

**Priest compiles timeless prayers**

**Remembering the Queen**



**Action urged on climate crisis**

# The Anglican

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## HAPPY DAY

The Rev. Canon Beth Benson blesses a dog at St. James Cathedral's Blessing of Animals service on Oct. 1. For more photos, see Page 13. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

# FaithWorks Sunday set for Nov. 20

Campaign supports most vulnerable members of society

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

ON Nov. 20, the diocese will mark its third annual FaithWorks Sunday, a day to focus attention on this year's FaithWorks campaign and the important work of its 16 ministry partners.

Since 2020, FaithWorks Sunday has fallen on the Reign of Christ, the last Sunday of the church year. Peter Mentis, the FaithWorks campaign manager, says the timing is no coincidence. "That Sunday brings forth images of the Kingdom of God, where God's love and mercy rule. Another image is from the book of Revelation, where mourning and crying and pain will be no

more," he says.

Reign of Christ Sunday also calls to his mind the mission statement of FaithWorks, taken from Matthew 25: For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. "It's not only the vision for FaithWorks; it's also an instruction of how we are to be part of the Kingdom of God, how we enter the Kingdom of God both here and now as well as in eternity," says Mr. Mentis.

While FaithWorks is a year-

round priority for many parishes, he says there's real value in setting a particular day to recognize its importance. "We celebrate the presence of the living Christ in our midst every day, yet we still set aside certain days like Christmas, Easter and Sundays to be reminded of that presence," he says. "FaithWorks Sunday is exactly the same; it's the moment to focus. Because the work of FaithWorks goes on every day. The needs that FaithWorks addresses go on every day."

The timing is also convenient because many people leave their charitable donations until the end of the calendar year, making December a critical month for the

annual FaithWorks campaign. "We really won't know until the end of the year how things have gone. Things seem to be on track, but that's why now through the fall is the time to draw attention to FaithWorks as a reminder as people are wrapping up the year," says Mr. Mentis.

The invitation to celebrate FaithWorks Sunday on Nov. 20 is by no means mandatory, as the FaithWorks team knows that some parishes choose to focus on FaithWorks at different times of the year. "Whether it's the diocesan date or another day, it's a good thing to bring particular focus to that aspect of our Christian life, both

our calling and our abilities to reach out and help," he says. "It's a good reminder for those parishes that may not have a specific date that this is the opportunity to create something." He says FaithWorks Sunday can also give parishes a chance to invite support from new members who may not yet be aware of FaithWorks and its ministries.

While FaithWorks has fared well during the pandemic, with individuals and parishes maintaining and even increasing their gifts over the past two years, lingering uncertainty continues to affect the outlook for 2023. "This is a difficult year to tell exactly

Continued on Page 15

**YOUTH RECHARGE AT RETREAT - SEE PAGE 16**

# Priest brings prayers together in new book

## Timeless words from BCP help with daily life

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

A new book envisioned by a priest in the Diocese of Toronto is helping to make some of the oldest and most beautiful prayers from the Anglican tradition more easily available. *These Our Prayers*, published this past summer, compiles and organizes prayers primarily from the 1962 *Canadian Book of Common Prayer* (BCP) into categories that can be used by individuals and communities in their daily prayer lives.

"The *Book of Common Prayer* is this rich resource of prayers that is not necessarily turned to by a lot of people anymore, especially if you're in a church that uses the *Book of Alternative Services* exclusively," says the Rev. Robert Mitchell, who compiled the book. "It's part of our collective Anglican heritage, and there's all these wonderful prayers within it that are still very useful."

Mr. Mitchell is the incumbent of St. Olave, Swansea, which uses the Prayer Book exclusively, so he is very familiar with the daily offices, prayers of thanksgiving and Sunday collects. But he says he's discovered prayers that he wasn't familiar with or had forgotten. "Even people that use the Prayer Book on a regular basis and have one on their bedside

table may not know about some of those prayers that are buried deep in the back," he says. "I thought it would be kind of neat to be able to pull those prayers from some of these dark recesses of the Prayer Book where they're sometimes lost, categorize them and put them together in a place where they could be rediscovered and used, hopefully on a more regular basis."

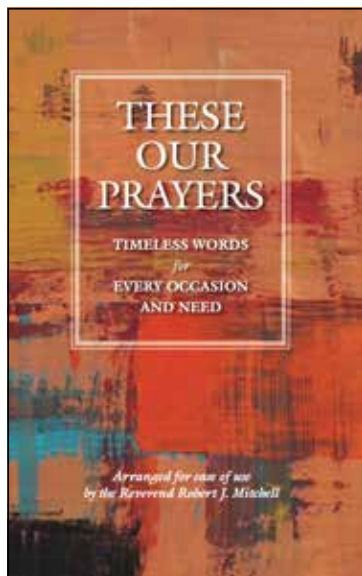
He had the idea for *These Our Prayers* in 2019 and started working on the project in earnest in the summer of 2020. He says the pandemic may have helped inspire him to finish the project. "It's something that was rattling around my brain for a while, and I finally started working at it," he says. "During COVID there was an increased appetite for prayer and prayer resources, so it pushed me through to the finish line. It felt like it might be of use to people, given the slightly new environment in which we found ourselves."

The work included hours spent poring through the BCP in search of standalone prayers, collects and other resources that he felt would be useful in someone's prayer life. He also chose several prayers from the *Canadian Book of Occasional Offices*, which was published in 1964 as a supplement to the Prayer Book,

and delved into the 1918 *Canadian Book of Common Prayer*, the 1938 *Common Praise* hymn book and the English Hymnal of 1933. In all, he categorized and included nearly 500 prayers.

Realizing there would be some cost to publishing the kind of book he envisioned, Mr. Mitchell approached the Prayer Book Society of Canada, which offered funding. He was also well supported by people in his parish. His rector's warden, who has worked in communications and publishing, lent her expertise, while other parishioners created the book's cover art and did the layout and design.

The result is a well-organized collection of prayers divided into categories for use in daily life, such as prayers for church musicians, prayers for an end to racism, prayers for those in anxiety, prayers in a time of pandemic, and grace at meals, among many others. There is also a section of seasonal prayers for the liturgical calendar, prayers for feast days observed throughout the Church year, and tips for readers who want to create or customize their own prayers. "I would guess that I've incorporated at least 95 per cent of the standalone prayers in the Prayer Book," says Mr. Mitchell.



The cover of *These Our Prayers* and the Rev. Robert Mitchell. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ST. OLAVE, SWANSEA



The *Book of Common Prayer* wasn't always a central part of his own prayer life. Growing up in Saskatoon as the son of an Anglican priest, his parish used the *Book of Alternative Services* exclusively. "I did have access to the Prayer Book, but it wasn't necessarily something I was using on a regular basis," he says. He grew more familiar with the BCP in seminary and then in parish appointments after ordination. "Maybe a couple generations before me, it was just the book everybody had. For people of a younger generation, we've discovered it potentially in a different way than our parents and grandparents."

He says he thinks one of the reasons these prayers continue to resonate with people is the language. "There are beautiful turns of phrase, and the use of language is just so elegant," he says. "For some people, when you have that moment of beauty in language, there's a connection there. It elevates the prayer to a certain degree."

But more than that, he says he believes the prayers of the *Book of Common Prayer*, some of which are hundreds of years old, can help

Christians feel part of a long legacy of people praying over countless generations. "You're not just a solitary individual trying to start from ground zero; you're part of a tradition that's vast and much larger than you are. That can hold you up, especially when you don't necessarily have the words that you need in a particular circumstance," he says. "If you're able to pray this prayer that's been hallowed and sanctified by generations of other Christians, that's liberating. You don't always have to know exactly what to say."

Mr. Mitchell says he hopes that *These Our Prayers* will be helpful to a broad audience, lay and ordained alike. "I think the obvious first group of people might be Anglicans that are interested in this style of prayer," he says. "Really anybody, certainly any Christian, who's interested in prayer. There's no limit to who could use it."

*These Our Prayers* can be ordered from Lulu Publishing for \$22.99 plus taxes and shipping, or for pickup at St. Olave's in the west end of Toronto for \$25. For more details, visit [www.stolaves.ca/these-our-prayers](http://www.stolaves.ca/these-our-prayers).

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## BRIEFLY

### Synod coming up

The diocese's 161st Regular Session of Synod will convene online Nov. 17-19. For more information, visit [www.toronto.anglican.ca/upcomingsynod](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/upcomingsynod). Coverage of Synod will be available on the diocese's

website, [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca), afterwards and in the January issue of *The Anglican*.

### Correction

Marion Thompson is a member of St. Peter, Oshawa, where she is a lay member of Synod and serves as deputy rector's warden. Incorrect information was published in the September issue. *The Anglican* regrets the error.

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# Dear reader,

This fall marks another stage in the life of *The Anglican*, the diocese's monthly newspaper. In October, the paper joined Anglican News Canada, a ministry of the Anglican Church of Canada. Anglican News Canada brings together the church's national newspaper and a growing list of diocesan papers, which readers can explore with a single mouse-click or touch.

As a partner of Anglican News Canada, *The Anglican* has been given its own website, [www.theanglican.ca](http://www.theanglican.ca), where stories, photographs and commentary are presented in a bright, lively way. The website, which is attractive and easy to use, provides not only stories from the monthly paper but also the latest news from the diocese.

Of course, *The Anglican* will continue to be available in print and on the diocese's website in PDF format. The diocese's latest news will continue to be posted on the diocese's website as well.

Please visit *The Anglican* at [www.theanglican.ca](http://www.theanglican.ca) when you have a minute, and thank you for your continued support of the paper's important ministry.

Stuart Mann, Editor



## OPEN

The Rev. Canon Janet Reid-Hockin and Ian Beverley cut the ribbon to open the Bayview Garden Project at St. Cuthbert, Leaside on Sept. 18. The new outdoor space includes a contemplative prayer garden, signage and a welcoming entrance to the church off Bayview Avenue. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

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**RUNNING FOR CLEAN WATER**

Bishop Kevin Robertson (back row, second from right) joins some volunteers and participants in the 12th annual Schomberg Country Run on Sept. 24. The run raised a record total of \$28,000. Proceeds went to Water First, an organization that focusses on educating and training Indigenous youth to support water systems in their communities. This year's run drew 41 participants, both on-site and remotely. The run, organized by the Parish of Lloydtown's run committee, included a breakfast and coffee. With the group is the Rev. Greg Fiennes-Clinton, incumbent of the Parish of Lloydtown (back row, right). PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SCHOMBERG COUNTRY RUN



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# Time to make social assistance a real lifeline



BY ELIN GOULDEN

**W**ith inflation at the highest rates seen in decades, the cost of living is on everyone's mind these days. There is probably no one in Ontario who hasn't felt some level of "sticker shock" when paying for everything from gas to groceries, rent and heat. But what if your income was already insufficient to meet your basic needs before inflation hit?

Since 1995, when the Harris government cut social assistance rates by 21.6 per cent for recipients considered employable (a program now called Ontario Works or OW), to live on social assistance in this province has been to live in increasingly deep poverty. The modest rate increases applied to both Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program from 2003 to 2018 barely kept pace with inflation over that period, and after a 1.5 per cent increase in fall 2018, rates for both OW and ODSP were frozen for the next four years. Thus, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, single people receiving ODSP were 40 per cent below the poverty line, while those receiving OW were more than 60 per cent below the poverty line. Both rates fall well within what is considered "deep poverty," or

an income 75 per cent of (or 25 per cent below) the official poverty line.

As inflation has climbed, the poverty gap has only widened. In September 2022, the Ford government followed through with its campaign promise to raise ODSP rates by 5 per cent. While this is a welcome step after a four-year rate freeze, it is still far from adequate. The increase will give single ODSP recipients just over \$58 more per month, nowhere near enough to lift them out of deep poverty. Meanwhile, those on Ontario Works receive no increase at all. There is nowhere in Ontario where the \$733 per month received by a single person on OW is adequate to meet their needs for food, shelter and clothing.

It's hardly surprising that homelessness is increasing everywhere from Peel to Peterborough and Collingwood to Coburg, while food banks and other food security programs are reporting a huge spike in the numbers of people accessing their services for the first time. While people receiving Ontario Works are considered employable, the abysmally low rates of assistance drive them deeper into destitution, making it more and more difficult for them to lift themselves out of poverty.

Some ODSP recipients are actively seeking medical assistance in dying (MAiD), not because they are dying of

their disabilities, nor because they don't wish to live, but because their income is too meagre to allow them to live with their disabilities in dignity. For such people, the recently expanded access to MAiD may at least allow them to die with dignity. As the Rev. Canon Douglas Graydon has noted, this is less of an individual choice than an indictment against a society that has "determined that they're not worthy of sufficient resources to ensure a quality of life."

A growing number of advocates across the province have begun calling for a substantial increase to both OW and ODSP to meet the cost of basic needs. This past summer, the Income Security Advocacy Centre (a branch of Legal Aid Ontario) released an open letter calling on the provincial government to double social assistance rates and index them to inflation. This letter has been endorsed by more than 230 community organizations and social service providers, including food banks and legal clinics across the province; faith communities such as the Salvation Army and Mennonite Central Committee – Ontario; coalitions such as the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC), of which this diocese is a member; and several of our FaithWorks ministry partners, including the Orillia Christian Centre – Lighthouse and the Dam. ISARC

is planning to invite its faith communities to participate in a solidarity fast and advocacy action leading up to its fall forum in November. (Visit [www.isarc.ca](http://www.isarc.ca) to learn more.)

Anglicans in our diocese will also be asked to support a social justice vestry motion in 2023 calling for a substantial increase to social assistance rates. The motion and supporting materials are in preparation and should be available on the diocesan website by early December.

Ensuring that the most vulnerable members of our communities are able to meet their most basic needs is surely one of our most fundamental obligations as a society. Disabled people should not be driven to seek "death with dignity" because we fail to provide them with enough to live life with dignity. Those who are down on their luck should be supported to rise out of poverty rather than pushed deeper into destitution.

To fail to respond to the needs of the poor in our midst is to be like the rich man in Luke 16 who enjoyed the good things of life while ignoring Lazarus at his gate. We are called instead to recognize in our neighbour the face of Christ, and to work together to ensure all have enough.

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

"I was hungry and you gave me food ..." Matt. 25:35



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## ROYAL VISIT

The Queen and Prince Philip attend a service at St. James Cathedral during their visit to Toronto in 2010. After the service, the Queen rededicated the cathedral's St. George's Chapel, presented two peals of eight handbells to representatives of the Six Nations and Tyendinaga Chapels Royal and signed the cathedral's Royal Bible and the Six Nations' Queen Anne's Bible. The Queen and Prince Philip also did a short walkabout after the service, much to the delight of spectators who waited outside. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



## The Queen and duty

BY THE REV. DANIEL GRAVES



I promise to do my best, to do my duty to God and the Queen, to keep the law of the wolf cub pack and to do a good turn every day." This was the oath we

seven-year-old boys solemnly swore each week at cub pack meetings. Perhaps this, along with the devotion instilled in me by my English Nan, is what led me to be a deep admirer of our late sovereign.

Much has been said in recent days of Elizabeth II's own oath, given on her 21st birthday, to serve her people all her days whether her life be long or short. Her sense of duty will long shine as a beacon of faithfulness both as our Queen and as a Christian. Duty is not something we speak that fondly of these days. In a world obsessed with liberty, and indeed a certain libertinism, with self-actualization and sovereignty of the individual held up as the supreme virtues, we may have forgotten the virtue of duty. But is duty a virtue? Not in and of itself, but it is reflective of and an expression of virtue. And what was the virtue that our late Queen upheld in her commitment to duty? It was that of obedience.

Like duty, obedience is not often looked

upon that favourably in today's world. Did we not remove "obey" from the marriage liturgy, after all? Yet, it is to be found in the baptismal liturgy as a virtuous response to the call of God in all our lives. Our modern baptismal liturgy invites us to turn to Christ, trust in his grace and love, and to obey him as Lord. In my experience preparing individuals for baptism, they don't seem to have much trouble with the "turning" and "trusting" parts, but people's backs seem to get up when we speak about obedience.

We can speculate much about the late Queen's faith, but in truth, we will never know what she talked to God about in her quiet moments. Beyond her brief statements of faith in her Christmas messages, we have only her life before us as a witness to her faith, and it was a life of duty and obedience. Some recent biographers have revealed that had she never been Queen, she would have relished the life of a country lady, raising horses and dogs. To be sure, she was able to indulge these passions during her life, but first and foremost was her service to the people God called her to serve. She never asked to be Queen – God called her to it in the providence of her birth. She answered the call unwaveringly, obediently and dutifully. How many of us can say we have

been as faithful to God's call as Her Late Majesty was?

This brings us back to the oaths and vows that we make to each other, to those whom we serve and to the one we serve, our Lord and Master. Each of us has been providentially placed in our own setting with a call of God on our lives. Many of us will have more choice than the late Queen as to how we will live our lives, where we will live, with whom shall we live and what we will do with our choices. Yet there is much we cannot change about where we find ourselves. Do we fight against what we cannot change? Or shall we lay hold of the hope of the gospel open to all, no matter where we find ourselves? Shall we ask, where we are, whatever our circumstances, "what does the Lord ask of me?" and "how shall I serve?"

Looking to the example of Elizabeth II, perhaps we might re-examine the concept of duty and the virtue of obedience. This is not to dismiss the promise of liberty and personal sovereignty, for the gospel offers both of these in abundance. Yet, let us always remember that in following Christ, in dutifully serving him, in obeying him, we discover a service of perfect freedom. The last photo taken of the late Queen, meeting the last prime minister of her reign, days before her death, shows a frail person, but one still radiating. Surely the oath of faithfulness to serve in the way God had called her was as much on her mind that day as it was that day on her 21st birthday.

*The Rev. Daniel Graves is the associate priest at Trinity Church, Aurora.*

# 'She loved this country'

## Speakers recall monarch's faith, love of Canada

BY STUART MANN

**A** national memorial service in commemoration of Queen Elizabeth II was held at St. James Cathedral in Toronto on Sept. 20. The service was preceded by a 96-gun salute at Queen's Park – one shot for each year of the late monarch's life.

The Queen, who was the Supreme Governor of the Church of England and Defender of the Faith, died on Sept. 8 after 70 years on the throne. She was succeeded by King Charles III. Her state funeral was held at Westminster Abbey in London, England on Sept. 19. A commemorative service was held at Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa later the same day.

The Queen and the late Prince Philip visited and attended worship services at St. James Cathedral in 1997 and 2010. A book of condolences and a small exhibit of photos of the royal visits were set up in the cathedral after her death.

The service at the cathedral on Sept. 20 began with music and the burial sentences, sung by the cathedral's choir. The congregation sang the national anthem, O Canada, and Bishop Andrew Asbil, Bishop of Toronto, speaking in English and French, welcomed those attending in person or via the live stream.

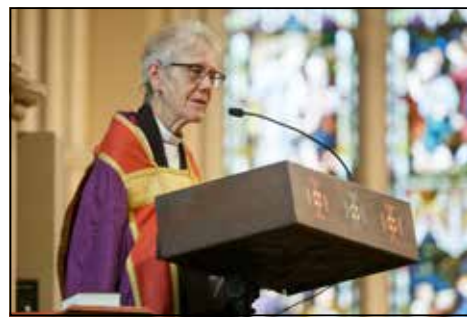
"The service that we participate in now allows us to touch our grief and sorrow," he said. "It gives us an opportunity to express our gratitude, and to lean into the future together in hope and prayer for our king, for the royal family, for the peoples of this land of Canada, for the Commonwealth and for the world."

Dr. Olive Watahine Elm of the Oneida Nation of the Thames gave the opening prayer in Oneida, and then the Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, the lieutenant governor of Ontario, gave a reflection. She spoke about the Queen's commitment to duty and her love of Canada.

"During wars and depressions, global instability and uncertainty, and incessant change, she was a pillar of strength, adaptation and endurance, the embodiment of dignity and commitment to duty," she said. "For more than 70 years, this was a woman who put duty beyond desire, service above self, and in doing so the Queen's legacy may be measured by the extraordinary impact on the quality of our national character and the complexion of civic life in Canada."

"She loved this country, and perhaps never more so than when, in 1990, shortly after the failure of the Meech Lake Accord, she so graciously told Canadians, I'm not a fairweather friend. I am with you in good times and bad. Canada has seen great days and we're going to see many more in the future."

"Even until the very moment of her death, her steadfast example of duty was evident. One of her last acts was to send a message of comfort to the people of James Smith Cree Nation, Saskatchewan. And in Ontario, I granted royal assent in her name on the afternoon of Sept. 8, just minutes before Buckingham Palace announced that she had passed. So our collective respect, devotion and admiration for her were very well earned. How fortunate we have been."



**Clockwise from top: members of the Lieutenant-Governor's guard of honour stand at attention in front of St. James Cathedral before the service; the cathedral's choir sings a lament; piper Ian Goodtimes plays a lament; Bishop Andrew Asbil greets Toronto Mayor John Tory (right) and Premier Doug Ford after the service; Lieutenant-Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell gives the reflection; Archbishop Linda Nicholls preaches. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON**

"For most of us, she has been the only sovereign we've known, a calm and enduring presence. In equal measure in time of challenge or celebration, she always found the words to inspire us. In offering hope and encouragement as we endured yet another year of a global pandemic, she reminded us that as dark as death can be, particularly for those suffering with grief, light and life are greater... She showed us that we must never give up in our quest for a world where fairness, security, opportunity and freedom mutually support and reinforce each other. Such wisdom, both in word and deed. Her humanity and human decency were ever present. And for that, we are grateful. Perhaps we might honour her best by following her example of a life of humility, constancy, civility and caring. May we commit to working together with open hearts and open minds as we celebrate her life."

Premier Doug Ford read the first lesson, Wisdom 3:1-9, and Thanyehténhas (Nathan Brinklow) of the Turtle Clan from the Tyendinga Mohawk Territory, read the second lesson, Revelation 21:1-7, in Mohawk.

In her homily, Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, spoke about the Queen's deep and abiding faith. "Having been set apart for the work of a monarch, serving the people entrusted to her leadership, she was both unstinting and unwavering in commitments to its demands, even as she drew strength and grace from her Christian faith," she said. "She reflected



the life of the righteous described in the first reading from the Book of Wisdom: tried, tested, faithful. The author wrote, those who trust in God will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with Him in love because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and He watches over his holy ones.

"She was particularly open about her faith in her annual Christmas messages. In 2014, she said, for me the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose birth we celebrate today, is an inspiration and anchor in my life. A role model of reconciliation and forgiveness, he stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing. Christ's example has taught me to seek, to respect and value all people of whatever faiths or none."

As she concluded her homily, Archbishop Nicholls thanked the Queen for her life of service and faith. "Some wished she used her role for particular causes or world concerns more. Others saw the wealth of the Royal Family, others see no reason for a monarchy. It is a fragile institution whose value is only proven by the people who inhabit it. In Queen Elizabeth we had a woman born into its demands, who recognized the servant role it re-

quired and fulfilled it faithfully to the best of her ability. In the face of her death, we say thank you. Thank you for showing us a life lived in service and in Christian witness with grace, courage and resilience. Thank you for accepting the duty thrust upon you and embracing it with joy and care for all you served. May each of us live the vocation that lays before us in our time and place, inspired by her example, choosing well that which grounds us in hope and connects us deeply in community and service to one another."

Prayers were said by the Most Rev. Greg Kerr-Wilson, Archbishop of Calgary and Metropolitan of Rupert's Land, the Most Rev. Anne Germond, Archbishop of Algoma and Metropolitan of Ontario, the Rev. Dr. Robert Faris, Moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Rt. Rev. Nigel Shaw, Bishop Ordinary to the Canadian Forces, and the Most Rev. Dr. Lynne McNaughton, Archbishop of Kootenay and Metropolitan of British Columbia and Yukon.

The service concluded with piper Ian Goodtimes playing a lament and the congregation singing the royal anthem, God Save the King. Bishop Asbil gave the blessing.

# Churches form regional ministry

## Parishes plan to work together

BY STUART MANN

IT'S been a while since St. George, Hastings was full for an Evensong service, but that was the case on Sept. 25 as about 80 people crowded into its pews to celebrate the start of a new regional ministry, one of the first in the diocese.

"It was lovely," says the Rev. Canon Brad Smith, incumbent of St. John the Evangelist, Peterborough, recalling the service. "It was very energetic and joyful. It was a reflection of what we're trying to do with regional ministry – to collaborate with other parishes."

The congregation was made up of representatives from all of the churches taking part in the regional ministry – St. John the Evangelist, Havelock, Christ Church, Norwood, St. Michael, Westwood, St. George, Hastings, St. James, Roseneath, Christ Church, Campbellford and St. John the Evangelist, Peterborough. The churches are located on the eastern side of the diocese.

After the service, there was a dinner where people from the churches got to know each other. "Most of the people sat with others they hadn't met before and there was a real sense of folks sharing in this together," says Canon Smith. "The willingness and excitement that people have for doing this – it gives me a lot of hope. It's a very exciting time."

The churches started talking about forming a regional ministry in 2019 but the COVID-19 pandemic put those discussions on hold. Dialogue resumed in the spring of 2021 and the vestries voted in favour of it at the beginning of this year, with an official start date of July 1.

Canon Smith describes regional ministry as a partnership between churches, where clergy and laity work as teams to address the ministry needs of whole area, not just

their individual parishes. Instead of each church trying to do everything, churches can rely on others for support or provide expertise as they are able.

For churches that are struggling with dwindling attendance, this can be a lifeline, says Canon Smith, who worked in regional ministry in the Diocese of Ontario before coming to the Diocese of Toronto. "Some parishes have 12 people in a church on a Sunday and they're trying to sustain a cleric and a building, and that's really hard to do with that number of people. So regionalizing and putting our oars in together means that we may have a renewed lease on life."

But it's not just about survival, he adds. "It's about shifting the focus from how to keep the congregation alive to how can it interact with its community. It takes the focus away from Sunday-type ministry and clergy and says, how do the laity who are left engage with the community?"

The churches in the regional ministry have identified three priorities they'd like to work on together: ministry to families and youth, outreach, and pastoral visiting, particularly to seniors. They've already started work on pastoral visiting. St. John the Evangelist, Peterborough has a group of pastoral visitors who hope to recruit and train volunteers in the other churches. The clergy are also working together as a team. In addition to Canon Smith, there is the Rev. Bryce Sangster, incumbent of the Parish of Campbellford, Hastings and Roseneath, and the Rev. Max Dionisio, who is serving as the regional ministry's curate.

Canon Smith says the regional ministry plans to proceed one step at a time and make things work before moving on to the next thing. "It's very much a learn-as-we-go



The Rev. Max Dionisio, curate of the regional ministry, sits with church members at a dinner following the service at St. George, Hastings. PHOTO BY THE REV. CANON BRAD SMITH

process. We're still learning how to work together. But so far, so good. The commitment of the laity is incredible. They want this to work and they're doing the work to get it off the ground and make it happen."

Janet Marshall, director of the diocese's Congregational Development department, says that while regional ministry is relatively new to the Diocese of Toronto, it is common in other parts of Canada and around the world, in all contexts – urban, suburban and rural.

"I think it's the way of the future – having ministry teams," she says. "We don't all have to have the same programs and strengths. We can share that around and participate in each other's ministries more, and thereby have a much more careful stewardship of the resources entrusted to us."

She says there are some pragmatic reasons for trying regional

ministry as well. "I think it's a route to building financially sustainable ministries in a time when that is a real concern. We're coming out of the pandemic and know that there have been losses, and in some cases the decline in church attendance has accelerated. We want to stay in communities, and regionalization is a way of getting imaginative and creative, to really be wise about the stewardship of our resources so that we can afford and sustain ministry in these areas."

It can be a struggle for churches to find priests, for example, and regionalization provides a solution to that. "With regional ministry, we're looking at a team of people who can look after more churches together, so it takes some of that burden off every parish needing to afford or find a full-time or part-time priest," she says. "Regional ministry offers us an alternative way of staffing that can be healthy,

creative and affordable."

It's also a way of involving the laity in ministry, she adds. "If we do ministry as a region, there could be more volunteers for the programs you want. Each church doesn't need to find their own volunteers for a program, but rather it can be shared and even expanded. It can stretch our capacity to do ministry."

She admits that regional ministry could be a major cultural change for the diocese, which is why it is being introduced carefully. "While there are models of regional ministry that we can share, any group of churches considering this needs to do the work for their own context and make it right for themselves, so that they can figure out together, through pray and work and discussion how they can move from the expectations of how churches are supposed to work, to something that can be new."

## Convent offers retreats, plans to renovate guest house

LIKE so many churches and other businesses throughout the pandemic, the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine has been creative in staying connected with family, friends, Associates, Oblates and neighbours near and far.

Due to the pandemic, the St. John's Convent guest house was frequently closed from March 2020 to March 2022 for in-house personal and group retreats. But this didn't stop the Sisters' ministry. In fact, there was an increased demand for spiritual direction and silent personal retreats. The Food for the Soul program, in collaboration with retreat leaders, created online workshops and retreats, to



A path outside St. John's Convent.

great success.

In March 2021, John Bell of the Iona Community led "The Spirituality of the Psalms" online retreat, where he focused on the poetic imagery of the psalms through reading and reflection. Also in March, Thomas Power from Wycliffe Col-

lege in Toronto led a deep exploration on the Book of Kells entitled "The Spirituality of the Book of Kells." In May, Cathy AJ Hardy delved into Psalm 23 through the artistic lens of music, poetry and mandala meditations in her retreat "Come to the Table." Kathleen Norris, the *New York Times* bestselling author, suggested in her "Walking in Heaven: A COVID Year" retreat in early October that the pandemic gave us a unique opportunity to reassess our lives. Her second retreat, "A New Look at Formation," focused on how spirituality is anchored in one's local community. The Sisters offered silent virtually directed in-home retreats throughout 2021

and early 2022.

In addition to hosting online retreats, the community explored the possibility of rebuilding or renovating the guest house. After consulting with architects and reviewing feedback from guests and groups, the Sisters have decided to renovate. They are currently preparing to fundraise with the hopes of beginning renovations in August 2023. More information about the renovation project and fundraising will be posted on the website in the near future.

The guest house began to welcome back individual retreatants and various church and denominational groups this past March and

has increased the guest capacity from 10 to 30 guests. Many post-COVID retreatants are thirsting for the interior space, solitude and silence that are hallmarks of making a healing and rejuvenating retreat. The Sisters rejoice in being able to offer hospitality to those searching for something more in their relationship with God.

Directed retreat listings and registration details can be found on the website at [www.ssjd.ca/retreats-programs-retreat-calendar/retreat-calendar](http://www.ssjd.ca/retreats-programs-retreat-calendar/retreat-calendar). For personal retreats, contact [guesthouse@ssjd.ca](mailto:guesthouse@ssjd.ca).

Submitted by the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine.



# Parish tackles climate crisis

## Speakers share ideas, urge action

BY MURRAY MacADAM

**CHURCH** of the Redeemer, Bloor St. tackled the climate crisis head-on through a two-part worship, education and action series in early October, involving both in-person and online participants. The series was organized by the parish's Creation Matters committee and other parish members. More than 200 people in total attended, either in person or online.

"Our goal is to stimulate a sustained conversation about the climate crisis and reflect on ways to engage at a meaningful level. It is too easy to feel helpless in the face of the daily news," says Grant Jahnke, chair the committee. He says the focus of the series was engagement with the wider body of the Church. "That's why, fully aware of the heroic challenge of coming together to make significant change, our theme for this year's Season of Creation is 'What if the Christian churches, particularly the Diocese of Toronto, were to take the climate crisis seriously and come together to take collective action? What would change?'"

The first event on Oct. 2 offered a varied service of scripture readings, poetry, music, prayer and an address by Elizabeth May, member of Parliament for the Green Party, an Anglican and veteran environmental activist. "We planned EarthSong, the opening service of our Season of Creation, to appeal to people's souls and emotions, as well as present key facts. We hope that a wide range of engagement will result," says Mr. Jahnke.

In a darkened church, solemn drumbeats and the sounds of birds and chainsaws were interspersed with stark comments about the fate of the Earth to open the service. "In a time of climate chaos, humans are starting to feel the sting of ignoring the rights of the Earth," warned parishioner Jean Bubba, calling for balance with the "beautiful, astonishing natural world."

In an impassioned address, Ms. May reviewed climate developments since 1986, when she began working on the climate issue. She recalled warnings from that time of what would happen if fossil fuel re-



Bishop Andrew Asbil, Brian Walsh, the Rev. Alison Hari-Singh, Paige Souter and Adrienne Clarkson discuss the climate crisis at Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

duction targets were not met. "We still had time to avoid everything we are experiencing now," she said. Instead, since 1992 the world has emitted more greenhouse gases than it had since the start of the industrial revolution.

She recalled a sermon by the Archbishop of Canterbury at a United Nations climate conference in which he highlighted that in Genesis 9, God commits to Noah never again to destroy the Earth. God made a covenant with all of creation. "We've declared war on Mother Earth," said Ms. May. "We're in a dangerous time." She noted the fire in Lytton, B.C., the more than 700 deaths from Vancouver's heat dome in 2021, and more recently, Hurricane Fiona's destruction in Atlantic Canada, as well as floods in Pakistan disrupting the lives of millions of people.

She challenged the churches to move from despair and grief about the climate crisis to action. "We still have time to save ourselves. Where's the belief we can do more than what we see before us?" She urged her listeners to draw strength from the well-known passage in Ephesians 3:20, affirming that God's power working in us can do far more than we can ask or imagine.

A recent report by the Inter-

governmental Panel on Climate Change, a respected UN authority, warned that fossil fuel emissions must stop rising by 2025. Yet Canada recently approved a major new offshore oil development and approved expansion of the Trans Mountain Pipeline in western Canada.

"This is a time to kick ass, to be seriously radical," said Ms. May. "The churches can offer something no one else can: faith. And not allow greed and political realities to allow us to give up on hope for our grandchildren. Miracles happen—but not without us." As Ms. May wrapped up her talk, the audience gave her a standing ovation.

As a follow-up to EarthSong, Bishop Andrew Asbil chaired a panel discussion on Oct. 4, also held in-person at Redeemer, Bloor St. and live-streamed, focusing on the question: what if churches in the Diocese of Toronto took the climate crisis seriously? Panelists included Adrienne Clarkson, former governor general of Canada; Paige Souter, a member of the Bishop's Committee for Creation Care; the Rev. Alison Hari-Singh, a lecturer at Trinity College; and Dr. Brian Walsh, an environmental activist and biblical author. Creative ideas and bold prescriptions for action based on faith marked the event.

Bishop Asbil noted the idea from theologian Walter Brueggemann that God and the world are intrinsically linked in a world of fidelity. God will not act arbitrarily, but the world must act within the order of the Creator.

Ms. Clarkson, an active Anglican, focused on specific practical actions Anglicans and their parishes could take: stop driving to church; garden, because contact with the Earth is important; appoint an environmental point person in every parish; stop using plastic; and develop prayers about the environment and how God can guide us. "If we did things like

this, non-Christian people would take us seriously. Young people would admire us," she said. Steps such as these would be criticized by some people, she said, but "it would be good for us to take risks and be seen as non-establishment."

Referring to the call in Ephesians 6:10-18 to put on the armour of God, Ms. Souter urged the creation of "climate warriors." She suggested the Church needs to respond to the needs of climate refugees in our own communities, noting that marginalized people are hardest hit by extreme weather. "The cry of the Earth is the cry of the poor. It should break our hearts that people on the streets are dying because of heat," she said.

Ms. Hari-Singh zeroed in on our economic system, with its relentless push for growth as the chief cause of the climate crisis. "The climate crisis emergency is wrapped up with how capitalism functions. The disease is capitalism, and Anglicans think of it as normal. Capitalism as we know it needs to come to an end, and I know that is not going to happen overnight," she said, adding that churches need to study economics through the lens of faith.

Our society has the technology to sustain the planet, she said, but we need a "metanoia," referring to a biblical term for a change of mind brought about by repentance. "This is our moment of conversion," she said.

Mr. Walsh named the climate crisis as the defining issue of our age. "There can be no business as normal, because the trouble with normal is it only gets worse," he said. He called for a radical shift in our thinking about heaven and said we need a theology of transformational renewal. Climate concerns should be a central focus in our formation processes for church missionaries, he said.

Noting that acknowledgements affirming Indigenous peoples as

the original inhabitants of our land have become common in churches, Mr. Walsh suggested the custom should be extended to mention the land itself, its birds, trees and creatures that have been lost. "That could shape us in our character," he said.

Nothing that the Church no longer has the authority it once had in society, Ms. Clarkson encouraged Bishop Asbil to seek regular meetings with Premier Doug Ford to present concrete solutions. Bishop Asbil replied that he has met the premier six or seven times.

Participants both in person and online put forth a range of suggestions and questions for panellists during a lively question period. They called for climate literacy programs in parishes, asked how we can "break open the Christian imagination," proposed a hard look at how we use our buildings and perhaps giving some of them back to Indigenous people, and asked whether diocesan investment funds are involved with fossil fuel companies.

"How we use our properties is a big issue we are wrestling with," said Bishop Asbil, reminding the audience that St. James Park, next to the cathedral, was given to the city of Toronto for a token one dollar so that all citizens could enjoy green space.

The Church's willingness to take bold action in its response to the climate emergency came up repeatedly during the discussion. "Isaiah invites us to let go out of the past and to see that there's new life in the wilderness," said Ms. Souter.

"It will take the tenacity of Anglicans on the ground to make the changes that are necessary," said Bishop Asbil in closing remarks. "The creativity needs to be filtered up."

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



The Rev. Alison Hari-Singh speaks while Paige Souter listens.

# It was amazing to see my skill set grow

Rose St. Thomas is the co-coordinator of the diocese's Youth Ministry Apprenticeship Program.

The Youth Ministry Apprenticeship Program (YMAP) allows people who have a potential calling to youth ministry to complete a nine-month apprenticeship at a parish within the Diocese of Toronto. During this program, apprentices are given support and encouragement to work on discerning their calling and to develop the skills needed to work in youth ministry. YMAP participants can complete this program either through a job shadowing model, where they have a youth ministry mentor to guide and teach them, or in a parish partnership model, where YMAP offers an interested parish support with training and partially financing the hiring of a part-time youth worker for nine months.

As a new addition to the YMAP team, I am working with seasoned YMAP coordinator Cormac Culkeen to help enrich the youth ministry at the seven participating parishes we have lined up for the 2022-23 year. We'll provide very real supports to apprentices and their parishes, and also arrange for several weekend retreats to help apprentices continue their ongoing journey of spiritual growth and discernment. We'll give one-on-one guidance and direction to apprentices as they set their goals and intentions for the program, and help them to meet those learning goals through a process of skills-building and self discovery.

I am very excited to organize in-person weekend retreats for our YMAP apprentices this year. We'll be having these retreats several times throughout the 2022-23 program, and for the first time since the pandemic began, they'll be offered in-person! As thankful as I was for the possibility of Zoom retreats during my own 2020 YMAP experience, there is something deeply meaningful about gathering together to ponder our callings, our faith and our journey with God as a group,



Rose St. Thomas

face to face. I am truly looking forward to cultivating a series of creative, prayerful, and educational spaces where this year's YMAP apprentices can lean into deep contemplation, learning and fun. On top of all that, I really enjoy conversations about discernment, callings and prayer, so I am looking forward to having many of those in the coming months with our new round of apprentices.

I was an apprentice in YMAP for the 2020-2021 cohort, doing a job shadow placement at All Saints, Peterborough. I am a pretty quiet person who likes to stay in the background, so receiving ongoing support and guidance while practicing my public speaking skills in a church setting was really wonderful. Additionally, I got tremendous value from the intentional periods of reflection and prayer that are structured into the YMAP experience. Learning how to be a part of youth min-

istry at All Saints in a very hands-on way was also exciting and stretched me out of my comfort zone. It was amazing to see my skill set grow in ways that helped to support and care for the youth and families in the neighborhood, while also bringing a lot of additional joy and meaning into my life.

I was born and raised in Peterborough, Ont., with some time spent away living in Oakville and Kingston. I've spent a good amount of time accumulating books and student loans (as well as a BA in illustration, English literature, and an MA in English literature). I have spent time working as a teacher's assistant, an online ESL teacher and, currently, as a library public service specialist as a content writer, and as an assistant to youth and family ministries at All Saints, Peterborough. I love books, and have recently been able to start enjoying them again after a period where reading unexpectedly became dif-

ficult for me during the pandemic. I also love early morning creek-side walks in the woods, writing, creating art, periods of prayerful contemplation, journaling, spending time with my friends and family, and eating all the snacks.

What would I like to be doing five years from now? That is such a challenging question for me to answer! I hope and pray that wherever I am in five years' time, I am deeply rooted in my faith and God's unconditional love for all creation. I hope I am living a life that is in keeping with my core values of diversity, inclusivity, creativity, compassion and community. I hope that I'm taking the time to be still in the woods and intentionally spending time with God throughout my day. I hope I'm writing. I hope I am a part of a beautiful family. I hope that I am surrounded by love, and that I am acting in real and tangible ways that also reflect God's love back to the community around me. I hope that I am brave and say "yes" to the things that matter most, even if I find that "yes" scary. That's more of a reflection on who I hope to grow into being with the help of God and my community in the next five years, so I hope that's all right.

My favourite passage from scripture is Romans 8:35-39. I love the imagery that is invoked by this description of how nothing can separate us from God's love – not life or death, not the present or the future, not any distance of any conceivable measure, not violence, not trouble. Nothing. There is no separation. As someone who is queer and has encountered times of deep suffering (sometimes in religious spaces), I spent many years in my 20s believing that God's love would not extend out far enough to ever reach me. Today, I deeply cherish this passage because it grounds me in the beautiful reality of God's radical, inclusive, unconditional and ever-present love – not only for me, but for all humanity and for all living beings on this beautiful, hurting and holy planet. God loves and values each and every one of us, without exception.

## Does our language help or hinder our mission?



BY MURRAY MACADAM

We're not speaking the language of the younger generation."

Archbishop Ted Scott's comment continues to percolate through my mind more than 35 years after he said it to me. I still remember the look of intense concern on his face. We were rushing down a hotel hallway towards a diocesan Synod where Archbishop Scott, then Primate of the national church, was slated to speak. We'd had only a short time to chat about the state of the Church and shared a mutual unease about its future in the face of declining numbers. Unfortunately, there wasn't time to further explore Archbishop Scott's remarks.

Since our brief chat, church trends have underscored the challenges we face. Statistics Canada shows that only 68 per cent of Canadians 15 or older say they have a religious affiliation. While 10.4 per cent of all Canadians were Anglican in 1986, only 3.8 per cent were Anglicans in 2019. Other denominations are facing similar chal-

lenges around declining membership. The United Church of Canada, for example, is closing one church every week, on average.

I keep thinking about Archbishop Scott's comment because it may offer some insights into how our Church could connect more effectively with people in our society who are seeking spiritual meaning but are not relating to our Anglican message, or for that matter, the message of other Christian denominations. Some of these folks have been dubbed the "SBNRs" — spiritual but not religious.

We need to think about why people who are searching for God might not seek out an Anglican faith community. Some of our Anglican terms present barriers to people unfamiliar with them. For example, when I hear the term "warden," my mind immediately thinks about prison. And it took me years after becoming an Anglican to understand what "narthex" means, a word I'd never heard of before. Same with "rector." Language also includes the language of song, and here too we face challenges. Most of the music played and sung in our parishes is not music that younger people would listen to on their own.

Much of our Anglican worship language and hymns is beautiful, and I wouldn't want to lose this rich element of our Church. The challenge of speaking to different audiences is somewhat similar to the challenge of scripture itself. Eugene Peterson's *The Message*, a contemporary language version of the New Testament, certainly makes the words of Jesus and his message accessible in a fresh way, and thus serves an important goal. However, in my view and in the view of many Christians, it lacks the majesty and richness found in traditional versions of the Bible.

However, I believe that Archbishop Scott was delving into a deeper issue during our brief chat, one much broader than the use of particular terms. He was talking about a new narrative for the Church, one that requires new and different expressions of ministry. And perhaps taking some bold steps. These might involve new ways to reach out to people who might never venture inside a church. Or who used to attend a parish but stopped going. Perhaps reaching out to some of these former Anglicans might offer fresh insights about how to reconnect with them, and how to reimagine our

Church for today's society.

By no means do I want to downplay the efforts currently underway through our diocese's Congregational Development department to revitalize parishes. Many of our parishes are reaching out into their communities through creative initiatives to engage with people in ways that go beyond church walls. To cite just one example, the parish of Epiphany and St. Mark in Toronto's Parkdale neighbourhood provides worship and meal preparation space to The Dale Ministries, a church and community organization with a special focus on marginalized people that operates without a church building.

There are no easy answers to the challenges we face. Many factors have contributed to declining church involvement during recent decades, including shifts in our culture. Looking forward, perhaps by making a concerted effort to listen to as wide a cross-section of our communities as possible about their issues and beliefs with a focus on younger people, we will be able to put new wine into new wineskins.

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

# 'It is a privilege and honour to attend'

Bishops Andrew Asbil, Riscylla Shaw and Kevin Robertson of the Diocese of Toronto shared their thoughts on the 15th Lambeth Conference during an online conversation on Sept. 22. Suzanne Lawson, ODT, was the host and asked questions. The following are extracts from the conversation and have been edited for length. For the full dialogue, visit the diocese's Facebook page or YouTube channel. The Lambeth Conference is an international meeting of Anglican bishops to discuss church and world affairs and the global mission of the Anglican Communion for the decade ahead. This year's conference was held July 26 to Aug. 8 in England and its theme was "God's Church for God's World - walking, listening and witnessing together."

**Suzanne Lawson:** What is Lambeth's purpose as you experienced it?

**Bishop Robertson:** We had a very full agenda with the Lambeth Calls and Bible studies and worship, but if we pushed all that aside and all we did was spend 12 days getting to know each other, building relationships and praying together, that alone would be a good use of our time. I walked away from the conference thinking that the relationships that were built or deepened were worth their weight in gold. That was the essence of the conference for me – being in relationship.

**Bishop Shaw:** It was about the Communion coming together in unity. We were missing Rwanda, Nigeria and Uganda, but they were spoken of fondly and prayed for. Being at Lambeth was about unity for me, about being able to see across the globe the notion that we share in solidarity our sense of call and responding to the call and our faithfulness to the call. It was also quite a lot about worship, of being able to experience Christ through music from different parts of the world and worshipping side by side with people who speak different languages. It was a very powerful experience. Being able to sit with people from across the globe or who are near and dear to us was a really good experience.

**Bishop Asbil:** It's a little like going to



Canadian bishops and some of their spouses stand outside Canterbury Cathedral at the Lambeth Conference. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE

frosch week at university and living the university life. You're living in very intense community and you're meeting people constantly. There is such a rich diversity of culture and language and people, all dressed beautifully, differently, casually and formally. And a real sense of graciousness as you meet one another.

**Suzanne Lawson:** What was the most challenging thing you learned anew?

**Bishop Asbil:** I think one of the most challenging things that we experienced from time to time, especially when we gathered for the Eucharist, was that there were some among us who would not receive. That was particularly painful – to know that there were some among us who felt they could not receive the commun-

ion. And it's a reminder to Anglicans of the whole body that we have healing and work to do in forming communion in a deeper way, and that we are broken and need God's love and salvation. We can't do this work on our own, it's not something we can manufacture on our own, but we need God's grace to help us sew accord rather than discord.

**Bishop Robertson:** I remember the first day of the conference, the global south group of bishops had a press conference with a document, and it clearly said that they were not going to receive communion with bishops who were there in same-sex marriages. For the first time, among 650 people, the seven of us who were there in same-sex marriages felt really conspicuous. We had lots of support, not only

from within the Canadian and American houses but also from bishops from around the world. But it was a painful reminder. There was a veneer of civility and we're all going to get together for 12 days, but at other moments it was clear there were people who were not interested in gathering around the table together. But I want to add that there were encouragements as well. A few years ago, in 2019, I went to the course for new bishops in Canterbury. It is for bishops from around the world, and I made some friendships with bishops from Africa and Asia. Those were some of the people who came up to me at the Lambeth Conference three years later and put their arm around me and said, "We stand with you." That speaks to the enduring

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## Take heart, take courage



The Most Rev. Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, gave this closing sermon to the 15th Lambeth Conference at Canterbury Cathedral on Aug. 7. It has been edited for length.

**D**o not be afraid, little flock." "Do not be afraid, Abram. The word of the Lord endureth forever."

When we fear, we cling to what we know. We clutch at what makes us feel in control, be that the things we own, the possessions we have stored up for ourselves, the story we tell ourselves about who we are, what our power is, what our importance is and what is possible. We want, when we are afraid, to be comfortable with the familiar and familiar with the comfortable.

And these things – our assumptions, our possessions – become a comfort blanket which ultimately smothers us, for they forbid us to engage with each other and with Christ. We make our worlds and our ambitions smaller because it feels safer, and they come to define and to con-

strain us. So the institutions, the power, the status, positions that we hold onto out of fear – personal fear for ourselves, fear for the future of the church – end up fulfilling our fears.

Let's be clear though about the fact that in this broken world, there are very real reasons to fear. The roar of the lions is real. And the reality is there is so much suffering. We moaned collectively when we heard of the earthquake this morning. There is so much uncertainty. There are people here who will know the uncertainty of food supplies, the precarious nature of poverty, the insecurity of life in places of conflict and flux and natural disaster. People around the world live with the reality of these fears every day. For so many, it is very real indeed.

How can God tell us, "Do not fear"?

We don't like being told what to do. We think commands limit us.

Not God's commands, though. God's commands set us free. They liberate us to step into a new world that he makes visible and known to us.

And so we are continually being invited to begin a journey from fear to faith. And when we slip from faith to fear, then Christ

comes to us as he did to the fearful disciples in the upper room. He appears to us and says, "Do not fear." He comes to us; he does not call us to find him. We are liberated to look outwards, to imagine a new way of relating to the world around us, as well as among us, to imagine what it means to be given the kingdom in his world.

As Jesus said, the Kingdom of God is near us, the Kingdom of God is within us. It is found, as we heard so movingly yesterday, in a boy hugging a t-shirt under his pillow, signed by a bishop who made him remember that he had a father in God and an eternal father.

Some years ago, in 2016, it was found, to my surprise, by me, when a major daily newspaper in this country discovered and published the fact that the man I thought was my father was not my father. Someone else was... But I found within me, to my surprise, an unbreakable certainty that the God who knew me knows my true identity at the deepest level, at a far deeper level than just a DNA test. It was found in a story I will tell you about Cardinal van Thuan, the former Archbishop of Saigon, held for nine years in solitary and a further four years in prison. He was eventually let out

but kept in an area far from his home. He was out one day and near the forest. Three people came out of the forest and, meeting him, asked if he was a pastor. He said yes, and they requested he come three days' journey to baptize their village. They were a mountainous people. He went and found a village that had converted to Christ by listening to a Pentecostal radio station. So he baptised them, some thousands, as Christians, certainly, Catholic Christians he said with a smile. But the Kingdom breaks down our denominational barriers and overrules our frontiers and our theological border guards.

The Kingdom is seen in how we set out as the revolutionary movement that is God's church in Christ, for it leads us from tightly clutching, to freely receiving the grace of God, from zero-sum scarcity to abundance, hospitality and generosity – because God dares us to join a whole new way of being, and the Holy Spirit gives us the power to take up the dare.

What we gain is not what the world tells us we should want. What the world values is not what God values. So following God may not get us wealth or power.

Continued on Page 15

# Forgotten voices brought back to life

## Project to record sermons by women, preachers of colour from the past

BY NAOMI RAGZ

AS both an actor and a Christian, Peter Kennedy, a lifelong parishioner at Trinity East (Little Trinity) in Toronto, has long been interested in sermons, particularly listening to recordings of old sermons. While attending seminary at Wycliffe College, Mr. Kennedy noticed how few recordings there were of sermons by women and preachers of colour.

“There is a whole breadth of old sermons available. But in the English-speaking West, it’s really focused on white men,” says Mr. Kennedy. “You can get your Wesley and your Spurgeon and your Luther – people have recorded those – but there’s nothing that represents the multicultural aspects of the Church in the West. That’s something lacking in the Church. It’s a message that needs to be spoken into the Church, especially in today’s multicultural world. So I wanted to try and source some of those voices that are hard to find and bring life back into them.”

This idea laid the foundation for the Sermon Project, an ambitious plan to find and record 100 sermons over three years that will highlight ethnically and culturally diverse preachers of the past. Initially,

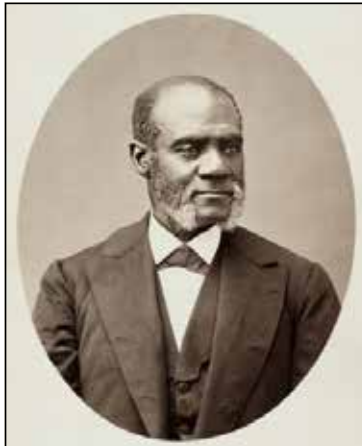
the project will focus on Canadian preachers.

Using his connections in the Church and academia, Mr. Kennedy has already been able to find a rich variety of sermons. With the help of a generous early donor and a Reach Grant of \$5,000 from the diocese, he planned to begin recording in October.

Mr. Kennedy will be hiring voice actors and possibly also preachers to record the sermons in a professional studio, to produce the highest quality recordings possible. He emphasizes that he will be seeking voice actors who reflect the gender and ethnicity of the preachers. The sermons will also be recorded in the original language, with a translation in English available as well.

One challenge facing the project is the question of how faithful the recordings should be to the original sermons. “This is one of the things we’ve talked a bit about. If you do a sermon from Elizabethan times, are you going to perform it like a Shakespearean play or are you going to do a bit of modernization of the language? There’s pros and cons to both,” he says.

Supported by a steering committee, Mr. Kennedy will also consider the contents of each sermon



Henry Garnet, Louisa Woosley and Ding Limei are some of the writers and preachers featured in the Sermon Project.

closely. “If something in a sermon was just terrible, I wouldn’t record that sermon. But theology shifts throughout generations, and I’m okay with allowing that to sit because it’s part of the history of the Church, warts and all. It’s part of admitting that we are broken and fallen people who are struggling to walk in relationship with God,” he says.

Each sermon will have its own introduction, providing context on the language and content. The sermons will be housed on the project’s website ([www.sermonproject.com](http://www.sermonproject.com)), which will allow users free access to a searchable database of historic sermons. Mr. Kennedy says he hopes that the project will create a space for people to contemplate the history of the Church. “It’s designed to address social and racial issues in a space that is invitational,

rather than confrontational. It’s a safe space, and I’m hoping that this project invites people into that space,” he says.

One genre of sermons that he has found during his research and that he is especially excited to share is sermons by women from a period when it was illegal for women to preach. “There’s this whole genre of literature in the 18th and 19th centuries where women authors, who were forbidden to preach, would write sermons in their writings. So whether you think women shouldn’t preach or you think, of course, women should preach, it doesn’t matter because you’ve got these historical examples,” he says. “It gives people that space to go, ‘well this happened, so let’s talk about it.’”

Mr. Kennedy says he hopes the project will bring many more sto-



Peter Kennedy

ries like this one to a wider audience and encourage discussions. Anyone who’d like to support the project financially can donate on the website at [www.sermonproject.com/donate](http://www.sermonproject.com/donate).

## ‘We are deeply woven together as a people’

Continued from Page 11

nature of these relationships.

**Bishop Shaw:** One of the challenges was that our Archbishop, Linda Nicholls, was the only woman Primate. That’s a deep challenge to the rest of the globe. When I was there, I wore my collar every day, because when I was walking with Jana (her spouse), he got mistaken for the bishop in the family. It’s still an automatic to assume the man is the bishop. That’s a challenge. Another piece was that Archbishop Justin Welby said that shepherds must practice humility because we are also sheep. I was reminded of that, both in my own behaviour and in a sense of who do we want to portray ourselves as? What is our identity as leaders in the diocese and the Communion? Who are we? We are sheep, so let’s remember that.

**Suzanne Lawson:** What was one of the big worship services that impressed you?

**Bishop Shaw:** Bishop Vicentia preaching at the opening service and having Archbishop Linda (Nicholls) help to celebrate at the closing service. That was a memorable time for me. (*Bishop Vicentia Refiloe Kgabe, Bishop of Lesotho, was the first woman in history to preach at a Lambeth Conference.*)

**Bishop Asbil:** Experiencing Linda

(Nicholls) celebrating at the closing worship was really rich. That was profoundly moving for me. Also, the very first hymn we sang together, “The Church’s one foundation.” To hear the thunderous voices of 650 bishops from around the world in different languages, with spouses, clergy and laity, was really profound.

**Bishop Robertson:** For me, it was the music – it was so amazing. The planners of the liturgies, especially the opening and closing services, really did a great job of incorporating as many different voices, sounds and tempos. The diversity and all of us together in one place – it was magical.

**Suzanne Lawson:** What is the expense of Lambeth and is it worth it at a time when there could be other calls on our financial resources?

**Bishop Asbil:** It is a privilege and an honour for us to attend, and all three of us express our deep gratitude to the diocese for sending us. The cost is about \$10,000 per person. What’s important to remember is that the Canadian church also donates to the worldwide Anglican Communion to send bishops from around the world who are not able to afford it, including a number of Canadian bishops.

The Compass Rose society, of which we have a Canadian chapter, gives about \$500,000 to send bishops.

Is it worth it? I think it is. The ability to gather with many bishops from around the world, face to face, to be able to be in conversation, in prayer, in worship, to be the Body of Christ, to come apart from our own contexts, to be in a strange place all of us together, and to be linked as a body, is priceless. It’s 12 days that will continue to feed my ministry and our collective ministries in our diocese and beyond. The friendships that get built and woven together over time help us understand our contexts. We are not an island in North America. We are not separated from each other because we happen to be in Canada. We are deeply woven together as a people of the earth, and if there was ever a time when we needed to know that even more keenly, it is right now.

**Suzanne Lawson:** Give us a nugget of wisdom that you brought home and will act on.

**Bishop Asbil:** Very simply, we are better together.

**Bishop Shaw:** Communication – reaching out to one another – is key.

**Bishop Robertson:** Ours is a gospel of reconciliation – the theme of reconciliation there and bringing that home to our own context, in all kinds of different ways; that’s a nugget I will bring into my own ministry.

**Suzanne Lawson:** Do you have a picture or an image that you can leave with us that helps us feel that we were almost there?

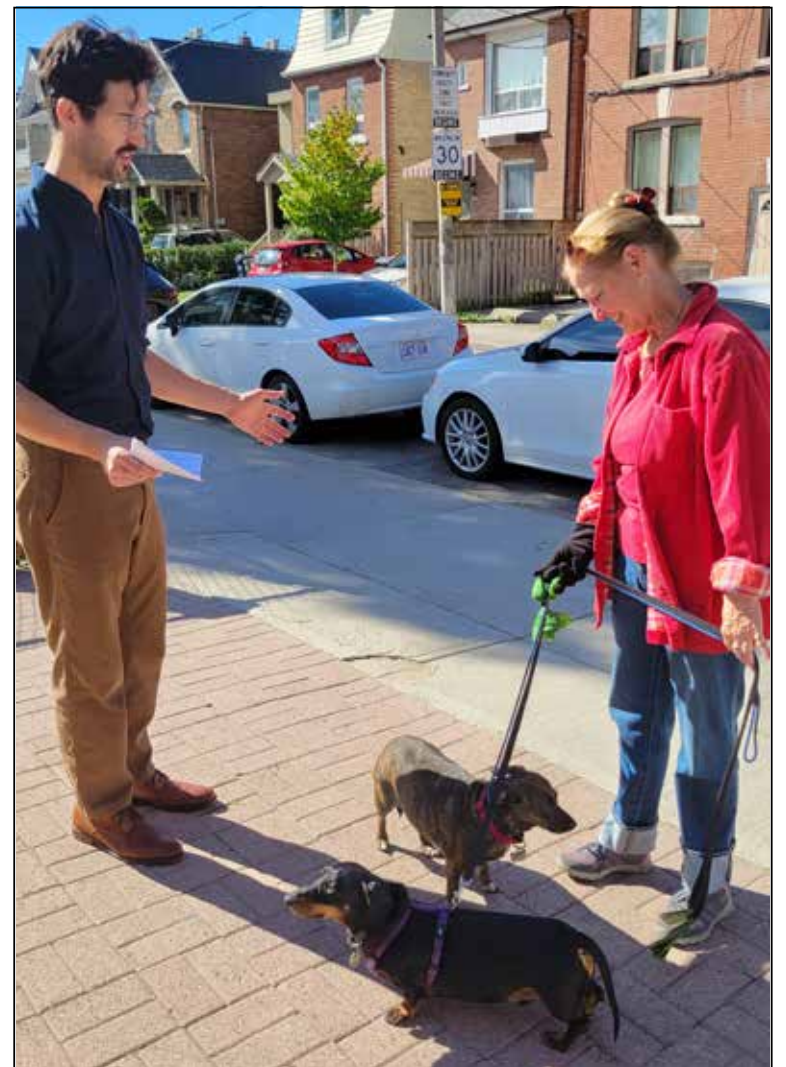
**Bishop Shaw:** For me, from Amos, chapter 8, a basket of summer fruit. It was hot, it was sweet, we were all different but we were all together.

**Bishop Asbil:** The picture of all the women bishops together was powerful, to see the shift from a small gathering in 2008 to almost 100 in 2022. I found that profound. I bought a picture for the Diocesan Centre and it will get framed and put in one of our meeting groups.

**Bishop Robertson:** Fourteen years ago, the only openly gay partnered bishop was not even invited to the conference. On the last day of this conference, eight of us who are out, partnered and part of the LGBTQ+ community were standing in a formal picture. That was wonderful and I pray that, like the number of women bishops, that will increase.

Visit our website at [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca)

People and their pets attend the Blessing of Animals service at St. James Anglican Cathedral on Oct 1. The blessing was followed by a demonstration by police dog Briggs (below), held by Sgt. Dave Dickson of the Toronto Police Service Canine Unit. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



The Rev. Don Beyers blesses dogs, and a cat sits on a table in the church at St. Anne, Toronto's Blessing of Pets service on Oct. 2. PHOTOS BY MARY LOU HARRISON

The Rev. Fraser Elsdon of Eastminster United Church blesses dogs at St. Barnabas, Chester's Blessing of Animals service. Eastminster United and St. Barnabas held a joint service on Sept. 24. PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. BARNABAS, CHESTER



**FAREWELL**

St. James Cathedral bids farewell to Dean Stephen Vail on Sept. 11, his last Sunday at the church before his retirement. Dean Vail (top left) preached at the service and enjoyed a reception in Snell Hall afterwards. During the reception, a photo portrait of Dean Vail was unveiled. The portrait will join those of other former deans at the cathedral. Standing with the portrait are, from left, Don Solomon, deputy warden David Gates, rector's warden Kate Uchench, Dean Vail and his partner Neil Walker. At lower left, Bishop Andrew Asbil gives Dean Vail a hug. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



**CANADA BRIEFS**

**Churches provide bikes to migrant workers**

LONDON - St. Aidan's church in London, Ont. partnered with Christ Church, Chatham to deliver close to 100 donated bikes to migrant workers in south-western Ontario.

Over the summer, the Rev. Canon Kevin George of St. Aidan's put out a call to Londoners to see if anyone would be willing to donate a bicycle. The Rev. John Maroney of Christ Church suggested the idea of assisting migrant workers back in June when he began to see their need for transportation.

"The fellows that would come to our service afterwards would say, you know, we really could use bicycles because we are isolated out where we are," he says. "I thought, these fellows are away from their families for months at a time, they're isolated. Why shouldn't they have the freedom to jump on a bike? We are giving them that freedom of dignity and knowing

that Canadians care."

As of late August, 80 bikes had been donated. Canon George planned to deliver dozens of them to a farm in Chatham, which he says employs 100 migrant workers.

CTV News

**Church helps Ukrainian kids learn English**

FREDRICKTON - During a sunny week in late July, 20 children – 18 of them from Ukraine – gathered at St. John's church in Saint John for English language camp.

"This came about as a result of the Ukrainian newcomers," says the Rev. Terence Chandra, organizer. "We wanted to give the kids some exposure to English before school started."

Mr. Chandra and his wife, Jasmine, are priests-in-charge of St. John's, also called the Stone Church, and lead an uptown ministry called Pennies and Sparrows.

"We know their lives have been extremely difficult," he says. "They've left family behind. We hoped to provide space for them to just be kids. We want them to speak English as much as possible, but even if they're having fun, that's a win for me."

Mr. Chandra used his contacts

from the adult English classes he teaches to organize the five-day camp and recruit the children, aged eight to 13. It turned out there was a high demand and he had to cap enrollment at 20.

With the help of three volunteers, he organized games, crafts and activities that encouraged communication. Their proficiency in English varied dramatically, with some who were surprisingly adept.

Corey Fairbrother was one of the volunteers. "These kids never knew each other (in Ukraine)," he says. "They were from all different towns, and now they're forging their own community here."

Anne Dykeman and Clare Andrews rounded out the volunteer list, and both had a fun week with the kids. But it wasn't just the kids who were benefiting. "The parents come early to socialize with each other," says Ms. Dykeman.

While Mr. Chandra admitted to being exhausted when the camp ended each day, he plans on doing it again next year. "It's probably the most rewarding thing I've done this summer," he says. "Jesus said 'welcome the stranger.' That's what we're doing with this camp."

New Brunswick Anglican

**New tombstone honours heroic cleric**

HALIFAX - A Canadian hero who had lain in an unmarked grave for decades now has a tombstone honouring his life, thanks to an American author's discovery of the story during a visit to Halifax five years ago.

Frank Jastrzembski, who is also a historian, stumbled across the Rev. William Ancient's story at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in 2017 and jotted down the memorable name of the priest involved in rescuing people from the sinking SS Atlantic in 1873.

The steamship left England for New York that March, but ran low on coal. The captain changed course to Halifax. It ran ashore near Lower Prospect, N.S., at Marrs Island. The ship sank on the morning of April 1 and 565 passengers and crew drowned.

But locals saved more than 200 others. Mr. Ancient played a role in that rescue, memorably telling one of the final people saved to "never mind your shins man, it is your life we're after," before getting him to safety. He also took on the difficult task of seeing that the hundreds of dead were properly buried.

Mr. Ancient's heroic deeds are now recorded on his new gravestone in Halifax's St. John's

Cemetery. The black granite tombstone features the engraved face of the young bearded cleric and details of his actions on that fateful day.

Mr. Jastrzembski learned that Mr. Ancient rested in an unmarked grave at Halifax's St. John's Cemetery. Mr. Jastrzembski founded and operates Shrouded Veterans, which typically provides grave markers for American soldiers.

He made an exception for Mr. Ancient.

He raised about \$3,000, and the headstone wound up costing a bit more than that. But Heritage Memorials covered the difference. He said the money came from a few big donors, and a lot of small contributions.

Mr. Jastrzembski said he was delighted to see photos of the finished project. "It's always a great feeling when you see a newly installed headstone on a previously unmarked grave," he said.

"It's a wonderful feeling," he added. "There isn't anything more satisfying than honouring a hero like Ancient. He's someone all Canadians should be proud of. Canada, especially Nova Scotia, will always have a special place in my heart. I'm glad I was able to do a good deed for my Canadian neighbours." CBC News

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## PRAYER CYCLE

### FOR NOVEMBER

1. St. Matthew the Apostle, Oriole
2. St. Theodore of Canterbury
3. All Saints, Markham
4. Christ Church, Stouffville
5. Christ Church, Woodbridge
6. All Saints Church-Community Centre
7. Emmanuel, Richvale (Richmond Hill)
8. Grace Church, Markham
9. Holy Trinity, Thornhill
10. St. Christopher, Richmond Hill
11. Military Chaplains
12. St. John the Baptist, Oak Ridges
13. York Central Deanery
14. The Synod Agenda and Planning Committee
15. Lay Members to Synod
16. The Chancellor, Vice-Chancellors and Synod Officers
17. 161st Synod of the Diocese of Toronto
18. 161st Synod of the Diocese of Toronto
19. 161st Synod of the Diocese of Toronto

## IN MOTION

### Appointments

- The Rev. Claire Latimer-Dennis, Chaplain, Bishop Strachan School, Aug. 22.
- The Rev. Canon Derek Stapleton, Interim Priest-in-Charge, Grace Church, Scarborough, Sept. 1.
- The Rev. Canon Tim Foley, Priest-in-Charge, St. Paul, Perrytown, Oct. 1.
- The Rev. Canon Victor Li, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Elizabeth, Mississauga, Oct. 1.
- The Rev. Johanna Pak, Priest-in-Charge, St. Mark, Port Hope, Oct. 6.

### 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):
- Havergal College Chaplain
- Christ the King
- St. Timothy, North Toronto

20. FaithWorks
21. St. Mary, Richmond Hill
22. St. Philip on-the-Hill, Unionville
23. St. Stephen, Maple
24. The Fresh Start Program
25. The Momentum Program
26. FLAME and AWARE Renewal Ministries

- Christ Church, Bolton
- Grace Church, Scarborough
- St. George, Haliburton

### Parish Selection Committee Process

First Phase - (not yet receiving names):

- St. John, Oak Ridges
- St. Aidan, Toronto
- St. George Memorial, Oshawa

Second Phase - (receiving names via Area Bishop):

- Holy Trinity, Thornhill

Third Phase - (no longer receiving names):

- St. Peter, Erindale

### Celebrations of New Ministry

- The Rev. Christopher D'Angelo, Priest-in-Charge, St. David, Donlands/St. Andrew, Japanese, Nov. 13 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Canon Stephanie Douglas, Incumbent, St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering, Nov. 13 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Andrew MacDonald, Incumbent, St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff, Nov. 27 at 4 p.m.

27. St. James Cathedral
28. The Compass Rose Society
29. The Bishop's Committee on Discipleship
30. Threshold Ministries (formerly The Church Army)

## LOOKING AHEAD

To submit items for Looking Ahead, email [editor@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:editor@toronto.anglican.ca). The deadline for the December issue is November 1. Parishes can also promote their events on the diocese's website at [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca).

## Worship

NOV. 1 - All Saints Communion on Tuesday at 7 p.m., plus Dr. Jesse Billett's feature talk at 7:30 on the history and significance of Canada's Prayer Book. Join us in person at St. Olave, Bloor and Windermere, Toronto; or online (live or later, at [stolaves.ca/special-services](http://stolaves.ca/special-services)). For more details, call 416-769-5686 or go to [stolaves.ca](http://stolaves.ca).

## Fairs, teas

NOV. 5 - Christmas Market, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. featuring jewelry, paintings, knitting, crafts, bake table, pottery and a lunch table, St. Barnabas, Chester, 361 Danforth Ave., Toronto.

NOV. 5 - Sugar Plum Christmas Bazaar, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Margaret in-the-Pines, 4130 Lawrence Ave., Scarborough. Baked goodies and jams, crafts, collectibles, books and DVDs, jewellery and much more. Then join us for lunch in our Internet Café.

NOV. 5 - Christmas bazaar and candy cane hunt, Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingston Rd., Toronto. Christmas Bazaar is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Candy Cane Hunt starts at 12 noon. Baking, baskets, books, photos with Santa and more.

NOV. 12 - Annual bazaar, All Saints, 300 Dundas St. W., Whitby. Visit [www.allsaintswhitby.org](http://www.allsaintswhitby.org) for details.

NOV. 18-26 - Hybrid Christmas Market at St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto. A silent auction will be held on the church's Facebook page from Nov. 18 at 6 p.m. to Nov. 24 at 6 p.m. Articles obtained will be available for pick-

up at the in-person segment of the Market, to be held at the church on Nov. 26 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. All welcome.

NOV. 19 - Holly Berry Bazaar from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Dunstan of Canterbury, 56 Lawson Rd., Toronto. Crafts, jewelry, home-baked goods, books, movies, gently used tools and more, plus Santa Claus and his helper. Free admission. For more information, call the church office at 416-283-1844.

NOV. 19 - St. George, Pickering Village's annual fall fair and bazaar, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. George's, 77 Randall Dr., Pickering Village, Ajax. Vendor tables, children's activities, raffles, silent auction, crafts, baking table, refreshments. Free admission and parking. Vendors wanted. Vendors should email [stgeorgesajax@gmail.com](mailto:stgeorgesajax@gmail.com) for more information and an application.

NOV. 19 - Christmas bazaar, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. St. Joseph of Nazareth, 290 Balmoral Dr., Brampton. Raffle, bake table, tea room, knitting and more.

NOV. 26 - Poinsettia tea with tearoom, Christmas baking, giftware, raffle and Christmas-past Room, 2-4 p.m., Holy Trinity, 140 Brooke St., Thornhill.

DEC. 3 - Christmas Bazaar with clothing, crafts, bake table and more, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Christ Church, Scarborough Village, 155 Markham Rd., Scarborough.

## Gatherings

NOV. 19 - Poetry reading at St. Thomas, 383 Huron St., 7:30 p.m. featuring D. S. Martin and John Terpstra. Introduced by John Franklin, executive director of IMAGO. Reception and book table to follow in the parish hall (cash or cheque for book purchases). The reading can also be viewed on St. Thomas's YouTube channel.

NOV. 26 - Holy Trinity, Guildwood's 60th anniversary gala St. Dunstan of Canterbury's church hall. Tickets are \$70 per person. Cocktails at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. and entertainment at 8 p.m. For more information, contact [office@trinityguildwood.org](mailto:office@trinityguildwood.org).

# Faithworks Sunday Nov. 20

Continued from Page 1

what's happening. In the past we were able to tell where we're at based on last year and compare. But we can't compare," he says. "Given the uncertainties of the world, whether it's economics or war or the environment, it really is difficult to predict where things will be at next year."

Still, Mr. Mentis has been able to visit more ministry partners and parishes to see first-hand the efforts being made across

the diocese to support the most vulnerable members of society. "It has been quite inspiring to see the innovative work being done across the board by our ministry partners, and parishes that are stepping up to bat and trying new things," he says.

Preparation of materials for the 2023 campaign is well underway, and he hopes they'll be ready to send out before Christmas. He says he's grateful that despite fac-

ing their own difficulties in some cases, parishes are continuing to support FaithWorks.

"The needs are still there. That hasn't changed. If anything, it's gotten more intense. And our calling to manifest God's love has not gone away," he says. "I'm hoping that in the year to continue to inspire individuals, parishes, businesses and foundations that support us to be able to do so in the future."

PROMOTE PARISH EVENTS ~ DEADLINE NOVEMBER 1

# 'We are called again to conversion to life'

Continued from Page 11

But it does guide us to riches beyond treasure – treasure in heaven, and a world that looks just a bit more like the Kingdom. A world where people do not suffer because of where they were born, where the scandal of poverty and huge inequality does not exist, where people are not persecuted for their faith, gender, sexuality. Where we do not allow our brothers and sisters to be told that they matter by the wealthy and then to be ignored materially.

Because in this command, "Do not fear," our eyes are opened to God's promise. We are called again to conversion to life, a conversion that daily says to us that we should pray to God: "I trust you. To

hear my prayers, my protests, my praises, my laments, to hear my heart crying out to you in anger" that says, whatever happens I trust that in some wonderful and mysterious way you feed me for eternity, with a wafer and wine over which a prayer has been said. That in the host I see a crucified God.

This conversion expands our world. We have met, over the past weeks and days, with people from all the corners of the globe, from contexts and experiences that are totally alien to us. And in these meetings, we have found the antidote to fear. We find in John: perfect love casts out fear.

God's promises will be fulfilled. He will draw abundance out of barrenness

and riches out of our poverty. That is his promise to us. And that releases us to be radical, bold, courageous, revolutionary today. To have the courage to have faith in God. To be brave enough to defy the world, even to defy other Christians, by loving one another without ceasing. To have the courage shown by bishops and spouses here, clergy and laity around the Anglican Communion, who make the Good News known to those who live in fear. Who go to church in greater numbers the week after a suicide bomb attack has killed 160 of them. Who fly with the Missionary Aviation Fellowship to a remote part of Papua New Guinea, and then work for a week across mountains to do confirmations. Who protest against civil

rights abuses, against gerrymandering of votes, against shooting unarmed people of colour in a routine traffic stop.

As we grow in love, our fear shrinks and the Kingdom of God finds space, finds its rule in our hearts and in our lives as God's people.

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ – no mere greeting, that – dear sisters and brothers in Christ, who to each other and to me have become dearer and dearer over the last 10 days, as you, as I, go home, do not fear: take heart, take courage, because it is the Father's good pleasure to give you His kingdom!

Photo of Archbishop Welby by Roger Harris.



# Youth gather for fun, prayer and reflection

## Event returns in person

BY THE REV. BRIAN SUGGS

THE Bishop's Youth Ministry Committee (BYMC) was delighted to be back in person this year for the diocesan ReCharge Youth Retreat. We had 87 participants from across the diocese gather on Sept. 23-25 at Muskoka Woods. It was a beautiful fall weekend, and we enjoyed time together praying, worshipping, eating, playing and even getting some sleep.

Bishop Andrew Asbil joined us on Friday night and was there to greet everyone as the bus rolled in from Toronto and for our first session. He shared about his own good times as a youth at the Niagara Youth Conference and then led us in night prayers before returning to Toronto. Bishop Riscylla Shaw was also in attendance and stayed with us the whole weekend. She made time to chat with youth and youth leaders on Saturday afternoon during free time and celebrated the Eucharist with us on Sunday.

Our theme for the retreat was Redemption: The Story of Us All. Cormac Culkeen, youth coordinator for Trent-Durham and co-coordinator for the Youth Ministry Apprenticeship Program (YMAP), was our speaker for the weekend, and the Rev. Yohan Dumpala, assistant curate at St. John the Baptist, Norway, led us in worship. Cormac

shared in the first session about how the story of our redemption looks like a heartbeat on an ECG machine: it has ups and downs in the same way a heartbeat does when it's represented on paper. At creation, everything God created was good, but it didn't take too long before that changed.

In the second session, we spent time talking about lament and how it's a good and right way to express to God our anger, hurt, frustration and angst with the world around us. Participants spent time in breakout groups either writing their own lament, taking part in a Lectio Divina exercise with Psalm 10, writing and rehearsing a drama to illustrate lament, or in a more active group where they built things and then tore them down.

At our third session, we read from Romans 5, where St. Paul writes, "But God demonstrates his love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." We talked about how God, through Jesus Christ, has redeemed us all. Cormac reminded everyone that God is always with them and refuses to ever leave them, whether times are good or bad. In breakout groups, participants chose to either spend time outside and give thanks to God for the beauty of creation, talk with others about redemption, dramatize redemption, or in the



Youth and youth ministry leaders gather for a photo (top) at the retreat. Participants also take part in a skit and worship with Bishop Riscylla Shaw. PHOTOS BY THE REV. YOHAN DUMPALA

active group where participants again built things and this time beautified their creations.

In our last session, we had Communion together. We looked at the feeding of the 5,000+ and paid special attention to St. John's account where he writes about the boy who brings his lunch and offers it to Jesus. Jesus blesses the boy's meager lunch and feeds everyone to their contentment. Participants were encouraged to offer themselves and what they have to God

and to watch how God brings about God's kingdom on this earth as it is in heaven through them.

We also had a lot of time to play and explore many of the activities Muskoka Woods offers. We played Capture the Flag on Saturday morning and a very exciting game of Flame Battlers on Saturday night. In the afternoon, participants enjoyed their choice of volleyball, basketball, tennis, pickleball, high ropes course, indoor rock climbing, long boarding and scooters, as well

as arts and crafts. Those doing arts and crafts designed and made a beautiful stole for Bishop Shaw to wear on Sunday at the Eucharist.

The BYMC would like to thank the diocese and the College of Bishops for their continued support of youth ministry. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year!

*The Rev. Brian Suggs is a member of the Bishop's Youth Ministry Committee and an associate priest at All Saints, Kingsway.*