

## **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 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**

- ✦ An annual retreat for families is held at the Canterbury Hills Conference Centre each winter to provide families with an opportunity to relax, to reconnect with their family members, to bond with other families and to nourish each other. The 2009 Winter Retreat is scheduled for January 30 to February 1.
- ✦ 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 2009 Children's Festivals in Undermount/Mohawk, Lincoln/Brock, Greater Wellington, and Trafalgar began on November 3rd.

#### **Godly Play Training Workshop**

- ✦ A weekend training event for those interested in using Godly Play in their parishes was held the weekend after Easter at L'Arche in Richmond Hill and involved the Diocese of Toronto and Huron. Ten participants from Niagara learned how about the leader roles, how to tell the stories and engage the children in reflection, and how to create resources. Godly Play resources are available from the lending library and further training will be offered.

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### **Soul Rhythms**

- ✦ An annual event intended to nourish, nurture and thank parish volunteers – Sunday, November 16 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, Card making) and also enjoy dinner and a guest speaker.

### **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:

- Welcoming Differences: Including Children Who Experience Challenges
- Sleep in Peace –*in a bed, a tent or a hammock, God is there*
- Still My Grandma – *introduces young readers to Alzheimer's while reminding them of the power of love*
- 10 Conversations You Need to Have With Your Children
- Who Moved My Cheese for Children
- The Ark – *a pop up book*
- Lectionary Story Bible

### **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.
- ✦ 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.
- ✦ 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, and to offer feedback about resources.

## **REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF CONGEGATIONAL SUPPORT (continued)**

### **The Annual Calendar of Events includes:**

#### **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 Friday, November 7 to Saturday, November 8, 2008 at Canterbury Hills, for youth member ages 16-25.
- ✚ Provides an opportunity to create relationships amongst the youth and young adult community attending Diocesan Synod, and offer support and education about procedures and meeting content for Synod.

#### **SpiritQuest**

- ✚ An intimate spiritual retreat for youth aged 15-24.
- ✚ SpiritQuest was held the Unity Retreat Centre in Hamilton, with 12 participants and three leaders, February 1-2, 2008.
- ✚ The program has expanded recently to include a young adult component with particular emphasis on making transitions and the spiritual journey.
- ✚ The 2009 event will take place January 30-February 1 at the Crieff Hills Retreat Centre in Puslinch.

#### **Servers' Fest**

- ✚ An annual day-long event to connect, thank and encourage servers of all ages from all parishes across the diocese.
- ✚ The 2009 event will be on Saturday, February 28 at Christ's Church Cathedral.

#### **Youth Leadership Training Program (YLTP)**

- ✚ A three-year leadership training program (now in its third decade) held during March Break. It took place at Canterbury Hills, this year from March 11-14, 2007 with 40 youth participants, ages 13-16, including seven adult leaders.
- ✚ A Commissioning Service for the 3rd year participants, their families and supporters was held at Canterbury Hills on June 14, 2008. Thanks to Jay Blackwood and Judy Worsley for their three years of leadership to this 2008 graduating group.
- ✚ The 2009 event will take place Sunday, March 15 to Wednesday, March 18.
- ✚ Applications for first year participants are available now and will be accepted until the end of January 2009.

#### **Youth Synod**

- ✚ The largest youth ministry program in Niagara, the 20th annual Youth Synod was hosted by St. Andrew's, Grimsby, May 2-4, 2008.
- ✚ Offers youth delegates ages 13-21 the opportunity to debate and strategize about issues important to their faith and their communities.
- ✚ Over 100 delegates, 20 adult observers, and over 50 adult volunteer staff were in attendance representing over 50 parishes. The minutes are available on the Youth Ministry website: [www.zipsqueal.com](http://www.zipsqueal.com). Many thanks to our host parish St. Andrew's for their enthusiasm and gracious hospitality!
- ✚ Youth Synod 2009, hosted by St. Christopher's Burlington will take place May 1-3.

#### **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.

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- ✚ Involves 15 youth representatives representing the regions along with the Chair of Youth Synod
- ✚ Thanks to Rev. Matthew Griffin for facilitating the Council's work in 2008, and for continuing in 2009.

### **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.
- ✚ 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 2008 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 - this year was the 62nd 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 24-29, 2008 at Canterbury Hills. The program is staffed by 19 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**

#### Lincoln Youth Fest (LYF)

- ✚ The parishes in the Lincoln Region, with the assistance of the diocesan youth ministry staff, began to dream of working cooperatively in ministry to its youth in grades 5-8 in the winter of 2006 which has resulted in the Lincoln Youth Fest which meets monthly, one Friday a month, to share a meal, to have fun together and to develop a new and supportive faith community across the region. Unfortunately due to all the ministry staff involved in this project leaving this region, we have now placed this program on hold for the time being. Thank you to Catherine Novis and Canon Stuart Pike for all their hard work and many hours to offer this program in the Lincoln Region.

#### Hamilton Regional Youth Worship – The Gathering

- ✚ This event, now completing its third year offers worship quarterly in the 21st Century with a live band and liturgy written and delivered by its 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.
- ✚ Our goal in 2008 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>.

### **Lending Resource Library**

- ✚ Includes resources for program planning, current youth ministry theory and theology as well as worship and music resources. Located at the Diocesan Resource Centre Program Department offices and are available to individuals and parishes.
- ✚ To check out the many resources available, an on-line catalogue can be found on the youth ministry website: [www.zipsqueal.com](http://www.zipsqueal.com).

## **REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF CONGEGATIONAL SUPPORT (continued)**

### **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 people's lives.

### **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 and graduation will be planned for 2009.
- ✦ Thank you to BDC leaders Rev. Canon Dr. Mark McDermott, 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 coordinates the Alternative Liturgy Conversation.

### **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.

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

- ✦ Michael Patterson, Executive Officer
- ✦ Christyn Perkons, Consultant, Children, Youth & Family Ministries, & Congregational Support
- ✦ Joyce Wilton, Consultant, Youth Ministry, Volunteer Management & Screening, Congregational Support
- ✦ Jane Wyse, Diocesan Administrative Assistant