samuel Winter, and Rev. Mike Anderson who were flown down from their Northern Ontario communities for the occasion. Rev. Mary Lucas, Incumbent at St. John's welcomed the visitors and assisted with the service.

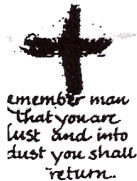
The liturgy and hymns were in Cree language. The choir of First

Nation's people sang in praise, with musical accompaniment provided by organists Philip Bighead and Bill Albany, and by Eno Chapman on guitar accompanied by his brothers and cousins. Five baptisms provided additional joy to the pleasure of the sound of many children in the congregation. Rev. Samuel Winter, homilist, spoke of the healing required in the community as it struggles with youth suicide: faith is the support during difficult times.

Lorna Morgan organised the feast which followed the service, and managed the kitchen staff during two days of preparations. Her capable crew adapted to the unfamiliar kitchen with minimal assistance. The kitchen was a place of savoury scents and good natured fellowship. The Grace was said by NAN Grand Chief Stan Beardy. The feast of turkey, ham, spaghetti and meatballs, potatoes, wild rice, vegetables, and innumerable desserts was enjoyed all.



WELCOME THE NEW BORN KING: Members of the cast and crew of the Christmas pageant held at the Church of the Ascension, Sudbury are pictured above. The pageant was held at the church on Sunday, December 18, 2011.



# From the Anchorhold



By Sister Mary Cartwright

Candlemas.; another feast of light, at the beginning of this dark month; the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

We see the young Mother and Child, along with stalwart Joseph, bringing their treasured Son to present Him to the Lord (who already knows His own Son). They come in both pride and humility; pride as a family, humility because of the honour, and their poverty, they bring the gift of the poor, two young pigeons.

Old Simeon, who has been promised by God that he will live to see the Christ, and has spent years studying the people who come, instantly recognises Jesus, and as he holds Him in his arms, proclaims the *Nunc Dimittis* one of the wonderful canticles we tend to miss now, unless we are lucky enough to be a Religious!

"Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace... for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." He has words of warning for Mary, too: "A sword shall pierce through thine own heart, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Anna, the old Prophetess, joins in the thanksgiving.

And then, very early this year, comes Ash Wednesday, when, marked with the cross of ashes, we are reminded of our mortality and dependence on God. It is good to ponder this as we enter Lent. We will, if wise, spend Lent in prayer and thoughtful meditation. We try to eliminate our favourite little sins, strengthen our faith, and follow Jesus ever more nearly. He is, as Simeon says, "the light to enlighten the Gentiles" (That's us!) and he will light us on our way, if we ask and follow Him.

As we begin a holy and rewarding Lent, we do well to look to the saints for example. This month we recall Hannah Greer Coome, Mother Foundress of the Sisters of St. John the Divine. As a solitary, I thank them for easing my path with rest, friendship and example, as they do for many others. Ploycarp is one of my favourites, martyred in his old age, for refusing to deny his Lord; "eighty-six years have I served Him, and He has done me no wrong."

Then comes Anskar, Cyril and Methodius, the Martyrs of Japan, and then two poets, Caedmon, early(600) singer of songs, and George Herbert, Priest and poet, whose hymns we still sing today, if we are lucky. I love this one. It takes your breath away:

*Come my Way, my Truth, my Life  
Such a way as gives us breath  
Such a truth as mends all strife  
Such a love as killeth death.*







**A WELL FOR ESHITARI:** In August of 2006, the Church of the Redeemer, Rosseau began to raise funds to have a well drilled in Kenya. The dream was realised in the community of Eshitari, Western Kenya on March 6, 2010. The project was facilitated by Michael Frederiksen, President of Community Education Sevices (CES) Canada. From left, Sharyn Poole and Sheila Smith, parishioners of the Church of the Redeemer, and founding members of the Parry Sound/Muskoka Chapter of CES, stand beside the sign erected in honour of the completion of the well. Ms. Poole and Mrs. Smith visited the site in November of 2011. For further information, please go to the diocesan web site, or CES Canada at [www.cescan.ca](http://www.cescan.ca).



**WELCOME TO ESHITARI:** Rev. Livingstone Nyanje, and a number of residents from Eshitari, which is located in the District of Kakamega, Western Kenya, were on hand to welcome Michael Frederiksen in March of 2010 at the opening of the well for the community.



**VISITING THE EDUCATORS:** Sheila Smith, second from left, and Sharyn Poole are pictured with administrators and teachers from Shikoti Girls Secondary School during their trip to Kenya in November of 2011. On the far right is Principal Everlyne Shinali.

Contact  
**The Algoma Anglican**  
at our E-mail address:  
[anglican@muskoka.com](mailto:anglican@muskoka.com)

# The young face great pressure to conform

**By Charlotte Haldenby**  
One of the writers of the *Christian Science Monitor* in their September 26, 2011 edition on *Take Back Girlhood*, worries that her daughter wants to be a princess. She sits around waiting for her prince to come. Maybe she needs to read Robert Munsch's *Paper-bag Princess*.  
My grandniece Isabella, away during Hallowe'en at a "destination" to be the flower girl for her uncle's wedding, was upset that the resort had scheduled a zombie event for children when she really wanted to be Rapunzel. In the family, we know that she has been Hannah Montana so she could dance, and Lightning McQueen, the race car, and "a little lamb" to immigration officers the last time she went on a trip. So we're not too worried if she wants to wear a Tim Horton's crown and pillowcase cape to say grace at Christmas. She is four and a half with an active imagination. Who knows who she'll be next month.  
The *Christian Science Monitor* article says 43% of girls six to nine wear lipstick and gloss. Isabella does wear lipstick for her dance recitals. I have only seen *Toddlers and Tiaras* in a report on *The National*. But do these little girls really want all the finery and the practices all the time, or is this women who never got to their own first pageant trying to re-live their own goals? "I just want her to have a good self-concept." But will the little girls be able to keep up the act 24 hours a

**Looking at the World**  
day? If not, what happens to the self-concept? There is definitely cause for concern when we look at young girls today.  
It's fiction, but when the 13 year old daughter of the doctor on TV's *Body of Proof* wants to streak her hair and wear clothes cut both high and low, and get her nose done, so she can be one of the cool kids, it might reflect society at large. The *Christian Science Monitor* report says 81% of ten year olds fear getting fat. And 25% of girls fourteen to seventeen admit sending or receiving naked pictures online! How many stories do we hear of on-line bullying to kids who don't fit.  
Look at the ads for girls' clothes and the posture of the models. The *Christian Science Monitor* statistics again show that 80% of thirteen to eighteen year olds list shopping as their favourite hobby. In Toronto I saw a new station advertised for children's music, but the dancing was at least teen-age. If that's what girls see, in things their parents might pick for them, how do they know any better?  
Where do kids find out how to dress and behave? In some homes people are busy trying to cope with several jobs to make the family living and don't have time to sit down and explain

things. But in our commercial world of Sell, Sell, Sell and Buy, Buy, Buy, sometimes you have to really work to find appropriate dress when you go out to buy a new outfit for your child. With so much media available you would almost have to teach a lesson a day in what is appropriate behaviour for a young girl. Maybe this is why Isabella's mother has taken to making big and little sister outfits for Isabella and Elianna, on the sewing machine she inherited from my mom.  
Pre-teens and teens are really open to many models. If many TV shows have only girls who

wonderful voice, that talent does not only come in pretty packages, but how many girls are dropped or don't think they have a chance in life because of what they see?  
In Sharon Butala's book *The Girl in Saskatoon*, she tells of a former high school acquaintance who was murdered more than 30 years ago, and whose case is still open. Once the small town girl of a Ukrainian pioneer family comes into Saskatoon to train as a nurse, at a time when the careers for girls were teacher, secretary and nurse, she begins to grow into the beautiful mode, and, as winner of three beauty queen pageants, has Johnny Cash sing *The Girl in Saskatoon* to her on stage. Wow! No one had anything against her, it seems, but she winds up dead.  
At the time the glamorous job was a stewardess. But you had to be just so tall and not too tall, and pretty, and not weigh too much either. At the time one of the qualifications was to have your nursing papers, but how many went through the course just to be a stewardess? In fact one of the people Butala interviews ruefully says the real reason she wanted to be a stewardess then was to fly all over the world. This was at the time girls couldn't become pilots.  
I haven't seen the show *PanAm* but it seems to be about stewardesses in the 50s or 60s. Is this what we need to see? It's one thing for people of a certain age who remember those days to

watch the show, but what does it say to our young girls?  
In some Asian countries, North American women have to really watch what they wear, as many men think we are all just like the *Baywatch* girls. And what good woman in their society would ever dress like that? Within Chinese society today, young women who get a university education are not seen as "marriageable" in comparison to young teenagers men can still train up to their model wife. What does that say to girls?  
Now that we are past New Year's, the Valentines blitz has begun. St. Valentine was an early Christian priest who married Christian couples, and it cost him his life. In legend while waiting for his execution he cured his jailer's daughter of blindness and on the eve of his beheading in around 270 A.D., on February 14th, sent her a note "from your Valentine". In 1969 he was one of the saints dropped from the Roman Catholic calendar.  
Other stories claim that all our present day cards come from a Roman custom of boys drawing girls' names in honour of the Roman goddess Februata Juno on February 15th. Every year as we celebrate this day of social love, let us remember to see the real people we care about, just as we hope they can see us in our reality. There's a lot more to each one of us than how we look and what we wear. God sees that and we should too.

*"Look at the ads for girl's clothes and the posture of the models."*