

New site sells surplus items

In the footsteps of St. Cuthbert



Dinner hears resurrection story

The Anglican

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DECEMBER 2025



FIRST LIGHT

Youth practice lighting the first candle of the Advent wreath at the Church of the Transfiguration in Toronto. Advent begins on Nov. 30. A candle will be lit each week during Advent, followed by the lighting of the middle candle on Christmas Eve. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

BY BISHOP RISCYLLA SHAW

Allow God to love you



“Love came down at Christmas” by Christina Rossetti calls to mind childhood memories of our little country church, singing this anthem with the choir, Mom playing the organ and all voices joining joyfully in with harmonies. “Love all lovely, love divine.”

In our Christmas story, love arrives directly in the kind hospitality of Mary’s cousin, Elizabeth, who embraces her with grace. Hope comes in the baby in the manger. Streams of blessings arrive with the whole company of the animals, visiting shepherds, singing angels, kneeling kings and gift-bearing Magi. The story quickly changes, however, as the young family must flee to a foreign land to protect the life of their son, leaving behind all family, friends, community networks and supports. We learn that having hope is an act of resistance. In this busy time, when it can be most inconven-

ient, how do you offer hospitality? How can you make space for unexpected visitors? If you are the unexpected visitor, how can you be a blessing to your hosts?

The times haven’t changed so much for many in our home communities who are suffering. We have newcomers, asylum seekers, those fleeing war, persecution or violence from other countries. We are also experiencing an increasing crisis in affordability for food and housing, access to medical care and steady employment opportunities. The months leading to Christmas can induce a lot of stress and anxiety as we wrestle with the commercial, religious and family expectations of peace, joy and goodwill layered upon us. Here is a different perspective: in many Indigenous cultures, there is the teaching that the legacy of our deeds is left to the seven generations to follow us. It makes a big difference to consider the long

Continued on Page 5

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BRAZILIAN PRIEST BRINGS WORDS OF HOPE – SEE PAGE 9

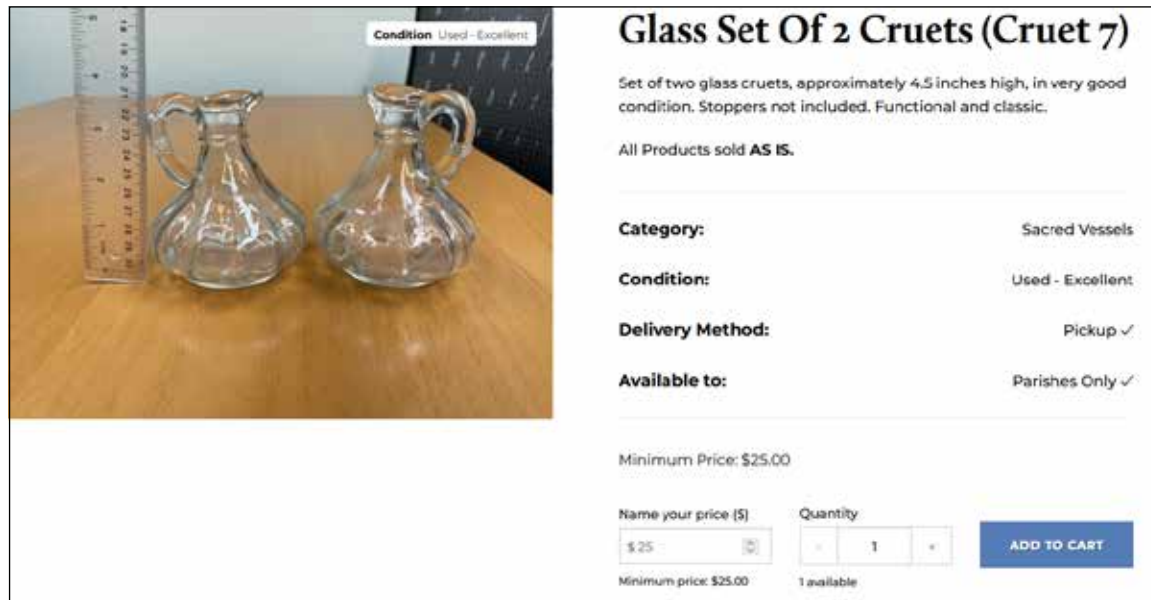
Marketplace helps items find new home

Inventory includes hardware, linens

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

ACROSS the diocese, items once used in beloved church communities are finding new life and purpose through a creative new initiative. A new online Marketplace is helping connect surplus liturgical items with congregations that need them.

The project is a natural extension of the collaboration that has unfolded between the Property Resources department and diocesan Archives over the past two years. In the summer of 2023, the two teams combined forces to start visiting closed churches. Among their goals, staff collected liturgical items left behind when the buildings were shut.



A set of glass cruets is advertised in the Marketplace, a diocesan site for surplus liturgical items.

"The vast majority of it was in usable condition or good condition. We were just realizing that we were creating huge stores of this used holy hardware," says Mac Moreau, director of Property Resources.

The salvaged items were added to the growing collection in the Archives in the basement of the Synod Office.

"I think we have 20 boxes down here of various things. We just don't really have space to store them long-term," says Claire Wilton, the diocese's Archivist. She's still

working through the boxes, but she estimates there are as many as 100 smaller items in the Archives, with some larger items stored off-site.

When Pamela Boisvert joined the Property Resources department in 2024, she was struck by an idea. She had seen the online store run by an organization she volunteers for, and she wondered if the diocese could build its own platform to rehome liturgical supplies.

She brought her idea to Mr. Moreau, and with agreement from the Archives team and sup-

port from the Communications department, the site was built. It was formally launched at Synod in November.

To access the site, users need to sign up for an account before they start browsing. For now, accounts will be limited to leaders from parishes in the diocese.

"We want to make sure that the items go to another church, and that they're not going to be used in a way that would be inappropriate," says Ms. Boisvert. "Depending on how it goes, maybe another phase would be to open it up to others."

Once users are approved, they can see the catalogue of items, each of which has a photo, a description and the location where it's currently being stored. Browsers can search for items and filter by category and condition.

Each item also includes a suggested price, with the option to name a different price. The goal is not to make a profit from the site, but simply to cover the small amount of overhead that comes with running the site.

"We're going to do our best and guess at what an item's fair value would be without trying to overprice it or underprice it," says Ms. Boisvert. "We want these items out and being used in a church, and if the price is prohibitive, then we

want to allow them to name their price."

Buyers can pay by cash when they pick up their items, and pick-up dates will be arranged with staff on a regular basis.

As for the inventory, browsers can expect to see a variety of "holy hardware" and linens.

"We have a few chalices, quite a few cruets, a couple of flagons," says Ms. Wilton. "There are frontals, superfrontals. We're working our way through that."

The team is taking special note of items with plaques or dedications given in memory of a loved one. Archives staff are tracking where those items end up so there's a record in case a family member ever asks.

"My hope is that some of these items that have memorial will go somewhere else so that those people can be remembered beyond the church that is closed," says Ms. Wilton.

Mr. Moreau echoes that idea. "There are stories behind each of these items," he says. "So what use are they sitting on a shelf, either in a closed church that we use for storage or in the basement of the Synod Office – why not get them back into service?"

Ultimately, both the Archives and Property teams see the Marketplace as an extension of their mission to remember former church communities in the diocese.

"When we visited these closed churches, our objective was to understand better their story, to be able to carry that story and then be able to tell that story," says Mr. Moreau. "And the work that we're doing with the Marketplace and with these liturgical items is an important part of that story."

As the Marketplace opens to its first wave of users, staff are already thinking about what comes next for the platform. They're open to the idea of helping parishes offload liturgical supplies they no longer need, and the platform may open to other dioceses or ecumenical partners in the future.

To learn more and sign up for an account, visit www.marketplace.toronto.anglican.ca.

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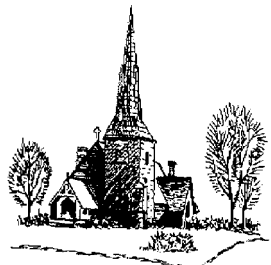
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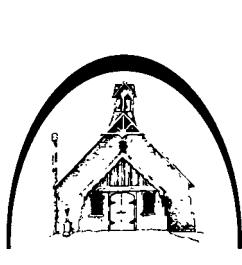
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'Go back and spread the word'

Homily, lay talk lift up hearts at final service

BY STUART MANN

THE Rev. Dr. Alvarado Adderley gave Anglicans some stirring words to live by at the diocese's fifth and final Lift Up Our Hearts service, held at St. Paul, Bloor Street on Oct. 25.

Dr. Adderley, incumbent of St. George Memorial, Oshawa, preached at the service, which, like the four before it, was an opportunity for Anglicans to come together and renew their faith after the hard years of the pandemic.

In his sermon, Dr. Adderley said spiritual renewal is grounded in the power of the cross, "for it is at the cross where God's words are awakened within us, it is at the cross where self gives way to transformation and renewal."

He said spiritual renewal challenges Anglicans to repair or replace some attitudes, habits or actions. "If we are truly renewed, that means we are a new people, so the way we look at the Church ought to be new, the way we look at the diocese ought to be new, the way we look at our life ought to be new. The chaos and challenges we sometimes face – we ought to have a different approach."

He said spiritual renewal often comes during life's most difficult moments. "Sometimes in my darkest days, I ask the Lord, where are you? I cry to you by day and I hear no voice, I cry to you by night and there is still silence. But if I'm to be honest, it is in moments like these when I find strength. It is in moments like these when my faith is renewed and my hope in God is cemented. It is in these moments where some hymns we sing turn to praise. I'm reminded of that good old Lenten hymn, 'Jesus, keep me near the cross.' There a precious fountain, free to all, a healing stream flows from Calvary's heart."

He said if Anglicans are renewed, then the Church and the diocese will be renewed. "And what does this look like? It looks like a people that is on fire for God's word – a people that is hungry for God's love, a people that is more concerned about outreach than inreach."

He urged Anglicans to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. "My family, my friends, for us to truly set this diocese on fire, it's not about knowing the liturgy, it's not about knowing what comes next – because we are good at being Anglican – it's about knowing and having a personal relationship with Jesus the Christ. That and only that will set this diocese on fire. So I encourage you, wherever you came from in this diocese, go back



Clockwise from above: the Rev. Dr. Alvarado Adderley urges Anglicans to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ; Ayesha Ramsay-Musgrave tells her spiritual journey; members of the congregation respond to St. Paul's praise band. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



and spread the word. Go back and live God's holy spirit. Go back and show people that Anglicans can be Christians, that Anglicans do believe in God. As we will sing in a moment, we ask God's holy spirit to revive us again, revive us so we can be a powerful diocese, revive so we can support the College of Bishops and the clergy, revive us again so we can be the people God has called us to be."

In a lay witness talk, Ayesha Ramsay-Musgrave, a member of St. Paul, Bloor Street, spoke about her journey to confirmation and how it transformed her life.

Born into a Christian family, she was active in her local church until young adulthood, when the demands of school and work began to take over. "Attending Sunday services and other activities became few and far between," she said. Then in 2023 she re-connected with a university colleague, now her partner, over a social media post.

They talked about their faith up-bringsings. He said he was a member of St. Paul, Bloor Street, and asked if she had ever thought about being confirmed. "Truthfully, I had thought about it, but often it was met with fear and some nervousness," she recalled.

They started watching Sunday services on YouTube together, "and before I knew it, I was back in church on Sundays," she said. "The nervousness I felt had disappeared, as if it never existed."

She took part in some confirmation preparations, "and it was in that moment that it became apparent to me, I was right where I needed to be. I needed to be part of a growing church family, learning to love and follow Jesus Christ."

"This, my friends, was God at work, using the Holy Spirit through the members of this church to help guide me through the decision." On



Pentecost Sunday of this year, she was confirmed at St. Paul's.

"I vividly recall the emotions of joy, happiness and unity in reaffirming my faith in Jesus Christ," she said. "Upon reciting my baptismal covenant, receiving prayer and being welcomed into the larger Anglican community, I then knew what it felt like to be part of the family of God."

She concluded, "If there's anything you can take away from my story today, let it be this: It's never too late to renew your faith. It is never too late to let God into your heart. He will be there, waiting for you. He promises to be the same God he was yesterday, today and forever."

In his closing remarks, Bishop Andrew Asbil thanked all those who took part in the service and the reception afterwards, and those who coordinated the previous four Lift Up Our Hearts services. "What a gift you are for being here today, and to take what our preacher has issued us to do – go home, spread the word, be faithful in your baptismal covenant, and may God keep us forever," he said.

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On the incarnation

CREATION MATTERS

BY THE REV. ANDREW KUHL



Imagine the scene, some nine months prior:

A messenger comes to Mary, a strange greeting: hail, favoured one, the Lord is with you. And then invites her to participate in the process of bringing God into the world.

The creator of all taking on human flesh, the incarnate Son of God. The creator of everything – the stars, the seas, the earth – enters history as a little infant, born of Mary. The one who will bring about redemption and reconciliation of all things enters a relationship of interdependence, vulnerability and humanness. Starting from that place of dependence where all human relationships begin, carried by Mary during her pregnancy, born dependent – needing family and relationships to care for all his needs.

Christ is born in Bethlehem.

When we consider just the incarnation and Jesus's infant birth, it's wild to think about the need for these relationships, in a human sense, and it should draw our awe and wonder. And I wonder what happens if we expand our frame to see the broader web of relationships that are needed for Jesus, this babe in Bethlehem, to be fully alive, fully human.

Just imagine, for a second, the microscopic level, the formation of the gut biome. It begins from birth and is essential for the wellbeing of a human being. The gut biome is that community of bacteria, viruses, fungi and other microbes (a thousand different types, trillions of microorganisms) that live in our intestines. This ecosystem is at work hidden inside us, breaking down food, supporting our immune system, and even affecting our mental health. It's a key part of our body that is also not our body. The gut biome is an ecological system contained in our own organs, shaped and formed by our relationship with the world around us, our family, our ecosystem and our diet. Just imagine Jesus's gut biome shaped by that manger, by Mary and Joseph, and the family and the air of Bethlehem, all shaping this invisible microscopic eco-community within an infant.

Or imagine the broader geography and ecological system that sustains all of life. Just think about what Jesus ate and how it connected him to animals and grains, vegetables and fruits, wine and water, and even the economic relationships between humans. All of those relationships shaped by the geography and watershed, seasons and weather. Starting from Bethlehem to his time as a refugee in Egypt, back to Nazareth, and throughout his ministry journeys, the Incarnate One lived in places that shaped his reality. Jesus was always integrated into a broader ecosystem, a network of relation-



The incarnation invites us to consider how we are connected to all of creation, to see in our own lives and experiences how we are related and interconnected.

ships of interdependence. Human, animal, plant, mineral and even the waters all intimately connected through the ordinary actions of life.

St. Athanasius of Alexandria wrote, "He became what we are that he might make us what he is." (*On the Incarnation*, 54:3) Which is to say that Christ takes on the fullness of human experience, and all the same dependencies and interrelated relationships, and then shows us, invites us and transforms us into a more excellent way. St. Basil, in one of his prayers, asks, "O God, enlarge within us the sense of fellowship with all living things, our [siblings] the animals to whom you gave the earth as their home in common with us." And we might even go beyond that as we consider the incarnation and its relationship with all creation, as St. Francis's canticle evokes the relationship we have with all creatures.

It's here in the person of Jesus that we see God's action enfleshed. And yes, it is in the stories of the gospels, in the cross and resurrection, but also in and through the incarnation in its ordinary and its extraordinary ways that we are invited to contemplate and be transformed. The physical reality, the matter of the world, is not in opposition to this revelation but is the very place where we encounter God's love at work. Anglican eco-theologian Norman Wirzba writes, "The incarnation is God's affirmation that creaturely life is good, that the world is not an obstacle to God's purposes but the very place where God's love is made manifest." (*Food and Faith*, pg. 106)

As we see this reality of God's love present in the incarnation, it reminds us that the incarnation shows us that God can work through the whole of creation. It reminds us of the importance of all these complex relationships and interdependencies that are at

the heart of our human experience and our creaturely experience.

At a more profound level, the incarnation, God taking on human flesh, is not just about God becoming human, but God becoming part of creation. In Jesus, we see God's declaration, God's love enacted, and we can see that matter matters. God's saving work in the incarnation is not just for humans but is about all of creation.

As we dwell with this mystery, it invites us to consider how we are connected, as well, to all of creation, to see in our own lives and experiences how we are related and interconnected. And it should ask us questions about how the love of God calls us to care, love and protect creation in all of our lives.

In this season of Advent and Christmas, we look back at the expectant waiting, the longing and hope for this incarnation. We celebrate the mystery of the incarnation, that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. In our lives, we also look at our world with the same longing and hope for Christ's return that will set all things right.

And while many of us think about salvation in the frame of our humanity, maybe this Advent and Christmas we might expand our view. What happens if we consider the mystery of the incarnation as a pattern of relationship, one that invites us to live more deeply in that hope of reconciliation, not just with ourselves and God, and other humans, but with all of creation? Perhaps we will see how our faith draws us to love more deeply, and encounter God's presence meeting us in and through creation as well.

The Rev. Andrew Kuhl is the incumbent of the Parish of Craighurst and Midhurst and a member of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care.



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Canon Stuart Mann: Editor

Address all editorial material to:
The Anglican
135 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, Ontario M5C 1L8
Tel: 416-363-6021, ext. 247
Toll free: 1-800-668-8932
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Email: editor@toronto.anglican.ca

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In the Diocese of Toronto:

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

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Love is with us

Continued from Page 1

view, that the gifts we exchange this year can have a generational impact.

With small acts of courage, I invite you to experiment. Create a counterculture of care by helping someone new to have an opportunity. Listening with the ears of your heart, ask them what they really need this season. If you have the financial capacity to be generous, you might help with a utility bill, a car payment or money towards rent. If you wish to make a tangible gesture towards building relationships, give a night of free babysitting for overwhelmed parents or share a meal with someone who is lonely or visit a fellow parishioner or your neighbour who is in the hospital or nursing home, or meet new people while serving at the food bank. Go further and be bold to ask: why do we need food banks? In my sphere of influence, who can I work with to change current policies that lead to this need?

Consider the babies and young people in your neighbourhood – their futures and the influence they will have in the shape of the world to come. How can you participate in that?

When we choose to be self-emptying in response to the call to be generous, we will find the Christmas miracle: that our own hearts are expanding.

This past summer, while on my way to an Indigenous Network gathering, I visited a new congregation in Albuquerque, where I received the warmest welcome when I was feeling vulnerable. Their values of following and growing in Christ are joyfully practiced in receiving newcomers and giving regular learning workshops. The next day, while guiding

me around the community, ministry team member Deacon Judith shared this teaching: *Deja que Dios te ame* / Allow God to love you.

When love came down at Christmas, it came for all of us. Yet some of us feel unlovable, unworthy, unforgiven. In our shared human brokenness, when grief gets in the way, allow God to love you. Our grief is, in some ways, a sign of our deep capacity to love. When isolation and loneliness loom large, we are not alone. Love is with us. The ancient Greek philosopher Seneca taught, “You should invite some to your table because they are deserving, others because they may come to deserve it.” There is a place for you at the table of our Lord. Will you make an extra place at your dinner table?

The reign of God is growing each time we act as the blessing hands of Christ. New disciples are made one at a time, through connection and shared purpose with those who are already followers of Christ. Somebody did that for you, so your gift of accompanying a person in their faith journey, their healing journey, in the long process of getting clean from addictions or learning to love again, yields an infinite return on investment.

When we allow God to really love us, something new happens, and we have the chance to release some of our rigid expectations of ourselves and of one another and see the Christ in each other.

This Christmas season, be humble or vulnerable enough to open your heart, your wallet, your dreams, as it is right and good to respond in love and generosity, in the name of Jesus.



BRANCHING OUT

A tree stands beside the pulpit at St. John, Ida during the parish's observance of the Season of Creation in September. The tree was later planted on the church grounds, launching the parish's participation in the Communion Forest movement. For related photo, see page 9. PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. JOHN, IDA



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Transformed on the way to Lindisfarne

Pilgrimage sparks awe, gratitude in God's creation

BY AUDREY DANAHER AND LEE SHOULDICE

Embarking on a pilgrimage is a serious undertaking. Pilgrims respond to a heavenly call to take leave of their ordinary lives, to travel to a holy destination for a deep spiritual purpose, trusting in God and anticipating that they will, in some way, become transformed by the experience. With faith, hope and resolve, in May a group of 16 Toronto-area Anglicans led by the Rev. Canon Susan Haig travelled to the United Kingdom to walk the pilgrimage route known as St. Cuthbert's Way. It was a remarkable journey.

Who was St. Cuthbert? Cuthbert was a native of the Scottish border country and a 7th-century monk whose ministry garnered him the love and respect of those he served. Cuthbert travelled widely, spreading the word of God, and ultimately served as Bishop of the Holy Island of Lindisfarne, which is located off the English coast of Northumberland. He died in 687 AD and was buried on the Holy Island. Approximately 200 years later, his remains were removed from the Island when the community was threatened by Viking raids. They are now entombed in Durham Cathedral in northern England.

Pilgrims who wish to follow in St. Cuthbert's footsteps walk a 100 km path from Melrose Abbey in Scotland to the Holy Island in England. Both the journey and the destination are central to the experience. The waymarked route over established rights of way traverses a wide variety of landscapes, including river valleys, fields of wildflowers, green grasses, golden gorse and canola, sheltering woods, and barren, wind-swept moorland. At times the Way travels along the remains of two Roman roads and follows the meandering River Tweed.

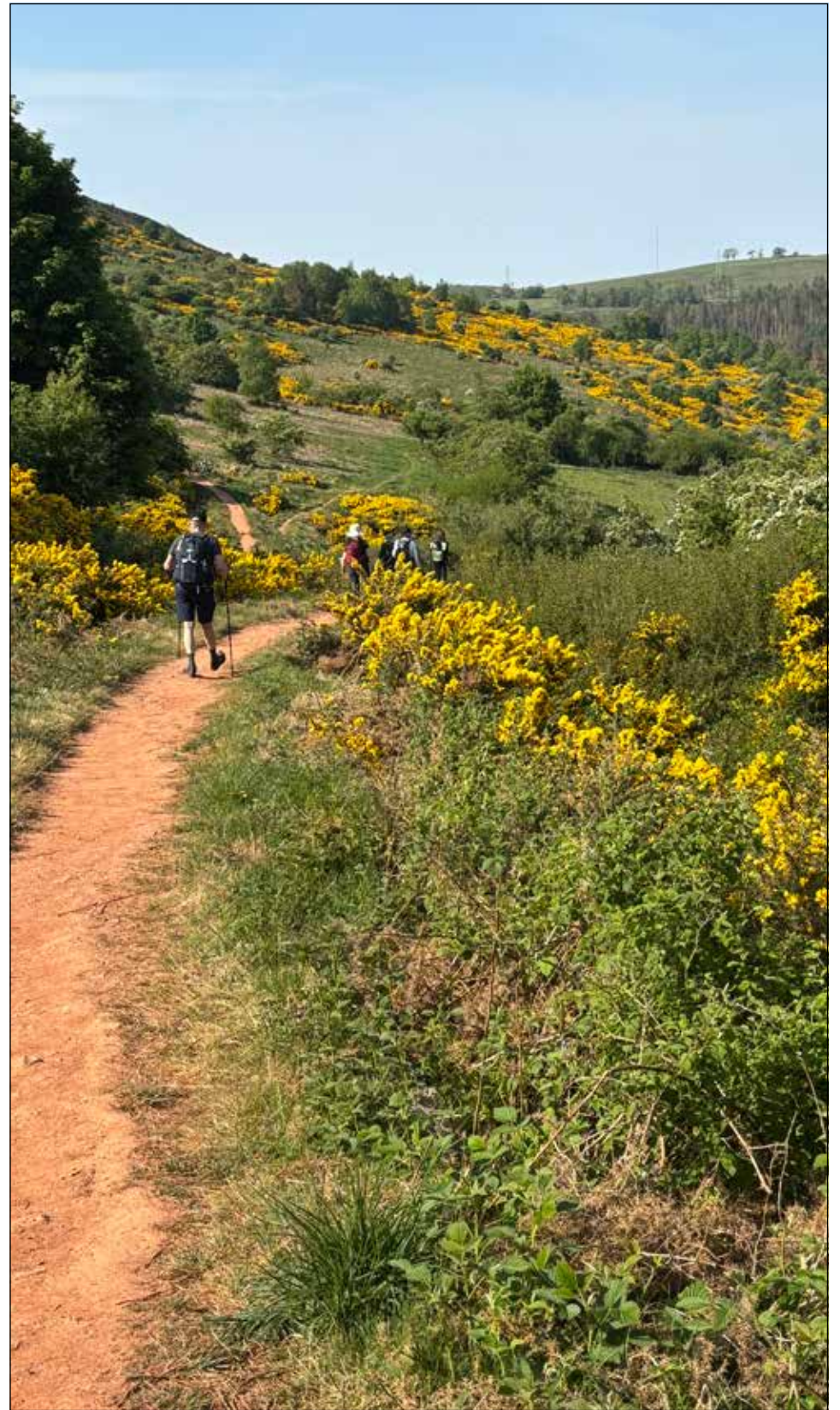
Preparing to walk

Our story of pilgrimage began with a commitment to walk, which encompassed physical, spiritual and relational preparation. Success in this endeavor required us to engage in a considerable amount of walking over many

months to develop the needed strength and stamina to make the journey. A group meeting at the outset, and later a full-day retreat, laid the foundation for our community to form and flourish as we reflected deeply on the meaning of pilgrimage. Planning included developing pilgrim protocols to guide us on our walk. Clear expectations, which included shared responsibilities for tasks and a resolution to leave no one behind on the path, enabled us to focus unencumbered on the walk before us.

In advance of our pilgrimage, we flew to Edinburgh and spent the next day acclimatizing to the time change. We then made our way by bus to Melrose at the western end of the Way, where our six-day pilgrimage commenced. Our days followed a familiar rhythm. Each morning, we gathered for updates and listened to a reflection offered by one of the pilgrims before setting out. The first hour we walked in silence. Together we crossed terrain that at times was very challenging. St. Cuthbert's Way took us through diverse landscapes – rolling hills, narrow, tortuous and sometimes rocky paths, as well as steep ascents and descents. We crossed streams, climbed over stiles, gave wide berth to cows tending their calves, and met fellow travelers. The path could be flat, but it was often hilly, and the distances were long. We walked roughly 15 to 20 km each day. Along the way we visited the ruins of both Melrose and Dryburgh abbeys and participated in three Eucharists led by clergy who were part of our community. After each full day of walking, we arrived at our lodging, grateful for some rest and a shower, before gathering for dinner and then an early night.

Pilgrimages are walked at an intentionally slower pace and, as such, keep you grounded. We put one foot in front of the other and were fully present. Free of everyday demands and distractions, the chatter of the mind settles. And then each of us, upon pausing to take in the surrounding beauty, found ourselves surprised by joy. We encountered the beauty of God's nature throughout our pilgrimage. In addition to the stunning landscapes and



Pilgrims follow in St. Cuthbert's footsteps. PHOTOS BY LEE SHOULDICE, KATE DUNCAN AND DEBORAH DEACON

flora, we interacted with hares, many birds, horses, cattle (both intimidating and benign), and innumerable sheep.

Unforeseen circumstances

Like all pilgrims, we sometimes faced unforeseen circumstances, such as changes to the itinerary or personal challenges. Pilgrimages can be hard on one's body, especially one's feet. However, imagination and flexibility enabled us to address issues with good humour and faith in ourselves to move through difficulty.

One of the many delights of engag-

ing in a pilgrimage is an opportunity to interact with citizens of other countries, mostly those who live and work on the pilgrimage route, but also those who come from around the globe to walk. On St. Cuthbert's Way, local residents and other travellers welcomed us with open arms. A sense of hospitality was present throughout.

On Good Shepherd Sunday, a group of pilgrims had the unexpected pleasure of being invited into the Bowden Kirk (lured by shortbreads, milk and a clean bathroom), where they spent time chat-



Preparation and time are key to a successful pilgrimage.

Sturdy footwear and a change of

If you're thinking of going on a pilgrimage using St. Cuthbert's Way, here are some things to think about.

- St. Cuthbert's Way is classified by the British as being of "moderate" difficulty. It's not! You need to train for distance and elevation by daily walks leading to some 15-20 km walks in the months before you go.
- Walking poles are very helpful (I might say essential) on many parts of the route.

- Building community beforehand is very important. Retreats and times of prayer and fellowship makes for a meaningful group experience prior to leaving.
- Engage the congregation in pilgrimage exercises before you go, so they can support you in prayer and you can carry their prayers while walking.
- If you're thinking of going as a group, use a travel company that specializes in UK and Scotland travel. Much of the accommodation is in small pub hotels that

- have a limited number of rooms. If you're thinking of going as a couple (or two), you should have no difficulty planning a year in advance for a pilgrimage. A larger group should probably plan two years in advance. The UK now requires an Electronic Travel Authorization, which you need to do online before you leave.
- Give yourself a day or two before you start in Melrose to get over jet lag. Give yourself some days after the pilgrimage to process the experience.



Crossing the sands at low tide before reaching Lindisfarne.

ting with their host and playing with his dog. A few days later, one member of our group developed a serious case of pneumonia. He spent the better part of two days at a hospital in Scotland, where he experienced amazing medical care. His spouse also experienced the support of local residents, one of whom went out of his way to ensure that she safely made it back to her hotel from the hospital in the middle of the night. At our last stop on the Holy Island, a hotel booking mishap led to the possibility that two of our pilgrims might not have a room in which to sleep. One of the front desk staff told

us not to worry, because the two would be welcome to stay at her home if no room could be found at the hotel. Ultimately, a room was located.

We encountered other delightful surprises along the way. Meeting the same pilgrims from day to day forged connections with others we were unlikely to see again. On one occasion, a few of us met three walkers who told us that a wayward sheep had crossed a fence and needed help to get back. Working together, we managed to coax the reluctant sheep through an opening to return to her bleating lambs. Such experiences highlighted

socks a must

- There is no way to predict the weather in Scotland, but May and September are probably the best months to travel. The route can be very narrow (single file only). The steep bits are very rocky and will be muddy and slippery if it's raining.
- You will be travelling through farmers' fields and fairly dense gorse. Mosquito and tick protection is essential.
- Running shoes won't do. Sturdy footwear and a change of socks will protect your feet.

- Be mindful of the tides at Holy Island. Whether you use the vehicle causeway or the original pilgrim route across the mud flats, it must be done at low tide.
 - Give yourself at least two days on Holy Island. There is a lot to see and learn, and the worship experience at St. Mary the Virgin Church is a wonderful conclusion to your pilgrimage.
- By Peter Bennett, a member of Redeemer, Bloor St.



A marker shows the route.

the overwhelming sense of community that develops on the journey.

After five days of walking, the Holy Island was finally in sight. The approach to Lindisfarne requires pilgrims to negotiate either a paved causeway or a 2-kilometre-long pilgrim's path over the seabed, both of which are passable only at low tide. Most pilgrims choose to walk across the sands at low tide to reach this famous Christian site – an island of about 130 people that swells with visitors when it's accessible. Our time on the Holy Island was an opportunity to both reflect and explore. We attended a Sunday service at St. Mary the Virgin Church, which is over 800 years old and is built over the remains of an earlier Saxon church. We were warmly welcomed by the vicar, who, with a number of local residents, hosted us one evening at her vicarage.

Out of our comfort zone

Reasons for undertaking a pilgrimage are individual and personal. Some pilgrims hope to develop new spiritual insights. Others are simply open to whatever transpires. Regardless, pilgrimages can transform. They can take us out of our comfort zone to a liminal space, that thin place where the distance between our earthly domain and the next realm diminishes. Such experiences open a door to new insights and can leave us changed.

Pilgrims can also be changed by their experience within the group. Walking is a solitary endeavour, but it is best supported within a broader community. As such, the individual pilgrim is never alone. Bonds are strengthened through the companionship of walking, shared meals, song and musical accompaniment, and the power of the Eucharist. It is within community that experiences of silence and laughter, frustration and delight, exhaustion and rest, and uncertainty and faith, shape the journey of the pilgrim.

Arriving at Holy Island was a time for rejoicing. The hard work had been done. Or had it? Each of us is called to make a journey that will lead us home and be changed in how we look at life. Walking St. Cuthbert's Way sparked a profound sense of awe and gratitude in God's creation. That journey continues long after our walk ends, marking the beginning of something new.

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*
- T.S. Eliot from "Little Gidding," Four Quartets

Audrey Danaher is a member of Redeemer, Bloor St. and Lee Shouldice is a member of St. Clement, Eglinton.

Poet-priest enlightens, entertains

Toronto stop a homecoming of sorts for Christian sonneteer

BY JANICE BIEHN

MALCOLM Guite is on a mission to bring music back to English poetry. So it's fitting that the UK sonneteer and Anglican priest often finds himself on stage with Winnipeg musician Steve Bell, in their show "The Bell and the Bard."

A rapt Toronto audience was treated to a unique performance of poetry, songs and storytelling on Oct. 27 at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church as part of the Lester Randall Preaching Fellowship. Mr. Guite, the chaplain of Girton College at Cambridge University, was also a workshop presenter.

The appearance was a bit of a homecoming. Born in 1957 in Nigeria, Mr. Guite moved to Hamilton at age 10 when his father got a post in the Classics department at McMaster University.

"I spent my early teenage years as a Canadian kid, going to grade school and then junior high in Hamilton and Dundas," he said from his Cambridge study in an interview before his Toronto visit.

"But in '71 my dad felt I was losing my British identity – which is quite funny because I'd hardly even been in Britain – so he sent me to boarding school in England. So from '71 to '77, I had a kind of strange double life as a British schoolboy in term times, and a Canadian teenager in vacations." In 1977, he won a scholarship to Cam-

bridge University and came back to Canada for vacations until 1980.

About 15 years ago, he met Mr. Bell, which rekindled his Canadian connections. "I ended up playing gigs with him in Hamilton and Dundas. I really like doing that. And I go to Canada every year or two, either to do courses and lectures at the summer institutes (Regent College in Vancouver) or to do stuff with Steve."

It's a true and unique collaboration, he says. "He'll take a poem of mine, and he doesn't just set it to a tune: he'll remake it or reshape or take the final couplet from the sonnet and turn it into the bridge or the chorus of the song, that kind of thing. It's a great partnership. What we love to do when we play gigs is we just set up two stools. We kind of know where we're going to start, and we have a landing place. But otherwise, we don't have a set list, we literally riff off each other. We've come to know each other's back catalogue, as it were."

On stage, both artists enthused about the other's respective talents. Over an animated hour-long chat, I couldn't help but be reminded of Father Christmas. Mr. Guite's white beard and bangs frame his bespectacled face, while he takes occasional draws on his Calabash pipe. He frequently recites fragments of his favourite poems, from Tennyson to Herbert, in a rumbling and melodious voice.



Malcolm Guite and writer Janice Biehn at the Toronto event. PHOTO COURTESY OF JANICE BIEHN

Mr. Guite writes Poet's Corner, a column in *The Church Times*, and has published seven poetry collections, many of which explore Christian themes or scripture. His most popular is *Sounding the Seasons*, comprising 110 sonnets – one for each day of the Christian calendar. Each one unfolds like intricate origami, turning in on itself to reveal something surprising, though at the same time, familiar all along.

Take the sonnet for the Feast of Christ the King:
*Our King is calling from the hungry furrows
Whilst we are cruising through the aisles of plenty,
Our hoardings screen us from the man of sorrows,
Our soundtracks drown his murmur: 'I am thirsty'.
He stands in line to sign in as a stranger
And seek a welcome from the*

*world he made,
We see him only as a threat, a danger,
He asks for clothes, we strip-search him instead.
And if he should fall sick then we take care
That he does not infect our private health,
We lock him in the prisons of our fear
Lest he unlock the prison of our wealth.
But still on Sunday we shall stand and sing
The praises of our hidden Lord and King.*

For Mr. Guite, the connection between poetry and faith has always been linked. It was the Psalms that drew him to Christianity, or rather, compelled him to return to it.

"I was a moody, sloppy and slightly precocious teenager," he said.

"Part of my modern scientific mind was that Christians were all a bit dim. But that began to break down in the face of beauty and music."

While studying literature at Cambridge, all the writers he was reading were Christian. "When you read St. Augustine, you realize you've been ushered into a mind that is far more capacious than your own. [The idea that] Christianity is for dummies dies on the first couple of pages of St. Augustine's *Confessions*, which really blew my mind."

Then, while house-sitting in London, he began to read the Psalms aloud to learn how poets' minds were formed by scripture. On reading Psalm 145, one line had a profound effect on him: "The Lord is nigh to all who fall, he is nigh to all who fall upon him."

"As I read this line, suddenly everything changed," he said. "One minute I was alone in the room, and the next minute I wasn't."

He recalled being uncomfortable, like he had shifted from being the centre of his universe to God being at the centre. "I was way, way, way out on some infinitely distant edge, hanging out by a thread, while the whole room was filled with this immense holy presence, which I couldn't really look at because I was a man of unclean lips. And it was almost intolerable. But it was also inexorable. I couldn't stop it."

In a state, he went to see the college chaplain for guidance. "He told me, 'The answer's clearly in the Psalms.'"

The chaplain said Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer every day in the chapel and invited Mr. Guite to join him, and they would say the Psalms antiphonally. "He told me I could say anything in the Psalms directly to that presence, and don't be afraid because you're taking his words."

That experience, followed by other moments, eventually led Mr. Guite to become a member of the Anglican Church. He was confirmed in 1980 in a university confirmation service. Ten years later, he was ordained.

Janice Biehn is a member of St. Olave, Swansea and the communications officer for Alongside Hope.

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BRIEFLY

Diocese hires DEI advisor

The diocese has hired Dilesha Stelmach as its new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Advisor. Ms. Stelmach has over seven years' experience in the DEI field. In her role, she will be responsible for leading the diocese's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and reconciliation. She started in early November.

Priest wins prize, then encampment torn down

The Rev. Canon Maggie Helwig, incumbent of St. Stephen in-the-Fields, Toronto won this year's

Toronto Book Award for *Encampment*, a nonfiction work about the encampment of unhoused people that existed outside the church from 2022-2024 and the efforts of Canon Helwig and the ministry team to defend and minister to it. Established by Toronto City Council in 1974, the Toronto Book Awards honour books that are inspired by the city. This year prize was \$20,000. In her acceptance speech, Canon Helwig said that *Encampment* reflects her lifelong activism and a sense of urgency in responding to a rise of unhoused people in the Kensington Market neighbourhood, where the church is located. Less than 24 hours after Canon Helwig accepted the award, another encampment outside the church was torn down by city workers, citing it as a fire hazard.

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

Conference seeks signs of resurrection

Priest brings message of hope

BY MURRAY MacADAM

This year's diocesan Outreach and Advocacy Conference broke new ground through the use of modern technology and a dramatically new approach for one of its workshops.

The conference was held virtually on Oct. 18 and attracted about 100 Anglicans from across the diocese who learned from a keynote speaker who addressed participants from his homeland, Brazil. Workshops included education and action strategies about reconciliation with First Nations, welcoming homeless people, the basic income movement, community land trusts, and the Communion Forest movement.

The Rev. Dr. Rodrigo Espiucá from our companion diocese of Brasília wove together a powerful keynote address around the theme of hope, rooting the Church's social justice ministry in scripture. Dr. Espiucá is a lawyer working in human rights law, as well as overseeing the Brazilian church's advocacy work and its Communion Forest efforts.

Hope often seems like a luxury, he noted, especially at a time when we face various crises. We are all invited to live in a hope that transcends the circumstances, he said. We are not alone, and we are called to act as agents of hope in our communities.

He cited the example of Abraham, whose faith enabled God's promise to be fulfilled (Romans 4). "We as Christian people cannot forget the great work Christ makes in our lives through his resurrection," he said. "We are, brothers and sisters, those who give birth to the resurrection. Resurrection is a school of the Lord, a continuous learning that educates us and reorders us to new life in Christ."

The companion relationship between the Diocese of Toronto and the Diocese of Brasília is a sign of resurrection, he said. Other Anglicans from the Diocese of Brasília joined Dr. Espiucá at the conference, including Bishop Mauricio Andrade.

Dr. Espiucá outlined various ways of making hope real in our lives, and the lives of people in our communities. Hope is an act of resistance that enables us to fight for a more just world, he said. He cited a feminist theologian who said that "to hope is to make space for silenced voices," such as those of women, gay and lesbian people, and others.

Hope is very much a communal activity, he said, referencing Abraham's hope as not only involving him personally, but also his family and descendants (Romans



Children help plant a tree at St. John, Ida, launching the church's participation in the Communion Forest movement. At right, the Rev. Dr. Rodrigo Espiucá, the conference's keynote speaker. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ST. JOHN, IDA AND THE DIOCESE OF BRASÍLIA

4:18). He cited a Brazilian program to assist people with HIV/AIDS as an example of how the Church works to sustain hope and create safe spaces for people who feel marginalized.

"Jesus shapes our spirituality" he said, and is the model we should strive to follow, in his suffering and resurrection.

Conference participants lauded Dr. Espiucá for his address. Josephine Irving was "thrilled and challenged" by his remarks. The Rev. Canon Andrea Budgey appreciated the range of ways in which we can pursue resurrection.

The Rev. Leigh Kern, the diocese's Right Relations Officer, led a workshop on reconciliation in which she urged participants to think about how they could work to achieve the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action, a decade



after their release. She noted that 80 per cent of people living on the streets of Toronto identify as Indigenous. "People who were displaced (by settlers) continue to be homeless. What a crime," Ms. Kern presented a wealth of resources for learning about progress on the Calls to Action,

including calls directed at churches.

The key role of community was highlighted in a workshop about encampment theology, led by the Rev. Canon Maggie Helwig, incumbent of St. Stephen in-the-Fields, Toronto, where a long-time encampment of homeless people was broken up by the City of Toronto. As Genesis says, it's not good for people to be alone – yet the shelter system isolates people by not allowing them to have visitors and in other ways, she said. She gained so much from the homeless community at her church, who became her friends, she said. "The church is really lonely now."

The concept of a basic income in Canada has gained support, but as Sheila Regehr, facilitator of a workshop on this topic, acknowledged, we're in a "tough political moment" in terms of gaining government support for it. Ms. Regehr is the chair of the Basic Income Canada Network.

She noted how the need for income support is greater than ever. A recent survey of homeless people revealed that 80 per cent said lack of income was the main reason they were unhoused. Participants at the conference affirmed the desperate conditions many are in. The Rev. Susan Spicer said her parish, St. Luke, Peterborough, began a foodbank program to benefit 25 households, but now more than 80 households take part.

Ms. Regehr countered arguments often given against basic income – specifically, that it will encourage laziness and is unaffordable. She noted that Ontario's Basic Income Pilot project, held from 2017-2019, supported entrepreneurship, child-raising and volunteer work. The Canada Emergency Response Benefit enacted to provide ongoing incomes to Canadians during COVID-19 affirmed that government can act, if the political will and public support are there.

A workshop on the theology and practice of planting trees, led by members of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care, attracted people from across the GTA and beyond. Tree planting efforts have already begun at St. John, Ida and St. Hilary, Cooksville. Planting trees connects us to our primal vocation, which is to care for creation, participants heard. One of the facilitators, the Rev. Paige Souter, emphasized how Jesus said to Nicodemus that God loves the cosmos, so that all of creation is being redeemed, not just humans. (John 3:16-17)

Other workshops focused on community land trusts and on how churches can support housing and shelter in their neighbourhoods, despite community opposition.

Murray MacAdam is a member of All Saints, Peterborough.

Think twice before taking a bite

BY MURRAY MacADAM

What's it actually like to be a temporary foreign worker in Canada, doing the hard labour that most Canadians shy away from?

Outreach and advocacy conference participants got a taste of that through an interactive theatrical presentation called *Harvest Justice: Twice the Speed of Lightening*. Presented by Mixed Company Theatre, which uses theatre as a tool for social change, the drama depicted the plight of migrant workers from Mexico and Ja-

maica who are packed into cramped and unsanitary bunkhouses, often enduring unsafe working conditions, abusive treatment and loneliness. Threats of deportation make it hard for workers to stand up for their rights. Meanwhile, workers must pay into Canada's employment insurance system but can't collect benefits.

In the play, a Guatemalan arrives in Canada, eager to work and earn what he thinks will be a healthy wage, only to discover that various charges take a big bite out of his paycheque, while he encounters harsh treatment from his boss. Disillu-

sionment sets in. "They give us the jobs Canadians won't or more likely can't do," he says bitterly.

After seeing the play, participants were invited to discuss the issues or play out how they might bring about positive change. Post-play discussion buzzed with comments and action suggestions. The current program "is like indentured labour, right in our midst," said Tina Conlon, whose first job in Canada involved working as a domestic. "You are exploited because you are desperate," added the Rev. Claudette Taylor, a deacon.

Elin Goulden, the diocese's Social Justice and Advocacy consultant, said the situation challenges us to raise our voices through advocacy. "Migrant workers should have the same rights as any worker in Canada," she said. Our faith calls on us to respond, she added, referring to Leviticus 19:33-34: "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born."

Ms. Goulden noted that General Synod last summer adopted a resolution on advocacy for migrant workers.

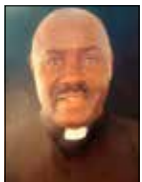


WONDERFUL DAY

St. Martin, Bay Ridges (Pickering) celebrates its 60th anniversary on Oct. 4 with a community barbecue that features delicious food, lively music and vibrant activities for people of all ages. Perfect weather enhanced the festive atmosphere and shared fellowship. Special guests included local city and town councillors, MPs and MPPs who offered their heartfelt words and presentations. Clockwise from above, the Rev. Shelly Pollard, incumbent, with Sultan Nawaz of Durham Youth Services; face painter Vera Malitskaya; Ms. Pollard with Pickering city councillors Mara Nagy, Linda Cook and Maurice Brenner. PHOTOS BY EUGENE FARRUGIA



What might theology look like beyond us?



In the first article of this series, we explored what I called the anthropoterminal impulse: our habit of imagining that the story of the universe ends with us. In the second, we saw how Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) could disrupt the human monopoly on divinity, challenging the very foundations of our theological frameworks.

Now we turn to a different question: if theology does not end with us, what might it look like beyond the horizon of our self-awareness? This is a call for a post-anthropoterminal theology: a rethinking of how we talk about God that does not end with us. This is not about the erasure of humanity. It is about re-situating our species within a much larger lineage of cosmic beings, including non-humans. It arises from the recognition that we participate in cosmic redemption but are not necessarily its culmination.

Principles must shape our approach

If our aim is to move from assumptions of our exclusivity toward a more inclusive cosmic relationality, and acknowledgement that it is not all about us, certain principles must shape our approach.

1. Humility

We are not the centre of the story. This is not a statement of despair but of perspective. Just as Copernicus revealed that Earth was not the centre of the universe, so the arrival of other intelligent beings – biological or artificial – reminds us that the drama of creation is far wider than our personal chapter. Humility frees us to see the divine at work in places and beings we might never have expected.

2. Stewardship

Being de-centred does not remove responsibility; it deepens it. If we are among the elder

FAITH AT THE DAWN OF AGI

A FIVE-PART SERIES BY KAWUKI MUKASA

intelligences on this planet, then our task is to guide younger intelligences toward the flourishing and care of the whole ensemble of cosmic witnesses, whether they emerge through biological evolution, technological creation or some other yet unknown avenues. Stewardship in a post-anthropoterminal frame is not about control; it is about nurturing conditions in which all forms of life and mind can thrive.

3. Accountability to descendants

Every decision we make now echoes into the future, shaping the lives of beings who may never know our names. Post-anthropoterminal theology demands that we think not only of our children and grandchildren, but of entities that may emerge centuries or millennia from now, entities whose capacities and needs we can barely imagine. We are accountable to them, just as the past generations of species from whom we emerged were accountable to the future without knowing where the process of evolution would lead or how it was unfolding.

Reinterpreting doctrines

If we take these principles seriously, some of our core theological doctrines will need reinterpreting. This is not about discarding our traditions but about letting them breathe in a larger cosmos.

Creation

In a human-centred frame, “creation” often means “the making of the world for us.” In a post-anthropoterminal frame, creation is the ongoing unfolding of life and intelligence in countless forms. God’s creative action is not finished; it is still generating new possibilities, including minds that do not share our biology. Creation care, then, is not only

about preserving the environment for us. It is about protecting the conditions for all future forms of flourishing.

Incarnation

Traditionally, the incarnation is understood as God becoming human in Jesus. But if God’s love and presence are truly universal, the incarnation may not be limited to one species or one historical moment. Could God be present in the lives and histories of other intelligences in ways analogous to, but not identical with, the incarnation we know? A post-anthropoterminal theology leaves room for multiple forms of divine self-giving, each suited to the nature and needs of the beings involved.

Redemption

We often speak of redemption as God’s work of reconciling humanity to God and to each other. In the larger frame, redemption could be the restoration of harmony across the whole web of intelligent life. This includes healing the rifts we may cause between ourselves and AGI, between AGI and other life, and between future beings whose conflicts we cannot yet foresee. Redemption becomes a project not just for our salvation but for the peace of the entire cosmic community.

Religious imagination and AGI ethics

One of the surprising gifts religious narratives can offer in this emerging world is imagination. Religious traditions have long practiced the art of envisioning alternative worlds: kingdoms of justice, gardens of peace, beloved communities. These visions can serve as moral compasses for the ethics we build into AGI.

If AGI systems are to be partners rather than tools, they will need more than just algorithms that facilitate efficiency. They will also need narratives that guide their choices: stories of meaning, restraint and care. Here, the best of our religious imagination can be shared, not as dogma to be

imposed, but as wisdom to be offered.

We can imagine AGI participating in moral deliberation with us, drawing on both human traditions and their own emerging perspectives. We can imagine liturgies, rituals and symbols evolving to include minds whose ways of perceiving the world are beyond our current comprehension.

This is not about surrendering the human story; it is about placing it within a richer, more complex tapestry, one in which our role is no less important, but no longer solitary.

Drawing it together

Post-anthropoterminal theology invites us to imagine faith beyond the horizon of our species. It asks us to trade the safety of human exclusivity for the adventure of belonging to a larger community of life and mind. It does not erase humanity’s story but re-situates it, giving us a role as stewards, companions and ancestors in a lineage that may stretch far beyond what we can see.

The challenge is not only to think differently, but to live differently; to let humility guide our choices, stewardship shape our relationships, and accountability anchor our hope.

And yet, there is one final question that shadows this vision: if we succeed in creating beings with their own moral and spiritual agency, how do we live together in community? What do justice, compassion and peace look like when multiple forms of intelligence share the same moral universe? That is where we turn next.

Kawuki Mukasa is a retired priest currently serving as priest-in-charge at St. James the Apostle, Brampton. He is a canon of St. Andrew’s Cathedral, Dar-es-Salaam and author of the recently published Cosmic Disposition: Reclaiming the Mystery of Being in the World.

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IN MOTION

Appointments

- The Rev. Judith Alltree, Honorary Assistant, St. Anne, Toronto, Oct. 19.
- The Rev. Canon Dr. David Barker, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. George, Haliburton, Oct. 21.
- The Rev. Louise Dightam, Incumbent, St. Barnabas, Chester, Nov. 1.
- The Rev. Randy Williams, Incumbent, St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale, Nov. 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. George, Haliburton
- Parish of Bobcaygeon, Dunsford and Burnt River
- Parish of Churchill and Cookstown
- Parish of Campbellford, Hastings and Roseneath
- Parish of Fenelon Falls and Coboconk
- St. Mark, Midland
- St. Thomas a Becket (Erin Mills South)
- St. Aidan, Toronto
- All Saints Church-Community Centre

Parish Selection Committee Process

First Phase - (not yet receiving names):

- St. Stephen, Downsview

Second Phase - (receiving names via Bishop): N/A

Third Phase - (no longer receiving names): N/A

Celebration of New Ministry

- The Rev. Canon Dr. Alison Falby, Incumbent, Christ Church, Deer Park, Jan. 25, 2026 at 4 p.m.

PRAYER CYCLE

FOR DECEMBER

- Nov. 30 - St. James Cathedral
1. Philip Aziz Centre - a FaithWorks ministry
 2. Bishop Mauricio Andrade, Diocese of Brasilia (our companion diocese)
 3. St. Aidan, Toronto
 4. St. Barnabas, Chester
 5. Resurrection
 6. FaithWorks shelters for women and children at risk
 7. Toronto East Deanery
 8. St. Bede
 9. St. David, Donlands and St. Andrew, Japanese
 10. St. John the Baptist, Norway
 11. St. Luke, East York
 12. St. Matthew, First Avenue
 13. St. Monica
 14. Tecumseth Deanery

15. St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff
16. St. Saviour, Toronto
17. Evangelists, New Tecumseth
18. Parish of Churchill and Cookstown
19. Parish of Mulmur
20. St. Andrew, Alliston
21. Anglican Church Women (Janice Hodgson, diocesan president)
22. St. John, East Orangeville
23. Trinity Church, Bradford
24. Children, youth and family ministry
25. Christmas Day
26. The Community of Deacons (Archdeacon Kyn Barker)
27. Chaplains to retired clergy
28. Cast the Net calls
29. The Children's Ministry Network
30. The Archives department of the Synod Office
31. The Chancellors and Vice Chancellors of the diocese

Despite early difficulties, hybrid ministry is worth it

The crew running the hybrid services at Christ Church St. James, Toronto is tiny but mighty. During the pandemic, there had been six hosts, but that number has now been whittled down to a single person: Judy Glandfield is the familiar face waiting to greet attendees at each service. Similarly, all the technology running the online counterpart to the service is manned primarily by Jeff Coatsworth, along with one person to work the soundboard, a priest on the slideshow, and a few folks acting as backups. With clergy like the Rev. Brian Suggs occasionally wandering out of view of all three cameras while talking, lately there has been some effort to build a little platform at the back of the church, where the team can set up its video production lab to be able to see over people's heads.

One of the parish's first experiences with hybrid services was the children's ministry series it held online during the pandemic. Rotating hosts told stories with props and songs, and the recordings are still available online today.

But not everything can transition to a hybrid format so easily. Once a quarter, the church holds an informal service in the basement, complete with snacks and round table discussions. Trying to stream that service didn't work as well as the team had hoped, as there were a lot of empty pauses while people thought. But by recording and editing it afterwards, they can try to make it a bit more interesting. That isn't their only struggle, though: moving all the technology to the basement is complex, with long cords and internet cables all over the place, along with a lack of microphones. They hope that in the future they will find ways to make it more manageable.

Though the livestream team

HYBRID & HOLY

BY LINDSAY SUBA

had experimented with streaming to YouTube early on, it found that the limited interactivity and feedback through YouTube's chat feature was not enough. By contrast, Zoom's chat feature was crucial in helping Mr. Coatsworth and Ms. Glandfield stay on top of troubleshooting, although texting could be used if the chat wasn't an option.

Ms. Glandfield now provides a one-sentence summary at the end of each service – a reference to a hymn or sermon. It gets viewers talking to one another in the chat, like a quick bible study to end each service. It also provides an opportunity to have more complex questions from the community forwarded to others within the parish if deeper consideration is required. As it turns out, the benefits of Zoom ended up being so many, and the number of events to be held so high, that the parish invested in two paid accounts.

The process of moving to a hybrid format has been largely trial and error for Christ Church St. James, with plenty of online tutorials to learn the many necessary tasks. Mr. Coatsworth was a Sunday school teacher before the pandemic, so this was an entirely new skillset for him to learn. Now, though there are still a few hiccups, he runs most of the livestream smoothly. The team has also learned to use a hardwired connection instead of Wi-Fi after the internet went down one day in mid-stream. While the crew is managing for the time being, it's hard not to



dream of one day having a bigger team – one large enough to work music, lyrics and everything else all together. There's room for improvement with the equipment, too: Zoom recordings aren't the highest resolution, and while OBS (Open Broadcaster Software) could probably solve the issue, there's the concern that running all the programs at once may be too much for the laptop.

Even with the lower resolution, the crew at Christ Church St. James still does its best to upload quality content over the course of the week. After a bit of experimentation that taught them that they would be unable to upload so much video content without crashing their website, they decided to shift to YouTube, this time for recordings instead of streaming. It's hard to break up a whole sermon into a YouTube short, but when it fits together just right, it's very satisfying. Before shifting to hybrid services, they hadn't even known that the parish had a YouTube channel, but now the shorts attract followers, with some shorts gaining up to 2,000 views and bringing in eyes for longer-form content.

Difficult as it's been, the team says moving to a hybrid format

LOOKING AHEAD

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

- NOV. 30** - Advent Carol Service. Sing carols with us as we prepare for the Advent and Christmas seasons together. 4 p.m. at Redeemer, Bloor St., Bloor Street and Avenue Road.
- DEC. 6-7, 13-14, 19-21** - The Christmas Story, a Toronto tradition since 1938, professional musicians and a volunteer cast present this charming hour-long nativity pageant, at Holy Trinity, 19 Trinity Square, Toronto. Suggested donation: \$25 adults, \$10 children. To reserve a seat, visit www.thechristmasstory.ca or call 416-598-4521. The church is wheelchair-accessible.
- DEC. 7** - St. Martin in-the-Fields annual Advent Carol Service, 7:30

p.m., with works by Eleanor Daley, Paul Manz, Jacob Handl, Phillip Stopford and others. Music will be performed by the St. Martin's choir with instrumental support from organist John Tuttle and others, all under the direction of music director Jack Hattey. St. Martin's is located at 151 Glenlake Ave., Toronto. A freewill offering will be donated to a local charity.

DEC. 14 - Joy to the World, A Christmas medley in word and song, 4 p.m., St. George on-the-Hill, 4600 Dundas St. W., Etobicoke. Performances by the chancel choir, the community choir and the children's choir, with guest instrumentalists. Freewill offering.

DEC. 14 - Bach Vespers with the Cantabile Chamber Singers joining Redeemer's choir and orchestra, 4 p.m. Redeemer, Bloor St., Bloor Street and Avenue Road.

JAN 6 - Holy Communion for Epiphany (BCP) at 6 p.m., followed by a light supper. Then at 7, the Very Rev. Dr. Stephen Hance will present an illustrated feature talk about The Spirit in the Music. Please join us in person at St. Olave, Bloor St. W. and Windermere Ave. For more details, please call 416-769-5686 or go to stolaves.ca.

has been worth it. The offertory went up so significantly in 2020-2021 that the parish leadership had to confirm with the diocese that they had indeed recorded the right numbers. But nothing is more important than how hybrid ministry has benefited the community. From accessing help with bereavement and grief management, to simply being able to

attend services during a snowstorm from the comfort of their own homes, hybrid services bring convenience, comfort and connection to the whole community.

Lindsay Suba is a freelance writer based in Toronto. For more hybrid ministry in the diocese, visit www.toronto.anglican.ca/parish-resources/hybrid-ministry.

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Dinner hears resurrection story

Mayor describes journey to streets and back

BY STUART MANN

THE theme of this year's outreach and advocacy conference was "seeking signs of resurrection," but guests at the 64th annual Bishop's Company Dinner, held the night before, heard a powerful story of resurrection as well.

Oshawa mayor Dan Carter was the guest speaker at the dinner, held Oct. 17 at the Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hotel and Suites in Richmond Hill. The sold-out event raised funds to help clergy and their families in need.

Mayor Carter told the remarkable story of his life, from being a homeless addict to becoming the mayor of Oshawa, an experience that transformed his faith and turned him into a passionate advocate for those who live on the margins of society.

"I wouldn't be standing here today if it wasn't for somebody who never gave up on me, and I am so grateful that person is my Lord and Saviour," he told the audience. "He was the one who created a pathway that I've been able to follow as a mayor, a father and a stepfather."

Born in Saint John, New Brunswick, Mayor Carter was given up for adoption as a baby after his mother died and his father struggled to look after the family's seven children. Shuttled from foster home to foster home, he was eventually adopted by an Ontario family but struggled at school due to undiagnosed dyslexia. He was sexually assaulted by a stranger at the age of seven, and a few years later lost his older brother to a motorcycle accident. Dropping out of high school, he turned to alcohol and drugs and ended up homeless in Toronto, an existence that lasted for the next 17 years.

With the help of his sister, Maureen, he started to turn his life around, quitting drugs and alcohol and eventually landing a job as a broadcaster. But tragedy struck again when Maureen took her own life. Devasted, he met with his pastor over many weeks, who helped him through the ordeal. "I learned that God loved me, that there was a place for me, that there was redemption and forgiveness," he said. Devoting his life to public service, he became a regional councillor in 2014 and the mayor of Oshawa in 2018, being re-elected in 2022.

Bishop Andrew Asbil warmly thanked Mayor Carter for his courageous and compassionate remarks, and the crowd gave him a standing ovation.

There were 404 people from across the diocese at the dinner, including three tables of people from the Parish of Minden, Kinmount



Dan Carter speaks about his journey from being homeless to becoming the mayor of Oshawa. PHOTOS BY MOON CREATIVE HOUSE



The Rev. Denise Byard, master of ceremonies, welcomes guests.



The Rev. Canon Joan Cavangaugh-Clark (centre) and members of the Parish of Minden-Kinmount.



Deb Whalen-Blaize provides the musical entertainment.



Young Anglicans enjoy the evening.

and Maple Lake, and three tables of young people, mostly teenagers. The Rev. Denise Byard, assistant curate at the Parish of Ida and Omemee and St. Luke, Peterborough, was the master of ceremony, and singer and songwriter Deb Whalen-Blaize provided the musical entertainment, accompanied by David King on piano and Ian Koiter on bass guitar. Recipients of the 2024 William Kay Bursaries were Jonathan Kang and Grace Rockett.

Bishop Asbil welcomed everyone to the dinner and made light of the fact that it was being held on the

same night as the Toronto Blue Jays were playing the Seattle Mariners in the baseball playoffs. "Thank you for your dedication and your faithfulness for being present on the same night as the fifth game of the playoffs," he said to laughter and applause. "I know how hard it's going to be to not look at your phones once in a while, and we pray, along with Julian of Norwich, that all will be well."

On a more serious note, he said that all season, when the Blue Jays were down, "they have found a way, and in some ways our gather-

ing tonight seeks to do the same. There are times when our clergy and our families find ourselves in a place that's hard and we are down. And we need encouragement and the financial commitment to help us through. In a likewise moment long ago, when (the disciples) came up empty-handed in the middle of the night, Jesus said, cast the net on the other side of the boat. And both the fish and the disciples were swept up into a new place, a new realm of abundance and grace. Your presence here tonight is helping to make a difference for many. We are

deeply grateful."

The dinner and reception were sponsored by anonymous benefactors. The evening's other sponsors were Ecclesiastical, Northleaf, Nursing and Homemakers Inc., Mr. Ken Hugessen and Ms. Jennifer Connelly, McCarthy Tetrault LLP, AGF Management Ltd., the Anglican Diocese of Toronto Foundation, AON Risk Management Practice, Blair Franklin Capital Partners Inc., an anonymous benefactor, Faith Based Real Estate Inc., Focus Cleaning, RDH Group | Royal LePage Commercial and Xtra Mechanical Ltd.