

OTHER REPORTS

THE DIOCESAN ARCHIVIST

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. Canon 2.6 governs the care and upkeep of the diocesan archives.

The diocesan archives kept at Cathedral Place include:

- synod journals from 1875 to present;
- copies of the Niagara Anglican newspaper from 1975 to present;
- personnel files of deceased or retired clergy;
- parish files, current or closed, including some parish histories and clergy biographies;
- some artifacts of our ministry;
- confirmation records; and
- some blueprints or drawings of past construction or additions

Throughout the pandemic, we have continued to process requests for records through the efforts of Lorna Shaw. All archival inquiries should continue to be directed to lorna.shaw@niagaraanglican.ca.

As we look ahead to the future, we are consulting with McMaster University to review the materials we currently hold at Cathedral Place while also assessing our future needs with regards to an archivist as well as implementing best practices for storing, cataloguing, preserving our heritage.

Respectfully submitted,

The Venerable Bill Mous
Executive Officer & Secretary of Synod

OTHER REPORTS

THE CLIMATE JUSTICE NIAGARA COMMITTEE

Climate Justice Niagara (CJN) is committed to equipping the people of “God’s Church for God’s Mission,” with tools for strong advocacy and action in creating both local and global responses to the climate crisis.

During Synod 2021, 98% of participants voted in favour to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 10% in 5 years. Sue Carson, CJN’s chair since its inception, moved from that leadership role to take on the important coordination of this initiative. Bishop Susan Bell appointed Irene Pang from Grace, Waterdown, as the new chair for a renewable two-year term.

Since then, the main highlights of our work have been:

- supporting 14 parishes in completing a walk-through energy audit and some analysis of their carbon footprint to creation their 5-year plans;
- hosting a webinar to introduce the energy audit program, with 43 in attendance and close to 100 views of the recording since;
- hosting a hybrid meeting with the steering committee at Grace Church, Waterdown to work on strategic planning;
- hosting a hybrid meeting with CJN facilitators at St. George’s, Guelph on ‘The Roadmap to a Low-carbon Church’;
- monthly articles in the Niagara Anglican such as “Talk to your candidates about Climate Change” and a full-page showcase of parish gardens to celebrate Season of Creation;
- garden certificates have been created and 2 parishes have been presented with them and more presentation visits will be arranged;
- General Synod motion on climate change submitted by CJN members through the national Creation Matters Working Group;
- connected with Net Zero Churches and work with other dioceses to reduce greenhouse emission; and
- grounded in prayer, CJN is creating its own prayer for use in our meetings and diocesan gatherings.

For 2023, within the diocese, we will continue to work closely with parishes to establish bans on single-use plastics and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Our goal is to reach out to all parishes and work with clergy, wardens, and building committees. Outside the diocese, we will continue to be an active facilitator in building the Net Zero Churches Network.

We welcomed three new members and two student volunteers Chris Miller, Rosemary Ansty and Brue Mackenzie to the committee this year. Heather Sewell has offered her time as a volunteer. Thanks to Canon Leslie Gerlofs, Lowell Bliss, James Newman, Jane Stephen and Bob Chown for their tremendous contribution during their time with the committee and their continuous supports in all future works of CJN. Committee members Irene Pang and Sue Carson will be responding to invitations to preach in parishes in the coming year. My deepest gratitude for fellow committees who continue to root for each other on the mission to care for the Creation.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Pang
Chair

OTHER REPORTS

THE DIOCESAN REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE

Over the last year, parishes and community groups have continued to sponsor refugees and provide essential care for newcomers as they are resettled in Canada. Our diocese undertakes this ministry as a Sponsorship Agreement Holder through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees program of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

This important ministry was recently upheld by the Lambeth Conference in a statement of support for the work of “Anglican provinces, dioceses and agencies on the ground” in response to the refugee and migration crisis. The statement reads, in part, as follows:

“As Anglicans, we are called in our Marks of Mission to “respond to human need by loving service” and to “transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.” Meeting the immediate needs of those who have been displaced or trafficked in any way, and doing what we can to build better structures to help all people flourish, is at the heart of our mission.”

According to the United Nations Refugee Agency, by the end of 2021 more than 100 million people around the world have been forced to flee their homes due to human conflict. This included over 27.1 million refugees who have fled their country.

Since the last report to Synod in September 2021, our diocese has:

- submitted applications for 3 new sponsorship cases totalling 8 people;
- welcomed 48 newcomers to Canada, representing 24 sponsorship cases, from Eritrea, Syria, Iraq, Myanmar, and Afghanistan; and
- celebrated the successful completion of 6 sponsorship cases.

Our efforts continue to be bolstered by funds raised by the 140th Anniversary Refugee Sponsorship Fund, which helps parishes take on sponsorships they might not otherwise be able to support on their own. If your parish is interested in sponsoring refugees, please email refugees@niagaraanglican.ca to inquire and learn more.

As with all ministries of the church, this work happens because of passion and faithfulness of parishioners and people in the communities we serve. In addition, there is a team of dedicated volunteers and staff who help support this diocesan ministry, helping us live into our responsibilities as a Sponsorship Agreement Holder.

Finally, a word of gratitude: earlier this year, The Reverend Scott McLeod concluded his responsibilities as our diocesan refugee sponsorship coordinator. Through his efforts our diocese has helped to sponsor more than 400 refugees since 2015. In no small measure to Scott’s coordinating efforts, thousands of lives have been transformed we have helped warmly welcomed newcomers to Canada. Thanks be to God!

Respectfully submitted,

The Venerable Bill Mous
Interim Coordinator

OTHER REPORTS

THE CATHEDRAL PLACE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Even through pandemic restrictions, Cathedral Place (CP) remains a vital hub for ministry. This fall has seen a resumption of in-person meetings and diocesan services. Amidst all the challenges, the Cathedral congregation has been faithful in Sunday worship and in hosting and live-streaming diocesan services, to say nothing of their significant outreach such as the rest and hygiene center.

A busy CP means we continue to be deeply grateful for the work of Property Manager Derek Smith. From organizing cleaning and routine repairs, to getting quotes, to so much more, Derek runs the gamut in his faithful stewardship.

Over the past year, live-streaming equipment has been installed into the Cathedral proper; work has begun to develop a formal Heritage Conservation Plan for CP; and the episcopal and cathedral office areas have been painted and their lighting upgraded to LED fixtures. After Jamesville Daycare moved out of CP, the former outdoor playground has been converted into an area that can be used for lunches and outdoor meetings. There are surprisingly few spaces in CP conducive to meetings with physical distancing in place, and this new space provides exciting new opportunities. A former daycare classroom beside Myler Hall is being converted into a lounge-style meeting room.

Also this year, the committee reviewed quotes and made a recommendation to the executive officer for a cleaning service, following the resignation of the in-house employee who had been doing that work. This change will result in cost savings.

The committee continues to plan for other work to CP and its property to ensure that it is a safe, accessible, and welcoming base for the many and varied ministries it supports.

Respectfully submitted,

The Reverend Canon Matthew Griffin
Chair

OTHER REPORTS

THE ANTI-RACISM WORKING GROUP

The promises made in baptism can be a lens through which Anglicans can address the racism deeply embedded in Christian culture, calling out the evils of this world and mandating the Church to break down barriers and eradicate systemic and structural racism. The Anti-Racism Working Group is leading the diocesan effort to ensure every parish leader is equipped with anti-racism training in order to dismantle systemic racism in our diocese. Through education and training taken on by the working group members, they have been able to create a series of training modules for use in pilot test form for 2023.

In the past year, a few highlights of our ministry have been:

- finishing our discussions based on Resmaa Menakem's *In My Grandmother's Hands* and moving from a study group to a curriculum development group;
- having several members complete Anti-Racism training courses from other jurisdictions
- discerning dialogue about what the Diocese of Niagara needs in its curriculum and settling on curriculum topics; and
- researching resources and creating curriculum for each topic grounded in our faith and our baptismal covenant.

In January 2023, a pilot test of the six two-hour sessions will be announced and first participants will be asked to register. In the meantime, the committee continues to put final touches to the curriculum and train the first set of trainers.

Respectfully submitted,

The Reverend Naomi Kabugi
Chair

OTHER REPORTS

THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING JUSTICE NIAGARA WORKING GROUP

Human Trafficking Justice Niagara, encouraged and supported by Bishop Susan Bell since its inception in 2020, follows the lead of General Synod 2019 Resolution A204 Human Trafficking and Modern slavery to:

1. Condemn the ongoing practices of human trafficking and modern slavery and commit to working for their elimination in Canada and globally
2. Constructively engage all levels of government on relevant policy areas to combat human trafficking, slavery and enforced migration
3. Develop, promote and disseminate liturgical, theological and educational materials related to combatting human trafficking, slavery and enforced migration
4. Build relationships with local and regional networks combatting human trafficking, slavery and exploitation

Over the past 2 years, the committee has been meeting on a regular basis and has accomplished the following:

- highlighted Freedom Sunday during live-streamed Morning Prayer with Bishop Susan Bell at the Cathedral, on Freedom Sunday 2021;
- hosted a diocesan webinar '*Human Trafficking? Not In My Community!*' with a panel of experts from the community and the church;
- met with leaders from the Anglican Church of Canada and social service agencies within our communities to educate ourselves on human trafficking;
- assembled some liturgical resources for parish use for Freedom Sunday 2021, including two recorded sermons; and
- engaged in a process to create a logo for this committee and a prayer that can be used at all meetings around human trafficking.

Human Trafficking Justice Niagara will continue to equip the people of the diocese to live more deeply into the Fourth Mark of Mission and our diocesan Mission Action Plan to be strong advocates for local and global change in the following ways:

- **Prayer** – Ensure that prayers and concern for human trafficking become an integral part of parish life, particularly on National Human Trafficking Awareness Day, February 22
- **Education** – Equip and inspire social justice facilitators and teams by developing and disseminating current local resources and evidence-based knowledge about modern day slavery, human trafficking and forced labour
- **Action** – Provide facilitators, clergy and lay leaders with the tools to ensure their parishes are able to assist local outreach in support of victims of human trafficking
- **Advocacy** – Model strong leadership and resolute political action to address human trafficking and modern-day slavery. Support parish and Diocesan leaders in recognizing the presence of trafficking in our communities and ways to speak out against it.

Respectfully submitted,

The Reverend Jody Balint
Chair

OTHER REPORTS

THE NIAGARA SCHOOL FOR MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP STEERING COMMITTEE

The Niagara School for Missional Leadership (NSML) is a Gospel-focused learning community based in the Diocese of Niagara that trains effective missional leaders (both clergy and lay) to respond to the needs of God's world. The school centres its learning on the Good News of Jesus Christ – that the Church is called to participate in Jesus' mission in the world in bringing about the Kingdom of God. Jesus calls us to life and compels us to love, and as we live into and out of this calling, the kingdom breaks into the world around us.

The mandate of the NSML Steering Committee is to support the school's vision of creating a practical and coaching based learning environment where participants are equipped to respond creatively and faithfully to God's mission. The work of the committee includes providing input regarding the development and administration of the school, promotions, finances, and monitoring alignment between the school's operations and the school's mission and vision.

In the past year, a few highlights of our ministry have been:

- launched in September 2021 with 16 course offerings and 157 registrations;
- formed partnerships with the Dioceses of Algoma and Moosonee towards the development of Indigenous ministry students at the Tom Corston School of Theology;
- created a curriculum sub-committee to develop courses and engage teacher practitioners, with the view of guarding the alignment of the school curriculum to the school's vision and mission;
- hired a coordinator role to oversee and administer the operations of the school;
- launched social media platforms on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter; and
- implemented online learning and administration platforms for delivering courses and tracking registrations.

Considering the diocesan Mission Action Plan, the Niagara School for Missional Leadership will seek to contribute to the MAP's objectives and strategies through the following ways over the coming year, continuing to live into:

- Objective #1 to '*create and implement opportunities to ignite and strengthen faith*' by developing practical, accessible, and culturally relevant learning opportunities that both deepen the learner's Christian faith while developing leadership competencies and practical tools for missional ministry.
- Objective #2 to '*reimagine diocesan culture and adapt our structures to enable ministry*' by drawing from practitioners from both within and outside of the Anglican Communion to teach and share from their experiences with church, culture, and mission, which will expose learner-practitioners to innovative strategies for approaching mission in the Diocese of Niagara.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Smith
Chair