

Group helps with housing

Anglican advocates for God's creation



Bishop's dinner back in person

# The Anglican

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## CRICKET DAY

The Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen Fields of St. James Cathedral catches while Jayachandran Solomon, the people's warden at St. Bede in Toronto, bats during a cricket match at the Anglican Church Community Festival in Brampton on July 15. For more photos, see pages 10-11. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

## Season seeks to rekindle faith

Events include special services

BY STUART MANN

**THE** Diocese of Toronto is planning to hold a Season of Spiritual Renewal to help Anglicans re-energize their faith.

"I am really excited by it," says Bishop Andrew Asbil. "We've been hearing over and over again in Cast the Net's consultations with clergy and laity a deep need to steep ourselves in prayer and discipleship and a renewed sense of our life in Christ. My hope is that this will lead us to a deep and profound joy in the gospel of Jesus Christ and a sense of communities large and small feeling a part of a rekindling of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Toronto."

Cast the Net, the diocese's visioning and strategy process, has consulted with about 1,000 clergy and laity since last fall. One of the major themes emerging from the discussions is a desire for spiritual renewal – for people to re-connect with their faith, to deepen their own discipleship and to be more articulate about their life in Christ.

In response to that desire, Cast the Net's steering committee originally proposed a year of spiritual renewal, to be held in 2024. However, it was felt that a two-year time frame was more realistic to plan and hold activities. Therefore, the Season of Spiritual Renewal will start with Synod this November and run until the fall of 2025.

The steering committee is proposing that the season unfold in four phases:

- Clergy will be oriented to the project with easy-to-use educational and promotional materials. Every parish will be asked to participate in a three-session program of bible study and reflection on mission, co-

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## New ministry serves children, youth

Parishes in Scarborough deanery work together

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

A group of parishes in the eastern part of Toronto is banding together in an innovative ministry serving its youngest members. Ignite Family Ministry is a joint effort by the parishes of Scarborough deanery to bring all 13 churches together to offer mid-week children's and youth ministry.

The idea of joining forces was raised during the pandemic, but nobody had the time to devote to a new project. "We started doing some framework and groundwork without being able to put a real skin and bones to it," says Denise Byard, the lay pastoral associate for missional outreach and discipleship ministry at Holy Trinity, Guildwood.



Elaine Vanderwerf

Meanwhile, Elaine Vanderwerf was leading family ministries at both St. Timothy, Agincourt and St. Timothy, North Toronto. "During the pandemic, I ended up com-

binning both parishes for Sunday School and for youth group and discovered that when I brought people from two parishes together, we had more people and therefore, in a way, we were able to do more stuff," she says.

But when the pandemic shifted to allow for a return to in-person gatherings, she realized her two parishes were geographically too far apart to sustain joint ministry. "I was back down to two or three people, which just made it difficult."

Then, at a clericus meeting in November 2022, the idea for some kind of shared family ministry in Scarborough resurfaced. "One of the clerics who has kids said, 'You know, as a parent I'm more than happy to drive my kids to any number of programs here and

there, and we just do that because it's part of the gig.' Church doesn't offer anything like that, because we operate in individual parish silos," says the Rev. Canon Gregory Carpenter, the regional dean for Scarborough.

Ms. Vanderwerf, who happened to be attending the meeting of clergy in the deanery, recognized the opportunity. "I said this is something I've been starting to think about – could this maybe work at the deanery level?" she says.

Canon Carpenter supported the idea and helped to bring the right people and resources together. "There's a lot of talented people that are in this deanery doing a lot of really great ministry, but this is new and this is different," he says.

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# Bishop believes time is right for renewal

Continued from Page 1

led by teams of clergy and laity, online or in person. There will be additional resources for young adults, youth and children, to engage them in what it means to be committed to a life in Christ. Materials will be available in a variety of languages, reflecting the cultural diversity of the diocese.

- Bishop Asbil and others will travel throughout the diocese, conducting and preaching at special services with a focus on strengthening the people of the diocese in their work and of being the Church. Services will include inspiring music, testimonies, scripture and sermons, as well as time for anointing and prayer for those who seek it. The services will be held in easily accessible venues and will also be available virtually for those who cannot attend in person.
- The bishops and others will preside and preach at liturgies in large locations. Baptism, confirmation and reaffirmation will be offered. These will be lively, diverse celebrations of Christian commitment and service.
- Sunday worship celebrations will include times for lay people to share testimony about how they experience God as active in their lives, or share "Spirit sightings," where they see the Holy Spirit of God at work in the world. Every par-

ish and congregation will be invited to engage in an examination of mission opportunities within their region. Many of these will be held in regional groupings. Reports from these efforts will be brought back to Synod.

The College of Bishops requested that \$400,000 be set aside from the diocese's Our Faith-Our Hope funds to support the season, including the hiring of a coordinator and an administrator and coordinator of volunteers. Synod Council approved the request at its June meeting.

Bishop Asbil believes the time is right for the Season of Spiritual Renewal. "I think every parish understands that where we were before the pandemic is not where we are now. On the one hand, we feel the vulnerability of that but on the other hand we feel the possibility of it, too. And there is a real sense of kindling of new ideas and a new sense of God's spirit working with us."

The Very Rev. Peter Elliott, one of Cast the Net's coordinators, echoes his words. "I think the pandemic – that period of being disbursed and losing the pattern of regular church attendance – has had an impact on people, and it's a new day. Things have changed and we need a renewal of the Spirit to face the challenges that this new day is bringing," he says. "In some ways, the Season of Spiritual Renewal is casting the net on the other side."

He says Bishop Asbil has the gifts



## TASTY POTLUCK

AURA (Anglican United Refugee Alliance) celebrates World Refugee Day with a potluck at St. Peter and St. Simon the Apostle in Toronto in June. The event brought together past and present refugee sponsors and newcomers to Canada. The potluck included food from 11 different countries. World Refugee Day, held on June 20, is dedicated to honoring and acknowledging the resilience of refugees worldwide. Pictured at right are AURA team members. From left are Ted Robinson, Stan Nicholls, Anastasia Shamshyna, Alex Hauschildt and Marin Lehmann-Bender. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



to lead the season. "In my view, Bishop Andrew is one of the most gifted communicators of the Christian way in the church in Canada and in the whole Communion. So let's put his gifts to the fore. Rather than sitting in meetings and puzzling over problems, what if the bishop's time could be used to do one of the things he does the best, and communicate out the faith and the importance of that in daily life and work?"

For related story, see Page 16.

## Staff changes made at diocese

THERE have been some staff changes at the diocese.

The Rev. Canon Susan Haig, associate priest of Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St., is the new canon pastor of the diocese, succeeding Archdeacon John Anderson, incumbent of St. James, Orillia, who has stepped down after eight years in the role. The diocese's canon pastor is responsible for handling complaints and investigations of sexual misconduct.

Mac Moreau has joined the diocese as director of Property Resources. Mr. Moreau has come to the diocese from the Bob Rumball Canadian Centre of Excellence for the Deaf, where he worked as the director of capital asset management and planning. He has more than 14 years of leadership experience in the non-profit sector. Property

Resources helps parishes and the diocese with property matters.

Mary Lynne Stewart is the new executive director of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto Foundation. Ms. Stewart, who began in June, will help the foundation with fund development, marketing and communications and supporting the board of directors with governance matters. She is a professional fundraiser with more than 30 years experience and is a churchwarden at Church of the Resurrection in Toronto and a stewardship coach for the diocese. The Anglican Diocese of Toronto Foundation supports the episcopacy, parishes, and the wider needs of the Church community.

Evie Tran joined the diocese in July as an administrative assistant to Bishop Riscylla Shaw.

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# Group provides housing for seniors

## Towers get new life

BY STUART MANN

A dedicated group of Anglicans has been working for the past seven years to create affordable housing for seniors, and its efforts are beginning to bear fruit.

The group, led by the Very Rev. Douglas Stoute, has been transforming St. Hilda's Seniors Community, a not-for-profit housing complex near Eglinton Avenue West and Dufferin Street in Toronto. The property includes three large residential towers and St. Hilda's Anglican church.

When work is complete, the complex will have about 500 modern apartments for seniors, one of the largest projects of its kind in the city.

"We're committed to social housing – it's part of the ministry of the Church," says Dean Stoute, president of St. Hilda's Seniors Community and a former rector of St. James Cathedral.

One of the towers, named after the late Archbishop Terence Finlay, has been fully renovated and is accepting new tenants. The tower has 210 studio and one-bedroom apartments, available with or with-



Renovations are underway at St. Hilda's Seniors Community in Toronto. The complex will include 80 apartments for previously unhoused people. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

out support services such as light housekeeping and meal preparation. The tower is about 40 per cent occupied.

A second tower, named after the late Rev. Canon Clifford Ward, is currently under renovation. When completed, it will have 110 studio and one-bedroom apartments, also with or without support services. The third tower, named after the late Archbishop Lewis Garnsworthy, will receive some upgrades in the future. It has 120 units, with support services available.

Rent for the apartments is capped

at 80 per cent of market-level rates in the local community. Many units are available on a rent-geared-to-income basis, and 80 apartments have been designated for previously unhoused people.

The renovation of the Finlay and Ward towers is being financed by loans and grants from three levels of government. CMHC (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation), a federal agency that seeks to make housing affordable to Canadians, is contributing \$33 million while the province is providing \$12 million through Homes for Good,

a program that strives to prevent chronic homelessness and help people remain in stable housing. The City of Toronto is contributing \$3.4 million through a Social Infrastructure Funding grant.

St. Hilda's Seniors Community needs to repay about \$28 million to CMHC, which it plans to do through rental income over the next five to 10 years.

The towers are being managed by WoodGreen, one of the largest not-for-profit social service providers in Toronto. WoodGreen, which was founded in the 1930s, manages 20 housing sites in the city, where residents have access to an array of support services.

Dean Stoute says it's important to have professional managers running the St. Hilda's complex to ensure its current and long-term health. "The skill set to run structures like this, with 500 residences, are not necessarily aligned with the skill sets of a parish priest. You need someone with expertise in managing buildings and residences. That's what WoodGreen does. They have the managerial acumen that we have faith will keep this project on a positive cash flow basis."

Kevin Kindellan, a member of St. Hilda's modernization committee, says the City of Toronto was keen to participate in the project in part because of its location on Eglinton Avenue's light rapid transit route.

"Wherever you have transit, you have density," he says. "Being able to have affordable housing right on the transit line is something the city doesn't usually have access to. All three kitty-corners of the property have been sold to luxury condominium developers, so having affordable housing on a transit line is a rather unique opportunity for the city."

The city is trying to address the shortage of affordable housing units for seniors. According to its figures, there are about 35,000 seniors on the waiting list for subsidized housing administered by the city.

"What we're doing at St. Hilda's is significant, but the need is huge," says Dean Stoute.

St. Hilda's Towers, as it was originally called, was founded by Anglicans in the 1970s to provide affordable, supportive housing for seniors. Over the decades, it became an assisted-living organization, similar to a nursing home, and was no longer viable. The complex needed a new vision to survive and thrive, says Dean Stoute, and it chose affordable housing.

"We've reincarnated ourselves as an affordable housing project that will hopefully provide that service for people for the next 30 to 40 years," he says. "I see it as a sign of the Church renewing itself in a different age, in a different model."



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# Putting our faith into action



**G**od is good! In the context of being faithful, courageous, wise and generous, how can we be influenced by the holy call for transformation, evolution and growth in our Church in this time? Angela Davis says, "Radical means grasping things at the root." We are in a time of great opportunity for grassroots change – in the gospel language of our diocese's visioning process, casting the net on the other side of the boat. We are not throwing ourselves out of the boat! Rather, we are shifting, turning, pivoting our positions to learn afresh what it means to say with bravery and conviction, with actions and deeds, that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. We are being called to consider anew what the context is of this embodied ministry we live.

A great spin-off from the net imagery for me is a honeycomb (I am partial to bees). We like to find ways to measure our progress when we are making changes, imagining new directions and seeking to affirm that we are headed in the right way – the Way of Love, the Jesus Way. In business talk, we call these benchmarks or measurables. In a complex organization like a church, we are nested within a community within a diocese, situated in townships, municipalities, the province (you get it), and connected to families through relatives in blood and in baptism. Take a look at how many edges of your honeycomb are bumping up against another: can we see and name the sides that

## BISHOP'S OPINION

By BISHOP RISCYLLA SHAW

are connecting with other ministries, community partnerships and individuals whose lives have been changed by their proximity to our church congregations? These are measurements of health! At the edges of our honeycombs, we are entering into the real work of the Church, we are building capacity as the hands and feet of Jesus in the world, we are effecting real change in a world where mercy, justice and kindness are essential, where working together is the only way forward, and where we become more fully human in relationship with all of creation. This is how we understand ourselves as effective agents of the grace of God, putting our faith in action.

And this work comes at a cost. John Ruskin said, "There is no wealth but life." There is the financial part, which is always a gift from God to each of us in this precious life, and in our health we choose how to share this blessing of wealth forward to help make a difference in the lives of others. Especially, there is a spiritual price for putting our faith in action. There will be resistance to good work, and pushback against faith-filled decision-making. There will be those close to us whom we consider wise and careful, who will speak against the real and perceived dangers and costs of doing justice and bringing righteousness to light. Apologizing publicly, for example, is owning economic, social, cultural

and spiritual damages caused. I consider the 1993 apology for our Anglican complicity in the Residential Schools that Archbishop Michael Peers courageously spoke into life, followed by the 2019 apology for spiritual harm that Archbishop Fred Hiltz brought forward, which was received with holy wonder. In the Diocese of Toronto, we have seen the 2012 apology that Archbishop Terry Finlay made to the Rev. Canon Jim Ferry for the implementation of Church policies that caused untold suffering and injury both to this individual and the entire community of marginalized LGBTQ2IA peoples, and the 2021 apology that Bishop Andrew Asbil made to the LGBTQ2IA community in the Diocese of Toronto in acknowledgement of the harm the Church has caused its members.

As a human race, it feels like we are still in the early days of recognizing our spiritual arrogance, which takes form in many and creative ways, not least of which are religious practises, racism, dominion over the earth and all the creatures therein. At our roots, we have work to do, in humbling ourselves and learning from each other how to live together. In our souls, we have work to do in being brave, to put on the whole armour of God, as the Apostle Paul teaches in Ephesians 6, and to step out in faith to bring the reign of God to fruition here on earth. On the ground in our communities, we have work to do in identifying the edges of our honeycombs where opportunity is calling. I invite you to pray right now for the light and love of God to strengthen you, as you strive to build communities of hope.

# Humour enriches our spiritual life

BY MURRAY MacADAM



**A**s soon as I see a new issue of *Sojourners* in my mailbox, my heart leaps. It's an award-winning Christian magazine from the U.S., full of news and commentary about the issues facing

our world, along with theological reflections and biblical commentary. But I always flip first to the back page. Why? Because it features a humour column – and nothing beats a good laugh, especially these days.

Humour helps us get through tough times. And it's just plain fun and joyful. It releases the child within us, opening us up to joy – a key spiritual value.

Did you know the words human, humour and humility all have the same Indo-European root – *ghom*, best translated by the English word humus? Humus is key to any ecological system, whether it be forest, grassland or garden. Healthy garden humus combines fruit and vegetable matter with leaves, grass clippings and earth. Similarly, for our lives to thrive, we need many different elements, including humour.

What a tragedy, therefore, that Christians have so often been seen as dour and humourless. When I think back to the church I attended as a teenager, one my strongest memories is that it was deadly serious. I can't remember a single time when laughter rang through the church. I suspect that my experience was all too common.

Many biblical scholars believe that Jesus

had a lively sense of humour. His message was serious, but sometimes he got his point across by making people see the ridiculous side of life. Jesus was a master of wordplay and satire, often with an element of humour. He made serious points in humorous ways. "Are grapes gathered from thornbushes?" he asks, "or figs from thistles?" (Matthew 7:16). People who did farm work in that culture surely smiled at the self-evident answers. Consider the image Jesus used to describe how hard it is for a proud rich person to enter the Kingdom of God: like a camel trying to go through the eye of a needle (Luke 18:25). Can you imagine his audience not laughing as they tried to picture this in their minds? Unfortunately, neglect of the element of humor in the teachings of Jesus has led to an unduly sombre piety.

In his book, *The Humour of Christ*, Elton Trueblood shows how Jesus used humour to convey his message, often in parables and short dialogues. He lists 30 humorous passages in the gospels, mainly one-liners, parables or stories Jesus told.

Humour also infuses the Hebrew Bible. God directs laughter toward arrogant leaders who think their power exceeds his. Psalm 2:2,4 declares that when "the kings of the earth take their stand," marshalling themselves "against the Lord ... and against his Anointed One," then "the One enthroned in heaven laughs." A more caustic example of humour is directed at King Jehoram in Chronicles: "Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. He passed away, to no one's regret, and was bur-

ied in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings." (2 Chronicles 21:20)

Other faith traditions are not shy about incorporating humour into their belief system. Tibetan Buddhist leader the Dalai Lama often wears an impish grin and calls himself a "professional laugher." He says it's important for spiritual leaders to be playful. Laughter and humour are also integral elements of life for First Nations people. Despite an upbringing marked by severe challenges, Tomson Highway's acclaimed memoir *Permanent Astonishment* ripples with a light-hearted perspective. Similarly, Thomas King, another respected Indigenous writer, weaves humour into his writing, despite his serious subject material.

Humour reminds us that we are human and share both positive and negative qualities. Humour is often a kind of realignment with the force of life that laughs at our attempts to impose our order on things. It reminds us that we share at our core the same frailties and vulnerabilities.

Humour constantly reminds us of our humanity, and of the creative and spiritual potential within us. "There is, in fact," writes Jungian analyst Helen Luke, "no real spirituality without the laughter which a sense of humour brings." Humour offers new points of view on every situation. It takes the facts of our existence and plays with them in creative and insightful ways.

So, let's lighten up!

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



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**In the Diocese of Toronto:**  
A community of 254 congregations in 210 parishes covering 26,000 square kilometers. Of the nearly 5 million people who live within the diocesan boundaries, 376,000 claim to be affiliated with the Anglican Church, with about 80,000 people identified on the parish rolls. The diocese is home to many ethnic and language-based congregations, including African, Caribbean, Chinese, Filipino, French, Hispanic, Japanese, and Tamil. The City of Toronto has a large population of aboriginal peoples.

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# Farm feeds neighbours

## Unique ministry needs support

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

Residents of the Flemingdon Park neighbourhood welcomed another season of free, locally grown produce from the Common Table Farm this year. The farm, a project of Flemingdon Park Ministry, sits on the property of Our Saviour, Don Mills and has been growing and distributing food since 2017.

This year, Common Table has been growing more than 30 kinds of vegetables, giving fresh produce to 100 seniors and 150 families in Flemingdon Park. “Many of them are newcomers and people who are lower income or experiencing food insecurity,” says Melodie Ng, the farm manager.

The farm is also getting neighbours, youth and kids involved in urban farming. A new program this summer has seen several youth joining the farm a few times a week to learn about urban agriculture, ecological care, composting, and food security and sustainability. Common Table also plans to continue its relationship with Three Valleys Public School next door. Past workshops have seen students planting their own vegetables from seed, taking care of their seedlings and planting them on the farm.

Flemingdon Park Ministry also administers the city-run community garden plots in Flemingdon Park, which allow residents to use a plot of land to grow their own produce. The number of plots increased from 72 to 103 this year. That expansion allowed the ministry to eliminate its waiting list – but a new list has already started.

“A lot of the residents in Flemingdon Park are in apartments, so people don’t have access to land the same way as a homeowner. These kinds of plots are really important spaces for people to have that chance to grow whatever they want to grow,” says Ms. Ng.

Despite its success and its vital role in addressing food insecurity in Flemingdon Park, the Common Table Farm faces an uncertain future. The large grants that kickstarted the farm back in 2017 have run out, and new funding is hard to come by. The farm receives grants for specific projects and equipment, but those funds don’t typically cover wages or operational costs. “We’re trying to save our farm so we can continue next season,” says Ms. Ng.

As they continue to harvest this season’s crop of vegetables, the staff at Common Table are hoping this won’t be the last year they can help their neighbours. “We want people to know what we do here and how many people benefit from what is produced here, and that a source of fresh vegetables may die because of the lack of funding,” says Maria Reolin, executive director of Flemingdon Park Ministry. “Ideally, we would like to find support from the government, but that’s very difficult to come by. Some reliable source that allows us to concentrate on what we know how to do – farming.”

To learn more about the Common Table Farm and support its work, visit [www.flemingdonparkministry.com](http://www.flemingdonparkministry.com).



Staff and volunteers at the Common Table Farm, located at Our Saviour, Don Mills, harvest and wash vegetables for residents of Flemingdon Park. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON.



# Prayer of Lament starts grief journey

BY KAREN TURNER

*Therefore the land mourns, and all who live in it languish; together with the wild animals and the birds of the air, even the fish of the sea are perishing. (Hosea 4:3)*

There's a term for the feeling many of us have in the pit of our stomach these days – ecological grief. Grief, we all know, is the normal human response to loss, so ecological grief can be defined as the grief felt as a response to the environmental losses we hear about all the time – loss of species, ecosystems and meaningful landscapes we have known, due to climate change.

I would also suggest it is a form of disenfranchised grief, which is grief from a loss that is not readily acknowledged in society. When a close family member dies, there is a general social understanding and acceptance of the loss, and a period of grieving is accommodated and encouraged. But some kinds of loss, although they can be deeply felt by individuals and groups, do not elicit the same kind of acknowledgement and support. These would include losses such as an abortion or a miscarriage, being fired from a job, betrayal by a friend, or the death of a pet.

As the environmental crisis humanity faces, including its human causes, dawns on each of us, grief is often among our many complex emotional responses. However, since one of the other dominant social and individual responses to the climate crisis is denial, there is little social acknowledgement of ecological grief, which makes it very difficult to even internally name the sadness and anxiety many of us feel as the deep grief that it is, let alone process it effectively.

Ecological grief is not only often disenfranchised, it's also complex, because it is often mixed up with other complicated reactions such as guilt, anger and help-



lessness. This complex, disenfranchised grief cannot be borne entirely alone. To be processed well, grief also needs to be shared, brought into a beloved community to be processed with others who lovingly understand. Such a community can be family, or a group of dear friends, or a worshipping community. In such a loving context we can begin to name our grief together, to share healing rituals, songs and prayers.

I suggest that, along with repentance, and before a community can get to healing and hope, part of the communal sharing and processing of ecological grief needs to be lament, the liturgical naming of grief, pain, anger and despair that seems to have been mostly lost in the Western Church. There are raw expressions of lament throughout scripture, especially in the Psalms, but I have not often heard it expressed in modern liturgy.

I offer this Prayer of Lament as a starting point on this grief journey.

## A Prayer of Lament

Holy Mother, you created human beings out of the earth, with material from the stars. You breathed your spirit, your ancient love, into us and imprinted us with your image. We remember Jesus' words that the one who has dominion must be the servant of all. And that you have called us to care for your magnificent earth creation, to serve our kin, All those who share the earth with us. Lord in your mercy, Save us.

But we have forgotten our place. We imagined we were masters, not servants. The more we learned about your evolving creation masterpiece, Instead of rejoicing in wonder and gratitude, The more we took and used, burned and

destroyed, without care for your beautiful work, our human siblings and our non-human kin. Lord in your mercy, Save us.

Because we have abused our calling, forgotten our place, desecrated what we did not understand, now we stand on the precipice of climate disaster. We, your human children have done this. Lord in your mercy, Save us.

Many of us, especially the powerful, rich and comfortable among us, ignore the terrifying evidence of climate disaster and continue as we always have, Living with the tattered illusion of an inert earth with unlimited resources. And those of us who are beginning to see, to understand, what we have done, Ache with anxiety and grief at how we have wounded the living earth, our Mother, At the climate changes and catastrophes that are picking up speed, despairing at times, doing small things that make small differences, Knowing it is not enough. Lord in your mercy, Save us.

Creator God, in your mercy, save us! Spirit of love, help us in our weakness, intercede for us with your sighs too deep for words. We hang on to the promise that even this peril cannot separate us from you, And from your ancient love, from your vision of a beloved earth community. Holy One, teach us our place once again. We are listening. Amen.

*Karen Turner serves on the Season of Creation committee for Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St. and as a member of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care.*

## Journalist to speak at Earthsong service

BY HEATHER BENNETT

This year's Season of Creation at Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St., begins with its annual EarthSong service on Oct. 1 at 7 p.m. This in-person and livestreamed service of sacred and secular music, readings and prayers will feature Alanna Mitchell, acclaimed Canadian science journalist, author and playwright, as the speaker. Ms. Mitchell will address this year's Season of Creation theme, "Listen to the Voices of Creation."

Ms. Mitchell is eminently qualified to speak firsthand on what is happening to creation. Her book *Sea Sick* describes how the ocean is "undergoing vast chemical changes at the hand of man and why that matters." While the climate crisis grabs news headlines, the crisis in the oceans should. As she says, "some of the carbon dioxide we are putting into the air by burning fossil fuels is being absorbed by the ocean. That puts it into a state it has not been in for millions of years: more acid, warmer, and more prone to vast oxygen-deprived dead zones. At risk is the very structure of life in the ocean and

therefore on the planet as a whole."

While she was doing the research for *Sea Sick*, Ms. Mitchell began giving talks about her adventures and discoveries. These were so powerful and profound she was commissioned to write a play. Franco Boni and Ravi Jain of The Theatre Centre in Toronto worked with Ms. Mitchell to write *Sea Sick: The Play*. She performed this play in venues across Canada, Europe and beyond over several years to critical acclaim, including a Dora Award nomination. Ms. Mitchell will no doubt present a compelling message encouraging EarthSong participants to listen and, we hope, to hear the voices of creation.

A Season of Creation has been celebrated annually by Redeemer, Bloor St. over the past six years. This liturgical season is a time for us to delight, with joy and humble gratitude, in our experiences of the immense beauty, detail and surprises of creation; to lament for the harms we have inflicted, knowingly or unknowingly, to fellow humans, entire communities, species and ecosystems; to repent for our own destructive and wanton treatment of



Alanna Mitchell, author of *Sea Sick*.

the Earth's resources; to hope we have the resolve to step forward and, listening to the voices of creation, work together tirelessly to care for our common home.

After the EarthSong service launches Redeemer's Season of Creation, the Sunday 10:30 a.m. liturgies during October will expand on the theme: listen to the

voices of land; the voices of air; the voices of water; and what we have learned from listening to the voices of creation. Join us for any or all of these services. For full details, visit [www.theredeemer.ca](http://www.theredeemer.ca).

*Heather Bennett is a member of Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St.*

# I am an advocate for God's creation



BY MONICA WOODLEY

**M**y climate advocacy began quite by accident in 2015. The Lord works in mysterious ways!

At a meet-and-greet of Toastmasters in Richmond Hill, an attendee mentioned they were planning to attend former U.S. vice president Al Gore's training on making presentations. Hoping to improve my presentation skills, I googled the event, applied and was accepted.

With 600 global attendees, I experienced four amazing days on climate change and the need for awareness, education and mitigation. This was training for new Climate Reality Leaders (CRLs) of Mr. Gore's global Climate Reality Project. I became a climate advocate – equipped to speak up and speak out about climate change.

Before this, I hadn't given much thought to matters of climate or the ravages of climate change on our precious earth – and far less to my own contributions. I learned that much of climate change is caused by human activity. I came to understand that persons of all stripes and persuasions need to take action to demand, encourage and persuade others to stop fanning the flames of climate chaos.

Following training, CRLs receive access to a treasure trove of Al Gore's presentation slides. Naturally, many included scientific language that was unfamiliar to me. Happily, in the mix I found a slide presentation of Pope Francis's famous encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*, encouraging the care of God's creation, our common home. Science in the language of Christianity! My advocacy by divine design became stewardship of God's creation – where it all began.

2015 was an interesting year. Justin Trudeau became Canada's prime minister; Pope Francis published *Laudato Si'*; and at the UN Climate Conference (COP21), the Paris Agreement, a legally



## What is the Season of Creation?

**C**hristians around the world are invited to give particular attention to praying and caring for God's creation as part of the global Season of Creation, observed from Sept. 1 to Oct. 4 every year. General Synod 2019 passed a resolution adopting the Season of Creation in the Anglican Church of Canada as a time of prayer, education, and action and encouraging dioceses and parishes to participate.

There are many ways your community can participate in the Season of Creation: hold an ecumenical or interfaith prayer service; worship outdoors; go for a hike with members of your parish; work to reduce your plastic or energy consumption; or advocate for stronger environmental policy.

For more information and resources, visit the Creation Care page of the diocese's website, [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca).

binding international treaty on climate change, was adopted by 196 parties. The key goal of the Paris Agreement was to limit global warming to 1.5°C by 2030.

Sadly, despite the hype and promises made at COP21, very little has been achieved by the signatories, including Canada. Even as climate advocates warn that time is running out to keep global warming within the critical 1.5°C limit, much remains to be done.

As a creation-focused Climate Reality Leader, I joined the green team at my former parish, St. Mary, Richmond Hill. This group had been faithfully raising awareness for many years through skits, talks and regular lunches after Sunday services with speakers or videos. The aim is to inform, educate and encourage the congregation to do their part in caring for the earth. It is advocacy at its best, responding to the Lord's Prayer: "Thy kingdom come on Earth as in heaven." In 2020 I was invited to join the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care to help carry this message to our whole diocese.

With eyes increasingly opened to the plight and groanings of creation, what do I see? Climate crises in Canada and globally: wildfires, floods, Arctic melting, droughts, poor air quality, heat waves and more, resulting in evacuations, displacements locally and globally, loss of lives and livelihoods, and the destruction of property and biodiversity. This year, Canada has entered the worst forest fire season on record. Imagine the pain, fear, confusion and uncertainty as people are forced to flee their homes, some never to return.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns the world that time is running out for us to keep global warming within the critical 1.5°C limit. Are world leaders listening? Are Canadian leaders concerned enough to make this a high priority?

Governments continue to heavily subsidize the fossil fuel industry, increasing windfall profits to the wealthy. Reliable and accessible renewable energy options exist – wind, solar and geothermal – but the political will to make a large-scale



shift is lacking.

Advocacy groups and organizations have risen to the earth's defence. I join groups, support demonstrations on the streets, sign petitions, write letters and meet government leaders at all levels, advocating for climate action.

Advocacy also means speaking to friends, family and neighbours about reducing our carbon footprints – how we commute, shop, eat, waste (especially food), use energy and more. As Christians, we must consider not only our personal carbon footprints but also those of our churches.

Our mandate for advocacy lies in scripture. As Psalm 24 reminds us, the earth belongs to God. Human beings are called to be stewards, caretakers and advocates for all of creation – humans, plants, animals of the fields and of the seas. Indigenous peoples understood and practised careful use of land and waters long before colonization. Can we find mutual connections for advocacy here?

In scripture we also find the supreme advocate for the care of creation, Jesus. During his earthly life, Jesus' love and

regard for creation is evident. He encounters rivers, seas, gardens and wilderness. His parables speak of plants, flowers and trees, creatures of earth, sea and sky, and the rhythms of herding, pruning, sowing and reaping.

Jesus loves children. There may be no greater, growing threat facing the world's children – and their children – than climate change. For me, as a grandmother of two young grandchildren, this is my greatest impetus to advocacy.

What encourages you to be an advocate for God's creation? How can you get involved?

Possible suggestions: read up on the issue. Join a local climate action group. Sign up with environmental organizations. Shop thoughtfully. Start gardening, hiking, walking at home or at church with others. Join or start a green team at your church. Help and resources are available on the diocesan website at [www.toronto.anglican.ca/creationcare](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/creationcare).

*Monica Woodley is a member of St. Paul, Newmarket and the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care.*

# Hiking church connects us to creation

BY THE REV. SUSAN SPICER

**O**n a blustery day in Lent, 17 Anglicans took a silent walk in the Duffins Creek watershed. It was the first hiking church event hosted by the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care. Our route took us along a suburban street, under a power corridor, and into the woods along a ravine.

After 30 minutes of walking in silence, we stopped amid white pine and sumac with their red cones still bright in winter, made a circle in the snow and shared a Eucharist – the earth our paten, the chalice passed from one to another around the circle. Our return trip included conversation, framed by a question: What did you notice?

There were challenges. A snow squall made it almost impossible to see when we started out, but by the time we hit the woods, the sun was shining. We hit an icy patch on the trail. Everyone helped one another through it with great care, and we were formed as community.

As I write this, Nova Scotians are grieving people drowned in flash floods, the air is filled with forest fire soot and global temperatures are dangerously high. As the crisis deepens, so does our grief for the Earth, for the vulnerable poor who are suffering the most, for the creatures who are “falling faster than the minutes of our lives,” as the poet W.S. Merwin wrote. Lament is an important spiritual practice for us in this time. (See Karen Turner's article on Page 6.)

It is encouraging to see how many parishes in our diocese are gardening, forming green teams and becoming advocates for creation. This crisis calls us to be Christ-centred, creation-informed disciples on the way, recognizing that the neighbours we serve are not only the humans, but the foxes and the cedars, the floral and fauna communities with whom we share our home.

Do you feel overwhelmed by the crisis facing our world? Not sure what to do? Writer and farmer Wendell Berry says while the crisis is global, our focus should be local. “The question that must be addressed is not how to care for the planet, but how to care for each of the planet's millions of human and natural neighbour-



Photos of nature on the Season of Creation pages by Michael Hudson

hoods, each of its millions of small pieces and parcels of land, each one of which is in some precious way different from all the others.”

Hiking church is a way to begin doing this work in our parishes. It's been often said that we won't save what we don't love, and we can't love what we don't know, and we won't know what we haven't experienced. So why not take a walk with your parish? Find the folks who have a lot of local knowledge to share; they could choose the route. When you share the Eucharist, you will be re-affirming your sacred bond to the earth, singing the Sanctus with the birds and the creatures who dwell with you in your place. You will have taken some important steps on the way to knowing, loving and serving creation in your parish.

On that snowy, icy day in Lent, one of the participants said that by the time we stopped for worship, she was tired and cold and couldn't see how it was going to work. But as we shared bread around the circle, our feet touching the Earth, she felt a deep sense of connection that moved her to tears.

If you visit the creation care page on the diocesan website, you will find a template for hiking church, and we encourage you to adapt it to your context. We are grateful to the Salal + Cedar wild church community of the Fraser Valley watershed for allowing us to include the Eucharistic Prayer that allows you to name the creatures, the plants and the animals,



the waterways and the geography of your place. (If you do use it, they ask that you credit it in your materials and make a financial contribution to the Indigenous land defenders near you.)

Our hope is that hiking church events happen in every parish in the diocese: rural, suburban, urban. It's a good idea to scout out your route and time it, with the capacity of your hikers in mind. The pace you set must work for the slow walkers. Choose a walk that is safe, enjoyable and accessible for the people with whom you

hope to share the experience. Let us know how it goes. We would appreciate hearing your experience, adaptations and suggestions for this liturgy so that what we send out to parishes will be inspiring and helpful. You can reach the chair of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care at [revsusan77@gmail.com](mailto:revsusan77@gmail.com) or 905-683-7981.

*The Rev. Susan Spicer is the incumbent of St. George, Pickering Village (Ajax) and is a member of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care.*



Photo adapted from Fizes/Shutterstock

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# Shared ministry supports kids, parents

## Diocese provides grant

Continued from Page 1

“My role is really about letting the people who really know what they’re talking about do what they do well. It’s a lot of cheerleading.”

He sought the expertise of Ms. Byard, who is familiar with many of the avenues and models of funding for innovative ministry in the diocese. Ms. Byard’s own role at Holy Trinity, Guildwood is funded primarily by a Ministry Allocation Fund grant. She’s also a member of the diocese’s Project Enabling and Monitoring Group, which reviews grant proposals for innovative ministry.

“We want to be able to do something that’s creative, something that’s sustainable and something that’s fair for all,” she says. “I see what a sustainable model looks like. It’s very much patterned after my MAF grant funding strategy.”

The small team re-envisioned the project from a simple, one-time \$10,000 request to a three-year, \$120,000 initiative. Synod Council approved the grant in full at its meeting in April. The hope is that the parishes in Scarborough deanery will be able to start funding the ministry themselves through contributions in their annual budgets.

In March, just four months after planning got underway, Ignite Family Ministry launched. Its program runs on Wednesdays and Thursday evenings every week in two churches at a time, so families can choose the day and location that works best for them, and the ministry isn’t undermining parishes’ existing Sunday offerings.

The kids get to enjoy physical movement, crafts and activities, songs, a bible story and a snack. Officially Ignite caters to kids in grades 3-6, but Ms. Vanderwerf has seen participants from kindergarten to Grade 8.

“For the kids and the families that have been coming, it has been really, really wonderful. The kids



A participant in Ignite Family Ministry with a craft celebrating Jesus as the keystone who makes everything hold together. At right, participants and coordinator Elaine Vanderwerf show off their lantern crafts. PHOTOS COURTESY OF IGNITE FAMILY MINISTRY

love it, meeting friends from other parishes, and just having enough people to make these things actually happen,” she says.

Since parents are driving their kids farther than they might otherwise for a church activity, Ignite also includes a parents’ café to let them meet and talk about their common concerns, with at least one cleric on hand to provide support.

“It’s my hope that as that group of parents really starts to gel that we could do workshops, possibly even bring in a guest speaker to help with pertinent parenting issues. Just giving the parents a place to hang out and chat and support each other and be supported by clergy as well,” says Ms. Vanderwerf.

Four parishes have hosted Ignite so far, with plans for more to come on board in the fall. September will also see the launch of Blaze Youth Ministry, running at the same time and place as Ignite. “Originally I’d thought it would maybe take another year of establishing the children’s portion before we got the youth going, but a lot of the ones who are coming already are in what we would have as our youth bracket,” says Ms. Vanderwerf.

Youth will have the chance to earn volunteer hours by leading games or crafts for the kids, but

they’ll also have time to build their own community. “They can have slightly more grown-up conversations about issues, really getting into more bible study so they really start to understand scripture themselves,” says Ms. Vanderwerf.

None of the organizers have been particularly surprised by the positive reaction to Ignite. “There is a great hunger for the support of children’s ministry. A lot of families need more support and that underpinning that the Church can naturally give,” says Canon Carpenter. “There’s one family that travels on two buses and spends a whole lot of time getting there because of the value of this. Maybe that’s re-emerging from Covid, but there’s a newfound wanting to build connections.”

The hope is that once parishes see their own children and youth participating in Ignite, they’ll be empowered to create new connections with young people in their neighbourhoods who aren’t currently part of a church community.

This isn’t the first initiative that has seen Scarborough parishes joining forces. Most notably, in June the deanery enjoyed its second Scarborough Steeplechase, a scavenger hunt with teams from many of the parishes and stops at



12 churches. A third installment is in the works for 2024.

Canon Carpenter says he’s deliberately tried to foster a spirit of collaboration and conversation during his time as regional dean. “We’re all trying to be successful, we’re all trying to do our best and to make our mark. But at the same time, we’re part of a larger organization that needs to be able to support each other in the work that we do,” he says.

The formal partnership between parishes has already given new life to their individual children’s ministries. After years of running their own summer camps, this year St. Timothy, Agincourt, Holy Trinity, Guildwood and St. Jude, Wexford joined forces to organize their camps under the Ignite banner, sharing resources and volunteers. “I normally run a camp with a skeleton staff, and Elaine runs a camp,” says Ms. Byard. “Now we have more staff than either of us knows what to do with.”

That renewed energy is something they’d all like to see happen in other deaneries across the diocese. “I’d say go for it! Start having conversations and praying that something could happen, because I think this could be the wave of the future,” says Ms. Vanderwerf.

Canon Carpenter echoes that

encouragement. “Don’t be afraid. There are a lot of details, but it’s worth it. I don’t want to make light of the amount of work that it’s been to organize,” he says. “But just having the courage jump in. It might not look exactly the same as in Scarborough, and Scarborough may learn something from other areas in how that unfolds for them.”

Ms. Byard emphasizes that this is just one example of the kind of innovation and structural change that needs to happen across the diocese. “If we don’t invest now, if we don’t invest yesterday, we have nothing to develop tomorrow,” she says. “It’s important to be able to create mental space to grow and to be open to new ways of doing things, because our society is hungry for community and spirituality and faith, but they’re not sure if they can trust the Church.”

Alongside their own efforts, Ignite’s organizers also credit the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in inspiring and energizing this new ministry. “I’ve learned that God can do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine, as we pray every week. It’s just been amazing,” says Ms. Vanderwerf. “If God’s really in something, nothing stops him. He brings all the pieces together to make a Kingdom dream happen.”

# Bishop’s Company Dinner returns in person

BY STUART MANN

AFTER a three-year hiatus, the Bishop’s Company Dinner is back in person.

The dinner, which raises funds for clergy in need and other important causes in the Diocese of Toronto, will be held Oct. 20 at the Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre hotel in Toronto. Tickets go on sale Sept. 20 at [bishopscompany-toronto.ca](http://bishopscompany-toronto.ca).

Peter Misiaszek, the diocese’s director of Stewardship Development, hopes the event will be sold out. “I think we owe it to ourselves to put

as much effort into this as possible. We know the need is great. Our clergy need our support. And this is one of the best ways to demonstrate that we are there for them.”

He says the time is right to hold the dinner in person again. “I think there’s a desire to get back together as one, in the same way as we’re doing with Synod this year. We’re social creatures, after all, and I think a lot of us want to be in each other’s company again.”

The Rev. Roshni Jayawardena, incumbent of St. Peter, Erindale, will be the MC for the dinner, which is celebrating its 62nd year. Blake

Goldring, ODT, executive chairman of AGF, will be the keynote speaker. Nathan Hiltz, a jazz guitarist based in Toronto, will perform with his ensemble. The evening will include a reception.

New this year will be a “visionary sponsorship level.” Sponsors who participate at this level will receive two tables of seating, one for their guests and the other donated back to the diocese, which will invite young people to attend the dinner for free. Four visionary sponsors are participating.

“It’s an exciting initiative that will bring youth from across our

diocese to the dinner,” says Mr. Misiaszek.

He adds, “It’s going to be a wonderful occasion. You’re going to leave with a good feeling that you’ve helped support important ministry in the diocese.” In addition to helping clergy with unforeseen expenses, the dinner provides funds for scholarships and bursaries for seminary students.

The Bishop’s Company Cabaret, which was held online during the pandemic in place of the dinner, will be back again this year but in a different format. Highlights from the dinner, plus five other musical

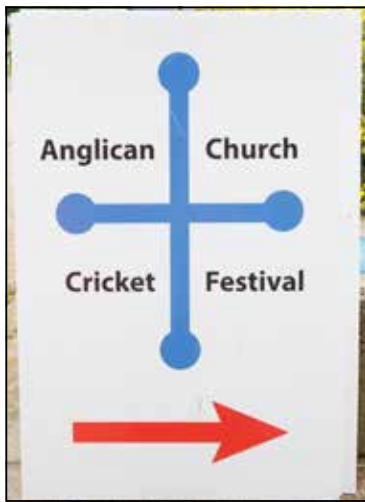
acts, will be compiled in a video that will be sent out to parishes in November for their viewing.

Mr. Misiaszek says it’s too soon to tell whether this will be the last year for the cabaret. “It will depend on how many people view it.”

He says the cabaret, which has been held each year since 2020, has been important for bringing the diocese together and raising funds in place of the dinner. “It’s something we should be very proud of. The acts have been great, and it has showed us how resilient the Church has been in a very challenging time.”



Cricket teams, families and friends gather for a photo at the Anglican Church Community Festival. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



# Anglicans enjoy festival

**CRICKET** teams from seven churches in the diocese took part in the Anglican Church Community Festival in Brampton on July 15. The teams and their supporters came from St. James the Apostle, Brampton, St. Jude, Bramalea North, St. Thomas a Becket, Erin Mills South, St. Joseph of Nazareth, Bramalea, St. Bede in Toronto and Holy Family, Heart Lake, Brampton. Among those in attendance was Charmaine Williams, MPP Brampton Centre and associate minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity. On behalf of the Ontario government, she praised the festival for 'bringing Anglicans from diverse communities across the GTA together. Your selfless work encouraging the importance of building relationships has created unity and strength among many in the Anglican community.' In addition to cricket, participants enjoyed food and fellowship. St. Bede's was the top team of the day, beating St. James the Apostle in the final game with a winning score of 44 runs first.



The winning team from St. Bede, Toronto, named the Bede Squad, holds a recognition from the Ontario government for the festival's contribution to diversity.



St. Bede's team and St. James the Apostle, Brampton's team congratulate each other after the final match, won by St. Bede's.



Batters from Holy Family, Heart Lake run for the wickets.



A batter from St. Bede's takes a swing.



Commentator Amaresh adds his humour and professional touch to the game, assisted by Lucy Fields.



Holy Family, Heart Lake and St. James the Apostle, Brampton square off.



Charmaine Williams, at left, with other spectators.



People enjoy food and refreshments at mid-day.



## TEAM EFFORT

Members of St. James Cathedral, pictured here, prepare and serve food at the cathedral's annual Canada Day barbecue for the neighbourhood on July 1. The barbecue was held on the cathedral's west lawn. PHOTOS BY REBECCA McTAGGART AND WALTER SNOW



The Rev. Ruthanne Ward (left) of Church of the Ascension, the Rev. Stephanie Richmond of Greenbank United Church (middle) and the Rev. Karen Hammond Croxall of Trinity United, Uxbridge walk in Port Perry's first Pride march. PHOTO BY THE REV. DON SHEILDS

## Clergy walk in Pride march

BY THE REV. CANON RUTHANNE WARD

THE main street in Port Perry was abuzz early on June 10 as many gathered to walk together in the first Pride march, organized by North Durham Pride. Surrounded by a lively group of elementary school children and teachers, high school students and local residents, I was privileged to march with clergy from Greenbank United and Trinity United (Uxbridge), holding the banner of Affirming Places of Worship for Durham Region.

The march was full of energy,

smiles, music and dancing. Those who gathered to watch us march down Queen Street to Palmer Park by Lake Scugog cheered us on, waving small pride flags.

We can often forget, in the fun of it all, how important these intentional acts of support and care are for our 2SLGBTQ+ community. As we were marching down Queen Street, I noticed one woman standing on her own. She stood watching us with a very small smile on her face and tears streaming from her eyes. I don't know her story, but it reminded me that we have a long

way yet to go where everyone feels included, loved, safe and celebrated.

During the Pride Picnic, now in its second year, Church of the Ascension helped Port Perry United host a tent where children of all ages could paint rocks in all colours of the rainbow. It was a wonderful late spring day of community care, support and love. As the flags around town proclaim: Small Town, Big Pride!

*The Rev. Canon Ruthanne Ward is the incumbent of Church of the Ascension, Port Perry.*



Some of the ACW's paintings on display. PHOTO COURTESY OF MAUREEN GREENWOOD

## Church holds first art silent auction

BY MAUREEN GREENWOOD

FOR the first three Sundays in June, Christ Church, Campbellford held its first, and hopefully not last, art silent auction. The Anglican Church Women had a number of pieces of artwork bequeathed to them, along with other art donations. How could we best share these beautiful pieces and, at the same time, help fulfill our commitment to help our church, our community and beyond?

We didn't want to sell the art at our rummage or yard sales, as they weren't the right "fit" for that kind of sale. One of our members came up with an innovative idea – why don't we have a special sale,

like an art silent auction? Thus, the Christ Church ACW art silent auction was born.

It was a great success. There was something for everyone, and it was an enjoyable venture for all. Our congregation enjoyed the display each week, and interest peaked as the auction reached the end of its three-week run. The final tally was \$495 for 10 pictures, and the happy new owners took their art treasures home to enjoy for years to come. Thank you to all who helped out and participated, as you made this endeavour a success!

*Maureen Greenwood is a member of the ACW at Christ Church, Campbellford.*



Collage shows some of the 28 participants and their hosts taking part in the Scarborough Steeplechase scavenger hunt. At top right, Bishop Andrew Asbil hands out prizes at the end of the race, won by the team from St. Jude, Wexford. PHOTO COLLAGE BY DENISE BYARD

## Teams visit dozen churches in steeplechase

Saturday, June 10 was a beautiful, sunny day for clergy, parishioners and the community to get to know people from other parishes and the buildings where they worship. Twenty-eight registrants formed eight teams and raced across Scarborough deanery in the Scarborough Steeplechase scavenger hunt, visiting 12 churches – all in support of the Primate’s World Relief and Development

Fund (PWRDF). More than \$700 was raised for the fund.

The stops included Holy Trinity, Guildwood; St. Timothy, Agincourt; St. Jude, Wexford; St. Margaret in-the-Pines; Christ Church, Scarborough; Grace Church, Scarborough; Nativity, Malvern; Holy Wisdom; and St. Paul, L’Amoreaux. The scriptural theme for the day was I Corinthians 9:24-25: “Do you not know that in a race the runners

all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable garland, but we an imperishable one.”

The race ended with a big party and prizes at St. Timothy, Agincourt. One of the teams – from St. Jude, Wexford – won first prize. Church of the Holy Wisdom came in second, and third place went to

St. Timothy, Agincourt.

“The winnings are priceless, our minds are filled with memories, we made new friends with other church parishioners, and fun and love was shared among so many churches,” said a family afterwards.

Thank you to Manita Swati from PWRDF for opening the Steeplechase, and to Bishop Andrew and Mary Asbil for handing out prizes

at the closing ceremony. Special thanks to our sponsors who helped make this event a success. Thank you to Randy Vancourt, as well as St. Timothy, Agincourt’s contemporary group for providing music during the opening and closing celebrations.

*Submitted by Scarborough Steeplechase organizers Denise Byard and Elaine Vanderwerf.*

## Food, book nook help neighbours

### Orillia church responds as inflation bites budgets

BY SAM GILLET

ST. David Anglican-Lutheran Church, Orillia remains intent on sharing love to its community, one veggie or book at a time.

The congregation gathered on June 25 to bless the church’s community garden and to celebrate a brand new “book nook” that was donated in memory of a parishioner who passed away in 2021.

The Rev. Lori Pilatzke, incumbent, said Ryan Oliver was the driving force behind the “re-energization” of the church’s gardens, which sit on a shaded strip of grass behind the church.

The miniature library now carries dozens of children’s books, sheltered by glass doors attached to a colourful wooden house.

“Come and take a book or leave a book: they’re for everyone,” said Ms. Pilatzke.

Parishioners laid tobacco on the garden and around the book nook, as an act of blessing on the garden and its impact on the community.

Ms. Pilatzke said the book nook and gardens, along with the area’s shaded benches and grass, can be a great local resource for those living in Orillia’s south ward, who may not be able to get to the library or downtown parks.

“This place is supposed to be for our neighbourhood. It’s something they can come and do – grab a book and just chill,” she said.

Beside the book nook, raised gardens are home to blooming tomato plants, green beans, onions, carrots, lettuces and more. All the produce is given to community members.

“Budgets are tight, groceries have gone up. So people who are already on a tight budget, this can

help,” Ms. Pilatzke said.

The congregation blesses the gardens each year, as it reaffirms its mission in the community.

“The blessing is acknowledging we’re in partnership with God, our creator, and we’re asking for God’s grace and love to be poured into these seeds and as they sprout,” Ms. Pilatzke said.

As the cost of living rises and inflation challenges families’ budgets, Ms. Pilatzke said the church hopes the area and its produce – whether veggies or fun books – can offer a bit of help and fun during difficult times.

“Our mission statement is ‘stand together’ so everything we do we try and do for our neighbourhood. It’s not for us.”

*This article was first published by Orillia Matters.*

## Church hosts mapping exercise

ST. Paul, Lindsay hosted “Mapping the Ground We Stand On,” facilitated by Cheryl Marek of the PWRDF, on June 24. The church welcomed about 20 participants from the parish and the wider community. This exercise, now often referred to as “The Mapping Exercise,” offers settler participants an opportunity to take another step on their journey towards reconciliation with their Indigenous siblings. During the exercise, participants experienced how the presumed “terra nullius” of northern Turtle Island was already occupied by hundreds of nations; they filled

in the empty map with the names of some of the nations who cared for the land from coast to coast before the arrival of settlers. Many of the participants said the exercise was an informative and illuminating experience for them. St. Paul’s made its annual observance of National Indigenous Day of Prayer the next day. Many of the participants of The Mapping Exercise are planning to continue their journey by visiting a local powwow in September.

*Submitted by the Rev. Bonnie Skerritt*

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**BACK AT LAST**

Volunteers and migrant workers have a meal and worship together at St. Saviour, Orono in June – the first time in three years, due to the pandemic. The Migrant Worker Ministry of Durham Region partners with Anglican and non-Anglican churches and organizations to bring a hot meal and a church service to the men in Spanish and English. This is done once a month from June until October. ‘We sing together, have a wonderful meal and worship together,’ says the Rev. Augusto Nunez, incumbent of St. Saviour’s. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MIGRANT WORKER MINISTRY OF DURHAM REGION



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The Rev. Canon Simon Bell and the Rev. Susan Snelling lead the service, attended by members of three churches in the North Barrie Regional Ministry. PHOTOS BY MATTHEW BRAY



**Church hosts tea for regional ministry**

ON the morning of June 25, members from Trinity, Barrie, St. Margaret, Barrie and the Good Shepherd in Stayner gathered for an outdoor service and strawberry tea at the Good Shepherd. The parish backs onto a creek, with lots of shade. Many parishioners brought lawn chairs and sat under the trees. It was a hot, humid day but thankfully the rain held off. The Rev. Susan Snelling presided at the service and the Rev. Canon Simon Bell preached. Members from all the parishes took part in the service. Music was provided by pianist and accordionist Marg MacArthur and All in Accord on ukuleles.

Jesse Stormes of The Good Shepherd barbecued hotdogs, and members of the congregations provided cold salads. This was followed by a lovely dessert of vanilla ice cream, fresh strawberries and cake. Many hands do make light work, and many pitched in to help things go smoothly. Parishioners enjoyed fellowship and refreshments. The day was a great success. There were 75 people in attendance. It provided an opportunity for members of the various congregations to get to know each other better. In addition, members of The Good Shepherd felt supported and encouraged by all who came.

Following the service, lunch was served in the church’s upper hall.

*Submitted by the North Barrie Regional Ministry.*

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# Advocates urge action for disabled

## Poverty threatens dignity, town hall hears

BY STAFF

**HOLY** Trinity, Guildwood hosted a town hall meeting in June to raise awareness of the proposed Canada Disability Benefit. The event was held with Community Food Centres Canada and Disability Without Poverty, to urge the federal government to pass and implement the Canada Disability Act (Bill C-22).

Janet Rodrigues, a local spokesperson for Disability Without Poverty, noted that people with disabilities are twice as likely to live in poverty as other Canadians. Provincial disability support programs, such as the ODSP, leave Canadians with disabilities well below the poverty line. For far too many, it is poverty, not disability, that poses the greatest challenge to surviving with dignity. A Canada Disability Benefit would supple-

ment provincial income supports, helping people with disabilities meet their basic needs and fostering greater personal dignity, independence and social inclusion.

Holy Trinity's lay pastoral associate, Denise Byard, referenced a *Toronto Star* editorial written by three health-care providers that outlined the crushing impacts they witness among disabled people living in poverty, and urged swift passage and implementation of the federal benefit. Elin Goulden, the diocese's social Justice and advocacy consultant, connected the call for a Canada Disability Benefit to other diocesan advocacy efforts, including the 2023 vestry motion to raise social assistance rates.

Several members of the Well-spring Centre (a program for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities located at Holy Trinity) and their families attended the



People hold signed postcards for Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland at the Disability Without Poverty town hall meeting at Holy Trinity, Guildwood. The postcards urge the finance minister to implement the Canada Disability Benefit this year. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

event. They spoke poignantly of their experiences of poverty and disability, as well as anti-Black racism. "My son benefits so much from this program," said a mother of a Well-spring member. "But we can only afford to send him one day a week. I'm worried about his future when I'm no longer able to support him."

Attendees of the event signed postcards to Chrystia Freeland, the deputy prime minister and finance minister, urging her to implement the Canada Disability Benefit in 2023. The signed postcards were brought to a Disability Without Poverty rally on June 2 at Matt

Cohen Park in Toronto, across from Ms. Freeland's constituency office. Representatives of Disability Without Poverty collected bags of postcards from events held during the week and delivered them to the minister's office.

Bill C-22 received royal assent on June 22. However, the regulatory process to determine the amount of the benefit, eligibility and other details, has yet to begin. Importantly, the legislation commits to including people with disabilities in the development and design of the regulations.

Still, it could be a year or more before people with disabilities start

to receive this much-needed income support. "Considering that the original Canada Disability Benefit Act died on the order paper when the 2021 federal election was called, people with disabilities have already waited two years too long for this benefit," says Ms. Goulden. "They should not have to wait any longer."

*To call on the federal government to put the Canada Disability Benefit in its fall economic statement and roll out the benefit before the end of 2023, visit the diocese's Social Justice and Advocacy webpage, [www.toronto.anglican.ca/sjac](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/sjac).*

# Primate visits parish

BY DIANE ALLENGAME

**ST.** James, Caledon East welcomed Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, at a special Sunday morning service on June 4 to celebrate 175 years of parish life in the Caledon area.

Archbishop Nicholls leads the Church in discerning and pursuing the mission of God, and despite her national and international roles she makes time to visit parishes of all sizes. Her visit to St. James coincided with the first performance of an anthem composed for the anniversary by parishioner Howard Jones. "St. James in the Heart of the Village" features a lively tune and lyrics that capture the long legacy of faith in the community, including recent times.

*When Covid stopped worship  
in God's house,  
With livestream and Zoom at  
the touch of a mouse,  
God put the church back into  
everyone's home,  
And still does for those who in*



Archbishop Linda Nicholls (centre) joins the people of St. James, Caledon East for their church's 175th anniversary service. PHOTO BY JESSICA MOORE

person can't come. In her address to the congregation, Archbishop Nicholls spoke of God's constant care for us and our resilience during times like

the pandemic. She also welcomed seven members of St. James into the Anglican Communion, a meaningful act for those raised in other faith traditions.

"I'm so glad this happened," said Claire Olorenshaw. "I was raised in the United Church and attended a Roman Catholic church when my children were little, but I have

found my real spiritual home here at St. James."

*Diane Allengame is a member of St. James, Caledon East.*

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# Laity in mood for change: discussions

## Consultations reveal energy, anxiety

BY STUART MANN

As they emerge from the pandemic, many lay members of the Diocese of Toronto are in the mood for change and renewal – to cast the net on the other side of the boat, as one said.

That's one of the top findings coming out of Cast the Net's consultations with about 450 lay people. The findings were presented to Synod Council in May.

The diocese's visioning and strategy process, which takes its name from the Gospel of John, chapter 21, has been consulting with clergy and laity since last fall. The steering committee hopes to bring recommendations to Synod in November that will set a course for the diocese for the next several years.

In the consultations with lay people, participants were asked what it might mean for them to cast their nets on the right (or other) side of the boat. They were asked to imagine that it was five years in the future and there was a feeling of new life and energy in their church and the diocese. They were asked, how did your church try a different approach that resulted in new life? What new or different things did you focus on that brought energy and drew you closer to the life of Christ? What did you need to let go of to allow new things to happen?

### Younger people wanted

In response to these questions, many participants referred to young people, including children, youth, young adults and young families. They felt that attracting young people to church was key to their parish's future, and they hoped the diocese or another church would tell them how to do that. They were concerned for young people's well-being and wanted to hear from them directly.

Participants suggested changes to liturgy and music to appeal to younger people and newcomers. They desired more energetic, informal and engaging liturgy, and worship that is relevant to community concerns and social justice. They suggested shorter services, updated liturgical language, modern music, relevant and interactive preaching, and different physical spaces and scheduling for worship.

Another common subject of discussion was relations with the wider community, in particular evangelism and outreach, social justice and the Church's public image. Many participants said evangelism should focus on parishioners who haven't returned to church since the COVID-19 pandemic, younger people, new Canadians and the "unchurched." While some expressed enthusiasm for evangelism, others described barriers to it, especially a lack of ability to express their faith and a desire to do so.

In the area of social justice, participants felt the primary focus should be on meeting the material and social needs of those in the community, especially the provision of food and shelter. Advocacy and teaching and learning about social justice issues were also priorities.

Participants said a negative image of the Church may affect engagement with the wider community. They highlighted the Church's role in the Residential



Schools and Anglicanism's British heritage as two causes of its negative image. They said the image of the Church and the image of Anglicans must change.

### High expectations of clergy

In suggesting these changes, participants discussed the roles of lay leaders and volunteers, clergy and the diocese. Some favoured a larger role for lay leaders. "We have to expand lay leadership training," said a participant. "We have to empower the laity, too." However, others were concerned by the burden that would be placed on them. "It's not easy or viable to have churchwardens doing all this work," said another. "There are so many issues, and we are not supported. It is a tremendous burden."

Participants had high expectations of clergy. They wanted clergy to be emotionally available and relatable, to be leaders in reaching out to the community, to make preaching and liturgical leadership relatable, and to have spiritual acumen. There was a desire for younger, more diverse clergy. They said pastoral transitions and incumbent vacancies were a significant source of stress in many parishes and encouraged different approaches to staffing. Only one participant mentioned clergy burnout.

Some participants were displeased with the diocese, for taking either too big or too small a role in parish life. They said the diocese could contribute to parish life by supporting outreach, creating a centralized approach to technology, helping with property issues and facilitating collaboration.

Throughout the lay consultations, there was a strong, consistent desire for collaboration among parishes and with other faith and community groups. There was also affirmation of the positive role of technology in parish life, although some feared that it discouraged in-person attendance and put a strain on the parish's finances and staffing.

Buildings were seen as both a burden and an opportunity. Participants felt congregations needed to get out of their church building as well as welcome the wider community into them. The cost of keeping buildings open was a burden, they said, and many buildings had accessibility challenges. People spoke about

letting go of buildings for the good of the community, such as providing affordable housing. Others advocated for a greater investment in buildings, which were seen as anchors for evangelism. They felt that church buildings were often the heart of the community.

Some participants expressed thoughts that were different from the dominant narrative of change for the sake of survival and growth. As a starting point for naming key values, they reflected on why they are part of the Church and moments when the Church had been particularly significant in their lives. They expressed a desire for spiritual connection with God and going back to the basics of their faith. They named a need to be the Church beyond Sunday by living as disciples of Jesus Christ every day.

A number of participants named spirituality, including spiritual experiences, core beliefs and values, as key to their involvement in the Church. "Why do I come to church?" asked one. "There are so many changes in the world; our God is not changing." Some wanted a stronger emphasis on spirituality in the Church. "Church has become more social and less spiritual – get back to spirituality," said one. Some called for simplicity, getting "back to basics" in teaching, learning and practicing the faith. Another quiet, consistent theme in the conversations called for a shift in focus from Sunday-only worship in church to living as disciples of Jesus Christ every day.

The presentation to Synod Council in May concluded with some observations from Cast the Net's coordinators. They said the volunteer facilitators who led the lay consultations reported a lot of positive energy in the groups, alongside considerable anxiety. Participants were grateful for being listened to and were keen for more such conversations, they said, and they were willing to change and work for the outcomes they wanted. There was a need to help people focus on spiritual renewal as opposed to institutional survival – transformational rather than transactional change, "resurrection, not resuscitation," they concluded.

### Not a realistic prospect

Cast the Net's steering committee asked Dr. Sarah Kathleen Johnson to analyze

the results of both the lay and clergy consultations. Dr. Johnson is a professor of liturgy and pastoral theology at Saint Paul University in Ottawa and oversees its Anglican Studies programs. Her analyses of the consultations, along with other documents, can be found on the diocese's website, [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca).

Reflecting on the lay consultations, Dr. Johnson says it is not a realistic prospect for most churches to have a lot of young people, given changing demographics and societal trends. "The desire for churches full of young people is disconnected from the demographic realities that we are facing in Canada," she says. "The Canadian population as a whole is aging. Our population grows through immigration, and most new Canadians are not Christian, and if they are, they're not Anglican. Each successive generation is less religious than the preceding generation. These are demographic realities, all of which are not in favour of churches full of young people. So that expectation is out of step with who lives in Canada now."

However, she says it is important for Cast the Net's steering committee and the diocesan leadership to hear that desire from lay people. "Recognizing that this is the direction people are looking in, and that there is this underlying anxiety, will be important for the Cast the Net team in shaping a vision."

Dr. Johnson says one of the highlights of the lay consultations for her was the participants' focus on liturgy. "There are ways to see it initially as a focus on attracting young people through changing practices, but listening a little bit deeper, there's a call for liturgical renewal. I describe it in terms of three characteristics: liturgy that is more emotionally engaging and energetic; liturgy that is more relevant and connected to people's lives and understandable; and liturgy that makes the connection to everyday acts of compassion and social justice that the Church is involved with. I found that really inspiring, to see that call for liturgy that's more connected to spirituality and discipleship. Those are principles that can be valuable regardless of the style of worship or who's part of the worshipping community."

### Visionary voices

In her analysis of the lay consultations, Dr. Johnson highlighted the quieter, less prominent voices in the conversations, what she called the "visionary voices." She says these voices could play a prominent role in shaping a vision for the diocese. "My hunch is that a bold, transformative vision is likely to come from the edge of the Church rather than the centre, and listening to voices that are less central and have historically been marginalized will be important for thinking about ways forward. Looking and listening for those comments was inspiring for me."

She says it's important for the Church to listen to those voices. "That's how we follow Jesus. That's who Jesus was listening to and was attentive to – those on the margins of his community. One of the ways that we move into our calling as followers of Jesus is being attentive to those who are marginalized in our own context. That's often where we see God at work, where we hear the prophetic call."

She was impressed by the amount of energy and engagement shown by the participants. "It was good to hear the energy that was present and the enthusiasm that people had for a chance to gather together to share their stories and learn what other people are doing. I really ap-

Continued on Page 17



## Church helps bird guide with hearing **1**

KINGSTON - "I will again hear those sweet voices from nature. I will be able to hear my birds in the forests."

With those words, Ugandan bird guide Ibrahim Senfuma greeted the news that St. Andrew, Sharbot Lake in the Diocese of Ontario had raised enough funds for him to purchase 24-channel hearing aids and thus work again as a bird guide.

After a few delays, the funds were transferred from Canada to a hearing clinic in the town of Mukono in Uganda, where a doctor had been working with Mr. Senfuma to find the best hearing aids to pick up bird calls. In early June, Mr. Senfuma was fitted with the aids and, after adjusting to them, decided to try birding. "Today I went birding in the forest," he wrote. "It was superb. I heard birds everywhere around me. It really works. I heard my birds again."

St. Andrew's "Help Ibrahim Hear the Birds Again" fundraiser was a success. Donations came in from as far away as Quebec, B.C. and New Zealand. "Thanks to you all, Ibrahim's livelihood is now secure and he has received the aids in time for the main Ugandan tourist season, starting in June," wrote a member of the fundraising team. *Dialogue*

## New church space opens **2**

HAMILTON - On Palm Sunday, Bishop Susan Bell did something that hasn't happened in the Diocese of Niagara in nearly a quarter of a century. She consecrated a new church space, setting it apart for worship and ministry.

More than 70 people gathered at the new All Saints Mission, located at the corner of King and Queen streets in Hamilton. The mission is in a newly constructed, 24-storey condominium building.

"You are the best news we've had in years," said Bishop Bell during the service.

Canon Mike Deed, All Saints' missionary, is working to build partnerships in the local community and exploring ways to open the mission's doors to new ways of being God's church. The mission's mandate is shaped by three priorities: to deepen relationships with God, to walk with its neighbours and to work for



justice. "The new building, with its huge windows looking out onto the busyness of King Street, is another constant reminder to seek and meet God in the world and to be invitational," he says.

Two stained glass windows and the century-old baptismal font from the former All Saints church have been incorporated into the new worship space and are visible from the street.

The people of All Saints Mission have been waiting for a permanent worship space to call their own since 2009, when their church, which dated back to the 1870s, was deemed structurally unsound due to a rare earthquake in 1998. Restoration costs were estimated at more than \$6 million, so the congregation voted to leave the building and build a new church to continue ministry in the neighbourhood. The damaged church and other buildings were demolished in 2016.

Since that time, the congregation has worshipped in a nursing home, a local Presbyterian church and with their Anglican siblings at St. Paul, Westdale. The Good Shepherd community in Hamilton also exhibited generous hospitality towards them. "I hope that you, All Saints, have inaugurated a moment, a movement and a season, and that there will be plenty more new churches to come," said Bishop Bell. *Niagara Anglican*

## Cathedral spire renovation finished **3**

MONTREAL - The restoration of Christ Church Cathedral's iconic spire is finished. "The spire has, at long last, been unwrapped from its scaffolding and is standing proudly again in the midst of all the steel and glass downtown," writes the Very Rev. Bertrand Olivier, dean of the cathedral, in the diocesan newspaper.

The steel structure and aluminum tiles, which had replaced the original stone spire in the 1940s, had corroded to the point of instability. If left unchecked, the spire was a potential danger to the public, and the cathedral had to undertake major work to ensure its safety and longevity.

The cathedral's architects developed a plan of action in two phases. In the first stage, which began in 2017, expert masons strengthened the stone tower that supported the spire. The second phase - the work on the spire structure - started in 2019. The original plan was to remove all the aluminum tiles, slice the spire in two and then lift both halves down to the ground for maintenance. However, this proved to be impossible because of the many other construction projects happening around the cathedral and the load-bearing restrictions of the building being

situated on top of a shopping mall. A new process had to be developed.

The new approach involved enveloping the whole spire in scaffolding to remove the tiles. Each was painstakingly numbered so that it would find its place again at the end of the project. As tiles were removed, they were taken to a specialist firm in Ottawa for cleaning and decontamination to remove more than eight decades of pollution.

COVID-19 stopped work temporarily and then slowed down the process. Restoration work was also hindered by worldwide supply chain issues. Some of the materials needed for the work, including the additional scaffolding and many highly technical items, had to be sourced elsewhere than originally planned with longer lead times and higher costs.

Last May, Dean Olivier faced his own fear of heights and climbed the scaffolding to the top of the spire to bless the cross as it was set back in place, a powerful symbol of the presence of Christ in the heart of the city. Since then, the team of architects and contractors worked steadfastly - tackling each challenge as it arose - and finally taking down the scaffolding from the spire.

"This has been an extraordinary journey, one that will

ensure that the cathedral will continue to be a place of gathering for Anglicans and Montrealers for many years to come," writes Dean Olivier.

Although the work is finished, the cathedral still needs to raise \$500,000 to \$750,000 to cover costs. Donations can be made in three ways: by e-transfer to [accounting@montrealcathedral.ca](mailto:accounting@montrealcathedral.ca) with "Spire" in the message; by cheque labeled "Spire" to Christ Church Cathedral, 1444 Av. Union, Montreal, H3A 2B8; or online at [montrealcathedral.ca/finishing-the-spire](http://montrealcathedral.ca/finishing-the-spire). *Montreal Anglican*

## Ukrainians celebrate **4** in Anglican cathedral

FREDERICTON - More than 100 members of the Ukrainian Catholic Church met for a joyous Easter celebration at the Anglican cathedral in Fredericton.

Their usual spot - St. Anthony's Catholic Church on the city's north side - was already booked, so the Ukrainian Community of Fredericton approached Christ Church Cathedral.

"We started shopping around," said Oksana Tesla, president of the association, adding she had been to concerts at the cathedral in the past. "Having the service in this beautiful cathedral, everyone was amazed," she said. "The cathedral looks very European. It feels closer to us."

The service began outside with the priest, who had travelled from Moncton, blessing the traditional Easter baskets that contained Easter bread, sausage, smoked ham, butter, cheese, salt, horseradish and painted eggs. They also contained a candle and a green branch to symbolize new life.

Having the service given in their native language meant a great deal to worshippers, said Ms. Tesla. Many dressed in traditional costume for the occasion. For both those Ukrainians such as Ms. Tesla who have lived in Canada for several years, and newcomers forced out because of the Russian invasion last year, the day was a special one meant to bring everyone together in celebration. "When you are far from home, you sometimes value things differently," she said. "It was quite emotional. We were looking forward to it for a very long time."

*The New Brunswick Anglican*

# Advisor upbeat about diocese despite challenging findings

Continued from Page 16

plaud Cast the Net's desire and success in listening broadly and deeply."

Despite the challenges facing the diocese, she is optimistic about its future. "There's fatigue and recognition of declining membership and participation - those things are real and

important to acknowledge - but this is still a large organization. It has financial resources, social power and more than 400 people showing up for a conversation about the future - that's a strong place to be starting from. While it's important to acknowledge the fatigue and changing

demographic realities, it's also important to recognize that the Diocese of Toronto still operates out of a position of strength and can use that to shape a future that really serves communities, that serves congregations, that leads to deeper spirituality and discipleship."

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## A Mr. Perkins Story

# Birthdays

BY THE REV. DANIEL GRAVES

In church-land there are certain little customs that seem to develop over time. At first, they are innocuous, charming, even quaint; but it doesn't take long before they begin to attain a sacrosanct and inviolable character. Any clergy person who has inherited this sort of custom (and I believe we all have, of some sort or another) will know of what I speak. In one church I knew, the service always concluded after the final hymn and dismissal with the congregation singing "Go now in Peace." While this might have been open to criticism by some of our more serious-minded Anglican liturgists, it was quite lovely, as the whole congregation sung it with great love and meant every word of it from the depths of their hearts. These are the little customs that do no harm, and perhaps even do a little bit of good, but are still the sort of thing that any good cleric, especially those of us trained at Trinity College, sooner or later feel we must stamp out. The thought of one of our old college friends seeing us allowing such para-liturgical aberrations in our parish is just too much to bear. Thus, it was with our friend, the Rev. Mr. William Perkins, the rector of that tiny parish of Christ Church, Hampton's Corners, and his inherited custom of the monthly birthday celebration.

The custom was this: On the final Sunday of the month, after the service had concluded, during the announcements but before the recessional hymn, he was to ask if there were any birthdays in that month. Hands would go up or people would stand. The organist would strike up a rousing rendition of "Happy Birthday to You!" and the small, but faithful congregation would lustfully warble along. Following the service, a big slab cake would be served to the ever-diminishing cotton-topped congregation. I suppose that at one time in the parish history, in those halcyon days of yore, when the pews were packed and the Sunday school overflowing with children, a slab cake was appropriate. Yet, in these latter days of church decline, with which we are all so sadly acquainted, a slab cake was more than enough – too much – way too much for the dozen-and-a-half octogenarians who made up the congregation. They were always pushing half a cake on Mr. Perkins to take home. He was not a big fan of Costco cake.

In his early days in the parish, on the first Sunday when this little ritual unfolded, Mr. Perkins knew he would soon "nix" it. Mr. Perkins, especially in his earlier years, was what we might refer to as a "liturgical fusspot." Being the Trinity College man that he was, he liked things

done with order and decency, according to the rubrics of the authorized liturgies of the Church. After that first Sunday in which he experienced the strange phenomenon of the monthly birthday celebration, he thought to himself, "Well, this is the first thing to go."

And so, when the next month rolled around and the last Sunday of the month arrived, that Sunday being a Sunday in Lent, and certainly inappropriate for the singing of "Happy Birthday" and the eating of cake, Mr. Perkins knew the moment had come. He rolled through the announcements without a breath, singular in his purpose of arriving at the announcing of the recessional hymn. The recessional hymn played and Mr. Perkins was faced down by angry stares as he processed down the nave to the back of the church for the dismissal. The hymn ended and before Mr. Perkins could say a word, old Judy Jumblejump barked, "We forgot the birthdays! Who has a birthday?!" Miss Lillian Littlestature, that ancient spinster, cried out, "I do! And so does Charlie!" referring to Charlie Strawblade, an old farmer whose family had been founders of the parish, one hundred and fifty-three years ago. The organist struck up "Happy Birthday" and they all began to sing. Judy Jumblejump began to cut up the cake and pass it around to people when they ought to have been on their knees saying their final prayers in silence.

Needless to say, Mr. Perkins heard about it for weeks. He was told how deeply offended people were and how important the monthly birthday celebration was to the parish. A certain Marjorie Mayhem, a stalwart member of the flower guild, confronted him mid-week with considerable rage. She told him that last month was her husband George's birthday and that she had almost missed the opportunity to celebrate it. "Hasn't George been gone for a several years?" Mr. Perkins asked, somewhat confused.

"Yes, but it's very important to be able to sing 'Happy Birthday' to him in church every year. It makes me feel close to him."

Mr. Perkins didn't know what to say. The idea of singing happy birthday to a dead person in church seemed beyond the pale. He tried to explain this to her, but she became more indignant and furious. This is the moment when most wise clergy would re-evaluate their decision and ask that time-honored question of themselves, "Is this the ditch I'm going to die in?" But Mr. Perkins was undeterred, resolute. He would hold his course no matter how stormy the seas and root out this para-liturgical abomination from the Lord's temple. In more a reasoned moment, he said he might allow them to continue to have their "happy birthdays"



and cakes in the church hall, but certainly not in the church proper. Such festivities were more suited to a coffee hour than a service in the church. He was drawing his line in the sand. Much grumbling and murmuring ensued over the following month after Mr. Perkins had communicated his decision, but Mr. Perkins paid it no mind. He was firm in his determination to kill this thing.

And thus came that fateful day and one once again the last Sunday of the month rolled around. All wondered what would happen. The service was tense. Mr. Perkins' sermon, not touching on the topic of "birthdays," of course, seemed uncharacteristically cold. He was, of nature, a warm man and known for his compassionate preaching. This dissonance only made the congregation feel even more tense. The Sacrament being concluded and the service drawing to a close, he the made announcements with some haste and pushed forward to announce the recessional hymn. Before he could draw a breath to announce the hymn "Take up your Cross and Follow Me," Judy Jumblejump called out, "What about the March birthdays, Mr. Perkins?!" His countenance fell. With his head down, he felt a rage pulsing within his chest at this monstrous uprising, this sinister sedition, this blatant act of defiance. He drew in a breath slowly, tried to calm his mind and his heart. He would not make a

scene of it. "Take the long view" he told himself silently. He was devoted to order and decency in Anglican worship as an article of faith. He would not lose it from the chancel steps.

"Alright," he said, "who has a birthday in March?"

Silence. No one answered.

"Surely," he continued, "there must be at least one March birthday..."

Silence.

"No March birthdays?" he asked, giving one final opportunity. "Alright," he continued, "Our recessional hymn is..."

"Wait!!" a voice called out. It was Judy Jumblejump. "But we didn't sing 'Happy Birthday!'"

"But there aren't any March birthdays," he responded, confounded.

"But we always sing 'Happy Birthday'," she said.

"It's true," added old Charlie Strawblade.

"Indeed it is," chimed in Miss Lillian Littlestature.

And so, knowing he was defeated, he directed the organist to strike the chord, and they all sang "Happy Birthday" to no one in particular. And when the singing was over, Judy Jumblejump called out, "And don't forget! There's cake!"

*The Rev. Daniel Graves is the theologian in residence and associate priest at Trinity Church, Aurora.*

## Recital celebrates cathedral's new organ console

In July, St. James Cathedral received its new organ console from Létourneau Organs after two years of detailed planning, carving and sophisticated electrical and computer work. Everyone is invited to join the cathedral in celebrating the arrival of the new console, a gift that will enhance its music and worship for years to come.

Organist David Briggs will play the inaugural recital on Sept. 22 at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Briggs is one of the world's finest improvisors, with a busy schedule on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. He has held appointments at Hereford, Truro and Gloucester cathedrals, and for a number of years was Artist in Residence at St. James Cathedral.

The cathedral thanks Peter Farah, whose generosity has allowed this project to be fulfilled. The console is dedicated to his father, the Rev. Canon Shafeek A. Farah, a priest in Palestine and Canada. His signature in Arabic is carved into the decoration on the casing.

All are invited to the inaugural recital on Sept. 22. Tickets are

\$25 and can be purchased in one of these ways: search for "David Briggs Recital" on Eventbrite.ca; by e-transfer to bookkeeper@stjamescathedral.ca (please specify "David Briggs Recital" in the message); at the front desk of the Cathedral Centre, Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; or by cheque, payable to St. James Cathedral, 65 Church St.,

Toronto, ON M5C 2E9.

To receive information about upcoming musical events at the cathedral, email info@stjamescathedral.ca or call (416) 364-7865.

*Submitted by St. James Cathedral.*

TO PLACE AN AD CALL 905.833.6200 ext. 22 OR EMAIL ANGLICAN@CHURCHADVERTISING.CA

## IN MOTION

### Appointments

- The Rev. Susan Haig, Canon Pastor of the Diocese of Toronto, May 1.
- The Rev. Daniel Graves, Assistant Canon Pastor of the Diocese of Toronto, May 1.
- The Rev. Micah Latimer-Dennis, Associate Priest, Grace Church on-the-Hill, May 10.
- The Rev. Daniel Graves, Interim Priest-in-Charge, Trinity Church, Aurora, June 1.
- The Rev. Canon Richard Miller, Priest-in-Charge, St. George Memorial, Oshawa, June 1.
- The Rev. Canon Leonard Abbah, OHC, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Chad and Ahadi while the Priest-in-Charge is on sabbatical as of June 1.
- The Rev. Sherri Golisky, Incumbent, St. Matthew the Apostle, Oriole, June 1.
- The Rev. Maureen Hair, Regional Dean of Huronia, June 1.
- The Rev. Gerlyn Henry, Incumbent, Holy Wisdom, June 1.
- The Rev. Jo-Anne Billinger, Honorary Assistant, St. James Cathedral, June 15.
- The Rev. John Lockyer, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. John, East Orangeville, July 1.
- The Rev. Lyn Youll Marshall, Interim Priest-in-Charge, Christ Church, St. James, July 1.

- The Rev. Frances Kovar, Interim Associate Priest, Trinity Church, Aurora, July 1.
- The Rev. Randy Williams (Diocese of Niagara), Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Paul, Uxbridge July 1.
- The Rev. Canon Dr. Isaac Kawuki-Mukasa, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. James the Apostle, Brampton, July 6.
- The Rev. Michael Perry, Incumbent, Transfiguration, Aug. 1.
- The Rev. Hannah Johnston, Assistant Curate, St. Anne, Toronto, with particular appointment to Parkdale-Toronto West Regional Ministry, Aug. 15.
- The Rev. Richard Webb, Incumbent, St. John, York Mills, Sept. 1.
- The Rev. Rebecca Bridges (Diocese of Alabama), Incumbent, St. Aidan, Toronto, Sept. 1.

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

### Bishop's Direct Appointment Process

- (receiving names):
- St. Cyprian
- Christ Church, Scarborough
- Grace Church, Scarborough
- St. Mary, Richmond Hill
- St. George, Haliburton

- Christ Church, Bolton
- Trinity-St. Paul, Port Credit

### Parish Selection Committee Process

- First Phase** - (not yet receiving names):
- Christ Church-St. James
  - St. Martin in-the-Fields

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

- Holy Trinity, Thornhill
- Christ the King
- St. George Memorial, Oshawa
- St. John the Baptist, Oak Ridges

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

- St. James Cathedral
- Grace Church on-the-Hill

### Ordinations and Receptions

- The Rev. Deborah Chapman was ordained a vocational deacon at St. John the Evangelist, Port Hope on June 4.
- The Rev. Peter Newell was ordained a vocational deacon at All Saints, Sherbourne St. on June 4.
- The Rev. Michael Watson was ordained a vocational deacon at St. John the Evangelist, Port Hope on June 4.
- The Rev. Max Price had his orders received into the Anglican Communion at St. Stephen in-the-Fields on June 10.
- The Rev. Jessica Dowling will

be ordained a priest at St. Margaret, New Toronto on Sept. 24 at 4 p.m.

### Celebration of New Ministry

- The Rev. Richard Webb, Incumbent, St. John, York Mills, Sept. 17 at 10 a.m.

### Conclusions

- The Ven. John Anderson concluded his appointment as the diocese's Canon Pastor on April 30.
- The Rev. Ian LaFleur concluded his appointment as Incumbent of St. Stephen, Maple on June 30.
- The Rev. Canon Donald Butler will conclude his appointment as Incumbent of St. Andrew, Scarborough on Sept. 1.

### Deaths

- The Rev. Canon Donald Bone died on May 20. Ordained deacon in 1963 and priest in 1964, he served as assistant curate of St. Mary, Richmond Hill, incumbent of the Parish of Roche's Point, incumbent of St. Paul, L'Amoreaux, incumbent of Trinity, Aurora, and director of the diocese's Planning and Development department until his retirement in 2001. His funeral was held at St. Mary, Richmond Hill on May 27.
- The Rev. Arthur W.M.J. MacRae died on May 31. Ordained deacon in 1955 and priest in 1956, he served as assistant curate of Christ

Church, Deer Park, incumbent of St. James the Apostle, Brampton, priest-in-charge of St. Timothy by-the-Humber and honorary assistant at St. Patrick, Willowdale, Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St. and St. Clement, Eglinton. He joined the McGill COTC in 1949 and after service overseas, served with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps as an instructor and chaplain. His funeral was held on June 6.

- The Rev. Canon Mary "Lynn" Uzans (Diocese of Nova Scotia) died on June 8. Ordained deacon in 1993 and priest in 1994 in the Diocese of Algoma, she came to the Diocese of Toronto in 2002 to serve as associate priest of Trinity Church, Aurora. She served as the initial trainer and coordinator of the Fresh Start program for the Diocese of Toronto. Her funeral was held on June 13.
- The Rev. Canon Dr. M. Alice Medcof died on July 13. Ordained deacon in 1979 and priest in 1980, she served as assistant curate of St. Paul, Lorne Park, associate of Christ Church, Deer Park, incumbent of Epiphany, Scarborough, St. Bede, and Church of the Transfiguration, and honorary assistant of St. Clement, Eglinton. Her funeral was held on July 21 at Church of the Transfiguration.

## PRAYER CYCLE

### FOR SEPTEMBER

1. Bishop's Committee on Creation Care
2. Holy Trinity School
3. Anglican schools in the Diocese of Toronto
4. Citizens for Public Justice
5. Teachers and students
6. Royal St. George's College School
7. School chaplains
8. Sisterhood of St. John the Divine
9. St. Clement's School
10. Religious communities of the Diocese of Toronto (SSJD & OHC)
11. Lakefield College School
12. Kingsway College School
13. Bishop Strachan School
14. Order of the Holy Cross
15. Christian-Jewish Dialogue of

- Toronto (CJDT)
16. St. Paul, Lindsay
  17. Victoria & Haliburton Deanery
  18. Founders, benefactors & missionaries of the ACC
  19. St. Paul, Minden
  20. St. Peter, Maple Lake
  21. The Chapel of St. James, West Brock
  22. The Chapel of St. Margaret, Wilberforce
  23. Christ Church, Bolton
  24. Lay ministry and the Education for Ministry program
  25. Christ Church, Brampton
  26. Holy Family, Heart Lake (Brampton)
  27. St. Hugh and St. Edmund
  28. St. James the Apostle, Brampton
  29. ReCharge Youth Retreat & youth ministries of the diocese
  30. Toronto Urban Native Ministry

## LOOKING AHEAD

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

### Gatherings

**SEPT. 13-NOV. 1** - Ignite Family Ministry's Children & Youth Midweek Program, Wednesdays, 6:30-8 p.m., St. Jude, Wexford, 10 Howarth Ave., Toronto. For grades 3 to 6, crafts,

drama, science, games, songs, stories and snacks. For grades 7-10, hang out, prayer, worship, games and snacks.

**SEPT. 13-NOV. 1** - Ignite Family Ministry's Children & Youth Midweek Program, Thursdays, 6:30-8 p.m., St. Dunstan of Canterbury, 56 Lawson Rd., Toronto. For grades 3 to 6, crafts, drama, science, games, songs, stories and snacks. For grades 7-10, hang out, prayer, worship, games and snacks.

**SEPT. 16-17** - Guildwood Food Truck Festival, a family-friendly event with food trucks, inflatables for kids, fire truck and more, Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingston Rd., Toronto.

**SEPT. 24** - Choral Evensong for Michaelmas (transferred), 4 p.m., followed by an illustrated music feature entitled William Byrd: His Style and Legacy, as we mark the 400th anniversary of his passing in

1623, presented by Robert Busiakiewicz, the former music director at St. James Cathedral. Takes place at St. Olave, Bloor Street and Windermere Avenue.

**SEPT. 30** - Toronto Welsh Male Voice Choir Concert, 2:30 p.m., Church of Our Saviour, 1 Laurentide Dr., Don Mills. Tickets \$30, advance sales only. For tickets or for more information, contact the church during office hours: 416-385-1805, Tuesday and Friday, noon to 4 p.m., or Elizabeth Liness at 905-621-9205.

**SEPT. 21** - Guildwood Tech Skills Workshop, 4 p.m. \$25 per session, Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingston Rd., Toronto. For anyone struggling with technology. For more information, email [denise@trinityguildwood.org](mailto:denise@trinityguildwood.org) or call (416) 261-9503.

**OCT. 1** - Blessing the Animals Service, 4 p.m., Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingston Rd., Toronto.

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**PROUD ANGLICANS**

Anglicans walk and ride in the Pride Parade in downtown Toronto on June 25, with tens of thousands of people lining the route. A group from St. Paul, Bloor Street handed out water at the start of the parade. At right, Bishop Kevin Robertson and his son walk in the parade while Bishop Andrew Asbil (lower right) enjoys a moment with other Anglicans. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

