

LIGHT IN THE CITY

Church of the Ascension

We are a caring Anglican Church, joyously seeking to grow God's love, and to demonstrate the greatness of Jesus by meeting the diverse needs of our community through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.



This Thanksgiving Season, all across Canada people will be gathering in a variety of ways to celebrate and give thanks for all the beauty of this world and the gift of the harvest. It is a beautiful and faith-filled tradition.

As our world seems to be feeling darker with mass shootings, poverty, war, economic uncertainty, racial and ethnic conflicts and many other concerns, it feels good to gather to simply offer our thanks to God and to focus on what is lovely, and just and honourable, as St. Paul says. As our lives get busier and busier,

as our commitments and connections get overwhelming, as the tempo seems to constantly pick up, we need opportunities to stop and reflect upon the gracious gifts of God in our lives.

As a child, the thing I loved most about Jesus and still do when I read the stories of his life, was that Jesus was kind, and it struck me that even though he lived in a hostile and harsh place, amongst people who were unforgiving and deeply divided, in the presence of Jesus, they were always met with kindness and love, and a heart that was overflowingly generous and considerate of the needs around him, and that remains the same today - none of that has changed.

I think it's quite easy for us to look at some places described in the Catherine Hernandez's novel *Scarborough* or other places in the world, and simply shake our heads and say "what a mess" thinking that much of the poverty, violence and injustice we see was probably self-inflicted, and if only "they would try harder." But it never changes the call of Christ of us, to love without condition and to have hearts that are generous and kind, to care for the poor, the frail and those who are weak.

We may think, "but what can I do", and the answer is to help in whatever way you can, where ever you can. In our church we need people to volunteer at the Food Bank and at Café 65 or by supporting a family in our Angle Tree Outreach. If you think about what each person received when Jesus fed the multitudes, it wasn't a three course meal, but every single person had enough, and it made a difference in their lives.

I hope that you get a chance to be with family and friends during this Harvest Season and acknowledge the many blessings for which you are most grateful. Take time to push aside all the worries and pressures of the appointment calendar and focus on what is truly important in your life and offer thanks to God. Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family! May God bless you, Nick +

Episcopal Visit

Bishop Kevin Robertson, our new Area Bishop, will preach & celebrate at the 10:30 am service on Sunday, October 29th. Invite family & friends. Reception follows.

Requiem for All Souls

Saturday, November 4th, 4 pm. Led by our Director of Music, Larry Green and Choir, featuring Faure's Requiem. Reception follows. Please submit photos of remembrance by October 30th.

Remembrance Sunday

Our traditional solemn Act of Remembrance on Sunday, November 12th at 10:30. A Piper will play and a Trumpeter will sound the Last Post

Café 65 – A Gathering Place for Seniors...

God's Love in Action! Café 65 continues its mission in Don Mills with its lively twice-monthly programs of lunch and Entertainment supported by a dedicated team of church and community volunteers. Every time we meet, we have the opportunity to demonstrate the love of Christ in action, with the warmth and welcoming spirit of the Ascension. Café 65 has certainly made a difference in the lives of those who now regularly attend, and we are looking at other ways of responding to the diverse needs of seniors in our community, while also expanding our reach and building our church.



This fall for instance, the *Peace* was exchanged after lunch, allowing folk to mix, mingle and greet one another. It was well received by both regular and new attendees, strengthening old friendships while fostering new ones.

At the recent Don Mills Residents Association (DMRI) *Street Festival* in September, Café 65 had an information booth to help spread the good news of what our outreach is doing, but we also need Ascension members to be more actively involved in spreading this good news and participating by helping to volunteer by welcoming and helping visitors to our church feel at home when they come out to Café 65. Each one of us has the power to add a little brightness to someone else's day!

Look forward to seeing you and your friends at the next Café 65 event.



Advent Study: Love the Stranger

Migration is a very divisive issue in our society today and the focus of intense political debate. More people are on the move and living away from home than at any time in history. The United Nations estimated in 2016 that the total number of migrants across the world is 244 million. Migration is a subject which does not feature a great deal in sermons or Bible studies. However, it is a subject on

which the Bible has a great deal to say. The Old Testament was written against a background of great people-movements. The New Testament was written in an age when it was comparatively easy to cross the known world. Understanding migration is an inseparable part of loving our neighbours as ourselves. To love means to imagine ourselves in other people's shoes, to listen to their experiences. This study encourages engagement with the Bible, to gain a deeper understanding of migration in various biblical texts, and relate them to today's world. The cost for each booklet is \$6.00. Please sign up at the Information Table if you are interested in being part of a small group study. Sessions TBA.

Angel Tree Outreach



Share the joy of Christmas with a family in our community who is in need of our support by participating in our annual *Angel Tree Outreach*. Beginning Sunday, November 19th, please choose a *Blue Angel* from the Angel Tree. Each Angel will list a specific gift item such as clothing, a household item, gift card, food or toy. Please be as generous as you can to help make a difference in someone's life this Christmas. Thank you.

New Steam Boiler

The Corporation wishes to thank all those who have donated to our new steam boiler; our previous steam boiler had served us for a long period of time, but it had reached the point where we were at risk of a complete boiler failure during this upcoming heating season; with many potentially serious consequences. Parts of the steam system, such as the radiators, are still the original equipment and we still need to go through a period of fine-tuning the new steam boiler, but we are expecting to see many benefits. Some of those benefits include:



- **Less Gas:** We are expecting the new steam boiler to use less gas because it is more efficient and has two levels of firing, mid and high, while the old steam boiler just had one level, high.
- **Less Water:** The old steam boiler was badly leaking water when coming up from a cold start and there were flakes of rust constantly falling off of the boiler as it vibrated. The new boiler will have none of those problems; also less water requires less chemical treatment.
- **Less Electricity:** The original heating system used all pneumatic (air-based) controls, which required us to operate an air compressor year round, now it can run less often. The new steam boiler will have electronic digital controls and a more efficient burner blower motor and we should be able to completely shut down the air compressor during the winter time.



- **More Reliable:** The old steam boiler was running into frequent burner flame out conditions and as a result the boiler would shut down and there would be no heat in the church and we would have to move into the parish hall. A few years ago the air compressor motor failed just before Christmas forcing the boiler into a high heat-constantly on mode, so that we had to manually turn it on and off until a replacement motor could be found. Increased reliability will also reduce our annual repair costs.

- **Better Controls:** Now both the church steam boiler and the parish hall hot water boiler have digital instead of pneumatic controls, which were becoming difficult to maintain. In the past one technician had to search in his basement to find obsolete pneumatic parts to repair our system. The controls of the two boilers will be integrated, can be programmed remotely and it will be much easier to pre-program the heating for onetime events.

- **Averaging Thermostats:** The church has been set up with two wireless thermostats, one at the front and one at the back to improve the temperature control in the church.





“Growing in Christ” is the Diocese’s five year strategic plan to address the number of challenges both internal and external that we face as a Church.

We are living in a time of change and transformation. Our local communities are facing changes in population size and demographics. Increasing rates of secularization, especially for younger generations, are changing attitudes and relationships with religious organizations.

In this dynamic environment, leadership, flexibility, and a willingness to learn and try new things will be essential for success.

In the midst of change, what remains constant and trustworthy is God: God’s profound love for God’s creation, revealed in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and continually renewed through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

As the world around us changes, we are committed to looking forward and building a healthy Anglican community, responsive to God’s mission today and in the future. We will do this from the foundation of our faith, common values, and the traditions that connect us as a community of disciples of “disciples are followers who learn, and learners who follow”. The Anglican Church of tomorrow will require new models and ways of thinking. We have already shown leadership and commitment to the promotion of innovation through our Reach and Stretch Grants. We recognize that we need to do more in terms of supporting innovation across our community, sharing lessons from both success and failure and adopting best practices across our Diocese.

We are excited about the future. The Strategic Plan reflects our trust in Christ’s faithfulness to his Church, our rich heritage, embraces change and focuses action on a bold Vision for the future. Each priority area within the plan is inter-related and connected and our efforts over the next five years will complement and build on each other to support achieving our Vision and lead our Diocese into the future.

FOCUS AREA:

Leadership & Formation

- 1 Develop leaders (both clerical and lay) to lead the transformation of the Diocese.
- 2 Expand the availability and practice of continuous education for both clergy and lay leaders.
- 3 Adopt new models of formation and diversity of leadership.

FOCUS AREA:

Trust & Culture

- 4 Continually evolve our culture to one that is positive, collaborative adaptive to change and reinforces our Vision and Values.
- 5 Build positive, respectful and transparent communication across this Diocese.
- 6 Develop working relationships to facilitate an integrated team based on operating model between synod office and parishes.

FOCUS AREA:

Innovation Based on Evidence

- 7 Do things differently through the adoption of best practices and innovation.
- 8 Use data to measure outcomes for the purpose of continuous improvement.
- 9 Use technology to enhance data collection, reporting and decision making.

FOCUS AREA:

Governance & Decision Making

- 10 Review and update canons, policies and procedures in collaboration with stakeholders.
- 11 Update the organization and governance structure of this Diocese, including synod office and parishes to align with our mission.

FOCUS AREA:

Stewardship of Resources

- 12 Strategically track, manage and leverage real-estate assets to support the mission and future health of this Diocese.
- 13 Be an organization that attracts and retains the best clergy, lay leadership and staff.
- 14 Diversify funding sources to support future needs and sustainability.