

Church hires digital pastor

New canons installed

Distinguished priest coming to diocese



# The Anglican

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## New Dean gets warm welcome

### Spirits high despite cold

BY STUART MANN

**THE** Very Rev. Dr. Stephen Hance and his wife Jacqui didn't have to wait long to get a taste of a Canadian winter.

As the couple landed at Pearson airport on Jan. 12 to begin their new ministry at St. James Cathedral, the Greater Toronto Area experienced its first cold snap.

But the freezing temperature didn't lower their spirits. "The weather has been cold but the welcome has been overwhelmingly warm," said Dean Hance. "It's been beautiful. We've been very deeply touched by how kind and warm people have been to us."

Just 48 hours after they arrived from the UK, Dean Hance was installed as the new rector of St. James Cathedral and dean of Toronto. The Sunday afternoon service was full of warmth, joy and excitement as the cathedral began a new chapter in its life.

Dean Hance becomes the 14th rector of the cathedral and the ninth dean of Toronto, succeeding the Very Rev. Stephen Vail, who retired in 2022. The Very Rev. Peter Wall served as the interim rector and dean until Dean Hance's installation.

In his address to the congregation, Dean Hance thanked Dean Wall, the Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen Fields, sub-dean and vicar, the Rev. Canon Beth Benson, interim associate priest, "and all those who have stewarded this place with joy, love, compassion and care over the months and years leading up to this point."

Dean Hance shared his dreams for the cathedral. "I want people to say, if you want to see what



**The Very Rev. Dr. Stephen and Jacqui Hance receive applause during the installation service at St. James Cathedral. At right, Sophia Jacob, helped by her mother Sarah Rodrigues, brings flowers to Jacqui Hance. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON**

the diocese's vision looks like, look at the cathedral – they're embodying it. I'd love us to be a cathedral that acts as a hub for the arts and culture in this great city, where there is so much to celebrate. The arts have been a pathway to God for me and I want it to be a pathway to God for others as well. I want it to be a cathedral that looks like the city we exist to serve, in all its beautiful diversity. Finally, I want us to be a cathedral that helps people discover and to grow in faith in Jesus – to know Jesus, held and loved by God who reveals himself to us most fully in Jesus Christ and invites each of us into a loving relationship with him for his glory."

Before coming to Toronto, Dean Hance was the Church of England's national lead for evangelism and witness. Previous to that, he was the Dean of Derby. Earlier, he served as the director of mission and evangelism in the Diocese of Southwark and was the canon missionary of its cathedral. He has written or contributed to books on fresh expressions, mission action planning, evangelism, forgive-



ness, confirmation, parenting and preaching. Jacqui Hance was the evangelism and witness priority coordinator at Lambeth Palace. The couple have three adult children, Elliott, Simeon and Isaac.

Bishop Andrew Asbil said he was delighted with the new Dean's appointment, describing him as "warm, smart, committed, faithful, playful – all of the attributes

you're looking for in a prophetic, mission-focused leader. As someone who has a really good handle on what it means to be missional, and who also understands discipleship and helping people claim their faith, Stephen is exactly the kind of leader we need. And as the Dean – the first amongst equals as clergy – he can model that for us."

In addition to his duties at the

cathedral, Dean Hance said he was looking forward to meeting and working with the clergy and laity of the diocese. "I want them to know that this is their cathedral and I'm their dean, and if there are ways that I and we can support their ministries, their parishes, please pick up the phone or send an email. Whatever we can do to support and help, we will."



# FaithWorks campaign keeps ministries funded

BY STUART MANN

**FAITHWORKS** raised \$1,482,700 last year, ensuring that thousands of people will be cared for in the diocese, across Canada and around the world.

Although the diocese's outreach campaign fell just short of its \$1.5 million target, it raised enough to fulfil its funding obligations to its ministry partners, says Peter Misiaszek, the diocese's director of Stewardship Development.

"More important than reaching the goal is being able to fund the ministries at the level they need, and once again we've done that," he says.

FaithWorks funds 16 Anglican-affiliated ministries that serve the needs of people who are Indigenous, homeless, hungry, at-risk women, children, youth, immigrants, refugees or those struggling with HIV/AIDS. Since its inception in 1997, the annual campaign has raised

about \$40 million.

Bishop Andrew Asbil says the level of commitment and generosity shown by Anglicans across the diocese is wonderful and inspiring. "I am deeply grateful to all who donated in 2023 from the pews, from small and large parishes – rural, suburban and urban – and from communities and individuals who have given so much. I am also grateful to all the agencies that have served so faithfully. We're excited about 2024."

About 88 per cent of parishes in the diocese participated in the campaign, giving a total of \$835,700. Of this amount, \$174,000 was given by parishioners through direct mail solicitation or online giving.

Many parishes once again showed exceptional generosity. St. Christopher in Richmond Hill raised nearly \$40,000 for the campaign through its annual Ping Pong Rally. St. Barnabas, Chester gave a gift of \$20,000 out of a bequest it received.

The campaign also received a boost through a "challenge grant," whereby every dollar given was matched by an anonymous donor, up to \$100,000.

Corporations and foundations gave \$474,000, a slight increase from 2022. The campaign also benefitted from high interest rates, receiving \$48,000 in interest, enough to fund one of its ministry partners.

Mr. Misiaszek says he is grateful to all those who took part in the appeal. "I am humbled by the fact that so many people, whether they're in parishes or as individuals, corporations or foundations, are making a place for FaithWorks in their hearts, and are committing, not only as volunteers but as donors, to support the important ministry that is taking place."

He praised Peter Mentis, the FaithWorks campaign manager, for his efforts. "Peter's commitment to working with our parishes, his preaching and the production of our online newsletter, *Faithlines*, has had a tremendous impact. He continues to serve us well by presenting the face of FaithWorks across our diocese."

The 2024 campaign goal is \$1.5 million and Mr. Misiaszek hopes every parish in the diocese will participate. "As good as last year was, I'd really love to see every parish get involved in this year's campaign."



Members of three churches in the Regional Ministry of South Georgian Bay travel to the Order of the Diocese of Toronto presentation in Toronto. PHOTO BY THE REV. DR. MICHAEL PETERSON

## Bus trip builds bonds between congregations

BY THE REV. DR. MICHAEL PETERSON

**WHAT** does regional ministry in our diocese look like? Well, on New Year's Day, it looked like three churches on a bus.

The three parishes of the Regional Ministry of South Georgian Bay were delighted to learn that four of our number were among those awarded the Order of the Diocese of Toronto: Val Beasley, ODT (Prince of Peace, Wasaga Beach), Eileen Martin, ODT (St. Luke, Creemore), Sharon Goldsworthy, ODT and Moira Southwell, ODT (All Saints, Collingwood).

Their friends and fellow parishioners were certainly not going to let these four go to Toronto alone for their investiture at St. James Cathedral! Our resourceful curate, the Rev. Louise Dightam, put her years of Girl Guides leadership to good use and found us a bus charter company. An anonymous donor stepped up and generously covered the cost. On New Year's Day, after stops at each church, 45 passengers (including Jack the service dog) were headed south.

We sometimes forget how big our diocese is. Some of the folks on

the bus hadn't been to Toronto for many years, and a few had never visited the cathedral before. So the mood on the bus was excited and joyful, evoking old memories of school field trips.

The service of Evensong and the investiture at the cathedral did not disappoint. The breadth of ministries described in the annual ceremony is always inspiring, and for some of our group, it was all gloriously new. One young man, a new Christian, told me that the beauty of the cathedral and the music left him in tears. The trip back home included singing and laughter. It was a long day, but totally worthwhile.

Regional ministry in our diocese is very much a work in progress and requires that new ideas are tried. This trip helped build friendships and bonds between our three congregations. We grew closer together and saw a larger vision of what we can accomplish as the people of God.

*The Rev. Dr. Michael Peterson is the priest-in-charge of the Regional Ministry of South Georgian Bay.*

"Come away to a quiet place...and rest a while..." Mark 6:31

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# Church hires digital pastor for online community

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

**FOUR** years after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the parish of St. Clement, Eglinton is taking a next step in its exploration of online community with a new staff position, the first of its kind in the diocese.

In January, the parish announced that Michael Buttrey would become its first digital pastor, dedicated to meeting the increasing needs of the online community at St. Clement's. He will be responsible for researching, implementing, facilitating and shaping interactive opportunities for those who connect with the parish online.

Serving as theologian-in-residence at St. Clement's since 2017, Mr. Buttrey is also a doctoral candidate in Christian ethics at Regis College and program secretary for the Canadian Council of Churches.

"Michael's a brilliant teacher, he's a great preacher, and over the course of the seven years of his ministry in different capacities as theologian-in-residence, he's built up a huge pocket of trust with people," says the Rev. Canon Andrew Federle, incumbent of St. Clement's.

The position will be funded by a \$30,000 Cast and Learn grant from the diocese. Launched in 2023 as part of the Cast the Net visioning process, Cast and Learn provides one-time grants to parishes wanting to innovate, learn and grow as they reach out to people who aren't currently connected to the church.

The need for a staff person dedicated to St. Clement's online community was spurred by the shift to virtual ministry during the pandemic. The leadership team had been engaged in a strategic planning process, launching its new strategic plan just three weeks before in-person worship was suspended in 2020. But the pandemic didn't derail the parish's new direction; instead, that vision guided the community through a time of disruption.

"The 'how,' of necessity, needed to change pretty radically – online versus in-person – but the 'what' and the 'who' were really strong," says Canon Federle. "We weren't scrambling about who we are or what we were up to. What had crystallized for us was that our mission was learning to follow Jesus Christ."

The focus on learning, he says, was a deliberate choice. The parish leadership intended to adopt a posture of experimentation and failure, which proved to be well suited for pandemic ministry. "I would say for just about three years straight, we were trying something new every

week," says Canon Federle.

The team at St. Clement's decided to use Zoom to create an interactive worship experience, dubbed Church at Home, rather than live streaming a worship service for participants to watch. When lockdown was lifted and people started to return to in-person worship, the team shifted to a live stream model, but they soon realized it was becoming more difficult to maintain the person-to-person connection beyond the church walls.

"We had whetted people's appetite that this wasn't just watching something; they could participate," says Canon Federle. "People knew that this could be more than just watching something on the screen."

With many competing demands on the clergy team, its members found that they couldn't devote the time they once had to cultivating relationships with the people participating online.

"We were bumping up against the frustration of knowing how important this was and just not having the time and people power to be able to do that," says the Rev. Pamela Rayment. As an associate priest at the parish, Ms. Rayment is the creative strategist behind its worship experiences and communications.

"We recognized that not having a specific person in a role dedicated to that kind of work was a detriment, and we were missing an opportunity with one of the growing edges of this community," she says.

The team knew how deep these online relationships could be, having seen many examples during the pandemic of people from all locations and walks of life engaging with the St. Clement's community without ever stepping foot inside the building.

"We had a family from a small community out west – the mom grew up in Toronto. They had their son during the pandemic and wanted to connect to an Anglican church. She remembered us, looked us up and started connecting with us online," says Ms. Rayment.

An initial email exchange led to an eight-month conversation about having their son baptized at St. Clement's. After meeting on Zoom and doing virtual baptismal prep, the family flew to Toronto and their son was baptized.

"That was one really concrete example of the connections that can be made through intentional connection with those who are online. And having someone interfacing regularly through that digital sphere was something that we began to see would be super



Michael Buttrey in the chancel of St. Clement, Eglinton. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

beneficial moving forward," says Ms. Rayment.

Now that Mr. Buttrey has started his work as digital pastor, he says his first task will be looking at the many options for engaging people online and prioritizing what the parish can achieve.

"I think we're in the stage of planning to do a bunch of things and see if they stick, because we don't necessarily know what will be the best set of tools, the best ways to engage with our online community," he says.

He plans to learn more about the people who connect with St. Clement's online, using surveys, focus groups and one-on-one communication. "And then we have to try different things and see if this is right for this time and this place and these people," he says.

While digital ministry presents unique opportunities and tools for fostering connection, Mr. Buttrey says the engagement they've seen online is a natural extension of what he's experienced at St. Clement's since he arrived as a parishioner 12 years ago.

"There's people from very different backgrounds at St. Clement's, different experiences with church, different knowledge of faith, and

a lot of them are really excited to learn," he says. "I think that variety or diversity provides a real opportunity for online offerings."

He expects that he and the staff team will draw on experiences from the parish's in-person ministries as they continue to explore opportunities for online engagement. "The skills are the same whenever you're trying to engage with people and build their relationships, so that gives us a really good base," he says.

The leadership team also recognizes the overlap between people who engage in-person and those who choose to connect online, and that all members are vital to the parish community.

"We're really looking to explore the beginnings of a renewed ecclesiology and trying to understand the digital and the in-person as different expressions of a singular Body of Christ," says Canon Federle.

Part of the parish's Cast and Learn grant will be reporting back to the wider diocese on what the team tries and learns about digital ministry. Mr. Buttrey says he hopes their findings will help other churches discerning a way forward with online engagement. "There may be ideas that don't work for

St. Clement's but could work well for another church," he says.

The team also understands that they're privileged to have a gifted group of clergy and staff, and they're not simply expecting other churches to become more like St. Clement's. Instead, they hope parishes will try to respond faithfully to their own contexts.

"Four years ago, we were all thrust into this global kind of experiment of how to do things online. We're all continuing to experiment," says Mr. Buttrey. "Every church community has different needs and different people, so I think some back and forth, tacking in and out of the wind to find the right course, is perfectly appropriate."

"We're all contributing to the work of God in the world, and each place is unique, so there is a lot we can learn from other churches," Ms. Rayment adds. "The conversations that can happen around creative ministry moving forward are really exciting, and I believe it can only build up the Church."

For his part, Mr. Buttrey is keen to have those conversations with anyone who'd like to have them. He can be reached by email at [mbuttrey@stclementsto.ca](mailto:mbuttrey@stclementsto.ca).

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# We are here to support you

*This is the College of Bishops' pastoral letter to vestries, to be read or circulated on the Sunday of the parish's annual vestry meeting.*

**D**ear friends,  
Followers of Jesus, inspired by the Holy Spirit, serve the world God loves.

Simple and elegant. These few words capture the essence of a vision that we have been pursuing and discerning throughout the Cast the Net process, a visioning exercise that began while we were still in pandemic mode. Over the course of several consultations, we listened to one another, and for the leading of the Holy Spirit. With time, sifting and testing, 20 Calls were revealed at Synod, which were supported with enthusiasm. A final version of the Calls will be received by Synod Council in February. We continue to be grateful to the steering committee and consultants, who have led our work together over the past 18 months. And now the work begins to incorporate these Calls into the life and ministry of the whole diocese. This is the time for parishes large and small, missions, ministries, committees and Synod Council to animate the Calls in our own contexts. It is almost impossible for one community to embrace all 20, but by serving together from Mississauga to Brighton, Midland to Minden, and all points in between, we can!

We begin this journey with a Season of Spiritual Renewal. We embrace the Call to deepen our walk together as communities by immersing ourselves in prayer, reading and reflection on scripture, worship and sharing our stories of faith with one another. As we promised in our baptism: we will "continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers." The season will be supported by the Rev. Canon Dr. Judy Paulsen, members of a steer-



ing committee and the College of Bishops. We hope that you will be able to join us for diocesan worship events, learning opportunities, programs and fellowship that entice us all to walk more closely in the footsteps of Jesus.

We are delighted to reach across our borders to deepen our friendship with the Diocese of Brasilia. Brasilia is a relatively new diocese, birthed in 1985, with a small number of parishes, missions and ministries. We were delighted to welcome their Bishop Mauricio Andrade and his wife Sandra to our diocesan Synod in November. We will learn from, grow with and support one another as we strive to serve Christ in our unique circumstances. And we look forward to opportunities for delegations of our clergy and laity to visit back and forth, both in-person and online, as we deepen our affection for one another.

We are proud of and amazed at the ministry taking place across our diocese, especially in the areas of youth, ecumenism, creation care, diversity and faith formation. We encourage you to consider this year's diocesan social justice motion on housing, and to prayerfully support our Church's advocacy for every person's right to adequate shelter. We are convinced that the Holy Spirit is leading and guiding us and challenging us to bravely find new ways to work and worship together, to increase in courage, to share our passion for the Good News of Jesus, and to seek and find new meaning as followers of Christ in the 21st century, where we are con-

fronted with emerging economic and social challenges. We want to express our heartfelt thanks to all who make up our dynamic community of faith – lay people, deacons, priests – all helping to give a glimpse of the Reign of God as it unfolds in our midst.

As your bishops, we know the joy and privilege of serving the Church in this diocese. We thank all those who have joined us in giving leadership over the past year. We have recently celebrated one year of our new diocesan leadership model, and we are immensely grateful to our new territorial archdeacons and canon administrator for stepping into their roles so effectively and with such faithfulness. The five of them have helped to ease the bishops' administrative load, allowing us to focus on some of the other work to which we have been called and ordained.

Whether your work is changing this year, whether you are stepping out of your role at this vestry meeting, or stepping into a new ministry, or continuing on in your good work, please know that we are here to support you in every way we can. We want to encourage you in gospel ministry, in the initiatives and relationships that you are building as you cast your nets ever wider in a world that is hungry for Christ – for meaning, connection and belonging.

Our mission statement is simple and elegant. And it invites us, like the dismissal at the close of the Eucharist, to action. We invite you to incorporate these words in your liturgies on Sunday morning: Followers of Jesus, inspired by the Holy Spirit, serve the world God loves. Thanks be to God!

Yours faithfully in Christ Jesus,

Bishop Andrew Asbil  
Bishop Riscylla Shaw  
Bishop Kevin Robertson



## The Anglican

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**National Indigenous Archbishop:**  
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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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# Finding power at the margins



BY MURRAY MACADAM

"Those were the days," said my friend John wistfully. "We could line up a meeting with a cabinet minister with a phone call and know that we could count on Ted Scott and other church leaders to be on hand."

A former lawyer who worked for decades alongside First Nations, John was recalling how church leaders, including former Primate Ted Scott, could easily access the corridors of power in Ottawa to have a voice on critical issues facing Canada. Knowing that church leaders represented millions of Canadians in the pews, the politicians listened, even if they didn't always follow the advice they heard.

Today, as church memberships plunge, those days increasingly feel like another era. That can cause us to lament our waning influence in helping to shape the country's direction and in having an impact in other ways.

Perhaps there's another way of thinking about the Church and power, starting with how we think about power itself. Not surprisingly, we tend to think about power in the way the secular world does, largely in terms of "power over," that is, hierarchical power. It's a kind of power tied up with the elites of our society, those small groups of people who wield extensive influence over our lives. And while the Church has often used its influence for good, too often the Church has gotten

caught up in worldly power with tragic results, the saga of Residential Schools being a notable example.

Jesus offers us a radically different model of power. God set a ground-breaking example of power by coming among us not as a powerful political leader or an influential rabbi, but rather as that least powerful kind of person, a baby. A baby born to a couple of very modest means. Those humble beginnings and the humility Jesus showed can serve as a model for us.

In his book *Playing God: Redeeming the Gift of Power*, author and journalist Andy Crouch notes that by washing his disciples' feet, Jesus doesn't give up power; he redefines it. "Jesus knew that God had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel wrapped around him." (John 13:3-5)

The disciples knew about Jesus's immense power. They'd seen him perform miracles and confound the teachers of the law. Yet in this moment, Jesus takes on the role of servant. And he doesn't relinquish his power but exercises it in an unexpected way.

When Jesus washed feet, he made it clear that the gospel transforms how we use power in this broken world. Rather than lording it over the less powerful, we too can choose to lay down our egos and demands so that others can enjoy the abundant life God wants

for all.

Another way of thinking about power is to consider what might be called "bottom-up power" rather than the top-down power that dominates our thinking. There is – or can be – immense power in the actions of ordinary people coming together around common goals. Throughout history, the actions of large numbers of people at the grassroots have helped move society forward. Think only of India gaining its independence, South Africans ending apartheid, or in Canada today, the large numbers of people in the Church and across society working to put authentic reconciliation with Indigenous people into action.

We still need to strive to influence our country and the issues it faces in ways that reflect biblical values of justice and peace, and to do so through our Church and through networks such as the KAIROS ecumenical social justice coalition. And we still have greater access to those corridors of power than many others in our society have. Years ago, I was part of an Anglican delegation meeting an Ontario MPP to urge the government to take stronger action on behalf of people hard hit by poverty and the housing shortage. We had a fruitful dialogue, and as we walked out of the politician's office, he quietly said, as if to himself, "Thank you for speaking up for those who don't have a voice." His words still resonate today.

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



# The time to act is now

BY ELIN GOULDEN

**O**ur faith calls us to serve the world God loves – to respond not only to spiritual needs but also to the physical needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized members of our communities, and to advocate for policies that will address the challenges they face. Our social justice priorities include poverty reduction, working to end homelessness by creating affordable housing, and safeguarding the integrity of the land, water and air that sustains us all. We believe that our efforts as individuals and parish communities must be supplemented by public investment and policy measures to address the systemic issues affecting Ontarians. Here is a summary of the Diocese of Toronto's asks for the 2024 provincial budget.

## Poverty reduction

The cost of living continues to rise, leaving Ontarians on low incomes still further behind. More and more Ontarians are turning to food banks to help them survive through the month, while food banks themselves are struggling to keep up with demand.

## Social assistance

With Ontario Works' rates having remained unchanged since 2018, despite rapidly rising inflation, recipients' already meagre incomes are in steep decline and are now, in real terms, the lowest in over 30 years. A program meant to be a springboard to help Ontarians get back on their feet has become a doorway to destitution. While Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) rates went up 5 per cent in 2022 and are now indexed to inflation, this still leaves Ontarians with disabilities receiving a mere 57 per cent of the Market Basket Measure poverty line, which does not account for the extra costs of living with a disability. With the rising cost of living, Ontarians with disabilities face increased food and housing insecurity, and are forced to make difficult choices around medications and other disability aids.

Last year, 123 parishes in our diocese passed a motion calling the province to double social assistance rates and index Ontario Works, as well as ODSP, to inflation. We cannot afford to let Ontarians in poverty fall further behind. We urge this government to bring both Ontario Works and ODSP rates into alignment with the Market Basket Measure so that people in need of assistance are at the poverty line, instead of far below it.

## Decent work

More than one in six Ontarians using food banks have their primary source of income from employment, a 37 per cent increase over the previous year. We were heartened to see Ontario's minimum wage increase to \$16.55 per hour last Oct. 1. However, there is still no place in Ontario where a person working full-time on minimum wage can make ends meet. The rising cost of living impacts those at the low end of the wage spectrum the most, as they have the least capacity to absorb price increases and are at the greatest risk of food and housing insecurity. To ensure that a job is indeed a pathway out of poverty, the provincial minimum wage should be brought into line with the average living wage in Ontario and indexed to inflation.

Another way in which low-income workers fall behind is that there is no legislation preventing employers from paying part-time, temporary or contract workers a lower hourly rate than full-time workers doing similar work. To redress



A man begs for change in Toronto. More than 10,000 people experience homelessness on any given night in the city, and homeless encampments are springing up in smaller centres such as Barrie, Peterborough and Cobourg. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

this imbalance, we call for legislation so that employees working less than full-time hours are paid at the same rate of hourly compensation as full-time workers.

As we approach the fourth anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ongoing high rates of COVID-19, flu and respiratory syncytial virus transmission in the province are a reminder that paid sick days are a public health necessity. We reiterate our call for legislation requiring employers to provide 10 paid sick days per year for all workers, with 14 extra days in case of public health emergencies.

## Overdose prevention

Overdose deaths have skyrocketed since the COVID-19 pandemic, due to social isolation, restricted direct access to services and supports, negative mental-health impacts and an increasingly toxic drug supply. Despite demonstrated need in communities across Ontario, the number of provincially funded overdose prevention sites has been capped, and the province has announced a pause on planned openings and future approvals of such sites. We believe not only drug users but whole communities are safer for the presence of supervised consumption/overdose prevention sites. We join with the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario and other health care providers in calling on your government to allow already approved overdose prevention sites to open, and to expand them in every community in need across the province.

## Affordable housing

We are encouraged that this government recognizes the need for increased housing supply and is taking steps to increase that supply. However, we continue to stress that supply-side measures alone are not sufficient to ensure that everyone in Ontario is able to obtain adequate and affordable housing.

## Rent control

The lack of rent control on new rental units, as well as a lack of vacancy control, has contributed to a situation in which the increase in average asking rents across the province is outstripping even the high rate of inflation, resulting in a net loss of affordable housing by approximately 20,000 units per year. This alarming trend undermines Ontario's efforts to create more housing. It also means more and more Ontarians are being pushed into core housing need, and at risk of being made homeless, which ends up costing our communities far more. While this government has taken some steps to address bad-faith evictions, the elimina-

tion of vacancy de-control would significantly decrease the number of bad-faith evictions by removing the incentive to displace tenants. We therefore reiterate our call for this government to implement rent control on all rental housing units in the province, including new units, and to eliminate vacancy de-control.

## Rental replacement regulations

The province now has the right to regulate municipal rental replacement provisions. As communities across the province seek to create more housing sustainably through intensifying density, the number of rental units subject to demolition and renovation will increase. Without robust rental replacement provisions, this has the potential for displacing thousands of tenants from older affordable units into unaffordable new rentals, and potentially into homelessness. We call on this government to ensure regulations regarding municipal rental replacement by-laws do not weaken existing municipal by-law requirements, but protect tenants' access to adequate, affordable and secure housing.

## Development charge exemptions

Current legislation exempts developers from development charges on the creation of new "affordable" housing, where "affordable" is lower than 100 per cent of market rent and a rent set at 30 per cent of the gross annual income of households at the 60th percentile for renter household incomes in each municipality. Basing the affordability measure on the 60th percentile of gross annual renter incomes means that these projects will continue to be unaffordable to the vast majority of Ontarians who are in core housing need, 76 per cent of whom have low and very low incomes. Public incentives such as development charge exemptions are most effective when directed at developments that address core housing need. Current legislation reduces the effectiveness of development charge exemptions as a means of addressing Ontarians' real need for affordable housing, while depriving municipalities of a key source of revenue to meet those needs. Therefore, we urge this government to base the definition of "affordable" housing in the Development Charges Act as housing that is affordable to low income households, as defined in the Housing Needs Assessment Test.

## Homelessness prevention

The province has a key role to play in helping municipalities address core housing needs in their communities. Programs like the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative, the Ontario Priorities Housing

Initiative, and the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit help maintain and expand Ontario's social housing supply, fund needed repairs and keep Ontario households from falling into homelessness. We urge your government to continue, and indeed expand, investments in community housing and homelessness prevention programs to address areas of core housing need.

## Supportive housing and shelter

Homelessness is exploding all over the province, with more than 10,000 people experiencing homelessness at any given night in the City of Toronto, and homeless encampments springing up in smaller centres such as Barrie, Peterborough and Cobourg. Municipalities depend on the province for an assured source of revenue to be able to address the needs of those without shelter. Multi-year funding arrangements with local governments at the regional, county or municipal level would help alleviate uncertainty and allow local authorities to allocate resources effectively. In this vein, we urge this government to continue to honour its funding commitment to shelter and housing programs in Toronto, regardless of the federal government's contribution. We also urge increased investment in supportive housing programs, which over the long term offer better housing at a lower cost than emergency shelter services.

## Environmental issues

We are pleased that this government has reversed its decision to remove lands from the Greenbelt under Bill 23. However, the government continues with plans for the construction of Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass. These mega-highways will pave over some of Ontario's best farmland, exacerbate urban sprawl and lead to higher levels of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, without easing traffic congestion in the long-term. This is especially misguided considering the need to do all we can to lower greenhouse gas emissions and avoid even more catastrophic climate impacts. Investing in public transit at the local and regional levels instead would help ease congestion and reduce our environmental impact. We therefore reiterate our call to cancel the development of Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass and invest those dollars in expanding and improving public and regional transit.

We welcome the news that this government has announced new procurement targets for 5,000 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy over the next four to six years. At the same time, however, the province is looking to ramp up gas-fired power generation capacity by an additional 1,500 MW despite 35 Ontario communities (representing 60 per cent of the province's population) having called for the phase-out of gas-fired power, federal Clean Electricity Regulations set to take effect in 2035 and the worldwide need to triple renewable energy generation capacity. Solar and wind power generation is also more cost-effective than either gas-fired or nuclear generation. We therefore call on this government to significantly expand investment in renewable energy sources instead of ramping up gas-powered and nuclear power generation.

Our recommendations are not new, but the need for them across our province is greater than ever. We urge your government to include these recommendations in preparing the upcoming provincial budget. The time to act is now.

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



# Bishop installs new canons

**BISHOP** Andrew Asbil installed 12 new honorary canons of St. James Cathedral before a full congregation of friends, family and supporters on Jan. 21. The new canons were the Rev. Canon Julie Burn, incumbent of Church of the Resurrection, the Rev. Canon Andrea Christensen, incumbent of St. Timothy, Agincourt, the Rev. Canon Dr. Alison Falby, incumbent of All Saints, Sherbourne St., the Rev. Canon Andrew Federle, incumbent of St. Clement, Eglinton, Canon Dr. Anita Gittens, ODT, a member of St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale, the Rev. Canon David Bryan Hoopes of the Order of the Holy Cross, Canon Janet Marshall, director of Congregational Development, the Rev. Canon Rob Mitchell, incumbent of St. Olave, Swansea, the Rev. Canon Lisa Newland, incumbent of Christ Church, Stouffville, the Rev. Canon Jesse Parker, incumbent of St. John the Evangelist, Port Hope, the Rev. Canon Mark Regis, incumbent of St. Mary and St. Martha, and the Rev. Canon Kevin Wong, incumbent of All Saints, Markham. **PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON**



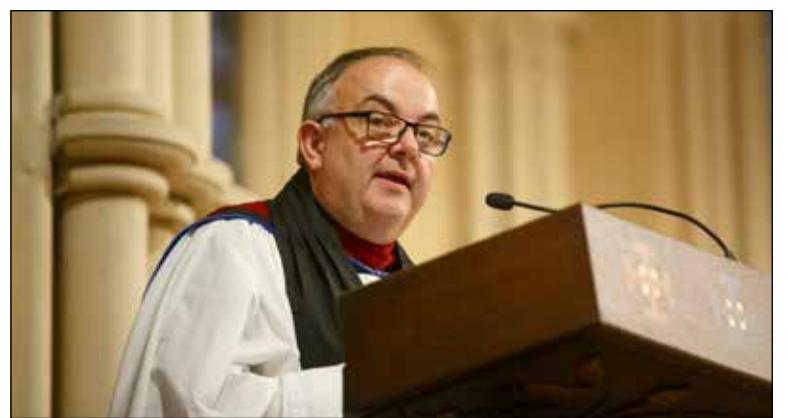
Bishop Andrew Asbil installs the Rev. Canon David Brian Hoopes, OHC, as the other new canons look on.



Bishop Asbil installs the Rev. Canon Kevin Wong.



Choristers in the procession.



Dean Stephen Hance gives the homily.



Family and friends of the new canons fill the cathedral.



The Rev. Canon Jesse Parker and the Rev. Canon Dr. Alison Falby.





The new canons stand with Bishop Asbil, the suffragan bishops, clergy and laity after the service. In the front row are the Rev. Canon Dr. Alison Falby (far left), the Rev. Canon Jesse Parker (second from left), the Rev. Canon Andrew Federle (third from left), Canon Janet Marshall (fourth from left), the Rev. Canon David Bryan Hoopes, OHC, (third from right), the Rev. Canon Lisa Newland (second from right), the Rev. Canon Kevin Wong (far right). In the second row are Canon Dr. Anita Gittens, ODT, (far left), the Rev. Canon Rob Mitchell (second from left), the Rev. Canon Mark Regis (third from right), the Rev. Canon Andrea Christensen (second from right) and the Rev. Canon Julie Burn (far right).



The Rev. Canon Rob Mitchell (left), Canon Dr. Anita Gittens, ODT, and the Rev. Canon Andrew Federle.



The Rev. Canon Mark Regis (far right) and other new canons are shown to their assigned stalls.



The Rev. Canon Julie Burn and the Rev. Canon Kevin Wong.



The Rev. Canon Beth Benson, interim associate priest at the cathedral, is greeted by friends.



A joyful moment after the service.



# The land told us it was time to rest



BY MELODIE NG

As I walk through the farm, crusty snow crunches beneath my boots. Browned leaves rustle on dried corn stalks as I pass. Animal tracks of varying sizes crisscross in front of me – despite appearances of being abandoned, the farm clearly remains a frequented place. The farm's garden beds stretch long and white, the mounded snow covering layers of leaves and straw mulch. Our field work at Common Table Farm wrapped up in mid-November. When people learn that I work at an urban farm, inevitably the question pops up: What do you do in the winter?

It's a question posed in genuine curiosity, but nevertheless it tends to stir up some inner defensiveness in me. I feel a need to explain that our farm staff are still busy; that our labour hours and employment are justified. If I take a step back, however, I realize that this question opens up an interesting space for reflection. The farm in winter offers a precious invitation – the call to rest from productivity. In Toronto, our climate cycles through four seasons. There have been some years when our farm team tried extending the growing season, using hoop tunnels to grow greens into the winter. While this was a worthy experiment, it taught us that just because you can do something doesn't always mean that you need to. It's highly unpleasant to harvest kale when ice cements your hoop coverings to the ground, and your fingers freeze as you work! We realized that it was ridiculous to keep pushing, when all around us the trees were bare and insects were hibernating. The land told us it was time to rest.

This time of "not doing" is still full of meaningful being. While our farm looks inactive, underneath the insulating blanket of mulch and snow are worms and microbes who continue to break down



The Common Table Farm, located on the property of Our Saviour, Don Mills, rests under a blanket of snow. PHOTO BY MELODIE NG

organic matter. For some plants, germination is improved by a period of experiencing cold – a process called vernalization. Garlic is a crop that benefits from being planted in the fall, which gives it a head start in establishing. Lying dormant over winter, the garlic is ready for quick growth in the spring. Land, plants and creatures alike are waiting and readying for the next season in different ways. Meaningful work is still happening in winter; it's just of a different nature from the activity of spring, summer and fall.

For the farm team, the time of "not doing" is also full of meaningful being. We are resting our bodies. By the end of the season, as we rush to finish harvest and close up the farm before the cold hits, we are stretched thin by an accumulative mental and physical exhaustion. Common Table Farm operates on a human scale, striving to grow produce in ecologically sensitive ways. For us, this means extensive manual labour and an avoidance of heavy machinery and products such as pesticides. We lean into the joy and challenge of doing many tasks with simple hand tools and by the sweat of our

brows. It might sound idyllic, but it also means aching backs and sore muscles! Our approach requires that we lean into the need for community. Our farm relies on the passion of volunteers, neighbours, groups and youth – together, we manifest the people power needed to grow food in ways that support the health of the soil. In order to sustain this approach from season to season, it is essential to allow for rest and recovery.

Since stepping into the seasonal life of a farmer, I'm struck by how differently I now experience time and work rhythm. Previously, I had been normalized to a round-the-clock work schedule with no significant changes in rhythm. Work weeks simply kept going, aside from vacation and holiday time. Since becoming a farmer, it's been beautiful to experience a workflow that closely embodies the seasonal time of the region in which I live. I love how this line of work allows me to become more aware of the natural world, with all its transitions in temperature, amount of daylight and weather patterns. I am invited to notice how other living beings respond to these seasonal changes

and take my cue accordingly.

As I write this in January, I'm reluctant to begin thinking about the upcoming season. I'm still at the stage where exhaustion leaves me never wanting to see another vegetable again! But something switches around late February and March. Maybe it's that the daylight hours become noticeably longer. Some uncanny magic happens: there's an itch to get back outside and an excitement to look through our store of seeds. What could we grow this year? Is there a new crop to try?

In truth, during the winter months we are still quite active. Our farm staff support Flemingdon Park Ministry's other community programs. We take time to do much needed organizing of our storage space. We work on crop planning, write grant reports and brainstorm for new projects. We collaborate with students and facilitate workshops. In February, we begin seeding leeks and onions. By March, our seedling production begins in earnest. Our "off time" can often feel full of bustling community activity.

But when I return to the farm on a snowy day and stand on the land, I am called back to stillness. The true value of this time is the pause that calms the churning drive for productivity. Our North American culture prides itself in achievement and growth. These are not necessarily bad things. But pursued without balance, the relentless work culture can be soul-crushing. I take in a breath of cold winter air. The land speaks through its muted colours: Hold up. Stand still for once. Breathe in the fullness of all that's been given in the past season – all that nourishment, hard work and collaboration. Hold that for a while, in rest, before you begin again.

Melodie Ng is the Common Table's farm manager. To learn more about the farm, visit [www.flemingdonparkministry.com](http://www.flemingdonparkministry.com) or email [melodie@flemingdonparkministry.com](mailto:melodie@flemingdonparkministry.com).

## I invite you into a sacred walk



### CREATION MATTERS

BY THE REV. PAIGE SOUTER

Holy Week is approaching. It is the time in our church year when we remember the final days of Jesus' life. We immerse ourselves in his story and walk with him as he journeys from his triumphant entry into Jerusalem to his torture, death and resurrection.

The liturgies of Holy Week remind us of our Christian identity that is grounded in a particular place and at a particular time in history. And if we are open to it, Holy Week can ground us in creation, the landscape upon which the original story and the places where we are situated today unfold. It presents us with an opportunity to experience creation as an integral part of our life as disciples of Christ.

In his book *A Christian Theology of Place*, Bishop John Inge defines place as "the seat of relations or the place of meeting and activity in the interaction between God and the world." He argues that "God relates to people in places, and the places are not irrelevant to that relationship but, rather, are integral to divine human encounter." Place not only includes relationships with each other, but also with the land and the natural world. The

relationships and activities occur in place, which unfolds in creation.

Place is an integral part of Christian discipleship. It is more than the landscape upon which we worship or the neighbourhoods within which we minister. It is both a physical reality and an internal orientation that longs for relationship rooted in God. Unfortunately, many Christians treat worldly and spiritual matters as distinct and separate realities. This has contributed to us treating our relationships with the natural world as separate and distinct from our relationship with God and our neighbourhoods.

Our current liturgical framework for Holy Week has its origin in fourth-century Jerusalem. Called the Great Week, the final days of Jesus' life were shared and embodied through stationary liturgy. Each day worshippers walked from place to place, church to church throughout Jerusalem, marking the moments of Jesus' final days. On Palm Sunday, worshippers began their day at the Anastasis (the place of the resurrection), moved to the Martyrium (the tomb), returned to the

Anastasis, gathered for a vigil at Eleona (Mount of Olives), walked to the Imbomon (the place of the ascension), then walked from the summit of the Mount to the city and from there through the whole city to the Anastasis. On that day alone, worshippers moved between seven places in and around Jerusalem. As they walked, they prayed, sang, fasted, held silence, held all-night vigils, and walked by candlelight. This level of activity reached a climax on Good Friday with 10 stops.

As they walked, worshippers were formed by the story and became physically, emotionally and spiritually connected to the place of the story. In addition to seeing the buildings, markets and people, they became aware of the natural world in which the story unfolded. They walked on rocky and hilly ground, felt the daytime heat and the chill of cold evenings, their eyesight adjusted to the brilliance of the sun and the sparkling of the stars, and they took refuge from the sun under trees and shrubs. The geography of Jerusalem was a formational part of the liturgies of Holy Week.

The Jesus story extends beyond Jerusalem into our places. Our identity as followers of Jesus is deeply connected to the place of Jesus' life, as well as to place in which we live and move and have our be-

ing. Holy Week is an invitation to connect the Jesus story to our experience of God in the places in which we are each situated.

What if we remembered Jesus' torture, death and resurrection as we walked in our places, while being mindful of our green spaces and their connection (or disconnection) with urban spaces, of the broken and wounded parts of nature and our communities, of those who call our places home? Perhaps this may help to recapture the significance of place, of the natural world. Perhaps our identity as disciples becomes grounded not only in Jerusalem but also here and now.

This Holy Week, I invite you into a sacred walk. If you can, walk each day of the week. As you walk, recall Jesus' final days and pay attention to the ground under your feet, to the buildings and roadways, to the trees, the grass (or maybe snow or rain), any creatures, the birdsong, to the people you pass. Notice how this place and the creation upon which it sits connect to the Jesus story. Notice how God is speaking to you in this place.

Blessed walking.

The Rev. Paige Souter is co-chair of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care and the assistant curate at Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St.



# Church celebrates Black history

**HOLY** Family, Heart Lake, Brampton kicked off its Black History Month celebrations at a service on Feb. 4. Bishop Peter Fenty (suffragan bishop, retired) was the guest celebrant and preacher. Highlights included a colorful flag procession, a talk by parishioner and liturgical artist Pat Fisher about the altar frontal she quilted that incorporates symbols of the Underground Railroad, and a chil-

dren's choir singing a traditional Nigerian song, 'Ise Oluwa.' People wore attire from their countries of origin, many from Africa and the Caribbean, sang African-American songs 'Sweet, Sweet Spirit' and 'Revive Us Again' and enjoyed a Caribbean breakfast coffee hour. 'It was a warm, energetic and Spirit-filled service,' says the Rev. Julie Meakin, incumbent. **PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON**





# Cricket festival set for July

## Individuals, church teams invited to day of fun

BY RANIL MENDIS, ODT

AS readers of *The Anglican* may remember from earlier issues featuring the Anglican Church Cricket Festival, cricket boasts a rich history that is intertwined with Canada and the Anglican Church, dating back to the 1800s. This legacy will continue when Canada takes the field for the first time in a T20 Cricket World Cup this year. On June 1 in Dallas, Texas, the opening match will feature Canada against the United States in a re-enactment of their iconic 1844 encounter. The 1844 match between the two countries has the proud distinction of being the world's first-ever international cricket match. For those intrigued by the sport and enticed to explore its nuances, an opportunity awaits in our own diocese on July 13 as the eighth annual Anglican Church Cricket Festival (ACCF) is held in Brampton.

This is an invitation to join a celebration that goes beyond the confines of sport, community and diversity. The organizers extend this invitation not only to seasoned cricket enthusiasts but also to those who are new to the game, encouraging them to explore, learn, try and actively participate in the world's second most popular game after

soccer. The ACCF provides opportunities for Anglicans in the GTA to get to know each other and build relationships, and enjoy food, fun and Christian fellowship.

Last year's festival was a resounding success. Drawing more than 80 parishioners and friends from six churches in the diocese, the event was a testament to the unifying power of cricket. The Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen Fields, sub-dean and vicar of St. James Cathedral, MPP Charmaine Williams, a parishioner of St. Joseph of Nazareth, and the Rev. Ginnie Wong, interim priest-in-charge of Holy Trinity, Thornhill, inaugurated the tournament with enthusiasm and spirit. The round-robin games culminated in an entertaining final match with St. Bede, Scarborough claiming the title of tournament champion.

The event showcased the talents of all involved, each with varying levels of knowledge and understanding of the game. Ms. Williams, recognizing the significance of the event, presented the organizers with a special award on behalf of the Ontario government. Afterwards, Canon Fields shared his delight as he praised the ACCF for its lively atmosphere, enjoyable activities and sense of community. As a passionate cricket enthusiast



The Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen Fields (in red shirt) and other cricket players hold an award of recognition presented by the Ontario government at last year's cricket festival in Brampton. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

hailing from Barbados, he lived up to expectations by displaying his cricket skills with the distinctive flair of West Indian cricket.

The organizers express their appreciation to all who supported last year's festival. A special acknowledgment is extended to the Ontario Schools Cricket Association for its ongoing support of the festival, providing equipment and

setup materials for the event.

The invitation for this year's festival on July 13 – a Saturday – extends to all parishes. We urge you to consider fielding a cricket team or encourage individual players to join a combined church cricket team representing your church. The festival will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Creditview Sandalwood Sports Complex, 10530 Creditview

Rd., Brampton.

*Ranil Mendis, ODT, is a member of St. Thomas a Becket, Mississauga and one of the organizers of the Anglican Church Cricket Festival. If you are interested in playing as an individual, as a church team or simply helping out as a volunteer, email Mr. Mendis at [rmendis1@gmail.com](mailto:rmendis1@gmail.com).*



### OPEN AT LAST

Brent Whitby, Jacek Swierzbinski, Kris Ciesek and Gary Davenport cut the ribbon to open the new accessible entrance at St. Barnabas, Chester on Jan. 28. The entrance includes a ramp that leads directly into the church on Danforth Avenue in Toronto. 'The journey to our new entrance began in September 2021,' says Helen Taylor, a parishioner. 'We endured a few turns in the road, one being COVID-19, but finally we are able to say, St. Barnabas church welcomes the community through our new accessible entrance.' PHOTO COURTESY OF HELEN TAYLOR



### SPECIAL MOMENT

Four generations of the same family light the Christ Candle on Christmas Eve at Christ Church-St. Jude, Ivy. From left are Courtney Wrobel-Jackson holding two-month-old Lennon Mae Jackson, Anne Banting with great-granddaughter Ava Grace Jackson, and Cherrie Banting-Wrobel, who was the reader. PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIST CHURCH-ST. JUDE



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## PRAYER CYCLE

### FOR MARCH

1. World Day of Prayer
2. St. Luke, Creemore
3. The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer
4. Bishop Andrew Asbil
5. St. Margaret, Barrie
6. St. Paul, Innisfil
7. St. Paul, Midhurst
8. The Anglican Church Women – Enid Corbett, Diocesan President
9. The Community of Deacons (Archdeacon Kyn Barker)
10. The Anglican Church Women – Enid Corbett, Diocesan President
11. St. Thomas, Shanty Bay
12. Trinity Church, Barrie
13. All Saints, Kingsway
14. Atonement, Alderwood
15. Christ Church St. James
16. Christ the King
17. Etobicoke-Humber Deanery
18. Church of South India (CSI), Toronto
19. San Lorenzo-Dufferin
20. Francophonie Ministry in the Diocese of Toronto
21. The Prayer Book Society
22. The Nee Chee Circle Ministry
23. Parish Leaders: Churchwardens and Treasurers
24. Palm Sunday
25. Holy Week
26. Holy Week
27. Holy Week
28. Holy Week
29. Holy Week
30. Holy week
31. Easter day



## UNITY

Bishop Peter Fenty (front, centre), the Rev. Canon Philip Hobson (the diocese's ecumenical officer) and the Rev. Canon Susan Climo join representatives from a wide diversity of Christian churches at a service on Jan. 21 to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The service was held at St. Mark's Coptic Cathedral in Markham. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity invites Christians around the world to pray for the unity of all Christians, to reflect on scripture together, to participate in jointly organized ecumenical services and to share fellowship. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GREATER TORONTO CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

## IN MOTION

### Appointments

- The Rev. Nelson Charles (Diocese of Raiwind, Church of Pakistan), Interim Priest-in-Charge, Evangelists, New Tecumseth, Jan. 14.
- The Rev. Johanna Pak, Incumbent, St. Mark, Port Hope, Jan. 15.

### 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
- Our Saviour
- Grace Church, Scarborough
- St. Mary, Richmond Hill
- St. George, Haliburton
- St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale
- Christ Church, Bolton
- Trinity-St. Paul, Port Credit

### Parish Selection Committee Process

First Phase - (not yet receiving names):

- Christ Church-St. James

Second Phase - (receiving names via Bishop):

- Holy Trinity, Thornhill
- St. John the Baptist, Oak Ridges
- St. Martin in-the-Fields
- Grace Church on-the-Hill

Third Phase - (no longer

receiving names):

- N/A

### Celebrations of New Ministry

- The Rev. Jeff Nowers, Priest-in-Charge, Christ the King, March 3 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Amirolid Lazard, Incumbent, Nativity, Malvern, April 14 at 4 p.m.

### Retirement

- The Rev. Canon Dr. Byron Gilmore's last Sunday at Christ Church, Brampton will be April 7.
- The Ven. Cheryl Palmer's last Sunday at Christ Church, Deer Park will be April 28. She will continue to serve in retirement as the Archdeacon of the South Archdeaconry.

### Death

- The Rev. Canon Dr. Charles Graham Cotter died on Jan. 31. Ordained deacon in 1957 and priest in 1958, he worked for 16 years in the Synod Office as executive secretary of Diocesan Council for Social Services, while also lecturing at Trinity College and serving as an honorary assistant at St. Simon the Apostle, Toronto. He was the incumbent of St. Mark, Parkdale from 1965 to 1983, then the associate priest at St. Cuthbert, Leaside until his retirement. From 1990, he served as an honorary assistant at St. Mark, Port Hope. The funeral took place at St. Mark, Port Hope on Feb. 10.

## LOOKING AHEAD

To submit items for Looking Ahead, email editor@toronto.anglican.ca. The deadline for the April issue is Mar. 1. Parishes can also promote their events on the diocese's website Calendar at www.toronto.anglican.ca.

### Gatherings

- **MARCH 3** - Rock Eucharist: The Music of Van Morrison, 7 p.m., Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St., Bloor Street and Avenue Road, Toronto.
- **MARCH 5** - Guildwood Media Club, a workshop for seniors and anyone else who is struggling with using

technology, 4 p.m., Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingston Rd., Toronto. Registration is \$25. Subjects include Zoom, email, mobile devices, computers and cybersecurity. For more information, email denise@trinityguildwood.org or call 416-261-9503.

• **MARCH 23** - Voices Chamber Choir with organist Conrad Gold and conductor Ron Ka Ming Cheung, 8 p.m., St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto. Tickets (cash only) are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students and seniors. Call 416-519-0528.

• **MARCH 24** - Bach Vespers, 7 p.m., Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St., Bloor Street and Avenue Road, Toronto.

• **MARCH 24-31** - Holy Week at Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingston Rd., Toronto. Includes "Eggstravaganza" and community Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday. Visit in

person or online. For details, visit www.trinityguildwood.org.

• **APRIL 13** - Spring Rummage Sale, 9 a.m. to noon, Holy Trinity, Thornhill, 140 Brooke St. (at Yonge and Centre streets). A large selection of clothing, shoes, boots and linens will be available. For more information, call 905-889-5931.

• **MAY 3-4** - Monks' Cell, a unique dining experience of 54 years, is back at St. Theodore of Canterbury, 111 Cactus Ave., North York. Dine on open-hearth charcoal grilled steak or chicken served by attentive brothers and sisters in a setting reminiscent of a mediaeval dining hall. Licensed. Order your 750 ml. bottles of red or white wine with your reservation or purchase at your table for \$15. May 3, 6-10 p.m., and May 4, 5-10 p.m. Reservations open April 1 at monkscell@hotmail.com or call 647-393 1391.

**Great photos are just the start.**

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# Distinguished priest to visit diocese

## Garden videos brought hope

BY STUART MANN

**AN** English priest whose YouTube videos brought hope and joy to thousands of people around the world during the pandemic is visiting the diocese in March.

When the Church of England suspended public worship due to COVID-19, Dean Robert Willis began to broadcast Morning Prayer from the deanery garden of Canterbury Cathedral. He and his partner, Fletcher Banner, went on to post more than 900 videos, helping people get through the pandemic.

In addition to the videos, Dean Willis, who is now retired, had a distinguished career in the Church. He was the dean of Canterbury Cathedral for 20 years and advised three archbishops of Canterbury. He received numerous honours, including the Cross of St. Augustine, the second highest award within Anglicanism, given to people in recognition of their contributions to the Communion. He and Mr. Banner currently serve as ambassadors for the Church and various worldwide charities.

"He's one of those true people



Dean Robert Willis. PHOTO COURTESY OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

of God who have been blessed with immense talent and grace," says Archdeacon Paul Feheley, incumbent of St. Michael and All Angels in Toronto and a long-time friend of Dean Willis.

Dean Willis will lead a Lenten retreat at St. Michael and All

Angels on the afternoon of Saturday, March 16. He will give two addresses, and there will be time for questions and answers. The retreat, held from 1-4 p.m., will include quiet time and a chance to meet Dean Willis. The retreat will conclude with Even-

ing Prayer. The church is located at 611 St. Clair Ave. W., and all are invited to attend, either in person or online.

The next day, Sunday, March 17, Dean Willis will preach at St. Michael and All Angels' morning Eucharist, which begins at 10 a.m. The service will be held in person and online. For details about his visit to St. Michael and All Angels, visit the church's website, [www.stmichaelonstclair.com](http://www.stmichaelonstclair.com).

On the afternoon of Sunday, March 17, Dean Willis will be preaching at Evensong at St. James Cathedral, located at Church and King streets in Toronto. The service begins at 4:30 p.m. After Evensong, the cathedral will be holding a vigil for peace and justice in the world, as part of its observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The vigil will be held from 6-8 p.m. Dean Willis will take part, helping people to pray and focus on peace in various parts of the world. Both Evensong and the vigil will be held in person and livestreamed. Visit the cathedral's website, [www.stjamescathedral.ca](http://www.stjamescathedral.ca), for more information.

On Monday, March 18 at 1 p.m., Dean Willis will lead a Lenten reflection hosted by the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer. The webinar will be held on Zoom and all are invited to attend. For details, visit [www.anglicanprayer.org](http://www.anglicanprayer.org).

In addition to public events, Dean Willis will meet with the Ontario House of Bishops on March 18 and will attend a din-

ner for the Primate, Archbishop Linda Nicholls, on March 19.

The dinner will be hosted by the Ontario House of Bishops and Provincial Council, the governing body of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario.

Archdeacon Feheley says he is excited about Dean Willis's visit. "He's not a person who boasts about his own accomplishments, although there are many, and he's very humble," he says. "He did an extraordinary job of leadership at Canterbury Cathedral. He's a person who has mixed with world leaders and leaders of Christian denominations, and yet once when I was visiting him, he and Fletcher were busy taking a basket of goods and flowers to a needy parishioner. It's that kind of a person whose done an extraordinary job of prayer and leadership that I think is going to be really welcomed by people in our diocese."

He says Dean Willis can help Anglicans share their faith. "The beauty of the Garden Congregation and the prayers he offered is to realize that evangelism in its most honest way is very simple and direct. We so often try to get it all complicated, and what we had in the videos was simply a priest sitting in his garden offering Morning Prayer with some thoughts or comments. He also took into consideration who would be watching and praying with him. That's the remarkable thing about Dean Willis: how powerful the message can be when it's done in simplicity and beauty."

## All invited to vigil for peace in world

**ST.** James Cathedral and the Bishop's Committee on Interfaith Ministry are hosting a vigil for peace and justice in the world. The vigil and an Evensong service will be held at the cathedral on Sunday, March 17 from 4:30-8 p.m. All are invited to attend, either in person or online. The event is part of the cathedral's observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

"Our gospel calls us to pursue the things that make for peace and build up the common life," says the Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen Fields, sub-dean and vicar of the cathedral. "We encourage people, whether they are Christian or not, to come out and pray for peace, to image what it looks like and feels like, and to empathize with those who are far from it."

The Very Rev. Robert Willis, dean emeritus of Canterbury Cathedral, will preach at the Evensong service, which begins at 4:30 p.m. Dean Willis gained a worldwide audience

during the pandemic when he and his partner, Fletcher Banner, made videos of Morning Prayer from the deanery garden of Canterbury Cathedral.

In addition to preaching at Evensong, Dean Willis will help to set the tone for the prayers and reflections of the vigil, which begins at 6:30 p.m. There will be five stations around the cathedral, each representing a part of the world that is experiencing war or civil unrest. The areas will be the Middle East, southeast Asia, north and central Africa, eastern Europe and the rest of the world. Prayers and reflections will be offered at each station. There will also be lighting of candles and music, both choral and instrumental.

"We welcome everyone to come in and make it a time of community at prayer," says Canon Fields. For more information, visit the cathedral's website at [www.stjamescathedral.ca](http://www.stjamescathedral.ca).

Staff

## BRIEFLY

### Convent closed for overnight retreats

The Guest House at St. John's Convent is closed for all overnight retreats until renovations are completed in 2025. While overnight stays are unavailable, individuals and groups are welcome to visit for the day. For more information, visit the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine's website, [www.ssjd.ca](http://www.ssjd.ca).

### ACW meeting planned for April

The diocesan Anglican Church Women will hold its annual general meeting on Zoom on April 20 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. This year's theme will be "Hope and Peace in Today's World," with special guests from the Stephen Lewis Foundation. The invitation and registration link was to be emailed to each church by March 20 and posted on the ACW page on the diocese's website, [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca).

## More funds approved for grants program

**SYNOD** Council has allocated another \$300,000 to the diocese's Cast and Learn grants program to help parishes find new ways of being church. The program provides one-time grants of between \$10,000 and \$40,000 to parishes willing to innovate, learn and grow.

The program started in December 2022 with \$300,000 in funding. It was thought that the funding would last for two years but the program has been so popular that the funds were nearly depleted by the end of the first year, prompting Synod Council to allocate another \$300,000 for it. The money will come from the diocese's Ministry Allocation Fund -- \$200,000 from its "congregational growth" stream and \$100,000 from its "new or innovative forms of

ministry" stream.

Nine parishes received grants in the first year, ranging from \$18,400 to \$40,000. Projects included drama and music ministry, a multicultural children's drop-in program, pastors for online and community ministries and the start-up of a new dinner church.

All the projects will be reviewed by the diocese's Project Enabling and Monitoring Group at the end of their funding so that learning can be collected and shared within the diocese. The Cast and Learn grants program gets its name from Cast the Net, the diocese's strategic visioning process that is based on John 21.

Staff

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