

Annual Vestry Meeting

February 24, 2019



Reports for 2018

The Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields

✦ *Toronto* ✦

Agenda - Vestry Meeting

February 24, 2019

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CHURCH OF ST.MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING – FEBRUARY 25, 2018

1. The meeting was called to order at 1 pm and Father Philip opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. Lee Jeffrey was appointed as Vestry Clerk.
3. The minutes of the 2017 Vestry Meeting were presented. Corrections to the minutes- none. Motion to approve the minutes by David Chipman, seconded by Jonathan Gentry. Motion carried.
4. The pastoral letters from the Archbishop, the Most Reverend Colin Johnson and the Area Bishop, the Right Reverend Jennifer Andison were read silently by Vestry or could be read at home.
5. 2017 Financial Statements- Treasurer Philip Conliffe reviewed the financial statements. The Statement of Financial Position comes first and this is the balance sheet, with Memorial Fund and General Fund separated and it shows the General Fund balance at the end of the year at \$260,585. The Our Faith Our Hope money is still coming in, although it will be ending soon. We received some grants for Children's Ministry and for Rectory repairs. Philip Conliffe moved the adoption of the financial statements, seconded by Kathy Wagg. Carried.
6. Memorial Fund Report – Father Philip pointed out that the report can be found towards the end of the package. John Cash says Brian Bradstreet has indicated activity in the account and produced a detailed statement. A new investment is in Fairfax India Holdings Corp. Michael Attwood asked about the significant amount invested in short term funds and John Cash explained that we are waiting for an appropriate opportunity. Michael Attwood says Brian Bradstreet thinks that opportunities will be coming up. John Cash moved acceptance of the Memorial Fund Report, Larry Palin seconded. Carried
7. Management Board Report and Parish Council Reports – **Management Board** - Michael Attwood said that Philip Conliffe noted the assistance from the Deanery for Rectory repairs, but noted that it was through the efforts of Father Philip that we learned of the fund and deadlines, etc. Michael also thanked Shelagh McPherson for securing a new user in the summer, resulting in increased rental income. In regards to PAR (Pre Authorized Remittance), the system is improving and receipts will be able to come from St Martin's. Michael is stepping down after 8 years. He took on the position as a duty and obligation, but has received much satisfaction and knowledge from it. Philip Savage moved a motion of thanks to Michael Attwood, seconded by Elin Goulden. Vestry applauded him for his years of incredible service and he was presented with a gift. Michael commented that Philip Conliffe makes the job easy. **Parish Council** – Cindy Paget had a busy job with hospitality in the past year and could use more volunteers to help with events. Thanks to all who supported her and it has been a joy to work with everyone. Cathy Paxton moved acceptance of the report, seconded by Kathy Wagg. Carried
8. Budget – Philip Conliffe – Referring to the last two columns with the 2017 and 2018 budget figures, Philip pointed out the space usage income, which is higher than it has been. Under expenses, Human Resources is the largest expense and the cost of living increase is 2.1% this year. The overall cost is somewhat lower due to Father Andrew's departure, but a bit more has been budgeted for assisting clergy. Under Church and Rectory, we did not spend the full amount, but it's important to keep up with maintenance so the amount has been increased. The bathroom at the rectory is almost done and the windows will be done next. On the last page, the Diocesan amount is lower due to capital spending and other amounts are similar to last year. The amount for Outreach goes in and is distributed according to what is received (in and out). The Outreach amount was higher due to increased activity in the past year. Under administration, it should be noted that we run a lean operation. There is a deficit of about \$64,000 but transfers could be made from the Memorial Fund. A Memorial Fund transfer of \$52,065 was budgeted as per the policy approved by Vestry in 2017. It is encouraging that despite the increase in capital spending, we don't plan to transfer more than 4%. Some money is set aside from the 125th Anniversary and is designated for a statue, but if that is not completed the money could go towards other expenses. David Chipman asked about PAR fees going from zero to about \$600 and Philip explained that we were not previously recording the per transaction fees this way. Philip Conliffe moved the 2018 budget for approval with total revenues of \$282,300 & total expenses of \$346,536. Seconded by Peter Chauvin. Carried with applause for Philip Conliffe.

9. Elections – Nominating Committee Report – Father Philip – the Committee brings forward a slate of nominees. They were introduced. Further nominations were called for. Lynn McKnight moved election of the nominees, seconded by David Chipman. Carried with thanks to all. Non-elected positions – Introductions were made and thanks to all for their help.
10. Reports of Church Groups – most are printed in the reports but some members had additional comments
- Altar Guild – Roberta Laking Kananaj – Thanks to the faithful few, which is down to 3 or 4. Roberta is looking forward to the renovation, which will make the job easier.
- Coffee Cohorts – Larry Barwick – the group tried to reorganize the way things were done, but for a variety of reasons, this was not successful. Coffee Cohorts are getting tired and need more people. A special thanks to Mary Conliffe for her offer to provide lemonade on the lawn over the summer.
- Faithworks – Father Philip reported a banner year with thanks to Jacqueline Hayden. Ten percent of the fund goes to the area and some goes to PWRDF.
- Garden Group – We had a rainy summer so the garden stayed green.
- Heritage and Archives – is working on an accounting book of all donations – financial and otherwise.
- Kid’s Church – Father Philip says it has been great working with Grace and thanks to her and the other volunteers.
- Library – Philip Snider – Please return any books you have borrowed from the library.
- Lychgate (Newsletter) – Ian Green and Eilonwy Morgan are working on the next issue.
- Missional Team – Kathy Wagg thanked the volunteers and one new member. The team needs help to reach out and execute ideas and events and “to serve as Christ’s hands and feet, heart and mind”. (a quote from Father Andrew)
- Music – Jack Hattey had nothing to add. Father Philip thanked Jack and the choir and organ scholar.
- Newcomers – Dianne Doughty – Thank to all the members and the committee could use some additional members.
- Nutcracker Fair – Helen Kolberg thanked everyone and asked that we keep the donations coming.
- Outreach – Almut Brenne-Davies said the committee is re-evaluating due to decreased membership.
- Property Management – Mark Kolberg is looking for more members but thanks Lynn McKnight especially, for all her help. An inspection of the property was required by the Diocese and there were concerns that major repairs might be needed but the inspection was “passed”. Some improvement to security are planned. Mary Conliffe asked if any thought had been given to installing a security system. Mark was not sure if this was a good idea. Andrea Zinn asked about flooding at the church. Mark said that during the renovation a water issue was identified in the report and will probably never be solved, but can be controlled and the floor is polished concrete to avoid the damage that there would be if it were of other materials. Father Philip said it has been dry in the chapel and Guild Room area and Lynn pointed out that there is dehumidifier, which does help. Mark Kolberg also mentioned that there had been a break in the city water main.
- Servers – Lynn McKnight said there have been 10 new members over the last year, but a few more adults would help. Father Philip mentioned that this is an important part of children’s ministry.
- Sidespeople – Glen Storey explained that the committee seems to lose and gain members often, but about 6 more members would be appreciated. Father Philip thanked the sidespeople for their important frontline ministry.
- Stewardship – Peter Chauvin expressed his thanks to the Stewardship Committee and Michael Attwood. There are concerns regarding falling income and therefore the Growing Healthy Stewards program is recommended by the Stewardship Committee. Good reasons for joining this program include capacity for improvement and building up the church including newcomers. Individuals need to think about our gifts, responsibilities, actions and offering. What is Growing Healthy Stewards? It is a three year commitment and we have a coach, Peter Bennett, from Church of the Redeemer. Stewardship would be a year round undertaking and more “in your face”. The program is already

underway in 30 parishes. We are reminded of the role of stewardship as part of our Christian faith, our relationship with money and complete lifestyle every day. There will be more sermons about this. There will also be a narrative budget as well as the traditional one. It will encourage new members and break away from the static level of giving.

32nd Toronto Scouting Group – Father Philip noted that we are a parish sponsor of Scouting

Other Reports – Jonathan Gentry and the Events Committee would like ideas from the congregation and are planning a trip to the Canadian Opera Company.

Social Media – Andrea Zinn said it's important to have regular posts for Facebook due to the algorithms of the system. Father Philip emphasized the importance of giving him your e-mail address.

Elizabeth Daniels read an inspirational piece.

11. Other Business – Social Justice and Advocacy Motion – Elin Goulden explained that the purpose is to make parishes aware of issues and for them to start speaking out on these issues. It's also important for the bishops to be able to say that they have parishes across the Diocese who are concerned and have voted. The motion this year is on Affordable Housing and Homelessness and will be directed provincially. Municipalities have some responsibility but it is limited. Toronto has old housing stock and nothing much being built. Special communities, particularly Indigenous, racialized, seniors, survivors of domestic violence, youth and people with mental illness or addictions need additional housing. There is much work to be done getting people out of shelters and into permanent housing. A forum is potentially being organized to get city representatives and faith communities together. David Chipman asked if Elin had heard of "Options for Homes" and Elin replied that yes, she has and recognizes that they do great work. The motion was made by Elin Goulden, Anne Longmore seconded. Carried (unanimous).
12. Mary Conliffe thanked the clergy team and Michael Attwood thanked the honorary assistants. Father Philip thanked Margaret Allen for preparing the packages and also thanked the people who made the lunch. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields Special Vestry Minutes - October 21, 2018

Father Philip called the meeting to order at 12:45 with a prayer.

A special vestry is called for one issue only and this vestry is called to authorize an application to the Carleton Fund of the Diocese for financial help with replacement of the Rectory windows.

The background is that work is ongoing at the Rectory to bring it up to current standards following recommendations resulting from an inspection. One of these recommendations was to replace the windows for energy efficiency and ease of use. The current windows are original to the house. This was included in the budget for 2018 already approved by Vestry. Mark Kolberg has obtained a quote for all windows and one door for \$52,000 and the amount budgeted is less than this. Applications can be made to the Carleton Fund for repairs to a rectory where the incumbent is residing and applications are only allowed once every two years. The maximum amount is \$12,000 so the remaining \$40,000 would have to be paid from our budget, but it could be spread over two years if necessary.

The motion is:

The Vestry of St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church authorizes the Churchwardens with the guidance of Management Board to proceed with the replacement of the windows at the Rectory and to make application to the Carleton Fund of the diocese for financial assistance for this project.

Moved by David McKnight, seconded by Elin Goulden and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Lee Jeffrey,
Vestry Clerk

Bishop's Letter to Vestries 2019

To our Clergy, Churchwardens and Parishioners
Beloved in Christ, peace and grace be with you.

This will be the first time, in almost 30 years, that I am not chairing a vestry meeting. I am one of those people who actually enjoys vestry; poring over audited financial statements, ministry reports, marking important milestones in the parish, celebrating the incredible contributions of our lay leaders (without whom very little would happen). Deeper than that, a good meeting names the anxiety we have in trying to balance the needs of the parish while trusting deeply in the hope that God will guide, provide and inspire us to deepen our faith, try new ideas and be creative in our endeavour to serve the mission of God. The vestry meeting is one moment in the year when a parish has the opportunity to look back and then to look forward. I am joined by the Area Bishops in assuring you of our prayers as you gather for your annual meeting. We also extend our deepest gratitude for all who have served so faithfully as wardens, committee members, teachers, greeters and leaders who make known the love of Christ through their offering of time, talent and treasure. If you are taking on a new role this year, a particular word of encouragement to you.

Over the last several years it has been our practice to invite each parish to consider a vestry motion that addresses issues of poverty and social action. In view of the drastically rising economic inequity in our province, this year's vestry motion asks your parish to consider Standing in Solidarity, by making a commitment to protect all who are living in poverty, through direct local and parish outreach and through meaningful advocacy.

On January 13th, 2019 I was formally seated as the 12th Bishop of Toronto. The journey to that moment has been heart-warming, moving and humbling. I am heartened by your words of encouragement, humbled by your support, and moved by your desire to row and to peddle! I will be forever indebted to Archbishop Colin for his encouragement and support. I am invigorated by the passion and faithfulness of our Area Bishops Peter, Riscylla, Kevin and Jenny as we step in together to write a new chapter as the College of Bishops. I am impressed beyond words by the dedication of our staff in the Diocesan office, and by the creative ways that ministry is happening every day in our parishes and centers of ministry around the Diocese.

I am thrilled to be on the road Sunday by Sunday visiting parishes, celebrating worship and getting to know you. I am finding my bearings with each of the committees, councils and task forces of the Diocese. I will be spending time with the clergy in each Deanery to glean the wisdom of those who lead in each community. In the first week of May I would like to meet with the laity of the Diocese through 5 scheduled Town Hall meetings (details will be posted on the Diocesan website). Each gathering gives us time to listen to each other, articulate our hopes for ministry, and catch a glimpse of what might be. I hope that you will join me.

May God bless you as you meet for Vestry.

Yours in Christ,

Andrew Toronto
The Rt. Rev. Andrew J. Asbil, Bishop of Toronto

A Pastoral Letter to Vestry 2019 - January 18, 2019, First Day of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

My sisters and brothers,
Grace and peace to you, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am writing this letter as I prepare to fly off to India, at the invitation of the Diocese of Madhya Kerala, to strengthen our relationship with the Church of South India. As you know, York-Credit Valley is incredibly diverse, and we have Christians, and those who are spiritually searching, worshipping in our churches from all over the globe—from Spain to Mongolia, Kenya to China, and everywhere in between.

As I visit parishes I have been freshly reminded of the palpable spiritual hunger in our neighbourhoods, and how our gracious Heavenly Father continues to draw people into Anglican churches throughout the week. Are we ready to receive them? Have we ensured our website is engaging for a spiritual seeker? Is our Sunday morning worship beautiful and welcoming for

someone who has never been before? What opportunities do we provide for people to intentionally investigate the claims of Jesus, and for children and teens to explore spiritually without feeling judged? Have we noticed that people from other immigrant groups are beginning to visit our churches and are we adding, for example, music in their languages/styles and an explicit welcome in our bulletins and on our signs/websites? All of this, of course, requires prayer and hard work as well as an intentional and sometimes sacrificial commitment of resources. It is a joy for me to see first-hand how many prayerful and hard-working people there are in our churches and how they are creatively and boldly using the resources that God has provided to draw people into closer relationship with Jesus. Thank you!

May I encourage you in 2019 to dedicate creative energy into strengthening the prayer ministry of your church. Historical research has shown that time and again, renewal and new life in churches consistently begin with a renewal in the prayer life of the local church. Are your Prayers of the People each week asking God for renewal, that more visitors would come to the church, and that you would be given more opportunities to serve the poor? Are your meetings beginning and ending with time for prayer? Do you have a dedicated group praying each day for the neighbourhood, and are you equipping people to pray at home and with their children and grandchildren? All parishes in York-Credit Valley are invited to participate in [Thy Kingdom Come](#) this year, an initiative of the Archbishop of Canterbury that has become a global phenomenon—10 days of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost for our friends to come to know the love of Jesus.

I encourage you also to present to your Vestry this year's [Social Justice Motion](#), which calls us to voice our support for those with first-hand knowledge of the impacts of poverty and, as the hands and feet of Christ, seek action on their behalf, either through direct outreach or through advocacy for policy changes or more accessible services.

I am so grateful for all the ministry—being the hands and feet of Christ—that you will be celebrating at your Annual Vestry Meeting. A deep thank you to those of you who are serving as Wardens and Treasurers, those who serve in children and youth ministry, caring for the property, making our worship of God beautiful, and those who serve in our social justice ministries.

It continues to be a joy to serve you as your Bishop, and please join me in continuing to uphold our new Diocesan Bishop, Bishop Andrew Asbil, in prayer as we move forward together following Christ.

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Colossians 3:13-14

Peace,

The Right Reverend Jennifer Andison
Area Bishop of York-Credit Valley, Bishop Suffragan of Toronto

Management Board Report

Management Board oversees the property, financial and operating concerns of our church. The Board meets monthly through the year (except July & August.)

Current Members: Cindy Paget (Chair), Father Philip, Philip Savage (Parish Council), Philip Conliffe (Treasurer), Mark Kolberg (Property), Larry Barwick (Secretary), John Cash (Screening, IT and Memorial Fund Liaison), Peter Chauvin (Stewardship), Members at Large: Cyriline Taylor, David McKnight, Frank Bodkin, Eilonwy Morgan, Maxine Joseph, Dawn St. Bernard, Ann Jordan.

Much of the Board's attention is focused on financial matters and property concerns. We have changed brokers for the Memorial Fund this year, however its day-to-day stewardship remains in the very capable hands of Brian Bradstreet. Our financial status is in good shape at this time thanks to our dedicated parishioners and income from space usage about which Treasurer Philip Conliffe will report on at Vestry. The Stewardship committee recommended and we have initiated an account at Canada Helps in order that donations may be received through the website.

Major property concerns over the past few years have focused on the Rectory and its needs. These concerns were shepherded by former Warden Michael Attwood and implemented by Property Manager Mark Kolberg. I am pleased to report that we were in receipt of a grant from the Carleton Fund – the

application as a result of a special vestry meeting – in the amount of \$12,000, which has enabled us to place the deposit for the windows in the Rectory to be installed in the Spring.

As a result of a memorial donation, over the summer the Vestry and environs were renovated under the guidance of Lynn McKnight to the joy of servers and altar guild volunteers.

I would like to thank all members of Management Board for their efforts on behalf of St. Martin's over the past year and particularly Mark Kolberg and Philip Conliffe for all that they do on an on-going basis. While they are not members of Management Board, I would also like to acknowledge the commitment and substantial contributions made by Shelagh McPherson, who takes care of our space usage and bookings, and Jonathan Gentry in his capacity as Envelope Secretary. As well many thanks go to those who volunteer their time and talents to support Management Board and its activities through various committees.

A big “thank you” to all our staff for their great work during the year: Margaret Allen (Secretary), Jack Hattey (Organist and Choir Director), Derek Hodges and Esther-Ruth Teel (Organ Scholars,) Matthew Waterman (Choral Scholar), Bernard Sanders (Sexton) and Grace Stephenson (Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator.)

I would also like to express my thanks to my fellow Warden, Philip Savage, for his support and friendship, and to Fr. Philip for his ongoing support, commitment and involvement in every aspect of ministry at St. Martin's.

Respectfully submitted,
Cindy Paget, Chair

Parish Council

Members: Cindy Paget (Management Board), Anne Longmore (Lay Delegate to Synod), Patty McKnight (Lay Delegate to Synod & Secretary), Jonathan Gentry (Alternate Lay Delegate to Synod), Members At Large: Estella Joseph, Maria Hayes, Margaret Douglin, Allison Turner, Bob Thornley, Cathy Paxton, Kathie Wagg, Maggie Knight, Bethanne Bell, Ian Greene, Gayne Brawn, Dianne Doughty, Lee Jeffrey, and Emily Bell.

Parish Council was “on a mission” this past year, literally and spiritually.

As Parish Council Chair, it was a privilege to see the degree to which all our members worked together and among parishioners to deepen our service to the larger community through faithful, thoughtful and energetic outreach. In particular I feel we should recognize those parishioners leading the Missional, Outreach, Hospitality and Newcomers groups.

The Missional Team led by Kathie Wagg brought people literally into the church (and church yard) on numerous occasions including in the Blessing of the Bicycles in April and the Fun Fair in June. Through the fall there was a very successful Blessing of the Pets with over 40 community participants (and half as many four-legged friends). As a result, a dozen people shared their names and contact as new “Friends of St Martin's.” Then on December 23rd there was a very large turnout (almost 200!) for Caroling in the Churchyard, with a number of the carolers taking part for the first time in Christmas eve services.



Also in December a Blessing Box was installed in the Lychgate which provides direct community outreach and support (officially opened and blessed by Bishop Jenny Andison). The box is being well used and extra clothing donated is being sent on to the local Stonegate Mission Second Hand Shop.

Due to the Missional initiatives and thoughtful planning, the parish was successful in its application for a REACH grant from the Diocese for just under \$7000 for further outreach work.

The Outreach Committee led by Almut Brenne-Davies was active in continuing our service to those in need with on-going support for Out of the Cold, the Outreach Art Fair in May for PARC's Music Program, a Faithworks walkathon in June, as well as later in the year raising \$1400 for the Out of the Cold program

at the Advent Carol Service, and again organizing Christmas tree ornaments donations for Redwood Shelter.

We must also thank and recognize the work done by the Newcomers committee who welcome those new to the church to feel the warmth of family and friends. This year Kathy Mansfield and Tim Stephenson welcomed in the spring, and Eilonwy Morgan and Ian Greene in the autumn.

Hospitality and those on Parish Council and throughout the parish who provide it, remains at the heart of our welcoming and outreach-oriented parish (as the former Parish Council Chair Cindy Paget described in her report last year). Perhaps this was most memorable in the warm send-off for Mother (now Bishop) Susan Bell on April 29th.

There are so many to thank on behalf of Parish Council for the joyful service they provide to those long-time and new members of our parish family. In particular Grace Karram Stephenson, our Children's Ministry Coordinator, and her roster of volunteer teachers, provide an excellent program for our children (an increasing number of whom come from families new to the parish).

Finally related to mission, outreach and welcoming, I note that an increasing part of our parish mission involves social media channels and the people supporting them in order to raise the parish profile in the larger community. The channels are: Facebook managed by Andrea Zinn, the web site managed by Patty McKnight and Jamie Whitaker, and the garden Instagram site managed by Patty and David McKnight.

As Wardens before have said: we are blessed with the many people who give of their time and talents to promote the many committees and activities of Parish Council. Thanks once again to all the 2018 Council members for your commitment, your time and efforts throughout the year, and to all the other volunteers whose efforts are invaluable to the mission of St Martin in the Fields in Toronto.

Respectfully submitted,
Philip Savage, Rector's Warden

Nominating Committee Report

Parish Council

Chair (Rector's Warden)	Philip Savage
Deputy Chair	Jonathan Gentry
Secretary	Patty McKnight
Lay Delegates to Synod	Anne Longmore
	Patty McKnight
Alternate Lay Delegate to Synod	Jonathan Gentry
Members at Large	Estella Joseph
	Bob Thornley
	Cathy Paxton
	Kathie Wagg
	Lee Jeffrey
	Ian Greene
	Gayne Brawn
	Kathy Bishop
	Anne Longmore

Management Board

Chair (People's Warden)	Cindy Paget
Deputy Chair	Eilonwy Morgan
Secretary	Larry Barwick
Treasurer	Philip Conliffe
Property Manager	Mark Kolberg
Screening Officer / IT	John Cash
Members at Large	Frank Bodkin
	Cyrline Taylor
	Maxine Joseph

	David McKnight Peter Chauvin Maria Hayes
Vestry Clerk Parochial Tribunal	Lee Jeffrey Tim Stephenson Patty McKnight Jonathan Gentry
Envelope Secretary	

Non-Elected Positions

Treasurer	Philip Conliffe
Stewardship	Peter Chauvin
Altar Guild	Roberta Laking / Adrienne Beeker
Bookings	Shelagh McPherson
Christian Education	Mary Conliffe
Coffee Cohorts	Ann Castro / Gayne Brawn
Counting Teams	Shelagh McPherson
FaithWorks Coordinator	Judith Kidd
Garden Coordinator	Ingrid Whitaker / Patty McKnight
Heritage & Archives	Eilonwy Morgan
Library	Samantha Thompson
Martin's Basement	Phil Snider
Memorial Fund	Brian Bradstreet
Nutcracker Fair	Helen Kolberg
Newcomers	Dianne Doughty / Janet Reid-Nahabedian
Newsletter Editor	Ian Greene / Eilonwy Morgan
Outreach	Almut Brenne-Davies
Quiet Garden	Margaret Douglin
Readers	Bill Keel
Servers	Lynn McKnight / Philip Savage
Events	Cindy Paget
Safe Church Workshops	Huntly Duff
Sidespeople	Glen Storey
Web Team	Patty McKnight
Social Media	Andrea Zinn
Health, Safety & Security	Cindy Paget
Missional Team	Kathie Wagg

Reports from Church Groups

Altar Guild

The Altar Guild is responsible for the care and maintenance of the many things used in worship at St Martin's; the members set up everything required for celebrations of the Eucharist, weddings, baptisms, funerals, and special services the whole year round. This includes communion vessels, vestments, candles, incense, flowers, processional crosses, even the brass collection plate.

Thanks to a generous bequest and the careful planning of Lynn McKnight and her advisors, the Altar Guild and Servers now share washing-up and storage facilities beside the vestry, plus extra storage for vestments inside the vestry. Communion vessels can be washed and set up immediately after use. This has reduced the need to carry things up and down stairs. The Altar Guild still uses the Guild Room and small kitchen for laundry and ironing, brass cleaning, caring for candles, and flower arranging.

We are grateful to Lynn McKnight and the Servers' Guild for their help and support during these moves and transitions.

Minor vestment repairs were done by members of the Altar Guild who possess the necessary skills, but major restorations of essential pieces will be carried out in 2019 by the Diocesan Chancel Guild. The pieces include the burse and a stole from the 1923 Advent blue vestment set, an embroidered white silk

burse and a dark green embroidered silk stole (both originally from St Cyprian's).

The cracked silver and crystal cruet has proved difficult to repair, as this work needs both a silversmith and a glass blower. We are now looking into the possibility of commissioning a new set of cruets of a similar design.

The current wish list includes a set of Pentecost (bright red) dalmatics for deacon and subdeacon, a new green burse and veil, and new fair linen for the church altar and credence table.

We thank the Rev. Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan for her generous donation of a magnificent old red and gold silk dalmatic, which she and her late husband, the Rev. Bruce Barnett-Cowan, once received as a gift from a parish church in Quebec.

Thanks to Fr. Philip and all who help behind the scenes. Special thanks to Adrienne Beecker for her leadership and to Robert Kananaj for his amazing flower arrangements.

Respectfully submitted,
Roberta Laking Kananaj, Co-chair

Changeable Signage

An important segment of our parish communication strategy are the two changeable signs – the two-sided sign near the Lychgate and the sign under the banners on Indian Grove. These signs communicate various events and festivals taking place at St. Martin's – and issue invitations to our community to join with us. It is a very labour-intensive process to change these signs – especially in the winter.

We have a dedicated group of parishioners who make sure these signs are changed in a timely manner and I would like to thank each one for their commitment. Members of this group are Christopher Dube, Whitney Dube, Derek Hodges and Ian Wrong.

Respectfully submitted
Kathie Wagg

Christian Education

The Christian Education Committee took time in this past year to regroup and refocus our efforts to create ongoing opportunities for growing disciples in our congregation. We initiated a parish survey last spring which generated a terrific response and indicated to us a real desire of educational programming of all sorts. We have taken that feedback seriously and have already started to implement your priorities. Stay tuned for more of your excellent ideas to come to fruition!

Over the summer months, the Parish Book Club encouraged the reading of the book "Everyday God: The Spirit of the Ordinary" by Paula Gooder. A thoughtful and stimulating conversation took place every Wednesday through September as parishioners gathered to discuss the book together.

In December, we chose four holiday animated classics, one for each Wednesday evening, to watch together (with popcorn!) and reflect on Christmas as portrayed in cartoons: A Charlie Brown Christmas, The Selfish Giant, The Happy Prince, and The Grinch Who Stole Christmas. It was fun to have intergenerational participation for this Advent study.

We look forward to some excellent events coming up early in 2019: a celebration of Oscar Romero and his recent canonization in the Roman Catholic Church with Jenn McIntyre and others from Romero House, and a Lenten Study with our own Professor Joe Mangina on the Creed, with special emphasis on what we believe about Jesus.

We are always open to new ideas or requests for outings, speakers, books and other topic to help us grow in our faith. Do bring your suggestions to me, or another member of the Christian Education Committee: Vicki Cooper, Dale McInnes-Keel, Peter Muller, Phil Snider, Tim Stephenson, or Father Philip.

Respectfully submitted for the committee,
Mary Conliffe

Coffee Cohorts

The big thing this year was that we were again able to hold Coffee Hour in the garden – thanks to Mary Conliffe's extremely generous offer to take this on for the summer months with the aid of the Sunday School. As this 'aid' turned out to be a bit sporadic, Mary carried the load virtually on her own, so an enormous thank you goes to Mary for her very gallant (and perhaps optimistic) gesture. Not surprisingly, we will be looking for a different and more fair solution this coming summer, but will likely continue the "Lemonade on the Lawn" theme as that seemed to work really well.

Going forward, we would still gladly welcome 3 or 4 more parishioners to join our merry band, especially in the summer. More Coffee Cohorts mean less Sundays to be on coffee duty! All of us really enjoy the interaction with our fellow parishioners, and it's a great way to meet everyone. Do you think you could help in this way? Why not come and join us one Sunday ... perhaps just to help with serving, set-up or clean-up? You'd be most welcome!

Murray will be 'retiring' from being Coffee Cohort Co-Coordinator this year, but Gayne Brawn has kindly agreed to take his place, so she and I will be 'co-coordinating together'.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann & Murray Albert

FaithWorks

*"... what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8*

These words are prominently placed on the 'homepage' of the FaithWorks' web site.

Once again, in 2018, the St. Martin's parish community continued their strong support of the Diocese of Toronto's annual fundraising drive. FaithWorks provides grants to partner agencies in our community, our diocese, in remote communities throughout the far north and internationally. These partners provide help and hope to individuals and families who are vulnerable and marginalized.

Thank you to all who donate, monthly or annually, to those who participate in the annual Walkathon - and all those who sponsor a walker. Thanks also to those who attended our FaithWorks' breakfast. A very special thanks to Glen and Lindsey, Jay and Vicki for making the breakfasts possible. Thanks also to the support and guidance from the members of the Outreach Committee for making this first year effort for me so rewarding.

Respectfully submitted,
Judith Kidd

Garden Group

We are very lucky to have such a beautiful garden as part of our church premises as not many city churches have such a lovely space but the corollary of this is that the maintenance of this garden does take time and money.

Once again a dedicated group of gardeners met on Tuesday mornings through the growing season to plant, weed and generally maintain the St. Martin-in-the Fields gardens and sometimes when we have lots of large weeds that need removing we do indeed feel that we are *in the fields*.

Our garden is a mature garden but it always needs basic things like compost, manure, soil and replacement plants. This year many new bulbs were also planted to replace those that were munched by animals or that failed to thrive. Some species of spring bulbs seem to be like catnip to squirrels and raccoons and although they are planted deeply, they still get eaten on a regular basis.

This year a bee hotel was installed, thanks to a donation from Roberta Laking. This structure provides a home for mason bees who aid in the pollination of plants in our garden. Pollination is very important to all flowers. Honey bees and stinging bees do not nest in these bee hotels.

We are also trying to plant more native Canadian plants that will survive both drought and our hot summers better as sometimes plants die as we cannot always be on the premises to water regularly.

As always we wish to thank the Toronto and Parkdale Horticultural society for their generous maintenance donation which encourages the community to use our marvellous outside space and indeed one can see that the local community treasures our beautiful space as much as we do.

Respectfully submitted,
Ingrid Whitaker and Patty McKnight

Heritage & Archives Committee

The Heritage and Archives Committee undertakes a variety of activities such as researching, documenting, organizing, protecting, liaising with parishioners, and so on.

In 2018 updates for the previous year were added to the Memorial Book. The Memorial Book provided information to the Garden Committee for memorial plaques for the trees in the church garden, to be installed in the spring of 2019.

Late in the year the parish received an album of church photos and newspaper articles assembled by the Rev. Eric Osborne, incumbent of St. Martin's between 1947 and 1951. These items provided a fascinating glimpse into events and services at the church at that time, and were the source for a display at the coffee hour in December.

In 2019 work will continue on our oral history project, interviewing long-time members of the parish for their recollections. This is being coordinated with the parish profile work done in each edition of the Lychgate.

The Committee welcomes new members.

Respectfully submitted,
Eilonwy Morgan

Kids' Church

We are so thankful for the active role our children played in parish life throughout 2019. It is exciting to see three new boat-children serving next to the thurifer and several of our older children taking on new responsibilities such as crucifer. Our kids have also continued to play an important support role at major church events like the Nutcracker Fair and Pancake Tuesday. We are very thankful for Father Philip's excellent child-focused homilies at our intergenerational services, as we teach the children the essential skill of sitting through a full church service. Our overall numbers in the weekly Sunday School have increased by an average of three children each week. This increase was particularly noticeable at our pageant in which 25 children participated, not including the wonderful youth who shepherded the performers. We are so thankful for our four teachers and four helpers who been faithful each week working with our kids and designing lessons to match the kids' boundless energy. We look forward to a parish retreat in the spring for more intergenerational time (June 7/8, 2019). Thank you to each person at St. Martin's for making our church a welcoming place for new families and children.

Respectfully submitted,
Grace Karram Stephenson

Library

St. Martin's Library continued to acquire new books this year which have improved the depth, breadth and currency of our collections. The library also continues to experience improved use, and circulation data is easier to gather with the simple book card system. There has been some attrition of our holdings due to loss this year. A list of missing items has been initiated so that the catalogue can be kept up to date. (Parishioners are reminded to return books so that others can enjoy them.)

Respectfully submitted
Samantha Thompson

The Lychgate

We were appointed editors of *The Lychgate* at the February, 2016 Vestry meeting, and re-appointed in February 2017 and 2018. We have agreed to let our names stand for another year.

Since Vestry 2018, four issues of *The Lychgate* have been published, on March 25, June 17, September 23, and December 2. The next issue is scheduled to be released on April 7, 2019, with submissions due by March 31. We would like to thank Fr. Philip for his careful proof-reading, and help with printing the newsletter and preparing it for distribution. If any parishioners would like to help with any aspect of newsletter preparation, printing or envelope stuffing, please let us know. It's fun, and many hands make light work.

Some parishioners prefer to receive an electronic link to the newsletter rather than a paper copy. If you want to go paperless and cancel your paper copy of *The Lychgate*, email us at Lychgate1111@gmail.com.

We would like to thank the dozens of parishioners who contributed to the 2018 Lychgates. In particular, we would like to thank those who agreed to be featured in Parish Profiles. Please let us know if you would like to be featured, or if you would like to suggest someone we could feature. We also welcome articles or suggestions for future topics: iangreene0766@rogers.com.

Respectfully submitted,
Eilonwy Morgan and Ian Greene

Martin's Table / Newcomers

2018 was a busy year of continued growth. We experimented with an 'Open' attendance format for our bi-annual meetings in June and October that brought a dozen or more attendees to each. Some of the milestones are;

- i. The Welcome Table continues to be a favorite destination for fellowship following the 11 o'clock service.
- ii. We hosted two Martin's Table brunches (April 22 and October 28). Moving the event to a family brunch following the Sunday service has proven to be popular and well received by both children and adults in promoting fellowship and dialogue.
- iii. We will be participating with the St. Martin's Games Night taking place on February 9, 2019, welcoming the wider St. Martin's community and neighbourhood.
- iv. An informal 'Greeters' role was outlined, that would accompany newcomers to the Welcome Table for fellowship.
- v. The committee endorsed the archiving of Fr. Philip's sermons.
- vi. Name Tag Sunday.
- vii. Our Newcomers' Fridge magnets hand-out have been well received and may also be purchased by loyal parishioners.
- viii. At the October meeting a 'parishioners' portrait project was proposed.

My thanks to all who have so generously volunteered their time and support to Martin's Table and Newcomers this past year.

We welcome your ideas, comments and involvement.

Respectfully submitted,
Dianne Doughty

Missional Team

What is Mission? *"It requires an outward focus, rather than inward. It calls us out of the building into the neighbourhood, and invites us to serve as Christ's hands and feet, and heart and mind."* Fr. Andrew Macdonald.

This past year was one of growth for our team. Joining Glen Storey and myself were David Fleming, Kathy Mansfield and, most recently, Bethanne Bell. With the support of many volunteers from our parish family, we undertook all our planned activities with differing success rates:

1. Blessing of the Bicycles in April was undertaken in the rain. We did not have as many visitors as we would have liked, but those who did attend, quite enjoyed themselves. Two members of the Metro Toronto Police bicycle unit participated with us.
2. The Neighbourhood Fun Fair in June was also plagued by rain – but we still entertained about 60 of our neighbours – and those who did come participated fully in all that we offered. Martin's Basement participated by organizing and running many of the games. And Kid's Church ran their scavenger hunt again upstairs in the Church.
3. We experienced a very successful Blessing of the Animals in late September with 23 dogs participating with 45 owners. We undertook a blessing liturgy as a group and Fr. Philip offered one-on-one blessings for those interested. Every one of the owners lined up for this blessing of their pet.
4. Caroling in the Garden was a huge success this year with 175-200 participants from the parish and the neighbourhood. This event grows more popular each year.
5. "Take what you need, leave what you can; But above all – Be Blessed" is the theme of the Blessing Box and Free Library installation in the Lychgate. This takes non-perishable food items, common household items and, in the colder months, warm clothing items available to those in need in the neighbourhood as well as the books for the library. This installation is being well used, although we could always use more non-perishable food items. These are taken promptly when put in.
6. Pickleball in the parish now falls under Missional activities and about 60% of our members come from the community , with some of these people attending parish events.

The team was successful in obtaining a Diocesan REACH grant to help fund Missional activities for 2 years. We plan to repeat the activities of this past year and will be looking to plan new activities to appeal to the unchurched and dechurched in our community. We want to thank our parish family for helping with all the activities and being the face of Christ to those who come in from the community.

Respectfully submitted by Kathie Wagg for the Missional Team

Music

It has been another good year for the choir. Week by week, our services are lovingly sung by a fine group of volunteers. It is a great joy to be a part of this music.

This year has seen the parish develop a fine musical team. Our Musical Intern from York University, Derek Hodges became our Junior Organ Scholar in June. He played the 11 am services during July and most of August-a great learning experience. Derek did an excellent job working with the church school to play the 7 pm Christmas Eve service with our fine trumpeter. He also played the 11 am Christmas Day service. Derek plays at the Saturday Evening Services as well.

We have been lucky to hire Esther-Ruth Teel as our Organ Scholar this year. Esther-Ruth hails from Victoria BC and is an organ performance major at the University of Toronto. She is also a celtic harpist, excellent soprano and a first-rate conductor.

We have been fortunate again this year to have a number of instrumentalists join with the choir. Paul Sanvidotti-trumpet, Nancy Nourse-flute and Alex MacLeod-viola.

We were delighted to have Rachel Robinson, Tom Hubschmidt and Matthew Waterman join our ranks this year. Matthew has a degree in music composition from the University of Toronto and joins us as a Choral Scholar until the end of June. He is studying to be a priest at Wycliffe College. Frances Mangina is now a student at Princeton, but joins us when she comes home to Toronto. Emily Bell is now studying in Edinburgh.

New music this year include Philip Stopford's There is no Rose, Sarah Quartel's How can I keep from singing?, and Pepper Choplin's We Are Not Alone.

Our choir has again been reaching out this year. We sang at Susan Bell's consecration at Christ Church Cathedral in Hamilton in May. This past December, we sang at the Star Carol Concert at St. Paul's Bloor Street. It was rewarding to sing together with several choirs and the Salvation Army Band, but also to help raise money for such a worthy cause. Our Advent Carol Service drew folks from all over the city. We had a full house and the collection went to Old of the Cold. It is a fine thing to use music and liturgy for outreach.

Lastly, my thanks to the Rector and Wardens, and to the choir and congregation for the support which makes St. Martin's sing.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Hattey



Nutcracker Fair

The annual Nutcracker Fair was held Saturday November 17, 2018 and continued to deliver on the goals of raising funds, building community within St. Martin's, and reaching out to the wider community. Many thanks to everyone involved in the set-up, the day of the event and those who provided items to be sold at the Fair. This year's event raised over \$9,000! This brings the total proceeds from the Fair since 2006 to \$118,000.

The main draws of the event continue to be great food and unique and wonderful gift items.

Continued success of the Fair depends on the dedication and support of many at St. Martin's.

New Volunteers are needed. Please consider how your talents could help next year's event!

Respectfully submitted,
Helen Kolberg

Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee has had an eventful year. The emphasis this year appeared to be on Faithworks. Judith Kidd took over as the new Faithworks co-ordinator and put an emphasis on the Faithworks campaign. In spite of a rainy Faithworks walkathon in June a phenomenal amount of money was raised to add to the wonderful amount contributed by parishioners on a one-time and monthly basis over the year. The addition to the Faithworks walk this year was Almut's furry friend, Bryn. We are hoping to have other furry additions as part of 2019's walkathon.

Judith Kidd also co-ordinated the Out of the Cold program this year. While she had many volunteers for the food preparation she struggled with the recruitment of servers for the dinner itself. The Outreach team is hoping to encourage more people to volunteer as servers this coming year. The proceeds of the Advent Carol Service went towards the Out of the Cold program and we have been collecting toiletries for the program as well.

Jay and Glen have been working hard in the kitchen on the Faithworks breakfast, on a breakfast fundraiser for Pikangikum in the spring and serving food at our Arts for PARC and Bake Sale.

The Arts for PARC and Bake sale took place on Rogation Sunday in May in the garden, and we received a fair amount of attention from individuals and families walking through the garden. We are hoping to increase the attendance of the fundraiser by providing savoury and sweet baked goods and a variety of foods from the grill this coming year. Ingrid Whitaker is our artist in residence and takes care of the artist recruitment for this event.

The petals for Pikangikum enriched our garden with a variety of colours and raised funds for the water project.

During Advent the funds raised through the purchase of ornaments for the Advent Tree supported the Redwood Shelter. The Christmas Cheer helped to purchase gifts for refugees from Romero House, and the coat drive also supported refugees associated with Romero House, as these newcomers might be unprepared for the Canadian winter.

The Outreach Committee consisting of Father Philip, Aster, Judith, Glen, Jay, Lee and Almut is concerned about the impact of the provincial government on the working poor and on individuals and families living in poverty. We are hoping to continue the work with our local MPP and other churches to advocate for individuals living in poverty.

Respectfully submitted,
Almut Brenne-Davies
Chair

Property Management

As reported at Vestry for 2017, two major capital expenditure projects were planned for 2018 at the Rectory (29 Indian Grove): complete renovation of the main bathroom and installation of all new windows and exterior doors. This work was identified as a priority at the 2016 Vestry. The need for the window replacement was also identified in the 2012 Rectory Inspection Report. The bathroom renovation was completed in March 2018; the vital contribution of Lynn McKnight's time and effort is acknowledged. The window and door replacement project contract for \$71,000 (including HST) has been signed and the product has been ordered. A \$50,000 deposit was made in 2018 with the help of a \$12,000 grant from the Carleton Fund (Diocese). The windows and doors will be installed in the spring of 2019 and the balance owing on the contract will come from the 2019 budget.

The Vestry (and surrounding area) was renovated and greatly improved. This project was completed on time and on budget under the direction of Lynn McKnight. Funds for this project came from a generous donation from the estate of Anita Li and were not included in the property management budget.

Beyond completion of the Rectory window and door project in 2019, we will continue maintaining and improving both the Church and Rectory properties. Projects now under consideration for 2019 at the Rectory include repairs to the driveway to correct cracking and drainage and maintenance tree pruning in the backyard; these projects are the remaining major items identified in the 2012 Rectory Inspection Report as requiring attention. In 2017 the *Property Condition Assessment Report* for the Church was completed by CDW Engineering. This assessment of the condition and level of maintenance of the Church building was mandated by the Diocese and was reported at the Vestry for 2017. A ten-year plan for repairs and maintenance was provided in the report and Management Board will continue to rely on this document for planning and budgeting future work. For example, water has been leaking under the flashing at the clerestory windows above the hallway in the extension and will need attention. It is also likely that we will need to replace the expansion tank in the furnace/boiler system.

As always, there were miscellaneous repairs, furnace and plumbing repairs, maintenance and ongoing services that were completed in 2018 (e.g., lift licence, alarm monitoring, furnace servicing and repairs, light bulbs). I wish to extend my thanks to all the volunteers who helped.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Kolberg
Property Manager – Management Board

Quiet Garden

St. Martin's held its annual Spring Quiet Garden on Saturday, June 16 at the home of Lynn McKnight and Michael Atwood. There were about 14 people who attended the event. Fr. Philip led the group through periods of quiet reflection which centred on the theme of *Living the Eucharist*.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Douglin

Servers Guild

The Servers Guild had a busy year in 2018 with an influx of new team members, especially in our junior servers' group.

Our Sunday 8:30 service team of five members remained unchanged while our 11 AM Subdeacon group of seven saw Maxine Joseph step away from the team in the later months of the year in preparation for giving birth and for being on maternity leave in 2019. We miss having her in our rotation and wish her a smooth transition into motherhood. We hope she will be able to be part of the team again in the future.

We enjoyed having divinity student Jeff Boldt with us for our 11 AM services during March and April. We now look forward to getting to know and to serving alongside our new Assistant Curate, the Rev'd Alison Hari-Singh.

Over the course of the year we were pleased to welcome new youth servers to the team including boat bearers Ivy Elliott, Gisèle Sabourin and Matthew Snider. They have all settled into the team nicely and along with Maëlle Stephenson and Audrey Hall take their new roles seriously and seem to enjoy being part of the team. Acolyte Quinn Kennedy trained as Crucifer in the fall and has acclimated well to this role.

David Fleming joined the team and began serving in February as acolyte and is now doing Crucifer duties too, as well as serving at funerals when his schedule permits. In the second half of 2018 Larry Barwick joined the team and has quickly become a proficient acolyte. He will be trained to take on the role of Crucifer as well in 2019. We are very pleased to have these two new adult members on the team. Jeff Buss has been part of our team for several years and due to his distance from St. Martin's has not been able to serve as frequently as he would like, but still serves when his work schedule will allow.

The current serving team, with the additions described above is made up of 31 people, with 12 children, 2 teenagers and 17 adults. This includes 6 Subdeacons (since Maxine stepped out), two of whom also belong to the serving team. We would be happy to recruit more adult servers, especially before the summer months and vacation time. Youth servers are also welcome. Anyone who is interested should contact Lynn to discuss. Young children start as boat bearer at 5 or 6, depending on readiness, then move to Acolyte at about 9 years of age. Teens and adults start as Acolyte, then when ready, learn to be Crucifer, followed by Thurifer and finally MC (Master of Ceremonies).

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn McKnight

Sidespeople

Canon 16 of the Diocese of Toronto states that the Sidespeople "receive and seat the congregation in the church and maintain order in and about the church during divine worship."

We were very busy during 2018 especially with the Easter and Christmas services. I would like to thank all the parishioners that stepped forward to assist the sidespeople's teams during these busy times. Your efforts were greatly appreciated.

At St. Martin's we have six teams with 22 members and two support persons. We are actively seeking new members to train and to be on the support list to assist the teams in the event that they are shorthanded. If you are interested in volunteering for this important ministry or have any questions, please contact Glen Storey at storeybook25@gmail.com

Respectfully submitted,
Glen Storey, Chair

Stewardship Committee

The past year was a significant one for Stewardship at St. Martin's. The work done by the committee members – Maria Hayes, Maggie Knight, Frank Bodkin, Cyriline Taylor and Michael Attwood was outstanding and much appreciated. We continue to receive the support of Father Philip and Wardens Cindy Paget and Philip Savage. And thanks too for the assistance we received from Diane Doughty, Derek Hodges and Margaret Allen.

St. Martin's was invited to participate in the Diocesan developed "Growing Healthy Stewards" program. The program got underway early in 2018. As part of GHS the Committee received mentorship for its activities and programs from the Diocese appointed Coach – Peter Bennett. Peter, who is an active member of the Church of the Redeemer, provided wonderful guidance to the Committee.

The key driver behind GHS is that Stewardship is a complete lifestyle based on gratitude for and eager sharing of the gifts we have been given. The Committee is working to expand stewardship beyond simply a brief annual campaign and elevating the profile and importance of stewardship within the Parish and ideally have stewardship be top of mind throughout the year.

The annual reach out campaign in October/November included, for the first time in several years, a telephone reach out to a large portion of the Parish. While we were not able to call everyone, we expect to do mini-telethon's periodically going forward to ensure we reach everyone in the Parish. The objective

of these telephone campaigns is to elevate the overall engagement of Parish members in the stewardship of St. Martin's.

An important development in 2018 was St. Martin's ability to access donations on-line through Canada Helps. Donors who visit our web site will now see a 'Donate Now' button that automatically links to Canada Helps and enables donors to contribute to St. Martin's on-line, including paying by credit card. We saw several significant donations at the end of the year, donations we may not have received without the on-line donation tool.

Finally, the Committee is looking forward to 2019 and working with the entire Parish to develop an even stronger stewardship culture in the coming years.

Respectfully submitted,
Peter Chauvin

Social Justice Motion

"We, the Vestry of the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields commit to standing in solidarity with those living in poverty by taking the following actions guided by the Outreach Committee and the Missional Team:

1. increasing our direct outreach to those in need in our neighbourhood by encouraging parishioners to contribute to the parish's Blessing Box and by encouraging more parishioners to help with the serving of food to the attendees of the Out of the Cold program with which the parish is involved;
- 2 .increasing our advocacy work by collaborating with other local churches , faith groups and our municipal, provincial and federal representatives in addressing issues related to poverty."

Rector's Report to Vestry

As we prepare to hold our annual Vestry meeting later this morning, we come together first in prayer and worship in our celebrations of the Eucharist. While our annual meeting is a chance to reflect on the activities of the last year and prepare for the work of a new year, it is also something more. There is a very good reason that the Vestry meeting comes directly after our worship together, for, as in all of our life in the Church, our work begins, continues, and ends in God.

What do our readings this morning tell us about the God whom we worship? In the Gospel we hear of God's astounding mercy. As the Gospel says, "he is kind" not just to those who follow his ways but also "to the ungrateful and the wicked". It is God's extravagant love that we are called to reflect in our lives as children of the Most High. To love your enemies, to do good to those who hate you, and to pray for those who abuse you are ridiculous actions according to the standards of this world. They only make sense within the context of a God who sends his only Son to die for us sinners, and who offers forgiveness to all, even those who have nailed Christ to the cross. It is that kind of compassion and forgiveness that we are called to model in our lives as disciples of Christ both within the life of this parish and beyond its bounds.

A merciful God, yes, but also a God who brings about extraordinary transformations, who brings new life even to the dead, this is what St. Paul relates as he writes to those early Christians in Corinth who are struggling perhaps as we do to understand what God is about in his promise of resurrection. As Paul emphasizes in his flights of rhetoric in today's passage, it is only the transforming power of God that can bring human life out of the dust of the earth, and then can work again to bring new and eternal life out of the dust of death and decay. To be made in the image of God is an astounding privilege and responsibility which we are called to live into as part of our life as baptized followers of Christ. It also sows the seed in us of that life with God that we are invited to enjoy only partially in this life, but oh so much more profoundly in the life to come.

Finally, in our first reading this morning, from the great cycle of Joseph stories, we have an account of the dramatic moment when Joseph reveals himself to his brothers as the one whom they had sold so many years before into slavery and oblivion. For me, the crucial insight comes as Joseph reassures his brothers who may be terrified of what Joseph will do to them in retribution, as he says to them, "it was not you who sent me here, but God, and he has done so to preserve life." This is a prime example of that mysterious activity that we call the providence of God. In ways that we cannot always fathom, God is at work in our lives, and the life of the community of faith, bringing about his purposes, ensuring that life and not death, hope and not despair, love and not fear, emerge in the midst of the community of grace. This calls for trust on our part in the sometimes hidden ways that God's mercy is at work, exercising that providence, providing his life and love for us.

Three readings that lead us deeper into our understanding of the God whom we worship. The insights that they share with us can help us in our Vestry meeting today, and in the coming year to ask some crucial questions.

Firstly, how are we as a parish community reflecting the extravagant love of God in the life of our community? How do we embody the mercy, the forgiveness, the compassion that God calls us to share with all, even those we would consider not our friends, but even our enemies?

Secondly, how are we as a parish community co-operating with God in that amazing work of transformation to bring life out of the dust, in the lives of those who come through the doors of this church, and in the lives of those in the surrounding community who never join us in worship and yet are also made in the image of God?

And finally, how do we become a community that puts our complete trust in the providence of God, God's providing love, trusting not in our own powers, but in the amazing grace of God's love for us and for all God's world?

These are big questions that we cannot answer simply or quickly today but they are questions that we can carry with us through the coming year, guiding us in our actions and our prayers in the ensuing months.

Just think how we might apply these questions to our outreach and missional activities. I am tremendously grateful for the way in which so many in this parish have given of their financial resources for those in need beyond our parish. As the audited financial statements indicate, close to \$43,000 of a total parish expenditure of just over \$373,000 was spent by the parish on outreach and mission. The incredibly generous support of FaithWorks, the outreach we provided through our support of Out of the Cold, PARC, Romero House, the Redwood Shelter and the Pikangikum water project, the deep concern and support for refugees, all of these are signs of our faith being put into action as we seek to embody God's extravagant love. I think also of our missional activities from Carolling in the Garden to the new neighbourhood Blessing Box as signs of our desire to meet people in their need and share something of our trust in God's life-giving grace with those around us. The social justice motion that we will be voting on later in our Vestry meeting carries this activity still further as we are being asked to continue to build on our assistance to the poor at the same time that we are called to work for transformation in our society, to change the structures that lead to poverty and marginalization. In a recent joint meeting of the Missional Team and the Christian Education Committee, the emphasis was placed once again on the importance of listening intently to the voices of those who live in the neighbourhood around this church, to hear their needs, and to discover where the Spirit is already on the move in this community. We are called to discern where God's providence is already at work, bringing about his purposes, so that we might come alongside the ongoing work of the Spirit.

This year was a time of transition in the parish. It was not easy for us to say good-bye to Mother Susan after her many years of wonderful ministry amongst us. And yet, it was also an exciting moment for us at St. Martin's to think that God had been using our community as part of the way in which he was preparing Susan for her new ministry within the wider Church as Bishop of Niagara. We can be thankful that our parish community has so often been a fruitful ground for training and preparation for so many whether they are budding organists and singers in our choir, or theological students and clergy in formation. We are grateful that God has once again moved to provide for us through the ministry of our new Assistant Curate, as we continue to celebrate the faithful service of all the members of our clergy team.

Gratitude is surely at the heart of our Christian life, as we express our gratefulness for all the blessings that God shares with us in this parish. This past year our parish joined the diocesan stewardship initiative, Growing Healthy Stewards. If there is anything that characterizes this initiative it is that spirit of thanksgiving, of gratitude both for the amazing resources that God shares with us, but also gratitude for the opportunities that God provides to use those resources in the service of God and God's world. We look forward to the coming year and the ways in which our Stewardship Committee can help us to live even more deeply this life of gratitude, as part of our commitment to the total stewardship of our lives in God's service.

God has been so good to us. While this past year has been a time when we have continued to say good-bye to many faithful parishioners who have died, it has also been a time when we have been able to welcome many new people into our parish community. The great work of the Newcomers Committee has been so instrumental in ensuring that newcomers to our parish receive a warm welcome, but, more than that, are encouraged to become full and active members of our parish community. As the committee continues its good work in the coming year, we need to remind ourselves constantly that welcoming the stranger is not an optional extra to be exercised by the few, but is an integral part of what it means for all of us to be disciples of Christ. As we greet our neighbour in the pew, chat with someone new at Coffee Hour, or go the extra mile and make contact with a newcomer beyond the Sunday connection, we are reflecting Christ's love, and ensuring that all may know the compassion and mercy that God so wishes to share with everyone.

Several weeks ago I welcomed a group that included the priest and lay leaders from one of the other parishes in our Deanery. They had come to St. Martin's for ideas as they are looking to make major changes in their church building to assist in their life and ministry. I was so grateful that I was able to take them on a tour of our facilities to show them the ways in which we have cared for and enhanced our

facilities to allow for an even stronger life of worship and service. This work has continued this past year with the wonderful transformation of our Vestry and Sacristy area and with the ongoing work at the Rectory. After their visit to St. Martin's, I heard from the priest what an inspiration that visit had been to the group, how they were encouraged to see the ways in which God has provided for us, and how we have used that provision to further our life and ministry. May we continue in the coming year to seek ways in which we can use even more effectively the resources that God has provided.

Speaking of inspiration and encouragement, I must say that I have received much of that this past year through the wonderful work that has been going on as part of our ministry with children and young people. There is a spirit of joy and excitement in Kids' Church that spills over into the general life of the parish, and was much in evidence in the wonderful Christmas pageant that the children and young people mounted on Christmas Eve. I am so delighted that in the coming months that joy and excitement may be shared with even more of our neighbours through the Mums and Tots group, and that the work of sharing the faith with our young people will take an even deeper path. I am also delighted that we will be starting a new group in the parish specifically targeted at young adults to help them grow in their Christian life and witness.

There are so many other blessings that we can be thankful for, including the Coffee Cohorts' new Lemonade in the Garden initiative, the expansion of our Servers' Guild, the faithful work of our Altar Guild week in and week out, the beauty that we enjoy in our garden thanks to the work of our garden helpers, the wonderful music that we enjoy Sunday by Sunday provided by our choir and talented musicians, the great work of oversight and planning done by our Churchwardens in co-operation with our Parish Council and Management Board, the new and innovative ways provided by our Christian Education committee for us to embrace the gospel message, and the great ministry of so many others, including sidespeople, readers, social media and signage shepherds. We give thanks for all of these individuals and groups who provide so much to the ongoing life of this parish.

We have so much to be grateful for, including the great opportunities for witness and ministry that God will send our way in the coming year. May we continue to focus our attention on those questions that I posed earlier in this report as we seek to become more and more agents of God's love and compassion, working with the Spirit to create a community in which God's transformative power is at work, trusting in God's care for us and for the future life of our parish community.

Respectfully submitted,
Fr. Philip Hobson
Incumbent.