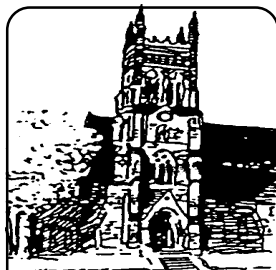


# The **Georgian**

Advent 2007



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Tuesday - Sunday  
9:00am - 4:00pm

**Rector**  
The Rev. Ralph Leavitt

**Wardens**  
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**Church School  
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**Services**  
*Sundays*  
9:00am Holy Communion  
10:30am Main Service  
(see calendar for details)

*Wednesdays*  
12:15pm Holy Communion  
5:30pm Holy Communion

**Do not be afraid; for  
behold, I bring you good  
news of great joy!**

St. George's Newsletter  
Vol. 07, No. 6

## VIEW

### From the Rector's Desk...

This Autumn I was fortunate to be able to attend the Annual FLAME Retreat, that is "Fellowship and Learning for Anglican Men's Enrichment". There were 54 men there from all around the Diocese, and six men from St. George's. The Rev'd. Dean Brady was our speaker, and he talked about "Sheer Christianity".

As we begin this Advent season, I think some of Dean's teaching would be good to keep in mind. In his first talk Dean spoke about holiness and community. He referred to 1 Peter 1: 15 which reads, "...as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; for it is written, 'You shall be holy as I am holy'". This last quote comes from Leviticus 11:45. 'You shall be holy as I am holy'.

What does "holy" mean? I have always thought of holy as meaning set apart, sanctified, or sacred. As you are created in the image of God, you are set apart as God's, you are called to life as a child of God. In this way you are sanctified. You are holy. For Christians, holiness is supremely manifest in the mystery of Jesus Christ; our sustainer, redeemer, cleanser, purifier, the source of faith, our hope, and our love.

When we think of holy people we often do not think of ourselves. We think only of the Saints of the church, the apostles, the great teachers of the faith, etc. However I would have to say that I agree with St. Paul. When Paul was writing his letters to the early Christian churches, he always began by addressing his letter to the saints in Ephesus, or Rome, or wherever. He thought of every individual in these Christian communities as being holy. We too have to think that way, that indeed we are all holy, therefore all saints, made in the image of God, and we are called to fulfill God's purpose here on earth, that is to bring about the kingdom of God.

A second part, however, that we have to realize, is that if we are called to be holy, that call is not only to us as individuals, but as a community. God is calling the entire community to holiness. God called Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to be holy, but in and through them as leaders he called an entire nation to be his people. A holy community. Everyone of us has to realize that we cannot just worship God alone, we have to do it in community.

(Continued on page 2)

## From the Rector's Desk... (continued from Page 1)

In Exodus we read, "*you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation*". Church is not just one individual, and another individual, but rather the body of Christ.

Of course this makes things difficult. Does the body, the family of Christ always agree on everything? Of course not. But nonetheless we are called into community and always have to resist the temptation to walk alone, to walk apart from others. We must walk together.

In the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 5 we read, "*you are the salt of the earth...you are the light of the world*". I believe that when Matthew wrote this Gospel he was not writing to an individual, but to a community. He was referring to everyone together; "*you are the salt of the earth...you are the light of the world*". We must always work together as a Christian community, as holy people, to fulfill God's will for us.

Together, as the body of Christ in this place, let us make sure that we are salt of the earth and light in this world. And let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven. Thanks be to God.

Ralph+

## The Advent Refugee Centre

by June Paterson

Sadly, we have had to close the Refugee Centre. The House of Prayer for All Nations, who had allowed us to remain in the church hall basement after they purchased the Church of the Advent three years ago, informed us in the summer that they wished us to move out at the end of September. At the same time they asked The Open Door to vacate the church hall, where St. Stephen's has run their soup kitchen for the past few years. We were not successful in finding another location and The Open Door has gone back to St. Stephen's, where they have considerably reduced facilities at present.

Thanks to James Khokhar, our faithful volunteer helper, the closing went relatively smoothly. Most of the clothes and household items went to a church in Park Extension where they also have a refugee centre; another load to Renaissance. Letters have gone to the Anglican churches in Newfoundland who have sent us boxes of hand knitted mitts, socks, etc. at Christmas for many years, with the suggestion that if they still wish to help refugees and disadvantaged people in Montreal, they can send them to The Heart of the Nations, a used clothing centre on St. Catherine Street, run by the Evangelical Pentecostal church.

The Advent Refugee Centre, founded by Miss Ann Robson, has helped many people over the years. In addition to the clothing centre, Ann arranged for refugee children and their mothers to go to the Old Brewery Mission camp each summer. She organized an annual children's Christmas party, accompanied refugees to their immigration hearings and protested when they were refused. Because she was fluent in Spanish, she was able to help many people from South America. She received several awards, including the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award. We were glad that we were able to keep the Centre going for six years after her death in 2001, and grateful to St. George's for financial help in the past three years.

James Khokhar postponed knee surgery until after the Centre closed. He is now recuperating, and once he is again mobile we hope to plan a party for all those who have had any connection to the Refugee Centre over the years.

### The Georgian View

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## A Report of our Diocesan Synod

From the Rector, October 14, 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I wish at this time to report to you briefly on our Diocesan Synod that took place recently. Many important items came up at Synod, and I wish to summarize some of them and speak to you of some of my personal reflections.

### Financial Matters:

Unfortunately the number of Anglicans on our rolls in the Diocese has gone from 33,000 in 1987, to 23,000 in 1997, to 13,000 in 2007. We have not cut costs according to our numbers. This year's deficit was \$1.2 million. We have assets of some 9 million. So major changes have to take place. Our new treasurer, Norman Spenser, a member of St. George's, has said he will balance our budget in 2 – 3 years. Synod was adjourned until Jan 12th when we will look at the new budget.

### Episcopal Ministry Review

Bishop Barry will convene a Committee to review his ministry in this Diocese.

### The Bishop's Awards

Barry will announce the Bishop's Awards on Epiphany Sunday.

### Stewardship of the Environment

This Motion was passed; "Be it resolved that the Synod of the Diocese of Montreal call upon the churches of our diocese and all Anglicans to set targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by reducing their energy consumption." All Anglicans and every parish are encouraged to be more friendly to our environment.

### Motion "L" – Blessing of Same-Sex Unions

By far the headline motion of Synod concerned the Blessing of Same Sex Unions. This Motion was passed in all houses: in the order of clergy (44 - 25) in the order of laity (59 – 32) and the Bishop concurred. In other words 64% of Clergy and Laity voted yes to this motion.

After the motion had passed Bishop Barry made the following statement:

*The Synod – our diocesan legislative body – has now requested that I grant permission for clergy, whose conscience permits, to bless duly solemnized and registered civil marriages, including marriages between same-sex couples, where at least one party is baptized; and that I authorize an appropriate rite and make regulations for its use in supportive parishes.*

*I will need some time to reflect on today's discussions, to consult further with the other Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada when we meet later this month, and to consider the concerns of our partners in the wider Anglican Communion.*

*All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. As in any family, we have disagreements – sometimes serious. And as a family, it is important for us to be together; to continue to meet together to discern the mind of Christ. I was elected as Bishop of all Anglicans in this diocese, and as such, I call upon all to remain at the table, working to sustain the highest level of Communion possible. Until a decision is made, there is no change in our current policy and practice; I expect our clergy to refrain from blessing same-sex couples.*

**(Continued on page 4)**

**Motion “L” – Blessing of Same-Sex Unions (continued from page 3)**

I want to report to you that the debate on this very contentious issue was done civilly and with a high degree of intelligence with respect for all members present at Synod. Bishop Barry reminded us both before and after the vote that we are the body of Christ in this Diocese and he is our Bishop. He is Bishop to all people in the Diocese, no matter where anyone stands on this issue.

I want to mention that a lot has to be done before any same sex blessings might proceed in the Diocese. Barry will consult the House of Bishops, and the International Communion. We will wait to see how other Dioceses proceed. If the Diocese does proceed, there will have to be regulations set up, and then in each parish the Priest must agree as well as the parish for these Blessings to occur.

**My personal reflections:**

I voted against this motion for several reasons. First, theologically I do not think that Blessing Same Sex Unions is correct. I cannot support it in my conscience. And I feel that by proceeding down this path, it might lead to a debate on Same Sex marriage, which I definitely oppose.

I also feel that our church should have waited for action from General Synod, our top governing body, rather than individual Dioceses proceeding one by one, which, in my mind creates a divided church.

Finally, I opposed this motion because I feel it is not the right time for the Canadian church to move ahead while there is so much disagreement in our International Communion. The Bishops in the American Episcopal Church stepped back recently from ordaining any Bishops in same sex relationships, and I feel we too should have stepped back for further discussion to take place.

In the end, I was part of the 36% of clergy in this Diocese that voted against this Motion. With the permission of your Synod Delegates, I can say that one of them voted for the motion, the other against. It is not easy to disagree with what our Synod does. It creates great tension in my mind, heart and soul. However, I believe at this moment God is calling me to live with that tension. I have respect for how our church has always worked, for our Synodical process. And just because I disagree with one Motion that our Synod has passed, I will not “run away”. I feel very strongly that I am still called to be the Rector of St. George’s Church, that I am also called, and always have been called, to be a Priest in the Diocese of Montreal. Personally, I want to continue to be a clear voice of scriptural truth in this Diocese. I will never recommend to this Parish that we “leave” the Diocese, or that we seek out another Bishop. Here I am, and here I stay. Barry is my Bishop, he is your Bishop. And I hope you will all continue to try to build up the kingdom of God with all our brothers and sisters in Christ in this Diocese.

I know that in our very family here at St. George’s there are a variety of opinions concerning this matter. Some of you would support this motion, some would not. I hope and pray that you will all continue to be part of this wonderful parish, a parish that is both historically and presently a leader in the Diocese of Montreal. I hope and pray that you will continue as the family that you have become to work together for the building up of God’s kingdom. I pray that as you look around you and see your fellow parishioners, you will not segregate them according to one issue, but rather continue to celebrate with them that we are one body with many parts. And that we are called to work together to glorify God.

In these times of tension in our church, I pray more than ever that the peace of Christ will be with us. For his peace passes all our limited understanding. I also want to invite any of you who wish to speak to me about this issue to please do so. I am your Pastor, and here to listen to your concerns and help you grow in your Christian faith.

May God continue to bless you, to bless this congregation, to bless this Diocese, and to bless our church.

## TRUTH

Jesus told Pilate that HE came into the world to bear witness to the truth and that everyone who is of the truth will hear his voice. Pilate asked HIM “What is truth?” (John 18: 37,38)

Truth, how shall I know it? Jesus declares in John 14:6 that HE is the way, the truth and the life and that no one comes to the FATHER except through HIM. He also said in John 8: 31,32 “that those who believe in HIM, if they abide in HIS word, that they would be HIS disciples indeed, and that they would know the truth and the truth would make them free.”

I am a believer and follower of JESUS CHRIST and I read and meditate on HIS word, and accept Paul’s word in 2 Timothy 3:16 that all scripture is given by inspiration of GOD. Does this mean that I know the truth? No, I must pray for revelation knowledge. JESUS promises that the HOLY SPIRIT, the SPIRIT of truth, will guide me into all truth; that HE will declare the words of JESUS to me. (John 16:13,14)

JESUS is the head of the Church and I am a member of HIS body. I want HIM to reign in me and be LORD of all that I am. My desire is to think as HE thinks, “to be mindful of the things of GOD not the things of men”. I do not want to be one who does what is right in my own eyes. The scriptures mention such people many times. I pray to be declared the righteousness of GOD in CHRIST JESUS. (1 Corinthians 1:30)

JESUS says in John 10:10 “The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy” and in John 8:44 declared him to be a father of lies. James 4:7 tells me to submit to GOD and to resist the devil and he will flee from me. My constant prayer is that I will never be deceived, but will speak the truth in love and grow up in all things into HIM who is the head-CHRIST. (Ephesians 4:15)

Thanks be to GOD who can do abundantly more than I can ask or imagine. (Ephesians 3:20) May I always hear GOD’s truth and have the courage to declare it boldly in love. AMEN.

Jane Wigglesworth

## THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR

Be thankful for the clothes that fit a little too tightly, because it means you have enough to eat.

Be thankful for the mess you clean up after a dinner or a party, because it means you have been surrounded by friends.

Be thankful for the taxes you pay, because it means you own something.

Be thankful that your lawn needs mowing and your windows need fixing, because it means you have a home.

Be thankful for the heating bill, because it means you are warm.

Be thankful for the laundry, because it means you have clothes to wear.

Be thankful for the space you find at the end of the parking lot, because it means you can walk.

Be thankful for the lady who sings off key behind you in Church, because it means you can hear.

Be thankful when people complain about the government, because it means you have freedom of speech.

Be thankful for the heat wave, because it means you are not having an ice storm.

Be thankful for the alarm that goes on in early morning, because it means you are alive.

ETC. ETC. ETC. ADD YOUR OWN BLESSINGS!

Submitted by Lee Dowker

## IMPRESSIONS OF SYNOD

by Anne McGuigan

When I received my copy of the Convening Circular of the 148th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Montreal, my first reaction was, “what have I let myself in for?” The document is about half an inch thick and came ready punched with holes for insertion in a binder. Closer inspection revealed that at least half of the contents consisted of minutes of the 2006 synod and Synod reports for 2007. My misgivings subsided.

Synod took place over 2 days, Friday 19th and Saturday 20th October. At 2 p.m. on Friday I went to Fulford Hall, registered and was given a tag with my name and the name of my church. As a first time delegate, I then went to an information session conducted this year by The Ven. Peter Hannen. We all introduced ourselves and were given a brief explanation of what synod is and how it works. The word synod derives from the Greek words syn meaning together and hodos meaning road. The Anglican church is episcopally led and synodically governed and that’s why we were all there! We learned the correct procedure for addressing Synod, asking a question, etc. My fellow delegate, Nicole Borntraeger, and I then took our places in the hall.

Synod takes place in Fulford Hall. The Bishop sits on a dais flanked on his left by the Chancellor and on the right by an archdeacon. Since there is more than one archdeacon, each has a turn during the two days. At 4 p.m. on Friday we attended Eucharist at the cathedral then broke for supper. After supper, Motion ‘L’ - The Blessing of Same Sex Unions was introduced and many people, clergy, and laity took their turn at the microphone. Synod was slated to adjourn at 9:25 p.m., but by common consent we remained to vote on the motion, adjourning at shortly after 10 p.m.

On Saturday we reconvened at 9 a.m. and adjourned at 3 p.m. Each session began and ended with worship and there were plenty of stretch and coffee breaks. On Saturday afternoon, the Youth delegates, including our own Tina and Juliet Oppong, gave a presentation. These articulate and committed young people were an inspiration to us all.

I am glad that I was able to attend Synod, and proud to be one of the delegates from St. George’s. This opportunity allowed me to see how church business is conducted, to put faces to names, and to hear different viewpoints expressed with passion and conviction, and listened to with respect. I also feel privileged to have taken part in an historic vote and to have felt the emotion in the room when the result was announced. I feel richer for the experience.

## Flame Weekend 2007

by Wayne Rannie

This year fifty-four men participated in the FLAME weekend. Of that number, six came from our church, an encouraging sign. The site, once again, was the Manoir d’Youville, a truly idyllic location. The guest speaker, the Rev’d Dean Brady, chose as his topic “Sheer Christianity”, an intriguing title to say the least. Between Friday and Sunday he addressed the gathering four times. Each address was preceded by the enthusiastic singing of catchy hymns, accompanied by a guitarist and a keyboard player. To coin a phrase, they raised the roof. Following each talk we broke up into small groups and discussed what had been said. What a wonderful opportunity this was to meet and share with fellow Christians in an open and honest manner. I was particularly gratified to see a true spirit of co-operation and trust at work during each segment of the weekend. At the conclusion of the retreat, Reverend Brady received a truly well deserved standing ovation from the group, a testament indeed to the impact that his talks had on everyone present. On a personal note, the FLAME weekend lifted me spiritually and, for this alone, I am grateful for having had the opportunity to attend. (The Rev’d Brady has been invited to speak at our next Men’s Breakfast on December 1st).

## Magic and Mystery(PartOne)

*And now for the really difficult part, please remove your mask and reveal your true self.*

For quite some time, the Lord has been placing a burden on my heart regarding how we relate to the rest of the Body of Christ. On June 24, as General Synod was to vote on the issue of Same Sex Blessings, I sat in church and quietly wept, not exactly sure why, but comfortable that I could be myself within the body, among friends who knew me and were comfortable with the expression of emotion.

This September, I was on a retreat with a few of these same friends, other leaders, when one of them directed the rest of us back to the table around which we had been sitting, with the words, "I'm not comfortable getting up from this table until this is resolved". At which point I swung around and immediately returned to the table, not knowing what needed to be resolved, but I knew I was needed. It seemed that one of them had offended another earlier that day by the way he had spoken in the group. For the next half hour or so, I participated in an amazing atmosphere of prayer, honesty, empathy, emotional outbursts, forgiveness and hugs, all the while feeling anchored to the Lord in spiritual warfare against our common enemy, Strife. It was interesting to note that earlier, these two, who were now locked in conflict, had together been involved in a form of spiritual warfare with percussion instruments. The enemy was now striking back through hurt feelings, insecurity and bringing up some past hurtful relationships. I shared with one of them after, that I had taken a course in Conflict Resolution this past May at Concordia and felt called to work in this area with the Body of Christ. We all realized that it was part of God's plan to have me there that evening to join in the battle. They don't teach the importance of prayer in conflict resolution at Concordia but the importance of honesty and empathy as necessary elements is emphasized.

Halloween may be over, but we may have become comfortable wearing masks, especially as we plod along in our beloved Anglican Church at a rather crucial moment in its history. Several weeks after I had witnessed, at the retreat, what happens when the masks are removed within the Body of Christ, Ralph stood up at the end of the Family Service, and did a very difficult but very important thing. He shared with his brothers and sisters at St. George's where he stood and why on the issue of blessing same sex marriages. I know he thought and prayed long and hard about how and when and why he should, and what exactly he would say. In so doing, he lifted his own mask and revealed the struggle he has had, trying to keep political church issues at bay in order to focus on the gospel that he loves so dearly and desires to share with everyone from his heart.

I have been around the halls, corners, and pews of St. George's for a year now and have observed the attempts to unite in prayer that were curtly refused. I have taken note of the feelings of isolation, rejection and loneliness and heard the confusion, frustration and thoughts of fleeing, from many. All I can say is from the many Anglican churches where I have been involved, this is nothing new and you are not alone in how you feel no matter how it is that you are feeling.

In our attempts to "not offend" others, as a church, we have lost our footing and at times, watered down the Message, thinking this would encourage friendship with the world and help us gain favour. Jesus Himself was and is an offence (stumbling block; Isaiah 8:14) to anyone who refuses to listen and follow Him. We are called to take off the masks we wear, the old clothes, and to put on a suit of armour, Heavenly Armour, (Eph. 6), robes of righteousness and garments of praise.

In the next issue of the Georgian View, we will look at Isaiah 8 and 9, 1 Thessalonians 2-4 and 2 Thessalonians 2, to see what God had to say to His people in past difficult times and also how he spoke through St. Paul about the things that are to come and the importance of carefully removing our own masks while gently inviting and encouraging others to do so as well. I invite you to read these passages over the holidays.

God Bless you and have a Joy filled, Jesus filled Christmas, and remember the Joy of the Lord is our strength.

Forever in Him, Melody Simms.

## St. George's Christmas Sale: From the perspective of a newcomer.

This year I was asked if I would be willing to help out with the Christmas Sale on October 25th. Despite a one o'clock executive meeting at Concordia, I was delighted to do what I could to help and thanks to a special Santa's helper I enjoyed the ham dinner and apple pie before traipsing the half dozen downtown blocks to the Hall building.

I was delighted to meet Marcelle Gagné who was escorted to the sale courtesy of Hanna Mansour, who also brought along a birthday cake and flowers for Marcelle in order for everyone to share in the celebration of her 99th birthday (actually two days later). Unfortunately I had to miss her blowing out the candles but left my camera for Hanna to take pictures. I wish I had my camera handy though, when Carol Lord turned around to see Marcelle standing there. I would have loved to have captured the look of surprise and joy on Carol's face at that moment in order to share it with you. I will have to be content with my own beautiful memory of these two lovely ladies' greeting. When I returned at 3pm. to help Josette pack up the toys and games booth, I was impressed to see that Marcelle was still on her feet and looking fresh, five hours later, although I'm sure she was tired but so happy to have been at St. George's that day and to see so many of her friends.

It was interesting to see all the dealers come in first thing to spot a treasure or two, especially at the art, book and jewelry tables. I am not able to report the actual figures from the sales of that day but I understand that the Guild surpassed last year's sale by a fair bit. I believe they made something over \$7,000. Great work everyone!

Until next year.....your on the spot reporter, Melody (alias, the newcomer)

## INSPIRATIONAL POEMS

By Wayne Rannie

I would like to share with you two inspirational poems that speak to two important issues in our lives; friendship and not quitting. The first is entitled "the Duty of Friendship" by Margaret E. Sangster from the Friendship Book of Francis Gay (1983). The second poem's author is unknown and it is entitled "Don't Quit".

### "The Duty of Friendship"

Comfort one another  
For the way is often dreary  
And the feet are often weary,  
And the heart is very sad.  
There is heavy burden-bearing,  
When it seems that none are caring,  
And we half-forget that ever we were glad.

Comfort one another  
With the hand-clasp close and tender  
With the sweetness love can render  
And the looks of friendly eyes.  
Do not wait with words unspoken,  
While life's daily break is broken –  
Gentle speech is oft like manna from the skies.

### "Don't Quit"

When things go wrong as they sometimes will,  
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,  
When the funds are low and the debts are high,  
And you want to smile but you have to sigh,  
When care is pressing you down a bit –  
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.

Success is failure turned inside out,  
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,  
And you never can tell how close you are,  
It may be near when it seems afar.  
So, stick to the fight when you're hardest hit –  
It's when things go wrong that you mustn't quit.