

REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF CONGEGATIONAL SUPPORT

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

Through programs, events, training days and parish consultations, Congregational Support and Development continues to support the diocesan vision of **Life Changing Worship**, **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry**, **Prophetic Social Justice**, **Generous Culture of Stewardship** and **Continuous Culture of Innovation** so that we may follow Christ passionately, pursuing excellence and continuing to grow.

Staff of the Division are:

Christyn Perkons, Consultant, Children, Youth & Family Ministries, & Congregational Support, Ext. 460, christyn.perkons@niagara.anglican.ca

Jane Wyse, Diocesan Administrative Assistant, Ext. 420, jane.wyse@niagara.anglican.ca

Michael Patterson, Executive Officer & Supervisor of CSD, Ext. 257,
michael.patterson@niagara.anglican.ca

½ time position currently not filled

Joyce Wilton retired from Congregational Support & Development in July 2010 and will be missed after 25 years of passionate ministry to and for the youth of Niagara as well as serving the Diocese in Women's Ministry, Adult Education, Volunteer Screening & Management, and as a member of the Safe Church Committee and the Safe Church Investigative Team. Her ministry was celebrated at a special service at Christ's Church Cathedral on June 27 with laudatory appreciation offered by the Bishop, parish priests, parents, alumni and young people currently in programs.

Congregation Support

Christyn does congregational support and development work with parishes using tools such as Open Space, Asset Mapping, Appreciative Inquiry & Holy Conversations/ Strategic Planning, staff performance evaluations based on an Alban Institute model; maintains a CSD resource library; serves on Candidates Committee and the Vision Planning Team, and chairs the **Life Changing Worship** petal of the diocesan vision.

Currently working with St. James, Dundas, St. Alban's, Beamsville, St. Philip's by the Lake, Grimsby, and St. John's, York.

Congregational Support & Development Resources

Emerging Church/Alternate Worship – books, videos, DVDs.

Change Management – books and 'how to' manuals.

Adult Education – programs; Via Media, Living the Questions (1 & 2) Saving Jesus, Eclipsing Empire, The Fit Life.

Parish Guide for Same Gender Blessings Discussion.

New Resources:

- *Uppity Women of the Bible* (4-6 week sessions on Song of Songs, Esther, Judith & Ruth);
- *Mission-Shaped Youth; rethinking young people and church;*
- *Bread for the Journey: resources for worship* (Ruth Duck);
- *Eggs and ashes; Practical & liturgical resources for Lent and Holy Week* (Ruth Burgess – Iona);
- *Creating Change; the arts as catalyst for spiritual transformation* (Keri Wehlander, editor);

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- *Welcome to the Wisdom of the World and its meaning for you* (Joan Chittister);
- *Space for Grace* (Giles Goddard);
- *Exploring the Worship Spectrum: 6 views*;
- *A primer of Christian worship: where we've been, where we are, where we can go*;
- *Kicking Habits; welcome relief for addicted churches* (Thomas Bandy);
- *Prayers for an Inclusive Church; Collects for Years A,B & C, for Festivals and Seasonal Prayers*;
- *Showing Our True Colours: A Fun, Easy Guide for Understanding and Appreciating Yourself and Others*;
- *40 Day Journey with Madeleine L'Engle*;
- *40 Day Journey with Kathleen Norris*;
- *Six Theories of Justice*;
- *Justice in an Unjust World*;
- *What Can One Person Do?: Faith to Heal a Broken World*;
- *Rural Evangelism: Catching the Vision*;
- *Rural Ministry: The Shape of Renewal to Come*; and
- *Discovering Hope: Building Vitality in Rural Congregations*.

Children and Family Ministries

Consultant: Christyn Perkons on part-time basis.

- Works to enhance the ability of the Niagara Anglican Community to nurture the spiritual growth of children and their inclusion in faith communities.
- Provides resources and leadership training for Sunday morning programming, junior youth ministry and family ministry to parishes and parish clusters by request.
- Visits parishes by invitation to get to know volunteers and staff involved in children and family ministry; to get a sense of what's happening in parishes across the diocese, and to offer resources.

Family Ministry

- Resources particular to family needs are available through the lending library and include books in the areas of parenting, family spirituality, family activities, special needs children, sexuality and family milestones as well as games, music and videos/CDs.
- Parishes wanting to enhance ministry to families are encouraged to contact Christyn for ideas and resources.

Puppet Ministry

- Eighteen puppets along with puppet skits, instruction guides, and training manuals are available for loan to parishes to use in Sunday morning children's programming, children's talks, worship, Bible storytelling, and church announcements. Mini training workshops can be provided to parishes by the consultant, and training days by a professional at a puppet training school are offered as interest dictates.

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Children's Festivals

- The consultant provides support to the regional Children's Festivals through advertising, administration, and button design/creation. Over 400 children enjoy this event annually which typically occurs on the last Saturday in April. Planning for the 2011 Children's Festivals in Undermount/Mohawk, Lincoln/Brock, Greater Wellington, and Trafalgar began on November 1st.

Lending Library

A wide variety of books, activities, games, music, videos and CDs are available for three week loans through the Program Consultant's office. New resources include:

- *Green Church: Caretakers of God's Creation* (a six week study for children)
- *Veggie Tales Silly Little Thing Called Love* DVD
- *The Singing Bowl: 26 Children's Sermons with Activities*
- *Formational Children's Ministry: shaping children using story, ritual and relationship*
- *Core Skills for Children's Work: Developing and extending key skills for children's ministry*
- *Great Tween Getaways: 8 Retreats for Tweens*
- *Advent Angels: a host of stories, crafts, puzzles and things to do for the days of Advent*

Resources

The consultant can provide:

- Resource packages for All Saints Day, Ash Wednesday and Pentecost.
- Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation materials.
- Retreat planning resources.
- Innovative worship resources including instructed Eucharists.
- Response to particular needs such as: specific types of crafts, crafts related to a particular observance such as Good Friday, games for teaching servers, developing a junior youth ministry, working with special needs children, and summer activities related to church and faith experiences to name but a few.
- Information handouts including articles on Prayers for Children, Hosting an All Saints Party, Working with Behavioural Challenges, Christmas Pageants, What's Available in Church School Curriculum, Teaching Tips 101, Co-operative Games, Puppet Ministry in the Parish, and Young Teens Ministry Toolbox.

Youth Ministry

Program Consultants: Joyce Wilton and Christyn Perkons job-shared this 4/5 time portfolio until Joyce's retirement in June 2010. The 2011 plan for youth ministry ensures that the current level of programming can be sustained by Christyn thanks to a one year commitment of substantial time by key volunteers.

- Work to enhance the ability of the Niagara Anglican Community to nurture the spiritual growth of youth and young adults and their inclusion in faith communities.
- Develop and train a strong and committed group of lay and clergy leaders to staff our programs and to share this leadership and their abilities with the larger diocesan community.
- Provide resources and leadership training for junior/senior youth ministry and young adult initiatives to parishes and parish clusters by request.

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- Visit parishes on request to get to know volunteers and staff involved in youth ministry, to get a sense of what's happening in parishes across the diocese and to offer support and resources.

Diocesan Youth Ministry Committee (DYMC)

Representatives meet monthly to support and offer direction to the Program Consultants, to define and execute the direction, vision and plans around diocesan-wide programming and training needs to reflect the diocesan vision, and to offer feedback about resources.

My experiences with youth ministry in Niagara have fundamentally shaped who I am today. Niagara youth programs have given me deep spiritual guidance, and so much more. They have informed my analysis of oppression, encouraged me to be a peacemaker in this world, and taught me to respect and rejoice in God's creation. I would have turned away from the Anglican Church (and possibly even God) years ago if I hadn't been exposed to a side of it that could relate to my spiritual contradictions and guide me forward.

Youth Synod taught me how to organize around important issues, and how use our agency as a collective. YLTP taught me to be not just a leader, but an accompanier - in solidarity with others. SpiritQuest helped me deepen my relationship with God and others. NYC, well, words don't describe NYC. My activism largely revolves around the principle of community - being pro-community in the face of state and corporate power. Niagara youth ministries provided me with a support network at such a crucial period in my life. I understand community through these youth programs.

Samantha Ponting

The Annual Calendar of Events includes:

Diocesan Synod Youth Members Residence & Orientation

- A residential program that includes an orientation to synod procedures for Youth Members of Diocesan Synod during the annual Synod meeting in November.
- The residence and orientation will take place on Friday, November 12 to Saturday, November 13, 2010 at Christ's Church Cathedral, for youth member ages 16-25.
- This **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry** event provides an opportunity to create relationships amongst the youth and young adult community attending Diocesan Synod, and offers support and education about procedures and meeting content for Synod so that youth are able to take a leadership role.

SpiritQuest

- An intimate spiritual retreat for youth aged 14-24 highlighting **Life Changing Worship** and a **Continuous Culture of Innovation**.
- SpiritQuest was held at Crieff Hills Retreat Centre in Puslinch, with 10 participants and three leaders, January 29-31, 2010.
- The program has expanded recently to include a young adult component with particular emphasis on making transitions and the spiritual journey.
- The 2011 event will take place January 28-30 at the Crieff Hills Retreat Centre.

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Youth Leadership Training Program (YLTP)

- A three-year leadership training program (now in its third decade) held during March Break to develop youth leaders who can offer **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry**. In addition to an emphasis on developing leadership skills, participants experience and create **Life Changing Worship** and focus on a **Generous Culture of Stewardship**. It took place at Canterbury Hills, this year from March 14-17, 2010 with 31 youth participants, ages 13-16, including seven adult leaders.
- A Commissioning Service for the 3rd year participants, their families and supporters was held at St. John the Evangelist, Niagara Falls on September 18, 2010. Thanks to Lynne Corfield and Beth Kerley for their three years of leadership to this 2010 graduating group.
- The 2011 event will take place Sunday, March 13 to Wednesday, March 16.
- *Applications for first year participants are available now and will be accepted until the end of January 2011.*

Youth Synod

- The largest youth ministry program in Niagara with a dual focus on **Prophetic Social Justice Making** and **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry**, the 22nd annual Youth Synod was hosted by St. James, Dundas, April 30 to May 2, 2010.
- Offers youth delegates ages 13-21 the opportunity to debate and strategize about issues important to their faith and their communities as well as providing opportunities to experience **Life Changing Worship**.
- Over 85 delegates, 15 adult observers, and over 50 adult volunteer staff were in attendance representing over 40 parishes. The minutes are available on the Youth Ministry website: www.zipsqueal.com. Many thanks to our host parish St. James for their enthusiasm and gracious hospitality!

“The issues debated at Youth Synod not only shattered my black and white understanding of the world, but also inspired me to consider how my faith is lived through acts of justice.

Reverend Bill Mous

- Youth Synod 2011, hosted by St. George’s, St. Catharines will take place April 29 to May 1. *Apologies for the wrong location on the 2011 poster!*

Youth Synod Council

- This body drafts motions for the upcoming Youth Synod, follows up on motions post-Synod, and functions as the voice of youth in the Diocese of Niagara between Youth Synods.
- Involves seven youth representatives representing the regions along with the Chair of Youth Synod who meet monthly from October to May developing **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry** skills and broadening their understanding of **Prophetic Social Justice Making** and **Generous Culture of Stewardship**.
- Thanks to Reverend Matthew Griffin for facilitating the Council’s work in 2010 and welcome to Carrie Charters who assumed this role as of October 2010.

Youth Ministry Sunday

- A variety of resources (bulletin covers, theme ideas, and liturgical material) are offered to parishes to help them celebrate Youth Ministry in their congregation on the date of their choosing. This contextual liturgy material is developed within a

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Continuous Culture of Innovation framework and is intended to help youth and the parish families that support them celebrate their ministry through **Life Changing Worship**.

- Resource material and bulletin covers were mailed to all parishes prior to the June event (our target celebration date; parishes can use the material at their own convenience) and also available on the website at www.zipsqueal.com. Check out this site to view the 2010 resources and the resources from previous years. The new material is posted in early May.

Niagara Youth Conference (NYC)

- The cornerstone event in youth ministry in Niagara with a multiple focus on **Life Changing Worship**, a **Continuous Culture of Innovation**, a **Generous Culture of Stewardship**, and **Prophetic Social Justice Making** - this year was the 64th Anniversary of the first NYC (formerly NLC).
- The purpose of this five day residential event is to establish a caring, spiritual, participatory, learning community that encourages inclusivity and personal sharing (mitigated, of course, by fun and frivolity).
- NYC took place from August 29-September 3, 2010 at Canterbury Hills. The program is staffed by 18 volunteers who give nine months to the planning and execution of this conference; pictures of which can be viewed at www.zipsqueal.com.

Youth ministry has been instrumental in me finding my place spiritually. The breadth of programming gave me an opportunity for experiential learning as a leader (YLTP), confidence in my beliefs and concern for the greater community (Youth Synod), and spiritual growth in life changing worship and community (NYC). As a teenager it provided me with true God Moments, genuine community, confidence in my own gifts, and life-long friendships - Youth Ministry events are among the few places I have ever experienced acceptance without judgment. It is because of Youth Ministry that I discovered my connection to God through music – it is my access point to life changing worship – I can't imagine my life without that.

Phil Jones

Regional Youth Ministry

Hamilton Regional Youth Worship – The Gathering

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

Regional Youth Worship – The Gathering North

- Our goal in 2009 was to extend this ministry to the Greater Wellington area. This goal was reached with one event held at St. George's, Guelph on April 5th and another at St. Matthias on October 18th.
- We are currently seeking a location and young people to host this ministry in 2011.

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Lending Resource Library

- Includes resources for program planning, current youth ministry theory and theology as well as worship and music resources all supporting the diocesan vision in **Life Changing Worship**, **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry**, **Prophetic Social Justice**, **Continuous Culture of Innovation**, and **Generous Culture of Stewardship**. Resources are available to borrow by individuals and parishes. They are located in the Program Department offices at Cathedral Place.
- To check out the many resources available, an online catalogue can be found on the youth ministry website: www.zipsqueal.com.

Children, Youth and Family Ministry Consultations and Training

- Christyn is involved with a number of parishes on a consultation basis.
- Consultations can be as simple as telephone support and resource sharing electronically or as complex as a multi-event response created for your parish.
- Consultations are designed to meet the needs of the individual parish. The focus of the consultation may include visioning for ministry in the specific parish or area, development of a youth ministry program, specific training for children, youth and family ministry staff and volunteers as well as advice on hiring children, youth and family ministry personnel.

The Youth Ministry community has strengthened me in ways no other community has been able to do; I am now a stronger leader and a stronger team player. I have grown in my spirituality and understanding; I have learned to accept, relax and be at peace. Throughout my Youth Ministry involvement I have learned to know myself and this has greatly impacted the person I am. The community is outstanding; the compassion from everyone is phenomenal! From being involved with Youth Ministry, I feel that I am the most "real" that I have been in ages.

Emma Smith

Adult Education - Bishop's Diploma Course (BDC)

- This program provides instruction related to faith issues for over 50 lay people through two eight-week terms (fall and winter) and is offered in as many as six parish centres. Course themes include Old Testament, New Testament, ethics, liturgy, history, spirituality, world religions and Anglicanism.
- Diploma requirements are completion of six course and attendance at a retreat.
- Retreats and graduations are planned biennially. The next retreat and graduation will be held in 2011/2012.
- Thank you to BDC leaders, Venerable Bruce McPetrie, Canon Barry Randle, Reverend John Ripley, Reverend Paul Whitehouse, Reverend Jonathan Massimi, for their ongoing leadership and dedication to the program.
- Jane Wyse provides staff support for BDC and may be contacted for information.

Thanks to our Volunteers!

Thank you to the dozens of volunteers who have supported our work in the past year. Without you, these ministries would not be transforming the lives of children, youth and adults across the Diocese. Thanks especially to those volunteers who have agreed to gift the diocese with an extraordinary donation of time to maintain youth ministry programming in 2011 as the Diocese creates a long range plan for this ministry.