

Anglicans vote
for favourite hymn

Sculpture installed
outside church



Baseball team
wins again

The Anglican

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Holy Cross Priory to close doors

Monastery
served
diocese for
decades

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

A centre of prayer in Toronto's High Park neighbourhood will soon be shutting its doors. The Holy Cross Priory, home to brothers of the Order of the Holy Cross, will close in May 2024 after decades of service and hospitality.

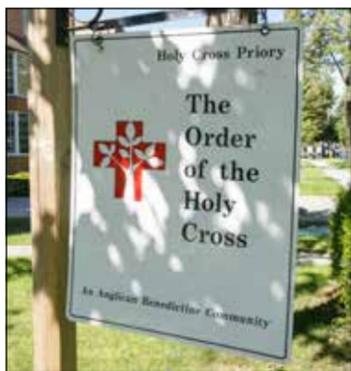
The difficult decision emerged from the realities facing the three aging brothers who have been caring for the priory. "Trying to maintain a large 19th-century house with considerable grounds, a guest house, the Divine Office and the work which all of us are doing in the diocese is becoming really more than we can effectively manage," says Brother David Bryan Hoopes, the prior.

The priory is situated in a Victorian house, where members of the community participate in a daily cycle of prayer, study and work. It is currently home to Brother David Bryan, Brother Reginald-Martin Crenshaw and Brother Leonard Abbah. Brother Brian Youngward, who also serves in Toronto, is a non-residential monk.

Brother David Bryan estimates the priory has been home to as many as 30 brothers in its life. "At one time we had eight brothers in the house, and then it was normative to have six. In the last couple of years we were down to four, and now we're down to three," he says.

The priory has also welcomed many brothers and associates from other countries. In years past, they had been able to stay in Canada for extended periods, covered by religious worker permits. Now, Brother David Bryan says, the Canadian government seems reluctant to grant such permits beyond two or three months. "It really hampers our bringing brothers from outside Canada up to the monastery to help out," he says.

The Order of the Holy Cross, based in West Park, NY, was founded in 1884 by the Rev. James Otis Sargent Huntington to provide a North American expression of



monasticism for Anglicans. While the order has ministered in Canada since the 1890s, the Holy Cross Priory was established in Toronto in 1973, eventually settling in its current house in 1984.

"We came at the invitation of Archbishop Garnsworthy, who really wanted us to be a presence in the diocese, a spiritual presence. He also hoped that we would be able to be there to minister especially to the clergy who perhaps needed help, who maybe needed retreat time or counselling," says Brother David Bryan.

Since then, the brothers have been a constant part of the life of the diocese, some in ordained ministry and others through employment and volunteer work. "Those who are ordained have served as incumbents or associates or honoraries in various churches. We've had a couple of brothers who worked at the Synod Office. One of our brothers was an adjunct professor at Trinity College," says Brother David Bryan.

Brothers Leonard, Brian and David Bryan, who are also priests, have served in parishes such as St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale, St. James Cathedral, St. Hilda, Fairbank, St. Matthias, Bellwoods and St. Chad. Brother Leonard was one of the founding members of the Ghanaian Anglican Church of Toronto and continues to serve as an honorary assistant at St. Joseph's, as it's now called.

Meanwhile, Brother Reginald-Martin Crenshaw is a diocesan volunteer who has been involved in countless parish selection committees, retreats and quiet days, the Momentum training program and parish administration, along with providing insight on anti-bias and anti-racism initiatives.

The brothers have also offered hospitality for people from all over the world staying in the priory's



The Order of the Holy Cross priory, where members of the community participate in a daily cycle of prayer, study and work. The priory has welcomed guests from across Canada, the United States and overseas over the years. From left are Brother Leonard Abbah, Brother David Bryan Hoopes and Brother Reginald-Martin Crenshaw. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

guest rooms. "I enjoy hospitality, so I'm always delighted to have guests, and we've certainly had a wonderful variety of guests from all over the place," says Brother David Bryan.

While he will be returning to the Holy Cross Monastery in West Park, where he's served before, the others will stay in Toronto and continue their ministry here. "The brothers will not be able to do the kind of hospitality which we were able to do in the priory, but I'm sure that they will reach out as they're able to do," he says.

Though they recognize that selling the priory is necessary at this time, Brother David Bryan says he and his companions will miss being a centre of ministry for the Order of the Holy Cross in Canada, as well as a beloved fixture in their neighbourhood.

"It has been a good time, and I will be very sad to leave, but I'm grateful for the time that I've had here," he says. "One of the wonderful things about us brothers in



Toronto is that we all wanted to be here. We weren't assigned here; it was our choice to be here. So we've obviously loved being here, and this is what we really wanted to do, and we wish we could continue as we are now."

Looking ahead to spring, the brothers' next steps involve putting the house on the market and finding an apartment or condominium for brothers Reginald and Leonard. "I've talked with a reputable realtor who assures me that there probably will be no problem getting a buyer for it," says Brother David Bryan. "Brothers Reginald and Leonard want to remain in Canada, so we'll find a suitable place for them to live that is affordable and large enough

for them to have a monastic house."

As he thinks back on the half-century of ministry by the Order of the Holy Cross in Toronto, and his own 13 years in the city, Brother David Bryan says he's grateful for the wider diocese's support from the very beginning, and he hopes the diocese will continue to support religious orders.

"We have certainly enjoyed the support of the bishops who have served in the diocese, and a lot of diocesan leaders have included us in so many things. We're very grateful for that," he says. "My hope is always that Canadian men will be inspired to perhaps join the order and really establish a Canadian household here."

Be Thou My Vision voted best hymn

Parish initiative has broad appeal

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

WHAT'S the best hymn? A polarizing question, to be sure, and one that the parish of St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff set out to answer last summer. After 11 weeks and 11 rounds of voting, “Be Thou My Vision” emerged victorious in the St. Nick’s “Favourite Hymn” bracket challenge, beating out “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee.”

The bracket challenge was conceived of by the Rev. Andrew MacDonald, the incumbent of St. Nicholas, as a way for the parish to have fun together during the summer. After running a simple one-question-a-week survey during June, he started thinking about other ways to engage parishioners using online platforms.

“It kind of gave way to this idea. I thought, wouldn’t a hymn challenge be fun to do through the summer, just a way to pass the weeks by,” he says. “Anglicans have such a strong musical tradition, but we also have such strong feelings about music, because music for many, many Anglicans is at the heart of our faith.”

His first task was picking 64 hymns – a number that seemed small enough to be manageable but large enough to include a variety of styles – and pairing them up against each other. Each week, participants would be sent a number of pairings to pick between, with winners facing each other in subsequent rounds.

He says he wanted to make sure the bracket challenge reflected the breadth of hymns beloved by Anglicans. “Picking the hymns was

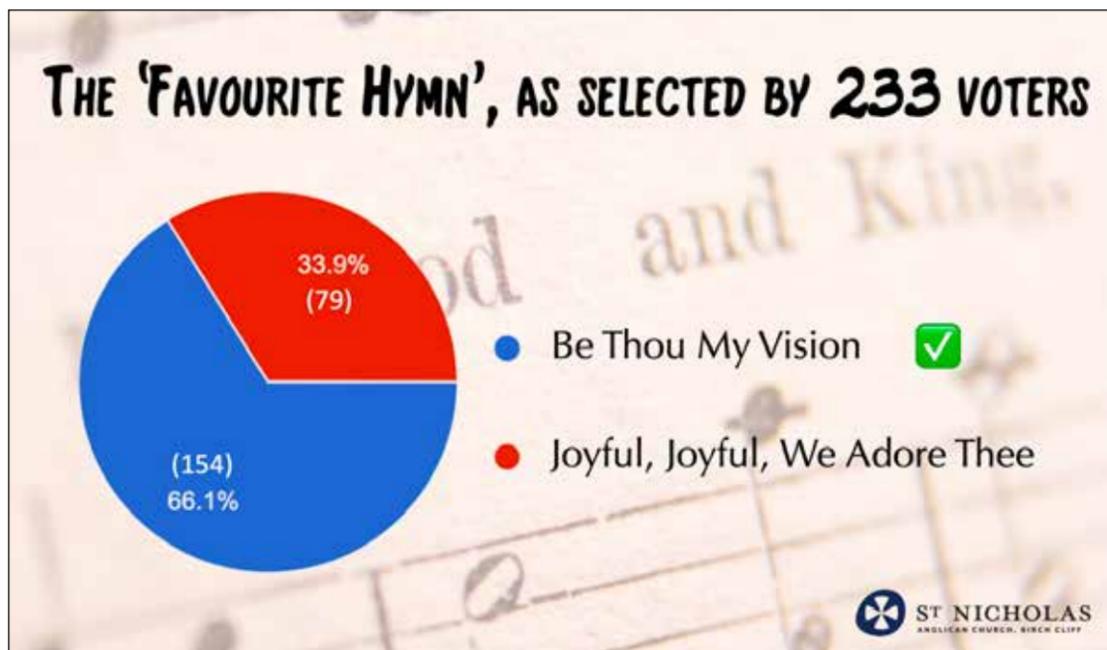


really a challenge, because we all know that there are far more than 64 great classic and traditional and modern Anglican hymns,” he says. “We have a very rich musical tradition, and there were very fine hymns that we had to cut out.”

He also put some thought into how he paired the hymns, since only one winner would move on from each pairing, and he wanted each hymn to have a fair shot at success. “I tried to pair them up in as logical a way as possible,” he says. “I would put plainsong ones together, I put the two Taizé ones together, I put those epic Victorian hymns together.”

The bracket challenge launched on July 2 with an email containing a link to that week’s matchups. Mr. MacDonald created the surveys using Google Forms, the same platform he’d used for his earlier parish surveys. “It’s a free platform, which automatically made it attractive, but it’s also a fairly easy-to-use platform,” he says.

Given the number of hymns involved, each choice also included a link to a YouTube video. “Not everyone knows every hymn, so one of the things I did was spend quite a bit of time on YouTube looking for good, authentic recordings that would give people the sense of what



The Rev. Andrew MacDonald started the bracket challenge as a way to engage his parishioners over the summer. By the time the final vote was taken, Anglicans from across Canada, the U.S. and U.K. were participating. A graphic from the contest shows the final tally. PHOTO AND GRAPHIC COURTESY OF ST. NICHOLAS, BIRCH CLIFF

the hymns were.”

As voting got underway, votes soon started to arrive from more than just parishioners of St. Nicholas. While Mr. MacDonald hadn’t necessarily expected a wide interest in the bracket challenge, sharing the surveys online generated some enthusiasm from the wider diocese and further afield.

“There were people who were sharing it on social media and getting their friends to sign up and take part in it. And I had people who were lobbying for particular hymns and that sort of thing,” he says. “We had voters from every province and several places in the U.K. and the United States as well.”

More than 300 people signed up to receive the weekly emails, and there were 250 votes cast on average each week. A member of St. Nicholas also phoned several parishioners who don’t use email

and recorded their votes.

Mr. MacDonald says he enjoyed seeing the results come in, with a few pairings too close to call right up to the deadline. “There were some hymns that I was surprised made it as long as they did, and there were some that I was really surprised didn’t win, particularly in the first round,” he says. “But such is life. We’re Anglicans, and we have strong opinions about music, and that’s what’s going to happen.”

As participants started to have conversations about the matchups, both in person and online, Mr. MacDonald was fascinated to hear some of the methods and rationales for choosing particular hymns. Some chose the hymn that was most fun to sing, one church chorister evaluated the alto lines, and many felt compelled to choose hymns that had been sung at a family member’s wedding or funeral.

“I always think of *Dead Poets Society* and the idea of a ‘Pritchard Scale’ of what’s a good hymn, but it’s not that. It’s about our personal connections that we have with this music, because they connect to us in a very deep way and how we express our faith,” he says.

Though declining to state a preference for the hymn he wishes had

won, he says he thought the final four hymns – “Be Thou My Vision,” “Holy, Holy, Holy,” “Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven” and “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” – were all worthy of the title.

Given the enthusiasm from participants, Mr. MacDonald says he was already thinking about future hymn bracket challenges before the first winner was declared. The parish is planning an Advent-Christmas-Epiphany edition, which will start on Nov. 26 and finish in early January. People started signing up for those emails in September, already expressing their love for “Silent Night” or “O Come, All Ye Faithful.”

Beyond that, he says he’s also thinking about choosing a new group of 64 hymns for a bracket challenge next summer. “There were enough write-in ballots of hymns that didn’t make it into the first 64, so we might do a ‘Version Two: The Ones We Missed’ challenge next summer,” he says. “We’re going to see what the interest is in that idea. I think the interest will be strong.”

Anyone who’s interested in the Christmas hymn bracket challenge can join the email list at www.stnicholasbirchcliff.com.

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Sculpture reaches out to community

Artwork a summons to address societal ills, says priest

BY STUART MANN

ON one of Toronto's busiest street corners, near high-end stores and multi-million-dollar condos, a life-sized sculpture of Jesus Christ as a sick person offers passers-by a chance to stop and reflect on their lives and those who are less fortunate than themselves.

The bronze sculpture, called *When I Was Sick*, was installed outside Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St. in September. It is accompanied by a plaque that reads, "It dwells in this place as a shared calling and a commitment as a church, a city and a world to take care of those who are in need."

The statue sits on a slab of granite outside the front of the church, just steps away from the sidewalk and the intersection of Bloor Street and Avenue Road. It was dedicated after the Sunday morning service on Sept. 24.

The artwork was created by Timothy Schmalz, a Canadian sculptor whose provocative works of Jesus Christ have been installed in public spaces worldwide. Mr. Schmalz is best known for his Homeless Jesus statue, which he created in reaction to the many people he saw living on the streets. His statues are installed outside St. Paul, Bloor Street and St. Stephen-in-the-Fields in Toronto.

The sculpture outside Redeemer shows a Christ-like figure under a bedsheet, his hand reaching out towards the viewer. His face is partially hidden and his feet and hands have been pierced.

"We're hoping that when people read the plaque and see the statue, it will serve as a kind of summons," says Archdeacon Steven Mackison, incumbent. "It can be interpreted in a couple of ways – as someone who is reaching out and entreating us to take care of them because they are in need, and also as Jesus in his own brokenness reaching out to the world, saying, 'I need you in this ministry, I'm calling you to this ministry.'"

Redeemer has one of the largest outreach ministries in the diocese. The Common Table, a drop-in program of the church, serves about 100 people each day, providing meals, a meeting place, basic health care, toiletries and other necessities. It also uses carts to take food and supplies to people on the streets.

Archdeacon Mackison says the statue reflects the church's belief that poverty and homelessness are societal ills. "They are a societal sickness that we must all address, and the statue speaks to that."

The sculpture was donated by the Sam and Roma Mercanti Founda-



Clockwise from top: Sandra Campbell, a member of Church of the Redeemer and the Toronto Urban Native Ministry, smudges the new sculpture during the dedication ceremony; the blessing and laying-on-of-hands; a group photo with Timothy Schmalz (second from left) and the Mercanti family. Parishioners are wearing orange shirts to mark Orange Shirt Day, a day to honour Indigenous children who were sent away to Canada's Residential Schools. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

tion, a registered charity based in Hamilton. The foundation had put a bronze cast of *When I Was Sick* in front of St. Joseph's hospital in Hamilton and wanted to put another cast in a prominent spot in Toronto. (The original statue is located at a hospital in Rome.)

Mr. Schmalz contacted Archdeacon Mackison to see if the church was interested. "They wanted to say something deeper about sickness, and it was completely aligned with our values and with our ministry to the poor and homeless," explains Archdeacon Mackison. "Many of our guests suffer from addiction or mental illness. There is a misconception that people are homeless because they are lazy or messed up – ignoring the fact that mental health or addiction issues are illnesses. The statue is a reminder of that."

The sculpture has drawn praise, he says. "Even before we dedicated it, we got so many comments from members of the Yorkville community – people who've passed by and said this is a really meaningful and powerful expression of what we feel

we should be doing. Just as importantly have been comments from our own guests of The Common Table who've said, 'It's as though you put that statue there for us.'"

In addition to the statue, the church plans to install an outdoor mural that depicts its ministry and commitment to Indigenous justice. A project of the parish's Indigenous Solidarity Working Group, the mural's panels will be 30 inches high and cover the entire lower west wall of the church. Paintings by Indigenous artist Donald Chretien will be etched on to brushed aluminum.

Archdeacon Mackison is hoping that the mural and the statue will raise awareness, deepen understanding and foster commitment. "It's really an engagement with the larger community. I hope people will be curious and come to us to ask what those ministries are and why they're important to us. And I hope that our passion may inspire members of the wider community to be more passionate about those things as well – and they already are."

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For all the saints



The arrival of November signals the beginning of a season of remembrance in our Church. On Nov. 1 – All Saints Day – we remember and give thanks for the witness of the heroes of our faith who have modelled

the Christian life in unique and compelling ways. The lives of the great saints are often marked by struggle and sacrifice, yet they also point to the victory of Christ over sin and death.

Nov. 2 – All Souls Day – has a slightly different focus. On this day, we remember and give thanks for those closest to us who have “fought the good fight, finished their course and kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7-8). Perhaps these are family members, friends or members of our church communities who have passed from this life and now stand on another shore and in a greater light. Some parishes invite people to write the names of loved ones in a book of prayers leading up to Nov. 2 so that they may be remembered by name during the Prayers of the People.

The end of this season of remembrance is Nov. 11 – Remembrance Day – when we recall those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of peace and justice. We also pray to the Prince of Peace for an end to all

BISHOP'S OPINION

By Bishop Kevin Robertson

conflict between nations and peoples.

All Saints, All Souls and Remembrance Day are important days for remembering the past. But they are not only about memory. This season calls us to be transformed by the ways that others have inhabited the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their own lives. It invites us to see how the fruits of the Spirit were shown in others so that they might be manifest in our lives as well. Indeed, the stories of the great saints are of little value if they are simply memorialized in stained-glass windows. They come to life when their lives point us to Jesus.

I recently picked up a wonderful little book called *Stick with Love* by Bishop Arun Arora. The author reflects on the lives of various “saints” drawn from every corner of the world: India, Nigeria, Eritrea, China, to name but a few. Some of the saints in the book were well known to me, and others I had never heard of. Yet each story, each life, is an expression of a living faith in the God of love. In the foreword, Archbishop Stephen Cottrell writes, “In the daily stories of the saints, we encounter women and men whose lives are

resonant with the love of God. Their music is part of our own story and song: with joy and lament they enable us to encounter afresh the surprising, all-surpassing love of God.” I encourage you to order this book for the season of Advent and use its daily reflections to live more deeply into our faith through the example of God's saints.

For me, it is comforting to be reminded of our deep connection with all the saints and souls who have gone before us. In Christ, we are forever bound to them and they to us. They go on living not only in our memories, but in the nearer presence of God who has welcomed them home. Though gone from our sight and touch, our loved ones and the great saints of the Church are with us so closely in ways we cannot fully comprehend. It is perhaps only in the “thin spaces” of our lives – standing at the edge of the ocean, watching a sunrise across the lake, catching a glimpse of an old photo – that we sense how near they still are.

As we step into this season of remembrance once again this year, I invite you to be inspired by the examples of the great ones who have gone before us, transformed by their unwavering commitment to “stick with love” and comforted that they now dwell in the fullness of God's presence.

Comfort, O comfort my people



What words or images come to mind when you think of the Incarnation? Holding a classical view, the following words might come to mind: infant, annunciation, nativity, Mary, God with us, the angel

Gabriel, or the Word made flesh. Advent invites us to enter into the mystery of the Incarnation, to delve deeply and to prepare for new life that emerges in the celebration of Christmas.

There is a deepening awareness that there is more to the Incarnation than a focus on the historical Jesus. There are a plethora of theologians and clerics from across Christian denominations (Niels Gregersen, Elizabeth A. Johnson, Sallie McFague and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, to name just a few) who invite us to ponder how creation itself is enfolded into the Incarnation.

In the Word made flesh, we see the embodied expression of creation. Elizabeth A. Johnson puts it this way: “the Word of God's embodied self became a creature of Earth, a complex unit of minerals and fluids, an item in the carbon, oxygen, and nitrogen cycles, a moment in the biological evolution of this planet. Jesus carried within himself ‘the signature of the supernovas and the geology and life history of the Earth.’”

In the Incarnation, science and faith intersect. The Gospel of John invites us into the deep mystery of the Incarnation in which

CREATION MATTERS

By the Rev. Paige Souter

creation is embedded into Christ's nature. Creation emerges through him, “all things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being” (John 1:3). In addition, Christ is made of the material of creation, “and the Word became flesh and lived among us” (John 1:14a).

Can this understanding of the Incarnation help us to see and experience the Earth as sacred? Can it help us to respond differently to the challenges facing the planet? Can it foster the emergence of an ecological ethic that transforms us into a voice of the planet and into good stewards of the Earth?

Advent is the perfect season to ponder these questions as we prepare to celebrate the inbreaking of God into the world over 2,000 years ago, and as we wait for Christ to break into our lives and the world in new ways.

One of our travelling companions during Advent is the prophet Isaiah. Speaking to the Israelites who have lost their way and are on the brink of catastrophe, he reminds them that idolatry is a path that leads only to self-destruction. Isaiah attempts to redirect them to the alternative path of hope and justice promised by God. For him, God is a God of hope, compassion, justice, peace, mercy, consolation and comfort.

During the second Sunday of Advent, we

hear Isaiah say, “Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins” (Isaiah 40:1-2).

Isaiah calls out to us to turn to God and all will be well, because God who comforts us is with us.

Does God's comfort include the Earth and its burning forests, its drying lakes, its endangered species, its flooded communities, its arid soil, its rising sea levels, its warming climate, its marginalized and vulnerable people?

What if the mystery unfolding for us in Advent is a new awareness that creation is enfolded into the Incarnation? What if this Advent we prepared our hearts to enter into the mystery of a deepening incarnation in which God's breaking into the world extends into material existence?

What if in the Incarnation we see God's love imprinted in nature? Might we begin to see that we are called to be a consoling and comforting presence to the Earth as Jesus is to us?

This Advent, may we awaken to a new awareness of the sacredness of the Earth.

The Rev. Paige Souter is a member of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care and the assistant curate at Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St. Creation Matters is a new column in The Anglican.



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Cultivating an attitude of gratitude



BY MURRAY MACADAM

Now is the winter of our discontent," wrote William Shakespeare in the famous opening line of his play, *Richard III*. He could just as well have been writing about modern-day life in post-pandemic Canada. Worried about rising food, housing and other costs, extreme weather events and much more, many Canadians are feeling discontented, their grim mood and fears for the future fanned by politicians.

These concerns are very real. Many people are understandably worried about the challenges they face in their lives now and about what the future may hold.

Yet are we seeing the full picture when our minds slip into a mood of resentment and discontent?

Refugee advocate, writer and theologian Mary Jo Leddy unpacks the roots of much of our modern malaise in her powerful faith-filled book, *Radical Gratitude*. She identifies our society as one in which a sense of perpetual dissatisfaction is created, as we continually long for that which we don't have. There can never be enough. "In gratitude, the vicious cycle of dissatisfaction with life is broken and we begin anew in the recognition of what we have rather than what we don't, in the acknowledgement of who we are rather than who we aren't," says Ms. Leddy. "Gratitude is the foundation of faith in God as the Creator of all beings, great and small. It awakens the imagination to another way of being."



People enjoy the peace of a park. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Gratitude refers to the ability to show thanks for the things you have and the things you're grateful for. It helps us get closer to God by recognizing the blessings in our lives and makes it easier to focus on the positive. "Always be rejoicing. Give thanks for everything." (1Thessalonians 5:16,18)

Our faith can energize us to live differently, inspired by Jesus, who lived a life of radical gratitude, who freely gave of himself even up until his death, and whose actions inspired others to follow his example. Following Jesus enables us to be grateful for the unexpected gifts of God and the gifts that we take for granted all too often.

Gratitude can thus serve as the bedrock

of our new life in Christ. Paul says, "Whatever you do... do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks." (Colossians 3:17)

Many of us, of course, often give thanks for our blessings. The grace we say before meals serves as an example. Yet as with our faith overall, we can always do more to be thankful, to develop a mindset of gratitude, and to realize its transformative power.

We can start by being thankful for where we live. A recent analysis of 87 nations rated Canada as the second-best country in which to live, based on a range of factors including quality of life and cultural diversity. I've been lucky enough to visit 25 countries, in many

cases with PWRDF, and as I'd get on the plane to go home, I'd say to myself, "I've had a terrific experience but am so thankful to be going home to Canada." Yes, our country faces severe challenges, especially in terms of needing to improve the lives of millions of Canadians impacted by hunger, poor housing conditions and poverty. Gratitude is a powerful thing; it can help counter the sense of powerlessness that many of us feel in terms of changing our society — and of changing ourselves.

Indigenous writer Robin Wall Kimmerer stretches the boundary of gratitude in her book *Braiding Sweetgrass*. She outlines how her First Nation gives thanks for the elements of creation that sustain life: the water, the fish, the animals, the plants, the trees. Like Ms. Leddy, she reminds us that in our consumer society, a sense of contentment and gratitude is a radical proposition. "Gratitude doesn't send you out shopping to find satisfaction; it comes as a gift rather than a commodity, subverting the foundation of the whole economy," she notes. "That's good medicine for land and people alike."

Gratitude can become the foundation for both renewing ourselves and using its creative power to fashion something new in the world. It can start with something as simple as being grateful for all that has been given to us by God. As a new year approaches, why not make living out an attitude of gratitude one of your resolutions for 2024?

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





"I was hungry and you gave me food..."
— Matthew 25:35





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more and
more
joyful.*

—Archbishop
Desmond Tutu
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Faith groups play vital role to heal Earth, says author

BY MURRAY MACADAM

"EARTH is telling us a terrifying story."

Acclaimed science journalist, author and playwright Alanna Mitchell pulled no punches as she spelled out the impact of rising carbon emissions at a Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St. "EarthSong" celebration of the natural world, held on Oct. 1. The event was the first in a month-long Season of Creation series held at the Toronto parish and was organized by its Creation Matters team. It attracted 75 people in person as well as others who watched it on YouTube.

The event wove together a creative blend of scripture readings, poetry and music ranging from traditional hymns to songs by musicians such as Marvin Gaye and the band Tears for Fears, all of it focused around the Earth and its elements.

Ms. Mitchell is a Christian and veteran journalist who has written for *The New York Times* and *The Globe and Mail*. Her book about the alarming state of the world's oceans, *Sea Sick: The Global Ocean in Crisis*, became an international bestseller, then was transformed into a play performed by Ms. Mitchell to audiences around the world.

"We are at an unusual moment in our history," she warned. "We're putting carbon into the atmosphere faster than at any known time in the planet's history. That carbon is throwing things out of sync. It's not just that it's gotten hotter. Or that

the seasons have slid into forgetfulness about what they're supposed to do. It's not just the floods and the wildfires and the weird rains that flow down from the heavens like rivers. The real story is that all these disruptions are just the start of what's to come if we don't rein in our carbon emissions. I hear people talk about this 'new normal' that we're in. This is not the new normal. Earth is just giving us a little taste of what's to come. This is one little step on the way to a much more anarchic future whose rules we can't even imagine, except that it will be unlikely to support life as we know it. I wish I were exaggerating. I am not."

Ms. Mitchell's talk was sobering at times, as she laid out basic facts about what she called the greatest challenge in human history. Yet she firmly rejected the idea that it's too late for us to heal our ailing planet. She noted that Canada has pledged to reduce its carbon emissions by 40 to 45 per cent, from the 2005 levels, by 2030. So far, a 6.4 per cent reduction has been reached, showing that some progress has been made, albeit not nearly enough. Emissions from producing electricity have dropped by more than half since 2005. However, oil and gas emissions are up more than 15 per cent.

We can listen to the voice of creation around four key elements, she noted, reflecting an ancient script familiar to people of faith: delighting in what the Earth offers us; lamenting what has gone wrong; moving beyond grief to heed the Earth's call



The All Beings Confluence silk panels are returned to Church of the Redeemer's sanctuary for the duration of the Season of Creation. The long sheer panels each represent a living creature and people are invited to walk amongst them. At right, Alanna Mitchell speaks to the gathering. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

for healing; and finally, dedicating ourselves to act for the creation.

She recalled that at a recent gathering she attended of leading artists and activists from around the world, acclaimed Indian novelist Amitav Ghosh was asked if there was a shortcut to bring humanity back from the brink of climate chaos. His answer shocked the audience: "Plug into the communities of faith all around the world. They are already organized. They communicate with others. They tend to be interested in thinking about things bigger than their own lives."

Ms. Mitchell told the Redeemer gathering, "He was talking about people like you. He was urging you not to give up, to believe in your own power. We people of faith know the



power of story. We can write a new ending to this story. We can write a new narrative – a parable – to tell us what's going on, based on love, joy, hope, possibility, success. It's the one Moses' people must have written thousands of years ago to let them follow him out of Egypt and out of the desert and into the promised land."

In response to a question she's of-

ten asked after performing her play – what should I do? – Ms. Mitchell says she flips the question around, challenging people to think about the gifts they have that can be put into action in response to the climate crisis.

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

What does it mean to be stewards of creation?



In the second chapter of Genesis, we read about how God fashions human beings from dust, places them in the Garden of Eden and gives them dominion over creation (Genesis 2:8).

For some Christians this has long been interpreted to mean the power to dominate and possess absolute control. Instead of stewarding or conserving creation, this has led to widespread exploitation of the Earth's riches and the subjugation of peoples to assert control over natural resources.

The creation narratives give no hint that humanity should plunder or endlessly aim to consume as much as possible. The achievement of creation is celebrated by God's desire to share its abundance. After giving over the birds of the air, fish of the sea, creatures of the earth and livestock, God blesses humanity and gives them care of all that is good. In the New Testament,

THE STEWARD

BY PETER MISIASZEK

we read in 1 Peter that there is great responsibility in having dominion, as it does not give license to domineer, but rather to be "examples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:3).

For most of my time as the director of Stewardship Development, the focus of my effort has been on assisting parishes to create an atmosphere of generosity among their membership to enable the re-sourcing of ministry. This means helping people understand their own giftedness and how those gifts can be shared among the church community and beyond. Unfortunately, this has been interpreted by some to mean fundraising for the Church. Or, more inaccurately, to make people feel uncomfortable that they are not giving enough. This is an unfortunate interpretation of what I try to impart. After all, what

is a steward? They are the managers of the household, tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that adequate provision is made for the various routines necessary to run day-to-day operations.

The Church is not interested just in your time, talent and treasure – the oft repeated chorus of stewardship educators. These common elements are important in helping members of the Church understand their own giftedness and how that relates to supporting ministry. There is a fourth, however, that I have only just begun thinking about in earnest: terrain. Perhaps it's because of the climate crisis or the relentless clutter in my own house, but the care of God's creation needs to be at the top of our stewardship list for the others to matter.

I am reminded of the Marks of Mission as adopted by the Anglican Communion, in which the fifth states: "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the Earth."

There needs to be some acknowledgement that human beings, including Christians, have not been particularly good at living up to this standard. We were given care of the Earth's bounty, and we have done a remarkable job of mucking things up.

This lack of regard for creation is symptomatic of our fallen nature. There is a reason we confess our shortcomings at church. We have indeed failed, and there is too much that we have done and left undone. But there is hope.

Climate scientists tell us that there is still time to reverse the centuries of neglect we have imposed on creation and avoid the worst that climate change might mean for humanity. Next month I will review some of the ways the Church can step up and demonstrate our stewardship of terrain.

Peter Misiasek is the diocese's director of Stewardship Development.



SUMMER CLASSIC

Six teams play in the 62nd annual SAYM (Scarborough Anglican Youth Movement) baseball finals in Ajax on Sept. 9. The teams came from Holy Trinity, Guildwood, Wesley Chapel Baptist, Scarborough Baptist, Christ Church & St. Bede, St. Paul, L'Amoreaux and a multi-church team from the wider community. The Holy Trinity Angels (shown at left) set a record by winning the tourney for the fourth consecutive time, beating St. Paul, L'Amoreaux 17-10 in the final game. The team was presented with The Rev. Peter Trant Memorial Trophy. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Church responds after flag cut down

Letter seeks to foster understanding

BY STUART MANN

WHEN its Pride flag was cut down and vandalized in early August, St. Paul, Uxbridge decided to speak out.

Rather than stay silent about the incident, the Rev. Randy Williams, the interim priest-in-charge of the church, wrote a letter to the local newspaper, the *Uxbridge Cosmos*.

"Silence means consent," he says, explaining why he wrote the letter. "It means that someone has done this to us, and we're accepting it. Or we're afraid. And that's one thing we didn't want to condone."

The church's rainbow-coloured flag was cut down and thrown into some nearby bushes. It had been attached by wires to the church's outdoor sign. The congregation had put it up in June in support of Pride month and LGBTQ2S+ people. The church decided to keep it up for a few more months to honour and recognize the community.

Upon arrival at the church in early August, parishioners noted the flag's absence. When they learned that their flag had been vandalized, they were saddened and upset, says Mr. Williams. "The mandate of our church is to accept all. We are a loving, caring, Christian community aiming to live the gospel."

After speaking with the police, the mayor and the local councillor, he wrote the letter to the newspaper on behalf of the congregation. "We wanted to be careful how we did it," he explains. "We didn't want to be seen as angry about it, but we couldn't remain silent, either."

He hoped the letter would foster understanding in the community. A recent report by Statistics Canada noted a 64 per cent increase in hate crimes in Canada targeting individuals over their sexual orientation. In June, a number of church leaders, including Bishop Andrew Asbil, signed a statement denouncing the hate crimes and affirming their support for LGBTQ2S+ people.

"This flag stood as a symbol of the church's commitment to inclusivity, diversity, welcome and love for all members of our community," Mr. Williams wrote in his letter. "Its cutting down was not merely a material loss but a blow to the principles that we hold dear – acceptance, understanding, appreciation and respect – all those characteristics that God encourages us to live."

The loss of the flag "left a void in the heart of our congregation," he wrote. "It is particularly disheart-

ening that such an act of hate occurred within our local community. However, we choose to respond with resilience and the determination to foster unity. Uxbridge is a community known for its kindness and compassion, and this incident does not define who we are. Instead, let it serve as a reminder of the work that remains to be done in promoting understanding and acceptance for all individuals, regardless of their background, identity or sexuality."

The letter concluded, "In times like these, it is our shared values of empathy, compassion, faith in a God who loves us all unconditionally, and unity that will see us through. We believe that by addressing these challenges head-on, we can create a community that truly reflects the love and respect we hold for one another. Our Pride flag(s) are and will fly again."

Mr. Williams says the response to the letter has been positive. "People who have read the letter have stopped by the church and, along with our neighbours, said that they are standing with us. I was at the foodbank last week and people came up to me and said, we read your letter, thank you for saying that."

He says it was important that the letter didn't demonize the person who cut down the flag. The person's identity remains unknown. "We don't know the person's story. It could be somebody who is triggered by the flag, it could be someone who has their own struggles, it could have been anybody. We pray for them."

He encourages other parishes that have experienced similar incidents to speak out. "Don't be silent about it, because silence means we're supportive of what has happened, even though we're not. We may think it's happening to just us, but often it's not – it's happening to other churches and places of worship as well. By speaking out, we're building external, caring communities; we're building support. To reiterate a question: what would Jesus do?"

And the church is flying the Pride flag again – several of them, in fact. The parish has purchased several small flags that are out on the lawn. Mr. Williams used to take them in every evening, but not anymore; they remain outside, flying in the breeze. "They're out there for all to see that we are seriously a safe and accepting place for whomsoever will," he says.



TEA TIME

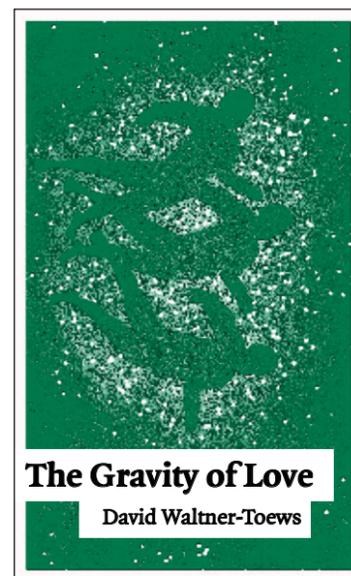
The Parish of Minden, Kinmount and Maple Lake holds its annual garden tea party on Aug. 13. The tea party is held to connect the community and the parish. Despite the threat of rain, this year's event drew more than 80 parishioners and guests. Above, the Rev. Canon Joan Cavanaugh, incumbent, is joined by Mayor Bob Carter, Canon Robert Saffrey and Harold Saffrey. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE PARISH



Poetry reading launches new book

NOW in its 35th year, the St. Thomas Poetry Series will host a reading on Nov. 18 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Thomas, 383 Huron St., Toronto. The 35th book in its publication series, *The Gravity of Love* by David Waltner-Toews, will be launched.

Mr. Waltner-Toews, recently named to the Order of Canada, is a distinguished veterinary epidemiologist from the University of Guelph. He has published several books on pandemics (most recently, *A Conspiracy of Chickens* and *On*



The Gravity of Love is the 35th book produced by the St. Thomas Poetry Series, a Christian poetry publisher in Toronto.

Pandemics), in addition to books of poetry and short stories. He will be introduced by Hildi Froese Tiessen,

a pioneering scholar in Canadian Mennonite literature who taught for many years at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo.

Also reading on this program will be Alice Major, past president of the League of Canadian Poets and Edmonton's first poet laureate. She is the author of a dozen highly regarded books of poetry, two novels for young adults and a collection of essays about poetry and science. This will be the Toronto launch for her latest collection, *Knife on Stone* (Turnstone Press, 2023). She will be introduced by freelance editor, literary consultant, poet and publisher Allan Briesmaster of Thornhill.

A reception with book table will follow in the parish hall. If you are unable to attend in person, the reading will be livestreamed on St. Thomas's YouTube channel.

For more information about the series or to order *The Gravity of Love*, visit www.stthomaspoetry-series.com.

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Anglicans stand up for LGBTQ2S+ kids

Counter-protests held in Barrie, Toronto

BY STUART MANN

A protest and counter-protest over the rights of LGBTQ2S+ students has left an Anglican woman shaken but resolute.

Kit Woods, who has a transgender son, was screamed at and told she would go to hell at a protest in Barrie on Sept. 20. Despite the encounter, she says she would do it again.

"A hundred per cent," she says. "I feel in my guts and soul that I have to because of my son and all the other trans kids. I don't want them to have to face this – they've been through enough. I will always, always go."

Protests were held across the country by people who were opposed to sexual orientation and gender identity education in schools. The protesters wanted school boards to implement policies that would require young people to get parental consent before teachers could use their preferred first names and pronouns. The policies are currently in place in Saskatchewan and New Brunswick. The counter-protests were held to support LGBTQ2S+ students and oppose the policies.

Ms. Woods, who went to the counter-protest in Barrie with her sister, the Rev. Canon Erin Martin, incumbent of All Saints, King City, says requiring young people to get parental consent before teachers can use their preferred first names

and pronouns is not only misguided but dangerous. "In an ideal world, all kids would have the support of their families. Kids would be able to tell them things honestly and truthfully. But for the majority of trans kids, they do not have supportive homes. Most of them are afraid to even suggest to their family that they're something other than what their family wants them to be. School is the only place where they can be free to express who they are, to have it be acknowledged and for them to feel like human beings.

"When my son came out, he was afraid and didn't know how to tell us, so he came out at school first, using his new name and pronoun. I didn't know that until he was ready to tell me. When he did, we were supportive. But other kids can face violence or get kicked out of their homes. Almost every single trans kid that I've met has tried to commit suicide or contemplated committing suicide, including my son. The suicide rate among trans children is so high. If those kids go to school and they're forced to hide because they can't use their names or pronouns for fear of their parents will find out, they will resort to taking their lives. Children will die. It really is life or death. I wish other parents could know that. It's not their rights being taken away; it's the kids' rights to be safe and to live."

She says the aggression of the protesters in Barrie shocked and



Kit Woods (above) at the counter-protest in Barrie. At right, the Rev. Hannah Johnston and Elin Goulden, the diocese's Social Justice and Advocacy consultant, in Toronto.

disturbed her. The number of protesters far outnumbered the counter-protesters.

"A woman came and stood in front of Erin and I with her thick Bible," she recalls. "She screamed at us about going to hell. At one point I was afraid she was going to hit Erin with the Bible. There were other people – red-faced and in our faces. Thank goodness for the police. They broke up some really tense moments."

One moment in particular was seared into her mind. "I always try to see that people are good, and that perhaps people just don't understand. So if there was an opportunity to say something to someone that might reach them, I always – maybe naively – wanted to do that. There was a man nearby who was on the side of the protesters, saying 'Protect our kids, protect our kids.' And I thought maybe I could respond to him. I said, 'Your kids are protected. Mine isn't. My son needed protection when he was coming out, when he was transitioning.' And the man looked at me and said, 'If your kid was going to transition, he should have killed himself first.' I couldn't believe he said that. I couldn't believe that came out of someone's mouth."

Despite the hate directed at her and the other counter-protesters, she says she was glad she went. "People needed to stand there with everyone else. At one point I was with a small group of mothers who had trans kids and we were standing side by side with tears in our eyes, saying protect our children too. It was so moving but very, very difficult at the same time."

She was encouraged by the turnout of Anglicans at other counter-protests in the diocese. "I see a lot of Anglican communities coming together purposefully. I think it's really important because Anglicans haven't shied away from standing on the right side of what we know God wants us to do – love our



neighbour and be in community and fellowship with each other. I just hope that these issues come into the hearts of other Anglicans, outside of the ones who are already affirming."

In Toronto, Bishop Kevin Robertson and other Anglicans took part in a counter-protest that started at the 519 Community Centre on Church Street and made its way through the city's streets before ending on the west side of the front lawn of Queen's Park, where more than 1,000 people gathered to listen to speeches and voice their support for LGBTQ2S+ students. In addition, Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St. was open for people who wanted to rest in a safe place.

The counter-protesters at Queen's Park outnumbered the protesters, who gathered on the north lawn of the legislative building. Large numbers of counter-protesters turned out in other cities such as Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa and Vancouver.

Chris Ambidge, a member of Redeemer and a long-time advocate

of LGBTQ2S+ rights in the Church, took part in the walk and counter-protest at Queen's Park. "I've been pushing for queer equality and status since 1985. It's important for me to stand up and be there when there are public expressions of homophobia and transphobia happening. I needed to be with a group of people who were saying no, and saying it loudly."

He says adults have a duty to protect students as they go through their formative years and are questioning their sexuality and gender identity. "People who are in their teens are very vulnerable and figuring themselves out. It's incumbent upon those of us who have gone through that time of life to protect them and make their growing up safe."

He says Canada has become much more accepting of gender diversity and the diversity of sexual expression, but advocates need to remain vigilant. "Jesus has always had preferential treatment for the downtrodden and the weak, and that's what we have to do too."



Bishop Kevin Robertson and Ryan Weston, the national church's lead animator, public witness for social and ecological justice, walk in the counter-protest to Queen's Park in Toronto.



BLESSED

The Rev. Andrew MacDonald blesses horses from the Toronto Police Service Mounted Unit (at left) and other animals at the Blessing of Animals service at St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff in Toronto on Oct. 1. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



FURRY FRIENDS

Ross, Isabel and their dog Emma enjoy the Blessing of Animals service at St. Augustine of Canterbury in Toronto on Oct. 1. At right, the Rev. Megan Jull and her son Matthew enjoy a moment with Squeaks the guinea pig. PHOTOS BY THE REV. MEGAN JULL AND I. WILD

PRAYER CYCLE

FOR NOVEMBER

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All Saints, Markham 2. Christ Church, Stouffville 3. The Church Historical Society 4. Children's Ministry Conference 5. All Saints Church-Community Centre 6. Christ Church, Woodbridge 7. Emmanuel, Richvale (Richmond Hill) 8. Grace Church, Markham 9. Holy Trinity, Thornhill 10. Military Chaplains | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11. St. Christopher 12. York Central Deanery 13. The Synod Agenda and Planning Committee 14. Lay Members to Synod 15. The Chancellor, Vice-Chancellors and Synod Officers 16. 162nd Synod of the Diocese of Toronto 17. 162nd Synod of the Diocese of Toronto 18. 162nd Synod of the Diocese of Toronto | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Regionalized Ministries of the Diocese 20. St. John the Baptist, Oak Ridges 21. St. Mary, Richmond Hill 22. St. Philip on-the-Hill 23. St. Stephen, Maple 24. Holy Spirit of Peace 25. St. Bride, Clarkson 26. FaithWorks 27. St. Elizabeth Church, Mississauga 28. St. Francis of Assisi 29. St. Hilary (Cooksville) 30. St. John the Baptist (Dixie) |
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LOOKING AHEAD

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

Gatherings

NOV. 1 - Holy Communion for All Saints Day at 7 p.m., followed by "Music and Your Health" at 7:30 p.m., when Dr. Kevin Komisaruk talks about healing through music as a vehicle for restoring wholeness. In person at St. Olave, Swansea, Bloor Street and Windermere Avenue.

NOV. 4 - Christmas market, home baking, knitted goods, jams and preserves and more, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., St. Barnabas, 361 Danforth Ave., Toronto.

NOV. 4 - Sugar Plum Christmas Bazaar, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., crafts, baked goods and more, St. Margaret in-the-Pines, 4130 Lawrence Ave., Scarborough.

NOV. 4 - Christmas bazaar and bake sale, 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale, 2182 Kipling

Ave., Toronto. Baked goods, attic treasures, crafts, tea room and more.

NOV. 11 - Annual Christmas Bazaar, bake sale, jewelry, pictures with Santa and more, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Grace Church, Markham.

NOV. 18 - Christmas Market, home baking, silent auction, luncheon and more, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Christ Church, Stouffville, 254 Sunset Blvd., Stouffville.

NOV. 18 - Christmas Bazaar with crafts, bake table, food, jewellery and more, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Church of the Holy Family, 10446 Kennedy Rd. N., Brampton.

NOV. 18 - Holly Berry Bazaar, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Dunstan of Canterbury, 56 Lawson Rd., Scarborough. Handicrafts, jewelry, home-baked goods, lunchroom and more. Santa and his helper will be on hand. Free admission. Call the church office at 416-283-1844.

NOV. 18 - Mistletoe Market and Merry Tea, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., in the parish hall of St. Peter and St. Simon-the-Apostle, 525 Bloor St. E., Toronto. Christmas gifts, antique treasures, bake sale and tea.

NOV. 25 - Festival of Christmas, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. featuring Christmas baking, country store, Christmas past room, raffle & light lunch, Holy Trinity, 140 Brooke St., Thornhill.

NOV. 25 - Tea room, raffles, silent auction, bake sale and more, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., St. Luke, 904 Coxwell Ave., Toronto. Vendors who wish

to reserve a table should call 416-421-6878 ext. 21.

NOV. 25 - Christmas Market and silent auction, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto.

NOV. 25 - Annual Christmas bazaar, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., homemade baking, tables with treasures, silent auction, Christmas items, jewelry, a coffee corner and more, Church of Our Saviour, Don Mills, 1 Laurentide Dr., Toronto.

NOV. 26 - Choral Evensong for Sunday before Advent, 4 p.m., followed by Christmas Lights with St. Olave's Arts Guild, featuring stories, poems and songs on the theme Ghosts of Christmas, with extracts from A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, at St. Olave, Bloor Street and Windermere Avenue.

DEC. 9, 10, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24 - The Christmas Story, a Toronto tradition since 1938, with professional musicians and a volunteer cast presenting a charming hour-long nativity pageant, at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square, 19 Trinity Square, Toronto. Suggested donation: \$25 adults, \$10 children. Visit www.thechristmasstory.ca to reserve or call 416-598-4521, ext. 301.

DEC. 10 - Advent carol service, 7:30 p.m., St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto. A freewill offering will be donated to a local charitable organization supported by St. Martin's. A reception will follow to which all are invited.

IN MOTION

Appointments

- The Rev. Dr. Monique Taylor, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Peter, Oshawa, Oct. 1.
- The Rev. Canon Dr. Judy Paulsen, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. John the Baptist, Lakefield, Nov. 1.
- The Rev. Vinaya Dumpala, Interim Priest-in-Charge, Emmanuel, Richvale (Richmond Hill) while the Incumbent is on leave, Sept. 24.
- The Rev. Karen Hatch, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Mary, Richmond Hill, Sept. 24.
- The Ven. Paul Feheley, Incumbent, St. Michael and All Angels, Oct. 1.
- The Rev. Ian LaFleur, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. George on Yonge, Oct. 1.
- The Rev. Beverley Williams, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Andrew, Scarborough, Oct. 1.

Vacant Incumbencies

Clergy from outside the diocese with the permission of their bishop may apply through the Diocesan Executive Assistant, Canon Mary Conliffe.

Bishop's Direct Appointment Process

- (receiving names):
- St. Cyprian

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

Parish Selection Committee Process

First Phase - (not yet receiving names):

- Christ Church-St. James
- St. Martin in-the-Fields

Second Phase - (receiving names via Bishop):

- Holy Trinity, Thornhill
- Christ the King
- St. John the Baptist, Oak Ridges

Third Phase - (no longer receiving names):

- St. James Cathedral
- Grace Church on-the-Hill
- St. George Memorial, Oshawa

Retirements

- The Rev. Leonard Leader's last Sunday at St. George on Yonge was Sept. 24.
- The Rev. Randy Murray's last Sunday at St. Peter, Oshawa was Sept. 24.
- The Rev. Peter Mills's last Sunday at the Parish of Ida and Omeme will be Dec. 31.



THE BISHOP'S COMPANY

The 2023 Bishop's Company Dinner & Cabaret

The Bishop's Company would also like to thank Mr. Goldring for his years of service to the Anglican community and for being this year's guest speaker.

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GREAT & SMALL

The blessing of animals service at St. James Cathedral on Sept. 30 attracts a large crowd. The Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen Fields and the Very Rev. Peter Wall blessed all manner of pets and other animals, including Mirvish and Northrup (at left), two Clydesdale horses of the Toronto Police Service Mounted Unit. In addition to the blessing, One Health Partners gave a demonstration with therapy dogs and a miniature horse that are taken to hospitals and seniors' homes to visit people with health issues and those in palliative care (see photo bottom right). PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

