Diocesan Centre undergoes changes

Upgrades include signage, technology

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

OVER the past several months, changes have been emerging around the Diocesan Centre to help staff, clergy and volunteers with their work. These changes – some subtle and some obvious – are reshaping both the building and some of the work that happens inside.

Some of the changes to the building itself are small, but Susan Abell, ODT, the diocese’s interim chief administrative officer since last November, is enthusiastic about their impact. “What we’ve done are things I’ve seen done in other workplaces, and the whole intent is to make it more functional for the people who work here or who come here,” she says.

One of Ms. Abell’s favourite projects has been improving signage around the building, starting with the front doors. At her suggestion, the blue diocesan logo was added to the window, and the street number was given much greater prominence. The coats of arms above both doors were also repainted, and planters with colourful flowers were added outside the main entrance.

“When I first came, I remember thinking, ‘What is that sort of yellow brick building?’ The crests shine kind of like a beacon now. It’s not only to house people; it’s also to identify that this is a part of the Anglican Church in downtown Toronto,” she says. “We’re working to be part of the neighbourhood, to be seen as neighbours.”

Inside, offices and cubicles are now equipped with nameplates featuring each staff person’s name and department. “It gives people a place that’s theirs. It’s not about ownership; it’s identifying this is the person and this is the work that’s being done in this space,” says Ms. Abell.

Signs have also been added to make the washrooms on each floor more visible, while new directories on the second and third floors help visitors orient themselves when they step off the elevator.

Other efforts are more involved, including plans to give the boardroom a much-needed technical upgrade. Funded by an Our Faith–Our Hope grant, the meeting space will be fitted with a complete audio and video system to help people see and hear each other better.

“It’s more than just cosmetic; it’s improving the acoustics in the room,” says Pamela Boisvert, secretary of Synod. “Right now if you’re at one end and someone is speaking at the other end, you just can’t hear them.” Almost 100 meetings were held in the boardroom in 2016, with the hope is that this conference will allow for video conferencing.

“I think this is one area that we’ve really lagged behind in terms of technology,” says Ms. Boisvert. “What we’re planning for the boardroom is typical in any other boardroom, so this is just to bring us up to the modern day.”

She hopes the upgrades will be installed and in use by the end of the year.

Some of the building updates have been far more low-tech. Several of the second-floor meeting rooms are now equipped with whiteboards, and each room has a clock to help schedules stay on track. The Diocesan Centre roof was also replaced during the summer, a much-needed repair.

Ultimately, Ms. Abell expects that a review will be conducted within the next year to evaluate the needs of staff and others in

The video component will include either a built-in projector or a smartboard. The hope is that this technology will allow for video conferencing.

“Conference seeks to break down barriers

BY ELIN GOULDEN

The diocese’s annual Outreach and Advocacy Conference will take place on Nov. 4 at St. John, York Mills, 19 Don Ridge Dr., Toronto. St. John is readily accessible by TTC, as well as by car from Highway 401.

The theme of this year’s conference is “Becoming God’s people: Embracing difference, building solidarity.” While that vision of the Kingdom of God is of diverse peoples brought into communion through Christ as members of one body, all too often, in our society and in our churches, there remain barriers to listening to and fully welcoming each other. This conference aims to help us break down those barriers, examine our own privilege, and learn to hear what others’ needs are, and to work towards breaking down those barriers in our own lives.

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Director sets sail for retirement

Ministry spanned three decades

By Stuart Mann

As he nears the end of his long career with the diocese, Canon Dave Robinson is planning another sort of journey. Next summer, he will sail his boat from Toronto Islands to Thunder Bay, stopping along the way at ports on Lake Erie, the North Channel and points west. Canon Robinson has sailed on all the Great Lakes, but this trip will have special significance. After Thunder Bay, he will start a new chapter of his life in Winnipeg, where his wife, the Rev. Canon Heather McCance, the former chancellor of his diocese, will start a new ministry with the diocese, Canon Dave Robinson will retire as the director of the diocese’s Congregational Development department on Nov. 1, ending a remarkable career that began in 1987, when he was hired as the frontline youth worker at Flemingdon Park Ministry, a diocesan outreach in Don Mills.

For the last three years, he became the diocese’s youth consultant, then a consultant for Congregational Development (then called Program Resources), specializing in parish conflict resolution. He went on to become the department’s lead consultant and then director. Known for his encyclopedic knowledge of the diocese and its history, he reckons he has visited every church. “This is the family firm,” he says. “My Dad was coming to meetings at the Diocesan Centre when I was born. He was the president of the diocesan AYPA (Anglican Young People’s Association), and my mother was the diocesan secretary. There were always stories around the kitchen table when I was a kid.”

He’s passionate about the work of Congregational Development. “What we’re really all about is helping congregations and mission to thrive. Worship Jesus Christ, proclaim the Gospel, embody Christ in word and action—that’s what we want congregations to do, so we try to figure out the resources they need to get there.”

One of the things he is most proud of is the creation of the Supporting Congregations Volunteer Corps, a 70-person group of trained coaches and facilitators who work with individuals and congregations to build up the church during times of transition, challenge and change. They are highly skilled and committed, assisting parishes with everything from Natural Church Development and parish selection committees, to parish administration, amalgamations and reconfigurations. Canon Robinson says the corps is indispensable to the diocese as it seeks to grow healthy, missional parishes.

He also played a role in developing the diocese’s Strategic and Sustainable Ministry Policy, which provides a set of definitions and principles about sustainable and strategic parish ministry. The policy is a tool to help the diocese assess the viability of churches and their ministries. Canon Robinson was one of the early champions of the diocese of Natural Church Development, an initiative that helps parishes become healthier through regular cycles of self-evaluation and action. To date, there have been 100 cycles. “We’ve seen some parishes that are six or seven cycles in that have been transformed,” he says. “They’re healthy, vital and missional.”

He admits it’s sometimes hard to see that the diocese is benefiting from the work of the corps. Sometimes, he says, he uses a nautical image to describe the feeling. “The diocese is like a supertanker: you only know it’s changing course by looking at the wake and seeing the curve.”

But he is confident it is heading in the right direction. “Yes, we’ve shrunk numerically overall, but 25 per cent of our churches are growing. I think we’re really succeeded where some denominations have not.”

He says the diocese also plays an important role for the rest of the Canadian church. “We’re a big, growing diocese and we have resources that other dioceses do not. Being able to share those resources is very important.”

Looking ahead to Winnipeg, he says he might do some consulting work for other dioceses. On a personal level, he plans to work on a family history project and, of course, explore Lake Superior on his boat, which he will keep in Thunder Bay. He will also keep in touch with lots of people back home in the Diocese of Toronto. “Forgive for now and we’ll see where it goes,” he says with a smile.
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The Reformation, 500 years on

In our music, God is glorified

BISHOP’S OPINION
By Bishop Kevin Robertson

Even though the girls come from different parishes across our diocese (and beyond), there is a strong bond that has developed between them. For each of them, whether they are eight or 18, church music is helping them to nurture their Christian faith. I strongly commend this camp to the young women of our diocese, and I am grateful to Fr. Philip Howse, who has served as chaplain to the camp for many years.

In my travels around York Scarborough for the past nine months, I have come to discover the wonderful diversity of music that exists in our parishes. In some places, there are professional choirs, while others have no choir at all. Some parishes enjoy traditional Anglican hymnody, while others raise the roof with a rock Eucharist, Jazz Vespers or a praise band. In a recent parish we were told that a new church music concert that is starting to develop.

Whatever our ability or musical preference, we are all called to worship God and offer to God the gift of praise in song. The 20th century Methodist hymn-writer Fred Pratt Green captured well the importance of music in our life of faith: “When in our music God is glorified, and adornment less than a crown, it is as though the whole creation cried, Alleluia!”

So, get out there and sing to the Lord a new song!

BISHOP’S OPINION

As a boy growing up in the parish of Holy Trinity, Thornhill, there was a rule that you had to be 10 years old before you could join the choir. In those days, the choir filled the entire chancel at the 9 a.m. service, and those of us on the cusps of double digits flocked to be there with the older kids. I vividly remember the year I was finally allowed to join the choir. It was just in time to sing for the wedding of our assistant curate, a dynamic, guitar-strumming young cleric by the name of Philip Poole, and his bride, Karen.

It is no exaggeration to say that my participation in that junior choir helped to form me as a musician. The discipline, the power of the rhythm and the artistry of the printing press, Luther’s printer could lecture on Reformation themes.

The Protestant Reformation and the Counter-Reformation in the Roman Catholic Church, the tenets of learning, the training of clergy and leaders, new forms of piety, competitive theology and alternative church order and practice. It also produced schism, persecution and prejudice. Factions produced still more factions. The Hundred Years’ War that resulted tore Europe apart, destroying families and countries. Death and destruction were a terrible legacy that not only marred a continent but blighted relationships and hosted hostilities that echo to this day.

The Reformation radically challenged old orthodoxies, either in calling them back to their roots (radix) or in questioning their legitimacy and authority. Any reformation is inherently violent to some degree, and that was certainly true in the 16th-century Reformation. Reformations is perhaps a better term, because there were several, some more extreme than others, in different places and times.

We are now trying to assess the results of the reformation's five centuries later, healing old wounds, correcting misunderstandings, clarifying issues, bridging divisions and also affirming truths and important principles. We continue to shape the process of reconciliation of our various branches of the church but not because we do not want to get along. Traces of the Counter-Reformation, the Puritan Reformation, and the Catholic Reformation are still evident today. Each of our churches is on a journey of discovery, of change, and of growth.

In the Anglican Church we pray for the Church that is we become, even as he and the Father are one. That is not a new canonic form of prayer, but that each is so bound together in love and will that there is complete unity of person and life. The essential task of seeking unity is not only possible but the prayer of Jesus.
BY ELIN GOULDEN

Most Christians would agree that we are called to care for the vulnerable in our midst. Whether directly through food banks, Out of the Cold, refugee sponsorship and the like, or indirectly through donations to FaithWorks, almost every parish in our diocese is engaged at some level in meeting basic human needs. We understand that when we serve “the least of these,” we are serving Jesus himself (Matthew 25:40).

But the Bible not only calls us to serve the vulnerable directly; it calls us to speak up on their behalf. Examples of this kind of advocacy include Moses and Esther, who risked their lives to bring food to the plight of the Jewish people before Pharaoh and the King of Persia. Again the prophets call God’s people to establish justice (Amos 5:15, Micah 6:8) and to speak out for those at the margins (Proverbs 31:8-9, Isaiah 1:17). Even in exile, they are invited to comment on budgets and new legislation. Recognizing the importance of charitable organizations’ public witness on the impact of government policies, Canadian law considers these communications aspects of the church’s charitable purpose.

Over the past decade or more, the Social Justice and Advocacy Committee has drafted annual vestry motions on concerns with which our diocese is connected: poverty reduction, affordable housing, care for the environment, welcoming refugees and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. These motions are non-partisan, and the diocesan College of Bishops must approve their final wording before commending them to parishes for consideration. When parishes across the diocese support these motions, it strengthens the bishops’ voices in their advocacy with government. For example, Archbishop Johnson’s response to the recent provincial budget and proposed labour legislation drew on parishes’ support for the 2014 vestry motion in support of raising the minimum wage.

The motions also serve to inform parishes about diocesan social justice concerns. Some Anglicans have first-hand knowledge of the impacts of poverty, lack of housing, environmental damage or unjust policies, but many others do not. The vestry motion campaign is an opportunity to learn more from those who do experience these impacts so we can add our voices in support of theirs. Each year, the Social Justice and Advocacy Committee prepares a brief “backgrounder” on the issue at hand, which can be used as a bulletin insert. Lately, we have also offered workshops in each episcopal area for Anglicans to learn more about the issue before vestry, as well as providing resources for further learning. The past two vestry motions around reconciliation with Indigenous peoples have motivated many parishes to learn more about the impact of colonialism and residential schools on First Nations, a welcome development.

More and more parishes, recognizing the need for education around the issues addressed in the social justice vestry motion, have asked us to make the motion and supporting resources available earlier in the year. To encourage parishes to take these opportunities for learning, we announced the subject of the 2018 motion in May, posted resources on the diocese’s website over the summer, and presented the wording of the motion to the bishops for approval in September. All these materials are available on the diocesan website at www.toronto.anglican.ca/socialjustice.

Some parishes shy away from presenting a social justice motion at vestry, seeking to avoid conflict. This is understandable, particularly in certain situations, and no parish is required to present the motion. However, the Anglican Church cannot be insulated from issues that affect the world God loves. Learning about and speaking out on these matters – even learning to disagree well together – is part of the witness we bear to Christ, who makes all things new.

Elin Goulden is the diocese’s Social Justice and Advocacy consultant.
Bi-vocational life is my normal

Priest balances roles of incumbent, psychotherapist

By the Rev. Susan Haig

I have never thought of myself as a pioneer, but, apparently, I am. The novelty of my bi-vocationality was brought home to me in a dramatic way in the autumn of 2015. And, as so often happens, it was accomplished through the eyes of another.

It was my last evening in Santiago, Spain. I was seated at a long table with 20 or so other pilgrims, and we were celebrating the completion of our pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago by breaking bread together. I found myself across the table from a young Canadian woman, Sarah, from Kingston. As the conversation ebbed and flowed, someone made the connection that three of us grouped together were all psychotherapists – at which point another person, Otto, from Winnipeg, piped up and said, “Yeah, and Susan’s also an Anglican priest.”

Words fail to do justice to the look of rapture on Sarah’s face. Too stunned to speak for many seconds, she was aglow with transfiguring amazement and awe. Looking ready to laugh and cry at the same time, she stammered: “I can’t believe this! I walked the entire Camino trying to discern if I should leave my profession of psychotherapy to answer what I believe is God’s call to the Anglican priesthood. I’ve been struggling with wanting to do both, not able to choose between them, not knowing or ever conceiving that both could be possible. And here I am, on the last night, thinking I wasn’t going to get an answer – and here you are, giving me the answer to five weeks of prayer.”

Now, with tears welling up, she continued, “I just can’t believe it! My heart’s going to burst. Because the answer is: Sarah, you can do both.”

Yes, you can do both. What for Sarah was a startling and awesome epiphany is an answer – and here you are, giving me not knowing or ever conceiving that both can do both, not able to choose between them, believe is God’s call to the Anglican priest-minister. The same time, she stammered: “I can’t believe this! I walked the entire Camino trying to discern if I should leave my profession of psychotherapy to answer what I believe is God’s call to the Anglican priest. I’ve been struggling with wanting to do both, not able to choose between them, not knowing or ever conceiving that both could be possible. And here I am, on the last night, thinking I wasn’t going to get an answer – and here you are, giving me the answer to five weeks of prayer.”

While my professions may seem to outsiders as so similar as to be almost identical, they are not. This configuration requires me to be constantly alert. Not only is it vitally important to remember, as I open my eyes every morning, exactly what day of the week it is, it’s also vitally important to remember with precision the "clothes" I’m wearing at any given time. However, for me, there is both professional and personal fulfillment, as well as a stimulating synergy created by the tensions between the two, which more than compensate for the effort required in staying alert and switching gears.

What exactly does my part-time parish ministry look like? Like that of any incumbent in the Anglican church. Despite being one of a small number of bi-vocational priests in the diocese, I hadn’t appreciated its singularity and enormous potential. But she sure did.

That she could still be a psychotherapist and also say yes to God’s call to ordained ministry was a tremendous gift to her. As it has been to me. During the last five years, I have alternated every week between days spent in my part-time psychotherapy private practice and days spent as the part-time incumbent of St. Theodore’s, one of the first tasks I set for myself was to accelerate the process of awakening in the congregation bluntly that “Mother Susan will not be able to do this on her own.” Following her lead, I spent much time in exploring, inviting and encouraging the gifts of others. Just one example: I saw early on that having a deacon would be a huge asset, and so made it likely as possible to discern with the parish and a potential candidate whether we and she were called in this way. By God’s grace, we were.

This opening of space brings lovely surprises to the life of a parish and to the blossoming of lay individuals, who might not otherwise develop or exercise their own ministry gifts. A year ago, we conducted a very successful capital campaign that was conceived and executed by a former churchwarden who wasn’t a natural fundraiser but felt called to undertake a vital project that I could not have led myself.

Time and again, I have observed that being a part-time incumbent creates a steady, salutary pressure on others to harken to God’s call to step up to fill the gaps that are so obvious and at times so large.

Finally, my bi-vocational status is a tremendous gift to today’s church at large. Many churches in our diocese are somewhere towards the end of their life cycle; like St. Theodore’s, they may have years of time in which to engage still but not the numbers or financial resources to maintain a full-time priest.

There is no reason for them to feel neither must they of necessity resort to non-stipendiary ministry, which may not be fulsome enough for the tasks at hand.

It is also a gift to the church to have ordained servants who are “at the edge of inside.” In an op-ed article in The New York Times, David Brooks described the unique contribution to an organization made by insiders, who are neither inside and deeply embedded nor outside and throwing “missiles from beyond the walls.” The part-time priest with another active professional vocation is at the edge of inside, with “the loyalty of a faithful insider, but the judgment of the critical outsider.” As a person standing at the doorway, she is not “confused by trivia” nor “locked into the status quo.” Instead, her experience of watching constant comings and goings makes her comfortable with the value of internal questioning and transformation, and so able to evaluate and speak with a fresh perspective.

Above all, the bi-vocational priest is a unique voice amongst many other important voices – a voice the church needs now to hear. Here’s is a unique vocation with plenitude of gifts to offer the church in our times, as it adapts and re-configures itself in response to new and sometimes challenging opportunities.
Former chaplain helps Anglicans share Gospel

**BY STUART MANN**

For the past 10 years, the Rev. Canon Susan Bell has been speaking to a school community of 650 students, staff and faculty three times a week about faith and life. This experience, combined with being the associate priest at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Toronto, for many years has formed a good grounding for the work of a missioner.

Indeed, as she retired as chaplain at Havergal College, an independent girls’ school in Toronto, to take up the diocese’s canon missioner position on a full-time basis on Sept. 1, she relished the opportunity to not only share the Gospel with people, but to empower other Anglicans in the diocese to do so as well.

“We are followers of the Way,” she says. “Sharing the Gospel and sharing our faith with people who don’t yet know the name of Jesus is what we’re about.”

Being the diocese’s canon missioner is to have “a heart and orientation” towards people who do not know Christianity or have left the church, she says. “The work is to help us focus on our mission again, and I’ll do that any way that makes sense. I’m pleased and honoured to try and I look forward to working with my colleagues.”

She praised the work of the Rev. Canon Douglas Graydon, who as the diocese’s Coordinator of Chaplaincy Services for the past 15 years supported the school chaplains. The chaplaincy services department is being restructured and Canon Graydon’s new job title is Coordinator of Health Care Chaplaincy. In that role, he will provide support to hospital chaplains and parish nurses.

“I’d like to thank Douglas for all his work over the years with the school chaplains,” says Canon Bell.

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**MUSICAL SUMMER**

Members of The Toronto Diocesan Choir School for Girls gather after an evening service at St. James Cathedral on Aug. 20. The choir school is a two-week program open to young choristers from the diocese and beyond. Its purpose is to prepare them to perform music in its widest spectrum for Anglican liturgy. Joining the choristers are choir director Tony Browning (far left) and Mary Ridgley and the Rev. Canon Philip Hobson (far right). PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON
I had a sort of conversion experience

Sister Deborah Stewart is a member of The Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit.

My position is that of Canadian director, president of our Canadian board of directors, and a member of the U.S. board of directors. I am on the chapter, which is a group of 18 members who meet annually in the fall to pray and plan our coming year’s educational topics and the ongoing direction of our community.

We are a lay community whose Rule of Life is based on Benedictine spiritual-  ity. Our focus is on becoming the people God wants us to be. We are accountable to one another for our spiritual growth. We rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. We are recognized by the Anglican Church in Canada and the Episcopal Church in the United States.

As the Canadian director, my key role is to read the monthly letters of our community members, to keep a pulse on the heart of the community. We have 114 life-professed members. I have four people writing their monthly letter to me, to whom I respond. I am involved in the production of our monthly bulletin, which features an educational article, questions for reflection, community news and members’ stories of mission and ministry to others.

Our community members live and work in the world in all sorts of occupations. I have three children and four grandchildren and have worked in the insurance industry for 45 years. Our cov- entant commitment to The Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit is our desire to grow closer to God, serving Jesus Christ right where we are in the world. Our Rule of Life is our toolbox to assist us in becoming more obedient to the nudges of the Holy Spirit, growing closer to Christ. In the messy circumstances of our everyday world, it is an anchor to help us live in a purposeful and joyful way.

Most of us are lay people – married, single, divorced, widowed or partnered. There is also a place for clergy in our midst, as we grow and learn together. We are sort of a virtual community in that we do not live together, but maintain our solid connections through prayer, Skype email, monthly corporate communion where physically possible, and an annual retreat. Our bonds are strong and we support one another through all trials and joys of life. We have members in Canada, the United States, Haiti and Australia.

In 1984, I had a sort of conversion experience and started reading my Bible and attending church again, after leaving it in my teenage years. I really wanted support in this wonderful life I had found. I was introduced to The Worker Sisters and Brothers of the Holy Spirit while attending Emmanuel Anglican Church in Richmond Hill. I felt like I had found my home. I joined in 1985 and became a Sister in 1992. We have a wonderful educational process: a year of application with study each month, another year of study as a worker, a year or more of just “being” in the com- munity together. I believe that is the reason I will continue, because a monthly study before becoming a Sister or Brother is that I have the desire in the early days of the diocese, it was a missionary diocese. As the com- munity grew and changed, Bishop Strachan helped to reimagine how the church needed to function in a new context, he says, “I think this is a critical juncture for us to reclaim our tradition of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.”

First full-time missioner appointed

Continued From Page 7

“He has in large part been our sup- port and has created community for us. I’ve really appreciated that.”

August. Bonnie Briggs, a housing activist and poet who was 64, died on Aug. 4 at her Parkdale home. Formerly homeless herself, Ms. Briggs was loved by people fighting homelessness and poverty in the city, who saw her and her husband Kerry Briggs join years of meetings, rallies, marches and memorials on homelessness, never or barely. The memorial has 850 names on it.

Archbishop opens Reformation exhibit

Archbishop Colin Johnson will officially open “Flickering of the Flame: Print and the Reformation” on Oct. 4 at 5 p.m. at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, 120 St. George St., Toronto. The exhibi- tion of books, pamphlets and other items from the Reformation will run from Sept. 25 to Dec. 20. Admission is free. For opening hours, visit www.fisher.library.utoronto.ca.

BRIEFLY

Archbishop opens Reformation exhibit

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Activist founded homeless memorial

The woman who first suggested Toronto needed a standing memo- rial for homeless people who died on its streets was honoured at the memorial, located outside Holy Trinity, Trinity Square, in early
Anglicans support migrant field workers

Services, counselling part of expanding outreach ministry

BY DIANA SWIFT

You may have seen them as you drive east, west or north of Toronto: Old Testament-like scenes with hundreds of foreign workers labouring in fields. You may have missed the summer’s bounty of fruits, vegetables and flowers.

These seasonal agricultural employees arrive in May and June from Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia and remain separated from their families until they depart in November. Living in barracks on farms, they were once isolated and unsupported with little access to transportation, counselling and other services. But now, innovative Anglican outreach ministries in the diocese are helping to change that.

At the forefront of collaboration with the Durham Region Migrant Workers Network (DRMWN), the Rev. Augusto Nunez, the Rev. Canon Ted McCollum and the Rev. Kit Geaves are among those leading a comprehensive outreach to visiting field workers.

The Peruvian-born Mr. Nunez is the first priest-in-charge at St. Saviour, Orono, about 90 km east of Toronto. Thanks to a Ministry Allocation Fund grant from the diocese, he’ll be able to split his time between serving at St. Saviour’s and conducting an itinerant ministry across the communities of Northumberland County in aid of seasonal workers. “I came to Canada at age 12, and I can relate to living in a strange land and culture and leaving everything you know. You need support,” he says.

Mr. Nunez’s group kicked off the 2017 season with a health fair on July 16 at St. John, Bowmanville, where Mr. Geaves is the incumbent, and celebrated St. Saviour’s first Spanish service on July 23. Last year, Mr. Nunez served in the seasonal workers’ program based at St. John’s, and before that he spent three summers doing the same in the Beaverton area. In collaboration with a growing number of other groups in the DRMWN, his ministry tends to a broad swathe of spiritual and practical needs—from worship services for workers in the immediate neighbourhood with its natural fragrance. Begonias, theodora, petunias and snapdragons flower in abundance.

Since its dedication, the clock has survived changeable weather, a hail storm, a resident frog, and a heavy rendering of “O Canada” during the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which was beautifully catered by the Anglican Church Women. It will hopefully remain as a unique and lovely reminder of Canada’s sesquicentennial by the Anglican Church Women. It will hopefully remain as a unique and lovely reminder of Canada’s sesquicentennial. It will hopefully remain as a unique and lovely reminder of Canada’s sesquicentennial.

The Rev. Kit Geaves (second from left) and the Rev. Augusto Nunez join migrant farm workers and a volunteer at a health fair for the workers at St. John, Bowmanville in July. Top right, workers near Beaverton. Bottom right, workers receive communion at St. John’s in 2016.

Floral clock honours Canada’s sesquicentennial

BY ROSEMARY WALTON

St. John’s stands on beautiful grounds in the picturesque village of Craighurst in the township of Oro-Medonte, located on the northwestern shores of Lake Simcoe. The church has a very active congregation and won first prize in the “Churches” category of the International Ploughing Match for a garden sculpture using farming implements. Since then, it has looked for other ways to add to the interest and attractive character of the church grounds.

Canada’s sesquicentennial celebrations this year provided an opportunity to mark the occasion by building a floral clock. It has a diameter of 3.6 metres with foundations constructed from large pieces of Canadian Shield granite.

The stones were brought from a blasting site near Bracebridge, Ont., by members of the congregation who were told they were going on a day’s mystery outing; their only requirements were steel-capped boots and a strong back.

The waterproof vault that holds the mechanical drive for the clock’s hands was set in concrete in the centre and a cable was laid from the vault to an electronic control inside the church. The vault is covered by a large circular panel with a red maple leaf motif.

The dates of confederation and the establishment of St. John’s were inscribed on pieces of flat stone in the outside ring of the clock face. Rich soil was obtained from a nearby farm with the understanding that it was well aged so that it would not signal its presence to the immediate neighbourhood with its natural fragrance. Begonias, marigolds and delphiniums—planted by members of the congregation and the Sunday School. Since its dedication, the clock has survived changeable weather, a hail storm, a resident frog, and a heavy rendering of “O Canada” during the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which was beautifully catered by the Anglican Church Women. It will hopefully remain as a unique and lovely reminder of Canada’s sesquicentennial celebrations.

Rosemary Walton is the parish administrator of the Parish of Craighurst and Midhurst.
Durham group welcomes refugees

After more than a year of fundraising and preparation, ROAD (Refugee Outreach Anglicans of Durham) welcomed a refugee family in May at Pearson airport. ROAD is a multi-parish committee led by St. George, Pickering Village, along with St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering, All Saints, Whiby, St. Thomas, Brooklin and St. George Memorial, Oshawa. With the help of AURA (Anglican United Refugee Alliance) and Ian McBride, its executive director, the group accomplished its aim. The family was found and a flight arranged.

The family of seven had fled Syria and lived for five years in a refugee camp in Turkey. After their arrival in Canada, they lived in temporary housing for two months while the committee found a suitable rental home. The parishes had collected enough items to completely furnish their new home.

The children started school in September, and the adults are taking English classes at the Ajax Welcome Centre. Volunteers from the parishes helped with English over the summer, taking the family to medical and dental appointments and shopping. They are becoming used to the transit system and are gradually needing less help from ROAD.

“This whole adventure has been inspiring for our parishes,” says Bruce Beveridge, a member of St. Thomas, Brooklin. “Reaching out and helping the less fortunate has drawn us closer to our faith.”

Church gives scholarships, bursaries

For the past 10 years, Grade 12 students in Pickering and Ajax, and adult students in foreign countries, have been awarded scholarships and bursaries by St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering, to help pay for their education.

Scholarships have been given to 31 students from the Ajax and Pickering area, and 10 international students, from Tanzania, Guyana, Uganda, Guatemala, Kenya, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Egypt and Cambodia, have received bursaries.

Recipients of the 2017 Youth Achievement Scholarship are Taije Gustavus, Nathanael Masson and Sarah Power. The 2017 Arcelia Hunte Memorial International Bursary was awarded to three women from the Mother’s Union Sewing Centre of the Diocese of Tarime, Tanzania—Happiness Daniel, Esté Paulo and Suzana Samuel.

High school students who are residents of Ajax or Pickering and plan to attend university or college in September 2018 are eligible for the scholarship. The next set of scholarship applications is due by May 18, 2018, and forms will be available online at www.stpaulsonthehill.com, at the church or at school guidance offices in Ajax and Pickering beginning in January.

St. Paul’s is proud to continually encourage and support the young people of its community and adults studying to make a difference in their families and communities in the world at large.

For more information or to make a donation to the program, visit the church’s website or call the church office at 905-839-7909.

Church celebrates women’s ministry

Past presidents of the Anglican Church Women at St. Clement, Eglinton gathered on May 28 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the ministry, service and fellowship of women in the parish. The community gathered to view special exhibits marking the 50 years of efforts, and the Rev. Andrew Federle rededicated “The Nativity,” created by Yvonne Williams and given by the women of St. Clement’s in gratitude for the privilege of service from 1892 to 1962. Through liturgy and celebration, the entire month of May marked a focus on women in ministry in the Church, locally and globally.
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12. Discipline Parish Nurses Network
11. Christmas bazaar, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Church of the Ascension, St. Luke, Scarborough
10. St. John’s Christmas market, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., St. John’s, Midland
9. Christmas bazaar, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Dunstan of Canterbury, 56 Lawson Rd., Scarborough
8. Christmas bazaar, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Christ Church, Scarborough
7. Christmas market, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., St. Peter, Erincliffe
6. Christmas bazaar, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Luke, Scarborough
5. Christmas bazaar, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Christ Church, Gillwood
4. Christmas market, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., St. Peter, Erincliffe
3. Christmas bazaar, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Christ Church, Scarborough
2. Christmas bazaar, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. John’s, Midland
1. Christmas bazaar, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Dunstan of Canterbury, 56 Lawson Rd., Scarborough

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October 2017
AnglicanClassifieds
Abuses not so far away or long ago

BY ELIZABETH CUMMINGS

One and a half years on from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s release of its 94 recommendations, the term “reconciliation” often feels like nothing more than a buzzword handled back and forth by people of power. Even reading over the 94 recommendations (which I recommend), trying to formulate a cohesive idea of what reconciliation might look like on a personal level can prove to be a difficult task, yet another item to add to a never-ending list of things you really will get to someday. Many of us are settlers in this land, and it’s easy enough to think of our country’s abuses as bad things that happened a long time ago. If only this were true.

One only has to drive 42 kilometers west of Hamilton to find the longest-able and oldest of the Six Nations community. We were led through a thanksgiving address and walked through the Six Nations’ traditional consensus-based decision-making process, out in ways both big and small, personal reconciliation.

On Aug. 6, 1903, then-Primiate Michael Peers delivered an official apology for residential schools from the Anglican Church of Canada to the National Native Convocation in Niskay, Ont. Deeply moving and heartfelt, it’s all too easy for the rest of us (settlers) to feel like this is not just the start of reconciliation as a church, but also the end.

As not only a Canadian but also a Christian, a settler and an Anglican, reconciliation takes me to the place where I know and appreciate the differences and similarities between my community and each Indigenous community across Canada. Reconciliation needs to be as active for me as colonialism has been for them. Most importantly, reconciliation must involve listening to and believing Indigenous people about their own lived experiences and genuinely respecting them and their culture as equal to what ever I can bring to the table.

For all the books I’ve read and discussions I’ve participated in, Stronger Together was not an event I could ever hope to gain a better understanding of in any meaningful way. By hearing from and listening to the injustices of the past and how they are still reverberating through the Six Nations community, we were able to attend, we heard from survivors of the Mohawk Institute Residential School and also from staff and students at Six Nations Polytechnic, the organizer at the Royal Mohawk Chapel and elders of the Six Nations community. We were led through a thanksgiving address and walked through the Six Nations’ traditional consensus-based decision-making process, out in ways both big and small, personal reconciliation.

Elizabeth Cummings is a churchwarden at St. Stephen-in-the-Fields, Toronto.

Canadian Briefs

Diocese sponsors 350 refugees

Victoria - The Diocese of British Columbia is now sponsoring the settlement in Canada of 350 refugees, making it the largest private sponsor of refugees on Vancouver Island, if not the entire province of B.C., the diocese’s refugee sponsorship co-ordinator says.

The diocese’s refugee program is 10 times larger now than it was one and a half years ago, says Rebecca Siebert, making it comparable to those of the dioceses of Ottawa and Niagara.

The Diocese of British Columbia covers Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands of the Strait of Georgia and Kingcome Inlet on the B.C. mainland.

Ms. Siebert says offers from would-be volunteers or donors abruptly stopped last year, and since then the program has been trying to reach out to other public for more support and calling on family members of the refugees to raise the money needed to sponsor them. These family members, most of whom arrived in Canada as refugees themselves years ago, have been “scraping together all of their savings in order to facilitate the sponsorship of relatives,” she says.

About 30 per cent of the sponsoring groups the program manages are Anglican parishes, and about 10 per cent are ecumenical partnerships. Most of the rest, she says, are people who don’t actually know the family in need of a faith-based organization at all, but have felt called to act.

For more information and to register, visit www.toronto.anglican.ca outreatchurchconference or contact Elin Goulden, social justice and advocacy consultant, at egoulden@toronto.anglican.ca or 416-363-0812, ext. 240.

Conference takes aim at barriers

Continued from Page 1

others in our pews and our communities are saying.

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Carl James, the Jean Augustine Chair in Education at York University. Dr. James is well known for his work on the impact of structural racism on youth in the GTA. He is also chair of the Black Experience Project Research Advisory Committee, whose report on the black experience in Toronto was released this summer.

Workshops will cover topics such as unpacking privilege, inequity in access to housing, building interfaith friendships in the face of xenophobia, we as a Church need to find ways to embrace difference to build solidarity. By hearing from people of diverse experiences, we hope to gain a better understanding of how we can stand alongside and uphold each other.

Several FaithWorks ministries will host displays where attendees can learn about their work and how to get involved.

The cost for the conference is $80 per person (try to reach out or those with low incomes), including lunch and refreshments. Childcare is also available.

For more information and to register, visit www.toronto.anglican.ca/outreachchurchconference or contact Elin Goulden, social justice and advocacy consultant, at egoulden@toronto.anglican.ca or 416-363-0812, ext. 240.