

## **BISHOP'S VISION/CONNECTION TO YOUTH MINISTRY**

**WHEREAS:** diocesan youth ministry has embodied a flourishing culture of innovation by modeling and teaching how to take intelligent risks and to try out new ideas in programming, in worship, in leadership, in stewardship, in interpersonal skills, and in myriad other ways;

**AND WHEREAS:** the actions of Diocesan Youth Ministry show a longstanding track record of commitment to prophetic social justice-making e.g., Youth Synod influencing Diocesan Synod's decision to include issues of social-justice making in its two-day synods, advocating for the full inclusion of gays and lesbians in the entire life of the church and for the ordination of women to the episcopacy, speaking out against sweatshop labour and advocating for fair appeals for refugees, supporting the use of fair trade products, and several poverty reduction motions and actions;

**AND WHEREAS:** youth ministry has been a leader in moving toward effective resource management in terms of greening youth ministry events and parishes, of managing volunteers, of bringing food for food banks and generally living out of a theology of gratitude for the abundant blessings which God has given to us;

**AND WHEREAS:** youth ministry has helped to give training and opportunities for Christians, young and old, in outstanding leadership for ministry for both volunteer staff and event participants via the Youth Leadership Training program; Youth Synod in general and its Young Adult Mentor program in particular; the Niagara Youth Conference; SpiritQuest; the Diocesan Synod Orientation Program; and many, many more events and programs as well as advocating for leadership training for clergy and laity through Youth Synod;

**AND WHEREAS:** we are renowned across Canada for both creating and advocating for contemporary, life-changing worship services that fully engage laity and clergy in designing, creating and participating in transformative liturgy that is Spirit-driven, affirming, inclusive, diverse, and highly participatory as well as for training events designed to help participants develop liturgical skills and best practices.

### **BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

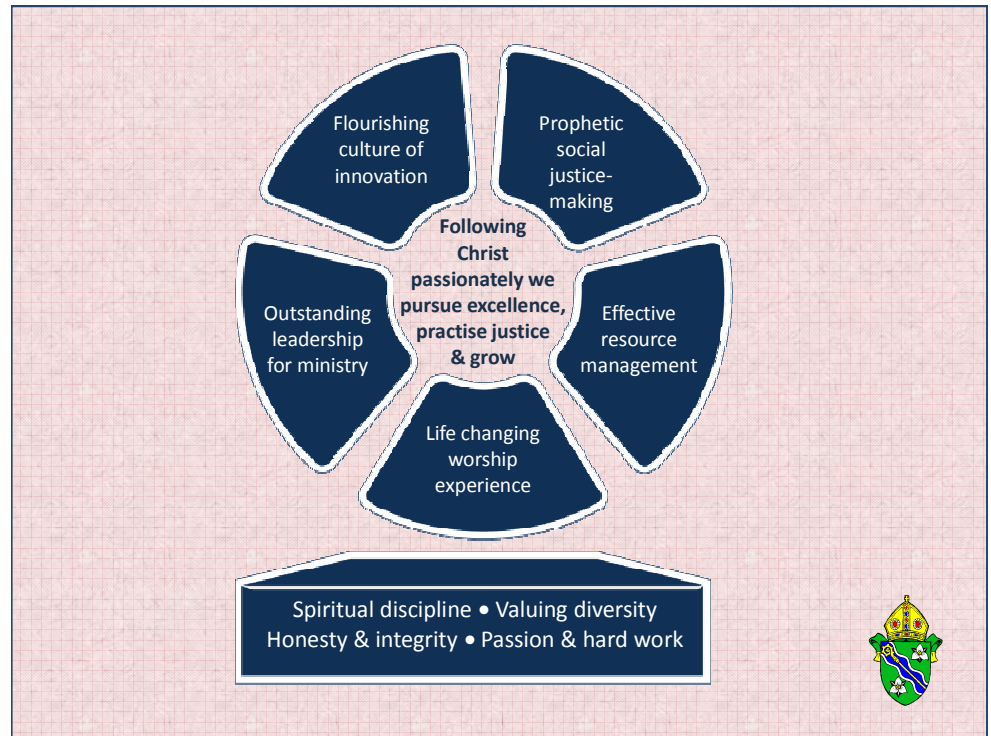
1. Youth Synod 2009 affirms the Diocesan vision and resolves to continue its leadership role as the vision is fully realised in the Diocese of Niagara.
2. Youth Synod 2009 asks the Bishop to affirm his commitment to living out the diocesan vision in partnership with the youth of the Diocese of Niagara through Diocesan Youth Ministry.

Moved by:     Stuart Armstrong  
                  St. John the Divine, Cayuga

Seconded by:

## The Pursuit of Excellence in Ministry Diocese of Niagara Vision

**Youth Ministry  
Supports the  
Diocesan Vision!**



### **Prophetic Social Justice Making**

**Youth Synod** gives youth the space in which to discuss and debate issues of concern to them within the church and beyond. Motions that reflect social justice issues since Youth Synod's inception in 1989:

1989	Ban on styrofoam products at Youth Ministry events
1990	Call for ordination of women to the episcopacy Advocating for the ordination of non-celibate gays and lesbians Encouraging parishes to adopt an 'environmentally friendly' policy
1993	Challenging parishes to highlight women's participation in the life of the early church, and to use inclusive language in liturgy
1995	Supporting the blessing and performing of unions and marriages of couples of the same sex Supporting a ban on animal testing of cosmetics Calling for Synod Council to make leadership training a priority for the clergy
1996	Supporting the right of homosexuals to adopt children Urging the Diocese to support and fund programs to train lay leaders
2000	Spoke out against the practice of sweatshop labour
2001	Petitioned Diocesan Synod to amend its canons to allow same sex marriages to be performed by priests in Niagara Sent a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada and the Premier of Ontario supporting the legalization of same sex marriages spoke out against child poverty encouraging delegates to initiate activities designed to support the poor as well as advocating with the federal, provincial and municipal governments regarding policy action around poverty issues
2002	Supported developmental aid along with the active involvement of Anglicans in justice advocacy Encouraged delegates to intervene verbally in situations of bullying Urged the Canadian Armed Forces to consider equality issues when assigning jobs.
2003	Sent a memorial to Diocesan Synod and General Synod supporting the blessing of same sex unions Asked parishes to use only Fair Trade coffee for all church functions

2004	Spoke out against the use of sweatshops and urged delegates not to purchase sweatshop-made goods Encouraged the Diocese and parishes to include in their codes of conduct a harassment policy that specifically includes sexual orientation as well as asking that church leaders use respectful, supportive and inclusive language around sexual orientation and gender identity
2005	Urged delegates to support the One Tonne challenge and to carpool regularly Added its voice to that of the Canadian Counsel of Refugees and Amnesty International to call on the federal government to implement a fair appeals process for refugees Sent a memorial to Diocesan Synod urging productive dialogue about same sex blessings following the release of the Windsor Report Petitioned the federal government to increase financial aid to the Sudan
2006	Sent a memorial to the 131 <sup>st</sup> Diocesan Synod affirming the support of YS 2006 for the Bishop to grant clergy permission to bless civilly married gay or lesbian couples Issued a statement via the Niagara Anglican encouraging parishes to engage in a dialogue about same sex blessings in preparation for Diocesan Synod Advocated to the Federal government to provide an additional one percent of the budget to provide basic needs and committed to being personally involved in an AIDS advocacy organization Urged the Diocese to adopt an anti-discrimination policy prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation
2007	Committed to starting or supporting green box programs in delegates' parishes Petition the Bishop to declare one Sunday per year for Anglicans to walk, cycle or carpool to church Delegates to 'adopt a road' and pick up garbage after church Asks Diocesan Synod to designate global warming as social justice theme for Synod 2007 Committed delegates at subsequent Youth Synods to bring food donations for a local food bank
2008	Delegates signed and sent a letter to the Federal Minister of Human Resources and Social Development asking the government to take immediate steps towards addressing homelessness Sent a similar letter to their MPs Committed to volunteering 1,000 hours in their youth groups to assist the homeless or those at risk of homelessness Directed Diocesan Youth Ministry Committee to reduce the carbon footprint at youth events Committed to advocating for greening groups in their own parishes Committed to calculating their personal carbon footprint and taking steps to reduce that by 15% Condemned the practice of human trafficking and signed the "I am Coming" petition and committed to praying daily for an end to trafficking and the safe return of victims

**Life Changing Worship:** every Youth Ministry program and event has worship that is intentionally created to allow the Holy Spirit to change lives, and participants in specific programs participate in the development of these liturgies, specifically The Gathering, NYC and YLTP. In addition, the Youth Ministry staff serves as a resource to parishes and the Synod office for creative worship.

**Outstanding Leadership for Ministry:** every Youth Ministry program focuses on developing and utilizing the skills of volunteer staff as well as developing the leadership skills of the participants. Frequently participants 'graduate' to volunteer staff positions based on the high level of skills they possess. The Youth Ministry Training Program (YLTP) specifically focuses on leadership training for youth over a three year program and several of Niagara's parish priests have high praise for the leadership skills of graduates.

**Flourishing Culture of Innovation:** the diocesan youth ministry programs are renowned for their commitment to innovation intended to enhance the experiences of youth and volunteer staff, and the staff are often invited to bring that perspective to other areas in the Diocese.

**Effective Resource Management:** Diocesan Youth Ministry nurtures a cadre of over 100 volunteers spanning a variety of ages across all the regions of the Diocese who can be counted on to support not only Youth Ministry events and programs but also other diocesan and parish needs. Budgeted dollars are maximized in programs in a variety of ways; volunteers sleep on floors for training events, purchasing food & cooking meals for both meetings and programs, and holding programs at low cost facilities when feasible. In addition, Program staff provides both green and blue bins at all residential events if hosting facilities do not. Finally every Youth Ministry program and event includes an evaluation so that feedback can be utilized to better meet the needs of future participants.

## **BULLYING: A CALL TO ACTION**

**WHEREAS:** bullying is seen as a widespread problem in schools and among youth and is an issue that has touched many at Youth Synod either directly or through friends and peers;

**AND WHEREAS:** 34% of students in grades 7 to 11 say they are bullied within a school year, and 27% say they have been bullied online;

**AND WHEREAS:** bullying is very hard for adults to catch and prevent; especially online and non-violent bullying;

**AND WHEREAS:** 81% of bullying happens in a peer group where friends are pressured into keeping silent about the actions of their peers;

**AND WHEREAS:** 83% of students who have watched bullying say it made them uncomfortable and 57% of the time when someone intervenes in a bullying situation, it stops within 10 seconds—and peers intervene more often than adults;

**AND WHEREAS:** the suicide rate among students from ages 10 to 19 is on the rise, and research shows that chronic peer abuse is an additional risk factor for childhood and adolescent suicide for both victims and perpetrators.

### **BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

1. the delegates of Youth Synod 2009 commit to intervening when seeing or hearing about acts of bullying.
2. the delegates of Youth Synod 2009 will be mindful of what they put on Facebook, Zipsqueal, MSN and other websites.
3. Youth Synod asks the Program Consultants to provide training on how to deal with bullying (both at and away from youth events) to youth ministry volunteer staff.
4. Youth Synod 2009 asks the Diocesan Youth Ministry Committee to address the issue of bullying at events such as The Gathering, NYC, YLTP, etc.

Moved by: Kaitlin Lagerwerf  
St. Andrew's, Grimsby

Seconded by: Diana Wood  
Church of the Resurrection, Hamilton

## Resources Consulted:

### **Bullying Facts and Statistics**

<http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/faq/bullying.asp>

### **B-Free.com Statistics**

<http://www.b-free.ca/stats.html>

### **Centre for Suicide Prevention**

<http://www.suicideinfo.ca/csp/assets/alert30.pdf>

[www.ascy.ca/docs/bully\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.ascy.ca/docs/bully_factsheet.pdf)

### **E! Science News**

[http://esciencenews.com/articles/2008/07/17/bullying\\_suicide\\_link\\_explored\\_new\\_study\\_researchers\\_yale](http://esciencenews.com/articles/2008/07/17/bullying_suicide_link_explored_new_study_researchers_yale)

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### **Bullied to Death** Perceptions of Peer Abuse and Suicidal Behaviour during Adolescence

**Jolynn V. Carney** Youngstown State University

This study investigated the perceptions of adolescents concerning the relationship between chronic peer abuse and suicidal behaviour. The major thesis is that chronic peer abuse is an additional risk for adolescent suicidal behaviour. The results of the study upheld this contention and added a surprising component in that bystander perceptions supported victims' views.

### **Bullying-suicide link explored in new study by researchers at Yale**

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Researchers at Yale School of Medicine have found signs of an apparent connection between bullying, being bullied and suicide in children, according to a new review of studies from 13 countries published in the *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*. In the review, Kim and colleague Bennett Leventhal, M.D., analyzed 37 studies that examined bullying and suicide among children and adolescents. The studies took place in the United States, Canada, several European countries (including the United Kingdom and Germany), South Korea, Japan and South Africa. Almost all of the studies found connections between being bullied and suicidal thoughts among children. Five reported that bullying victims were two to nine times more likely to report suicidal thoughts than other children were.

## **CONSUMERISM AND HOW IT RELATES TO STEWARDSHIP IN DELEGATES' PARISHES**

**WHEREAS:** Almost everyone buys many things that we do not really need, and Jesus reminds us that where our treasure is, there our heart will be also (Mt 6.21).

**AND WHEREAS:** The amount of money spent on unnecessary purchases could be spent on better things, or for other people who need basic necessities.

**AND WHEREAS:** Stewardship committees are a great way to advocate for, and share stories of, non-consumption with fellow parishioners and friends.

**AND WHEREAS:** Youth Synod has previously passed a motion against buying bottled water: while environmental in focus, this motion shows our long history of working against consumerism.

### **BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

1. Delegates cut back spending on unnecessary items, both major and minor expenses (from a new PS3 game system or a new iPod to a daily Tim Horton's coffee, fast food instead of bringing food with us, hair products) and donate either a personal set amount or percentage of the money that would have been normally spent on minor purchases to their home parishes or other charities.
2. Delegates join or help to form stewardship committees (including at least one youth) and actively and creatively participate in the activities of those committees.
3. Delegates participate in sharing stories about mindful consumerism and why they are not spending this amount of money using the email address: [whatididntbuy@gmail.com](mailto:whatididntbuy@gmail.com).

Moved by: Dean Sutton-Greenhalgh  
All Saints, Hamilton

Seconded by: Stuart Armstrong  
St. John the Divine, Cayuga

## END THE GENOCIDE IN DARFUR

**WHEREAS:** genocide is the deliberate and systematic destruction, in whole or in part, of an ethnic, racial, religious, or national group;

**AND WHEREAS:** genocide in Darfur has killed 400,000 people to date, and displaced more than 2.5 million people since 2003;

**AND WHEREAS:** after the Holocaust, our world leaders pledged that genocide would never happen again, but since that day incidences of genocide have occurred without intervention from the worldwide community in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and now Darfur;

**AND WHEREAS:** God commands us to “Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends,” (John 15:12-13);

**AND WHEREAS:** God calls us to be responsible to help every person to bring about God’s reign.

### BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. All delegates will become a voice for Darfur by sending a post card to the Prime Minister and their MPs and/or will call 1-800-GENOCIDE to show that we join the Save Darfur! campaign in supporting: *the promotion of **peace**, the **protection** of civilians, **punishment** for the perpetrators of genocide, **prevention** of future genocides*
2. Delegates will become a member of the Save Darfur Coalition to get updates on how they can help work against the genocide in Darfur (savedarfur.org) and sign the petition to urge China to stop protecting Sudan and aiding the genocide in Darfur (<http://action.savedarfur.org/campaign/chinaolymp>).
3. Delegates will host a film screening at their home parishes and/or schools using the Darfur: A Call to Action video and discussion guide and urge the parish and/or school to take action to help Darfur, including, for parishes, to become a Congregation of Conscience <http://www.savedarfur.org/page/s/faith> postcards.
4. Delegates will write to their local newspaper about the crisis in Darfur, what they are doing to try to stop it, and the importance of covering the Darfur crisis in our media.
5. Delegates will pray daily for an end to the crisis in Darfur.

Moved by: Emily Johnson  
St. Christopher’s, Burlington

Seconded by:

## **HOMOPHOBIA**

**WHEREAS:** Homophobia is the irrational fear of, aversion to or discrimination against homosexuality or homosexuals;

**AND WHEREAS:** The Bible says in Malachi 2:10 “Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our fathers by breaking faith with one another?”;

**AND WHEREAS:** In 2005, 2003, 2001 and 1995, Youth Synod advocated for the blessing of same gender unions, and Bishop Michael announced at Diocesan Synod in March 2008 that the Diocese is creating rites for the blessing of civilly married same sex unions, and that he intends to authorize the use of those rites shortly after their completion.

### **BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

1. Delegates will write to their local municipal board members asking them to proclaim May 17, 2010 as international day against homophobia and to fly the rainbow flag on that day.
2. Delegates will petition their high school to fly the rainbow flag from May 15-18th (the 17th is a Sunday this year).
3. Delegates will remove from their daily vocabulary language that would exclude, antagonize or discriminate against people of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered (“GLBT”) community such as the words gay, dike, fag, pansy, etc. and actively intervene when others use such language.
4. Delegates will sign the Safe Schools Petition, calling for concrete action to provide a safe environment for GLBT students and staff as well as those perceived to be GLBT. (Petition found at: <http://www.egale.ca/index.asp?lang=E&menu=1&item=1176>)

Moved by: Justin Michaels  
St. Matthias, Guelph

Seconded by:

## **INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE IN CHURCH/NON-DEROGATORY LANGUAGE**

**WHEREAS:** It is common for many people to use words such as “gay” and “retarded” in the wrong context (e.g. as synonyms for the word “stupid”). It is profoundly disrespectful to use these words in the wrong context and youth should be encouraged to try and stop using these terms in inappropriate ways;

**AND WHEREAS:** our faith has long taught that how we speak matters very deeply, as we can see in many places in the Bible: “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Matthew 12:34) and “Let your speech always be with grace” (Colossians 4:6);

**AND WHEREAS:** Scripture is clear that God is beyond gender: “So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” (Genesis 1.27);

**AND WHEREAS:** Youth Synod has had a history of inclusive language in past motions and continues to be committed to ensuring that we speak and act to include all of God’s people.

### **BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

1. Delegates no longer use words such as “gay” and “retarded” pejoratively as synonyms for “stupid”.
2. Delegates encountering others speaking this way will ask those people to stop doing so.
3. Delegates try to use both male and female pronouns for God and always keep an open mind about the gender of God.
4. Worship at youth events will use gender-neutral language and a balance of pronouns to refer to God.
5. Youth Synod 2009 asks the Bishop and the Synod of the Diocese of Niagara to commit to using gender-neutral language and a balance of male and female pronouns in all future diocesan worship services.

Moved by: Dean Sutton-Greenhalgh  
All Saints, Hamilton

Seconded by:

## YOUTH OUTREACH MOTION

**WHEREAS:** youth ministry events are intended to create safe spaces where we can grow as individuals and leaders, explore and get excited about our faith, and worship in ways different than at church;

**AND WHEREAS:** relationships in faith communities are important because they allow youth to connect with others who share similar values and get to know each other on a deeper level than may otherwise be possible;

**AND WHEREAS:** it is important for those new to youth ministry to feel welcomed and safe at youth events in order for them to participate in these relationships;

**AND WHEREAS:** in the first Christian community, "the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul" (acts 4.32), we see the ideal presented that we are joined through our faith as one and must know and care for one another.

### BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. Youth Synod 2009 asks the Diocesan Program Consultants to coordinate youth ambassadors at all major diocesan events to talk up why it is a great thing to be part of Diocesan Youth Ministry events and what youth will gain from participating in Diocesan Youth Ministry events, and to support that, each Youth Synod 2009 delegate will volunteer to be a youth ambassador for at least two diocesan events in 2009-2010.
2. Youth Synod asks the Diocesan Youth Ministry Committee to create teams to go out to parishes (as invited) to make presentations about the benefits and joys of participating in Diocesan Youth Ministry events, and to support that, each Youth Synod 2009 delegate will volunteer to be part of a team.
3. Each Youth Synod 2009 delegate will, at any Diocesan Youth Ministry event she/he attends from now on, meet and speak to at least one person whom she/he has not met before, and that Diocesan Youth Ministry staff and volunteers will ensure that event participants are reminded to do this at the beginning of each event.
4. Youth Synod 2009 asks Youth Ministry Program Consultants to arrange for non-staff youth greeters at all Diocesan Youth Ministry events, and to support that, each Youth Synod 2009 delegate will volunteer to be such a greeter.

Moved by: Rosie Hopkins  
St. Christopher's, Burlington

Seconded by: Derek La Hay  
St. Christopher's, Burlington