



Advent & Christmas 2016

Our impact:

- We Build Community
- We Foster Family
- We Are an Economic Catalyst
- We Build a Safer Neighborhood
- We Foster a Vibrant Community

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Diocese Names All Saints' "Pioneering Ministry"

The Executive Council of the Diocese of Toronto has just granted All Saints' funding as one of our Anglican Church's pioneering ministries. This grant recognizes not so much the over forty years of innovation in which All Saints' has endeavored to update its work to meet the changes in its neighborhood. Rather the nearly \$253,000 funding is meant to encourage us to try new things and "be" church in new and innovative ways.

All Saints' has served as an overnight shelter, an open-door daytime drop-in, a place to warm up in winter or to find food when hungry, a parlor where a person can socialize with neighbors and take part in recreation. It has also been

where the needy in the downtown can find help in accessing resources, referrals, or other forms of support.

With this new money All Saints' intends to continue being a church that offers the gospel to those who have stopped going to church because of the hurt they may have once experienced in such settings or perhaps they may never have gone to church before. We will be working to extend our outreach on the street to women involved in the sex trade and with addictions and with the transgendered community.

Our hope is to hire a native elder to work alongside our



At the corner of Dundas and Sherbourne for 142 years

associate priest in a collaboration with a spirituality outside the Anglican tradition — to bring healing to those indigenous people whose relationship with the Church was especially damaged by its legacy of ties to colonialism and to the residential school system.

Peer Worker Starts Self-Help Group

Our harm reduction outreach worker's regular street outreach work (in which she spends several hours in the neighborhood each week) has her handing out essential supplies such as harm reduction kits and warm clothing. She uses these interactions as a starting point to reach women and inform them

about the services and supports available through All Saints' such as the Friday morning drop-in breakfast for sex workers and addicts.

Her recent initiative employs 6 neighborhood women who meet weekly and assemble the harm reduction kits distributed on our

site. This provides much-needed additional income to the members and also creates a space for them to gather and offer mutual support and social connection for each other. They also keep staff informed on current drug use trends and needs in the community.

In addition to social and spiritual value, local faith congregations also contribute economically to the common good of all.

New Study Shows All Saints' Halo

As a measure of its impact within the broader community, All Saints Church – Community Centre was one of two Faith-Works agencies and ten Toronto area faith communities that participated in the HALO Project.

The project studied what these institutions contribute economically to the common good in their neighborhoods. It revealed that for every dollar that All Saints' spends in its operations it creates \$34 worth of service the City does not have

to provide, an astonishing total of \$13,547,274.73 each year.

The study confirmed that local faith communities can be viewed as economic catalysts—that the social, spiritual, and communal value many have viewed churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples represented has as well a dollar value that economists can determine.

That means, faith communities have a 'halo effect,' meaning that their programming makes

an economic contribution to their surrounding communities.

In All Saints' case, the study found that it contributes services that can be valued at \$3.7 million in suicide prevention, \$4.2 million in crime prevention, and \$137,000 in enhancing health as well as other social benefits.

All Saints' Begins Renovations

Aging buildings constantly require repairs and up keep, and All Saints' 144-year-old structure now needs \$150,000 of re-roofing. Work will start this fall on patching, and we hope to replace the entire north roof next year.

The wonderful contrasting brickwork of the church itself has been called "the outstanding example in Canada of High Vic-

torian polychrome brickwork" by a past curator of the Royal Ontario Museum. Yet this polychromy that the Victorians called "streaky bacon" style gets assaulted each year by car pollution and road salt splashed from the street.

This summer the City of Toronto committed a grant of matched funding for 50% of up to \$101,500 for masonry work.

We must raise our share of this funding in order to complete this work by July 31, 2018, to fulfill the terms of the grant.

Thus we will be looking to our donors in the coming months to help us save this beloved and nationally important piece of architecture. The building's survival is even more important because of the shelter it now provides to the homeless and destitute of Toronto's inner city.



The deterioration of the roof

Vegetable Garden Grows Once More

A most remarkable example of stewardship from the local congregation began in the spring of 2015. Some members of the All Saints', Sherbourne congregation created a vegetable garden in the church parking lot. The garden at All Saints' has flourished, and now for a second season has provided food for all the Drop-Ins as well as take-

outs for the Sunday community. These local gardeners obtained the donations of bags of earth and the seeds, did the landscaping, the sowing, the weeding, and the watering.

Some people feared the garden would be vandalized or looted, but instead people in the neighbourhood have kept an eye on it at nights and on weekends.

Passersby drop by to admire it or they join worshippers when Sunday services take place there in the summer. This year these volunteers have tidied up and planted another corner of the parking lot in addition to the main garden.



Lee, Siheed, and Aldo cultivate new growth

“Help me learn to read!”

Noticing that some of the women at the Thursday afternoon drop-in were opting not to play Bingo or playing with the help of a partner, the Rev. Joanna Manning discreetly inquired if they were having trouble reading. Asking if they would like help to read better, they responded, “Oh, yes please.”

Supplied with adult literacy materials from Frontier College, the retired teacher, Joanna, began a class once a week on Thursday morning with one student. Halfway through the

first book in the literacy series, the student’s greatest ambition now is to be one of the readers in church on Sundays to recite the Bible to the worshipers. Three more women have since asked to be included in the literacy program.

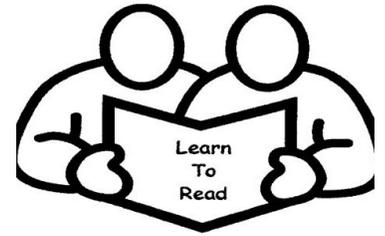
All of them have had various degrees of difficulties in their lives which played havoc with their schooling. None of has the confidence to register in a large class of students.

But they are very proud that

now they have an individual binder, and homework exercises to work on at home.

“I’m going to the library this weekend,” says one proudly, “and I’ll take my binder and do my homework there.”

For more information or to volunteer as a reading coach, contact Rev Joanna at 416 559 1244.



Redevelopment in Toronto’s Downtown East

All Saints’ Church is located in a rapidly changing hub of downtown Toronto. The City of Toronto has made this district a focus of several recent studies about how to shape growth in the area around Sherbourne and Dundas Streets.

Central to these concerns of city officials is the revitalization of George Street, just two blocks west of All Saints’, and the rede-

velopment there of Seaton House, one of the City’s oldest and largest overnight shelters.

The City plans to drastically reduce the 600 beds at Seaton House and to spread them into four new shelter sites in other parts of Toronto. Such sharp reduction in the number of available beds will scatter the homeless from the centrally located services like All Saints’

drop-ins that support them within walking distance of where they shelter.

Current members of All Saints’ congregation reside at Seaton House and at the neighboring Schoolhouse. The City’s plan means uncertainty for them. It would uproot them from their current familiar home. It also jeopardizes their networks of friends and that they have long known.

Moving away to far-away facilities in the suburbs means distance from other supports like health care and counsellors.

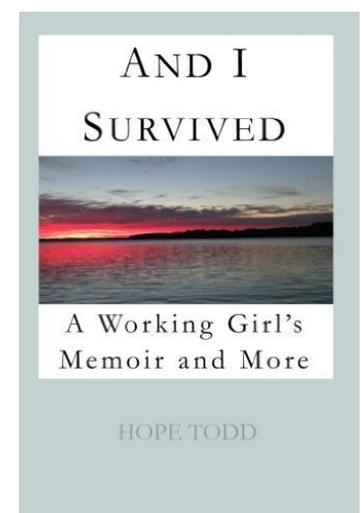
Book Launch Held in the Church

A former student placement, Hope Todd, who worked at All Saints’ Drop-in, has published her new book, “And I Survived—A Working Girl’s Memoir and More”. Its editing was done by our former associate priest, Kate Merriman. It is Hope’s personal account of her life in the sex trade and provides valuable insight into life lived on the

streets of downtown cities.

Moreover, Hope’s survived a near-lethal stroke and aneurysm. Her finding a trusted spiritual guide and resuming her studies, and establishing a loving relationship she believes to have happened as God’s purpose for her, and this is the cause for her to write this book.

It can be purchased through Amazon Books and is available in paperback and Kindle editions.



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We are All Saints.

We're on the Web! See our new site!

allsaintstoronto.com

All Saints is organizing a special service on December 6 2016: a service of remembrance for women who have died by violence, and of empowerment for all of us to continue the struggle for justice and equality. There will be a smudging ceremony, a chance for reflection and remembrance, a native women's drumming circle and some communal singing. Neighbourhood organizations will have displays and information available, and we will end with a light lunch.

PLEASE JOIN US FROM 11.00am - 1.00pm on
TUESDAY DECEMBER 6



From the Least to the Most

The widows in first-century Palestine were often among the poorest, most vulnerable, and voiceless in society with no security, no claim on property, no protection, and few resources. They were like those who come to All Saints' drop-ins and who are members of our congregation.

When Jesus and his disciples sat near the Temple and saw an impoverished widow put in two coins that may seem not worth much, Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth but she, from her poverty, has contributed all

she had, her whole livelihood." (Mark 12:21-24)

On the one hand, Jesus contrasts favorably the portion of her income the woman gives to that of the wealthy, who gave more money but a much smaller percentage of their total income than the woman gave.

But, as well, just before this scene in the temple, Jesus had been warning the disciples to be wary of those who use their position and wealth only for themselves—the influential of the religious establishment, who "recite lengthy prayers" as a pretext to fleece the poor and the vulnerable

What Jesus observed in his day

continues to challenge us at All Saints' today. Those with the least continue to give more, by percentage of their resources, than we who are far wealthier!

At the same time, the gifts of the penniless remain largely unrecognized in our wider society. Yet here at All Saints' their actions and Jesus' words help us to see better the prejudices that produce such unfairness in our society and our faith communities.

We staff people and volunteers from outside this area constantly find ourselves amazed by the creativity and caring that residents here have for this neighborhood and for each other.

Christmas is "the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on their journeys," Charles Dickens wrote in "The Christmas Carol."

Since my return to All Saints' six months ago, I have come to be more and more appreciative of and thankful for the gifts of those most needy who yet contribute so much to me and to others—not just at Christmas but throughout all year.

-The Rev. Canon Brad Lennon