Diocese challenged to pull on oars

BY STUART MANN

"ARE you ready to row?"

Bishop Andrew Asbil, the dio-
cese’s coadjutor bishop, asked that
question during his consecration
service on Sept. 29 at St. James
Cathedral in Toronto.

The congregation answered with
an emphatic “Yes!”

It was one of many delightful
and surprising moments in the
two-hour service, which began and
ended with songs written by rock
groups The Who and U2.

Bishop Asbil, wearing his mitre
and vestments for the first time,
asked the question from the chan-
cel steps just before the exchange
of the Peace. He was referring to
the song “Michael Row the Boat
Ashore,” the famous spiritual that
describes St. Michael the Archangel
rowing across the River Jordan to
the Promised Land.

“To be dressed today in a mitre,
a chasuble, a ring, a pectoral cross
and a staff – some of it brand new,
some of it well worn, some of it worn
by saints who have gone before us – is to be literally wrapped in a
story that can’t help but pull the
oar for life,” he said. “In a world
full of cynicism, doubt, fear, greed
and violence, to pull on the oar is
to pull for life itself.”

He thanked Archbishop Fred
Hiltz, who gave the homily, and
Archbishop Colin Johnson, the
current Bishop of Toronto who
will be retiring at the end of the
year. He thanked his wife Mary
and their children. Then he ad-
dressed the congregation – and
the diocese – directly.

“Now I have only one question
for you – for the Church, for our
priests and deacons, for our lay
leaders and pew dwellers: Are you
ready to row?”

He continued: “Are you ready
to put your back against the wind
and pull on the oar?”

“Yes!”

Bishop Andrew Asbil (left) and Archbishop Colin Johnson walk down the aisle after the consecration service. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, congratulates Bishop Asbil outside St. James Cathedral.

It was a wonderful moment and a
powerful image to share as Bishop
Asbil prepares to become the next

Another memorable moment
was at the end of the service, when
Bishop Asbil and Archbishop John-
son walked down the aisle together,
side by side, to sustained applause
while U2’s song “Beautiful Day,”
performed by musicians from the
Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St.,
filled the historic cathedral.

To many, including Archbishop
Johnson, it felt like the start of a
new chapter in the life of the dio-
cese. “I’m so happy that Andrew is
going to be leading the diocese in
some new directions – that’s exactly

A RETIREMENT CELEBRATION
HONOURING
ARCHBISHOP COLIN JOHNSON

All are welcome!
Saturday, December 15, 2018
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
St. James Cathedral
Church & King Streets, Toronto

Refreshments and Receiving Line
1:00 – 1:45 pm, 2:45 – 3:30 pm
Speeches and Presentations 2:00 pm
Choral Evensong 4:00 pm
Preacher: Archbishop Johnson

Continued on Page 2
New bishop elated

Continued From Page 1

what we need to do," he said. "I’ve led it for a season of time and now it’s time for someone else to take those reins and move it further into the 21st century."

The service started with an acknowledgment by Bishop-elect Chris Harper, the next Bishop of Saskatoon, that it was being held on traditional First Nations land. He then smudged the chancel, purifying and sanctifying the altar with scented smoke.

The first reading – the story of Jacob’s ladder from Genesis – was told in the form of a story by Jean Bubba. Without using notes, Ms. Bubba captured the congregation with her voice and her descriptions.

Morning Wang, a leader of the Methodist Church, delivered the gospel – Revelation 12:7-12 – was read by the Rev. Bridget Coyle-Asbil. The gospel was followed by the second reading in the form of a story by Jean Bubba, telling the story of Jacob’s ladder.

In an interview after the service, Bishop Asbil said he was “elated, overwhelmed, delighted, happy and excited about what’s next. I really want to have an understanding of where the diocese is, to learn as much as I can from Colm before he retires, and to really get to know the other bishops. I’ve had a chance over the last two months to go to diocesan meetings and get my feet wet. In listening, I’m hearing a lot of excitement about the possibilities for the future, and I’m also hearing the anxiety, too.”

He said the image of Michael rowing the boat is a simple and powerful image for the Church today. “It has been sung by generations of people living in the world, looking for a sense of hope and anticipation. We’re the boat. We’re going to do our best to keep rowing because the world needs the Church – desperately.”

He added: “For us, it’s having that sense of hope that who we are as a Christian people is moving forward in a new and holy direction that goes into the world and finds the broken and enslaved and gives a sense of what can be.”

Bishop Asbil, the former rector of St. James Cathedral and dean of Toronto, will be working with Archbishop Johnson over the next three months to learn about the duties and responsibilities of a diocesan bishop. His office is now at the Diocesan Centre. His service will take place in January at the cathedral.

As the 12th Bishop of Toronto, Bishop Asbil will be the chief pastor of the diocese, working with four suffragan bishops. The diocese is the most populous in Canada, and have a total of 100 congregations in 183 parishes. It stretches from Mississauga to Brighton and north to Haliburton.

In addition to the hundreds of people filling St. James Cathedral for the consecration, many more were following along on their computers, phones and tablets. Viewers tuned in from Toronto, Minden, Port Hope, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Hong Kong, Zimbabwe and more. This is the first major liturgical event the diocese has live streamed. The video can be viewed on the diocese’s YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/tordio135. Bishop Asbil’s installation as Bishop of Toronto in January will also be shared live.
Clockwise from above: Archbishop Colin Johnson places the mitre on Bishop Andrew Asbil's head during the consecration; bishops from across Canada place their hands on Bishop Asbil's head as Archbishop Johnson prays for the Holy Spirit to come down upon him; Bishop Asbil's wife Mary and his mother and father walk to the chancel; Bishop Asbil kisses Canon Alice Jean Finlay after receiving the crozier that belonged to the late Archbishop Terence Finlay. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

The Anglican Diocese of Toronto Foundation congratulates The Right Reverend Andrew John Asbil on his consecration to the episcopate as he prepares to become the 12th Bishop of the Diocese of Toronto.

To learn more about how you can join us in supporting the ministry of Bishop, please visit us at www.toronto.anglican.ca/foundation.
I am excited by what’s in store

ARCHBISHOP’S DIARY
By Archbishop Colin Johnson

I am preparing to retire as Archbishop of Toronto. I have already retired as Metropolitan of Ontario and Bishop of Moosonee. Many ask what I have planned and if I am worried about what I will do on Jan. 1.

At Easter, several parishioners kindly said they were sorry it was my last Easter. I replied that while I planned to retire, I hoped there would be many more Easters for me yet! I was not intending this to be my last Easter. (Now as for my Synod—hmm, that might be a bit more attractive!)

Almost 42 years of ordained ministry have taught me a few things about change and how I approach it. Change is inevitable. You can’t stop it. At most you can direct it, but that often makes it more complicated and difficult. At some point, you have to forgo the deceit that you are in total charge; you have to learn to trust. How I wish parishioners as well as people, could learn that lesson! I long ago realized that I am a lot less in control of things than I pretend to myself to be—and what is?—they still work out just fine. It’s God’s Church and God’s world. I am invited and encouraged to engage in it fully and to the very best of my ability—but it remains under God’s gracious providence.

I have seen that so clearly in my life and ministry. Change also involves grief. There is the loss (or at least the lessening) of something that has been very important and life-giving. There is the acknowledgement that some things were never to be. How I wish we could simply say goodbye, and let the grief work out as you might have hoped. There are some things that you will not be able to ac-

compilish or fix or get a chance to complete (or even get around to start). There is the grief for the undone as well as for the poorly done. That grief needs to be recognized and dealt with each time, but cannot be allowed to overwhelm. Grief involves at least pieces of denial, anger, depression and bargaining (to reference the famous patterns identified by Kuhler-Ross).

How we learn to approach the small losses, including how we approach the change of retirement, rehouses us for the ultimate giving over of ourselves to God in faith. As Christians, we can grieve, but not without hope; we cannot be derailed. We do not have to fear. Loss or diminishment or even death itself are never the last word because God in Jesus has overcome death and given us the hope of resurrection.

So change is a spiritual and emotional process as well as a physical one. The ongoing presence of a community of faith and the assurance of a compassionate and abiding God have been essential to me in my past experience of loss and coping well with it in the long run. I continue to be blessed with a rich and vibrant community of faith and faithfulness.

I have always found that I am more interested in what opportunity God is offering me next than hankering for the “good old days.” As a lover of history and tradition, I have always looked to the future for our work out as you might have hoped. There are some things that you will not be able to ac-

We need to talk

God is love. God is good. Not all people behave well all the time, even though we are all formed in the image of God. This needs attention, and is getting attention in the media, in the streets, in our churches. We are taking responsibility for calling out the bad behaviour that oppress, coerce and persecute people of God in the workplace, in the worship place, where we meet and greet and eat, where we study, play, work, explore and create.

There has long been an imbalance of power between the genders in Western national systems, and it continues to contribute to demeaning and subjugating behaviours. The time is now to attend to this redress, with intention, clarity and compassion. Where can we practise inclusion in our personal and corporate lives? How do we open the lines of communication, encourage and allow the Holy Spirit-questions that are emerging, and create space for every voice in our conversations? There are emotional— for some, even post-traumatic stress— triggers each time we turn on the radio or the television. There are societal convulsions while hearing public testimony about misconduct, abuse, harassment; we are realizing that we do not really know our neighbours, our publicly elected officials. And often, they do not know us. There is a crisis of community. How do we get to know one another with honesty, respect and humility? How do we allow ourselves to be vulnerable in ways that will build relationships across divides of political parties and fundamentally different theologies, recognizing our common humanity?

What dynamics are shifting in the balance of power, influence, authority? While this might cause initial consternation, how can we spiritually deepen to embrace these shifts, to augment and support each other? How is this already changing in the public sphere? Speaking to the Church, where can we meet this call to new awareness in our liturgies, in our hymnody, in our printed materials? What can we address outside our worship services— creating spaces of welcome, inclusion, expanding the reign of God to grow disciples of all stripes and shapes? Much of our communication, inside the Church and in Church circles, is currently in coded language that perpetuates a system of control and patriarchalism. We have inherited this; now we have an opportunity and, especially, a call from the Holy Spirit, to adapt. The winds of change are blowing, and we need people to feel welcome and included in their own Church. The message of Jesus is liberating for all people, beyond the “citizens” of any particular culture or society— out to the fringes, beyond the margins, and all the way up to the top of the hierarchy.

The Anglican

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In the Diocese of Toronto: Our diocese covers 190 parishes covering 20,000 square kilometers. Of the nearly 5 million people who live within the diocesan boundaries, 370,000 claim to be affiliated with the Anglican Church, with about 30,000 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 proportion of Aboriginal peoples in the country.

The Archbishops of Toronto: The Most Rev. Colin Johnson

York-Credit Valley: The Rt. Rev. Jerry Anderson

York-Surrounds: The Rt. Rev. R. Stephen Shaw

York-Stouffville: The Rt. Rev. Ken Robertson

York-Mississauga: The Rt. Rev. Peter Fenty

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News

Churches worship online

Live broadcast links deanery’s parishes, viewers from around the world

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

On Aug. 19, parishes in the Toronto East Deanery worshipped together in a new way—through a live stream. The project was prompted by the Rev. Tay Moss, incumbent of Church of the Messiah, Toronto. Mr. Moss is a live stream enthusiast, broadcasting his parish’s Sunday worship service each week and frequently sharing his expertise with other congregations.

“One of the unique things about live streaming is about connecting people in a way that exudes authenticity, immediacy and a back-and-forth relationship between the content creators and the audience,” he says.

With cameras set up at St. Barnabas, Chester, the service was broadcast on large screens, tablets and phones in their own worship spaces. After the exchange of the Peace, the other churches turned off the screens and celebrated the Eucharist separately, while St. Barnabas continued the live stream for those watching online.

Eight of the Toronto East parishes participated, a response far greater than Ms. Lewis had hoped for. “It was wonderful, it was so affirming,” she says.

The project was prompted by Ms. Lewis’s advice to other church leaders to pray about how they can continue to make a difference with their missions and ministry. Lots of parishioners have family in the islands who were able to see it,” says Ms. Lewis.

As for the other deanery churches, their members were enthusiastic about the experience. “They really enjoyed it. A lot of them felt it was really neat to be a part of a bigger whole,” says Ms. Lewis.

Ms. Lewis is eager to keep using technology to bring people together. “I want it to be more interactive in a lot of ways, getting others involved who would take their devices out to shut-ins and take communion,” she says.

She says she would love to get youth involved, and she’s started talking with Jillian Ruch, the area youth coordinator, about how that could work. She also likes to explore the idea of hosting a multi-parish Bible study with a live-streamed component. “We could do something different, making it interactive and dealing with issues that everyone is focusing on at the moment in the Church,” she says.

Whatever direction the next live stream takes, Ms. Lewis emphasizes that trying out new technology is essential for the Church. “It’s a wonderful opportunity to spread the Word,” she says. “You can see it on the streets. People aren’t looking at each other; they’re looking at their phones and listening to what’s playing in their cars. We need to reach out to them in those ways. Otherwise, we’re not going to be heard.”

Ms. Moss agrees. “In the Church, we create many engaging experiences such as worship, concerts and classes — why not make those experiences more available? I am all about kicking over bushel baskets to let the light shine,” he says.

“I believe the future of the Church depends on finding new ways to share Christ with the world,” Ms. Lewis says. “Ms. Lewis’s advice to other churches considering live streaming is simple. “Go for it! What’s the worst that can happen? Nobody watches. Well, so what? You’ve done it,” she says. “It’s so important to keep up to date and try new avenues. It’s exciting stuff!”

Donations go twice as far for those in need

BY STUART MANN

FaithWorks has launched a special appeal that every little new or not increased donation to the campaign matched dollar for dollar, up to $75,000, to make as possible $150,000 in additional funding to help the most vulnerable and marginalized people in the diocese.

“We really ask parishioners to pray about how they can continue to make a difference with FaithWorks,” says Paige Souter, the diocese’s manager of annual giving. “Any little extra that they could make would make a tremendous amount of difference in the lives of others.”

With a few dollars a goes a long way. “We can take five or ten dollars for granted in our own lives, but for others it can literally mean a hot meal or a coat in the winter or a safe place for a mother and child,” says Ms. Souter.

Those wishing to make a donation can do so through their parish’s Fair Works campaign or by donating directly to FaithWorks at www.faithworks.ca. (Online donations will not be included as part of the donor’s parish campaign.)

FaithWorks is the diocese’s annual outreach appeal, providing funds for 15 ministry partners, and affiliated ministries serve about 32,000 people a year as people, including homeless, ex-prisoners, refugees, women and children who are at risk of domestic violence, Indigenous people and those living with HIV/AIDS.

The special appeal is made possible by a pledge of $75,000 from an anonymous donor who has supported FaithWorks for many years, says Ms. Souter. “He is so wonderful that he’s willing to do this,” she says.

She hopes the special appeal will help parishioners refocus their attention on FaithWorks, which saw a decrease in donations last year as people responded to the Syrian refugee crisis. “It’s critical that we take our eyes away from the big picture and get back to the levels we were at so we can continue to support vulnerable people across the diocese,” she says.

FaithWorks raised $1.3 million in 2017 from parish, corporate and individual donations. Since it began in 1996, it has raised more than $25 million.

Ms. Souter says giving to FaithWorks is a way that Anglicans can put their faith in action. “When we’re serving someone who is hungry, we’re serving Christ; when we’re giving somebody a safe place to live, we’re serving Christ; when we’re helping a prisoner leave incarceration and rebuild their lives, we’re serving Christ. It’s the heart of who we are as his followers. It’s not just enough to have faith in Christ, we need to live out that faith in an active way.”

The Rev. Dana Dickson, incumbent of Trinity, Bradford, blesses a bearded dragon and dogs at the church’s Dec. 23 Advent service on Sept. 23. Many churches held services in late September and early October to celebrate St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and ecology. PHOTO COURTESY OF TRINITY, BRADFORD

BLESSED

Advent Lessons and Carols — Sunday December 2, 4 pm

Begin the Season of Advent with a service of readings and carols.

Choral music of Holman, Palestrina, Cashmore & Manz

A gathering with fruit cake and sherry will follow

Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol — Sunday December 9, 4 pm

A dramatic reading with audience carols led by the ASPS choir. Tickets $10/15 available at the door

Children’s Musical: The Nat-So-Silent Night — Sunday December 16, 3 pm

Humorous and touching play presented by the children of the parish and community.

Nineteen Lessons and Carols — Sunday December 23, 4 pm

A beloved traditional selection of carols and readings by candlelight.

Choral music of William, Holman, Praetorius and Rutter.

A social gathering featuring mince tarts and mulled wine will follow.

Christmas Eve — Monday December 24, 10 pm

A candid traditional Christmas service featuring Christmas carols & choral music.

Christmas Day — Tuesday December 25, 10:30 am

A 32-year link of an 8:30 Carol Service and Matins Service

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the life of faith is not to be seen or heard, but for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, it is present in the world around us. It is not something that we can create or control, but something that we can recognize and be transformed by.”

news
I say my Church is the Big Tent

The Rev. Canon Gary van der Meer is the diocese’s interfaith officer. He has also served as incumbent of St. Anne, Toronto since 2011.

As the interfaith officer, I hope to bring a robust Anglican presence to the conversations and developing friendships between faith groups in the Toronto area. When you consider how multi-cultural Toronto is, there is a lot going on. It’s my first year in this role and I’m trying to find out what’s happening, then figuring out where to join in.

When Archbishop Johnson appointed me, we talked about responsibilities. He advised me that there is more than one path now regularly volunteer at St. Anne’s. There is an open mind. Then I heard Professor Richardson talk about Anglicanism. In a tutorial session, he talked about what he called “comparative views” – how the Anglican tradition pragmatically made room for people of differing theologies, unity and liturgy to be at home in one tradition. At the time, I thought, “Finally something that makes sense. If ever decide to go back to church, I will look for an Anglican church.” His comment has stayed with me all these years. Now I say “my Church is the Big Tent.” I feel how our Primate, Fred Hiltz, phrased it: our Church is called to “Holy Spaciousness.”

When I did go back to church, it was at St. Thomas, Huron Street. At first it was the welcome at the coffee hour. In so many ways, that welcome continues to matter to me. I stayed for the refugee committee. And then I discovered how much the members of the refugee committee loved the liturgy at St. Thomas. I started to love the liturgy by loving them. I sat beside an elderly woman at an outreach committee celebration and she asked me what I thought the Church of the future should be like. I don’t remember everything I said. It’s what she said that mattered. “What do you want to do about that?” I had never used the word ordination before about myself, and I couldn’t unsay it after that. I am so thankful for those supportive people who helped me figure out what to do.

Five years from now, I hope I am part of new ways of bringing the neighbourliness and the city together to build community in God’s Church. This is my life at St. Anne’s, and I love the crossroads of people finding the Church to be holy spaciousness.

My favourite passage of scripture keeps changing. It was the case I was used to saying, “Whomver is not against us is for us” (Mark 9:40). I want to begin conversations from this place.
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November 2018

BRIEFLY

Synod coverage on website

The diocese’s Regular Session of Synod will be held Nov. 9-10 in Richmond Hill. Full coverage of the proceedings will be provided on the diocese’s website, www.toronto.anglican.ca.

Workshop explores assisted dying

A workshop on medical assistance in dying will be held on Nov. 24 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist, 99 Brock St., Peterborough. Participants will enter into conversation with the Rev. Canon Douglas Greydan, the diocese’s coordinator of Chaplaincy Services, and the Rev. Margaret Johnston-Jones to explore the pastoral, moral and theological questions surrounding this issue. Lunch will be provided. For more information, contact Jennifer McLeod at 905-668-1558.

Children’s ministry in spotlight

The Toronto Children’s Ministry Conference, a gathering of parents, volunteers, ministry leaders and anyone with a passion for ministering to children, will take place on Nov. 3 at Wycliffe College, 5 Hoskin Ave., Toronto. Visit www.wycliffecollege.ca.

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Event honours archbishop for ‘job well done’

ANGLIANS will have a chance to say farewell to Archbishop Colin Johnson before he retires at the end of the year. A special retirement celebration will be held on Dec. 15 from 1-4 p.m. at St. James Cathedral, Church and King streets, Toronto. All are invited.

“I would strongly encourage people to come,” says Bishop Andrew Asbil, the diocese’s coadjutor bishop. “This is a real opportunity to give him the accolades and praise, and to speak the words we need to say to him for all that he has done for the diocese as the diocesan, the Archdeacon of York, and as a faithful priest of this diocese.”

The celebration will include refreshments, a receiving line, speeches and presentations. It will conclude with a Choral Evensong at which Archbishop Johnson will preach.

Archbishop Johnson is retiring after more than 40 years of ordained ministry. He has been the Bishop of Toronto, or diocesan bishop, since 2004. He was the Bishop of Moosonee and Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario before stepping down from those roles in October.

Archbishop Johnson will continue to serve as Bishop of Toronto until he retires on Dec. 31. He will be succeeded by Bishop Asbil on Jan. 1, 2019.

“For many reasons, the diocese will want to gather to congratulate Archbishop Johnson on a job well done, to thank him for a lifetime of service to the Church generally and the Diocese of Toronto in particular, and to wish him and Ellen well in this next chapter of their lives,” says Canon Mary Conliffe, the Diocesan Executive Assistant to the Archbishop. “This will be a wonderful occasion, and I hope many people will come out to honour him.”

In addition to the Dec. 15 event, Archbishop Johnson was the guest of honour at the Bishop’s Company Dinner, held in Toronto on Oct. 19. He will be chairing the diocese’s Synod for the last time when it convenes on Nov. 9-10 in Richmond Hill.

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Local youth visit Yukon

Group stays with First Nation

BY AMY FERGUSON

A group of eight youth and four leaders from St. Aidan, Toronto traveled to the Diocese of Yukon this summer to visit the village of Old Crow, a small, isolated community in the northwest corner of Canada. We went to learn about one of Canada’s First Nations, to make connections with the people there as part of our parish’s ongoing work at truth and reconciliation, and to be of service to the community if possible.

Old Crow is a self-governing First Nation, the Vuntut Gwich’in. It was a joy for us to discover the strengths and wisdom of the people there, as we met with various leaders in the community and were guided by their priest, the Rev. Bert Chestnut.

We saw how the people of the Vuntut Gwich’in have created sustainable solutions to help them live healthy lives while having as little impact as possible on the planet and their fragile ecosystem. We learned about their work to help protect that part of the planet and the Porcupine Caribou herd upon which they depend. As the week progressed, we gradually met more of the community members and became friends rather than just visitors.

Our group members were changed as we learned to see the earth – its people, plants, animals and water – differently. We were made more aware of the need to change our thinking and habits to preserve our world. Equally important, we were able to experience another way of thinking about how people should behave towards each other and work together despite coming from very different backgrounds.

Living in this vibrant First Nations community for a week gave us some real hope for the future. It was a model that needs to be shared with more Canadians as we work to repair the damage that has been done in our country.

Amy Ferguson was one of the leaders on the trip.

Centre for Spiritual Growth opens at St. James, Orillia

WENDY Passmore has been a spiritual director for more than 20 years, helping to guide both clergy and laity on their faith journeys. Now she is branching out to provide workshops and retreats at the newly opened Centre for Spiritual Growth, located at St. James, Orillia.

“It has always been in my heart to somehow recover the contemplative tradition from our Christian past,” says Ms. Passmore. “It’s really about inviting people into quiet prayer, meditation and attending to their inner life with God.”

Ms. Passmore hopes the centre will be a model that needs to be shared with more Canadians as we work to repair the damage that has been done in our country.

The centre is offering two work-shops in November. On Nov. 3, the Rev. Sandor Borbely, a former Jesuit priest and the incumbent of St. Thomas, Shanty Bay, will lead a workshop on “Christian Mindfulness.” On Nov. 17, there will be a workshop on “Safe Conversation” techniques. For more information on these and other activities at the centre, visit www.stjamesorillia.com/bulletin-board/centre-for-spiritual-growth.

The Rev. Canon Mark Kinghan and Bishop Kevin Robertson join members of the Uxbridge Gay/Straight Alliance.

Uxbridge church starts Gay/Straight Alliance

When Kathleen Carroll, a member of St. Paul, Uxbridge and a teacher at a local school, proposed that the students at the school form a rainbow by wearing different coloured t-shirts in honour of Pride Week, she was met with a negative response. Out of that experience came the creation of the Uxbridge Gay/Straight Alliance, which meets at the church.

In an informal and safe environment, members of the LGBTQ community and their friends share experiences and offer mutual support and encouragement. At the meeting on Sept. 15, the group welcomed Bishop Kevin Robertson, who shared his story and invited questions and comments. Through this initiative, Christ Church, Stouffville is starting at Gay/Straight Alliance in its community as well.

Above, youth and leaders from St. Aidan, Toronto at Old Crow. At right, youth from St. Aidan’s and Old Crow spend time together. Photos courtesy of St. Aidan’s.
Speakers urge kinship with creation

BY DIANA SWIFT

“We are the earth” is a compelling statement. But how do we express that and how can urban people of faith live it in reality?

Those were the primary talking points for a panel convened Sept. 25 at the Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St. in Toronto. The discussion was part of the church’s “Season of Creation,” a time to celebrate and give thanks to the Creator for the earth and to look at ways to safeguard it.

The three principal speakers were Bishop Mark MacDonald, national Indigenous bishop of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Rev. Dr. Cheryl DiNovo, moderator of the United Church of Canada, the Rev. Dr. Bill Phipps, co-founder of Faith & the Common Good and a former MPP, and the Very Rev. Dr. Bill Phipps, co-founder of Faith & the Common Good and a former moderator of the United Church of Canada.

Explaining the ancient beliefs of the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island (North America), Bishop MacDonald stressed the fundamental principle of the interconnectedness and interdependence of all creation. “In the great Walk of Life, all life is responsible to the rest of life. We are all relatives,” he said.

In Indigenous culture, he said, that relational kinship lies at the very heart of life, whereas in Western society humanity has become increasingly alienated from the rest of creation, with adverse consequences for the planet. “This fundamental kinship, sometimes known as Walking the Good Life, does exist in Christianity but it is not taught strongly enough in Christian teaching,” he said.

Dr. DiNovo agreed that the Western culture of individualism has increased humankind’s separateness from the planet, resulting in an existence that is not spiritual but rather cut off from spirit. She took the notion of kinship beyond earth to the galaxy, quoting Carl Sagan’s famous aphorism: “We are made of star stuff” in that every thing on earth was made in the interiors of collapsing stars.

“If we are not to be separate from earth, then our orders are to save the earth, then our orders are to save the planet. We have a prophetic call to do so.”

Dr. Phipps noted that the United Church has changed its creed to include a core commitment to “living with respect in creation.” And rather than being “given” that creation, he said, humankind is actually embedded in it along with all other forms of life and is not, as we arrogantly assume, its pinnacle. “The assault we see on Mother Earth is an assault on ourselves.”

He called on society to celebrate and grieve publicly for the planet. On a political level, Dr. DiNovo reminded the audience that people of faith must speak truth to power: “We have to remind government that we are the true owners of Parliament Hill and Queen’s Park and City Hall, and the public servants there work for us. We must make sure they understand their responsibilities.”

Bishop MacDonald said urbanities must first abandon the urban-versus-rural mentality and humbly acknowledge the sacred land on which their cities are built. “This sacred location calls us to the beginnings.”

In a question to the panel from the floor, one audience member expressed frustration with the bewildering number of organizations focused on climate change. She wanted to know how to replicate the leadership to galvanize the thousands of voices needed to effect change.

In response, Dr. Phipps pointed to faith communities as the perfect organizing tools. “I want to see our local churches active in this,” he said. “If every church installed solar panels and reduced its roof, that would send a huge message. Why don’t we in every faith community join up with congregations down the road and go down to Queen’s Park and demand action? And if we did that across Canada, things would change just like that.”

Diana Swift is a freelance writer.

Churches can lead fight for change

BY ELIN GOULDEN

The 2018 Parish Outreach & Greening Survey was launched in May to gain insight into the outreach, advocacy and environmental efforts of parishes in our diocese and how diocesan staff and volunteers can best support them. At the time of writing, 71 responses have been received from 67 parishes in all four episcopal areas – from large urban parishes to multi-point rural parishes, and parishes of every size and description in between.

It is clear that our parishes are active in direct outreach ministries, especially in providing food and shelter: 86 per cent of responding parishes either host or collect for a food bank program, and more than half host or contribute to a community meal program; 30 per cent have community vegetable gardens, and over 20 per cent are involved in an Out of the Cold program; 60 per cent have engaged in refugee sponsorship over the past two years.

Other forms of outreach include clothing exchanges; ministry to seniors, youth, hospitals and shelters; partnering with local organizations; and raising funds for FaithWorks’ ministries and PWDFD. Half of respondents are involved in five or more forms of direct outreach.

While participation in advocacy activities was generally lower, diocesan efforts to raise awareness and engagement have borne fruit. Fully 90 per cent of responding parishes present the diocesan social justice vestry motion at their annual vestries, and one-third are involved in meetings with elected officials on justice issues. Several indicated growing interest in Indigenous justice and reconciliation.

In terms of creation care, many parishes are doing the best they can with aging buildings and limited budgets. The vast majority of parishes (over 85 per cent) participate in cost conservation measures such as recycling (especially paper) and keeping lights, appliances and taps turned off when not in use. Nearly two-thirds use reusable bags and chinaware rather than plastic bottles and disposable cups. More than 60 per cent have upgraded to energy-efficient lighting and programmable thermostats, while a sizable minority (40-50 per cent) have taken measures such as improving insulation, upgrading heating systems, installing low-flow toilets, using non-toxic cleaning materials, and choosing landscaping that needs less water. Several respondents indicated they would like to do more in terms of energy and water conservation but lacked funds for upgrades. Participation in a free energy benchmarking program, such as that offered by Faith & the Common Good, could help such parishes prioritize measures that will have the greatest impact for the lowest cost.

Some parishes get creative when it comes to creation care. The Church of the Ascension, Port Perry has partnered with Kawartha Conservation to regenerate Williams Creek, located behind the church property. In this project, professionals have begun removing invasive Japanese knotweed from the creek, and volunteers will help replant the banks with native species and reinforce it with boulders to reduce erosion and improve wildlife habitat. Ascension’s property chair, Cliff Moon, a freshwater limnologist, describes it as a very practical way for the church to help “safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.”

Most parishes surveyed build awareness of justice issues by bringing social justice and creation care into prayer and preaching, as well as through use of bulletin inserts and other print resources. Nearly half make social or ecological justice the focus of specific Sundays, such as Earth Sunday or National Indigenous Sunday, while 46 per cent hold special events on social and ecological justice.

Overall, the survey indicates that parishes in our diocese interested in learning from each other. The survey offers a snapshot of a Church on the way, growing in love for, and public witness to, the environment that we are the true owners of, and in love for, and public witness to, the autochthonous wisdom of Indigenous peoples, “a wisdom that has nurtured the human spirit on the North for thousands of years.”

In response to the survey, a new truth and reconciliation initiative was suggested by Dr. Phipps, one that would unite people in the healing of the earth by listening to the autochthonous wisdom of Indigenous peoples, “a wisdom that has nurtured the human spirit on the North for thousands of years.”

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Looking Ahead

To submit items for Looking Ahead, email editor@toronto.anglican.ca. The deadline for the December issue is Nov. 1. Parishes can also promote their events on the diocese’s website Calendar at www.toronto.anglican.ca.

Music & Worship


Oct. 31 – Dec. 1 – Kingsway Organ Recital Series at All Saints, Kingsway, 2850 Bloor St., Toronto. All concerts begin at 12:30 p.m. and end at 1:30 p.m. Admission free but freewill offering gratefully accepted. For program details, visit www.organconcerts.ca.

Nov. 4 – All Souls’ Sunday Requiem Eucharist featuring the Redeker Choir, 7 p.m., Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street and Avenue Road, Toronto.

Nov. 10 – Each Children’s Chorus & Bach Chamber Youth Choir present “Resonant Reflection,” 7:30 p.m., St. John the Baptist, Norway, 470 Woodbine Ave., Toronto. A benefit concert for the East End Refugee Committee. Tickets $26; students $10. Tickets available at 416-461-4500 or at the door.

Nov. 10 – Messy Church for all ages, 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livington Rd., Toronto.

Dec. 1 – Carolis and lullabies at the Healey Willan Singers annual Christmas concert, 8 p.m., with accompanist John Stephenson and conductor Ron Cheung, St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto. Tickets available at the door (cash only), $20 adults, $15 students/seniors.

Dec. 9 – Advent carol service, 7:30 p.m., St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto.

Dec. 13 – Service of Healing and Reconciliation, a simple worship of song, readings and a reflection of God’s hope, for those experiencing loneliness, sadness and loss during the Christmas season, 10:30 a.m., St. Theodore of Canterbury, 111 Cactus Ave., Toronto.

Dec. 15 – The Mystery of Christmas at the Voices Chamber Choir annual Christmas concert, featuring Healey Willan’s The Mystery of Bethlehem, 8 p.m., St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto. Tickets available at the door (cash only), $20 adults, $15 students/seniors.

Sales

Nov. 3 – Christmas Bazaar, noon to 3 p.m., St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff, 3512 Kingston Rd. Crafts, baked goods and more.

Nov. 3 – Bazaar with bake table, café, jewellery and more, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Joseph of Nazareth, 280 Bloor St. Dr., Brampton. Call 905-793-8020.

Nov. 3 – Annual Christmas Bazaar featuring a lunch of homemade soup, sandwiches and dessert, a silent auction, an art sale, handmade jewelry and more, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. James the Apostle, 3 Cathedral Rd., Brampton. Call 905-451-7711.

Nov. 3 – Annual Club Christmas Sale featuring knitting, sewing and handcrafted one-of-a-kind items, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Timothy, Agincourt, 4125 Sheppard Ave. E., Toronto.

Nov. 3 – Christmas market, handcrafts, raffle, bake table and more, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., St. Barnabas, 301 Danforth Ave., Toronto.

Nov. 3 – Poinsettia bazaar, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Matthew, 150 Wilson Rd. S., Oakville. Knitting, baking, country store and more. Lunch room available.

Nov. 3 – Sugar Plum Christmas Bazaar: 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Margaret in-the-Pines, 4130 Lawrence Ave. E., Scarborough. Baked goods, craft table, collectible table, lunch room and more. Tables available for rent as well. Call 416-284-4123.

Nov. 3 – Bazaar, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Church of St. Mary & St. Martha, 1149 Weston Rd., Toronto. Bake, table, crafts and more.

Nov. 3 – Christmas bazaar with silent auction, bake table, crafts and more, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livington Rd., Toronto. Meet and have photos with Santa between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Nov. 10 – Christmas Bazaar, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Grace Church, 19 Parkway Ave., Markham. Featuring antiques, baking, knitting, sewing, lunch and more. Call 905-204-3184.

Nov. 10 – Christmas bazaar with homemade lunch, silent auction, baked goods and more, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., All Saints, 300 Dundas St. W., Whitby.

Nov. 10 – Christmas bazaar featuring gift baskets, baking, knitted goods, crafts and more, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. John’s, 885 Scarborough Golf Club Rd., Scarborough.

Nov. 16 – Art show featuring fine arts and crafts, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., St. Margaret’s By the Sea, 477 Manning Ave., Toronto. Ticketed reception with silent auction and wine tasting Friday evening. Open admission Saturday. Visit www.stmarymagdalena.ca/services-and-events.

Nov. 17 – Nutcracker Fair with silent auction, homemade baked goods, crafts and more, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto.

Nov. 17 – Holly Berry Bazaar, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Dunstan of Canterbury, 56 Lawson Rd., Scarborough. Handicrafts, jewelry, home-baked goods and more.

Nov. 17 – Christmas craft show and coffee house, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., crafts, book fair, home baking, luncheon and more, St. Olave, Bloor Street and Windermere Avenue, Toronto.

Nov. 17 – Christmas bazaar with crafts, bake table, lunch room and more, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Holy Family, Kennedy Road North, Heart Lake, Brampton.

Nov. 17 – Holly bazaar with crafts, baked good and more, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., St. Martin, Bay Ridges, 1200 St. Martin’s Dr., Pickering.

Nov. 24 – Snowflake Bazaar, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. John, 11 Temperance St., Bowmanville. Lunch room, bake sale, handmade knits, crafts and more.

Nov. 24 – Festival of Christmas with baked goods, gourmet gifts, crafts and more, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., Holy Trinity, 414 Brook St., Thornhill. Ticket: at the door, $10 per person.

Nov. 24 – Christmas bazaar with crafts, knitted goods, baked goods and more, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Andrew, 125 Wellington St., Bowmanville. Lunch room, bake table, crafts and more.

Nov. 24 – Holly Berry Fair with tea room, crafts, knitted goods, baking and more, 10:00 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Luke, 904 Cornwall Ave., Toronto.

Nov. 24 – Craft sale with gifts, food and more, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. John the Baptist, 470 Woodbine Ave., Toronto.

Dec. 1 – Holly Berry Bazaar 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. John, 11 Temperance St., Bowmanville. Lunch room, bake table, crafts and more.

Dec. 8 – Christmas craft and bake sale and an open house art exhibit hosted by the Creative Space Resident Artist Group, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., St. Aidan, 70 Silver Birch Ave., Toronto.

Workshops & Gatherings

Sept. 16–Dec. 2 – Christopher Leadershdip Course, designed to enhance your leadership and communication skills, and your confidence, 3:30 p.m., Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livington Rd., Toronto. Register by calling 416-410-7776 or 1-800-488-8925 or email cltctorontoeast@gmail.com.

Oct. 27 – “Spirituality for Activists,” led by the Rev. Maylanne Maybee, a deacon who is the former principal of the Centre for Christian Studies in Winnipeg, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., St. John’s, 235 Cummer Ave., Toronto. $90 ($25 for associates and oblates) if you bring a bag lunch; a hot meal is an additional $15. For more information, visit www.ssjd.ca or call 416-226-2201, ext. 305. Members of Prophitia, a fellowship of LGBTQ Anglicans who prefer the Book of Common Prayer, will be attending this event. For more information on Prophitia, call 416-977-4339.

Oct. 27 – Lay pastoral care teams are invited to attend an overview of lay pastoral care with Dr. Shelley Tidy, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., St. Philip, Etobicoke, 25 St. Phillips Rd., Etobicoke. Lunch provided. Call 416-244-0088 for more information.

Dec. 1 – Early Fashioned Christmas Bazaar with lunch room, homemade décor and gift items, baked goods and more, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Church of the Ascension, 266 North St., Por. Perry.

Dec. 1 – Christmas Kitchen, home baking, lunch, silent auction, Santa photos for kids and more, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., St. Timothy, 10 Old Orchard Grove, Toronto.

GOOD NEWS

Friends and colleagues gather at Trinity, Streetsville on Sept. 15 for the launch of Good News Church: Celebrating the Legacy of Harold Percy, edited by Dr. John Bowen and the Rev. Michael Knowles. Above from left are the Rev. Michael Knowles, Dr. John Bowen, former Mississauga mayor Hazel McCallion, ODT, the Rev. Canon Harold Percy and Bishop Jenny Andison of York. The book contains 18 essays exploring the lessons and impact of Canon Percy’s ministry on evangelism, discipleship, worship, preaching, mentoring, congregational outreach, financial stewardship and more. The book is published by Castle Quay Books and is available for $119.95. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Continued on Page 11

The Anglican

November 2018
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COUNSELING

IN MOTION

6. Threshold Ministries (formerly The
Clergy from outside the diocese
ward to where God takes me next.”
begin this journey, but I look for-
ing one’s self in God that endures
community must follow a “Rule
in God’s time,” praying, studying
in tonal quality, range and ability
to at least match the old one
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in Germany. The Beckerath-built
organ is expected to be useable
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ity would have cost $100,000 more.

The New Brunswick Anglican
Cathedral votes for $258k organ
SAULT STE. MARIE – The vestry of
enforced a proposal to build the
cathedral, at a cost of up to $258,000.

The winning proposal was made by
Rudolf von Beckerath, an organ-
maker from a foundry in Hamburg
Germany. The Beckerath-built
organ is expected to be useable
for up to 80 years. The vestry
would make the cathedral an
organ with similar music-making capac-

Other projects now under con-
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cathedral. The project will also in-
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EVEN though the ReCharge retreat on Sept. 21-23 at Muskoka Woods Camp started on generator power, the 168 participants from across the diocese – and even from Kingston! – lit up the music hall with songs, laughter and joy after long rides up to the camp. In our initial session, we learned about #drunknakedjesus – ask one of the youths what this means!

Afterwards, we moved to our cabins with help from our trusty flashlights, which only added to the excitement of our youth finding their cabins and beds for the night. We awoke to a beautiful morning, very thankful that breakfast was still able to be made and enjoyed by all, even with no power.

The power outage only rejigged our plans slightly, and the sessions carried on as if nothing stood in our way. The ages were split into 11-13 year-olds and 14-18 year-olds, all talking about the same topic: “What it means to feel at home.” We all learned about how God wants us to be home in Him, home in our communities, home in our churches, home in our families and home in ourselves.

Our afternoon was filled with excitement on the low ropes and during gym time, mountain biking, team games, skateboarding and chill-out time. With the power restored, our evening sessions had us split into our groups once again with scripture being acted out, stories being told and ending in our small groups to delve deeper into the conversations of “Home.”

The evening ended with an epic game of Flame Battlers – again, ask your youth! The retreat ended with a rousing service of celebration and a sermon telling our youth that fear can drive us away from our home in God. They were tasked with asking themselves what scares them the most and then to “Go and do it!”

We so look forward to our retreat next year and ask that you consider sending your youth to join in all the learning, fun and fellowship!

Jillian Ruch is chair of the Archbishop’s Youth Ministry Committee and an area youth ministry coordinator for York-Scarborough.

Visit our website at www.toronto.anglican.ca or find us on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.