

REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT

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

Through programs, events, training days and parish consultations, Congregational Support and Development continues to support the diocesan vision of **Life Changing Worship**, **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry**, **Prophetic Social Justice**, **Generous Culture of Stewardship** and **Continuous Culture of Innovation** grounded in **Spiritual Values** (spiritual discipline, valuing diversity, honesty & integrity, passion & hard work) so that we may **Journey in Faith**; following Christ passionately, pursuing excellence and continuing to grow.

Staff of the Division are:

- Christyn Perkons, Director of Congregational Support & Development, Ext. 460, christyn.perkons@niagaraanglican.ca
- Brian Reusch, Program Consultant, Children, Youth & Family Ministry, Ext. 430, brian.reusch@niagaraanglican.ca. We were fortunate to hire Brian as of May 2013.
- Jane Wyse, Senior Administrative Assistant, Ext. 420, jane.wyse@niagaraanglican.ca

Congregation Support

Christyn facilitates congregational support and development work with parishes using tools such as Open Space, Asset Mapping, Appreciative Inquiry & Holy Conversations/ Strategic Planning; offers resources such as staff performance evaluations, functional job interviewing and missional tools; maintains a CSD resource library; serves on Candidates Committee and the Journeys in Faith team, and chairs the **Life Changing Worship** petal of the diocesan vision leadership team. She is also the Bishop's representative on the Canterbury Hills Board of Directors and the Niagara Anglican Publication Board.

Congregational Support & Development Resources

- Emerging Church/Alternate Worship – books, videos, DVDs.
- Change Management – books and 'how to' manuals.
- Adult Education – programs; Via Media, Living the Questions (1 & 2) Saving Jesus, Eclipsing Empire, The Fit Life.
- Parish Guide for Same Gender Blessings Discussion.
- New Resources:
 - *mission-shaped parish: traditional church in a changing world*
 - *mission-shaped spirituality: the transforming power of mission*
 - *mission-shaped and rural: growing churches in the countryside*
 - *Going Missional: Conversation with 13 Canadian Churches Who Have Embraced Missional Life*
 - *Mission-shaped Questions*
 - *The Power of Team Leadership (George Barna)*
 - *Leadership Can Be Taught (Sharon Daloz Parks)*
 - *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading (Ron Heifetz & Marty Linsky)*

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- *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World (Heifitz, Linsky & Grashow)*
- *Tilt: Small Shifts in Leadership That Make a Big Difference*
- *Following the Path: the Search for a Life of Passion, Purpose and Joy*
- *Not Your Parents' Offering Plate*
- *Serving as a Board Member; practical guidance for directors of Christian ministries*
- *Greenhouses of Hope: Congregations Growing Young Leaders Who Will Change the World*
- *The Other Side of Chaos: Breaking Through When Life is Breaking Down*
- *Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life*
- *Forgiven and Forgiving*
- *The Monastery of the Heart: An Invitation to a Meaningful Life*
- *Hildegard of Bingen: Selections from Her Writings*
- *Meister Eckhart: Selections From His Essential Writings*
- *Caring for Creation Bible Study & Leader Guide*
- *Bare Feet & Buttercups (Wild Goose)*
- *Dirt, Mess & Danger (Wild Goose)*
- *Praying for the Dawn (Wild Goose)*
- *Friends & Enemies (Wild Goose)*
- *Acorns & Archangels (Wild Goose)*
- *The Other Face of God*
- *My Heart in My Mouth*
- *Singing the Unsung: John Bell DVD*
- *Painting the Stars: Science, Religion and an Evolving Faith DVD from Living the Questions*
- *Embracing a Life of Meaning: Kathleen Norris on Discovering What Matters DVD*
- *On Our Way: Conversations about spiritual practices DVD*
- *The asphalt gospel (six ordinary people set out on a journey to change the face of Christianity in North America)*

Children and Family Ministry

Consultant: Christyn Perkons (January-May), Brian Reusch (May-December)

- 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 morning programming, junior youth ministry and family ministry to parishes and parish clusters by request.
- Visits parishes by invitation 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.
- Providing staff support to the Undermount Children's Ministry Resource Group which offered workshops on Baptism and Confirmation: Advent and Christmas; Lent and Easter: Pentecost, Ascension and Trinity to support the programming provided in parishes

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Family Ministry

- 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, sexuality and family milestones as well as games, music and videos/CDs.
- Parishes wanting to enhance ministry to families are encouraged to contact Brian for ideas and resources.

Puppet Ministry

- Eighteen puppets along with puppet skits, instruction guides, and training manuals are available for loan to parishes to use in Sunday morning children's programming, 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

- Children's Festival will be offered as a family day in 2014; stay tuned for details!

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:

- *Lighthouse*
- *Badger's Parting Gift*
- *Scared and Worried*
- *Have You Filled a Bucket?*
- *Creative Ideas for Children's Worship*
- *Humphrey's First Palm Sunday*
- *Living Lent: The Animals Tell the Story*
- *All-in-One Sunday School*
- *Dreaming of More for the Next Generation*
- *Twas the Night Before Easter Veggie Tales DVD*
- *The House That Stood Veggie Tales DVD*
- *Bibletoons: Rez the Rock that Rolled DVD*
- *Now I Can Celebrate Passover kit*
- *Complete Guide to Godly Play*

Resources

The consultant can provide:

- Resource packages for All Saints Day, Ash Wednesday and Pentecost.
- Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation materials.
- Retreat planning resources.
- Innovative worship resources including instructed Eucharists.
- Response to particular needs such as: specific types of crafts, crafts related to a particular observance such as Good Friday, games for teaching servers, developing a junior youth ministry, working with special needs children, 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.

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Youth Ministry

Consultant: Christyn Perkons (January-May), Brian Reusch (May-December)

- Work 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.
- Develop and train a strong and committed group of lay and clergy leaders to staff our programs and to share this leadership and their abilities with the larger diocesan community.
- Provide resources and leadership training for junior/senior youth ministry and young adult initiatives to parishes and parish clusters by request.
- Visit 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)

Mission:

Diocesan Youth Ministry is called by the Spirit to create and uphold authentic and transformative experiences in faith for youth, young adults and those who minister to and with them. We equip them for passionate leadership, ministry and advocacy; empower them in their response to God's call and in faith-based decision making; nurture their spiritual gifts; and provide opportunities for them to explore their relationship with God through intentional safe communities, creative and engaging worship, Christ-centred leadership development and relationship-based programming, rooted in the Anglican tradition.

We honour and uphold volunteers and staff in youth ministry at the parish and diocesan level; respecting their call to ministry by providing continuing education, support, recognition, and resources, and by encouraging them in faithful risk taking. In our quest for excellence in ministry, participants, volunteers, staff and parents regularly provide feedback about programs, resources and goals which is integrated into our continuously developing ministry.

The committee meets monthly to support this mission.

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The Annual Calendar of Events includes:

Diocesan Synod Youth Members Orientation & Residence

- An orientation to synod procedures for Youth Members of Diocesan Synod (16-25 years of age) during the annual Synod meeting in November.
- The orientation portion of the program will take place November 2, 2013 at Church of the Nativity, Hamilton.
- The residence portion of the program will take place November 15-16, 2013 at Christ's Church Cathedral, Hamilton.
- This **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry** event provides an opportunity to create relationships amongst the youth and young adult community attending Diocesan Synod, and offers support and education about procedures and meeting content for Synod so that youth are able to take a leadership role that reflects the vision **Spiritual Values**.

aWay...

- An intimate spiritual retreat for youth aged 16-25 highlighting **Spiritual Values, Journeys in Faith, Life Changing Worship** and a **Continuous Culture of Innovation**; focused on young adults joining their peers in a time apart to reflect on life transitions, God connections, and meaningful life choices
- aWay... was held at Crieff Hills Retreat Centre in Puslinch, with 10 participants and three leaders, February 15-17, 2013.
- aWay... 2014 will take place January 31-February 2 at Crieff Hills and registration is open.

Youth Leadership Training Program (YLTP)

- A three-year leadership training program held during March Break to develop youth leaders who can offer **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry**. In addition to an emphasis on developing leadership skills, participants experience and create **Life Changing Worship** and focus on a **Generous Culture of Stewardship** within the context of the vision's **Spiritual Values**. These **Journeys in Faith** took place at Canterbury Hills, this year from March 10-13, 2013 with 38 youth participants, ages 13-16, including seven adult leaders.
- A Commissioning Service for the 3rd year participants, their families and supporters was held at Christ's Church Cathedral on October 5, 2013.
- The 2014 event will take place Sunday, March 9 to Wednesday, March 12.
- *Applications for first year participants are available now and will be accepted until the end of January 2014.*

Youth Synod in Action

The largest youth ministry program in Niagara with a dual focus on **Prophetic Social Justice Making** and **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry**, the reshaped Youth Synod now known as Youth Synod in Action was hosted by Christ's Church Cathedral, Hamilton, May 3-5, 2013.

- Offers youth delegates ages 13-21 the opportunity to become more knowledgeable about justice issues as well as to immerse themselves for a day in the justice work that God is undertaking in the community
- In addition, the event provides multiple opportunities to experience **Life Changing Worship**.

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- Over 70 delegates, 12 small group leaders, and over 50 adult volunteer staff (including 24 community partners) participated representing over 40 parishes. The minutes are available on the website. Many thanks to our host parish, Christ's Church Cathedral, for their enthusiasm and gracious hospitality!

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. This contextual liturgy material is developed within a **Continuous Culture of Innovation** framework and is intended to help youth and the parish families that support them celebrate their ministry through **Life Changing Worship**.
- Resource material and bulletin covers is available online prior to the June event (our target celebration date; parishes can use the material at their own convenience). The 2014 resource material will be posted by late April.

Niagara Youth Conference (NYC)

- The cornerstone event in youth ministry in Niagara with a multiple focus on **Spiritual Values**, **Life Changing Worship**, a **Continuous Culture of Innovation**, a **Generous Culture of Stewardship**, and **Prophetic Social Justice Making** - this year was the 66th 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) as a means to deepening one's relationship with God and enabling participants to more fully live out their call to participate in co-creating God's kingdom.
- NYC took place from August 25-30, 2013 at Canterbury Hills. The program is staffed by 18 volunteers who give nine months to the planning and execution of this conference, pictures are posted on the Youth Ministry Facebook page.
- NYC 2014 takes place from August 25-29 and registration will open in May.

The Gathering

- This event, reflecting the vision in the areas of **Continuous Culture of Innovation**, **Life Changing Worship**, a **Generous Culture of Stewardship**, **Journeys in Faith** and **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry** and now completing its seventh year, offers worship quarterly with a live band and liturgy written and delivered by youth and young adult participants.
- A group of committed youth leaders and adult supporters meet along with diocesan youth ministry staff to plan this worship.

Resource Library

- Includes resources for program planning, current youth ministry theory and theology as well as worship and music resources all supporting the diocesan vision in **Life Changing Worship**, **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry**, **Prophetic Social Justice**, **Continuous Culture of Innovation**, and **Generous Culture of Stewardship**. Resources are available to borrow by individuals and parishes. They are located in the Program Department offices at Cathedral Place. New resources include:

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- *Go Deep: Spiritual Practices for Youth Ministry*
- *Love Wins for Teens*

Children, Youth and Family Ministry Consultations and Training

- Brian is 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 for your parish.
- Consultations are designed to meet the needs of the individual parish. The focus of the consultation may include visioning for ministry in the specific parish or area, development of a youth ministry program, specific training for children, youth and family ministry staff and volunteers as well as advice on hiring children, youth and family ministry personnel.

Adult Education - Bishop's Diploma Course (BDC)

- This program provides instruction related to faith issues for over 50 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 courses and attendance at a retreat.
- Retreats and graduations are planned biennially. The next retreat and graduation will be held in 2014/15.
- Thank you to BDC leaders Venerable Bruce McPetrie, Reverend John Ripley, and Reverend Paul Whitehouse for their ongoing leadership and dedication to the program.
- Jane Wyse provides staff support for BDC and may be contacted for information.

Thanks to our Volunteers!

Thank you to the dozens of volunteers who have supported our work in the past year. Without you, these ministries would not be transforming the lives of children, youth and adults across the Diocese. Thanks especially to those volunteers who gifted the diocese with an extraordinary donation of time to maintain youth ministry programming in 2013 while we worked to fill the youth ministry position.