

Community mourns the passing of Rev. Sheilagh Ashworth

By Mark Pavilons

The King community has lost a truly unique soul. The Rev. Sheilagh Ashworth passed away Sunday morning (June 28) Sheilagh passed with the sun coming in the windows at Matthews House Hospice, Alliston. She was 50. Please pray for Sheilagh's daughters, Madeleine and Sarah, her siblings Bernie, Chris, Pat, Peter, Brian, and Genny. and for all her family. Condolences can be left on Sheilagh's blog: www.howssheilagh.com. Described as a unique soul and kindred spirit by members of her parish, Rev. Sheilagh was genuine, authentic, and had a natural ability of making everyone she met feel at ease. "She gently and compassionately accepted everyone, whether a member of her church or the community at large, and let them know that they were beloved of God," said George Elliott, Interim Priest-in-Charge, Anglican Parish of Lloydtown. "Rev. Sheilagh exuded positivity and had a great sense of humour. She was known for her high fives and cherished children and youth, through her children's talks during service, summer day camp and various youth retreats. She had a natural ability to teach, participate and lead in a fun and engaging manner. Rev. Sheilagh fostered a spiritual community and took the initiative to lead by example and encouraged others to join. She loved preaching and applied her passion in extracurricular activities. "This was most evident with the annual Schomberg Country Run, an event that Rev. Sheilagh identified as an opportunity to raise funds for clean water initiatives in Pikangikum, as well as her teaching efforts on an Indigenous unit at local grade schools. Her homilies removed barriers and were delivered in an authentic manner that resonated so well with members of her parish. She made the world feel a bit brighter and more hopeful, and her smile and sense of wonderment will be sorely missed. Rev. Ashworth was ordained Deacon in 1998 and Priest in 1999 in the Anglican Church of Canada. She served as an Assistant Curate at St. Philip on-the-Hill, Unionville, then as an Associate Priest at St. Mary, Richmond Hill and at Trinity Church, Aurora. Since 2008 she was the Incumbent of the Anglican Parish of Lloydtown (St. Mary Magdalene, Schomberg and Christ Church, Kettleby, and the Anglican Community of the former St. Alban's, Nobleton). The family will be holding a private service later this week. Once the pandemic restrictions are lifted, there will be a public memorial service to which everyone will be invited. Sheilagh requested that donations be made to either St. Mary Magdalene, Schomberg or Christ Church, Kettleby. This can be done by emailing aplloydtown@gmail.com. You may also donate to the Toronto Urban Native Ministries at <https://sites.google.com/view/tunm/home>, Matthews House Hospice in Alliston at <https://www.matthewshousehospice.ca/>, or a charity of your choice. In lieu of flowers, the family invites you to send a small arrangement to someone you love. The family has requested that you do not drop off food, but instead donate food items to the King Township Food Bank or your local food bank. Support from the community was strong during Sheilagh's recent battle with cancer. A prayer vigil held just before she died drew well over 45 participants. Residents and parishioners continually asked what they could do for her during her difficult time. Cars passing by the rectory honked their horns to let Sheilagh know they were thinking of her.



The Rev'd Sheilagh Ashworth gives a Missional Moment at the 158th Regular Session of Synod at the Sheraton Parkway Toronto

North Hotel in Richmond Hill, Toronto on November 9, 2018. Synod's theme is Growing in Christ, a five-year vision setting the foundations for working to build healthy, missional Anglican communities. Photo/Michael Hudson