

Autistic kids
get place to play

Leaders oppose
OPS closures



New book looks
at evangelism

The Anglican

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People tour the Spirit Garden at Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto on its opening day. The Diocese of Toronto gave \$300,000 to the garden, a gift in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #82. Another \$44,000 was raised by individuals and parishes through FaithWorks. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

'This is going to be here forever now'

Monument stands for resilience of Indigenous peoples

BY THE REV. LEIGH KERN

On Sept. 30, from the first light of dawn until the setting of the sun, a sea of orange filled Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto. Hundreds of people gathered for the ceremonial opening of the Spirit Garden, a living monument and memorial to honour the survivors of Residential Schools and the children whose lives were taken. Ava Hill spoke in the opening ceremonies that the monument is *permanent*. "This is going to be here forever now," she said. The longevity of the sculpted stones depicting a turtle climbing over obstacles, the Inukshuk, the canoe and teaching lodge – all sacred symbols created to withstand every element and to permanently stand for that which could not be erased by colonization: the resilience and enduring vitality of Indigenous peoples.

The memorial is a fulfillment of Toronto's responsibility to Call to Action #82 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to create "publicly accessible, highly visible

Residential Schools monuments in each capital city to honour survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities." Ava Hill continued: "This Spirit Garden is in response to this call to action." The crowd erupted in cheers. The Spirit Garden, and the stories and teachings it carries, will not be erased and will stand for generations to come.

All day the sound of children's laughter intermingled with the testimonies of survivors, the heartbeat of drums, the smell of sacred medicines, and the vibrancy of ribbon skirts, shirts and ceremonial regalia. As I spoke with survivors, diocesan staff, clergy, bishops, friends and community members, what struck everyone was the joy of seeing so many children and young people present. Being surrounded by little ones from daycares and children visiting from nearby schools, their radiant joy and curiosity, their empathy and care, underlined the testimonies survivors shared at the opening of the Spirit Garden.

Survivors harrowingly spoke of being taken from their loving parents when they were so young that they did not know them until they reconnected 30 or 40 years later. A survivor named Clara spoke of meeting her siblings as adults. "They were like strangers to me," she said. Taken from her mother in 1963, Clara said, "I never knew my mother until I met her in the early '90s." Survivors echoed this heartbreaking reality of growing up in a cold and abusive institution, without the loving care of their parents, siblings and grandparents, graduating from Residential School and feeling completely alone in the world. Survivors remembered siblings who died at Residential School and the grief of their parents who were never given any information about what happened to their children.

Gord Peters placed the testimonies of survivors in historical context, reminding those present that 40 per cent of children who attended Residential Schools did not survive to graduate. He stated: "Canada calls this a dark

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Diocese hires new executive director

BY STUART MANN

THE diocese's next executive director is no stranger to helping parishes.

Varun Balendra, ODT, has been a member of the Diocesan Volunteer Corps for the past six years, serving as a Canon 24 administrator and a PEMG coach. In those volunteer roles, he has provided administrative and financial expertise to parishes in crisis, restoring them to financial health and long-term growth.

"I had a calling to that work and I really enjoyed it," says Mr. Balendra. "That experience – working with the bishops and staff and parishes – was one of the key reasons why I accepted this position."

Mr. Balendra will succeed Canon Rob Saffrey, who is retiring on Dec. 31. As the diocese's executive director, he will oversee the administrative and most of the program functions of the Synod Office. He will also have administrative oversight of the diocese's Synod.

Mr. Balendra will start on Oct. 23 and will shadow Canon Saffrey for the remainder of the year. "I will be like a sponge, learning from Rob," he says. "I'm looking forward to learning as much as I can from him and what needs to be done in the diocese. I'm also looking forward to meeting with the bishops and staff and committees and volunteers, to learn about their work

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Varun Balendra, ODT

Diocese marks creation season with service

Worshippers invited to bring water to cathedral

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

ON a sunny Saturday afternoon in downtown Toronto, Anglicans from across the diocese gathered at St. James Cathedral for a first-of-its-kind event. While many parishes have observed the Season of Creation in their own communities for several years, the Eucharist on Sept. 21 marked the first diocese-wide worship service to observe this annual ecumenical movement.

The Season of Creation encourages Christians around the world to observe the period between Sept. 1 (the World Day of Prayer for Creation) and Oct. 4 (the feast of St. Francis of Assisi) as a time of particular prayer for the Earth. In 2019, General Synod passed a resolution adopting the Season of Creation in the Anglican Church of Canada and encouraging dioceses

and parishes to participate.

Organized by the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care, the service featured a mix of musical styles, from traditional choral arrangements to an Indigenous mass setting, led by musicians from Redeemer, Bloor St. Along with readings from scripture, the congregation heard "Remember," a poem by Joy Harjo, the United States' first Indigenous poet laureate. Bishop Andrew Asbil presided.

As the service got underway, three teenagers – Joaquin and Mikhail Getfield Francis of Holy Trinity, Thornhill and Gregory Conliffe of St. Martin-in-the-Fields – shared stories of times they've connected with God through creation, as well as their thoughts about the role the Church might play in addressing the climate crisis.

"When it comes to the concerns



A woman pours water from her local watershed into the font while Elder Laverne Malcom blesses the mingled water and offers a prayer drum song. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

of the planet, the Church needs to promote more peace," one of the young people said. "To try and make sure that peace will be contagious and will be granted throughout the world."

To reflect the many watersheds of the diocese, worshippers were invited to bring water from their local watershed to pour into a font during the service. Elder Laverne Malcom then blessed the mingled water in Anishnawbemowin and

offered a prayer drum song.

In her sermon, the Rev. Susan Spicer, co-chair of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care, acknowledged the need to mourn the forest fires, droughts, catastrophic floods and heat waves that are ravaging God's creation.

"I expect that many of us are grieving for what has been lost – the places we once loved where creation no longer flourishes as we knew it," she said. "This, we know,

is a spiritual crisis. And unless we can grieve for our planet, we cannot love and serve it."

The path from grief to joy travels through lament to hope and action, she said. "The spiritual practice of communal lament helps us name what has been lost. It keeps us mindful of the suffering we encounter daily. It assures us that we are not alone in our grief. The prophets of Israel taught us to lament – lament the desolation of the world – and yet allow it to lead us to hope."

The hope we are called to, she continued, is rooted in the biblical vision of a new creation and leads us to action, inspired by our sacred story. "Prayer transforms hope into action. It empowers us to do the work that Jesus did, of tending and protecting and loving and serving all our kin," she said.

She reflected on the stories of Anglicans across the diocese who are responding to the climate crisis with compassion and creativity by planting pollinator gardens, growing fresh produce for food banks, greening their buildings, hosting repair cafés, advocating with local politicians and providing Christ-centred climate education.

"We say our prayers every day, and then we enter the world that waits on our doorstep, going out to serve, to do what we can, knowing that the Spirit is with us, empowering us to bring the healing, transforming love of our creation to our neighbours and our kin in this wounded and still wondrous world," she said.

The diocesan Season of Creation celebrations continued with Hiking Church events in Mississauga, west Toronto, Peterborough and Nottawasaga. These events combine walking and worship in creation, often including gathering songs and prayers and a Eucharist celebrated outdoors.

More information and resources on creation care in the diocese are available at www.toronto.anglican.ca/creationcare.

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Autistic kids find place to play at Orillia church

Parents can connect and share moments

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

A new initiative at St. David Anglican-Lutheran Church in Orillia is reaching out to a group in its local community that is notoriously underserved: children with autism.

Erica Duffy, a member of the parish, got the idea from her own experience as the mother to a nearly 3-year-old daughter with autism. While autistic children are usually integrated with their neurotypical peers in settings like school, Ms. Duffy says that can come with its own unique challenges.

“Sometimes it can be difficult, because if the kiddos are melting down it’s hard to watch,” she says. “So I thought, what if we have a playgroup for autistic children? It’s good for the kids because there’s no pressure on them to interact with each other – they can just play however they want to play. And it’s also good for parents, because we can talk and learn new things, and we don’t have to apologize if our kiddos are having meltdowns.”

Depending on the severity of their condition, autistic children often play with toys and interact with

people differently than neurotypical children. Some may be nonverbal, and they may have intense reactions to new or overwhelming situations.

The leadership team at St. David’s readily agreed to let Ms. Duffy use space at the church, and the playgroup launched in early July in an outdoor fenced-in space. Since then, it has met every Thursday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., with toys and snacks provided. As the weather cooled in the fall, the group moved inside the church building.

“The age range is from about 1 to 5, mostly, because that’s the toy range that I have. We don’t have any funding, so it’s mostly just me lugging everything that I can over,” says Ms. Duffy.

Each week she arranges balls, sensory bins, cars and trucks, a doctor’s station and other toys. “There’s a colouring area, a stuffy area. I try to find a darker area in case they get sensory overload, so they can go and sit.”

So far, the playgroup has seen up to six kids at a time. “That’s a lot, because sometimes they’re a little rowdy, so it was kind of the perfect storm,” says Ms. Duffy.

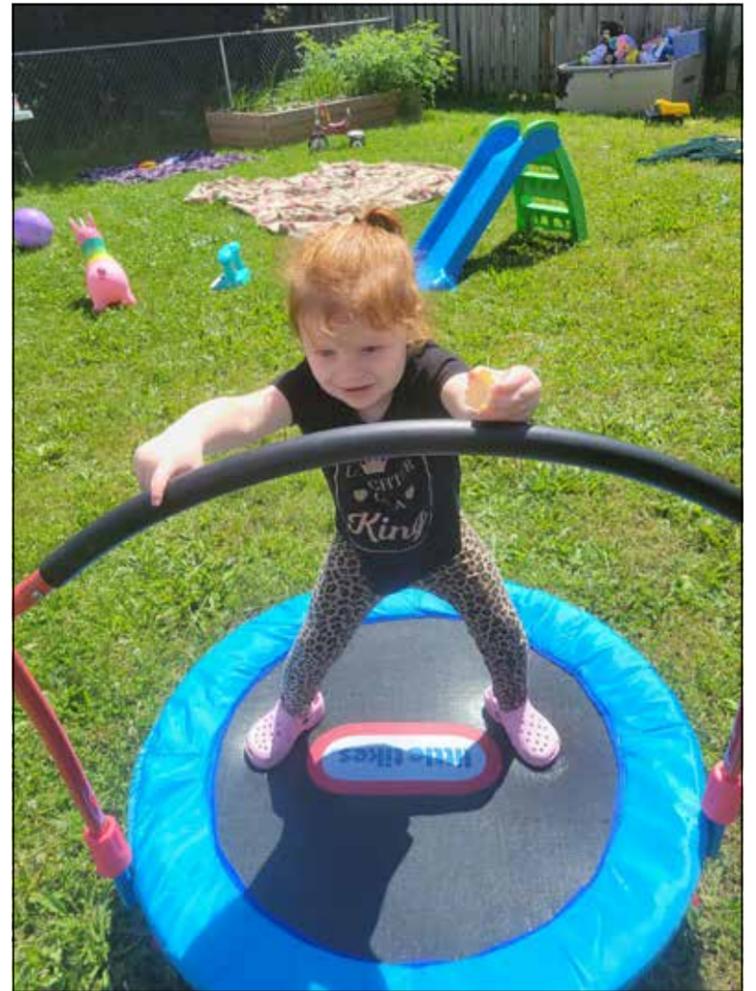
Even with the small number of families, she says they have already seen moments of growth among the kids, with some learning new skills from each other and from other parents.

“Some children aren’t looking at their parent, they’re looking at that other parent,” she says. “I was trying to teach my daughter how to pour, but it was another mother showing her son how to pour that got my daughter to pour.”

While the kids have enjoyed their weekly playtime, Ms. Duffy says the response from parents has been particularly strong. They’ve been able to connect with each other and even share some emotional moments as they watch their children learning and growing.

She recalls sharing one mother’s joy when her son started kicking a ball back and forth with another parent. “We’re almost weeping because we’ve never seen that engagement or that interaction – they’ve never kicked a ball before,” she says. “We can share these little milestones that are humungous for us and for our kiddos.”

The parishioners at St. David’s



A child with autism plays at St. David Anglican-Lutheran Church in Orillia. PHOTO BY ERICA DUFFY

have been very supportive, often buying snacks or donating funds to cover the cost of food.

“Everybody asks how it’s going, what do you need,” says Ms. Duffy.

“It’s been supported very, very well by everybody. They just thought it was such a great idea.”

Some parishioners have even
Continued on Page 7

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“We need to have places that is willing to help out with more food so that people that’s homeless can eat. Hopefully we get that because every year there’s more and more people that’s becoming homeless.”

– Cliff from One Roof in Peterborough

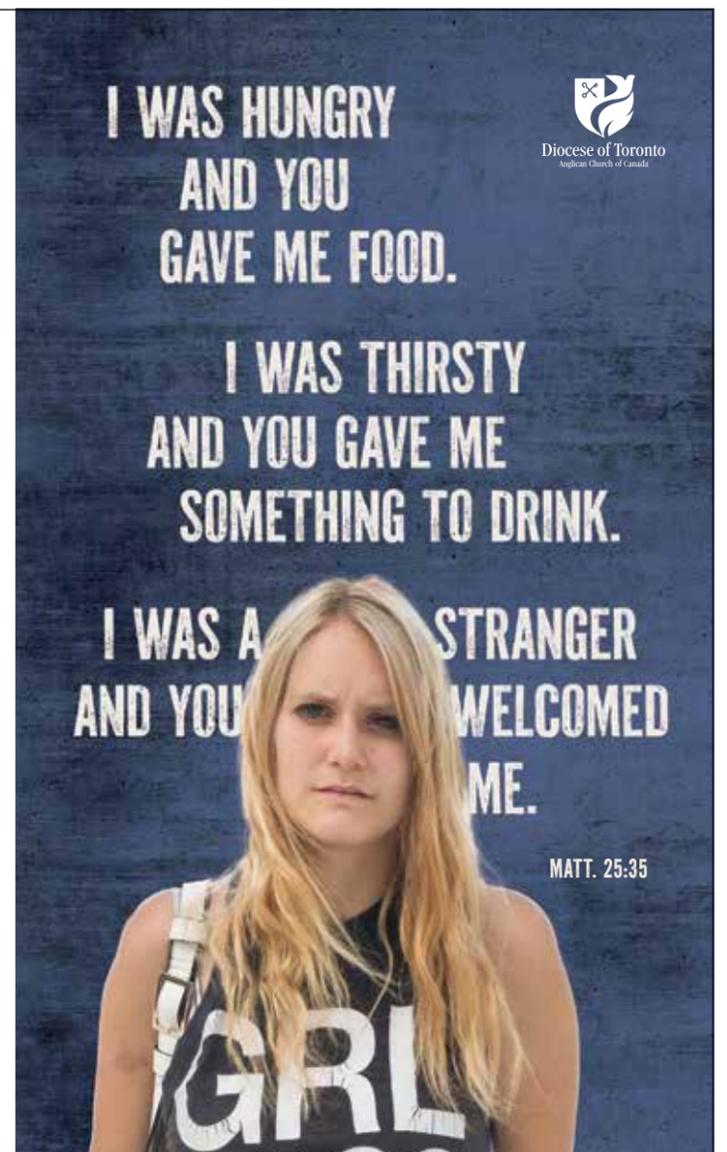
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I WAS HUNGRY
AND YOU
GAVE ME FOOD.

I WAS THIRSTY
AND YOU GAVE ME
SOMETHING TO DRINK.

I WAS A STRANGER
AND YOU WELCOMED
ME.

MATT. 25:35



“It just got too much for me” – Amber



Bishop Andrew Asbil speaks at a press conference at Queen's Park, urging the provincial government to reverse its decision to close 10 overdose prevention sites in Ontario. He is joined by other faith leaders. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Without these sites, thousands of people will die

The following letter was signed by more than 30 faith leaders in Ontario, including Bishop Andrew Asbil of the Diocese of Toronto and Bishop Susan Bell of the Diocese of Niagara. It was read at a press conference at Queen's Park on Sept. 16.

To: Premier Doug Ford and Health Minister Sylvia Jones,

"Whoever saves one life, saves the whole world." – Mishnah Sanhedrin, Chapter 4, Paragraph 5 (Quoted in Quran, 5:32.)

As faith leaders in Ontario, we are deeply distressed by the decision of the provincial government to close 10 of the 17 safe consumption/overdose prevention sites in Ontario, and to create legislation which will prevent any new sites from opening, and which will force at least one additional site in Toronto to close imminently.

Ontario is currently in the midst of a deadly overdose crisis that claims one life every eight hours. These safe consumption/overdose prevention sites are at the front lines of this crisis, having reversed 21,000 overdoses since 2020. Without these sites, thousands of people will die entirely preventable and unnecessary deaths. These people will be our friends, our relatives, members of our faith communities. They are precious and irreplaceable lives. They are beloved human beings who deserve to live, not to die in a park or a doorway or a public washroom.

We know that these sites are a lifesaving medical service. We also know that they provide not only overdose reversal, but

connections to community, mental health care, addiction counselling, and recovery resources. Some of us have seen at first-hand how workers at these sites meet people where they are, build trust, and help them to move towards health and stability. The 10 sites slated for closure refer approximately 131 people a day to other health and recovery services, as well as, in some cases, providing these services in-house, as some of the sites are part of multi-service agencies.

The sites are located in the areas of greatest need, and embedded in their communities, where they need to be. In most cases, they are such well-managed and peaceful presences that they can hardly be noticed. We understand that neighbourhoods with high rates of overdose death are usually areas of deprivation and difficulty, but closing the sites will lead to more discarded needles in the streets, more public drug use, and, in all probability, higher rates of crime.

Your statement quotes figures claiming that rates of crime are higher near safe consumption and overdose prevention sites, but without stating your sources, although this has been requested by the media. Furthermore, it fails to compare these rates to the same neighbourhoods before the sites opened, or to examine trends over time in major cities. Meanwhile, a well-documented study in *The Lancet* has demonstrated that overdose deaths dropped significantly in key areas of Toronto after safe consumption/overdose prevention sites were opened.

It is now known that two expert studies commissioned by your government to

examine the safe consumption site at the South Riverdale Community Health Centre in Toronto, did not recommend closure, and in fact recommended an expansion of safe consumption sites around the city.

The statement includes a promise that \$378 million will be put towards "19 new Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hubs." This is potentially welcome news, given that there is currently a very lengthy wait for substance use disorder treatment. However, these hubs are not replacements for safe consumption and overdose prevention sites. You cannot bring a dead person to recovery.

We are also deeply troubled that these hubs will be barred not only from providing supervised consumption, but also from providing sterile injection equipment, an extremely well-established and proven public health measure which has been in place for decades and is known to be a crucial tool in preventing the spread of blood-borne disease and infectious and bacterial complications. Nor is it clear that the sites will use the accepted and evidence-based treatment methods recommended by experts. There are concerning signs that the intention of the provincial government is to roll back harms reduction entirely, which would result in an unimaginable number of illnesses and deaths, and a massively increased burden on first responders and the health system.

We urge Premier Ford and Minister Jones to reverse this decision, and to follow the advice of the expert reports which they themselves commissioned.



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In the Diocese of Toronto:
A community of congregations in 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 Indigenous peoples.

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Flourishing in the midst of crop failure

BY MELODIE NG

I've just wrapped up my fifth season farming at Common Table Farm. Each growing season has been entirely different, with its particular mix of joys and disappointments. The one indelible lesson I've taken away from farming is that you cannot predict anything! With so much unpredictability, it's necessary to develop resilience, especially when your best laid plans get hit with blight.

No Torontonian will soon forget the torrential rains that were dumped upon us this summer. As climate change stirs up extreme weather, we see the effects immediately at the farm. One weekend in early August, the weather swung from a heat wave to a couple of unseasonably cool nights. I arrived back at the farm on Monday and was shocked to discover rows of tomato plants looking like they'd seen the apocalypse. Weekly efforts to nourish the plants with compost teas and worm castings were all for naught. As the heavy rains came again and again over the summer – with too much humidity and too few sunny days to dry off the plants – I worried about the wet conditions propagating disease. And there it was: all the tomatoes hit with blight. Plants that had been lush in July were drooping dramatically with blotchy leaves. Tons of green tomatoes just waiting for sun-ripening, now blemished with lesions. It was devastating. It was discouraging not to be able to provide an abundant harvest of this much-loved crop to our community. With a drier September, some plants bounced back and provided fruit. But overall, the harvest was about a quarter of what we would have expected. After months of tending from seed, this was a bitter result.

There was not much to be done for this season's tomatoes. But we can look forward and adapt for the future. We're currently seeking funding for a green-



An instructor and students in the Young Farmer Program. PHOTO COURTESY OF COMMON TABLE FARM

house that would allow us to grow our hot crops with protection from excessive rains. We also look to this season's successes and discover that there's still much cause to celebrate. We grew our first watermelons! Our Young Farmer Program continued into its second year, with thanks to funding from the Anglican Foundation and KPMG Foundation. One of our 2023 youth participants enjoyed the experience so much, she eagerly reached out mid-winter to ask about summer jobs. Gabrielle turned out to be one of our most delightful summer workers yet – full of energy, initiative and laughter. We are honoured to be a farm where knowledge about food and farming is shared amongst young people who will go on to be leaders in our community.

This summer the farm was not only a place for growing food; it was also a

gathering place for growing ideas. We welcomed graduate students taking a course entitled "Food/Justice, Farming and Faith" run by St. Michael's College of the Toronto School of Theology. Students reflected on the challenges within our industrial food system while being present to the soil itself, all while completing practical farm tasks. It was a unique opportunity to practice embodied theology. We also hosted a wrap-up party for participants of Seneca College's Toronto Urban Farming Training (TUFT). To the soundtrack of crickets and cicadas, we had an animated evening discussion about what kind of municipal policies

could support urban agriculture.

The farm welcomed younger learners, too. Elementary school students sifted worm castings and planted native flowers. Here's a snapshot of the kind of journey that kids experience here:

"I remember the composting and worm poop parts most... At first, I thought it was disgusting, but after I saw people having so much fun, I decided to give it a shot. It turned out to be really fun (except the earwigs and worms)."

Another student remarked: "I really felt good because it was my first time planting a plant. I remembered there were little grubs in the soil and an ant nest."

It's pretty special that this is a place where kids experience the soil and its inhabitants for the first time. The farm deepens our understanding of how soil, seeds, microbes, water and the sun come blessedly together to create food for all beings.

Farming is not all roses and sunshine. We have our share of trials and crop failures. But we are proud to be part of a larger food and eco-justice movement that invites people to see how environmental issues, our food system and our own relationships to land are all intricately connected. No matter what kind of season we have – blight or no blight – we experience flourishing here!

Melodie Ng is the manager of Common Table Farm. To learn more about Common Table Farm and to support its work, visit www.flemingdonparkministry.com. Flemingdon Park Ministry is a ministry of the Diocese of Toronto.

God's unconditional love at Sherbourne and Dundas

BY PETER MENTIS

This past summer, I had the opportunity of joining members of the FaithWorks allocations committee to tour the facilities at All Saints Church-Community Centre at Sherbourne and Dundas streets in Toronto and meet with its leadership. Every time I visit, it is apparent that the words of Jesus – and the mission statement of FaithWorks – are being fulfilled at All Saints.

"I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me ... As you did it to one of the least of these members of my family, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:35,40)

We were greeted by the beaming smile of the Rev. Canon Dr. Alison Falby, who welcomed us to All Saints. She showed us how the venerable church building is being used every day to offer food, drink, shelter and rest, in addition to prayer and worship.

The historic and beautiful architecture and stained-glass windows are fulfilling their purpose by inspiring giving and sharing in the service of God.

"I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink."

Two hundred meals are served four days a week. Amazingly, most of the food is donated. As the need increases and donations become harder to find, it is a struggle. But people need more than food and drink. They need support, guidance, community, belonging and inspiration, like in a family. All Saints offers all these things. There are mats on the church floor for people to sleep on during the day after having walked the streets all night. There is clothing, harm reduction kits, nursing, foot care, case management, housing referrals and assistance (Homes for Tomorrow), spiritual and pastoral care, all in a community atmosphere. There is a weekly art and music program, with movies on Mondays. It is easy to see how All

Saints is the place where people can find belonging at the corner of Sherbourne and Dundas. Here they experience God's unconditional love for everyone.

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

No one is a stranger at All Saints. Everyone is welcome. Whether a person is wrestling with the cravings of addiction, the voices of mental illness, the pangs of hunger, the precariousness of homelessness, the emptiness of loneliness, the threat of violence, or any other form of deprivation, they are welcome. Everyone is a member of Jesus' family and has a place at All Saints.

"As you did it to one of the least of these members of my family, you did it to me."

In the faces of those who serve and those who are served, we saw Jesus' face. The staff and volunteers radiated a joyful love, reflecting God's presence in their lives. Their dedication and hard work are an inspiration.

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Ancient stories provide insights into evangelism

Ordinary people often made the difference, says new book

BY STUART MANN

WHILE teaching a course in evangelism at Wycliffe College, the Rev. Canon Dr. Judy Paulsen noticed a strange thing. Most of her students, who were preparing for ordained and lay leadership in the Church, had a negative view of evangelism.

In their first class, the students were asked to respond to the word “evangelist.” Upon hearing the word, many said “Billy Graham” while others said “television,” “crusade,” “Mormons,” “street preacher” and “used car salesman.” One young woman simply drew a blank. When asked why, she replied, “My stomach just kind of tightened up.”

The students weren’t alone. A public opinion poll conducted in Canada some years ago found that only a sliver of the population viewed the word “evangelism” positively. Even among those deemed to be “religiously committed” (they believed in God, prayed and participated regularly in their faith community,) just 29 per cent said the word had a positive meaning. What’s more, other studies showed evangelism to be a low priority for churches. Many didn’t do it at all.

“After a couple of years of teaching the course, I realized we had to get a new framework – we had to begin to look at the problem,” says Canon Paulsen, who has just written an engaging new book on the subject, *A New and Ancient Evangelism: Rediscovering the Ways God Calls and Sends*.

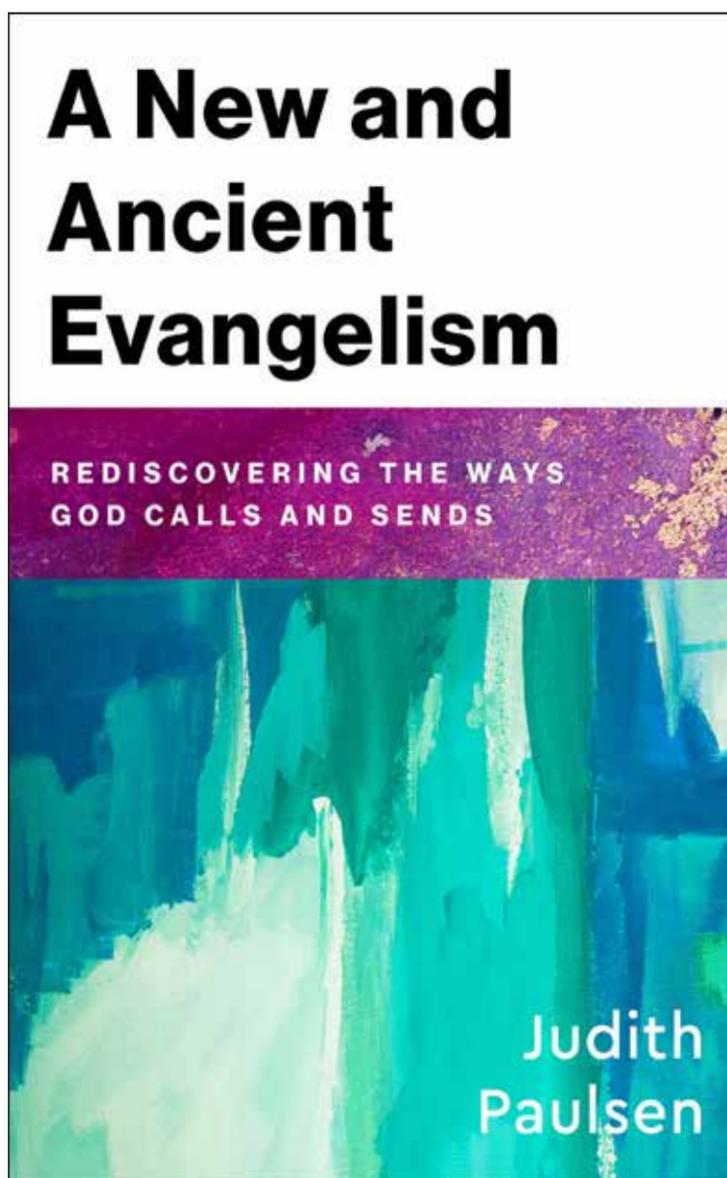
Canon Paulsen, a professor of

evangelism at Wycliffe College, served for 15 years as a priest in the Diocese of Toronto. She is the coordinator of the diocese’s Season of Spiritual Renewal, which seeks to refresh the spiritual lives of Anglicans in the diocese.

She says there are many reasons for the negative view of evangelism. One of them is the “sales-pitch” model that has been used by individuals and churches for decades. “It’s a model that says if you have the right strategy and the right tools and the right personality, then you will have the right arguments to convince people into the faith,” she says. “We know that most people recognize that there’s something wrong with that model. It’s not very relational – not based on authentic relationship – and it tends to flatten other people’s pre-existing spiritual views. Its biggest problem, though, is that it leaves God out of the picture. It’s very centred on a recipe and our ability to use that recipe.”

She knew the Church had to teach and practice evangelism in a different way. “How do we equip people to share their faith in a more relational, authentic and winsome manner? How do we convince people in the pews that they have something to share – the way that God has touched their lives, why they come to church and worship God, the moments when they’ve been especially aware of God’s presence?”

She turned to the stories of evangelism and conversion in scripture, to see if they could provide any



lessons and insights. She was surprised at what she found. “When you start to explore these stories, you see that the sales pitch model is completely absent,” she says. “These stories are full of mystery, and they always start with God’s action first. They’re full of things like visions and dreams, of individuals obeying something that God has told them to do, of ordinary people who have found something in the person of Jesus and they simply can’t wait to tell other people because it’s something so revolutionary and life-transforming for them.”

She revised the course she was teaching – and still teaches – using these conversion stories and the wisdom they offered. The 13 stories and their insights form the heart of her new book.

The stories are from the Old

and New Testament and show the conversion of people from all walks of life, including a blind man, a seeker cut off from God, a desperate general, a prison warden, a child prophet, a religious extremist, a successful businessperson and a tormented soul. The people come to God in many different ways, often with the assistance of ordinary people who have no religious education or training; they are simply helping the person along their spiritual journey that has already been started by God.

“Sometimes we think we need to have a big platform to be used by God, and that’s simply not true,” says Canon Paulsen. “In these stories, we see a word of hope spoken here, an invitation extended there, a word of encouragement offered. These are the simple ways in which



The Rev. Canon Dr. Judy Paulsen and her new book.

God uses what we offer and then multiplies it.”

At the end of each chapter are a few questions for small-group discussions. In the book’s appendix are experiments a church could try to help seekers along their spiritual path. These include holding a Dinner Church or simply inviting a friend or two out for a cup of coffee.

Canon Paulsen hopes churches will use the book to get clergy and laity thinking about how God calls people and how they can join in that work. But she cautions that the Church itself has some thinking to do as well.

“There is no lack of resources on evangelism. What I think is lacking in the Church is the idea that the gospel is life-giving,” she says. “We’ve also bought into a narrative that says everybody is too secular, and it just isn’t true. There are many people who have no faith connection or connection to any sacred text, but they have spiritual questions and longings.”

She adds, “I guess the deeper question for the Church to ask itself is, do we care about these people? Do we believe the gospel message is life-giving? I think these stories from scripture help us explore these questions because in them we see people’s lives changed in pretty amazing ways by their encounter with Christ.”

A New and Ancient Evangelism: Rediscovering the Ways God Calls and Sends, published by Baker Academic, is available from Indigo and Amazon. For bulk orders in Canada, contact Word Alive at debbie.tindale@wordalive.ca.

Seeing God’s love

Continued from Page 5

It’s no wonder that so many who have been helped at All Saints wish to help others, when and if they are able.

Janice Hodgson, the chair of the FaithWorks allocations committee, described the visit to All Saints as eye-opening. “I knew that All Saints works with individuals struggling with homelessness and food insecurity, but their non-judgmental approach to everyone who walked through their doors, including those with addiction and mental health issues, was inspiring. Their dedicated staff are doing what they were established to do – caring, befriending, feeding and shelter-

ing those less fortunate than ourselves,” she said.

Your donation to FaithWorks supports outreach to people who struggle with various challenges across our diocese. Each ministry partner offers unique gifts and abilities of comfort, guidance and assistance. All Saints is a shining example of outreach ministry. This was obvious during our visit. The bonds of family that connect FaithWorks and All Saints were reinforced during those few hours that we were there. It truly is “a corner of belonging.”

Peter Mentis is the FaithWorks campaign manager.

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Monument helps break silence

Continued from Page 1

chapter. It's not a dark chapter: it's Canadian history. Canadians have to accept and change that history. There's a long road to recovery for our people but we are well on our way."

That road of recovery and revitalization is memorialized in the monument as a turtle climbing over rocks and obstacles. Carved in stone below the turtle are the names of 18 federally funded Residential Schools that operated in Ontario. As the turtle climbs, it symbolizes cultural recovery over the horrific legacy of Residential Schools. The turtle symbolizes the first mother – mother earth – and symbolizes the rightful place of Indigenous people in creation. The courage of the turtle to continue to climb over obstacles symbolizes the strength and perseverance of survivors, who courageously shattered the silence of abuse and testified on the international stage at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Michael Cheena, a survivor who travelled with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for four years, and a proud member of St. John the Baptist, Norway in Toronto, said, "The Residential School system was a national crime, it was a national secret... I want to recognize the survivors, the courage of the survivors, who carried their childhood wounds into their adult lives and have lived to tell the truth of this day." Survivors broke through the oppression of this "national secret." Through the 94 Calls to Action, survivors have marked a pathway forward for justice and healing for all peoples on this land.

The Spirit Garden will be animated throughout the year, with its sacred teaching lodge full of the stories, languages, traditional teachings, histories and cultures that Residential Schools sought to silence. Elder the Rev. Canon Andrew Wesley shared that the teaching that will happen at the Spirit Garden will not only support Indigenous people in their



A turtle sculpture made out of limestone is the centrepiece of the Spirit Garden. The turtle, designed by Anishinaabe artist Solomon King, sits on sculpted boulders in the middle of a reflecting pool, facing the pool's north wall, which displays the names of all 18 residential schools that operated in Ontario. At far right, the day's events include dancing and tours of the Spirit Garden, including its Inukshuk and Voyageur Spirit Canoe. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



cultural revitalization, but also educate all people about what happened in Residential Schools, that they might "understand and help be called into action." The Diocese of Toronto invested in the Spirit Garden, in partnership with Toronto Council Fire, that we might fulfill our responsibilities to Indigenous peoples in Call to Action #82.

Survivors spoke throughout the opening of the Spirit Garden of how frustrating it is for them that so few of the Calls to Action have been fulfilled. This year, let us keep this summons at the centre of our hearts, let us spend time in prayer, memorial and

dialogue at the Spirit Garden, as we seek to honour our responsibilities to all 94 Calls to Action. Concluding the opening ceremony of the Spirit Garden, Gord Peters closed with this blessing: "May your families be healthy and strong, and may we carry on our responsibilities." Amen.

The Rev. Leigh Kern is the diocese's Right Relations Coordinator.



Word spreads about play space

Continued from Page 3

stopped by on Thursdays to watch the kids play. "My church knows my daughter and how she is," she says. "It's educational to see how these children play differently."

While there's purposefully no religious component to the playgroup, Ms. Duffy says people are

responding positively to the relaxed atmosphere, and many have asked about Sunday services.

"I feel like that's the way we show God's love," she says. "We say, 'Come, have fun, relax, and then ask as you will.' That seems to bring more people towards us."

Now that she's developed a rhythm for the group, Ms. Duffy says she's hoping to spread the word and invite more families to join. "Even my daughter's therapists have started sharing it with their kids," she says. "As soon as people know, they want to come."

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Naught for your comfort

The Very Rev. Richard Sewell, dean of St. George's College, Jerusalem, gave the Snell Lecture at St. James Cathedral on Sept. 29. The lectures honour the Rt. Rev. George Snell, the eighth Bishop of Toronto, and are intended to further his desire for deepening the Church's teaching and preaching ministry for both the laity and the clergy.

BY THE VERY REV. RICHARD SEWELL

In 1955, Anglican priest/monk (and later bishop) Trevor Huddleston was recalled to England by his order after having served for 15 years as a priest in apartheid-era South Africa. He was a much-loved priest who had mostly served in a township parish. His experience at the grassroots, community level had caused him to become increasingly critical of the minority Afrikaans government and their evil apartheid policies. He left reluctantly, having felt himself deeply committed to the plight of black South Africa, and his anti-apartheid activism had connected him forever with their just cause and struggle for freedom.

On his return he published a book which is still recognized as being of historical significance. The title resonated with me as I reflected on the course of events since I arrived in Jerusalem almost six years ago. His famous book is called *Naught for Your Comfort*. The title is a quote from a G.K. Chesterton poem, and the stanza from which it comes is:

*I tell you naught for your comfort,
Yea, naught for your desire,
Save that the sky grows darker yet
And the sea rises higher.*

Huddleston left South Africa aware that the struggle for freedom had only just begun. "The sin of racial pride, the evil of the doctrine of apartheid, must be condemned by the Church and the consequences of apartheid must be clearly and unmistakably proclaimed. This is prophecy: it is also politics," he wrote. But it is sobering to think that when Huddleston left South Africa condemning the sins of apartheid, it was another 40 years before the apartheid infrastructure fell and an election was held in which every single South African – Black, Coloured and White people – exercised their right to vote. Huddleston was right about South Africa in 1955: it is going to be a long struggle for freedom – the sky grows darker yet – but freedom did come, in time.

I write this now not to make the case that apartheid South Africa and the state of Israel are the same thing; that is an argument case for another time. Rather, I seek to make the point, which was Huddleston's point, that the struggle for freedom is almost always longer and harder than we imagine. Those who hope that there is a fast track to a solution for an intractable problem such as the Israel/Palestine question, may relent and give up long before the goal can be achieved. Standing as we do now, almost a year into a terrible war in Gaza and 58 years into Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, there is still a very long way to go before all the peoples of Israel and Palestine will be able to live alongside one another in freedom, equality and security.

In my view, a reflection on the present situation in this ongoing conflict should

be founded on some fundamental principles. Firstly, that Israel has a right to exist on the basis of the UN Resolution 181 dating from 1947. Secondly, that Palestinians suffered multiple grievous injustices which resulted from the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, which Palestinians know as the Nakba, the Catastrophe. This left millions of Palestinians dispossessed of their homes, their land and their fundamental freedoms.

It must also be understood that the Israeli occupation of the West Bank from 1967 and the blockade of Gaza since 2007 is an intolerable injustice which has compounded the previous dispossessions.

It should also be clearly stated that Israel has the right to self-defence and it has the power to achieve it. Surely it must be accepted that Palestinians also have the right to self-defence and have no such means.

Finally, it is necessary to continue to acknowledge that Hamas conducted a terrifying terrorist atrocity against some military forces and many civilians in the border areas of Gaza on Oct. 7, 2023 and this must be unreservedly condemned.

All of these statements underpin the way in which I approach the present conflict (and there are so many more which could be stated but time does not permit). They form part of the essential idea that the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians did not begin on Oct. 7, 2023. Those who simply state that Hamas initiated all this on the fateful day have shamefully missed all that went before it. There is a long and complicated history which must be understood. To detach the present bloody conflict from its historical context makes it impossible to engage coherently with present events and to consider future pathways towards any kind of resolution which is not simply an end to the Gaza War. The problems are far wider and deeper than that one devastating killing zone.

I arrived in Jerusalem six years ago to take up the role of dean of St. George's College. The college is neither a school nor a university but rather, the Anglican centre for pilgrimage in the Holy Land. We serve the whole Anglican Communion and run approximately 22 study pilgrimages each year (in normal times). When I accepted the role, I knew I was coming to serve in a part of the world which was riven with conflict, and I knew that the conflict would inevitably feature in my ministry. I have always seen it as part of St. George's purposes in running pilgrimages, to present the current political realities of Israel/Palestine. For myself, I believed I was well informed of the complex history and realities of the land, having first travelled there in 1981 to work in a church-run hostel for six months and having taken a close interest in the region ever since. It has been a shock to realize how little I truly understood until I fully rooted myself in the land and shared closely in the experiences of the people.

St. George's College has a long history, which has always sought to bridge the divide between Israelis and Palestinians, between Jews, Muslims and Christians. I fully committed to that vocation, although I felt my primary loyalty to be with Palestinians. As time has gone on, that lack of impartiality has become increasingly marked. The war in Gaza and its many



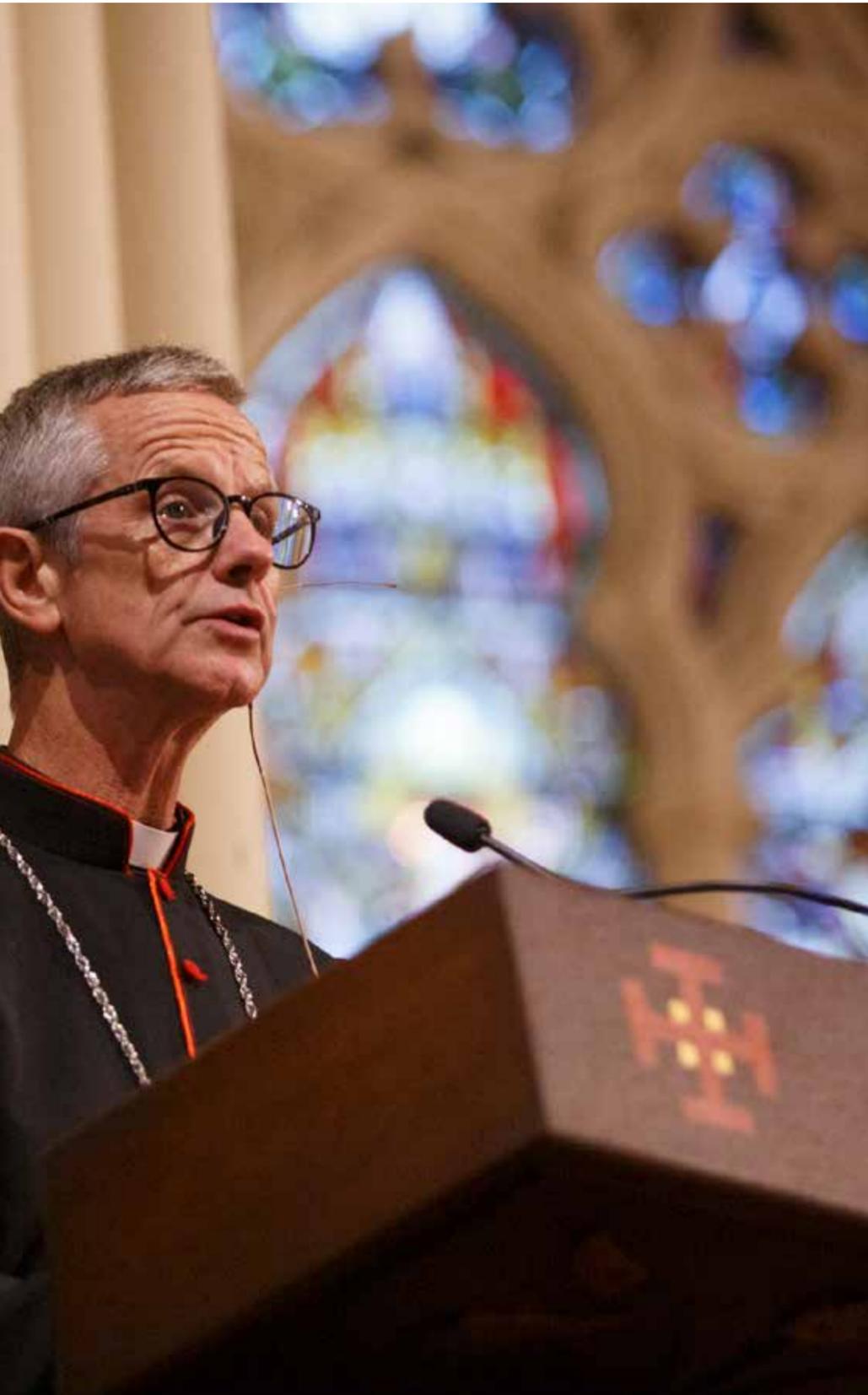
The Very Rev. Richard Sewell, dean of St. George's College, Jerusalem, gives the Snell Lecture at St. James Cathedral.

ramifications strengthened my convictions in the just cause of Palestinian liberation and the essential goal of statehood. I uphold the right of the State of Israel to exist but the maintenance of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem and the blockade of Gaza, which became a more or less accepted part of the political terrain, are deep and intolerable wounds on the land and damages all its people. These are wounds which, lacking treatment, have turned septic. The way in which Israel's occupation became accepted in international perspective, too, is well illustrated by the number of Christian pilgrims from all over the world, who glibly describe their "pilgrimage to Israel" without being in the least bit aware of all the times they have passed in and out of Palestine or, if you prefer, the "Occupied Palestinian Territories." Their tour guides either obscure these facts or are happy to go along with their pilgrims' willing indifference to it. Still, far too many Christian pilgrim groups hide behind the fig leaf description of "The Holy Land" to avoid having to engage in complex and possibly uncomfortable realities. Holy Land pilgrimage too easily hovers a few inches above the brutal facts on the ground in an

attempt at a holy avoidance of uncomfortable truths.

The catastrophic events of Oct. 7, 2023 and the ensuing brutal and merciless devastation of Gaza by Israel has at least put paid to all that avoidance. No one can honestly believe now that the status quo in Israel/Palestine as it existed on Oct. 6, 2023 was sustainable or desirable, nor that a return to that state of affairs is achievable in the future. Everything has changed and to some extent that is good, but the cost of removing the veil of ignorance is so very high and contains multiple tragedies that are going to take generations to process and heal. There is no going back; we have to go forward, and the deep challenge of these days is to seek to ensure that the steps forward we take must be onwards to a future in which everyone who lives in the land between the river and the sea is enabled to live as an equal citizen, and that future plans must not institutionalize a system of first class, second class and non-citizens.

The present situation in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel almost defies adequate description. Many people around the world, at least those who have not entirely given up on following international news,



Archbishop in Toronto. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

have been exposed to this mass destruction more than any other recent foreign war; however there is so much more occurring than is being reported. In the absence of the world's media in Gaza because Israel will not permit them, there are multiple realities and stories that will only emerge in time. Hamas and Israel have locked themselves into positions where neither is prepared to retreat even one inch. Both are seeking the vital sense of decisive victory that will enable them to move into the next phase of the conflict from a position of strength. The civilian population of Gaza is paying the price, and it is catastrophic.

The Anglican Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza City is one of our diocesan institutions. It gives us a reliable perspective into the conflict from ground level. There are multiple horrific stories (similar to the hundreds that have been seen in news reports) which we have heard directly from our staff there. A few months ago, the hospital was evacuated because of a general instruction by the Israeli army to flee to a supposed safe zone. But under a significant international outcry, Israel assured us that our staff and patients would be safe. Thus, several days after a trau-

matic departure, the hospital reopened. It is still the only functioning hospital in the north of Gaza. It has taken hits during the war, but unlike other hospitals it has not been flattened. It is operating way over capacity with new seriously injured patients arriving every day. There are insufficient medical supplies to do the necessary operations that are required. Women giving birth often do not have pain-killing relief. Our staff are exhausted on their feet and they are going hungry. Most are getting no more than one meal a day and at most, three hot meals per week. Patients are getting less than this, and ill patients will not recover without nutritious food.

The statistics alone are terrifying. Despite Israel's assurance to the contrary, they are still not permitting sufficient food and water into the Gaza Strip. There is continuing danger of famine, which would be an irreversible disaster of starvation and disease. Polio has reappeared for the first time in 50 years, and if the current attempt at an inoculation program does not succeed, there will be another avoidable disaster. Maximum suffering seems to have been part of the strategy. Senior politicians and generals declared their intent at the start and they have pursued those

policies with conviction despite latterly denying the intent and often declaring that there is no lack of food and no danger of starvation.

*I tell you naught for your comfort,
Yea, naught for your desire,
Save that the sky grows darker yet
And the sea rises higher.*

The harsh and brutal reality is that whenever the war in Gaza ends, it will not in any sense be the end of the conflict. You might say, to employ a well-known phrase, that it would be "the end of the beginning." It is so hard to imagine how Israelis and Palestinians will be able to live together in future, such is the deepening of division and the intensification of hatred that has developed. We neither know where we are going nor how we will get there. Of course, the whole region has been significantly destabilized over the past six months and the danger of the war spreading into Lebanon and involving Iran and their proxies in more significant ways, is a very real prospect, some arguing that it is inevitable. Recent events have made this prospect perilously likely.

All of this paints a very bleak picture before even describing the devastating impact which the war is having on the 2.7 million Palestinians who live in the Occupied West Bank. Whole neighbourhoods, hospitals and universities are *not* being flattened as in Gaza, but there is very significant military activity there too, which has escalated in recent weeks. Israel will say that they are rooting out Hamas terror cells (and inevitably there is some of that) but it is impacting the wider community in devastating and frightening ways. Freedom of movement is seriously curtailed. Hundreds of thousands of people have lost their jobs, poverty is growing and hunger is becoming a reality. There are multiple effects which are impacting the day to day lives of Palestinians and making life intolerable for many. There are multiple elements of Israel's occupation which long predate Oct. 7, 2023, such as home demolitions, forced removal of people from their long-established communities, arrest and detention without charge or trial, and refusal of permits to build new housing and tight control and limitation of the water and electricity supply. When all of these brutal and unjust practices are considered, it is not hard to imagine that many Palestinians, including significant numbers of Christians, have left the land or are planning to in order to seek a better life elsewhere, despite their deep attachment to and love of the land.

Where does all of this put us right now? There is enough violence, hatred and division in Israel and Palestine to last more than a lifetime. It's made all the more painful because of the place that Jerusalem, and all the land, holds for the people of the Abrahamic faiths. Jews, Christians and Muslims revere the land. They feel spiritually rooted in it because of the events of salvation history for each faith that have taken place there. We call Jerusalem the City of Peace but in recent times it has been anything but that; in fact, it rarely if ever has been peaceful. There is enough religious fervour and competition over the ownership of the land to sustain this conflict for generations to come. We can all use our holy scriptures to demonstrate that we should take precedence. But Jerusalem has had to be shared for millennia. Every attempt to claim the city for one faith has failed. No one will surrender the special place Jerusalem has for them, and none of the competing groups will give up the claim to their homeland. Instead of using our religion to beat each other, people of faith should dig deep to find the best of our spiritual wisdom and resources to discover the ways to live together in tolerance and equality. To adapt a phrase from the economic sphere, regarding the land, here

there is enough for everyone's need but not enough for everyone's greed. Christians are now a tiny minority throughout the land and perhaps they appear marginal or even irrelevant in the context of the whole conflict. But I believe Christians individually and the Church corporately have an important role to play. It is one that the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem is trying to exercise through all of our ministries – our schools, our hospitals and our care centres. Living together means serving one another. Ultimately, we will discover a better way when the peoples of the land can say "I belong to Jerusalem" rather than "Jerusalem belongs to me."

Trevor Huddleston gave to his readers "naught for your comfort" and my message is essentially the same. The hopeful outcome for us is somewhere over the horizon. Right now, we must concentrate on the next good thing we can do and the next good thing we can say. We must oppose and stop this war. The release of hostages held in Gaza and the release of Palestinians unjustly held in Israel is a necessary precondition for the establishment of a ceasefire which is such an urgent need. The International Court of Justice ordered Israel to take specific provisional measures to prevent the crime of genocide against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. It is hard to see how their actions since that ruling have complied with that requirement. Despite inevitable war fatigue in Europe and North America, it is still vital that people do not avert their eyes from this conflict. It is hard to watch, it feels intractable, and resolution still feels a long way off, but simply turning away from it is not a viable option. Of course it is far, far harder for those actually living through it. Do not forget, this war, this entire conflict, has everything to do with the populations of Western countries for multiple historical and current political reasons. It is certainly going to take years, not months, to make a difference, but the world cannot afford to avoid this situation any more. Huddleston concluded his book saying that he was unable to predict the future for Black South Africa, but he wrote a simple and powerful affirmation on which the way forward would have to be founded. It holds true for Israel/Palestine too:

He said that the gospel message relies on "the simple recognition that all people are made in the image and likeness of God; that in consequence each person is of infinite and eternal value; the state exists to protect the person but the state is always of inferior value to the person."

That seems to me to be an important conviction on which to establish a foundation and from there to build a path forwards. It will take the best of minds and hearts to rescue all the people of Israel and Palestine from slipping further towards mutual destruction. Huddleston had to wait 40 years from writing *Naught for Your Comfort* before he was able to celebrate the end of the apartheid regime, but he did at least live to see that joyful day. The prospect for a joyful outcome for Israelis and Palestinians also seems to be decades away, but as with the South African anti-apartheid movement, it will require massive international effort and mobilization to bring an end to the conflict in the Holy Land. To give up on the struggle and to step back again (as has occurred since the failure of the Oslo Process in 2000) would be disastrous for all communities in the land. Indeed, it would only cause more trouble for the international community and would lead to a further downward spiral in Palestine/Israel and way beyond their borders too. It is in everyone's best interests to continue grappling with the intractable issues and to seek peaceful pathways towards a just solution.

St. George's College buffeted by war

Absence of pilgrims squeezes finances

BY STUART MANN

THE conflict in the Holy Land is having an impact on the financial viability of St. George's College, an Anglican centre for pilgrimage in Jerusalem.

"We've had no pilgrim groups since last October, and at the moment we can't see the end of the war and can't imagine when they will come back," says the Very Rev. Richard Sewell, dean of the college.

Dean Sewell was in Toronto on Sept. 29 to preach at St. James Cathedral and deliver the Snell Lecture (see pages 8-9). He was here at the invitation of the Very Rev. Stephan Hance, rector of the cathedral and dean of Toronto. The two men are old friends.

During an interview, Dean Sewell said the war has had a profound impact on the region's economy, including businesses that cater to tourists and pilgrims, many of which are owned and operated by Christians. While some individuals continue to make their way there to stand in solidarity with Israelis or Palestinians, groups of pilgrims have stopped going.

"People who are dependent on the tourist and pilgrim business have no income, so they are really struggling," he said. "Poverty and hunger are beginning to be a thing. In the West Bank, there is no social security, so if you don't have work and don't have income, you have no money. There is nothing the government will do to support you."

St. George's College hasn't been spared the economic fallout. After enduring two years of shutdown during the COVID-19 pandemic, which



The Old City of Jerusalem is just steps away from St. George's College, an Anglican centre for pilgrimage.

decimated its financial reserves, it was looking forward to rebounding in 2023. Then the war started.

"We were fully booked for the year, and then bang, it finished in one stroke," said Dean Sewell. "All of the bookings collapsed. We lost all of them. It was devastating."

The college is currently closed to in-person visits and pilgrimages, and staff hours have been cut back. He has no idea when it will open again. "Nobody knows what the trajectory of this war is. Nobody can see an end. We hope for it sooner, not later, but it could be a month, two months, a year. We just have

to be ready when it does."

In times of peace, the college offers courses that include guided pilgrimages to the holy sites in Israel and Palestine. It provides residential accommodation for up to 40 pilgrims at a time. Located steps away from the Old City of Jerusalem, it is a popular destination for pilgrims from around the world. It celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2020.

To keep in touch with its supporters during the war, the college posts videos of the holy sites on its website. It also makes use of podcasts, social media and Zoom. "It's not an adequate alternative

to in-person, face-to-face contact in the land, but when you can't do that, it's a pretty good second," he says. "People can engage with us in lots of ways. We're not silent and we haven't disappeared, even though we're closed to in-person visits and pilgrimage."

The college is planning a fundraising campaign to help pay staff for the coming year and rebuild its financial reserves. Before and after his visit to Toronto, Dean Sewell met with Episcopalians in the United States to discuss the appeal, which will launch on Dec. 1. "So far, the response has been really

encouraging. We feel prayerfully, humbly confident that the Lord will bless us with what we need."

He says it's important to keep the staff employed during the war, not only so the college will be ready when the time comes to reopen, but to provide them with a means of living. "I don't want to say to my staff, who are predominantly Palestinian, that we're going to have to let you go. There are no alternative jobs at the moment, so I would be consigning them to poverty. I'm really hopeful that we will have the funds to be able to tide them over for the time being."

Authors to discuss 'wall' between Jews, Palestinians

BY NORAH BOLTON

THE Bishop's Committee on Interfaith Ministry had a challenge. How do we as Christians respond to conflicts in the Middle East? One of our members was in Jerusalem on Oct. 7 and had to be helped to leave Israel. We turned to a book with a provocative title, *The Wall Between: What Jews and Palestinians don't want to know about each other*. What if the authors could speak to us in person?

On Nov. 6 at 7 p.m., Anglicans have an opportunity to hear from Raja Khouri and Jeffrey Wilkinson at Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St. or join a livestream online. These authors will help us understand the

long and complicated backgrounds of Jews and Palestinians, showing how walls get built: by knowledge acquired as members of our families and traditions; through stories that stay alive through retelling; and the shared mortar elements of the wall – identity, trauma and victimhood. The authors, who are also friends, provide background from their Jewish and Palestinian contexts and help us understand elements also entering our North American culture – antisemitism, the Nakba, Zionism, and Palestinian resistance.

What is the answer to breaking down the wall? The authors provide no easy ones but show us

real-life examples: deep listening to the other; affirming the other's suffering as valid and each as willing to accept both; asking their communities, as well as our own, to pursue a common value – justice for all human beings. They challenge us to move toward it, not just from a wish for safety and freedom from oppression, but to a sense of freedom to create a different future. The diocese invites you to attend the event, learn more and join this important conversation (see ad on Page 11).

Norah Bolton is the secretary of the Bishop's Interfaith Committee.

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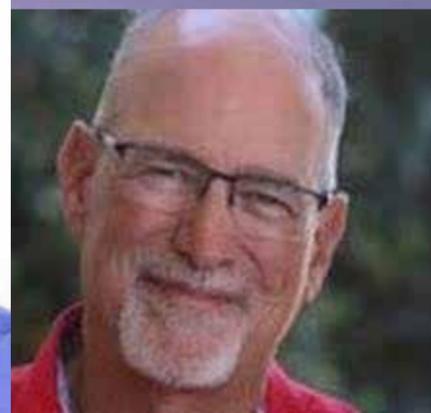
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WANT TO KNOW ABOUT EACH OTHER

THE WALL BETWEEN

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Anglicans walk for Grassy Narrows

MORE than 30 Anglicans took part in the Grassy Narrows River Run in Toronto on Sept. 18 to protest the ongoing mercury poisoning crisis at Grassy Narrows First Nation in northern Ontario. The walk and rally, attended by about 8,000 people, started at Grange Park and ended at Queen's Park. It included speeches and an Indigenous round dance on Bay Street. The protestors demanded fair financial compensation for Grassy Narrows First Nation, an end to industrial threats such as mining, logging and nuclear waste dumping, and support for Grassy Narrows to restore its way of life and wellness.

Grassy Narrows is suing the federal and provincial governments, alleging Canadian and Ontarian officials have consistently put the profits of industry ahead of a community poisoned by dumped mercury waste.



Anglicans walk to Queen's Park to demand justice for Grassy Narrows First Nation. From left are Christine Ivy, Bishop Riscylla Shaw, Ryan Weston, the Rev. Julie Burn and Jim Purvis. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



Making a statement.



The Red Rebels Toronto, a performance troupe dedicated to illuminating the global environmental crisis and supporting organizations that are trying to save humanity, enter Grange Park.



Some members of the Anglican contingent gather for a photo outside St. George by the Grange church before the start of the walk to Queen's Park. The church provided refreshments and a place for walkers to assemble their signs.



A large banner is spread out at Queen's Park for aerial viewing by media helicopters.

THE LORD GOD MADE THEM ALL

The Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen Fields, Dean Stephen Hance and the Rev. Lynn Braye bless pets at the annual Blessing of Animals service on the west lawn of St. James Cathedral on Oct. 5. The service is often held in churches on or near the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of pets and animals. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



New executive director hired

Continued from Page 1

and where they need help. And I'm keen to advance Cast the Net in the new year."

He describes his leadership style as servant-leadership, using a collaborative approach to help people make key decisions.

An accountant by profession, Mr. Balendra comes to the diocese

after working at a public service regulator for the past 18 years. A lifelong Anglican, he is a member of St. Bede, Toronto, which he attends with his wife and daughter, and is currently the rector's warden.

Bishop Andrew Asbil says he is delighted that Mr. Balendra has accepted the role of executive director.

"He brings such a wealth of experience in his work and volunteering, both in the Church and wider world," he says. "He is thoughtful, compassionate, hard-working and strategic. All these gifts are undergirded with a strong faith. I am looking forward to working closely with him."

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70 YEARS STRONG

St. Paul, Rexdale celebrates its 70th anniversary with a service and reception on Sept. 22. Clockwise from above: members and guests enjoy the reception; parishioner Grace Olds and the Rev. Randy Williams, priest-in-charge, cut the anniversary cake; sharing the Peace. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



Parish celebrates centennial year

THIS has been a year of spiritual renewal and centennial celebrations at St. George Memorial, Oshawa. The motto for the year is posted on the church lawn: Honouring our past, renewing our present and building our future in Christ.

At the Sunday Eucharist on April 24, the Rev. Dr. Alvarado Adderley dedicated and blessed a beautiful new altar frontal, designed and stitched by long-time parishioner Bill Fitches and given in memory of two former dedicated parishioners, Nancy Miller and Eleanor Ireland. The frontal depicts the three incarnations of the parish. The two previous structures built in 1837 and 1852 are shown in sepia tones on either side of the colourful version of the present building, completed in 1924. To complement his splendid project, Mr. Fitches prepared a book showing the various stages of progress, from initial sketches to final unveiling. This book has been made available for all to see.

At that service, Mr. Adderley also celebrated all the volunteers who have contributed to worship and ministry at St. George's throughout its history.

On May 4, St. George's participated in Doors Open Oshawa. Visitors toured the historic church, listened to a series of organ and chime concerts, and enjoyed meeting with parishioners. Interestingly, the City of Oshawa was incorporated in 1924, sharing the centennial year celebrations.

On May 11, a festive choral evening marked the actual date of the first worship service held in St. George's one hundred years before. Many visitors celebrated together through song and worship, followed by a reception.

On May 16, Bishop Riscylla Shaw joined the parish for the induction of its newly arrived priest, the Rev. Dr. Alvarado Adderley. Special guests and members of Mr. Adderley's former parish gathered with parishioners to celebrate the beginning of this new chapter in the long history of St. George's. A happy reception followed.

As St. George's centennial year continues, more special events are planned. Visit www.stgeorgesosha.com for details.

Submitted by St. George Memorial, Oshawa.



Members enjoy St. George's centenary year. PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. GEORGE MEMORIAL, OSHAWA.

PLAYING & SINGING FOR FAITHWORKS

Members of St. Christopher, Richmond Hill (at right) take part in a ping pong and karaoke fundraiser at the church on Sept. 14, raising a record \$42,845 for FaithWorks, the diocese's annual outreach appeal. More than 80 people took part in the afternoon event, playing ping pong for two hours followed by karaoke for two hours. The amount surpassed the \$25,000 target and last year's total of \$37,000. As the Rev. Canon Dr. Philip Der said to his congregation, "If you have not experienced a miracle, here is a miracle for you. Let us bless the Lord!" PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. CHRISTOPHER, RICHMOND HILL



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LOOKING AHEAD

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

NOV. 1 - Holy Communion for All Saints Day (BCP) at 6 p.m., followed by a light supper, then at 7 p.m. historian the Rev. Dr. Jim Leatch will present an illustrated feature talk about his choir tour with Royal St. George's College to Portugal and Spain in June. At St. Olave, Swansea, Bloor St. W. and Windermere Ave., Toronto.

NOV. 2 - Christmas craft and gift sale with vendors, baking, A.C.W. crafts, attic treasures, Christmas goods and luncheon, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale, 2182 Kipling Ave. For more info, call 416-743-1993.

NOV. 2 - Christmas Market, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., featuring home baking, snack bar, basket draw, jams and jellies, plus vendors selling place-mats, jewelry, knitted items, small art pieces and more, St. Barnabas, 361 Danforth Ave. Toronto.

NOV. 2 - Christmas Bazaar with baked goods, crafts, Santa's visit

at noon and more, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Holy Trinity, Guildwood, 85 Livingston Ave., Toronto.

NOV. 3, 17, 24 & DEC. 1 - On Nov. 3, All Souls Eucharist; on Nov. 17, Rock Eucharist featuring the music of Taylor Swift; on Nov. 17; on Nov. 24, Trans Day of Remembrance interfaith service, remembering all in the trans community who have died, along with their friends and family who mourn their loss; on Dec. 1, Advent Carol Service. All at 7 p.m. at Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street and Avenue Road, Toronto.

NOV. 9 - Christmas Fair, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., featuring art gallery, baking and preserves, books, toys and more, St. Cuthbert, Leaside, 1399 Bayview Ave., Toronto.

NOV. 9 - Sugar Plum Christmas Bazaar, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Margaret in-the-Pines, 4130 Lawrence Ave., Scarborough. Baked goods, crafts and more. Lunch in our Internet Café. For more information, call 416-284-4121 ext. 0.

NOV. 16 - Mistletoe Christmas Market, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Peter and Simon-the-Apostle, 525 Bloor St. E., Toronto. Arts and crafts for sale as well as pre-loved treasures and a bake sale. The day will include seasonal music performances by local musicians as well as members of the church choir. There will be a tearoom for refreshments. Admission is free.

NOV. 16 - Christmas market with home baking, silent auction, luncheon, books, vendors and more, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Christ Church Stouffville, 254 Sunset Blvd.,

Stouffville.

NOV. 22-28, 30 - Christmas Market at St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., one block north of the Keele subway station in Toronto. The market will launch on the church's Facebook page with a silent auction from Nov. 22 to Nov 28. Auction items will be picked up at the in-person sale featuring crafts, home baking, a children's table, vintage jewelry, books and more on Nov. 30 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

NOV. 23 - Annual Festival of Christmas with bake sale, country store and more, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., Holy Trinity Church, 140 Brooke St., Thornhill. Luncheon at 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. \$15 per person for tickets. Call 905-889-5931.

NOV. 23 - Holly Berry Bazaar with handicrafts, jewelry, home baked good, lunchroom, gently used china, books, tools, vendors and more, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Dunstan of Canterbury, 56 Lawson Rd., Scarborough. Santa and his helper will be on hand. Free admission. For more info, call the church office at 416-283-1844.

NOV. 23 - Annual Family Advent Fair, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., St. James Cathedral Centre, 65 Church St., Toronto. Featuring a special "Journey to the Manger" and enjoyable activities such as Advent wreath making, games, storytelling, take-home family Advent bags, Christmas card making for those experiencing homelessness, food, and a door prize. For more info, email Karyne Whalen at kwhalen@stjamescathedral.ca.

NOV. 24 - Choral Evensong (BCP) at

PRAYER CYCLE

FOR NOVEMBER

1. St. Athanasius, Orillia
2. St. David Anglican-Lutheran Church, Orillia
3. The Church Historical Society
4. Children's Ministry Conference
5. St. George, Fairvalley
6. St. James, Orillia
7. St. John, Waverly (Parish of Elmvale)
8. St. Luke, Price's Corners
9. St. Mark, Midland
10. Military Chaplains
11. All Saints, Markham
12. Christ Church, Stouffville
13. Christ Church, Woodbridge

14. Emmanuel, Richvale (Richmond Hill)
15. Grace Church, Markham
16. Holy Trinity, Thornhill
17. York Central Deanery
18. St. Christopher
19. St. John the Baptist, Oak Ridges
20. Children's Ministry in the Diocese
21. St. Mary, Richmond Hill
22. St. Philip on-the-Hill
23. Evangelists, New Tecumseth
24. FaithWorks
25. St. Peter, Churchill
26. St. David, Everett
27. St. John, Cookstown
28. St. John, East Orangeville
29. St. Luke, Rosemont
30. St. Andrew, Alliston

4 p.m. with St. Anne's church choir, followed at 4:45 p.m. by Let in the Light, featuring drama, music and poetry, presented by St. Olave's Arts Guild to lighten your mood as we prepare for the season ahead. In person at St. Olave, Bloor St. W. and Windermere Ave.

NOV. 30 - Christmas Bazaar with crafts, bake table, international food and more, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Holy Family, Heart Lake, 10446 Kennedy Rd. N., Brampton.

NOV. 30 - Annual Christmas Bazaar with bake table, silent auction, jewelry, art, coffee corner and more, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Our Saviour Don Mills, 1 Laurentide Dr., Don Mills.

DEC. 1 - First Sunday of Advent Evensong, 4 p.m. Church of St. Peter & St. Simon-the-Apostle, 525 Bloor St. E., Toronto. All welcome.

DEC. 7 & 8, 14 & 15 & 20-22 - The Christmas Story, a Toronto tradition

since 1938. Professional musicians and a volunteer cast present this charming hour-long nativity pageant. Suggested donation: \$25 adults, \$10 children. Visit www.thechristmasstory.ca to reserve seating or call 416-598-4521. At Holy Trinity, 19 Trinity Square, (on the west side of the Toronto Eaton Centre), Toronto. The Church is wheelchair accessible. American Sign Language interpretation on Dec. 14.

DEC. 15 - Joy to the World, 4 p.m., a concert of word and song, St. George on-the-Hill, 4600 Dundas St. W. Freewill offering.

JAN. 6 - Holy Communion for Epiphany (BCP) at 6 p.m., followed by a light supper, then at 7 p.m. Debbie Cowling presents an illustrated feature talk about her recent visit to Edinburgh and Glasgow. In-person at St. Olave, Bloor St. W. and Windermere Ave.

IN MOTION

Appointments

- The Rev. Frederick Kaaya (Diocese of Colorado), Priest-in-Charge of the Ahadi Ministry, Sept. 22.
- The Rev. Catherine Barley, Honorary Assistant, St. Mark, Midland, Sept. 26.
- The Rev. Jake Cunliffe, Priest-in-Charge, St. Andrew, Scarborough, Oct. 1.
- The Rt. Rev. Patrick White, Interim Priest-in-Charge, Grace Church on-the-Hill, while the Incumbent is on leave, Oct. 1.
- The Rev. Orvin Lao, Priest-in-Charge, St. John the Baptist, Oak Ridges, Nov. 25.

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):
- Messiah
- St. John, York Mills (Associate Priest)
- Parish of Fenelon Falls and Coboconk
- St. Paul, Uxbridge
- Trinity-St. Paul, Port Credit

Parish Selection Committee Process

First Phase - (not yet receiving names):

- Christ Church, Brampton
- St. George on-the-Hill

Second Phase - (receiving names via Bishop):

- Christ Church, Deer Park

Third Phase - (no longer receiving names):

- N/A

Celebration of New Ministry

- The Rev. Maria Ling, Incumbent, Holy Trinity, Thornhill, Nov. 30 at 2 p.m.
- The Rev. Brian Suggs, Incumbent, Christ Church, St. James, Dec. 15 at 4 p.m.

Conclusions

- The Rev. David Matthews will conclude his appointment as incumbent of St. Thomas a Becket (Erin Mills South) on Nov. 10. He will be taking up an appointment in the Diocese of Calgary.

Retirements

- The Rev. Canon Joanne Davies' last day with the Spiritual Care Department at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and St. John's Rehab was Oct. 31. In retirement, she will continue to serve on the Bishop's Committee on Healing Ministries.
- The Rev. Canon Simon Li's last Sunday at St. John, Willowdale will be July 27, 2025.

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