

“No God” ads won’t change people’s beliefs, says local minister

Bus ads have people talking, but the religious community on P.E.I. remains unphased

By Laura Yorke

To believe or not to believe, that is the question.

And more and more people are asking it after the Toronto Transit Commission allowed new ads promoting atheism to be displayed on its buses.

The ads say, “There’s probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life.”

Is this signalling a drastic trend towards atheism in our generation?

Joe Velaidum says no. He is a religious studies professor at the University of Prince Edward Island.

There is no increase in non-believers, but rather a decrease in organized religion, he said.

“We do things more individually... we’re more self-centered [these days].”

The ads say there probably is no God rather than there is no God, which is a common factor in atheism, he said.

The ads aren’t necessarily a bad thing either, he said.

“It’s an idea and it gets people talking, so that’s great.”

Spring Park United Church Rev. Bill MacLeod doesn’t see a problem with the ads either.

“They’re basically a non-issue.”

The positive side is they have engendered a lot of talk amongst believers and non-believers alike, he said.

“To those who [faith is] important, it’s still important, and to those who it wasn’t, it still isn’t.”

The ad is not as prominent as other issues in the world right now, said MacLeod.

“No one is calling us to ask about our stance on the war in Afghanistan.”

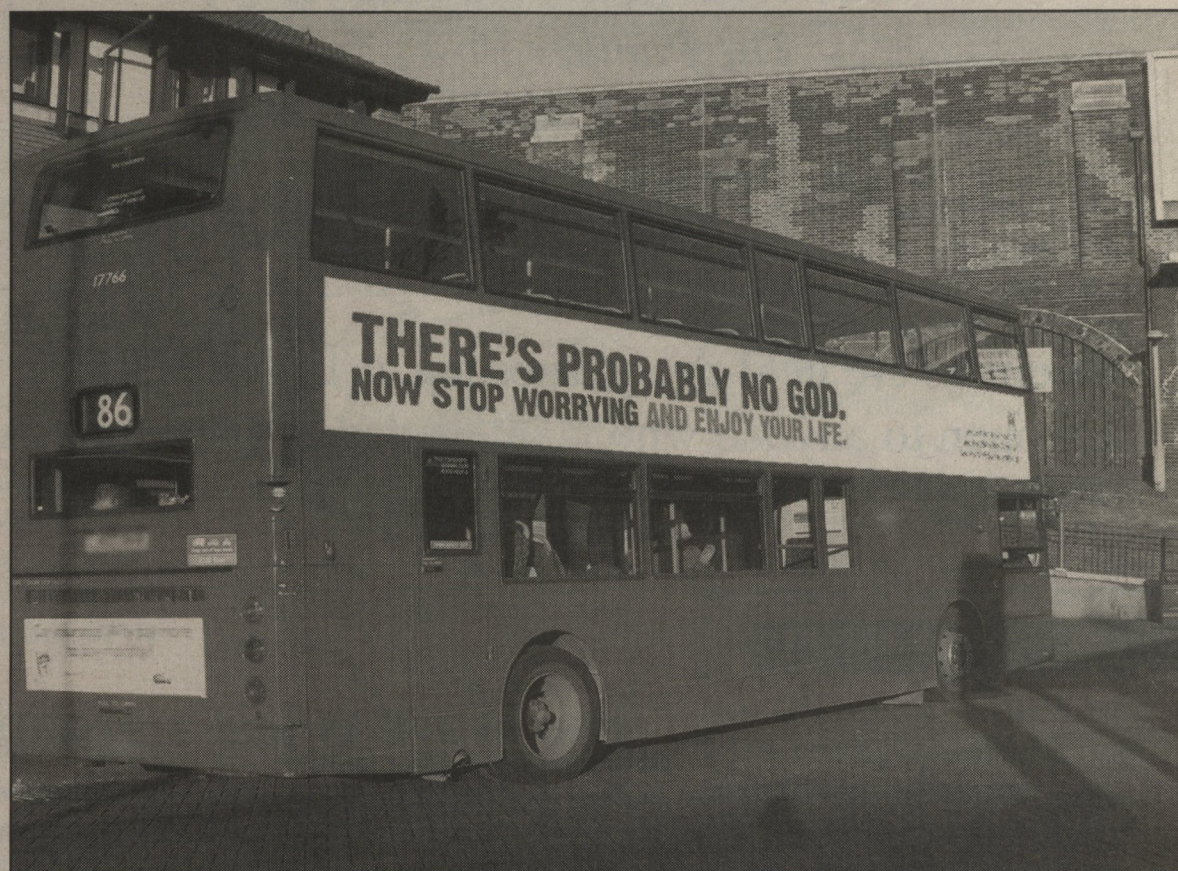
But he will bring up the ads in his sermon this week, where he will discuss the importance of faith.

“Christianity is for people who aren’t afraid to talk about life and its meaning.”

And the real question, said MacLeod, is what do you have to live for?

“Atheists don’t have an answer for that question.”

The issue seems to have caused a debate globally since first springing up on buses in the United Kingdom and making bee-line for North America. It has been a topic of discussion in media and religious institutions, as well an interesting topic of discussion



Atheist ads on buses first appeared in the United Kingdom. Photo: osocio.org

amongst friends and family.


UPEI is taking part in the debate on God on Feb. 27, as Velaidum debates with Malcolm Murray on God’s existence.

Yorke is a journalism student at Holland College



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Coffee shop being built inside Robertson Library

By Jarrod Yeo
Panther Post

Students will have a little extra incentive to study at the library for end of semester exams this spring.

A new Chartwells operated coffee shop is under construction in the Robertson Library’s lobby and is expected to be up and running in the coming weeks.

Mark Leggott, a university librarian, said it’s something students have been wanting for quite some time.

“I think the coffee shop will be great. Besides keeping things quiet, students looking to get a cup of coffee at nine or ten in the evening has been the biggest concern.”

The coffee shop is situated

directly behind where the library’s reference desk used to be. The reference desk has been temporarily moved next to the reserve desk until next summer, so there will be no disruption in service.

With regards to a menu, Leggott said students can expect something similar to Mickey’s Place in the Student Centre.

“It’ll be the usual coffee shop, but they did have a three-day taste testing not long ago so they’ll be looking to introduce some new blends. There will also be baked goods like cookies and muffins available.”

The coffee shop is still unnamed, so it’s possible students will be asked to submit proposals in the near future, he added.