

## Music studio strikes right note

## Knock on door sets wheels in motion



## Conference explores social justice

# The Anglican

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## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

BY BISHOP RISCYLLA SHAW

## A gift of love

### Thoughts on preparing the way

**G**od is good! As we set our faces towards the Star of Bethlehem, let us recall that we are created and infused with love from the stardust that was present at the spark of the world's dawn. From Psalm 103, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's Holy name... God knows how we are made, that we are but dust, but the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting."

We join the host of those who have gone before us to sing God's praise and glory, and it is in community, in service, in relationship that we hear the Voice of Love echo back to us. I asked the Rev. Canon Ruthanne Ward to share in a conversation with me about holy listening, as we are in a gritty and embodied season of Advent – a time of preparation for our Church, coming through this global pandemic. Here are some of our reflections:

We are being invited to listen to where God's Spirit may be leading us, and it is vital to do some preparatory self-examination. I ask of myself as a bishop in the Church, even before I ask other trailblazers, is the Church leadership ready to engage with pathways that may challenge our current ways of doing things? We often want to dive into ministry with a plan of action – an idea or activity that people can rally around, sign up for, get involved with. It's much more difficult to start with listening conversations.

As we look towards more sustainable ministry in our areas



### FIRST LIGHT

Morgan Martin practices lighting the Advent wreath with her brother Alec, left, and Mariah Perozak and her brother Robinson at St. Matthew, Oshawa. A candle will be lit each week during Advent, followed by the lighting of the middle candle on Christmas Eve. Advent begins on Nov. 28. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

and parishes, we are talking more and more about shared ministry, or regionalization. Suddenly we see broadly what we have seen on a smaller scale for some time, that the economy of running the average local parish is not sustainable with the familiar methods (tithing and volunteer support that is diminishing in numbers). How can shared ministry benefit sustainable ministry? Is it possible that some visions of shared ministry might even take us into healthier and sustainable ways of being Church in our changing world?

The model of a professional priesthood, where one (or if you're lucky, two or three) priests do all the work of the parish with some volunteer support has led us into a time of burning out, and many ministries find it increasingly difficult to be sustainable. How can regionally shared ministry invigorate the places of service to which we have a sense of God calling us?

We use the word "sustainable" because we are becoming

more aware that the resources we have are not always well matched to the needs and callings we identify in the communities around us. We may not have enough money. Our clergy are finding themselves stretched beyond capacity with many of the evolving demands of church life, especially due to the pandemic. And our lay leaders are also feeling that stretch. There seems so much to do, and yet we wonder how we can possibly do it. We are so grateful to our volunteers, our lay leaders, our clergy, for their faithful perseverance and dedication, and we want them to know how much they are appreciated, valued and supported. And into this God calls us to pray. "Glory to God, who can do more than we can ask or imagine..." Imagine. How do we imagine doing ministry together in new, sustainable and life-giving ways? We start with listening conversations. We find ways to have these conversations in our local area, with local

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# Church's music studio creates connections

## Program for young artists a hit

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

A project that has taken shape at Grace Church, Markham during the pandemic is helping to create connections within the church community and beyond. Parkway Studio, a music studio set up in the church building, has become a space for youth to belong and a place where Markham musicians can rehearse locally.

The idea was sparked when Aaron Dumpala, Grace's music director, identified a need in Markham that he felt the parish could meet. "I realized it's a little strange that there's such a big musical community in Markham and Stouffville, but still we have to gravitate to Toronto for rehearsal studios," he says. "I thought, we've got a bit of space at the church, so why don't we create a hub where musicians can meet?"

He also hoped to find a way for youth to use their creative talents in the church. "I did see a bit of a disconnect with the younger demographic," he says. "As much as I love my community, I was seeing that huge intergenerational gap."

In 2019, the parish applied for and received a Reach Grant from the diocese for studio equipment. "We didn't have any space in the church for this other than a cupboard, so we were going to build a very, very small sound booth in the choir room cupboard," says the Rev. Canon Nicola Skinner, incumbent.

Immediate plans were put on hold when the COVID-19 pandemic hit and the church closed



Aaron Dumpala

its doors to in-person gatherings. Meanwhile, a room became available to allow for a bigger space than they'd first thought possible, and the Rev. Andrew Colman, the church's new assistant curate, put the team in touch with a studio designer who could create a blueprint for the studio.

When the building was allowed to re-open in September 2020, the parish was ready to get to work on the space, with the help of many members of the congregation. "It was done with so many people from the parish; it wasn't just one person," says Mr. Dumpala. "We ended up pulling it off and building a studio just in time for Christmas."

Mr. Dumpala was able to use the new facility to record each of Grace's choir members separately and create a virtual choir for Christmas. "I said, 'Don't worry about the technology, don't worry about the rest; I'll take care of it. Just come and sing.' And they loved that," he says. "A lot of the parishioners saw this as a studio project more for youth or a younger demographic, but it was nice to see that intergenerational benefit."

While the pandemic may have delayed the studio's launch, it also broadened the team's vision for what the facility could do. "We

realized we could use it for the choir, we could use it for youth group and after-school stuff, but we could also do podcasts, we could use it for videos," says Canon Skinner. "So in actual fact, COVID was a bit of a catalyst for more ideas about how we could ramp up using technology within the church."

With the studio up and running, Mr. Dumpala turned his attention to how he could use it to engage with the broader Markham community. "I really wanted to have a summer program. I know that kids have had the worst couple years of their formative years, stuck inside and not able to play music," he says.

Parkway Summer Sessions invited young artists from the local community to participate in four weeks of instruction in vocals, guitar, percussion, composition, mixing and recording. Originally planned as an online program, Mr. Dumpala was able to offer it in-person when the Ontario government announced it would allow summer camps.

In all, 12 artists signed up. "A few of them were already from the church, and there were some new kids who heard about it and wanted to join in. It was a month long. It was a huge endeavour," says Canon Skinner.

One of Mr. Dumpala's goals was to give the participants creative control and empower them to make their own decisions. "I wanted to call them artists, not kids or youth. Regardless of age, they have talent. And even if they don't have musical talent, that's OK," he says.



### SPECIAL MOMENT

The Rev. Megan Jull blesses Emma at a Blessing of Animals service at St. Augustine of Canterbury, Toronto on Oct. 3. Despite the rain, a number of people from the church and from the surrounding community brought their pets for a blessing. PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY

At the end of the summer, the new band Water Guns N' Daisies played to a sold-out, physically distanced crowd in Grace's parking lot, with copies of its 15-track album for sale. The band also contributed a performance to the Bishop's Company Cabaret in October.

Since then, the music studio has become a home base for the church's youth group, with a few new members joining in. The group launched a weekly podcast in October, where they get to choose a topic to talk about for 20 minutes. Mr. Dumpala sees this as a change from the traditional pizza-and-a-movie model of youth ministry. "It's bringing them into the 21st century. We're learning something, we're having fun, and deeper than that, they're finding a safe place," he says.

He thinks it has also empowered the youth to participate more actively in the parish community, helping with technology during weekly services and volunteering at parish events. "They're not just children of the community; they're genuine participating members in this parish, regardless of age," he says.

That more visible presence of youth is something the rest of the congregation has noticed.

Canon Skinner says parishioners have been excited to see the success of Parkway Studio. "The congregation has seen the fruits of what Aaron has done already, and they're really impressed. They know that there's lots more to come when we open up," she says.

The parish plans to start a podcast involving both youth and older members of the congregation, interviewing parishioners and learning about their lives. The studio will also be available to rent as rehearsal and recording space for local musicians, and the parish is hoping to partner with nearby schools.

Despite Grace's success, Mr. Dumpala says he doesn't think other parishes should necessarily try to open studios of their own. "Try not comparing yourself to the other parish," he says. "It's good to share ideas, but I don't think we should just copy and paste what works here. Look at your specific community, the people you have available and whatever is needed."

Canon Skinner echoes those thoughts. "You may not be able to do a studio, per se, but it's really about the vision and allowing somebody with vision like Aaron to run with it," she says. "It's already grown, and I think it will continue to grow."

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# Church answers call to help refugees

## Afghan family arrives in Canada

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

It started with a knock on the door during a blizzard. One evening in December 2018, the Rev. Matthew McMillan, incumbent of St. Mary, Richmond Hill, was sitting alone in the church lobby in case someone had missed the email cancelling that night's scheduled meeting. "It was just a night where, in the middle of a snowstorm, Ibrahim came walking up to the church door and knocked on it," he says. "It was just fortuitous. God led the encounter."

As it turned out, Ibrahim needed a church to help him with a refugee sponsorship application and had already been in touch with AURA, the Anglican United Refugee Alliance. AURA had referred him to St. Mary's because it was near to where he lived.

Ibrahim, a medical doctor in Afghanistan, had come to Canada with his daughter a decade earlier. He was hoping St. Mary's could help



From left, Zhara (seated), Freshta, Ahmad Mansoor, Simin, Mohammad Kazim, Ahmad Eraj and Ibrahim take in the sights at Nathan Phillips Square.

him sponsor more family members. "We immediately said yes," says Mr. McMillan. "It wasn't even a thought about whether or not we should; it was 'Can we do this? How can we make this happen? What can we do?'"

The family in question, a married couple, three teenage children and their grandmother, fled Afghanistan as the Taliban began to encroach further into the country. They've been living in Tajikistan for several years. "They were warned by other Afghans that were saying the Taliban are coming, they're going to take everything you have,

you'd better flee. So the family sold their business and luckily just got out in time," says Mr. McMillan. As members of the minority Hazara ethnic group and Shi'a Muslims, they would have faced persecution by the Taliban, which has carried out ethnic massacres against Hazaras in the past.

The parish raised money, gathered household goods and tackled the logistical details involved in sponsorship. Ibrahim and Hazara Afghans already in Canada also raised funds to support this family and other Hazara refugees. Meanwhile, AURA staff helped everyone

keep track of the tasks that needed to happen. "They really fill in the gaps and cover the blind spots for parishes," says Mr. McMillan. "There's this collaboration on so many levels that the parish may not fully realize until they're knee deep into the process."

Though St. Mary's anticipated the family's arrival in early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic proved to be the biggest challenge, with immigration offices shutting down and travel restrictions being put in place. "The family has been remarkably patient and so thankful, and very gracious at every turn," says Mr. McMillan. "Being in a refugee position in a foreign country where there's limited to no funds and you're wondering how you're going to make it from one day to the next, let alone get out of the country – it's not easy."

Finally, the six family members arrived safely in Canada on Oct. 14 after a 20-hour flight from Tajikistan, entering a two-week quarantine under Canada's COVID-19 protocols. Now, the team from St. Mary's is helping them access schooling, English language support and medical attention, as well as providing friendship. "We become that immediate community that supports them and becomes their extended family by virtue of walking with them," says Mr. McMillan.

Though the sponsorship process has demanded time, energy and a lot of patience, Mr. McMillan says he's also seen some renewed engagement among members of the parish community. "When the meat of the gospel presents itself before them and they can do kindness, show mercy and give aid to those who are in desperate situations, it feels like we've reconnected with what God's purposes are for us as creatures of God," he says. "Refugee sponsorship is the love that Christ speaks of, where both the giver and the recipient are mutually filled through the exchange."

With this family safe on Canadian soil, the team at St. Mary's is going to work with Ibrahim to sponsor more members of his family who left Afghanistan and are living in Malaysia. They're also waiting to hear about two sisters who went into hiding when the Taliban regained power and are trying to escape to Pakistan through the mountains.

However the next steps unfold for Ibrahim and St. Mary's, and despite the occasional frustrations in the process, Mr. McMillan says helping refugees find safety has been a rewarding experience. "We felt that God was calling us to do this," he says. "It was very much just us in the midst of everyday life, but willing to answer the door when someone knocked."



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## ORANGE SHIRT DAY

The Rev. Leigh Kern, the diocese's Right Relations coordinator, sent out an invitation throughout the diocese for people to send in a 'selfie' on Orange Shirt Day. She compiled the photos into a collage (above) and shared it on the Toronto Urban Native Ministry's Facebook page. Sept. 30 is known as Orange Shirt Day in memory of Phyllis Webstad's first day at an Indian Residential School in 1973. Ms. Webstad came to school wearing her favourite shirt that was gifted to her by a loved one. She was forced by school officials to throw out her orange shirt and personal belongings. Wearing an orange shirt on Sept. 30 is a symbolic way of honouring the residential school survivors and acknowledging the legacy of harm inflicted on generations of Indigenous families and communities.

# How can we build back anew?



**R**ecently, the Ontario government announced a reopening plan that would see public activity return to pre-pandemic levels. It is an aspirational objective, that's for sure. And while the plan may be off by weeks,

if not months, it points us in the direction of masking and contact tracing as optional, the end of capacity limits and a return to singing in churches and using the common cup. This is what a new year potentially holds.

We've all heard the term "build back better." The same phrase can apply to the Church as well. As we prepare for a time when the pandemic is reduced to flu-like status, we need to think about how to reacquaint people with regular worship, fellowship, community engagement and welcoming new members. Many of us feel out of step with what used to be familiar and is essential to who we are as Christians.

As I noted in my article last month, the experience of stewardship practice during the pandemic has revealed success stories and exposed profound vulnerabilities. As we return to increased public activity in our parishes, let's be mindful of ways we can build back that encourage new ministry, growth and engagement. Here are seven ways each one of us can help our parish during the transition.

**Sign up for Pre-Authorized Remittance or electronic funds transfer.** Parishes in which at least 50 per cent of their givers use a first fruits method of giving fared the best during the most difficult period of the pandemic. Every parish should strive to achieve this figure.

## THE STEWARD

BY PETER MISIASZEK

**Consider increasing your offertory giving.** Many parishes have been reluctant to request increased giving, as the pandemic had a negative impact on employment, especially in the service sector. Most industries have bounced back, and employment levels are nearing pre-pandemic levels. Some people saw their savings increase as travel and discretionary spending decreased. Now would be a welcome time to increase your financial support to your parish and other diocesan ministries.

**Draw up a will or update your current one.** Remember your church or favourite diocesan ministry when planning your estate gifts. A gift of encouragement (see Acts 4:36) is a wonderful testimony to the values you profess now.

**Say thank you.** If you are in leadership, thank your donors. If you are not in leadership, thank those who are. The last two years forced many to carry burdens they were not prepared for.

**Invite someone to church.** There is a timeless bit of fundraising wisdom that says, "people give to people who give." That same wisdom can apply to church growth: people will go to church with people who go to church. In our secular age, being a seeker can be intimidating. If you know of someone who is seeking, invite them to an Anglican church.

**Encourage your parish to tithe to outreach.** The tithe remains the measure of generosity that is most widely admired and yearned for, and it is a challenge for most of

us. It is precisely because it is such a challenge that parishes should lead by example and endeavour to donate 10 per cent of their revenue to outreach, including 5 per cent to FaithWorks.

**Preach and lay witness about stewardship and its benefits.** While it might seem obvious that we need to talk about generosity, there is a general reluctance to preach on this topic. As newcomers begin to rediscover our churches, giving to ministry should be an important component of Christian discipleship.

A return to normal will not happen overnight, and there will be those who are reluctant to jump into the newness that life after COVID-19 will bring. I find it difficult to believe that it could be mere months a way – but I crave it. I long for public Bible study, parish potluck socials, men's breakfasts, lessons and carols at the cathedral and the sound of our voices in common praise. I long to return to my office in downtown Toronto in the company of wonderful colleagues and dedicated volunteers. Zoom has helped us cope, but it's not ideal (at least not for a fundraiser).

Hopefully, these suggestions offer achievable goals for Christians seeking to deepen their relationship with the Church and Jesus. Individually (and collectively), these suggestions have the potential to be transformative to both the giver and receiver. They can enrich ministry in our parish and our community while at the same time making us feel good that we are making a difference. And they can help our parishes build back anew as we adjust to post-pandemic life.

*Peter Misiaszek is the diocese's director of Stewardship Development.*



# Re-making community explored

## Participants seek to build just society

BY MURRAY MacADAM

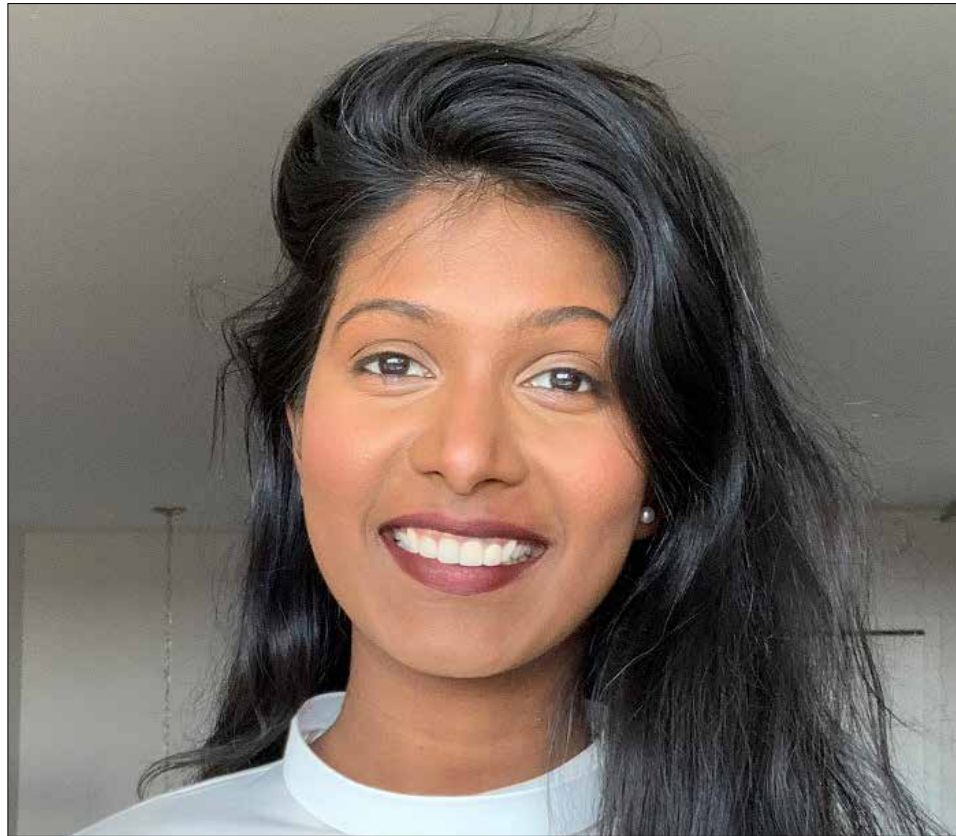
**M**ore than 100 people from all over the diocese and even as far as India met online on Oct. 30 for the annual Outreach and Advocacy Conference to learn, be inspired and discuss strategies for addressing issues facing our society. Workshops and a keynote address underscored the conference theme of “Re-membering and Re-making Community.”

In his welcome and opening prayer, Bishop Andrew Asbil said he has been “deeply moved by how social justice and advocacy has continued to sow peace and joy” throughout the diocese, despite the pandemic.

The Rev. Claudette Taylor recounted the well-known story from Ezekiel about God breathing new life into old bones (Ezekiel 37:1-14). The Rev. Gerlyn Henry, assistant curate at St. Timothy, North Toronto, picked up on that theme in a powerful, wide-ranging keynote address. In an opening prayer she implored God to “make us a people who behold, cherish and embody your promise as our dry bones shake us in uncertain times. We fall asleep to the sound of bones rattling; would you wake us with your breath? Give us the strength and courage to re-member and re-make community.”

Ms. Henry noted that Ezekiel knew what it was like to grow up in a community detached from its people and sense of identity. We’ve also experienced a sense of exile through the pandemic — but one that has heightened the inequalities of our society. For example, migrant farm workers were at least 10 times more likely to contract COVID-19 than the overall population. Homeless people have been more than 20 times as likely as the general population to be hospitalized with the virus.

“If Ezekiel were a prophet today and the spirit of God took him to a valley of bones, I think the bones would represent those we have omitted or forgotten. Tired bones of migrant workers far from their families. Symptomatic bones carrying the virus to work because Ontario didn’t approve



The Rev. Gerlyn Henry (above), assistant curate at St. Timothy, North Toronto, was the keynote speaker at the conference, while Pam Frache led a workshop on justice for workers.

sick days. They are bones of Indigenous children hidden six feet under, and bones crushed by empires that make billions of dollars while a billion people make less than a dollar a day,” said Ms. Henry.

“The first step to meaningful outreach and advocacy is bearing witness and truth-telling. Ezekiel stands in the midst of these dry bones and he bears witness. How do we bear witness to the things we are seeing in our communities? How do we share stories and encourage the naming of truth?”

Ms. Henry noted that God says in this passage, “I will cause breath to enter you and you shall live.” She then wondered about the people being re-made from these bones. Were they all the same? Very likely, there were a range of people in the crowd in terms of age, gender, diversity and ability. “The language that we hear is communal. I don’t think the point was for these individuals to stand strong and confident on their own two feet. No, the invitation by God is for the bodies to support one another in standing tall, and to uphold one another in reclaiming who we are.”

This teaching has strong implications for

us as the pandemic winds down, said Ms. Henry. “God’s invitation has never been to return to business as usual. We begin to re-make meaningful community in and after this pandemic by using this experience as a resource. Trusting the work of those who have been calling for justice,” she said.

She urged participants to remember that they possess a tremendous amount of knowledge that can be used, with the spirit of God, to imagine different realities. “In this pandemic many of us felt as if our bones dried up and our hope was lost. But we belong to God, and it’s through the Spirit of the God who lays sinew on bone that we stand leaning on one another, alive in a vast multitude. Trust the collective knowledge that has risen out of this pandemic,” she said.

After the keynote address, participants learned about a range of social justice issues at workshops. A “Justice for Workers” workshop zeroed in on the challenges faced by low-income workers, countering the view that higher minimum wages cause severe economic harm. After Ontario raised the minimum wage from \$11.65 to \$14 per hour in 2018, 130,000 new



jobs were created. Workshop leader Pam Frache highlighted that people of colour working in offices, warehouses, manufacturing and food industries have been most at risk from COVID-19. Ontario’s failure to enact paid sick days has meant that many of them go to work sick because they can’t afford to lose a day’s pay. “When we don’t protect the workplace, we ourselves are not protected. We have to protect each other,” she said.

Fair treatment for migrant workers was the focus of a workshop led by the Rev. Augusto Nunez, who leads a ministry for migrant workers in Durham Region, as well as being priest-in-charge at St. Saviour, Orono. These workers often struggle with loneliness, mental health issues and language barriers. The Durham Region Migrant Worker Ministry helps these workers from Mexico and the Caribbean in practical ways, such as providing meals, social gatherings and bicycles so workers living on isolated farms can get around. They are also supported in their faith through worship services. “Jesus is our foundation,” said Mr. Nunez.

Participants in a workshop on affordable housing heard how people of faith, both Christian and non-Christian, countered local hostility to a housing project for refugees in Toronto’s Willowdale neighbourhood by speaking out in support of the project. “People of faith must talk about the moral imperative to deal with justice issues,” said Jesse James, workshop leader. “It makes those opposed think about the issue in a different way.”

Other workshops dealt with transgender ministry, refugee sponsorship, renewing church lands and watershed discipleship.

Murray MacAdam is a member of St. John the Evangelist, Peterborough.

# Canadians urged to act on feelings of heartbreak, anger

BY MURRAY MacADAM

**A** workshop at the Outreach and Advocacy Conference on “Re-making Settler/Indigenous Relations” heard first-hand what the treatment of First Nations in Canada has meant in human terms, as well as strategies for action.

The Rev. Maggie Dieter, who led the workshop, is a United Church minister and a member of the Peepeekisis First Nation in Saskatchewan. She recounted how, without the Indian Agent’s approval, her grandparents couldn’t leave their reserve without a pass, or sell a cow. Her father’s brother was neglected in a residential school and never returned home.

Intergenerational trauma remains strong among Indigenous communities.



The Rev. Maggie Dieter

Ms. Dieter mentioned the discovery of Indigenous children’s unmarked graves at residential school sites, which has

triggered painful memories. Equally upsetting, she explained, has been seeing how these discoveries surprised so many Canadians, when they’ve had many opportunities to learn about residential schools. “It was shocking to see Canadians’ shocked responses. That wrongdoing is part of our DNA. It affects all of us,” said Ms. Dieter. “We have to acknowledge our feelings, our heartbreak and anger. Let’s also allow our feelings to move us. What is that anger calling you to do?”

She recalled the words of Justice Murray Sinclair, chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC): “Achieving reconciliation is like climbing a mountain — we must proceed a step at a time. ... We cannot allow ourselves to be daunted by the task, because our goal is just and it is also necessary.”

Ms. Dieter noted that faith communities like the Anglican Church have issued powerful words of apology. They also have a “pathway to the mountain” in the form of the TRC’s calls to action and opportunities to engage with local leaders. Cheryl Marek, a participant from Oshawa, encouraged fellow participants to take advantage of resources from the national church, such as the reconciliation toolkit, the Sacred Teachings podcast series by the late Ginny Doctor, and PWRDF’s interactive “Mapping the Ground We Stand On” workshop.

“Indigenous people are not looking for a handout,” said Ms. Dieter. “What they are seeking is nation building. How might what you heard today affect future dialogues? How might you act differently? Are we up for the challenge?”





Vaccinations and food are given to local residents in the parking lot of San Lorenzo, Dufferin. Bottom right, Bishop Andrew Asbil connects with a volunteer during a visit, accompanied by his wife Mary and the Rev. Canon Hernan Astudillo. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

# Church helps vaccinate Latin American community

## Parish radio station spreads the word

BY NAOMI RACZ

**THE** church of San Lorenzo, Dufferin, in co-ordination with the City of Toronto Health Department, ran a vaccination clinic for Toronto's Latin American community on Oct. 23. The afternoon clinic delivered 34 vaccines. The church also partnered with Unison to run a free food market with the clinic that provided fresh fruit and vegetables to more than 200 families. Bishop Andrew Asbil and his wife Mary attended and spoke with the nurses and community members.

It was the latest in a series of seven clinics run by the church, which has been active in promoting public health measures since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared

last March. The Rev. Canon Hernan Astudillo, incumbent, was inspired to act not only by his faith, but also by the fact that the Latin American community was disproportionately affected by the virus. Data released by Toronto Public Health showed that 83 per cent of people with a reported COVID-19 infection identified with a racialized group.

In April of this year, Canon Astudillo was contacted by Rosemary Bell, a community development officer at the City of Toronto who has been rolling out the community coordination plan and COVID-19 pandemic support in North York. She asked Canon Astudillo if he would like to be a community ambassador, given his leadership role

and wide reach within the Latin American community, not just with Anglicans but also those of other denominations. He was keen to be involved and when he told Ms. Bell he would like to run vaccine clinics, she was able to connect him with the right people.

San Lorenzo is uniquely placed to reach the Latin American community, as the church runs Voces Latinas CHHA 1610 AM, a CRTC licensed Spanish-language community radio station, which the church uses to broadcast public health messages. Canon Astudillo estimates that through the radio station, the church was able to inspire around 50,000 people to get vaccinated. He also spread the message through



social media, posting photos of himself receiving the vaccine.

Canon Astudillo has been at the frontline of supporting the Latin American community and has seen first-hand the impact COVID-19 has had, including close to home. Last May, one of the early victims of COVID 19 was Arturo, a prominent radio personality in the Latin American community and a long-time radio announcer on CHHA 1610 AM. Canon Astudillo has also received many calls from funeral homes across the city. "One experience that shocked me was a funeral for two seniors who were a married couple, 76 and 79 years old, who died of COVID-19 on the same day,

12 hours apart. Only 10 people were allowed to attend the funeral."

But running the vaccine clinics has given him a sense of hope. "I, as a priest, we, as a Church, have to be out in front at critical moments. Jesus was there at critical moments in history, he was the voice of hope, solidarity and love. That must be my role as a priest. This is a hard moment, but we are here with open hearts and open hands."

San Lorenzo and the Toronto Health Department have evaluated the success of the clinics, and there were plans to run another vaccine clinic in November as part of Voces Latino's 17th anniversary celebrations.

# Experimenting seems like a risky endeavour

Continued from Page 1

people, both of the church and those around the church.

For Jesus to be born to Mary, a conversation had to happen first. A heavenly messenger brought news to her that she would never have dreamt up on her own. The conversation was also an invitation, for God does not force us into doing ministry that isn't life-giving, but rather invites us into pathways that will always take us into new life.

In the Oshawa Deanery, four priests are starting just such a conversation, as no doubt many other priests have done, both informally and formally. In Barrie, we are learning to collaborate well while "thriving in place," recognizing the merits and gift of our material location, that God has a plan for us here,

but we need help! We are being both courageous and humble, in recognizing that we are not "lone rangers."

Experimenting seems like a risky endeavour. How do we experiment when it is easier to do what we know has worked in the past? It is an investment of serious time and energy that goes into listening first; we want to "get busy," not sit around praying and talking! And what if our shared ministry endeavour fails? We need to re-frame that question, to ask: was it failure, or a pathway in which we learned new things and were led in new directions? How do we bravely "fail forward" in this time of preparing the ground for the Reign of God in our communities?

Smaller parishes are strugg-

ling to keep full-time or even part-time priests. How can shared ministry benefit them? Does shared ministry mean more work? No! Just different kinds of work, and hopefully, work that allows us to re-allocate, to use our resources well and wisely, without overtaxing any one system or person. A key question to be explored: If shared ministry is to flourish, what kinds of infrastructure will be offered and needed on an area or diocesan level to help?

In this time of re-forming, looking for a guiding star, and listening, how can we be present to conversations amongst the community and the Holy Spirit so that we might discover the revelations of God, calling us into new and sustainable life?

## BRIEFLY

### Bursary fosters liturgical and musical creativity

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help provide creative liturgical programming. For more details, contact [cowlingbursary@gmail.com](mailto:cowlingbursary@gmail.com). The deadline to apply is Dec. 31, with grant recipients announced in January.

### Run raises record amount

The Schomberg Country Run, held in September, raised \$25,000, the highest total in the run's 11-year history. All of the proceeds were donated to PWRDF and directed to Water First, an initiative to improve water in Indigenous communities.





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## IN MOTION

### Appointments

- The Rev. Richard Newland, Honorary Assistant, St. Martin, Bay Ridges, Sept. 24.
- The Rev. Dr. Stephen Drakeford, Honorary Assistant, St. Anne, Toronto, Sept. 27.
- The Rev. Canon John Wilton, Honorary Assistant, St. Matthew the Apostle, Oriole, Oct. 10.
- The Rev. Canon Barbara Hammond, Interim Priest-in-Charge, Holy Trinity, Thornhill, Oct. 12.
- The Rev. Chris Horne, Honorary Assistant, Ascension, Don Mills, Oct. 24.
- The Rev. Don Davidson, Interim Priest-in-Charge, Christ Church, Bolton, Nov. 1.

### Vacant Incumbencies

*Clergy from outside the diocese with the permission of their bishop may apply through the Diocesan Executive Assistant, Canon Mary Conliffe.*

### Bishop's Direct Appointment Process

- (receiving names):
- All Saints, King City
- Prince of Peace, Wasaga Beach
- Havergal College Chaplain

### Parish Selection Committee Process

**First Phase** - (not yet receiving names):

- Christ Church, Bolton
- Holy Trinity, Trinity Square
- Holy Trinity, Thornhill
- Nativity, Malvern
- St. Dunstan of Canterbury
- St. Cyprian
- St. Peter, Erindale

**Second Phase** - (receiving names via Area Bishop):

- N/A

**Third Phase** - (no longer receiving names):

- St. George, Allandale (Barrie)

### Ordinations

- Virginia Gabriel will be ordained a Vocational Deacon at Christ the King on Dec. 12 at 2 p.m.

### Celebrations of New Ministry

*(Dates pending)*

#### Trent Durham

- The Rev. Shelly Pollard - Incumbent of St. Martin, Bay Ridges (Pickering) on Dec. 5 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Alvarado Adderley - Incumbent of the Parish of Fenelon Falls & Coboconk
- The Rev. Stephanie Douglas-Bowman - Incumbent of St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering
- The Rev. Peter Gachira - Incumbent of the Parish of Lakefield
- The Rev. Benjamin Gillard - Priest-in-Charge of St. Thomas, Brooklin
- The Rev. Lee McNaughton - Priest-in-Charge of St. Paul,

Brighton

- The Rev. Shelly Pollard - Incumbent of St. Martin, Bay Ridges (Pickering)
- The Rev. William Roberts - Priest-in-Charge of St. Mark, Port Hope
- The Rev. Jennifer Schick - Incumbent of All Saints, Whitby
- The Rev. Bonnie Skerrett - Incumbent of St. Paul, Lindsay

### York-Credit Valley

- The Rev. Nathan Humphrey - Incumbent of St. Thomas, Huron Street on Jan. 30, 2022 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Donald Beyers - Priest-in-Charge of St. Anne, Toronto
- The Rev. Robert Hurkmans - Incumbent of Trinity, Streetsville
- The Rev. Pam Prideaux - Incumbent of St. Joseph of Nazareth, Bramalea

### York-Scarborough

- The Rev. Alison Hari-Singh - Priest-in-Charge of St. Andrew by-the-Lake
- The Rev. Andrew Kaye - Incumbent of St. Margaret in-the-Pines
- The Rev. Andrew MacDonald - Priest-in-Charge of St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff
- The Rev. Michael Perry - Priest-in-Charge of Transfiguration
- The Rev. Dr. Irwin Sikha - Priest-in-Charge of St. Bede

### York-Simcoe

- The Rev. Eyad Ajji, Priest-in-Charge, Evangelists, New Tecumseth.
- The Rev. Ian LaFleur, Incumbent, St. Stephen, Maple.

### Retirement

- The Rev. Peter Blundell's last Sunday at St. John the Baptist, Oak Ridges will be Dec. 26.
- The Rev. Julian Aldous's last Sunday at Christ the King will be Dec. 26.

*Due to an editing oversight in June, the following announcements were omitted from the September issue. The Anglican regrets the error.*

### Conclusions

- The Rev. Canon Dr. Murray Henderson concluded his appointment as Honorary Assistant of St. Mary and St. Martha on April 25 and was moving to Ottawa.
- The Rev. Beverley Williams concluded her appointment as Executive Director of The Incorporated Ministry of Flemingdon Park on Aug. 31.

### Retirements

- The Rev. Tim Taylor's last Sunday at St. Anne, Toronto was June 27.
- The Rev. Canon Claire Wade's last Sunday at St. Thomas, Brooklin was June 27.
- The Rev. Victor Li's last Sunday at St. Cyprian was Aug. 29.

## PRAYER CYCLE

### FOR DECEMBER

1. Philip Aziz HIV/AIDS Hospice, a FaithWorks ministry
2. All Saints, Peterborough
3. St. George, Hastings
4. The Chapel of Christ Church, Lakefield
5. Project Ploughshares - the peace institute of the Canadian Council of Churches
6. FaithWorks' shelters for women and children at risk
7. Christ Church, Campbellford
8. Christ Church, Norwood

9. St. George-the-Martyr, Apsley
10. Bishop Kevin Robertson, Diversity Officer for the Diocese
11. St. James, Emily
12. Peterborough Deanery
13. St. James, Roseneath
14. St. John the Baptist, Lakefield
15. St. John the Evangelist, Havelock
16. St. John the Evangelist, Peterborough
17. St. John, Ida
18. Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto (CJDT)
19. The Anglican Church Women (ACW) - Enid Corbett, Diocesan President
20. St. Matthew and St. Aidan, Buckhorn

21. St. Michael, Westwood
22. St. Peter on-the-Rock, Stony Lake
23. St. Stephen, Chandos
24. Christ Church, Omeme
25. Christmas Day
26. Black Anglicans of Canada and the International Decade for People of African Descent
27. St. Thomas, Millbrook
28. St. Luke, Peterborough
29. The Staff of the Synod Office
30. Chaplains to the Retired Clergy
31. Founders and Benefactors of the Diocese of Toronto

# LOOKING AHEAD

To submit items for Looking Ahead, email [editor@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:editor@toronto.anglican.ca). The deadline for the January issue is Dec. 1. Parishes

can also promote their events on the diocese's website at [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca).

## Worship services

**DEC. 6** - The Feast of St. Nicholas Service and Celebration, 10:30 a.m., Bishop Kevin Robertson guest preacher, St. Nicholas will visit to remind children that Christmas is

coming, Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingston Rd., Toronto.

## Concerts & Plays

**NOV. 28** - Advent Evensong at 4 p.m., followed by The Mystic Voice of a Violin, a concert featuring Paulina Derbez, in person or on YouTube, St. Olave, Bloor and Windermere streets, Toronto. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

**DEC. 1-JAN.1** - The Christmas Story's 84th year, from Holy Trinity, Trinity Square. When the pandemic shut down live theatre last year, the cast of The Christmas Story took to the streets of Toronto to create a one-of-a-kind "Pandemic Pageant." This innovative film returns on-demand, online Suggested donation is \$10. ASL version available. Visit [www.thechristmasstory.ca](http://www.thechristmasstory.ca).

**DEC. 19** - The Wonder of Christmas Concert, 4 p.m., in person and live-streamed on YouTube, Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingston Rd., Toronto. Proceeds will go to PWRDF for Indigenous Water Project.

## Retreats

**DEC. 4** - Advent Quiet Day led by Bishop Peter Fenty, hosted by the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine, on Zoom. Cost: \$30. Visit [www.ssjd.ca](http://www.ssjd.ca).

## Bazaars

**DEC. 1** - Silent auction, baked goods, crafts, jewelry and more, Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingston Rd., Toronto.

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## Tower of tins helps those in need

Throughout the Season of Creation, members of St. Paul, Lindsay focused on responding to the needs of those with whom they shared the planet. The Rev. Bonnie Skerritt, incumbent, found over the summer that the shelves of the Kawartha Lakes Food Source were depleted because of a sharp increase in need across the region due to the pandemic. In response to this situation, from Sept. 19 to Thanksgiving Sunday on Oct. 10, the church held a Thanksgiving Food Drive, collecting tins of high protein items, which was the greatest need in the community, according to Food Source community engagement coordinator Kate Dorotheou.

A goal was set to build a "Tower of Tins," aiming for 300 tins. The church surpassed that goal, watching its tower grow week by week. The end result was over 450 tins of high protein items, as well as other tinned goods, breakfast foods and produce filling 12 banana boxes. The generosity of the parish was truly born out of a desire to answer Jesus' call to feed the hungry and care for those in the community. Submitted by St. Paul, Lindsay

## Cobourg honours church members

Several members of St. Peter, Cobourg were honoured at Cobourg's Annual Civic Awards ceremony, held virtually on Sept. 24.

"At the heart of every community are those volunteers who make the impossible possible – those who recognize the needs of others and selflessly give their time to meet those needs," wrote Cobourg Mayor John Henderson in the Northumberland News.

St. Peter's is not just a church but a significant part of Cobourg's thriving community. Even during the pandemic, church members, with the assistance of others, have been working to ensure that the vulnerable are fed and kids have warm coats for the winter.

Ann Stokes received a Distinguished Community Service Award for individuals for her work with The Blue Box. The workers for Thursday Night Lite, the dinner program that feeds on average 130 people each week, won in the group category.

In the major awards category, Barbara Tait was honoured as Outstanding Senior for her work with many volunteer organizations, including the Vision Working Group at St. Peter's, and Rod Baker won the prestigious Mayor's Award for his long-standing work with Coats for Kids, as well as his many charitable works at St. Peter's. Submitted by St. Peter, Cobourg

## Church holds drive-by farewell

Trinity Church, Barrie was blessed to have the Rev. Terry Bennett as its interim priest-in-charge for the past three years, along with Joy Packham as its administrator for two of those years. Although members of the congregation had wanted to have a parish barbecue for their farewell, due to COVID-19 they were unable to do so. Instead, they organized a drive-by/walk-



## INSPIRING

Volunteers at St. Martin, Bay Ridges put their creative talents to work to create a Rock Garden of Inspiration. Messages of hope and encouragement were painted on rocks along with dedications from the congregation. The rock garden was displayed at the church's altar on Harvest Sunday in October. PHOTO BY EUGENE FARRUGIA



The 'Tower of Tins' in St. Paul, Lindsay, ready to be given to those in need. PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. PAUL, LINDSAY



Friends gather with the Rev. Terry Bennett and Joy Packham after the drive- and walk-past farewell procession at Trinity Church, Barrie. PHOTO COURTESY OF TRINITY CHURCH, BARRIE

by farewell procession at the top of Trinity hill on the morning of Sept. 26.

The sunny fall day, a Sunday, was ideal as 60 parishioners lined up, either on foot or in their cars, to pass on their heartfelt thanks to the Bennetts and Joy Packham. Prior to proceeding with the drive by, the Bennetts were presented with a watercolour portrait of Trinity Church, with a silver plaque inscribed: "To Reverend Terry Bennett, with appreciation and gratitude, from the Parish of Trinity, 2018-2021." After Bob Garrett sang "Irish Eyes are Smiling," the parishioners had the opportunity to talk with each of them about the moments that moved them while they were with us. While waiting their turn, the parishioners signed communal farewell cards that were presented after the last vehicle had driven past. The parishioners were given a traditional blessing on a scroll, tied with a cross, by the Bennetts as a keepsake to remember them by.

A special thank-you goes to all who made the day special and possible, especially Bill and Monika Sergeant, Joan Hill, Ray Martinelli, Bob Garrett and Sue Taylor. Submitted by Trinity Church, Barrie.

## Walkathon supports refugees

On Oct. 16, despite a forecast of rain for the day, about 50 people gathered for the St. James Cathedral



People take part in St. James Cathedral and Community Refugee Committee's walkathon in response to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

and Community Refugee Committee's walkathon in response to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. Participants included committee members, St. James Cathedral parishioners, Bishop Andrew Asbil, Dean Stephen Vail, friends and family, including Fragomen Canada and Talent Beyond Boundaries staff and newcomer families who were previously supported through the committee's past refugee sponsorships. They met at the Toronto Botanical Gardens. While the group came prepared to walk, rain or shine, with umbrellas in hand, they were



blessed with clear skies and no rain for the two-hour, 6km walk along the serene edge of the Don River. Funds raised will go towards the sponsorship of one or two Afghan

families to be resettled in Canada with the support of the committee. Submitted by the St. James Cathedral and Community Refugee Committee.