

**Cabaret showcases talent**



**COP26 disappoints and inspires action**

**Bishop's Charge to Synod 2021**

# The Anglican

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## A joyful, compassionate man

### Memorial service celebrates life and faith of Bishop

BY NAOMI RAGZ

**HYMNS**, readings and prayers were offered at St. James Cathedral on Saturday, November 20, 2021, in celebration of the life of Bishop Michael Bedford-Jones, a priest and suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Toronto for 40 years. Bishop Bedford-Jones died on April 18, 2021, at an Oshawa hospital from the effects of COVID-19 at the age of 78.

Bishop Bedford-Jones was born in Toronto in 1942. It was a year, the Very Rev. Stephen Vail pointed out during his sermon, when people were ready for the war to be over and “they wondered where God was, and they wondered if they were being heard.” It was during this time of wondering and anxiety that Michael Hugh Harold Bedford-Jones was born. As Dean Vail went on to say, for his parents this baby boy would have been “a sign of hope, a sign of promise, a sign of new life” during a tumultuous time, but they also could not have known how many people’s lives their son would touch.

Bishop Bedford-Jones was born on the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels and was named accordingly. “[He was] named after the warrior angel,” said Dean Vail. “Very significantly, because Michael fought the good fight with joy and compassion and humility and faithfulness.... These are the ways in which God shaped the life of this remarkable and beautiful human being.”

In his eulogy, Archbishop Colin Johnson spoke of how Bishop Bedford-Jones was “destined for the priesthood in the Church, a vocation to priestly ministry that spanned multiple generations.” Indeed, the service featured Psalm 46 set to music by Archdeacon Thomas Bedford-Jones, Bishop Bedford-Jones’s great-great-grandfather.

Bishop Bedford-Jones attended Trinity College at the University of Toronto, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in 1965 and a Bachelor of Sacred Theology in 1968. He and Bonnie, who was also a student at Trinity College, were married in 1967. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Toronto in 1968

and served as the assistant curate, director of Christian education and then vicar of St. James Cathedral until 1975.

Archbishop Johnson spoke of Bishop Bedford-Jones’s passion for education and teaching: he completed a Master of Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Though Bishop Bedford-Jones had expressed regret shortly before his death that he had not had more time to focus on teaching, Archbishop Johnson pointed out that he was a teacher in many ways.

“Both explicitly in the pulpit, in lecture, in study groups, but I think, even more profoundly, in his mentoring of young clergy, in his work to develop theological education policies and programs and expand continuing education opportunities. But above all, by the personal example he set that was quietly observed and copied by those both lay and ordained who saw in him authentic Christian spirituality.”

Bishop Bedford-Jones became the incumbent of Epiphany, Scarborough in 1976, serving there until 1983, when he became the incumbent of St. Aidan, Toronto. In 1988, he was appointed the executive assistant to Archbishop Terence Finlay, who was the Bishop of Toronto at the time.

“It was not for his administrative skills that he was asked,” remarked Archbishop Johnson, “but for his humble wisdom and his immense knowledge of the diocese.” His encyclopedic knowledge of the parishes and their histories and people proved invaluable to Archbishop Finlay, who was relatively new to Toronto, as Bishop Bedford-Jones would often call him up to tell him all about the parish he would be visiting on Sunday morning.

But it was not just his vast knowledge of the diocese that marked Bishop Bedford-Jones out as special. “Michael’s pastoral sensitivity,” said Archbishop Johnson, “his theological acumen, his articulate command of the language, his



**Top: Bishop Michael Bedford-Jones in 2002. Top left: Members of the choir of St. James Cathedral sang hymns including “Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones,” “The Day of Resurrection,” and “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling.” Top right: Archbishop Colin Johnson delivers the eulogy. Bottom right: Bishop Andrew Asbil gives the blessing. Bottom left: The Very Rev. Stephen Vail, Dean of St. James Cathedral, delivers a sermon.**

Continued on Page 2

# Cabaret showcases talent, raises funds

BY STUART MANN

FOR the second year in a row, more than 400 people tuned in to watch the Bishop's Company Cabaret. The event, held virtually on Oct. 15, raised over \$80,000 for clergy and their families in need of financial assistance and scholarships for theological education.

The Rev. Jesse Parker, incumbent of St. John the Evangelist, Port Hope, was the MC for the evening, and the program included a welcome from Bishop Andrew Asbil, a moderated conversation between bishops Riscylla Shaw and Kevin Robertson, and performances by a dozen individuals and groups from across the diocese.

Performers included Georgina Bird, Laverne Malcolm and the Rev. Leigh Kern, who sang songs to honour those who never returned from the Indian Residential Schools; Valentin Bogolubov, a pianist who is the organist and choir director at Christ Church, Stouffville; Isaak Bonk, a folk singer and TTC busker; the choir of Holy Family, Heart Lake, Brampton; Rachel Colman, a musician who brings pieces of liturgy and scripture to life in meditative song; John Deacon, a singer and long-time volunteer

at All Saints Church-Community Centre; the Rev. Stephanie Douglas-Bowman, who played the violin for Scottish dancers; tenor Chris Fischer; Roger Gibbs, a singer, guitarist and recording artist who composes, arranges and performs Caribbean acoustic and calypso with his band Shak Shak; Gordon Ratcliffe, a flutist who performs frequently at St. Dunstan of Canterbury in Scarborough; the Thomas Trinity Band, an ensemble of musicians from Anglican churches in the Barrie area; and Water Guns N' Daisies, a band comprising 10 youth, ages 12-17, from Markham and Durham, who play rock, jazz and pop.

In a wide-ranging discussion that was moderated by Judy Maddren, a distinguished radio announcer and host and co-owner of Sound-portraits, Bishop Shaw and Bishop Robertson, who are the diocese's suffragan bishops, talked about when they felt called to ordained ministry; what "takes courage" in their work as bishops; how they manage to juggle all their tasks and live a balanced life; how COVID-19 has impacted them; how funds raised by the Bishop's Company help clergy; and how they know that God is present. The bishops



The Rev. Leigh Kern, Georgina Bird and Laverne Malcolm. PHOTO COURTESY OF TORONTO URBAN NATIVE MINISTRY

also answered a series of quick questions that further illuminated their thoughts and work.

As the evening drew to a close, Bishop Asbil thanked all those who made the event possible and those watching. "As you can see, we have much in the way of diversity and musical interests. It's my hope that this evening has brought you joy and encouragement. While we are unable to be together in person, we can nonetheless gather, celebrate and give to an important diocesan ministry."

The cabaret can be watched on the diocese's website, [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca).



Rachel Colman

## Interim Editor joins The Anglican

FROM Nov. 10 to Feb. 10, *The Anglican's* editor, Stuart Mann, will be on leave. During this time, editorship of the paper will be in the hands of Naomi Racz. Ms. Racz will be editing the January, February, and March issues of *The Anglican*. Ms. Racz joins us from Cumberland on Vancouver Island, where she is the editor of *Faith Tides* (formerly the *Diocesan Post*), a digital publication of the Anglican Diocese of Islands and Inlets (BC).



## His face beamed with welcome and delight, hint of mischief

Continued from Page 1

gentle diplomacy, and his grounding in prayer made him a vital and valuable contributor to the senior leadership of the diocese that was later recognized and confirmed in his election as Bishop."

Bishop Bedford-Jones was elected suffragan bishop in the diocese of Toronto in 1994, serving first as the area bishop of York-Scarborough and then as the area bishop of Trent-Durham. He retired in 2008

but remained active in the Church, serving as the interim priest-in-charge at St. Jude, Wexford in 2010 and interim priest-in-charge at St. Peter, Cobourg in 2015.

Beyond the biographical details

of his life, Archbishop Johnson and Dean Vail both spoke of Bishop Bedford-Jones's two expressions: one of joy and another of deeply knitted brows. "He really cared about you!" exclaimed Dean Vail during his sermon. Archbishop Johnson also spoke of the joy inherent in Bishop Bedford-Jones's life and faith.

"The pictures are there for you to see," said Archbishop Johnson. "You see that face beaming out with delight and welcome, and just the hint of mischief. There he was telling stories that provoked roars of laughter that would bend him over double; quaffing a pint of local craft brew with friends at the pub; crewing with his sailing buddies in regattas; playing piano for hours on end at clergy conferences as people called out their requests; visiting his beloved summer home; rollicking with his dogs that were bigger than him."

Archbishop Johnson shared his own personal connection to and experiences with Bishop Bedford-Jones. "I knew and worked with Michael for my whole ministry. He was one of my chosen episcopal presenters when I was consecrated bishop. For a decade and a half, he was my spiritual director and confessor. He was my mentor for much longer than that. And though I used him less than I should, each encounter was a blessing. I am a different person because of Michael. And I expect each of us could say the same because of our connection with Michael Bedford-Jones."

Bishop Andrew Asbil presided at the service and Bishop Patrick Yu, retired suffragan bishop of the diocese, and the Rev. Canon Greg Physick, honorary assistant at St. Paul, Lindsay, delivered readings from Isaiah 6 and Philippians 4, respectively. The service was attended by close family and friends.

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# COP26 leaves Anglicans disappointed but determined

BY ELIN GOULDEN

**THE** 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – or COP26, as it is popularly known – was held in Glasgow from Oct. 31 to Nov. 12, 2021.

The main objective for COP26 was to build on what countries had promised six years earlier in the Paris agreement – to commit to more ambitious greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions targets and to increase funding for climate change adaptation and mitigation, particularly for those countries that have done little to contribute to climate change but bear the brunt of its effects. Advocates and climate scientists hoped the commitments agreed to in Glasgow would hold global warming to under 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels.

For the Love of Creation, a faith-based climate advocacy coalition whose members include the Anglican Church of Canada, KAIROS, PWRDF, and Citizens for Public Justice, had already been calling on the federal government to commit to increasing our national GHG emissions reduction targets; to invest in a just transition to a fair, inclusive, green economy; to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, (including the right of free, prior and informed consent); and to support climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in the Global South.

The ACT Alliance, a global coalition of faith-based agencies (including PWRDF) working for humanitarian aid, gender and climate justice, peace and security, specifically advocated for compensation to poorer countries for loss and damage due to climate change impacts.

Unfortunately, hopes that COP26 would bring about significant climate action were disappointed. The COP26 agreement did specifically acknowledge fossil fuels as contributing to the climate crisis, the first time this language had been included in the decision text, but the calls for a “phase-down” of coal and a “phase-out” of fossil fuel subsidies were watered down from the initial draft. Developed countries also pledged to double their contributions for climate adaptation in developing nations by 2025, although this pledge did not include compensation for the impacts of the climate crisis already being felt by those nations.

Moreover, the pledges made at COP26 for 2030 would, if fulfilled, limit warming only to 2.4 degrees, or as good as 1.8 degrees if 2050 goals are also achieved, according to a recent op-ed in the *Globe and Mail* by Toronto-born, Christian climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe. Research group Climate Action Tracker cautioned that many of these targets depend heavily on cuts to be made further down the line, as well as on the success of



**Clockwise from top right: Christian activists participate in a climate march as part of COP26; ACT Alliance activists demand that wealthy countries contribute financing for loss and damage in the developing world due to climate change while actors portraying wealthy countries swig oil, stuff their ears with coal, and hold up a cheque full of “empty promises;” a sign at the climate march reads “No more hot air;” Ugandan Christians at the climate march.**

uncertain measures, such as untested carbon capture technology, or reforestation efforts that could be wiped out in a day by wildfire.

Simon Chambers, communications director for the ACT Alliance and a parishioner at St. Peter, Erindale, was one of a handful of Canadian Anglicans attending COP26. “I think that in the end COP26 was a failure because it was not ambitious enough. The world is rapidly running out of time to act and, while there were some limited gains at COP26, they were not broad or ambitious enough to get where we need to. We’re at 1.2 now and we see the devastation this year at home in Canada, but that is merely an echo of what has been happening around the world for years, and in countries where there is much less infrastructure to support those affected.”

While Canada did make some positive announcements at COP26, such as a cap on emissions from oil and gas, Mr. Chambers noted that Canada’s emissions are higher now than they were in 2015 when the Paris Agreement was adopted. It

is also not yet clear when that cap will take effect, or at what level it will be set.

Mr. Chambers also decried the failure of COP26 delegates to agree to loss and damage compensation for nations and communities most affected by climate change.

“As an Anglican, I feel that all of this must be done from a position of justice, not charity. We must look at the needs of the most vulnerable, who have done the least to contribute to climate change and yet face the worst of the impacts. Indigenous people in our own country, as well as all Indigenous people around the world, must receive justice, and must be included in the discussions and decisions around climate change in meaningful ways.”

A joint gathering of Indigenous and religious leaders during the COP26 summit underscored the importance of recognizing Indigenous rights and spiritualities in any effort to tackle the climate crisis. National Indigenous Archbishop Mark MacDonald, one of the leaders in attendance, noted

to a reporter for Religion News Service that Indigenous life and philosophy “braid together solidarity and communion with all of creation, with all of humanity and with the spirit.”

“This insight, which is the basis of Indigenous culture, is also essential to our future,” he said. “It is absolutely critical for us to understand that Indigenous people and their life stand in a prophetic relationship with humanity’s future. Let us take heed. Let us listen. Let us understand, for in this we will find life.”

For Karri Munn-Venn of Citizens for Public Justice, an Anglican from the Diocese of Ottawa who attended COP26 as part of a virtual delegation of members of For the Love of Creation and the United Church of Canada, the shortcomings of COP26 may, for many in Canada, be “merely disappointing,” but for those on the front lines of the climate crisis, these shortcomings threaten “ongoing devastation, [even] potential extinction.” Yet, in the advocacy efforts from people around the globe, she found a message of resistance and

hope. “Fortunately, the fate of the climate doesn’t rest solely in the hands of ‘world leaders.’ There is hope and there is power in coming together to resist, to advocate, and to act for change.”

*Elin Goulden is the diocese’s Social Justice and Advocacy Consultant.*

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# Seeking racial equity is love's hard work

## An update from the Bishop's Committee on Intercultural Ministries

BY THE REV. SUSANNE MCKIM

**W**e call ourselves a working group, and that's where you'll see us at our best – in those moments where our planning and our hopes move into action. Our mandate comes from the 2011 report *Being Multicultural, Becoming Intercultural*. We're passionately committed to promoting racial equity in this beloved diocese of ours in many ways: through educational programming, through providing resources and expertise, and by offering advocacy and support.

This mandate has become increasingly urgent in light of recent events: the heartless violence that George Floyd (like so many others) suffered; the shocking ongoing recovery of children's bodies that were unceremoniously discarded at Residential Schools; since the beginning of COVID-19, increased anti-Asian hate crimes; and so many other things. All this brokenness comes at a cost: our hearts feel heavy while at the same time, we are so weary of the effects of the global pandemic.

Writing this just before Advent, I cannot help but think of the musings of Fleming Rutledge, who articulated a profound state of tension in how Christians approach broken times. She believes that we're not afraid to look this brokenness directly in the face, however disheartening it may be, because we know that the light comes. Nothing, no matter how hard, is too much for God's loving light. It's always coming our way, and we trust in it. We wait for it. And there's good news. Bishop Andrew Asbil and the College of Bishops are deeply engaged in supporting and enabling this hard work of seeking racial equity among God's people here in the Diocese of Toronto. There is unprecedented action in the works, for which we are deeply grateful.

The theme of the 160th Regular Session of Synod was "Love Thy Neighbour." Jesus called us to love our neighbours as ourselves and declared that a hallmark of Christian discipleship was mutual love. This love is made visible among us when barriers between cultures and races are brought down, and all members of our Church experience inclusion and representation and are empowered for full participation and belonging. Here are some ways in which our work is advancing that goal.

Beginning with the College of Bishops and diocesan staff, mandatory anti-bias and anti-racism training has begun in earnest in our diocese and has continued throughout the fall with training for clergy and members of Diocesan Council. This training will also be rolled out to parishes next year.

Our committee was invited to draft the

diocesan Social Justice Vestry Motion for 2021, which we did with the assistance and expertise of Elin Goulden, Social Justice and Advocacy Consultant. This motion invited parishes to commit to anti-racism as individuals and as communities and provided them with resources to help them do so. The motion highlighted anti-Black racism as a particular form of racism that we are called to recognize and dismantle, along with every other form of racism. The motion was passed by the vast majority of parishes, with many parishes taking the opportunity to reach out to our committee for resources, speakers and more.

In April of 2021, several of our bishops, including our diocesan bishop, attended the virtual White Privilege Conference. This conference has been seen as a challenging, life-changing encounter for those of us who have attended. However aware we thought we were about racial issues, we all found ourselves speechless at the discovery of what we didn't know.

Our committee has contributed expertise and resources to support the College of Bishops with policy recommendations for incidents such as local hate crimes or racial incidents at the parish, committee, clergy and staff level.

We were invited to join in "Listening Sessions" developed by Bernadette Arthur of Co: Culture Collective. Bernadette used these sessions to help develop the curriculum for the diocesan anti-bias and anti-racism (ABAR) training. These sessions demonstrated how the lived experiences of both clergy and parishioners in our diocese have often left them feeling excluded, while white allies were kept on the fringe and not taken seriously. We place great hope in mandatory ABAR training: that it will begin to untangle these experiences so that we can all understand more deeply the effects of our words, decisions and actions.

Our members have been invited to speak to parishes at Sunday services and group studies to address issues of racism within ourselves and within our church communities. These invitations continue and have included St. Augustine of Canterbury; St. John, Willowdale; St. Mary Magdalene; St. Matthew, Islington; and St. Margaret, New Toronto.

In the new year, our committee will be turning its attention towards a more difficult section of our foundational report: the treatment of cultural congregations and racialized clergy. The diocese has committed to a reporting process like the one used under its Sexual Misconduct Protocol (SMP) to support racialized clergy and congregations. The committee will be making recommendations on what that process should

look like.

Additionally, the committee has strongly advocated for the collection of disaggregated race-based data to examine the diocese's hiring and remuneration practices. Working closely with the Diocesan Diversity Officer, we hope to move forward in this crucial task, which will help us identify where disparities exist and what work must be done to address these issues.

Friends, our diocese is strong, beautiful and faithful. And yet, even among God's good people, racial disparity exists in various forms. We don't want to imagine a hate crime happening at one of our churches, but it has happened, and it does happen. We, as God's loving people, want to believe that full representation of all people is a given. But I remember, at a recent Synod, counting the number of white nominees for an important decision-making committee. Out of 32, 30 were white. That is not full representation. That's token representation. It's time to look out at the sea of faces gathered at Synod – hard-working, bright and talented people of so many diverse communities. It's time that we heard these voices and learned from this diversity of wisdom.

Some years ago, we were shocked to be told that our diocese needed the Sexual Misconduct Protocol. But we learned together that in fact, some members have suffered abuse, and that we need a strong policy in place to protect people. In the same way, the time has come to acknowledge that there is much work to be done in seeking racial equity, and that a similar policy must be put in place to protect victims when things go wrong. At every level of the diocese, people are seeing this truth and are asking for justice. We thank God for this awakening.

These are just some of the broken parts. But for God's people, there is always good news.

You are an important part of our prayer that issues of racial equity will be named, addressed and healed. We warmly invite you to participate in the anti-bias and anti-racism training that will be offered to your parish. These are hard sessions. My reality was deeply challenged by this training. But the experienced, wise people leading these sessions know how hard it can hit, and they guide us through the training with grace and respect. It's a life-changing learning experience for all of us. The training doesn't point a finger of blame. It points out where disparity exists. This knowledge will help us to re-imagine the shape of our future.

Folks, we are God's faithful beloved in the Diocese of Toronto, and we stand together to face the parts that are broken, but to face them without fear. Talk to each other. Share your experiences. We're here to support you.



### TheAnglican

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

**Bishop of Toronto:**  
The Rt. Rev. Andrew Asbil

**Suffragan Bishops:**  
The Rt. Rev. Riscylla Shaw and  
The Rt. Rev. Kevin Robertson

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# SYNOD 2021

The Diocese of Toronto's 160th Regular Session of Synod was held Nov. 25-27 online. This was the first ever virtual Synod held by the diocese. The theme of Synod was "Love Thy Neighbour." St. Paul writes to the Galatians, "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up." To the Corinthians, he writes, "Let all that you do be done in love." Here are the highlights from Synod, in chronological order.

## Day 1

### Synod begins with Eucharist

Synod began on Nov. 25 at 7 p.m. with a Eucharist, which was live streamed from St. James Cathedral. Despite early technical difficulties, nearly 400 people joined the service from their homes. It included a penitential rite lamenting the Church's past wrongs against Indigenous peoples. Many of the musical pieces were pre-recorded by choirs and musicians from parishes across the diocese. The Eucharist is available to watch on the diocese's YouTube channel.

### Bishop gives Charge to Synod

During the Eucharist, Bishop Andrew Asbil gave his Charge to Synod. Using the story of the Good Samaritan, he spoke about sharing agape love with one's neighbour, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. "The Anglican Church in the Diocese of Toronto has stepped into this wilderness with a sense of enthusiasm, on adrenaline and on instinct, to serve," he said. His charge touched on several subjects, including the ways in which we are called to show God's love in the world, the need to discern where God is calling us into the future, and a call to generosity in stewardship. See pages 6-7.

### FaithWorks celebrates 25th anniversary

After the Eucharist, Synod watched a series of videos celebrating FaithWorks



Penitential Rite, acknowledging the sovereign leadership of local First Nations, is read by Bishop Andrew Asbil at the Opening Eucharist at St. James Cathedral. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON.



## REGULAR SESSION OF SYNOD 2021



The Processional at the 160th Regular Session of Synod Opening Eucharist. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON.

Results		%
CLERGY	Early Bird	58.4
	Night Owl	41.6
LAY	Early Bird	55.5
	Night Owl	44.5

Bishop Andrew Asbil shares the results of a test vote.

and the work of its ministry partners over the past 25 years. The diocese was encouraged to meet the 100%+1 challenge: every parish participating in this year's campaign, and every parish setting a goal exceeding its 2020 result by at least 1%.

## Day 2

### Business of Synod begins with worship

Synod reconvened online on Nov. 26 at 9:45 a.m. with Morning Prayer led by the Bishop's Committee on Intercultural Ministry.

### Synod thanks sponsors

Synod thanked the presenting co-sponsors, Burgundy Asset Management and Canso Investment Council.

### Members practice electronic voting

Synod members learned how to vote electronically through the online event platform. They were given instructions and took part in a few test polls to practice. A test vote revealed that a majority of both clergy and lay members considered themselves early birds rather than night owls,

to which Bishop Asbil commented "that's a very Anglican result."

### Diocese commits financial support to Indigenous reconciliation

Synod overwhelmingly passed a motion that recognized the diocese's commitment to the work of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and communities. The motion commits up to the 10% tithe from the Ministry Allocation Fund to further support and engage in that work of reconciliation, between now and the end of 2026. The Ministry Allocation Fund is sourced by selling properties in the diocese. The tithe of that fund is already set aside every year to spend on projects outside normal diocesan operations. Discussion before the vote raised the issue of the commodification of land as a limited understanding of what land means, perpetuating the structures that led to Indigenous displacement in the first place. Speakers raised the possibility of spiritual covenants and spiritual support with Indigenous peoples.

### Missional & Outreach Moment #1

Throughout Synod, members heard about how the diocese is living out its vision in the Missional & Outreach Moments – how communities are moving beyond their

walls to find new ways of meeting people who are not being reached by traditional forms of Church, and how our churches are reaching out to the poor, the marginalized and the homeless.

In the first Missional & Outreach Moment, Synod heard from Holy Family, Heart Lake in Brampton about how it was able to pivot during the pandemic, grapple with technology and take care of its seniors. The parish had relied on Zoom and emails to connect with its members, but they realized it wasn't enough. With a significant senior population trying to grapple with new technology, the parish founded a technical support team and help line to offer support to the parish's senior members. A Reach Grant allowed the parish to provide devices to some seniors, and all the seniors' ministry programs were able to run online. From a modest beginning of 22 parishioners worshipping online, Holy Family is now averaging 60-70 people in its online congregation. As the parish transitions to a hybrid model of worship, it prays for the grace of God to forge ahead.

### Diocesan Council's report received

Synod received Diocesan Council's Report to Synod, which contains a list of council members, council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a summary of

# We are dwelling between what we

## Bishop urges diocese to follow example of Good Samaritan

BY BISHOP ANDREW ASBIL

0 God, take our lips and speak through them. Take our minds and think through them. Take our hearts and fill them with love for you. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

In August of 2019, Mary and I had the opportunity of going to Israel on a pilgrimage with 14 other bishops and archbishops and their spouses from across the Communion. We were a diverse community from east and west, north and south. We travelled by foot and we travelled by bus to pilgrimage sites. Our conversations and our time together were steeped in bible study, in prayer and in community.

One day we got on our bus very early in the morning and we headed down the highway towards Jericho. Partway down the road, the bus pulled off and we were invited to go by foot, to walk up the side of a hill. There at the top of the hill was a plateau, and on the plateau were tiered seats looking out over the valleys and hills. In the middle of that plateau was a table, around which pilgrims could gather to break bread and pour out the wine. From that vantage point, in every direction, you could see nothing but hill upon hill upon hill of barren, dry land. Not a sign of any green or foliage or life whatsoever.

We were invited to then walk into the wilderness, to take a little walk out into the middle of the space, to find a lonely spot on our own just to sit and to meditate and to pray. So we walked out into the desert, and we found a spot to sit and to be quiet and to be still. I remember in that moment, though it was early in the morning, it was so hot, and I could only imagine how hot it would be by noon. Down below where we were sitting, in the valley, was a dry river bed. And on the shore of that wadi, like a finger tracing a line in the sand, was the old road from Jericho to Jerusalem. More of a footpath than a road, but in its time a major thoroughfare for travellers, for caravans carrying trade, for pilgrims going to the city, from one to the other, 18 miles' distance between the two. From our vantage point it became pretty evident that those who would travel that old road were very much at peril with the elements of heat, but also isolated and subject to attack by bandits.

It is particularly in this place that Jesus chooses to tell the story, to push the point with the lawyer. It's the time and the place where Jesus pushes the point to describe the love that we're called to have for our neighbours – in that lonely place, in the barrens, in the wilderness, betwixt and between Jerusalem and Jericho. And it's not a bad place to set the context for this Charge to Synod, as we live out our ministry betwixt and between, in a time of pandemic. So join me in a time of reflection, a time of prayer and meditation in God's presence.

### Agape love

Our story begins with the question that is posed by the lawyer: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus responds with another question: "What is it that you read in scripture?" The lawyer aptly puts two verses together to weave them into one: Deuteronomy 6 and Le-

viticus 19:8: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. And you shall love your neighbour as yourself."

The word in that text for "love" is "agape" in Greek. That word is a love that describes the need to give of self to the other; not the concern of self, but that can't help but give love away. It's not love that is expressed through familiarity or attraction or emotion, but is steeped in commitment, in justice and concern and sacrifice for the other. It is divine love. And we hear of this love spoken elsewhere in scripture. "Love is patient and kind, never boastful, arrogant or rude." "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son." "No greater love have we than to lay down our life for a friend."

The lawyer responds with another question: "Then, who is my neighbour? Who do I share this love with? Who do I bestow this love upon?" And Jesus tells a simple story: A man was going down to Jericho. He fell amongst thieves. He was robbed and beaten and stripped and left for dead. And they went away.

### Liminal space

When you and I left Synod in 2019, we had in our back pocket a two-year balanced budget, we had two years left on our Growing in Christ strategic plan, and we could imagine that the future would be pretty predictable and change would come incrementally. Were we ever wrong. None of us could have ever imagined what would happen in March of 2020, that we would be pushed out of our buildings, out of our schools, out of our places of employment. That we would join long lines going to grocery stores, that movie houses and bars and restaurants would close. We imagined that we would be back in our buildings by maybe Easter or Pentecost. Maybe that was naivete, maybe that was wishful thinking, maybe that was arrogance.

In quick order, we transformed our dining rooms and our kitchens and our flats and our apartments into office space. We shared wi-fi with children going to school and partners going to work. Our early offerings online were tentative, a little awkward, sometimes embarrassing. And yet we learned, like riding a bike, and we gained confidence. We learned new terms like "pivot" and "Zoom" and "breakout rooms." We learned to say, "please unmute." We learned to live apart from each other, to wear masks. We learned how to bump elbows in order to keep all of the community safe.

A man was going down to Jericho, and he fell amongst thieves, and he was robbed and he was stripped bare and left for dead, and they went away. The longer that we have been living in this space between and betwixt what we have known and where we are going, living in this time of pandemic has encouraged us to see that we are dwelling in a time of liminality. Our guest speaking for our clergy conference in 2021 was Susan Beaumont, and she reminded us that "liminal" comes from the Latin "limen," which is literally the threshold stone at the base of a doorway that one has to traverse in order



Bishop Andrew Asbil delivers his Charge to Synod in a pre-recorded video shown during the Opening Eucharist

to move inside and outside. That limen or liminal space is that place between what we have known, what we have experienced, and where we are going. In a time such as this, where we are going is fuzzy, not clear, not planned out entirely. We have a sense in this liminal time that going back is not an option, and we know living in this liminal space means that it is not for the faint of heart.

We are a people who love to plan out our journey, every aspect of it. When we plot out a course on a journey, we usually plug in the coordinates on a GPS or Waze to find the simplest way from one point to the next. But in this time of liminality, we are in fact given a compass that bears magnetic north and gives us bearings in the direction we go, not with precision but with the invitation to move in new directions. In this liminal space, God calls us to settle and to understand that going back to what we knew is not an option, but we live into the present in ways that we have never lived before, in hybrid. Somehow in time and beyond time. In person and online. Local and yet global.

### Stepping into the wilderness

A man went down to Jericho, and he fell into the hands of thieves, and he was beaten and he was stripped, and they left him for dead. In the last 19 months, the Church of God, the Anglican Church in

the Diocese of Toronto, has stepped into this wilderness with a sense of enthusiasm, on adrenaline and on instinct, to serve. We have at times planned and not planned, we have moved outside of our comfort zones, outside the box, to be present to a community around us.

The Church of the Nativity, Malvern spent a Sunday celebrating frontline workers in their own congregation who every day serve agape love to the wider community. A postal worker. Nurses. A police officer. Thirty members who were honoured on a Sunday morning, given a certificate by their local MP, a certificate by the parish and a keychain with the words of the Lord's Prayer.

Grace Church, Markham, through their creative ways, developed a website where seniors could sign up for vaccination and a ride to the vaccination appointment and a ride home, helping hundreds of community members get the care that they need.

The Anglican Outreach Network, which was formed during pandemic, gathered all of the outreach ministries that serve the poor and the underprivileged together from east and west, north and south in the diocese to source PPE and source food, and to be able to create protocols to keep people safe while honouring and upholding those who are most vulnerable.

Our Refugee Network created an opportunity for parishes to be able to serve together and to plan how to reach out

# have known, where we are going



across the world to welcome newcomers to Canada.

The South Etobicoke Cluster was formed, with primary leadership from St. Margaret, New Toronto to gather 28 agencies to coordinate care and help to the community.

## Words of gratitude

None of us could have imagined on March 20, and 19 months later, that we would be living through a time where we, like the man at the side of the road, have been robbed of so much. That we have experienced the pain and suffering of being stripped of our health and our security. That so many have been left by the side of the road. In the early part of the pandemic, it was our elderly in long-term care homes who were so vulnerable. Those who live in congregant settings, especially the homeless, who chose to live outside in tents, and those who live with precarious housing and food insecurity. And the Church has swept in to be able to honour and to help. But it has also come at a cost. Nineteen months later – one wave, two waves, three waves, four waves and perhaps counting – we know how tired the Church is in being able to step into that space. How brittle many of our leaders in our communities feel in this time of deep anxiety and change.

I'd like to share a word to our clergy,

to our priests and deacons in parishes and ministries in the Diocese of Toronto. I know how tired you are, and I know the weight of the office that you have been living over the last 19 months. Whether you are newly ordained or you have been practising this ministry for 40 years, nothing has prepared you for this time. And yet you have embodied this ministry in this time and space with such grace and with such patience and with such love. I am deeply grateful as your bishop for the sacrifice that you have made over these last 19 months. Together we take encouragement through the words of Paul: "And we boast in our suffering, because suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint. Because the love of God has been poured out into us through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

A word to our lay leaders: To our music directors, to office administrators, to outreach workers, to youth workers, to wardens and members of councils, and all of the volunteers that make up the life of your parish in this community. I am so deeply grateful for your witness to the gospel in this time of upset and change, for the tireless nature with which you lead and gather and hold the community together, mustering one step in front of the other. I am grateful for all of the hours it has taken you to open and

close and open again and close again, to put into place protocols and vaccination policies. As those who have gone before you in your parish, you are encompassed by such a great cloud of witnesses, and a reminder in Hebrews that we put away every weight and every sin, and we run the race that is set before us, and we keep our eyes fixed on the finisher of our race, who is Jesus Christ.

A word to our staff at 135 Adelaide: I am in awe of how hard you have worked over the last 19 months, in interfacing with communities on the ground, with government officials, in creating protocols and policies, answering questions and containing anxiety for leaders in the diocese. You have done it with such grace and such love and purpose, and for the last 19 months you have led with such love and joy. I am so grateful for every one of you, and a deep pride that I serve alongside you every day.

A word to our bishops: When we left Synod in 2019 there were five of us and now, Bishop Riscylla and Bishop Kevin, there are just three. You have taken on more than you could ever ask or imagine, and you have done it with such love and patience, too. I admire the way you lead with presence and humility in being able to cajole and to lead and to follow and to encourage the Church of God in the Diocese of Toronto. It is a joy to work alongside you every single day.

To Mary and Jennifer Bolender King: I am deeply grateful for your leadership. Canon Mary Conliffe and Jennifer Bolender King, for the way you help and guide my everyday work as the diocesan bishop. I could not do that without your encouragement and your direction.

I am grateful to our vice chancellors, Brian Armstrong and Paul Baston, who have taken on a deeper load of encouragement and giving of advice as we have moved through this time. But deeper still, I am so grateful to our chancellor, Clare Burns. You need to know that I am on the phone with Clare at least once a week, sometimes two times a week or more. Clare, you have been a presence of stillness and calm and giving of wisdom in a time of change and upset. For all of the hours of carrying the anxiety of the Church, I am so grateful.

And finally to my wife, Mary. Thank you for the love and the encouragement that you give to me every day.

## Draw near, see and have compassion

Let's go back to the road. At that point in the story, there happened to be a priest walking down the road, and he saw the man and passed by. And then a Levite happened to walk down the road, and he passed by too. I find that the most challenging part of the story. I know that biblical scholars over time have given good reasons why they might have done that. Perhaps they thought the man was dead, and to touch a corpse would mean that they would not be able to serve in the temple. Maybe. Or perhaps they thought that the man wasn't dead, it was a trap, that he would suffer a similar fate. Or maybe that he was half dead and stripped, and that the bandits were still in the proximity. It's better to keep moving and phone 911 from a distance.

But to be honest, I've never found those reasons persuasive, in the same way that the reasons that I've given on my own journey when I've missed an opportunity to stop and to serve have not been persuasive either. If we're honest as a Church,

there have been times when we have passed by and not taken the time to act and to serve, and missed an opportunity to be the eyes and the hands and the feet and the heart of God. While it's tempting to race through this pandemic like the priest and the Levite to get to our destination, God is calling us to live in the midst of this time of liminality, to be God's people and to share God's love. And so there are three pieces that we need to learn, I think, from the example of the Samaritan that help guide us into 2022, 2023 and 2024 and beyond.

First is this: He came near to him, he saw him and he had compassion. Come near, see and have compassion. On May 25, 2020, we witnessed the brutal murder of George Floyd, the lifeless body of a man in the streets. The whole world watched that moment, and the whole world summoned change, to open our eyes to anti-black racism and bias. The Diocese of Toronto stepped into that moment and created a program of training, of anti-bias and anti-racism training for clergy and for lay leaders in the diocese, which is being lived out in the moment. We will in 2022 continue to systemically change racism in our Church, to dismantle and to put into place new ways of helping us move as a community, including conducting a racial diversity survey of our congregations.

In the summer of 2021, we witnessed the moment when the unmarked graves of so many children were revealed on the sites of former residential schools in this country, awakening and opening our eyes once again to the long road of reconciliation that we have been on as Anglicans since the apology of our Archbishop Michael Peers in 1993 – but a renewed call to be agents of reconciliation and change. At this Synod, we entertain and consider Motion 12, which invites us to give 10 per cent of the tithe of our Ministry Allocation Fund, which is sourced by selling properties in the Diocese of Toronto, and for the next year to commit that amount to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

Draw near, and see, and have compassion for creation. As Anglicans in this diocese, as individuals, as families, as congregations, we must do our very best to lower our carbon footprint, to do the very best that we can to save the planet. It is our time to act and to be protective, to use our properties in such a way as to promote healing of the world, and to be agents of reconciliation with creation.

The mission of God is calling us outside of our church buildings. The hurt and the woundedness of the world is summoning us to do our part to engage in the mission of God. And this is a time when we look beyond ourselves to find how we can respond to the emerging need.

## Healing and discernment

The second thing we learn from the Samaritan: He bandaged his wounds, he poured wine and water, he put him on his animal, brought him to the inn, and he took care of him. The wounded are not just outside the Church; the wounded are within the Church walls too. In this time of living in liminal space, many of us are tired and wounded. It is important for us in this time to reflect, to pray and to be reminded that our healer, who is Jesus the Lord, is in our midst, and that we as a community take every opportunity to share in sacrament, in bible study, in reflection and in prayer, to seek the wisdom of God's presence in our midst. This is a time as

# HIGHLIGHTS

Continued from Page 5

all policy and major items discussed or approved by council, and a summary of diocesan grants, loans, and other funding. A total of \$8.8 million in grants and loans were awarded from 43 different funding and granting streams from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021.

## Bishop's Committee on Healing gives update

The committee told Synod what has been happening since it was formed in 2019. It represents lay and ordained health care chaplains, faith community nurses, lay anointers, lay pastoral visitors and seniors' ministry. The committee is chaired by the Rev. Canon Joanne Davies, chaplain at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, and provides speakers for parishes, area days and workshops on a variety of topics related to healing in the Church. It provides resources on its Facebook pages for healing ministry and seniors ministry.

## Missional and Outreach Moment #2

Synod heard from St. Olave, Swansea, which shared its online worship, online ministry and live streaming journey. The parish didn't have a plan; it just set up a camera and started recording, with its clergy using their smartphones to record the services as a series of separate clips and parishioners recording themselves reading lessons. People responded enthusiastically, including members of the community who couldn't attend church in-person even before the pandemic. Video offerings expanded to include the history of the parish, art variety shows, children's ministry and even a wedding. The parish was blown away when its 2021 Lenten education series earned 35,000 views. St. Olave's began to see the possibilities of a new way of parish ministry. Technology allowed the parish to keep people connected to the liturgy and sacred space – St. Olave's without borders. With a grant from the diocese and encouragement from nearby All Saints, Kingsway, the parish bought a new computer and camera and learned how to start live streaming services. "Our parish, like our imagination, knows no bounds."

## Bishop to form Episcopal Leadership Implementation Team

Bishop Andrew Asbil provided an update on episcopal leadership in the diocese. In 2020, Bishop Asbil formed the Episcopal Leadership Working Group to consider and report to him on alternative models for the exercise of episcopal leadership, oversight, and pastoral ministry. In 2021,



Bishop Riscylla Shaw and Chancellor Clare Burns read a motion concerning parish allotments and the diocesan budget.

Anglicans participated in town hall meetings to provide their feedback.

Having considered the recommendations and feedback, Bishop Asbil announced that the diocese will move forward with three bishops: one diocesan bishop and two suffragan bishops. Suffragan bishops won't necessarily be appointed to geographic areas, but will engage in ministry to the entire diocese. He will appoint as many as six to eight territorial archdeacons who will offer administrative oversight to two or three deaneries each.

Bishop Asbil will strike an Episcopal Leadership Implementation Team to develop a job description for territorial archdeacons, a selection and training process, and a timeline and communications strategy for these structural changes. The co-chairs of the implementation team are Susan Abell, ODT and the Rev. Stephen Kirkegaard. The episcopal leadership update can be viewed on the diocese's YouTube channel.

## Governance changes to move forward

Synod approved motions dealing with the Constitution and Canons that will allow changes to be made to the diocese's governance structure. The changes to the governance structure will be undertaken during a two-year pilot project. The changes will include:

- Diocesan Council and Executive Board will be amalgamated into one body called Synod Council.
- The size of Synod Council will include 25-27 members.
- Five committees will be established: Audit Committee, Finance Committee, Property Committee, Human Resources Committee, and Risk and Governance Committee.
- Existing committees will be amalgamated.

- The committees will have decision-making authority delegated to them with parameters established by Synod and Synod Council.

Questions involved how members of Synod Council will be sought, how program committees will fit into the proposed governance structure, and when the committee will report back to Synod. After the two-year pilot, there will be a 75% threshold needed to either make these changes permanent or revert to the old structure.

Synod approved changes to the Constitution first considered in 2019. Then Synod approved Canonical changes. A third motion approved the Governance Pilot Project first considered at the last session of Synod, with the following amendments based on feedback since 2019:

- All members of Synod Council will need to be members of Synod. If not currently, the bishop can make them members of Synod under s.3(4) of the Constitution of the Diocese of Toronto, provided they are qualified under s.3(1)(a)(b)&(c) of the Constitution.
- All elected members of Council will be elected at Synod, rather than at Pre-Synod meetings.
- A carefully considered slate of nominees will be presented by the nominating committee, ensuring robust elections and a diverse group of candidates.
- The proposed model addresses possible changes in episcopal leadership and episcopal areas of the diocese.
- The committee chairs and up to five others will be appointed by the bishop, taking into consideration skills, abilities and the diversity (geographic, gender, age, theological and BIPOC) of the diocese.
- The bishops and those whom the diocesan bishop appoints to Council will together not hold a majority of votes (45.83% with three bishops; 48% with four bishops; 50% with five bishops).

The pilot project will continue for two years, with a report back to Synod next year.

## Missional & Outreach Moment #3

All Saints, Collingwood shared how it has stepped up and responded to community needs during the pandemic. The church's weekly Friendship Dinner started many years ago. In March 2020, when in-person dinners were no longer possible, the parish decided to do take-out meals instead. The first take-out dinner held on April 1, 2020, gave out 65 meals. By October 2021, the team was giving out 220 take-out bags. But they saw that it wasn't enough.

Under-served people in the community were wondering what to do for food in between meals, especially as other churches weren't holding their own dinners. All Saints developed Entrees to Go, handing out about 100 frozen entrees each week. The parish sees this as a vital ministry in its community, where there is so much need. "The church and community are hand-in-hand, and they have to continue that way."

## Synod approves constitution and canon, housekeeping changes

Synod voted to change Canon 15 to broaden the scope of how churchwardens are permitted to make payments, taking into account the modern reality of electronic transfers and credit cards.

## Missional & Outreach Moment #4

St. Margaret, New Toronto described how its ministries expanded during the pandemic. When COVID-19 struck, the parish became a better neighbour, and its outreach ministries expanded beyond its imagination. With its own programs on hold, the parish got permission to redirect people to a community health centre and the Salvation Army, which were equipped to provide take-out hot meals. A group of local agencies got together and started to coordinate services and connect with each other, with leadership and coordination offered by the United Way and the City of Toronto. The Rev. Jacqueline Daley was invited to participate in this South Etobicoke Cluster. The group identified a need for a drop-in to give those most at risk access to hot meals, showers, laundry, and space to rest and get warm. St. Margaret's became the home of this new drop-in. The parish's new relationships with community partners and agencies have inspired its members to do more than they could ask or imagine.

## Members raise issues, causes

During Members' Time, members spoke about several issues and causes, including:

- Nuclear disarmament and the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty
- Fossil fuel divestment
- Geared-to-income housing
- The need to re-engage and make connections face-to-face in the community post-pandemic
- The lack of COVID-19 vaccinations in other parts of the world while Canadians are receiving third shots
- The Toronto Children's Ministry Conference
- Thanks to the behind-the-scenes team for putting together an online Synod

## Day ends in prayer

At the end of the afternoon session, the brothers of the Order of the Holy Cross led Synod in Evening Prayer.

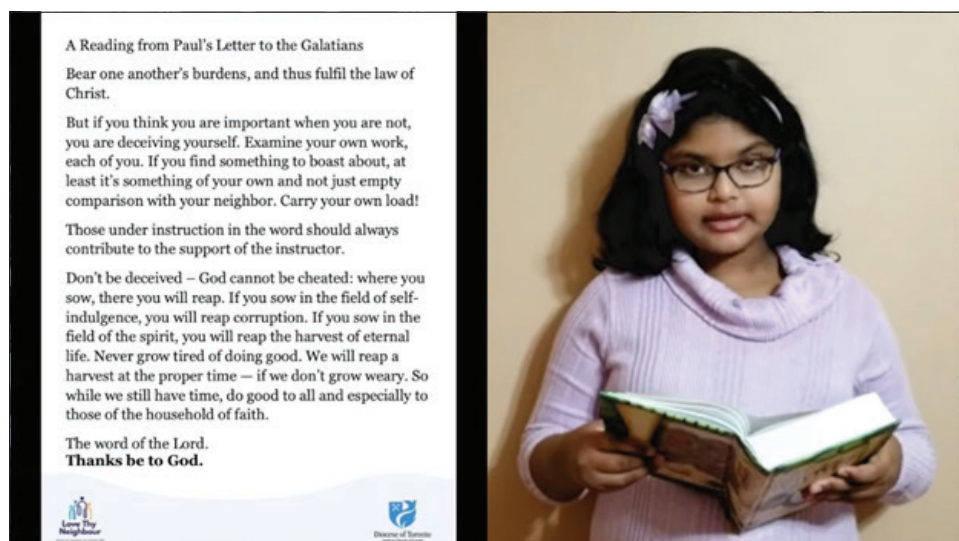
# Day 3

## Synod resumes with worship

Synod reconvened on Nov. 27 at 9:45 a.m. with Morning Prayer led by the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine along with the Rev. Canon Joanne Davies, chair of the Bishop's Committee on Healing Ministries and an oblate of SSJD.

## Financial reports and statements approved

Synod received and approved the Financial Report for 2020, the Audited Financial Statements for the Incorporated Synod for 2020 and the Audited Financial Statements for the Cemetery Fund for 2020.



Children and youth from across the diocese read from Paul's Letter to the Galatians, in a pre-recorded video played during the Opening Eucharist.



# HIGHLIGHTS

## Auditors appointed

Synod appointed the firm Grant Thornton LLP, Chartered Accountants, to conduct the audit of the financial statements of Synod, the Consolidated Trust Fund and the Cemetery Fund for the year ending Dec. 31, 2021, at a fee to be approved by the Audit Committee.

## Synod votes on priorities and plans, budget

Synod voted in favour of the diocese's priorities and plans and budget for 2022. Rob Saffrey, the diocese's Executive Director, walked Synod members through the priorities and plans. As the diocese considers what a post-COVID Church will look like, the strategy is to be nimble and not make significant changes to diocesan ministry. The focus in 2022 is to assess how parishes will emerge from COVID-19, and not make major decisions until a long-term strategic plan is in place.

Patricia D'Souza, the diocese's Controller, walked Synod through the budget details, including the revenue that supports diocesan ministry. There will be an estimated budgeted deficit of \$1.74 million in 2022, funded by a combination of proceeds from land sales and the diocesan unrestricted fund. There will be no change to the parish assessment rate. The diocese is offering a one-month relief from allotment for all parishes in 2022.

## Parish assessment rate approved

Synod approved an assessment rate for parishes of 24.70 per cent for 2022. This is the same assessment rate since 2019.

## Missional & Outreach Moment #5

St. Margaret, Barrie talked about its missional transformation, which began 10 years ago. Since then, the parish has taken up the idea that it is profoundly missional. It engages in projects and events to engage with the community around it, creating trusting and welcoming places where people can have open conversations about where God may be at work in their lives. St. Margaret's continually experiments with new ways of connecting with its neighbours, taking risks and trusting that God will lead them. During the pandemic, it has joined a coordinated project in Barrie starting food pantries. Churches around Barrie have seen that there's a real need, and the pantries are well used. On Halloween, organizers trick-or-treated for food bank items to stock the pantry, with great success.

## Members' Time

During Members' Time, Synod members raised several issues, including:

- Thanks to the diocesan staff, Executive Board and Diocesan Council for their support of parishes during the pandemic.
- Appreciation for the parishes and musicians that submitted music to be included at Synod.
- The need to address the pain and division in society as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need for a safe place to have conversations.

## Synod Council members announced

The following clergy were elected to serve on Synod Council:

- The Rev. Simon Bell
- The Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen Fields
- The Rev. Canon Sister Constance Joanna Gefvert, SSJD
- The Rev. Maria Ling
- The Rev. Jesse Parker



Bishop Kevin Robertson chairs Members' Time.



Brothers of the Order of the Holy Cross lead Synod in a pre-recorded Evening Prayer.

The following lay members were elected to serve on Synod Council:

- Chris Ambidge, ODT
- Eirene Khean Cheng Wee
- Heather McGregor, ODT
- David Toyce, ODT
- Laura Walton, ODT

## General Synod members announced

The following clergy were elected to serve on General Synod, which will be held in 2022:

- The Rev. Canon Nicola Skinner
- The Rev. Canon Dr. Stephen Fields
- The Rev. Molly Finlay
- The Rev. Roshni Jayawardena
- The Rev. Mark Regis
- The Rev. Claudette Taylor
- The Very Rev. Stephen Vail

The following laity were elected to General Synod:

- Laura Walton, ODT
- Chris Ambidge, ODT
- Yvonne Murray, ODT
- Gail Smith
- Marion Thompson, ODT
- David Toyce, ODT
- Mary Walsh, ODT

Finn Keesmaat-Walsh was elected to be the diocese's Youth Member of General Synod.

## Election of Honorary Secretaries

Bishop Asbil thanked Peter Newell as he retired from the position of Honorary Lay Secretary of Synod. He had served in this role since 2017.

The following were elected for the ensuing two-year term:

- The Rev. Andrew MacDonald, Honorary Clerical Secretary

- Sheila Robson, Honorary Lay Secretary
- The Rev. Lisa Newland, Assistant Honorary Clerical Secretary

## New vice-chancellors announced

Bishop Asbil said that new vice-chancellors would join Canon Brian Armstrong and Canon Paul Baston, the diocese's existing vice-chancellors. Joining them are:

- Marg Creal
- Mark Hemingway
- Gail Smith
- John van Gent

## Honorary canons named

Bishop Asbil named new Honorary Canons of St. James Cathedral:

- Canon Robert Saffrey, Executive Director of the diocese
- The Rev. Canon Simon Bell, St. Margaret, Barrie
- The Rev. Canon Andrea Budgey, Trinity College and St. Theodore of Canterbury
- The Rev. Canon Greg Carpenter, St. Jude, Wexford
- The Rev. Canon Susan Climo, Holy Spirit of Peace
- The Rev. Canon Stephanie Douglas-Bowman, St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering
- The Rev. Canon Timothy Haughton, Trinity East (Little Trinity)
- The Rev. Canon Maggie Helwig, St. Stephen in-the-Fields
- The Rev. Canon Stephen Kirkegaard, Holy Trinity, Guildwood
- The Rev. Canon Victor Li, St. Cyprian
- The Rev. Canon Erin Martin, St. James the Apostle, Sharon
- The Rev. Canon Claudette Taylor, Epiphany & St. Mark, Parkdale
- The Rev. Canon James Ferry, St. Peter, Erindale

## Bishop offers thanks

Bishop Asbil thanked the many people who have worked to put Synod together. He said that we leave this Synod knowing that things are changing underfoot, and that we go into the future with confidence. God is with us. We are called to love each other, to love our neighbour as ourselves.



The Rev. Dr. Gary Gannon, deacon at All Saints, Whitby, reads the holy gospel during the Opening Eucharist. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON.

# Parishes urged to champion justice for workers



BY ELIN GOULDEN

**THE** Bible calls us to justice for those who are most vulnerable, including vulnerable workers in our society.

After God's people were brought out of slavery into freedom, they were reminded to treat their hired labourers – including “sojourners in the land” – with fairness and dignity (Deuteronomy 24:14-15). Likewise, Paul's letter to Timothy repeats the adages “You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain” and “The labourer deserves to be paid” (1 Timothy 5:18).

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that many workers in essential workplaces – health care and long-term care facilities, manufacturing, warehousing, logistics, farms, food processing industries and grocery stores – are precariously employed. Precarious workers are those who are not only low-paid but whose employment is also characterized by uncertain hours and a lack of workplace benefits and protections. For instance,

workers who make less than \$33,000 per year are also those least likely to have paid sick days. Part-time workers not only are frequently excluded from workplace benefit programs, but face uncertainty about their hours of work from week to week, making it difficult to plan their lives, arrange for child-care, or accept other employment to be able to make enough income to meet their needs.

Precarious work has a harmful effect on the physical, mental and emotional health of workers and their families, with repercussions felt in the wider community. During the pandemic, we have seen many workplaces become hubs of COVID-19 transmission. When the employment laws allow employers to hire people at sub-poverty wages and in dangerous working conditions without adequate protection, low-income and precarious workers pay for this with their health – and even with their lives.

Low-wage workers who lack employment benefits are also overwhelmingly likely to be women, members of racialized groups, newcomers, migrant or undocumented

workers. Decent work is therefore not just a matter of economic justice, but a matter of gender and racial justice as well.

Accordingly, this year the Social Justice & Advocacy Committee, with the support of the College of Bishops, has put forward a motion calling on the provincial government to support Ontario's most vulnerable workers by passing legislation to implement the following measures:

• Ten days of employer-paid sick leave per year for all workers, without requiring workers to submit doctor's notes, with an additional 14 days' sick leave during public health emergencies.

• Require employers to give workers a minimum number of hours per week (based on the job) and to give reasonable advance notice of work schedules.

• Require employers to provide equal pay and benefits to all workers doing the same work, whether they are part-time, temporary or contract workers, and regardless of immigration status.

A backgrounder supporting the motion, which parishes can down-

load and use as a bulletin insert, has been prepared by the Social Justice & Advocacy Committee. It can be found on the diocesan website at [www.toronto.anglican.ca/vestry-motion](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/vestry-motion). That same page includes links to further reading on the issues, ideas on actions parishes can take, and tips for presenting the motion.

This year's motion is timely as the pandemic has made us all more aware of the challenges faced by many essential workers in our communities. It's time to translate our appreciation for those workers who keep us fed, clothed and cared for into giving them working conditions and benefits that treat them with dignity and allow them to stay healthy as well.

Pam Frache, an organizer with the Worker's Action Centre who led a workshop at our recent Outreach & Advocacy Conference, reminded us that “when we don't protect the workplace, we ourselves are not protected. We have to protect each other.” This should be of concern to all in society, but especially to us, as those called by Christ to love our neighbours as ourselves.

The Rev. Canon Andrea Budgely, chair of the diocese's Poverty Reduction subcommittee, puts it this way: “As Irenaeus famously expressed it, ‘The glory of God is the living human being, and human life is the vision of God.’ We live in an economy built on workers' fear, on precarious and inequitable work conditions, and we've become so accustomed to it that we can forget what an affront that is to the divine purpose. When we advocate for justice and dignity for workers, we are re-aligning ourselves with God's desire for us.”

While we acknowledge that some members of our parishes may not agree with the motion as presented, there is still merit in raising and discussing these issues within the parish, as we seek to bear witness to what loving our neighbour looks like in practice. Moreover, no parish is required to present the motion, and any parish can agree to change the wording of the motion if this is the will of its vestry. All we ask is that any alterations be communicated to Elin Goulden, Social Justice & Advocacy Consultant, at [egoulden@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:egoulden@toronto.anglican.ca).

## We must make space for lament



BY THE REV. CANON MAGGIE HELWIG

I have spent a possibly troubling amount of time reading, analysing and teaching the Revelation to John of

Patmos, not to mention directing several dramatized readings of the text. But it was in the last activity – and reasonably enough, since it is a text written to be performed – that I fully realized the depth, the beauty and terror, of the doom pronounced upon Babylon in chapter 18:

“... the sound of harpists and minstrels and of flautists and trumpeters will be heard in you no more; and an artisan of any trade will be found in you no more; and the sound of the millstone will be heard in you no more; and the light of a lamp will shine in you no more; and the voice of bridegroom and bride will be heard in you no more.”

As the economy of Babylon begins to collapse, it is not the powerholders who are the first to be trapped in the rubble, but the innocent musicians, the ordinary artisans, the slaves working in the mills, the young couples in love. Babylon must

fall – the institutionalized oppression and exploitation of the empire must and will crash under its own weight – but it cannot fall without tragedy. And the scope of the tragedy will be immense.

As I am writing this, the COP26 talks are wrapping up, without any substantive or meaningful commitments to truly reducing emissions and containing the climate emergency. And as I write this, every highway into Vancouver has been shut down by flooding. Entire towns have been evacuated, barely months after the absolute material destruction of the village of Lytton by wildfires. Indigenous communities are cut off by mudslides, without food or medicine, and much of Abbotsford is now under water. It will not stop with this. The angels, to use John's imagery, are pouring out their vials.

It seems certain, now, that our world of uncontrolled capitalism, fossil fuel addiction and end-game consumerism will fall. It is falling. We are living in a global Babylon, with which the Church has collaborated for a long time, and more thoroughly than even John of Patmos could have imagined. We, all of us, are entangled so deeply in structural sin, and our leaders, our merchants and kings of the earth, are so unwilling to step out of it, that there is no realistically possible

future which avoids collapse. And perhaps this is, on the larger societal level, even a kind of justice.

But many of the people most directly affected by the BC disasters are Indigenous – the descendants of those who cared well for this land for so long. Most of the people who are watching their homes wash away are not wealthy, and they have had few choices. Some of them are musicians, artisans, low-wage workers in the mills of the service industry, young couples in love. They are innocent casualties of the empire's falling.

Faced with the demand to live truthfully amid this tragedy, John suggests a stance of withdrawal, non-cooperation, detachment. Up to a point, it is helpful advice; we must still try to pull ourselves out of the matrix of sin, to live without unnecessary consumption, to choose smaller lives, to grow our vegetables and put up our solar panels. And to build, as well, community resilience, the skills and relationships and shared bonds of mutual aid, the sense of a common and interdependent life and destiny.

But there must be more than that. The Canadian government continues, even now, to build pipelines and to expand our fossil fuel industry, and it is primarily Indigenous land defenders who are

standing in their way. We must name this, we must name the apocalyptic riders of our time, and we must be prepared to stand with those who are opposing them. We must name the fact that the Church itself is deeply tied up in the fossil fuel economy and consumerism; we must change ourselves, and we must be ready to help those who will suffer from this change, too.

And we must make space for lament. For it is too late now to save much that was beautiful and good; it is too late to spare our descendants the pain and struggle that will be created by our decisions. As the angel's lament over Babylon disrupts John's vision of avenging justice, we must hold a place and time for mourning, mourning for the light of the lamp and the music of the flute, for the polar bear and the coral reef and the last white rhinoceros, for all the lovely things that were and will be no more. To remember, to memorialize, and to grieve – this too is the work of the Church in our time, and may be the work that only faith, and a fierce irrational hope, can enable us to do.

*The Rev. Canon Maggie Helwig is the incumbent of St. Stephen-in-the-Fields, Toronto.*

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## PRAYER CYCLE

### FOR JANUARY

1. The Diocese of Toronto
2. The Members of the Diocese of Toronto
3. Christ Church, Scarborough
4. Grace Church in Scarborough
5. Holy Trinity, Guildwood
6. Nativity, Malvern
7. New Hope Anglican Mission
8. St. Andrew, Scarborough
9. Honorary Canons of St. James Cathedral
10. St. Dunstan of Canterbury
11. St. John the Divine, Scarborough
12. St. Jude, Wexford
13. St. Margaret in-the-Pines
14. St. Margaret Tamil Congregation
15. St. Michael the Archangel
16. Scarborough Deanery
17. St. Ninian, Scarborough
18. St. Paul, L'Amoreaux
19. St. Peter, Scarborough
20. St. Timothy, Agincourt
21. Ecumenical Dialogues of the Anglican Church of Canada
22. Ecumenical Officer – the Rev. Canon Philip Hobson, OGS
23. Canadian Council of Churches
24. All Saints, King City
25. Christ Church, Holland Landing
26. Christ Church, Kettleby
27. Christ Church, Roches Point
28. Parish of Georgina
29. New Vocations in the Diocese of Toronto
30. Holland Deanery
31. St. James the Apostle, Sharon

## IN MOTION

### Appointments

- The Rev. Milton Solomon, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Margaret Tamil Congregation, Nov. 1.
- Maria Reolin, Executive Director, Flemingdon Park Ministry, Nov. 2.
- The Rev. Vickie Edgeworth-Pitcher, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Athanasius, Orillia, Nov. 7.

- The Rev. Ken Johnstone, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Cyprian, Toronto, Nov. 17.
- The Rev. Michelle Jones, Priest-in-Charge of St. James, Caledon East, Nov. 25.
- The Rev. Simon Bell, Priest-in-Charge, Trinity Church, Barrie, Nov. 28. This appointment will be in addition to his Incumbency at St. Margaret, Barrie.
- The Rev. Susan Snelling, Associate Priest, St. Margaret, Barrie, Nov. 28. This appointment will be in addition to her appointment as Priest-in-Charge of Good Shepherd, Stayner.
- The Rev. Gregory Fiennes-Clinton, Priest-in-Charge, Parish of Lloydtown, Dec. 1.
- The Rev. Ken McClure, Incumbent, St. George, Allandale, Jan. 1, 2022.
- The Rev. Canon Dr. David Barker, Interim Priest-in-Charge, Parish of Haliburton, Jan. 1, 2022.

**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):
- All Saints, King City
- Prince of Peace, Wasaga Beach
- Havergal College Chaplain

### Parish Selection Committee Process

- First Phase** - (not yet receiving names):
- Christ Church, Bolton
  - Holy Trinity, Trinity Square
  - Holy Trinity, Thornhill
  - Nativity, Malvern
  - St. Dunstan of Canterbury
  - St. Cyprian

- St. Peter, Erindale

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

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

### Ordinations

- Angie Hocking will be ordained a Vocational Deacon at Redeemer, Bloor St. on Jan. 23, 2022 at 4 p.m.

### Celebrations of New Ministry

(Dates pending)

#### Trent Durham

- The Rev. Alvarado Adderley – Incumbent of the Parish of Fenelon Falls & Coboconk
- The Rev. Stephanie Douglas-Bowman – Incumbent of St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering
- The Rev. Peter Gachira – Incumbent of the Parish of Lakefield
- The Rev. Benjamin Gillard – Priest-in-Charge of St. Thomas, Brooklin
- The Rev. Lee McNaughton – Priest-in-Charge of St. Paul, Brighton
- The Rev. William Roberts – Priest-in-Charge of St. Mark, Port Hope
- The Rev. Jennifer Schick – Incumbent of All Saints, Whitby
- The Rev. Bonnie Skerritt – Incumbent of St. Paul Lindsay

#### York-Credit Valley

- The Rev. Nathan Humphrey – Incumbent of St. Thomas, Huron Street on Jan. 30, 2022 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Robert Hurkmans – Incumbent of Trinity, Streetsville
- The Rev. Pam Prideaux – Incumbent of St. Joseph of Nazareth, Bramalea

#### York-Scarborough

- The Rev. Sherri Golisky – Priest-in-Charge of St. Matthew the Apostle, Oriole
- The Rev. Alison Hari-Singh – Priest-in-Charge of St. Andrew by-the-Lake
- The Rev. Andrew Kaye – Incumbent of St. Margaret in-the-Pines
- The Rev. Andrew MacDonald – Priest-in-Charge of St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff
- The Rev. Michael Perry – Priest-in-Charge of Transfiguration
- The Rev. Dr. Irwin Sikha – Priest-in-Charge of St. Bede

#### York-Simcoe

- The Rev. Eyad Aji – Priest-in-Charge of Evangelists, New Tecumseth
- The Rev. Gregory Fiennes-Clinton – Priest-in-Charge, Parish of Lloydtown
- The Rev. Ian LaFleur – Incumbent of St. Stephen, Maple
- The Rev. Ken McClure – Incumbent of St. George, Allandale

### Conclusions

- The Rev. Chris Dow will conclude his appointment as Incumbent of St. James, Caledon East on November 21. He will be taking up an appointment in the Diocese of the Arctic.

### Deaths

- The Rev. Canon Joyce Barnett, Incumbent of St. Matthias, Bellwoods and spouse of the Rev. Dr. Deacon Alison Kemper, died on Nov. 29, 2021 after a valiant fight against cancer. Ordained deacon in 1984 and priest in 2010, over the course of her ministry she served in the parishes of St. Margaret, West Hill; St. John,

Weston; St. David, Lawrence Avenue; and St. Matthias, Bellwoods.

- The Rev. Richard (Dick) Johns died on Nov. 28, 2021. Ordained in 1955, he served as the Director of Personnel Resources for the Anglican Church of Canada. After retirement from that role in 1990 he served as Interim Priest-in-Charge of St. John, West Toronto, St. Francis of Assisi, Meadowvale, and the Interim Executive Assistant to the Bishop.

## LOOKING AHEAD

To submit items for Looking Ahead, email [editor@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:editor@toronto.anglican.ca). The deadline for the February issue is Jan. 1. Parishes can also promote their events on the diocese's website Calendar at [www.toronto.anglican.ca](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca).

## Concerts

**JAN 5.-FEB. 16** – The Kingsway Organ Recital Series has returned. The following performances will take place in January and February: Adrian Ross, Jan. 5; Peter Nikiforuk (Jan. 19); Alexander Straus-Fausto (Feb. 2); Michael Capon (Feb. 16). All concerts take place at All Saints' Kingsway from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. A free-will offering will be gratefully received.

**FEB. 6** – Accession Evensong at 4 p.m., marking the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with Music for Royal Occasions and a short talk by historian Dr. Jim Leatch. Join in person at St. Olave, Bloor and Windermere, Toronto, or online on YouTube. For more details, please call 416-769-5686 or visit [www.stolaves.ca](http://www.stolaves.ca).

# God is calling us to be signs of love and compassion

Continued from Page 7

communities when we know that recovery and pulling the people of God back to worship will take time. It's important to be patient with each other, to be kind to each other, to seek after the lost, to leave the 99 and to go out into the wilderness to find the one to bring them in.

It's a time when congregations need to take account of where we are and how God is calling us into the future. Some parishes will be ready to plant new ideas and new ministries, while others need to consolidate and to imagine a new future, whether that's with a neighbouring parish or in a regionalized ministry, or to be able to re-imagine ministry in a new way in that same place.

There is opportunity for us to do the same. As we have come to the end of our Growing in Christ strategic plan, it's tempting for us to quickly come up with a new plan. But I believe that God is calling us into that same space of discernment, to be able to form listening circles throughout our diocese, in very much the same way the national church has done, and to listen for the calling of God, who is urging

us to be the Church in the future as we build and understand our call tomorrow.

In the same way, at this Synod we will entertain a change in our governance pattern, an opportunity to be more nimble as we keep moving in these uncertain times. And also that episcopal leadership in this diocese will now move forward with three bishops and further support.

## A call to generosity

The third thing that we learn from the Samaritan: He gave the innkeeper two denarii and said, "Take care of him. When I come back, I will settle whatever I owe you." Two denarii is two days' wages. That was a tremendous sum of money that speaks of the generosity and magnanimity of God's love. We are called to that same generosity, especially in a time of pandemic and especially in a time of wilderness between here and there. It is tempting to hold, to keep, to believe that we live in scarcity, and yet by faith we know that God calls us to abundance.

In 2020, Diocesan Council passed a

motion to sell two pieces of property to provide wages for three months for every cleric in the diocese and three months of relief from allotment. In 2022, we offer one month of relief from allotment, and also build into our budget an opportunity for parishes that are suffering financially to apply for more relief. We recognize that it is difficult to move through this time, and more support needs to be given.

We also know that this is a call to the Church to speak about stewardship, to pray about stewardship, to offer opportunities for Anglicans to be generous. In 2020, I asked a member of this diocese to consider offering \$100,000 as a matching grant for FaithWorks. She thought about it, and she said, "I would like to do that, but I'd like to match only new donations to the FaithWorks program." We took that challenge, and in 2020 we raised the second largest amount towards our annual appeal in the history of FaithWorks. That same donor is offering the same challenge in 2021, our 25th year, and I hope and I pray God that we as Anglicans in this diocese may respond with the same

generosity. Fourteenth-century mystic Meister Eckhart once said that the soul grows not by addition but by subtraction. It is when we let go and offer that our souls grow too.

## Go and do likewise

Here we are in the midst of a pandemic as Synod 2021, as a Diocese of Toronto, and God calls us to bear witness in this time, because God is in this time with us. It is God that is calling us as a diocese to have the strength, the fortitude, the confidence and the will to persist and to keep going. And with God's strong presence we serve. Theologian Karoline Lewis once said that the Samaritan draws near to the man trusting that the Kingdom of God draws near. And the Kingdom draws near to us when we respond in the same way. God is calling us to be present in this time of disruption and change, to be signs of love and compassion for our neighbours. And we heed the call that Jesus has given as a last word to the lawyer: go and do likewise. Amen.

# All Saints has big plans for 150th anniversary

## Church kicks off year of celebration

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

ALL Saints Church-Community Centre is celebrating its 150th anniversary, and the community kicked off its year of festivities with a special worship service on All Saints' Day. "That is the tradition here – to kick off the anniversary celebrations on All Saints', which is our patronal," says the Rev. Alison Falby, priest-in-charge.

Bishop Andrew Asbil celebrated and preached, and the congregation of 30 included past and present volunteers, donors and board members, as well as people from the wider community. Despite the cold fall temperatures, the service took place outside. "The drop-in was still running, and it meant that we could sing," says Ms. Falby. "It was very cold, I have to say!"

The anniversary celebrations will continue until All Saints' Day in 2022, with former incumbents coming back to celebrate and preach. "We have a visiting celebrant or preacher each month. Archbishop Fred Hiltz is starting us off in January, Archbishop Linda Nicholls is

coming in June, and Archbishop Mark MacDonald is concluding our celebrations with us on the next All Saint's Day," says Ms. Falby. On June 16, the actual anniversary of All Saints' first service, the community is planning a big barbecue, if COVID-19 restrictions allow for larger gatherings with food and drink by then.

With the theme "A Corner of Belonging for 150 Years: Sharing our Stories," Ms. Falby says the community is hoping it will be a year of storytelling. "We're asking people to share their stories of how they've experienced belonging at All Saints, and their general memories. We took videos of a few people on Nov. 1, and we're going to have other opportunities for people to share their stories through the year," she says. One tool for that will be a new website, which will include a way for people to submit their memories.

Ms. Falby is also working on a partnership with Ryerson University to undertake an oral history project. "The history of All Saints is really tied up with the history



Top: Bishop Andrew Asbil (centre) and the Rev. Alison Falby (fifth from the right) with All Saints parishioners and supporters. Bottom right: All Saints music director, Thomas McCallum, sings and plays guitar for the gathered crowd. Bottom left: Retiring drop-in worker Barb Todd (left) receives flowers from Rev. Joanna Manning in honour of her years of service. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON.

of the poor in Toronto, and it's a history that doesn't get a lot of attention. People here have great stories," she says.

The anniversary year is a welcome celebration in a community that has experienced some of the harshest effects of COVID-19. Located at the corner of Sherbourne and Dundas streets in Toronto, All Saints serves some of the city's most economically disenfranchised people. As one of the only drop-ins that stayed open during the first wave of the pandemic, the ongoing effort has taken a toll on its staff and its budget. "Most of the people who spend time in our drop-in are unhoused. Many of them are sleeping rough, and we want to be able to provide space for them," says Ms. Falby. Meanwhile, staff have had to put programs on hold and limit the number of people inside the building.

Still, there has been no shortage of encouragement during the last two years. "Seeing how resilient

our community is, is pretty amazing. There are people who've had a harder time with COVID than I have who still are tremendously faithful and every day say that where there's life, there's hope. The constant reminder of that is a great joy," says Ms. Falby. "Tired as we are, knowing that we have been here for the community gives me very deep satisfaction."

The pandemic has brought new ministries and opportunities as well. A prayer group has started meeting weekly, and the new website will include a way for people to ask for prayers. All Saints has also formed new partnerships with organizations, churches, and individuals providing support. "We know we're not in it alone," says Ms. Falby. "People really want to help and be in partnership with us, and that has been incredibly life-giving."

When she considers what she'd like to see in the next few years, her first concern is for the welfare

of her community. "I would love to see more people housed. We'd really like to see more supportive housing for members of our community," she says. "Also, being able to make more long-term plans and have more stability would be one of my greatest hopes."

While not every parish is located in a neighbourhood so clearly in need of ministry with the underserved and underprivileged members of society, Ms. Falby says she'd encourage every community to build these meaningful relationships in their own contexts. "Fr. Greg Boyle, who founded Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles, said that we are not called to serve the poor; we are called to kinship with the poor, which is a very different thing. There is much greater joy in being in kinship with the poor rather than merely serving them," she says. "Being in kinship with people who are different from us is a way to be transformed ourselves, but also to transform our communities."

## Diocese's early support for PWRDF project lights the way



Two trainees install a solar suitcase at a health clinic in rural Mozambique. PHOTO COURTESY OF PWRDF.

BY JANICE BIEHN

MOTHERS and babies in rural Mozambique will get a better chance at a healthy birth, thanks to a PWRDF campaign that ran last year from May 1 until October 31, 2021. The "Light for Every Birth" project reunited PWRDF with the Mozambican health organization EHALE and California-based We Care Solar to

bring solar electricity to 50 health care clinics.

The success of this project started in 2016. PWRDF was embarking on a historic four-year maternal, newborn and child health program funded by donors and the Government of Canada with a 6:1 match. The project budget was approximately \$20 million, and PWRDF was responsible for raising \$2.8 million

through donations. The Diocese of Toronto's Our Faith-Our Hope campaign gave a generous donation of \$500,000, which was critical to kickstarting that \$2.8 million.

One of the successes in year one of the program was the installation of 30 "solar suitcases" in rural health clinics in Mozambique. The hard plastic boxes open like a suitcase, they are installed on the wall of a clinic and then connected to a solar panel mounted to the roof. Bright, plentiful sunshine flows into the panel and the suitcase, powering a headlamp, a ceiling light, phone charging ports and a fetal Doppler.

Since the suitcases were installed, PWRDF's Mozambique partners have seen a dramatic increase in healthy births during the night, and greater acceptance of going to the clinics to have a trained birth attendant present at the birth. The suitcases are still in perfect working condition. Any repairs that were required were easily made by those who had been trained in 2016.

So in 2021, when the opportunity presented itself to install more solar suitcases, the Diocese of Toronto came to the table again, this time with a grant from FaithWorks for \$10,000.

Olinda Magaia, Executive Director at EHALE, joined PWRDF for a Zoom celebration of the program's success and spoke about the excitement for the new suitcases. "People, after they see what the solar suitcases have done to other communities and their impact, they call me and say, 'you have to protect us, you have to bring a solar suitcase to us,'" said Ms. Magaia through a translator.

As there was no government match for this program, PWRDF had to be more creative in its approach to fundraising. Many churches took up the cause, including St. John, East Orangeville, a small but mighty parish in Caledon. St. John raised enough for two suitcases. "We have a very small parish, only about 30 worshippers on average each Sunday," says Mark Hauck, a warden and a PWRDF

board member. So how did they raise \$11,600?

Two factors were key, says Mr. Hauck. One, parish leadership. "Our incumbent, Archdeacon Elizabeth Hardy, is extremely organized and was behind the project from the beginning." The other factor was having a beginning, middle and end to the campaign.

"We started in late June by deciding at the parish leadership to undertake this. We started providing information on a Bristol board display in the church and answered any questions from the parish."

Near the middle, they invited PWRDF Executive Director Will Postma to come and speak. "We were able to gather outside, and he answered even more questions."

Toward the end, the Orangeville newspaper picked up the story. "They published a Q&A with our priest, Archdeacon Hardy, and also invited people outside the church to give."

In the end, the parish raised the funds through 27 gifts, two of which were anonymous.