

PERSPECTIVE

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Primate Shane Parker offers hopeful message to Canadian Anglicans on New Year's Day

PHOTOS: LEIGH ANNE WILLIAMS

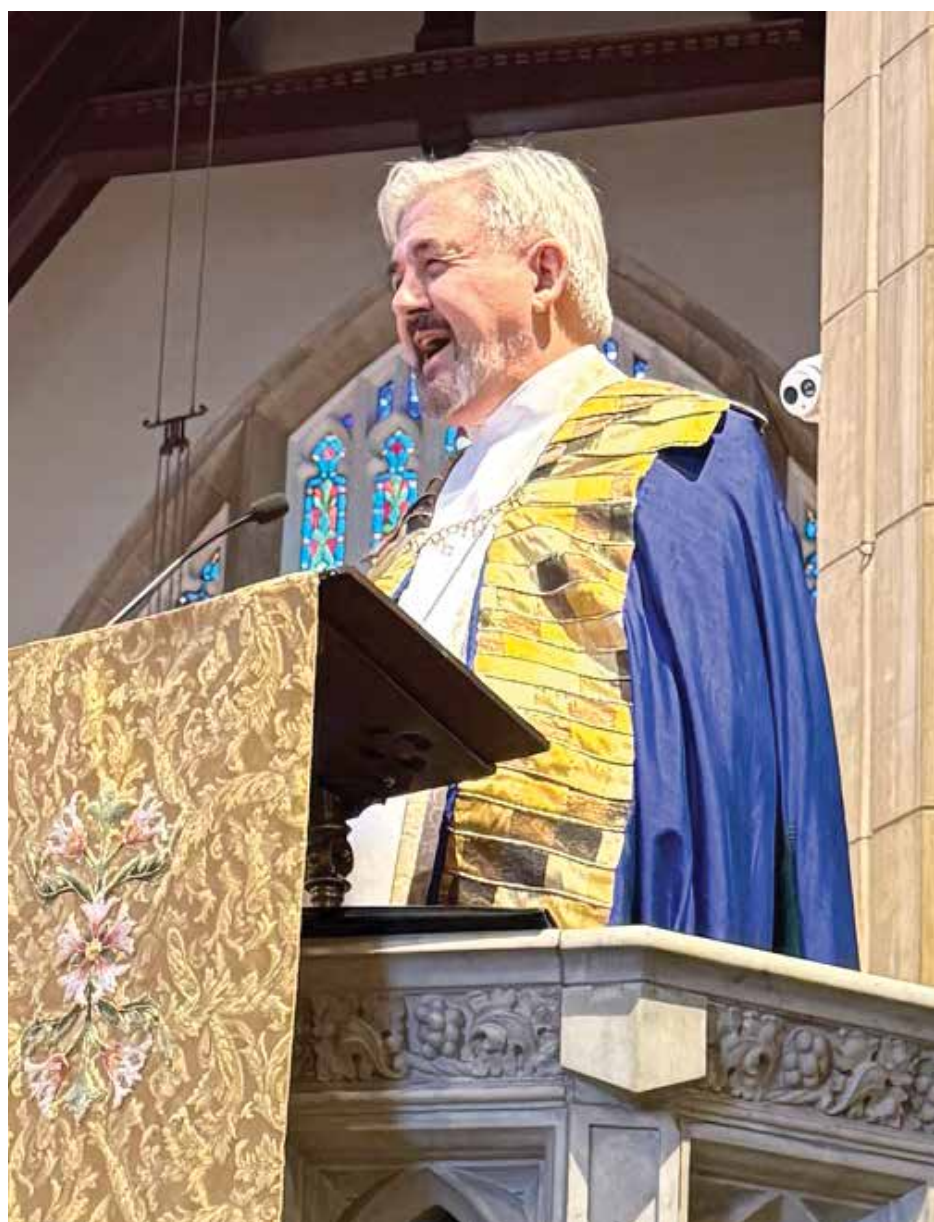
BY LEIGH ANNE WILLIAMS

Archbishop Shane Parker offered the homily at a worship service at Christ Church Cathedral Ottawa on Jan. 1, 2026, maintaining a longstanding tradition of the Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada beginning each new year by addressing the whole church from the Cathedral in the nation's capital.

There was a particularly warm welcome as a homecoming for the archbishop who had served as a priest of the diocese, dean of the Cathedral for 25 years and as the 10th bishop of Ottawa for the past five years until he was elected Primate in June of 2025.

After congratulating the Cathedral girls' choir on their 25th anniversary, Archbishop Parker began by noting that the first place he travelled after being elected was to Calgary to attend the Sacred Circle, the national gathering of Indigenous Anglicans in Canada, in August 2025. The Indigenous Church is resurging, celebrating and being celebrated, he said. "Our Indigenous church is growing confident as Indigenous Anglicans with ancient roots and traditions on this land."

He added: "In what could be described as kind of a cosmic irony, the Anglican Church of Canada, as distinct from the Indigenous Anglican Church that dwells within it, ... over



From a familiar pulpit and Cathedral where he served as dean and bishop, Archbishop Shane Parker addressed the whole of the Anglican Church of Canada.

the last century or so, has gone from being in a central place of privilege in Canada to being on the margins."

January 1 is the day when Christian churches celebrate the naming of Jesus. "What does it mean for us to lift up the name of Jesus from our place in the margins of Canadian society?" Parker asked. "What are we to make of the words from the ancient Christian hymn we heard read from Philippians? 'In the name of Jesus, every knee should bend in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and

every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.' It sounds like a call to Christian nationalism, which our church has recently and firmly denounced as a distortion of the gospel of Jesus and a threat to Canadian democracy. It sounds a lot like the place, the mindset, that the Anglican Church had when it first came to this land. Imperial, somewhat arrogant, privileged, and profoundly damaging to the spiritual traditions of the first people," he said.

► **Primate's message, to page 2**



Cathedral Girls Choir celebrates its 25th anniversary

Archbishop Shane Parker congratulated and thanked the Cathedral Girls Choir, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary. He added that one of the best things he ever did as dean of the Cathedral was to get behind the idea of a girls choir.

"It's important for you to know, and for those who are listening online across our country, that our cathedral in the nation's capital has one of the strongest youth ministries in the Anglican Church of Canada between its two choirs. Upwards of 40 and sometimes 50 kids weekly gather to sing together, to sing scripture, to grow in their stature as the children of God." It's a wonderful ministry, he added.

The choirs have plans to travel to the U.K. next year and to sing at Westminster Abbey in London in 2027.

Interest and excitement build as Episcopal election day approaches



PHOTO DEAN BETH BRETZLAFF

**Bishop's Cathedra,
Christ Church Cathedral
Ottawa**

CLERGY NEWS



Archdeacon Eric Morin has been appointed Incumbent of St. Thomas Stittsville, effective March 23, 2026.



The Rev. Victoria Scott has been appointed as director general of Anglican Community Ministries, effective Feb. 2, 2026. This follows the retirement of the Rev. Canon Dr. Peter John Hobbs.

The episcopal election will take place at Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa on Feb. 28, 2026. Names of the nominees will be published on Jan. 27 along with their relevant biographical information. On Feb. 5, their written responses to a set of formal questions provided by the Episcopal Election Committee will also be published. Watch for updates on the diocesan website and ongoing coverage in *Perspective's* online edition.

Public meetings for the purpose of introducing the nominees to the people of the diocese will take place in four locations. A moderator will invite each nominee to address the meeting and respond to questions from the audience. There will also be an opportunity to get to know the nominees during an informal reception. While only members of Synod will do the actual electing of the bishop, the public meetings are open to anyone who wishes to attend.

Public Meetings

The schedule for the public meetings is:

- Feb. 11, 7 pm**
St. Helen's, Orleans
- Feb. 12, 7 pm**
Trinity, Cornwall
- Feb. 15, 7 pm**
St. Paul's, Kanata
- Feb. 20, 7 pm**
Holy Trinity, Pembroke

All of the meetings will also be livestreamed. Should severe winter weather force the cancellation of an in-person event, the public meeting will take place on the same date but in an online setting. Check the diocesan website for updates: ottawa.anglican.ca/episcopal-elections-2026

Nominations will be accepted up to the moment that the Electoral Synod is called to order on Feb. 28, but only nominees whose forms were submitted by the first nomination deadline on Jan. 24, 2026, are eligible to participate in the public meetings.

All candidates must be a cleric in good standing within the Anglican Communion, must be at least 30 years old, must have served as a priest for at least seven years, and must conform to the doctrine and discipline of the Anglican Church of Canada. (More detailed information is available on the diocesan website on the episcopal election page.)

The nomination form asks for information on the nominee's formal qualifications, such as their date of ordination. It will also require the signatures of at least five clergy and five lay members of Synod. These are the nominators, and by signing they assert their belief that the nominee is qualified to serve the diocesan church as bishop. Completed forms should be forwarded to the Secretaries of Synod. A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document has also been on the diocesan website [<https://ottawa.anglican.ca/episcopal-elections-2026>]

In a previous article, Synod Secretary, the Rev. Canon Stephen Silverthorne, outlined some of the qualities required for the role of bishop. 'The greatest requirement is a commitment to careful discernment. It is a privilege to serve as bishop, but it's not an easy calling. Among other things, the office of bishop involves serving as a pastor, an administrator, a theologian, and a communicator,' he said. "We believe in God's providence and in God's power to equip people for

the roles they are called to, but it is a challenging role which requires candidates to consider carefully the costs involved. So, we encourage everyone in our diocese to pray that the Holy Spirit would embolden and encourage the right people to allow their names to be put forward for nomination."

Election Day

All lay members of the 145th Annual Synod (held in October 2025) are eligible to vote in the Electoral Synod, as are all active clergy in our diocese. Following procedures set by diocesan canons, ten retired clergy, chosen by their fellow retired clergy, will also serve as members of the Electoral Synod.

The Electoral Synod itself will be held at Christ Church Cathedral on February 28, 2026. Registration begins at 8 am. A celebration of the Eucharist will begin at 9 am. At the Electoral Synod, electors will be issued ballots and invited to vote for the nominee they feel is most qualified. Voting is conducted by orders, meaning that the votes of clergy and laity are counted separately. To be elected, a nominee must receive a majority of votes both among the clergy and among the laity. If a round of balloting does not achieve this, more rounds of balloting follow until a nominee has achieved a majority in both houses. The Most Rev. Anne Germond, Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, will chair the Electoral Synod.

The bishop-elect will be installed at a service at Christ Church Cathedral on May 9, 2026.

With thanks to the Rev. Canon Stephen Silverthorne

" Lifting up the name of Jesus means building up our parishes and congregations"

► Primate's message, from page 1

Instead, Parker explained, for the people, clergy, and bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada, "lifting up the name of Jesus means three things: communion with each other, communion with all humanity, and communion with the Creator of creation.

He elaborated: "Lifting up the name of Jesus means building up our parishes and congregations as well-run places of belonging, friendship, of lifelong relationships, intergenerational, diverse communities of worship, pastoral care, and service, communities that include all who seek relief from isolation and meaninglessness and loneliness, places of genuine concern and meaning.... Lifting

up the name of Jesus also means selfless and courageous and steadfast acts of compassion, justice, advocacy, mercy, and peacemaking. It means building up our ministries and missions that serve the most vulnerable people, the oppressed, the victimized, wherever they are in this world. And critically, it means standing alongside every group or government, or person of goodwill who also seek to bring compassion, justice, mercy and peace to others. For us, the name of Jesus means deep communion with all human beings and with the earth itself."

For Anglicans in Canada, Parker said, it also "means being a people of hope. Christ was born. Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. We are a people who wait

and live and serve in hope because we believe Christ Jesus is before, within, and after all time, all space, all things in heaven and earth. God is not finished yet."

The archbishop offered this advice for living in that hope. "Be fully alive. Use your good gifts and resources fully and wisely. Build up, adjust, shape your parishes and congregations to be meaningful places of deep communion with one another. Courageously and selflessly join with other people of goodwill to serve those who live precariously. Be in deep communion with all humanity and lay claim to the hope that dwells within us and around us at all times."

View the entire service : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzeUdNolv6o>



Happy New Year!

Archbishop Shane Parker (left) marked the first day of 2026 catching up with friends at Christ Church Cathedral, where he served as dean and then as bishop before he was elected as Primate in 2025.

Right: Katherine Shadbolt Parker met up Jane Wickham and Barbara Morris.

PHOTOS: DOUG MORRIS



Middle row, above:
Audrey Lawrence and Marilyn Collins;
the Rev. Sony Jabouin;
James Calkin, Dean Beth Bretzlaff, the Rev. Canon Doug Richards and Andrew McNerney

Left: *Perspective* contributors
Leigh Anne Williams,
David Humphreys,
Dr. Glenn Lockwood;
Jane Waterston and
Doug Morris

Let us pray for the election of a bishop for our Diocese

BY PAUL DUMBRILLE

Prayer during the election

People can pray during the election in two ways:

1. Participate in the onsite prayer vigil at the Cathedral on February 28.
During the election an on-site Prayer Vigil will take place in the Reconciliation Chapel beside the main altar of the Cathedral, welcoming non-delegates and delegates. All are invited to come to the Cathedral and participate at any time after 8 am and join the Prayer Vigil. Participants do not have to be present for the whole time and may come and go as their personal schedule allows. People planning to come to the Cathedral to pray are asked to contact Paul Dumbille at afp@ottawa.anglican.ca; 613-225-0806.
2. Those who cannot come to the Cathedral, either alone or with others, are encouraged to set aside time on February 28 for prayer.

Weekly prayers

Parishes are encouraged to include prayers for the election in their liturgies and gatherings in the weeks preceding the February 28 election. The following are suggested prayers for the 6 weeks prior to the election.

Week of January 18

Pray for the mission of the Church. Everliving God, whose will is that all should come to you through your Son Jesus Christ. Inspire our witness to him, that all may know the power of his forgiveness and the hope of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Week of January 25

Pray for the Ottawa Diocese. O God, by your grace you have called us in this Diocese of Ottawa to a goodly fellowship of faith. Bless the one who is to be our bishop, the other clergy and all the people. Grant that your Word may be truly preached and truly heard, your sacraments faithfully administered and faithfully received. Amen.

Week of February 1

Pray for the Electoral Synod. Loving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with those who will take counsel in the Synod of this Diocese for the renewal and mission of your Church. Amen.

Week of February 8

Pray for those offering to serve as bishop. Gracious God, you led your holy apostles to ordain ministers in every place. Grant that your Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, may choose suitable persons for the ministry of being a bishop, and may uphold them in their work for the extension of your kingdom. Amen.

Week of February 15

Pray for the election of the person God would have to be Bishop. Almighty God, giver of every good gift, look graciously on your Church in this Diocese, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a bishop for us, that we may receive

a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Week of February 22

Pray for the one who shall be chosen. Gracious God, give your grace, we humbly pray, to the one who will be called to the office and ministry of bishop for your people in this Diocese; and so fill them with the truth of your doctrine and clothe them with holiness of life. Amen

Prayer gatherings prior to the election

Parishes or deaneries are encouraged to hold in-person or online prayer gatherings in the time before the election focussed on praying for the election of a bishop. Resources for such a gathering can be provided by contacting Paul Dumbille at afp@ottawa.anglican.ca; 613-225-0806.

Alongside Hope's solar suitcase campaign brings light to mothers and babies

BY VALERIE MAIER

In the closing months of 2025, the diocese of Ottawa supported Alongside Hope's national campaign to bring light and renewable energy to rural clinics in Madagascar and Mozambique. Thanks to teamwork and generosity, the diocese of Ottawa played a significant role in supporting Alongside Hope's partner We Care Solar with the installation of 49 solar suitcases at nursing stations and rural clinics in areas of those countries with little or no access to electric power.

Charged by two durable solar panels installed on the roof of a clinic, the hardy and portable solar suitcase unit opens to reveal a high-capacity lithium battery, four high powered medical LED lights, two chargeable head lamps, a foetal doppler, USB and 12V charging ports, and rechargeable batteries with charger. These provide medical attendants with the tools they need to ensure every birth is illuminated, and phones are charged to make emergency referrals, especially at night.

Solar suitcases were the subject of a presentation at St. Bartholomew, Rockcliffe by Alongside Hope Board member, Bob Orr, at a "soup supper" followed by choral Evensong. Visitors to St. Bartholomew's Christmas bazaar in November were able to see a solar suitcase and hear accounts of how it had improved maternal health care.

In October, Will Postma, executive director of Alongside Hope, visited parishes in Ottawa with a solar suitcase to demonstrate how they work. At St. Helen's, Orleans, he explained how they include training



Solar Suitcase at St. Bartholmew's Bazaar, November 2025
Brian Eckert and Bob Orr, members of St. Bart's, took charge of the suitcase on display in the church hall.

materials for local practitioners and information to install and maintain the equipment. He described the immense difference the suitcases make in rural communities. Expectant mothers now know they can safely give birth in the dark and are more likely to seek health care.

Bart Dickinson, Alongside Hope's planning, monitoring & evaluation coordinator, attended an event at St. James, Carleton Place, to explain how midwives could attend mothers and provide safe deliveries at all hours using the equipment each suitcase contains. Felice Parthun, a previous practicing Canadian midwife who attended the presentation, commented on how

PHOTO: GILLES VÉZINA

useful such an innovation could be. Other local parishes chose to support this project through their outreach budgets. Alongside Hope's Wild Ride campaign also benefitted the Solar Suitcase project. This saw 23 teams and 56 people across Canada cycle, walk, swim, make blankets, or bake muffins. Their combined efforts nationwide raised \$61,440 towards the total. Across Canada, more than \$321,000 was raised, including \$150,000 in matching funds donated by a generous anonymous donor. As a result of efforts in Ottawa and across Canada, 49 nursing stations in Mozambique and Madagascar are now able to provide round the clock maternal health care to their community members.

PHOTO: ALONGSIDE HOPE



Solar Suitcase in Centro De Saude De Muripotana, Mozambique



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Please contact the editor for submission deadlines.

Correction

The January 2026 edition, page 9, misidentified Gwynneth Evans's parish. She worships at St. Bartholomew.



Perspective acknowledges that we publish on traditional Anishinàbeg Algonquin territory. We recognize the Algonquins as the customary keepers and defenders of the Ottawa River Watershed and its tributaries.

COMMUNITY MINISTRY NEWS

Empathy project takes front-line workers into the experience of homelessness

BY DAVID HUMPHREYS

Senior leaders of Cornerstone Housing for Women and Belong Ottawa, diocesan Community Ministries, can now say they have walked a mile in the shoes of the vulnerable people facing homelessness who they serve. They participated with about 60 other front-line providers in the Empathy Project, described by the organizer, Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa, as an exercise in social policy education.

Each one assumed a persona—a person who needed help from multiple service providers—which was fictional but was expertly designed to reflect real-life experience. They were given a list of service locations such as Service Ontario, a health care clinic and community housing service which were scattered around a multi-storey building of the Canadian Mental Health Association.

At the end of the exercise, some of their comments were: “meaningful and memorable... unsettling...very powerful... profound... overwhelmed at how awful it is...”

“The Empathy Project challenges participants to engage with the realities of navigating a complex and often dehumanizing system,” Moira Alie, chair of the Bishop’s Panel on Housing Justice, said. “Though the experience can be frustrating, its purpose is not to foster hopelessness, but to inspire action. If homelessness is a systemic problem, it is also a solvable one.” Alie is engagement manager at the alliance.

Mark Holzman, chair of Cornerstone’s board of directors, stepped into the situation of an Inuit man who had been living with his son and mother in Ottawa for two years, doing well enough to rent an apartment. Until, one day he was evicted, informed that the landlord was going to renovate. He was out on the street.

“I went to register on the housing list and was told it’s a six-year wait...There were a lot of people waiting at the shelter. Often the answer was, ‘No...no, we can’t help you, you need to go over there...no, you aren’t going to be helped today.’ That was unsettling.”

Holzman pointed out that in the simulation the “clients” had to walk up and down stairs to locations in a multi-storey building. In reality they would have to take a bus. And sometimes their first problem is getting bus tickets.

Anne Marie Hopkins, executive director of Cornerstone, assumed the role of Charles, a young immigrant refugee trying to get into a shelter and in need of disability support.

“I was not able to get my birth certificate because I didn’t have \$35 to pay for it. Because of that I’m not able to get onto disability and get some income to get housing.”

Hopkins said it was a realistic reflection of the barriers that folks at the shelter face regularly. Cornerstone has a fund to help with issues like getting a birth certificate, and staff will accompany people to help them access services properly.

Shauna-marie Young, executive director of Belong Ottawa, stepped into the persona a black woman, a recent arrival to Canada who didn’t



Cornerstone chair Mark Holzman (top), Cornerstone executive director Anne Marie Hopkins and Belong Ottawa's Shauna-marie Young stepped into the shoes of homeless persons this winter. *Jesus Homeless*, by Timothy Schmalz.

have her documents in order. She became ill, had to be hospitalized, losing her children to foster care. Upon discharge she struggled to find income and housing so her children could be returned. As she walked from agency to agency, she found abject rejection, a lack of real support, a

fatigue on the part of the providers when they had nothing to offer. “Imagine losing your children to care and being told, ‘There’s nothing I can do to help you. No, you can’t see your children’... Being in receipt of no, no, no, as kindly as it’s said, it’s still no, no, no.”

The Rev. Victoria Scott, a member of Belong Ottawa’s board of directors who has just been appointed as the director general for Anglican Community Ministries, was Charles, a 17-year-old who had been bounced around in foster care, suffered abuse and ended up on the street.

“Without any money, ID or connections other than a local shelter, I had to make my way through a day of navigating the system: going to Service Ontario to be told that I couldn’t apply for a birth certificate without the fee. I then went to the ODSP (Ontario Disability Support Program) office to be told I couldn’t apply without ID, an address and bank statements. I reached out to a landlord to be told I couldn’t apply for an apartment without proof that I was receiving ODSP. I went to the employment office to find a line so long that I had to leave in order to get back to the shelter to sign in before 4 pm.”

Scott said she knew people in similar situations when she was incumbent at St Luke’s, with its St Luke’s Table drop-in centre. She was impressed by an approach that encourages empathy. “I often think there is a misconception that the church borrows social justice from politics but it’s gospel-based. It’s our baptismal vows. It’s what Jesus did.”

Simon Kinsman, newly-appointed chair of Belong Ottawa’s advisory board, assumed the persona of a single mother, struggling to support her own ailing mother and a son facing “renoviction.”

She had been managing financially but had to take unpaid time away from her work, spending days at the offices of service providers. She herself ended up being illegally evicted and turned to the emergency shelter for help.

“What stood out for me,” Kinsman said, “was how discouraging and even dehumanizing it is to be told no constantly. People facing homelessness continue to face life’s other challenges — a sick parent, job insecurity, without the safe space to rest and without a support network.”

“It made me incredibly proud of the work Belong Ottawa and the Anglican ministries do in providing that safe space.”

Kinsman said the project is valuable for the decision-makers to better understand how the system they have designed is experienced by the people who use it.

That’s the goal of Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa. It has been taken up by Ottawa and Pembroke city councils and is offered to medical and nursing students, anyone considering a caring profession, including teachers.

Raising awareness of how the system actually works is seen by all as a big step forward in reducing homelessness.

As Mark Holzman said: “We hope the people making the rules can experience what it’s like. Do they really need all that information before they can provide a service? If you’re telling your story over and over again...Is there not a way to simplify that process?”

PARISH NEWS

PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED

Building new worshipping communities: the challenge

At diocesan Synod last fall, Archdeacon Mark Whittall reminded everyone of “the vision that we set out for ourselves at Synod 2023: We will be a spirit-led church equipped for contextual mission. And at that time, we gave ourselves two goals. First, that by 2028, every parish in our diocese will be engaged in a new or renewed contextual mission initiative. And second, that by the 135th anniversary of our Diocese, which is in 2032, we will have created 35 new worshipping communities.”

The Contextual Mission Subcommittee, which Whittall co-chairs, provides parishes with resources to support contextual mission. “We offer you resources for prayer, courses for both leaders, individuals, and for parishes, parish groups, facilitation and coaching, a guide to help you with your discernment, and even cold, hard cash — Future Fund grants to fund your initiatives.”

Although the goals might seem challenging or even daunting, Anglicans have a deep history of serving their communities, and Whittall noted that the diocesan church was well on its way to meeting those goals. “We have initiated intentional communities, innovative worship services, forest church, meal programs, jazz vespers, playgroups, wish lists, milk bag mats, and the list goes on.”



Santa Claus giving the Rev. Bill Byers a pat on the back for his work to get the Gathering started.



Each monthly Gathering at St. James Manotick features live entertainment, usually music.

St. James’ monthly Gathering is a hit in Manotick

BY LEIGH ANNE WILLIAMS

On the second Monday of each month, St. James Manotick invites members of the surrounding community into its parish hall for a hearty lunch, live music, some fun and fellowship.

Sharing the story of The Gathering, as it has come to be known, with members of Synod last fall, the Rev. John Holgate, incumbent of St. James, said that contextual mission involves asking the question: “How is God calling us to proclaim the good news in a way that is shaped by the realities and concerns of our current context, our time and our place?” He described Manotick as a former village that has become a sort of far suburb of Ottawa. In 2023, in the wake of the pandemic, people were still nervous about public gatherings, sometimes still wearing masks.

The idea for encouraging people to start getting together again began with the Rev. Bill Byers, a retired priest of the diocese, who is the honorary assistant at St. James. “It really struck me about how many people felt isolated and were not coming out to things... We had been a community that got together, often several times in the week, and we weren't doing that anymore. I was also widowed, and as a result I was feeling the same sort of thing,” he told Perspective. “I thought if we could get together for the whole purpose of just being together for food and fun and fellowship ... and have no other ulterior motive than just simply to be hospitable and enjoy each other's presence.”

Byers suggested it and the parish liked the idea. He led the way to

create a monthly gathering with a meal, entertainment and fellowship. The parish agreed to underwrite the costs and to treat the event as an outreach effort. They spread the word primarily through the church’s channels and hoped for 40 people to attend. Seventy-five registered.

The Gathering is now in its third year with steady attendance of 85 to 100 people, about 35% of whom are non-parishioners. It not only draws the neighbours, but some people drive from Barrhaven and Bells Corners. “Apparently some sort of need is being met,” Holgate said. “We have a lot of fun themes... We celebrate fall, Christmas, Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day and Easter. We have a summer picnic. Interestingly, I sometimes hear that our themed events are the only opportunity that some attendees have to observe those holidays or those seasons.”

The Gathering continues to grow. Holgate said that the Christmas event in December was their largest attendance yet, and the parish hall was filled to capacity.

It’s a simple formula, Holgate said. “You get a hearty lunch, you get entertainment, which is usually musical, Eastern Ontario talent. We pay the talent. It's free to attend. We do accept free will donations. And it happens every month on a consistent day.

“During the meal, I eat on the fly, wandering around the tables, just saying hello to people. We don't do any sort of overt evangelization. The only church-related things we ever do are saying grace before the meal and occasionally pushing baked goods from the ACW. But at nearly every event, ... at least one person

brings up some kind of pastoral ministry-related concern. As I wander, I hear ... about the people who come for respite care away from looking after their spouse at home, or the people who bring their unwell spouse with them for what is sometimes a once-monthly outing for that person. People who are lonely while living alone, even those who are living in a retirement home. They're alone in a community of 150 people in the same building, people who are fresh out of hospital or who are about to go in....Some become new parishioners,” he said.

It’s a self-sustaining ministry, Holgate added. Byers organized three teams do the cooking, as well as set up and tear down teams. “We have the entertainment finding person or the impresario... who actually ... belongs to the Catholic church in town. Only one event ever has lost money ... and that was during an ice storm....We have the rarest of programs, an outreach ministry that makes money, even though that isn't the goal,” Holgate said.

“How can we tell that we're building community? ...The noise level is incredible. The feeling is great. People moving from table to table to say hello to people they haven't seen in a month, sometimes in a year. We surveyed people a year ago to ask what they would like to change about the gathering. The overwhelming response was to change nothing, leave it alone, because it's so simple — food, fun, fellowship.”

CONTEXTUAL MISSION



People play board games, but Games Night has also included a scavenger hunt, water balloon fight, outside lawn games in the summer and usually a craft at another table. PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

Let more games begin ...
at St. John's in Smiths Falls

BY LEIGH ANNE WILLIAMS

The Rev. Dr. Thomas Brauer, incumbent of St. John the Evangelist in Smiths Falls, told members of Synod last fall how receiving a Future Fund grant was helping the parish to enhance and expand a popular games night program in the parish.

“Back in 2018, prior to the COVID pandemic, people became aware of a different epidemic of loneliness. And the members of our congregation, working in partnership with Canon Catherine Ascah and with many in the neighbourhood, worked on the question of ‘how do we answer the epidemic of loneliness?’ And Games Night was born.”

He described the atmosphere of hearing the tick-tack sound of discs hitting pegs and landing in the holes on wooden crockinole boards and interspersed with the flip-flop sounds of cards being played and shuffled, and the sounds of people having fun together.

“On the first Friday of each month, the parish hall is available to parishioners and guests to participate in any number of games. Games that they might bring with them, card games, board games, table games, even shuffleboard if they can draw it on a floor themselves. There’s even food provided and refreshments. Nobody has to leave because they’re hungry,” Brauer said.

“Over time, it was observed that these events were achieving the initial goal of connection and

relationship with community building among congregants. It was also observed that community and relationships were being built with non-congregants. The guests of church members who were accepting invitations to join in. The parish leadership, the council and corporation, and the congregation as a whole have been encouraged by the positive impacts of Games Night. And so, we sought support from the Future Fund Grant, and we were honoured to receive that support.”

Play is widely known to be essential to human development and well-being, Brauer said, but “it is often overlooked by churches and social organizations that seek to serve those who experience deprivation and poverty.” While the church might overlook it, God does not, he said, quoting a few passages from Scripture. “Zechariah 8: The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets. Ecclesiastes 3, ‘For everything there is a season, including a time to laugh and a time to dance. Matthew, ‘Jesus says, let the little children come to me for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’”

“Play is central to who we are,” Brauer said. “So, this fund isn’t just a fund to get us working harder. It’s not just a fund to get us to do the right things. It is a fund to let us play. But not just us. To be able to play with those who may not have the chance to play on their own. For those whose situations in life are so awkward and so complex

Future Fund deadline coming soon....

Future Fund grants provide the financial resources to support contextual mission initiatives and new worshipping communities.

The next application deadline is March 15.

Ron Brophy, co-chair of the Contextual Mission sub-committee, outlined the application process at Synod last fall. “You may have great ideas for launching new ministry or building new worshipping communities, but they’re beyond your parish budget, or your parish’s context has changed over time. Your parish council has identified a great way to reconnect or re-engage with your local neighbourhood, but you just don’t have the means to do that. If this describes your situation, then you should think about a Future Fund grant. You can apply for up to \$10,000, and you don’t have to match any portion of those funds.”

Information is available on the diocesan website.

Click on:

- ▶ Resources for Parishes
- ▶ Contextual Mission
- ▶ Future Fund

Applications are accepted twice per year.

Application deadlines are March 15 and November 1.

Archdeacon Mark Whittall, co-chair of the subcommittee, also encouraged parishes to apply, noting that the application process is logical and easy to follow, and responses from the review committee are quick. Reports on projects are required as follow-up.

Check the Future Fund page on the diocesan website for more detail.

that the idea of even having access to play is unthinkable. And so, with this grant from the Future Fund, we are able not only to continue that tick tack of fellowship and the shuffle sound of friendship and fun and communion, but also to extend and expand the soundtrack of godly playfulness in a context of isolation, loneliness and deprivation.”

Brauer noted that Smiths Falls is a town that is counted by many as one of the poorest in Ontario with reports of 25 % food insecurity, 20 % social assistance, making the week possible. “With this grant, Games Night can grow to include movie night, as we are able to purchase better equipment and pay for film licenses. With this grant, Games Night can grow by printing invitations that can reach

our friends and neighbors further beyond our pews. With this grant, Games Night can grow by making available new games, games we wouldn’t have ever thought possible as new friends join us and bring with them their desires for hope and play in community with us.”

The grant will also make it possible for the parish to buy coffee makers, he said. “Coffee makers would be now a gift to add caffeine to our communion,” he said wryly. It would also make it possible to expand the program to happen every week, not just once a month “so that new expressions of playfulness and fellowship can be enjoyed by so many,” he added, thanking the diocese once again for its support.



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St. Thomas the Apostle makes plans for Black History Month

IMAGE: JOSIAH CALVIN DAVIES

THE REV. MARIA NIGHTINGALE

A dedicated group of parishioners at St. Thomas the Apostle is preparing for our annual February celebration of Black History Month. Following the national BHM 2026 theme of Resistance, our theme is Faith as Resistance.

Guest speakers at Sunday services, and enhanced fellowship time following our 10 am service featuring refreshments from various African and Caribbean countries, are planned.

As well, a Lenten book study will start during Black History Month, beginning Feb. 4, 2026 on Zoom on Wednesdays at 7 pm and run until March 18. A special in-person session is planned for Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18. We will

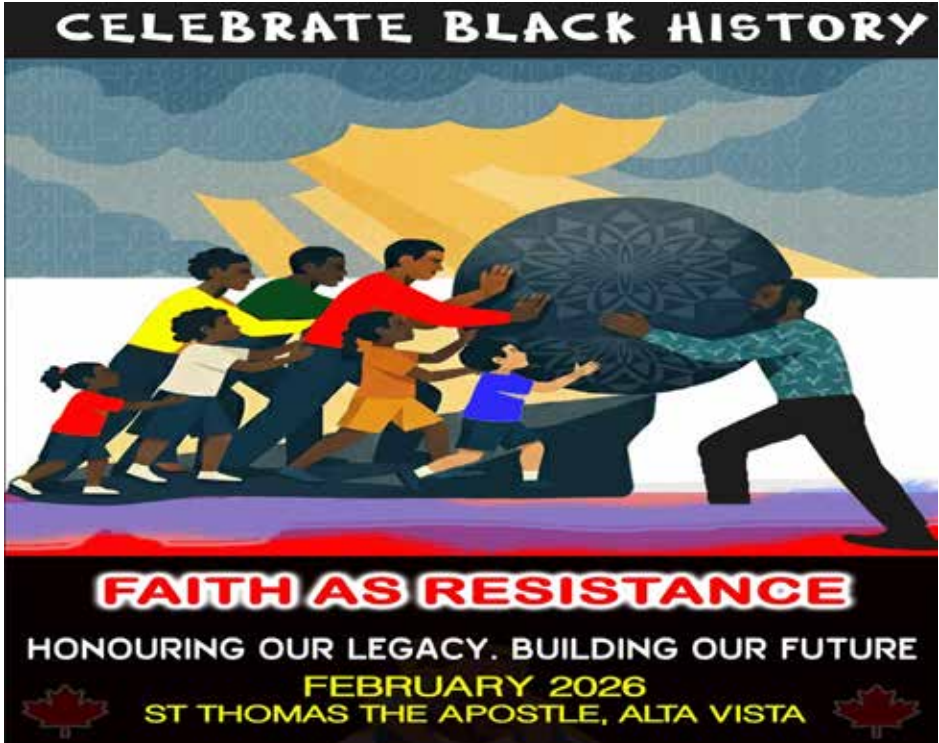
be reading and reflecting on Black Liturgies by Cole Arthur Riley. We are asking for a free will offering to cover the cost of these hard-cover books (suggested \$30).

This year, we are excited to present a concert at St. Thomas on Sunday, Feb. 8, at 3 pm featuring the London Trio Plus Gospel Singers. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students and children. Tickets can be obtained by emailing the church office at stthomasparishottawa@gmail.com

To get a taste of the talent of the London Trio Plus, visit their Youtube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/c/londontrioplus>

St. Thomas the Apostle is located at 2345 Alta Vista Dr. in Ottawa.

More info: *Calendar*, p. 12



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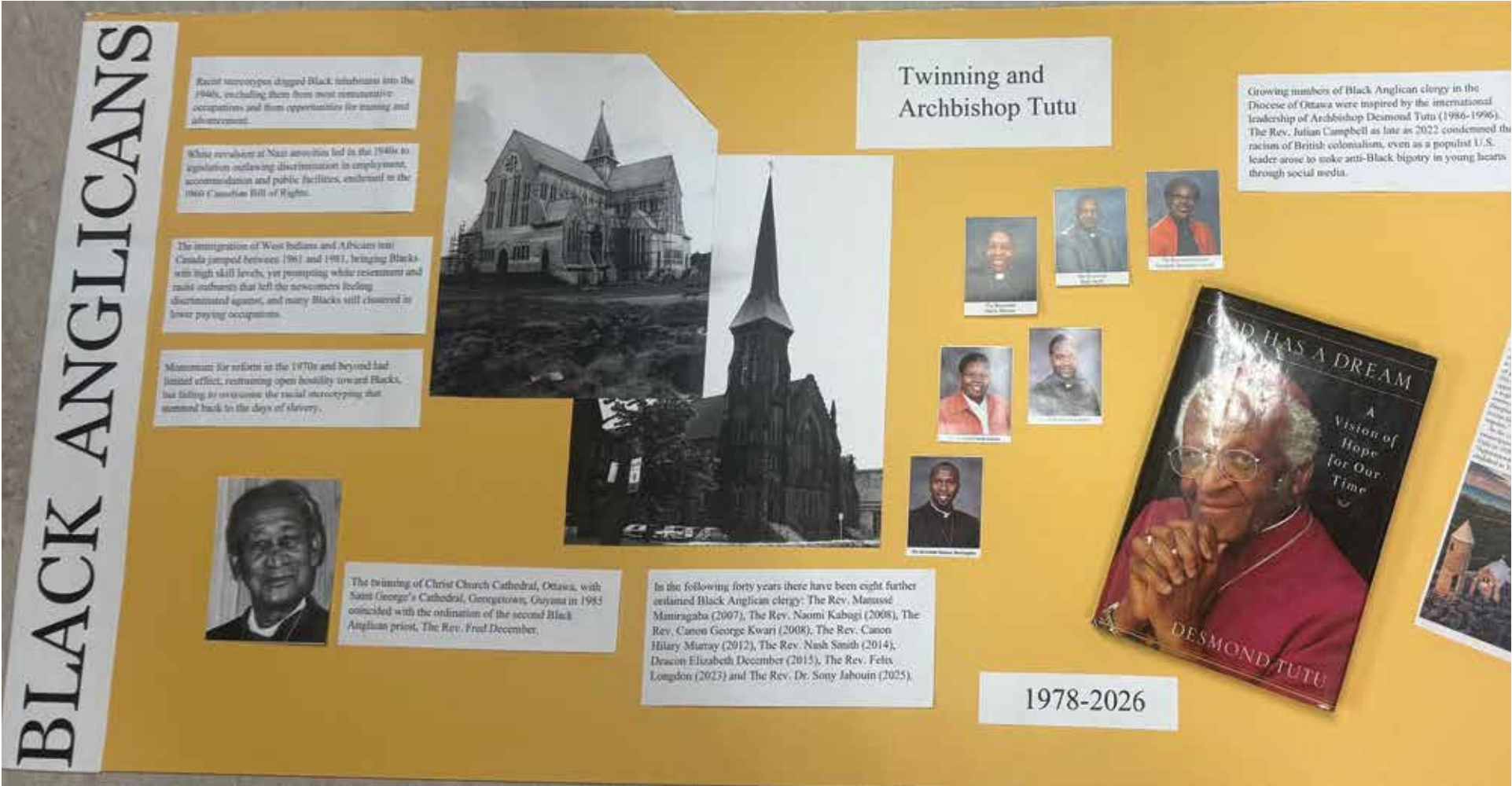
This winter, enjoy a short-term stay at The Vista on Sparks, where every detail is taken care of. Relax in a tastefully furnished suite, savour chef-prepared meals, and participate in enriching programs designed to keep you engaged and inspired throughout the season.

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PHOTO: LEIGH ANNE WILLIAMS



The Diocesan Archives display presents some information about the history of Black clergy who have served in the diocese.

Black Anglicans in the Diocese of Ottawa, 1978-2026

BY GLENN J LOCKWOOD

Editor's note: this is the fifth in a series of Black History Month articles written by Dr. Lockwood, tracing the history of Blacks in the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa from its beginnings to present day.

The legacy of slavery haunted Blacks in Canada, as their immigration here was proscribed in the early 20th century, and “science” harnessed to prove that hierarchical relationships were natural and right. This led to widespread segregating of Black citizens, whether in theatres or hotels into the 1940s. As late as the inter-war period, Blacks were concentrated in low wage corners of the economy: men as waiters, janitors, barbers and labourers, and women as domestic servants, laundresses and waitresses. The federal government permitted racial restriction in its hiring and promotion policies.

By 1940, most Blacks were born here. Elsewhere in Canada, Blacks were organizing, protesting limitations on employment and where they could socialize. The revelation of Nazi atrocities at the end of the Second World War produced a major shift in attitude. This led to new expressions of international opinion through the United Nations charters to create a more liberal intellectual climate. Researchers were discrediting the claims of “scientific” racism. The federal Bill of Rights in 1960 refuted

personal limitations by reason of race, religion or sex.

In 1962, Ontario consolidated its anti-discrimination legislation in a code, to be implemented by a Human Rights Commission with a mandate to promote equal opportunity as well as to administer existing laws accordingly. In 1962, new Canadian immigration regulations made individual skills the chief criterion for admission and ended race or national origin as reasons for exclusion. Further regulations in 1967 established a “points” system, whereby all who accumulated sufficient points were automatically admitted to Canada.

The effect was immediate in the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa. With artificial barriers removed, highly qualified applicants from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean flocked to Canada. West Indians so swelled Ottawa’s Anglican population that in 1985 Christ Church Cathedral was twinned with Saint George’s Cathedral in Georgetown, Guyana. A significant number of Anglicans among the new arrivals led to pressure for more Blacks to be ordained. Twenty years after Blair Dixon became a priest, (the year the cathedrals were twinned), The Rev. Frederick December (1912-2004), originally from Agricola, Guyana, came to serve in the Diocese of Ottawa.

The struggle over race relations in the United States from mid-century, including the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King

Junior in 1968, rivetted attention north of the border. Violence visited on peaceful non-violent Blacks demanding American civil rights was one side of the news reports, while Black achievements in sports, music and various mainstream fields of endeavour spoke of hard-won achievements.

The improving climate for Blacks in Canada contrasted with the apartheid policies of the government of South Africa, another country in the British Commonwealth. The attention of Anglicans in the Diocese of Ottawa was drawn to the words of a Black cleric—and eventual Nobel laureate, Archbishop Desmond Tutu. In his polemics, he wrote against the racist regime:

No matter how long and how repressive this unjust and undemocratic rule turns out to be, the urge for freedom remains as a subversive element threatening the overthrow of rigid repression. The tyrant is on a road to nowhere even though he may survive for an unconscionably long time and even though he may turn his country into a huge prison riddled with informers.

These words of hope eventually brought South African apartheid to an end, and it did so by encompassing the goal of “Truth and Reconciliation”—a phrase that eventually moved Canadians to confront their sordid history with Indigenous inhabitants.

Another 20 years would pass by after the reception of the Rev.

Fred December before a number of Blacks were ordained Anglican clergy in the Diocese of Ottawa. They included receiving the Rev. Manassé Maniragaba (2007), the Rev. Naomi Kabugi (2008), the Rev. George Kwari (2008), ordaining the Rev. Hilary Murray (2012), receiving the Rev. Nash Smith (2014), ordaining Deacon Elizabeth December (2015), receiving the Rev. E. Julian Campbell (2019), the Rev. Felix Longdon (2023), and the Rev. Dr. Sony Jabouin (2025).

Despite growing numbers of Black clergy, the Rev. Julian Campbell in 2022 wrote about the longstanding negative impact of colonialism. Although slavery was abolished in his native Bahamas in 1838, Campbell noted how Blacks affected a British accent, and they were not allowed to serve at royal functions until the late 1960s. Plantation owners became dominant, possessed land, and owned Black bodies. Blacks suffered from misogyny, homophobia, xenophobia and colouration long after. Under slavery, British people saw money flowing into their coffers without witnessing the price in blood paid by Blacks in the West Indies.

Forgiveness, concluded Campbell, doesn’t mean forgetting the past. Today, as anti-Black bigotry again is stoked in the United States, note William Faulkner’s warning: “The past isn’t dead. It isn’t even past.”

Based on the writing of James W. St.G. Walker and The Rev. E. Julian Campbell

DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

Saint Mary's Church, Westmeath
Deanery of the Northwest

Advantages and Scandal

BY GLENN J LOCKWOOD

Anglicans faced numerous challenges in getting established in eastern Ontario and western Quebec during the nineteenth century. This has not been the traditional account presented in general histories of Ontario and Quebec. Anglican historiographers know better. In the day, other denominations decried the supposed advantages enjoyed by the Church of England over all other denominations.

A Presbyterian minister at Perth, the Rev. William Bell, in his 1824 book *Hints to Emigrants* stated: “The church of England claims an establishment here and meets with a decided preference from the members of government.” While this was certainly the aim of Archdeacon John Strachan at York (Toronto), and although Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Colborne endowed a number of rectories in the 1830s (local examples being at Franktown and Carleton Place), by and large the number of Anglican clergy and churches fell behind various other denominations during the first half of the nineteenth century.

So, although the Westmeath area was visited as early as the 1820s by Governor General Dalhousie (who favoured the Church of Scotland) and his retinue, it was not until the end of the century that Anglicans managed to build a house of worship on this remote frontier across the Ottawa River from the Province of Quebec. As early as 1855, Henry Bromley of Westmeath



DIOCESAN ARCHIVES BRIAN GLENN FONDS PE06 E102

was enlisted as a pillar of the church by the Rev. E.H.M. Baker in the larger Pembroke vicinity.

Westmeath is first mentioned as an outstation of the Mission of Beachburg in 1869, but the going proved tough on the Calumet Island frontier in that generation, and it was removed from the list of stations in that mission from 1877 to 1879. In 1881, the Mission of Beachburg was dissolved, and Westmeath seems not to have received any services from an Anglican clergyman until 1884 when the Mission of Beachburg was recreated. Hope for a new beginning was planted in 1897 when Thomas Monsel donated the site for an Anglican house of worship.

A church of faultless lines was built of local grey limestone at

Westmeath in 1898, doubtless partly subsidized by the still-new Anglican Diocese of Ottawa, and Saint Mary's Church was duly consecrated by Bishop Charles Hamilton on 8 January 1899. Had the church been built half a century earlier, it seems likely that its name would have been selected from eight or so favoured Anglican choices: Christ Church, Saint James, Saint John's, Saint Paul's, Saint George's, Saint Thomas's, Trinity and Holy Trinity.

If the choice of the name of Saint Mary's was chosen by the bishop over the objections of the church, at the time it was said to be a scandal that one week after the new house of worship was consecrated, it was practically deserted because parishioners refused to attend services. That did not last, but the

years of struggle were by no means over. Half a century later, from 1944 to 1946 the Mission of Beachburg was an outstation of the Parish of Cobden. By 1968, Westmeath was an outstation of the Parish of Beachburg-Cobden. Saint Mary's Church, Westmeath celebrated a century of worship on 13 December 1998. In the 2010s, Bishop John H. Chapman secularized this house of worship.

The Diocesan Archives collects parish registers, vestry reports, service registers, minutes of committees, financial documents, property records (including cemeteries and architectural plans), insurance policies, letters, pew bulletins, photographs and paintings, scrapbooks, parish newsletters and unusual documents.

PHOTO: LEIGH ANNE WILLIAMS



Christ Church Cathedral, alight with sunshine from stained glass.

The Companions Program

September 2026 – June 2027

The residential Companions program is an immersive opportunity to experience a contemporary monastic community rooted in the Benedictine tradition. It is open to women aged 21 and up regardless of Christian denomination.

Companions live, work, and pray alongside the sisters, learning from them but also sharing each companion's own gifts with the sisters and their ministries. They will:

- Learn to cultivate peaceful and creative ways of living in a diverse intentional community
- Appreciate silence and solitude as well as community and service for a healthy life
- Put down deep roots of spiritual intimacy with God and each other
- Develop a personal path to ongoing spiritual growth

Application start & end (both programs): January 1, 2026 – May 1, 2026

Open to women of all Christian expressions, **Companions Online** is an opportunity to become "monastics in the world," living a Benedictine rhythm of prayer, work, study, and recreation. Online Companions learn to develop practices that support and nurture their spiritual life from the comfort of their homes.

They meet regularly for classes and discussion groups, and commit to times of personal prayer at home. They share in book studies, participate in online worship and sometimes screen a film relevant to spiritual growth and self-understanding. Online Companions also develop spiritual disciplines that follow the liturgical year.

Cost:
Residential Companions: sugg. \$150/month.
Companions Online: sugg. \$100/month.
If cost is a hindrance, assistance is available.

To learn more about either program, or to apply, email:
Canon Sr. Elizabeth Rolfe-Thomas, SSJD, at companions@ssjd.ca, or phone St. John's Convent: 416-226-2201, ext. 304

The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine

CLERGY REFLECTION

PHOTO: CANVA, COURTESY OF DIOCESE OF TORONTO



Looking to the past for a vision of peace in the Holy Land

BY THE REV. CANON
DR. CHRISTOPHER BRITTAIN

Editor's Note: Bishop Andrew Asbil of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto led a Canadian group on a pilgrimage with the Friends of Sabeel Liberation Theology Centre in East Jerusalem in late November. The Friends of Sabeel is an international and ecumenical response to the call of Palestinian Christians for solidarity. "Happening Now in Palestine" gathers daily reflections by some members of the group – "stories, moments and insights that invite us to listen, learn and pray alongside those who travelled."



The Rev. Dr. Christopher Brittain, Dean of Divinity at Trinity College in Toronto, was appointed in 2025 as Canon Theologian for the Anglican Diocese in Ottawa. After taking part in the pilgrimage, he shared this reflection, and he and the diocese graciously granted Perspective permission to reprint it.

The entire series can be accessed on the Anglican Diocese of Toronto website: <https://www.toronto.anglican.ca/happening-now-in-palestine/>

The first full day of the [Toronto] diocesan delegation's visit to the Holy Land began, fittingly, on the Mount of Olives, where we visited the Princess Basma Centre for Disabled Children. Run by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, this amazing institution is dedicated to treating Palestinian children with disabilities. It also works intentionally to teach and empower parents to understand and better support such children. I was deeply moved and inspired by the experience.

"Basma" means "smile" in Arabic, and this facility was full of displays of joy: smiling children, smiling hospital staff and teachers, and smiling parents. While there, the delegation watched a video of a satellite program in Gaza that is run by the centre. In a small cardboard hut, a nurse and a therapist treat children with various disabilities in the context of what continues to be a war zone.

Watching this video, and hearing stories of how difficult it was for Palestinians living in the West Bank to access this care facility due to being denied the necessary entry pass for Jerusalem or due to checkpoints being closed, brought to my mind these words from the prophet Isaiah: "The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain" (Isaiah 11:8). The Princess Basma Centre offers one example of this image being lived out faithfully in a perilous context.

Later that afternoon, we travelled to West Jerusalem to meet with

the biblical scholar and Jesuit priest David Neuhaus. Born in South Africa to a Jewish family, at the age of 15 Dr. Neuhaus was sent by his parents to a school in Jerusalem. He told us that, upon arrival, he saw that apartheid South Africa and Israeli society shared much in the way that significant portions of the population were treated as second-class citizens. Despite this impression, he became so attached to the region that he made it his home. After converting to Christianity and joining the Jesuits, he eventually settled at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Jerusalem.

Our conversation with Dr. Neuhaus was challenging—not only due to his blunt description of the injustices imposed on Palestinians, but also because he highlighted ways Christianity is sometimes used to reinforce such acts. More than one of us sat up straight when he declared, "The Bible can be vicious poison." His point was to emphasize the ways in which scripture is frequently used in narrow and self-serving ways to justify injustice and violence. His concern was particularly with how the Bible is employed as a weapon by some in the State of Israel to justify the displacement of Palestinians from their land.

Yet, even as Dr. Neuhaus criticized the treatment of Palestinians by the State of Israel and by the aggressive settler movement in the West Bank, he also acknowledged that "anti-Semitism is real." That this terrible reality continues to fuel the crisis situation in Palestine is tragically poignant in the wake of the news of

the [Dec. 14] attack on a Hanukkah celebration in Australia.

When asked where he sees signs of hope, Dr. Neuhaus soberly suggested there were few positive signs for the future in the Holy Land. Instead, he finds encouragement by looking to the past: "It's not always been like this." He reminded us that until around 1936, Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Holy Land lived as neighbours and in peace. Remembering that the present conflicts and atrocities don't define what is possible in Palestine and Israel, he suggested, can nurture a prophetic imagination.

These words echoed what one of the leaders of Sabeel, the organization hosting our visit, shared with us. He suggested that faith in the empty tomb is not something that encourages us to pray, "Lord, Lord, great are my problems!" Instead, we are called to pray, "Problems, problems, great is our God."

Although this was only the delegation's first day of encountering the struggles of Palestinians in the region, it was already clear to everyone in our group that we were going to be deeply impacted by what we were witnessing. Later that evening, this realization began to sink in as we were walking through the Christian Quarter of the Old City. Some in the group decided to get a small tattoo on their arm to mark this profound moment in our lives. Whether it was visible or not, we had already recognized that this trip was going to change us permanently.

CALENDAR

PHOTO: LA WILLIAMS

Feb. 8
Gospel Concert featuring
The London Trio-Plus Choral
Ensemble

St. Thomas the Apostle
(2345 Alta Vista Dr, Ottawa,)
3 pm
Tickets: Adults - \$20; Children and
Students - \$10

Feb. 11
Public meeting – Episcopal
election

St. Helen’s Anglican Church
(1234 Prestone Dr., Orleans)
7 pm
Nominees in the Episcopal election will
answer a set of questions relating to
the role of bishop and there will be a
chance to get to know them more at a
following reception.

Feb. 12
Public meeting – Episcopal
election

Trinity Church
(105 Second St. W., Cornwall)
7 pm
Nominees in the Episcopal election will
answer a set of questions relating to
the role of bishop and there will be a
chance to get to know them more at a
following reception.

Feb. 15
Public meeting – Episcopal
election

St. Paul’s Anglican Church
(20 Young Rd. Kanata)
7 pm
Nominees in the Episcopal election will
answer a set of questions relating to
the role of bishop and there will be a
chance to get to know them more at a
following reception.

Feb. 20
Public meeting – Episcopal
election

Holy Trinity Anglican Church
(68 Renfrew St., Pembroke)
7 pm
Nominees in the Episcopal election will
answer a set of questions relating to
the role of bishop and there will be a



chance to get to know them more at a
following reception.

The four public meetings will also be
livestreamed. Should severe winter
weather force the cancellation of an
in-person event, the public meeting
will take place on the same date
but in an online setting. Check the
diocesan website for further details
and updates: [ottawa.anglican.ca/
episcopal-elections-2026](http://ottawa.anglican.ca/episcopal-elections-2026)

Feb. 28
Episcopal Election
Christ Church Cathedral
(414 Sparks St., Ottawa)
8 am - Registration
9 am - Eucharist worship service
followed by the opening of the electoral
Synod

COFFEE
COMPANY &
CONVERSATION



WINTER SEASON 2026

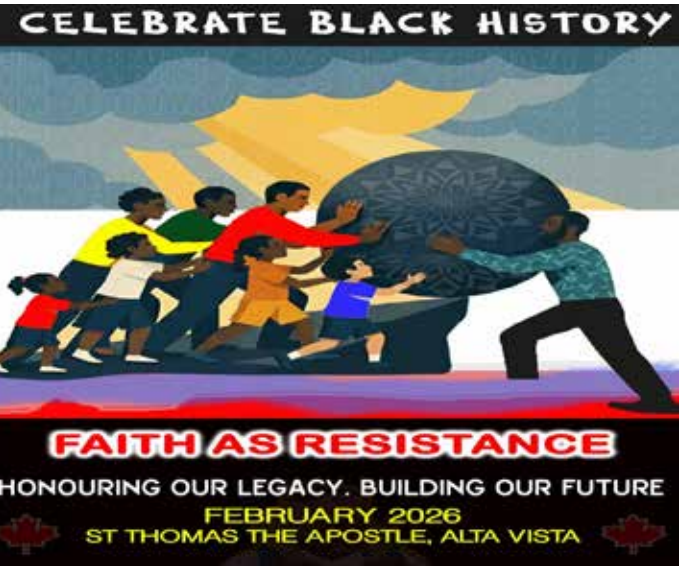
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UP-COMING ACTIVITIES	
February 5	Creative Writing – or – "Koffee Klatsch"
February 12	Aged In Harmony – an a cappella group of 20 men sharing music and humour
February 19	A Post Valentine Morning Trivia and Famous Stories from the History of Love
February 26	Games – or – "Koffee Klatsch"
March 5	The Rev. Dr. Mary Cate Garden, Theologian and Archaeologist – Speaking on the fascination and relevance of Archaeology for today's society
March 12	Creative Writing – or – "Koffee Klatsch"
March 19	St Patrick's Ceilidh – Irish Shenanigans with Food, Fun, Brian and Irish Dancing
March 26	Games – or – "Koffee Klatsch"



St. Thomas the Apostle is located at
2345 Alta Vista Dr. in Ottawa.
More details are in the article on page 8.

Sunday, February 1
8 AM & 10 AM - Eucharist Service
Guest Speaker: Dr. Joy Mighty, St Thomas the Apostle Anglican Church
Enhanced Coffee Hour: Snacks provided by Josiah and Charlotte Davies, featuring Liberia

Wednesday February 4 to Wednesday March 18
7 pm – Lenten Book Study¹ of “Black Liturgies” by Cole Arthur Riley

Sunday, February 8
8 AM & 10 AM - Eucharist Service
Guest Speaker: Josiah Davies, St Thomas the Apostle Anglican Church
Enhanced Coffee Hour: Snacks provided by Patricia Simon, featuring Antigua & Barbuda
3:00 PM – Gospel Concert featuring The London Trio-Plus Choral Ensemble
Tickets: Adults - \$20; Children and Students - \$10

Sunday, February 15
8 AM & 10 AM - Eucharist Service
Guest Speaker: Rev Deacon Elizabeth December-Lovell, Julian of Norwich Anglican Church
Enhanced Coffee Hour: Snacks provided by Joyann and Kermit Mackey, featuring. The Bahamas

Sunday, February 22
8 AM & 10 AM - Eucharist Service
Guest Speaker: Rev Canon Hilary Anne Murray, Clinical Chaplain, Cornerstone Housing for Women
Enhanced Coffee Hour: Snacks provided by Andrea Teekasingh, featuring Guyana