



# THE MESSENGER



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## At Peace in Grandmother's Cabin - Grieving Loss of Home and Church

MARGARET GLIDDEN  
Edmonton Editor

**C**urled up under a blanket in her grandmother's cabin overlooking the calm waters of Clear Lake in Riding Mountain National Park, MB, in August, Nancy Addison recalled how, only weeks earlier, her son Matthew and his partner Viviane were among the firefighters working to contain the wildfire burning in Jasper National Park two provinces away.

For 35 years, Jasper has been home to Nancy, a retired schoolteacher and people's warden for St. Mary's and St. George's Anglican parish; her husband Mark, a retired physician, and their four grown children. Matthew and Viviane were on the ground fighting the blaze when flames shot 500 feet in the air burning a path of destruction through the Cabin Creek neighbourhood and western part of Jasper.

"Matthew told us not look at the pictures people were posting online," says Addison. "He knew I would be devastated to see our beloved St. Mary's and St. George's Anglican Church burning."

"The first picture we saw was taken by Viviane from the top of our street," she says. "We were texting with Matthew, and he said, 'Mom, dad, it looks like we'll lose our house...'"

Everyone in the Addison's neighbourhood and all but a few members of the Jasper Anglican Church community also lost their homes (the fire destroyed 358 homes and businesses).

"My heart is breaking," says Addison when thinking about the people who will not be returning to her community.

When Russia waged war on Ukraine, she took to social media to connect with people fleeing the conflict, mobilising her church and local employers to help more than 100 Ukrainian people settle in Jasper, offering her own home to newcomers.

She met Ukrainian refugees primarily through Facebook and helped them find places to live as well as jobs. She is concerned that many Ukrainian refugees, she estimates 30 or more, also lost their homes in the wildfire.

"They are very resilient people, but they have no safety net and are in a precarious situation," she says.

In 1928, around the time Nancy's grandmother built her cabin, she suddenly lost her 19-year-old son to a fatal brain aneurysm.

"My grandmother would swim every day in the lake and cry [for her son]," says Nancy. "We were lucky not to have lost anyone [in the fire]."

For Nancy and Mark, who purchased the

family cabin in 1995, being able to take refuge on the north shore of Clear Lake when their home burned 1,400 kms away was "an absolute godsend."

Though not physically present, in July, when everyone in Jasper, including more than 4,700 residents, had been evacuated, Addison received updates from her family members and followed the posts to social media. She manages the church Facebook page which she has been using to keep her community connected. Some of the church's members have relocated across the country, as far away as the Maritimes.

The wildfire also destroyed the Jasper United church which had been home to the thrift store that clothed "every Ukrainian family" the town had welcomed, she says.

Her own parish had provided space for the community's food bank and food recovery effort and, at one time, was home to a toy lending library. With its exquisite architecture based on a 14th-century English gothic blueprint, the Edith Cavell Memorial Tower, and excellent acoustics, the church was also a popular venue for weddings, concerts and art shows.

Addison is hopeful the church communities that still have their buildings, such as the Baptist and Roman Catholic churches, will be able to fill the void.

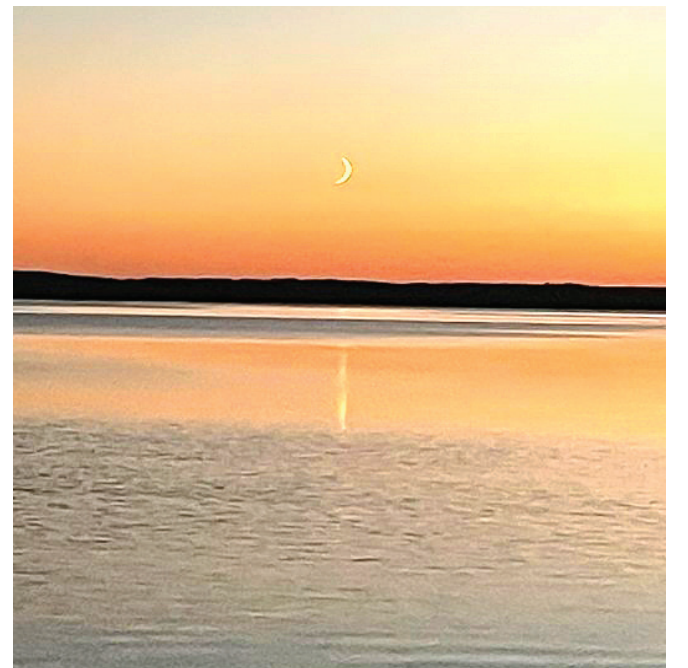
"Everything our church did was selfless," says Addison who began attending the Anglican church after completing the Alpha course with Mark at the local Baptist church, in 2001.

"We were church shopping and when we stepped into St. Mary's and St. George's, it (the community) was the salt of the earth. We fit right in," she says.

As the summer village of Wasagaming prepared for another Manitoba winter, cutting off water and power supply to the Addison's cabin in September, Nancy, Mark and their dog returned to Jasper to be reunited with their family and witness the "hard truth" of the fire's destruction.

Nancy, 65, cautions others that there are lessons to take away from this "horrible" wildfire. "Churches and the diocese need to make environmental issues a focus," she says. "We need to be more proactive in protecting the earth for ourselves and future generations."

Though it is still too soon to know what the future holds for the Anglican community in Jasper, St. Mary's and St. George's parish has received an outpouring of support from other parishes in the diocese, churches in other provinces, the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) and from individuals and organisations around the world.



Above: Nancy and Mark Addison found space to grieve in the family cabin on Clear Lake in Manitoba. Below: Members of Team Rubicon sift through the remnants of the Addison family home in Jasper.

In September, parishioners gathered with their friends from the Jasper United Church community for their first church service together since the fire, held at the Masonic Lodge.

At the time of writing, Bishop Stephen London was preparing to lead a Service of Prayer and Remembrance with the Rev. David Prowse, St. Mary's and St. George's Honourary Assistant, on the Sunday of Thanksgiving Weekend.

People were invited to join a prayer circle at the corner of Miette Avenue and Geike Street, on the edge of the fenced-off property near the church sign which stands as a hopeful reminder of the community formed in Jasper by St. Mary's and St. George's Anglican Church.



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# 'Love One Another' - young people invited to share energy, compassion and passion for Social Justice

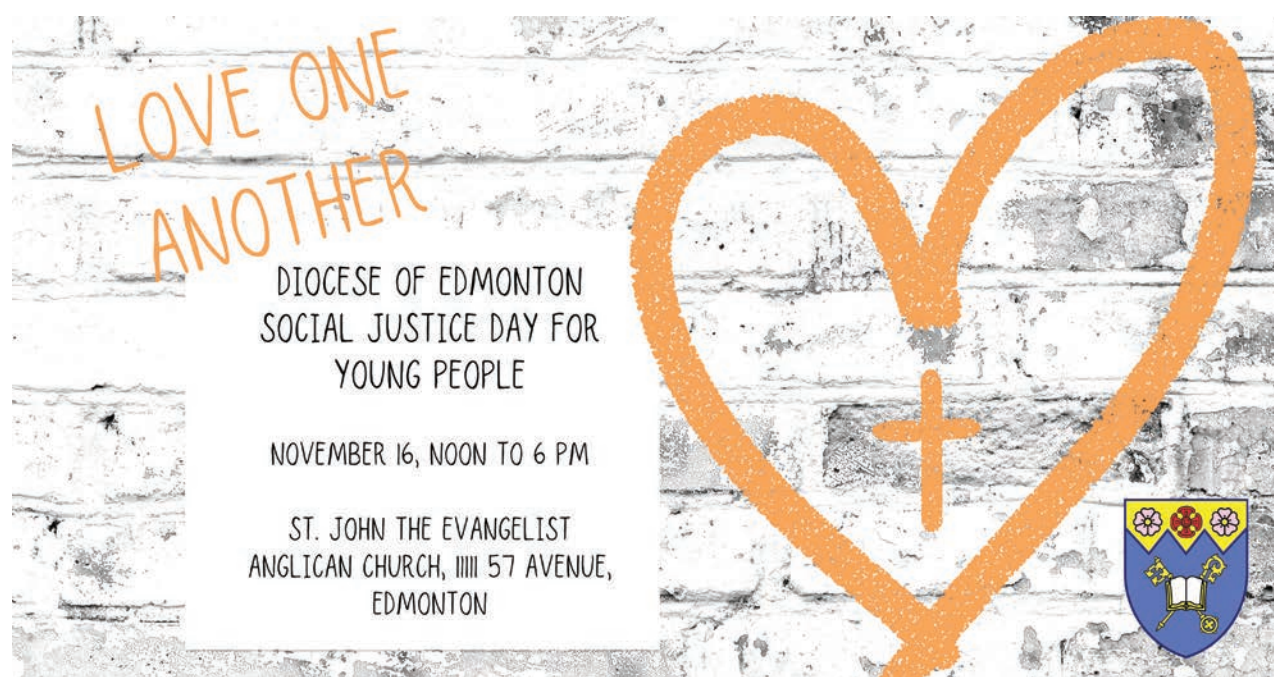
JENNIFER STEWART  
Social Justice Committee  
Diocese of Edmonton

What promises to be an exciting and inspiring day of learning and visioning for young people, ages 13 to 30 years, of every faith seeking to learn more about how our Christian faith compels us to transform unjust structures of society, is planned for November 16, from noon to 6 pm, at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, 11111 57 Avenue, Edmonton (10-minute walk from Southgate Transit Station).

Following a pizza lunch and musical performances by the Diocesan Children's Choir, led by Laura Hawley, and local musician and songwriter Emmet Michael, participants can choose to attend two breakout sessions that speak to their interests and passion.

Each breakout session will feature first-voice advocates with lived experience and leaders in communities forging the way towards social justice. Presenters will share stories, wisdom and lessons learned. There will be time for participants to ask questions and engage.

Panel discussions will focus on racial justice, queer justice, economic justice, environmental justice, prison justice and disability justice.



Panelists will address how to advocate for systems and structural change in law, public policy, human rights and public services.

This inclusive, accessible and free event is being organised by the Diocesan Social Justice Committee. Young people are encouraged to bring their energy, passion, compassion, ask

questions and share ideas as we reflect on our call to social justice.

Register online for the Youth Social Justice Day at <https://www.Edmonton.anglican.ca>. Youth groups are welcome! Please contact Rob Betty at [robetty@gmail.com](mailto:robetty@gmail.com) or Jennifer Stewart at [js.prayerworks@gmail.com](mailto:js.prayerworks@gmail.com) for more information about the day.

## Northern Lights' Parish Celebrates Diocese's 150th Anniversary

Bishop David Greenwood led the three congregations of the Parish of Northern Lights in their 5th Sunday joint service to celebrate the 150th year of the Diocese of Athabasca.

People from across the parish participated in the Eucharist service that included the recognition of a lay reader-in-training, and blessings for a special art piece, and people who had birthdays within the week. Following the service, people shared a potluck meal with lots of visiting and an anniversary cake for dessert.



Pictured from top: Violinist Bruno Wiske; Bishop David Greenwood and Northern Lights' Incumbent Rose Marie Howell with newly appointed lay-reader-in training Angela Dupuis (left), artist Savannah Dupuis with her three welded horseshoes original art piece. In blessing the art, Bishop David said it is symbolic of the triune God.

## Autumn Eucharist at St. Helen's, Fairview

ELLEN LUPICK  
St. Helen's, Fairview

The people of St. Helen's Anglican Church welcomed the Rev. Lloyd Nyarota who had travelled from his parish in Manning to Fairview, to celebrate the Eucharist on Sunday September 22.

After the service, Nyarota

drove home to spend time with his family in Leduc, before flying to Zimbabwe for a month-long visit to help other family members with the spring planting.

The members of St. Helen's Church share worship space with a Lutheran congregation in a storefront location in the Fairview Mall.



# People are fallible, the church is fallible

**S**emper Reformanda! This short Latin phrase is an age-old call to action for the church.

Simply it means "Always Reforming," and is a shortened version of a longer phrase that means "The Church Must Always Be Reforming." It is a call to action that is said to go back to St. Augustine, but really found enthusiasm at the time of the Great Reformation in the 16th century. This was the historical event out of which our own Anglican church came. The call to action found new traction, as well, in the 20th century with such luminaries as Karl Barth calling the church to turn from a self-destructive nationalism to worship of the one God; and Hans Kung to encourage the Catholic Church coming out of the great reform of Vatican II.

The call to action holds an important truth that our churches need to hold close to our hearts during these challenging times. The truth here is to recognise that the church institution is made up of fallible human beings who are trying their best but who, from time to time, have failed to live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ as it should be. At points in human history the church has gotten it mostly right, and at points in human history the church has gotten it spectacularly wrong. The Gospel never fails; humans do. This call to action is so important,



Bishop STEPHEN LONDON  
Diocese of Edmonton

because it means we must keep coming back to the Gospel: the great truth that God in Jesus Christ has reconciled the world to himself.

The New Testament testifies that Jesus Christ is at the center of all things; he is the meaning of history; he is the healer of our souls; he is the founder of the universal community of

love that is his Body in the world. In following Jesus, we have a great vision of the world made right and the creation made new because human hearts can be healed. The heart can be set free of defensiveness, fear, anger, greed and so on. It can begin to live by the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. But because we are not fully healed in this life, humans unwittingly continue to strive to make God and the church in our own image. This is why we need to be always reforming.

Through centuries, the church has always ebbed and flowed. There have been times when the church has been large and wealthy, and there have been times when the church has



Image SEBASTIEN MARTY  
Pixabay

been small and poor. In either circumstance, the church can be spiritually rich and full of energy, or it can be cold and legalistic. This choice, interestingly, has *nothing* to do with the church's size or wealth. It is all about the heart.

In this time of challenge, I call us to keep this front and center. We are going to have many conversations about canons, budgets, clergy deployment and structures. This is part of facing well the challenges ahead of us. But we also have to remember that all of these things are not ends in and of themselves. The center is Jesus Christ. Jesus wants to walk with people to make them whole, to find the deeper meaning and purpose of their lives, and to connect them with the source of life and love. This is what we are about, and why we are always reforming.

This is the good news we are built on.

Blessings,  
+ Stephen

# Work of every Christian is to become a 'little Christ'

**H**ow will the church grow?

That was my question last month, with my "tale of two hens." I was sitting with a congregation this past month and told them, "a parish won't grow unless a parish is growing."

*A parish won't grow unless it is growing.* By this, I mean that unless enough parish members are growing in their depth of faith, in discipleship, in apostleship, in encountering and walking with Christ, unless the congregation's understanding and walk with our Father God is increasing and growing, it won't grow in numbers, and it won't grow in finances. Outwardly-seen growth is a symptom of inward growth happening, not the other way around. A parish won't grow outwardly unless it is first growing inwardly. Each of us exist to be a "little Christ." As we get closer and closer to being little Christs, then Christ can use us, to His ends, more and more effectively.

As C.S. Lewis was quoted in his book *Mere Christianity*:

"Now the whole offer which Christianity



Bishop DAVID GREENWOOD  
Diocese of Athabasca

makes is this: that we can, if we let God have His way, come to share in the life of Christ. If we do, we shall then be sharing a life which was begotten, not made, which always existed and always will exist. Christ is the Son of God. If we share in this kind of life we also shall be children of God. We shall love the Father as He does and the Holy Ghost will arise in us. He came to this world and became a man in order to spread to

other people the kind of life He has — by what I call "good infection."

"Every Christian is to become a little Christ. The whole purpose of becoming a Christian is simply nothing else." And "The Church exists for nothing else but to draw people into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply

a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose. It is even doubtful, you know, whether the whole universe was created for any other purpose."

We share in a life which always existed and always will exist. We can love the Father as the Christ does and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit, we can be one with Christ, sharing His life, as Christ is one with the Father (which is why the fact that God is a trinity is essential to our salvation).

As we celebrate the Reign of Christ (November 24), let us commit to truly having Christ reign in us. Let us commit to growing in our faith, disciplining ourselves to the life of Christ (discipleship), learning and teaching what the apostles taught (apostleship), encountering and walking with Christ. Let us commit to sharing His life, through our life. Let us join together and encourage each other as we strive to do this in community. And then, we shall see the church grow, for we shall be growing — and we are the church.

May you be so blessed in the love of Christ, as you embrace Him in your walk. And I thank you, for you are a great blessing to me.

+ 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: NOV 1 for DEC 2024.

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## Where the Yeast Bubbles

The Ven. JONATHAN CRANE  
Archdeacon for Mission and Discipleship  
Diocese of Edmonton

Earlier this year, the Rev. Andreas Sigrist and I were blessed to participate in a national Anglican conference entitled, "You Are Leaven." I enjoyed this title on many levels. Being a beer and wine maker and occasional bread maker, I have often marveled at the way we participate with microorganisms – yeast in these cases – to create something delicious. In my learning as a gardener, I have come learn again and again that we do not garden plants, we garden soil – healthy topsoil is living soil with thousands of micro-insects, bacteria, fungi, protozoa, nematodes in every ounce.



Over the last few years, especially in our *Anglican Journal*, there has been some strange focus on (cue Darth Vader music) the 2040 graph. You know the one. I do not deny it – if you follow the church decline statistics out to their natural numerical end, as the stats show: "the last Anglican will turn out the lights in 2040." It's a weird presentation of the data, that suggests (or, as I actually feel the article encourages) that all of us Anglican's will somehow vaporise (or should somehow vaporise) in 16 years. God willing, my 43-year-old (by then 59-year-old) being will still be



Image: Ernesto Rodriguez Pixabay

diocese might be entirely rearranged in 16 years. These are all things we can figure out and do. The 2040 graph tells a mere organisational story and encompasses nothing of the spiritual story in which God is our animator and we are already being renewed in our hearts. Yes, the organisational story might change, might even end, but the Spirit story is eternal.

And so, the mission remains the same, your purpose remains the same whether we are small or large, weak or strong, flush or empty: we discern the bubbling. We discern together the Spirit's work among us, and we join in. What was the best church experience you've had in the last month? My guess is that it was a Spirit moment that burst out of unexpected circumstances. And, as long as this bubbling continues, here and there, in one place or another, God has not abandoned the Church.

***Jesus said, 'To what should I compare the kingdom of God? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'* Luke 13:2-21**

up kicking at that time! I am not particularly troubled by the graph.

I am not particularly troubled by the thought that the \*organisation\* of the church might be entirely rearranged in 16 years. I am not troubled by the thought that our Edmonton

The "You are Leaven" conference sought to use this similar imagery to foster and celebrate all the micro-movements of the Spirit that are bubbling in the Canadian Church. The conference was not based around one keynote speaker, but around multiple small experiences. Folk from around our ACC (Anglican Church of Canada) led spiritual formation exercises that spanned dramatic engagement with the scriptures, creative catechesis, liturgy and wild church. 'Bubbling' was a good descriptor of the tone of the conference – there was a very good energy, lots of idea-sharing, and it was clear that the Holy One is at work among us.

## Healing Power of Story

The Ven. JORDAN HAYNIE WARE  
Archdeacon for Justice  
Diocese of Edmonton

Stories are powerful. This truth became clear to me when listening to Father Michael Lapsley, founder of the Institute for the Healing of Memories (IHOM), and Honourary Canon for Healing and Reconciliation in the Diocese of Edmonton. He has shared his story – of participating in the struggle against the apartheid government in South Africa, being sent a letter bomb that took both his hands, one eye, and shattered his ear drums, and his journey to physical, mental, emotional and spiritual healing and reconciliation – during his visits to the Edmonton diocese and around the world.



Jordan Haynie Ware with Fr. Michael Lapsley in Cape Town, South Africa

We shared them in ironclad confidentiality. We listened attentively, without being distracted by other cares. Once someone finished sharing their story, we offered words of support and encouragement. I was surprised how often I found commonality with stories shared by participants from Rwanda, Lesotho, and South Africa. Despite differences of race, culture, education, social class, and religion, our stories reminded us of our common humanity.

By connecting with one another and receiving encouraging responses after sharing

our stories, the pain of those stories began to be healed.

It is this healing, Fr. Michael teaches, that allows even the most painful stories to become, like his, boring. When we can tell our stories without feelings of hatred, anger, bitterness, when we can live our lives acknowledging the truth of what has happened to us without seeking revenge, then we find that our most painful memories can be healed.

This individual healing leads, God willing, to communal healing that produces justice

in our communities. When we acknowledge commonality with someone we've hurt, we are made able to acknowledge our own fault, make amends, seek forgiveness. When our pain is acknowledged and heard, we are able to move forward without seeking revenge.

I'm still exploring ways that individual healing can lead to healing for our communities. I'd invite you to reflect on your story, and ways that it might be healed for you. How does your story connect you with others, especially those you might think you have nothing in common with? How can listening deeply to their story, and sharing with them your own, build solidarity, connection, and support justice in your community?



Jordan Haynie Ware and people from around the world shared their personal stories at the Institute for the Healing of Memories in 2024.

This is also the truth at the core of IHOM's work: every person has a story, and every story needs a listener. By listening to one another's stories of trauma and pain, we can heal those memories and build human connections that lead our communities to a brighter future.

Storytelling is a core part of who we are as human beings. Dr. John Trybus at Georgetown University argues that we are more narrative creatures than rational ones. We make our decisions based on stories that connect us to one another. Stories help us create and share meaning together.

At IHOM, stories are treated as precious.