

All Saints Anglican Church

MARCH 2008 - NEWSLETTER

“For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn away from the truth and turn aside to myths.” 2 Timothy 4: 3, 4

Please read this newsletter with great care. As you will see by the accompanying report from a Lay Delegate to the last Synod, our Anglican Church is experiencing great and unnerving changes. Under the present and recent hierarchy of the Diocese of Niagara, and indeed, the majority of the Canadian and American sections of the worldwide Anglican Communion, our beloved church has turned away from the basic tenets of the faith, to embrace an anything goes, liberal theology that puts Christ in the far background in order to fit in with “modern thinking”. They have committed themselves to a secularized version of Christianity.

Our Lord’s relationship with the official leadership of his day bears a remarkable resemblance to what is happening now. One was always brought up to honour and respect the Bishop, thinking that he would do what was best for his flock. Jesus himself regarded those in power as legitimate, but found deep down that they were bereft of the Spirit. In fact, they often stood against the purposes of God. And this is the reality of our church leadership today.

We had hoped that with the coming of our new Bishop, the church would redirect its efforts and return to its historic roots. We had hoped for a shepherd who would care for his flock. Instead, he turns out to be a hard liner who is unfamiliar with the teachings of Christ and treats the contents of Holy Scripture as irrelevant. We asked to meet with him to get his help in our desire to get back to worshipping again in our great church of All Saints. His reply was an emphatic NO!!! We have now found out the reason. All Saints is a traditional, orthodox, scripturally sound church and as such has no place in the new, liberal, Canadian Anglican Church, where its leadership has adjusted its teaching and practice to fit in with a wide-open, anything goes theology. Their plan is to close down any parish that does not conform to their secular norms. Christ has no part in their future.

Because of the thinking of the leaders of the Canadian church, (and American), we are no longer in communion with Canterbury and the worldwide Anglican Church. There are now two religions in the one church; the liberal section, theirs, and the traditional, orthodox, scripturally based one, of which we are a part, that has lasted for the last two thousand years.

As a result, we have seen in the news that a number of Anglican churches across Canada have separated from the Anglican Church of Canada, about 18 so far, and have joined the Anglican Network in Canada, a growing group of churches whose members wish to be Biblically faithful and remain true to the basic tenets upon which the Anglican Church in Canada was founded. They now make up the only section of Canadian churches in full communion with Canterbury and the Church of England throughout the world. As soon as the problem of church ownership is resolved, I suspect there will be a flood of other churches joining.

In each of the three churches that left the Niagara Diocese for the Anglican Network, the vote has been about 98% for leaving. The Diocese has rushed to look after the 2 or 3 people who voted against leaving, immediately sending a priest to serve them, while in our case, with 90 of us asking to get back **into** the Diocese, they turn their backs on us. A bit hypocritical?

Our new Bishop, and a lot of his fellow Bishops in Canada, have decided to part ways with the historic teachings of the Anglican Church that have stood the test of time for the past 400 years, while keeping hold of just enough of the liturgical framework to give it the appearance of legitimacy. It reminds me of what Jesus said, as reported by Mark, concerning the words found in Isaiah 29:13 .

“These people draw near with their mouths and honour me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their worship of me is a human commandment learned by rote.”

This destruction of our church, and incidentally many of the other mainline Protestant churches who have gone down a similar path, has been going on insidiously for a few decades, but has just recently gathered speed in the past 10 years. Interestingly, it exactly parallels the downward spiral in attendance in that same period. In our own case, at All Saints, it was the return to the solid Scriptural teaching and emphasis on the message of Jesus Christ as brought to us by Rev. Brian Burrows, that saw our numbers soar, young people join, and our church come back to life. We hope and pray that this will happen again.

Many of these new age leaders do not believe in the virgin birth, that Jesus is the Son of God, or in the Resurrection. What they do believe in is the closing of churches who will not go along with their “modern” approach. Money is their chief goal, with people merely the means to that end. As it says in Ezekiel 34:10 ;

“Thus says the Lord God, I am against the shepherds; and I will demand my sheep at their hand; ... no longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, so that they may not be food for them.”

“This alien and open-ended liberalism has grafted itself onto the original traditional/orthodox Christianity of our forefathers and has created an irreconcilable division into two incompatible religions”, as quoted from the book by the Rev. George Eves, ‘Two Religions - one Church’.

We have now been locked out of our church for over a year due to the efforts of those who are unfamiliar with what it means to be a Christian, or even how to act in a civilized manner! Civilization is, after all, determined by ***how those in power treat those without power***. I believe those in power need to take a refresher course on the founding principles of Canadian Anglicanism. They have to remember that the Church is under the Scriptures and not the other way around. As you can see in the accompanying article, our new Bishop is more into the worship of ‘Mother Earth’, than thinking of the One through whom Salvation comes.

I believe the prospects of our returning to All Saints may be helped by the current court battle being waged by the Anglican Network to determine the ownership of church property. If the Diocese is denied ownership, then I believe a window will have been opened to help our situation. One never knows in just what way our Lord will help us, but I am sure He will. Please keep constant in prayer for our church of All Saints that

“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”