

Interviews connect youth, seniors

Going on a silent retreat



Tourney brings churches together

# The Anglican

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Clockwise from top: members of the Church of the Holy Wisdom and friends gather for a photo outside the church after the Rev. Gerlyn Henry's induction and celebration of new ministry service on June 23; parishioners enjoy a reception in the parish hall afterwards; the Rev. Gerlyn Henry is presented with the chalice and paten by representatives of the parish during the service. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

## Perseverance pays off for new church

Congregations find way to come together despite pandemic

BY STUART MANN

**DURING** the midst of the pandemic, when things looked bleak, a new church in the diocese was born.

The Church of the Holy Wisdom came into being earlier this year, the result of a lot of hard work, perseverance and deep faith.

"It showed such holy resilience

that people hung on to a vision of the church being together," says the Rev. Gerlyn Henry, priest-in-charge.

Holy Wisdom is an amalgamation of three former churches – St. Ninian's, St. John the Divine and St. Peter's, all located within a short drive of each other in central Scarborough. After many discus-

sions over the years, the churches decided to try to amalgamate.

There was just one big problem: the COVID-19 pandemic had hit and churches across the diocese, as in the rest of Canada, were shuttered and had to do almost everything online, including holding worship services and meetings.

Bringing three churches together

can be challenging at the best of times, but to do it in the middle of a pandemic was particularly daunting. Important conversations and social gatherings that usually happen in person had to be done on Zoom.

"It was really challenging, but the willingness of this group to persevere is a testament to their

commitment to Anglican ministry in the area," says Janet Marshall, the director of the diocese's Congregational Development department, which assisted the churches throughout the process, along with a team of talented diocesan volunteers and Bishop Kevin Robertson, the area bishop.

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**CHURCH HELPS EVICTED RESIDENTS - SEE PAGE 3**

# Church is born

Continued from Page 1

Rather than giving up or delaying a decision until the pandemic ended, the churches pushed ahead and eventually voted to amalgamate. The decision was unanimous save one vote. The new church came into being on Jan. 1, 2022.

Like any newborn, Holy Wisdom experienced some growing pains. For the first few months, the congregations still couldn't worship together or socialize in person due to the pandemic. But they forged on, providing online BCP and BAS services.

"They cross-pollinated and got to meet each other," says Rev. Henry. "I think it worked well because there was a healthy trial period to see what worship looked like without having to commit your body to it."

Eventually the pandemic restrictions were lifted and the three congregations worshipped together in person for the first time on Pentecost (June 5). The service, held in the former St. Peter's building, featured traditions from all three congregations.

"It was mind-blowing because there were so many traditions in that one liturgy, but they had figured out how to honour their own legacies," she recalls.

One of the strengths of the new parish is its hospitality, which was on display in the spring. In addition to the Pentecost service, the church held a farewell celebration for the Rev. Canon Derek Stapleton, the interim priest-in-charge, and an induction service for Rev. Henry – all occasions for gathering and eating together.

"All of our tables where we eat only accommodate six people, and people didn't sit with people they knew; they intentionally sat with people they didn't know, without



Bishop Kevin Robertson and the Rev. Gerlyn Henry cut the cake after her induction as priest-in-charge of Holy Wisdom, the diocese's newest church. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

even naming that," says Rev. Henry. "Maybe that's a Scarborough trait – that you meet and greet people you don't know."

This is her first time in charge of a parish, and in a way it's a homecoming. Her family came to Canada when she was four, settling in Scarborough. She spent her early years there before moving away with her family. This is her first time back.

"I have a heart for Scarborough and for a lot of the new immigrants here," she says. "Part of what I want to do is have our parish be a welcoming parish. If you're new, if you're unsure, if you have doubts about God, come here."

The church has a welcoming website and Facebook page, and Rev. Henry is active on Tik Tok, where her video commentaries on God, Christianity and issues of the day have attracted a large following.

She is excited to be in her first post but also nervous – something she embraces. "I keep asking God, what is it you've called me here for? I think the opportunities are immense but I'm also really nervous. But I name that, because I think

that allows other people to also be nervous in this amalgamation."

She is passionate about reaching out to the surrounding community, and the church is already doing that through its food pantry. Originally a food bank at the former St. Ninian's, the pantry provides food and other items for free to anyone who comes in.

Through the pantry, groups in the church are finding a way to reach out to the community. The Altar Guild, for example, provides flowers, and leftover food and beverages from the coffee hour are given away as well.

After a period of rest over the summer, the church plans to meet with an architect to discuss how to make the building look like a new place of worship, where everyone in the new parish can call home. They also want to make the building fully accessible.

It's still early days for Holy Wisdom and other challenges will arise, but Rev. Henry is confident that the congregation will overcome them. "The amalgamation wasn't just by happenstance," she says. "It was intentional. Holy Wisdom reflects people of really strong faith."

# Stories bring youth, seniors together

## Interviews to be shared on video, podcast

BY MARTHA HOLMEN

ELIZABETH was a pin girl. As a young teen in the 1950s, her first job was to manually reset the bowling pins after each player had bowled, a role long since replaced by machinery. Now in her 80s and a member of Grace Church, Markham, she told the story when members of the congregation were socializing on Zoom after a mid-week service during the pandemic.

That conversation, and others like it, sparked an idea in Aaron Dumpala, the parish's music director. "You could see how nice it was to talk about her childhood. I could only help but wonder how many seniors or others have interesting stories that wouldn't be heard by anyone," he says. "We started learning things about each other that many who had gone to the same church for 30-plus years didn't even know about their fellow parishioners."

Mr. Dumpala had recently set up a recording studio at Grace with high-quality audio and video equipment. He'd been using it to record choir members and to support the parish's live streamed services, but he wanted to find other projects that could make use of the space. He was also eager to involve youth more fully in the life of the parish, and he had noticed that the young people at Grace were interested in media production.

In connecting that wish to engage youth with the desire to help seniors share their stories,

Talk of the Ages was born. Mr. Dumpala envisions it as a series of intergenerational interviews, with one host and one guest for each episode. The format will start with young people interviewing seniors, but there will be flexibility as the series gets going. "The only criteria will be that there must be a minimum of a five-year difference between the participants, preferably a generation or two gap," he says.

While Talk of the Ages will focus initially on members of Grace, Mr. Dumpala says he hopes to broaden its scope as it develops. He and his brother, the Rev. Yohan Dumpala, plan to adapt the concept at St. John the Baptist, Norway, where Yohan is the assistant curate. They also hope to bring the series to more Anglican churches, involving youth from all parts of the diocese. "It will be open to any parish that would like to join us in adding to the series," says Mr. Dumpala.

Talk of the Ages also won't necessarily be limited to church members. "Of course we're doing this for Grace and the Anglican Church, but if someone in the neighbourhood wants to talk about part of their life, they're more than welcome," says Mr. Dumpala. "It will be really nice to showcase people's stories."

The interviews will be available both as videos and as podcasts so that people can enjoy them on as many platforms as possible. With interviews set to start in the fall, Mr. Dumpala hopes to have the first episodes posted in October.

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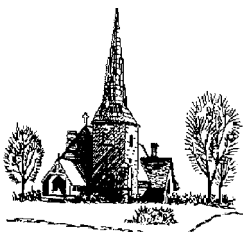
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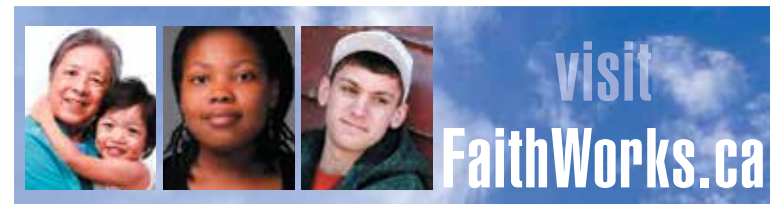
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# Parish rallies around evicted residents

## Donation, hot meals fill need

BY NAOMI RACZ

OVER the summer, a west-end Toronto church joined its local community in supporting evicted residents of a nearby Toronto Community Housing (TCHC) complex. On May 27, a ceiling collapsed and injured a tenant at Swansea Mews at Windermere Avenue and the Queensway, near St. Olave, Swansea. Following the incident, some residents of the Mews were told they would have to vacate their homes for a few weeks. But further investigation by structural engineers revealed that all units in the complex were unsafe, and the remaining residents were ordered to evacuate.

In total, the evacuation orders displaced 114 families. TCHC placed residents in temporary accommodation in hotels, college dorms and other social housing complexes across the city. Many were placed far from Swansea Mews and their jobs, healthcare providers, families and support networks.

The local community immediately rallied around the displaced families. On June 20, the Rev. Rob Mitchell, incumbent of St. Olave's,



From left, David and Cathy Hutcheon and Sheila Tait pack up jerk chicken and rice, soup and salad in St. Olave's kitchen. The food was made by the Parkdale Golden Age Foundation, paid for by donations from the congregation. Fifty meals were prepared four times, using halal chicken to accommodate many Muslim residents at the Swansea Mews. PHOTO BY THE REV. ROB MITCHELL

attended a Zoom meeting of community organizations, churches, agencies and members of the Swansea Mews community. Swansea Mews is within St. Olave's geographical bounds, and one family from the housing complex has been attending the church for more than 20 years. All four of their children were confirmed there.

Also attending the meeting were Paul Scrivener, a former warden, and Janice Biehn Douglas, the current rector's warden. Ms. Douglas is also the communications and marketing coordinator for the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund

(PWRDF). "It was very emotional," she says. "The memory of what had happened was very fresh. I was struck by the similarity with people who have escaped fire or floods."

This striking similarity to the evacuees PWRDF usually serves led Ms. Douglas to wonder if the organization could also help the residents of Swansea Mews. Mr. Mitchell applied for and was successful in securing a \$5,000 emergency grant from PWRDF. St. Olave's leadership consulted with the Swansea Mews community about how the money should be used. "It's about working with the

community," says Ms. Douglas. "It's about what they need, not what we think they need. And those needs are changing all the time. We want to support them to advocate for themselves."

St. Olave's donated the grant to the Stone Soup Network (SSN), a project of Windermere United Church that connects businesses wanting to share products and services with local community members who need them. SSN has long been active in the Swansea Mews community and wider neighbourhood, and residents of the housing complex sit on the SSN advisory board.

Kate Hoffmann, local director for SSN, explained that residents faced unanticipated expenses following the eviction. Some had added travel expenses, while others were paying for storage or pet care. Many residents on low or fixed incomes didn't have a financial cushion to the rely on. Knowing that the wider neighbourhood was also keen to support the displaced families, SSN launched a campaign to raise \$114,000, or \$1,000 for each family. The fundraiser was a concrete way for neighbours to respond quickly, while also allowing the families to use the money in a way that met their individual needs.

While the fundraiser fell short of its goal, SSN still managed to raise \$92,000, and the money was distributed to the residents at the end of

August. "The gift from St. Olave's really helped and spurred others to donate," says Ms. Hoffmann. "Getting this close to our goal is great and will have a significant impact on the families."

St. Olave's also organized a cardboard box drive and partnered with Parkdale Golden Age Foundation to provide residents with hot meals. As Mr. Mitchell put it, the response was about "demonstrating our concern and love."

Despite this outpouring of support, it will take years to complete the necessary upgrades to Swansea Mews, and many residents face an uncertain future. "This is Toronto," says Mr. Mitchell. "It's not like you can just find another place to rent. There's not enough housing, and those on low income feel the brunt. Public housing is dilapidated, and Toronto Community Housing budgets are stretched."

Mr. Mitchell also spoke of how years of neglect by TCHC was evident when he and other members of St. Olave's went to Swansea Mews to drop off cardboard boxes. "The covered parking was jacked up, and residents said it had been that way for years. It spoke to a general attitude."

But Mr. Mitchell has also been heartened by the response from the broader community. "People see the housing project as part of the community. It's been nice to see the compassion of the community."

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# Storied downtown church celebrates anniversary

BY VIVIAN HARROWER

**HOLY** Trinity, Trinity Square in downtown Toronto is observing its 175th anniversary this year with the slogan “Memory and Hope.” A service of celebration will be held on Oct. 23 at 10:30 a.m. with Bishop Andrew Asbil as guest homilist. The service will be hybrid, with some of the congregation in the nave and some participating via Zoom. A lunch will follow the service for those attending in person.

Colourful banners announcing “Memory and Hope” hang at the south entrance to the church. They are just steps away from the homeless memorial, where mourners and housing activists gather monthly to remember people who have died as a result of houselessness on Toronto’s streets and to call on governments at all levels to take concrete action to solve this crisis.

Photos and news articles from the parish’s rich history are on display in the church during October. Holy Trinity was opened in 1847 thanks to a bequest by an anonymous donor in England who had stipulated that no pew rents were to be collected (rentals being a common practice at the time). Years later, the donor was identified as Mary Lambert Swale of Leeds.



Banners announcing Holy Trinity’s 175th anniversary hang outside the south entrance of the church. Photo by Vivian Harrower

Holy Trinity’s commitment to social justice has continued through the years, including the Rev. John Frank’s ministry during the Great Depression, sheltering draft dodgers from the U.S. during the Vietnam War, championing women’s ordination and fighting for equal rights for 2SLGBTQ+ persons in the Anglican Church and wider community, and sponsoring a multitude of refugees.

In 2020, the parish furthered its commitment to truth and reconciliation, welcoming Toronto Urban Native Ministry into office space in the city core. Outreach to those affected by the COVID-19 shutdown of many downtown services ramped up quickly to provide food to people in need; that outreach continues through the Unity Kitchen ministry.

The parish also maintains a commitment to the arts through its sponsorship of Music Mondays, a summer concert series, and the annual Christmas Story, a tradition since 1937. Theatrical perfor-

mances, book launches, art exhibits, original hymns by parishioners, and a variety of concerts have all taken place at Holy Trinity. Seasonal altar frontals, most of them created by long-time member and artist Fran Sowton, bring added colour to the worship space.

Before re-opening for in-person worship in the spring, the parish underwent major upgrades to the nave: new flooring, an improved (more energy-efficient) heating and air-conditioning system and replacing aging pews with chairs. A number of chairs have been earmarked as memorial chairs; their cost will be covered by financial gifts in honour of people who have made significant contributions to the life of the parish.

More details about the anniversary are posted on the church’s website, [www.holytrinity.to](http://www.holytrinity.to). A donation of \$200 for a memorial chair may be made through e-transfer to [contact@holytrinity.to](mailto:contact@holytrinity.to) or by a cheque to Holy Trinity. Be sure to include the honouree’s name on the memo line of the cheque or in the e-transfer.

A *Brief History* of the parish by the Rev. William Whitla, a long-time member, provides a deeper look at the people and events that made up 175 years of memory and hope. To purchase a copy, contact [mlinken@holytrinity.to](mailto:mlinken@holytrinity.to).

*Vivian Harrower is a member of Holy Trinity, Trinity Square.*

## BRIEFLY

### Art show returns after hiatus

St. Barnabas, Chester hosted the 32nd edition of its very successful art show in August. After being closed for three years due to COVID-19 concerns, the church was once again able to open its doors. Started in 1989 by Jenny and Neville Reid, the show was moved to the church and a new annual date of Aug. 5-6 was set. This summer’s show featured 20 local artists showcasing their

original art, distributed among 16 tables. Fifty-two paintings were sold in a mere 10 hours.

### Hockey club looking for anthem singers

The Mississauga Steelheads Hockey Club, which competes in the Ontario Hockey League out of the Paramount Fine Foods Centre, is looking for church choirs to sing the national anthem at games in front of 2,000 or more fans. Afterward, the group can enjoy an evening of hockey. For more details, contact Michele Warner, coordinator of community partnerships, at [mwarner@mississaugasteelheads.com](mailto:mwarner@mississaugasteelheads.com).

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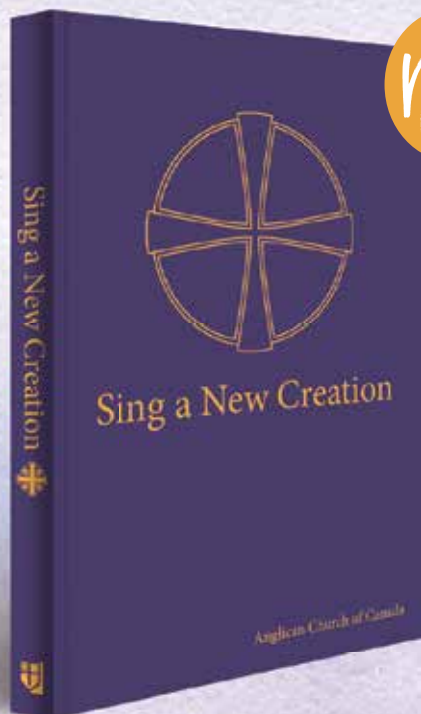
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# The call of the silent retreat

BY SISTER DOREEN MCGUFF

**F**inding our inner calm and peace can be difficult in this world that is so full of noise, distractions, unrest and violence. We live in troubling times and are beginning to emerge from the isolation and chaos caused by the COVID-19 virus, only to be confronted by war, climate change disasters, and economic and social problems on an international scale. It is easy to find ourselves lost in the confusion of our many thoughts, opinions, preferences, beliefs and grievances. It is easy to find ourselves locked in a prison that is characterized by stress, struggle, anxiety, confusion and argument. There often seems to be so many voices arguing within – some kind of inner division.

In my experience it has been the silent retreat – the silence itself – that has the capacity to help us enter this inner division to find an inner beingness, an inner rootedness, a wholeness. Margaret Silf suggests in her book *Going on Retreat* that one of the main qualities that turns ordinary time into graced time, with the power to renew, to challenge and to redirect us, is an intentional time of retreat. This time is always a spiritual experience, whether or not the person making the retreat would call themselves spiritual. Going away for a time of silence always takes us closer to the core of our being – a space where we also touch the reality of God.

Many years ago, Simon and Garfunkel sang a song called “The Sound of Silence.” Over the years, the last line of each verse has stayed with me as an important reason for going off into intentional periods of silence: “within the sound of silence”; “touched the sound of silence”; “disturb the sound of silence”; “echoed in the wells of silence”; and “whispered in the sound of silence.” I



An icon and candle at St. John's Convent in Toronto. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

hold them within this shared reflection, a backdrop for the importance of taking periods of silence – indeed, for considering going on a silent retreat. They are words that are pregnant with meaning for us today – within, touched, disturb, echoed, whispered – all gifts waiting for us within the silence, a way to still the mind and be more present.

Scripture records that Jesus frequently “went off to a lonely place by himself” to be alone with God in that inner beingness, that inner rootedness, that wholeness. At times of major decisions, he went off alone for an extended period of time, off in the hills in silence trying to discern his way forward. I know, and I believe so many of us know, that same feeling, a longing within us in the busyness of our daily life to just take a moment and gaze at the world, trying to see it through

God's eyes, a time to reflect on the ways in which God's energy may be active in our everyday living. I know the graced times apart that silent retreats have given me, of having time to reflect on my life, on my community and the world. A chance to become relaxed in the time away from my normal and often hectic pace of life. These graced times have opened up a space where I can be touched by the gentleness of God's unconditional and tenacious love for me and for the whole world. Silent retreats offer the time and space to open the eyes of my eyes, the ears of my ears: to open the eyes and the ears of my hearts as I search for a deeper intimacy with myself and God, or just to experience holy space while trying to make a decision or find inner meaning in the midst of grief or trauma.

Silent retreats are a time to do what

Psalm 131 calls us to do: “I still my soul and make it quiet.” This is the open door of the God who waits for us, a call to an inner attitude of waiting and listening silence before God. It is so true that silence and stillness can cause me to address issues I might have been running from! John of the Cross said that “silence is God's language” – and within silence, touched by silence, disturbed by silence, surrounded by the echo of silence. Like Elijah in the cave in the Old Testament (1 Kings 19:9-14), we discover that God is not in the earthquake, the wind or the fire but in the still small voice – the whisper of silence. I discover that God, the faithful God whose steady presence and companionship is with me – be it in the chaos, in the tumult, in the joy and the sorrow – is “uncovered and discovered” anew in the silence.

In the silence of a retreat, I often use a familiar meditation that is especially helpful when I feel like I am being torn apart by so many things. It goes like this:

Be still and know that I am God.  
*What does this mean to you?*  
 Be still and know that I am.  
*What is the image of God in your life?*  
 Be still and know.  
*What does God want you to know?*  
 Be still.  
*Stop. Relax, take a deep breath. Empty your thoughts and focus on the presence of God. Be still.*  
 Be.  
*What does it mean to just be? Who are you? Strip away all your roles and identities ... and just be.*

*Sister Doreen McGuff is a member of the Sisterhood of St. John the Divine and has led and participated in many silent retreats.*

# Why are so many people hungry?



BY MURRAY MACADAM

**A**bundance is central to the gospel promise. God wants everyone to “have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10). The prophet

Isaiah exhorts us to respond to God's abundance with acts of justice and compassion, including sharing our food with all who hunger and dismantling systems that produce hunger in the first place (58:7). Our own access to wholeness and abundance is explicitly tied to seeking the wholeness of others. Other Bible stories speak of how God's people responded to famine, including Joseph, whose careful distribution of food kept several nations alive during a five-year famine (Genesis 41:46-57).

Abundance is a noble goal. And yet it's a world away from the life so many lead.

I've often been to Toronto's Rogers Centre (formerly the SkyDome) when it's been full, a vast throng of 45,000 people. I use that image when grappling with the number of hungry people in Canada: 20 Rogers Centres full. That's over 840,000 people, many of them children and youth, and the number is growing due to runa-

way inflation. In Ontario, half a million people relied on food bank handouts to alleviate hunger between 2020 and 2021. Around the world, climate change and conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine war are leading to more hunger, with at least 140 million people in a dire food crisis.

In our wealthy society, why are so many people going hungry, including members of our own parishes? What can we do about it?

Many parishes in our diocese help hungry people through meal programs, food banks and similar efforts. Particularly encouraging are those efforts that build community and enable low-income people to provide their own food. The Common Table, sponsored by Flemingdon Park Ministry, is a garden in Toronto's Flemingdon Park neighbourhood through which residents, many of them new Canadians, grow food for themselves, local seniors and families on land gifted by Our Saviour, an Anglican church. Another dynamic initiative is the Church of the Resurrection's “Garden at the Rez,” through which dozens of gardeners and volunteers grow food on land near this east Toronto parish. Church members work alongside parish neighbours. The garden has become a neighbourhood hub,

with work bees, jam-making, barbecues and picnics. Beyond our diocese, PWRDF makes a huge difference in alleviating hunger through emergency relief programs and support for farmers around the world.

These are wonderful efforts making a real difference for people struggling to put food on the table. What more can we do to live that famous message from Matthew 25, where Jesus says: “I was hungry and you gave me food?”

We can tackle the problem at its root by ensuring that everyone is able to buy the food they need, joining forces with the growing number of Canadians urging our federal government to provide an adequate basic income for all (also called a guaranteed livable income). Major faith groups, including the Anglican Church of Canada, have endorsed this goal. Support for a basic income is growing, but to achieve it more people need to actively voice their support, especially to our political leaders.

In their 2020 letter to Prime Minister Trudeau calling for a basic income, 41 Anglican and Lutheran bishops noted the ethical implications involved: “We recommend GBI (guaranteed basic income), not just as an astute financial policy, but also

because it marks our identity as a country who cares for one another... GBI would be a new social contract, defining a new relationship amongst Canadians, through the mediating role of our government: we would be articulating a relationship where we would know that some of our public spending would provide income for others. With GBI, we state clearly and definitively that no one will be failed by the system so catastrophically that they cannot feed and house themselves and their families; that no one is left so alone and so far behind that they cannot find a path out of precarity.”

The diocese's Social Justice and Advocacy Committee has endorsed this campaign. Resources to help Anglicans learn more and advocate for basic income are available at [www.toronto.anglican.ca/diocesan-life/social-justice-advocacy](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/diocesan-life/social-justice-advocacy).

Hunger may look different today than it did in Jesus' day. Yet the question – and the challenge to us as Christians – remains the same: Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food? We can respond as individuals, as faith communities, and through our governments.

*Murray MacAdam is a member of St. John the Evangelist, Peterborough.*

# Simply put, it makes me happy

Jill Wyllie volunteers as a ship visitor for the Mission to Seafarers Southern Ontario, which has mission stations in the ports of Oshawa, Toronto and Hamilton.

I am a cradle Anglican, born and raised in a tiny parish in the south of England, but have lived my entire adult life in Canada and am now a member of St. Peter, Oshawa. I had never heard of the Mission to Seafarers until an article appeared in the local paper about the installation of a new mission station at the Port of Oshawa, calling for volunteers, and it captured my imagination as being quite a contrast to my hospital volunteering. For the first time in my life, I considered what working life at sea might be like for extended periods of time, with homes and families far away. I eventually joined the group shortly after the mission's official opening in 2015 and have been an enthusiastic ship visitor ever since.

Initially we go on board to welcome each international ship soon after its arrival with our contact information and a bag of chocolates. We explain to an officer what we can do for the crew: provide free WiFi, refreshments and donations of clothing, books and toiletries in our mission, otherwise known as the "seamen's club," plus souvenirs for sale and free transportation to shopping and recreation, with information about local amenities.

Before the pandemic, we could expect more than 40 ships a year in Oshawa,



Jill Wyllie visits the chief officer and crew members of the BBC Austria in Oshawa. PHOTO COURTESY OF JILL WYLLIE

but that number has since been reduced to about 30. Almost all the ships are carrying steel, but occasionally they may have large machine parts, and once we had a tanker in port. Crews may number anywhere between 12 on a tanker and 17 to 23 on the steel carriers. Ships docking on the west side of the port in Oshawa are in close proximity to a very attractive park, and it's a pleasure to see seafarers taking full advantage of it. Such a beautiful green space next to the port is quite a rarity.

The ships come to us from all over the world and the crews can be a mix of nationalities and languages, but communication is always manageable and we enjoy our interaction. It is very rewarding – though sometimes challenging

– to be able to gratify their wishes, and several seafarers have continued to stay in touch across the world on WhatsApp with a "how r u?" chat and family photos. I can't express how heartwarming that is, and I would strongly recommend others to volunteer and find out for themselves.

Sometimes a seafarer will ask me why I do what I do; I tell him that the blessing conveyed to me by him for giving me the opportunity to be useful far outweighs any granted to him by my actions. Simply put, it makes me happy. Once in a while an officer will express his appreciation with an invitation to a meal on board, which is accepted with alacrity whenever possible. That's always an interesting and a very enjoyable experience, with a pleasant sense of comrade-

ship. Generosity is also frequently shown to us in gifts of well-travelled chocolates, candy or small donations to the mission, which reinforces the value of our contribution to the seamen's welfare while they are with us. We are aware that our actions can make an appreciable difference; I like to feel that we provide a "soft place" for them to land when they come ashore.

My spiritual journey took several twists and turns, including a long period of estrangement due to horrifying world events, including the Biafra crisis affecting so many babies and children, and it took a particularly low point in my personal life to bring me back to a solid relationship with the Church, but on reflection it was all profoundly educational and did eventually lead me to where I am now, which I feel is where I was meant to be.

I would like to think that five years from now I'd be doing what I'm doing now, spending much of my time volunteering in Lakeridge Health, Oshawa, and as a ship visitor whenever there's a ship in port, but as I'd be well into my ninth decade that expectation may have to be revised. Apart from other considerations, the ships' gangways can be 42 steps high!

The 23rd psalm has always had special meaning for me, as it has for so many; it conveys such reassurance, hope and peace.

## The joy of bitter melon

BY MELODIE NG

As I reflect on this season at the Common Table Farm, the word that comes to mind is challenge. This summer has been a *challenge* – or more accurately, a series of challenges. Our urban farm, which supports the community of Flemingdon Park in Toronto, has seen its share of obstacles this year. We've experienced fluctuating temperatures, very little rain and tremendous weeds. As I pulled up incessant vines, scripture popped into my head. Surely the Old Testament writers were thinking of the curse of bindweed when they wrote, "cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field" (Genesis 3:17-18). We have definitely been experiencing plenty of thistle! The pest pressure has been blessedly low, but perhaps the insects are as confused by the weather as we are.

Constrained by funds, we were unable to hire seasonal workers until later in the season. This meant that seedlings were late going into the ground, which led to stunted plants. Then there were bean weevils and mice. Finding last year's saved seed pockmarked by weevils and seedlings nibbled down overnight by mice is not a good way to start your morning. Last but not least, there were the incidents of theft. First a wheelbarrow was stolen, then all our pointed shovels disappeared (inexplicably, our flat-edged shovels were left untouched). With all these challenges rolling in one after the other, there were days



Bitter melon seeds (left) and the plant ready for harvesting at the Common Table Farm. PHOTOS BY MELODIE NG

– especially the 40C with humidex days! – when I felt ready to throw in the towel.

Thankfully, the wisdom of my farm mentor Amy nudged me in a more hopeful direction. In one of our conversations, she asked, "What brings you joy on the farm?" I realized that bitter melon was my joy. Bitter melon – known also as *fu gua*, *karela*, *pavakkai*, *caraille*, *muop dang* and *ampalaya*, among other names – is a part of cuisines and cultures as diverse as Toronto. This is my first try at growing bitter melon. It has been a delight, right from opening the packet of seeds. Bitter melon seeds are marvellous – large and odd-shaped, rough-looking like a piece of bark. My co-worker Mateo thought they looked like tiny turtles. As the first seedlings sprouted and grew, I noticed that even the young leaves smelled fragrant and bitter. I watched the plants begin to wind up the trellis, grabbing hold with tendrils thin and strong. At first glimpse of the bitter melon flower, I was a kid again – I waved over my co-worker Anélia, and together we marvelled at the delicate yellow petals. The tiny bumpy



melon taking shape behind the flower brought much excitement to these farmers! We watched as the first pale green melons became rounder and fuller. This particular variety – "Big Top" – is harvested when "softball size." Bitter melon is a highly nutritious and medicinal plant, well known to Caribbean, South Asian and East Asian communities. Even saving its seed is a fascinating, squishy delight – the over-ripe fruit bursts open to reveal a scarlet treasure chest of gloopy seeds.

Why wax poetic about a melon? Because these little guys tell me it's all worth it. The days of battling weeds include a glimpse of a brilliant gold finch flitting through the farm. The dismay caused by diseased tomato plants coexists alongside the satisfaction of harvesting a bright yellow zucchini. The sound of water gushing from a broken irrigation pipe (cue much frustration) is followed by the discovery of fascinating cicada husks clinging to the wheel of a wheelbarrow. I'm privileged to farm in a context that allows me to stop and watch, wonder and enjoy. Our scale is human-

sized. The farm demands that I work hard, but not at the expense of taking a moment to marvel at a damner dragonfly's perfectly clear wings.

Our farm has not produced as much as planned this season. But our community continues to receive fresh vegetables through what the land is offering and through our partnerships with other farms. We can take care of soil, grow food and feed a community – and we find that every frustration and problem is part and parcel with the joys. Taking time to revel in bitter melon reminds me that this life is to be lived vibrantly and fully. I'm assured that it's okay to face challenges. It's okay that we're not as productive as we had planned in the winter, when the season was imagined and idealized. Big Top reminds me that despite the challenges of farming, there is immense wonder in being nourished by the earth.

One sweltering day, our staff and volunteers took a break under the shade of the maples. Kristen commented that she loves coming to work on our farm because it's an oasis from the stresses of her airline job. Marianne, another dedicated volunteer, nodded her head in agreement and said simply, "The healing garden." Indeed, this garden is healing. This summer I've learned that bitter melon has medicinal qualities not only for the body, but also for the mind and soul.

Melodie Ng is the farm manager of the Common Table. To find out more about the Common Table Farm or to donate to support our work, please visit [www.flemingdonparkministry.com](http://www.flemingdonparkministry.com).



**SUMMER CLASSIC**

Six teams play in the 61st annual Scarborough Anglican Youth Movement baseball tournament in Ajax on Aug. 20. The Holy Trinity Angels, Guildwood, (above) beat the team from St. Paul, L'Amoreaux 19-9 in the final game to win the Rev. Peter C. Trant Memorial trophy, presented by tourney organizer Martin Walks (in blue shirt). Also competing were teams from Wesley Chapel Baptist, Scarborough Baptist, Christ Church/St. Bede and a multi-church team. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

**Finding a way to talk about hope**



BY THE REV. CANON ANDREA BUDGEY

The beginning of September doesn't have any particular liturgical significance, but there are few sectors of society in which it doesn't mark a cyclical change of some sort. In colleges and universities, this year feels like a return in another, more complicated, way: institutions are working hard to create a sense of "post-COVID normality," while still maintaining some level of responsible pandemic precautions. Overall, it appears that there will be more opportunities for informal connection this year, and for a chaplain, this is significant. In my experience, very few undergrads make formal appointments to speak with me in this role – perhaps it would seem "religious" in an artificial, inauthentic, way – but long, intense conversations often begin with "Oh. Hi. Do you have a few minutes?" A colleague at another institution once described academic chaplaincy as "loitering with intent," and as a new year gets underway, I find myself wondering about the quality of that intent, and how best to communicate it. As a student, I was deeply curious about religion and very at-

tracted to Christianity, but I wouldn't have dreamed of darkening a chaplain's door. I think I felt a great need to research and explore questions of faith at my own pace and suspected that a chaplain might try to enroll me in social activities and group programming designed to "draw me into the fold." It wouldn't surprise me if a great many of the students I meet share these suspicions. Of course, there are those for whom the church of their youth was a happy and supportive experience, who want to be involved in services and develop a continuity of faith practice in their new environment. Others were dragged to church by their families and have no desire to revisit that experience (or anything that reminds them of it). Many grew up in traditions other than Christianity, and a significant number come from a background in which religion played no part at all, except in media representations ranging from the ridiculous to the downright horrifying. Some students are in search of community, trying to disentangle the myriad opportunities that campus life appears to offer. Still others have set their sights on making a difference in the world through research or art or service or advocacy, and don't really see a connection between their dreams and faith. A

chaplain is there to serve them all. A lot has been written about the mental health challenges that face students who have spent much of the past two years under pandemic restrictions – isolation, disengagement, anxiety – and all of these are significant. Perhaps more importantly, however, almost anyone entering college or university now has grown up with an endemic anxiety about climate change and the possibility that humans will consume themselves out of existence within a foreseeable future; this underlying dread is efficiently amplified by the dystopian scenarios of popular culture. Wars continue around the world, and the threat of nuclear and environmental catastrophe is never far away. The sense of equity and justice that families and schools seek to nurture in young people is challenged every day by the evidence of poverty, racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia and naked corporate greed. To be of service to students, chaplains have to be acutely aware of these dynamics, address the realities that face us and still find a way to talk about hope. Talking about hope is a complicated business. Simplistic cheerfulness doesn't cut it, nor does a flat rejection of the world and its brokenness in favour of a blissful eternity for the fortunate few. In

the past, I've boiled down my response to the "Why are you (still) a Christian?" question to this: Christians believe in a God who is not only an all-powerful Creator, but who knows what it is to suffer for love. From this starting point, we can acknowledge the world's brokenness and the danger in which humanity has put itself, and still talk about God's loving solidarity with us and all Creation. We can think about the kingdom of God as "already and not yet," as a future of justice and peace and sufficiency, but also as a radical force in the present, an underground rhizome system of love that can surround and subvert structures of power and cupidity. If we trust in God's loving solidarity and seek to live as part of the kingdom of resistance, we can still make a difference. This hope has to be the bedrock of my "loitering with intent," and I think it's crucial, not just for chaplains who work with young people but for the Church as an organism, to engage actively and visibly with the issues that challenge us all, to be known by the justice we stand for, the caring we embody and the transformation we seek. *The Rev. Canon Andrea Budgey is the Humphrys Chaplain at Trinity College.*

# Is worshipping together important?

## New book asks timely question

BY JANICE BIEHN

Recently at St. Olave, Swansea, the Rev. Dr. PJ Carefoote, our honorary assistant, presented a series on the history of the Church in Toronto. I was in charge of running the live stream. As I sat up in the balcony behind the camera, watching the YouTube feed on the computer monitors and clicking JPEGs of archival images synched to PJ's words, the irony was not lost on me. "What about the future of the Church?" I wondered.

It's a perennial question among the faithful, usually accompanied with lots of handwringing and action lists. This constant questioning of what the Church needs to do ensure its future forms the backbone of the Rev. Canon Martha Tatarnic's new book, *Why Gather? The Hope and Promise of the Church*.

As we emerge from the pandemic, many people in parish leadership may be asking themselves this question daily. Despite our herculean efforts to keep parishes con-



The Rev. Canon Martha Tatarnic with her new book.

nected with live streams and phone trees and Zoom worship, many churchgoers have been slow to return to the pews. Are we ever going to be back to the way it was? Will people gather together once more?

Canon Tatarnic brilliantly articulates so many things that I have experienced as a warden during the pandemic, trying to serve the church, serve God, pay the bills, keep everyone's mental health in check (as well as my own), support online worship

and keep the community together when we couldn't gather.

*Why Gather* is part memoir of Canon Tatarnic's ministry as rector of St. George's in St. Catharines. She shares stories about people being touched by faith and God's grace, connecting them to Jesus' ministry throughout. It is compelling.

Though she started asking the question "why gather" before the pandemic, the answer was shaped by lockdowns, nasal swabs and mute buttons. Jesus preached that we are to love our neighbours as ourselves and that everyone is our neighbour, but COVID-19 showed us that we are connected on an even more visceral level. We quite literally infect each other with our germs every day, connected by airborne particles, says Canon Tatarnic. "Whether we like it or not, the world is set up for us to be biologically and spiritually and emotionally infected with and connected to one another," she writes.

Before she was called to the priesthood, Canon Tatarnic wanted to become a lawyer. It's not surprising, because she essentially builds a case for why we need to gather as a community.

This messy, infectious imperfection, this connection, is what makes the Church the body of Christ, she says. Church is not

perfect, nor should it be. We gather, she writes, "to be better tuned in to what God is doing in our lives. Tuning in to this truth matters to us in ways that are urgent and consequential because it is exactly this – to be in relationship with one another and in relationship with God – for which we are created."

In other words, our faith is built on being connected, being together.

Coming out of two years of lockdowns and online worship, parishes across the country are under pressure to promote attendance and encourage giving. We want life to get back to normal already. But to fixate on the numbers is to misunderstand our mission.

Our mission is to lift up "the stories of grace, of transformation, of blessing, of how God has met us in the mess of our lives, of where we have been surprised by love, given second chances, and shown a way forward that we didn't know was possible," writes Canon Tatarnic. We gather to share these stories and in doing so reconnect to God and to each other.

Janice Biehn is a member of St. Olave, Swansea. *Why Gather? The Hope and Promise of the Church* is available in paperback or Kindle eBook at Amazon.

# Ecumenism and interfaith ministry: what's the difference?

BY THE REV. JEFF NOWERS



Over the last year as I have talked with many different Anglicans, a question continues to be asked: what is the relationship between ecumenism and interfaith ministry? It's an important question that invites exploration.

On the surface, the distinction between ecumenism and interfaith ministry seems clear. Take, first, ecumenism. At its first assembly, convened in Amsterdam in 1948, the World Council of Churches adopted a resolution that identified its member churches as those who "acknowledge Jesus Christ as God and saviour" and "find their unity in him." The resolution went on to declare, "They do not have to create their unity; it is the gift of God. But they know that it is their duty to make common cause in the search for the expression of that unity in life and work."

Ecumenism is the work that different churches undertake to visibly manifest their unity. This does not mean that churches aspire to eliminate all their differences, ultimately becoming a single global church. Instead, ecumenism involves different churches strengthening relationships between themselves, facilitating cooperation on joint projects, reaching consensus on theological statements, and striving for mutual recognition and acceptance of each other's ministries, such that clergy from one church are able to officiate sacramentally in another. An example of this is the 2001 Waterloo Declaration that brought the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada into full communion.

If that describes ecumenism, then interfaith ministry would seem to be something quite different. From the patristic era until the 20th century, the doctrinal phrase *extra Ecclesiam nulla salus* ("outside the Church is no salvation") determined how most Christians related to those of other faith traditions. The imperative of evangelization and baptism was the chief motivating factor in such relationships. But the upshot has been largely disastrous: harmful roots of Christian self-superiority have set in, the depths of which churches today are only beginning to fathom. Consider the enduring genocidal impact of the Indian Residential Schools, which Canadian churches operated to "civilize and Christianize" Indigenous children, "killing the Indian in the child."

Since the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the exclusivist theology behind the phrase *extra Ecclesiam nulla salus* has fallen under criticism, even as calls for a "new evangelization" have been raised. An important outcome of the council—the effects of which have impacted Anglicanism considerably—has been a call to dialogue with other faith traditions. Without dialogue, the inevitable alternative, as history has demonstrated time and again, is violence. Interfaith ministry is thus best understood as a form of peacemaking. It has to do with Christians reaching out to their neighbours of other faith traditions, to learn from them and understand them better, and to help them understand more clearly who Christians are without any ulterior intentions of proselytism. Even more, it involves cooperating on joint projects, fostering friendships and living side by side in peace.

If all that is helpful in grasping the distinction between ecumenism and interfaith ministry, in recent years the lines have

become blurry. Case in point: in 1987 the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto established its ecumenical and interfaith affairs office. Ecumenism and interfaith ministry, while distinct, were pursued separately in the same office. That changed in 2020 when Archbishop Thomas Collins established two departments: an office for interreligious dialogue and an office for promoting Christian unity and religious relations with Judaism. This development marked a deliberate attempt to expand the work of ecumenism to include reconciliation with Jews. It also complicated the relationship between ecumenism and interfaith ministry.

Bringing together ecumenism and Christian reconciliation with Jews surely makes good theological sense, and Anglican dioceses would do well to pursue a similar tack. On one level, as St. Paul argues, "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Romans 11:29). Jews participate in salvation, even when they are loyal to their own faith tradition and do not confess Jesus Christ as God and saviour. But on another level, Judaism remains its own faith tradition, distinguished from Christianity as much as from Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and other faiths. The quest for reconciliation with Jews is rightly an extension of ecumenism, but churches must also pursue relations with Jews that affirm the distinct integrity of Judaism. This is a point where ecumenism and interfaith ministry collide, even overlap.

There are those who argue that this overlap pertains only to Christian-Jewish relations, for Christian existence itself is altogether dependent on Judaism. But Christians and Jews are not the only "People of the Book": Islam rounds out the Abrahamic tradition. In the document

*Nostra aetate*, an important declaration of the Second Vatican Council, Muslims are esteemed because they "adore the one God." The declaration then calls on Christians and Muslims "to work sincerely for mutual understanding." This language opens the door for relations with Muslims that are an extension of ecumenism, in much the same way that reconciliation with Jews is a deepening of the ecumenical task.

Does the overlap of ecumenism and interfaith ministry extend beyond the Abrahamic tradition? Might Christians discover ways to relate *ecumenically* to Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhists and people of other so-called Dharmic faiths? The answer really depends on how much mutual understanding is first achieved through interfaith ministry. In the course of careful listening, deep learning and friendship building, Christians may find that assumed differences on major issues of belief and practice are mere misunderstandings. In the end, perhaps Christians stand in more theological agreement with, say, Buddhists than is typically acknowledged.

If this is so, then the importance of interfaith ministry cannot be overstated. It is a ministry that beckons all dioceses, parishes and individuals. The call is to each of us. As we reach out to our neighbours of other faiths, learn from them and extend our own hospitality, we might discover that we are verging ever closer to the work of ecumenism. Perhaps Jesus' prayer "that they may all be one" (John 17:21) can be heard in our time as a prayer for the whole world in all its religious multiplicity.

The Rev. Jeff Nowers is co-coordinator of interfaith ministry in the diocese.



**BLESSED**

St. Chad, Toronto's fifth annual Back to School Blessing Service is held at the church on Aug. 21. The congregation prayed for all students, teachers and parents as they set goals for the new academic year. During the service, young people received backpacks, read from scripture, were blessed and sang 'This little light of mine' while holding candles. The service, led by the Rev. Elivered Mulongo, priest-in-charge, was preceded by a community barbecue. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



# Province holds long-awaited vocations conference

BY LAURA WALTON, ODT



**F**all has arrived, and as summer fades into the background, the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario has gotten back into the swing

of in-person meetings after two and a half years of being on hiatus. The provincial College of Bishops, diocesan executive officers, our Synod Council and the Ontario Provincial Commission on Theological Education (OPCOTE) have all met in September to not only set their priorities for the rest of the triennium but also to review the work done over the two years when we were online only. While our fall meetings have now concluded, the provincial work continues as we move into the colder months.

A significant part of this upcoming and continuing work includes discussions and action plans that came out of a provincial conference that took place this past June. "Calling and Forming Priests for Tomorrow's Church: Pathways to Partnership" included two days of discussions and work that looked at the process of vocational discernment. It's been more than a decade since the last vocations conference of this significance was held in the ecclesiastical province.

The conference brought together individuals who assist others in their process of vocational discernment, formation and education. It included our provincial College of Bishops, Primate Linda Nicholls, theological educators, most executive officers, diocesan members and members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. It was a meeting of the Church and those in theological education. Archbishop Anne Germond, our metropolitan, clearly stated the need for this conference, saying that "it is imperative that our province takes the time and expends the energy to do the work that will encourage and excite those whom God is calling to ordained ministry in these current times. It is equally critical for us to ensure that all ordained leaders, called by the Church, are prepared, supported, confident and excited about the challenges that are before us as we embrace the mission of God in our respective dioceses and regions."

While the conference was delayed by two years due to the pandemic, this was a blessing in disguise. The delay allowed participants to discuss and assess the significant changes in the Anglican Church and its ministries that occurred during the pandemic shutdown. Many of these changes will be in place long after the pandemic ends and wouldn't have been

part of the conversation if the gathering had occurred at its original time. Outside-the-box thinking, being adaptive and quick to address change, and meeting the unexpected challenges of a global health threat became part of the conference dialogue.

Participants discussed discipleship and vocational discernment, intensive and extended formation and education programs, life-long learning, and other matters relevant to a vocational call. It was clear that preparing ordained leaders is different now compared to even a few years ago. Focusing on the formation of all the baptized, "incubator" parishes and other contexts that raise potential candidates, along with the importance of healthy mentoring and prayer, were highlighted. The meeting ended with the creation of action plans so there are next steps, not just talk.

Further to the vocations conference, the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario also continues its work on its eldercare mandate. The eldercare team is building and gathering resources for both senior care and advocacy, so parishes and individuals can find the guidance they need. Resources will be available on the provincial web page soon. There will be other resources to enhance advocacy for seniors once the care and support ones are in place.

The seven dioceses of our province also continue to work together to support each other in the areas of Safe Church and pandemic response. The chancellors, executive officers and bishops have regular meetings to strengthen relationships and support between the dioceses. There is a realization that nurturing provincial relationships and sharing gifts builds a stronger Church that is well equipped to do ministry in a world that can change quickly. Learning to adapt and share resources is necessary, and the dioceses want to continue to enhance this ability.

More planning and work will happen as we move into the winter months. Updates will be posted on the provincial website ([www.province-ontario.anglican.ca](http://www.province-ontario.anglican.ca)) if you're interested in our provincial council notes or want to find updates on the work underway. We're always open to any questions or suggestions that people may have about our ministry, and we look forward to continuing our provincial work into 2023.

*Laura Walton, ODT, is the prolocutor of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario and a member of the Diocese of Toronto. The ecclesiastical province comprises the dioceses of Algoma, Huron, Moosonee, Niagara, Ottawa, Ontario and Toronto.*

# PWRDF mounts diverse response

## Anglicans give generously to Ukraine relief

BY JANICE BIEHN

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine began on Feb. 24, more than 6.5 million Ukrainians have been forced to leave their homes and find safety within Ukraine, and millions more have crossed the border to become refugees. The massive migration is one of the largest forced displacement crises since the Second World War.

Anglicans in Canada have responded quickly and generously. More than \$1 million has been donated to PWRDF (Primate's World Relief and Development Fund) for Ukraine relief. This is the second largest emergency response in its history, after the Haiti earthquake in 2010. Canada is home to the second largest population of Ukrainians or people of Ukrainian descent outside of Ukraine.

PWRDF is working with two international partners and four local partners to support Ukrainians during the war with the funds that have been donated.

PWRDF is a member of the ACT Alliance, a global faith-based coalition of more than 140 churches and related agencies working in humanitarian assistance, long-term development and advocacy. Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA) is also a member. Working through ACT, PWRDF provided \$100,000 to HIA's response in the first two weeks of the war.

HIA is one of the largest charitable organizations in Hungary and it has had a permanent presence in Ukraine for more than 20 years. The organization is working closely with local governments and more than 20 local first-responder groups in Ukraine. It has been shipping food and distributing other relief goods to internally displaced people who have not crossed into Hungary. With connections to the local authorities on both sides of the border, HIA is able to ship food and other essentials and life-saving medical equipment and supplies from Hungary into Ukraine.

HIA has established two 24-hour refugee support points (one in Hungary and one in Ukraine) and is providing safe



People with disabilities and their families are evacuated in Ukraine with the assistance of Fight for Right. At right: Irina and her two children live in an HIA (Hungarian Interchurch Aid) shelter near the Hungarian border. PWRDF supports both Fight for Right and HIA. PHOTOS COURTESY OF FIGHT FOR RIGHT AND FEKETE DÁNIEL/ÖKUMENIKUS SEGÉLYSZERVEZET

transportation to railway hubs, food and hygiene kits for new arrivals. In the first two weeks of the war, PWRDF allocated \$100,000 to this response. In April, through a grant with the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation, an additional \$70,000 was forwarded to ACT.

Irina, 34, is a nurse living with her two children in an HIA shelter near the Hungarian border. Her husband teaches history but joined the territorial defence in the first days of the conflict. At first, she and her children lived with her parents, but they were in the middle of active fighting and bombing. "We tried to tell the children it was thunder. But when the active bombing started and the missiles fell near the house, the children started screaming. They were really very, very scared. That is why I realized there was no time to wait and it was time to evacuate somewhere." At the shelter, they receive three meals a day. "When we ask for something, people try to give us what we need," she says. "I understand that it is difficult to feed 100 people, so we try to buy fruit, yoghurt, some dairy products with our own money, our savings."

HelpAge International supports vulnerable seniors globally and has assisted seniors living in eastern Ukraine since the Russian invasion in 2014. It has provided food, medical assistance and sometimes even wheelbarrows of coal to help them heat their homes. As a result, they were well positioned to provide assistance from the beginning of the war in 2022.

HelpAge International is helping Ukrainians of all ages who have fled to Moldova, where one in four Ukrainians fleeing are seniors. Because men between 18 and 60 are not able to leave the country, many elderly people are accompanying children and other family members. HelpAge International is supporting 5,620 Ukrainian refugees through 80 emergency accommodation centres in Moldova with food, hygiene kits and other essentials.

"I'm not going to leave here," says Alexander, 81, from his home in the Donetsk region of Ukraine. "I hide in the basement from shelling. Now I sometimes spend the night there, or in the bathroom, which I secured after a shell hit the house. I'm afraid that everything I have



can be destroyed in a second. But I hope for a speedy peace. A HelpAge volunteer brings me food and we speak together. After talking with her, I want to live. God give her strength."

Patricia Maruschak joined PWRDF as the director of partnerships and programs just four days before the war began. Her Ukrainian-Canadian heritage and experience working in Ukraine has helped PWRDF establish strong ties with local organizations as well. "Because Ukraine has had a vibrant volunteer and civil society for years, there are many very capable local organizations that have transitioned to supporting their fellow Ukrainians," she says. "PWRDF is making a concerted effort to partner with these organizations because we believe Ukrainians are best positioned to understand local needs. They are invested in helping their fellow citizens and rebuilding Ukraine once the war ends."

So far, PWRDF has partnered with four Ukrainian organizations:

Initiative E+ is based in Kyiv and was established in 2014 to help medics and first responders provide relief to families affected by the 2014 invasion. Over the last two years, it has supported hospitals and medical centres in treating COVID-19 patients. When the invasion began at the end of February, it was able to ramp up its operations and partner with the country's ministry of health. It is now providing medical equipment such as tourniquets, dressings for serious wounds and external braces and supports for broken bones. These supplies are being delivered to hospitals, medical centres and first responders in the cities that were subjected to the most serious attacks by Russian

forces. PWRDF funds have also allowed for the purchase of two much-needed ambulances.

"PWRDF's help with purchasing ambulances is very needed," says Valentyna Varava, executive director of Initiative E+. "There is a catastrophic lack of ambulances in the de-occupied territories of the country. We currently have requests for ambulances from over 50 hospitals and medical centres as their vehicles were destroyed or seriously damaged by Russian forces."

Fight for Right was established and led by Ukrainian women with disabilities. Its core mission is promoting the rights of persons with disabilities in Ukraine. To date, the organization has already evacuated or assisted 645 people with disabilities, with more than 2,000 additional evacuations requested. After evacuation, most people face psychological difficulties and legal issues that need to be addressed in their EU destination. PWRDF is contributing to this work by supporting a 24-hour hotline, accommodations, wheelchairs, and medical, legal, psychological and evacuation support. "Thanks to these funds from PWRDF, and support from other partners, we will be able to operate a hotline for people with disabilities during wartime," says Anya Zaremba of Fight for Right. "The hotline will be used for various requests, including evacuation, psychological and legal assistance and provision of medication."

The Dzherelo Children's Rehabilitation Centre, based in the city of Lviv in western Ukraine, has been providing physical rehabilitation services and social support for patients and their families since 1992. When the war started, Lviv became a major hub for housing internally displaced people and a transit point for Ukrainians leaving the country. The municipal government has been referring displaced families who have children with disabilities to Dzherelo. The centre provides these families with a place to stay, food, medications and rehab services. The centre's adapted bus is also able to take families to the Polish border.

PWRDF funds will allow Dzherelo to upgrade the heating system in its facilities so it can keep heating costs down and deliver its programs in a safe and comfortable building. On Aug. 10, Dzherelo posted photos on Facebook of the work already in progress: "With the support of the Canadian Foundation and Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, we purchased an electric boiler, a diesel generator and a voltage stabilizer," wrote a staff member.

Voices of Children is providing round-the-clock assistance to affected children and families from all over the country. It is providing emergency psychological assistance and assisting in the relocation process and humanitarian response. PWRDF's support will be used to launch mobile psychological supports for children and their parents in the Kyiv region, accessing the most vulnerable people in small, de-occupied cities and villages. Psychologists will carry out a minimum of two field visits every week. Funds will also be used to communicate the stories of children through videos. "We are convinced that it is very important to speak about children's rights, their mental health and disseminate best practices on how to work with war trauma," says Valentyna Kyrychenko, the organization's grant management coordinator.

Janice Biehn is PWRDF's communications and marketing coordinator.



A first responder in a new ambulance provided by Initiative E+. PWRDF funds have helped the organization purchase of two ambulances. PHOTO COURTESY OF INITIATIVE E+

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**PRAYER CYCLE**

- FOR OCTOBER**
1. Parish of Mulmur
  2. Tecumseth Deanery
  3. Habitat for Humanity
  4. Bishop's Committee on Creation Care
  5. Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto (CJDT)
  6. St. Andrew, Alliston
  7. St. David, Everett
  8. St. John, Cookstown
  9. Foodbanks and food sharing ministries
  10. Farmers and food providers
  11. St. John, East Orangeville
  12. St. Luke, Rosemont
  13. St. Peter, Churchill
  14. The Chapel of St. John, New Tecumseth
  15. Pre-Synod Meetings in the Diocese
  16. Bishop's Committee on Healing Ministries
  17. Lay Pastoral Visitors and Lay Anointers
  18. Diocesan Parish Nurse Network
  19. Health Care Chaplains
  20. Trinity Church, Bradford
  21. Ascension, Don Mills
  22. Incarnation
  23. York Mills Deanery
  24. Our Saviour
  25. St. Cyprian
  26. St. George on Yonge
  27. St. John, Willowdale
  28. Trinity College
  29. Diocesan Outreach Conference
  30. The Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada - Bishop Michael Pryse
  31. Wycliffe College

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**IN MOTION**

**Appointments**

- The Rev. Colin Bowler, Honorary Assistant, St. James, Orillia, July 24.
- Rosalinde St. Thomas, Youth Ministry Apprenticeship Program Coordinator, July 27.
- The Rev. Christopher Parsons, Incumbent, St. Paul, Newmarket, Aug. 1.
- The Rev. Dr. John Oakes, Honorary Assistant, St. Paul, Bloor Street, Aug. 28.
- The Rev. Lyn Youll Marshall, Honorary Assistant, Christ Church St. James, Aug. 28.
- The Rev. Canon Beth Benson, Interim Associate Priest, St. James Cathedral, Sept. 1.
- The Rev. Canon Janet Read-Hockin, Incumbent, St. Cuthbert, Leaside, Sept. 1.
- The Rev. Evan Silcox, Incumbent, Incarnation, Sept. 1.
- The Rev. Canon David Brinton, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Andrew by-the-Lake, Sept. 19, while the Incumbent is on study leave.
- The Very Rev. Peter Wall (Diocese of Niagara), Interim Dean and Priest-in-Charge, St. James Cathedral, Oct. 15.

**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):
- Havergal College Chaplain
- Christ the King
- St. Timothy, North Toronto

**Parish Selection Committee Process**

- First Phase** - (not yet receiving names):
- Christ Church, Bolton
  - St. John, Oak Ridges
  - St. Aidan, Toronto
  - St. George Memorial, Oshawa
  - St. George, Haliburton
  - St. John, East Orangeville

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

- Holy Trinity, Thornhill
- St. Peter, Erindale

**Third Phase** - (no longer receiving names):

- Holy Trinity, Trinity Square
- St. Cyprian

**Celebrations of New Ministry**

- The Rev. Ken McClure,

- Incumbent, St. George, Allandale, Oct. 30 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Jennifer Schick, Incumbent, All Saints, Whitby, Oct. 2 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Alvarado Adderley, Incumbent of the Parish of St. James, Fenelon Falls, Oct. 16 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Lee McNaughton, Priest-in-Charge, St. Paul, Brighton, Oct. 23 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Canon Stephanie Douglas, Incumbent, St. Paul on-the-Hill, Pickering, Nov. 13 at 4 p.m.
- The Rev. Andrew MacDonald, Incumbent, St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff, Nov. 27 at 4 p.m.

**Retirement**

- The Rev. Canon Peter Walker's last Sunday at Grace Church on-the-Hill, Toronto will be Nov. 6.

**Death**

- The Rev. Marlene Carscallen died on Aug. 8 after a lengthy illness. Ordained in 1996, she served as Deacon at Grace Church on-the-Hill, Toronto, until her retirement in 2016. She played a pivotal role in the restoration of the diaconate in the Anglican Church of Canada and was the first coordinator of deacons for the Diocese

- of Toronto. Her funeral was held at Grace Church on-the-Hill on Aug. 12.
- The Rev. J. Stanley Whitehouse died on Sept. 4. Ordained in 1952 in the Diocese of Ottawa, he came to the Diocese of Toronto in 1971 to serve as rector of the Church of the Resurrection. He went on to serve as regional dean, priest-in-charge of St. Saviour, Toronto and incumbent of Christ Church, Woodbridge. Upon retirement in 1990, he moved to Picton and held various appointments in the Diocese of Ontario. In 2012, he was named honorary canon of the Diocese of Ontario.
- The Rev. Canon Ian Noseworthy died on Sept. 4. Ordained in 1978 in the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador, he came to the Diocese of Toronto in 1983. He served as associate priest of St. Thomas, Huron Street, incumbent of Epiphany, Scarborough, field worker of the diocese's Community Ministries Board, incumbent of St. Jude, Wexford, honorary assistant of St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff and interim priest-in-charge of St. Theodore of Canterbury. His funeral was held on Sept. 17 at St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff.

## LOOKING AHEAD

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

**Fairs, teas**

**NOV. 1** - All Saints Communion on Tuesday at 7 p.m., plus Dr. Jesse Billett's feature talk at 7:30 on the

history and significance of Canada's Prayer Book. Join us in person at St. Olave, Bloor and Windermere, Toronto; or online (live or later, at [stolaves.ca/special-services](http://stolaves.ca/special-services)). For more details, call 416-769-5686 or go to [stolaves.ca](http://stolaves.ca).

**NOV. 5** - Christmas Market, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. featuring jewelry, paintings, knitting, crafts, bake table, pottery and a lunch table, St. Barnabas, Chester, 361 Danforth Ave., Toronto.

**NOV. 5** - Sugar Plum Christmas Bazaar, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., St. Margaret in-the-Pines, 4130 Lawrence Ave., Scarborough. Baked goodies and jams, crafts, collectibles, books and DVDs, jewellery and much more. Then join us for lunch in our Internet Café.

**NOV. 12** - Annual bazaar, All Saints,

300 Dundas St. W., Whitby. Visit [www.allsaintswhitby.org](http://www.allsaintswhitby.org) for details.

**NOV. 19** - Holly Berry Bazaar from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Dunstan of Canterbury, 56 Lawson Rd., Toronto. Crafts, jewelry, home-baked goods, books, movies, gently used tools and more, plus Santa Claus and his helper. Free admission. For more information, call the church office at 416-283-1844.

**NOV. 19** - St. George, Pickering Village's annual fall fair and bazaar, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. George's, 77 Randall Dr., Pickering Village, Ajax. Vendor tables, children's activities, raffles, silent auction, crafts, baking table, refreshments. Free admission and parking. Vendors wanted. Vendors should email [stgeorgesajax@gmail.com](mailto:stgeorgesajax@gmail.com) for more

information and an application.

**NOV. 26** - Poinsettia tea with tearoom, Christmas baking, giftware, raffle and Christmas-past Room, 2-4 p.m., Holy Trinity, 140 Brooke St., Thornhill.

**Courses, workshops**

**SEPT. 25-OCT. 30** - "Love Goes All the Way Down: Discovering the Old Testament God" is an online course offered by Dr. Sylvia Keesmaat on Zoom. This course will explore how love, commitment and compassion are found in the very heart of God throughout the biblical story and the history of creation. Learn more and register at [www.bibleremixed.ca](http://www.bibleremixed.ca).

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# Article prompts rescue effort

## Former police officer, sons brought to Canada

The last names of some people in this story have been omitted for safety reasons.

BY NAOMI RAGZ

THE Rev. Canon Nicola Skinner, incumbent of Grace Church, Markham, was reading the *Guardian* one evening when an article caught her eye. The article was about Fatima, a former Afghan police officer who was targeted and beaten by the Taliban.

Fatima was forced to marry at the age of 12. Her husband was abusive but because he was unable to work, he encouraged her to join the police force. Fatima loved her job, and it allowed her to save up enough money to divorce her husband and support her two sons, now 10 and 13. In 2020, she went public with allegations of sexual assault within the police force and left her position after publicly burning her ID. Fatima was abused online and physically attacked for speaking out, and her family refused to help her.

The *Guardian* article recounts how the Taliban came to Fatima's house, demanding that she hand over her weapons. When she told them she didn't have any, they ransacked her house, beat her and held a knife to her son's throat. They left, telling her they would be back. Fatima immediately went into hiding and was able to flee to Pakistan with her children. But she had only a 60-day visa, and her applications for refugee status in Pakistan and asylum in western



Fatima and her sons (left) enjoy the peace and quiet of Anglican Church Camp in Innisfil and meet supporters at Grace Church, Markham (right). PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE REV. CANON NICOLA SKINNER

countries were met with silence.

Going to bed that night, Canon Skinner was certain that God wanted more than thoughts and prayers. Unable to sleep, she emailed Emma Graham-Harrison, the journalist who had written the article, offering to help settle Fatima and her sons in Canada.

"I read the paper every day, and every day you see story after story after story and you feel helpless," says Canon Skinner. "For some reason, I just thought, surely there's something we could do. So, I emailed the journalist. Sometimes, if God has put something in your heart, by just stepping into that, God will make things happen." For Canon Skinner, the story also felt personal as her husband, Tim Skinner, is an inspector with the York Regional Police (YRP).

Ms. Graham-Harrison replied to Canon's Skinner's email and asked her to send a letter to the IRCC (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada). She also put Canon Skinner in touch with Melissa Fung, the former CBC journalist who was captured by bandits while reporting in Afghanistan. Ms. Fung had helped submit the asylum applications on behalf of

Fatima and was also paying for her safe house in Islamabad.

Canon Skinner immediately got to work on a letter on Grace Church letterhead to send to the IRCC. She also decided to help Ms. Fung with paying for Fatima's safe house. Canon Skinner has been making soap for many years and put a call out on Facebook asking friends and family to consider buying 12 months' worth of soap. The response was overwhelming and raised \$3,000.

Canon Skinner doesn't know for certain whether sending the letter helped, but not long after, Fatima was approved as a Government Assisted Refugee. Fatima and her sons arrived in Canada in June. They were initially flown to Edmonton, where some vacationing members of Grace Church welcomed them. Then, on July 14 the family flew from Edmonton to Toronto. They spent their first month staying with Canon Skinner and her husband, and they attended a church camp in Innisfil. Canon Skinner says the camp gave Fatima a much-needed opportunity to relax while her boys rode bikes, made friends and learned to swim.

In mid-August, Fatima and her



sons moved into their new home in Markham. Affordable accommodation is difficult to find in the area, and Canon Skinner asked Grace Church to pray for the family. Not long after, a parishioner's neighbour offered to rent out his basement apartment.

"This is not a story about me," says Canon Skinner. "A lot of things have fallen into place: the parishioner's neighbour offering to rent his apartment for a good price, a Canadian colonel who paid for the family's flight from Edmonton to Toronto, the YRP women who are helping Fatima. I have seen God at work all the way through this process."

Sarah Riddell is an inspector with YRP and active in the YRP's Women in Leadership Internal Support Network. The network focuses on recognizing the contributions of women in law enforcement. However, Ms. Riddell summarizes their remit as "ensuring every girl and woman knows she has a sister in her corner" and the network also has an international focus. This seemed to dovetail perfectly with Fatima's situation, and the Women in Leadership have been helping her in a number of ways, including

connecting Fatima with a cultural community and finding a volunteer who is working with Fatima and her sons on English as a second language.

Ms. Riddell and the Women in Leadership are also passionate about supporting women who want to work in policing, a profession in which just 22 per cent of Canadian police officers are female. Fatima has expressed an interest in working in policing again one day and through the network she will have access to mentoring.

Zabi, who is from Afghanistan and is a police officer with the YRP, has also been helping to settle Fatima and her sons by providing translation. Zabi runs a non-profit that has helped settle more than 300 Afghans. Unfortunately, he has been unable to get a visa for his own family to come to Canada.

"If churches cooperate with other organizations, then we can leverage our position in the community," says Canon Skinner. Now, Canon Skinner, along with AURA (Anglican United Refugee Alliance) and the congregation at St. John the Baptist, Oak Ridges, are using that leverage to try to get Zabi's family to Canada.

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## CANADA BRIEFS

### Church, band discuss land redevelopment

ST. JOHN'S - Bishop John Organ of the Diocese of Western Newfoundland met with the Mi'kmaq Band of Burgeo in June. This meeting saw a unanimous agreement on the part of the

band to welcome an invitation by the Anglican Church to explore developing a piece of land where the local church's parish hall had been, located in the heart of the community. This will be a combined project with Burgeo's town council. In a Facebook post, Bishop Organ said, "The goal of this potential development is to continue the work of reconciliation with our Indigenous sisters and brothers and to walk together into the future with respect, harmony, and goodwill. Burgeo will be one of the first rural communities in our diocese to take this important and reconciling step."



### New book encourages private prayer

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### Bequests fund affordable housing, scholarship

SMITHS FALLS - Generous bequests have enabled St. John the Evangelist church in Smiths Falls to help launch a badly needed affordable housing project and fund a scholarship in post-secondary education.

The parish's donation of \$500,000 allowed Carebridge Community Support to proceed with its plan for 28 affordable housing units in a new four-storey building on Chambers Street in the town. Construction is expected to begin later this year, aiming for completion late in 2023 or early in 2024.

"It's the right thing to do, and we've been planning for several years," says the Rev. Canon Catherine Aschah. "We are uniquely blessed to help because of the significant bequests we received. We spent time talking to the community about the needs and precarious housing came up again and again. It's a need you don't

always see, and it seemed like a good fit for us."

Consultations have been under way since St. John's received two bequests in 2018 totalling \$1.8 million. Smith Falls Mayor Shawn Pankow knew that Carebridge was looking for a solid community investment to bring its project to reality. He brought St. John's and Carebridge together, leading to a series of consultations.

The two bequests were invested separately in the Diocese of Ottawa's Consolidated Trust Fund. St. John's is using one of the bequests to finance the \$500,000 donation. This will be done by drawing down \$250,000 of principle of the bequest, then securing a mortgage on the rectory in the amount of \$250,000, which will be serviced by dividends generated from the remaining principle in the bequest. Dividends from the second invested bequest are being used to finance a scholarship in post-secondary education for local students.