

OTHER REPORTS

The Diocesan Archivist

Canon 2.6 governs much of our work related to the care and upkeep of the diocesan archives.

Since 1975, McMaster University has overseen the storage of non-current diocesan records dating back to 1875, parish registers, service books, minute books and other material from more than 100 congregations. The records are on deposit only and remain the property of the diocese.

The diocesan archives kept at Cathedral Place include:

- All synod journals from 1875 to present
- All copies of Niagara Anglican from 1975 to present
- All clergy files of deceased or retired clergy
- All parish files now current or closed or amalgamated contain much history for a parish history
- Some blueprints or drawings of past construction or additions

At the end of 2019, Archdeacon John Rathbone, who has diligently served as our diocesan archivist for more than a quarter of a century, retired from this role. An ordained priest for 60 years, John was appointed to the position shortly after his first retirement in 1993. We give thanks for John's faithful witness to Jesus' Way, his passion for the safe keeping of our history.

Plans for the appointment of a new archivist were derailed by the pandemic. In the interim, Lorna Shaw has faithfully attended to requests for records as best we are able, given McMaster's archives were only taking emergency requests for a significant part of the year. All archival inquiries should be directed to Lorna at lorna.shaw@niagaraanglican.ca.

Respectfully submitted,

The Venerable Bill Mous
Executive Officer & Secretary of Synod

OTHER REPORTS

Climate Justice Niagara Committee

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic the Greening Niagara committee was making plans to meet electronically to cut back on greenhouse gas emissions. The pandemic meant a fast transition to monthly meetings by 'zoom'. Deirdre Pike was able to train us in this new medium and meetings have been meaningful and productive.

The committee, working within the Mission Action Plan realized that our image needed to be updated. What followed were months of discussion and a reworking of our name and mandate. Our new mandate focuses on a 4-prong approach pertaining to climate justice matters; these 4 areas are: prayer, education, action, and advocacy.

In the past year, the main highlights of our committee have been:

- * New name, new mandate, new logo, and updated website
- * Motion at synod November 2019 – “the diocese declares that there is a climate emergency.”
- * Introduction at synod of a parish Vestry motion on reducing single-use plastics by 2022
- * Education and resources made available for the Season of Creation
- * Education and resources made available for reduction of single-use plastics
- * Climate Justice Facilitators inaugural zoom meeting – August 26th – 2 dozen participants
- * Niagara in Action zoom event on plastics - September 26th – over 50 Participants
- * Hosting a talk by Dr. Dianne Saxe – *Creation Care that Counts* – October 14th

The committee is working to create stronger links with the Climate Justice Facilitators in every parish so that individuals feel more connected. Our inaugural Facilitators meeting was well received and will be repeated a few times each year to provide resources for climate events such as Earth Sunday and Season of Creation. Our mandate proposals of prayer, education, action, and advocacy will be the central focus for these sessions and for our meetings and discussions. We will focus on extending the plastic vestry motion this coming year and building on information and resources that result from our event with Dr. Dianne Saxe.

This year we welcomed Lowell Bliss and Irene Pang to the committee and regretfully said farewell to Michael Edwards. Michael has served on Greening Niagara since its initiation and will be greatly missed. Ongoing thanks to the committee that has been so energized, innovative, and supportive during this unusual year.

So much has been achieved – well done all of you: Lowell Bliss, Rev. Leslie Gerlofs, Norm Newbery, James Newman, Irene Pang, Deirdre Pike, David Savage, Jane Stephen, and Anne Young.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Carson, Chair

OTHER REPORTS

The Niagara Anglican Publication Board

The purpose of NAPB is to ensure that our diocesan newspaper, the Niagara Anglican, is published in line with the vision, mission, goals and aspirations of the Anglican Diocese of Niagara. Our mandate focuses on Niagara Anglican policy, planning and content. The Board also provides oversight and advice on the newspaper's advertisers, advertising rates and financial position, as well as on the diocesan communications strategy pertaining to print material, social media and other web-based media.

The work of the board was severely curtailed this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, we have lost members to retirement or resignation. Fortunately, early direction for the Niagara Anglican was set before the onset of the pandemic, with a major focus on stories from parishes and parishioners around the diocese, in keeping with our Diocesan Mission Statement.

As well, in October 2019 we welcomed The Reverend Rob Towler as Interim Editor and The Reverend John Ripley as Proof-reader for the paper. Their work, in conjunction with Art Director Craig Fairley, in producing ten editions of the paper from November 2019 through October 2020 has ensured that our diocesan communications strategy of balanced reporting, reflection and perspective on the life of the church in Niagara has remained strong.

Building upon the Diocesan Action Plan for a missional church, the Board recognizes and supports the current opportunity for further reflection, decision and action to enhance and improve the effectiveness of our communications strategies, mechanisms and practices in Niagara.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard B. Bradley, Chair

OTHER REPORTS

The Diocesan Refugee Sponsorship Initiative

As part of the work and ministry of the Diocese of Niagara, our refugee sponsorship for resettlement program is always working away in the background. As one of approximately 120 Sponsorship Agreement Holder organizations in Canada, parishes of our Diocese as well as interested community groups that we work with continue to provide settlement needs for refugees that we sponsor to resettle to Canada through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees program, of our federal government.

As with everyone and everything, 2020 has been different, but I am pleased to report

- We have submitted paperwork for 17 cases equaling 19 people and are working on submissions of 5 more cases equalling 29 people before the end of the year 2020.
- We have welcomed 15 newcomers to Canada in 2020 representing 3 cases.
- We have seen the successful completion of 14 cases in the past year

As COVID 19 has drastically affected the world, one thing is certain - those who were vulnerable before, are now, due to COVID-19 even more vulnerable. With borders closed, and flights canceled there has been a massive slow down in sponsorship activities. Submissions, processing, and arrivals.

Where it has been safe, and where Canadian Immigration has been able to do so, they have been slowly continuing to bring those people whose cases have already been approved. There are of course quarantine protocols, and all of the necessary safety work done, to ensure a safe arrival for them, and the sponsoring parishes and groups.

While maintaining a workable balance of cases, we have actually modestly increased our caseload this year. We continue to respond as we are able and urge as many parishes that are able to consider taking part in this work and ministry of the diocese. This resettlement work undertaken would not be possible without the work of people in our parishes, and in our community. It is due to their generous and inspired compassion, their dedication, commitment, time, talent, and treasure that makes this ministry possible.

We continue to urge all parishes of the Diocese of Niagara to consider participating and supporting this ministry of refugee resettlement as a worthy ministry and outreach. As always, we remind you that it is a situation of both and – supporting the refugee ministry alongside our work to rebuild relationship with First Nations, racial, social and economic justice and outreach work, along with every other aspect of ministry. We are called to serve, and compelled to love, in Christ's name.

Respectfully submitted,

The Reverend Scott McLeod, Coordinator

OTHER REPORTS

Cathedral Place Property Management Committee

The Cathedral Place Property Management Committee was reconfigured this year after receiving new terms of reference. The membership has been reduced from 12 to 7. Our mandate is to develop, monitor and oversee the annual capital, maintenance, and repair budget for 252 James Street North, Hamilton. We will also be responsible for developing policy related to user groups and for long range planning of major repairs and renovations.

The committee is comprised of 2 appointees from the Cathedral, 2 appointees from Synod Council, the rector of Christ's Church Cathedral, the diocesan Executive Officer, and a chairperson appointed by the Bishop of Niagara.

This year, the Cathedral Place Property Management Committee met via Zoom videoconference and activity has been reduced as a result of the closure of the building due to the pandemic.

However, the following priority work has been completed;

- Repairs and upgrades to the boiler system
- Roof repairs
- Plaster repairs
- Remediation and painting in the Niagara Room
- Installation of a new lift to ensure reliable accessibility into the Cathedral

In the coming year, in addition to normal maintenance and repair activity, we will begin mapping out a 5-year capital budget.

The committee would like to express our appreciation for the care and diligence that our property manager Derek Smith continues to provide in dealing with the many issues that arise at Cathedral Place.

Respectfully submitted,

Canon Terry Charters, Chair