



# THE MESSENGER



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MARCH 2024

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**Edmonton Diocese  
Takes Next Step  
on Way Forward  
Together**

## Edmonton diocesan executive council selects Another Way consultant to lead parish engagement

MARGARET GLIDDEN  
Edmonton Editor

The Diocese of Edmonton has selected an Edmonton-based consultant to lead the first phase of the Diocesan Strategic Plan.

At its meeting on January 25, executive council approved the strategic planning consultant search committee's recommendation to hire Anna Bubel, principal consultant of Another Way Consulting.

Greg Heaton, a member of Executive Council and chair of the search committee, noted that experienced consultants with an understanding of faith communities, whose names had been provided to the search committee by Bishop Stephen London, had been invited to submit proposals.

Bubel has been a consultant for several faith communities in Edmonton and St. Albert. In her work as a consultant and community planner, she specialises in participatory, action-oriented processes. According to her website, she has a "vision of community empowerment, cooperation, equity and capacity-building."

The multi-part resolution, introduced by

Heaton and seconded by Tricia Laffin, stipulates that the total cost of the contract not exceed \$75,000.

Bishop Stephen London will communicate to executive council the details of the finalised agreement, including how administrative support for phase one will be delivered. Bubel is self-employed and has indicated the scope of the project will require administrative support.

During the parish engagement phase, Bubel will meet with the clergy and lay leaders of all 46 parishes to gain a solid understanding of the current state of the diocese. Her methodology will include a set of consistent criteria: objective measures that take stock of physical assets. For example, income, regular attendance and property.

The environmental scan will also incorporate less tangible elements, such as the energy and engagement of parishioners and the role the parish plays in the larger community, and the spiritual health of the parish: "What's joyful in this parish in your relationship with God? What are you struggling with in your relationship with God?"

"In conversation with people, especially on a

grand scale, the hope is that themes will arise, and we start to see commonalities," says Bishop Stephen London.

"To some extent, we are already aware of some of our challenges: challenges in our cities, challenges in our rural communities, but it will be helpful to get a more objective and accurate picture of what these challenges are and could be. From this information we will be able to see how we can help support mission and ministry in our different communities."

Bubel will be asked to share her findings with the 69th Synod in October, when members of synod will be asked to provide feedback.

"The *Finding Our Way* survey was a voluntary process for people to share their hopes, dreams and priorities for the diocese. It was always meant to be a stepping stone to a more involved engagement for everyone to be invited to speak into the future of the diocese," says Bishop London. "Our hope is to gain a more fulsome understanding of both the joys and the struggles of individual parishes, to see where we are as a diocese, to look forward to the future God is calling us to with greater confidence."

Continued on next page.





## Cursillo 'Profound Experience of Christian Community'

Have you thought about going deeper in your faith by attending a Cursillo Weekend? The weekend runs from Friday evening, May 3 to late Sunday afternoon, May 5, at Star of the North Retreat Centre in St. Albert.

The weekend revolves around a series of talks given by a team of laypeople and clergy. Small group discussions follow the talks. There are times for worship, fellowship, personal reflection, prayer and song. The weekend is a time for you, as a Christian, to be strengthened in your spiritual journey. This weekend is open to all Christians 18 years and older.

"Cursillo means a little course in Christianity. But it is so much more. It is, in fact, a profound experience of deep Christian community. It is a weekend of learning, but also of fellowship, worship, laughter and friendship," says Bishop Stephen London, Diocese of Edmonton.

If interested, you are encouraged to discuss the possibility of attending a Cursillo weekend with your parish priest or a Cursillo community member. For more info, email [cursilloedmonton@gmail.com](mailto:cursilloedmonton@gmail.com)

You will then be asked to complete an application which can be downloaded at <https://edmonton.anglican.ca/events/cursillo-weekend/>



## Executive council selects consultant continued

Continued from Front Page.

The next phase of the diocesan strategy will incorporate the findings of the parish engagement to develop draft strategies tied to one or more of the 12 goals identified by the *Finding Our Way* strategic path. These strategies will define how the Edmonton diocese will respond to its current situation and achieve its goals. They are intended to move the diocese closer materially and measurably to its goals and vision.

As Bishop London explains, *Finding Our Way* was the guiding document for the diocese from October 2022 to 2024. "The conversations arising from the first phase of the strategic plan will create our process for the next two years. The goal is to revisit the strategic plan in 2026, with a mind to what has been effective and what changes need to be made."

The strategic plan will be a living document, subject to revision as circumstances change.

## Anglican Foundation of Canada rallying support for children and youth ministry

The Anglican Foundation of Canada (AFC) is encouraging parishes and ministries to begin thinking about pre-registering a fundraising team for the 2024 Say Yes! to Kids fundraising appeal.

Six church-led projects and initiatives supporting children, youth and young adults in the Diocese of Edmonton have received more than \$41,000 in funding from the Say Yes! to Kids program since 2021.

Beneficiaries in the Edmonton diocese include:

- St. Faith's, Edmonton: Gathering Strength: Youth Sharing and Learning
- Good Shepherd, Edmonton: We Belong Together Youth Drop-in Centre
- Christ Church, Edmonton: Diocesan Children's Choir
- St. Paul's, Edmonton: Anglican Youth Retreat Connection
- St. Paul's, Edmonton: St. Paul's Kids' Club
- St. Michael and All Angels, Edmonton: Upgrading for the Present and the Future of Children's Ministry

New to the 2024 campaign, says the AFC, is the celebration of Say Yes! to Kids Sunday on June 2. The SYTK Sunday liturgy will be the spiritual focal point for the movement. It will be a flexible, adaptable resource that any church



Join AFC and celebrate Say Yes! to Kids Sunday on June 2nd

Be part of the movement to grow a brighter future for children, youth, and young adults!

Visit [anglicanfoundation.org/sytkSunday](https://anglicanfoundation.org/sytkSunday)



can use — whether it has an active campaign, or an active youth ministry—providing suggested readings, hymns, collects and other resources that may be adapted to any context.

The goal of SYTK Sunday is to rally Canadian Anglicans to celebrate children, youth, and young adults in our midst and pray for the creativity and compassion to make young people a vital part of the fabric of our church now and in the future.

Since 2021, the SYTK movement has provided over \$625,000 in funding to more than 125 beneficiaries and fundraising partners for youth-focused ministry and outreach across the Anglican Church of Canada.

Register to receive the Say Yes! to Kids Sunday resources at <https://www.anglicanfoundation.org/sytkSunday/>

## Reimagining diocesan young adults ministry

With the support of executive council, the Diocese of Edmonton is optimistic it can reestablish its ministry to young adults.

At the January 25 meeting of executive council, Bishop Stephen London presented the report, "Young Adults Ministry - A Vision of Success," by a group he convened to begin the process of "reimagining" the Young Adults Ministry (formerly the University Chaplaincy).

Members of the Young Adults' Ministry Planning Team are Bishop Stephen London, Carol Blair, group facilitator and a member of Immanuel, Wetaskiwin; the Rev. Maddie Urion, rector of St. George's, Edmonton; the Ven. Susan Oliver, rector of Christ Church, Edmonton and Archdeacon for Children, Families and Youth Ministry; Emily Stephen-Garneau, Matthew Sayer.

The planning team will establish a diocesan leadership group to organise a Young Adults Focus Group this spring, identifying the needs and desires of young adults in the diocese. It is hoped this insight can be used to shape a plan for ongoing ministry, beginning with a kick-off event in the fall of 2024.

For more than 50 years, the University

Chaplaincy was a presence on the University of Alberta campus. In recent years, ministry programs included the Worship Room, a Sunday evening worship service and supper; the Livingroom, a weekly, evening drop-in at St. George's; Pub Theology, a monthly social evening on Whyte Avenue; and Interfaith Encounters, monthly noon-hour conversations at the university's HUB Mall.

However, the University Chaplaincy Board that organised an annual fundraising dinner in support of the chaplaincy had gradually dissipated and, by the start of the COVID pandemic in 2020, was no longer an entity. The position of University Chaplain has been vacant for a few years.

Furthermore, the diocesan-wide youth network was disrupted by the discontinuation of youth programs, like Together Encountering Christ (TEC), and the diocesan camping program.

These factors combined have necessitated a reimagining of ministry to young adults that can be sustained by consistent leadership and support. The hope is that by October, gatherings of young adults from across the diocese will resume with enthusiasm and regularity.

JOIN BISHOP STEPHEN LONDON AND ANGLICAN, LUTHERAN AND MORAVIAN YOUTH

# ECUMENICAL YOUTH EVENT

Sunday, April 14

1:30 to 4:30 pm

See You There!

Trinity Lutheran

REGISTER AT [HTTPS://EDMONTON.ANGLICAN.CA/EVENTS/JOIN-BISHOP-STEPHEN-FOR-ECUMENICAL-YOUTH-EVENT](https://edmonton.anglican.ca/events/join-bishop-stephen-for-ecumenical-youth-event)

## Be encouraged: Lent for healing and wholeness

Blessed Lent, my friends! When you read this column, you will be in the middle of the season of Lent. I thought I would write to give you a word of encouragement.

Lent, of course, is a penitential season in our church calendar. It is a season of repentance. It is a season of the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving (donations, particularly to the poor). It is a season of looking within our hearts with tremendous honesty and asking for forgiveness for our sins and the places where we have fallen short.

All of that is good and important, but what often gets forgotten in this understanding of Lent is that Lent is meant to be a season of *renewal*. There is a purpose to the season of Lent, and it is not to conjure our feelings of shame. Shame is not a helpful emotion in the spiritual life.

The purpose of Lent is to take time to reset ourselves completely: in body, mind and soul, so that we can recognise Jesus' grace and mercy in our lives. I use this helpful analogy: Lent offers us a time to do a "spring cleaning" of the soul.

During these 40 days, we set aside time to both look within and to connect with God.



Bishop STEPHEN LONDON  
Diocese of Edmonton

We need to have the honesty to go with God into the hard parts of our soul and the nest of negative emotions that usually dwells there: fear, anger, resentment, jealousy, insecurity, etc. This is, indeed, a hard path to walk, so let me tell you the secret to doing this well.

The secret is: you need to do this work from a place of grace and acceptance. Sometimes the language of Lent makes it sound like we revel in degradation, like the word from the hymn that talks about God saving "a *wretch* like me." While there is poetic value in that language to invoke



a feeling, we have to understand that this is hyperbole. The truth about your soul is that God loves you and delights in you.

The message of Christianity is not "you are a horrible person but, good news, God love you despite your horridness." The good news of Christianity is that you are a beautiful child of God who has a broken, underfunctioning heart that God wants to heal and restore in Jesus Christ. Yes, we have sinned and fallen short. But that is not our deepest identity! This is why Lent is a time of renewal.

Lent always points to the coming greater truth of resurrection and God's new creation. We have to remember that Lent only makes sense as the prelude to Easter. The path there is indeed through the cross and necessarily so. We have much to hand over to Christ that needs to be nailed there. But the purpose is for healing and wholeness. Take encouragement this Lent. God wants you and, indeed, the whole world to know its belovedness. This is the real work of Lent.

Blessings,  
+ Steve

## Lent a time to let go of disappointment

"This is just another example of how the church has let us down."

The Rev. Alsop (not his real name) was disheartened. He thought he had tried everything. He had let Mrs. Important know the dates he was available for her daughter's wedding. He had worked through the pre-marriage sessions with the two engaged people, though he doubted the couple was even listening, instead thinking, "We don't need this. It is a waste of our time."

Then Mrs. Important phoned to insist, "We're having the wedding two Saturdays from now." Exasperated, Alsop responded, "Mrs. Important, I told you I couldn't make that day. I suggested several alternative days instead."

"Well, those are the days the hall and extended family members are available, so that is when the wedding must be. Aunt Lulu has booked her tickets from Australia."

"I'm sorry," he replied. "But I won't be able to be there."

"Fine. This is just another example of the church letting us down. Goodbye," said Mrs. Important, abruptly ending the phone call.

Being a clergy person can be a joyful experience. We see people transformed by the love of God. And, we have the privilege



Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD  
Diocese of Athabasca

and honour of participating in their lives through baptisms, confirmations, marriages, funerals; in weekly celebrations and sorrows; in prayer, conversation and sundry activities.

Being a clergy person can also be a sad and frustrating experience, when we see people choose unhealthy lives and we are unable to meet their desires. We can be blamed for their troubles, even though they are not something we can influence.

The clergy are not the church, rather we are one part

of it. Please pray for your clergy person! The church is the collection of people who gather to worship and pray, to serve and love, to grieve and rejoice. We are a community of baptised people of God, journeying and exploring together what it means to be God's people today. The church's failures and successes are our failures and successes. There will be times when one part of the church is frustrated or hurt by another part (clergy or otherwise). This is inevitable.

In the above example, the person feeling let down and the person they believe to be the cause of their disappointment, are equally part of the church.

Seasons, like Lent, give us an opportunity to reflect, not only on our individual shortcomings but also our collective ones. Have we let someone down? Has our church? Have we accused someone of letting us down out of frustration at not being able to control them or our circumstances? Do we need to ask forgiveness? Do we need to give forgiveness? How can we extend forgiveness?

Jesus said, "Why do you see the speck in your brother's eye, but fail to see the 2x4 in your own?"

Instead of being quick to judge, let us work to remove what hinders us from seeing clearly. And with clear vision, let us offer loving, healthy words and action to our fellow explorers on the path of Christ.

Lent is a time to reflect, to confess, to forgive. It is an opportunity to find the 2x4s in our eyes, that we had been too busy to notice before, and with God's help and love remove them. It is a time to re-learn our identity; we are Images of God, we belong to Christ, we are fellow servants in his mission. It is a time to receive God's grace, and with thanksgiving move forward, in love. To love and to be loved.

May you be filled with his love.  
Amen.

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: March 1 for April 2024.

**CONTACT**  
Margaret Glidden (Edmonton Editor)  
[anglicanmessenger@gmail.com](mailto:anglicanmessenger@gmail.com)

Peter Clarke (Athabasca Editor)  
[seens@telus.net](mailto:seens@telus.net)

**REPORTING, LAYOUT & DESIGN**  
Margaret Glidden

**PROOFREADING**  
RJ Chambers

A \$15 annual donation is suggested. Please send donations to the dioceses of Athabasca or Edmonton, c/o The Messenger.

The Messenger is published under the authority of the Dioceses of Athabasca and Edmonton. Opinions expressed in The Messenger are not necessarily those of the editor or publisher.

The Messenger is a section of the Anglican Journal, printed 10 times a year (no issues July and August) by Webnews Printing Inc., North York O.N.

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# St. Luke's, Beaverlodge Welcomes the Greenwoods




Bishop David Greenwood had the pleasure of leading the eucharist service at St. Luke's, Beaverlodge on January 7, 2024. At the potluck lunch that followed in the hall, Bishop David thanked the congregation for their wonderful welcome. Pictured are: Bishop David Greenwood and Don Thompson; reader Alison Frissell, organist Louise Frame. Photos: Benita Greenwood.

150th Celebration

## ANNUAL ACW Conference

"I am loved. I'm known. I matter."

April 26 to 28, 2024  
Christ Church, Grande Prairie  
Guest Speaker: Pat Dutcher-Walls  
More Information to Come!



# Bishop David Celebrates Eucharist with St. Luke's, Ft. Vermilion



Bishop David Greenwood was honoured to celebrate the eucharist with the congregation of St. Luke's, Fort Vermilion on Sunday, January 21, 2024. A wonderful lunch followed the service. Please keep the Rev. Hermann Dittrich in your prayers as he recovers from surgery. Photos: Benita Greenwood

## ATHABASCA 150

# Bible Reading Marathon



March 24, 1pm to March 28, 5pm  
100 Hours of Sharing God's Word  
Via Zoom and Facebook

Sign Up at [www.athdio.ca](http://www.athdio.ca)

## LENT BOOKS SEVEN DEADLY SINS

