



THE MESSENGER

JANUARY 2020

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Episcopal Electoral Synod names All Saints' Athabasca priest David Greenwood as Bishop-elect

The Rev. Canon David Greenwood, priest-in-charge of All Saints' church in Athabasca, was declared 12th Bishop of the Diocese of Athabasca on November 16, 2019. Greenwood will be consecrated at St. James' Cathedral in Peace River on Friday, February 21, 2020 (Polycarp), at 7 pm.

Delegates from across the 317,000 sq km Diocese of Athabasca gathered on the Eve of the Episcopal Electoral Synod to share food and fellowship in the hall of St. James' Cathedral. The next morning about 80 delegates, plus visitors and observers, rose early in anticipation of electing a new bishop. Morning fog had blanketed Peace River but it soon lifted to reveal a clear bright day.

Archbishop Gregory Kerr Wilson, Metropolitan of the Province of Rupert's Land, called the proceedings to order at 9 am. He declared a quorum following the report of the Credentials Committee. Canon Peter Clarke, chair of the Diocesan Search



David Greenwood is presented as Bishop-elect of Athabasca. Pictured from left: Deacon Danielle McKenzie, Archbishop Gregory Kerr-Wilson, Metropolitan of the Province of Rupert's Land and Canon Terry Leer, Archdeacon for Mission Development.

Story and photos: Canon Peter Clarke, Athabasca Editor

Committee, reported on behalf of the committee, whose members were chosen to represent the diversity of the region. Among the committee's work over the past 5 1/2 months had been to produce a new diocesan memorandum similar to a Parish Profile but wider in scope. The committee presented the Rev. Canon David Greenwood, the Very Rev. Jason Haggstrom and the Ven. Canon Terry Leer as candidates for nomination.

Prior to the election, members of the electoral synod worshipped together during a eucharist service featuring magnificent singing, setting the tone for the day. In his sermon, Archbishop Kerr-Wilson described the qualities of a bishop: a person sent by God to serve the diocese. They must be a seeker of justice, he said, but have the grace not to crush. They must be a teacher, with great faithfulness; a great priest who can understand suffering and can represent in prayer.

He referred to the gospel of John and Jesus' call to Peter: 'if you love me you will carry out what I have shown you,' and reminded us that we, members of the Body of Christ, are anointed as we walk in the spirit; as we walk in the shadow of death. We reflect Jesus and embody Christ while striving to walk faithfully in his path.

As the election got underway, the Archbishop prayed for open hearts, open minds and guidance. The orders of the Clergy and the Laity voted separately with different-coloured ballots. The balloting continued for two rounds interspersed with singing. During a break for lunch prepared

by the ACW, the lively synod and guests enjoyed lively conversation over bowls of delicious potato-bacon soup. Before the third ballot was to begin, the Archbishop shared some joyful news: his daughter Victoria had just gotten engaged. Excitement continued to build as delegates cast their votes for a third time. Then the moment everyone had been waiting for arrived and the Archbishop declared that the Canon David Greenwood had received 50 per cent + 1 of the votes from each order and was the new Bishop-elect of Athabasca. The Archbishop expressed gratitude for the other nominees who had let their names stand for election.

The church erupted in joyful applause, handshakes, hugs and lots of picture-taking. The Archbishop gave a final blessing and left members of the synod to savour the moment together as he set about making much needed plans with the Bishop-elect. That evening, Bishop-elect Greenwood and delegates the Rev. Christobel Lines and David Lines, made the five-hour drive home together in preparation for the Sunday service in Athabasca.



Archbishop Gregory Kerr-Wilson, Metropolitan of the Province of Rupert's Land, looks on as the Bishop-elect of Athabasca David Greenwood addresses the Electoral Synod.

Story and photos: Canon Peter Clarke, Athabasca Editor



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Bishop appoints dean and rector of All Saints’ Cathedral

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

Recently appointed by Bishop Jane Alexander, the Rev. Alexandra Meek is beginning the new year as rector of All Saints’ Cathedral and Dean of the Diocese of Edmonton.

“I accepted Bishop Jane’s appointment with gratitude after a significant amount of time in prayer and discernment,” she says. “After reading the profile for All Saints’ and meeting with the search committee I was drawn to the sense of possibility about the future for this congregation. The desire to be a congregation that looks beyond the front doors with an emphasis on living out the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, outreach and social justice. I caught the excitement of the cathedral and how it can be Christ’s hands and feet in Edmonton.”

Meek was drawn to the cathedral’s demonstrated desire to reach out to the downtown Edmonton community through ministries such as the Manna Market and Friday Morning Breakfast program.

Born in Oshawa, ON and raised in the Greater Toronto Area, Meek belonged to “a really fantastic, small youth group led by a lay leader who was training for ministry.”

One night, the group drove to Toronto to take sandwiches to people who were homeless; an experience that changed her life. She and the other members of her youth group decided to make their Friday-night gatherings all about those trips to the city, where they would provide sandwiches and hot chocolate for



Alex Meek begins service as Dean and Rector of All Saints’ Anglican Cathedral on New Year’s Day, 2020.

anyone in need.

That was also the moment Meek, who was then a member of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, knew she would continue to do outreach ministry, even though leadership roles for women in the church were not plentiful at the time.

“After Scott (Sharman) and I were married, we began attending an Anglican Church and we quickly felt at home,” she says. “I approached the Bishop to discuss the possibility of entering a discernment process and returned to school to work on an MDiv and to begin learning about what it would mean to serve in the Anglican tradition.”

Meek was ordained a deacon by Bishop Victoria Matthews and, two years later in 2009, she was ordained a priest by Bishop Jane.

“Over the past 10 years I have had the great opportunity to serve in three churches in the diocese, most recently as associate, and then rector, of St. George’s by the U of A. It is a true gift to be the priest of a parish

and to walk with people in prayer as they recognize God at work in their lives and in the lives of those around them. My own faith is strengthened as I meet and pray with others, listen to their stories and hear their questions,” she says.

While too humble to speak specifically about the gifts she will bring to her new ministry, Meek says she hopes “to use them faithfully to love and care for the congregation of All Saints’ and as the dean of the cathedral. The church is entering a new time and that can feel either exciting or fearful depending on the day and so I hope to use my gifts to help navigate this new time so that we can see together how God is leading us and at work all around us. I believe the church is at a really exciting point in its history, as we are called to live into reconciliation, as we work for justice, as we love those around us and see each person as a sacred gift from God. There is such a strong foundation of ministry at the cathedral and I am excited by the opportunity to provide leadership, offer support and to help develop a vision for the future.”

*I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.
Psalm 121:1-2*

Meek’s gifts of loving and caring for others are obvious in her role as a priest and as a mother. She and Scott are parents to three children and they are upheld by a “supportive village of friends and family who love us, love our family and who love God and understand the life of the

church and the sacrifices that come alongside this work,” says Meek. “Scott and I often talk about how without these pillars of support we could not both live out our vocations within the church. I do not believe we could do this work on our own, but more importantly I’m not sure we are supposed to. The church is the body of Christ. We are told over and over again in scripture that we need one another and that no one can be the church by themselves. For us, this starts in a very practical way that means sometimes Scott or I will cook dinner, and sometimes dinner is made down the street by friends, and that grandma might put the kids to bed.”

The truth is, says Meek, that “my children have made me a better priest because they have helped me to understand the depth of my humanity, my limits, my fears, my joy in life, my great need for God. Additionally, they are three very beautiful reminders that while being a priest is not a 9-5 job, neither is it okay for me to work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.”

As Dean, Meek who served for more than a year as Regional Dean of Whitemud, hopes to be a source of support for the Bishop, as well as other clergy in the diocese.

“We all have limits and we all need to be reminded to rest,” she says.

When Meek has an opportunity to follow her own sage advice, she loves spending time in nature. She enjoys camping with her family and recently took up hiking. Little wonder then that her favourite passage of Scripture is Psalm 121: “A Song of Ascents.”

Second Community Open House Held at Holy Trinity Riverbend

Representatives of the Right at Home Housing Society and the Diocese of Edmonton welcomed residents of the Terwillegar Towne neighbourhood to the second community open house, December 3, at Holy Trinity Riverbend Anglican Church in Edmonton. You can view updates to the family and seniors-oriented, mixed-income housing development online at <https://rightathomehousing.com>.

Stuart Olson has been hired as construction manager for the project. A revised concept plan will be shared with the community this spring/summer. Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2021.



Anne Stevenson, Right at Home Board Chair (left), and Patti Holmstrom, Parish Project Manager (second from right), welcome community members at the second community open house, December 3, in Terwillegar Towne; Bishop Jane Alexander talks with Rebecca Harris, Deacon-in-Charge of Holy Trinity Riverbend (right).



“Those who sit in darkness have seen a great Light...”



Bishop JANE ALEXANDER
Diocese of Edmonton

season of Epiphany: the season of the spreading of light out into the world - what a glorious image. I have said before I love this season because it is

We turn a corner into a new year 2020! Every time we enter a new decade I always feel especially excited, as though something big is coming. So, for me, 2020 has arrived full of promise. We enter the church

a season on the move. Think of the time in the Christmas candlelight services when we light out candles and a tiny flicker of flame spreads out until the whole church is illuminated, and we get a glimpse of the beauty of people’s faces glowing in the candlelight. If you have that image in your mind’s eye then you are ready to explore the idea of Epiphany; a time when we look for and celebrate the presence of God in unexpected places. Epiphany, being always in January, is at a time when the world around us is becoming lighter and lighter with each passing day. It is a time when the natural world and our church year intersect, helping us focus our minds on what is happening.

I Am the Light of the World

I see your world in light that shines behind me,
Lit by a sun whose rays I cannot see,
The smallest gleam of light still seems to find me
Or find the child who’s hiding deep inside me.
I see your light reflected in the water,
Or kindled suddenly in someone’s eyes,
It shimmers through the living leaves of summer,
Or spills from silver veins in leaden skies,
It gathers in the candles at our vespers
It concentrates in tiny drops of dew
At times it sings for joy, at times it whispers,
But all the time it calls me back to you.
I follow you upstream through this dark night
My saviour, source, and spring, my life and light.
Malcolm Guite, 2015



Another way of thinking about Epiphany is to think of it as the moment when you knew something, really knew it. You knew you loved someone; you knew what you were going to do with your life. Take it a step further into your faith life: the moment you knew God is real, you knew Jesus loves you, you knew you are lovely. That moment, that epiphany, is a glorious

in-breaking of light.

It is true that sometimes it is hard to look for light when the world seems dark. There are many hardships in our communities right now. I know the economic uncertainty of late 2019 will have come with us into 2020, and still many in our communities are wondering how they will make ends meet. My prayer is that the most vulnerable in society will see the coming of the light in the actions of the church and of Christians everywhere as we devote ourselves to compassionate service. My prayer is that the voiceless will see the coming of the light in churches that speak into the darkness and call for light. My prayer is that by sharing light, in all the ways we can think of and with all the gifts and skills we possess, then wonderful things will happen.

In Christ, +Jane

Blessings abound through Edmonton Cursillo weekend

Edmonton Anglican Cursillo movement has accomplished another powerful and spirit-filled weekend; opening hearts and renewing faith by God’s grace.

It is the 29th year for the movement in our diocese, and a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the enthusiastic continuation of a very special community of pilgrims who thrive on the Christian encouragement of prayer, witness and song (and holy humour).

Next year will see celebrations at The King’s University, Edmonton to mark the 30th anniversary, with

guests and past Cursillo members gathering from across the country. Mark your calendars now: June 19-20, 2020. And the weekend for next year has been booked, too: November 6-8, 2020.

Co-lay directors for this fall’s weekend were Sue Wilson, of Fort Saskatchewan, and Norman Sieweke, of Edmonton (pictured right) . They pulled together a mighty team of clergy (the Very Rev. Neil Gordon and the Rev. Canon Chelsy Bouwman) and lay members to shepherd our new Cursillistas through the experience. Sue was

hesitant at first: “When I was asked to prayerfully consider being co-lay leader of Cursillo 2019 I really didn’t know what I was letting myself in for! With some health and family concerns, I almost refused. However, the Holy Spirit kept nudging me until she pushed me to say yes!”

“In the following months the Holy Spirit poured blessings down upon us, firstly providing Norman Sieweke as the awesome co-lay director and then the team that ‘prayerfully considered,’ and said, ‘yes!’ to joining us.” “



Continued on page 4.

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Church, mission, Jesus: What’s wrong with this picture?



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

Hello and Happy New Year!! I hope your Christmas was a blessed time. Welcome back to this series of articles, written to equip us as we reflect on what it means to be Jesus’ disciples. We spent the second half of 2019 seeking to understand what a Jesus-

shaped life might actually look like. We found the five-fold functions in Ephesians 4 to be of great value in illuminating that phrase. But how does that help us as Jesus’ disciples? I shared an answer to this question at the synod gathering last October and would like to share it here for all who weren’t able to be there. It’s an explanation using three words, all ending with ‘ology.’ (Don’t be afraid!)

We must start with Jesus, of course. He is at the centre of all we do and all we are. Jesus is the one who defines what it means to follow Him. Words like *church*, *discipleship*, *mission*, *good news*, and many others must all be defined by him if we are to live a life that is Jesus-shaped. We need to make

sure we haven’t gotten into the habit of living according to definitions that we have developed for ourselves, however unintentionally. So we start with Jesus; with our *Christology*! We always lead with and centre around Jesus. We look to see, what is Jesus doing? He is fully and always engaged in the mission of God; the mission given to him by his heavenly Father; a mission revealed from the beginning of and throughout scripture. In fact, this mission of God, continually reaching out with love and blessing to all human-kind, is the one unifying hermeneutic of scripture; the one thread that connects the beginning to the end; and a mission which – most emphatically – includes us all. “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” John 20:21

I like to share the following when we present the ID framework in churches throughout the diocese:

- The Greek word for send is *apostolos*.
- The Latin word for send is *missio*.

As the Lord’s disciples, we are Jesus’ sent ones. We are all *apostolos-ed* and *missio-ed*. “So I am sending you...”

From *Christology* then, our *missiology* is informed and defined by Jesus. So from Christology, to a *missiology* that gives us a purpose defined by Christ, his disciples come together to achieve his mission in community, which is the Body of Christ; the Church. Our understanding of how

Richard

Not *what* you know, but *who*, and how you let him change you



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

As a professional educator, I am about to say something heretical: content is not enough. Teaching is never enough. My task as an educator is never to pour content into a poor, unsuspecting disciple’s

brain. We clergy have always known this. We have even preached sermons on ‘moving head knowledge 35 centimetres (yes, we are Canadians) south to your heart.’ But, we still focus almost solely on content, on teaching people everything that we have learned. We assume that if they would just learn the gospel, they would live the gospel. We put on newcomers’ classes and baptismal preparation classes and confirmation classes and marriage preparation classes. In some of them, we even have things that read a lot like tests. Oh, sure, I created a board game once, but it was still based on content. And then, we preach teachy

sermons nearly every Sunday. We—and the Church—are so focussed on content. And when has this ever really worked for us? When has parsing a verb in Greek ever helped anyone? Has a single, word-perfect definition ever really changed anyone? For a word nerd like me, such questions are nearly traitorous. But the Bible, the Word of God, the gospel of salvation, and Jesus the Christ are all about relationship. The impact of God’s saving love is never about knowing more: it is all about being a transformed person. ‘Be ye transformed by the renewing’—not of your brain—but ‘of your mind...’ That is, the seat of consciousness and of self is to be renewed, which is not achieved by learning more content. It is renewed by the experience and interaction with God in the power of the Holy Spirit. So, never again evaluate the success of a parish workshop or course on the amount of content dispersed. One should only comment ‘Good workshop!’ when the experience has been life-changing. The goal driving your participation shall not be, ‘What can I learn?’ Rather, ‘How will God change me today?’ will be the question that opens you up to transformation. If you are the educator, then aim your course or workshop not at the mastery of content, but at the transformation of the soul. This will also assist in the practical application of content. Of course, we have to make our theology practical to aid in the transformation. And, if you are the worshipper, you may only comment, ‘Good sermon, rector,’ if you are aware of your own transformation. So, rally the whole people of God. Let us demonstrate in front of our churches with placards that say, ‘DOWN WITH CONTENT!’ and ‘UP WITH TRANSFORMATION!’ Actually, a riot in support of effective discipleship development might be really cool and aid in our collective transformation.

Blessings abound through Cursillo cont.

Continued from page 3.

“Over the weeks of team meetings we were all unsure of how the timing of the three-day weekend would work, but we were not taking into account Kairos time: God’s time!”

“Our team’s dedication, commitment, love and faith to each other and to the candidates

were amazing! The power of the Holy Spirit was behind us, before us, beside us and within us the whole weekend! We were all overwhelmed with the many, many, blessings we received. There are not enough superlatives to describe our experiences! And we are now all looking forward to our ‘Fourth Day’ walking alongside each other with the Lord!”

That Fourth Day, which comes after the weekend experience, describes the continuing opportunities to support each other as we walk in the real world outside the Star of the North Retreat Centre in St Albert. Thus Cursillo is much more than a weekend; it is an ongoing journey marked by monthly gatherings of prayer, music and witness (and snacks), as well as

regular prayer within small groups of Cursillistas who seek to encourage each other as they advance together in their walk with Christ.

Edmonton Anglican Cursillo welcomes all comers who wish to deepen their faith: men, women, young and old, married, single, widowed or alone, through all life circumstances.

To find out more, visit edmontoncursillo.ca or email David at dwholehouse@gmail.com.

What is the Spirit of God up to? Come and see...

The Very Rev. JASON HAGGSTROM
St. James’ Cathedral
Diocese of Athabasca



‘Can anything good come from up north?’ is the question asked by Nathanael of Philip (John 1:43-51) when Jesus calls Philip to journey north towards Nazareth with him. Philip goes and extends the invitation to Nathanael. For me, the meaningful message in this Gospel is the call to come and see, so that we might go and participate in the life and ministry of Jesus.

When Philip gestured, ‘come and see,’ he could have chosen to lecture

Nathanael about questioning what God can do. But Philip didn’t plead with his friend to be serious and to take him seriously. Instead, Philip extended an invitation and left the choice with Nathanael. It was the exuberance of Philip’s reply that caught Nathanael’s curiosity. He wanted to check out this Jesus guy from up north to see what the hullabaloo was all about. If there is one thing I have learned in the years I have been a pastor, teacher of the faith, and an evangelist, it is that faith is caught, not taught. I have the opportunity, from time to time, to speak with people I knew when I was younger. We often talk about the

‘good old days’ and why they were so good. One of the things I remember is how we used to talk about Jesus and our faith far more openly.

If there is something missing from the life of churches these days, it is the Spirit of God. That’s a bold statement to be sure, but it is something I don’t talk about much lately, and I need to do more of it. I will talk about following Jesus and other important things from Scripture, but I have had an epiphany recently: we as a church, and I as a priest, don’t talk a whole lot about the life and things of God the Holy Spirit. It is not an intentional omission to be sure, but I have come

to realize I need to be more intentional about talking about and preaching on it because it matters.

God uses people to draw other people to him and works on them to be the people they are meant to be in him. Being and moving with God in the Spirit, is a lot like ballroom dancing. God takes the lead and we are to follow the motions he sets out and indicates for us; showing us where to step and controlling the speed at which we, the Church, move.

But the Christian life is more than that. It is also about capturing the vision and learning to improvise the steps and motions. It is about learning to see what it is that God sees in us and in the life of others. The Church needs to learn to be creative in what we do in displaying and communicating the Gospel, so that we can capture, not just the motions, but also the imaginations of people. If you want to know what good can come from up north, come and see. If you want to see how God is working to rescue and redeem people, come and see. If you want to know what God is really like, come and see. It is God’s idea; God’s epiphany to show you all this and more. He is showing us the way! He is leading us and sustains us by his Spirit.

Jason+

Numbers Not the Whole Story at All Saints’ Athabasca

CANDACE MAHAFFEY
All Saints’ , Athabasca

God is good all the time. By tracking church attendance and counting how many children we have in our Sunday school we may be able to convince ourselves church is in decline. Wondering when these doors will close or what will happen can feel like gloom and doom. Yet, I was told repeatedly at our annual tea and bazaar, by long-time and first-time customers, that we make the best cup of tea in town. We have kept up our tradition of serving tea and making fancy sandwiches and this year we added a mix and match cookie sale as well as mix and match tarts. My family also has a tradition of attending the tea, and there is a new generation of young people who are anxious to help. My four-year-old, great granddaughter has been known to run towels into the kitchen, the seven-year-old loves setting up and putting away chairs and the nine-year-old, who is learning to do readings, really wants to help at the sale, and we are planning for next year. A 17-year-old worked behind the scenes to decorate and was an invaluable help scaling the ladder. The children’s talk, offered during the Sunday service each week, brings out enthusiastic participation. Before you are ready to concede defeat, look around! See the help, listen to even the smallest voices and welcome the new people God has put before you at the baking table or in the pew. The last time I checked, God was still in charge, not me. But he does expect me to do my part.



Pictured above: the children’s talk on the first Sunday of Advent, 2019; tables laden with goodies at the annual tea and bazaar.



Good Shepherd Anglican Church in Edmonton is looking for an enthusiastic and flexible Youth & Children’s Ministries Coordinator who loves to share the Good News of God’s love with children, teens, and their families. This is a part-time, independent contractor position at approximately six hours per week. Please contact the church administrator at 780-456-4643 for more information.

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(includes sermons for lay readers for each Sunday)

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Parish websites
Peace River: www.stjamespr.org
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Boyle: www.parishnorthernlights.org



The Rev. Lorne Manweiler inducted at St. Timothy’s, Edmonton

The Rev. Deacon SHELLY KING
Messenger Staff

St. Timothy’s Anglican Church in Edmonton celebrated a new season of ministry and its warm connections with the surrounding community at the induction service of the Rev. Lorne Manweiler on November 6, 2019.

Throughout the service, all in attendance had some part to play. St. Timothy’s choir, directed by Pamela Graham, called the community to worship with an anthem and shared two others through the course of the evening. People’s Warden, Diann Bowes brought the Old Testament reading from the book of Joel. Then Rev. Lorne called on the children to lead the responsive reading of Psalm 112. Their part was to shout “Praise the Lord!” at the start and end, which they did with gusto. Rector’s Warden, Margaret Woznura read from Romans for the New Testament reading and the Rev. John Gee, Honourary Deacon at St. Tim’s, read the Gospel from Luke 14:25-33.

In her sermon, the Rev. Danielle Lepine recalled the gasp that escaped her when she first saw the Gospel reading, and the frantic text she sent to Rev. Lorne to say, “Are you serious? For your induction?!”

The passage from Luke is extremely challenging:

“Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.” Luke 14:26, 27

Rev. Danielle explained that Jesus is not using the word hate the way we do in our culture, but rather...

“Jesus is saying you have to choose; I have to choose. Is it Jesus we are following? Because if we are following Jesus, things might get really uncomfortable, challenging, and difficult. In fact, I can guarantee everyone here tonight that if we all truly choose Jesus, things will get uncomfortable, challenging, and difficult.

The beautiful thing is, when one chooses to follow Christ, to love Jesus more than all others, to put God first, you find that all other relationships are enriched and just work!

It turns out that though there is a cost – and that cost can be anything from money, time, talent, to important relationships

with others – there is also a payoff. And that payoff is life as you could never have experienced it or imagined it without faith, full of richness – not riches, but richness – vibrancy, love, laughter, amazing adventure. It’s a choice to live a life full of an abundance of forgiveness, grace, deep peace, hope and, above all, love. All things that you at St. Timothy’s and Lorne will experience as you work together.”

Bishop Jane Alexander led the liturgy of the Covenant in Ministry, in which Rev. Lorne vowed his commitment to the ministry at St. Timothy’s, and parishioners their commitment to him. Then members of the church family presented the symbols of ministry in turn: a bible, a pitcher of water, oil, the canons of the diocese, the keys to the church, a Prayer Book and the bread and wine. The presentation of each symbol, Rev. Lorne’s invitation to join in ministry, and the response from all the people created a true sense that “we’re all in this together.”

The Bishop’s invitation to welcome, as she presented the newly inducted Rev. Lorne, was met with resounding applause and followed by a beautiful offering of the Prayers of the People, by Rena Whistance-Smith.

A less common, yet meaningful addition to the service was time reserved at the end to welcome members of the community. The congregation received greetings and encouragement from Lori Sigurdson MLA for Edmonton-Riverview, from Karen Wilk President of the Laurier Heights Community League, and from Wendy King, who spoke on behalf of the Canterbury Foundation as its Executive Director. The Rev. Anna Thede brought greetings from Hosanna Lutheran Church in celebration of the full communion between the Anglican Church and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. The Rev. James Lavoy, from Rio Terrace Moravian Church, acknowledged the growing movement towards communion with the Moravian Church and his personal friendship with Rev. Lorne. He summed up the essence of Rev. Lorne’s new ministry at St. Timothy’s, voicing appreciation for his “willingness to say ‘yes’ as he embraces his neighbours with faith, hope and love.”



Edmonton and area clergy gather at the induction of the Rev. Lorne Manweiler November 6, 2019.

The Rev. Johnny Pooten Inducted at Holy Trinity, Edson

The Rev. Deacon SHELLY KING
Messenger Staff

Almost a year to the day after Holy Trinity in Edson confirmed its new identity as a shared Anglican-Lutheran ministry, it celebrated the induction of the first full-time rector to oversee the combined work. Representatives of the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCiC) signed an Ecumenical Shared Ministry Agreement on November 1, 2018. On Saturday, November 2, 2019, both groups were present to celebrate the licensing of the Rev. Johnny Pooten.

To Pooten the service is an important marker for the parish: “It reminds both the pastor and the congregation of their unity as they journey together in caring and shepherding the needy in their community. My limited knowledge of being commissioned as new Rector/Pastor of the Holy Trinity Parish was more than I could imagine. The weight of responsibility

from the word of God that puts me into this new ministry is indescribable, and yet full of hope, encouragement and joy.” And it reminds him of the wisdom he has encountered in rural ministry.

“I was once told by a farmer that one of the criteria of a good priest/pastor is the quality of care they do for their sheep. He had the experience of selling the cattle he raised and the buyer would always ask about the health of his cows before they bought one. The quality of the cow reflected the kind of care he had for his animals. He continued to say that, as a priest/pastor, you wear a lot of hats, but the most important thing is to determine the way you care for the souls under your charge. To me, this is one of the most brilliant encounters I had, relating the work of a farmer and what he/she does for a living with how a priest should consider shaping the spiritual growth of the flock entrusted to his care.”



Pictured from left: John Greiner (Bethel Pentecostal in Edson), Eric Kregel, Alan Perry, Johnny Pooten, Prema Samuel (ELCiC), Doug Heine (Grace Lutheran in Hinton).

Generous patrons contribute to fund for care of clergy

The Rev. SHELLY KING
Messenger Staff

The 68th annual Bishop’s Fund Dinner on November 13, 2019 got underway with a time-honoured tradition as piper Kevin Thompson led the procession of Bishop’s Fund Committee members into the banquet hall at the Royal Mayfair Golf Club.

The annual dinner party is the primary fundraiser for the Bishop’s Fund, a discretionary resource available to the bishops of the Dioceses of Edmonton and the Arctic (District of Mackenzie). The fund is used to support clergy in times of need. That support has come in many forms, including:

- Travel to be with sick and dying relatives and to attend funerals
- Extended physical therapy for those recovering from surgeries
- Disability support beyond the scope of health benefits
- Psychological and spiritual counseling
- Continued education and training.

The Bishop’s Fund Committee members take on the responsibility to pay for all costs associated with the dinner, so contributions from supporters can go straight into the fund. Those contributors never know the details of how their generous donations are spent, but in her report at the start of the evening, Bishop Jane Alexander told them: “I wouldn’t necessarily say you have made the blind to see, the deaf to hear and the lame to walk – but you have certainly been instrumental in helping those things happen.”

Bishop Jane shared a quote from N.T. Wright describing church as: “...a place of welcome and laughter, of healing and hope, of friends and family and justice and new life. It’s where the homeless drop in for a bowl of soup and the elderly stop by for a chat. It’s where one group is working to help drug addicts



Pictured above, back row: Bishop’s Fund Committee members Lois MacLean, David Angus, Neil Gower, Marc de la Bruyere, Bill Shores, William King; seated: speaker Rick Hamlin and Bishop Jane Alexander. Pictured right: Bishop Jane with the newest member of the Bishop’s Fund Committee, Dean of the University of Alberta, Dr. Lesley Cormack.

and another is campaigning for global justice. It’s where you’ll find people learning to pray, coming to faith, struggling with temptation, finding new purpose, and getting in touch with a new power to carry out that purpose. It’s where people bring their own small faith and discover in getting together with others to worship the one true God, that the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts.”

“This is what we are growing into,” the Bishop said. “This is the church that we are called to try and be. And our clergy try and steer the ship, encourage volunteers and stand beside those in the gaps of society. Of course, it comes at a cost, and there are times the clergy need additional help and support just like the ones they deal with day to day. And this is where you step in. Please know that your support is not taken for granted, it is a surprise and blessing to most of our clergy and



Pictured from left: outgoing Bishop’s Fund Committee Chair Neil Gower addresses contributors; Bishop Jane Alexander describes Edmonton diocese’ appreciation for contributors’ generosity; author Rick Hamlin encourages listeners in various approaches to prayer.



their families that the Bishop’s Fund exists. Many are brought to tears of overwhelming relief and gratitude.”

Over the past nearly 70 years, the Bishop’s Fund Committee has invited guest speakers from many areas of expertise to share insights from their various respective professions. This year, the dinner was pleased to welcome Mr. Rick Hamlin, Executive Editor of *Guideposts Magazine* and author of several books, including *10 Prayers You Can’t Live Without*. Introduced by his long-time friend, Bishop’s Fund Committee Member Marc de la Bruyere, Hamlin brought encouraging and down-to-earth insights into the practice of prayer. He spoke of the value of having a regular place for prayer; one that, with repeated use, begins to signal



heart and mind that it’s time to pray. Hamlin’s own practice might have come as a surprise to some, as he described praying on the A-Train during his morning commute from Manhattan. “The sound of the subway doors closing, the rumble of the train on the tracks” have become cues to him as he sits, opens his bible for a short reading – perhaps a psalm – and then closes his eyes.

“Just listening; opening myself up... the more you do something the easier it gets,” he said.

“To try to pray is to pray,” Hamlin said. He described acts of compassion as prayer, the act of writing down those things for which we are grateful, and even singing which, as St. Augustine said, is like ‘praying twice.’ In answer to a question from the audience he spoke of when it’s hard to pray, saying that in those times we need community, as others “hold for us what we can’t hold for ourselves.”

Hamlin ended with a quote from Henri-Frederic Amiel: “Life is short. We don’t have much time to gladden the hearts of those who walk this way with us. So, be swift to love and make haste to be kind.”

University of Alberta Dean Dr. Lesley Cormack, the newest member of the Bishop’s Fund Committee, offered her thanks to Hamlin and to supporters as the evening drew to a close. Executive Director of the Canterbury Foundation, Wendy King, also spoke briefly about an ambitious expansion project that will create a 53-suite dementia care unit and 16-suite hospice, adding to the care now provided for more than 300 seniors in Canterbury Court, Canterbury Manor and Canterbury Lane. \$1.2 million has already been raised toward the \$2.5 million goal to cover the costs of the project.

In his closing remarks, outgoing Chair of the Bishop’s Fund Committee, Neil Gower, Q.C., put out a call for others to join the committee. He spoke of what a pleasure it is to work with the other members and to be in company with this larger association of Anglican lay persons, clergy and friends. The door is always open to more who wish to be involved. To become a member of the Bishop’s Fund by making a donation in support of clergy and their families, please contact Diocese of Edmonton Treasurer the Rev. John Gee:

Being Ecumenical: on the same page with different pictures

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

Members of the Edmonton ecumenical community came together in celebration in November to discuss and pray about the anniversary of a unifying declaration made by Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed and United (Methodist) Christians in recognition of commonalities and differences. A “family gathering” within a “fractured world,” is how guest presenter and preacher the Rev. Dr. Gordon Jensen, from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon, described a celebration of the 20th anniversary of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, held November 3 at St. Matthias Anglican Church.

To “survive and thrive in this world, as witnesses to the Gospel,” we need to come together as an extended family more often, said Jensen. “Regardless of how people view the Joint Declaration itself, it has, at the very least, been a catalyst in bringing leaders of more than 75 per cent of the Christian family together. Not represented, however, are our evangelical sisters and brothers. We should not forget that!”

The Joint Declaration was initially signed by the Catholic Church’s Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Lutheran World Federation on October 31, 1999 in the city of Augsburg Germany. The World Methodist Council was next to sign, followed by the Anglican Consultative Council and the World Council of Christian Reformed Churches.

Though not without

complications, family conversations among different Christian denominations are necessary, Jensen said. “As family members in the Christian Church, we haven’t always been too good at helpful conversation. For example, sometimes, our conversations tend to be more about ‘telling others’ what they should do, than helpful dialogue. Other times, we can find ourselves ‘talking past’ each other, rather than talking ‘with’ each other. Sometimes it’s not actually the whole picture, but our focus on a small part of the whole picture that can be divisive and polarizing...

In the 16th century, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans and the Reformed churches looked at the same picture and rejected what the other saw,” he said. “Thankfully, that is no longer the case. While all the churches who have signed the Joint Declaration focus their eyes on different parts of the picture, the basic assertion is still there: only God’s actions can create a right relationship with God.”

According to Jensen, a willingness to recognise we see the same big picture: a “life-giving Gospel, as revealed most clearly in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, but in a different way” is the intent of the Joint Declaration and is essential to ecumenism.

“This method, known as differentiated consensus, has been picked up by countless



other ecumenical dialogues and conversations as a way to help move discussions forward... Helping each other see equally valid, but different pictures within the boundaries of orthodoxy, can only benefit the whole church,” he said.

Jensen suggested members of the ecumenical community should continue to seek ways to “pray and work together to ensure justice and, as reconcilers among nations and peoples, bring all creation into right relationship.”

Offering a response to Jensen’s presentation, Dr. Faith Nostbakken, Northern Ecumenical Officer, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) Alberta Synod, said the local Christian community can look to examples such as the Lutheran, Anglican and Roman Catholic Committee, the Anglican-Mennonite-Lutheran Dialogue, and the Strathcona Ecumenical Mission to continue to “unite to meet the great needs of our neighbours and journey together with grateful, open hearts toward a kinder, more just world.”

Following further responses to Jensen’s talk from representatives of Catholic, United, Christian Reformed and Anglican traditions, the Rev. David Tiessen, rector of St. Matthias Anglican Church, welcomed guests of the Joint Declaration anniversary celebration to participate in an ecumenical prayer service.

Together they gathered around the (baptismal) font “remembering that in baptism we have been

incorporated into the one Body of Christ.”

Giving thanks for insight gained through a common way of listening to the word of God in Scripture, the Rev. Larry Wright, Spirit West United Church Minister, read Ephesians 4:4-6: “There is one body and one spirit, just as you

were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all things and through all and in all.”

Ecumenical participants who brought greetings to the congregation by reading from Scripture were: Bishop Larry Kochendorfer, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada; the Rev. Jim Corrigan, Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton; the Rev. Britt Aberhart, United Church of Canada; the Rev. Karen Norris, Christian Reformed Church; Canon Scott Sharman, Anglican Church of Canada.

As a representative from each distinctive Christian community stepped forward to light a candle from the Paschal Candle, excerpts from the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* were read aloud. The candles were then placed on the altar.

“Having lit these five lights, we proclaim Christ who calls us to witness to God’s reconciling and resurrecting love as we walk and pray and work together,” said Tiessen.

Prayer for an Ecumenical Heart

O generous and loving God, we praise and thank you for your gifts. We acknowledge our failure to heal divisions that exist among the followers of your Son, Jesus Christ. We pray for your help and guidance to overcome the barriers that continue to separate Christians. We ask that the power of your Holy Spirit be fully alive within us; and for Your Love to give us the strength to mend the hurts that separate the followers of Jesus. Help us build bridges of love and understanding with all humanity. May the love and forgiveness of Jesus guide us each day as we journey with our sisters and brothers in Christ’s name. We pray for the day when it will truly be said of all who follow your Son, Jesus Christ, “They love one another as Jesus loves!” Amen.

Prairie Centre for Ecumenism, Saskatoon

Prayer Book Society explores trend toward green burials

MARGARET GLIDDEN
Edmonton Editor

With files and photos from John Matthews.

One Edmonton family’s search for a cemetery able to accommodate “green” burials was the genesis of a recent public presentation exploring this re-emerging trend.

In the spring of 2018, John Matthews, a member of the parishes of Good Shepherd and St. Stephen the Martyr, received an email enquiry about natural burials at Christ Church Poplar Lake Cemetery, located at 82 Street and 195 Avenue in Edmonton.

At the time Matthews was chair of the volunteer cemetery committee (Harold Lake, of Good Shepherd, is the current chair) and he was intrigued by the concept of a natural burial. “It makes a lot of sense,” he says, “especially from a Christian perspective.”

For a natural burial, the body of the deceased is laid to rest without the use of chemicals, usually in a cloth shroud or a casket made from natural materials such as wool or untreated wood. Matthews discovered that Alberta Consumer Affairs does not have a burial requirement for embalming or a concrete grave liner. Another cemetery in the Edmonton diocese, Colchester Cemetery, administered by St. Thomas in Sherwood Park, has also accommodated a natural burial.

Interest in the once common practice is increasing as people seek to reduce their environmental footprint. The Edmonton Branch of the Prayer Book Society of Canada invited four presenters to St. Stephen the Martyr Anglican Church, on November 3, to explore



On behalf of the Prayer Book Society of Canada, Edmonton Branch, Fr. Armand Mercier, president, expresses appreciation for presenters, from left: Gina Vliet, Marc Turgeon, Heather Liddell and Arthur Dyck. On display behind the presenters is a cloth burial shroud.



Heather Liddell the practical challenges and spiritual considerations of natural burials.

Families who choose a natural burial assume many of the responsibilities associated with modern-day funeral homes. A body can be prepared at home for a natural burial, where it is placed in a basic wood plank coffin or in a simple cloth shroud and transported to the cemetery. There it can be lowered into a shallow grave with or without a concrete liner or the use of large machinery. Once covered in soil it is left to decompose and return to the earth.

As Matthews and the Rev. Armand Mercier, rector of St. Stephen the Martyr and president of the local branch of the Prayer Book Society, began to plan for an informative event addressing the topic of natural burials, the Poplar Lake Cemetery committee was contacted by Gina Vliet. Vliet’s company Charon Consulting (www.charonconsulting.ca) specializes in end-of-life planning and is creating



THE CANTERBURY FOUNDATION, EDMONTON

Grounded in the Anglican tradition, the Canterbury Foundation is a private not-for-profit charitable organization that operates three residential options on one site, providing home and care for 300 seniors. The Foundation is currently looking for dedicated volunteers, with a variety of qualifications, to serve on its Board of Directors.

For more information, please contact
Brian R Popp at
brpopp@telusplanet.net
Please respond by February 14, 2020.

Bishop Jane Alexander, the Rev. Lorne Manweiler and the Rev. Joanne Webster at the groundbreaking of Canterbury Foundation Renovation and Expansion Project, June 27, 2019.

person does not stay with the body. The ancient burial rite: “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust” is a clear reminder that our soul is transitory and our body should be returned to the earth.

The practice of natural burials is not new. At one time, it was common practice to prepare a deceased person’s body for burial at home, which was then placed in a simple pine box and buried in a grave dug by the family. This act became part of the grieving and healing process for family members who were able to be fully involved in the physical act of returning their loved one’s body to the earth.

Marc Turgeon worked as an embalmer in a funeral home before he began working for the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy. He is now an advocate for natural cloth burial shrouds and helped to establish a green burial section at the Rosehill Cemetery in southwest Edmonton. Rosehill Cemetery has designated a natural area for burials. No grave markers will be used in the natural area to avoid disturbing the natural habitat. Instead, visitors will be able to use their smartphone to look up a digital memorial listing which will include the GPS coordinates of each burial location.

Christ Church Cemetery Poplar Lake gives families the option of deciding if they would like a biodegradable burial container and/or grave marker. When the cemetery was restored 10 years ago, much of it was left to fallow, enabling native plants to flourish. However, noxious weed control is a legal requirement and a volunteer maintenance crew periodically cuts the ground cover to about six inches.

The family that first reached out to Matthews about natural burials has since purchased a block of 12 casket plots for extended family members.

PWRDF: bringing help and healing to the Holy Land



DOROTHY MARSHALL
PWRDF Representative
Diocese of Edmonton

The Christmas season seems a lot easier for me these days, now that my kids are grown. I no longer feel the responsibility of providing a “great” gift for each of them; quite the challenge when money was tight and expectations high. When I recently asked them what they remembered about their childhood Christmases, to my chagrin, not one of them mentioned a gift. What they remembered were the family times together, doing puzzles, playing games and visiting with friends and family. They remembered the people who became part of our annual celebrations. Our Christmas was a time of reconnecting and building

relationships; of being enveloped in the love of each other and sharing that with others.

To me, the first Christmas was about God reconnecting with his people, strengthening his relationship with us and enveloping us in his love. But I do wonder at his timing! Jesus was born into a land under the tyranny of the Roman Empire. God came down to us into a troubled land recovering from violent civil wars; a land that is still in turmoil. Bethlehem, both then and now, is not what is pictured on Christmas cards!

Today Bethlehem is part of the Diocese of Jerusalem, which covers five countries from Syria in the north to Jordan in the south. It includes Israel, Lebanon and Palestine (including the Gaza Strip and West Bank). The diocese has almost 30 parishes and very active healthcare and education ministries, including hospitals, clinics and rehabilitation centres. The Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) has, for

many years, worked with partners to fund a variety of initiatives in the Diocese of Jerusalem.

Recently, we have worked with our partners in the ACT Alliance to financially support the al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza when providing medical care to people (especially children) who were injured by violence in the region because of a shortage of funding. PWRDF has also supported this hospital in providing free medical care for vulnerable women, men, and children one day each week.

PWRDF also works with our long-time partner in the area, Refugee Egypt, which is a ministry of the Episcopal Church in Cairo. Several services are provided to newly arrived asylum seekers waiting for United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) status determination, repatriation, resettlement or local integration into

Egyptian society. Cairo is one of the largest urban refugee centres in the world. The unsettled situation throughout the region has generated a large influx of refugees, increasing the number of arrivals.

Also in the area, PWRDF contributed \$50,000 of its Canadian Foodgrains Bank equity to a food relief project to support vulnerable families in Yemen suffering from extreme hunger. These are just a few examples of the work we have contributed to. This work is an essential part of our Christian discipleship; of making connections, building relationships and sharing our love.

As we enter the season of Epiphany, we remember the visit of the wise men from the east to see the baby Jesus. We also remember how, as a result of Herod’s response to their visit, Jesus fled with his parents to live in Egypt as a refugee. The area was full of conflict then, as it is now. Supporting PWRDF enables us, as



A young boy receives treatment at al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza.

Canadian Anglicans, to respond with financial help in critical humanitarian situations in that troubled land.

Thank you for your support for all our projects. Please keep the people of the Middle East, who are affected by violence and unrest, in your prayers. Pray for peace, with justice, in the Holy Land.

If you would like to learn more about the work of PWRDF in this area or around the world, please check out our great website at www.pwrdf.org. If you would like to be involved in this work at your parish level, please contact me, Dorothy Marshall, by email: pwrdf@edmonton.anglican.ca.

Crops expected to yield food security in Buyé diocese



Edmonton diocese has received greetings from the Rev. Audace Kwizera, diocesan secretary for Buyé diocese, on behalf of our brothers and sisters in Burundi. They are well and hope we are, too.

These pictures are of a food security initiative that is supported by members of the Edmonton diocese through



a partnership with PWRDF. They show the Rev. Damascene Bagirubwira, a diocesan development officer, with farmers and their

crops of beans, maize and rice which are expected to yield a satisfactory crop in January, 2020.

In the meantime, Kwizera reports that the Mothers’ Union (MU) is busy enrolling new members and we can look forward to receiving more pictures in the new year.



Another Kind of Harvest in Buyé



Our companion Diocese of Buyé completed its “season of confirmations” with the final services held last autumn. Nineteen Christians were confirmed at All Saints’ Cathedral in Buyé. In the parishes of Murama and Kayanza, 120 and 27 were confirmed, respectively. The total number of confirmations for 2019 throughout Buyé diocese was 1,285. What an encouragement!

Diocesan youth get ‘hands-on’ in gingerbread build-off



There was lots of laughter and sugar-coated fun at Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Edmonton on Friday evening, November 29, as 33 youth from five parishes in the diocese participated in the Second Annual Great Anglican Gingerbread House Build-off. The young chefs and architects made a supper of homemade pizza and naan bread, then set out to construct their delicious masterpieces; devouring the extra icing and candy building materials for dessert. Getting in on the action were parents and youth leaders from HTAC and St. Matthias, as well as Bishop Jane who dropped by to help apply icing and stick walls together, while admiring some of the intricately designed cottages. “This is what I call a great Friday night,” said the Rev. Danielle Lepine, assistant curate at HTAC. “It’s so much fun to see the kids all laughing and having fun together.”

Diocesan Officers Hold Annual Conference in Edmonton



Diocesan Executive Archdeacons/Officers from across Canada met from November 19-21 in Edmonton. The meeting was held jointly with Diocesan Finance Officers on the 19th and separately for the rest of the time.

Twenty dioceses (Algoma, Arctic, Brandon, Calgary, Central Newfoundland, Edmonton, Fredericton, Huron, Kootenay, Montreal, Moosonee, New Westminster, Niagara, Nova Scotia and PEI, Ontario, Ottawa, Qu’Appelle, Toronto, Western Newfoundland, and Yukon) were represented, along with the Military Ordinariate. Archdeacon Michael Thompson, General Secretary of the General Synod, also participated.

The group gathers annually to discuss matters of diocesan governance, of the relationship between dioceses and the General Synod, and for mutual support and education.

Topics this year included Safe Church implementation, ACPO (Advisory Committee on Postulants for Ordination), General Synod finances, and General Synod governance and structure.

Immanuel Wetaskiwin Act of Remembrance



A photo of our wreath decorated with the poppies of all who came to church on Sunday, November 10. In place of a bugle, we sound the naval “End of Watch” eight bells before and after the silence. The remembrance books contain what is known about each of the people memorialized on our brasses.

Submitted by the Rev. Hugh Matheson

St. Saviour’s supports local lunch programs

St. Saviour’s Anglican Church donated \$1,500 to the Vermilion Elementary School Lunch Program Society and \$800 to the St. Jerome’s Hot Lunch Program on October 30. The funds had been raised during a Garage Sale held on September 21. The split amount was based on numbers provided by the schools.



Info Session for treasurers, clergy, wardens and anyone who does financial tasks in their parish

PARISH FINANCES TRAINING DAY

Saturday, January 18, 2020
Synod Office, 10035-103 Street NW Edmonton
Please register no later than January 13 at
<https://parishfinancetrainingday.eventbrite.ca>

10 am to Noon - Parish Financial Management
LUNCH
1 pm to 3 pm - Budgeting

Diocesan director of communications fulfills dream

Bishop Jane Alexander and the synod office staff for the Diocese of Edmonton wish to congratulate Margaret Glidden on her recent convocation. Margaret graduated from Royal Roads University with a Bachelor of Arts in Professional Communication.

Margaret grew up attending St. John's Anglican Church in Sedgewick. She has worked in the synod office since August 2008, first as receptionist/events secretary, and for the past approximately 10 years as director of communications and editor of the diocesan newspaper, The Messenger.



Margaret Glidden at convocation, Royal Roads University, Victoria, BC on November 7, 2019. Photo: Roy Glidden

The Messenger: Margaret, tell us how you decided to pursue this degree.

Margaret Glidden: I first came across information about the communications program at Royal Roads University (RRU) when my daughter Abbey was a toddler (she's 19 now). Although I started my BA straight out of high school in 1994, the opportunity to work full-time at the community newspaper in Sedgewick, where I had worked for two summers as a student reporter, appealed to me more at the time. I've gained knowledge and skills through the various jobs I've held: newspaper reporter/photographer/editor, freelance writer, retail manager, and communications director for the Edmonton diocese, but one of my personal goals has always been to finish my degree. The timing felt right when Abbey graduated from high school. The Bachelor of Arts in Professional Communication (BAPC), offered by the program in the School of Communication and Culture at RRU, seemed a natural fit. It's a two-year program designed for people who are working full-time. The majority of the courses can be completed online and there is a practicum, as well as two on-campus residencies in Victoria.

Messenger: What made you want to do it?

Margaret: My parents were educators: my dad taught high school Social Studies and my mum was well on her way to earning her Master's when they moved to Sedgewick, and by their example I gained a love and appreciation for learning. Plus, I'm naturally curious. I've learned a great deal by

talking to people about their careers, hobbies and passions. But there is so much to know about the theory and application of communication, which reaches across a broad spectrum, including crisis comms, intercultural comms, computer mediated comms and much more! Our means of communicating with one another is continually evolving, and the way we interact with one another is affected by many things, such as our personal beliefs and our personality styles. I was particularly intrigued by organizational communication and learning about different leadership styles. I'm so grateful to be able to work for a visionary leader like Bishop Jane who inspires, encourages and enables people to contribute to something greater than themselves. And, as Christians, we are able to draw strength from our common belief in God's everlasting and unconditional love and our salvation through Jesus Christ to build each other up so that we might communicate the good news to others.

Messenger: What was the biggest challenge in doing this degree?

Margaret: Honestly, believing I could do it! You know as well as I do what a challenge it can be to try and keep up with everything that's going on in the diocese. Over the past 12 years, I've been able to bear down to meet deadlines for the *Synod Scene* and *The Messenger*, but I seriously

questioned what would happen if I threw weekly discussion forums, team projects, research papers and practicum projects into the mix. I talked to an administrator early on in the program (I may have been having a minor meltdown at the time) who told me, 'just do the work and you'll be fine.' Fortunately, with the support and encouragement of my family, colleagues, instructors and cohort, and my husband's frequent reminders about how to eat an elephant (answer: one bite at a time), I was able to do the work.

Messenger: What was the biggest benefit?

Margaret: I've always considered myself an open-minded person, with an ability to consider different viewpoints. But studying communications has helped me to think even more critically about the source and intended outcome of news and stories. I think ethical communication needs to be centered on building understanding. While digital communication has provided more opportunities for people to connect and share their opinions, those opinions can be divisive and polarizing. And with digital comms there are new threats to personal security such as cyberbullying and data mining. I've definitely benefited from an increased awareness of the intent and potential effect of communication.

Messenger: How has it changed the way you see communications in the diocese?

Margaret: I don't know that I see communications in the diocese differently, but completing my degree has definitely reinforced my view of communications as an integral part of community-building. Thankfully, our Bishop recognises the key role of communications in

growing the church. Parishes and the diocese continue to share resources and ideas while supporting and encouraging one another to seek ways to share the gospel message with people who may or may not be familiar with church.

Messenger: Is there anything you're excited to try now in diocesan communications?

Margaret: Like communications, church is in the midst of a complete transformation, and I'm excited to see where God is leading us. I think it's fair to say that a major focus for us who work in communications in the synod office has been on trying to keep up with the changes in digital communication, while at the same time helping parishes and the diocese strengthen their digital presence. My practicum project focused on building a partnership with Ascend – a B.C.-based website developer that designs websites to reflect the needs and budgets of churches. We offered two workshops on parish website design and we are planning a third workshop for early in the new year. Of course, I always look forward to hearing about the amazing ministry that is being done throughout our diocese and sharing those stories across multiple platforms.

Messenger: How did you celebrate?

Margaret: I attended my convocation at the Royal Theatre in Victoria with my husband Roy and my mum Donna Martin. We met Abbey the next day in the Vancouver airport and flew to Kauai, Hawaii. We spent an unforgettable week exploring lush rain forests, taking pictures of breathtaking waterfalls and canyons, and relaxing on beautiful beaches alongside countless members of the island's wild chicken population and the occasional sea turtle and monk seal.

Messenger: Is there anything more you'd like to add?

Margaret: Thank you to my family, friends and colleagues for believing in me, for keeping me on course and for picking up the slack around home and at work while I was pursuing this goal. I have so much love and admiration for all of you.



Donna Martin, Margaret and Roy Glidden at Hatley Castle on the Royal Roads University campus in Victoria, BC. Photo: Makennah Walker