

1. Silent Night project - All across the country on the first Sunday in Advent, we are invited to sing Silent Night and contribute at least a "Toonie" to a special offering. These funds will go to support our Armed Forces Chaplains. Some of you will know the story of a Christmas Eve during World War 1. As the story goes, on this Christmas Eve, the battlefields went silent at one point and voices were heard singing Silent Night. Soldiers on both sides put down their weapons and walked to greet each other, sharing cigarettes and chocolate pieces across the lines. After a time they went back to their places. The night remained silent, but the next day hostilities resumed. The song Silent Night was chosen for this project because we all dream of a time when the nights will be silent around the world, when there will be no more war and when all people may greet one another in peace. We are not there yet! In this present time, our Armed Forces Chaplains try to bring peace of every sort while they work in the midst of violence of many kinds. You are asked to make this project part of your Sunday worship on November 28 and ask people to bring a special offering for this project on that morning. The Synod Office staff will be participating November 29 and the offering from the ordination on November 30 is designated for this project. Diocesan Council will be participating at their meeting on December 3-4.
2. Review of Health Plan and EAP – The clergy medical/dental plan is the most expensive item in the diocesan budget. Diocesan Council wishes to consult with the clergy about the possible ways of reducing the overall cost. Questions for your consideration will be coming from Canon Gordon Redden in the near future. Please participate if you are part of the Medical/Dental Plan or EAP.
3. Following the announcement that Kelly Appleton will be leaving our office at the end of this year, there have been several messages of concern for her and questions about what process may have taken place.

All of you have commented on the ministry and care that Kelly Appleton has exercised over the years and how that has positively impacted the clergy and laity across the diocese. She is truly appreciated and her loss will be felt by all of us, not least of all Bishop Ron and myself!

The Diocesan Council has been working hard to reduce the allotment rate in order to leave more money in parishes for local ministry and mission. We were asked to reduce the cost of Synod office in the budget. Kelly became aware some time ago of the possibility staff cuts and that she offered to be considered. When the staff cuts became a reality, we worked out together with Kelly a mutually agreed ending to her ministry here in the Synod Office. As Kelly has put it, "I've seized a wonderful opportunity to move on and am very much looking forward to exploring what the future has in store for me".

So I want to be clear that Kelly's position is not being terminated due to job performance or anything of that nature.

As a follow up to this loss, we will be reviewing all the Synod Office positions to determine how work can be done and what work will not be done. Diocesan Council is taking its responsibility to keep the budget trim seriously. That means we have to increase the income or continue to cut.

At the most recent Diocesan Council meeting, I was asked why I thought that we still had to keep moving toward an allotment rate of 15%. My response was that I would like to see it at 10%! That could work if every parishioner gave 10%. Then the parish could send 10% to the Diocese and the Diocese could send 10% to the national church and we would all have more money for mission and ministry!

I hope this note clarifies the situation of Kelly leaving. Please take time to express your thanks and best wishes to her in your own way.

4. March 7, 2011 A day with Canon Herbert O'Driscoll on preaching during Lent. Hosted at Trinity Anglican Church, 321 Main Ave., Halifax. More information on registration will be coming soon.
5. Long Term Pastorate Workshop will take place from April 4-7 2011 at the Debert Conference Centre. The workshop will be led by Ed White of the Alban Institute. The cost has yet to be finalized but will be in the range of \$400. Participants can apply to use their continuing education funds toward the cost. (This is a significant saving from the \$818 plus airfare that the workshop cost this fall in Washington State.) This workshop is recommended for anyone who has been in their current position for 5-7 years. If you are trying to decide whether to stay in a prospective long pastorate or to make a move or if you are already committed to staying in a long pastorate and want to ensure that the relationship does not stagnate. Further details are available on the Alban Institute website: "New Vision for the Long Pastorate". On-line registration will soon be available on our website.
6. Quiet time and Renewal of Vows April 7 evening and April 8 morning
7. May 31-June 2, 2011 Vital Church Planting Conference, St. Paul's Church, Bloor St., Toronto. Speaker, Rt. Rev. Stephen Croft, Bishop of Sheffield. More information coming shortly. Part of our approach to evangelism has to be getting comfortable with engaging strangers in conversations about our faith. Lisa Vaughn has attended this conference in the past.
8. Ministry Sunday will take place on January 23. This is an opportunity to highlight the call to ministry for all the baptized. If you would like to arrange for a guest speaker/preacher from the Synod Office staff or from among our students at AST, please contact the Rev. Ron Barkhouse.
9. The Evangelism Conference that took place on Oct. 22-23 was a great success. If you missed it, or if you had a team present but want to review the material, contact the Rev. Carl Fraser for the power-point presentation. Some of the teams that were at the conference expressed an interest in offering the six week "Mission Shaped Intro" program. To do so we need to hold a training day for facilitators. Talk to Carl if you want to follow this up.
10. Advent is a time of anticipation and preparation. Don't create so much work for yourself that you have no time for your own spiritual preparation for the coming of Christ.

Thank you for all your work in building the Kingdom of God where you are.