Let us be open to God’s purpose for us

In celebrating the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we rejoice in the knowledge that God chose to come among us. It is interesting that Matthew’s Gospel alone uses the term “Emmanuel,” which means “God is with us.” As Christians, we believe that the Incarnation of the Son of God, named Emmanuel, came among us to be with us, to share in and identify with the daily experiences we have. We believe that Jesus Christ is both divine and human.

In this Christmas message, I want to focus on the story told in Matthew’s Gospel. The Gospel writer relates the birth of Jesus from Joseph’s perspective. Mary was engaged to Joseph, and before getting married it was discovered she was pregnant. This presented Joseph with a dilemma, and because he was a good man, or as Matthew puts it, “a righteous man,” he planned to handle the situation with sensitivity to protect Mary. As he thought about how he might end his relationship with Mary without causing her further embarrassment and ostracization, Joseph had to believe that, as his society would have expected him to make. We can conclude that Joseph was not just a good man, but compassionate, mature and willing to listen to the voice of God, even if confused and bewildered. He was not impulsive and angry when he could well have simply reacted as most of the people around him expected he might. He decided to risk the ridicule, embarrassment and ostracization as he opted to listen to the angel he had been introduced to and have Mary stoned, if not “put away” privately. He chose neither.

We do not have the benefit of knowing every detail of what Joseph truly contemplated quietly divorcing Mary, but before doing so, he experienced an encounter with God through an angel that led him to a different decision than the one he society would have expected him to make. We can conclude that Joseph was not just a good man, but compassionate, mature and willing to listen to the voice of God, even if confused and bewildered. He was not impulsive and angry when he could well have been, but measured and attentive to the angel’s message. We may well describe Joseph’s situation as being “between a rock and a hard place.”

His example for us is to be open to and willing to discern God’s purpose, even in difficult circumstances. He must have been concerned about what his family and the people in his community thought of Mary and the embarrassment she must have felt. Of course, no one else knew of God’s plan and involvement in the lives of Mary and Joseph. Joseph could have simply reacted as most of the people around him expected and have Mary stoned, if not “put away” privately. He chose neither. He decided to risk the ridicule, embarrassment and ostracization as he opted to listen to the angel in carrying out God’s will and purpose. Joseph trusted God’s purpose and intention for his wife Mary. It is not always an easy decision to go against the expectations of family and friends when facing a significant dilemma like Joseph’s relationship with God must have been so grounded that he could listen and obey the angel’s message. This story raises questions for us as believers. How do we listen to the voice of God through the many angels or others whom we encounter on a regular basis? Can we be as trusting as Joseph was? Joseph had to believe that, unexpectedly, Mary and he were chosen to participate in God’s purpose, even in difficult circumstances. He must have been concerned about what his family and the people in his community thought of Mary and the embarrassment she must have felt. Of course, no one else knew of God’s plan and involvement in the lives of Mary and Joseph. Joseph could have simply reacted as most of the people around him expected and have Mary stoned, if not “put away” privately. He chose neither. He decided to risk the ridicule, embarrassment and ostracization as he opted to listen to the angel in carrying out God’s will and purpose. Joseph trusted God’s purpose and intention for his wife Mary. It is not always an easy decision to go against the expectations of family and friends when facing a significant dilemma like Joseph’s relationship with God must have been so grounded that he could listen and obey the angel’s message.

This story raises questions for us as believers. How do we listen to the voice of God through the many angels or others whom we encounter on a regular basis? Can we be as trusting as Joseph was? Joseph had to believe that, unexpectedly, Mary and he were chosen to participate in God’s purpose, even in difficult circumstances. He must have been concerned about what his family and the people in his community thought of Mary and the embarrassment she must have felt. Of course, no one else knew of God’s plan and involvement in the lives of Mary and Joseph. Joseph could have simply reacted as most of the people around him expected and have Mary stoned, if not “put away” privately. He chose neither. He decided to risk the ridicule, embarrassment and ostracization as he opted to listen to the angel in carrying out God’s will and purpose. Joseph trusted God’s purpose and intention for his wife Mary. It is not always an easy decision to go against the expectations of family and friends when facing a significant dilemma like Joseph’s relationship with God must have been so grounded that he could listen and obey the angel’s message.

The Archdiocese of Toronto

Scholarship program marks milestone

First Light

Young people practise lighting the first candle on the Advent wreath at the Church of the Evangelists, New Tecumseth in Tottenham on Nov. 6. A candle will be lit each week during Advent, followed by the lighting of the middle candle on Christmas Eve. Advent starts on Nov. 27. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

The Archdiocese of Toronto

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The Archdiocese of Toronto

Please join Archbishop Johnson and the College of Bishops to offer best wishes and prayers for the New Year.

January 1, 2017

Receiving Line and Reception from 2:00 to 3:15 p.m. with the ringing of the Bells of Old York

Festive Music at 3:30 p.m.

Choral Evensong at 4:00 p.m. with presentations of The Order of the Diocese of Toronto

King & Church Streets, Toronto

All are welcome

Nursery care provided

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A new future for St. Stephen, Maple was officially launched on Oct. 30, as Bishop Peter Fenty consecrated and rededicated the building where a new Anglican community is taking root.

“It was a wonderful celebration of new ministry. We had about 70 people out, which is about as many as we can seat comfortably,” says the Rev. Jeff Potter, who is leading the new congregation. “We’ve been trying to meet young families especially, and people who live nearby, neighbours, business owners,” he says.

In that time, they have gathered a core group of about 25 people who have been meeting for dinner and evening prayer. “We’ve been trying to take some time as a group to pray together and learn from each other – with each other – what we might be called to do here,” says Mr. Potter.

Amidst conversation and developments popping up and young families moving in, the historic church is once again taking its place at the centre of the village. Now, with housing growth that comes from word of mouth and being open and honest about who we are as Christians and what we believe,” he says.

Mr. Potter currently spends half his time at St. Stephen’s, increasing to three-quarters starting in January. He is also assistant curator at Holy Trinity, Thornhill. “Holy Trinity has been very gracious and supportive; it’s just overwhelming. They’re doing everything they can to help the ministry here,” he says.

As he looks to the congregation’s future beyond Christmas, he says he is eager to help shape the future of St. Stephen’s, however it unfolds. “You can’t plan too much, because things change. So far, the most exciting things have come out of the blue. I’m really excited to see what God has in store for us in this place.”

By Martha Holmen

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Organist and Music Director

St. Cuthbert’s in Oakville is seeking a new organist and music director to guide us in the next phase of our growth as a parish community.

Opportunity exists to work with adults, children and youth in providing a music program (choral and instrumental) that includes both traditional and contemporary expressions of worship. The parish has a newly installed Allen RL 58 organ with a recently refurbished baby grand piano. Familiarity with liturgical worship music is an asset and demonstrated skills in volunteer recruitment and empowerment required. 15 hours per week with remuneration in accordance with RCOO scale.

A full job description and more details are available upon request. To apply or to seek more information please contact the Reverend Canon Joseph Asselin at 905-844-4200 or email: rector@stcuthberts@bellnet.ca

For more information on St. Cuthbert’s, please visit us at www.stcuthbertsoakville.ca
**$500,000 grant helps women, children**

**Gift funds programs in Africa, Canada**

**BY STUART MANN**

The Anglican Diocese of Toronto is making a $500,000 donation to the Pri-mate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) to improve maternal, newborn and child health in Africa and in Indigenous communities in Canada. A portion of the money will also be used to provide loans to low-income women in Mozambique to help them better provide for their families.

The gift, approved by Diocesan Council on Oct. 26, is coming from the diocese’s Our Faith-Our Hope campaign, which saw donors pledge about $43 million for mis-sion and ministry both inside and outside the diocese: PWRDF is a ministry partner of FaithWorks, the diocese’s annual outreach appeal.

“I am delighted that we as a diocese are supporting this work with women and children,” says Archbishop Colin Johnson. “In Africa, it is the church that has the trusted responsibility for medical and social support of vul-nerable people to a degree un-known here. In the North, the needs of families are enormous. We committed a tithe of the Our Faith-Our Hope campaign to share the great resources we have been given to supporting others. This is such great min-istry and good news in action.”

According to PWRDF, mater-nal and child mortality rates are high in sub-Saharan Africa and in Indigenous communities in northern Canada. The maternal mortality rate in Mozambique, for example, is 500 deaths per 100,000 live births. In Canada, it is 12 deaths per 100,000 live births. Among Indigenous peoples in Canada, however, the infant mor-tality rate is up to twice that of the general population.

The grant from the diocese will help fund PWRDF’s All Mothers and Children Count program, which seeks to reduce illness and death among women of reproductive age, newborns and children of both sexes under the age of five in rural villages in Burundi, Mozambique, Rwanda and Tanzania.

Through its partnerships in Africa, PWRDF will purchase medical equipment for health clinics and maternity wards, con-struct and refurbish health clinics and nurses’ houses, and construct wells to provide clean water to communities affected by water-borne diseases.

In Canada, PWRDF is working to provide Indigenous communi-ties with midwifery services that are culturally relevant and re-sponsive to their needs and sug-gestions. It will work with some Indigenous health organizations that have expressed interest in exchanging and sharing expertise and experience on best practices about maternal health, and to support training initiatives for midwives to meet the particular needs of Inuit, First Nations and Métis women.

A portion of the diocese’s gift will also fund PWRDF’s Women Empowerment Project, a micro-fi-nance program that fights povery by providing access to banking services to low-income women in northern Mozambique. Through this project, 300 women will be able to open bank accounts for less than the equivalent of $5 in local currency and ask for loans to set up small businesses, some-thing they are unable to do with current banking practices Mozambique.

PWRDF plans to spend about $343,000 of the grant on its mater-nal, newborn and child health programs in Burundi, Mozam-bique, Rwanda and Tanzania. With $1.9 million in matching grants from the federal govern-ment’s Department of Global Af-fairs Canada, the total investment in those programs will be almost $2.3 million.

“The people of the Diocese of Toronto have not only made these programs stronger and larger be-cause of this grant but also able to leverage greater contribu-tions from the government of Canada,” says Will Postma, exec-utive director of PWRDF.

PWRDF will spend $50,000 of the grant on its programs for In-digenous women in Canada and $55,000 for the women’s empower-ment project in Mozambique.

Global Affairs Canada does not provide matching grants for ei-ther of these initiatives so the in vestment from the diocese is crit-ically important, says Mr. Postma. In order to build awareness of its maternal health and empower-ment programs in Africa, PWRDF plans to spend the remain-ing $52,000 of the grant to seek delegation to the Diocese of Masasi in Tanzania in May 2017 and to improve its website.

Mr. Postma proposes that two members of the delegation to Tanzania come from the Diocese of Toronto. The delegation, consisting of eight volunteers and two staff, will visit the people and projects that focus on maternal health and food security. The vol-unteers will be drawn from the PWRDF board, Westminster Network, its board of directors and its youth council.

Members of the delegation will make a trip from staff in the Diocese of Masasi and people in the communities where the pro-gram is being implemented. To return to Canada, they will share their learnings and experiences and the new tools and materials they’ve learned in Mozambique.

This is a third time the diocese has given a $500,000 grant from the Our Faith-Our Hope cam-paign for work outside of the dio-cese. It gave a grant of $500,000 to the Anglican Military Ordinariate in 2013 and a $500,000 grant to the Council of the North in 2014.

“Our Faith-Our Hope has en-altered the way people think in our diocese and beyond,” says Peter Misiaszek, the diocese’s di-cussion leader. “This one – in part because of the $6 to $1 match from the fed-eral government – potentially will have the greatest impact. This is very good work.”

**Christians share Advent experiences on social media**

Anglicans can join global calendar

**BY MARTHA HOLMEN**

In our community WITH Advent underway, Chris-tians and Anglicans around the world are turning to social media to share their common experi-ence of waiting and preparing for the birth of Jesus.

The Anglican Communion, partnering with the Society of St. John the Evangelist, is once again inviting Anglicans to join its glob-al online Advent calendar. Every-one who signs up will receive a daily prayer and photo based on a different word each day. They’ll also be invited to respond on social media with their own prayers and photos using the hashtag #AdventWord and the word of the day (for example, #Shine, #Hope or #Awaken). Those con-tributions appear with others from around the world in the Ad-vent calendar at www.advent-word.org.

For those not sure where to start, the Anglican Communion has provided resources explain-ing how to contribute and encour-age others to join. Newcomers can watch a tutorial video, clergy and parish leaders can download posters and bulletin inserts, and participants can see the full list of daily words so they can plan ahead. To see the resources or sign up for daily emails, visit www.aco.org/adventword. Partic-ipants can choose to receive emails in Arabic, Chinese, Eng-lish, French, German, Hindi, Por-tuguese, Spanish, Tamil or Amer-ican Sign Language.

Those looking to explore the meaning and mystery of Advent through social media can also join the Occupy Advent move-ment. Entering its sixth year, it describes its purpose as “reclaim-ing the holy season of waiting and watching for the Lord.” Using the hashtag #OccupyAdvent, social media users share their thoughts and reflections as they try to re-sist commercialism and focus in stead on Advent as a time to slow down and to be with their families. To join the conversation, visit Occu- pyAdvent at www.facebook.com/OccupyAd-vent or follow @OccupyAdvent on Twitter.

In our own diocese, Archbishop Colin Johnson will be releasing a seasonal video message in De-cember. The video will appear on the diocese’s Facebook page, Twitter profile and YouTube channel. Members are ex-pected to share it online with their friends and family as we wait to-gether in joyful hope for the com-ing of Christ.
FaithWorks celebrates special anniversary

FAITHWORKS, the diocese’s annual outreach appeal, marked its 30th anniversary with a gala celebration in Snell Hall at St. James Cathedral on Oct. 30. “It was a wonderful gathering celebrating donors, supporters and FaithWorks ministry partners, who together are building communities of hope and compassion,” says Paige Souter, the diocese’s manager of annual giving. Attendees were invited to share their dreams for FaithWorks on a dream board. Archbishop Colin Johnson shared his reflections on 20 years of FaithWorks. As part of his thank-you to donors for their faith-filled generosity, he previewed a special video thanking donors. The celebration ended with a Choral Evening. Carol Reist from The Ban Native Ministry led the procession with drumming and smudging. Carol Reist from The Dam was the honouree.

Constance Kendall (centre) and Evadne Wilkinson (left) welcome people to the Downsview Youth Covenant display at the FaithWorks 20th anniversary gala. The Downsview Youth Covenant, based at St. Stephen, Downsview, is a recipient of FaithWorks funding. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

God is with us—our Emmanuel

Your friends at The Anglican wish you a blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas.

mission for the salvation of the world. It was surprising to both, that they should be chosen to play a vital role in the salvation history of humanity. How open and willing are we to trust God and allow ourselves to be used as vessels and instruments of God’s reconciling love for the world? Can we make ourselves available to God to use us in drawing others unto him? What might we be prepared to do or even give up for the advancement of the loving reign of God? God needs us to carry out whatever the divine plan is for the salvation of humanity. How willing are we to trust God in such a plan? Just as Joseph initially considered severing his relationship with Mary because of expected scandal, we too are sometimes tempted to avoid doing what is right for fear of losing friendships or the opportunity for advancement. We may also be tempted to avoid associating with people considered as “outcast.” We should remember that our Lord was often accused of eating and drinking with outcasts and sinners. In the midst of life’s challenges, scandals, uncertainties, fears and anxieties, we are once again reminded this Christmas that God is with us—our Emmanuel. In coming among us, God intends to comfort, forgive, save and enable us in the mission into which we are called to share and participate. May you and your families have a blessed, happy and holy Christmas.

The Anglican

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The Anglican Church

In the Anglican Communion:
A global community of 70 million Anglicans in 64,000 congregations in 164 countries.

Archbishop of Canterbury:

In Canada:
A community of about 600,000 members in 30 dioceses, stretching from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland and north to the Arctic Ocean.

Primates:
The Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, Church House, 80 Hayden St., Toronto, ON M5C 3G2

In the Diocese of Toronto:
A community of 524 congregations in 210 parishes covering 36,000 square kilometers. Of the nearly 5 million people who live within the diocesan boundaries, 576,000 claim to be affiliated with the Anglican Church, with about 85,000 people identified on the parish rolls. The diocese is home to many ethnic and language-based congregations, including African, Caribbean, Chinese, Filipino, French, Hispanic, Japanese, and Tamil. The City of Toronto has the largest population of aboriginal peoples in the country.

The Archbishop of Toronto:
The Most Rev., Colin Johnson
York-Credit Valley:
The Rt. Rev. Chian Chee
Trent-Durham:
The Rt. Rev. Patrick White (Interim)
York-York:
The Rt. Rev. Patrick Yu
York-Almossa:
The Rt. Rev. Peter Fenty

The Diocese of Toronto:
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Web site: http://www.toronto.anglican.ca

The Rev. Alison Falby (left), incumbent of St. Martin, Bay Ridges, Pickering and the Rev. Canon Heather McCance, incumbent of St. Andrew, Scarborough.

Katelyn James and the Rev. Chris- tian Harvey of The Warming Room shelter in Peterborough.

Guests write their dreams for FaithWorks.

The Rev. Patrick White writes his dream for FaithWorks.

Archbishop Colin Johnson addresses guests at the gala.

Carol Reist staffs The Dam display, The Dam, a recipient of FaithWorks funding, helps vulnerable teens in Mississauga.

Carol Reist from The Ban Native Ministry led the procession with drumming and smudging. Carol Reist from The Dam was the honouree.
Finding hope in the early church

The lesson in Acts 2: 44-45 is summed up in four words: “those who believed, shared.” For a stewardship educator, this message is golden. Luke’s portrayal of the early Christian community is a lofty depiction – the community of believers is always together, praying and eating and evangelizing. They share everything, personal possessions are sold off and the money is given to the disciples to fund their ministry. Everything is held in common. Everyone has each other’s back. Idealized indeed, but not unattainable. Even though the early Christians were particularly zealous in their belief and practice, their values and behaviours are, in fact, achievable today.

First-century Christians faced many of the same struggles we face today: doubt, lack of commitment, distractions from the world around us, false gods. They were tempted by the same temptations, either. First-century Christians today: doubt, lack of commitment, distraction.

Members of the early church were not above experiencing their share of temptations, either. First-century Christians faced many of the same struggles we face today: doubt, lack of commitment, distractions from the world around us, false gods and idols. They were tempted by the same vices we are tempted with.

What value do you place on the ministry required if it were to flourish and nourish those who were its members.

The story of the disciples in Acts is inspiring because it makes me think and believe that a similar experience can be had even today; that same sort of devoted and all-encompassing faith community can be possible. But honestly, it can be discouraging to compare that picture with the reality of some churches today. Many are grappling with declining membership, reduced Sunday school attendance, declining buildings, few if any ministry opportunities, burned-out volunteers and a lack of hope.

It doesn’t have to be that way. We can lament that our church will never be as committed or spiritual or unified as the ones in Acts were. Or we can recognize that in the brokenness and fragility of humankind, Jesus gives us the tools to persevere in his mission.

Across our church, I see those glimpses of life-sustaining community among this group of imperfect, struggling people. We laugh and cry, break bread, pray together, celebrate together and walk as disciples together. In these holy moments, we experience grace.

What value do you place on the ministry that takes place here? What do you hope for, for you, your family and your children? In this season of Advent, what might God be calling you to give – two per cent, five per cent or perhaps a 10 per cent tithe? That same generosity of heart the early Christians experienced needs to be felt here if we are to grow this church and evangelize this community.

For many of you, this month marks the end of your commitment to the diocesan ministry campaign Our Faith-Our Hope. Month in, month out you have diligently given to support the reimagining of the church of God. Now that the campaign is done, can you recommit? Can you direct 40 per cent of your pledge amount to the parish – the same amount that was returned to the church for local ministry over the last five years – now that your gift is complete?

In the next week or so – perhaps even today – I ask that you put this to prayer. Take five minutes and contemplate the life of the early disciples and their perseverance. Consider their generosity, their unity and their hopes for a fledgling church. Consider the importance of this place in your life and what you bring to it. Pray for yourself, your family, your church, for a pew-mate who is experiencing loss. Pray as you can. Slow down and have a conversation with God, the one who is always ready to listen. May we become more like those earliest Christians, who believed and shared.

The Anglican Diocese of Toronto

THE STEWARD
BY PETER MISIASZEK

What I like about the passage in Acts is the depiction of the early church: its simplicity and yet profound demand for commitment. The people had all things in common. They made sure things would be distributed “as anyone had need.” They broke bread together with glad and generous hearts. They spent a lot of time together. And they really got to know each other.

They also loved one another like themselves. They fully committed to the group, as if it were the only thing that mattered. It sounds both awesome and overwhelming, because living in community takes a lot of work. To be part of something so much bigger than yourself and to devote every ounce of your being takes work, yielding commitment, sacrifice, patience and a generous spirit.

What the early disciples were aiming for was a culture that shunned the “all about me” mentality. They endeavoured to achieve a healthy, transforming faith community. It takes time, prayer, discipline, enthusiasm and money. Even the early Christian communities recognized that ministry required an investment if it
I notice God in the mundane

Sarah Moesker is in the Companions on an Ancient Path program, run by the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine. The SSJD’s consent is in Toronto.

Companions on an Ancient Path is a year-long discernment program for women ages 22–40 who find themselves uncertain about what is next in their lives. In addition to that, it aims to invite younger generations into the monastic life, with the hope that the values and wisdom we learn continue on even if our journeys lead us somewhere other than a monastery or convent.

I heard about the program in the bulletin at St. Benedict’s Table, the Anglican church I was attending while haphazardly working toward a degree at the Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg. It was intuition alone that compelled me to apply, though I did about it for the purpose of discernment.

When, at the end of that time, I was still uncertain about what is next in my life, with the hope that the values and wisdom we learn continue on even if our spirituality we learn continues, on a daily basis, whether I feel like it.

The best thing about the program is the formative learning. I found universality to be an excellent environment for a particular type of learning that cultivates insights, on a daily basis, whether I feel like it.

The worst thing is being accountable to the community in all of my and their humanness – even when I don’t feel like it. It is difficult to unlearn my pattern of separating myself from the group, as well as my habit of doing things only if I feel like it.

Not long after, I went to Vancouver for the internship. It was there that I was immersed in an intentional Christian community that enveloped me even after the internship, despite all of the rather uncomforable idiosyncrasies common of the socially inert. I was like a stringy plant after a good rain: I exploded into life and vibrated under such gentleness and attention. I refer fondly to this time as my “spiritual infancy” because God was only a thought away. Everything I saw and heard, everyone I met, felt to me a love song. I was still a mess of course, and I cannot say it was a great time for those who interacted with me, but I know that season was necessary for me. Like a newborn child, it was really more about receiving than giving.

But God called me to an internship in Vancouver with Urban Promise Ministries and so I went, working at an after-school and summer daycamp program located in an “under-resourced” neighbourhood in Surrey, BC. Soon after, I was accepted at the Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg. I spent three bewildering years there when God called for a time-out and suggested the Companions program. So I finished the year I spent this past summer as a live-in host at the Foothills Mennonite Guest House in Calgary for my practicum, and then moved to Ontario. My other pursuits have essentially involved an indefatigable striving toward understanding myself and the beck God is. This has mostly just involved an alternating pattern of reading and lying on the floor. And now here I am – a pseudo nun and loving it.

My faith journey was pretty one-sided for most of my life, particularly in adolescence and the first years of adulthood. I feel a little silly saying “my darkest time” with no explicit tragedy in the near quarter-century of my existence, but I really was quite close to volitional death several years ago and so I refer to it as such. It was at this time that I began praying again and discovered God to be alarmingly present – suspiciously close, as though He’d been there the whole time. I did not consider the significance of this much then because of depression.

I really was quite close to volitional death with private prayer – actually draw out my spirituality. I notice God in the mundane and only now realize God has been there the whole time.” How strange. How wonderful!

I am participating in the program to discern what is next, but my loosely held plan is to return to university with more purpose.

Five years from now, I hope to be praying, hoping and trusting; seeking justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with my God. I hope I will be living with God with all of me and loving my neighbour as myself. I hope to be writing, traveling, and welcoming well. Other than that, I am pretty open.

Currently I am loving the book of Job. Sure, it can be somewhat dismal and long-winded, but something inarticulate within me found comfort reading. My interpretation aligns with the author’s extraordinary trust in God parallel to his demand for a reason. It feels strangely intimate.

Applications are open for the next Companions on an Ancient Path cohort, from September 2017 to August 2018. For more information, visit www.ssjdcompanions.org or www.ssjd.ca or contact Sister Constance Joanna at companions@ssjd.ca.

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CHANGING CAREERS AND UNCERTAIN?

To help people with complex mental health challenges get back on their feet, recover dignity, leave homelessness behind, it only takes two things: unwavering support and hope.

LOFT offers the Unwavering Support. You provide the Hope.

For more information, or to receive a free estate planning brochure, contact Jane Corbett at 416-979-1984 x 227 or jcorbett@lclcs.org.

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December 2016
As we prepare to celebrate the good news of the birth of our Lord and Saviour, please remember those in need with your gift to FaithWorks.

FaithWorks is the annual appeal of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto. Since 1996 FaithWorks has provided more than $25 million to Anglican-affiliated ministries offering help and hope to people in need throughout south-central Ontario and around the world.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’

A second time he said to him, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Tend my sheep.’

He said to him the third time, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ And he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep.’

JOHN 21: 12-17
Canadian soprano Meredith Hall was joined by a stellar lineup of singers and musicians at a benefit concert at St. Peter and St. Simon the Apostle, Bloor Street on Oct. 15. The evening raised funds for Reaching Out Through Music, a program that enriches the lives of children and their families in the nearby neighbourhood of St. James Town.

Ms. Hall was joined onstage by singer Thaanya Aswathamman, 12, a resident of St. James Town and a member of the Reaching Out Through Music program. “Music brings joy and takes me to another world,” she said. “Music is God’s gift.”

Other performers included pianists Patricia Parr, Kathleen Penny, John Sheard and Marjorie Wiens, Colombian clarinetist Felipe Jiminez Murillo and singer Yanika Gauthier. The concert was attended by more than 200 people.

The church has served as Reaching Out’s anchor location for the past nine years. The program provides musical and social opportunities for children who live in St. James Town, one of the most densely populated and ethnically diverse communities in North America.

“Reaching Out Through Music was conceived in five minutes in a pew at St. Simon’s,” says John Loosemore, the program’s founding director. The idea came after a memorial service at the church at which Kirkland Adsett, the music director and organist at the time, played and Canadian mezzo-soprano Jean Stilwell sang “Ave Maria.”

“The three of us were chatting, and I said to Kirk that there was a kids’ choir out there in those towers.” The apartment buildings in nearby St. James Town are home to many young families with children. Many are immigrants for whom English is a second language.

“Jean was a friend and Kirk was a stranger to me before the service that day in October of 2007,” recalls Mr. Loosemore. “We’ve been fortunate over the years to have the support of world-renowned musicians of the calibre of Jean Stilwell, Patricia Parr and Meredith Hall,” he says.

Their lives demonstrate the way in which music from an early age can shape lives. Jean literally learned to sing at her mother’s knee, in the choir at Grace Church on-the-Hill. Patricia’s career as a chamber musician speaks to the power of collaboration and teamwork. Meredith spent a lot of time early in her singing career teaching and mentoring inner-city children.

Reaching Out Through Music raises money through benefit concerts but relies heavily on the financial support of individuals, corporations and foundations to fund its operations. For more information, visit www.reachingoutthroughmusic.org.

Clockwise from above: together after the concert are, from left, Thaanya Aswathamman, Kathleen Penny, Meredith Hall, Patricia Parr, Andrea Boliero, Yanika Gauthier, John Loosemore and John Sheard; Thaanya Aswathamman sings, accompanied by Marjorie Wiens; singer Yanika Gauthier is accompanied by John Sheard. Photos by Michael Hudson.

For Refugees

Organist Thomas Fitches and St. George’s choir, under the direction of Stephen Powell, perform at a fundraiser for refugee sponsorship at St. George Memorial, Oshawa on Oct. 16. The concert, attended by about 200 people, raised more than $3,100 for a refugee family sponsored by five churches in the Oshawa Deanery. The concert also marked the 50th anniversary of the installation of the church’s Casavant organ. Photos by Michael Hudson.
Hospitality & Exile
Conference explores ways to help poor, displaced

BY MURRAY MACADAM

DRAWING its theme from a well-known biblical text, the diocese’s annual Outreach and Advocacy Conference, held Oct. 15 in Richmond Hill, affirmed how hospitality can strengthen our Christian witness and ease the alienation of “exile” felt by many in society.

In a powerful keynote address, the Rev. Jeffrey Metcalfe, a priest in the Diocese of Quebec and a doctoral student at Trinity College, Toronto, focused on what the exile discussed in Psalm 137 can mean for people today. The psalmist wrote: “By the rivers of Babylon — there we sat down and there we wept, when we remember Zion.”

As Mr. Metcalfe noted, Psalm 137 is the song of an oppressed and displaced people who refuse to sing or play their instruments in a strange land. “It’s a song of lament, of resistance and a call for justice,” he said. “We should be uncomfortable with this song, because of its call for justice.”

He urged the conference participants to ask themselves, “How compelling is our faith in a world defined by displacement and exile?” He cited women and children who face domestic violence, only to be turned away from packed shelters, and people, including children, being held at a nearby refugee detention center, as examples of those impacted by exile. “What does our faith community have to say to the refugee family who might have to sleep on the streets tonight because there is no more room in the shelters?”

Many congregations have Out of the Cold programs to help feed the hungry, the sick and marginally housed. However, he asked, would our communities welcome those people into their choirs, their pulpits or into their congregations as equal members? “It’s not people we need to invite back to church on Sunday,” he said. “It’s the church we need to invite, back to its pilgrimage to the City of God.”

He noted how hospitality, while not a replacement for justice, is one way we can stand in solidarity with those denied justice. He cited two examples in the Diocese of Toronto where such hospitality is offered. The first, St. Stephen in the Fields, Toronto, stays all night on Friday nights to provide a Safe Space drop-in program. It is staffed by volunteers who provide snacks and support to anyone needing a place of sanctuary. The second example is the new Seeds of Sanctuary program at St. James Cathedral, in which the Rev. Leigh Korn leads pilgrimages from the cathedral to local shelters and social service agencies as a first step in finding out how the church might work in solidarity with its neighbours. He noted this innovative ecumenical ministry is where these parishes are located.

Mr. Metcalfe wrapped up his talk with what he described as an “altar call” to hospitality, by encouraging conference participants to contact him if they’d be willing to offer temporary housing to refugees, working with the Romero House refugee ministry. He noted that anyone with space to offer could help meet this need for shelter in Toronto. This included churches, he added. “Maybe God has been emptying out our churches to prepare us not for closing our doors, but for opening them even wider,” he said. Two people later offered to provide space, while a third will inquire whether a refugee family could stay in their church building.

Conference workshops covered a variety of topics, often with a focus on reaching out to displaced people. A workshop titled “Poverty as a Form of Exile” heard how an innovative ecumenical ministry called The Dale Ministries, based in Toronto’s Parkdale neighbourhood, focuses on building relationships with local residents. The Dale has been called “a church without walls” because it has no building, with ministry taking place in coffee shops and other locations.

“Poverty is often rooted in a poverty of relationship,” said Brian Oxford, pastor and director of the ministry. “We’re trying to say collectively this is our place, and endeavouring to build community.” It supports low-income families and people with psychiatric issues, accompanies people to court, intervenes with landlords to support tenants, and helps in other ways. She shared a powerful example of building a relationship with an isolated person called Snakeman who was living in an illegal basement apartment with only four pet snakes for company. They were able to find him a good apartment, which he regarded as a castle.

Community support cuts both ways, noted Ms. Oxford, telling a moving tale of how when her family issued an appeal to friends and family for financial support to cover costly medical treatment for her husband, she received a bag containing $78.26 from low-income community residents.

The Rev. Sherman Hesselgrave, incumbent of Holy Trinity, Trinity Square in Toronto, noted how some people criticize charity work unfairly. He responded that charitable efforts, such as a turkey dinner at a church, can represent “an invitation for community” for isolated individuals.

Hospitality for refugees was explored in a workshop led by Jenn McIntyre, director of Romero House, a Christian-based community of welcome for refugees and their families in Toronto that provides housing and companionship. Participants jointly read a booklet about the community’s mission, based on a belief that “as Christians we preach the meaning of the Gospel more with our lives than with our words.”

Romero House strives to do that by living alongside refugees, helping them find permanent housing and supporting them as they adjust to life in a strange land.

A workshop on advocacy led by Elin Goulden and the Rev. Kyn Parker, both of the diocese, faced head-on the comment sometimes voiced by Anglicans that “the church should stay out of politics.” They noted the biblical call for justice. Participants reflected on three Bible passages calling for justice: Proverbs 31:8-9, Isaiah 1:16-17; and Micah 6:8. They were reminded that the Anglican Church’s Five Marks of Mission encourage Anglicans “to seek to transform unjust structures of society.”

“Poverty is a readiness to do good things, but when you start talking about advocacy, it’s a different matter, and especially when talking about changes at a governmental level. People have in effect sold their votes for tax cuts.”

Murray MacAdam is the diocese’s former Social Justice and Advocacy consultant.
Scholarship program turns 20

Church and community help more than 100 students

BY STUART MANN

As a first-year English literature major at York University, Keisha McIntosh-Siung would have to read a lot of novels, sometimes one per week. Paying for all those books wasn’t going to be easy.

Fortunately for Ms. McIntosh-Siung, the Church of the Nativity, Malvern, located in the northeast corner of Toronto, gave her a $300 scholarship to help buy the books. That was in 1996, when Ms. McIntosh-Siung was a teenager at the church.

“Every little bit did count,” she recalls. “To me, it was another indication that I was moving in the right direction and if I put my mind to it, help would come in some way – and it did with the Nativity church scholarship.”

Ms. McIntosh-Siung was back at the Church of the Nativity on Oct. 29 as it celebrated the 20th anniversary of its scholarship program, which has helped more than 110 local teens pursue post-secondary education, either at university, college or in the trades.

Each year, the church gives out $300 “book awards” or $1,000 scholarships to local students for their post-secondary education. This year, eight scholarships were awarded for a total of $8,000.

Ms. McIntosh-Siung joined a handful of former recipients at the gala, which was held in the church’s parish hall and was attended by about 125 people from the church and surrounding community.

The evening featured keynote addresses by Dr. Sheridan Cyrus, a dentist and one of the benefactors of the program, and Laura Wilson, a lawyer and a board member of the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers. It included music by soloist Kimya Cato Hypolite and Arienne Johnson on steel pan.

Seven plaques were given to long-time donors, in appreciation for their support over the years. One of the plaques was given to the Anglican Diocese of Toronto Foundation, which has provided funds since 2003.

The Rev. Pam Prideaux, incumbent of the Church of the Nativity, praised the program’s donors.

“The bottom line is that the church, out of its own budget, would never have been able to help so many young people, and we find it amazing that so many people have rallied to the cause,” she says. “I see it as a sign of the kingdom that people are willing to invest in young people from a somewhat underprivileged area year after year after year. And when we see those young people come back and start giving back to the church, either through contributing to scholarships or through volunteering their time, then we know we’ve made a real difference in people’s lives, and that’s what the program is all about.”

Ms. McIntosh-Siung echoed those thoughts, saying that the community’s belief in the promise of its young people was even more important than the money it gave. “They really believe in their youth, which is what you need to do,” she says. “That belief has impacted us more than the $100,000 that they’ve given.”

This year’s recipients of the Nativity Scholarship Program, from left: Brent Chandler, Karimah Butler, Corina Sukhai, the mother of recipient Yazmeen Jameson, Tristan Bonnick, Briana Tomlinson Tracey, the mother of recipient Willon Buchmyre and Trey Sangs. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON
JOY Kogawa, acclaimed author and lifelong Anglican, joined Bishop Patrick Yu and politician Olivia Chow on Oct. 28 in a public conversation about reconciling the relationships between people of Chinese, Japanese and other Asian heritage. Speaking at the University of Toronto’s Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library, the three participants discussed how their communities can learn to love and forgive as they emerge from their shared history of trauma.

The conversation echoed themes from Gently to Nagasaki, Ms. Kogawa’s recently released memoir, in which she explores both her family’s private trauma and the collective historical trauma of Japanese-Canadians. The Toronto launch of Gently to Nagasaki was held on Nov. 10 at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square. Ms. Kogawa, a member of Holy Trinity, was joined on stage by Mary Jo Leddy, and both authors spoke about their experiences of forgiveness and reconciliation in personal and cultural relationships.

Fans of Ms. Kogawa’s work also had the opportunity to experience her writing musically this fall. Tapestry Opera, a contemporary opera company, began its season with the Toronto premiere of Naomi’s Road. An adaptation of Ms. Kogawa’s novel Obasan, Naomi’s Road tells the story of a young Japanese-Canadian girl sent to an internment camp during the Second World War. Performances were held from Nov. 16-20 at St. David, Donlands, home of the St. Andrew, Japanese Anglican congregation.

Ms. Kogawa’s books, including Gently to Nagasaki and Obasan, are available from major book sellers in Canada.
Author hangs in for long haul

BY THE REV. JIM HOS顿

Where became the Anglican faith minister for ministry to St. James Town in 1970, Barry Morris, with his mass of black hair and huge brow in his rumpled black raincoat, pocketed bubbling with pa-
pers, was already a familiar figure on the streets of Don Vale neighborhood (later to be-
come part of Cabbagetown). What became the faith min-
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CHRISTMAS AT ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL

CHRISTMAS LITURGIES

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6
6:00pm When Christmas is a Difficult Time:
A service of prayer and reflection
to help us prepare for the holiday
in faith and hope, despite our losses;
to be followed by refreshments

CHRISTMAS EVE: DECEMBER 24
4:30pm A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols
7:30pm Choral Eucharist & Procession
to the Creche

CHRISTMAS DAY: DECEMBER 25
8:00am Said Eucharist
9:00am Sung Eucharist
11:00am Procession & Choral Eucharist

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
NEW YEAR’S DAY: JANUARY 1
8:00am Said Eucharist
9:00am Sung Eucharist
11:00am Procession & Choral Eucharist
2:00-3:30pm The Archbishop’s Levee
3:30pm Festive Music for Brass & Organ
4:00pm Choral Evensong & Presentations of
the Order of the Diocese of Toronto

CHECK ONLINE FOR A DETAILED LISTING
OF ALL ADVENT & CHRISTMAS LITURGIES

LITURGY

MUSIC

COPLAND’S
IN THE BEGINNING
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4 | 4:00PM
The Choir of St. James Cathedral in recital
Admission free | Donations welcome

MESSIAEN’S
LA NATIVITÉ DU SEIGNEUR
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17 | 4:00PM
Organist David Briggs | Donations welcome

ADVENT LECTURES
with Archbishop Johnson

THREE WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 14
6:00pm Service of Light & Evensong
in the Cathedral (Cantata on Dec 7)
6:30pm Light Dinner | 7:00pm Lecture

LECTURES

GREAT & SMALL
Dean Andrew Assil and the Rev.
Leigh Kern, assistant curate, bless
dogs, rabbits, police horses
and other animals outside St.
James Cathedral on Oct. 8. The
annual service attracted dozens
of local citizens and their pets.
Many Anglican churches hold
Blessing of Animals services in
early October to celebrate St.
Francis of Assisi, the patron saint
of animals and ecology. PHOTOS BY
MICHAEL HUDSON
Music & Worship

DEC. 4 - St. Philip's Jazz Vespers, an hour of meditation and smooth jazz performed by some of the city's finest musicians, 4 p.m., All Saints, Kingsway, 2850 Bloor St. W., Toronto. Freewill offering will be donated to an outreach charity in the parish. Reception will follow. All invited.

DEC. 10 - Voices Chamber Choir, 8 p.m. with special guest Flautas del Pueyo, Canada's premier flute duo, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto. Enjoy the music of Willan, Casals, Near, Thalben-Ball, Gardiner and others performed by the church choir. Freewill offering will be donated to an outreach charity in the parish. Reception will follow. All invited.


DEC. 18 - “The Wonder of Christmas,” a concert with musicians Robert Graham and Derrick Zu- ber, vocalist Caitlin Holland and the choir of Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 4 p.m., Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingstone Rd., Toronto.

DEC. 18 - Sound Over All Water, a candlelight service of lessons and traditional carols sung by the congregation interspersed with choir selections in a jazz and Gospel mood, 4 p.m., All Saints, Kingsway, 2850 Bloor St. W., Toronto.

DEC. 18 - “The Wonder of Christmas,” a concert with musicians Robert Graham and Derrick Zuber, vocalist Caitlin Holland and the choir of Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 4 p.m., Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingstone Rd., Toronto.

DEC. 18 - Candlelight service of Lessons and Carols, 7:30 p.m., St. Olave, Bloor Street and Winder- mere Avenue, Toronto.

DEC. 21 - Kingsway Organ Recital Series featuring Thomas Flitches, choral adviser and conductor of the Chapel Choir at Massey College, 12:30 p.m. to 1:15 p.m., All Saints, Kingsway, 2850 Bloor St. W., Toronto. Freewill offering.

DEC. 24 - Children’s Christmas Eve service (family service), 4 p.m., St. Olave, Bloor Street and Windermere Avenue, Toronto.

DEC. 25 - Holy Communion with anointing, 10:30 a.m., St. Olave, Bloor Street and Windermere Avenue, Toronto.

DEC. 26 - Holy Communion with anointing, 10:30 a.m., St. Olave, Bloor Street and Windermere Avenue, Toronto.

Workshops & Gatherings

DEC. 1 - Toronto’s World AIDS Day Vigil, 7:30 p.m., St. Anne, 270 Gladstone Ave., Toronto. Features St. Anne’s choir and Singing Out, an LGBTQ choir, with speakers and reception. All welcome.

DEC. 3 - A Fireside Christmas Gift, 7 p.m., St. Theodore of Canterbury, 111 Cactus Ave., Toronto. Breathe out, relax for an hour or two and let us rekindle the spirit of the season. Storytelling and carols, mulled cider and mince pie.

DEC. 11-16, 22-24 – The Christmas Story, a tradition since 1998, professional musicians and volunteer cast present this hour-long nativity pageant, Holy Trini- ty, 19 Trinity Square, Toronto. Evening performances at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 9, 10,16,17,22,23. Matinees at 4:30 p.m. on Dec. 10,11,17,18 and 24. The performance on Dec. 24 will be at 1:30 p.m. Suggestions do- nation is $20 for adults and $5 for children. For tickets, visit www.thechristmasstory.ca or call 416-598-6221, ext. 301.

DEC. 11 - 3rd annual Christmas pageant, 10:30 a.m., St. Olave, Bloor Street and Windermere Avenue, Toronto.

JAN. 14 - Caribbean dinner and show, a refugee sponsorship fundraiser hosted by ROAD (Refugee Outreach by Anglicans of Durham), 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., at the Caribean Cultural Centre, 600 Wentworth St. E. Oshawa. The evening will feature Club Carib’s Sounds of Steel and the Hummingbird Dancers. Tickets are $30 per person and are available at the following churches: St. George, Oshawa, All Saints, Whitby, St. George, Pickering, St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering, and St.Thomas, Brooklin. For more in- formation, email church@stgeorgeshaw.ca or call 905-725-7875.
A girl checks out jewelry at St. Peter, Churchill’s first fall fair, held on Nov. 20. The church also raised funds, in to put on a new roof (above) which was dedicated on Nov. 20.

### IN MOTION

#### Appointments
- The Ven. Elizabeth Hardy, In- terim Priest-in-Charge, St. George Memorial, Oshawa, Oct. 2.
- The Rev. Jeff Stone, Interim Associate Priest, Our Saviour, Don Mills, Oct. 9.
- The Rev. Sharon Johnstone, Honorary Assistant, All Saints, Collingwood, Oct. 15.

#### Vacant Incumbencies
Clergy from outside the diocese with the permission of their bishop may apply through the Dio- cese Executive Assistant, Mrs. Mary Conliffe.

York—Scarborough
- All Saints, Kingwest
- Christ Church, Bolton
- Christ Church St. James, Toronto
- St. Stephen, Davenport
- St. Philip, Etobicoke

York—Eglinton
- St. John the Baptist, Norway
- St. Timothy, Agincourt
- York—Simece
- St. James, Orillia
- Trinity Church, Bradford

### Orations
- The Rev. Jeffrey Potter was or- dained a priest at Holy Trinity, Thornhill on Nov. 20.
- Michael Shapcott will be or- dained a vocational deacon at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square on Dec. 4 at 7 p.m.
- The Rev. Richard Webb will be ordained a priest at St. Clement, Eglinton on Dec. 17 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Tyler Wigg-Steven- son will be ordained a priest at Trinity East (Little Trinity) on Dec. 18 at 2 p.m.

### Deaths
- The Rev. Canon Gerald Loweth was ordained a priest at Holy Trinity, Thornhill on Oct. 29. Ordained deacon in 1964 and priest in 1964, he served as assistant curate at St. Peter, Coboab and St. Paul, Bloor Street, incumbent of St. Mark and Calvary, Toronto, incumbent of St. Thomas, Brooklin, and associ- ate priest of St. John, York Mills until his retirement in 1996. In retirement he served as honorary assistant of St. Clement, Eglinton.
- The Rev. Frank Lee died on Oct. 15. Ordained deacon in 1933 and priest in 1954 in Connecticut, he served as archdeacon of Hawaii before entering the Diocese of Toronto in 1965. He served as assistant rector of Grace Church on-the-Hill, Toronto, incumbent of St. John the Divine, Scarborough, incumbent of St. Mark, Richmond Hill, and asso- ciate priest of St. Clement, Eglinton until his retirement in 1991, after which he contin- ued as honorary assistant. He served as regional dean, later archdeacon, of Scarborough, and was an adjunct professor at Trinity College. He was em- ployed in ecumenism, social housing, the healing ministry, and was a spiritual director to many clergy, seminarians and others. His funeral was held at St. Mary, Richmond Hill on Oct. 22.
- Andrew Murray, formally a priest of the diocese, died on Oct. 19. Ordained in the Dio- cese of Niagara, he entered the Diocese of Toronto in 2002 and served as incumbent of Christ Church, Mimico until 2006. His funeral was held at St. George on-the-Hill, Toronto on Oct. 29.
- The Rev. Frank Lee died on Oct. 24. Ordained deacon in 1964 and priest in 1964, he served as assistant curate at St. Peter, Coboab and St. Paul, Bloor Street, incumbent of St. Mark and Calvary, Toronto, incumbent of St. Thomas, Brooklin, and associ- ate priest of St. John, York Mills until his retirement in 1996. In retirement he served as honorary assistant of St. Clement, Eglinton. His funeral was held at St. Clement, Eglinton on Nov. 2.
Several denominations represented

BY STUART MANN

AS a first-time attendee of the Toronto Children’s Ministry Conference, Tiffany Robinson came away with a wealth of knowledge and contacts. But it might be a second, third or even fourth conference with other children’s ministers that she cherishes the most.

“To be in on an experience where several different groups pulled together and said, ‘This matters to us, let’s make the conversation happen,’” was really encouraging, and I would love to see more of it,” she says.

Ms. Robinson, the director of children’s ministry at Little Trinity in Toronto, was one of about 300 people from several denominations who gathered at Wycliffe College on Nov. 5 for a full day of workshops, networking and worship.

Since 2011, the conference has been held at St. John, York Mills and sponsored by the Centre for Excellence in Christian Education (CECE), a group of lay people and clergy in the diocese who are dedicated to promoting Christian education and formation for children and youth.

This year, the gathering was moved to Wycliffe College and co-sponsored by the CECE, Wycliffe College, the Diocese of Toronto and the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec. There were 15 workshops to choose from, including home-based discipleship, children’s spirituality, Messy Church, choosing a curriculum, recruiting and retaining volunteers, Godly Play and the role of grandparents in discipleship.

Ms. Robinson, who led a workshop on the challenges of leadership in children’s ministry, said the conference benefitted from having multiple sponsors and being held at the college, which is located at the University of Toronto. “Wycliffe’s ability to broadcast it widely meant that a lot of people heard about it and came,” she says.

Among those in attendance were Anglicans, Catholics, Baptists, Pentecostals, Presbyterians and members of the Christian Missionary Alliance. “It was really great to sit in a room with people of different denominations and have a constructive conversation around this particular ministry,” she says.

The wide variety of workshops, led by people with on-the-ground experience, was another big draw, she adds. “The fact that you knew if you showed up you were going to receive a good number of take-aways for your work — that was a big motivator. The range of people they managed to recruit to come teach was fantastic.”

In addition to the camaraderie, the conference also provided a wealth of resources in one place. “I find one of the challenges of children’s ministry is that there isn’t really a central clearing house with enough content to support a vibrant children’s ministry,” says Ms. Robinson. “This was an experience where there was beginning to be a centralized conversation around it, and that it was Canadian and somewhat local.”

She adds: “I was really encouraged to see institutions working together around a common valuing of children’s ministry, and a sense that the work we do in discipling children is crucial and critical to the health of the church.”

Musical planned for Black History Month

LOCAL author Jennifer Dance is debuting a musical during Black History Month in the hopes of educating and motivating attack. Six months after they arrived, he died of a cerebral hemorrhage. Six months after they arrived, he died of a cerebral hemorrhage.

Clockwise from above: the Toronto Children’s Ministry Conference, held at Wycliffe College, gets off to a rousing start in the opening worship service; taking part in the Messy Church workshop, one of 15 offered; Elizabeth McCaffrey, the diocese’s volunteer resources coordinator, leads a workshop on recruiting and retaining volunteers. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE, REXDALE SEEKING ORGANIST AND CHOIR DIRECTOR

St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale (Anglican) is seeking a part-time director of music and organist to lead the Sunday worship/ Liturgy of music and to lead the parish choir, in a wide repertoire of hymns, service music and anthems.

The successful applicant will enjoy teaching and help develop the musical skills of the choir as a part of the pastoral and preaching mission. This role is a two-manual electronic Allen organ. The position is filled by a part-time musician and a music director who will have a strong interest in the liturgy, and who is able to address the needs of the congregation and the liturgy.

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Applications are being accepted until December 16th, 2016 or until the post is filled.