

Spring 2016

Lent & Easter Worship

March 20 Palm Sunday

9:00 a.m. The Sacred Table
10:30 a.m. The Open Door
11:30 a.m. The Forum

March 21–23 Holy Week

7:30 p.m. Quiet reflection and personal confession (optional)

March 24 Maundy Thursday

7:30 p.m. Holy Communion and stripping of the altar

March 25 Good Friday

10:00 a.m. The Passion Story

March 27 Easter Sunday

9:00 a.m. The Sacred Table
10:30 a.m. The Open Door
11:30 a.m. The Forum

Sunday Worship

9:00 a.m. The Sacred Table

Holy Communion with music from our rich Anglican tradition

10:30 a.m. The Open Door

Worship, song and teaching with a casual atmosphere and a children's program

11:30 a.m. The Forum

Bring your questions; let's discuss!

St John's York Mills Anglican Church

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RECTOR'S REFLECTIONS

Building Joy

Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labour is not in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:58

As I write to you we have just successfully celebrated both Christmas and The Epiphany. What a joyful experience it was, with our new worship format being so well received. Although many people attend both The Sacred Table (Holy Communion) and The Open Door (Ministry of Teaching the Word of God) we have experienced a considerable increase in our Sunday attendance overall. For this I am extremely thankful. I am also profoundly aware of all the work that goes on behind the scenes to make our Sunday morning experience so rewarding and edifying. It is that behind-the-scenes work I wish to speak about.

Early on a Sunday morning the church is already bustling with activity. There are musicians practising in the children's chapel, technicians running through slides or attending to the proper mix of sound in the sanctuary, a cadre in the kitchen preparing coffee ... all before most of us appear for worship. Without these faithful servants we just couldn't do what we do; this parish — any church — doesn't function without them. In fact, the healthier and more vibrant the volunteer base, the faster a parish grows, numerically and spiritually. As growth continues, the need for volunteers also increases. So, hopefully, does our capacity to serve: for example, we have installed an entirely new coffee service that will make our ministry of hospitality so much easier. I am hoping that more of you might consider offering some of your time and energy to the expanding ministries at St. John's. It need not be a weekly commitment; many hands make light work, as they say! Speak to me or one of the clergy and we will be happy to direct you in the best possible way.

We also had a most wonderful baptism service on January 10, 2016 which serves to illustrate another area of growth. Our Children's and Youth Ministry continues to flourish; we have 40 to 60 children on any given Sunday and our teachers are doing a fantastic job. Once again, it will take increased participation by all of us to sustain this level and reach toward the next. This ministry of nurture could use a few more men, for example, particularly the younger teen boys who benefit from a masculine presence in the classroom. Who was it that nurtured *you* in the faith when you were young?

One last example of life in the parish that truly excites me is that, in addition to many small groups of study and fellowship, we have also added two dynamic teaching elements to our discipleship program:

Rector's Reflections

Continued from page 1

- Under the leadership of Rev. Tim Taylor with his wife Trish we offer a Monday night parenting class. It was an obvious area of need as the class has filled to capacity.
- Warden Max and I are hosting a primer in the Christian faith at SJYM, geared especially for those who feel the need to acquaint themselves with the foundations of our faith and its rich traditions.

These two classes are both offered on Monday nights, with a supervised Homework Club for children and youth. It is such a joy to see SJYM hopping with activity, as some 50 adults and children begin with a simple dinner (amazingly prepared weekly by Rev. Tim) and then break up into their respective meeting rooms. The energy in the building is palpable.

It appears to me that the Spirit of God is alive and well at SJYM, providing you rich opportunity to grow in faith: in worship and volunteering, in attending events and contributing to outreach projects, in planning to celebrate our 200th anniversary and helping to build toward our future. This is how the Kingdom of God as it is lived at SJYM will grow.

Blessings to you in your labour for the Kingdom – young and old are counting on it.

In His Service,



Rev. Canon Dr. D. V. MacDonald
Rector SJYM

THE LINK

The Link is published four times per year by St John's York Mills Anglican Church. Items for inclusion are subject to editing and should be submitted to thelink@sjym.ca. Related high-resolution digital photos may be submitted as well.

Next Issue: Summer 2016. Copy deadline is April 15 for a mid-May mailing.

Editor: Laura Peetoom

Designer: Catherine Bryant

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Do you enjoy our Sunday coffee time?

Would you be willing to help?

If you attend The Sacred Table ...

- Arrive at 8:30 for set-up.

If you attend The Open Door ...

- Arrive at 9:15 for set-up.

Experienced volunteers are available to show you the routine!

The Hospitality Team is pleased that **Canada Coffee** has installed a new coffee brewing system in the kitchen. Each of the two machines brews 10 cups of coffee in two minutes; with dedicated plumbing, there's no need to pour in more water between brews. The coffee flows directly into portable, insulated flasks and we have eight of them, so we can build up a supply in advance of serving. This means only one set-up for the whole morning — and clean-up is a breeze now that we are using disposable cups.

Please help us carry on this important fellowship time. There's a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board outside the office. If you need more information, contact Karen Barnett at kabarnett99@hotmail.com or 416-223-0806.

P.S. The **donated baked goods** are very much appreciated and enjoyed by everyone. Please keep them coming!



CURATE'S CORNER

One of the (many) joys of preparing for ordination is becoming involved with a wide variety of Anglican communities. Over four or five years, ordinands are required to serve in a range of churches so that we can experience the breadth of expression that is included in the Communion.

I have had the good fortune to be part of four different worshipping communities, each with their own personalities and strengths: one very high Anglo-Catholic, one progressive-liberal, one Caribbean and now, the broad, family-friendly community that is St. John's York Mills.

On a recent Sunday I arrived for The Sacred Table to find cookies on the sacristy counter, filling the space where consecrated bread and wine is placed after communion. A sign marked the spot: "Reserved Sacrament."



Now, there are churches where this would border on the sacreligious. But that isn't the nature of SJYM. Instead, everyone gathered there for prayers prior to the service saw the humour in the situation.

I believe that Jesus had a fairly relaxed approach to rules. When it came to worship, if the rules helped you into a closer and more loving relationship with God, then great. If the rules hampered the declaration of God's loving Grace in the world, then watch out! In Matthew 12:3-4, he debates with the Pharisees who are condemning his disciples for plucking grain on the Sabbath:

"Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him or his companions to eat, but only for the priests."

In their own way, the cookies represent the broad perspective of this parish: that we find and express our journey to God through our families. The Rockin' Ringers (kids aged 10 and up) had baked the cookies during their church sleepover and were going to distribute them during coffee time. As an expression of thanks from the bell ringers to the congregation for this wonderful musical experience, the cookies were "an outward and visible sign, of an inward and spiritual grace."

That, to me, is one of the many joys of worshipping in the Anglican Communion: we are all encouraged to find our own way to enter into a loving relationship with the God who loves us.

— Curate Tim

DEACON CATHERINE'S DIARY

The Centre for Excellence in Christian Education (CECE)

Plans are underway for this year's Leading Children's Ministry Conference to be held at SJYM on **Saturday, November 5th**. Our keynote speaker is The Rev. Dr. Judy Paulsen who will be speaking about children and evangelism. Save the date!

Children's Ministry

The nativity story video project *The Christmas Story As Told By the Children of SJYM* was presented to God's glory and the people of St. John's during the 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service. As some of you are aware, we underwent a series of challenges and asked for your prayers; it looks like they worked!

We are indebted to St. Paul's Anglican Church in Auckland, New Zealand for their inspiration and support of this project; to Spring Garden Baptist Church, who lent us the costumes and props; and to Glen and Michele McDonald, who pulled together all the rough work into the final production. It would not have been accomplished without your help. Very special thanks go to Connie McDougall and Ariel McDonald, who took the lead in the audio- and videotaping, as well as Simone Nieuwolt, who backed me up during the process. There are so many others who made this possible; to mention only a few: Stephen Monk, Emma Burns, Gillian Mitchell, Peter Raynham ... thank you! And thank you, SJYM family, for your support of our children and those who minister to them.

Continued on page 4

Deacon Catherine's Diary
Continued from page 3

So, our next video endeavour will be the Resurrection As Witnessed By the Children of SJYM. We hope to have this ready for Easter of 2017 and will begin work after Easter this year. Thus far, the children and a number of adults have indicated their interest and support: Susanne Sutherland, Simone Nieuwolt, Gillian Mitchell, Michele McDonald, Peter Raynham, Max Dionisio and many others. Your prayers for all of us during this time would be greatly appreciated. We'll keep you updated!

Barnabas

It is my privilege to serve in the Barnabas ministry as part of the prayer team. It never fails to amaze me as to what our Barnabas guests have to endure. As we pray together their thoughts turn to the SJYM family, in thanks for our caring and ministry to them. They come with woeful stories but never complain. In response to the prayers of the destitute within our midst I urge you not to forget the forgettable.

Recently, one of our guests was asking for prayers for the refugees who will be coming to Canada and for the poor within our city – the jobless, the sick, the weak, the homeless. I thought that we had no homeless among our Barnabas friends but I learned that I was wrong. I remember when my mom and I lost our home. It was a scary time; I was nine years old. My godmother opened her heart and home to us and we stayed in the safety and loving care she provided for eight years. She certainly more than fulfilled her baptismal vows to me. I have never forgotten her for this and for her faith; she was an inspiration.

Yes, we open our hearts and Canadian home to refugees — not neglecting the needy in our own community. Yes, please pray for all those who have not received the love and opportunities we have been blessed with. Pray also for all who are homeless in Toronto, especially during the cold of winter. May we continue to reach out to those in need as our hearts are softened by God's love to us. Thank you for your support of this Barnabas ministry and of all who are in need.

Praying for a holy time of Lent, repentance and giving for us all, and looking forward to celebrating the Resurrection in the spring,

— The Rev. Dr. Catherine Keating

A LENTEN GIFT FOR YOU

I am greatly loved by God.

(Romans 1:7; Ephesians 2:4; Colossians 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:4)

I am God's child.

(1 Peter 1:23)

I am the light of the world.

(Matthew 5:14)

I am a new creature in Christ.

(2 Corinthians 5:17)

I am the temple of the Holy Spirit.

(1 Corinthians 6:19)

I have the peace of God that passes all understanding.

(Philippians 4:7)

In January at The Open Door, we've had a theme in our teaching around the question, "Who am I?" We've explored what happens in our baptism and spent some time uncovering the buried treasure of spiritual gifts that God has given to each one of us. In scripture, there are many sentences that affirm who we are as followers of Jesus. Above, I've given you six of my favourite ones. I've spent a lot of time over the years meditating on these affirmations. I've studied the scriptures that surround them, written them out repeatedly, carried them as a mantra within my heart during the day. There are six affirmations and six weeks in Lent. I invite you to take one affirmation a week and make it yours. Read it. Write it. Study it. Repeat it. Enjoy it and enjoy the affirming presence of God with you during this holy season. Easter is coming. Let's be ready to truly celebrate! With love and prayers for you all.

Anne +
Associate Priest



SPIRIT CINEMA

A Contemplative Fire Fundraising Film Series

Spirit Cinema returned in February with *The Power of Forgiveness*. Join us for our next two offerings. Gently used spiritual books available at a bring-and-buy book sale before and after the screening. All are welcome!

Suggested donation: \$20

March 10: Bonhoeffer

This documentary portrait of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian who was imprisoned and killed by the Nazis for plotting to assassinate Hitler, conveys the essence of a man and his world. Bonhoeffer's life is lyrically presented, with his friends and family shedding light on his breakaway seminary, his travels to America and Harlem, his calls to change the world for better, and his noble attempts to respond to Nazi Germany as a Christian.

April 14 : The Shift

This is the story of one 12-hour night shift in a hospital's emergency department, where a veteran nurse, Kayle, struggles with the haunting guilt of his brother's drowning while training a new nurse, Amanda. Kayle and Amanda are at odds throughout the story because, while they both struggle with the spiritual turmoil of what is right and wrong, they have both come to very different conclusions.

**St John's York Mills
19 Don Ridge Drive
Soup supper: 6:00 p.m.
Film start: 7:00 p.m.**

ENGLISH CONVERSATION CIRCLE

Some of you may notice that our name has changed. We felt that the word "circle" was more accessible to English learners, than "fellowship," in part because it falls in line with other programs like ours. We continue to offer a casual, friendship-driven hour of chatting and learning to people in our community who need to increase their facility with a difficult language.

In the autumn months, we were new at working together and new at what we were doing, just as our guests were new to this country and new to this church. Our guests come from different countries—one from Iran, one from Albania, four from Romania, two from Korea and several from China. All are not at the same level in their English ability but we quickly found that laughter and friendliness are universally understood, which drew us together.

At our last meeting before Christmas, we each spoke about a "highlight" (new word) of the past year. One guest mentioned that the highlight for him was meeting one of the other guests. That was a holy moment, and we reflected that meeting one another had indeed been a highlight for all of us. We were pleased to see three of our guests at Sing and Ring, enjoying the music (another universal language!). One of our guests frequently comes to one of our church services, valiantly trying to understand the sermon!

If you know someone who would benefit from some friendly English practice, let them know that we meet on Thursdays from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. in the Garnsworthy Room. We welcome newcomers!

DOORS OPEN TORONTO 2016

Welcome back, Toronto!

In 2003 we were invited to take part in Doors Open Toronto, a city-wide celebration of Toronto's culture, architecture and history. We welcomed over 200 people to our beautiful church and this year, as part of our 200th anniversary celebration, we will be participating again. Doors Open 2016 will take place over two days, Saturday and Sunday, May 28 and 29.

The theme this year is Re-used, Re-visited and Revised. That is definitely St John's York Mills in 2016!

Since our humble beginnings in 1816, we have grown to be a parish of great significance. Our rich history can be

discovered throughout the property: in the graveyard, in the magnificent windows and dedication plaques, in the archives and artifacts and, of course, in the building itself.

Would you like an opportunity to learn more about our history and to share your knowledge? Would you like to help celebrate our 200th anniversary and promote our present and future in the wider community? We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to take part in this event. It may include showing people around the church or cemetery, greeting them as they arrive, talking about a particular aspect or item that interests you or helping with the set-up. Training and materials will be provided.

Please contact Venetia Cowie: vcowie@sympatico.ca.

THE GOOD AND BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE

If you knew my background, it might surprise you that *The Good and Beautiful God* has changed my life. It certainly surprised me.



My father was a minister in the Christian Reformed Church, a denomination that takes an intellectual approach to faith and thus values rigorous Christian education. My first nine years of school were in an independent Christian school; I went to Sunday School classes every week and, when I was old enough, attended catechism (formalized Christian teaching) classes. I attended the church's boys' club and then the church youth group. When I graduated from high school I went to a Christian liberal arts college.

I have attended a church service pretty much every week of my life, with the exception of a five-month stretch when I was backpacking through Europe. I have been a faithful and involved member of whatever church I have attended, volunteering as study-group leader, parish council member and warden. I have tried to live my life as a thoughtful Christian, with God very much part of my life, every day. I know the Bible well, perhaps not so much as to quote verses at will but well enough to discern a false teaching if it came my way. I had collected all the badges, so to speak, but felt like there was something missing.

I...recommend this program for both those in ministry or for those who simply want to deepen their walk with the Lord.

Scot McKnight, New Testament scholar and Christian author

I joined one of the very first *Good and Beautiful* groups at SJYM. The book begins by saying that “a lot of people want to change...but many of them do not believe it is possible. After years of trying and failing, they lead a Christian life of quiet desperation, longing for change and yet certain it will never happen. So they sit in their pews each week, sighing silently, resigned to their fate.” That resonated with me. The book looked promising.

As many of you know, the book is laid out simply: each chapter focuses on a “false narrative” — a mistaken idea that leads to other mistaken ideas — about God that is prevalent both inside and outside the church. As well, each chapter was followed by a soul training exercise — nothing onerous but always something that stretched us a bit. The first one was to get enough sleep. That was easy. There were others: experiencing silence, counting your blessings and making space and time in your life. Our study group, under Drew's leadership, tackled one chapter after another and none of them I found difficult or challenging to the way I viewed God. “God is good.” *Yup.* “God is generous.” *Check.* “God is trustworthy.” *Uh huh.* No surprises. As we progressed through the chapters, my expectation of having that “road to Damascus” moment began to fade.

This is not to say I was disappointed. The book was good. The discussion was great. It was a perfect opportunity to get to know others better. So things were going along well — maybe not earth-shatteringly fantastic, but well enough.

Then came Chapter Eight, “God Transforms.” This chapter explores a very familiar and central narrative: We are sinners who have been redeemed by Christ. The author takes hold of the “sin” part of this equation and gives it a shake; then, he asks the reader to consider this text: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Growing up in the Reformed tradition, I had been balancing on that seesaw of sin/redemption, guilt/pardon, naughty child/forgiving parent all my life. In the solitude that is this chapter's “soul training” required, I obediently meditated on other texts that spoke of a similar theme: John 1:2, Romans 5:1, Colossians 2:13. And here is what I wrote in the journal I was obediently keeping:

I wasn't particularly moved by any of the passages, having heard them all at some time before, but reading them together and

repeatedly I felt like I was getting hit over the head, as if God was trying to tell me something that I just wouldn't listen to.

Here's the surprising (and comical) part of all this: after writing the above, it still took me *a whole week* to clue in. Slowly, it dawned on me that, because of my faith in Christ, I was *no longer a sinner*. Through Christ, I was a new person, not mastered by sin but *filled with the Spirit*. All my life I had been playing by the rules, but it was the wrong set of rules, and the real ones were *so much more* in my favour. I wasn't a redeemed sinner at all. I was a Spirit-filled, new creation in Christ.

I cannot overstate how significant this was for me. I have the date – January 15, 2015 – marked on my calendar as the date that I crossed over to another dimension, a different level of awareness in which I am just beginning to understand what it means to be a Christian. For the first time in my life I witnessed to someone who knew nothing about the Bible; this is something I would have NEVER done before. Before, I harboured a cynical streak that took over when I listened to others talk about their faith experience. Now, no longer — for the most part, anyway. (Old habits die hard!) I am, in fact, excited about my faith. And that is not something I had before in my life.

Reading and discussing The Good and Beautiful Life has become a meaningful spiritual journey. Focusing on life in the Kingdom here on earth has brought an unexpected bonus — a sense of shedding burdens for a place of peace.

Gail Moore

I am almost 52. I regret that this didn't happen to me sooner but I recognize that, for whatever reason, I wasn't ready. And I am so thankful that I get to experience this now. Even after all my years of Christian education it is the blessing and gift of God's grace that I too can learn something new about Him.

So, it should come as no surprise that I heartily encourage anyone who hasn't read the books and/or participated in a *Good and Beautiful* study group to do so at your first opportunity. You'll have your own experience, of course, and what you get out of the book may be entirely different. But there IS something there for you. If it changes you like it changed me, well, you're in for a wonderful surprise.

— Paul Heersink

These books have conveyed to me the extravagant love, the unconditional love, the overwhelming love that the Lord has for us all. There is no condemnation, just freedom to become all He has created us to be.

Blessed by Him, Barbara Abraham

As *The Link* goes to print there are four "Good and Beautiful" groups underway at St. John's. New groups commence throughout the year. Watch *The In-Between Times* for announcements or contact the church office at the beginning of March to ask about a "Good and Beautiful" group for you.

Copies of *The Good and Beautiful God* and *The Good and Beautiful Life* are available in the office.

A CHRISTMAS STORY

On a sunny day two days before Christmas I happened to stop by the gatehouse at Tapestry where my husband Bill and I have resided for six years to drop off some Christmas cookies.

Varghese was on duty and thanked me for the cookies. He then said, "Merry Christmas, Mrs Prentice. Did you know that I am a Christian?"

I did not know, as discussion of belief was not part of the conversation when this security person was on duty and being helpful to the residents at our condo.

He then explained he is from India and is a member of the Malankara Orthodox Church, founded in 52 AD when St. Thomas visited Crangnore, southwest India. Evangelists during the life of Christ, 70 total, he said, had visited India to spread the gospel of Christ but had not met with success due to language and cultural barriers. Today, 98% of Indians are Hindu or Muslim. This minority church has survived and exists on all the continents; 300 exist in Canada. Two branches are in the Toronto area with eight congregations.

When we wish a Merry Christmas to those around us, we never know what will learn!

— Linda Prentice

MUSICFEST 2016

Pause a moment. Think back on your life.
What musical memories come to mind for you?

This is the theme for this year's Musicfest, taking place on **Sunday, May 1, 2016 at 3:00 p.m.** Since St. John's York Mills is celebrating its 200th birthday this year, we have a *lot* of musical memories! We'll present some each from the 1800s, 1900s and 2000s.



Though it takes a while to see popular secular songs turned into handbell arrangements, each year we encourage our fearless leader Carolyn Martin to move forward into this century. It's early days as I write this and at this point we haven't fleshed out the total program; however, you'll see some songs you may recognize, such as "Phantom of the Opera," "Memory" from the musical *Cats*, and the *Star Wars* theme.

The St. John's handbell program is self-supporting. This concert helps to allow us to continue this way — and also to give back to the world around us. Once again we will be donating some of the concert proceeds to Sleeping Children Around the World (SCAW), a local Canadian charity providing bed kits to children around the world.

Please come and celebrate our church's 200th anniversary year by attending our Musical Memories Musicfest 2016 concert. Again, the date is **Sunday, May 1 at 3:00 p.m.** See you there!

It's funny that I was asked to write about this year's MusicFest and its theme of Musical Memories. My family's history is intertwined with the history of this church. As many of you know, Joseph Shepard donated the land for the church and the churchyard. What you don't know is that he is my great-great-great grandfather. His youngest daughter, Sarah, married Joshua Harrison, my great-great grandfather. My grandmother was a Harrison. The Harrisons farmed in York Mills from 1796 until 1954. They were members of St. John's — I suspect they helped build the church — and many of them are buried in the churchyard. I currently live on land once owned by Joseph Shepard.

— Stephanie Brander, Musicfest Committee

MCCOLLUM FUND AWARDS

The **Archdeacon A.C. McCollum Fund** was established in 1957 to assist students who are enrolled in an Anglican seminary in Ontario and are engaged in advancing the faith and teachings of the Anglican Church of Canada. The deadline for application for a given year of study falls in October of the previous year. Information and application forms for the bursary are available on the SJYM website.

This year, the Fund Committee decided to award a \$5000 bursary, and on November 24, 2015 the members met to review seven strong applications. After much discussion, four students were selected to share the bursary, two from Wycliffe College and two from Saint Paul University in Ottawa (see below).

The co-chairs wish to thank all the members of the committee for their hard work reviewing this year's applications.

— Max Dionisio, McCollum Fund Co-Chair

Karen Isaacs, Wycliffe College (awarded \$2000)

My name is Karen Isaacs and I am so grateful to be one of this year's recipients of a bursary from the Archdeacon A.C. McCollum Fund!



I currently work at the Diocese of Toronto office downtown where I am Bishop Patrick Yu's administrative assistant. I am also studying part-time at Wycliffe College to supplement a Master of Theological Studies degree, as well as doing a parish placement at St. Martin in-the-Fields. I am hoping to be ordained to the priesthood in the spring of 2017. I have a deep interest in all things mission- and outreach-related, which stems from an early age, and have worked with various mission organizations in Europe and Africa, including Wycliffe Bible Translators and Youth with a Mission (YWAM). I love travelling and most recently returned from a short-term trip to the beautiful and gracious country of Ethiopia. I was born and raised in a large and loving Christian family in a small town in northern Manitoba. I hold a degree in Linguistics from the University of Manitoba and am known as Auntie Karen to six beautiful nieces and one nephew in Winnipeg.

**Ted Williams, Wycliffe College
(awarded \$500)**

David “Teddy” Williams is a Master’s of Theological Studies student at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto. In addition to his studies, Ted is a member of the Graduate Christian Fellowship and represents the Green Team on the Wycliffe Student Council. As a member of the Green Team, Ted has organized monthly events to pray and fast for the recent Paris climate talks, and encourages conversation about a theology of creation care. His previous experiences include the arts and politics. He has worked for two Lieutenant-Governors of Ontario and was executive assistant to Ms. Suzanne Anton, a mayoralty candidate in Vancouver’s 2011 municipal election. As an undergraduate student at the University of King’s College, Halifax, Ted founded a student musical society as well as the King’s Chorus, a professionally led choir with over 60 members. Years later, both choir and society remain important to the King’s College community and offer a good way to introduce students to the college’s chapel.



It was at King’s College that Ted developed an interest in mission and its role in the church. While there, he rebooted the St. Andrew’s Missionary Society and coordinated students to volunteer at soup kitchens in Halifax. Now that he is at Wycliffe College, he is taking the opportunity to study mission further. He is interested in serving the Lord abroad as a teacher. Ted’s interests include judo, French, films and telling stories; he plays the violin and harmonica.

**Colin McFarland, Saint Paul University
(awarded \$2000)**

Greetings! My name is Colin and I am a first-year M.Div. (Anglican Studies) student at Saint Paul University in Ottawa. Following my graduation in 2011 from Trinity Western University (B.A. in Music), I moved to Ottawa to work as an administrator in a not-for-profit arts organization. During that time I met and married my wife, Keltie, and have been putting down roots in our community. An important part of that has been



my involvement in church and in a very special community of friends at a local urban drop-in centre in Ottawa’s Lowertown neighbourhood. The process of learning to listen, to serve and to pray for others in these communities with the intent of drawing people into the life of God’s kingdom has had a profound effect on me. In response to a call to consider ministry in the church, I started a Diploma in Christian Studies at Wycliffe College in 2014. That experience confirmed my interest in studying theology and contributed to a better understanding of the call on my life, and helped me to discern a new vocation in the Anglican Church of Canada. I am so thankful for the support of the Archdeacon A.C. McCollum Fund; this financial support is such an encouragement as I transition from full-time employment to full-time studies. Many thanks to you for your ongoing prayer and support for M.Div. Students in Ontario.

**Ryan Boivin, Saint Paul University
(awarded \$500)**

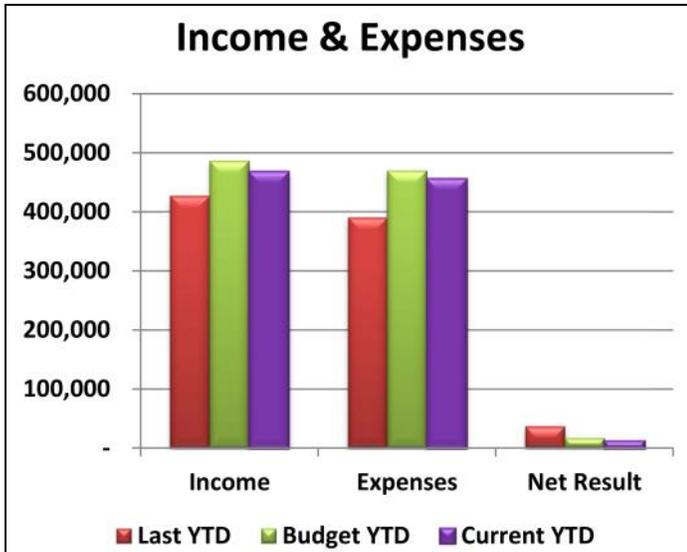
What an honour and a blessing to receive this bursary from the A.C. McCollum Fund. I am a postulant with the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa, with hopes of being ordained, God willing, at some point in 2016. I have completed two of the three years of theological education required and am on my third of three internships as part of my formation. It was only four short years ago that my wife Kara and I moved from Windsor to Ottawa so that she could begin her PhD studies at Carleton in Sociology.



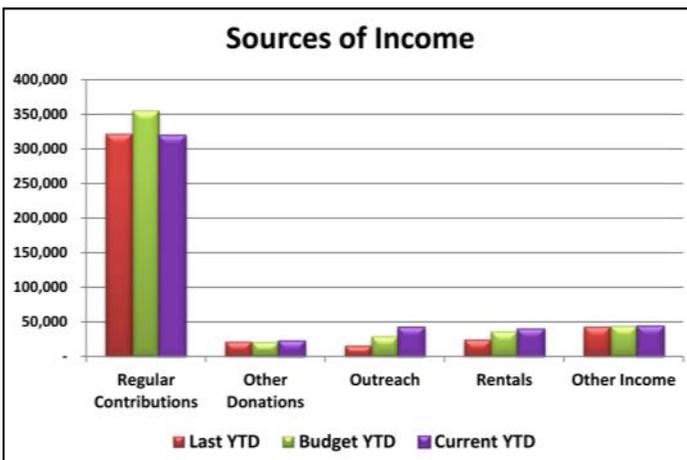
Before moving, I did my undergraduate studies at the University of Windsor where I finished with Bachelor’s degrees in both Math and Education. After seven years of trying to gain employment as an occasional teacher with a number of different school boards, I made the decision to put an end to that pursuit. While the ensuing time of uncertainty and self-exploration was challenging, it culminated in answering a call to ordained ministry. The Rev. Gerry Edmondson, who was my parish priest and who prepared me for my confirmation when I was a pre-teen, told me on the day of my confirmation that I should one day consider the priesthood. Having brushed aside his remark for near 15 years, but having never forgotten his words, it was then and is now the only thing that makes sense. I believe I am so called, and I hope that I can do Gerry proud and serve with all my brothers and sisters in Christ to the glory of God.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

We are just past the first half of our fiscal year. This is a good time to review our current finances. Here are some highlights:



Expenses are in line with the investment budget we presented at the vestry meeting in October 2015. They are higher than last year due to increased educational programming for youth and adults and the staff needed to support them.



Income overall is also higher than last year due to a grant to help with our curate's salary, increases in rental income and contributions to the Jamaica project.

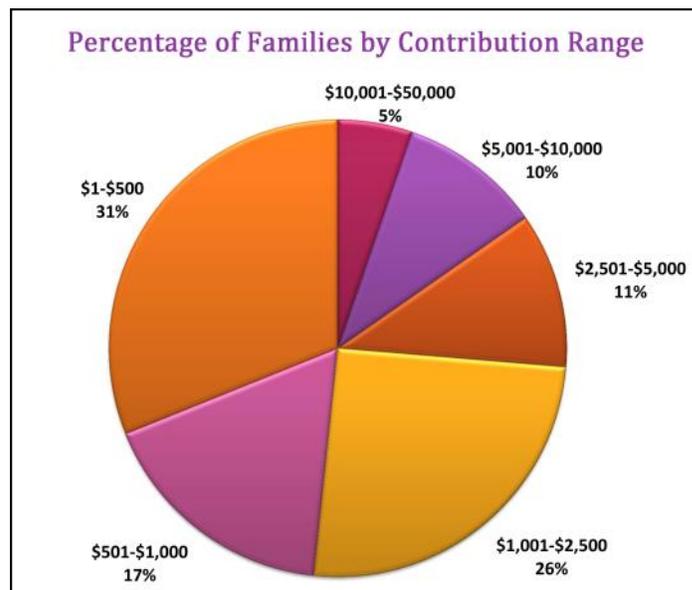
Regular contributions are lower than the three percent increase approved at vestry to fund our investment in new programs. Overall, we are currently about \$40,000 behind budget in this category.

How much do we currently give?

Based on an analysis of the annual gifts of 209 families who make regular contributions to SJYM we know that:

- 26% of our families contribute 77% of our regular contribution income;
- 74% of our families contribute the remaining 23% of our regular contribution income;
- 31% (or 65 families) contribute an average of less than \$5 per week.

Overall we rely on a small group of families to provide us with the majority of our income. Financially speaking, this is a risky position. Speaking in love, **we urge you to consider how the financial responsibilities of the parish**



can be shared more widely and equitably.

How much *could* we give?

In the end, our answer to this question is personal and reflects our relationship with God.

We have developed a worksheet to help you discern what your family's standard of giving might be. It is included with your tax receipt for 2015. You can also get a copy through the office or on our website: www.sjym.ca/stewardship.

One approach is to give the equivalent of one hour's wage per week. This approach can make the work week and the work of our hands holy because our act of giving

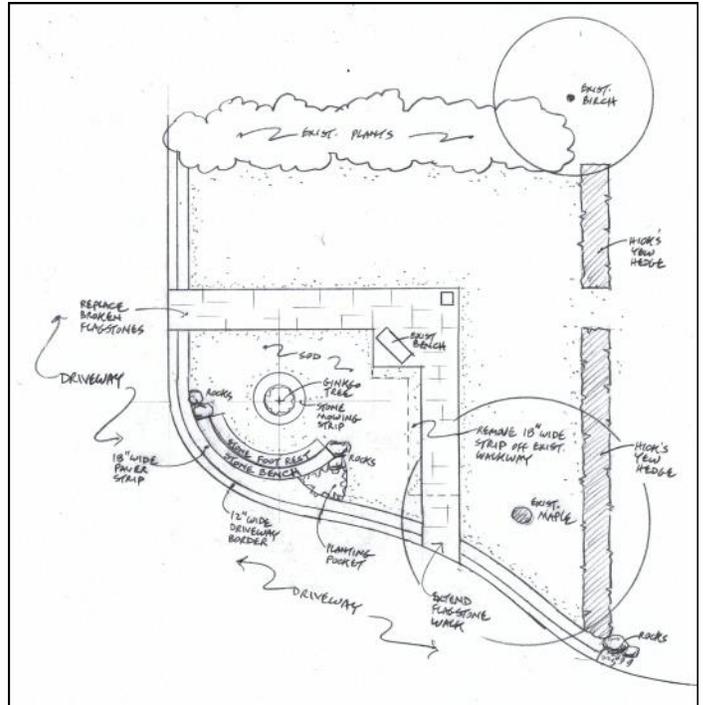
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CREMATION GARDEN RENOVATION

To mark the occasion of the 200th anniversary of St. John's York Mills, the Churchyard Committee will be renovating our Cremation Garden area. Our plans make the area a dignified resting place for loved ones by improving the ambiance and increasing comfort for visitors. The renewal of our facility will be a little disruptive but only for a short time, and we hope you'll enjoy watching our progress.

We cannot expand our confines but we can increase the ground space to provide for future interments. The boxwood hedge will be relocated to the base of the new patio and the mulberry tree at the centre will be replaced with a single ginkgo tree matching the one installed last summer in the Welcome Garden. Ginkgos (also known as maidenhair trees) have an ancient heritage and are found in fossils dating back 270 million years, making them appropriate markers for historical occasions.

The hedge currently separating the Cremation Garden from the graveyard will be replaced with coniferous yews, matching the yew hedge along the eastern boundary of the churchyard. Minor pruning of the large red maple tree will increase light and air circulation—and make the area safer for tall walkers! The stone path will be repaired and a small section added. The dedicated stone bench already in place will, of course, remain.



Along the curve of the driveway, a stone seating wall will be constructed, so that visiting families can rest and remember. We hope it will also be a place for parishioners to take a few moments on a pleasant day to enjoy the quiet naturalism of our beautiful churchyard. We are so blessed to have this wonderful sanctuary in the midst of a big and bustling city; we look forward to enhancing the experience of using it.

Financial Update continued from page 10

is intimately tied to how we earn a living. It is a simple and profound contribution and it may increase with time to reflect our progress in life.

In the Old Testament, the tithe – 10 per cent of one's income – was the rule in order to provide support for "widows and orphans." In Canada we are fortunate to have access to many social programs, therefore, some people use the "modern-day tithe" of 5 percent of all income, as a guide for their giving.

In the New Testament, Jesus furthers the challenge to be generous in all that we do. In Luke's Gospel we learn that "much is required of the person to whom much is given; much more is required from the person to whom more is given" (12:48).

Those who cannot afford to give more due to under-employment or other serious financial burdens could pray

for the Church and consider how they might give of their time and talent on a weekly basis. Everyone, regardless of income level, should be encouraged to give something. Even in our hardship we experience blessing.

A Stewardship Prayer

Oh Lord, giver of life and source of our freedom, we are reminded that Yours is "the earth in its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it." We know that it is from your hand that we have received all we have and are and will be. Gracious and loving God, we understand that you call us to be the stewards of Your abundance, the caretakers of all you have entrusted to us. Help us always to use your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously. May our faithful stewardship bear witness to the love of Christ in our lives. We pray this with grateful hearts in Jesus' name.
Amen.

NEW CIRCLES

Over the holidays, we were overwhelmed by the generosity of clothing donors across the city and beyond. Thank you to everyone who reached out to us. Donation drop-off resumed February 8 with some new guidelines, outlined in detail on our website, www.newcircles.ca. The most important point is that we are asking that you pre-sort items into men's, women's, kids/teens or shoes/accessories and place them into plastic bags labelled accordingly. This will help us process donations on-site more quickly. Think of this as supporting our volunteers and clients from the comfort of your own home! Of course, you can also help out on-site: call Alykhan at (416) 422-2591 if this interests you.

Your donations make a huge difference to families in need. Since November, we have outfitted over 3,000 people through our GLOW (Gently Loved Outfits to Wear) service, ensuring that they have warm clothing for winter. Thank you!

CHRISTMAS GIFT DRIVE

Mr. David Hicks, the new proprietor of Canadian Tire at Sheppard and Leslie, kindly continued a tradition begun many years ago by the now retired Eric Sellors. He matched each Canadian Tire or regular dollar donated and then charged us at sale prices when we did our shopping. With his support we provided gifts to homework club students at the Downsview Youth Covenant and to the hardworking volunteers who help sustain Flemingdon Park Ministry (FPM).

For the Robertson House shelter, Mastermind Toys once again generously provided many boxes of gifts. This year, there was a shortage of suitable gifts for teens, and the Toronto Tim Hortons Restaurant Owners group came through with twenty \$20 TimCards. FPM also gave some extra gifts they had available.

FPM greatly appreciated the mittens, hats and scarves donated by parishioners through our foyer Giving Tree. After December 10th, Robertson House staff picked up whatever remained, including items for newborns and infants.

Thank you for your kind support in helping share the joy of Christmas with so many people.

— Scott and Josephine McDougall

ST JOHN'S OPENS ITS HEART

Refugee sponsorship will be one of the cornerstones of the church's outreach ministry in 2016.

A Syrian woman named Alaa, who lives in our neighbourhood, approached us some months ago for help to bring her mother and sister to Canada. Since then, the Alaa Sponsorship Committee, led by Katharine Grenier, is actively working with the Anglican-United Refugee Alliance (AURA) to bring make it happen. The two women are safe in Amman, Jordan and Katharine is working with the family to ensure that the required paperwork is complete.

A second refugee sponsorship is being coordinated through St. John's by more neighbours — the North York Moms and Dads Facebook Group. This group is made up of 2,000 families who live in North York and who share parenting tips on Facebook. When the famous picture of Alain Kurdi hit the papers, a dozen parents formed a committee to explore how they could sponsor a refugee family. Their search brought them to our door and we have been assisting them with the process and coordinating the financial component of their sponsorship. Amongst themselves, they have already raised over \$40,000, with commitments for \$10,000 more.

Now, a new group is forming at St. John's, with approximately 18 families from the church community who wish to sponsor a third family. We are informed by AURA that there are refugee families ready and waiting to be sponsored, so there will soon be a fund-raising initiative to raise the \$40,000 to \$50,000 required to sponsor a family for a year.

Refugee sponsorship is a constantly changing program — if you have any questions, please contact Jeremy Edwards (directly or through the church office) or Curate Tim.

