

Volunteer-led ESL program thrives

Record number of diocesan Archives inquiries

Diocese affirms commitment to treaty relationships

The Anglican

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Chandanie Mendis from St. Thomas a Becket, Erin Mills South reaches for the ball during a match against St. James the Apostle, Brampton. See pages 9-10 for more photos. PHOTOS BY SAM MOFFATT/MAVERICK MEDIA COLLECTIVE

Festival scores another success

BY RANIL MENDIS, ODT

The 11th annual Anglican Church Cricket Festival (ACCF) brought together more than 150 parishioners from churches across the Greater Toronto Area on July 11 at Creditview Sandalwood Park in Brampton for another memorable day of faith, fellowship and cricket.

Bishop Andrew Asbil was on hand to meet the teams and officially open the festival with a prayer and blessing. His presence set a warm tone for a day that has become a cherished tradition for

many churches across the GTA.

The festival was also honoured by the presence of the Hon. Graham McGregor, MPP for Brampton North and Ontario's Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism, who brought greetings from the Government of Ontario. Regional councillor Navjit Kaur Brar also attended and extended greetings on behalf of the City of Brampton.

While some matches featured exciting cricket from experienced players, many participants were introduced to the game for the very first time. That blend of

competition, encouragement and fellowship continues to make the ACCF unique.

St. Thomas Orthodox Church, Toronto captured its first title, defeating the Church of South India, Toronto in the final.

One of the stories of the day was the remarkable debut of Miracle Church. Competing in the ACCF for the first time, the team advanced to the semifinals and gave eventual champions St. Thomas Orthodox its toughest test of the tournament in a closely contested match.

"My first ACCF tournament

was a memorable experience," said Michael Sampathkumar of Miracle Church. "It gave me the opportunity to enjoy competitive cricket while growing in fellowship and unity with brothers and sisters in Christ. I'm looking forward to participating again."

Miracle Church's memorable debut was also reflected in the presentation of the Ontario Schools Cricket Association Youth Spirit of Cricket awards. Deluthra Jebaraj received the girls' award and Evans Herbert Gnanaraja received the boys' award. Both were recognized for their enthusiasm,

teamwork, fair play and gracious attitude throughout the day.

As the festival concluded, it once again reminded everyone why the ACCF continues to grow after 11 years. It remains a space for the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of young and old, church and unchurched, skilled cricketers and enthusiastic amateurs alike.

Ranil Mendis, ODT is a member of the Anglican Church Cricket Festival's organizing committee and a parishioner of St. Thomas a Becket, Erin Mills South.



Participants and volunteers in the ESL program at St. Timothy, North Toronto gather at a session in April where Farnoosh Darooie (front and centre) read a letter of thanks to the volunteers. PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. TIMOTHY, NORTH TORONTO

ESL participant shares gratitude

BY GEORGE GOODWIN

THREE years ago, a funny little flyer showed up in an email from our new priest, the Rev. Irina Dubinski, who had recently arrived at St. Timothy, North Toronto. The flyer proposed that we start an ESL program at St. Timothy's. At that point, Irina was turning us upside down: shifting the position of the altar, removing pews so communion could be adminis-

tered closer to the congregation, starting a vegetable garden on the front lawn of the church. My, but there was a lot happening! And it was wonderful ... Several of us responded to Irina's call. None of us had experience teaching English as a second language, but we were game to support our new priest as she set about reconnecting St. Tim's with the neighbourhood. There were those of us – I was

one! – who wondered whether such an initiative could ever fly in a posh, two-income neighbourhood like North Toronto. Who did we know who needed to learn how to speak English? At the first ESL session in June 2023, six volunteers showed up. To our surprise, so did six willing students. A single mother from Brazil teaching at university, a young man from Turkey, someone from India, someone else from Hong Kong... and all they wanted to do was talk in English so they could improve their speaking skills. The skeptics among us left that first get-together feeling that we were truly doing God's work. Those six students were so grateful to be able to sit in our library with no fear of judgment or criticism, working their way through tough words like "enough" as we helped them

as much as we could. By the end of the first year, the leadership of the Rev. Carol Shih, our assistant curate, had grown the attendance to 10-20 students who arrived every Tuesday morning from all over the city. A real community had developed within St. Tim's ESL program. Friendships were created as newcomers from all over the world found comfort in each other's experiences. They went on weekend trips together around the city, they supported each other when interviews didn't turn into jobs, and we all celebrated when someone arrived and said it was their final meeting because they had found a job. A reading group formed spontaneously and met for an hour every two weeks to discuss the English book they were all reading. A career mentoring group also met every two weeks, and we helped several newcomers find jobs to support their new lives in Canada.

Jonathan Kang took over from Carol after her departure in 2025. The ESL program continued to thrive during his time with us. The development of a greater degree of lay leadership was a hallmark of his guidance during the third year of the ESL program.

In April 2026 – three years after the ESL program was started – the wife of an Iranian couple who often attend our sessions asked if she could address the group. Farnoosh stood up and read this letter:

Dear volunteers,
We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for everything you have done for us. Your kindness, patience, and dedication in teaching us English during this time have truly made a meaningful difference in our lives.

Because of your support, we have gained more confidence in speaking, improved our skills and feel more connected to the community. You didn't just teach us a language – you opened new doors and gave us hope for a better future.

Even in the cold of winter,

through snow and harsh weather, you came and continued to support us. This showed us your true commitment and kindness, and we will never forget it.
This week is Volunteer Week, and we would also like to congratulate you on being part of this meaningful and inspiring community.
We deeply appreciate the time and energy you shared with us. Your encouragement has inspired us to keep learning and growing. Thank you for your generosity and for believing in us.
With sincere appreciation,
Farnoosh Darooie

In the shadows of the photo from that day are the 150-200 other volunteers and participants who have passed through the St. Tim's ESL program since 2023, including my late wife Sheila, to whom this program was so dear that we talked about it in the hospital up until the end. It's good to recognize the number of lives – both students and volunteers – that we have touched so positively in such a short time. Not all of the volunteers are members of our congregation; several live in the neighbourhood, heard what we were doing and wanted to participate.

Several of the folks who first walked through our doors hoping to learn how to speak better English have themselves become parishioners and begun to volunteer in other parish initiatives: gardening, arranging altar flowers, running AV during services.

And finally, it's important to acknowledge that Irina "stepped out in faith" when she suggested we do this three years ago, despite the misgivings some of us had. She knew we wanted to reconnect with those who needed what we had to give. She understood that if we were successful that we could change many lives for the better.

She was right: we have.

George Goodwin in a member of St. Timothy, North Toronto.

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Canon Mann unveils a framed photo by Michael Hudson of St. James Park and the cathedral. PHOTOS BY MARTHA HOLMEN



Bishop Andrew Asbil chats with Evangeline Mann as her father looks on.



Canon Mary Conliffe embraces Canon Mann after sharing a warm tribute to him.



Friends, colleagues and well-wishers fill the Johnson Boardroom.

Communicator celebrated

Friends and colleagues gathered at the Synod Office on May 28 to bid farewell to Canon Stuart Mann, who retired as the diocese’s director of Communications and editor of *The Anglican*. Canon Mann first joined the diocese in 1990 as an editorial assistant. He expressed his gratitude for being part of “that great story we call the Church.”



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Archivists field citizenship rush

Inquiries soar as people trace Canadian roots

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

A recent change to Canadian citizenship law is sending people in the United States and beyond on a search for their family roots, creating an unexpected surge in demand among church archivists of all denominations.

Citizenship for people born outside Canada used to be limited to just children of Canadian citizens, but since Parliament passed Bill C-3 in December, someone born outside Canada before Dec. 15, 2025, can be recognized as a Canadian citizen if they have a Canadian grandparent or great-grandparent. For that to happen, they need to apply for proof of citizenship – and that’s where archivists come in.

Since December, archives across Canada have seen a surge in ancestral research requests, and the archives for the Diocese of Toronto are no exception. Claire Wilton, the diocesan archivist, and Sarah McDougall, the archives assistant, have been fielding hundreds of requests from people looking for their Canadian ancestors.

“It’s been nonstop,” says McDougall. “We used to respond to genealogy requests, and I would say the whole thing would take about a week. We’re now telling people, hopefully by the end of this month or up to five weeks, because we are just so inundated. It’s extreme, and it was unexpected.”

Normally, the archives gets 75 to 100 genealogical requests each year. In the first three months of 2026, they were already up to 88 requests, with more coming in each day. The archives charges a \$30 search fee for up to an hour of research, along with fees for certified copies, and the incoming funds show just how high the demand is.

“Normally we make about \$1,200 a year in fees. We’d already made over \$5,000 up to May,” says Wilton.

The ease of finding an elusive ancestor can depend on how much information a requestor has, often from sites like Ancestry.ca or FamilySearch.

“Some people have done a great deal of research, and they’re fairly certain



Diocesan archivists Sarah McDougall and Claire Wilton have been inundated with requests from people looking for their Canadian ancestors. PHOTO BY MARTHA HOLMEN

of exactly where the person lived,” says Wilton.

Others know only that their great-grandparent was born in Ontario, requiring a lot more digging. In that case, the archives team often refers them to records from the Toronto Public Library or Library and Archives Canada to help narrow down the search. They say requestors are often surprised by what’s involved in searching historical records, and how little is available online.

“I think because Ancestry and FamilySearch are so pervasive now, they assume that our records must be available to that level as well, and they’re just not,” says McDougall. “It’s almost like an education moment. It’s been neat seeing people who have never given archives a second thought having to come to us. I do feel like people are learning, which is really cool.”

They both say they’re not surprised that many of the requests are coming from Americans who are uncomfortable

with the current political climate in their home country. McDougall admits that she’s particularly attached to those cases.

“It’s the ones who are part of marginalized communities, such as LGBTQ folks and people of colour. Those are the ones I’m most concerned about, because they’re the ones who I think are the most afraid and want to come up here,” she says.

When a new request comes in, the first resource the archivists check is their map to see which churches existed at the time. That leads them to parish registers, where baptisms and marriages were recorded. With historical realities like changing parish boundaries, renamed townships, travelling clergy and new settlers on the move, finding the right record is part skill and part luck.

“It’s really a struggle for me, even though I know that it’s like a needle in a haystack for some of these. You really want to be able to find it,” says Wilton.

“It’s so exciting when you’ve had a real string of not finding something and you finally find something. It’s like a big party.”

But success can be elusive. There’s simply not enough time to check every register, and sometimes requestors are left disappointed. Wilton guesses her success rate is about 40 per cent.

“It’s so hard when you’re just going to check one more church – what if it’s at that one? It’s really hard to give up, because you just don’t know,” says Wilton. “We’ve seen cases where a whole family is baptized when the oldest kid is 16, so that means you could look for a 16-year period. I usually do 10 years as a reasonable period to look for, but it’s challenging to give up.”

Both archivists have had cases where a name pops up somewhere unexpected during unrelated research, like a woman from Darlington Township who appeared in the registry for St. Philip, Etobicoke, some 80 kilometres away.

“You can never be 100 per cent certain that you’ve actually searched everywhere. And that’s hard, too, because Claire and I both want to do the best possible job, and you never know,” says McDougall.

Despite the increase in their workload, both archivists say they’re happy to help so many people looking into their family histories – though they’re also hoping the numbers start to subside soon.

“Sarah and I love genealogy, which I think makes us very much want to help people, but we also do have to respect the fact that we have a lot of internal work that still needs to be done,” says Wilton. “We’re just trying to find a rhythm and a balance whereby we’re able to help but also focus on our work.”

For her part, McDougall says she hopes this influx of attention will help more people realize how vital archives really are.

“This really is a moment that I never expected. I think people forget why archives are important, and this has been such an out-of-left-field reminder,” she says. “I’m hoping, especially at a time of financial austerity at all government levels for funding and grants, that this resurgence of need will show that this stuff is actually wildly important.”



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Bishop Andrew Asbil and the Rev. Leigh Kern (third from right) present gifts to Ogimaa-Kwe Chief Margaret Sault and councillors of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation in May as a step in renewing the diocese's treaty relationships. Below: A raku bowl by local artist Shu-Chen Cheng sits alongside a copper cup and vessel. Items like these were given to each of the four First Nations.

Diocese renews treaty ties

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

A diocesan effort to examine its response to Truth and Reconciliation has led to a new process of reflection, repentance and rebuilding relationships. About 130 people signed onto Zoom on the evening of June 14 to hear from the Rev. Leigh Kern and Bishop Andrew Asbil about their efforts to renew the Diocese of Toronto's treaty relationships with the seven First Nations on whose land the diocese lives and worships.

The process began in the winter of 2025, when the Bishop's Collaborative for Right Relations, a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous clergy and laity, began an audit of the progress the diocese had made in implementing the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Of those 94 calls, 13 specifically name the Church. The collaborative found that the diocese had implemented only three of the 13 calls.

That audit spurred a longer conversation about Call to Action #46, which calls for the Church to "renew or establish Treaty relationships based on principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for maintaining those relationships into the future."

"Early in 2026, Leigh and I sent out letters to each of the chiefs and councils of the seven communities, asking if there might be an opportunity for us to meet together and talk about renewing our treaty relationships," Bishop Andrew told the gathering.

Since then, they have heard back from five communities and visited four so far: the Chippewas of Rama, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Alderville First Nation and Curve Lake First Nation. They're waiting to schedule a time

with a fifth and are hoping to hear back from two more.

Before sharing the story of those visits, Kern, the diocese's Right Relations Coordinator, began with some historical context – a history that is not in the past, she explained, but is living, present and ongoing.

First Nations in southern Ontario were forcibly displaced multiple times and had their land stolen from them repeatedly. While 1/7 of all Crown lands were set aside for the Anglican Church, many First Nations had to purchase their own reserve lands, which were later stolen from them again.

Treaty relationships, Kern explained, were meant to be ones of interconnection, interdependence and respect, renewed annually in ceremony and prayer. But treaties that were supposed to honour Indigenous rights, including the right to hunt and fish, instead took away those rights and often made smaller the already tiny reserves.

Before meeting with the First Nations chiefs and councils, Kern and the diocese's archivists did careful research to better understand the Church's history of colonialism and broken treaties.

"The sad part for us has been that the truth is actually so much more painful than even these high-level surface presentations," Kern said. "This isn't far-away history, it's very close – the land under our feet."

She and Bishop Asbil both felt it was essential to approach the First Nations communities with knowledge of each group's specific stories.

"Not knowing our history is not an excuse anymore. It's very important for us to hear the stories that are local to us," said Bishop Asbil. "My eyes have certainly been opened to the stories."

In each of the four meetings, Bishop Asbil brought a bundle of tobacco

as a sign of welcome and gratitude. He offered words of repentance, confessing the sins of Christian colonialism and acknowledging the hurt and brokenness caused by the Anglican Church.

He and Kern offered a copper vessel to mark a relationship of cooperation and collaboration, a symbol of great respect for the Nations' teachings, traditions and relationship with their territories. Purple fabric from a former Anglican Church represented the Church's call to repentance and confession of sin, as well as the office of bishop. Smaller copper cups were presented to each member of council as a symbol of the diocese's deep desire to renew the relationships. And a pottery bowl from a local artist, made from different clay bodies coming together, represented the beauty and abundance of the Great Lakes basin.

Bishop Asbil, Kern and Mary Asbil, who accompanied her husband on his visit to Curve Lake, all remarked how moving the experiences had been.

"There was in each of those rooms deep gratitude on the one hand, candour on the other hand," said Bishop Asbil. "One of the comments that we heard on a number of occasions was, 'We had no idea what you really wanted, and we didn't know what you were going to say.'"

"There was deep stillness and silence in the room, a lot of emotion – both gratitude and also real honesty about survivor hurt," said Mary Asbil. "We could just listen and be part of it and take that in."

In a Q&A session following the Zoom presentation, those gathered wondered



how they could engage with issues of reconciliation. Bishop Asbil and Kern both encouraged them to find ways of building relationships with local First Nations communities at the parish level.

"Building relationships is something we can all do," said Kern. "It takes a lot to build trust and build relationships, and we can break the trust in a second. It is a journey we are on."

Both emphasized that the diocese and its parishes are the ones responsible for making the effort to build relationships, not First Nations.

"It is our job to reconcile. We did the harm. We need to repent," said Kern. "We need to do a 360 as a church."

Bishop Asbil also emphasized that he carries the whole diocese with him in these conversations, speaking words of penance on behalf of every parish and its members.

"We wanted to have an evening like that so that you knew what we were saying, because we are inviting you into this work," he said. "It is imperative that we do this work. We are summoned into this reconciliation ministry. I'm counting on you to keep all of us accountable in doing this work."



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Fresh, ancient words for a fractured age

Instructions for the End of the World.
By Maggie Helwig, June 2026.
ISBN 9781552455210,
e-ISBN 9781770568969, 240 pp, \$24.95.

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

I read most of this book on the bus and on the subway, after dropping my daughter off at kindergarten on spring mornings that stubbornly refused to be spring mornings. Was this the best environment to really delve into a collection of sermons? Possibly not. But when the text in question demands a reckoning with the world in its present state, crises and all, perhaps out-in-the-world is exactly the place to read it.

Instructions for the End of the World collects sermons preached by the Rev. Canon Maggie Helwig to the community of St. Stephen in-the-Fields, Toronto, over the course of five years, from March 2020 to November 2025. The events of the pandemic and the years that followed – the churchyard encampment and the repeated attempts to remove it, worsening income inequality, the rise of nationalism and a turn to fascism – are the backdrop for these texts, but the focus is the gospel.

What I found were sermons fresh and ancient, new and deeply timeless. Canon Helwig's exegetical style is at once intellectual and deeply poetic, considering the nuances of New Testament Greek, the possibilities of literary imagery, and the realities of particular historical contexts. She hints at the personalities of the gospel writers, considers the specific ways parables are introduced, and challenges simplistic interpretations. Her sermons bring a fresh perspective to familiar stories, often offering nuance I hadn't considered before.

Canon Helwig's literary prowess is evident, but her sermons are not literary exercises. She speaks to her congregation in moments of real calamity and uncertainty, both on its doorstep and in the broader world. As I read, I heard most clearly a priest faithfully caring for her flock, speaking words of comfort, providing consolation and encouragement. And now she writes these words to all of us, finding our footing in a world that seems more chaotic every day.

Rooted in the Revised Common Lectionary, the three-year cycle of scriptural readings used in many Christian churches, this collection positions us alongside biblical figures grappling with their own turbulent times. Like us, these people exist in a messy, complicated world full of messy, complicated humans whom we are called to love, just as God loves us and we must love ourselves. We see here the theology from which *Encampment*, Canon Helwig's award-winning book, grew – a theology that compels love of neighbour and action in the face of injustice. Canon Helwig calls us to consider the ways we can love and serve our neigh-

bours in any context. (And there is no one who is not included among our neighbours.) She exhorts us to do whatever we can, however we can, even if it doesn't feel like enough. "We can heal, now and then, small moments of our times. We can make things better, not forever, but for a day, an hour, ten minutes – and those minutes matter eternally," she writes.

The hope Canon Helwig provides is complex and nuanced. There are no empty platitudes to be found in these pages. She acknowledges the pain and suffering in the world, the ways in which our society is deeply wrong and deeply flawed, and she doesn't minimize any of it. "Sorrow and suffering, limit and loss, are a part of this reality, and to take away those hard human

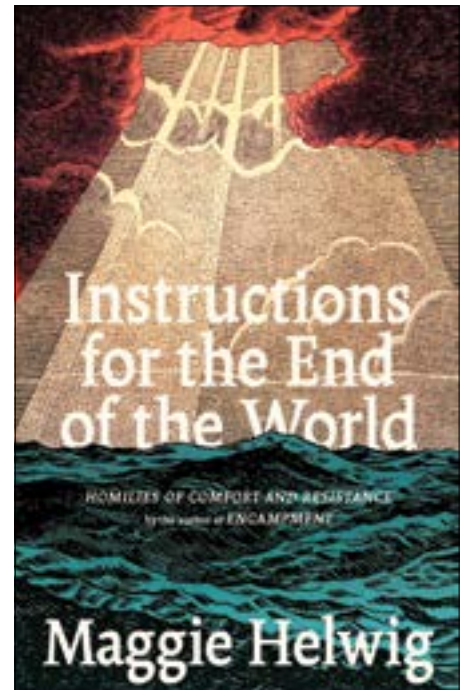
troubled world.

As Canon Helwig speaks again and again of the radical love of a God who chooses to join us in our own frailty and brokenness, and thereby make sacred our broken world, I can't help but come away with a deep sense of wonder and gratitude that we, together, are called to plant our gardens in Babylon, to celebrate that excessive, unreasonable love, and to do whatever we can to make that love known in the world.

"We are the body, and this is the time, for we have no other bodies, and no other times. This is the year of God's favour, because we have no other year. This is the place of fulfillment, because we have no other place."



The Rev. Canon Maggie Helwig stands near the encampment in the churchyard of St. Stephen in-the-Fields in 2022. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON



limits would be to take away our human lives, our shattering, struggling, beautiful, painful lives," she writes.

With evidence of such darkness, it would be easy to fall into despair, but instead these sermons are filled with relentless hope. The boundless, radical love of God through Jesus Christ breathes on every page, and it is that love that strengthens us as the Body of Christ to live in the world and send God's love back into it. "Even if we cannot know it in the moment, we are held, we are cherished, we matter. We must take that love and try to bring it into the world, in our small kindness and our small resistance," she writes.

Instructions also provides an antidote to the Christian nationalism that so often dominates the public conversation in North America. Canon Helwig returns to Christianity's roots as an outsider movement – a faith found not in the halls of power, but in the margins. And it's only as the Body of Christ, all of us working together, that we can hope to help God's kingdom break in. This is not a faith of individual salvation, but of working and praying and loving as a community to bring peace into a

Always on time.

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Photo adapted from Fizes/Shutterstock

Indigenous art reimagines sacred space

Epiphany and St. Mark, Parkdale has installed a permanent Indigenous art installation in its worship space, created by Mohawk artist Merlin Homer and dedicated by the Rev. Dr. Jason McKinney on Aug. 24, 2025.

“For a long time, I wanted to forefront an Indigenous, female presence within the interior of an Anglican Church. I have called this a Grandmothers Chapel,” writes Homer. “This hope has been manifested, and it is beautiful.”

Reconciliation looks at Christianity and the Indigenous spiritual traditions of the land called Canada and sees that they have been in contrast with, and at tragic odds with, each other. Christianity stems from the Abrahamic world view, in which the creator of all is assumed to have a special relationship with human beings. Contemporary Christianity also has roots in a European world that has been largely patriarchal and misogynistic. In contrast, Indigenous traditions place high value on women and the feminine as creative and life giving. In these traditions, the creator of all is seen to have equal and full relationships with all beings, human as well as plant and animal.

The upsetting history of the meeting of these two traditions is well known and does not need repeating here. The Grandmothers Chapel invites us to something different — to see the two traditions not as antagonists but as complementary, able to create wholeness within each of us and with our world, our oneness and equality with all God’s creation. The equality of Woman with Man.

In the Grandmothers Chapel



Grandmother Anne artwork. PHOTOS COURTESY OF EPIPHANY AND ST. MARK, PARKDALE



Grandmother Moon artwork.



Grandmother Spider artwork.

we find three grandmothers, and among them a stained-glass vision of Mary as the Madonna of the Wheat that seems to have been waiting for them. Many scholars agree that this representation of Mary harkens to ancient portrayals of the sacred feminine. It is as if our Madonna of the Wheat has been waiting for her mother and grandmothers to come to her.

Grandmother Moon

Our Grandmother Moon is a feminine figure deeply associated with the waters. She creates the tides in the seas and oceans and within all women, who are connected with the waters. From the waters of the moon within women, all new human life emerges. Grandmother Moon is paradox, light in darkness or, in the case of an eclipse, darkness in light. Stillness and

vibrant power at once.

In our painting of Grandmother Moon, we see the quiet power of her darkness, which still allows light. We see her in her waters, luminous and female, illuminating the waters with the colours of the night. We can feel great stillness and great power.

Grandmother Hannah

The painting of Grandmother Hannah (St. Anne) shows her holding the infant Miriam (Mary). St. Anne is honoured as the grandmother of Jesus of Nazareth.

Our St. Anne is surrounded by echoes of the luminous moon in the waters of the Grandmother Moon painting. This birth of a daughter is presented as emerging from the depths of creation. This is a story of long ago and far away, being repeated here on

Turtle Island. Baby Mary is dressed in Mary’s traditional blue. Around mother and child we see a symbolic representation of all creation, the four directions, the four colours of the medicine wheel. Here, to suggest the power and protectiveness of life, the colours are represented as living flowers, drawn in the woodland Indian style.

Roses are said to be the flowers associated with both Mary and Anne, white and red. Here those colours are combined in a circle of wild roses, showing the natural capacity of our land to hold and honour holiness. The colour green is also associated with St. Anne. Here it is depicted as the living green of the Earth, sacred in itself. Surrounding all, a turquoise necklace, protection to the newborn and carrying the meaning of the connection between the

sky and the waters.

Looking at this painting, we rest in the assurance that in the vastness of creation, we are always held.

Grandmother Spider

The third painting is of Grandmother Spider. Spiders always have something to tell us, with their beautiful, hopeful webs, spun with endless patience and perseverance. Grandmother Spider is a figure of incarnation and mystery. These words accompany her: Giving birth to the world, she lives within it.

Three swans fly at the centre of this painting. Grace, beauty and spiritual significance, messengers of faith, flying free within the web of life. Guides to self-awareness and transformation.

Submitted by Epiphany and St. Mark, Parkdale.



Archbishop Chris Harpe and artist Donald Chretien at Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St. PHOTOS COURTESY OF DONALD CHRETIEN



Roots of Hope mounted on the west wall of the church.

Indigenous mural unveiled, celebrated by church community

BY PATRICK GOSSAGE

A powerful Indigenous mural called Roots of Hope mounted on the west wall of the Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St. is becoming a Toronto landmark.

The Ven. Steven Mackison, incumbent of the Redeemer, Bloor St., describes the mural as a “visible message to Torontonians of Indigenous art and culture that we believe will contribute to understanding and reconciliation. It is strong evidence of our parish’s

vision to reach out to the world around us.”

On June 7, parishioners were joined by Ojibwe artist Donald Chretien for the mural’s dedication led by Archbishop Chris Harper, the National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop and Presiding Elder of Sacred Circle. Chretien, a member of Nipissing First Nation, based the colourful mural on traditional bead work, devising a striking fusion with digital technology. The exterior placement of the 72 ft. long, 17-panel mural emphasizes connection to the earth and the

heads that symbolize the church’s roots, Chretien explained. “The roots are the base of the tree of life from our ceremonies and reach to the sky.”

The mural is accompanied by plaques in English and Ojibwe that read, “We invite you to walk the path of beaded roots. They reach deep towards an ancient, buried creek. They spring from land lived upon by humans for 18,000 years; from the Huron-Wendat and the Petun and the Seneca to the Mississauga of the Credit River. These roots now

rise to embrace the living church. What comes before nurtures what comes after. With stories. With healing wisdom. With hope.”

Stephen Allen, the dedicated leader of the church’s active Indigenous Solidarity Working Group (ISWG), shepherded the project to completion over many years. Reflecting on the culmination of this project, he said, “At this busy intersection of Bloor Street and Avenue Road, may this mural communicate our commitment to truth and reconciliation, and may this mural be a celebration

of Indigenous art and culture.”

Dawn Lee, the design and project coordinator, highlighted the mural’s dynamic inspirations and the significance of Indigenous roots holding up a church. “The colours shift in ‘waves’ travelling along the wall to represent the four stages or ‘hills’ of life, the four seasons, the four cardinal directions of the compass and the four colours of the Medicine Wheel,” said Lee.

Patrick Gossage is a parishioner at Redeemer, Bloor St.

Parish marks milestone with community partners



Guests at the anniversary celebration included Bishop Riscylla Shaw, costumed interpreters from the Penetanguishene Museum and costumed naval interpreters. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE PARISH OF PENETANGUSHENE

ON April 12, the Parish of Penetanguishene celebrated its 190th anniversary, along with the 40th anniversary of the ordination of the Rev. Vickie Edgeworth-Pitcher, the parish's current interim priest-in-charge.

Participating in the celebration were Bishop Riscylla

Shaw, the colour party from the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 68, costumed interpreters from the Penetanguishene Museum, and costumed naval interpreters. (The Anglican parish of St. James-on-the-Lines was built for and by the soldiers stationed at the local garrison, which is now called

Discovery Harbour.) Bringing greetings on behalf of the province and the country were Adam Chambers, MP for Simcoe North, and the parents of Jill Dunlop, the local MPP. Future anniversary plans involving the historic cemetery include the planting of a children's memorial garden

in remembrance of the boys of the Boys Reformatory of Upper Canada (the province's first juvenile detention centre) and the many other children buried there. Children from Burkevale Protestant Separate School will also be participating in the No Stone Left Alone program, honouring and remember-

ing Canada's veterans. The program will conclude with placing white crosses made by clients of the Waypoint Mental Health Centre at the grave of every veteran in the historic cemetery.

Submitted by the Parish of Penetanguishene



LEARNING TOGETHER

Faith in the Food Court, a gathering hosted by the social justice committee at St. Martin, Bay Ridges, meets monthly to explore ways to actively bring faith into the local community. Each session begins and ends with prayer. In the spring, the group was reading and discussing the book 52 Ways to Reconcile by David A. Robertson. PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. MARTIN, BAY RIDGES

BRIEFLY

Bishop receives honorary degree

Bishop Victoria Matthews received a Doctor of Divinity degree (*honoris causa*) from Trinity College, Toronto at its convocation ceremony in May. The honour recognized her pioneering leadership in the Anglican Church of Canada and the wider Anglican Communion. In 1994, she became the first female bishop in Canada and the fifth in

the world when she was elected a suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Toronto. She went on to be the Bishop of Edmonton and the Bishop of Christchurch (New Zealand).

Diocese celebrates women's ordination

The Diocese of Toronto is marking the milestone 50th anniversary of women's ordination to the priesthood in the Anglican Church of Canada by hosting two events. On Oct. 15 from 12-3 p.m., a service of Holy Eucharist will be held at St. James Cathedral for ordained women priests (active and retired), followed by a catered lunch in Snell

Hall. Confirm your attendance at the lunch and any food allergies by emailing Aimen Akbar at aakbar@toronto.anglican.ca. On Oct. 18 at 4:30 p.m., there will be a joyful service of Evensong at St. James Cathedral open to all, with a light reception to follow.

Youth gather for annual retreat

Registration is open for the ReCharge youth retreat for youth in grades 6-12 on Sept. 18-20 at Medeba Retreat Centre. Get ready for a weekend filled with fun, connection, faith and time to recharge together. The registration deadline is Sept. 6 at 8 p.m. Sign

up online at www.linktr.ee/bymc.

Registration opens for Outreach conference

The diocesan Outreach & Advocacy Conference will be held on Oct. 17. This year's keynote speaker is Dr. Dean Detloff, the research and advocacy officer of Development & Peace – Caritas Canada and a sessional faculty member at the Institute for Christian Studies. He will address the theme of "The Church as a Catalyst for Liberation." Registration will open after Labour Day on the diocesan website, www.toronto.anglican.ca.



Ranil Mendis, ODT and others are all smiles before a match. PHOTOS BY SAM MOFFATT/MAVERICK MEDIA COLLECTIVE



Players greet each other before a match.



Players from the Church of South India and Miracle Church.



Bishop Andrew Asbil opens the festival with a prayer and blessing.



Bishop Andrew Asbil, Judi Marshall, regional councillor Navjit Kaur Brar, Peter Marshall, the Rev. Edmund Laldin and Ranil Mendis, ODT gather for a photo.



A member of St. Jude, Bramalea North cheers on teammates.



Players and spectators enjoy some shade during a match.



Players from the Church of South India and St. Jude, Bramalea North during a match.



A young player closely follows the action.



A trophy and medals await the winners.



Players and spectators gather for opening remarks during the Anglican Church Cricket Festival.

Discovering your ecological parish

An intro to watershed thinking

BY THE REV. ANDREW KUHL

I want you to think about your parish, the specific geographic neighbourhood that your church finds itself in. Maybe you know your parish boundaries clearly, maybe you can even walk them. I wonder, what are the defining features of your neighbourhood? What are the key landmarks that shape your church’s geography?

Maybe you would start with your church building, then think about the other gathering points in your neighbourhood. Maybe you would think about where people eat or drink, or where they work and live. Maybe you would think about where they shop or access services, or where they go for recreation and fun. Maybe you would even think about the transportation networks or hubs.

The gift of thinking about the parish as a fundamental unit in Anglicanism is that we have a particular place that focuses our ministry. How we live, work, love and worship can be shaped around the needs of that neighbourhood. Those realities of our neighbourhood of course connect beyond our parish to our deaneries, diocese and beyond, and they allow a tangible point of ministry for one another as Anglicans.

But what happens if you think beyond the human frame of reference and consider an ecological view? What is the story of the landscape and ecosystem in your parish? What are its defining characteristics? What would you put on a map as key features for the plants and wildlife? Or for the rivers and hills?

One good starting point is to use a wa-



PHOTO BY THE REV. CANON SUSAN SPICER

tershed approach to understanding your local ecological neighbourhood. A watershed is simply a geographic area where all water in that area flows through a shared body of water. It might be a creek or a river, it could be a lake or a marsh, it might be bigger than your parish or you might find a particular sub-watershed that you are connected to.

For example, I live in a community that has two sub-watersheds, the Willow Creek and Mattheson Creek sub-watersheds. These creeks shape our village and provide wonderful places for walking and hiking. They eventually connect with the Nottawasaga River through the Minesing Wetlands, and the Nottawasaga River continues to Lake Huron at Wasaga Beach. The Great Lakes watershed connects us together as a diocese eventually to the St. Lawrence River and the rest of the waters of the world.

From there you can discover the network of neighbours that live, work, love and worship within your ecological neighbourhood. The waters that you

share connect you together, the way the waterbodies gather the water shapes a great web of connection.

Just imagine for a second what happens to water if you were able to follow it along its journey in your watershed – where your wastewater goes and is managed, to what happens from your garden, lawns or fields, even where the water from the baptismal font is emptied, is all gathered into your local watershed. Think about where your drinking water comes from. If you live with a well, you are probably more aware of the ground water around you.

When we consider that way of looking at our parish, it invites us to attend and care for the relationships that we have or forget that we have. It invites us to envision the active presence of God sustaining and renewing creation. As Psalm 104:30 says, “When you send forth your spirit, they are renewed.” And it asks us how we participate in life with and care for all the beings (human and non-human) in the bounds of our parish.

This Season of Creation with the theme of “Living Waters,” you are invited to map your watershed and discover what you and your parish know about your ecological parish. The resource is a simple set of questions to discover week after week and create a growing map that you could use as a station near the entrance to worship, or over coffee hour. All it takes is a map of your community, a few simple supplies and a willingness to play and create together. You could run it as a workshop all in one day or add a walk or an exploration into your plans. Hopefully it will inspire you to think about those relationships in your watershed and discover again where God is at work in your parish and in creation. And then ask yourselves what you want to do to care for your community.

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.

Resources deepen engagement with creation care

BY ELIN GOULDEN

This year, Anglicans in our diocese have more resources than ever to help them observe the Season of Creation.

The Season of Creation is a global ecumenical movement that invites Christians to engage intentionally in action and prayer for God’s creation from Sept. 1, the Orthodox Day of Prayer for Creation, to Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. Our diocese has officially observed the Season of Creation since it was adopted by General Synod in 2019, though individual parishes had begun celebrating it even earlier. The global Season of Creation website provides a scripture-based theme and related resources every year, but local churches are also encouraged to develop their own.

The Bishop’s Committee on Creation Care has produced several resources in keeping with this year’s theme of “Living Water.” The Rev. Adrienne Clements has offered a liturgy

used at St. Hilary, Cooksville last fall for the dedication of a rain garden. The Rev. Andrew Kuhl, of the parish of Craighurst and Midhurst, has created a watershed mapping exercise that invites parishioners into a deeper understanding of their local watershed and its challenges. The Rev. Dr. Alison Kemper has gathered prayer resources on the theme of water, while I have collected advocacy and action ideas for parishes and individuals to help protect water in our communities and beyond. The Rev. Canon Susan Spicer, co-chair of the committee, offers a theological reflection tying together the theme of “Living Water” and the flourishing of creation, which is the goal of the Anglican Communion Forest. All these resources can be found on our diocesan website.

In March 2024, church leaders from around the globe met in Assisi, Italy to explore establishing a new feast in the Western Church calendar to celebrate God’s original and



PHOTO BY DASOLA DINA

ongoing acts of creation. In 2025, General Synod, along with other church bodies around the world, adopted the Feast of the Creator to be held on Sept. 1 or another date during the Season of Creation. This spring, Council of General Synod approved a trial use liturgy to be used for this feast. Readings for the feast have also been added to the Revised Common Lectionary.

As the Rev. Dr. Rachel Mash, coordinator of the Anglican Communion Environmental Network, explains, the Feast

of the Creator (or Feast of Creation in Christ, as it is also known) is not simply a “Christian Earth Day.” Rather, it has deep roots in the theological understanding of the Triune God as Creator, and specifically of Christ’s role as the one “through whom all things were made” and in whom “all things are held together.” The Feast of the Creator thus takes its place among the other Christological feasts of the church year, lifting up the role of Christ in creation. The Feast of the Creator re-

minds us, in the words of Wendell Berry, that “our destruction of nature is not just bad stewardship, or stupid economics, or a betrayal of family responsibility; it is the most horrid blasphemy.” As we observe it, and the Season of Creation, this year, may we be drawn deeper into God’s love and care for all his creatures, including the waters which give us life.

Elin Goulden is the diocese’s Social Justice & Advocacy consultant.

Wherever the waters flow, creation flourishes

BY THE REV. CANON SUSAN SPICER

The theme for the Season of Creation in 2026 is “Living Water.” The grounding text is from the prophet Ezekiel: *Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish, once these waters reach there. It will become fresh; and everything will live where the river goes.*

On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.

Ezekiel is given this vision 25 years after the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem. The land is ravaged by war, the people now in exile in Babylon. The water flows out of the ruined temple, God’s presence flowing over the broken land, bringing healing. At first, it is a trickle, then ankle deep and finally deep and wide enough to swim in.

As disciples, we hear this vision fulfilled in Christ, the living water that becomes in us a spring of water gushing up to eternal life (John 4:10-14) and who offers us the living water that slakes our thirst for healing and justice in a broken world (John 7:37-39).

“The river grows deeper and deeper, restoring land, reviving waters and sustaining flourishing ecosystems,” says this year’s call to the Season of Creation. “The vision invites human responsibility: recognizing ecological damage, embracing interconnectedness, we are called to immerse ourselves in the water, actively safeguarding and working for the renewal of creation so that environmental healing and human well-being may flourish together.” The symbol for this year is staying immersed in the water that flows from the throne of God, stepping deeper and deeper, working together for the renewal of creation.

From his vantage point in the river, Ezekiel sees that along the banks are trees bearing fruit in all seasons, and whose leaves do not wither. This is divine blessing; creation is healed where the river flows and Ezekiel is restored to hope. John reprises this vision in his Revelation, where the river of the water of life flows from the throne of God *through* the astonishing tree of life whose leaves are for the healing of the nations (Revelation 22:1-3).

Images of the riparian edge where river meets forest are common in scripture. People gather there for worship and lament. Think of the exiles weeping by the rivers, their harps hung up in the poplars, unable to sing (Psalm 137). Paul and Silas, released from prison, head to the riverbank where there is a place of prayer and meeting with the women there (Acts 16:13). The righteous are like trees planted by water, bearing fruit (Psalm 1:1-3; Jeremiah 17:7-8).

Walk along a riverbank or better yet, explore in a kayak from the water, and it is easy to see why. The so-called riparian zone between the river and the forest is a place of abundant life. The roots of trees hold soil together and stabilize the bank. The rich soil nourished by the constant flow of water supports a greater diversity of plants, which feed and shelter amphibian and mammal life. Fish thrive in the cooler, shaded waters and turtles rest on fallen logs. The riverbank is a study in the interconnectedness of a healthy ecology.

The northern flank of our diocese lies within “the land between,” an ecologically significant transition zone between the Canadian Shield to the north and the flat, arable land of southern Ontario. It includes communities from Orillia all the way east to Campbellford and Havelock and has a high density of wetlands, lakes and rivers, rock barrens, alvars (rare limestone grasslands) and savannahs. The endangered five-lined skink, Ontario’s only lizard, and other rare reptiles and amphibians, all rely on the riparian edge. Climate change and human intervention deplete habitats at an alarming rate. Where there are cribbed and hardened shorelines, these creatures cannot survive; fish can no longer spawn and shorebirds cannot nest. It is encouraging to see municipalities promoting the restoration of riparian zones.

There is an urgent need for rewilding in a world where corporate logos are more familiar to children than the names of trees. Over the past 50 years, the decline in wildlife populations and the rate of species extinction are catastrophic. We know that where Indigenous and local communities have control of land, biodiversity increases.

The Rev. Laurel Dykstra, who leads the Salal and Cedar community in the Diocese of New Westminster, advocates for the rewilding of our church lands. “On a modest scale,” Laurel writes, “churches are local communities with control of land. And for the most part, the land that

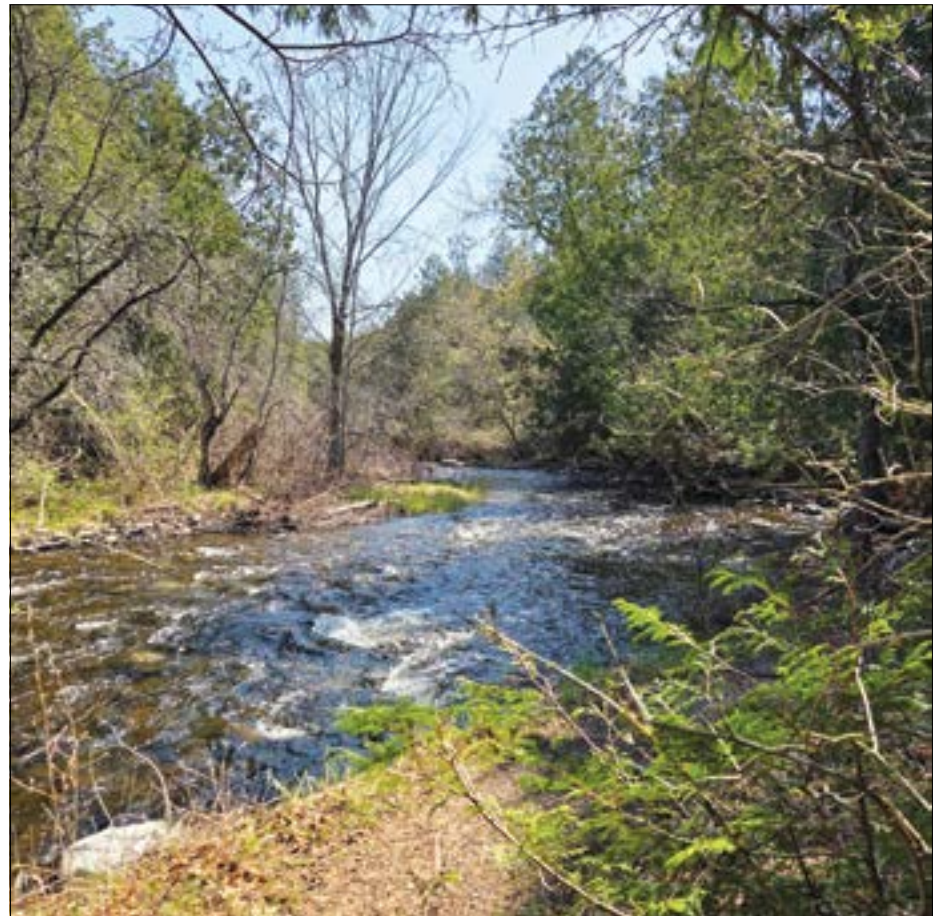


PHOTO BY THE REV. CANON SUSAN SPICER

our churches control is a rectangle of grass, a patch of monoculture ready for rewilding.” A church with a creek flowing through can restore the riparian zone by introducing native plants and creating habitat. Churches in our diocese, including St. Hilary, Cooksville in Mississauga, are creating rain gardens and introducing native species and pollinator gardens.

But facing the ecological crisis means rewilding ourselves. Our environmental crisis is actually a human crisis, says theologist and fly fisher Derek Taylor in a recent article in *Comment* magazine. We need healing, which begins by recovering our creatureliness. “We treat the world as something other than creation, and we imagine ourselves to be something more than creatures. We have forgotten where we are and who we are.”

Remembering who we are begins with being immersed in creation as Ezekiel was. We are rewilded when we enter into communion with our Creator, with our kin in creation, with the suffering body of the earth. We find this

communion in liturgy, in the garden, in wandering and wading together, knowing and tending the places where we live and serve and worship. Archbishop of Canterbury Sarah Mullally says, “In the season of creation we turn again to Christ... As we follow Christ, we are called to share in his reconciling work, seeking justice, healing and hope for the earth and for all who dwell within it.”

In our diocese, the Bishop’s Committee for Creation Care supports this creation-informed, Christ-centred discipleship with resources to help Anglicans “rewild” in celebrations of the Season of Creation and participation in the Communion Forest, a global movement for the restoration of habitat and planting trees. Where the river flows and the trees grow, creation flourishes.

The Rev. Canon Susan Spicer is co-chair of the Bishop’s Committee on Creation Care and priest-in-charge of St. Luke, Peterborough and St. John, Ida.

A seat at the Communion table

Local Anglican serves global Church

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

When Canon Dr. Anita Gittens left Toronto to attend the 19th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in Belfast, being elected to the council’s standing committee was not on her radar.

“It wasn’t something that I had given any thought at all to,” she says.

But when she discovered she’d been nominated for one of five open spots on the committee, which meets between sessions of the full council to continue its work, a seed of excitement was planted.

“I thought it would be quite an op-

portunity. There are many things that I felt I could take to the table, and some ways that I thought I could be of help,” she says. “I had no attachment to the outcome. If it didn’t happen, it was absolutely okay.”

Later that week, when her name was the first read out, it took her a moment to realize she’d really been elected.

“It’s absolutely an honour and a privilege, because when you see the folks in the room and know that they’re representatives from 165 countries across the world, it’s quite the feeling,” she says.

Canon Gittens is one of the Anglican Church of Canada’s three delegates to the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC), along with Bishop Riscylla Shaw and the Rev. Marnie Peterson, a priest in the Diocese of New Westminster. The ACC, which meets every three years, is one of the Anglican Communion’s four “instruments of Communion.” It includes clergy, bishops and laity from across the Communion who consult on matters related to mission, advocacy

and Christian unity.

It’s also the only instrument of Communion that includes lay people. The other three instruments are the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference (a once-a-decade gathering of all Anglican bishops) and the Primates’ Meeting (a regular gathering of presiding bishops from each national or regional church).

Canon Gittens’ qualifications to serve on the standing committee are too many to name. Her involvement in parish, diocesan, national and international church ministry spans decades, alongside her work in healthcare administration. A member of St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale, she has served with the diocesan Anglican Church Women, the Postulancy Committee, the Cast the Net steering committee, Diocesan Council and as a clergy coach. She is a founding member of Black Anglicans of Canada, chair of the national church’s Partners in Mission Coordinating Committee and a member of the Communion-wide



Canon Dr. Anita Gittens

advisory group for the United Society Partners in the Gospel.

“There’s a whole lot that I can pull from the skill sets, things that I have learned, things that I have lived,” she says. “I’m happy to use whatever skills, whatever tools I can use to help in the discussions.”

Continued on Page 13

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

IN MOTION

Appointments

- The Rev. Dr. Stephen Drakeford, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. John, York Mills, May 4.
- The Rev. Sooraj Thomas (Madhya Kerala), Priest-in-Charge, Church of South India, Toronto, May 14.
- The Rev. Leonard Abbah, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Stephen, Downsview, May 27.
- The Rev. Max Dionisio, Incumbent, St. George, Pickering Village (Ajax), June 1.
- The Rev. Stephanie McWatt (Ottawa), Incumbent, St. Andrew, Alliston, July 1.
- The Rev. Ken McClure, Regional Dean of Nottawasaga, July 1.
- The Rev. Peter Owadayo (Nigeria), Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Michael the Archangel, July 12.
- The Rev. Debbie Dennis, Interim Priest-in-Charge, North Essa: Christ Church-St. Jude, Ivy and St. George Utopia, Aug. 1.
- The Rev. Silvanus Daraj Singh, Associate Priest, St. John the Baptist, Norway, Aug. 2.
- The Rev. Dwight Thomas (North East Caribbean & Aruba), Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Hilary (Cooksville), Aug. 3.
- The Rev. Yaa Addison (Washington), Associate Priest, St. Peter (Erindale), Sept. 1
- The Rev. Edmund Harris (Olympia), Incumbent, All Saints Church-Community Centre, Sept. 1.

- The Rev. Alexandra Stone, Incumbent, St. Mary Magdalene, Sept. 1.
- The Rev. Matthew Waterman, Incumbent, St. Stephen, Downsview, Sept. 1.
- The Rev. John Runza, Incumbent, St. John the Baptist, Lakefield, Sept. 1.
- The Rev. Karen Koiter, Priest-in-Charge, St. Matthew, First Avenue, Sept. 8.
- The Ven. John Anderson, Priest-in-Charge, Parish of Campbellford, Hastings and Roseneath, Sept. 8.
- The Rev. Alexandra McIntosh, Incumbent, St. George on Yonge, Sept. 9.
- The Rev. Abraham Thomas, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Matthew, Oshawa and St. Peter, Oshawa, Sept. 13.
- The Rev. Jacob Cunliffe, Incumbent, St. Andrew, Scarborough, Oct. 1.

Vacant Incumbencies

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

Bishop’s Direct Appointment Process

- (receiving names):
- Huronia Regionalization
- Parish of Bobcaygeon, Dunsford and Burnt River
- St. George, Haliburton

Parish Selection Committee Process

- First Phase - (not yet receiving names):
- Resurrection

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

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

Ordinations

- The Rev. William Kingston was ordained a deacon at St. Bride, Clarkson on June 7.
- The Rev. Mark Stenabaugh was ordained a deacon at St. Mary Magdalene, Toronto on June 11.
- The Rev. Bill Crawford was ordained a deacon at Trinity, Streetsville on July 8.

Celebrations of New Ministry

- The Rev. Yohan Dumpala, Incumbent, Grace Church in Scarborough, Oct. 4 at 10 a.m.
- The Rev. Alexandra McIntosh, Incumbent, St. George on Yonge, Oct. 25 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Jacob Cunliffe, Incumbent, St. Andrew, Scarborough, Nov. 8, at 10 a.m.

Conclusions

- The Rev. Richard Webb concluded his appointment as Incumbent of St. John, York Mills on May 3.
- The Rev. Oliver Lim concluded his appointment as Assistant Curate of Grace Church, Markham on June 7. He is taking up an appointment with the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real.
- The Rev. Nicole Critch concluded her

appointment as Priest-in-Charge of St. John, Whitby on Aug. 9. She is taking up appointment with the Diocese of Central Newfoundland.

Retirements

- The Rev. Cathy Gibbs’ last Sunday as Honorary Assistant at Christ Church, Deer Park was May 30.
- The Rev. Adrienne Clements’s last Sunday as Incumbent of St. Hilary (Cooksville) was Aug. 2.
- The Rev. Diane Lee’s last Sunday as Incumbent of St. Matthew, Oshawa was July 19, and her last Sunday as incumbent of St. Peter, Oshawa was July 26.

Deaths

- The Rev. John Lockyer died on May 18. Ordained deacon and priest in 2003 in the Diocese of Algoma, he transferred to the Diocese of Toronto in 2008 to serve as incumbent of St. John, East Orangeville until he retired in 2017. His funeral was held on June 8 at St. John, Elora.
- The Rev. Margaret Tandy died on June 19. Ordained deacon in 1993 and priest in 1994, she served as assistant curate of St. Timothy, Agincourt, chaplain of Bishop Strachan School, incumbent of St. Mark, Port Hope, priest-in-charge of St. Paul, Perrytown and honorary assistant of St. John the Evangelist, Port Hope. Her funeral was held on July 4 at St. John the Evangelist, Port Hope.

LOOKING AHEAD

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

SEPT. 20 – Be still with the Cosmic Walk. The Cosmic Walk depicts the reality of oneness found not only on planet Earth but throughout the whole universe. The music of Taizé and the movement of a dancer are part of this ritual storytelling of

the 13.8 billion-year unfolding of the universe. Join at 4 p.m., Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street and Avenue Road.

SEPT. 27 – Be still. The church’s doors are open. The candles lit. The busyness of the city left behind as you enter the worship space. Prayer. Stillness. In times such as this, there is space for you to be still. Join in this Taizé service with chanting and contemplative choral music at 4 p.m., Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street and Avenue Road.

SEPT. 27 – Choral Evensong (BCP) for Michaelmas at 4 p.m., followed by an illustrated feature at 5 p.m. on “The Pre-contact Indigenous History of Toronto and Southern Ontario,” presented by distinguished historian Dr. Carl Benn. Join us in person at St. Olave, Bloor Street West and Windermere Avenue. For more details, call 416-769-5686 or go to stolaves.ca.

PRAYER CYCLE

FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

1. Bishop’s Committee on Creation Care
2. Trinity College School, Port Hope
3. Holy Trinity School
4. Havergal College
5. Royal St. George’s College School
6. Teachers and Students
7. Citizens for Public Justice
8. Sisterhood of St. John the Divine
9. Teachers and Students
10. St. Clement’s School
11. Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto (CJDT)
12. Kingsway College School
13. Lay Ministry and the Education for Ministry Program
14. Bishop Strachan School

15. Lakefield College School
16. Central Simcoe Regional Ministry
17. All Saints, Collingwood
18. Founders, Benefactors & Missionaries of the ACC
19. Good Shepherd, Stayner
20. Nottawasaga Deanery
21. Holy Trinity, Clearview
22. Parish of Craighurst and Midhurst
23. The Youth Delegation visiting from the Diocese of Brasilia
24. Parish of North Essa
25. Prince of Peace, Wasaga Beach
26. St. George, Allandale
27. The ReCharge Diocesan Youth Retreat and Youth Ministry in the Diocese
28. St. Luke, Creemore
29. St. Margaret, Barrie
30. Toronto Urban Native Ministry

Involvement in church ministry spans decades

Continued from Page 12

The ACC met this year from June 27 to July 5, dubbed ACC-19 – the 19th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council. Much of the conversation was focused on the Nairobi-Cairo Proposals, a theological document that considers what it means to be the Anglican Communion today. The proposals lay out a framework for how Anglican churches can deepen their unity, with some specific suggestions for changes to the definition of the Communion and its structures.

After considerable discussion, ACC-19’s members affirmed the need for “relationships and trust to grow” amid these conversations and called for further dialogue across the Communion over the next three years.

“The overwhelming thought was that it needed more time for reflection and discussion. We will continue the discussion and

the dialogue and report back to ACC-20,” says Canon Gittens.

She says that while divisions within the Anglican Communion were top of mind, delegates expressed their desire and hope that unity would continue despite different views on doctrine.

“People were truly listening and trying to understand where the differences of opinion came from. They listened and they responded very respectfully,” she says.

The analogy of family arose often around the table, she continued. “There are many different family members. There’s some that we disagree with and there’s some that do not attend family gatherings, but at the end of the day, we’re still part of the family.”

As her work on the ACC’s standing committee begins, Canon Gittens says she would like to be able to raise the profile of the work of the Anglican Communion and its commissions within

the Diocese of Toronto.

“As much as we can share a lot, we can also learn from the others,” she says. “There is unbelievable work being done by the networks and commissions that many folks are not aware of. Those are ways for parishes and groups in our diocese to reach out, to connect and work together, because so much work is already happening.”

As Anglicans around the world continue to consider what it means to be bound together in a global communion amid division, Canon Gittens says she hopes those conversations continue closer to home, as well.

“The Communion might never be the unified group that it may have been at some time. But acknowledging that and working together, learning from each other, listening to each other, respecting each other, moving forward together – this is a time like no other time.”

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PROUD ANGLICANS

67 Anglicans from 16 parishes walk in the Pride Parade in downtown Toronto on June 28, with tens of thousands of people lining the route. PHOTOS BY STEF & ETHAN





Growing young adult ministry

VICTORIA – Young people are looking for spiritual life and they’re looking for spiritual life made for them. At St. Barnabas, they’ve had the gift of young adults, seeking a rich tradition of worship and faith, pouring through the door. Nearly every week, there’s a new young adult wandering into the hall with a story about seeking a richer faith. Just as often, they see that young adult coming to their next event and joining a growing community.

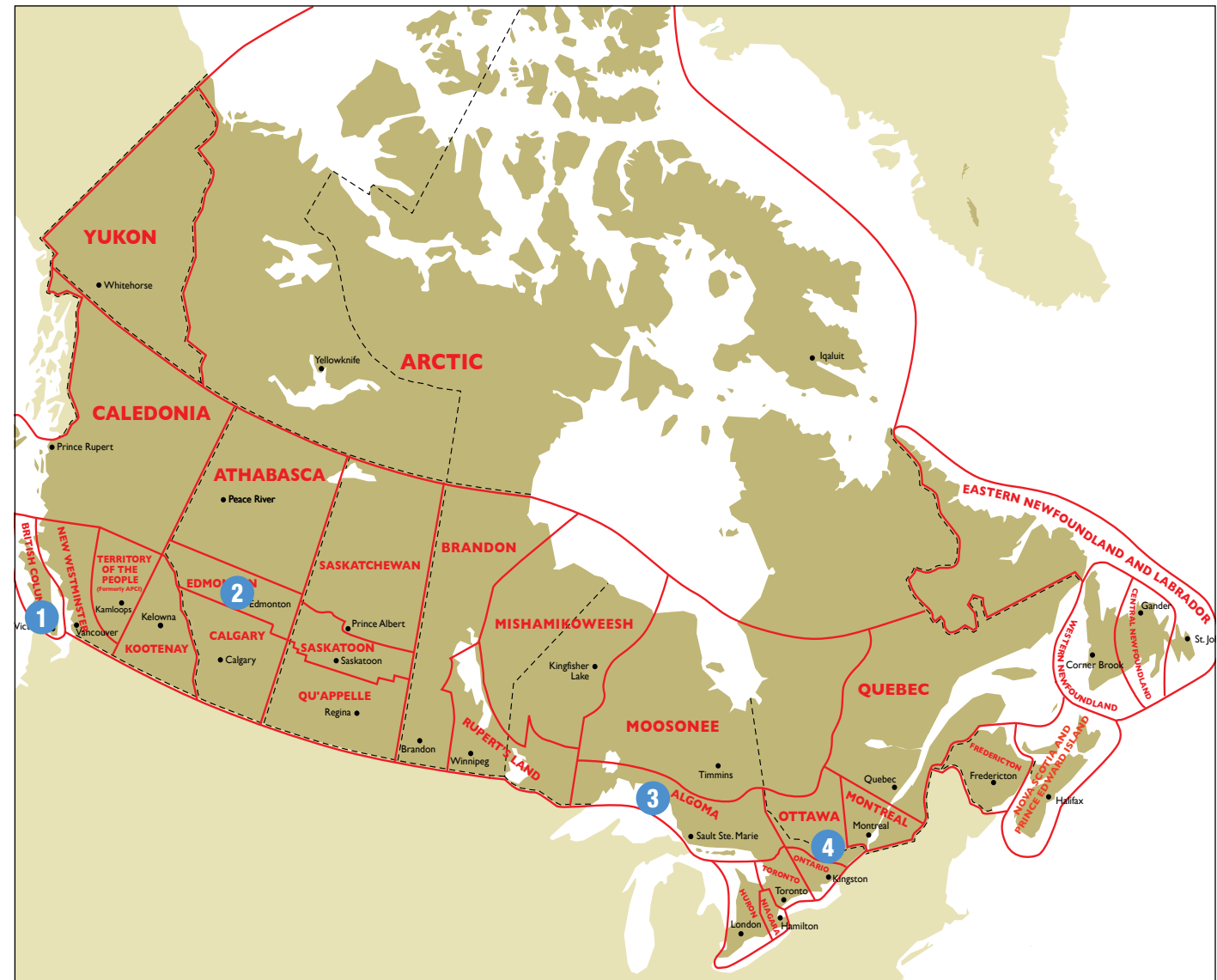
The St. Barnabas young adults’ group, newly minted “Sanctum,” is led by young adults for young adults seeking a rich tradition of faith. The Anglo-Catholic tradition offers young people a tie to a deeply sacramental expression of Anglicanism. It offers something real and tangible in a world consumed by image and performance. As young people seek identity amidst the fractures, the sacramental life offers a connection and belonging that nothing else can. The group believes that fostering scriptural and theological integrity connects people.

Every week, they gather a little differently. The mainstay is the theology study group, in which they discuss scripture, theology and faith practice. The key point for outreach is the biweekly social group. Oftentimes, the group meets in local pubs or around kitchen tables. Other weeks, they’re having campfires, dinner parties and hiking excursions. Regardless of what they do, there’s a focus on ministry and creating a place where people feel they belong. *FaithTides*

Modernizing baptism resources

EDMONTON – At the end of April, eleven clergy and lay members of the Anglican Church of Canada gathered at Mount St. Francis Retreat Centre in Cochrane. The group considered proposals for renewal of the Anglican Church of Canada’s baptism materials to meet the needs of the 21st century church. The project is funded by a grant from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. The audience for the work includes parents and sponsors who are new to the Anglican Church of Canada, whether they come from other countries or from ecclesial traditions with different practices and understandings of baptism. The need for updated resources has emerged as many churches welcome Christians from diverse backgrounds. Participants in the working group represent six dioceses and all four ecclesiastical provinces; the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP); the Council of the North; the Francophone community in Québec; and The Episcopal Church (USA). Six of the eleven members who were born outside of Canada bring perspectives from Africa, the Caribbean and the United States.

The team reviewed and provided



feedback on draft liturgies, including a Cree Anglican Baptismal Liturgy with a decolonizing Thanksgiving over the Water, and a Rite of Acknowledgment of Baptism for a Stillborn Child. Once they are finalized, these liturgies will be brought forward for approval. The Rite of Acknowledgment will go to the Faith, Worship and Ministry Coordinating Committee for recommendation to the November meeting of the Council of General Synod. The Cree liturgy will be presented to ACIP at their meeting in October.

The Messenger

Churches support wildfire evacuees

THUNDER BAY – As devastating wildfires continue to burn across Northwestern Ontario, the Diocese of Algoma is mobilizing to support evacuees who have been forced to flee their homes, many leaving with little more than the clothes they were wearing.

Following reports that communities were being evacuated and residents were arriving in Thunder Bay, Archbishop Anne Germond reached out to clergy across the Thunder Bay–North Shore Deanery to learn what assistance was already underway and how the Diocese could best support local efforts. Alongside Hope, the Anglican

Church of Canada’s national relief and development agency, also confirmed that emergency funds were available to assist ministry responding to the crisis.

Those conversations quickly developed into a coordinated deanery-wide response. Working alongside local organizations and Indigenous partners already serving evacuees, Anglican parishes are focusing their efforts on meeting practical needs while ensuring that support complements the work already taking place on the ground.

The Matawa Training and Wellness Centre, one of several organizations welcoming evacuees to Thunder Bay, has become a central focus for the deanery’s response.

In a pastoral message shared with the deanery, the Rev. Elizabeth Sipos, Regional Dean of Thunder Bay–North Shore, invited Anglicans to respond in the spirit of the early Church. “All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.” She stressed that many people have lost everything, fleeing only with their lives and, in some cases, their pets. She encouraged churches to be “a witness of Christ’s love, compassion and hope during this dark season.”

The Diocese of Algoma

Celebrating Indigenous History Month

OTTAWA – Christ Church Bells Corners hosted a community event to mark Indigenous History Month on June 13.

The day began with Elder Larry Langlois offering a smudge and prayers outside the church.

Then everyone moved into the parish hall where Belle Bailey and Charmaine Leonard, who came to the event from Mādhōki Farm, demonstrated two beautiful traditional dances. Bailey performed a Fancy Shawl Dance, and Leonard performed a Jingle Dress Dance. Afterward, they spoke and offered some insights from their Indigenous cultures and advice on how non-Indigenous people can learn more and work to contribute to reconciliation.

Everyone attending was invited to participate in a collaborative art project, adding their own designs to rocks that had been painted red, white, yellow and black. Then all the rocks were carried out into the parish garden to be arranged into the four quadrants of a medicine wheel, an important symbol in many First Nations cultures, which represents the interconnectedness of all life, the cycles of nature and a path to personal balance.

The parish offered bannock with strawberry jam and strawberry water as refreshments for all.

Perspective

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