



**REMEMBER
THE MISSION,
allow yourself to
BE OUTRAGED,
and BE READY
TO SERVE.**

These words of challenge formed the basis of the address, entitled "The Best of Times, The Worst of Times," delivered by David Toycen, President and Chief Executive Officer of World Vision Canada, at Wycliffe College's convocation held on May 9, 2005.



David Toycen delivering the convocation address

He said that graduates should be prepared for the best and the worst. The society they will go out into is one of a combination of boredom and materialism mixed with a generous dose of consumerism. For this they needed to be mindful of three things.

Remember the mission!

Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before others that they will see your good works and give glory to your father in heaven." He also said, "Go into all the world and make disciples." You cannot imagine how many churches and Christian organizations lose their way on this point. Doctrine, lifestyle, moral failure, hubris, fear, loss of risk-taking and broken relationships can drive Christian ministry into the ground or make it so harmless that it attracts no one. We don't need more dull church services and lukewarm pastors and priests. Our task is to challenge the culture to take Jesus and the New Testament seriously.

Pursue big possibilities. We Christians should be thinking big thoughts and dreaming up big possibilities because the devil doesn't need any more help to keep us thinking small.

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Words from the Principal

Dear brothers and sisters,

Greetings in Christ. Wycliffe is part of the Toronto School of Theology, an ecumenical venture begun two generations ago. In the intervening years, some of the most creative ecumenical thinking has been around the idea of “communio”, which in Greek is “koinonia”, and in English either “communion” or “fellowship.” I have been reading I John recently, and it makes the following bold statement at the outset: “We declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” Think of the wide reach of the word, all the way from the sense of togetherness of a parish or prayer group, to the service of the Lord’s supper, to the “bonds of affection” (to quote the recent Windsor Report to the Anglican primates) within a whole Church and ecumenically, between Churches, to the gift of our life in Christ, and at the very top of the ladder, to the mysterious indwelling of Father, Son, and Spirit in the very life of God. In Acts 2 we hear how the apostles have “koinonia” with one another in prayers, and eucharist, and doctrine, and the three are

likewise intimately connected. Now that’s a word with biceps and armspan! “Communion”, “koinonia”, “fellowship” – isn’t the theological depth of the word (and the incredible gift of the Church to us sinful and mortal creatures!) in the “bonds” between all those uses, from the most mundane to the most spiritually profound? The communion we are given in Christ seems like a fragile filament- fellowships can be strained, or forgotten, but I John reminds us that the “koinonia” is rooted in that of God, and so the filaments are in fact of steel. I have come more and more to see that a tradition, institution, and community like Wycliffe is in fact a “koinonia,” in addition to being a building and a program and a current set of people. It actually is equally the memories and ties of alumni and friends, the reputation and respect of the wider Church and the ethos conveyed by its history.

So read this issue with a sense of this wider web of gossamer steel, the “common thing” (koinonia) we all share which is the ministry of Wycliffe. It reaches back heroically to the work of Bishop Archibald Fleming, the Diocese of the Arctic’s first bishop, and still to a Wycliffe

graduate heading north to maintain contact with that tradition. It remembers proudly previous eras, when exemplars like the Coggans ministered here. It includes a proud tradition of pastoral care and continues today as students fan out across the country in pastoral ministry. It reaches all the way to African Anglicanism in the continued tradition of inviting African students to study here. It is also a koinonia in doctrine, which must sometimes challenge errant ideas, as in Terry’s piece. It involves claiming the proud evangelical tradition of emphasis on spreading and proclaiming the word, as witnessed in the work of our Institute and our recent preaching day with Bishop Hockin.

Wycliffe is a communion that endures not because of our own abilities, but because “we have communion with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.” You are part of that web, and we invite you to read this issue to hear what the family is up to.

Peace,

George Sumner

Remember the Mission – David Toycen

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Stay positive. John 6:9-13 reminds us that life is about finding opportunities to glorify God through acts of service, justice and compassion. Speculating on the spiritual causes of someone's illness can be both dangerous and distracting. Some things are mysteries that defy our human understanding.

You are also on a journey so make sure you are on the right mission. It's a journey of self-discovery. No one can do this for you. Academic training is important, essential and helpful. But you will have to reflect on all of life to find your answers.

Do you have the gifts and calling to be an effective pastor and priest, teacher, professor or lay leader? It's true that sometimes God uses someone who has none of the right gifts, but in my experience that is the exception. Most of the time God chooses people with the right gifts to develop the right competencies to do the job. What none of us have at the beginning is experience, which means gifts waiting to be expressed and developed.

Mission is costly. It will take your best and often not in the way you think. Get used to dealing with relationship challenges, and don't let them distract from the mission to reach others. In fact they are part of your mission.

Allow yourself to be outraged

Cultivate your holy discomfort with the way things are. In other words, maintain your outrage! If you don't have any, may the Lord help you find it.

I am outraged by the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa because even though our government passed a law almost a year ago, which would allow generic drug companies to produce anti-retroviral drugs at a cheaper cost, not one tablet has been produced. If even a significant portion of the Christian community tithed there would be resources to meet this challenge. Our neglect of this pandemic is riddled with racism. We would never allow this to happen in a Western country. Our callousness and neglect towards Africa seems to know no boundaries.

It's in these moments of outrage that we are forced to remember who we really are and what we stand for. We have to ask: are we going to get mad or are we going to channel our passion into making a difference? My only hope is the cross of Jesus. If God's son died in this horrible way, then in some convoluted logic it explains why the crucifixion of the poor continues day after day. And it also explains that I better choose whose side I'm on. Is it Jesus or the way of the world? I hope that some day we Christians will be

known more for our generosity than our judging.

One of the great fallacies that hinders mission is that you have to have it together before you can minister to others. In fact it's just the opposite. God honours us wherever we are on the road of transformation and service. Often it's in the very doing that God speaks clearly and plainly to us. I have witnessed people coming to faith while serving on a mission to build houses for the poor. God appears to be more interested in the willing than the perfected.

I have a dream that evangelism and social action will draw us together rather than separate us. I have hope that God will give you new insights that will take us through the contentions and disagreements that paralyze our ministry and distract us from the most important things.

Be ready to serve

In Ephesians 2:10, Paul writes, "For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life." Years ago, the missionary doctor, Albert Schweitzer, spoke to graduates at a school in England. He said: "I do not know what your destiny will be. Some of you will perhaps occupy remarkable positions. But I know one thing. The only ones among you who will

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Mission *(cont'd from page 3)*

be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.”

Near Bogota, Colombia, there is a community where the inhabitants are living in shacks. Inside there is a little church with 70 members who have found Jesus in the midst of the whirlwind. They offer a hot lunch to slum children, supported by World Vision. Their pastor has staked out a new building that will serve as a community hall and place of worship. He lives with his wife and two young children in this place. His face beams as he speaks with praise to the Lord and his dream for this community. By the world's standards he is a madman. Yet in reality he is a man after God's own heart who has found the secret of mission and service. In God's economy, he is a person who has only a widow's mite to place on the altar, but he has given everything he has in service to the mission. Not for him low-risk Christianity.

What are some of the things that will feed your soul in the midst of service? For me it's the absolute joy I feel when someone shares his or her newfound joy in committing his or her life to Jesus. And the absolute cream on the cake is if I was a contributor. For me it's the pure satisfaction of seeing hungry children and their families with food, education and a grasp on some kind of sustainable future. For me it's the overwhelming emotional roller coaster of a ride when I serve as a communion

assistant. On this wretched earth full of broken lives, unfulfilled yearnings and the mad pursuit of power and wealth, the hope and life of Jesus infuses my soul. I'm ready to do battle for another day.

In the end our service is about love – love for Jesus and love for human beings one at a time. There are no shortcuts and no hidden formulas. We serve an upfront God who lays it on the line right from the beginning. We struggle against principalities and powers and we struggle against ourselves. But love makes our final

departure from this earth a celebration rather than a dirge.

We are in a battle for our lives and for those we serve. Do you know your mission? Is there some outrage lurking deep in your heart? Will you serve? Are you prepared to love? In the best of times in the worst of times – God help us all. Amen. ■

(THIS IS AN EDITED VERSION OF THE ADDRESS PREPARED BY TOM POWER. YOU CAN READ THE FULL VERSION AT WYCLIFFFECOLLEGE.CA)



The Graduating Class of 2005

A Tribute to Dr. Robert Haslam

As we travel through the groves of academe, we have the privilege of developing strong and sustained friendships with wonderful associates and colleagues based on mutual respect and admiration. Essential for such friendships are the personal qualities of integrity, intelligence, compassion, empathy, generosity of spirit and a healthy sense of humor. For all of us who have been associated with Wycliffe College during the past two decades, we have witnessed in our good friend, Dr. Robert Haslam, these very qualities in full measure. For Bob's exemplary service to our College, notably as Chairman of the College Council, and for his abiding friendship we are – will continue to be – forever grateful.

DR. ROBERT B. SALTER



Robert and his wife Barbara reside in Calgary, Alberta. This photo was taken on their 45th wedding anniversary last summer.

Jazz, Prime Rib and PowerPoint

The Fund-Raising Dinner for the Institute of Evangelism, April 7, 2005

At 6.30, guests began to arrive, a hundred of them, crowding expectantly into the Reading Room and the lobby. Over the growing babble of conversation rose the strains of jazz, played by the Ben Bowen Trio. (Any relation to the Institute director, you ask? Well, yes. Son, actually.)

At around 7.15, Bishop Peter Mason summoned us into Sheraton Hall to take our places for the meal. The Rev. Judy Paulsen welcomed us and said grace, and supper was served. While we ate, the jazz trio continued to entertain us in the background with a variety of numbers, both standards and originals.

The program began with John Bowen talking about changes in the church's understanding of evangelism in the last twenty years. In particular, he highlighted three emphases (all of which go back to the New Testament): one, that evangelism (helping a person come to faith in Christ) is normally a process which takes months or years; two, that for many people these days, they "belong before they believe" – that is, beginning to share in the life of the Christian community is part of the process of evangelism; and three, that most people who become Christians do so through family and friends.

John then introduced the **Institute Associates Project**, which will help to discover leaders who are doing good work in evangelism and congregational development but who are not widely known, and give them some profile across the country so that their expertise can be more widely shared.

The Rev. Nicole Poitras, the Project Manager, also spoke and gave more details of how the Project will unfold in the next year or two.

Bishop Mason took over the microphone, explaining that the Institute needs to raise \$70,000 each year to maintain its budget, and inviting guests to contribute whatever they could to meet this goal. Guests that evening generously donated a total of \$4,660 towards the Institute, bringing us close to this year's target. The Principal, Dr. George Sumner, closed the evening with a benediction.

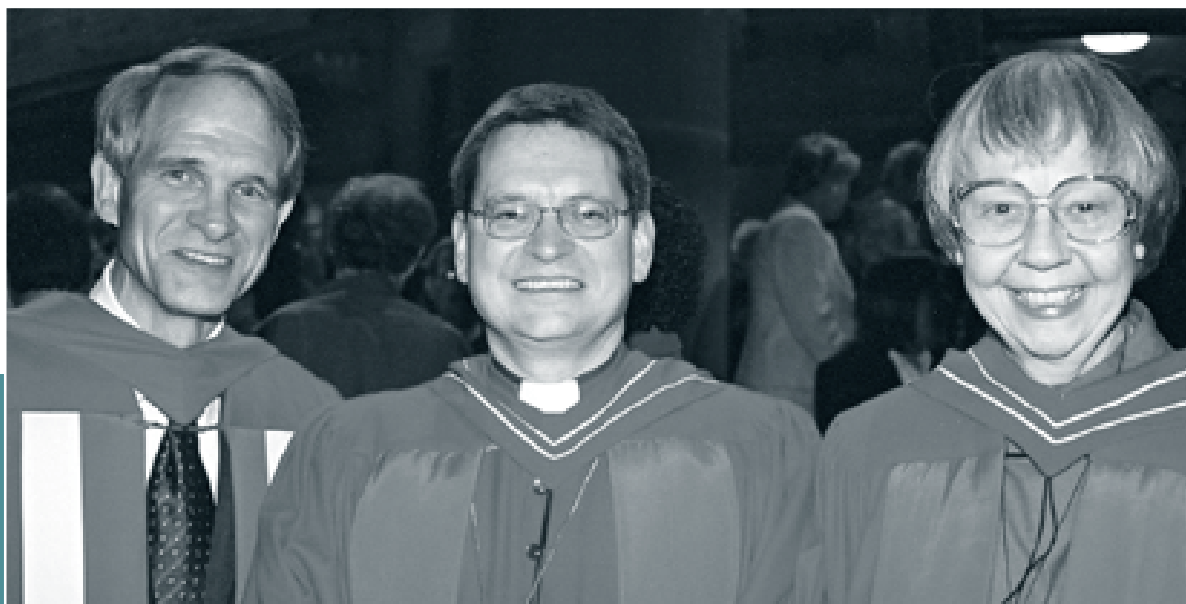
Jazz, prime rib, and PowerPoint. And, more importantly, friends spending time together in support of a worthwhile cause. All elements of a very pleasant evening.



Convocation 2005



Graduates processing to Convocation Hall



Honorary Degree recipients:

Mr. David Toycen, Doctor of Sacred Letters (honoris causa)

The Rt. Rev. Colin Johnson, Doctor of Divinity (honoris causa)

Sister Constance Joanna Gefvert, SSJD, Doctor of Divinity (honoris causa)



At Convocation day, Wycliffe celebrated its historic links with the Anglican Mission to the Arctic. Present at a small display on the theme were Principal Sumner, Sue Oliver (graduating student who is going to Fort McPherson), Bishop Ben Arreak of the Arctic, and Ms Evelyn White of Hamilton who donated a travelling liturgical set believed to have been used by Bishop Archibald Lang Fleming (d.1953), a Wycliffe graduate.

We extend congratulations and best wishes to this year's graduating class.

Doctor of Theology

Clarence Wing-Ming Lau

Master of Theology

Kosti Ketola

EunJung Kim

Master of Divinity, Honours

Michael Amirault

Andrew Federle

Susan Oliver

James Pedlar

Paul Ranson

Madeleine Urion

Master of Divinity

Penny Bruce

Eleanor Clitheroe

Ellen Curtis

Christopher Harper

Edward Hayley

Jonathan Hoskin

Robert Hutchison

David Julien

Susanne McKim

Lisa Newland

Stephanie Pellow

Stephen Pessah

Jason Prisley

Robert Sears

William Thomas

Master of Religion

Domenic Femia

Andrew Kaye

Neville Solomon

Marilynne Teskey

Master of Theological Studies

Gwendolyn Claire Alexander

Mark Kim

Robert Knetsch

Matthew Parker

Leanne Tiessen

Deborah Wilson

Engin Yildirim

Iddi Zachari

Diploma in Lay Ministry

Sandra Butler

Ken Collins

Carrol Cornish

Donald Frederick Duncan

Patricia Fleming

James Gillies

Garry Glowacki

Barbara Golloher

Tracy Harper

Shirley Ince

Carl Johnson

Karen Johnston

John King

Suzanne Lehtinen

Elizabeth Pennington

G. Keith Pidduck

Regina Robinson

Wendy Rothwell

Vanessa Rottner

Christine Welch

Ruth Welham-Umphrey

Angela Wentzel

Nicole Wong

Refresh!

A continuing education conference, April 25–29, 2005

BY THE REV. JAMES ROBINSON

My graduation from Wycliffe took place nineteen years ago and since then I have been in parish ministry in the Diocese of Calgary. When I first received the *Refresh!* brochure, I gave it only a cursory glance. It was, after all, being held in Toronto, which is a good distance from my home in Lethbridge, Alberta. It was my wife, Judith, who picked up the material and told me, “you should consider going, I think that you would love this.” Sure enough, when I examined the speakers, the topics and the overall concept of the conference, I felt that this was an event that I did not want to miss.

Refresh! offered outstanding speakers who were dealing with issues of practical and immediate relevance for those working in parish ministry. The event also took place over a period of five days, which made it substantial enough to warrant spending the plane fare. What clinched it for me, however, was the incredible bargain offered in the low registration and accommodation fees. I had the sense that Wycliffe College was reaching out and making it as easy as possible for those clergy, clergy spouses, lay leaders and students to attend.

Monday was entitled “Head Start Preaching Day.” During the four study sessions of the day, we looked at the lectionary readings for the four Sundays in October. Not only did we receive some fine teaching in the area of homiletics, but we were also given a “head start” on our sermons for next October. The Rev. Dr. Glen Taylor (Old Testament) and The Rev. Catherine Sider Hamilton (New Testament) skillfully led us through an exegesis of the texts in question, with the goal of planning sermons. Their teaching was scholarly, practical, and mindful of the immense responsibility entrusted to those who are called to proclaim God’s word in

parish churches, Sunday by Sunday. Following Glen and Catherine, The Rev. Dr. Harry Robinson preached sermons on the texts, allowing us to see how the exegetical work is used to craft a biblical and compelling sermon. The Preaching Day not only assisted me in my preaching ministry, but also fed my spirit, particularly through the profound and passionately biblical preaching of Harry Robinson.

On the following day, I was delighted to listen to my former New Testament teacher, Dr. Richard Longenecker who spoke on the topic of “Scripture: Inspired and Profitable.” I remembered why Dick Longenecker was so beloved a professor at Wycliffe as I enjoyed his scholarly, gracious and faith-filled lecture.

Among the many workshops offered, I particularly enjoyed The Rev. Judy Paulsen’s practical and



The Very Rev. Dr. Paul Zahl

inspirational presentation on “Developing a Template for Contemporary Worship.” There was a large selection of workshops and many were hands-on and useful for parish ministry.

At one Evening Prayer, we were addressed by Sudhar Rejasingam, who spoke movingly of her work in Sri Lanka with victims of the civil war and the Tsunami. Sri Lankan music added to the richness of this time of worship.

We had the privilege of hearing The Very Rev. Dr. Paul Zahl, Dean and President of Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry, preach at Morning Prayer each day. He spoke on several passages from I and II Peter; of God calling his people out of darkness into light and Peter’s leading from the law to the gospel. He concluded his series of morning addresses with the proclamation that the wounds of Christ have healed us, not just in an ethical and moral sense, but also in bringing about the rebirth of the one who is in Christ. Dr. Zahl also gave a plenary session on the topic of “Itching Ears,” based on II Timothy 4:3-4. He gave us a succinct and profound definition of basic evangelical doctrine as having a low anthropology, a high soteriology and a supremely high Christology.

Dr. James Houston of Regent College, spoke on the theme of the conference, “In Season and Out of Season” (II Timothy 4:2). This was a stirring call to live truly Christian lives in a secular humanist culture, which has become more alien to the gospel than was the paganism of the first century. Dr. Houston particularly called those who are in leadership positions in the church to live lives of deep spirituality. It was a profound honour to hear a man who had spoken and worked with such people as C.S. Lewis and Malcolm Muggeridge.

I had the privilege of studying with The Rev. Dr. Alan Hayes as a student, so it was a great treat for me to hear his lecture: “Crisis and Growth in the Church.” Alan looked at previous crises and schisms



Dr. James Houston

within Anglicanism and helped us to see both parallels and differences in the present struggles.

Towards the end of the conference we heard from Dr. John Bowen who spoke on “Engaging the Myths of our Culture,” an engaging talk which taught us to “unpack many of the normative myths” which drive our secular culture. John also helped us to think of ways in which we might be able to use these secular myths as a stepping-stone for evangelism.

In *Refresh!*, Wycliffe College has produced an excellent program for clergy, lay leaders, spouses, and those interested in ordination. I am already planning to attend next year’s *Refresh!* The difference is, I hope to bring my wife, Judith. This is too good to keep to myself. ■

THE REV. JAMES ROBINSON IS A PARISH PRIEST IN ALBERTA AND A GRADUATE OF ‘86.

WYCLIFFE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE ANGLICAN FOUNDATION AND THE FLINT TRUST FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THIS CONFERENCE.

Help for the Preacher

A Preaching Workshop for students with Bishop Bill Hockin, Retired Bishop of the Diocese of Fredericton

Effective preaching is no accident. It takes prayer, preparation, and a willingness to work hard. This message was one of many inspirational challenges given to over fifty Wycliffe students by The Rt. Reverend Bill Hockin in January. Bishop Hockin is well known for his expertise in, and passion for, preaching. The day-long, interactive preaching workshop combined theological reflections on sermon writing with practical tools for getting the job done. Participants ranged from seasoned preachers to absolute beginners, but the engaging discussion and frantic note-taking made it evident that there was something for everyone. As second year M. Div. student Paul Tinker put it, “I thought it was excellent. It provided a very practical tool for writing sermons that leave the congregation with something to take away.”

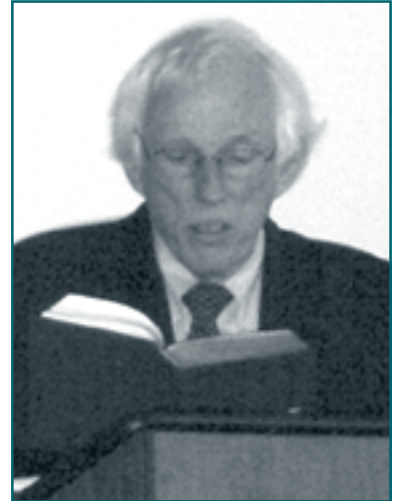
Bishop Hockin (later nicknamed “Rockin’ Hockin” by an appreciative student body!) offered seven principles of effective preaching. Among these was the principle that preaching must be transformational, enabling people to encounter the living God through scripture. Preaching has been devalued in the life of the church, Bishop Hockin said, and needs to be reclaimed as the key focus of the liturgy. He also provided students with a step by step sermon preparation process, and a worksheet for future use.

The workshop was especially helpful for people who don’t even know where to begin when it comes to preaching, said The Rev. Dr. Glen Taylor. “I was

impressed by how accessible it was,” said Dr. Taylor, who teaches preaching at Wycliffe. “It was user-friendly and a great source of encouragement.” Bishop Hockin’s method urges preachers to begin with their own observations and study of scripture, and then to confirm their conclusions by comparing them with what other preachers and theologians have had to say. Dr. Taylor agrees that one’s own study of a passage, independent of resources such as concordances and commentaries, is a key ingredient in sermon preparation. “We don’t want to separate homiletics from biblical studies,” he says. Still, Dr. Taylor emphasizes the importance of thorough exegesis in order to interpret a passage of scripture as faithfully as possible.

Nick Trussell, a first-year M. Div student, had this to say about what he appreciated and learned: “I found it encouraging that one of the principles of preaching taught at the workshop was to look for the human need or suffering in a passage and find the divine response. The Gospels not only tell us something about the life of Jesus but also about his concern for and action in the lives of people. It can be difficult to remember that when preaching we are to proclaim God’s word, not to lecture on the finer points of Biblical criticism, but to proclaim this word which is not only relevant to life but essential to it.” Such preaching would surely be life-giving to the church and the world.

KELLY COOPER IS IN HER SECOND YEAR OF THE M.DIV. PROGRAM AT WYCLIFFE COLLEGE



Engaged students at the seminar

From Wycliffe's Director of Development



Dear Friends,

The parables of Jesus are like Bach fugues. Each level of meaning is layered over with a multiplicity of nuances, each leading to further exploration and variation. One of my favourite parables (found in Matthew 25) centres upon a wealthy man who entrusted his possessions to three servants, each receiving an amount comparable to his ability, in units of five, two, and one. The Authorized Version of the Bible translates these amounts of money as 'talents', so the parable quickly came to be understood so as to include personal skills, aptitudes, gifts for ministry, – human God-given resources. Two of the three servants invest the talents wisely and productively and in due course receive the master's praise. The third takes no risks, shows no initiative, and simply hoards the single talent until the master returns and, not surprisingly, is roundly condemned.

This parable took on fresh meaning for me when I realised that the world, including the church, is made up of individuals with an enormous range of talents. Rating myself about 3.25 on the talent scale, I knew that to accomplish the ministries for which I was responsible, would require both the blessing of God and the contributions of some 4+ talent people. So I hired several, and the enterprise thrived. But then it dawned upon me that there were equally important roles for 2 talent folks, and rather than bypass them, they should be drawn fully into our mission and encouraged to offer all they could. At the end of the day it becomes clear that the church, of which Wycliffe College is one expression, is at its best when every talent-gifted member is welcomed, encouraged, and affirmed in who they are and what contributions they make to the common good. It is only when we behave like the 1 talent servant – low in self-esteem, lazy, selfish, defensive, fearful, – that Christ's ministry suffers, and his body deteriorates.

The failure of the 1 talent servant lay not in his self-perceived limitations ("I'm not rich; I don't have an A-average; I can't sing; I lost my seat on the Toronto Stock Exchange; etc."), but in his unwillingness to opt into his master's agenda. Not that he quarrelled with the agenda, but that he put his own comfort and security first. Christians must become students of the divine economy, the purposes of God. And the more clearly we discern those purposes the more committed we must become to their realisation, not counting personal cost or loss.

For over a century and a quarter Wycliffe College has articulated its *raison d'être*, through prayer, reflection on scripture, and in consultation with the wider church. Various mission statements have tried to capture our sense of purpose from one decade to the next, with surprising similarity. And that is good, because it indicates that we remain solid at the core yet flexible around the edges. Our historic mission has attracted the loyalty of dozens of faculty, trustees and staff, hundreds of alumni/ae, and thousands of friends from our earliest days.

Today that loyalty, born out of the conviction that our limited mission is a microcosm of God's Great Commission, remains one of our chief treasures. Such loyalty, expressed in prayer, service, and generosity of substance, is a Primary Talent which, rightly offered, nurtures Christian leadership, builds Christ's Church, and extends the Kingdom. Thank you for expressing your talent through Wycliffe College.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads "Peter Mason".

Bishop Peter Mason, Director of Development

Reading *The Pagan Christ*...

One of the occupational hazards that comes with my role as Professor of New Testament is that when some controversial book or movie about Jesus or the early church catches the attention of the media, I get asked for my opinion not only by students but by interested outsiders – friends, acquaintances, sometimes the media itself (though usually I am happy to leave this arena to David Reed!) As I result, I find myself reading books (*The Da Vinci Code* is next on my list) or seeing films (*The Passion of the Christ*) that I might otherwise be content to ignore. Thus it was that a couple of months ago I read Tom Harpur's *The Pagan Christ: Recovering the Lost Light*.

To be sure, my connection with Tom Harpur is somewhat closer than with Dan Brown or Mel Gibson. Not only have our paths crossed a number of times over the years, but he is one of my predecessors as a professor of New Testament studies at Wycliffe College. In fact he begins his book with a recollection of an event that took place in his office at Wycliffe – an attempt to reassure a student whose “conservative evangelical faith” had been unsettled by the mythological and non-literal approach to the Bible that she was encountering in Northrop Frye's (now famous) course on the Bible. So here I am, playing the role of Tom Harpur to his Northrop Frye (even if I do not actually occupy his old office).

For *The Pagan Christ* is itself a decidedly mythological and non-literal approach to the New Testament. Harpur has come to understand the story of Christ – incarnation, virgin birth, death, resurrection – as essentially a mythological representation of the human struggle towards divinization. Each of us is the incarnation of a divine spark embedded in earthly matter. This spark is enclosed in “the tomb of our carnality and worldliness” (p. 25) and the path toward spiritual enlightenment – the resurrection – is one in which we come to a full realization of the divine nature within us.

We have heard this sort of thing before – second-century Gnosticism comes immediately to mind – but what makes Harpur's version unusual is his insistence that this was the original version. He argues that the earliest Christian writings, and early Christians generally, did not intend the story of Jesus to be taken literally. Instead it was created as a symbolic dramatization of this cosmic story of divinization, something akin to the myth of the dying and rising god lying at the heart of the mystery religions that were widespread in the ancient world. Indeed, he holds that underlying Christianity, Gnosticism, the mystery religions, Platonism, Orphism, and even Hindu mysticism is a single myth concerning “the incarnation of the divine in the human” (p. 21), found in its purest form in Egyptian religion. What came to be known as Christianity is the result of a wrongheaded and disastrous shift in the third and fourth centuries, in which this myth of the Christ-principle within each of us was transformed into the crudely literal story of a single individual, a transformation carried out by “ecclesiastical authorities bent on maintaining control” (p. 178) of the masses.

This is not the place to carry out anything like a full analysis and critique of *The Pagan Christ*. Certainly, it is an easy target in many ways. In Harpur's hands (following the lead of his muse, the eccentric independent scholar Alvin Boyd Kuhn), the religions of antiquity are flattened and homogenized to an excessive degree. In many instances the work is a textbook example of what Samuel Sandmel has called “parallelomania” – the practice of turning minor resemblances into essential similarities and similarities into origins. For example, the etymological bridges that Harpur attempts to construct between Egyptian religion and New Testament accounts will not carry any freight at all. There is simply no way, for example, to span the vast etymological canyon between the Egyptian *Osiris* and the Greek *Lazarus* (Hebrew *Eleazar*) (see pp. 133–34). While Egyptian is a Semitic

...in Tom Harpur's Old Office

language, it shares virtually no cognate vocabulary with Hebrew. Further, Harpur does not address the dualistic strain that runs through at least some of these religions, with their disparaging attitude towards bodily existence and the created order. At the same time, Jewish religion is left out of account almost entirely. In particular, virtually no mention is made of apocalyptic literature and its cosmic mythology, a form of religious symbolism that is both much more rooted in history and a much more pertinent seed-bed for Christian ideas. And concerning his version of Christian history, one is rightly sceptical of any argument built on the assumptions (1) that most Christians have totally misunderstood and misrepresented what Jesus or the early church was all about; (2) that this is the result of a conspiracy to suppress the truth and to muzzle those who knew it; and (3) that the one proposing the argument is one of the very few who have been able to recover the truth.

Not unexpectedly, Harpur looks for support in the example of the apostle Paul. For in his letters Paul shows little interest in the earthly life or career of a human Jesus. His gospel of a participatory union with a dying and rising saviour (Harpur cites Col 1:27: "this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory") has often been interpreted as depending heavily on elements of the mystery religions or of an incipient Gnosticism. But disinterest in the earthly Jesus is one thing, a mythical Christ-principle is quite another. It takes a highly selective reading to eliminate the individuality of Christ and his vicarious role from Paul's gospel "mystery." For Paul, Christ was sent by God "when the fullness of time had come"; he was "born of a woman, born under the law" (Gal 4:4). He was crucified by the "rulers of this age" (1 Cor 2:8). If God had not raised Christ from the dead, Paul's "proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain" (1 Cor 15:14). To paraphrase Gal 2:21, if spiritual enlightenment were possible by cultivating the divine spark within, "then Christ died for nothing."

And yet. And yet the fact remains that *The Pagan Christ* has had a wide popular reception. It spent weeks on the best seller lists. According to the *Toronto Star*, it was the "number 1 national non-fiction best-seller in 2004." Enthusiastic crowds have gathered, often in church halls, to hear Harpur speak about the book. All of this suggests that there is a spiritual hunger for a message that combines personal transformation with a cosmic vision. What does this phenomenon have to say to us who continue to base our faith and common life on the "crudely literal" story of Jesus' incarnation, life, death and resurrection?

In traditional Christianity, the message of personal transformation and cosmic vision – what Harpur calls the Christ myth and I would prefer to call the gospel – is rooted in a set of historical events – a story – and is experienced in a community – the church. Harpur is apparently offended by the history and angry at the church, and so he dissociates the transformational message from both. (Curiously, however, he is not content to leave the message without historical roots. He apparently feels that it is necessary to construct an alternative version of history in which to root his cosmic myth.) But perhaps the success of his book, even among churchgoers, is a measure of our failure to engage people at the deepest spiritual level.

The primary task that faces me as I sit in my office at Wycliffe College is to lead students more deeply into the central "myth" of our faith – the story of Christ's life, death and resurrection. This story is rooted in history and embodied in the church. But our challenge is to embody this story not simply as a historical and cultural relic that it is the church's business to conserve, but more fundamentally as the story of a Christ both cosmic and personal, into whose image of glory we are destined to be transformed (Phil 3:21). ■

DR. TERRY DONALDSON IS PROFESSOR OF
NEW TESTAMENT AT WYCLIFFE COLLEGE

Faculty Comings and Goings

Alan Hayes was appointed honorary assistant priest at St. Simon's, Oakville, as of January 1. On Wednesdays in Lent he led a course there in Anglican history to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the parish. He also preached in February at St. Simon's, Toronto, for a series on Anglican identity organized by the retired primate, Archbishop Peers. Alan also spoke to the Friends of the Graham Library on Anglican history as a series of issues du jour, gave the keynote address on theological education at a panel sponsored by the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre, and led a Lenten retreat at King's College, Halifax. He was also named a Canon of the Diocese of Niagara. In the March issue of *Anglican and Episcopal History* he published a church review of two very different Episcopal churches in Boulder, Colorado. The June issue of the same journal will include his church review of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Palm Desert, California, where the best known parishioners are Gerald and Betty Ford. With two TST colleagues he has completed a website on the history of Canadian Protestantism at <http://individual.utoronto.ca/hayes>. His websites on early Church history, Anglican history and the Anglican Church of Canada, which he previously constructed, are also linked from the same webpage. At Convocation, Alan was cited for 30 years of teaching at Wycliffe, with a scroll from the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

Terry Donaldson helped lead the Wycliffe trip to Turkey ("From Antioch to Byzantium"), April 25–May 7. Two articles are to appear soon. One is entitled, "The Vindicated Son: A Narrative Approach to Matthean Christology," in Richard N. Longenecker (ed.), *Contours of Christology in the New Testament* (Eerdmans), the other, "Royal Sympathizers in Jewish Narrative," in the *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*, which deals with kings and other royal officials who are

described as worshipping or showing respect for the God of Israel.

Ann Jervis returned to teaching in January following a sabbatical at the Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton, for which she continues as a resource theologian. She had two articles and one chapter in a book appear recently: "Reading Romans 7 in Conversation with Post-Colonial Theory: Paul's Struggle Toward a Christian Identity of Hybridity" *TheoForum* (2004); and "'The Commandment which is for Life' (Romans 7.10): Sin's Use of the Obedience of Faith" *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* (2004); and "The Story That Shaped Paul's Way with Women," in *Loving God with Our Minds: The Pastor as Theologian* ed M. Welker and C. A. Jarvis (2004). After completing a book on Paul's view of suffering, entitled "At the Heart of the Gospel" (due late in 2005), her next project is a book on Paul's Ethics. In February, she gave a presentation entitled "Reading the New Testament" for the Diocese of Toronto, Day of Celebration, Cobourg, ON, spoke at *Refresh!* on "Enduring Suffering", and in June she will lead a clergy conference in Fredericton, NB. This Fall at the SBL meeting she will present a paper entitled "Freeing Exegesis". Ann currently serves as chair of TST Biblical Department.

David Reed made presentations on "The Future of the Family: Finding the Theological 'Sweet Spot,'" SEAD Conference, held at Wycliffe last September, and on "Why Is Sex So Complicated for Christians?" Trinity Church, Streetsville, in March. He participated in the Wycliffe Institute of Evangelism's parish mission, to Dunnville, ON, last October. On the publishing front he submitted the manuscript for his forthcoming book entitled, *In Jesus' Name: The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals* (forthcoming in 2006). David continues to be in heavy demand in the public media with regular

interviews on CBC Radio, Global TV, CTV News, the *Toronto Star* and *The Globe and Mail* for whom he has given opinions on topics ranging from religious cults and sects, same-sex unions, and developments in the Anglican Communion.

Tom Power had a collection which he co-edited and contributed two essays, entitled, *Converts and Conversion in Ireland, 1650–1850*, published by Four Courts Press, Dublin. In July he will teach summer school at Regent College, Vancouver.

In January, **John Bowen** taught a Doctor of Ministry course entitled "Church in Missiological Context" at Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry in Pittsburgh. Also in January, with a grant of \$20,000 from the Bridgeway Foundation of Cambridge (ON), the Institute hired the Rev. Nicole Poitras to oversee the new Institute Associates Project which will be launched in September with five new associates. John preached at Little Trinity (Toronto) on Palm Sunday and at St. Matthew's Islington (Etobicoke) on Good Friday. In April, he led a workshop on "Welcoming and Integrating Newcomers" for the Credit Valley Area Day. In April, he and Nicole led a weekend for 100 Anglicans in the Thunder Bay (ON) deanery on the topic, "Evangelism for 'Normal' People." During the college's *Refresh!* conference in May, John was one of the plenary speakers, addressing the topic, "Engaging the Myths of our Culture." He is currently serving on a Diocese of Toronto committee, asked by Bishop Johnson to formulate a response to the Windsor Report.

Marion Taylor participated in the Louisville Institute Winter Seminar in January and a similar ATS sponsored grant recipients conference in Pittsburgh in February. She conducted a women's breakfast at St Margaret's Parish, New Toronto, January, and another one at

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Student News:

Reflections from two of Wycliffe's African Students

The Rev. Benjamin Mbago

I come from Manyoni, Tanzania in the central part of our country about 115 km west of Dodoma, the capital city. I am married to Sophia and we have four children: Samuel (15), Salome (12), Beatrice (8) and Jesca (3). The Diocese of the Rift Valley occupies an area of 49,341 square kilometers. Most of this location is prone to drought that results in famine and water shortages almost every year. As a result of this situation, many people live in great poverty, which adds further misery to the difficulties already faced by these people.

For 12 years (1992-2004), I had been working with the Anglican Church of Tanzania, particularly the Diocese of the Rift Valley as the Diocesan Youth and Christian Coordinator. As a result of this work, we have been discovering the big number of youth becoming believers as

they respond to the invitation of the message of Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord. This is one of the sources of the growth of the church in our diocese.

Today, about 75% of the Christians in our diocese are young people. However, with this good work we face some challenges due to lack of finances, such as: lack of a conference centre, means of transportation and materials for Christian education.

I feel the Lord calling me to continue to serve him with the same ministry after I have completed my two years program of the Master in Theological Studies (MTS) at Wycliffe College.

THE REV. BENJAMIN MBAGO



The Rev. Benjamin Mbago

The Rev. John Kiboi

I was excited when I learned of securing a chance to study at Wycliffe College. Like everyone else traveling abroad,



The Rev. John Kiboi standing beside a picture of his bishop, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Eliud Wabukala, Bishop of the Diocese of Bungoma, Kenya

I had my own expectations coupled with assumptions. Well, some of my expectations have been met so far, while others turned out to be fictional. Least did I know of the serious culture shock waiting for

me; ranging from academics, food, housing, language and the general material culture. I was very glad to discover the depth of the evangelical tradition present at Wycliffe.

My challenge to those who have studied at Wycliffe and those who may study here in future is: take advantage of the tradition and the orthodox teachings at Wycliffe. Thanks for the scholarship which has enabled me to go through my studies smoothly. May God bless Wycliffe, God bless the faculty, staff and student body.

THE REV. JOHN MICHAEL KIBOI IS FINISHING HIS M.A. IN THEOLOGY AT WYCLIFFE. HE IS FROM THE DIOCESE OF BUNGOMA IN KENYA, AFRICA.

Faculty Comings and Goings (cont'd from p. 14)

St John the Baptist Anglican Church in Lakefield in April. She gave a series of lectures at a clergy conference at Presbyterian College in Montreal in February. She presented two seminars at an educational event for the Trent-Durham area held at St Peter's, Cobourg in March. At the Canadian Society of

Biblical Studies congress in London, ON in May she presented a paper on "Mary Cornwallis: 19th century Biblical Commentator". With her husband, **Glen Taylor**, she led the parish retreat for Christ Church, Brampton and St Matthew's, Islington in April. Glen attended the Algoma synod in Sault Ste

Marie in May and taught a course on Psalms in Alberta later the same month.

Joe Mangina is completing a sabbatical at the Centre for Theological Inquiry, Princeton University. ■

In Memoriam

INSIGHT

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Lady Jean Braithwaite Coggan (1908–2005)

Born in May 1908, Jean Coggan was a remarkable woman, whose life spanned a great piece of English and Canadian history. Jean chose a career in social work, training to work in the slums of east London, so she could help the poor. It was in this environment that she gradually became involved in the work of IVCF and soon met a young Cambridge student named Donald Coggan.

Their marriage began a lifelong partnership in the ministry of Christ, with a curacy in a parish in London and later when Donald was called to join the Wycliffe College faculty as Dean. In Canada, Jean quickly put down roots and made a home. Her special interest was with the Wycliffe students and her home was open for all – teas and supper parties, befriending other faculty wives and joining the Board of Deaconess House. The happiness of this young couple was complete with the arrival of daughters Ann in 1938, and Ruth in 1940. In 1944, Donald was “called” to become the principal of St. John’s Highbury (London School of Divinity), and to start as soon as he could gain passage across the Atlantic. In those postwar London years, Jean’s energies and talents focussed on making a good home for her family, and there is not doubt that she did that.

The Rev. Dr. John Stewart (M.D.)

John died peacefully during his sleep on March 10, 2005. He had the flu and pneumonia and had been recently visited by family and friends. John was the youngest padre in the Canadian forces during WWII and served while his father was also still enlisted as the oldest active padre. John also became an MD while a resident at Wycliffe

When Donald was called to become Bishop of Bradford, Jean’s attention quickly focussed on a ministry to clergy wives. Her ministry expanded even further when in 1970, she agreed to be “licensed as a Reader”. She stated that she never felt the call to ordination herself, but was an avid supporter of the ordination of women, and perhaps even had an influence on her husband’s thinking in this.

The years at York and Canterbury which followed, were filled with activity and challenge, for both Donald and Jean. Ann and Ruth had grown up, and Jean was free to undertake foreign travel with Donald. Perhaps the 1978 Lambeth Conference gave Jean her greatest opportunity of influencing the lives of clergy wives. Her constant theme in these addresses was that “clergy wives must be recognized in their own right, and not as appendages but partners.”

Death was no stranger to Jean. In 2002, she lost her beloved “partner” in his 90th year. Two years later, she bade farewell, to her precious Ann. On January 26, 2005, our dear Jean “passed over.” Ruth wrote to me: “She was ready to go and as you know, had a wonderful life, lived close to God and everyone she knew, loved her.”

College and went on to become a medical missionary in Liberia with his young family. He later joined the teaching staff of Grenville Christian College where he also served as in-house physician (before his retirement) and priest associate. A memorial service was held on Saturday, May 28 at Grenville College.

