



THE MESSENGER

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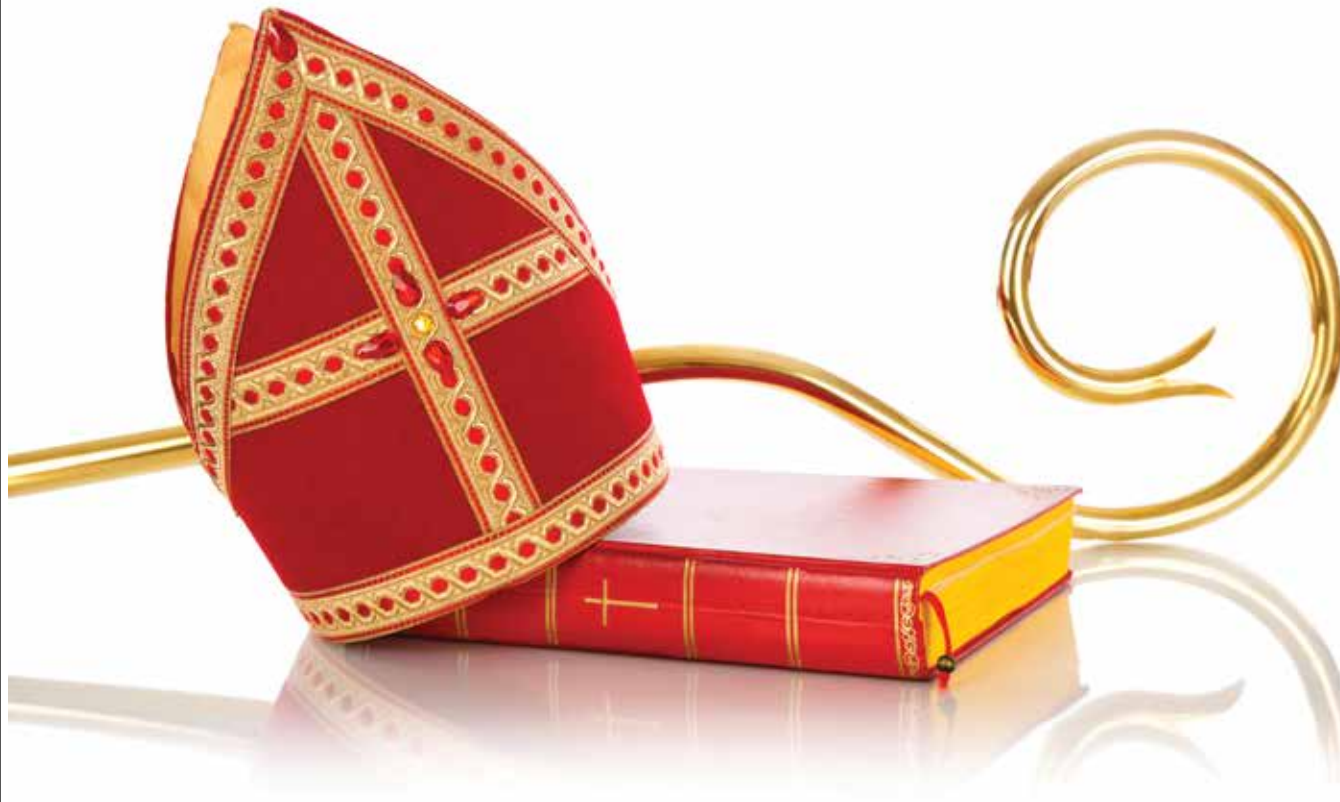
Process Underway for Edmonton Episcopal Election

MESSENGER Staff

April 2021 will be a pivotal month for the Diocese of Edmonton. On Easter Sunday, April 4, the Rt. Rev. Jane Alexander will preach and preside as bishop in All Saints' Cathedral for the last time. April 16 will be her final day as Bishop of Edmonton. April 17, the Very Rev. Alex Meek, Dean of Edmonton, will take up the duties of Administrator of the Diocese, until such time as the next bishop is consecrated.

Busy in the background through these significant days and weeks, a search committee will be developing a profile of Edmonton diocese and, when that is finalized, will begin the process of seeking candidates. At the time of writing the Diocesan Search Committee has not been chosen, but it will be hard at work by the release of this edition of *The Messenger*.

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Reflections on 13 years of episcopal ministry, part two

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

The March 2021 edition of The Messenger launched the first in this two-part series, reflecting on the many aspects of the ministry of the Rt. Rev. Jane Alexander, 10th Bishop of Edmonton.

Following is the conclusion of this series.

Throughout her ministry, Bishop Jane Alexander has called on members of Edmonton diocese, located on Treaty 6 and Treaty 8 land, to seek to build peaceful and reconciling relationships with Indigenous peoples. She established the Indigenous Ministries Initiative (IMI), led by Archdeacon Travis Enright. The IMI team leads Standing Stones sacred gatherings and facilitates blanket exercises, participates in Our Common Ground

community education events, participates in public observances, such as Orange Shirt Day, and supports Indigenous women and families through significant life events, such as the birth of a baby. Most recently, Bishop Jane appointed Fred Matthews, an Indigenous Anglican and member of the Messy Church Reconciliation Team, to minister to Frog Lake First Nation in northeast Alberta.

Bishop Jane witnessed the testimonies of Residential School Survivors at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 7th National Event and presided with then Primate Fred Hiltz at a special candle-light service in memory of the children who didn't return home from Residential Schools.

She partnered with Canon Barbara Burrows and All Saints'

Cathedral to host the Truth and Reconciliation Commission traveling exhibit and helped envision the Red Dress memorial services held every October at the Cathedral in honour of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

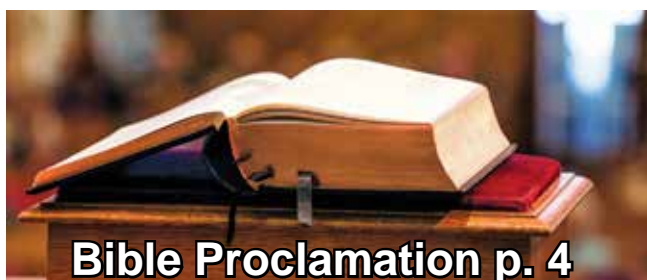
As a newly consecrated bishop, Jane, with her husband Dr. Tim Alexander, attended the 14th Annual Lambeth Conference, hosted by then Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams. (Together Jane and Tim have raised four children: Mark, Rachel, Sarah and Peter, and are the proud grandparents of three granddaughters and three grandsons.) At Lambeth Bishop Jane met and prayed with Bishop Sixbert Macumi of Buyé diocese in Burundi, a nation in central Africa. The new friends pledged to walk together in Christ, and the sister dioceses of Edmonton and Buyé have nurtured and



May 2009, Bishop Sixbert and Bishop Jane sign an agreement to walk together, working for the Kingdom of God in Buyé and in Edmonton.

supported each other through parish prayer partnerships and health and wellbeing initiatives.

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Full-time focus a boost to diocesan rural ministry

The Rev. Deacon SHELLY KING
Messenger Staff

Rural ministry is enjoying fresh emphasis in Edmonton diocese. For the past six months, the Rev. Canon Chelsy Bouwman has been developing her new, full-time role as Canon Pastor for Rural Ministry.

Bishop Jane Alexander installed Bouwman as Canon Pastor in November 2016. She says, “Chelsy has been very well known in our rural parishes for some years now, and brings a particular charism of joyful calmness that is so hopeful.”

At the beginning, however, Bouwman was working full-time as a parish priest and had to fit planning and travel for rural ministry around other duties. She continued to fill dual roles until last October, when

she transitioned to the full-time post, allowing her to bring more attention to the work and life of rural parishes.

The COVID-19 pandemic was, in part, a catalyst for the change. Bouwman says it has hit many rural parishes hard, making the need for this increased focus even greater.

“It was the result of Bishop Jane’s vision,” says Bouwman. “Ministry, mission and worship will need to look different on the other side of this pandemic and it was Bishop Jane’s dream that we might get ahead of changes that are coming in order to lead with hope and optimism.”

This was welcome news. “Rural parishes often feel overlooked and forgotten,” Bouwman says. “So for Bishop Jane to boldly and confidently say this needs to be a priority speaks volumes of

the importance and relevance of the work and ministry of rural communities.”

“It is a huge gift,” says the Rev. Elizabeth Metcalfe, rector in Vermilion. “Knowing there is someone to help interpret and apply diocesan guidelines into the rural setting will be invaluable to us.”

Rector in Onoway, the Rev. Cheryl Boulet, says, “Chelsy has been engaging and deliberate in her efforts. She is continually reaching out and we give thanks to God for her ministry!”

The Rev. Donna Gauthier, agrees. From her northern post in Cold Lake, she says, “Having help with the occasional service and someone to talk with has been a real blessing. Chelsy understands the unique challenges of rural ministry.”

Having grown up in Ponoka

and served as rector in Vegreville, Viking, Sedgewick, and Fort Saskatchewan, Bouwman does understand the challenges, sheer physical distance being one. Edmonton diocese stretches from Cold Lake to Ponoka, and from Jasper to Vermilion. The difficulty of travel, especially in winter, has limited participation in diocesan activities that are most often held in the city. According to Bouwman, however, there is a much greater challenge: fear.

“Fear of declining numbers, money and human resources. Fear of closure, fear of irrelevance, fear of being forgotten, fear of burn out, fear of grief and change. And with many of our rural communities already experiencing the weight of the economic downturn, the weight of the pandemic has been really difficult.”

The challenges may seem overwhelming, yet Bouwman also sees great strengths in rural parishes.

“They’re so much fun! And so very welcoming!” she says. “They’re great at working with other churches and secular associations in their communities. And they’re creative, with unique opportunities, whether it’s a baptism in the river in Camrose or an evening on the North Saskatchewan at Wild Church in Vermilion or standing out in a canola field asking God to bless the harvest.”

Continued on page 6.



Photo by Chelsy Bouwman

Process Underway for Edmonton Episcopal Election, cont.

Continued from front page.

The search committee will consist of three clergy and three lay members of the diocese, along with one bishop, one clergy and one lay person from outside the diocese, as appointed by Archbishop Greg Kerr-Wilson, Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert’s Land, in which the Diocese of Edmonton is situated.

The profile created by the search committee will consist of statistical information about Edmonton diocese, as well as a description of diocesan ministries and partnerships. It will try to engage candidates whose gifts and vision call them to lead as bishop, not any diocese, but this diocese. The profile will outline the requirements for a bishop laid out in the canons and will include a sense of what is particularly important to the parishes and people here.

Meek led the way in soliciting input from parishes through early March using videos and a discussion paper titled “What is a Bishop?” In this paper, the Rev. Canon Dr. Scott Sharman explains that our idea of episcopal ministry (the ministry of a bishop) comes from the Greek word episkope, which translates as oversight or keeping watch. It is a ministry that keeps things “moving in the right direction and ensuring, as best as possible, that the fabric of the Church not be torn apart at the seams.”

He describes a bishop as “chief shepherd of the Church’s unity, custodian of the consistency of the faith of Christ, and a leader in shaping and directing the Church’s co-working mission within the Mission of God.”

Importantly, Sharman makes clear, “there is no such thing as an ideal bishop, but only real bishops. Bishops are not concepts,

or doctrines, or structures; they are people.”

Throughout the process, Meek has continually encouraged the diocese to pray, for Bishop Jane, for the diocese, and for the person God will call into this role.

“We need to ask God to open our hearts and minds to where God is leading us. We can do this on our own, but I encourage us to pray with others; pray as a community.”

At the time of writing, the date of the electoral synod has not been confirmed. However, given ongoing uncertainty regarding COVID-19 restrictions, plans are underway to hold it, at least partially, online. Organizers will benefit from the guidance of other dioceses that have successfully hosted virtual electoral synods in the past year.

The Easter Sunday morning service at which Bishop Jane will preach and preside will be live-streamed on the All Saints’

YouTube channel and will remain available for viewing afterwards. A separate farewell service and virtual reception the following weekend will provide an opportunity to pray for Bishop Jane and give thanks for her ministry. It will also be live-streamed.

In keeping with tradition, the diocese will offer a gift on behalf of Bishop Jane as she steps down. This gift will be directed toward the development of fresh-water wells in the Diocese of Buyé, a place and a project close to her heart. Donations will be accepted through the Synod Office by all usual means. Cheques made out to the Diocese of Edmonton should mention “Bishop’s Farewell Gift” in the memo line.

Details about the Buyé Water Project are posted on the diocesan website at: [edmonton.anglican.ca/synod/67th-synod-2021](https://www.edmonton.anglican.ca/synod/67th-synod-2021), along with all information, as it develops, regarding the episcopal election.

Resurrection 2021 is, for us, a time of opportunity



Bishop JANE ALEXANDER
Diocese of Edmonton

Well, as you read this we will be in the season of resurrection. I hope that at least some of us will be able to gather in community to celebrate Jesus' rising from the dead. Otherwise, we will have had two Easters of a

very different way of keeping the feast. When we are disappointed because things are different or frustrated because vaccines are not moving quickly enough for us to keep our traditions of community and family connection; at those times it is easy to lose perspective on life – the big picture – as people say.

Last year at Easter I admit I was feeling introspective about what I was missing and the poetry of Malcolm Guite gave me a bit of a wake-up call. I have talked of Malcolm before. He is a marvelous Christian poet and his work pulls the reader deeper and deeper into reflection and, for me, into prayer. Here in 2021 as we stand on the edge of Easter it is perhaps easy to feel we have lost out in some way just as we felt in 2020. However, Malcolm reminds us that Jesus has been

Yesterday I was crucified with Christ; today I am glorified with him.
Yesterday I was dead with Christ; today I am sharing in his resurrection.
Yesterday I was buried with him; today I am waking with him from the sleep of death.

- Gregory of Nazianzus (389)

active and busy in the new resurrected life all this time. Jesus has been loose in the world beside the sick and the sorrowful, the healers and the helpers. Here is a little taste:

*And where is Jesus, this strange Easter day?
Not lost in our locked churches, anymore
Than he was sealed in that dark sepulchre.
The locks are loosed; the stone is rolled away,
And he is up and risen, long before,
Alive, at large, and making his strong way
Into the world he gave his life to save,
No need to seek him in his empty grave.*

(Please enjoy this whole poem at <https://malcolmguite.wordpress.com/2020/04/12/easter-2020-a-new-poem>)

This April I pray that you are up and at them

with Jesus, spreading joy and hope and love; comforting those who mourn or who are restless in their waiting; assuring the lonely they are not forgotten; calling one another to celebrate and live this new redeemed life to the fullest. This whole pandemic has refocused our minds on those things which are most important to us in our relationships. I really pray that our times spent with Jesus increased and will continue to stay deep and rich once we pick up our lives in new ways come the summer and fall. Resurrection means that nothing was ever the same again for the world. Resurrection 2021 means for us that we can choose to live life differently. We do not have to pick up every behaviour or thread of life as it was before, unless it was life-giving and truly reflected what we believe. This Easter is a time of opportunity. What do you want to take forward from the pandemic? What looks and feels like a resurrected life?

As I prepare to leave this position in just a couple of weeks now, I have ideas for myself on what I want to take forward with me. I wish you all every blessing and pray that you remain firm in faith and powerful in love. I pray that every day each and every one of us looks a little more like Jesus and that God uses us to renew the world.

With all my love and thanksgiving for the incredible privilege of serving as your bishop,

Jane

Out of deepest darkness he rose; and with him we rise



Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca

Alleluia! The Lord is Risen! Out of the darkness of death by crucifixion, Jesus has risen. Crucifixion was intended to be the most painful and humiliating death possible (hence the term *excruciating*, which literally

means "out of crucifying"). It was used to punish slaves and enemies of the state. Jesus was crucified as an enemy of the state, a usurper. This death was necessary, for the world needed to have its way of humiliating and condemning the actions of God-on-Earth; and only the most graphic, painful, and humiliating method would do: no quick be-heading

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!
His the scepter, His the throne;
Alleluia! His the triumph,
His the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion
Thunder like a mighty flood;
"Jesus out of ev'ry nation
Has redeemed us by His blood."

or sword through the heart. The powers of man, the most powerful religious structure of that place and time and the most powerful empire, united to bring down the Son of Man.

And from this, He rose.

Jesus' death was also necessary to take on the many ways we ourselves attempt to kill God. By our selfishness, our greed, our arrogance, our lack of thankfulness, our blindness to the glory of God;

by striving for our own way, for power, for fame, for fortune; by worshiping ourselves or anything other than the only thing worthy of worship: God our Heavenly Father. Jesus takes that all on, from us, as if we ourselves are hammering in the nails and binding the cords.

And from this, He rises.

Not only that, but he reaches out to us, with his pierced hands and scarred head; reaches out to us in love. He stretches forth his hands to you and says: "Come to me, my beloved: join my Fathers' family. Know our love, the love that you were created with. Know the absence of death, the absence of fear, the absence of loathing. Know our love, and that you are defined by our love. Be filled with it, be one with it, be transformed in it."

And so, with him, we rise. Redeemed, forgiven, loved, and to be resurrected: we rise.

All glory be to God. Amen.

+David

SUBMISSIONS DUE 1 MONTH PRIOR to PRINTING DATE

DEADLINE for May 2021 is Thursday, April 1, 2021

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Submissions:

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

Send to:

Margaret Glidden (Edmonton) anglicanmessenger@gmail.com
Peter Clarke (Athabasca) seens@telus.net

MESSENGER TEAM

EDITORS

Margaret Glidden (Edmonton)
Peter Clarke (Athabasca)

LAYOUT & DESIGN

Margaret Glidden
Shelly King

PROOF READING

Jennifer Wirun

REPORTING

Peter Clarke
Margaret Glidden
Shelly King

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Early Church mission strategy: the practice of patience



The Ven. RICHARD KING
Archdeacon for
Mission and Discipleship
Diocese of Edmonton

Welcome back to our series on the importance of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) and how it equips us for participation in the Mission of God. Having previously looked at *love*, *joy*, and *peace*, today we start the first of two sessions on *patience*.

Paul describes patience

as one of the attributes of God:

“Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?”

Romans 2:4

This is no surprise, for all the fruits of the Spirit are attributes of God, and we are meant to reflect those attributes more and more as the Spirit of God is at work in our lives.

But how does this God-like attribute of patience help us to be missional disciples?

Let me direct you to a very interesting book: *The Patient Ferment of the Early Church*, written in 2013 by Alan Krieder. In this book Krieder describes how the early Church built its mission strategy around patience.

By patience, I don’t mean simply waiting patiently for God to act. The early Church made the practice of patience an intentional part of its life. Patience was to be publicly displayed in one’s personal life and in one’s business life, too. In every way, Christians were expected to lead lives that drew people to God through the way they were constantly and consistently patient.

The great early leaders of the Church, over a period of more than two hundred years, encouraged the practice of patience in order to be an authentic, counter-cultural witness. The following all wrote treatises, and in some cases more than one, on the missional practice of patience:

- Justin Martyr (100-165AD)

- Clement of Alexandria (150-215AD)
- Origen (184-253AD)
- Tertullian (155-240AD)
- Cyprian (200-258AD)
- Lactantius (250-325AD)

Here are just two examples of how they saw it working:

Kreider notes that sometime around 150AD, the early Christian apologist Justin Martyr wrote to Emperor Antoninus Pius saying that Christians were growing in number ‘because their lives embody “the fair commands of Christ.”’

In 256AD Cyprian wrote: “We do not speak great things, but we live them!”

What a wonderful statement.

Cyprian spoke of how Christians were to live their lives in a way that *embodied* patience. “Therefore, as

servants and worshipers of God, let us show by spiritual homage the patience that we learn from the heavenly teachings. For that virtue we have in common with God.”

It was in patience that the faithful demonstrated the character of God.

And it worked. I have written before how scholars estimate that 20 thousand Christians in 100AD became 20 million two hundred years later. This is in spite of the fact that the churches had closed their doors to outsiders after Nero’s persecution of AD68! Krieder notes that this is a growth rate of 3.65%, which is manageable for us too, isn’t it?

It’s here that we will pick it up next time. Until then, may God bless you in all your endeavours in his name.

Richard

Godly Activism a Natural Outworking of Discipleship



The Ven. TERRY LEER
Executive Archdeacon
Diocese of Athabasca

One Sunday, long ago, I challenged my parishioners to vote in an upcoming election. This wasn’t a sermon topic, just one

sentence at announcement time. As one man walked through the traditional “nice-sermon-rector” line after the service, he refused to shake my hand and growled, “There should be a separation between Church and State.” What he meant, I think, was that the Church shouldn’t be involved in politics and that I should have kept my opinion about the necessity of voting to myself.

However, he was quite wrong back then. And he would still be wrong today.

By definition, Christians are activists. God has appointed us his champions. We are to

proclaim and work towards justice, righteousness, freedom, and peace. Our salvation obligates us to engage with people and to combat systems which repress God’s vision for his creation. In fact, there are so many arenas for Christian activism, that each disciple has to choose where to focus his or her attention.

Race relations. The environment. The effect of the pandemic on marginalized people. Intergenerational trauma within aboriginal families. Food security. Climate change. Anti-Muslim prejudice. The chronically homeless and under-employed. Provincial

and federal politics. Maternal health. The plight of refugees worldwide. Water security. Systemic racism. Spousal violence. There are just too many for any one disciple to take them all on. So, we have to choose and leave the others for other disciples.

But with so much need, how is a disciple to choose? Look for something about which you may become passionate. Don’t choose out of a sense of obligation or duty. That’s like dieting just because your doctor said you should lose ten kilos. Rather, seek that about which you can become excited. Look for

that which might bring you some new skills and new relationships. “You know? I’ve always wondered how this actually worked in the real world, so maybe I’ll ask St. Google some questions.” Choose that arena where your interest and passion can address a lack of justice, righteousness, freedom and peace.

Christian activism is inherently a part of our faith. Through our choices for justice we will actually fulfill that for which we pray daily: “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Let’s say, “Amen,” to that.

Diocese of Athabasca expands tradition of bible proclamation

Messenger Staff

For a few years now, Christians from various churches in High Prairie, Alberta have joined in a Holy Week Bible Reading Proclamation. St. Mark’s Anglican Church has led the way, organizing volunteers in the continuous reading aloud of God’s Word

from Passion Sunday until Maundy Thursday. Readers came to the church to read and took breaks only in the hours from midnight to 6:00am each day.

This year, thanks to the online possibilities we’re all getting used to, the Diocese of Athabasca will host the Proclamation on Zoom from 1:00pm on Passion

Sunday to 5:00pm Maundy Thursday, with no breaks, for 100 hours non-stop reading of God’s word. The benefit of the virtual reading is that people can participate from anywhere. At the time of writing, Primate Linda Nicholls, former Primate Fred Hiltz, the senior Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada,



Archbishops Kerr-Wilson of Calgary and Edwards of Fredericton, and several

other bishops have agreed to take part, including, of course, Bishop David.

Pancakes on Zoom for Shrove Tuesday? Why not?

The Rev. Deacon DANIELLE MCKENZIE Grimshaw/Berwyn Parish

There is a long-standing tradition in the parishes of Berwyn/Grimshaw and Dunvegan (Fairview) to hold a pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday. Christ Church always hosts the supper for the Berwyn/Grimshaw parish, usually in the Legion Hall in Berwyn, and St. Helen's hosts in their community of Fairview. These evenings of food and fellowship are greatly anticipated, well-

attended community events; established as *the* place to be on Shrove Tuesday.

So, this year when the question was posed to the three congregations, "What do you want to do about Shrove Tuesday?" the answer was clearly, "Eat pancakes, on Zoom!" They knew, of course, that it wouldn't have the same flare and they wouldn't see as many attend as usual, but at least it was something to mark the day.

As it turned out, a small group of eleven or so gathered on Zoom that

evening. As pancakes were tasted and screens adjusted for best angles, they shared, as they always have, in good fellowship with one another.

The ability to gather in person may have been taken away, but the desire to be in community was stronger than ever. The time together was edifying and up-lifting, smiles and laughter returned.

Then, as the evening came to an end, they took a moment to rejoice - no piles

of dishes in church kitchens to wash! Praise God!



iStockphoto/mg7

Like Thomas, we wait for our own moment with Jesus

The Very Rev. J. Haggstrom Dean of St. James' Cathedral Peace River

There are many who will consider Easter to be a bygone holiday, as soon as it's over awaiting the next long weekend, which for so many in our country heralds the start of the camping season. But in fact, we have eight more weeks of the Easter Season to go!

Many might have gone away from the Easter experience wondering where Jesus' body went. The women who went to the tomb came back telling some foolish tale about there being no body there. There was an earthquake, some dead soldiers (until they summoned the courage to run away) and an angel telling the women to tell the disciples to make the trek back to Galilee because they would see Jesus there. That was only Sunday morning.

There was more to come.

Judas Iscariot was already dead. Peter and Thomas were absent. The windows were shuttered, and the doors were locked and bolted. Most of the twelve thought they were next to go to the cross. All of Jesus' followers in that room knew that they were potentially targets for the unbridled hatred that had been unleashed on Jesus.

Jesus greets them with "Shalom" as he enters the room. He invites them to come near and touch him to prove he is alive. See and touch the nail prints. See and touch the spear's wound. See that it is really and truly me. When they understood, then he greeted them a second time with "Shalom," not just to take away the fear and foreboding, but to replace it with all the good things that are going to be needed now to make the mission of the Church happen.

The disciples expected something different. They could have been waiting for a rebuke for their lack of faith and perseverance under difficult circumstances on Friday. They received the opposite: forgiveness and mercy. They are invited into reconciliation by Christ himself. This is important for all of us because it is for us, both to know and to proclaim. There is a simple reality of which we as a Church need to be aware: we can tell people that they can be made free and serve God or not. Freedom in new life comes to us precisely because we continue to believe that Jesus is the Christ and that we are free and have life in and through him.

This brings us to Thomas (John 20:19-31). I have heard him called everything

from a doubter to a realist. Wanting to have the same experience as everyone else is not a doubt, it is a desire. As Saint Paul would put it, Thomas had hope beyond hope. He wants what others have. There is no harm or shame in that. He wants to be like his brothers. What is important is the faith and trust that need to be there day in and day out, whether we can see him or not. There is blessing in being patient and waiting for your moment with Jesus because it will come. The key is not allowing the moment between this one and that one to distract us from believing and participating in the life that is now a reality because of the cross. In fact, there is blessing for the one who faithfully lives, awaiting the moment to be face to face with the Master.

"Blessed are those who have not seen yet still believe."

Therefore, we must be people of the Word projecting the trust, the hope, and the life we have in Christ. We need to be people who continue to believe because faith instills courage and builds up the Church community through our active creativity and lively imaginations. We need to hold out the bread of life to both feed the hungry and to continue the journey towards the day that we will be at that final Feast. And we need to do this with a deep and abiding passion for the kingdom of God

After all, the most important thing is to go on believing, participating, and waiting because our time and our turn with Jesus will come.

Jason+

Have you downloaded the church app yet?

Check out the Anglican Diocese of Athabasca church app and download for free. <https://tithely.app.link/anglican-diocese-of-athabasca>

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:



Or, search Facebook.com for:

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

'Card Angel' plants seeds of care in time of isolation

ANGELA BOKENFOHR
St. Matthew's, St. Albert

It seems like a lifetime ago that we had a women's retreat at St. Matthew's! It was one of a kind and stretched all our imaginations in terms of what was possible, since it happened as a hybrid of online and in-person (with the appropriate social distancing, masks, and cleaning). The retreat provided a lot of opportunities though, that perhaps would not have arisen otherwise. We had a number of people join in who would have previously been unable to attend a full weekend retreat. It enticed a group of young people because they only needed to take one day off work rather than a whole weekend to join us. And it demonstrated that technology has the ability to connect us in ways that we otherwise could not have dreamed possible. What made this retreat stand out, however, is the way ministry has continued beyond the retreat itself!

At the end of our day together, there was a lot of conversation around what it truly means to be "okay" in these strange and isolating times. There is a recognition that being "okay" is a sliding scale and there are a lot of things that impact where on that scale we stand. In the unfolding of that conversation, there came a genuine desire for people to make a commitment to themselves and to their community, to become more diligent in checking in and being genuinely invested in ensuring



that our community is "okay." The retreat ended with a really uplifting and happy feeling that, even in our small corner of St. Albert, we could and would have a positive impact. I just didn't realize how much of an impact that would be!

A few days after the retreat concluded, I received an email in my inbox from a retreat attendee who was wondering if she could write a card to two people who shared their stories throughout the day and who, in the eyes of this woman, needed someone to just say, "I see you. I feel you. I am here for you." There was only one caveat: she wished to remain anonymous!

I would facilitate picking up these two cards and then putting the



St. Matthew's 'Card Angel' creates works of art designed to encourage and inspire. Photos by Angela Bokenfohr

return address of the church on the envelope and getting the cards to the recipients with nothing more than "a card angel

wished for me to get this to you."

Cards are now sent on a regular basis to individuals from our congregation, our wider community, to staff in hospitals overcome with this pandemic, to students struggling with school being in person and online, and to anyone who is identified as needing such a card. They are hand drawn and often carry a verse or two of encouragement for the receiver. And while creating them, thoughts and prayers are ascending for the person who will receive that card.

One of the activities for retreat participants was to plant a plant; the illustration was that sometimes we are called as Christians to do nothing

more than plant seeds. It can seem so minor in a world of hurt, exhausted, or broken travellers. Other times, we are called to come along and water the seeds that another person has planted. Again, it may seem minor in the larger picture. And yet, it is equally required for someone (perhaps many people down the line) to harvest the final product. That is what this Card Angel reminds me of every week. I send names or one-line explanations of what I know about in my small corner; and in her small corner, this angel creates a handmade card, crafted in love. Although we might never know the harvest that will come, I can assure you that the people who receive these cards usually reply back, "this is just what I needed."

Seeing the positive impact of the St. Matthew's Card Angel, it makes me wonder what other seeds we can plant today. This afternoon, Right now.

Happy planting!

Full-time focus a boost to diocesan rural ministry, cont.

Continued from page 2.

Bouwman also describes rural parishes as resilient. "They work hard at keeping their presence and ministry alive and active. It's not easy, but they persevere."

Bouwman believes part of her work is to help rural parishes tell their story to the rest of the diocese. In September, she created a harvest video "to give thanks for farmers, their families, the land they till, and the harvest that we all benefit from." For Christmas, another video enabled the Annual Nativity Festival at St. Mary's in Vegreville to find an audience when coming to see it in person was not possible.

Bouwman looks forward to the day when she will be free to take "road trips" to visit rural clergy, but in the meantime keeps in touch



in other ways. She has created Facebook and Instagram pages (search countryroadsyeg) where reflections, prayers and bible quotes are posted daily. She hosted a virtual Blue Christmas Service for 70 people in December and has taken turns with other rural clergy to lead

a virtual Lenten Bible study. She is also walking alongside St. Philip's in Westlock as they work through the ID discipleship framework online with Archdeacon Richard King and the Rev. Dr. Maryann Amor. She is hoping all these experiences with technology will open new

possibilities.

"I think one good thing that COVID has done for all of us," she says, "is that it's pushed us into the virtual age. Now that we have gotten more used to it, I hope to see folks embracing this new way of communicating and socializing."

And as for Bouwman's hopes for the future? She has many.

"To see a more unified relationship between urban and rural parishes. I hope to see a change in the vernacular from 'us and them' to 'we;' to find more ways to celebrate the gifts of rural ministry; to see rural churches gain more confidence and courage, knowing and trusting that God is at work in everything they do."

"I want them to not be afraid to think outside the box, but just go for it and see what Spirit does."

Donors share as message of food insecurity hits home

I write this at the end of February when spring is a distant hope, and we are finally coming out of the freezing temperatures of the “polar vortex.” This is the time of year when I begin starting seeds on my sunny windowsills to get a head start on the garden season. I was surprised when I ordered my seeds earlier this year to find many of the companies running out of stock. In fact, some of them are reporting a 300 – 400% increase in orders this year and a search online will find many popular varieties sold out. It seems that the pandemic has given people more time to nurture their green thumbs, and they have warmed up to the idea of growing their own food.

Through this pandemic, some of us have become concerned about sustainability and our own food security for the first time. However, the unfortunate fact is, even in this day and age, 700 million people go to bed hungry each night. Of those, the vast majority are suffering from chronic hunger: malnutrition from lack of food or lack of a nutritionally balanced diet. It is also interesting that 70% of these are small scale farmers.

This is where international development comes in; supporting



DOROTHY MARSHALL
PWRDF Representative
Diocese of Edmonton

people as they learn sustainable agriculture techniques and giving them the tools to feed themselves. It is about living out our Christian faith in a very practical way. In Luke 12 Jesus tells us: “From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required...” not suggested, or requested, but required.

Supporting international development projects is where the vast majority of the budget for PWRDF is spent, on your behalf. One of the big fundraising efforts for these projects is through the World of Gifts catalogue, which is distributed through the Anglican Journal each fall. I am very thankful to report that this year’s catalogue has again been a wonderful success.

Thank you to those of you who joined the thousands of Anglicans across Canada supporting this campaign and raising over \$420,000 during the Christmas season. Of that amount, \$72,000 went to supporting health care clinics in Africa, enabling them to better deal with the COVID crises; funds that will be matched 6:1 by the federal government as part of the All Mothers and Children Count project.

A further \$26,000 was raised to support PWRDF food assistance



A Community Health Worker wrangles a pair of goats given to her to increase her food security.

disaster response projects through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank; funds eligible for up to 4:1 match from the government.

Indigenous programs in Canada were popular. Nearly \$29,000 went to support those initiatives.

And while people here at home have begun to think about producing their own food, you have supported others around the world to be able to do so as well. By far the majority of funds raised went towards food security projects, and goats were the number one gift item chosen. Donkeys were also popular, as well as chickens. People like livestock! People also purchased seeds, trees, water wells, and the exchange of knowledge through agriculture

education projects. This is very important in these times as we all need to learn how to preserve water, restore soil, and grow more resilient to climate change. Those living in disadvantaged areas around the equator are especially vulnerable.

We have been blessed, and it is wonderful to have the opportunity to share that blessing. We who have been given much, have much to give. It is up to each of us how we respond.

PWRDF’s World of Gifts catalogue is available all year long and offers great gifts for Easter, birthdays, anniversaries and more. I hope you will check it out at: pwrdf.org/get-involved/shop-pwrdfs-world-of-gifts/

St. Saviour’s Supports Community Despite Restrictions

JOANN MONES
St. Saviour’s, Vermilion

St. Saviour’s rector the Rev. Elizabeth Metcalfe and church warden Rita Barr have delivered two cheques of slightly more than \$1,500 to Vermilion schools in support of their lunch programs. The cheques were received by Brandon Tupper, president of the Vermilion Elementary School Hot Lunch Society, and Sarah Dewing, representing St. Jerome’s School Lunch Program, on February 25.

St. Saviour’s has continued to meet, via Zoom, throughout the pandemic, and posts services to the church Facebook page.

Though parish members have not been able to meet in person for more than a year, members continue to find ways to reach out. Each fall, the parish has been in the habit of

donating proceeds from its Fall Garage Sale back to the community. The annual garage sale could not be held this year, due to the pandemic. However, parish members recognised an even greater need for school lunch programs.

“Throughout this difficult time, the parish has been discovering what it is to be the church when we are unable to meet in person on Sundays,” says the Rev. Elizabeth Metcalfe.

“Our unofficial motto during the pandemic has been ‘stay safe, love God and love others.’”

When members of the church became aware of this need in the community, they opened their hearts and generously donated to the effort.

We are happy to be able to connect with the school community and to show God’s love and care for those who are struggling financially during these times.”



From left: Elizabeth Metcalfe presents cheque to Brandon Tupper with warden Rita Barr.



From left: Sarah Dewing receives cheque from Elizabeth Metcalfe and warden Rita Barr.

Reflections on episcopal ministry, part two, continued

Continued from front page.

“Because of Bishop Jane and her team, the Buyé Hospital was privileged to be supported with significant medical equipment, an integrated HIV/AIDS centre and maternity and pediatric wards,” says Bishop Sixbert. “Also, the community surrounding the hospital was given mosquito nets to reduce the spread of malaria, a leading cause of death in the area and the country at large. Further, elderly people throughout the Diocese of Buyé were given medical cards to help them access medical care by allowing them to pay only five per cent of their medical bills. These initiatives have saved many lives.

“Bishop Jane is a calm, humbly approachable leader who faces challenges with prayer.”
- the Rev. Akon Lual

“The Diocese of Edmonton, through the leadership of Bishop Jane, has also played a significant role in training clergy and lay catechists in Buyé diocese. During the 13 years we have walked together so far, we have learned much from Bishop Jane; and yet, there is more. I cannot neglect to mention how she effectively integrated Indigenous people into the Church. Our country has been afflicted several times by ethnicity-based civil war and I am thankful that our diocese is now

reconciling Burundians who once fought as enemies.

“We wish Bishop Jane a successful new journey with sincere appreciation for her faithful service, her friendship and the immeasurable difference she has made in the lives of so many. She will always be fondly remembered in Burundi.”

Presiding with Bishop Sixbert at a multicultural service of ordination celebrating the 100th anniversary of the formation of the Diocese of Edmonton is one of Bishop Jane’s most memorable ministry moments. At the service, held on Pentecost Sunday, 2014, the mid-way mark of her episcopal ministry, she blessed chokecherry trees and gifted them to every parish as living symbols of the diocese’s commitment to reconciliation and healing.

Bishop Jane united with faith community leaders to lift the voices of marginalised people, endorsing the Capital Region Interfaith Statement in support of Edmonton’s 10-year Plan to End Homelessness, and commissioning, with support from the Anglican Foundation, the End Poverty Action Guide for Religious and Spiritual Communities.

As co-chair of Mayor Don Iveson’s task force to end poverty and homelessness in Edmonton, she helped bring together Indigenous leaders, newcomers, business and community leaders, social agencies, educators, health care providers and, most importantly, people with a lived experience of poverty, to create a road map for meeting people’s basic needs and, in turn, enabling all people to be contributing members of community.

“Co-chairing our task force’s journey with Bishop Jane ranks as one of my mayoral highlights,” says Mayor Iveson. “Her passion and commitment to solving one of humanity’s oldest challenges are authentic, deeply

“I am forever thankful for Bishop Jane’s ministry in my life.”
- the Rev. Eric Kregel

grounding and always motivating.”

Named a “Woman of Vision” by Global Edmonton in 2016, Bishop Jane speaks publicly against the evils of racism and gender-based violence. She has appointed Archdeacon Jordan Ware, rector of Good Shepherd in Edmonton, to help bring awareness to social injustices through educational and dialogue opportunities, such as the “16 Days of Activism” video series: www.edmonton.anglican.ca/podcasts/message.

In 2018, several members of the Edmonton diocese accompanied Bishop Jane on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where she led a “Women of the Bible” retreat for St. George’s College. Bishop Jane has served on the Task Force on Discipleship and Evangelism and is a member of the Jesus Shaped Life Group of the Anglican Communion. She helped facilitate communication between the provinces of the Communion as a member of the Anglican Consultative Council Standing Committee. And she engaged in respectful and prayerful dialogue with Canadian and African bishops about differing views on human sexuality and other potentially divisive issues. She is an Eco-Bishop and urges members of the Communion to “join in prayer and in pastoral, priestly and prophetic action” to address the climate crisis and its impact on diverse communities and developing countries.

“I appreciate Bishop Jane’s trust and support and the freedom to live out God’s call on my life.”
- the Rev. Andreas Sigrist

Closer to home Bishop Jane was invited to give a TED talk at Change for Climate Edmonton. She has given parishes of the Edmonton diocese tools to care for creation and reduce their carbon footprint. Parishes have increasingly adopted



June 2018, Bishop Jane waits to celebrate the eucharist at the Sisters of Nazareth Convent, one of the few places women priests - or bishops - were allowed to preside.

Photo by Donna Gauthier

sustainable practices, such as conducting environmental audits, installing LED lighting and solar panels and reducing the use of Styrofoam and single-use plastics.

As Bishop Jane prepares to lay down her crozier for the next Bishop of Edmonton, she has peace of heart knowing God is doing a new thing.

“It is time to set the next course for the diocese,” she says. “It seems to me that the 11th Bishop of the Diocese of Edmonton is even now being called to come and be with you in the fall of 2021.

As for her future ministry, Bishop Jane says she has “no idea what God has in store, just that it will be good. Maybe it’s to play with my grandchildren and knit. Though, I suspect, I’ll only get away with that for a short time.

“My call to episcopal ministry was to be bishop here,” she says. “Not everything we’ve tried has

worked, and we haven’t solved all problems. But, I hope, we’ve found joy together in our service of the Lord.

“I pray that you will continue to be faithful to Jesus’ call

on your lives and I promise that I will do the same. I will continue to pray for you all, our parishes, our ministries. I pray that the end of the pandemic will find us a church of renewed hope and purpose set for whatever God calls us to do.”



June 2014, the central aisle at All Saints’ Cathedral lined with chokecherry trees, living symbols of reconciliation.