



The Prayer Book Society of Canada – Toronto Branch
Diana Verseghy, President – 12 Sherbourne Drive,
Maple, Ontario, L6A 1G8. Phone: 905-303-4490.
E-mail: diana.verseghy@sympatico.ca

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Dear members and friends of the PBSC Toronto Branch,

As we begin Advent, your branch executive is already looking forward to our Lenten programme of next year! Lent 2016 begins very early – Ash Wednesday falls on February 10th – so our planning is well underway. On the front page of this issue of *The Lamp*, you will find information on a Lenten study series that is being organized by our branch vice-president, Dr. Bill Cooke, at St. Olave’s Church on the six Wednesday evenings leading up to Palm Sunday. The series will focus on the Book of Common Prayer, and as you can see, will feature an array of gifted speakers. I hope that many of you will be able to attend. Alongside, this, we will also still be holding our annual Lenten Quiet Day at St. Thomas’s Church as usual. The date is not yet set, but we already have a speaker lined up: the Revd. Peter Molloy, a long-time friend of the Prayer Book Society and one of the founders of the popular newspaper *The Anglican Planet*. More details will follow in our next mailing.

Also in this issue of *The Lamp*, you will find excerpts from the talk on “The Prayer Book in the North” that was given by the Revd. Chris Dow at St. Olave’s on October 17th. The talk was a really outstanding one, giving much food for thought. Chris is the rector of a three-point parish near Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, which includes two farming communities and the Muskoday First Nation reservation. The mission statement of the Diocese of Saskatchewan is “Mâwawi isi Miywâcimowin”, which in Cree means, “Together in the Gospel” – indigenous and non-indigenous Anglicans as partners and friends together in the Gospel. It was truly inspiring to hear how First Nations have, in the words of political philosopher John Ralston Saul, “been making a comeback from a terrifyingly low point of population, of legal respect, of civilizational stability, to a position of power, influence and civilizational creativity ... Most Canadians still don’t understand this because we are focused on the suffering of many indigenous people, the problems, the failures”. Chris recounted how their faith, and in his diocese, the Prayer Book have been anchors and guides on this road to recovery. He commented that our often condescending attitude towards First Nations “prevents us from recognizing the fact that we need aboriginal people as our teachers and partners.

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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 end of 2015, I enclose a cheque made out to the “Prayer Book Society of Canada – Toronto Branch”, for:

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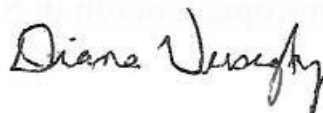
That's how it was in the formative years of our country when the explorers and settlers arrived in a new world in which they were totally unprepared to live. The same is true for us now. I submit to you that we, by ourselves, are ill prepared for the dangers and challenges that we will face in the 21st century – including, but not limited to, the breakdown and deliberate dismantling of the family”.

Another stimulating event in October, which I mentioned in my last letter, was the “Desiring the Kingdom” conference, organized by the Anglican Communion Alliance, that was held at Tyndale University and Seminary on October 22-24. The PBSC was invited to have a literature table at the event, providing information on the Society, an invitation which we accepted with alacrity. Our national chairman, the Revd. Gordon Maitland, and I spent the whole of the 23rd at the table, assisted for part of the time by Toronto branch executive members Janice Webster and Jelana Duncan, and it was well worth it. Our table was in a prime location right outside the chapel, where the plenary talks were given, and attracted a steady stream of interested people. We handed out a great deal of material, signed up several new members, and generally demonstrated that the Society is engaged and active in the Church. Perhaps the most gratifying (and surprising) thing about the event was that the main speaker, Dr. James K.A. Smith, repeatedly commended the Prayer Book for worship! Dr. Smith is a professor of philosophy and theology at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, and a prolific writer. He spoke of worship as the heart of discipleship, and stressed the importance of rooted, stable, historic forms of worship for Christian formation in our post-modern society, in particular the Book of Common Prayer. I am sure that this was a fresh and eye-opening concept to many of the conference participants!

To conclude, as always, please remember that we rely on your financial contributions to carry on our work of upholding the Prayer Book and classical Anglicanism. We hope that we can continue to count on your support and prayers as we approach the end of 2015.

With best wishes for a blessed Advent, a merry Christmas and a happy new year,

Yours faithfully,



Diana Versegby.

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