

## **REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF CONGEGATIONAL SUPPORT**

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

Through programs, events, training days and parish consultations, Children, Youth and Family Ministries continues to support the Bishop's priorities for the Diocese of leadership, stewardship and evangelism.

### **Children and Family Ministries**

**Program 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**

- ✦ The annual retreat for families held at the Canterbury Hills Conference Centre each winter has regrettably been suspended for the time being.
- ✦ 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.

### **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.

### **Children's Festivals**

- ✦ The consultant provides support to the regional Children's Festivals through advertising, administration, and button design/creation. Over 700 children enjoy this event annually which typically occurs on the last Saturday in April. Planning for the 2010 Children's Festivals in Undermount/Mohawk, Lincoln/Brock, Greater Wellington, and Trafalgar began on November 2nd.

### **Soul Rhythms**

- ✦ An annual event intended to nourish, nurture and thank parish volunteers – Sunday, November 15 at St. Christopher's, Burlington.
- ✦ Participants have a choice of workshops (which have included in the past offerings such as Aromatherapy, Sacred Circle Dancing, Drumming, Biblical Gardening, Floral Arranging, Belly Dancing ) and also enjoy dinner and a guest speaker.

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### **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:

- Water Bugs & Dragonflies colouring book (explaining death to young children)
- Love Life, Live Lent Family Book: Transform Your World
- Anglican Learning Centres: **The Creed**, and **All Saints**
- Sharing the Easter Faith with Children (from birth to 12)
- Games, Kids, and Christian Education
- Storytelling, Kids, and Christian Education
- Topsy Turvy Christmas: a Musical Play for Children with music CD

### **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, 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-share this 4/5 time portfolio.

- ✚ 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.
- ✚ 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.

## REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF CONGEGATIONAL SUPPORT continued

### The Annual Calendar of Events includes:

#### Looking Forward: A Youth Leaders Training Event

➤ A residential event that offers youth leaders (young and old, lay and ordained) training in current issues and an opportunity to network with other leaders. This **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry** event is coordinated, hosted and staffed by Niagara but has participants from the dioceses of Niagara, Huron and Toronto

➤ This event is taking place on Friday November 6 and Saturday November 7, 2009

#### Diocesan Synod Youth Members Residence & Orientation

➤ A residential program at Canterbury Hills 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 Thursday, November 19 to Saturday, November 21, 2009 at Canterbury Hills, 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 **Flourishing Culture of Innovation**.

➤ SpiritQuest was held at Crieff Hills Retreat Centre in Puslinch, with 10 participants and three leaders, January 30 to February 1, 2009.

➤ The program has expanded recently to include a young adult component with particular emphasis on making transitions and the spiritual journey.

➤ The 2010 event will take place January 29-31 at the Crieff Hills Retreat Centre.

#### 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**. It took place at Canterbury Hills, this year from March 15-18, 2009 with 34 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. Christopher, Burlington on June 6, 2009. Thanks to Donna Ellis and Sue Nicolls for their three years of leadership to this 2009 graduating group.

➤ The 2010 event will take place Sunday, March 14 to Wednesday, March 17.

➤ Applications for first year participants are available now and will be accepted until the end of January 2010.

#### Youth Synod

➤ The largest youth ministry program in Niagara with a dual focus on **Prophetic Social Justice Making and Outstanding Leadership for Ministry**, the 21st annual Youth Synod was hosted by St. Christopher, Burlington, May 1-3, 2009.

➤ 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 90 delegates, 20 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](http://www.zipsqueal.com). Many thanks to our host parish St. Christopher's for their enthusiasm and gracious hospitality!

➤ Youth Synod 2010, hosted by St. James, Dundas will take place April 30 to May 2.

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### 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**
- ✚ Thanks to Rev. Matthew Griffin for facilitating the Council's work in 2009 and for his willingness to continue in 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 **Flourishing 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](http://www.zipsqueal.com). Check out this site to view the 2009 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 **Flourishing Culture of Innovation** and **Prophetic Social Justice Making** - this year was the 63rd 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 23-28, 2009 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](http://www.zipsqueal.com).

### Regional Youth Ministry

#### Hamilton Regional Youth Worship – The Gathering

- ✚ This event, reflecting the vision in a **Flourishing Culture of Innovation, Life Changing Worship 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 5<sup>th</sup> and another at St. Matthias on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

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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. 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](http://www.zipsqueal.com).

### **Consultations and Training**

- ✦ Joyce and Christyn are 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 youth ministry in the specific parish or area, development of a youth ministry program, specific training for youth ministry staff and volunteers as well as advice on hiring youth ministry personnel.

### **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.

### **Adult Education - Bishop's Diploma Course (BDC)**

- ✦ This program provides instruction related to faith issues for over 100 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 will be held October 3, 2009 and graduation will be planned for December 3, 2009.
- ✦ Thank you to BDC leaders, Ven. Bruce McPetrie, Rev. Canon Barry Randle, Rev. John Ripley and Rev. Paul Whitehouse, for their ongoing leadership and dedication to the program.
- ✦ Jane Wyse provides staff support for BDC and may be contacted for information.

### **Congregation Support**

- ✦ Joyce serves on the Safe Church Committee, is a member of the Safe Church investigative team, and staffs the Volunteer Management & Screening initiatives for the diocese.
- ✦ Christyn does congregational support and development work with parishes using tools such as Open Space, Asset Mapping, Appreciative Inquiry & Holy Conversations/Strategic Planning, maintains a CSD resource library, serves on Candidates Committee and the Vision Planning Team, and coordinates the Alternative Liturgy Conversation.

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### **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.
- PCensus – a tool that gives parishes access to detailed demographic information for any area around the parish including census data, current and future year estimates, demographic profiling and lifestyle targeting.
- New Resources: God’s Tapestry: Understanding and Celebrating Differences, Can Our Church Live?-Redeveloping Congregations in Decline, Spirit and the Politics of Disablement, Eclipsing Empire: Paul, Rome and the Kingdom of God (from Living the Questions), The Church of All Ages: Generations Worshipping Together, Becoming a Blessed Church: Forming a Church of Purpose, Presence and Power

### **Staff of the Division are:**

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