

REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF CONGEGATIONAL SUPPORT

Our Mission is to develop strong, vital, committed faith communities in the Diocese of Niagara and to nurture the leadership required to create and sustain them.

Through programs, events, training days and parish consultations, Children, Youth and Family Ministries continues to support the Bishop's priorities for the Diocese of leadership, stewardship and evangelism.

Children and Family Ministries

Program Consultant: Christyn Perkons on part-time basis.

- Works to enhance the ability of the Niagara Anglican Community to nurture the spiritual growth of children and their inclusion in faith communities.
- Provides resources and leadership training for Sunday School, junior youth ministry and family ministry to parishes and parish clusters by request.
- Visits parishes to get to know volunteers and staff involved in children and family ministry, to get a sense of what's happening in parishes across the diocese and to offer resources.

Children and Family Ministry Advisory Committee

- Regional representatives meet bi-monthly to support the work of the Program Consultant, to vision and plan around diocesan-wide programming and training needs, and to offer feedback about resources.

Family Ministry

- An annual retreat for families is held at the Canterbury Hills Conference Centre each winter to provide families with an opportunity to relax, to reconnect with their family members, to bond with other families and to nourish each other. The 2007 Winter Retreat is scheduled for February 16-18.
- Resources particular to family needs are available through the lending library and include books in the areas of parenting, family spirituality, family activities, special needs children and family milestones as well as games, music and videos/CDs.

Puppet Ministry

- Eighteen puppets along with puppet skits, instruction guides, and training manuals are available for loan to parishes to use in Sunday School, children's talks, worship, Bible storytelling, and church announcements. Mini training workshops can be provided to parishes by the consultant, and training days by a professional at a puppet training school are offered as interest dictates.

Children's Festivals

- The consultant provides support to the regional Children's Festivals through advertising, administration, and button design and creation. Over 700 children enjoy this event annually which typically occurs on the last Saturday in April. Renewed interest among the Trafalgar clerics led to a Trafalgar Children's Festival on October 21st hosted by St. Simon's, Oakville. Planning for the 2007 Children's Festivals in Undermount/Mohawk, Lincoln/Brock, Greater Wellington and Trafalgar commences early November.

All My Relations...the Journey Continues

- Family-based education component of the Diocesan commitment to New Agape designed to help provide children, youth and families with an opportunity to learn about aboriginal culture and interact with First Nations people.
- Plans are underway for the March 2007 event at St. George's, St. Catharines.

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Lending Library

- A wide variety of books, activities, games, music, videos and CDs are available for three week loans through the Program Consultant's office. New resources include a "Full Armour of God" suit (related to Ephesians 6:13-18) suitable for children under 10, worship resources from the Wild Goose Resource Group (Iona), Creative Arts in Worship, Becoming Family: How to Build a Stepfamily That Really Works, Games, Crowdbreakers and Community Builders, Bible Alphabet Puzzles, Wa-a-a-ay Cool Bible Puzzles, Preteen Ministry Smart Pages, Making Worship Real, Prayers to Share, Help! I'm a Sunday School Teacher, The Incredible Indoor Games Book, Making Your Children's Ministry the Best Hour of Every Week!, and Fearless Pharaoh Foo-Foo and Other Dramas for Children.

Resources

The consultant can provide:

- Resource packages for Christian Education Days - All Saints Day, Ash Wednesday and Pentecost.
- Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation materials.
- Retreat planning resources.
- Worship resources.
- Response to particular needs such as: requests for particular types of crafts or crafts related to a particular observance such as Good Friday, games for teaching servers, developing a junior youth ministry, and summer activities related to church and faith experiences to name but a few.
- Information handouts including articles on Prayers for Children, Hosting an All Saints Party, Working with Behavioural Challenges, Christmas Pageants, What's Available in Church School Curriculum, Teaching Tips 101, Co-operative Games, Puppet Ministry in the Parish, and Young Teens Ministry Toolbox.

Youth Ministry

Program Consultant: Joyce Wilton and Christyn Perkons job-share this portfolio.

- Works to enhance the ability of the Niagara Anglican Community to nurture the spiritual growth of youth and young adults and their inclusion in faith communities.
- Provides resources and leadership training for junior/senior youth ministry and young adult initiatives to parishes and parish clusters by request.
- Visits parishes on request to get to know volunteers and staff involved in youth ministry, to get a sense of what's happening in parishes across the diocese and to offer support and resources.

Diocesan Youth Ministry Committee (DYMC)

- Representatives meet monthly to support and offer direction to the Program Consultants, and to define and execute the direction, vision and plans around diocesan-wide programming and training needs, and to offer feedback about resources.

The Annual Calendar of Events includes:

Junior Youth Connections (JYC)

- A traveling semi-annual program hosted by a different parish and region each time. The target group is youth in grades 5 – 8 and their leaders.

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- A Friday night program that offers a fun-filled night for the youth with the opportunity to meet other Anglican kids from their area, and resources and networking to their parents and leaders in a parallel program. The Spring JYC took place at St. George's, St. Catharines in April, 2006, and the Fall event is being hosted by St. Christopher's, Burlington on Friday, October 20.

Diocesan Synod Youth Members Residence & Orientation

- A residential program at Canterbury Hills that includes an orientation to synod procedures for Youth Members of Diocesan Synod during the annual Synod meeting in November.
- The residence and orientation will be on Friday, November 24 at Canterbury Hills.
- Provides an opportunity to create relationships amongst the youth and young adult community attending Diocesan Synod, and offer support and education about procedures and meeting content for Synod.

SpiritQuest

- An intimate spiritual retreat for youth aged 15-24.
- For 11 years SpiritQuest was held at St. Michael's House in Oakville. The 2006 event (February 10-12) was moved to a larger and more central facility, the Unity Retreat Centre in Hamilton, with 15 participants and three leaders.
- The program has also been expanded to include a young adult component with particular emphasis on making transitions and the spiritual journey.
- The 2007 event will take place February 9-11 at the Unity Retreat Centre.

Servers' Fest

- An annual day-long event to connect, thank and encourage servers of all ages from all parishes across the diocese.
- Christ's Church Cathedral hosted this event on February 18, 2006. There were over 100 participants representing more than 20 parishes ranging in age from six years through to retirement. Thank you to the approximately 20 volunteers who helped make this annual event a success and to the Cathedral for its hospitality.
- The 2007 event will take place on Saturday, February 24 at Christ's Church Cathedral.

Youth Leadership Training Program (YLTP)

- A three-year leadership training program (now in its third decade) held during March Break. It takes place at Canterbury Hills, this year from March 12-15, 2006 with 42 participants including six adult leaders.
- A Commissioning Service for the 3rd year participants, their families and supporters was held at St. Elizabeth's, Burlington on May 28, 2006. Thanks to St. Elizabeth's for their hospitality.
- The 2007 event will take place Sunday March 11 to Wednesday March 14.
- Applications for first year participants are available now and will be accepted until the end of January 2007.

Youth Synod

- The largest youth ministry program in Niagara, the 18th annual Youth Synod was hosted by St. John's, Ancaster, May 5-7, 2006.
- Offers youth delegates ages 13 – 21 the opportunity to debate and strategize about issues important to their faith and their communities.

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- One hundred and five delegates and over 40 volunteer staff were in attendance representing over 50 parishes. The minutes are available on the Youth Ministry website: www.zipsqueal.com. Many thanks to our host parish St. John's for their hospitality!
- Youth Synod 2007, hosted by St. George's, Guelph, will take place May 4-6.

Youth Synod Council

- This body, which drafts motions for the upcoming Youth Synod, follows up on motions post-Synod, and functions as the voice of youth in the Diocese of Niagara between Youth Synods, came into being as a result of a motion at Youth Synod 2005.
- Involves 15 youth representatives representing the regions along with the Chair of Youth Synod
- Thanks to Rev. Stephen Murray for facilitating the Council's work in 2006.

Youth Ministry Sunday

- A variety of resources (bulletin covers, theme ideas, and liturgical material) are offered to parishes to help them celebrate Youth Ministry in their congregation on the date of their choosing.
- Resource material and bulletin covers were mailed to all parishes prior to June 4 (our target celebration date) and also available on the website at www.zipsqueal.com. Check out this site to view the 2006 resources and the resources from previous years.

Niagara Youth Conference (NYC)

- The cornerstone event in youth ministry in Niagara - this year was the 60th Anniversary of the first NYC (formerly NLC).
- The purpose of this five day residential event is to establish a caring, spiritual, participatory, learning community that encourages inclusivity and personal sharing (mitigated, of course, by fun and frivolity).
- NYC took place from August 27 to September 1, 2006 at Canterbury Hills with 112 participants. The program is staffed by 23 volunteers who give nine months to the planning and execution of this conference, pictures of which can be seen at www.zipsqueal.com.

Regional Youth Ministry

Lincoln Youth Fest (LYF)

- The parishes in the Lincoln Region, with the assistance of the diocesan youth ministry staff, began to dream of working cooperatively in ministry to its youth in grades 5 -8 in the winter of 2006 which has resulted in the Lincoln Youth Fest which meets monthly, one Friday a month, to share a meal, to have fun together and to develop a new and supportive faith community across the region.
- Lincoln Youth Fest met from March to June, took a break in the summer and plans are in place for September through December.

Hamilton Regional Youth Worship – The Gathering

- In the winter of 2006, a group of committed youth leaders met along with diocesan youth ministry staff to dream about the possibility of offering quarterly youth worship in the Hamilton area dedicated to youth and young adults.

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- “The Gathering” had its first event on Saturday March 25 at McMaster University with follow-up events on May 27 at St. James Dundas, and September 30 at St. Paul’s in Hamilton. The last event of 2006 will take place on November 25th (yes, right after Diocesan Synod).
- This event is committed to offering worship in the 21st Century with a live band and liturgy written and delivered by its youth and young adult participants.

North Greater Wellington

- This cluster began their joint youth ministry with an Open Space event from which emerged plans for 2006 which included a Bruce Trail hike arranged by Chris Saayman from St. Mark’s, Orangeville, a youth worship featuring the NYC Band hosted by St. John’s, Mono Mills (Diocese of Toronto), a Confirmation Retreat hosted by Rev. Amy Cousineau (All Saints, Erin) and a canoe trip to Long Lake hosted by Rev. Peter Scott (St. Mark’s, Orangeville).

Stoney Creek

- As part of the Stoney Creek/Winona parishes’ work on shared ministry, Diocesan youth ministry staff was invited to participate in some of their children/youth ministry planning.
- Subsequently, a successful joint parish Ash Wednesday event was held at Our Saviour, Stoney Creek.

Looking Forward - Youth Leaders’ Training Weekend

- This is our 2nd annual event in co-operation with the Dioceses of Toronto and Ottawa where professional and lay youth leaders from across the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario gather for a weekend to learn new skills, compare notes, find support and rejuvenation and share resources.
- This year’s event took place November 3 – 5 at Canterbury Hills.

Children and Youth Ministry Network – Spiritual Spa

- An annual event intended to nourish, nurture and thank children and youth ministry volunteers.
- Participants have a choice of “spa” workshops which include offerings such as Soul Food, Therapeutic Touch, Embodied Living, Biblical Gardening, Sacred Circle Dancing, Tai Chi, Batiking Meditation, Music for the Musically Challenged and Pray As You Can, Not As You Can’t, and also enjoy dinner and a guest speaker.

Lending Resource Library

- Includes resources for program planning, current youth ministry theory and theology as well as worship and music resources. There are also resources available to assist in training and study.
- Located at the Diocesan Resource Centre Program Department offices and are available to individuals and parishes on a three-week loan basis.
- To check out the many resources available, an on-line catalogue can be found on the youth ministry website: www.zipsqueal.com.

Consultations and Training

- Joyce and Christyn are involved with a number of parishes on a consultation basis.
- Consultations can be as simple as telephone support and resource sharing electronically or as complex as a multi-event response created especially for your parish’s needs – we are only a phone call or email away!

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- Consultations are designed to meet the needs of the individual parish. The focus of the consultation may include visioning for youth ministry in the specific parish or area, development of a youth ministry program, specific training for youth ministry staff and volunteers as well as advice on hiring youth ministry personnel.
- Both consultants are offering workshops at The Leadership Conference on October 28, 2006; Joyce in Single Digit Youth Ministry& Soul Tending in Youth Ministry, and Christyn (with Rev. Sue-Ann Ward) in Empowering a Parish Community in Outreach.

Adult Education

Bishop's Diploma Course (BDC)

- This program provides instruction related to faith issues for over 100 lay people through two eight-week terms (fall and winter) and is offered in as many as six parish centres. Course themes include Old Testament, New Testament, ethics, liturgy, history, spirituality, world religions and Anglicanism.
- Diploma requirements are completion of six course and attendance at a retreat.
- The biennial retreat will take place on Saturday, November 4 at Christ's Church Cathedral, Hamilton with guest speaker Bishop Ann Tottenham.
- Graduations are also planned biennially. The next graduation is planned for Wednesday, December 6 at Christ's Church Cathedral, Hamilton. This event includes a Eucharist with diploma presentation followed by a dinner with Bishop Spence.
- Thank you to Rev. Haynes Hubbard, Rev. Canon Dr. Mark McDermott, Ven. Bruce McPetrie, Rev. Canon Barry Randle, Rev. John Ripley and Rev. Paul Whitehouse, our BDC leaders, for their ongoing leadership and dedication to the program.
- Jane Wyse provides staff support for BDC and may be contacted for more information.

Thanks to our Volunteers!

We would like to thank the dozens² of volunteers who have supported our work in the past year. Without you, we could not make the difference in peoples' lives that we have been privileged to offer. Thank you!

Staff of the Division are:

- Marion Vincett, Executive Officer, Ext. 340, marion.vincett@niagara.anglican.ca
- Christyn Perkons, Program Consultant, Children, Youth & Family Ministries, New Agepe Education, Ext. 460, christyn.perkons@niagara.anglican.ca
- Joyce Wilton, Program Consultant, Youth Ministry, Volunteer Management & Screening, Ext. 430, joyce.wilton@niagara.anglican.ca
- Jane Wyse, Diocesan Administrative Assistant, Ext. 420, jane.wyse@niagara.anglican.ca

REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF MINISTRY SUPPORT

During the past year, the College of Deacons has flourished with the Rev. Anne Crawford, Deacon graciously serving as Chair, all with the heart-felt appreciation of the College. She has now been succeeded by the Rev. Joseph Noseworthy, Deacon. Synod Council representatives to the College are Canon Margaret Murray, Ian Smith and Ross Gillett. Our Committee is pleased with the progress and expanding activity of the Vocational Diaconate.

The Committee functions as a preliminary review panel in close cooperation with the Director of Human Resources when developing recommended policies and best practices regarding diverse matters. These include transitional ministry, insurance and risk management, long-term disability and pensions, Provincial water, food and property legislative changes affecting parishes, community health and emergency issues, and the dissemination of private information.

The Director of Human Resources, Treasurer and Executive Officer represented the Diocese in discussions with the National Pension Office over our concerns about changes to the LTD Plan. We are pleased to report that the Pension heard our concerns and we are now convinced that the new plan will provide financial security for our members.

The Supplementary Employment Benefit is now available for all parish employees on the Diocesan payroll who can claim EI benefits. Combined with EI sickness benefits, the employee may receive 95% of their salary for short term illness.

Good cooperation has been noted among the Dioceses of Huron, Toronto, Niagara and occasionally Western New York in dealing with matters related to human resources.

The new Accessibility legislation applies to parish halls only. However, the requirements will be phased in over several years. A better method of assessing related needs is being discussed. The proposed Heritage legislation introduced by the previous provincial government has rightly been deferred for further preparation; it could have severely affected the future of church properties.

Canon Marni Nancekivell is now the Director of both Interim Ministry replacing Canon Bill Thomas; she also serves as Coordinator of Fresh Start.

The Compensation Sub-Committee has reported to Synod Council recommending approval of a 2007 increase of 2.0% in the minimum salary guidelines and the living allowances, with an additional 1% on stipends to clergy residing in a rectory; the same salary increase was recommended for other diocesan and parish staffs. It is noted that a Compensation Task Force is developing recommendations to address many long-standing problems affecting all staff.

A Contract Purchasing Task Force has been established and is focused on developing procedures to obtain the best combined value for parishes and the Diocese in bulk purchasing arrangements for many common commodities. Further study details will shortly be available.

Various Seminars and Conferences have been noted and wider attendance encouraged. Consideration is being given to arranging a Retirement Seminar.

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The Committee members recognize the support and assistance provided by both Rev. David Long, the Human Resources Director and Alison D'Atri. Much has been achieved in the past few years and much is being accomplished in establishing proper staffing policies and ministry standards.

Ross Gillett has served as Chair and represented the Committee to Synod Council, with Sharon White as Alternate. The Committee would like one or two more members, particularly from the Oakville area, to assist in our work.

Committee members:

Rev. Dan Bennett, Welland
Mr. David Bucsis, Hamilton
Rev. Fran Darlington, Guelph
Mr. Ross Gillett, Niagara Falls
Rev. Canon Elaine Hooker, Stoney Creek
Rev. Ronald Pincoe, Deacon, Orangeville
Ms. Sharon White, Dundas
Rev. David Long, Director Human Resources
Mrs. Alison D'Atri, Recording Secretary

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Ross J. W. Gillett O.N., Chair