

## Church websites look outward

## New rector for St. James Cathedral



## Provincial Synod held in Toronto

# The Anglican

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## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

BY BISHOP PETER FENTY

# Give thanks today

I decided to write this article early in September, as I was inspired by two events that took place on Sept. 10 and 11.

On Sept. 10, I had the distinct honour and privilege of presiding at the celebration of the life and Christian witness of the Rev. Canon William "Bill" Riesberry in the parish of St. John, East Orangeville. It was a well-attended celebration befitting Bill, who always wore a smile on his face and was gracious to everyone he met. Many remarked that the liturgy was a wonderful thanksgiving for a good, long and faithful life of a husband, father, grandfather, brother, friend and priest.

Bill's daughter Jennifer gave a moving tribute to her father, whom she described as a person who loved life, cherished his family and cared for people. She spoke of how much he loved to laugh and be funny, and of the compassion and concern he had for persons on the margins of society.

God loaned Bill to us for 89 years, and what wonderful memories he has left us. We give thanks to God for a good and faithful priest, for the servant ministry he carried out and the many lives he touched.

On Sept. 11, I watched some of the events marking the 14th anniversary of the tragedy of 9/11. We were reminded that 14 years ago, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, sons, daughters and grandparents left their loved ones at home that day, never to return to them. No one in America or around the world could have imagined how that day would change the lives of all of us, in one way or another.

Continued on Page 4



## FIRST TIME

Youth at the new church of St. Mary and St. Martha on Weston Road in Toronto practice lighting a candle on the Advent wreath. It will be the first time the church celebrates Advent and Christmas. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

# Large turnout for start of new parish

## Name unique in diocese

BY STUART MANN

**THE** congregation of St. Mary and St. Martha is living up to its name, says the priest-in-charge of the diocese's newest church. "There is a wonderful combination of spirited devotion and discipleship with a ministry of hospitality and welcome," says the Rev. Beth Benson.

That was on full display at the church's inaugural service on Oct. 11, when 145 people gathered for worship and to celebrate the long-awaited beginning of their new parish. On the following Sunday, the church held a potluck lunch that drew another large crowd.

"I was touched by the hymnody and prayerfulness of that first

service," says Ms. Benson. "People were singing from their hearts."

St. Mary and St. Martha – a name that is unique in the diocese – is an amalgamation of four former churches in Toronto's north-west corner – the Church of the Advent, the Church of the Good Shepherd, St. David's on Lawrence Avenue and St. John, Weston. The congregation is worshipping in the building of the former Church of the Good Shepherd, located at 1149 Weston Rd.

For many, the first service also contained another key ingredient – people. Many had come from dwindling congregations that had

Continued on Page 11

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# New websites help churches look outward

Project promotes better online curb appeal

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

A project is underway to help churches proclaim the Gospel through a medium that is becoming an increasingly dominant form of communication: the Internet.

The Parish Website Project began about two years ago as a conversation between Stuart Mann, director of Communications for the diocese, and the Rev. David Giffen, incumbent at Church of the Transfiguration, Toronto, about how to help parishes become more open and inviting online.

"Websites, social media and digital communications in the 21st century are incredible tools at our disposal, for both proclaiming the Gospel and seeking to build the Kingdom of God," says

Mr. Giffen.

Over the course of six months, parishes work with a professional web designer to create a new custom-built website and receive advice to help them establish a presence on social media. A professional photographer also visits each church to take high-quality photos for the new website.

The project is funded by an Our Faith-Our Hope grant of \$57,700 to build websites for 18 parishes. Each participating parish also contributes \$500.

The first group of parishes began the process in October 2014, with the goal of launching new websites the following Easter. So far All Saints, Whitby; St. Philip on-the-Hill, Unionville; St. Martin, Bay Ridges; St. George on Yonge; Christ Church, Bolton; and St.



The social media and website team at St. Martin, Bay Ridges in Pickering. Front row from left: Rob Mackay, Denise Farrugia, Joe Moore and the Rev. Dr. Alison Falby. Back row from left: Mark Lynn, Lee Lynn and Eugene Farrugia. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

## OUR FAITH OUR HOPE

*In this series, we look at how the diocese's Our Faith-Our Hope campaign is helping individuals and parishes re-imagine the church. For information about grants, visit [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca).*

Martin in-the-Fields have launched new sites, with several more on the way.

The websites are all built on WordPress, an easy-to-use platform for those with limited technical knowledge.

"It was a great gift," says the

Rev. Stephen Vail, incumbent at All Saints, Whitby. "We don't bat an eyelash about spending money on bricks and mortar. Spend some money on your website to get the best product you can."

An inviting website is increasingly important in a time when a church's curb appeal, once epitomized by a red door meant to attract passersby, has moved online. "People judge us based on our website. It's a front door, it's an entry," says the Rev. Dr. Alison Falby, incumbent at St. Martin, Bay Ridges.

Six months after launching its new website, Dr. Falby says St. Martin's is seeing success. "We have had people come to us based on our website. Even if it's someone looking for a place to have their wedding, that's something," she says.

While many parishes assume their websites are visited primarily by their own members, the project team asks them to think more deliberately about who they are trying to reach. "It really helped us focus on who we were hoping to attract and how to reach different audiences, partic-

ularly newcomers," says Dr. Falby.

Churches are encouraged to see their websites as one tool among many they can use to communicate, such as in-service announcements, bulletin boards, newsletters, email lists and social media.

All Saints, Whitby is taking that idea seriously. "We have a communications committee now," says Mr. Vail. "The project has helped us to be less self-focused and to take the question of our target audience and apply it to other communication tools."

The Parish Website Project is currently helping its third group of parishes create and launch new websites. Once the Our Faith-Our Hope grant money has been spent, the project team will evaluate its success and consider applying for a second grant.

"The goal is that every parish we work with would end up with a website that would be the front door for seekers," says Mr. Giffen. "I hope that one by one, this will help parishes prioritize proclaiming the Gospel in new and different ways."



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He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.'

JOHN 21: 12-17



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# Christmas in prison

BY THE REV. CANON NORMAN COLLIER

**W**ould you want to be born in a prison?" The question was pretty direct, and somehow our Christmas conversation had steered into uncharted territory. But it was exactly the kind of question I had been hoping for.

Since the beginning of December, I have been meeting with small groups of Agassiz residents to talk about Christmas. It doesn't take much imagination to realize that Christmas in a jail is not going to be the same as Christmas in your living room. There is no fireplace, no Christmas pudding, no pretty packages, no warm candlelight glow, no family. Christmas looks pretty bleak.

Facing me are 10 young teens who are trying to put the Christmas story together. They are in jail for good reason. One is an auto thief, one traffics drugs, and several are here for assault. Robbery, impersonation, breaching court orders, second-degree murder – it is all here in this room.

Several of them know the Christmas story, and with a little help they can identify Mary and Joseph, Bethlehem, and the three Wise Men. But what do all these details mean, be-



yond a sentimental portrayal of the first Christmas?

So I start to explain that the eternal and omnipotent God did something unimaginable. God could have chosen to be born in a castle, to appear with power and glory, to settle into the lap of luxury, to visit the greatest city in the world. But that's not what we got. Instead, God appeared in rural Bethlehem with a teenage mom, in a barn that stank with manure. God could have had the best, but instead God chose the worst.

To get the discussion going, I ask them where God might appear today if Jesus were

to be born in 2014. Where are the places of need, the places of poverty, the forgotten places, the rough places?

I wait anxiously. Suddenly, one guy says a broken home. Another shouts out Afghanistan. Someone from Winnipeg says Jarvis and Main. And the guy beside me says Agassiz. The perfect answer. Then another resident asks, "Would you want to be born in a prison?" And the answer, of course, is no. No one would. Except God.

Christmas is the celebration of the Incarnation. It means that God became flesh at the place of our greatest need. God does not require perfection or respectability. God simply requires our need – and is ready to be born at any moment in the heart of all who call out for help.

Your Christmas might include presents and family and carols. But it won't be Christmas until it includes the birth of Christ in the place of your greatest need. In prison or out.

*The Rev. Canon Norman Collier is the chaplain at the Agassiz Youth Centre in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. This article first appeared in the Rupert's Land News in 2014.*

# Millennials changing how we give



**H**ow do we respond to the ways that millennials are changing the church? We're not just talking about reaching out to newcomers; we're talking specifically about people in their 20s and 30s – children

of the information age, who shun chequing accounts for e-transfers, access Wikipedia for instant clarification and touch base with friends via text and Instagram while avoiding telephone land lines altogether.

As a group, millennials have the potential to shake up the church in ways we have not seen for decades. We know they have the capacity to give, but they want their giving to have impact. It is not sufficient to "just give," as previous generations have. More than ever, parishes need to develop annual narrative budgets and to expose millennials to the ministry of the church; they need to invite millennials to take on leadership roles that are appropriate for them.

An article in *Today's Christian* last year noted that "church leadership is still dominated by those of our parents' and grandpar-

## THE STEWARD

BY PETER MISIASZEK

ents' generation, and the hierarchy is usually pretty entrenched." This seems typical of most congregations, as older members have more time, skill and experience. The generational difference this time is that millennials aren't prepared to wait. If denominational identification is less salient among young people and the opportunity to get involved isn't there, they will just go elsewhere.

This new way of thinking and engaging young people will have a profound impact on the collection plate – provided one will still be passed around. Many parishes have already adopted pre-authorized giving for their collections. Imagine a day when we are cashless and cheque-less. The parish of St. Mary and St. Bartholomew in Saint John, New Brunswick, seems to be ahead of the ball on this one. To my knowledge, they are the first Anglican church in Canada to install a debit and credit card machine in their narthex. As well, "giving kiosks" seem to be gaining trac-

tion with some evangelical churches in the United States. Given the use of technology across all sectors, it's only a matter of time before they become commonplace in our parishes as well.

The Diocese of Toronto has invested considerable energy and resources in developing mobile apps for giving and an online platform that will issue a tax receipt moments after a gift has been made. Online giving has increased significantly in recent years, but we need to learn how to motivate giving on the Internet; we need to connect with young people where they tend to gather online.

All of this is to say that demographic change is impacting the way that people give. In the not-too-distant future, we can expect a church where the collection plate will not be passed, where everyone in the congregation will be giving through pre-authorized giving, where churches will have giving kiosks in the narthex, where financial planning is taught side-by-side with stewardship education, and where all program registration will be done online. Millennials are ushering in a whole new way to give to ministry. We need not fear the change, but it is coming.

# Every day is an opportunity to say thanks

Continued from Page 1

Many of those who died had no opportunity to say goodbye for the last time to their loved ones. The tragedy of that day was a stark reminder to all of us that as great and wonderful as life can be, it is equally frail and at times very uncertain. It is not difficult to believe or imagine that many who lost beloved family and friends would have liked to tell them how much they loved them and appreciated the things they did and shared.

As we prepare for and celebrate the birth of the Christ Child, the one who came that we might have life in all its fullness – God's gift of his only Son for our salvation – may we pause and give thanks to Almighty God for those with whom we share our lives. Let us not take for granted those with whom we share our lives. God has made us to be in relationship. He chose to come among us, our

Emmanuel, and share in our humanity. Christ dwells among us to share in our joys and sorrows, our ups and downs, and that we may know that we are loved by God. Bill's life was celebrated by family, friends, former parishioners and the church, as he exemplified the importance of love for family and care for others. Those who lost family and friends on 9/11 would probably have given anything to have said one more goodbye.

Every day is a God-given opportunity to tell loved ones, friends, co-workers and the many with whom we share our lives, that they are loved, appreciated and valued by us.

My hope this Christmas season is that we would be more intentional in expressing thanks to Almighty God for life and the gift of salvation in his Son Jesus Christ. I also hope that we would show and express grati-

tude to those whom we can so easily take for granted – family, friend, co-worker and neighbour.

While tributes to loved ones and friends at retirement functions and funerals are fitting and appropriate, let us not lose the opportunity to tell them while they are with us how much they are loved and cherished.

In this season of love, peace and goodwill, and as we gather to celebrate the birth of Christ in our churches and at meals with family, friends and others, may we be reminded that we are called to love God and neighbour, as we love ourselves.

A blessed and happy Christmas to you and all with whom you share your lives.

*Bishop Peter Fenty is the area bishop of York-Simcoe.*



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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 the largest population of aboriginal peoples in the country.

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# New rector appointed to St. James Cathedral

Canon Andrew Asbil begins on Jan. 25

BY STUART MANN

**THE** Rev. Canon Andrew Asbil, incumbent of the Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street, has been named the new rector of St. James Cathedral and dean of Toronto. He will succeed Dean Douglas Stoute, who is stepping down in January.

"To go from the corner of Avenue and Bloor to the corner of King and Church is a real gift," says Canon Asbil, 54, of his move from Redeemer to the cathedral, both located in downtown Toronto. "It's a wonderful opportunity for my family and I to stay really connected to the city we love."

Canon Asbil, who begins his new post on Jan. 25, says he plans to build on the work done by Dean Stoute and the staff at the cathedral, and to explore new avenues for mission and ministry.

"I see opportunities for going deep into the neighbourhood, of making new relationships with George Brown College and Ryerson University and other community gathering places," he says. "I'd like to expand our liturgical diet so it's not only steeped in our rich Anglican tradition but branches out in new ways."

Canon Asbil, who has served at Redeemer for the past 14 years, says ministry in the downtown core presents many challenges and opportunities. "The challenge is that living vertically means that we live with a greater amount of isolation. It feels better because we've raised ourselves up but we feel more and more disconnected. I think that's going to be one of the greatest gifts that downtown core churches offer – how do we break down those walls of isolation that keep people separated? How do we help people understand that they're actually connected to their neigh-

bours and create common space where faith has a chance to sink in?"

He says the cathedral is ideally situated and suited for that to happen. "Because of its size, the cathedral can be a daunting place for some people to go into, and yet at the same time it offers this atmosphere of mystical space in the heart of a city that's going 100 miles per hour. We're able to say, 'Step inside, come and see. Christ is here for you, we are here for you. Let's discover together how God is calling us to serve on this corner, in this city, in the world.'"

He says he has been shaped by the ministry at Redeemer and is proud of the church's commitment to social justice and advocacy. Located at one of the busiest corners in the city, Redeemer's lunch program feeds about 100 people a day; the program costs more than \$130,000, most of which comes from open plate offerings. "Redeemer is a community that says, 'We're in.' It's the kind of place that wants to experiment and take some really deep risks."

Canon Asbil graduated from the University of Waterloo with a degree in science and received his Master of Divinity from Huron College in London, Ont. He was ordained in the Diocese of Niagara and served in three parishes there – St. George in Guelph, St. Alban in Acton and the Church of the Incarnation in Oakville – before going to Redeemer in 2001. He has been a member of the Diocese of Toronto's Diocesan Council and Executive Board. At the national level, he is chair of the Faith, Worship and Ministry Committee and chair of the Liturgy Task Force. He is married to Mary and together they have five children, ages 11 through 18.

Dean Stoute says it has been "wonderful and a great privilege"



Canon Andrew Asbil



Dean Douglas Stoute



Canada Day celebrations at the cathedral. In the background is the Cathedral Centre. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

to have served the cathedral for the past 21 years. "The most important thing that has happened, and that I am very grateful for, is the way the congregation has changed," he says. "It is very culturally diverse now. What you're beginning to see on Sunday is a lot like Toronto itself."

This has happened because the cathedral has been intentional about including newcomers in all aspects of its liturgical life, he says. "It's important because the

cathedral is a living entity in an ever-changing city," he says. "We are reaching a broad spectrum of people, not just one small enclave."

Under Dean Stoute's leadership, the cathedral's staff has grown significantly, mainly due to the activity at the Cathedral Centre. There are about 48 full- and part-time staff members, including three full-time clergy and four part-time priests who assist in the pastoral and liturgical life of the

cathedral.

He says Canon Asbil can expect "a unified, diverse community who will be very supportive." Of his own plans, he says he will continue serving as a priest in the diocese, but not in an executive role. "I've been here for 21 years, and as much as I love it and hate the idea of leaving, I think it's right for the cathedral. It's good to leave before the lights are turned out," he says with a smile.

## Busy Cathedral Centre brings together diverse groups

BY STUART MANN

**PERHAPS** nothing quite so neatly illustrates the size and complexity of St. James Cathedral as a calendar on the wall of a small room on the second story of its glass-and-brick Cathedral Centre.

The calendar occupies the entire wall – about 10 feet across – and is filled with a blizzard of coloured dots, indicating some 800 events that are planned throughout the year. The office has a staff of four, just to manage it all.

Indeed, a tour of the cathedral's office and meeting space on a weekday morning provides a glimpse of church life that is rarely seen – large rooms packed with people, staff indistinguish-

able from visitors, and the hum of activity and purpose everywhere. "We're really a community hub," says Dean Douglas Stoute.

Located at the corner of King and Church streets in downtown Toronto, the cathedral is open seven days a week and provides at least four worship services a day, beginning with a Eucharist at 7:30 a.m. This past summer, about 400 people a day visited the historic Gothic building.

The cathedral figures prominently in the city's cultural landscape. It provided important outreach during the Occupy movement, supplying water and electricity to protestors camped out next door in St. James Park. It was the site of the Hon. Jim Flaherty's state funeral in 2014 and,

in previous years, welcomed the Queen on two separate occasions.

Much of the activity takes place in the new Cathedral Centre, an \$18 million renovation and expansion of the former parish house. The building has won international praise and received several awards. Modern and light-filled throughout, it acts as a conduit for the neighbourhood, bringing together a variety of groups and interests from the business, government and non-profit worlds.

"When the city wants to have meetings and consult with the neighbourhood, they come here," says Dean Stoute. The centre hosted mayoral debates in the last municipal election and a seminar on the plight of Christians in

the Middle East, chaired by the CBC's Mark Kelly. It regularly hosts forums on social, political and educational matters.

Rental income from the meetings and events helps to fund the cathedral's outreach, especially its weekly drop-in, which takes place on two levels of the Cathedral Centre. Among the services offered are haircuts to men and women, a foot-care clinic, pastoral counselling and referrals, and a nutritious lunch. The drop-in helps hundreds of people, every week of the year.

Business groups that rent space in the centre often see the drop-in and are moved to assist. Catering companies have provided chefs to prepare meals, food companies send products and a

local restaurant hosts an annual elegant holiday dinner in December for the drop-in's guests.

Leaders from around the world have come to the cathedral to tour the facilities and learn how they can emulate it. Trinity, Wall Street, an Episcopal church in New York, filmed a documentary about the cathedral's success.

In addition to the activity at King and Church streets, the cathedral owns and operates St. James the Less, a large and historic cemetery and crematorium at Parliament and Bloor streets. The rector of the cathedral is also the priest-in-charge of St. Bartholomew in nearby Regent Park, with the Rev. Walter Hanam serving as St. Bartholomew's vicar.

# My faith journey has been challenging

*Laura Walton, a member of Christ Church, Batteau in the episcopal area of York-Simcoe, was recently elected prolocutor of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, which comprises the dioceses of Algoma, Huron, Moosonee, Niagara, Ottawa, Ontario and Toronto. Representatives from each diocese meet every three years at Provincial Synod. For more about the work of Provincial Synod, see the related article on Page 7.*

The main duties of the prolocutor are to support the Archbishop and to assist as vice-chair at the meetings of Provincial Synod and its executive council. The term lasts until the next Provincial Synod in 2018.

My hope is to support mandates that have already been established by Provincial Synod but also to work on new ones that were proposed at our Synod this past October. I think it's critical to keep not only the executive council engaged in the work of Synod over the next three years but also those who are elected from each diocese. We have many gifts within our membership and it would be wonderful to utilize them beyond our in-person meetings. I hope we can also expand our diversity and knowledge base, to bring even more depth to the table.

I was born in Mississauga and grew up in Bramalea, now a part of Brampton. I moved to Nottawa, Ont. (near Collingwood) in 1998 to raise my two children and be closer to my parents, who moved to the area when my mother became the incumbent of a local parish. I'm the proud mom of my daughter Michaela, who is 19 and attending University of Toronto, my son Matthew, who is 17 and finishing Grade 12, and a three-year-old Siberian Husky named Shila.

I attended University of Toronto, com-



Laura Walton and Jean Bédard, the chancellor of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, at their installation service during Provincial Synod. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

pleting an Honours BA in criminology. I continued my studies at St. Michael's College, U of T, and attained certificates in counselling, specializing in mediation, bereavement and addictions. I currently work with the Anglican Church of Canada on their Youth Initiatives Team and am in private practice as a family and individual counsellor.

My faith journey has been challenging.

I am a cradle Anglican but attended an eclectic assortment of worship services with friends during high school. As a group, we would attend Baptist, Salvation Army, Pentecostal,

Roman Catholic and other churches. In Bramalea, I had a broad range of experiences, both cultural and religious, that influenced my faith, leading me to a strong sense that God is calling the church to be as inclusive as possible rather than exclusive. I struggled when my personal beliefs did not coincide with the church's stance on a topic. As a teen, I challenged my parish to let me be a server and reader when girls were less than welcome. I proudly watched my mother be ordained into a church that was not always quick to accept female clergy.

I currently work with youth who are struggling not only with their faith but with religious relevancy. I also see young families searching for a church home and often finding churches that aren't very flexible or open. My faith journey is a reflection of these struggles. At times it felt not only like people didn't

care about ministry but like God had no interest, either; at those times, I have wanted to walk away from our church and God. At other times, I find hope in others who are so selfless and positive in opening their doors and walking with those who need a hand up. I see the joy of God's love in those who are so full of grace and humility, and it is inspiring.

I enjoy working with youth and children at all levels of the church. Youth and children have a huge capacity to give from the heart, without prejudice or expectations. I'm also proud to be part of my church family at Batteau and am grateful that they are outward-looking. When they see those who struggle and are vulnerable, they do not hesitate to help. They do ministry for the sake of ministry, not because it will put bums in the pews or money on the plate. I'm proud to be part of this team, doing ministry because it's what we are called to do.

Five years from now I would love to be working on something to do with connecting our rural and northern communities with our more prosperous ones in the cities. I think there are ways to work with youth, children and young families who are hindered socially and geographically. The church has yet to fully grasp the ministry and outreach that is possible outside not only our church walls but our city boundaries. I hope we can build on the advocacy and social justice gifts that so many Anglicans have, and to move ministry in new and exciting ways.

My favourite passage from scripture is John 15:12: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." There is nothing simpler or more direct than that. It's what we owe to each other simply as human beings. Without love being the foundation of relationships and ministries, it becomes about fulfilling our own personal needs and achievements rather than supporting and loving others. We need to raise others up rather than tear them down over differences. We are not called to judge others: we are called to be a family with all its quirks and varying experiences. Love one another as I have loved you. If that is our guide on our faith journey, then there is no problem getting over the bumps on the road.

## Mary G. Griffith B.A., M.B.A., J.D.

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## Advent and Christmas at the Church of St Simon-the-Apostle

**Advent Lessons and Carols - Sunday November 29, 4pm**  
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**A Christmas Carol - Saturday December 12, 3pm**  
A dramatic reading of the abridged version of Charles Dickens classic with choral selections by St Simon's Choir and lots of audience sing-along carols. Tickets \$15/\$10

**Nine Lessons and Carols - Sunday December 20, 4pm**  
A beloved traditional selection of carols and readings by candlelight. A social gathering featuring mince tarts and mulled wine will follow.

**Christmas Eve - Thursday December 24, 10 pm**  
A candlelit traditional Eucharist service featuring Christmas carols & choral music.

**Christmas Day - Friday December 25, 10:30am**  
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# Archbishop re-elected Metropolitan

BY STUART MANN

**ARCHBISHOP** Colin Johnson has been re-elected Metropolitan, or senior bishop, of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario.

Archbishop Johnson, who is the bishop of the dioceses of Toronto and Moosonee, was re-elected for a second six-year term at Provincial Synod, held at St. Paul, Bloor Street on Oct. 14-16.

Two other people from the Diocese of Toronto figured prominently at Provincial Synod. Laura Walton, a member of Christ Church, Batteau in the episcopal area of York-Simcoe, was elected prolocutor, or vice-chair, of the group while Canon Christopher Riggs, a member of the Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street, retired as its chancellor.

"I'm delighted that Laura has been elected," says Archbishop Johnson. "She's had long experience with Provincial Synod, General Synod and our own diocesan Synod, so she brings a wealth of experience. It's also good to have

someone who comes from a smaller community, representing a different voice in the life of the church."

As chancellor, Canon Riggs provided legal counsel on a pro bono basis for the past six years. "His work has been a great gift to the church," says Archbishop Johnson. "He brought together the chancellors from all the dioceses in the province so they could have an interchange of ideas and also work together on common policies and procedures. Building up those relationships is really important."

Ms. Walton succeeds the Rev. Canon Rob Towler of the Diocese of Huron and Canon Riggs is succeeded by Jean Bédard, the former vice-chancellor of the Diocese of Ontario.

The theme of Provincial Synod was "Re-imagining Church in the Public Square" and a number of speakers reflected on that, including Premier Kathleen Wynne. She praised the Anglican Church for creating "communities of belong-



**Archbishop Colin Johnson is installed as Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario at a service at St. Simon-the-Apostle, Toronto. At left is the Rev. Geoffrey Sangwine of the Diocese of Toronto. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON**

ing" and advocating for the poor and marginalized.

"You don't just witness the harsh realities of marginalized peoples, whose struggles are often ignored – you take on their struggles as though they are your own," she said. "You help them find a voice. You help them find support, and that tightens the bonds among all of us. You help them find a roof over their heads and ensure there is food on their plates, and you provide access to economic opportunities so they can build a future for themselves and their families."

Other speakers included Hugh Segal, the former Conservative senator and current master of

Massey College, Archbishop Fred Hiltz and Dr. William Cavanaugh, a professor of theology at DePaul University in Chicago. Several dioceses showed videos about how they were reimagining church in the public square.

Archbishop Johnson says Provincial Synod's work over the next three years will focus on three main areas: theological education and vocations, advocacy with the provincial government, and developing cooperation between the seven dioceses that make up the ecclesiastical province (Algoma, Huron, Moosonee, Niagara, Ottawa, Ontario and Toronto.)

"In terms of advocacy, we'll

continue to work in the areas of poverty and homelessness," he says. "We are big providers of services to those who are poor. We're significant stakeholders in the conversation, so we'll bring our expertise to the table with the government."

Other areas of advocacy and conversation with the government will include increased funding for palliative care, a response to the issue of physician-assisted death, and school curriculum that accurately reflects the First Nations experience, particularly in regards to the residential schools.

The ecclesiastical province has worked with the government on a number of issues over the years, particularly ones that affect churches. This includes laws and regulations that govern heritage buildings, cemeteries, water use, land registration and funeral services. Much of the work is done with ecumenical partners. "It means that Anglicans, Roman Catholics and United Church members in the whole province can go together to the government on a particular issue and represent a large chunk of the electorate," says Archbishop Johnson.

More than half of all Anglicans in Canada live in the ecclesiastical province, which falls almost entirely within the geographic boundaries of the civil province. "We're in very good shape," says Archbishop Johnson. "The seven dioceses that comprise the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario are all strong. In a sense, it's the engine of the Canadian church."

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**CHRISTMAS EVE: DECEMBER 24**

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7:30pm Choral Eucharist & Procession to the Crèche

**CHRISTMAS DAY: DECEMBER 25**

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#### MESSIAEN'S LA NATIVITÉ DU SEIGNEUR

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19 | 4:00PM**

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**DECEMBER 3-30 | 12:30-4:00PM**

Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays (closed Dec 24) in the Archives & Museum. Admission free. Further details and times online.

## BRIEFLY

## Lutheran, Anglican youth meet in PEI

CLAY 2016, a national gathering of Lutheran and Anglican youth, will be held Aug. 17-21 at Charlottetown, PEI. Online registration opens Feb. 1. "We will be experi-

encing CLAY through the theme of 'Not For Sale,' with a focus on three areas: salvation not for sale, human beings not for sale, and creation not for sale," says Hannah Shirliff, communications coordinator. "After CLAY, we will share what we experienced and learned with others in our home communities." All registration and fee information can be found at [www.claygathering.ca](http://www.claygathering.ca).

## Blog provides free music resources

Jason Locke, director of music at St. George-the-Martyr, Parkdale, has started a new online music resource called Our Sacred Song. The blog is dedicated to sharing original settings of useful service music. Visit [www.oursacredsongs.weebly.com](http://www.oursacredsongs.weebly.com).



The Rev. Kyn Barker, a deacon at St. Matthew the Apostle, Oriole, shows how to send an email to Toronto's city council, urging support for the city's Poverty Reduction Strategy. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

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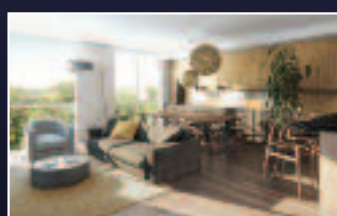


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# Conference focuses on social justice

BY RYAN WESTON

**UNDER** the theme "Loving in Deed and in Truth," taken from 1 John 3: 17-18, about 90 Anglicans from across the diocese gathered for the annual Outreach & Advocacy Conference at Holy Trinity School, Richmond Hill, on Oct. 17 for a day of learning, networking and worship.

The day's events opened with a passionate keynote address from Dr. Alex Himelfarb, former Clerk of the Privy Council, former ambassador, and co-editor of the book *Tax is Not a Four-letter Word*. "The consequences of austerity fall most heavily on the vulnerable," Dr. Himelfarb told the audience. "When the consequences fall most heavily on the vulnerable, we are all diminished by it. We're diminished in our shared humanity. We're diminished in our society."

Dr. Himelfarb reminded conference attendees that taxes are an important way in which citizens contribute to the public good and that tax cuts always come with a cost. "I don't think there was ever a golden age where we jumped up and down with joy to pay taxes," he confessed. But he has seen increased resistance to any taxation programs over the last 20 years, with real impacts on essential services. "A lot of our success is on the backs of generations more willing than we are to pay taxes. We have to ask ourselves: is it time that we paid it forward? What are we leaving for future generations?"

The drive towards lower taxes at all costs, he suggested, is because we have come to see ourselves as "consumers before we are citizens." While consumers seek out advantages over their neighbours, citizens are called to pursue the public good. "Everyone benefits equally from the streetlights, the fire brigade, medicare," he said. It is the work of citizens to preserve these programs that directly impact the

lives of everyone, especially the most vulnerable, he added.

Following his address, conference attendees spread out to small workshops throughout the school to learn more about how they could take up the call for active citizenship in relation to key current social justice issues. This included an exploration of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, a visual examination of the root causes of poverty, a conversation about the intersection of mission and social justice, and a discussion of the relationship between disability and sacrament. Workshop facilitators included diocesan staff and clergy, as well as representatives from organizations as diverse as Citizens for Public Justice, Put Food in the Budget, the Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario, Christian Peacemaker Teams, and the Mining Injustice Solidarity Network.

Throughout the day, those present were able to visit information tables from several FaithWorks ministry partners such as the Anglican-United Refugee Alliance, Couchiching Jubilee House, and The Bridge Prison Ministry. During lunch, those from Toronto were encouraged to contact city council to support the passing of the City of Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy.

As the busy day wound down, attendees once again gathered in the theatre where they were addressed by Archbishop Colin Johnson, who reminded those present that they were engaged in following the call of the gospels and that they must remain persistent and patient as they carried out this work. The day closed with a brief worship before folks returned to their home communities to share what they had learned at the conference.

*Ryan Weston is the diocese's Social Justice and Advocacy consultant.*

## Run raises funds for worthy causes

St. John, Ida, hosted the 11th annual Cavan Hills Cross Country Run on Sept. 26, with 158 participants crossing the finish line. Participants could take part in a 10 km run or walk on townships roads, or go on a 4.7 km stroll through corn and soy bean fields.

More than 50 volunteers assisted in the setup and race day organization, and another 15 produced some of the delicious and nutritious foods that all enjoyed. "It's been an amazing event for St. John's," says Cathy Olley, the people's warden. "It has not only raised funds for important causes but our parishioners are out there in the community, honouring God."

As in previous years, money raised through pledges will go to local charities such as Home-grown Homes in Peterborough and the Millbrook & District Food Share. All other net income from the run will support St. John's outreach ministry to a number of worthy causes, including The Rural Outreach Centre in Buckhorn, a safe haven for women and their children seeking escape from abusive relationships. About \$8,400 was raised this year through pledges and net income.



Children and adults cross the finish line at the 11th annual Cavan Hills Cross Country Run, hosted by St. John, Ida. PHOTO BY VANESSA OLLEY

Next year's run will be held on Sept. 25.

## Dinner serves up Palestinian delicacies

A study trip to Saint George's College in Jerusalem bore fruit quickly for the Rev. Mary Bell-Plouffe and churches in Peterborough that are in the Anglican-Lutheran Covenant. On Oct. 3, Ms. Bell-Plouffe and her husband, chef Daniel Plouffe, presented "Palestinian Palate," a dinner of Palestinian delicacies to more

than 80 diners. A group of Muslim youth set the tables, while Anglican youth did the dishes. The \$3,500 raised from the dinner and silent auction was sent to the Diocese of Jerusalem for use in social and medical ministry to Palestinians. The Anglican-Lutheran Covenant is a formal agreement of mutual ministry in Peterborough.

## Church celebrates 50th anniversary

St. Cyprian, Toronto, celebrated

its 50th anniversary on Sept. 13. Bishop Patrick Yu presided at the service and blessed the parish and its congregation.

Bishop Yu expressed his appreciation for the work of the clergy and all who had given so much to the life of the church. He spoke of the good work and the many activities that have been done at St. Cyprian's over the past 50 years, and how this has been of service to the members and the community.

Many former members of St. Cyprian's, including some who were a part of the original formation of the church, attended the service. They rekindled old friendships and met with new members.

"St. Cyprian's is not just a place for worship – it is a place for

serenity, a sanctuary where the storms of life are calmed," wrote Ingrid Ellis-Rowe, a 50-year member. "God's love shines brightly throughout St. Cyprian's."

The service was attended by several past clergy, including the Rev. William Sharp, the Rev. Allan Kirk and interim ministers the Rev. Doug Jacques and the Rev. Mary Lewis. Almost 200 people filled the church and sang several of the hymns that were part of the original service.

St. Cyprian's was the first Anglican congregation to join in the construction of a building with United and Presbyterian churches to form the first tri-congregational church building in Canada, with separate worship areas for each congregation. The church is located at 1080 Finch Ave. E.

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## Worship & Music

**NOV. 29** – Advent lessons and carols, 4 p.m., St. Simon-the-Apostle, 525 Bloor St., E., Toronto.

**DEC. 4** – Soweto Gospel Choir, 7:30 p.m., Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, Toronto. For tickets, including group discounts, call 1-855-872-7669.

**DEC. 6** – Welcome Him: A Choral and Narrative Presentation, 10:30 a.m., Christ the King, 475 Rathburn Rd., Etobicoke.

**DEC. 6** – St. Martin in-the-Fields annual Advent Carol Service, 7:30 p.m. Music presented by the choir of St. Martin's, directed by Jack Hattey. Instrumental accompaniment by Tom Fitches on organ, Paul Sanvidotti on trumpet and Nancy Nourse on flute. St. Martin's is located at 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto.

**DEC. 12** – Voices Chamber Choir performs Handel's Messiah with orchestra and soloists, 7:30 p.m., St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto. Tickets available by calling 416-419-0528 or at



## FOND FAREWELL

The Rev. Canon Dr. George Sumner, his wife Stephanie Hodgkins and artist Greg Furmanczyk stand with a portrait of Canon Sumner during an open house at Wycliffe College, Toronto, on Oct. 31. Canon Sumner, the former principal of Wycliffe College, is the new bishop of Dallas. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

the door: \$35 for adults, \$25 for students and seniors. Cash only.

**DEC. 13** – Community Carol Sing, 7:30 p.m., St. Dunstan of Canterbury, 56 Lawson Rd., Scarborough. The free-will offering will be donated to the Kids for Peace organization.

**DEC. 20** – Nine Lessons and Carols, with readings by candlelight, 4 p.m., St. Simon-the-Apostle, 525 Bloor St., E., Toronto.

**DEC. 20** – St. Anne's Community Cantate, a Christmas concert in support of the Youth Scholarship Program of the Division 14 Community Police Liaison Committee. Featuring the choir of St. Anne's, The Junction Trio, Leah Salomaa, and Ken Whiteley. 3 p.m. at St. Anne's, 276 Gladstone Ave., Toronto. Tickets are \$15; \$10 for students and seniors. Children free. Tickets available online at [Eventbrite.ca](http://Eventbrite.ca) or by cash at the door.

**DEC. 20** – Christmas Carols and Candlelight, 4:30 p.m., St. Aidan, 70 Silver Birch Ave. and Queen St. E., Toronto.

**DEC. 20** – Service of Lessons and Carols for Christmas, 7 p.m., St. John the Baptist, Norway, 470 Woodbine Ave. at Kingston Road,

Toronto. Music by the choir of St. John's.

**DEC. 20** – Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols, 7:30 p.m., St. Olave, Bloor and Windermere streets, Toronto.

**DEC. 24** – Carols by Candlelight, 4:30 p.m., and carol service with Communion, 7:30 p.m., Christ the King, 475 Rathburn Rd., Etobicoke.

**DEC. 24** – Candlelit traditional Eucharist with Christmas carols and choral music, 10 p.m., St. Simon-the-Apostle, 525 Bloor St., E., Toronto.

**DEC. 24** – Candlelight Service of Holy Communion, 10:30 p.m., St. Olave, Bloor and Windermere streets, Toronto. Children's Christmas Eve Service at St. Olave's; call 416-769-5686 for details.

**DEC. 25** – Holy Communion with Anointing, 10:30 a.m., St. Olave, Bloor and Windermere streets, Toronto.

**DEC. 25** – Communion, 10:30 a.m., Christ the King, 475 Rathburn Rd., Etobicoke.

**DEC. 25** – Service celebrating the joy of God's blessing in the birth of Jesus, 10:30 a.m., St. Simon-the-

Apostle, 525 Bloor St., E., Toronto.

## Talks, Plays & Presentations

**DEC. 4-6, 11-13, 18-20** – The Christmas Story at Holy Trinity, 19 Trinity Square, west side Toronto Eaton Centre. Performed since 1938 with professional musicians, volunteer cast. Matinees 4:30 p.m. Dec. 5, 6 12, 13, 19 and 20. Evenings, 7:30 p.m. Dec. 4, 11, 12, 18, 19 and 20. American Sign Language interpretation at selected performances. Suggested donation \$20 adults, \$5 children. Wheelchair accessible. To reserve: [www.holytrinity-toronto.org](http://www.holytrinity-toronto.org); 416-598-4521, ext. 301.

**DEC. 5-6** – Display of nativities from around the world at St. Mark, Port Hope. December 5: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Dec. 6: 12 noon to 4 p.m.

**DEC. 11** – Charles Dickens' classic *A Christmas Carol* at 7:30 p.m., St. John the Baptist, Norway, 470 Woodbine Ave. at Kingston Road, Toronto. Tickets \$10 for adults; free for children under 12. Tickets available at the door. Proceeds will support AURA (Anglican United Refugee Alliance) and Save the Children Fund.

**DEC. 12** – A dramatic reading of the abridged version of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, 3 p.m., with choral selections by the choir and audience sing-along carols, St. Simon-the-Apostle, 525 Bloor St., E., Toronto. Tickets \$15 and \$10.

**DEC. 12** – "A Fireside Christmas Gift," storytelling and carols, mulled cider and mince pie, 4 p.m., St. Theodore of Canterbury, 111 Cactus Ave., Toronto. Proceeds to the North York Harvest Food Bank.

**DEC. 13** – 32nd Annual Christmas Pageant, 10:30 a.m., St. Olave, Bloor and Windermere streets, Toronto.

**DEC. 24** – Children's Nativity Pageant, 4:30 p.m., followed by Holy Eucharist, St. Aidan, 70 Silver Birch Ave. and Queen Street E., Toronto.

## Sales

**NOV. 28** – Christmas bazaar and luncheon, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., St. Mary, Richmond Hill. Hot lunch and dessert, \$10 per person.

**DEC. 5** – Christmas bazaar, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Church of the Ascension, 266 North St., Port Perry.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25  
7AM Mass at Dawn  
10AM The Third Mass of Christmas in the Day

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Mass

**THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD**  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6 | 10AM  
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## READING THE BIBLE

BY THE REV. CANON DON BEATTY

# Luke reveals a loving Jesus

The first Sunday in Advent this year is on Nov. 29. Advent means "the coming." It is the churches' preparation for the coming of the Christ-child.

Advent also marks the beginning of the new church year. This year, we will be in Year C. This means that most of the Gospel readings will be from Luke, which provides a fascinating account of the life of Jesus.

Luke is the only Gentile writer in the New Testament. He was probably a medical doctor, converted by Paul. He accompanied Paul on most of Paul's missionary journeys. In addition to his Gospel, Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles, the fifth book in our Christian Bible.

Luke met most of the leaders of the early church as he travelled with Paul. He may have even talked to Mary, the mother of Jesus. His stories reflect a very compassionate and loving Jesus, a Jesus who is concerned for the underdog, the poor, outcasts, and women and children. It is only in Luke that we find the parables of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan.

It is also in Luke that we find the classic birth story of Jesus. This is the beautiful account of angels and shepherds and the stable in Bethlehem. The emperor in far-off Rome has decided to have a census taken. A decree goes out, causing Mary and Joseph to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. (As they are of the House of David, Mary and Joseph have to return to their ancestral hometown. Bethlehem is the birthplace of David, born a thousand years before Jesus. David was Israel's greatest king.)

It is in Bethlehem that the Saviour of the world is born, in a dark, damp cave fit only for animals. For Luke, Jesus is the fulfillment of Jewish history. His arrival marks the inauguration of the Kingdom of God. Jesus is

the king, born to lead his people into a new relationship with their God. His enthronement is to be the cross on Calvary Hill. Luke emphasizes the kingship of Jesus and the establishment of his kingdom here on earth.

For Luke, Jesus is a revolutionary who comes to replace temple worship and to renew the old Jewish order with a new order. He represents the new Israel. Thus the cross, his throne, is central for the history of God's people, which includes all people on earth. Luke's Gospel message is universal, and Christians are called to proclaim it to all people.

I would encourage you to read Luke's Gospel during this Advent season. It reveals a very loving and compassionate Jesus, who reaches out to us across the centuries with the love of God for each person.

Luke probably wrote his Gospel shortly after the destruction of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. The temple was one of the great wonders of the ancient world, the most holy place for every Jewish person. Luke did not want the believers in Jesus Christ to interpret this destruction as a sign of the end of the world. God had not deserted his people. Their hope was in the future, with Christ's triumphant return. The Christian community was encouraged to continue to live faithfully, endure suffering, and wait patiently for God's promise of a new beginning to be fulfilled here on earth.

May Advent be a time of joyful hope, anticipation and expectation, as we prepare for the birth of the Christ-child in our hearts, and for His coming again in great glory to reign forever. Have a blessed and holy Advent and may Christmas be filled with love, joy and peace for all.

*The Rev. Canon Don Beatty is an honorary assistant at St. Luke, Dixie South, Mississauga.*

# New church opens

Continued from Page 1

been struggling to keep up their mission and ministry.

"After the service, people were coming up to me and saying, 'We haven't worshipped in a congregation anything near this size for many years,'" says Ms. Benson. "They're starting to feel again what it is like to be part of a big family."

Sandra Lewis, one of the churchwardens, says the service reminded her of the large Christmas Eve services back in her native Grenada. "I couldn't remember the last time I saw so many people in church," she says. "The hymns were wonderful. It was like - we Anglicans can sing!"

Ms. Benson says the transformation of four congregations into one is like the birthing process, where time and patience are essential. "All the ingredients are here; we just need care and patience for each other to create the space for this birth to happen. I know there's a real desire for it."

To help with the transition, the church has incorporated some things from the former parishes into its worship. It uses a candle stand and some vestments from the Church of the Advent, sacred vessels and linen from the Church of the Good Shepherd, and a processional cross from St. John's.

The church will stay at its current location for the foreseeable future. It plans to sell the rectory belonging to the former Church of the Good Shepherd to pay for renovations to the building. The future of the three former church properties has yet to be decided. Bishop Philip Poole, the area bishop of York-Credit Valley, is in discussions with the parish, the diocese and city planners.

Ms. Benson says that despite some early growing pains, St. Mary and St. Martha has an exciting future. "I am privileged to serve alongside what God is doing in this part of the diocese. The best days are yet to come."

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## IN MOTION

### Appointments

- The Rev. Beverley Williams, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Simon-the-Apostle, Toronto, Oct. 10.
- The Rev. Geoffrey Sangwine, Interim Priest-in-Charge, San Lorenzo Ruiz, Oct. 11, while continuing as Incumbent of St. John the Baptist, Norway.
- The Rev. Jason van Veghel-Wood, Interim Associate Priest, St. Peter, Erindale, Oct. 13, while the Associate Priest is on leave.
- The Rt. Rev. Patrick White, Interim Priest-in-Charge, Church of Our Saviour, Toronto, Oct. 15.
- The Rev. Dr. Judy Paulsen, Honorary Assistant, Grace Church on-the-Hill, Toronto, Oct. 18.
- The Rev. Geoff Howson, Priest-in-Charge, St. Luke, Peterborough, Nov. 1, while continuing as incumbent at All Saints, Peterborough.

terborough.

- The Rev. Lee McNaughton (Diocese of Ontario), Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. John the Divine and St. Ninian, Scarborough, Nov. 1.
- The Rev. Doug Woods, Interim Associate Priest, St. Luke, Peterborough, Nov. 1.
- The Rev. Canon Andrew Asbil, Dean of Toronto and Rector of St. James Cathedral, Jan. 25, 2016.

### Ordinations

- The Rev. Bill Yee-Ching Mok was ordained a priest at St. Elizabeth, Mississauga, on Nov. 22.

### Vacant Incumbencies

*Clergy from outside the diocese with the permission of their bishop may apply through the Diocesan Executive Assistant, Mrs. Mary Conliffe, mconliffe@toronto.anglican.ca.*

**Trent Durham**

- Lakefield College School
- St. Mark, Port Hope
- Newcastle & Orono

### York - Credit Valley

- St. Olave, Toronto
- St. John the Baptist, Dixie, Mississauga

### York - Scarborough

- St. Timothy, North Toronto

### York - Simcoe

- St. Margaret of Scotland, Barrie
- All Saints, King City
- St. Mark, Midland

### Conclusions

- The Rev. Bob Bettson will conclude his ministry at the Parish of Bobcaygeon, Dunsford & Burnt River on Jan. 10, 2016.

### Retirements

- The Rev. Chris Horne's last Sunday at St. Luke, East York, will be Jan. 31, 2016.





YOUTH MINISTRY

BY BRIAN SUGGS

# We should be making disciples

What is the goal of youth ministry in your parish? Often the ultimate purpose of ministry to our 12- to 18-year-olds gets tangled up with other pursuits – numerical growth, ensuring a future congregation or to be more attractive to those searching for a church. While these may be by-products of a faithful and fruitful ministry, they cannot be the sole motivating factors for ministry to youth. Rather, our goal should be to continue to carry out Jesus’ command to make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20).

I want to focus on three aspects of discipleship for youth – relationships, education, and formation.

The value and importance of building safe, healthy, and trusted relationships with our youth in the discipleship process cannot be overstated. It is often the area I spend the most time on; it is also the area most questioned by those not engaged in the process. Relationship-building can be playing games at a youth retreat, eating a simple meal together, talking over hot chocolate or spending a summer day at Canada’s Wonderland. This can be perceived as being a waste of time or unnecessary, but it is neither. This is the time when we get to know one another.

Another key component of discipleship is education, as we seek to teach this generation about God, the Bible and the Christian faith. Education may look like a Bible study group, a confirmation class, a Sunday school lesson, or listening to and

later discussing or debating a sermon. This part of the process is often the most engaged and valued by parishes, but it is only one part and must be combined with the others in a wholesome approach to making disciples.

The final component is spiritual formation. This can include activities such as serving others (raking the neighbour’s leaves, working at the foodbank or serving as an acolyte or greeter), engaging youth in spiritual practices (prayer, meditation, silence, fasting), including youth in the rituals of the church (many found in services during Advent and Christmas, Lent, Holy Week and Easter), and regular participation in the sacraments of the church. Formational activities look vastly different from educational ones in that they do not employ a schooling model and are not oriented toward knowledge acquisition. The purpose is to allow transformation, a work of the Holy Spirit, to occur. While we cannot produce transformation, we can provide a conducive environment.

As part of the Archbishop’s Youth Ministry Committee, where it is our goal to support and nurture youth ministry in the diocese, it is my prayer and hope that we will continue to make disciples of Christ in this generation and in future ones. Our next event, Recharge Retreat, is on Jan. 29-31 at Muskoka Bible Camp, where we will focus on the above aspects of discipleship while emphasizing engaging youth in spiritual practices.

*Brian Suggs is the Youth Coordinator for York-Simcoe.*

PRAYER CYCLE

FOR DECEMBER

- 1. New Hope Mandarin Ministry
- 2. All Saints, King City
- 3. Christ Church, Holland Landing
- 4. Christ Church, Kettleby
- 5. Christ Church, Roches Point
- 6. Holland Deanery
- 7. Parish of Georgina
- 8. St. James the Apostle, Sharon
- 9. St. Mary Magdalene, Schomberg
- 10. St. Paul, Jersey (Keswick)
- 11. St. Paul, Newmarket
- 12. Trinity Church, Aurora
- 13. Mississauga Deanery
- 14. Holy Spirit, Dixie North
- 15. St. Bride, Clarkson

- 16. St. Elizabeth, Mississauga
- 17. St. Francis of Assisi, Mississauga
- 18. St. Hilary (Cooksville) Mississauga
- 19. St. John the Baptist (Dixie) Mississauga
- 20. Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (FaithWorks)
- 21. St. Luke (Dixie South) Mississauga
- 22. Trinity-St. Paul, Port Credit
- 23. St. Peter, Erindale
- 24. St. Thomas a Becket (Erin Mills South) Mississauga
- 25. Christmas
- 26. Trinity, Streetsville
- 27. The Anglican Foundation
- 28. AURA (Anglican United Refugee Alliance)
- 29. All Saints, Whitby
- 30. Ascension, Port Perry
- 31. Christ Memorial Church, Oshawa

Send your letters to  
editor@toronto.anglican.ca

# CANADA BRIEFS

## Faith groups plant trees

About 160 people from 12 different faith groups representing

Muslims, Jews and Christians gathered to reforest part of a park in London, Ont., earlier this fall. The event was organized by Re-Forest London, a non-profit environmental group.

“We all worked together to make a difference in two significant ways,” said the Rev. Lyndon Hutchison-Hounsell, incumbent of St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church. “We planted trees to

help reforest and enhance the integrity of creation, and we worked side-by-side with other Christians, Muslims and Jews.”

The event began with words of blessing from three faith leaders quoting from the Talmud, the Bible and the Qur’an to remind participants of God’s expectations that humans care for the earth, practise tolerance and build community.



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