



THE MESSENGER

DECEMBER 2020

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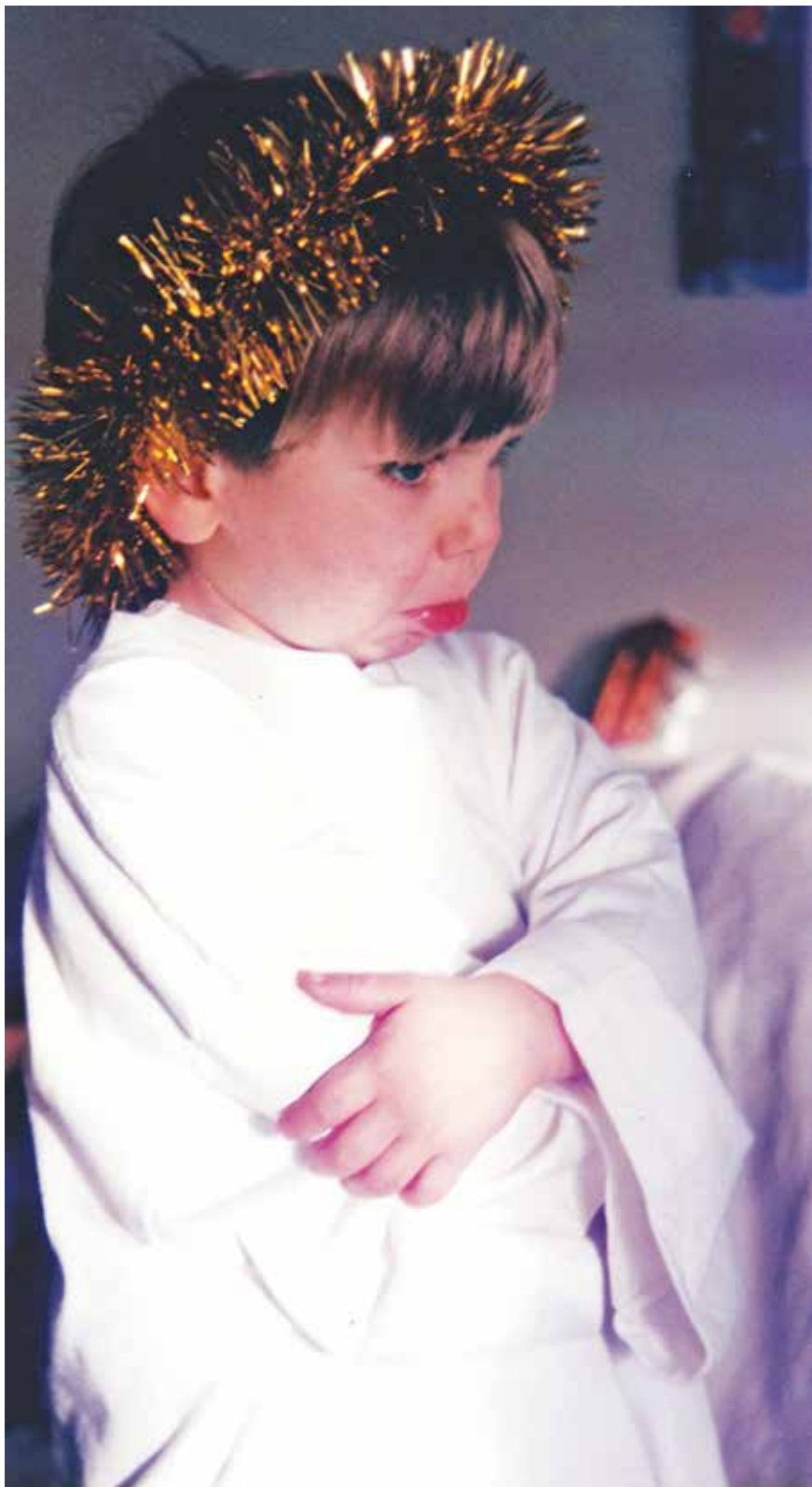


Advent & Christmas 2020: *writing a new script*

Bishop JANE ALEXANDER
Diocese of Edmonton

Advent and Christmas are not cancelled – don't even think about telling the angels to go home...

2020 is a wonderful year for a rich Advent and celebration of the feast of the incarnation, don't you think?



One of Bishop Jane's children, pictured here from many years ago, exemplifies the way many are feeling about Advent and Christmas 2020.

"No, Bishop Jane I do not think so, in fact I am feeling unsettled and disappointed and confused about how everything is going to shake out for us."

Excuse me if I say that if that is the case, then you have much in common with the world some two thousand and twenty years ago, a world that needed a sign of God's presence, a world in confusion, looking for new gods, a world that needed Jesus. The lead up to the birth of Jesus in scripture is full of scandal and rushing around, a time of distraction, a time of uncomfortable travel, a time of difficulty. Since March I think we can all agree that 2020 has been a time of difficulty.

There is nothing orderly about the story of Christ's birth or of Mary's pregnancy, nothing 'normal' or calm. So please take comfort from that. As I have reflected on this, I keep being drawn back to the words of Barbara Brown Taylor as she describes Mary's life-changing "yes" to God. In *Gospel Medicine* she says that this is now the choice before us: "You can take part in a thrilling and dangerous scheme with no script and no guarantees. You can agree to smuggle God into the world inside your own body."

I love that image, those words. They make me think – where will I try to smuggle Jesus tomorrow? And what will it look like? I would love to hear stories from you on what you think that *you* might do. I realize – of course I do – that many of us won't do it; that it might be too scary even to try. But wouldn't it be great if we did? Wouldn't it be great if some poor unsuspecting person out there was about to hear good news that would blow his or her socks off?

To quote a well-known advent hymn: we can know that the "long-expected Jesus" is

even now setting his people free. David's greater Son is breaking oppression. Flowers of love and joy and hope are springing up around us and we are saved from despair.

In Jesus' birth we celebrate the thing the world could not do alone; we celebrate finding our way back into the embrace of God. We come home. All of scripture really speaks to that yearning to come home, whether we look in the old or new Testaments. God has come to make his home with us, and we are called to make room.

I remember a few years ago when our oldest granddaughter had been building her Christmas crèche. Right up to December 24th all the animals and shepherds and even the angels and camels were piled in one great heap inside the stable. She said it was so they could keep warm. But Olivia promised me that when the baby Jesus arrived, *they would all make space for him...* out of the mouths of babes and children, don't you think? This is the huge task for us this 2020 Advent and Christmas season. Will we make room?

We could spend this year thinking of years' past and mourning what might have been, but truly we are called to something different. At the time of writing it is possible that our churches may yet be shut down again as the virus continues to spread. We have no script and no guarantees. But all across the diocese people are looking for ways to help one another tell the story and celebrate Jesus' birth and to proclaim hope. All over the diocese we will be finding new ways to share and to tell the story of the incarnation.

How are we doing this?

- Virtual services
- Videos of the Christmas story
- Video presentations on the Magnificat and on the Advent Antiphons
- Interviews with folks doing their best and talking about what gives them hope
- A chat with a real-life shepherd, and we are hoping for one with a real-life camel keeper too!
- Distanced nativity plays
- An online diocesan singing of 'Silent Night'
- Reflections from your Bishop each week
- Prayers for your crèches and candle lighting
- A Christingle build along with Bishop Jane
- A family prayer service for you to share at home this Christmas Eve or Christmas morning

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Victims of COVID-19 remembered on All Souls' Day

The Rev. Deacon SHELLY KING
Messenger Staff

At 11:30 on the morning of All Souls' Day, clergy and staff from the Synod Office and All Saints' Anglican Cathedral gathered in a quiet ceremony to remember those in Alberta who have died of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19. 320 glowing candles represented 320 lives cut short in this ongoing pandemic.

All Souls' Day is traditionally a time to honour the "lives of the faithful departed" and to pray for those who grieve the loss of their loved ones. Bishop Jane Alexander and the Very Rev. Alex Meek, took this opportunity on All Souls' Day, because, "as time goes on and the numbers go up, and people get tired of battling this pandemic, it's all too easy to forget that each one of these people was a mother, a husband, a friend... a person with a life and people who loved them."

"It was important to pause," said the Bishop, "to take some time and pray for them."

Cathedral Music Director and



Pictured from left: Shelly King, Jeremy Spurgeon, Bishop Jane Alexander, Alex Meek and Gwen Bright. Not pictured: Sara Kate Edwards and Jennifer Wirun. Photos by Jennifer Wirun

organist, Jeremy Spurgeon, opened the service playing "Fidelis" by Percy Whitlock. For a time of reflection in the midst of the prayers, he played "Es ist ein Ros' Entsprungen" (A Rose has Sprung Up) by Johannes Brahms. The service ended with "Now Rest Beneath Night's Shadow" by Flor Peeters.



Father of all,
We pray to you for those who we
love
but see no longer,
Grant them peace
Let light perpetual shine upon them
And in your loving wisdom and
almighty power
Work in them the good purpose
of your perfect will
Through Jesus Christ our Lord
Amen

All Saints' Drayton Valley hosts All Saints' Day induction

The Rev. Deacon SHELLY KING
Messenger Staff

All Saints' Anglican Church in Drayton Valley celebrated All Saints' Day in a special way this year, with the induction of their rector, the Rev. Christopher Cook.

All Saints' is blessed with plenty of space so that 35 people could attend in person with room to spare, while the service was also streamed live through Facebook. Some who came along to the church were local area dignitaries: Yellowhead MP Gerald Soroka, Devon-Drayton Valley MLA Mark Smith, and Drayton Valley Town Councillor Amila Gammana. The Rev. Randy Rye of the Drayton Valley Life Church represented the local ministerial association, and two clergy of the diocese made the 90 minute drive from Edmonton to show their support; the Rev. Ron Hörst and the Rev. Arthur Dyck.

All Saints' people's warden Rita Stagman gave the opening welcome and announcements, in



Bishop Jane, Christopher Cook, Rita Stagman and Tammy Flett during the presentation of the symbols of ministry.

which she made clear the church's feelings, saying to Cook, "We like you here, we got you here and we're going to keep you here!"

Bishop Jane Alexander started the service, then chair of the local ACW Miriam Roberts brought the readings, including Revelation 7:9-17, which describes the saints from all the world gathered around the throne of God:

"...and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the

Lamb!" (Rev. 7:9, 10)

That passage was the focus of Bishop Jane's sermon, which she began with the question, "How does one become a saint?"

Her answer: "Trust Jesus; be confident in him and follow him by living in love and charity with all."

"It's not pie-in-the-sky," she said. "Jesus enters our ordinary lives and calls us to action that is totally within our ability."

"And Chris, here, your rector, is in the saint-making business. He will be helping you on that path, and you help him. Has he got all the answers? I expect not. But that's good too because finding God's plan is a corporate activity. We expect to work together. Ministry is never a solo effort."

Bishop Jane spoke of the fact that Cook's arrival in Drayton Valley came at a "crazy" time. He arrived at All Saints' in February, only one month before the pandemic lockdown in March. However, she encouraged

the parish to look forward to a time when they would worship together again in greater freedom.

"May you always find joy in the service of the Lord."

Following the Creed, the service of induction continued with the presentation of the symbols: a Bible, a vessel of water, oil of anointing, the canons of the diocese, the keys of the church, a Book of Common Prayer, and a paten and chalice. All point to an aspect of the ministry of the rector and are usually brought forward one at a time by members of the congregation. For safety however, Stagman, along with rector's warden Tammy Flett, read out the name of each symbol as Cook held it up, leading the congregation in the responses.

Of the whole event, Cook says, "Honestly, I am overflowing with joy and happiness and feel at peace where I am."

"I have a compassionate and loving church family in Drayton Valley that makes my heart overjoyed. I am blessed to be called here and am touched by all those with me today in person and online who showed their support. May God continue to guide my steps on this journey with all of the saints at All Saints'."

Salvation in Jesus: the reason for all the seasons



Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca

Alleluia!
Christ is
Risen!
“Hold on
David, hold on!
Wrong season,
wrong month,
wrong festival!”
Oops.
Or is it?
What, exactly,
is Christmas all
about?

Yes, we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Yes, we remember Mary and Joseph and the cattle and the manger and the shepherds. Yes, we exchange gifts and hopefully we are able to renew ties with friends and family. But, really, what is Christmas all about? A baby? A party? Lights and decorations? Sales and bargains?

As we know, a little over 2000 years ago, a baby was born. However, babies have actually been born every day, for at least the last 2000 years. Why is this one special?

This baby grew up and began to do things that only God, or someone enabled by God, could do. Things like walking on water, like healing the sick, like announcing: “Change your ways! The Kingdom of God is near!”

In fact, this baby, when he was grown up, told

the people that the scriptures point to him. He told them that when he rose again, he would draw all people to himself. He confused a lot of people! And He helped a lot of people.

On Good Friday, He was crucified – a most painful method of execution. On Easter Sunday, true to his word, he rose again. And now he lives at the right hand of the Father, in glory everlasting. He is our judge and redeemer.

You see, the joy of Christmas is actually that it contains the promise of Good Friday. The joy of Good Friday is that it contains the promise of Easter Sunday. The joy of Easter Sunday is that it contains our salvation – our risen Lord, ruler of heaven and earth, all that is. So, working backwards, the joy of Christmas is our salvation in Christ – and your salvation is worth celebrating, for you are so very important!

The baby born on Christmas morning to Mary and Joseph was a wonderful, cuddly, messy, crying, sleeping, lovable baby. And, that same baby was God incarnate, the redeemer of the world. He was born into a world of conflict, and death, and disease, just like our world today – and He redeemed it for us. He took away the sin of the world, so that we may have eternal life, glory everlasting, with Him.

Every year of our lives is a “one and only” year, to be remembered and cherished. This past year has been stranger than many, with all of us living with the COVID-19 pandemic, some of us

with floods, some with loved ones getting sick or going on to our Lord, some with threat to their jobs and livelihood. And yet, I would encourage you to remember (and hold on to!) the fact that Christ came for you, to:

- redeem you;
- open up the Kingdom of God to you;
- reassure you of the love of God, our Father, for you.

He promises to be with you forever. All of that comes when we are filled with the Holy Spirit and baptized into the kingdom of our Lord.

Let us celebrate what happened 2000 years ago. Even more, let us celebrate the fact that Christ is with us today, seeking to guide us in his kingdom. Let us follow him wholeheartedly, to his glory and our joy. Let us help those who we know have been negatively affected by this past year, in the love of Christ. Let us worship Christ with each other in songs and prayers, and let us worship Christ by our daily actions of love and caring. May you be greatly blessed in this, indeed.

The Lord is Risen indeed! Alleluia!

Merry Christmas.

+David

Bishop David's December Schedule (at time of printing)

- Dec 06: Beaverlodge
- Dec 13: High Prairie
- Dec 20: Slave Lake
- Dec 24: Fairview; Peace River

Bishop warmly greeted by parishioners... and wildlife!

Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca

On September 12 and 13, Benita and I were honoured to spend time with the good people of Fort Vermilion. Herman and Erika were gracious hosts, and their love for the people and area are evident.

Fort Vermilion competes with Fort Chipewyan as to which was the first Anglican mission in our diocese, and early on both were pro-cathedrals. (A pro-cathedral is a church named by a diocesan bishop to serve as a cathedral, but which remains under the governance of the vestry and dean. It is replaced when a permanent cathedral is chosen.)

Fort Vermilion's latitude is 58.3873° N vs. Fort Chipewyan's at 58.7196° N, a difference of only 37 km. So, they are very close that way too!



The topography of each is very different, however. Fort Chip has a huge lake, sand dunes, lots of rock and boreal forest, plus the world's largest inland delta (where the Peace and Athabasca Rivers join into Lake Athabasca and the Slave River leaves it to go up to Great Slave Lake). Fort Vermilion has a beautiful river, lots of trees and extensive farming, and bears! We saw 10 of them on our way home! Because of the many farms, it felt to me like we were quite a bit farther



Pictured above: Erika and Herman, parishioners of St. Luke's, Fort Vermilion.

south than we actually were. Fort Vermilion has a long and proud history with the Anglican church, with many sacrifices made by both clergy and lay people. This heritage continues in the present congregation, with many diverse backgrounds coming together as God's people under Christ. We were privileged to visit and worship together.

Erika gave us a tour of the flood-damaged areas of town where, like Fort McMurray, the flooding was extensive, with many people unable to move back into their homes even by the time of our visit. There was also a deep concern about the crops that were badly hit by a very wet summer.

I want to thank the people of Fort Vermilion for our great visit. Please pray for your brothers and sisters at St. Luke's who so ably represent us there. May they be blessed in Christ.

SUBMISSIONS DUE 1 MONTH PRIOR to PRINTING DATE

DEADLINE for JANUARY, 2021 is Tuesday, December 1, 2020

www.edmonton.anglican.ca/blog/the-messenger

Submissions:

We welcome letters to the editor, news, stories and book reviews (max 500 words), event notices and high resolution photos (min 300 dpi).

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To be a disciple of Christ is to see values transformed



The Ven. RICHARD KING
Archdeacon for
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Diocese of Edmonton

Hello again!
Last month, I introduced us to the importance of bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit, as described for us in the fifth chapter of Paul's letter to Galatians: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

It is crucial that these are ever-increasing in our lives as the Lord's missional disciples. Today we start with 'love.' We'll take two articles to talk about this and we'll look at these verses from Matthew's gospel:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Matthew 22:37-39)

In this first part, we need to do a little self-reflection that will then set us up to go deeper. We need to ask ourselves, “What do we mean when we talk about love?” You might think that a daft question but it's really important. Do we interpret and hear that word with all

Jesus means by it or with the meaning given it in our culture?

When Jesus gives us these two commandments, it's not merely part of a list of 'dos and don'ts.' This is Jesus leading us into a radical shift of culture and values in the hearts of his people.

To believe and trust in our Lord Jesus Christ, to be a disciple, is to increasingly become aware of the values we brought with us when we began our life in Christ, and see them transformed by his values, through the ongoing outpouring of his grace and love upon us.

We often think it is what we believe with our minds that shapes what we do. Actually, it is what we most value. And we see what it is we truly value in the way we

live: the way we spend our time, our money, the choices we make, including why we might choose the type of worship we prefer, along with our reactions when things don't go the way we like. Being a disciple of Jesus is to see our values replaced by his values in all these things.

So, what values have we brought into our life with Christ, that he would see replaced? What do we love and what do we mean when we say we love something. Each culture is blind to its own values, so what is it in our own culture that seems so normal to us that we don't even think about it?

In Canada in 2020, we live in a culture that is highly individualised and highly commercialised. Those values have shaped us

and both are actually quite insidious! Consumerism causes us to be mindful of that which we want and gives us permission to think it is always ok to get what we like and want and always ok to reject what we don't like. When these values inform our discipleship, it can cause us to inadvertently add to the worship of God all kinds of other loves, preferences and loyalties that can crowd in on loving him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength.

Next time, we look more closely at what Jesus means by the word 'love.' Until then, consider the values that shape your life. Think about what you love and why. And may God bless you in all your endeavours in His name.

Richard

Education in the Church is formation, not information



The Ven. TERRY LEER
Archdeacon for
Mission Development
Diocese of Athabasca

In Alberta there has been much debate of late about elementary education. In my own ministry there have been some serious questions about effective education for disciples.

Education in the Church cannot mean memorization

of bible verses and rote rehearsal of liturgies. Education in the Church cannot mean some old guy in a plastic collar telling the poor students what they have to believe and how they must live it out. Education in the Church does not mean implanting theological facts into someone's brain with the finesse of a sledgehammer. That's not education.

Education in the Church needs to create an atmosphere in which the disciple can grow in the love and grace of God. Education in the Church is all about developing the relationships amongst the disciple, God and the Body of Christ. In the Church we don't learn facts. We learn the love of God as shown in Jesus

through the power of the Holy Spirit. We don't learn Bible verses—we “learn” people.

This means that the educator must first let go of the need to teach theology or morals or anything else that implies the flow of “head” knowledge from the brain of the teacher to the poor brain of the student. The teacher is not the superior in this learning process. The teacher is a companion.

Since the teacher is only a companion and fellow traveller, then the teacher must also be a student. That is, if the student is to develop his or her own relationships with God and the Body of Christ, then the teacher must also be developing his or her

relationships. The teacher is primarily a mentor.

“I'm finding this and that to be helpful in my relationship with God. What about you?” That's the process of education within the Church.

But how is this to be achieved in our COVID-limited Sunday Schools?

Perhaps the scene plays out something like this:

Let's sing: “Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to him belong. They are weak, but he is strong...” You know what? Let's draw a picture that tells our own story of how Jesus loves us. Then, after we draw, we maybe can tell the story of our picture.

Let's remember: Jesus helped some really sick

men who had a terrible skin disease. I'll tell you a story about how God helped me to help someone. Then, maybe we can think of some other ways to help.

What is required is not so much a shift in the curriculum itself but rather in our attitudes towards teaching. What matters is the communication of our love from and for God in the midst of education. The lessons and curriculum are only tools to serve that love.

That's Christian education. That's discipleship development. That's for everyone and can come through everyone. Yes, it is a challenge, but then the whole of the Christian life is a challenge. Let's all of us rise to this challenge.

Advent & Christmas 2020: writing a new script, cont.

Continued from front page.

All of this (and more) will be posted on the diocesan website www.edmonton.anglican.ca and will be updated regularly.

And so my advice to you this Advent and Christmas season: pick one way of walking to Bethlehem this year and do it faithfully each and every day and try not to walk backwards. Whenever you find yourself longing for what has

been in the past, stop and give thanks for those times. They were and will always be, a blessing. Now is the time to write a new script; to throw yourself into God's promise of hope for the future.

Rowan Williams once said that we should look around at the world and see it...

“...pregnant with God. And as you see it pregnant with God understand that this is something you will never contain or control. All you can do is open your eyes, draw in your

breath, and receive what is to be received and step forward.”

That would be a good way to live out the rest of 2020, I think. Yes, things will be different. But maybe, just maybe, we will learn to tell the story in new ways and take it to people who have not heard it before. God will use this time.

We are a people of hope, let us share that hope with joy this season and always.

+Jane

St. Thomas' Fort McMurray weeps with those who weep

Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca

The weekend of September 20 saw Benita and I visiting St. Thomas' Anglican Church in Fort McMurray.

While St. Thomas' did not get any flooding from the rivers in Fort McMurray, they still had two incidents this past summer. First, a boiler went in their offices, flooding the kitchen area, and soon after downtown Fort McMurray flooded, St. Thomas' basement was flooded from sewer backup. I was given a walkthrough of the basement and remediation was, thanks be to God, well underway.

While in Fort McMurray, I was able to visit with a couple of postulants (people feeling called to ordained ministry as deacon or priest, and who are moving along a defined discernment path with us.) We also had a good and extensive visit with



Fr. Christopher Tapera.

I also had the privilege of participating in a memorial service for Willie Sanders, a well-beloved member of the St. Thomas' parish. Even though we know that, as adopted children of God through Christ, we are promised eternal life with him in forgiveness, death can still be very hard on those

important to pay attention to grief and allow ourselves to enter into it. Though we shall all be together with Willie, in Christ, for eternity, there is still the grief of time lost now; an emptiness to carry along.

I think this is true for anyone who experiences the death of a loved one. Let us give thanks, though, for



Bishop David shares Sunday service with St. Thomas' in Fort McMurray, September 20.

who grieve. Grieving is a way of recognizing a love that is lost, and it is

even in grief we are never alone. Christ is always with us, holding our hearts now and promising us full unity with the Father in the new heaven and earth, where "God will live among them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death will not exist any more—or

mourning, or crying, or pain..." (Rev. 21:3-4)

Let us give thanks to God for his indescribable gift. And let us give thanks for the people of St. Thomas' too! All glory be to God.

Have you downloaded the church app yet?

Check out the Anglican Diocese of Athabasca church app and download for free here:

<https://fithely.app.link/anglican-diocese-of-athabasca>

All Saints' Fort McMurray rallies in face of many challenges

Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca

Benita and I spent the weekend of October 2 to 4 in Fort McMurray, this time worshipping with parishioners at All Saints' Anglican Church.

All Saints' had extensive sewer backup following the flooding of the Clearwater river in Fort McMurray this past spring. The congregation was heavily impacted, both at the church worship centre and at some members' homes.

Then someone broke in to steal some computer equipment and tools from the restoration work. So, they have had their plates full!

The people of All Saints'

have, however, been very ably working together since their priest, the Rev. Dane Neufeld, left for Calgary in the summertime. I was very pleased to hear how many of them came together to help

each other (and some outside the congregation as well) in true Christian charity.

We will have upsets and downfalls, and some have experienced many this year in our little diocese.

However, no matter how many upsets or downfalls we may encounter, we can always rely on Christ to walk with us in peace, in patience, in strength, and in wisdom. As Psalm 23 says, "Though I walk through

the valley of the shadow of death, You are always with me..."

Christ will always be with us, and we can always count on him to walk with us, no matter how difficult things may seem.

Please pray for our brothers and sisters at All Saints', and throughout our diocese, that they both feel and know that Christ is with them, no matter what – and that all of us keep our eyes on walking with him, in his eternal kingdom, fully experiencing the shalom we were created for.

May you, and the people of All Saints', be blessed in this.



Pictured from left: Lay Reader Jamie McIlvenna, young acolyte, Bishop David Greenwood, Philip and Karen Kilpatrick at All Saints' Fort McMurray, Sunday October 4, 2020.

Athabasca Diocese Virtual Worship Resources and Opportunities

For access to online services, both mid-week and on Sunday, please visit the ***NEW*** diocesan website at www.athdio.ca or one of the following parish websites:

- www.stjamespr.org
- www.christchurchanglicangp.org

- www.sttom.ca
- www.allsaintsanglican.ca
- www.parishnorthernlights.org

Or, search Facebook.com for:

- The Diocese of Athabasca
- St. James Cathedral
- St. Mark's High Prairie
- St. Thomas Fort McMurray

- Christ Church Grande Prairie
- St. Anne's Church Valleyview
- All Saints Church Fort McMurray
- St. Peters Church Slave Lake
- Anglican Church of Athabasca
- St. Helen's Anglican Church
- St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church



Team induction service part of visit to Tri-Parish area

Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca

On the weekend of September 25-27, Benita and I visited the Tri-Parish area of Athabasca, Northern Lights, and Living Waters. During this weekend, we were able to worship with Perryvale, Colinton, and Athabasca. The next time we are able to go, I hope to worship with Boyle, Lac La Biche, and Wandering River as well!

We were wonderfully hosted by Bishop Larry and Sheila, and had a very good visit with them, as well as an enjoyable afternoon (and supper!) with the Rev. Rose Howell and her husband George.

Sunday morning we celebrated with St. Thomas' in Perryvale at 9:00am, St. Andrew's-Zion in Colinton at 10:30am, and then that evening we held an induction service in Athabasca for Bishop Larry, Rev. Rose, and the entire ministry team. This great group includes the Rev. Christobel Lines, the Rev. Terry Francis, and Lay Readers / Lay Readers-in-training Sheila Robertson, Jodi Pisarewski, Mike Griffin, Barry Belcourt, Kevin Pederson, Deana Lemke, Bruno Wiskel, Karen Dominey, Corrine Bryks, Joanna Muzyka, and David Lines (unwell on that day).



Pictured clockwise from above: Bishop David Greenwood introduces Blessing Shambare as regional dean; Bishop David officiates at Athabasca induction service for (standing) Terry Francis, Rose Howell, Larry Robertson and Bill Creaser; Bishop David with the worship team at St. Thomas' Perryvale; the physically distanced congregation meets at St. Andrew's-Zion Church in Colinton.

I also had the privilege of introducing our new Athabasca Regional Dean, the Rev. Blessing Shambare.

It is exciting to witness new ministries starting to happen, and this is such a good example. Working together under this very able ministry team, it is my prayer that the three parishes will flourish as they delve into what it means to follow Christ and be a part of His body on a daily basis in their context.

As throughout our diocese, these parishes are populated by caring people who work hard. Please pray for their success as they support each other in working for Christ.



Diocese of Athabasca Called to Prayer and Fasting for South Sudan

Canon PETER CLARKE
Diocese of Athabasca

The Diocese of Athabasca has a long-term relationship with the Diocese of Ibba in South Sudan, Africa. In 2017, the Rt. Rev. Wilson Kamani of the Diocese of Ibba came to visit and was a guest speaker and presenter at the diocesan synod in Peace River. He explained the day to day difficulties affecting the people of his diocese: poor crops, lack of useful medications, an ongoing war surrounding his diocese and many other major concerns at that time. Everyday matters that we might consider normal, such as transport links, food and water supplies, and safety, were serious

issues of concern for the people of that diocese.

Since 2017, both dioceses have been holding each other in prayer each week and on occasion funds have been sent from the Diocese of Athabasca to assist the work in the Diocese of Ibba. This year there have been major upheavals in Ibba. Due to torrential rains, the River Nile flooded large areas of land with more than 600,000 people losing homes and livelihoods. The area also continues to suffer with the COVID-19 situation, the prospect of political unrest and the possibility of armed conflict.

Bishop David Greenwood of the Diocese of Athabasca designated

the month of October as a month of prayer for Ibba, South Sudan. Bishop Kamani had requested prayer for:

- favourable weather for abundant harvests and food security for everyone
- opportunities to rebuild homes and save crops affected by the floods
- the unity of Christians in the Diocese of Ibba
- access to training and education around health and safety, especially the necessity of masks, hand-washing and social distancing during the pandemic.

People in the Diocese of

Athabasca were asked to pray for these concerns each day throughout the month, both privately and during worship services.

Bishops Greenwood and Kamani called upon the members of both dioceses to complete the month of prayer by committing to a day of prayer and fasting on October 31, 2020. Even allowing for the nine-hour time difference, this meant that brothers and sisters throughout northern Alberta and Ibba diocese would be upholding each other as one family, God's family.

Though the day of prayer and fasting is now over, we must continue to pray regularly for all the people of South Sudan.

Interfaith Housing Initiative adapting, expectant for 2021

The Rev. Deacon SHELLY KING
Messenger Staff

The month of December will be a critical one for the Capital Region Interfaith Housing Initiative (CRIHI), as it works to secure funding for its ongoing work in 2021.

As with many agencies, CRIHI had to adapt quickly during 2020 to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Early in the year, it lost a key grant. Funding that once supported education and advocacy work suddenly stopped. Priorities pivoted toward frontline projects. CRIHI Housing Ambassador, Mike Van Boom says, "Suddenly we were going to be out of money by the end of summer! So, we had to adapt. We put our skills and our understanding of the community to a new purpose."

That new purpose is the Neighbours Helping Neighbours project. It seeks to inspire and enable Edmontonians, including Indigenous Canadians, newcomers to Canada, and low-income households, to connect and care for each other during the pandemic. It includes a website, www.helpisnextdoor.ca with resources such as:

- a 'help map'
- a link to a YouTube channel for video resources



- tools to enable safe connections such as how to plan safe block parties and social gatherings
- 'neighbouring cards' to facilitate meeting neighbours and offering help

All this will be translated into ten minority languages that are prominent in Edmonton.

The funding for this project allows the CRIHI to continue the rest of its work, which has increased, not decreased during the pandemic. Among many COVID-related challenges are ever-lengthening waitlists with affordable housing providers. Capital Region Housing is getting 300 new applications every month. There are around 10,000 people on its list. Van Boom heard one applicant say, "Getting into housing is like winning the lottery."

As the pandemic continues it may also happen that more people will be unable to pay their rent.

CRIHI was invited to a meeting on this topic in November between Alberta Premier Jason Kenney and Archbishop Richard Smith of the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton. CRIHI will consider taking on a rental assistance fundraising project if needed.

Even in the midst of the struggle, however, Van Boom says there is a lot to celebrate. This year, the City of Edmonton adopted a policy to distribute affordable and supportive housing to a threshold of 16% in every neighbourhood in Edmonton. This means "weaving people into the fabric of our neighbourhoods; integration instead of separation," says Van Boom, who has lobbied for these measures on behalf of CRIHI for four years.

"It's a major victory," he says, "not to be underestimated."

As well, 600 new units of supportive housing are in the works

for people who need ongoing support to stay off the streets. Four new facilities are in the consultation phase in Terrace Heights, King Edward Park, McArthur Industrial and Inglewood.

The path into 2021 is hopeful for CRIHI. It will apply again for the grant that was lost in 2020, this time with the formal backing of EndPovertyEdmonton and the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. That would provide half the funding needed and would enable CRIHI to move forward with a new program called TogetherWise, a carefully crafted, trust-based approach to community consultations around affordable and supportive housing.

The other half of the funding will need to come primarily from supporters in faith communities. The City of Edmonton has been supportive in the past but faces new challenges and limited resources going into next year. Van Boom says it is daunting, but he chooses not to look at "the mountain ahead." Rather, he says, "The best advice is to just take the first step and keep moving."

Contact Van Boom by email at mike@interfaithhousing.ca for more information, to donate or to volunteer.

Resilience & community theme at annual interfaith gathering

The Rev. Deacon SHELLY KING
Messenger Staff

On Saturday, October 31 about 100 people gathered, either in person or on Zoom, for the 2020 Christian-Muslim Dialogue hosted by A Common Word Alberta. The common word and theme this year? Resilience.

The actual title was Boosting Resilience for the Digital Age, but the focus veered more toward the need to foster resilience in these pandemic days. Guest speakers Dr. Salima Versi and the Rev. Ingrid Cramer-Doerschel approached the topic, each from her own faith background and experience in dealing with mental health.

Versi is a psychotherapist, a PhD candidate and instructor in the University of Alberta's Religious Studies Program. She is also a scholar, preacher, and spiritual care giver within the Ismaili Muslim community. Cramer-Doerschel began her theological studies at a seminary in Germany which was connected to a psychiatric hospital. She is now minister at Trinity Lutheran Church



Keynote speakers the Rev. Ingrid Cramer-Doerschel and Dr. Salima Versi made their presentations in the 2020 A Common Word via Zoom.

in Edmonton, Alberta.

Both made a point of saying resilience is not about keeping up our productivity or being able to somehow pull ourselves up 'by our bootstraps' when we struggle. Rather, as Cramer-Doerschel put it, "resilience is going through the ups and downs and coming out the other side wiser and stronger."

"But this means taking small steps along the way," she was careful to add. In dealing with the downs of life, "it's okay if you thought you were over it, and it hits you all over again."

Versi told the story of how the Prophet Mohamed (peace be upon him and his family) was overwhelmed and filled with anxiety after receiving his revelation from Allah. He even considered throwing himself off the mountain where he received his visions. "It shows," said Versi, "at the very beginning of our faith: humanity and fragility."

"Fluctuations in our mental health are normal occurrences," she said, "the same as with our physical health. Struggle is a part of how we live and work and grow; find meaning and purpose. But sometimes we experience something beyond our

ability to cope."

"The question is, when we know someone is struggling, do we come alongside?"

Versi said when someone needs support, the best question is a simple 'how are you?' "Focus on the person, be present and genuine," she said, "hearing whatever that person chooses to share."

In the end, Versi said, Mohamed was helped by an angel and by the support of his wife, who "reassured him, believed in him, and helped him believe in himself."

Continued on page 12.

TYP TOP Bakery: social justice never tasted so good

MESSENGER STAFF

In this pandemic year, one of the ministries that has grown and thrived despite the many challenges is the Trinity Youth Project (TYP). The Messenger interviewed Clark Hardy, Outreach Youth Worker for the Diocese of Edmonton, to tell us all about it.

Clark, TYP has been a growing concern through 2020. Remind us how it got started.

TYP began off the side of my desk while working for the Edmonton John Howard Society as an outreach youth worker in 2017. I could see that the youth I was supporting had a real need for meaningful relationships and social inclusion. For any of us, supportive reciprocal relationships are crucial to our mental, physical, and spiritual health. I was seeing that we could help a youth find housing or connect them to mental health supports, but if at the end of the day they didn't have a matrix of relationships supporting them, it was hard to maintain any progress.

As Holy Trinity Anglican Church (HTAC) is quite invested in the Edmonton arts scene, I thought this could be an effective avenue to try to engage youth. We started running weekly art sessions alternating between HTAC, the Armoury Resource Centre at Edmonton's Youth Empowerment and Support Services (YESS) and the Old Strathcona Youth Society CO-OP.

Then in 2018, through discussions with Bishop Jane, the role of Outreach Youth Coordinator was created to support youth on the margins of society and work to address their needs meaningfully and

holistically. At this point TYP became my full-time job. Since then, I've been working to build up our art program, create a restorative justice program, and develop a social enterprise (a business with a social mission) to meet the employment needs our youth have.

The bakery business started as an opportunity to provide treats twice a month for HTAC's coffee hour just using my grandma's family recipes. As we got into the summer of 2019, we started selling baking at farmer's markets, and increased our catering orders.

My hope is that all three programs feed into each other. As an example, if a youth comes to us through our restorative justice program and is in need of work and positive leisure activities, we can refer them to our baking program for employment and the art program for positive activities to keep them busy.

Tell us about the youth who participate.

Since starting the baking program we have had around 60 youth participate, most of whom had no prior connection to HTAC or the diocese.

I think our youth, especially the ones who have been with us more long term, feel a sense of belonging and community. We've started doing monthly 'family dinners' at which we celebrate whichever youth or staff have had a birthday that month. We also work closely with the YESS employment program to help youth



Pictured left: Clark Hardy working on a tray of cream puffs in the kitchen at Holy Trinity Anglican Church. Right: Chef Kelsey mentoring one of the youth. Photos provided by TYP TOP Bakery.



get work experience that they can add to their resumes to apply for other jobs!

One of our youth is working on her Red Seal designation in baking under the supervision of our new baking program coordinator. Her dream is to one day open her own bakery, so we are doing what we can to help move her towards making that dream a reality.

2020 has been a challenging year, but it hasn't slowed down the Trinity Youth Project; what is your pandemic story?

Initially the lockdown put all the programs on hold. Then, about a week into it we were approached to see if we could bake for St. Faith's PrayerWorks Common meal program and the All Saints' Cathedral Manna Market. Both ministries were continuing to operate during the lockdown in order to address food insecurity for vulnerable people throughout the city. After consulting with Alberta Health Services, we determined it would be possible to continue baking to help meet these needs. We got up to baking 1200 buns each week between myself and two other youth from the same household for the first few months of lockdown. As summer approached and restrictions eased, we were able to bring back more youth and in September we started receiving referrals from other youth-serving agencies as we had prior to the pandemic.

We have to limit the number of people in the kitchen to ensure proper physical distancing, we have increased our sanitization practices, and everyone wears a mask at all times. But aside from these adjustments, we've remained

busy! In August and September, we partnered with local restaurant, Baijiu, to collaborate on ice cream sandwiches. Each week we baked a different flavour cookie, which they paired with unique house-made ice cream flavours! We also forged new partnerships with Grizzlar Cafe and Lui-Chi's cafe which are now carrying a selection of our baked goods.

We also participated in some farmer's markets in the summer, continued to fulfill individual and corporate catering orders, and provided take-away baking for HTAC initially for their outdoor summer services, and then for their indoor services when those started up in the fall. We will also be partnering with more cafes in the Old Strathcona area before the end of the year!

What will the Advent and Christmas season hold?

Last year we baked 200 lbs. of shortbread for St. John the Divine in Onoway and we are looking at doing a similar amount this year! We will also partner with the Edmonton Christmas Market on some of their collaborative food boxes alongside other Edmonton eateries and producers, providing a selection of our baking. We will be taking orders for our own monthly subscription boxes again in December. And of course we will be launching our Christmas menu which people can find at www.typtopbakery.ca. So, we anticipate and hope that we will be busy fulfilling lots of holiday orders, which is especially good for our youth to be able to have additional hours and income heading into Christmas and the New Year.

Continued next page.

Welcome Chef Kelsey Johnson



Thanks to grants received in 2020, TYP TOP Bakery was able to hire Chef Kelsey Johnson as full-time baking program coordinator. Chef Kelsey has previously worked at Character's Fine Dining, Woodwork, Duchess Bake Shop, and is the former owner and head chef of Café Linnea.

Youth Outreach Coordinator, Clark Hardy says, "We are so excited to have her onboard sharing her wealth of experience and skill with the youth. Already the youth have been able to learn more complicated recipes like blitz pastries and sourdoughs that we haven't previously been able to do! She has also helped open other doors within the industry, and the youth really enjoy working with her too, which is the biggest asset for us."

Make All Mothers and Children Count this Christmas

We recently welcomed a new baby into our family; grandchild number 11! The birth of beautiful little baby Josie has been celebrated – unfortunately, from afar. In these unprecedented times of social isolating, we admire her from a distance; we love her and want to keep her safe. The time for snuggling her up in Grandma's arms will come soon enough. For now, it is good that she is protected and healthy.

Our Josie is what is being called a “pandemic baby,” and as I consider her birth I am so very thankful that she was born in a hospital in Edmonton where the well-trained staff have the latest equipment at their disposal and adequate PPE to keep themselves and their patients safe.

Of course, there are “pandemic babies” being born around the world at this time and, as we all are aware, not all of them have the blessing of being born under such safe conditions as Josie was. I am thinking of the families who were part of PWRDF's All Mothers and Children Count (AMCC) program in Africa. From 2016 to 2020, this



DOROTHY MARSHALL
PWRDF Representative
Diocese of Edmonton



initiative empowered women and girls through improved health and food security with projects in Tanzania, Rwanda, Mozambique and Burundi. Because of

your support, over those five years health outcomes for both mothers and babies were dramatically improved and the project was a wonderful success.

When the effects of the COVID-19 virus struck these countries in south eastern Africa, governments did not have the resources to offer adequate protection, especially in the rural and often isolated communities our projects had worked with.

Fortunately, earlier this past summer, PWRDF was pleased to announce that the Government of

Canada awarded a \$1.98-million grant to extend the work of the AMCC partners. The funds will support these vulnerable communities through the COVID-19 crisis. This grant includes a 6:1 match for a total project budget of approximately \$2.3 million. That means PWRDF needs to raise more than \$320,00.00 to meet our commitment, and every dollar donated will be matched by six from the federal government.

As we enter the season of Advent our thoughts focus on the birth of another baby, over 2000 years ago. Baby Jesus, the Son of God, was born into very humble conditions; he came to save us all. What better way to celebrate the gift of that birth than by giving financial support to the projects involved in the All Mothers and Children Count program? You

can make your donation through the PWRDF World of Gifts catalogue (an insert with this edition of *The Messenger* and online at www.pwrdf.org/worldofgifts). In that catalogue you will also find many other great opportunities to support our ongoing projects around the world – all great Christmas gifts for those on your list!

You might also want to take the opportunity to send your Christmas season's greetings with our beautiful PWRDF Christmas Cards (see photos). A donation of at least \$25.00 along with the cost per box is tax deductible. If you're interested, act quickly as cards must be ordered by early December to arrive in time for Christmas mailing.

The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund is the relief and development agency of the Anglican Church of Canada. As Luke tells us in chapter 4 of his gospel, Jesus acknowledged his mission in the synagogue in Nazareth when he read from the 61st chapter of Isaiah:

“I have come to bring good news to the poor.”

We each have the opportunity to be part of sharing that good news. We thank you for your support for PWRDF as we work on behalf of all Canadian Anglicans towards a truly just, healthy and peaceful world.

Dorothy Marshall, Diocese of Edmonton PWRDF Representative at pwrdf@edmonton.anglican.ca.



Two types of PWRDF Christmas cards are available for purchase online at www.pwrdf.org/ChristmasCards2020.

'Coffee' Fundraiser to Support Buyé Diocese Ongoing

The Diocese of Edmonton “\$5-5 Ways Campaign” has struggled in 2020 to maintain the level of giving of previous years.

The original idea behind the campaign was that parishioners could donate an extra five dollars at their Sunday coffee-hour through the month of September, and in 2019 that appeal raised \$6,565 by the start of November. This year, however, parishes in Edmonton diocese did not gather for coffee-hours because of COVID-19 restrictions. Many parishes and individuals have responded to need regardless, with \$2,700 raised at the time of printing.

Our partner diocese of Buyé uses the funds raised through this appeal to purchase medical cards, which the Mothers Union distributes to those deemed to be in greatest need. The cards are valid for one year and reduce the cost of medical treatment by 80 per cent, putting medical care within reach for many who would otherwise go without. Donations are still being accepted through the Diocese of Edmonton Synod Office or online at www.edmonton.anglican.ca/donate.



TYP TOP Bakery: social justice never tasted so good, cont.

Continued from previous page.

What do you hope for in the long term?

I am hoping to see TYP TOP Bakery become a self-sustaining social enterprise. We would like to be able to provide steady part-time and full-time employment for our youth.

I would also like to expand to other parts of the city, and in the diocese at large. There are a lot of

youth looking for support both in our urban and rural communities, and my dream is to be able to expand our reach beyond central Edmonton.

I am so excited that Bishop Jane was willing to step up to work with youth on the margins of society. I truly believe this is necessary work to uplift some of the most vulnerable youth in our communities and help meet their spiritual, emotional, and physical needs. When we look at the example of Jesus, he doesn't separate

these needs when he ministers to people and I think it's crucial we take the same approach whenever possible. Seeing each person as created in the image of a relational triune God and building meaningful ongoing relationships with our youth is paramount to all that we do. It is through relationship that real transformation happens and enables us to truly have hope and optimism for a more just and equitable world.

What else would you like our readers to know?

People can always visit us at www.trinityyouthproject.ca and can access our online ordering menu at www.typtopbakery.ca. We are also on Twitter and on Instagram.

We are grateful to the many individuals and parishes who have supported our work. If others are interested in partnering with us, they can email me at clark@trinityyouthproject.ca.

7 Great Ideas for Making Christmas 2020 Special

ROBYN THOMPSON

St. John the Evangelist, Edmonton

As we peer towards Christmas barreling down upon us, let's take a breath and notice that God is still here with us! Let's try to open our eyes to what God might be doing.

Ah. You are thinking, that sounds nice. Let's all focus on the beauty of this season. But, how? I live in the nitty-gritty of a pack of kids doing online schooling, we are all separated from our favourite people, and we have to isolate from

our beloved elderly. My family and community are not happy about all the things we'll be missing out on this year. Seriously, what can I actually do?

Here are some practical ideas of things you might try. The most important thing? Invite God to be a part of it. Ask him to inspire you with ideas and energy to help make this Christmas special. He is infinitely creative and a source of hope. In these dark winter nights God promises he will come to us – and behold, he is already there.

A Smorgasbord of Covid-friendly Christmas Ideas

1. Use your front yard (or church yard) as a landscape of joy: hang lights, make decorations, check out YouTube for instructions to make ice-lanterns. You can even make an ice-sculpture by spraying a chicken wire sculpture with water on a cold night. Make a sacred space, a humorous space, or a hopeful space. Spread light. A church might design a winter sacred space and invite the community to come and sit among the lights. You might include a laminated bible verse or poem or even a QR code that would lead people to an audio file of someone reading out the Christmas story.
2. Take ten minutes each week to make contact with one person to see how they are doing. This is probably both the easiest and most impactful thing you can do.
3. If health guidelines allow, plan a skating, snowshoeing, skiing or other outdoor socially distanced party with someone who might be feeling lonely. Or how about a winter bonfire? Or firework display? That would make memories!
4. Partner up the children in your life with the elderly to become pen-pals or picture-pals. Getting something in the mail is always exciting.
5. We may be missing choir and school concerts but why not plan your own? Gather with some friends over a video chat and have your own little concert or lessons and carols service. Kids could make shakers and you could take turns reading out the Christmas story from the gospel of Luke. Wear ugly sweaters or dress up in your best.
6. Kids going to miss the nativity play? Make a home video of kids re-enacting the Christmas story and then send it to grandparents and friends.
7. How about organizing a little contest in a parish or among friends? It could be a digital talent show, a Christmas light challenge, or a challenge to artists to represent a particular idea like Hope.



Pandemic creates surprising opportunity for leap of faith

LEAH MARSHALL

St. Andrew's, Camrose

As a 2020 university graduate, the outbreak of COVID-19 has led to many doors being closed to me. Yet other opportunities, that I never would have otherwise considered, have arisen as well.

This fall I was accepted into Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB) College, London, UK. HTB is “a vibrant Church of England church in the heart of London, passionate about seeing lives changed in the name of Jesus.” (www.htb.org) You might be more familiar with HTB as the creators of ‘Alpha,’ a series of online video courses designed to lead the curious to ask big questions like ‘what is life?’, ‘what is the bible?’, and ‘what does it mean to pray?’

HTB church now has five planted parishes and over 5000 parishioners across London. Some of their other areas of ministry include student programming, offering courses on marriage and financial management, social justice initiatives on caring for ex-offenders, the love thy neighbour initiative to deliver emergency food supplies during the COVID -19 pandemic, and so much more.

I first heard of HTB by watching their online services. I saw that they offer a college program; a year to develop your understanding of theology and leadership by studying discipleship and experiencing practical ministry at the heart of HTB Church. Honestly, I applied because thanks to COVID -19, I didn't have any other plans for my immediate future. And then I was accepted. Suddenly, I realized, I was moving to the UK.

Though I have travelled to a

variety of places, as a prairie farm-girl this is my first time living in another country, let alone during a global pandemic. As I'm sure you can imagine, the thought was a little daunting to me. Yet, ever since starting lectures online, I have encountered an overwhelming amount of support from my community both with the college and at home; I have really felt a strong sense that this is where I need to be.

I officially moved to London on October 16 to participate in classes in person (socially distanced) and to assist in programming for the HTB students' new project called WELL. WELL is an initiative acting on rates of loneliness with post-secondary students; particularly in providing a welcoming community for all students to feel that they belong, and to provide opportunities to access resources for mental health. WELL aspires to help students live life in all its fullness—to live well. Working on the WELL project as part of my HTB college placement, it has been incredibly encouraging to see how HTB is approaching holistic ministry to the communities around them, even during the challenges of COVID -19.

I want to sincerely thank the Diocese of Edmonton and my home parish of St. Andrews, Camrose, for supporting me in this leap of faith.

Though COVID -19 has meant many changes this year, in many ways it has also opened doors to approach ministry and opportunities for learning in new ways.

You can follow this work at www.htb.org or on Instagram at [@htbchurch](https://www.instagram.com/htbchurch), [@htbcollege](https://www.instagram.com/htbcollege), [@htbstudents](https://www.instagram.com/htbstudents) and [@well.students](https://www.instagram.com/well.students)



Edmonton church creates space online to tackle tough topics

The Rev. Deacon SHELLY KING
Messenger Staff

Good Shepherd Anglican Church in Edmonton is spearheading two different approaches to tackle the problem of racism. The previous edition of *The Messenger* focused on the Solidarity & Sharing Zoom meeting, which provides a safe place for people who have experienced racism to share and be supported. Now, for those who perhaps have not had opportunity to discuss the topic of racism in depth before, Good Shepherd has also started a Zoom book club.

The Ven. Jordan Ware, Archdeacon for Social Justice and Community Connection and rector of Good Shepherd, says the first book



club meeting in September “went fantastic, better than I could have expected.”

“People were honest and open about their perspectives and struggles with the book (*So You Want to Talk About Race*). We talked about what motivates the author, an atheist, to work for justice and what similar and different motivations we might

have as Christians. There was great variation in experience discussing this topic, but nobody spoke down to other people, just patiently shared what they knew so that we could all grow.”

Participant Sherylin Trompetter enjoyed it as well.

“I felt we got to a certain level of understanding and questioning, but there is still a long way to go on this journey together. It takes time for people to be willing to be vulnerable, especially with a topic like this.

I would have liked to see more generational and ethnic diversity as I think that would have also provided a bit of a different discussion, but I think there is a lot of potential as we move through various books on the

topic.”

Ware described discussion in the October meeting as “lively” and said, “The book (*White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*) clearly affected each reader deeply, which prompted a rich conversation. There was significant disagreement when it came to the book’s call to action, but it wasn’t expressed in grievance, and we were able to learn from the different perspectives present.”

Check out the events calendar at www.goodshepanglican.org for the time and date of the next discussion, and email Ware at rector@goodshepanglican.org to receive the Zoom link.

Anglican Foundation of Canada seeking memberships

The Rev. Canon JUDY ROIS
Anglican Foundation of Canada

At AFC we love, more than anything, to say Yes! and to help our parishes imagine more. The Foundation has been saying yes steadily and unfailingly—through good times and bad—for more than sixty years.

In the Diocese of Edmonton, since 2010, we have said Yes! to nearly \$250,000 in grants and loans for your parishes. The vast majority of that investment has been in buildings and programs, including numerous outreach ministries. AFC has provided grants for the Ascend Leadership Project, the National Worship Conference, ESL classes and computers for new immigrants as well as supporting the outreach ministry to the South Alberta Light Horse army reservists. Additionally, AFC as provided funding for a congregational poverty action guide in support of EndPoverty Edmonton, and Medicine Stores supporting indigenous ministries.

This past May, in spite of the COVID-19 crisis and the impact on AFC’s investment portfolio, we said

Yes! to helping St. Patrick’s Church take ‘Three More Steps on the Road to Greening.’

For nearly ten years now as Executive Director of the Foundation, I’ve had a front row seat to some of the Canadian church’s best ideas: ministries and programs parish visionaries might undertake if only they had strategic funding to get them started. Knowing the innovative and compassionate character of the church, nationally, I cannot help but feel hopeful about the future.

Please be assured that AFC will continue to be a force for stability no matter what the future may hold. In order for AFC to remain strong and vibrant, however, I am asking those who can continue to partner with us to do so. If you are a member I ask you to renew your membership. If you have never been a member of the Foundation before, please accept this invitation to pay-it-forward.

Join us and help AFC continue to be able to say Yes! to dreams and aspirations in your diocese, and so many more across the country.

To donate to the Anglican Foundation of Canada visit www.anglicanfoundation.org.

Endings and Beginnings for Church in Frog Lake



Bishop Jane and a small group of community members gathered on October 1st to deconsecrate the church building in the community of Frog Lake, and to remember the blessing it has been.

One of those gathered was married in the church, another went to school there. Sophie rang the chapel bell one last time.

The years and the elements have taken their toll on the wooden structure, which is now beyond repair. The parish of Frog Lake, however, is alive and well with nine baptisms in 2019 and continued leadership of Fred Matthews, Lay Reader-in-Charge, and the diocesan Indigenous Ministries Initiative.



Text by Judy Rois
Illustrations by Michele Hilsenrath

Receive a free festive stocking when you order a copy of *Dear God* (while supplies last).

anglicanfoundation.org

ANGLICAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Picture perfect: nature provides peace in a pandemic

Janice Hurlburt
Christ Church, Edmonton

*“Everybody needs beauty
as well as bread,
places to play in and pray in,
where nature may heal and give
strength to body and soul.”*

— John Muir

Being in nature is essential to my wellbeing. It is one activity that has not been restricted by the pandemic. It allows my mind to empty itself of the busy-ness of the *musts* and *shoulds* racing in my head. In nature, I find myself both seeking and not seeking; hoping to find something and being open to whatever presents itself. Being focused and not focused; using my camera to capture a particular moment and then sitting back and taking it all in.

These photos represent a few reflections on my time spent in nature through this pandemic year.



Staying at home, enjoying the birds that come to our backyard feeders through our “bird channel” living room windows. Feeling especially honoured to have a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers coming in daily. It’s a thrill that the birds accept my offerings of food and water.



Above: Driving on country roads in our mobile self-isolation unit (car), looking out at the vast fields and the everchanging Alberta sky, my thoughts and concerns melt away. Flocks of Snow Geese migrating in Spring, making a stop-over to feed on a farmer’s field on their way to their breeding grounds up north, give the reassurance that nature’s cycles continue and that new birth will come.

Right: Taking a meditative walk through Laurier Park shortly after Easter Sunday, I was delightfully surprised by the appearance of a young Northern Goshawk perched on the ice breaking up on the river. This uncommon sighting felt like a pure gift and it lightened my spirit.



Janice Hurlburt has a passion for birding and is an amateur photographer, having taken up the hobby 13 years ago. She recently retired from her job at the University of Alberta after 21 years and is particularly enjoying taking her grandchildren for walks along the city trails, hoping to instill in them a love of nature. Look for part two of this meditation in photography in the January edition of *The Messenger*.

Resilience & community theme at interfaith gathering, continued

Continued from page 7.

Cramer-Doerschel shared the story of the prophet Elijah from the Hebrew Scriptures, who also suffered exhaustion and depression after a powerful experience of God. “It is enough,” he said. “Take my life away from me.”

Then he slept and took nourishment — also from an angel — who led him to a hidden place where he met God in a still, gentle whisper. “You won’t make it on your own,” said Cramer-Doerschel, “but you don’t have to.”

“See, hear and make room for each other, including the stories that are hard to talk about and hard to listen to. Resilience happens in and through community.”

Community is a key value for A Common Word Alberta. It has been holding annual events promoting dialogue between Muslims and Christians since 2013. The Diocese of Edmonton got involved in 2014 and has been a strong supporter ever since. Both Bishop Jane Alexander and the Rev. Canon Dr. Scott Sharman have taken a turn as the main Christian speaker, and many

lay people and other clergy have been engaged in different ways as well.

Of the 2020 event, Sharman says, “The theme for this year was very timely. It seems many societies in recent months and years have been facing more and more polarization between those who are different, and it is becoming more difficult for people to find common ground. That’s why something like A Common Word is so important.”

The name “A Common Word” goes back to 2007, when 183 Muslim leaders from around the globe signed

their names to a letter, which was sent to major Christian leaders and denominations. It was titled, “A Common Word Between You and Us” and proposed that these two Abrahamic religions should be able to find common ground, as each calls on its adherents to love God and to love their neighbour.

A Common Word Alberta seeks to find those commonalities through fostering dialogue, building relationships and debunking stereotypes

Visit www.acwalberta.ca for more information.