Consecration coming up for bishops-elect

The consecration of Bishops-elect Risckylla Walsh Shaw, Kevin Robertson and Jenny Andison will take place on Jan. 7 at 10:30 a.m. The service will be held at St. Paul, Bloor Street, 227 Bloor St. E., Toronto. All are welcome to attend. The congregation is asked to be seated by 10:15 a.m. After the diocese’s three bishops-elect are consecrated on Jan. 7 at St. Paul, Bloor Street, they will be installed in their episcopal areas. Here are the details for each service of installation:

- Bishop-elect Risckylla Walsh Shaw will be installed in Trent-Durham on Jan. 21 at 2 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist, 99 Brock St., Peterborough.
- Bishop-elect Kevin Robertson will be installed in York-Scarborough on Jan. 22 at 7 p.m. at St. John, York Mills, 19 Don Ridge Dr., Toronto.
- Bishop-elect Jenny Andison will be installed in York-Credit Valley on Jan. 22 at 2:30 p.m. at St. Matthew, Islington, 3962 Bloor St. W., Toronto.

Historic churches join together

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Dinner celebrates bishop’s ministry

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A ray of hope in Pikangikum

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The vestry motion focuses specifically on Call to Action 48, which calls for the adoption and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), an international agreement that establishes a framework of rights for Indigenous communities around the world. In particular, the motion emphasizes the need for clear policies that recognize the need for free, prior and informed consent from Indigenous communities regarding the management and development of their lands and resources.

"Indigenous communities around the world have long experienced dispossession of their lands, forced relocation to allow for infrastructure development and environmentally destructive resource extraction, without sufficient negotiation," states the motion.

Ongoing opposition to projects, such as the reversal of the Line 9 pipeline in Ontario by the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation or the resistance to development of the Dakota Access Pipeline by the Standing Rock Sioux Nation in the United States, are the result of the continued practice of imposing decisions on Indigenous communities without the level of consent required by the UNDRIP. The federal government’s recent approval of the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion from Alberta to Vancouver has already met with protests from Indigenous communities that will be affected by the project, along with non-Indigenous communities opposed to the development, demonstrating the significant need for a policy of free, prior and informed consent in Canada.

In addition to being asked to pass the vestry motion, parishes will be asked to continue to undertake ongoing education and advocacy work to develop a deeper engagement with the long-term project of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. Over the past year, parishes have engaged in a variety of programs, from hosting a KAIROS Blanket Exercise to learn about the history of Indigenous peoples and colonialism in Canada, to initiating a study series on the Calls to Action or the UNDRIP. Other congregations have invited Indigenous speakers and collaborated on public witness events such as vigils and marches with ecumenical and interfaith partners.

Training and formation sessions on the topic of the vestry motion will be held for each episcopal area in January to allow interested parishioners and clergy to learn more about the motion in preparation for presentations and discussions at their vestry meetings. Materials, information on training sessions, and additional resources for the vestry motion can be found on the diocesan website, www.toronto.anglican.ca.

Ryan Weston is the diocese’s Social Justice and Advocacy consultant. For more information on the vestry motion, contact him at rweston@toronto.anglican.ca or phone 416-362-0021 (1-909-668-8952), ext. 241.
Church, hall reopen after renovations

After being closed for renovations for seven months, the church and parish hall of St. Philip, Etobicoke reopened on Dec. 4 with a service of rededication. Parishioners gathered in the parish hall, processed to the church for the ribbon-cutting ceremony, then returned to the parish hall for refreshments. The $2.2 million renovation project included new washrooms, air conditioning, two elevators and a new kitchen. The diocese contributed $1.1 million to the project. Sandra Marki, chair of the renovation project, said the fully accessible facilities meet all current fire, health and safety standards, permitting St. Philip’s to enhance and expand its ministry in the surrounding community. “These renovations not only make our buildings more accessible and functional, they demonstrate the commitment of St. Philip’s and our diocese to ministry and mission,” says the Rev. Arthur Boers, interim priest-in-charge.

PhOtOs B Y M I CHAEL H UDSOn
Amalgamation off to good start

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

The congregation of St. Peter and St. Simon the Apostle has only been worshipping together for a few weeks, but its members are already finding new joy in downtown Toronto.

“It feels stronger, it feels enthusiastic, it feels prayerful, worshipful and quite celebratory,” says the Rev. Geoffrey Sangwine, priest-in-charge. “Any change can be a bit unsettling because it’s new, but generally the feeling is very positive and very hopeful.”

The parish celebrated its first official service on Oct. 30, with Bishop Patrick Yu as the celebrant and preacher. The congregation was also joined by San Lorenzo Ruiz, a Filipino Anglican community that worships in the same building on Sunday afternoons. “We had the youth group from San Lorenzo use traditional gongs to bring up the offertory, our choir sang glorious music, and it was really quite wonderful,” says Mr. Sangwine.

The partnership between St. Peter, Carlton St. and St. Simon-the-Apostle unfolded over many months of discussion and prayer, and the congregations worshipped together twice last summer. “The first Sunday in August, we went up to St. Simon’s and joined them in their service to welcome Geoff. Then they came down here on the last Sunday in August, and for our last service in October,” says the Rev. Jeanette Lewis, former incumbent of St. Peter’s who now serves as associate priest in the new parish.

The amalgamated congregation is worshipping at the former St. Simon’s, near Bloor and Sherbourne streets. Dixon Hall Neighbourhood Services, an agency that provides a variety of social services in the neighbourhood, is in discussions with the diocese about leasing the St. Peter’s building.

Ms. Lewis says that many members of St. Peter’s were sad to leave their 150-year-old building, but the congregation decided to focus on its people instead. “It’s more important that the family stay together and continue to be church,” she says. “For a lot of people, this is their only family.”

As members of the new church get to know each other, Mr. Sangwine says their shared way forward will be grounded in worship. “The major focus is worship, and us being a worshipping community together,” he says. “I think worship is our primary reason for being.”

The worship style and structure of the services will be decided over the coming months, involving people from both church es. “There are a lot of little things that will have to be taken into account,” says Ms. Lewis. “Everyone will have to consider that now half the congregation is different than they are.”

The parish is already finding common ground in its shared commitment to social justice and outreach ministries, particularly in the St. James Town neighbourhood. “The needs in downtown Toronto are immense, and it’s going to take us time and energy to see what ministry needs there are—and courage, I expect, too,” says Mr. Sangwine. “We have to be careful not to do everything, and to let God’s gift of time help us through this so that things can begin to happen organically.”

The church also shares a commitment to refugee resettlement, something it is planning to explore further in the coming months. “Our refugee group has really expanded and has lots of interest in doing much more. We’ve just sponsored a refugee who arrived this summer, and now we’re looking at next steps,” says Mr. Sangwine.

As members of St. Peter and St. Simon the Apostle continue to consider new ideas and grow together, Mr. Sangwine says he sees excitement for the future of the new community. “We’ve seen a much fuller church, and that gives people a lot of hope and enthusiasm looking ahead,” he says. “It’s just amazing what more people can do, and new people, new ideas, a fresh look at things.”
ARCHBISHOP’S DIARY

BY ARCHBISHOP COLIN JOHNSON

Torto, one of the torontos housing crisis – means that some refugees who have been fleing from their homes now face the possibility of dying on our city’s streets this winter because they have nowhere to live.

Romero House is one of the local community organizations that welcomes refugees in this city and has been witnessing the Toronto housing crisis through the eyes of some of the most vulnerable people in this country – refugee claimant families.

Refugee claimants fleeing persecution show up at Romero House’s door every day looking for emergency shelter. When Romero House is full, which is often the case, they look elsewhere for beds. However, in the past couple of months, it has become increas- ingly difficult to find spaces. In fact, it has be- come impossible.

This problem is not unique to Romero House but has become common practice for all refugee support and housing agencies. They are serving people who, after arriving in Canada in search of safety and protection, are sleeping on the street, in garages or parks, above store fronts, or, if they are lucky, in churches or mosques or with dis- tant relatives, friends of friends or kind strangers they meet in the subway.

Worst-case scenarios are becoming the real- ity. Romero House recently had a couple come to their organization through a referral from another refugee settlement organization. This organization had housed them for one night on cots in a basement, which they shared with another family in the same situation. This cou- ple had slept in the park the night before.

Folks, this is Canada. It is winter and it is cold.

The very real prospect of homelessness is terrifying for anyone. But imagine that this is affecting entire families, including children. These families have fled their homes; they have left war, violence, death threats, torture or other risks to their lives and come to Canada in search of safety, only to arrive to no one to welcome them and nowhere to go. This is the heartbreaking truth of the situa- tion we are all facing.

Long-term solutions will only result from meaningful structural change – the construc- tion of more affordable housing – but that takes time. There is an urgent need to respond now. What organizations like Romero House need immediately is more beds and safe spaces for those at risk of homelessness as they await alternative housing options.

We need this emergency response now, even as we continue to work for more acces- sible and affordable housing for all. Anglicans, Roman Catholics and people of all faith traditions (and none) can join Romero House’s Community Host Program.

If you have a room to spare, for a limited time, Romero House would like to hear from you. Assisted by Romero House staff, who will walk alongside you in helping to offer a space that is welcoming and safe for all par- ties involved – ensuring police checks, facili- tating housing agreements, and offering oth- er forms of support and oversight – you can stand in solidarity with refugees by provid- ing temporary accommodations. For more in- formation on how you can get involved, visit Romero House’s website (https://romero- house.org/housing) or call 416-763-1303.

Refugees looking for shelter are amongst “the least of these” in our city. They are our neighbours and they are crying for mercy. By welcoming them into our homes, by keeping them off the streets, we not only confirm and make visible the hope that is in us (1 Peter 3:31), we open ourselves to further avenues of God’s revelation in our lives, in our churches, and in our world.

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AIDS DAY VIGIL

Tony Crosbie, a member of the diocese’s HIV/AIDS Working Group, lights candles with people at the diocese’s World AIDS Day Vigil at St. Peter and St. Stephen. He spoke about the impact of HIV/AIDS. / Photo by Michael Hudson
Balancing priorities

In next budget, government can live up to commitments on poverty reduction

On Nov 21, Archbishop Colin Johnson and the diocese’s Poverty Reduction Committee submitted the following brief to the Ontario government’s pre-budget consultations.

About the Diocese of Toronto

The Diocese of Toronto, founded in 1839, is the most populous of the 39 dioceses in the Anglican Church of Canada. Our geographical area extends over 26,000 square kilometres, stretching from Mississauga to Wawa, Timmins and the Northern Communities. Some 224 congregations in 194 parishes are located in the diocese and serve the spiritual and physical needs of hundreds of thousands of Ontarians. As Metropolitan Archbishop of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, I also represent all Anglicans throughout the province.

Introduction

Anglicans in Ontario regularly work to serve their neighbours and to help the most vulnerable meet their basic needs through food banks, meal programs, Out of the Cold shelters, and drop-ins. Our parishes, from Peel Region to Peterborough, are responding to the traditions of our faith to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and welcome the stranger. We know that each time we accept a request, we only delay the immediate needs of our neighbours, and that true change for the most vulnerable Ontarians only be achieved through strong government action that addresses the root causes of poverty through public policy changes and improved funding in the areas of poverty reduction.

Our approach to this investment is not based in self-interest. We do not come asking for increased funding for our programs or special exemptions for our faith communities. Rather, we speak alongside those who continue to experience marginalization and exploitation in our society to propose a more equitable and just vision for our society.

There has been some encouraging developments from your government over the past year around programs and services for Ontarians living in poverty. The introduction of tuition assistance for low-income students has offered the possibility of post secondary education to those who previously faced significant barriers to access this important opportunity. Your government’s commitment to end the claw-back of child support payments for child support in the face of rising living costs, has meant that workers are not being left further behind as the cost of living fluctuates.

We are hopeful that the government’s decision to highlight its priorities and reinvest in this important program can offer greater progress in pursuit of the goal of a 25 per cent reduction in child poverty, and so we ask that the Ontario Child Benefit be increased by $50 per child per year for the lowest income category.

A homeless man sleeps over a grate in downtown Toronto. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

3. Build affordable housing

In the second phase of the poverty reduction strategy, released in 2014, the Ontario government made the bold commitment to end chronic homelessness in the province. Anglicans throughout the province share this commitment and remain hopeful that the government will develop and implement a clear plan to achieve this goal.

Several recent reports have highlighted the increased costs to the healthcare, social services and justice systems when Ontarians are unable to access affordable and stable housing. Providing appropriate housing could result in savings of $100,000 or more per person per year. Investing in housing and ending homelessness, then, is not only the right thing to do, but is also fiscally responsible.

An important element of any effort to combat homelessness in Ontario must be a commitment to building affordable housing that will help to prevent those in precarious circumstances from falling into homelessness. Across the province, Ontarians are experiencing unaffordable housing, leaving them vulnerable to increased economic uncertainty, standard of living and risk to their health. Municipalities need support to increase the affordable housing stock available to their communities, whether rural, suburban or urban. We ask that this budget include a sizable investment in building affordable housing stock across the province, including safe and supportive housing for those living with mental illness or addiction, in order to reduce wait times. This will require a significant expenditure; however, the government’s commitment to end homelessness means that we must also work to prevent homelessness in the first place.

We encourage the government to aggressively pursue funding and partnerships with the federal and municipal levels of government in this area of mutual interest for everyone.

Our shared values

A budget offers a government an opportunity to highlight its priorities and reinforce our shared values. It is a chance for our society to reflect on what we believe to be most important in the coming year.

We recognize that there are considerable challenges facing our government as you make these decisions, and that a balanced budget has been a priority for many in this province. Nevertheless, a balanced budget that fails to address the significant need for investment in poverty reduction will not live up to our shared values. Making a real difference in the lives of Ontarians living in poverty requires a commitment to short-term, as well as long-term strategies for the future.

Such investments will require the government to take bold action to ensure that revenue streams that are currently available to it. These could include a modest tax increase on higher-income Ontarians of $350 or increasing corporate tax rates to 200% levels as just two possible examples. Offering new revenue tools to make our budget sustainable.
What if the offertory was a celebration?

A few months back, I penned an article on whether the offertory of the collection plate had run its course. Given the volume of emails, phone calls and one-on-one conversations I’ve received and had, it would seem that I got people’s attention. In fact, no column that I’ve written has garnered so much interest – both in support of and contrary to my comments.

Since then, I’ve paused to reconsider my original hypothesis. I don’t believe the offering plate should be dispensed with; rather, I believe we need to reconsider how an offering is received.

If we examine the practice of offering from the Old Testament, we see that different types of offerings were made – grain, first fruit and money. The practice of offering was a joyful one that often marked rites of passage: a newborn child, a safe return from a journey, a coming of age, a bountiful harvest. Often the various gifts were held heavenward and dedicated to God’s purposes. If you happened to have been in the temple at that time, you would have experienced a feast for the senses, including the sweet incense, sweet corn and freshly baked perfumed breads.

There are very few opportunities in our secular society where the act of making an offering has the potential to be as graciously received as in a church. For that matter, other than giving to the officer’s United Way Appeal, we are less and less exposed to the whole concept of generosity. Churches still hold the market cornered on this aspect of giving. So why don’t we endeavour to do a really good job of celebrating the act of intentionally putting something into the offering plate?

The church service itself presents a wonderful opportunity to use the offering as a stewardship education. As the offering is introduced, received and dedicated to God’s mission, perhaps we can reinforce important beliefs about our relationship with money, such as why we give, how to give joyfully, the importance of the voluntary giving, and how pre-authored giving builds God’s mission even when we are absent from worship. The offering is an ideal time for congregational participation, and it should be encouraged for everyone present, including our children.

Typically, our offering experience has been reduced to the giving of money. Why can’t we reclaim at least part of the ancient practice that goes beyond this? The act of giving should be expanded so it includes more than what is in our bank account; it should be reflective of our whole selves. During the offering, we could offer words of encouragement to members of the congregation, get-well notes to those who are ill, requests for forgiveness, pledges of time, personal memorials, special gifts of gifts in an estate, and tangible items like food.

If we included non-monetary giving, why can’t we reclaim at least part of the ancient practice that goes beyond this? The act of giving should be expanded so it includes more than what is in our bank account; it should be reflective of our whole selves. During the offering, we could offer words of encouragement to members of the congregation, get-well notes to those who are ill, requests for forgiveness, pledges of time, personal memorials, special gifts of gifts in an estate, and tangible items like food.

Just imagine how the offertory could be done differently in your church. What if offering was a celebration? We would have the opportunity to gather our community around to celebrate the variety of gifts we have as we join in the act of giving to God. If we invited those present to reflect on their gifts and how best to use them for God’s purposes, we could experience a truly joyful act of generosity.

An important belief about our relationship with money is that it is a gift. We have been given the opportunity to share our gifts with others. Our offertory is not just an opportunity to give to God; it is also an opportunity to share the gifts others have given to us. If we did this, our offering experience would be transformed into an anticipated celebration of giftedness and thanksgiving. If we were to celebrate the giving, we would have an opportunity to reflect upon the importance of giving, to consider the impact of our giving and to be encouraged to give more. By celebrating our gifts, we would have an opportunity to see the impact of our giving and to be encouraged to give more. By celebrating our gifts, we would have an opportunity to see the impact of our giving and to be encouraged to give more.
Bishop Yu celebrated at joyous dinner

BY STUART MANN

BISHOP Patrick Yu’s speech was entitled “My greatest disappointments in life,” but the Bishop’s Company Regional Dinner, held in York-Scarborough on Nov. 10, surely couldn’t have been one of them.

The dinner, held at a large Chinese restaurant in Markham, was a joyous affair as about 150 people from parishes across York-Scarborough and further afield gathered to enjoy each other’s company, savour delicious food and celebrate the ministry of Bishop Yu, who is retiring as area bishop in mid-January after 10 years on the job.

“This is fantastic and I’m very honoured,” he said as the evening drew to a close.

The location – the Dragon Leg restaurant – was an inspired choice. Diners sat together at long tables, creating a friendly, family atmosphere. The closing hymn – “Let all things now living, a song of thanksgiving” – carried throughout the busy restaurant, proving once again that Anglicans not only like to have a good time but can really sing.

In his speech, Bishop Yu spoke about the “disappointments” in his life that had turned out to be blessings due to the grace of God. One of those moments was when he was elected bishop in 2006. “I came into the episcopate with for fear and trembling, but being a bishop has been 10 of the most fulfilling years of my life,” he said.

He spoke about a time many years ago when, unable to land an incumbency at a city church, he drove “miles and miles” into the country to take up the incumbency at Coldwater-Medonte. It turned out to be one of the happiest postings of his life.

In summing up, he reflected on the 25th chapter of Genesis, in which Joseph tells his brothers not to feel distressed or angry for selling him into slavery because “it was not you who sent me here, but God.” Bishop Yu said: “I believe that verse is the heart of the Gospel – ‘but God.’ And if you hold on to that, I think you will turn disappointments into blessings.”

Afterwards, Archbishop John- son said Bishop Yu was a gift to the diocese. “He has been creative and innovative, and he is willing to take risks,” he said. “Patrick will create something new and then ask, ‘What are we learning from this?’ That stepping back and asking how can we do it better has really helped the diocese significantly. He’s a born teacher.”

In addition to celebrating Bishop Yu’s ministry, the dinner raised funds to help the Bishop of Toronto provide emergency relief to clergy in need, as well as supporting initiatives and projects that are not covered by the diocese’s operating budget. The dinner’s benefactor was Caldwell Investment Management.
Inmates’ artwork challenges assumptions

A provocative collection of art on display in Brampton during November challenged viewers to re-think their assumptions about crime and justice. “Art From the Inside Out” featured drawings, paintings, poetry, sketches, prayer cards, prose and Christmas tree ornaments collected by The Bridge Prison Ministry from more than 40 inmates and former inmates. Several pieces were created with unusual supplies such as table cloths and bed sheets because prisoners often have limited access to art supplies.

“The artwork is very poignant and the artists are very talented – surprisingly so to most people but not to those of us who have spent time in jail,” says Gary Glowacki, executive director of The Bridge Prison Ministry.

The exhibit, which was hosted by Beaux Arts Brampton, culminated in a reception on Nov. 24 to celebrate Restorative Justice Week in Brampton. The event featured speakers and displays emphasizing the need to walk alongside prisoners and ex-prisoners to repair the damage caused by crime.

“Art From the Inside Out” will help fund The Bridge’s prison art program. A video of the exhibit is posted on the Bridge’s local website www.thebridgeprisonministry.com.

The Bridge, a recipient of FaithWorks funding, has received, for more than 40 years to “create a bridge between correctional institutions and the community,” says Mr. Glowacki. “Our long-standing programs have enabled countless numbers of offenders, adults and youths, to successfully and safely reintegrate back into the community along with the most hard to reaching contributing members of society and, most importantly, no longer posing a threat to the community at large.”

Archbishop authorizes pastoral guidelines

Guidelines for same-sex marriage in place until next meeting of General Synod

ARCHBISHOP

Colin Johnson has authorized pastoral guidelines for the marriage of same-sex couples in the Diocese of Toronto. The guidelines, to be used in specific circumstances, are intended to respond to the pastoral needs of parishioners in stable, committed same-sex relationships.

The guidelines, released on Nov. 10, 2016, will be in place until General Synod can revisit the issue that time, General Synod will hold a second vote on changing the marriage of same-sex couples. If approved, the guidelines will apply to the diocese’s “Blessing of Same-Gender Commitments,” issued in 2010. It is assumed that some priests of parishes that have been designated to perform blessings or marriages will have already been civilly married.

The provisions in the guidelines are similar to those in the diocese’s “Blessing of Same-Gender Commitments,” issued in 2010. It is assumed that some priests of parishes that have been permitted to offer blessings may have already been civilly married. The provisions for blessings will continue as a pastoral response in a number of cases, such as situations where couples have already been civilly married.

The guidelines state that the blessing of marriage of any same-sex couple is expected to be part of an existing pastoral relationship and legal registration, and at least one of the couple must be baptized. All requirements of civil law must be followed, including proper legal documentation, and the marriage must be registered with the government and recorded in the proper parochial registers.

The guidelines authorize the marriage of same-sex couples until explicitly sanctioned by the diocese and within parishes which do not concur. As Bish -

op Johnson wrote that the next few marriages, visit the diocese’s website www.toronto.anglican.ca.

In concluding, the guidelines reiterate that permission to participate in the marriage of same-sex couples will be extended only to those parishes and clergy who fulfill the requirements outlined and receive permission from the diocesan bishop, and that no clergy or parishes will be required to participate in the blessing of same-sex relationships or the marriage of same-sex couples.

In his letter to Archbishops, Johnson wrote that the next few marriages, visit the diocese’s website www.toronto.anglican.ca.

For more information on the pastoral guidelines for same-sex marriages, visit the diocese’s website www.toronto.anglican.ca.
Efforts starting to bear fruit in Pikangikum

Clean water, job training help First Nations community

BY MURRAY MACADAM

THE word “Pikangikum” can evoke feelings of sadness and despair, as this remote northern Ontario community has attracted headlines for tragically high rates of suicide among its youth. But clean water and other local projects sponsored by the Anglican-supported Pikangikum First Nations Working Group are offering new hope.

The initiative was sparked after Bishop Mark MacDonald, the national Indigenous bishop, spoke about the shortage of clean water in First Nations communities at the diocese’s Outreach and Advocacy Conference in 2011. Several Anglicans discussed how they could do.

Pikangikum was chosen because of its suicide rate and because the Pikangikum First Nations Working Group had begun speaking with the band about its needs. “It presented a great possibility and has turned out to be spectacularly successful,” says Bishop MacDonald.

Work at Pikangikum is already bearing fruit, with 10 homes supplied with clean water in the community of 3,000, where most homes lack clean water and toilet facilities. Residents must rely on outdoor taps and outhouses.

While a federal government report said it would cost $180,000 to supply a home with water, the working group’s cost per home is only $20,000. Plans for 2017 call for at least 10 more homes to be supplied with water.

Another benefit of the project is that it provides skills training to residents of Pikangikum, which has a 90 per cent unemployment rate. Six young people have learned plumbing and electrical skills and have jobs. Another seven young people will receive skills training in 2017. Other activities to meet community needs and provide employment include the construction of 200 new homes using local lumber.

The Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund has raised $440,000 for the projects. After Anglican and Lutheran young people identified the right to water as a priority in 2012, they raised almost $20,000 and have been doing related educational work.

Local supporters realize it is a long-term effort. “Our culture wants things to happen fast,” says Cheryl Marek, a member of Christ Memorial Church, Oshawa. “Start small and know that God is using whatever you’re doing in ways you cannot imagine.”

Ms. Marek has been involved in educating people about Pikangikum and in broader reconciliation efforts. This has involved parish members as well as local non-Anglican residents and the school board. “Including our community in educational efforts can show the church is relevant today,” she says.

Bishop MacDonald is hopeful that success at Pikangikum can lead to similar initiatives in other First Nations communities. “Our concern for Pikangikum is part of a larger concern about First Nations communities which are suffering in a country that should have water security for all citizens.”

For more information about the water projects in Pikangikum, visit the PW RDF website, www.pw rdf.org. PW RDF is ministry partner of FaithWorks, the diocese’s annual outreach appeal.
Bishop-elect Riscylla Walsh Shaw says a prayer at the Louis Riel Day celebration on Nov. 19 at St. John, East Orangeville with members of the New Credit Valley Metis Council. The church is engaged with First Nations groups in the parish.

Silversmith’s work honours former dean
On her 88th birthday, distinguished Canadian silversmith Lois Betteridge completed a chalice titled “Tree of Life” for St. James Cathedral in Toronto. The commission honours the Very Rev. Douglas Stoutie, who retired as rector and dean of the cathedral in early 2016. The chalice and its accompanying paten (a plate to hold the Host) are made of sterling silver and lapus larzuli, a deep blue semi-precious stone. The base of the chalice rises like the trunk of a tree whose branches cradle a bowl. The delicate hammered surface of the bowl reflects diffuse light. The bowl is shaped like a half apple, suggesting the Garden of Eden story.

Lois Betteridge, a resident of Guelph, was inducted into the Order of Canada in 1997.

Peterborough parish celebrates anniversary
Archbishop Colin Johnson was the celebrant and guest speaker at St. Luke, Peterborough on Oct. 23 for the 140th anniversary celebration of the parish. Included in the service was the dedication of the St. George’s Chapel, a small worship centre located in the rear of the nave. In 2009, St. George, Peterborough merged with St. Luke’s. The chapel is furnished with gifts and memorials from St. George’s. Following the service, a parish luncheon was held, during which historical pictures were displayed. In addition to worship on Sundays and Wednesdays, the parish has community meals, a thrift store and a food bank.

Primates’ visit to Whitby caps celebrations
All Saints, Whitby celebrated its 150th patronal festival on Nov. 6 with guest celebrant Archbishop Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada. The service began with a declaration by a town crier and a grand procession, but it was moments of tenderness that made the service truly special – the Primates’ children’s focus, the singing of the same hymns as were sung at the church’s opening in 1866, and the exchange of the peace among the present and returning parishioners.

The Primates’ homily on saints and mission and his vivid retelling of the 2001 destruction by fire of St. John’s church in Lunenburg brought tears to eyes of the assembled congregation, which had had its own recent experience with fire. But the tears were joyful as the Primates then dedicated All Saints’ new altar, the last piece of furnishing to be replaced since arson gutted the sanctuary in 2009.

The service was the culmination of an 18-month celebration that included visits from the Primates, two bishops, and eight former clerics as well as a New Year’s Day social, a Victorian tea, a memorial tree planting, a brass hand concert, historic walks, Doors Open and quilt display, a flower festival, 150th chemise shirts, mugs and ornaments, a parish directory, a sesquicentennial cookbook, monthly recognition of memorial windows, a bi-monthly newsletter, and an elegant year-end gala dinner and dance.

At the inaugural meeting of the 150th planning committee in October 2014, the chair, Arlene Ralph, remarked that the church’s anniversary year was “not only a chance to honour the early church founders and generations of past members, but also a way to commit to holding ourselves and future generations in loving accountability with one another, an opportunity to publicly recognize that it is entirely through God’s grace and faithfulness that we are here.”

Going forward beyond this 150th year, All Saints’ strives always to be passionately spiritual, transformatively missional, and powerfully grateful for its past and its future as place in the family of God in Whitby, she said.

Visit to Six Nations part of reconciliation effort
The Aboriginal Issues Working Group at Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street has been taking steps toward growing a relationship with its First Nations neighbours. The group began meeting in 2013 and then invited representatives from Anglican and United churches in downtown Toronto to discuss the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report before its release in 2015.

Participants in the original group included Anglican and United Church members from Holy Trinity, Trinity Square, St. Paul, Bloor Street and Trinity-St. Paul United Church. Those conversations have resulted in various follow-up activities and workshops with leaders from Toronto’s First Nations community.

In early October 2016, a group of more than 30 people visited the Woodland Cultural Centre on the Six Nations reserve near Brantford and were invited to a Thanksgiving service at Her Majesty’s Royal Chapel of the Mohawks. Bishop Mark MacDonald, the Anglican Church of Canada’s national Indigenous bishop, preached at the service.

The Woodland Centre is a vibrant museum and art gallery complex situated next to the Mohawk Institute Residential School building. It provides in-depth and historically significant insight into the residential school system and offers a distinctive look at First Nations and Canadian history. The Mohawk Institute is being restored, with a reopening date planned in the first half of 2017.

“This visit was another step in our collective learning along the path to reaching out and achieving reconciliation and understanding with First Nations peoples,” says a member of the group. To learn more about this initiative, sign up for the weekly Indigenous news digest at awg.redeemer@gmail.com. Another visit to Six Nations is being planned to coincide with the opening of the Mohawk Institute next spring.
School of ministry to raise up clergy
TIMMINS - On Jan. 27, the Diocese of Timmins will launch its new school of ministry for local parish leaders who feel called to take on more formal roles in the church.

The diocese’s theological education team has been seeking a suitable location for the new school, and has decided to launch in the diocese’s downtown area.

The school will be headquartered at St. Luke’s Church, where the diocese has already established an office.

The school will offer a two-year program, with classes held on Saturdays and Sundays.

Applications are now being accepted, and interested candidates should contact the diocese at 705-623-3474 or anglican@timminsdiocese.ca.
Faith groups come together on poverty
Forum hears about basic income, advocacy strategies

BY RYAN WESTON

MEMBERS of several faith traditions gathered at Queen’s Park on Nov. 24 to hear about the possibilities of a basic income and to strategize for effective interfaith advocacy on poverty reduction in Ontario. The annual Religious Leaders Forum was presented by the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition.

Archbishop Colin Johnson helped open the day with a theological reflection that explored ways that the multi-faith audience was “united in our service to both our faith and how that faith intersects with the wider community.” Referring to the implications of understanding ourselves as being beloved by God, he insisted that the needs of the poor are at the core of many religious traditions.

“Everyone is beloved,” he said. “The question I have is: What would it look like if all of our policies, if all of our governance, if all of our rules, if all of our activities, if all of our interventions were governed based on that inherent dignity of every person? That each is cherished. That all are declared beloved.”

In his keynote address, Senator Art Eggleton addressed the question of whether poverty eradication is possible and what role faith communities can play in bringing it about.

Arguing that there are considerable economic and social costs to poverty in society, Senator Eggleton insisted that “the biggest cost is the toll on people’s lives: the loss of dignity, marginalization.”

He said the current systems for dealing with poverty are failing. “We’re locking people into a system or systems that trap them in poverty… They are degrading, demeaning, stigmatizing.”

In his keynote address, Senator Art Eggleton talks about a guaranteed annual income in his keynote address.

Senator Art Eggleton talks about a guaranteed annual income in his keynote address.

A basic income or Guaranteed Annual Income was one of five “transformative strategies” for poverty elimination he explored in his talk, along with local leadership, stimulating the economy, investing in education and undertaking serious taxation reform.

The Ontario government is currently preparing to undertake a basic income pilot project to explore how this strategy might be used to address poverty across the province.

“It’s time to end poverty and reduce inequality in this country we are blessed to live in,” said Senator Eggleton. “It’s time to improve equality of opportunity and better sharing of our resources. It’s time to explore a new way, a new approach. It’s time for a basic income.”

Some of the final messages of the morning encouraged faith communities to become actively engaged in advocacy for poverty reduction. Senator Eggleton observed that “faith communities have the ability to inspire and mobilize human resources; in fact, you have extraordinary capabilities.”

MPP Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale-High Park) echoed this sentiment when she reminded the audience that churches, temples and mosques represent hundreds of mosques, people as Muslims, we’re all in this together. And that is what the political is.”

BY RYAN WESTON

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The annual Religious Leaders Forum was presented by the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition.

Archbishop Colin Johnson speaks at the Religious Leaders Forum at Queen’s Park, presented by the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Archbishop Colin Johnson speaks at the Religious Leaders Forum at Queen’s Park, presented by the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition.

Jeniffer Laidley from Campaign 2000 (left) and economist Kaylie Tiessen speak at the forum.

Jeniffer Laidley from Campaign 2000 (left) and economist Kaylie Tiessen speak at the forum.

Spirit of Advent fundraising campaign to train and equip more students at the college.

Vigil upholds water in God’s creation

“Keepers of the Water: A Vigil of Lament and Thanksgiving” will be held on Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square. The service incorporates Indigenous and Christian traditions around blessing water and valuing its role in God’s creation. Bishop-elect Riscylla Walsh Shaw will preside. The church is located behind the Toronto Eaton Centre at 10 Trinity Square, Toronto.

Diocese welcomes interim CAO

Susan Abell has been appointed interim chief administrative officer of the Diocese as of Nov. 8. She has been active in the church at both the local and diocesan levels, most recently as the chair of the working group for Growing in Christ, the diocese’s strategic plan. Ms. Abell has extensive business experience in the not-for-profit sector and currently works as a consultant of management resources. As interim CAO, her responsibilities will include implementing Growing in Christ, supervising diocesan team leaders and overseeing administrative functions of the Diocesan Centre. She works two days a week as the diocese searches for a full-time CAO.

Jeniffer Laidley from Campaign 2000 (left) and economist Kaylie Tiessen speak at the forum.

Choir offers free webcast of concert

For those who can’t get to a Christmas concert this season, the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir is providing a free webcast of its Festival of Carols to viewers at home. The concert, filmed on Dec. 7, features traditional and contemporary carols, including an audience sing-along. The choir is joined by organist David Briggs of St. James Cathedral and the Canadian Staff Band. Viewers can access the webcast on the choir’s website, www.tmchoir.org.

Levee, Order start new year

The annual Archbishop’s levee will be held on Jan. 1 at St. James Cathedral, followed by the Order of the Diocese of Toronto presentations. The levee will begin with a receiving line and reception at 2 p.m., with the ringing of the Bells of Old York. At 3:30 p.m. there will be a selection of festive music, followed by a chorale evensong and the presentations of the Order of the Diocese of Toronto at 4 p.m. All are welcome, and nursery care will be provided.