

BIBLE VERSE OF THE MONTH

Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. *Luke 12:27*



Parish Postcards

A round up of summer-time activities around the diocese

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In Conversation with ...

Bishop Cyril Ben-Smith of Ghana

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Special Insert

Report on the activities of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario

Centre pages

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A section of the Anglican Journal

NIAGARA ANGLICAN

A Gathering Place and a Sounding Board for the People of the Diocese of Niagara

SEPTEMBER 2015

First step taken in mega project

Niagara Synod gives approval for Cathedral Place plan

Niagara Diocese took a giant leap into the future on May 23, 2015.

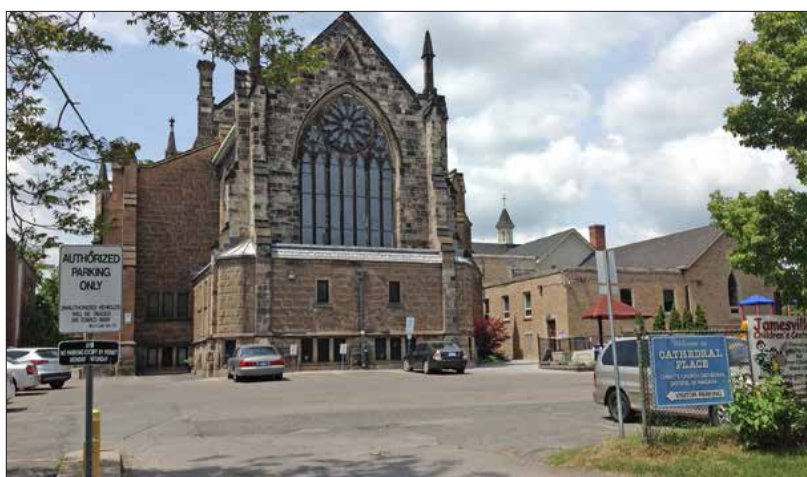
Leading up to the 141st annual Synod, Bishop Michael declared the time had come to make an "informed decision on this progressive, bold and faithful project."

The Cathedral Place Revitalization Plan called for the approval of a multi-million dollar investment that would see the Cathedral Place property at 252 James Street North, Hamilton, revitalized through the addition of residential, community and retail space.

Over 200 synod delegates from more than 90 parishes across the diocese were asked to authorize "an investment of not more than \$4,500,000 in cash, a transfer of land valued at \$1,700,000 (and) a subsequent mortgage of not more than \$2,500,000."

"The revitalization of James Street North has presented us with a huge opportunity to respond to the ministry needs of today in a way that is visionary, innovative and sustainable," said Bishop Michael Bird in his message to Synod delegates. "The revitalization plan seeks to strengthen the many ministries supported through Cathedral Place, as well as the surrounding neighbourhood."

The current development concept, according to a diocesan press release, envisions the construction of a new building along



with the renovation of the existing diocesan centre within five years. Christ's Church Cathedral and the School House façade will remain unaltered, protecting the valuable heritage of the property. A triple-bottom line development approach will ensure that social, environmental and financial benefits flow from the project.

The Diocese will partner with local architect David Premi and Windmill Development Group, one of Canada's greenest developers, on the project.

Both were present at Synod to speak about the exciting project, to answer delegates' questions and to listen to their concerns.

Questions were posed about escalating costs, financing, tendering contracts, building taller structures considered greener and more cost effective, who has the final oversight of the project as well as getting community or city approval.

Concerns were expressed about providing affordable housing and gentrification of the area, protecting outdoor space for daycare and even if the building would block too much light from

See CATHEDRAL Page 2

◀ The parking lot behind the Cathedral will be the site for the construction of a new building with underground parking.

The plan calls for renovation to the existing diocesan centre but Christ's Church Cathedral and the School House (right) façade will remain unaltered, protecting the valuable heritage of the property.

Photo: Hollis Hiscock



▲ Concept drawing showing the Cathedral property development. This is not an actual picture of what might be developed.

Source: Architect David Premi

Say it... in fewer words

Following guidelines suggested by community newspapers, the Niagara Anglican Publication Board decided to limit articles to a maximum of 600 words. This excludes the headline and information about the writer.

Any articles already submitted to the editor (maximum 750 words) will be honoured during a phase-in period.

Reducing the length of submissions will fit better with today's reading habits and free up space for more articles and pictures. As well, we are adapting to trends developing in the print/digital world of communication.

I applied the new guidelines to my September HOLLISTORIAL. It forced me to be more disci-

plined regarding length and ideas generated.

We thank you for your co-operation and look forward to your articles reflecting church life and thought.

Deadlines and submissions information can be found on page 5.

Hollis Hiscock, Editor

Cathedral Place redevelopment approved by Synod

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the Cathedral.

The question of the burial plots under the parking lot was also raised, as well as whether the diocese should be involved in this type of project since it may mean changing the direction of the church's ministry.

In passing the motion, the Synod required the Synod Council or Synod itself to provide regular updates and progress

reports on "expenditures and construction plans through to the completion of the project."

The Synod also authorised its officers "to enter into such agreements, as may be approved by the Diocesan Solicitor, and as may be necessary for the completion of this project."

The second session of the 141st Synod is scheduled for October 30-31, 2015.



◀ First time attendee Zachary Boulert from Incarnation Oakville speaking about the Cathedral Place Revitalization Plan at the Niagara Synod.

Photos: Hollis Hiscock



Save the Date!

Join us on Monday, November 9, 2015 for the Bishop's Company dinner at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington.

The focus of the evening will be a celebration of the 140th Anniversary.

This event is not to be missed and will include: a special guest, photo opps, live music, a DIY candy bar, access to the RBG

greenhouse and of course, a delicious meal.

The dinner is a wonderful opportunity to meet other members of our diocesan family and to support clergy and their family through times of exceptional need.

For further information visit our website: niagaraanglican.ca/bishops-company/

◀ Each year at the Bishop's Company dinner, people are given a wonderful opportunity to enjoy an evening with Bishop Michael and to meet others from across Niagara Diocese.

Photo: Hollis Hiscock



Stay connected with the Niagara Anglican and the Anglican Journal

For decades, the Niagara Anglican and the Anglican Journal have partnered to bring stories that matter to you, your parish, your diocese and the national church.

Together, we have been at the forefront of providing thoughtful coverage of Anglican, religious and other news and viewpoints that enrich a Christian life.

Whether encouraging a response to a humanitarian need, informing you about new and thriving ministries or helping you make sense of the ever-evolving religious landscape, the Niagara Anglican

and the Anglican Journal help spark meaningful conversation and action.

This year marks the 140th anniversary of the Anglican Journal and the 60th anniversary of the Niagara Anglican. With your help, we can keep the connection and conversation going.

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You Get MORE When You Ask For LOTZ

Bible verse of the month

Send us your favourite or meaningful Bible verse and why you have selected that verse or the story behind your choice. Contact information is on page 3.

HOLLIStorial



Decisions ... consequences ... Actions ... consequences

Every decision triggers consequences.

Each consequence results in action.

Every action generates further decisions.

This cycle plays out continuously as individuals and groups live out their decisions.

Our sleeping hours are determined by late night television watching, computer game obsessions, book reading fixations or similarly captivating activities.

Our waking hours revolve around work, recreation, learning, volunteering and other pursuits.

When individuals join groups—political, religious, pressure or special interest—they undertake the policies and practices associated with the group's aims or mission.

However, when new attitudes, ideas or situations are introduced, disequilibrium arises. The natural reaction is to either return to the safety of the womb,

deny what is happening or accept and manage the change.

History shows every generation must adjust or be left behind.

The television series *Downton Abbey* depicts the evolution of England's feudal system to the class levelling society following the First World War. Those hoping to hang on to their lands, privileges or wealth were often ignored or left to wallow in their own self-pity.

Today's world is being shaped in ways never before envisaged.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the church, comprised of liberals at one extreme, fundamentalists at the other and many continuums in between. Although adhering to Jesus' Gospel, each frequently reaches and follows vastly different decisions, consequences and actions.

A contemporary example is the discussion and decision concerning gay rights, especially marriage.

In June 2015 the United States

Supreme Court ruled that their constitution provides same-sex couples the right to marry.

At the same time the United States Episcopal (Anglican) Church was meeting in their General Convention (General Synod for Canadian Anglicans). Delegates were considering two resolutions—one authorizing new marriage liturgies for trial use, and another to remove from the church canons references to marriages as being between a man and a woman.

While the American Episcopalians were struggling with their decision, the Archbishop of Canterbury expressed his "deep concerns". Acknowledging their prerogative to address issues appropriate to their own context, he said the American church's decision could cause distress for some and have ramifications for the whole Anglican Communion, as well as for ecumenical and interfaith relationships.

Despite the warning the General Convention overwhelmingly passed the two resolutions.

Whatever consequences—within and outside the Anglican Communion—flow from their decision, let's pray that all people, both in their speeches and actions, will reflect the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Meanwhile in Canada ...

Ten years after Canadian lawmakers legalized same-sex marriages, today the Anglican Church is seeking broad consultation in preparation for its 2016 General Synod which plans to consider a motion allowing same-sex couples to be married in the church.

One notable consultation came from the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada (ARC).

In a nine page report ARC predicted allowing same-sex marriage would weaken the relationship between the two denominations. However, it also pointed out that in the past

other challenges to their relationship, notably the ordination of women and the marriage of divorced people, also were faced but their relationship continued. Whatever happens at General Synod they expressed a desire to continue in dialogue.

Sounds like a mature decision based on gospel principles.

Regardless of the decision there is always fallout: people get hurt, others celebrate, some mourn or turn away, relationships are damaged or broken and bridges are built.

"What would Jesus do?" should be the guiding light for all our decisions, consequences and actions.

The Anglican Church in the United States has already decided.

We await the decision from the Anglican Church of Canada.

Editor Hollis Hiscock invites responses to the HOLLIStorial. Contact information below,

To the Editor

Twinkle in his inner eye – Walter Bagnell, Seventh Bishop of Niagara

(re: Niagara Anglican, Summer 2015, page 8)

I have fond memories of Bishop Walter Bagnell.

When I started attending the Cathedral, Walter had retired as bishop and attended the cathedral. Often he would choose to sit in the row in front of me and suffered our little children over whom I had nominal charge, because my wife sang in the choir. Walter used to come

armed with candy and would feed it to our young children.

This "soft" image of Walter is in contrast to some of the stories of his persona as bishop that I have heard, although I suspect he always had a twinkle in his inner eye.

*Alexander Darling
Hamilton.*

Another inheritance – After 69 years of worship and service
(re: Niagara Anglican, Summer 2015, page 6)

Thank you for your article. You did us proud. I have had such nice phone calls and even a few letters of praise of our service and tea, and our work over the years. I am sure Sunday morning we will receive warm handshakes.

We have had another inheritance dropped on us. It is one of those where we receive a percentage of what is left after the main bequests. Whatever, we will divide it up percentage wise.

Mavis Adams, Flamborough

Maybe not two MEN: Sagas from Dorothy, Judy, Chrissy and Jesus
(re: Niagara Anglican, HOLLIStorial, May 2015, page 3)

I wondered how you concluded that it was two men who were walking home to Emmaus?

I recall reading somewhere that it might have been a brother and sister or a married couple.

In that case it would have been even braver of her to invite a guest to eat with them. She had been away for several days, and who knew what might have happened to her kitchen and to

her (probably meagre) supplies in her absence?

*Marianne Vespry
Hamilton*

We love your feedback. Please direct your letters to the Editor by email or letter mail to the addresses below

NIAGARA ANGLICAN

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www.niagaraanglican.ca



A roundup of activities over the summer

Parish postcards

Four Cheques for One Centre

Family Settlement Counsellor Nada Tuta of St. Joseph Immigrant Women's Centre (IWC) Mountain Location and IWC Assistant Director Elizabeth Webb (centre) received cheques totalling \$3,875. from the Mountain Ministry Parishes Hamilton presented by the Reverends Michael Deed, Sheila Van Zandwyk, Scott McNaughton and Holly Klemmensen.

The funds were raised through the Good Friday Walk, when 127 walkers from four Hamilton parishes—the Church of the Resurrection, St. Michael's/St. Gabriel's, St. Stephen on the Mount and Holy Trinity—were joined by parishioners from two Spanish congregations, St. Stephen's and San Gabriel.

The Good Friday Walk, started two years ago, also includes worship at different churches and time for refreshments.

"The Good Friday walk is just one way we work together to carry out God's mission. I am proud to be a part of that ministry," wrote Sue Crawford from St. Michael's.

Photos: Submitted



Celebrating 175 Years

Before the Eucharist celebrating the 175th anniversary of St. John's Ridgemount, Deacon Roderick McDowell, Bishop Michael Bird and Rector Elizabeth Sipsos pose in front of the old church.

Photo: Submitted



Vests keep the chill out



The Krafty Korners of St. George's St. Catharines produced 426 pneumonia-prevention vests this past year.

Started in 2012, the Krafty Korners meet every Tuesday for knitting, handiwork and fellowship.

In their first year they challenged themselves to make 220 vests. The following years they almost doubled their output to 414 vests by enlisting the help of other willing and "krafty" hands in St. Catharines.

The Krafty Korners and Friends delivered the vests to Dr. and Mrs. Taylor of "Not Just Tourists" in St. Catharines. They deliver the vests to places in need in the world, particularly areas where hot days turn into cold nights, where these hand-made vests can provide valuable protection against the chill.

Photo: Submitted

For Whom the Bells Need to Toll

Dean Peter Wall prepares to have the bells rung at Niagara's Christ's Church Cathedral as part of a cross Canada tolling of the bells for each of the 1,181 indigenous women and girls who were reported murdered or missing between 1980 and 2012. It also marked the closing ceremonies of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and its work to address the tragic legacy of Indian residential schools.

Photo: Alison Meredith



Sundaes for refugees

Since the 125th anniversary of St. John the Evangelist Winona fell on World Refugee Day (June 13), "we decided that all free-will offerings would support our diocesan effort to sponsor refugee claimants," said Priest-in-Charge Leslie Gerlofs.

As part of their Strawberry Social Open House, St. John's served ice cream sundaes made with fresh local strawberries, provided outdoor fun for kids and a guided walk through the church.

Enjoying the special ice cream treat are (left to right): Jacob Gerlofs, Zachery Suess, Nick Hathaway, Alex Hathaway and Jonathan Chapman.

See Refugees article page 9.

Photo: Submitted

Parish postcards

More activities over the summer

Baptism

Jackson Luc Methot, the fourth generation to be baptized in the same font at Christ's Church Cathedral, began the next part of the journey by posing with his father Luc Methot, grandmother Karen Methot and great grandfather Jack Dougherty.

Photo: Sharon Dougherty



Confirmation

Six people from Holy Trinity Chippawa were among the 76 individuals from 17 parishes renewing their baptismal promises during the service of confirmation with Diocesan Bishop Michael Bird and Bishop Cyril from Ghana.

Photo: Hollis Hiscock



The Class of 1955

"The class of 1955" consisted of 17 couples from St. Christopher's Burlington who celebrated their 50th or Golden Wedding anniversaries at a special worship service and reception at the church in 2005. In 2015 there are still 14 of those couples in the congregation. In June they, along with the surviving spouses of the original 17 couples, once again gathered at St. Christopher's to celebrate their 60th or Diamond wedding anniversaries. The reception following the worship service provided an opportunity for lots of chatter and reminiscing.

Photo: Jane Wyse



Bishop's Diploma Course

This program provides an opportunity for lay people to grow in their commitment to Christ and Christ's Church through a deepening of faith. This fall will feature an **eight-week course on the Old Testament**. Registration is held on the first evening; dates indicated below.

Attend the parish centre of your choice. Registration fee: \$35 (includes sessions plus text)

Area	Parish Centre	Start Date
Burlington	St. Luke	September 14 - 7:30pm
Flamborough	Christ Church	September 16 - 1:30pm
Jordan	St. John	September 15 - 2:00pm
St. Catharines	Grace Church	September 23 - 7:00pm

For further information contact Jane Wyse at 905-527-1316 ext. 420 or jane.wyse@niagara.anglican.ca



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Deadlines and Submissions for Niagara Anglican

Deadlines:
November – September 25
December – October 25
January – November 25

Submissions:
News – 500 words or less
Articles – 600 words or less

Letters to the Editor – 300 words or less
Reviews (books, films, music, theatre) – 400 words or less
Original cartoons or art – contact the Editor
Photos – very large,

high resolution, action pictures (people doing something). Include name of photographer.
Questions or information: contact the Editor at editor@niagaraanglican.ca or 905-635-9463

In conversation with ...

Bishop Kobina Ben-Smith (Bishop Cyril) Asante Mampong Diocese, Province of West Africa

During his visit to Niagara Diocese, Bishop Cyril participated in a confirmation, an ordination, a leaders' conference, a parish visit and more. The Niagara Anglican appreciated the opportunity to engage in conversation with Bishop Cyril.

Niagara Anglican (NA): Tell us briefly about yourself.

Bishop Cyril (BC): Well, I am the last born son, born into a clergy family. My father was an Archdeacon and served the church for many years. I attended local basic and secondary schools in Ghana, and was trained for the priesthood at St. Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana.

I have also had the opportunity to study outside Ghana—in South Korea for a master's degree, in Cardiff, Wales for an M.Phil. in Religious Studies and a Doctor of Philosophy Degree from the University of Manchester.

I was ordained in 1988, consecrated Bishop in May 2011 and enthroned as Diocesan Bishop on November 30, 2014.

I am married to Christiana since 1991 and have three children, Adjoa (23), Esi (21) and Robert (18).

NA: Your diocese is new. Describe it for our readers.

BC: Our Diocese is the newest in Ghana and possibly within the Anglican Communion, inaugurated on November 23, 2014. It was carved out of the Diocese of Kumasi which was established in 1974.

Ghana is located in the western part of sub-Saharan Africa. With a population of 25 million, Ghana became independent in 1957 from Great Britain.

The Diocese of Asante Mampong currently has 14 full parishes and over 100 congregations scattered over the middle to forest region of Ghana. The

inhabitants are mostly peasant farmers and petty traders. The Diocese spreads roughly 70 miles across the length and 60 miles across the breadth.

We currently have 17 clergy, including two females, and over 100 catechists. We have four ordinands who started their theological education in Ghana in August 2015.

We minister to roughly 500,000 people, although we can boast of roughly about 6,000 congregants who attend our churches on a regular basis.

NA: In January of this year you held your first synod and described many challenges

and opportunities for the church there. What emerged as the top priorities?

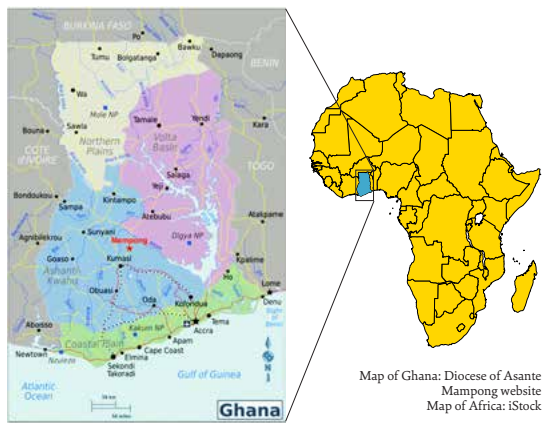
BC: The synod prioritised our aims stressing Evangelism and mission, social outreach, teaching and financial sustainability as the most crucial priority areas. Manpower development of both

clergy and laity is also high on our agenda.

NA: In your charge you mentioned goals must be clear and measurable. What progress has been made?

BC: Well it's early days yet, but so far we have sought to lay the structures for the achievement of our goals. We

Continued Page 7



► Bishop Cyril and his wife Christiana from Ghana visited many sections of Niagara Diocese during their short stay here.

Photo: Hollis Hiscock



Reimagining the Church in the Public Square

Provincial Synod Special Insert



Provincial Synod 2015

'Our baptismal vows include a very public dimension'

Archbishop Colin Johnson

Thank you for learning more about the Ecclesiastical Province and Provincial Synod of Ontario. This insert will give you a brief overview of what we do as the Anglican Church beyond your diocese in this part of Ontario and Quebec.

I've been the Metropolitan of the Province, or senior bishop, for six years, chairing the triennial Synod, the twice-yearly Executive Council and the House of Bishops. Because of a closer alignment of civil and church boundaries than most of the other ecclesiastical provinces, we have taken a very active role in engaging with the civil government on a number of issues, ranging from policies on human rights regulations, water, heritage buildings, accessibility, and oversight of cemeteries, to advocacy for poverty reduction, social housing and chaplaincy services. We have developed a good rapport with our elected officials and civil servants, in cooperation with other major denominations, not only for our own benefit but to contribute to the well-being of the people of our province.

A key strategy has been to find ways of cooperating across diocesan boundaries to share resources and avoid duplication. Communications, training programs, theological education, human resources, financial management, and



Archbishop Colin Johnson. Photo - Michael Hudson.

legal expertise are areas of consultation. The Province's bishops also consider together strategic issues facing the Church today and take considerable leadership in bringing these before the national House of Bishops.

The triennial Synod of the Province meets in Toronto this year, with the theme "Reimagining the Church in the Public Square." The Anglican Church has always been engaged with its wider community, both formally in its connections with the civil leaders but also through our members who have served on countless boards, agencies and acts of service that have helped establish and maintain the well-being of our society. For a time we were a dominant, sometimes even dominating, voice. Recognizing the changes in our culture, we both voluntarily drew back, and sometimes were sidelined, in an attempt to accommodate the growing

multifaith complexity of our province. For a while, equal treatment of faith traditions was achieved by studiously ignoring religious views in public discussion. But that can't be done. Religious values undergird and inform the very heart of how people of faith understand the world and our place in it. Our baptismal vows include a very public dimension: "Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself? Will you strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being? Will you safeguard the integrity of creation and respect, maintain and renew the face of the Earth?"

So this year we will look at the theological background to our call to engage in the welfare of our society. We will hear politicians' take on it. We will explore ministries that are actively involved in direct service, policy development and advocacy. We will learn how the seven dioceses engage in their own setting. And we will pray for our neighbourhoods to God who "by your holy prophet taught your ancient people to pray for the welfare of the cities in which they lived" (BAS p. 690).

Archbishop Colin Johnson is the Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario. He is the bishop of the dioceses of Toronto and Moosonee.



Triennial Provincial Synod: what is it exactly?

Provincial Synod performs a lot of work on your dioceses' behalf such as bringing stakeholders together around the table.

OPCOTE

The Ontario Provincial Commission on Theological Education (OPCOTE) meets twice a year. It brings leadership from the theological colleges and dioceses together to discuss mutual concerns. Provincial Synod provides significant grants to the theological colleges of our Province.

SHARING IDEAS AND RESOURCES

In the past three years, we have hosted meetings of executive officers, financial officers and communications officers to share ideas and resources and to develop recommended policies and procedures.

ADVOCACY & REGULATION

Provincial Synod Council meets twice a year and hears reports and makes recommendations on a number of matters affecting the Anglican Church in Ontario. This has included advocacy on issues of justice, government legislation and regulation on chaplaincy, cemeteries, heritage matters, and water usage.

INTER-GOVERNMENTAL

Provincial Synod employs two executive officers who do much of the inter-governmental work between meetings of the Council and Synod. The Provincial Secretariat is an important group with representatives from each of the political parties in the legislature. It works with the Provincial Synod's executive officers to ensure that matters of concern to the church are directed to the appropriate government officials.

In the last provincial election, Provincial Synod facilitated the "I'm Voting for a Poverty Free Ontario" campaign. This included lawn signs, press releases and social media postings.

Looking forward

Rev. Canon Rob Towler

Much like diocesan synods, Provincial Synod gathers to review what we have already done

and look forward to what more we are called to do.

Much of our work is to continue ...

- facilitating a sharing of resources and ideas, for the benefit of our dioceses, so those engaged in specific ministries in their diocese can benefit from the experiences of others.
- overseeing the Advisory Committee of Postulants

for Ordination, as part of the discernment process for those feeling called to ordained ministry.

- supporting and promoting the work of OPCOTE (the Ontario Provincial Commission of Theological Education), which gathers representatives from around the province who are engaged in theological education.

- working with the provincial secretariat, a small body with representatives from each of the political parties in the legislature, who engage in issues of justice and to help them stay connected with the grassroots.

Provincial Synod also serves as a forum for delegates to reflect on where we focus our time and

energy over the next three years.

With its theme of "Reimagining the Church in the Public Square," synod will have no shortage of ideas and conversations as to where we believe the Spirit is calling us to go.

The Rev. Canon Rob Towler is Prolocutor of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario

Priorities:

Provincial Synod prepares to set agenda for next three years

Ven. Dr. Harry Huskins

The Provincial Synod meets every three years. The work done between those sessions is guided by the priorities set by the Synod and its Council. From 2012 to 2015, those priorities were:

1 Advocacy

Social Advocacy

Housing and child poverty have been our key areas of focus. We have continued our long-standing work of building relationships in the area of social advocacy with government and other groups working to better our society. Our partner in this has been the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC), to which we provide one of our largest funding grants. We are represented on this coalition of more than 20 Christian churches and faith groups by Murray MacAdam.

Government Relations

Decisions made by the Ontario government and its agencies touch the lives of our parishes and ministries every day. Wherever possible, our discussions with government have been done in collaboration with the Lutheran, Roman Catholic and United churches in the Province. Examples of these

discussions with government include:

- the Ontario Human Rights Commission and its re-writing of its policies on creed and conflict rights;
- the government's reorganization of cemeteries and the creation of the new Bereavement Authority of Ontario and our representation on it;
- the Ontario Heritage Trust and how its policies affect our buildings and what we can do with them;
- the new College of Psychotherapists and how much control it will have over what our clergy and laity do in our pastoral work;
- on-going conversations with all three political parties about other matters of concern to Anglicans in Ontario.

2 Education & Vocations

Our Commission on Theological Education (OPCOTE) brings together representatives of our theological colleges, dioceses and bishops and enables them to work collaboratively to improve the quality of

theological education in Ontario. The commission has donated more than \$350,000 to our colleges over the last three years from money contributed by our dioceses.

We are continuing to help our dioceses in their work of encouraging Anglicans to undertake new lay and ordained ministry. The national church's Advisory Committee on Postulants for Ordination (ACPO) plays a central role in this. ACPO enables those studying for ordination and trained assessors to come together for weekend discernment sessions that provide the candidates, dioceses and bishops with guidance about these potential ordained ministries.

These ACPO sessions take place once a year in the rest of Canada, but our Provincial Synod provides \$12,000 of funding to enable these to take place twice a year in Ontario. This is our single largest program expense.

3 Sharing of Resources

There are seven dioceses in our Province and every day they deal with many of the same opportunities and problems. Our Provincial



“Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 3:13-14

Synod helps them work together on many of those that they are more effective in what they are doing and can lower the costs involved.

Over the last three years, we have:

- brought our bishops and senior diocesan staff together to talk about and plan this kind of cooperation;
- brought our diocesan human resources staff together to discuss how best to help each other in their work and to discuss this with lawyers who specialize in this

field. As a result, our smaller dioceses that cannot afford their own human resources staff can now consult with the fulltime experts working in our larger dioceses;

- brought the senior diocesan staff together twice a year to talk about new ideas that are working to strengthen and develop our ministries and solutions to the common problems they are facing.

The Ven. Dr. Harry Huskins is Executive Officer, The Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario.

COMMUNICATIONS

better sharing of resources



Rev. Canon Andrew Chisholm

The Provincial Task Group on Communications was asked to consult with the individual dioceses, and then consider and make recommendations on matters such as:

- the future of our diocesan newspapers and the potential for developing shared regional newspapers;
- social media policy;
- public relations.

The task group has met three times. The members are:

Algoma: Kelly Baetz, Huron: Rob Towler, Moosonee: Deborah Lonergan-Freake, Niagara: Bill Mous, Ontario: Mark Hauser, Ottawa: Stephanie Boyd, Toronto: Stuart Mann, Chair: Andy Chisholm.

The complete report and other documents can be found on the Provincial Synod Website at <http://province-ontario.anglican.ca/communications.htm>.

Anti-spam legislation

We discussed new federal anti-spam legislation and circulated in our interim report a document previously shared with the House of Bishops on this matter. Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) requires all organizations that send "commercial electronic messages (CEM)" to obtain either express or implied consent of the recipient. The legislation is not of significant concern as most messages our churches send do not fall into the CEM category, but advertising for an event or selling a product or service would normally fall within the definition of a CEM. Many free electronic newsletter services are available to help meet these requirements of the legislation, with MailChimp being among the most popular and used by many faith groups, like the Anglican Church of Canada and KAIROS for their monthly communications.

Social media policy

We spent considerable time

on social media policy. We discussed best practices as well success stories in our dioceses. Some dioceses and bishops are active in social media (Algoma, Moosonee, Niagara, Ontario, Toronto), some dioceses and bishops make almost no use of social media (Huron, Ottawa). A summary is below. There are a number of social media policies for dioceses available online. We found the Toronto policy for Synod Office staff to be helpful as well as the Diocese of Bath and Wells guidelines for parishes and individuals. These are posted on Provincial Synod website communications page.

We also provided a summary of what each of the dioceses were doing in using social media.

The Rev. Canon Andrew Chisholm is Communications, Honorary Clerical Secretary, and Web Manager for Provincial Synod.

HIGHLIGHTS

DID YOU KNOW:

Moosonee

Our last Provincial Synod session reorganized the Diocese of Moosonee. This has been very successful, bringing renewed vitality to its mission and ministry along with financial stability.

Theological Education

Our seven theological colleges work together with our dioceses to provide some of the best lay and ordained education and training in the world, through our Ontario Provincial Commission on Theological Education (OPCOTE).

Ordination Discernment

Some of the hardest decisions in our Christian life have to be made by those who feel called to the ordained ministry and the dioceses and bishops who have to decide who should be ordained and become members of our clergy. Our Provincial Synod makes its largest single funding grant to the Advisory Committee on Postulants for Ordination (ACPO), which plays a key role in this discernment.

Human Rights

Our Provincial Synod has taken the lead for the Anglican, Roman Catholic and United churches in discussions with the Ontario Human Rights Commissions in its first re-writing of its Policy on Creed and the Accommodation of Religious Observances since the policy was put into place in 1996. The Anglican Church in Ontario was one of the key movers in pressing for the establishment of the Human Rights Commission in 1961.

Heritage Buildings

Our Provincial Synod is in discussions with the Ontario Heritage Trust about its policies and their effect on our buildings. The Christian churches are the second largest holder of heritage-designated properties in Ontario. We are working jointly with the Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and United churches in these discussions that seek to preserve our heritage buildings for generations to come, while at the same time enabling us to adapt them to better ministry uses such as Out of the Cold, youth ministry, elder support and other programs.

STREET TALK: what does 'Reimagining the Church in the Public Square' look like to you?



“I envision a church engaged with the culture and context that it finds itself in. We need to join where God is already at work in the world. We serve the world God loves. We don't hide from it.”

— The Rev. Jon Martin (Diocese of Ottawa) [Not a delegate to Provincial Synod]



“I see the church's community expanding to include whole neighbourhoods and the church's building as a foundation all people associate with acceptance and belonging.”

— Erica Howes (Diocese of Ottawa) [Not a delegate to Provincial Synod]



“As Anglicans in a non-Anglican world, the language of church can sometimes be overwhelming for non-Anglicans and non-Christians. A revisiting process doesn't have to involve changing our parishes but rather how our identity and message are received by others. This will keep the church centered on ministry, clear and focussed liturgies, and prayerful communication.”

— Meg Stewart (Diocese of Ottawa) [Not a delegate to Provincial Synod]



“Although it seems somewhat heretical coming from someone who has worked for the Anglican Church all of his life, I think that reimagining the church in our culture today requires us to come forward with what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ first and foremost - and only then a member of the Anglican Church”

— David Embury (Diocese of Huron), Lay Member



“I don't think there is one answer to the question. It is going to depend on the circumstances that present themselves. Each situation is unique and may/will change depending on the issues in each parish and diocese. We need to be open to the Holy Spirit to see what that looks like. Some may close and others may thrive. I fear that some may see it only their way and not be open to the changes required.”

— Canon David Ricketts (Diocese of Niagara), Lay Member

Triennial Provincial Synod

What it does and how you can get involved

Rev. Canon Andrew Chisholm

Provincial Synod does a lot of work on your behalf. One of the most important things we do is bring stakeholders together around the table.

The Ontario Provincial Commission on Theological Education (OPCOTE) meets twice a year. It brings leadership from the theological colleges and dioceses together to discuss mutual concerns. Provincial Synod provides significant grants to the theological colleges of our Province.

In the past three years, we have hosted meetings of executive officers, financial officers and communications people to share ideas and

resources and to develop recommended policies and procedures.

Provincial Synod Council meets twice a year and hears reports and makes recommendations on a number of matters affecting the Anglican Church in Ontario. This has included advocacy on issues of justice, government legislation and regulation on chaplaincy, cemeteries, heritage matters, and water usage.

Provincial Synod employs two executive officers who do much of the inter-governmental work between meetings of the Council and Synod. The Provincial Secretariat is an important group with representatives from each of the political

parties in the legislature. It works with the Provincial Synod's executive officers to ensure that matters of concern to the church are directed to the appropriate government officials.

In the last provincial election, Provincial Synod facilitated the "I'm Voting for a Poverty Free Ontario" campaign. This included lawn signs, press releases and social media postings.

The Rev. Canon Andrew Chisholm is Communications, Honorary Clerical Secretary, and Web Manager for Provincial Synod.

How to Get Involved and Contact Information

You can get involved in the Provincial Synod by speaking to your delegate about what you think our priorities should be as we move forward. You are welcome to contact any of the officers of Synod about matters of concern to you. For inter-governmental affairs, we recommend contacting the Ven. Dr. Harry Huskins, who does the bulk of that work on our behalf.

Metropolitan

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The Diocese of Toronto
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MEETING INFORMATION

The Provincial Synod will meet for its 35th session in Toronto from Wednesday, Oct. 14 to Friday, Oct. 16. The session will be held at St. Paul's, Bloor Street in Toronto. Registration will take place from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 13.

The election of the Metropolitan (Archbishop) will take place on the Wednesday morning, with an installation service on the Thursday night.

The business sessions will include an update on the success of the reorganization of the Diocese of Moosonee and debate over what the priorities should be for the Synod's work in the next three years.

Further information on registration, accommodation and the agenda can be found on the Provincial website: <http://province-ontario.anglican.ca>.

HISTORY

The Ontario Provincial Synod was created in 1912 when the old Province of Canada was divided in two, becoming the present day ecclesiastical provinces of Ontario and Canada. The old Province had come into being in 1861 and included the dioceses of Toronto, Huron and Ontario, along with Montreal and Quebec. The dioceses of Fredericton and Nova Scotia joined a few years later. The dioceses of Niagara (1875), Ottawa (1896), and Algoma (1873) were added later when they were created. The Diocese of Moosonee was transferred from the Province of Rupert's Land to Ontario in 1935.

The focus of the old Province's work was its Domestic and Foreign Mission Society and its Woman's Auxiliary. With the establishment of the General Synod in 1893 and the transfer to it of this work, much of the reason for the old Province's existence was lost. The dioceses in the civil Province of Ontario wanted to re-focus their efforts on social reform work at the legislature in Toronto but, understandably, the dioceses in Quebec and the Maritimes were not very interested in this. This tension led to the division of the old Province in 1912. Bishop James Sweeny summed this up in his Charge to the 1914 Toronto Synod: "The formation of the Provincial Synod of Ontario has made it possible for us to deal more effectively as respecting the Church in this Province."

ELECTION OF THE METROPOLITAN

The Metropolitan is the senior bishop of the Province and carries the title of Archbishop. The Metropolitan is the president of the Provincial Synod, its Provincial Council, and of the Ontario House of Bishops, and presides at the election of other bishops. Canon II of the Province's constitution establishes a six-year term for the Office of Metropolitan, and only diocesan bishops are eligible for election.

Our present Metropolitan is Archbishop Colin Johnson. Canon II provides that a present Metropolitan may be nominated for re-election by any member of the Synod. The election is by a secret ballot in two orders with the bishops and clergy voting together in one order and the laity in the other. A majority in both orders is needed for an election.

Social Media and Website

Twitter:

@ontanglicans

Website:

<http://province-ontario.anglican.ca/>

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

have made strides in the creation of new parishes and archdeacons and all that is on course. As well, we have been able to ordain clergy to pastor these new parishes. However much still needs to be done before the end of the year.

NA: You attended a conference with clergy and lay leaders from Niagara Diocese. What message did you have for them?

BC: I enjoyed the interaction and friendships I made at the conference.

I spoke about our common call to ministry and asked the clergy to be persistent in prayer and in resolve.

Speaking on the theme "Press On"—with five ideas on the word *press*—I argued that we must seek to work on five important words in our journey of faith: **persistent** in resolve and faith, **remembering** that God who has called us is faithful and will not abandon us, being an **example** to others like Christ the Good Shepherd, seeking to **serve** as the Son of man did and not to be served, and finally offering ourselves as a living **sacrifice** that is holy and acceptable to God.

NA: How are people in your diocese responding to the Gospel message of Jesus Christ and what advice would they give to people in Niagara Diocese?

BC: Our people are very receptive to the gospel and we have the obligation of working to make them disciples of the gospel.

However, there is a huge challenge in terms of the growing upsurge of secularism and materialism. The Church in Ghana is working hard to be the voice of the voiceless and the conscience of our society.

Our advice to the people of the Diocese is to continue to be steadfast in the faith and

to strategize towards making the gospel attractive to people in a world that is increasingly secular. The easiest way will be in teaching to make people disciples and to ensure that the laity as well as the clergy are all involved in reaching out of our comfort zones.

I would recommend that the Diocese of Niagara work at going out to people rather than expecting people to come. This is easier said than done. However we are with you in prayer, for with God all things are possible.

NA: As a bishop in Ghana, what do you say to the government and civic leaders of your country?

BC: I am unfortunately not a friend of our government as issues of corruption are rife and we have not been silent on the issue. However, we cooperate with the government on social interventions, especially in the area of education, health and human rights.

NA: Any other comments that you wish to make?

BC: I express our sincere thanks and appreciation to my friend Bishop Michael, "Mother Superior" Susan and all our clergy and lay friends for their warmth and hospitality.

We appreciate very much this friendship in the Lord's ministry and we look forward to welcoming all in the Diocese to our home and Diocese in Mampong, Ghana.

I am thus extending a warm invitation to all members of the Diocese of Niagara to visit Ghana, our humble home, for a holiday, sabbatical, etc.

NA: Thank you. May God continue to bless you in your mission and ministry to God's people.

Bishop Cyril in Niagara



▲ During the Celtic liturgy at St. Cuthbert's Oakville Bishop Cyril spoke with the children.



◀ The Oakville Celtic Fiddlers were the guest musicians at St. Cuthbert's Oakville on the morning Bishop Cyril celebrated a special Celtic liturgy.

Photo: Submitted



▲ Following their ordinations in Christ's Church Cathedral, Deacons Nancy McBride, Holly Klemmensen and Hans Claessens, along with newly ordained priest Daniel Cranley, posed with Bishop Cyril and Bishop Michael.

Photo: Jane Wyse



In conversation with ...

The Reverend Mark Curtis: Justice of the Peace, Priest, Singer

Mark Curtis has been advised he is the first active priest to be appointed to the Ontario Court of Justice bench. The Niagara Anglican felt called to engage him in conversation about his unique situation.

Niagara Anglican (NA): Tell our readers about your early days.

Mark Curtis (MC): I was born and raised in Hamilton and was the second oldest of five boys. My father was a high school principal at Bishop Ryan High School where I attended, and my mother was a stay at home mom.

NA: Let's take each of your professions in turn; tell us about your life as a priest.

MC: My post-secondary education began in 1975—I attended the University of Waterloo. Initially, I had no intentions to enter the seminary to study for the priesthood, but after graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree I worked as a pastoral assistant in a busy parish in Hamilton. During this time, I felt the “tug of God” upon my heart to serve Him through the priesthood and entered St. Peter's Seminary at the University of Western Ontario in 1980.

I was ordained a deacon in 1983 and two years later a priest for the Diocese of Hamilton. Since my ordination, I have been privileged to serve in many parishes throughout Southern Ontario communities, including Dundalk, Guelph, Hamilton, Hanover, Milton and Waterloo.

In 1998, my priestly orders were received into the Anglican Communion by Bishop Ralph Spence and soon after my reception I was assigned to be the chaplain of St. Mildred's-Lightbourn School in Oakville. In 2000, I began to work full time in the music and speaking ministries across the province, evangelizing and raising funds for various church communities

and charitable organizations.

NA: What about your ministry as “the Singing Priest”?

MC: I've been singing ever since I was born. My earliest recollection of singing in public was during my grade school days, performing in children's choirs and school musicals. In high school and in university I formally studied music and began my writing and recording career.

Since 1975, I've written more than 200 compositions and produced some 15 recordings, performing throughout North America raising awareness for various charities and raising more than eleven million dollars.

NA: When did you become a Justice of the Peace, and why?

MC: On February 11, 2007, the Attorney General of Ontario appointed me to the judicial office of Justice of the Peace and assigned me to serve in the jurisdiction of Peel in the Brampton Criminal Courthouse. While serving on the Milton Town Council, I was approached by a number of community leaders to consider applying for this judicial role. Some two years after my initial interview, I received the appointment.

The duties of a Justice of the Peace include presiding in criminal bail courts, presiding over court appearances prior to trial, deciding if someone should be prohibited from possessing firearms, issuing warrants apprehending children in need of protection, deciding if someone should be bound by a peace bond and ordering the assessment of someone apparently suffering from a mental disorder.

I also hear and decide provincial offence cases, which include matters dealing with workplace health and safety, environmental protection, municipal by-law

matters, traffic offences and education matters.

In 2013 I received a transfer and now preside at the Milton Criminal Courthouse. The reason I accepted this appointment is simple—taking into account the role of a Justice, I felt it was an excellent opportunity to serve the community. Bearing in mind the Justice of the Peace is often the first, and sometimes the only judicial officer that a member of the public will ever meet, I saw this appointment as a real opportunity to be the “face of justice”.

NA: How do you integrate all three roles and how do they complement each other?

MC: Since my appointment, I retired from my full time music and speaking ministries and presently assist on Sundays as an Honorary Assistant at Grace Church Milton. In 30 years of priesthood, the call to serve God has come through numerous unique invitations. Whether serving in parish life, city politics, through the gift of song and now through the courts, the Lord's call remains the same: wherever you are, serve others with compassion, mercy and justice.

No matter where I am invited to serve, my parents' wisdom has always been my inspiration and guide: “You're not here to see through each other, but rather you're here to see each other through.” I see the office of Justice truly a special gift to serve all people with a face of gentleness, the words of mercy and a heart of justice.

NA: Blessings on your three ministries.

Editor's update: Since our conversation, Mark has been appointed the Regional Senior Judge for the Central West Region. He is now responsible for overseeing all of the Justices' daily court assignments at the Milton and Burlington Courthouses, and is the Regional Senior Justice of The Peace and Regional Senior Judge's presence and voice for the Halton Courts.



A Special Invitation

Any parish interested in touring Milton Courthouse, receiving an explanation of our Canadian justice system and possibly watch a hearing or trial is asked to contact Justice Mark Curtis at 905-878-4165 Ext. 4216.

Refugees



Helping refugees find a new life

SCOTT MCLEOD

According to the United Nations, today more than 42 million people are displaced from their homes, due mostly to some kind of armed human conflict.

Most of those are still within their own countries—think of the situations in Ukraine, Iraq and various African and Asian countries.

Of those 42 million people of concern, about 16 million are outside of their own countries and are considered refugees.

About four million are Palestinians, and are cared for under the umbrella of the United Nations Works and Relief Agency.

The rest, the 12 million, fall under the purview of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN refugee agency.

Of those 12 million, only about 10% (1.2 million) are eligible for resettlement to a country like Canada. In reality, only about 10% of that 10% (120,000 of the 1.2 million) will ever be resettled.

The needs are very great. This summer, the UNHCR reported there are four million Syrian refugees in the surrounding countries of Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.

There is so much instability and pressure on countries in that region, it is a miracle that things are not worse than they are. That

is not to say they are good by any stretch of the imagination.

The crises faced by people in that region are some of the worst situations we have ever seen in the history of the world.

While we need to rely on our governments and agencies to be working at improving the situations there, we also must recognize the plight of people in those situations, and our ability to do something to help in the short term. That is why Bishop Michael has set the goal for the 140th Anniversary of Niagara Diocese to sponsor 10 families.

There is a lot of need both close to home and on the other side of the world. As Christians, we are called to respond to need

everywhere.

Just as we are engaged with work to address and help with poverty and social justice here in Canada, in the Niagara Diocese we also play a part in helping people whose lives are hanging in the balance around the globe.

Resettlement is a lot of work, but together we can make sure Canada is welcoming and hospitable to newcomers who need the safety and security that we can provide them.

We do have to raise money. While we are always concerned with taking care of our church buildings, we do have wonderful opportunities to partner with people in the wider community to raise the necessary funds.

There are also opportunities to raise funds with creative events like the Ride For Refuge on October 4, 2015—a bicycle ride and walk where riders/walkers get pledges to raise funds for chosen organizations—in this case for our Diocesan refugee program.

If you have not already, consider taking part in the 140th Anniversary challenge and contribute to the Diocesan effort to offer a new life in safety to people whose lives are hanging in the balance.

The Reverend Scott McLeod is the new refugee coordinator for Niagara Diocese. EMAIL: smcleod@stgeorgesanglican.ca



Refugee campaign an overwhelming success

In just one month St. James-St. Brendan Port Colbourne raised over \$8,000 more than what is needed to support one refugee family in Canada.

Their goal was \$25,000 to sponsor the resettlement of a refugee family in the community, but they went even further and presented a cheque for \$33,725 to Bishop Michael.

Churchwardens Jim Allan and John Butt made the presentation to Bishop Michael as the Reverend Bill Mous and Rector Robert Hurkmans look on.

During Niagara's 140th anniversary, the diocese is hoping to sponsor 10 refugee families.

Photo: Submitted



September's Bible verse of the month

Luke 12:27 has proved true for me many times over—in times of physical and spiritual need.

Jesus tells us not to worry, for God will provide what we need (vs. what we want). It doesn't mean I just sit back and wait, but that God loves me and will somehow provide for me. It continues to give me hope and contentment in challenging times.

Craig Fairley,
Art Director, Niagara Anglican

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1285 Hwy. 8 at Winona Rd. 905-643-2180**

Mitts, computers and light bulbs brighten community

HOLLIS HISCOCK

The 850 students of Eenchokay Birchstick School in the north-western Ontario community of Pikangikum have an additional 151 laptops, thanks to 60 volunteers who helped refurbish the decommissioned computers.

Organizer Philip Schaus, organist at St. Aidan's Oakville, said Project Pikangikum brought his three separate jobs "together in a wonderful example of outreach." He is also the manager of Information Technology (IT) for purchasing at Siemens Oakville and leads computer donation workshops regularly.

Five years ago, he and two Siemens co-workers founded Corporations For Community Connections (CFCC). The registered charity refurbishes and then donates corporate computers. This gives new life to old computers, provides needed access to technology, diverts waste from landfills and offers corporations an economic alternative for computer disposal.

Project Pikangikum began nearly one year ago when St. Aidan's parishioner Len Fortune, who is familiar with the challenges faced by Pikangikum First Nations, invited Philip to a meeting of community representatives and others to address these challenges.

Many ideas were exchanged at the meeting.

Pikangikum's school principal expressed delight at the possibility of getting computers donated and also asked for mittens to



▲ 850 elementary and high school students attend Eenchokay Birchstick School, with its portable classrooms and other buildings, in the northwestern Ontario community of Pikangikum.

Photos: Brittney Gaska

▼ Volunteers refurbishing computers for use in Ontario schools.



▼ Philip Schaus packs mitts around computers to ensure a safe delivery to Pikangikum.



warm students' hands in the -40 degree winter weather.

Frontiers Foundation (frontiersfoundation.ca), with funding from The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, had finished installing water and sewage in 10 homes, and were anxious to continue installing more. However, the tribal council would not give their consent because of the possible negative impact on Pikangikum's fragile electric power genera-

tors. They were concerned the system's pumps and heaters could contribute to additional power outages. Frontiers proposed the replacement of all of Pikangikum's incandescent light bulbs with high efficiency LED bulbs, but neither bulbs nor funding were available.

Philip conveyed Pikangikum's situation to colleagues and friends at St. Aidan's, Siemens and CFCC. Within a few weeks Project Pikangikum was born.

Siemens committed to donate the decommissioned computers and funds for their refurbishment and transportation. At special workshops, 60 volunteers refurbished 151 English language laptops for Pikangikum's school, as well as 50 French language laptops for schools in Hamilton and Oakville.

Osram Sylvania agreed to supply and transport 3,600 LED light bulbs.

And a mountain of mittens

was amassed by St. Aidan's parishioners, Siemens employees, the Salvation Army, students and other churches.

In May a cargo plane made three round trips to Pikangikum to complete the delivery of 151 laptops, 40 surge protectors, 1,000 sets of mittens and hats and 3,600 LED light bulbs.

Philip, who travelled with the cargo, said the computers provide the students "access to information and equip them with the tools they need to make their voices heard throughout our increasingly interconnected world."

The school's Vice Principal Kurt MacRae responded, "I just want to thank you at this time for providing the 151 laptops to our school so we can better meet our technology needs. This initiative will also enable us to continue to improve educational outcomes for our students."

The computers are being used to create workstations in classrooms, improve literacy skills for special needs students and enhance other elementary and secondary educational programs.

Frontiers Foundation and Ontario Works partnered to install the LED light bulbs in every home in Pikangikum, and as a result additional homes will receive running water and sewerage systems.

"And next winter, hundreds of little hands will be warmed with new mittens," Philip remarked with a smile.

Theme for Ontario's Provincial Synod:

Niagara is one of seven dioceses making up the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario.

The others—Algoma, Huron, Moosonee, Ontario, Ottawa and Toronto—are all located within the civil Province of Ontario.

Every three years the Provincial Synod meets to review the work of the past several years and decide what areas of mission and ministry should be the focus for the future.

Some of the ongoing concerns of Provincial Synod include:

- overseeing ACPO (Advisory Committee of Postulants for Ordination) as part of the discernment process for those who feel called to ordained ministry;
- supporting and promoting the work of OPCOTE (Ontario Provincial

Commission of Theological Education) which gathers representatives from around the province who are engaged in theological education, and;

- the provincial secretariat. Because the seven dioceses reside primarily within the civil province of Ontario, it provides an opportunity to focus on the needs of the province, and work directly with members of the legislature to help shape government policies and services.

Delegates attending this year's Provincial Synod, which meets in Toronto from October 14-16, will focus on the theme "re-imagining the Church in the public square."

The Bishop, Chancellor, four clergy, four laypeople and one youth delegate will represent Niagara Diocese.

Forty-five years of ministry

The Asbil Lounge

MARTHA TATARNIC

The idea was first presented to our Parish Council by parishioner George Hostick. St. George's St. Catharines has a history of naming rooms after former Incumbents: the Swan, the Luxton, Lower Broughall Hall. The Council was instantly in favour of George's idea and voted unanimously to dedicate our recently-renovated lounge as The Asbil Lounge—honouring the 45 years of ministry of Mavis and Bishop Walter Asbil at St. George's.

The next part was fun. We covertly contacted their family, suggesting Father's Day would be an appropriate day to make the announcement, while also providing a guise if any of the family were able to be with us. We alerted our congregation that "Something Special" would be happening on June 21, but in collaboration with the family, decided that we wanted this to

be a surprise.

Mavis and Walter were gratefully caught off-guard when June 21 came along and many of their family surprised them by coming into town for the Father's Day worship. Parishioners greeted three of their children who were able to be with us—and their families—with a sense of homecoming. After all, the Asbils raised their family at St. George's.

The Gospel for that Sunday told of Jesus and his disciples encountering stormy waters in a journey across the lake. With a word of peace and faith, Jesus finds a calm centre in the midst of the winds and waves.

Reflecting on this passage, so often read as a metaphor for our own individual and communal journeys—the stormy moments, the places where we encounter calm and peace and faith—I was able, on behalf of the congregation, to give thanks for Mavis' and Walter's incredible ministry at St. George's.



▲ Walter and Mavis Asbil

Photo: Jane McLaughlin

They first arrived in St. Catharines in 1970 when Walter was appointed Rector of the parish, returning to serve St. George's and the Niagara Diocese in 1990 when he was ordained Bishop, and then retiring to live and work in the congregation.

Over that time, our community buried loved ones, welcomed new ones, filled our worship space with song and prayer, told our stories, weathered our storms and counted our blessings. Not surprisingly, then, at every turn in my own ministry at St. George's, I hear grateful

stories of the wisdom, friendship, faithfulness, consideration and honesty of Walter and Mavis—of the important place they have come to hold in the major life moments of so many of us. They have served as a team every step of the way, and they have offered incalculable gifts to building up the faith and fellowship of our church.

There were many tears shed when, at the end of my homily, I announced to delighted gasps that the Council had made this decision to dedicate our Lounge as The Asbil Lounge in honour of

their rich and generous work and offering.

Thank you Mavis and Walter: from your church family, from your Diocese, from the countless people who share their stories of how your life and witness touched them, strengthened their faith, and helped them to find God's safe passage through the stormy seas.

The Reverend Martha Tatarnic is Rector of St. George's St. Catharines. EMAIL: marthatatarnic@hotmail.com

Christmas memories and other gifts



Every year we enjoy reading about people's Christmas experiences.

So send us yours as your Christmas gift to our readers in 2015.

In 300 words or less ...

- ▶ Recall a special Christmas worship;
- ▶ Relate a humorous Christmas happening;
- ▶ Retell a Christmas experience in poem or story;
- ▶ Relive a Christmas tradition or memory, or
- ▶ Reflect on what Christmas means for you.

You can even draw a Christmas picture or cartoon.



Send us a high resolution head shot photo of yourself.

We need your submissions by **October 25** to include in our December paper.

Send your item to editor@niagaraanglican.ca or Editor, Niagara Anglican, 710 Ashley Ave, Burlington, ON, L7R 2Z3 or talk to the Editor at 905-635-9463.



GENERAL SYNOD 2016 DIOCESE OF NIAGARA - CALL FOR NOMINATIONS



The Synod of the Diocese of Niagara is calling for nominations to the General Synod which will meet July 7-13, 2016 in Toronto.

Niagara is entitled to elect (4) clergy delegates, (4) lay delegates and (1) youth delegate. Youth Synod was held in May, 2015 and delegates have been selected by vote for the Youth delegate and the Youth alternate.

Individuals must be members of the 2015 Diocesan Synod in order to be eligible for nomination. The consent of a nominee must be given prior to his/her name being submitted. Members of Synod may self-nominate.

Deadline for nominations is September 30, 2015 and must include: name, parish, location, gender, email address, phone number and the completed nomination form, available from your parish or online.

The ballot will be presented to the October 2015 Diocesan Synod. Nominations will be accepted

from the floor conditional upon the consent of the nominee. Further information about this volunteer opportunity is available on the General Synod area of our Diocesan website: niagaraanglican.ca/synod/general

Please send nominations to:
The General Synod Nominations Committee
Mrs. Mary Anne Grant
Administrative Assistant
maryanne.grant@niagaraanglican.ca

Cathedral Place
252 James Street North
Hamilton ON L8R 2L3
Fax: 905-527-1281

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A sounding board

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

In her article "Why young people are leaving the church, and

how to get them back" (*Niagara Anglican* May 2015) 17-year-old Sierra Robertson-Roper, a youth delegate to Provincial Synod, described a challenge facing many churches. She made the following recommendations:

- Focus less on words, and more

on meaning

- Put our money where our mouths are
- Talk more about what we do believe, and less about what we don't believe
- Make the Church more open to young people

She concluded, "It is absolutely necessary to bring young people back to the church, and for that to happen, there need to be major changes in the way our faith community functions."

In responding to Sierra, Elisabeth Staton addresses

the challenge from another perspective.

Both are fulfilling the mandate of the *Niagara Anglican* to be a sounding board.

I recommend you read and reflect upon both.

Why we need to talk about Jesus and the truth of Christianity and not try to turn the Church into something it isn't

ELISABETH STATON

I applaud Sierra Robertson-Roper's ("Why young people are leaving the church and how to get them back" *Niagara Anglican* May 2015) obvious commitment to the Anglican Church, her faith and youth ministry.

Sierra says "it sometimes feels like more trouble than its worth" to talk about her faith with her peers. I suggest, though, that if we don't take the trouble to counteract the negatives in the media, then we can't expect anyone to know the truth. If, as she says "the church is often seen as a negative institution that gets in the way of social change", it is up to us to point out at every opportunity the positive and

life-changing activities of the Church.

When Sierra suggests "less focus on words and more on meaning", I hope she doesn't forget the importance of the actual words Jesus spoke, which the disciples learned from him and which we need to speak as well. Jesus said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also that shall believe on me through their word" (John 17:20). It is through the words of Jesus, given to the disciples and given to us, that we make known to the world our faith and beliefs.

When Sierra calls the Bible "an integral part of our faith", there is a possibility of categorizing the Bible incorrectly. The Bible is *sui generis* (the only thing

of its kind): the inspired Word of God. The Bible is also most definitely "a book of laws" (for what else would you call the Ten Commandments?). There are many ancient customs that are no longer practiced by Christians, but it could be misleading to suggest that the Bible's core laws are no longer pertinent. The Bible is not merely "a history of mankind." It is, in particular, and amongst other things, the history of creation and the people of Israel and, most importantly of the life of Jesus Christ.

I'm not sure what "archaic language" she is referring to that needs explaining (it's true the King James Bible is sometimes difficult to understand!). There are countless contemporary-

language Bibles, prayer books and hymn books available whose language should be accessible to all.

Finally, calling for "justice making" in the Church approaches a misreading of the Church's primary function here on earth: to worship God and believe in Jesus Christ. You can be a Christian politician or a Christian in any endeavor or profession. However, membership in the Body of Christ is not membership in a social justice or political action group. As C.S. Lewis so succinctly said, "we don't come to Christianity because we think it good for society, we come because we think it is true."

We should also take care when we ask the Church to respond to

what some particular age group is looking for. The Church doesn't exist for anyone's personal needs or for the fashion of the moment —rather, we come to Church to participate in the Body of Christ, so that "where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them" (Matthew 18:20).

I hope Sierra continues to share her experience of the worship of God and the exceptional story of Jesus Christ with those with whom she comes into contact.

Elisabeth Staton is a member of St. John the Evangelist Elora. EMAIL: lisastaton2000@gmail.com

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