Care for the elderly

What do you want for Christmas? For weeks leading up to the festive day, that question will be asked repeatedly. Wide-eyed children will offer up their special lists, teens will drop major clues, and adults will try not to look too eager. Some of us will fall back on that frustrating line, “Oh, nothing.”

What do I want for Christmas? I want high-quality, accessible medical care for seniors who have significant challenges and are uncooperative.

Let me explain. In the 1960s, a woman in Chicago named Elizabeth Kübler-Ross observed in the hospital where she worked that doctors were unwilling or unable to provide much medical support to patients who were terminally ill. Medicine is to cure and save lives, she reasoned, and doctors did not know what to do when someone was dying. She saw doctors basically abandoning their patients as they died. Death was in some way an affront to their profession. From her research came a new way to understand dying, death and the grieving process. It has greatly enriched the medical profession and has made an enormous difference in our approach to, and care for, the dying.

I think we need the same ground-breaking work in the field of gerontology. There are a number of elderly people who have lost the ability to name what is happening inside their bodies. Through dementia, they are taken on scary interior journeys which leave them anxious, frightened and void of the usual social skills. They may try to hit or bite or lash out in ways they never would have dreamed of if they had been in their “right mind.” They are incapable of monitoring their own medication and require constant care from others to get through the day. I have the deepest respect for those who are on the front lines of care in nursing homes and deal with human beings who are in a vulnerable and needy state.

I think physicians shy away from dealing with these problems because they are uncertain of what to do. My observation is that this is a specialized, time-consuming area of medicine that runs counter to the quick, in-and-out style of most medical clinics.

We have learned how to deal with babies who show distress in the same way. They cannot verbalize their pain by any means other than screaming. They can’t monitor their medications or care for themselves. Pediatrics is a specialized field of medicine, highly regarded and celebrated. I dare say that specialized medicine for elderly people is not as celebrated. It has not been how to floss or brush the person’s teeth for fear of being attacked? How are cavities to be filled or dental work accomplished with uncooperative patients? Where are the doctors who are willing to do rounds in nursing homes or retirement centers? Is gerontology a highly respected and celebrated field of study?

To understand the enormous challenges involved, try this: A doctor will not come to the patient’s residence, so you must dress the patient to go outside in the winter. He or she is often uncooperative and confined to a wheelchair. Well in advance of this, you must arrange transportation to the doctor’s office, and then wait in a poorly accessible senior citizens’ residence or has an office for those in a wheelchair. What is a senior citizen to do when his or her teeth start falling out from a lack of proper oral care and the staff at the nursing home are unable to figure out how to floss or brush the person’s teeth for fear of being attacked?

FIRST LIGHT

Sharissa Osborne lights the first candle on the Advent Wreath as her friends at St. Margaret-in-the-Pines, West Hill, Scarborough, look on. A candle will be lit each week during Advent, followed by the lighting of the middle candle on Christmas Eve. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Continued on Page 4
Choose traditional or contemporary designs. Each packet contains 10 cards and 10 envelopes.

The cost is $15.00. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of cards will benefit FaithWorks Ministry Partners, providing life-saving support to those in need throughout our Diocese and around the world.

MESSAGE INSIDE EACH CARD:
Lord Jesus,
born in the darkness of a stable
in order to bring light to the world,
be born in our hearts this day.

This Christmas, send a FaithWorks greeting

To place an order, visit www.faithworks.ca or call us at 416-363-6021 ext. 244 or 1-800-668-8932 ext. 244.
The Allocations Committee urges churches to put on their thinking caps

BY STUART MANN

Bishop George Elliott, 63, has announced that he will retire as the area bishop of York-Simcoe at the end of April.

“I initially just going to take a deep breath and relax,” says Bishop Elliott, who has been the area bishop of York-Simcoe for the past 12 years and was a parish priest in the area for 12 years before that.

He says he’s stepping down at the right time and in good health.

“I feel that my gifts have been used. The area pastoral area is in good shape. I’m quite excited about what’s taking place in a number of parishes in the area. I’ve got a good group of clergy, so I’m passing on something that is healthy and vibrant. There is a lot of good work going on.”

After an initial period of rest, he says he’d like to explore new coaching and mentoring of clergy and parishes. One of the things he really enjoyed as a parish priest was having the opportunity to work with curates and students and be able to support and nurture them.

He says the highlight of his episcopacy was visiting different parishes Sunday after Sunday. “I thought that was going to be the part I liked the least. As a bishop, you go to a different church every Sunday, and I wondered how I could connect with people. From my very first Sunday, I couldn’t believe the warmth and welcome that I received.”

Presiding at ordinations and confirmations was also a highlight. “I continue to be excited about folks, all ages, who are coming before me to declare their desire to follow Jesus Christ as their saviour. It’s wonderful to be able to support priests and deacons as they’re ordained into the ministries where God is calling them.”

He adds: “I’m grateful for the privilege I’ve been given by the church to take on this ministry. I leave with a great deal of thankfulness because of what we’ve shared but also because of a sense of hope that whoever follows me will bring his or her gifts, and I’m sure they will continue to grow God’s kingdom.”

Archbishop Colin Johnson says he has “very mixed emotions” about Bishop Elliott’s retirement. “I am delighted for Bishop George and his wife Linda as they begin to embark on a new venture into retirement, when both are in good health and enjoying life to the fullest. I am deeply saddened that the longest-serving bishop in the diocese and the (ecclesiastical) province will be leaving his position. He has been a stalwart servant of Christ, contributing wisdom, energy, pastoral sensitivity and marvellous humour to the life of the diocese. He has been a wonderful friend to me and I will miss the weekly connection with him.”

Bishop Elliott served his curacy at St. Thomas à Beckett, Erin Mills, then became the incumbent at St. John, York Mills, and then was elected bishop in 2000. He and his wife, Linda, plan to live in King City.

The Diocesan Council will make the final decision. Guidelines and grant application forms will be posted on the diocese’s website when they are available. The Anglican will inform readers when this happens.

The funds are ideal for churches that want to change or start a new venture but don’t have the money to make it happen, says Mr. Bickley, who is a churchwarden at St. John, York Mills, and the executive vice president for marketing and business development at Bell Media.

“I am delighted for Bishop George about Bishop Elliott’s retirement. I sympathize with clergy and others in a parish who are trying to bring about change and are meeting resistance. If you’re trying to sell a vision that’s going to require an investment and bringing everyone on board, you’re going to have two obstacles: one is the vision and the other is funding that vision. What is great about the Our Faith-Our Hope money is that we help you with one of those problems. We bring the financial resources. That allows you to say to your parish, ‘Look, I think this is a great idea. Let’s try it.’”

Mr. Bickley points out that the $28 million is for new and innovative work, not to prop up existing church structures and programs. “It’s not for operating costs. It’s mean to ask, ‘How can we re-imagine church?'”

Grants will be given for work in two areas: “Building the Church for Tomorrow” and “Revitalizing Our Inheritance.” The first involves church development, pioneering ministry and communicating in a digital world. The second involves reusing and re-capturing church structures and programs and enabling parishes to become multi-staffed.

The Allocations Committee plans to start accepting grant proposals next spring, so it is urging parishes to put on their thinking caps and to re-imagine some creative ideas. “The key thing we’re looking for is new ideas, especially as they relate to other parishes. We’ll also look at the probability of success and how much the parish is willing to put its own resources into it.”

The diocese will also require an investment and bring resources. That allows you to say to your parish, ‘Look, I think this is a great idea. Let’s try it.’”

Mr. Bickley sees it, the Our Faith-Our Hope fundraising campaign is in addition to the $17 million that will flow back to parishes for other parishes to put on their thinking caps and to re-imagine some church structures and programs. “It’s not for operating costs. It’s meant to ask, ‘How can we re-imagine church?'”

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He says the money can transform the diocese and the parishes. “Three to five years from now, I think you’ll find a revitalized diocese with energy, growth and optimism from re-imagining church. Most importantly, I think lives will be changed by encountering the risen Lord. I can’t imagine anything better than that.”
By Archbishop Terence Finlay

want to take you back to the

continued from Page 1

dimension: 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle. It was said the cold was too much for them, the school was too far away, their parents were not able to bring them back, or they had found a way to escape. What remained was a legacy of pain and loneliness, of parents trying to make sense of what had happened to their children. It was a legacy of trauma and unanswered questions. It was a legacy of the need for truth and reconciliation.

In 1991, the Anglican Church of Canada established the Anglican Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, which provided for financial compensation to those who attended the schools, and additional compensation to those who were abused physically, sexually, culturally, or emotionally. In 2007, a Residential Schools Settlement Agreement was reached by the federal government, the churches, and the Assembly of First Nations. This provided compensation to those who attended the schools, and additional compensation to those who were abused physically, sexually, culturally, or emotionally.

In 2009, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established by the federal government, with the mandate to gather and report on the experiences of those who attended the schools. The commission, led by Justice Murray Sinclair, found that the schools were places of abuse, neglect, and trauma. They were places where children were stripped of their culture and identity, and forced to conform to a Western way of life. The schools were also places where children were punished for speaking their own language, and were denied the opportunity to learn about their own history and culture.

The commission’s report, released in 2015, is a powerful testament to the suffering that took place in the schools. It includes testimony from former students, as well as from parents and other family members. It describes the ways in which the schools were places of trauma and abuse, and the impact that they had on the lives of those who attended.

The report calls for a truth and reconciliation process, with the goal of promoting healing and understanding. It also calls for financial compensation to those who were affected by the schools, and for the establishment of a national memorial to commemorate the lives of those who attended.

The report has been widely praised for its depth and breadth, and has been used as a resource for those who are working towards reconciliation.

I am sorry, more than I can say, that we were not a part of the solution at that time. I am sorry that we did not do more to prevent abuse, and to provide support for survivors. I am sorry that we did not do more to learn from the experiences of those who were affected.

I am sorry that we did not do more to acknowledge the suffering that took place, and to promote healing and understanding.

I am sorry that we did not do more to ensure that the lessons learned from the schools are not repeated in any other context.

I am sorry that we did not do more to promote the values of cultural diversity and respect for all people.

I am sorry that we did not do more to promote the values of education and the importance of learning about one’s own culture and identity.

I am sorry that we did not do more to promote the values of honesty and accountability.

I am sorry that we did not do more to promote the values of compassion and empathy.

I am sorry that we did not do more to promote the values of respect and dignity.

I am sorry that we did not do more to promote the values of love and kindness.

I am sorry that we did not do more to promote the values of forgiveness and reconciliation.

I am sorry that we did not do more to promote the values of justice and equality.

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By Dr. John Bowen

Why I dislike evangelism

Winston Churchill once said that the leader of the opposition was a very boring person—“Well,” said Churchill, “he has a lot to be humble about.” One of the many things I have to be humble about, as a professor of evangelism, is the realization that the apostles had never read a book about evangelism, and a whole generation of evangelists, had never heard a sermon urging them to evangelize, and yet spearheaded the most powerful ecumenical movement the world has ever seen. What inspired them, then, if it wasn’t a book, a course, or a sermon about evangelism? It was the thing from which we get rather ugly word: evangelism: the exegel (in Greek), better known as the “Good News.” The apostles were so delighted with what they had discovered in what we now call Christianity that they could not but share it with spontaneous exuberance. For most Anglicans, the words “de- light” or “sensations” are not what first comes to mind when we think of our faith. Unhallowed spiritual passion is not generally considered a hallmark of Anglican churches. (Ask any congregation that has done a Natural Church Development survey.) Maybe this is one reason why we are so reluctant to engage the “e-word.” The truth is, it’s deliciously ironic, however, in fact that while many Christians still shy away from the idea of evangelism, people in the second act of their Christian story are naturally adopting it. John Bryant, the chief executive officer ofKellogg, has apparently declared himself a “renewal evangelist.” And have you ever heard of Vinton G. Corf? He is the vice president and chief Internet evangelist for Google. Jesse Hirsh, often heard on C.B.C radio commenting on issues of technology, also describes himself as an “Internet evangelist.” We have created Counting Customer Evangelists, published in 2002, explains what is behind this: “When customers are truly thrilled about their experience with your product or service, they become outward-spoken ‘evangelists’ for your company.” This does not seem radical to me. I think I converted into a potent marketing force to grow your universe of customers.” The realization that the evangelical church in the United States is growing has not escaped me, either. The Advent Conspiracy (www.adventconspiracy.org) grew out of a desire to share something I love—God’s Gospel. What is the question? Is that Good News? Any answer to that question has to begin with one short word: God. The Gospel is Good News from God and about God. Christian faith says God loves us. It is his wish to forgive us for messing up this beautiful world. It says God became one of us in a unique way in Jesus Christ, and that in the process, we will find joy. Isn’t that good news? It certainly seems to be exciting people in Nepal. So it’s not really about evangelism. An “e” is an abstract, academic, lifeless kind of thing. That’s why I dislike it. It’s about the evangel— the unlikely, disturbing, and ultimately joyful joy-filled Good News. That’s what excites those who evangelize. That’s what makes them want to tell the news. The question is, I suppose, whether we believe it? This is the first of a three-part series on evangelism by Dr. John Bowen, professor of evangelism and director of Wycliffe College’s Institute of Evangelism.

How will you celebrate?

By the Rev. Heather McCance

When my husband and I were married 20 years ago, we decided to celebrate as simply as possible. We wore a $50 sundress; he, a Guatemalan wedding shirt. The reception was potluck. Friends provided the music in one long jam session. It was wonderful.

Yet what made several of our family and friends uncomfortable was our request that people not give wedding gifts. We didn’t feel we needed anything, and had little interest in trying to put more stuff into an already crowded basement apartment. Many friends were quite happy with this, or donated to one of the charities to which we asked gifts be directed in the name of the occasion. Others, though, were honestly surprised; could we have been ungracious for the generosity of others?

During the Christmas season, many of us try to walk a balance between celebrating and enjoying the riches of the holiday and a desire to resist an increasingly materialistic culture that seems to do its best to turn our most holiest feast days into an orgy of consumerism.

Many of you have taken part in one of the many anti-consumerist Christmas masts, that have sprung up over the past few decades. “Buy Nothing Christmas” (www.buynothingchristmas.org) was started by the Mennonite Church, a group that might teach us about living one’s faith in a way that is different from the world around us. The “Advent Conspiracy” (www.adventconspiracy.org) grew out of the evangelical church in Nepal since 2002, and is the realization that the evangelical church in the United States currently has. (The full story can be read at www.adventconspiracy.org.) Simple but dramatic, isn’t it?

So what’s to love about the Christian faith that might be sufficiently enthusiastic about to want to share it? It’s not our buildings, beautiful though many of them may be. It’s not our calendar, either though they may be. Neither is it even the beauty of our liturgy. All those are actually secondary to the way we behave, as individuals—towards God, as a family and as a church, as a society to—God’s Gospel, the Good News.

So the question is: what is that Good News? Any answer to that question has to begin with one short word: God. The Gospel is Good News from God and about God. Christian faith says God loves us. It is his wish to forgive us for messing up this beautiful world. It says God became one of us in a unique way in Jesus Christ, and that in the process, we will find joy. Isn’t that good news? It certainly seems to be exciting people in Nepal.

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We cannot care for creation alone

BY ELIN GOULDEN

The diocese’s Environmental Working Group, Creation Matters, exists to promote the 9th Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion: “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.” We do so by raising awareness of ecological issues, helping to draw out the theological and spiritual implications of Christian faith for the care of creation, and encouraging individuals and parishes to take practical steps in living more lightly on the earth. We do so by encouraging Anglicans to become involved in environmental advocacy.

Why advocacy? Because while personal change is vital, the care of creation is a task much greater than any of us can accomplish alone. Like it or not, we are all implicated in political and economic systems whose policies have far-reaching consequences for the air we breathe, the water we drink, the earth that provides our food, and our fellow creatures, human and non-human. As citizens of a democracy, we have the right—and the responsibility—to inform ourselves and to speak up about the policies our representatives are pursuing in our name.

Anglicans in our diocese are joining those around the world to advocate on the issue of climate change. Following General Synod resolution A180, our Primate has signed the Canadian Interfaith Call to Action on Climate Change, and churches in our diocese have circulated petitions calling on the federal government to establish fair, ambitious targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases. Anglicans in our diocese have founded climate advocacy groups such as the JustEarth Coalition (a member of the Climate Action Network) and For Our Grandchildren.

One of the biggest obstacles to arresting climate change is, of course, the proposed expansion of the Alberta tar sands. The resulting increase in greenhouse gas emissions will make it impossible for Canada to reach even the federal government’s most modest emission reduction goal. Let alone, the reduction scientists believe is required to avoid irreversible climate change. Expansion of the tar sands would also bring about other adverse impacts. Emission of the tar sands would also bring about other adverse impacts. Expansion of the tar sands would also bring about other adverse impacts. The relationship is clear: people who are intimately involved with.

The Alberta Chipewyan First Nation live directly downstream from the tar sands and are already experiencing the toxic effects of these operations, including deformed fish and abnormally high numbers of rare cancers in their community. They have recently mounted a legal challenge to the proposed expansion, knowing that approval amounts to violating their treaty rights.

First Nations peoples are also facing their own environmental issues, particularly on the Northern Gateway Pipeline, which proposes to bring oil from the tarsands in B.C. coast for export. Concerned about the impact of potential spills from both pipeline and tanker traffic, the Yinka Dene Alliance opposes the building of the pipeline across their territories. Many British Columbians have joined the protest, with thousands railing in front of the provincial legislature and at politicians’ offices this October.

Closer to home, in Melancthon Township, northwest of Toronto, the Highlands company proposes to build a quarry over 2,300 acres in area, to a depth of 200 feet below the water table. The area affected is not only prime agricultural land, producing up to half the potatoes eaten in the GTA, but it is also the headwaters of several river systems that provide drinking water for more than one million Ontarians. The potential impact of the quarry on the sources of local food and water has led the provincial government to require an environmental assessment of the project. Thousands of Ontarians also joined this fall’s Soupstock to protest the quarry.

At our diocese’s recent Outreach Networking Conference, author and environmentalist Alanna Mitchell told participants: “If we cannot care for creation alone, the Yinka Dene Alliance oppose the building of the pipeline across their territories. Many British Columbians have joined the protest, with thousands railing in front of the provincial legislature and at politicians’ offices this October. Closer to home, in Melancthon Township, northwest of Toronto, the Highlands company proposes to build a quarry over 2,300 acres in area, to a depth of 200 feet below the water table. The area affected is not only prime agricultural land, producing up to half the potatoes eaten in the GTA, but it is also the headwaters of several river systems that provide drinking water for more than one million Ontarians. The potential impact of the project. Thousands of Ontarians also joined this fall’s Soupstock to protest the quarry. At our diocese’s recent Out reach Networking Conference, author and environmentalist Alanna Mitchell told partici pants in her Environmental Advocacy workshop that with global awareness and action, there is still hope for change. Scripture tells us to “speak out for those who cannot speak” (Prov. 31:8).

When powerful interests seek to silence the voice of creation and the voices of those who live close to the land, it is time to speak out all the louder. Signing petitions, attending rallies, and contacting politicians all send the message that the integrity of creation is a priority for us, not only Canadians, but also as Christians entrusted with the care of the earth and each other.

Elin Goulden is a member of Creation Matters and is the Parish Outreach Facilitator for the diocese’s Social Justice and Advocacy webpage, www.toronto.anglican.ca/sjac.

Could you tithe your time?

I am very excited and grateful that tithing our money to church and charity is something we are called to do. As a stewardship educator, I have found that one of the quickest ways to limit a conversation on giving is to insist that we give away 10 per cent of all we earn.

With the level of giving close to only 2 per cent of family income in the Anglican Church, you can understand why. If I want to make headway in the conversation, I usually begin by speaking about giving proportionately. Instead of listening to the radio, reading the newspaper, or spending an hour on the internet, let’s reflect on my own circumstances. In a week.

Here’s an interesting idea. What if we encouraged people to tithe their time? In all my conversations and presentations on stewardship, I cannot think of a single occasion when I challenged someone to tithe their time. Yet I know from experience that those parishes that encourage members to involve themselves at a heightened level of ministry and community service experience tremendous levels of financial giving. The relationship is clear: people who are intimately involved with their church are generous, generous, generous.

Regardless of our personal economic situation, we all have the same amount of time. We all have the capacity within our daily routine to dedicate our time to serving God and the people of God in the world.

Here’s the bottom line. How does the average Canadian spend his or her week? Re-listing the same old circumstances, a typical week looks something like this:

• Work—40 hours
• Sleep—49 hours
•食—15 hours
• Travel—15 hours
• Food and church—10 hours
• Exercise and grooming—9 hours
• Total—168 hours in a week

Let’s consider how we might dedicate 16.8 hours in the service of the Lord over the course of a week. Surprisingly, there are many opportunities to weave prayer, reading, service and worship into our weekly schedule. Instead of listening to the radio, choose an inspirational CD. While walking to the office, meditate. Come to church and tithe your time to serve God? How might our relationships be enhanced? How might our Christian journey be more fulfilling? Is there a way to find our time more intentionally to God’s mission, and actually fulfill our baptismal promises.

All too frequently, we think of stewardship as synonymous with the gift of treasure. My phone does not ring because the parish priest is having trouble recruiting choristers but because the call is from the orderly. Most of my time is spent resourceful parishes on how to encourage financial giving that is proportional, generous, consistent and joyful. Without a doubt, this is one of the most key to secure the temporal ministry needs of our churches. However, imagine what our parish experience might be like if everyone in the congregation was encour aged to live this time.

Peter Misiaszek is the diocese’s director of Stewardship Development.

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Your time, compassion and commitment can help make someone’s journey more manageable and meaningful. Call 416-363-9196 x204 for further information. Full training provided.

Volunteer with the Philip Azic Centre www.philipaziccentre.ca wills@philipaziccentre.ca

Please recycle this newspaper.
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We claim that God became Word, and that God can be discerned through words—through human words. Let us consider that focus of life-giving words that is at the heart of scripture. For the reader, scripture is a font of blessing, an overflowing source of trustworthy words and healing visions. The words of scripture give us the ability to move, discern, and find our way in the confusion and wilderness.

But there are formidable obstacles for us post-modern people to grasp this heavenly bread and drink from this fresh spring that scripture offers. There is distance and forgetting. We are no longer sages in the school of divinity, we are people of other eras when the culture, literature and schooling were Christian. We cannot throw ourselves into the scripture and accept it because we don’t know it—the stories, the phrases, the proverbs. The Word is not very near to us anymore.

Another obstacle is how terribly ration-

al, left-brain and linear we are. It is diffi-
cult to relate to scripture because we are all rational—we know too much about evolution and gravity and semicon-
ductors. It is difficult to relate to scripture because we don’t know it—the stories, the phrases, the proverbs. The Word is not very near to us anymore.

But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel. But God’s plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to God’s Israel was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel.
We see the cost of poverty every day

This article was first published by the Canadian Council of Churches on corporate policy, as part of a three-part series on economic disparity and corporate ethics.

BY THE REV. MAGGIE HELWIG

The church is direct ed, in its founding texts, to be concerned about economies, particularly when economic systems operate in ways that distribute resources fairly and care for the weak and the disadvantaged, or whether they cause harm to those in need. The church's concern about poverty occasionally intersects with the tax system and corporate ethics for the time and culture—directions to landowners to leave the edges of their crops unploughed so that the poor and the migrants could gather from them, to pay tithes toward the welfare of the poor, and to forgive debts in a seven-year cycle. Throughout the Old Testament, it is made clear that the moral health of a society is measured by its treatment of the most vulnerable, exiles and widows and orphans.

The New Testament, too, is strikingly forthright about ethics and economics. Mary, upon hearing that her child will be the Messiah, declares that God "has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty." Jesus tells a "rich young man" that he must sell all his possessions and give the money to the poor. The Epistle of James castigates wealthy, and the First Epistle of John tells us that the love of God can only be expressed by serving and giving to those in need. A fundamental metaphor that underlies Christian thinking is that of the body, in which the corporate entities, all members of one body, which is, ultimately, Christ's body—and so, none of us can be whole or healthy or saved alone. We exist in relationship, and can only thrive when all the body's members are well, harm to any member of the body is harm to each one of us, and to Christ's own self. Economic inequality, poverty, homelessness, exclusion—these are wounds on Christ's body, and on our own.

In recent Canadian history, the Anglican Church of Canada has acted out of this belief when, for instance, we were one of the early voices calling for corporate disinvestment from the apartheid regime in South Africa when we played a part in founding the Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility (CCCR) in 1987. The importance of issues relating to poverty and economic inequality, workfare systems with other faith communities, and with secular groups, we have met with MPPs and provincial cabinet ministers on housing policy, fair taxation and social assistance rates. We have submitted a brief to the Social Assistance Review Commission and taken part in Toronto's municipal budget debate.

We have immediate reasons to be concerned about social justice, because our churches see the cost of poverty every day. Men and women come to us for help when they can't think of where else. They come for grocery vouchers or subway tokens, for soap and shampoo, a sandwich or a cup of soup, a pair of mittens in the winter—basic, simple needs. Nearly every parish in Toronto is now involved in providing food for hungry people, whether through foodbanks, community kitchens, corporate partners, as people with whom we pray or to bring food and blankets to the homeless.

Our anecdotal sense that the situation is becoming increasingly serious is borne out by statistical evidence. Income disparity is now growing much more quickly in Canada than in the United States, according to researchers at Byuern University. A report released by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in January 2012 revealed that Canada's top 100 highest paid CEOs now earn 180 times more than the average Canadian. By noontime on Jan. 3, 2012, the first official working day of the year, Canada's top 100 elite had earned $44,396—the salary that an average Canadian worker would earn in a full-time job over the course of a whole year. And, of course, the gap between the elite and those working for minimum wage, or living on social assistance, is far greater. We are increasing ly becoming a society of sharply divided income classes, with fewer and fewer in the middle.

Many minimum-wage workers live well below the poverty line. In 2008, one-third of all Ontario children lived in poverty (as defined by the federal Low Income Cut-Off Before Tax measurement) were in families with full-time, year-round work. Statistics Canada reports that Ontario's poverty rate had risen to 13.1% by 2009, and that poverty increased most sharply among single adults and seniors. All social assistance recipients in Ontario live far below the poverty line.

Economic inequality costs society at large; societies with higher levels of economic inequality pay for it in higher levels of infant mortality, a deterioration in overall health, crime rates, and incarceration—all of which carry heavy costs, both socially and economically. But so too do inequalities that are not because it is in our own interests, but because it is morally and ethically right to do so. For those of us who are Christians, it is also a theological imperative.

So when Occupy came to camp in the yard of St. James Cathedral in Toronto, many of us recognized them as conversation partners, as people with whom we shared common aims and dreams. There were devout Christians who lived in the Occupy camp, and many others who spent days or nights there, came to talk or to pray or to bring food and blankets to the Occupiers.

The most common criticism of Occupy, of course, is that it didn't propose practicable measures to reduce or eliminate the economic inequality it was protesting. This is only partially true. It may be more true to say that there were so many different ideas that none were able to emerge clearly in the public discourse. It is also true that Occupy was about big dreams, great visions. A society in which all are equally valued, in which resources are shared so that no one is disadvantaged, no one hungry or unsheltered, is very far from our grasp right now.

And yet, it is something which we can all have a share in creating. Occupy has, among other things, opened up space to talk about taxation policy, and to question whether our current tax system is in fact working to ensure the health and well-being of all Canadians. Indeed, an OECD report from last year agreed with Occupy on this point, and recommended that the Canadian government consider revising the tax system so that "wealthier individuals" are paying more of their "fair share."

In a recent brief to the Government of Ontario, we suggested a number of incremental steps towards fairness, including indexing social assistance rates to inflation, introducing a housing benefit and increasing the minimum wage, while at the same time bringing in modest increases in personal income tax for those in the highest income brackets, eliminating the tax break on stock options, and freezing corporate income tax.

If corporations were willing to lend their support to such measures, and to express to governments their willingness to behave as responsible parties in society by paying their fair share in taxes, this would be a powerful statement of social solidarity. Corporations should also consider their own pay rates, refrain from paying excessively high salaries to CEOs, and look at what their lowest-paid employees are earning and whether it is possible for them to live a dignified life; they should examine the increasingly common, and damaging, practice of hiring on contract, without benefits or security, for far too many, mostly low-paid, positions.

These are not big dreams; these measures will not take us all the way towards a society of justice and compassion. But they are a beginning at least, and it is our hope that we can all work together to create a society in which, as our scriptures insist, the well-being of those now poor and vulnerable is made the measure of our collective health.

The Rev. Maggie Helwig is the chair of the Diocese of Toronto's Social Justice and Advocacy Committee and the assistant curate of St. Timothy's, North Toronto.
Churches urged to collaborate

BY BOB BETTSON

“Terry McCullum, the chief executive officer of LOFT Community Services, challenged 140 people from parishes across the diocese to show leadership and get their churches to work collaboratively to address social justice issues in their communities.”

Mr. McCullum was speaking at the diocese’s Outreach Networking Conference, held at Holy Trinity School, Richmond Hill, on Oct. 29.

LOFT was an Anglican outreach ministry that began in the 1960s with two houses for young men and women with mental health and addiction issues. It was called Anglican Houses and was an initiative of the diocese. Today, it is one of the largest providers of assisted housing in the province, with more than 1,000 units.

Mr. McCullum said the church needs to show leadership. “Don’t allow us to feel we are individuals. Collaborate.”

A social worker who started with Anglican Houses in the 1980s, he said LOFT has always initially embraced by the community, he said, such as a housing project for homeless people with mental health challenges and AIDS.

Murray MacAdam, the diocese’s Social Justice and Advocacy consultant, said the Outreach Networking Conference, now in its 11th year, is one of the only opportunities for people working on justice issues to get together.

“Frankly, outreach and advocacy can be a tough slug,” said Mr. MacAdam. “This conference gives people working on these issues a shot in the arm. It helps us remember justice is at the core of our faith.”

Bishop George Elliott celebrated the closing Eucharist, which raised up in prayer many of the ministries discussed during the day. “We are all challenged to look at how God is working in the world, and how to engage in it,” he said. “I hope we are able to witness to Jesus in word and deed, and never lose the habit of looking for Jesus in the lives of others, and in our world.”

The conference was well received, with participants noting the wide variety of workshops and the opportunity to learn and share with each other. Workshops included topics such as prison ministry, the spirituality of social justice, the Occupy movement, relationships with First Nations people, sustainable community development, evangelism and outreach and advocacy in a time of austerity.

Church can help abused seniors

BY BOB BETTSON

ELDER abuse is one of those outreach issues, as well as is often talked about much. Yet Maureen Etkin, from the Ontario Network for Prevention of Elder Abuse, told a group of Anglicans that 10 per cent of seniors will experience abuse in some form during their lives.

In 2001, about one in eight Canadians was over the age of 65. By 2026, that number will grow to one in four. Yet public awareness of elder abuse has not kept up to give the growth of the country’s senior population.

Ms. Etkin said the church can play an important role in education and awareness, as well as responding to seniors experiencing abuse. Surveys show that 68 per cent of seniors would confide in clergy if they had a problem. However, she added, “we do not have the opportunity to say something. Studies show that most of the elderly victims of elder abuse are immediate family members, and only 24 per cent are unrelated caregivers. That means that victims are reluctant to speak out.”

“Elderly sometimes blame themselves,” says Ms. Etkin, who led a workshop at the diocese’s Outreach Networking Conference. “They think, ‘God is punishing me.’” Victims also fear a loss of autonomy and control, and that the abuser will report the abuse. While finally the elderly experience the most common kind of elder abuse, with family members taking advantage of their elders for financial gain, there is also physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

Ms. Etkin says some of the most hurtful abuse doesn’t involve violence. “It is emotional abuse, with threats, intimidation, infantilization, shaming and ignoring.” An example would be the threat to put a senior in a “home” if they don’t agree to do something that the abuser wants them to do.

There are two 24-hour hotlines designed to help with elder abuse: the Seniors Safety Line, 1-866-299-1011, and Senior Crime Stoppers, 1-800-222-8477.

Elders are anyone who has been helped. The first was a youth who came to one of the LOFT houses after losing his home and had been kicked out of his house by his own family because of his behaviour. After staying with LOFT, he was re-united with family. He has finished his education and is working.

LOFT also worked on some challenging projects that weren’t initially embraced by the community, he said, such as a housing project for homeless people with mental health challenges and AIDS.

Still time to save Earth: author

Canada among worst polluters

BY BOB BETTSON

ALANNA Mitchell has travelled to all seven continents on scientific expeditions to observe how our environment is changing. The former Globe and Mail journalist and author says that despite the environmental degradation she has seen, she remains hopeful.

Ms. Mitchell, speaking to Anglicans at the Outreach Networking Conference, said church groups have not been at the forefront of advocacy on environmental issues. “There has been a failure of leadership,” she said. She noted that former United Church Moderator Mardi Tun-dal was the only Canadian church leader to attend the earth summit in Durban, South Africa.

Ms. Mitchell said that the last 100 years have been one of the most climate change and environmental degradation, are “like the blink of an eye” when compared to millions of years of life on earth. Yet in the past 300 years, the burning of fossil fuels has destabilized the atmosphere because it can no longer absorb carbon emissions. This has changed the chemistry of the oceans as well as the air.

She said the Kyoto Protocol, renounced by the Harper government, has actually worked quite well in the rest of the world. Many of the countries that signed the agreement have reduced emissions below 1990 levels.

Canada is one of the worst polluters, she said, failing to reduce emissions and instead increasing them by 17 per cent. This is due to increased emissions by the oil producing provinces, Alberta and Saskatchewan. Meanwhile, Germany is drawing almost half its energy from renewable sources as solar and wind.

For churches, advocacy must go beyond green initiatives like recycling and energy use audits, she said. “This is a public policy advocacy issue. The narrative has still not been written. We still have time to do something.”

Participants agreed with Ms. Mitchell that church leaders need to do much more, in terms of resources and leadership, to support environmental protection.

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Nanny says basic rights, living wage denied

by BOB BETTSON

Maru Maesa is a Filipino nanny who has worked in Canada under the federal government’s temporary caregiver program since 2008. Now a leader in a migrant workers’ association, she says Canada is part of a system that puts temporary workers in conditions that deny them basic human rights and mobility.

Ms. Maesa was speaking at a forum on refugee and migrant workers’ issues at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square, Toronto, in October, along with Ched Myers, an American theologian and justice activist.

She described conditions for migrant caregivers. They can’t work for any other employer without applying again, with a three month delay. No educational or vocational training is permitted. There are often long hours, with no overtime pay.

In many cases, she said, separation from families back home causes isolation, loneliness and depression. And caregivers can fall prey to agencies that demand large sums of money to arrange placements. She was asked to pay $5,000 to such an agency.

Maru Maesa

Globalization of the world economy means that more workers are becoming migrants. “More of us are away from our families to meet an economic need,” she said.

“We are commodities for sale.” She attributed her longevity as a migrant worker to a strong determination to survive. “You need strong faith,” she said. “It’s a feudal system.”

Mr. Myers, who was the keynote speaker at the diocese’s Outreach Networking Conference in 2010, said, “It’s painful to look with open eyes and open hearts at the stories which Maru embodies.” Those stories demand a faith response, he said.

Mr. Myers is part of a generation of faith-based activists who are beginning to end, God is portrayed asking for hospitality.”

He stands knocking at our door, sending signals to potential refugees not to come to Canada to make their claims for refugee status, said Michael Creal, who works on refugee issues for Holy Trinity.

There is a mean-spiritedness to this legislation, he said, as well as giving the minister much more unfettered power in the refugee determination process.

The federal government is sending signals to potential refugees not to come to Canada to make their claims for refugee status, said Michael Creal, who works on refugee issues for Holy Trinity. “Doors are closing” because of proposed legislation that allows potential claimants to be sent back to other countries where they could have made a claim as part of their flight to Canada, he said.

Under a new bill before the House of Commons, the processing of refugees will be sped up, making it impossible to get legal counsel for refugees, he said.

There is a mean-spiritedness to this legislation, he said, as well as giving the minister much more unqualified power in the refugee determination process.

Migrant workers ‘commodities’
Arab Spring brings hope, says cleric

Radical Islam ‘casting a big shadow’ on Middle East

BY STUART MANN

A Syrian Anglican priest who visited Toronto in October says the Arab Spring is good for the Middle East, even though it has brought bloodshed and uncertainty.

“There is a hope that the whole region will emerge stronger,” said the Rev. Nadim Nassar, a Church of England cleric who was born in Syria and now lives in London. “Getting rid of dictators is always good.”

Mr. Nassar was speaking at a forum on “Christian reflections on the Arab Spring” at Grace Church on the Hill, Toronto. He is the director of the Awareness Foundation, an international charity that fosters relations between people of different faiths and cultures.

He said Syria’s economy under President Bashar al-Assad and his father had become totally corrupt. “It ate the country from the inside out. The psyche of the people, the pride of the people, the identity of the people—you have no idea what corruption can do to a society.”

Syria’s dictatorship also stifled freedom of speech and learning, he said. “For 40 years, people forgot how to speak, how to form opinions, how to express themselves. Our children don’t know how to be leaders. Why? Because for decades, they didn’t grow up in a healthy situation where leadership skills could be taught.”

He said it is a myth that Christians in Syria are a privileged minority. “That is a big misconception. We are all privileged at all. Is having the minimum rights a privilege? What privileges do you think under Assad regime—that we could worship? Big deal.

Even if he was a member of a privileged minority living under a dictatorship, he would not want it, he said. “Is that what Christianity is about—to be privileged? No. I don’t think so. I don’t want to be privileged. Thank you very much. I want society to have freedom—the basic freedom of speech, the freedom of politics.”

He said the war in Syria to topple President al-Assad is devastating. “It’s horrible, unbelievable. But on the other hand, it seems we have to go through this painful way to emerge stronger and better.”

He said radical Islam is “casting a big shadow” on the future of Syria and the Middle East. “Relations between faiths in Syria have not been a problem at all. On the street and in everyday life, there has not been a problem. Christians and Muslims get along. The problem is between the dictatorship, the ruling family and the rest of the country. And everybody is afraid of the emerging power of Islamic fanaticism. The Christians don’t want to go from a political dictatorship to a religious dictator. Most of the Muslims in Syria also do not want that.”

One of the biggest questions in the Middle East is what will happen to religious minorities now that many of the dictators are gone and Islamist governments have taken over, he said. “I hope we will not reach a point where it has to be either Islam or nothing. Neither Christians nor Muslims want to prove to the world that Islam is a religion that cannot live with a different other.”

He encouraged Christians not to leave the Middle East. “It is important for us to be there because we have a message, we have a role—to be the catalyst for peace.”

If we believe that there is a region in the whole world which can nourish the idea of different ethnic groups living together, it is the Middle East. If we lose that, it means the world has failed to face its differences in the 21st century.”

He said the only way to end the fighting is to bring all groups involved in the conflict together. “That is the only way to stop the bloodshed and start the dialogue and move on.”

BRIEFLY

Cathedral shows crèches from around world

St. James Cathedral’s annual exhibit of crèches from the around the world opens on Dec. 12. This year’s exhibit will feature the history of the crèche in Canada and the different traditions brought to the country by waves of immigrants over the past 400 years. The crèches will be on view in the cathedral’s Archives and Museum, which will be open every Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday afternoon from 12:30 to 4 p.m. until Jan. 6, with the exception of Dec. 26 and 27. All are welcome and admission is free. For special group tours, email archives@stjamescathedral.on.ca.

All Our Days

only online

All Our Days, a resource that includes the lectionary and various prayer cycles, will be published only online starting in 2013. It will retain its familiar layout, with some changes, and will continue to include the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer. It will be available on the Prayer Resources page of the diocese’s website, www.toronto.anglican.ca/prayer. On the site, readers will also find links to other websites that offer the lectionary and the Anglican Cycle of Prayer. Prayer Cycle will continue to be published in The Anglican.

Correction

Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, will return to academia as master of Magdalene College, Cambridge. Incorrect information appeared in last month’s issue.

Info session for investments

Under Canon 39 of the diocese’s Constitution and Canons, the Investment Committee is charged with the responsibility of managing and investing the Consolidated Trust Fund and the Cemetery Fund. An information session will be held on Dec. 5, 7 p.m. at St. John, York Mills, 10 Don Ridge Dr, in Toronto. For more information, contact Anitha Chang at 416-363-6021, ext. 233, or achang@toronto.anglican.ca.

Resources available for unity week

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held Jan. 19-25. Parishes are encouraged to cooperate with other churches in their community to mark this important annual observance. Information about the week and resources to use during ecumenical gatherings are available on the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity page on the national church’s website, www.anglican.ca.

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

TREASURER OF GENERAL SYNOD AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

There are more than 800,000 Anglicans from Vancouver Island to St. John’s, Newfoundland, and from the country’s southernmost point to the Arctic Circle. The Anglican Church of Canada supports churches in large urban areas, small rural villages, and in remote northern regions.

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We would like to thank all applicants for submitting their resume, however only applicants selected to be interviewed will be contacted.
City becomes ‘compassionate’

The Rev. Andrew Twiddy, rector of St. Edmunds church in the Diocese of British Columbia, has been instrumental in getting the city of Parksville to become the first Compassionate City on Vancouver Island. The Compassion has grown out of the work of author Karen Armstrong and the Taizé Movement. While promoted by churches in the area, the Charter is not necessarily linked to a particular denomination. Mr. Twiddy made a presentation to city council in August and, in response to the petition, unanimously to affirm the Charter.

The Diocesan Post

Young Anglicans travel to Taizé

In the early morning hours of June 29, a group of four teenagers, three children and two adults from St. Helen, West Point Grey in Vancouver met at the rectory, took a bus to the airport and flew to Taizé, a tiny town in France near the Swiss border. So began a visit with the Taizé Brothers, renowned for their ministry of reconciliation, hospitality and worship services.

“The week we were there, about 2,500 people were present and we all came together three times a day to worship God in the beautiful simplicity of the Taizé songs,” says the Rev. Scott Gould, rector of St. Helen’s. “It is really difficult to describe the power and holiness of 2,500 people from every language and race all singing the same songs together to God.” About 100,000 pilgrims make the journey to Taizé every year, he says.

Church connects through theatre

Every August, Holy Trinity, in the Old Strathcona neighbourhood of Edmonton is surrounded by the energy and excitement of the city’s annual Fringe theatre festival. The parish has become a part of the action by opening its basement as a venue and supporting the festival in numerous other roles. This year, close to 100 volunteers helped host seven Fringe productions, entertained patrons and helped and performed the festival in numerous other roles. This year, close to 100 volunteers helped host seven Fringe productions, entertained patrons and helped.

Family flies far for baptism

Carolyn and Anthony Behan travelled from Malawi in Southern Africa to St. Clement, Winnipeg to have their son baptized in August. The Behans had made the trip three times before, to get married and to have their two other children baptized in the city. Ms. Behan is originally from St. Clement’s and met her husband while on a trip to Malawi with her father in 2002.

The Messenger

Beloved Christmas play still going strong

BY CAROLYN PURDON

THIS year, there will be a special Christmas celebration at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square, Toronto. For the 75th consecutive year, the church will stage its famous Christmas play, which has a cast of more than 100 players. The Christmas Story will be performed on Friday nights and on Saturday and Sunday days at 4:30 p.m. on the same days as the Christmas’ “Adopt-A-Fair” program. Linked to Mount Pearl’s walking trails, the labyrinth provides a space for people to walk, contemplate and meditate. It is a collaboratively created project of the parish, city and the Grand Concourse Authority in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Cathedral hall razed for new development

Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa was demolished in August to make way for 10 new town homes and a 2-storey condominium tower. Six years ago, the Diocese of Ottawa and the cathedral formed a joint committee to look at the best use of cathedral land to generate revenue for both parishes while protecting the environment and respecting the designated heritage district. More than 70 per cent of the condos in the yet-to-be-built tower have already been sold. Occupancy is expected in the summer of 2014. A new cathedral hall and diocesan archives will also be built on the site in the next two years.

Labyrinth connected to walking trails

On Sept. 16, the Parish of the Good Shepherd in Mount Pearl, Nfld., unveiled a labyrinth. It offers a chance to view the landscape of the parish’s redevelopment of the green space next to the church under the city’s “Adopt-A-Fair” program. Linked to Mount Pearl’s walking trails, the labyrinth provides a space for people to walk, contemplate and meditate. It is a collaboratively created project of the parish, city and the Grand Concourse Authority in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Beloved Christmas play, linked by narration. The music is provided by a professional organist, professional singers and a choir. A professional firm makes the production a series of mimed scenes from the Gospels, linked by narration. The music is provided by a professional organist, professional singers and a choir. A professional firm makes the production a series of mimed scenes from the Gospels, linked by narration. The music is provided by a professional organist, professional singers and a choir. A professional firm makes the production a series of mimed scenes from the Gospels, linked by narration. The music is provided by a professional organist, professional singers and a choir. A professional firm makes the production a series of mimed scenes from the Gospels, linked by narration. The music is provided by a professional organist, professional singers and a choir. A professional firm makes the production a series of mimed scenes from the Gospels, linked by narration. The music is provided by a professional organist, professional singers and a choir. A professional firm makes the production a series of mimed scenes from the Gospels.
The book sells for $25 and is available from NeighbourLink Northumberland, 1-888-200-2711.

Churches Over the Life of the Town, from 1819 to the present.

The book, called Cobourg's Town, celebrates 100 years.

The book, called Cobourg's Churches Over the Life of the Town, covers 15 churches in chronological order of their foundation, from 1819 to the present.

Over the years, the ministry has been supported by various local organizations, businesses, churches and individuals, including the Canadian Automobile Workers Family Auxiliary, St. Matthew, Oshawa, the Cub Pack at St. George Memorial, Oshawa, and St. John, Whitby. The food bank has also received an outreach grant from the diocese. If you can arrange a regular or one-time source of food or funds with a school, retailer, service organization or community group, contact Ms. Doucett at 905-725-5471 or rd.doucett@sympatico.ca.

The backpack program has been a tradition at the church for 14 years.

On Oct. 18, a group of volunteers at St. Paul on-the-Hill in Pickering packed 524 backpacks, intended for homeless people, with toiletries, underwear, socks, t-shirts, warm winter items, and Scripture. The backpacks were blessed by the Rev. Canon Kim Beard on Oct. 21 and distributed to seven agencies and churches in the Durham and Toronto regions the same day. "The generosity of people and the many hands it took to put them together is a true testament of God’s love and caring," writes Bruce Hampson, program coordinator. The backpack program has been a tradition at the church for 14 years.

Parishioner writes about Cobourg churches

Jim Weller, a member of St. Peter, Cobourg, has written a book about local churches to coincide with the 175th anniversary of the parish’s existence for 40 years or more. St. Clement’s was recognized for the renovation and restoration of eight structures built between 1891 and 1918.

Norfolk Anglican Church in the east end of Toronto. They canvassed door-to-door to raise the capital needed to renovate and restore the church, which existed for 40 years or more. St. Clement’s was recognized for the renovation and restoration of eight structures built between 1891 and 1918.

To mark the anniversary, the Rez commissioned artist Marilyn Pike to paint a picture of what the neighborhood looked like 100 years ago. Ms. Pike researched archival photos and images to create the painting. A centennial celebration will be held at the church on Dec. 9. For more information, visit www.therez.ca.

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Renovated church wins award

St. Clement, Eglinton, won an Award of Excellence for architectural conservation and craftsmanship in the 2012 Heritage Toronto Awards, held in October. The jury-judged category honours projects that have restored or adapted buildings or structures that have existed for 40 years or more. St. Clement’s was recognized for the renovation and restoration of eight structures built between 1891 and 1918.

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Students feeling the stress

December is a month full of anxiety for many students. There are gifts to buy, desserts to make and family to see. For students, December isn’t the only month where stress can sap their energy. I’ve experienced it in my life for about the last five years. It began in my last year of high school, and the stress was about the future seemed a lot more pressing and important than the previous 17 years of my life.

In September, McClen’s magazine asked me to write about the increase in mental health issues on Canadian campuses. The article was published in McMaster’s Everson University, the school that I attend. In just one year, the school’s Health Development and Counseling saw a 200 per cent increase in students in crisis situations. These situations included suicide, homelessness or severe depression.

The financial situation of many students is a common source of stress for them. Tuition across Canada is up five per cent from last year, and Ontario has the highest tuition fees, at an average of $7,180 a year. Combine that with highest tuition fees, at an average of $7,180 a year. Combine that with the last year’s increase. The funds for helping students in conflict may not be available.

One of the positive things is that students at universities are more open to help. For more counselling was given extra funding from the university after last year. These funds were enough to allow the hiring of two additional staff members.

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GEN WHY

BY REBECCA WILLIAMS

By Rebecca Williams

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John’s words give strength

As we approach Christ -mas, we will depart from the Hebrew Bible and look at the Christmas story according to John. We will pick up the Moses saga in the New Year.

John’s Christmas story is very different from Matthew and Luke. John does not tell us about Bethlehem and a stable, the angels and shepherds, and the magi from the east. John takes us back to the beginning of time.

John 1:18 is the prologue to his Gospel, and it is often used at the midnight service on Christmas Eve. This passage is also called the “last Gospel” and may be recited by the priest at the end of every celebration of the Eucharist. It is a vivid memory of this passage, especially when I was a student deacon at Trinity Anglican Church in St. Thomas. Oct. Father Wagland recited this passage at the conclusion of every service. I soon started to say it with him, quietly to myself, and it quickly became one of my favorites. It is amazing how constant repetition becomes part of our very being. What was John saying in this prologue? It begins: “In the begin - ning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God” (John 1:1). This is reminiscent of the first sentence of Genesis. Was John writing a new Torah? The Greek word “logos” means so much more than “word” as it is translated in English. To the Hebrew mind, the “word of God” was equated with wisdom, which was the creative power of God. John was telling us at the begin - ning of the Gospel that Jesus was the creator of all things.

For the Gentiles, “logos” would be seen in philosophical terms, describing the design of the universe. It was the divine principle of reason that gave order to the world. Again, they would understand “logos” as a divine name for the creator of the universe. John set the tone. John’s Gospel is different from the other Gospels, and is the only Gospel that gives strength to both Hebrew and Greek followers of Jesus and the Christ-child into our world. Meditate on the words of their leader and companion. Enjoy the dialogue and have a blessed Christmas.
Anglican takes rare form of vows

Follows Benedictine principles

BY HENRIETA PAUKOV

HOSPITAL chaplain Gail Fox took vows on Nov. 24, but even before that day patients at Toronto East General Hospital sometimes called her “sister.” “Thank you, sister,” a patient might say as she was leaving the room. Now she no longer has to set people right.

“To me it’s an affirmation of how people see me,” says Sr. Gail, who made religious and personal life vows for the single consecrated life. “I don’t think many people will be surprised.” She was drawn to religious life years ago, but she finished two graduate degrees—Master of Theological Studies and Master of Divinity—and became a hospit al chaplain before becoming an oblate with the Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict in Minnesota in 2007. (Oblates are individuals living in general society who are affiliated with a monastic community and have made formal promises.)

Her growing relationship with God made her want to make vows, but she wanted to do so in an Anglican context. “I value my Anglican roots,” she says. “I have been an Anglican since I started singing in the choir when I was eight.” Canada has only two Anglican religious communities for women and Sr. Gail’s age precluded her from joining, which is why she chose the single consecrated life.

Her vows include stability, obedience and conversion of life. “That fits me right in the Benedictine tradition in the Anglican Church,” she says. She will be supported by the brothers of the Order of the Holy Cross in Toronto and will meet once a year with Archbishop Colin Johnson and Canon Philip Hobson, who is a member of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd.

Tomorrow, she will also continue her affiliation with the community in Minnesota. “It’s given me a home to go to,” she says. “I go there regularly and I keep in contact with some sisters who are there.”

She follows a rule of life based on Benedictine principles, with daily prayer and lectio divina (prayerful reading of scripture). “Because of my work, which is so demanding, I’m not able to give as much in my parish, but hopefully when I retire there will be more time,” says Sr. Gail, who is a member of St. Thomas, Huron Street.

Though she is possibly the only Anglican woman in Canada who has taken life vows for the single consecrated life, she thinks that religious life outside monastic communities may become more common. “Religious life is changing,” she says. “The orders are not getting the young people to join the way they did before. I’ve often said that I felt that oblates are the way of the future.”

At Toronto East General Hospital, where she has worked for almost a decade, she supervises field education for students from seminaries and theological colleges and is involved in patient care in the palliative and intensive care units and on the respiratory floor. She understands a patient’s need for spiritual support, having been supported by her own faith when she went through a life-threatening illness. “It’s probably what helps me in my ministry, because I know what it’s like to be alone and wonder what is going to happen: ‘Am I going to live or am I going to die?’” she says. “God helped me then and I hope I can help others.”

Gail Fox at work as senior chaplain at Toronto East General Hospital. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

IN THE NEWS

Reporters interview John Stephenson Jr. (centre) and Dennis Hollingsworth of Take This Bread at the bakery’s launch party at St. James Cathedral on Sept. 28. The bakery, run by All Saints, Sherbourne Street, provides job training and baked goods. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

TO PLACE AN AD IN THE ANGLICAN, call Carol at 905.833.6200 x25 or email cmccormick@canadads.com

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Presented by Pociuli Ludique Societas and St. Thomas’s Church
Featuring period choral and instrumental music
December 14 at 7 p.m.
December 15 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.
ST THOMAS’S CHURCH, 383 HURON STREET, TORONTO
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Gerry Lapointe - NOW magazine

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