



The Prayer Book Society of Canada – Toronto Branch
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Dear members and friends of the PBSC Toronto Branch,

This fall mailing is coming to you substantially earlier than usual, because our fall event this year will be taking place in early September – Saturday the 10th. In response to feedback received at our Annual General Meeting this past spring, we will be holding it at St. Thomas’s Church (Huron St.), and we are delighted to report that the Revd. Jeffry Kennedy has accepted our invitation to speak at the event. Fr. Kennedy, a recently retired priest, has had the experience of “rediscovering” the BCP and is keen to share this experience with you. For the timing of the event, your branch executive has decided to try something new and hold the event on a Saturday morning instead of an afternoon, so that those attending can have the rest of the day to run their weekend errands. Full details can be found in this issue of *The Lamp*.

In the course of this event, there is an important issue that will be up for debate: whether the PBSC Toronto Branch should continue as a distinct entity within the PBSC. Local PBSC branches were originally formed back in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s, primarily in order to publicize the Society and to organize educational events in their areas. The Toronto Branch was in the forefront of these efforts, and many of our members will remember highly successful events such as our 1999 conference at St. Paul’s Bloor Street in celebration of the 450th anniversary of the first BCP. In recent years, however, we have seen a steady drop in attendance at our events, to the point where only a handful of members other than the branch executive have come to the last few. Our analysis is that there are several reasons for this. First, there is the fact that much of our membership is aging and increasingly finding it difficult to get out to events. Second, the fact that the younger generation nowadays tends to rely on the Internet and on social media rather than attending meetings. (Certainly the PBSC website and Facebook page receive many visits, showing that there is a real and growing interest in the BCP among the young and the tech-savvy.) Third, we also need to recognize that there are now BCP-related events being organized on a regular basis by Prayer Book-friendly parishes; notably St. Olave’s (whose new rector, as you will see in *The Lamp*, is again very BCP-supportive), St. Thomas’s Huron St., and occasionally other parishes. Moreover, the new Principal

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THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY OF CANADA – TORONTO BRANCH

The work of the PBSC Toronto Branch is important to me! In support of it through the fall of 2016, I enclose a cheque made out to the “Prayer Book Society of Canada – Toronto Branch”, for:

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other: _____

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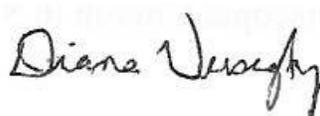
of Wycliffe College, Dr. Stephen Andrews, is a long-time supporter of the BCP, so divinity students there will be receiving an excellent grounding in the Prayer Book. Lastly, a related matter of concern is of course the huge increase in postage costs in recent years. We have now reached the point where nearly 1/3 of our donation income is spent on stamps, and we must ask ourselves honestly whether this represents a good use of the Society's resources. (The national Society, having a much larger mailing list, can qualify for bulk postage rates which are much lower.) Therefore, at our gathering in September I will ask for a vote on the question of whether we ought to fold the Toronto Branch back into the national Society. If you will be unable to attend the meeting and wish to express your views on this question, please do feel free to contact me.

Finally, to end on a cheerier note, a bit of surprising good news. Many of you will remember the booklet "What Happened to Morning Prayer?" which was commissioned way back in 1997 by the Toronto Branch and co-authored by Drs. John Webster and Alan Hayes of Wycliffe College. At the "Desiring the Kingdom" conference that was held at Tyndale College last October, in the course of a conversation with Bishop William Anderson of the Diocese of Caledonia, he mentioned that there was renewed interest in the service of Morning Prayer among the House of Bishops, because of the increasing number of parishes that are unable to afford a full-time priest. I still had a hundred or so leftover copies of the booklet stored in my basement, so I told him about it, and he was very much interested. The upshot was, I mailed him two boxes of booklets which he distributed to all of the parishes in his diocese and to every member of the House of Bishops! Which just goes to show that we little know what fruit our efforts may bear, even many years afterwards.

To conclude, even though we are currently debating whether to wind up the Toronto Branch, please remember that we are still in need of financial resources until the end of the year, to send out our year-end mailing; so please continue your support of the Branch! Should the vote be in favour of this move, any monies remaining in our account at the end of the year will be transferred to the national PBSC, as directed by our branch constitution. Again, if you wish to express your views on this matter, do feel free to contact me.

With best wishes for a pleasant fall,

Yours faithfully,



Diana Versegby.

We welcome your comments!

(If you would like to receive our mailings electronically, please send us your e-mail address.)
