

## **REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF OUTREACH**

*“To create, strengthen, and support responsible relationships which promote justice peace and the stewardship of creation.”*

Highlights of the committee’s work since Synod 2007 are:

### Survive & Thrive Outreach in the Name of Christ Endowment Fund

Over the summer a small sub-group of the Outreach Committee worked on revising the process for allocating *Survive & Thrive* Outreach Grants. The purpose of the revisions is to streamline the process both for parishes wishing to apply for funds and for the committee members allocating the funds. The main changes are as follows:

- Grants will be allocated only once per year, with an application deadline of October 30<sup>th</sup>.
- The maximum yearly grant will now be \$5,000, since the Fund has only \$25,000 per year to allocate.
- Changes to the application form will assist applicants to clearly define how their projects contribute to the Division’s mission goals of justice, peace and right relations.
- A newly drafted evaluation form is to be submitted before an application for renewed funding can be considered.

Our goal is to encourage and support the outreach work of parishes in our diocese. We hope these changes will be helpful in that regard.

The *Survive & Thrive* Campaign established an Endowment Fund to assist parishes/ministries with new Outreach projects in Niagara. So far, in 2008, the following new grants have been approved;

1. St. Aidan’s, Oakville – Care Packages with Agape Love program \$6,000
2. Jamesville Community Centre – Taste of Jamesville Fun Fair \$1,500
3. McQuesten Community Centre Project – \$21,000 to serve the community; over three years
4. St. James and St. Brendan’s, Port Colborne – Navigator Café \$3,000

### Social Justice

In 2008 the focus of social justice work in the Diocese has been on affordable housing and Ontario’s Poverty Reduction Strategy.

### Affordable Housing Advocacy

- In partnership with the Toronto Diocese in their Affordable Housing Campaign, the Social Justice Coordinator for the Diocese of Niagara, organized meetings with six MPPs from the Halton and Hamilton areas to discuss the importance of affordable housing in our diocese.
- This was followed by participation in the national initiative on affordable housing lead by the Primate and National Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada. Work on this initiative picked up again this fall with the formation of a Housing Working Group made up of Anglicans and Lutherans from across the country. Kathleen Szoke of St. Luke’s, Burlington is assisting the Social Justice Coordinator with this work.

### From Charity to Justice

Coverage of the visits and campaigns in the diocesan paper along with background pieces on affordable housing resonated with many of the readers in the diocese. Arising out of this people expressed an interest in learning how to incorporate justice advocacy into their parish outreach programs.

## **REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF OUTREACH (continued)**

- On May 31, 2008, a group of twenty five Niagara Anglicans and friends came together to participate in a workshop run by Deacon Maylanne Maybee, the Coordinator for Justice Education and Networks of the Anglican Church of Canada. Hosted by the Church of the Incarnation in Oakville, participants spent half a day exploring the concepts of charity and justice and how they relate to parish outreach efforts. Through worship, reflection, conversation in small groups and in plenary, participants sought ways to encourage a justice-oriented approach in the social justice work undertaken in the Diocese both at the diocesan level and in the parishes.

### Poverty Reduction

Niagara Anglicans were also making efforts on ending poverty in Ontario.

- In early June Bishop Bird wrote to Minister Matthews, the Chair of the Ontario government's Poverty Reduction Strategy Committee endorsing the principles of the 25 in 5 Declaration – advocating for a 25% reduction in poverty within 5 years.
- Other Niagara Anglicans participated in the government's consultation on poverty reduction by attending meetings across the diocese. At least a half a dozen of the Charity to Justice Workshop participants were present at the June 27, 2008 Community Conversation with MPP Kevin Flynn in Oakville and Niagara Anglicans have been active participants on the Hamilton Working Group on the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy.

### Justice Camp 2010

In August 2008 Bishop Bird announced that the Diocese will be hosting the 2010 Justice Camp May 9-14, 2010. Community Justice Camp, *Live the Change You Want to See* is an opportunity to bring together young and old, those from near and far, all those who are concerned about injustice and want to answer the gospel call to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with the Lord.

We will learn from each other and from our community, ecumenical and interfaith partners how to identify the justice issues in our neighbourhoods, communities and parishes and take action that can help build a just community. It is a chance to showcase our Niagara outreach successes and get support to overcome our challenges.

### Anglican Church of Canada, Partners in Mission and EcoJustice Committee

On this committee the Diocese of Niagara is represented by Bill Mous and Colleen Sym. The Committee has met twice this triennium with the third meeting taking place in Montreal, October 2-5, 2008. In the first two meetings the committee members have met and come to know one another, and have taken some first steps in the goal to unite the work of two previous committees, Partners in Mission and EcoJustice. At the third meeting the committee will review the mandate from General Synod, and discuss their understandings of their role and responsibilities in the Anglican Church of Canada, as well as the ways of working together. In between meetings, the work of the committee is carried out through a structure of issues groups and actions groups.

## **REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF OUTREACH (continued)**

### Coins for Cuba

The Coins for Cuba project began in 2006 with an idea from Mr. John Page, Outreach Coordinator at Grace Church, Milton. This project is facilitated by the members of Grace Church, Milton with partnership from the Diocese of Niagara, Division of Outreach and the Primate's Office. The focus for this site is to raise awareness of the needs of the Episcopal Church in Cuba, the needs of congregations, clergy and church buildings. Coins for Cuba also look at ways and means to support Cuban students in seminary and studying towards ordination in the Episcopal Church of Cuba.

To date the program has sent over \$8,000 to the Diocese of Cuba and a further \$2,000 will be raised by year end, making the total gift by the end of 2008 \$10,000. The Primate will attend the Diocese of Cuba Synod in February of 2009 and will deliver the gift. For more information visit the website [www.coinsforcuba.ca/project\\_home.html](http://www.coinsforcuba.ca/project_home.html)

### Primate's World Relief and Development Fund

*Caring for God's Creation* was the theme for reflection, learning and action of The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund this past year. Every parish received printed materials, among them an activity / action calendar for interaction between adults and children.

The 40-day chart *Care for Creation* was aimed at teen-age children and suggested things or topics to pray for, act upon and give to. The Niagara PWRDF Reference Group adapted this chart for younger children and mailed it to all Sunday School Supervisors for distribution to and discussion with the children.

*Fair Trade* as a viable alternative economic movement and a realistic contribution to sustainable development was further promoted, following up on the distribution of literature and free samples at the 2007 Synod.

Most communication with parish representatives was via e-mail. On average 2.5 e-mail messages were sent containing emergency appeals, relevant articles, news about churches in the Southern hemisphere, etc. There was a good response to the appeal for Myanmar and China following the floods and earthquake.

In total, individuals and parishes within the Diocese of Niagara contributed \$232,062 in 2007 (this figure includes individual donations directly to the National Office.) This represents a 7% increase over our givings in 2006.

On September 13 this year, 16 representatives from 13 parishes came together for a 3-hour workshop to hear about plans for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, to share ideas and experiences and to make connections among themselves. The event was hosted by the Church of the Ascension, Hamilton, and was much appreciated by those able to attend.

The Primate's Fund came into being in 1958 when Anglicans across the country gave more than \$100,000 to aid victims of the Springhill mining disaster in Nova Scotia. General Synod in 1959 established the Primate's World Relief Fund, as it was initially called. Since then, Anglicans have given over \$80 million as "a response to the gospel call to bear witness to God's healing love in a broken world". It is hoped that the many blessings of PWRDF and of its partners in the southern hemisphere and Canada's north will be celebrated in the Diocese of Niagara and in every parish during the next 18 months.

## **REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF OUTREACH (continued)**

### Refugee Sponsorship

The number of refugee sponsorships is increasing this year, largely due to the number of Iraqi refugees in need of resettlement. Unfortunately this does not reflect an increase in interest in sponsorship at the parish level. We are able to sponsor refugees whose family members can provide financial support for them; however it is difficult to find parishes willing to sponsor refugees without family members in Canada with financial means. We would like to be able to help refugees in need of resettlement regardless of whether or not they have “connections” in Canada.

Since last year’s Synod we have welcomed several refugees from Iraq, and a family of ethnic Karen refugees from Burma, and we have cases pending from Iraq, Colombia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Our refugee coordinator, Carolyn Vanderlip, is continuing in her second term as an Elected Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) on the NGO/Government Committee on the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. She is also a member of the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP) Advisory Committee. Carolyn attended a special consultation between all SAHs, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Winnipeg at the end of last year. She also attended the SAH Annual Forum in Ottawa, the Canadian Council for Refugees Fall consultation in Ottawa and Spring Consultation in Winnipeg, and a Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) Working Group meeting in Calgary.

The Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund will begin celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, and one of the important ways they plan to commemorate this milestone is through the sponsorship of 50 refugee families by parishes across Canada. We hope that our Diocese will be actively involved in this and that parishes will consider sponsorship to help a refugee family begin a new life in Canada.

### Current committee members

Mrs. Judy Connor

Ms. Alicia Archbell (Youth Representative)

The Reverend Elizabeth Huether

Dr. Ellie Johnson

The Reverend Patricia Lucy (Youth Mission Coordinator)

Mrs. Doris M’Timkulu (Diocesan P.W.R.D.F. Coordinator)

The Reverend Canon Stuart Pike

The Reverend Jean Ruttan-Yates, Deacon (Outreach Representative on Synod Council)

Mrs. Colleen Sym (Social Justice Coordinator, EcoJustice/PIM Representative)

The Reverend Lynne Thackwray

Mrs. Carolyn Vanderlip (Diocesan Refugee Coordinator)

The Venerable Michael Patterson (Director of Outreach)

Mrs. Karen Nowicki (Administrative Assistant to the Division of Outreach)

Respectfully submitted,  
Diocesan Division of Outreach