Grant sparks youth program

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Give us your opinion

In this month’s issue is a readership survey for The Anglican and the Anglican Journal. This is a valuable tool that helps us find out who you are and what you want in your diocesan and national newspapers. Please take a few minutes to fill out the survey and return it to us in the pre-paid envelope or go to www.anglicanjournal.com to fill it out online. The survey is located in the middle of the Anglican Journal, which is wrapped around The Anglican. Thank you.

The Editor

Barrington youth program

 Teens head to college

BY STUART MANN

As a young person growing up in the parish of St. John, Elora, the Rev. Matt Adams wasn’t aware of the network of Anglicans and other Christians in the rest of the country and around the world. It wasn’t until he started studying for a Master of Divinity degree at Wycliffe College that he realized how big it was—and how little he knew about it.

“I realized there was a large disconnect between young people in the local parish and the rest of the wider church,” says Mr. Adams, now an assistant curate at St. Paul, Bloor Street. “It was obvious to me that there was a need to connect young people with the wider church.”

In March, Mr. Adams will see his dream become a reality as Wycliffe College hosts young Anglicans from across Ontario who are taking part in a new leadership program called Arise. “It’s our first time doing this and we’re pretty excited,” he says.

The program will see 15 teenagers in grades 11 and 12 stay

Church helps crime victim

Bedside conversation leads to new clothes and a ticket home

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

READERS of the Toronto Star were shocked to read in January about a court case involving a young man who had been kept in a closet by his wife and her lover and tortured over a three-month period. What they didn’t know was the significant role All Saints, King City, played in the man’s life after police found him.

The man, who cannot be named, and his wife lived in a small town in British Columbia. They met a man named John Siscoe at an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. Mr. Siscoe took advantage of the vulnerable couple and subsequently moved into their apartment and began an affair with the wife.

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The man told Mr. Ballard his story, and Mr. Ballard became very upset. When his parish priest, the Rev. Nicola Skinner, came to visit him, he told her about it. She recalls, “Harry said, ‘We’ve got to help him because he’s been through this terrible ordeal and he doesn’t have any help here in Ontario because all his family is in B.C.’”

Ms. Skinner went to talk to the young man and spent the rest of the week going back to the hospital not only to visit Mr. Ballard but to see what could be done to help the man.

She found out that his family in British Columbia was very poor and could not afford to fly to Toronto to see him. And his only possessions were the few clothes he had been wearing when police came to rescue him from the closet.

During that week, Ms. Skinner discovered that the social workers at Sunnybrook were about to release the young man because they had done all they could and his bed was needed. But Ms. Skinner and the police officer in charge of the case thought that was the worst thing that could happen. The young man had no money, nowhere to stay and no winter clothing.

The police officer was especially worried because once on the streets, the man could disappear, and he was the only person who could testify against his wife and Mr. Siscoe.

“His wounds were still oozing,” Ms. Skinner recalls. “I asked how they could put him out on the streets like that and they said it was not their responsibility.”

The police department had no money for this type of emergency aid, so Ms. Skinner went back to her congregation at All Saints and told them the story. Their response was immediate.

“Basically, everybody put their hands in

JOYOUS BEAT

A girl keeps the beat during a musical performance at St. Simon the Apostle, Toronto. For more photos of the event, see page 9. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

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Continued on Page 12
Young leader inspires church
Parish uses Reach grant to start youth program

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

A few years ago, two young people in the congregation at St. Saviour, Orono, expressed deep concern about a problem in the parish. After they had been confirmed, there were no programs to keep them in the church. Sunday School ended for them with confirmation, and after that, the only activity available for teens was assisting in the services.

Unfortunately, the small country parish did not have the money to set up a youth program. And so, when the diocese’s Reach Grants were announced last year, the people at St. Saviour’s saw an opportunity.

They had in their congregation a young woman, Afrika Nieves-Bentley, who had been an outstanding leader in the church. In her teens, she went to Kenya to help build a school. She raised money for the project from the congregation, and gave a presentation when she came back.

“She really became a model for the younger children in the church,” says Stan Squires, a churchwarden. “With the right support, we thought we could create an environment that would produce another Afrika.”

The parish recently put together a proposal for a $4,000 youth program, and Ms. Nieves-Bentley, now in university, wrote a letter of support. She said that she valued the grounding in patience and tolerance that St. Saviour’s gave her. “I am studying human rights,” she wrote, “and I can say that when I am forced to read about the worst abuses that humans commit against each other, a strong faith in God is sometimes all that keeps me going. I would hope that the youth of St. Saviour’s can have the chance to support each other as they build their own faith in God.”

The parish received a Reach Grant of $2,000, with the rest coming from the vestry. With the money, it will establish a youth council and the young people will develop their own program. One of the Sunday School teachers will act as a youth leader, and several young people have already indicated their interest.

“The idea is to develop their own leadership skills,” says Mr. Squires. “It will be their program and we hope they’ll link it back into the church and community.” He stresses that the plan is still at the idea stage, but the aim will be to equip the young people to witness in the local community through leadership training and social activism.

The A nglican

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Justice Camp coming up

BY MURRAY MACADAM

PLAN now to attend the 2012 Justice Camp, taking place in Peterborough Aug. 19-24, hosted by the Diocese of Toronto. Justice Camp is an unforgettable experience, involving active learning through small groups with local justice partners, creative worship and community building. Half of the 190 participants will come from across Canada, and half will be young (16-35). Through experiential learning and training, participants will explore how to integrate justice-making into their lives and the lives of their parishes and their communities. Each participant will work in a small immersion group for three days on a chosen topic, such as political advocacy, violence, sustainable agriculture, poverty and food, the arts and social change, immigrant and refugee concerns, and First Nations issues.

“Justice Camp is an intensive week of learning together about building awareness, moving from mere charity to true justice, grassroots organizing, and building community,” says Elin Goulden, parish outreach facilitator for York-Credit Valley, who attended the 2010 Justice Camp. Since space is limited to 100 people (60 from the Diocese of Toronto), those interested in taking part should apply soon. Already people are applying from across Canada and even India. The camp fee (including food) is only $375. Some bursaries and travel subsidies are available. Students can receive course credit for attending Justice Camp and doing related course work through the Toronto School of Theology. Find out more at www.justicecamp.ca.

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Church runs two campaigns

BY STUART MANN

WITH a month and a half left to go before the end of the Our Faith-Our Hope campaign at St. Margaret’s, Rev. Stephen Pessah says to his wife, “You know, if we make it to 50 per cent or better, I will be ecstatic.”

Mr. Pessah, the incumbent of St. Margaret’s, had every reason to be doubtful about reaching the church’s target of $145,000. The church was running two campaigns at the same time, one for Our Faith-Our Hope and the other to pay down its debt. It was a lot to ask of the congregation.

Within a matter of weeks, however, the church had reached 86 per cent of its goal, and by the end of the campaign it had received pledges totalling $151,450. “We did one heck of a happy dance,” recalls Mr. Pessah. “We were absolutely thrilled. We couldn’t believe it. We’re human and our eyes of faith are somewhat limited, but God was able to do what we couldn’t even imagine was possible.”

St. Margaret’s has had its share of financial challenges over the years. Since the building opened in 1999, the church has struggled to pay off its debt. But with a plan in place to reduce its debt and balance its operating budget, it has turned a corner.

That can-do spirit was one of the major reasons for the success of the Our Faith-Our Hope campaign, says Mr. Pessah. He says the campaign’s executive committee led by example. “They were very positive about it. They recognized that this was something we had to do and they resolved to embrace it and do the very best that they could do.”

He also credits the congregation’s pioneering spirit. St. Margaret’s started as a weekly service in a local school gymnasium. The congregation then moved into a storefront in a plaza and a portable building before building the current church. “The people here like the idea of mission and outreach, which is really the heartbeat of the campaign, and that resonated with them. They didn’t have trouble seeing the value in it.”

The congregation was also motivated by the fact that they could keep 40 per cent of the money they raised. They decided not to use it to pay down the debt. Instead, the money will be spent on enhancing the church’s ministry to youth and young families, for spiritual and congregational growth, and to improve its building.

Mr. Pessah says the Our Faith-Our Hope campaign has even helped with the campaign to reduce the debt. Some people have increased their pre-authorized giving to the church. “For some, it gave them that final push to just get it.”

Program expands horizons

March Break gathering a first

Continued from Page 1

at Wycliffe College during March Break. They will take part in college life, including meeting the professors and eating with the students, taking part in worship services, and learning community- and team-building skills. They will also visit some mission projects in the city.

Although the program will involve spiritual formation and discernment, it’s not just for teens who feel called to ordained ministry, says Mr. Adams. “I think we’ll draw some kids who are concerned about making an ordained ministry, but I hope it will also attract kids who are interested in the arts, business or whatever—young people who know they’re going to live out their faith in whatever context God places them.”

He hopes the program will encourage and equip the youths to be leaders in their home parishes. “I hope they will go back with a renewed sense of vision for how they can be involved in their parish, and that they’re going to be difference-makers and step up into positions of leadership and be the change they want to see within the life of their parish.”

The director of the program is Gayle Doornbos, a Ph.D. student at Wycliffe College who has led a similar program at Calvin College in the United States. In addition to Wycliffe, the program is supported by a number of Anglican churches, including St. Paul’s. The program has received a grant from the Anglican Foundation.

Mr. Adams hopes that if this year’s event is successful, it will include more students in the coming years. “One of the reasons why I’m so passionate about this is because I feel that amidst all the drama and conflict in the church, it’s important that we don’t lose sight of building God’s kingdom and God’s church. That means investing in future leaders and the future of the church by equipping, mentoring and developing young Christians to grow up in the faith and become part of our rich Anglican heritage.”

For more information or to register for Arise, email arise@wycliffe.utoronto.ca or contact Wycliffe College at 416-946-3535.
What’s on your top 10 list?

ARCHBISHOP’S DIARY

BY ARCHBISHOP COLIN JOHNSON

Last March, I received two very significant gifts from a 10-year-old girl who pledged it as a teaching assistant to Mr. Stott at King’s College in London. One was a copy of the New Testament and the other was a subscription to the Anglican. I was excited to receive these gifts and to know that Mr. Stott had been so kind to me.

The New Testament is a book that I have always loved reading. It is a powerful and inspiring story of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. It is also a book that has taught me a great deal about the nature of God and the purpose of our lives. The subscription to the Anglican is a gift that I will cherish forever. It is a reminder of the importance of staying connected to the church and staying informed about the latest news and events.

I am so grateful for these gifts and for the thoughtfulness of the person who gave them to me. I hope that this story will inspire others to give gifts to those who have inspired them. The power of a gift can be immense and can change someone’s life in a positive way.

I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to Mr. Stott for his kindness and to the person who gave me these gifts. I hope that this story will inspire others to give gifts to those who have inspired them. The power of a gift can be immense and can change someone’s life in a positive way.
Telling stories on a winter night

One of the books I read over the Christmas holidays was Tolkien's The Lamp of Aes cir, a Christian Belief by Archbishop Rowan Williams. I had to read it slowly, not just because it was badly written or overly complicated, but because he was dealing with some major issues in a thoughtful way that forced you to sit there and stare off into space to think about what he had written.

Does he know as much about the Bible?" asked my son on one of those occasions. He was sitting across the coffee table from me, deep into the collected stories of the Old Testament. His feet were on the light and the wind was buffeting the house.

He's one of the greatest theologians of all time," I said.

He went and got his children's Bible and sat down beside me. He showed me Samson breaking out of his chains, bringing down the great walls. It was his favourite Biblical character. He liked the part about Samson killing all the Philistines with a donkey's jawbone, and Delilah's trickery, and how he had his eye on the Philistines.

“What's the moral of the story?” I asked.

“You can always trust in God,” he said.

I was impressed by that. I didn't know if that was the correct answer but then I realized it didn't need to be so.

His second favourite character was Moses, and we talked about the importance of the Exodus to the Israelites. We looked at the maps showing where they crossed the desert, their routes marked in red. “He dug through the pages and found the part. His third favourite Biblical character was Solomon.

We marvelled at the size of the Bible and how some people have read it all, every word. “It's full of blood and guts,” I said, referring to the Old Testament, and told him some of the most savage parts. We tried to find them but couldn't manage it, so much so that I can't believe I haven't done this sooner. And, as an inherently non-reserved person with a passion for debating scriptural minutiae, I have no trouble finding something to talk about each day. But then again, I'm still firmly in the fast-paced world of the early Pentateuch (those first five books that set the stage for... well, basically, the rest of the time). We've seen how easy discussion comes when I'm wallowing in Numbers, a book that I have no problem admitting I've never read at all. One of my hopes for the blog has been fulfilled: it has definitely kept me motivated. The blog doesn't exactly have an enormous following at the moment, but enough people drop by and comment, either on the blog or on my self-promoting posts, that I feel a sort of obligation to stick to my original plan—one reading each day, one post each day.

One thing I didn't expect, though, was how many of my friends who normally have nothing to do with the church or the Bible have engaged and encouraged. I know they don't read it every day, and most of them hold very different beliefs, but it's nice for me to hear from a non-Christian friend that they're really enjoying reading it, and that provides another motivation to keep it up. The other benefit to the small reading segments is that they make it a little easier not to get swept up in stories that are already very familiar. It forces a closer reading approach which has already helped me to notice things that 30 years of other reading, Sunday School, the usual seminary and general reading have missed.

C.S. Lewis once wrote an introduction to St. Augustine's On the Incarnation, and in it he encouraged people to go back to the ancient texts, partly because they are important, and partly because they're generally much more interesting and easier to read than later works written about them. It shouldn't have surprised me that this is absolutely the case with the Bible. As a bit of a literature nerd, I'm loving the writing, the narrative craft, the characters and the wonderful plot devices that I've already encountered, and it's just made me even more excited to move through the rest of the year.

One book and 20 days down, 65 and 345 to go.

Ryan Paulsen studied theology at Wycliffe College, Toronto, and currently works as a multimedia journalist at a daily newspaper in Pembroke, Ont. His mother, the Rev. Heather McCance, is the incumbent of St. Andrew, Scarborough.

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One book and 20 days down, 65 and 345 to go.
Respond creatively to change: speaker

BY HENRIETA PAUKOV

I M A G I N A T I O N is a more powerful tool than knowledge or understanding when it comes to being missional, said the Rev. Dave Male in his first address on Feb. 2 at the Vital Church Planting Conference in Toronto. “It seems to me that we need dreamers who do,” he said. “People who don’t just dream and do nothing, but dream and begin to turn them into reality.”

Mr. Male was the keynote speaker at the 8th annual Vital Church Planting Conference, which took place Feb. 2-4 at St. Paul, Bloor Street, and attracted 175 participants from various Christian denominations and from as far away as Fredericton and Barbados. The conference was jointly sponsored by the Diocese of Toronto and the Wycliffe College Institute of Evangelism. Mr. Male is Tutor in Pioneer Mission Training at Ridley Hall and Associate Tutor at Westcott House, both in Cambridge, UK. He is also Fresh Expressions Adviser for the Diocese of Ely. He founded the Net Church, a pioneering fresh expression of church, in Huddersfield.

Christians should use their imagination to respond creatively to the patterns and changes they discern in their communities, engaging in “faithful improvisation,” according to Mr. Male. “We don’t start with a blank piece of paper,” he said. “I am not saying at all we need to clear everything from our tradition and start again. That is not what any of this is about. It is about singing the old lyrics but with a new tune.” It’s not about leaving the tradition, but about “driving to its core.”

The second major shift is a re-imagining of church, pub church, skater church, and Saturday night, helping people come out of the clubs, working with the police and local council, and showing care and love.”

The second major shift is a re-imagining of church that operates on the assumption that people will still come to church and that when they come they will have a positive experience.

• Missional church: a style of church that operates on the assumption that people will not be naturally attracted to church and so the church needs to go where they are. “a realization that church isn’t just about how many people we can get inside the building on Sunday or to various other activities, it’s about asking what it means to be a follower of Jesus 24/7.” He cited the rise of new monasticism and the rediscovery of the Wesleyan class-meeting system as examples of this third shift.

In a group discussion about the three shifts, the Rev. Beth Benson, incumbent of St. Cuthbert, Leaside, said that she sees missional re-engagement with society as a “recovery, not as a new, latest gimmick or idea. It’s actually a recovery of a lost identity, so in a way it’s like going home. But I think we have a lot to do in our communities.” Part of that work, she suggested, was to “turn the hearts of the existing congregation, become a new community of faith.”

One of the participants at the Vital Church Planting Conference is available at http://davemale.typepad.com/churchunplugged.

The Rev. Dave Male tells participants at the Vital Church Planting Conference that fresh expressions of church are ‘about singing the old lyrics but with a new tune.’ PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUGGARD

Christ saying: “Yes, that’s actually who we’ve always been.”

The Rev. Murray Henderson, incumbent of Christ Church St. James in Etobicoke, agreed that the participation of both clergy and lay people is important in helping a congregation become mission-oriented. “I think a fair number of lay people realize that something like this has to happen,” he said. “What I would try to do in terms of action is have this conversation with more and more people within the parish. We need to make this a commonplace discussion, and out of that can come the unpredictable ideas that the Holy Spirit will give us.”

The PowerPoint slides from Mr. Male’s presentations at the Vital Church Planting Conference are available at http://davemale.typepad.com/churchunplugged.

YOU may have noticed phrases on these pages like “attractive church” or “mixed economy church.” What exactly do these terms mean? Here’s a primer on missional lingo.

• Missional church: a style of church that operates on the assumption that people will still come to church and that when they come they will have a positive experience.

• Fresh expression of church: A fresh expression of church is a form of church for our changing culture established primarily for the benefit of people who are not being reached by traditional forms of church. It will come into being through the principles of listening, service, incarnational mission and making disciples. It will have the potential to become a mature expression of church shaped by the Gospel and the enduring marks of the church (one, holy, catholic and apostolic) and for its cultural context.

• Mixed economy church: is where fresh expressions of church and inherited or traditional churches exist alongside one another within the same denomination in relationships of mutual respect and support.

• Every parish mission-shaped: all parishes are shaped for and by the missio dei. Mission is not simply what “some parishes do.” Regardless of liturgical, theological or historical background, all parishes are called to be mission-shaped.
Couple serves with neighbours

Joining in can lead to opportunities

BY STUART MANN

In 1999, Jon Osmond started a church in Mississauga. He took the conventional route: he got a group of people together, came up with a plan and launched a worshipping community. Ten years later, Mr. Osmond and his wife left the church and moved to downtown Toronto, a totally different context that required a different approach. They hope to start another church, but this time they’re going about it differently.

“We’ve become part of the humanity of the neighbourhood and taken on the flesh of the neighbourhood,” he says. “We’ve listened and learned and gone with a humble approach. We haven’t arrived and said, ‘Hey, we’re putting our flag in the ground here and we’re going to plant a church here and tell you the programs we’re going to run for you.’”

Instead, Mr. Osmond led a workshop at the Vital Church Planting Conference. One of the first things Mr. Osmond and his wife did was join the neighbourhood association. “Instead of coming to them and saying ‘We’ve got all the answers to your problems,’ we’ve actually served with them. It usually means working for the betterment of the neighbourhood or some other function that will bring the community together. So my wife and I have just rolled up our sleeves and done everything from shovelling manure to arranging the pumpkins for the community pumpkin patch.”

He says the key thing is that they’re going to the neighbours rather than waiting for the neighbours to come to them. That has opened up some opportunities. “I’ve come as a servant but have been given opportunities to lead,” he says.

For example, some people in the neighbourhood wanted to have a carol sing. They came from different faiths and no faith. An email went around the neighbourhood association, asking for volunteers. Mr. Osmond went to a planning committee, and when the people found out he was a pastor, they asked him to lead the carol sing.

“The learning is, I didn’t go to the neighbourhood association with the idea to do a carol sing. Instead, I listened and entered in, and the carol sing emerged beautifully out of that. Singing Joy to the World and Silent Night with people up and down the street was incredible.”

He says serving doesn’t have to be complicated or involve a lot of time or effort. In fact, he says the simplest acts of service, such as inviting someone over to your house for a meal, can be the most powerful. “I don’t think we should ever underestimate the power of hospitality and serving. You can see that in Jesus’ life. He shared food and entered people’s homes. Everything he did was serving.”

He quotes from the theologian Henri Nouwen: “I wonder more and more if the first thing I should do is to know people by name and eat and drink with them and listen to their stories and tell my own story and let them know with words, handshakes and hugs that you do not simply like them but truly love them.”

He says that’s good advice. “I’ve seen that happen over and over again in our neighbourhood just by extending hospitality and friendship, amazing relationships have opened up conversations.”

He says, however, that followers of Jesus have to go beyond simple acts of kindness. “We’re finding out what God is doing and joining in—that’s what missional listening is about.”

“Finding out what God is doing and joining in—that’s what missional listening is about.”

He adds, “To what extent are we Jesus-shaped? Or are we being shaped by other forces? It’s not about being shaped by the culture and a fresh engagement with the future? We can listen and re-examine what our core task is.”
Discipleship takes faith to next level

Lives transformed ‘from inside out’

BY STUART MANN

A few years ago, the Rev. Tim Haughton of St. Paul, Bloor Street, travelled to England to research fresh expressions of church, with the view to starting one in his parish. While he was there, he saw groups of people coming together in new forms of church. But something was troubling him.

“The question that came up time and time again was, ‘Great, you’ve got 30 to 50 people together, but are they becoming disciples? Are they growing in their faith? Are they impacting the community with the Gospel?’ And more often than not, the answer was ‘Not really.’”

Since then, he has become convinced that making disciples of Jesus Christ is essential to any fresh expression of church—or established church, for that matter. “If you’re just looking for people, buy a keg of beer and a lot of people will show up,” he says. “But if you’re looking for a transformation of the heart, you’ve got to focus people towards Jesus, towards what he has done for us, towards the Gospel.”

He believes that fostering one-to-one discipleship is the most effective way to do that. He’s been doing that at St. Paul’s for the past four years. “It’s exhausting,” he says. “God just gets a hold of their hearts and the sky’s the limit,” he says.

He lets the person decide what they want to read, but more often than not they want him to decide. “Because most people are on the cusp of conversion, newly converted or are coming back to church, I start with the Gospel of Matthew, as I know that one the best. We go through each passage and I ask ‘What challenges you? What hits your heart?’ That begins the conversation.”

He says one-to-one discipleship can often be more powerful than group discipleship. “It means you can address their specific needs and questions, foster their specific gifts, and then send them out to put those gifts into practice.”

He has discipled about 35 people over the years, and many of them have gone on to disciple others. One man has discipled 25 people. A woman converted to Christianity and has gone on to become an evangelist.

He invites people to discipleship who seem to want to take their faith deeper, or who are potential leaders in the church who just need a nudge in the right direction. Most people are keen to take part in the process. “More often than not, people say to me, ‘This is exactly what I want. I’ve been praying about going deeper into my faith and understanding.’”

He says the sessions aren’t structured, and he goes into the process with an open mind. “I go in with the mindset that God is already at work in this person’s life even before we begin the conversation. I ask some questions, trying to figure out what, spiritually, has brought this person to this part of his or her life.”

He says one-to-one discipleship is called to lay down our lives for people. Jesus, wherever you go, will follow. Following Jesus into our neighbour-hoods requires us to go beyond shovelling the snow off the sidewalk, to places where we struggle.”

He admits it’s not an easy task, especially when the acts of service seem insignificant or even pointless. “Sometimes we wonder, ‘Will these small acts of serving actually do anything?’ But the resurrection tells us that new creation is launched in Jesus and every act that we do is part of that larger picture. We have to tell ourselves that The kingdom is happening, though sometimes it’s hidden, and we have to participate in it.”

This kind of commitment to service is only possible by having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, he says. “Without a deep transformative experience with the risen Christ through the Holy Spirit, individually and as a team, it’ll be difficult to move past being nice to really radical acts of service. Even in the early church, some Christians stayed in cities where there was sickness to help, not because they were committed to a program, but because they were deeply rooted in Jesus and the call to compassion and service.”

He adds, “Jesus doesn’t go out and say, ‘This is how it’s done, come to me.’ He says, ‘God’s kingdom is coming, take up your cross and follow me.’ This isn’t just another random-act-of-kindness project, it’s a deep devotion to Jesus.”
**ANGELIC**

Young people in the Reaching Out Through Music program perform at St. Simon the Apostle, Toronto, on Jan. 26. The music program, originally an outreach project of the church, provides singing and music lessons to children who live in nearby St. James town, one of Toronto’s most densely populated and ethnically diverse communities. The young musicians, trained by skilled teachers, have given performances in homeless shelters and seniors’ homes and at community centers. This was the first time they played their instruments in public. **PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON**

**CANADA BRIEFS**

**Bishop wants immigration bill withdrawn**

Bishop Michael Bird of the Diocese of Niagara has asked the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration, and Multiculturalism, Jason Kenney, to withdraw the proposed Bill C-4: Preventing Human Smugglers from Abusing Canada’s Immigration System Act.

**While the bishop thanked the federal government for its funding of The Primacy’s World Relief and Development Fund’s 50th Anniversary sponsorship initiative, which helped two churches in the diocese sponsor a refugee family from Iraq, he outlined his concern about Bill C-4. “This legislation will punish the refugees whom we—as Canadian and international citizens—have pledged to protect and to give a signal of compassion and hospitality.”**

**Women gather for ecumenical retreat**

Twenty-two women from Anglican, Lutheran, Roman Catholic and United Church ministries in the Regina area gathered at St. Michael’s Retreat Centre in early December. They reflected on the unique ways that women experience and handle the stresses and strains in ministry. Inspired by a similar event held annually in Saskatoon, the Rev. Trish McCarthy, an Anglican, suggested holding the St. Michael’s retreat. “It was wonderful to be with women of the Christian faith and to reflect on the Advent theme together. It was powerful,” she said.

**New Diocesan Centre dedicated**

More than 80 people gathered for an open house and dedication of the Diocese of Kootenay’s new Diocesan Centre above St. Aidan’s Church in Kelowna, B.C. The name was changed from Synod Office to Diocesan Centre to signal a shift in the understanding of its function—from being an office primarily for the bishop and staff to a gathering place for members of the diocesan family. While there are still offices, the building also has a chapel, archive space, meeting room and common area with WiFi Internet access. It also has a centre for lay and clergy education. Bishop John Privett announced that final costs were slightly below what was estimated. The centre was funded by the sale of other properties, including St. John, Hoodley, All Saints’, Chase, and St. Andrew, Willow Point.

**Historic chapel rededicated**

St. Anne’s Chapel of Ease in downtown Fredericton was rededicated last fall after a major renovation. Regarded as the finest Gothic Revival church of its size and kind in North America, it has been designated a national historic site. As such, it received a $425,000 restoration grant from the National Historic Sites of Canada cost-sharing program. A parish fundraising campaign raised matching funds. Until St. Anne’s was built, those who wished to sit in a pew in church in Fredericton had to rent one. When Bishop John Meadley, the first bishop of the diocese, arrived in Fredericton from England in 1845, he asked architect Frank Willis to “provide a place of worship with free seats for the poor.”

**Women celebrate ordination milestone**

Late last fall, 42 women in the ministry from 14 different dioceses gathered in Lunenburg, N.S. to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the ordination of women to the priesthood. The event was shared between the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, which both began ordaining women on Nov. 30, 1976. Delegates renewed their ordination vows. Laura McCue performed the song “We Are Meant to Shine,” which she had been commissioned to write for the occasion. The 40th anniversary celebration will be in the Diocese of Huron in 2016. **The Diocesan Times**

**Rainbow Kitchen finds a new home**

The Rainbow Kitchen, which has been serving meals five days a week for 10 years to people in need from St. Saviour, Esquimalt, B.C., has found a new home. It will be moving to the Esquimalt United Church. More than 125 meals per day were being served before the church property was sold. A $20,000 donation from the Victoria Rotary Club will assist with renovation costs before the kitchen reopens. **The Diocesan Post**

**Prairie paper turns 40**

The Saskatchewan Anglican, the newspaper that reports on news in the dioceses of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon and Qu’Appelle, celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. **Saskatchewan Anglican**

**Foundation helps kids in Canada**

The Anglican Foundation has launched a trust fund called “Kids Helping Kids.” Donations will be used to help children and teenagers in need in Canada. “One in seven children in Canada live in poverty and hundreds will never have the chance to thrive or contribute because of poverty and social deprivation,” says the Rev. Canon Judy Rois, executive director of the Anglican Foundation. For a $30 donation, donors will receive a stuffed “Hope Bear” as a reminder that the Foundation cares about kids in Canada, she says. **The Anglican Foundation**
Worship  
MARCH 2 – Attend a World Day of Prayer celebration, on the theme “Let Justice Prevail.” The celebration focuses on Malaysia. For more information, visit the music page of the church’s website or call 416-769-5686 or visit www.stpauls-lindsay.ca.  
MARCH 10 – All Saints’ Worship Services at Horseshoe Resort, Saturday evenings, 5:30 p.m., until March 10. These informal services will be held at the Ellsmere Chapel at Horseshoe Resort and will be led by the Rev. Nico Malabetti, incumbent of the Parish of Craighurst and Midhurst. Refreshments and fellowship follow the service. All are welcome.  
MARCH 11, 21 – Jazz Vespers at Christ Church Deer Park, 1570 Yonge St., Toronto, at 4:30 p.m. Scripture reading, prayers and a brief reflection. March 11, Pjt. Peter from Poetry in Motion to Charlie Christian with Rob Pitch & Lorne Lofsky (guitar duo). Call 416-222-5211 or visit www.christchurchdeerpark.org.  
Social  
APRIL 9, 14, 20 & 21 – Lunchtime Chamber Music, Barrie. For more information, visit www.stthomastohon.org.  
APRIL 20 & 21 – Join St. Theodore Church, Deer Park, 1570 Yonge St., Toronto for a unique dining experience in a medieaval setting reminiscent of a monastic refectory. Dinner includes salad, fresh rolls, New York Strip steak or chicken cooked over an open hearth, potato, apple pie and apple wine, all for $35. Seating available Friday night, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. and Saturday night, 5 p.m. – 10 p.m. For reservations, call 416-222-6198 or email monksellers@hotmail.com.  
Educational  
FEB., 23 – MARCH 28 – All are invited to St. Olave’s Lenten Series entitled The Inner Tradition, an exploration of small group crafts, an “art” gallery, odd’s ends and small electrical goods. Free games for kids and an end of series raffle. For more information, contact 416-769-5686 or visit www.stolaves.ca.  
FEB., 22 – MARCH 21 – Lenten Lecture Series at St. Thomas, Huron Street, and Poculi Ludique (guitar duo) for kids on the green. Call 416-485-1938 or www.stpauls-lindsay.ca.  
Music/Film/Theatre  
MARCH 1, 8, 15 & 22, 2012 – St. Philip’s Church, Deer Park, 1570 Yonge St., Toronto. For more information, visit the music page of the church’s website or call 416-485-0329 or visit www.stethistlelea-side.com.

Time capsule brings back the past

The contents included a copy of the Toronto Daily Star dated May 23, 1911, copies of the Toronto Telegram and the Globe and Mail, a postcard of St. Philip’s, a list of benefactors in a sealed envelope, an invitation to the laying of the time capsule, and a collection of coins, including a 50 cent piece. There were also several photos of the tent that the congregation worshipped in before construction of the new building. "Interesting what people chose to be remembered today," says Ms. Creighton. "These photos told the story from Spadina Avenue through to the tent church, to the new building." The nucleus of the congregation were families that moved from the old St. Philip’s on Spadina Avenue and started a little mission in a tent in 1942 on the site where would be the new church. The contents of the time capsule will be housed at the Diocesan Archives and made available as part of the historical record of St. Philip’s, says Mary-Anne Nicholls, the diocesan archivist.
### Anglican Classifieds

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#### Creation myths help us understand God

The word “Bible” comes from the Greek words “ta biblia,” meaning “the books.” The Hebrews who have made the word singular, this describes the Bible very well. It is a library of books, originally written on scrolls over a long period of time, for a variety of different circumstances and using several kinds of genres and the genre used for each story. These stories have been edited and copied over many centuries and most are originally from an oral tradition.

When we look at the Old Testament, we see that the writings cover almost a thousand years. The oldest recorded stories were probably written around 1,000 BCE. As Christians, our roots are in the Old Testament, and we need to study and understand this important part of our heritage.

The first five books of the Old Testament or the Hebrew Bible are called the Torah, or the first five books. For the Hebrews, this is the most important part of their Bible. The first 11 chapters of Genesis (the first book in the Torah) were written in the primeval myth. The compilers of the Hebrew Bible were probably the Jewish priests. They were the final editors of the Torah, working during the Babylonian captivity, sometime between 597 and 539 BCE. They included two creation myths in the Torah. Genesis 1:1-2:3 is the most recent one written. It closely resembles an ancient Babylonian creation story. However, the Hebrew writers gave this story an entirely new meaning by understanding God. For the Jews, there was only one God. They believed in one God in the midst of all the gods. Many of the gods of these ancient people were related to nature. In Genesis 1, the God of the Jews created the sun, the moon, the stars, the trees, the rivers and everything in nature. Their God was over the order of nature and created it.

The Hebrew people believed that God was all-powerful. Creation came about as God said, “Let there be…” He spoke this truth about God. The Bible does not attempt to prove the existence of God. The writers assumed that He is and that He has always been. He is almighty, eternal, and in charge of all creation. In the second creation story, God creates Adam out of the dust and involves on earth. He walks in the Garden. He forms Adam out of the dust. Adam is not a proper name. It is Hebrew for “for the earth,” or “earthly.” God made Adam and Eve of Adam’s rib. (Notice, it was from a rib, this is why God suggested that woman was made to walk alongside of man, not be dominated by him.) This second account is probably the earlier one written. It is composed sometime around 950 BCE. It is the work of the “J” source, or the group of writers who used the name of God for the name of God.

The Bible is not a book of science. It is a book of stories told over the centuries to help us understand the role of God in our world and in our lives. Scientists tell us that the universe as we know it probably came into being about 13.7 billion years ago by a massive explosion of energy, and our place in this world is absolutely insignificant. Indeed, the Bible is about human beings and how we may continue to seek God in our world and how we may continue to lead us through the power of his Holy Spirit.

The stories are beautiful and powerful stories to help us understand who God is in our lives and how we may continue to develop our relationship with Him. There are many profound truths to be found in these words if we will take the time to dialogue with them. We have much to learn from the Old Testament. Don’t neglect these stories. They are important to our faith journey.

The Rev. Canon Don Beatty is an honourary assistant at St. Luke, Dixie South, Mississauga.
Man overwhelmed by kindness

As well as helping the poor, the Bible calls Christians to advocate for policy changes. In Proverbs we are told: “Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Defend the rights of the poor and needy” (13:8-9). The last social justice and advocacy survey in 2004 reflected that Anglicans were readily mobilized around serving community needs, but very little was being done in the area of advocacy. The latest survey, however, shows a new, exciting trend. Anglicans are starting to broaden their focus from providing for the poor and marginalized to include advocating for policy changes to improve society. From petitioning the federal government to implement the United Nations’ Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, to opposing hospital closures, to fighting cuts to affordable housing and more, Anglicans across the diocese are adding their voices to the call for more equitable policies to improve the lives of those living on the fringe. This combination of community outreach programs and advocating for policy changes gives Anglicans the opportunity to speak credibly on social justice issues and strengthens our work as Christians to influence the lives of those in need. Together, we are building the Kingdom of God. 

Leah Watkiss is the Social Justice Intern for the Diocese of Toronto. To learn more about the social justice and advocacy work at the diocese and see how you can get involved, visit www.toronto.anglican.ca/sjac.