

Island church offers retreats

New rural church rises from ashes



Service includes real animals

The Anglican

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GREETINGS

Bishop Andrew and Mary Asbil stand with Andre Lyn, ODT, and his family at the annual Bishop's Levee at St. James Cathedral on Jan. 1. Mr. Lyn, a member of St. Joseph of Nazareth, Bramalea, was one of 31 people who received the Order of the Diocese of Toronto for outstanding service over the years. For more on the levee and the order presentations, see pages 6-8. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Conference to explore '63 Congress

Historic gathering took place in Toronto

BY STUART MANN

IN August 1963, Anglican leaders from around the world came to Toronto for an Anglican Congress. The event, which included a service at Maple Leaf Gardens that was attended by 17,000 people, was featured in *Time* magazine, with a photo of Archbishop Michael Ramsey, the Archbishop of Canterbury,

on the cover.

To mark the 60th anniversary of that historic gathering, a conference will be held April 12-13 at St. Paul, Bloor Street. The conference will explore the lead-up to the Anglican Congress, the gathering itself, the personalities involved, its manifesto and its impact on the Anglican Communion. It might also help pave the way for another



Anglicans pack Maple Leaf Gardens for the opening service of the 1963 Toronto Anglican Congress. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA ARCHIVES

Anglican Congress. "We felt it should be marked because it was a kind of Vatican

II for the Anglican Communion and it took place in Toronto," says Bishop Terry Brown, president of

the Canadian Church Historical Society, co-sponsor of the conference along with the Historical Society

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A PILGRIMAGE INTO RETIREMENT – SEE PAGE 5

Sign honours 'light of my life'

Lifelong friend inspires parishioner to give

BY STUART MANN

A friendship that spanned half a century has led to the creation of a new electric sign for St. James Cathedral.

The sign, at the corner of Church and King streets in downtown Toronto, was dedicated in November to the memory of Grace Martin, a member of the cathedral who passed away in 2018.

"Grace was the light of my life, and I wondered how I could honour that," says Daisy Pittis, who donated the funds for the sign.

Bright, attractive and contemporary, the sign informs passersby about the cathedral's service times and special events. Hundreds of pedestrians pass it every day, along with cars, buses and streetcars.

Daisy and Grace had lived together for about 50 years, first in Toronto and then in Caledon and then back to Toronto when Grace,

a non-smoker, developed a lung ailment and couldn't drive anymore. "It was a beautiful friendship that few could hope to match," recalls Daisy.

She says Grace brought her back to the Christian faith. A cradle Anglican, Daisy had basically left the faith as a young person. That changed one Sunday when Grace took her to a service at Little Trinity and they heard the Rev. Harry Robinson, the rector at the time, preach.

"It felt like he was speaking directly to me," says Daisy.

From then on, Daisy's faith grew and the two women became deeply involved in church life, first at Christ Church, Bolton and then at the cathedral in Toronto. Throughout all the years, Grace's faith was an inspiration to Daisy and others.

"It was because of Grace that I began to take being a Christian seriously," says Daisy.

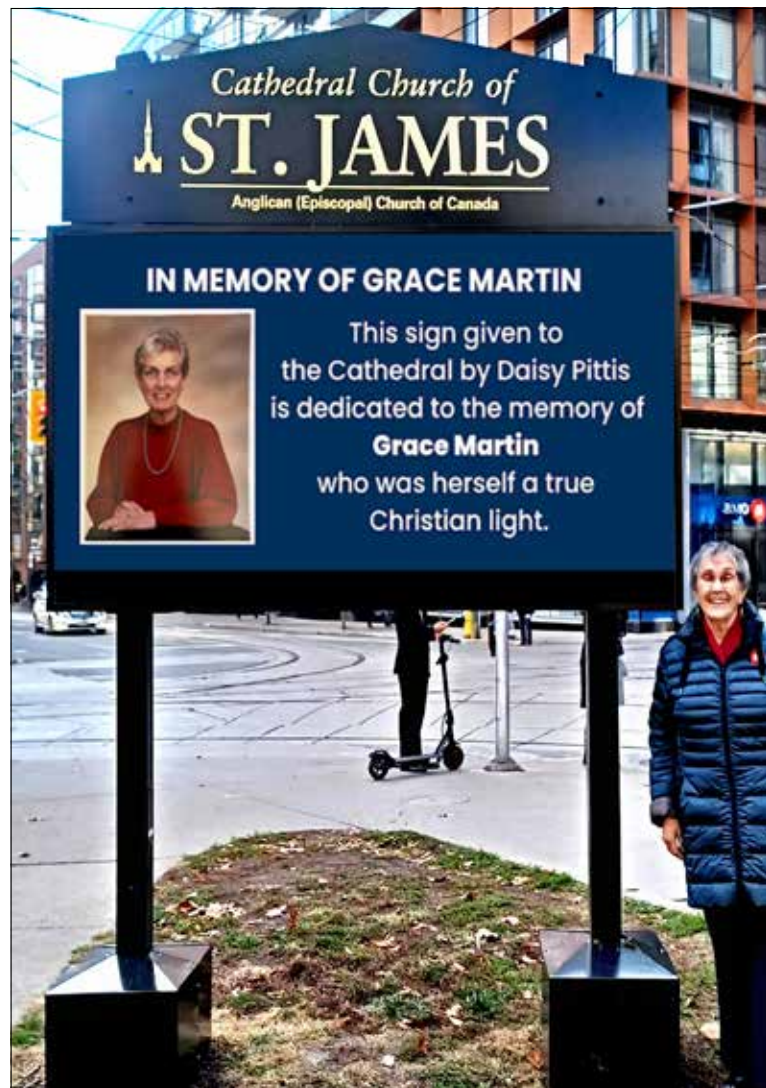


The cathedral's new sign shines at the corner of King and Church streets in Toronto on a chilly evening. At right, Daisy Pittis stands beside the sign, dedicated to her friend Grace Martin. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL

Grace's death in 2018 was soon followed by the long years of COVID-19. During that time, the cathedral's sign, which was made of wood, began to suffer from wear and tear. Daisy wondered if it could be replaced by a new electric sign in honour of her departed friend.

After speaking to the Very Rev. Stephen Vail, the rector and dean at the time, the idea slowly turned into reality and the new sign was dedicated in November 2023. The image on the sign was a picture of Grace, smiling out at the city.

Daisy says it is "absolutely wonderful" to honour her friend in this



way. "She was such a good person – a really beautiful human being. How often I've wanted to honour

her, and now that the sign is up, I'm just thrilled. I think she would have loved it."

BRIEFLY

Workshops scheduled for parish leaders

Diocesan staff will hold Zoom workshops in March for parish leaders, especially those new to their roles. If you are a leader in your parish or thinking about becoming one, you are strongly encouraged to at-

tend. The same content is offered at each workshop, so you only need to register for one. The workshops aim to meet these objectives: review parish governance in critical areas of knowledge; increase your understanding and overall comfort level to support you in your position; let you meet key diocesan staff virtually; in small groups, analyze a case study and provide input; learn when and how you can access resources available to you; answer any questions

you might have. The workshops will be held March 18, 6:30-9 p.m., March 20, 6:30-9 p.m. and March 23, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Visit the Supporting Parish Leaders Workshops page on the diocese's website, www.toronto.anglican.ca, for more information.

Primate to attend film screening

St. John the Baptist, Norway and the diocese are presenting a screen-

ing of *The Philadelphia Eleven*, a documentary about the group of women and their supporters who organized their ordination to become Episcopal priests in 1974. The film will be followed by a Q&A session with Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada. The event will take place on Feb. 3 at 3 p.m. at the St. James Cathedral Centre, 65 Church St., Toronto. Doors open at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are free. For ticket information, visit the cathedral's website, www.stjamescathedral.ca, or email the cathedral at info@stjamescathedral.ca.

Booklet lists transgender programs, services

A booklet of resources for ministry with transgender people has been compiled and is available on the Prayer Resources page of the diocese's website, www.toronto.anglican.ca. It includes transgender-related programs and services across the diocese that a parish member or cleric might find helpful, such as transgender programs, specialized medical care and trans-friendly faith communities.

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A place to stop and rest

Island church hosts retreats

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

“COME away by yourselves and rest a while.” That image is inspiring one parish to open its doors to Anglicans from across the diocese looking for quiet and rest.

As its name suggests, St. Andrew by-the-Lake sits mere metres from Lake Ontario, the only church on the Toronto Islands, but many Anglicans worshipping on the mainland aren't aware of its presence. “When I asked the question at Synod, ‘How many people know there's a church on the island?’ and only 25 per cent, I would say, of people put their hand up, it sort of confirmed what I'd been thinking,” says the Rev. Dr. Alison Hari Singh, the priest-in-charge.

After arriving at the parish in August 2021, Ms. Hari Singh was immediately struck by the church's beautiful surroundings. She recalls one day when she had taken her bike on the ferry and was riding toward the church. “I came around the corner, and this guy was paddleboarding outside of the church,” she says. She asked if she could take a photo of him with the church building. “So he just sort of stood there and waved, and I thought to myself, this is something else. This place is not like other churches.”

But she soon realized that what made St. Andrew by-the-Lake so unique also meant that growth would need to look somewhat



St. Andrew by-the-Lake, located on Toronto Islands, is just a ferry ride away from the city and steps away from the lake. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

different than in other parishes. She knew that the cost and inconvenience of taking a ferry from downtown Toronto were likely to be a barrier to seekers looking for a church home.

“I may be a decent preacher, but no one is going to pay \$9.11 to come hear me preach and hear this great music,” she says. “I could just feel that it's not going to grow in the typical way that we think of church growth, because it costs money to get there, which we can't get reimbursed. No other church in the city do you have to pay to go to.”

The church building is leased from the City of Toronto with terms

that stipulate that it can be used only for religious purposes, so the parish can't rent its space to a daycare or a sports group, for example, to generate income.

As Ms. Hari Singh thought about a way forward for St. Andrew's, she started to feel that the same things that might keep new members away would also make the parish an ideal spot for retreats. “The first thing we do on Sunday mornings is we stop, and in the summer all you can hear is the birds. You can hear the wind blowing in the trees. Sometimes you can hear the water lapping and you just come away,” she says.

After considering the idea, she

met individually with several of the parish's past clergy to gauge their reaction, and they all affirmed her instinct. “I had all these clergy who had been there before me telling me what my gut was saying, which is, I think that this really needs to turn into a church and retreat centre,” she says.

This new vision for St. Andrew's hasn't unfolded quickly; Ms. Hari Singh has been gradually introducing the idea with the parish leadership and through her preaching on Sunday mornings. “It's two years of prayer and pushing very gently, just sort of opening up a vision, a new way of thinking about what

this parish could become,” she says.

As St. Andrew's hosted several retreats for parishes last summer, she saw parishioners starting to get excited about more people using the building. But she is also wary of overburdening her lay leaders. “It's not perfect. We're not people-rich, so we don't have a lot of people power,” she says. “This desire to see the place rented could easily turn into a massive case of burnout.”

She hopes that as interest grows, the parish might be able to hire a staff person to manage rentals and retreats. Eventually she'd like to be able to offer packages to parishes that want to bring a group of people over, whether it's for a quiet day with a speaker, to walk the outdoor labyrinth, to take advantage of the beautiful setting or simply to go to the beach and try paddleboarding.

“I want this place to be like a cathedral to the whole Church, and to feel like you can come here as your church. This is your church,” she says. “There's a small rental fee, but you can use this building as if it's your place to be quiet, to take time to rest a while.”

She also encourages retired clergy or clergy on vacation to visit on a Sunday morning as part of their own self-care. “Make a pilgrimage. Make a point of getting your ferry ticket, entering that portal. It's like going through the Narnia doors, the closet, when you enter this whole new world,” she says.

Anyone interested in helping the parish develop its retreat centre vision is encouraged to contact Ms. Hari Singh at standrewminister@gmail.com. Groups that would like to use the space at St. Andrew's can visit www.standrewbythelake.com or email standrewbookings@gmail.com.

Website helps Anglicans write wills, leave gifts

THE Anglican Diocese of Toronto Foundation is making it easier for people to do their wills – and to leave a planned gift to their church or a cherished ministry.

The foundation, a registered charity of the Diocese of Toronto, has teamed up with Willfora, a website that allows people to write their wills online for free.

Willfora is a not-for-profit website that is financially supported by Canadian charities such as March of Dimes Canada, the World Wildlife Federation and Sinai Health Foundation. Its purpose is to raise awareness about the importance of having a will and the impact that a planned gift – even a small one – can have on a charitable cause.

Mary Lynne Stewart, executive director of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto Foundation, says Willfora is secure and easy to use. All information entered on the site is protected by encryption, and data and contact information is never sold. Individuals can print off a copy of their will and share it with

their lawyer, executor or others if they choose.

“For so many people, doing a will is intimidating, and they feel it's costly,” says Ms. Stewart. “With Willfora, they can create a will at their own pace, online, for free. And Willfora is a trusted service, supported and used by some of the largest charities in Canada.”

A link to Willfora is on the Anglican Diocese of Toronto Foundation's webpage, www.toronto.anglican.ca/foundation.

Ms. Stewart says encouraging Anglicans to write their will is part of an effort by the foundation to raise awareness of planned giving in parishes. “The foundation is taking a step forward and saying, ‘Let us be your partner and help you get a planned giving program going in your parish or get your parishioners talking about it. Let us help you have that conversation and make it a simple one.’”

Planned gifts can have a significant impact, she says. Churches that have received planned gifts

have used them to hire new ministry staff, support an outreach project or make improvements to their buildings. Gifts that were given to the diocese in the 1960s are still bearing fruit, helping to fund FaithWorks and other initiatives.

“It's about leaving a legacy and providing support to a ministry you're passionate about,” she says. “We want to encourage those conversations, so that 30 years from now there's a planned gift that will help carry on the work of your church or the diocese.”

The foundation will be hosting planned giving seminars for parishes in 2024. It is also developing a toolkit for parishes, to help them get started on planned giving. Ms. Stewart hopes the diocese will create a Planned Giving Sunday someday, similar to its annual FaithWorks Sunday.

“I'm very excited,” she says. “Talking about leaving a planned gift can be a life-changing conversation for people. It can make a tremendous difference.”

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In winter, creation teaches us to rest



All the complicated details of the attiring and the disattiring are completed! A liquid moon moves gently among the long branches. Thus having prepared their buds against a sure winter, the wise trees stand sleeping in the cold. (William Carlos Williams)

As a relative newcomer to Canada, winter is something I am still getting used to. Being from the UK, I should be accustomed to grey skies and short winter days. Yet I always feel a sense of dread as winter approaches, as I pull out my 'SAD' lamp in preparation for the drop in energy I experience, and the cold, dark mornings. This is my fifth winter in Canada, but I am still surprised by it. I am surprised by the extreme cold snaps, the unexpected thaws, the heavy snowfalls, those beautiful freezing days of blue sky and bright sunshine. And I am surprised by the stillness. The absence of bird song, the inactivity of the raccoons in my garden and the cats in my house. There are no leaves to rustle on the trees, there are no ripples on a frozen lake.

I wonder if I dread the winter because I am not very good at stillness. If I made the rules, it would always be summer, and life would always be full – full of people, events, work,

CREATION MATTERS

BY THE REV. HANNAH JOHNSTON

social commitments, travel. If I could, I would skip winter completely and jump straight into spring.

As a city dweller, I can too easily become disconnected from the natural cycles of the earth. I can forget that each season is necessary for life. The natural seasons of our world, the short days and the longer nights – they are necessary. Trees cannot blossom or produce fruit all year round. Leaves must fall to the ground and die in order for new life to begin. Animals hibernate, retreating into a safe dark place until spring. Winter is a season when creation slows down, rests, regenerates.

This winter I have been trying to learn from the stillness of creation.

Maybe I should not expect to have the same energy and pace of life in winter as I do in summer. Maybe human beings were made to join with the rest of creation in moving through the natural seasons. Seasons of energy and growth, blossom and fruitfulness, seasons of death and rebirth, rest and stillness. Maybe, for humans too, winter can be a season of rest, regeneration and renewal. In the darkness of the earth seeds germinate,

begin to grow. Our bodies, too, can rest in the quiet darkness.

In a culture that treats people who are more productive as more valuable, and views busyness as a badge of honour, learning to rest can be a radical act. Activist Tricia Hersey, founder of The Nap Ministry, says that “rest is resistance.” That cultivating a deliberate practice of slowing down and choosing rest is an act of resistance against capitalism and white supremacy, systems that treat human bodies as tools for production and labour and that are driving the planet to exhaustion. She says, “I took to rest and naps and slowing down as a way to save my life, resist the systems telling me to do more... Rest pushes back and disrupts [these] systems. It is a counter narrative.”

Choosing to rest can be an act of resistance against systems that extract labour and resources from human bodies and from creation until there is nothing left. Creation teaches us that rest is necessary for regeneration and renewal. Winter reminds us that it is not natural to produce fruit all year round.

This winter I am trying to learn from creation.

The Rev. Hannah Johnston is a member of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care and the assistant curate at St. Anne, Toronto.

Moving beyond fear to community

BY MURRAY MacADAM



It had been an inspiring morning, pitching in with other volunteers to do odd jobs completing a community centre at a new housing project for individuals who

had been homeless. I marveled that this grassroots initiative to provide sleeping cabins and community services was nearing completion – and that it had all been accomplished without a dime of government funding. I appreciated that the project was based on the edge of the city, thereby avoiding hostility from nearby homeowners.

Or so I thought. During a coffee break another volunteer pulled me aside and in a low voice outlined that even though the nearest homes were several hundred metres away, some of those homeowners had voiced their opposition to the project.

This is just one example of the hostility that often bursts forth in response to housing projects meant to benefit “the least of these.” A veteran Ontario MPP once told me that any politician bold enough to support affordable housing projects in their riding must accept the fact that everyone living near the project will vote against them in the next election, and many will campaign for other candidates.

Yes, fear of plunging property values, crime and other reasons often lie behind this hostility. But other fears are at play here too – especially fear of “the other,” of people who

are different from us. We also like to believe that we're in full control of our lives, when in fact we are not. Life is full of unforeseen events, many of them difficult, such as illnesses or accidents. Worrying about what the future may bring stirs up fear. The deepening climate crisis is another factor raising anxiety about an uncertain future.

Our Christian faith has plenty to say about fear and about deepening our faith in God rather than succumbing to fear. Our faith does not rest of the predictability of safety, but on God's grace. The first words Jesus says to his fearful disciples following his resurrection are “Do not be afraid” (Matthew 28:10). “Fear not!” is the most repeated command in the bible. It's been said that there are 365 “fear nots” in the bible – one for every day of the year.

In his book *Fear of the Other: No Fear in Love*, American theologian William Willimon invites Christians to consider the gospel command to love and not merely tolerate those considered to be “other” or outside mainstream Christian culture. Rooted in the Christian story and its inclusive vision, he brings a bold perspective to what may be the hardest thing for people of faith to do: including and loving the “other” as they are, without expecting them to become like us.

Emphasizing biblical teaching that urges us to accept these persons for who they are and their differences as gifts and mysteries bearing the grace of God, Willimon also offers a strong critique of privileged people who often speak of reconciliation yet evade

the injustice of huge inequalities faced by foreigners and strangers.

Willimon argues that God comes to us through so-called outsiders, strangers, immigrants and those without status – the kind of people with whom Jesus spent a lot of time. Beyond extending welcome, Christians must become “other” to the world, shaking off the dominant culture's identity and privilege through practices of listening, humility and understanding.

Along with those disciplines, I would add that conquering fear needs to involve going beyond our comfort zone to form meaningful connections with people different from us. Unfortunately, our society – and our personal attitudes – all too often erect barriers separating people based on their differences. It's a kind of social apartheid. I live only 10 blocks from a Peterborough community nicknamed “Cracktown” because drug addiction plagues the lives of some of its residents. My wife and I have been lucky enough to make friends with three people living there who have taught me much about generosity and about how to laugh despite life's challenges. Our life experiences are radically different, but deep down we share a common humanity.

Moving beyond fear is far from easy. It can begin with a couple of basic questions: what is it, exactly, that I am fearful of? Who am I afraid of – and why?

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



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Considering the lilies

BY THE REV. CANON LUCY REID

I was asked recently if I had been on another pilgrimage, having done one a few years ago. My answer was no in terms of a literal pilgrimage journey, but yes in terms of a metaphorical one. In June 2022 I retired after 41 years of ordained ministry, first serving as a deaconess in the Church of England and then as a priest in the Anglican Church of Canada. My husband David Howells, also a parish priest, had retired the previous year and had been working on renovations to a little house we had bought. Three days after saying farewell to my parish, our belongings were loaded up and we moved from Toronto to Guelph.

Even with congested traffic the journey can hardly be called a long one, but metaphorically it was huge, and almost two years later I still find myself ruminating on the vastness of the pilgrimage from full-time work to retirement.

My generation is retiring in record numbers as we Baby Boomers enter that stage of life, so there is plenty of advice, wise and otherwise, on how to retire gracefully. For clergy there are also protocols around leaving a parish cleanly, without trying to hang on to relationships forged during a ministry. Pastoral relationships are different from friendships, we are reminded. And yet after years of serving in a church community, having the privilege of entering deeply into people's lives at times of great sorrow and great joy, seeing little ones grow up and elders die, friendships do form. A strong web of relationships develops. And the pain of walking away from that is real.

Leaving any ministry or job can be painful. But there is something additionally poignant about the pang of loss that comes with retirement, precisely because it is final. Perhaps that explains why many of us take on part-time roles after retiring, so that we can carry on doing what we did for so long. And churches need these newly retired people as volunteers and as interim clergy. I remember how much I valued that cohort in my own parishes over the years. Yet a friend in Guelph had warned me against jumping back into ministry or volunteerism too soon, for the sake of filling the uncomfortable, unfamiliar gap. And so I promised myself that I would do nothing for the first six months other than settling into Guelph and travelling to the UK to see family.

The other reality was that I was burned out after my final years of ministry during Covid and a huge church renovation project, and my husband had been suffering from memory loss for several years already. It was time for our world to shrink to a more manageable size and for our energies to be focused closer to home. In the metaphor of a pilgrimage, our roads needed to be smaller, slower, shorter, heading not outwards but inwards.

At first, I felt most acutely a huge sense of relief that I had put down the weighty responsibility of my work. A parishioner had told me that her husband, on retiring, had described his new life as heaven on earth. I got that. Our work demands so much of us, for better and for worse, and parish ministry in particular is a complex blend of leadership, service, management, pastoral care, liturgical expertise, teaching, preaching, and much more. It had felt at times like spinning an impossibly large number of plates on sticks, while trying not to let any fall. And yes, I knew it was God's church, not mine. I knew I was a minister, not a messiah. I relied on the guidance and strength of the Spirit at



The pilgrimage into retirement invites us to learn letting go, slowing down, trusting, being more than doing, watching more than acting. PHOTO BY THE REV. CANON LUCY REID

work among us all. Nevertheless, it was a weight of responsibility that I was deeply relieved to put down.

As we settled into the home back in the town where we had raised our children, and as we reconnected with old friends there, a slow trickle of energy began to return. We visited family in England and spent a month in Scotland, hiking in the hills of Skye and walking through the chain of islands that make up the Outer Hebrides. Unlike our pilgrimage three years before, when we had walked some 500 kilometres from Lindisfarne across Scotland to Iona, we were not walking all day and camping by night this time, but instead had a car and a comfortable caravan. It was much easier, freer – another metaphor for transitioning into retirement.

And yet there was also a pang of grief under the relief. As my energy returned, I found myself missing the work and the sense of purpose and identity it gave. I missed the life of the church community, with all its ups and downs, challenges and joys. I missed the friends I had made there. My husband noticed that sitting in a pew on Sundays as a parishioner, rather than standing behind the altar as a priest, rankled with him and made him restless, critical, sad. And we both found ourselves antsy on Saturdays, as though we were forgetting to do something, after four decades of gearing up for Sundays.

So the honeymoon period of retirement as heaven on earth turned out to be more complex. Retirement (on a pension, with a home of our own) was a gift and a privilege, and yet it also involved loss and disorientation. It was hard to get used to not being busy all the time. With colleagues still working, some struggling, I felt guilty for having slipped into the slow lane. But my friend's words about not jumping into busyness too soon, allowing some fallow time instead, stayed with me.

The same friend is a gardener, and he turned up on my birthday in the spring with a car full of perennial plantings from his garden. He knew I had great ambitions to turn our large empty lawn into flower and vegetable gardens. My family gave me ten rose bushes as a birthday gift, and around the same time I bought vegetable seeds and seedlings from a

local organic farm. The fallow time was about to give way to a season of planting.

Somewhat to my husband's alarm, I began digging up sections of the lawn, creating new, curving spaces for the flower beds and business-like raised beds for the vegetables. I pictured a riot of colour throughout the summer and copious food to take us into the winter. But gardening is a long, slow game. The perennials took their time to root. Some were unable to cope with the toxins produced by our two large black walnut trees and had to be moved. Others grew but put out few blooms. While my neighbour planted beds full of annuals for instant colour, which I glanced at enviously while digging up yet another piece of the lawn, I was discovering that perennials take time and care.

The vegetables, too, had lessons to teach me. We had copious lettuce and an abundance of green beans, but the peppers were reluctant to thrive, and the tomato plants grew leggy and weak because I failed to prune them. The squash played a game with me where they multiplied under cover of their leaves. Just when I thought the last one had been picked, more were discovered hiding in the shade. I forgot I had a packet of carrot seeds and tossed them into the ground late in the summer. They yielded a small handful of miniatures in mid-November.

Gardening invites you to slow down and notice. There is some strenuous physical effort required at certain points, but mostly it felt last year like a matter of getting to know the little piece of land we had settled on, and the plants I was bringing to it. As we were rooting into our new stage of life, the plants were embodying a parallel process. As I tended them, watered and weeded them and enjoyed their bounty, I was also aware of settling myself down, focusing on one thing at a time, instead of spinning multiple plates. Often I just stopped and smelled the roses.

Two of our adult children have also moved back to Guelph, where they grew up. We see them often and delight in being able to drop in on each other. Our youngest one lives in Mexico and often reminds us that in traditional cultures we would be regarded as elders who have entered into a chapter of life typified by wisdom, a slower

pace, a handing off of responsibilities. That reminder has been helpful for me, conditioned as I am to being productive, busy, in control. Doing nothing more than smelling the roses and observing the vegetables grow can be a spiritual practice.

"Consider the lilies," said Jesus. "They neither spin nor toil, yet even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these." So I took time to consider the lilies, and the roses, and the beans, tomatoes and squash. I gave myself permission to keep my calendar relatively empty. I practised patience – not a strong suit of mine, but increasingly important as my husband and I cope with his memory loss.

This pilgrimage into retirement is a journey to a new destination. Ultimately of course, and naturally, it leads to death. But along the way it invites us to learn letting go, slowing down, trusting, being more than doing, watching more than acting.

In his book *To Bless the Space Between Us*, teacher and poet John O'Donohue has a blessing for retirement, which includes these words:

*You stand on the shore of new invitation
To open your life to what is left undone;
Let your heart enjoy a different rhythm
When drawn to the wonder of other horizons.*

*Have the courage for a new approach to time;
Allow it to slow until you find freedom
To draw alongside the mystery you hold
And befriend your own beauty of soul.*

Wonder, courage, freedom, mystery, beauty. These are gospel words of wisdom and good news at this stage in the pilgrimage of life. And Christ, whom Mary Magdalene mistook for a gardener, tends our souls with loving care.

The Rev. Canon Lucy Reid is a retired priest of the diocese who now lives in Guelph.

Laity receive Order of the

Award honours outstanding service over the years

The Order of the Diocese of Toronto honours members of the laity in the diocese who have given outstanding service over a significant period of time in their volunteer ministry. We give thanks to God for the work and witness of these faithful people who, in the exercise of their baptismal ministry, have demonstrated that “their light shines, their works glorify.” In 2023, the recipients came from the following deaneries: North Peel, Nottawasaga, St. James & Toronto East, and Victoria/Haliburton.

Cheryl Atkins, ODT St. John, West Toronto

Mrs. Atkins was nominated by the bishop for decades of exemplary service to God in the Church. Rector’s warden with three different priests, she has provided consistency and guided the parish through difficult transitions. The one who knows where everything is and when everything is happening and who cleans the church so the custodian can take holidays, “Saint Cheryl” is how her parish affectionately refers to this joyfully spirited servant leader.

Joan Baillie, ODT

St. Joseph of Nazareth, Bramalea
Mrs. Baillie was nominated by St. Joseph of Nazareth, Bramalea for her lifelong witness to God’s presence. For 60 years, she has humbly served with creative courage and a grateful smile as a joyful intercessor, Sunday School teacher, pastoral visitor and FaithWorks parish coordinator. In her own words, “God always had a hand on me, looking after me, enabling me to serve.” She is an inspiring servant leader in her beloved parish.

Mario Bartolozzi, ODT

St. Matthias, Bellwoods
Mr. Bartolozzi was nominated by the bishop for his extensive volunteer service as a Diocesan Council member, Mission Action Planning and parish transition coach, visioning facilitator, and a remote technology consultant. Mr. Bartolozzi is active in his parish leadership, working as a churchwarden and serving as a cantor, reader and liturgical assistant. His volunteerism extends beyond the church walls to helping community charities, including the Make a Wish Foundation and the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation.

Valerie Beasley, ODT

Prince of Peace, Wasaga Beach
Mrs. Beasley was nominated by Prince of Peace for her faith-filled, enthusiastic service. As an eight-year rector’s warden, she has also served as lay reader, communion assistant, intercessor, children’s ministry coordinator and chorister. During the pandemic, she held the congregation together by organizing services and outdoor worship, and she is the driving force behind the vitality and growth of the parish – a shining example of how to live for God.



New members of the Order of the Diocese of Toronto stand with Bishop Andrew Asbil, suffragan bishops and clergy after their investiture at St. James Cathedral.

Stephen Boake, ODT & Lise Browne, ODT St. James Cathedral

Mr. Boake & Ms. Browne were nominated by the bishop for their long-standing consultancy work with the diocese. The husband-and-wife team are the creative partners behind Designwerke, a multipurpose graphic arts, design and communications company that has worked with the Stewardship Development department to brand FaithWorks, Our Faith-Our Hope, the John Strachan Trust and the Bishop’s Company. In providing vital strategic vision for the diocesan context, they lend their time and talents to serve a bigger purpose that they believe in.

Patricia Campbell, ODT Parish of Minden-Kinmount

Ms. Campbell was nominated by the Parish of Minden-Kinmount for her ability to bring people into a relationship with Jesus. A 90-plus-year faithful member of St. Paul’s, she has held almost every position imaginable as a shining light to her church. Her desire to serve and her sense of what is needed are exemplary. With her love of Christ radiating through her, she is the hands, feet and light of Christ in the community.

Audrey Chan, ODT

St. Matthew, First Avenue
Mrs. Chan was nominated by St. Matthew, First Avenue for her many years of service to the church and for her Christian kindness. As warden, treasurer, acting administrator, financial assistant, refreshment coordinator, chorister, greeter, lay pastoral visitor, intercessor and refugee committee member, she serves with quiet, steadfast joy. Her work and guidance have been essential in maintaining the church community through many challenging circumstances, and her presence in the local neighbourhood is known as “You Christians have something!”

Junia Crichlow, ODT St. Jude, Bramalea North

Mrs. Crichlow was nominated by St. Jude, Bramalea North for her vital pastoral presence. A lay anointer, intercessor, fundraiser and advisor, she is an in-demand listener and confidante for many. With a long career as a public health nurse, in retirement she is often asked for advice regarding elder stay-at-home parishioners and has more time to spend serving her parish.

Marion Cronsberry, ODT St. John the Baptist, Norway

Ms. Cronsberry was nominated by St. John the Baptist, Norway for lifelong

membership and service to her church. From early childhood years watching her parents in leadership roles, she was guided by their faith and action and faithfully continued her worship and service with her own family. As the parish’s homegrown historian, she has held many roles herself and is currently lead of the chancel guild and archives.

Gary Davenport, ODT St. Barnabas, Chester

Mr. Davenport was nominated by St. Barnabas, Chester for his tireless work in the parish, spanning several decades. As warden and interim treasurer when needed, he also pitches in with human resources matters and property items and oversees all construction with patience and professionalism. Always present at Sunday worship services (unless on vacation), he values all voices and is well loved by all members of the parish.

David Finch, ODT St. James, Caledon East

Mr. Finch was nominated by St. James, Caledon East for his commitment to serving God in faithful reverent worship, responsible administrative duties, dedicated maintenance of church property and dependable friendship to his fellow siblings in Christ. When the COVID-19 lockdown threatened parish life, he procured a dioc-

The Diocese of Toronto



Jan. 1. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

esan grant for a visual recording system and used his talents to set it up and train volunteers to run it. He is caring and committed to the life of St. James, and the parish is truly grateful for him.

Jean Franz, ODT

St. Hugh and St. Edmund

Mrs. Franz was nominated by St. Hugh and St. Edmund for her dedicated service to the church and her commitment to her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Generously stewarding her resources to the parish, she contributes to the church's work of spreading the gospel. As parish secretary since 1968, she has also taken up roles as lay pastoral assistant, lay anointer, chancel guild member and advisory board chairperson, and in her spare time is a member of the ACW, prayer group and church choir.

Freda Gearing, ODT

St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff

Mrs. Gearing was nominated by St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff for her dedicated and unwavering commitment to pastoral care and parish life over the past 20 years. As coordinator of the parish pastoral care team, anointer of the sick and lay communion administrator, her life of faith and service is evidenced by her valued ministry and dedication to prayer whenever and wherever it is needed for.

Sharon Goldsworthy, ODT

All Saints, Collingwood

Mrs. Goldsworthy was nominated by All Saints, Collingwood for her ministries of hospitality, pastoral care and outreach. Since COVID-19, she has focused on food security in the parish community, exemplified in the Five Loaves program she began as a way of supplementing monthly sit-down community dinners. Serving 100 people as of October, hot nutritious meals are provided to shut-ins, shelters and encampments. An enthusiastic Eucharistic assistant and anointer, her deep spirituality is an inspiration to her priest and parish.

Marilyn Hutchison, ODT

St. Paul, Innisfil

Ms. Hutchison was nominated by St. Paul, Innisfil for her significant contribution to the life of the parish over the past six years. As rector's warden, special events coordinator, volunteer screening coordinator and Messy Church volunteer, she is also called "Josephine the plumber." This woman is the eighth wonder of the world – if she sees something that needs doing, it was done yesterday.

James (Jim) Laking, ODT

Trinity Church, Barrie

Mr. Laking was nominated by Trinity Church, Barrie for numerous stalwart contributions that have been appreciated

by all. When the main wooden church doors were vandalized with a blowtorch last year, he sanded out the offensive symbols and words and stained the doors to make them new. Baptized at Trinity in 1932 and a member ever since, he has tirelessly managed property work inside and outside, sidespeople, security, audio visual presentations and historical church membership records.

Andre Lyn, ODT

St. Joseph of Nazareth, Bramalea

Mr. Lyn was nominated by the bishop for his tireless and gracious commitment to diversity and learning in our Church. As long-serving chair of the Bishop's Working Group on Intercultural Ministries, he has led the diocese in learning about its differences and facilitated challenging conversations about its history and present need to change. He is a long-serving warden in his own parish and, true to form, handles all situations with humility, grace and integrity.

Cynthia Majewski, ODT

St. Timothy, North Toronto

Ms. Majewski was nominated by the bishop for volunteer work with healing ministries and within the volunteer corps, where she brings her RN and University of Toronto-level of quality improvement rigour to coaching and evaluating diocesan

grants. She led the Reach Grant tech evaluation team that presented the "Using Technology for God's Mission" series, co-authored a tech sustainability package and led a new digital ministry working group. She has joined the Nominating Committee, collaborated with the Toronto United Church Council's Innovative Ministry Centre on project evaluation, volunteered at Synod and welcomed her first grandchild, Jay.

Kimberley Marshall, ODT

St. Monica

Ms. Marshall was nominated by St. Monica for her many contributions to parish life. Having committed her life to Jesus six years ago, she has become an active participant in every aspect, including music ministry, hospitality, holy hardware polishing and representing the parish as a lay delegate to Synod. When a job needs to be done, she will be there to help out.

Eileen Martin, ODT

St. Luke, Creemore

Mrs. Martin was nominated by St. Luke, Creemore for her faithfulness and guidance that she offers without judgement in all she does. Former secretary to the dean of St. James Cathedral and member of St. Barnabas, she has worked in several parishes throughout her life and consistently engages in prayer and support of the mission of the Anglican Church. She lives her faith as a humble servant.

Ethel Morris, ODT

St. Paul, Lindsay

Mrs. Morris was nominated by St. Paul, Lindsay for her loving and willing service to her Lord and Church. In liturgy, outreach, mission, hospitality and education, she has generously stewarded her trained skills and gifts for the work of the Church. A four-plus-decades lay reader, enduring seasons of change personally and within the church, she is faithfully committed to ministry for the good of the Church and community.

Marjorie Myton, ODT

Holy Family, Heart Lake (Brampton)

Ms. Myton was nominated by Holy Family, Heart Lake (Brampton) for her contributions to parish ministry over the last 30-plus years, many of which she continues today. Liturgical coordinator and trainer, lay anointer, prayer chain leader, choir member, welcoming committee, warden, advisory board member, nominations committee member, and the initiator and coordinator of the Caring and Sharing Christmas outreach program delivering boxes of food and gifts, her selfless dedication has indeed blessed Holy Family and many others.

Ian Paul, ODT

Ascension, Don Mills

Mr. Paul was nominated by the bishop for his faithfulness to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, symbolizing outstanding service to Church and community. Faithful to the point of portraying the role nobody wants in the annual Christmas pageant (the Roman soldier), he has served in all parish roles that equally may or may not be volunteered for. Recognized by his parish as a humble, unassuming man who gives of himself quietly, he is appreciated by the diocese for his generous service to our Church.

RINGING IN A NEW YEAR

The bishops and their spouses, along with the diocese's chancellor, archdeacons and canon administrator, exchange greetings with well-wishers at the annual Bishop's Levee at St. James Cathedral on Jan. 1. The afternoon event, held to offer best wishes and prayers for the New Year, included a worship service, the traditional receiving line and reception, a ringing of the cathedral's bells, festive music, and the presentations of the Order of the Diocese of Toronto. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



Laity honoured for faithful service

Continued from Page 7

Norman Savill, ODT

St. Margaret, Barrie

Mr. Savill was nominated by St. Margaret, Barrie for his lifelong service to the Church as a gifted host and enthusiastic lay reader. A mentor to new leaders, he regularly hosts new parishioners in his home and works to connect the church and community. In recognition of his leadership and encouragement to his parish during COVID-19, he continues to be an innovative leader in the regional ministry project that explores new ways of being Church.

Valerie Seales, ODT

St. Matthew the Apostle, Oriole

Ms. Seales was nominated by the bishop for 50-plus years of leadership in parish life and the community. A longtime churchwarden, her business sense and kindness have set the tone for inclusivity, joyous celebration, diligent management and prayerful participation in the neighbourhood. In addition to parish leadership, she is a dedicated volunteer with Toronto Caribbean Carnival, the Henry Farm community association, Hibiscus United of Trinidad and Tobago (Canada) and the beloved *Los Ketchos Assos* parang band as a joyful singer.

Moira Southwell, ODT

All Saints, Collingwood

Mrs. Southwell was nominated by the bishop for her ministries of hospitality, pastoral care and outreach. As pastoral team lead, she mobilizes members for home visits and calls while consistently hosting weekly coffee drop-ins and bible studies and a monthly afternoon Eucharist for seniors. Sunday service chauffeur and PowerPoint assistant to her husband Doug, she also acts as an anointer after Communion. Reliable for her plain-spoken honesty and deep knowledge of the congregation, she is guided by her heart for God's people.

John Sutton, ODT

Redeemer, Bloor St.

Mr. Sutton was nominated by Church of the Redeemer for his outstanding work as chair of the property committee. He has brought many projects to fruition that have enhanced the beauty and utility of the parish sacred space, as well as serving as a Communion minister and focusing on building relationships. This past year, he facilitated the installation of the "When I was sick" sculpture and the restoration of stained-glass windows, both visible signs to the downtown neighbourhood of Christ's presence in the city.

Timothy Yat-Kwong Tong, ODT

St. John, Willowdale

Mr. Tong was nominated by the bishop for remarkable service to the parish in multiple ministries and as a longstanding churchwarden. Instrumental in the relocation of St. John's to its permanent church home, he enabled a fruitful transition. He lived an exemplary life in his Christian commitment and humility, showed faithful spirituality through challenges in his personal and parish life, and encouraged and inspired all to grow in Christian virtues and unity. *Mr. Tong died of cancer on Dec. 4, 2023. His award was presented posthumously to his family.*

Valerie Trutwein, ODT

St. Bede

Ms. Trutwein was nominated by St. Bede for her ministry of encouragement and support to other seniors. As a 50-plus year neighbourhood resident and parishioner, St. Bede's has been a haven of peace and comfort, and in turn she has faithfully supported the church and reaches out to its members with care. A former chorister and lay reader, her spirit remains strong and is a bright light of inspiration to others.

Roger Welsman, ODT

St. Thomas, Shanty Bay

Mr. Welsman was nominated by St. Thomas, Shanty Bay for lifelong service as churchwarden, lay reader, fundraiser, community organizer and volunteer. When he began as a churchwarden in the 1960s, the church hall was built and he became a lay reader, appointed by then-incumbent the Rev. Basil Tonks. In 2006, he again lent his leadership to see the church hall updated into a beautiful new facility that is now home to a Montessori school during the week.

Martha Whittaker, ODT

Christ Church, Brampton

Ms. Whittaker was nominated by Christ Church, Brampton for her significant, longtime volunteer ministry for children and youth, hospitality, newcomer integration and stewardship development. Using her skills and experience as a former corporate vice-president in the insurance industry, she has mentored and supported volunteers from within the parish and from other parishes and community agencies. She has been instrumental in developing procedures and systems for intentional, integrated and growth-oriented change in the church.

New church rises on scenic hillside

Congregation rallies after major fire

BY ROSS STEVENSON

THE new St. James, Roseneath has risen from the ashes of the devastating fire of “suspicious origin” that destroyed the pioneer church on April 9, 2019. The official opening and consecration service was held on Dec. 9, 2023. St. James is again a notable landmark on the scenic hillside northeast of Roseneath.

Bishop Riscylla Shaw, suffragan bishop with oversight of the diocese’s North and East archdeaconries, conducted a wonderful service that touched on some of the challenges of the rebuild. “This is a day of joyful celebration,” she told the congregation. “We have come to pray for God’s blessing on this house of assembly and worship, which we name St. James.”

Bishop Shaw, a key supporter of the rebuild, said, “The Church is more than bricks and mortar and more than people. It is being the feet and hands of Jesus and doing Jesus’ work in the community.”

The Rev. Bryce Sangster, incumbent, welcomed everyone on behalf of those who worked to make the day possible. “The atmosphere has a feeling of a resurrection and a new beginning after coming through both the tragic fire and Covid, the perfect storm, with new and exciting possibilities for this place going forward,” he said.

Chief Taynar Simpson of Alderville First Nation and John Logel, mayor of the Township of Alnwick-Haldimand, also spoke at the gathering. Seven other Anglican clergy attended, representing regional groups. Wally Brown was

the pianist.

Many people remarked about the beautiful new building with its many windows, the brightness, the acoustics, the lofted ceiling, the glass panel doors and other pleasant features of the church. A capacity crowd filled all the chairs, with a few attendees standing by the doorway.

“The opening day was wonderful and I am very thankful for the support of the membership and the community,” said Gail Latchford, deputy people’s warden.

St. James is nestled amongst family farms and small woodlots in the beautiful rolling hills of Northumberland County. Windows that look out over the picturesque hillside and valleys are a prominent feature of the church. The views provide a memorable panorama and offer an invitation to return.

The rebuilding of the church was intentionally delayed because the cost of most building materials skyrocketed in 2020 to 2022. The rebuilding process included a redesign to incorporate some cost savings. As part of the revised plan, vinyl siding was used as a substitute for concrete board as the external cladding. The church retained the plan for a steel roof for its longevity and durability. A metal roof was deemed to be important on the wind-prone hillside.

With its off-white vertical siding, black window frames, glass panelled doors, charcoal coloured roof and a green cross on each gable, the new church was dressed and ready for the consecration service and official opening on Dec. 9, 2023.

The first St. James church was



The new St. James, Roseneath. At right, the Rev. Bryce Sangster and Bishop Riscylla Shaw stand with Allan McCracken, people’s warden, Gail Latchford, deputy people’s warden, Helen Lee, deputy rector’s warden, and Barry Surerus, rector’s warden, on opening day. Not present at the time of the photo was Laurie Woodruff, treasurer. PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. JAMES, ROSENEATH

built by pioneer families in 1863 and services had been held there since before Confederation. The original church was built with mostly volunteer labour. It was made of pine lumber and cost \$800. The land was donated by William Nichol. The stained-glass window, installed in 1886, was in memory of the Rev. John McCleary. In 1925, the Coyle and Drope families donated the church’s huge bell, which is 38 inches in diameter, just eight inches less than the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. The bell marked the centennial of the families’ arrival in Canada. In 1977, the vestry and basement were added; in 1980, the bell tower was extended.

St. James Cemetery was also initiated in 1863. Many former parishioners are interred in the pristine and pastoral cemetery. The church’s strong emotional link with former rectors is evident, as they



later chose this cemetery as their final resting place. They include the Rev. A.J. Patstone (1881-1978), the Rev. Canon Henry Peasgood (1915-1977), the Rev. A.C. Herbert (1906-1993), and the Rev. Canon Bill Hewton (1930-1998).

The devastating fire that destroyed the old church interrupted 156 years of service to the community. The only items to survive the fire were the leather-bound bible and the bell, which was damaged in the fall from the tower. But now

rebuilt, St. James returns to its prominent landmark location on the scenic hillside northeast of Roseneath, beside County Road 45. St. James was able to escape the sobering trend towards closures of rural churches and rise from the ashes of the fire. With a rebuilt church, the parish can continue its roll in the social and spiritual development of the community.

Ross Stevenson is a member of St. James, Roseneath.

Two dinners make their mark in Lent



BY THE REV. CANON GREG PHYSICK

The scripture passages of Ash Wednesday get us pondering various aspects of our faith, as does the liturgical invitation to observe a holy Lent.

I invite you to ponder and pray about them as you make your journey this Lent.

I remind us all that Lent, while about prayer and fasting and abstinence – the giving up of certain things – is about taking on things, too, that can affect others in a good way. I still recall the Lenten boxes, pyramids and cards with spaces for coins,

a way of setting money aside to help others in need.

However, as is so often pointed out in scripture, all the prayers and ritual and everything “just right” in worship won’t matter if one neglects or hurts others due to such faith expressions.

Two stories: It was a Friday in Lent, 1979. My late wife Susan and I invited a couple over for dinner. Sue did up a lovely beef bourguignon dinner. She was a little anxious, as we didn’t know them well. When dinner was served, the fellow took one look and said, “I don’t eat meat in Lent.” Certain details have left me, except Susan quietly going to the kitchen to do up a pasta dish without the meat topping.

I have never forgotten that hurtful moment. An action of caring takes precedence over any Lenten discipline. Please eat the meal innocently served.

Fast forward to Ash Wednesday 2018. My late wife Bonnie, tired after four nights in the hospital due to her cancer and home only a few days, wanted to make us Chinese food for dinner. How close I came to automatically responding, “But it is Ash Wednesday and I only have a little soup.” Maybe the dinner of Lent 1979 suddenly came to mind, for the words were not said. We enjoyed that night’s Chinese dinner together.

You see, Ash Wednesday fell on Valentine’s Day in 2018, and that dinner was

Bon’s gift to me on what would be our last Valentine’s Day – and Ash Wednesday – together. It was a special gift, for she knew how much I enjoy Chinese food.

Caring and love are what are most important in God’s eyes.

A Lenten dinner in 1979, and then one in 2018. Each has left a mark, and each reminds me of what our Lenten disciplines are really to be about: growing in Christ’s love and living that love out. May we have a holy Lent. May Easter’s dawn touch our souls. Amen.

The Rev. Canon Greg Physick gave this reflection in 2022 at St. Paul, Lindsay, where he is the honorary assistant.



Congress shaped Anglican Communion

Continued on from Page 1

of the Episcopal Church. “It was an important event in Canadian Anglican Church history, probably the first time where the Canadian church was on the global Anglican stage.”

The conference, called MRIat60, will feature a keynote address by the Rev. Canon Dr. Mark Chapman of the University of Oxford. Twenty-one papers will be presented by speakers from various parts of the Anglican Communion. The conference will be held in person and will also be available online. Everyone is invited to attend.

Although there had been earlier Anglican congresses, the 1963 Toronto Anglican Congress was unique, says Bishop Brown. “It was after World War II and decolonization was taking place, while at the same time new Church provinces were forming in Africa, Asia and South America with indigenous leadership,” he says. “The Toronto Congress was an attempt to move forward as a Communion in the 1960s, when a lot of rapid change was anticipated.”

The Congress, held over two weeks, included worship services, social events, plenary sessions and presentations. At the end, it issued a manifesto that called for a new understanding of mission relationships and a radical reordering of priorities and resources to establish equality, interdependence and in-



Clockwise from top left: the Most Rev. Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, with the Most Rev. Howard Clark, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, following, at the Maple Leaf Gardens service; Archbishop Michael Ramsey (left) and the Rt. Rev. Frederick Wilkinson, Bishop of Toronto; choristers waiting to go into the service at Maple Leaf Gardens; the Royal York Hotel, site of the meetings; delegates in the Canadian Room, Royal York Hotel. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA ARCHIVES

terconnectedness in the Anglican Communion.

The manifesto, called Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ (also known as the MRI Declaration), ended with a stirring call to action that reverberated through the Church: “We are aware that such a program as we propose, if it is seen in its true size and accepted, will mean the death of much that is familiar about our churches now. It will mean radical change in our priorities – even leading us to share with others at least as much as we spend on ourselves. It means the death of old isolations and inherited attitudes. It means a willingness to forego many desirable things, in every church. In substance, what we are really asking is the rebirth

of the Anglican Communion, which means the death of many old things, but – infinitely more – the birth of entirely new relationships. We regard this as the essential task before the churches of the Anglican Communion now.”

Bishop Brown says the Congress and its declaration shaped the direction of the Anglican Communion for decades afterwards and had a major impact on the Canadian church, especially in the area of overseas mission. The Church began to send more people and financial resources to dioceses and provinces in the global south and it participated in the Communion-wide Partners in Mission program. Canadian dioceses formed companionships with other dioceses in the Communion, leading to new ways

of sharing and listening.

The Congress also shaped the ministries of a lot of people, he says. “For some people who were tied to parish ministry or bureaucratic structures in their diocese, it freed them up. The models of ministry that were put forward, with so much emphasis on the Church being out there in the world, gave a lot of people permission to go into other forms of ministry. It was a revelation to many people, to see just how broad and complex the Communion was.”

While the MRIat60 conference is exploring a Congress that convened decades ago, it is also responding to a current call within the Church to have another Congress. At the

most recent Lambeth Conference, held in 2022, the gathered bishops requested that the Communion begin planning for an Anglican Congress to be held in the global south before the next Lambeth Conference (the Lambeth Conference is held every 10 years.)

“Our conference, with its emphasis on mutual responsibility and interdependence, could make an important contribution to planning for the next Anglican Congress,” says Bishop Brown.

For more information about the MRIat60 conference and to register, visit mriat60.wordpress.com. The website includes a video about the 1963 Toronto Anglican Congress.

TO PLACE AN AD CALL 905.833.6200 ext. 22 OR EMAIL ANGLICAN@CHURCHADVERTISING.CA

LOOKING AHEAD

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

Gatherings

FEB. 4 - Choral Evensong for Candlemas at 4 p.m., followed by "Isaac Watts 350." Marking this anniversary year, music director Jeremy Tingle discusses the history of Anglican hymns, focusing on Mr. Watts's paraphrases of the psalms. At St. Olave, Bloor Street and Windermere Road, Toronto, or watch online live or later.

MARCH 3 - Rock Eucharist, 7 p.m., Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St., Bloor Street and Avenue Road.

PRAYER CYCLE

FOR FEBRUARY

1. St. Paul, Newmarket
2. Trinity Church, Aurora
3. Ascension, Don Mills
4. Bishop's Committee on Interfaith Ministry
5. Incarnation
6. The Clergy of the Diocese of Toronto
7. Our Saviour
8. St. Cyprian
9. Sisterhood of St. John the Divine
10. Chinese Ministry in the Diocese of Toronto
11. York Mills Deanery
12. St. George on Yonge
13. St. John, Willowdale
14. Ash Wednesday
15. St. Matthew the Apostle, Oriole
16. St. Theodore of Canterbury
17. Flemingdon Park Ministry
18. Nottawasaga Deanery
19. Family Ministries
20. The Social Justice and Advocacy Committee

IN MOTION

Appointments

- The Rev. Donald Beyers, Incumbent, St. Anne, Toronto, Jan. 1.
- The Rev. Martha Gordon (Diocese of Johannesburg), Interim Priest-in-Charge, Grace Church on-the-Hill, Jan. 1.
- The Rev. Ravi Kalison, Priest-in-Charge, Christ Church, Scarborough, Jan. 1.
- The Rev. Vinaya Dumpala, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. George on Yonge, Jan. 1.
- The Rev. Amirolid Lazard, Incumbent, Nativity, Malvern, Jan. 1.
- The Rev. Canon Gloria Master, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. John the Baptist, Lakefield, Jan. 1.
- The Rev. Dr. Connie Phillipson, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. George, Haliburton, Jan. 1.
- Major (Rtd) the Rev. Canon David Warren, CD, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Paul, Newmarket, Jan. 1.
- The Rev. Canon Ric Miller, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. John, Ida Feb. 1.
- The Rev. Dr. Alvarado Adderley, Incumbent, St. George Memorial, Oshawa, Feb. 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
- Our Saviour
- Grace Church, Scarborough
- St. Mary, Richmond Hill
- St. George, Haliburton

21. All Saints, Collingwood
22. Christ Church-St. Jude, Ivy
23. Good Shepherd, Stayner
24. Holy Trinity, Clearview
25. Freedom Sunday - pray for an end

- St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale
- Christ Church, Bolton
- Trinity-St. Paul, Port Credit

Parish Selection Committee Process

First Phase - (not yet receiving names):

- Christ Church-St. James

Second Phase - (receiving names via Bishop):

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

Third Phase - (no longer receiving names):

- N/A

Ordinations

- The Rev. Doug Smith was ordained a Priest at St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering on Jan. 20.
- The Rev. Abraham Thomas will be ordained a Priest at St. Peter and St. Simon the Apostle on Feb. 2 at 7 p.m.

Retirements

- The Rev. Canon Dr. Byron Gilmore's last Sunday at Christ Church, Brampton will be April 7.
- The Rev. Jeanette Lewis's last Sunday at St. Barnabas, Chester will be April 7.

Celebrations of New Ministry

- The Rev. Siu Chun Leung, Priest-in-Charge, St. Elizabeth, Mississauga, Jan. 28 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Michelle Jones, Incumbent, St. James, Caledon East, Feb. 11 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Jeff Nowers, Priest-in-Charge, Christ the King, March 3 at 4 p.m.

26. Prince of Peace, Wasaga Beach
27. St. George, Allandale
28. St. George, Utopia
29. St. John, Craighurst

Gambling ads, vocations part of province's discussions



BY CANON LAURA WALTON

THE Diocese of Toronto held its Synod in November and elected its delegates to the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario's Synod, which will be held in September 2024 in Sault Ste. Marie. At that time, the province will be saying thank you to some Toronto members who will be finishing their term and welcoming others who will be joining the Synod, along with members from the other six dioceses that comprise the ecclesiastical province. We offer thanks to both these groups of volunteers.

The fall 2023 meeting of the current Provincial Synod took place in Hamilton in the Diocese of Niagara. This in-person, week-long gathering included meetings of the Provincial House of Bishops, the executive officers, Provincial Council, OPCOTE and a follow-up discussion to our vocations conference. Similar themes ran through all the meetings. The discussion around vocations continued, as it is a provincial priority, but there was also an in-depth discussion on gambling ads in Ontario. Archbishop Linda Nicholls, the Primate, asked for a review and discussion of a white paper on gambling ads. (The paper can be found at www.banadsforgambling.ca/resources-white-paper.) The outcome of the review and discussion was that the Ontario House of Bishops supported a request to ban gambling ads in Ontario, with the further support of Provincial Council. The full story can be found in the *Anglican Journal's* January edition. While vocations and the white paper took up significant discussion time, the meetings also addressed budgeting, safe church resources, and continuing social justice work as a province.

The upcoming meetings this spring will highlight similar topics along with the ongoing focus on vocations and formation, which has been the province's central focus throughout this tri-

ennium, along with discussions on how to continue this work in the months and years to come. There will be a focus on incubator parishes that identify and nurture vocations, structural integration, promoting vocations, lifelong learning, mentoring and structures. All discussions are meant to work in conjunction with OPCOTE in assessing the best ways to move this conversation and work forward.

This spring's Provincial Council meeting will also look at potential agenda items for our larger fall meeting, which will take place in Sault Ste. Marie. This week-long September event will once again focus on vocations as well as the business of Synod. We will look toward the next triennium's work along with the election of members to the next Provincial Council, which does the work of the province in between synods. It will be decided who will attend those meetings, as chosen by their diocese. The speaker at the fall gathering will be the Most Rev. Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York in the UK. Along with the regular business of the Provincial Synod, we hope to spend time at the Shingwauk Residential School Centre at the University of Algoma and on the land of the former Shingwauk and Wawanosh Indian Residential Schools in Sault Ste. Marie.

2024 will be a busy time in the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario as it plots its way into a new triennium of work and ministry. The work will continue to build bridges between the seven dioceses and share resources that will enhance ministry and relationships. New members will continue the work that was begun in the last triennium while bringing innovative ideas and gifts to the table. The province is blessed to have volunteers and staff who continue to give of their time and talents, and for that we give thanks.

Canon Laura Walton is the prolocutor of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, which comprises the dioceses of Algoma, Huron, Ontario, Moosonee, Niagara, Ottawa and Toronto.

The Companions Program September 2024 - June 2025

The residential Companions program is an immersive opportunity to experience a contemporary monastic community rooted in the Benedictine tradition. It is open to women aged 21 and up regardless of Christian denomination.

Companions live, work, and pray alongside the sisters, learning from them but also sharing each companion's own gifts with the sisters and their ministries. They will:

- Learn to cultivate peaceful and creative ways of living in a diverse intentional community
- Appreciate silence and solitude as well as community and service for a healthy life
- Put down deep roots of spiritual intimacy with God and each other
- Develop a personal path to ongoing spiritual growth
- Discern individual gifts and vocations.



Application start & end (both programs):
January 1, 2024 - May 15, 2024

Open to women of all Christian expressions, **Companions Online** is an opportunity to become "monastics in the world," living a Benedictine rhythm of prayer, work, study, and recreation. Online Companions learn to develop practices that support and nurture their spiritual life from the comfort of their homes.

They meet regularly for classes and discussion groups, and commit to times of personal prayer at home. They share in book studies, participate in online worship and screen films relevant to spiritual growth and self-understanding. Online Companions also develop spiritual disciplines that follow the liturgical year.



Cost:

Residential Companions: sugg. \$100.00/month.

Companions Online: sugg. \$50.00/month.

If cost is a hindrance, assistance is available.

To learn more about either program, or to apply, email

Shannon Epp, Program Coordinator, at companions@ssjd.ca, or phone St. John's Convent: 416-226-2201, ext. 342

The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine

Looking for an article?

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Visit the new online home of The Anglican at www.theanglican.ca

Animals delight young and old at service

BY DIANA STOREN

WHEN I heard that our church would be having a live nativity on Christmas Eve, I just assumed – incorrectly, as it turned out – that the service would be held outdoors to allow the stable animals to relieve themselves when the urge came upon them.

I was prepared to stand in the drizzly weather we'd been having, assuming – again, incorrectly – that whatever prayers were offered would be very brief. And, of course, I wanted to see what critters would be there.

The hour-long family service started at 4 p.m. inside the church sanctuary. As we entered, my nose detected a definite barnyard odour, which became stronger as we approached the pews near the front.

In the place where the grand piano usually sits lay a straw-covered tarpaulin surrounded by a low wire fence. In this enclosure a multitude of farm animals either explored their new home or busied themselves ignoring the throngs of fascinated churchgoers who, like us, approached the beasts with curiosity and amazement.

The most obvious of these was Striker, a deep brown alpaca who stared imperiously at the humans making a fuss over him. Alpacas are very distant cousins of camels... without the humps. He was joined by Delilah the donkey, two very woolly sheep, a fuzzy miniature cow, what appeared to be a small goat with a light-brown coat, several gorgeous angora rabbits, a host of squealing piglets, a large and boisterous contingent of very small aggressive chickens, and a lone goose. It was crowded!

There was no room for Mary, Joseph or the baby Jesus in a manger. But two women remained with the beasts in the corral, keeping watch as the shepherds did and answering our questions.

As the service began, the Rev. Matthew McMillan asked each parishioner to imitate his or her favourite creature. I love cows, and so I mooed! No one heard me; a cacophony filled the entire building. The prayers and hymns proceeded to a background of various snorts, clucks, honks and other unchurch-like noises. Maybe the beasts were merely echoing what they had just



A cow, an alpaca, sheep, a goat and a donkey make themselves at home inside St. Peter, Cobourg during a Christmas Eve service. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ST. PETER, COBOURG

heard from us!

Several times Striker buried his head in the straw, emerging with his face covered in yellowish wisps. He chewed continually during worship, not caring a whit about the effect he was having on the parishioners. Delilah stood quietly, deep in thought.

At one pivotal moment, Father Matt left his pulpit and approached the pen. Lifting his robes, he climbed over the barrier. I thought he was going to bless the flock, but he came out with Delilah's lead in his hand,

encouraging her to walk down the aisle toward the back of the church. She was not a willing participant, but she made the best of the situation. A certain irony existed in this stroll. In the bible, we hear of a donkey carrying Mary, who was with child. Apparently Delilah was also pregnant!

When he is not in church, Striker shares a farm paddock with Delilah. He might have been concerned about his friend. Or perhaps the gate in the small fence had been accidentally

left open. For whatever reason, Striker made a quick and unexpected exit from his compound. The man seated in front of me reacted with haste, sticking out his arm and stopping the alpaca in his tracks.

One of the handlers quickly arrived to rein in the runaway, and things proceeded almost as planned. The excited children were invited to meet both Delilah and interloper Striker. Squealing with delight, the kids were keen to pat the animals but had to be reminded that alpacas

don't like to be touched on the face or head – neck and shoulder rubs are quite acceptable.

Once the wanderers were back in their pen, candles were lit and we all sang "Silent Night."

I wonder if the participants had any idea that they had taken part in an historic moment. St. Francis is credited with setting up the very first nativity scene exactly 800 years ago, on Christmas Eve 1223.

Diana Storen is a member of St. Peter, Cobourg.