



THE MESSENGER



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Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Hebrews 13:2



Diocesan Refugee Coordinators gather at the PWRDF Refugee Network in Calgary. Front row (l to r): Sarah Cooper (NS/PEI), Ralph Paragg (Qu'Appelle), Marlene Smith (Rupert's Land), Ishita Ghose (Ottawa), Rev. Erin Phillips (Calgary), Jane Townshend (Huron). Back row (left to right): Jibril Mohamed (Islands & Inlets), Alex Hauschildt (Toronto), Grant Hanna (Calgary), Sue Kershaw (Kootenay), Ian Van Haren (Montreal), Ven. Bill Mous (Niagara), Sarah Kemp (Edmonton), Mimi Merrill (Ontario), Joanne Lavergne (Calgary), Sophia Berumen (Calgary). Photo: Suzanne Rumsey

Refugee sponsorship coordinators 'holding a light'

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

In early November, the PWRDF Refugee Network, made up of representatives of 15 dioceses in the Anglican Church of Canada that hold Private Sponsorship Agreements with the federal Ministry of Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), met in Calgary. The Diocese of Edmonton is one of 130 Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs), both faith-based and secular, in Canada.

As interim refugee coordinator for the Diocese of Edmonton, Sarah Kemp also attended a series of meetings with other SAHs and with IRCC representatives.

"...Refugee Coordinators are a mix of paid staff and volunteers. Some have other full-time jobs, but all of them work overtime. Many have come to the work through their commitment to both their faith and to refugees," said Suzanne Rumsey, PWRDF Public Engagement Program Coordinator, in an article for pwrdf.org. ("These are people." PWRDF supports refugee coordinators in challenging work - *The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund*)

In 2023, the Edmonton diocese submitted sponsorship applications for 32 people. Kemp took on the ministry of coordinating all the administrative and program work that goes into enabling parishes, families and others to undertake a private sponsorship of an individual or family for their first year in Canada, in addition to her full-time job as executive assistant to Bishop Stephen London.

"Twenty-one of our sponsorship applications were submitted under a special program called Operation Afghan Safety, which tied into the federal government's commitment to bring over a certain number of Afghan refugees," she explains. "The other 11 were done through 3 parishes."

"The conference was an incredible opportunity to learn from people who have been doing this work for many years," says Kemp who heard from people involved at many levels of refugee sponsorship.

At her first SAH conference, Kemp was able to "put faces to the names on the other end of helpful emails. "I heard the stories of people conducting on the ground interviews in refugee camps, and deals made with foreign

governments in an attempt to stop mass deportations. I heard of the struggles of those working in the federal government who strive to advocate for a program that can be at the mercy of political and social whims. We had discussions regarding equity and being settlers on Indigenous land."

"It was an interesting year to attend as they were celebrating 25 years of the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP), a federally funded program that helps those involved in the Privately Sponsored Refugee Program to do sponsorship well."

Prior to the RSTP, Kemp says there were approximately 50 SAHs sponsoring approximately 3,000 refugees per year. At the time, only about 60 per cent of applications were approved. Now there are approximately 135 SAHs sponsoring approximately 28,000 refugees per year, and the approval rate is now over 99 per cent."

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Revive
Equipping Lay Leaders to be Spiritual Leaders

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Revive Discipleship Program Offered in Person and Virtually

This January, the Diocese of Edmonton is offering the Revive Discipleship Program to anyone who would like to grow in confidence as a spiritual leader in serving in Jesus' ministry.

Revive reflects our belief that all who are baptised are called to share in the mission of God through their unique ministries. A Calling for All, the second of the Edmonton diocese's Five Primary Principles, sees an empowered laity serving as equals alongside a collaborative and team-oriented clergy.

The program is offered in thanksgiving to lay people who have a desire to develop a deeper relationship with God and others.

"Revive is specifically geared towards active and experienced lay leaders in Christian communities who want to go deeper in their faith and spiritual leadership," says the Rev. Canon Dr. Scott Sharman, Canon to the Ordinary, Diocese of Edmonton. "It would be especially good for wardens, vestry members, building committee members, altar guild members, readers, servers, and intercessors, children and youth volunteers, etc."

The Revive program will be offered both in-person and virtually. Both groups will start with a Retreat Day on Saturday, January 13. From there, they will move through the three modules: Communicating with God, Engaging with Scripture, Called for Ministry.

"We've tried to make our program more manageable by breaking it up into six-week portions, with breaks in between," says Sharman. "We recognise that 18 sessions with an opening and closing retreat day bookending these is a substantial time commitment. But we are talking about things of profound meaning and significance. These topics are at the heart of who we are as human beings. They are expressions of our deepest spiritual longings." Sharman is confident those who participate in the course will see it as a "great blessing."

The diocesan courses will be led by a



team of Diocesan Revive Animators, including Sharman, the Rev. Madeleine Urion, St. George's, Edmonton; the Rev. Andreas Sigrist, St. Matthias, Edmonton; the Rev. Stephanie London, St. Columba, Beaumont. Two leaders will facilitate the in-person group, and two will run the group meeting virtually.

The animators have been working through the program and their experience has been "great so far," says Sharman. "The content is very engaging and thought-provoking. It moves you at the level of the head, the heart, and the spirit all at the same time. The videos are really well done, and the activities and discussion questions are excellent."

Revive is one of many tools the Edmonton diocese will use as we *Find Our Way* forward together as Gospel people in the 21st century. In particular, Principle 1, Transformative Discipleship: "A renewed and transforming personal encounter with Jesus for every member of the church is where everything else finds its source. This process, both individual and communal, is supported by intentional engagement with spiritual wisdom and practices from the Jesus-Way, both old and new," and Goal 1, Spiritual Renewal: "We will encourage and support smaller intentional gatherings of Jesus-followers with the goal of fostering personal and communal spiritual renewal."

To learn more about Revive and to register, visit <https://edmonton.anglican.ca/news/register-now-for-revive-discipleship-program>

"Traditionally, Anglicans are formed spiritually through liturgy and private devotions. But these are not enough. We need to speak about the activity of God in our lives, in small groups or with mentors, in order for our experience of God to be integrated and form meaning." - Revive

Program Format

Opening Retreat (Saturday, January 13, 9 am to 4 pm): Spiritual Story

The objective of this six-hour retreat is to develop trust within the group, an appreciation for God's gift of diverse personality temperaments, and an awareness of each participant's own spiritual story.

Module 1: Communicating with God

The objective is to expose participants to at least 10 prayer practices, including imaginative prayer, the examen, body prayers, labyrinth, icons, contemplation, and journaling, etc. Participants usually begin with little prayer experience outside the Sunday liturgy. By the end, leaders can lead public prayer and have a prayer life.

Module 2: Engaging in Scripture

The objective is to expose participants to four methods of using the Bible for spiritual formation, enabling them to lead short Bible meditations for church meetings. The four Bible study styles used are the inductive method, S.O.A.P., lectio divina and Ignatius Imaginative Method.

Module 3: Called to Ministry

The objective here is to reflect on significant topics of faith and deepen the participants' spiritual maturity. This module includes topics, such as group spiritual direction, discernment, spiritual gifts, death & dying, forgiveness, creeds and belief statements, and spiritual leadership.

Closing Retreat (Saturday, October 26, 10 am to 2 pm): Rule of Life

The objective is to conclude with the crafting of a Rule of Life that orients participants as followers of Christ.

and this will require much more work administratively," Kemp says. "Thankfully, the SAH community is generous with both their time and resources, so many people have shared, or have offered to share the resources they developed to help manage the administrative responsibilities."

Given the new requirements, the Diocese of Islands and Inlets has decided to wind down its PSR program by 2026, but for now the Edmonton diocese will continue as an SAH.

During the conference, Kemp had an "overwhelming sense of so many people trying their very best to work for the greater good in a difficult world. The room was filled with people who just want to help."

It is her hope that as the Edmonton diocese "adapts to the new administrative requirements of the program, and as we engage more people in this ministry, we will be able to continue the good and important work of refugee sponsorship."

She adds that "although we will never be able to help everyone who is displaced and persecuted, this is our way of holding a light

Refugee sponsorship coordinators 'holding a light' continued

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The Edmonton diocese has been active in refugee sponsorship for decades. However, between 2018 and 2023 the federal program underwent major changes which have increased the administrative burden. These changes were crucial though to make sure that every refugee is settled well in Canada with the utmost chance for success.

SAHs face a host of challenges, not the least of which is meeting the new Program Integrity Framework (PIF), introduced by IRCC.

Kemp says, "since the aftermath of the Syrian refugee crisis in 2015/2016 the Privately Sponsored Refugee Program has undergone many changes to ensure that newcomers to Canada receive a basic standard of support and care. This has resulted in an increased administrative burden for SAHs, and has been a very difficult transition, especially for SAHs that are exclusively volunteer run.

"As our refugee program continues forward, we must be compliant with all the government regulations around sponsorship and settlement,

in a sometimes very dark world... The work of sponsoring refugees and supporting newcomers is the work of God, and it is a privilege to be invited into this ministry. This is concrete, actionable work that makes a world of difference in people's lives."

Next year the Edmonton diocese anticipates it will submit sponsorships for around 20 people, through three or four parishes. Kemp intends to use the feedback from the diocese's "A Calling for All Survey" to connect with members of the diocese who indicated an interest in helping with refugee sponsorship program. She will invite volunteers to serve on a new Diocesan Refugee Committee, or to provide support for newcomers and co-sponsors during the settlement process.

These positions will require a Police Records Check, and an interview, as volunteers will be dealing with a vulnerable population and sensitive personal information. If you are interested in either or both volunteer opportunities, please contact RJ at the Synod Office.

Humility key to knowledge and growth

I pray that these thoughts find you well in this new year. A new year is always a time to look ahead and wonder what we are going to experience and discover.

Part of the gift of a new year is knowing we are going to learn something new and grow because of it. In fact, one way to understand wisdom is to see it as the kind of knowledge that helps us to grow in maturity and love. I pray this will be a year of growth in wisdom for you.

To grow in wisdom, we need to be humble as people and humble as a church. Without humility, we risk losing our hunger for learning. Writing to a young jazz musician, Wynton Marsalis, the deeply profound jazz trumpet player, reflected on humility. The key to keep growing as a musician, he wrote, is humility. Because the real struggle is not with the music, but with yourself: having self-knowledge. He writes, "Do you know how you can tell when someone is truly humble? I believe there is one simple test: because they consistently observe and listen, the humble



Bishop STEPHEN LONDON
Diocese of Edmonton

improve. They don't assume, 'I know the way.'" (*Letters to a Young Jazz Musician*)

This is the stance of our diocese in 2024: we are still learning about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are still capable of awe at what God is doing in our midst. It is wonderful that the new year comes at the season of Epiphany. Epiphany is all about people discovering new things about Jesus. We have the moving story of the three wise gentiles

coming to pay homage to the child Jesus teaching that this good news isn't just for a chosen few. (And we are still learning this.) We have the great story of Jesus' baptism teaching us that this person is not just a prophet, but the very son of God. (And we are still trying to grasp the implications of this.) We have the miracle of the turning of water into wine at the wedding of Cana teaching us that God is in the

midst of our lives. (And we still forget this.) Epiphany reminds us that we always have more to learn and, therefore, more to grow, even as a church.

Later in that letter to the young musician, Marsalis continued: "Humility engenders learning because it beats back the arrogance that puts blinders on. It leaves you open for truths to reveal themselves. You don't stand in your own way."

We need to pray we don't stand in the way of God's love of the world. May God grant us growth this year.

*Blessings,
+ Steve*



Begin new year by getting to know God

"Happy New Year! So, how are you going to represent Jesus this year?"

"Oh, I thought I'd walk on water, heal a few dozen people, you know."

"Really?"

"I'm joking, I'm joking!"

"Oh, I wanted to come and watch."

"What do you mean, how am I going to represent Jesus? I'm not God! I can't be Jesus!"

"I didn't ask how you would be Jesus, but how you would represent Jesus! You are baptised, after all."

"There's a difference?"

"Yes. Just like I cannot be you, but I can try to represent you, as a lawyer, or an ambassador, or even as a friend, for example."

"Ah. Well, I don't know. How am I to know the mind of God?"

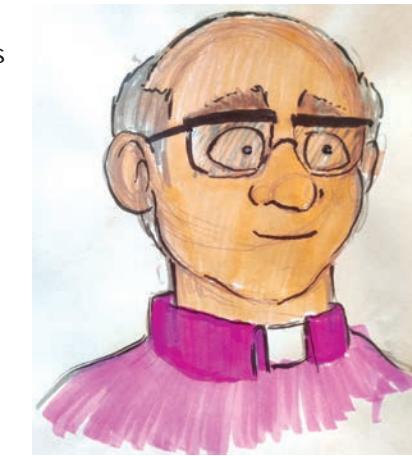
"O, come on, read your bible, for God's sake! And for your sake, too!"

"Huh? Don't need to get rude!"

"You know the mind of God if you read Jesus in the Bible, and then read the Bible through Jesus."

"How do I do that?"

"Read the Gospels, and truly try to understand Jesus. Then, read the New Testament letters and see how Paul, Peter, and the others tried to read the Old Testament through the eyes and life of Jesus, and do the same."



Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD
Diocese of Athabasca

"So, if I read the Bible, I'll know the mind of God?"

"I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to the child-like."

"Ok, Mr. Smarty Pants, tell me: what's the will of God? How do I represent Jesus?"

"First of all, you realise you're an Image of God, right?"

"Eh?"

"God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female, he created them."

"What do you mean that I'm an Image of God?"

"Not just you, but every single person."

"Everyone? Even those who are ruining the world and killing others?"

"Everyone was created in the Image of God."

"Oh. That's heavy."

"So, how do you think God wants to be treated?"

"I don't know, with honour? With reverence?"

"And, how do you think God wants His Images to be treated?"

"The same way?"

"So, if you lie to another person, or cheat, or steal, or treat them as an object for your personal pleasure or gain, do you think that honours them? Reverses them?"

"No ..."

"If you do anything to harm them, do you think that honours them?"

"No."

"Right. So, how do you think God wants His images to be treated?"

"With honesty, respect, not taking advantage of them, but doing things to build them up and strengthen them?"

"Bingo! You do know the mind of God!"

"Oh, come on now. I'm not all-knowing, there's no way I know the mind of God."

"God doesn't ask you to be all-knowing, just to know Him. Get to know Jesus! He who said, 'I give you a new commandment: to love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. Everyone will know by this that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'"

"So, God wants me to treat His Images how I would treat God, because that glorifies Him?"

"You are a smart cookie. Yes. So, what's one way you could represent Jesus?"

"By trying to be honest? By not trying to take advantage of anyone?"

"Those are excellent things to start with."

So, how are you going to represent Jesus this year?

*Be blessed in Christ!
+ David*

We welcome letters to the editor, news, stories and book reviews (max 500 words), event notices and high resolution photos (min 1 MB, 200 dpi).

Submissions are due one month prior to the issue for which they are intended, for example: JANUARY 2 for FEBRUARY 2024.

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Married Ministry Team Breaks New Ground with Lovefeast

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

A husband-and-wife ministry team at Holy Trinity Anglican Church is breaking new ground by drawing from Anglican, Moravian and Lutheran faith traditions to offer rich, engaging worship experiences.

During a celebration of new ministry on Sunday, December 3, the Rev. Rob Key was welcomed as deacon at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Edmonton by Bishop Stephen London, the Rev. Danielle Key, rector of Holy Trinity, the Rev. Erin Thomas, pastor of Trinity Lutheran, Edmonton; the Rev. Mark Guevarra, pastor of Edmonton Moravian, and other members of the local clergy and lay communities.

The Sunday before, the Keys, who were married on February 22, 2020, broke ground by leading a lovefeast service at Holy Trinity.

Originating from the Moravian faith tradition, a lovefeast is a service that begins with a prayer and is followed by music and the distribution of a simple meal. People are then encouraged to engage in spiritual conversations.

"This was the first lovefeast we've heard of being done in an Anglican church. Certainly, the first one at Holy Trinity and likely the first one in Canada," says Rob.

Almost all Moravian churches in Canada are situated in Alberta, except one in Ontario. The Canadian district is one of three districts within the Northern Province.

For several weeks leading up to the lovefeast, the couple spent time familiarising people with what to expect.

"Not everyone is comfortable with change, and we didn't want to throw people into a 'welcome on Sunday, surprise! look what we're doing' situation," says Danielle. "One of the congregation's members said to Rob afterwards, 'I Googled lovefeast and, I figured, I could do that.'"

In the Moravian church, a lovefeast is a separate service, often held after the main worship service, which may or may not include communion. However, Rob and Danielle decided that the Holy Trinity lovefeast would take place inside an Anglican communion service.

There were other differences, too. For instance, a traditional lovefeast service would not include formal scripture readings or even a sermon. But Rob did give a "short-for-me" sermon.

Six people helped Danielle and Rob distribute the food and drink. In Pennsylvania, where the Moravian seminary for the Northern Province is situated, churches traditionally serve coffee and Moravian Sugar Cake. But Rob and Danielle planned the service to be fully inclusive, opting instead to serve Brownies, and a gluten-free option, along with juice boxes to be enjoyed by people of all ages.

While our context determined the type of food we served, "we wanted everyone to share the same food," says Danielle.

As they enjoyed their snack, people were encouraged to share about what brought them to Holy Trinity.

The idea of the lovefeast was to "show people that although Anglican and Moravian traditions are different, there's a commonality in our beliefs and our practices," says Rob.

About 97 people attended at the service (about 20 fewer people than average for Holy Trinity), and Danielle says, "nearly everyone was engaged," and they received much positive feedback.

It is common practice for Holy Trinity to partner with its Full Communion neighbours. The Keys and the Rev. Erin Thomas, pastor

of Trinity Lutheran Church, have served and hosted in each other's churches, and Edmonton Moravian Church happily lent its serving trays to Holy Trinity for the lovefeast.

"Our churches share an openness to different expressions of faith and different ways of worship within each tradition," says Rob. "The basic tenets of the Christian faith are the same."

"There's so much rich liturgy between the three traditions," says Danielle who serves on the One Flock, One Shepherd Lutheran, Anglican Moravian (LAM)

full communion working group of General Synod. "It would be heartbreaking to do all this work to create a full communion if no one wants to experiment. We all have beautiful liturgies, so let's share them."

Looking ahead, Danielle hopes "more people are comfortable reaching out and creating relationships with one another. When we do that, we can help each other with resources and support, ultimately making things so much easier."

Rob is equally optimistic that while trying different things, "people will also feel comfortable saying when something doesn't work."

"At the lovefeast someone said, 'That was interesting. It's not my thing, but it's interesting,'" says Danielle. "They were happy for the experience."

The fact that "there's not a lot, at least not at our local level, that's forced downward, enables people (within the guardrails) to be fairly free in the expression of their faith," says Rob, whose own faith journey has followed a winding path between denominations in Canada and the US.

After leading the youth at Holy Trinity under the Rev. Don Aellen, Rob moved away to attend seminary and while there was asked to fill a parental leave for the pastor of Edmonton Moravian Church. "Because of that experience, I explored the Moravian church and their history of mission appealed to me," he says.

After completing additional training at seminary in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, he served as pastor of Good News Moravian church in Sherwood Park for four-plus years.

"I had not thought, at that time, I would ever serve vocationally within an Anglican church," says Rob.

"My move back into vocational ministry is part of our love story. It's only since Danielle and I have been together that we've thought and prayed about it, and we're moving through this together."

It was the potential to do ministry as part of a team, that drew Rob back in. "I didn't necessarily want to be a solo pastor again. It can be pretty isolating."

As partners in ministry, Danielle says, "We've always made a good team. We started leading the youth group together when I came to Holy Trinity, in 2018. This has felt like a natural progression. I know he jokes and says, 'Now she's my boss,' but we're teammates.



Edmonton full communion partners attending the celebration of new ministry for Rob Key, deacon of Holy Trinity, are (l to r): Robin Walker, HTAC Honourary Assistant; Bishop Stephen London, Anglican Diocese of Edmonton; Erin Thomas, Trinity Lutheran Pastor; Rob Key, HTAC Deacon; Danielle Key, HTAC Rector; Penny Bruce, HTAC Honourary Assistant; Scott Sharman, Diocese of Edmonton Canon to the Ordinary; Mark Guevarra, Edmonton Moravian Pastor; Mark Vigrass, St. George's, Edmonton Deacon. Photo: Matthew Mercer-Deadman

Luckily a lot of my weaknesses are Rob's strengths and vice versa. We balance each other pretty well. I hope other couples in our congregation find it encouraging to see we are both strong in our faith and aren't afraid to show it."

When Danielle and Rob began imagining what their team ministry could be, "we promised each other we would always keep communication open and be honest with each other, always keeping in mind what's best for the congregation and the community," she says.

Rob is quick to add that the couple does not always agree on everything. One of the strengths of their ministry is being able to bring their different perspectives to worship, Bible and book studies, and the marriage prep sessions they lead together for engaged couples.

"We read the book called Jesus Feminist: An Invitation to Revisit the Bible's View of Women and it was funny because, even though we each consider ourselves a feminist, we have different understandings of what that term means. We spent the first half of the book arguing until we came to that realisation."

"Oftentimes, our different view of things makes for a more wholesome conversation and, I think, it's easier for other people to enter into that," says Rob.

Looking ahead, Danielle and Rob hope to expand their ministry outreach even further into the surrounding community and the University of Alberta.

"We've been thrilled and blessed by the amount of community engagement we've been able to do here at Holy Trinity. We've been able to welcome, feed and get to know our neighbours, and just be a safe place that people can turn to. We keep casting our nets further to help in different ways. I think the real key to the future of the church is breaking outside of your doors on Sunday and doing more community engagement. I'm thrilled that Holy Trinity is receptive to trying new things with both of us. The old mentality of 'we never used to do it that way' is gone, and now it's more of a 'well, let's try it. Why not?'"

"My dream would be to live out God's love not only with Holy Trinity, but also with other partners, however that looks," says Rob. "For me, it's about empowering the people of Holy Trinity to live out that love in everyday, practical ways."