



The 178<sup>th</sup> Annual Vestry (General) Meeting  
St. Paul's Bloor Street (Anglican Church)  
October 27, 2020

## Annual Ministry (Vestry) Reports

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## Rector's Message

Dear Friends;

This is my 23<sup>rd</sup> and final Annual Rector's Report to the Congregation of St. Paul's Bloor Street. You will see in the following pages a remarkable testament to God's relentless faithfulness and the response of God's people here at St. Paul's. All the reports have two parts: BC—Before COVID and AC—Adapting to COVID. We can only be grateful in response to the tremendous ministry undertaken in challenging circumstances.

This past summer we had a series titled "Life in Transit" which built upon the narrative of the Exodus. God's people are supernaturally released from slavery and promised a better future, the Promised Land. We know of course the journey was a meandering, chaotic, challenging trudge through the wilderness. The people naturally wanted to go back to what they knew. The living God however, kept calling them forward with signs, wonders and miracles as signposts of his incredible faithfulness.

What an appropriate and relevant narrative for us in 2020. We too have been supernaturally released from slavery by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We too are beckoned to follow Jesus on this side of eternity in what seems like a meandering, chaotic, challenging trudge through the wilderness. Yet, God keeps calling us forward with signs, wonders and miracles of his incredible faithfulness. Hence, we can live as a people of hope in a world that desperately needs it.

Since January 1, 1998 I have been on that journey with you. I am no Moses, but I have had the great privilege of serving in a particular leadership capacity that has allowed me to observe signs, wonders and miracles. As I begin to step back from active ministry at St. Paul's, allow me to point to a few of these things.

The first is that, in spite of many challenges over the years—many good, some not—God is faithful. His presence and promises have never wavered. When Jesus said he would be with his followers to the end of the age (Matthew 28: 20) he has revealed that truth to us, time and time again.

This was true not only in my life but also in hundreds, perhaps thousands of lives over the years. I have had a uniquely privileged position of opportunity and trust to journey with many of you at important and critical milestones in life and death. No matter what we encounter in life, the good news of Jesus always prevails.

A second observation is over my tenure I have seen the evolution of a leadership cadre that have first been humble followers of Jesus, called to "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind*"; and,

*'Love your neighbour as yourself.'*" (Luke 10: 27). Only then did they assume an effective gospel-centred leadership. Through the years, individuals sensed a willingness to serve and that calling was affirmed by the community of St. Paul's Bloor Street. This was both for ministry leadership through Ordination that has impacted the wider Church in profound ways, as well as many ministries of service through St. Paul's. These included Children's Ministry, Youth, Young Adults, Families, Worship, Connect Groups, Senior Care, Finance, Facility Care, Pastoral Care, Community Engagement...the list goes on. This exceptional leadership also includes our wonderful staff who serve in powerful and unseen ways. What a testimony to God's faithfulness and your response. This Church has grasped a fundamental stewardship principle—you are blessed to be a blessing.

A third observation also concerns a stewardship-centric perspective. St. Paul's has instinctively understood an aspect of God's calling for us is to be a ministry incubator, where seeking to be faithful is much more important than success or failure, renowned programming or doing things 'right'. To that end, this Parish has taken seriously the reality of our physical footprint, what I often refer to as our 'container of ministry'. I think of the massive renovation project we called the 'Nehemiah Project' that took eight years and millions of dollars to ensure the container we were entrusted with was maintained for dynamic ministry well into the future. I also think of the current Sight and Sound Project that has saved our facilities from a catastrophic event. It extends to our finances as the Parish supported our Above & Beyond Capital campaign to pay off all of our debt so future generations would experience ministry driven by the love of Jesus and not financial hardship.

Finally, my last observation. I am often asked how we undertake Gospel ministry in such a complex church existing in a complex and transient world. I always respond by telling others it was not Seminary that prepared me but rather the Fire Academy. There, firefighters are taught unchanging fundamentals so that their response becomes instinctive. Everything becomes the application of those fundamentals. When ministry was tough over the years, we were reminded that even though forms and methods of worship, differing platforms of communication and how to effectively love our neighbours was changing; the good news of the Gospel was *the same yesterday, today and forever* (Hebrews 13: 8). St. Paul's is always seeking to focus on the core of the Gospel. Everything else is application.

As only the 10<sup>th</sup> Rector in 178 years of service to the City, the nation, and the world; St. Paul's is truly unique. With long incumbencies the norm, it tells us that being the Rector is in ministry terms, a life's work. That makes me acutely aware that I am a blessed man. I am reminded of the familiar expression by Sir Isaac Newton in 1675: "*If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants*". All of the thousands and thousands of seeking, praying, faithful, mourning, hopeful, longing for people who have gone before have positioned St. Paul's not simply with a rich history, but leaving a robust legacy.

Rather, the ministry of this moment is about laying a foundation for the future, paying it spiritually forward.

May the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and keep you and make his face shine upon you. I pray this in the name of God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Yours in Christ,



(The Rev. Canon Dr.) Barry Parker  
Rector

## Board of Trustees

*"Don't worry about anything; instead pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."*

*Philippians 4: 6-7*

As we reflect back over the last year, we cannot help but be grateful to God for providing St. Paul's Bloor Street (SPBS) with his grace and blessings. Despite the events of COVID-19 that have, and are still affecting our lives in many ways – the Board has been particularly impressed by the continuity and resilience demonstrated by the Rector, the lead team, and every staff member through all the challenges associated with this pandemic. Our sincere thanks go to everyone for their excellent work in pivoting our church and its services to provide comfort under these trying circumstances.

In 2019, the Board bid farewell to Rick Uy who served faithfully for several years while welcoming Winville Larcher as the newly appointed Trustee. The 2019-2020 Board consisted of Samuel Ah-kim (Rector's Warden), Sarah Brandon (People's Warden), Susan So (Treasurer), Beng Wee, Joy Fitzgibbon, Mark Hemingway, Blythe McKinlay and Winville Larcher.

The Board ushered in 2020 with the launch of a new vision for St Paul's: *A church made alive by the power of the Holy Spirit, a city made new by the gospel of Jesus Christ and a people made whole by the grace of God.* Our website and social media channels



were also revamped along with new Connection Cards, Welcome Booklets, Community News and the What's Happening!

On February 23, 2020, the Churchwardens shared a letter from the Bishop of Toronto, The Rt. Rev. Andrew J. Asbil, to the congregation at the three services proclaiming the intentions of Rector Barry Parker to retire after leading, growing, and transforming SPBS during his 22-year incumbency. The news was greeted with sadness but also with a sense of deep gratitude to Barry and Cathy. Following the announcement and under the authority of the Diocesan Bishop, a Parish Selection Committee (PSC) was formed and the Board approved its appointed members and chairperson, Joy Fitzgibbon.

When COVID-19 prompted a 'lockdown' in Ontario in March 2020, in accordance with the directives sent from the Diocese, all services at SPBS were suspended until further notice. Instead of the physical gathering, our Church pivoted to providing worship services online as well as Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry and a Compline midweek service to name a few.

Health Ministries also turned to an online presence. DivorceCare and GriefShare both experienced a high rate of enrollment.

care@stpaulsbloor.org was established as a way for people to offer or ask for assistance, and the clergy team called everyone on the parish roll in an effort to connect with them.

With events and catering immediately cancelled for the remainder of the year, SPBS reached out to two local community shelters, Sanctuary and Redeemer, to offer up our catering services to people who are marginalized. Over 225 meals have been prepared weekly since April and volunteers have been delivering them to the shelters.

Thanks to the creative use of technology and the efforts of the clergy, staff and volunteers, St. Paul's has remained a source of hope and encouragement to the Parish as well as those whom we seek to serve, both in our local community and around the world.

During these unprecedented times, the Board has continued to meet regularly and support the Parish virtually from a strategic perspective on key projects and initiatives.

Among these, is the "Sight and Sound" project, which includes the full rewiring of the nearly 110-year-old electrical system in the main sanctuary. This much needed upgrade of lighting, audio and video systems will ensure our worship space surpasses today's safety and energy standards for better visibility, efficiency, and future sustainability. The project led by the Rev. Steve Shaw is now in full swing, after members of vestry voted by a large majority for its implementation during a special vestry meeting held virtually by Zoom on June 22, 2020.



Another major initiative is the ongoing selection process for the next Rector of St. Paul's. Parishioners were given the opportunity to submit their input, ideas, and feedback by responding to an electronic survey before the start of the process. Thanks to our executive search partner, and in spite of the pandemic, members of the Parish Selection Committee have been engaged in regular meetings to assess and deliberate on candidates from the worldwide Anglican Communion. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the committee has made great progress with the support of our Diocesan Bishop Andrew Asbil, and we look forward to sharing an update in the coming months.

In closing, we would like to commend the work and energy that has been put in by our Director of Operations, Ingrid Suld and her staff to prepare our church for the recent re-opening of public worship. In order for parishioners to physically gather in the safest and most effective way possible, they've had to ensure all protocols are in place and fully adhered to under the guidelines provided by the Diocese. We rejoice the first onsite service took place safely on September 13, 2020 with approximately 30 people in attendance.

2020 has been a challenging time for all of us. As trustees, it continues to be an honour and privilege to serve St. Paul's. Now, more than ever, we are looking forward to what the Lord has in store for our church, our city and for each one of us. He alone knows and we trust Him with His ministry of grace and hope.

Respectfully submitted by  
Samuel Ah-kim, Rector's Warden and Sarah Brandon, People's Warden  
On behalf of the Board of Trustees

**\*Edit: Due to a formatting and editing issue, we did not record that Susan So stepped down as our Treasurer in February 2020. St. Paul's is grateful to Susan and her exceptional commitment to the financial stewardship of St. Paul's. We are also grateful that one of our Trustees, Beng Wee, stepped in to be our Parish Treasurer.**

## Chancel Guild

The Chancel Guild supports the Ministry by ensuring the appropriate accoutrements for each service are prepared. Activities are customised according to the needs of each specific service, taking direction from the Lead Team and their collective knowledge. Duties were performed for all three Sunday services and the Tuesday service, as well as special services. Our members were able to quickly adapt preparation procedures requested by the Bishop as COVID-19 began to spread at the beginning of the year.



Thanks to the generous donations of parishioners, the Guild is fortunate to be able to fulfil its ministry in preparing floral tributes for the High Table, Chapels and Font. The many donations allowed us to beautify the Sanctuary with a wonderful array of seasonal flowers and plants at Thanksgiving and Christmas. We are blessed with dedicated volunteers who contribute both time and expertise to ensure flowers meet the expectations of donors as appropriate tributes. Due to the closing of the facility and having no Easter flower donations, this year ended in a deficit financial position. However, we were blessed to receive generous donations from Chancel Guild members which enabled us to purchase and prepare two artificial flower arrangements to help beautify our online ministry.

Members of the Chancel Guild are key participants in the Annual Christmas Bake Sale, which contributes to the Rector's Discretionary Fund. The 2019 event was a great success, and we received many donations and wonderful support from the Church community.

We were pleased to welcome two new members to the Guild this year and are continually seeking new members.

The Guild continues to streamline its internal operations and push towards a fully electronic environment. We have successfully updated all of our procedures but expect revisions as the Church returns to in-person worship services.

As the facility closed in March due to the pandemic, the Guild has been inactive. It is unclear how the role of the Chancel Guild Ministry will evolve - which it surely will - as the Church defines its "new reality". In addition, after such a long absence from serving and given the demographic of the majority of our members, it is unclear how many will return to serve.

Pamela Wilson  
President of St. Paul's Chancel Guild

## Children's Ministry

*"In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling."*  
*Exodus 15:13*

This past year of ministry was truly one with 2 parts. From July 2019 until February 2020 we offered ministry to children and their families through in-person gatherings primarily on Sunday mornings. Beginning in March 2020 we entered a new time of ministry through Sunday morning video-based connections.

Our goal to serve the needs of the children and families of our community has not changed, but with the spread of COVID-19 our methods had to be different.



Our Nursery was under the leadership of new staff Sally Hurkmans and Rafaela Cardona Rivera beginning in September 2019. We are very grateful for Christina Arunasalam who resigned after 5 years of caring service in our Nursery. Before COVID, we were continuing to try and improve our Nursery environment and program to bless the young children in our care.

In 2019, we presented our 'Big Stories from the Old Testament' summer program. We kicked off the fall with 'Welcome Sunday', a fun day with carnival games and glitter tattoos. Our Sunday morning ministry continued in its same pattern with play and a Large Group time followed by classroom teaching. We used the HeartShaper curriculum for our JK to Grade 5 groups, and the Beginner's Bible for our 3-year-olds.

We hosted our second 'Family Fun Night' in October welcoming children and youth of all ages, some dressed-up in wonderful costumes!

At the Christmas Pageant in early December, children and families gathered to tell the story of Jesus' birth. We enjoyed a delicious meal together afterward hosted by great group of Youth volunteers.

On March 29<sup>th</sup> we started a video-based Sunday morning ministry using the Zoom platform. We have had fun and many challenges adapting to this new form of teaching and connection. Linda Deramaix and Sally Hurkmans have been faithful collaborators as we have prepared our weekly plans. We started with the Easter Season, offered a series entitled 'Jesus came to...', then taught the 'Fruit of the Spirit' alongside the online worship teaching.

Children's Ministry Zooms have reached about 15-25 families each week and have included some of our Children's Ministry volunteers. We have had technical problems and learnings, presented fun and creative teaching videos, shared a variety of music, and had some beautiful and prayerful moments together. We miss the families who are not comfortable with this type of gathering, and welcoming new and visiting families.

I am grateful for our 'Parents - St. Paul's Bloor Street' Facebook page. We have almost 100 members who can stay up to date with news and connections about Children's and Youth Ministry. It has provided a safe space to share our Zoom links and ministry happenings.

As we reflect back on a year of challenge and change, we give thanks for our faithful God who leads and guides us in every season.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet Earle  
Children's Minister

## Engagement Ministries

**Alpha:** In the fall of 2019 we launched the Alpha 108 Challenge based on Acts 1:8 which challenged parishioners to invite 108 people to try Alpha. Our campaign was successful, and our goal was exceeded as a record breaking 130 people tried Alpha last fall! As well, approximately 20 volunteers were trained to be table hosts and helpers. At the end of September, I attended a 3-day gathering of church leaders from around the world at Holy Trinity Brompton (UK) called the “Alpha Collective.” Since then I have joined a group of GTA pastors called the Alpha Leadership Circle that meets regularly to discuss strategies and best practices for running Alpha. Finally, in May-June of 2020 we ran our very first Online Alpha which was attended by over 40 participants, hosts, and helpers.

**ESL Cafe:** In the fall of 2019 and in early 2020, the ESL Cafe was achieving record breaking attendance. Every Monday night 130-160 students would attend the cafe along with numerous volunteer table leaders. This proved to be an amazing missional opportunity as many participants were invited to attend Alpha, ESL Bible Studies, or Sunday services as a result. Unfortunately, COVID-19 ended the ESL Cafe in March of 2020. We look forward to reopening and rebuilding this great outreach opportunity.

**Advent Ask:** This year the Advent Ask hit a new record as over \$70,000 was raised to support the work of Opportunity International Canada. OI Canada is a microfinance charity that provides access to savings, small business loans, insurance and training to 17.5 million people working their way out of poverty around the world. Our 2019 campaign funds were distributed as microloans to female entrepreneurs living in Ghana.

**Praise and Worship Nights:** During the fall of 2019 and early 2020 we began a series of worship/prayer nights to support our new vision. These nights were filled with lay-led prayers, vision-focussed intercessions, and spirit-led worship. We look forward to resuming these refreshing times of worship when we can do so safely.

**Vision:** Throughout 2019 a great deal of dreaming, thinking, and planning resulted in SPBS’s new Vision and Values. In January of 2020 we were excited to unveil and celebrate the new “Made For More” vision through a preaching series as well as a special Vision Launch Celebration which included music, food, drinks, photos and merchandise. COVID-19 interrupted this momentum, but hopefully 2020-2021 will give us further opportunity to explore how SPBS is Made for More.

**Growing Young:** In the fall of 2019 we read through the Growing Young research from the Fuller Youth Institute. Growing Young provided us with a workable framework for better integrating youth and young adults into the life of SPBS. On February 4<sup>th</sup> an initial task-force comprised of leaders, clergy, and laity met to begin exploring how SPBS could adopt and pursue some of the goals and strategies of Growing Young.



**Coldest Night of the Year:** On February 22<sup>nd</sup> St. Paul's hosted the CNOY gathering in support of Yonge Street Mission. While SPBS has participated in the CNOY walk in years past, this represented the first time we hosted the event. With the help of many volunteers from SPBS it was a great success. Hopefully we can continue to host this event in the future.

**Worship:** In December, SPBS hired a new Bridge Music Lead - Terry Posthumus. We are blessed by Terry's leadership, commitment, and creativity in his new role. He has also collaborated with Ian Koiter and Douglas Romanow in both our Prayer and Praise nights, and in our online service. Terry's second career as a professional musician and animator provides him with a unique gift set ideally suited for our growing online presence.

**Online Ministry:** In response to COVID-19, we launched our first complete online worship service which on Palm Sunday. Multiple staff and lay people contribute every week to the various aspects of this online ministry - a true group effort. In the pursuit of excellence for this new ministry, Douglas Romanow was hired as our Creative Arts Producer and Alexander Stevens as the Video Editor. As well, the Youth Media Production Group (YMPG) established the summer of 2020, is injecting new ideas and energy into our weekly production.

(The Rev.) Robert Hurkmans  
Director of Engagement

## Formation Ministries

**Connect Groups:** In September 2019 our small group ministry was relaunched and rebranded as Connect Groups. Throughout 2019 and early 2020 we had approximately 250 active members in 19 groups, with four new groups launched in Fall 2019. The majority of these groups have continued to meet remotely over Zoom during COVID-19, providing a place of community and connection, a place to be cared for and to pray for one another, and a place to continue to grow as disciples and Jesus-followers. In September 2019 we launched RightNow Media, an online platform with a wide range of video & digital study materials, training resources, and other catechetical content. We are looking forward to increasing our use of RightNow Media as a platform to host our online sermons and other SPBS videos.

**Biblical Literacy:** We recognize Biblical knowledge is fundamental to growth in understanding and a relationship with God. Thanks to a very generous donation from a member who has a passion for getting bibles into the hands of people, we have been able to distribute many NIV Study Bibles (the translation we use for Sunday worship). We handed out two Bibles the day before we closed our doors due to COVID-19!



**Compline:** Due to gathered worship being cancelled in March, we began offering a weekly recorded service of Compline (Night Prayer), available on Wednesday evenings at 7 pm on YouTube and Facebook. This quiet and meditative service has continually attracted between 15-20 people “live” each week, with some weeks gathering up to 90 views total. We anticipate this service of prayer continuing to be offered online through the rest of 2020.

**Outreach During COVID-19:** During COVID our chef, Omari Alonzo, has been cooking 225 individual meals weekly which are delivered by SPBS volunteers to our ministry partners: Sanctuary Ministries Toronto, and the Church of the Redeemer’s meal program “The Common Table”. We are grateful to all volunteers, Omari, and all who continue to contribute financially to God’s work through SPBS, enabling this vital ministry.

We have also had parishioners making and donating cloth masks for pick-up, as well as parishioners who have volunteered to do grocery runs and other errands for those who are shut-in or in isolation. Many thanks to all who have been “loving your neighbours” so well in these ways!

(The Rev.) Karen Isaacs  
Director of Formation

## Health Ministry

*“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.”*

Galatians 6:2

This annual report is divided into two roadmaps: normal and new reality. Thanks to the ongoing leadership of a strong team of Health Ministry Facilitators, we were able to continue our primary outreach series to hurting communities: people going through the pain of separation and divorce and people suffering the death of a loved one. The facilitators are: Kate Lambert Prichard, Karen Kennedy, Alana Hoeben, Vanessa Curci, Lisa Milligan, Rebecca Wilson, and Pallavi Armoogum.

Health Ministry activities since fall 2019 included:

- DivorceCare group #42 (fall 2019) - 8 people enrolled.
- DivorceCare group #43 (winter 2020) - 7 people enrolled
- GriefShare group #18 ( fall 2019) - 9 people enrolled.
- GriefShare group #19 (winter 2020) - 11 people enrolled.
- GriefShare group #20 started in March 2020 and was cancelled due to COVID-19. 4 people had enrolled.

We transitioned to a new online offering, due to COVID-19 restrictions and the facility closure. Church Initiative offers the DivorceCare and GriefShare programs and put the



content online. They have offered many webinars for group leaders and all the facilitators are enrolled with them. All health ministry facilitators are now virtual group leaders via Zoom. We continue to screen participants and enrol them in the fall 2020 series.

As anticipated, the demand for the DivorceCare series has doubled. We also wanted smaller groups on Zoom and two group leaders led each series, which kept 6 group leaders busy from May to August 2020. DivorceCare groups #44 and #45 ran concurrently to meet the need. GriefShare group #21 had 5 participants May to August. They came from as far away as Saskatoon. A survey was completed by 7 participants and much appreciation was expressed for the series content and the support. One woman reported in DivorceCare that her marriage was restored!

On August 22, 2020 there was a Professional Development Workshop for the health ministry facilitators. The workshop leader, Purple Yip, is a respected Christian Registered Psychotherapist with extensive experience in mental health issues and leading related workshops.

I continue to assist parishioners as the parish nurse, but the numbers are fewer. Contact has been by telephone, email and rarely in person. I have also been a member of the Bishop's Committee for Healing Ministries in the Diocese of Toronto since March 2019.

With the unswerving support of St. Paul's and the leadership provided by the Health Ministry facilitators and the Rev. Karen Isaacs, we expect to continue to reach out to the community. We strive to bring the gospel message of hope and recovery to those seeking the church's response in their time of need.

Nancy Truscott  
Parish Nurse

## **Music Ministry**

### **11 am Music Ministry**

This has certainly been a year of two halves: the time before, and the time throughout the pandemic. In particular, the restrictions imposed to reduce the spread of the virus by singing have limited our music. However, despite the binary nature of the year – glorious music in the first half, very little in the second – there are still some common threads: the wonderful, supportive community at St. Paul's; guidance and care offered by staff, and above all God's presence with us at all times, through the music and silence of our lives.

Fall 2019 started with beautiful singing from the choir stalls. Perhaps this is subjective, but I believe the singing has been as lovely as I have known at my time at St. Paul's. We have been blessed by numerous dedicated singers travelling through every available traffic

and weather condition every Thursday and Sunday. We are thankful for their gifts of time and music in the service of worship. We have been delighted to welcome several new singers including Gabrielle Turgeon, the scholarship recipient made possible by the kindness of the Wilby family. We also welcomed our youngest member of the choir community, baby Nicholas, born to Anna Kwiatkowska. Anna sang an unforgettably beautiful *Mary's Magnificat* days before Nicholas was born! We sadly said goodbye to Georgia Lin who pursued her studies in Washington. Our profuse thanks are offered to both Gerald Loo for his wonderful organ playing, and Craig Truscott, our president, who has shepherded the choir with his unfailing kindness, grace and humour. We are very blessed.

The choice of music for worship is an ever-evolving task, as our demographics constantly change. We have sung several new hymns which have become part of our worship on a regular basis. We literally brought our music onto the streets when the choir sang for 'Open Streets' in September. A few months later in December our singers sang carols at Grace Hospital, kindly organised by our Parish Nurse, Nancy Truscott.

The monthly organ concerts were well-attended. We are grateful to both the talented performers and the careful fiscal management of the trustees which allows the organ to remain in good condition.

Although the months following the pandemic have been difficult, the choir has met online twice a week: one social meeting and one music practice. To be able to meet virtually has been a gift and support for those who have been able to attend. Soloists have provided music for the online worship, for which our thanks are due to both the singers and the talents of Douglas Romanow who has recorded the musical selections. The individual voices of the choir have also been assembled for a video which I hope we can release in the upcoming months.

Music needs silence to be fully felt. It seems this malevolent pandemic has temporarily silenced our music, or at least diminished it. However I am confident though this has surely been a most difficult time, beautiful music will once again break through the silence presently felt under the rafters of St. Paul's, and in doing so it will be even more special, more keenly felt, and more beautiful than before the pandemic.

In the meantime, my many thanks to all with whom I have the privilege of serving.

Thomas Bell  
Music Director



### **9:30 am (Bridge) Music Ministry**

COVID-19 has had a tremendous impact on the Bridge Worship Team/Ministry. The team has been so impressive during these trying times. The willingness to participate (where/when available) and the grace exhibited is impressive and inspiring, to say the least. I'm so thankful for the time, efforts, skills, and talents demonstrated over the past eight months. This is an incredible team.

Of course, the ministry had to pivot very quickly mid-March, but I am glad to report we have been able to submit a new piece of music for the Sunday morning online services every week. It is my hope the worship has been authentic and engaging, as we have sought to serve the St. Paul's community during the pandemic.

It has been a pleasure to work with the Creative Team headed up by Douglas Romanow. Over the weeks that have transpired, we have developed new and efficient ways to develop, create, produce, and present worship music for our online service.

It has been a delight to work with the Bridge Team, and in the short time leading up to the pandemic, we began to develop some new connections and relationships. Looking forward, we will continue to develop new artistic and personal connections as we expand the ministry to reflect the diverse pool of talent that's representative of the St. Paul's community.

The predominant goal of the Bridge Worship Ministry is to create engaging and authentic worship that is closely tied to the themes and series being shared during the Bridge service. We aim to do this by facilitating congregational worship through songs that reinforce the lessons taught through scripture on any given week.

I speak for the team when I say we look forward to the days ahead as we grow in personnel and skill. It is a pleasure and privilege to serve the St. Paul's community.

Terry Posthumus  
Bridge Music Lead

### **Operations**

Looking at past year's Vestry reports, it's very easy to say this last year has been one like no other experienced by the Operations team. It has been nothing short of a clear example of God's continued grace and faithfulness, and ranges from many staffing changes to completing the year working remotely due to a worldwide pandemic.



In July 2019, office staffing changes began. Grace Peter resigned as Accountant as she planned her future wedding and move to the U.S.A. Hananeel Robertson also resigned her position as Administrative Assistant to pursue an opportunity in Edmonton, Alberta.

August saw Emmanuel Tsang join as the new Administrative Assistant. Emmanuel has been a wonderful addition to the team and is responsible for creating the sermon series images, *What's Happening!* Newsletter as well as providing administrative support.

Another change that took place in August was Jacqui Compayre, our Executive Assistant and Volunteer Coordinator left to pursue an opportunity in the area of Human Resources. Victor Short was hired to fulfill the vacancy left by Jacqui's departure.

The Rector also appointed Ingrid Suld as Director of Operations on August 1<sup>st</sup>. Ingrid is responsible for oversight of all the operational functions of St. Paul's including property, finance, administration, information technology, communications, events and rentals.

In September, Mitch Orsatti – Events Manager, started his parental leave. Jasmine MacDuff was hired on contract to oversee all events at St. Paul's.

The fall progressed with a vacancy in the finance area and a slight re-organization of the office staff. Hilary Wilson was promoted to Sr. Administrative Assistant and provides support to both the Rector and Director of Operations, as well as Sunday services. Hilary's excellent administrative and organizational skills have been a huge blessing to the ministry. Victor Short remained Volunteer Coordinator and took on the duties of managing reception.

From July until April, the Finance Manager position was vacant. During this time, Patricia Budimir – Financial Assistant, maintained all the financial functions of St. Paul's. We are very thankful for her perseverance during a difficult period. In April, Shorna James joined the team as the Finance Manager. Shorna brings with her many skills and experience that are of benefit to St. Paul's.

In the midst of all the staffing changes, ministry continued forward.

Over the year, a facility such as St. Paul's requires numerous repairs and upkeep to be a container of ministry for the community. This year there were many broken windows and skylights and roofing repairs done. The security system was upgraded and deteriorating thresholds for the Atrium doors had to be replaced. Caring for our property is a huge responsibility. Noel Kane, our Property Manager oversees all property related concerns as well as our facility staff team. This includes Frank Varela (Verger/Assistant Manager), Diana Rubi (Head Custodian), James Finnerty (Services Sound Tech) as well as our Custodial team; John De Oliveria, Doug Henry, Mai Kipper, Alex Lawrence, Alex Rubi and Moira Leonard.



December saw the launch of the new website, [www.stpaulsbloor.org](http://www.stpaulsbloor.org). Clivane Previlon – Communications Manager, worked tirelessly to share the ministry with the broader community. Clivane is also responsible for all social media and signage ensuring we are doing our best to reach people and invite them to St. Paul's. With the launch of the new website, the branding for St. Paul's was also refreshed and launched with the new vision and mission in January. Plans were also made to create a new "Welcome!" video for our new website.

In March, when the COVID-19 pandemic brought about the lockdown ordered by Bishop Andrew Asbil, the Operations team had to quickly pivot in order to continue supporting the ministries; online sermons were produced; remote working methods were established. Plans had to change but the ministry of St. Paul's Bloor Street continued.

Unfortunately, along with the stoppage of onsite worship gatherings, it also brought a halt to the event rentals and catering. This resulted in the elimination of two positions from the Operations team. The hope is these positions will be required again in the coming year.

As this ministry year was completed, the Operations team had been diligently working from home to support the ongoing ministries with their skills in graphic design, administration, financial acumen and communications. So much more happens behind the scenes daily than what can be described in this report, especially when working through a worldwide pandemic. It is an outstanding Operations staff team that takes care of all the details and it is a privilege to serve with them.

Our Operations team, along with the property personnel mentioned above, include: Hilary Wilson (Sr. Administrative Assistant), Clivane Previlon (Communications Manager), Emmanuel Tsang (Administrative Assistant), Shorna James (Accountant), Patricia Budimir (Financial Assistant), and Omari Alonzo (Executive Chef).

The 2019-2020 ministry year began with many transitions. As the next ministry year begins amidst the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic there is no doubt there will also be many more transitions to come. However, we are trusting God to do *"The Lord's Work in the Lord's Way"* (Charles Spurgeon).

Ingrid Suld  
Director of Operations

## Sight & Sound Project

The Sight and Sound project for St. Paul's sanctuary was approved by our Special Vestry on June 22, 2020 with a budget of \$2.64 million and is now well under way. Prior approval was received by Diocesan Council to undertake this critical project for a budget not exceeding \$3.0 million.

This work was initiated in the sanctuary because of the deteriorating condition of the wiring and electrical fixtures. These safety and fire hazards did not meet current minimum safety standards. Some of the wiring was in fact believed to be original, over 105 years old. As the planning proceeded it became obvious this was the time to fully upgrade our lighting, electrical and sound systems. This is also intended to lessen our environmental footprint with more efficient wiring, lighting and sound.

The project underway includes now:

- The complete rewiring of the narthex, nave, and sanctuary of St. Paul's.
- New energy efficient lighting fixtures for the church.
- An enhanced new audio system.
- Putting in place the infrastructure for future video screens and cameras.

When planning began over 18 months ago, it was assumed the church would continue to be used for Sunday worship, albeit in a limited way, during the repair work. The COVID-19 pandemic and the restricted access mandated by the government meant the entire facility had to be closed, thus allowing the contractors to continue their work without having to clean up each weekend for a service saving us time and money. This also has the potential to shave four months off of the original timeline.

Further, when the planning began the need for recording and streaming services with a distinctive online presence, was not seen as significant. The pandemic has changed that, and so audio/video infrastructure is now being put in place to allow live streaming and video recording of services and events. This will only enhance the use of our beautiful sanctuary for more city-wide impact. It is still to be determined how much additional equipment such as cameras and projectors can be installed within the current budget.

The demolition work is complete, and it has been noted some of the wiring and fixtures were in much worse condition than originally thought, confirming the essential nature of this project. At the time of this writing, work is moving ahead on time and on budget. However, as we have known for years at St. Paul's, unexpected challenges are always likely with an old heritage building. The construction team is working hard to mitigate any unforeseen issues.

(The Rev.) Steve Shaw  
Project Coordinator



## Youth & Young Adults Ministry

It's been quite a year in Youth & Young Adult Ministries. They began, like others before it, with joy, energy & focus (and an increase in attendance!). Every Sunday and Wednesday, our Youth Room filled with youth, music & laughter. Our Young Adult gatherings provided opportunities for community, thoughtful reflection, and mutual edification. And then COVID. In the middle of March 2020, we saw our facilities shut down and our routines disrupted. But this didn't curtail our ministries; it just forced us to figure out how to be the Church in "the new reality". Below, you'll find a brief description of Youth & Young Adult communities, gatherings, and events, both before and after changes brought about by the pandemic.

### Youth Ministry

Our Sunday morning Youth gatherings (9:30 and 11am) were simple. We focused on fellowship, worship, prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and the study of scripture. This past year, we trekked through biblical history. We examined how, beginning with Abraham's family, God set a plan in motion to heal our broken world, and how — through the emergence of that family into the people of Israel, their rescue by God from slavery in Egypt, the giving of the Torah, the establishment of the nation of Israel and its kings, its punishment in the Exile — God brought that plan to its fulfillment in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Since COVID, we've moved our Sunday morning gathering to 11:30am (after the St. Paul's online service). Over Zoom we are still able to pray, worship through music, learn, and discuss God's word.

Wednesday nights became the week's highlight for youth and leaders alike. Packed onto the Youth Room couches, we were blessed, week after week, by our leaders, guest speakers, a series of "Real Questions" (based on challenging questions submitted by our own youth), as well as video series from RightNow Media. Our small groups and their leaders have grown into dependable, committed communities of friendship, mutual support, and prayer

COVID has not hindered our Wednesday night gatherings. In March we moved our gatherings online to Zoom. As a large group, we can play games like Kahoot and Skribbl, be led in worship by our Youth Music team, and be taught by leaders and by online videos. Zoom also allows us to break into our usual small groups where we can go deeper in our discussion and in our fellowship.

Our Youth Music team has grown in numbers, discipline, and maturity. Violin & viola, organ, piano, bass guitar, synthesizer, and drum machine now regularly accompany our vocalists. The team has not only learned and practiced music—they have learned and practiced what it means to make music *for worship*. As a result, our youth gatherings on



Sunday and Wednesday have been blessed. Furthermore, the team has ably led worship in St. Paul's online services as well as at diocesan retreats and events.

Since we are not able to meet in person during this time of physical distancing, our focus has shifted from making music in a live setting to making recordings at home. Our musicians have learned how to record their voices and instruments so that we can provide worship music not only for our Youth gatherings but for St. Paul's online service as well!

It is no secret St. Paul's Youth Ministry boasts a deep bench of talented and committed volunteers without whom our ministry would be impoverished. On Sundays and Wednesdays, they lead games and discussions, helping to build a fun and supportive community. Danny Hertz, Don McKellar, Eli Mathews, Rumbi Mugwagwa, Jillian Ruch, Jamie Summers, and David and Jillian Veitch—we can't express enough our thanks and appreciation for their gifts and tireless support for our youth!

During this time of distancing and isolation, our leaders have continued to show up, bringing their energy, and find innovative ways to connect with and lead our youth over Zoom!

DeAndrea Yeates has for two years been apprenticing in our Youth Ministry, and we're very proud that, in June, she was named our new Junior Youth Pastor. DeAndrea is now the primary advocate and point-of-contact for youth ages 11–13.

### Young Adult Ministry

St. Paul's Young Professionals meets the last Thursday of every month for a time of fellowship and to discuss a range of topics relevant to our faith and to our professional lives. Over the past year, Henry Araujo, Astrid Arzu, and Daisy Maher have helped lead the group, planning topics as well as social events like restaurant & pub nights, hikes, games & movie nights, escape rooms, and outings to see live music.

Although COVID has restricted our range of activities, our Young Adult community has continued to meet, chat, study, and pray online over Zoom. What's more, since April, we've had the opportunity to establish a new noon hour Bible-study group for those who are now forced to work in isolation. We meet Monday to Thursday, for 45 minutes to an hour, in order to immerse ourselves in God's word and to enjoy each other's' company and insight.

Ian Koiter  
Youth and Young Adult Pastor