



YEAR IN REVIEW
2021-2022



MONTREAL
DIO

FROM THE PRINCIPAL: A TIME FOR RECONSTRUCTION



Dear friends,

In the midst of the change and the challenge of this past year, I have found myself returning to the Biblical theme of reconstruction.

For many Christians, one of the dominant motifs of the Hebrew Scriptures is exile, and rightly so.

After several centuries as an independent kingdom, Israel was conquered, the temple destroyed, and the people taken into exile in Babylon. It was a cataclysmic event for the people of God that resounds across the pages of Scripture.

But exile is not the end of the story. In time, the exiles were permitted to return to Jerusalem and begin the work of reconstruction. This was a literal rebuilding. The returnees built a new temple in Jerusalem. But it was also a reconstruction of a different sort. The community that rebuilt itself in Jerusalem was not the same as the community that had been taken into exile. Israel was no longer an independent kingdom but a peripheral province in a mighty empire. The memories of what had come before were fading. Remaining faithful to God as God's people meant creating a new—different—community than what had come before.

For the college community, the pandemic was an experience of exile from our building. But in this past year, we returned to the building and began to reconstruct our embodied community life. This meant remembering our former patterns of living. Where do we keep the communion wine? Whose job is it to empty the dishwasher? We had to change as well. We realized, for instance, that the pandemic meant there was a need for new technology in our classrooms to support hybrid teaching.

Our community is different as well. Many people who were students when the pandemic began have now graduated. New students joined our community online and had little experience of our in-person practices. We've welcomed the United Theological College and their

students into our midst and begun to understand the identity of the college as an ecumenical community.

God was with God's people during reconstruction just as much as at any point in their history. The prophet Haggai ministered during reconstruction. Channeling the voice of God, he had this to say to the leaders of the reconstruction effort in Jerusalem: "Yet now, take courage—work, for I am with you... My spirit abides among you; do not fear." (Haggai 2:4-5)

There is much about the future of the church that can seem uncertain. Whether it is installing new technology, incorporating a theological college, or discerning our calling as followers of Christ in a plural world, the work can seem challenging and overwhelming. It is, perhaps, no different from how it felt to be an exile returning to Jerusalem and setting to work on a new temple. Haggai reminds us that in the midst of this courageous work, God's spirit is with us. We need not fear.

There's another way I take comfort from reconstruction. The form of the Jewish religion that emerged in the period of this second temple was different than the form of the Jewish religion of the people who built the first temple several centuries earlier. But it was the same God they worshipped and the same truths they proclaimed. That's been true for the church in its history as well. In order to stay faithful to an unchanging God, the church has needed to continually change.

This post-pandemic period of reconstruction is another opportunity for change for this theological college and for the church more broadly. As we return to our buildings, we're not only cleaning off the cobwebs and installing webcams, we're also asking the hard questions about who God is calling us to be. It is comforting to know that we are not the first followers of God to be in this position. God's faithfulness remains steadfast even as our own ways of following God shift and alter. In that message, I find courage and will not fear. God is in the midst of this holy work.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jesse A. Zink". The script is fluid and cursive.

Jesse Zink
Principal

JESSE ZINK'S TERM AS PRINCIPAL RENEWED

The Board of Governors of Montreal Dio has approved a renewal of the term of the Rev. Canon Jesse Zink as principal of the college. "Jesse arrived at the college in 2017 and has been a transformative leader for this institution," said the Rt. Rev. Mary Irwin-Gibson, Bishop of Montreal and Chair of the Board of Governors. "He has raised the profile of the college, launched new educational programming to serve the needs of a changing church, recruited an expanded student body, and steered the college through a global pandemic. He has done this with skill, good humour, and grace."

Dr. Zink's initial five-year term ends this summer. Following an extensive review process over the past year, the Board of Governors renewed his contract for a further five years.

MAJOR NEW FUNDING TO SUPPORT NEW INITIATIVES

MONTREAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY RECEIVES PHASE II OF LILLY ENDOWMENT GRANT

The theological education consortium of which Montreal Dio is a part has received a major grant from an American philanthropic foundation.

The five year grant of \$1-million (USD) will help the Montreal School of Theology in its ongoing work of preparing pastoral leaders to face the new and ever-changing challenges of ministry in our contemporary world. The grant is part of the Lilly Endowment's three-phase Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative, which is designed to support theological colleges in Canada and the United States as they face the many challenges of preparing church leaders for the church and world of today and tomorrow.

"This is a huge vote of confidence in theological education in Montreal," said Dio principal Jesse Zink. "This was a very competitive process involving hundreds of theological schools across the U.S. and Canada. We're grateful that Lilly has recognized the value of what we do here and given us the means to continue to expand our programs in new ways to serve the needs of our changing church."

MST's grant proposal focused on three main areas. First, MST will launch the Montreal Mission Internship, a program that Dio has offered at times in the past. MMI is a summer service-learning program that allows young people to discern a vocation to lay and ordained ministry while serving others in community (read more on page 7). Second, MST will thoroughly revise its field education program. Under the leadership of a new Director of Field Education, MST will develop new ways of training future clergy to ensure that their field education experiences prepare them for the kind of ministry they will engage in in coming decades. Finally, MST will launch a new mentoring program for clergy who are new to ministry. This is based on a program that the Presbyterian College has offered in the past. Each of these programs will be ecumenical in nature and focused on providing leaders in the church with opportunities for contextual engagement, reflective learning, and growth as a pastoral leader.

Roland De Vries, principal of the Presbyterian College and Director of MST, said, "This grant will enable MST to pursue its renewed mission with creativity and with strengthened institutional capacities—particularly in engagement with our unique and dynamic context of Montreal. This project and supporting grant represent a profoundly hopeful moment as MST and its constituent colleges creatively reimagine theological education."

Across North America, 84 other theological schools are receiving a total of \$82 million in grants through this second phase of Lilly's Pathways Initiative.

MCGILL SCHOOL OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES RECEIVES SUBSTANTIAL BEQUEST

In October of 2021, our colleagues at the McGill School of Religious Studies received one of the largest gifts ever made to the Faculty of Arts. The gift was made by Professor Ray Hart who has long been a leader in theology and religious studies in North America. His decision to leave a substantial legacy to the School of Religious Studies will immeasurably strengthen the school. Students at Dio are enrolled at McGill and will benefit fully from this gift in the years and decades to come.

Staff Culture Recommendations:

As a staff, we often talk about where we see God in the world and in the culture we engage with. You'll find some of our recommendations from the past year throughout this review.



Inside the McCord Museum, there are treasures from Montreal's past and present. Top of my list is the permanent exhibit, *Indigenous Voices of Today: Knowledge, Trauma, and Resistance*, which is curated by McCord's Huron-Wendat historian, Jonathan Lainey. This is part of McCord's commitment to initiate dialogue and foster understanding. It's an invitation to transform one's way of seeing the world.
- Alyson Huntly, Director of United Church Studies



Starring Canada's own Simu Liu, *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* was released in September of 2021. It combines fun geeky comedy, sumptuous costuming, always-impressive CGI effects and a genuinely compelling story. The film examines the legacy of families, and the choices each of us must make about what we choose to carry into our own lives from the stories of our families' past.
-Heather McCance, Director of Pastoral Studies



After two years of Zoom convocations, the college community was delighted to gather in person at Christ Church Cathedral to celebrate our graduates as well as the deepening of our relationship with the United Theological College. It was a truly ecumenical and bilingual affair, including hymns and prayers from the Anglican and United Church traditions, and clergy and guests representing both denominations and beyond.

The honorary Doctorate of Divinity was conferred by UTC on the Rev. Catherine (Cathy) Ann Hamilton for her impact on the vitality of French ministries in the United Church of Canada. A special award was given to Patty Evans, chairperson of the UTC Board of Governors, for her tireless work over the past two years as UTC has discerned a future with Dio.

The convocation address was given by Adele Halliday (pictured above), Anti-Racism and Equity Lead for the United Church of Canada. Earlier in the day she gave a public talk at St. James United Church on building an anti-racist church, providing a helpful framework and useful tools that will enable communities of faith to engage in active anti-racism work. In Adele's convocation address, she reflected on the story of doubting Thomas and noted that our Christ is a wounded Christ, and that as his followers, we are called to embrace brokenness. She encouraged the graduates to begin a "trauma informed ministry", and to use their own experiences of brokenness, of belonging, and of not being believed, to create space for racialized people in their ministry contexts.

AWARDS

Prizes Awarded by Montreal Dio:

The Gault Award, made to the final-year student who, in the opinion of the judges, shows the best combination of personal maturity and readiness for ministry: Bram Kranichfeld
The Bancroft Prize, for a theological essay: Ben Crosby
The Robert Reford Prize, for the leading of worship. Based on the conduct of Morning and Evening Prayer in College Chapel, in the normal course of the daily schedule: Sarah Wicks
The Lachlan Gibb Award, for preaching: Sarah Killam
The Canon Mark Beaufoy Award, for the demonstration and development of pastoral skills: Bram Kranichfeld
The Alys L.G. Slater Memorial Bequest, for proficiency in Anglican studies: Alex Griffin
The Lionel Temple-Hill Prize, in memory of Lionel Temple-Hill, a 1938 graduate of Dio and 1976 honorary doctorate recipient: Peter Lekx
The Rev. Canon Dr. Lettie James Prize, for feminist or pastoral theory: Jessica Gauthier
The College Prize for Academic Achievement in the Master of Arts Program: Tevfik Karatop

Prizes Awarded by UTC:

The McCorkill Award for Academic Excellence in M.Div. III: Norman Robert Boie
The Donald H. Crawford Award for Pastoral Ministry: Jean-Philippe Dubé-Goupil
The John Dillon Award for Highest Standing in M.Div. II: Adedeji Sunday Akintayo
The Joseph G. Joyce Award for Old Testament Studies: Felississima Mwambarangwe
The Lydia McCullough Memorial Award for Church History: Jessica Gauthier
The R. Stuart Johnson Memorial Prize for the Pursuit of Excellence in Biblical Studies: Morgan-Pierre Point
The Fairman Junior Award for General Proficiency in M.Div. I: Marie Silvenie Chery

Bishop Russel Brown Award, awarded to the student who made the biggest impact on the community life of the college over the year, voted on by the student body: Norman Robert Boie

OUR GRADUATES

NORMAN ROBERT BOIE, MASTER OF DIVINITY (WITH DISTINCTION)



Norman Robert grew up in a bilingual family with an American father and a French-Canadian mother. Norman was artistically gifted and religiously inclined. While he was considering joining a Roman Catholic religious order in his late teens, he finished a Bachelor's in Education at McGill University. In his twenties, he taught in the public and private Quebec school system. In 1991, he auditioned for Montreal's production of *Les Misérables* and embarked on a career in the performing arts. In 2001, he started a career in television, first as a manager and then as a TV producer. In 2017, he left the TV industry to follow a call to ministry. Norman's vision for ministry is to communicate God's unconditional love for all of humanity and creation for today's context.

"In the last five years, I have learned much about religion and explored theology from many diverse angles. In doing so, I have deepened my faith and beliefs, and have integrated skills and knowledge gleaned from previous life experiences. I am ready to serve and go wherever the Spirit is calling."

BRAM KRANICHFELD, MASTER OF DIVINITY

Bram grew up in New York. After college in Chicago and law school in Ithaca, Bram worked as a lawyer in various roles, mostly as a criminal prosecutor. Bram worked as a county prosecutor in Burlington, Vermont and led the Criminal Division of the Vermont Attorney General's Office in Montpelier. Bram also served a term on the Burlington City Council. Mid-career, Bram began discerning for ordained ministry in the Vermont Episcopal Church, which led him eventually to enroll in the M.Div. program at Montreal Dio. Bram lives in Burlington with his wife, Erin, and their two children. Bram hopes to be ordained soon as a transitional deacon in the Vermont Episcopal Church.

"I have learned how important community is to ministry. Even through the pandemic, the Dio community was warm, welcoming, and tightly knit. Knowing I could always rely on my peers was really important."



PRISCILLA GEISTERFER, DIPLOMA IN MINISTRY (WITH DISTINCTION)



Since 2000, Priscilla has been working in the context of spiritual formation for various Canadian religious institutions. Priscilla comes to this work with an MA in Biblical interpretation and several years of doctoral studies that remain incomplete. Her personal interests were rooted in breaking open complex religious wisdom and ideas in the sacred literature of Christian and Judaic foundations and making them accessible to reveal the wise guidance and love of the Creator. This work included individual spiritual counseling, group spiritual guidance, inspirational talks, and course instruction. Priscilla developed programs for teaching the spiritual foundations of Christianity as well as intensive interfaith programs emphasizing an awareness of diversity.

Recently, Priscilla spent 11 years working as faith formation coordinator for United Churches in New Brunswick.

"UTC formed in me Christian leadership that was rooted in love, spiritual practice, and faith. The leader that I have become as a result, emerges from an emphasis on theological reflection in relation to all aspects of Christian community. I believe this formation is as valuable for the laity as it is for ordained members of the Church."

JEAN-PHILIPPE DUBÉ-GOUPIL, DIPLOMA IN MINISTRY

Jean-Philippe is a "jack of all trades", a specialized educator interested in theories of art. He has worked in difficult contexts and met people with criminal records, mental health issues or who are in palliative care. He believes that human beings are not limited to the mistakes of the past, no matter how serious they are. Recognizing that fact made him acquire the necessary maturity to accompany and support those around him despite our human fragility and our differing stories. As he progressed in this way of thinking, he grew interested in theology. He has come to believe that humans are first and foremost spiritual beings, and that we are inclined to reflect on the transcendent and are bound to find meaning in life. Whether we are Christians, Jews, Muslims or even atheists, we are moved by the ultimate questions. Being humans is to question what lies beyond us.

"I want to thank everyone who accompanied me through this journey. I will keep fond memories of the year we have spent together."



FORMING AN ECUMENICAL COLLEGE: A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIO AND THE UNITED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE



Ms. Patty Evans, The Rev. Jim Pratt, The Rev. Paul Dillman, and Bishop Mary Irwin-Gibson sign agreement documents between UTC and Dio

A key feature of the past year has been the college's continued work with the United Theological College to explore a more integrated and sustainable future relationship. In April 2022, UTC and Dio announced they had reached an agreement to deepen their relationship and provide for excellent theological education in Montreal. UTC will continue to wind down its existence and transfer its assets to Dio. Dio commits to offering United Church programming on an ongoing basis and to incorporate United Church representatives into its governance.

UTC and Dio have worked together for nearly a century. At two previous points in their shared history—first during World War II and then from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s—UTC occupied space in Dio's building. In January 2021, the colleges announced a strategic alliance for a period of 18 months. UTC sold its building and moved into Dio. During the 2021-2022 academic year, Dio's principal, Jesse Zink has offered oversight to UTC's programs and the two colleges shared some worship and programming. A survey of United Church students conducted in February 2022 showed significant levels of satisfaction with the arrangement and a unanimous desire to continue the partnership between the colleges beyond this year.

While students and faculty have been working out this relationship in the college, governors of the two colleges have engaged in an extensive, shared planning process overseen by a small working group of members of both Boards of Governors, and assisted by an external consultant and working groups dedicated to specific topics. This included a two-day in-person facilitated meeting of the two Boards as well as numerous and frequent online meetings and consultations.

In agreement documents approved by the Boards of Governors at their separate April meetings, Dio agreed to formally launch a United Church Studies program that will prepare students for ordered ministry in the United Church of Canada. Dio also agreed to continue to build on UTC's work of offering online education to French-speaking students and programs that prepare people for bilingual ministry.

Patty Evans, the chairperson of UTC's Board of Governors, said, "We are entering this partnership with aspirations for all that we hope to gain as we share and learn from one another, mutually celebrating our gifts and strengths. As the UTC Board of Governors, we are gratified that our aim to ensure the continuity of United Church theological education in Montreal beyond the existence of UTC itself is being realized."

Dio will amend its constitution to provide for United Church participation in its governance. Dio will be an ecumenical institution that continues to train students for ministry in the Anglican, United Church, and other traditions, in partnership with the Montreal School of Theology and McGill University. While Dio was founded in the Anglican tradition, it has long had students from other Christian traditions and currently has students from Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and Pentecostal backgrounds, in addition to the Anglican and Episcopal tradition. This agreement formalizes that understanding of Dio and acknowledges the special role of the United Church in this partnership.

"God is always calling us to new things," said the Rt. Rev. Mary Irwin-Gibson, Anglican Bishop of Montreal and President of Dio. "The decisions we are making are the result of the great faithfulness and goodwill shown by all who have been involved in this process. We are excited to see what new fruit this partnership will bear for our churches."

"The last year has shown us the great potential of this relationship," said Principal Zink. "We've seen great growth in our online courses for lay people, in English and in French. We've learned about how UTC's work in French can serve a broader audience. And we've realized how we are called to partner in the work of preaching the gospel. I'm looking forward to what we can continue to do together."



PERSPECTIVES ON A HYBRID YEAR



LIVING INTO HYBRIDITY

The Rev. Dr. Heather McCance, Director of Pastoral Studies

The word 'hybridity' carries many meanings from different disciplines, but at its core it is about combining things to create new structures and practices in which the preceding elements are mixed. It's a good word for the 2021-22 school year.

First, and as you'll read about elsewhere, was our strategic alliance with the United Theological College. This meant that I was blessed to have UTC staff as colleagues working just down the hall, and that our student body was larger and more diverse than it might otherwise have been.

Second, the reality of theological education during a global pandemic meant that we all needed to be flexible. In teaching the In-Ministry Year courses to the final year students from Dio, UTC and Presbyterian College in Preaching and Ministry Leadership, there were only two occasions in the entire year when all the students were in the same building as me. In the Ministry Seminar we were sometimes online and sometimes in person – and sometimes, some of us were online and some in person. This brought some challenges but also some real gifts – for example we could have guest speakers come to our students from literally anywhere on the planet (although I limited myself to North America).

Worship wasn't hybrid in the sense of some worshippers being in person and others online (as in many faith communities); rather, some of our worship services were in person and others online. This gave each worship service a distinct flavour, and yet allowed for the maximum participation of community members from far away and on campus.

Hybridity comes with challenges as we negotiate new ways of being together and doing things. Yet it has also brought to all of us great gifts that can only better equip our students for ministry in this ever-changing world.

HYBRID LEARNING AS COMMUNITY CARE

Peter Lekx, Master of Divinity student

I want to reflect for a moment on the remarkable technological transitions that we have experienced as students at Dio, thinking particularly of the switch last fall to a hybrid learning model. This consists of in-person learning for those of us who can be physically present at the college, joined by others online via Zoom connections. As someone who experiences health difficulties resulting from extended screen-time, being able to cautiously return to in-person learning last fall was a great relief after having spent eighteen months completely online! However, due to individual health situations or border difficulties, it is simply not always possible for everyone to be physically present, hence our new norm of hybrid learning. Even though I am aided best by in-person learning, I can think of recent situations when last-minute health considerations arose at home, keeping me from physically attending – but still being able to participate! Our hybrid classes have been a fruitful way to create a good learning environment while keeping the flexibility to accommodate our personal situations, which tend to change all too rapidly in the present world. This has allowed us all to err on the side of caution as we consider how to care for our neighbours and colleagues most compassionately.

I have found this method has worked particularly well in the small seminar classes I have been in this year as part of the ministry training portion of the Master of Divinity. Thanks in no small part to professors who are carefully curating these seminars, we end up in deep debate over our course materials and I for one often completely forget about any differences between who is present and who is online – simply appreciating what they are each offering to our communal learning! It has been a blessing to connect through these hybrid learning classes with my colleagues and professors – to have such meaningful discussions that have inspired me to grow in my faith and understanding.

Staff Culture Recommendation:



My family and I were captivated by Disney's *Encanto*, the story of a magical family and their struggles to learn what truly unites them. The music is catchy, the animation is stunning, and the core message that what matters is who we are created to be and not what we do is a beautiful articulation of the Christian gospel. - Jesse Zink, Principal



Montreal Mission Internship, 2015

REFLECTING ON A YEAR IN MINISTRY

Bram Kranichfeld, Master of Divinity student

I was blessed to have been placed this year at St. James Church in Essex Junction, Vermont. To have been part of this faith community as an assistant minister was a tremendous experience for me. I received focused instruction from an ordained minister and was able to experience ministry in a congregational setting.

To have received the tutelage of an ordained priest was invaluable in my formation. I was able to observe and assist my supervisor in all her ministerial roles, from liturgical leader to pastor to administrator. She was always available to answer my questions, no matter how inconsequential they might have seemed.

It was also deeply meaningful to be in a congregational setting. This experience has also solidified what I now understand to be a call to parish ministry. To be part of a faith community and to experience the stability of a parish setting deeply resonated with me. I got to know the dynamics of this community and the relationships within it. Particularly, this experience deepened my understanding of ministry and pastoral care in the context of a congregation.

It was also a blessing, maybe counterintuitively, to have had this experience during the pandemic. There was rarely a week where we knew what to expect regarding Covid restrictions or the rate of new cases. I got a front row seat to the kind of adaptive leadership and decision making demanded by the challenges of the pandemic. I am grateful to have had this experience as we continue to move through these liminal times.

THE MONTREAL MISSION INTERNSHIP: Forming Young Leaders for the Church and World

This summer, Montreal Dio and its ecumenical partners are relaunching the Montreal Mission Internship: a nine-week paid internship for young people of faith that will enable participants to put their faith into action and discern their Christian vocation in our changing world.

The Covid-19 pandemic has been challenging for many young people with disruption to education and social life. These last two years have also made clear the scope of the challenges that we face as a society. Our sense is that young people emerging into adulthood at this moment are both driven by a desire to build a just society but also searching for ways to make meaningful change that aligns with their vision and values. There are many young people who have an inchoate sense of what the church would call vocation but lack opportunity to develop this call in the context of a supportive community of peers. We're excited to be relaunching this program and providing this opportunity for more young adults to find their calling as they emerge into adulthood.

Each intern will be placed in a social service placement where they will engage in meaningful work in an area of deep concern for them. Every week, the participants will meet as a group for learning, reflection, and community support, facilitated by the program's director, Alan Ma, Montreal School of Theology faculty, and other guests. To make this program as accessible as possible to students from as many backgrounds as possible, this is a paid internship position, with a significant stipend.

We're able to relaunch MMI this summer thanks to the recent grant we received from the Lilly Endowment (see page 2), as well as additional funding from the Anglican Foundation of Canada's Say Yes to Kids initiative, the Diocese of Montreal and the Nakonha:ka Regional Council of the United Church of Canada.

Staff Culture Recommendation:

Poetry Unbound



The podcast *Poetry Unbound* gives a deep dive into a different poem every episode, with the Irish poet and theologian Pádraig Ó Tuama as your guide. His poem choices are engaging and his commentary is generous, inviting the listener to hear the words more deeply. Each episode is about 15 minutes long — perfect for a short commute, walk or mid-day break.

- Jen Bourque, Chaplain



An open enrolment course

Learn and prepare to lead a Bible study on the Gospel of Luke through a combination of synchronous online learning, and resources you can access at your own pace



OPEN ENROLMENT COURSES: BROADENING THE REACH OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The college offered its largest and most diverse array of online open enrolment courses this year, reaching a growing number of students across the United States and Canada, and helping build cultures of discipleship and Christian formation in local congregations.

Open enrolment courses are designed to be short (no more than five weeks in length), focused on one particular topic or theme, and accessible to lay people who desire to learn more about their faith but may not have much background or experience with the study of the Christian tradition.

Our numerous innovations this year included:

- Offering our first courses in French, thanks to our partnership with the United Theological College.
- Offering our first course using a hybrid teaching modality. In our winter course on leading a Bible study on the Gospel of Luke, participants engaged with some material at their own pace in an asynchronous fashion and gathered together online for some learning in a synchronous fashion
- Adapted material from our practical ministry courses for a wide audience, including a course on preaching and another on offering pastoral care.

We estimate that close to 500 people engaged with our open enrolment courses this year. Some participated as part of groups that then gathered together to discuss the material after class. Some joined as individuals. Some took more than one course over the course of the year.

Valerie Tryon from Hanmer, Ontario in the Diocese of Algoma has taken several of the online courses. She says, "Whether taken for leisure or more serious study Dio's open enrolment courses are worth a try. The quality is consistent and suited to a variety of interests, abilities and applications." Caroline Filler, from Verdun, Quebec took the course on leading a Bible study on the Gospel of Luke and then used the curriculum provided in the course to lead a Lenten Bible study in her church, Epiphany Anglican in the Diocese of Montreal. "The classes and curriculum provided left me feeling confident for the Bible study," she says. "The themes and questions provided led to rich and thoughtful discussions. These parables and passages of scripture are familiar, but the themes and questions suggested seemed to bring new light and another angle to them for many of our parishioners."

Randy Gates from Austin, Quebec in the Diocese of Montreal took the course on pastoral care taught by college chaplain, Jen Bourque. "I believe that we all have a responsibility and a calling to take care of others. Having the opportunity to participate in the open enrolment classes offered by the college, I feel that I am better prepared to continue along my journey of faith and of caring for my fellow neighbour. Please continue to make these kinds of quality courses available to us all."

Other topics for this year included close studies of the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, a course on reading the Bible at a time of climate change, and an introduction to Exodus. We'll be announcing next year's line-up of courses this summer. Stay tuned for details!

Staff Culture Recommendation:



I'm not typically the biggest fan of sci-fi but the lyricism of Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone's writing in *This is How you Lose the Time War*, made the book a joy to read. The intricate and often-times convoluted representation of time in a world that seems always on the brink of collapse, forces you to focus on the one thing that is clear: the love story at the heart of all the rubble. And I think that's a beautiful representation of how we can strive to exist in our similarly disorienting world.

- Emily Stuchbery, Communications Coordinator

CATCHING UP WITH SOME OF LAST YEAR'S GRADS



Fresia and Archdeacon Tim Smart outside of St. George's

FRESIA SABORIO

After graduating from the MDiv at Montreal Dio, I was ordained as a transitional deacon and immediately after, I moved to the Eastern Townships to serve my curacy. It was a big change from the church environment of Montreal, but I adapted quite quickly. The warmth with which the community received me helped me to embrace the challenges of the new ministry.

During the time I was at Dio, I loved attending Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer with my classmates. This prayer practice turned out to be the discipline that is sustaining me the most in ministry. Another valuable lesson learned was the stewardship of time and learning how to prioritize, not looking for perfection but allowing the grace of God to work through us.

During the weekdays when I am preparing my Sunday sermon, I remember the love for preaching all the professors had. Their passion has stayed with me. I cannot underline enough that the community of friends made throughout seminary has become the support network of colleagues that keeps providing me with encouragement and with a sense of walking this journey together.



Ben with his wife Erica and son Charles

BEN STUCHBERY

I began my curacy at St. James', Hudson and St. Mary's, Como in September 2021 under the supervision of the Ven. Sophie Rolland.

The pandemic has made the last eight months an especially challenging moment to begin a new ministry. When I started in September, the parish was just re-opening to in-person worship. By Christmas, we were back online, and would not re-open until the beginning of March. I entered a parish that had either lost or put on hold many of the events and social groups that tied the community together. I found I needed to be very intentional in reaching out to parishioners to introduce myself, and to hear their stories. That work is starting to bear fruit. I've kickstarted a pastoral care team. I've led two book studies. I've organized two quiet days for prayer and conversation. I've taken the lead on our monthly Messy Church. I wrangled some volunteers for a Passion Play on Palm Sunday. All of that on top of administering the cemetery, preaching, and leading worship (the heart of my pastoral responsibilities).

I am drawing constantly from my studies at Dio and from the Clinical Pastoral Education program. I am learning to trust my gifts for pastoral ministry. Prayer is where I continue to find my energy. This is the greatest gift Dio gave to me: the habit of prayer. Even on days when I don't pray in a formal way, I carry with me an ongoing awareness of God thanks to my habit of prayer.



JON JAMESON

My time since graduating from Dio has been quite a blessed whirlwind. I was able to continue serving at the Church of St. Mark and St. Peter (CMP) in Ville St Laurent, the church that I did my In-Ministry Year at, as Honorary Assistant as they moved back into more regular in-person services. They have greatly blessed me and my family as a community of faith and it was a joy to serve with them. In the fall, my band Delta Spirit was finally able to get back on the road (we were shut down as Covid emerged) and we made a new album that will be coming out this summer. Finally, I accepted a call to St. John's Church, located on one of the historic squares in downtown Savannah, Georgia.

It is a wonderful Episcopal church that upholds the Prayer Book tradition. The cross-border move, that included buying a home over FaceTime, was quite an adventure, but we are loving it down here! I continue to be grateful for the formation and education that Dio provided, and I pray that it will continue to serve and bless the Church as we seek to share the saving gospel of our Lord until he comes again.

DONORS 2021-2022

The following individuals and institutions generously donated to Montreal Dio between May 1, 2021 and April 30 2022.
Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of this list.

Ms. Jane Aitkens
Mrs. D. Ardell
The Rev. Peter Asbil
The Rev. John Barton
The Rev. Lisette Baxter
The Ven. James Bennett
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