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for new ideas

Syrian priest  
backs Arab Spring



Anglican takes  
special vows

# The Anglican

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DECEMBER 2012

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

BY BISHOP PHILIP POOLE

## Care for the elderly

**W**hat do you want for Christmas? For weeks leading up to the festive day, that question will be asked repeatedly. Wide-eyed children will offer up their special lists, teens will drop major clues, and adults will try not to look too eager. Some of us will fall back on that frustrating line, "Oh, nothing."

What do I want for Christmas? I want high-quality, accessible medical care for seniors who have significant challenges and are uncooperative.

Let me explain. In the 1950s, a woman in Chicago named Elizabeth Kübler-Ross observed in the hospital where she worked that doctors were unwilling or unable to provide much medical support to patients who were terminally ill. Medicine is to cure and save lives, she reasoned, and doctors did not know what to do when someone was dying. She saw doctors basically abandoning their patients as they died. Death was in some way an affront to their profession. From her research came a new way to understand dying, death and the grieving process. It has greatly enriched the medical profession and has made an enormous difference in our approach to, and care for, the dying.

I think we need the same ground-breaking work in the field of gerontology. There are a number of elderly people who have lost the ability to name what is happening inside their bodies. Through dementia, they are taken on scary interior journeys which leave them anxious, frightened and void of the usual social skills. They may try to hit or bite or lash out in ways they never would have dreamed of if they had been in their "right



### FIRST LIGHT

Sharissa Osbourne lights the first candle on the Advent Wreath as her friends at St. Margaret-in-the-Pines, West Hill, Scarborough, look on. A candle will be lit each week during Advent, followed by the lighting of the middle candle on Christmas Eve. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

mind." They are incapable of monitoring their own medication and require constant care from others to get through the day. I have the deepest respect for those who are on the front lines of care in nursing homes and deal with human beings who are in a vulnerable and needy state.

I think physicians shy away from dealing with these problems because they are uncertain of what to do. My observation is that this is a specialized, time-consuming area of medicine that runs counter to the quick, in-and-out style of most medical clinics.

We have learned how to deal with babies who show distress in the same way. They cannot verbalize their pain by any means other than screaming. They can't monitor their medications or care for themselves. Pediatrics is a specialized field of medicine, highly regarded and celebrated. I dare say that specialized medicine for elderly people is not as celebrated. Try to find a dentist who will work at a

senior citizens' residence or has an office for those in a wheelchair. What is a senior citizen to do when his or her teeth start falling out from a lack of proper oral care and the staff at the nursing home are unable to figure out how to floss or brush the person's teeth for fear of being attacked? How are cavities to be filled or dental work accomplished with uncooperative patients? Where are the doctors who are willing to do rounds in nursing homes or retirement centers? Is gerontology a highly respected and celebrated field of study?

To understand the enormous challenges involved, try this: A doctor will not come to the patient's residence, so you must dress the patient to go outside in the winter. He or she is often uncooperative and confined to a wheelchair. Well in advance of this, you must arrange transportation to the doctor's office, and then wait in a poorly acces-

Continued on Page 4

## THE ARCHBISHOP'S LEVEE 2013

at the Cathedral Church of St. James



Please join Archbishop Johnson and the College of Bishops to offer best wishes and prayers for the New Year.

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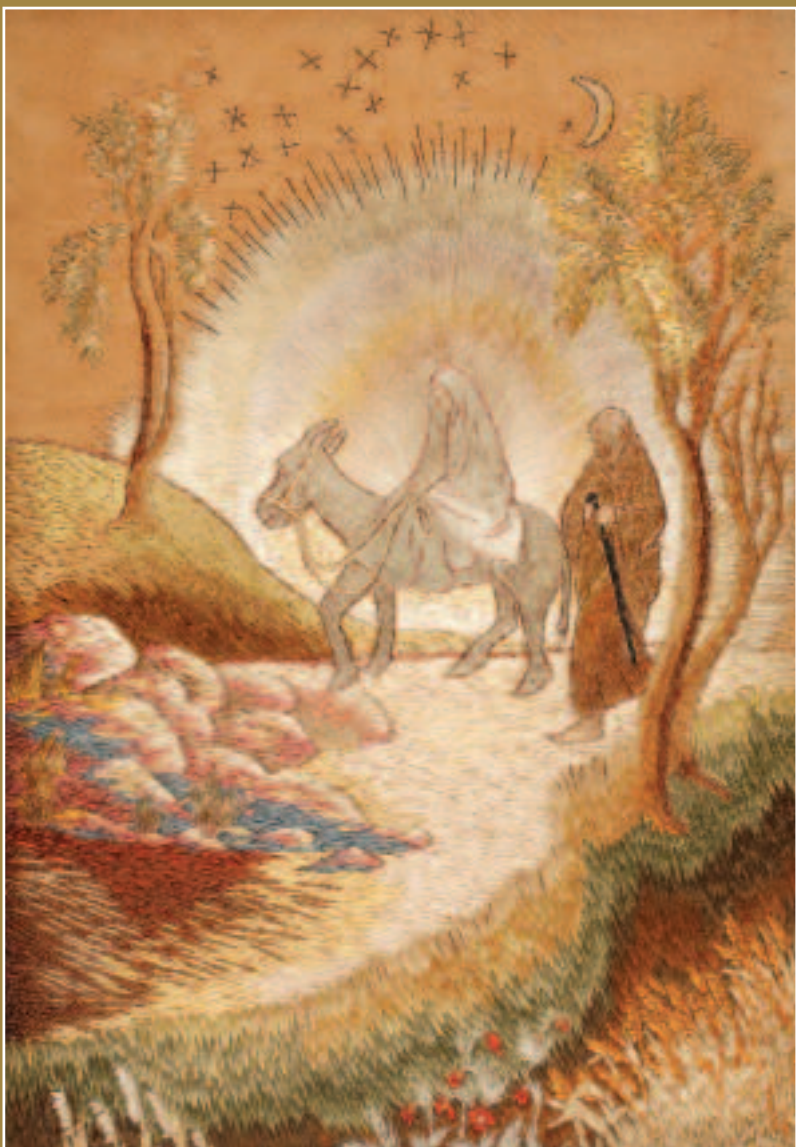
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# \$28 million to fund new ideas

## Allocations Committee urges churches to put on their thinking caps

BY STUART MANN

**THE** way Steve Bickley sees it, the Diocese of Toronto and its parishes have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to revitalize the church and share the good news of Jesus Christ in new ways.

"There's not a more exciting time to re-imagine the church than right now," says Mr. Bickley, a member of the diocese's Our Faith-Our Hope Allocations Committee. "We want a zillion creative ideas that need funding."

The Allocations Committee, which is made up of clergy and laity, is charged with overseeing the disbursement of millions of dollars from the diocese's Our Faith-Our Hope fundraising campaign.

If the campaign reaches its goal of \$50 million and all pledges are fulfilled, \$28 million will be available to parishes to re-imagine church in their local context. This



Steve Bickley

is in addition to the \$17 million that will flow back to parishes for local church needs and \$5 million that will go to groups outside the diocese such as the Council of the North. (As of Oct. 22, the campaign had raised \$40 million in

pledges.)

Mr. Bickley points out that the \$28 million is for new and innovative work, not to prop up existing church structures and programs. "It's not for operating costs. It's meant to say, 'How can we re-invent church?'"

Grants will be given for work in two areas: "Building the Church for Tomorrow" and "Revitalizing Our Inheritance." The first includes leadership development, pioneering ministry and communicating in a digital world. The second includes adaptive reuse of parish facilities and enabling parishes to become multi-staffed.

The Allocations Committee plans to start accepting grant proposals next spring, so it is urging parishes to put on their thinking caps and generate some creative ideas. "The key thing we're looking for is new ideas, especially things that can be replicated in other parishes. We'll also look at

the probability of success and how much the parish is willing to put its own resources into it."

He says the grant-giving process will be transparent. Every proposal will be considered and Diocesan Council will make the final decision. Guidelines and grant application forms will be posted on the diocese's website when they are available. *The Anglican* will inform readers when this happens.

The funds are ideal for churches that want to change or start a new venture but don't have the money to make it happen, says Mr. Bickley, who is a churchwarden at St. John, York Mills, and the executive vice president for marketing and business development at Bell Media.

"Innovation and change requires capital," he says. "Too many businesses are unable to weather change or re-invent themselves because they're undercapitalized. We're not going to

be undercapitalized here."

He sympathizes with clergy and others in a parish who are trying to bring about change and are meeting resistance. "If you're trying to sell a vision that's going to require an investment and bringing everyone on board, you're going to have two obstacles: one is the vision and the other is funding that vision. What is great about the Our Faith-Our Hope money is that we help you with one of those problems. We bring the financial resources. That allows you to say to your parish, 'Look, I think this is a great idea. Let's try it.'"

He says the money can transform the diocese and the parishes. "Three to five years from now, I think you'll find a revitalized diocese with energy, growth and optimism from re-imagining church. Most importantly, I think lives will be changed by encountering the risen Lord. I can't imagine anything better than that."

# Bishop stepping down in April

## Wants to be coach, mentor

BY STUART MANN

**BISHOP** George Elliott, 63, has announced that he will retire as the area bishop of York-Simcoe at the end of April.

"Initially I'm just going to take a deep breath and relax," says Bishop Elliott, who has been the area bishop of York-Simcoe for the past 12 years and was a parish priest in the area for 12 years before that.

He says he's stepping down at the right time and in good health. "I feel that my gifts have been used and the episcopal area is in good shape. I'm quite excited about what's taking place in a number of parishes in the area. I've got a good group of clergy, so I'm passing on something that is healthy and vibrant. There is a lot of good ministry going on."

After an initial period of rest, he says he'd like to explore new areas of ministry. "What I'd really like to do is be involved in the coaching and mentoring of clergy and parishes. One of the things I really enjoyed as a parish priest was having the opportunity to work with curates and students and be able to support and nurture them."

He says the highlight of his episcopacy was visiting different parishes Sunday after Sunday. "When I first started, I thought that was going to be the part I liked the least. As a bishop, you go out to a different church every Sunday, and I wondered how I



Bishop George Elliott

was going to connect with people. From my very first Sunday, I couldn't believe the warmth and welcome that I received."

Presiding at ordinations and confirmations was also a highlight. "I continue to be excited about folks, of all ages, who are coming before me to declare their desire to follow Jesus Christ as their saviour. It's wonderful to be able to support priests and deacons as they're ordained into the ministries where God is calling them."

He adds: "I'm grateful for the privilege I've been given by the

church to take on this ministry. I leave with a great deal of thankfulness because of what we've shared but also because of a sense of hope that whoever follows me will bring his or her gifts, and I'm sure they will continue to grow God's kingdom."

Archbishop Colin Johnson says he has "very mixed emotions" about Bishop Elliott's retirement. "I am delighted for Bishop George and (his wife) Linda as they begin to embark on a new venture into retirement, when both are in good health and enjoying life to the fullest. I am deeply saddened that the longest-serving bishop in the diocese and the (ecclesiastical) province will be leaving his position. He has been a stalwart servant of Christ, contributing wisdom, energy, pastoral sensitivity and marvellous humour to the life of the diocese. He has been a wonderful friend to me and I will miss the weekly connection with him."

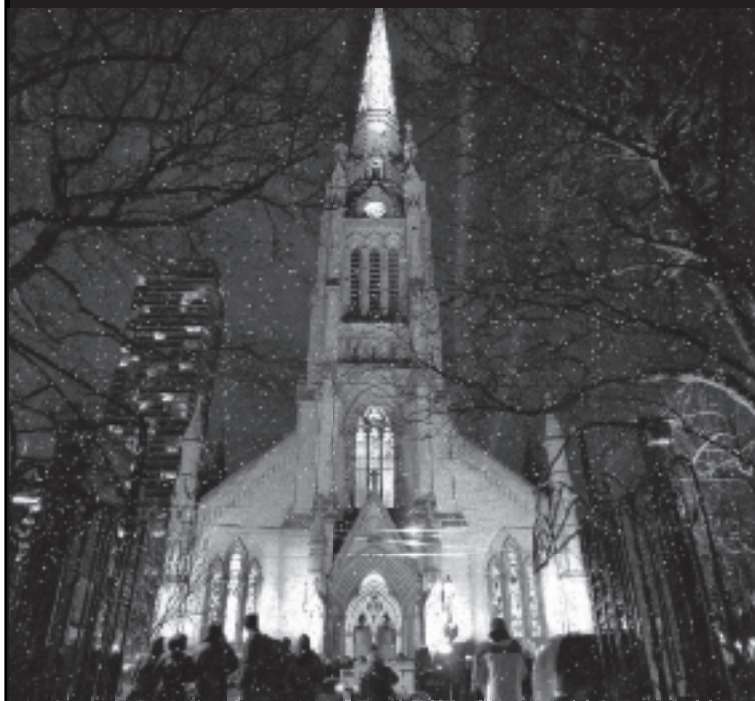
Bishop Elliott served his curacy at St. Thomas à Beckett, Erin Mills, then became the incumbent of the Parish of Minden and then All Saints, King City. He was elected bishop in 2000. He and his wife, Linda, plan to live in King City for the foreseeable future.

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# Painful but not hopeless



BY ARCHBISHOP TERENCE FINLAY

I want to take you back to the darkness of one night while I watched as the shadows gradually gave way to the golden shafts of morning light. There, illuminated before me, were the faces of Algonquin, Ojibwas, Cree, Mohawk, Dakota and more. We sat in a circle around the sacred fire, a fire that would burn six days and nights with its fragrance of burning pine and dancing sparks.

Through the still air came the rhythm of a drum beat. Then the voice of an elder called on God our Creator Spirit. Tobacco was offered in thanksgiving for the earth and water, for the birds and animals, and for God's children gathered together. I sat in contented silence. I was attending a Sacred Circle with Anglicans of the First Nations.

Since 2004, I have been our Primate's special envoy in the church's relationship with indigenous people. This has taken me through negotiations with the government and the other churches as we struggled with the shame and pain of the residential schools and eventually a financial settlement. Now I am occasionally involved with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as it takes place across the country.

After Confederation and the *Indian Act* of 1876, the new Canadian government assumed that it had a moral responsibility to educate and assimilate indigenous children into the life and ways of the dominant white culture. This was done through residential schools. It was *our* government's decision, and even though we were not around then, we have some accountability for that misguided decision.

The federal government did not want the bother of staffing the schools, so the churches stepped in and hired people to care for the youngsters in these large residential institutions. Of the 130 schools, 35 were staffed through the Anglican Church; most of the staff members were not ordained people, and several were not even church people.

Tragically, our Parliament sanctioned the removal of native children from their "evil surroundings" of family and community for re-socialization. In the words of a century ago, "the savage child would surely be remade into a 'civilized' western adult."

It is hard to believe that these schools went

on from the late 19th century right up to 1996. By the time the last school was closed, more than 190,000 Aboriginal, Inuit, and Métis children had attended. English only was to be spoken, tribal customs and languages were to be forgotten and often siblings were not allowed to speak to each other.

Some schools were well run, with sensitivity by staff who loved the children. But others were fraught with cases of unspeakable physical and sexual abuse. I have sat in circles and heard heart-breaking stories of pain and loneliness, of parents trying to hang on to children as Indian agents took them away, of children who reacted by running away and often never returned to their family home, of some who died and were buried in cemeteries at the schools, while others still lie in unmarked graves. I have wept many times.

In 1991, the Anglican Church of Canada established an Indigenous Healing Fund, which continues to grow and offer hope. In 1993, the Primate, Archbishop Michael Peers, offered a full apology for the church's role in the schools. Let me remind you of his words: "I am sorry, more than I can say, that we were part of a system which took your children from home and family, that we tried to remake you in our own image, taking from you your language and the signs of identity, and that in our schools so many of you were abused physically, sexually, culturally and emotionally."

In 2007, a Residential Schools Settlement Agreement was reached by the federal government, the churches and the Assembly of First Nations and Survivors. This provides financial compensation to those who attended the schools, and additional compensation to those who were abused. The Anglican Church of Canada was responsible for raising \$16 million among the dioceses.

Included in this agreement was the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission which, over five years, has provided an opportunity for survivors and staff of the schools to tell their stories. Through this process, a permanent record is being established so that in the future no one could ever deny that this had happened.

Last year, I was privileged to attend the Truth and Reconciliation gathering in Inuvik, 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle, and one in Saskatoon. Once again, I listened to appalling stories as I sat in sacred circles.

One thing I have learned is that for the in-

igenous person, healing comes in telling their story many times. Our Anglo culture thinks that after you have told your story twice, you should get on with living. But in the First Nations culture, telling the story over and over again brings healing and insight, affirmation and self-respect.

I need to warn you that for Anglicans and others, listening is not easy. We hear our way of life criticized. Truth hurts. Our forebears and church missionaries thought they were acting in an honorable way. But, carelessly, the gifts of a different culture were demeaned, and aboriginals lost self-respect. Instead of seeing them as our brothers and sisters in Christ, we thought we knew what was best for them—to force them to become little English children in stiff uniforms. We betrayed them in treaties, and we diminished their culture. A deep level of distrust remains. The damage goes through generations. We also have to face the pain of recognizing there are strident voices in our dominant white culture that grumble that any attempts to work with First Nations will be a waste of time.

But not all is hopeless. I enjoy my time among these fellow Anglicans. I listen to the quiet wisdom of the elders as they plan a better future. I participate in the traditional ceremonies. I enjoy the company of friends and shared laughter. In the evening there are marvelous times of jamboree with throat singing, great old Gospel hymns, country and western music. Indigenous Anglicans love to sing and dance when they get together!

The seventh Anglican sacred circle was held in Manitoba. Bishop Mark MacDonald, our national indigenous Anglican bishop, said that among the 200 indigenous Anglicans, there were about 30 youth who spoke about the meaning of faith in their lives. He said, "Our young people have known more pain and grief than most people in a lifetime." He went on: "They are eager to be indigenous, to be Christian and to bridge the past into the future." I have often heard him say that when non-native people ask the First Peoples, "What can we do?" The answer, every time, is, "Walk with us."

May we have the courage to walk together through challenging truths and healing reconciliation. Amen.

*Archbishop Terence Finlay, the former Bishop of Toronto, preached this sermon at St. Clement, Eglinton, in August.*



## TheAnglican

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A global community of 70 million Anglicans in 64,000 congregations in 164 countries.

### Archbishop of Canterbury:

The Most Rev. and Rt. Hon. Rowan Williams, Lambeth Palace, London, England SE1 7JU.

### In Canada:

A community of about 600,000 members in 30 dioceses, stretching from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland and north to the Arctic Ocean.

### Primate:

The Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, Church House, 80 Hayden St. Toronto, ON M4Y 3G2

### In the Diocese of Toronto:

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

### The Archbishop of Toronto:

The Most Rev. Colin Johnson

### York-Credit Valley:

The Rt. Rev. Philip Poole

### Trent-Durham:

The Rt. Rev. Linda Nicholls

### York-Scarborough:

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# What I want for Christmas

Continued from Page 1

sible office and examining room. Then you must coordinate a ride home, not knowing when the appointment will end. This is not at all simple. It is even more challenging if you have to take the patient to a clinic for x-rays or a pacemaker.

I'm not trying to assign blame here, just making an observation. Our society is aging. Medi-

cine has provided longer and generally healthier lives for us here in Canada. However, the last years of life for many are less than healthy and leave some in a vulnerable and needy situation. I hold a high view of life. As our country sadly edges closer to policies that allow euthanasia, I seek to ensure good care for our precious seniors.

That's what I want for Christmas.

So as we kneel at the manger to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus and reflect on the reality that Jesus became fully dependent on human beings for his very life, think about those who are vulnerable at the other end of life. See what you and your parish might be able to do by

way of ministry at your local nursing homes and homes for the aged. Visit the nursing homes, bring the sacraments, take the time to listen, pray with people, support the staff, be present. Don't be put off by the smells or sounds of aging: just remember that the person you are with is no less a child of God.



Your friends at  
*The Anglican*  
wish you a blessed Advent  
and a Merry Christmas.



# Why I dislike evangelism



BY DR. JOHN BOWEN

**W**inston Churchill was once told that the leader of the opposition was a very humble man. “Well,” said Churchill, “he has a lot to be humble about.” One of the many things I have to be humble about, as a professor of evangelism, is the realization that the apostles had never read a book about evangelism, had never taken a course on evangelism, had never heard a sermon urging them to evangelize, and yet spearheaded the most powerful evangelistic movement the world has ever seen.

What inspired them, then, if it wasn’t a book, a course, or a sermon about evangelism? It was the thing from which we get our rather ugly word evangelism: the *evangel* (in Greek), better known as the Good News or the Gospel. They were so delighted with what they had discovered in what we now call Christianity that they could not but share it with spontaneous exuberance.

For most Anglicans, the words “delight,” “spontaneous,” and “exuberance” are not what first comes to mind when we think of our faith. Uninhibited spiritual passion is not generally considered a hallmark of Anglican churches. (Ask any congregation that has done a Natural Church Development survey.) Maybe this is one reason why we are so reluctant to engage “the e-word.”

There is a delicious irony, however, in the fact that while many Christians still shy away from the idea of evangelism, people in the secular world are cheerfully adopting it. John Bryant, the chief executive officer of Kellogg, has apparently declared himself a “cereal evangelist.” And have you ever heard of Vinton G. Cerf? He is the vice president and chief Internet evangelist for Google. Jesse Hirsh, often

heard on CBC radio commenting on issues of technology, also describes himself as an “Internet evangelist.”

A book called *Creating Customer Evangelists*, published in 2002, explains what is behind this: “When customers are truly thrilled about their experience with your product or service, they can become outspoken ‘evangelists’ for your company. This group of satisfied believers can be converted into a potent marketing force to grow your universe of customers.” The book points out that every time you rave about a new restaurant or movie or grandchild, you are being an evangelist; you want others to share your enthusiasm for what you have discovered. For these people, being an evangelist—an advocate for something you love—is a positive thing, to be encouraged. Apart from anything else, if every one of your customers becomes an evangelist for your product, you are going to have a successful business!

I am not recommending a business model for the church. But these people understand something that has often escaped Christians: evangelism is not doing something you hate; it is not “forcing the Bible down someone’s throat,” or preaching on the street corner, or worrying about “What would I say?” The heart of evangelism is talking about something you love.

Maybe the problem with our lack of Christian evangelism is that we don’t love the things that would make us effective evangelists. I read recently about the dramatic growth of the church in Nepal since 1960. There were 30 known Christians at that time; today there are one and a half million. How did that happen? Did hundreds of Bible-toting missionaries descend from North America? No. Those days, generally speaking, are over. This movement happened because young Nepalese went overseas—to study, for example—discovered the joy of Christianity while they were away, and then returned home and

“evangelized”—that is, shared their enthusiasm for something wonderful they had discovered. (The full story can be read at [www.dispatchesfrombrian.com](http://www.dispatchesfrombrian.com).) Simple but dramatic, isn’t it?

So what’s to love about the Christian faith? What might we be sufficiently enthusiastic about to want to share it? It’s not our buildings, beautiful though many of them are. It’s not our clergy, wonderful though they may be. Neither is it even the beauty of our liturgy. All those are actually pointing us to something beyond themselves—to the Gospel, the Good News.

So the question is: what is that Good News? Any answer to that question has to begin with one short word: God. The Gospel is Good News from God and about God. Christian faith says God loves us. It says God is willing to forgive us for messing up this beautiful world. It says God became one of us in a unique way in Jesus Christ, to live a fully human life, to die for our sins, and to rise again to begin a new stage of the world’s history. It says that God is at work to put to rights everything that is wrong with our world. It says God invites us to give up our petty ambitions and our self-directed lives and give our lives instead to co-operating with God in this work, and that in the process, we will find joy. Isn’t that good news? It certainly seems to be exciting people in Nepal.

So it’s not really about evangelism. An “ism” is an abstract, academic, lifeless kind of thing. That’s why I dislike it. It’s about the *evangel*—the unlikely, disturbing, outrageous and ultimately joy-filled Good News. That’s what excites those who evangelize. That’s what makes them want to share it. The question is, I suppose, whether we believe it?

*This is the first of a three-part series on evangelism by Dr. John Bowen, professor of evangelism and director of Wycliffe College’s Institute of Evangelism.*



EDITOR’S CORNER

BY STUART MANN

## Start now

**I** must admit I have a soft spot for Christmas. A few weeks ago, I received in the mail a pamphlet that advertised Christmas cards, nativity scenes and other seasonal goods. I got a lump in my throat as I flipped through the pictures of the Holy Family in the manger, the shepherds and their animals under the heavenly host, and the wise men riding toward Bethlehem on their camels.

These scenes took me back to when I was a boy at Christmas—finishing up the turkey and stuffing on Christmas Eve, hurrying off to church in the cold night air, crowding into a pew for Midnight Mass. I can still recall the smell of wood varnish, red wine and mothballs. It was always thrilling when my mother leaned over and wished my sisters and me a Merry Christmas as the clock struck midnight.

I cherish these memories, but that’s all they are—memories. I live in a different church now, and I’m not the sort of Christian I used to be. There are two reasons for this. The first was a life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ that set me down a different road than the one I was travelling on. The second was that, as I travelled in this new direction, I asked myself: What sort of Christian did I want to be? What sort of church did I want? (By “church,” I mean the people of God, not a building.)

I knew that I wanted to be a fully engaged follower of Jesus. I wanted to know where we were going and what I could do to get us there. I wasn’t interested in being a spectator anymore: I wanted to be one of the disciples. As for the church, I wanted it to be a force for good in the world, an instrument of reconciliation between God and God’s people, and a voice that spoke truth to power. If we had to give up some of our cherished traditions and status to do it, then so be it.

To a large extent, that is what has happened. That is the sort of Christian I have become and the type of church I belong to. How did this happen? I just started doing it. I didn’t wait for someone to show me how, or for a new program or a course, important as those things are. I didn’t wait until I had the time or the money or the energy. I just took the first step and trusted that God would show me the way.

As soon as I started to become the church that I wanted, the church changed, too. I am surrounded by hard-working, talented and deeply faithful people, both at my home parish and at work, who are transforming lives in the name of Christ. I can barely remember the tired old narratives about church that used to go around in my head. They’re just a dim memory now.

I’m not suggesting that we all go off and do our own thing. We need each other and we need to listen to each other. We need to ponder the wisdom that’s been handed down to us through the centuries. It is God’s church, after all. But God also gave us hearts and minds and the freedom to choose. We were given those things in order to act, not to sit on the sidelines. So what are you being called to do? What is the Holy Spirit saying to you? Whatever it is, start now. Be it.

# How will you celebrate?



MUSINGS

BY THE REV. HEATHER MCCANCE

**W**hen my husband and I were married nearly 20 years ago, we decided to celebrate as simply as possible. I wore a \$50 sundress; he, a Guatemalan cotton shirt. The reception was potluck. Friends provided the music in one long jam session. It was wonderful.

Yet what made several of our family and friends uncomfortable was our request that people not give us wedding gifts. We didn’t feel we needed anything, and had little interest in trying to put more stuff into an already crowded basement apartment. Many friends were quite happy with this, or donated to one of the charities to which we asked gifts be directed in honour of the occasion. Others, though, were hurt or angry. We were told we were ungracious for refusing the generosity of others.

During the Christmas season, many of us try to walk a balance between celebrating and enjoying the riches of the holiday and a desire to resist an overly materialistic culture that seems to do its best to turn one of our holiest feast days into an orgy of consumerism.

Many of you have taken part in one of the many anti-consumerist Christmas movements that have sprung up over the past few decades. “Buy-Nothing Christ-

mas” ([www.buynothingchristmas.org](http://www.buynothingchristmas.org)) was started by the Mennonite Church, a group that might teach us about living one’s faith in ways that are different from the world around us. The “Advent Conspiracy” ([www.adventconspiracy.org](http://www.adventconspiracy.org)) grew out of the evangelical church in the United States, with similar goals of spending less money and giving of one’s self during Christmas. We will all be familiar with the World Vision gift catalogue ([www.worldvision.ca](http://www.worldvision.ca)), from which one can “give” a goat or medicine to someone in a developing country as a “gift” to someone here.

Others, I know, have simple Christmas celebrations that involve spending little money, as much because of the circumstances of life as from a conscious choice—the person who has few friends or family members with whom to exchange gifts; the person who simply doesn’t have the money to spend; the person who comes from a culture where spending a lot of money on Christmas gifts just isn’t a normal part of the celebration.

I confess that I struggle with this each year. Perhaps a part of me is remembering the consternation caused by our gift-free wedding. But to be frank, a larger part of me simply likes getting presents. They’re

fun! And a large part of me likes to give presents, to see the look on someone’s face when they open my gift.

Having worked in retail for several years before my ordination, I am also aware of just how many jobs depend upon holiday spending, which makes up 20 to 40 per cent of many retailers’ income in a year. But as I see the world around me turn into a frenzy of “buy, buy, buy” each December, we in church most strongly hear the cry of the prophets to live in justice and care for those in need.

I recall spending time in Jamaica last year as a part of the Continuing Indaba process, and listening to (now-retired) Bishop Alfred Reid speak of the need for a new economic model to be birthed, one that has justice and prosperity for all people as its goal rather than maximizing profits for a few. Bishop Reid acknowledged that this is hard and that there are many jobs that depend on the model we currently have. Yet he reminded us that a century and a half ago, people were convinced that the world’s economy couldn’t survive if slavery were to be abolished. They were wrong. Maybe this century could see a similar restructuring of the way the world does business, so that the call of the prophets—to raise up the valleys and lower the mountains—can be fulfilled. In the end, I suspect, that is the question for us all: how is the way we celebrate Christmas preparing the way of the Lord?



# We cannot care for creation alone



BY ELIN GOULDEN

The diocese's Environmental Working Group, Creation Matters, exists to promote the 5th Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion: "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth." We do so by raising awareness of ecological issues, helping to draw out the theological and spiritual implications of Christian faith for the care of creation, and encouraging individuals and parishes to take practical steps in living more lightly on the earth. We also do so by encouraging Anglicans to become involved in environmental advocacy.

Why advocacy? Because while personal change is vital, the care of creation is a task much greater than any of us can accomplish alone. Like it or not, we are all implicated in political and economic systems whose policies

have far-reaching consequences for the air we breathe, the water we drink, the earth that produces our food, and our fellow creatures, human and non-human. As citizens of a democracy, we have the right—and the responsibility—to inform ourselves and to speak up about the policies our representatives are pursuing in our name.

Anglicans in our diocese are joining those around the world to advocate on the issue of climate change. Following General Synod resolution A180, our Primate has signed the Canadian Interfaith Call to Action on Climate Change, and churches in our diocese have circulated petitions calling on the federal government to establish fair, ambitious targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases. Anglicans in our diocese have founded climate advocacy groups such as the JustEarth Coalition (a member of the Climate Action Network) and For Our Grandchildren.

One of the biggest obstacles to arresting climate change is, of

course, the proposed expansion of the Alberta tar sands. The resulting increase in greenhouse gas emissions will make it impossible for Canada to reach even the federal government's modest emission reduction goals, let alone the reduction scientists believe is required to avoid irreversible climate change. Expansion of the tar sands would also bring about other adverse impacts. The Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation live directly downstream from the tar sands and are already experiencing the toxic effects of these operations, including deformed fish and abnormally high rates of rare cancers in their community. They have recently mounted a legal challenge to the proposed expansion of the Jackpine mine as violating their treaty rights.

First Nations peoples are also leaders in the opposition to the Northern Gateway Pipeline, which proposes to bring oil from the tar sands to the B.C. coast for export. Concerned about the impact of potential spills from

both pipeline and tanker traffic, the Yinka Dene Alliance oppose the building of the pipeline across their territories. Many British Columbians have joined the protest, with thousands rallying in front of the provincial legislature and at politicians' offices this October.

Closer to home, in Melancthon Township, northwest of Toronto, the Highlands company proposes to build a quarry over 2,300 acres in area, to a depth of 200 feet below the water table. The area affected is not only prime agricultural land, producing up to half the potatoes eaten in the GTA, but it is also the headwaters of several river systems that provide drinking water for more than one million Ontarians. The potential impact of this mega-quarry on the sources of local food and water has led the provincial government to require an environmental assessment of the project. Thousands of Ontarians also attended this fall's Soupstock to protest the quarry.

At our diocese's recent Out-

reach Networking Conference, author and environmentalist Alanna Mitchell told participants in her Environmental Advocacy workshop that with global awareness and action, there is still hope for change. Scripture tells us to "speak out for those who cannot speak" (Prov. 31:8). When powerful interests seek to silence the voice of creation and the voices of those who live close to the land, it is time to speak out all the louder. Signing petitions, attending rallies, and contacting politicians all send the message that the integrity of creation is a priority for us, not only as Canadians, but also as Christians entrusted with the care of the earth and each other.

*Elin Goulden is a member of Creation Matters and is the Parish Outreach Facilitator for York Credit Valley. For more information on advocating on environmental issues, visit the diocese's Social Justice and Advocacy webpage, [www.toronto.anglican.ca/sjac](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/sjac).*

## Could you tithe your time?

If we are truly honest, most of us would agree that tithing our money to church and charity is something we struggle with. As a stewardship educator, I have found that one of the quickest ways to limit a conversation on giving is to insist that we give away 10 per cent of all we earn.

With the level of giving close to only 2 per cent of family income in the Anglican Church, you can understand why. If I want to make headway in the conversation, I usually begin by speaking about giving proportionately, and then challenge people to increase their giving on an annual basis.



### THE STEWARD

BY PETER MISIASZEK

Here's an interesting idea. What if we encouraged people to tithe their time? In all my conversations and presentations on stewardship, I cannot think of a single occasion when I challenged someone to tithe their time. Yet I know from experience that those parishes that encourage members to involve themselves at a heightened level of

ministry and community service tend to experience very generous levels of financial giving. The relationship is clear: people give most generously to the causes they are intimately involved with.

Regardless of our personal economic situation, we all have the same amount of time. We all have the capacity within our daily routine to dedicate our time to serving God and the people of God in the world.

How does the average Canadian spend his or her week? Reflecting on my own circumstances, a typical week looks something like this:

- Sleep—49 hours
- Work—40 hours
- Television/Internet—15 hours
- Meal preparation and eat-

ing—15 hours

- Chores, laundry, cleaning—15 hours
- Travel—15 hours
- Family time and church—10 hours
- Exercise and grooming—9 hours
- Total—168 hours in a week

Let's consider how we might dedicate 16.8 hours in the service of the Lord over the course of a week. Surprisingly, there are many opportunities to weave prayer, reading, service and worship into our weekly schedule. Instead of listening to the radio, choose an inspirational CD. While walking to the office, meditate. Challenge yourself to read 30 minutes of scripture each day. Participate in a weekly Bible study and then volunteer in another ministry at the church. At-

tend church services weekly. If you have children, volunteer at one of their activities. If your circumstances are different, a host of other community groups could benefit from your talent and energy.

The ways in which we could tithe our time are endless. And consider the benefits. How might the pace of life change if we consciously chose to use more of our time to serve God? How might our relationships be enhanced? How might our Christian journey be more fulfilling? In finding ways to commit our time more intentionally to God's mission, we actually fulfill our baptismal promises.

All too frequently, we think of stewardship as synonymous with the gift of treasure. My phone does not ring because the parish priest is having trouble recruiting choristers but because the church offertory is declining. Most of my time is spent resourcing parishes on how to encourage financial giving that is proportional, generous, consistent and joyful. Without a doubt, all this is necessary to secure the temporal ministry needs of our churches. However, imagine what our parish experience might be like if everyone in the congregation was encouraged to tithe their time.

*Peter Misiaszek is the diocese's director of Stewardship Development.*

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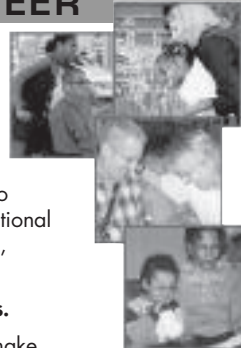
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# Reawaken your imagination

*The following is an excerpt of the annual Snell Sermon, preached at St. James Cathedral, Toronto, on Nov. 4.*

BY THE REV. DR. CYNTHIA BRIGGS KITTREDGE

**W**e claim that God became Word, and that God can be discerned and proclaimed through human words. Let us consider that locus of life-giving words that is at the heart of our Christian tradition. Holy Scripture is a font of blessing, an overflowing source of trustworthy words and healing visions for a world that is starving for wisdom as much as for bread. The words of scripture give us the ability to move, discern, and find our way in the confusion and wilderness.

But there are formidable obstacles for us post-modern people to discover this heavenly bread and drink from this fresh spring that scripture offers. There is distance and forgetting. We are no longer saturated in the scriptural world, as were people of other eras when the culture, literature and schooling were Christian. We cannot take scripture for granted because we don't know it—the stories, the phrases, the proverbs. The Word is not very near us anymore.

Another obstacle is how terribly rational, left-brain and linear we are. It is difficult to relate to scripture because we are all rational—we know too much about evolution and gravity and semiconductors. Did God cause Adam to sleep and remove his partner from his side? Did the waters really divide for the people to cross over? Who rolled away the stone from the door of the tomb?

There is the stubborn resistance to scripture provoked by all those who tell us we must obey it, and that we must reject every word except God's word. There are many who use scripture to divide men and women, humans and animals, people and the earth.

And finally, the Bible is burdened with "shoulds." You should like it. You should understand it. You should obey it. You should read it in a certain way. You should read it correctly. Only those with special knowledge and elite piety are qualified to approach the Holy Bible.

## Rediscovering scripture

A churchgoer as a child, I heard a lot of scripture, especially through the Book of Common Prayer, with little explanation. Then, as a graduate student, I rediscovered scripture and found that when I attended to the Gospels and letters in the New Testament with the instruments of biblical criticism, I was able to awaken my memory. Historical criticism did not drain the words of their ancient magic. Rather, it put them in their context in real people's lives and revived them. It was able to connect me with those historical people of faith. In my enthusiasm of discovery, I became convinced that if I could teach biblical criticism, I could help others gain faithful companions from the past and restore their memory. The church would thrive.

It took years of doctoral work, a couple of decades of teaching seminary students and of preaching the Gospel, to enlarge my understanding of what faculty is needed to read scripture and to be fed by it. Certainly intellect is required: I teach my students to read Greek and to analyze the text. Emotion is also required. But traveling with scripture requires the gift of the imagination. The imagination is nourished and informed by studying the past, the languages, and contemporaneous literature. It



The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Briggs Kittredge

engages with words and images and makes something new from its reading.

Imagination is the spiritual faculty through which we know truth/God. Through metaphor, imagination connects the known and the not known, the familiar and the unfamiliar. Imagination is the right faculty to employ when reading scripture, because it was imagination that animated the human beings who wrote the Gospels and letters, the Acts and apocalypse that has come to be our scripture. They themselves knew of God through scripture and prayer. They knew the risen Jesus' presence among them in the water of baptism and in the bread and wine of the eucharistic meal. These writers took courage to try to speak the unspeakable and voice God's mysterious, unfigure-outable plan. They used the materials they had—narratives of slavery, liberation and wandering, receiving the law through a charismatic leader. They used the vocabulary of rain, sea, light, lilies, seeds, treasure, children, kingdom. Prophets and poets of the Jewish and Christian tradition read their times and spoke God's words through their words.

## Paul the poet

Tonight I focus on one of these prophet-poets, the apostle Paul. In the New Testament, Paul is known as the sailor, the miracle-worker, the traveller, the missionary, the preacher, the baptizer of the prominent, the orator. He speaks of himself as a Pharisee, "confident in the flesh, circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews." Theologians know him as a theologian, a brilliant logician, a rhetorician. But I want to think about him tonight as the poet, the mystic, the interpreter of scripture, the one who plays with scripture's reversals and patterns and who asks those who hear him to agree with the sensibleness and faithfulness of his reasoning. I want to see him tonight as the creator of pictures. Paul is a crafter who crafts with words, a person who is simultaneously humble and bold, who counsels caution but takes risks. Over the centuries, his flexible words have been read with a lens of rigidity and his inclusive vision as one of division and judgment. In the end, Paul asserts God's limitless creativity, ingenuity, faithfulness and love in Christ Jesus.

Let me begin by putting Paul into the wider picture of the movement of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Greece and Asia Minor and Italy. (This is to reawaken your memory). Jesus, a prophet of God in Galilee, preached the nearness

of the kingdom of God and the good news of God. Jesus led a movement of women and men who had received God's Spirit and who called their compatriots to a renewed relationship with God and rededication to the commandments to love God and neighbour and to care for the stranger and alien. John was Jesus' ally, and before John, Elijah and Elisha, and before Elijah, Moses and Miriam and Aaron. Jesus healed the mentally ill and physically sick, and when there was nothing to eat provided for the people from God's generosity. He headed into the danger of Jerusalem to preach and to eat the Passover with his followers. There he was betrayed, arrested, humiliated, and crucified as a faithful, righteous martyr of God. He was buried. On the third day the faithful women went to the tomb. Its emptiness told them the whole story, which they proclaimed to their fellow disciples—"He is risen." "I have seen the Lord." Let's meet him in Galilee. Let's join the movement of God for healing and restoration of the good creation and the defeat of the power of evil. And let's spread the good news.

The resurrection of Jesus at Easter showed that the story had a new chapter in it, or the plot took a new turn, but its goal was consistent with the author of the original story. The story was written with the old material and refigured in a new way: the story of God's love for a people, God's plan for blessing and restoration, the divine mission to rescue the world from sin and death. The Spirit blew among them, making them all prophets and healers and raising up the lowly, making the poor rich in God. They proclaimed in baptism that in Christ there was no more Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female. Like scripture had previewed, when the Messiah came, the people of God was going to be expanded. The Gentiles were going to come to Jerusalem bearing gifts. "Nations will stream to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

## Spreading the Gospel

Along with his friends Junia, Phoebe, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Euodia, Syntyche, Timothy, Prisca and Aquila, Paul worked to spread the Gospel of the crucified Messiah, who made former enemies to be friends of God. Paul established churches where there were no longer slaves, but sisters and brothers. Paul connects with the churches through the now old-fashioned medium of the letter.

In his letter to the church at Rome, a community of Jews and Gentiles who affirmed the Gospel as "the power of God for salvation for all who have faith, the Jew first, and also the Greek," Paul affirmed that God was working God's purposes out even in the trouble they were in. In the exultant hymn of faith and love, Paul affirms that they are made children in baptism, that God's spirit is groaning, while the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God:

"Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35-39).

But God's plan has taken an unexpected turn. The flood of Gentiles to be faithful to Israel's God was amazing, but it appeared that Israel overall had rejected the Gospel.

In Romans 9-11, Paul faces the reality that some things don't seem to fit the perfect plan of God. What will happen to Israel? In sending Jesus, did God change the story, revise the plan? Did God change, too? Did God stop being faithful and true to God's promise? Was God still righteous and just? Paul takes on this challenge of theodicy. "Justifying the ways of God to man," he acts like Job, questioning God, and also like the Psalmist, passionate, loyal, yet protesting injustice, lamenting and naming the wrong.

So Paul looks to scripture, the stories of the Pentateuch, to see what he can discern there about the pattern of God's goodness. Paul argues that the word of God has not failed. That would be an unthinkable tragedy. Paul is going to show that God's word hasn't failed. He will show this by attending closely to that word and playing with it, even messing with it, but messing with it within the boundaries and registers that his hearers would understand and accept and confirm. Paul will engage with the words and make something new. Paul finds in scripture a divine design of paradox and surprise. God keeps doing the surprising, ironic, paradoxical thing—picking the youngest son for blessing, for example, or choosing the most unlikely means to do what he wants, hardening Pharaoh's heart, making it look really bad for the Israelites. "So he has mercy on whomever he chooses and hardens the heart of whomever he chooses." God is about mercy, first and always...

## A gesture of love

Paul's view of scripture is bold and humble and flexible and imaginative, neither rational or literalist, nor heavy handed. He views himself as a creature, a prophet, a person, a sinner, a wrestler, a lamenter. As Paul draws on all the wealth of scriptural poetry, our preachers and teachers and readers and all of us can do that also—drink from the well, and find life-giving visions in the current world of political literalness. (Compare Paul's vision of the inclusive design of God with the current political discourse where one always wins and another is always defeated.) This imaginative work is an honoring of God and an attempt to speak into the mystery. It is a gesture of love. Paul's vision of God is of one who is immensely creative and inventive, who works out of his fundamentally merciful, trustworthy character to rescue the whole human race and the creation groaning in travail. God is still doing this.

This is a vision we need in a divided world—of Islam opposed to the West, of North and Global South, of First and Two-Thirds World. God figured it out then and is figuring it out now. There's a wideness in God's mercy. We need reawakened imagination to find scripture, like Paul did, a place of refreshment and confidence and courage. Imagination helps us overcome the obstacles—the obstacle of forgetting, the obstacle of hyper-rationality, the obstacle of authority and "shoulds." Humans are not helpless before the Word—you and I are agents, faithful readers, who play with images, contribute, and make new things.

*The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Briggs Kittredge is the Ernest J. Villavaso Jr. Professor of New Testament and Academic Dean at Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas.*



# We see the cost of poverty every day

*This article was first published by the Canadian Centre for Ethics and Corporate Policy, as part of a three-part series on economic disparity and corporate ethics.*



BY THE REV.  
MAGGIE HELWIG

**T**he church is directed, in its founding texts, to be concerned about economics, particularly whether economic systems

operate in ways that distribute resources fairly and care for the weak and the disadvantaged, or whether they cause harm to those already suffering. The legal code of the ancient Israelites is remarkable in part because it is the earliest written document to lay out the equivalent of corporate ethics for the time and culture—directions to landowners to leave the edges of their crops un-reaped so that the poor and the migrants could gather from them, to pay tithes toward the welfare of the poor, and to forgive debts in a seven-year cycle. Throughout the Old Testament, it is made clear that the moral health of a society is measured by its treatment of the most vulnerable, exiles and widows and orphans.

The New Testament, too, is strikingly forthright about ethics and economics. Mary, upon hearing that her child will be the Messiah, declares this a sign that God “has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.” Jesus tells a “rich young man” that he must sell all his possessions and give the money to the poor. The Epistle of James castigates Christian communities for favouring the wealthy, and the First Epistle of John tells us that the love of God can only be expressed by serving and giving to those in need. A fundamental metaphor that underlies Christian thinking is that of the body. We are, according to our scriptures, all members of one body, which is, ultimately, Christ’s body—and so, no one of us can be whole or healthy or saved alone. We exist in relationship, and can only thrive when all the body’s members are well; harm to any member of the body is harm to each one of us, and to Christ’s own self. Economic inequality, poverty, homelessness, exclusion—these are wounds on Christ’s body, and on our own.

In recent Canadian history, the Anglican Church of Canada has acted out of this belief when, for instance, we were one of the early voices calling for corporate disinvestment from the apartheid regime in South Africa, or when we played a part in founding the Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility in 1975. The Diocese of Toronto has been active in advocacy on issues relating

to poverty and economic inequality, working together with other faith communities and with secular groups; we have met with MPPs and provincial cabinet ministers on housing policy, fair taxation and social assistance rates. We have submitted a brief to the Social Assistance Review Commission and taken part in Toronto’s municipal budget debate.

We have immediate reasons to be concerned about these issues, because our churches see the cost of poverty every day. Men and women come to us for help when they can’t think of where else to turn. They come for grocery vouchers or subway tokens, for soap and shampoo, a sandwich or a cup of soup, a pair of mittens in the winter—basic, simple needs. Nearly every parish in Toronto is now involved in providing food for hungry people, whether through foodbanks, community meals, “deacon’s pantries” or other initiatives. Many also provide emergency shelter. Our congregations include vulnerable seniors, single parents, new Canadians and people with disabilities. People tell us about how they cannot afford dental care or clothing for job interviews, about how they “ration” their medications by taking them half as often as prescribed. People who are working long hours at low-wage jobs come between shifts for a hot meal, so they can stretch their paycheques through a bit more of the month. People who are unable to work because of severe, permanent disabilities sometimes sleep on our floors in the winter because they can’t find appropriate affordable housing. We see the wounded body, daily.

Our anecdotal sense that the situation is becoming increasingly serious is borne out by statistical evidence. Income disparity is now growing much more quickly in Canada than in the United States, according to researchers at Ryerson University. A report released by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in January 2012 revealed that Canada’s top 100 highest paid CEOs now earn 189 times more than the average Canadian. By noontime on Jan. 3, 2012, the first official working day of the year, Canada’s top 100 elite had earned \$44,366—the salary that an average Canadian working full-time earns over the course of a whole year. And, of course, the gap between the elite and those working for minimum wage, or living on social assistance, is far greater. We are increasingly becoming a society of sharply divided income classes, with fewer and fewer in the middle.

Many minimum-wage workers live well below the poverty line. In 2008, one-third of all Ontario children living in poverty (as defined by the federal Low Income Cut-Off Before Tax measurement) were in families with full-time, full-year hours of work. Statistics Canada reports that On-



A homeless man curls up over a vent on Bay Street in Toronto, a common sight in winter. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

tario’s poverty rate had risen to 13.1% by 2009, and that poverty increased most sharply among single adults and seniors. All social assistance recipients in Ontario live far below the poverty line.

Economic inequality costs society at large; societies with higher levels of economic inequality pay for it in higher levels of infant mortality, a deterioration in overall health, higher rates of crime and incarceration—all of which carry heavy costs, both socially and economically. But we need to seek greater equality not only because it is in our own interests, but because it is morally and ethically right to do so. For those of us who are Christians, it is also a theological imperative.

So when Occupy came to camp in the yard of St. James Cathedral in Toronto, many of us recognized them as conversation partners, as people with whom we shared common aims and dreams. There were devout Christians who lived in the Occupy camp, and many others who spent days or nights there, came to talk or to pray or to bring food and blankets to the Occupiers.

The most common criticism of Occupy, of course, is that it didn’t propose practical measures to reduce or eliminate the economic inequality it was protesting. This is only partially true. It may be more true to say that there were so many different ideas that none were able to emerge clearly in the public discourse. It is also true that Occupy was about big dreams, great visions. A society in which all are equally valued, in which resources are shared so that no one is disadvantaged, no one hungry or unsheltered, is very far from our grasp right now.

And yet, it is something which we can all have a share in creating. Occupy has, among other things, opened up space to talk about taxation policy, and to question whether our current tax system is in fact working to ensure the health and well-being of all Canadians. Indeed, an OECD re-

port from last year agreed with Occupy on this point, and recommended that the Canadian government consider revising the tax system so that “wealthier individuals” are paying more of their “fair share.” We, too, agree with this. In a recent brief to the Government of Ontario, we suggested a number of incremental steps towards fairness, including indexing social assistance rates to inflation, introducing a housing benefit and increasing the minimum wage, while at the same time bringing in modest increases in personal income tax for those in the highest income brackets, eliminating the tax break on stock options, and freezing corporate income tax.

If corporations were willing to lend their support to such measures, and to express to governments their willingness to behave as responsible parties in society by paying their fair share in taxes, this would be a powerful statement of social solidarity. Corporations should also consider their own pay rates, refrain from paying excessively high salaries to CEOs, and look at what their lowest-paid employees are earning and whether it is possible for them to live a dignified life; they should examine the increasingly common, and damaging, practice of hiring on contract, without benefits or security, for far too many, mostly low-paid, positions. These are not big dreams; these measures will not take us all the way towards a society of justice and compassion. But they are a beginning at least, and it is our hope that we can all work together to create a society in which, as our scriptures insist, the well-being of those now poor and vulnerable is made the measure of our collective health.

*The Rev. Maggie Helwig is the chair of the Diocese of Toronto’s Social Justice and Advocacy Committee and the assistant curate of St. Timothy’s, North Toronto.*

## LETTERS

### Climate change action

Thank you for publishing the article by Elin Goulden about MP Kirsty Duncan’s meeting with multi-faith groups and headlining her challenge to respond to climate change (October). The Anglican Church needs to hear compelling information, such as the fact that an 80 per cent reduc-

tion of carbon dioxide emissions is needed. I hope that we can look forward to further evidence of your publication’s awareness of the need for action.

It is scary that our food security is now in doubt because of unawareness and inaction. An 80 per cent reduction to greenhouse gas emissions means drastic action. Obviously, because climate change is happening at a faster pace and on a far grander scale than scientists have hitherto imagined, the situation is dire. I urge you to instruct your readers to consult the in-

formation contained in recent books on the subject (excepting, of course, those written by deniers) and make them a focus for church reading groups. I would also suggest posting reading lists on the diocese’s website. One must first know the facts; what one doesn’t know is definitely harmful. It should be our mission to do all we can to mitigate a hellish scenario of our own making.

Barbara Falby  
Toronto

Email your  
**LETTERS**  
to the editor

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# Churches urged to collaborate

Conference provides 'shot in arm'

BY BOB BETTSON

**TERRY** McCullum, the chief executive officer of LOFT Community Services, challenged 140 people from parishes across the diocese to show leadership and get their churches to work collaboratively to address social justice issues in their communities.

Mr. McCullum was speaking at the diocese's Outreach Networking Conference, held at Holy Trinity School, Richmond Hill, on Oct. 20.

LOFT was an Anglican outreach ministry that began in the 1950s with two houses for young men and women with mental health and addiction issues. It was called Anglican Houses and was an initiative of the diocese. Today, it is one of the largest providers of assisted housing in the province, with more than 1,000 units.

Mr. McCullum said the church needs to show leadership. "Don't silo as individual parishes. Collaborate."

A social worker who started with Anglican Houses in the 1980s, he said LOFT has always ministered to "those kind of people"—the poor, the handicapped, the people who Jesus ministered to. "We call it the hope and recovery model. We put life back in your hands."

He gave two examples of those who have been helped. The first was a youth who came to one of the LOFT houses after losing everything, including his house. He was addicted and had nowhere to go. He is now working, living in his own apartment and in a stable relationship. The second young man had a mental



**Faces of the Outreach Networking Conference:** Terry McCullum tells participants to work together to address social justice issues; spoken word poet Mo Ali takes part in the youth program; Alexa Gilmour speaks during a workshop on the Occupy movement and faith; below, participants listen during a plenary session. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

illness and had been kicked out of his house by his own family because of his behaviour. After staying with LOFT, he was reunited with family. He has finished his education and is working.

LOFT also worked on some challenging projects that weren't initially embraced by the community, he said, such as a housing project for homeless people with mental health challenges and AIDS.

Murray MacAdam, the diocese's Social Justice and Advocacy consultant, said the Outreach Networking Conference, now in its 11th year, is one of the only opportunities for people working on justice issues to get together.

"Frankly, outreach and advocacy can be a tough slog," said Mr. MacAdam. "This conference gives people working on these issues a shot in the arm. It helps us remember justice is at the core of our faith."

Bishop George Elliott celebrated the closing Eucharist, which raised up in prayer many of the ministries discussed during the day. "We are all challenged to



look at how God is working in the world, and how to engage in it," he said. "I hope we are able to witness to Jesus in word and in deed, and never lose the habit of looking for Jesus in the lives of others, and in our world."

The conference was well received, with participants noting the wide variety of workshops

and the opportunity to learn and share with each other. Workshops included topics such as prison ministry, the spirituality of social justice, the Occupy movement, relationships with First Nations people, sustainable community development, evangelism and outreach and advocacy in a time of austerity.

# Church can help abused seniors

BY BOB BETTSON

**ELDER** abuse is one of those outreach issues that is not talked about much. Yet Maureen Etkin, from the Ontario Network for Prevention of Elder Abuse, told a group of Anglicans that 10 per cent of seniors will experience abuse in some form during their lives.

In 2001, about one in eight Canadians was over the age of 65. By 2026, that number will grow to one in four. Yet public awareness of elder abuse has not kept up to the growth of the country's senior population.

Ms. Etkin said the church can play an important role in education and awareness, as well as responding to seniors experiencing abuse. Surveys show that 68 per cent of seniors would confide in clergy if they had a problem. However, they often do not have the opportunity to say something. Studies show that more than 60 per cent of elder abusers are immediate family members, and only 24 per cent are unrelated caregivers. That means that victims are reluctant to speak out.

"They sometimes blame themselves," says Ms. Etkin, who led a workshop at the diocese's Outreach Networking Conference. "They think, 'God is punishing me.'" Victims also fear a loss of affection, more abuse, humiliation and what will happen to the abuser if they report the abuse.

While financial abuse is the most common kind of elder abuse, with family members taking advantage of their elders for financial gain, there is also physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, as well as neglect.

Ms. Etkin says some of the most hurtful abuse doesn't involve violence. "It is emotional abuse, with threats, intimidation, infantilization, shunning and ignoring." An example would be threatening to put a senior in a "home" if they don't agree to do something that the caregiver wants them to do.

There are two 24-hour hotlines designed to help with elder abuse: the Seniors Safety Line, 1-866-299-1011, and Senior Crime Stoppers, 1-800-222-8477.

# Still time to save Earth: author

Canada among worst polluters

BY BOB BETTSON

**ALANNA** Mitchell has travelled to all seven continents on scientific expeditions to observe how our environment is changing. The former *Globe and Mail* journalist and author says that despite the environmental degradation she has seen, she remains hopeful that with global awareness and action, there can be change.

Ms. Mitchell, speaking to Anglicans at the diocese' Outreach Networking Conference, said church groups have not been at



**Alanna Mitchell**

the forefront of advocacy on environmental issues. "There has been a failure of leadership," she said. She noted that former United Church Moderator Mardi Tin-

dal was the only Canadian church leader to attend the earth summit in Durban, South Africa.

Ms. Mitchell said that the last 10,000 years, which have seen so much climate change and environmental degradation, are "like the blink of an eye" when compared to millions of years of life on earth. Yet in the past 200 years, the burning of fossil fuels has destabilized the atmosphere because it can no longer absorb carbon emissions. This has changed the chemistry of the oceans as well as the air.

She said the Kyoto Protocol, renounced by the Harper government, has actually worked quite well in the rest of the world. Many of the countries that signed the agreement have reduced emissions below 1990 levels.

Canada is one of the worst polluters, she said, failing to reduce emissions and instead increasing them by 17 per cent. This is due to increased emissions by the oil producing provinces, Alberta and Saskatchewan. Meanwhile, Germany is drawing almost half its energy from renewable sources such as solar and wind.

For churches, advocacy must go beyond green initiatives like recycling and energy use audits, she said. "This is a public policy advocacy issue. The narrative has still not been written. We still have time to do something."

Participants agreed with Ms. Mitchell that church leaders need to do much more, in terms of resources and leadership, to support environmental protection.

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# Migrant workers 'commodities'

## Nanny says basic rights, living wage denied

BY BOB BETTSON

**MARU** Maesa is a Filipino nanny who has worked in Canada under the federal government's temporary caregiver program since 2008. Now a leader in a migrant workers' association, she says Canada is part of a system that puts temporary workers in conditions that deny them basic human rights and mobility.

Ms. Maesa was speaking at a forum on refugee and migrant workers' issues at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square, Toronto, in October, along with Ched Myers, an American



Maru Maesa

biblical scholar and justice activist.

For 15 years, Ms. Maesa has been a domestic worker in Hong Kong, Singapore and now Canada. She sends money back to the

Philippines to help with medical treatment for her parents. She accuses the Philippine government of pushing Filipinos out of the country through state oppression and creating conditions where hunger and poverty leave few alternatives.

"There is a labour export policy that has become a permanent fixture," she said. "It's a feudal system."

At times holding back tears, she described conditions for migrant caregivers. They can't work for any other employer without applying again, with a three month delay. No educational or vocational training is permitted. There are often long hours, with no overtime pay.

In many cases, she said, separation from families back home causes isolation, loneliness and depression. And caregivers can fall prey to agencies that demand large sums of money to arrange placements. She was asked to pay \$5,000 to such an agency.

Globalization of the world economy means that more workers are becoming migrants. "More of us are away from our families to meet an economic need," she said. "We are commodities for sale."

She attributed her longevity as a migrant worker to a strong determination to survive. "You need to remind the Canadian government that despite tougher economic times here, Canada continues to be among the wealthiest countries in the world. It's not right that migrant workers be denied basic rights and a living wage."

Mr. Myers, who was the keynote speaker at the diocese's Outreach Networking Conference in 2010, said, "It's painful to look with open eyes and open hearts at the stories which Maru embodies." Those stories demand a faith response, he said.

Mr. Myers is part of a generation of faith-based activists who were formed by the sanctuary movement for refugees in the

1980s, when churches invoked the ancient tradition of sanctuary to protect Central American refugees from deportation.

He said the rights and dignity of Ms. Maesa and other migrant workers were being sacrificed for "our need for cheap food and cheap labour," and he called for a new sanctuary movement based on "prophetic hospitality" to the stranger.

"In our Biblical tradition, from beginning to end, God is portrayed as entering the world in the guise of a stranger needing hospitality," he said.

He noted that the theme of Advent and Christmas is hospitality: the Holy Family as political refugees fleeing to Egypt. Yet this theme of hospitality has been replaced today with an "orgy of addiction to consumerism, at a very high spiritual cost. We need to turn our attention back to Christ. He stands knocking at our door, asking for hospitality."

The federal government is sending signals to potential refugees not to come to Canada to make their claims for refugee status, said Michael Creal, who works on refugee issues for Holy Trinity. "Doors are closing" because of proposed legislation that allows potential claimants to be sent back to other countries where they could have made a claim as part of their flight to Canada, he said.

Under a new bill before the House of Commons, the processing of refugees will be sped up, and with compressed timelines it will be impossible to get legal counsel for refugees, he said. There is a mean-spiritedness to this legislation, he said, as well as giving the minister much more unqualified power in the refugee determination process.

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# Arab Spring brings hope, says cleric

## Radical Islam 'casting a big shadow' on Middle East

BY STUART MANN

A Syrian Anglican priest who visited Toronto in October says the Arab Spring is good for the Middle East, even though it has brought bloodshed and uncertainty.

"There is a hope that the whole region will emerge stronger," said the Rev. Nadim Nassar, a Church of England cleric who was born in Syria and now lives in London. "Getting rid of dictators is always good."

Mr. Nassar was speaking at a forum on "Christian reflections on the Arab Spring" at Grace Church on-the-Hill, Toronto. He is the director of the Awareness Foundation, an international charity that fosters relations between people of different faiths and cultures.

He said Syria's economy under President Bashar Hafez al-Assad and his father had become totally corrupt. "It ate the country from the inside out. The psyche of the people, the pride of the people, the identity of the people—you have no idea what corruption can do to a society."

Syria's dictatorship also stifled

freedom of speech and learning, he said. "For 40 years, people forgot how to speak, how to form opinions, how to express themselves. Our children don't know how to be leaders. Why? Because for decades, they did not grow up in a healthy situation where leadership skills could be taught."

He said it is a myth that Christians in Syria are a privileged minority. "That is a big misconception. We've never been privileged at all. Is having the minimum rights a privilege? What privileges do we have under the al-Assad regime—that we could worship? Big deal."

Even if he was a member of a privileged minority living under a dictatorship, he would not want it, he said. "Is that what Christianity is about—to be privileged? No, I don't think so. I don't want to be privileged, thank you very much. I want society to have freedom—the basic freedom of speech, the freedom of politics."

He said the war in Syria to topple President al-Assad is devastating. "It's horrible, unbelievable. But on the other hand, it seems we have to go through this painful



The Rev. Nadim Nassar, speaking at a forum on the Arab Spring, says 'getting rid of dictators is always good.'  
PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

way to emerge stronger and better."

He said radical Islam is "casting a big shadow" on the future of Syria and the Middle East. "Relations between faiths in Syria have not been a problem at all. On the street and in everyday life, there has not been a problem. Christians and Muslims get along. The problem is between the dictatorship, the ruling family and the rest of the country. And everybody is afraid of the emerging power of Islamic fanaticism. The Christians don't want to go from a political dictator to a religious dictator. Most of the Muslims in Syria also do not want that."

One of the biggest questions in the Middle East is what will happen to religious minorities now that many of the dictators are

gone and Islamist governments have taken over, he said. "I hope we will not reach a point where it has to be either Islam or nothing. Neither Christians nor Muslims want to prove to the world that Islam is a religion that cannot live with a different other."

He encouraged Christians not to leave the Middle East. "It is important for us to be there because we have a message, we have a role—to be the catalyst for peace.

If we believe that there is a region in the whole world which can nourish the idea of different ethnic groups living together, it is the Middle East. If we lose that, it means the world has failed to face its differences in the 21st century."

He said the only way to end the fighting is to bring all groups involved in the conflict together. "That is the only way to stop the bloodshed and start the dialogue and move on."

## BRIEFLY

### Cathedral shows crèches from around world

St. James Cathedral's annual exhibit of crèches from the around the world opens on Dec. 12. This year's exhibit will feature the history of the crèche in Canada and the different traditions brought to the country by waves of immigrants over the past 400 years. The crèches will be on view in the cathedral's Archives and Museum, which will be open every Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday afternoons from 12:30 to 4 p.m. until Jan. 6, with the exception of Dec. 26 and 27. All are welcome and admission is free. For special group tours, email archives@stjamescathedral.on.ca.

### All Our Days only online

All Our Days, a resource that includes the lectionary and various prayer cycles, will be published only online starting in 2013. It will retain its familiar layout, with some changes, and will con-

tinue to include the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer. It will be available on the Prayer Resources page of the diocese's website, [www.toronto.anglican.ca/prayer](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/prayer). On the same page, readers will also find links to other websites that offer the lectionary and the Anglican Cycle of Prayer. Prayer Cycle will continue to be published in *The Anglican*.

### Correction

Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, will return to academia as master of Magdalene College, Cambridge. Incorrect information appeared in last month's issue.

### Info session for investments

Under Canon 39 of the diocese's Constitution and Canons, the Investment Committee is charged with the responsibility of managing and investing the Consolidated Trust Fund and the Cemetery Fund. An information session will be held on Dec. 5, 7-9 p.m., at St. John, York Mills, 10 Don Ridge Dr., in Toronto. For more information, contact Aneita Chang at 416-363-6021, ext. 233, or [achang@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:achang@toronto.anglican.ca).

### Resources available for unity week

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held Jan. 18-25. Parishes are encouraged to cooperate with other churches in their community to mark this important annual observance. Information about the week and resources to use during ecumenical gatherings are available on the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity page on the national church's website, [www.anglican.ca](http://www.anglican.ca).

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### City becomes 'compassionate' ①

The Rev. Andrew Twiddy, rector of St. Edmunds church in the Diocese of British Columbia, has been instrumental in getting the city of Parksville to become the first Compassionate City on Vancouver Island. The Charter of Compassion has grown out of the work of author Karen Armstrong and has become a global movement. While promoted by churches in the area, the Charter is non-religious and non-partisan. Mr. Twiddy made a presentation to city council in August and, in response, councillors voted unanimously to affirm the Charter. *The Diocesan Post*

### Young Anglicans travel to Taizé ②

In the early morning hours of June 29, a group of four teenagers, three children and two adults from St. Helen, West Point Grey in Vancouver met at the rectory, took a bus to the airport and flew to Taizé, a tiny town in France near the Swiss border. So began a visit with the Taizé Brothers, renowned for their ministry of reconciliation, hospitality and worship services. "The week we were there, about 2,500 people were present and we all came together three times a day to worship God in the beautiful simplicity of the Taizé songs," says the Rev. Scott Gould, rector of St. Helen's. "It is really difficult to describe the power and holiness of 2,500 people from every language and race all singing the same songs together to God." About 100,000 pilgrims make the journey to Taizé every year, he says. *Topic*



### Church connects through theatre ③

Every August, Holy Trinity in the Old Strathcona neighbourhood of Edmonton is surrounded by the energy and excitement of the city's annual Fringe theatre festival. The parish has become a part of the action by opening its basement as a venue and supporting the festival in numerous other roles. This year, close to 100 volunteers helped host seven Fringe performances. They collected tickets at the box office, co-ordinated volunteers, entertained lineups of patrons and kept the audiences and performers refreshed. "It feels good to make a contribution," says Adrian Peetoom. "This outreach really puts a face on the church and

cements our sense of community both inside and out." *The Messenger*

### Family flies far for baptism ④

Carolyn and Anthony Behan travelled from Malawi in Southern Africa to St. Clement, Winnipeg, to have their son baptized in August. The Behans have made the trip three times before, to get married and to have their two other children baptized in the church. Ms. Behan is originally from St. Clement's and met her husband while on a trip to Malawi with her father in 2002. *Rupert's Land News*

### Cathedral hall razed for new development ⑤

Christ Church Cathedral Hall in Ottawa was demolished in August to make way for 10 new townhomes and a 21-storey condominium tower. Six years ago, the Diocese of Ottawa and the cathedral formed a joint committee to look at the best use of cathedral land to generate revenue for both parties while protecting the environment and respecting the designated heritage district. More than 70 per cent of the condos in the yet-to-be-built tower have already been sold. Occupancy is expected in the summer of 2014. A new cathedral hall and diocesan archives will also be built on the site in the next two years. *Crosstalk*

### Ministry to sailors celebrates anniversary ⑥

Much has changed since the founding of the Montreal Sailors' Institute on the waterfront in 1862. Seafarers are less likely to be stranded, confined to their ships or unpaid, but the Rev. David Rozeboom, chaplain, is convinced that the centre still provides necessary services to those in port. One of the most important supports offered to seafarers are opportunities to contact their families through Skype or other Internet connections. In the first half of the year, the ministry provided 382 hours of Internet time (not including Wi-Fi) and helped seafarers place 1,708 long-distance calls. It celebrated its 150th anniversary in November. *Montreal Anglican*

### Labyrinth connected to walking trails ⑦

On Sept. 16, the Parish of the Good Shepherd in Mount Pearl, Nfld., unveiled a labyrinth. It stands as the centerpiece of the parish's redevelopment of the green space next to the church under the city's "Adopt-A-Park" program. Linked to Mount Pearl's walking trails, the labyrinth provides a space for people to walk, contemplate and meditate. It is a collaborative project of the parish, city and the Grand Concourse Authority in Newfoundland and Labrador. *Anglican Life*

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# Beloved Christmas play still going strong

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

**THIS** year, there will be a special Christmas celebration at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square, Toronto. For the 75th consecutive year, the church will stage its famous Christmas play, which has a cast of more than 100 players. The Christmas Story will be performed on Friday nights and weekends from Dec. 7 to 23.

The play itself is actually 85 years old. It began in England in 1928 at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London, when the rector and some others created a script and a musical template for a Christmas story.

That play closed because of the pre-war blackout in 1938 and never reopened. However, the rector's daughter, Patricia Frank, married a young priest who came to Toronto that year to become rector of Holy Trinity. Ms. Frank brought the play with her, produced it that Christmas, and it has continued ever since.

The production is a series of mimed scenes from the Gospels, linked by narration. The music is provided by a professional organist, professional singers and a choir. A professional firm makes the 100 different lighting changes required by the one-hour production.

The play is a massive undertaking, involving more than 160 performers and volunteers. The volunteers, who log more than 3,000 hours on the play, do the publicity, work on the wardrobe, act as ushers and take on other tasks.

Only a minority of the participants come from the Holy Trinity community. The majority come from all walks of life and from across the Greater Toronto Area, says Susan Watson, the director who has been involved with the production for almost 30 years. They are not necessarily Anglican, and not necessarily Christian, she adds.

An important element in the play is the use of a live baby. Al-

though Ms. Frank had wanted a baby to portray Jesus, it was not considered appropriate and a doll was used. By the 1960s, opinions had changed.

A baby has made a great difference to the performance, says Ms. Watson. "This story is about the incarnation, the Word made flesh," she says. "It's amazingly powerful with a real baby there. At the end of the pageant, when they say, 'The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us,' and there's a little baby on stage, the words impact you on a different level."

The play has retained a faithful audience, some of whom have been attending for decades. To Ms. Watson, it is evidence that the timeless story speaks to people wherever they are in their lives—for example, to children who see the other children on stage, to new parents or to those who are refugees.

People come to see the play for a variety of reasons, she says. For



The Word is made flesh in *The Christmas Story*. PHOTO BY TINA RAYNA PHOTOGRAPHY

some, it is a deeply faithful and spiritual experience; for others, it's a piece of theatre. Some come for the superb music.

But there were times during the 75 years when it looked as if the production would not go on. In the 1970s, the church was under threat of demolition. In 1977, a fire destroyed much of the church ceiling, and the pageant moved into the Eaton Centre.

In 1987, the play celebrated its 50th anniversary, and Ms. Frank flew in from England for the production. But the following year, it narrowly risked being shut down. The relevance of the play to the parish's work was questioned by social activists in the congregation and the pageant only just

survived by a close vote.

The Christmas Story will be performed on Friday and Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m. and on Saturdays and Sundays at 4:30 p.m. On Dec. 8, there will be a special gala performance, by invitation only, for those who have performed in the play over the years—including a few from the original 1938 performance as well as long-time audience members.

Because of the gala, there will be two additional evening performances this year, on Dec. 20 and Dec. 23. Although the play is free, Ms. Watson recommends that because of fire regulations, people make reservations through the Holy Trinity website, [www.holytrinitytoronto.org](http://www.holytrinitytoronto.org).





Volunteers from St. Paul on-the-Hill in Pickering take a break with backpacks they have filled with necessities for homeless people.



## FRIENDLY

Velco the ferret, held by owner Tanya Mereweather, gets closer to the Rev. David Bryant, incumbent of St. Joseph of Nazareth, Bramalea, at the Blessing of the Animals service at Chinguacousy Park on Oct. 6. Besides Velco, the guests included dogs, a pony named Caramel and "a picture of gold fish (it was too cold for them to come in person)," writes Mr. Bryant.

## Renovated church wins award

St. Clement, Eglinton, won an Award of Excellence for architectural conservation and craftsmanship in the 2012 Heritage Toronto Awards, held in October. The jury-judged category honours projects that have restored or adapted buildings or structures that have existed for 40 years or more. St. Clement's was recognized for the renovation and restoration of eight structures built between 1891 and 1958.

## Parishioner writes about Cobourg churches

Jim Weller, a member of St. Peter, Cobourg, has written a book about local churches to coincide with the 175th anniversary of the town. The book, called *Cobourg's Churches Over the Life of the Town*, covers 15 churches in chronological order of their foundation, from 1819 to the present.

Proceeds from the sale of the book will go to NeighbourLink Northumberland, which provides assistance for people in the county. The book sells for \$25 and is available from NeighbourLink Northumberland, 1-888-200-2711.

## Food bank celebrates a decade of service

In October, the food bank at St. Peter, Oshawa, celebrated 10 years of outreach ministry to the south Oshawa community. The food bank is run by a team of volunteers, coordinated by Rosemary Doucett, which works to welcome visitors and provide them with

food boxes. More than 1,800 families are registered. Some visit on a regular basis, while others come during a difficult period in their lives.

Over the years, the ministry has been supported by various local organizations, businesses, churches and individuals, including the Canadian Automobile Workers Family Auxiliary, St. Matthew, Oshawa, the Cub Pack at St. George Memorial, Oshawa, and St. John, Whitby. The food bank has also received an outreach grant from the diocese. If you can arrange a regular or one-time source of food or funds with a school, retailer, service organization or community group, contact Ms. Doucett at 905-725-5471 or rd.doucett@sympatico.ca.

## East end church celebrates 100 years

The Church of the Resurrection—affectionately called The Rez—is celebrating a century of ministry this year. In 1912, members of St. Paul, Bloor Street, and St. John the Baptist, Norway, saw a need for an Anglican Church in the east end of Toronto. They canvassed door-to-door to raise the capital needed to build the Church of the Resurrection on the corner of Woodbine and Milverton Avenues.

At the time, the church held three services and Sunday School every Sunday, with hundreds in attendance. After several decades of robust ministry, the neighborhood began to change, and many families moved to the suburbs. In the 1990s, the church was in danger of closing, but was revitalized through the intervention of Bishop



Volunteers at the food bank at St. Peter, Oshawa, gather for a photo in front of the shelves.



## ROLLING IN DOUGH

Members of St. Paul, Washago, prepare meat pies on Sept. 10, to be sold at the church's bazaar and bake sale in October. "All were invited to come and help in some way with this money raising project," writes parishioner Barbara Taylor. "No experience was needed to join in the fun and fellowship. We visited while we stirred filling, rolled pastry, and filled pies." The team produced more than 100 pies that day and raised \$1,434 in total from the pies produced during this session and three other sessions in 2012.

Michael Bedford Jones and under the leadership of the Rev. Canon Duke Viperman. Since then, the church has continued to grow, even adding a community garden.

To mark the anniversary, the Rez commissioned artist Marilyn Pike to paint a picture of what the neighborhood looked like 100 years ago. Ms. Pike researched archival photos and images to create the painting. A centennial celebration will be held at the church on Dec. 9. For more information, visit [www.therez.ca](http://www.therez.ca).

## Backpacks provide necessities to homeless

On Oct. 18, a group of volunteers at St. Paul on-the-Hill in Pickering packed 524 backpacks, intended for homeless people, with toiletries, underwear, socks, t-shirts, warm winter items, and Scripture. The backpacks were blessed by the Rev. Canon Kim Beard on Oct. 21 and distributed to seven agencies and churches in the Durham and Toronto regions the same day. "The gen-



## FUN DAY

Members of Christ the King, Etobicoke, walk around the parish property on Oct. 21 as part of Beating the Bounds, an annual walk that raises money for the parish operating fund. It is modeled on an old English custom that marked parish boundaries. This year, the walkers and their sponsors raised more than \$1,000.

erosity of people and the many hands it took to put them together is a true testament of God's love and caring," writes Bruce

Hampson, program coordinator. The backpack program has been a tradition at the church for 14 years.



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

## Worship

**DEC. 2** – A service of readings and carols at St. Simon-the-Apostle, 525 Bloor St. E., Toronto, at 4 p.m. A reception with Christmas cake will follow. Call 416-923-8714 or visit [www.stsimons.ca](http://www.stsimons.ca).

**DEC. 2** – Advent Choral Evensong at St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Windermere Ave., Toronto, at 4 p.m., with St. Olave's Choir and organist Tim Showalter. Followed by Christmas Tea and "Clarinet at Christmas" performance. Contributions appreciated. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

**DEC. 2** – Advent Service of Lessons and Carols at St. Peter, Erindale, 1745 Dundas St. W., Mississauga, at 4 p.m., based on the Service of St. John's College, Cambridge. Great "O" Antiphons, and music of Howells, Britten, Goldschmidt, and Ralph Vaughan Williams, presented by the parish choir. Call 905-828-2095.

**DEC. 9** – St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., in Toronto, will hold its annual Advent Carol Service at 8 p.m. Music by Cleobury, Martin, McDowall, Part, Skempton and Wilberg will be presented by the choir of St. Martin's, with organ and instrumental accompaniment. Collection will be taken and donated to a charity in the parish. Call 416-767-7491.

**DEC. 16** – Christmas Jazz Vespers at Christ Church, Deer Park, 1570 Yonge St., Toronto, with the Dixie Demons. Scripture

reading, prayers and a brief reflection. Call 416-920-5211 or visit [www.christchurchdeerpark.org](http://www.christchurchdeerpark.org).

**DEC. 16** – Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols at St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Windermere Ave., Toronto, at 7:30 p.m. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

**DEC. 16** – St. Simon-the-Apostle's annual service of Nine Lessons and Carols will be held at 4 p.m. A hot apple cider and mince tarts social will follow the service. The church is located at 525 Bloor St. E., Toronto. Call 416-923-8714 or visit [www.stsimons.ca](http://www.stsimons.ca).

**DEC. 16** – Christmas Lessons, Poetry and Carols, at St. Peter, Erindale, 1745 Dundas St. W., Mississauga, with the Parish Choir, St. Peter's Singers, and Handbell Choir, at 7 p.m. Call 905-828-2095.

**DEC. 24** – St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Windermere Ave., Toronto, invites all to its Christmas Eve services. Children's Christmas Eve Service at 4 p.m. and Candlelight Service of Holy Communion with Anointing at 10:30 p.m. Carolling in the church beginning at 10 p.m. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

**DEC. 24** – Christmas Eve service at St. Simon the Apostle, 525 Bloor St. E., Toronto, at 10 p.m. Call 416-923-8714 or visit [www.stsimons.ca](http://www.stsimons.ca).

**DEC. 24** – Christmas Eve Services at St. Peter, Erindale, 1745 Dundas St. W., Mississauga. 10:30 a.m. Infants at the Creche; 4 p.m. Toddlers' Service; 7 p.m., 9 p.m., and 11 p.m. Choral Services. Call 905-828-2095.

**DEC. 25** – Join St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Windermere Ave., Toronto, for Holy Communion with Anointing at 10:30 a.m. For more details call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

**DEC. 25** – Christmas Day service at



## GOLDEN

Artist Mary Catherine Newcomb installs a wheat field at St. Anne, Toronto, in preparation for its art festival "Mirabilia—A Miracle on Gladstone Avenue," which featured visual arts, film, music, lectures on religion and the arts, and worship, from Oct. 13 to 21. The festival marked the church's 150th anniversary and drew more than 2,500 people. PHOTO BY THE REV. GARY VAN DER MEER

St. Simon-the-Apostle at 10:30 a.m. Call 416-923-8714 or visit [www.stsimons.ca](http://www.stsimons.ca).

**DEC. 25** – Christmas Day Service at St. Peter, Erindale, 1745 Dundas St. W., Mississauga, at 9 a.m. Call 905-828-2095.

**DEC. 30** – Memorial Carol Service at 10:30 a.m. at St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Windermere Ave., Toronto. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

**JAN. 13** – Atonement, Alderwood, 256 Sheldon Ave., Toronto, celebrates its 90th anniversary with a Holy Eucharist at 10:30 a.m. For more information, contact Yvonne Russell at 416-626-6164.

**JAN. 26 & 27** – Come back to St. Paul, Brighton, as the church completes a year of 150th anniversary celebrations, with Holy Communion at 10 a.m. with Bishop Linda Nicholls. Luncheon after the service. For more information about anniversary activities, call 613-475-2000 or visit [www.stpaulsbrighton.ca](http://www.stpaulsbrighton.ca).

## Sales

**DEC. 1** – Christmas Bazaar at St. John, Craighurst, on Highway 93, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Crafts, cookies, cakes, pies, preserves and lunch. Bring your own bag. Call 705-721-9722.

**DEC. 1** – Christmas Fair at Christ Church, Deer Park, Toronto, from 10:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. Gifts, tea room, treasures and collectibles, decorations, knitted, sewn and craft items, jewellery, baskets and tins, home baking, jellies, jams and preserves. Call 416-920-5211 or visit [www.thereslifehere.org](http://www.thereslifehere.org).

## Art/Music/Theatre

**DEC. 1** – The Anglican Churches of Port Hope—St. John the Evangelist, Port Hope; St. Mark, Port Hope; and St. Paul, Perrytown—are pleased to sponsor the 1st An-

nual Christmas show "Christmas with the Aces" at St. John the Evangelist at 135 Pine St. at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome; tickets are \$15 each or \$45 for a family of four. To order tickets, call 905-885-4071 or email [rewilson@live.ca](mailto:rewilson@live.ca).

**DEC. 7 & 9, 14-16, 20-23** – The Christmas Story nativity play, a Toronto tradition since 1938, celebrates its 75th season. Professional musicians and a volunteer cast present this hour-long pageant. Friday and Saturday evenings, 7:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday matinees, 4:30 p.m. Thursday and Sunday evenings, 7:30 p.m. Final weekend only. Suggested donation: \$20 adults, \$5 children. To reserve, visit [www.holytrinitytoronto.org](http://www.holytrinitytoronto.org) or call 416-598-8979. The church is wheelchair accessible. American Sign Language interpretation at selected performances. The Christmas Story takes place at Holy Trinity, 10 Trinity Sq., Toronto. For more information and tickets, email [christmasstory@holyltrinitytoronto.org](mailto:christmasstory@holyltrinitytoronto.org).

**DEC. 8** – The choir of Grace Church, Markham, joins the choir of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and Bur Oak Secondary School Choir in a dramatic reading of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol, at 8 p.m. at St. Andrew Presbyterian, 143 Main Street Markham North, Markham. Admission is \$15; proceeds go to Markham Food Bank. For more information or tickets, call 905-294-4736 or email [musicatstandrews@bell.net](mailto:musicatstandrews@bell.net).

**DEC. 9** – Christmas Pageant at St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Windermere Ave., Toronto, at 10:30 a.m. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

**DEC. 15** – St. Theodore of Canterbury, 111 Cactus Ave., North York, presents the Fourth Annual Dramatic Reading of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol, at 7:30 p.m.

Music by "The Tunes" Youth Instrumental Ensemble. All proceeds to benefit North York Harvest Food Bank. Tickets are \$10. Call 416-222-2461 or visit [www.sttheodore.ca](http://www.sttheodore.ca).

**DEC. 15** – St. Leonard, 25 Wanless Ave., Toronto, will host "Stories and Songs of Christmas" by the Rev. Canon Dr. Tim Elliott, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20 and available through the church office or at the door. Call 416-485-7278.

**DEC. 16** – "Never a Brighter Star," at All Saints, Kingsway, 2850 Bloor St. W., Toronto, featuring the majestic Gloria by Mark Hayes and other seasonal favourites by Halley, Daley, Rutter and Sirett, at 4 p.m. Celebrate the Christmas season with Chamber Orchestra, massed choir and audience singing of carols. Shawn Grenke, conductor; Margaret Bárdos, mezzo-soprano; Shawn Mattas, baritone; Krista Rhodes, piano. Tickets are \$20. Call 416-233-1125.

**DEC. 16** – Christmas Pageant at St. Peter, Erindale, 1745 Dundas St. W., Mississauga, at 9:15 a.m. Call 905-828-2095.

**DEC. 21** – Messiah with Ontario Philharmonic, at 8 p.m. at Christ Church, Deer Park, 1570 Yonge Street, Toronto. The world tradition of Messiah continues with the Ontario Philharmonic featuring the Amadeus Choir and Jennifer Taverner, soprano; Leigh-Anne Martin, alto; Zachary Finkelstein, tenor; Justin Welsh, baritone. Tickets are \$25-\$45. Call 416-443-9737 or 905-579-6711 or visit [www.ontariophil.ca](http://www.ontariophil.ca).

**JAN. 6** – The Caribbean Chorale of Toronto, under the direction of the Rev. Amy Lee, will present an Epiphany Concert at St. Hilda, Fairbank, 2353 Dufferin St., Toronto. Concert begins promptly at 4 p.m.; tickets are \$20 per person and can be obtained by calling 416-614-1184.

# Students feeling the stress



December is a month full of anxiety for many people. There are gifts to buy, desserts to make and family

to see.

For students, December isn't the only month where stress can spark. Anxiety has been an issue in my life for about the last five years. It began in my last year of high school, when decisions about the future seemed a lot more pressing and important than in the previous 17 years of my life.

In September, *Maclean's* magazine published an article about the increase in mental health issues on Canadian campuses. The article gave a statistic from Ryerson University, the school that I attend. In just one year, the school's Centre for Development and Counseling saw a 200 per cent increase in students in crisis situations. These situations included suicide, homelessness or

## GEN WHY

BY REBECCA WILLIAMS

severe depression.

The financial situation of many students is a common source of stress for them. Tuition across Canada is up five per cent from last year, and Ontario has the highest tuition fees, at an average of \$7,180 a year. Combine that possibility for debt with an unemployment rate of 15 per cent and you have the factors for stress.

One of the positive things is that students at universities are looking for help. Ryerson's counseling centre was given extra funding from the university after last year's increase. The funds were enough to allow the hiring of two additional staff members.

The situation for students today isn't ideal, but if people continue to ask for help, changes will be made in the institutions we are a part of.

*Rebecca Williams is a member of Christ Church, Scarborough.*



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## Prayer Cycle will return

Prayer Cycle was unavailable for publication. It will return next month.

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## IN MOTION

### Appointments

- The Rev. Cathy Miller, Interim Priest-in-Charge, All Saints, Collingwood, Oct. 1.
- The Rev. Lorna May, Deacon-in-Charge, St. Luke, Creemore, Oct. 1.
- The Rev. Canon Jeremy Van Lane, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. James, Sharon, Oct. 14.
- The Rev. Joyce Barnett, Interim-Priest-in-Charge, St. Matthias, Bellwoods, Toronto, Oct. 22, while the Incumbent is on leave.

### Vacant Incumbencies

Clergy from outside the diocese with the permission of their bishop may apply through the Ven. Peter Fenty.

### First Phase - Parish Selection Committee in Formation

- (not yet receiving names):
- All Saints, Peterborough
  - Epiphany & St. Mark, Parkdale
  - Parish of Elmvale
  - St. Thomas, Shanty Bay
  - Parish of Roche's Point

- Parish of Penetanguishene & Waubashene
- All Saints, Collingwood
- Church of the Nativity, Scarborough

### Second Phase - Parish Selection Committee Receiving Names (via Area Bishop):

- St. Martin, Bay Ridges (Trent-Durham)
- St. Luke, Dixie South, Mississauga (York-Credit Valley)
- St. Christopher, Richmond Hill (York-Scarborough)

### Third Phase - Parish Selection Committee Interviewing

- (not receiving names):
- Church of the Advent, Toronto
  - St. Simon the Apostle, Toronto
  - St. Barnabas, Chester
  - Trinity East (Little Trinity)
  - St. Clement, Eglinton

### Ordinations

- The Rev. Arthur Boers was ordained a priest at St. Paul, L'Amoreaux on Oct. 21.
- The Rev. Susan Spicer was ordained a priest at St. James, Fenelon Falls, on Nov. 24.

### Conclusions

- Major Grahame Thompson has relinquished his ministry in the Anglican Church of Canada, as of Aug. 28.
- The Rev. Bill Welch has resigned as Incumbent of St. James the Apostle, Sharon. His last Sunday in the parish was Sept. 30.
- The Rev. Janet Stephens has retired as Associate Priest at Grace Church, Markham, as of Oct. 1. She will continue in the parish as an Honorary Assistant.
- The Ven. Judy Walton has resigned as Honorary Assistant at Christ Church, Batteau, as of Oct. 17.
- The Rev. Canon Betty Jordan is concluding her ministry at St. Paul, Lorne Park. Her last Sunday there will be Dec. 30.
- The Rev. Wendy Moore has announced her retirement. Her last Sunday at St. James, Caledon East, will be Dec. 30.
- The Rt. Rev. George Elliott has announced his retirement. He will step down as Area Bishop of York-Simcoe at the end of April 2013.



## READING THE BIBLE

BY THE REV. CANON DON BEATTY

## John's words give strength

As we approach Christmas, we will depart from the Hebrew Bible and look at the Christmas story according to John. We will pick up the Moses saga in the New Year.

John's Christmas story is very different from Matthew and Luke. John does not tell us about Bethlehem and a stable, the angels and shepherds, and the magi from the east. John takes us back to the beginning of time.

John 1:1-18 is the prologue to his Gospel, and 1:1-14 is often used at the midnight service on Christmas Eve. This passage is also called the "last Gospel" and may be recited by the priest at the end of every celebration of the Eucharist. I have vivid memories of this passage, especially when I was a student deacon at Trinity Anglican Church in St. Thomas, Ont. Father Wagland recited this passage at the conclusion of every service. I soon started to say it with him, quietly to myself, and it quickly became one of my favourites. It is amazing how constant repetition becomes part of our very being.

What was John saying in this prologue? It begins: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God" (John 1:1). This is reminiscent of the first sentence in Genesis. Was John writing a new Torah?

The Greek word "logos" means so much more than "Word," as it is translated in English. To the Hebrew mind, the "word of God" was equated with wisdom, which was the creative power of God. John was telling us at the beginning of the Gospel that Jesus was the creator God.

For the Gentiles, "logos" would be seen in philosophical terms, describing the design of the universe. It was the divine principle of reason that gave order to the world. Again, they would understand "logos" as a divine name for the creator of the universe. John set the tone for his Gospel in that first sentence. Jesus was part of the creative force of the universe. "Logos" would appeal to both Hebrew and Greek followers in Ephesus.

The spirituality of this Gospel is evident from that prologue. John told us that this Jesus was God from the beginning. He was sent into the world so that all people could be enlightened through him. This Christmas Gospel concludes with the beautiful sentence, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

This sentence confirmed the belief that Jesus was the incarnate Messiah. The Word came into the world as God with us, to lead us back to God. There was no doubt that John was telling his audience and us that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, sent to bring the world into a loving relationship with the Father.

Let me tell you about the writing of this fourth Gospel. It was probably composed by John the Apostle. He and his brother James were among the first disciples called by Jesus, and they were part of the inner circle that was with Jesus in all the events of his ministry. John had outlived his contemporaries. Most of the apostles had suffered martyrdom many years before John wrote this Gospel. It was probably written between 85 and 95 CE. John was in Ephesus, where he had migrated from Jerusalem.

Paul had established a Christian community in Ephesus many years before, and John may have gone to the local synagogue and worshipped with this community, slowly gathering a group of believers around him. Eventually, this group was expelled from the synagogue because of its belief in Jesus as the Messiah. John, with the help of his followers, wrote this Gospel to strengthen this small community that was expelled from the synagogue. This group would include a number of Gentiles, as most synagogues appealed to several Gentile followers, usually referred to as God-fearers in the New Testament.

The early Christians would be encouraged in the midst of persecution and strengthened in their faith by these words. They knew that this Jesus, whom they professed, was indeed the incarnate Word of God sent into the world to bring them eternal life. In the midst of the busyness of Christmas, take time to read this prologue of John as you prepare to celebrate the birth of the Christ-child into our world. Meditate on this passage and sense the encouragement that John brought to his followers. Try to visualize the early Christian community gathered in a tiny home in Ephesus, finding great comfort in the words of their leader and companion. Enjoy the dialogue and have a blessed Christmas.



# Anglican takes rare form of vows

## Follows Benedictine principles

BY HENRIETA PAUKOV

**HOSPITAL** chaplain Gail Fox took vows on Nov. 24, but even before that day patients at Toronto East General Hospital sometimes called her “sister.” “Thank you, sister,” a patient might say as she was leaving the room. Now she no longer has to set people right.

“To me it’s an affirmation of how people see me,” says Sr. Gail, who made religious and personal life vows for the single consecrated life. “I don’t think many people will be surprised.”

She was drawn to religious life years ago, but she finished two graduate degrees—Master of Theological Studies and Master of Divinity—and became a hospital chaplain before becoming an oblate with the Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict in Minnesota in 2007. (Oblates are individuals living in general society who are affiliated with a monastic community and have made formal promises.)

Her growing relationship with God made her want to make vows, but she wanted to do so in an Anglican context. “I value my Anglican roots,” she says. “I have been an Anglican since I started



Gail Fox at work as senior chaplain at Toronto East General Hospital. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

singing in the choir when I was eight.” Canada has only two Anglican religious communities for women and Sr. Gail’s age precluded her from joining, which is why she chose the single consecrated life.

Her vows include stability, obe-

dience and conversion of life. “That fits me right in the Benedictine tradition in the Anglican Church,” she says. She will be supported by the brothers of the Order of the Holy Cross in Toronto and will meet once a year with Archbishop Colin Johnson and

several times a year with the Rev. Canon Philip Hobson, who is a member of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd. She will also continue her affiliation with the community in Minnesota. “It’s given me a home to go to,” she says. “I go there regularly and I keep in

contact with some sisters who are there.”

She follows a rule of life based on Benedictine principles, with daily prayer and *lectio divina* (prayerful reading of scripture). “Because of my work, which is so demanding, I’m not able to give as much in my parish, but hopefully when I retire there will be more time,” says Sr. Gail, who is a member of St. Thomas, Huron Street.

Though she is possibly the only Anglican woman in Canada who has taken life vows for the single consecrated life, she thinks that religious life outside monastic communities may become more common. “Religious life is changing,” she says. “The orders are not getting the young people to join the way they did before. I’ve often said that I felt that oblates are the way of the future.”

At Toronto East General Hospital, where she has worked for almost a decade, she supervises field education for students from seminaries and theological colleges and is involved in patient care in the palliative and intensive care units and on the respiratory floor. She understands a patient’s need for spiritual support, having been supported by her own faith when she went through a life-threatening illness.

“It’s probably what helps me in my ministry, because I know what it’s like to be alone and wondering what is going to happen: ‘Am I going to live or am I going to die?’” she says. “God helped me when I couldn’t help myself; I really believe that.”

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## IN THE NEWS

Reporters interview John Stephenson Jr. (centre) and Dennis Hollingsworth of Take This Bread at the bakery’s launch party at St. James Cathedral on Sept. 28. The bakery, run by All Saints, Sherbourne Street, provides job training and baked goods. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

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