



ACW Newsletter Lent 2024

# Anglican Church Women

Diocese of Toronto

135 Adelaide Street East Toronto

■ ON ■ M5C 1L8

## PRAYER LINKS

### April

Deaneries of Mississauga , North Peel  
ACW Sisters in the Diocese of Ottawa,  
Qu'Appelle

Threshold Ministries (formerly Church  
Army)

### May

Deaneries of Nottawasaga, Oshawa  
ACW Sisters in the Dioceses of  
Saskatchewan, Saskatoon  
Episcopal Church in the USA  
Chaplaincies in Diocese of Toronto

### June

Deanery of Parkdale-Toronto West  
ACW sisters in the Dioceses of the  
Yukon, Calgary, Edmonton  
Our sisters in the Evangelical Lutheran  
Church.

## NATIONAL PRAYER PARTNERS

The ACW's in the Diocese of Toronto are  
to pray for the ACW's in the Diocese of  
Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador.

The ACW's in the Diocese of Western  
Newfoundland are praying for the ACW's  
in the Diocese of Toronto.

Please send us your photos and  
news of your women's activities.

**Deadline for next issue May 8, 2024**

### COMMUNICATIONS

Website: [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca)  
(under About Us / Departments)

## 2024 Special Project Theme: Food Insecurity

**Definition:** food insecurity is the lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy life.

Food insecurity can be a temporary situation or it can last a long time. Studies have shown that food insecurity in children can result in a number of health issues. Children with food insecurity are twice as likely to be in poor health compared to other children. Conditions like anemia and asthma have been linked to food insecurity. Food insecurity also affects adults. Studies have shown that it's linked to mental health conditions, including depression. It can also raise the risk of chronic health conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol. And once diagnosed, it's more difficult to follow dietary guidance to keep these conditions under control.

A number of factors can cause food insecurity. But obstacles to accessing enough food are commonly related to:

**Income:** Inadequate or insecure income can affect food insecurity if money for food isn't as readily available. High housing costs contribute to this as well as limited access to credit.

**Employment:** Unemployment or underemployment can affect income, which makes it more difficult to afford food.

**Race or ethnicity:** Certain races and ethnicities disproportionately experience food insecurity. This may be due to a combination of social and economic factors.

**Disability:** Disabilities can sometimes limit employment options. They can also cause more financial strain due to added healthcare expenses.

In Canada, being severely food insecure means households are forced to skip meals, cut meals or even go for whole days without eating because of a lack of money for food. Food insecurity rates are highest for single parent households, renters and households with incomes below the poverty line. Statistics from 2021 show that 5.8 million Canadians, including 1.2 million children faced food insecurity, even though over half of these are living in working households. Just over a million Canadians use food banks. Sixty percent of households relying on social assistance face food insecurities.

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## **Food Insecurity** Cont'd

Housing costs are one of the major factors for lack of money for food. A newly accepted guideline states that one should spend no more than 30% – 50% of gross income on rent. In our Diocese that is difficult. Many are spending much more. Lack of affordable housing has increased significantly since 1998 when the province downloaded social housing to the municipalities. Since then, very little social housing has been built.

What can we do? For now, we need to support our food banks with donations of goods, money and time (volunteer). Food banks and charitable donations have been a popular solution to hunger in Canada for 40 years—but they are an emergency stopgap, not a solution. Soup kitchens, drop-in meal programs and community gardens also need our support.

We need to keep up to date with accurate information on who is most at risk and make sure that our policy makers, public health planners, and advocacy groups use this information to set priorities and take action, as there is strong evidence showing that food insecurity can be addressed through policy interventions which include improving the incomes of low-income households.

## **LENTEN LOVE FOR THE FOODBANK**

In December of last year, Christ Church Stouffville held a very successful donation campaign for the Stouffville Foodbank called a “Reverse Advent”. Parish members contributed an item each day for the entire Advent Season.

Building on this idea, Christ Church Stouffville is conducting a similar donation campaign for the season of Lent, called “Lenten Love for the Foodbank”. Starting on February 14<sup>th</sup>, Ash Wednesday, and for the following six weeks, participants can donate 2-3 items that fall under that week’s theme; for example, week 1 is “Beverage Week” so donations could be tea, coffee, hot chocolate, juice, etc. Donations can be brought in each week or all at once on Palm Sunday

## **President’s Message**

Easter is early this year and Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, has caught many of us off guard, especially as we have had so little of a snowy winter. Bishop White in a recent sermon mentioned that symbols sometimes speak louder than words. The imposition of ashes on our foreheads, in the sign of a cross, is one such symbol, reminding us of our mortality. This has prompted me to think of and contemplate what other symbols/actions are in our Christian life and to use these as a focus for my Lenten journey. May you too find a meaningful focus for your Lenten journey.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held April 20 on Zoom. Registration information is on the back page of this newsletter. The theme of “Hope and Peace in Today’s World” ties in with our Special Projects theme of ‘Food Insecurity’. Our guest speakers will be from the Stephen Lewis Foundation who will tell us about how they are providing hope through their work as partners with community-led organizations in the 14 countries that have been hardest hit by the HIV epidemic in Africa.

May you and your family have a blessed Lent and a joyous Easter!

Enid



## Chaplain's Reflection

I have noticed the number 40 is often mentioned in the Bible and appears in ways that have symbolic meaning and importance. The mention of 40 days is especially prominent – God flooded the Earth for 40 days, Jesus spent 40 days between resurrection and ascension and much more.

The phrase “40 days” is mentioned more than 20 times – some in the Old Testament and some in the New Testament. Here are a few of the times the number 40 is mentioned.

In Genesis God describes his plans for dealing with rampant sin on our planet: “Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I have made. In Exodus we read that Moses met with God on Mount Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights, and later, in Exodus, we read that “Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water and wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant – the Ten Commandments.”

In 1 Kings, we read how the prophet Elijah fasts for 40 days as he travels, after the angel of the Lord tells him to eat and drink to help him make a spiritual journey: The Philistine soldier Goliath threatened the Israelites for 40 days before God sent the courageous shepherd David to defeat Goliath against all odds. Jonah delivered a prophecy, warning the city of Nineveh would be overthrown in 40 days, but the people took the warning seriously and used the 40 days to repent of their sins. As a result, God spared them.

Jesus spent 40 days in the desert wilderness before he began his public ministry, being tempted to sin in ways common to all humanity. After his Resurrection, Acts reports Jesus spent 40 days appearing to people, sharing the kingdom of God before his Ascension into heaven.

The phrase “40 days” in the Bible designates a period of time to complete an important spiritual challenge. When the Bible uses that phrase, something challenging that leads to spiritual growth is always taking place within the context of 40 days, often involving a move from sin to strengthening faith, as in the story of Noah's Ark. There are many examples, but these few help us understand the significance of 40 days.

This Lent what will these 40 days hold for you in the way of spiritual growth and faith? Will these days be a catapult into a new understanding of your relationship with Christ, or a new understanding of what it means to forgive, or perhaps a new understanding of systemic poverty and how it keeps so many poor. However, you use these 40 days, I pray they are able to help you become more connected with our great God.

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## World Day of Prayer 2024

Friday, March 1 2024, the first Friday of March, is the 2024 World Day of Prayer featuring the country of Palestine with the theme “**I Beg You – Bear with One Another in Love**”.

A 58-minute video of the World Day of Prayer 2024 service, with participants from across Canada, has been created to view at home and in churches. The World Day of Prayer Service 2024, national service led by board members of the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada will be **Saturday, March 9, 1pm ET** (online).

The video is based on the worship service prepared by Palestinian Christian women, and then presented and produced by the Women's Inter-Church

To watch this full-length service video, visit **[wicc.org/world-day-of-prayer/how-to-participate/](https://wicc.org/world-day-of-prayer/how-to-participate/)** after January 15, 2024. It can be downloaded, for free, from the WDP resource section of [wicc.org](https://wicc.org)



Chaplain's message cont'd

A 40-day challenge may also involve a vital meeting with God, like Moses' encounter with God on Mount Sinai and Elijah's journey to meet with God on Mount Horeb. Finally, the Bible uses the phrase “40 days” to refer to the challenge Jesus gave people who encountered him between his Resurrection and Ascension – to believe in the good news of the Gospel and to begin saving relationships with God. The Bible's use of “40 days” is consistent with its use of the number 40 overall, which also signifies the time during which some sort of spiritual challenge takes place – such as the 40 years that Israelites spent wandering in the desert before reaching the Promised Land.

Blessings

Rev. Canon Joan Cavanaugh-Clark



## **Ecclesiastical Needleworkers**

Does your parish need a new-to-you superfrontal? Or a burse and veil? The Needleworkers have several gently used ones looking for a new home (see examples below).

They are all in good condition and the Needleworkers can help with any alterations necessary. There are also some fair linens and credence cloths in good shape - washed ironed and ready to use.

We also make new items. If you are interested in seeing these things, a visit can be arranged. Please call the ACW office (416-363-0018) and leave a message for the Needleworkers.



"Lent is the season in which we ought to be surprised by joy. Our self-sacrifices serve no purpose unless, by laying aside this or that desire, we are able to focus on our heart's deepest longing: unity with Christ. In him-- in his suffering and death, his resurrection and triumph, we find our truest joy."

From *Bread and Wine: Readings for Lent and Easter*

## **The Power of Four Words**

If the pandemic lockdown taught us anything, it was likely the power of prayer. In our imposed isolation, prayer became our greatest support. For me personally, it gave me time to contemplate, research and practice. Before this, I always related to Anne Shirley in *Anne of Green Gables* when she was asked by Marilla to say her nightly prayers. Just like Anne, let me stand in a forest or a field and my soul could give thanks to God.

But to pray out loud, especially in front of other people, my words dried up. I found my inspiration in Matthew 6 verse 7: "When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words."

Sometimes, I believe we over-complicate praying and we get lost in the details or in our rambling thoughts. If praying is giving thanks to God for who he is, for what he has done or for what he will do, we should keep it simple. I challenged myself to see how brief I could be. Online I found several articles that thought the most powerful prayer is "Thy will be done". It is just four words. Could I do that?

I started every night by coming up with a four-word prayer to end my day. I began to write them down as a personal reflection of my day. Looking back over them, I can see the state of my day:

Please guide my steps.

Lord, forgive my faults.

Thank-you for another day.

(And yes, I had to let my inner English teacher go and accept the word thank-you with a hyphen is only one word).

So now, challenge yourself to come up with your own four-word prayer.

In the words of Anne Shirley,

I remain, yours respectfully,

Carol Cryer, Christ Church-St. Jude, Ivy

*They may forget what you said — but they will never forget how you made them feel.*

## **ACW of the Church of Christ the King**

On October 28, we hosted a Fling into Fall gathering for women in the parishes of our deanery and beyond. A beautiful bright fall day and enthusiastic participants made this a very special event.

After a warm-up game to mix the crowd, we settled down to our guest speaker. The Rev. Virginia Gabriel, Deacon at Christ the King, enlightened all of us on the history and meaning of many of the fittings and vestments that we see each Sunday. Not only the colours, but the embroideries have great traditional roots, some as far back as the 1000's. For instance who? and why? can wear a ruffled cuff on their surplice????

After discussions and questions, the groups set to making their own shawls with paper, pens and anything they could find. Amazing work was done. Since this was not a competition there was no prize but the admiration of the rest of the groups.

After lunch, all enjoyed a quiz linking numbers and place names that have significance in our church history. Amazing how much we all learned!!!

To cap off the day, we had a good old fashioned hymn sing. Everyone agreed that in gathering together, women from each church had more understanding of our roles in the church and how much we can each enjoy each other's company and work together.

We'll do it again I hope.



### **Short Prayers fort Lent**

God, may Your light guide my day, and your spirit bring me peace. Amen.

God, may my sacrifice of today of (state your Lenten sacrifice) remind me of my dependence on You for all the blessings I enjoy. Amen.

God, I lift up (name of the person you'd like to pray for) today. I ask that you bless them abundantly today and throughout Lent. Amen.

Oh Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything. Amen.

Heavenly Father, I'm truly sorry for the moments today where I missed the mark. I ask for your forgiveness and the strength to better follow Your call tomorrow. Amen.

### **FAST AND FEAST**

Fast from judging others; feast on Christ in them.

Fast from wanting more; feast on being thankful.

Fast from anger; feast on patience.

Fast from worry; feast on trust.

Fast from complaining; feast on enjoyment.

Fast from negatives; feast on positives.

Fast from stress; feast on prayer.

Fast from anger; feast on forgiveness.

Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others.

Fast from fear; feast on truth.

Fast from discouragement; feast on hope.

Fast from gossip; feast on silence.

Fast from fighting; feast on peace.

An adaptation from the poem

"A Lenten Prayer" by William Arthur Ward (1921-1984)

# THE ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN DIOCESE OF TORONTO



invite you to the

## Annual General Meeting (Zoom)

**SATURDAY APRIL 20, 2024**

10:00 am – 1:00 pm

### Theme

**“Hope and Peace in Today’s World”**

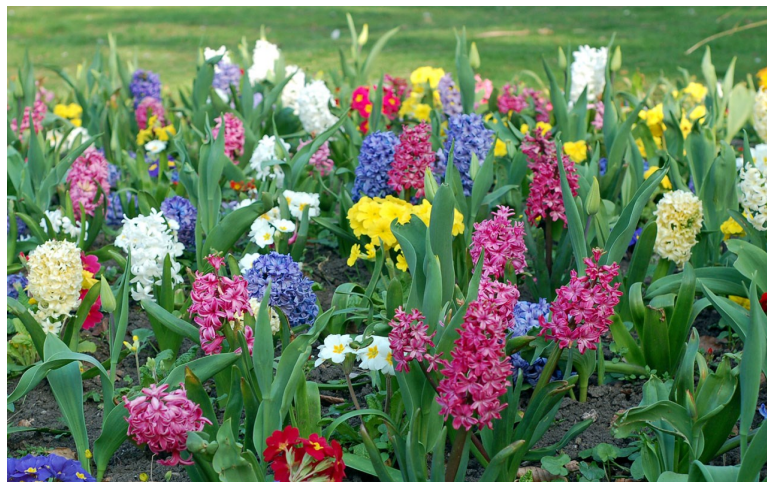
Special Guests from  
**The Stephen Lewis Foundation**

The invitation with the registration link will be emailed to each church by March 20, 2024  
Registration information will be on the Diocesan website March 20, 2024

For further information:

Telephone: 416-363-0018 (leave message) e-mail: [acw@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:acw@toronto.anglican.ca)

Diocesan website: [toronto.anglican.ca](http://toronto.anglican.ca)



**SAVE THE DATE**

### **WOMEN’S GATHERING**

All women are invited to gather at

**St. James Orillia**

for

**FUN & FELLOWSHIP**

**Saturday June 1st, 2024**

Registration information to follow in the Spring