Donors rise to challenge

Parishes, individual donors and the corporate community rose to the challenge presented by Margaret McCain, a long-time FaithWorks supporter.

As of Dec. 20, 80 donors had contributed $115,273 in response to the $75,000 McCain FaithWorks Challenge. Together, they raised a total of $378,145 to benefit FaithWorks' programs, who are serving people in need throughout the diocese and around the world.

“I would like to thank every FaithWorks donor because your support truly shows that we who are many are one body,” said Mrs. McCain. Her remarks reflected the 2012 FaithWorks campaign theme, taken from 1 Corinthians 10:17, Bishop Philip Poole, co-curate of the FaithWorks Corporate appeal, said, “Margaret McCain has been one of our most generous contributors.”

Continued on Page 3

Letter helps stop casino proposal

Clergy should speak up, says priest

BY STUART MANN

A letter from a priest to his city councillor played a small but important role in turning the tide against the establishment of a casino in Mississauga last year.

When the Rev. Philip Der, the incumbent of St. Elizabeth, Mississauga, read in his local newspaper that city council was mulling over the possibility of a casino, he wrote to his Ward 6 councillor, Ron Starr, to express his concerns.

“Thank you for putting forth your concerns in a balanced and non-confrontational way, saying that is the most effective way to influence a politician’s decision,” said Mr. Der. “People sometimes think that their politicians or community leaders don’t listen, but they do. When their opinions are voiced in a reasonable and constructive way, we listen.”

Mr. Der ended up deciding against a casino, as did the rest of city council, early in 2012. Mr. Der encouraged other clergy to contact their elected officials if their city or town is considering a casino. “Christians cannot be indifferent to society’s problems. Our role is to uphold what is good and healthy. Whether it’s a casino or other things that are against Christian ethics, we have to make our voice heard.”

He said he knows of people who are addicted to gambling, and how it can destroy a family. “The children constantly hear their parents arguing, mainly over finances. They live in fear and often have low self esteem. Some of them go on to become troublemakers at school and then in the community.”

Continued on Page 10
Organist has big plans for cathedral

Choir, concerts, organ to attract music lovers

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

AS the newly arrived artist-in-residence at St. James Cathedral, organist David Briggs has a broad mandate that he finds very exciting.

An internationally renowned musician, Mr. Briggs was approached by Dean Douglas Hourie almost two years ago to consider the possibility of moving to Toronto. The dean was looking for someone to craft a broad vision for the development of music at St. James'.

At that point, Mr. Briggs had been freelancing in New York and Massachusetts for nine years. “I was very intrigued,” he says. Last May, he came to Toronto for an interview, and on Sept. 1 he took up the post.

The appointment is for three years and Mr. Briggs has a sweeping vision for St. James’ music program. “I’d like to make Toronto a centre for excellence in organ music and choral music, based at the cathedral,” he says. “It’s such a glorious building and a fantastic location. There is fantastic support from the congregation and the clergy—it really is very exciting.”

He would like to develop the profile of the choir, which he praises for its high standard of choral music, and says this can be done through recordings and touring. He wants to introduce regular organ concerts at the cathedral. He cites Cologne Cathedral in Germany, which holds a free organ concert series every Tuesday night from May to September that draws thousands of people. “With a world-class organ, St. James could bring in 600 to 800 people,” he says.

He would also like to initiate a weekly concert series featuring the music of J.S. Bach, as is done at Trinity, Wall Street in New York, and bring in various Toronto musicians to play.

A major concern for the cathedral and Mr. Briggs is the state of the cathedral’s organ. Most of the mechanism dates from 1936, and it last received major maintenance in 1968. Mr. Briggs is the consultant on the organ from a technical point of view, and he says it needs significant work.

A committee has been struck, he adds, and one item on its agenda is a major fundraising campaign that will benefit all aspects of music at the cathedral—the acoustics, a choral endowment and complete restoration and enhancement of the organ.

Mr. Briggs was born in Birmingham, England, where he was a choirboy at the cathedral. After attending music school, he became the Organ Scholar at King’s College, Cambridge in 1981 and stayed there for three years while he took his degree in music. He also played in the famous Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols for his last two years there.

“I’m very happy to be here,” he says of the Toronto move. “The potential of the cathedral is absolutely enormous for world-class music-making.”

Mr. Briggs will actually be at the cathedral for half the year, for the other half, he will be giving as many as 60 concerts across North America and in Europe.

He has an extensive repertoire that includes Mahler, Ravel and Schubert, and he also often performs improvisations to silent films, such as Phantom of the Opera. A composer as well, Mr. Briggs has recorded 30 CDs and one DVD.

Continued from Page 1

lookout for those who might feel called to ordained ministry.

Ms. Andison said the Postulation Committee wanted to create the video to expand the pool of candidates to choose from. Until now, candidates for ordination have presented themselves to the committee. With the video, the committee hopes to now start recruiting people as well. “The Holy Spirit is active in people approaching us, but we also want to be proactive in approaching people,” she said.

The video is posted on the diocese’s YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/tordio135.

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Deanery hires biblical scholar

Experiment a first for churches

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

THE Deanery of Victoria-Haliburton has embarked on an experiment that has not been tried before. It is also likely a first for the diocese. The deanery has its own biblical scholar, who will deliver high-quality adult Christian education to Anglicans and other churchgoers.

The new scholar, Dr. Sylvia Keesmaat, started in January. She lives in the parish of St. James, Fenelon Falls, and is an adjunct faculty member in the department of biblical studies at Trinity College in Toronto.

In addition to providing education, she will create opportunities for people to know the biblical story and live in it, and for them to invite friends and neighbours outside the church to hear the story.

Dr. Keesmaat will deliver programs in Lent, Pentecost and leading up to Advent, and also meet quarterly with area clergy to discuss the lectionary. In addition, she will preach at various churches in the deanery.

She is enthusiastic about the opportunity the new position opens up. “It’s always very exciting to teach lay people because there’s a strong hunger for more biblical knowledge in our church,” she says. “To do courses that build upon previous courses and give people a vision of the depth and breadth of what we have in the biblical story and the way that it actually speaks to our lives is very exciting.”

She points out that many people do not know what is actually in the biblical story. They have had negative experiences with the Bible, either as a text that has been used in oppressive ways or as a text that has depicted God very negatively, and as a result have assumptions that do not match the biblical vision.

She will address these misconceptions in the programs, which she has designed. For example, a Pentecost program examines the perceived tensions between the Old Testament God and Jesus Christ by looking at the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the entire story.

The programs will be delivered in different churches across the deanery and range from a single night to one night a week for up to six weeks.

“My hope is that, as the year goes on, we will not just become more biblically literate in the deanery but will have a stronger sense of our vision and our Christian engagement with the places we find ourselves,” she says. “I would like to see this kind of teaching become more widespread, not just in this deanery but throughout the diocese.”

The proposal for a biblical scholar-in-residence came from the Rev. Susan Spicer, who is dean-in-charge of the Parish of Fenelon Falls, a four-point parish. She gives credit for the idea to her churchwardens, who thought that since Ms. Keesmaat lived in the parish, it would be great to use her skills in adult Christian education courses.

At a Re-imagine Church meeting in the deanery soon afterwards, Ms. Spicer mentioned the idea to her colleagues, and that immediately sparked interest.

“This was something everyone would be interested in having access to,” she says.

The part-time position is being funded by an Area Ministry Grant from the Trent-Durham episcopal area and a Reach Grant.

Contest open to young artists

THE popular FaithWorks Christmas cards will have a new design next year, created by a young artist in the diocese.

In addition to its traditional and contemporary Christmas cards, FaithWorks will introduce a new card that will portray a child’s vision of Christmas.

Children and young people up to the age of 17 are being invited to submit their art, which will be judged by Stephen Boake, principal of Smith-Boake Designwerke Inc. He will make a recommendation to Archbishops Colin Johnson, who will announce the winner.

Susan McCulloch, the FaithWorks campaign manager, says many people had requested the many people had requested the additional design. The artist must be a member of a church or Sunday school in the diocese, or the child, grandchild or ward of an Anglican parish in the diocese.

The winning artist will receive a $100 RESP savings bond and his or her Sunday school will receive $100 towards the purchase of arts and crafts supplies. In addition, the artist’s Sunday school will enjoy a pizza party with Archbishop Johnson, sponsored by Smith-Boake Designwerke Inc.

The contest will be promoted through the diocese’s Sunday school network. The deadline for submissions is April 15.

Sales of the cards, which sell for $15 for a pack of 10, have been very good, Ms. McCulloch says. Proceeds benefit FaithWorks Ministry Partners. For more information, contact Ms. McCulloch at smcculloch@toronto.anglican.ca.
Questions help us dig deeper

ARCHBISHOP’S DIARY

BY ARCHBISHOP COLIN JOHNSON

The repeated aspiration is, “I will with God’s help.”

Each of the questions has biblical warrant, some even using Phrasing from the Scriptures themselves. It would be a useful exercise to consider where you find these intentions in scripture.

• How have you acted on this over the past year? (What has gone well and not so well? Where are you stronger? What is easy? What are you learning?)

• What will you resolve to do about this over the next year?

• How can the church help you do that?"

This Lent, I suggest taking one of the baptismal questions each of the first five weeks of Lent, and thinking about your own life of faith and that of your parish using Mr. Westerhoff’s questions. Then spend some time during Holy Week to reflect on the implications of the Apostles’ Creed. What is it we believe and how do we affirm that in our daily life? You can do this on your own, of course, but it would be even more fruitful if you could find someone else to share your discussion with at least once a week.

A

I have a guide for the days ahead

BISHOP'S OPINION

BY BISHOP GEORGE ELLIOTT

The responsibilities that go along with it I suspect it will be more like the ministry shared by the majority of Christians who are not ordained and yet live out their faith, their baptismal calling, in their vocations and avocations day in and day out. I like the sound of that, and I find myself quite excited about what might lie ahead.

So what plans does God have for me? I don’t know, but I do have a guide. My call in all three of my ordinations was to be a servant of God. I anticipate that the future ahead will provide opportunities that will continue to allow me to support others in their walk with Christ, just as I have been supported by others in my faith journey for over six decades. When I read the Baptismal Covenant (BAS p. 139-159), I am struck every time by its simplicity and its overwhelming challenges. It calls you and me to believe in the Lord Jesus, that the Holy Spirit lives in you and me, that you are a child of God, a member of Christ’s Body, that you have a relationship with God, that you are a member of God’s Church, that you are a person with a purpose.

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It is easy? What are you learning?
Moving to Main Street

BY JOHN BOWEN

Stepping into the unknown

BY JENNY SEEMAN

Anglicans receive Jubilee Medal

The following Anglicans in the Diocese of Toronto have received the Diamond Jubilee Medal:

Robert Churchill
St. David, Lawrence Avenue, Toronto
Mr. Churchill has given close to half a century of volunteerism in the community of York South-Weston. He served on the Board of St. David’s Church. He was a Scout Leader with Scouts Canada. He also worked as a volunteer in the York South-Weston area.

The Rev. Canon Lynne Shea
St. Hilda, Fairbank, in Toronto
Canon Shea was recognized for her service to the community of York South-Weston. She has served on the Board of St. Hilda’s Towers with the University Health Network. She was also recognized for her leadership of the Ontario Women’s Council on Children and Families, as well as for her involvement with provincial and national organizations.

Jenny Seeman moved to Newfoundland five years ago and is a member of St. Michael and All Angels, St. John’s.

Dying well

Bishop Poole articulates hope for the appropriate care of elderly persons—al l very well and full of Christian, loving concern (December). What I miss, however, is the grasping of the nettle of allowing or en- abling persons to control the final de- bilitating conditions to die with some scrap of dignity, rather than waiting for an inevitability that is too long delayed.

A friend of Sir Dirk Bogarde, the British film star and author, was similarly totally disabused of his founding belief in that he was full-time assistant in caring for him. Mr. Bogarde wrote in his autobiography that the friend, who could speak but nothing else, said as he was being turned, “If you did this to a dog they’d have you up in court,” meaning that he would be prosecuted.

Some time ago, I mentioned this matter to a devout Christian, after a work col- league of ours died of one of those condi- tions. He replied that assisting a person to die was not possible, as everyone is sacred and must be preserved. He mentioned that the problem is euthanasia, which means mercy killing; in fact, the Greek from which the word derives means “dying well.” And isn’t dying well what we would wish for ourselves and for others?

The Rev. Canon Colin Proulx

comment

The Anglican

February 2013

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Letters

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Anglicans receive Jubilee Medal
Days reflect journey out of darkness

I n my previous profession
al life, I spent more time than
ever thinking about
Old English proverbs.
One of my favourites goes
simply: “Winter is coldest, summer is
coldest, Lent is longest.”

I like to think that even across a span
of 1,000 years, we can recognize some
familiar sentiments by our brothers and
sisters in Christ. I’m sure we all have
times when we wish Lent would go
by just a little faster—especially when we,
find ourselves craving chocolate, a
glass of wine, or whatever addictive
Internet game we might have given up. Lent
can indeed seem like the longest season in
our Christian year.

But there are two to this saying that
just do not get past Lenten fasting and
to Easter fasting. The word “Lent” here actually
refers not just to the liturgical season leading up to Holy Week,
but also to the season of spring. In fact, our term “Lent” refers to the lengthening
of the days at this time of year. Through the
months of February and March, our
days, which reached their shortest span
during Christmas, start growing gradually
longer. We are moving out of the dark-
ness of winter towards the light of sum-
mer. In a more optimistic twist on the
motto from Game of Thrones, we might
say: “Summer is coming.”

And it is no coincidence that the litur-
gical season of Lent and the season of
spring at one point shared the same
name. That sense of forward movement
and lengthening of days has spiritual significance for us. In the short,
dark December days, we celebrate the
coming of the light of Christ into the
darkness of our broken world. Likewise,
in Lent, these gradually lengthening days
reflect our journey out of darkness into
the new life offered to us through Christ’s
resurrection.

This sense of Lent as a spiritual jour-
ney offers us a positive take on Lent as
a season of repentance and spiritual re-
newal. Lent represents a definite shift in
our liturgical perspective. We have been
in the season of Epiphany, when our ori-
teination has been directed back to Christ.
Beginning with Ash Wednesday, the house-
doors are now looking ahead—
counting down the days until Holy Week
and the great celebration of Easter. The
journey is to proceed, the journey
(towards new life in Christ).

As such, Lent is not simply about peni-
tance and fasting for their own sake.
We fast in order to free up
more of our time and energy for more ed-
ifying objectives. Time spent obsessively
checking Twitter and Facebook can be
given over to practicing a new form of
contemplative prayer. Money usually
spent on an afternoon coffee could be
given over to those in need. Such simple Lenten
disciplines bring us into deeper commu-
nion with God and make us aware of how
easily we can give of ourselves to others.

We are all necessary

O r much of my
life, I have been
accustomed to
feel somewhat
ashamed about
myself, about the
scantily clad
characters. Being
blind, each time I
heard the story of
the healing of the
blind man in the
ninth chapter of John’s
Gospel, I have wanted to ask: If Jesus could heal him, why have
I, a faithful Christian, not been
similarly cured?

I believe that miracles have
and still do take place, but I have
personally never seen one. What
does this all mean?

It has taken a lifetime to learn
that each of us serves God where
we are. John Henry Newman’s
famous meditation on how God for each of us that no one else
does this all mean?

Likewise, we are all branches attached to the
member that, it will transform
us. We are all branches attached to the
member that, it will transform
us.

“Faith is the assurance of things
hoped for” (Heb. 11:1), not things
fully comprehended. Here in this
life, we see only dimly through a
mirror (1 Cor. 13:12).

A professional systematic the-
oLOGian might find parallels or in-
consistencies in my logic in try-
ing to explain how living with a
disability can be seen as consis-
tent with God’s good provision,
but this understanding is framed in
highly personal ways that I
have only come to realize after
many years. It is not intended to
be theologically complete. I am
relating only one person’s
struggles to understand what it
means to be a Christian with a disability
and how that still serves God’s
purposes. Some may recall John
Milton’s sonnet, “On His Blind
ness,” in which the poet wrestles
with the same dilemma.

The reality is that I can’t love
everyone. The people who I
meet each day are those who I
walk past on the street, the
young woman from whom I
buy a coffee at Tim Hortons, the
grocery clerk at No Frills, as well
as the members of St. Andrew-
by-the-Lake and Contemplative Fire.
Unlike the rest of the Inter-
net, these are flesh and blood
encounters.

I can be so deep in my own
thoughts that I will walk past
close friends on the street with-
out noticing them. For me, how-
ever, seeing is more than being
aware of the person on the pave-
ment in front of me. The next
step is to wonder who is the
young woman who pours my
cup of coffee each day, some
story of the clerk ringing up my
bill at the grocery store, what
are the needs, the dreams, the
worries of the person with whom I
worship? Maybe this is the begin-
ing of discovering
the uniqueness of the people
around me.

In his first letter to the Corin-
hithians, the Apostle Paul
carries the Body of Christ to
the human body. The body, he
writes, is made up of many
parts or members, all depend-
ent on each other (“The eye
cannot say to the hand, ‘I have
no need of you,’ nor again the
head to the feet, ‘I have no need
of you’”) (1 Corinthians 12:21).
My eye needs my hand to pick
up my pen to write this article. My
head needs my feet to take it
across the room. I need
the young woman in Tim Hortons,
the grocery clerk in No Frills,
and the members of the
communities through whom I
meet God.

On Jesus says, “I am the vine,
you are the branches” (John 15).
The church I belong to is a
community. The people of
St. Andrew-by-the-Lake are very involved in the lives of
those who live around them.
Members of Contemplative Fire
are dispersed. We meet together
for worship gatherings and in
local small groups, but commu-
nicate on a larger scale through
the Internet. All of us are mem-
bers of the Body of Christ. We
are all branches attached to the
vine and nourished by the
branching out of those with whom I come in contact. Howev-
er, self-contained I may think I
am, I cannot live and bear fruit
without this connection.

We are all necessary

Loving everyone a
challenge

L ast summer, I read The Wis-
dom Jesus by Chia Bourgault.
I did not always un-
derstand what she wrote, but
every so often something in her
book caught my attention, such
as this: “We flow into God—and
God into us” (101). I love the
tempting of the nature of love to flow.” She
writes that we are asked to love
our neighbors as ourselves, as a con-
sequence of our own
being—two cells of one great
life.

This presents a challenge for
me. I belong to St. Andrew by-
the-Lake, Toronto Islands, and
Contemplative Fire. I am in-
volved in both communities. At
the same time, I am an inter-
and private. I do not give my
e-mail address to everyone and
I avoid social media. I have a
sense of not being understood. How can I love all people as a
continuation of myself?

The reality is that I can’t love
all people. The people who I
meet each day are those who I
walk past on the street, the
young woman from whom I
buy a coffee at Tim Hortons, the
grocery clerk at No Frills, as well
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branching out of those with whom I come in contact. Howev-
er, self-contained I may think I
am, I cannot live and bear fruit
without this connection.
I wake up grateful each day

Sonya Dykstra is completing a Master of Theological Studies in Development degree at Wycliffe College in Toronto. She moved to Ramallah in the West Bank to complete her Experiential Learning Module at the Arab Evangelical Episcopal School, acting in the capacity of a school chaplain. The Anglican interviewed her while she was in Ramallah. She returned to Toronto in December.

Located in Ramallah, the Arab Evangelical Episcopal School is co-ed from kindergarten through Grade 12. Ramallah is located about 10 kilometres north of Jerusalem, situated on a crest of the Judean Hills. The name Ramallah can be translated from Arabic as the hill of God. The school caters to both Muslim and Christian students. As a Christian private school, the school serves the Palestinian community in all its diversity, regardless of religion, gender, race, abilities and socio-economic status of the students. Currently, the school has an enrollment of approximately 665 students from Ramallah and the surrounding villages.

Ramallah needs to be experienced to be understood. From a faith perspective, the Christians are in the minority, so their faith is all the more important to them and they do not take it for granted. An interesting tidbit of information is that the mayor of Ramallah must be Christian by law. The city itself is growing rapidly—there is construction and new buildings going up everywhere. I am told this is because banks established themselves in the West Bank within the last 10 years and everyone is taking out loans to buy apartments and even cars. In fact, I have never seen more BMWs and Mercedes Benz than I have in this town. Someone once jokingly told me that if there’s another Intifada, the banks will own Ramallah. It is interesting how seamlessly words like Intifada and incursion make it into daily conversations. People here are living a reality of which I have only touched the surface.

Unfortunately, the media have given an inaccurate description of the West Bank. It is completely safe. For the most part, it’s like living in any other city in the world—there are grocery stores, cafes, restaurants. There is a lack of movie theaters, but I am set to the various cultural centres for film screenings.

Living in Ramallah has made me more aware of the situation here and I have a greater understanding of the culture. I have been touched deeply by so many amazing individuals that it’s hard to know the full extent to which I have changed. I have no doubt that God has taught me a lot—there is a purpose and continues to transform me by the experiences with which He blesses me. Being surrounded by so many vibrant Christians who are actively living out their faith and bearing witness to God’s love has affirmed my faith. I also have a deeper understanding of how culture can appropriate and misappropriate Christianity, and it has made me re-examine how I live out my own faith in the context of Canada.

The highlight of my stay has been the people—such incredible, warm people. I feel as though I have known many of the teachers at the school for much longer than I have been with them. There is a very welcoming atmosphere here. The lowest point is seeing the hardships they face under occupation. Many of the people who live here must have a permit to visit Jerusalem. They must endure checkpoints, a wall that separates Palestinians and Israelis. They must endure checkpoints, and it has made me re-examine how I live my life.

My time here is for an academic semester. I arrived in late August and will return back to Canada in time for Christmas. I truly missed experiencing autumn in Canada, my favourite season. And I miss my family and friends back home.

At the time of trying to discern whether to return to school, I saw an ad in The Anglican for the “Women at a Crossroads” program offered by the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine. I attended the program, and afterwards enrolled in the Master of Theological Studies in Development program at Wycliffe College. I continued living at the convent while completing my degree. The master’s program appealed to me because of the internship component, which could be completed abroad. As I have had a strong interest in the Middle East, I was able to include Arabic language courses as part of my program and it gave me the opportunity to come to Ramallah for my internship.

When I first reached out to the priest in Ramallah about undertaking an internship, he connected me with the school. Knowing intuitively that my future work will not involve kids, I considered backing out of the internship twice. But through prayer and discernment, I continued to pursue it. And since arriving, all my apprehensions have vanished. I thank God for bringing me to Ramallah. It has been an experience far beyond what words can properly capture, and I wake up grateful for each day that I have here.
Bishop steps down from Compass Rose Society expands in Canada

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

BISHOP Philip Poole, the area bishop of York-Credit Valley, has stepped down as president of the international Compass Rose Society after 10 years at the helm.

Founded in the mid-1990s, the Compass Rose Society is an international group of Anglicans who support the Archbishops of Canterbury’s ministry in the Anglican Communion. Its 280 members comprise individuals, parishes, chapters, dioceses and institutions in 11 countries.

At the society’s annual meeting with the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, the society’s board of directors presented Bishop Poole with a magnificent gift: a blue cope and stole emblazoned with a gold compass rose on both front and back.

“They had it specially made for me,” Bishop Poole said. “It was presented and dedicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, which made it quite special.”

During his term of office, Bishop Poole saw the Compass Rose Society increase its presence in Canada, with 53 members across the country. He credits the growth of the society with the Archbishop of Canterbury’s ministry in the Anglican Communion and established important international contacts for the Canadian branch, he says.

Part of the society’s mandate is to visit various parts of the world—sometimes financially—with them. For example, it established microfinance groups in the Diocese of the Highveld in South Africa, enabling women to gain economic control of their lives. When visiting a country, the society’s members met not only with religious leaders but also political leaders, often engaging in dialogue with them. He says these visits took society members to some very poor parts of the world—slums where people have no visible material goods and yet welcomed them warmly.

“There was this extraordinary sense of Christian hospitality,” he says. “They would feed us these incredible meals, and I always felt bad because I knew where my next meal was coming from and I wasn’t sure they did. Never did they ask for money, and always they said, ‘Thank you for visiting us, you’ve made us feel part of our worldwide church.’”

The Compass Rose Society is also charged with assisting the communication between the international Anglican Church and the independent provinces. As part of that work, the society has been raising funds to improve the website of the Anglican Communion Office. In addition, the society provides educational scholarships and helps support schools in the dioceses of Malawi and Jerusalem.

Bishop Poole says his time with the Compass Rose Society made him proud to be an Anglican and a part of such an international church. “It’s been something that’s made my heart sing over the last few years,” he says. “I’ll certainly miss it.” Bishop Poole’s successor is the Rev. Canon John Peterson, former secretary general of the Anglican Communion, who helped found the society.

Bishop Philip Poole wears the new cope given to him by the Compass Rose Society. It was made in England and presented to him by the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Budget cuts threaten Ontario Multifaith Council Dialogue between faiths at risk

BY STUART MANN

THE diocese’s coordinator of Chaplaincy Services says the provincial government’s decision to stop funding the Ontario Multifaith Council (OMC) in March will end an important piece of infra-structure that supports coopera-tion among faith groups.

“The OMC is one of those organizations that contributes to making Ontario a relatively calm and peaceful diverse province,” says the Rev. Canon Douglas Graydon.

“It provides us with a structure that allows conversation to happen. If those under-pinnings are slowly taken away, then the dialogue failing and we run the risk of becoming more strungers to each other than good neighbours.”

The OMC was created almost 40 years ago to provide the government with expert and bal-anced advice on spiritual and reli-igious care in publicly funded hospitals, mental health institutions and long-term care facilities. The OMC, which is made up of representatives of 30 faith groups, including the Anglican Church, also provides practical support for chaplains.

As the government got out of the business of running all of those institutions except prisons, questions were raised about the need for the OMC, says Canon Graydon, who is the Anglican Church’s representative on the council’s board. “About two years ago, it was obvious that the government was funding the OMC for almost $500,000 a year and was getting almost nothing back in return because it wasn’t providing direct services anymore,” he says. “The question was raised, ‘What are we getting for the dol-lary?’”

The OMC argues that it is pro-moting religious tolerance and a sense of harmony amongst faith communities and in society in general. It is the only body of its kind in Canada and has published a resource booklet that is widely used across the country.

The OMC also has a network of grassroots committees across the province that promote multifaith dialogue and action and advocate for chaplains in local facilities. The OMC’s structure brings faith communities together, says Canon Graydon. “On a regular ba-sis, you’re in dialogue with each other and know each other and know who to reach out to if there is an issue.”

He says the grassroots network will be in jeopardy if the government withdraws its funding. The OMC has an annual budget of about $750,000, of which nearly $600,000 comes from the government. The faith groups say they cannot make up the shortfall if the government pulls its funding.

“It’s not a good step forward for multifaith diversity and initia-tives in Ontario,” says Canon Graydon. “In many respects, it’s a step backwards.”

The government’s decision comes at a time when the federal government plans to eliminate funding to all but full-time Chris-tian chaplains in penitentiaries. In addition, hospitals are also phasing out funding for chaplain-cy positions.

Canon Graydon says the trend is due to governments and hospi-tals trying to balance their budget and at a time of fiscal restraint. “They’re throwing the gauntlet back at the faith communities and saying, ‘Look, if you’re serious about this, then you provide the resources for your community.’”

He says it’s understandable that governments and hospitals are doing this. “I believe what they’re saying is legitimate. If it’s a priority of faith communities to make sure that their faithful members are looked after when they’re in health care or long-term care facilities or prisons—if that’s a part of their calling—then maybe part of the challenge is for them to respond to that.”

One of the dangers of the gov-ernment’s attitude, however, is that minority faith communities will have a much harder time looking after their people in institu-tions, he says. “The mainstream denominations will be increasingly challenged to provide the dollars to support chaplaincy initiatives. But when you’re talk-ing about minority faith communities, they haven’t got any re-sources at all. They won’t be able to compete.”

He says chaplains will be in-creasingly called upon to provide care to a diverse group of religious minorities who are not part of their faith group. Without the OMC to provide sup-port, chaplains could feel isolated and uncertain of where to turn for help.

Continued on Page 10
Sponsors give refugees new life

Newcomers often traumatized

BY HENRIETTA PAUKOV

Jacqueline Nunez wants to talk to anyone about St. John, Ida’s refugee sponsorship committee, which she chairs, but it will have to wait. First, she needs to take a call from Loona, the young Iraqi woman the committee sponsored, who has called Ms. Nunez’s advice about a family matter.

“We sorted everything out, so it’s all good,” says Ms. Nunez when she is free to talk.

The committee’s formal commitment to Loona, her husband Janan, and their toddler daughter, Lamita, ended in July 2012, but informally Ms. Nunez and other church members are still helping the family—Christians who fled sectarian violence in Iraq—find their bearings in Canada. They have learned, as many Anglicans do, that refugee sponsorship can be a complex and challenging, and yet immensely rewarding way of helping others.

“For me, it’s a part of my Christian life,” says Anthony Grange, a parishioner of St. John, Norway, and a member of the East End Refugee Committee, a group of individuals from eight East Toronto churches.

“The other thing that motivates me is that this work is hands on work. These people, you know them, you help them, you get the feedback when they realize that they are safe for the first time in a long while.”

Meanwhile, the people who arrived in Canada are displaced because of war, persecution, and serious human rights abuses. Many can never return to a family matter and may languish in refugee camps for years. Refugees who qualify to come to Canada can be resettled either through the government-assisted program or the privately sponsored program. The latter is where churches can get involved, by committing to provide social and financial support for a refugee family after their arrival in Canada.

Canada is the only country in the world that has a private program, says Alexander Kotyk, acting executive officer for the Anglican United Refugee Alliance (AURA), an organization that helps churches with refugee sponsorship. The privately sponsored program allows Canada to bring in an additional 1,000-4,500 people every year on top of a family matter sponsored by the government, he explains.

The refugee sponsorship committee at St. John, Ida, started the process three years ago, initially applying to sponsor a family from Colombia. The first family was not able to come because of paperwork problems in Colombia; the second family arrived in Canada but chose to be supported by family members. “We were released from any undertaking,” explains Ms. Nunez. “That was a difficult time for us. We met as a group and we prayed and decided that we’d like to continue.”

They asked for a small family. “We are a small rural parish so our capacity to take care of a family is not that large,” she says. Nevertheless, they raised significant support in the church. “I think there was a sense among most people that if someone was displaced and had no home and was in an unsafe situation from day to day, then it’s just part of being a Christian to want to help,” says Ms. Nunez.

Eventually, they were matched with Janan, Loona and Lamita. The first month was a period of adjustment for the newcomers, who were dealing with a completely different environment, culture and language. “It really did take some work on behalf of our committee, and one member in particular, who spent a lot of time with them, just talking to them and helping to defuse that anxiety, getting them to relax with us, to trust us and understand that we are the sponsors and we are here to help them with everything,” says Ms. Nunez.

The committee and other church members helped with practical matters, from finding housing to getting the phone line set up to filling out government forms. When the couple needed daycare so they could go to school, people volunteered to watch Lamita. They also drove the family to church every Sunday until Janan got his driver’s license and a church member gave them a car.

“Being in a small community had its advantages. “I think we benefit from being in a small community in that we are close-knit,” says Ms. Nunez. “We don’t only have the church supporting them, but we also have the community.” She says one challenge was finding translation services. Luckily, they connected with a business owner who had come to Peterborough from Iraq years ago and had been sponsored by a church. “He was so grateful for what had been done for him, that he quite readily and openly gave himself to us to help us with translation and to get them to feel comfortable.”

For their part, Janan and Loona are very industrious and determined to get ahead, says Ms. Nunez. They started English classes in September and Janan has been working part-time. Lamita is learning English from her daycare provider. Ms. Nunez says the committee might consider doing another sponsorship in the future, though not right away. “As a parish, we are in the middle of quite a few things,” she says. “We are trying to become a one-point parish and that involves acquiring more funds, and that’s a bit of a priority right now.”

By comparison, churches in Toronto have an easier time because they can hand together to raise support. The East End Refugee Committee is an example of such a collaboration. Renna Grange, Mr. Grange’s wife, explains that while each church may have only four or five parishioners who volunteer for sponsorship work, when you multiply that by eight, it is sufficient. “The decision about whether to take on a family case comes down to ‘how much work is it going to be, how many people are not too busy right now, how much money have we got’ always,” she says.

Since 1985, the committee has worked on 14 sponsorships, the latest family having arrived in November. It’s a family from Colombia with three sons, the father is paraplegic and needs medical treatment. “You hire a translator to pummel them for exact details. And sometimes years have gone by, and we don’t know the exact details.”

Because this latest family has special needs, the government provides financial support, and the committee is helping with the social and emotional aspects of integration. “I have been told that because we have been doing this for so long, we are considered one of the most experienced groups,” says Mrs. Grange. “For new groups, it’s too overwhelming.”

She encounters people who question whether Canada should be accepting refugees who need extensive medical treatment. Her answer is simple: “You put yourself in that situation.”

For their part, the newcomers are busy getting used to their new country and, according to Ms. Nunez, “are the most experienced groups,” says Mrs. Grange.

“The parents are both learning English, the two older boys are in school and the youngest goes to daycare. “They are extremely bright, they are going to an excellent school, they are soaking up English every day because they are so young,” says Ms. Grange. “They are going to be bilingual in Spanish and English, which is going to be a plus for any career they are going to have.”

In December, AURA held a Christmas party. Mrs. Grange was there, as was the newly arrived family. “I wish you had been there,” she says. “You would have seen the joy. Sometimes we are exhausted from the amount of work we are doing. But the joy, when you see the happiness on the face of someone who was suffering—it’s the best.”

Faith communities unable to make up shortfall

Continued From Page 8

Although faith communities have said they do not have the money to make up the $500,000 shortfall, they might be able to carry on the work of the OMC if they get more engaged in the sort of work that the OMC does, he says. “The challenge for the faith communities that make up the OMC is to convince their people to pick up the work and to advo- cacy.”

Canon Graydon says the Diocese of Toronto will carry on its chaplaincy efforts despite the OMC’s loss of funding. “The diocese has held its ground finan- cially over the years. The diocese’s chaplaincy department is one of the few departments to have no significant cutbacks. As for the future—it’s unknown at this point. I think the diocese would always be open to new chaplaincies, but at present there are no plans for additional paid chaplaincies.”

The diocese currently funds three full-time chaplaincies—at Mount Sinai Hospital, the Hospi- tal for Sick Children, and Sunny- brook. The OMC’s other Anglican chaplains who are paid by the institutions where they work.

FEATURE
Camp property to be mothballed
The Diocese of British Columbia’s Diocesan Council has decided to mothball the Camp Columbia property on Thetis Island for use for more than 50 years for a camping ministry. The property had reached “a state where it was no longer fit for human habitation because, structurally and service-wise, it was not up to today’s codes,” said the Rev. Ian Powell. Upgrading or rebuilding the property was not financially feasible, with costs estimated to be between $5 million and $7 million, and the council agreed for a study to determine the viability of camping or other possible uses of the site. The Diocesan Post

Richmond parish opens drop-in centre
St. Alban’s in Richmond, B.C., has opened a drop-in centre as a part of the church’s commitment to serve the homeless and marginalized. The centre will offer its visitors access to computers and the Internet, counseling services and access to local health services. Visitors will also be able to use the location as a mailing address, and, once a week, there will be a hairdresser on site. St. Alban’s had already been serving as an extreme weather shelter and offering a weekly community meal.

City’s faith community recognized
Edmonton has been declared the first Canadian member of the Parliament of the World’s Religions Partner Cities Network. “Edmonton is a world class city that has done a great job of recognizing that each faith has its own set of deeply held values,” said Helen Specter, a member of the board of trustees for the parliament’s council. Held every five years, the parliament is the world’s largest convener of religious leaders to address issues of peace, social justice and community sustainability. The Messenger

Saskatoon parish loses centenarian
Isabella Rhodes, a lifetime member and one of the most beloved parishioners of the congregation of the Cathedral Parish of St. John the Evangelist, Sask., has passed away. Last September, Ms. Rhodes took part in celebrations of the centennial of the cathedral and celebrated her 100th birthday in the same month. After meeting at the cathedral’s celebration, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, the Primate, enticed her to write columns in the Anglican Journal, “Isabella,” noting how she inspired both young and old around her.

Moose Jaw becomes mission area
When Bishop Tom Corston of the Diocese of Moose Jaw retires, the diocese will become a mission area of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario. The decision of the diocese was announced at the provincial synod last October. The decision is the result of a process of discussion on the diocese’s mission and its place in the larger mission of the Anglican Church in Canada. The Synod of Canada has decided to make some changes in the way it administers its diocesan and episcopal structures to better reflect the way the church is called to mission and to support the mission of the church.

Ottawa congregation celebrates rebirth
The Rev. Mark Whitall was appointed as the incumbent at St. Alban’s, Ottawa, in April, 2011, but he was not inducted until Oct. 28, 2012. During the 29-month delay, the congregation was rebuilt after the previous clergy resigned three years ago to join the Anglican Network in Canada. But what began as a congregation of one has now grown to more than 100 worshipers, with an average Sunday attendance of more than 60. The congregation also celebrated the return of Centre 454, a ministry that serves the homeless and others in need. The centre was based at St. Alban’s from 1990 to 2000. The building has now been gutted and rebuilt to serve the needs of the centre.

Montreal church closes
Bishop Barry Clarke of Montreal presided over a service last November marking the end of a 130-year ministry at St. Paul’s in Lachine, Que. Bishop Clarke—parish priest of St. Paul’s from 1983 to 2004—asked a near-capacity congregation of more than 300 parishioners and well-wishers not to waste energy, trying to assign blame for the closing of the church. “For us to move forward in God’s mission, we have to do things differently,” he said. “I give thanks for your diligence, perseverance, courage and risk. God is calling us into something fresh and new.” The parish reported 154 people on parish rolls last year, with an average attendance at Sunday service of 50. The church building has been sold and is being prepared for other uses.

Saskatoon and Montreal parishes

Letter makes impact
Continued From Page 1

community.”
He adds, “As a church and community leader, I don’t want to see more problems in our city. I’m really concerned about that. That’s why I spoke out.”
He says he was pleased with the result. “Ron took my concerns to heart. He assured me that there would be no casino for Mirissaigua, and I praised the Lord for that. I thought that politicians didn’t listen, but Ron did, and I really appreciated that. I also learned that, as community leaders, clergy also need to have good listening skills. We should listen more to find out what is best for our community.”

All needed
Continued From Page 6

Let us rejoice and rejoice again that the Lord we worship has given us a sign that his marriage feast has already come.
—Seán Madson is a member of Church of the Ascension, Port Perry.

Book expands to TV
Gary Cox felt called to expand his lay ministry beyond the walls of St. Andrew’s in Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia, where he had worshipped for more than 30 years. With financial support from the Diocese of Nova Scotia and P.E.I. and the Anglican Foundation of Canada, Mr. Cox was able to publish his book LEAP for Faith and launch an interactive website (www.leapforfaith.org), and create a six-week spiritual development program to aid seekers and those who wish to grow in their faith. Now, a LEAP for Faith television series will begin airing in January on Eastlink Community TV. Each week, Mr. Cox and co-host Nicki Hetherington have casual conversations with guests from a variety of denominations about faith development.

The Diocesan Times

Diocese condemns new refugee law
Challenging the federal government’s changes to Canada’s refugee policy, the Diocese of Quebec has unanimously passed a motion calling on Ottawa to repeal sections of Bill C-31, “which puts at risk the security of those seeking refuge in our country.” Among other things, the legislation gives the federal immigration minister power to declare countries as “safe,” resulting in accelerated processing and deportation to such countries, regardless of particular circumstances with no possibility to appeal. Synod members also unanimously condemned Ottawa’s recent decision to cancel the contracts of all part-time federal prison chaplains.

Gazette

February 2013
Sunday school teacher honoured

Audrey Wilson, a Sunday school teacher at St. Clement, Eglington, is the inaugural recipient of the Sladen Award of Excellence in Children’s Ministry, awarded by the Centre for Excellence in Christian Education (CECE). Mrs. Wilson was honoured for more than seven decades of service in children’s ministry at St. Clement’s.

Mrs. Wilson’s parents lived across the street from St. Clement’s when she was born, and she was baptized, confirmed and married there. After confirmation, she was asked by Canon Nicholson, who was the vicar at the time, how she would like to serve in the church. She told him, “I want to work with the children, the little ones, four and five-year-olds, in the Beginner’s Department.” She was 17 years old when she started teaching that class, and she’s still teaching it today, 73 years later.

Children’s ministry looks very different from what it looked like when Mrs. Wilson first started teaching. “Children in the 1940s and 1950s, they were shy, they were quiet, sort of reserved,” she says. “In those days, there were about four teachers, a teacher for every six children. We would have classes with about 10 children on a Sunday morning.”

Mrs. Wilson recruited her current teaching partner, Margaret Learn, when Ms. Learn’s daughter was in her class. “She stayed a couple of Sundays with her daughter and I said, ‘Well, if you’re staying, how would you like to help us? Work with us?’ And she and I have been doing this together for about 25 years now.”

These days, the children in the Kindergarten Sunday school class are invited one at a time to tell or show something to the rest of the class, and put their collection coins into an old wooden church tower. They explore Old Testament Bible stories in the fall and Christmas pageant in December.

Mrs. Wilson has taught generations of children about God, showing them Christ’s love through her warm manner and caring spirit. The CECE’s Sladen Award acknowledges her incredible service to God.

The Centre for Excellence in Christian Education (CECE) is a group of laypeople and clergy in the Diocese of Toronto who seek to support those who minister to children. The organization offers a resource library, a website, an annual children’s ministry conference and the Sladen Award, named after Kathleen Sladen, a children’s ministry pioneer from St. John, York Mills, where CECE is located. Next year, there will be an award for each area of Toronto.

Centenarian saw historic flight

On Jan. 6, more than 100 people filled St. Peter, Scarborough, to honour long-time parishioner Lilian Tucker as she turned 100. Ms. Tucker, whose birthday was on Jan. 1, has been a major contributor to parish bake sales and still bakes the bread used at the Easter Communion service. “One of her oldest memories is of being at Lester’s Field in St. John’s, Newfoundland, in June, 1919, to see John Alcock and Arthur (Teddie) Brown take off on what would be the first flight across the Atlantic,” writes parishioner David Finnimore. Ms. Tucker’s birthday celebration took place in the parish hall after the 10:30 a.m. service.

Men enjoy the fundraising dinner for L’Arche Toronto. The dinner was put on by three churches.
Parish News

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Daughter thanks mother with banners
Kathy Ariss wanted to thank her mother, Anne Graham, for all the love and support she has received, and for the love and dedication that Anne has given to her church. After much soul searching and prayer, she decided to make banners for St. Barnabas, Peterborough.

Kathy started working on the banners in December 2011 and they were presented to St. Barnabas on Dec. 9, 2012. She became interested in embroidery while watching her mother, and she went on to develop her skill in the Home Economics class in high school. Kathy has had a five-year struggle with a heart condition and her daughter, Courtenay, has also had serious health issues. “Making the banners was very therapeutic,” said Kathy.

Courtenay, who has an eye for colour and design, helped with the choosing of the colours and placing the crystals, but Kathy did the original design and sewing. Each design is hand-embroidered on Irish linen, incorporating Japan Gold thread and Swarovski Crystals, then sewn onto a background of Dupioni silk.

There are four banners: Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and the fourth representing the choir. Kathy’s mother, Anne, has been a member of St. Barnabas for 52 years, assisting in the Altar Guild for 30 years and singing in the choir. Anne embroidered the altar frontal that is used for Advent and Lent.

By Pat Plow

DELIGHTFUL

Choristers and musicians from St. Paul, L’Amoreaux’s junior choir and music school perform at a Christmas concert at the Scarborough church on Dec. 16. The young people perform four concerts a year, half at the church and half at places in the community such as senior citizens’ residences. Each March, they travel to a different city. Last year, they performed at President Obama’s home church in Chicago. They’ve also performed in Washington, Boston, New York, Montreal and Quebec City. They sing and play in the church’s youth choir, string and wind ensembles and a steel pan band. The concert at the church on Dec. 16 also featured the Red Brass Quintet from the Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra and soloists Jocelyn Belfer and Melissa Morgan. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON
Interfaith group helps refugee family

People inspired to give

BY MARY LOU HARRISON

NEWSPAPER

The Hands Across the Sands committee to sponsor a family of refugees from Iraq answers this question with a resounding “Yes.” Comprised of members of St. Mary Magdalene and The First Narayever Congregation, a traditional-egalitarian synagogue, the committee’s name reflects not only a reaching out across the sands of the Middle East to embrace a family seeking safety and a new beginning in Canada, but also reaching out across the “sands” of Harley Willan Park in Toronto, located directly behind St. Mary Magdalene’s, to the home of a member of First Narayever who was instrumental in developing the partnership between the two congregations.

The inspiration for working together on a refugee sponsorship project came from Dalia Margalit-Faircloth, another member of First Narayever, whose loss of family members in the Holocaust motivated her desire to assist a family fleeing religious persecution. Sponsoring a refugee family also speaks to the Jewish concept of Tikkun olam, the idea of repairing the world, of addressing social imbalance. The sharing of this concept was just one of the many ways in which members of the committee learned about each other’s religion while working toward a common goal of giving a family a new start in Canada.

According to the Rev. Paul MacLean, co-chair of the Hands Across the Sands committee and University of Toronto professor at St. Mary Magdalene’s, the process of refugee sponsorship, from exploratory conversations to the arrival of the family, took a year. The committee worked through a federal government program in which 5,000 Iraqi citizens, many of them persecuted Christians, were pre-approved as refugees eligible for sponsorship. They also benefitted from the involvement of the Anglican United Refugee Alliance (AURA), which is a PathWorks ministry partner.

In order to determine if sufficient funds could be raised to undertake the refugee sponsorship, parishioners at St. Mary Magdalene were asked to make pledges to support the project, and they were enthusiastic in their responses. “I think people were inspired by the idea of a partnership with members of a synagogue,” says Mr. MacLean, noting that members of both congregations were very generous with donations of household items, expertise, and volunteer time. The initiative was also supported by a $4,400 grant from the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund.

Micky Praterman, a committee member from First Narayever, says that the long lead-up period to the refugee family’s arrival allowed the interfaith team members to get to know each other better and to create a strong partnership based on trust. “It is an exciting process to learn about how each member of the team approaches the challenges that come before us,” she says, “and it requires respectful collaboration.”

The Hands Across the Sands committee faced a number of challenges, and after the arrival of the Shaia family, Mnhal, Madlin, and their adult children Mnhal, Madlin, and Manirva. These included changes in the federal government’s healthcare program for refugees, finding appropriate and affordable accommodation for a family, vast amounts of paperwork, and the actual arrival of the family from the Middle East, given the political situation in war-torn Syria. While the committee was ready to receive the family in January of 2012, they did not arrive until May.

The Shaia family was officially introduced to the parish of St. Mary Magdalene’s on All Saints’ Day at a potluck supper at which members of the First Narayever Congregation were also honored guests. The Rev. David Harrison, incumbent of St. Mary Magdalene’s, called the evening “a special event in the life of our parish” and invited Shayne Robinson, Hands Across the Sands co-chair and member of First Narayever, to bless the meal. This he did eloquently, comparing the journey of the Shaia family to that of Abraham and Sarah in the Old Testament.

The Rev. Paul MacLean is delighted with the community that has been formed as a result of interfaith partnership and, of course, with the safe arrival of Mnhal, Madlin, Sivan, and Manirva. Addressing the family at the supper, he said, “We are so glad you are here. You help make us complete.”

Mary Lou Harrison is a member of St. Mary Magdalene, Toronto.
Looking Ahead
To submit items for Looking Ahead, email hpausalov@toronto.anglican.ca. The deadline for the March issue is February 1. Parish- ers can also promote their events on the diocese’s website Calendar; at www.toronto.anglican.ca.

Worship
Feb 15 – Litany by Candlelight at St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Winder- more Ave., Toronto, at 6 p.m., with Holy Communion for Ash Wednes- day. Followed by light supper at 6:30 p.m. and the first in a Lenten series about The Jesus Prayer with the Rev. David Burrows at 7 p.m. Contributions appreciated. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit www.stolaves.ca.

Feb 17 – Choral Evensong at St. George, Swansea, 360 Winder- more Ave., Toronto, for First Sunday in Lent at 4 p.m., with St. Olave’s Choir and organist Tim Shawter. The service is followed by refreshments and a sequence of classical, contem- porary and popular flutes pieces, played by Toronto’s City Flutes, founded and directed by Lana Chou Hoyt. Contributions appreciated. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit www.stolaves.ca.

Feb 20 – Evensong for Lent at St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Winder- more Ave., Toronto, at 6 p.m., with light supper at 6:30 p.m. and an infor- mation discussion from 7 to 8:45 p.m., with the Rev. David Burrows ex- ploring the psychology of the Je- sus Prayer. Second of six Wednes- days, continues to March 20. Contri- butions appreciated. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit www.stolaves.ca.

Lectures
Feb 3 – The 15th series of the Forty Minute Forum concludes at St. Clement’s Church, 70 St. Clements Ave., Toronto. AGO cu- rator Sasha Siela will introduce the upcoming exhibit, “Revealing the Renaissance: An Exhibition of Revolutionary Art at the AGO.” Forums are held on Sundays from 10:10 to 10:50 a.m. (between the major morning services) in the Canon Nicholson Hall. The series will return for a five-week spring series starting April 7. All events in this series are free and everyone is welcome. Call 416-481-6664 or visit www.stclementschurch.org.

Feb 20, 27, March 6, 13 – St. Paul, Bloor Street, Toronto, presents a Lenten pro- gram conducted by the Rev. Canon Dr. Reginald Stackhouse, Wednesdays Feb. 20 and 27, March 6 and 13, 12:30 p.m. Theme: “Enabling Disabilities.” Lunch available (US) on request. For further information, contact Shirley Tidy at 416-481-8116 or stidy@stpaulsbrook.org.

Social
Feb 12 – Pancake and Samosa Supper at Christ Church, Scarbor- ough Village, 155 Markham Rd., Scarborough, from 5 to 7 p.m. Call 416-261-4169.

Fundraisers
Feb 9 – The Outreach Committee of St. Clement, Eglinton, presents a concert and silent auction with proceeds to be shared by Reaching Out Through Music, Moorlands Camp and Ferrer Rouge School in Haiti. The concert will be hosted by Anne-Marie Meshewake and per- formers will include Mary Lou Fal- lis, soprano comedienne, with Pe- ter Tiefenbach, piano; Teng Li, vi- ola; Patricia Parr, piano; Jean Stil- well, mezzo-soprano; and Tom Fitches, organ. Silent auction view- ing begins at 6:45 p.m.; concert at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are $40 (adult), $30 (senior), $10 (student) and $100 (patron-includes tax receipt). For further details or to order tick- ets, call 416-925-7144, ext. 205, email janevzert@gmail.com or visit www.reachingoutthroughmu- sic.org.

Film/Music
Feb 2 – St. John, York Mills, 19 Don Ridge Dr., continues its Silent Film Series with “The General,” (75 min., 1926), at 7:30 p.m. The film is set during the American Civil War and features Buster Keaton. Live organ music by international- ly renowned accompanist Bill O’Meara. Admission free; dona- tions appreciated for charity. Visit www.ysym.ca or call 416-225-6611.

Feb 7 – Lunchtime Chamber Mu- sic, Thursdays at 12:10 p.m. at Christ Church, Deer Park, 1570 Yonge St., Toronto. Admission free; donations welcome. For more information, visit the music page of the church’s website, at www.churchatdeerpark.org.

Music/Art
Feb 2 – “Revolutionary Art at the AGO.” For more information, visit www.christchurchdeerpark.org.

For further information, contact Canon Nicholson Hall. The series will return for a five-week spring series on April 7. All events in this series are free and everyone is welcome. Call 416-481-6664 or visit www.stclementschurch.org.

Blue Earth
Members of the Lake & Land Panel gather for a photo near St. George, Sibbald Point, on Sept. 16. The panel, organized by the incumbent, the Rev. Susanne McKim, and parish- ioners, addressed the role of the church in nature conservation and environmental protection. About 20 people from the parish and the community attended. Left to right: Paul Harpley, incumbent’s warden, president of the South Lake Simcoe Naturalists and director of the Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe; Murray MacAdam, social justice and advocacy consultant for the Diocese of Toronto; Daisy Radigan, spiritual leader for the day; Stephen Scharper, associate pro- fessor at the School of the Environ- ment at the University of Toronto; and Ken McClure, lay theologian.

Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” (John 8:12). Experience the light this Christmas. The Anglican Church invites you to join us for worship, music, food and fellowship as we celebrate the birth of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Try this for Lent
With Lent fast approaching, I can’t help but re- call past disciplines I’ve taken as a kid, they always involved giving up some sort of sweet. A year that was particularly challenging was when I decided to give up peanut butter. which made up about 50 per cent of my diet.

To me, a Lenten discipline is about discovering the difference between want and need. Your body needs food, but it doesn’t need chocolate, cake or even peanut butter to do its job. My family got this wake up call some years ago during Lent.

With a group of families and in- dividuals, we decided to live off Ontario Works budget, not only allowing my father to travel to the car, but also to truly live off what the government deems is necessary. Yes, giving up chocolate doesn’t allow parents to give their children what they need?

After researching the mini- mum amount of rent in our area for a one-bedroom apartment with around $500 for the month. We calculated how much to spend on bus tickets, since living on government funding wouldn’t allow my father to travel to the city and back every day to work.

No matter how we budgeted our money, we knew that we would have to go to a food bank to get help for the rest of the month. We also bought items that are also to truly live in dea- con’s cupboards, like beans, pas- ta and other canned goods.

Two weeks in, my then 13- year-old brother fainted while in the shower. When we told the doctor about the challenge, she said that the combination of the temperature of the shower and my brother’s lack of nutrition undoubtedly led to his fainting.

She also questioned our reasons for starting the challenge. “Why would you want to put your family through that?” she asked.

That’s my point exactly. If Lent is about discovering the difference between want and need, then what better way to chal- lenge yourself if the food bank covers what the government deems is enough to cover a family’s needs?

There’s at least a couple weeks left until Lent begins. I challenge you to take a look at an Ontario Works budget, not only to see how difficult it is to live on, but also to truly see the difference between wanting and needing. Yes, giving up chocolate may help you realize that you don’t need cake, but how about discovering that the government doesn’t even provide parents; their children what they need?

Rebecca Williams is a member of Christ Church, Scarborough.  

Try this for Lent
Israelites flee for their lives

When we left Moses and the Israelites last month, they were fleeing from bondage in Egypt. The Pharaoh had released them after the angel of death had slain the first-born of each Egyptian family but had passed over the families of the Hebrews. The Pharaoh was anxious to be rid of these people, and he allowed them to go and worship Yahweh on the sacred mountain.

Soon afterwards, the Pharaoh changed his mind and sent his army in pursuit of the ragtag group of slaves. The army caught up to the Israelites on the edge of the Sea of Reeds and the Egyptians overtook them after the angel of death had slain the first-born of each Egyptian family. The Pharaoh had released the Israelites, but he wanted to recapture them and bring them back to Egypt. He ordered his army to pursue them and capture them.

The Israelites were fleeing for their lives. The Bible said that they were led by a cloud representing their presence, and that they eventually made their way to the Mount Sinai (sometimes called Mount Horeb). This is the same mountain on which Moses had encountered Yahweh in the burning bush some years before. The Egyptian army had decided it must not let the Israelites escape.

Mount Sinai was very important in the lives of the Israelites, and they remained there for a full year—probably the most important year in the long history of these ancient people. It was here that they received the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments) and the covenant with Yahweh. This was the first conditional covenant: if the people obeyed Yahweh, He would continue to bless them. They also received their ritual, legal, and moral laws, including instructions for building the Ark of the Covenant and the tabernacle (the tent of meeting).

These laws were similar in nature to the laws governing the surrounding tribes, but with some major differences. With the other tribes, it was the king who gave the laws. For the Hebrew people, the laws are recorded as being given directly by God through the voice of Moses. The other major difference was with the laws governing their relationship with each other. The Hebrew laws were much more humane. The people were obliged to provide for the widows, orphans, and the strangers in their midst. Some of their laws may seem rather brutal today. We no longer stone a woman to death for committing adultery, or cut off an ear or a hand. And we no longer accept slavery as a norm. But the Hebraic law was far more humane than those of the other tribes.

In the next column, as it records the death of our hero, Moses. It is fascinating to discover how these people lived in that era and how they developed an absolute trust in their God.

After leaving the sacred mountain, the Hebrews wandered for another 30 years before they arrived at the Promised Land. During this time, God turned this ragtag group of slaves into a holy nation. This renewal of the Hebrew people began at Mount Sinai.
NEW YEAR’S CHEER

Anglicans rang in the New Year at the Archbishop’s Levee, held at St. James Cathedral, Toronto, on Jan. 1. The annual afternoon event included the traditional receiving line, the ringing of the Bells of Old York and a choral evensong. Clockwise from top right: Christina Helvadjian, a visitor on a spiritual journey after a serious injury, greets Ellen Johnson as Archbishop Colin Johnson looks on; Allissa Cavanaugh-Clark shakes hands with Dean Douglas Stout; guests enjoy refreshments, always a popular feature at the levee; the Rev. Canon Prue Chambers (right) and Elizabeth Loweth offer greetings; Bishop Linda Nicholls and the Rev. Joan Cavanaugh-Clark, incumbent of the Parish of Minden-Kinmount, share greetings. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Music, food offered

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ed by the Anglican Foundation of Canada, Urban Remixed is committed to engaging, encouraging, stimulating and offering an ongoing educational ministry for urban ministry. In the coming months, Urban Remixed will host other educational events in the areas of restorative justice, the theology of the city, renewal, sustainability and justice.

Brian Walsh is the director of Urban Remixed and serves as the Christian Reformed campus minister to the University of Toronto. He also teaches at Trinity and Wycliffe colleges.

Grant guidelines on website

The grant application guidelines for the Our Faith-Our Hope grants are now posted on the diocese’s website. Go to www.toronto.anglican.ca and click on “Grants & Funding.”

As reported in the December issue of The Anglican, grants will be given for work in two areas: “Building the Church for Tomorrow” and “Revitalizing Our Inheritance.” The first includes leadership development, pioneering ministry and communicating in a digital world. The second includes adaptive reuse of parish facilities and enabling parishes to become multi-staffed.

The Allocations Committee, which will oversee the disbursement of the grants, will start accepting grant proposals in the spring.

Grant guidelines on website

Send your parish news to editor@toronto.anglican.ca