

REPORT OF THE UNDERMOUNT REGIONAL COUNCIL

The Ten Tribes of Undermount

Undermount Region lies below the mountain “Niagara Escarpment” from Winona on the east to west of McMaster University and north to Hamilton Harbor and Lake Ontario. It is a region of agriculture, educational facilities, shipping and both light and heavy industries. We have ten parishes including the Cathedral. We also have St. Matthews House and three community outreach centers located in our region. Jamestown near the Cathedral and the McQueston Centre close to the Church of the Nativity as well as the ABC food program operated out of the Church of the Ascension. The Mission to Sea Farers, situated in the Hamilton Harbor Area serves visiting sailors from ships of many countries which dock in Hamilton. The sailors have access to the internet so they can talk to those back home, and opportunity to visit Niagara Falls along with many other activities that the Mission offers to them. We are the smallest Region in the Diocese in mileage but powerful in spirit. Our welcoming parishes are a great diversity of worship services from Anglo-Catholic to Evangelical, from liberal to Conservative. These represent the diversity from street folk, university and college students to the descendants of the founding fathers of Hamilton. Undermount also offers many sizes of spaces and buildings from the grandeur and beauty of the Cathedral to the carillon and “rural” beauty of St. John’s in Winona. From majestic pipe organs and hymn books to guitars, drums and Power Point. From the traditional inspirational quiet services to lively, invigorating, inspirational worship, as a region we offer something somewhere for everybody.

We continue as a region to work on the Greening Niagara Committee and are part of the testing process for accreditation as a Green Parish at either Bronze Silver or Gold level. At some point during this session of Synod you will hear of the progress in this area. The parishes in Undermount have greatly reduced waste, recycled fervently and overall have taken on the challenge of making our region a Greening Region. We encourage you to look at the Greening Niagara portion of the Diocese of Niagara web site to learn about many innovative ideas, programs and posters that you can use in your home parishes. During the past year our Regional Council held discussions on requirements for the Order of Niagara and are working at our Regional meetings on the Diocesan Vision. We were one of the first regions in our Diocese to hold a special meeting, attended by several people from each parish, with Bishop Michael present to inform parish members of this vision. They have taken the information they received back to their home parishes for parish input and action

One of the mandates of a Regional Council is to “support, encourage and facilitate the mission of the church in response to local and regional needs” Canon 1.10. 5(a). Many of our parishes are actively working locally with faith groups of other denominations and are active with Children’s Festival, Bible Study, Prayer Groups, Out of the Cold, Open Doors Hamilton, Seniors activities, Youth Clubs, College and University Outreach, Scouting and Guiding, breakfast programs and AA groups. For the past three years on Victoria Day, one parish, St. Alban the Martyr works with six other denominations to have a Party in the Park located opposite it. Christian music, displays, prayer table, games, face painting and food are available to the neighborhood. This year close to 1,000 youth and adults attended the event. St. Alban’s has recently started a new program, Parenting Skills for Teen Mothers. Our Regional Council Outreach this year was a monetary and donation of food items in support of St. Matthews House.

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We hold bi-monthly Regional Council meetings. These are attended by both clergy and lay representatives. Each parish attending the meetings informs the others of their successes with events they have held and also future activities. That way we all share in the spread of great ideas that each of us can take back to our own parishes. The Council reps are also made aware of any Diocesan programs that may be new to them or that they need to take action on in their home parishes. All of us feel it is truly thrilling to be a small part of making a difference in the life of our parishes, Undermount Region and our Diocese of Niagara.

Respectfully submitted,
Mrs. Betty Denny
Mr. Russell Kelk