

Choir brings music to school

Anglicans stand up for Earth



New canons installed

# The Anglican

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF TORONTO

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DECEMBER, 2009

## New church consecrated

Building a leader in green technology

BY STUART MANN

**FOR** Kristy Weenen and St. Thomas, Brooklin, it was a new beginning.

Ms. Weenen, 17, was baptized during the consecration service for St. Thomas, Brooklin's new worship space.

"It was like I was being baptized along with the church," said Ms. Weenen afterwards. "I was being welcomed into the church, and at the same time I was welcoming the church into its new life. It was an amazing experience."

About 400 people, including local MP Jim Flaherty, the federal finance minister, packed the new church on Nov. 1 for the consecration service, which began with the traditional knock on the door by Bishop Linda Nicholls, the area bishop of Trent-Durham.

During the course of the service, which included contemporary and traditional music, Bishop Nicholls anointed the walls and the altar, and dedicated the church's unique cross-shaped font and the lectern. In a moment rich with tradition and symbolism, the altar was vested, the vessels were placed upon it and the candles were lit.

"It was a privilege and a thrill to do that because there will probably be very few occasions in my episcopate for me to consecrate a church," said Bishop Nicholls. "We don't build a lot of new churches, so to do it in such a wonderful space that has so many possibilities for creativity and liturgy was a delight."

In addition to being the diocese's newest church building, St. Thomas is also the most environmentally friendly. It is the first church in the diocese to be heated and cooled using geothermal

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Bishop Linda Nicholls baptizes Kristy Weenen, 17, in St. Thomas, Brooklin's cross-shaped font as the Rev. David Harrison, incumbent, looks on. 'It was like I was being baptized along with the church,' said Ms. Weenen afterwards. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

## I plan to bask in its simplicity

### CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

BY BISHOP GEORGE ELLIOTT

**T**he Virgin Mary had a baby boy, and they gave him the name of Jesus."

In a nutshell, the words of this carol from the West Indies capture the essence of what our Christmas celebrations are all about. A baby boy was born. His mother, Mary, was a virgin, married to a man named Joseph. On a winter's night in the small town of Bethlehem, this child was given the name Jesus.

It could not be much simpler, yet wrapped in these events is the mystery of the Incarnation,

God breaking into the midst of our humanity and speaking to us through a son. Let me see if I can peel back some of the layers.

On the surface, it is an ordinary birth; countless numbers had occurred before it and since. Having witnessed the birth of my own two children, I know it is an amazing moment. After nine months of gestation, a new human being emerges into this world and takes a first breath. In my mind it is a miraculous event. It was no different with Jesus.

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### THE Archbishop's Levee 2010

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# Family reunited after 13 years

## Small church does big job for refugees

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

A small parish has made a huge difference in the lives of seven people through perseverance, prayer, hope and determination.

In 1999, Moses Duku, a 20-year-old Sudanese refugee, arrived in Toronto, sponsored by his brother. Three years later, when he was working as the sexton at Holy Trinity, Guildwood, the parishioners learned about the terrible circumstances of his life.

When he was 13, Moses and his father were arrested on false accusations of helping the rebels during Sudan's civil war. They escaped and lived in refugee camps.

In 1995, Moses met and married

Regina, with whom he had a daughter. However, circumstances would separate them for the next 13 years. When Moses came to Canada, his wife was looking after his four younger brothers and his daughter, Roba, in a refugee camp in northwestern Kenya.

When the parishioners at Holy Trinity heard Moses' story, they decided to reunite him with his family. Little did they realize that it would take eight long years before they achieved their goal.

A big part of the problem was the Canadian High Commission in Nairobi, says the Rev. Stephen Kirkegaard, incumbent. It disputed that Emmanuel, Joseph, Santino and Raphael were Moses' brothers,

or that Roba was his daughter.

To prove biological kinship, Moses had to undergo a \$3,000 DNA test. (This is the same high commission that prevented Canadian Suaad Hagi Mohamud from returning to Canada to her 12-year-old son because, they said, she did not look like her passport picture.)

Even after Nairobi received the DNA results, more years passed, says parishioner Sharon Trivers, who has spent eight years working on the family's reunification. "When we started in 2002, we were told they would be here very soon," she says. "It became two years and then four years, and Nairobi just kept putting up roadblocks."

Along the way, the parishioners sought help from their local Member of Parliament, John McKay. They also received assistance in approaching Nairobi from the Anglican United Refugee Alliance.

Finally, last December, Em-



The Rev. Stephen Kirkegaard joins Moses Duku, third from right, and his family during their reunion at Holy Trinity, Guildwood.

manuel and Raphael arrived in Toronto. To the joy of Moses and the congregation, reunification was completed in July with the arrival of Regina and Roba, 13, along with Joseph and Santino.

The three youngest brothers are now in high school and have joined the West Rouge All Star soccer club, while Emmanuel has a part-time job and is studying English. Roba is in Grade 8, Moses is working full time and Regina is enrolled in a language class.

Holy Trinity has been raising funds for the family since 2002 and had \$30,000 put by when the first brothers arrived. The parish is providing an apartment, groceries, clothing, school costs and TTC tickets. Now, it needs to raise another \$65,000 to assist the family through their first two years in Canada.

A major expenditure, says Mr. Kirkegaard, has been dental bills – none of the family had ever visited a dentist. As well, the parish must pay the \$11,000 it costs to bring the family to Canada.

To help raise the funds, the parish and the CBC are staging a reading of Dickens' A Christmas Carol at 3 p.m. on Dec. 12 at Scarborough Bluffs United Church. Further information can be obtained from Holy Trinity at 416-261-9503.

Mr. Kirkegaard says the congregation's years of prayers for the Duku family have been answered.

*The Christmas Story*

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# Choir brings music to public school

## Students invited to join

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

**ST.** Paul, L'Amoreaux, is bringing choral music to a Toronto public school.

The church's popular children's choir is practising after classes at Highland Heights Junior Public School, and inviting the students to join in.

"We're thrilled," says the Rev. Canon Dr. Dean Mercer, incumbent of St. Paul's. "It's an outstanding opportunity to answer one of our earlier objectives, to offer fine musical training and opportunities for performance for our choir, with every attempt to serve those whose means may be spare."

The nearby school is located in one of Toronto's "critical needs" areas and does not have a formal music program. Canon Mercer hopes the presence of the choir in the school will attract new choristers and give students an exposure to great music.

He said having the choir practice in the school during the week has a couple of other advantages. It means that the students who want to join the choir do not have to be transported to the church, and it gives parents time to build up a measure of trust.

In 2005, Canon Mercer decided to establish a children's choir that was based on the Regent Park School of Music model, which offers an affordable music program for kids. Today, the choir has 22 members, aged eight to 16, half of them from the parish and half



Neema Bickersteth, left, rehearses with St. Paul, L'Amoreaux's children's choir at Highland Heights Junior Public School in Toronto. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

from the community. They work under the tutelage of music director David McCartney and assistant music director Neema Bickersteth, an opera singer and voice instructor.

The choir sings at the church's Sunday worship services. Four to six times a year, they hold concerts, half of them in the church, where they sing choral music, and half in community settings such as seniors' residences, where they sing a variety of show tunes.

St. Paul's promotes the choir through a banner outside the church and flyers to neighbourhood schools, but it also uses the carrot of a spring trip to whet kids' interest. The expeditions, which take place over a long weekend during Spring Break, have taken the kids to sing in churches in Quebec City and Montreal. This year they appeared in concert at St. Bartholomew's Church on Park Avenue, New York, where they sang with that church's children's

choir before 500 people.

Holding choir practices at Highland Heights Junior Public School

came about because of Canon Mercer's friendship with school board trustee Soo Wong. Last year, wanting to get the word out to kids in the community that they were welcome to join the choir, Canon Mercer invited Ms. Wong to share her advice at a choir planning meeting.

She suggested that St. Paul's conduct choir practice as an after-hours program in local schools where there was a lack of musical resources. On weekends, the regular choir practice would take place in the church and the school kids would be welcome to attend.

After discussions with the local superintendent and principal, it was agreed that the choir would practice at Highland Heights Junior Public School, starting in October.

The church is reaching out to the community through music in other ways. This summer, for the first time, the church ran a musical theatre summer camp under the direction of Carlynn Reed, coordinator of the church's music program. There were 25 kids in the program, and well over half were from the community. The program ran half-days from Monday to Friday in the church hall. Now the church is contemplating conducting a similar theatre or music camp next year. It is mulling over an offer to use of the educational facility on Centre Island.

# 2,429 come back to church

BY STUART MANN

**THE** early returns are in for Back to Church Sunday, and they're stunning: 2,429 newcomers came to Anglican churches in the Diocese of Toronto on Sept. 27.

Nearly 80 per cent of all the churches in the diocese took part in the event, which saw regular church-goers ask their friends and family members back to church.

Those numbers could go even higher as four deaneries have yet to report.

"This is beyond our wildest predictions," says Bishop Philip Poole, who headed up efforts in the diocese. "It's thrilling to see that many people accepting our invitation."

He says the bishops will ask regional deans in December to find out from their parish priests how many of those newcomers have remained in their churches. "We have some early indications that people have been staying," he says.

The Rev. Ruth Knapp, incumbent of Christ Church, Campbellford, says that of the approximately 30

guests who came to her church, about half are still attending.

The number of newcomers per church on Sept. 27 ranged from one to 100. Many churches reported having 10 or more. In one case, a new family came to church, and then brought another family with them the following Sunday.

To determine the number of newcomers, regional deans asked their parish priests if they participated in Back to Church Sunday and, if so, how many visitors came. The total reported as of Nov. 5 was 2,429.

Bishop Poole said the numbers show that Anglicans want to share their faith with others – and can do it. "Back to Church Sunday has given us permission to talk about our faith. It shows that Anglicans are excited about where their church is going, both at the local, area and diocesan level."

He says the College of Bishops is committed to Back to Church Sunday for the next five years. The next one will be held on Sept. 26, 2010.

The diocese has 211 parishes which contain 253 congregations. It has 20 deaneries.

Back to Church Sunday started in the U.K. in 2004 and has spread to thousands of churches in 15 countries around the world. The total worldwide figures for 2009 will be published when they are available.



Greeters at St. Hilary, Cooksville, wear red t-shirts on Back to Church Sunday.

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# What's so bad about pain?

BY THE REV. W. TAY MOSS

"You have to ask yourself," said the midwife, "What's so frightening about pain?" Our birthing class — a half-dozen expectant first-time parents — giggled. "No, really," said the midwife earnestly. "What's so bad about pain? Let's talk about this."

It was our first session, and it was unsurprising that the number one question on everybody's mind was, "How bad is it going to be? What kind of pain medication am I going to need to get through it?" The midwife explained that there are two diametrically opposed opinions among childbirth educators: those who believe that talking about pain at all will cause women to experience it more intensely, and those who believe that it is possible to prepare oneself.

Luckily, I will never have to experience the pain of childbirth. However, I am told that it is usually the most painful thing a woman will ever experience. One priest and mother friend of mine said that it was like squeezing a pineapple through your left nostril. Yikes.

We live in a culture that maintains the myth that pain should (and can) be avoided. We anesthetize ourselves against all kinds of experiences of hardship using all manner of product and technique. For example, when someone comes for pastoral care, the assumption is that the pastor will "comfort" them. The pastor is supposed to soothe the sin-sick soul with the balm of Gilead. People

expect that prayer will make them feel less pain, not more. But perhaps this is not always a reasonable or healthy assumption.

My spiritual director was on a meditation retreat when he got a headache during a sit. After the meditation time, he shared that he found it worthwhile to examine the sensation of pain during his meditation. Many in the group thought this was masochistic madness, but he maintained his position: "Pain is a perfectly good sensation." For him, meditation wasn't about escaping reality, but embracing it. That kind of intra-psychic hospitality may make us uncomfortable, but it also challenges us with possible paths for healing and transformation.

"The most important thing to remember about pain in childbirth," our midwife told us, "is that nothing is actually getting damaged. Nothing is wrong. Pain is just part of the process." Indeed, pain seems to serve some functions in childbirth. It marshals the mother's internal resources, as well as the community's resources, to deal with the event. It gets our attention and motivates change. Research has shown that women who labour without drugs give birth faster.

I've noticed a fair amount of pain being felt in church-land these days: historic decline, closing parishes, eviscerated budgets, disputes about doctrine, schisms—take your pick. Bishops talk about "pruning for growth." I've never heard a tree scream, but I have heard parishioners! Truth is, new life hurts. Yet every mother I've asked about

pain tells me the same thing, "It's worth it." Creation always is.

Once upon a time, a stained glass artist named Stephen Bélanger-Taylor gathered up the pieces of broken glass left over from a fire at my church. He gathered up broken pieces of a broken church and reassembled them into a witness in light and colour of God's transforming grace. Our East window is a testament to how the people of my parish were able to move through the pain of a broken church to build a new thing. As with our Lord's resurrected body, the wounds were still there, but they had been made glorious. It was painful—a substantial portion of the congregation left and never came back—but it was worth it.

Building a church for the future will require a similar exercise—gathering up the fragments of a broken church like so many pieces of shattered stained glass. One thinks of the disciples gathering the fragments of fish and bread after the miraculous feeding of the crowd. Twelve baskets. Abundance, sure, but broken abundance. Unlike the bread, the metaphorical pieces of glass cannot be gathered without some pain. The church we grew up with is full of sharp edges.

That's life. Pain and beauty and creation, baby! So we have to ask ourselves: "What's so frightening about pain?"

*The Rev. W. Tay Moss is the incumbent of Church of the Messiah, Toronto.*



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

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# A year of heartbreak and joy

BY AMIT PARASAR

I'll highly recommend the spiritual works of C. S. Lewis to just about anybody. From his brilliant writings I've learned what Christ means when he calls us to die to ourselves. We must forsake our selfish natures, which are the product of the cardinal sin — pride. We must forget ourselves and focus entirely on loving God and others. Only then will we realize the goodness of our true selves as the likeness of the Creator's goodness, whose image we are made in.

To do this we must learn humility, as it is the cardinal virtue and the antitoxin for pride. To be humble before God is to love like him, something that we need his help to learn to do. It means killing our pride and dying to ourselves, a process requiring a sort of spiritual surgery that we should expect to be as painful as it sounds.

When I asked God to help me do away with my pride this year, I knew that I was in for a great deal of pain that I couldn't fully anticipate. I knew, though, that the pain was necessary for God to teach me the lessons I had to learn.

This year I experienced unprecedented heartbreak. Through it, God showed me the pain he feels when he loves us so much and we don't love him back. In watching my loved ones suffer through emotional and physical anguish, God taught me how he feels when he wants to take our suffering from us, but can't because it's a consequence of the choices we make. In the death of a seven-month-old child, God showed me the value of his gift of life, my error in treating it as cavalierly as I have, and the pain he felt in watching me do so.

Yet despite this suffering and sometimes through it, God in his infinite wisdom also blessed me with great joys. A good man was added to my family when my sister got married this summer. I was able to participate in yet another life-altering mission trip to Bolivia, where I made many new friends and learned many important lessons. This year, I feel that I was able to see more of my loved ones than I ever have before. Even the tragic death of a child brought about love and togetherness that I had never before witnessed.

I'm sure many people can relate to the suffering that I experienced this year. The economic crisis certainly ensured enough suf-

fering to go around. Suffering is a horrible thing, but it has great value because it can help us better appreciate our blessings.

If you've been blessed with a family, then enjoy this Christmas season with them to the fullest. If you're spending this time alone, reflect and count your blessings. I'm sure you'll think of a few.

One blessing that Christmas time should remind you of is the gift of God's only son who suffered far more than any of us have. Jesus set the greatest example of the cardinal virtue for us by humbling himself more than any of us ever could, taking the punishment humanity deserved and dying at the hands of the very sinful creatures that he loves and came to save. In times of suffering, we often struggle to think of the blessings in our lives, but we can never forget that one. Celebrate Jesus' birthday by following his example of love, humility and generosity towards others. Be like Christ, because that is the best way to have a Merry Christmas.

*Amit Parasar is a member of St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering.*

# I tried God as a last resort

BY CATHERINE CLOUGH

I don't know when my healing journey began. Perhaps it was during my last visit to Wellesley Hospital in Toronto, when, in a moment, everything crystallized and I decided to stay on my anti-psychotic medication. Perhaps it was my decision to accept a job in a bookstore, after turning down

previous job offers because I wasn't ready to enter the workforce and face the real world. Courage played a role in both decisions. Perhaps what had a lasting effect was the decision to walk through the doors of St. Paul, Bloor Street, on a Sunday morning in the fall of 1991.

I was an unruly adolescent, with social problems, some of which can be related to the ab-

sence of a proper diagnosis. My parents thought I would "grow up and grow out of it." I was finally diagnosed with schizophrenia in my late twenties. Schizophrenia is a mental illness that typically surfaces in early adulthood. The hallucinations that may accompany the illness are treated with anti-psychotic medication that is known to work on some patients, but not all. Be-

cause of the uncomfortable side effects of the medication, some patients fail to take it, and, as a result, continue to experience hallucinations. After bouts of homelessness, false starts in the workplace, and hospitalizations, I tried God as a last resort and was able to stay on my medications and hold down a job.

I think that the healing of the

Continued on Page 8

# There is another way

BY MARIE GREEN

With the introduction of Bill C-14, the Harper government proves once again that it is out of touch with the social landscape of Canada's inner cities, where factors such as poverty and family disintegration are a breeding ground for crime. With this new legislation, an entire generation of young people could be lost through long-term jail sentences. Meanwhile, the alternatives to this legislation, such as early intervention and preventative measures, remain on the road less travelled.

Bill C-14 is the government's "get tough" bill on organized crime. The proposed amendment to the *Criminal Code* means that anyone involved in organized crime who commits murder will automatically be charged with first-degree murder. (The RCMP says that some youth gangs are linked to organized crime.) In addition, three new laws will establish minimum sentences for drive-by and other public shootings while ensuring stricter punishment for assaulting a police officer.

The causes of criminal activity among young people are numerous and complicated, but the solutions are simple and cost a lot less than incarceration.

One solution is embodied in after-school programs like the Downsview Youth Covenant's Homework Club. For more than 10 years, this outreach program at St. Stephen, Downsview, has served as an alternative to the streets and malls during those critical hours after school when most crime by youth takes place.

This outreach ministry is based on the premise that children who are provided with a safe place after school, and who are exposed to positive role models, are less likely to become involved in gangs, drop out of school or end up in poverty in adulthood. The children are exposed to programs such as the National Society of Black Engineers, an organization that is focused on increasing the number of black engineering professionals. The children interact with older students who excel in science, technology and math.

The Downsview Youth Covenant also operates camps during March Break and the summer to help keep children busy when school is out. "On school days, 3 to 6 p.m. are the peak hours for teens to commit crimes, be in



Students do their homework at the Downsview Youth Covenant's Homework Club. For more than 10 years, the club has served as an alternative to the streets and malls after school.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

or cause car crashes, be victims of crime, and smoke, drink or use drugs," writes David Kass of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, an organization dedicated to preventing crime.

There is strong evidence to support the claim that after-school programs help keep youth out of trouble. Grassroots programs such as the Downsview Youth Covenant are essential in neighbourhoods where many parents cannot afford to pay for extracurricular activities such as sports or music lessons.

The Centre for Research on Youth at Risk estimates that it costs \$100,000 per year to incarcerate a young offender in Canada. By contrast, the Downsview Youth Covenant can provide after-school programming for a child for as little as \$1,500 per year. Yet the Conservative government has opted time and time again to invest large sums of taxpayers' money in building institutions for locking up

young offenders and creating legislation that makes no provision for alternative measures.

We can debate all the other factors that lead to youth involvement in crime — such as family life, racial oppression, a less than perfect education system, mental health issues — but we know that incarceration and tougher sentences do not deter their involvement. Instead, we need to look at providing support to proven solutions.

Providing a safe and nurturing place in the hours after school is an easy and affordable way to prevent youth from becoming involved in criminal behaviour. The social return on investing in preventative measures far outweighs the social return on investment in jails.

Marie Green is the youth worker at St. Stephen, Downsview.

## EDITOR'S CORNER

BY STUART MANN

## Praying on Main Street

Public displays of faith have always made me slightly queasy and fearful. Those things that feel right and normal in a church often feel awkward and even alien outside of it.

Which is why I approached Alison Wooding's time atop a column in Trafalgar Square, London, with great trepidation.

Alison is a Church Army evangelist in the UK. She was one of thousands of Britons who won a place in artist Antony Gormley's Fourth Plinth, an outdoor art installation. For exactly one hour, each individual could occupy the top of a seven-metre-high column in the city's famous square. They could do almost anything they wanted — sing, sleep, juggle, tell jokes, hang out. Alison decided to pray.

I tuned in to the website to watch, expecting the worst. My fears were soon realized. As the crane dropped off Alison atop her perch, she fumbled with her sign — [www.makejesusfamous.org.uk](http://www.makejesusfamous.org.uk) — and spread out a small blanket to kneel on, all the while checking that her cell phone was turned off and making heartfelt but somewhat embarrassing comments about her daughter in France.

The small crowd of curiosity-seekers standing at the base of the column seemed both puzzled and irritated. It was very early in the morning, still dark, and they wanted some sort of show for their dedication.

Finally, Alison put aside her cell phone and personal nic-knacks. She made herself comfortable on a small stool and knelt down to pray. She bent her head slightly and closed her eyes.

I watched, waiting for something to happen. The crowd turned restless. "Boring!" shouted a young man. Alison smiled but otherwise didn't move. Serenity seemed to flow out of her.

The minutes ticked by. I stared, transfixed. I had never seen anyone look so vulnerable and powerful at the same time. The rowdies at the base of the column seemed to feel the same way. They became quiet.

My skepticism turned to fascination and then admiration. Alison was very courageous. The sight of her — still, calm and deeply connected with God — was inspiring. She gave me a jolt of faith I hadn't felt in a long time.

So often Anglicans show our faith in public only through good works on behalf of the poor, while we keep our worship to ourselves or our churches. Perhaps it's time to rethink that a bit.

# A hero comes home

BY DOUG WILLOUGHBY

While driving home from Oshawa, I noticed an all-too-familiar sight. The majority of overpasses were beginning to fill up with people waving Canadian flags and the Fleur-de-lis. They were there to welcome home our latest hero, Pte. Patrick Lormand, killed in Afghanistan.

I quickened my pace. I wanted to get home to Pickering to join the gathering throngs on the bridges before the procession passed by. For months I had watched news reports about those who had gathered on the bridges to pay their respects to our fallen heroes. I had wanted to join these silent groups but something else had always come up; the tribute had passed before I realized I had missed an opportunity to pay my respects to someone I did not know but was very grateful for.

As these thoughts flashed through my mind, I thought of another hero who has gone home. A week earlier, I attended a memorial service at St. Barnabas, Peterborough, for David Wyldes. David wasn't a

member of St. Barnabas for very long. It was only when his fiancée arrived in Canada and wanted to connect with a local parish that they began to attend the church. They were welcomed with open arms and the wedding took place this past June.

David was a long-term survivor of HIV/AIDS, and he was not about to sit around and feel sorry for himself. In spite of the fact that he was confined to a wheelchair, he knew he could contribute in a very positive way. He had knowledge of the virus — how it is contracted, how it can be avoided — and he had a computer. He began the PWA (Positive With AIDS) Info Center and started counseling people in the hardest-hit region of the pandemic, sub-Saharan Africa. It was through this on-line help center that David began communicating with Pam. This spring, Pam came to Canada not as a visitor, but to become David's wife. David was very open about his HIV status, as well as the fact that he was a client of the Peterborough AIDS Resource Network.

People began arriving at St. Barnabas an hour before the memorial service. There

were David's friends from the Peterborough AIDS Resource Network and also his friends from the congregation. My mind wandered to the many HIV-positive people I had met who were not welcomed in their own churches. Many things have changed in the church since the onslaught of HIV, but much more needs to be done. This memorial service was like a breath of fresh air.

The organist began to play and the choir took its place. My heartfelt and sincere thanks went out to the Rev. Eugene Berlenbach for his thoughtful, caring approach to the service. Afterwards, the congregation provided a luncheon for all those who had travelled to pay their respects to their hero.

Doug Willoughby is a pastoral associate at St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering. He also runs an HIV/AIDS ministry at the church. St. Paul's World AIDS Day Service will be held on Dec. 1 at 7:30 pm. The church is located at 882 Kingston Rd., Pickering. All are welcome.



Members of St. Elizabeth, Mississauga, enjoy the buffet.



Bishop Philip Poole, left, shares a moment with the Rev. Canon Harold Percy, Brother Reginald Crenshaw, OHC, and the Rev. Canon Bill Kibblewhite. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

# Dinner draws large crowd

## York-Credit Valley hosts Bishop's Company fundraiser

BY STUART MANN

The first Bishop's Company Dinner to be held in York-Credit Valley was a relaxed affair that drew a capacity crowd of 250 clergy and lay members.

The event, held in Mississauga on Oct. 21, raised \$22,000 for the bishop's discretionary fund. The fund helps clergy and their families with emergency needs and pays for initiatives that are important to the archbishop but are not provided for in the diocese's budget.

The evening began with a rousing version of "Happy Birthday" for a member of St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale's Steel Pan Band, which entertained the gathering before dinner. Bishop Philip Poole, the area bishop of York-Credit Valley, also congratulated

Archbishop Colin Johnson on his recent election as Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario.

"We're really excited and proud of your election," he said, followed by a hearty round of applause for Archbishop Johnson, who attended the dinner.

Bishop Poole announced that almost half of the parishes in York-Credit Valley had purchased tickets for the dinner. Also among the diners were staff from The Dam (an outreach ministry for youth at risk in Mississauga), The Bridge (an outreach ministry for inmates) and the Downsview Youth Covenant, which runs after-school programs for children in the parish of St. Stephen, Downsview. All three ministries are financially supported by FaithWorks.

Archbishop Johnson said it is

exciting to be a member of the Diocese of Toronto and to be an Anglican. "It's wonderful to be in such a lively and engaging diocese and church, where we have women priests, where we can have lively debate in a spirit of openness, and where there is such a wonderful sense of humour."

The Rev. Canon Jennifer Reid, who was the evening's Master of Ceremonies, said the dinner was an important event. "There are few chances for us to gather together and to celebrate the work of the clergy," she said. Ken Hugessen, who was attending his first dinner as chair of the Bishop's Company, agreed, saying, "We really try to give something back to clergy and their families, and this is a great opportunity to do that." He said the Bishop's Company had raised \$1.5 million since its inception. The evening's main sponsor was Mr. Hugessen's firm, Hugessen Consulting, Toronto.

Judy Maddren, former host of CBC Radio's World Report, was the evening's guest speaker and her theme was "Every Life is Re-



Judy Maddren, the former host of CBC Radio's World Report, tells the audience that every life is remarkable.

markable." She is now one of the directors of Soundportraits, a company that makes one-hour CD recordings of a person's life stories or an important chapter in their life.

"I've discovered that every life is remarkable," said Ms. Maddren. "Each one of us needs courage and faith and love to navigate the tough times of our days."

She said it is important for people to learn to listen to each other. "Listening is one of the greatest gifts clergy give to us, and it is a gift we can give to each other. If you listen, you'll learn something remarkable. It gives our lives meaning."

Married to the Rev. Canon Timothy Elliott, a retired priest of the diocese, she recounted what it was like to be a clergy spouse. Her comments drew laughter and applause from the crowd. However, she ended by saying, "It was a wonderful time and I learned a lot. We're extremely rich for that experience."

As at previous dinners, there was a silent auction with many interesting items, including a Detroit Red Wings hockey sweater signed by Scotty Bowman, a hand-made stained glass picture, a day at a spa and tickets to the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and a Toronto Maple Leafs game. The silent auction raised \$4,735.

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**DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS JANUARY 15TH 2010.**

# Parishes take action on environment

Anglicans try to reawaken 'responsibility for the Earth'

BY CAROLYN PURDEN

**THOUSANDS** of people marked the International Day of Climate Action on Parliament Hill on Oct. 24, including a busload of young people from the Peterborough area. Christian Harvey, the youth worker at St. John the Evangelist, Peterborough, organized the trip, he says, because of the need to speak up about climate change and also because it is an issue that interests youth. "It's something they want to have a voice in, but often they feel that what they have to say isn't represented by politicians."

The bus left on Friday and the students bedded down at St. John's church in Ottawa. The next morning, they created placards and t-shirts, then walked through the rain to Parliament Hill, where they listened to speeches.

The gathering wasn't all serious. Oxfam started a game of "keep up the beach ball" with a six-foot-wide beach ball, and Mr. Harvey's group inspired a dance party with their drums and other percussion instruments. "Climate change is a serious issue, but we also wanted to keep things positive and fun and not militant and angry," he says.

After the rally, the group returned to the Ottawa church and held a candlelit service where each person talked about how they would limit their carbon footprint. Mr. Harvey says the students came home feeling that they had done something positive. "For many, it was their first political rally, which is why I was pretty dedicated to making sure it was informative, fun and positive," he says. "They said it set the bar pretty high for future rallies."

St. Matthew, Islington, and several other churches in the diocese also marked the International Day of Climate Action, ringing their bells 350 times. The number represented the goal of stabilizing the amount of carbon dioxide in the air we breathe at 350 parts per million (it is currently 387 parts per million).

"I'm trying to reawaken in the congregation global responsibility for the Earth," explains the Rev.

Stephen Drakeford, incumbent of St. Matthew's. There was a lot of anxiety among parishioners, who were concerned that the bells would disturb people. But the church communicated its intentions to its closest neighbours and there were no complaints. On Oct. 24, bell-ringer Brian Currell started ringing the bell at 10:30 a.m. and finished 17 1/2 minutes later.

It was a short but symbolic act, Mr. Drakeford says. "In the past, church bells called people to pray. Today, we're using the church bells in a different way, but asking for the same thing—to pray for the Earth and to do something about the Earth."

The Rev. Lance Dixon, team leader of the Jeremiah Community, also believes the church should be involved in environmental issues. A major neighbourhood concern, he says, has been a proposal to increase the number of diesel GO trains in the Georgetown corridor. Residents, believing this to be a health risk and noise issue, have been calling for electrification of the trains.

Mr. Dixon felt this was a matter of social justice and joined the local organizing committee protesting the proposal. "It was important that churches have a voice in this, especially local parishes" he says. To raise public awareness, Mr. Dixon organized a march and rally of about 1,000 people on Sept. 26. The march began at the Weston GO station and, gathering people along the way, ended at a park in the Roncesvalles neighbourhood. "We sent a high profile message to government that all neighbourhoods were concerned," Mr. Dixon says.

Ultimately, the government decided to proceed with the diesel trains but, responding to neighbourhood concerns, imposed strict conditions. Mr. Dixon says that by becoming involved in neighbourhood concerns, his church is being missional. He explains: "It means to love the world so much that we're willing to let their concerns be ours."



The Rev. Lance Dixon and Rob Shearer of the Jeremiah Community (holding placards, centre), protest against a plan by GO Transit to add more diesel trains to the Georgetown corridor. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON



Emily Coombes, 16, from St. John the Evangelist, Peterborough, makes a statement on Parliament Hill.



Brian Currell, left, the Rev. Stephen Drakeford and Jean Smith ring the bells 350 times at St. Matthew, Islington, on International Day of Climate Action. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON



Members of St. Paul, Uxbridge, pose with their banner in front of the church after ringing the church bell 350 times on International Day of Climate Action. PHOTO BY BRUCE BEVERIDGE

## Conversations with the Culture

A new blog featuring commentary by clergy and lay writers on contemporary issues and events.

[www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca)



The Rev. Canon Donald Butler of Church of the Nativity, Toronto, receives a hug after the service.



New canons join Dean Douglas Stoute, Archbishop Colin Johnson, Bishop Philip Poole and Archdeacon Peter Fenty (fourth from right) after their installation at St. James Cathedral on Sept. 13. From left: the Rev. Canon Anne Moore, the Rev. Canon Dr. Duke Vipperman, the Rev. Canon Maylanne Maybee, the Rev. Canon Jennifer Reid, the Rev. Canon Allan Budzin, Canon Phyllis Creighton, the Rev. Canon Barbara Hammond, the Rev. Canon Andrew Asbil, the Rev. Canon Ann Smith, the Rev. Canon Stephen Peake, the Rev. Canon Dr. Dean Mercer, the Rev. Canon Donald Butler. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



The Rev. Canon Andrew Asbil of Church of the Redeemer, Toronto, is congratulated by Ellen Marie Masuda, left, and Johanna Lavergne.

# I plan to bask in its simplicity

Continued from Page 1

However, as we know, there was more to this particular birth than meets the eye. First of all, Mary is a virgin, an unmarried woman. The angel of God appears to her and calls her chosen, to be the one in whom God will bring to life a child who is both fully God and fully human.

Joseph at the time was betrothed to Mary. In another appearance by the angel, he was told that everything would be all right: God was acting. Like Mary, all Joseph needed to do was trust God.

All this complicates what would have developed into another ordinary marriage and, all going well, an ordinary birth.

There has been lots of speculation about this virgin birth over the centuries. It is in our creeds, after all. Many have trouble with this precept of our faith. Some claim it is part of the myth that arose around the person of Jesus, claimed in part to fulfill Old Testament prophecy and to legitimize Jesus' ministry. Others simply reject the possibility, seeing Jesus as a special person, a prophet like no other, but certainly not the Son of God. In my mind, I find it more than plausible that God could fertilize an egg in Mary's womb. After all, this is the God who brought into being all that is in the universe.

The next layer in the Christmas story is our understanding, or lack thereof, of who Jesus is. Is he a human? Is he God? Where do you draw the line? In the early centuries of the Christian era, there was great debate about just

this question. Ecumenical councils of bishops and theologians debated this for months. One group understood Jesus to be a human person, blessed with special gifts, but not God. On the other hand, there were others who understood Jesus to be fully God who was simply living in the empty shell of a human being, a kind of Superman.

What was the church to believe? In the end, said the words of the Nicene Creed, "he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man." The Athanasius Creed, on page 695 of the Book of Common Prayer, made it absolutely clear. It states

that Jesus was "perfect God; perfect Man; of reasoning soul and human flesh subsisting."

Frankly, the idea of Jesus being either just a human being or just God does not appeal to me at all. What the first lacks in a godly presence, the latter lacks in its absence of our humanity. I believe that little child, whose first cries rang out in a stable in Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago, was fully God and fully human. His humanity allowed him to enter fully into the experience of life – life as you and I experience it with all its ups and downs. I can relate to that Jesus because he has already walked where you and I walk.

His being God made it possible for God to break into the midst of our common humanity. Jesus' brief journey through life opened the door for God's love to touch us in ways that before had not been possible. As Jesus walked to Calvary's hill, laying down his life, we see on that cross the ultimate expression of God's love for us. It would make no sense to me if Jesus were not fully human and not fully God at that moment of death.

Yet in the midst of all the arguments and debate, the truth still stands for me. The Virgin Mary did indeed give birth to a baby boy, and they gave him the name of Jesus. I hope to stop right there on Christmas morning and bask in the simplicity of it all, opening my heart again to the gift God offers me and all of humankind in this holy child, Jesus, the son of Mary, the son of God.

*Bishop George Elliott is the area bishop of York-Simcoe. He was writing on behalf of the College of Bishops.*

# I tried God as a last resort

Continued from Page 4

mind is greatly inhibited without some acknowledgment of the spiritual component, and that a by-product of faith, even a fledgling faith, can be emotional and psychological healing. My decisions to stay on my medication, return to the workplace and return to church all came about the same time. I believe the timing of these decisions was not entirely coincidental, but the work of the Holy Spirit in answer to my own prayers and the prayers of others around me. My 10 years at St. Paul's introduced me to prayer, Bible reading, fellowship and Christian authors. Life still has its challenges and some of the problems still persist, but I don't think I would be here without awareness of the presence and knowledge of God.

*Catherine Clough is a member of St. Peter, Cobourg.*

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## Church of St. Philip the Apostle

201 Caribou Road, Toronto  
 St. Philip the Apostle is to be disestablished, 30 May 2010.

Parish wishes to dispose of stained glass windows and other furnishings to churches able to make most effective use of them. Number are creations of Canadian artists Sylvia Hahn, Yvonne Williams and Gustav Weisman. Great opportunity for churches to expand their attractiveness and value.

For information and appointments contact ;  
 Don Taylor: dftay78@rogers.com or Ken Armson: mamkaa@sympatico.ca





## COLOURFUL

Members of the Quilters' Group at St. Mark, Port Hope, add the final stitches to another of their hand-crafted quilts. Each year, a quilt made by the group is the first prize in the church's Holly Berry Bazaar raffle, the proceeds of which go to the parish. From left to right: Audrey Peel, Jenny Mitchell, Norma Hulme, and Blair Morris.

## All stand for those with cancer

On Oct. 3, the Rev. Kate McLarty, priest-in-charge at St. Alban, Peterborough, marked Breast Cancer Awareness Month by wearing a pink preaching scarf. Her sermon was based on the reading from Job, which highlights suffering, hope, faith and steadfastness. Ms. McLarty asked members of the congregation to stand if they were cancer patients or survivors, or knew of someone who had cancer or had died of cancer. The whole congregation stood up. "People commented afterwards what an awesome moment that was," says parishioner Marilyn Sutherst. "Kate concluded that 'We all suffer, whether from illness, job loss, or family problems, but, like Job, we can choose to hope in Him.'" (Editor's note: The Rev. Kate McLarty died on Nov. 11 as the paper was going to press.)

## Anglicans sing together

About 70 choristers and choir directors from parishes around the diocese gathered for the Choral Workshop held at St. Martin, Bay Ridges, in Pickering, on Oct. 17. With the guidance of Darryl Edwards, associate professor of voice studies at the University of Toronto, the group learned and per-

formed four pieces of church music, including "Cum Sancto Spiritu" by Vivaldi, "Thou Shalt Know Him" by Mark Sirett, "And the Father Will Dance" by Mark Hayes, and "The Size of Your Heart" by Eleanor Daley. The choristers learned proper singing techniques and did exercises to improve the quality and heighten the spirituality of their singing. "As people were leaving, they wanted to know if we could do another workshop in the near future," says parishioner Cliff Hope. "I felt that they took a lot of ideas back to their choirs and churches."

## Contemplative Fire comes to Mississauga

The Health and Wellness Committee of St. Peter, Erindale, in Mississauga, has invited the Rev. Anne Crosthwait to lead a healing service, The Service of Light, on Dec. 16 at 7 p.m. in the parish hall. Ms. Crosthwait is the Community Leader for Contemplative Fire in Canada, a fresh expression of church that emphasizes creative worship, contemplative bible study, and Christian meditation. The Service of Light will focus on healing losses at Christmas and will include elements of Contemplative Fire worship. For more information, contact info@contemplativefire.ca.



## FURRY FRIEND

Teddi the cat gets a blessing from the Rev. Millie Hope at the Blessing of Animals at St. Martin, Bay Ridges (Pickering), on Oct. 4, as the Mackay family — from left to right, Caitlyn, Callie, Tami and Rob — looks on. PHOTO BY CLIFF HOPE



The Rev. Kate McLarty wears a pink preaching scarf on Oct. 3 to mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month.



## HAPPY STEPS

Members of Christ the King in Etobicoke — from left to right: Elaine Weir, John Corkill and Barbara Yule — walk the perimeter of the church property on Nov. 1, as part of an annual fundraiser called Beat the Bounds. More than 50 walkers participated this year. The proceeds will benefit the parish.

# Diocese's chief administrative officer retires

BY STUART MANN

**ALISON** Knight, the diocese's chief administrative officer and secretary of synod, retired at the end of November.

"I feel that it's time to say goodbye and to be open to doing something different," she said. "I have no idea what comes next. I think for a little while I will read some good books and listen to lovely music in the middle of the day."

She said it was a joy and a privilege to work for the diocese for the past seven years. "The staff are marvelous and the volunteers have been wonderful and incredibly supportive," she said. "Each and every person in the church brings their own gifts, and I've

just been in awe of how much we are blessed by one another."

Archbishop Colin Johnson said Ms. Knight contributed enormously to the life of the diocese. "She has contributed her organizational skills, an ability to do strategic thinking and planning, and an ability to look at budgets and finances and not only put them in order but look at how they can be deployed strategically."

He said she was instrumental in setting up the Ministry Allocation Fund, which provides grants and loans for real estate purposes, congregational growth and new forms of ministry. She also played a leading role in putting the diocese on a sound financial footing so it can grow, he said.

"She has responded to the expressed desire of people in the parishes to keep more money in the parishes, and she has helped to develop budgets that over time have reduced parish assessments. That is hugely significant."

Archbishop Johnson said that under Ms. Knight's leadership, the synod office staff achieved a high level of excellence. "She saw how important it was for administration to not stop things but enable ministry to happen. She structured the synod office to respond to ministry needs."

He said she was a catalyst for change in the diocese. "She was able to put into practice structures and processes that supported the vision of the diocese, for it to build

communities of hope and compassion. Unless done properly, things like policies or budgetary constraints or procedural difficulties can put up roadblocks in implementing a vision. Alison was able to help enable the ministries to happen and to move them forward."

She hopes that her efforts helped the church begin to reclaim its place in the wider community. "Part of our change process has been about remembering what we are called to do as individuals and as the church and putting first things first, getting back in right relationship with one another and God and the people in our communities. I hope that as this church continues to reinvent itself and serve its communities, it will re-

claim its place in the public sphere and in the marketplace. I don't want to live in a godless society — a society where we can't talk about God except in private places; I don't think any of us want to, but it's up to us to make sure that we don't."

Although she is looking forward to some quiet time, she does not plan to be idle. She sits on a number of boards, including the board of the *Anglican Journal*, and is considering other opportunities. "I don't think I'll be sitting around for too long," she says. "But who knows? That's what makes this next stage so exciting."

Items for Looking Ahead should be emailed to [hpaukov@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:hpaukov@toronto.anglican.ca). The deadline for the January issue is December 1. Parishes can also promote their events on the diocese's website. Visit [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca), click Calendar, then click Submit an Event.

## Services

**DEC. 1** – World AIDS Day Service at St. Paul on-the-Hill, 882 Kingston Rd., Pickering, at 7:30 p.m. The speaker will be Yvette Perreault, executive director of the AIDS Bereavement Project of Ontario. All are welcome. Call 905-839-7909.

**DEC. 6** – St. Dunstan of Canterbury, 56 Lawson Rd., Scarborough, will celebrate its 25th Anniversary with a special service at 10:30 a.m. All previous members of the parish are invited. There will be time to renew old friendships following the service. Call 416-283-1844.

**DEC. 6** – Advent Carol Service at St. Martin in-the-Fields, 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto, at 8 p.m., with the Choir of St. Martin's with organ and trumpet accompaniment. Collection will be taken and donated to a charity in the parish. All are welcome. Call 416-767-7491.

**DEC. 16** – Contemplative Fire Healing Service at St. Peter, Erindale, 1745 Dundas St. W., Mississauga, at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Stillness, stories, music, meditation. Call 905-828-2095.

**DEC. 20** – A Service of Nine Lessons & Carols for Christmas at St. Peter, Erindale, 1745 Dundas St. W., Mississauga, at 7 p.m. Featuring the Parish Choir of St. Peter's, the St. Peter's Singers, and the St. Peter's Handbell Choir. Call 905-828-2095.

**DEC. 20** – St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Windermere Ave., Toronto, invites all to a Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols, at 7:30 p.m. Contributions appreciated. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

**DEC. 20** – Christmas Vespers at Christ Church, Deer Park, 1570 Yonge St., Toronto, at 4:30 p.m. Call 416-920-5211.

**DEC. 24, 25** – St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Windermere Ave., Toronto, invites you to its Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services. Christmas Eve: 4 p.m., Children's Christmas Eve Service; 10:30 p.m., Candlelight Service of Holy Communion. Christmas Day: 10:30 a.m., Holy Communion with Anointing. Contributions appreciated. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

## Lectures/Conferences

**JAN. 22-24** – A Women's Weekend Getaway entitled Waiting and Watching in the Wilderness will be offered at Queen Apostles Renewal Centre. The cost of \$185 includes all meals and private room with two-piece ensuite. The leaders are the Rev. Carol Langley and Wendy Passmore. For more information, contact Carol Langley at 905-846-2952 or email at [cdlangley@sympatico.ca](mailto:cdlangley@sympatico.ca). Pre-registration is required.

## Christmas Events

**DEC. 4 - 6, 11-13, 18-20** – The Christmas Story at Holy Trinity, Trinity Square, a Toronto tradition since 1938. Professional musicians

and a volunteer cast present this hour-long nativity pageant. Friday and Saturday evenings, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday matinees, 4:30 p.m. Suggested donation: \$15 adults, \$5 children. The church is wheelchair accessible. American Sign Language interpretation at selected performances. To reserve, call 416-598-8979. For more information, visit [www.holytrinitytoronto.org](http://www.holytrinitytoronto.org) or email [christmasstory@holyltrinitytoronto.org](mailto:christmasstory@holyltrinitytoronto.org).

**DEC. 5** – St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Windermere Ave., Toronto, presents a dramatic reading of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," at 7:30 p.m. In benefit of St. Olave's Hunger Patrol. Featuring CBC Radio Metro Morning Producer Mary Wiens. Pay-what-you-can; minimum suggested contribution: \$5. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

**DEC. 12** – Holy Trinity, Guildwood, and CBC Radio present a dramatic reading, with music, of Charles' Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" at 3 p.m. The reading will take place at Scarborough Bluffs United Church, 3739 Kingston Rd. (at Scarborough Golf Club Road). Tickets (which include reception and refreshments) are \$20. All proceeds for the Refugee Family Re-uniting Outreach Fund. To order, call 416-464-9671.

**DEC. 13** – St. Olave, Swansea, 360 Windermere Ave., Toronto, presents its 26th Annual Christmas Pageant, at 10:30 a.m. Contributions appreciated. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

**DEC. 19 & 20** – Crèches from Across the World at St. James' Cathedral, Saturday and Sunday, December 19 and 20. This year's exhibit of about 50 crèches will be held in the Cathedral as the Parish House is under renovations, and will be limited to two days. Open all day Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday afternoon from 1 to 4 p.m. About 50 crèches from many countries of the world on view. Activities for children both days. For further information, call Nancy Mallett at 416-364-7865, ext. 233.

## Sales

**DEC. 5** – Christmas Bazaar at St. Leonard, 25 Wanless Ave., Toronto, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Artisans' tables, poinsettias, baked goods, lunch room, book sale, Christmas table. Call 416-485-7278.

**DEC. 12** – Baked Goods and Jam Sale at St. Hilda, Fairbank, 2353 Dufferin St., Toronto, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. For information, call 416-256-6563.

## Music/Drama

**DEC. 3, 10, 17** – Noon Hour Organ Recitals at St. Paul, Bloor Street, 227 Bloor St. E., Toronto. Thursdays at 12:10 p.m. Dec. 3, Stephen Boda, Peaker Organ Scholar, St. Paul's Bloor St.; Dec. 10, Andrew Adair, Assistant Organist, St. Mary Magdalene, Toronto; Dec. 17, Catharine & Ian Sadler, soprano & organ. Free admission. For more information, call 416-961-8116.

**DEC. 13** – Community Carol Sing at St. Dunstan of Canterbury, 56 Lawson Rd., Scarborough, at 7:30 p.m. Free will offering. An evening of fun with old favourites, as well as new carols. For information,



MP Bob Rae, left, talks to Archbishop Colin Johnson and social justice advocates about a national strategy for affordable housing. They were meeting at All Saints, Sherbourne Street, Toronto. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

## Advocates seek housing plan

**THE** housing conditions endured by many low-income people in downtown Toronto dominated a meeting held Oct. 9 involving Bishop Colin Johnson, local MP Bob Rae, staff of All Saints Church, Sherbourne Street, and local residents.

The meeting was one of a series of such gatherings being held across Canada between Members of Parliament, Anglican and

Lutheran bishops and frontline housing providers to advocate for a national affordable housing strategy and federal government leadership on this issue. Mr. Rae signaled his support for federal action.

Archbishop Johnson affirmed society's responsibility to share its resources so that everyone has a decent place to live. Mr. Rae noted the difficulty of proposing the tax increases needed to raise

the government revenue required so that everyone in society can be housed with dignity. A related issue is the divide between those who enjoy good housing and those who don't. "Housing is an 'us and them' issue, and poverty is an 'us and them' issue," said Mr. Rae. "How do we reinforce the need for solidarity?"

call 416-283-1844.

**DEC. 19** – The St. Paul's Singers of St. Paul, Midhurst, presents its third annual evening of music and entertainment at 7:30 p.m. The evening of music will be followed by a reception with hot cider and goodies. For information, call 705-721-9722.

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EXT. 25**

## BRIEFLY

### Mission course on website

The Mission Possible course will be available for download off the diocese's website, [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca), by Jan. 14. If parishes cannot download and print the course off the website, they should contact the Rev. Jenny Andison, the Archbishop's Officer for Mission, at (416) 363-6021 or 1-800-668-

8932, ext. 229, or email [jandison@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:jandison@toronto.anglican.ca), and she will send it to you. The purpose of the course is to help churches rediscover what it means to be missional in their own particular context. The course is designed to be run in parishes during Lent, 2010. It consists of one-hour study sessions that are based on scriptural readings. The readings are accompanied by questions and case studies to work through.

### St. Thomas's Church

383 Huron Street, Toronto  
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### Nativity Play

Dec. 16 at 7:30  
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\$15 adults  
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Fundraiser for St. Thomas's  
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Festival of  
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Dec. 20 at 7:00

[www.stthomas.on.ca](http://www.stthomas.on.ca)

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The Philip Aziz Centre is a Christian, community-based hospice in Toronto providing practical, emotional and spiritual support to children and adults living with AIDS, cancer and other life-threatening illnesses.

We are seeking volunteers to join us in making a difference by providing hospice care in the community.

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**PRAYER CYCLE**

**FOR REMAINDER OF DECEMBER**

27. The Most Rev. Colin R. Johnson, Archbishop of Toronto and Metropolitan of Ontario
28. Church of the Incarnation
29. Ascension, Don Mills
30. The Church of Our Saviour
31. St. Christopher, Richmond Hill

**FOR JANUARY 2010**

1. St. Christopher Tri-Congregation (North York)
2. St. Cyprian (North York)

3. York Mills Deanery
4. St. George, Willowdale
5. St. John, Toronto
6. St. John, York Mills
7. St. Matthew the Apostle, Oriole
8. St. Patrick
9. St. Theodore of Canterbury
10. The Rt. Rev. Philip Poole, Area Bishop of York-Credit Valley
11. All Saints, Kingsway
12. Atonement, Alderwood
13. Christ Church St. James
14. Christ the King
15. St. George on-the-Hill
16. St. Margaret, New Toronto
17. Etobicoke Deanery
18. St. Matthew, Islington
19. St. Matthias, Etobicoke
20. St. Philip, Etobicoke
21. St. Wilfrid, Islington
22. St. Andrew, Scarborough
23. St. Bede
24. The Rt. Rev. Patrick Yu, Area Bishop of York-Scarborough
25. Christ Church, Scarborough
26. St. Crispin
27. St. Dunstan of Canterbury
28. Epiphany, Scarborough
29. St. George, Scarborough
30. St. Giles, Scarborough
31. Scarborough Deanery

**IN MOTION**

**Appointments**

- The Rev. John Anderson, Assistant Curate, Christ Church, Stouffville, Oct. 1.
- The Rev. Anne Crosthwait, Honorary Assistant, St. Leonard, Toronto, Oct. 1.
- The Rev. Naomi Miller, Associate Priest, St. John the Evangelist, Peterborough, Oct. 1.
- The Very Rev. Ted Clarke, Priest-in-Charge, St. Martin, Courtice, Oct. 1.
- The Rev. Canon Sr. Constance Joanna Gefvert, Honorary Assistant, Church of the Incarnation, Toronto, Oct. 25.
- The Rev. Richard Gauthier (Montreal), Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Bartholomew, Toronto, Nov. 1.
- The Rt. Rev. Michael Bedford-Jones, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Jude, Wexford, Dec. 1.

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

**First Phase - Parish Selection Committee in Formation**  
 (not yet receiving names):

- Minden-Kinmount
- St. Peter, Cobourg
- All Saints, Whitby
- St. John, Norway

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

- St. Jude, Wexford (York-Scarborough)
- Trinity, Streetsville

**Third Phase - Parish Selection Committee Interviewing**  
 (not receiving names):

- St. Mary Magdalene

**Departures**

- The Rev. Sonja Free (ELCIC)

has concluded her ministry as Honorary Assistant at St. Matthew, Islington, as she has moved to Innisfil.

- The Rev. Robert Conway has accepted a ministry appointment in the Diocese of Niagara, starting Nov. 1. His last Sunday at St. Bartholomew, Toronto, was Oct. 25.

**Death**

- The Rev. Canon C. Rupert King died on Oct. 3. Ordained for the Diocese of Newfoundland in 1949, he came to Toronto in 1966, serving first as Assistant Curate of St. John the Baptist, Norway, then Priest-in-Charge (later Rector) of the Church of the Advent, Toronto, then Incumbent of Christ Church, Mimico, until his retirement in 1988. His funeral was held Oct. 6 at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Toronto.

**READING THE BIBLE**

BY THE REV. CANON DON BEATTY

## Yes, you can take the Bible literally

In our condo we have a small but helpful library. It contains a number of books in different genres, especially mystery books, which I enjoy. It has few religious books, so I was rather surprised to find on the display table a book entitled, *The Reason for God*, by Timothy Keller. I had never heard of the author. As I read through the introductory material, I discovered that he is the founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, a church that has grown to more than 5,000 attendees in 20 years. It has established some 12 sister churches in and around New York. As I have been interested in church growth for many years, this book caught my attention. The author goes on to inform us that some two-thirds of the members of his church are single and that the average age is about 30. Needless to say, I read the book.

The sub-title of the book is *Belief in the Age of Skepticism*. Pastor Keller has attempted to deal honestly and intellectually with the many questions asked by members of his congregation. Indeed, that is the format of the book. He states that he centers worship services each week on a biblically based sermon. One of the book's chapters is entitled, "You can't take the Bible literally," and then he proceeds to prove that you can. It is this chapter that I am referring to in my column this month.

Some would claim that the Bible is really a series of legends that the church recorded to prove its theology. However, Keller rightly claims that the New Testament writings were written too soon after Jesus' death for legends to have been established about him. Some of the epistles were written within 20 years of his death! The four Gospels were written within 70 years of the beginning of church history. Many of the first Christians were still alive when these documents were circulated, and they would have pointed out inaccuracies. For example, Mark 15:21 records that the father of Alexander and Rufus helped carry the cross of Jesus. These men were active in the Jerusalem church. Would they not have said something if this was not true?

Paul was writing about the divinity of Christ within 20 years of the death of Jesus. Read the second chapter of his Epistle to the Philippians.

Also, Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:6, claims that there were some 500 witnesses to the resurrection

appearances of Jesus, and many of those witnesses were still alive. Luke, in Acts 26:26, has Paul telling King Agrippa during one of their talks, "that these things were not done in a corner." The king can check with the local officials about what Paul has been telling him.

All four Gospel writers have women as the first witnesses to the empty tomb. Women were not considered reliable in the first century and were usually not allowed to give testimony in a court of law. Yet the church saw fit to have them as the first witnesses of the empty tomb. John's Gospel has Mary Magdalene as the first witness to the resurrected Jesus and the first to proclaim the "good news" to his disciples. Would a church trying to defend its theology have included these stories?

If the church was trying to establish a theology, why did Jesus not speak out about the circumcision controversy? This was the first major fight in the early church, and yet the Gospels record nothing said by Jesus about this problem.

In *The De Vinci Code*, author Dan Brown suggests that it was the Emperor Constantine who chose which books would be included in the New Testament. However, Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon (130-200 CE), stated that there are only four Gospels, thus omitting all other Gospels in circulation at that time. This was many years before Constantine and the Council of Nicaea (325 CE). Constantine did not settle our scriptural heritage. The church was well on its way to establishing the canon of scriptures many years before Constantine.

We must remember that the Bible has many different styles of writing. We do not try to ascribe literal truth to poetic or apocalyptic writings. Therefore, we should take some parts of the Bible literally and others metaphorically.

Finally, would so many Christians have suffered and died for their faith if they knew it was not true? The first 300 years of the church were turbulent times. Many Christians were martyred in different parts of the Roman Empire at various times. I cannot see these intelligent people dying for a lie.

If you see *The Reason for God* by Timothy Keller, pick it up. It would be a good Advent read.

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



Children pray the Lord's Prayer in sign language.



The Rev. David Harrison speaks to the congregation during the consecration of St. Thomas, Brooklin's new worship space. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

# Church keeps up with town's growth

Continued from Page 1

energy, which is generated by heat stored beneath the earth's surface. The energy is safe and clean, because it reduces reliance on fossil fuels. The building also incorporates other green features, such as energy-efficient lighting.

The new, flexible worship space seats 260, with room for another 80 in the overflow section. The lower level is designed for children's programs such as the church-owned daycare centre and Sunday school. The building is connected to three other structures on the property – the former church, built in 1869, the parish hall, built in 1987, and the original 1879 rectory, which now houses the church offices.

The new worship space includes furnishings from other Anglican churches that have closed. The altar and lectern are from St. Clement, Riverdale; other items are from Holy Trinity, Ajax; St. Stephen, Maple; and Christ Church, Bailieboro.

"We're very grateful to the people of those congregations for their legacy," said the Rev. David Harrison, incumbent.

Mr. Harrison said the congregation has traversed "hills and valleys" over the past seven years to build their new church. "There are times when I look at it and think, 'Wow, I can't believe that we're here,'" he said. "There were many times when things clicked into place wonderfully, and other times when there seemed to be insurmountable barriers. I keep coming back to the strong sense of God's guidance for us through this. We planted and watered and did all sorts of stuff, but God has given the growth."

St. Thomas struck a task force in 2002 to explore ways to keep up with Brooklin's rapid growth. Since the early 1990s, when it had less than 2,000 people, the town has grown to more than 15,000. After exploring several options, the task force decided that a larger, modern church was necessary.

The new church cost nearly \$5 million. Mr. Harrison said the church's child care program will help pay off the mortgage. Donations from parishioners and a grant of nearly \$1.6 million from the diocese's Ministry Allocation Fund will pay off the rest. "This

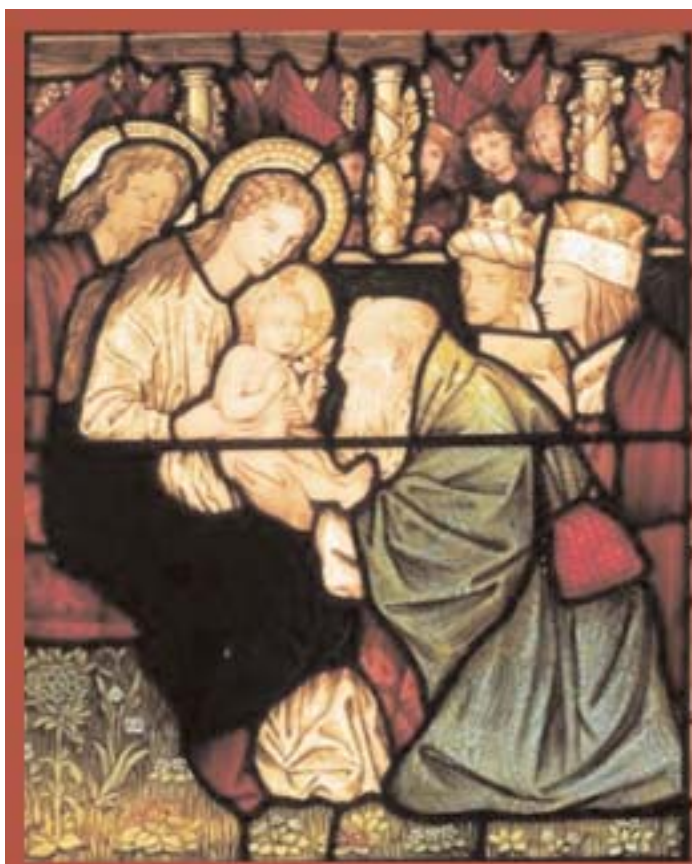
project would not have happened without that level of support from the diocese," he said.

He said this is a new chapter in the life of the parish. "This isn't the end. It's actually the beginning. St. Thomas has always had good outreach, but now we can think about what else we can do locally, in the wider community and internationally. Also, we've got more room now in the worship space. We're finding that new people are coming in to check us out."

Bishop Nicholls commended the congregation for keeping up with the changes in the wider community. "They entered into a process of visioning, to say, 'How can we be faithful to what we're called to do and be in this community?'" She encouraged other parishes to ask that question. "Sometimes it may call us to close a building; sometimes it may call us to build a new building; sometimes it may call us to move to a new location; and sometimes it may call us just to re-tool what we're doing with what we currently have. But it's the courage to step out and do that, and that's what St. Thomas did."



The new worship space, the original church, the rectory (now used for office space), and the parish hall are all connected.



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