Bishop to hold town hall meetings
All invited

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

BISHOP Andrew Asbil is holding five town hall meetings in early May to hear from lay people in every episcopal area about their hopes, fears and dreams for their parishes and the diocese. With clergy gathering in late May at their Clergy Conference, Bishop Asbil says he wants to have a similar chance to get to know the laity.

“It’s an opportunity for me as the new Diocesan to just be able to say words of encouragement and ask questions of the community of leaders, and for leaders to be able to voice where their hopes and aspirations are, as well as their anxieties,” he says. “Large crowds and small crowds are settings that I find really encouraging and give a lot of energy.”

The first meetings will take place on Wednesday, May 1, with one session at 2 p.m. at St. James Cathedral, Toronto and a second session at 7 p.m. at St. Bride, Clarkson. The third town hall will take place on Thursday, May 2 at 7 p.m. at St. Andrews, Scarborough.

The final meetings will be held on Saturday, May 4, when Bishop Asbil will visit St. Paul, Newmarket at 10 a.m. and St. Paul, Uxbridge at 2 p.m.

With no formal agenda or concrete objectives, Bishop Asbil says his goal is simply to have an open dialogue. “It’s not a legislative time. It’s not about necessarily setting all the courses and charts of where we’re going exactly. It’s really an opportunity for me just to be able to listen very carefully,” he says.

In that way, he’s framing the town halls as an extension of the courses and charts of where we’re going exactly. It’s really an opportunity for me just to be able to listen very carefully,” he says.

“I’m grateful for a job I’ve loved”

Diocese’s archivist retiring after long career

BY STUART MANN

CANON Mary-Anne Nicholls, the diocese’s first full-time Archivist, is retiring on March 31 after 35 ½ years of service.

“It’s been great,” she says, looking back on her long career: “I’m so grateful for the people I’ve worked with and the support I’ve received along the way. People tell me I’ve got the best job, and in many ways it’s true.”

When Canon Nicholls started in 1983, the diocese’s Archives were housed next to the Diocesan Centre’s hallway. The work area was the AWC’s old “bailing room,” where shipments of clothing were prepared for Canada’s north.

Since then, the Archives have grown, both in size and scope. The department now has a modern office space, a specialized storage area and a dedicated staff of two full-time employees and volunteers who offer a multitude of services to parishes, the diocese and the public.

Much of the growth has been due to Canon Nicholls’ hard work and leadership, although she is quick to give credit to others who have helped her over the years. These include David Ptolemy, ODT, who was the diocese’s secretary-treasurer from 1976 to 1994. Mr. Ptolemy hired Canon Nicholls and gave her the support to modernize the Archives; he has been a volunteer in the Archives since his retirement. Canon Nicholls also credits long-time leaders, and for leaders to be able to voice where their hopes and aspirations are, as well as their anxieties,” he says. "Large crowds and small crowds are settings that I find really encouraging and give a lot of energy."
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CELEBRATE
The diocese’s 24th annual black heritage service, ‘Journey into Light, Giving Thanks for Our Ordained Ministers,’ is held at St. Paul, Bloor Street on Feb. 24. Clockwise from top left: the Rev. Ian LaFleur gives the sermon; members of the Ghanaian Anglican Church of Toronto's choir sing; flags are carried around the church during the playing of the black national anthem, 'Lift Every Voice and Sing'; the St. Michael and All Angels dancers perform; enjoying the service; Jan Morgan plays a trumpet solo; Bishop Riscylla Shaw and members of the congregation share the Peace.

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

LAY ANOINTERS TRAINING WEEKEND
Offered by The Diocese of Toronto – The Bishop’s Committee on Healing (BCH)
Date: Friday May 24, 2019 7:00 pm – Sunday May 26, 2019 1:00 pm
Location: The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine (SSJD),
235 Cummer Ave, North York, ON M2M 2E8

This training weekend is for individuals to be trained and equipped for the ministry of lay anointing in the Parish. Supervising clergy attend for approximately two hours on the Saturday afternoon. Registrants may register as a commuter (lunch but no accommodation) or register to stay in the SSJD Guest House for the weekend which includes accommodation and meals. A limited number of rooms are set aside at SSJD in the Guest House so early registration is encouraged. On line registration on the Diocese of Toronto website for attendees and supervising clergy will close Tuesday, May 7. A clergy letter of support for the participant is to be sent in advance to The Rev. Jo-Anne Billinger, Chair, BCH at j.billinger@rogers.com. Clergy considering introducing the ministry of lay anointing in the Parish who would like more information about the ministry are welcome to contact the Committee through The Rev. Jo-Anne Billinger at j.billinger@rogers.com.
Mission to seafarers needs volunteers

Changes planned for Toronto

BY STUART MANN

THE Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario is sending out an SOS — for volunteers.

As the shipping season prepares to get underway in late March or early April, the mission needs volunteers for its stations in Oshawa, Toronto and Hamilton.

“Our people were doing double and triple duty at the Oshawa mission last season because ships were coming in so frequently,” says the Rev. Judith Alltree, the mission’s executive director and senior port chaplain. “It was great for the seafarers, but we’re going to need a lot more people.”

The mission opened the Terry Finlay Seafarers Centre in the Port of Oshawa in June 2017 and it has been busy ever since, she says. The station was named after the late Archbishop Terence Finlay, a former diocesan bishop of Toronto and a long-time supporter and advocate of seafarers.

She says volunteers serve in a number of ways. Some are trained to go on the ships to visit the crews. Others staff the stations, making sure they’re open and hot coffee and free WiFi are ready for the seafarers when they come off the ships. Others drive the seafarers into town so they can shop and do some banking if necessary. Most importantly, the volunteers are there to listen to the seafarers and help out when necessary. “That’s a really important aspect of our mission work — actively listening to what’s going on in the lives of these folks,” says Ms. Alltree. “They’re really grateful for that.”

“It’s very touching.” There are about seven active volunteers at the Oshawa station but that needs to increase to 12-15 to keep up with the demand, she says. The mission is open from 3-9 p.m. during shipping season and volunteers regularly work in three-hour shifts. Volunteers are also needed at the Toronto mission, which is moving from its former building on Pier 51 to new space in Port/Toronto’s Cruise Ship Terminal, formerly the International Passenger Terminal, also located on Pier 51.

Ms. Alltree says the mission’s board of directors decided to make the move after determining that the old building was too costly to maintain and needed extensive repairs. The number of seafarers visiting it had dropped by about 90 per cent, she says.

The mission, which relies entirely on donations and grants, was unable to sell or move the building and the decision was made to vacate it. During a cold snap on Jan. 30, frozen water pipes led to a flood, making the building currently uninhabitable. “It was an iconic building, but we have a moral obligation to the people who support the mission with their donations and financial sacrifices to steward those resources responsibly,” she says.

The Rev. Judith Alltree stands outside the Cruise Ship Terminal building, behind her on left, in Toronto’s harbour. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Changes planned for Toronto

The Anglican Diocese of Toronto Foundation wishes you and your loved ones a blessed Easter Season as we celebrate the promise of new life.

To learn more about how you can join us in supporting the ministry of the Bishop, please visit us at www.toronto.anglican.ca/foundation.

Continued on Page 9
**BISHOP’S DIARY**
By Bishop Andrew Asbil

When we sit on another committee of the diocese, He gave wise counsel and offered good insight in-ly called, when I became a member of the Pos-sibilities that face traumatic pastoral issues. In the diocese, both pastorally and morally. He in the garden. We were busy that summer. We

programs for new bishops are some-times referred to as the “Baby Bishops’ Schools.” Since my consecration, I have had the opportunity to attend two of these programs for “baby bishops,” one offered by The Episcopal Church and the other offered by the Church of England. The English program is based in Canterbury, which I attended in February. The experience of being in Canterbury was remarkable. Twenty-nine bishops from around the Anglican Communion gathered for 10 days of prayer, study and fellowship. Most days were spent at Canterbury, though we also had a road trip to London, with trips to the Anglican Communion Office and Lambeth Palace. I am still reflecting on this profound experience, but I want to share a few things I looked away with me:

1. **Our Communion is wonderfully diverse.** The 29 bishops in the program came from 16 continents and repre-sented more than a dozen linguistic groups. Certain bishops served some of the world’s least-discerning dioceses, and others served some of the poorest. One bishop arrived late to the program because he was burying priests who had just been murdered in the ongoing civil conflict in South Sudan. Another was the bishop of a branch new diocese in Brazil, and she was creatively figuring out how to lead women and fish in the water. And it possibilities. Another bishop spoke of

Bishop’s Opinion

**BISHOP’S OPINION**
By Bishop Kevin Robertson

the real fear that the effects of climate change will wipe out entire islands near his home in Melanesia.

2. **Yet we are the same.** In spite of our many differences, and the rich diversity of our Communion, what a privilege it was to share stories that spoke of our common fellowship. All of us shared the joys and struggles of trying to proclaim and live the gospel in a diverse world. For some African bishops, their minis-try takes place in areas where Islam is growing much faster than Christianity. For other bishops, ministry is set in the midst of an increasingly secular society. For all of us, there was recogni-tion that ministry must be adaptable and contextual, so that the gospel can continue to speak to the changing needs of a changing world. On a more personal level, all of us expressed the importance of balancing the demands of episcopal ministry with the needs of family and friendship on the other.

3. **It’s about Jesus.** One of my enduring memories of our time together was our last meeting, which was held at Augustine’s Abbey, not far from Can-terbury Cathedral. This was the place where, as a young novice, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, prayed when he came as a missionary to England from Rome in the late 6th century. For 15 centuries, Chris-tians have gathered there to pray, break bread and study. In that same place, we also prayed, sang and exchanged gifts – all in the name of the same Jesus who was worshipped and proclaimed by St. Augustine all those years ago. Regard-less of our differences in languages, cul-ture, theology or polities, we were united in our praise and thanksgiving to God, and in our confession of Jesus Christ as “the friction of all creation, the head of the Church and the author of our salvation.”

4. **We are all in this together.** Before I left for the U.K., some people predicted that bishops from other parts of the Communion wouldn’t want much to do with bishops from Canada and the U.S., given the current disagreements within the Communion. I was pleased that nothing could be further from the truth. There was an earnest desire to talk openly about some of the challenges we face, but there was also recognition and appreciation that the work of the gospel might look very different across the various provinces and dioceses of our Church. As we prepared to return home, we committed to continu-ous working and praying together, to discover new ways to give leadership to God’s Church in all its wonderful diversity and complexity. In that mutual commitment, we have sought to re- new faithfulness and trust the promises of Jesus, “that they may all be one.” (John 17:21)
Lent is traditionally a time for turning to God in self-examination and repentance. It is a time for adopting practices that draw us closer to God while curbing our tendencies to self-indulgence, and for turning toward others in solidarity and generosity.

A faithful response to the groaning of creation in our time calls for the adoption of the Lenten practices of self-examination, repentance, self-restraint and generosity. While seeking to follow more closely the way of Christ. The growing crises of climate change and plastic pollution, threats to water quality and species at risk, testify to human greed, callousness and love of ease and convenience superseding God’s command for human-kind to care for all members of the created community.

Lent offers us the opportunity to examine our lifestyles and practices, both personal and corporate, and find ways to live that honour our relationship with creation and our dependence upon the Creator. This year, Earth Day (April 22) falls on Easter Monday, which makes observing a “green Lent” a timely preparation for the celebration of Earth Sunday in Eastertide. To that end, the diocese’s Creation Matters committee has prepared a Lent calendar that guides individual Anglicans through reflection on scripture, learning about environmental issues, practical tips for reducing one’s own environmental footprint, invitations to community action, calls to advocate for stronger environmental policy, and opportunities to share our wealth with those who bear the disproportionate burden of climate change and other environmental threats. The calendar is available at www.toronto.anglican.ca/environment.

One of the actions called for in the Lenten calendar is to participate in the annual “Give It Up for the Earth” postcard campaign by Citizens for Public Justice. This ecumenical coalition of Canadian churches has run the campaign since 2017, inviting Canadian Christians to pledge to reduce their own carbon footprint during Lent while calling on the federal government to implement a robust climate policy. This year’s postcard urges the Prime Minister to end public subsidies on fossil fuels, which amount to about $1.4 billion annually. At the time of writing, 2,600 postcards have been distributed to a dozen parishes in our diocese. To order more, or to sign up, please visit www.cpj.ca/forthearth.

It has been our practice in this diocese to observe Earth Sunday on the Sunday nearest to April 22. This year, that would be Easter Sunday, so we anticipate that many clergy will prefer to transfer Earth Sunday to April 28, the Second Sunday of Easter. In addition to the Lent calendar, the Creation Matters committee has compiled a number of other resources to aid parishes in celebrating Earth Sunday. These include reflections on the lectionary for both Easter Sunday and the Second Sunday of Easter, an Earth Sunday Prayers of the People, and a list of suggested hymns. In addition, the Creation Matters Working Group of the Anglican Church of Canada has also shared resources produced by other dioceses for Lent and Earth Sunday. The Diocese of Nova Scotia and P.E.I., with the assistance of photographer Donna Giles, has created a series of reflections called “Stations of Creation” that invite participants to reflect on scripture, a brief meditation and a photograph at each station. Sue Carson, from the Diocese of Niagara, offers a reflection on the popular hymn “All Things Bright and Beautiful.” Links to these resources can also be found on the environmental Resources page of our diocese’s website, www.toronto.anglican.ca.

While the season of Lent calls us into repentance for the ways in which we have caused creation, plea- tion the general deliverance” - that gloriously reconciliatory and restor- ation of all creation through the death and resurrection of Christ. Let these seasons draw us more deeply into God’s love for all that God has made, and teach us to live in right relationship with what Indigenous tradition recogni- nes as “all our relations.”

Elin Goulden is the diocese’s Social Justice and Advocacy consultant. 

_BY ELIN GOULDEN_
Cricket was a great escape for me

Ranil Mendis is a member of the Anglican Church Cricket Festival’s organizing committee and a parishioner of St. Thomas a Becket, Erin Mills South. This year’s tournament will be held on June 15 at Creditview Sandalwood Park in Brampton.

The Anglican Church Cricket Festival (ACCF) provides an opportunity for parishioners of Anglican churches across the GTA to get to know each other and to build relationships with our community at large. ACCF uses cricket to give our parishioners an enjoyable day out, with food, fun and good Christian fellowship. Women, men, children of all ages, seasoned cricket players as well as absolute beginners are given the opportunity to try this sport. Bishop Jenny Andison described the event beautifully in a thank-you letter to the committee: “The event builds community amongst the parishioners and creates a space for the working of the Holy Spirit in the lives of young and old, churched and unchurched, skilled cricketers and enthusiastic amateurs.”

Cities in the GTA have experienced growth as a direct result of immigration, and it is important to recognize the implications of these settlement patterns and how they shape local needs and desires with respect to recreation. Cricket is a regular topic of conversation when Peter Marshall, an avid cricket fan from Yorkshire, England, and I meet during the coffee time at St. Thomas’s. Apart from talking about the big boys play cricket. Thus the seeds were planted in my mind to follow this fascinating sport for a lifetime.

With the death of my father when I was 12, cricket – played with friends under coconut trees – was a great escape for me throughout my childhood. It was part of my routine practically every day after school. I went on to play cricket for my school. I played A-list cricket and represented my employers during my 10-year working career in Sri Lanka. Moving to Canada in 1987, a country where I had no close friends or family, it was a cricket match that I attended in Mississauga, the day after arriving in Canada, that helped me build my network of friends here. Five months later, my future wife Chandanie migrated to Canada and we got married at Christ’s Church Cathedral in Hamilton.

Accompanying the Toronto Mayor’s Youth Cricket Team on tours annually for over a decade to England, I had the privilege of meeting and current serve on the board of the Lord’s cricket ground. A trip to this stadium was a common thread that could bind our diverse church communities together.

The best part about holding the festival is that it’s an opportunity to meet and bring together Anglians from across the GTA, and also to receive the support of Bishop Jenny and the Diocesan Centre. The worst is that we have no control over one of the key factors for a successful event – the weather! This reminds me of what my mother used to say: “Man proposes, God disposes.”

I have served on the boards of a number of government agencies that deliver social services in the GTA and currently serve on the board of the Toronto Grace Health Centre, a public hospital run by the Salvation Army. As a board member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA), I have had the great privilege of heading the CIMA Mayor’s School Cricket Program, providing over 8,000 school children in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area with opportunities to play cricket. I also led CIMA’s cricket scholar-ship program, where young cricketers were given the opportunity to represent Toronto overseas as part of the Toronto Mayor’s Youth Cricket Team.

I was born in Moratuwa, Sri Lanka and am the third in my family of seven. Moratuwa is a city that has produced some of Sri Lanka’s top national cricket stars. My father worked for the Gal Oya Development Board, one of the largest rural irrigation projects in Sri Lanka, and I have fond memories of living and going to school up to Grade 5 in a village amidst thick jungle. Moving back to our hometown of Moratuwa as a 10-year-old, I was fascinated by the activities going on next to my ancestral home, “Mendis Villa,” where a group of youth had built a club-house for their community cricket club. I used to join them as a young kid and be on the cricket field watching and admiring the big boys play cricket. Thus the seeds were planted in my mind to follow this fascinating sport for a lifetime.

My favourite passage is Isaiah 40: 28-31. I have had to face more than my share of storms in life, all the way back to my childhood. This passage speaks to the importance of waiting on the Lord when your faith is challenged in the face of adversity. These verses have shown me, and continue to teach me, the promise of renewing and regaining new strength through Him.
Memorial service fills church, spurs call for change

BY ELIN GOUDEL
NEARLY 150 people filled Holy Trinity, Trinity Square in Toronto on Feb. 12 to celebrate, mourn and honour eight individuals who died without a home in the first few weeks of 2019. While the Toronto Homeless Memorial service has taken place on the second Tuesday of every month since 1998, February’s gathering was especially large due to the number of deaths and the publicity surrounding two of them.

Those who had died in the city in 2019 were named at the service: Chris Saboyard, Crystal Papineau, Tabitha Lewis, Hang Vo, James Young, Leonard Sisson and two men identified only as “John Doe.” The name of William Easter, an advocate who had experienced homelessness and addiction and died Feb. 3, was also added at the request of his partner.

(Seven more individuals, six identified as “John Doe,” were added to the total for 2018 from data recently released by the city on deaths within the shelter system.)

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Journey through Uganda

Local writer finds food security projects taking root

BY JANICE BIEHN

In his 1968 book My African Journey, Winston Churchill dubbed Uganda the Pearl of Africa for its rugged natural beauty and fertile land. More than 100 years later, the moniker is still worn with pride. But the land is not as productive today as parts of the country experience food insecurity.

Journeying through Uganda in May, we were welcomed by Uganda's three largest development partners: the Pentecostal Assemblies of God in Arua, which has been delivering a nutritional supplement to refugees and women on the importance of sharing hospitality is a shameful thing to a Ugandan, we learn.

The development staff takes us to meet two separate savings-and-loan co-ops. In my group, 14 women gather on a tarp laid out beneath the shade of a tree. Plastic lawn chairs are set out for us and we are welcomed with singing and dancing. One by one, the women rise to tell us how this program has transformed their lives.

The women do the bulk of the farming, but with the increasing rate of climate change, the work takes longer and produces less. They have learned conservation agriculture techniques such as planting more than one type of seed at a time (to be less vulnerable to a bad crop), mulching (to retain moisture), and planting in rows (to make weeding easier). Soon their harvests were yielding enough food to feed their families and sell the surplus.

Once the men saw the increased yields and what the women were learning, couples began to work together as partners, sharing not only the farming workload but household and parenting duties as well. Gender workshops were also organized for both men and women.

Diocese of Nebbi, Nebbi

Clusters of one-room brick buildings with sloped thatched grass roofs dot the landscape in the rural outskirts of this northwestern town. Towers of hand-made bricks are stacked to form their own kiln, and huge bundles of grass lean against the bed behind them, as well as plates, cups and chairs. To do not be able to demonstrate hospitality is a shameful thing to a Ugandan, we learn.

The next day we meet refugees in Zone 4. We speak with a group of breastfeeding or pregnant women who have been receiving the fortified porridge. They sit close together on a bench, two of them holding their babies on their laps. All but one attend Bethlehem Anglican Church, the large building behind us. Sarah Adjonye, who sits at one end, is a churchwarden there. She patiently translates each woman’s name and ages, and their harrowing stories of how they arrived in Uganda.

clockwise from above: Judith and Moses with their baby Emmanuel in Nebbi; Daniel points to an aquaculture pool in Masaka; Olivia speaks at the co-op presentation in Nebbi; Janice Biehn with Sarah Adjonye, a churchwarden of Bethlehem Anglican Church at Rhino Camp. PHOTOS BY JANICE BIEHN

The seeds and soil are tired,” he says. “We don’t have the knowledge to adapt.” Uganda has the world’s youngest population, so providing enough food will be a challenge for years to come.

I am in Uganda representing The Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWDRF) with other communications professionals from member agencies of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. The group is made up of Becky Longhurst of Canadian Lutheran World Relief, Jon Sef of World Renew, Samantha Burnside of Emergency Relief and Development Overseas and Shylax Mungo and Mau Taylor-Lewis of the Foodgrains Bank. We will also be joined by Nyamuhira Githaiga, a peace-building and crisis specialist with South Sudan.

Over the next week, we will visit three food security projects that are supported by PWDRF and implemented by these Ugandan development partners: the Anglican Diocese of Nebbi, which for three years has been training rural families about conservation agriculture, empowering women with a savings and loan cooperative and training men and women on the importance of sharing household responsibilities; the Pentecostal Assemblies of God in Arua, which has been delivering a nutritional supplement to vulnerable South Sudanese refugees in Rhino Camp, as well as women’s sanitary kits and psychosocial support; and the St. Jude’s Family Project in Masaka, which for 20 years has been training local people to farm, using innovative farming techniques such as permaculture.

We know we have come to hear people’s stories and share them with our respective churches, but we don’t yet know how inspired we’ll be by the people we meet.

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The development staff takes us to meet two separate savings-and-loan co-ops. In my group, 14 women gather on a tarp laid out beneath the shade of a tree. Plastic lawn chairs are set out for us and we are welcomed with singing and dancing. One by one, the women rise to tell us how this program has transformed their lives.

The women do the bulk of the farming, but with the increasing rate of climate change, the work takes longer and produces less. They have learned conservation agriculture techniques such as planting more than one type of seed at a time (to be less vulnerable to a bad crop), mulching (to retain moisture), and planting in rows (to make weeding easier). Soon their harvests were yielding enough food to feed their families and sell the surplus.

Once the men saw the increased yields and what the women were learning, couples began to work together as partners, sharing not only the farming workload but household and parenting duties as well. Gender workshops were also organized for both men and women.

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Diocese of Nebbi, Nebbi

Clusters of one-room brick buildings with sloped thatched grass roofs dot the landscape in the rural outskirts of this northwestern town. Towers of hand-made bricks are stacked to form their own kiln, and huge bundles of grass lean against the bed behind them, as well as plates, cups and chairs. To do not be able to demonstrate hospitality is a shameful thing to a Ugandan, we learn.

The development staff takes us to meet two separate savings-and-loan co-ops. In my group, 14 women gather on a tarp laid out beneath the shade of a tree. Plastic lawn chairs are set out for us and we are welcomed with singing and dancing. One by one, the women rise to tell us how this program has transformed their lives.

The women do the bulk of the farming, but with the increasing rate of climate change, the work takes longer and produces less. They have learned conservation agriculture techniques such as planting more than one type of seed at a time (to be less vulnerable to a bad crop), mulching (to retain moisture), and planting in rows (to make weeding easier). Soon their harvests were yielding enough food to feed their families and sell the surplus.

Once the men saw the increased yields and what the women were learning, couples began to work together as partners, sharing not only the farming workload but household and parenting duties as well. Gender workshops were also organized for both men and women.
Justice walk turns 40
March bears witness to society’s wounds

TORONTO’S Ecumenical Good Friday Walk for Justice is celebrating its 40th anniversary. This year’s walk will be held on Good Friday, April 19, beginning at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square at 2 p.m. The theme will be “For the Sale of the World: 40 Years of Hopeful Persistence.”

The first walk, held on April 19, 1979, was organized by a group of Catholic teachers, Teachers for Social Justice of the Metropolitan Separate School Board. The theme was “Witness to Hope: Contempor ary Way of the Cross,” and began at the Newman Center at 40 St. George St. with more than 100 partici pants. There were five stations – for the wounds of Christ on the cross – and everyone was invited to meditate on five contemporary wounds of the suffering Body of Christ. The stations focused on the hazards of nuclear waste, abor tion, refugee policy, exploitation in the sugar industry, and justice for striking workers in a seven-month lockout in Sudbury.

“The purpose was not to lay blame, but to acknowledge every one’s participation in oppressive structures and everyone’s need for repentance,” explains the Rev. Sherman Hesselgrave, incumbent of Holy Trinity, Trinity Square. The first walk concluded at Nathan Phillips Square.

Over the decades, the themes of the stations have responded to a wide range of issues, from human trafficking to the commodification of water to climate change. The themes of the stations on the 2019 walk – homelessness, refugees, Indigenous and environmental justice – have been addressed on previous walks.

“Forty is a long time to persist, but it took William Wilberforce 40 years of offering his private member’s bill to abolish slavery before Parliament took action to do so,” says Rev. Hesselgrave.

This year’s walk concludes back at Holy Trinity with a simple supper, followed by a short ecumenical service and a brief reflection on the Stations of the Cross – and everyone was invited to take a short walk to remember our history and commit to action for justice.

Projects help transform lives in Uganda

St. Jude’s Family Project, Masaka
On our last day, we head west to Masaka. Founder Josephine Kizza Aliddeki greets us with enthusiasm. The 22-year-old organization has grown to include modern offices and classrooms, dormitories and a cafeteria for instruction in permaculture. PWRDF has been supporting St. Jude’s for the past year and a half, training 210 women farmers, building 210 water tanks for rainwater harvest, establishing tree nurseries and more. Josephine’s son Daniel recently completed a Master’s degree in Oklahoma and is excited to show us the new demonstration garden. “We built it on the side of a hill to show farmers that an area that seems inhospitable can still grow food,” he says. The garden includes irrigation tunnels that run down the hill and feed into three aquaculture pools where fish are farmed. There is eggplant, tomatoes, banana trees, heaps of grass compost, chicken coops and pig styes.

“Permaculture is all about using the soil to feed you, but also feeding the soil,” says Daniel. He explains that farmers learn to continuously plant so there is no “season.” Plans are harvested in turn and carefully chosen to also return nutrients to the soil.

We take a short drive to the home of Emily, 52, who is disabled. She leads other vulnerable people in caring for a tree nursery, making soap, breeding pigs and collecting rain water. She tours us around her home and shows off her new higher-efficiency wood-burning brick stove, one of 120 in the community. PWRDF has supported St. Jude’s in planting more than 10,000 trees. When crops are not turning a profit, many people cut down trees to burn and make charcoal to sell, but the cost to the soil and air quality is far greater than the short-term gain.

When we return to the main building, the community is waiting to meet and thank us. They have written a song about how their lives have changed. Josephine translates: “It is through the Canadians that we can reach higher and do better.” The song goes, “We’ve been able now to improve our lives because St. Jude came to work with us.” Mission accomplished.
Discipleship program making inroads

Busy lay leaders brought closer to God

BY STUART MANN

A discipleship program for lay leaders that was pioneered at Trinity Church, Aurora, is starting to be used by other parishes in southern Ontario and the United States, where church leaders are running workshops to help volunteers and others draw closer to God – something they don’t always have time for in their busy lives.

Clergy who are running the program say it is giving participants more confidence and enthusiasm to talk about and share their faith. They say it is also deepening relationships at church.

Revive invites lay leaders to journey with their clergy for a year. The program starts with an opening retreat followed by three modules, each lasting about six weeks. In the first module, participants learn several different types of prayer. They develop a prayer practice for themselves and feel confident about praying in public. In the second module, they learn about scripture and how to lead a small Bible meditation group. The third module is about orienting their ministry to prayer and vocation, rather than just doing a job.

Up to 12 people and their priest journey together from October to early June, taking a break during the Christmas and Easter seasons. They usually meet one night a week for about two hours. At the end of the program, they attend another retreat and adopt a Rule of Life, a way for them to carry on their life and ministry in a new way.

The Rev. Canon Martha Tatarmic is co-leading the program for 12 lay leaders at St. George in St. Catharines and says it is having a remarkable effect on the group. “It was like people had been waiting their whole lives to be asked to this stuff. The floodgates just opened. They seemed to relish the opportunity to speak about those things in a way that was safe.”

She says the program is having an impact on the rest of her parish as well. “It’s almost like there is a permission in the parish now for others to be talking openly about their spiritual stories. Anglicans can be pretty polite about their religion and reserved in terms of how they talk about their relationship with God, and this seems like we’re moving the dial just a little bit in terms of that culture.”

As group members form a closer relationship with God and become more confident in their faith, their ministry deepens, she says. “That communicates a really important message about who the church is and what we’re called to be – that all we do is rooted in our relationship with God, and I can see, just halfway through the program, how that revitalization has already happened here.”

The Rev. Shelagh Ashworth is running Revive for eight people in the Parish of Lloydtown, which comprises Christ Church, Kettleby and St. Mary Magdalene, Schobberg. She says the program is giving group members the confidence and experience to lead in worship settings, something that has practical implications in her parish.

“In our multi-point church, we need lay readers to lead morning prayer on occasion, and it’s been helpful for that,” she says. She’s hoping members of the group will lead the parish's Bible study during Lent.

She is impressed with the program’s resources, including videos that can be used to facilitate the discussions. “The workbooks are well laid out, thoughtful and easy to use. As a package, it works very well. It’s empowering.”

The Rev. Canon Cheryl Palmer, the incumbent of Christ Church, Deer Park in Toronto, says her group got to know some members of the congregation when she started there last January. Christ Church was one of 10 parishes in Canada and the United States that took part in a pilot project to test the program.

“Right away there was a little group of people with whom I suddenly had a relationship,” she recalls. “We were delving into deeply spiritual things, so we connected with each other from the start.”

She says the first module on prayer and different types of prayer had a powerful impact on the group. “It was a huge hit with people. We all have in our minds what prayer is supposed to be, but then along comes someone who says you can pray this way and that way – it all depends on who you are and what’s going on in your life. People were receptive to that and it unfolded in a beautiful way.”

She recalls a moment that illustrates how the program can instill confidence in those who take it. One morning before the start of a service, she couldn’t pray with the choir downstairs because she was welcoming people to the church upstairs. In the spur of the moment, she asked one of the Revive group members to lead the prayer for the choir. “She looked at me, and then smiled and said, ‘Yes, I can do that.’ It’s a small thing, but it’s indicative of the freedom that people were given as a result of engaging with the program.”

Revive is on Jan. 7, is offered by RenewalWorks, a ministry of Forward Movement, an arm of The Episcopal Church that offers a hopeful perspective for Parish Nursing Ministry. The Living Diet is a Christian Journey to Joyful Eating, a new book by Alexandra Shimo, author of Invisible North: Life Lessons from a Troubled Reserve.

For more information, visit www.toronto.anglican.ca.

ACW holds annual general meeting

The diocesan Anglican Church Women’s annual general meeting and luncheon will be held on April 17 at St. Timothy. Agincourt with guest speaker Alexord Shimo, author of Invisible North: Life Lessons from a Troubled Reserve. All are invited. Tickets are $35. For more information, call 416-363-0018 or email acw@toronto.anglican.ca.

BRIEFLY

Workshops help parish leaders

The diocese is holding half-day workshops for parish leaders, especially those new to their positions. The workshops are for churchwardens, deputy churchwardens, parish administrators, treasurers, and administrative staff and clergy. The purpose of the workshops is to provide parish leaders with the information, resources and support needed to help them do their jobs. Two workshops were held on March 23. Two more workshops will be held on April 6, the first at St. John, East Orangeville in the morning and the second at Christ Church, Brampton in the afternoon. For more information, visit www.toronto.anglican.ca.

Priest writes book on joyful eating

The Rev. Canon Martha Tatarmic, the former incumbent of St. David, Orrilla and now the incumbent of St. George in St. Catharines, has written The Living Diet: A Christian Journey to Joyful Eating, a new book that offers a hopeful perspective on how to understand our relationship with the food we eat and the bodies in which we live.

In The Living Diet, she focuses on how the teachings of Jesus offer a different perspective on healthy bodies and healthy food, rooted in eating as an act of relationship. “We know the old adage, ‘You are what you eat,’” she says. “But Jesus also proclaims that we are how we eat.”

In the book, Tatarmic offers a hopeful perspective on how to understand our relationship with the food we eat and the bodies in which we live. She is impressed with the program’s resources, including videos that can be used to facilitate the discussions. “The workbooks are well laid out, thoughtful and easy to use. As a package, it works very well. It’s empowering.”

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Head of refugee alliance retires

Ian McBride, the long-time director of the Anglican-United Refugee Alliance (AURA), retired at the end of January. Mr. McBride worked in the area of refugee sponsorship and resettlement on behalf of the diocese for many years, beginning on the board of what was then the Anglican Resettlement Group on Refugee Resettlement in 1996, and becoming executive director in 1998. “Those of us who have been involved in refugee sponsorship either in diocese or through our home parishes can attest to Ian’s passion and dedication to this work, and how well he has equipped parishes throughout our diocese to live out Christ’s call to ‘welcome the stranger,’” says Elin Goulden, the diocese’s Social Justice and Advocacy consultant.
COUNSELLING

Bishop plans town hall meetings in May

Continued from Page 1

own context, who are able to speak with a sense of passion about where their hopes and dreams are. When I leave a parish hall, I'm taking their hopes and dreams with me,” he says. “I get to dwell with that, and they get to dwell with what I have in my heart. So there's a kind of this mutual conversation that we're having.”

Bishop ASH says he wants to hear from a wide range of people and is encouraging “anybody and everybody” to attend, whether they’re new to the Anglican Church or have been in parish ministry for decades.

“Folks who just want to come and listen, and others who want to be able to voice their own opinions and insights. Everybody,” he says. The town halls will also give people the opportunity to receive encouragement and insights from Anglican bishops, as Bishop ASH says, “This is really about saying, how do we go forward?”

This planning to attend the town hall meetings are asked to register through the website, www.toronto.anglican.ca.

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Sheet Music & Worship

MARCH 30 – Voices Chorale Choir presents: A Journey of Faith, music from Ash Wednesday to Good Friday, featuring Theodore Dubois’s The Last Words of Christ, 8 p.m., St. Martin-in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto. Tickets available at the door: $20 for adults, $15 for students and seniors.

APRIL 1 – Healey Willan Singers presents: Requiem, music arranged for women’s ensemble, featuring Mozart’s Missa Brevis in C (“Spazemann”) with chamber orchestra, 8 p.m., St. Martin-in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto. Tickets available at the door: $20 for adults, $15 for students and seniors.

APRIL 2 – St. Peter’s Handbell Choir presents: Spring concert at St. Peter, Erindale, Mississauga Rd., just north of Dundas Street, Toronto. Also performing are the Ontario Male Choral Chorus and the Boys in B. Donations in the $10-$20 range will be appreciated, put to good use to provide more music.

MAY 5 – “Car Karaoke Classics” featuring the Barbers, band, choir and audience participation, 2 p.m., St. John, York Mills, 19 Don Ridge Dr., Toronto. Proceeds aid Sleeping Children Around the World and St. John’s. Tickets for adults are $15, children, $8. Call 425-225-4611, visit www.sjym.ca, or email musicfest@ sjym.ca.

JUNE 8 – Voices Chorale Choir presents: Handa! and Haydn, music by Michael and Joseph Haydn, featuring Handel’s Four Coronation Anthems, 8 p.m., St. Martin-in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto. Tickets available at the door: $20 for adults, $15 for students and seniors.

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Sales

APRIL 6 – Spring rummage sale, 9 a.m. to 12 noon, Holy Trinity, 140 Brooke St., Thornhill. Clothing, linens, household items, games, toys and jewelry. Call 905-889-5931.

14. Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday)
15. Monday in Holy Week
16. Tuesday in Holy Week
17. Wednesday in Holy Week
18. Maundy Thursday
19. Good Friday
20. Holy Saturday
21. Easter Day
22. Maundy Thursday
23. Good Friday
24. Holy Saturday
25. Easter Day
26. Tuesday in Holy Week
27. Wednesday in Holy Week
28. Maundy Thursday
29. Good Friday
30. Holy Saturday
31. Easter Sunday

Workshops & Gatherings

APRIL 13 – Spring rummage sale, 8:30 a.m. to noon, Grace Church, 19 Parkway Ave., Markham. Household items, clothing, linens, books, and toys.

APRIL 15 – Spring market bazaar; 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., St. Thomas, Brooklin.

APRIL 17 – Strawberry social, 2-4 p.m., St. John, Bowmanville.

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with the permission of their clergy to be trained and equipped for the ministry of lay anointing in the parish. Supervising clergy are asked to prepare for approximately two hours on the Saturday afternoon. For registration information, contact the Rev. Joan Billinger at billinger@ rogers.com.

JUNE 9 – Strawberry social, 2-4 p.m. and 6 p.m., St. John the Evangelist, 23 1/2 Main St., St. Andrew by-the-Lake. This event supports the many outreach projects contributed to each year. In between the socials, a 10-case of ice cream, there will be music from John Earnshaw at the piano in the afternoon and the Peterborough Concert Band in the evening.
PARISH NEWS

SNOW NIGHT
Youngsters and leaders in York-Simcoe take part in a fun evening of snow tubing at Snow Valley Resort in Barrie, followed by a sleepover in the sanctuary at St. Paul, Innisfil. About 50 youth and leaders took part. PHOTO BY NANCY HANNAH

WARM HEARTS
Walkers gather at St. Barnabas, Chester during the “Coldest Night of the Year Walk” on Feb. 23. The walk, held at 131 locations across Canada, raised money for local agencies that provide services to the homeless, the lonely or the needy. More than 100 walkers set off from the church at 5:15 pm.; most walked the 5 km route along Danforth Avenue while others walked 10 km. Funds from the walk went to Kennedy House Services in Toronto, which supports youth who find themselves in need of a place to sleep or a meal. Next year’s walk will be held on Feb. 22. PHOTO BY HELEN TAYLOR

HAPPY NEW YEAR
The Rev. Canon Philip Der (far left), incumbent of St. Christopher, Richmond Hill, stands with the Toronto Si-Zhu Chinese Music Ensemble during the church’s Chinese New Year celebration on Feb. 16. About 70 people took part in the celebration, which included traditional games and entertainment. PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. CHRISTOPHER’S

WELCOME
All Saints Church Community Centre, Toronto welcomes its new priest-in-charge, the Rev. Dr. Alison Falby, at a Celebration of New Ministry service on Feb. 24. PHOTO BY EUGENE FARRUGIA

FAMILY FRIENDLY
The Rev. Christopher Dow, the new priest-in-charge of St. James, Caledon East, his wife Amy Dow and their children join Bishop Jenny Andison at his Celebration of New Ministry at St. James on Feb. 24. PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. JAMES

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April 2019