Photography project empowers women

Pictures, exhibit educate community about life of those who are ‘invisible’

BY HENRIETA PAUKOV

THIS photo is really interesting,” says artist Anne O’Callaghan as she points to the laptop monitor. “That’s where I sleep,” responds Mia, the woman who took the photo. The small group around the laptop leans in closer to examine the photo and learn more about Mia’s life.

Mia uses drugs and works in the sex trade. She took the picture with a disposable camera that was given to her as part of the Exposure Project, a program of All Saints, Sherbourne St., that teaches photography to marginalized women in the Regent Park and Moss Park areas of Toronto.

Participants were picked from among those who attend All Saints’ Friday morning drop-in program, which reaches out to women who work in the sex trade. “I dreamed up the idea for the Exposure Project one day,” says Carly Kalish, the social worker who coordinates the Friday morning drop-in. “I thought, how cool would it be to educate and empower sex workers through the art of photography while educating the community about what their lives look like. Because people walk by and don’t even acknowledge them. They are completely invisible.”

She asked 10 women to participate, focusing on “the most marginalized, the most vulnerable,” women who would not normally have an opportunity to participate in this type of program. “The response has been magnificent,” she says. “They gave me hugs when I invited them to be part of this. These are people who will swear at you when you walk by them on the street. They are just so excited to be a part of it.”

The women received disposable cameras and a photography lesson from Ms. O’Callaghan, and they were encouraged to take pictures of their lives on the street. When they brought the cameras back, Ms. Kalish had the rolls developed. “Today, we are having our second session to look at the first set of pictures and to talk about light and contrast and the meaning behind the pictures,” she says. “We are going to go through the film to see where we want to improve, where we want to take more pictures, and so on.”

In April, the photographs will be displayed at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square, in Toronto, with descriptions written by the photographers “about what the picture means to them, what All Saints means to them, possibly a picture of themselves and their story,” says Ms. Kalish. On the last night of the week-long exhibit, April 19, the Exposure Project will hold a fundraising event where guests will have an opportunity to buy the photographs, with a portion of the proceeds going back to the photographers, “so they can not only learn from it but also see how valuable their work is and what it’s worth to someone else.” Perhaps most importantly, the photographers will be encouraged to invite family and friends to see their work.

The women taking part in the Exposure Project and the other women who use the Friday morning drop-in are not used to having people pay positive attention to their lives. Most of them use drugs and do sex work in order to survive. “It’s a cycle of using drugs, needing money to get those drugs, and doing sex work to get that money,” says Ms. Kalish. By paying attention to their lives, they hope to help these women break out of this cycle.

Carly Kalish, standing outside All Saints, Sherbourne Street, Toronto, runs a drop-in for women who work in the sex trade. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Continued on Page 9
Church adds worship to morning menu

Guests can talk, pray before breakfast

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

WHEN guests drop in at the breakfast program at Church of the Redeemer, Toronto, they have an opportunity to partake not only of nourishment for the body, but also for the soul.

Church of the Redeemer provides breakfast for about 60 people and lunch for about 120 people every weekday. Evaluating the programs two years ago, the organizers realized that they did not provide any kind of spiritual practice for those who wanted it.

“We looked at what we might do to provide people with an opportunity for prayer and biblical reflection that wouldn’t be intimidating or threatening to anybody,” says John Stevens, a volunteer and leader with the program.

The organizers of the lunch program took the idea to a meeting of their guests and decided to build on something that was already happening informally: several guests were sitting at a table and doing some biblical reflection on their own. “We have what we call the ‘kitchen Bible’ and they would borrow it and have some really interesting conversations,” Mr. Stevens says.

Inspired by that, the church decided to open half an hour earlier on Thursday mornings, with coffee available until breakfast was served at 9 a.m. Anyone could gather round one of the tables in the room for an unscripted opportunity to engage in prayer and biblical reflection.

Over the past two years, numbers at the “Talk and Pray” gatherings before breakfast have varied from five to 12 guests, often with different people taking part. Evaluating or threatening to attend Sunday worship. “It’s a hugely important thing for the whole congregation,” Mr. Stevens says. “We like to think of the lunch program as something that involves a lot of volunteers, but is part of the ministry of the whole congregation. To have lunch program guests as part of the congregation. To have lunch program guests as part of the congregation is, I think, a gift to the whole congregation.”

The guests offer an amazing variety of reflections, he adds. “There are some very honest conversations, he says. “Among the group, there are some people who are really struggling with their lives.” It is interesting to watch the reactions of those at nearby tables, he adds. Sometimes there is no reaction and sometimes he senses hostility, but often he notices that people are paying attention, although they are not willing to be drawn into the group.

Although the guests have unpredictable lives, three or four from the lunch program have made a deeper commitment to the church and have begun attending Sunday worship. “It’s a hugely important thing for the whole congregation,” Mr. Stevens says. “We like to think of the lunch program as something that involves a lot of volunteers, but is part of the ministry of the whole congregation. To have lunch program guests as part of the congregation is, I think, a gift to the whole congregation.”

John Stevens, photographed with the ‘kitchen Bible’ at Church of the Redeemer, Toronto, volunteers at the church’s breakfast and lunch programs. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON
Enthusiasm carries parish past goal

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

SOMETIMEs all you need to run a good fundraising campaign is a strong boost of positive energy. At least, that is the experience of St. Augustine of Canterbury, Toronto.

When the Rev. Canon John Wilton, priest-in-charge, found out that the Leaside parish was due to start its Our Faith-Our Hope campaign in May, he knew right away that the timing was bad.

The parish had been going through a two-and-a-half-year visioning process to determine its future, and the culminating conference in that process was to be held in mid-October.

Canon Wilton and the churchwardens petitioned the diocese to start the campaign at the end of that month, and the diocese agreed. “I wanted to wait until the conference was over before I asked people for cash, because the future of the parish was kind of uncertain,” Canon Wilton says. “It worked out well because the parish conference generated lots of creativity and energy and that just flowed straight into the campaign.”

The conference was intended to provide a weekend for parishioners to talk about St. Augustine and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “appreciative inquiry” model, which looks at the strengths of the community and its future. But rather than talk about problems, participants followed the “ap...
Stir the embers of your heart

By Bishop Philip Poole

 Lent was a somber time in my childhood home in Peterborough. Some things were different. Each year, a few days before Ash Wednesday, our family would gather at the dinner table, and each of us was called upon to declare what he or she would give up for Lent. There were long lists of a few items for children to choose from: dessert, pop and chocolates were the obvious candidates. I was not sure. It was a time when the church was to make a sacrifice, not we. Jesus gave up his life for us. Jesus gave up his life for us. Jesus gave up his life for us. Jesus gave up his life for us. Jesus gave up his life for us.

Whatever concept we learned or did not learn has had an influence on the way we approach money. It gets even more complicated when we get married and have to deal with another set of embers. All of these things affect how we use money.

Lent also meant being invited to give up some money. From an early age, we had been taught to tithe our parents’ income. An allowance of 10 cents per week wasn’t much, but one cent could fill up a small bag with licorice and other treats, so in the eyes of an eight-year-old, that was quite a sacrifice.

Lent required more of us. Filling up the Lenten coin card or cardboard church to be burned in on Palm Sunday was a matter of some pride for me, though I can only imagine now how the counters must have dreaded being able to add up the pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters offered by hundreds of Sunday school children. The money raised was to go to some special project somewhere in the world.

We were called “Little Helpers” back then, working with the rest of the parish family and making a difference in mission. For many years, Lent gave us an opportunity to attend an evening in the parish hall of all Saints, listening to a missionary on leave from either Africa or China or the Canadian North. Black and white pictures, projected on a screen by a “magic lantern,” gave us a glimpse into another culture and society. The embers of my heart were stirred with a passion for the poor, the oppressed and the needy, with a desire to serve where God’s call to help, and we wanted to respond.

Ash Wednesday itself was a very special day. It began by going to church early in the morning without first having breakfast, to attend a solemn service and have ashes imposed on our foreheads. Communion was reserved for those who could afford it, but ashes were available to all. Breakfast was served after the service. It was a simple meal of egg, milk and juice (we were considered too young to follow the Lenten discipline of fasting). Then we would go to school, late.

Throughout Lent, there was a somber feeling not only on Sundays, with subdued hymns and a somber home environment when family duties emphasized self-denial. In careful ways, we were taught to examine our consciences, to acknowledge our shortcomings and to seek forgiveness for our sins. It was not an oppressive time, just a spiritually focused time, ultimately leading us through the events of Holy Week to the foot of the cross and the excitement of the empty tomb. It was a spiritual change in my life at the time of a young boy. Lent mattered. I had not yet been exposed to the other traditional disciplines of Lent, but self-denial, sacrificial giving, repentance and missions have had a lasting effect on me. It was, of course, a different era. Canada had not yet become a wealthy nation and the world had been created from the Second World War with a sense of confidence, Canada was still heavily reliant on natural resources, still finding its place among the nations of the world. The church was still at the centre of social life and voices opposed to the church were unheard. Sundays were commonly called the Lord’s Day. Sunday shopping was not legally permitted. Children’s sports activities had started by Sunday.

The purpose of this article is not to date myself, though I have successfully done that, but to invite you to consider using this Lent as a dedicated time for self-sacrifice and charity, for extraordinary acts of charity, and for a renewed personal sense of mission. Use the time to enter into the depths of your faith. Volunteer at a foodbank, visit a nursing home, take part in a Bible study, make a point of attending worship weekly, plan to attend all the services of Holy Week, reflect on the self-giving life of Jesus and rededicate yourself as a disciple of our Lord. Step out of the frenetic pace of life for a few days of Lent and see if the embers of your heart are stirred again with a passion for mission.

In my view, the finest exposition in the Book of Common Prayer is found on page 511 and says, in part, “I therefore invoke you, in the name of the church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by examination and repentance, by prayer, fasting, self-denial and by reading and meditating upon God’s holy Word. May God grant us a holy Lent. It is worth the journey.

The Bishop of Peterborough

What does money mean to you?

By the Rev. Bill Welch

A few years ago, I read a sermon by the famous preacher John Wesley about the use of money. He based his sermon on Luke 16:9 about making friends with money: “And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of your dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.” His basic rule is to do three things with money: gain all you can, save all you can and give all you can.

Gaining all one can seems like a no-brainer—he who doesn’t want to get as much as possible? However, this maxim is predicated on the notion that you do not gain all you can at the expense of your health, either physically, emotionally, spiritually or psychologically. If your occupation causes undue stress upon you, then he advises to find other employment.

Secondly, gaining all you can should not be at the expense of your family; make sure they have the basics.

Give to members of the household of faith.

Give to all people.

Wesley offers us this as an opportunity for people to come to grips with their attitudes toward money and put it in a context of faith. He challenges his readers and listeners to think more deeply about the ways we use our money; not only how it affects our well-being, but also how it affects our neighbour’s well-being. He gives us a way of using our money: that it is not just “fifty lacs” but can be a positive influence on God’s creation if we remain in control of it and not the other way around.

The Rev. Bill Welch is the incumbent of St. James the Apostle, Sharon.

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THE STEWARD

By the Rev. Bill Welch

For the needs of your family; make sure they have the basics.

Give to members of the household of faith.

Give to all people.

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The Rev. Bill Welch is the incumbent of St. James the Apostle, Sharon.

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February 2012
Show God’s love to those in need

BY THE REV. HEATHER MCCANCE

Services have strict regulations about who can donate blood. Some of these restrictions are made for the sake of the potential donor and some are aimed at keeping the blood supply of organs of disease. Some of these regulations are, I would argue, unnecessarily exclusive. Prohibiting men to love another as husband and wife, even once, or their partners, seems excessive in an age when so many tests are done on the blood to preclude any transmission of disease.

Likewise, not everyone who has died is a suitable organ donor. If a person has been ill, often their organs cannot be used, and if a person has been on life support for too long, their organs cease to be viable for this reason.

In Canada, our loved ones will never know who benefited from our organ donation. To be a donor does not mean that our loved ones will die in vain. It means that we have the opportunity to make our suffering mean something to another.

The Rev. Heather McCance is the incumbent of St. Andrew, Scarborough.

Free will gives us the choice

BY AMIT PARASAR

No one can donate their blood or organs to help others. Canadian Blood Services has very strict regulations about who can donate blood. Some of these restrictions are made for the sake of the potential donor and some are aimed at keeping the blood supply of organs of disease. Some of these regulations are, I would argue, unnecessarily exclusive. Prohibiting men to love another as husband and wife, even once, or their partners, seems excessive in an age when so many tests are done on the blood to preclude any transmission of disease.

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I didn’t ask for these things

BY STUART MANN

T here comes a point in every production of The Anglican when I think I’m in deep trouble. That moment is when I have to start the next one, when I’m staring down the end and the clock is ticking..."There is no stopping this clock. In every corner of the world, it goes on. We can’t stop it, and we don’t want to stop it."

In the past at such moments, I’ve always thrown myself into a fit of busy-ness—assigning stories and photos, writing, correcting copy—and then started digging through old files for stories that didn’t make it into previous issues. Sometimes, I take a more gentle approach. I still get busy, but I also think, “Don’t worry. God will provide.”

In my case, God has recently provided me with a concern for economic and social injustice. This is entirely unrelated. I’m not a seeker of social justice by nature and it does not come easily to me. I’ve lived my life in the suburbs, nurtured by myself and my family, the world will look after itself. And it’s stood me in good stead. But during the past year I’ve found it increasingly difficult to look away from the poverty of so many people around the world. I can’t take a shower anymore without thinking of the millions of people in the world who don’t have enough fresh water to drink, let alone wash. I can’t go fishing with my son without thinking of that fact that he spends his nights on a concrete slab in -15°C weather while I’m stretched out on the couch in our living room. I can’t go shopping for food without thinking that for many women in other parts of the world, going for food and firewood can lead to rape, murder or enslavement.

Most of all, I can’t fall back on the old excuse of “where’s nothing” I’ve done about it, that it’s carried out by scoundrels in other lands, far away. You and I, who live under the same bridge at the top of my street is back again this winter, and I can’t pretend I don’t see him anymore. It’s impossible for me to square the fact that he spends his nights on a concrete slab in -15°C weather while I’m stretched out on the couch in my living room. I can’t go shopping for food without thinking that for many women in other parts of the world, going for food and firewood can lead to rape, murder or enslavement.

I know, I live in a fair world. I’ve used that excuse a thousand times. I’ve also profited by it. But God, through the hidden face and hunched frame of the man under that bridge, has kept this fact that just can’t just go out anymore. I have to give back. I have to respond.

I’m not sure why, but Dr. Stephen Schapper said at Synod. He quoted from the Catholic eco-theologian Thomas Berry: “We did not ask to be here. We did not ask to be born.” God says: “You are going anyway.” We are not asked whether we wish to live at this particular moment in time, we are here, the inseparable is before us.”
Changing times, changing questions

The Ontario Human Rights Commission is updating its policy on creed and the accommodation of religious practices, and is holding a number of consultations with the public over the next few years. It held its first consultation in Toronto on Jan. 11-12. Barbara Hall, a former mayor of Toronto, gave this address at the beginning of the consultation.

BY BARBARA HALL

In the last few years I've been at the Commission, people have said to me, “You know, religion has never been an issue in Canada until this point.” Well, I’d say to them then, and I say to you tonight, that in the 50 years that there has been a Human Rights Commission, creed has been an issue.

This was brought home to me very clearly last summer when I was having a conversation with a woman who had been a student of mine years ago. She was very hot, muggy Toronto day and I said, “Do you mean you can’t swim?” We used to go to “the Waeg,” the name of a recreation club in downtown Toronto. We know that’s absurd, but for a long time that’s what was presented to us. The heart of the spiritual revolution in indigenous communities has been the accommodation of religious practices, and the policies that we are moving to update in this process have been affected by things that have been happening over the last few years—the bombing of the World Trade Centre, for example, and the change in the number of cases that came to the Human Rights Commission related to that, and the discrimination and stereotypes that flowed from that.

There are many, many issues, and it really goes back to this: what exactly is creed? The Human Rights Code talks about it, but in our current policy, developed 15 years ago, we interpret creed to mean religious creed or religion. Under this policy, we see religion as a professed belief in a God or gods or single supreme being or deity is not required, so creed under the policy can include non-deistic bodies of faith such as the spiritual faith—the practices of First Nations, Inuit and Metis cultures, for example. Again, if we want to ensure that paganism or humanism should be included as a creed, and there are cases today before not just the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal but other tribunals across the country asking those kinds of questions.

So we have had changing times and changing questions. The answers to those questions indicate the decisions of the courts and tribunals need to be looked at and the policy needs to be updated. We regularly get questions from people, questions you hear when you pick up the newspaper or turn on the radio or TV. One of the things we know is that many people have addressed these questions in a good way, so there are many best practices out there, things that aren’t shared, so as issues come up, people aren’t aware of how to deal with them. What obligations do employees have to accommodate religious holidays for non-Christian staff? What obligations do hospitals or jails or universities have in meeting various needs? There’s a myriad of legitimate issues that people want responses to.

We talk about people seeking accommodation for creeds, but there are other people who want to be free of other people’s religion or creed. What about that in the workplace? How much can co-workers talk about their religion before it violates other people’s rights? What about a police officer who wants to be allowed not to carry a weapon based on religious beliefs around pacifism? What about religious prayers being held in public schools during school hours?

People are being awakened to a new day

Bishop Mark MacDonald, the Anglican Church of Canada’s national indigenous bishop, attended the diocese’s Synod last November and was asked to reflect on his experience there. This is an excerpt of his comments.

BY BISHOP MARK MACDONALD

Since I’m the first national indigenous bishop, people ask me how it’s going. My first answer is, “Better than I deserve!” The second answer I give is, it’s going a lot quicker than I thought it would. I thought I would spend the rest of my career explaining concepts to people that they didn’t really understand. But I’m finding that a lot of people understand those concepts and that we, as a church, are ready to move into a new decade much more quickly than I anticipated.

When I became the national indigenous bishop, I realized that there was a kind of indigenous fatigue in the church, that people were tired of hearing from us. The most common comment I hear from people after I speak is, “Gee, that was great, I liked that. I was expecting something really bad.” What they’re expecting is that I will make them feel guilty and helpless. But the fact is, there is a lot of good news.

People are being awakened to a new day in the partnership between indigenous peoples and the rest of Canada. Some things happened here at this Synod that has been happening elsewhere in the past few months: all kinds of people have been coming to me and asking about partnerships, particularly on issues of water and poverty in aboriginal communities across Canada. It’s really incredible. All of a sudden I’ve had over 30 churches from Manitoba, 15 in Ontario, 30 from Monctreal to Winnipeg contact me, asking how they can become involved. Their questions indicate that we have reached a level of maturity in our understanding of aboriginal issues that is unique and new, and that gives me great hope.

Today in indigenous communities, Matthew 18:20 is the most important verse in the Bible, where Jesus says, “Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of you. It is the most important verse because indigenous communities have been told for hundreds of years that...
God wins, and God is with us

The following is an edited version of Archbishop Colin Johnson’s New Year’s Day sermon at St. James Cathedral.

WE come to the year of our Lord 2012 to give thanks to Almighty God for the blessings that we have received, to receive consolation in our sorrows, to ask forgiveness for our failures, and to ask God’s blessing for the year that has just begun.

New Year’s is a time of resolutions. Bishop Ann Tottenham, whenever she did something she regretted, would say, “Next year, I promise to be a better person!”

On New Year’s, we look forward and back. We make beginnings and endings.

The first reading is an apocalyptic reading (Revelation 19:11-16). It’s about endings, last times. The Book of Revelation was written in a period of great crisis in the church. The people were enduring great persecution. They were in doubt about the way forward and how to remain faithful. They were edging on despair: St. John the Divine wrote this magnificent piece of dreamlike poetry, this apocalyptic literature, to give them hope. It’s dreamlike, full of imagery that is exaggerated, grotesque, evocative, symbolic, and notoriously difficult to interpret.

There is a story of a brush, young seminarian who was working in a hospice for the homeless. He saw a man, weathered, aged and decrepit, sitting on one of the benches reading a Bible. Going over to him, he asked, “Old man, what are you reading?”

“The Book of Revelation,” said the man.

“Really? Difficult book, that. Do you understand it?”

“You do?” he asked incredulously. “Well, tell me what it means.”

“God wins.”

You see, the man got the essence of the story without getting bogged down in the incidental, without being diverted by all of the distracting imagery. He understood the heart of it—God wins.

On this first day of the year, keep that in mind—God wins. His victory is over all and alone. The promised kingdom of God is realized and consummated in a re-created world made in God’s image.

God changes the situation

If the first reading talks about the end, the second reading (Matthew 1:18-25) talks about the beginning. It tells about Jesus, the one who is called to recognize all the absurdities in the world and to act. It’s not Joseph who acts. It’s not even Mary who acts. It’s God who acts and changes the situation.

A wise monk who talked to us on a retreat once said, “It’s okay to go to sleep. God has the capacity to work with you, and he will work with you even while you’re asleep. In fact, for strong-willed people, that is sometimes the only chance God gets!”

In his sleep, Joseph dreams, and he discovers a completely different resolution. A marriage comes followed by a birth. God acts. It’s not Joseph who acts. It’s not even Mary who acts. It’s God who acts and changes the situation.

A child is born. Emmanuel—“God with us.”

Joseph and Mary joined in saying “yes” to God’s purposes. Not only were they called to recognize all the absurdities in the world and to act, they were called to recognize all the absurdities and to act—except he, Joseph, had a dream that led to exile and then an amazing restoration. Peter had a dream that opened the promise in unimaginable joy.

Do we need a saviour?

But do we need a saviour? Do you and I really need a saviour? It’s quite obvious, when you look around the world, when you witness:

• the poverty, sickness and disease;
• the war and violence;
• the disasters;
• the environment that can’t fix itself.

Clearly, there are situations in which God has to act. Even in this neighbour- hood, there are people on the streets, people who are hungry, homeless, frightened, ill, dying and alone. We see that those people actually need a saviour: But do we? Perhaps we can only recognize our need for a saviour when we quiet down from all the busyness, when we go on retreat, when we withdraw into silence, when we sleep (perchance to dream), when we find that we cannot fix ourselves in spite of all the self-help books. It comes when we recognize that we cannot make our lives any better and realize that the promise “next year I’ll be a better person” doesn’t work unless God is with us, unless God saves us, unless God comes in and changes the situation.

The annual Archbishop’s Levee was held at St. James Cathedral on Jan. 1. Clockwise from above: Occupy Toronto activist Christopher Lambe embraces Dean Douglas Stout in gratitude for the Dean’s and the cathedral’s kindness and support during Occupy St. James Park. The Rev. Robin Peasgood, her husband Steve and their children enjoy the festivities. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Let us dream of a church in which Jesus is with us. Let us dream of a church so evangelical that God wins and that God is with us. Let us dream of a church that affirms life over death as much as life after death, unafraid of change, able to recognize God’s hand in the changing. Let us dream of a church that affirms the beauty of diversity, abhorring the imprisoning of uniformity.

Let us dream of a church without answers but asking the right questions; holding law and grace, freedom and authority, faith and works, together in tension, by the Holy Spirit, pointing to the glorious mystery who is God; a church so deeply rooted in Gospel and tradition that, like a living tree, it can swing in the wind and continually surprise us with new blossoms.

Let us dream of a church so sappy and yeasty that it would really be missed if it no longer was around; where there is a wild sowing of seeds, and much rejoicing when they take root, and little concern over success or even survival.

Let us dream of a church so evangelical that its worship, its quality of caring, its eagerness to reach out to those in need can not be isolated and alone. It’s not Joseph who acts. It’s not even Mary who acts. It’s God who acts and changes the situation.

A Church called to recognize all the absurdities in the world and to act: a Church called to recognize all the absurdities and to act except for Jesus, Joseph. He had a dream that led to exile and then an amazing restoration. Peter had a dream that opened the promise in unimaginable joy. Let us dream of a church so evangelical that its worship, its quality of caring, its eagerness to reach out to those in need can not be isolated and alone.

Let us dream of a church where each congregation is in mission and each Christian is gifted for ministry—a crew on a freighter, not passengers on a luxury liner; peacemakers and healers who abhor violence in all forms, as concerned with societal healing as with individual healing, with justice as with freedom, prophetically confronting the root causes of social, political and economic ills.

Let us dream of a church that is a community under judgment, seeking to live with its own propheticization, and therefore, truly loving what the Lord commands and desiring His promise.

Let us dream of a dream of a people called to recognize all the absurdities in ourselves and in one another, including the absurdity of our own propheticization. Let us dream of a Church called to recognize all the absurdities in the world and to act except for Jesus. He had a dream that led to exile and then an amazing restoration. Peter had a dream that opened the promise in unimaginable joy. Let us dream of a church so evangelical that its worship, its quality of caring, its eagerness to reach out to those in need can not be isolated and alone.

Let us dream of a church that is a community under judgment, seeking to live with its own propheticization, and therefore, truly loving what the Lord commands and desiring His promise.
Christians protest budget cuts

Systemic bias against poor, say advocates

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

TOORONTO - The Anglican Church has vigorously protested the city’s proposed budget cuts, saying that they targeted the most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents. Those cuts related especially to access to food, shelter and transportation.

But there are no association of North-East Toronto, a co-operative fellowship of 34 Christian faith communities, parishes and agencies in the former rectory of St. Matthias, Bellwoods, Toronto. A city agency, it seeks in vulnerable was due to debate the cuts. It said, “As we have read the list of proposed reductions and elimination of services and listened carefully to the explanations offered for them, there appears to be evidence of a systemic bias against the economically disadvantaged and the social services they need.”

The association, which represents more than 10,000 voters, went on to say that the values of love, compassion and commitment toward the poor and oppressed should characterize civil life. “We feel strongly that the service cuts in the proposed budget run counter to those values.”

The association expressed gratitude that 58 nutrition programs for children and adults would be retained, but was concerned that cuts to them were even considered. “We were hoping such cuts would never again be put on the table,” the release said.

The ministerial association’s members are the Rev. Dr. John Stephen son, incumbent of St. Timothy, Ag incourt. He said a particular concern was the immigration of homeless people into Scarborough.

As downtown neighbourhoods become gentrified, he said, Scarborough has witnessed a “dramatic increase” in the number of homeless people who once resided in the area. “We were hoping such cuts would never again be put on the table,” the release said.

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The ministerial association’s members are the Rev. Dr. John Stephen son, incumbent of St. Timothy, Ag incourt. He said a particular concern was the immigration of homeless people into Scarborough. One of the city’s targets for closing down is the emergency refuge. Scarborough, with a population of 685,000, has a budget cuts, saying that they targeted the most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents. Those cuts related especially to access to food, shelter and transportation.

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Lives come into focus

Continued from Page 1

Our fight is still valid

BY REBECCA WILLIAMS

The Anglican Church has been ordaining women for more than 30 years, but that isn’t to say that equality has been reached. The first female bishop was ordained in 1980 and there are still only a handful of women bishops in Canada. The percentage of female clergy in Anglican churches is not reflected in the higher echelons of the church.

A few months ago, Michele Landsberg was a guest speaker in one of my classes at Ryerson University. During the 1970s and 1980s, she wrote a column in both the Toronto Star and the Globe and Mail that featured her feminist views. As part of her lecture, she told the class that feminism isn’t just about equality for women, it’s also important for the rights of the family. She believes that fairness between the sexes will only be reached when childcare becomes affordable. Oftentimes, the high price of childcare leaves women unable to work.

Current statistics show that a higher percentage of university graduates are women. I would like to think that this means that more women will fill upper-level positions. But the only way we’ll reach that equality is if women of my age push for that to happen. If we’re constantly degrading and mocking women who have to work in sex work, it’s completely cyclical.”

The drop-in celebrated its one-year anniversary in December and is seeing more than 40 women each Friday morning. “The women have taken a big responsibility and actually own the group,” says drop-in staff member Alisha Shakes. “In August we were closed and they said: ‘We wanted you guys there, we missed the Friday group.’ And we are getting women from all walks of life. It’s supposed to be for women in the sex trade and women who use drugs, but we have women who come in just because they heard that it’s such a good community.”

“The photographer’s name has been changed to protect her privacy.

Tickets for the Exposure Project’s fundraising event on April 19 are available for $30 at www.allsaintstoronto.com.
LOOKING AHEAD

To submit items for Looking Ahead, email hpaukov@toronto.anglican.ca. The deadline for the March issue is February 1. Parishioners can also promote their events on the diocese’s website Calendar, at www.toronto.anglican.ca.

Worship

FEB. 2 – The Feast of the Purification of Mary, according to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, at St. Thomas, Huron St., in Toronto, at 7 p.m. Periodical choral and instrumental service at 8 p.m. Visit www.stthomas.on.ca.

FEB. 4, 11, 18, 25, MARCH 3, 10 – Services at 7:30 p.m. at The Horseshoe Resort, Saturday evenings, 5-6 p.m., until March 10. These informal services will be held at the Ellamere Chapel at Horseshoe Resort and will be led by the Rev. Nico Montalbetti, incumbent of the Parishes of Craigthurst and Midhurst. All are welcome. Refreshments and fellowship follow the service.

FEB. 11 – St. Simon-the-Apostle, 325 Bloor St. E., Toronto, invites everyone to attend Vespers at 7:30 p.m., featuring John Sheard, pianist, producer, arranger and musical director for CBC’s Vinyl Café. Suggested donations $15/$10 in support of the St. Jamestown Reaching Out Through Music Program. For more information, call 416-923-8714 or visit www.stsimons.ca.

FEB. 22 – Litany by Candlelight at St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Windermer Ave., Toronto, at 6 p.m., with Holy Communion for Ash Wednesday. Followed by light supper at 6:30 p.m. and the service in a Lenten series about The Inner Tradition with the Rev David Burrows, discussing Solomon’s and Herod’s temples at 7 p.m. Contributions appreciated. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit www.stolaves.ca.

FEB. 26 – St. Olave, Swansea, presents a choral evensong for First Sunday in Lent at 4 p.m. with St. Olave’s Choir directed by Rachel Shaw. Followed by refreshments. Afterward, listen to classical and contemporary pieces scored for up to six flutes and played by Toronto’s City Flutes, founded and directed by Lana Choi. Contributions appreciated. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit www.stolaves.ca.

FEB. 29 – St. Olave, Swansea, presents The Inner Tradition, An Even- song for Lent at 6 p.m., with light supper at 6:30 p.m. and an infor-mal discussion from 7 to 7:45 p.m., with the Rev. David Burrows exploring the Body and the Church as the New Temple. Second of five Wednesdays, continues to March 28. Contributions appreciated. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit www.stolaves.ca.

MARCH 2 – Attend a World Day of Prayer celebration, on the theme “Let Justice Prevail.” This year’s celebration focuses on Malaysia. For more information, visit www.wicoc.org. To find a church service in Toronto West, contact Maxine Holden at 416-245-8848; for Toronto East, contact the Rev. Angela Chune at 416-422-0110, ext. 25.

PARISH NEWS

All Saints, Kingsway’s, new bell, which belonged to the disestablished church of St. Jude on Roncesvalles, is carried by the installers.

Bell begins new life

A bell with a history was dedicated at St. Jude’s Anglican Church on Roncesvalles Avenue, which had been disestablished in 1977, with the property sold. For several years, All Saints’ parishioner James Rayner negotiated with the new owner to have the bell donated to All Saints’. When the owner finally agreed, the bell was removed from St. Jude’s tower, but “because of varying needs at All Saints’, it wasn’t until early 2011 that a campaign was started to pay for the installation of the bell,” says Mr. Rayner. The campaign was successful and a memorial plaque now honours those of those who contributed $1,000 to the campaign. “The bell has been restored to its original purpose of calling the faithful to worship, as well as marking weddings and funerals,” says Mr. Rayner. “It is also programmed to chime the hours between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.”

Congregations enjoy joint worship

In the spring of 2011, urgent repairs to the steeple of St. John the Evangelist, Port Hope, forced the cancellation of the mid-week Evangelist. Instead, the people of St. John’s headed to St. Mark, Port Hope, to worship with the congregation there. “The two congregations have very much enjoyed worshipping together and sharing fellowship and refreshments afterwards,” writes Anne Gram, a member of St. Mark’s. “So much so, in fact, that once repairs to St. John’s have been completed, they will continue to worship together on Wednesdays, alternating monthly between the two church buildings.”

Music/Film

MARCH 3 – The second of two evenings in the 9th annual Silent Film Series at St. John, York Mills, 19 Don Ridge Dr., Toronto, at 7:30 p.m. Watch “The Lodger,” a 1927 drama directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with live organ music by accompanist Bill O’Meara. Admission free, donations appreciated for PathWorks. Visit www.stjohnyorkmills.com or call 416-225-6011.

MARCH 6 – Three Cantors at All Saints, Kingsway, at 7:30 p.m. Peter Wall, William Cliff, and David Pickett are Canadian Anglican priests who, with accompanist Maestro Angus Sinclair, sing to benefit the Kids4Peace initiative and the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund. Tickets are $25 in advance, $30 at the door. For more information, contact Sarah Hastie at 416-230-1125, ext. 0.

APRIL 1 – All Saints, Kingsway, presents the Amadeus Choir of Toronto and the All Saints’ Choir, performing the stunning Requiem of Gabriel Fauré, with other works by Parry, Daley, Holst, and Watson Henderson. Lydia Adams, conductor; Shawn Grenke, organist. The concert starts at 4 p.m. Tickets are $25. For more information, contact Sarah Hastie at 416-230-1125, ext. 0.

Christians protest

“Realize that the City of Toronto faces challenges in bal-ancing its budget. However, we al-so believe that the budget must not be balanced at the expense of the poorest among us,” he wrote. Instead, he said, options for in-creasing government revenues are available, and the city should pursue them.

Mr. Stephenson said he and his colleagues in the Ministerial Association of North-East Toronto did not believe the budget cuts were a one-time thing. Further budget cutsbacks are likely to be proposed for the city’s 2013 budget. Thus, Mr. Stephenson and other clergy were convinced they were enter-ing into a multi-year commitment to advocacy. The City Council had already committed to debate the budget cuts on Jan. 17-19.
During winter, a hint of spring

February reminds us that Lent is coming. The word "Lent" refers to the 40-day fast of Jesus in the wilderness after his baptism. It is a time of preparation, fasting, and self-examination in the Christian tradition.

During Lent, believers focus on repentance and spiritual renewal. They often give up something for the duration of Lent as a form of self-discipline and reflection. This practice helps them to grow closer to God and to prepare their hearts for Easter, which celebrates Jesus' resurrection.

In the Anglican Church, Lent is marked by various observances and practices. These may include fasting, prayer, and fasting. During this time, the Lenten cycle of readings is used in the liturgy. The themes of Lent include repentance, suffering, and resurrection.

In the tradition of the Anglican Church, Lent is a time for spiritual renewal and growth. It is a time to reflect on one's relationship with God and to make commitments to living a more Christ-centered life.

Lent is a time for both reflection and action. It is a time to prepare for the celebration of Easter, the day when Jesus rose from the dead. Lent is a time to remember that new life begins with repentance and faith.

Lent is a time to listen to the story of Jesus and to participate in the life of the Church. It is a time to pray, fast, and work towards personal and spiritual growth. Lent is a time to remember the power of God's love and to live it out in the world.

Lent is a time to be reminded of the sayings of St. Francis of Assisi, who said, "Lent is time to reflect on your relationship with Jesus and to make commitments to living a more Christ-centered life."
Christmas ad draws response from community
Local churches, mosque pitch in for meal

BY STAFF

The diocese’s annual Christmas ad, featuring St. Margaret, New Toronto, brought forth a show of generosity from local churches and a mosque. (See ad at right.)

After the ad appeared in the Toronto Star and Metro on Dec. 22, St. Margaret’s received food and financial donations from nearby Anglican, Baptist and Presbyterian churches, plus $500 and lamb meal from the local mosque.

The donations and food came in handy as the church welcomed more than 250 people for its annual Christmas dinner. “It was just handy as the church welcomed everyone was served,” says Ms. Koke. “I have friends in Edmonton who’ve watched. It has a life of its own now.”

The diocese has been publishing ads during Christmas and Easter for the past three years, to invite people to church and to bring the Christian message to people. It plans to publish another ad at Easter. The combined circulation of the Toronto Star and Metro is about 600,000.

The response from community

Local churches, mosque pitch in for meal

The ad included a link to a video about St. Margaret’s. The video has been viewed about 200 times, with many watching it on mobile devices. The video can be seen on the diocese’s YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/toronto.

“People just love that video,” says Ms. Koke. “I have friends in Edmonton who’ve watched. It has a life of its own now.”

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A special service celebrating the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible at the church on Nov. 16, 2011. The Queen, Prince Philip and Prince Charles were present, and Archbishop Rowan Williams was the preacher. Entrants in the competition were asked to select passages from the King James Bible that had not previously been set to music. Mr. Wadsworth chose several sections from the Book of Job. His anthem has been published by Novello, a publisher of sacred music.

The Sower

Chapel in mall helps shoppers

Respite for weary shoppers was available in December in an Advent Christmas Chapel organized by a team of young clergy and seminarians in the former Diocesan Book Room in the Promenade Cathedrale mall, located under Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal. Teams of volunteers kept the chapel open for relaxation for harried shoppers. There were printed devotional guides and information about the Diocese of Montreal and its parishes.

First Inuit woman ordained

On Nov. 13, 2011, the Rev. Sarah Baikie became the first woman of Inuit descent to be ordained in the Anglican diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador. The bishop of the diocese, the Rt. Rev. Cyrus Pitman, ordained Ms. Baikie in the presence of her family and community in her home church of St. Timothy’s in Rigolet, Labrador. Ms. Baikie’s five grand-children, dressed in traditional aboriginal attire, drummed the procession into the church. The Lord’s Prayer was recited in her local dialect of Inuktitut.

Anglican Life

The Anglican Church invites you to join us this Christmas for worship, music, food and fellowship as we celebrate the birth of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The Diocese of Toronto Anglican Church of Canada

Restorations on hold for Quebec churches

Two major reconstruction projects in the Diocese of Quebec are on hold after a shortfall in provincial funding for the restoration of heritage buildings. The diocese asked for more than $160,000 to restore the interior of All Saints’ Chapel, a 19th century chapel adjacent to the bishop’s residence in Quebec City. The chapel has not been used for worship in more than 20 years because of a leaky roof. The plan was to include transforming the interior into a multi-purpose meeting area. For now, the $85,404 grant received will be used to repair the church’s roof, brickwork, windows and exterior. The diocese also had applied for more than $50,000 in heritage grants to restore the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. Diocesan property manager James Sweegy said the diocese will find out in late fall whether these projects will be considered in the next round of funding.

Rupert’s Land News

The Anglican Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada are holding a joint national worship conference June 29 to July 2 in Winnipeg. Speakers include Craig Van Gelder, who writes on the mission- al church and on congregational leadership, and Douglas Cowling, director of music at St. Philip, Rigo- boroke. Entitled “Beyond the Fortress,” the conference will take place at the University of Manitoba.

February 2012