

# Annual Vestry Report for 2024

March 9, 2025

*Vestry Meeting (part 1) will be in person, Parish Hall 12:15pm*



## **The Church of Saint Peter and Saint Simon-the-Apostle**

525 Bloor St East, Toronto, Ontario M4W 1J1  
416 923-8714  
office@stpeterstsimons.ca www.stpeterstsimons.ca



Diocese of Toronto  
Anglican Church of Canada

# Table of Contents

<b>Agenda</b>	2
<b>The College of Bishops Pastoral Letter to Vestries, 2025</b>	3
<b>Rector's Report To Vestry – March 2025</b>	5
<b>Assistant Curate's Vestry Report</b>	7
<b>Warden's Report to Vestry 2025</b>	8
<b>Envelope Secretary's Report</b>	10
<b>Other Reports</b>	10
<b>Property Committee</b>	10
<b>Health &amp; Safety Working Group</b>	11
<b>Stewardship Committee (Growing Healthy Stewards)</b>	12
<b>Coffee Hour</b>	12
<b>Pollinator Garden</b>	13
<b>Communications</b>	13
<b>Social Justice Vestry Motion for 2025: Protecting and Expanding Harm Reduction in Ontario</b>	15
<b>Parish Statistics</b>	17
<b>The Church of St Peter and St Simon-the-Apostle</b>	18
<b>2024 Parish Records</b>	18
<b>SPSS CLERGY, STAFF and PARISH NOMINATIONS - VESTRY 2025</b>	23

## AGENDA

1. Incumbent takes the Chair. (Canon 14, Sec. 13).
2. Opening prayers
3. Electing Vestry Clerk (if not already appointed or if absent.) (Canon 14, Sec. 13)
4. Reading, correcting, and confirming minutes of last annual meeting, and minutes of any other meeting that have not been confirmed
5. Incumbent's Report
6. Church Wardens' Report  
Presenting of audited statements 2021,2022,2023
8. Advisory Board report
9. Envelope Secretary's report
10. Nominations Committee report:
  - a. Appointments
  - b. Elections
11. Approval of Auditors for 2025
12. Social Justice Motion
13. Presenting reports of all parochial organizations
14. General business and adjournment

# THE COLLEGE OF BISHOPS PASTORAL LETTER TO VESTRIES, 2025

*to be read or circulated on the Sunday of the parish's annual vestry meeting*



**To the clergy, churchwardens, and parishioners of the Diocese of Toronto:**

Beloved Siblings in Christ,

**“...be renewed in the spirit ...”** – Ephesians 4:23

In this Season of Spiritual Renewal, the Diocese of Toronto is exhibiting a burgeoning health and vitality that inspires us daily. To God be the glory! As your bishops, as we travel around to visit our parishes, we have witnessed the Holy Spirit engaging in marvelous ways with people, groups and ministries right across this Diocese – from Mississauga to Minden, from Cobourg to Collingwood. The Season of Spiritual Renewal, this invitation to spiritual growth, has been enthusiastically received in so many ways, including the sharing of prayer resources, participation in online workshops, and our bishops' Advent study online. We are also looking forward to #LiveLent: God's Story, Our Story, a daily Lenten resource with a helpful guide for small group use.

We are excited that the next phase in this Season of Spiritual Renewal is called “Lift Up Our Hearts.” Over the coming year, large worship services will take place across the Diocese on five Saturday afternoons at 2 p.m. Each celebration of the Eucharist will feature excellent music, moving testimony, and preachers from within our own Diocese, each with their own unique approach to spiritual renewal. We hope you will plan to join us for one or more of these marvelous gatherings. Come on your own, bring a friend, or hire a bus! We will see you there:

- March 22 – St. James Cathedral (preacher: the Rev. Molly Finlay)
- March 29 – Trinity Church, Streetsville (preacher: the Rev. Canon Stephanie Douglas)
- May 31 – All Saints, Whitby (preacher: the Rev. Gerlyn Henry)
- September 27 – St. James, Orillia (preacher: the Rev. Dr. Rob Hurkmans)
- October 25 – St. Paul's, Bloor Street (preacher: the Rev. Dr. Alvarado Adderley)

The call to spiritual renewal, however, was just the first of 20 Calls articulated in the Cast the Net strategic vision adopted by Synod and this Diocese in 2023. Over the coming year, you will hear us repeatedly emphasising the need for each congregation to review and consider all of the 20 Calls and then choose which two or three your parish will focus on. As you gather today for Vestry, this could be the perfect opportunity to start considering the question. A small group – the Netminders – has prepared resources to help you, which you can find on the Cast the Net web page. While it's important to remember that no congregation could possibly answer all 20 Calls, we strongly believe that each congregation can consider two or three. Leading up to our diocesan Synod in November, we hope that every parish will be able to identify which of the Calls they are living into.

We are pleased to welcome our new Executive Director, Varun Balendra ODT. A familiar face around the Diocese, Varun has served in many volunteer capacities over the years, and we look forward to working together in this new capacity. By the time of our diocesan Synod on Friday, Nov. 7 and Saturday, Nov. 8, we expect that we will be introducing a new Secretary of Synod and a new full-time Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisor, whose primary focus areas will be supporting the work of the Anti-Bias, Anti-Racism (ABAR) and other DEI training, and supporting individuals and parishes to grow, build community, educate and engage.

Some other new faces at Synod may include guests from the Diocese of Brasilia. This past June, at the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection in the city of Brasilia, the two diocesan bishops of Brasilia and Toronto signed the covenant that brings our two dioceses into a companion relationship. Since the signing of our agreement, a small representative group from each diocese has been meeting monthly – in both Portuguese and English – to pray together and to plan events. For example, clergy from both dioceses will gather online for a joint study day on liberation theology on March 25. In the fall, a youth delegation from Brasilia will join our own youth at the Re-Charge youth retreat at Muskoka Woods camp. And we anticipate sending a delegation from Toronto to Brasilia in 2026. We have even developed a shared logo for our relationship that combines elements of each of our own logos: our Diocese of Toronto dove springing from their Ipe Tree. You can expect to hear more about this companion partnership as we enter into the second year of it.

Closer to home, the partnerships within our own Diocese continue to flourish. When we speak of casting the net, we are referring to the supportive, creative and collaborative ministry that occurs in each deanery and regionalization, between parishes and congregations, amongst church neighbours and colleagues. We are grateful to our hardworking and devout clergy and our dedicated lay leaders, especially churchwardens, treasurers, administrators, musicians and the countless church staff and parish volunteers who are Christ's hands and feet of ministry in our communities. We are so grateful for all of your faithful work in our parishes and beyond.

We have embarked on a feasibility study to discern if this is the right time for the Diocese to conduct a major financial campaign. Over the next six months, M&M International, a Toronto-based fundraising firm, will listen to parishes large and small, soliciting feedback on a case for support. It is proposed that if a campaign does go forward, the majority of funds raised will remain in the parishes, with a smaller portion supporting the 20 Calls at the diocesan level. Your feedback and commitment will make the difference as we look into this additional way of working together.

Lastly, we want to encourage each Vestry meeting to consider this year's social justice motion: "Protecting and Expanding Harm Reduction in Ontario." The Church has a role to play in calling on government for responsible actions in caring for our most vulnerable neighbours, to ensure life-saving protections for those experiencing addictions and other challenges. Please consider how your parish can speak up, and out, for those who require advocacy. As we anticipate going to the polls in the coming year – federally and provincially – let us remember our baptismal promises as we cast our ballots, choosing candidates who align with our values. And let us pray for them.

For it is in praying that we are drawn ever deeper into relationship with the Triune God and become more attentive to the will of our Heavenly Creator. In this Season of Spiritual Renewal, we ask every reader of this letter to commit more deeply to a life of prayer, that it may infuse your every day with Grace as you witness to the Love of Christ in your life and to the world.

In your prayers, please pray for all three of us, your College of Bishops, both in your personal daily devotions as well as your parish's weekly intercessions. Know that we are praying for you too, giving thanks for our common life together across our wonderful diocesan family.

Yours faithfully in Christ Jesus



The Right Rev. Andrew J. Asbilhe  
Bishop of Toronto



The Right Rev. Riscylla Shaw  
Suffragan Bishop of Toronto



The Right Rev. Kevin Robertson  
Suffragan Bishop of Toronto

## RECTOR'S REPORT TO VESTRY – MARCH 2025

Dear Friends,

In 2024 the Bishop of Toronto invited parishes across the Diocese into a two-year Season of Spiritual Renewal. This is an opportunity for the Church in this post-pandemic time to re-focus energy on faith development for individuals and communities and to re-invest in mission. Here at SPSS, we have made a commitment to be part of this initiative, recognizing many needs and opportunities for our life as a faith community. The past year has been very full. I take this moment to identify ministries and parish events that show our commitment to spiritual growth, including a full and joyous community life:

- Caribbean Dinner – with fundraising support for Codrington College in Barbados;
- Christmas Market – funds to support various parish ministries;
- Garden Ministry – involves community partners and *Bees for Peace*.
- Homework Club – a ministry in partnership with Rosedale Presbyterian Church supporting families in St Jamestown;
- Lay Pastoral Visitors – a group of faithful parishioners who visit the sick and stay connected with the homebound;
- Newcomers Welcome receptions at my house;
- Ordination to the Priesthood of the Reverend Abraham Thomas;
- Pancake Supper;
- Sanctuary Beautification and Dedication and Michaelmas;
- Study Series – Bible BBQ with St Jude's Wexford and C.S. Lewis *Mere Christianity* book study;
- Toronto Star Carol Service – the choir participated in this for the first time in many years.
- Quiet Days - Father Michael's presentation on the Lord's Prayer was especially helpful;
- Wednesday Eucharist and Lunch;
- Worship - offered reverently in the beauty of holiness.

The past year also came with some significant challenges. When water appeared in the narthex it became apparent there was a problem with the roof and an urgent need for its complete replacement over the narthex area. This, along with other building issues put a strain on our finances. We managed to secure a loan from the Diocese to help us through. We also made application to the York Rector's and received a generous grant of \$150,000 to assist us with the roof project. This along with other ministry needs led us to re-evaluate the practicality of supporting the proposed choir trip for the summer of 2025 and its eventual cancellation.

The parish leadership also came to the realization that a new direction was necessary for the leadership of our music ministry; the result was the end of our contractual relationship with Mr. Robin Davis. We thank Robin for his years of service to the parish and wish him well in his future endeavors. In February 2025, Daniel Webb accepted our invitation to serve as Interim Director of Music. Daniel is an exceptional musician and teacher. He is doing a remarkable job caring for our choir, encouraging new membership and leading the music of our worship. A key focus for 2025 will be the search for a new permanent Director of Music – we are working now to form a search committee. As I have stated on a number of occasions in announcements and from the pulpit, this is a time for us to walk mindfully, graciously and prayerfully with one another as we discern our way forward.

There are so many people to thank who contribute their time and talent to this congregation, often behind the scenes; those involved in our worship - Altar Guild, Readers, Intercessors, Greeters, Choristers, Servers, Communion Ministers - those who serve on Committees, Counters, those involved in the ministry of hospitality, those who visit the sick and homebound. Sileen Phillips continues to care for our children in Church School, assisted by Carol Peck – thank you.

Jessy Balendra continues to do a fantastic job as our Parish Administrator. The office is a busy place, and Jessy has a special gift in dealing graciously with people – thank you, Jessy.

One gift at SPSS is having clergy colleagues. Thank you to our Assistant Curate Abraham Thomas who has really stepped up to help and support the parish in a time of change and transition. Thank you also to Father Michael, for his wisdom, energy, faith and humour - he is a terrific support and such a wonderful part of our clerical team.

Finally, I must acknowledge the ministry of the Wardens. Serving as Warden is a huge responsibility in any parish and has been especially the case at SPSS. With the move to Kingston, our People's Warden Jerry Courage had to step down. Thank you to Jerry for his wisdom and dedication. Special recognition is due to Ted Robinson who agreed to serve as People's Warden after Jerry's departure. Ted and our Rector's Warden David Carrington have given countless hours of time to steady the ship through what has been an often-turbulent sea. A word of thanks here hardly does justice to their dedication to this parish. I also thank the Deputy Wardens, Laurie, John and Johan as well as past Deputy Warden Christopher Ashby and Mary Martin who serves as the faithful scribe for the Corporation. In 2025 we will be ending the wardens council model and reverting to the traditional canonical model of a Rector's Warden (David Carrington), People's Warden (nominee: David Rounthwaite) and two Deputy Wardens (nominee: Laurie Sanderson, appointment: Spencer Higgins). Thank you to those willing offer themselves for parish leadership positions.

Looking head to 2025 we will continue our focus on spiritual renewal. We will continue to focus on faith development, our care for one another and our community, our stewardship and community life. We invite members of the parish to join us for the *Discovery Day* on March 29<sup>th</sup>. This will be a day of conversation worship and fellowship as we discern ministry moving forward.

All we do is grounded in the praise and worship of Almighty God. In her book *Worship*, Evelyn Underhill writes "Worship is in its deepest sense, the response of humans to the Eternal". Worship is our offering to God and a sign of God's worth as the creator of all and expression of thanksgiving for God's goodness and love. Worship is at the heart of our life at SPSS. Our goal through liturgy and music is to proclaim God's glory, uphold God's people, to support and strengthen the faith life of the parish community, and so to witness to God's mercy bestowed on us in Jesus Christ. Thank you to the many dedicated and faithful members of our congregation who join us in this ministry. May God guides us in the year ahead. I conclude with a simple prayer from the *Prayer Book* that helps focus me – it seems appropriate in this season of our life together.

*Lord, teach us to pray. Keep our thoughts from wandering  
and grant that we may worship thee in Spirit and in truth, Through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Geoffrey+

## ASSISTANT CURATE'S VESTRY REPORT

2024 has been an interesting year at the Church of St. Peter and St. Simon the Apostle. As I mentioned in my report last year, I was ordained on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, and I was fortunate to celebrate and preach on the anniversary of my ordination at SPSS on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025. I would like to thank Fr. Geoff Sangwine for his patience and his guidance during this entire time, and I would like to thank the parishioners for their continued prayers, patience, and support in this time.

I have been able to contribute in part to the ministry of Christian Education through the Bible Study on the water and its importance in the Biblical narrative which SPSS conducted with St. Jude's Wexford, the study of Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis, and the Baptism of Veronika Silver-Fialova.

Concerning the ministry of home visitations and communions, I have continued to celebrate the Eucharist and distribute the Reserved Sacrament to Fudger House every month, and to the Reikai facilities on Sherborne Street and at Wellesley Street every other month. It has been a joy to continue to serve these communities and has allowed me to appreciate the work that is being done at all three facilities for the most vulnerable among us. I have also been able to visit some of our homebound parishioners with members of our Pastoral Visitation Team.

I have continued to prepare the bulletins for Wednesday's Eucharist services, and in the time since my last report, I have had a greater appreciation for the Prayer Book Lectionary readings, which in turn has influenced my understanding of the shape of the regular liturgy. These lessons have also helped me in my preparation for the Sunday services. The 9:00 service continues to be small, but well attended, and I have had the privilege of preaching and celebrating the services at the same time. I have also been able to assist, preach, and celebrate the Eucharist and lead or preach at Matins at the 10:30 service. We are blessed to have the faithful souls in our pews who come every week to support us in our ministry. Our parishioners have been faithful not only in attending our services but also in participating in ecumenical services such as the Good Friday Walk on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024. This walk is an adaptation of the Stations of the Cross, where we connected the suffering faced by Christ at every Station with the suffering faced by members of our community. This practice was halted during the time of COVID-19, and I was able to update the prayers used during this walk. I would like to thank Ian Corlett for his help in planning the walk last year. The Good Friday Walk also allowed us to improve our relationship with our neighbours and siblings in Christ who worship at the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Toronto. We were able to build on this relationship with the planning and coordination for the Vespers for the Season of Creation, on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, where we not only received members from our Parish and Our Lady of Lourdes but also members of the clergy and laity from the Parishes of St. Barnabas on the Danforth and St. Paul's, Bloor Street.

Another area of ecumenical cooperation has been the Homework Club, a ministry that we share with our siblings and neighbours at Rosedale Presbyterian Church, and I am a volunteer with them. It has allowed me to help the kids who come to this program and to serve them as an informal tutor.

I am humbled and grateful to be your Assistant Curate and will endeavor to be a worthy servant-leader to all of you, collectively and individually,

יְשׁוּעָה, יְהוָה יְבָרְכֶךָ



Respectfully submitted,  
*The Reverend Abraham Thomas*

## WARDEN'S REPORT TO VESTRY 2025

2024 represented a number of significant occurrences in the life of SPSS. We were emerging from the construction phase of the Munchkin Manor project. The fire alarm system in the Nave of the church was not working and had to be replaced. This delayed the full operation of the Daycare. We had to replace the infrared unit in the Nave of the church and the triggering system in the chancel. As a result of this delay, we gave Munchkin a discount on their rent as they could not obtain a license to operate without the Fire alarm system operational. This issue was resolved in early March and now the daycare is operating at full capacity. The next issue that manifested itself was the roof over the Narthex. This was a 25 years old flat roof that failed causing water to pool and then leak into the Narthex and elevator shaft. In examining our finances, it was determined that we would need a loan from the Diocese to affect the work. As a condition of this loan the Diocese asked for updated audited financial statements. This requirement had been suspended by the Diocese because of the COVID 19 Pandemic. The practice concerning audits in the parish before this suspension was to have one done each fiscal year. Consequently, SPSS would now need to engage an audit firm to conduct the audits for 2021, 2022 and 2023.

The work on the roof commenced in the summer and was substantially completed in late December 2024. The above two projects exposed us to the thinness of our financial security. Managing cash flow and the day-to-day operation of the Parish meant that we had to be mindful of our finances. And with a building that is over 130 years old there are always things that need attention. The roof is one area that we have and will have to concentrate on. It is contemplated that we will need an engineering study and then address the issues presented in bite size pieces. This will involve the Property Committee as well as a dedicated fundraising committee to finance this work. We have addressed in 2024 the acute portion, however, we are mindful that there are sections over the Organ and in the parish hall that will require attention.

Most of credit for the completion of the roof over the Narthex and the daycare project goes to Johan van't Hof and Spencer Higgins. Johan worked hard to ensure that both projects came in on time and on budget. And Johan and Spencer ensured that we received quality work that modernized the building with renovations and upgrades that will last a long time. Thank you to Johan and Spencer.

To enhance our security, we have installed security cameras around the building. These cameras are operational 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. They are part of our response to the vandalism that has occurred at our building and it is hoped that they will be a deterrent to people doing damage to the property. These cameras were installed in the late summer and over the fall. Some of the work had to be coordinated with the repair of the roof over the Narthex.

Our building is not only a place of worship but is also a community hub. Inside the building we, in partnership of Rosedale Presbyterian, run the Homework Club, which provides afterschool programing for youths in our community. Also, in our building is the Anglican United Refugee Alliance (AURA). This Organization facilitates the resettlement of refugees in our city and we have used their services on a number of occasions. Currently, they are helping to facilitate the resettlement of a parishioner's family.

There are also many other activates that take place in our building that make this a hub for the St. Jamestown community. In addition to AURA our building houses Artist June Clarke, San Lorenzo Ruiz Anglican Philippine Congregation, Kenyan Christian Fellowship and other community groups. These along with special events help to make the parish a growing and going concern in the community.

At the start of 2025, in consultation with the Rector, we decided to go in a new direction regarding the Musical Leadership at SPSS. The music will retain its traditional high standards, however, there will be more emphasis on building the choir in the community. The program will be fostered by our interim Music Director, Daniel Webb.

This year we received episcopal permission from Bishop Kevin Robertson to hold the Vestry meeting in two parts. The first part will take place on March 9<sup>th</sup> after the 10:30 AM service. At that meeting we will deal with nominations/elections, committee reports and the audited financial statements for 2021, 22 and 23. The second meeting will be held in late April or early May. At that time, we will have audited financial statements for 2024 as well as the 2025 budget.

The reason for splitting the Vestry in two parts is two-fold: First, to fulfill the requirements of the loan from the Diocese we need to have updated audited financial statements. This process was only started at the beginning of summer and was delayed by the temporary loss of some of the necessary documentation by the courier company. Secondly, late in the year we hired a new bookkeeper and there was the process of onboarding that was necessary to bring her up to speed with our processes.

It has been our pleasure to be your Wardens for 2024. During the year we worked to ensure that we have a solid financial footing to carry out the mission of the church and parish. Whether it is bible studies and/or other activities in the Parish we could not have achieved them without the help of Fathers Geoffrey, Michael and Abraham and the work of so many of you who provide the vibrance and give life through Christ in the parish. As we go forward together it is our hope that this vibrance will help us grow this congregation and our roots will be expanded and nourished by the community in which we are situated.

Respectfully Yours,

Ted Robinson, People's Warden  
David Carrington, Rector's Warden

*See Appendix A for the 2021 audited statement*

*See Appendix B for the 2022 audited statement*

*See Appendix C for the 2023 audited statement*

## ENVELOPE SECRETARY'S REPORT

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." Malachi 3:10

### 2024 Donations to be used for General Funds

<u>Category</u>	<u>Number of Parishioners</u>
Weekly Envelopes	7
Monthly Envelopes	26
Monthly Pre-Authorized Givings	53
Monthly Canada Helps	8
1-5 Donations per year including e-Transfers	51

I would encourage all envelope subscribers to consider switching to Pre-Authorized Givings. If interested in changing your mode of giving, please contact Jessy Balendra, our Parish Administrator, who would be happy to send you a form to switch to Pre-Authorized Givings.

My sincere thanks to Joy Quan Lee, Jessy Balendra and Robert Sloan for their assistance in 2024. Joy and I come to the church approximately every three weeks to count all donations that have been received at the church whether by in person or mailed in donations and Robert Sloan enters the PAG donations on a monthly basis.

I also want to thank all parishioners for their continued financial support of our parish ministry during 2024.

Respectfully Submitted

Paul Mitchell

## OTHER REPORTS

### Property Committee

Our church is a one hundred and forty year-old heritage building with a constant litany of structural and upkeep demands. The last five years have been particularly active with the renovation of substantial areas of our basement to accommodate a new daycare tenant, Munchkin Manor, the cleanup and restoration of the old shelter area, and work on the wooden floors in both the church hall and the chancel area of the sanctuary.

During 2024, significant work continued, some highly visible some less so but critically important. At significant expense, the building fire alarm panel and Nave smoke detector needed to be replaced and a repair to the Narthex heating system had to be done.

Of the visible work, two items in the interior of the church stand out: the restoration of the wall mural work high up above the chancel, and the lighting to illuminate the panels of stained glass between the narthex and the nave. Both these ventures were supported by generous donations from parishioners. A water-damaged ceiling area inside the narthex was repaired and the AURA office got new flooring (paid by them). On the exterior of the building a couple of big jobs were done. Protective covering was installed over the stained glass (Tooke) windows on the north side of the church and the area around the windows was painted and enhanced with decorative tiling. Some painting of exterior window frames was undertaken, a job that will continue in 2025.

The big job for 2024 was the replacement of a major section of roof –the flat roof over the Narthex- at a cost of approximately \$350,000.

On the grounds of the church, south side, a pollinator garden has been put into place through significant volunteer work and financed by a grant from TD. The security of the exterior of the church got enhanced through the installation of nine cctv cameras at strategic points around the building as well as negotiation with Toronto Police to include our property in their bicycle patrols.

We have substantial items to look after going into 2025. A major one will be repair and painting of the frames and sashes of the large south-facing stained glass windows. This work is scheduled to be undertaken in May. We would also like to see restoration and painting work done on the Tudor themed exterior walls on the south east corner of the building above the Munchkin Manor entrance.

The other large item will be the next section of roof replacement. We will now tackle the church's sloped roof section by section, the first area targeted will be that on the south side which covers the chancel and organ areas. Funds will have to be raised and allocated for this and other segments going forward.

I want to thank fellow committee members Spencer Higgins, Christopher Ashby, Johan van' t Hof, and David Carrington for their time and work. I also want to acknowledge the work of the garden guild, and of our sexton, Daiverzon Guillermo, parish administrator, Jessy Balendra, and verger, Ian Corlett.

Respectfully submitted  
Larry Krotz, chair  
January 2024

## **Health & Safety Working Group**

During the year 2024 the Health & Safety Committee has focused on fire safety and emergency response plans. We developed a team of first responders for emergencies, particularly during Worship Services. This included training in first aid and CPR for staff. We also received a donation allowing us to obtain an appropriate AED device, which was installed in the church in the early fall

To test our response readiness for fire and other emergencies, we held two fire drills at the end of Sunday service one the spring and one in the fall.

Another safety issue that the Committee will address in 2025 is related to de-escalation training, for our staff and volunteers, but also for other groups, including the Homework Club, who use the church facilities,

The H&S Committee continues to recommend that everyone keep their Covid and Influenza vaccinations up to date. And we all need to take care of ourselves and others by staying home if any cold or 'flu-like symptoms occur.

We thank the members of the Health & Safety Committee for their contributions this past year. They include Laurie Sanderson, John Pugsley, David Carrington, Glenna Sims-Bonk, Mary Martin, Greg Robinson and Fr. Geoff Sangwine.

Ted Robinson  
Chair, Health & Safety Working Group

## **Stewardship Committee (Growing Healthy Stewards)**

The Stewardship Committee had a busy year with six main areas of focus as the thrust of their efforts. A Monthly Giving Chart posted in the narthex provided information to the congregation as to the Preauthorized vs. Envelope Givings of the church and stressed the importance of preauthorized givings as a more consistent means of donation throughout the year.

Educating the congregation regarding Faithworks, Legacy Givings and volunteer ministry were some of the topics presented on Sunday mornings. We embarked on a Season of Giving in the fall, stressing increasing monthly givings (PAG) and our parish needs.

Attraction and retention of new members was another area of development, through a New Parishioners social at Fr. Geoff's house. A Newcomer Package was in the process of being developed. The implementation of electronic "Tap and Pay" was thoroughly investigated, but was determined too risk adverse to the parish, and was abandoned.

Increasing social interaction of parishioners through the implementation of a weekly chair exercise class was piloted and was enjoyed by regular participants for a six-week period in the Fall of 2024.

The Annual Mistletoe Market was staged by members of the Stewardship Committee. The goals of increasing the Parish profile in the community, bringing the community into the church, increasing parish morale and raising funds for the church were achieved.

Mary Anderson, Stewardship Chair

## **Coffee Hour**

The hospitality and coffee hour volunteers met on January 12, 2025. All Volunteers were gratefully thanked for their continued support and work to make the coffee hour and special events happen successfully. We ask all parishioners to consider helping once a month on a Sunday coffee hour or for a one-time event during the year. Please contact the office if you can help out. Thank you to all who donate cookies, drinks and money to help with the cost.

The church kitchen is open for all group meetings as well as renters for funerals, weddings, baptisms and birthdays for up to 125 people for a sit down meal preparation. The gas and wall ovens are being repaired. All items used from the kitchen must be returned clean to their cupboards. No food can be left in the refrigerator unless marked for a particular person to use. After 3 days it will be thrown away and is a great waste. Take all left-overs home.

Dishwashers are needed for special events and would be paid. Contact the office if you are interested in this.

Please watch the Bulletin and Fridge Notes for special events and consider volunteering for one-time to set tables, serve food , collect dishes, put away cleaned items.

Fran Brown

## Pollinator Garden

A blooming wonderful experience!! for those who tended this garden and those who enjoyed its success this year. Many thanks to the small group of gardeners who faithfully offered their time, expertise and muscle. We are again receiving more plants to replace and to expand the garden area through Faith and The Common Good director Donna Lang. This work is fully subsidized by the TD Bank environmental program. All plants are native plants from the native plant nursery Grow Wild and so have a separate plot on Howard Street.

If anyone is interested in volunteering to plant or to water from May to October, please contact the office. We hope to involve the Sunday school and the Munchkin Manor children this year in planting. There is also an over abundance of mulch to be shared with the rest of the church garden. This has been donated by Scott's through Faith and the Common Good.

Fran Brown

## Communications

The newly formed (at Vestry 2024) Communications Committee, worked on the following projects this past year:

**Website:** the website was refreshed using new photography, layout, and more user-friendly navigation. The work was done in partnership with Big Creative, the company that hosts our website. Some pages will need updating, such as Music; and some other pages still need to be reviewed.

The refreshed site has all our events and news on the homepage, these need to be updated regularly, and we have attempted to do so but need more help with this and are actively recruiting new members to this team.

**Electronic Signage:** We worked with Jessy to ensure the signage is kept updated. There are some technical issues to do with uploading signage, using graphics and some of the panels, which are not

working. Unfortunately, these technical issues were not resolved, but this will be top priority in 2025/26.

**Social Media:** we ironed out technical difficulties with posting to our two main social media pages, Facebook and Instagram, and have endeavoured to post more regularly to those channels.

**Weekly Parish E-News:** This communication channel was reviewed and a few tweaks to presentation were made.

**Jubilate! Newsletter:** It was decided that at this time we do not have enough resources to continue with the newsletter. However, as mentioned above, all events and news are posted to the website. In the future if we can find an editor for the newsletter, we would be very happy to revive it.

**Print Media Advertising:** We undertook the following advertising in print media:

*The Anglican:* we advertised the spring concert, the Christmas bazaar, all Advent and Christmas services in the free Looking Ahead column in The Toronto Anglican. We also sent editorial content regarding the renovation of the chancel which was published in December.

*The Bridge Community News:* This publication is distributed between Front Street, east of Yonge and St. Jamestown. We bought ads in the publication for all the above events except the spring concert. We likewise sent editorial content regarding the renovation of the chancel to this publication which was published in their October issue.

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Woodside, Chair.

# Social Justice Vestry Motion for 2025: Protecting and Expanding Harm Reduction in Ontario

## Social Justice Vestry Motion 2025: Protecting and Expanding Harm Reduction in Ontario

**We, the parish of St Peter St Simon-the-Apostle in the Diocese of Toronto, urge the Province of Ontario to reverse the planned closure of safe consumption sites in Ontario, and to lift the ban on the creation of new sites, in order to expand life-saving harm reduction services to Ontarians.**

Ontario is currently in the midst of a deadly overdose crisis, which claims an average of seven lives every day.<sup>1</sup> Safe consumption sites, also called supervised consumption sites, (SCS) are on the front lines of this crisis, having reversed more than 21,000 overdoses in the province between March 2020 and January 2024.<sup>2</sup> Each one of these is a life saved. The sites offer an indoor, supervised space for people who use drugs to do so safely, with clean equipment and boxes for the safe disposal of used needles. They also have healthcare workers and other staff on hand to reverse overdoses, address other health issues, and connect people to other supports, including treatment. No death has occurred within an overdose prevention site since they were opened.

In 2018, the province put in place a cap of 21 such sites in Ontario, but has only funded 17. A few other supervised consumption sites in the province have received federal approval but no provincial funding. Two of these, in northern Ontario, have closed due to a lack of funds, while one in Toronto has continued to operate through donations. Other communities, such as Barrie, Cobourg, Oshawa, and Orillia, remain without such sites, despite demonstrable need in those communities.<sup>3</sup>

In August 2024 the provincial government announced a ban on supervised drug consumption sites within 200 metres of schools and childcare centres. On Nov. 18, 2024, the province introduced Bill 223, the “Safer Streets, Stronger Communities Act,” which, in addition to implementing this geographic ban, prohibits municipalities or any other organizations from starting up new sites. As a result, ten SCS are slated to close by March 31, 2025, five of which are in Toronto. Another Toronto SCS, the Moss Park site on Sherbourne St., will also close, as the location is subject to redevelopment and a move to a new location would count as a “new” site under the ban.

Concerns about safety near the sites reached a fever pitch after a mother of two was killed by a stray bullet not far from the South Riverdale site in July of 2023. This is indeed a tragedy. Yet the external review commissioned by the province in the wake of the shooting, while making recommendations concerning safety, security, and community engagement, did not recommend the closure of the site, but noted “a clear need for the services” in that location and recommended that the site continue to receive provincial funding.<sup>4</sup>

The province claims that crime rates are higher near supervised consumption sites, but has not

---

<sup>1</sup> Ontario Drug Policy Research Network, <https://odprn.ca/occ-opioid-and-suspect-drug-related-death-data/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://amho.ca/amho-news/addictions-and-mental-health-ontario-calls-for-community-driven-and-evidence-based-approach-to-expanding-addictions-care/> These figures are a lower estimate than that given by the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.orilliamatters.com/local-news/city-push-for-treatment-services-harm-reduction-marred-by-provincial-announcement-9391095>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-08/moh-consumption-treatment-service-review-unity-health-en-2024-08-19.pdf>

provided statistics to back up this claim, despite repeated requests to do so. Rather, analysis of data from the Toronto Police Service indicates that incidents of most types of crime dropped in neighbourhoods with SCS, often to a greater degree than in neighbourhoods without sites, and for crime rates which did not drop, there was no significant difference in the change of crime rates between neighbourhoods which had opened sites and neighbourhoods without them.<sup>5</sup>

It is also worth noting that supervised consumption sites are located where they are because these are areas that already see high levels of drug use. Closing the sites will not change that fact. Indeed, the sites' closure would lead to more public drug use, in parks, alleyways, and coffee shop washrooms; more discarded needles and other drug paraphernalia in public spaces; more blood-borne disease from the sharing of needles; and more likelihood of people overdosing and dying in public. This does not equate to greater safety for anybody in the community, including the children the province ostensibly wishes to protect.

Moreover, by responding to overdoses quickly, safe consumption sites reduce the strain on first responders and emergency services, saving taxpayer dollars. Without these sites, demand for ambulances and emergency rooms will only increase, leading to longer wait times for anyone who needs emergency medical treatment.

Along with the announced closures, the province announced an investment of \$378 million to open "Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment" (HART) hubs. While investment in treatment is welcome, several aspects of the announcement are problematic. Firstly, the name unjustly conflates the issues of homelessness and drug addiction. Most people with a substance use disorder are housed; and even though the experience of homelessness can cause people to increase their substance use, many people experiencing homelessness do not have substance use disorders. Moreover, the amount to be invested in the HART hubs is insufficient to meet the need for either treatment beds or supportive housing across the province. Further, the proposed HART hubs would be barred not only from providing supervised consumption, but also from providing sterile injection equipment, a proven public health measure which has been in place for decades, which is known to be a crucial tool in preventing the spread of blood-borne disease and infectious and bacterial complications. This flies in the face of medical best practice.

Supervised consumption sites take a harm reduction approach to drug use. Recognizing that some people use drugs, and may not be ready, willing, or able to stop doing so entirely, harm reduction focuses on meeting people where they are, without ignoring or condemning them. By offering a place of support that meets people where they are, and respects the inherent dignity of each human being, these sites not only keep people alive to get treatment, but offer a place of community and compassion. These sites should not be seen in opposition to addiction treatment, but as part of a continuum of care available across our province.

"Jesus met people on the margins where they were, with compassion and respect," says Keren Elumir, an Anglican who works as a nurse at the Moss Park site. "Everyone we meet is made in the image of God and loved by God. Harm reduction is holy work."

---

<sup>5</sup> Centre on Drug Policy Evaluation. Supervised Consumption Services in Toronto: Evidence and Recommendations (Toronto, November 2024).

## PARISH STATISTICS

	2024 *See Notes Below	2023	2022
Average 9:00 Sunday Attendance	9	6	6
Average 10:30 Sunday Attendance	82	78	66
Average Sunday Attendance all services	91	84 (plus 118 weekly average unique on-line views)	72 + 30-60 (on-line)
Average other Wednesday Attendance all services	18	22	16
Average Weekly Attendance all services	109	106	88
Christmas attendance (24 & 25 December, Blue Christmas)	220	171 (includes blue Christmas, Christmas eve, Christmas day)	164
Christmas Lessons & Carols	139	145	115
Easter (Easter Vigil & Easter Sunday)	172	162	122
(Weddings & Funerals are not included)			

**\*Notes for the 2024 Attendance Records:**

In addition to in-person attendance Sunday Services are live-streamed with an average of 86 unique views weekly

**THE CHURCH OF ST PETER AND ST SIMON-THE-APOSTLE  
2024 PARISH RECORDS**

**Baptisms**

4

**Confirmations**

0

**Marriages**

1

**Funerals**

*“Receive them into the arms of your mercy and remember them  
according to the favour you bear for your people.”*

Nancy Leonard Byers  
Margaret Hilda Elias  
Adelaide Fabriga  
Hin-Shing Wong  
Clifford John Pearson  
Ghizela Lazlo  
Meredith Rounthwaite  
Elaine Macleod  
Miriam A. Smart  
Constance Priscilla Lynn Matthews  
Barbara Lee Towe  
Beverly Lynn Jahnke  
Audrey May Homewood  
Claudia Maureen Ewan – Riley  
Marie Simone Monique Leclerc Wells  
Clifford John Pearson  
Eileen Ann (Coumont) Baird

# **MINUTES OF THE 141st ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING of the Parish of St. Peter and St. Simon the Apostle held on Sunday, March 10, 2024, at 12:25 p.m.**

The Rev. Canon Geoffrey Sangwine, the Incumbent, took the chair and called the meeting to order at 12:25 p.m. There were 56 members of the Vestry present.

Moved by Ted Robinson and seconded by John Pugsley that Diane Way be appointed Vestry Clerk.

**Carried**

## **Opening Prayers**

The opening prayer was led by the Rev Canon Geoffrey Sangwine. He remembered those members of the parish who had passed away since the last Vestry Meeting.

## **Minutes of the 2023 Annual Vestry Meeting**

Michael Burgess+ stated that Jessy Balendra's name was misspelled and asked that it be corrected.

Moved by Paul Faulkner and seconded by Russell Smith that the minutes of the 2023 Vestry Meeting be approved as amended.

**Carried**

## **Incumbent's Report**

The report for 2024 is printed in the final Vestry Report.

## **Election of Officers and Advisory Board Members**

Mary Martin stated that Johan van t'Hof will continue as Deputy Warden, and Vanessa Scott will continue as Deputy Warden. Marc Cote will become Treasurer. Peggy Needham will chair the Social Justice Committee.

Moved by Alan Rands and seconded by Michael Burgess+ that members be elected as printed.

**Carried**

## **Churchwardens' Report**

David Carrington spoke of the challenges for the parish. Everyone is part of the parish family, and help is needed to grow the community. There are challenges ahead for 2024 to fund the parish operations, as not enough money is coming in. He asked the parishioners to increase their giving by 10%. The wardens are looking for new initiatives to make money.

Rosemary Hutchison suggested that the wardens look into the possibility that some expenses could be covered by grants or by the government. Stephanie Woodside agreed that this is a good suggestion. In 2023, the wardens were preoccupied with getting the daycare up and running. In 2024, there will be more time to address these and other possibilities.

## **Financial Statements for 2023**

Johan van t'Hof referred the Vestry to the printed unaudited financial statements for 2023. Accounts receivable are almost all HST. The construction cost \$1,275,000 including HST. Unfortunately, the parish does not get all the HST back. Of the payables, almost all go to the Diocese. Deferred revenue is increased because of the

tenants and the use of the facilities. There is a curacy grant from the Diocese because we now have the Rev. Abraham Thomas as curate.

The parish received special donations for the purpose of cleaning the organ and cleaning the sanctuary. One-time expenses were a new boiler and a new fire alarm system. From excess of revenue over expenses, \$110,000 went to construction. The parish borrowed from the Diocese to pay for construction. The parish is sponsoring an Afgani family. The federal government does not pay for this; therefore, the parish is liable for the first-year costs of the refugees.

The parish saves \$18,000 by turning out the lights.

The parish is a beneficiary of the estate of Ann McIntosh Duff and will receive two-ninths of the proceeds from the sale of her house. The parish will also receive money from the Woodruff Estate.

Moved by Marc Cote and seconded by Irene Courage that the unaudited financial statements for 2023 be adopted as printed.

**Carried**

### **The Parish Budget for 2024**

Johan van t'Hof referred the Vestry to the printed 2024 budget proposal. Johan van t'Hof is stepping down as Treasurer, and he will be replaced by Marc Cote.

The Rev. Canan Geoffrey Sangwine stated that the Diocese is in support of the parish and wishes to see it flourish.

Moved by Johan van t'Hof and seconded by Marc Cote that the 2024 budget be approved as printed.

**Carried**

### **Advisory Board Report**

There is no written report.

The Rev. Canon Geoffrey Sanguine thanked Matthew Beasley who pulled all the people together to get the work done.

### **Property Committee Report**

Larry Krotz stated that the church building is expensive to maintain. The roof will be replaced in sections. Rosemary Hutchison thanked Spencer Higgins for getting the courtyard fountain working.

### **Connections Committee Report**

Fran Brown stated that committee hopes to get a government grant.

### **Synod Report**

Nancy Nourse discussed the views of Synod on the social justice motion. Though housing is an important issue, the complexities of the motion made it difficult for the Synod to accept. Therefore, there was no vote on the motion.

### **Envelope Secretary's Report**

The Rev. Canon Geoffrey Sanguine thanked Paul Mitchell and Joy Quan-Lee for their work.

### **Social Justice Vestry Motion**

Moved by Michael Burgess+ and seconded by Fran Brown that the Social Justice Motion presented to the Vestry by the Diocese be approved.

The floor was opened for discussion.

Irene Courage stated that the role of the Church is to preach the Gospel, not to support housing. The motion goes too far.

The Rev. Michael Burgess+ stated that Christianity is political because it is responsible for other people. So it includes education, health care, housing.

Johan van t’Hof stated that he could agree with both Irene and Michael. However, real estate is market based. Immigration continues, but the housing stock remains constant. Although more people come in, there is no increase in services.

Moveta Nanton is on the board of the Elizabeth Fry Society, which deals with housing as one of its duties. When the funds run out, the result can be devastating.

John Pugsley stated that the general idea is good – the problem is with the bullet points.

Peggy Needham stated that she supports the motion. Passing it would say that the Vestry cares that people have problems with housing.

Larry Krotz stated that the various levels of government already have this issue on the front burner. Passing the motion would add our voice to the social issue.

Rosemary Hutchison stated that there is a need for more specialized housing. The Diocese should ask the government to assist the churches in building more housing.

Geoffrey Sangwine+ stated that the motion is not so much about solving the issue as it is about giving weight to the voice of the Diocese in its dealings with politicians.

Agreed by the movers Michael Burgess+ and Fran Brown that the motion be amended to remove the bullet points so that the motion reads:

“We, the Vestry of the Parish of St. Peter and St .Simon-the-Apostle, call on all levels of government to protect and advance the human right to housing.”

The Vestry voted in favour of the motion as amended with one opposed.

**Carried**

### **Auditors**

Moved by Johan van t’Hof and seconded by John Pugsley that Dario and Franklin be appointed auditors.

**Carried**

### **Adjournment**

Gerry Courage moved that the meeting be adjourned.

**Carried**

The meeting of the Vestry adjourned *sine die* at 2:20 p.m.

# Members of the Vestry Present at the Meeting

Irene Courage  
Peggy Needham  
David Carrington  
Geoffrey Sangwine +  
Mary Martin  
Paul Faulkner  
Alan Rands  
Vera Vera  
Natalia J  
Betty Scantlebury  
Moveta Nanton  
Fenwick Nanton  
Ena Forde  
Veronica Silver  
Ted Robinson  
Isabelle Robinson  
Nancy Nourse  
Larry Krotz  
Stephanie Woodside  
Joshua McFaul  
Alison Jane  
Daphne Harris  
Gerald Courage  
Rudy Milne  
Nadine Milne  
Linda Davis  
Marina Caytap  
Russell D. Smith

Carol Peck  
Diane Way  
John Pugsley  
Rogers Beyongyera  
Robin Davis  
Johan van t'Hof  
Sophie Knowles  
Kogi Johnson  
May Lewis  
Maurice White  
Gary Toneguzzo  
Joy Quan-Lee  
Douglas Gardiner  
Ian Corlett  
Petra Silver  
Marc Cote  
Eugene Sendelweck  
Robert O'Keefe  
Elaine Kwee-Chong  
Ferdinand Galingan  
Spencer Higgins  
Fran Brown  
Mekhriban Mamedova  
Jane Rajantie  
Sheila Sangwine  
Michael Burgess +  
Rosemary Hutchison  
Abraham Thomas +



## SPSS CLERGY, STAFF AND PARISH NOMINATIONS - VESTRY 2025

<b>Nominations Committee</b>	Mary Martin, Paul Mitchell, Ted Robinson, Geoffrey Sangwine
<b>Clergy</b>	
<b>Incumbent Priest</b>	The Reverend Canon Geoffrey Sangwine
<b>Assistant Curate</b>	The Reverend Abraham Thomas
<b>Honorary Assistant</b>	The Reverend Canon Michael Burgess

Parish Ministries	Elected Position	Rector's Appointment	Corporation Appointment or Hire (H)
<b>Wardens</b>			
<b>Rector's Warden</b>		David Carrington	
<b>People's Warden</b>	David Rounthwaite		
<b>Deputy Warden</b>		Spencer Higgins	
<b>Deputy Warden</b>	Laurie Sanderson		
<b>Advisory Bd Mem at Large</b> <i>2 elected/2 appointed</i>	Mekrihban Mamedova Russell Smith	Matthew Beasley Mark Garbutt	
<b>Altar Guild</b>		Joy Quan-Lee	
<b>Flowers</b>		Joy Quan-Lee/Sheila Thomas	
<b>Bookkeeper</b>			Anthea D'Souza (H)
<b>Caretaker</b>			Daive Guillermo (H)
<b>Church School</b>		Sileen Phillips (Hire)	Sileen Phillips (H)
<b>Christian Education</b>		The Rev'd Canon G. Sangwine Ian Corlett The Rev'd Abraham Thomas	
<b>Community Relations &amp; Communications</b>	Stephanie Woodside		
<b>Envelope Secretary</b>			Paul Mitchell
<b>Assistant</b>			Joy Quan-Lee
<b>Pre-Authorized Giving</b>			Robert Sloan
<b>Garden Guild Chair</b>		Carol Peck	
<b>Pollinator Garden</b>			Fran Brown
<b>Music Director (Interim)</b>			Daniel Webb (H)
<b>Parish Administrator</b>			Jessy Balendra (H)
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>			Ted Robinson
<b>Hospitality</b>			Laurie Sanderson
<b>Coffee Hour</b>			Fran Brown
<b>Funerals/Weddings</b>	Jane Rajante		
<b>Special Events</b>			Laurie Sanderson/Marina Caytap

<b>Parish Ministries</b>	<b>Elected Position</b>	<b>Rector's Appointment/Hire</b>	<b>Corporation Appointment or Hire</b>
<b>Intercessors &amp; Readers</b>		Ian Corlett	
<b>Lay Anointers</b>		Audrey Hughes Ted Robinson	
<b>Lay Members to Synod</b> <i>(2 elected)</i>	Paul Mitchell Mealica Smith Laurie Sanderson		
Alternate			
<b>Lay Pastoral Visitors</b>		Fen Nanton	
<b>Librarian</b>	Carol Peck		
<b>Newsletter</b>	Fr. Michael Burgess		
<b>Parochial Tribunal</b>	Rector/Wardens (ex-officio) Mary Martin Carol Peck		
<b>Property Committee</b>	Larry Krotz		
<b>Refugee Committee</b>		Barbara Pearson David Carrington	
<b>Rental Coordinator</b>		Jessy/C. Ashby	Jessy/C. Ashby
<b>Servers</b>		Fen Nanton	
<b>Sidepersons/Greeters</b>		Larry Krotz	
<b>Social Justice/Advocacy</b>			VACANT
<b>Stewardship</b>	TBA		
<b>Treasurer</b>			VACANT
<b>Verger</b>		Ian Corlett	Ian Corlett (H)

Nominations may be submitted to the Nominations Committee c/o the Church Office,  
Jessy Balendra, Administrator.

Email: [office@stpeterstsimon.ca](mailto:office@stpeterstsimon.ca) Tel: 416.923.8714, extension 3