

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** grounded in **Spiritual Values** (spiritual discipline, valuing diversity, honesty & integrity, passion & hard work) so that we may follow Christ passionately, pursuing excellence and continuing to grow.

Staff of the Division are:

- Christyn Perkons, Director of Congregational Support & Development including Children, Youth & Family Ministries, Ext. 460, christyn.perkons@niagara.anglican.ca
- Jane Wyse, Diocesan Administrative Assistant, Ext. 420, jane.wyse@niagara.anglican.ca
- Half-time position currently in the process of being filled

Congregation Support

Christyn facilitates 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 Journeys in Faith team, and chairs the **Life Changing Worship** petal of the diocesan vision.

Christyn is currently working with All Saints Hagersville, St. Alban's Beamsville, St. Paul's Glanford, St. Paul's Caledonia and St. Philip-by-the-Lake Grimsby.

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:

- *Going Missional in Canada*
- *Mission-Shaped Parish*
- *Mission-Shaped Questions*
- *Mission-Shaped Spirituality*
- *On Our Way: Christian Practices for Living a Whole Life*
- *Love Wins* (Rob Bell)
- *A Voluptuous God*
- *Stewardship for Vital Congregations*
- *Beyond the Gods & Back*
- *Whose Offering Plate is it?*
- *Greenhouses of Hope*
- *Altar in the World*
- *Listening for Mission*
- *40 Day Journey with Joan Chittister*
- *The Worshipping Artists*
- *Fire and Bread: Resources for Easter Day to Trinity Sunday*

- *Bare Feet and Buttercups: Resources for Ordinary Time – Trinity Sunday to Transfiguration*
- *Acorns and Archangels: Resources for Ordinary Time – Transfiguration to All Hallows*
- *Hay & Stardust: Resources for Christmas to Candlemas*
- *Going Another Way: Daily Readings and Resources for Christmastide*
- *Advent, Christmas and Epiphany; Liturgies and Prayers for Public Worship*
- *Advent Readings from Iona*

Children and Family Ministries

Consultant: Christyn Perkons

- 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.

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 2012 Children's Festivals in Undermount/Mohawk, Lincoln/Brock, Greater Wellington, and Trafalgar began on November 7th.

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:

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| • <i>What Colour is Christmas?</i> | • <i>God's Big Table</i> |
| • <i>Children First</i> | • <i>Growing Compassionate Kids</i> |
| • <i>Ask, Thank, Tell</i> | • <i>It is Easy Being Green</i> |
| • <i>Two VBS kits: RENEW & Shake It up Café</i> | • <i>Where are the Children?</i> |
| • <i>Bedbug Passion Play</i> | • <i>Several ELF help books for children</i> |
| • <i>A Year's Worth of Children's Church</i> | • <i>Natural Saints: How People of Faith are Working to Save God's Earth</i> |

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

Consultant: Christyn Perkons

Thanks to the dedication and sacrifices of many youth ministry volunteers, current levels of programming were maintained during 2011 and youth from our parishes were well served by an outstanding array of programs and resources. We expect to have a half-time staff person in youth ministry hired by early 2012.

- 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)

Mission:

Diocesan Youth Ministry is called by the Spirit to create and uphold authentic and transformative experiences in faith for youth, young adults and those who minister to and with them. We equip them for passionate leadership, ministry and advocacy; empower them in their response to God's call and in faith-based decision making; nurture their spiritual gifts; and provide opportunities for them to explore their relationship with God through intentional safe communities, creative and engaging worship, Christ-centred leadership development and relationship-based programming, rooted in the Anglican tradition.

We honour and uphold volunteers and staff in youth ministry at the parish and diocesan level; respecting their call to ministry by providing continuing education,

support, recognition, and resources,
and by encouraging them in faithful risk taking.
In our quest for excellence in ministry,
participants, volunteers, staff and parents regularly provide feedback
about programs, resources and goals
which is integrated into our continuously developing ministry.

The committee meets monthly to support this mission.

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 Thursday, November 17 to Saturday, November 19, 2011 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 that reflects the vision **Spiritual Values**.

aWay... (formerly known as SpiritQuest)

- An intimate spiritual retreat for youth aged 16-25 highlighting **Spiritual Values**, **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 28-30, 2011.
- The new name highlights a focus on young adults joining their peers in a time apart to reflect on life transitions, God connections, and meaningful life choices
- aWay... 2012 event will take place February 17-19 at Crieff Hills.

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** within the context of the vision's **Spiritual Values**. It took place at Canterbury Hills, this year from March 13-16, 2011 with 37 youth participants, ages 13-16, including seven adult leaders.
- A Commissioning Service for the 3rd year participants, their families and supporters will be held at St. James Dundas on October 29, 2011. Thanks to Val Kerr and Bill Mous for their three years of leadership to this 2011 graduating group.
- The 2012 event will take place Sunday, March 11 to Wednesday, March 14.
- *Applications for first year participants are available now and will be accepted until the end of January 2012.*

Youth Synod

- The largest youth ministry program in Niagara with a dual focus on **Prophetic Social Justice Making** and **Outstanding Leadership for Ministry**, the 23rd annual Youth Synod was hosted by St. George, St. Catharines, April 29 to May 1, 2011.
- 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 80 delegates, 12 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. George for their enthusiasm and gracious hospitality!
- Youth Synod 2012 will be hosted by St. Luke's, Burlington - April 4-6.

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 Carrie Charters for facilitating the Council's work in 2011 and for continuing in 2012 despite a move to London, ON.

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 **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 2011 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 **Spiritual Values, 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 28-September 2, 2011 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 zipsqueal.com.

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

- This ministry has been extended to the Greater Wellington area. Events were held at All Saints Erin, St. James, Fergus and St. George's, Guelph in 2011.
- Currently seeking a location and young people to champion this ministry in 2012.

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: 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.

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 2012/13.
- Thank you to BDC leaders, Venerable Bruce McPetrie, Canon Barry Randle, Reverend John Ripley, Reverend Paul Whitehouse 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.