

Walking with the sacred

Pilgrimage lesson for pandemic times



Homeless memorial adds 35 names

The Anglican

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MARCH 2022

Churches open doors to vaccinate communities

BY NAOMI RACZ

WHEN the East Toronto Chinese Baptist Church approached the Rev. Canon Greg Carpenter, incumbent at St. Jude, Wexford, about partnering to run a pop-up COVID-19 vaccination clinic, he said it seemed like a “no-brainer.”

“We were walking into the unknown, but I thought, of course we’ll try this.” Setting up the clinic turned out to be much simpler than Canon Carpenter had imagined. The Baptist church had already run a clinic and was able to connect him with Toronto Public Health. “It really was as simple as sending an email. Our pitch was that we’re centrally located, we have two elementary schools nearby, people walk through our car park all day and we also run a food bank.”

Toronto Public Health set a date for the pop-up clinic, Nov. 17, 2021, which would run from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., overlapping with the church’s food bank. However, the clinic didn’t gain much traction. “We vaccinated about five people, so we were disappointed. But we did get one or two boosters in arms, and we stayed open right until the end of the day, until four, and in the last half hour we had a father come in asking if we could vaccinate his two high schoolers. So, because we stayed open, we were able to vaccinate them.”

Canon Carpenter says Toronto Public Health was happy with the clinic, but the church decided to approach them about running another clinic and a new date was set for Dec. 30. This time, more people would be eligible for boosters and vaccines for younger children had also been approved. However, says Canon Carpenter, “It was like trying

to hit a moving target. You just don’t know what if any traction you’re going to get.”

Again, the clinic was set to run from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Two hours before the clinic was due to open, there were already people lining up outside the church and by the time it opened there were around 140 people waiting. Because of the church’s experience with running the food bank and because the church building is a large space, the staff and volunteers on hand were able to invite those waiting inside, while maintaining social distancing. They also handed out numbers so that those waiting knew they would be seen.

By the time the clinic closed, 290 doses had been administered. “It was very cool,” says Canon Carpenter. “It was great. Toronto Public Health were very easy to deal with and we were able to use the church space, which was very intentional. This wasn’t in any way separate from the church, it wasn’t in a church hall or another building.

“From a practical standpoint, this meant everything was on one level and accessible. We already have the church space set up for social distancing. Our food bank is based in the church. So, it made sense to use the church as far as moving people in and out.

“But on a more faith-based side, it strikes to the heart of what the church is here to do — to be open, to be available. To open our church doors, it was a sign of great hope during a time of great closure. At that time, we still had the Christmas decorations up, the creche was still up, and it was incarnational, it was the church at work. We are not here to proselytize; we are here to help.”



Above: A healthcare worker receives a dose of a COVID-19 vaccine at a clinic at St. Stephen in-the-Fields on Dec. 19, 2021. Right: People line up to get their vaccination.

St. Stephen in-the-Fields is part of the City of Toronto’s COVID-19 Vaccine Engagement Team for the Downtown West area. The program was set up to provide grants to non-profits, community organisations and faith-based groups that could help ensure access to vaccines in areas disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Through running seven vaccination clinics, St. Stephen in-the-Fields has been able to reach vulnerable populations including those who are unhoused or marginally housed. “There’s a lot of institutional mistrust,” says the Rev. Canon Maggie Helwig, incumbent at St. Stephen in-the-Fields. “There’s lack of access to phones and computers. Many are refugees who are anxious about interacting with institutions. We are coming to them and there’s a level of trust.” PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE REV. CANON MAGGIE HELWIG

Synod Council gathers online for the first time

New governance pilot project approved at Synod 2021 underway

BY NAOMI RACZ

ON Jan. 20, Synod Council gathered for the first time under the new governance pilot project. The pilot project was approved during the 160th Regular Session of Synod, held online last year. It will run for two years and, in 2023, there

will be a vote at Synod on whether the changes should be made permanent, or the old structure reverted to.

Under the pilot project, Diocesan Council and the Executive Board have been amalgamated into one body called Synod Council, which currently includes 25 members

(and can include a maximum of 27) — almost half the size of Diocesan Council. Meanwhile, within Synod Council there will be five committees: Audit Committee, Finance Committee, Property Committee, Human Resources Committee, and Risk and Governance Committee. The committees will be responsi-

ble for decision making within a certain remit.

At the January Synod Council meeting, the focus of discussion was on what the committee model will look like and what their decision-making parameters will be.

The Constitution and Canonical changes required to carry out

this pilot were first considered at Synod in 2019 and some amendments were subsequently made, discussed at diocesan “Town Halls” and then approved at Synod 2021. These included an amendment stipulating that elections to Synod

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Barrie warming centre a lifesaving “band aid”

BY NAOMI RAGZ

ON Jan. 21, a much-needed daytime warming centre opened in Barrie at Trinity Church. The warming centre is open Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will remain open until the end of March. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it currently serves around 12-16 people each day. The warming centre is a collaboration between Trinity Church, the John Howard Society and the Gilbert Centre.

“We realise this is a band aid,” says the Rev. Canon Simon Bell, incumbent at St. Margaret, Barrie, which is part of a regional ministry with Trinity Church and Good Shepherd, Stayner, “but if we don’t do it then people will die. We’re just keeping people alive one extra day.”

According to a survey conducted by the Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness on the night of Nov. 17, 2020, 536 people were counted experiencing homelessness. Of those, 49% were in Barrie. However, Canon Bell estimates that figure to be much higher now as the situation has been exacerbated by the pandemic.

A significant proportion of Barrie’s unhoused or precariously housed population is individuals who have been released from the nearby correctional centre in Penetanguishene. The former prisoners are dropped off at the bus station in Barrie, despite not necessarily being from the area. There are few resources available in Simcoe County for the reintegration of prisoners and with no money and

nowhere to go, former prisoners are left unhoused or precariously housed. This has been a growing issue as prisons across Ontario have tried to reduce their numbers to curb the spread of COVID-19. Other issues are also at play, including the opioid crisis and a lack of affordable housing.

Canon Bell says that a huge influx of professionals from Toronto during the pandemic has driven up house prices in Barrie. “People are living in their cars. They’re employed but they can’t afford housing. We’re supporting a carpenter and a man who does snowplow driving and construction. Both live in their cars. They’re employed but underpaid.”

As part of the City of Barrie’s New Foundations affordable housing initiative, Trinity Church was

invited to apply for \$20,000 to do an affordable housing feasibility study to assess the practical steps needed to build affordable housing on the church’s property. It’s just one step towards moving beyond “band aids.”

But solving the challenges facing the unhoused and precariously housed goes far beyond one church’s efforts. “We can’t solve the problem of a minimum wage versus a living wage. We can’t solve the opioid crisis. There doesn’t seem to be a coherent conversation in Canada around the opioid crisis. Safe sites are another band aid. Do we need to be looking at decriminalizing drug use?”

Trinity Church is part of a coalition that is working on homelessness and food security issues in

Barrie. The coalition meets every week and includes local officials. Canon Bell sees this as one of the advantages to being in a small city. “When I worked in downtown Toronto, I would sometimes meet with local politicians but here we have the ear of the mayor and Simcoe officials. I can have a coffee with the mayor.” But Canon Bell admits that members of the coalition often feel overwhelmed.

Still, he does see hope. “Where the hope lies for me is in small agencies and churches getting involved and making a small contribution. Bishop Andrew and the College of Bishops have encouraged us to continue these projects during covid. So, that really helped, not needing to convince the system, but the system saying, ‘please, make this happen.’”

Streamlining decision making

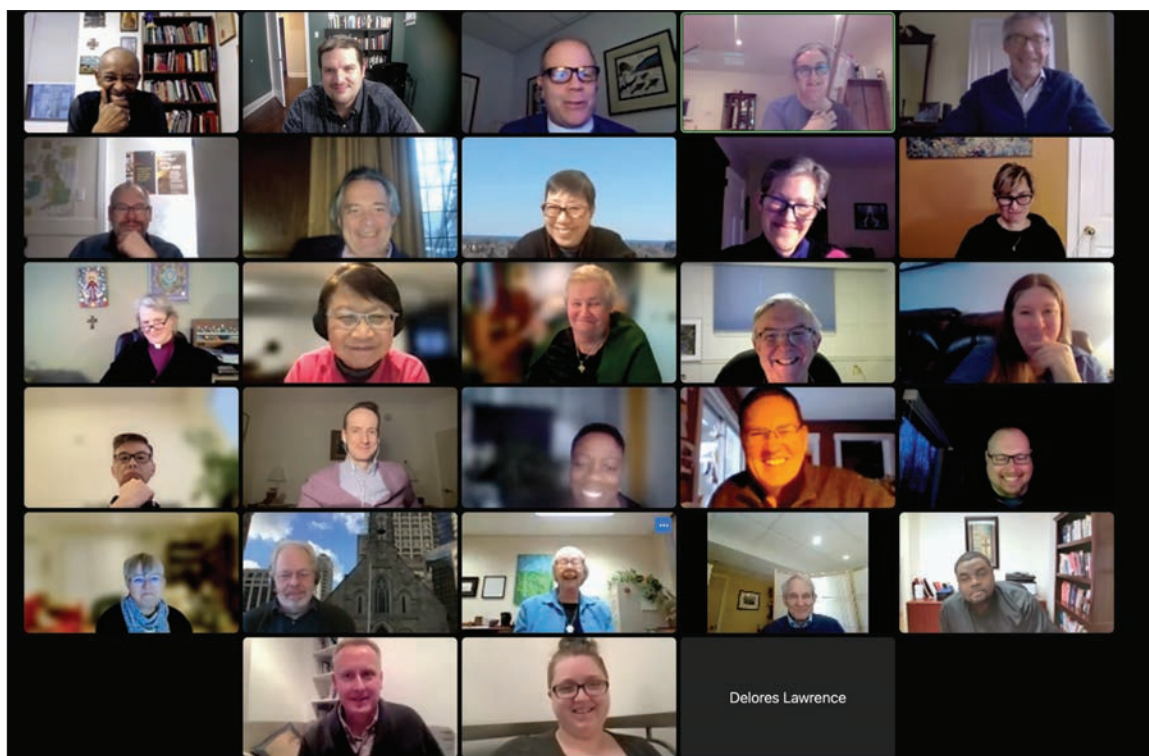
Continued from Page 1

Council will take place at Synod, rather than at area Pre-Synod meetings, to ensure a robust voting process. Another amendment stipulates that the nominating committee for Synod elections will consider the geographical, gender, age, theological, racial and ethnic diversity of the diocese in order to ensure a diverse slate of candidates and that Synod Council is representative of the diocese.

The goal of the new governance structure is to facilitate and streamline decision making and to allow for more thorough discussions. Canon Robert Saffrey, executive director, felt this was

reflected in the January Synod Council meeting. “I think there was a depth to the discussion that we were able to have. There was greater participation. This new structure will also hopefully help parishes. The main question we get is: how do we move this forward? The governance pilot will make getting approval for a new building, for example, more streamlined, and it will make this question easier to answer.”

Synod Council will continue to meet monthly, with a break for summer, and an update on the pilot project will be delivered at Synod 2022.



Synod Council meets for the first time under the new governance pilot project. The meeting was held on Zoom on Jan. 20.

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Walking with the sacred

Creation care committee develops watershed pilgrimage resource

BY KAREN TURNER

MOST of us have been aware of a climate emergency for many years now and see that the urgency has only increased, to the point where action is essential to avert the worst consequences of human-caused climate change.

How do we respond? Getting to know the place where you live and serve is one way. The Bishop's Committee on Creation Care is inviting every parish in the diocese to participate in a joyful and challenging project called "The Watershed Pilgrimage." The project is rooted in the principles of watershed discipleship and pilgrimage and will help parishioners get to know their place, tell its stories and see where the land is flourishing and where it is suffering.

The committee is working on a resource that will guide parish groups. A series of explorations will help people learn about their watershed and create a pilgrimage walk, starting from the door of the church, so that others can connect more deeply with the land. The guide will be divided into six units,

and parishes can take as long as they need to complete each unit.

Each parish will also be encouraged to reach out to neighbouring parishes to see if they can connect the routes of their pilgrimage walks, creating longer walks throughout the diocese.

The ancient spiritual practice of pilgrimage calls us to journey on sacred paths to holy places in order to come into a deeper relationship with the land and with God. Anglicans are no strangers to the idea of our parishes serving our neighbourhoods; watershed discipleship encourages us to widen our definition of neighbour beyond the human community to include the plants, animals, birds and even the soil that supports life in the place where we live. One of the principles of watershed discipleship articulated by environmentalist Baba Dioum is to love where you live: "In the end we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we are taught."

These two practices — watershed

discipleship and pilgrimage — deepen our relationship with our place and inspire us to respond to the impact of climate change where we live.

The guide for the "Watershed Pilgrimage" will be shared in the spring and is designed to be suitable for use in any season. Each unit will be rooted in biblical reflection on our relationship with creation as we experience it at the local level. It will include practical advice about uncovering the hidden stories and unique aspects of our watershed and culminate in the creation of a parish-based pilgrimage walk that can be shared with others, offering friends and visitors the opportunity to know and love the watershed as well.

"Our hope is to launch the watershed pilgrimage with a walk led by Bishop Andrew Asbil, from St. James Cathedral to the parish church of St. Andrew by-the-Lake," says the Rev. Susan Spicer, co-chair of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care. For more information, contact creation.care@toronto.anglican.ca



PHOTO BY SUSAN SPICER

AURA seeks refugee sponsorship groups

BY MARIN LEHMANN-BENDER

OVER 82 million people around the world have been forced from their homes due to persecution or conflict. The Anglican United Refugee Alliance (AURA) is seeking parishes that can make a life-changing difference by welcoming a refugee into their community.

AURA has been working in collaboration with the Diocese of Toronto for 30 years to welcome refugees through private sponsorship. Through private sponsorship, parish members can use their Canadian experience and work together with a group of volunteers to provide settlement and financial support to a refugee for their first year in Canada. AURA guides parishes through the sponsorship process from start to finish.

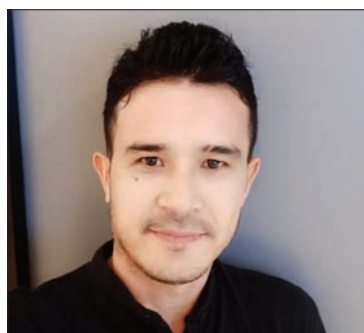
AURA receives thousands of requests from refugees and family members each year, but they need more parishes to get involved. Currently, AURA is seeking sponsorship groups for persecuted Hazaras

from Afghanistan. The persecution of the Hazara people in Afghanistan has become one of the worst humanitarian challenges of our time, causing a global refugee crisis that has been long overlooked.

Northern Lights Canada and the Hazara Refugee Collective have compiled profiles of Hazara refugees desperately in need of sponsors. Many of these potential sponsorships have funding available from a generous private donor, requiring only minimal fundraising from sponsors. AURA would like to help facilitate some of these sponsorships under the federal government's new program to help resettle vulnerable Afghans, but they need sponsor groups.

If you are interested in learning more or getting involved visit www.auraforrefugees.org, email info@auraforrefugees.org or phone 416-588-1612 x0.

Marin Lehmann-Bender is the sponsorship director for AURA.



Hazara refugees seeking sponsorship.

BRIEFLY

Spend a year living in God's rhythm

Are you contemplating the next steps on your spiritual journey? Do you want to experience life in community, learn more about prayer, serve others and take monastic values out into the world? Or perhaps you want to learn how to live as a "monastic in the world" from the comfort of your own home. The Sisters of St. John the Divine are inviting applicants for its 11-month companions program, either in-person or online, as they follow Jesus on the road of prayer, community, learning and service. Learn more at www.ssjd.ca.

ACW annual general meeting

The Diocesan of Toronto Anglican Church Women will be holding its annual general meeting by Zoom on Saturday, April 30 from 10 a.m. until noon. The theme of the meeting is "Renewed for Change." The registration link will be available by April 1. For further information phone and leave a message at 416-363-0018, or email acw@toronto.anglican.ca

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This Mortal Flesh: reflections on living with pain and uncertainty



God is good. As we lean into Lent, we all have been changed by this desert experience.

Two years of pandemic living have alternately trudged past and flown by us. Bishop Peter Fenty asked at the beginning of the pandemic, “How can we show love for our neighbour? I show love by wearing a mask to protect the vulnerable.” Two years in, we show love by getting vaccinated, still wearing a mask, still distancing and still consciously choosing how we will (or won’t) get together for worship, for community, for essential relationship building, for maintaining physical, spiritual, mental health.

This requirement to choose, for our physical health, has taken a drastic toll on our individual and collective mental health. We have personally experienced and witnessed other people, both those dear to us and those in the larger population, suffering from increased anxiety, depression, social phobias and extreme isolation and loneliness.

The Israelites spent 40 years in the wilderness; we have been changed already because of this global two-year desert experience. Some slow but steadily working solace for your soul from our brother Jesus in Matthew 5, the Beatitudes: “Blessed are the poor in spirit.”

We often consider Lent to be a time of

BISHOP'S OPINION

By BISHOP RISCYLLA SHAW

looking inwards. As Jesus taught us to look to the marginalized, the little ones, we also are called to look outwards, to see with our hearts. What happens when we don’t like what we see? It can be too simple, and not even realistic, to say “change.” When outside pressures are forcing us to change in ways we wouldn’t normally choose, some instinctually get along, learn to adapt, look up to see the bigger picture.

For others — and for a little piece inside most of us — it is in our nature to rebel, revolt, complain, act out, sometimes to overlook our responsibilities to the good of the larger whole in the process. Exodus 16 comes to mind, when the Israelites were complaining to Moses and Aaron, complaining about how long the trek across the desert was taking, complaining about the food, complaining about their siblings, their neighbours, the snakes, themselves. It is captured well in this verse: “Then the whole community of Israelites began complaining again.” It is for our learning that St. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians 5:22 & 23, reminds Christ-followers: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-

control.”

As I am writing this, we are seeing small groups of horn-honking, loud-voiced citizens protesting the vaccine mandates in cities and at the borders across our part of Turtle Island. That question comes to mind again: how can we show love for our neighbour? As Jesus experienced in the desert, so also are we tempted by the Adversary to be afraid, to act out of fear, to be divided and separated from one another. We are tempted to act selfishly, sometimes violently, to consider only our own desires and needs, to hunker down and narrow our vision so that we see only the next steps immediately ahead of us. “Blessed are the peacemakers.” Will you be called to action by this teaching of Jesus?

Be assured, God is with us in this time of trial. We are not alone. This is an invitation to come together, in real life or virtually, to integrate our needs for self-care, care of others, and especially our striving for God. It is in uniting together in relationship that we see the face of God and hear God’s voice. Teachings from the Desert Mothers and Fathers, from the mystics and the spiritual giants of our Christian faith traditions, and from other wise teachers can help us to see the light of Christ shining in the darkness, to come to life in new hope, to act with courage and love, and especially to be the change we wish to see in our world.

A view from the shore



BY JUDITH ALLTREE

Once again, the pictures said it all, only this time it wasn’t happening on the other side of the world but on the other side of our own country.

While strolling around the Victoria waterfront on a beautiful Sunday morning in late October 2021 people were greeted with the sight of a huge ship in the near distance, billowing clouds of thick smoke. The smoke poured out of some containers on the ship’s deck as several tugs rushed to her rescue. While this was happening, the Canadian Coast Guard was hailing the ship, the *Zim Kingston*, advising the captain and crew to abandon ship. The fire was in a number of containers that were carrying extremely hazardous materials that could actually be ignited by water.

This was yet another chapter of the story of the *Zim Kingston* and her crew, who had literally been through the watery equivalent of “to hell and back” during the previous week. Only later, when several chaplains and union officials in Vancouver met with the crew, did the larger story emerge.

Although a dangerous storm was heading directly for the ship, they were denied access to a safe harbour, any harbour, and required to stay at sea while the storm bore down on them. For four days the ship was tossed about the ocean, despite the enormous combined size of the vessel itself and the cargo bolted to the deck. For four days it was impossible for the cook to make any meals, for the crew to walk upright anywhere inside, for the crew to sleep (they had to tie themselves to their bunks). During the storm, over 140 containers filled with goods destined to be Christmas gifts at a local drug store chain were ripped off the deck by the violence of the storm. The containers that didn’t sink washed up on the pristine shores of Clayoquot Sound.

For the seafarers on this voyage, it was one of the worst of their careers. They felt abandoned and brutalized (their words) after such a journey. Our chaplains and staff in Vancouver spent many hours helping these seafarers through the emotional and physical trauma they had experienced. Several investigations are underway about many aspects of this voyage, most notably why the ship was not offered safe harbour when they were directly in the path of a major storm

and so close to land. The seafarers themselves want those answers.

There were some empty shelves at Christmas owing to “supply chain” issues, but few of us, I imagine, would have dreamed up the scenario of the *Zim Kingston* as one of the reasons why. And yet, not many days after this terrible journey, the crew of the *Zim Kingston* continued on with the ship, sailing her from Victoria to Nanaimo for repairs and to discharge some of the many hundreds more containers which were not lost overboard during the storm.

To bring us all that we need, seafarers sacrifice everything, sometimes even their lives. As one of my colleagues remarked recently at the death of a young seafarer: “Water is their livelihood but it is not their friend.” Please think of the human cost of shopping the next time you see shelves filled with products we “can’t live without.” Please remember to support the Mission to Seafarers through your prayers and your donations. On behalf of seafarers everywhere: thank you.

The Rev. Judith Alltree is the executive director of the Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario.

BRIEFLY

Giving new life to “disposable clothing”

You may well have a few items of “disposable clothing” in your closet: the free t-shirt

handed out at a conference, the uniform for a job you no longer do, a hat that was part of a product promotion. Indeed, the very notion of “fast fashion” promotes the view that all clothing is disposable. Items like these frequently make their way to Holy Trinity, Trinity Square.

Unity Kitchen runs out of Holy Trinity and provides a warm, safe space for unhoused

people in the city to access fresh food, as well as items such as sleeping bags, tents and clothing. During Advent 2021, Unity Kitchen rebranded its donations of disposable clothing with the Unity logo and distributed them as gifts to its community members. Items that might otherwise have gone to landfill were given a second chance and community members received clothing that is dignified.



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In the Diocese of Toronto:
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Listening for the voice of vocation



BY MURRAY MacADAM

Vocations: it was a key word during my Roman Catholic childhood. We were exhorted to “pray for vocations,” that is, to pray that young men would heed God’s call to become priests, reflecting the significant roles that priests played in the Roman Catholic world.

However, that was a narrow understanding of the word “vocation,” one that left out most people — including, of course, women — except for their prayers. The term “vocation” can be defined as a person’s employment or major occupation, especially one requiring particularly worthy and dedicated service. Thinking again of my youth, the dedicated teachers who instilled in me a love of learning certainly had a vocation. Today doctors and nurses spring to mind as people having vocations, as well as frontline workers who have also worked selflessly to keep us safe during the pandemic, such as grocery store cashiers, hospital cleaners and many others. We

all can have a meaningful vocation.

The word “vocation” is rooted in the Latin for “voice.” All of us have an inner voice calling us to live in a way that’s authentic to our values and beliefs. That inner voice asks: What am I meant to do? Who am I meant to be? In his insightful and aptly titled book *Let Your Life Speak*, Quaker writer and teacher Parker Palmer plumbs the rich elements of the vocational quest. He notes, “Vocation comes from listening. I must listen to my life and try to understand what it is truly about.... I must listen for the truths and values at the heart of my identity. Is the life I am living the same as the life that wants to live in me?”

This quest for vocation starts with each of us but doesn’t end there. Frederick Buechner, another faith-based writer, connects our personal vocation with the needs of a hurting world when he defines vocation as “the place where your deep gladness meets the world’s deep need.”

As I reflect today upon the meaning of vocation, it’s a season sometimes called “the bleak midwinter.” Many people feel even more bleak right now because of the pandemic, and because of the

isolation and limitations that have been forced upon us. These are very real hardships. Yet while our outer lives have been curtailed, our inner lives have a rare opportunity to flourish, if we heed our inner voices. When, as a friend said, we’ve become “involuntary monks” because of COVID-19, what better time to think about the deep issues of life and faith, such as the vocations that we are being called to live out?

We can also use this time to explore the broader meaning of vocation. What’s our vocational identity as an Anglican faith community? What does the Good News mean in an uncertain, fearful world? Just as the post-pandemic world will be different from the one before, so too the Church is sure to be different as well. We’ve had to adapt to new styles of worship, of working together and of communication during the pandemic, and those new patterns are certain to affect our communal life in a post-COVID-19 world. Maybe we can not only reimagine church and worship, but also envision a whole new understanding of what it means to be fully alive as Anglican Christians.

Change can be difficult, especially when it’s thrust upon us. Listening to the voice of the Spirit can guide us, reminding us that God is always with us. And that when one door closes, another opens. The Gospel’s message of new life speaks to us now with a special power: “I am about to do a new thing. Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” (Isaiah 43:19)

Nor is it always easy to hear the still voice of God calling us to our vocation. It can start with making space to hear that voice, turning off the distractions of today’s technology-dominated world. My former Toronto parish held an annual retreat we called a parish quiet day on Toronto Island, with an agenda dominated by ... nothing. That is, simply time to be with God. As our parishes look toward a day when we can gather again, perhaps building in time for quiet reflection and pondering where God is calling us can be a priority. Meanwhile we can pray and mediate on God’s vocation for us.

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

Building a healthier, more resilient Ontario

This is a summary of “Putting Ontario on the Road to Recovery,” the provincial pre-budget submission from Bishop Asbil and the Social Justice & Advocacy Committee. The full text can be read at www.toronto.anglican.ca/sjac.

Throughout the pandemic, Anglicans in our diocese have shown unprecedented generosity and commitment in responding to the needs of our communities. However, public investment and policy change is also needed, to address the systemic inequities that predate the pandemic, but which have also been exacerbated by it. We make the following recommendations in keeping with our social justice priorities of poverty reduction, affordable housing and care for the environment:

Poverty Reduction

1. While the minimum wage was raised to \$15/hr this January, this is still well below the living wage rate in any part of Ontario. **Over the next five years, we urge you to continue to raise the minimum wage until it approximates the average living wage in Ontario, and index it to inflation.**
2. The prevalence of workplace outbreaks of COVID-19 is directly related to the lack of paid sick days for workers. While this government has brought in a temporary measure to provide three paid sick days for COVID-19 related reasons, this provision is inadequate, temporary and overly complex. **Require employers to provide employees with 10 paid sick days per year on a permanent basis, with an additional 14 paid sick days during public health emergencies.**
3. Uncertainty over work hours and

schedules makes it difficult for workers to know how much money they will make, to arrange childcare, to find supplementary income-earning opportunities or to pursue education and training. **Require employers to provide a minimum number of hours per week for each position and give employees adequate advance notice of work schedules.**

4. Ontario’s employment legislation currently permits employers to pay part-time, temporary or contract workers less than full-time and permanent workers doing the same work, creating an incentive for employers to offer precarious jobs. **Require employers to pay part-time, temporary and casual workers at the same level as permanent, full-time employees doing the same work.**
5. Ontario is the only province that has not yet signed on to the federal childcare plan, yet families in Ontario, especially in Toronto, pay some of the highest childcare fees in the country. **Sign on to the federal-provincial child care agreement to bring affordable childcare to Ontario families and establish decent pay and working conditions for early childhood educators.**
6. Social assistance rates have not been increased since 2018 despite growing inflation, and fall well below the Market Basket Measure, Canada’s poverty line. **Over the next five years, align social assistance rates with the Market Basket Measure (MBM) for each community, and index them to inflation thereafter, so that people on social assistance are able to meet their basic needs.**

7. **Remove the artificial separation of social assistance benefits into basic needs and housing benefits.** The minimal increases to social assistance rates over the past decade have accrued only to the basic needs portion of the benefit, leaving the shelter allowance ever further beneath the real cost of housing as rents increase. Thus, fewer landlords are able to offer Rent-Geared-to-Income housing to social assistance recipients. Moreover, unhoused people on social assistance do not receive the shelter allowance, making it difficult for them to access housing.
8. Since March 2020, fatal opioid overdoses in Ontario increased by 60 per cent and emergency calls for suspected opioid overdose increased by 57 per cent — not only in urban areas, but all over Ontario. **We call on this government to remove the cap on provincially funded overdose prevention sites.**

Affordable Housing

9. Vacancy decontrol and exemption of new rental housing from rent control have not worked to incentivize the creation of new rental housing but have led to an overall loss of affordable rental units. **Implement rent control for all residential rental units in Ontario, including rent control on vacant units.**
10. **Prioritize the creation and maintenance of permanently affordable rental housing, especially by municipal, non-profit and co-operative housing providers, by streamlining the planning and approval process, waiving government charges and providing funding for start-up costs and capital maintenance.**

11. **Tax real-estate speculation and vacant residential units to cool the overheated housing market.**

Environmental Stewardship

12. **Protect Ontario’s environment, food and water supply by keeping the Greenbelt free from development. In particular, resist the use of minister’s zoning orders to override protections for agricultural land and environmentally significant areas.** Once prime agricultural and ecologically protected land is lost to development, it cannot be replaced, leaving future Ontarians less resilient, more dependent on outside sources for food and drinking water and more vulnerable to climate change-related natural disasters. It does not make good economic sense even in the short term, since the cost of infrastructure for greenfield development far exceeds that of intensified or infill development.
13. **Cancel the development of Highway 413 and invest those dollars in expanding and improving public and regional transit.** Adding a new mega-highway will accelerate urban sprawl and lead to higher levels of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, without easing traffic congestion long-term. Investing in public transit at the local and regional levels will help ease congestion at the same time as reducing our environmental impact.

As we look forward to emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, we all want to build a healthier, more resilient Ontario. We want all Ontarians to share in the recovery and renewal of our province. We urge your government to include these recommended measures in your 2022 budget.



Growing a brighter future, today

Say Yes! to Kids 2022

THE Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) is stepping up its commitment to young people across Canada with an even more ambitious plan to fund ministry and outreach to children, youth and young adults this year.

At its November meeting, the AFC Board approved a campaign plan for *Say Yes! to Kids 2022*, setting a \$500,000 goal and introducing an innovative partnership model of fundraising. "Our hope is that this campaign will be both empowering and energizing," says Dr. Scott Brubacher, executive director, "enabling our churches to harness the power of peer-to-peer fundraising to grow sustainable revenue streams for youth programs, while connecting them with other churches across Canada, as well as diocesan and national ministries, that are growing a brighter future for young people, today."

Dr. Brubacher says that the 2021

campaign and Request for Proposals (RFPs), which granted 79 projects a total of \$470,000 in funding, was a valuable learning experience for AFC. "Grant recipients demonstrated a stunning combination of compassion and creative thinking. They also showed us the depth of relationships that exist between churches and their communities." Dr. Brubacher says *Say Yes! to Kids* will help to provide the resources needed to strengthen these connections and partnerships so the church can "continue to be a catalyst for re-engaging with children and families in a time of pandemic recovery."

The Very Rev. Peter Wall, AFC's gift consultant, is excited about this campaign's potential to attract leadership gifts. "There was, and is, a real appetite among donors to support a community-based movement for youth. We believe a national campaign that is strong in its numbers

and coordinated in its approach can connect money to mission in a truly transformational way."

Michelle Hauser, AFC's development and communications consultant says, "Any Anglican parish in Canada with a vision for outreach to young people is eligible to apply to form a fundraising team and campaign alongside like-minded parishes nationwide from April 1 to June 30." Ms. Hauser says teams will be able to set their own fundraising goals, and they will receive support with communications, case development and training from AFC throughout the campaign. "Teams will also benefit from an AFC-led leadership giving campaign that will boost their efforts, including matching gifts."

To learn more about *Say Yes! to Kids* visit anglicanfoundation.org/say-yes-to-kids or contact Michelle Hauser at mhauser@anglicanfoundation.org.

Supporting the unhoused through hot meals

Holy Trinity and Hospice Toronto partner



The Church of the Holy Trinity, Trinity Square.

BY KATHRYN ADAMO

"Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord and will be repaid in full." (Proverbs 19:17)

STEPS away from one of Toronto's largest malls is a small 173-year-old church surrounded by skyscrapers and buildings that were built in the 1970s. With its walls of pale-yellow bricks standing in stark contrast to the metallic Eaton Centre, this is a warm and safe place for those experiencing homelessness and food insecurity in Toronto.

It is here, at Holy Trinity, that Unity Kitchen was born. Unity Kitchen is a community kitchen that operates out of the Trinity Square Café located within the church. It provides those who are facing homelessness with fresh food, hot meals and resources such as tents, jackets and sleeping bags.

It was through Unity Kitchen and due to the COVID-19 pandemic that Holy Trinity and Hospice Toronto re-connected when the two organizations discovered that, together, they had programs that aligned and benefited the community.

Hospice Toronto has its roots in Holy Trinity. In 1988, Hospice Toronto, then Trinity Home Hospice, began as a grassroots mobilization centred around the desire expressed by people in the community to receive support in their own homes, whether they had cancer, HIV/AIDS or simply a desire to die in peace in familiar surroundings.

Trinity Home Hospice supported Margaret Fraser, a friend and member of the church community, when she was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and wanted to die at home. More than 60 parishioners, friends and acquaintances organized themselves into a care team. They formed round-the-clock schedules, cooked meals, told stories and faced their own fears of death. In 1991, Trinity Home Hospice incorporated as a registered charity to continue supporting community members in their journey towards death.

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, we realized that every organization in the downtown core was going to

close. The decision at Unity Kitchen was to remain open to take care of the most basic needs of people, most of whom are dependent on community and social services. Holy Trinity was the only service open in downtown Toronto for the first eight to nine months after the pandemic began. During this time, Holy Trinity worked with the wider community and healthy meals were prepared on site by volunteers.

During the height of the pandemic, when Unity Kitchen was serving approximately 300 people each day, Holy Trinity and Hospice Toronto formed a partnership to support Holy Trinity's hot meals program. Today, almost two years after the pandemic began, Unity Kitchen continues to prepare and serve hot meals for people living in low-income settings, on the street, in isolation or with life-threatening illness, as well as seniors.

Holy Trinity and Hospice Toronto have created, through our joint food security program, a program that includes community services. This program plans to engage practitioners who can support those in need, such as doctors and harm reduction workers. The program includes two hospice outreach workers, who focus on the needs of those who are aging on the street and are in need of hospice care. Together Holy Trinity and Hospice Toronto work on supporting their most basic needs. Cancer, age-related disabilities and cognitive decline are some of the health areas that rapidly reduce life expectancy on the street.

Most recently, we have begun providing a palliative day program. This program has many elements where peer support workers build bridges to social services. We will be engaging a palliative nurse to attend the day program and provide ongoing care for folks on the street, which means that when people come to our program they can receive a nutritious meal and medical attention, along with social and emotional support.

To donate to the Church of the Holy Trinity and Hospice Toronto's hot meals program visit www.hospicetoronto.ca.

ANGLICAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Say Yes! to Kids

Growing a brighter future, today.

Campaign launches April 1
anglicanfoundation.org/kids

stations of the cross

CrossingsToronto.com

Crossings

A Journey to Easter Arts Exhibition

An All-Outdoor Art Exhibition

Toronto, Ontario
March 2 - April 14, 2022

Canadian Bible Society
Generous Sponsor of Crossings

imago

Stations of the Cross on the streets of Toronto



Homeless Jesus by Timothy Schmalz outside Regis College, University of Toronto.

BY NAOMI RACZ

JOHN Franklin is passionate about the role of art in addressing issues of social justice and he's dedicated the last two decades of his life to advocating for the arts. Mr. Franklin is the executive director of IMAGO, which advocates for the arts in Canada and supports projects across the artistic disciplines. When he heard about the international public arts project "Stations of the Cross" from one of its co-founders, Aaron Rosen, he was immediately interested in bringing it to Toronto.

Stations of the Cross features

art works inspired by the story of the passion that prompt reflection and action on issues of social justice. Each year it is hosted in a different city — though in 2021 it was hosted online with contributions from around the world — and there are typically fourteen stations set up with art works. Participants can follow a pilgrimage route between the works. Reflections and podcasts also prompt participants to reflect more deeply on the art works and their messages.

In 2022, Stations of the Cross, or Crossings as it will be known this year, will be in Toronto from March 2 to April 14. Due to the

pandemic, Mr. Franklin made the decision to have the exhibits entirely outdoors, which presented some challenges. "It changed what we could include. How do you display an original artwork outside? We have had to make display cases for most of the pieces. It's been a huge challenge and an undertaking."

But there is a positive side to having the exhibit entirely outdoors: "You lose the intimacy of a chapel or gallery, but you will get people who are just driving past who will see these pieces. It gives us huge public exposure."

Mr. Franklin is keen for as many people as possible to see

the exhibition. "The Passion narrative should be available to all. It is a deeply human story. There's justice, betrayal, vulnerability. It brings together suffering and hope. We don't often see these as coming together, but Jesus embraced suffering in order to walk a redeeming and healing path."

One of the pieces that will be included in the Crossings exhibition is Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz's "Homeless Jesus." From a distance, the bronze sculpture appears to be a cloaked figure lying on a bench. It is only when the viewer gets close to the sculpture that they can see the crucifixion wounds on the figure's feet. "One of the wonderful things about art is its indirect," says Mr. Franklin. "It piques curiosity. Good art will call you back again and again. Art can awaken us to see things in a different way. It's about contemplation and action. Both are important. I hope they can live in creative tension, that people can reflect and then do something."

There will be a catalogue to accompany the exhibition, with photographs of each of the 16 pieces (Crossings will include an additional two pieces to the usual 14 in order to include the triumphal entry and the resurrection), as well as a background on the artist and their artwork. The catalogue will also contain 16 meditations, with two of the meditations being written by Indigenous Archbishop Mark McDonald and Primate Linda Nicholls.

For more information and updates visit the Crossings website crossingstoronto.com.



Station: The Sanhedrin Trial of Jesus
Title of artwork: "Explain Yourself"
Artist: Betty Spackman

The premise of this work is simply to show the ludicrousness of judging one another.

The twelve fingers (as a jury), point and ask Jesus to explain himself but he was silent before his accusers at the Sanhedrin saying only, "I AM." He did not defend his innocence by pointing back. Instead, he retaliated with an act of love.

We so often find solidarity in a common enemy and our mutual hate towards them. We divide into our various camps and cry out for justice, pointing at and accusing the ones who are also pointing at and accusing us. It feels good to stand up together for what we believe is right and demand justice. But if judgmental hatred is our motivation, in the end, no matter how noble the cause, we are all just left with more hatred.

Jesus offered a more radical justice based on forgiveness, which acts in mercy and loves the enemy as well as the friend. He demonstrated the justice of a very difficult love that requires humility and the absurdity of retaliating with a blessing and calls for reconciliation rather than retribution.

Asking someone to tell us who they are and what they believe, in order to understand them and find ways to reconcile, is very different to demanding they explain and prove themselves because we believe they are wrong. It is no wonder this lamb of God who is love was mocked, rejected, brutalized and murdered. Innocent as he was, the only way he explained himself was to lay down his life for his accusers.

How to plan a virtual Synod

A Q&A with Pamela Boisvert



Pamela Boisvert is the secretary of synod for the diocese. The Anglican caught up with her to find out about the challenges of and successes that came with organizing the diocese's first ever virtual Synod.

When did you decide to go ahead with planning a virtual Synod?

Our last Synod was in fall 2019. We were delayed in starting the major planning for Synod 2021 because we were still hoping we could go ahead with an in-person meeting. But as

soon as we decided to have a virtual Synod, we had to get planning and get contracts signed. It was a whole different playbook. But our vendors; the professional event coordinator; AV Canada, the production company that provided the online command centre; and Data on the Spot, the company that provided the voting system, had already pivoted to online events, so that was a huge help.

How did you go about beginning to plan a virtual Synod?

We have a pre-Synod in each region. I handle those events, not the professional event coordinator, and the cost is usually quite low, just

the venue and refreshments. But because the members also need to vote at those events, we decided to do the pre-Synod meetings using the same online event platform. It did mean the cost was much higher, but it meant we could use those meetings as a test for the online platform, voting system and call centre.

Did you already have an idea of how it would work or how it would look?

The professional planners could picture in their minds exactly what it was going to look like, but I really struggled to picture it. I hadn't done a lot of virtual events during

the pandemic. But I trusted the professionals and when we went to the rehearsals, I was pleasantly surprised. It looked really professional.

What were some of the challenges you faced?

The biggest challenge was that for a meeting of this size, there was no opportunity for our members to network, and that was a big loss. The platform we used just didn't allow for it, so that's something we need to look at going forward. We also used a call centre for members to call in for questions and discussion. This worked, but there were

elements that could certainly be improved. So that's also part of the experience that we need to think about for next time.

It sounds like it was enough of a success that you're planning another virtual Synod next time?

Yes, we've already decided to go virtual for the next Regular Session of Synod. We did consider doing a hybrid event, but that involves more cost and risk. I think virtual events are much easier to plan in a sense, as you have much more control over the agenda. A lot of things were pre-recorded so you know how much time each segment will take.



St. Davids Cathedral. PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTHA WHITTAKER

Seeking the little things on the Way of St. David

Pilgrimage lessons for pandemic times

BY MARTHA WHITTAKER

SOME years ago, a dear friend introduced me to the New Year tradition of choosing words to live by for the year to come. In January 2019, I settled on “compassion,” “courage,” “grace” and “resilience.” Who would have known how those words would linger and sustain me over the coming years, particularly in the midst of the pandemic.

Heading into 2019, I also knew that I needed a “recharge” of sorts; to refuel myself so I could live out those words. Could I possibly combine my love of walking with Celtic landscapes? If one were to look at my browser history, it would be abundantly clear that I have been noodling this idea for some time. That said, time and time again I kept returning to one site in particular.

Over New Year’s Eve dinner with another close friend, I disclosed my desire to dip my toe into a wee pilgrimage called the “Way of St. David” in southwest Wales in June. It would mean walking approximately 100km over 5 days; ending up at St. Davids Cathedral. To which her response was, “Can I come too?” The next day, when clearer heads prevailed (the discussion the evening before did take place on New Year’s Eve, after all), we started working the plan.

Way of St. David

The Way of St. David is steeped in history and had long been abandoned (as a result of the Reformation) but was being revived by Journeying, a U.K.-based non-profit Christian travel organization. We would be on the inaugural pilgrimage. The cathedral, begun in 1181,

was the fourth church to be built on the site where it is believed St. David founded a monastic community (one of 12) in the 6th century. For nearly 14 centuries it was an important place of pilgrimage. In 1124, Pope Calixtus II declared that two pilgrimages to St. Davids were equal to one to Rome and three

were equal to one to Jerusalem. Having spent time in both Rome and Jerusalem, the Way of St. David seemed like a pretty good place to start exploring this idea of pilgrimage. According to *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints*, St. David’s monastic communities were extremely strict, and St. David was

known as “the Waterman,” so there is speculation he and his monks were teetotalers. Full confession here, I likely would have some difficulty being a member of the community even if I could. But St. David, whose feast day is celebrated on March 1 as the Patron Saint of Wales, has as his motto “Do the lit-



Foxgloves and sea cliffs on the Way of St. David. PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTHA WHITTAKER



A boardwalk across a marshy patch of the Way of St. David. PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTHA WHITTAKER



Pictured are (left) Martha Whittaker and (right) Lynne Golding. PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTHA WHITTAKER

St. Davids Cathedral. PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTHA WHITTAKER

tle things.” Now that is something I could get behind.

Compassion, courage, grace and resilience

After months training on the walking paths of Brampton, we arrived in the small Welsh village of Llangwm in Pembrokeshire not at all knowing what to expect. Recognizing that this was also meant to be a vacation and perhaps a little daunted by the physical challenge ahead of us, we had given ourselves permission to take a day off. Had we bitten off more than we could chew? Walking 20km in one day didn't seem too bad but five days in a row was another matter.

Our first afternoon set the tone for what was to unfold. Our retreat leader was ever the gracious host and gently took the lead of our little band of five. For the next several days we would be journeying together. As I look back on this experience, I can see how my chosen words played out and how they would be foundational throughout the pandemic that was to follow, mere months after our return.

Much like a liturgy, our days settled into a gentle rhythm — beginning and ending with morning and evening prayer. Time had a way of slowing down, and you simply focussed on the task at hand even if it was putting one foot in front of the other. At intentional locations, Iain (our retreat leader) had us stop for moments of reflection, prayer or singing of hymns, and at other times we would meditate on a particular word or scripture. For me, the rhythm of walking cultivates moments of clarity and peace. So let me tell you how my words turned up on the Way of St. David and how they have helped me these last several months during the pandemic. Remember that St. David's motto is “Do the little things.”

Compassion

When you bring five strangers together, albeit Lynne and I were not strangers to each other, it's hard to predict how things will turn out. In our case, there is no question (and maybe there never is) that God's timing was perfect. Each of us had stories that were revealed over the week, sometimes to the group and sometimes only to one another. That was the lovely mystery: you simply never knew nor needed to know if you were going to be the storyteller or the listener. The timing was not of our choosing but it was a time of deep listening

and simply walking alongside. St. David was on to something with his little things.

Forward to the pandemic and haven't we found that satisfying that deep human desire to be the storyteller to a good listener a big part of what we have been missing? Those long phone calls, walks with friends, delivery of meals, the cards and notes popped in the mail and small gatherings all speak to that. Being a good listener is not one of my strengths but in the pandemic, I have tried to cultivate it. Even with all the silence, I still have a long way to go. But the pandemic has gifted me more intentional time in silence and prayer that inevitably has me praying for others.

Courage

I do not like heights, and I like them even less when I am on a narrow footpath precariously close to the edge of a 200-foot rocky cliff but that is where I found myself on the Way of St. David. I made the journey but not without literally walking through my fear.

Aren't there days during the pandemic where we have a courage deficit? Days when we give into the fear even if just for a short time, when frustration or anger seeps in. I am not so sure that we have given ourselves enough credit for the courage that has gotten us this far. We shouldn't overlook those little things like learning new

technology, adapting to endless changes, refocussing our outlook and asking for or accepting help. All these things take courage.

Grace

Some of you may recall the U2 song *Grace* from their 2000 album *All That You Can't Leave Behind*. In it, we hear grace makes beauty out of ugly things and finds beauty and goodness in everything. The first day of our walk was anything but beautiful.

We started the day with worship at St. Jerome (a lovely medieval church built circa 1185-1215 and subsequently restored) and a pilgrim blessing for our journey. We then set off walking westward along the Milford Haven waterway. It drizzled all day, and we were surrounded by enormous petrochemical companies. I had seen too many British crime dramas (thinking specifically of *Hinterland*) to be daunted by a day of drizzle, but the prospect of five days was a bit ugly, and certainly the refineries stood in stark contrast to the beautiful landscape.

The next day dawned bright and we continued our westward journey, leaving the refineries behind us and eventually turning north to spend the balance of our walk along St. Bride's Bay. In fact, the weather became so wonderful that we were scrambling for sunscreen. The portion of the Wales

Coastal Path that we were on was simply stunning. Our little band of sojourners did not need much grace on our pilgrimage, however, the journey did much to restore it for the months to come.

God's grace is central to me and without it living through the pandemic would have been quite ugly. “What once was hurt, what once was friction, what left a mark no longer stings,” sings Bono, and that cannot be done without God's grace. Throughout the pandemic, with all its messiness, there have been true moments of grace, and many of them have been the result of the little things. Small gestures have resulted in reconciliation. Kind words have healed wounds or provided comfort. Friends have reached out to support each other. God's love bats last.

Resilience

I can clearly hear Iain say “just beyond the next headland” in response to us (it *might* have been just me) asking how much longer. The headlands came and went. The ascents and descents kept coming; they seemed relentless. We had trained on the mainly flat and well-maintained trails in Brampton and this was completely different. Sometimes the Way of St. David was easy and comfortable while at other times it could be wearisome and gruelling. I can clearly remember repeating my words over and over

again during yet another climb just to keep me focussed, just to get to the top. But steady-on and we would eventually land in a quiet safe harbour to end the day. Isn't this what it has been like during the pandemic? One pivot after another, grief and losses, joy and celebrations but for me it is the steady-on that will land us in that safe harbour.

With the rhythm of the days, the wonderful companionship and the beauty of creation to energize us, we never did take that day off. When the pandemic is behind us and it is safe to do so, it will be another pilgrimage for me.

Walking the Way

May you find a new rhythm
Watching the waves,
Listening to the birds,
By walking the Way.
May you find a new rhythm,
Engaging with thoughts,
Conversing with strangers,
By walking the Way.
May you find a new rhythm,
In opening your heart,
And freeing your soul
By walking the Way.

The Little Book of Celtic Blessing by Iain Tweedale, 2021. Printed with permission from the author.

Martha Whittaker is the parish administrator at Christ Church, Brampton.



Ms. Whittaker walked through her fear of heights on this narrow path along a 200-foot cliff. PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTHA WHITTAKER

Anglican Church of Canada launches new online news platform

THE Anglican Church of Canada has launched Anglican News Canada, an online news platform that allows readers to access the websites of the *Anglican Journal* and diocesan news outlets *Faith Tides* (Diocese of British Columbia) and *Rupert's Land News*. The hope is that eventually most dioceses will have a presence on the platform.

The platform grew out of a review of General Synod communications presented at the Council of General Synod in 2013. The originally envisaged channel would have featured press releases and official communications from General Synod, but those will now remain on anglican.ca, and the project has continued to evolve through consultation with the dioceses.

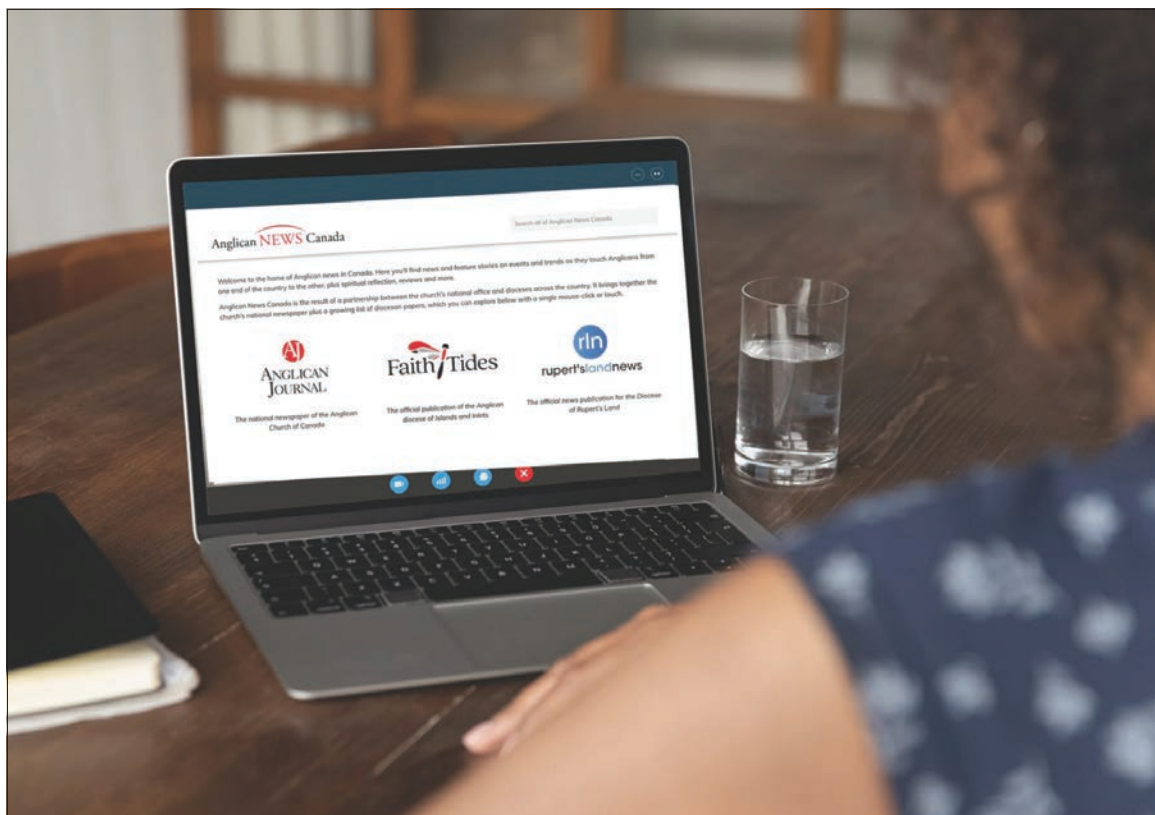
Priorities for the dioceses included the ability to share local stories across the whole church, having one central news site rather than leaving each diocese to run its own, and providing dioceses whose budgets will not support the continuation of their print

publications with a sustainable option for sharing news and stories.

Faith Tides and *Rupert's Land News* are fully online and digital, with no print option (though a feature is in development that would allow visitors to easily download and print a PDF pamphlet of each issue), but the new platform isn't intended to replace print editions of diocesan newspapers, and some of the diocesan publications that have signed up to develop their news site will continue with print.

The next round of publications slated for launch on the platform by the summer include *The Highway* (Diocese of Kootenay), *The Niagara Anglican*, *The Diocesan Times* (Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island), and *Anglican Life* (dioceses in Newfoundland and Labrador). The dioceses of Ottawa, Edmonton and Athabasca will also be joining the platform but have not yet set a date for doing so.

Visit the new platform at anglicannews.ca.



CANADA BRIEFS

Mobile medical clinic for Ghanaian diocese 1

FREDERICTON - The Diocese of Fredericton has employed the services of Malley Industries, which manufactures emergency vehicles, to build a mobile medical clinic. The mobile clinic will be shipped to the Diocese of Ho in Ghana, which is a companion diocese to the Diocese of Fredericton. Situated in the Volta and Oti regions, it is a large, rural diocese where most people lack access to health care.

The van features a heating and cooling system, a worktable for lab tests, a refrigerator for medicines, a stretcher and a roof rack for jerry cans and the tents in which consultations and operations will be carried out. The interior of the van has aluminum bracing to prevent the equipment inside from coming loose as it navigates the region's unpaved roads. It also has a winch for pulling itself out of ruts.

The project almost didn't get underway as Malley Industries has been affected by supply chain issues. Of 73 chassis they ordered, only two arrived in the fall of 2021 — one of them the chassis for the mobile medical clinic.

The project was the vision of the bishop of the diocese of Ho, Bishop Matthias Mededues-Badohu, and Robbie Griffin, chair of the companion diocese committee in Fredericton. The cost of the project, including the cost of refurbishing the van,



supplies and shipping, is \$270,000 and many parishes across the diocese of Fredericton have contributed to the fundraising. Malley Industries has also donated medical equipment.

Mr. Griffin and Archbishop David Edwards hope to be there when the van reaches Ghana in early spring. The mobile clinic will be operated and staffed by the Ho Teaching Hospital. It will provide staff there with the opportunity to train in rural medicine, and the people of the diocese of Ho will have access to basic health care.

The New Brunswick Anglican

Fundraising for affordable housing off to a good start 2

OTTAWA - Parish fundraising for the Christ Church Bells Corners affordable housing project has already raised \$750,000 of its \$1.6M goal, with \$250,000 of that amount from a single donation. The housing project will see a 35-unit, 4-storey affordable housing unit on the site of the church's former rectory. The project has

already received \$10M in government funding and construction is almost complete; it is expected that renters will be moving in later this year.

The building will include a mix of studio and one-, two- and three-bedroom units, with units offered at average market value as well as three categories of affordable housing: 80 per cent of average market rent, 70 per cent of average market rent, and units with deeper subsidies for people eligible for the Ontario Disability Support Program. The first floor of the building will provide a permanent home for FAMSAC, a local food cupboard, and the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre, which provides services to seniors and families including meals, transportation and foot care.

Increasing community compassion for homeless 3

PENTICTION - The Downtown Churches for Social Justice group is made up of a number of

Penticton churches, including the Anglican parish of St. Saviour, as well as local social service agencies. The group meets monthly and works to address pressing needs within the Penticton community, including homelessness and food insecurity.

Recently, the group and its partners have been working on resources to increase the wider community's understanding of the root causes of homelessness, with the aim of increasing compassion and action for those who are unhoused or precariously housed.

"One of the most challenging problems is public understanding — the need to help the wider community understand the challenges facing a person living under a local bridge in a tent or in a building doorway," writes Pat Simons, deacon at St. Saviour, Penticton, in a recent issue of *The Highway*. "I don't think there is any intention to treat others badly; I just think people are unsure of how to respond when they encounter a person living outside."

Ms. Simons identifies one of the biggest misunderstandings among the public regarding homelessness as being the notion that people living outside should simply "get a job." This admonition overlooks the underlying causes of homelessness, such as abuse, trauma, mental health problems and substance use. To educate the public, the Downtown Churches for Social Justice group has supported its partner OneSky Community Resources to develop a series of videos in which people who have been living on the streets tell their stories. The videos have been released on the OneSky Community Resources Facebook

page and Ms. Simons describes them as "very compelling."

"I became very emotional as I viewed the videos — the people telling their stories are no different than you and me, except some event or some thing had caused a catastrophic change in their lives."

Another resource developed by the partnering groups and shared on the St. Saviour Facebook page over the course of a week details seven steps to support people experiencing homelessness. The steps include changing the language used to refer to people who are homeless, donating, volunteering, demanding affordable housing and showing kindness.

Ms. Simons hopes these resources and a shift in the wider community's understanding of homelessness could ultimately lead to a world in which homelessness is a thing of the past. "I know this is a huge hope but human lives are at risk. It is a human right to have food, clothing and shelter for everyone. If this is not happening, then we must push for it to be at the top of our agenda."

The Highway

A boatful of children's books 4

ST. JOHN'S - During Advent 2021, the Parish of the Ascension in Mount Pearl, N.L., encouraged parishioners to purchase books for children aged two to four years. The books were collected in the church's boat, Saint Margaret (picture a small rowboat), and the boat was eventually filled to the brim. The books were for the Daybreak Parent Child Centre in St. John's.

Anglican Life

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PRAYER CYCLE

FOR MARCH

1. St. John, Whitby
2. Ash Wednesday
3. St. Martin, Courtice
4. The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer
5. St. Matthew, Oshawa
6. Bishop Andrew Asbil
7. St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering
8. Anglican Church Women – Enid Corbett, Diocesan President
9. Youth Ministry Apprenticeship Program and youth ministry in the diocese
10. Council of General Synod
11. St. Peter, Oshawa
12. St. Thomas, Brooklin
13. Oshawa Deanery
14. St. Paul, Uxbridge
15. Atonement, Alderwood
16. Christ Church St. James
17. Christ the King
18. Church of South India (GSI), Toronto
19. San Lorenzo-Dufferin
20. Etobicoke-Humber Deanery
21. The Prayer Book Society
22. All Saints, Kingsway
23. St. George on-the-Hill
24. St. Joseph's Anglican Church
25. St. Margaret, New Toronto
26. St. Matthew, Islington
27. The Area Councils of the diocese
28. St. Matthias, Etobicoke
29. St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale
30. St. Philip, Etobicoke
31. St. Stephen, Downsview

IN MOTION

Appointments

- The Rev. Andrew Colman, Assistant Curate, Holy Trinity, Guildwood, Jan. 11.
- The Rev. Richard Newland, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. John, Whitby, Jan. 25.
- Sarah Mair, Area Youth Coordinator, York-Scarborough, Feb. 1.
- The Rev. Canon Dr. Eric Beresford, Priest-in-Charge, St. Mary Magdalene, April 1.

Vacant Incumbencies

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

Bishop's Direct Appointment Process

- (receiving names):
- 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. Cyprian
- St. Peter, Erindale

Second Phase - (receiving names via Area Bishop):

- St. Dunstan of Canterbury

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

Ordinations

- (postponed)
- Angie Hocking will be ordained a Vocational Deacon at Redeemer, Bloor St.

Celebrations of New Ministry

- (will be announced when dates are set)

Retirement

- The Very Rev. Stephen Vail's last Sunday at St. James Cathedral will be Sept. 11.

Death

- Mr. Dieter Billinger, husband of the Rev. Jo-Anne Billinger, incumbent at St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale, died on Jan. 28.

LOOKING AHEAD

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

Concerts

MARCH 2 - Ash Wednesday in-person worship service, 7 p.m., at Church of the Holy Trinity, Guildwood. Visit www.trinityguildwood.org

for more information.

MARCH 9-APRIL 6 - Evening Prayer on Wednesdays at 7 p.m., plus the Rev. Rob Mitchell's five-part Lenten Series at 7:30, entitled "Following in the Steps of Jesus." Join online on YouTube; or in person at St. Olave, Bloor and Windermere, Toronto (if churches are still open). For more details, call 416-769-5686 or go to stolaves.ca.

MARCH 14-18 - "Lights! Camera! Action!" in-person March break camp. For more information and to register (by March 7) contact Denise Byard at denise@trinityguildwood.org.

BRIEFLY

100 years Yonge

St. George on Yonge is celebrating its 100th Anniversary in 2022. The church is reaching out to connect with former parishioners and others who have been involved in the

church over the years. There will be a special celebration service on Saturday, April 23, which is the patronal festival of St. George. Other events will also be occurring throughout the year, including concerts and guest preaching by former clergy. For more information contact office@stgeorgeyonge.ca or visit stgeorgeyonge.ca.

SEND YOUR PARISH NEWS AND PHOTOS TO EDITOR@TORONTO.ANGLICAN.CA

A heavy burden of grief and loss



"And Jesus said to them, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.'" (Matthew 8:20)

BY THE REV. LEIGH KERN

In December 2021, Toronto's Homeless Memorial added 35 names of people who died from causes related to homelessness in the city of Toronto. Every second Tuesday of the month, people gather outside the Church of the Holy Trinity in downtown Toronto, to name, to remember and to grieve the loved ones we have lost to tragic and preventable circumstances. Years ago, we would often have eight or nine names to add to the memorial monthly, but that number continues to rise, doubling, and now tripling. Every week I hear of the passing of several community members and friends, many of whom I have known for years.

Last winter we witnessed the city of Toronto evicting people living in encampments while there were no indoor shelter-hotel beds available: where were people supposed to go? In response, we organized with impacted families to advocate for an increase of 2,000 beds and private shelter rooms in the city of Toronto's emergency housing programs, but we have seen no expansion. Within the underfunded and under-resourced shelter system we have heard shocking reports of residents experiencing rape, theft, transphobia, racism and even murder.

Despite our advocacy efforts and raising these horrific findings with city officials, we have seen little movement or efforts to increase the wellbeing, safety and privacy of residents. The overwhelming

majority of houseless people are Indigenous, many are Survivors or intergenerational Survivors of child confinement institutions, including Indian Residential Schools and Indian Hospitals. A just response to the crisis of a dramatic rise in deaths in city-run institutions would prioritize the experience and knowledge of residents.

Many of our community members are missing. We have filed missing persons reports but they have led nowhere. We have been told that there are hundreds of unidentified and unclaimed bodies in Toronto's morgue. Every time I refer a community member into a shelter-hotel I wonder if I will see them again. Every month the shelter system releases anonymous numbers of the amount of people who died in its services recently; we honour them at the Homeless Memorial service as Jane, Jay or John Doe. However, we know that every one of them had a name and little is being done to honour them or connect with the deceased's family and community.

Last week I learned of the tragic passing of a vibrant soul and wonderful Anishnaabe artist whom I had known for years. He died while riding the subway late at night, he was found unresponsive, and the cause of death is unknown. I recently broke the news of his death to another community member who knew and loved him. He broke down in tears at the thought of his friend dying alone, riding the TTC to stay warm because of severe winter weather and a constantly full shelter system.

As we grieved the constant confrontation of the decimation of our communities he reflected: "I can't take this, it's like everyone is dying. Over 300 people have died at the Bond [shelter-hotel] since it opened

during the pandemic. A shelter isn't supposed to have a graveyard. A shelter isn't supposed to be haunted. My wife died there, and I have no choice but to stay in the same institution that led to her sudden death. When we enter the shelters, they don't ask for a next of kin. So many people have died that they don't even tell us when someone passes. How are we supposed to grieve them if we don't know they died? They aren't contacting families or reaching out for people to be identified. If I die in the shelter or in a tent, who will tell my daughter?"

Our community members are dying at disproportionate and exponential rates. Those most impacted by these ongoing tragedies have the wisdom that houses solutions to the overlapping oppression against poor and racialized communities. As Christians may we be challenged and transformed by God-with-us, who identified God's very self with those most impacted by systemic oppression, trauma and social neglect.

"Whoever oppresses a poor person insults their Creator, but they who are generous to the needy honour their Maker." (Proverbs 14:31)

Sister Laura, a houseless community leader and co-founder with Papa Smith of the street-based community care initiative "Harmonization" comments on the relentless and tragic loss of her friends: "What I see is pure madness, the government treats people who live on the street, who don't deserve to live on the street, so badly. The housing crisis and covid crisis has turned Toronto into a violent war on the street, the city is at war against us."

"So many of my friends have died on the streets from drug use, so many have died by suicide. This is supposed to be a good place to live. The younger genera-



Memorial tiles painted by community members following the Toronto Homeless Memorial service in honour of their friends who have passed away. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE REV. LEIGH KERN

tion is our future to keep our veterans and elderly people safe from harm's way, from sickness, bad drugs and sh**** housing. Canada has a racist issue. I, Sister Laura, support the grief and loss group in Toronto, Trinity Church supports me, I march forward every day and think every day of everyone around the world who has passed away from homelessness. I pray for the angels to protect everyone on Earth and for our younger generation to keep peace, goodwill and happiness, and have freedom to love and treat people as human beings."

The constant grief and burden of loss has been extremely heavy on our communities in this time, but in times of unprecedented suffering we are called to deepen our commitment to solidarity, in honour of all whom we have loved and lost. Indeed, above the Homeless Memorial, which crumbles under the weight of over 1,000 names, are the words "FIGHT FOR THE LIVING" written in chalk on the church wall.

The Rev. Leigh Kern is the diocese's right relations coordinator.

Church partners to open overnight winter warming room

St. Peter, Cobourg has partnered with Transition House and Northumberland County to provide an overnight warming room this winter. The warming room offers shelter from the cold and access to washrooms and there are light refreshments available as well. It is open from 8 p.m. until 8 a.m. nightly from December until March 31, 2022. This initiative was funded through the provincial government's Social Services Relief Funding, which is geared to enhancing social services during COVID-19.

Opening its doors to those in need of the warming room is an extension of the work the church is already doing in the community. St. Peter is one of five local churches involved in weekly lunch programs and members of St. Peter provide bagged lunches every Tuesday. On Thursday evenings, the church provides approximately 140 bagged hot dinners through their "Thursday Night Light" program. When it is safe to reopen, the church hopes to provide sit-down in-person meals once again, offering a sense of fellowship and personal contact.

St. Thomas, Brooklin bids farewell to priest and friend

While the parishioners of St. Thomas, Brooklin would have liked to send the Rev. Canon Claire Wade off into her retirement with a special service to celebrate her ministry and thank her for her presence and guidance, COVID-19 restrictions did not allow for such a celebration.

Instead, in June 2021, Canon Wade stood for over two hours in the heat of a midsummer's day as a long line of cars stretched down St. Thomas Street and slowly moved through the church's parking lot, where parishioners wished her well, gave cards and gifts and thanked her for her time with the church. Canon Wade was particularly fond of the children that attend St. Thomas and they showed up with banners and good wishes.

Canon Wade saw St. Thomas through good times, such as the church's 150th anniversary celebrations, and during the more challenging times, such as the pandemic, when worship services had to be online or in-person with adjustments. Whatever the format, the parishioners enjoyed her weekly homily and their gratitude for her inspiration, compassion and guidance shone through at her drive-by farewell.

Outpourings of joy shared in new book

During a Sunday morning service in September 2021, Canon Stephanie Douglas asked the congregation of St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering to remember a time when God met a significant need in their lives. Parishioner Bonnie Thomson was prompted to remember the time she got a job after being told there were no jobs in her field. She felt an upwelling of joy and love for God who had intervened, and she began to wonder if others in the congregation had stories of similar experiences.

Ms. Thomson imagined what



From left, the Rev. Canon Ruthanne Ward, the Rev. Richard Newland, the Rev. Canon Erin Martin, Calista Mackay (bishop's chaplain), the Rev. Shelly Pollard, and Bishop Riscylla Shaw. PHOTO BY EUGENE FARRUGIA.

might happen if everyone gathered to share their stories. She imagined the sheer magnitude of what God had done, and the outpouring of joy that would result. Since COVID-19 wouldn't allow such a gathering, Ms. Thomson began to wonder if there was another way to tell the stories of God's work in the parishioners' lives.

Praise from the People of St. Paul's on-the-Hill brings together 27 stories from the parishioners of St. Paul. Each story is unique. Some, such as "Testimony of an A/V Tech," are set in the fabric of life at St. Paul. Others, for example "Love on a Leash," tell of unexpected light in dark times of loneliness, disintegration of the familiar or bereavement. "God's Reassurance" remembers the return of hope and the sustaining presence of God during the hardships of a financial reversal. Several recount the loving, nurturing companionship of God during a lifetime of ups and downs. All show how a relationship with God has been strengthened.

Praise from the People of St. Paul's on-the-Hill is available in paperback (\$10) and as an ebook (\$3.85). It can be found by searching amazon.ca for St. Paul's on-the-Hill.

Celebration of new ministry

On Sunday, March 1, 2020, the Rev. Shelly-Ann Pollard led her first worship service as incumbent at St. Martin, Bay Ridges. However, after only two weeks of in-person worship, services were suspended due to the restrictions and lockdowns caused by COVID-19. Almost two years later, on Sunday, December 5, 2021, due to the easing of some pandemic restrictions, the people of St. Martin were, at long last, able to hold a service of celebration of new ministry to formally induct Ms. Pollard as their incumbent.

Bishop Riscylla Shaw presided over the service with the assistance of the Rev. Canon Ruthanne Ward, regional dean of Oshawa deanery. St. Martin's honorary assistant, the Rev. Richard Newland, shared the gospel reading and the Rev. Canon Erin Martin of St. James the Apostle, Sharon, delivered the



The selection committee presents the Rev. Shelly-Ann Pollard with symbols of their ministry. PHOTO BY EUGENE FARRUGIA.



The Rev. Shelly-Ann Pollard addresses the congregation. PHOTO BY EUGENE FARRUGIA

homily. Several symbolic gifts were presented by members of the selection committee and a new chasuble was given to Ms. Pollard on behalf of the congregation. The entire service was livestreamed on YouTube for all who were unable to attend in person.

While the pandemic delayed this event from happening, it didn't stop Ms. Pollard from getting on with her ministry and getting to know and serve the members of St. Martin and the entire parish was proud to officially welcome Ms. Pollard.



Parishioners line up down the street to give the Rev. Canon Claire Wade their best wishes. PHOTO COURTESY OF BRUCE BEVERIDGE



Children created signs to express their gratitude. PHOTO COURTESY OF BRUCE BEVERIDGE