

Vocation up to God, says theologian

Lots to discuss at diocese's Synod



Foreign country becomes home

The Anglican

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JANUARY 2020

Youth leaders learn faith, skills

BY STUART MANN

MORE than 50 youth ministry leaders from the Diocese of Toronto, and some from the Diocese of Niagara, gathered at Trinity and Wycliffe colleges in Toronto on Dec. 1 for a day of theological training, worship and networking. The event, hosted by the colleges and the Bishop's Youth Ministry Committee, was a resounding success.

"It was incredible," said Alexandra McIntosh, one of the organizers and the youth ministry coordinator for York-Credit Valley. "The Spirit was there with us, for sure."

The purpose of the day was to give youth leaders a deeper understanding of their faith, particularly prayer, baptism and the Eucharist. Youth often ask difficult questions, explains Ms. McIntosh, and their leaders want to be equipped to answer them.

The day began with worship music in Wycliffe's chapel, followed by



Youth leaders and instructors gather for a photo in Trinity College's chapel. At right, the Rev. Dr. Christopher Brittain (centre) instructs participants at the altar during Communion. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

an hour-long talk by Bishop Jenny Andison, the Diocese of Toronto's link bishop for youth ministry, on prayer. She spoke about why Anglicans need to prioritize the interior spiritual life of teenagers and that the best way to do that is by equipping them to pray. Her talk included both theological instruction about Christian prayer and practical tips on how to pray with youth groups and teach young people how to pray on their own.

"We asked the speakers to help deepen our theological understanding of these subjects, but also to

equip us to teach youth about them," says Ms. McIntosh.

After lunch, participants crossed the street to Trinity's chapel, where Bishop Andrew Asbil gave a talk about baptism, particularly the Baptismal Covenant and the Prayer Book. Like Bishop Andison, he provided both theological instruction and practical tips.

The final part of the day was an instructed Eucharist, led by the Rev. Dr. Christopher Brittain, dean of divinity at Trinity. He gave participants an order of service

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Volunteers needed for the neediest

AS the cold weather sets in, All Saints, Sherbourne Street is in urgent need of volunteers. Located at the corner of Dundas and Sherbourne streets in downtown Toronto, All Saints serves one of the most challenged neighbourhoods in the city. Its drop-in and related programs help hundreds of people a day, from sex workers and substance users to the hungry and homeless.

Volunteers are needed for the church's drop-in (open Monday to Thursday, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.), a men's cooking group, a women's

lunch and drop-in, a weekly breakfast with sex workers and building maintenance. Tasks include preparing and serving food, washing dishes and cleaning up after meals, unloading and unpacking food deliveries, picking up food donations, interacting with clients, providing harm reduction supplies and providing clothing to clients from the church's emergency clothing bank.

"Volunteers and staff work alongside members of the community to help foster social inclusion, equality

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SPECIAL GIFT

The Rev. Peter Mills of St. John, Ida displays one of eight fur coats his parish sent to Matilda Karpik (right) in Nain, a village in northern Labrador. Mr. Mills's spouse, Trish Mills, donated a mink stole, and Ms. Karpik used some of the fur to create mittens for her as a thank-you gift. Ms. Karpik and her craft group in Nain use donated fur coats to create mittens, slippers and mukluks for sale. Anyone wishing to purchase an item or donate a fur coat or hide to her should contact Maureen at 705-277-1825 or Andy Harjula at andyharjula@gmail.com. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ST. JOHN, IDA

Christian vocation counter-cultural, says theologian

Author visits Toronto church

BY ELAINE ROWE

NOTED American author and theologian the Rev. Dr. William Willimon spoke at Grace Church on-the-Hill, Toronto, on Nov. 16 on the topic “The Calling of Christians Today: Christian Vocation in an Anxious Age.” Dr. Willimon is a professor at Duke University’s divinity school and was the bishop of the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church. He has written more than 80 books.

Dr. Willimon addressed two main questions: “How can Christians live out our calling in the present age that is full of skepticism and anxiety and have joy while doing so?” And, “How can clergy and the Church help and guide Christians to find their baptismal vocation?”

Over two talks, each followed by a time for questions from the audience, Dr. Willimon spoke with passion, humour and insight, using lots of anecdotes to illustrate his points. He spoke about North American culture and society, the Church, scripture, and our vocations as Christians. He challenged us not to think of the world as a place filled with skepticism and

anxiety, but that being Christians can cause skepticism and anxiety because we are called to be counter-cultural while living in the world.

He described vocation as the countercultural belief that your life is not your own – while you’re “doing your thing,” God owns your life and is giving you a role to play. And for us, he said, salvation is being given a job to do.

Whatever God chooses to do in the world, Dr. Willimon observed, He chooses not to do it alone. He will call us to do what He wants done, but we must recognize that our vocation is never a settled and finished thing. We can be called and re-called again and again. “We serve a living God, a God who is on the move. We cannot serve him if we cannot keep up with him.”

Dr. Willimon said that Jesus is so often presented to us as the solution to all our problems – as consolation, solace, and comfort. But, he said, that is not what scripture tells us. “This is not a story about us looking for God, but about God looking for us, about our own little lives getting caught up in the world. Really, it’s about God calling us to give us assignments!”



The Rev. Dr. William Willimon (left) shares the stage with the Rev. Canon Dr. Judy Paulsen and the Rev. Canon Peter Walker at Grace Church on-the-Hill. PHOTO COURTESY OF GRACE CHURCH ON-THE-HILL

He reminded the audience that vocation is not about what we want to do or even about us at all; it’s about God and what He wants. We are likely to be called to do things we don’t want to do or that we feel completely unqualified for. “This is not my idea of a good time,” Dr. Willimon said dryly as he told a story about something he felt called to do, but—too bad, that was the assignment.

Another truth about vocation, he said, is that you go out to do something “good” and you come back thinking, “I believe God did more for me than anyone else today.”

When he was asked about the

role of the Church today as so many congregations are shrinking and some churches are fighting to stay open, he told a story about a church he knew that fought to stay open but had to close. Yet as one congregation was saying goodbye to their beloved church, another one was moving into the space to worship in a new way, and they experienced the love and care that the former congregation had imbued the building with.

“The gospel is not a story you can tell to yourself,” he said. “Someone has to tell it to you. The good news has to be received from someone else.” He said the Christian faith

is inherently communal, and so it forces us to work with all kinds of other people. The Church is “God’s unique means of salvation in the world, and we are forced to work with anyone Jesus drags in the door.” There’s “no debate of the admissions committee,” about that, he said. We work with all the people who come. “There’s no way to get around the fact that salvation through Jesus Christ is a group experience. Jesus forces us to be with other disciples, to walk with them and to work with them.”

Elaine Rowe is a member of Grace Church on-the-Hill, Toronto.

All invited to levee, order presentation

THE annual Bishop’s Levee will be held on Jan. 1 at St. James Cathedral. All are invited to join Bishop Andrew Asbil and the College of

Bishops to offer best wishes and prayers for the New Year. The levee will begin with a Eucharist at 12:30 p.m., followed by a receiving line

and reception from 1:30 to 2:45 p.m. There will be Choral Evensong at 3:30 p.m. with presentations of the Order of the Diocese of Toronto.

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UNTIL NEXT YEAR

The Rev. Augusto Nunez visits migrant farm workers in Beaverton one last time before they fly home to Mexico for the winter. Mr. Nunez, along with the Rev. Canon Ted McCollum, the Rev. Canon Kit Greaves and local volunteers, runs the Durham Region Migrant Worker Ministry and Network. The ministry looks after the spiritual and health needs of about 500 men from Mexico, Jamaica and Barbados who work on farms in southern Ontario during the spring, summer and fall. Mr. Nunez, Canon McCollum and Canon Greaves are clergy of the diocese. PHOTO BY THE REV. AUGUSTO NUNEZ

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Vestry motion helps us care for creation



BY ELIN GOULDEN

It's time to get serious about creation care. From widespread fires in Australia and

the Amazon to the flooding of Venice's council chambers, the disrupting effects of climate change are making headlines around the world. These effects are also being felt in Canada, including wildfires, more intense storms and flooding, and increased prevalence of diseases transmitted by insects, which once were kept in check by longer, colder winters. In the Arctic, where warming is three times the global average, clergy are finding graves filled with water from thawing permafrost, roads and buildings are collapsing, and Indigenous people are reporting changes in wildlife populations and migration patterns that threaten their food supply and traditional culture.

All these changes are occurring while the global temperature increase is only 1 degree C on average. The impacts expected from a 2-degree average rise include widespread drought, coastal flooding, species loss, and catastrophic human mortality from hunger, drought, heatwaves and vector-borne diseases. Those most vulnerable to these impacts include people in poverty, Indigenous peoples, people with health conditions, the elderly, women and children. Limiting the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees instead of 2 degrees would mean a significant reduction of these impacts, but last fall's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report warned that "urgent and unprecedented changes" would need to be implemented before 2030 to keep the global average temperature rise to the Paris Accord target of 1.5 degrees C. The federal government's current climate policies would not even achieve its Paris Accord commitment of a 30 per cent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels by 2030.

Our Canadian economy and infrastructure are heavily dependent on the extraction and use of oil, gas and, to a lesser extent, coal. Transitioning to a lower-carbon economy is not a simple matter. For that very reason, however, it is crucial that all sectors of Canadian society, including governments, business and financial systems, as well as churches and other

faith and community organizations, work together to address the challenge. Federal and provincial subsidies of the oil and gas industry add up to billions of dollars annually – money that could be invested in energy efficiency, renewable infrastructure, skills retraining for oil and gas sector workers, and climate change mitigation and adaptation for vulnerable Canadians.

This past July, General Synod passed Resolution C003, which, in addition to recognizing a global climate emergency, encourages all dioceses, parishes and members of the Anglican Church of Canada to make the Baptismal Covenant and fifth Mark of Mission a priority, while urging Anglicans to join with others to strengthen our voices on climate change.

In the same vein, this year's social justice vestry motion invites parishes in our diocese to add their voices in advocating for federal policies that would meet Canada's emissions targets and support a just transition to a low-carbon economy, while also taking the opportunity to consider ways to lower their own environmental footprint as a parish. A range of suggested options for action have been provided. Some parishes in our diocese have already taken significant steps in this regard, pursuing energy-efficient retrofits of heating, lighting and insulation. Other possible actions include promoting public transportation options, limiting or eliminating single-use plastic products, planting trees and/or community gardens, and examining the environmental impact of one's investments. (The Investing with a Mission resource from the Responsible Investment Task Force of the Anglican Church of Canada may provide helpful guidance in this regard.)

As Christians, we understand ourselves as entrusted with the needs of our neighbours and the care of God's creation. This motion gives us the opportunity to consider how we can make personal and institutional changes, as well as how we can advocate for policies on a wider scale, to address the threat climate change poses to our earth, our neighbours and ourselves.

Elin Goulden is the diocese's Social Justice and Advocacy consultant. For more information on the social justice vestry motion, visit the diocese's website, www.toronto.anglican.ca.



PEACE POLE

Lisa Ronco (left), Sharon Taylor and the Rev. Canon Mark Kinghan stand with a Peace Pole that was planted on the front lawn of St. Paul, Uxbridge during the church's Remembrance Day observance in November. The pole, illustrated by Ms. Ronco, bears the image of a tree and two messages: 'May peace prevail on earth' and 'May there be peace in our homes and community.' Canon Kinghan said the pole is a gift to the wider community, providing a place to pray and reflect about peace. The Peace Pole Project is a worldwide initiative. PHOTO BY PATRICK KINGHAN

Forum hears voices from the margins

MORE than a dozen Anglicans from the diocese attended the annual Religious Leaders' Forum hosted by the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC). The event, held on Nov. 27 at Queen's Park, drew about 70 members of faith communities from across Ontario.

The forum focused on ISARC's Voices from the Margins, a project through which people living on low incomes share their stories of the challenges they face and their hopes for change. Project organizers and participants from Kingston, Hamilton and Peterborough shared their insights. Their reports highlighted the social isolation and exclusion of living in poverty, as well as the obstacles people face in securing housing and employment. Many participants from Hamilton had been part of the

short-lived Basic Income Pilot and spoke eloquently of the difference it had made in their lives, bringing "normal life" within their reach. Sadly, for many recipients who used the extra income to invest in better housing, further education or starting a small business, the premature end to the pilot project left them worse off, stuck with payments they cannot afford on social assistance, and ruined credit.

In the afternoon, Elin Goulden, the diocese's Social Justice and Advocacy Consultant and a member of ISARC's executive committee, facilitated a local Voices from the Margins hearing with participants from Toronto. Among these were three men associated with the Common Table drop-in at Church of the Redeemer, Bloor St., who shared their experience of homelessness

Continued on Page 4

Gathering empowers youth leaders

Continued from Page 1

that explained various parts of the liturgy. Then he led the service, pausing at key points to explain what was happening.

For many, it was an enlightening experience to learn about a service they had been participating in for years. For one youth leader who came from an evangelical denomination, it was the first time she had experienced an Anglican Eucharist.

The day not only provided theological instruction but also the opportunity for youth leaders to network and share experiences with each other – a rare occasion. "Youth ministers don't get a chance to meet each other in the same way that clergy do," says Ms. McIntosh. "Getting them together in the same room, sharing the same questions and struggles, they know they're not alone. They feel empowered to do their work."

The event was such a success that many left asking when the next one will be. Ms. McIntosh says another could be held in 2020, with the subject being how to teach youth about the Bible.

She describes the day as a "win" for youth ministry in the diocese. "It made us feel that we're on the right track, that people want to come and learn and teach. We're in a sweet spot right now and we need to build on the momentum."

The diocese is slowly going through a "culture shift" that recognizes the importance of youth ministry and equipping youth leaders, she says. "The sense of renewal and momentum in youth ministry is palpable, and we all left that day feeling it. There's a love for our young people and a love for Jesus in this diocese that we're tapping into and exploring."

She thanked all those who helped to organize the event, including Jillian Ruch of the Bishop's Youth Ministry Committee, Bishop Andison, Bishop Asbil and Dean Brittain. "It was a really collaborative experience," she says.

All Saints needs volunteers

Continued from Page 1

and mutual respect," says Shea Gerrie, volunteer coordinator. All Saints is also in need of hats, gloves, adult winter coats and boots.

Volunteers with skills in the following areas are also needed: cook, hair stylist, legal aid, teaching reading and writing, resume-writing and job skill training and assessment, yoga instructor, arts and crafts teacher, art therapist and poetry group leader.

For more information and updates, contact Shea Gerrie at shea@allsaintstoronto.com or follow All Saints on Instagram, @all.saints.toronto.

What is Jesus calling you to in 2020?



God is good! And so is gracious disruption. In turning over the tables in the temple, teaching that the last shall be first and uplifting the poor, the humble and the marginalized, Jesus gives us clear direction

to problematize our inherited beliefs about superiority, privilege and entitlement.

In Romans 13, the Apostle Paul begs us to “wake from our sleep.” We are in the International Decade for People of African Descent. Archbishop Desmond Tutu, working against racism in South Africa, said, “And you remember the rainbow in the Bible is the sign of peace. The rainbow is the sign of prosperity. We want peace, prosperity and justice and we can have it when all the people of God, the rainbow people of God, work together.” How can we, as an institution and as “the rainbow people of God,” work together to disrupt and dismantle racism? Our gospel speaks to issues of injustice and inequality in health and wealth, access and priority; how can we put into words and action the call to change the policies, structures and systems that oppress and hold each other down?

The deep and insidious colonial messages that shape our society need to be challenged, uprooted and addressed for the freedom of each and all. When Moses came into the Promised Land, there were people already living there. When the Europeans came to Turtle Island/North America, there were people already living here. There is a long pattern in the human story of imposing upon one another, dehumanizing and dispossession

BISHOP'S OPINION

BY BISHOP RISCYLLA SHAW

ing in order to gain. One of the side effects of colonization is that it influences everybody in its reach – so all the people who came to Turtle Island as settlers or who were brought as slaves were adversely persuaded to be ashamed of their own cultures, languages and customs. How many second- and third-generation Canadians have lost their family heritage, which also needs to be personally researched and reclaimed? I encourage you in your personal discovery, as it adds richness and depth to your faith, your family, your community.

There are also glimpses of hope in our sacred stories, like in the stories of Ruth and her mother-in-law, and the Good Samaritan. Where are the glimpses of hope in our present stories, where the liberating message of Jesus infiltrates and indwells to expand the reign of God? Where is our Church in need of the good news of decolonization? Where can we participate with integrity, humility and respect?

Another place to unsettle ourselves is in the Final Report of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which outlines 94 ways to systematically dismantle racism and inequity, and to reconstruct the fabric of our life together through child welfare, education, language and culture, health and justice. When we work together, bound by our strong faith in Jesus and our willingness to serve the radical gospel of inclusion, our story can be transformed. Reconcilia-

tion is a spiritual discipline, a way of life, a process in which we are constantly engaged, renewing, expanding. Our history is also about the future: what are we willing to do about it in 2020? How can we speak up, step outside ourselves to encounter others, disagree agreeably? How can we support one another to persist, continue on, stay in the fray? Whose voice is missing – or to whom do we need to listen, that we might have ears to hear?

Also consider the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to end poverty, promote deep and sustainable peace, and protect the planet. This is where we must connect with young people who are crying out for our attention. Their voices must be heard, and our policies and structures must reveal our responses to their insights and concerns. Our Church is not separate from our world – it is in the world. The young people who are not in our churches are still part of our parishes, our families and our communities in vital and powerful ways. How do we hold each other to account? How do we challenge our internal and unconscious assumptions about superiority and ageism? Where do we seek wisdom?

Have courage. Ruth Bader Ginsberg says, “Real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time.” Take a step. Who would we be if we decided to love our neighbours for who they already are, as beloved of God? Who could our neighbours be if they were freed from our prejudice and expectations? Who are you being called to radically include? What is Jesus and the gospel calling us to in 2020?



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

Bishop of Toronto:
The Rt. Rev. Andrew Asbil

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The Rt. Rev. Jenny Andison

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TORONTO CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

Dr. Carl Benn
of Ryerson's Department of History discusses the diversities of Toronto's church architecture, from the Neoclassical visions of the Georgians to the Gothic Revival and eclectic tastes of the Victorians, in the denominationally pluralistic city during its first 100 years.

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GETTING TOGETHER

Stewardship officers from around the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario meet at the Diocesan Centre in Toronto on Nov. 14-15. Front row from left: Jane Kirkpatrick, Kathryn Smith and Jeff Pym. Back row from left: Jane Scanlon, Trish Miller, Lori Guenther Reesor, Jay Koyle, Peter Misiaszek, Gillian Doucet Campbell and Neil Mancor. Topics of discussion included legacy giving, Christian giving in challenging times and a roundtable conversation of what's new, successes and challenges. The province comprises the dioceses of Ottawa, Ontario, Toronto, Niagara, Huron, Algoma and Moosonee. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

Determination, resilience shines through

Continued from Page 3

and of being “trapped” in a cycle of poverty, but also the sense of community, dignity and purpose they found at the Common Table. Despite having faced deprivation,

discrimination, violence and deep loneliness, the participants' wit, determination and resilience shone through.

The day concluded with discus-

sions of ways to build community and work together to advocate for change. ISARC's report on the “Voices” project will be released in 2020.

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SYNOD 2019

The Diocese of Toronto's 159th Regular Session of Synod was held Nov. 8-9 at the Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hotel & Suites in Richmond Hill. The theme of Synod was "Created and Recreated in Christ." St. Paul tells the Church in Corinth, "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation," reminding us that God's recreative purpose is ongoing. Here are the highlights of Synod, in chronological order.

DAY 1

Synod begins with Eucharist

Synod began on Nov. 8 at 10:30 a.m. with a Eucharist, which included an acknowledgment that it was being held on traditional First Nations land. Some of the prayers and hymns were in Spanish.

Bishop gives Charge to Synod

During the Eucharist, Bishop Andrew Asbil gave his Charge to Synod. He spoke about pruning for growth, of letting go of deadwood and trying new things for the sake of the gospel. "It is not a time to be afraid; it is a time to have courage," he said. His Charge touched on a number of subjects, including discipleship, the proposed changes to the diocese's governance structure, General Synod's decision regarding the marriage canon and "A Word to the Church," caring for Creation, and his first year as a bishop. See pages 6-7.

Members practice electronic voting

As in previous Synods, members used electronic devices, called response pads, to vote. They were given instructions and asked three mock questions to practice. In a light-hearted moment, Synod members were asked if they wanted Synod to adjourn. 67.4 per cent voted in favour and 32.6 per cent were opposed.

Synod thanks sponsors

Synod thanked the following sponsors: Letko, Brosseau and Associates; Fiera Capital; Canso Investment Counsel Limited; Northleaf Capital Partners; Ecclesiastical Insurance; M&M International; Quartet IT Security and Support Service; Burgundy Asset Management Ltd; Trinity College; and Wycliffe College.

Diocesan Council's Report received

Synod received Diocesan Council's Report



The Rev. Ken Johnstone (left), Br. Reginald-Martin Crenshaw, OHC, and the Rev. Dr. Stephen Drakeford enjoy the moment.



Youth members of Synod at their table. From left: Ethan Hannah, DeAndrea Yeates, Victoria Barclay, Jeremy Joukema, Kate Andison, Raheem Yeates (an acolyte for the worship service but not a youth member of Synod) and Bronte Anderson. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



Lee Lynn and Denise Farrugia of St. Martin, Bay Ridges, speak about their church's online evangelism efforts during a Missional Moment.

to Synod, which contains a list of council members, a summary of all policy and major items discussed or approved by council, and a summary of diocesan grants, loans and other funding. A total of \$6.8 million in grants and loans were awarded from 37 different funding and granting streams from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

Missional & Outreach Moment #1

During Synod, members heard about how the diocese is living out its vision in the Missional & Outreach Moments – how communities are moving beyond their walls to find new ways of meeting people who are not being reached by traditional forms of Church, and how our churches are reaching out to the poor, the marginalized and the homeless.

In the first Missional & Outreach Moment, Lee Lynn and Denise Farrugia of St. Martin, Bay Ridges, spoke about the work of the church's communication and social media team. They said the church's website and Facebook page are the "front door" for many newcomers, and that its efforts at "digital evangelism" have paid off, reaching individuals and groups in the wider community and forming bonds with the church. The church strives to take part in two global online initiatives each year – Social Media Sunday and Advent-Word. They encouraged other churches to use online communication for evangelism and missionary work. To those who are resisting, they asked, "If Jesus were alive today, would he use social media to spread his message of love and hope?"



Liturgical dancers perform during the opening service.

Synod votes on governance changes

Mark Hemingway of the diocese's Governance and Decision-Making Working Group spoke about proposed changes to the diocese's governance structure, so that it is more effective in helping the diocese accomplish its mission. After extensive consultations with Diocesan Council, the College of Bishops and others, the group made the following recommendations:

- Diocesan Council and the Executive Board be amalgamated into one body called Synod Council.
- The size of Synod Council be reduced so that there be a maximum of 25 members.
- Six committees be established: Audit Committee, Finance Committee, Property Committee, Human Resources Committee, Programs Committee and Risk and Governance Committee.
- Existing committees be amalgamated.
- Members of the committees would not necessarily be members of Synod.
- The committees would have decision-making authority delegated to them with parameters established by Synod and Synod Council.

The Governance and Decision-Making Working Group recommended that the changes be implemented during a two-year pilot project, with a report about the outcome going to the next regular session of Synod. Chancellor Clare Burns explained that some changes would have to be made to the diocese's Constitution and canons for the recommendations to

be implemented on a pilot basis.

The matter generated much discussion and debate. Several people felt that Synod would not have enough representation on the proposed Synod Council and committees. They also expressed concern about how the progress of the pilot project would be measured. Others said the proposed changes did not come with financial implications. Other Synod members supported the proposals, saying they would help to streamline the decision-making process, which is generally seen as too slow and unwieldy; they said the pilot project would allow the diocese to test and refine the changes.

After more than an hour of discussion, Synod approved a motion to receive and approve the pilot project in principle; the motion needed a simple majority (50 + 1) to pass. However, the motion to change the parts of the Constitution dealing with the pilot project was defeated. The motion required 75 per cent approval in each of the houses of clergy and laity to succeed. It was approved in the house of laity but received 74.3 per cent in the house of clergy. Since the motion failed, the matter will be referred to the next regular session of Synod.

Synod hears from guest speaker

Dr. Sylvia Keesmaat, an adjunct professor at Trinity College and Wycliffe College and the Biblical Scholar in Residence at St. James, Fenelon Falls, spoke to Synod about the Biblical Story and human beings' place in it, as both "earth creatures" and the living spirit of God. She

This is not a time to be afraid

Bishop urges clergy, laity to take risks for the sake of the gospel

BY BISHOP ANDREW ASBIL

In the summer between Grade 7 and Grade 8, my older brother and I formed a lawn-cutting business. We borrowed the Gestetner machine at the parish, duplicated flyers and went door-to-door; by the beginning of the season, we had about 20 customers. My father would patiently drive us across town for the gigs that were far away, and for the ones close to home we dragged the family lawn mower behind our bikes. Halfway through July, my brother got a better job and I was left to fend for myself, so I hired my younger brother to do all the trimming and edging. By the end of July, we had enough money to buy our own lawn mower. At the beginning of August, when the heat of summer rises and the need to cut the lawn diminishes, we picked up other jobs as we went.

One day, one of our clients asked me, "Do you know how to prune a hedge?" I said, "Of course I know how to prune a hedge. I've pruned lots of hedges." He showed me the hedge at the side of his house. It started at the boulevard and went right up next to the house's foundation. It was about yea high, and it was woolly; it had not been trimmed in a long time. He said, "I'd like it to be straight. A straight line and rounded edges. Can you do that?" "Absolutely," I said. So he went inside, and I brought out my clippers.

Now, the thing you need to know is that the property had a gentle slope from the foundation down to the road. I started at the road, thinking a straight line and not taking into account the soft slope. As I began to cut, it was leafy and green at first, and then it got a little thicker, and then it was downright lumber by the time I got to the foundation. I didn't want to stop because I was persistent, and I thought it would all kind of work out. Then the owner came out.

Now, you need to know that he was a parishioner in our parish, and he was also a high school principal. He sidled up next to me very quietly, and he didn't say a word because I knew exactly what he was thinking: What have you done to my hedge? But he didn't say it, and he didn't say, "I thought you knew what you were doing," and "Now what are you going to do to repair it?" Instead, there was a long silence, and he finally said, "Do you think it'll come back?"

Vine and branches

Do you think it'll come back? Every time I think of John 15, I think of that moment long ago in the summer between Grade 7 and 8, praying always that God is better at pruning than I am. "I am the vine and you are the branches. I am the vine and my Father is the vine grower, and he removes all branches that do not bear fruit. And the branches that bear fruit, he prunes so they bear more fruit. I'm the vine and you are the branches." That moment in John 15 is uttered around a table at the Last Supper, a time to commemorate a moment of deliverance long ago of bringing slaves out of Egypt and bringing them back home to a land flowing with milk and honey. Jesus brings into their midst this beautiful, earthly image, just as Deuteronomy does. A land with barley

and wheat and fig trees and pomegranates and vines. He describes this earthly metaphor as the way that God relates to the Son Jesus, and how we relate to the Son Jesus in us.

Pruning is both an art and a science. You really can't prune with a machine; you have to do it by hand. The best way to prune is to get to know the vine, because the vine, each one, is actually individual and different, and each one needs to be tended over time – over years, in fact. The time that you prune during the year makes the difference about the growth and the nature of the fruit that is going to be grown. Vine growers spend at least four to five months every year pruning to provide the right kind of shade, the right kind of sunlight, in order that the fruit might bear goodness for humankind, for every creature under the heavens and, with the right kind of patience, the perfect Cab Sauvignon. It takes patience, and you have to do it by hand.

Most of the important matters in ministry, you and I do by hand: a hand of welcome at the front door; a hand of forgiveness in the liturgy; a hand of receiving Eucharist at the table; a hand of consolation when one is sorrowful. Hands folded over in prayer, hands clutching hymn books and prayer books in the hopes of being touched by God, hands folded and mimicking the one that we follow. The leper who came to him, imploring him, kneeling before him, saying, "You, if you will, you can heal me." And Jesus touched and moved with compassion, reached out and touched him. "I do, and you are made whole." Or Simon's mother-in-law who is sick, and they tell him about her, and he takes her by the hand, and he raises her up and the fever leaves her, and she immediately begins to serve them. Or at sundown, all those who were sick and suffering with disease were brought to him and he laid hands on them and they were made whole.

Hands: healing, redemptive, forming, shaping, pruning every week, Sunday by Sunday and day by day, in parishes large and small in this diocese, from Mississauga to Collingwood, Orillia through the Kawarthas, from Peterborough down to Brighton and every point in between. Communities gather to be pruned Sunday by Sunday. While there are similarities among us as churches, every community is very different and unique, a one-of-a-kind. It takes time for every parish and community to be pruned by God and shaped by God over time, and it needs to be done by hand. Over the first 11 months of my episcopacy, I have been going from parish to parish – 40 altogether so far – and each time I step in the doors of a church community, each one is recognizable and yet so unique. And yet there's only one way for me to get to know this diocese, and it's by hand.

Like the moment at Trinity College School in Port Hope. It was the last chapel service of the year, and the chapel was filled with students – a whole student body along with all the faculty and staff – and the service was exuberant. At the end of the service, all the students left the chapel except for the graduating class of 2019. Then finally the 2019 class moved out, and there were two lines formed by all the stu-



Bishop Andrew Asbil speaks about pruning and growing in his Charge to Synod. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON

dents and faculty that wended their way from the chapel's front door out into the middle of a field, where a sapling had been planted to honour the class of 2019. As that class started to wend its way there, you could hear the tears forming as a recognition of a passage in time in a place that had formed so many. We gathered around the sapling, and they waited for me to say a perfunctory prayer. That is not the occasion to say a perfunctory prayer. Instead, I invited them to come very close, to huddle in together. Then I invited the entire faculty and student body to huddle in behind them, to surround them, to reach out and touch their backs, and to pray together. For what seemed like an eternity, we just stood in silence and listened to creation around us, and the sobs of a graduating class, standing in front of a little sapling that was calling them to live their life in the way that God was intending. Then we prayed and left.

Opportunities to grow

"He removes in me all that does not bear fruit." How we long for God to remove the deadwood in our souls. How we long for God to take away the bits in ourselves

that get in the way, that always show up at the wrong time, that are always a nuisance, to keep us from growing. Or the part of us that grows a little too wild. How often we settle in ourselves to carry the burdens and sins of our lives, choosing to keep them close so that they might fuel our anger as a way of keeping us, rather than allowing God to just take them and burn them because they're not needed anymore.

How often in church communities and parishes we hang on for dear life to all the old things that, in fact, don't give us life anymore. How often we have said to ourselves as parishes, "We tried that once. We don't do that here. We can't do that because that might upset so and so." And so we just keep doing over and over the old things, hoping for different results. But God calls us to remove that deadwood that we don't need anymore. As every parish in this diocese knows, when we tell the truth, there are parts of us that we need to let go of. So in Synod, take the time as communities to say, "What is it in us that we need to let go of so that God can make room for something new?"

"And the branches that bear fruit, God

It is a time to have courage



prunes so that they may bear more fruit.” Pruners know that it’s important only to clip the cane that is first-year growth and always to clip above, leaving at least two buds. Two by two. Two by two, they came into the ark. Two by two, Jesus sent them out into the mission field, and he gave them authority over all unclean spirits, and he commissioned them to take nothing with them except for a staff. No bag, no bread, no money – to take sandals and not two tunics, to go empty-handed so that you may offer and receive blessing. You can’t offer and receive blessing when your hands are holding deadwood. You cannot offer and receive blessing when you are too comfortable.

It is in that moment of being sent out into the community, beyond the safety of the four walls of our church community, that the vine has an opportunity to grow. It is in growing that the flower flourishes and the grapes and the fruit are formed. The fruit is not capped: it is given away with no strings attached. It is when we push ourselves out into the world that we meet our God and our maker. When we offer the fruit of who we are as community, ministry happens. The mission of God is always

fueled by presence or, for the vine, sap. It’s well known that when you are pruning a vine, it’s important to cut the new cane, and the new cane needs to be connected to the previous year’s growth, and it needs to be connected to the previous year to that. You can count the growth all the way down to the soil, just like you can count the rings of life on a stump. As long as there’s a connection from one year to the next, the sap will actually grow evenly and push out new life to the buds.

In my first year of ministry, I have been to parishes that are celebrating significant moments in their lives – their 50th anniversary, their 100th, 150th, 175th, 200th. When you stand in the front foyer of most of those churches, you can see the history in black and white pictures of rectors and old colour images. Some of those pictures show that the church building was once in the middle of a field and now is in the middle of a bustling downtown core of a suburb, or in the City of Toronto, or beyond. The one thing that keeps parishes moving is knowing that that presence somehow continues to course its way through a church community. You do not live 175 years in a straight line. In fact, you

meander – you twist and turn, and there are gnarls and blemishes. But as long as that presence continues to feed, there will be fruit that comes to life on the vine.

The heart of discipleship

It is the presence of God that fuels all that we do. The heart of discipleship, as we contemplate what that means for us as a diocese, is understanding what it means to abide. John uses the word “abide” 43 times in the gospel. It means to hold, to stand, to be expectant, to tarry with expectancy, to surround, to dwell. To dwell in the vine means to always live with a sense of expectancy that the God who delivers us does not act just in the past but comes to us from the future as we listen with expectancy.

It is like Cleopas and his wife on the day of the resurrection, who finally get to their front door and implore him, “Stay with us.” And when he is there, revealed, they say, “Were not our hearts burning within us?” Or as we hear from that first reading today in Isaiah, “I have called you by name, and you are mine. When you go through the rivers, I will go with you. When you go through the waters, they will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fires, you will not be burned. When you walk through the flames, you will not be consumed. I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel.”

More often than not, we look backwards in time with a sense of expectancy instead of turning our faces to the future with courage. How often in our parishes we long for the good old days that always seem so much better than they are now. But when we long for yesterday, we back our way into the future, losing those moments of deliverance that God presents to us in the here and now. When we listen to those with all the statistics about the future of a church community, it is easy for us to wring our hands and to give up. Well, my friends, the Church has always been one generation from closing or taking off. That is the nature of Church. And that future depends on you, and it depends on me. And it takes courage for us to be able to imagine a new future. When the flames erupted through the roof of St. James, Roseneath on April the 9th, did those flames consume the community? No. The community imagines a new future as they contemplate how God is calling them.

In those moments when we wring our hands, how can we find the energy to find new models of working together in our communities so that vines may work and live side by side, amalgamating, merging, creating opportunities for clergy and lay leaders from parishes to always work side by side? Sometimes it means letting go of old grudges. I am told that in Port Hope there was a time when St. Mark’s and St. John’s would never cross the river to dawn the doors of each other’s parishes. And yet now, and for some time, they are celebrating the Eucharist on Wednesdays every week, and they gather to hear the Passover story on Easter Eve every year.

Repurposing our properties

This is our time for us to think imaginatively about how God is calling us to repurpose our properties and our ministries as we go forward as a diocese. This is not a time to be afraid. It is a time to have courage. Some years ago, when I was serving in a parish in Oakville, we had a large maple tree in our front yard. At a silent auction, I won the services of a

parishioner who was an arborist. For the first 20 minutes or so on a Saturday morning, he taught me how you’re supposed to clip the branches on a tree, and how in fact you have to climb into the tree and clip out all the branches that grow inward or downward or at cross purposes or rub against each other. He only brought a pruning knife and a saw, and no ladder. After a few moments, he went up into the tree. He literally climbed the tree, and he just kept sawing and cutting, and twigs and branches would fall to the ground. The memory of that old hedge from long ago came to my mind, and I thought, “Are you gonna leave a little bit of the tree behind?” It’s a little like for me when I go get my hair cut and I say, “Please, Lord, leave just a little on top. Make it look better than it really is.”

After a couple of hours, I came back to see what he had done, and he invited me in, and there was a huge pile of branches. When I stepped under that canopy, there was an incredible spaciousness. In this Synod, we talk about making space. Our governance working group is bringing a different model of governance through our Synod Council, that we pray God creates a different kind of space that allows us to make decisions more effectively by creating committees on the ground, close to the ground, with a mixture of Synod members and those who have a particular expertise that we need. We have learned in our governance patterns in the past and in the present that there are many moments when we rub up against each other and we often work across purposes in trying to make an effective decision, and we don’t always get it right. I am looking forward to that conversation in this Synod, where we get to dream together, to say, “How will we make decisions most effectively for a changing circumstance in the Church?”

Space for diversity

In standing beneath a great canopy, we also create a space for diversity: diversity of language, diversity of culture, diversity of liturgical expression, diversity of biblical interpretation and theology – of rather than working at cross purposes and always rubbing up against each other, to determine that one way is better or not than the other, to create that space where branches are always moving outward and upward. From the table we hear the words, “Love one another as I have loved you. Love one another.” The summer of 2019 and General Synod will be remembered for many things, and one thing only. For many of us, that one thing only was that the change to the marriage canon did not happen, because it didn’t have enough votes in the House of Bishops. And no matter which part or side you stand on that question, there was deep upheaval and unrest for all. But for me, a deep hope emerging at General Synod at the same time was the Word to the Church, an apology from the bishops, and two little words that open a door: local option. Or as Isaiah might put it, “I am about to do a new thing. Do you not perceive it?”

A word to all our LGBTQ2S community members: you are home. This is your home. You are sisters, brothers and siblings in Christ, fully in this community. As we move towards Pentecost 2020, marriage is open in the same way that it is open for all couples in equal measure. If you are a cleric who believes God is calling you to marry same-sex partners, you will have

HIGHLIGHTS

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spoke about the key chapters in the story, including Creation, the Fall, the Flood, Abraham, Exodus, Exile, the Promise of Salvation, Jesus the Messiah, Pentecost, the Early Church, and the New Creation. Humans caring for the earth, God's creation, was a constant theme running through her talk. It is when humans strayed from this core purpose that calamity often happened, she said.

In the second part of her talk, given after dinner, she spoke about the current environmental crisis and asked, "How did we get here and how do we have hope in the midst of it?" She said we can find answers by going to our founding story, the Bible. We are not the first people to deal with such calamity, she said; the Bible tells of others who faced similar threats and survived. She spoke in particular about Noah and the Flood, Jeremiah and the Israelites in Babylon, and the Book of Revelation, written during a time of environmental devastation. She said we can begin to turn the tide of the current environmental and humanitarian disaster, which we helped to create and sustain, by breaking our dependency on the world economy and instead focusing on local initiatives such as buying local products and services and investing in skills and "ark" places that nourish people and sustain the earth. She urged individuals and churches to plant gardens wherever possible, making local produce available to all and modelling new ways of being, seeking God's kingdom first rather than their own safety and comfort. Like those in the Bible stories, "we should be



David Pickering of St. Olave, Swansea speaks during a debate. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON



Dean Stephen Vail leads a workshop on discipleship.

willing to take risks and embrace this sacrificial way of living," she said. In closing, she said, "The New Creation is the place where Jesus calls us to live with him, so close your eyes and dream."

Members attend breakout sessions

Synod members took part in the following workshops:

- Can you give 1% more? Five simple steps parishes can follow that will lead to positive stewardship outcomes
- Leveraging the Power of Legacy Gifts in Your Parish
- Understanding the Diocesan Grants Process
- Strengthening Relations: Indigenous Ministries and You
- Consultation Workshop on Discipleship
- Supporting Vital Ministry and Mission
- Highlights from the Clergy Remuneration Working Group's Report to the Bishop

Missional & Outreach Moment #2

The Rev. Leigh Kern, the diocese's Coordinator of Indigenous Ministries and Reconciliation Animator, spoke about the Neechee Circle, held each Thursday at Allen Gardens in downtown Toronto. The Indigenous-led circle includes singing, prayers, a hot meal and support for participants. She said treaties stated that Indigenous people could freely move, tent, camp, hunt, fish and live on the land in Toronto, and yet they are routinely harassed by the police and others. She spoke about those involved in the Neechee Circle, including Laverne Malcolm, who is the leader. The circle is fully accessible and barrier-free, she said. She spoke about friends who have died from the opioid crisis or have been murdered or incarcerated. "The transformative and radical hospitality of Christ is enfolded at the circle," she said. Her presentation ended with a video of drumming at the circle.

New canons named

The following were made honorary canons of St. James Cathedral:

- The Rev. Canon Judy Allen, Holy Family, Heart Lake, Brampton
- Canon Brian Armstrong, ODT, Vice Chancellor of the diocese
- The Rev. Canon Hernan Astudillo, San Lorenzo, Dufferin Street
- The Rev. Canon Joyce Barnett, St. Matthias, Bellwoods
- The Rev. Canon Eric Beresford, St. Timothy, North Toronto
- The Rev. Canon Richard Dentinger, former director of Human Resources
- The Rev. Canon Gloria Master, Parish of Lakefield
- The Rev. Canon Lucy Reid, St. Aidan, Toronto
- The Rev. Canon Geoffrey Sangwine, St. Peter and St. Simon the Apostle
- The Rev. Canon Ruthanne Ward, Church of the Ascension, Port Perry

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HIGHLIGHTS

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- The Rev. Canon Darrell Wright, Parish of Mulmur
- The Rev. Canon Paul G. Walker, retired

DAY 2

Synod begins with worship

Synod reconvened on Nov. 9 at 8:30 a.m., and the meeting began with worship, including prayers and a moment of silence for those who lost their lives in the wars.

Synod agrees to time-saving measures

Synod had too many agenda items to finish by 1 p.m., so it agreed to the following time-saving measures: the presentation on General Synod would be posted on the diocese's website; the Clergy Remuneration Working Group's Report to the Bishop will be finished and then it will be presented at workshops in 2020 after consultation and with the support of the working group; Motion #16 has been withdrawn.

Bishop hears thoughts on same-sex marriage

"A Word to the Bishop" was an hour-long, "open mic" session, much like Members' Time, specifically on the topic of same-sex marriage in the Church. It was intended to allow people to speak directly and openly to Bishop Andrew Asbil on the subject as he seeks to have new guidelines in place for the diocese by Pentecost 2020. Members were also invited to send written comments to him if they wished at mconliffe@toronto.anglican.ca. Many people spoke. Here are some of the comments:

- The words spoken by Bishop Asbil yesterday in his Charge, "home" and "equal" for LGBTQ people, meant the world to us.
- The world is changing and we need to change. We need to look forward. We have to have it in our heart to move forward.
- Thank you for holding this time and space for us to do this. As a youth who is questioning, it's very important to have these spaces for these conversations, especially in rural communities where there are few opportunities to do this.
- As a queer woman, I left the Catholic Church because of the issue of same-sex marriage. I love the Anglican Church and want to stay, but I came because of the hope of equal marriage. Please let us have that – equal sacraments.
- Loving your neighbour means loving your LGBTQ neighbours, not only here but in places where there is no "local option."
- I am a gay man but I also believe in traditional marriage. I believe marriage is between one man and one woman. I felt it was important to speak because as space is being made for communities, I don't often feel there is space made for me. My community is diverse on such things, and I ask that space be made for us.
- Social media has become an extension of my ministry. Every day I get at least two or three messages from somewhere in the world, from people who are reaching out to me because I'm the only openly gay, Christian, ordained person they know. Thank you to the diocese and all those who have done the difficult work to welcome us



Dr. Sylvia Keesmaat speaks to Synod about The Biblical Story. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON



The Rev. Christian Harvey is given a standing ovation for his work with the diocese's Youth Ministry Apprenticeship Program. PHOTO BY THE REV. TAY MOSS

home.

- Advocates for Changing the Marriage Canon is a Facebook group that has 1,500 members across Canada and is attracting people from around the world.
- There are people like me who are unable to give up the Church's traditional teaching on marriage. I am happy to know there will be a place for people like me in this diocese. I am committed to praying with members of the LGBTQ community and have already begun to do so. I would encourage others to do so as well.
- We have a church group with about 20 LGBTQ youth. Some want us to marry them someday, and I'm really looking forward to the day when I don't have to hesitate before I answer them.
- I love that my Church is struggling with this. I want my Church to be spacious and life-giving for all of us.
- I am grateful for the friendship of those who disagree with me.

Missional and Outreach Moment #3

The Rev. Christian Harvey and Cormac Culkeen spoke about the diocese's Youth Ministry Apprenticeship Program, which equips and prepares potential leaders for youth ministry positions in the diocese. Since the program started in 2009, there have been 37 graduates. Mr. Harvey was one of the co-founders of the program and Synod gave him a standing ovation for his leadership over the years. He was stepping down as co-coordinator of the

program to be the executive director of the Warming Room in Peterborough. After thanking Mr. Harvey for his efforts, Bishop Jenny Andison announced that Cormac Culkeen will be the coordinator of the program for the eastern half of the diocese while Alexandra McIntosh will be the coordinator for it in the western half of the diocese.

Financial reports and statements approved

Synod received and approved the Financial Report for 2018, the Audited Financial Statements for the Incorporated Synod for 2018 and the Audited Financial Statements for the Cemetery Fund for 2018.

Auditors appointed

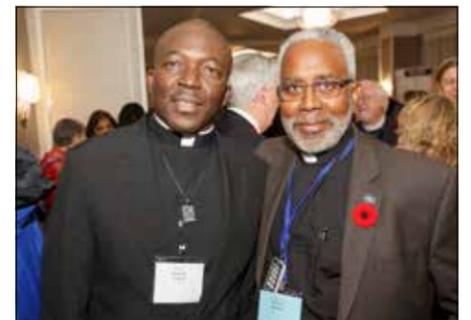
Synod appointed the firm Grant Thornton LLP, Chartered Accountants, to conduct the audit of the financial statements of Synod, the Consolidated Trust Fund and the Cemetery Fund for the year ending Dec. 31, 2019, at a fee to be approved by the Audit Committee.

Synod hears financial update

Lilian Qian, the diocese's Treasurer and Director of Finance, presented the financial update for 2019. As of Aug. 30, 2019, the diocese had an operating surplus of \$118,900, which is favorable to the revised forecast by \$105,116. She said the main drivers for this favourable result were: timing differences for expenses such as curacy grants, area council and Synod; and she anticipates that the diocese will achieve the forecast 2019 budget target.



Ronald Joshua and the Rev. Vernon La Fleur. PHOTO BY MICHAEL HUDSON



The Rev. Amiroid Lazard (left) and the Rev. Canon Anthony Jemmott.

Synod votes on priorities and plans, budgets

Synod voted in favour of the diocese's priorities and plans for 2019-2021. Rob Saffrey, the diocese's Executive Director, said the budgets for 2020 and 2021 support the five priority areas that are set out in the diocese's strategic plan: leadership and formation; trust and culture; innovation based on evidence; governance and decision-making; and stewardship of resources. He said the resources to support these priorities are spread throughout the six distinct program categories: episcopal care and leadership; church growth and development; amalgamations, closures and property support; support for the wider church; corporate governance and support services; and supporting ordained leaders. Ms. Qian walked Synod members through the budget details, including the revenue that supports this work. She said there will be no change to the parish assessment rate. Synod voted in favour of the budgets.

Parish assessment rate approved

Synod approved an assessment rate for parishes of 24.70 per cent for 2020 and 2021. This is the same assessment rate as in 2019.

HIGHLIGHTS

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Synod votes on members' motions

Synod approved the following motions from Synod members:

Motion #10

It is **MOVED** by the Rev. Canon David Harrison and **SECONDED** by the Rev. Dr. Stephen Drakeford that this diocesan Synod:

1. Encourages parishes to curtail their purchase of single-use plastic products, with the intention of ending their use by 2023, taking into consideration the accessibility needs of their communities.
2. Encourages individual Anglicans to reduce their reliance on single-use plastic products.
3. Encourage the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care to develop and promote resources aimed at supporting local efforts toward plastics reduction.

Motion #14

It is **MOVED** by the Rev. Dr. Jason McKinney and **SECONDED** by the Rev. Canon David Harrison that this Synod request Diocesan Council (or its successor) to respond to the affordable housing crisis across the diocese by developing an Affordable Housing Plan. This plan will:

1. determine the feasibility of building affordable housing on diocesan-owned lands;
2. prioritize strategic partnerships with industry experts in the fields of planning, development, and affordable housing provision;
3. establish specific achievable targets (e.g. 250 units by 2024).

The plan should be completed by Nov. 30, 2020, at which time a report to Synod and to the diocese will be made.

Motion # 15

It is **MOVED** by the Rev. Canon David Harrison and **SECONDED** by the Rev. Dr. Stephen Drakeford that Synod requests the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care, working through a creation care lens and in the context of our developing relationship with Indigenous Peoples, to develop and propose environmental policies and resources for all diocesan operations that reflect the need to increase the use of renewable energy services and decrease our carbon footprint. In particular, Synod requests a review of and development of policies pertaining to:



1. our spending practices;
2. our travel policies;
3. our land use and development;
4. the creation of a fund to assist parishes to reduce their carbon footprint;
5. the creation of a fund to assist clergy to purchase or lease zero emission vehicles;
6. the curtailment of the purchase of single-use plastic products, with the intention of ending their use no later than the beginning of 2023, taking into consideration the accessibility needs of our communities;
7. developing modules for clergy and lay formation on the connection between creation care and the Gospel; and
8. promoting reduced consumption as part of a Christian Rule of Life.

Synod and the diocese shall be provided with a report on the work of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care and the progress made on these issues by June 30, 2020 and every six months thereafter until the next Regular Session of Synod.

Members raise issues, causes

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

- The Anglican Foundation of Canada.
- The Sixth Mark of Mission, to take care of God's creation, and the work of St. Thomas, Brooklin's sustainability council.
- The Centres for Spiritual Growth at St. James, Orillia and St. John the Baptist, Dixie.
- Ratifying the nuclear ban treaty.
- Fresh Start, a program for clergy in transition.
- Residential school survivors and having parish partnerships with other churches in Canada to learn from Indigenous people.
- The Church is failing to make disciples and the diocese should start every meeting by providing updates on the work that is being done in this area.

Provincial Synod members elected, acclaimed

The following clergy were elected to serve



Clockwise from top left: Stacey Daoust staffs the David Busby Centre's booth, one of many at Synod; the Rev. Canon Ted McCollum converses with friends; staff and friends meet at the Toronto Urban Native Ministry booth. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HUDSON

on Provincial Synod, which will be held in 2021:

- The Rev. Canon Christopher Greaves (Christ Memorial, Oshawa)
- The Rev. Dana Dickson (Trinity Church, Bradford)
- The Rev. Canon David Harrison (St. Mary Magdalene, Toronto)
- The Rev. Claudette Taylor (Epiphany and St. Mark, Parkdale)

The following laity were acclaimed, as there were no other nominees:

- Bill Bickle, ODT (St. John the Evangelist, Port Hope)
- Sandy Richmond, ODT (St. George, Allandale)
- Mary Walsh, ODT (St. John the Baptist, Oak Ridges)
- Laura Walton, ODT (Holy Trinity, Clearview)

Bronte Anderson of Christ Church, Stouffville was elected to be the diocese's Youth Member of Provincial Synod.

Speaker gives closing reflection

Dr. Sylvia Keesmaat, Synod's guest speaker, spoke about people being in a place of grief and lament, and how it is important to dwell in that place for a period of time and to remember what we have lost. She said the environmental disaster is the defining issue of our age, and we lament that the story is not turning out as we hoped. She said there are more psalms of lament in the Bible than any other. "God will respond when we cry out, because it's in the deepest darkness that God acts," she says. "Our story is darkness to light."



Bishop Asbil reflects

In a closing reflection, Bishop Asbil spoke about putting trust in "the One who comes back, every day." He spoke about churches that have returned to life because of the faith of people in them. He said that is the kind of faith that the diocese needs as we move forward together into the future.

Honorary Clerical Secretary and others thanked

Bishop Asbil thanked the Rev. Ian LaFleur as he stepped down as Honorary Clerical Secretary of Synod. He has served in this capacity since 2015. Bishop Asbil also thanked Pam Boisvert, the Secretary of Synod, Chancellor Clare Burns and many others for their efforts at Synod.

Election of Honorary Secretaries

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

- Peter Newell, Honorary Lay Secretary
- The Rev. Andrew MacDonald, Honorary Clerical Secretary
- Sheila Robson, Assistant Honorary Lay Secretary

Bishop Asbil concluded Synod with a blessing.

For more information about Synod, including the Convening Circular and the video of the Bishop's Charge, visit the diocese's website, www.toronto.anglican.ca.

It is a time to create space for diversity

Continued from Page 7

that opportunity. It is given to you. And if you hold to that teaching of the traditional view of marriage, you may, and live that with integrity and teach it with integrity. It is now a time for us as community, living under a huge canopy, to create that space for diversity where all may love one another as Christ has loved us.

Responsible stewards

We hear in the first reading that the journey from exile home restores the whole of creation. "The rivers will flow in the desert, waters in the wild place, and the jackals and the ostriches will honour me." As we make our way homeward as creation, we take creation with us. We learn from creation in the sorrow and the groaning, as we know that the tempera-

tures of the earth are rising. In all that we do as a diocese, we are summoned to be responsible stewards and to do all in our power to transform our law, and to let go of that which creates no life, that is marking our own carbon footprints at home, in our parishes and in the work of the diocese.

"I chose you. You did not choose me." Those are the words that Jesus said to his disciples as parting words in this reading. "I chose you. You did not choose me." For the last 11 months, I have been learning what it means to be a bishop. I have learned over those last 11 months that there's a part of me that's a little like that kid in Grade 7 and 8 who is learning. There are moments when I have made mistakes or been persistent, but you have been teaching me and forming me and helping me to learn what it means to be a pastor. It is our time as church

leaders, lay and ordained, for us to make our mistakes and to take those risks for the sake of the gospel. As one of my mentors, George Black, once said, "You're gonna make mistakes. Make them boldly and make them quickly and get on with it." No truer words could be spoken. Rather than covering with fear that we might get it wrong, take the risk and get it right.

This staff, for me, I hold with great thanksgiving. It was made from a branch of a cherry tree that was pruned on the property of St. Jude's, Wexford. It was fashioned in the form of a staff for me by picking up that which was taken off, and to remind me of what it means to go boldly, empty-handed, carrying nothing but a staff. I am deeply grateful for your continued prayers as I learn what it means to be your bishop, and I have deep

pride and a great grateful heart for the way that I have been called to do this awesome duty. I could not do this without my colleagues in the College – of Peter and Riscylla, of Kevin and Jenny, and of Mary Conliffe – who inspire and hold and pray this community of the Diocese of Toronto into the future. I am deeply grateful for every bishop here. I am also deeply grateful for Jenn Bolender King, who keeps my schedule tidy and moving in a way that makes some sense. And I'm deeply grateful for my wife Mary, who has been standing by my side through this whole year and holding my hand and encouraging me to take bold steps.

May God keep us, bless us and hold us, and inspire us to be courageous for the sake of the gospel that courses through our very being. Amen.

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GOOD CAUSE

Archbishop Colin Johnson, the former Bishop of Toronto, and his wife Ellen buy Christmas ornaments at a booth set up by St. James Cathedral at St. Lawrence Market in Toronto in November. The cathedral was selling the hand-crafted ornaments at locations around the city to raise funds for its drop-in, which has seen an increase in the number of guests as social services are rolled back and the cold weather sets in. PHOTO BY JAMES REESE

PRAYER CYCLE

FOR JANUARY

1. The Diocese of Toronto
2. St. John the Evangelist, Port Hope
3. St. John, Bowmanville
4. St. John, Harwood
5. Durham & Northumberland Deanery
6. St. Mark, Port Hope
7. St. Paul, Brighton
8. St. Paul, Perrytown
9. St. Peter, Cobourg
10. St. Saviour, Orono
11. The Chapel of St. George,

Gore's Landing

12. Etobicoke-Humber Deanery
13. All Saints, Kingsway
14. Atonement, Alderwood
15. Christ Church St. James
16. Christ the King
17. Church of South India (CSI), Toronto
18. Ghanaian Anglican Church of Toronto (GACOT)
19. Honorary Canons of St. James Cathedral
20. San Lorenzo-Dufferin
21. St. George on-the-Hill
22. St. Margaret, New Toronto
23. St. Matthew, Islington

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24. St. Matthias, Etobicoke
25. St. Paul the Apostle, Rexdale
26. Canadian Council of Churches
27. St. Philip-the-Apostle
28. St. Philip, Etobicoke
29. St. Stephen, Downsview
30. Christ Church, Deer Park
31. Grace Church on-the-Hill

IN MOTION

Appointments

- The Rev. Chris Horne, Interim Priest-in-Charge, Our Saviour, Toronto, Nov. 1, 2019.
- The Rev. Megan Jull, Incumbent, St. Augustine of Canterbury, Toronto, Dec. 1, 2019.
- The Rev. Mark Regis, Priest-in-Charge, St. Mary and St. Martha, Toronto, Feb. 1, 2020.
- The Rev. Canon David Brinton, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Thomas, Huron Street, Nov. 25, 2019.
- The Rev. Helena-Rose Houldcroft, Interim Priest-in-Charge, St. Peter, Scarborough, Dec. 1, 2019.

Area Bishop's Direct Appointment Process

- St. Hilda, Fairbank
- St. Elizabeth, Mississauga
- Church of the Evangelists, New Tecumseth
- St. Paul, Newmarket

Vacant Incumbencies

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

First Phase - Parish Selection Committee in Formation (not yet receiving names):

- Trinity, Streetsville
- Epiphany and St. Mark, Parkdale
- St. Thomas, Huron Street
- Trinity-St. Paul, Port Credit

Second Phase - Parish Selection Committee (receiving names via Area Bishop):

- All Saints Whitby
- Christ Church, Stouffville
- Parish of Fenelon Falls
- Church of the Incarnation, Toronto
- Parish of Lakefield
- St. Christopher, Richmond Hill (Associate Priest)
- St. John, York Mills (Associate Priest)
- St. Margaret in-the-Pines, Toronto

Third Phase - No Longer Receiving Names

- St. Martin, Bay Ridges

Ordination

- The Rev. Alison Hari-Singh will be ordained a priest at St. Martin in-the-Fields on Jan. 12, 2020 at 4 p.m.

Death

- The Rev. Sid Maddock died on Nov. 27, 2019. Ordained deacon in 1969 and priest in 1970, he served as assistant curate at St. Hilda, Fairbank, and then associate priest at St. Margaret in the Pines, West Hill, moving to incumbent at All Saints, Penetanguishene in 1973 and St. Jude, Bramalea in 1977. From 1995 to 2012, he served at the Parish of Elmvalle as priest-in-charge, interim priest-in-charge and honorary assistant. His funeral was held at St. Margaret of Scotland, Barrie on Dec. 5, 2019.

CANADA BRIEFS

New 300-seat church opens

SUDBURY - A new \$2.5 million, 300-seat church – possibly the largest church building in the Diocese of Moosonee, according to Assistant Bishop Tom Corston – opened its doors in the Cree Nation of Kashechewan on Sept. 23. More than 120 residents gathered to celebrate the church's grand opening. For the past 10 to 15 years, the Anglican community in Kashechewan has met in a small space made of two general-purpose sheds bolted end-to-end, donated by the local band council. While well cared-for, the space was not ideal for worship, with huge pillars situated throughout and an uninsulated floor. After many years of dreaming of a new church, funds from the Cree Nation of Kashechewan were made available to construct the new building. Bishop Corston consecrated the new church, which sits on high ground across the road from the community's cemetery, and designated it as St. Paul's Anglican Church. Parish deacon and Kashechewan Band Chief the Rev. Leo Friday has since been ordained to the priesthood and licensed as the church's first incumbent. *Northland*

Anglicans, Muslims start relationship

HAMILTON - A church in the Diocese of Niagara is fostering

and a raffle. Reservations can be made by calling All Saints at 905-833-5432. The church is located just south of the King Side Road on the east side of Keele Street.

Workshops & Gatherings

JAN. 24 - Evening Prayer at 6 p.m.,

interfaith dialogue with a local Islamic cultural centre. The relationship between All Saints in Erin, Ont., and the Erin Islamic Cultural Centre began when the Rev. Joan Dunn met with people from the newly opened centre in the summer to discuss what could be done to create educational opportunities between the two groups. On Sept. 29, All Saints held a service attended by two imams and 30 Muslim worshippers. The service included a Eucharist and a combined Christian and Muslim prayer. Imam Moulana Norrudin answered questions about Islam from All Saints' congregation. *Niagara Anglican*

Organ receives historic designation

HALIFAX - The 157-year-old pipe organ at St. Mary's in Auburn, N.S., has been designated a significant historic instrument by the Royal Canadian College of Organists (RCCO). The Class A historic designation was awarded to the organ because of its age and largely unaltered state. Built in 1862 by George Stephens & Co. in Massachusetts, the organ is likely a one-of-a-kind instrument, built by special order. It is "a very rare example of its kind in Canada," according to the RCCO. The organ was originally purchased by the church for about \$450. It was pumped by hand until the early 1960s, when an electric motor was installed to operate the bellows. According to the RCCO certificate, the organ "retains all its original pipework, original hand-blowing equipment and has not been altered in any way." *The Diocesan Times*

LOOKING AHEAD

To submit items for Looking Ahead, email editor@toronto.anglican.ca. The deadline for the February issue is Jan. 2. Parishes can also promote their events on the diocese's website Calendar at www.toronto.anglican.ca.

Music & Worship

JAN. 8 - APRIL 29 - Kingsway Organ Recital Series, 12:30 p.m. to 1:15 p.m., free admission, All Saints, Kingsway, 2850 Bloor St. W., Toronto. Recitals on the following dates: Jan. 8, Jan. 22, Feb. 5, Feb. 19, March 4, March 18, April 1, April 15, April 29.

JAN. 12 - Epiphany Vespers featuring choir and brass ensemble, 7 p.m., Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street and Avenue Road, Toronto.
JAN. 19 - Rock Eucharist, featuring the music of Tears for Fears, 7 p.m., Church of the Redeemer, Bloor

Street and Avenue Road, Toronto.
JAN. 26 - "Sing and Joyful Be!", a Eucharist featuring the music of the Sacred Harp (shape note singing), 7 p.m., Church of the Redeemer, Bloor Street and Avenue Road, Toronto.

FEB. 8 - Concert by the Toronto Welsh Male Voice Choir, 2:30 p.m., All Saints, King City, 12935 Keele St. This internationally travelled group of over 35 choristers has a broad repertoire that includes spirituals, operatic arias, Canadian folk songs, Broadway show tunes and contemporary music. Tickets are \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door. There will be refreshments

I am certain God is always with me

Lydia Cordie is a bi-vocational youth minister at St. Peter, Erindale, a member of York-Credit Valley's Area Council, co-chair of the Children and Youth Ministry Taskforce in York-Credit Valley, and a graduate of the Diocese of Toronto Youth Ministry Apprenticeship Program. She is currently enrolled in Education for Ministry, a program of theological education for lay people. She's also a social worker and currently works at CAMH as part of a research team.



Lydia Cordie

I was born and raised in Havana, Cuba. I have been working with children and youth for over 15 years. My initial involvement in children and youth ministry happened at my local church, Cathedral Episcopal de la Santísima Trinidad in Havana. In that context, I was privileged to serve as a Sunday School teacher to children and youth between the ages of seven and 14. I immigrated to Canada in 2006 and served as a volunteer Sunday School teacher's assistant at Erin Mills Baptist Church for a couple of years. I became the youth minister at St. Peter, Erindale in 2013. Since then, I have been responsible for all things youth-related for those between the ages of 11 to 18.

As a child, I attended Sunday School, and it was there that I learned about Jesus, God's love, the Bible and prayer. When I was about 13 years old, I remembered asking God why he was not answering my prayers (as the situation at home was extremely difficult) and telling him that I was going to stop coming to church. And so I did. Interestingly, at the time, my mom started attending church regularly. I returned to my childhood church at the

age of 17. It was there that my mom introduced me to Eusebio, my lovely husband. Back then, seeing the way he lived out his faith on a daily basis inspired me to do the same, and still does to this day.

The best part of my ministry work is sharing the gospel and spending time with the youth. Whether we are reading the Bible, praying together, playing board games, running the Coffee Hour, preparing to lead a worship service, having a family potluck dinner or getting footage for the youth group promo video, I see all of these as fantastic opportunities to encourage the youth in their spiritual growth as they become the people God intended them to be.

I believe the work that children and youth ministers do is extremely valuable. We are coming into contact with

children and youth at a time in their lives where they are making sense of the world around them, who they are and who God is to them. This work is exciting and comes with great responsibility. Due to all its responsibilities and the many hats I wear – minister, friend, event planner, mentor, trainer, etc. – sometimes the work feels overwhelming. It can also feel isolating and lonely at times. Over the years, I have found that having a solid ministry plan, practicing self-care, as well as sharing experiences, success stories and resources with the other ministers, can contribute to reducing my sense of feeling overwhelmed and isolated.

I am extremely excited about a new intergenerational ministry initiative we have at St. Peter's. The initiative started last year when the Rev. Maria Nightingale, our associate priest and chaplain to seniors, and I got together to discuss what we could do to facilitate relationship-building and faith-sharing among the seniors and youths in our parish. The first event to formally bring the seniors and youths together happened in March 2018. The focus of the event was to teach both groups how to write a mini spiritual autobiography, so they felt more comfortable speaking about their faith. The event was a success! Building on the success of this event, we launched Cooking with the Bible. Cooking with the Bible gives seniors and youth a chance to bond with one another as they cook, eat, laugh, pray, worship, and learn about Christian spiritual practices and the types of food people ate during biblical times. So far, lentil soup, bread, honey and hummus seemed to be the favourites. We

have yet to cook locusts, but we have not had any request for them!

I'm also thrilled about being part of York Credit Valley's Area Council. I am also the co-chair of our area's Children and Youth Ministry Taskforce. As the co-chair, I get to leverage my skills, knowledge and talents to contribute to the work of the Area Council in empowering children and youth ministers to teach and model how to be followers of Jesus Christ in today's world.

(Five years from now), I hope to continue to work in youth ministry, as this is one of my passions. Being a millennial, I am also aware of the need for young adult ministry. Lately, I have been discerning if this an area of ministry that God wants me to become involved in. Other than that, the possibilities are limitless, so regardless of what I end up doing, I hope it will allow me faithfully serve God.

One of my favourite passages from scripture is the gospel passage found in Matthew 6:25-34. I used to read this passage every night during my first year in Canada. Every time I read it, I felt that it had been written just for me. I also felt less anxious about being on my own in a foreign country (which had a language I did not speak), having no money, no family or friends. Looking back, I could see God's love for me. In time, I met really caring people and Canada became my home. Nowadays, whenever I read this passage, I still feel a sense of comfort and tranquility. I am certain that no matter wherever I go and whatever circumstances I might encounter, God is always with me.

A tipping point of our own



Here's a fresh idea: Encouragement Sunday! What's that, you might ask? It's a new way of looking at a longstanding idea – of prayerfully making a gift to the Church from your estate.

For many years we have urged all members of the Church to consider leaving a gift in their wills to their local parishes or a diocesan ministry. It's difficult to measure our progress. Certainly, many parishes receive gifts from time to time from the estates of their parishioners, though I believe most receive very little when compared to health-related charities or schools. It is not a common practice for Anglicans to think of their church as a recipient of end-of-life giving.

Encouragement Sunday would reverse that practice.

What if we made a special effort to promote estate-giving on one dedicated Sunday each year? That way, all our effort and conversation might coalesce at the same time. The date can be promoted, discussed and preached about. It's the one day each year when parishes focus on how each of us can provide for future ministry in the Church.

Personally, I think Encouragement Sunday should be held on the first Sunday after Remembrance Day. This way we can honour the past on one Sunday and then look to the future on the next one. That is what gifts of encouragement are all about – funding the ministry, mission and capital needs of the Church that will come

THE STEWARD

By PETER MISIASZEK

after us. It's a day to be hopeful and good stewards, ensuring that future generations can find a home in the Church.

But why "Encouragement Sunday" and not just "Legacy Sunday"? Because the notion of encouragement is rooted in scripture. Acts 4:36-37 provides what is considered to be the first example of a planned gift in scripture. Though Joseph, later named Barnabas, didn't leave a gift in his will, so to speak, he did make a gift from his estate – selling a parcel of land and giving the proceeds to the apostles for the ministry of the early Church.

Barnabas means "son of encouragement." Each one of us can be a child of encouragement by making a provision from our estate to serve the temporal needs of the Church now and in the future.

Gifts of encouragement have the potential to be transformational. Suppose we recommended that all Anglicans consider leaving a tithe – another concept rooted in scripture – to the Church in their estates. This leaves plenty of opportunity to make provisions for family members and other charities. At a time of huge wealth transfer with the passing of the "Greatest Generation" (those born before the baby boom), the Church needs to avoid being an afterthought in people's gift planning.

In his book *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell persuasively argues that the tipping point is "that magic moment when an

idea, trend or social behaviour crosses a threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire." It only takes a little – often just 15 per cent – to result in a significant change. What if 15 per cent of our parishes decided to embrace the idea of Encouragement Sunday in 2020?

The practice could be very simple: develop a brochure and hand it out to everyone at church, preach about gift planning from the pulpit, and then have someone during announcements bear witness to the gift they have made. It doesn't need to be any more than this (although you might want to inform the envelope secretary or stewardship committee that you've made such a provision in your estate plans). The key is doing something.

I bet if we could identify 30 parishes in the Diocese of Toronto to commit to Encouragement Sunday in 2020, it would become normative by 2022. My guess is that if 30 parishes agreed to make Nov. 15, 2020 a focus on gift planning, it would take off. The event would be newsworthy, and people would share stories of hope, joy and encouragement.

Ready to commit? As you contemplate something new for 2020, are you ready to make a gift of encouragement and celebrate that gift on Encouragement Sunday? If your parish is interested in taking a step forward by participating in Encouragement Sunday, let me know at pmisiaszek@toronto.anglican.ca. Let's create a tipping point of our own.

Peter Misiaszek is the diocese's director of Stewardship Development.

BRIEFLY

Christians pray for unity

An ecumenical service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held on Jan. 26 at 7 p.m. at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. Leaders from churches across Toronto will take part, including Bishop Andrew Asbil and Thomas Cardinal Collins. This year's theme is "They showed us unusual kindness" (Acts 28:2). The Week of Prayer is an annual celebration that invites Christians around the world to pray for the unity of all Christians, reflect on scripture together, participate in ecumenical services and share fellowship. To learn more and download resources for your parish, visit www.weekofprayer.ca.

Orthodox influence in choral music explored

The Toronto chapter of the Fellowship of St. Alban & St. Sergius is hosting an evening at St. John's Convent on Jan. 23 at 6 p.m. to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The Orthodox liturgy for the Blessing of Waters will be sung at 6 p.m., followed by a sandwich supper. At 7 p.m., Stephanie Martin, composer and professor of music at York University, will speak on "Ancient echoes: Orthodox influences in Canadian choral music," looking particularly at Healey Willan and contemporary choral music. RSVP by Jan. 17 to guesthouse@ssjd.ca or 416-226-2201, ext. 305.